

Welcome to Senior Years

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Submitted: December 22, 2005

Updated: April 29, 2006

Tomeo has moved to yet another highschool. He's a shy boy but manages to make a good friend, Busuke. Yet one boy, Yukio, leader of the school's 'cool' continues to catch his eye...

Provided by Fanart Central.

http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/Skye_Element/25167/Welcome-to-Senior-Years

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1 - First Day

It was time for his first year being a senior let alone his first day at Genki High, a school that he knew nothing of. But this didn't worry him; it was the simple fact that he knew none of the students that frightened him the most. No friends could mean a very hard first few weeks. It wasn't like he hadn't been through this all before. He'd moved schools three times in one year before and it was hell. Yet it never got him down. Of course he was very nervous at first but after a few days or so he'd perk up a little within a month he was rather content. But it seemed whenever he became truly at home, his Father would get a call and he would be dragged across the country.

“What are you standing there for boy? Get to class!” A balding man with a very unattractive comb over spat the words in the young man's face.

“Err... I'm sorry Sir, you see, I'm new and I'm not really sure where I'm supposed to be.”

The man narrowed his eyes. “What's your name?” The books the greasy old man clutched looked to be English textbooks.

“Sato Tomeo, Sir.” He answered promptly and gave a hasty bow.

The man's face relaxed somewhat, but it only allowed his floppy skin to fall down unappealingly. He did seem satisfied with his reply. “My name is Mr. Goroki, I'm your combined English class teacher. I've been looking over your file and you're a very intelligent student.”

Mr. Goroki nodded as if confirming, or agreeing with himself upon his statement. “Follow me, the class is waiting.” The chubby little man didn't look too healthy yet he moved quite speedily along the corridors that Tomeo found it hard to keep up.

Finally, they arrived outside the door of the terribly noisy classroom. Mr. Goroki was reaching for the door handle but paused and looked over his shoulder to Tomeo. At that point he reminded Tomeo of a goblin of some kind. “Be sure not to sit up the back young man. That can be a very... dangerous...”

Tomeo frowned in confusion and followed his teacher into the room, as soon as the door opened a wave of different voices and sounds washed over them. Girls were chatting and squealing, guys were shouting loudly and chucking things around the room, the majority of the noise seemed to originate from around the back of the classroom; just as Mr. Goroki had said.

“Sit down and shut up, you little vermin!” Mr. Goroki snarled and in a very slow wave like motion from the front to the back, the class stopped and all eyes lay on the new boy standing in the doorway. “Class, we have a new transfer student. Tell them about yourself.”

Tomeo walked into the class, feeling almost all eyes upon him. The girls whispered and gave inviting smiles. The boys gave him threatening glares, but some smiled. Yet one boy caught his eye, one of the older boys in the back. His eyes were covered by long, dark bangs and he didn't appear to be interested, not like the others at all. He snapped back to what was at hand.

“Um... I'm Sato Tomeo, I'm 17 years old and I just moved here with my Father during the break.” He murmured quietly, not making solid eye contact with anyone. Once he was silent he could hear some of the whispers.

“He's cute.”

“He's kind of short...”

“I bet he's a teacher's pet...”

“Did he say he was from?”

“He mentioned his Father, where's his Mother?”

Mr. Goroki gave a wave of his hand to a seat, second from the front and he sat down quickly, taking out his old book from his previous school. The first thing he wrote down in the first few pages of his book were 'Genki High' and the date, added onto a long list of schools. A boy suddenly glanced over and then scribbled something down on a piece of paper and passed it back. The little piece of paper eventually came into the hands of that same older boy with the long bangs. Tomeo looked at the reflection in the window so no one would see him watching. The boy read the note over and stuffed it in his pocket. Tomeo looked away then turned his gaze back to the reflection. The boy was staring at him. Tomeo jumped and snapped his head back to the board. He heard a low chuckle from behind and then voices of those guys up the back. It seemed that they were the 'cool, tough' crowd of the school. The ones that everyone looked up to and never questioned, never dared to defy. He was guessing that the boy with the long bangs was the top man. He sat in the middle with a large group of handsome guys and a couple of stunning girls draping off him.

He knew he'd never fit into a crowd like that, not in a million years. They were probably making fun of him right now. Tomeo didn't take it to heart though, once a geek, always a geek...

2 - Rich Gang

The first half of the day was behind him at least but now it was lunchtime, when he couldn't pretend that he was too entranced in the lesson to answer anyone's stupid and sometimes mean questions or to notice their prying stares. His homeroom was the same as his first class, English. And who would be there? The rich gang of course. He learnt that they were known as that from passing girls talking about the leader whose name was Yamamoto Yukio. It seemed that all the girls floundered over him as if he were the god's greatest gift to the world. That meant that not even the most unattractive girl would show interest in him because they all were convinced that they had a shot with Yukio. The other males knew him as a deadly charmer even if he had no intent on a relationship with his victim.

Relationships were never even considered by Tomeo. He knew what he was and the troubles that would be saved if girls ignored him completely. When he was fifteen, he had to turn down a girl who was very much in love with him because it was impossible. He didn't like girls. He just didn't. It was nothing to do with them personally, he had had friends that were girls before but in the means of relationships of a higher meaning than friendship, they did not attract him. He had once tried to ask a guy when he was sixteen but had been mistaken, rumours had spread that he was gay but they weren't true. Tomeo had been shattered when he laughed at him and then told the entire school. It was the first time he had asked his Father if he could move schools and not the other way around.

So as long as he kept school and relationships separate everything would be fine.

With those thoughts in mind, he entered his homeroom and took a seat beside the window. Taking out his lunch and thoughtfully munching on a rice ball, he stared out over Tokyo. It was a beautiful city to him.

"Hey, you're that new guy, Sato-san. I'm Ito Busuke, pleased to meet you." Busuke offered a hand, smiling in a most friendly manner. He was the first to introduce himself to Tomeo. He looked Busuke over briefly. He was a rather a plump fellow but in a loveable-bear kind of way. Smiling in return, Tomeo shook his hand lightly. He was obviously older than him but he was still a possible friend.

"Pleased to meet you too, Ito-sempai. To be honest, I'm more than pleased, I'm grateful... You're the first person to talk to me to my face and not behind my back." Tomeo said quietly with a weary smile. He had been feeling very distant from everyone, like he wasn't welcome at all. This school was very closed off to newcomers compared to all the other schools he had attended.

Busuke chuckled, he was very polite yet very friendly at the same time. He even asked if he was allowed to sit down. Of course Tomeo invited him whole-heartedly. "I'm sure that you don't really know your way around yet, like some help?" Busuke asked whilst taking a bite of a pickle he had brought with his lunch.

"I already know where all my classes are-" Tomeo began to answer but Busuke again chuckled and stopped him.

"No, no, you're way around *socially*." Busuke explained.

"Would you?" Tomeo exclaimed, leaning forward with wide eyes. No one had ever done this for him before. It was quite strange really... It was puzzling as to why Busuke was helping him out.

"I offered didn't I?" Busuke replied. He turned his seat around a fraction, just so he could point towards the rich gang without them being able to see. "Okay, all you really need to know it about is the rich gang. Stay on the gang's good side and no one else will give you any grief. See the guy with the red hair? He's Saito Akeno. He's the prankster and sets up all revenges upon teachers or anyone with authority. If it's a student or another gang that the group wants revenge upon, Tanaka Shige is the guy they call in. He came top in the school for using a kabana. Then there's Tanaka Shichu. Whatever you do, don't get them mixed up or call them brothers. They can both get really heated over those types of things. They are not really good friends at all. That adorable princess, her name is Kobayashi Kisa. Believe it or not I am her ex. She's best friends with Yamamoto Sakaki And that girl, the one that looks like a girl you'd find in a dirty magazine? Yamamoto Sakaki, sister of the leader of the gang. Yamamoto Yukio. He is one dangerous guy. A really quiet person but that's the way it should be, you don't want to see him angry."

Tomeo noticed that when he spoke of Yukio's anger, he seemed to speak from experience. After taking the information in, Tomeo said their first names to make sure he heard it all correctly. "Akeno - prankster, Shige - kabana guy, Shichu - not Shige's brother, Kisa - you're her ex, best friends with Sakaki, Sakaki - sister of Yukio, Yukio - dangerous leader of rich gang." He looked up at Busuke and saw him nod with satisfaction.

"You got it."

3 - Yukio's Darkness

It wasn't long before Tomeo found himself at the end of his first day and for once, he had made a friend. Busuke was not of love interest to him but he found him as a great friend and role model. He was kind, helpful, and friendly - everything a friend should be. He even ended up walking him home.

"Thanks Ito-sempai-"

"Please, just call me Busuke. I feel really comfortable around you. Anyway, see you tomorrow Tomeo!" Busuke said, turning away and giving a casual wave over his head. Tomeo watched him stroll away down the footpath, whistling merrily until he disappeared around the corner.

Tomeo smiled happily and ran up the stairs to the apartment, his Father was renting out. Fishing around in his bag, he found his key but also a note. Busuke had stuck his phone number in his bag along with a note saying `we can't be friends if we can't contact each other'. He'd drawn a funny little smiley face in the corner.

It made Tomeo smile but it faded away as he walked through the door to find the apartment empty... as usual. His Father was never home. He was always working. When he was home, he was drunk off his face. He'd been keeping it up ever since Tomeo's Mother passed away.

"Great..." Tomeo sighed and ran a hand through his dark chocolate hair. The beer stains were already visible from a few nights ago. But even has he cleaned up the small apartment on his hands and knees, Tomeo couldn't help but think of how lucky he was to have a friend like Busuke.

Yawning and stretching, Tomeo waited for Busuke to turn up. He had promised him that he would meet him to walk for school. He found out that no matter how perfect Busuke seemed at friendship, he was never going to be perfect with organization or time management. Finally, he saw the older boy bolt around the corner, slowing down for a few school girls, smiling sweetly and when they continued past him, got a good view of their asses before dashing off again. He was a classic straight male, but the nicest one Tomeo had ever met so he chose not to remember that little act.

“Sorry Tomeo, I over slept.” Busuke called as he neared and came to a stop. Waving a hand in acknowledgement while covering his mouth as he yawned again, Tomeo started to walk towards school. “But it seems like you didn't get enough.” Busuke laughed and caught up to him.

