

Split soul

Von Gepo

Kapitel 27: Baby steps

Akashi sent Ayako a text that he would meet up with a therapist on Friday. He sent the same to Satsuki and Shintaro. He knew that all three of them were already alarmed – Satsuki less than the other two – and sent him daily messages to know he was still breathing. He could understand the fuzz to some extent but he knew he would not kill himself. Not yet anyway. This child was innocent and would not be able to live without him. No matter how much he hated it he would not endanger this baby in any way. It was what he would have wanted for himself, so he would be damned before he did not offer the same to his own child.

By now he wasn't sure what he wanted for himself. Did he even want to live? Would it make any sense to continue living? His mother might have loved him, he didn't remember. His father only wanted him as a broodmare. Would he have any reason to live after birthing this child? His purpose was done then. On the other hand he would be free. No expectations, no bonds. Just him and a whole world for him to explore. He had more money than most other people in this country had. He could do whatever he wanted. Seijuro could play piano or violin. He ... well, he could continue to be a CEO. He didn't have to. Did he like his job? He didn't even know.

He sank into the tube and enjoyed the warm water on his skin. Ayako had gifted him with aromatic oil, Shintaro had gotten him some skin care products. He felt a bit effeminate lying in scented water and preparing the creams and lotions he would apply later but he had to admit that all of this did lower his tension a bit. It also made him feel better in his skin. Caring for his body did made him resent himself less. Maybe he should be thankful for being pregnant. He would not have had enough incentive to look after himself this much without it.

The kick against his rib brought back the usual sickness. He rubbed the spot, only to have it kicked again. The moved his hand down, hoping his skin would be kicked instead because his ribs really hurt. He was rewarded with a kick against his hand and sank into the tube with a smile. So he could control the little pest a bit. That thought brought him a kick against his kidney which hurt like hell.

"Hey, hell spawn, stay on the hand!" He poked his own abdomen. "Yeah, there. That's the spirit. Don't always aim for the ribs or kidneys, I know you're there. Don't worry, I'm not about to forget." He poked two areas at once. "So what will you do now?"

He got a kick and something not as forceful. Might that have been a hand? Interesting. He tried a few other areas but it seemed like his baby wasn't able to register more than one poke if they were too far from one another. They would have to train that. If he was meant to see this baby as his son, he needed to be intelligent at least.

What had Shintaro said? Talk with him, sing and play him some music? Classic music

was meant to make babies smart, right? He had ignored his baby long enough, it was bound to get stupid if he continued this behavior. So classic music ... maybe he should try playing a bit. He did have his violin and he knew how to restring it. He had enough time on his hands to play a bit. He got out of the bath, applied the lotions and creams and clothed himself in fluffy bathrobe. He found his repair kit and restrung his violin. His baby's kicks continued to aim for his abdomen which led him to pat it before he begun to play. He had not really thought about what to play but recognized the song as "Memories" after a bit.

The kicks stopped coming. Even his baby seemed content to listen. So music was able to calm babies, that was good to know. And his playing really got better from having emotions. It also calmed him which it had never done before. This was really nice. He smiled and ended the song before beginning with "Ombra Mai Fu". He wished Ayako was here to sing. Maybe he should learn some songs to which he could sing? He took his phone after the song and texted Ayako: "What songs would you like me to learn to sing?"

He first had to go to work on Friday, so he debated with himself if he should change clothes at work before going to the therapist or if she would not bat an eyelash at a man wearing a hakama. He decided to keep his new clothes on. If she really looked down upon his clothes he would not even tell her about himself. So he got out of his limosine and told his driver to grab a coffee somewhere until he called him back, giving him a time frame of about an hour.

His new therapist lived in a house with a garden. He could see a tea parlor and a winter garden behind some bushes and trees while going it. Most of the house was artfully hidden from sight. It was a modern, western house with some Japanese aspects, a perfect blend of tradition and modernism. He had learned from the call to make an appointment that his new therapist was French and that her Japanese was rusty at best. She spoke French and English fluently, so he decided on French. He had no problem with any of the languages she spoke but he guessed she would be most comfortable in her own.

She greeted him at the door before he even had to ring the bell. After a bow – one could see that she learned those manners late in life – she showed him to the winter garden which he could reach without having to see more of her home than a staircase. He simply chose to walk around in his tabis which seemed alright with her. He analyzed the setting from the winter garden and chose a seat with it's back to the garden entrance. If any paparazzi tried to sneak in here she would see them first and they would not be able to snap a picture of him.

"Thank you for agreeing to speak with me in French. My language skills are a big barrier in treating my patients." She sat in a seat opposite him.

"It's no problem at all. I speak a lot of languages. It's a requirement for my job."

"I got from being called by some kind of headhunter and seeing you arrive in a black limousine that you are most likely some very important person. Should I recognize your name?" She seemed a bit wary. Did she think he was a yakuza boss or something like that?

"You may. Akashi Corporation is one of the biggest companies in this country. Your TV over there was produced by one of my subcompanies. It's why I searched for someone who I could trust not to sell me out to the papers."

