

Split soul

Von Gepo

Kapitel 12: Uncomfortable truths

"You did what?" He looked at Kuroko completely aghast. Why had ... why would ...

>How about revenge? It's a way to hurt you.< His alter ego suggested.

>I can't believe he would do that. Tetsu has always supported us.<

>Then maybe he thought it was in our best interest?<

"It is a very important fact about you. You should tell your girlfriend about something like that." The other man answered in his monotonous voice and sat on Ayako's other side.

"Well, yes, I was going to. Don't you think this is a rather personal thing to tell someone? It's not like I go around telling your secrets to everyone I just met." Akashi slowly shook his head. "I had more trust in you."

"You just changed into your cruel personality to punish my husband right in front of her. You might not want to do that if you don't want others to know." Kuroko showed no remorse at all, simply grabbing a snack from the middle of the blanket.

>I would say it was revenge. He most likely did not like the fact that I just trashed his mate.<

>Were you unfair?< He would not have expected him to.

>It's in the eye of the beholder.< His alter ego smirked. >As you know, we do not like Kagami.<

"I am sorry you had to learn it this way." He turned to Ayako. "I wanted to tell you in private."

"Are you ashamed of it?" She whispered cautiously.

"No, I am not." He sent Kuroko a warning glance. "But if my other personality is unsupervised for some time, he tends to do some rather questionable things which I am not proud of."

"So you have something like an evil twin?" Thankfully she seemed rather curious instead of disgusted or scared. "What kind of things does he do?"

"Well." How to explain this? He did not want her to run. "Chiho?"

"Oh." She took a bit of distance and lowered her head. "I see ... that actually explains a lot." She seemed to collect her thoughts for a moment before she looked up again.

"How bad does he get?"

"He organized Omega hunts on me," Kuroko told her.

Akashi felt himself getting shoved back, too stunned to actually put up a fight against his alter ego. Instead of being submerged in his unconscious though, it was more like he simply took a step back, seeing a screen to the outside world. He felt his mouth move, heard to words he spoke but knew it was his alter ego instead of him: "You seem to try your best to alienate her from me. Is that what jealousy looks like on you?"

May I kindly remind you that you have a husband and it's not me?"

Kuroko flinched back as if he had been hit.

"Akashi!" Momoi screeched and put herself between them.

"I just asked myself the same question." Shintaro calmly said. "Kuroko, what is the meaning of your behavior?"

Momoi's lip was quivering for a moment before she slowly looked over her shoulder for an answer. So even she found his behavior strange.

"I am sorry, Akashi." Kuroko had lowered his head. "I'll go for a walk." With a sharp turn he stalked off, immediately followed by his husband who got up from the ground and ran from the court, sensing his mate's dismay.

"That was unsightly." Shintaro judged after a moment of silence.

With a sigh Akashi went to the forefront again while his alter ego stepped back without resistance. They had never changed this smoothly. It was actually nice to know they could do this. His best friend looked at him and simply nodded before relaxing slightly. Akashi decided to address him: "Thank you, Shintaro. Your intervention helped me stay in control."

"You are also getting better. That transition was well-timed."

"I guess it helps that we talk a lot." He let go of his breath before cautiously turning to Ayako. "I am sorry, this meeting is not going like I had planned."

She simply nodded, still a bit stunned. Her gaze was resting on Kuroko's retreating back.

"It looks like your other personality is well-controlled now, isn't he?" Momoi asked him in a small voice.

"More or less, yes. I don't think you have to fear erratic actions from me again as long as my alter ego isn't out for more than a week. I am still sorry about what happened in middle-school. But since then I have not had a problem with control."

"That does sound rather promising." Momoi smiled at him. "I am sure Tetsu and Taiga will work this out. It's not like Tetsu is known for staying mad at people."

"He just gave a different impression." Akashi told himself to relax his muscles. "I wonder if my alter ego is right and he really was being jealous. I wouldn't understand why though."

