Chapter 17.3: Just Do It

I was shocked at her words but quickly got my cool before she could notice.

“Selective accords?” I asked.

“No need to deny; I wanted him to tell you because I knew it would make you come here faster. I mean, if you knew I was going to bully you, then you’d come, and I’d handle this quickly.”

“...”

I was speechless because this girl was banking everything on a plan that didn’t even go right.

Innō didn’t tell me she was going to bully me; I happened to pick up his call on a whim, and I came early, also on a whim.

“Surprised, huh? Y’know, I can be really smart when I want to,” she flipped her hair with her hand.

Your plan worked because of a coincidence. I don’t think that makes you smart. Of course, I’m not one to talk when it comes to coincidences.

Honochi just showed me how I judged her too quickly earlier when I called her smart—she seemed to have mastery only in social settings.

“...”

“You seem speechless. Well, that is to be expected. That being said, Nakamura, I want you to do something for me.”

“Hmm?”

“Do not even think of telling Ito or Kagura about your situation, or you might get expelled again.”

“...How so?”
“I will invite someone to our class and, by using the Selective Accords, I’ll tell them about your rapist tendencies.”
“...But that—”
“And if you’re thinking about whether they’ll believe me, trust me, they will. I still have the voice recording from Aiya-chan.”
“Voice recording?”
“Oh, you don’t know? Aiya-chan recorded your attempt at raping her—everyone has it.”
“Eh?”
“Wanna hear?” Honochi grinned.
Wait, if this is true, why did Ito and Kagura believe me?
“Wh—”
“That being said, Kagura-chan and Ito didn’t listen to it; maybe that is why he still tolerates scum like you. Anyway, if you tell them you understand what happens,” she had a wide smile, and it was frankly unnerving.
“...”
This was a checkmate, truly a checkmate indeed, even if I tried to report her.
If I reported her early, then she could just deny it and could even tell our classmates that I tried to falsely accuse her, reducing my Rp even more than it was.
If I tried to report during the action, the other person would still know and tell other people—the same would happen if I reported her after the action and had evidence by recording her.

Of course, there was the possibility that if I told the chairman, then he could send the same message that he sent to the class to the person that Honochi told. However, the person could easily just tell people before that happens, and it could reach Fuji… and I really wanted to avoid that.
I was also somewhat sure that Honochi did a deal similar to this with Kobayashi—it explained why he didn't report her.
"Of course, it goes without saying that you cannot report to anyone else and you cannot run away from us; you must play with us till we get bored. Do we have an understanding?" She grinned, extending her hand out for a handshake.
"..."
I silently just looked at her hand. I was reminiscing about how I did something similar to someone.
So this is how Arai felt, huh. I feel really bad now that I got the same thing.
"...Or are you against it?" she said, walking away.
Damn, she even copied my bluffing. Was she there?
"I accept your offer."
She came back with a smile, giving me a handshake like we were signing a business deal.
"Though I must ask, why are you doing this?"
"Wasn't it obvious? It's because I hate you," she said, her smile fading. "You took Ito away from me and even tried to spread a rumour about him."
"Took him from you…?"

What's this girl talking about?
"Uh, I meant from the girls," she said quickly, trying to cover up what she said before. "Anyway, since I'm done with explaining everything, I'm done with this act of helping you."
"I—"
"I don't really need an answer. Gosh, you're stupid," she said, walking away in annoyance.
With our conversation done, I went back to class, and shortly after, Ito came.
Also, on an unrelated note, by the time Ito entered the class, my clothes were pretty much dry.
I glanced at Honochi because what was I going to do if he noticed that? This really showed how she really wasn't as smart as I gave her credit for.
"Huh? Why is everyone here so early? Did something happen?" he asked.
"We were just reading for the special test," Honochi said, trying not to arouse suspicion.
"Oh, but why wasn't I invited?"
"You weren't? I must have forgotten to text you. Sorry about that."
"Nah, no biggie. And also, before I forget, there won't be a study session today because the committee members have a bit of work to do."
With that, he sat down, and shortly after, Suzuki came to school. In a few minutes, we had homeroom, and class was underway.

Class was fairly normal; in fact, the gossip stopped. Perhaps people felt bad for me.
However, while I wasn't getting the usual gossip, I got bullied, though it was so childish that I couldn't really call it bullying.
They took my pen when I went to the restroom, though I luckily had spare pens.
My notebook page was covered in pen ink, but I easily tore out the page and rewrote what was on that page.
They poured water on my chair; however, I used the page I tore out to clean it.
Luckily for them, Ito didn't notice when all this happened, though it was all in all not hard to deal with; what was daunting was what would come when they eventually called for me.
However, I got my mind off it by remembering something I had to do.
Ring, Ring, Ring.
At the sound of the bell, I sent a message to Kagura—meeting her physically could make Honochi think I was going against her wishes.
[Me: I need a favor.]
I'm sure you're asking why I would do this, especially since I said I never want to talk to her.
The thing is, I actually forgot about my other reason for meeting Kagura that day, and since I opened up that wound already, I couldn't just go back on it.
Well, I suppose 'forget' is not the right word. I didn't forget, but got sidetracked and remembered as I was

leaving. Anyway, I had to ask her now.

