

Between Heaven and Earth

[Kaoru x Die] AU

Von NanaSaintClair

Kapitel 3: Chapter Three

The next morning Kaoru took a look inside the bags Toshiya and Die had brought from their shopping tour. Quickly rummaging through their content until he had found something suiting for the events ahead, he took the pile of clothes and entered Die's room. The red-haired man was still fast asleep, lying on his belly, the book next to the bed. He had fallen asleep during reading since it had been a little bit boring unlike the other book he was reading at first.

Kaoru dropped the pile next to Die and unceremoniously woke him. "Get up, Die. Dress properly."

Yawning and blinking with his eyelids to adjust to the bright morning sun, Die watched the host march off, before he swung his legs out of his bed and stretched. He had slept like a stone, another thing that was totally different than in Heaven. There he only slept lightly, always on alert. Being an angel had been a serious matter after all. Now he just smiled to himself and grabbed the pile of clothes, taking a look at them. They were indeed fine and just the feel of the material against his fingertips was making him smile.

Once Kaoru was done inside the bathroom, Die quickly headed inside in need for the toilet. Gods, it felt weird, all these human needs, especially to let out all the liquid he had consumed the day earlier. With a sigh he tended to this urgent need, then quickly showered and got dressed. Then he even combed his hair and put some wax in it. He had seen how Kaoru did that and he was happily surprised when his hair suddenly smelled somehow nicely, even if he couldn't quite say of what exactly it smelled. To smell was one of the things adding to the new sensations of being a human but he liked it. Only in the city there were bad smells, but here, in Kaoru's home, everything smelled nice to Die.

With a smile he grabbed himself something to eat from out of the fridge and ate it before Kaoru already urged him to leave. At work Die began to greet back all the friendly people who offered him and his boss a 'good morning'. He had brought the book and was ordered to read again while Kaoru made some phone calls and studied some files. But after a while the lawyer checked his watch and got up, slipping inside his jacket. "C'mon, Die. We're heading to the court. There's an important trial today

and I want you to watch.”

No question, Die was all up for it. Beaming he stood next to Kaoru in no time. “A trial?”

“Yeah, the case of Mrs. Inari. She’s claiming for damages against her ex-husband,” Kaoru explained while they were heading out of the building and inside a cab. The lawyer hardly used his own car to get to the court. Modesty was a thing judges appreciated more than to show off with expensive cars. “But he’s actually trying to make the judges declare Inari for certifiably insane. Should be interesting for you.”

He couldn’t help his last remark since he was sure Die literally was insane but it made the redhead only enthusiastically nod. “It is. But why would he do that? Is she insane?”

“No. Well, not really. Technically she’s been a pill-addict of some sort. We’re claiming she’s not but that she’s been in therapy militates against her. Now I’ve just got the medical certificate about her being released as cured. That’ll erase his claim and she can sue him for what he’s worth.” That someone actually listened to all that crap was indeed even nice, Kaoru had to admit. No one of his friends or those who wanted to be his friends was truly interested in his work. Even if they were listening, Kaoru could see that it was because of different reasons and he had become mistrusting. People these days only wanted to use any information for their own advantage. Not so Die. He was gleaming for every tiny bit the lawyer told him and he was actually looking as if he was really interested. Sure, there was still the possibility that Die was a ‘spy’ but then Kaoru would’ve to compliment the one that had had this idea – it was just too absurd.

“Why does she sue him at all? What kind of damages did she gain from him? Did he hit her?” This was just too exciting and all these human-things were highly fascinating for Die. He just wondered if it was normal for the human kind to have this sort of problems. Why wasn’t Kaoru married? Did he have someone to sue too? Would he fight today for the poor victim? A hundred new questions followed the first and Die’s mind was overturning itself with thoughts.

“Psychological damages,” Kaoru stated as the car came to a halt and he opened the door to climb out. “We’re claiming that she’s been mentally abused. Because of his assaults on her she became an addict, went through a therapy and now that she’s cured, she deserves some financial compensation. Now shut up. No word about it in the court, okay?”