Much to his surprise it was Aomine that answered: "As long as you're still angry at people or have some other strong emotion, you feel like you still have some kind of claim on them." Deep blue eyes watched him intently while the man himself stood a bit out of the way. "I learned that in therapy. My self-pity was a way to chain him to me. I gave that up. You seem to have given up as well. We both got girlfriends." He did some tricks with the ball to get out his nervous energy. "Might be it pisses him off we're over him."

>I think those are the first sensible words that ever came out of his mouth.< His alter ego spoke into the stunned silence in his head.

"You really seem to have learned a lot in therapy." Akashi slowly nodded. "You might be right."

"Uhm ... may I ask what you are talking about?" Ayako asked, obviously not intimidated by Aomine as most people were on first sight.

It was true that his aggressive aura had been reduced significantly. Therapy seemed to be doing him a lot of good. Maybe Akashi should think about therapy for himself? He had read some self-help books about DID, learning that talking with your alter egos in a friendly manner helped a lot. It seemed true, he had never been able to stay awake while his alter ego was out until now. If his alter ego's words were to be

believed he had also never been able to remember conversations about other alter egos before. Maybe he was slowly healing now that his father was dead. And all of that had been happening in only two months, that was rather impressive.

"I got therapy for ... well ... being less abusive?" Aomine looked away. "I was a kinda shitty person before."

"You were depressed and let it out on others." Momoi smiled at her fiancée. "I am proud that you got better."

"Well, that's a rather nice way of putting it." He raised his eyebrows at her. "But yeah, I am proud of myself too." He turned back to Ayako. "I've been a real asshole for about five years and nearly got fired because of drinking problems and aggressive behavior. I got over it."

"That's rather admirable." She smiled at Akashi. "Your friends really are impressive."

"In all kinds of ways." Kazunari added with a wistful smile. "So who's up for a bit of basketball?"

"That sounds marvelous." Kasamatsu stood a bit away, trying not to get involved in any kind of conflict. "Ryouta, join us."

"I'll play you." Aomine smiled at the blond.

"I'll sit out for a bit." Akashi told them when they looked at him. His legs felt rather weak. He was sure it wasn't due to his match with Kagami before. Or maybe it was and he was getting out of shape. He also saw Murasakibara and Himuro approaching them in the distance. What captured his attention though was Tsuki's unhappy grumble. He followed the sound and found the baby lying on another blanket next to Shintaro.

"Has Tetsu really just left her?" Akashi stroked her cheek. It seemed a bit cold. Maybe she was feeling chilly? He took her into his arms, gently rocking her in both of his arms. She really felt a bit cold. She happily quieted down, snuggling against his chest. "It's easier for her when you hold her more vertically." Shintaro helped him to adjust her position. "Now lean back a bit, you'll keep her warm and comfortable like that."

"The weather seems a bit too chilly for her to lie all by herself." He did as his friend told him. Tsuki looked content to drool on his shoulder.

"Yes, she needs a hat. Momoi, would you please have a look if Kuroko brought a hat for her?" Shintaro asked the women who still looked a bit lost.

"Of course." She turned to his bag to have a look. When she found one and held it out to them she looked at Akashi for a moment. "I am sorry, Akashi. You are right, Tetsu should not have told Ayako something like that without your consent. I am sorry I didn't stop him. I was unsure about what to do."

He nodded and said: "I wanted to tell her anyway, so no harm done, I guess. Though I expect you to do that if the situation ever repeats itself. I trust all of you with my secrets but I won't if some have no qualms to spread them."

"Have people reacted negatively before?" Ayako looked at him with concern.

"I think everyone here was creeped out at some point." He looked at Shintaro who smiled wryly. Everyone except for Shintaro. Even though his autistic best friend was a peculiar person himself, he had known years before the others. He was the only one who knew him this well and who had accepted his alter ego without complaint. "What bothers me more is what it tells people about me. It's a disorder by the name of dissociative identity disorder, DID in short, and stems from severe childhood abuse."

"Oh." Her eyes widened. One of her hands touched her lips, the other drawn in front of her breast.