They talked the whole way there, not about anything in particular, just little facts about themselves that they thought necessary for the other to know. When Busuke started to count the number of girls he had slept with since coming a Genki High senior, Tomeo felt rather awkward but luckily, due to Busuke's lateness, there was no time to talk when they arrived at school.

The day was quite normal, boring in fact. Except for English...

“What is Mr. Itokywa trying to convey in his poem? Sato-kun?” Mr. Goroki asked.

Tomeo looked up and hesitated, gathering his thoughts. “Well, the poem expresses light and hope. It's trying to be positive.”

The class made it clear they disagreed with a series of murmurings. But they were silenced from the rare voice that came from the back of the room.

“He speaks of pain, misery, the horrors of life. It can't be positive.”

Tomeo turned around, seeing who had questioned him. That boy, Yukio... “Yes but he's merely using it as a way to show how the world is seen.”

“No, he's showing us that is how the world is because pain, misery and horrors and real.”

“You just proved me right, that's how you see the world and by the looks of it, most of the class agree with you but you're forgetting all the good things. The poet is trying to show us how lost and blind the world has become and saying that the world is still beautiful.”

Yukio's eyes could not be seen. He wasn't even sure if he was looking at him in the first place. His expression was unreadable. But one thing was for sure; he had nothing more to say and stood corrected. Tomeo sensed something very strange with that boy. Something he felt had been covered up for a very long time.

That was the last lesson for the day. Tomeo stayed back to ask Mr. Goroki about his opinion on his theory about the poem. He was praised for his work. Bowing and giving his thanks, Tomeo walked out of the room and headed down to the library. After a while, he emerged, ready to go home. As he came from a corridor, a lightning fast hand reached out and he felt a sharp tug at his tie. He was dragged around the corner into the shadows.

4 - "Welcome to senior years"

Looming over him was none other than Yukio, his dark bangs covering over half his face but this time Tomeo was sure he was looking at him, straight in the eye. They were so close to one another. He could feel his hot breath flow against his skin. He wasn't exactly sure where to put his hands so he left them up defensively in front of Yukio, just inches away from his chest. Yukio looked totally relaxed with one hand firmly grasping Tomeo's tie and the other shoved in his pocket. He then uttered a few words.

"Welcome to senior years."

His voice sounded so smooth and sensual. A familiar feeling washed over Tomeo and his face burned red. He was blushing. Yukio smiled, a small, hardly visible but still a faint smile. He leaned forward and with the lightest, most feathery touch, he passed his lips over Tomeo's. As he did, his hair was pushed to the side slightly and Tomeo saw a glance of one of his eyes. He stared into his eye, and the eye stared back. It was pitch black, like it had never seen the light of day and it burned with lust, longing, need. And that moment of heaven was over as Yukio walked pass him as casually as ever. Tomeo was light headed and needed to catch his breath. He had never got close enough to realize how sexy Yukio really was. He was lean but strong, his skin was pure and soft, his hands were delicate but forceful and his eyes were like windows to his soul. But he hid them... what did he have in his soul that he didn't want others to see? But he showed Tomeo. He was left standing dazed in the shadows with these thoughts in his mind. He knew that Yukio was obviously gay like him but no one else knew in the whole school.

"I think I like him...." Tomeo murmured, touching his lips with his fingers.

At home, Tomeo decided he'd call Busuke. He wanted to ask him what he knew about Yukio.
"Busuke?"

"Yeah, is this Tomeo?"

"Yup, it's me. Busuke... can I ask you some questions?"

“Sure, ask away.”

“It's about... Yukio.”

The line was silent and he heard a sigh. “Look Tomeo. You don't want to get mixed up with that guy. He's not... right.”

“What do you mean, not right?”

“He's not right in the head. He's a strange one.”

“It's just he...”

“Promise me you won't go getting yourself into trouble.”

Tomeo wondered why Busuke was so strong about this. Maybe they had some history. Never the less, Busuke was his first friend so he wasn't going to brake his promise. “I promise.”

“Good. I have to go, I'll meet you tomorrow okay?” Busuke seemed much brighter now.

“Okay, but as long as you're not too late.” Tomeo laughed.

“Okay, okay, bye Tomeo.”

“Bye.” Tomeo pressed the red button and placed the phone on the draws next to his bed. He lay down,

hands behind his head, staring up at the ceiling. Busuke didn't say he couldn't dream about Yukio did he? A smile crept into his lips and he closed his eyes.

5 - Hit the Showers!

The light streamed in through the small parts in the blinds, a strip of light came down upon his eyes and awoke Tomeo from his sleep. He stretched, rolling over slightly in bed. He opened his eyes in a flash, realizing that perhaps his dream had been a little too real.

“Damn...” Tomeo muttered, reaching for a box of tissues.

His dream wasn't *that* erotic, he could think of much kinkier things to do. It'd been a few days since Yukio in the hall had confronted him and every so often he'd have a dream about him. It always ended up in a mess. He'd learnt never to actually speak about him to Busuke, but he thought about him all the time. He had seen Yukio watching him a few times but had not given any sign of recognition in return because he knew Busuke would be furious if he found out that he had spoken to Yukio. Tomeo wanted badly to ask him what he had against him but no matter how nice Busuke was, Tomeo could somehow sense that he had a hateful grudge that could be turned against him if he let it lose by putting his nose in where it was not meant to be.

But it was getting harder and harder to resist Yukio. He brushed past him in the hall. He left little notes in his locker and gave him the sexiest stares while brushing his bangs away for just a second. Those eyes were the most gorgeous feature of Yukio's. It was a pity he hid them but it made Tomeo feel even more special when he let him see, like it was their little secret and they had never even had a two way conversation before.

Still, if he was to keep Busuke as a friend, he couldn't give in to the temptation.

“I swear... if that old hag, Mrs. Tasuganami doesn't stop giving me F's, I'm gonna complain, I mean, my essay was flawless - flawless!” Busuke raved on and on about his History teacher and Tomeo listened but didn't *hear*. He was trying to figure out a way to avoid Yukio as much as he possibly could. “Earth to Tomeo, are you in there buddy?” Busuke waved a hand in front of Tomeo eyes.

Tomeo snapped back. He had never dazed out so many times in these last few days. “Err... Yeah, sorry

Busuke, I guess I have a lot on my mind,”

“That's fine.” But Busuke's expression contradicted his reply.

Later on that day, while Tomeo was getting some textbooks from his locker when he found another note. ‘We have our first lesson of PE today’ then there was a little smiley face. Of course - the showers... oh no, how could he escape that?

“I'll just get myself in trouble and then I'll have to do laps and then the showers will all be empty. Yeah, that's what I'll do...” Tomeo sighed, quite pleased that his avoiding tactic was working. But something bothered him. Busuke had said that Yukio wasn't right in the head. Did that mean that he was kind of stalking him? It's not as if he followed him though, it was all coincident, right? To be honest with himself he had to admit that he really didn't know. But it was beginning to scare him, but in a way, he didn't want Yukio to stop.

“Alright you maggots, drop and gimme twenty!” The teacher took a deep breath and blew on the whistle, the shrill sound causing everyone to jump. One by one, the students dropped like flies to the ground. Tomeo was not the type to rebel but he *needed* to stay back. He was the last one standing, his gym shorts and shirt suddenly felt see through as Yukio glanced at him. But he felt like a piece of raw meat in front of the PE teacher. “And you are standing... why?”

Tomeo didn't say a thing, he could feel his heart racing and he started to fiddle with his shirt nervously. He heard a giggle from some of the girls, his flesh was showing slightly and he tugged his shirt down.

“LAPS!” The teacher roared and Tomeo squeaked. He turned immediately and ran off to start his laps. The whole time he was grinning, thrilled that he would not have to deal with the showers until everyone was gone. After his thirtieth lap, the others started to head off into the showers. The teacher glared at him and he knew that he wanted him to keep on running. He gladly obliged.

Finally he was allowed to go and take a shower and boy did he need one! He felt as if his entire body was on fire, his skin, his lungs, his muscles; they were all burning. But as he walked across the oval, a thought hit him. What if Yukio held back too?

6 - Blood, Sweat and Tears

Sure, he could have gone without a shower, but he didn't want to have to turn his life upside down to avoid Yukio. That would be stupid and it would give Yukio what he wanted. Swallowing hard, he poked his head around the corner so he could make sure that the boys' showers were empty. He wasn't sure.

"Hello? Anyone there?" Tomeo called out with a shaky voice. No reply. He cleared his throat. "Hello?" He called out again with a little bit more confidence. There was still no reply. Sighing, he walked into the showers, placed down his bag and started to slip his shirt over his head. Walking into the stalls once he was free of all his sweaty clothes, he turned the knobs and had a warm shower. The water pelted down hard on his skin, loosening his muscles and cooling him down. He leant against the wall with one hand, bowing his head and letting the water pour over his neck and back.

His eyes flashed open and he whirled around to face the person that thought he had avoided - Yukio...

He attempted to reach up and grab a towel, his face already burning bright red, but his wrist was snatched roughly and he was forced against the tiled wall. He knew this would happen, he knew! Then why didn't he stop it from happening? He thought for a moment, perhaps he wanted it this way deep down. But he couldn't, Busuke would not allow it!

He could faintly see Yukio's eyes through the strands of hair, he was so close. He was holding him firmly in place, looming over him. Tomeo could not look away, those eyes that were blacker than midnight. He could not look away.

"We both know I want you, but do you want me?" Yukio broke the silence. His grip loosened and his other hand held Tomeo's jaw, his thumb placed on his chin.

Tomeo knew he shouldn't, but Yukio wouldn't tell Busuke and he certainly wouldn't. He'd had a crush on Yukio for a week now and wouldn't refuse him now just when he made a move. He nodded. Now Tomeo usually wasn't one to throw himself at someone but after all this temptation, he would've tackled him down in the hall.

Leaning closer and standing on his tippee toes, he kissed Yukio like he had imagined he would in one of his dreams. His lips were warm and soft, like he had dreamed. It wasn't his first kiss but it sure felt like it. He could feel Yukio's shock at his openness but was pleasantly surprised when he felt his tongue dip into his mouth and massage his own.

