

Comfort

Twin-story to "Hurt"

Von Gepo

Kapitel 23: The last one to forgive

"Midorima?" He sat down next to the green-haired who wore his orange trikot over a pullover to keep warm. It covered his little baby bump but it truly was little. For someone in their seventh month, it was much too small.

"Kuroko? What are you doing up here?" The other looked him up and down, finally using his sense of smell. "Oh! I thought you wanted to wait."

"I did. But I am used to things not going my way."

"Was it ... did it ... I mean-"

"He didn't hurt me" Kuroko answered the question his companion seemed loath to ask. "We were in the heat of things, quite literally. Hormones make you stupid."

"Oh. Well, I am glad to hear it wasn't ... like back then. You're keeping it I guess?" Midorima looked really pained. This conversation must be hard on him. Talking about his emotions or trying to sound nice did not come easily to him.

"Of course." He smiled. "I don't want to ever abort a child again. Even if it makes us very poor."

"You mated a future NBA player, I don't think you need to worry." The other scoffed.

"If Aomine doesn't shape up mentally, Kagami will be the only one of us but I have to admit he is good."

"What about Kise? You don't think he'll stick to basketball?" Akashi was out for obvious reasons and Midorima was stroking his. "Or Murasakibara? Even though he does not like the sport much, I think Himuro will kick him out if he does not earn a living."

"I am not a doctor yet and I have not examined him personally but I don't think Kise's foot and knee will heal fully. Aomine's elbow just needs a good training regime. Murasakibara ... you most likely know better than me, I am not good at making predictions about social behavior." Yes, that was one way of putting it. "I don't know Himuro Tatsuya well enough to judge correctly. I only know that Murasakibara by himself will not consent to a professional career."

"Himuro will make him play because there is not much else Murasakibara can do to provide for their family."

"Is Himuro pregnant as well?" Midorima looked up in surprise.

"I don't think so or he would have informed Taiga. But Murasakibara is very family oriented. Not traditional like you, he just likes kids. Maybe because they are easy, small kids have his level after all. I think he was even more crushed that I aborted the babies than you."

"Really?" Midorima was silent for a moment. "I wouldn't have expected that. I was ... distraught. I knew that people could abort, I just never considered anyone would do so. I was very naive."

"If I had not done it, we would have been mated for nearly three years now and I would be pregnant with our third child." Kuroko looked at him. "I would have left school without a degree and would spent my whole life shut away in your home. You'd return every day to my melancholic smile and you would most likely abhor yourself for the rest of your life for forcing that on me."

"It was for the best." Midorima rubbed his stomach. "Your decision was the right one, even if I could not see that at the time." His eyes followed Takao, no, Midorima Kazunari actually, with a smile on his lips. "Staying together for a child would have been horrible. It or they would have grown up with two unhappy parents. Even if the situation isn't perfect, having parents in love with each other is important."

"You do, don't you?" Kuroko smiled. "For years I thought you were unable to properly feel emotions."

"I am still not sure I do. But I am beginning to understand what they are and those things I feel do resemble little versions of what other people seem to have. Love ... for me that is trust. To trust someone with my whole being and give myself to him. And there is this certain urge to touch." The other sent him a coy look. "I don't know if it is instinct or love but touching Kazu is nice. I abhor touches from most other beings, my mother is the only one from whom I allow that."

"I would hate to have to live in your head. Even after all that happened, I can feel love and joy and happiness." Kuroko knew his expression showed what he talked about. "I can relax." He did just that, sinking into his seat. "I haven't had flashbacks or panic attacks for months." He looked Midorima up and down. "Hey, could it be you don't have a lucky item with you?"

"Of course I have one!" The green-haired pulled a flamingo plushie out from under his trikot but immediately put it back. "But I have learned that some of those items count as embarrassing, so I try to hide those."

"How did you learn that?" The blue eyebrows shot up.

"Well, I went to school with this statue of a fairy on a unicorn-"

Kuroko could not help himself, he had to laugh thinking about that sight. Hilarious! Everyone must have burst out laughing. So even Midorima had noticed that it might have something to do with him? His – was it husband now? No, marriage between men was illegal in the country – had really come a long way with him.

"Well, yes, that was everyone's reaction. I asked Kazu about it and he explained the concept of shame to me. I still cannot understand why anyone would feel ashamed about something another person does but I was able to integrate the concept into my daily behavior and adjust it accordingly."

Well, talking to Midorima might not be the easiest thing but it had one advantage over talking with anyone else. You did feel much less like a failure of nature afterwards.