Of course Die would keep it secret, but he still couldn’t help it. He didn’t really get what the whole thing was about. Mentally abused? How was that possible? How could humans abuse each other mentally? Humans were supposed to work, fall in love, have children, some not, but all in all not to mentally abuse. Could they kill each other by mental abuse? That would be new to Die. He really had still so much to learn.

During the trial Die sat and watched enticed by the whole matter and most of all Kaoru. The best part was his final speech, when he delivered the pleading. It was breath-taking even, and stunned Die watched when the lawyer turned things to his

advantage, leaving a good impression on the judge. That Inari's former husband had tried to declare her certifiably insane added at last to the things that actually spoke against that man. She got compensated with a lot of money in the end and after the judge had finally pronounced his judgment, she even hugged Kaoru and thanked him. It brought a huge smile upon Die's lips when he met with Kaoru right after.

The lawyer was now in good spirits and even smiled back at Die before they made their way back to the cab. "Now we'll have a drink. I deserve one after that case."

Not complaining Die just widely grinned and followed. They were brought to a bar Kaoru usually spent time to celebrate whenever he had won a trial. Most of the people there were businessmen like him or at least richer than standard. Kaoru led them both to the bar and instantly ordered two beer. "Consider yourself invited, Die. I'm so relieved this is over and won. Inari isn't exactly one of my favorite clients."

"Thanks," Die beamed and took the offered beer that the bartender had quickly served. "Why is that? Don't you like all your clients?"

"Of course not. One can't like everybody. That's only human, my dear angel," the dark-haired man said in a teasing tone, still not quite thinking that Die had been an angel, ever. "Inari's actually quite a bitch."

Unbelievably Die raised his brows, not grasping that either. "Then why are you helping her?"

"What do you think? For money naturally." Kaoru scoffed a little but then chuckled, too high from his victory to be seriously annoyed right now. "Being a lawyer is a job, Die. I earn money by helping these people. If I only helped those who I liked, I'd have not a penny."

Humankind was indeed difficult to understand but Die guessed, it would be normal. Every human was working to gain money and so did Kaoru. It would surely take some time until Die would fully comprehend the matters of a lawyer's work. But he was eager to know all about it. Yet, there was something else in his mind that he had contemplated since their ride in the cab. "Hey Kaoru, why aren't you married?"

"Why would I be?" Even if he wasn't exactly prepared for the question, Kaoru was used to it and casually shrugged.

"Because most humans are. They fall in love, marry, have kids. I haven't been an angel under Cupid for long, only had two chances to prove myself in this department, but that's what I've learnt." It was true. Die had tried to make people fall in love on two occasions but since he hadn't been successful, he was sent to try himself as a guardian angel. That hadn't worked either.

"Not everyone is eager to marry." Kaoru took a sip from his beer and lit himself a cigarette. "Besides, I don't go for women anyway. So don't even ask about kids."

"You like guys?" Smiling Die scratched his head. That was new and yet not. He had

heard about those already. "I was never sent to guide a gay couple into love. But you're right. They can't have kids. Women bear them."

"Right." It made the lawyer actually laugh. Die's whole way of thinking was quite adorable, even if completely silly and weird. But in a way he wasn't really dim, more like that his brain cells needed some training first. But right now Kaoru didn't want to think about it, didn't want to think about anything at all. Fed up with work for once he would call it a day. If he just thought of laws right now, his head would throb. "I say, let's have this beer and then go home. I'd like to check if you've gained any knowledge about cooking."

The small smirk upon Kaoru's lips was teasing but Die didn't even notice. "Yeah! I'd love to! But don't we need some things like food first? And spices, I read so much about different spices."

"Fine," the lawyer agreed. "Then let's get my car from the office and buy some food." He wasn't that eager for shopping but what had to be done, had to be done. He was actually in quite a funny mood to offer this at all, but in case Die wouldn't prove himself to be a good cook, it didn't matter either. Kaoru was never that hungry and he just liked to keep his 'angel' busy.

