**Chapter Twenty-Four**

I wake up with a moan, not quite awake, but feeling *good.* The hot, wet, and pulsing feeling around my morning hardness not so much shocking me into consciousness, but slowly enticing me into the day in the *best* way. Blinking awake, I expect to find Mina on top of me, only to be half right. Looking down, I meet eyes with her as she slides her mouth down my length, and I can *feel* her smile, humming happily in a way that elicits a groan of appreciation

“Holy *shit* Mina,” I laugh. “Hell of a wake-up call.”

Pulling back, sucking as she goes, practically letting me go with a pop she smiles back. “That’s what I thought,” she says, before licking her lips and once more taking me into her mouth, tongue slithering around my shaft, and she makes it just over halfway down before she stops, holding there for a moment, before she begins to bob.

Maybe one day I’d be able to stoically enjoy it, holding out for an hour or something like that, but with my grand total of *two* nights of experience I can’t help but shudder in enjoyment. I’m not close to the edge though, and, dropping my head back, I reach down, not grabbing her head, but resting a hand against her, running fingers through her hair, sliding a thumb over one of her horns.

She hesitates, and I can feel her *shiver*, before she goes back to it, and I just enjoy the feeling, as time seems to stretch. Eventually, though, I can feel the end coming, and groan, “Getting close.”

Pulling herself off, soft hands grasp saliva slicked flesh, and she grins at me as she massages my member, smile cocky, smug, and *absolutely* deserved. Under the assault of sensations, so different from the warm haze I’d been drifting in, but no less pleasurable, and with no reason to hold back I let go, hips bucking a little as I paint her chest.

“Holy shit,” I repeat, dropping back onto the bed. “Next time we stay overnight, I need to set an alarm.”

“Why?” she asks, cocking her head in confusion. “Did I do something wrong?”

“What? *No,*” I reply, laughing, “So I can return the favor, of course.”

Mina laughs, stalking up me on the bed, grinning, and goes in for a kiss. For a second I have a moment of unthinking disgust, given what she was just doing, but we *are* going to take a shower after this, and it’s not like she’s going to snowball me, even accidentally.

She hesitates, suddenly unsure, but I grab her head and bring her in for a kiss, ignoring what she’d just been doing and focusing on *her.* She melts into it, and , when she pulls back, we stick to each other a little, causing us both to laugh awkwardly.

“Shower?” I asked, and she nodded, getting up. “Sorry for the. . . pause,” I told her, knowing I’d, if only momentarily, hurt her feelings. “It’s a guy thing, but as long as I’m not gonna taste my own release, I don’t mind.”

“Oh, yeah, I heard guys don’t like that,” she replied a little chagrined, getting up and stretching, hand going to her neck and rubbing likely tired muscles. “But, I also heard guys don’t mind doing that to girls. The ones that will at all. So how’s *that* fair?”

I tried to come up with a comparable example as I stood. “Okay, imagine if I went down on you during your period, and had not just juices, but blood and uterine lining in my mouth, and came up to kiss you.”

“*Ew!”* Mina squealed, face screwing up in disgust. “*Denki!* That’s *disgusting!”*

“And that’s about how most guys feel about tasting their own seed,” I shrugged. “So yeah, great way to wake up, but if you have to make the choice to spit or swallow, I’m gonna ask you brush your teeth before I kiss you. And then I will. *A lot.*”

Reaching over, I pull her to me, both of us naked, and meet her lips with mine, losing ourselves in the moment once more. Pulling back, and finding us sticking to each other once again, I ask, “Shower?”

“*Shower.*”

<MHA>

After washing off, together, to save water, of course, we ordered room service and ate, side by side, leaning into one another. “So, anything else you want to tell me?” Mina asked, mostly joking, but with an underlying nervous edge.

“I think you’re sexy, and we should do this regularly?” I shrugged, and she bumped her shoulder into my arm in irritation, though her wide, happy smile undercut it. “Any questions *you* have?”

That got a thoughtful silence from her. “You said you could buy people?”

“Not going to without a *damn* good reason, and *your* explicit approval, but yeah,” I nodded.

“Could you. . . buy *me?*” she asked.

