Chapter 20.2: Step 4 of My Strategy.

Everyone was still momentarily shocked at what Kagura said.

Some were so shocked that they looked at me, and others didn't; at any rate, everyone was silent until Honda spoke up.

"That has to be a joke, right?" She scoffed. "Because there's no way he got that information."

"No, he—"

"That has to be a lie. Are you trying to increase his Rp? You thought maybe if I called his name, then people might act slightly more favourably towards him."

Well, to be completely honest, that was originally what I had planned for Kagura to do, but I knew it would be deconstructed in an instant—just like now.

That was why I didn't tell Kagura anything about the strategy, but instead let her be authentic. I could only do this because I had faith in her—faith in my friend.

"You're wrong. I got it from Nakamura," Kagura still doubled down despite Honda's comment.

"You're so adamant about that. Let's say that you did get it from him. Why trust him?"

"...He doesn't deserve to be ostracised."

"Really? Even if some men interact with him, he is for sure an enemy to every woman."

"Hey, wait. Don't you think you are overdoing it?" Ito would, of course, try to resolve everything peacefully.

“His expulsion was annulled; we still don’t know if that rape charge is true. It may be false,” Kagura still wouldn’t allow me to be put down.
They’re really good friends.
“False? Aiya wouldn’t lie about that, though I know that you and Ito are too nice for your own good. That being said, I’m sure Aiya will agree with m—”
“Actually, I completely disagree,” Suzuki silently went to the podium as Kagura and Honda argued. “Nakamura and I talked during the weekend, and it seems there has been a misunderstanding.”
Everyone froze at those words. Ah, yes, now the stage was completely set for you, Suzuki Aiya. Show me your acting ability.
“He… didn’t try to rape me, but accidentally slipped on me after he finished taking a bath.”
Everything before her last sentence was true—we did talk during the weekend, but that bath part was obviously a fabricated lie.
Suzuki took a strategic pause; she looked over at everyone before continuing in a soft and slow but deliberate tone—she was about to begin bullshitting.
“It was the room, before his expulsion, the night before, to be exact. I came to his room, and he said he wanted to take a bath. We normally had study sessions, for which I put my phone on record so he could listen to them after the session. After he finished his bath, he came out, and he was about to go to his cabinet, but fell on me—I got flustered and told him to stop. I didn’t wait

for an answer and hit him before running away. I was honestly scared, so I quickly told everyone," Suzuki lowered her head in shame—or so she made it look.
She really is quite the actor.
"That's…" Honda was flabbergasted but tried to look for an answer. "What if he blackmailed her? He might be forcing her to say that. He is—"
"Why can't you just believe the truth? No, I'm not surprised. After all, you're looking for someone to antagonise. You've been bullying Nakamura just for the fun of it," Suzuki continued.
"...?!" Ito was alarmed by the statement; so was Kagura.
"That was—" Honda quickly saw what was happening and was about to try to disengage; however, I planned solely for this to happen.
"When you did that to Kobayashi, I overlooked it, but now, I won't let you do it again—I won't let you drive my friend to expulsion!"
Friend, huh? Didn't think we were that close, Yoshida?
Both Ito and Kagura were shocked, but this was precisely what I wanted.
I didn't tell Yoshida to do any of this; instead, I made her care about me so she would want to protect me.
"That's completely different; moreover, it was deserved, and also, you didn't say anything about it."
"You're right, I didn't, but I am saying something now. I am saying something because this is just ludicrous. You're just a sadist."

“...!” Honda was furious, but she had to disengage to lower the damage to her reputation.
“Even now, you’re silent; you’re focusing on me instead of focusing on your victim, Nakamura-kun. Especially after—”
“You did this just for your own sake,” Suzuki cut her off.
I sent a message to Suzuki that she should cut Yoshida off because she was about to mention what happened on the Friday before the test, or what she thought happened.
If she mentioned that, this plan would explode in front of me.
“No, I was trying to avenge you—”
“Honochi, please just stop before your Rp reduces even further, and Nakamura, we apologise for what we did to you; we understand that we overreacted,” Ayumi said.
When I was being bullied, I noticed that Ayumi wasn’t actually on Honda’s side—rather, she didn’t actually like bullying me.
I expected her to try to look for an out through this argument, and if a close friend of Honda looked like she was giving up, it would be the same as Honda giving up.
“Bullshit. I’m not wrong. I was trying to help someone, yet I’m the one being punished. What kind of logic is that?”
Honda was frustrated and was trying to make someone just side with her. She was desperate, and unfortunately, desperation didn’t help but made her look crazy.