About an hour later they had gathered all the necessary items and drove back to Kaoru's house. He even switched off his cell phone what usually made him restless, but the fact that he had still a working phone at home, fax and email calmed him down enough. While Kaoru sneaked off to have a quick and relaxing shower, the former angel started to prepare a meal. As soon as Kaoru emerged back from the bathroom, a delicious smell filled his nostrils. Dressed in casual jeans and shirt, he got closer and took a glimpse at what was in the pan.

"Fried rice-balls?" He raised one skeptical eyebrow. "Is that all?"

Die happily nodded. "I figured it wouldn't take much time."

"At least you've made many of them and it smells good." The slightly smaller man sniffed a little, then walked to gather something to drink from out of the fridge. "When will they be ready?"

"I'm not so sure," the redhead pondered and frowned. "The book says nothing precise. Just that they should have a golden brown color."

Setting the table with two plates, Kaoru shrugged, before he sat down and waited for his meal. Shortly after, Die decided that it was good enough to try and taste. He served the rice-balls and sat down opposite the other man. "Bon appetit."

A snort emitted from Kaoru. "Where did you get that from? The book?" Die's merry nod confirmed his guess and carefully he tried the rice-balls with his chop-sticks. But he wasn't happily surprised when the food was spicily hot. "Urgh. Don't you think there's a little too much curry in it?" He quickly took a huge gulp from his orange juice.

Tasting his food Die coughed. "Could also be the chili," he breathed and bravely kept on eating. "I don't know. What did I do wrong?"

"Are you crazy to eat that?" The other man shoved his plate away and was about to tell Die that he should stop eating that since Kaoru was in no mood to call a doctor for him. Die wasn't insured after all! But the doorbell cut the lawyer off of everything his mind contemplated. With his drink in hand he got the door and found Toshiya standing there was a sly grin plastered on his face.

"Hey! What are you two doing? I thought I could pay you a visit, since your cell phone is off..." The sentence trailed off when Toshiya's voice purposefully got lower and he entered the house. The host didn't reply anything at all, just let him inside and got back to his seat on the table. He knew too well that his friend was curious like hell about Die and that this was the only reason for his spontaneous appearance. Toshiya slid on the chair at the side between them, gazing at Die. "Hello beauty, how are you doing?"

"Hm?" The red-haired man looked up from his food, hadn't dared to take another bite and grabbed his coke. He took a mild sip, wondering if the man had really meant him with beauty, before he answered. "I'm fine, and you?"

"Fine, fine. Oh, I'm interfering you two eating. I'm sorry, that wasn't my intention," the tall dark-haired guy said but didn't offer to leave anyway. "Did Kaoru cook?"

"Nope," the addressed man replied in a sly tone. "Die did. Wanna try?"

Mentally grinning in a dirty fashion Kaoru shoved his plate to his friend. He could literally read the other's mind. No, of course Kaoru hadn't cooked. He never did, not for guests anyway. Not even if he was charming them and that was exactly what the other was hinting at. It was a little suspicious that Kaoru offered his food so generously but Toshiya wanted to try nonetheless. He liked the redhead and just to show him that, he would eat whatever he had cooked.

"Maybe you shouldn't—" Die started but never finished when it was already too late. Toshiya had taken the chop-sticks and eagerly munched down some of the rice-balls. He should soon regret that though. Innocently the redhead stared at the other man while Kaoru couldn't suppress his snort that mixed with some spiteful giggles.

"Do you like it, Toto?" He asked leaning closer and patting his friend's back. Sometimes it was just the friendliness of other people that annoyed the crap out of Kaoru and his friend here was definitely too kind.

"Spicy," he pressed out between his teeth but could not contain himself any longer, reaching for Die's coke. "Gimme that." He brought the can to his lips and drank it all out.

Die watched and tilted his head. Now his drink had gone. That wasn't quite nice. With large puppy dog eyes he looked at his host. "Can I have another can?"

