Chapter 19: Another Set of Preparations Is Done.

After leaving Yoshida's room, I sneakily slipped back into my room by creepily going down the stairs to my room. After I made sure that no one was around, I entered my room before locking it slowly so it wouldn't make noise. Upon entering my room, I let out a big sigh of relief—everything seemed to have worked out fine.

"Heugh."

Now that step 1 was done, I could focus on other important things, like sleep.

I slumped on my bed and kept my phone on my nightstand before going to bed.

The sleep was peaceful as I relaxed my mind and my body—it was euphoric.

However, the peace was short-lived; before I knew it, it was time to wake up.

I took a bath and prepared for school as quickly as possible before leaving my room.

I think that's the fastest it has taken me to get ready for school.

However, when I checked my phone, I realised I was way too early—ahh, I knew something was wrong when I didn't hear that damn alarm.

Should I go back to my room? Nah. Though going to class now is…

I might meet with Honda, and she could use Selective Accords; even if she didn't, she could do what she did

last time—take me to a place that had no cameras: the toilet.
I shuddered at the thought.
I'll just relax in the lobby.
I walked over to the lobby, but as I reached the lobby, I remembered that I had forgotten my P.E. uniform because I had P.E. today.
I gave my clothes up for laundry on Wednesday, so I had to get the uniform from the laundry room.
I hurriedly went to the laundry room and asked for the P.E. uniform.
"Sorry to bother you, but can I ask for my P.E. uniform?"
The person nodded but still stayed in place.
Hmm…? Oh, they don't know which one.
"I'm talking about the normal one, not the swimsuit."
The person nodded before pointing at a signboard that said you had to pay 200 Rp to collect your clothes early.
"Oh."
The person showed me a QR scanner, and I paid 200 Rp.
After I paid, the person walked away before turning back to gesture for me to follow him.
Immediately after he gave me my uniform, he silently left.
Well, he's really quiet, huh.
I didn't mind it, though, and just shrugged at his behaviour before putting the uniform in my bag as I looked at the time—it was late enough for me to leave.

I was on my way out of the dorms when I was called to the front desk.
“You’re Nakamura Eiya, right?” A student asked.
“Yeah.”
I didn’t know who this student was, but I had a hunch about why they called me.
“Well, you’ve been called to the front desk.”
Of course. I wasn’t surprised; rather, I would have been surprised if she hadn’t called me.
“Ok, but why did she have to send you?”
“You weren’t picking up your landline.”
Oh, right, I left my room quite early today.
“Oh, alright, thanks for calling me. I’ll go meet her.”
I promptly headed straight to the front desk.
“Good morning, ma’am.”
“Good morning,” she said. “Do you know why you were called here?”
“Yes, ma’am—”
“That’s Kuon Suiren to you.”
“Uh, Kuon-sama,” I said. “I understand what I did was wrong, and I apologise.”
“Really? Then assume you’re ready to accept your punishment.”
“Yes, but first, how did you even know Kuon-sama?”
“The surveillance team told me.”
Yup, I expected that.
I knew I would get caught because of the cameras, though I still made sure not to make noise yesterday so that no one other than Kuon-sama would know.

“But sneaking to a girl’s room,” Kuon-sama added. “Couldn’t it wait till morning? If not I trusted you, it almost looked like you snuck into her room. Anyway, what did you even do?”

You trust me?

Because I expected this, I had a response ready.

“Sorry, I was studying at night and went to get a drink, then I saw Yoshida frustrated because she was waiting for me. You see, I left my phone, so she probably called me countless times; at any rate, I followed her to her room. She was surprised to see me, but we ended up having a study session.”

It would explain why I was at the vending machine and also entered her room.

“Ok, I guess that makes sense,” she seemed to believe me; however, that didn’t mean I was off the hook yet.

“I understand, but I will have to confirm with her.”

It was expected, so before entering Kuou-sama’s office, I would send Yoshida a reply that she should memorise for each possible question—luckily, part of our contract was that Yoshida had to make sure no one knew what happened yesterday.

Hopefully, she’ll follow it judiciously.

“Also, there still have to be consequences.”

“Yes, ma’am.”

“What did I tell you?”

“Sorry, I meant Kuon-sama.”

“Now, the punishment is 10,000 Rp.”

“Eh?!”

I didn’t have nearly enough; well, I didn’t even have enough funds to buy food, so it wasn’t all that surprising.
“Don’t have enough, huh? Fine, let’s make a deal.”
“What’s the deal? I’ll agree to anything.”
“Anything?” Her eyes gleamed with enthusiasm. “Ok then, on your next pay cheque—sorry, I mean, allowance instalment. Anyway, I want half of it.”
“Half? Don’t you think you’re going too far?”
“I am? Well, you could always just not pay and get kicked out of the dorms.”
As she said that, I imagined myself living in a cardboard box—it was a scary thought.
Heugh.
I sighed internally at the possible outcome. I had no other choice but to agree.
“...I agree.”
“Good,” she grinned. “Now, off you go.”
I wasn’t happy with the outcome, but I couldn’t do anything about it; however, let’s just say my opinion of Kuon-sama was greatly reduced as I walked over to school.
On my way to school, I noticed Ito, and we walked together. It was comforting—well, until his fans came and did what they always did.
I suppose it was our daily routine, so it was a little heartwarming.
Anyway, I arrived at school and dropped my P.E. uniform in the changing room. The day went as usual until P.E.

