

See Who I Am

If I dare to let you...

Von Iwa

Endurance

A lazy hand slaps away the alarm clock, when it rings 4 o' clock in the morning. In contrast to what he makes everyone believe he hates to stand up early. He would like to sleep in, enjoying the coziness of his bed, but he can't. He has to maintain his mask. He has to start the day, start his pre-school training session.

He gathers as much strenght as he can muster up in the morning and sits at least upright. No, he definitely is no morning person. It can't be helped. And he knows why he endures.

He has to be the perfect, traditional, stony fukubuchou Yukimura counts on, and he would never want to disappoint him. Sometimes he'd like to shake his head, telling himself he doesn't have to, but wants to fulfill his image. But he has never even made it to the first shake. He just isn't able to convince himself, because he knows it is nonsense.

Besides his self-imposed duty, though, he is determined to overcome his buchou one day. This dream drives him to train like a madman every morning in these early hours. Those are not the only reasons he is willing to give up his welcomed rest, but he never talks about his silent joy, he can never talk about it.

His clothes rustle, when he takes them off. His pajama is a mess around his ankles. Wrinkles will soon stain the smooth fabric. He looks at the puddle of cloth. Should he pick them up? He doesn't want to, he isn't so tidy as everyone deems him. He feels somewhat stupid for thinking about such a futile thing.

When the first shivers run up his legs, slowing creeping up his back, giving him goose bums, he sighs defeatedly, reaches for his pajama, folds it and places it neatly in his bed.

Maybe, if he keeps this attitude up long enough, he will think this is how he really is someday.

He walks back to his closet, sticking his arm inside. He has reached in too far, so his fingers brush over a piece of metall at the very back of the closet. He knows it well. It's soothing to feel the sharp edges, to feel the cool surface. But he shouldn't bother with it. It will never come in handy so he rather banishes it to a place where he doesn't see it.

He searches around for a moment before he pulls out some sport clothes. His tennis

uniform is drying at the moment so he can't use it, but it should be ready by the time he has to go to school (or rather training).

He changes into the dark blue pants and the plain black t-shirt. On the way to the door he grabs his tennis bag and his cap and places it on his head. He never goes anywhere without it. He isn't sure why, but Yukimura has once said it looked good on him, although it's nowhere near a traditional item. Still, after Yukimura has given him a compliment he was reluctant to even take it off in school (and yet he does it everyday, because he is proper student).

Now prepared for his training he leaves the fairly too big house. The sun has yet to rise. He is engulfed by darkness on the first step he sets outside. The air is fresh but not cold. It's perfect for his marathon of morning training.

Slowly he begins to jog, building the speed bit by bit. His tennis bag rocks up and down in sync with his steps. He doesn't care, he is already used to run with his backpack. It's more convenient this way.

Most of the street lamps are turned out by now, but he knows his way by heart. Besides, he has learned to see with his feet thanks to the numerous matches with Yukimura and his Creeping Shadow technique.

The streets are silent as he passes them by one by one. The birds are still sleeping and so is most of the civilization. His team would surely think he enjoys the quietness, but he doesn't. He would rather listen to his music while jogging, but he doesn't dare to. He is too anxious that someone he knows will walk by and discover he never listens to classic songs. Thus, his MP3-Player always stays safe at home.

He throws the ball into the air and smashes it into the wall. The ball bounce back and he repeats his actions. It is pure routine. He doesn't have to think about how or where to hit the ball, his body just reacts. He doesn't even need to self-actualize. The ball hits the exact same spot again.

At this time of his morning training he always has the time to think. Not think actually, but rather day dreaming. When he hits the ball back and forth he imagines what it would be like to reveal himself to his friends. To be who he is. He imagines what Yukimura would think of him. He dreams of Yukimura to love him even with his true personality. But he knows it's never going to happen. It is just a dream that he chases every morning.

In his thought stories Yukimura always smiles at him, sometimes they even kiss. He wants nothing more than to know how it would be like to kiss his buchou. Of course, he has imagined other kinds of pleasantries under the covers of his bed or under the shower, but at first it would be enough the kiss the beautiful man the whole school desires.

The picture of Yukimura slowly closing his eyes and parting his lips slightly comes into his mind. His hand which holds the racket gets sweaty. The ball bounces back to him. He doesn't hit it until the very last second. The angle is wrong so the ball crashes against the wall too high. When it comes back again he can't react, he is too

captivated by the thoughts in his minds. The ball misses his head by hair's breadth, but it knocks off the black cap.

He only notices his mistake when he hears the soft thud when his cap hits the ground. He sighs defeatedly, bends down and picks up his cap. He can hear the laughter of Yukimura. Naturely, it's only in his head, but he hears them still. In his mind the blue haired boy taunts him. 'What was that, Sanada? That's not tennis you're playing. Are you still in kindergarden, fooling around?'

Sanada knows regardless of how much he tries to shut up the voice in his head, it will remain. And Yukimura is right to pester him about it. After all he was careless and has allowed such a mistake.

He picks up his ball, too and puts it and his racket back in his bag. It's time to jog back home, so he has time to shower before going to school.

The warm water splattering his shoulders feels nice. Sanada exhales deeply. His nostrils flare with the breath. He likes to shower even if he does it three times a day. He wiggles his toes in the hot water at his feet. But he hasn't got the time to stand there for minutes, doing nothing, so he reaches for the soap, beginning to wash himself.

A low melody echoes in Sanada's head. He knows it well, it's one of his favourite songs. Quietly he starts to hum the rhythm. One time he had dared to sing out loud, but that has been when his brother hasn't been at home. He would never push his luck so far when his sibling could possibly hear him.

He jerks somewhat violently when the door to the bathroom is opened. An almost perfect image of himself, except for the slightly longer hair and the few inches of difference in hight, enters the room. Sanada change the melody he hums into some classic one, because it would be too suspicious to just stop.

„Morning, Gen-chan“, his brother greets with a stifled yawn. Sanada can't see the arched eyebrow of his older sibling in the shower. The latter has noticed the change in melody, but says nothing. Well, it isn't as if he hasn't known before.

„Don't call me that, Hiroshi“, Sanada snaps. He doesn't like the nickname, not one bit. It sound like he was a child, but he is almost an adult. After all he is already in second year of senior high school.

„Oh, come on, Gen-chan. It suits you and it's cute“, Hiroshi answers and is lucky that Sanada doesn't jump out of the shower to strangle him.

Sanada is taking off his clothes after the morning training at school, when Yukimura claps his hands to get everyone's attention.

„Everyone“, he says, „Renji and myself have decided that the regulars should hold another meeting...“ He can't even finish his sentence, when Marui interrupts him.

„Can we go to a café to eat cake?“, he asks with a glitter in his eyes. Yukimura smiles and nods.

„Yes, that has been my intention.“

Sanada thinks about since when he has been left out of the decision making, but he wouldn't mop about it. It's not the first time it has happened, after all.

He grunts in recognition to Yukimura's announcement and stalks into the showers. It's not like he doesn't like the meetings with the others, it's just... difficult. But he has once swore to himself to endure it, thus he bears everything, because he has got a goal set before his eyes.