"Serve yourself," he replied and lit a cigarette.

"I'm sorry," Die began to explain once he had fetched something to drink. "It was my first time cooking. Obviously I'm too dense for that too." He bowed his head low, referring to the time when he had failed all his missions as an angel.

"No!" Toshiya shook his head severely, not able to take the look on Die's face without getting weak and to pity the redhead. He was sure that Die had tried his best. "Don't worry about it. It is good. For a first try it is good, believe me." He tried to be convincing and made the red-haired guy look up with doubtful eyes. "Trust me. Kaoru's cooking skills are way worse."

That earned him a glare from the lawyer but Toshiya's mind was too occupied too notice. He hadn't come here without ideas for the evening anyway. "Hey, what do you think? Shall we go out and have a drink together? We can snatch something to eat on the way. What do you say? Die? Kao?"

"I'm not in the mood," Kaoru replied not even giving it too much thought. He had planned on relaxing at home for once and maybe to tease his guest a little but certainly not a night out with Toshiya. His friend was nice and the best he had but he was an exhausting company. "I have an appointment tomorrow."

"Tomorrow? It's Friday. What about weekend?" His friend couldn't understand that at all. Usually Kaoru was anything but a party pooper, opposite to what people might think. But he was still more of a workaholic.

"Can't be helped," he said and shrugged. "The client is important. Maybe I'll go out tomorrow night."

"Too bad," Toshiya sighed and looked at Die with huge eyes. "What about you? C'mon, don't let me down too!"

Thinking about it Die didn't mind, not at all. The guy was nice company and he would like to experience more from the human society and their habits. Yet, he wasn't quite sure if he was actually allowed to, and with questioningly raised eyebrows he turned to look at Kaoru. "May I?"

Kaoru certainly hadn't expected Die's eagerness but he wasn't exactly surprised either. He just minded the fact that he would probably spill too much information about his doubtful background. Then again an evening without any human presence was so tempting. With no time to think about the whole matter for long, he shrugged. "Do as you wish. You're off duty right now."

A bright smile nearly broke Die's face. "Thank you."

"Don't thank me. Just don't be back too late. I'll wait until midnight," he explained since he had no intention of giving Die or even Toshiya a key for his home. Not in a million years! Kaoru unceremoniously got up and walked inside the living room, taking a seat there in front of the TV. Beer in hand he pretended to watch when in truth his

ears caught every word that was spoken between his guest and his friend.

"Awesome," Toshiya beamed and stood up as well, dragging Die up. "C'mon. You should wear the black shirt we've bought yesterday." They disappeared into the guest room where Kaoru had stored Die's clothes sometime during the day. He hadn't like it when they were just decorating the middle of his living, since he loved things tidy and neat.

Once the two men emerged back and passed Kaoru by, Die stopped while Toshiya already went to the front door. "Erm... Toshiya? I... well, I don't have any money yet." He felt odd, didn't want to ask his boss for credit when he still was in debts, and Kaoru ignored this statement on purpose. He had already spent enough money on clothes and food. If Die wanted to have drinks, he would've to ask Toshiya for an invitation.

The problem solved itself when the dark-haired guy just waved, "You're invited. Now come on," and marched outside.

Another huge smile appeared on Die's face and he was about to leave as well, when Kaoru stopped him. "Die." He waited for the redhead's attention and looked at him seriously. "I'd appreciate if you won't tell too much about your past."

Although the red-haired man didn't quite understand why that was a problem for Kaoru or humankind in general, he still didn't mind. If the lawyer would be happy if Die wouldn't tell TOO MUCH, he was fine with that. "Okay, no problem." He smiled. "Goodbye Kaoru! I'll be back on time!"

With that he quickly hurried after Toshiya. Kaoru sighed and shifted into a lying position, staring at the ceiling. Finally peace. With Die he almost felt as if he had a kid to watch after.