[Kagura-chan: Huh? I thought you said you wouldn't talk to me again.]

[Me: ...I need your help. I need you to meet with someone.]

[Kagura-chan: Sorry to disappoint you, but I don’t want to do it.]

[Me: Nah, it’s fine. It was my fault that I planned a surprise without your permission.]

[Kagura-chan: Surprise? What kind of surprise?]

[Me: I planned on surprising my friend Fuji by bringing someone else to keep her company. She doesn’t have that many friends.]

[Kagura-chan: Really? That’s so sad; so you’re one of her only friends.]

[Me: I’m her only friend.]

[Kagura-chan: So the favour you wanted was for me to accompany you to hang out with her?]

[Me: Yes, exactly.]

[Kagura-chan: Ok, if that’s it, then I guess I can come. What class is she in?]

Of course, what I did to her was planned; I guilt-tripped her. Well, at first, I made her interested when I mentioned the ‘surprise’.

After that, I successfully guilt-tripped her because of her people-pleasing character.

I was sure that she would change her mind if I mentioned Fuji's situation.

That being said, in a normal situation, Kagura wouldn't be able to come because of her friends.

However, because of what I did yesterday, Kagura wouldn’t be with her friends; in fact, she didn’t talk to any of them during class.

So in a way, what I did yesterday actually helped. Not that I intentionally did that for that effect, but I kind of expected that to happen.

[Me: We don’t meet in her class; we meet in the library. I’ll meet you in front of the library.]

[Kagura-chan: Ok then.]

After she texted that she headed out of class, I followed her shortly after.

“So… do you still view me as a bad person?” she asked as we walked to the library.

“Yes, I still do.”

“Oh…” She looked down.

“That being said, you shouldn’t care about what I said. You become good when you do good, not when I tell you that you’re good… And now, you’re doing well. You

shouldn’t act based on what people think of you.”

Just because I guilt-tripped her and used her people-pleasing personality, that didn’t mean that I wouldn’t help her.

After all, we were allies and were friends.

“I’m guessing that means you noticed that I’m a people pleaser.”

“...”

I didn't explicitly say that, but I was still implying it. However, this meant that Kagura was aware that she was a people pleaser.

“No need to hide it,” she said.

“Not really hiding it. I just noticed you are smarter than you act.”

“I’m flattered you think that, but I’m just observant, and moreover, when did you realise I was ‘smart’?”

“When you did that phone call strategy.”

Well, maybe a little earlier.

“Oh, that. I thought it was earlier than that.”

“Earlier?”

“Yes, when we were on the train for that party, I was observing you.”

“I actually *do* remember that, but I wasn’t sure if you

were observing me or not.”

I was sure, but wanted to just move the conversation back to the phone call because even if I didn’t lie, it would make no difference.

“Oh.”

“Also, how *did* you do that phone call strategy?”

“...” She went silent; even her breathing was halted for a brief moment.

“...Can’t say?”

She nodded in affirmation, and there was an awkward silence.

“Thanks for listening to my request,” I said, breaking the silence.

“Well, I kinda had to, especially when you cajoled me.”

“So you knew and still came? You’re really amazing, you know that, right?”

“You really need to stop with the flattery,” she giggled softly.

While I can’t help but wonder what made you into a people-pleaser, I don’t think prying will do anything.

We continued to talk and arrived at the library in a short time.

We walked over to the place where Fuji and I hung

out—when Fuji was in our line of sight, I stopped and turned to look at Kagura.

“I’ll tell her you're here, but I still want it as a surprise, so when I clap my hands, you’ll appear.”

“Ok.”

I went over to meet Fuji, picking up a book on a shelf. I picked up ‘Invisible Man’ by Ralph Ellison. It was his first novel, and the only one published during his lifetime.

However, it was still quite an amazing book despite being published in 1947.

“Yo,” I greeted Fuji.

“Oh, hey, Nakamura.”

I sat down beside her with a large grin.

“What’s with the creepy grin?”

“Nothing,” I replied. “So, Fuji, you know how you don’t have any female friends? I can help with that.”

“Not just female friends; you’re my only friend. Also, didn’t we go over this yesterday?”

“You said you would drive them away, but I can help with that—I’ll help teach you how to make friends, particularly female friends.”

“How?”

I didn’t answer, just kept smiling. I chose Kagura to help

me with this because of her people-pleasing nature.

I know, I know. It sounds bad, but I knew that eventually Kagura would get used to Fuji's way of speaking and help tweak it.

Moreover, Fuji also needed female friends and a bigger area of exposure, not just a friend who silently reads beside her, making a few side comments.