“Good morning, class. Today we will have a physical fitness test. Also, I hope you all left your phones in class because if you didn’t, the school isn’t liable for them if they’re stolen.”
We nodded in affirmation.
“Ok, good. Now, let us begin.”
First, we went to take our height, weight, and vision checks.
For height, I hadn’t changed a single bit.
For weight, we went in groups of boys and girls; well, I’m sure we can all understand why.
Anyway, my weight was 65 kg.
For the vision checks, I had good vision—no need for glasses.
Next up was checking our flexibility test.
When I did mine, I reached my feet pretty easily and could split with ease.
Next up was the strength test—that is, grip strength, sit-ups, push-ups, and a pull-up.
My grip strength was 56 kg.
“Wow, that’s amazing,” a boy said beside me before keeping quiet after realising that it was *my* result.
Maybe I overdid it; I should have held back more.
For sit-ups, we were told to do 10.
I completed my ten fairly easily, but most couldn’t afford to do 5.
For push-ups, we were also told to do 10.
To which I also did that fairly easily.
For the pull-up, we all had to do just one.

While most were able to pull it off, some struggled.
Next was the speed test—a 50 m sprint, a shuttle run, and a long distance.
We did it in sets, and I made sure to pace myself—I came 3rd, 5th, and 2nd in the races, respectively.
I think I held back enough.
Next up was the jumping ability test.
We all did a standard long jump—nothing too hard. I did 270 cm.
Haven't done this before, so don't really know if I'm holding back enough or too much.
And last was the softball throw.
I managed to throw mine 50 m.
Good enough.
When we finished, we headed to the nurse's office to get some glucose and water, though I, Ito, Innō, Arakawa, and some others hadn't really broken a sweat.
I mean, this is some basic training.
The fact that many of us were sweating profusely as if we had run for hours showed how pitiful Class Epsilon was—we didn't just fail at academics but at physicals, too.
Anyway, with that done, we had the rest of the class to relax.
Most went to the locker room to change and parade around school because next was maths—a class we all collectively disliked.
I changed and hurriedly went to class before texting Yoshida.

[Me: Please keep Suzuki out of class.]
[Yellow Bear: Why?]
Ignoring her weird nickname, I texted back.
[Me: It's needed for my plan.]
[Yellow Bear: How? Explain.]
[Me: I don't have enough time.]
[Yellow Bear: No, you have to, or I won't help you; I already helped in the morning with Kuou-sama.]
I could threaten her, but if she didn't do this, I would really be screwed, and it would affect everything.
[Me: Yoshida, I just don't want her to enter the class. I just…don't want her to see what happened to me.]
Before Yoshida answered, I called her—I expected this to happen (well, mostly), so I created a backup plan.
Improv.
"Yoshida, all I want is…for her not to come and see me now."
"See you. What happened?"
"I can't say."
"Is it Honochi?" she asked.
"I can't say; if I tell anyone she'll…"
"But you told me yesterday."
"Yes, but if I tell you, she might find out, or worse," my voice grew dim. "So please."
"What about the others in our class?"
"They won't come if I'm in class."
Some had come before I began the call, but quickly left when they saw that it was only me.

I was sure they would tell their friends that it was only me in class, meaning that they would leave me alone.
“Then shouldn’t I come and hel—”
“Please, Yoshida, I just need some alone time,” I barely pushed out my words, trying my hardest to mumble the syllables.
“I thought you said it was part of your plan.”
“...I lied; I just want to be alone for now.”
“Fine,” she said, her tone sympathetic. “I understand.”
Good. Now, I can continue.
With that done, I made myself stagger to Suzuki’s table as if I wanted to open the window before I intentionally slipped and fell, injuring my nose and making it bleed profusely.
I was angled on the floor, basically facing the camera, like I was just processing my injury.
Next, I wrote something on a piece of paper and slipped it under her table and carried her phone that was in her bag without the camera noticing.
After I was done, I walked over to the nurse’s office. I made it seem like I was staggering from blood loss.
Though yes, I was suffering from blood loss.
“Huh? What happened to you?”
“I fell,” I said before lying on the bed and falling asleep.
I did so that the nurse would have to check the camera without having to question me, because if I remained awake, I would lose more blood, so it was better for her to treat me quickly.

At any rate, my preparations for step 2 of my strategy were done.

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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.