

Any Way It Blows

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Any Way It Blows

by [gutterghoul](#)

Summary

From: Gojo Satoru

Wed, August 15

7:24 PM i know I fucked up and I'm sorry

11:14 PM baby please just respond

11:22 PM i'll beg if that's what u want

11:50 PM i'm so so sorry

Today at 12:34 AM

please talk to me. i don't think I can sleep another night without u

“Should've thought of that before you fucked him, dumb ass,” Suguru cursed as he clicked his phone screen off and set it face down on the coffee table.

Ex-boyfriend. The word still came as a shock, even when only spoken in his head.

You'll get used to it, he reminded himself. You broke up with him before. This is no different.

OR

Suguru's life turns on it's axis when Satoru does the unthinkable: sleeps with another man.

Over the course of a week Suguru reflects on his tumultuous relationship with his ex, grappling with the decision Satoru made, questioning how to pick up the pieces of his life once again and wondering whether he can learn to forgive the only man he's ever loved.

Notes

I wrote this as a contemplative, darker rendition of their relationship that explores toxic masculinity, violence, and what happens when flawed characters try to love without knowing what love means. This is NOT anti-STSG propaganda, just so we're clear.

You might not initially *love* the way Gojo is characterized, but trust the process, and let me cook! Despite the cheating tag, this likely will not be what you're expecting :)

Triggers include: Domestic violence, Manipulation, Gas lighting, Cheating, Toxic relationship, Disordered eating, Body dysmorphia, Negative self-talk, Mentions of suicidal

ideation, Drug abuse, Past drug addiction, Addiction recovery

Canon divergence: Suguru still defects, but is only away from Jujutsu Tech for 6 months. This story takes place 3 years after he returns. He's now working as an assistant auxiliary manager, having given up his curse technique and practicing sorcery.

If you're anime-only, this fic does include a couple of characters that haven't been animated yet, however there are **no spoilers!** The only things that *might* be considered spoilerish are inconsequential pieces of Higuruma Hiromi's backstory.

Now that we got the housekeeping out of the way, I hope you enjoy going on this journey with me!

Blown Away

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Gojo Satoru

Wed, Aug. 15 at 5:33 PM

Gojo Satoru

we really need to talk
all I'm asking for is 5 mins then I'll leave u alone
can u call me?

Wed, Aug. 15 at 7:24 PM

i know I fucked up and I'm sorry

Thurs, Aug. 16 at 10:08 AM

i'm a piece of shit and u have every right to be mad
i just need to hear ur voice

Thurs, Aug. 16 at 12:45 PM

if you don't want to talk right now just lmk
I'm going crazy waiting for u to respond

Thurs, Aug. 16 at 2:58 PM

I can literally see that ur reading these and not responding :(((
guess I deserve that :(

Thurs, Aug. 16 at 5:20 PM

i picked up tayaki on my way back from Kyoto today
Attachment: 1 Image

Thurs, Aug. 16 at 7:53 PM

Sugu please

Thurs, Aug. 16 at 10:26 PM

???

Fri, August 17 at 8:15 PM

seriously??
you're still mad???

Fri, August 17 at 11:48 PM

it was one fucking mistake Suguru

Sat, August 18 at 6:40 AM

ur just gonna ignore me forever ???
good fucking luck

Sat, August 18 at 1:51 PM

silent treatment is real cute coming from u

Sat, August 18 at 8:26 PM

- ✘ Missed Call
- ✘ Missed Call
- ✘ Missed Call (2)
- ✘ Missed Call (6)

Sat, August 18 at 8:48 PM

stop being a dick and answer me

Sat, August 18 at 9:09 PM

where the fuck are you that you can't pick up
i know you went out with Shoko

Sat, August 18 at 9:42 PM

whatever
fuck you

Sat, August 18 at 11:14 PM

baby please just respond
i need to know ur okay
i'll beg if that's what u want

Sat, August 18 at 11:50 PM

i'm so so sorry
feel like I'm going crazy

Today at 12:34 AM

please talk to me
i don't think I can sleep another night without u

“Should've thought of that before you fucked him, dumb ass,” Suguru cursed as he clicked his phone screen off and set it face down on the coffee table. He turned back to the TV. Some K-drama was playing in the background, one he only recognized because Satoru had recently started watching it after his favorite show ended last month.

Suguru hated that his brain harbored that knowledge. He hated that he was thinking about his ex-boyfriend at all.

The word still came as a shock, even when only spoken in his head. Ex-boyfriend. It sounded childish and downright wrong, but there wasn't any other way to describe the state of his and Satoru's relationship.

You'll get used to it , Suguru reminded himself. *You broke up with him before. This is no different* .

On-screen, the two love interests shared a passionate kiss.



SUGURU KNEW he was lying. It was different.

The last time he'd left Satoru, his head was filled with so many curses and devastating emptiness that he couldn't bring himself to feel anything other than pain, day-in and day-out, let alone love someone else. It hurt Satoru and created a rift in their relationship that took years to mend, but the pain he caused wasn't intentional—just unfortunate collateral damage.

No, this time, Suguru left that snowflake-looking, loud-mouthed, immature, whiny, sorry-ass-prick because he had *fucked* someone else. Got drunk off his mind and let another man touch him. Kiss him. Fuck into him until he was screaming a name that wasn't his boyfriend of two years.

The thought of that alone conjured murderous visions into Suguru's head. He was supposed to be the only one who knew that side of him. How it felt to have Satoru wrapped around his cock, and the scorching heat of his body. How Satoru babbled when his senses were overwhelmed, set off by his hair sticking to his forehead or a cock catching on his rim. How he hiccuped when he was about to cum, thighs trembling like his body was begging for it.

Knowing someone else had heard Satoru's whorish moans and seen the look on his face when he orgasms made Suguru feel sick. Literally *sick*, to the point he struggled to keep food down.

The phone buzzed again. Suguru snatched it from the table, powered it off without reading the message, and shoved it under the nearest couch cushion.

He flipped through TV channels until he landed on a documentary about whales or something. He watched mindlessly as disturbingly close-up footage of the sea mammoths played on the screen while shoving handfuls of popcorn in his mouth. It was pretty much the only thing that wouldn't upset his stomach.

He lasted all of two valiantly fought minutes before fishing his phone out and turning it back on. This time, he silenced it before sliding it under the cushion.

God was probably judging him, but at least he kept his eyes closed so he couldn't read another one of Satoru's mania-fueled texts. It helped a little but didn't quiet the anxiety still thrumming in his ears.

In his defense, it had only been a week since the breakup. Of course, he felt antsy and unsettled, fighting back waves of emotions every time he even thought of Satoru. And to make it worse, his asshole ex wouldn't stop texting him. (Although Suguru refused to acknowledge that he could, in fact, stop the madness by simply blocking said madman).

He tugged at his scrunchie and let his locks fall to his shoulders. The high ponytail was giving him a headache. Suguru narrowed his attention on the documentary once again, pretending he actually gave a shit about...sea turtles?

Whatever. Anything to get his mind off of Satoru.

He nearly pulled a muscle in his corneas, keeping his eyes glued to the TV. Absolutely not letting them drift around the apartment to look at all the little things that reminded him of his ex.

Like the digital photo frame on the bookshelf—a housewarming gift from Shoko when he and Satoru moved in two years ago. It was right after Suguru finally graduated. A year late, but hey, better late than not graduating at all.

The image flipped to a photo from their second year, the two young men smiling wildly into the lens of Shoko's new camera. Satoru's arm pulled Suguru in by the shoulders and squished him into a lopsided hug.

Nope.

He wasn't going to think about that. And there was no way in hell Suguru would waste a single brain cell ruminating on the smell of Satoru clinging to the blanket stretched over his lap.

...the ring of dust collected on Satoru's unused coaster.

...the candy wrapper on the floor that had somehow evaded his manic cleaning episode the day after he kicked Satoru out.

The white-haired man had jumped when Suguru pointed toward the door and told him to “get the fuck out.” One of those full-body reproaches like an outdoor cat startled by a vacuum cleaner. Followed by a long, blank stare while the words settled in.

And Suguru stared back, watching the cycle of emotions contort his face into visages of horror, then disbelief. Anger. Disgust.

He'd never seen Satoru look at him with that sort of contempt. Not even when he'd confessed to nearly decimating a village after finding two little girls in cages. Nor when he drunkenly admitted he couldn't imagine life as a jujutsu sorcerer and didn't want to share the title “the strongest” anymore.

Satoru had even kept his composure when he found Suguru six months later holed up in a run-down warehouse, sleeping on a piss-stained mattress and so high on a drug cocktail that he could barely remember his name.

All those times, Satoru wore the same goofy-ass, nonchalant smile. Cocky as hell, like nothing Suguru said or did could break him.

But this face?

It was like Satoru had realized he couldn't rely on the unspoken promise that Suguru would forgive and forget every dumb thing he did simply because...well because it was Suguru and he was Satoru, and that's just what they did.

“You're not kicking me out. I live here,” Satoru eventually said, as if it were a simple yet obvious fact Suguru forgot to consider.

“Too fucking bad. You're leaving. Get some shit, pack a few bags, and get the fuck out of my sight. Now.” In the low light of their kitchen, Suguru could see the splotches of red on his cheeks and under the stretched collar of his shirt.

Satoru was drunk—again. A new habit he picked up after a string of particularly bad missions.

Suguru couldn't help but feel like it was his fault. He wasn't in the field anymore to fight alongside Satoru, which meant Satoru had spent the last few years carrying the weight of being the strongest alone.

The guilt ate away at Suguru and made him hate himself. Maybe if he'd been stronger or hadn't given up so easily, Satoru wouldn't have been alone and wouldn't have needed to turn to Soju to cope.

“Fuck you,” Satoru jabbed, his words just barely slurring.

“Wasn't me you fucked was it?”

“Jesus, will you give it a rest?”

“No, Satoru, I won’t! I’m sick of listening to your bullshit. I don’t want you within spitting distance of me, so just get the fuck out.”

“Ha! No. This is my apartment just as much as it’s yours. Or did you forget who bought it?”

Suguru gritted his teeth. Leave it to Satoru to flaunt his wealth just to get under his skin.

“Not my problem. Sounds like you made a shitty, short-sighted decision. Can’t say I’m surprised.”

“Oh, for fuck’s sake!” Satoru scoffed, throwing his hands in the air.

They’d been going in the same circle for hours. Shuffling back and forth between every room in the tiny apartment. When one man fled, the other inevitably followed, fighting to get a leg up and win the argument.

“What do you want me to say, Suguru? I’m sorry? I’ve said it so many times I feel like a broken record. I’m sorry, okay? I messed up. Had too much to drink a-a-and just...I don’t know. I didn’t mean to. I was sad and so fucked up, and Higuruma was just there. One thing led to another. But I swear it didn’t mean anything. Why won’t you believe me?”

“Because what it meant doesn’t matter!” Suguru erupted, chest heaving. “You let another man inside of you! How am I supposed to move on from that? Do you really expect me to say you’re forgiven and let it go? I can barely fucking look at you.”

“That’s not what I—“ Satoru shouted, cutting himself off with a loud smack of his open palm against the countertop. The marble shivered and cracked on impact.

“No, okay? Obviously, you’re upset. But, you know what? You could at least listen to me. You could at least acknowledge that as soon as I pulled my shit together, I came home and told you right away. Do you know how many guys would do that? I could have just pretended like it didn’t happen. I could have fucked Higuruma again on our next assignment. Shit, maybe I should. Not like you’re around to know any better.”

He was bluffing. Suguru knew every tactic Satoru liked to pull in an argument. The man was shit at lying. He’d never be able to keep an affair secret.

“So you want me to reward you for your honesty? Is that it, Satoru? Thank you, Gojo Satoru, for being so forthcoming about your infidelity. Real stand-up guy.”

“Don’t—“

“You’ve got your head shoved farther up your ass than I thought.”

“And you’re an insufferable bitch.”

“Then leave!”

“It’s my fucking house!”

They were back at square one.

Behind Satoru, the microwave clock read 5:18 AM. For a moment, nothing but the sound of their labored breaths filled the room, spent from all of the yelling. Until a laugh cut through the quiet—cruel and sarcastic.

“Something funny?” Suguru snarled.

“You always do this, you know,” Satoru said, leaning against the counter to keep himself upright, his voice dropping. “I know I fucked up, but you always do this to me.”

“What the fuck does that mean?”

“This. When it gets even a little bit hard, you run.”

“Don’t you dare put this on me. You’re the one who cheated.”

“Yeah, I did. And did you stop to think about why?”

It was the last straw. Before Suguru's brain could catch up to his body, he felt his knuckles connect with Satoru’s jaw, knocking the taller man backward. A weak punch, considering Suguru’s strength. He’d hit the man harder while sparring in high school.

But this wasn’t a fight. Suguru had no reason to hit him like he was battling for his life. This was retaliation. Catharsis.

Satoru righted himself in time for Suguru to swing again, and his fist connected to Satoru’s eye socket. This time, he didn’t give Satoru a chance to stand. He swung again and again, the sharp pain of bones smashing together shooting through his hand.

How could Satoru do this? How could he throw away everything they’d been through in one night? And for what? Cheap sex in a dirty hotel a prefecture away from the man he claimed he loved? That wasn’t love.

If Satoru loved him, he wouldn’t have come home at all.

He wouldn’t have let Suguru smell the other man’s cologne on his skin.

Or let Suguru see how he winced when he walked, hole used by some law-abiding, self-serving prick.

It could have been 5 minutes or 15—Suguru wasn’t sure. His vision had gone blurry, ears ringing as Satoru let him hammer his face until he tasted blood. When he was done, his knuckles were broken and bruised purple.

Without a word, Satoru got up and walked to their bedroom, slamming their door shut. Suguru watched the clocked, the minutes ticking by for so long that he ended up wondering if Satoru had ignored everything that happened and went to sleep.

Right when he'd resolved to sleeping on the couch, the door opened, and Satoru emerged with a single duffel bag.

His face was swollen, and his capillaries strained against the whites of his eyes. Noticeable tear stains streaked through the mix of blood and snot under his nose and crusted into a pool on his chin.

Like a coward, Suguru looked away as Satoru grabbed his keys and left.



DAYS PASSED without any contact from Satoru—no calls, no texts, nothing.

This wasn't the first time their fights ended explosively, and he was ashamed to say it wasn't the first time they'd exchanged blows. Too often they'd defaulted to the violence they were taught as children when words seemed too difficult to express.

He didn't want to count how many times they'd fought like that, but Satoru had always fought back. This was the first time he hadn't, and something about that made Suguru feel he couldn't face him if given the chance.

On Monday, Ijichi accepted Suguru's sick day without question, along with the quiet tears he choked on as he spoke.

"It's been quiet since that special grade disturbance in Kobe. Nitta and I can handle your casework for it. I think it'd be best if you took some time off, at least an additional day or two."

"That won't be necessary," Suguru argued, his throat tight and burning with the threat of another onslaught of tears. He was in no state to work. His hair was a tangled mess, and his shirt was wet with tears and snot, but it was the principle of the matter.

"It wouldn't be appropriate to inconvenience you guys."

"You won't be much help to us if you're not feeling well. Don't worry about it. Besides, when was the last time you took a day off?"

"I don't need—"

"I'll see you when you get back," Ijichi cut him off, then hung up.

Suguru's eyes burned as he curled under the blankets and stared at the empty space on Satoru's side of the bed, trying to make sense of the cold sheets and tidy pillows.

It was over. Like, really over this time.

Their relationship had always teetered on unstable ground. Now, it had finally slipped off the edge. Somewhere in his mind, he knew he'd been waiting for this day, steeling himself in the moments of happiness growing fewer and farther apart.

Satoru was boorish, dismissive, and selfish. He took what he wanted when he wanted, with little concern over how it would affect others. Sure, he'd learned not to be so obvious in the few years since high school, but that didn't mean those ugly traits were gone. They were just better disguised.

Cheating wasn't something Suguru expected, but when he thought about it, they did fit in with Satoru's self-centered, manipulative behavior. Yeah, the more he mulled it over, the more he realized how stupid he was to miscalculate the extent of Satoru's plethora of shitty traits.

You're better off alone, he assured himself. Satoru had made his choice loud and clear. *Dwelling on the pain is useless*.

Maybe if he said it enough times, he'd start to believe it.

With a groan, Suguru stretched and maneuvered out of the mess of blankets and tissues covering their—no—*his* bed. A shower would quiet his mind and wash away the urge to think about how much this hurt.

Chapter End Notes

Let me know what you thought in the comments.

You can also come yell at me on [twitter](#) (active-ish?) or [instagram](#) (where I collect JJK enamel pins).

P.S. I'll likely update this fic weekly-ish on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

P.S.S. My deepest apologies, Higuruma, my beloved. So sorry for all the strays you're about to catch in this fic.

Wayward Son, Pt. 1

Chapter Summary

After kicking Satoru out and three days of no contact, Suguru tries--but fails--to clear his head. We get a look at what happened after he left Tokyo Jujutsu Tech three years ago.

Chapter Notes

This chapter contains: Graphic depictions of drug abuse and brief mentions of death.

Read with care <3

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Turned out that hot water and a eucalyptus shower bomb had nothing on the power of Geto Suguru's obsessive thoughts. The argument replayed in his mind, like a cacophony of voices talking all at once.

No matter how he dissected Satoru's *I'm sorry's* and excuses for fucking Higuruma, he couldn't escape what his heart knew:

Satoru did it because he *wanted* to cheat on him.

Nothing, not in heaven or on earth, could force the holder of the Six Eyes into doing something against his will.

No, Satoru had fucked his co-worker because he only thought of himself, not how he could hurt others by doing so.

Suguru wanted to hurt him back—much more than a few blows to the face—but he was a walking contradiction, unable to get over the pain burrowing in his chest. He wanted the man to suffer. He wanted to turn time back to before he knew what Satoru had done. Most of all, he was embarrassed by how much his body longed for him, even after Satoru had spat on his trust.

