

Wounds

A perpetrator's perspective

Von Gepo

Kapitel 7: Incidents

"Miss Momoï told me you got dead drunk last week. Was it something going on in your head or did something happen to trigger that?" Doctor Enjoji asked.

He shrugged a shoulder, tracing the carpet pattern with his eyes.

"Shame is a curious thing. Do you have any idea why shame is a useful emotion?" She looked at him for a moment. "Actually, you already answered it the first time around. It keeps you from doing something that would hurt or offend others. While fear keeps us from doing something in the future, shame keeps us from repeating mistakes. Your behavior indicates shame to me. I actually like that because a lot of my patients need to learn shame as one of the first steps. Most come into therapy lacking empathy and complex emotions like shame. I am happy to see you have that. Now we have to work with it. What are you ashamed about?"

Behaving like an idiot over nothing. Why had he run out? Why had he just disconnected Kuroko? He didn't know. He really didn't know, he just looked at the mess in hindsight and told himself that blaming others did not solve it. Kuroko had said nothing offensive. Satsuki had not pushed or held him back.

"May I remind you that you are doing this therapy for yourself, not because I want to torture you?"

"I am ashamed I lost control." He mumbled.

"Was it only drinking or did you lose control in another way?"

He shook his head.

"Okay, drinking. What emotion drove you to drink?" Her voice still held sharp edges but it was soothing all the same. She never judged, just asked.

"Anger."

"What were you angry about?"

"I don't have a fucking clue." He closed his eyes. "I never do. I just get angry and lose my cool and do stupid shit."

"What happened right before you got angry?"

"I was on the phone with Tetsu. He told me how proud he was I was attending therapy and getting better." He sighed and looked at the wall.

"Why should you not get angry about that?"

"Excuse me?" He blinked and stared at his therapists. "That's a compliment, in case you didn't notice."

"Compliments can hurt. When you are trying to gain or lose weight and someone tells you how good you look, it's annoying. When you have a good grade in school but

wanted a better one and everyone congratulates you, that can be really annoying. When you try to be less intimidating and someone tells you how strong and manly you are, it hurts. It heightens the feeling of failure without giving a way to retaliate because the person earnestly meant it nicely. So why could it be hurtful to be praised on getting better?"

"Because I am not! I'm not better, I'm the same as before, they just want to see things. They want me better, so they have illusions I already am!" He spat.

"And why is that a bad thing?"

"Because then they have expectations and I ... can't meet them." His gaze sank to the floor again.

"What expectations?"

"I don't know."

"Then you should ask. Shall we call Satsuki in and ask her?"

"No." He deflated, sinking into his seat. "I know hers. She wants me to be reliable, to go to training and matches by myself, look after myself and care for her."

"Is that your idea of getting better as well?"

"Hm ... guess so." He crossed his arms.

"So what are Tetsu's expectations?" She saw him shrug as an answer. "What do you expect them to be?"

"To stop bothering him." He took a deep breath. "He knows my life is all about him, what I did to him, how I still long for him ... he would want me to put an end to that."

"He is married with a child on the way. I would understand that wish. Do you understand why he would wish for that as well?" Doctor Enjoji – who sat on a cushion this time – folded her legs.

"Yeah ... I nearly ruined his wedding. Sometimes I think they went to America to get away from me. That's bullshit, I know, his husband has a job over there but still ... he could have taken the job here. Then we would see each other every day."

"Well, if I had an rapist ex-boyfriend who I would see everyday, I would chose the option of going away as well."

"But he says he likes me and wants to stay friends!"

"You can be friends even when there is an ocean between you. It's harder to be lovers with an ocean between you. Are you angry that he chose his husband over you?"

Yeah. He was. His smile was sour. He damn well was.

"In what way are you better than his current husband?"

It took a moment until he admitted: "None."

"Then why should he chose you over him?"

"I was there first."

"True. He might even be with you if you hadn't raped him and killed his baby." Her voice was merciless.

He winced.

"It happened. You lost him with those actions. You say yourself they are unforgivable. So why do you expect him to forgive you?"

"Because he forgave everyone else."

"Gang-rapes, right? Is his husband someone who raped him?" She saw him shook his head. "Then what makes you think he forgave them any more than you?"

Huh. Well ... yeah. Right. He was friends with every one of them, just like he was friends with him. But none had a right to touch him. He wasn't special in that way. They had all fucked up by fucking Kuroko.

"He did not, huh?" She mustered him. "Does it make this easier?"

"Yeah." He looked up. "You're right. We all fucked up." He took a deep breath. "We were five Alphas, none of us had anyone but unimportant flings. Our captain made us compete for Tetsu. Being better, learning faster, scoring more ... two others had a go at him before me. I was burning with jealousy. He was my best friend, I had wanted him first. He got pregnant two times from other Alphas than me. I was so ... it's not only anger, it was so much more. All my instincts were screaming at me to bite him, to take him away, to mess up those fuckers that laid their hands on him. He was mine. He wanted to be mine. I knew that. When I got the okay to have him, I ... I really messed him up. He was black and blue, bloody and splattered in come. I felt so bad looking at what I did to him. All that anger at the situation, the others, I let it out on him. I had wanted to love him, to be different than those who raped him and I became the worst of all." He felt tears on his cheeks. "I only ever wanted to be the one who protected him."

