

One Night in London

Von abgemeldet

London, 2012

The floodlit stadium was filled with the cheers of the spectators as the middle-distance runners started their race. They were followed by a Mexican wave, which was sloshing around the stands. The long jumpers demanded the support of the viewers by clapping their hands together over their heads, before they ran down the runway and landed gracefully in the sand pit. The entire arena was decorated with the flags of every participating nation and the Olympic torch towered over all.

Yet Kagome Higurashi didn't take notice of the atmosphere, nor of the efforts of the other athletes. Instead, she stared at her spikes and stockings, while she re-enacted the course of motions internally. When a referee approached her to tell her that it would be her turn soon, she stood up and walked towards the basket in which the javelins were stored. The young woman contemplated several javelins, before she chose the one with the red grip and white shaft, the colours of her home country. Taking in a deep breath, she made her way towards the starting point. She passed the coaching zone with one final glance at her trainer. His white hair shone bright in the floodlight and his amber eyes glowed like they always did when he felt tense. After all, it was the sixth round. This would be her final try. It was now or never. Kagome smiled weakly, as the memory from last year resurfaced against her own will.

Daegu, 2011

"C'mon!" Kagome yelled, but her javelin sunk mercilessly towards the ground, much quicker than she had hoped. She didn't even need to look at the scoreboard to know that this throw had been no improvement. Her best throw had been her first one which had landed at 64,07 metres. More than six metres shorter than her season's best. And this throw had already been her fifth attempt. She returned slowly to the warm-up area and donned her track suit top. After that she dropped on the bench and covered her face in her hands in horror.

What was going on? She had no idea. This season had been her best season ever, even if she still was a rather young athlete of 25 years. However, her sponsors had informed her that they expected her to achieve some results – i.e. the winning of an international championship – or they would cut down her allowance. The situation

with her trainer was even worse.

When the famous Sesshomaru Taisho had offered to train her three years ago, she had been overwhelmed. Sesshomaru had been a very successful javelin thrower himself, he had even won the world championship at the age of nineteen, but a terrible accident had put a stop to his promising career: During a car crash he had lost his left arm. Instead of continuing his sport on a different level, he had concentrated on teaching others and he had been a very successful trainer ever since. His protégés had all been very triumphant, too: Under Sesshomaru's guidance they became national or continental champions and his last student even world champion – twice.

Therefore experts had been surprised by his decision to train her, some odd little girl from Tokyo. Kagome didn't pay attention to them. However, the problem with a trainer used to success was that they had barely any patience. Some athletes Sesshomaru had only trained for a couple of months, before he had dropped them off, because he'd deemed them unworthy. And seven years ago, he had quit his contract with promising javelin thrower Helen Wellington, for she 'only' had managed to become second at the Olympic Games, after they had been a team for three years.

Three years...

Three years and Kagome still hadn't won any big title. She simply knew, if she failed him again, he would leave her for sure. And if the great Sesshomaru couldn't make a champion out of her, then no one could. Yet, this was not the main reason, why she didn't want her coach to abandon her. No, the real reason why she could not afford to lose him, was that it would break her heart. Against her own will, she had fallen in love with the man who was 24 years older than her. Somehow his cold demeanour soothed her more than anything else in the world. Around him, she simply felt complete. And it wasn't like he was void of feelings – granted that he had no romantic feelings whatsoever for her – but he was capable of showing emotions, only that he showed them differently from most people. He was definitely more subtle than herself, as she carried her heart openly for anyone to see. Which was why these last months had become increasingly difficult, for she longed to tell him the truth. But then he would have quit the contract with her for sure and that was the last thing she'd have wanted.

The cheering crowd jolted Kagome out of her thoughts and the reason became very clear to her as she glanced at the scoreboard. One of the Russians had thrown over 71 metres, which was a new European record. Of course, it also meant that the blond girl was now in the lead. Kagome shook her head. How was she supposed to compete with that? She had never broken the magical 71 metres mark in her entire life! She felt desperation smothering her insides and so she got up and headed towards the coaching zone. She was unable to understand what had happened in the last 48 hours. It had been so easy to qualify for the final, her first attempt had been not only good enough to qualify her, but also it had been the best one in the qualification of all athletes. During today's warm-up she had felt so confident and the throws had come so easily to her that both, she and her trainer had assumed that the title was within reach. Kagome came to a halt in front of the tribune, where all the coaches waited for their charges. Sesshomaru already waited for her and leaned against the restriction.

"Focus," he hissed.

Kagome blinked, as she was now on the verge of tears. "I am focused," she retorted.

"No, you are not. You are watching what the others are doing and your thoughts are God knows where," Sesshomaru barked at her. "You have only got one chance left."

"I KNOW that," she shrieked. "I just- I just don't know what's wrong with me. Everything felt fine earlier, but now..."

"Concentrate on the present. There's no earlier in sports."

Intense amber eyes scrutinized her, as tears made their way down her cheeks. Her breathing became more erratic and after a few moments, she averted her gaze as she could not stand to see his disappointed face any longer.