If Satoru had at least been meaner—crueler—downright evil throughout their relationship, he could've accepted the betrayal or learned to. Could've written the incident off as a sign that Satoru had never cared about him.

But the truth was, Satoru had been the one who cared the most, and he showed it.

After all, Satoru was the one who'd found him three years ago.



WHEN SUGURU LEFT Jujutsu Technical High School, he'd planned every detail of his exit, from the path he'd chart once he was off campus to ensuring no one could trace him.

After weeks of practice and late nights, he'd taught himself to reduce his residual cursed energy output enough to be undetectable. A book in the school's library had explained the basics, and Suguru filled in the gaps on his own.

Once he felt confident, he packed some clothes and keepsakes, stashed food for the journey, and picked places to hide in the first few days. By November, the only thing left was deciding whether he'd tell his friends.

What would he say if they tried to change his mind? Would he have to explain that he'd been drowning for months? Would he tell them about the night terrors—the ones that started the day Amanai was shot? Or the guilt that haunted him, knowing he couldn't save her? Would they understand?

In the end, Suguru bargained with himself, claiming he'd call Shoko after he was good and gone. He'd tell her he was alright—not to worry or look for him. Then maybe she'd spare his ego by passing the message on to Satoru.

Whatever they were at the time—whatever they were doing—didn't have a label outside of "best friends." By the time second year started, their childish bickering had long since mellowed into a competitive, playful symbiosis.

You see, the thing about being a jujutsu sorcerer is that you can't afford to be guarded. The very notion that you could be signing your death certificate the moment you enter a curse's innate domain is what makes sorcerers vulnerable. There's no other choice but to trust those standing beside you and protect each other from the worst fate.

So, Suguru had to learn to trust Satoru, and Satoru had no other option but to let Suguru in, lest one of them wanted to carry a body bag home with their souvenirs.

As time passed, their mutual trust begot loyalty, and loyalty became unwavering dedication. They spent every waking moment together. Sharing quarters. Countless missions. Late-night trips to the convenience store for ramen. Falling deeper into the magnetic pull of knowing they were the strongest, the only two sorcerers in a league above everyone else. Maybe that's why it didn't surprise Suguru when their relationship shifted.

They were already close in every other way, and Satoru had always struggled with the concept of personal space. He clung to Suguru like a leech.

When they watched movies, he'd stretch out on the sofa and spread his lanky frame over Suguru's lap as if the younger boy were another cushion. Satoru was known to tackle Suguru to the ground when he was bored and fight him for entertainment. And, more than once,

Satoru had snuck into his bed in the middle of the night. Curled up behind him and hugged Suguru with both arms the way kids do with their parents when they're scared or sad, or both.

When Suguru looked back it seemed inevitable—their first kiss. Lying head-to-head in the middle of his bedroom. Faces so close their cheeks brushed as they laughed and argued, tossing a ball back and forth to keep their hands busy. Suguru could still remember what it sounded like hitting the floor when Satoru pulled him in by the shirt and closed the space between their lips.

It didn't take long for a single hurried kiss between horny teenagers to turn into full-on make-out sessions. Rutting against each other in classrooms when no one else was around. Sloppy handjobs in hotels when they traveled for missions.

Their bizarrely co-dependent relationship twisted into something else. Passionate and big and so scary that neither wanted to rock the boat by naming it.

So they took the easy route—hormone-fueled sex, greedy touches, messy orgasms—treading the murky lines between best friends and something more. Neither hiding nor being forthright about their relationship when they got knowing stares from their friends.

To them, they were just Satoru and Suguru. Geto and Gojo. Practically the sun and moon. What they did to each other's bodies behind closed doors wouldn't change that and wasn't going to change the fact they were child soldiers running a fruitless race.

Nor would it stop the awful, endless hole growing in Suguru's chest as the days passed. Widening and gnawing at his ankles. Chasing him toward the realization that he couldn't endure the brunt of war any longer.

Saving those little girls in that village was the straw that broke the camel's back.

He made up his mind. There was too much suffering in this life. He didn't want to be a sorcerer. He didn't want to be the strongest. He'd lost his way a long time ago. Couldn't remember why he'd ever loved sorcery, to begin with.

Satoru didn't take the confession seriously. Of course, he didn't. The idiot was deliberately oblivious to anything that didn't fit into his view of how things did or *should* work.

Instead, the damn pride and joy of jujutsu society simply smirked and rolled the lollipop in his fingers across his lips.

“What?” Satoru had scoffed. “Scared you can't keep up with me anymore, Suguru? That's a shame. Who's gonna lick up my scraps after I'm done tearing the limbs off these special-grades? Someone's gotta clean the mess, you know.”

Amidst the infinite darkness of that December night, Satoru's eyes glowed wild with pride. The hunger for battle, to satiate his blood lust, to revel in the challenge of one-upping his only worthy contender.

It was a game they'd played for years, and Suguru had a leading role in it. He wouldn't be able to make Satoru understand. There was no use in trying when divergence wasn't an option.

The next day, Suguru left.

With a single bag strapped to his back, he summoned his giant stingray and rode it as fast as he could and as far as he could stand, letting the cities, provinces, and villages speed away beneath him.

Two weeks in, he hadn't heard a single peep from the school. After a month, he decided to leave the small countryside village he'd been hiding in and returned to Tokyo, rightfully convinced he wouldn't be disrupted by the world of jujutsu again.



IT WAS JANUARY when Suguru got his first taste of blow.

Looking back on it, he knew he'd basically served himself up on a silver platter to addiction, seasoned with naivety and false confidence.

His story wasn't unique or particularly tragic, but it went like this:

Unlike Satoru, Suguru didn't have familial wealth, and his parents barely spoke to him. Broke and without resources, he took up odd jobs to keep food in his stomach. He considered himself lucky when one of his bosses offered to let him sleep on a bed roll in the back of a laundromat he owned.

The same boss, Mr. Kawamura, came to him one morning to ask for help with an odd job. Easy money. Delivering packages for a buddy at the casino he frequented.

Suguru wasn't stupid. He knew it was likely drugs, considering the types of people he saw hanging around Mr. Kawamura, but he needed the money.

Besides, if he got into real danger, he could use his cursed technique for self-defense. It wasn't ideal, but what part of his life had been?

Thankfully, the drop went so smoothly that Mr. Kawamura asked him to run another one. Then again, until it became a regular occurrence.

The money came in steadily, and for the first time in two months, Suguru didn't feel like he was constantly starving.

Mr. Kawamura commented on his weight gain, noting how his once-drawn cheeks had filled out.

"You could make even better money fighting if you wanted," the older man said, sticking a finger in his mouth and rubbing against his gums. He licked his teeth and swallowed hard.

“We’ve got a few guys in the Shinjuku circuit, but you?” He whistled, eyeing Suguru’s biceps, still smaller than they’d been in the past but noteworthy nonetheless. “Now that I know you can eat so well, I’d reckon we can fatten you up and make you prime stock. You ever fight before, kid?”

“Yeah,” Suguru shrugged, trying to hide the alarm bells rattling in his head. He’d left the jujutsu world to get away from the fight. He had no intentions of getting back in the proverbial ring.

“For money?”

“Not really,” he said flatly, avoiding eye contact. The older man snorted a low, rumbling laugh.

“No need for the skepticism. Relax kid. You look like you’re going to hit *me* if I keep askin’. Guess you do have the fight in ya’.” He clicked his tongue, then dipped another finger in the white baggie on the desk.

It wasn’t the response Suguru expected. Despite himself, he his guard wavered.

Mr. Kawamura pointed to the chair opposite him in the tiny laundromat office.

“Listen, kid, I don’t know where you’re coming from, and frankly, I don’t care. You do decent work, you don’t make trouble, and you scare the shit out of the people I don’t want making trouble with me. We’ve got a good thing going here, don’t ya’ think?”

“Sure,” Suguru offered, then remembered the need to respect his elders. “I’m very grateful for your taking care of me.”

“Eh, no need for all that,” Mr. Kawamura waved him off. “Just keep up the good work. But, if you want to make a little extra.” He shrugged, poking out a lip, then cut a line with a laundromat business card. “The offer’s always on the table. Got it?”

Suguru nodded. His eyes flitted to the fat lines of white on the desk.

Mr. Kawamura railed one, squeezed his nose, huffed, and snorted something awful. Then righted his eyes, enough to catch the way Suguru kept darting back to the white powder on the desk.

“How old are ya, kid?” he asked, already cutting and scraping again.

“20,” Suguru lied. Probably better not to reveal he was still a minor.

The man grunted. “Old enough, I guess. Ever tried it?”

Suguru shook his head, afraid of where this was going.

He’d been curious about the drugs. After weeks of delivering them, he couldn’t help but wonder what they were like.

Back in his village, it wasn't unheard of for twenty-somethings to get their hands on bud, as it was much easier to hide the illegal substance in a barely populated town. The grannies scolded anyone who would listen about it, but that was the extent of the topic.

Before he knew what he was, Suguru wondered if smoking would make him stop seeing horrific creatures everywhere he went. He was scouted by Jujutsu Tech before he had the chance to try.

Blow was a stimulant. He was smart enough to know that. It wouldn't mellow him out, but maybe it could help stave off the weight of exhaustion wearing dark circles under his eyes. Or at least make it easier to get out of bed in the morning.

Mr. Kawamura cut the powder into four neat lines, two large and two considerably smaller. "I'll let you have this one on the house," he winked. "You in?"

Suguru tapped his foot, thinking, then pushed the thoughts out of his head with a shrug. "Why not?"

He wished he could say he'd tried it once, then came to his senses and resisted the drug again until the call of the beast got the best of him. That his descent into substance abuse was gradual, or at least that he'd fought it. Kept a level head but finally, unable to control himself any longer, snapped and fell tragically.

He didn't.

After that first taste, he was hooked. Not because of some chemical level addition from one shitty bump, but because he wanted to keep going.

It took a few tries, but once he got the hang of snorting that sugar, he loved the rush of the high. It made him feel awake and alert in a way he hadn't experienced in nearly a year. Ever since Amanai.

When cutting lines with Mr. Kawamura after work wasn't enough, he became a regular customer.

The two grew closer. The older man liked Suguru with his maturity, wit, and impeccable ability to read a room. In the seedy underbelly of dive bars and the backs of fronting restaurants, he showed Suguru what he *actually* did for work, and it was a lot more than dealing drugs.

Suguru didn't care as long as he got paid and got his bonus at the end of the night—a little extra on top of his usual 8-ball.

The partying came next. Mr. Kawamura took a lot of high-profile client meetings at nightclubs. He insisted he needed Suguru by his side as protection. When they were done, he was welcome to stay as long as he wanted.

So, with these outings came new drugs, new sensations, new experiences.

Some took him higher than the clouds, and others dropped him into holes where his mind felt numb and stuck in a perpetual time loop. He didn't have a particular preference for the type of trip as long as it kept him from paying attention to the curses that haunted the streets of Tokyo. Whatever. He was feeling as alive as he'd ever felt.

The problem was that drugs were expensive. Like, way more expensive than anything else he'd ever bought in his seventeen years of life. Keeping up with the different types of fixes he enjoyed was making the money he earned from Mr. Kawamura disappear as quickly as it came in.

The older man never said anything but kept a tilted smirk when Suguru asked him for an advance on his next payment. After the third time, he smiled wide as he placed the 50,000 yen in Suguru's hands.

"I'll give you the advance this time, but I can't keep promising it. Gotta keep my funds liquid and available for inventory. Business has been a little shaky lately. I don't wanna find myself in a pinch and have to start charging you rent. You're too good a kid for that, but... Well, business is business. You know how it is."

He didn't have to say anything else. Suguru had learned how the older man operated—how he molded his words just right to get his clients and business partners to fold right into his pocket, prey to the hand he'd graciously dealt them.

Suguru was no different. He'd been playing Mr. Kawamura's game for months and had managed by without a scratch.

The message was clear now—it was time to get his hands dirty.

Suguru counted the money, passing a few bills back wordlessly. The older man reached into his desk and tossed his usual baggie to him. It was lighter than the last.

"Oh, and I'm gonna have to cut back on the extras. Cutting losses."

That evening, Suguru stared at the water-stained ceiling tiles above his bed, tugging at the frayed edges of the blanket Mr. Kawamura loaned him months ago.

Winter raged outside without indicating it would let up, even though they were creeping toward spring.

Suguru rubbed his chapped feet together, then turned onto his side to tuck them under the fabric. The bed roll was too small, or he was too big for it; he wasn't sure which. He never thought anything could be more uncomfortable than the Western-style springy mattresses he'd slept in at Jujutsu High, but having his feet brush the dirty linoleum floor in the dead of winter was a close second.

He tried to drift to sleep but was awoken by a noise.

"Paaaapeerrr or plasssstic," a warbled voice stuttered. Eyes now open, Suguru searched the darkness. Under the dryer, a curse was scooting along the ground, leaving a slime trail behind

it.

“Carrrrrrrd declineddd. Paaaper or plaaaaaastic?”

Seconds later, he held the exorcised curse, rolling it between his fingers. With his other hand, he reached into his backpack and fished out the little baggie of pills he kept stashed there. Nearly empty. Popped a Benzo and washed it down with the curse. He just wanted to get some fucking sleep.

In the morning, Suguru waited until Mr. Kawamura was settled in, then knocked on the open office door.

The older man smiled. “How can I help ya, kid?”

Suguru didn’t hesitate. Didn’t waver or play coy. He’d made up his mind before he drifted to sleep. Probably even longer before that, if he was honest with himself.

“That place in Kitashinjuku got an address?”

Mr. Kawamura matched his energy, not bothering to hide his smirk. He scribbled something on the back of a receipt and slipped it to Suguru.

“Ask for Hakari. Tell ‘em I sent you.”

Chapter End Notes

Damn, Suguru. Not you spiraling.

As always, let me know what you think in the comments!

Up Next: smut, spice, and a little bit of help from some friends.

P.S. I decided to split some of my extra-long chapters into two-parters to make them more digestible. God willing, I'll have part 2 for this edited and up before you know it.

Wayward Son, Pt. 2

Chapter Summary

Suguru's trip down memory lane ends with Satoru finding him six months after he left Jujutsu Tech.

Chapter Notes

This chapter contains: Explicit sexual content; mentions of drug abuse and addiction treatment.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The rest of the day went by in a blur as Suguru shuffled around his empty apartment. Restlessness ate away at his nerves.

He couldn't read without losing his place after a few paragraphs. He'd already cleaned every visible surface in the house and mopped the floor twice. And what feeble attempts he made at cooking ended with mushy, inedible food or burnt to a crisp.

Why now, after being cheated on, had his brain decided to queue up a highlight reel of his lowest moments? They played repeatedly as he waded through one distraction after another, watching the shitty memories like a movie marathon.

His first time consuming a curse. The time a curse almost consumed him. Amanai. Kuroi. The village and those little girls. Kitashinjuku was only the tip of the iceberg.

Did he relish the sting of digging out those memories, like some form of self-harm? Was he really that much of a masochist?

Or was it that somewhere in his stupid, fucked up brain, he liked thinking about the lows because they were all followed up by memories of a certain blue-eyed sorcerer?



THE BLUE-EYED BOY had found Suguru months after he'd joined Mr. Kawamura's shitty fight club. Just showed up one day out of nowhere at a drug den in Kabukicho and nearly blew the door off its hinges. When he spotted Suguru, Satoru waltzed over, narrowed his eyes at the state he was in, then wordlessly dragged his ass back to Jujutsu Tech.

Suguru was so strung out he couldn't even put up a fight.

Days later, Suguru woke up in the school's infirmary with an IV bag hooked to his arm and Satoru snoring softly at his side. White hair nuzzled against the hospital bed, and his cheek pressed to Suguru's thigh. He flinched when Suguru shifted.

"Uggghh...Suguru, stop moving," Satoru mumbled, voice thick with sleep. A beat later, his eyes shot open.

"You're awake? You're awake! Holy shit, okay, don't move. How do you feel? Are you okay? What am I saying, you probably feel like shit. Just don't move, yeah? You have a couple of broken ribs, and they're not set. I'm gonna get Shoko."

Suguru didn't have a chance to respond. Satoru was already out the door, then back again with Shoko in tow. Nervous excitement rippled off of him as he watched Shoko perform her exam.

She was thorough as she worked and asked countless questions. She checked his vitals and replaced his IV. Then ran mobility tests before guiding him to the bathroom for an embarrassing exploration of his genitals to remove the bag he'd been pissing in. After, Suguru brushed his teeth. He drank several glasses of water while he listened to her prognosis.

Three broken ribs. Several minor contusions and a fractured toe.

Suguru gritted his teeth as Shoko healed him. She'd waited to do it until he was awake to get his consent, unsure if he'd be comfortable with sorcery-based treatment, considering he'd left that world behind.

It was a nice sentiment, but Suguru cared a lot more about the pain he was in than the moral implications of going back on his word. Broken ribs were a bitch to feel and a bigger bitch to heal naturally.

Besides, he wasn't going to admit that he hadn't walked away from jujutsu entirely. He'd resorted to swallowing curses for easy money a few times when he was too broke to afford his next fix.

"I gave you Methadone to ease the withdrawals," Shoko explained when she was done.

"I also put non-interactive painkillers in your IV. You should be good to go by tomorrow. Leave whenever. Just let me know before you do so I can give you a supply of meds." She looked him right in the eyes as she lit a cigarette. In a hospital, for god's sake.

"Bleh, that stinks," Satoru complained. "Don't you ever get tired of smelling like a rest stop?"

Shoko shrugged and took a long drag. "There's nothing flammable in this room."

"You're a quack, aren't you?"

"Satoru, I don't think you know what that means." She ashed the cigarette on a medical tray, then pursed her lips in a harsh line. "And no fucking in my infirmary." The look on her face

was deadly.

Satoru—very maturely—stuck his tongue out at her backside as the curtain swung closed behind her.