Toshiya stayed true to his words and fetched something to eat from a drive-in before he steered his car to where his favorite bar was. They had eaten their food during the ride and headed straight into the location. Entering, Die couldn't help but gape. He had never been into such a place. There were dancers on a small stage but he wasn't sure if they were males or females. Music sounded from everywhere around him, the lights were dim but colorful and it smelled of pleasant smoke, unlike when actually a fire was burning.

"Come, come," the dark-haired male waved for Die to follow, making his way to a small table with four comfortable looking chairs. Both men settled down and ordered beer. Die for sure wanted it and nothing else. He had developed an instant liking for the bitter-sweet drink.

"How d'you like it?" Toshiya asked and leant closer to Die, who was still gazing around in awe.

"Awesome," he replied with a smile. "Are those dancers males or females?"

Chuckling, the other man grinned. "Males. They're cross-dressing. It's not everybody's taste but I like it. They give a good show, better than naked girls dancing. You don't like it?"

"I like it," Die nodded and took another glimpse at the dancing people. They really were fascinating. He had never been to any show at all, whether with naked girls or cross-dressing males. "Why do they do that?"

"You mean, dancing or cross-dressing?" Toshiya asked with a smirk but realized what Die meant when he was nodding at the end of the question. "Well, it's some sort of art. At least that's what I think. Some people are just disgusted by dancing cross-dressers but so are they when meeting gays. I just think that doing a show like that is very much about art."

"It is," the redhead agreed, because dancing seemed to him an art he should be highly fascinated about. The way they moved their feet, their hands, their whole body – it had to be art.

The other man liked the way Die was thinking. He hadn't dared to judge or ask about whether he was gay or straight yet, but he was determined to find out. Because if this cute red-haired man was anything near gay, then Toshiya would certainly not wait for long to properly check him out. Full stop. But first he just wanted to enjoy his company and learn a little bit more about Kaoru's sudden guest. "And do you like working for Kaoru?"

"Yeah," Die beamed and nodded several times, before sipping from his beer. "I do like it. I started to read a book about basic law and at first it was boring but now that I've seen Kaoru in a trial, I wanna read the rest so badly."

Although it was hard to imagine Die as a lawyer, Toshiya didn't question his interest. Anyone who had ever seen Kaoru in action would dream about being like him. That was just Kaoru, a perfectionist, a legend in his business and for good reason. It wasn't hard for Toshiya to guess that Die hadn't attended all the schools to be educated enough to actually become a lawyer but if he had an interest in law, it was for good. Then at least Toshiya didn't feel as if he needed to pity Die. "And you like him? Kaoru, I mean."

"Yeah," Die answered again with a small smile and a nod of his head. "He is nice. And I'm so grateful that I can live with him. Without him I'd probably starve on the street."

The black-haired man bit the insides of his cheek, not really knowing what to say. Maybe for once in his life Kaoru was actually doing something good for a person, not just for money, though still not unselfish. If Die had really been a former junkie, owning nothing but his skin, then he sure was grateful for any help. But Toshiya wouldn't push the matter any further. "I'm glad, really. That you and him get along well is good. Just," he bit his lip, not sure if he should really speak of his worries or not. But in the end he decided to spill the beans since he just liked Die already much. "Just don't get involved with him privately, if you know what I mean."

"Huh?" Wasn't Die already involved with Kaoru privately? He lived with him and he was his friend. He and Toshiya and maybe also Mai were his friends so far. Now Die really didn't get what Toshiya was talking about. "No, I don't know what you mean."

"I mean that he likes guys and you are one of that kind. A cute one for that matter," Toshiya said and grinned, but sighed afterwards. "Kaoru's my friend and I don't wanna run him down but because you're really a nice guy, Die, I wouldn't wanna see you become one of his flings."

