

The Bet

Or such a thing called Love

Von mie-van-cha

Kapitel 16: Chapter 16

Tegoshi slept shoddily that night. He threw himself anxiously from one side to the other one and whimpered. He had a nightmare. Ryo woke up from the sound of Tegoshi's desperate voice. He saw his painful, sad face and without hesitating he pulled Tegoshi into his arms and held him tightly. Nearly immediately Tegoshi's whimpers silenced.

"Sssh..." Ryo made anyway as if he pampered a baby. Tegoshi's sleeping face was still heartbreakingly sad, full of grief and sorrow, but he sighed, totally worn out and moved further into Ryo's protective embrace. With his fingers he grabbed Ryo's shirt and held it.

And again Ryo was worrying what in the world was troubling Tegoshi so much.

Tegoshi felt sick the next morning. His throat was swollen and his voice scratchy. He felt as if he wouldn't have slept a single minute that night. He was powerless when he woke up and had no motivation for the day. But he forced himself to get out of the bed anyway. Ryo was already away, but he'd left a message on the table, saying he was at home meeting his parents and siblings. Tegoshi was glad to be alone. He didn't want Ryo to see him like that, because it would have just brought his worry for him back.

Tegoshi's head was aching as if 100 elephants would have a great party in there. But this pain was nothing against his heart. It felt empty, though it was heavy like a lead weight inside his chest.

After he'd looked at the clock which told him it was around lunch-time he decided to take a hot bath. The thick overwhelming air befuddled him even more, but he was too dull to even realize it. His head was full of nothing, but his brain weight as much as his heart. He just laid there in the bathtub, the hot water nearly boiling him and stared at the flagging on the walls. The pain in his head vibrated behind his forehead. He nearly fell asleep after some time, so he struggled himself out of the bathtub. With slow heavy steps he walked to his bed, just in shorts, and crawled under the blankets. He

was terribly cold, but his head felt still so unbearable hot from the bath. He didn't realize he slipped into shallow sleep after a few minutes.

He woke up from some noise. There was somebody with him in the room. He forced his eyes a bit open, but his sight was blurred. He groaned.

"Tesshi?" A worried voice. It took a moment till he noticed whose it was.

"Pi...-chan?" he whispered and narrowed his eyes, trying to get a clear glimpse of the face in front of him.

"Mh." Was the answer. "Are you okay?"

Tegoshi needed to breathe in and out a few times to get the energy to reply. "I'm not sure...I'm...not so good..."

"Thought so... You don't seem alright."

Tegoshi felt a hand touching his cheek, but immediately stopping in the movement. "Shit, Tegoshi!"

"What?" Yamapi's shocked shout echoed in his head, leaving beats of pain as it wavered out.

"You're hot! I mean, you're burning!" Yamapi's hand felt icy-cold and good on his forehead. "You have a damn high fever!"

Fever?...Oh...

Tegoshi took a deep breath. "Oh..." he groaned and tried a weak smile. "Sorry..."

"Oh? Gosh, Tesshi, you have at least 40°C!"

Tegoshi didn't know what to say. Yamapi's usually so well-sounding voice was incredibly loud in his sore head. "Please...calm down..." he pleaded and closed his eyes in exhaustion.

"Calm down?" Yamapi repeated in shock. Tegoshi's face was wet due to sweat. He didn't know what to do. He was sure he had to bring down the fever no matter what, but he didn't have any medicine.

"Tesshi?"

"Mh...?"

"I'm going to ask somebody for something against fever, okay? Don't move, I'll be right back."

"Okay..." Tegoshi nodded with greatest effort. And then he felt a pair of comfortable soft lips onto his own ones. But before he could open his eyes to look if it wasn't just

his tired imagination that went crazy without his weak body being able to control his wishes, he heard Yamapi leaving the room and closing the door behind himself. Tegoshi laid there in silence again. The fact Yamapi were here stirred him up, but not as much as it would've done when his head would have not been so foggy. He could still feel Yamapi's lips, but he had imagined them so much onto his own ones up till now, he couldn't say this time was true, not a childish daydream again. The blankets felt thick and heavy on his chest and he was so hot, yet he feared to get cold as soon as he lifted them a bit to get some fresh air at his body.