“It’s not her infirmary yet. We just graduated. She hasn’t even started medical school,” he grumbled. His tiny nose furrowed in contempt.

Suguru was surprised by how much he missed that look.

“So you two have been getting along?” he teased, amused when Satoru pouted at the question.

“We tolerate each other.”

“Mmm. Got it. So you’re grating her nerves.”

“It’s not my fault! All I did was ask for a couple of favors—pry apart a few curses and see how they tick. No need to tell anyone about it. She said no without even asking why I wanted her to do it. Not the least bit curious!”

Probably so she couldn’t be implicated in whatever the fuck you were doing.

“Shoko’s always had a big head,” Satoru continued.

Suguru played along. “Someone’s gotta knock her down a few pegs.”

“I wonder who managed to raise her without a shred of humility.”

“You’d think she’d pick up something from us and learn to be humble.”

A wicked smile spread across Satoru’s lips. “Nah, I don’t want her catching up with us. Cheap imitation would be an insult.”

Suguru couldn’t help but smile, too. It was so easy to fall back into their routine of banter and snide quips. It was familiar. Simple. Followed a formula that Suguru knew better than he knew the contents of his heart. It felt like home. Suguru ignored how much that terrified him.

Minutes ticked by as he listened to Satoru complain about this, that, and everything. The conversation eventually slipped into highlight reels from his recent missions, the latest gossip, how easily he’d taken down the Kyoto students in their final exchange event, and the graduation Suguru missed.

Suguru listened languidly, letting the pain medication work through the lingering sting of Shoko’s technique.

Soon enough, minutes turned into hours. They talked long into the dead of night until the only light left in the room was cast from a singular fluorescent bulb near the door.

The whole time, Suguru warred with the questions burning on his tongue. How did Satoru find him? Did he know about all the things Suguru had done?

His suspicions grew the longer they talked, but the words wouldn't come out. Suguru knew asking would break the spell, opening the floodgates when Satoru had tactfully avoided the elephant in the room.

Satoru hadn't mentioned the state he'd found Suguru in. Didn't ask a single question about why he'd left or how he'd ended up higher than the sky on a cocktail of drugs. Where he'd been for six months, nor how his ribs were broken.

It was a small mercy to let him have that moment of peace. He could pretend nothing had changed, and they were still Satoru and Suguru—best friends who could handle anything the world threw at them.

No one had to know how much that act of mercy nearly broke him. Nor did they need to know he'd shed a tear or two when the words finally ran out, and he sat with Satoru in the quiet, just listening to him breathe.

Satoru traced patterns on the back of Suguru's hand, then laced their fingers together and fiddled with the IV bag whenever he could no longer sit still. He was keyed up with energy but refused to leave Suguru's side. When he adjusted the drip enough to hurt, Suguru finally snatched his hand away and pulled it in to rest on his chest right above his beating heart.

That caught the boy's attention. His iridescent blue eyes met bottomless purple over the rim of rounded sunglasses.

Slowly, Suguru raised Satoru's hand to his lips. Kissed his palm, then each knuckle, and nipped on the web of skin holding all the bones and ligaments together. He worked over every inch of the appendage. Worshiping the hands that had reached in and pulled him out from the darkness he'd been drowning in for six months, maybe even longer than that.

Thank you for finding me, Suguru thought, hoping Satoru would somehow understand what he was saying by the way he cradled his hand against his stubbly cheek.

I was so lonely. Another kiss to his wrist. *Thank you for caring*.

Suguru's lips trailed back and forth across calluses. *You're the only one who ever did*.

Satoru caught his chin between two fingers and tilted it up. He'd tossed his sunglasses somewhere on the bedside table. Suguru tried to memorize each fracture of blue that shone in the low fluorescent lighting.

Can you ever forgive me for leaving?

There was a flurry of limbs as they crashed into each other. Clothes shed rapidly. Sloppy kisses, tongues licking into the other's mouth as if searching for remnants of every moment they'd missed. Like they could make sense of the absence by tasting it and swallowing it whole.

The thin blanket ended up wrapped around Satoru's bare hips, and Suguru's white hospital gown was shoved up to his chest. They didn't speak as they rolled their hips together, grinding their bare cocks until they were hard. Both too afraid to ruin the moment with something so trivial as words.

They found medical lubricant in the drawer next to the bed, and Suguru thanked a god he didn't believe in for at least giving him that.

He was still mumbling a prayer when his cock grazed Satoru's hole. His breath caught in his throat, and his eyes squeezed shut when Satoru started sinking on it. Swallowing him in wet heat so tight, it made Suguru delirious and his nerves light on fire.

He hadn't bothered with sex in the time he worked for Mr. Kawamura. The drugs wilted his libido, and he'd never been interested in random hookups. But the way Satoru squeezed around his dick made Suguru wonder how he'd ever gone six months without this.

The man was beautiful, damn near ethereal. It was almost unfair how good Satoru looked, legs spread wide and head thrown back. Giving Suguru the perfect view of his length spearing him open. Too impatient to do the work with his fingers.

Satoru paused to catch his breath after each inch. Allowing his body to adjust and his hole to relax around Suguru's girth bullying his insides. It was like some seventh-circle of Hell game of edging, but Suguru willed himself to stay still, fighting the urge to make Satoru take the rest of him in a single thrust.

Instead, Suguru focused on Satoru's face. His shiny lips were wet with their mix of spit. His blushing cheeks and the red flush that went up to his ears. His mouth dropped open, whimpers and shallow gasps slipping out, and the way Satoru's brow creased when the last of Suguru was finally seated deep inside.

Suguru watched in awe when Satoru finally started to move. He rocked back and forth, brushing his ass against Suguru's balls with each motion.

The fullness was ungodly. So good it made Satoru's brain stutter, and the only coherent thought he could form was how empty he'd felt all those months.

He was angry. Heartbroken. Fucking pissed to the point he didn't know what to do with all that emotion. But as much as he was furious, he was equally elated. Months of loneliness had left him desperate to fill the hole in his heart. His body yearned for Suguru. Wanted to keep him inside, where he belonged, warm and alive, like Suguru was another part of him.

And now, Suguru was back. Underneath him. Making room in Satoru's body once again and molding his insides into the shape of his dick as Satoru fucked himself with slow, deep strokes. He decided he'd happily spend the rest of his life cockwarming Suguru just to see Suguru's brows knit together when he bottomed out.

Satoru grabbed the other boy's hand and placed it below his navel. He intertwined their fingers as he pressed down and drank in Suguru's reactions: the flex of his biceps and his teeth gnawing in his lips. Satoru arched his back, sucking his cock impossibly deeper as

Suguru's hand dug into his belly. Earning a shaky moan from the dark-haired boy that made Satoru swell with pride.

He was sure Suguru understood it then. How good it felt—how important it was that he filled the entirety of Satoru's narrow stomach. That their bodies fit so perfectly together, the stretch painful just as much as it was euphoric. He wanted to live in that feeling, drown in it, then engrave it into his body.

Satoru picked up the pace, bouncing in Suguru's lap, letting Suguru's grip on his waist anchor him to the tiny hospital bed. It was the only thing that kept him from falling when Suguru bucked his hips and brushed against the bundle of nerves under his belly button, the sudden burst of pleasure jolting him forward.

“D-don't move,” Satoru yelped. “J-just stay still. You're going to hurt yourself. Relax, okay? Let me make you feel good. Can you do that for me, baby?” He slowed his hips to a near stall until Suguru nodded.

Satisfied, Satoru awarded his obedience with a kiss—open-mouthed and breathy the way Suguru liked. He licked Suguru's teeth and gums, then sucked on his tongue.

Their sex had always been rough, bordering on violence. When Suguru was horny, he was filthy and mean and persistent—the kind of person who enjoyed torturing his lover through one overstimulated orgasm after another.

Between their first clumsy attempt at sex two summers ago and the day he left, Suguru had become a menace. All too confident once he realized he could break Satoru down by taking him to the edge of bliss—then past his limits—and piece him back together. He never missed the opportunity to see Satoru screaming under him.

Satoru always gave Suguru everything he demanded, then took his claim with brutality paling only compared to how he decimated battlefields.

He'd loved slamming Suguru's head against the shower wall when he used his throat. Got downright giddy the time Suguru practically begged for his forgiveness after passing out from the force of it and spilling Satoru's cum onto the tiled floor. Nothing felt better than burying his cock deep into Suguru's plush ass without warning whenever the other boy had the nerve to beat him in a fight. Choking, smart-mouthed retorts right off his lips the moment they were behind closed doors.

It was raw and sadistic, rapturous, and *so fucking hot*. For two summers, they'd let their passion take the shape of a serrated knife edge and surrendered their bodies to be mutilated by it.

Now, under dim infirmary lights, their sex molded itself into something else entirely. Where jagged edges once existed, smooth corners took shape, and their bodies moved against one another like two waves crashing into the lulling ocean. Satoru didn't know sex could feel like that.

Jolts of pleasure shot down his thighs with every thrust. His knees slid across the sheets, and his muscles burned as the anxiety inside of him mounted. What the fuck was he supposed to do if Suguru disappeared again and this mind-blowing feeling was ripped away when he'd only just discovered it?

As if listening to his thoughts, Suguru wrapped a hand around the back of Satoru's nape and pressed their foreheads together. Breaths harsh and short, he moaned into Satoru's mouth. A confirmation that yes, he could feel this too—how it was so different yet perfect.

Suguru's free hand scrambled on Satoru's hips, up his waist, then down again like he couldn't decide what he wanted to touch the most. He eventually dug his thick fingers into the swell of Satoru's ass.

Satoru could tell Suguru was close by the way his abs twitched. He wasn't much farther behind. The familiar feeling of impending release had already settled in his groin, and his cock was smearing precum into Suguru's belly button each time it slapped his stomach. The pressure built until he was on the precipice of ecstasy, slamming his hips down, trembling as the coil inside of him unraveled, just a couple more thrusts from—

Satoru pulled off of Suguru, his hand shooting down to wrap around himself and squeeze hard, choking off his orgasm.

“Wh—why'd you—?” Suguru sputtered, but Satoru ignored him. With shaky movements, Satoru dropped down again. Pressed the head of Suguru's cock against his hole, then clenched *hard* around the tip when he felt it pop past his rim.

Suguru moaned loudly—a broken, wanton thing that rattled from his chest, then hitched into a pained squeak much too shrill for someone as big and dangerous as him. His mouth hung open, and his eyes blinked wildly. His body trying to make sense of his aborted orgasm and the vice grip Satoru's hole had on the sensitive spot under the head of his cock. Satoru reached back and wrapped his fingers tight around the length. Feeling Suguru throb against his palm.

“I need you to listen carefully,” Satoru started, gaze locked with Suguru's.

He was fully aware of how unsettling his Six Eyes could be when unobstructed, so he made a point of not blinking as he loosened his fingers into a slack fist and rubbed the part of Suguru's dick that wasn't inside of him. Just fast enough to drive Suguru insane but not enough to push him over the edge.

“If you ever do that to me again, I will kill you,” Satoru said and *meant* it. “I don't care what's happening in your freakishly complicated head. If things ever get so bad that you feel like you need to leave—that you basically want to kill yourself without actually pulling the trigger—you tell me. Don't just disappear. Understand?”

Satoru didn't wait for a response. He snaked his fingers down to Suguru's balls and squeezed hard enough to make Suguru double over.

“Answer me,” he snarled.

“Y-yes, fuck Satoru. I get it. I get it! Jesus, let go.” Suguru’s heart was beating wildly against the hand Satoru had pressed to his chest. His legs kicked in the sheets.

“Say it back.”

“Ah—stop! That fucking hurts.”

“It’s supposed to. Now say it back to me.” Satoru pulsed his hand, threatening to squeeze tighter.

“I—fuck! I’ll tell you when I’m not—ah—w-when I’m n-not, okay,” Suguru shouted from the pain. “I won’t leave you, and I’ll n-never hurt you like that again.”

Satoru released Suguru’s crown jewels from his death grip, eliciting a throaty, pathetic groan from the other man, head slamming against the pillows, cock twitching violently in Satoru’s ass.

Satoru felt his own cock kick at the sight. He continued his ministrations, now soothing Suguru. Tightening his hand to purposefully jerked him off. He looked like a madman, smiling wide when the tears in Suguru’s eyes finally spilled onto his cheeks. It made him want to torture Suguru more, so he did. Twisted his wrist on the upstroke the way Suguru liked it and sucked bruises along his neck.

“You take care of me, and I take care of you. Got it? That’s the deal. So fucking let me take care of you, Suguru.”

Satoru’s voice was low in his ear. The warmth of his breath made Suguru's skin tingle. He couldn’t take it anymore. Every time Satoru’s puffy rim squeezed the head of his dick, his vision blurred, and his eyes rolled to the back of his head like Satoru felt so damn good inside he couldn't help losing himself in the way his velvety walls clung to him.

“Satoru, please. I’m so fucking close,” Suguru begged, now mindlessly canting his hips to push his tip in as far as Satoru would allow. He needed to cum, even if his balls were so sore it made him dizzy.

Satoru let go of Suguru’s cock, propped himself up on Suguru’s chest, and spread his legs until his knees were at the edge of the bed. Then finally, *finally*, dropped his weight and pistoned his ass down in a brutal rhythm, slamming Suguru’s cock into his swollen prostate with each thrust.

His mouth crashed into Suguru’s in a wet, sloppy kiss, and he hummed when Suguru pushed against him with just as much impatience.

Satoru dragged his hands over Suguru’s chest, losing himself in the way Suguru fucked him like he wanted their bodies to melt into one person. He couldn’t hold back any longer. His thighs quivered, and his lower back burned as he worked loud, frantic moans out of the man beneath him. The obscene noise was loud in the quiet room, competing only with the sound of their sweat-slicked skin slapping together.

“I’m gonna t-take care of you whether you like it or not,” Satoru whimpered, feeling his orgasm hurtling toward him. “You—mhm! You don’t get to leave me just because you’re tired of it. F-fuck, Suguru, I’m gonna cum.”

Satoru swung his hips in quick, frantic thrusts, chasing Suguru’s release and the feeling of hot warmth painting his insides, the fullness he’d missed for *six fucking months*.

His mind whited out when Suguru wrapped his hand around his neglected cock and stroked him. He could barely form a coherent sentence as the first ropes of cum spurted onto his stomach.

“You don’t get to leave me at all. Do you hear me? Say it back to me. Don’t ever leave me again. Fuck, Suguru—ah! Baby, come with me.”

Chapter End Notes

Up next: We return to present day. Shoko is Switzerland.

Thanks for reading <3

High and Low

Chapter Summary

Shoko offers post-breakup advice. Suguru reveals more about his past and the Kitashinjuku fighting circuit.

Chapter Notes

First, thank you so much for all the love and support you've shown *Any Way It Blows*. I read every comment, and your thoughtful responses genuinely warm my heart. Like, I'm a grown ass woman over here kicking, squealing, and twirling my fingers over internet comments. Wild.

But in all seriousness, I was afraid to post a story with such heavy themes that paints Suguru and Satoru in a negative light. I'm glad y'all are enjoying reading it as much as I've enjoyed writing it!

Now, back to the debauchery.

This chapter contains: Depictions of disordered eating, drug abuse, mild violence, and mild sexual content. Read with care <3

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

With practiced strokes, Suguru came, splattering the toilet bowl with thick white streaks. He shuddered and gripped the wall, riding out the last waves of his orgasm as voices flitted in from the other side of the door.

Suguru sighed. Carefully tucked himself back in and went to the sink to clean up.

He'd spent considerable time that morning erasing all evidence that he'd been a sniveling, sobbing wreck for the past 72 hours. His roots throbbed where he'd brushed out knots, and his skin still tingled from the arsenal of serums he'd used to calm the swelling under his eyes.

Yet there he was, jacking off at work, to memories of the same shitty ex who'd been balls deep in someone else just a few days ago. And using that night in the infirmary—of all things—as spunk bank material? Jesus. Suguru didn't want to acknowledge how pathetic that was or the guilt and shame that followed. He just hoped he didn't look as bad as he felt.

That was until he saw Shoko. The woman whistled, barely letting his ass hit the bench before she spoke.

“Damn. I thought Satoru was the one who got punched in the face.”

“And here I was thinking I looked nice today.”

Shoko laughed around the cigarette in her mouth and tilted her chin to the bento in Suguru’s hand. “What are we eating today?”

“Tamagoyaki. Up to your liking?”

She nodded, then held up her pack of cigarettes. “Mild Sevens. Up to yours?”

They were quiet while Shoko nibbled on the omelet and Suguru smoked. It was a daily routine they’d shared since high school—Suguru bumming cigarettes and Shoko bartering for bites of his food. He liked to think they didn’t count against his sobriety if he wasn’t the one who bought the carton.

Some time went by before Shoko finally spoke up.

“Do you want to talk about it?” she asked.

Unlike her other comment, Suguru anticipated this conversation. Prepared for it by calculating the likelihood that Satoru had already run his mouth about their breakup or that, by some miracle, Suguru would be able to get to her first.

Sure, it was immature to put Shoko in the middle of their fight, but Suguru wasn’t trying to be mature. He was trying to win this breakup and their mutual friend group, shove Satoru’s stupid face into the dirt, and walk away mildly unscathed. It was a grandiose delusion, but a man could dream.

“Depends on how much you know already.”

“I got the gist,” Shoko said. She knocked the ash off her cigarette. “Honestly, he was a mess when he called. I could barely understand what he was saying.”

“He called you?”

“How else would he talk to me?”

“Kind of expected him to whine on your doorstep until you let him in.”

“Oh, he did that too. The call was after he gave up.” The corner of her lip turned, and Suguru stifled a laugh.

“So, his phone does work. I was starting to think he’d lost it. The coward hasn’t said a thing since he left.” Suguru frowned when Shoko cocked a slender brow.

“What?”

“You smashed his face in and kicked him out. In that order.”

“I’ve seen Grade 2’s give him worse work.”

“Sure, but he wasn’t dating them.”