Die's eyes widened a little. He didn't see a problem in Kaoru liking him, not at all, he would appreciate that. But he hadn't even thought about having a fling with the lawyer. Now the idea was kind of new and didn't sound too bad either. Love was a good thing in any way. Yet, Die had no clue about the physical love between two humans, not to mention two of the same sex. Technically he knew what they did but he had never experienced that himself in human form. For now it was out of question anyway since he was here with Toshiya, not Kaoru. What Die truly didn't get, was why Toshiya wouldn't wanna see him become one of Kaoru's flings. Would that be bad? Didn't he grant his friend such thing? "Why are you saying that? Kaoru's your friend. That's what you said."

"He is." With a small nod and a sigh Toshiya tilted his head, not understanding why Die didn't just take his friendly hint. Was he already into the lawyer? If that was the case, there was nothing he could do. To warn Die wouldn't help. "But he's also a jackass. And I say that because I am his friend. Everyone else just doesn't dare to say it out loud. I know him for so long and I can count on him any time, really, that's why he is my friend. But I'd never get involved with him on a sexual basis. No way. He's just not made for the everlasting love."

"But there's someone for every human, Cupid says," Die countered, even if what Toshiya said in the beginning might be true. But the last statement was just not correct at all. "For you and for Kaoru too. And sometimes humans just need a little help to see this other person with whom they are supposed to live happily ever after."

Now Toshiya was gaping, mouth open. Suddenly he broke out into laughter. Die couldn't be serious. That guy was a joker and his jokes were definitely ones of the best. He always said such things from time to time and the black-haired man was sure, Die was trying to kid him. "Man, you're really good, Die. You got me there."

"Thank you." Smiling Die was happy about the compliment. Being good was a fine one of that sort.

Still with tears of laughter in his eyes Toshiya ordered another round of beer. Maybe Die was a clever one, too smart to give away that easily if he had an interest in Kaoru. Either that or he had simply none. But one thing was for sure: he was a highly entertaining company. And so they chatted away, Toshiya beginning to explain what he actually did for a living and Die listening intently and asking away about everything he didn't get in the first place.

Meanwhile Kaoru had become restless. Tapping his fingertips against the surface of his desk, he just hoped for Die's sake that he would be back in time. Not that Kaoru was worried about him. That wasn't the case. He had just never waited for anyone and he was definitely feeling as if he was waiting for Die. It was absurd. Why did he trust a guy who he hardly knew? Why did he believe a guy who usually behaved like he had no brains at all? It was half past eleven when Kaoru swore that if the redhead wasn't back on time, he would surely kill him. He could've run off with his new clothes, even if that wasn't likely to happen. Then he should've done that with the credit card. And Toshiya was harmless and faithful, but certainly not attentive. He was careless.

Kaoru had tried to read, to watch television and in the end settled to do some work. But he couldn't help his mind drifting to the redhead. That was why he had never any serious relationship. He had too many important things in his head, was in charge of so many different serious matters, there was no space to even think about someone else. Not even a guest who believed he had been an angel. But the damage was done and Die was hired.

"Fuck it," Kaoru sighed. When did it happen that he had turned into a fool?

After his fourth beer Die had stopped listening to Toshiya's tales of how he had become and still was a fashion designer. It wasn't that Die didn't want to listen but his attention just wouldn't keep focused anymore. His limbs were trembling in anticipation to move and every time he watched the dancers, it was getting a tad bit worse. His eyelids blinked more often and faster and his hands moved differently, although he couldn't put his finger on the reason yet. Unconsciously he quietly began to sing along to the music, no matter that he did not know the lyrics.

"Oh my," Toshiya mentioned when he took a glimpse at his wristwatch. "We better go now or you will be in trouble."

Die frowned since he hadn't even realized how late it had become and he really didn't want to make Kaoru mad at him. With a nod Die got up on his feet and stumbled a little. Was he still a human or why did he have the slight feeling that he could fly? Well, he could definitely not feel any wings on his back and the flying sensation was kind of different but still, his feet were so light even. He couldn't say it any differently.

"My god, Die, you're shambling. Are you drunk already?" Toshiya couldn't help his giggles. The redhead was looking just too cute lurching like he did.

