

Wind Phoenix And Iron-Armed Tiger

Von Alibear

Akiyama couldn't have been any more happy to finally be at home.

After a long day full of work at his office at Sky Finance with more than a few desperate people (with some strange and even stranger requests for money) he had to take care of; all accompanied by some harsh words from his assistant and kind soul Hana. Instead of offering him sympathy and support she kept going on about that his problem was not that he needed to get better at his job, no. First and foremost, he had to at least DO it. As if that wasn't already enough, his second job (or more like his hobby) as a manager at his hostess club Elise knocked the last nail in the coffin of his energy. At least for today.

The girls weren't even the problem. Some of the customers always needed more than a few kind words to convince them that enough was enough...

His legs hurt like hell...

With a sigh, he closed the door behind him, threw his mauve-striped jacket off his shoulders and on a nearby chair. He was so glad to be home...

Finally relax, get some rest - to be with his love.

Thinking about him he had to smile almost instantaneously.

A few months back he'd have never imagined he could be with someone ever again - but it was a man of all things that showed him that there was still hope left in love for someone like him.

Remembering how they left each other this morning, that soft, loving kiss, the smile they shared with each other; then Akiyama went to work after Saejima told him he would just stroll through the streets of Kamurocho as of today, just after he put on his parka.

All would have been okay, all would have been fine as he was entering the bedroom, almost expecting Saejima to be there, greeting him, welcoming him home.

He wasn't that far off with his expectations - but instead of finding the older man in

bed with his pajamas, Saejima was still in his parka.

Just sitting at the edge of the bed, staring at the floor in melancholy. His hair hanging down, almost covering up his whole face, but it gave way enough to a heartbreaking sight.

Saejima was never the man to openly cry, but in Akiyama's eyes it looked as if he was at the brink of shedding tears.

Appalled at this scene, Akiyama walked cautiously towards his partner. Just sat down next to him, remained silent for just a while; put his arm around Saejima's shoulders.

"Is everything alright?", Akiyama then asked, instantly knowing right after uttering this words that it was the most stupid question he could have asked in a situation like this.

And he kinda did not expect an answer from his partner - but it came anyway.

Even if the content was not in any shape or form something he wanted to hear from such a strong, experienced man. Someone who, after such a long time, finally began to find his place in this world again.

"I...", Saejima began, then stopped, for just a while, but enough of one that Akiyama had the feeling to have a lump in his throat.

Then his partner continued, looking at the younger man for just a little moment, almost breaking his heart; his eyes almost instantly went straight back to the floor.

"All these things...that happened in my life...", he uttered with a sigh, stumbling over his words just a little bit.

"All those bad memories just rushed in over my head...you were gone for just...like a second and...then they came....suffocating me, draining me off my strength..."

Saejima did not have to explain what those memories were; Akiyama knew them all to well. Some of them they've had experienced together, some of them the older man had confessed to him.

"I couldn't set foot outside, couldn't even stand up, bring up the strength to at least get rid of this damn jacket", he sighed in frustration, just sitting there, staring.

Helpless.

Powerless.

It was not the first time something like this had happened, not the first time Akiyama had to comfort his partner, assure him it was all okay now, that all would be fine from now on.

So he put his arms around this strong man, let them run over his body, up to his head, his hair.

Putting one hand on his shoulder, grapping the side of his face oh so carefully, running his fingers through his thick, black hair, Akiyama placed a kiss on Saejimas cheek.

Soft, loving, tender.

Supporting.

He could feel the other mans hand on his shoulder, valuing this support.

"Everything will be alright...I am here for you...", was all he could say, over and over and over again. Until the other man would understand, could conclude with his past, with all this pain still troubling him time and again.

All he could do now was wait, wait until the Saejima would understand.

Wait, be there for him, embrace him.

He would understand.

Someday.

That he was sure of.