"Let's see how exactly you got into that situation ... how were you five Alphas connected? Why did you compete for one Omega?"

"We were the best of the best basketball players of our generation. Successive national champions and that crap. Tetsu was our sixth man, our support player. He was – is – a really impressive Omega. I was the only one who loved him, the other four just liked him more or less. But having no opponents at all, our captain made us fight each other to keep us motivated. It started with things like who scores the most, who gets the most passes, normal betting stuff. When we grew bored of that, he came up with a complex system which gave the best of us five the chance to hunt Tetsu while he was in heat. So once a month, one of us was allowed to rape him. Tetsu agreed to that." He saw his therapist scowl. "Yeah, he was most likely pressured into it. I am not sure with what. But as it happened right about the time I was acting out, upsetting the whole team with my moods and getting suicidal, I fear Tetsu agreed out of love for me. To somehow keep me in line."

"Your captain made an Omega agree to be raped in the most horrible imaginable way by claiming he could save you with it?" His therapist looked sceptical.

"It's what I guess. I never asked." He let out a deep sigh. "Sick thing, it worked. It got me in line. I haven't been well but I have not been suicidal since then."

"Okay, let us just let it stand like that. It is only speculation, we will have to ask another time. So another person was chosen first and Tetsu got pregnant. What happened to the baby?"

"He aborted it. Same with the next. Then I hunted him, he got pregnant and did not abort it."

"What happened the next month? Was he hunted even though he was pregnant?"

"Yeah." He looked away again, clenching his fists. "By the last one who had not slept with him before. I was told he was all gentle and nice ... no wonder when Tetsu wasn't even in heat."

"Were you told he was better than you?"

"No. But with how angry I was at myself, that's what I made out of it at that time. When he was hunted again, I was so filled with ... I loathed myself. I loved him, I wanted him to be mine and I let those fuckers have him. I did not protect him, did not protect the baby they endangered, I ... I hated myself so fucking much. But still I wasn't good enough, didn't get to be the one to hunt him, did not take him away from everything, I-"

"Why did you not run away with him?" Again, her voice was blameless. How could she not blame him? Why did she not blame him?

"Be- because ... we were fourteen." He felt his nails split the skin of his palms. "I was scared."

"So you wanted to get him away from all that but you did not know how?"

"Yeah." He took a deep breath, tried to relax, to let out the tension, to not further the bleeding wounds. "We were in our second year of middle school. He had no money, I had no money. We would be found and brought back and ... I was not sure I would survive if my parents got wind of what happened."

"Why did you not alert anyone of the situation? A teacher, the police, anyone?"

"You would not ask if you knew who those people were. We're talking about someone worse than the Yakuza here." Akashi. No one would ever go against Akashi. That guy was scary. "I tried. I begged him to stop the competition, to give Tetsu a rest, he was pregnant for god's sake but he would not relent. He told me Tetsu was his to decide over and no failure in life had any right to question his decisions. If I wanted to spare Tetsu, I should win those competitions. So I tried my damn best."

"You felt helpless?"

"I was so fucking furious with how much of a failure I was." He nearly choked on his tears. Shit. He hated crying. It never solved anything, it just made others call him a crybaby. Tears were a sign of weakness.

"Here." She stood and gave him a tissue. "Blow your nose. We'll continue but with another setting. This is getting a bit much for you and I don't want you to go home as a wreck." She pulled two sitting cushions and a small table over. "Sit down and place your hands on the table."

He blew his nose, dried his tears and did what she said. She sat on the other side of the table and laid her hands on his, beginning to tap the backs of his hands. Left, right, left, right, quite fast.

"It's a technique that keeps your emotions in check. I have others if this proves to be not effective enough." She continued her tapping. "So you felt helpless and you were angry at yourself for that and for how you treated Tetsu on the hunt."

"Yeah." He watched her tapping. "And I was jealous."

"How did you cope with all of those emotions?"

"I bottled them up."

"When did they explode?"

"When Tetsu told me he wanted to have the baby and end the hunts."

The tapping stopped for a second before continuing. Doctor Enjoji said: "I am surprised about that. Wasn't that what you wished for?"

"One part of me. The other was scared shitless. Our captain, the Yakuza guy, would take it as defiance. I was an angel against him, the guy could murder in cold blood, no joke. And I would have to tell my parents, they would have thrown me out. I could not support a mate and a child. Hell, I wasn't sure I would live. So ... I killed the baby."

"How?" Her voice was subdued. So it did get to her.

"I hit Tetsu in the stomach with all my might. I knew that could kill. My mom had lost three babies that way." A sharp pain jolted through his chest. "I ... I was so sorry. The same moment I punched him, I wanted to fall to my knees and apologize. I never, ever wanted to do that, I just ... my whole world went black and the next instant, Tetsu was on the floor and bleeding out. I am so sorry." Tears ran down his face, sobs choking him.

