

Wounds

A perpetrator's perspective

Von Gepo

Kapitel 17: Building bridges

His teammates played a glorious game on Saturday. Coach even allowed him to sit on the bench, talking with him while they watched the game. Due to his new view on teamwork, he was able to point out some things where they needed more training. Though it was a sad fact, his Sunday basketball group had better teamwork than their national team. He explained his current training as a point guard which their coach regarded with absolute astonishment.

"How could it be that amateur players are better trained than professionals?"

"Well, Seirin was trained by Aida Rika. She is one of the best coaches I know, no offense to you. And some of those amateurs are on our professional level, they just decided to do something else with their life. Also that ban on players that might get pregnant costs this team a lot of good players. Midorima Shintaro – as much as I hate the guy – is without question one of the best shooters in the world. He just had a daughter when he was seventeen."

"I read about him. Shame that." Coach shook his head. "But that ban is in place for a good reason."

"A fallout with Aida Riko's father who refused to abort her." He shook his head. "That cost this team a star player and a star coach. She won't ever work for us."

"Oh." Coach Saito blinked. "That legendary high-school coach is his daughter?"

"Same one." Aomine grinned. "I wouldn't be surprised if she decided on training a pure Omega team to beat us, just because."

"Omegas aren't very athletic."

"You'd be surprised." He nodded in Murasakibara's direction. "His mate is on par with most of our players and better than our current power forward." Said man played his own position right now. "My old teammate Kuroko Tetsuya helped Teiko in two of our three consecutive national championships and Seirin in their two national championships. The legendary phantom player."

"Now you're kidding me."

"Nope. Most Omegas aren't athletic, true, but those that play often have better technique and team-play than our Alphas. One or two on a team don't hurt." He grinned again, struck by sudden inspiration. "Actually, why not take our team down a notch to give them some incentive? Let me ask them to play us. Midorima, Kazu, Junpei, Teppei and Tatsu against our team. That would be one Alpha who had a child, three Betas and one Omega who recently had a child against our national team."

"And you think they might win?" The coach looked skeptical.

"Murasakibara is their only real challenge, but with two shooters they won't have a problem to work around him. Kasamatsu will probably tell you the same, he knows them."

"And you think that will motivate everyone to put more work into team-play?"

"At least it's how I learned that I really suck."

"Says the most arrogant guy I ever met." Saito nodded slowly. "Well, I wouldn't mind a bit of motivation on that account. The team is good but yes, they could be better. Everyone plays their own style. All are good but they don't really work together."

"I'll ask them tomorrow if they would play us."

Now, was drinking at a party okay or not? Was he able to stop after a few beers? His head said yes, but could he trust his inner voice? Alcohol was his vice, he knew. Maybe he should install some precautions.

"Hey, Reo." He poked the slim man.

"What is it, handsome?" He was met with an amused smile.

"Could you go into mother-hen mode for me? If I drink too much, cut me off."

"And you'll listen?" His smile was amused, he clearly didn't believe him.

"If not, you may tell Murasakibara to make me listen to you."

"I can see you trashing the place, to be honest." Reo mustered him. "Just remember you asked me. I don't want to hear complaints in the morning."

"Scout's honor."

"You never were a scout, you bad boy." The other shook his head. "I'll give you a chance though. Atsu-chan said you became much nicer through therapy."

"It's true." Man, had he really been so bad that his teammates expected him to lash out at them for something he asked them to do? He felt like getting angry, but maybe they hadn't been so far off. He had been a jerk to them – though to his defense, some weren't exactly better on that account.

"So what exactly happened?" Reo leaned in and whispered. "Coach only told us you were hospitalized and couldn't play due to a broken rib. And suddenly Atsu-chan says something about you seeing a shrink."

"Both are true." Did he really want to tell? Damn, he had not thought about this beforehand. "I partied a bit too hard and a guy beat me up. Coach was furious and made me see a shrink, otherwise he'd throw me off the team."

"Oh." Reo's mouth turned down. "I had hoped it was something more spectacular than that. So forcing you to see a shrink actually made you more mature?"

"Well, he thought about sending all of you to see a shrink," Aomine answered with a slightly sadistic smirk.

"You're kidding!" The long-lashed lids widened. Really, how could an Omega be a problem but this guy was okay? He behaved like a walking man-trap.

"Not at all." He took a swig of his beer.

"I have seen enough shrinks for the rest of my life." Reo shook his head.

"You have?" Instead of just blurting that out, he actually tried to ask carefully. Most people were ashamed about seeing therapists after all.

"My parents weren't happy about my 'shameful conduct'," the feminine player spat those words out. "My father tried beating it out of me, my mother tried tears and blame, and finally they decided that only a professional could convert me."

"Conversion therapy?" He had heard about that. Alphas who wanted to abstain from male Omegas, all Omegas actually, or other sexual or gender abnormalities. As if reacting to an Omega (or any kind of human actually) was unnatural or something.

"Akashi saved me from that shit. He told me it was alright to be who and how I wanted to be, so I was able to fight my parents. They finally left the issue alone. I really don't need people to tell me I need to change, just because they can't deal with their own prejudice."

"Akashi did that?" He asked full of surprise.

"He is far from the bigoted, sheltered kid stuffed full of hate for everyone else that you would expect. But who am I telling this? You know him after all." Reo smiled indulgently.

"I know a madman that had his team members break the law to pressure them into obeying him."

"What?" Big black eyes stared at him in disbelief. "He ... no, he was nice to us. He ... well, sometimes he threatened us with something, once he trashed us on the court to show his superiority. But he never used violence or anything that was ... well, telling us he would carve his eyes out if we didn't get our shit together was a bit over the top, but all in all he was alright."

Should he tell? No, Akashi might hear he hinted at something. They were all in this together, they would all hold their tongue. So he smiled and said: "No offense, but maybe you were easier to handle than the generation of miracles."

"Most certainly! Two of you are bad enough, four would be a horror." The other man rolled his eyes. "What's Kise doing these days?"

"Why don't you ask his best friend?" Aomine couldn't help the ironic undertone when he pointed at Kasamatsu. Best friend indeed. Kasamatsu hated his guts, had been since the day he found him fucking Kise after a game in Kaido's locker room. He could talk about honor, fraternizing and self-respect as much as he wanted, Aomine knew that look. It had been pure envy.

"And Midorima? He somehow married Takao, didn't he?" Always the gossip.

"Kazunari was adopted into their family as an equivalent of marriage. Their daughter Kikyo is well."

"I wish I had a family who'd accept my choice of partners." Reo sighed, suddenly sad. "They are disgusted with me."

"You like men, right?" He thought so at least. Most days he tried not to think about the fact that for getting pregnant, Midorima was the one ... no, not thinking about it. It was strange. Very strange. Thinking about Reo like that was easier. "Actually, if you like that kind of thing ... how come they allowed you on the team?"

The other bit his lower lip, just realizing what he had admitted. He looked around in fear, but no one seemed to pay them any mind, before leaning in and whispering again: "I lied about that when they asked me."

"You wouldn't be the first, I bet." No, Kasamatsu must have lied as well. Except if he fucked Kise exclusively, but that would surprise him. Kise liked both active and passive sex after all.

Momoi's next letter was ten pages long, handwritten this time. She told him what she felt hearing and reading it all, her fears and wishes. Her anger, her disappointment, her sadness, shame and guilt. It was so open and emotional, it was heart-breaking. Gods, why had he hurt her like that? He cried, read that letter again and again, and cried some more.

No, she wasn't in danger. Tetsu wasn't in danger. No one was in danger, he never wanted to hurt anyone like that ever again. How could he make her believe in him? How could he make her trust him again? Even if he knew, did he deserve that trust? He

wasn't sure. Gods, he wasn't sure about any of this. What was he even doing? Telling his friends that he was an asshole, that their most horrible fears had come true, and that he wanted them to stay with him anyway? In Kuroko's case he at least knew that he had already done worse.

This was about the worst thing he would ever do to Momoi. So he took a pen and began to write down a written confession, detailing anything he ever did to hurt others. The murder, the consecutive rapes, gang-rapes, offering Kuroko to Kise ... God forgive him. No human could. Seeing it blue on white like that, there were only few worse things he could do to other humans. He was despicable. He still loved Momoi though.

"You look like a wreck," Doctor Enjoji stated. "Tell me about your week."

"Satsuki left her job and applied to university. Tetsu persuaded her to stay in mail contact with me. I apologized and she sent me her questions which I answered honestly this time. She sent me another letter, telling me about her feelings and what I did to her with ... what I did. I sent her a full account of my offenses."