"It is how you learn from other people's behavior. You identify with people you see or hear or read about and imitate favorable behavior. It is why watching pornography is bad, it distorts your view on reality." That was something no other than Akashi had explained to him once when they talked about Aomine. One of his parents unfavorable quirks had been to watch pornography with their kids, so he had been brought up with a horrible attitude towards relationships and sex.

"Why would anyone want to see other people have sex?" The green-haired seemed

confused.

"It turns people on." Normal people. Midorima would most likely be put off. Aomine had showed him some pornography in their first year of middle-school which had been deeply disturbing for Kuroko. It was where he finally learned why everyone regarded Omegas as cockhungry sluts. It was hot, sure, but why someone would decide that raping a person who was unable to consent was hot was beyond him as well. It was a lot less fun when you were on the receiving end of such treatment. The usual five-Alphas-rape-one-Omega-flick was beyond disgusting to him as well – at the same time it did turn him on. Watching porn always left him disgusted with himself and in fear he would receive the same treatment. A year later he had received that treatment from Aomine, so that fear had not been unfounded. Come to think of it, he hated pornography. "But you are right, I also don't want to see other people have sex. What I have is nice enough."

"So Kagami treats you well?" The green-haired actually smiled.

"Yes, he does." Kuroko actually felt like grinning, so he tried, but it came out mangled, so he stopped. "I am glad I learned to control my hormones. It is how it should be, we are both able to have a choice. It makes being together much more meaningful." It made him remember Akashi though. If that one ever decided to give him a blast of his pheromones, it would overpower Kagami's. It also made Akashi very honorable for not doing so, but he hated the possibility. "Midorima ... did you know that Akashi had feelings for me?"

"He hinted at that, yes." They were best friends after all. So Akashi told his best friend possibly ruinous things. "He never said so outright, anyone could have overheard and used it against him but he did talk to me about that dilemma. I think that I was the first to hunt you wasn't due to the fact that I had somehow been the best one that month but to make me forget he ever hinted at that. I just do never forget."

"So you knew all along? Did you ever talk to him about it?" Kuroko felt anger surge up in him. So Midorima had been able to do something against those hunts?

"I tried after that first hunt. I never got out a full sentence before his gaze told me he would murder even me if I continued. That dark side of Akashi ... that wasn't my friend. I stopped talking to him after that day. He scared me." Those green eyes filled with guilt. "I am sorry. I should have protected you more. But I was very scared of him back then." He lowered his gaze. "A good Alpha always puts his Omega's needs over his own. I did not do that. Mating with you had been my only idea how to get you out without being hurt too much. I am sorry for having been such a coward."

"Don't worry, it was a honorable offer. It was more than anyone else ever gave me." Kuroko leaned over and shortly squeezed Midorima's hand before remembering he hated touches from others. "Especially when you knew that Akashi wanted me for himself. You would have put yourself in harm's way like that."

"Maybe ... maybe Akashi would have decided to visit and fuck you right in front of me. I am not sure I would have done more than tell him I did not like that. I am not a good Alpha mate. I relish in being taken care of, not the other way round."

Kuroko froze for a second before saying: "Thank you for your honesty."

So he would have ended up a plaything for two Alphas, one mourning that fact, one relishing in the chance to have him however often he pleased. Worst case scenario the family in which he lived would have shunned his babies, not knowing if they were actually theirs. His gut feeling had told him not to take Midorima up on his offer, even if that meant more consecutive rapes. It had been good to trust his feelings, even though he had doubted his decision again and again.

"I'm sorry."

"Don't be a broken record, you are long forgiven." Kuroko decided to screw that no-touch-thing and lent against the other. "I found you unbearable in middle-school but I learned to appreciate your way of communication. One has to learn to like you but it's okay. I do now."

"Thank you, I guess?" The green-haired had stiffened but already relaxed again. "I still don't exactly understand friendship but Kazu teaches me. I'll try to be a good friend."

"As long as you follow morale, we'll be fine. I told Akashi the same. Did he tell you I slapped him?" Midorima looked back with something akin to fear. "Don't worry, we're good. He actually asked me to punch him in the face after he understood where I was coming from. He is very sorry about middle-school."

"Are you sure he understood you correctly? When an Akashi actually says he is sorry, he will do his utmost to correct his ways. This ... might be dangerous in some circumstances." Midorima sounded a bit doubtful. "Do you know what he plans to do now?"

"He said he wanted to talk to his father – I met that man, he is horrible." Kuroko felt the other stiffen again. "I guess you know him?"

