

## II

The class settled down as the teacher took her place at the front of the room.

"Good morning, Ms. Adachi!" the class said in unison. She waved, signaling for them to sit down.

"Good morning class," she said sleepily, leaning on the blackboard. "Today, we have a new transfer student who'll be in our class from now on. I just woke the hell up, so I'll let her do her own introduction," she mumbled.

The class began to fill with the sounds of discussion amongst the students. At the back of the room, Nori leaned over to the right towards Yuuto, who sat beside him. "Dude! Did you hear that? *She* is going to be introducing *herself*! We're getting a new girl! This is awesome! I wonder if she's hot...we may really have our work cut out for us with this list thing!"

Yuuto sighed. "Don't make me regret agreeing to help you with that, man," he chuckled. "And besides, it's a transfer. Don't get your hopes up too high." He smirked. "For God's sake, if it's one of those stuck-up snobby girls who transfers from a prestigious private school for no reason at all and ends up being a total bitch, I don't care how hot she is."

"Yeah, I hear you on that one, man," Nori nodded, "but just imagine if she's super ho—"

Before he could finish his sentence, Nori was cut off by the sound of the door opening. The room fell silent. The teacher, Ms. Adachi, yawned casually and motioned for the person at the door to come in. The class watched, some in awe, as a girl marched in through the doorway. She sported long, pink hair, done up in a ponytail. She had a set of dark, purple eyes; a perfect contrast to her brighter hair color.

"I friggin' called it, man!" Nori whispered to a stunned Yuuto.

"Yeah, I guess you did," Yuuto replied casually, reaching into his bag and pulling out a can of soda. "Now shut up. I'm gonna try and drink my soda in class. I'm pretty sure Ms. Adachi is too tired to care so now's my chance!"

The girl looked across the classroom. She smiled brightly and averted to everyone, then proceeded to pick up a piece of chalk and write her name on the blackboard. Having finished that, she turned back to the class. "Hello everyone," she called, a bright smile upon her face. "My name is Hanae Tsukuda, and I'm 15 years old. I'll be in this class starting today, so I hope to be able to get along with everybody!"

The class broke into cheers. The girls all began squealing, with cries of "your hair is beautiful!" and "can we be best friends?" The guys, on the other hand, had started cheering in their own way, calling out phrases such as "you're so pretty!" and "will you marry me?"

At the back of the class, Yuuto took a sip of his soda. "Damn," he chuckled, "I can't believe it. Did you hear that one, man?" he asked Nori. "Some guy asked her to

marry him, and they probably just met!" He paused for a moment, his eyes suddenly widening in terror. "W-wait, please tell me *you* weren't the one who said that," he said.

"No," Nori replied, "I didn't go *that* far. I DID, however, say 'can I have your address?' just now."

"Why do I get the feeling that you made it worse?"

"What makes you say that, man?"

"You sounded like a stalker."

"Oh, shut up and drink your soda!" Nori laughed.

"Fine by me," Yuuto replied, raising the can back to his lips.

Up at the front of the class, Hanae looked around as if she was searching for something. "U-umm, if I may ask," she said calmly, "which one of you is Yuuto Ishikawa?"

The entire class froze. The girls all look at her, confused. The boys, on the other hand, turned their gazes to a stunned Yuuto, who was just about to take another sip of his drink.

"Oh shit, man," Nori whispered to him. "You *may* wanna run now."

"Why?" Yuuto asked casually. He raised his free hand. "If you're looking for Yuuto Ishikawa, that would be me," he called out before taking another sip of his soda.

"Oh, wonderful!" Hanae replied enthusiastically. "It's nice to finally meet you! I'm your fiancée!"

"FUCKIN' WHAT?" Yuuto cried as he spat out his drink. Looking around, he could see the other guys in his class glaring daggers straight at him. He felt beads of sweat dripping down his neck.

"*That's* why," Nori sighed. "Well man, you're on your own. I couldn't help you even if I wanted to, and believe me, I do." He leaned back in his seat, giving Yuuto a sly smirk.

"Son of a—" Yuuto began. He stopped himself, shaking his head violently. "Wait a minute," he mumbled. "Y-you're kidding, right?" he asked nervously, turning to Hanae.

"Not at all...*darling*."

"That's what I was afraid you'd say..."