

Sweet Misery

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*What do you want from me? I'm just writing this stuff as it comes to me! Feh...

Two boys meet under odd circumstances. Watch them grow up.*

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1. So we meet...

Ms. Funada had a hard life. Her husband died a few years back, she was working an office job, and with school out for the summer, she had nowhere to put her son, Shuichi. Ever since his father had died, he'd been troublesome. Nobody would take him while she worked, so she had to bring him to the office where he proceeded to destroy everything he could get his hands on.

"What will I do?" she asked herself hopelessly.

"Having trouble?"

She looked up to see one of her co-workers.

"Ah, you're Mrs. Yamatsu, aren't you? It's just my son..." She glanced at Shuichi, who was disassembling a printer. She sighed. "What should I do with him?"

"Why not bring him to meet my little boy? He's a very relaxed child. Maybe a little will rub off on yours?"

Ms. Funada felt a small glimmer of hope inside her. "I hope so."

When Saturday arrived, Shuichi found himself being woken up early. What was his mom thinking, getting him up before noon on a weekend? "What time is it...?"

"It's eleven, now hurry up and get dressed. I'm taking you somewhere nice today."

He suspected it was more behavior lessons, but when they started driving, they went out of the main town, where the houses got larger, and farther apart. "Where are we going?"

"Somewhere nice," she said again. He was starting to get nervous.

Finally they pulled up to a house. It was quite large, and probably belonged to some rich family. Around the side he saw a path that probably led to a garden area. They approached the front door. "Something nice..."

A woman, about his mother's age, answered the door. Ah, welcome Ms. Funada. Good to see you again, Shuichi." He looked up at her.

"You're that lady who works with Mom..."

"Yes, I am." She called to someone inside the house. "Kentaro, our guests are here! Please come introduce yourself!" A young boy with pale features trotted up to them and smiled. He held his hand out.

"Hello. I'm Kentaro. Are you Shuichi?" So this was her plan. Some well-mannered pipsqueak was supposed to influence him into being good. Well he wasn't going to fall for it. He shoved past the kid and into the house, but he sensed he was being followed.

"What do you want?"

"I'm nine years old," Kentaro said cheerfully. "What about you?"

"Eight."

"Wow, no way! You're one year younger than me? I thought for sure you were older!"

Shuichi was starting to get very annoyed. "Yeah, well, who cares? You look like a girl!" There. Such an insult would surely cause him to leave, or at least stop being so cheery. But he didn't.

"Really? Most people say I look like a ghost," he replied, and laughed.

"Whatever. I'm going into the garden," he grumbled, spotting the door. To his surprise, Kentaro turned around and ran to a different part of the house. Finally, he was alone.

The garden was huge! Cherry trees were in bloom all over, and the air was filled with the smell of lilacs. He found a pond filled with koi fish. They circled lazily in the late-morning sun, content with the fullness from their morning meal. He started throwing pebbles at them.

After a few minutes he heard light footsteps approaching.

"Having fun?" He turned around to see Kentaro, holding a large flowery parasol. He started laughing.

"What's wrong with, fool? only women carry parasols! Especially girly ones like that." He snatched it and threw it into a tree.

"No, my parasol!" Kentaro yelled, then cried out as the noon sun hit his skin. He curled up in an attempt to cover himself, but it was no good. His exposed skin started turning pink. "It hurts!" Shuichi stared, startled at Kentaro's reaction to the light. He quickly retrieved the parasol and gave it back.

After Kentaro seemed to have recovered he asked him, "What was that?!"

Kentaro was sitting on the ground, looking frightened and helpless, holding the parasol tightly over his head. "I can't be in direct sunlight..." he muttered. "It burns my skin very quickly..."

"I'll keep that in mind." Shuichi replied. "Will you leave me alone now? I didn't even want to come here."

Kentaro looked at the ground sadly. "Okay, I'll go..." and he got up and walked to a different part of the garden.

Shuichi continued his quest for entertainment. He picked up a hunk of wood and threw it as far as he could. A few moments later a large brown dog came into the garden, carrying the stick in its mouth. Shuichi smiled. "Here doggy. Bring me that stick." but the dog dropped it where it stood, and a low rumble started in its throat. Shuichi took a step back. "N-nice doggy..." The dog snarled, white slobber dripping from its big mouth, then it charged. Shuichi climbed up the nearest tree he could find, the dog barking and snapping at his ankles. It managed to rip off one of his shoes. A few yards away he spotted Kentaro, watching fearfully. "Help me, please!" he cried, but the smaller boy turned and ran back toward the house. Could he blame him? He hadn't been very kind, to anyone. He probably deserved this...

The thin branches snapped under his weight, and he fell to the ground, hard. The dog went for him, and- BLAM! A loud, explosive sound echoed through the garden. Shuichi opened his eyes in time to see the dog topple onto its side, twitch a few times, and die. Kentaro had gone back to the house, not to hide, but to retrieve a gun to save Shuichi. He dropped it and fell to his knees, crying loudly with his hands plastered over his face.

Shuichi, still shaking with fear, carefully inched his way around the dog to Kentaro, then put an arm around him and guided him into the shade, since he had apparently abandoned the parasol to get the gun. They huddled there, crying, until their mothers came to see what the noise had been. Shuichi's mother dragged him away. "Come on Shuichi, we're going. Leaving children alone outside... how irresponsible!"

"But mother, I'm not ready!" He didn't want to leave Kentaro alone. Who knew what effects such an experience would have on the small boy? Besides, it was Shuichi's fault. At least, that's how he saw it. But his mother dragged him home, and it was a whole year before they met again.

This is the first chapter of a short story. It's freshly typed and has yet to be edited, so I apologize if it's not very good and full of mistakes.