“Yes, but probably no,” I replied. “I could’ve done so before I ever *met* you, but it wouldn’t’ve been *you* exactly. The multiverse is. . . *big.* I could buy a clone of you, but almost certainly a you that never dated me, never knew *me,* just the. . . original version of me. Or a you that someone *else* captured and sold. But there’s almost certainly me’s on sale too. Maybe not *me* me’s, but possible me me’s too,” I said, thinking out loud.

I certainly wouldn’t put it past the company to make copies of all of their employees to maximize profits. Hell *I* might be a copy, not that being one really mattered in the grand scheme of things. I was me, and that’s what mattered. “It’s. . . if you can think of it, it’s probably happened out there somewhere. Infinite multiverse means infinite wonder and infinite horror. All that we can do is make wherever *we* are better.”

“. . . huh?” she finally replied, confused, but also obviously working her way through the concepts. “That’s. . . huh.”

“Pretty much,” I agreed. “Trying to ‘win’ is an impossibility, but it always was even if you didn’t know about it, so we should just worry about protecting who we can, and try to make things better for those around us.” I reached over, putting an arm around her shoulder, and hugging Mina to me. “That’s assuming a set multiversal pattern, with significant differences between each iteration, and not the ever branching pattern where every choice breaks off into another dimension as infinitum. I don’t know how it works, and it’s probably going to be a while before we meet someone who does.”

“So, does that mean that somewhere else Niri Hashimoto is real?” she questioned.

It took me a minute to place the name, until I realized she was the main character of a book series that’d gotten popular last year, half the girls in my class not shutting up about the ‘Burning Sword of Dawn’, which, despite its cool name, had been a fantasy romance first, with the actual combat as a distant second.

Reaching over with a lightning limb and grabbing my bag, I retrieved my cell-phone, and opened up the company app. Scrolling through the possible sources, I didn’t see it, but there *was* a search function. Typing in the name of the series, Mina peering over as I did so, sure enough, it showed up. A tier five world, Niri herself was a tier four, and well within my budget.

“Oh, *wow,*” Mina breathed. “That’s. . . that’s really cool. So when her author said that she just ‘wrote herself’ maybe she really *did.*”

“Maybe, or maybe the author’s just following things down *one* decision path, or maybe the book series is *close,* but Niri actually doesn’t care about Kaneshiro, but instead ended up with Inazuma instead,” I offered.

“You mean the mysterious lightning swordsman who strikes and vanishes without a trace?” my girlfriend teased. “Wait, you *read* those books?”

“It was called *‘Burning Sword of Dawn’.* I thought there were going to be a lot more *burning swords of dawn* then there actually were*,* and less court politics and romance,” I explained, a bit defensively.

“Denki, it was *metaphorical* and stuff. Of her passion, and the start of her new life,” Mina laughed.

I had to point out, *“*She was a fire-mage who wielded a *flaming sword named Akatsuki*. How is that not a *literal burning sword of dawn.* But she only used it, like, *twice.*”

“Three times!” Mina argued, smiling. “She used it to start that fire when they were stuck in the mountains!”

“Like *that counts!*” I objected, smiling right back, “And the fact that you knew *exactly* what I was referring to-”

Mina’s phone chimed, and I hesitated, reaching a lengthened limb over to grab her purse, handing it to her.

“Oh, I gotta go,” she said, reading it. At my look she explained, “I told my mom I was at Hagakure’s, and she just got called asking when I’d be back. She kinda panicked and said I’d already left, but she lives further away than here, so I’ll be fine.”

“Oh,” I echoed. “Why didn’t you just tell them you were with me?”

“Sparky, that’d be *dumb,”* my girlfriend informed me. “Hanging out with a boy? Alone? Mom’d *flip.* She’d think we were. . . well, that we were going to do what we did! Wait, are you telling me you *told* your parents you were with me?” I opened up the texts, turning my phone to show her I’d done *just that*. “Oh that *isn’t fair,”* she whined. “What does she mean, ‘Told you’?”

“I was worried you’d never want to talk to me again. She disagreed,” I shrugged. “Oh, and they’d like to meet you, but no rush.”

“Do they know about. . .” Mina asked, miming a stamp, and I shook my head. “But you said. . . *Oh Denki,”* she cooed in sudden sympathy, eyes going wide.

