Chapter 7

(V1) - Kiyotaka observes Horikita making the first steps in her attempt to better Class D. He first tests her by randomly faking going to sleep in class next to her which makes him get stabbed by her compass instantly. He also sees that like him, she had analyzed that most of the problems regarding misbehavior have fixed themselves and that she set her objective on ensuring everyone clears the Midterms exam, with the study groups helping everyone except the unwilling Sudo, Ike and Yamauchi. Kiyo gives the suggestion of Horikita holding a study group for them, but finds himself put to the task of convincing them, as his persona is both manipulated and threatened by his new boss.

Just as he predicted, the effort of personally trying to persuade them to join Horikita's study group was futile. Kiyotaka knew each of their individual attitudes, confidence in their limited abilities and lack of situational awareness would make them delude themselves that they can cram the Midterms on the night before.
Ayanokoji knew that the easiest way to make them accept joining the study group and more importantly attend and commit to the studies is to exploit what they had in common. Kushida Kikyo, the class angel who was so sociable and could charm everyone regardless of gender, was someone who all of the 3 idiots had at least a good impression of, if not being straight up in love with.

While she was already perfect for the task, Kiyotaka's main goal had shifted to capitalizing on this opportunity to reignite the fuse between Kushida and Horikita and to find out the truth behind their bizarre chemistry, more specifically to discern the obsession Kushida has with Horikita. His plan is to force them to be working together in close proximity in order to trigger some situations where Horikita will be forced to push Kushida's appeals away. Ayanokoji plans to test Kushida's limits and see if she will peacefully give up from her desperate attempt to befriend Horikita, or will she finally snap and reveal more of what she is hiding in her heart.

The pretext of them working together for the class was not enough, as he had to account for the fact that Horikita would dislike having to deal with Kushida again after their past interaction, so if he tries to approach her in class, Suzune would go and stop him, and also ensure that Kushida cannot join her study group.

Away from Horikita, Kiyotaka approaches Kushida with the pretext of them trying again to have her get closer to the ice queen, as well as mentioning the cruel fate awaiting the 3 idiots. In this order, Kiyotaka showcased Horikita as doing something by herself for the sake of the class, from her own goodwill, something which Kiyotaka knew that the angel herself, regardless if fake or not, regardless of her feelings of Horikita being positive or negative, judging from her past actions, would surely not overlook and miss to embark on, as Kiyotaka is giving Kushida the perfect excuse to join for the sake of assistance in a task Suzune struggles with, regardless if her main motive is to do that or has ulterior ones, where in the latter case Kiyotaka additionally relies on the task being of Kushida's character to exercise.

Only after Kushida was able to easily secure all 3 idiots into their study group, Ayanokoji informed Horikita of her joining up. As expected, it upset her, but she had no way to argue against it seeing the results.
In the way Kiyotaka arranged the scenario, there's 2 possible foreseen ways Suzune reacts upon having to deal with Kushida.
- If she accepts Kushida's cooperation, Ayanokoji would be able to deem that Horikita has no bias towards her, as he had already understood from her strong willpower that she is willing to pair up with the right people if it meant working for the class despite past minor inconveniences such as the cafe incident.
- As it happened, Horikita tried to isolate Kushida from the study group while still having her recruit students, which she passed the order down to Ayanokoji. He had now concluded that a deep bias runs in Horikita in regards to Kikyo, one that is deeper than the cafe incident, which he asked her about it being the case just to make sure it wasn't.
While Horikita calls it simple hatred, Ayanokoji perceives in Suzune's attempts to avoid explaining further when adding the fact that she verbally dropped a hint regarding her feelings of unease in her admission of hatred, that Suzune more so feels extremely uncomfortable around Kushida.
This is different in comparison to the first weeks in ANHS such as when the cafe incident happened. At that time Suzune had an indifferent attitude towards Kushida, by no means particularly different compared to anyone else.
Seeing that Kushida's goal of approaching Suzune conventionally did not change as she accepted his proposal, nor did her attitude to Horikita in any way, so Ayanokoji understood that this change came exclusively from Horikita and also that Kushida and Suzune did not have any private interactions, unless Kushida is hiding something and aims to keep getting close to Suzune, despite the latter not wanting to due to her own comfort being at stake.

Assuming that no interaction was made, then the only explanation was that Horikita was struck by a realization of some sort, one which particularly made intend to keep her distance.
Kiyotaka then looks back in his memories to Kushida's lines of dialogue:

NOTE: Ayanokoji had already seen through abnormalities in how Kushida approached Horikita and what she had known about her ever since the second day in ANHS, when Kikyo had known of her name already despite it being very unlikely that she had either gotten into contact with Sudo, the only other person who knew of her name at that time, or Horikita had dropped it herself despite not wanting to associate with her.
He had passively waited for more revelations to spring if there were any as he suspected, as with such little information at the time he had nothing to infer.