“Whose side are you on?” Suguru snapped. He could hear the undue annoyance in his voice. *So much for keeping it cool.*

Shoko was unfazed. “I hate to disappoint, but you’re not getting loyalty from me on this one. I’m an unwilling participant in your marital squabble.”

It wasn’t immediate, but eventually, Suguru deflated. He’d hoped Shoko would back him up, but he should’ve known better. Shoko barely tolerated their friendly bickering, and she’d never been one to get in the middle of their actual fights.

“Yeah,” he sighed. “Yeah, you’re right. Sorry. But, morally, you’re supposed to be on the side of the person who got cheated on.”

“No way. I’m not dealing with Satoru’s wrath when he finds out I picked you over him.” Shoko motioned for the pack, then traded with Suguru for the bento.

The last thing Suguru wanted to do was eat, but he needed the calories, considering how much food he’d puked up over the weekend.

With a grunt, he shoved rice in his mouth and forced himself to chew.

Across the quad, a group of students were playing a pickup game. Suguru watched curiously, admiring the way they weaved around the field.

In the two years since he’d started the auxiliary manager job, he’d only interacted with students when they were in the back seat of his car. Sometimes, it still came as a shock that he was the one driving rather than the sorcerer nervously prepping for the mission.

Suguru still remembered what Yaga said when he asked him to shadow Ijichi. A few weeks after he’d moved back into his old dorm, the new principal showed up with two bowls of Udon, determined to understand why Suguru left and what he needed to do to get him to stay this time.

“I’m sure you never imagined yourself in that sort of job,” Yaga had said when their bowls were empty. “But our managers are essential to the success of every mission. You don’t want to protect the weak? Fine. I won’t try to change your mind, but it would be a damn shame to see someone like you let their talent go to waste.”

“The way I see it, managers have their own strengths. They’re the eyes and ears before and after a mission. The work they do protects strong sorcerers like you and your friends. Could you find meaning in that?”

It took a bit more coaxing, but eventually, Suguru agreed to give it a shot.

He didn't love the job but didn't hate it either. The hours were long, and the pay was shit, but at least he could use his knowledge of curses for something.

It was a bonus that he got to hang out with Shoko for lunch. And when Satoru wasn't away on missions, they'd sneak off to spar and fuck in the old, unused training rooms. In fact, spending extra time with Satoru was one of the main reasons he took the job. That, and needing money for food.

Right, *food*. Suguru forced another bite of rice down and tried to keep the words that itched the back of his tongue from spilling out.

"Just say it," Shoko demanded as if she could hear his thoughts.

"How's h—" his voice croaked. He cleared the knot in his throat and swallowed the spit gathered in his mouth. "How's he doing?"

"Mmm, hard to tell. Quieter than normal, which could be either a blessing or a curse."

Another pause.

Suguru let Shoko chew the filter of her cigarette until he couldn't take the silence anymore. "Your turn. Spit it out."

"Only if you promise not to shoot the messenger."

Suguru held his hands up in surrender.

"It's..." She mumbled so quietly Suguru had to ask her to repeat what she'd said. "It's obvious he...misses you."

"He's a prick for that."

"I know."

"He fucked Higuruma," Suguru huffed bitterly. "The douchebag who thinks Megami no Ruby Pocky are spicy."

"I know."

"Then came home to me still smelling like him."

"I know that too."

"Satoru doesn't deserve to miss me. He doesn't deserve to even think of me."

"He doesn't." A puff of smoke blew past Shoko's lips. "But you're thinking about him too. You miss him, don't you?"

"Yeah," Suguru relented. There was no point in lying. Shoko could always see through him, no matter how hard he tried to hide his feelings.

“Why?”

Suguru clenched his jaw, drawing his eyebrows together, and let out the deep breath he'd been holding.

It wasn't a rhetorical question, but Suguru didn't want to answer, petty or not. He stalled by suffering through half of an omelet, then pushed the bento away. If he took one more look at that food, he would hurl.

Shoko rolled her eyes, crossing her arms. “Are you going to make me spell this out to you?”

“Might as well if that means you'll stop being so cryptic.”

She sighed like speaking to him was the most exhausting thing she'd ever done. Still, she didn't get up to leave.

“When you left,” she started, and Suguru braced for impact. “It was bad. I know you two. I know you never really talked about what happened on either side of the fence. And I know for sure you never told him about the...things...you went through.”

Got me there, Suguru thought. He was starting to feel like he was losing *Suguru v. Shoko v. Satoru*.

“All I can say is, it wasn't the same here, but it wasn't far off either. We all thought Satoru would go on a rampage, exorcising anything he could find, mission or not. But...it wasn't like that. He was sad, Suguru. Not the sad you think I'm talking about where he pretends it's fine and laughs about it. This was something else. I didn't know the guy had that depth of emotion in him.”

Suguru started interjecting, but Shoko cut him off, blowing smoke in his face. She crushed the finished cigarette under her toes.

“I saw him twice in that first month. At some point, I just assumed his clan took him home for the semester or something. But it wasn't like that. The crazy bastard was skipping classes and missions to hunt you down like a trapper stalking a nice new pelt. Obsessed to the point that Yaga had to talk some sense into him and nearly got the Fushiguro Toji treatment. Honestly, I'm a little impressed by how well you hid your residuals. I know—not the point.

“What I'm trying to say is, there was never a time in those six months when he stopped looking. Because as insufferable and self-centered as Satoru can be, he's also equally obsessed with you. Now, is it a healthy obsession?” She shrugged as if answering her question.

Suguru huffed a wry laugh. “He's got some way of showing it.”

“As if you're any better.”

Suguru scowled deeply, and his gaze narrowed. There was a knowing look on Shoko's face. Like she could uproot every incident he'd ever tried to forget but was choosing to spare him the embarrassment.

“Look, you both have monsters. That’s why you always find your way back to whatever the fuck this little mating dance is. I’m not saying you should forgive him or take him back. If I were you, I’d cut his dick off.” She said the last part, with such seriousness, Suguru closed his legs from their natural man-spread.

“But if you think Satoru’s going to give up and back off without a fight, you might actually be stupid.”

“Shoko, I—“

“What? Don’t tell me you think you can slither your way out of this. This is Gojo Satoru we’re talking about. You asked him to back off, so he’s giving you what you want. But let’s act like you have a brain swimming in that head of yours. There’s no way he’s staying away for good. The man is a shark on blood, and you’re the big bloody cut of meat, Suguru.”

Suguru rubbed at his temples. It was hard to think clearly. “Okay, so what am I supposed to do?” he asked, his voice strained with frustration.

“As your friend, my official advice is to hurry up and figure out your bullshit. It’s complicated, I get it. It’d be weird if it weren’t. But if you don’t work out what you’re feeling right now, you’ll end up in denial, which is a great weakness to exploit if he wants to get you back. Unless you want him to win you back. Then deny until your heart’s content.”

A short burst of wind cooled the sweat on Suguru’s forehead. Summer was almost over, and he wondered if he’d have time to visit Meiji-Jingu Gaien for koyo in the fall.

He knew Shoko’s advice made sense. He also had no idea what to do about it or where to start. Part of him was relieved that Satoru hadn’t made things harder by reaching out.

It also really pissed him off. Because who was Satoru to think he could put him through hell and then fuck off as if he hadn’t dropped a bomb on his life? What made the man so self-important that he felt too good to beg?

“Shoko,” Suguru tried again after the woman stood up.

“Eh?” she mumbled. A new cigarette was already between her lips.

“Thank you for...” He searched for the right words, but they wouldn’t come. Thank you for listening? Thanks for putting up with his mess all these years? Suguru waved a hand toward her, then the empty bento box.

Hints of a smile slowly pulled at the corners of Shoko’s lips until they split into a full-blown grin. It was warm and made Suguru’s heart swell. Shoko was really beautiful when she wasn’t giving him hell.

Maybe if he’d never met Satoru, he could have loved her. Fell in love with his other best friend—in a different lifetime, another version of their twisted reality.

“Thank Satoru for that,” she quipped. “He’s the one who pays me to make sure you eat.”



SHOKO WAS RIGHT, Suguru thought, cringing at the messages on his phone.

Gojo Satoru

Wed, Aug. 15 at 5:33 PM

Gojo Satoru

we really need to talk
all I'm asking for is 5 mins then I'll leave u alone
can u call me?

With a jolt, the train came to a stop. A disembodied woman's voice announced, "Carriage doors are closing. Mind the gap."

Suguru shifted as other commuters entered and exited the train. Sweat-slicked bodies brushed against the white button-up sticking to his back. A man fanned himself on the bench opposite him with his sun visor. The train was suffocatingly hot in the summer, but riding a couple of stops beat walking when he didn't have Satoru around to fly him home from work.

Suguru had spent the rest of the workday in a haze, trying to reason holes into Shoko's logic.

Satoru doesn't miss me.

If he did, he would have called.

He's probably already cuddled up with Higuruma somewhere, laughing about how much happier he is now that I'm out of the picture.

Suguru looked down at his phone again, like the texts would disappear. His finger hovered over the Call button for so long it started to cramp.

Calling would give Satoru the upper hand, right? The only thing Suguru had left was his pride. He wouldn't give that up so quickly, even if he missed him. Besides, what would he say if Satoru picked up?

Suguru shoved the phone back into his pocket and imagined stealing that old guy's fan. It was too damn hot to argue with Satoru.

The sweat-logged clothes touching his skin were driving Suguru crazy. They reminded him that he had a body. That he was a *person* when he wanted to be anything but. He'd rather be shapeless and transient—something that didn't have to *think*, or *feel* or *care* about stupid shit like texts from an ex-boyfriend who couldn't take a hint.

Moments like this made him miss the months he'd spent following Mr. Kawamura around. Sleepless nights. As high as he could get in smoke-filled back rooms. Too loud music.

Bloody knuckles. Pills. Powders. The crunch of bones under his fists. Where to go and who to call if he wanted a fix.

He'd tasted every Benzodiazepine on the second-hand market. Sometimes, he liked to imagine what flavor he'd choose if he could get his hands on it.

Right now? Klonopin. Ativan if he wanted to numb his brain completely.

Was it the best coping mechanism? No, but Suguru didn't care. He'd never been one to cope appropriately. Some people liked to down ice cream tubs in one sitting. Suguru liked to rail a line of coke and pop Benzos when he was ready to mellow out.

He'd been desperate for that weightless feeling the day he went to the address Mr. Kawamura gave him. Probably should have given the man's proposition more thought at the time. But Suguru knew he'd lost whatever humanity he had left long before he gave in to his boss. He'd fallen into the same trap—traded being used as a jujutsu soldier for being a pawn to a gangster. The only difference was that Mr. Kawamura never tried to convince him it would be worth all the pain.

With little direction, Suguru had found the gym and the man in charge—Hakari Hajime. He knew the family name.

The Hakaris—a long-standing clan in the Kanto region—had fought for ownership of several Tokyo nightclubs, bars, and betting rings in the 1960s and won. The current generation consisted of five sons, four known criminals with influence over the seediest places in the city.

Suguru had spent enough time with Mr. Kawamura to know the Hakari name meant danger. That alone should've made him turn around and high tail it home long before he was face-to-face with a man he knew better than to trifle with.

“You seem like a no-nonsense kinda guy, so let's skip to the plain 'nd simple,” Hakari had said the day he met Suguru.

In a tiny office several floors underground, Hakari sprawled across an amethyst-colored couch. Legs wide open and shirtless to show off the tattoos that covered his body down to his navel. His bleached-blond hair was a stark contrast against his olive skin. Suguru tried not to stare at the thin gold chain that connected the hoops in his nipples.

“You do what I say when I say, without question. Fight the matches I tell ya to, win the ones I want ya to, and you put on a helluva show while ya do it. If I like what I see, you'll earn enough cash to help with that nasty little addiction you're workin' with.”

Hakari leaned forward and poured cheap, amber-colored liquor into a glass. Eyes never breaking away from Suguru's, like a wild cat lounging after catching a mouse.

“Don't gotta be shy about it. The old man told me alllll about your love for dust,” the man drawled, tapping a ringed finger against the side of his nose. “Ya see, I don't really give a shit

what you put in your body. Long as you get the rich and pathetic to empty their pockets, and the old man gets his finder's fee. Think you can keep your end of the bargain?"

He pushed the glass to Suguru, then leaned back, hands folded on his thighs.

Suguru knew what he wanted. He'd seen Mr. Kawamura use the tactic plenty of times when he wanted to make it clear that he had the upper hand. Hakari wanted to know if Suguru was obedient, if he would come when called, like a dog.

Dutifully, Suguru had picked up the glass and swallowed it all.



"KITASHINJUKU PLATFORM. Mind the gap," the robo-conductor warned over the speaker.

Suguru's eyes snapped open. Did he fall asleep? He glanced out the window right as the train pulled off. The buildings in his view fading into the distance.

Kitashinjuku.

Why was he being so nostalgic today? Getting startled by a name he'd heard a thousand times? He leaned his head on the back of his seat and shook away the remnants of the dream.

He hadn't been back in Kitashinjuku in years. Not since he left the fight and the *fever* in that underground gym that always smelled like stale sweat and fresh blood.

He hadn't known what 'the fever' meant when Hakari first talked about it, but he caught on soon enough. He was sure he had it by the end of his first match. It was familiar, after all—something he'd felt countless times while fighting curses.

Before he left—before Amanai and Kuroi died—he'd get that euphoric rush when going toe-to-toe with special grades. He knew all about that ripple of heat that exploded in his gut when his life was at risk. It was a high he'd only ever experienced when dismantling monsters, the calm that wrapped around him when he called his curses. It had been a long time since he felt it, and when he did, the dopamine rush was almost better than drugs.

Securing a position among Hakari's regular fighters was easy, considering he'd already spent two years of his youth fashioning his mind and body into the perfect weapon. He was quick on his feet. Brutal. Knew how to break down his challengers when it was his turn to win, take his beatings when it was time to lose, and deliver the dramatic effects of good entertainment.

He thrived in the ring because, truthfully, he missed the fight no matter how hard he tried to escape it. There was no other feeling like the sting of blood in his eyes and sweat in his torn knuckles after they'd split and re-opened too many times. He relished seeing his opponents kick and scratch with every bit of strength they had, instincts demanding self-preservation.

Suguru would never admit that he loved it, but he did. Even when he hated it. Fighting gave him purpose, and following orders kept him numb. After all, those were the things he knew

best, better than he knew how to say ‘I’m sorry’ or ‘I need your help.’ In the ring, he didn’t have to think about money or curses or the people he was running from.

The more money Suguru won, the more he saw the fever in Hakari’s eyes. But before Suguru could dodge it, the past came hurtling toward him and collided with his new life.

He ran into Shoko one morning when he was stumbling home from celebrating his most recent win.

From where he stood across the street, he recognized her immediately—smoking outside a new cafe with cute little signs advertising milk teas and exotic treats in its windows. All sweet things he knew Shoko would never eat. Even in his fucked-up, strung-out state, Suguru could deduce who she was waiting for. Without so much as a ‘hello,’ he turned on his heel and ran in the opposite direction, nearly falling over a jogger.

Was it a cowardly move? Sure, but what else was new? Suguru had never claimed he was brave, just strong.

The last thing he needed was for Satoru to see him, especially after the bender he’d been on. He’d already spent so many nights crying over his best friend. Tried to use pills and powders to get Satoru off his mind until he finally accepted that forgetting Satoru was a moot point.

It was easier to ball up his feelings and hide them inside himself like one of his curses. To pretend he didn’t long for the Six Eyed man. Because where there was Satoru, there was jujutsu, and he fully intended to leave that hell in the past.



SUGURU PUNCHED his passcode into the keypad on his apartment door. A melodic bell welcomed him home, followed by cold silence.

No alarming clangs from the kitchen, no cutlery scraping ceramic bowls. No music so loud it nearly blew out the speaker system. And worst of all, no overzealous word vomit spewing at him before he could slip off his work shoes.

Quiet is better. Maybe now I ’ll be able to hear myself think.

He tossed his keys into the dish in the foyer and slipped his worn-out house shoes on. Satoru’s pair still sat beside them, practically brand new since he preferred stealing Suguru’s over wearing his own. *Bastard.*

With a grunt, Suguru flopped onto the couch and pulled out his phone, scrolling to distract himself from the severe lack of noise. To his surprise, he had a few unread messages from Nanami.

He could practically hear the man’s monotone voice narrating his condolences for the breakup and assuring him that he was better off without “that idiot.” A photo of Nanami and Haibara giving the camera heart-hands was attached to the last message.

Suguru's stomach twisted, unsure of whether to be heart-warmed or uneasy. It felt pathetic being comforted by friends in a happy, healthy relationship all because his self-obsessed boyfriend cheated on him.

He kept scrolling, slowly digging himself out of the unread messages that built up when he was dead to the world. There was a reminder from his mom to book a dentist appointment. A question from his dad wanting to troubleshoot an error on their new satellite cable system (as if Suguru knew anything about fixing it). Mundane updates from a few other friends and several funny images from Utahime in their Kyoto-Tokyo faculty group chat.

When he ran out of things and couldn't avoid it anymore, he clicked Satoru's name. There was a single new message.

Gojo Satoru

Wed, Aug. 15 at 5:33 PM

Gojo Satoru

we really need to talk
all I'm asking for is 5 mins then I'll leave u alone
can u call me?

Wed, Aug. 15 at 7:24 PM

i know I fucked up and I'm sorry

What the fuck did Satoru want him to say? That he was forgiven? Congrats on acknowledging he was in the wrong? Suguru bit back a scream. There were no words for how he felt.

Suguru clicked the screen off and let his eyes wander around the apartment as if the answers were written on the walls.

On the windowsill sat a blackened plant they'd both been too busy to water.

Unread mail spilled across the dining room table—primarily letters from the Gojo estate that Satoru had promised to sort.

