

Into your heart

Von Junbi

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Kapitel 1:

Nino is still snuggled tightly against Ohno when Ohno wakes up, the collar of his shirt feeling damp against his neck, almost wet. His headache is ridiculously strong, his head feeling like it is a hundred kilos heavy, throbbing with pain, and all Ohno wants for the moment is a glass of ice-cold water and aspirin. He feels like shit.

Ohno looks down at his own, clothed but weirdly sticky feeling body, and then there is Nino next to him; tiny, pale, skinny Nino. Naked Nino. Ohno pulls the blanket away a bit, just to make sure, and then he roughly pushes at Nino's shoulder.

Nino snaps awake instantly, his body alert, his eyes a bit reddened but mostly clear and tired as he looks up to Ohno. He remembers the last night immediately, and backs away from Ohno obviously, pulling a bit of blanket with himself so he can cover his own body.

"What the fuck?" Ohno hisses, and he looks dead-pissed. Nino isn't sure how much of this is directed at Nino himself and how much at the obvious hangover he suffers from. Nino has one, too, but he doesn't feel too awful. He had drunk quite a bit less than Ohno after all, and he can deal with a slight headache.

"What?" Nino finally manages to ask back, his voice controlled, but he can't bear looking at Ohno anymore. He has to keep it together, just keep it together for a little longer.

"Why are you naked?" Ohno asks sharply.

Nino frowns, confused; he doesn't understand the question. Ohno had undressed him personally after all. He *knows* why Nino is naked. *Why aren't you naked*, Nino wants to bite back angrily, but he doesn't, because Ohno speaks first.

"We *didn't*—did we?"

Nino's abdomen throbs in pain at those words, and they hit Nino in the face like a brick. He winces back and loses his facial expression completely, looking emptily at the bed sheets before him, sparsely covering up his naked body. The meaning of Ohno's words only slowly sinks into his mind, but the stuttered out question is unmistakable.

Ohno doesn't *remember*. Ohno doesn't remember last night.

And he obviously sounds so disgusted at the plain imagination of having slept with Nino that his chest convulses painfully. *So blowjobs are okay*, Nino realizes, and he feels both hurt and angry, *but once I get included in it, it's not okay anymore. Once all of this chaos turns into more than just me quickly taking care of your primal needs, it's too much.*

"No, we did not," Nino confirms almost immediately. His heart is broken already; there is nothing more to destroy. He feels so small and unimportant under Ohno's gaze it is ridiculous.

"Why—" Ohno starts again, and he still sounds mad, "Why are you naked then, and why am I in your bed instead of my own?" He asks matter-of-factly, cocking his head back. Nino doesn't see it.

"I wanted to drive you home last night," Nino answers back, and he isn't even lying during this part. That doesn't change the fact, though, that his voice is absolutely empty, and his hands are tightly fisted into the bed sheets under the blanket so he

can keep it together. It is so hard he can barely breathe.

"But you didn't allow me to," Nino continues, "You said I was too drunk, I should just take you home in a cab. I *was* drunk, so I told the driver my address instead of yours. When we ended up here and I realized my mistake, you didn't want to get driven to your place alone anymore, so you came in with me."

"And then you got naked," Ohno cuts in without skipping a beat. Nino winces.

"Then I sucked you off," Nino corrects, staring emptily into his lap, shivering. He knows he is lying about last night, but he also knows he couldn't bear Ohno's reaction if he told him the truth now—Ohno would possibly hate him forever, possibly beat him up, blame it all on Nino alone. And he would clearly, once and for all, *reject* Nino, scream at him perhaps, and claim how Nino wants to ruin him. Him and his damned relationship with his girlfriend.