P1: "Are you a good swimmer, Horikita-san? I wouldn't say I'm particularly good or bad at it." "I was really bad at swimming when I was in junior high. But I gave it my all and practiced really hard, and now I think I've gotten better" - 1st time Swimming Poll
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P2: "Horikita-san, whatever you say, I really want to be friends with you. When I saw you, I felt like it wasn't the first time we'd met. I wondered if you felt the same way," Kushida mumbled. - Cafe Setup
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C1/P3: In both her only significant attempts at interacting with Horikita to befriend her, Kushida brings up the past as the firsthand topic of communication.
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P4: She further says that she feels like she had met her before, and she is curious if Suzune feels like she had met her before, which again, is used as a motive of friendship appeal by Kikyo in an outside context.
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P5: Sometime after the attempt at the cafe, Suzune had this realization and started thinking differently of Kushida and her attempts at friendship, negatively at that.
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C2/P6: Horikita had remembered Kushida from some time in her past, which is most likely in middle school given Kikyo had previously referenced it. Kushida and Horikita were not close by any means, seeing that Suzune could not remember her either by face or name at first glance.

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P7: Kushida's main motive of being so desperate to approach Horikita lies somewhere connected with the fact that Kushida remembered Horikita, someone from her past, from the very beginning or not long after joining ANHS.
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P8: Considering her great academics and incredible social ability, Kushida would be surely fit for a higher, if not directly into class A normally, but for some reason she was placed in Class D due to her defect, one which by elimination is exclusively related to an event in her past.
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P9: Such a past event must be something impactful enough to cause significant amounts of turmoil or chaos in her environment, given that even such a large number of absences is highly unlikely to demote a student from the highest to the lowest class when they meet all other requirements. It must be an event of catastrophic magnitude directly attributed to Kushida's profile which somehow makes her be considered defective enough to pose the risk of being a negative influence to the others around her.
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P10: Horikita being uncomfortable by Kushida's presence infers that she is aware of something to make her uncomfortable by Kushida, therefore to a degree Horikita is aware of a horrible event in Kushida's past, which is the main cause of her defect.
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C3/P11: Kushida's past incident occurred in middle school, which is where Horikita heard of it. It can be considered horrible or tragic.
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P12: Kikyo's current status all around the ANHS campus is that of a class angel. One of the most popular and cherished students by men and women alike. She has everyone looking up to her and showering her with praise and affection. That social position is something which many people would enjoy having. Therefore Kushida is definitely aiming to keep such a reputation, regardless if she is genuine about her interactions or not.
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P13: Considering the incident was harsh enough to get Kushida in Class D instead of A or B, as well as to make Suzune uncomfortable, it is very likely that it is an incident which if found out, would heavily damage Kushida's reputation in the whole ANHS.
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P14: Kushida does not want anyone in her new environment to know of what

happened in the past.
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C4: Kushida, when recognizing Horikita, has realized that she is someone who possibly knows of the incident and therefore is a risk to her high school life. The reason Kushida is so interested and ultimately desperate in approaching Horikita is to ensure that she won't leak what happened, so to keep her close. Kushida's attempts of bringing up the past as a pretext in their short conversations was her testing Horikita to remember if she knows of something.

Ultimately, Kiyotaka concluded that even the most beautiful apples can be rotten at their core. Soon after the call with Suzune where she rejects Kushida's presence, he sighs and remembers of the defective products that ANHS has to offer to him to deal with, saying he could somehow understand what Suzune was saying today.

The revelation that she is prone to stress induced from struggling to keep her secret safe seeing all her past failures at approaching Horikita, together with the actual intent to suppress the past of her situation from being revealed in the first place confirms that Kushida's angelic personality is at the very least, not genuine to a marginal degree.
This lack of truth in Kushida's existence comes in the form of 2 things: Her being prone to hide the truth and deceive/manipulate others into ensuring that any negative truth involving herself doesn't get out, as well as the sheer stress from having to constantly maintain a disingenuous facade towards all the people she strives to interact with willingly.

With this revelation in mind, Kiyotaka further reasons that the only significant reason why Kushida is putting herself through having to deal with that amount of social pressure, assuming that she is doing so for her own happiness and love of being appreciated by the ones around her in daily society, is if the affective merits from that validation definitely surpass the constant strain she puts on herself mentally, which in turn is only possible if her need of attention and praise is at a level excessively higher than the average person has. Together with her inability to accept any sort of criticism of her past actions, Ayanokoji had concluded that Kushida Kikyo suffers from a strong case of Narcissistic Personality Disorder, overt enough to be considered a grandiose form.

A grandiose form of NPD is a pattern marked by exaggerated feelings of superiority, entitlement, self-importance, an obsessive need for admiration, and

a lack of empathy towards others, together with the presence of most other symptoms of clinical narcissism to a bigger degree. Such characteristics would entirely reflect on the meaning of Kushida's behavior and goals, revealing a much darker truth.
Because Kushida's psyche is pathologically characterized by the existence of similar traits, it in turn only confirms that rather than Kushida's angelic persona being plausible to have some truthfulness to it, everything in regards to Kikyo's open personality and contributions in society is done for the sake of hedonistic gain exclusively. Observing over Kushida's daily routines, number of friends, goal of befriending everyone in her year, interacting with all the people that seek her including scum and having to appeal to their perception of how Kushida's ideal self should perfectly act in all of those various social situations, it in turn reflects a personality trait and a dangerous drawback Kushida possesses which ultimately clash with one another in a contradicting, and ultimately violent manner:

It is apparent that Kushida's love for being in the center of attention and seeking validation is so abnormally high that she pushes herself beyond all reasonable limits to fake her entire personality if it means she gets what she desires, to the point where she is highly dependent on the pleasure coming from it.
It is because of that addiction that Kushida strives to be an absolute flawless ideal with no lapses of consistency in her acting. Such addiction in the context of the overly demanding task causing immense mental strain, the frustration of constantly dealing with the problems all the people she secretly holds little to no care for and having no escape from that, the impossibility to take breaks means that she is forced into a state where her stress levels accumulates daily with barely any interruptions as well as her narcissistic personality traits amplifying every mentioned factor which would already be highly bothersome to any regular person, overall makes Kushida's stress levels to be ridiculously unhealthy and unsafely large.

It is in Kikyo Kushida's character to accumulate huge amounts of stress in certain intervals that if normally left unattended, would simply guarantee her eventual collapse. Kiyotaka reasons that if Kushida has managed to keep such a delicate act for so long without any issue, and even to the point where her stress level is unrecognizable from an outside glance, then she must have found an effective way to cope with the stress to her necessity.

Kushida's way of coping with her mental strain, aside from first and foremost being available to do whenever the need arises without being relying on any sort of substance abuse, would need to infer a spontaneous release of all her nerves and frustrations, something which any calming methods of coping mechanisms do not have such immediate or strong effect.

Looking at the personality traits common in Narcissistic Personality Disorder of similar caliber, Ayanokoji acknowledges that behavior such as anger when confronted about any sort of inconvenience or negative behavior in dealing with other people is extremely likely in Kikyo, and seeing it represents her social situation very well and additionally fits in being an effective stress coping mechanism, it is extremely, by elimination, that Kushida suffers from violent outbursts as a means to cope with all the stress she is facing from her overloading situation.

With a significant layer of her psyche profiled, Kiyotaka now has an incredibly well thought grasp of Kushida's internal being, to the point where he is able to forecast her behavior when she doesn't need to put the front she does when she is in the vicinity of people.

Before the studying session even began, Ayanokoji had fulfilled half of his objectives.

(V1) - Very soon after his nighttime conversation with Suzune, Kiyotaka calls Kushida, acting reluctant to tell her since "things got complicated" to make Kushida immediately tell that Horikita has rejected her according to the expectations.
He anticipated that Kushida would take matters into her own hands and would push to come with all the study group members to the meeting location despite whatever Suzune had to say, whether done by a calculated scheme or not.
Through this Kiyotaka had planned the scenario where Horikita and Kushida are forced to work in proximity with one another, the study group, understanding from their core dynamic and difference in goals would lead to a full failure to get results on either end.

As he was overly familiar with Suzune's inability to be a guide to others in social situation, even in something task oriented such as studying, he had already predicted that Horikita would be too incapable to handle the likes of the 3 idiots in the study group, seeing that Ike, Yamauchi and Sudo not only lack the ability

to understand the necessary material in enough time to ensure they pass, but they also do not have the discipline nor willpower to even bother to study if not properly taken care of or motivated, things which Horikita not only that she can't do, but would in fact tend to demotivate the others with her remarks, enough to enrage the likes of Ike and Sudo, which sooner or later would simply lead to the growth of tension in the study group and them not wanting to deal with Horikita anymore, which is ultimately the failure of the study group with all the blame to be put on her, to which Suzune would irresponsibly not accept and blame others for their inferiority. Instead, it is deemed to have them be expelled to throw them out while they are still at zero points so they don't become a nuisance later.
Ayanokoji was in fact able to accurately predict everything in the study group from its' beginning until it crumbled.

With Kushida being put to witness such a situation as Kiyotaka intends where basically all Horikita did was destroy the group Kushida herself had put effort in, with Suzune not being able to do anything except act all high and mighty and still categorize the others including Kikyo as inferior, would be something which undeniably makes any reasonable person angry or disappointed in Suzune's behavior.
THIS is the perfect opportunity for Ayanokoji to test Kushida Kikyo's true self and most importantly, her true way of thinking about the Suzune Horikita she strives so hard to get.
He is using psychological destabilization by creating circumstances that disrupt Kushida's internal stability, which helps in revealing her true thoughts and feelings in regards to her current situation, as well as stress inoculation by applying controlled stress to push Kushida to her limits, where she is likely to exhibit unguarded reactions. Kiyotaka's layering of circumstances such as Horikita's leadership flaws, her miserable projection of superiority in spite of the study group failure, as well as Kushida's lack of control over the outcome making it a huge timewaste in what is already an unpleasant environment ensures an overly stressful state where Kikyo's usual internal defense mechanisms are not enough to dissipate the frustration and utter disdain she feels at Horikita.
Overall, Ayanokoji had in fact anticipated a situation where Kushida would have to deal with more social invoked stress than she does per usual, one where as seen in the issues of her angelic personality would invoke enough problems to make her need to distance herself from the study group days' events immediately.