A collection of books on recovery was haphazardly balanced on the edge of a bookshelf. Satoru's favorite, *Hijacked Brains*, poked out, bloated from sticky notes and dogeared pages.

Off to the side, a poorly mended dent in the wall made an ugly eye sore. A reminder of the fight that broke out the first time Suguru relapsed.

Shoko was right. Suguru had never told Satoru everything that happened during the months he'd defected. He didn't see the point in dredging up old wounds for the sake of being honest. The truth wouldn't change what *happened* or the things he'd *done*. Besides, some things were better left buried as deep as possible in the past.

Suguru ignored his phone when it buzzed again. Too many unsaid words stood between them. A text wasn't going to fix it.

Alright, let's leave Suguboo to work through some of that self-pity.

Up Next: Gojo's POV. I wonder what's going on in that pretty little head of his...

P.S. I heard from a friend of a friend that there will be 2 uploads this week. Idk, sounds sus. Don't quote me on it.

Gentle Light, Pt. 1

Chapter Summary

Satoru sheds light on how his relationship with Suguru started and the night he was unfaithful.

Chapter Notes

This chapter takes place on the night of Satoru's infidelity.

Therefore it contains: Non-explicit depictions of cheating and a little gas lighting.

It's actually a pretty tame installment in this fucked-up story. So enjoy the break from the heavier topics!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Saturday, August 11

[BEFORE]

Aside from the taste, there were three reasons why Gojo Satoru didn't like to drink.

For one, he was a lightweight.

Something he'd found out in high school after two cans of beer led to the most embarrassing night of his life. Public nudity and six sacks of flour had been involved. He swore everyone to secrecy and wholeheartedly planned to follow up on any betrayal by detaching limbs.

Second, Satoru hated losing control.

His entire life operated under the very thing. Control over Limitless. The Gojo clan's control over his future. The traditions of jujutsu society that controlled the social order. It was a delicate balance of power, and Satoru liked to keep unknowns from tipping the scales unless *he* was the unknown force.

Third, and arguably most important, when he drank his Six Eyes freaked the fuck out.

Reverted back to how they were when he was a kid, seeing curse energy as an unrefined, unfiltered kaleidoscope of color and every human emotion that flowed through it. Anger. Passion. Ambition. Inevitable regret. But, most commonly, *lust*.

You see, Satoru had learned from an early age that, like mono in a freshman dorm, lust was inescapable. His Six Eyes saw it all the time in the way people worshiped him. The Gojo prodigy. Wielder of the clan's innate technique. The first in a millennium.

As he got older, they saw it in the way other sorcerers envied him. Because he was the strongest. A savior come to deliver the weak from a pick of wannabe villains delusional enough to challenge him that day.

Then puberty came and went. Transformed him into a young man. Suddenly, the color of lust splintered into distinct shades, and his Six Eyes could see each one. Could parse the kind of lust that coveted his power and wealth from the one laced with raw sexual desire.

And the more he learned to untangle that kaleidoscope, the more it became clear that—above all else—everyone wanted him because they wanted to fuck.

Yes, *everyone*.

Moms, dads, politicians, nine of his second cousins. Teachers, priests, the goddamn mailman. Hell, even the grannies lining up at Jujo Market couldn't resist pinching his ass when he stopped by for his regular fix of Anzu ame.

He couldn't blame them for it. Wanting Gojo Satoru was a damn near-universal experience.

And Higuruma Hiromi was no exception to the masses.

It was shameless—how obvious the older man was with his pining. To the point that Satoru barely needed the boosted cursed energy to see how desperate he was for it. From the first mission they'd worked together, Higuruma could scarcely keep his eyes off him.

Since then, they'd worked together on and off. There'd been an influx in special grade incidents across eastern Japan. Strong curses showing up in pairs, if not trios, while weak ones lingered on the perimeter. Making Satoru's job that much more annoying to get done. Sorcerers like Higuruma helped him finish his work faster and gave him an audience when he felt like showing off.

When Satoru told Higuruma so after their fourth or fifth time working together, the stoic man snorted a laugh.

“You really are just as cocky as they say,” he'd smirked, no trace of venom in his voice.

Satoru had simply shrugged with his palms out. “Guilty as charged. Hope you don't mind. Although even if you do, that won't change anything.”

They'd just wrapped up a mission clearing an old abandoned hospital. A special grade with a particularly sticky innate domain that secreted disorienting toxins. It'd taken longer than Satoru would have liked.

Behind his blindfold, Satoru watched Higuruma strain to get a peak of his ass as they descended the stairs toward the lobby. Poor fucker had no clue how the Six Eyes worked, and

Satoru didn't care to fill him in. Nor did he care to talk to him about anything other than coordinating a strategy.

"It doesn't matter to me," Higuruma chuckled again, shaking his head. "The important thing is a job well done, and you delivered."

"Oh no, don't tell me you're one of those morality-obsessed sorcerers."

"Morality. Duty. Whichever fits the bill, I suppose. Either way, I'm glad I can help people. If that means letting you be cocky, be my guest."

"Cute, but flattery doesn't work on me." Satoru rolled his eyes behind the blindfold when Higuruma responded with a smile.

"Worth the shot," he grunted, scratching at the back of his head with a gavel.

Satoru stared at it curiously. Few things in the world of jujutsu shocked him. The first time he saw Higuruma whip out a judicial mallet mid-fight was one of them.

"What's up with that anyway?" He pointed at Higuruma's weapon.

"This? It was the first thing I picked up when my curse technique awakened a couple of years ago." Satoru was still clearly confused.

"Used to be a defense attorney. I was in a courtroom with my client when it happened. Some kid from the wrong side of the street who got himself mixed up in a murder investigation."

Fitting.

"I'm surprised you weren't a judge. You give off that kind of vibe."

"Maybe. Can't say I never thought about it. But back then, I truly believed in our judicial system—that it served to protect the innocent."

Though inefficient, Satoru walked with Higuruma down the winding hallways instead of flying them to the front door. Apparently, some people didn't appreciate being picked up and tossed through the air without warning, even if it was faster. Or at least that's what Suguru told him every time he scolded him for it.

Outside, they spotted a familiar black car approaching.

"That kid," Satoru asked as it pulled up. "The one you defended. What happened to him?"

Higuruma had been in the middle of reaching for the car door when he faltered. Cleared his throat awkwardly, before tugging on it and gesturing for Satoru to get in. Satoru could practically see the gears turning in Higuruma's head before he spoke.

"It's an interesting story. But you'd need all of the details to appreciate it. Why don't I tell you over a drink? My treat."

It was a lame way to ask him out and barely worth the trouble of rejection. Usually, Satoru liked to shatter the dreams of anyone who made a pass at him. He'd smile and yell, "Sorry, I'm married to a man!" just to see their faces scramble in confusion when they looked at his ringless left hand.

If it had been a typical day, Satoru would have given Higuruma the same treatment and teleported himself to Tokyo. He'd walk right into the higher-ups' office, demanding they never put him on another mission with that wannabe vigilante lawyer again, and complain to Suguru about it later while they snuggled on the couch.

But it wasn't a typical day. He and Suguru had fought that morning—something they were suddenly doing a lot. The arguments were nearly daily and usually fueled by Suguru's penchant for nagging when Satoru was already low. Or Suguru's icy attitude when Satoru inevitably failed to pick up on some silent cue his boyfriend gave him instead of just saying how he felt.

It seemed like the only thing they could agree on was the need to pick fights when things got too good, too comfortable, too *real*. Satoru didn't feel like going home to pick up on the argument he'd left to fester while at work.

Would it be so bad to pretend he didn't have a shit storm to deal with? Indulge in green apple soju and let his brain get fuzzy enough that he didn't care what Suguru said or how his boyfriend made him feel?

An hour and a half later, Satoru sipped a drink, sat side-by-side with Higuruma in a mid-scale bar in Meguro-ku. Hardly listening to the old man drone on and on about the idiot kid he'd had as a client.

The noisy chatter of the evening rush surrounded them like a weighted blanket. Higuruma used it as an excuse to lean in so close Satoru could smell the wheat beer on his breath. The older man's big, sleepy eyes hadn't peeled away from Satoru's mouth since they'd sat down, and his hand had been creeping across the bar top for at least fifteen minutes.

Satoru used his tongue to play with the straw in his drink and fought the urge to wrinkle his nose at the waves of lust-filled curse energy that oozed from Higuruma. Why the hell did he insist on talking Satoru's ear off without giving him a chance to respond? It was some Grade-A Loser bullshit, and his egregious control over his flow of curse energy only made the situation worse.

Satoru wondered how he'd ever managed to become a sorcerer and a special grade at that. Did the higher-ups seriously think this dude was anywhere near qualified enough to work with him? He'd been working alone since Suguru quit, so wasn't pairing him up with Higuruma the equivalent of saying the older man was a worthy replacement for his best friend?

What a fucking joke. The only sorcerer equivalent to Suguru was Suguru, even if he was being a bitch at the moment.

Satoru chugged his soju, then signaled to the bartender with a wink. He felt warm and sluggish, already buzzed. His Six Eyes were on the fritz, showing him the lust-laced curse energy that rippled off of her body as she dipped into the low fridge. It was overwhelming. Reminded him why he didn't drink. Whatever. He was starting to get used to the feeling. Avoiding Suguru by frequenting bars was another habit he'd picked up recently.

With his new drink in hand, Satoru settled back into his chair. Higuruma had a knee barely pressed to the inside of his thigh, their legs dangerously close to being slotted together. Satoru did Higuruma's job of closing the gap, pushing against the older man's leg. He licked his lips when Higuruma stuttered from the touch, high on the satisfaction he got from unraveling Higuruma with the single bone he'd thrown him.

Why couldn't Suguru eat from the palm of his hand like that? Satoru had spent years trying to tame him. Yet, like some sick cosmic irony, the more he tried to keep Suguru, the harder Suguru pulled away. Leaving Satoru feeling small and embarrassed, as if he were the dog being led by a bone.

Satoru snapped his focus back at the call of his name. Higuruma had asked him a question. He didn't know what, so he smiled. Nodded coyly and positioned his knee a few barely-there centimeters from the older man's crotch, making him choke on his drink.

It was harmless—just a little flirting to get things back to the natural order. Something that made him feel powerful, like batting his long lashes could make empires crumble.

That was part of the fun of knowing everyone wanted him. Toying with someone enough to scratch his itch for a distraction—something to keep him from focusing on the storm inside his head. To keep his mind from drifting to the strained silence and loneliness waiting for him at home, packaged neatly in the shape of the man he loved.



HE'D MET SUGURU on a warm day in March when the sun was high, shining brightly on cherry blossom petals that littered the stone paths connecting Jujutsu Tech's campus.

Satoru picked them from his hair as he walked. He'd arrived early in the morning, accompanied by his nanny and the bodyguard assigned to him for the last ten years. He hadn't seen his mom since he was six and never knew his dad, so this was as close to a parental send-off as he would get. Fine by him. Satoru accepted their well wishes and the handful of food the clan chef packed, practically pushing them out the door.

He couldn't wait to check out the place where he'd be spending the next three years. Sure, he hated school—never enjoyed the homework or learning and all of that. But this was the first and only time he'd ever been allowed to leave the Gojo estate for more than a few days and without a chaperone. He didn't care if the high school served as its own version of a chicken coup. Soon, he'd be going on missions, fighting real curses instead of mock dummies, and maybe he'd even make his first fri—

Satoru's body slammed into a hard wall, cutting his thoughts short. The wall yelped.

“Whoa, eyes up,” a smooth voice chastised.

Satoru looked down at his assailant and was met by two slanted eyes, purple irises thin against dilated pupils. They paired well with the harsh scowl beneath them and the mess of sleek black hair falling out of the boy’s high bun.

“Dude, watch where you’re going,” Satoru snipped, rubbing at his sternum where he’d been struck. That would be the last time he walked around without Limitless up.

“Wha—? You—“ the guy stammered, then collected himself. “You’re the one who ran into *me*.”

“So?”

“So...*you* watch where you’re going.”

Satoru’s mouth snapped open, now thoroughly annoyed. “Alright, short stack. What’s your problem?”

The other boy’s face contorted into a dumbfounded frown like Satoru had just told him he didn’t know where babies came from. “Short stack? What shitty teen movie did you just step out of?”

That kind of pissed Satoru off. He wasn’t used to people talking back to him. He was the Gojo heir, for crying out loud. And worse, he wasn’t trying to be rude, even if he was bothered by the kid’s behavior. The guy was shorter than Satoru by a few inches, objectively. And Satoru really didn’t see him! He’d been too lost in his thoughts to pay attention to his surroundings, something he knew he needed to train his Six Eyes to do automatically.

Satoru readied to spit another retort, but he was interrupted by a familiar voice.

“Gojo Satoru. I see you arrived safely, and you’ve already met your classmate.” Yaga Sensei descended the stairs that led to the promenade and stopped beside the boys. Satoru had met him when he toured the school last spring and decided he thought the man was silly but nice enough.

“Not formally, sensei,” the purple-eyed kid said, smiling brightly at their teacher. Any trace of his previous anger gone. The effortless change-up was unsettling.

“Ah, then introductions are in order. This is Gojo Satoru, the one I told you about before. He comes from one of the oldest clans of sorcerers in Japan’s history. We’re lucky to have him in our school, so learn well from him. Gojo, this is Geto Suguru. I think you two will get along. You both have promising techniques and a lot of potential.”

Gojo practically lept out of his shoes. This Kenzo Tenma-looking dude with a lame attitude and weird smile was being compared to him? Absolutely not. *No way he’s anywhere near my level. He’d be better suited as a pet than my peer.*

“Anyway, I’ll leave you two to get acquainted.”

“Sensei,” Suguru blurted before Yaga could leave. “I was wondering if you could show me to the training grounds. I want to get a workout so I’m prepared for our class on Monday.”

“Really? How disciplined. Gojo, take note. You don’t want to slip up and fall behind,” Yaga teased with a wink.

“Unlikely. But Geto’s more than welcome to try to keep up if he wants.”

“From what I hear about your family, I have plenty to learn,” Suguru quipped, innocently tilting his head. “I look forward to seeing you show off the skill that’s been promised.”

Satoru’s mouth fell agape, and his blood began to boil. The little shit was challenging him, suggesting he was all bark and no bite, all name with no skill to back it up. He wanted to snap back, but his brain couldn’t catch up with his mouth quickly enough.

Yaga had already waved a curt goodbye and was walking away with Geto, who hadn’t bothered to acknowledge him before turning on his heel.

As Satoru watched the two round a corner, he decided he hated that motherfucker Geto Suguru. He wanted to wipe the floor with that shit-eating grin.

From a young age, Satoru had been taught that no one in heaven or on earth would ever come close to wielding power equal to his. His nannies constantly reminded him of it. Ingrained into his brain that he was on another level, leagues above everyone else, even them. Even the absent mother who birthed him and the faceless father from which the idea of him had spawned. Satoru couldn’t be distracted by people nor swayed by their thoughts or feelings. One mistake could cause him to stray from the path of greatness he was destined for.

Satoru could still clearly remember Nanny Misa’s words, chastising him after one of the many times he complained about not having friends.

“You don’t need friends, Satoru-chan. You will need allies, at most, but friends will only bring harm in the end. Someone like you could never relate to what normal jujutsu sorcerers experience. If you find someone you care about, it will be safer for you and them if you think of them as a little bit...lesser than yourself. Care for them the best you can, but never put their safety above your own.”

At six years old, Satoru wasn’t exactly sure what Nanny Misa was saying, but he tried to make the only connection he could. “Like how I am with Chihiro?”

The long-haired dog slept in the corner. His floppy ears twitched when he heard his name called.

There’d been an incident a couple of weeks before.

Chihiro had escaped the compound walls and ran into the street. Satoru had run after him, eliciting a chorus of horrified screams from his aides when he almost got hit by a delivery truck. So little the driver hadn’t seen him in their blind spot. After that, he wasn’t allowed outside the estate without a chaperone.

“That’s right. Remember what I told you?” Nanny Misa continued. “Chihiro is a precious gift, and it’s your responsibility to take care of him as long as he lives. But ultimately, he’ll only be here for a single season in your long life. That’s why you can never forget your life comes before his.”

“O-okay,” Satoru said with a shaky voice, still unsure of what Nanny Misa was getting at.

She kneeled before him and held his tiny hands.

“For you, people will serve a similar purpose—companions only good for their lifetime. If you try to keep them longer, it will only cause pain for you and your companions. It’s better to think of them the way you think of little Chihiro. Like...”

“Like pets?” he asked innocently.

She bit her lip, a look in her eyes Satoru hadn’t seen before. “Yes, that’s right, Satoru-chan.”

“Even you?”

“Even me.”

From that day on, Satoru had lived by Nanny Misa’s words. Yet, less than three hours into his first day outside the clan’s influence, he’d nearly let himself forget it.

Well, crisis averted. He didn’t need to make friends. Never did. Back home, he simply collected pets as they came and went from the estate. Now that he was in high school, he’d just have to find a new one. And there was something exceptionally appealing about the idea of making Geto Suguru the target of his affection.

He didn’t doubt the kid had some talent, which, if true, could make him useful. And he got along with his elders, something Satoru lacked.

The more Satoru ruminated, the more something profound told him to keep Suguru—to covet and possess him. Deflate the kid’s ego by showing him his place and make sure no one ever compared them again. Because who would dare compare a master to the animal he tended?



SATORU’S EFFORTS DIDN’T go as planned—at least, not at first. Just as their first meeting had ingrained itself in Satoru’s head, the same went for Suguru. But rather than morphing into a bizarre obsession, Suguru channeled his emotions the old-fashioned way—into pure, unadulterated hatred.

He was never obvious about it. Satoru quickly learned that Suguru preferred to hide his true feelings behind broad smiles and soft affirmations. No, Suguru wrung out his hate boner by antagonizing Satoru any chance he got. Nagging him about the homework he hadn’t completed. Telling him to be ‘nicer’ to their teachers and, worst of all, lecturing him on the morality of jujutsu sorcery at any chance he was given.

