

Not good enough

Von Gepo

Kapitel 2: Gaining a friend

When Murasakibara entered his classroom, saw him and smiled, Tatsuya felt good about it. Mostly, when Alphas smiled at him, they wanted to get in his pants. So this was a nice kind of change. Somehow it was reassuring when a guy was more interested in the candies in your pocket than your body.

Murasakibara came over and proudly told him: "I got an A class!"

"Great! So you have home-economics with us?" It was the class they were about to have. So there was something that Murasakibara could do well enough that he did not need an S-class for everything.

"I'm very good at baking." His smile made Tatsuya want to give him a pat on the head.

"Not so good at cooking though."

"I am a very good cook. Maybe I can teach you cooking and you teach me baking." Not that he was actually bad at baking, he was quite alright, but still it felt like treating Murasakibara as an equal was the right thing to do. And who knew – maybe he was better than Tatsuya. With such a sweet tooth he was most likely interested in being able to make baked goods by himself.

"I want to make cake."

"Let's see what our teacher wants us to do."

Murasakibara began to check their table's stores and found everything but milk. There even was enough egg powder for a few cakes. He looked at their things and asked: "Does strawberry milk work like real milk in a cake?"

"I am not sure. There is a lot of chemistry in strawberry milk. I think most of them are made from water with milk aroma."

"Would green tea with milk work?" Did Murasakibara really want to make a cake with milk from the vending machine?

"We could ask the teacher. He'll be here soon. Ah, look, that's him I think." Tatsuya saw Murasakibara turn and walk in his direction. "Wait!"

"Why?" The giant asked annoyed.

"First he'll begin his lecture and then he gives us tasks and only then can you ask." Had the other boy ever been to a normal class? Did he know what class structure was?

"I don't want tasks. I want to bake a cake." Murasakibara still looked at him.

"Students, take your seats. Groups of two or three at every cooking table", the teacher told them.

"Look, in this class we do what the teacher wants us to do. We need special permission if we want to do something else. Let's go and hear what he wants us to do, okay?"

"I want cake", Murasakibara said with a pout on his lips but followed him back to their

table.

Tatsuya wished for their teacher to want cake today but he feared it would be something else. How would they get Murasakibara to cook anything but cake? How did classes with him work? He could not grasp the concept of school and why people were obedient in class. Did he understand long-term gain? He seemed to think as far as his next treat. So that was why their coach gave out candies for those who went to practice.

"Today we will prepare different kinds of mixed salad and talk about their substance of content. It is important to be able to evaluate nutritious facts, vitamins and micronutrients. Can anyone tell me which vitamins can be found in green salad?", the teacher began his lecture.

Himuro raised his hand while looking at Murasakibara. How was he supposed to follow such a lecture? Would he start to mess around if he got bored? Would he simply interrupt their teacher by asking for cake? Himuro was called upon, so he began to explain the difference of water-based and fat-based vitamins. The giant next to him seemed content to listen. It was plain to see that he stopped trying to get the content after a few words and instead concentrated on a small insect that was flying through the room.

How did anyone expect that man to be able to follow a normal class?

Murasakibara was pouting after their lesson. Himuro offered to buy him dessert for lunch because the other had not only been unable to bake cake, they had really only prepared different salads. None of those had been filling in any way which was why they had decided to visit the cafeteria for their break. They both swiped their cards for a normal menu. As promised, Himuro handed over his dessert.

He noticed that Murasakibara's hand was as big as the plate filled with karaage. Would one normal menu be enough for this giant? He looked like he needed at least two. He had gotten this big somehow. Had he really such a good metabolism that he needed only this much? Himuro offered his own meal after he had enough and the other took it with happy relish.

"Why didn't you get a larger one?"

Murasakibara swallowed before he answered though he still had rice sticking on his skin: "I only have enough money for one menu. Mama says that I eat too much."

"But you are still growing and you play basketball." No matter how intimidating that growth part sounded, he was likely to get even larger.

His new friend just shrugged his shoulders. His lips looked pouty when he said: "Mama says this school is expensive. So I can get one meal and one package of candies." That was most likely the longest sentence he had heard Murasakibara speak yet.

So his parents had financial problems. Then why did they send their son to ... oh, well. This was the only school where they had special courses for mentally disabled boys and who treated them reasonably well. He had heard the others in the locker room. Beatings, food taken from them, imprisonment. It had sounded like they were talking about broken down pets instead of their lives up to now.

"So you are very hungry?" The other nodded in answer. "What would you normally eat?"

"Five meals. Eight packages of candy."

Tatsuya had to swallow. At this rate the guy would starve! No matter how poor you were, you could not cut down your growing son's rations like that. It wasn't like Murasakibara was fat. He was lean as a stick. "Who gives you your money?"

"Teacher Tsueda."

"I'll ask him if you can get a bit more. It's hard to play basketball when you are hungry."

His friend only smiled at him as if Christmas had come earlier this year. Tatsuya gave into the urge to pat his head. He had been the cat type up to now but dogs seemed good as well.

Teacher Tsueda was not what he had expected. His mind had pictured either a man looking like his teammates or a woman looking like their coach. Instead he met a man as tall and broad as Himuro himself – which meant nothing much of both. The teacher was a mousy, unremarkable Beta who immediately blushed upon seeing him. It was a typical reaction of men both drawn to and intimidated by him.

"Wh- what can I do for you, Mister Himuro?" The teacher stumbled over his own words.

"You know my name?" The student raised an eyebrow.

The man blushed only deeper. Oh. So it was like this. At his last school the teachers had passed around his picture which made half of the staff fall in love with him. He had not expected that from a school that housed a large size of Omegas but it seemed true what his doctors had told him. His pheromones and his beauty were something else – not that he cared or wished for that, he wanted to be a professional basketball player. But it seemed to have happened again. He shuddered at the thought of middle-aged men wanking to his school application picture.