And all of that isn't true. It is as simple as the fact that Nino loves Ohno more than anything—has, for years—and he would never want to ruin *anything* for Ohno. All he wants is to *have* Ohno, to *be* with him, but he can't—so he tries to adapt, tries to take and get by with the little bit of Ohno he *can* have. They had just both been drunk last night, and now that Nino is sober, he—he doesn't *regret* it, but it doesn't change the fact that all of it is a result of two men being drunk, not the result of Nino wanting to break Ohno's trust, let alone his relationship with his girlfriend.

But Ohno wouldn't understand any of it, and so lying is easier. Lying makes sure they can at least keep their relationship the way it had been until last night.

"That's why you still have all of your clothes on", Nino explains further, his voice sounding as tiny as Nino himself is, naked and slightly curled up in the bed, looking lost and defenceless.

"And why are *you* naked then?" Ohno still doubts him; it is glaringly obvious. Some part of Nino feels hurt because Ohno seems not to trust him at all, not even a little.

"Because I wanked off afterwards," he says quietly, though, not even feeling embarrassed to admit such a thing. "And then I didn't bother putting on clothes again. You know, we wanted to sleep after all, and this is kind of *my* bed." Nino loosens his fingers from the bed sheets to cross them in front of his chest instead, and he tries his best to keep the slight trembling under control.

"And then you hugged yourself to me like that?" Ohno continues imploring, and Nino almost loses it.

"I was *drunk*, Satoshi! *We* were drunk!" He hisses, his eyes clear and angry when he looks over to Ohno who seems to be still half-asleep, like he doesn't really *care*—Nino doesn't even want to *think* about it. "I just did, so what? Like we *don't* do that sometimes! Why does it even bother you?!"

There is silence for a while as Nino is looking up to Ohno, rage burning in his eyes. What is Ohno even thinking? Since when have they moved from being best friends to being fuck buddies (or something like that) *without* the friendship aspect? Nino doesn't understand it, and this hurts *so much more* than just being rejected.

But some kind of emotion flickers through Ohno's eyes and washes over his whole face, an emotion Nino cannot quite pin-point, and Ohno's facial features finally soften a little. He nods.

"You're right, Kazu," he simply says, sighing inaudibly. "I shouldn't have said that."

Nino only now notices how his whole body had been completely tense, but at Ohno's soft and almost apologetic words, he slightly sinks back into the bed again. He doesn't know what to say, so he simply nods as well. The situation and the atmosphere both feel awkward—at least to Nino, who knows that last night so much *more* has

happened than just a simple blowjob, and for the first time ever he feels like they should stop all of this. Completely.

Or, Nino thinks, *this is not quite right. I should stop it.*

Ohno doesn't even do *anything*, ever, literally. He doesn't fight back, he doesn't protest, but he doesn't initiate anything either. When Nino sneaks a hand around Ohno's hips and starts to skilfully rub him through his pants, Ohno pliantly lets it happen; when Nino drops to his knees, gently nudges Ohno's legs apart and goes down on him, Ohno doesn't protest.

But he never *asks* for it either. It is *Nino*—it always is, and maybe, maybe it is just better if he stops it right here. It is only a matter of time until he would break completely under the mental torture he is forcing upon himself for years now; and neither Ohno nor Arashi would deserve such an emotional disaster.

"Do you have aspirin?" Ohno mumbles grumpily, rubbing his forehead, and Nino feels how his mouth quirks up in the tiniest of smiles, despite everything. His heart is still throbbing, but like always, he can't do anything about it. And at least Ohno's phone isn't ringing right now, and it hopefully won't for a while.

"Yeah," he says and slowly gets up from the bed—slowly, *slowly*, wrapping the blanket all around his body, covering the faint bruises on his hips from Ohno's tight grip last night and the too many hickeys and other bruises covering his chest and neck, made by Ohno as well. It is better if Ohno doesn't get suspicious again, and it is better if Nino doesn't have to be reminded of last night again either. Not now, and not ever again in the future.

Regardless of the fact that this *has* happened in reality, with Ohno not remembering, all of it is worth nothing more than a mere dream, after all. One of the million dreams involving Ohno Satoshi that have been haunting Nino ever since he has fallen in love with this man. It is a bitter feeling deep down in his chest, and the lump forming in Nino's throat is just proof of it.