He felt his senses come alive and was sure that Yukio was feeling the same. The kiss deepened, their arms wrapping around each other, their lips tasting more and more of the sweet kiss. Tomeo began to feel light-headed, his knees gave way but Yukio supported him and he found his feet again. Feeling a little nervous, Tomeo slowed down a little. He had the time to observe that Yukio was standing in a running shower with his school uniform still on, even his shoes. Yukio stopped as Tomeo looked down at his clothes and then back up at him with a questioning stare.

"Hmmm... My clothes are getting wet." They were soaked. "Better take them off them."

Tomeo felt his heart skip a beat. Were they really going to go that far? He didn't expect all this, he just thought they were hugging and kissing. A lump formed in his throat, he wanted to say something but it was like he was choking. Yukio leant against the wall, a hand each side of Tomeo's head, propping him up. He stared into his eyes.

"It's okay Tomeo. We don't have to do it if you don't want to." Yukio whispered, stroking his droplet covered cheek. Then he leaned forward and kissed his neck, giving a soft, tender kiss. Tomeo sighed dreamily and his eyes slipped shut in bliss but a sharp and extremely painful sting soon awakened him where Yukio was kissing him. But he wasn't kissing him anymore. He was biting him! He wanted to yell out in pain but he couldn't. His eyes were wide and in shock. He could feel the blood run down his skin, mingling with the water. He was released and Yukio stared him straight in the eyes and he murmured some words that made Tomeo's skin crawl even more than the actual bite. He had branded him. He had claimed him as his own. He could feel the tears welling in his eyes...

"You belong to me now."

7 - "I don't like rejection."

At that moment, Tomeo knew what Busuke had meant by Yukio being dangerous. Now he was branded, ashamed and most of all, scared. He had only one person to whom he could turn to - Busuke. He had to find him. Pushing past Yukio, Tomeo had all intent to get out of there. But he was grabbed by the arm and was held fast. The grip was like iron but it felt so soft. He hated him and loved him at the same time. Yukio drew him back.

"Be careful Tomeo. I don't like rejection." Yukio whispered the threat that made his victim's skin crawl. Then, he was released. Tomeo grabbed his clothes and ran to the door. He turned back and choked out an answer.

"Then you won't like me much." Tomeo knew that no matter how much he was attracted to Yukio and how much Yukio lusted after him. That boy was too dangerous to be with.

As he was walking home alone, Tomeo found that he was even more frightened after saying such a thing to a boy with so many contacts. He felt stupid walking around, crying his eyes out so he ducked down behind a few houses and hide from the world for a while. But just as he was ready to get going, the clouds began to rumble their anger and poured down rain. Sighing and hanging his head, he sat down on a rubbish bin, feeling as used and as worthless as he had ever felt in his entire life and to top it all off, night had come.

He could hear footsteps.

Many footsteps.

Someone laughed and chuckled echoed after the first.

"What are you doing out here all alone?" The first voice asked with a mocking tone. Tomeo looked up

and saw at least eight or more guys standing before him in the rain. The first looked slightly familiar through the rain but it was hard to tell. "Don't worry kid, we'll give you a hand." The boy roughly grabbed his arm and pulled him to his feet. He called back to the rest of the guys. "Don't frack up the face," Tomeo then realised what they were going to do. He stared at the boy in horror, now with clear eyes. It was Tanaka Shige, the boy in Yukio's group that was in charge of 'taking care' of others. "Yukio's orders."

Tomeo's eyes widened. Yukio really wanted him hurt? Busuke was so right! He was messed up in the head, really badly. He was slammed up against the wall and he felt the brick graze open the flesh on his back through his thin, soaked shirt. Shige beat a fist into his stomach and the smaller boy collapsed down to his knees. The pain was everywhere and it was hard to breathe. He felt himself being lifted up by the collar to his feet and pushed into the arms of one of the guys. He was spun around and pushed again. They were all circled around him like a ravenous pack of wolves, each hungry to get their share of the piece of meat. It was all so fast he was being shoved around like a toy when suddenly he was on his back on the ground, gasping for breath. They were all around him, laughing, pointing. Then a boot came down upon his neck and he grabbed the ankle, desperately trying to free himself. But his grip fell loose as he was repeatedly kicked in the sides. He could already feel his flesh bruising. Someone grabbed his tie and pulled him again to his feet. Then he was left in the middle of the circle. The voices started up again.

"Come on, fight back you little moron!"

"Too scared?"

"You wimp!"

"Fight or become the victim runt!"

Then someone came from behind and punched him in the shoulder. He turned but still stumbled backwards. Another two came at him, their fists at the ready. One punched him in the gut and another in the side. Laughing rang through his ears, the rain blaring out most of the shouted insults, but he could still hear as they came closer and shoved him around some more.

“frackwit!”

“Retard!”

“Bastard!”

“Little son of a dog!”

He yelled out, tears mingling with the rain. His body hurt, every inch but calling his Mother such a name was unforgivable! Charging at the boy that insulted his dead Mother, Tomeo threw the larger boy off his feet in the slippery weather and punched him in the face over and over until the others pulled him off. He turned; just dying to give another what that boy had taken but was smashed over the back of the head with a trash bin lid. He collapsed on the ground, soaked and beaten into a bloody mess and barely keeping consciousness.

“shoot, he isn't fracking moving!”

“Shichu, what the hell did you do?”

“Oh come on Shige, he was on top of you and beating the life out of you.”

“Which is what you've done to him!”

“An eye for an eye...”

“Ah frack it, let's get out of here before anyone sees.”

Tomeo heard bolting splashes fading off and voices trailing then he heard nothing more.

8 - Lying to You

It was a long time before Tomeo finally awoke. He wasn't surprised to see Busuke at his bedside, fast asleep and looking a total wreck. But what did he look like? All he knew was that he hurt everywhere. He felt a tight bandage around his head and more around his sides. His arms felt as if they were being weighed down with lead. He pulled them up from beneath the covers and saw they were riddled with bruises, a few handprints could even be seen. He was in the hospital.

Rolling over on his side to face Busuke, he watched him for a while. He always knew it was perfect to have him as a friend. He looked around. His Father wasn't anywhere to be seen. No surprises there. Tomeo tapped his shoulder a couple of times. Busuke groaned and wearily looked up. His eyes widened and he pulled Tomeo in a big bear hug. Tomeo immediately let out a cry of pain.

"Oh sorry, sorry!" Busuke said then acted as if he were made of glass as he helped him lie back down. "Tomeo... You scared me! When I called your house you weren't there and when I went out looking and finally found you, you were lying unconscious in a back alley!" Busuke was white, as if just remembering it was painful.

Tomeo sniffed. He was touched that Busuke had gone looking for him. No one except for his Mother had ever cared so much for him. "Thank you Busuke." Tomeo murmured. His mouth felt dry. "How long have I been out?"

"You were out for... 29 hours, all last night and it's 3 pm now." Busuke shook his head and looked away for a moment. He then brought his gaze back to Tomeo. "Who did this to you?"

Tomeo hadn't thought about this. He couldn't just tell who had done it because then Busuke would know that he hadn't kept his promise. He shrugged. "I couldn't see their faces."

"*Their* faces?" Busuke questioned. "How many were there?"

"I don't remember. But there was more than one, that's for sure." Tomeo knew if he gave too much information, Busuke would know.

"Are you sure-" Busuke went on.

"I don't know, okay? It was dark and I was scared! I just don't remember!" Tomeo lashed out defensively. He started to cry.

Busuke jumped a little. "I'm sorry Tomeo, I just want to get revenge on whoever it was that beat up on you." He put an arm around his shoulder. "It's hard remembering, I won't ask anymore." Busuke said soothingly. He thought Tomeo was crying because it was too painful to remember but he was really crying because he was lying to his one friend right to his face. And it felt horrible.

He hated himself. He hated this. He hated his life. But most of all he hated Yukio. He knew how stupid he had been to think he could avoid him. Perhaps he knew all along that he couldn't escape him and subconsciously wanted him to find him in that shower. It was all so confusing.

Busuke didn't stay for much longer. He claimed that Tomeo needed his rest. But he knew that he just wanted to get away because he felt bad about hounding him for answers. But that was okay, Tomeo felt as if he needed to be beat up again for lying to Busuke. He just wished he had never met Yamamoto Yukio. Things were easier then. Things weren't threatening his health, his mind. His heart...

9 - Nurse Sakura

Tomeo was visited by his Father but only because he wanted to know the pin number to his bank account saying that he needed to borrow some money to pay for electricity. He knew that his Father wanted it for his dirty drinking habit but Tomeo didn't refuse in case he threatened to not take him home. He couldn't get there on his own. His condition was still terrible. So he reluctantly gave it to him.

"9928... You won't forget to pick me up will you? I'm discharged this afternoon." Tomeo said, staring at his Father dead in the eyes.

"Yeah, yeah, I'll be back for you." He grumbled and turned and left.

Tomeo lay back down and stared at the ceiling. He said he would come back but he knew better. He'd be lying drunk somewhere in no time and wouldn't come until tomorrow. He tried to hold back the tears. Why did this have to happen to him?

The nurse came in the afternoon and announced in a cheerful voice that he was discharged. When he didn't reply or even look at her, she took on an expression of concern and sat beside him. She was young and very beautiful.

"You... You need to call someone?" She asked. Tomeo's eyes met hers and she gasped. "Oh my, what's the matter?" She touched his shoulder gently.

"No one will answer..." Tomeo whispered, staring with such sorrow into her eyes.

She melted, feeling so sorry for him. "Where do you live? I'll ask someone to cover for me and I'll take you home." She said with determination.

Tomeo's eyes brightened. "Really? You would do that for me?"

She nodded, smiling softly. For some reason, she reminded him of his Mother. They both shared that same sweet glow of happiness. "Of course." She stood then smiled and offered him her hand. "Oh rude of me, I'm Sakura."

Tomeo smiled back "Tomeo. Pleased to meet you Sakura." He felt comforted by her. She looked like an angel. She had long flowing hair and looked adorable in her uniform.

It wasn't long before she had driven him home. He asked her a question as she helped him into the apartment. "Sakura? How old are you?"

She glanced at him. "Me? I'm 16."

Tomeo jaw dropped. "Y- you're 16? Why aren't you in school?" She was driving already!

She laughed and nodded as if confirming her first answer. "I quit high school when I finished Junior High since I was attending a nursing course at TAFE then got a job where my Auntie works." She smiled. "You're 17, right?"

