Chapter 23.1: Factions Are Like This?

“What the hell?” Ito was confused; rather, he didn’t want to believe what was occurring before his eyes. “Hey, Nakamura-kun, is he trying to…?”

He didn’t finish his sentence, but I was well aware of what he wanted to say, and I also happened to have the answer.

“Yes, he’s trying to assault her.”

Not like I can say that, though.

I wasn’t exactly sure if I should say yes or no because it wasn’t that Ito didn’t know the answer; he probably just didn’t want to believe that he was correct.

“It’s obvious, isn’t it?”

Of course, I couldn’t just let him stay in his delusion because this girl was being sexually assaulted right in front of us, though something was still a bit…

“Yeah, you’re right, so let’s go and stop—” Ito was about to leave to meet them; he probably expected me to just follow, but something wasn’t clear yet.

“Hey, wait,” I held him back.

“Huh? What’s up?” He looked at me with his left eyebrow slightly above his right one, indicating his confusion.

“We have no idea what’s going on, so let’s try and analyse the situation,” I said in a matter-of-fact tone.

“Analyse the situation? The situation is she’s getting assaulted; you already said how it’s obvious, didn’t you?”

“She’s being assaulted, but why? I doubt anyone’s that stupid to do such a thing in a public place where cameras are nearby—she could tell her friends or report to the school, and that boy is out of here, so why attempt it?”

It honestly didn’t make sense no matter how you thought about it, so it was obvious there was something we were missing.

“We don’t have the time nor the luxury to think about that for now,” Ito stated with slightly furrowed brows.

“You can’t just rush into a situation.”

“I can’t just rush into a situation? What are you even talking about?”

“I’m saying that your way of thinking is flawed; you’re not a saviour.”

“It’s you that’s flawed,” Ito glared at me. “How can you just stay put and watch when someone who’s clearly defenceless is about to be wronged!”

“...?!”

Ito still glared as he screamed at me; perhaps it was his way of saying, “I didn’t expect you, of all people, to not be concerned.”

After all, Ito saw me as a kind person.

That being said, Ito was luckily not heard because we were far enough away for them not to hear us, or perhaps the perpetrator was too focused on his victim because he was taking his sweet time as he kissed her.

I was also paying attention to that, but I was more focused on the fact that Ito screamed at me.

I was… shocked. I knew Ito had a breaking point, but I didn’t expect to see it so soon.

It felt so sudden, but I suppose I couldn’t blame him. I was the weird one for not being as concerned as him.

Now I don’t really have a choice but to act.

I believed my method of watching before acting was absolute, but I was open to being proven wrong; moreover, I wanted to honour my friend.

“I… apologise.” I bowed deeply. “I think I was a bit insensitive there, so let me make it up by helping the girl.”

“...” Ito was silent for a second, but then he answered in a soft tone. “Nah, I just overreacted; I know that you’re a good person, but I still said that. You’re not someone who would overlook the helpless.”

“I try to be.”

“And that’s enough. So now let’s go and help—”

“Can I do it myself?”

“Is there a reason why?”

“I have a plan.”

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“So, Yumeko, what are you doing here?” Kaneko-senpai walked closer to me with a soft smile and tsurime eyes.

“...”

“Yumeko? Did you hear what I said?”

He looked calm and normal, but his words and tone made it seem like if I said anything wrong, I would be eaten alive—it reminded me of that time I questioned Nakamura Eiya.

Another thing was that something was off; I just couldn’t tell what it was.

“Uh, I forgot something in my clubroom so I—”

“Except you were outside the student council room for a while, didn’t you? Isn’t that why you’re sweating that much? You’re scared.”

I didn’t notice it until he said it, but I was sweating. I was also quite nervous because I was shaking like I was caught in the act of murder.

“N-No, I’m just a bit nervous. Y’know, since I’m meeting the student council president.”

“Is that right? Yumeko, you’re such a liar.”

“...Huh?”

My lie was obvious, but that wasn’t why I was shocked. Before, I had a feeling that something wasn't quite right, but now it was obvious that there was a problem.

“Kaneko-senpai, how do you know my name?”

I didn’t notice it before, but it was awfully weird that a second-year, or rather even someone as busy as the student council president, knew my name.

It wasn’t just weird; it sounded impossible that he would even notice someone like me who had just newly arrived at school.

“I know the names of every student in this school.”

“That’s a lie; why do you *actually* know my name?”

“Nothing gets past you, huh? Well, there are hidden cameras outside the student council room, so I saw your face, searched it up on the student database, and voila, I saw your name.”

“I see,” I sighed.

“So, back to the subject at hand, why were you outside the student council room?” Kaneko-senpai began

walking closer, but this time it wasn't with a kind smile; his smile was… unreadable.

It reminded me of Nakamura-kun and made me instinctively move back.

"I really was trying to get something; I just got a bit distracted. I didn't stay for long, I promise."

Kaneko-senpai couldn't be talking to Nakamura-kun and paying attention to me; he probably checked the camera when he was done talking to him.

Meaning he never really knew when I came to the student council room.

"So what did you even come to get?"

"Uh, uh, well…"

I forgot. I had no idea what I was even looking for. What the hell did I even forget in my clubroom?

"Just got distracted, huh? Don't you think you stayed because you wanted to know something, perhaps something you shouldn't know?"

Kaneko-senpai was sort of right; I really liked watching people, so I also naturally enjoyed eavesdropping. That's why I even forgot what I came to get.

I got so engrossed in their conversation that I unintentionally forgot why I came here.

"Uh…"

“I don’t really need an answer,” he still kept an unreadable expression before suddenly turning away. “After all, it’s not really business if you wanted to eavesdrop. Though, if you wanted to learn more about the elusive figure known as Nakamura Eiya, you’d need this.”