ONLY because Kiyotaka had planned for Kushida to need an immediate breath of air in the following hour, he was able to fulfill the scenario he had projected in his mind ever since the beginning. Kikyo was to go and find a place to release her stress freely, doing so directly after the study group was over, something which would allow Kiyotaka to directly tail her behind, monitor her through, and finally catch a glimpse of her and what is behind the angel act she portrays. Kiyotaka's actions for this set up lead to his final act to ensure all conditions to fulfill his intentions are met, as everything until now is merely the first phase.

(V1) - Ayanokoji's plan from the very beginning was to set up a long-lasting conflict between Kushida and Horikita in a twisted way to exploit their fundamental struggles of their character and more importantly, use their motivations against one another.

As everything in the scene of Kushida's tantrum went as he had expected, Ayanokoji, who at the time was listening to Kushida's ugly venting, had loudly kicked the door nearby as he pretended to attempt to leave.
The tensed up Kikyo immediately turns back only to see a panicked Kiyotaka stare at her and attempt to immediately leave again, forcing her to stop him and soon question if he has heard her. The optimal solution to avoid a situation where Kushida becomes irreversibly hostile is bluffing away all answers remotely suggesting he has heard something, and yet Ayanokoji here does the exact opposite. In this scene, Kiyotaka's intention is to lead Kushida on that he saw everything and additionally bluff that he is too honest to lie from the very beginning in the form of asking her "Would you believe me if I said I didn't?"
The approach itself serves to guarantee one thing, Kushida is forced into taking action against Ayanokoji to protect herself. Ayanokoji wants to find himself in a situation where Kushida has or at least thinks she has leverage against him, and through his bluffs he guides her himself towards that.

He plays into her threats, asking what would happen if he spoke to anyone about it. Kushida then confirms that she will tell everyone he tried to rape her, which in response Kiyotaka just keeps asking for evidence to get himself "in more misery". He lets Kushida take his hand, open it, and put it on her breast while all appearing dazed and confused, with his first reaction being trying to pull his hand back to no avail due to his lack of force and initiative. All Kiyotaka's actor could do is glare at the girl who now has a massive leverage on him: Kiyotaka Ayanokoji's fingerprints are now on one of Kushida's uniforms, one

which she plans to keep unwashed so that her leverage on him forces Ayanokoji to not be able to tell a word to anyone about what he has seen on this night, as otherwise his entire life would be destroyed by her.

This was all something which Ayanokoji had made Kikyo believe, seeing the situation develop towards a fabrication of evidence ever since she claimed that she would accuse of him rape if he doesn't obey her. Kiyotaka had aimed himself for these circumstances to be planted around him because he had understood that Kushida's improvised attempt at handling him was flawed from the start.
The school uniform, containing a material commonly used in the industry such as cotton, has a limited time in which the fingerprints remain recognizable. For the likes of cotton or polyester specifically, that period is way less than a year, even as little as a matter of weeks.
What this means is that the leverage Kushida has on Ayanokoji cannot be kept for extended periods of time even if it remains undisturbed. Ayanokoji is at no risk of getting Kushida to try to use her false evidence against him, since he did all of this without ever intending to expose Kushida in the first place. His plan is way more ambitious than to merely get blackmail of Kushida through such means as a recording, as she plays a key role in developing the class battle as he intends.

The core idea behind Ayanokoji's self revelation to Kushida is to exploit her perception of her secret's security and weaponize her against Horikita, utterly ruining her previous plan of trying to befriend her.
In her own perspective, Ayanokoji is nothing but Horikita's puppet doll who gets all walked over by her without consideration. Ayanokoji cannot go against her as seen from all the previous interactions Kiyotaka himself has fed to Kushida to come to this conclusion.
It is because Horikita and Ayanokoji are so close and isolated from the rest of the class groups and now both know of her secret, that it is extremely likely from Kushida's perspective that Horikita will find out from Ayanokoji about today's events, even if she will keep it to herself for the sake of protecting him. This makes any sort of attempt of Kushida to get close to Horikita in the first place to be in vain, since now it is impossible to gain her trust as previously believed.
Kushida now knows that to protect her secret and finally put her anxious mind at ease, she would have to get rid of at least Horikita, if not for Ayanokoji as well. Under the current circumstances, it is now impossible for them to live in the school together in harmony for the next three years, and so Kushida will do

anything possible to get in Horikita's way of success, not only for her own sake, but due to her newfound hatred for the girl and her orbit who pose an active risk of exposing her for what he is.

Kushida is meant to be nothing but a catalyst to Horikita's own development however. By making Kikyo one of Horikita's biggest obstacles, Suzune will at one point be put in a state where together with other reasons Kiyotaka plans to expand on such as the mantle of leadership, she will be forced to reflect over her self isolationist policy as obsolete and instead engage in a battle over her own life in ANHS against an agent directly inside her own class. This again will challenge Horikita to confront her own biases towards certain people such as what she had shown with Kushida, leading overall to emotional growth.