Just when he was about to slip into sleep again Yamapi came back, and with him Koyama. Tegoshi could hear his voice.

"Tegoshi?" Yamapi asked full of worry in a low tone. "Tesshi? Koyama has some painkillers. They should bring down your fever too."

"Mmmh..." was all Tegoshi was able to bring out.

"Can you sit up to flush the pills down with some water?"

"Hm?"

He heard a little sigh. "Come on. I'll help you, okay?" Tegoshi felt Yamapi's pleasantly cold hands in his neck and on his back. Everything in his head swirled a moment when Yamapi sat him up in the pillows. He had no other chance now than to open his eyes. He looked into Yamapi's worried face, and right behind that he could see the shape of Koyama. "Here, open your mouth." Yamapi said in a low voice and pushed a little pill between his lips into his mouth.

"You have to drink it up." Koyama said, but it was unnecessary. As soon as the first drop touched Tegoshi's tongue he realized how thirsty he actually was and he finished the glass of water in one greedy gulp. After that the overwhelming exhaustion came back. The fact he sat up even increased his headache. He was relieved when Yamapi laid him back again. He heard the worried whispers of Koyama and Yamapi, but he didn't want to understand them. All he wanted was to sleep...

Yamapi and Koyama kept watch by Tegoshi's bed sight for three hours. They looked at his sweaty face which became more and more less shaken as his fever went down. They jumped up when he twitched and opened his eyes.

"Pi-chan?" Tegoshi whimpered.

"I'm here." Yamapi grabbed his tiny hot hand. "Do you feel better?"

"Mmh...Yes, I think so..." Tegoshi held his forehead. The pain was just a little throb now. His mind was clear, yet his body felt still weak though. His stomach moaned. "I'm hungry." He squeaked in a high scratchy voice, his still reddened cheeks even blushed a bit through a whimsically teeny-tiny smile and he looked pleadingly at Yamapi.

"I'll go to get you some soup." Yamapi said immediately. He was lucky that Tegoshi seemed better. Hesitating he looked at Koyama as he stood up. "I'll stay with him." Koyama promised and Yamapi left with the relieving feeling that Tegoshi was in good hands during his absence.

Koyama's eyes looked deep into Tegoshi's. "Is it because of them?"

"Eh?"

"Ryo-chan and Yamapi. It's because of them, isn't it?"

"I don't get you."

"Don't try to fool me. It's obvious they're fighting for you."

Tegoshi looked at him with honest confusion.

Koyama stared back in surprise. "You really didn't notice...?"

"Notice what?"

Koyama shook his head. "Forget it. It's okay." He smiled. "Probably I misunderstood something."

Tegoshi sighed.

"But something's troubling you anyway, deshou?"

A moment passed, then Tegoshi nodded.

"I...I love them....Both of them...But that's not right...And it's not easy either. Every time I'm with one of them my decision changes...I wish I would be sure, but I'm not...It's not fair of me. They have the right that I'm honest and fair to them..." Tegoshi's voice got more and more quiet until it silenced.

Yamapi came back, opened the door, but neither Koyama nor Tegoshi noticed or heard him.

"Ryo said...Ryo said I should forget about Pi-chan..." Silence.

Yamapi stood there, the hot soup for Tegoshi in his hand and he could hear his heartbeat rushing in his head. Before he knew what he did he'd left the room without being noticed again.

"But I can't. Pi-chan is important to me. As well as Ryo..."

"Oh, Tesshi..." Koyama sympathetically grabbed his hand. "Why didn't you say something?"

"I was afraid...and confused." His voice trembled. Tears were in his big puppy-eyes that stared at the blankets covering his hot body. "But...I think I know what to do now." The sudden determined look on Tegoshi's face made Koyama aware. "To do what?" he asked carefully and afraid of the answer he already suspected.

Tegoshi looked up. Every single trace of fever in his face was away. His eyes were sure, no sparkle of doubt or hesitate in them.

"I will quit NEWS."