

Castling

Von Chocora

Kapitel 2:

A cold wind blew Tsukasa's scarf into his face on his way to the train station. He chipped it away in a rush of anger. His eyes were fixated on the ground with a gloomy expression on his face. He was angry with himself. Even though he had practiced so much, his live had been a catastrophe. He wondered why his company hadn't already fired him. Somehow they were very patient with him even though he failed times and times again, but that didn't change how Tsukasa felt about himself.

After the concert he had quickly left the venue in frustration. Certainly not without sincerely apologizing to his manager at least two times. He was frustrated but it was all his fault and he didn't want to treat the management indecently because of his own mistakes. He had started to wander the streets in thoughts. At first he didn't have any particular destination in mind; he just needed the fresh air to cool his emotions. But it was getting late and cold, so he decided to take the shortest route to the station now.

The station was already in sight. A stream of people was moving into the same direction and the air was filled with the sound of footsteps and occasional chatter. From the direction Tsukasa was heading a faint singing voice reached his ear, growing louder the closer he got. Someone stood in front of the station, singing live and surrounded by a bulk of people, so he couldn't actually see the performer. Street performers weren't unusual in Japan. There were many of them, trying to get attention and gain popularity this way, maybe even to get recognised by a company. Tsukasa was lucky that he had attended an idol school which lead to signing a contract directly after graduation, so he didn't have to take that difficult path.

".. Two glittering dreams, colliding into one another...."

The redheaded slid his ticket over the ticket machine and entered the station when more bits of lyrics reached his ear.

"Until this voice gives out, I want this sparkling song to reach you, the best performance, we shall dedicate it to you."

Tsukasa froze in his steps. He knew these lyrics. He knew this voice. But that couldn't be true. Someone bumped into him and excused himself, but the redhead couldn't react.

No, there was no way that could be him. But he just couldn't leave without making sure.

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Some moments later Tsukasa tried to push his way through the crowd surrounding the mysterious singer outside, when suddenly the music stopped. Everyone started clapping and the crowd slowly disbanded.

No! He wanted to see that person! He couldn't let him disappear from the stage before he reached him!

Tsukasa gasped in relief when he caught sight of the performer's back; dressed in a baggy pullover, the hood covering the back of his head. He was still standing in the center where the crowd had just been. He was stuffing something into a huge bag, then shouldering the bag, getting ready to leave.

"Wait!"

Tsukasa dashed towards him, grabbing his pullover to stop him from leaving. The run had made him out of breath and he was clinging to the mysterious person's pullover as if his life depended on it. When he felt the other one turn around, Tsukasa slowly lifted his head and ... stared into a pair of green eyes, green like the morning grass.

"Wahaha! Did you like my performance THAT much? I know, I'm a genius!"

The familiar voice reaching his ears... Tsukasa couldn't believe it. But Leo Tsukinaga was standing right in front of him. His former leader.

Suddenly Leo made a thinking pose, scratching his chin with his hand. "Hmmm, you look familiar! No, don't say anything! I know you! Your name was..."

"Tsukasa Suou! You should be able to remember my name by now, Leader!" Tsukasa made a sullen face, but actually he was incredibly happy to see Leo again, the Leo he knew, unchanged and still his old self, he was almost on the brink of hugging the older one.

"Ahhh!! Suou!! I knew it! The memory is flooding back like a Tsunami reaching the shore! Sweet sweet memories!" Leo whirled around dramatically and nodded in exasperation. Then his eyes found Tsukasa's face again. "But for a chicken to grow taller than his hen! I knew the saying was right! When the student surpasses the master it's..."

Tsukasa didn't listen to the gush of words coming out of Leo's mouth. Now that he saw him close up, he realized his now smaller leader didn't actually look the same way he did in his memories. His behavior was the same as always, but his eyes had dark circles, his hair was unkempt, his clothes dirty and his face looked incredibly thin. Leo never had been one of the tidiest people he knew, but now he almost resembled a

homeless person.

"Did you run away from home again?", he interrupted the orange haired boy.

Leo took a moment to answer his question. He closed his eyes, his eyebrows knit together in concentration. Then he said, faking a desperate voice: "You know, Suoh! Something terrible happened! I was cursed by a witch and now I shall never return home again or despair will fall onto my family! I shall wander this magical world like Dorothy*. Do you want to be my companion?"

Leo was once again speaking in riddles but Tsukasa knew him well enough to understand what it meant. The older one must have indeed run away from home again and, judging by his outward appearance, for god knows how long already. There was so much Tsukasa wanted to ask about what Leo had been gone through these past 2 years, but he knew he wouldn't get any real answers out of his mouth that quickly and also it was growing late.

"It's late already. Let's go home. You'll sleep at my place tonight."

He knew it would take time to get Leo to talk but he wouldn't be Tsukasa Suou if he didn't accept this challenge. But most importantly, he would not allow Leo to vanish from his side again any time soon!

*Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz