[𝐒𝐌𝐒]: dooon't rush to get here! i'll look at the menu first.

**[stratus\_]** : sorry sorry!! :sad: I'll be there soon. get something yum, it'll be on me for the dinner!

It felt strange socializing when the sun was still up - and with someone she seemingly had no commonality with too. A model? Nineteen? Ugh. Maybe this was a sign she needed to get out more. Make friends.

Gaku scanned the menu idly, front and back. She definitely wasn't going to let him pay. She was his senior after all. And he was just a kid.

The sound of a clicker would echo. Before him had been the neon lights of the downtown district, blurred slight by the caress of the tinted windshield. Kumori had been settled in the back seat, his glasses covering those sky-blue hues as he stared outside. The red light that cascaded against the rainbow-like display around them had signalled for his demise. He's late, all because his manager's little lecture on the disappearances he's made as of recent. With a small exhale, he adjusted his shirt, using the backseat mirror as a guide before raising fingers to ruffle loose hair. Another shifting of his seat before the car began to move once more, taking a few minutes of travel before halting in front of a flashy restaurant.

'Daegu BBQ'.

The spot he recommended. With small, careful steps, he made his way past the entrance, pushing the double doors open before scanning his gaze within the bustling business. "Where was she..." His voice was a murmur, his feet shifting to lift himself up onto his tippy toes. Another moment passed before he found her, or at least, the back of her hair. It wasn't long before those light steps lifted him forward, almost dashing as he slipped between moving patrons, zigzagging his way over to her. Once he was a few steps away, he snuck beside, easing to her left as he poked his head out, almost like a ghost. "Hmm... I think Set C looks good for two..." Another whisper to spook her, a cheeky smile on his lips as he glanced at the menu alongside her; something he's memorized purely through the amount of times he's frequented here.

She wasn't in her usual all-black get-up this time. Today she donned a white button-up blouse paired with black stockings and a knee-length pencil skirt. A badge hung over her neck displaying 'NTT Data' in bold letters. Your typical corporate wage slave.

But not even the homogenous ideologies of Japanese society could take the edge off of Gaku. She turned, flashing him a peace sign. "Kumori-san." Her eyes flickered towards his side, unphased by his surprise appearance. A small smile crept up on her lips.

"... You think so? Should I sneak you some soju too?" Teasing him, of course. The legal drinking age was 20, but she wasn't above sliding him a sip or two under the table.

"You look nice today." She flagged down the waiter, putting in their order (and the alcohol) before continuing. "... I'm jealous. Your skin is clearer than mine and I bet you're not even wearing any make up."

A hand would cover his mouth; a feigned gasp. “Drinking? Now?” Hidden behind that hand had been a cheeky smirk. With a smooth swivel, he shifted to the seat across her, settling himself comfortably before nodding to himself. “If you want to drink, you can.” Once the waiter had arrived, a small smile spread across his features as he brought his attention to the girl before him. A cursory glance before another nod. “You too, I like that ‘office’ style look you got going on here.” Both arms brought themselves to the table before resting his chin on palm. “You’re lying.” Of course, he couldn’t hide that slight giddiness from the compliment.

Just before the waiter left, he quickly added on to their order. “Make it two bottles. If you have any apple-mango, that’d be preferable.” The waiter nodded, taking the menus away before rushing off to the kitchen. The bustle of the restaurant became apparent as those aquamarines peered towards her own. “There isn’t heavy-heavy make-up, but I still do have a little bit of foundation when I’m doing my shoots.” A little shift in his seat, his lips pursed as he mused for a moment. “You look cute yourself, I’m surprised you’re jealous.”

There was a quick comment before the waiter returned with a pair of glass bottles and shot glasses beside. The signature green had shimmered with a frosty coating, Kumori’s hands reaching to crack open the first bottle. “Did you just finish your work?” Composed hands had poured them both a shot, fingers reaching to bring one over in front of her before bringing the other to himself. “A quick after-work drinking as our first proper meeting.” A small smile, even from this short interaction, he was already enjoying her company.

"I guuuuuess I can clean up a little every now and then." It's true that while Gaku isn't exactly flashy she tends to garner some lingering stares. Subtly at work. On the train. Even now, while they sat across from each other. But it wasn't exactly as blatant as-

Haaaaaah!? Her eyes lit up as he requested another drink so casually. They didn't even check his I.D. Is this the kind of power people walk around with when they're young and good-looking!? For the record, unmarried women over the age of twenty-five are called 'Christmas Cakes,' in reference to the bakery item that struggles to sell after December 25th. Gaku's a little resentful about that. It's less than a year away.

She rests her chin on an open palm, lazily eyeing him twist the bottle cap. "Uh huh. Done for the weekend. I'm surprised they let me get off at a reasonable time today. Some people stick around the office until the sun goes down. That's what they do to us middle-class folk, work us to the bone."

... At least there's indulgences like this. The sweet, sweet scent of rice wine. Mango-apple at that. She held the glass to her nose, taking a slow inhale, before holding it out towards him for a cheers. "To our first proper meeting!"

Down the hatch it goes.

She wonders, is Kumori a light-weight?

A cheers to match, the clinking of the glasses before it goes down the hatch.

There had been a pause. His gaze kept upon the girl before him as he matched her motions. She seemed rather comfortable with drinking, so he simply mirrored the shot. He wasn’t the kind to drink straight; most of the time he was a cocktail drinker.

His expression was of a slight wince, a gulp as he exhaled the cool air of the frosty alcohol.

“People who stick around like that… I have those too.” A few of his colleagues tend to be hyper-sensitive to the way they look on the camera, something that he wasn’t accustomed to. It was something that his manager knew, hence why the lecture had been of the sort that it was.

“Yum.” A few smacking of his lips followed as he swayed a little in his seat. “I don’t drink too often, usually I’m having dinner here either by myself or with a friend who doesn’t.” A little peek into his tolerance – rarely to drink, yet he was acting like a natural.

“I like my sweet stuff, I don’t like the others.” As he spoke, the waiter would return with a small trolley; there, a bunch of delicious smelling meats, marinated and the like, wafted as they were placed on the table before them.

 “Mm. You drink much?” From what it looked like, she seemed to be the type. He wasn’t too sure though.

Gakkun

Kumori

Gakkun

Kumori

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