

# Split soul

Von Gepo

## Kapitel 3: The first visit to a kindergarten

Akashi left the conference after refusing an invitation to lunch with a practiced smile, giving his intention to inspect the kindergarten as a reason. He had already noticed that some single men would be teased for saying so, but nobody seemed to think that he had any other intention than to appraise the value of his latest investment. He had placed the kindergarten on the forth floor after remodeling the second and third to a spa and fitness area. Of course he had opened the kindergarten in front of cameras as a PR stunt but he had never seen it used until now.

He immediately noticed the different smell after stepping out of the elevator. The kids smelled similar to milk, some kindergarten teachers smelled pregnant, some like taken mates. None had the smell of awakening passion, not that he had imagined he would find an unbound Omega. Luckily that did not decimate his pick, he could unbound nearly all of them if he so desired. As different as the smell was the reception he got. Wherever he went, people would immediately flock to him, trying to suck up to him. Here he received a greeting and a wave from a young woman that looked up but no one really cared about him. He wasn't sure that any one of them even knew who he was.

The clock struck twelve which seemed like a magical spell. All children immediately left their play and ran in his direction which had him panicked for a second. But they steered of and went to get their lunch bags while the kindergarten teachers put the tables in the middle of the room. He went over to help but they did it with practiced ease, so he could only help with the chairs.

"Thank you very much," a very small Omega women in her late thirties said, "will you stay for lunch?"

"Sure." He decided on the spot. Seemed like he had come at a bad time. Of course the children would have lunch now.

The horde of little feet came back, every child unpacking in well-known order. Everyone had a table set, a napkin, two other little towels, a toothbrush, toothpaste and a lunch box. The teachers oversaw the procedure, helping the smallest of them who seemed to be barely two years old. Akashi looked for a safe place and decided to stand next to the piano, wondering why the kindergarten had one. He was soon enlightened when the petite woman stepped behind it to play a short melody that silenced the children and had them look in her direction.

"Thank you for assembling so orderly, children. Today, we have a guest. This gentleman will stay for lunch. May I ask your name?" She turned to him.

"Akashi Seijuro."

She only faltered for a second, staring at him with wide eyes before turning back to

the children: "Mister Akashi is a very important man, he is your parents' boss. It is due to him that we have this beautiful kindergarten. Let us all thank him."

"Thank you!" The children said in practiced unison, some of the younger ones a bit out of tune or just mouthing words.

The woman played another melody which had all the children lay down their heads on their lunch boxes. It looked like they were asleep in an instant though some seemed to fake sleep, just staring into space in boredom. The nice woman mentioned him to follow her to the windows that were a few meters farther.

"Thank you very much for visiting us, Mister Akashi. It is a honor to have you here. My name is Kuroko Miyako. I think you are acquainted with my son." Oh, this was his mother? She was barely one and a half meters tall and had normal black hair. She was even plainer and less notable than her son, though she seemed filled with a happy spirit.

"Indeed I am. Tetsu is a good friend of mine. I am honored to meet the woman who brought up such a delightful young man." He bowed to her which made her bow deeper in return. "So how does the lunch ritual work?" He had never been to a kindergarten himself after all.

"The children now sleep for twenty minutes before we eat. After that they brush their teeth and return to play. We always have some extra lunches because sometimes the parents forget to prepare one, so if you like we can provide you with a bento."

"That would be appreciated." His eyes went to the piano. "So you use songs to structure the day?"

"And for singing and dancing together which we do daily." She looked at him with curiosity in her eyes. "Do you play?"

"Yes, I learned to play the violin and the piano." He sometimes played them to relax.

"Would you like to play a bit after lunch? I fear we aren't exactly well-taught, we just recently learned some basic songs. When it comes to classical music, we still have to rely on prerecorded music. If you have the time, of course."

"I do." He nodded with a smile. "I think this is much better than just listening to statistics and surveys on how well this new project works."

"You are a kind and graceful man, just like my son told me." Her smile was genuine, full of outright happiness. "We all read your interview and were impressed by it."

