At midnight, as I was lazing around in my room, I received a text message . It was from Kushida .

“Yamauchi-kun and Ike-kun said OK~ (^・ω・^)b ”

“Quick!”

Ike instantly rejected me with a wave of his hand when I asked him… The presence of a girl is clearly a big factor concerning boys . It’s like they hold infinite power .

“I just contacted Sudou-kun too, and I think he’ll agree too (＾ω＾)”

I received another mail . Oh~ . At this pace, everyone will really meet up tomorrow .

At this faster than expected development, I contacted Horikita with the news . I sent her a mail about how I was working with Kushida, that Ike and Yamauchi agreed to come, and how Kushida would also be participating in the study group . ”

“Well, time to take a bath . ”

As soon as I got up from my bed, I got a call from Horikita .

“Moshi moshi?”[1]

“… I don’t understand your text . ”

“What do you mean, you don’t understand . Isn’t it concise and simple? It looks like all three will come tomorrow . ”

“Not that . The part where you said Kushida-san was helping . This is my first time hearing that . ”

“I asked her earlier . For someone like Kushida who puts great effort in helping her classmates, she’d want to participate regardless of whether or not I invited her . In short, Sudou, Ike, and Yamauchi are coming . Ok?”

“I don’t remember allowing that . She didn’t even get a failing score either . ”

“Hey—by introducing Kushida into our plan, the chances of success go way up . I just took the simplest measure of increasing the probability of success . ”

“… I’m still not pleased with it . Shouldn’t you have done that after asking for my approval?”

“I know that you hate someone as proactive as Kushida is . However, it’s to make sure that no one fails . Or do you want to try gathering all students who failed by yourself?”

“Thats…”

Looks like Horikita understood that getting Kushida on board was a good thing .

Because she has too much pride in herself, it’s difficult for her to simply agree .

“We also don’t have much time until the test . Is it not ok?”

Speaking of which, Horikita doesn’t have much breathing room for her plan to work . But still, she was caught up on something and didn’t say anything . It was silent for a while .

“… Fine . We can’t do anything without making a sacrifice . However, Kushida-san will only help gather the students that failed . I can’t agree to her participating in the study group . ”

“… No, why is that? That was her condition for helping out . You’re being unreasonable .

“I won’t accept her participating in the study group . That won’t change . ”

“Is this about that? Are you trying to get back at her for when we deceived you?”

“That’s unrelated . She didn’t fail her mock test . Having extra people will only result in extra effort and confusion . ”

Her explanations are pretty reasonable, but I don’t understand the reason as to why she refuses to let Kushida join the study group .

“Do you just hate Kushida?”

“Do you not feel uncomfortable when you are next to someone you hate?”

“Huh?’

I didn’t understand what she meant .

Kushida tried to understand and get to know Horikita more than anyone, and tries to become her friend .

I never thought that Horikita actually hated Kushida .

“What if they decide to not come because Kushida’s not coming?”

“… Sorry, reviewing the test material is taking longer than I thought it would . I’m going to end the phone call because it’s taking so long . Well, good night . ”

“H-hey!”

She quickly cut the call . A misanthrope would probably do the same . However, in order to rise up to class A, it’s necessary to compromise . (T/N always think of Hamilton when it says rise up)

I plugged in my phone, put it on the table, then lied down on my bed .

I thought back on the days since the entrance ceremony .

“Defective products, huh . ”

On the first day of school, that’s what the second-year senpais said to us .

In English, that would be “Defective product” . [2]

That’s what they used to ridicule the students of class D . The flawless Horikita probably has some problems too . I could somehow understand what she was saying today .

“What should I do…”

Should I try to force her? However, Horikita might leave in the worst case .

If Horikita didn’t teach, everyone’s time would go to naught .

Feeling heavy, I called Kushida’s number .

“Moshi moshi~”

At first, I could hear the strong wind in the background . It quickly died away though .

“By any chance, were you drying your hair?”

“Oh, did you hear that? I just finished, so it’s fine . ”

Kushida just got out of the bath, huh… wait, it’s not the time to be having these delusions .

“No, uh, I have some bad news… Can you make it so that I never asked you to gather the failed students?”

“… Um, why?”

She answered after a short pause . It seems like she wants to know the reason, rather than getting mad immediately .

“Sorry . I can’t talk about it at length . Anyway, it got a bit difficult . ”

“Is that so… I see that Horikita-san really doesn’t like me . ”

I didn’t think I implied that at all, but it seems like Kushida picked up on it over the phone .

“It’s not related to her . It’s my mistake . ”

“It’s fine if you don’t try to hide it~ . I won’t get mad . I thought she would reject me because it looks like she doesn’t like me . It just happened as I thought it would . ”

I guess you can call it woman’s intuition .

“Anyway, it’s my bad that I asked you to help . ”

“Uun, there’s no need for you to apologize . But… ? I don’t think that Horikita-san can gather Sudou and the others by herself . ”

I couldn’t deny that .

“Hey, what did Horikita-san say, though? Was she against me gathering the others? Or was she against me participating in the study group?”

She got it perfectly right, as if she was listening to the conversation too .

“… The latter . Sorry for spoiling the mood . ”

“Ahahaha, yea . There’s no need for you to apologize, though . She has a ‘Don’t get close to me’ kind aura . So I expected it to happen anyway . ”

Even so, you’re really perceptive .

“But everyone agreed to join because I said I would also participate… Before inviting me, couldn’t you have lied that I wouldn’t be able to participate? If you told them now, everyone would probably hate Horikita-san…”

I feel a bit frightened towards Kushida . She understands everything .

“Can you leave this one to me?”

“Leave this one to you?”

“Tomorrow, I’ll take everyone to Horikita-san . Of course, I’ll go too . ”

“That’s—”

“It’s fine, right?” Or can you solve the problem? Is there a way to gather everyone without me, or a way to convince Horikita?”

It’s too bad, but that’s impossible .

“… I got it . I’ll leave it to you . I won’t know what will happen, though . ”

“That’s fine . You won’t be responsible for any of it, after all . Well, see you tomorrow then . ”

The phone call ended . I never thought that I’d get more tired than I was after the phone call with Horikita . She said that it was fine, but is it really?

Horikita will insult and taunt anything she’s not pleased with, no matter who is on the receiving end . It’s clear that this precarious situation will end up in flames . Feeling anxious, I headed towards the bathroom .

Let’s stop thinking about tomorrow—it’ll only make me more depressed .

No matter how worried I get, tomorrow will come and go . Things will work out somehow .