"Err... Yeah..." Tomeo replied a little dully. He was still in shock. He thought that she must have been in her twenties or something.

Once he fumbled around and found the spare key under the doormat and was sitting comfortably on the couch, he thanked her.

"I really appreciate it Sakura." Tomeo smiled.

She blushed. "Aw, it was nothing! It's always fun helping out a cute patient!" Sakura grinned and waved goodbye. She really was a sweetheart but he wondered if she had any feelings behind the blush and the sure patient remark. He waved goodbye and switched on the TV. He thought he might as well do something while waiting for his Father.

An hour later, Busuke called.

“Hey, I heard you got taken home by that cute nurse.” Busuke chuckled.

Tomeo decided to break it to him. “Yeah, she was a pretty cute *16 year old!*”

There was a break on the line for a while. Busuke's mouth was wide open. “No way! Oh... And I was interested too... Err that was if I wasn't invading on anything you had going with her.”

“Trust me, she's really pretty and really nice and friendly-”

“So what's the problem?”

“She's not my... type.”

“Gees Tomeo, you are one picky guy. What is your type anyway?”

“I guess I haven't found my ideal love interest.” Tomeo sighed.

“Ah, perk up, you'll run into her one day.”

Tomeo didn't really want to talk anymore. He was saved by the bell when his Father collapsed through the front door. “I've got to go Busuke... My Dad's home.” He sighed and said goodbye before hanging up. He looked down at the drunken mess that was his Father and buried his face into his hands.

10 - Light Fades, Boys Will Play

It was a few days after he had been discharged and Tomeo decided that it would be best to go back to school. He was feeling better but he wouldn't be able to play Sport for a while which was just what he needed a break from. But just as he was going out the door, Tomeo was met with a familiar face, Sakura. He had convinced himself that she thought of him as a friend and a friend only. She was smiling happily as usual.

"Hi Tomeo!" Sakura said in her quiet but bright voice.

"Hey, I'm sorry but I'm going back to school today." Tomeo said with disappointment. He found her a very comforting person to be around.

She kept on smiling. "No problem! The doctor is letting me have some time exploring other jobs. I'm being employed by your school!" Sakura tilted her head to the side in her adorable little way.

"That's great!" Tomeo grinned and gave her a big hug. He knew things could only improve if he had two friends at the school.

Sakura blushed deeply, holding back a content sigh as he hugged her. "Hey, Tomeo, what's that bite on your neck?" She asked but was met with silence. She didn't want to offend him so she dropped it. "Really? You would like me to come?"

"Sure!" Tomeo grinned. Soon they met up with Busuke and walked to school. It was funny really. Sakura got a LOT of attention.

But something had been bothering Tomeo all day. He couldn't see Yukio anywhere. That something was tugging at him. He knew the dangers all too well but it wouldn't give him any peace. He had to speak with him. He searched and searched but to no avail. The day was over and that was that.

Suddenly, Tomeo spotted him. He was sitting beneath a cherry blossom tree, just idly staring at nothing. He swallowed hard and began to advance. He was about to speak but was cut off.

“Sit.” Yukio murmured. He couldn't tell if it was an order or a request but he sat anyway. They stayed in silence for what seemed hours until Tomeo couldn't take it anymore.

“Why?” It was the question that was plaguing his mind.

“I had to punish you.” Yukio replied in a flat tone.

“Because I rejected you?”

“Yes.”

“You can't go around doing that to people!” Tomeo demanded, his voice raising. Though it didn't matter, no one was at school anymore.

Yukio looked at him. “Why did you reject me?” His voice seemed timid and sad.

“You don't know? Yukio. You were stalking me, obsessing over me.” He knew it sounded self-centred but it was true.

“Only because I love you.” Yukio murmured.

Tomeo stared at him, dumbfounded. “You... *love* me?” Tomeo repeated.

“Yes. Ever since I saw you, I knew you were special. I know what I did was wrong but I know no other way of reaching you. Stalking means no one will see me, obsessing means I will never forget you.”

“Yukio...” Tomeo was touched by his confession. He felt a familiar feeling, one for Yukio that he thought he had drowned out. But it was back. He edged a little closer. “I... I forgive you...” He had such good intentions behind all those horrible things. Maybe Tomeo could change him. Just maybe.

Yukio reached over and gently pulled him closer. And then, he just sat there with him, one arm around his shoulder. Tomeo had never felt so... he couldn't even begin to describe it. But he was swamped with the feeling he knew just how to slake. He turned Yukio's face to his and drew him closer. Their lips met. It felt like fireworks. Yukio placed a tender hand upon his cheek and it sent shivers down his spine. The kiss only lasted a few seconds but it was pure. They stared into each other's eyes knowing all too well what they both desired.

Almost at the same time, they crashed together in a heated, lustful kiss. Yukio wrapped his arms around Tomeo, running his hands up and down his back. The friction sensation caused Tomeo to moan into the kiss but then he stood, breaking away from his partners grasp. But he took his hand and starting leading him into the school. He urged him to keep the pace lively, pulling him along. Yukio didn't need much encouragement when he saw he was taking him to the nurse's office where there were beds. Then, as they entered the room, Yukio slowly closed the door behind him...

11 - Faster

An entanglement of limbs was wrestling lustfully on the nurse's bed, Tomeo and Yukio grasping and caressing each other. The now flimsy clothing they wore was the only layer between their flesh. Tongues licked and massaged, teeth grazed and teased eager lips. Yukio was dominant. The weight of him on Tomeo was glorious suffocation. The inner throbbing was growing and he could feel that Yukio was the same. Everything blurred as he surrendered willingly to the older boy.

Soon, Yukio's lips reluctantly left his and slide down his neck. Tomeo felt his breathing become ragged as Yukio became hard against his leg through his pants. Amazed at how his sempai could keep his control in such a situation. He could hardly keep himself from shaking but was glad that Yukio was still and strong. He found security as he clung to him whilst his hands calmly undid the buttons of his shirt. Tomeo then felt Yukio's kisses upon his naked chest and even that almost threw him over the edge. He moaned gently, as Yukio's teeth grazed his nipple and his lips sucked and he felt himself go hard. Yukio smiled an eerie but drop dead gorgeous smirk. Tomeo fumbled with his lover's shirt. He couldn't seem to concentrate. Yukio removed his own shirt, never breaking eye contact and ran a slender pale hand down Tomeo's side expecting a groan of pleasure to his touch but instead Tomeo yelped in pain. Yukio's eyes flooded with concern and he looked towards his hand and saw a terrible black blue bruise blemishing his skin. His eyes ran over him only to find more and more under the folds of material.

Tomeo wouldn't look for he had his eyes shut tightly. Yukio stroked his cheek and uttered something that made Tomeo feel much better.

"I'll be gentle."

Tomeo thought about this for a while though as Yukio slowly tended to his pants and found that even though the pain was still great, he didn't want to be gentle. He wanted to furiously be loved in a breathing taking swarm of kisses. Talking was impossible. He could hardly catch his breath. So Tomeo decided he would have to show Yukio exactly how he wanted to be loved.

Taking both of Yukio's wrists, he mustered up a quite shocking amount of strength for his size and seized the dominant position for himself. Yukio started at him blankly. His bangs pushed back to reveal his hauntingly dark eyes and handsome face. Tomeo felt it was such a shame that he hid his face like

that but it wasn't his choice. He didn't want to make Yukio change, at least not in that way.

Tomeo took his hands and pinned them over his head, holding them down with one hand. The other worked at freeing him of his pants. Once they were dismissed to the floor, Tomeo removed his underpants as well. He'd never done anything like what he was going to do before. But he figured Yukio liked being touched where he liked being touched.

Leaning down, Tomeo took the head of his cock in his mouth and ran his tongue softly over the pink skin and took the length in his hand, wrapping his fingers around him. He was hard, very hard. He let his tongue slip to the sensitive spot just below the head and stroked. He moved his hand, squeezing slightly and was rewarded with a heavy groan. He looked to the side. Yukio had since moved his hands down from over his head and was gripping the sheets. Tomeo then decided that he wanted to make Yukio loose the control that he held onto so defensively. It would be his little goal.

He froze for a moment, just a moment. When his own fear pushed him back yet the will to keep going pushed him forward. That was what it meant to be frozen, to be suspended by your conflicting emotions. But the later was the stronger of the two and he continued. Tomeo removed his hand and tended to his partner's cock with lips, mouth and tongue. Taking him down so that his nose almost touched the curly hair at the base, he began a pumping action, which was agonisingly slow at first.

Yukio tipped his head back, panting. His grip tightened and his pelvis lifted, wanting more of the hot sensation.

"Faster - Tomeo..." Yukio begged, whimpering.

12 - Patience

Obliging, Tomeo picked up the pace. The sweet hot suction he tortured Yukio with was now becoming close to unbearable for Yukio. He bit down upon his lip, so hard that he drew blood. He squeezed the sheets, constricting them in his grasp. He was so close, so very close.

Tomeo could taste the pre-cum but that only encouraged him to go faster and bring him more pleasure. Yukio wasn't the only one enjoying himself. Just watching his lover in helplessness at his will turned him on. Becoming aroused like this, gave him the will to continue. Besides, one good deed doesn't go unrepaid.

The searing hot feeling that was now spreading into his stomach told Yukio that it was time, he couldn't hold back any longer.

"I- I'm going to-!" Yukio managed to blurt out before he came, waves of pleasure causing his muscles to clench and release. His back arched up as he tensed up, calling out Tomeo's name. He had never felt so good before. Tomeo satisfied him in everyway possible. But his little lover was incredibly horny from watching that. So much that it ached. He shuffled around, trying to find a position that was comfortable on the bed, kneeling before Yukio expectantly.

Panting heavily, a thin film of sweat lacing his brow, Yukio went limp. The orgasm that had shaken him up had subsided. His head slowly tipped down, his pitch-black bangs falling down over his gaze. Some hair clung to his skin, making just enough parts for Tomeo to see his clouded grey eyes storming ferociously with lust. It was exactly what Tomeo wanted, what he needed.

"That... was... incredible..." Yukio managed to say between breathes.

Tomeo grinned with satisfaction, seductively licking some hot cum from his lips. He had done it. He had never seen Yukio so uncontrolled before. "I know." Tomeo said with a flick of a hand as if he did it all the time. In reality it was his first time giving a blowjob. Although it wasn't like he was totally in the dark, the Internet and the video rental store had been a great help. He was still grinning and totally oblivious

as Yukio found he did in fact still have bones within his flesh and pounced on Tomeo almost throwing him off the bed.

