

Ocean Avenue

Von Makikolgami

Kapitel 12: Waiting Game

It was Saturday and Hiruma had almost forgotten what Musashi had said about his birthday party. So, when the door opened and he heard Musashi enter the room, he rushed over to the door and threw his arms around the other's neck.

"Welcome home, honey! How was work today?" he chirped falsely, grinning his toothy grin as Musashi stared at him in pure disbelief.

"...Who are you and what happened to Hiruma?" the older looking man asked, glaring down the blond as he tried to cover up the fact that he wanted to throw up.

"What? Wasn't that what you were thinking of when you showed me your other bedroom?" Hiruma asked, a grin so bittersweet and false on his lips that Musashi wanted to vomit.

"In fact, no," he ground out between clenched teeth, pushing Hiruma away from himself. "I was just thinking that I finally wanted to have a place to call home. I'd even give up what little of my own time and space I had for that."

Hiruma snorted, crossing his arms in front of his chest before he looked up levelly at the other. "You can tell that to yourself, I'm not buying that."

Gen rolled his eyes as he took off his shoes and coat. "Listen, you are the first person I ever showed this place and I didn't lie when I told you that not even Mamori has been here. No one had been here, just Tamahachi, Youichi and the plumber and electrician. Because, no, I'm a carpenter and I can't do anything on my own, either."

"That still doesn't mean that-"

"I was not done yet!" Gen bellowed, blinking slightly in surprise when Hiruma's eyes widened with a hint of fear. "Sorry, I didn't", Musashi started, then shook his head, and his look was as firm as before. "Look, through all the years, I've been faithful and believe me, it wasn't easy. Only now, that you're back..."

He stopped right there, staring down at the ground while his cheeks turned beet-red like he was still a teenager. "Forget what I said. Let me get a few things and then we should get going."

Still having to work through what Musashi had just told him, Hiruma frowned and decided to slip the first bunch of questions that came to his mind that had to do only with the two of them in favor for the one that was most important right then. "Go where?"

"Odaiba," Musashi said on his way to the kitchen to get something out of a drawer. "Remember? I asked you to come to my birthday party to meet some old friends-"

"Wait, Odaiba? Why don't you celebrate your birthday at home?" Hiruma's frown deepened.

"Because Mamori would kill me if she had to cook and do the dishes for a good 50 persons," Musashi elaborated, putting the object that looked like a little present to Hiruma into his pocket.

"What?! Why do you invite so many people to your birthday?" Hiruma glared. "I thought you didn't like that many people in one place either."

"Well, I know a lot of people and – you know how that works – you have to invite the right people at the right time and do nice things to them to get the things you want, right?" Musashi now smirked, obviously done with what he wanted to do as he returned to the entrance and started to put his shoes back on.

"Right..." Hiruma mumbled, not looking happy at all. "Well, then, you have to go alone, because I don't have anything to wear that matches your suit. I don't have any clothes for a funeral."

With a shrug he returned to his laptop on the couch, fully expecting Musashi to let him have his peace and leave. He did not have such luck though.

"What do you think you're doing? You're worse than Mamori when she's on PMS. You're coming with me and if I have to drag you out by your collar or something!" the man ordered, making Hiruma feel like a schoolboy. His eyes narrowed and he glared full force at the other.

"Who do you think you're talking to? One of your sons?" he asked in an icy tone.

Musashi rolled his eyes. "Look, I don't have time for any of these games, I promise we can talk about it later, but now, please put on something or come as you are or whatever just..."

"...You're late," Hiruma pointed out, finally recognizing the reason behind Musashi's harshness with a knowing grin.

"...Yes, I am," Musashi sighed, "now, please, don't make it harder than it already is."

"...Fine, but only because it's you."

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About an hour later, after Hiruma had taken a very quick shower, redressed in something more presentable than black pants and a short-sleeved turtleneck, he and Musashi arrived at the hotel on Odaiba where the party took place.

Hiruma frowned when he read the text on the signs on their hurried way inside. He did not read much of a birthday party, more of a wedding anniversary. But Musashi was so fast that even he had a hard time keeping up with him, especially since the older looking man had his wrist in a vice-like hold.