Jujutsu needs to be taken seriously, Suguru often reminded him. Then followed up with a self-aggrandizing speech about how sorcerers needed to take this ‘truth’ to heart lest they want the same people they were trying to save to *die*.

“So what?” Satoru mused one day. He’d almost taken down a small duplex with a botched Red that morning, and Suguru had been on one since. How was he supposed to know that a bunch of bratty neighborhood kids were hiding in the basement?

“People die every day. I can’t waste my time getting worked up over the inevitable.” The lanky first-year student sucked on a cherry red lollipop, legs spread wide open, sitting lazily on the stairs leading up to the main building of the school.

He’d spent most of their morning classes arguing with Yaga sensei. Satoru knew his bratty behavior unnerved Suguru, but he needed to let off some steam between Suguru’s annoying lectures and Yaga’s reprimands. Plus, he enjoyed getting a rise out of his classmate.

Suguru ground his teeth and tugged at the sweat-stained neck of his uniform. “Sure,” he huffed, “but what happens when hundreds die because you failed? Thousands? It might seem easy to brush it off now, but at some point, all of that blood on your hands will start to feel disgusting.”

“I’ll leave that to you to figure out, Suguru,” Satoru said with a plastered smile. “I never fail.”

He watched Suguru’s face contort until he looked like he wanted to punch the smirk right off his mouth.

Their first year continued like that—backhanded compliments, even more front-handed insults. Snide comments and provocative jabs topped off with the ever-mounting competitive current that surged between them. Satoru found it all thrilling.

Sure, it took longer to break Suguru’s resolve than he’d anticipated. To finally get the kid to stop fighting and submit to him. But Satoru enjoyed the fight much more than he’d expected. No one fought with him back home. Unless there was a chance of bodily harm, he always got exactly what he wanted when he wanted it. Suguru, on the other hand, wasn’t afraid to talk back. Tell him no. Or throw the first punch when Satoru really got under his skin.

By autumn, they were having weekly fights, especially as their growing list of missions forced them to spend even more time together.

“He’s just so...so...” Suguru shoved a fried rice ball into his mouth, struggling to stifle the annoyance bubbling under his skin.

From where Satoru stood just outside the canteen, he had a clear view of the other first years as they ate. They hadn’t yet learned to keep their private conversations to enclosed spaces, and Satoru had only recently started teleporting. They were too reliant on the tells of approaching footsteps and shuffling clothes to let them know when to lower their voices.

Suguru chewed with his mouth open. “You don’t get it. He’s just—“

“Self-obsessed?” Shoko offered, cringing as Suguru wiped his lips with his hand.

“Loud. He’s so goddamn loud!”

Shoko nodded, looking over her shoulder for anyone who could save her from having to listen to another Satoru-hate-boner venting session. The quad behind them was empty.

“Yeah, the guy does like to talk a lot.”

“It’s not just the talking. It’s the way he walks, how he sleeps. God, the way he stretches before a fight is loud and flashy. It never stops!” Suguru chewed angrily.

Satoru stifled a laugh at that. He knew Suguru wasn't a fan of him, but it was honestly kind of funny to hear how far Satoru had pushed him in only a few months.

“He’s so freaking annoying,” Suguru whined.

“I know, you’ve told me. At least a hundred times now,” Shoko rolled her eyes as she lit a cigarette.

Suguru continued, ignoring her. “I can’t stand the guy!”

“It’s because you two are so alike,” Shoko mumbled, cigarette balancing between her teeth, making Suguru’s mouth snap comically open.

“Yo!” Satoru called. His classmates whipped around and nearly jumped out of their skin at how close he stood. Without asking if he was welcome, he dropped his plate on the table and straddled the chair next to the raven-haired boy.

Suguru stared, projecting as much disinterest as possible with the bored look on his face.

“You know, guys, something so weird just happened. I was on my way to get lunch, and out of nowhere, I felt my ears burning.”

“Yeah? And?” Shoko offered.

“That means that someone was talking about me,” Satoru pouted.

“Adults say that to kids to keep them from talking shit about their elders,” she sighed, mirroring Suguru’s boredom. Except she meant it.

“I’m not so sure. What do you think, Suguru?” Satoru turned, eyeing his classmate with his usual look of impudence.

“You tell me. Your ears must burn all the time. There’s a lot to say about someone only liked by themselves.”

Satoru blinked, then threw his head back, bursting into a loud fit of laughter.

“You’re so sensitive. Lighten up,” he taunted. Then swiped the rice ball Suguru was holding and popped it into his mouth.

Truth be told, Satoru might have had too much fun taming his new pet. He always found a way to latch on to Suguru and annoy him to no end. One of his favorite methods was invading Suguru’s personal space.

Satoru loved to make a mess of Suguru’s hair. Twirled the kid’s bangs around his fingers or ruffled raven-black strands out of the tight bun meticulously positioned at the crown of his head.

With a smirk, he’d say something ridiculous like, “Your hair’s soft like a girl’s, Suguru. I might mistake you for a woman if I didn’t know you.”

Or, “What’s up with the bangs? You like looking like a mutt? Or are you too busy getting your ass kicked to clean yourself up?”

On other days, he found joy in kicking Suguru’s ankles under the table or leaving Suguru prank messages on tiny sheets of paper stuffed in his notebooks.

Most of all, Satoru found the most pleasure in sparring. He was always the first to offer to pair up when they practiced in class, and no one ever questioned it, probably because no one else wanted to deal with either of them.

When Satoru and Suguru fought, it was like two stars orbiting each other—unimaginable power shifted and sparked—never quite colliding. They danced a delicate tug-of-war, forcing each other’s hand and pulling out both the best and the worst in one another.

“Withdraw,” Satoru barked, his hot breath tickling Suguru’s ear.

That day, Suguru had faltered first, landing him pinned to a scratchy vinyl mat. They’d been passing kicks and punches back and forth as Yaga guided them through a lesson.

Unfortunately, Suguru was the better close-combat fighter. It was part of what made him the perfect pet to keep by Satoru’s side. He was the only person who could match—and sometimes surpass—Satoru’s skill. So, he’d learned that to win in a hand-to-hand match, he needed to wear Suguru down until he was far past his physical limits.

Satoru held Suguru’s head in a chokehold, his legs binding the other boy’s, preventing them from moving. It wasn’t enough to hurt Suguru, but it would take considerable energy he didn’t have to break away. The problem was that Satoru didn’t realize Suguru had caught onto this tactic.

With what little energy he had left, Suguru brought his free hand forward and jabbed his elbow back, connecting with the fleshy side of Satoru’s stomach. It took the taller by surprise, leaving an opening for Suguru to haul his body weight forward, flipping Satoru over his head.

In a flash, he rolled on top of Satoru and straddled his waist, using his hands to wrap around Satoru's elbow and pin it close to his knee in a painful hold.

"I think you're the one who should withdraw," Suguru huffed.

His thighs were almost as big as Satoru's face, and the pressure he put on Satoru's arm threatened to pop it out of the socket. Unless he used Limitless, he wasn't getting out of that hold, and it was a sorcery-exempt sparring lesson.

Still, Satoru continued to fight. Strained against Suguru's hands and squirming for purchase.

"God, give up already!" Suguru hissed.

Satoru didn't want to forfeit, but he was exhausted. Their stubbornness had made the lesson run twice as long as planned. Shoko had left an hour ago. Satoru needed a shower, food, and quality time with his K-dramas. Giving Suguru the win and punishing him for it later would be easier than fighting.

"Looks like you finally got sick of being second best,"

He watched as annoyance, then relief, sparked in Suguru's eyes, and a victorious smirk spread his lips. That wouldn't do.

Just as Suguru moved to let go, Satoru decided to fuck with him a little bit more. He reached for the medical bandages he wore when sparring and pulled them down.

Suguru gasped.

He'd seen Satoru's eyes before, but never like this—never so close and blown out. The few times it had happened, Satoru noticed how it made the kid freeze in his tracks like he was a LimeWire download buffering for twenty minutes.

"Good for you, Suguru," Satoru teased, holding Suguru's gaze. Drowning him in the uncanny abyss of his fractal baby blues. "How does it feel now that you finally grew a pair of balls?"

The sound of Yaga's whistle cut through the moment. "Let's clean up for the day!" he called, then strode out of the training room.

Suguru snapped out of the trance. Jumped back and scrambled on his hands and knees until he stumbled onto his feet. He was so obviously unnerved it made Satoru preen.

"Maybe you don't suck as much as I thought you did," he said, slapping Suguru on the back. Without another word, he followed Yaga out the door, leaving Suguru to clean up the mess of mats and weapons littered across their station.

Satoru snickered at the image of Suguru in his head. The mix of shock and panic. The way his ruddy face, flushed red from their match, had slowly darkened to almost purple. The twitch of his lips and frenzied heartbeat Satoru had felt through Suguru's palms. God, and the heat of hatred that practically radiated from him when Satoru ditched clean up. Satoru hummed in satisfaction. Suguru was just so cute when he was pissed.

Wait.

Satoru stopped dead in his tracks. What the hell was that thought?

Cute?

Suguru?

The fuck???

Chapter End Notes

Good news and bad new.

Good news: I'm in Japan!

Bad news: That means this will be my last upload for a few weeks until I return from vacation. On the bright side, between all of my flights, I'll have plenty of time to write and edit.

When we return: First-year Satoru learns the meaning of gay panic.

As always, thanks for reading! <3

Gentle Light, Pt. 2

Chapter Summary

First-year Satoru starts down a path that changes his life forever.

Chapter Notes

This chapter contains: explicit sexual content and dubious consent.

Explicit content starts with "Satoru swiveled" and ends with "He teleported." For a summary of this portion, see the End Notes.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

“Seriously, what the actual fuck?” Satoru muttered as he frantically paced his room, dodging piles of junk at each turn. It didn’t make sense. He’d never, *never*, once associated the word “cute” with Suguru.

Kittens were cute. Lilamon was cute. Yaga trying to keep him in line was cute, in the most condescending way.

But, that prick? He was supposed to be breaking down Suguru’s arrogance, not smiling like an idiot when he blushed. What the hell was going on? And why, now? He’d teased Suguru into oblivion countless times, turning him pink with embarrassment, without his brain mainlining butterflies to his stomach.

Satoru threw himself onto his bed and muffled a scream into his pillows, raking his fingers through sweat-slicked hair. If he were at home, Nanny Misa would’ve whacked him with a broomstick, then shoved him into the shower. But he couldn’t bring himself to get up. He was in personal turmoil, dammit!

Why was his brain playing some sick trick on him? Maybe he hadn’t been sleeping enough. Pushed himself too far between missions and studying and was now paying the price. Satoru squeezed his eyes closed, trying to block out the affronting thoughts.

Yeah, stress had to be turning him soft, Satoru reasoned. That’s all. Proper sleep, good food, and resetting his zen would fix it. Then, he’d never think about Suguru in that way again.



IT TOOK LESS THAN a week for the intrusive thoughts to return.

The first time, Suguru had been giving a boring presentation on simple domains when Satoru caught himself staring at his pursed lips. Satoru blamed spoiled fish for the tingle in his stomach.

It happened again when they shared a room on an overnight mission—a cosmic set-up from the universe if you asked Satoru. It was most definitely, absolutely not his fault that he'd gone to sleep that night with a half-chub. The smell of Suguru's clean hair was too girly and confusing! Who wouldn't get turned on by musky pine and eucalyptus?

Satoru's resolve cracked after he spent a game of pick-up basketball in a daze, utterly distracted by glimpses of Suguru's abs each time he lifted his shirt to wipe sweat from his face.

Over and over again, the same word turned in Satoru's head. Cute. Cute. *Cute, cute, cute.* After a week of torment, he knew he couldn't deny it anymore.

He, Gojo Satoru, thought Geto fucking Suguru was inexplicably, undeniably, frustratingly *cute*.

Suguru was cute when he snapped at Satoru for throwing erasers at his head. He was cute when he grumbled at Satoru for spouting nonsense. He was even cute when he pretended to be frustrated at Satoru's provocations, though they both knew Suguru picked just as many fights. All of it was just so goddamn *cute*.

It wasn't his fault, Satoru decided one night. He was in bed, mindlessly using Limitless to toss around a paper ball.

Surely, he was bound to go a little soft on Suguru eventually, right? They practically spent every waking moment together. They shared a dorm room wall, for Christ's sake. He'd even heard Suguru masturbating a few times. Those close quarters would make anyone have weird thoughts.

And he'd said it before as a joke, but Suguru did look like a girl from certain angles. That sleek hair. His long lashes and slender fingers. The way he walked around the dorms in a high ponytail. Very feminine behavior!

So...so what if he thought Suguru was kind of adorable? That didn't necessarily mean anything, right? It was expected to grow fond of the people around you. Suguru wasn't the first pet Satoru had liked, after all. Sure, all the others were staff at the estate and at least twice his age. But this was no different. Satoru's fondness had *nothing* to do with the way Suguru bit his lips when he concentrated or the way his bangs stuck to his forehead when he was sweaty, or how he somehow always kept his fingernails perfectly manicured and—

Satoru bolted upright, releasing Limitless. The paper ball smacked him in the face.

With all things in life, he'd never been one to deny reality. He found it useless. So there was no use in avoiding the question gnawing at his sanity:

Was he gay?

Satoru's nose wrinkled on instinct. He'd never thought that way about men before. But he couldn't keep pretending the feeling itching under his skin was anything other than desire. So where did that leave him?

Satoru pondered for all of fifteen seconds before snatching on a hoodie and bounding out of his room toward the library.

It was empty when he arrived. He sat at the nearest computer station and drummed his fingers against the desk, waiting for the old machine to blink to life. It felt like an eternity before the default Microsoft background filled the computer screen. Satoru quickly opened the browser, shamelessly typed "gay porn" into the search bar, then got to work.

A few minutes later, he realized he had no idea what he was looking for. The grainy thumbnails and obtuse titles for each video didn't help either:

"Topping my DILF coach in the locker rooms after playoffs!! Hot as fuck creampie"

"Stepson gets dirty with his new daddy. Don't let Mom find out ;)"

"EPIC cumshot compilation. UNCUT and HUNG edition"

Satoru felt a headache coming on.

What kind of porn did one watch when trying to decide if they like dick? Satoru wondered. Would it be more efficient to search by most popular videos or try to find something similar to his taste in women? Eventually, Satoru landed on a thumbnail of a bottom with soft, feminine features and hit play. He turned the volume down when baritone moans echoed through the speaker.

It wasn't...bad, per se—the image of two men banging. It actually wasn't that different from the straight porn he liked, save for the extra dick and balls. At the very least, the viewing experience was educational, showing him how men go about sex with other men. Satoru watched intently, curiously studying how the men interacted.

No, he didn't mind it at all. But it didn't do anything for him either. His dick was still flaccid in his boxers.

Satoru kept searching, clicking through categories he'd never heard of. *Bears*. *Cruising*. *Femboy*. He scrubbed through random scenes, taking in as much as he could. But after an hour of searching, he was bored. Nothing had held his attention for more than a few minutes. Sure, it was kind of fascinating to stumble into a world he knew nothing about, but his dick was laughably uninterested. He was about ready to pack it up for the night when a title made him pause:

"Musclehead stud totally *wrecks* and *punishes* his bratty roommate"

Satoru stilled, hovering his mouse over the exit button for several seconds. He clicked the link.

The video opened with a man sitting on a couch, complaining about the stress of his upcoming exams. Bleach blonde. Nice build. He slipped a hand into his sweats to jerk off. The camera panned to the door as someone else walked in. A tall brunette with thin, dark eyes and taut pecs that stretched the fabric of his shirt. The camera's angle showed off his sharp jaw.

Satoru swiveled in his chair, checking the empty room before he turned up the volume slightly above a whisper.

It was nothing special—the typical cheesy porno professionally filmed in a big studio. So Satoru wasn't surprised when the blonde continued stroking himself despite the interruption, pulling a pillow into his lap to hide his cock. It would play out like most of those scenarios do. Eventually, the roommate would catch on. Maybe tease the blonde before offering to suck him off. Or the blonde would come onto him first, begging for relief until the brunette gave into his carnal urges.

Except that's not what happened. The brunette was pissed when he realized what the blonde was doing, pointing fingers in disgust. The conversation quickly turned into an argument. Suddenly, both were on their feet, pushing and shoving, mashing each other's faces with open palms until the brunette wrestled them onto the couch. He growled and forced the other's face into the cushions.

It was so cheesy. Yet Satoru couldn't help the flush of excitement that came from watching him yank the blonde's hips against his pelvis. Hissing insults and working his hips into his ass. Mocking the blonde when his knees buckled.

"I bet you like that, you pervert," the brunette spat. "You like me rubbing my cock all over your ass. You're a sick little fuck doing that shit out in the open when you knew I'd see it. So desperate you'd probably let me jerk you off."

In one motion, he pulled the blonde's pants to his ankles and tilted their bodies toward the camera, putting the smaller man's leaking cock on full display. He spit on his palm before he wrapped his fingers around his length and pumped mercilessly in time with the rhythm of his clothed hips snapping against bare skin. The blonde mewled from the friction, then cursed at the brunette for laughing.

Satoru gnawed on his lips, eyes transfixed on the screen. Sweat prickled his forehead. He felt his pants tighten as the two grew angrier, the blonde now fucking himself into his roommate's hand. The smaller man cursed between moans, his face drawn into a mix of wrath and ecstasy. The orgasm hit him like a trainwreck, drawing strangled screams from his throat as white streaks of spunk shot all over the couch cushions, pillows, and the hand still tugging his cock. He looked exorcised. Like his climax had been ripped from his body, giving him no choice but to succumb to the ecstasy of release.

Before he could settle, the brunette was already freeing himself from his baggy jeans, revealing a monster cock that only existed in porn. He rose, planted one foot on the cushions, and dropped the other to the floor. The perspective changed, and Satoru watched him glide a hand up and down his length, using the cum on his fingers as slick. Moving slowly from a swell of thick black hair to his beet-red tip.