"Kagome... Don't give up hope just yet," he added in a much softer voice.

She nodded and returned to field without looking at Sesshomaru. It was easy enough for him, he wouldn't lose anything. He would simply go and find himself another charge, a more talented one, leaving her behind, but she, she would lose everything. She would lose him and that thought frightened her the most.

Then, everything happened quite fast. She arrived at the basket and grabbed a javelin, her hands still shaking. She walked to the starting point and her head felt dizzy. Her insides were cringed as she started to run. Her limbs felt heavy like iron clubs, during the withdrawal and transition. A shudder went through her spine when she released the javelin. She wanted to shout something, but her voice had deserted her. Her knees were shivering as she watched after her javelin. It flew high, higher, then began to sink, lower and lower and landed – outside the sector. The giant X marking her void attempt on the scoreboard was the last thing she saw, before she collapsed on the running track.

An hour after her failure, she was sitting on the tiles of the shower room and water was trickling down on her body. She hadn't even bothered to undress. Her number was slowly dissolving in the cold water, as were her hopes for the future. In the end, she had scored the fourth place. However, her best throw had been five metres shorter than the bronze throw of the South African chick. She shook her head. It didn't matter anymore, nothing mattered anymore.

"Are you trying to drown yourself?"

Kagome turned her head away. Sesshomaru was the last person she had wanted to see. She didn't want to hear the words which she feared the most right now. She heard the squeaking of the water tap and the shower stopped. Footfalls announced that he left the shower room, but to her dismay, he returned soon after and a towel was dropped onto her head. Kagome did not stir, but when she felt him sitting down next to her, she had the urge to run away, but her muscles were sore and moving was out of the question for the moment.

"So?" he asked after a while.

"So what?" she snapped back. "I lost. I am a failure. I will never win anything."

"A failure?" he repeated in a mocking tone. "No, but your manners leave a lot to be desired."

She shrugged and the towel fell to the ground. "Who cares?"

"Your trainer does."

Her head swirled around, tears stinging in her eyes. "What do you mean?"

Sesshomaru regarded her for a moment and then he took her left hand into his larger right hand.

"Have you ever been to London?"

London 2012

Kagome drew in a deep breath. Her spikes took off from the ground and she started. The javelin tightly locked in her right hand, she closed her eyes. A smile ghosted over her lips. Fifteen steps to go. Her left arm swung freely, while her right maintained the carrying position. Thirteen steps to go. She accelerated. Seven steps to go. She leaned back. Five steps and her arm drew back. Three steps and her arm went off straight forward and she released the javelin. One step to go and she halted in front of the line. She opened her eyes and they grew wider and wider.

Two hours later, she had finally time for herself. She was sitting on a bench in the dressing room, which was deserted apart from her, sipping at her energy drink. She was unable to stop her right foot from tapping on the floor. The door opened and Sesshomaru entered. In an instant, Kagome got to her feet and dashed towards him. Before he had a chance to say something, she had taken the ribbon from her neck and threw it over his head, grinning all over her face. Then she stepped back and cocked her head.

"Gold looks good on you," she chirped.

He sighed and returned the medal to her, inclining his head slightly. "Congratulations."

Kagome bowed in front of him. "It's because of your training that I won tonight."

"I can't remember teaching you to run with your eyes closed while holding a spear."

She laughed. "Well, I guess, there's still a lot for you to teach me."

"Well, about that..."

Kagome's laughter died, when she noticed the look on his face. "What do you mean?"

He smiled.

"No... No! NO!" she yelled and moved closer to him. "I mean, you can't leave me now! Now that I have finally won a title! What about the world championship next year? What about Moscow? What about the world record? I was two inches away from it today, but I need your help! I'll train even harder and no chocolate for me! But I need you! Without you... I, I can't... Please, Sesshomaru!"

He shook his head. In her desperation, Kagome threw her arms around his neck. "Why?" she sobbed against his shoulder.

"Because it is the right thing to do," he whispered in her ear, as he put his arm around her.

She looked up at his beautiful face, crying silent tears. When she had finally mustered her courage to say something, Sesshomaru interrupted her.

"And so is this," he said.

And then he leaned closer and kissed her.

Tokyo 2017

"You were smiling," Sesshomaru said as he leaned back, putting his arm around her waist.

Kagome looked up from her magazine, puzzled. Sometimes, she was unable to fathom his line of thinking.

"In London," he continued. "I saw your face on the screen and you were smiling, shortly after you had closed your eyes. I've always wondered why you had smiled in that particular moment."

The black haired woman threw her magazine on the coffee table and embraced Sesshomaru, relishing in the musky scent of his after shave. She remembered that moment well. When she had closed her eyes, she had seen no other than Sesshomaru in front of her inner eye. He had given her the strength to achieve her goal. Of course, she wouldn't tell him that. He would still be mad, even though he wasn't her coach anymore, for she hadn't been as focussed as he had wanted her to be.

"That is a secret," she chuckled and pecked him on the cheek.

"Hnn."