"I'm going to bring the best of the best."

"Huh? Couldn't you just teach me?"

I laughed nervously; it seemed Fuji apparently thought I was a master of making friends.

When I was actually the complete opposite.

I'm—at best—just a little better than you.

I clapped my hands, and Kagura slid into the area where we were.

"Heyo!" She screamed, though one couldn't really call it a scream because it was quite low since we were in the library. At any rate, it carried the energy needed.

"Uhh…" Fuji stared blankly at Kagura.

"Hey, Fuji," Kagura stretched out her hand for a handshake. "It's an honour to meet you."

"How do you know my name? No better question. Who are you anyway?"

“Eh?” Kagura forced a smile. “You don’t know me?!”

“Yes.”

It seemed that for someone as popular as Kagura, being unknown was just not possible. Well, considering how Fuji didn’t have many friends, it wasn’t a shock for me.

“I don’t think I heard you right; please say that again.”

“I do not know who you are.”

“Huh?!” Kagura collapsed in an exaggerated motion before standing up. “You’re really something, Fuji.”

“But seriously, who are you?”

“Fuji, she’s the person who’s gonna teach you,” I said.

“Oh, I see.”

“Yeah, anyway, my name’s Kagurazaka Akane. Call me Kagura.”

“Oh, well, I’m Fujimoto Misaki. Call me Fujimoto.”

“Sure thing, Fuji.”

“I thought I told you to call me Fujimoto,” Fuji furrowed her brows.

“Relax. Friends should use nicknames with each other."

“When did I say that we were friends? I just met you. I don’t appreciate you using the nickname that Eiya came up with,” Fuji narrowed her eyes.

“I mean, what’s bad with adding another friend—Wait,

did you say Eiya? Are you two da—”

“No, we’re not,” I cut in. “Also, could you guys stop this?”

“Stop what? You can hardly call this a fight.”

“Sure… Let’s just say that’s true. The thing is that you guys are forgetting that we have limited time for break,” I pointed at the clock—we had used 5 minutes just for introductions.

“R-right, that’s true, so then let me begin. Now, it’s time for both of you to listen.”

“Huh? Both of us? Aren’t you only teaching me?” Fuji looked perplexed, and so did I.

“Nakamura doesn’t have much experience with girls—well, at least not in this school.”

Yup, I’m somewhat of a loner.

“Huh?”

“Anyway, Kagura, please begin,” I said, quickly changing the subject.

“Now, to understand the female psyche—”

“You do know that Fuji is a girl, righ—”

Before I could finish my sentence, I saw Kagura pick up a book and smack me with it.

“Owww,” I cried. “What’d I do?”

“Don’t interrupt the teacher.”

“Hey, don’t hurt Eiya.”

“Nah, don’t worry. Nakamura’s super tough.”

It seemed that Kagura messed up her Japanese and meant to say ‘brittle’ because I couldn’t even fathom a universe where I was tough.

“Anyway, let’s continue,” Kagura said. “Oh, right, I don't even know the root cause. So, Fuji, is there any particular reason why you have trouble making friends?”

“I, uh, have a problem filtering myself.”

“Huh? I saw no such problem,” Kagura said.

“Well, it’s cuz I didn’t notice anything particularly stupid about you. Yet,” Fuji retorted.

“Yet?”

“Now, that was intentional. I was getting back at you for hitting Eiya.”

Go Fuji!

“Well, let’s just continue the lesson.”

“I suppose we can continue—”

Bling!

“Hmm?” I heard a sound from my phone and saw it was a message—a message from Honochi, but I didn’t have her account.

In this school, if you received a message from an

unsaved account, you can see the name of the user (well, their selected nickname), but they can't see whether you viewed their chat.

[Honochi: Stay in class after school.]

I expected this message, but was still annoyed when I eventually saw it. At any rate, instead of being angry, I got hungry.

"Well, that's a wrap," I said, getting up.

"Huh? Where are you going, Eiya?" Fuji looked clearly confused.

"I have some stuff that I forgot about and set an alarm," I lied. Well, it was a white lie. I actually did forget to eat.

"Really?" Fuji looked sad; if she begged me, I might have had to stay. "Well, I understand."

Of course, Fuji was already growing to not be too dependent on me.

"Later. Also, Kagura, teach her well."

"Sure."

I headed over to class and began eating my lunch while thinking about what Kagura would teach Fuji. Kagura would be an excellent teacher because of her remarkable social intelligence.

However, experience doesn't equal teaching ability. That being said, I happened to observe her during the study

sessions and noticed how she was teaching people who scored just below me.

That made me ascertain that she most likely could do the job.

Moreover, it was not like *I* could teach Fuji.

Because after all, social interactions are another thing that I am useless at… for now.

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Author's Note:

Anyway, remember to comment, share, and leave a review. Thanks for reading the chapter, and see you in the next one.