“Spread your slutty ass for me,” the brunette taunted, voice rough with want.

The blonde looked over his shoulder. There were tears in his eyes and an angry ripple between his brows. He sneered as he reached back and pulled his cheeks apart.

Satoru choked on his spit. The sight was obscene—the loose ring of muscle gaped and dripping with lube. The strain in his boxers was noticeable now. Nothing in his brain but arousal like he’d never felt before, something deeply ravenous that had suddenly opened its maws and threatened to eat him alive if he didn’t feed it. He jolted in his seat at the first loud smack of a large hand on a tan ass, unsure if it was him or the blonde moaning.

The same hand smoothed over the reddening welts it’d created, then came down again. Repeating the motion until the blonde screamed, thighs trembling from holding himself up. A string of expletives spilled from his mouth when his roommate reached between his legs and palmed the head of his cock, still sensitive from his orgasm.

With a low chuckle, the brunette stroked himself one last time, then fed his cock to the furled hole, pushing in until the muscle swallowed the broadest part of his dick.

“Fuuuuuck,” the blonde groaned, stuttering over the word.

“Ha, I knew you were desperate for it, but isn’t this too much? Your slutty ass is sucking me like it’s giving me a blow job. You want it that bad, huh?”

“Y-you’re a piece of shit.”

“Aw, you don’t like me?” the brunette laughed and pulled out. The blonde’s hole clenched on the emptiness. His breath hitched when the hand at his hips moved to his neck and squeezed, silencing the insult into a quiet, throaty gurgle.

“Mmm, well, too damn bad. Now shut the fuck up and take your punishment.” His hips snapped forward, plunging his cock deep inside in a single thrust.

Satoru made a mess of his underwear before he could even get his pants undone, toppling over to the sound of the brunette barreling through his orgasm.

He teleported back to his dorm so quickly he wasn’t sure he remembered to close the browser.

An hour later, he was lying in his bed, sheets ruined by a collage of wet spots, chest heaving as he raggedly gasped for air. He’d never seen anything so...charged with emotion. So animalistic. He knew people were into some weird shit, but when he thought of kinky sex, he thought of handcuffs and blindfolds, not taunting his partner and degrading them.

Having grown up sheltered as hell and cut off from the world, it’d been an earth-shattering experience when Satoru’s upperclassmen showed him porn for the first time. Since then, he’d mainly watched what they shared—usually, busty, submissive girls engaged in vanilla sex. The few times he’d ventured to the library for ‘extracurricular activities,’ he’d kept his searches just as tame.

When he jerked off, he liked to imagine holding a girl's slim wrists, sitting her in his lap, and bouncing her on his dick as she whined for him to be gentle. He'd felt guilty the first time he had that sort of fantasy. So what the fuck was the shit he just watched? And why did it turn him on so much, imagining it was Suguru's face pressed against the couch, murder sparking in his eyes as Satoru spanked him?

The thought made Satoru's spent cock flag painfully. It was all he could think about—mixing pain and pleasure. Fighting Suguru and fucking him within an inch of his life the way he'd seen that top pleasure his bottom.

So, he was into dick.

Wanted to know what it was like to have another man's ass squeezing him. His muscles viscerally ached at the mental image of sheathing himself deep inside Suguru and rearranging his insides. It was just as appealing as every fantasy he'd ever had about a woman.

Bisexual, maybe? Satoru wondered, considering whether the label mattered to him. He decided that was a thought for another day. He had a bigger problem. The seal had been broken, and an insatiable hunger lapped at his skin.

He wanted to do every unholy thing he saw in that video and more to his classmate and favorite toy.



IT HAPPENED UNEXPECTEDLY in their second year. By then, Mission 'Make Suguru My Pet' had been re-branded to Mission 'Make Suguru Spread His Ass.'

Satoru had switched tactics. Eased up on the snide comments and undue insults and aimed for something closer to a respectful rivalry. Hoping Suguru wouldn't question the change. With time (and many unrelated scoldings from Yaga), the angry current between the two boys had crested into a lulling wave. They'd grown out of trying to consume one another and conceded to co-existence. It wasn't the thrill Satoru got from watching Suguru squirm, but civil movie nights and trips to the arcade were their own fun.

Turned out, when they weren't driving each other to the edge of madness, Satoru could appreciate the shimmery purple of Suguru's eyes. How they brightened when he was genuinely happy and nearly disappeared behind mono lids when he was somber.

Satoru trained his Six Eyes to distinguish the range of emotions Suguru could express—and there were many of them. Far more than Satoru had ever dealt with. Melancholy, anxiety, insecurity, contempt, hope, pride. Satoru studied them like the textbooks he was supposed to read contemplating how to use this newfound knowledge to make his wet dreams a reality.

That day, they'd retreated to Suguru's room to escape the summer heat. Sprawled on his floor, bickering without malice as they fanned themselves with worksheets. A ratty old standing AC machine pushed warm air around. Suguru said something diabolical about Digimon. Claiming Greymon was less powerful than Starmon or some bullshit like that. It was playful, now that they knew it wouldn't end with new bruises.

Satoru couldn't quite remember what Suguru was saying when everything shifted. A cloud must have moved just right. One moment, the room was overexposed. In the next, they were plunged into darkness except for a single beam of gentle light on Suguru's face.

Satoru watched as the clouds parted and the beam expanded. Turning the peach fuzz on Suguru's chin translucent and eyelashes gold like sunlight.

Satoru stared in awe as a familiar desire ignited, his hands twitching with want. He *needed* to touch Suguru. The want had been burning him for so long. Hot in his gut, threatening to light everything in its path ablaze. It was torture, craving the feeling of Suguru's damp skin under his. His black tresses falling through his fingers. Wondering what sounds he'd make when he finally tasted his lips. He didn't know how much longer he could wait to take what was his. So he didn't.

Satoru dove forward and crushed their lips together in a hurried, awkward kiss. At first, Suguru stiffened, squeezing his hands at his sides. Until the shock of the moment settled, and he melted into the kiss, soft lips moving against Satoru's with equal enthusiasm. His hands tangled in Satoru's hair and drew him closer.

Satoru moaned embarrassingly loud like the touch-starved virgin that he was when Suguru's tongue pried him open. He didn't care. How could he when Suguru kissed him back, tickling his face with the short breaths he blew against his cheek?

It was transcendent—a supernova erupting behind Satoru's closed lids.

Suguru tasted exactly like he'd imagined—black coffee and something savory. He licked behind Suguru's teeth and under his tongue, nibbled on his lips, then dove back in to map every crevice of his mouth before he pulled the wet muscle between his teeth and sucked.

It was Suguru's turn to moan, and Satoru swallowed that too. He wanted to live off of Suguru—his smell, his skin, his cursed energy. Drink down everything Suguru would give him because he was a starved man getting the first drop of water after a year-long drought, with nothing to hold him over but the hope of having Suguru like this.

Satoru held his breath span class Suguru back, letting the flame in his gut consume him and take him to a headspace where there was nothing left but *Suguru, Suguru, Suguru*. Pushing and pulling against the other boy, locked in the dance of combat. Taking each of Suguru's moans as his winnings.



“WHAT?” SATORU yelled. His voice echoed down the hallway, bouncing off the shoji doors.

“Suguru left,” Yaga repeated. “It seems he fled during the storm last night. Don't make me say it again.” His face was cold, and his eyes were trained on the floor, making it impossible for Satoru to recognize his expression.

“I heard you. That's why I said, ‘What?’”

A door at the end of the hallway opened, letting in a cold gust of wind. It was December. Their third year of school. Satoru couldn't wait to graduate in the spring.

Since that first kiss they shared, he and Suguru had been inseparable. Spending all their free time either goofing off, or watching shitty television. Going on night excursions to find trouble in Shibuya, or holing up in love hotels for the weekend. That's exactly where they'd been two days ago celebrating Satoru's birthday. So why the hell was Yaga telling him that Suguru had left?

"Several auxiliary managers and I searched for him this morning, but there was no trace of his residuals within a 10-kilometer radius. There were no signs of a struggle or forced entry in his room, and Tengen's barriers would've alerted us if any unknown cursed energy signature entered. We also contacted Suguru's parents, but they haven't heard from him since October."

"So, what are you saying?"

"It seems Suguru left on his own accord and doesn't want to be found."

He'd expected the response, but that didn't stop the panicked rage that erupted from Satoru. "There's no way!" he spat.

Yaga sighed again, his shoulders sagging as he covered his face with his hand. "Satoru, I also have no idea what the hell is going on."

In the nearly three years Satoru had known Yaga, he'd never heard his sensei diverge from his typically monotoned, no-bullshit, often exasperated tone. But when he finally made eye contact with him, Satoru could see the weight of exhaustion in his teacher's eyes and hear what he was trying to convey without words.

Suguru was gone. He'd planned this and left without a trace. *Don't get your hopes up, Yaga's eyes said. I'll try, but if he doesn't want to be found...*

To Satoru, the notion was unacceptable.

By noon, he'd joined their meager search party. They divided the perimeter of the school, surroundings, and greater Tokyo into sectors so they could cover the most ground. Still, they hadn't found a trace of his residuals or a single clue as to where he could have gone.

After three days without progress and no sign that Suguru was in imminent danger, Tengen called off the search, anticipating the reprimands that would come once the higher-ups learned that the Tokyo school had wasted so much time and resources on one student.

"Those bastards," Satoru spat as he worried a trail into the quad's grass. "They're treating him like he's some Grade 4 waste of space. Suguru is a Special Grade. Shouldn't that count for anything? What's the point of training us like this if the higher-ups aren't going to do anything when they lose one of their best?"

Neither Nanami or Haibara spoke. Only Shoko hummed noncommittally, as she did when she was only half-listening. Satoru was mainly talking to himself at this point. He'd been ranting, repeating the same frustrations for nearly an hour.

Between his outbursts over the previous two days and his current rant, he could tell the others were sick of listening to him talk in circles, but he couldn't get himself to shut up. "What if something happened to him, and we're missing a clue?"

"You and I turned over his room multiple times," Shoko reminded him. The most valuable thing they'd found was a book on advanced cursed energy applications, with several bookmarks neatly tucked between the passages on residuals and cursed womb theories. "If there were anything to find, we would have caught it."

"Sure, but what if he wasn't in his right mind when he left?"

"As in...?"

"I don't know! What if he thought he wanted to leave but was in some sort of fugue state, and now he's woken up halfway across the country with no idea what his name is?"

"Satoru—"

"I know that sort of thing happens."

It was Nanami's turn to interject. "Statistically, the chances of that happening are low."

"But it's not impossible. Or he could have a split personality disorder, and it was another version of him that made him leave."

"I think..." Haibara started, eyes darting everywhere except for toward Satoru. His tone was gentle, as if he were reasoning with a spooked animal. "Maybe we need to accept that Geto... wanted to go."

Satoru gritted his teeth. He knew his friends were being logical, but that didn't stop the prickle of anger that sparked in him.

"Okay, okay. So, he chose to go? Fine. But Suguru is from the countryside. He doesn't know how to take care of himself in a big city like Tokyo. *I'm* the one who taught him how to ride the subway. It's not safe for him to be out there alone."

No one responded, so he took that as his opportunity to barrel on.

"How is he eating? Where is he sleeping? When Suguru gets desperate, he's too trusting."

"Gojo, I—" Nanami tried, but Satoru cut him off.

"Who's going to watch out for him? What if he gets himself into trouble? What if someone tries to hurt him?"

"Goj—"

“And he practically looks like a girl from behind. What if someone mistakes him for a woman and tries to take advantage of him?”

“Gojo, I need you to listen to yourself.”

Satoru knew he was being ridiculous. He could hear the hysterics in his voice, but he couldn't help it. Why wasn't anyone as concerned as he was? Why was everyone acting so calm?

They didn't get it. *Something* had to be wrong, even if Suguru had left of his own will. He'd *fled the* school in the middle of the night. Suguru wouldn't do something so rash without a reason. He was sure of it because he knew Suguru better than anyone.

He'd spent nearly three years obsessing over Suguru. Analyzing him. Learning and memorizing the minute details of his life. Taking note of every vulnerability, every insecurity, every dream, aspiration, and stupid little opinion that crossed Suguru's mind. Suffering through moral platitudes just to understand what made him tick.

How many times had he helped Suguru run inventory on his consumed curses, discussing strategies for using each one and when? And how many times had he practiced those strategies with Suguru then patched him up, ensuring his body was in pristine condition?

How many nights had Satoru spent watching over him when they were on missions, making sure nothing harmed his most prized possession? And when they were safe, how much time and effort had he put into shaping him into the perfect companion and lover? Punishing Suguru when he needed to be put in his place and rewarding him with pleasure when he behaved?

No, Satoru couldn't accept that Suguru simply spirited away in the night without a word. Thrown it all out— everything he'd trained for, his entire future. There was no way everything he'd done had been in vain.

And there was no way Suguru had left him behind.

Chapter End Notes

► **[Click here for a summary of the explicit content](#)**

One thing about young Satoru: he's going to be in denial.

Next up: Present-day Satoru gets bullied by a child.

P.S. No one asked, but Japan and South Korea were amazing. I highly recommend visiting Busan if you're planning a trip!

Manhunt

Chapter Summary

Present-day Satoru makes a special home visit.

Chapter Notes

No content warnings this chapter, woohoo!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Satoru rolled over and searched the mess of clothes on the floor for his phone, eventually finding it tucked between a pair of gym shorts and his takeout box from dinner. He opened his messages from the previous day.

Geto Suguru

Thurs, Aug. 16 at 10:08 AM

Gojo Satoru

i'm a piece of shit and u have every right to be mad
i just need to hear ur voice

Thursday at 12:45 PM

if you don't want to talk right now just lmk
I'm going crazy waiting for u to respond

Thursday at 2:58 PM

I can literally see that ur reading these and not responding :(((
guess I deserve that :(

Thursday at 5:20 PM

i picked up tayaki on my way back from Kyoto today
Attachment: 1 Image

Thursday at 7:53 PM

Sugu please

Thursday at 10:26 PM

???

Satoru tossed the phone back into the abyss, got up, and started dressing. It was his day off, and if Suguru wasn't going to respond, he'd just have to go visit his other best friend.



ON THE THIRD KNOCK, the door to apartment 74D swung open.

“Megumiiii!” Satoru squealed.

The little boy stood in the entryway, hair spiky and wild from sleep. His brows furrowed in suspicion, making him look like an angry porcupine.

“What are you doing here? It’s not grocery day,” Megumi deadpanned.

“I’m not allowed to hang out with my favorite fourth-grader?” Megumi’s hand on the doorknob flexed as if contemplating saying no. That wouldn’t do.

Satoru raised the paper bag he’d been hiding behind his back. “I brought donuts. Have breakfast with me, Megumi-kun.”

The prior look of hesitation in the boy’s eyes softened, and Satoru smiled. Even a clever little runt like Megumi was still susceptible to the promise of sugar.

Satoru followed him into the apartment, changing into his house shoes before he grabbed dishware and napkins from the kitchen. He settled them at the dining table and watched Megumi curl over a hippo-shaped plate, tearing into a yuzu-glazed donut.

“You want tea with that?” Satoru asked.

The little boy nodded, and Satoru got to work setting the kettle. He steeped the tea bag, then inspected the fridge. The fresh vegetables were half-gone, an improvement from the grocery run before that when they’d gone untouched.

“Why are you here?” Megumi asked again, interrupting Satoru’s train of thought. His legs swung from the dining room chair, making it obvious how small he was for a 9-year-old.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“I know you didn’t come just to eat breakfast,” he said, spitting crumbs all over the table. Satoru held back an eye-roll. The kid was far too perceptive for his age. An annoying trait, but it was also why Satoru liked him.

“Yeah? If you’re so smart, then what am I doing here?”

“Idunnokno,” Megumi shrugged. “You never bring anything fun, though.”

“Groceries are fun. New clothes are fun. You never complained before.” The boy hummed, clearly too taken by the donut to play along. “Where’s your sister?”

“At her friend’s house.”

“Already?” It was barely 9 AM on a public holiday.

“Sleepover.”

Satoru winced. He’d never get used to hearing that Megumi had been home alone for hours on end. His lack of supervision was one of the reasons he’d moved the kids out of their shitty apartment in Akasaka and into a much nicer, newer development.

Satoru first visited the Fushiguro children months after Amanai's death. He'd asked Suguru to tag along but was met with frustration. Understandable, considering Megumi's father had almost sent them both to an early grave. Satoru didn't press the topic.

When morbid curiosity eventually got the best of him, he showed up at their shitty little doorstep alone, only to be slapped in the face with Megumi's fierce personality and the outline of a ten shadows technique in his curse energy. Soon enough, Satoru found himself coming over once a month to check on the kids. Then, almost weekly after Suguru left.

When he got Suguru back, Satoru couldn't help but proudly brag about them. Boasting Tsumiki's perfect test scores and Megumi's no-nonsense attitude. How he'd fought a kid at school twice his size and won, and how impressive of a sorcerer Megumi would be once he had someone to train him. He wanted Megumi to start as soon as possible, considering he didn't have parents to teach him about jujutsu society.

That last bit tipped Suguru from polite indifference—nodding with a tight smile when Satoru brought them up—into casual interest. He started asking questions here and there. How did Megumi's presentation on Mt. Fuji go? Did Tsumiki make the club volleyball team? Did they have enough blankets for the winter months?

The next time Satoru went to drop off new clothes, Suguru went with him. On the way back, he was already ranting about the broken window clasp in Tsumiki's bedroom and unfinished drywall in their kitchen, claiming it wasn't a safe environment for children.

Satoru plucked an ice cube from the freezer and dropped it into the child's mug of hot tea. "Blow on it. I'm not taking you to the hospital if you burn your taste buds off."

"Where's Geto-sama?" Megumi asked, two hands outstretched to accept the cup.

"Idunnokno," Satoru parroted back without missing a beat. "What's it to you?"