Music was coming from the room they were going to, rather loud, too. Wincing, Hiruma returned to glaring at Musashi, but the other did not notice, because he was not even looking at him. Instead, he made his way straight to the door.

As he opened it, they were greeted by a loud and cheery "Happy Anniversary!" which was followed by a few very loud gasps and Hiruma rolled his eyes.

"Hi-Hiruma-san... Is that you?" a man in his forties – like most of the people here – stepped forward, large eyes staring at him in disbelief.

"Che, fucking shrimp, you had twenty years to get a new haircut and you still look the same?" Hiruma snorted, trying to ignore the warm and fuzzy feeling in his chest.

A blond man in the corner snorted and said to his two friends: "Heh, it's really the same old-"

"HIRUMA~~~~!!!"

Every muscle in Hiruma's body was suddenly alerted to jump when he heard a too familiar loud and a very happy cry. He could not yet make out where it came from, but by the way it had suddenly gotten darker, he knew that Kurita's approach was close. Musashi's catlike reflexes were the ones that saved him from being crushed though.

"Aw, Musashi, why don't you let me hug Hiruma? It's been such a long time that we saw him," Kurita pouted, still the same round person that he was during school. Somehow it felt nice that nothing had changed at all, Hiruma noticed with more fondness than he would ever admit.

"The last time you hugged somebody, Takami had to do some immediate surgery to get their bones back in place and you know you crushed a car in your hug once, remember?" Musashi reprimanded him with a fatherly and fond smile. Hiruma remembered his little comparison from earlier and shook his head. Seems like he took his father role a little too seriously.

"It's alright, fucking fatty, if you're careful. Like Daddy here said, don't crush you friends in your bear hugs- huff!"

Hiruma was not able to say more as he had already been lifted off the ground by Kurita, who had him tightly in his arms. It felt a bit bone crushing, but not too much. In fact, the only other time that Kurita had actually hugged him like this was when they had won the game before the Christmas Bowl and that was nothing compared to this hug. Hiruma winced at the memory of his broken arm then, but then used his legs to kick the other as hard as he could into his big round belly.

"That's okay! Stop it! Ugh!" The blond struggled until he was put back down safely on the ground, just to take a deep breath. Taking a good look at his oldest friend, he shook his head with a grin. "Damn, you really haven't changed one bit. You still the same old fatty you were in Junior High... minus the beard."

"Huh? What? Oh! You mean this," Kurita said with a sheepish laugh, running his hand through the beard around his mouth. "I've had it for so long that I don't remember that I have it."

"Hiruma-san, it has been a really long time," the man with the large eyes from before stepped in, smiling genuinely at him. It took Hiruma a heartbeat to transform this face back into that of a young man in his early twenties and then he was able to tell who it was that he was talking to.

"It has, fucking shrimp," he grinned fondly down at the one who moved passed each and every obstacle on the football field back during their days in High School together. "You've grown a lot since then... And your forehead, too."

The younger laughed sheepishly. "Yeah, I fear that I've inherited this from my father. But it's okay, I'm not-"

"He doesn't need to look good," a woman with dark bluish black hair about the same age as the man in front of him said, "he's got me for that."

"I see you haven't changed at all, either," Hiruma grinned down at Suzuna and Sena. "And I see that you did marry in the end."

"Yes!" Suzuna cheered. "But it took him 3 years to finally come up with the courage to ask me. You know how shy he is."

"Suzuna!" Sena protested in a high-pitched voice, sounding just like he did back during High School.

Hiruma grinned. "At least he grew a few centimeters."

"Oh yes! Doesn't he look good now? So manly, but not too much, not like Shin-san, but," she started and purred, making Sena blush completely.

"Suzuna! Would you please stop that?! You know there are minors around..." Sena protested, glancing towards the girl that was holding hands with Youichi right now, watching the scene with a cute little blush on her cheeks.

"Oh, believe me, Emi knows what she wants," Suzuna grinned.

Still grinning, Hiruma watched the pair banter about raising kids, when their daughter eyed him just as suspiciously as her boyfriend did. He walked away from his friends and towards the younger pair, offering his hand to the girl. "You must be Emi. I already heard of you... from your future parents-in-law."