"What? I dunno," he replied with a sheepish grin. "But my head feels a little odd, like everything's spinning."

"You're drunk, that's what you are." Putting an arm around the other man, Toshiya guided him outside and neatly placed him inside the car. "Fasten the seatbelt and don't you dare to puke." Shaking his head, he took the place behind the steering

wheel and started the engine.

Only a few minutes later they both stood in front of the door at Kaoru's house, or rather Toshiya stood and Die leant against him. Ringing the doorbell it wasn't before long when the owner admitted them entrance. Kaoru instantly frowned when he saw the two of them and a small sound of surprise emitted from his mouth when Die literally lurched forward to wrap his arms around the smaller man's shoulders, hugging him to steady himself.

"Hello back, Kaoru!" For a moment the lawyer was that dumbfounded that he couldn't help but just gaze quite stupidly as the redhead practically clung to him. But when he heard the silly giggles of his friend, Kaoru glared and shoved Die off.

"Yeah, great," he mumbled but didn't dare to keep his hands off Die's shoulders, afraid he'd fall flat against him again.

"I've seen cross-dressing dancers!" The redhead proudly beamed with a smile that could lighten the whole city. "And I drank beer. But you know what, I'm kinda tired or something 'cause my body feels as if I could just lie down, so heavy my limbs are and my eyelids, and there's some sort of jumble inside my head. Really odd, really odd," he babbled away and tried to keep his eyes focused on the man holding his shoulders for balance, of which he was grateful for by the way.

Kaoru heaved an outrageously annoyed sigh, suddenly dragging one of Die's arms ruggedly around his shoulders. He was pissed but not entirely because of Die. Without to care about gentleness he dragged the redhead into his room and dropped him on the bed. Facedown the taller man muttered some thanks into the pillow but didn't even turn around anymore. Muffled, he wished Kaoru a good night, even after he was already gone and had closed the door.

Toshiya mildly laughed about the whole situation because Die was just too funny when drunk. But when Kaoru's dark glare was suddenly upon the taller black-haired man, his laughter died and he shrugged. He was about to ask what his problem was, but the other man was already faster and snapped: "Thank you for making him drunk! Was that really necessary? Tomorrow he'll be hung over and that's certainly the least I can need."

"Why are you mad at me? Is it my fault that he can't take four bottles of beer?" Toshiya pouted and crossed his arms. "Really, Kaoru. Four bottles, and he was like that. You could've warned me if you've known he can't take that bit."

With a hardly audible growl the lawyer went to gather one of his cigarettes and lit it almost hastily. His friend was right. Not even Kaoru had known that Die couldn't take much but at least Kaoru would've guessed it. But still Toshiya could've realized it earlier. "Oh well, forget it. At least you're back and I can finally go to bed now."

Suppressing to roll his eyes upwards, Toshiya ignored Kaoru's grumpiness, used to it by now. That was just his character and long ago the other man had given up on caring about it anyway. In all the years he knew Kaoru, he had been like this but somehow

managed to show his more friendly side from time to time. That was probably why Toshiya was still his one and only real friend. "It really wasn't my intention to get him drunk. But you must admit, he's cute when he's drunk, ne?"

Raising his brows, Kaoru just looked at his friend with indifference. "If you say so," he sighed again and took another long drag from his cigarette, slowly blowing the smoke out, somewhat calmed down by it. He didn't mind the two of them hanging out, it had somehow been his idea in the first place, but there was another problem coming closer in Kaoru's opinion. Fact was, Die was nuts and good only for working his heels off. The thing was, that no matter what he believed he was or had been, he was a gorgeous, nice and cute male and Kaoru's tall dark-haired friend easily fell for other men. "Toshiya, I'd prefer you don't hit on him."