“Oof!” Tomeo grunted as he felt the weight of Yukio on him once again. But there was a newfound strength and yearning in his eyes that he could not overthrow this time. Tomeo's head now just hung off the edge of the bed. He still had the strength to hold it up though. Yukio furiously began leaving a fiery trail of kisses down his neck showing no mercy whatsoever. He could feel Tomeo's wanting pressing hard against his inner thigh. He was going to slake that lust that Tomeo had burning between his legs just as he had slaked his.

Tomeo's chest started to rise and fall dramatically as Yukio snaked a hand down his torso, down his pelvis and slipped beneath the hem of his underpants. He took him in hand, stroking his length up and down with a silk like touch.

It was an intoxicating feeling that swept over him as he touched him, he breathed a husky moan, letting his fingers comb through Yukio's dark hair. The warm hand tugged at his underpants, working them down his legs and then throwing them over his shoulder. And then Yukio went still. Tomeo stared into his eyes questioningly. Then he saw. He was asking him silently. Pausing to make sure that he would be doing the right thing. Tomeo smiled, touched. Yukio was a kind boy beneath the barrier he held over himself. Suddenly, for some unusual reason, Busuke's face appeared in his mind.

“I promised...” Tomeo murmured.

Yukio stared at him blankly.

Tomeo met his gaze but couldn't hold it. He pushed himself up. They both kneeled before each other in the now darkness. It was well after sunset. He found he didn't want to say the wrong thing. Busuke obviously hated Yukio and he wouldn't be shocked if Yukio hated him too. After all this, he was still somewhat afraid of what Yukio would do if he upset him.

“What did you promise?” Yukio asked once Tomeo kept silent for some time.

“I... promised... I promised Busuke-“ Tomeo sunk a little as if expecting to be hit.

Yukio's eyes went black once more. "Busuke? What did you promise him?"

Eternity seemed to pass. "That I would stay away from you..."

Yukio's face darkened into hate. "So Busuke means more to you than me?"

Tomeo turned to him, taking his hands up to his heart and squeezing them. He didn't want to ruin what they had just made. "No, no! That's not it at all! But Busuke is my friend... Look, all I want to know is why you two hate each other." Tomeo stared pleadingly into Yukio's eyes, hoping, begging for an answer. If he had that he might be able to find a way to mend it.

"Busuke and I have been going to school together since we were very young. When we came to high school, he was the most popular boy in our year."

Tomeo found that hard to believe. It looked like everyone always excluded Busuke.

"He had all the girls. I was jealous of them because I secretly had a crush on him. So when my sister's friend Kisa and him started to go out when he was 15 and she was 14, I just had to stop them."

Tomeo recalled Busuke telling him that his ex was Kisa.

"Sakaki, my sister, had never approved of Busuke so I used that to my advantage. She helped me break them up. Kisa is still in love with him. I am not sure about Busuke though." Yukio sighed. It seemed painful for him to bring up the past.

Tomeo knew that Busuke still loved Kisa too. He'd always be raving on about her. He felt like he practically knew the girl even if he had never met her before in his life.

“Then while comforting Busuke after the break up, I... I told him how I felt about him.” Yukio's brow furrowed. “He laughed at me.”

Tomeo was shocked that Busuke would ever do such a thing but by the tone of voice and the look in his eyes, he knew Yukio wasn't lying.

“He thought I was kidding. I told him I wasn't and he got angry with me. He called me names and jeered at me. I never forgave him. I dragged him down from his spot as the most popular boy and took it myself. It was easy to bring him down. I had so much dirt on him.” Yukio gave a hollow chuckle, like deep down he regretted everything.

Tomeo thought about all this for a moment. Busuke had changed since then. He'd humbled. But he still felt very sorry for Yukio. He threw his arms around him and hugged him tightly. “It's going to be alright.”

They both decided silently and mutually that they weren't ready for anything further than what had happened already. They knew too little about each other. They were still exploring each other. But the time would soon come.

13 - Secrets and Jealousy

Yukio returned home at a late hour, jumping the backyard fence and opening the sliding door of his room, he silently removed his shoes.

“A little late aren't you?”

Yukio turned at his sister's voice. She was standing in the shadows, leaning against his walk in wardrobe with her arms crossed and head bows. She stared up at him with her piercing purple eyes. “You're up late Sakaki. Aren't you?” Yukio retorted coolly. He acted as if she wasn't there, just casually placing his bag down on the ground.

She chuckled and closed her eyes. Her thick sensual voice exceeded her years. “Yes. I was waiting for you to stop fooling around with that boy and come home.”

Yukio froze. A smile crossed her lips. His hand formed a fist.

“That is what you were doing wasn't it?” Sakaki already knew the answer to that.

“It's none of your concern.” Yukio answered after a long period of hesitation.

Sakaki opened her eyes and sat down on his bed. “Oh but it is dear brother. We share flesh and blood. If I may say, he isn't bad looking. Not like Busuke. It's hard to believe you ever had any interest in him.”

Yukio sat down beside her. “Do... Do not tell anyone. Please.”

Her face softened as she heard a slight crack in his voice. "I would not betray you brother. Never. Not like her." Sakaki murmured. Letting him lay his head down on her lap. She stroked his hair gently, weaving her fingers through the fine black strands.

* * * *

When Busuke met up with Tomeo on the weekend, he was taken back. He had never seen his friend so light and carefree. He enjoyed seeing him like this, but he couldn't help but question why. It was odd. Tomeo had been through so much recently and now he looked as if he had been granted every one of his wishes.

"So where are we going exactly? Can you tell me yet?" Tomeo asked, shifting his weight hyperactively.

Busuke laughed. "What is up with you today?"

"Uh ah ah! I asked you a question first."

"So you did. Well our ride is coming soon enough." Busuke winked.

Tomeo's eyes brightened as he envisioned a fancy red convertible shining gloriously in the sun. Busuke just laughed once more.

Soon enough, an engine roared over the hill. Tomeo had a look of sheer excitement on his face. But it quickly dropped as he saw the more than appealing car come into sight. It was a piece of crap! It looked as if it would die right there in the middle of the road!

He sighed. "You're so mean Busuke..."

Busuke was too busy hopping in the front seat. "Hey Miss Sakura! How are you this fine day?" His charm towards the adorable little nurse was as transparent as glass.

Sakura giggled and leant over kissing Busuke gently on the cheek. "Oh Tomeo, I didn't see you there. Jump in." She said somewhat calmly.

Tomeo's jaw dropped. "WHAT? When did this happen??"

Sakura couldn't help but smile and think to herself, *my plan is working! Tomeo is getting jealous!*

Busuke waved a hand back. "You had your chance, don't take it too hard." Although as he stared out the window, Tomeo could see that he didn't have Sakura on his mind.

Then those words Yukio had spoken echoed in his mind... *She helped me break them up. Kisa is still in love with him. I am not sure about Busuke though.*

But Tomeo knew well that Busuke still loved her. Why was he getting into a relationship with Sakura? A school nurse! It was just not at all right.

The three of them went to the fair that was in town. They stayed til late, playing games, eating the sweet and sometimes greasy food of the fair. And all the while Sakura and Busuke were swooning over each other. Tomeo felt like a third wheel.

Tomeo had to speak to Busuke. So when the faros wheel line had shortened as midnight approached, Tomeo asked him to have a ride. Sakura didn't want to go anyway. She was afraid of heights. While going up, the two didn't speak at all. But once they reached the top and the wheel was paused so everyone could get a good look at the view, Tomeo broke the silence.

"Busuke?"

“You shouldn't be jealous of me. I'm... happy.”

“I'm not jealous, trust me. But... I've found out something about Kisa...”

Busuke didn't want to hear it. He had come too far. “I haven't got a chance with her again, don't you get that? I'm sick of wanting her and feeling sorry for myself because I can't, I won't do that to myself! I have to move on, Sakura can help me do that. She likes me and I like her.”

Tomeo paused as Busuke looked away. “But... Do you love her?”

He didn't answer him. He just stared off in the opposite direction.

Sakura could sense the tension between them. Even from down on the ground she could sense it. She watched curiously and guiltily. She didn't want to hurt Busuke. She didn't want to hurt the friendship Busuke had with Tomeo. Feeling selfish and childish, Sakura fled the fairgrounds without even saying goodbye.

14 - Sakaki's Threat

Tomeo couldn't believe it when he saw Busuke waiting outside for him. It was a Monday. He should have been at least fifteen minutes late, not to mention he thought they were still not talking since Saturday. Pausing a good distance away from him, Tomeo studied him. He was looking at his feet, not showing his eyes and an eerie sense of bad aura surrounded him. He advanced a little further.

“Busuke?” Tomeo said, trying to not sound as concerned as he really was.

He turned away from him and started walking. Tomeo trotted behind faithfully. By the time they made it to school, Busuke had still not said a word. It was very strange and unsettling. Finally, as Tomeo was giving up and heading off to class, Busuke grabbed his arm and stopped him.

“Sakura called me last night. She... She told me that it was all in order to get you jealous. She used me to get to you. But she's very sorry and even started to cry.”

Tomeo turned to see Busuke with tears welling in his eyes.

“Whenever I have something special to me, it goes away. But I won't let you go away. You're the best friend I've ever have since...”

Tomeo knew he had held his tongue back from saying Yukio. He was about to say something but the bell rang. He just smiled.

“I'm not going anywhere.”

In class Sakura called Tomeo over the P.A system. He wondered if he should open up to her to explain

why he could never like her back the way she liked him. Yet he'd done that before and it had ended up badly. Still, there was nothing other way.

Sakura seemed, like Busuke, very hurt and ashamed. Tomeo didn't feel as much sympathy for her.

"I am sorry." She fell to her knees, bowing as low as she could. "I am a fool and if you do not wish to be my friend I understand." She had clearly lost all fantasies of being with him. Tomeo had to restrain back a sigh of relief. He didn't have to tell her at all.

Reaching down, he pulled her to her feet. "Friends?" Tomeo smiled and offered a hand.

Sakura smiled too and gratefully took his hand.

Suddenly they were interrupted by a passing student who was like almost every boy infatuated with Sakura. "What are you doing?" He asked suspiciously.