"I was invited and deigned a suitable acquaintance for his son after a thorough background check. Since then I have been Akashi's only friend up to now. There were others he was allowed to talk to but he found most of them insufferable. Akashi hates mindless chatter and it seems that is all those stuffed-up rich kids are able to do. We were taught that it is polite to talk like that but it was a chore for us both. We stuck together because we were able to just stay silent and be happy with that. The adults were happy to know we had friends while we were able to enjoy the quiet." The other sighed slowly. "From what I know now, I'd say we were lonely kids, trying to find some respite in a life that demanded more than we could give. Akashi was someone I could relax with because he did not ask anything of me and I not of him. Mostly we played basketball or chess or shogi or simply read books next to each other. I think for him it was the only time of the day where he was allowed to do something he liked instead of having to learn things. He never complained but I knew he hated his life. When he was allowed to visit a public school with me, he complained to his father so that the man would not guess how happy Akashi was to escape him. He was and is a man who accepts nothing but perfection. He would suddenly turn up, demand his son to demonstrate some skill and beat him up if it wasn't on the level he expected. I never once saw him praise Akashi. My father is similar but he would never dare to raise his hand against me. But after Akashi's mother died, well ... there was no one to protect him. If you met the older Akashi, you can be sure that he beat his son up for talking to you. You are not on the suitable acquaintance list."

"That is horrible." Kuroko sat back up and looked at the other. "Is there nothing we can do?"

"Just ... don't judge him if his father does turn up dead one day. I can't condone murder but it is hard not to with that man. I tend to just overlook some of Akashi's more strange behavioral traits. It's not as if that man or I were good role-models, so there is no one Akashi could learn good behavior from. There was a time I had to explain social interaction to him."

"Poor Akashi. Nothing against you, Midorima, but that is not your forte."

"Don't worry, I know. I don't get mad about you stating the terribly obvious." Midorima resumed stroking his stomach. "Kazu will teach our daughter human interaction. I'll just listen and learn and if I see something Akashi doesn't know I'll tell

him.”

“I asked him to please let me teach his kids. Somehow I don’t see his wife being any better than him at raising a child.”

“Would you teach me too?” The green-haired suddenly looked at him. “When it comes to things people see as instinctual, I learned it’s best to observe more than one person for a better understanding.”

“How about playdates with both our babies? When is yours due?” He remembered something about hearing Alphas babies were often early-born.

“This month. There trying to keep her in as long as possible but my stomach does not give much. I am having ultrasound checks every week to decide if she is allowed to stay in another week. With the rate she is growing, I guess it will be next week or the one after.”

“I still have half a year, I’m only eleven weeks now. So maybe you should come over beforehand ... how about you bring her to our Sunday basketball meetings? I am not allowed to participate, you won’t be for a few months and Takao will most likely be glad to spend a bit of time with ... normal people his age.”

“Are you implying I am not good company?” Midorima smiled, getting the meaning.

“You are not exactly one to joke around and do stupid stuff with. Relationships are important, but they are not the only thing in life. Especially when you have kids, you need to remember to have friends too. Otherwise your life will get lonely.”

“Since I met Kazu, it’s the first time in my life I haven’t been lonely.” Which was pretty believable with the honest smile on his face – it was still out of place in Kuroko’s perspective but nice all the same. “Can you believe he dragged our teammates and me to karaoke? Again, I might add.”

“You sing?” Kuroko deadpanned.

“I’m pretty good too” Was that a smirk? Dear god, Midorima smirked. The world was coming to an end. “He began teaching me some modern ballads. He means to invite some girls next, having me sing pop songs with them.”

“You have some unexpected qualities. I can’t hold a tune. Kagami is even worse, at least if I judge from his screaming under the shower.”

“Rather than singing, he should learn not to foul so much first” The other commented the game they were watching for the first time. “It’s his luck Kimura is so afraid of him, he mostly jumps out of the way.”

“Don’t be mean, he holds his ground well. It’s his first season, isn’t it?”

“This team is doomed without me.” Midorima shook his head. “With Otsubo, Miyagi and me gone, we are at a severe disadvantage against veterans like you, even if you are without Teppei and yourself. We don’t have anyone rivaling Kagami right now. This game is a one-man show.”

“Takao is holding his ground well. With his team-work, your team was able to circle the ball around Kagami quite often. You’ll be able to join the WinterCup, though maybe not the InterHigh. Your shooter is not even a quarter as good as you. You are right that the team is severely lacking without you, but as soon as you join, Shutoku will be unstoppable again.”

“Let’s have our rematch next season. Plan your next child after high-school, alright?” The other Alpha not only smiled but poked his side. Midorima and poking. When had he learned to relax like that?

“I direly hope I finally learned all about controlling my hormones.” Kuroko sighed deeply. “Otherwise I’ll end up with twenty kids or so.”

Midorima chuckled. The world was coming to an end.