Oh. That interview. The PR gag with Vogue. The most disgustingly romantic crap he had ever read, making him out to be a gentleman looking for true love, interpreting his hints of having specific standards to be good breed and etiquette while he was simply talking about masochistic sexual kinks.

»An older women who is able to stand up to you. Have you ever thought about fucking Tetsu's mom instead of him?«

»You are disgusting.«

»Just asking.«

"They were very kind and made me out to be a much better man than I am."

"You are so modest." She pointed at the whole floor. "To give such a gift to Alphas and Omegas alike, to strengthen our future generation like this takes extraordinary dedication. You are an example for other leaders."

He had heard praise all his life but this was so honest that he felt like blushing. So this was where Kuroko got his positive attitude from. He should have known that someone as special as him would come from a special person.

»Sure about not fucking her?«

Akashi decided to ignore his alter ego and focused on Misses Kuroko instead. He

asked her about the rooms, if they were missing anything, the kids and the teachers. She praised him on allowing the teachers to bring their own children and described how they had developed a system that rotated them to have another teacher than their own mother. She also described how the children lived with other mothers when their own were in heat and how they were coping with the three-week-schedule. All of it seemed well-thought through and had worked splendidly until now. A lot of teachers working here had been able to stabilize their lives. Misses Kuroko never mentioned prostitution but it seemed like some of them had been working unsafe jobs before.

After twenty minutes they went back over to the children who awoke to a song played by Misses Kuroko. One of the tables had two extra sets of which one was offered to him. His host took the other. They both sat in seiza as the tables were seized for the small children sitting on stools. They all said "Itadaikimasu" before opening their boxes. The four children at his table all seemed to have their own boxes filled with onigiris in cat or bunny form, octopus sausages, cut wraps and apples, one even had a daifuku while another held a small toy next to the food. His own box contained rice with a bear face cut out of algae, some meatballs and cherry tomatoes. Cute.

"What is that?" Misses Kuroko asked a little girl.

"A lion," she answered. Her small rice ball had a lion face made of mango and a mane made of grated carrots. It was artistic. She looked at it for a second before biting into it.

"Do you like lions?"

"I saw one at the zoo. It was really big," she said after swallowing her food. Good girl. She had perfect manners for a four-year-old.

"Did you know that our kindergarten logo is a lion? I think it was Mister Akashi's favorite animal."

"It is," he confirmed. "Lions are strong animals full of grace and beauty." It was one of those things asked in his interview. He had stated that he wanted a partner as strong as a lion and compassionate as an elephant. His alter ego had commented that he forgot to say he or she also needed to be a rabbit in bed. His reply had been that lions copulated twenty times a day and that was more than enough.

"I like wolfs." One of the boys said.

"Tigers are better!" Another one replied.

"I like cheetahs," said the girl who was eating her lion onigiri. For a four-year-old, she knew some interesting things. "They are the fastest animals on earth."

"My daddy's car is faster," the first boy said.

"What animal do you like?" Akashi asked the little girl seated to his left.

"Bunnies." She seemed to be very shy. Maybe a little Omega between all those Alpha children. Her bento box held three little bunny onigiris. She seemed reluctant to eat them but did after Misses Kuroko told her to.

The two boys were discussing cars – or rather, telling the other that their respective father had the better car without ever telling which one it was, most likely they didn't even know – and the first girl pouted for an unfathomable reason. She interrupted them both by asking him what car he had and he astounded them all by telling them that he was too young to have a driving license. Of course he owned some cars but he still had half a year before he turned twenty.

His own meal was alright. The rice was a bit dry, the meat balls were cold of course, but all in all it was not bad. Some of the teachers must be making those every morning

and he could appreciate the work that went into them. It was lovely to have some hand-made lunches for kids who had none instead of buying some in the cafeteria. Just by listening to Misses Kuroko talk to the children, he could feel something inside him mending. It filled him with unbelievable sadness all the same.

"Do you not like your lunch?" The four-year-old asked him who seemed to have noticed his changing mood.