"Did you ever tell him so?" She kept tapping.

"Two years later." His hands had balled into fists. "He said ... he would never forgive me. Not in anger, just ... he said we could be friends and he wasn't angry anymore but

he would never forgive me. He would never allow anything more than friendship again."

"What do you think about that reaction?" Her voice was steady again.

"It would have been easier if he had been mad. He had every right to. I would have felt better if he screamed at me or hit me or ... anything. He never did that. When he left, it was without a word. When I told him I was sorry, he was so fucking calm. It feels like it's still hanging over me. Every time we talk or skype or meet, I expect him to finally scream at me."

"Maybe he did. But it's much safer to scream at someone you take as an image in therapy than at the real person. Because the real rapist might hurt you again."

"I-" Would never hurt him? What a joke. He even told Kuroko that he needed Kagami as a threat to keep from hurting him. No wonder the other never dared to scream at him. He was scared shitless, even when he joked around with him. How fucked up was that? Did Kuroko not notice how fucked up that was? "I don't think he ever screamed at someone. He is still bottling it up, thinking that having everything nice and harmonic will make the past alright."

"Deciding not to confront your anger is a possibility as well. He was severely traumatized after all. Some people need ten, twenty, even thirty years until they confront traumata. Some never do." She stopped tapping and leaned back.

"So it might be that it's not my fault he hasn't screamed at me yet?" Aomine blinked for a moment, finally getting out the tissue again and drying his cheeks.

"Before he confronts his anger, he needs to be stable enough to live through it. If he needs harmony, give him harmony. But harmony doesn't mean you have to feel guilty forever."

"I'm not sure we'll still have harmony if I don't feel guilty anymore."

"What do you mean?" She tilted her head.

"I mean, won't he be mad if I don't feel guilty anymore?"

"Why should he be?"

"Well ... as long as I am down, he knows someone is taking this serious, right?" Aomine fidgeted in his seat. Did this sound as idiotic as it did to him?

"So as long as you feel guilty, he doesn't have to confront this himself? As people rarely are noble, I'd say you fear you will lose your friend if you stop feeling guilty." Damn, she was sharp. Yeah. "If I say it aloud like that, how likely does it sound?"

"Quite unlikely."

"Right. He will confront it when the time is right for him. He might get angry, he might decide he does not want to continue being your friend but your own actions won't change much about all of that. Feeling guilty or not, suffering for years or not, the only thing you can do is apologize. After five years of hating yourself, he should know you mean it. You don't have to beat yourself up about it forever."

"That sounds nice and all, doc ... but I killed our child." Aoki. Kuroko had named him. He remembered that gravestone in the graveyard of water children. "How can I not feel bad about that? I understand about Tetsu but ... I can't forgive myself for killing Aoki."

"Have you buried him?" Her voice was laced with sadness.

"Tetsu did. Two years after. It's where I apologized to him." He felt tears in his eyes again. Why was he always crying? God, he knew this would happen. It was why he never wanted therapy.

"I'll repeat the question: have you buried him? Tetsu did, dealing with his loss and sadness. But he did it without you, didn't he? Have you ever stood in front of that

grave and allowed yourself to grieve?"

He shook his head, trying his hardest not to sob. She gave him another tissue and he tried his best to dry his tears before he asked: "Shouldn't you do that tapping thing again?"

"Self-loathing, hate and fear can be destructive but this is sadness. Sadness in terms of grieving is a healing emotion, freeing us from pain. Mourning a child is quite natural, no matter how it died."

"How the fuck should I mourn someone I killed myself? That's wrong!" He sobbed. Shit, he was breaking. Fuck. He didn't want this.

"It's not. Killing is wrong. Being sad about death is natural and right. You are allowed to mourn someone you killed." Instead of tapping, she held his fist in a hand.

He simply cried. Damn, it hurt so much. He had never wanted to see another child die and then he went and killed his own. It was the most despicable thing on the planet. All his life he told himself he didn't want to become a monster like his parents were and then he did exactly that. Fuck. Killing children was the worst.

He was brought back into his current situation by the tapping on his hands. He stared at them for a long moment before looking up to see his therapist. Her gaze was concerned, her eyes intently trained on him. She stopped after a few more taps.

"Shouldn't I grieve?" He asked slowly.

"Grieving and losing yourself in your world of self-loathing are two different things. You started doing the latter."

"How did you notice?"

"Apathetically staring into space and tensing up is no reaction associated with grieve."

"Oh." He tried to take a deep breath but his nose was snotty. So he took some more tissues and freshened up while breathing through his mouth.

"I'd like to ask yourself about that self-loathing but we are out of time. So I'll ask next time. Please try to remember what you just thought about when you lost yourself, so we can talk about it next time." She mustered his face again. "For now, I am proud of you. Today was heavy but you did well."

He simply nodded, suddenly too tired to care either way. He was unable to feel good about her praise right now. Sleep was in order. His mind was blessedly blank for once.

"See you next week." She accompanied him out, telling Satsuki outside that she should get him into bed. Good woman.

Satsuki did without any further questions.