Not long before their departure, Kiyotaka extends his line of safety by implying a logical reason why Kushida would be safe with him knowing of her secret, as it was in her anxious nature to doubt her safety regardless of the blackmail. Kiyotaka opens up about his conclusions barely so to excuse it as it being intuitive given the circumstances by asking if her and Horikita were acquaintances from before. This immediately surprises and riles up Kushida's panic, with her asking of him if Horikita has mentioned anything, which then allows him to excuse it as him first witnessing her say Horikita's name despite her being someone who did not introduce herself, which even with Kushida memorizing everyone's names in the class she had available, it was very improbable that she would somehow get Suzune's unless she met with Sudo, which was also unlikely. This allows Kiyotaka to bring up the accusation that she had only gotten close to him to keep tabs on Horikita, without appearing to know more as it was out of his own seemingly fresh made conclusions.
It is a psychological trap to get Kushida in a panic state seeing all of his connected information about her and begin to doubt her safety, which in turn makes her ask him again IF she can TRUST him about not to say a word of anything which happened in their scene.
Kiyotaka did all of this to be able to reassure Kushida into a deeper comfort zone, as instead of him just giving his word as before, he states that even if he were to spread such a rumor, no one would even believe him, which was the epistemic truth. Kiyotaka additionally follows up by pretending to have a small reflection of his own and "accidentally" mumble to himself in self conflict "Is there anyone who would even trust me?" when Kushida was close enough to hear him, something which only further reassured Kikyo seeing his own insecurity at close.

It is because of this question asked by a desperate self of Ayanokoji that Kushida answers it herself in mind regarding someone who would actually believe in him, Horikita Suzune. This makes Kikyo bring her up in the conversation, saying that despite how strange she is, she indeed opens up to him in a way unlike others, one where there's a degree of trust involved despite Kiyotaka's insecurity, and reminded of Horikita's trust of Ayanokoji, Kushida herself realizes that he is actually someone she can trust with her ultimate secret in public, at least for now. His bluffing was used to manipulate Kushida's own mind to associate Kiyotaka's trust of Horikita directly as a token for her safety, something which he did without even bringing it into the discussion himself, and just by playing with Kushida's psyche.

By ensuring the events happened in the way they did and Kushida is manipulated into targeting Horikita, Ayanokoji adds a contingency to shield himself from Kushida's hostility at the very least until Kushida starts sabotaging or perhaps even working to expel Horikita through the leverage he had baited her into crafting, which ensures his safety as long as her secret is kept safe.
Kiyotaka reasoned that Kushida is currently very cautious of the places she decides to vent around and assuming she has a degree of responsibility given her own engagement in fulfilling her desires especially after what she had been through, she is at least cautious enough to ensure that no one is routinely walking around when she decides to vent during her times of need.
He had then confirmed this, seeing the spot she had chosen on the rooftop which is known to be closed after school. The way he discovered her doing it was by following her, however she is to expect that Ayanokoji did it by chance.
From the utter shock he instilled into Kushida by having her actually be seen in this state, Kiyotaka also made the already cautious Kushida change her approach of manifesting her coping mechanism to now ensure that she will only do it when she can absolutely guarantee she is not spotted, so that way she can ensure an incident similar with Ayanokoji will NOT happen again. He took this into account.

Everything went exactly as he had envisioned since the end of his call to Kushida.
(Manipulation, Bluffing, Acting, Tactics. Planning, Foresight)

(V1) - As Ayanokoji was able to see Kushida's tantrum up close, he picked up even more of her character traits. At this point, seeing from his ease of grasping all changes in her expressions and verbal cues despite her trying to hide them,

Ayanokoji developed a profound understanding of Kushida's psyche, one EVEN better than what had allowed him to instigate her tantrum in the first place.

In her newfound state, Kushida didn't look like her public self, didn't sound like her public self, nor behaved as such. It was more than a tantrum, as it was like seeing an entirely different person fundamentally down to her microexpressions and mannerisms manifest in Kikyo's body.

It is because of genuine wonder that Ayanokoji asks Kushida which oneself does she think is "the real her", as he wants to take a deep dive into her own reflections contrasting her struggles and desires.
"Is it bad to try to be liked by everyone? Do you understand how hard that is?" - gave the needed background. Because Kushida's motivation for her keeping up her "normal" act stems from her desire to be liked by others, it is so extreme to the point she imagines that it gives her existence meaning. It is ingrained into Kushida's mind and had existed even before she became a student here, during the time her incident in middle school happened.
Based on her long lasting desire as well as her visible expertise in socialization to the point where she takes it to the extreme, Kushida's angelic fake personality is something she has experience with for years and ultimately was existent even before the problems she dealt with in the past which must have hurt her reputation in her previous school.