It took me a moment to connect the dots. “*No*, my parents *do* love me. Or at least I’m *pretty* sure they do, but I think it takes *romantic* love to get ‘captured’, not an ‘I love my friends’ or ‘I love my kids’ kind of thing. Especially considering all the effects of the bindings, that’d be. . . *ew!*” I said, face screwing up in disgust at even the *concept.*

Mina laughed, getting dressed. “That’s what you get for making me think of that other stuff!”

I shook my head, following suit, and got ready to leave, looking around the room fondly. Turning to her, she started to say “Ready to-” before I swept her up in my arms, kissing her soundly.

“Now I am,” I told her, tightening my grip for a moment before putting her down. “See you at school Monday?”

“Sparky, we don’t *have* school Monday,” she reminded me with a smile.

I blinked, having forgotten it was Golden Week, the full week off from school that Japanese schools had, and when everyone would be training for the sports festival at the end. “In that case, are you doing anything tomorrow?”

“I’ve got a family thing, but Monday’s free,” Mina told me, and I nodded.

“Okay. I’ll still meet you at UA. I’ll reserve a gym, which I’ve found is a thing you can do,” I proposed instead.

She looked at me consideringly, before nodding. “And that way we can meet your Support Course friend. If she’s there.”

“Mei? Yeah, she’ll be there,” I laughed. “Hell, I think she’s there *right now.*”

<MHA>

Monday rolled around, and, despite myself, I was a little nervous. I was *beyond* happy that Mina was back with me, don’t get me wrong, though part of me was worried that she really *wasn’t*. That she was playing along until she had something that she could *prove*. That she resented me, and blamed me for what happened to her, *despite* what she said.

That she, like so many others, had lied to me, said what I wanted to hear, and I was a fool for believing it could, for once, work out.

However, there was one thing that helped me, if not *ignore*, than at least push away those fears.

*She loved me.*

If she hadn’t, this wouldn’t’ve been an issue, as I wouldn’t’ve ‘captured’ her, and could’ve slowly introduced her to this entire aspect of my life, like I’d had *vague* plans for, having expected it to be at *least* my second year before I’d had the opportunity for enough ‘captures’ to buy Sweet Home, and an escape route for *when*, not *if,* things went bad.

I believed that her loving me meant something, *had* to believe that meant something, and took comfort in it.

I’d been told that *before*, only to find it was a lie, *repeatedly.* To have it not be was. . . well, it’d shaken me so badly that I’d overreacted, and acted hastily, but now it was all seeming to work out, which was *another* thing I was by no means used to.

Spotting a familiar flash of pink, I set aside my worries, as best I could, and pushed off the wall, waving an arm in her direction. I smiled as she jogged over, starting to go for a hug, like she used to, but then hesitating, suddenly self-conscious. I took a step forward, picking her up and spinning her around as she squealed, *“Sparky!”*

Putting her down, I moved to her side, one arm around her waist as we walked through the gates of UA. “*Sparky, people will see,”* she whispered, looking around.

 *Right, Japanese PDA etiquette.* I moved my arm up, so it was around her shoulder instead, hugging her to me again before letting her go. “And?” I asked. “That’s never stopped us before.”

She glanced around, and, seeing only a couple of students milling about, said, “But that wasn’t *at school.* What if the *teachers see?*”

“As long as we don’t break the rules, we’re fine,” I shrugged. “At least that’s what All Might said.”

Mina stopped walking and stared at me. “You told *All Might?*” she asked, nervous.

“All Might *already knew.* We apparently weren’t *subtle,* Pinky,” I replied. “I said I needed to leave and meet my friend, and he said I shouldn’t keep ‘Ms. Ashido’ waiting. The staff are all Heroes, Mina, hand-picked by Principal Nezu, and successful ones at that. That means they’re all trained to notice things. It also means they’re not gonna be jerks about it. It’s not gonna be like middle school.”

“. . . Oh. Yeah, okay, that makes sense,” she nodded, letting out a long breath. “UA’s kinda awesome, isn’t it?”

Thinking of my own educational experiences, both here and before, I had to smile. “Yeah, it *really is*.”

