

Ocean Avenue

Von Makikolgami

Kapitel 5: Rough Landing, Holly

The ride from the café Ocean Avenue to the Takekura's residence a little outside the city was long, but not as bad as Hiruma had feared. It was surprisingly easy for him to go back to the usual bantering with his friend, teasing him about his age, his looks and everything that he could think of. He tried to tease him about his company, that he was still running his father's stupid construction company, but everything that came out of his mouth was simple praise for getting it as far as Musashi had gotten it. Takekura Constructions placed third in the ranking of numbers of buildings they built in Tokyo, and fifth in all of Japan, closing in on the next higher ranked one these days. A few more new contracts and Takekura Constructions would be ranked second in Tokyo, which was a lot more than Hiruma had expected the other to do when they had parted.

"You underestimated me," Musashi smirked. "You didn't think I'd get that far without you."

"Of course not," Hiruma snorted. "You're too soft, it's an entire surprise that you managed all of this."

"Well, I have to admit, it was not my doing alone," the older looking one admitted shyly. "If it weren't for Mamori by my side, I'd-"

Hiruma started laughing loudly, scaring away a few people around them. "How did I know she played a major role in this? You obviously didn't marry her for her good looks, did you?"

"No... not... not really," Musashi sighed. "I managed to build up a lot of valuable relationships with architects and other companies thanks to her. If she hadn't talked to other wives at certain social gatherings of Tokyo's upper class, I would have never talked to their husbands and well... Takekura Constructions wouldn't be where it is now. Also, it helps to have friends in politics."

"Mhm, I heard that Juumonji will be a candidate for the prime minister in the next elections," Hiruma said, having kept track of all of his ex-teammates from abroad.

Musashi nodded, "he and Haruto have been very good friends of us during all this time-"

"Haruto? Sakuraba Haruto?" Hiruma interrupted him suddenly. "Since when are the two of you friends? You never talked to each other the entire time I knew you."

"Well, um," Musashi mumbled, feeling his cheeks heat up a little and hoped that it did not show, "we knew each other since High School, right? One day we just met behind the scenes of some TV production and started talking. Then we had some coffee, I invited him over and he brought Ichiro along-"

"So the rumors are really true then? I mean, a lot of things come over to the US, especially if there's a cute gay guy on a popular TV-show in Japan, but most of the time it's just some kind of fake. You have absolutely NO idea how wild some those women abroad get if they see some guys kissing," Hiruma shook his head, grinning to himself though.

"Well, it *did* make a lot of waves when he announced publicly that he was dating a very attractive and skilled doctor. He almost had a nervous breakdown before and broke down crying afterwards when he only received positive reactions to his outing," Musashi explained with an almost fatherly smile on his lips. "I'm happy for him. He doesn't realize yet just how much he achieved through his outing, though. Thanks to Juumonji-kun politics are seeing the matters a bit more liberal now and they are really loosening up."

"A lot has changed, huh?" Hiruma asked quietly, feeling a little empty inside. Had things been like they were today...

"Not really," Musashi sighed. "It's only been ten years since Haruto's public outing; society needs a lot longer to cope with a shock like that."

"From what I know, they're doing a pretty good job," Hiruma said flatly, arms crossed in front of his chest.

"On the outside, yes," Musashi agreed. "But, well, many companies have stopped hiring Haruto since his outing. Still, he gets enough screen time to be popular. Ichiro has lost a few patients, too. Some even went as far as to insult him right in his face..."

"People are stupid," Hiruma concluded with a low growl and Musashi happened to agree.

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"Honey! I'm home!" Musashi yelled through the house after he had closed the door behind him and Hiruma. He took off his shoes before he stepped inside, hearing a "Welcome back, honey!" from the kitchen. He smiled to himself as he smelled his favorite food – steak with baked potatoes.

"I'll show you around in a second," he said to Hiruma, who just shrugged and tried not

to look uncomfortable, before he snuck over to the kitchen and kissed his wife hello.

"How was your day?" she asked as she turned back around from the stove and smiled at him. "Did you have a nice birthday?"

"Oh, it was okay. I got nothing done at work, you know?" he said lightly. "My mom called me, along with the rest of the city."

"Ah, so, the same as every year," Mamori chuckled.

"No, it was worse this time," Musashi grinned. "It seemed like everybody wanted a piece of me today."

"Well, it's your 45th birthday, that's something to celebrate," she said and turned back around to check the steaks.

"Yeah, unfortunately," Musashi sighed as he went over to the table and glanced at the bag from Kariya's. Then his face lightened up. "You won't believe what happened then. Come with me for a moment, could you?"

"In a moment, can't you see I'm cooking? They're almost done..."

"No, it really can't wait," Musashi insisted, having a goofy grin on his face. "You need to come with me now. Close your eyes," he instructed as she gave in with a sigh and he took her hands.

Carefully he directed her a few steps into the hallway, where Hiruma stood, looking slightly nervous, even for his standards.

"What is it? Did you get something nice as a present that you can't show me later?" she said, sounding annoyed in a very amused way.