Kiyotaka then looks back at Kushida's desperation to get close to Suzune:
P1: Kikyo's hatred for Horikita being so profound is fuelled not just by the mild annoyance due to Horikita's way of being, but also due to the frustration caused by her due to Kushida failing in her task to get close to her, considering how desperate she is.
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P2: With Kushida's purest desire being specifically to be liked by everyone specifically FOR being the way she tries to portray herself as, the desperation to protect herself stems from Horikita posing a risk to get in between Kushida and her lust for attention.
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C1: While taking into consideration Horikita's own behavior against Kushida at the beginning of the year showing she did not remember who Kushida is until the latter's insistence backfired, Kikyo must have thought that Suzune must know of her true personality as it is what would destroy her reputation in ANHS if proven as fake in comparison to how she behaves here when giving her

tantrum.
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P3: Suzune has admitted to trying to isolate herself since childhood, yet this incident spread wide enough to reach her ears, someone who was not even close enough to be in the proximity of Kushida's class at the time of the event.
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P4: Suzune herself was not personally close to Kikyo at all and yet the latter still became so deeply concerned with Horikita, proving she would have done so to anyone coming to ANHS which she had known from the past. Most if not all her middle school was able to find out about Kushida's doings.
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C2: The incident is deeply related to Kushida's fake self being openly exposed to everyone. However, taking into account the gravity of it, if just for a mere exposal with Kushida herself doing nothing else would under no circumstance be enough to ultimately conclude that Kushida is among the lowest of defects in ANHS, therefore it is what she had done afterwards which had caused for a true mess.
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P5: Considering that Kushida did in fact use her angelic persona in previous years as well, she often built up the very same mental stress she is dealing with here in ANHS, which for her own mental health as she currently does, she would need to discharge in some sort of habitual venting, due to similar circumstances, the venting is highly probable to involve talking about her actual feelings of the people around her.
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P6: Because of her mastered acting, she is experienced in deceiving others and has a level of awareness to discreetly cover her habit of venting her emotional strain, doing so consistently. The only time her ugly self was revealed was when the incident occurred.
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C3: Kushida had developed a similar false personality to what she has now ever since she was young, which is what she has constantly strived for since then and was able to perfect it enough to become a beacon of hope and trust all throughout her middle school.
The error she made in the past which had led to her reputation being destroyed and losing everything stems from her secret ranting about the individuals in her life being discovered by someone who ultimately leaked it to the public.
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P7: The situation was harsh enough for Kushida to resort to extreme means to

defend herself in the trouble which ensued as a consequence.
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P8: The incident happened relatively quickly and it was explosive given the harshness it is designated as by ANHS and Suzune's mannerisms, meaning that it was not up for debate whether or not Kushida's fake self was exposed. If it had occurred over a longer lasting period and it would have been only rumored that Kikyo is actually a horrible person, Kushida would have had many opportunities to use her built status to still defend herself. In this scenario that status was rendered useless and she was not able to prevent it.
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C4: Kushida's exposal in middle school had solid evidence to effectively expose and crush any doubt or hope lingering that her angelic self is genuine. She had no way to contest the claims nor did she have anyone left to believe in her.

Kiyotaka projects Kushida in the scenario of all her seeming friends turning against her, in what can only be described as a downward spiral where she is left defenseless towards the harshness of others hitting her like a 1000 needles. The emotional impact caused by the shock of her being confronted over her betrayal of trust of everyone as well as her hopelessness in the situation where she has no one to appeal to means that regardless of it being calculated or done instinctively, all Kushida can do is try to defend herself in any way possible.

Because in her situation she could turn to absolutely no one in order to fend off any sort of criticism towards her, as she was effectively done, the one way to defend herself effectively was to attack the others criticizing her with the aim to cause as much damage to everyone around her, enough to subsequently stain her name in malice even by the adults who have witnessed the aftermath of the scene.

<u>The Weapon of Trust</u>
Kushida Kikyo, the social butterfly, possesses a very powerful weapon, one more deadly than violence - Information.
With her social status as well as her ability to get close to individuals, Kushida is able to gain huge amounts of information about everyone's own personal tales and secrets they decide to share with her. Because Kikyo poses as a brilliantly kind person who helps everyone in need, she is able to gain the trust of individuals very easily. Additionally, seeing from her goal to befriend as many people as possible, she is able to gain immense amounts of information about various people, creating a ridiculous web of secrets she possesses and knows of

the people who look up to her daily.
When thinking of information which most people would like to keep private, matters which would affect one's public image negatively are among the first things perceived. Such secrets told by others is information Kushida is no stranger to. The likes of tales she had grasped and gatekept throughout the time can cut through relationships and turn people against each other more effectively than any sharp knife will, and Kikyo Kushida knows this better than anyone.
Her narcissism thrives on possessing leverage over others, since it gives her a strong sense of superiority and defines her sense of self-worth given to her by the others who shower her in trust and compliments. The lustful side of her narcissistic desires is manifested in her perverted thrill of getting the key to messing with other people's lives, the very ones who collectively decided to give her their trust.

When Kushida's ugly self was revealed and she was faced with the strong response from the ones who used to love her, all she had to do was keep revealing more, just reveal people's worst personal secrets to each other until they begin to prioritize one another and end up fighting between themselves, even when the cause behind their conflict is right in their faces.

FINAL CONCLUSION:
The incident which branded Kushida's status as a defective student revolves around her causing a huge drama by leaking everyone's secrets between themselves, and subsequently a fight which completely broke an entire class apart in such a violent way that it was an event recognized by Kikyo's and Suzune's entire middle school. She had effectively destroyed an entire class from the inside.