Nino makes his way to the kitchen, taking care not to limp as long as Ohno can see him, and while he inwardly slowly and weakly starts to try and wrap his mind around the idea of giving Ohno up for good, Nino knows it will kill a part of himself as well.

Nino doesn't want to admit it, but that part might be more than he could take losing. He almost stumbles over his own clothes on the way to the kitchen, and he quickly gathers them up, not wanting Ohno to see them here. He even puts them on again, at least his shirt and the pair of jeans, so he wouldn't have to walk around in the blanket anymore. The t-shirt doesn't properly cover the hickeys, but, Nino thinks, he could lie about them. It is not the first time Ohno has 'lost control' and caused a few bruises on Nino's neck.

His body is still aching when he reaches the kitchen and takes a couple aspirin himself before taking some more aside to bring to Ohno, together with a glass of water. When his eyes unconsciously slide over the rice cooker and his stomach growls simultaneously, Nino decides to prepare a quick breakfast as well. If he has to give up on Ohno for real, if they are going to not spend as much time together as they used to (because that *is* clearly what Nino is planning on, or he would go crazy), they could, perhaps, at least enjoy a last breakfast together. Nino chuckles at how ridiculously bittersweet all of this sounds in his head, like a bad movie.

After having checked in the fridge for some more food and remembering how he, fortunately, had just been out grocery shopping yesterday, Nino wanders back to the bedroom, aspirin in one hand and a glass of water in the other one.

"Oh-chan," he says before he has even entered the bedroom completely, Ohno's

nickname sounding so incredibly familiar and light on his tongue that he feels warm every time he says it, "I actually—"

Nino breaks off once he has fully entered the bedroom and looks up; Ohno is lying lazily on the bed, a lovesick smile plastered all over his face, as he is just about to close his cellphone. Nino doesn't know whether he should feel happy or depressed because Ohno had apparently just been talking to his girlfriend. But this is something he has to get used to, right? This aspect of Ohno's life is something Nino has to finally wrap his mind around, too, if he wants to endure all of this trouble without either ruining himself, their relationship or Arashi.

Fighting off the pang of jealousy in his chest, Nino walks over to the bed and hands Ohno both the medicine and the glass of water, smiling.

"I actually turned on the rice cooker for some breakfast," he continues his sentence from before, trying to sound casual—trying to sound like this *isn't* basically the last time Nino actively plans to spend some quality time with Ohno alone before he will never initiate anything ever again. "I also bought some fish and vegetables yesterday, we could have breakfast—"

"Can't," Ohno interrupts him on his own this time. He has just swallowed down the pills with some water and now places the glass loudly on the nightstand; to Nino the movement almost looks aggressive.

"Shiori-chan called," Ohno elaborates further when Nino doesn't say anything back, "She asked if we could have breakfast together because she is at my place right now and was staying up all night for me, but I didn't come home." Ohno sighs. "She sounded worried. I'm such an idiot."

Nino doesn't even try to hide his disappointment anymore this time, and his smile drops from his face within a split second. Even Ohno who has been looking up to him rather sleepily until now seems to notice, and he opens his mouth to say something more.

"Right," is all Nino answers back, though, cutting Ohno off, and he has turned away from him before the other man can protest, "I see."

It is ridiculous how much his heart is hurting, but he feels so awfully rejected; feels like as long as *Shiori-chan* is calling for Ohno, Nino's existence doesn't even *matter* to his ex-best-friend anymore. Nino can remember how there had been a time where he had felt like he was the most treasured, most precious person in Ohno's life, a time where he had felt like as long as they had each other, nothing else—*no one* else had mattered.

But Nino seems to have slept through the part where Ohno had suddenly stopped thinking like that.

Ohno is getting up from the bed now, and Nino decides to flee. He has had enough, and this is it: Ohno has hurt him enough for a lifetime or two, and it is not going to get both of them anywhere.