"I like it when he visits."

Satoru feigned offense. "What about me? You don't like it when I visit? I'm hurt, Megumi-kun."

"I want to show him what I got Tsumiki for her birthday."

"You can show me."

"You have bad taste."

Ouch. How was he getting burned by a kid who still wet the bed when he had a nightmare?

"Too bad. I'm all you've got," Satoru said with a smirk. He enjoyed watching Megumi's face draw up in disgust.

"Is he sick?"

Satoru plucked a donut from the box and shrugged, trying to avoid the childlike line of questioning he could tell Megumi was gearing up for.

Megumi didn't get the hint. "I thought you were best friends."

"... We are."

"Shouldn't best friends know if the other person is sick?"

"Being best friends doesn't mean you know everything about each other. Now, drink your tea before it gets cold."

"But you live together," Megumi pressed, undeterred. "I always know when Tsumiki is sick. And when I'm sick, Tsumiki makes me porridge so I can feel better."

Satoru sighed. His head was throbbing, probably from his severe lack of sleep. Sometimes, he missed when Megumi was little—too shy and distrusting to say more than a few sentences.

"What did you do to him?"

That threw Satoru off. He blinked at the child, wordlessly.

"You never come over without him anymore. You made him upset, didn't you?"

"I don't know why you'd think that," he mumbled once he'd recovered.

"Because Geto-sama *always* texts me before you guys come over," Megumi boasted. "Besides, I'm not a little kid, Gojo. I know you guys are...that way."

Megumi's eyes dropped to the table, his cheeks dusting a soft pink. All of the bravado he'd previously shown had been replaced by embarrassment. It was exactly how a little kid would react to talking about a romantic relationship, but Satoru wasn't going to argue with him.

"How do you know about that sort of thing?"

"Uh, well...I-I've heard other boys at school talk about it. And...and Tsumiki sometimes l-leaves her BLs around the house."

Satoru didn't know what a BL was, but Megumi's guilty expression told him everything he needed to know. He stored a mental note to have Suguru look through Tsumiki's room once this all blew over. She was much more likely to forgive Suguru for being intrusive if she found he'd been snooping. He was pretty sure the girl had a silly little crush on his boyfriend. He couldn't blame her because, honestly, who wouldn't have a crush on Suguru?

"Even if something did happen—which it didn't—that would be a grown-up topic. You're too young to talk about it."

"Am not."

“Are too.” Satoru pointed to the plate Megumi had licked clean. “Want another one?”

“Tell me what happened.”

Satoru’s shoulders dropped. Megumi was really going to beat this out of him, wasn’t he?

“Nothing happened, Megumi-kun,” he tried, but even he could hear the waver in his voice.

“You’re a bad liar.”

“I don’t have a reason to lie to a child.”

“You’re lying right now.”

“That’s not a nice thing to say,” Satoru pouted.

“If you did something wrong, you’re supposed to apologize.”

“I don’t know why you think I did something wrong.”

“Because,” Megumi paused, “You’re...you. You’re a weird guy who lies a lot, and Geto-sama is nice. So I know you did something to him. And you only lie to me when you did something bad.”

Satoru stopped poking at the donut he’d been abusing. The poor thing was oozing matcha-flavored custard. “Trust me. You don’t need to worry about it, alright? I’ve got it covered.”

“I don’t think you would come here if everything was okay.”

A tortured, breathy chuckle fell from Satoru’s lips. He didn’t know how else to respond. Here he was—the strongest sorcerer alive—getting bullied by a kid who still slept with a stuffed dog. Because, of course, it would be the 9-year-old orphan he benefitted that would see through his bullshit and not let up; too young and stubborn to know when to stop asking about a sensitive topic.

“Suguru and I had a small disagreement, that’s all,” he relented.

“Like a lover’s quarrel?”

Seriously, where the fuck is he learning this shit?

“Yeah, Megumi-kun, like that. But before you ask, no, I won’t tell you what the fight was about. *That* really is adult-only business.”

Megumi pouted a bit but, surprisingly, accepted Satoru’s response. He drew his knees up and tilted his head as he did when thinking hard. While he sorted it out, Satoru took the opportunity to clean up, sticking the last two donuts in the fridge for Tsumiki. When he was finished, he checked his phone again.

Still no response.

“Soooo...what are you going to do?”

“Right now? Finish my food, and then try to nap on your couch.”

“No! To get Geto-sama back?”

“I didn’t have anything planned,” Satoru answered honestly. He’d never needed to do anything to win Suguru’s forgiveness when they fought. Forgiveness was baked into the way their relationship operated. No matter how bad things got—and they did get bad—neither could ever stay angry for long. He’d been hoping that extended to this situation.

“In the books Tsumiki reads, whenever the love interest messes up, they do something big to get the main character to like them again. Like renting out a whole amusement park and playing all the games together. Or, one time, this guy drove all the way across town in a storm to confess. He bought flowers and chocolates and everything.”

Satoru kept his mouth shut and let Megumi ramble. He wouldn’t burst the kid’s bubble by telling him this wasn’t fiction. It was his *real* life, with *real* conflicts without the fanfare.

Satoru had gotten drunk and had lackluster sex with a boring motherfucker called Higuruma Hiromi. Then ran home to his boyfriend with his tail between his legs like a scared puppy running to its kennel after it pissed on the new carpet. Higuruma hadn’t even made him cum.

He’d wanted to prove a point to himself. Wanted to feel the high of being in control—something that had been waning for a long time, slipping through his fingers like sand the longer their relationship went on. He wanted Suguru to remember his place as someone who would submit to Gojo Satoru, not the other way around. Someone who would chase after their owner, not bite the hand that fed them.

Satoru cringed, thinking about how often he’d chased after Suguru as if *he* were the pet. For years, he’d been reaping the sour fruit of what he sowed during those six months Suguru was gone.



EVEN AFTER EVERYONE else had moved on, he’d continued looking for Suguru, scouring Tokyo for any sign of his residuals. Barely eating or sleeping. Too afraid he’d miss the smell of Suguru’s curse energy if he lost focus.

Weeks went by. Then weeks turned into months without any sightings, and Satoru became insufferable in his obsession. Nanami and Haibara started avoiding him. Yaga looked at him like a kicked puppy when he thought Satoru wouldn’t notice. Shoko was the only one who could stand being around him, but being with her reminded Satoru that there was a missing link in their trio. He tried to keep her at arm’s length, but Shoko, as stubborn as she was, kept pushing, dragging him off campus whenever she could.

And what do you know? A kikufuku outing gave Satoru his first lead in months.

That morning, Shoko had insisted they try out a new cafe, claiming he'd feel better if he stuffed himself full of sugar. Four rice cakes in Satoru felt the weight of consternation lifting. A bubble tea and a few foreign pastries later and he was ready to admit Shoko had been onto something. He'd walked out of the cafe, belly full and depression sated, expecting to find Shoko looking smug. Not to be smacked in the face with the smell of Suguru's residuals.

But there it was. Earthy and bitter, with a hint of sweetness at the end, like cherry-filled dark chocolate. Faint, yet unmistakable.

He could tell from the waning smell that Suguru was long gone, but he followed the trail anyway until it stopped abruptly several blocks north.

What was Suguru doing in east Shinjuku? Satoru wondered. Did he live there? Or was he just passing through on a random Tuesday morning? Why were his residuals laced with anxiety? And why had his residuals disappeared in Kabukicho? It was a red-light district filled with weirdos, seedy bars, and drunk customers who got too handsy. Did he work in one of the nightclubs?

The list of questions that ran through Satoru's mind was endless, but ultimately, none of it mattered.

The important thing was that Suguru had *finally* slipped. After hiding his residuals for so long, he'd gotten sloppy. Comfortable. Too confident. Making it all too easy for Satoru to take advantage of his show of weakness.

For the next few weeks, Satoru staked out the area. Suguru was a creature of habit, after all. Got up at the same time every day, went to the same stores and restaurants, and re-read his favorite books in the winter. Chances were, he'd been to that area before, and if he hadn't he might come back. Satoru knew it was a stretch, but fuck, he didn't have much else to go on, did he?

From high in the sky, he used his Six Eyes to wade through the crowds, memorizing familiar faces and the different streets. He knew enough about the city's underbelly to piece together who was who and which places were dangerous. The ramen bar on the corner? All sorts of racketeering. The hostess club on the right? A gathering place for dope smugglers. It took time, tact, and some asking around, but eventually, he found out if anyone knew a purple-eyed, long-haired boy with Buddha piercings.

A few conversations with some shady people later, and he was pointed toward a laundromat run by some old yakuza fuck, far too excited to run his mouth to a member of the rich-ass Gojo family. All Satoru had to do was flash his clan name and a smile, and the idiot gave up the address to a Muay Thai studio without hesitation.

At least that's what the sign at the front said. The entrance Satoru wanted was in the back, only accessible from a narrow alleyway.

When he found it, he knocked on the grey slate door. The peep slot opened almost immediately, revealing piercing black eyes in a web of puckered scars.

“You lost?” a gruff voice traveled through the hole.

“Here to see Hakari.”

“Never heard of him.” Just as quickly, the peep slot slammed closed.

Satoru’s jaw dropped open, temporarily too stunned to speak, before he rapped on the door again, the solid thuds sounding like thunder clapping. He weighed the possible repercussions of breaking it down. If the laundromat guy—Kawashima or something—had told the truth, then Suguru was inside that building.

Satoru banged harder, denting the metal. What if he was too late? What if Suguru had gotten tipped off and was halfway out the balcony window right now?

Metal screeched as the door swung open, and Satoru was face-to-face with a knife blade. Behind it stood a woman nearly his height.

“Well, that’s no way to greet people,” Satoru quipped, staring the knife down.

“You’ve got five seconds to walk away.”

He threw his hands up, wiggling his fingers to show he wasn’t carrying a weapon. “Mr. Kazuyoshi sent me. You know—old man with the big mouth. Smells like wet socks. Probably gonna need nasal reconstructive surgery in a year or two.”

The woman’s eyes narrowed, slowly scanning him from head to toe. There was a pause, then “You the new guy?”

Satoru had no idea what she was talking about, but that didn’t stop him from nodding. If being the new guy got him in the door, then yep, that’s him!

He had just accepted he’d have to kill her when the woman rolled her eyes and sucked her teeth. “Jesus, they just keep getting younger. Come on then.”

She didn’t wait for him to respond before turning on a heel to descend the dark corridor. Satoru followed through the maze of staircases, listening to the far-off sound of shouting and a bell clanging. He tried not to gawk at the graffiti on the walls spray-painted over rust-red blood stains.

If this was where Suguru had been hiding all those months, it was no wonder Satoru couldn’t find him. Never in a million years had he expected Suguru to step foot in a shady ass place like that, let alone frequent it enough to be known by name. It was practically a villain’s lair pulled out of a manga panel.

Every time Satoru was sure there couldn’t be another hall or stairs, another one popped up, disorienting him. The only sense of progress was the distant voices getting louder the farther in they went. Finally, they reached a set of doors manned by two guards. With a whistle, the woman signaled to them, and they pushed the doors open.

Satoru's first thought when he entered the room was the awful smell. It was like every man in Tokyo had released their body odor and used the facility to ferment their underwear. His second was that if the smell hadn't given him an immediate headache, the screaming crowd would have.

Dozens of people yelled from the sidelines as two women boxed inside a massive metal cage. A bell rang, followed by the sharp blow of a whistle, and the crowd erupted into enraged howling. The women broke off and backed up into opposite sides of the cage, where they were sprayed with water and blotted with hand towels. It was useless, considering how much blood was splattered on their faces.

It didn't take a genius to piece together that this was some sort of illegal fighting ring.

"You coming or what?" His escort barked in his ear, staring at him with an unreadable look.

Satoru hadn't realized he'd stopped to gawk. He straightened his shoulders and followed, weaving through the crowd of onlookers until he reached a makeshift VIP box, slightly elevated and guarded by a crude metal railing.

With the way Kazame talked about Hikari, Satoru had expected him to be elderly but intimidating—like the old yakuza movies he watched. Not the platinum blonde, baby-faced man wearing snake-skin pants sat before him. Holding a child on his lap, smiling at the boy, and pointing to the bloody scene in the cage as if pointing out goldfish variants in an aquarium tank.

The woman whispered into Hikari's ear, then took the child's hand. She motioned for Satoru to approach as she closed the box gate behind her, leaving the two men alone.

"Sit," Hakari said simply.

Satoru ignored him, folding his hands across his chest. He wasn't an idiot. He'd heard the Hakari name enough times over the years, usually whispered by his dodgy cousins from behind closed doors. The Hakaris were the lowest form of criminal filth. Dangerous too. Satoru just really didn't care.

"I was told you know where I can find Geto Suguru."

"I know why you're here. Now move. You're blocking my view of the match."

"If that's the case, then let's make this simple, blondie. This place smells like shit, and looking at your ugly mug is making me nauseous. I'm not going to ask you again. Where is Geto Suguru?"

Finally, Hikari looked up, raising a brow. "I see they don't teach you manners at that special little school."

As much as that surprised Satoru, he was more confused because *what*? His Six Eyes had been reading the cursed energy signatures of every person he encountered. Hikari wasn't a sorcerer or a curse user, nor did he possess any untapped innate technique. So, how did he

know about Jujutsu Tech? The only person here who'd given off even the *slightest* deviation in cursed energy was—

“Don't look so surprised,” Hakari smirked. “You're not the only one with a talented family. My little brother sees those things you guys hunt. What do ya' call 'em? Curses?”

Right. The little boy from earlier.

“I'm no expert on all that—monsters and demons or whatever ya' wanna call it. But since our parents died, I had ta' learn a thing or two for Kinji. You Gojo's are quite the family.”

Satoru scanned the room with his Six Eyes for the second time. Only one way in and one way out. They were at least 20 meters underground.

Satoru slowly counted to three. Reminded himself that it definitely would not be wise to kill a bunch of civilians right now. Who knew how many men he had on standby, tucked away behind closed doors or waiting in dark hallways? He wasn't here to get blood on his hands.

“So, that's your angle. You're not just going to tell me where he is. It's me you want, right?”

“I can see why you and Geto get along. Two smart-mouthed brats with a pretty face and a tight ass. Although you could lose the stupid-lookin' sunglasses.”

A creepy smile spread across Hikari's lips, making Satoru cringe. How had Suguru dealt with this guy for months? He was so fucking ugly.

Suddenly, the crowd roared. Dozens of people jumped out of their seats.

“Get to the point,” Satoru said through clenched teeth.

“Well, imagine my surprise when I heard the Gojo prodigy's lookin' for one of my prized fight dogs. And right after, the pup failed to pay up on his debt! Damn, felt like I won the lottery on Christmas.”

“You going senile, old man? I told you to cut the bullshit. Tell me what you want before I fall asleep listening to you yap.”

“Impatient, too.” Hikari's bare chest twitched as he snapped a finger over his shoulder, jolting the chain connecting his nipple rings. *Gag.*

A moment later, someone was handing Hakari a phone. He typed something and then tossed it to Satoru.

“As of two days ago, Geto Suguru is redundant on a count of unpaid balances between Kawamura Takashi and yours truly. This is his balance. Plus a little extra for handlin' fees,” Hakari winked.

Without hesitation, Satoru punched in his bank information. He didn't bother checking the transfer amount before hitting send and throwing the phone back.

Hikari's eyes went wide with genuine shock before he burst into laughter, loud and grating like a hyena screaming in pain. He smacked a tattooed hand across his knee.

"Damn, that was easier than I expected. I wonder what your clan will say when they find out you paid all that for a worn-out junkie. Can't be helped, I guess. The kid clearly gives you the fever."

"We done here?" Satoru snapped.

"Not yet."

"The fuck else do you want?"

"My brother will be old enough to start at your fancy school soon. I trust he'll be safe in your hands."

Satoru wrinkled his nose in confusion. "It's a school. Take that up with the staff."

"Well, word on the street is the strongest sorcerer has a soft spot for kids." Hikari licked his lips, then smiled wide enough to show off his gold-capped canines. "If that's the case, I'd expect my Kinji to be mentored by the best. Like I said, he's a talented one."

Satoru tapped his foot impatiently as the piece of shit wrote an address down. He'd have to figure out how the man knew about Megumi later. As soon as Hakari handed over the paper, Satoru sprung up and made for the exit.

Hikari called after him again before he could get past the railing.

"Oh, and Gojo?"

He bit his tongue, rolling his eyes behind his sunglasses, too far beyond words to respond with anything other than a look over his shoulder.

"You might want to bring something with ya' to patch your friend up. He took quite the beating after the little stunt he pulled. But don't worry, he was still breathing when my guys left him."

At that very moment, Satoru's ancestors must have personally imbued him with patience by popping a memory into his head: The Star Religious Group headquarters. Amanai's lifeless body heavy in his arms. Despite the weight, Satoru had felt like he was floating, a dark, cruel emptiness spreading through his veins. Lifting him high above everyone else.

In the memory, Suguru was next to him, panting, eyes bulging with shock. Satoru hadn't recognized his voice when he'd asked Suguru, *"Do you want to...kill them all? The me right now probably wouldn't even feel anything."*

The idea lingered in Satoru's mind for days, penetrating his dreams until they became full-on murderous ideation. He'd wanted to go back and kill every one of those sorry motherfuckers. Satoru remembered what Suguru had said when he told him about his dreams.

“Those kinds of thoughts are expected in that situation, Satoru. It means a lot more that you didn't act on them. That you're choosing not to do it, even now.”

Satoru swallowed around the scratch of Limitless in his throat and pretended he didn't hear Hikari when he yelled, “Thanks for doing business!” as he left.

Chapter End Notes

It needs to be said that I'm an OlderBroJo kind of head cannon. But if you're the DadJo type, that's cool too.

Up next: We wrap Act I with the last chapter of Satoru's mini-arc.

As always, tell me how you feel in the comments. Thanks for reading <3

P.S. ...

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