"Huh? Oh no, my lunch is great. I just thought of something complicated." He smiled at her. "Thank you for asking."

"Natsue is a delight." Misses Kuroko stroked her head. "She is Ayako's daughter. Her mother has her week off right now."

"Really?" He nodded. "So with whom are you living right now?" The system of placing their children in other houses while the mother was in heat was uncommon, he liked to know how well it worked.

"With Miss Teimei." She turned and pointed at a woman one table over.

"We do not point, Natsue." Misses Kuroko grabbed her hand and lowered it. "Those are bad manners."

"I'm sorry, Misses Kuroko."

"Do you always live with Miss Teimei when your mother has her week off?"

"Yes, I do." She nodded which made all her hair fall into her face, so she had to brush it back when her head went up again. "Then I get to play with Ryou and Shinta."

"So you like staying over at Miss Teimei's?"

"Yes, it is fun." She held up her hands. "Ryou is so big that he can pick me up. We went to the park and I could go sliding." It seemed like she saw it as something like vacation. He only vaguely remembered his own mother but he did not think he would have been able to part from her at so young an age.

"I also know a Ryou that is bigger than me. He works as a model and singer."

"Ryou's singing is horrible. He tried to sing a lullaby once. He was bad." She mercilessly told him.

Well, he couldn't really say that Ryouta had a good voice, he was simply popular. But he shouldn't openly say that. So he asked instead: "Can you sing?"

"I always sing with my mama." She had a big smile. "My mama is a good singer."

Hm, what to say? He opted for: "Misses Kuroko asked me to play the piano. Do you like piano music?"

"Yes!" She nearly jumped from her stool in joy. "Play kuckaku!"

"The song is called cockatoo, Natsue." Misses Kuroko shook her head but had to smile.

"Mister Akashi will play some of the music that we sometimes play on the recorder. Adult music."

"That is boring." Her lips turned down.

"We'll see about that." Challenge accepted. He would find a song she liked.

»Are you wooing four-year-olds now? You have some strange tastes.«

»Shut up.«

»I just wanted to remind you that we are here for finding a mate and not for playing with these little monsters.«

»They are cute.«

»They are unnecessary for our quest.«

»Some of them are children of the Omegas working here. If I take a mate here, I'll also get at least one child that way. I need to like both.«

»Again: You are not fucking the child.«

»Not everything is about sex, we talked about that.«

»I hate it when we are not productive.«

»Then go to sleep.«

Misses Kuroko had begun to play a song that was for brushing teeth. They had four little sinks. Two teachers oversaw the process while the song was played four times until every child had clean teeth. The children cleaned up their utensils while the teachers brushed their teeth (Akashi had to promise the children he would brush his teeth later as he had no toothbrush on him). It was followed by another song that had every child get a cushion while the teachers cleared away the tables and stools. They sat down on the cushions where the tables had been before.

"Today, Mister Akashi will play a few songs for us. Say thank you."

"Thank you!" They said again, this time a bit more in unison.

Oh well, this was it. Let's see what he remembered. He liked Chopin, Vivaldi, Bach and Mozart as well as Beethoven. Bach was a bit dry for children but the others would do. Or maybe even an Eastern classical like Dvóřak or Tschaikowski. While he still thought, his fingers already played "Für Elise" as every child knew it. Playing piano was something that happened completely on auto-pilot. He noticed that two keys were slightly out of tune, he would need to send a tuner. When the song ended, his trance was broken by some furious clapping. His little audience seemed impressed, they didn't even need to be told to clap, they did so on their own. He felt his cheeks redden. He had completely forgotten about the children.

"Wow." Misses Kuroko and the other teachers clapped as well. "My son told me you are very talented."

"Thank you very much." He lowered his head, looking at the kids. "So what would you like next? Something as lively or something a bit slower?"

"Lively!" Natsue answered, not star-struck like a lot of the others. "That song was like a flock of birds."

He had to smile. So another bird song. He would take Tschaikowski.