Sakura almost screamed and hastily moved her hand to his wrist. "Err... Ah... Just checking his pulse! I thought he was... um... dead! Hahaha!" She smiled nervously.

"Well anyone would drop dead for you Miss Sakura!" The boy said, hoping to charm the young lady.

Sakura laughed again, but she squeezed Tomeo's wrist in anger, obviously quite annoyed with the student. He found it difficult to feel his fingers. Pain shot up through his arm.

"Let go! Let go! Let go! Let go! Let go!" Tomeo yelled once the boy moved on.

"Oh my goodness! Sorry! Oh you can go back to class now." She smiled sheepishly and ushered him out the door.

* * * *

It wasn't until later on that day in English class that Tomeo saw Yukio since that night. He knew that it wouldn't be proper for him to go up and act as if he were his boyfriend. A thought struck him. Were they boyfriends? Secret ones? They hadn't ever spoken of it but they didn't really speak much anyway. Yukio gave him little smiles here and there but nothing more. It was like being popular prevented him from associating with what even considered the lower class of the high school society. It was more a prison than a blessing. But then again, not being popular was hell as well. You just couldn't win.

Whenever Tomeo dazed off for a moment, refusing to let his mind learn anything more, he always felt as if he had foreign eyes upon him. Like when Yukio was watching him. But this wasn't the same person, yet similar. It was strange. He dared not to look back and see who it was.

Class ended and everyone began busily bustling around, chattering endlessly as they left the room and headed to the labs. Tomeo finally managed to glance over his shoulder. The eyes that locked with his were an odd, but mysteriously beautiful deep purple. Sakaki.

She stood and walked over to him, her sauntering stride reminded him of a cat.

"Tomeo, right?" Sakaki asked. One hand placed lightly on her hip.

He nodded, unable to find any words worth saying.

She leaned closer, not seeming so intimidating anymore. "I know about you and my brother. I've known for a very long time what he... prefers in a lover. I care about him. I don't want to see him hurt."

Tomeo's eyes widened. "I would never hurt him!"

“But if you do, even by accident. I will know. And I will find you. And I will make you regret ever being born.” Sakaki returned to her full height and turned, hips swaying as she left the terrified but also curious Tomeo. But he wouldn't leave it alone. He had to know.

“Sakaki - wait!” Tomeo called out, skidding out of the door.

She stopped, not turning to face him. “Meet me in the park tonight. We will talk then and there only.”

“When?”

“9:00 o'clock. No sooner, no later.”

“I'll be there.”

15 - As Long As He's Happy

Tomeo was thankful to get out of the house, his Father was not the best of company at the moment and since the bills hadn't been paid, the phone line was cut off so he had no one to talk to. Not even Busuke.

The cold air nipped at his heels, sinking its icy fangs into his flesh and he was instantly reminded of Yukio. He was ashamed of his branding at first but now, he was rather proud of it. He finally advanced open the open oval, letting his gaze sweep over to see a dark shadowy figure lurking around near the play equipment. Sakaki. Taking in a breath, he pulled his parker around him tightly and jogged over.

“Sakaki?”

She turned and sure enough it was her deep purple eyes staring at him. “Sit.”

Tomeo couldn't help but let out a chuckle. She was just like her brother. Sitting down with her on the swings, he glanced over at her expectantly.

“Yukio hasn't told you but he really likes you and I do too, you're a good guy. But you must know. I will not let Yukio lose what he has gained at this school Tomeo. I won't lose my status either. We have both worked too hard.”

Tomeo glared. “What? Worked too hard at bringing down Busuke?” He snapped unintendedly.

“He was hurt enough by her, he didn't need Busuke's cruelty!” She screamed suddenly from nowhere. He'd obviously hit a nerve.

“What do you mean? Who's her?” Tomeo questioned, his voice calming down. His tone obviously

soothed Sakaki down, because she had calmed.

“...” She hesitated in replying him but she decided to go ahead and tell him. “Our... Mother...”

Tomeo frowned in confusion. What had their Mother done to Yukio? He remembered his Mother to always be a gentle and kind woman. He guessed not all Mother's could be that way. He waited once more. Not wanting to push her. It seemed to be a tender area of discussion.

“Yukio was always a very shy boy. I never knew why until I mentioned Mum and he told me everything. She had already left the house then. He told me that when he was eleven, she... abused him.”

Tomeo's face morphed into great concern.

“But not hitting or anything... it was the other kind of physical abuse...” Sakaki was finding it very difficult to say.

It dawned upon him what she meant. His Mother had sexually abused Yukio. What kind of a parent did that? It was too hard to imagine, he didn't want to anyway. Tomeo felt a great wave of sympathy for Yukio at that time. He didn't want to know anymore, it was enough. No wonder Sakaki wanted to protect him. How could she trust anyone if one who was supposed to be the one protecting them had turned on them?

“Yeah, I think I know what you mean...” Tomeo said, saving her the awkwardness.

She sighed in relief. “Then you know why I want to keep Yukio at the top of the food chain? It's nothing personal. I just have to keep him at such a place at school where no one can touch him. Do you understand what I'm trying to do for him?”

Tomeo nodded. He was not going to put Yukio in danger but he wasn't go to give him up either. He had never felt stronger for him before. Never.

“Good. Then you'll stay away from him.”

This time, she wasn't asking a question.

Tomeo didn't have a chance to object before she quickly stood and slipped away into the shadows of the night.

“Great,” Tomeo mumbled, swinging gently. “Now Yukio and I have to dodge Busuke's, Sakura's and Sakaki's eyes, not to mention everyone else. Just great.”

* * * *

Yukio knocked on the door to his sister's room. He had a feeling she had gone out with Kisa but wanted to be sure that she was gone. There was no reply so he slowly opened the door. Glancing around the room, he breathed a sigh of relief. She was nowhere to be found. Her and Kisa usually went out for hours on end. He turned back, nodding to Tomeo. He wasn't sure why he wasn't speaking. It just seemed like if they spoke, someone would catch them. He didn't want it to be like this, but there was no other choice.

Tomeo crept into Yukio's room and a photo frame caught his eye. Picking it up, he saw a picture of Yukio and Sakaki but they weren't as they were now. They were very young, about four and five years old. They both looked so happy, playing together in the winter snow. He couldn't help but smile. At that moment, he felt a tender kiss upon his neck and Yukio hugged him around his waist.

“You look happy here.” Tomeo whispered, continuing to admire his wide, dark eyes that weren't covered by bangs. Yukio chuckled slightly.

“I was crying five minutes later when Sakaki threw a snowball in my face.” Yukio sighed, remembering.

Tomeo turned around, not breaking Yukio's grasp around him, and placed his head on his chest, listening to his heartbeat. "Does this make you happy?" Tomeo whispered.

"Does what make me happy?"

"... This... You and me."

"Yes. It does." Yukio lifted Tomeo's chin and kissed him softly.

Tomeo smiled. *If Yukio is happy, that is all I need to know. Sakaki doesn't matter, he does.*

16 - Blood is Thicker than Water

Gently passing his fingers through Tomeo's hair, Yukio watched him as he slept. His head was resting on his chest, lying so peacefully. Yukio held him a little closer. He suddenly felt defensive of him. What if he were to lose him? He wasn't sure how he would cope if that ever occurred.

He stared up at the ceiling, his head sinking back into the pillow. He wished he could always have Tomeo here in his bedroom. It was strange. He wanted so badly to get as close to Tomeo as possible and share with him what he had wanted to share with him the moment he laid eyes on him. But when he held him in his arms and simply had that to call his own, he found he didn't need anymore.

Glancing back down, his eyes were met with Tomeo's. He had awakened. Yukio caught sight of the time out of the corner of his eye and realised that it was time for Tomeo to go. He couldn't stay any longer. His sister would be returning soon, but even worse, his Father would soon return after that.

Tomeo seemed to understand even though he never said a word. "Tomorrow then." And with that, he sat up, gave Yukio a tender kiss on the forehead and headed for the door.

Open reaching for the handle, it turned on it's own and flew open. He dodged out of the way just in time but not out of the way of Sakaki's view.

For a moment she stood wide-eyed and in horror but soon regained her composure. Giving a slight chuckle, she crossed her arms in front of her chest and gave one of her cold stares. "Tomeo, tsk tsk. Don't you remember our little chat?"

Yukio glanced back and forth between them and then stayed on Tomeo. His eyes were filled with clueless ness. "Chat?" Yukio asked to anyone who would answer him.

Ignoring the question so he could face Sakaki, he crossed his arms also. "I do. But never agreed to anything." Tomeo replied in a calm and collected manner.

Sakaki's expression darkened from sarcasm to anger. "No one defies me." He eyes narrowed.

Yukio tilted his head, adopting an adorable expression of confusion. Tomeo couldn't help but let a smile curl into the corner of his lips. "Then this shall be a first for you." Tomeo shot a come back at her. He felt rather cocky after that and held his head a little higher.

"You just don't understand do you?" Sakaki hissed.

"It's true, I really don't..." Yukio mumbled, thinking she was speaking to him.

"Not you!" Sakaki snapped. "Your damn boyfriend!"

Yukio stood at that point, his confronting height and cold stare sweeping over the room. But she didn't back down.

"Don't dare..." Sakaki hissed in a dangerously low tone.

Tomeo snapped between them, hoping to separate the two. But he was simply met with a feminine fist to the stomach. He sunk to the floor in pain. She could pack a hard punch.

Furious by her action, Yukio swung back his open palm and slapped her across the face. The sound of flesh upon flesh seemingly echoed through the walls. She was frozen for a moment. As if she truly hadn't expected it. Slowly she brought herself back to face her brother. Their eyes locked, both as intimidating as the other. But it was obvious that the other had won.

"I'm sorry brother. I should have knocked." And with that, Sakaki exited the room, her pale skinned cheek, which was now marked red, half covered by a dainty hand. Tomeo found it hard to believe that such a hand could inflict such pain.

Yukio didn't move. He only lowered his head to face his feet once the door clicked shut.

Tomeo bit his lip, not knowing what to say. Yukio didn't give him a chance to think of something to say.

"I never knew that my sister would do something like this to me. She knows how much you mean to me." Yukio murmured.

Tomeo stared.

"Her fury seems endless. But it will pass."