"Feel free to shower, I'm in the livingroom," he shortly explains, "have a nice day with Shiori-san." There, he had said it—*have a nice day with Shiori-san*. And Nino doesn't even mean it, at all, but it sounds pretty convincing anyway.

He is out of the bedroom before Ohno can answer and shuts the door to his livingroom behind himself noisily, indirectly saying *don't you come in here*, before pathetically curling up on the couch. His cellphone is still in the pocket of his pants from last night, and considering Nino really doesn't have anything better to do while he is waiting for Ohno to leave his apartment, he pulls it out and snaps it open.

That was my fabulous night with the one and only Ohno Satoshi, he thinks bitterly while

skimming through his messages. *Thanks, really. Thanks for absolutely nothing.*

There is a message from his manager, sent ten minutes ago, and since it says "important" in the subject headline, Nino decides to open it.

»Good morning, Ninomiya-kun!«, it reads, »We unexpectedly received an offer for a photo-shoot and an interview from a magazine, featuring you. It is a very good opportunity to promote your latest drama. I know today was actually your day off, but... It starts at 11AM, so please message me back to approve of it if you don't have any urgent personal matters to attend. Iwata«

Usually, Nino would probably be annoyed at his manager for such a message on his day off, but at this very moment where distraction is more than welcome, he types back a *no problem, I'll be there* without hesitation.

Kapitel 2:

"So, Ninomiya-san," the interviewer asks after a long day of photo-shoots and a lot of questions, trying to wrap the interview up, "Now, to round this off, we could talk a little bit about Arashi. Our readers are great fans of Arashi, and excited for any news you could reveal. How would you describe the atmosphere in Arashi, among the members? What would you say has changed through all the years of being together, and what is still the same? Do you like how things are going?"

The main thing Nino doesn't like right at this very moment is the fact that his entire body is craving nicotine; his manager had made the whole interview-photo-shoot appointment sound like it would barely take a couple of hours, but it is 5PM by now and Nino feels tired. Both emotionally and physically, and he really needs a cigarette. His brain works more slowly than usual today, but what with that awful morning he has had, it is not really surprising.

"The atmosphere amongst the members is great," Nino states, though, with a little smile. His manager looks down to him worriedly; Iwata has known him for years already and it is no surprise he notices that something is off immediately. "We are getting along as well as we always have. The other members are like family to me. However," Nino makes a long pause, inwardly preparing for what he is going to say next. When he had agreed on the interview earlier, *this* moment had been the sole reason for it, and Nino knows he has to word it correctly.

"We've come a long, long way until now," he starts off, pretending like he has a hard time finding the right words for it to buy himself more time, "We are existing for eight years by now, after all. We've started off as kids—I was sixteen, and the oldest one, Ohno-kun, he was eighteen. By now, though, all of us have grown up. We're adults; we've grown out of being those playful highschool boys, clinging to each other all the time and hugging each other like brothers. I think that's the main thing that has changed. While we are still as close as ever emotionally, we just treat each other like adults now and don't cling to each other like helpless puppies anymore." Nino laughs when he compares them to puppies, cocking his head back a little, wrinkles showing around his eyes. "It has taken a long time, but I think I can finally say that we're all adults now. And it feels good."

The man across the table is nodding at every word Nino says and the camera next to him is filming the whole time. Nino feels his heart beating hard and fast against his ribcage, and his palms turn a little sweaty. His manager has maybe not realized yet what exactly Nino is trying to accomplish with such statements, but soon enough he will.

"So you've grown up, you say," the interviewer repeats with a smile, and Nino nods enthusiastically. It hurts, it really does—but he doesn't have a choice. He just doesn't. This morning had been the final proof of how urgently things need to change, and in order to avoid talking to Ohno (or anyone from Arashi, really) directly about it, he has to trick them all. "And you don't hug so much anymore?" the man continues, sounding a bit bemused.