"My father is dead now, so I can speak a bit more freely about it. But it's not exactly a

topic I enjoy." He stroked Tsuki's back. Her weight reminded him that there were good things in this world.

"Would you like to play for a bit? I can keep Tsuki warm in the meantime," Shintaro offered. He had gotten better at recognizing other's emotional state. Actually, by now he was able to recognize more subtle gestures than about anyone else. Seemed like the tightening of Akashi's fist was enough for him to intervene. Shintaro had often been able to curb his more violent urges.

"Thank you, I'll take you up on that offer." They gently transferred Tsuki to his friend's breast who did not forget to protect his yukata with a baby cloth from her drooling.

"All of them have learned to work through their respective trauma with basketball," Momoi explained to Ayako. "All of them are scarred in one way or another. We mostly don't talk about it but we all know."

Akashi nodded to them before entering the court. Everyone turned to him, looking at his eyes before settling into fighting stances. Kazunari and Kasamatsu oriented themselves at Aomine and Kise who had a better read on him.

"What shall it be, Akashichi? Two on three?" Kise challenged him.

"More like four on one." He received the ball from Aomine and went to stand under one hoop. "Give me a challenge."

Aomine was the first to stand in his way lunging for the ball. Akashi rolled around him, leaving him to chase him. Kise was next, a bit too excited in his eyes. So their copycat wanted to try a copy of himself on him? Good luck. Akashi did a move he only sparsely used: dribbling the ball between Kise's legs while he sidestepped. He rolled again, speeding up when he saw Aomine lung for the ball from Kise's other side. He needed to jump to make up for Aomine's larger frame and superior speed. He really should have ankle-broken him. He rolled in the air and passed by Kasamatsu who had jumped in case he would try a three-pointer. He prepared the dribble for when he would land, knowing Aomine would be stopped enough by Kasamatsu landing in front of him to be able to reach him. It only left Kazunari in his way. Ankle-breaking him would take too much time, he would need to roll again. From the distance it looked like he would be able to jump from the roll, performing Murasakibara's Thor's hammer move. It seemed rather fitting.

The ball landed with a loud sound due to the immense pressure the move created. Akashi turned without looking back. Stopping an Aomine-Kise-combi without the zone wasn't an easy move, he should get a reading on them before engaging them. Kazunari took the ball, passed to Kasamatsu who passed to Kise. Kise looked like he would have a go at him but the air about him wasn't aggressive enough. Akashi was sure he would pass to Aomine who came from the other side, so he waited. Yes, there was the pass. Akashi sprinted to Aomine and used the millisecond it took to receive the pass to smash it out of his hands. This time he properly ankle-broke him before passing him by to be confronted by Kasamatsu and Kazunari. They tried Kuroko's quasi-emperor-eye move by standing behind each other, so Akashi flanked them and ankle-broke them both as well. It left him with Kise who had returned to the net. A three-pointer? A lay-up? No, he was feeling like doing another dunk. He charged Kise in a way that the blond would have to jump from his bad foot and simply jumped above him. He tackled the other with that but it was the no-foul-zone, so who cared? Kise landed on his ass, Akashi dunked the ball and with the power of an arm against the board changed his course so that he would land behind Kise instead of on top of him.

When he surveyed the field Aomine was the only one standing again. He nodded at him and said to the group at large: "A bit more of a challenge, please."

>And you tell me I am too arrogant?<

>It's surprisingly nice to let off steam.<

"Go, Akashi, go!" Momoi cheered him on while he jogged back to his own hoop. Ayako beside her looked a bit stunned.

"I'll give you a challenge, Aka-chin," Murasakibara said while he entered the court to stand on the side.

"Okay, everyone, we got this," Kasamatsu organized them, "Atsushi under the hoop, Aomine as PF, Kise is SF. Kazu, you take PG, I'll be our outside shooter." He passed the ball to Kise. "Let's take one back."

"Come at me." Internally he clasped hands with his alter ego.

>Let's see how they fare against two personalities working together.< His other half said.