"Everything? How you made Tetsu lose the child, started raping him apart from the hunts and what you did with Kise?" She seemed suspicious.

"Yes, everything. Even how I changed from wanting to protect my mother to telling myself she didn't deserve better and internally thanking my father every time he made her lose another child. That was wrong as well. It was how I started going bad and thinking that lashing out in anger and hurt was somehow okay."

"You learned a lot in such a short span of time." There was something like pride in her voice.

"Yeah, I ... I had a lot of help. I was able to tell Tetsu what I think. I mean, that he needs to treat himself better and start to get angry when people hurt him. He wrote back an e-mail and-" Could he really do that? Would it be alright? "I'd like to show it to you and ask your opinion."

"Okay." She nodded and took his phone when he offered it to her. It took a minute for her to read it. "You seem to have finally gotten through to him."

"Yeah." He smiled. "I feel good about that."

"He says in here that he reacts with sexual offers when he is thankful, and that he is unable to get angry when people mistreat him. Would you say that are his two main problems?"

"Second one more than the first, really. I have never actually seen him offer himself to anyone but me and Kagami. That's his husband, by the way."

"Does his husband treat him well in your opinion?"

"Definitely." He nodded. From all he had ever observed, Kagami was his support, his pillow, his friend and lover, his guardian as well as someone trusted Kuroko with his life. He was a true partner.

"If he never gets angry and tends to offer his body for anything positive, how can you be sure?"

"Well ... he might not get angry but he does get annoyed sometimes. Or hurt. He shows his feelings to his husband and that one is very sensitive. At least with Tetsu." Aomine hung his head. He got where she was heading. "I was sensitive once, it's why he fell in love with me. Then I closed myself off and hurt him. He stopped showing his emotions because I ignored them anyway. I taught him that screaming and crying was no use." He let out his breath. "I am the reason he does not get angry anymore. I taught him that his body is the only good thing about him and that his feelings don't

matter."

"That is the bottom line, yes." His therapist nodded.

"Is there a way I can make it up to him again?" Because he wanted to, damn, he really did. Just thinking about this filled him with burning shame. How could he have been angry with Kuroko when all he was angry about were things he had caused himself? Was that why he was angry about them? This was so twisted.

"You can teach him differently. Your words and actions matter most when it comes to this. When you show him that his anger has consequences for you, that you like him for more than his body and that his feelings matter, that is atonement."

"How do I do that?"

"You stop disregarding him and start taking him seriously. He needs space now? Give him space. He wants to talk with you about it? Invite him to do so and watch out for those small reactions you know he has instead of bulldozing over them. Search for all those destructive opinions in your head like "Omegas are whiny and needy" or "Omegas can't understand what Alphas need" or "Alphas are better than Omegas" or "Omegas love nothing but cocks" and squash them. Disrespecting Omegas, women, children, animals, that is part of our culture but that does not make it right. Especially when they are made into nothing but sexual prey for the amusement of some people that feel superior due to physical strength." She took a deep breath. "In the end it is your decision if the feeling of superiority that hurting others gives you is worth the pain you cause with it."

"I feel like shit when I hurt others." He hung his head and whispered those words.

"So you don't feel superior anymore when you see others in pain?" There was a smile on her face.

He shook his head.

"Then you learned what you had to. Well done."

"Do I have to stop this therapy now?" He straightened in shock.

"No, no. You'll most likely need some support to follow through with those convictions. But I want you to decide when you want to talk to me instead of having me decide what is good for you."

"Oh, okay." When did he want to talk to her again? "Can we continue with every week? I am sure I'll have another letter from Satsuki by next week and maybe Tetsu will call. Also I wanted to ask the coach if I might start light training with the team next week. I met up with them and some talked to me again. One guy who hated me for years actually said he liked how I was now. I apologized to him too."

"Do you think you could become friends now?" Doctor Enjoji smiled at him.

Murasakibara and him? "Maybe? He has this cute baby daughter and he invited me for dinner and cake next week. I didn't know he could bake. I am starting to like him."

They continued to talk about some team members as well as the coach and his Sunday basketball group. Had he really come this far? His therapist made him realize that he had made some friends, all by himself. Wow. For the first time he left therapy with a smile on his face.