"I wanted to talk to you about Murasakibara Atsushi."

"Oh! Has he harassed you? I am very sorry, I will talk to him, of course." The man bowed frantically.

"Not at all. He's one of the few guys not interested in me. I find that very refreshing." Himuro tried but failed to keep annoyance out of his voice.

"Oh ... yes, of course." The teacher cast down his eyes. So he knew about his attraction. "So what about him?"

"I accompanied him to lunch and was shocked when he said that he only has enough money for one meal a day. He'll starve at that rate."

"Oh. He hasn't told me. So it's not enough? His mother told me to cut down on his food expenses." The teacher looked up from a bowed down position.

"His average seems to have been five meals and eight packages of candy. While it makes sense to lower his candy intake, it's harsh to cut down on his meals. He is a growing two-meter-tall Alpha playing basketball. He will need at least the size of four meals. There is enough money for that, is there?"

"Err, wait, I'll get his folder." The teacher put up his hands before turning and scurried back into the teacher's lounge. He seemed nice enough, just a bit ill-prepared for ... well, about everything. Normal humans most of all. Maybe you got that way when you only worked with mentally disabled children. He returned with a folder that made Tatsuya's eyes bulge out a bit. "Wait, where was that section about food?" Tsueda began to turn pages. There was a large block on hygiene, on basketball, on aggressive behavior, on punishments (why were there about twenty-five pages on punishments?) and clothing before they arrived at the one labeled food. "If this is the amount per week and a meal is five- to eight-hundred and he needs four a day and gets one package of candies," the man mumbled to himself while counting in his head, "yeah, that's enough money. It leaves a small margin, so my plan to save up for basketball outings will not work out. His parents would need to pay extra for him to accompany

the team.”

“Why that? I thought the school paid for their starters,” Tatsuya wondered.

“I can’t just expect him to immediately become a starter, can I? I know he is one of those basketball miracles but are they really that good?”

Basketball miracles? Tatsuya feigned being in the know and said: “I saw him in training. He is very good and I am sure he will be a starter soon.”

“Oh, really?” The teacher smiled brightly. “That’s good. It’s always good when the boys have something they can be proud of.”

Tatsuya had to smile at that. So this man was proud of his students and wanted their best. It was nice to see. Just that one lunch with Murasakibara, he had seen the sneers, heard the whispered comments, felt the loathsome gazes on his skin. Guys like him were mercilessly picked on. He could only imagine how often his friend had gotten in trouble because he had reacted to that. It could explain those twenty-five pages of punishment. Tatsuya itched to read that file.

“I’ll tell him he can up his meals to four. Will that suffice?”

“I’ll accompany him to lunch and give you feedback.” He indulged the man a bit by giving a winsome smile. It always made grown man swoon.

This one was not different at all in that regard.

Christmas had come early. Tatsuya could not think of anyone but Taiga who had ever smiled this much. To no surprise it had also been about food. Taiga had taught him what that black hole Alphas called stomach could be filled with. Watching Murasakibara eat was a lot like watching Taiga. He was just as ravenous, just as messy and just as happy. It made Tatsuya glad to watch.

He was also sure he had gained a friend for life. Murasakibara had hugged him after hearing how much more food he was allowed now due to Tatsuya’s intervention. It was also the first time the giant had seem to caught on to the fact that Tatsuya was an Omega. He had simply said “You smell nice” and left it at that.

What disturbed Tatsuya had been his own reaction. He knew Murasakibara was an Alpha. He knew the guy as a freakishly tall basketball player. But he had been around basketball playing Alphas for years, so he was used to delicious male scents. He could safely say that no one – not even Taiga – smelled as good as this guy. If people called him a premium Omega, he was sure Murasakibara counted as a premium Alpha. And didn’t that throw up some questions ... was intelligence important? The Alphas good at school and sports had always smelled better than the ones only good at sports. Smell and pheromones were something related to genes. So if Murasakibara had genes that made him this disabled, shouldn’t he smell worse? Tatsuya tried that theory at their next practice, smelling the other guys on their team.

They did not appeal to him at all. So intelligence was something that changed the smell. Then why did Murasakibara smell as appealing as he did? Maybe his mental disability was not anchored in his genes? Could you get mentally disabled without being born that way? Most likely. But how could he solve that mystery? It wasn’t like he could go up to Murasakibara and ask him why he was so dumb. Because he really was. Ten practices in and Tatsuya was sure he was able to appraise his teammates’ intelligence. The captain was rather intelligent in comparison to the rest. Their shooter was also not the worst. But Murasakibara was. He really was the dumbest of all of them. Though there was one guy on the bench that did not talk, so Tatsuya wasn’t a hundred percent sure.

But Murasakibara was far from bright even compared to the other mentally disabled

boys. He could count to twenty but could only do calculus with numbers up to five. He could not play dice games because counting the dots on more than one dice was too much for him. He could read Katagana but not Hiragana. His writing was atrocious and nearly unreadable even to himself. He was a bit better at playing Memory but if Tatsuya had played seriously he would have won by a mile. They could play Uno and Murasakibara even won sometimes. It made him smile.

Tatsuya did notice how much he liked to make Murasakibara smile. So he played games with him or cooked with him in the evening – Murasakibara hadn't lied, he was a great baker – or simply challenged him to basketball games. As he had expected, they were both chosen as starters soon after. The one point where Tatsuya was not at his happiest was when they did homework together. That normally meant working side by side. While Tatsuya leafed through his books and wrote pages of history summaries, poem interpretations and math thesis, Murasakibara colored his homework sheets. No joke. He took his crayons and drew butterflies. Every time Tatsuya tried to motivate him a bit, he just said: "I am too dumb for this."