We started to walk again, Mina musing, “We’re gonna need to actually read the student handbook, aren’t we?”

“Already did. No kissing, two armed hugs can’t last longer than ten seconds unless we’re sparring or otherwise hero-ing, but putting my arm around you is fine,” I rattled off. “Oh, and if it’s Quirk related then it’s fine, which is why Recovery Girl can work here *at all*.”

“. . . Did you look it up just for me?” she asked, looking up at me wryly.

“. . . Maaaaybe,” I smiled back, giving her a wink.

She laughed, and reached over, hugging me to her for a moment before letting go. “But, let’s not, at least not here, okay? I don’t want to make things weird, and. . .”

“And don’t want to get caught up in things and kiss without meaning to?” I finished, “Because I can understand that. Kinda tempted, *especially* since I’m not supposed to.”

“I *know*, right,” Mina laughed, shaking her head, as we went up the stairs, turning the corner to the hallway with the Design Studio. A thin trail of smoke was coming out the door, and I had to sigh, even as my girlfriend asked, “Is that okay?”

“It’s fine,” I reassured her, but did start to walk faster, just in case. Opening the door, the top of the roof was a rolling smoke cloud, while Mei, at the back, worked on something that seemed to *actively be on fire*. Walking over, I hit the switch to turn on the ventilation systems, even as I called, “Is that *supposed* to be burning?”

“It’s part of the process, Denki!” the inventress replied cheerfully. “I need to keep the components hot so they all set at once! Get the cryogenic normalizer?”

I nodded, heading and grabbing the sapphire laser projector, because of *course* the cold thing would be blue, and set it up. “Level and rate?”

“228 and 38 mil!” she instructed. “Then this Baby’ll be *ready!*”

“That cold?” I questioned, surprised, setting it for effectively negative fifty fahrenheit, with a transition time of thirty-eight milliseconds, and getting it into position.

Mei, grinning, nodded to me. “Okay, on three. *Three!”*

Chuckling at the joke, I pressed the button, knowing she’d take my reaction time into account, and hit it as she sprung away from the workspace, which almost instantly went from fire to nothing, frost forming on the soldering pen she’d left behind.

A second later it beeped, done, and I moved to put it back, seeing Mina still hanging by the door. “Come in,” I waved to her, even as I turned back to Mei. “So what is it this time? Pneumatic dodge assistor? Magnetic scanning disruptor? Multi-phase analyzation goggles?”

“Pfshaw, no, though those *do* sound tempting. No, this Baby’s an electromagnetic shielder and absorber, but one that’ll repurpose whatever hits it into usable energy!” she cheered, sliding on gloves as she bumped her hip with mine to get me out of her way.

She carefully removed the device, which was slowly warming, and moved it over to a harness that we’d worked on earlier, which I’d taken Mei’s measurements to make, the support item obviously supposed to slot the space in the back.

“Limited utility,” I frowned, “Unless, First stages?” I asked, having mentioned how the Sports Festival went, and floating the idea of possibly working together to make sure we both got in.

“First stages!” Mei agreed, grinning, nodding rapidly, grabbing my arm and dragging me over to the harness, pointing out the connection points she needed, grabbing the others, and we connected it in a few seconds.

“Um, what?” Mina added, having moved closer, but staring at both of us oddly.

Hatsume’s head whipped around, staring at the girl, before whipping around to look at me. “Denki, you said you *weren’t* gonna bring me test subjects!” she cheered.

Laughing, I walked over to a *very* weirded out Mina. “She’s not a test subject, and I still say that you’re good enough that you don’t need to build anything that *needs* a test subject, at least in *that* way. No, Mei, this is Mina Ashido, my girlfriend.”

Mei pulled off her goggles, looking Mina over, cross-eyed pupils focusing on her. “I thought she wasn’t talking to you. And also wasn’t your girlfriend, just a girl friend.”

“We made up,” I explained, “And, yeah. Oh,” I suddenly realized, turning to look at Mina. “Did you not want me telling other peopl-”

“No,” she cut me off, reaching over and sliding a hand around my waist. “Yes, I’m his girlfriend. And you are?”

Before Mei could say something that was, well *Mei,* I waved towards the girl in question. “This is Mei Hatsumei, inventress extraordinaire, and my fr-”

“Partner!” Mei cut me off, grinning broadly, even as I felt Mina’s grip tighten slightly.