As he reconstructed Kushida's past piece by piece, Ayanokoji had additionally comprehended the reason she had aimed for ANHS in the first place. Because this school cuts off contact with the outside world, it would allow Kushida's past to remain unknown as well as permit her to start anew without looking back to her previous failure.

Ayanokoji questions Kushida about the level of stress built inside of her directly and how it affects her to which she responds that it is what she wants out of life however, because if so her existence has meaning.
Ayanokoji sees the emotional depth her response carries and concludes that it

contains multiple truths and lies within it, all emphasizing Kushida's distortion of her "real" self, one beyond any forced mask she is supposed to put.

- The stress is what she wants out of life is a truth because it's supposed to give her existence meaning. -> The burden of having to deal with the constant strain on her mind from maintaining her fake perfect self is what she ultimately forces herself to strive for, because she pursues her ultimate happiness in the form of making herself liked by anyone, ultimately giving herself her internal validation and meaning.
- The stress is what she wants out of life is a lie but it does give her existence meaning. -> And yet the burden is taking a visible toll on her, she cannot stand the stress and she is forced into releasing it no matter what to protect her sanity, all for the sake of protecting her own meaning, which still in truth, makes it all worth it.
- The stress is what she wants out of life is a truth and yet it fails to give her existence meaning. -> Kushida strives for the constant strain for the sake of keeping her fake personality and bring worth to herself, and yet her own significance is devalued by her degrading mind in having to pretend to be what she isn't while her stress remains something she can barely hold in and is at risk at losing herself in. The true Kushida's existence fails to hold any meaning due to the internal struggle.
- The stress is what she wants out of life is a lie because it fails to give her existence meaning. -> Kushida finds herself a broken mess unable to ever come at peace with herself despite the constant drown in pleasure, as she also pays the price in a neverending pain. The impossibility to find herself at ease makes it impossible for her to even give her existence any meaning, as she is constantly in a chase to fulfill her desires without giving her own self more significance than that. It is because she realizes this struggle that she knows the stress is just a burden in the long term, rather than a small inconvenience.

Despite the eternal contradiction, all of the above are ultimately correct perspectives of Kushida's psyche and acceptance of her internal struggles in the face of her desires.
It is because of this well understood eternal contradiction that Ayanokoji lays out - "I couldn't tell WHICH Kushida was the real her."
He knew that in truth, neither of the 2 versions which he had acknowledged of Kushida could be the real, "significant" self, there had to be something else.

Once Kushida switches to her angelic personality again and asks Kiyotaka to

head back with her, he makes an association between her and the story of Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde. His comparison of Kushida to the themes of Jekyll and Hyde is a deliberate choice that further emphasizes his deep understanding of her mental state, and holds particular importance as a means of discerning Kushida's "true" self.

The Plot of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde:

The personality of Jekyll refers to a man who publicly holds himself up to very strict moral standards, but "indulges in his unsated vices" secretly, which makes him feel incredibly shameful. As a way to avoid his shame when he sates his desires, he figures out how to physically transform himself into the alter ego known as Hyde so he could indulge in his vices shamelessly using a serum he personally developed. Jekyll's alter ego, Hyde, is borne from the true desires that he always held deep down, and is let free through the existence of the serum.

While the symbolism for Kushida and J&H is seen in the form that both characters have seemingly two alternate personalities, it is rather stemming from this basic misconception left at face layer that Ayanokoji has used this association as a means to give detail to Kushida's true self by "explaining the puzzle" through J&H, because it highlights an inconsistency by directly attributing Jekyll's and Kushida's alter personalities with their true selves. There's also to note that the rest of the story as well gives incredibly high relevance to Kushida's personality, which is another big standpoint for Ayanokoji's comparison.

Rather than simply associating Jekyll with Kushida's shown side during the tantrum and Hyde with the angelic persona, Kiyotaka portrays that just like in the novel, Dr. Jekyll's transformation into Mr. Hyde symbolizes the struggle between a public persona and hidden desires, and it is the same duality that is rather mirrored than directly transcribed by Kushida's outwardly "angelic" appearance and her ugly nature.

From previous psychoanalysis induced information, Ayanokoji concretely reasons a connection to a generalization of Kushida's version of herself she does not even know exist using already collected information and the literary analysis.
Starting from the assumption that Jekyll is supposed to represent her true "significant" self which is not normally affected by any sort of contradiction

between her meaning and desire, the “unsated vices” are resembled in her narcissistic character traits which inherently make her to crave for appreciation and control over others, then Mister Hyde is without a doubt the created angelic personality Kushida puts herself to portray, with what can only be sustained through the key serum, which is also Kikyo’s obligation to vent her stress.
Since Kushida’s ugly side cannot be her true self according to both the book and Ayanokoji’s own psychoanalysis and observations of Kushida’s psyche, all that remains is an extra element: The consequence of the vices, what is openly deemed as bad by all society and what is to be digging Doctor Jekyll’s grave in advance, just as it will to Kushida Kikyo.

Kushida’s similar psychological conflict and the motivations driving her behavior resulted in the creation of the stress and malice burdened monster Ayanokoji saw on that night on the rooftop. In the end, it is just a part of an illness-causing emotional response disguised as a coping mechanism caused by mere convenience and self gaslighting, only worsened by her personality disorders.