"Oh, so you are a celebrity." She looked relieved and smiled at him. "You know, I only know Japan by watching movies and listening to my husband tell me about his

country, so I expected you to tell me you are working some shady business or something." So she did expect him to be a yakuza.

He smiled at that and said: "No, I am working a legal business. The reason why I try to stay out of sight is that my uncle is the Emperor."

"Oh. This country's monarch is your uncle? You are royalty?"

"Yes, I am eighth in line for the throne. Does that explain the get-up?" He smiled at her in amusement.

"Oh yes, sure. So normal therapists and clinics are out for you, I guess?" She waited for his nod. "If you were to need a clinic in the course of this therapy, is it possible to refer you to a clinic abroad or are there special clinics you trust?"

"I never needed a clinic before and I hope to avoid one." He would need one for the birth though. He had not even thought about that. "But if it is not otherwise possible, I am open to suggestions. I just need all of this not to get public. I need your signature on it before I tell you anything to be precise."

"I have contracts of confidentiality right here. I seem to get a lot of known patients these days, so I keep them ready." She walked over to a sideboard and opened a drawer to take out some papers. "Please give them a quick read."

He scanned the two pages and found them agreeable. He signed with his personal pen before giving them to her, she signed and gave one back to him. After folding up their respective confidentiality agreements she asked: "Is whatever you are about to tell me a state secret that might put me at risk?"

"No. The involved parties are all dead. I would not dare to talk to anyone if that was still the case." She only nodded, so he continued. "I have a split personality. Right now I know three different personalities. That system has been stable until our abuser – our father – died and I found out that he left me pregnant. I am in my sixth month right now."

"I am sure you have mixed feelings about that." Good, she did not seem shocked at all. "At first I hated it. But one of the other personalities threatened me that she would take over if I endangered the child, so I have been on my best behavior. Somewhere between relaxing baths, skin care and food supplements I think I accepted this a bit. I still call him hell spawn but I began to talk to him and play him some music and other things my minders tell me to do."

"Who are those minders?" She took a notebook and a pen and began to write down some facts.

"My best friend who is my legal guardian right now. Because I am not stable, I signed all my rights over to him. He is allowed to admit me to psychiatric hospitals and other institutes however he sees fit. He accompanies me to my visits with my gynecologist who advises me on what to do or not to do regarding this pregnancy. Those are the minders."

"And how much time do you personally spend aware right now? Do you have a specific name in your system?" So she knew how dissociative personalities worked. Good.

"I am called Akashi and for the last four months I had complete control over this body. It seems I was chosen to be responsible for this pregnancy. Before, my main job was managing tough situations that required emotional distance." He made a hand gesture over his stomach. "This seems to count as an emotionally taxing situation."

She allowed a small smile to enter her lips. Her green eyes – she was auburn hair and green eyes – sparkled with mirth when she said: "You seem to be quite sarcastic."

"Most people find that to be rather off-putting." He shook his head. "Shintaro is my only friend, we have known each other since we were eight. Seijuro had a lot of

friends. He is my main personality and would normally be the one managing our everyday life. We do change frequently depending on the situation. As CEO of Akashi Corporation both a charming and calculating personality are required.”

“So you are managing the whole company on top of being pregnant and recuperating from ... how many years of abuse?” She looked up.

“Fifteen.” She just nodded, so he continued. “The third personality I know is called Sei. She was the one suffering the sexual abuse. I was the one who suffered the physical abuse. Sei is the oldest of us, so we should have a core personality somewhere. I never met him or her though. Right now Seijuro spends his time in our head talking to Sei to get her to work together with us. The last time I talked to her she tried to erase my personality and put me to sleep. So it’s safe to say she’s rather hostile to the rest of our known personality.”

“Since when have you known about your disorder?” Misses Hashiko still seemed rather unperturbed. So she definitely knew about this topic and was comfortable with it. It was reassuring.

“Seijuro was our main personality since the time we were eight. He encountered a situation he couldn’t deal with at fourteen and I became our main personality. Then I encountered a situation I could not deal with at sixteen and he came back. He became aware of me with that and thought of our situation as ... time worthy to investigate. We read some books about it. After reading the passage about sexual abuse someone or something started to draw thoughts and memories from him. I wasn’t able to talk freely because he would forget key information which might have led him to explore our system further. I wasn’t interested in exploring anyway, so the topic became mood. It came up again because after our father’s death Seijuro decided that he wanted a girlfriend. He found a good woman and told her about our disorder. The night after, Sei showed up and began to bitch around, trying to drive our girlfriend off. She bombarded us with a few memories and well ... since then we have an outline of what happened to us. As the pragmatic one, I went to a clinic to do a pregnancy check and have been in charge ever since.”

“You have an incredible awareness of yourself. But if you have been in charge for four months, why did you label yourself as unstable?” Her eyebrows were drawn together like she had a complex riddle before her.