“Honda,” Ito said, his voice having a hint of disappointment. “Just stop. Please.”
Honda finally stopped because she realised that Ito was also against her.
“I’m sorry for the false accusation,” Suzuki bowed.
“I apologise as well,” Yoshida bowed.
“I’m so sorry for what I did,” Ayumi bowed, and so did Honda, though her apology wasn’t as sincere.
People followed suit, bowing to express their apology, with Innō and Matsumoto looking sad as they did so.
“We apologise for doubting you,” the rest of my classmates said.
I grinned internally because my plans were going smoothly.
Perfect.
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As Nakamura was receiving apologies, certain things were occurring elsewhere.
They were happening over the entire first-year student block.
Class Alpha relished in their success, though it was expected, so most were calm about it, especially since Hoshikawa prepared the answers by Friday, so they just had to memorise everything, but they were told to fail a bit to not be suspicious—it was a coincidence that they failed the same thing, or was it? Because at the last minute, Hoshikwa told them what to fail.

Class Gamma was disappointed in themselves, and most were not in class, but their blind leader reassured them.
“Don’t worry, guys, we’ll do better next time. I promise,” he grinned—he was cheerful despite his disability.
Class Delta was also disappointed, but they were mostly okay because their camaraderie helped them get through the hardest challenges.
However, what we’re focusing on today isn’t those classes—we’re focusing on Class Beta.
Akatsuki just finished admonishing his class to do better, but that wasn’t all he was addressing.
“I happened to overhear that Class Beta fought a while ago. Care to explain?”
Everyone except Arai was confused; they all thought Akatsuki planned what happened.
“Well, I suppose most of you will be surprised. Fine, let me make it easier. Someone here used two weeks of my sickness to try to do something. If you come out, I won't do anything to you,” he grinned—even he didn’t believe in what he said.
Akatsuki could have just asked everyone to reveal the person, but he enjoyed playing like this—he was somewhat of a sadist.
“Five,” he began counting. “Four.”
“Three.”
“Two—”
“It was me,” Arai said, coming out.

“Is that so?” Akatsuki grinned. “So, Arai, why’d you do it?”
“I wanted us to get rid of the competition.”
“Yet you utterly failed. Who foiled your plan?”
“Nakamura Eiya. He made me deal because things were getting out of hand, and I was trying to stop us from—”
Arai told Akatsuki the entire story of what happened; throughout the story, Akatsuki heard the name Nakamura several times.
Akatsuki remembered that name—he was Suzuki’s boyfriend. Akatsuki found that fact interesting, but for now, he had to handle Arai.
“Slow down,” Akatsuki tapped Arai's shoulder. “I get it, but I still have to punish you.”
“B-But you said—”
“Come on, even you must have known that I was lying. I mean, you’re smart, aren’t you? Or maybe you’re not, and that’s how you got one-upped by someone in Class Epsilon.”
“Please don’t—”
“Sorry… but no.”
Akatsuki flashed his phone at the security camera—on his phone, it read ‘Selective Accords’; that was how the rule was activated. After its activation, Akatsuki carried Arai’s phone, and it gave him a choice.
“Survive without your phone,” he said. “Or get beaten up by 5 people.”
“...” Arai was frozen in fear because he knew Akatsuki wasn’t joking.

“Answer, or the number will increase.”
“...”
“Now, it’s six people.”
“...!”
“Now, it’s seven.”
“I’ll take the seven people!”
“Good boy, but now it’s eight,” Akatsuki patted his head before kneeing him in the stomach.
As Arai writhed in pain on the floor, Akatsuki walked through the seats and picked out 8 boys to beat Arai up. Akatsuki threatened them that if they didn’t, he would bring the upperclassmen to beat them up.
The 8 boys silently began to beat Arai up to the point of tears before Akatsuki gave him his phone back.
“Now,” Akatsuki said. “Don’t screw up again, or they’ll beat you till you get hospitalised.”
Akatsuki used his phone to turn off the selective accords, and class went on normally even as Arai sniffled in pain, though Akatsuki didn’t tell him to keep quiet because he was focusing on something else.
Akatsuki had set his sights on something interesting.
You see, while he was a sadist, he didn’t enjoy bullying the weak; he was just trying to keep Arai—and by proxy, the class—in line.
In fact, he did it because someone anonymously sent him a message that his class had tried something without his knowledge, and it was related to a fight—he didn’t actually know what happened, but luckily, he caught the person.

You see, Akatsuki was the kind of person who liked control but wasn't a tyrant; he just wanted his class to have order, so he created a front of a sadistic tyrant. His real sadistic nature was shown when he destroyed the strong—of course, not just literal physical strength. That was why he had just one thing on his mind.
'Let's see who you really are, Nakamura Eiya. Are you weak or Strong?'
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Author's Note:
Just so you know, this will literally be answered in the next volume.
Anyway, remember to comment, share, and leave a review. Thanks for reading the chapter, and see you in the next one.