The consequence of the uncontrolled desire has had a negative impact on Jekyll’s life all throughout the book, and it is the deeper layer of Ayanokoji’s association of J&H with Kushida Kikyo’s internal struggle, as the parallels suggest. Just as Dr. Jekyll’s suppression of his darker urges later leads to their violent emergence, Ayanokoji sees that Kushida’s relentless efforts to maintain her image are compelling her to keep straining further from and utterly dehumanize herself, consequently falling into a downward spiral which only ends in a spectacularly grim end.
Ayanokoji associates Kushida’s life with a number of events happening in the book:

- The Murder of Carew.

At one point, Jekyll involuntarily turns into Hyde in his sleep, and this causes him to stop his transformations altogether out of fear over inability to control them. This eventually fails, as Jekyll drinks his serum to turn into Hyde once again in a moment of mental weakness, and kills a character known as Carew under the Hyde personality.

What parallels this moment is the middle school incident, where her true personality was leaked across her entire school, and where she had caused the destruction of her entire class, with the consequence being Kushida enrolling into ANHS. This allowed Kushida to start a clean slate and make new friends to validate her existence once again, without the risk of anyone looking up information about her and finding out about the incident that happened the year before. This is why during her introduction on the first day, she specifically mentioned that nobody from her middle school followed her into ANHS, making her want to make friends with her new classmates.

- The Death of Lanyon

After this murder, Jekyll once again tries to avoid further transformations, but involuntarily does it again whilst awake. To transform back into Jekyll, Hyde calls a character named Lanyon to bring him the necessary ingredients for the transformation serum. After mixing all the ingredients that Lanyon brought up together and drinking in front of him, he transforms back into Jekyll. However, the sight of this transformation causes Lanyon to die of shock.

The rooftop scene where Kushida's tantrum is witnessed is what Kiyotaka parallels as the J&H plot. The “transformation” and serum is Kushida's venting of frustration towards Horikita, and the “death” of Ayanokoji would be the shattered image of Kushida's former self that he had held prior.

- Jekyll’s Suicide

After this event, the amount of serum that Jekyll required to stay himself increased and he decided to go into seclusion. It continually becomes more difficult for him to procure the ingredients to create that serum. Eventually, Jekyll ran out of the key ingredient, and killed himself as a final resort, fearing that he'd never return as his former self if he were to ever transform back into Hyde.

What Ayanokoji visualizes based on his J&H association is the future scenario where the “suicide” of Kushida’s fake personality is forced to happen. Because the J&H is rather a mirrored parallel where Jekyll himself is self aware of the point where one can go back, in Kushida’s case such a self does not exist, and what remains to push toward the crumbling of her angelic personality is the consequence of the vices, or rather the circumstances Kikyo will place herself

in.
As Ayanokoji well gets the balance Kushida strikes between her need for emotional release and her fear of exposure, with the path he planned in mind for the conflict between Horikita and Kushida, he has already through his FORCED intervention of causing the tantrum, as the “Lanyon” himself who influenced Jekyll’s fate, laid the groundwork towards engineering a scenario of Kushida’s angelic personality “suicide” happens. This is yet another layer of Kiyotaka’s plan to use Kushida as a means to build Horikita until the very end of her “lifespan”.
With Kushida setting up the circumstances against herself, she is left no room of being able to escape her impending exposal inside ANHS caused by her constant interference against her own class through the existence of Horikita Suzune inside of it which she aims to get in the way of, as Ayanokoji had foreseen long in advance and plans to ensure will happen. Kushida Kikyo will suffer a spectacular implosion of her angelic character as she is in turn destroyed in front of everyone, with the “ugly self” revealing once again, this time for all to see.
Kiyotaka has in fact started setting up the circumstances for his plan through using Kushida’s own built “leverage” against himself as a way to further entrap her in overconfidence when it comes to handling him.
The one important aspect to handling Kikyo which Ayanokoji takes into account is reflected in Kushida’s past and perhaps as another reference in the J&H book, her “weapon of last resort” which happens to be her self destructing mechanism as well, the information she will possess on her classmates which she will try again to use as a means of defending herself during the outbreak of the conflict.
Ayanokoji has two considered scenarios which shields himself from his own creation.
I - Expelling Kushida once her role was partially fulfilled.
II - Ensuring “Jekyll’s suicide” happens in a scenario where Class D is mentally prepared to deal with Kushida and overcome the turmoil she tries to cause.

In the end, only with the “death” of Kushida’s angelic personality and its occurring consequence will a projection of Kikyo’s true self finally be released by freeing her of the monster created by the circumstances imposed on herself, only then will she finally truly embrace meaning in herself. Kiyotaka had projected in his mind this version of her personality, the aftermath of “Jekyll’s suicide”.

With this, Ayanokoji had not just prepared for the important conflict laid down by himself in class D involving the start of his class battle all according to his will, but had also anticipated over a year in advance and planned over the end of such instigated long term conflict in the way the scenario sets it out to be for himself to adapt to. Ayanokoji aims to intervene and control the variables in the direction most desired by him, all for fulfilling his ultimate goal, while he was given this 3 year time period.