“Sei can overthrow me. She is stronger than both Seijuro and me. I do not know how far he is in making her aware of the system and asking for cooperation. If she were to take over she would move back into the mansion and shut herself in. No one would manage the company, none of our friends would be able to reach us. I am only in charge because I promised not to harm the baby in any way.”

“She wants to have the baby?” The therapist sent a short gaze to his stomach.

“She is nothing but a high pedigree broodmare. Her whole purpose in life was getting fucked to get pregnant. I don’t think she even knows what having a baby means, she only knows what she has been told every minute of her awareness. She has to have a baby or she has no worth.” He sighed deeply. “We decided to give the baby to a couple we are friends with and have them adopt it. The husband is an Alpha of our caliber, so if Sei decided to pull some stupid stunt he would be able to stop us.”

“So a royal prince will be raised as a commoner. I wager the royal family has something to say about that?” Smart women.

“No one of them knows of my pregnancy. Again, this has to stay secret.”

“I see.” She nodded. “I guess that’s why I am the perfect therapist, I do not have any loyalty conflicts.”

That was another hazard he had not even thought about. He was planning on cutting off a royal prince, one could count that as high treason. Thankfully he was only eighth in line, no one really cared about him. No one expected him to inherit, he certainly never expected that. He had more issues than any man should have.

"So what made you look for a therapist now?" She leaned back in her chair and studied him.

"Well ... I have always served as the crisis persona. I have been detached from my emotions to withstand torture, near-death-experiences and threats of all kinds. After Seijuro left to speak with Sei, the first thing that happened was that I experienced ... feelings. I never even knew anger beforehand. But I suddenly felt anger, regret, shame, fear ... all of those very useless feelings. I craved trust, intimacy, love, joy ... I never had to deal with longing before. All of those memories of abuse suddenly presented themselves in a new light and I began to ... hate. Yes, hate. I wanted to destroy, to make people suffer, to rage and scream. But I kept it all in, I don't want to lose control. Those last few days though I began to see Sei's memories. My memory is connecting the dots, bringing up what she had to face. I know what happened after and before I lost consciousness, the scenes are getting whole. I am ... deeply ashamed of what I did to survive. When I started talking about suicide, my girlfriend told me I had to go seek help."

Misses Hashiko nodded and asked: "Do you just remember or do those memories overwhelm you?"

"I had one panic attack, so they might get overwhelming the more I remember."

"I see." She nodded again and wrote something down. "What is happening right now is that Sei is being merged into your consciousness to some degree and most likely you into hers. That way she'll gain a perspective on her memories and become more mature because she can see more of the world than just her rape. There also seems to be a merge between you and Seijuro which gave you feelings. It broadens everyone's view and will hopefully help you work together. Working together is – as you most likely know – the main goal for a therapy of a DID patient. It means to destabilize you to make you more stable in the long run. Does that make sense?"

"Of course." If Sei wasn't their enemy, they would make a strong front. Right now she was a threat but with her on their side, they would be strong.

"What I can help you with is to give you an outside perspective on what is happening and to teach you some techniques to deal with memories, so that they do not overwhelm you. Integrating those memories into a whole self can be something we do here but only if you want to. I can mediate talks between your personalities and give you some techniques how to reach compromise. Once your main personalities work together we can do trauma therapy if you like but we do not have do."

"What good does trauma therapy do?" The rest sounded good but he had no clue what this might be about.

"It means facing some of your worst memories, reliving the emotions and integrating them into an adult self. Without trauma therapy you may always walk into psychological landmines that have memories flood you. One way is to avoid every trigger for those memories, the other is trauma therapy. Most DID patients aren't able to form stable relationships without trauma therapy."

"Like Sei happened upon us when Seijuro cuddled with his girlfriend?" Or how he had completely spaced out in his memories of drowning while Ayako was crying in front of him helplessly.

"For example. You don't have to decide now. Right now we can schedule some dates

for the stabilization part and once you are stable, you can decide on trauma therapy." Well, that was doable. Misses Hashiko seemed alright for a therapist and he felt able to tell her everything. She also seemed to know what she was doing and it was the same he had read in some of the books about DID. So he answered: "I'd like to schedule some meetings for stabilizing. Can we do two per week? I'll most likely have the child in four or five weeks and I'd like to have something on hand for that time."

"We can do three if you are up for it. Two would be the minimum in my opinion." She had picked up a calendar. "Please inform me when you know your due date. I think it might become important for you to have someone with you after the birth. You'll be the most instable then."

He just nodded. He had already guessed that from Ayako's story about her own daughter. With how he had been this week, he might throw himself out of the hospital window.

"Do I discuss payment with that women that called me? If so, I need her number again."

"No, you just sent me a bill. If I die, sent it to my best friend. I'll give you his contact dates. If you want to imprison me in a psychiatry, please tell me before you tell him. I'd like to at least be prepared."

"I am not here to traumatize you." Her gaze was full of pity mixed with resignation. "You'll need to be hospitalized if you cannot control your actions anymore. If you reach that stage, we'll talk about that. I hope we don't reach that point but you know as well as I that it cannot be guaranteed."

He sighed and nodded.