Nino nods. The lump in his throat is throbbing heavily, and he doesn't know when it even formed there.

"Yeah," he agrees, "Ohno-kun and me, for example. We used to cling to each other all the time. We've always seen each other like brothers, and that's why we hung out so

much together. Nowadays, however, we aren't as touchy anymore and don't spend that much time with each other anymore, either. I think, though, that's just natural during the process of growing up, right?"

When his manager widens his eyes, Nino knows the information was delivered correctly.

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Nino is inhaling the much-needed nicotine of the cigarette between his trembling fingers in fast and short breaths, his body only slowly coming down from how much he has put himself through today. Ohno is gone; he feels it—Ohno is gone, the night is gone, the warmth of Satoshi's body is gone, and it won't come back. Their affair is over, and their friendship will be over in no time as well.

Nino had initiated it earlier after all, and the interview is just the beginning.

"Why did you say such things, Ninomiya-kun?" Iwata asks. They are on the emergency staircase of the building of the magazine company; Nino is leaning over the railing, blowing the white smoke of the cigarette up into the sky. Iwata is standing behind him, leaning against the wall next to the emergency door, his arms crossed in front of his chest. Nino can almost feel the older man staring holes into his back, but he doesn't really care.

"Such things?" he asks back, playing dumb, and takes another pull on his cigarette. Inwardly, his body is throwing a tantrum, and Nino isn't sure if he might not have collapsed already if not for the cigarette between his fingers, keeping his emotions barely at bay.

"About hugging, about closeness," his manager elaborates, sounding annoyed. He knows that Nino knows, and playing dumb doesn't get either of them anywhere. "You had no right to make such statements! The agency *will* get back at you, or, well, at *me* once they see the article, and they will most likely stop the magazine from printing any more copies after the first circulation is out." Iwata sounds truly angry and like he has to compose himself a lot—which is no surprise, Nino knows. Usually he is easy to work with, but he *does* have some personal issues here and there, and when it is about them, he is a very difficult person to deal with.

"I said nothing but the truth," Nino monotonously responds, though, and flips the cigarette stump down into the streets, wondering how high they are here right now. Must be fifty metres, at least. "And I didn't say we weren't close anymore," Nino continues, now turning around to his manager and looking at him with a determined expression in his clear eyes. "I simply said Ohno-kun and me are not touchy anymore because we've grown up. And that's exactly how it is, and how it will be: Ohno and me will stop continuing this ridiculous fanservice all the time when the cameras are rolling—we will stop acting as if we were married, or a couple at the very least. I'm fed up with it, and that's why it will stop from this very second onwards. I delivered you a believable interview to base all of this on. If you aren't pleased with the outcome... well, that's not my problem."

Nino knows it actually *is* his problem and by the way his manager is giving him a cold and barely restrained, angry look, Iwata is just about to state the very same. But Nino simply *doesn't care*. He can only take so much before breaking completely, and he is sure that if Iwata just knew the *whole* story, he would be grateful for Nino to act this wisely instead of simply leaving Arashi—leaving *Ohno* for good.

Thus, before Iwata can even open his mouth and hiss back an angry answer, Nino

waves him off and passes him to open the door back in. "Today is my day off," he underlines slowly, "Isn't it enough that I already came to your appointment on my day off and spent more than *half* of the day here? If you excuse me now, I have *urgent personal matters* to attend. Call me in case my schedule for next week changes unexpectedly."

And with that, Nino leaves, ignoring how Iwata's jaw clenches visibly in anger.

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Jun would probably explode and insist they talk it out (and forget all of this has ever happened), and Sho would worry more than is good for his own health and annoy the fuck out of Nino—and in the end he would be suffering even more than Nino himself is, because Sho is just that kind of person who takes every single band matter to heart and wants everyone to be happy.