That said, the other guy gaped. Sometimes the bluntness of Kaoru was hard to take. "Why? Are you interested in him yourself? Just say so and I'll keep my hands off him." Although it would be a pity if he would've to keep his hands off the redhead, Toshiya would be true to his words. He had never interfered between Kaoru and any of his guys and for their friendship he would do anything to keep it that way. It was simple. Kaoru had known Die before and that's why Toshiya would back off. But only if the lawyer indeed held any interest in the redhead.

"I'm not," Kaoru honestly replied and thought about how to make Toshiya see that he meant it without having an interest in Die himself. Not on a sexual basis anyway. "I've already told you who he is and that is why I don't wanna get him involved with anyone."

"I'm not anyone and you only told me that he's some sort of fosterling of this judge. So what if I just check out if he's interested. I don't even know yet if he goes for guys. But seeing how he was fascinated by the cross-dancers..." Toshiya drifted off and rolled his eyes in a dreamy manner.

"Toshiya, no." The smaller guy wasn't even in the mood for his friend's dreamy expression right now because this matter was serious to him. It would only cause problems if Die and Toshiya had a thing going on. "Don't even try it. Could you do me this one favor? I never ask you such thing. But this time it's something else. If you wanna hang out with him, fine, do it. If you wanna go out with him, I don't mind. But just don't try anything else. I mean it. At least not as long as he lives under my roof." He intently gazed at his friend, hoping for his understanding.

Sighing, Toshiya gave in. "Fine. But when we moves out, I won't care anymore. Be sure of."

"That's how I love my Toto!" Kaoru grinned, relieved. Even if he couldn't show his appreciation like other people did, but he was still very thankful to have a friend like Toshiya. Throughout the years he had learnt to trust him and knew that he had a hard time to cope with Kaoru sometimes. Even if he should be good with words being a lawyer, those that spoke of affection were always hard to say, if not impossible. Kaoru had proved to be a good friend in a different way, whenever Toshiya had been in troubles, or they simply stuck together when the situation demanded it.

"Yeah, yeah, I know," the other man waved it off, openly showing that he had understood the unspoken words of thankfulness. "You love me when I do as you say."

"Right." Kaoru widely grinned. "Who couldn't love a good boy like you?"

"Stuff it, Kao. You're not charming me with your words. I know you too well." With a smirk the other man turned to leave. "I'll head home. Night, Kao. And call me when Die moves out, yeah?" He didn't wait for any reply and left the house, sniggering. After all Kaoru hadn't mentioned anything about not teasing and urging him in any way concerning the redhead. Time will tell if he would stay true to his words or not. Toshiya wasn't so sure about Kaoru really having no interest in Die at all.

Inside, Kaoru finished his cigarette and walked up the stairs into his bedroom. Maybe he was too selfish asking his friend to keep his fingers off the redhead, but he was sure it was for Toshiya's best. Hell, Kaoru didn't even know himself why he had taken the risk to take the former angel with him. He felt almost crazy having done this. Of course he had noticed that Die was a handsome and even beautiful man, but the lawyer had no intention whatsoever in taking him into his bed. He would if Die were sane. But that wasn't the case and he still needed him. Once he had had him as a lover, he wouldn't allow him to be this close to him anymore.

Sighing lowly, Kaoru sat down on the bed and rubbed his palms across his face. It was possible, and almost crazy he mentally added, that Die could even turn out to be a friend. But since Kaoru had already decided to use his stupidity to his advantage, it was unlikely to happen. Now if Toshiya fell for Die and the other way around, could he really use the love of his one and only friend? Nope, he couldn't.

Selfish, yes.

"This turns out to be a mess," he mumbled and let his body fall backwards on the bed. If he had met Die under different circumstances, he could've allowed Toshiya to do as he wished. Then again, Kaoru would've probably taken the chance himself. That was if Die weren't crazy. Fact was, Kaoru had hit him with the car and the damage was done. Now he couldn't take his decision back and end of story. All this thinking annoyed the crap out of him. Wasn't it his reason for not falling in love? There were more important things. There always were. Nothing would ever change that. That he was sure of.

Closing his eyes he slowly and unconsciously drifted off and fell asleep.