Tomeo shook his head. "I'm not so sure." He sighed and closed his eyes, when he opened them Yukio's hand was before him. Accepting the offer, he was pulled to his feet. "She will try to break us apart. And in the end, blood is thicker than water."

Yukio's dark eyes searching Tomeo's from behind his bangs. What was he saying?

"It would be less painful if we... If we ended it now." Tomeo choked out.

Yukio's lips parted as if he were ready to say something but no words came out. He wanted to say something. He needed to reply but by the time he found himself again the door had closed.

Braving the cold of the night, Tomeo hugged his coat around him, leaving one hand free to constantly brush away the tears that streaming down his face. He knew that Yukio would be hurt. He knew he was. The evidence was running down his cheeks. But he found that he felt as if he had no choice. Sakaki would eventually ruin her own Brother in order to keep them apart. They couldn't fight it. It was impossible. This would save them the heartbreak.

"I'm doing the right thing... I'm doing the right thing..."

Tomeo stopped, gazing up at the starry sky. He loved the night. It was so peaceful, so comforting. Yet he found, he wished Yukio were here to enjoy it with him.

“Aren't I?”

17 - I Want You

He felt a heavy hand rock his shoulder. He wished it were Yukio's hand. Looking up behind him, his Father loomed over him. The strong reeking of alcohol filled the air. He had yet again been drinking and the effects still hung over him.

"Get up, it's 12 o'clock and it's a Monday." His Father mumbled in his gravely voice.

Tomeo jumped up, glancing over to the clock and to his dismay, his Father was right. "Why didn't you wake me earlier!?" He protested in his own defence.

"I would've but I slept in too." His Father hollowly chuckled and stumbled out of the room, closing the door behind him.

"shoot..." Tomeo cursed beneath his breath. Grabbing his uniform, he started to pull it on. Slowly, he ceased his actions and then realized that he wasn't in the mood for school. He was usually a good student but a break up always called for a streak of rebellion. Changing into some casual clothes, Tomeo grabbed a shoulder bag, his wallet and headed out the door. He caught a glimpse of his Father, sprawled across the couch with yet another beer in hand. "He would die if he knew what I was." Tomeo sighed. He would never have the closeness that he once had with his Father again. He needed his Mother for that. They both did.

Kicking around a few stones that lay in his path, he walked by Busuke's house wondering if had slept in too. He picked up a stone and chucked it at his window. The stone bounced back, the tap loud enough to wake him. That was if he was there. To his surprise, the window shifted up and open. A very messy haired Busuke poked his head out. He squinted against the light and finally looked down. His face burst into a grin and he waved enthusiastically.

"Hey Tomeo, what are you doing here?" Busuke asked.

"I'm skipping, what about you?" Tomeo replied.

"Oooo! Rebel!" He laughed. "I'm," Busuke made a pathetic attempt to cough. "Sick."

Tomeo rolled his eyes and chuckled. "Come down, or would you rather spend the day in your room?"

Busuke considered this, for a little longer than Tomeo would've liked. This called for an enticement. "We can pass the video store." Busuke rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "And I'll pay."

That was enough enticement; Busuke let out a woohoo and in a few minutes was down. Porn was a great way to bribe Busuke, it wasn't cheap, but he would be as obedient as a canine from the time of bribery to the time of receiving.

The two walked the streets of Genki until late afternoon. Their friendship was as strong as ever. Thought Busuke did notice that Tomeo seemed troubled, even though he was doing his best to hide. It was easy for him to see that whatever he held upon his shoulders was too heavy for him to carry on his own. Yet, he didn't want to ruin his chances by poking into his business.

Tomeo gave him the money. "You go in and pick what you want." Tomeo smiled and gave him a little nudge into the store.

Busuke didn't need any more encouragement. Though as he was looking through some heart racing DVDs, he felt something in his gut that told him that Tomeo needed a friend. And what was more, he felt guilty as Kisa's image continually flashed in the back of his mind. He sighed heavily and walked out.

"Damn conscious..."

It was all Tomeo heard as he walked out, handing him the money which hadn't been spent at all. He smiled, realizing what Busuke had done for him and followed along beside him.

“What's on your mind? I can tell you've been out of it.” Busuke suddenly questioned him as they were walking down the street.

This was Tomeo's chance to get the whole thing off his shoulders but he couldn't tell him. It would ruin their friendship. He knew what had happened between Yukio and him. The result of a released secret would be the end of their friendship.

“My Dad's being a real idiot. I think he's gonna lose his job.” Tomeo lowered his head so that Busuke couldn't see that he was still hiding something.

Busuke looked over and thought that maybe he was trying not to cry. “Cheer up. He can just get another.”

“He always wants to move whenever he loses his job and that would mean... leaving here.” Tomeo admitted to himself that he was also worried about this too. Yukio wasn't his whole life. But he sure was a huge part of it.

Busuke nodded. “It's okay. We'll keep in touch if that happens. Just try not to think about it. It'll all work out. Trust me.”

By the time that the sun was heading below the city's horizon, the two were going their separate ways. Busuke needed to go home and explain to his Mum why he wasn't in bed. Tomeo decided that he was going to stay out a little longer and enjoy the nightlife a little.

Later on that evening...

Sipping a soft drink, Tomeo glanced around the nightclub's dance floor. It looked fun but he didn't feel that he really belonged down there. Each guy had a girl and he'd just be alone. So instead, he stayed on the top floor just keeping to his own company.

“Hey, shorty.”

Turning around, Tomeo laid eyes upon a large and scary looking guy. It was a boy from Yukio's group named Shige. He was one of the guys that beat him up. His eyes widened with fear. He wasn't back to have another go at him was he?

“Come with me. Yukio wants to see you.”

Tomeo stayed put for a little while. But then as Shige took a step away, he stood and followed. He didn't seem suspicious.

Shige turned back once or twice before finally speaking. “Do you know why Yukio wants to see you?”

Tomeo was surprised that he asked but not surprised as to why he didn't know. It was no doubt that Yukio wanted to speak to him about them. He shook his head.

At the back of the nightclub there was a set of private rooms where customers could reserve them. Yukio was behind one of the doors and Tomeo wasn't going to wait to see him again. He knew that he missed him and that he wanted him back.

Shige pointed to the door on the far left and slipped out behind the curtain and onto the floor again while Tomeo knocked and opened the door. Upon walking in, the first thing that hit him was the sheer beauty and class of the room. It must have cost them a fair amount. But then, his eyes were drawn to the figure sitting on the lounge in the centre of the room. Yukio wore a skin-tight black shirt with sleeves that covered half of his hands, a pair of ripped loose jeans with a few chains and a studded belt. He had never looked so incredibly sexy before. Tomeo just wanted to run up and crash their lips together but the awfully awkward silence between them acted as a difficult barrier.

He took a couple of steps closer, letting his eyes wander nervously over his body. He couldn't focus on anything else.

In an unexpected movement, Yukio stood. He could feel his cold eyes piercing his flesh from beneath his shadowy bangs. He was so close. He could feel his warmth and smell his musky, intoxicating scent.

All from nowhere, he saw the blur as Yukio lifted his hand and slapped him across the cheek. The touch of his flesh was hard and icy. The tingling sensation that followed sent shivers down his spine. His head had been turned to the side with the force and the stinging was beginning to set in but the feeling he had. It hadn't gone away.

“I want you.”

Yukio's body shivered as he heard the words. Why didn't he hate him? Why didn't he want to hurt him in every way possible? He had felt that way when Busuke rejected him so why was this different? Then he thought for a moment, maybe this was real.

He snapped back to reality when he felt Tomeo's small arms wrap around his neck and hug him tightly. He was standing on his tip-toe toes, doing what he could to get closer to him. Yukio couldn't hold back or resist him. Embracing him firmly, one hand in his soft hair and the other on his back, he buried his face in his shoulder. Closing his eyes and savouring the feeling of having him back in his arms again, Yukio sighed.

Tomeo jumped as a knock on the door sounded out and Shige's voice muffled its way through the closed door. “Yukio?”

“He's going to come in and find us.” Yukio murmured softly.

“Do what you have to.” Tomeo whispered tenderly in reply. He closed his eyes as he felt Yukio's hand creep to a point. He knew what he was going to do. His finger pressed down and he felt his body tense up. His eyes went dark as he dropped to the floor unconscious.

As he dropped, the door opened and Shige saw him fall to the ground. “You really gave it to him. What did he do?”

Yukio's dark eyes slid over to meet Shige's and he answered, "He dishonoured me."

18 - Deception

Yukio bent down to his knees as Shige left the room. Tomeo seemed so peaceful simply lying there. Brushing the hair out of his eyes, he leaned closer and kissed him tenderly on the forehead. Everything that he had ever dreamed of was right before him. He couldn't be more thankful. He would wait until he awoke before he would take him home. Yukio just didn't want to disturb him.

“If anyone knew of our love, we could never show our faces again. But, as long as you were with me, I wouldn't care.” Yukio murmured. He knew that his status was important for his social survival but he didn't really need to have social security anymore. He had Tomeo and Tomeo had him.

Yukio watched Tomeo walk through his front door as he stood out of view in the darkness of the night. Smiling softly and jerking the collar of his jacket closer around his jaw line, he turned around in the direction of home. The echo of his shoes, the dull thumping of leather on concrete, continued to invade the night's silence. Yet for a moment he thought there was another intruder and that perhaps he wasn't alone. Glancing over his shoulder, he saw Busuke crossing the road. He seemed to be somewhat bothered and troubled. Not his usual self. Yet at the same time he seemed to be in disbelief and confusion. Yukio recognised this expression. It was the same when he had told him his feelings for him and that he wasn't joking. Tomeo was his friend and even though Busuke had come between them in the past, he trusted Tomeo. So he left.

Busuke knocked on the door and for the first time in the long time that he had now known Tomeo, he met his Father. Tomeo had described him perfectly. No wonder. He was topping the class in English for his poetry work and narratives. He was just as intimidating and repulsively drunken as was described. Busuke gagged a little at the scent of alcohol but managed to suppress it from Mr Sato's knowledge.

“Is Tomeo home?” Busuke asked as politely as he could manage under the situation.

Mr Sato growled a few words that he didn't quite catch but still left the door open for him. Busuke reluctantly walked in but found that the place was much cleaner and higher classed than he had expected. Tomeo's doing by the modern style used. Apart from the few stray bottles lying randomly around the lounge room, the little flat had been well treated and maintained. He was relieved when Tomeo greeted him with a friendly wave and invited him to sit down.