“I was going to say *friend*, but yes, she’s also the person I’ve been working on support items with,” I corrected. “I might not *exactly* say Partner, as it’s actually about seventy-thirty her-to-me when it comes with who brings what to the table, and I might be being too kind to myself there.”

“Come on, Denki, I never would’ve figured out the Capture Gun without you,” Mei disagreed.

I shook my head, “Nah, you were ninety percent there on that one, I just suggested using webbing instead of micro-packed nets, and then you went ahead and figured out the fluid in a *day.* The multi-segmented movement gear was mostly me though.” Really, they were Doc Ock arms, something that’d been invented before, but the two of us had put our own spin on it.

“Only because you nixed the spinal interface system,” the inventress pouted.

“And I *told* you that blowback problems mean nothing that hooks into biology without another step, even if it puts in a few milliseconds of lag,” I re-argued. “A hero can take that into account and start to move early. The risk isn’t worth it.”

“Denki?” Mina asked. “You’re. . . building stuff? I know you said the lightning thing was something you made, but. . .”

Mei snorted derisively, “‘building stuff’? He’s creating *wonderful* Babies, and is almost as good at it as I am!”

“That’s still a pretty big gulf,” I pointed out to Mei, looking down to Mina, “But, yeah, before school starts. I just didn’t talk about it ‘cause you didn’t seem interested.”

“I am,” Mina objected, getting another disbelieving snort from Mei. “I *am!*” she insisted, stepping forward.

“Really? Mei asked, stepping towards the girl. “I bet you don’t know the difference between a direct drive and an electrophase engine!”

“Um,” I said, not exactly sure what was going on. “*I* didn’t know what the second one was until *you* explained it, Mei.”

The girl shot me an unhappy look, before rolling her eyes and sighing. “I suppose I might be able to make something for you. You’ve got such thick legs you could probably carry something decent.”

It wasn’t the *nicest* way of putting it, but I started to relax, as that *was* an olive branch, even if a reluctant one. If she wasn’t willing to be nice, she’d’ve tried to fit something we made *to* Mina, instead of the other way around. However, the nuance was lost on my girlfriend.

“Ex-*cuse* me?” the heroine demanded.

“Well, with all the running around you do, it makes sense you’d get a bit unbalanced, but maybe I could put together a synthetic chest piece or something. Something with armor.” Mei observed, and I groaned internally, now that I realized we were running a one movie, two-screens scenario.

To translate, *yeah*, Mei was commenting on Mina’s dancer’s legs, not understanding *why* they were that way, but was thinking biomechanically, not knowing her Quirk let her attack without normal punches and strikes, and wanted something that’d giver her strikes more power by building a chest-piece that utilized synthetic muscles, while also coming up with something that was armored and would keep her safe, since she knew I cared about Mina,.

To Mina, however, she probably just heard ‘you got thick legs and no boobs’, the latter of which I’d easily point out was *not* true, and her response of, “Well we can’t all be as *top heavy* as you are!” both confirmed and, I was well aware, would make things worse.

“I know, but you’re trying your best,” Mei replied comfortingly, and a little condescendingly, and *that* caught my attention, as she usually wasn’t *mean* about it. “But Denki’s apparently with you anyways. Even if he could do better.” *What?*

Mina’s eyes widened, and she snarled, “*You bitc-*”

“*Enough!”* I snapped, shutting them both up, as they both turned to look at me. “Okay. Mina, remember when I said Mei took a bit to get used to? You’ve apparently *forgotten*. She wasn’t calling you *fat,* or whatever, she was calling you *muscular* and wanted to *custom make you* a piece of power armor to help with punching strength, not knowing your Quirk means you have *better* ways of attacking. And Mei thought you were calling her *smart*, not backhandedly commenting on why her large bust was something to be proud of.”

“It is?” the inventress asked, confused, reaching down and bouncing them thoughtfully, Mina’s eye twitching as she did so. “But they get in the way so often! And why would I be proud of them? They just kinda happened. They’re not like my Babies! Those took effort and are *awe-some!*”

“That they are, but Mei,” I said, getting her attention. “What’s your problem with Mina? And what do you mean ‘I could do better?’, because I’m pretty sure *I’m* the lucky one here.”