"Um, yes, I am.... Nice... Nice to meet you," she mumbled, taking his hand and shaking it with a side-glance to Youichi, who still glared at him. "And you are?"

"I'm Hiruma Youichi, the role-model for your boyfriend here," the older blond introduced himself with a grin. Youichi's glared intensified and he took a half-step forward, raising his fist in warning.

"Really? But I never heard him mention you... But my dad said you were a great person, even though Takekura-kun tries to tell me differently..." she mumbled with another side-glance to her boyfriend.

"Oh, that's because his parents decided for him," Hiruma cackled and patted her head. "But don't worry, I bet he's a really nice guy underneath all his glaring at me." With a grin he leaned in so that he could whisper in her ear, "And I bet he's a real bomb in bed if he's anything like, his father or his mother..."

"What are you whispering to her?" Youichi demanded as Emi turned beet-red, trying to get images out of her head that she never wanted to have there in the first place. "What did you tell her? How dare you to embarrass her like that? Get your fucking filthy hands off her, she's mine, understood? Nobody touches her but me! And you won't touch her most of all people!"

Hiruma laughed loudly at that, and patted his shoulder as he walked. "Despite what you think of me, boy, I like you. And not only because you remind me of myself at your age. You irritate the hell out of me, but I like you. Keep that in mind when you plan to kill me."

"What the-?! Why should I?" Youichi mumbled as he stared at the blond's back, who walked away towards the buffet, but he was not able to make even two steps without being stopped by people that knew him and that wanted to talk to him. Of course he did not want to, but most of these people were people he had once cared about so he was just not able to brush them off like any other stranger and answered their questions with as much patience as he could gather.

When he had finally reached the buffet, he filled his plate with things that looked as un-sweet as they could and snuck out of the room as soon as he got the chance to. Unfortunately this was the moment that Musashi held his thank-you-speech and wanted to propose a toast to his sake.

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"Here you are."

Hiruma looked up from the skyline of Tokyo where he was leaning on the rail outside of the hotel. He acknowledged Musashi's presence with one look before he turned back around.

"I thought you had vanished again."

Snorting, the blond shook his head. "Not that soon. I was just tired of all the questions."

He half-expected Musashi to tell him that those were his friends, that they had a right to ask so many questions after twenty years, but the other just snorted. "I know how you feel. It's okay that you fled here."

"...What? No reprimanding from Daddy this time? Guess I must be lucky then," Hiruma chuckled.

"Maybe you are," Musashi said silently, sighing himself. "I've been on so many meetings that I just wanted to hide from because people kept asking me questions I didn't want to answer... But I never did it. Guess that makes me a stupid person."

"Perhaps," Hiruma mumbled. "Perhaps I'm the stupid one for running away like that. Perhaps I should have stayed and faced my problems like a man..."

"It's okay," Musashi shook his head. "You did what you did, then and now, it's not as if you could change it now."

"No, I can't change it," the blond sighed, turning to face the other. "But I can regret it now... At least a part of me."

"Since when did you ever feel regret?" his best and closest friend asked with a soft chuckle. "That's the first time I heard you say that."

"I regret a lot of things, but one thing more than all the others," Hiruma said. "Do you remember the day before your wedding or rather the night?"

Musashi frowned. "Why are you asking me that now?"

"Doesn't matter, just... tell me, what do you remember?"

"I just..." Musashi started, frowning as he tried to recall the day 20 years ago, but everything was clouded by the fog of one big hangover. "Not much, really. Just that... it was my bachelor's party, I was... kind of missing you, but suddenly you were there, but I don't remember what happened then."

"You don't remember anything from that night, do you?" Hiruma asked with a snort,

shaking his head as if he had expected such an answer.

"The only thing I remember that I asked the hooker somebody booked for me to go home and keep the money she got," Musashi admitted. "I didn't want this complete stranger to-"

"It's a pity you don't remember, but I do," Hiruma interrupted him before he could finish his story. "It's a good thing that you don't remember what you said to me then."

"What do you mean?" Musashi asked with a frown.