“Hey. What are you doing here?” Tomeo asked, a little surprised that he had come around just after they had spent the whole day together.

“What a way to speak to a guy looking for a friend's advice.” Busuke said with a light chuckle.

Tomeo smiled sheepishly. “Sorry.” He tilted his head. “Something on your mind?”

“You could say that.” Busuke replied, his voice dropping to a more serious tone. “But it's not just something, it's someone. I've been thinking.”

“A dangerous pass time.” Tomeo muttered and was hushed with a playful shove from Busuke. He continued.

“You know that I still have a thing for Kisa. I have to find a way for me to be alone with her and confess. That's where you come in. Yukio would never let me near her nor would Sakaki. Selfish assholes...”

Tomeo flinched but let it slip.

“You have to get her to come out to the gym after school. She's looking for someone to help her with her English. Of course it won't be you waiting for her, it will be me.” Busuke paused, waiting for some sort of agreement or encouragement on his plan.

Tomeo considered it. He would have to tell Yukio, he'd ask anyway and he wanted to try to have no secrets between them. Kisa was in his group after all. But how was he to avoid Sakaki? Busuke didn't know that she was just as threatening to him.

“Busuke... I don't know....” Tomeo finally answered awkwardly. He knew how much this meant to Busuke. His love for Kisa was exactly how he felt about Yukio. That's what made it hard for him to decline.

“Come on! I'd counting on you! I know it's a huge favour but you just can't fall out on me for this, it means too much!” Busuke protested. “Please?” Pleading came next.

Tomeo made a twisted `I'm not sure' face.

“You just don't know what it feels like to be in love.” Busuke mumbled.

He scoffed at his comment. Busuke didn't have a clue, so much so that it was amusing. “Fine. I'll ask her on Monday.”

Busuke's face lit up and he threw himself at Tomeo, lifting him off the ground in a huge bear hug. “I could kiss you!” He exclaimed.

Tomeo felt his chest tighten and he quickly pointed out that he had better save that for Kisa. With that Busuke agreed, placed him down and thanked him at least five times more before finally leaving. Tomeo sighed wondering what he had got himself into.

“Son. That was a really kind thing to do for that boy.”

Tomeo turned around, his Father was smiling. It was something that he hadn't done in quite a while.

“I've failed to notice what a young man you've become.”

Tomeo stared in disbelief. Where was all this praise coming from?

“I know I haven't been the best Father, but I hope that one day you might forgive me for it.”

Then the cold reality shined through the fog. He'd done this time and time again and yet he still managed to get him sucked in. Tomeo sighed. Looking to the ground.

“What have you done?”

His Father looked hurt at first but then that mask too melted under Tomeo's knowing glare. “I got fired.”

Tomeo laughed half-heartedly. “No surprises in that expect that they kept you for this long.”

“That's the thing. They didn't.”

“What do you mean?”

“I've used up all the saving trying to keep us afloat for the past few months.”

“Months? You mean they fired you months ago and you didn't tell me?”

“I didn't want to worry you-”

“Bullshoot! All you wanted to do was free ride as long as you could!”

Tomeo could see the shame but also the guilt in his eyes as he looked away to the ground.

“So, how long have we got until we get evicted? How much have we got left? Well, how much have you got left? Because I'm sick of you supporting me, I'd rather support myself. In fact, I'm moving out.”

“You can't. You don't have anything.”

“What are you talking about? I have my college fund and my savings and the share Mum left me, that's plenty for me to-”

The realisation hit him like a tone of bricks.

“You... You took all of it? Everything I had?”

His Father wouldn't or couldn't reply. He seemed too heavily burdened with guilt.

“Then what are we going to do?”

“... You're going to live with a new family from now on. Someone who will take care of you.”

Tomeo's eyes widened. He couldn't believe that he was hearing this. He couldn't believe what his Father had done to not only himself, but his Son too. His Father's own flesh and blood. Bowing his head, Tomeo tried to restrain himself from throwing a punch. He was furious. He clenched his fists in his rage, his body trembling. He whispered the words in a low voice, the words that he knew he would regret later but right now they made more sense than anything else that had been said.

“I hate you.”

19 - New Home, New Family, New Life

Tomeo stormed upstairs, hiding his devastation in his room and locking the door. In a fury, he kicked his bed, his bare feet suffering. But he didn't care. Pain was the last thing on his mind. He'd only just recovered a seemingly lost relationship that he wasn't prepared to give up but now... he didn't have a choice.

Collapsing hopelessly on his bed, Tomeo rest his head in his hands and choked out a few dry sobs. Trembling with fear of what was to become of him, he took up the photo frame on his bedside table and hugged it close to his heart.

“Tell me what to do Mum... I need your help... You said you'd always look after me...” Tomeo squeezed the picture tighter, hoping, praying that he would receive an answer. But there was no reply. “Then I'll have to do what I think is right.” Tomeo murmured. With that in mind, he grabbed an old gym bag and stuffed in what he could as fast as possible. He didn't want to stay a minute longer in a house where his Father slept. He couldn't stand to be around him any longer. He was suffocating him, draining the life from him and he wasn't about to let that happen anymore. He had made his decision. To where he would run to, he didn't know. With what he would use to survive, he didn't know. All he knew was anywhere was better than here and that new family he was being shipped off to.

As he was climbing out the window, his Father opened the door. “Tomeo! Wait, don't run!”

Tomeo scowled, his beautiful face stained with tears. “Why the hell not?!”

“You have nothing but what you can carry with no where to go. Is this a wise move?” His Father stalled him as he inched closer to the phone.

Tomeo glanced around, finding it difficult to meet eye to eye with his Father. “You have ... you have no right to lecture me old man!” Tomeo hissed.

He took another few steps closer to the phone. “You're right but I do have the right to let you know that

you're making the same mistake I did.”

Tomeo already knew that his Father had once run away when he was younger, in fact he was practically his age. This stopped him in his tracks. Did this mean that he may turn out like his Father, a useless, good for nothing drunk? He paused wondering if this was the future that lay before him.

Mr Sato now held the phone behind his back and pressed the buttons for the emergency help. He would hold the conversation with Tomeo, stalling him in time for the police to come and escort him to his new home.

“You can blame me all you want but please don't ruin your own life by running away. Your new family will love you and keep you safe. They will accept you no matter what.”

“Accept me? You don't even know who I am!”

“You're my Son.”

“Not anymore... I'm not having anything to do with you.” Tomeo lowered himself down a little further.

“Just wait, I want to talk. Just talk, that's all.”

Tomeo paused. Why was his Father doing this? Keeping him here. Then it dawned on him as the police car pulled up in the driveway. He was getting him taken there with the cops? “Wow. This is a new low for you.”

Mr Sato sighed and frowned, unable to meet his son's fiery gaze. “Just get in the car.”

Tomeo leaned against the glass, the sound of cars whooshing past keeping him awake. He wasn't sure where he was going, where they were taking him. It seemed as if they had been driving for hours

through the night.

An Officer turned back. A kind looking man, but his occupation caused Tomeo's trust to be withheld. "We'll be there soon." His face became stern. "You can't run away now Tomeo. Promise me that."

Tomeo felt like spitting on him but he mumbled a 'fine' in order to get the guy off his case. Drawing a breath, he stared out at the lights from the back seat of the police car. He suddenly wished Yukio were here with him. He wanted to be held so badly by his strong arms.

"I will still be going to the same school, right?" Tomeo broke the silence.

The same kind man looked back at him and then glanced at his partner who was driving. The other guy shrugged and he turned back to Tomeo. "I'm not sure, your new family will decide that."

"But I have to stay there! I have friends and a b-" He cut himself off. He wasn't going to tell them that.

"It may be hard at first, but you'll settle in. It'll be okay." The kind officer comforted him. Or at least attempted to comfort him.

Tomeo fought back tears the entire way. He might never see his friends and Yukio again. He would have to be the new kid yet again, that was if his new parents decided to move him from Genki High.

Finally, they arrived. It seemed like the cops had done their duty and left him at the front door, standing there with his belongings as soon as the door was answered. A beautiful young woman answered and held the door wide open, smiling.

"Welcome! You must be Tomeo. I'm Mrs Futchisohma but you can call me Erizabesu. Come in!" Erizabesu exclaimed happily.

Tomeo felt bad since he was so unhappy that he would ruin her obvious happiness. She seemed so excited and pleased to have him here. She was a blonde woman, European through and through. She had the most glorious green eyes and her skin was as pale as the moon was white. She was long legged and simply gorgeous.

As she ushered him in, he realized there was a small child clinging to her leg. She had her mother's green eyes even though she had the Japanese features. She seemed very shy at first but as soon as Tomeo placed down his bags and his hand was free, she reached out and took his thumb in her light grasp and lead him into the lounge room where it seemed she had her tea set all ready to play with. She offered him a pillow.

"This one is yours." She informed him as she poured some real hot tea into his cup. Tomeo was a little surprised that she had real tea.

"Um, Erizabesu? Is she supposed to...?"

Erizabesu turned back with her smile still on but as soon as she saw the hot tea, her face dropped. "Honey, honey, honey! You're not supposed to use this. Tea is for grown ups. I'm so sorry, Keitii keeps on breaking into the kitchen and boiling the kettle all on her own." Erizabesu gave a nervous laugh. "Oh, you should meet my husband, Sutiiven. He's in the kitchen preparing dinner."

Tomeo stood and took the tea with him, Keitii followed, her long, plated raven hair flowing out behind her as she ran into the kitchen. She had dark bangs just like Yukio. Tomeo stared at her and felt saddened. Was he ever going to see him again?

"Erizabesu? I must ask you something." Tomeo said before they entered the kitchen.

"Why yes, of course." Erizabesu replied cheerfully.

“Will I be staying at Genki High?” Tomeo's questioned as his hands clenched into fists nervously.

“Oh yes, we wouldn't want to disturb your social life.” Erizabesu answered.

Tomeo almost jumped out of his skin with joy. “You've just made my day!” Tomeo laughed and found he was hugging her enthusiastically.

She didn't seem to mind and instead of just receiving, she hugged him back. “I'm so glad that you're happy.” She said affectionately.

Tomeo smiled. His Father got one thing right. They really did love him.