Hatsume frowned, “But she made you so sad! I don’t know a lot about the entire ‘relationships’ kinda thing, the blueprints were all *super* faulty, but I know you’re not supposed to make someone feel *worse* if they’re your friend.”

“I made *him* feel sad!” Mina echoed, offended. “Do you know what he *did?*”

“Apologized? Tried to make it better? Was honest?” the inventress asked caustically, causing Mina to flinch. “He wouldn’t tell me what *happened,* but I’ve been workin’ with him for a bit, and he shouldn’t *be* like that, and not just ‘cause it makes him work slower on our Babies!”

That was. . . surprisingly touching. “Mei, people get into fights. *It happens*. Heck, *we* get into fights about how to go about making things *all the time.* Mina’s a good person, and it *was* my fault.”

“But when we get into fights, we argue points, and then decide things. How can you do that if you don’t talk?” she asked, confused, but unwilling to give up ground without a good reason.

“Because sometimes you can get overwhelmed, and need time to think things over before you talk,” I explained. Yes, I’d wished Mina had *told* me that’s what she was doing, but I couldn’t blame her from what I’d dropped in her lap.

Mei cocked her head to the side, arguing, “*I* don’t. *You* don’t. You shouldn’t be with someone who makes you sad just because she can’t think fast enough.”

“Someone like *you?*” Mina demanded, incensed.

“What? No!” Hatsume replied, taken aback. “I mean. . . maybe?”

I groaned, dropping my head in my hands. “Mei. *I* need time to think about things too. Hell, *you do too*, unless you have an immediate answer to Mina’s question.”

The inventress looked between us. “I. . . *okay*. Maybe it takes *some* time to think of things. But I still don’t like that you made Denki sad. He helps me, and no one who helps me should be sad!” she announced, pouting, and folding her arms.

“. . . You care that much about him?” Mina asked, looking at the other girl consideringly, which I didn’t expect.

“Yeah?” Mei replied, as if it were obvious. “Are you saying you’d like *me* if I made him a gloomy gus with a fake smile. ‘Cause trust me, I know fake smiles. See?” she asked, with a rictus grin.

“I wasn’t *that* bad,” I argued.

“You were Thursday ‘fore last,” she disagreed, and I winced. “*See?*” she asked Mina, waving in my direction.

My girlfriend looked between the two of us, before deflating with a sigh. “Hagakure *was* pretty pissed at you,” she admitted. “For, like, the *same* reasons, too. Just not as. . .”

“Direct?” I suggested, getting a nod. “That’s Mei for you.”

“If I’m not direct, how am I gonna have enough time to work on my *Babies!?*” Hatsume questioned.

“Don’t you always say you *don’t* have enough time to do that anyways?” I had to ask.

Mei, however, just nodded emphatically, “*Exactly!* I don’t have enough time *as is!*”

“But you’ll make time for Sparky?” Mina asked leadingly.

“Well, *yeah.* He’s *Denki,”* the inventress replied, as if that was somehow an argument.

My girlfriend, however, shot me a look and smiled. “Yeah, he is.”

Having lost the thread of the conversation, I chimed in. “So, Mei, Mina, are we okay?”

My girlfriend looked at my partner, and asked, “You were *really* saying my legs were strong?”

“*Duh,”* Mei said, crouching down and reaching over to poke them. “You’ve got to have some *unreal* torque there. With the right gear, made by the team of yours truly and your boyfriend, you’d be absolutely *awesome!*”

Mina looked at Mei in surprise, laughing and batting her hands away as the inventress squeezed the other girl’s thighs. “Okay, okay, I believe you,” she chuckled.

“And even better, she’s got a Quirk that gives her telekinetic control over the acid she creates,” I smiled, not ashamed in the slightest to brag about her. “Remember that idea I floated a couple weeks ago? The one that required a specialized Quirk to best be utilized? *She’s* the one I was talking about.”

Hatsume shot up, looking at me eyes wide, before looking to Mina, who nodded in agreement. “Oooooh!” Mei cheered, grinning. “We’re gonna make some *Awesome Babies!”*