XXIII

"It's the sea!" Hanae cried with excitement as she sprinted off the bus.

"Hey, get the hell back here!" Sayaka ordered.

Yuuto sighed as he walked off the bus. "Damn, an overnight stay at a seaside inn? And right beside a beach? Hey, Nori, are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

"Depends," Nori replied, "what're you thinking, man?"

"I'm thinking that you wanna go and be a peeping tom."

"In that case, then yeah, I'm thinking what you're thinking."

"Great. Glad to know we're on the same page. As friggin' if!" Yuuto said. "You could get sent home for that, y'know?"

"If I even get a peek, then it'll all have been worth it," Nori laughed, imagining the scene playing out in his head.

"S-sure, buddy."

Sayaka tugged Yuuto's sleeve gently, causing him to turn around and look at her. "What's up?" he asked casually.

"Umm...we're gonna be on the beach starting tomorrow...err...s-so please don't stare too much," she said timidly.

"R-right, of course," Yuuto replied, rubbing the back of his head in confusion. What did she mean by that? he wondered.

"Don't worry, class rep, I'll do the staring in Yuuto's place!" Nori openly admitted, causing all the girls to turn and glare at him.

"YOU won't be doing *any* staring, thank you," Sayaka snapped, giving him a sharp chop to the head.

Yuuto rolled his eyes. "Alright, alright, we should go check in already. C'mon, they'll all leave without us," he said, motioning towards the group of first years who were already leaving the bus and heading towards the inn.

"Wow, this is a pretty big room for two people," Nori laughed.

"Damn straight," Yuuto agreed, scanning the scene. Their room, meant for two people, consisted of a small lobby area with a dining table and one room off to each side of the entrance, totally in three rooms: one to the left, one to the right and one opposite to the door.

Yuuto smiled. "Go, left, right or center?" he asked Nori.

Nori smirked. "Well, I'll call dibs on center. After all, it's the place you gotta cu—"

"Alright then, it's yours," Yuuto cut him off. *There was no way I'd let him finish that sentence*, he thought. "I'll take right. We can leave the left room as a guest room."

"Guest room? What, you're expecting a guest who'll stay overnight?" Nori laughed.

"Technically, no," Yuuto answered, "but knowing my life for the last three months, it's entirely possible. I mean, one month of absolute madness followed by two more months of the same thing over and over again is pretty frustrating, not to mention my struggles recently."

"Amen to that, man," Nori agreed.

"Maybe my family shouldn't have moved back here. This is kinda the cause of all this crap...but then again, I guess I wouldn't be able to have a friend like you if I didn't move so it's not all bad, I suppose," Yuuto chuckled. "Thanks for making this situation bearable."

"Hey, no problem, man," Nori replied with a smile. "Now, let's head out to the beach! I'm sure a bunch of chicks are already changed and running in their swimsuits on the soft sands! I'll go get my camera."

"Err...I'm not even gonna ask," Yuuto commented as he walked towards his room. "I'll go change and then I'll wait for you in the lobby. You should change too after you find your damn camera."

"You got it!"