Aiba is a different kind of person, though. On first glance, he is cheerful, playful, childish and way too energetic for a normal person to endure for more than half an hour at once, but he has a very special place in Nino's heart. He is one of the people he has known for almost his entire life, and maybe it is a unique bond only Aiba and Nino share, but he knows that no matter what, Aiba would never let him down. He wouldn't judge him either, and he would certainly leave a topic alone if he realizes it is for the best.

And contrary to what people think, Aiba Masaki is clever and witty, too, and he knows exactly how to behave in what kind of situation.

It is no surprise that Nino writes an SMS to him out of all of Arashi the second he has reached his car, and barely half an hour later they meet up in the corner of a private restaurant, high up and hidden in one of Tokyo's countless skyscrapers.

Aiba looks awfully worried when he sits down at the table in a corner of the restaurant, and Nino only speaks once the waitress has brought them both a glass of water.

"It's nothing bad," Nino tries to calm the taller man down before the conversation has even started, and he ignores the fact that he must look pretty desperate like this, literally clinging to the cigarette between his fingers as if for dear life. "Or," he corrects, "no worse than the usual, anyway."

Aiba sighs quietly and nips on his glass of water. "Leader?" he asks, not really expecting any kind of explanation.

Nino only chuckles and closes his eyes for a moment while inhaling the nicotine. It is ridiculous how addicted he has become to cigarettes all over these years, but if there has *ever* been one time of his life where quitting smoking is certainly *not* an option, it is now.

"Yeah," he says, calmly, breathing out the smoke. It is funny because Aiba and Nino have never talked about his crush on Ohno that had slowly developed into a full-fledged, blossoming, deep love over the years. But Aiba knows—Nino *knows* that Aiba knows—and still, as intrusive and pushy as Aiba often seems, the taller man knows very well when to keep things to himself.

Nino swallows, and he knows Aiba won't ask any further. Aiba doesn't expect explanations; perhaps he simply thinks that Nino needs some friendly and distracting company.

Only not—not this time. This time, Nino feels like even Aiba's energetic spirit cannot help pull him out of his deep, deep hole anymore.

"I need help," Nino finally admits and looks up to Aiba who is silently watching him. Aiba nods without hesitation. "What is it?" he asks.

"I want you to take care of Oh-chan from now on," Nino explains further, and now he doesn't quite manage to meet the intensive look in Aiba's eyes anymore. "Because I can't anymore. I'll stop. With—with everything, actually. I gave an interview earlier and basically said the fanservice will stop, too. I just—" Nino breaks off then and shrugs helplessly, his facial expression faltering, his lips trembling, his fingers squeezing around the cigarette in his left hand. He feels how his emotions are just about to boil up within him—but this is the wrong place and the wrong company for it. Nino doesn't lose his face in public; in fact he doesn't lose his face in front of anyone. Not even in front of Aiba.

"I just need a break," Nino finally settles on ending his sentence in a whisper and swallows, trying to get his trembling under control. "Could you—could you just distract him for a while? So he won't notice the lack of my presence around him. And once he notices, later, he probably won't even mind anymore."

Aiba is just staring at him, but he doesn't even look shocked. His eyes mirror sadness and empathy, and some part of Nino wants to believe that Aiba can imagine exactly what is going on within his soul.

Aiba opens his mouth then, searching for words, closes it again—and then he simply nods, obviously not even knowing what to say.

"Are you sure?" he asks, though, while Nino is taking pull after pull on his cigarette.

"Have you—I mean—*talked* at least?"

Nino gives Aiba a look at that says *are you stupid? What do you think of me?*, and then shakes his head. "We haven't, and we won't. Now, can you do me this favour or not?"

Aiba seems to ponder for a moment, but then he nods hesitantly, sighing, and Nino realizes just how tensed up his body had been up until now as he suddenly, instinctively, slumps down into himself in relief. His heart is, again, beating hard against his ribcage from nervousness.

"Thank you, Masaki," he honestly and truthfully mumbles. "This means the world to me, you have no idea."