Hiruma found himself staring at her though. She had not changed at all over the year. In his eyes, she was still beautiful, the lines around her eyes enhancing her features instead of making her ugly. Her hair was up at the back of her head so that they did not fall into her face. It still had the same color he remembered. A pair of simple, but expensive looking earrings underlined her graceful neck along with a simple golden necklace. Right then, she was wearing a pink Rocket Bear apron over a kneelong skirt and a white t-shirt. His lips curled up into a smile at her affection towards that old mascot, that had obviously not changed over the years.

One look told her that she was happy now and that was all he needed to know about her right then. It lifted a heavy weight from his chest.

"Look what I found," Musashi mumbled as he gestured for his wife to open her eyes again. Hiruma made a conscious effort to hide the smile on his face, giving her a bored look.

"Did you bring home another pet..." she started, her eyes still focusing on the tall

figure in front of her. Her eyes became as wide as saucers and she clapped her hands over her mouth as she gasped in surprise.

"H-Hiruma..." she breathed, her eyes watering.

Despite feeling nervous because of her reactions, Hiruma managed to grin and taunt her. "What, are you going to cry, fucking mother hen?"

"Hiruma!" she cried and ran towards him, wrapping her arms around him in a tight embrace while tears started to run over her cheeks. "Welcome back!"

The blond felt uncomfortable with the weight that was suddenly clinging to him, but before he realized what he was doing, he had his arms wrapped around her and smiled once more. "Thank you," he breathed.

He felt Musashi's eyes on him and as he looked up over the mop of Mamori's hair, he could see him smiling softly. For a moment, he wished things would stay like this, but then he was shoved away by the woman.

"You! You stupid idiot!" she yelled at him, tears still streaming down her smiling face. "What did you think when you disappeared like that? Twenty years ago? Did you think nobody would miss you or what?"

"Kekeke, I had my reasons and you know it," he chuckled, patting her head. "Stop crying, will you? It'll only mess up your make up."

"Don't tell me what to do!" Mamori protested, but it sounded more like a laugh. "When did you come back?"

"Today," Hiruma answered curtly. "Your fucking husband over there picked me up by chance and dragged me here."

"I met him at the café," Musashi explained sheepishly. Her eyes narrowed and she pointed her index finger at him.

"I *told* you I'd make dinner tonight and you still go there to get something to eat? You're not getting anything today! And I don't care if it's your birthday!"

"Aw, honey, I just went there for the coffee... Besides, if I hadn't gone there, I would not have met Hiruma," Musashi said defensively, raising his arms.

Her anger seemed to cool down at that, and she sighed. "You're right. Hiruma, please, you must be tired. Why don't you go get a shower? I'll prepare the guest room for you after dinner."

"How can I deny such an offer?" the blond grinned.

"Honey, you show him around, okay?"

"Alright," Musashi smiled. "By the way, where are the kids?"

"They're not yet home from school and work respectively. You're a little early, you know? Sachiko and Takeshi are in their rooms though," Mamori explained, already on her way back to the kitchen.

"Okay," the man nodded before he turned back to Hiruma. "I'll show you around. Give me some of your luggage, please."

Wordlessly, Hiruma let him carry the heavier bag as Musashi led them into the living room where he dropped off the bag in a corner. It looked exactly like one of those living rooms from those movies, with cozy looking sofas, a huge TV set and a mantle piece, with a dining area at the backside of the house with a door to the gardens. They were small and the next house was just a few meters away, but it still let in some light from outside. The table was already set for five people, with a children's chair next to one chair.

"Four kids, huh? And a very young one, too?" Hiruma said after he observed the situation.

"Yeah," Musashi chuckled. "I know what you want to say, we've been very productive, I know. The youngest one is Sachiko, she is two years old and a latecomer. Her next brother is ten years old."

"What, so Sachiko's been an accident?" Hiruma started to tease him.

"Somewhat," Musashi admitted with a sheepish smile. "We had not wanted to get anymore children, but somehow... it just happened. And it's not like it's a bad thing. She's a lovely little girl."

"Well, I hope she doesn't call me 'Elf' or something equal stupid. I've met enough children in my life that thought my ears were funny," Hiruma snorted as he opened his bag to get some fresh clothes out of it.

Musashi simply shrugged. "I don't know... she doesn't seem prone to calling people funny names."

"I take your word for granted," Hiruma said, then smirked. "Care to join me for a shower?"

The other grinned back. "I'm sorry, not with the kids awake in the house."

"Oh, so later? When they're asleep?" Hiruma joked, his ears twitching slightly.

Musashi simply laughed and exited the room. "The guest bathroom is here," he said as he opened another door. "The bedrooms and our bathroom are upstairs, I'll be showing you that later, now go take a shower. I bet you must be looking forward to one after that long flight from America."

"I'm craving one, actually," Hiruma admitted. "Sure you do not want to join?"

Musashi shook his head with a smile. "See you in the living room later."

Hiruma grinned to himself as he closed the bathroom door behind him. It would have been to easy like that anyways.