

Untold

Von Gary

Kapitel 2: Rest

After his blackout Hanai had been banned from baseball practice and school for a week during which he was supposed to rest and recover.

His initial attempt to convince Coach Momoe to let him watch the training from the shade of the dugout had quickly led to the conclusion that he ought to spend that week as far away from the baseball field as possible if he cherished his life. It confirmed Hanai's suspicion that she was still mad at him for having hidden his feverish state during the practice game but he couldn't really blame her for that. It was her job to keep an eye on the team, after all. There was no denying that she could be terrifying if someone kept her from doing her job, though.

Part of Hanai knew that she was only being reasonable and that spending a week at home in bed probably was the best thing to do to ensure a fast and thorough recovery. It still didn't change the fact that it was a pain and that the week would be passing by excruciatingly slowly.

The lack of baseball practice and physical activity left Hanai frustrated and he let out an annoyed sigh as he stared up at the ceiling of his room. It had only been two days and he was already feeling done with staying at home doing nothing.

Abe and Sakaeguchi had dropped by to keep him updated on what had been discussed in class or during practice but instead of comforted, he felt somewhat guilty that they made an effort to visit so late in the evening only to make sure he wasn't falling behind.

Sakaeguchi had kept assuring him that they didn't mind and had wanted to check on him anyway, but he still couldn't fully shake it off.

One upside to being stuck at home was that he finally had time to get some serious studying done. It wasn't always easy to focus on school with baseball taking up most of his free time but keeping a decent academic record still was important to the team captain. He knew that he couldn't just rely on baseball when it came to planning his future, and that, no matter how awesome the thought, it wasn't likely for him to pursue a career as a professional baseball player. *Unlike Tajima*. If anyone, Hanai could see him becoming a star.

"All the more reason to buck up this week!" He encouraged himself as he sat up. Being

able to study intensively was the only thing justifying the thought that maybe a one week break wasn't so bad after all. "Come on, Hanai! Let's do this."

Hanai was studying at his desk until his mother caught and scolded him for having left his bed, then resorted to working from there. They could keep him in bed but they could not force him to give in to unproductivity and boredom.

A day's worth of studying had left a cluster of worksheets, books and notes gathered around him and once he had finished working through the notes Sakaeguchi had brought the previous day, he was about to study some more for the upcoming Biology exam. He had just opened the book when the doorbell suddenly interrupted him. It drew his attention to the alarm clock on his bedside table that read 7:00pm and he suspected that Sakaeguchi had returned to deliver today's school work. With him studying, time had flown by for a change.

His sisters were home, so Hanai knew he didn't have to rush to answer the door. Instead he was left with more time to clean up the paper chaos around him before his friend could reach his room.

"Azusa, your friend is here!" Haruka called over from the front door, confirming his guess, before she addressed the guest again. "He's in his room. It's the second one left."

"Alright, thanks!"

Hanai's movement froze in confusion. That voice didn't belong to Sakaeguchi. And neither did the rapidly approaching footsteps. They were unmistakably...

"Hanai! You better put away the porn, I'm coming in!"

...Tajima's.

The short boy yanked the door open and almost seemed disappointed to see Hanai surrounded by nothing more than books and worksheets.

"Wow, that's either the lamest porn ever or you're actually doing school work! Aren't you supposed to rest, get plenty of sleep and do nothing all week?"

The comment brought a flustered blush to his cheeks and Hanai furrowed his brows as he finished relocating his books and papers from the bed onto the nightstand. Why was it that Tajima made him feel like it was an unnatural thing to be studying for school?

"They told me to rest, not to take a vacation. Besides, I can't get behind on baseball *and* school work."

"So you're not only not allowed to come to practice but they're also making you study? That sucks!" commented Tajima before he turned away and began to inspect the room meticulously. "So this is where you live, huh?"

Tajima didn't look at him, curiously going through Hanai's belongings instead. While Tajima seemed to be able to focus on their conversation at the same time, the team captain was left terribly distracted.

Watching Tajima inspect his room made him feel strangely nervous and exposed. He didn't usually invite people over – mostly because he didn't want his family to embarrass him in front of his friends, but also because he enjoyed a certain level of privacy in his own home. Privacy that Tajima was shamelessly invading at the moment.

"No, that's not... Well, they're not *making* me study. I just don't want to fall behind on school work when I can't even go to... baseball practice. And I don't want to end up with... even more school work when I come back-..." Hanai decided to give up on trying to ignore Tajima's doing. "... Are you looking for something?"

"I'm not, but it's the first time I'm in your room. It's kinda interesting to see how you live."

"Not really..." mumbled Hanai, hesitantly observing Tajima who continued to go through his stuff as if he had been given permission to. Hanai didn't think there was anything particularly interesting about his room, so he wondered why the other seemed so intrigued by it. Then again, he couldn't deny that part of him wouldn't mind seeing how Tajima lived either. Perhaps even mundane lives could seem interesting to outsiders.

He mused about it, eyes following his guest until a comment suddenly startled him.

"Hey, is that your girlfriend? She's hot!" Tajima turned around, hands holding a picture showing Hanai and a young woman at some beach club.

"W-What? No!" Hanai jumped out of bed – too fast, as a sudden pain in his head warned him – and snatched the picture out of Tajima's hand. "Where did you even find that!?"

"Hey, don't blame me if you leave things like these lying around for everyone to see!" Tajima pouted at his friend's rude reaction but obviously was too curious to keep it up. "So who is she?"

Hanai didn't seem too happy about the shorter boy's inquisitiveness but, after a moment of consideration, sighed in defeat. Not telling him was probably going to take more effort than just getting it over and done with.

"Just a girl I met when my family and I were on vacation sometime. We exchanged email addresses and write occasionally." Tajima's expectant stare brought an embarrassed frown and blush back to Hanai's face. "And that's all there is to it, so get your head out of the gutter!"

He walked past his guest and slid the photograph into one of his desk's drawers with a heavy sigh. Tajima had just arrived and Hanai's feelings were already all over the place. There was something about the boy that kept making him lose his cool and he didn't know why.

"Why are you here anyway? I thought Sakaeguchi wanted to drop by today."

"Oh, right! About that! Sakaeguchi had to head home right after practice, so he asked me to bring you his notes instead." Tajima reached for his sports bag and pulled out a notebook.

That explained it, Hanai thought, and accepted the book with thanks before putting it only the nightstand of top of the other books.

He turned back to Tajima but, all topics have come to a close, didn't quite know what to say anymore without making it sound awkward. Now that Tajima had given him the notes, was he going to leave? Did he want to stay some more? What time did he have to be home? Should Hanai offer something to do? He realized that he really wasn't used to having people over.

Just when he had opened his mouth to say something, a voice cut through the silence, calling him from the hallway.

"Azusa, is your friend staying for dinner?"

Hanai turned towards the door, about to answer 'no' when his eyes met Tajima's whose expression clearly read 'yes, absolutely' instead.

"... Yeah, he is."

"Woohoo!!"

Tajima tossed his hands in the air, face lit up with excitement, and Hanai was reminded of an enthusiastic child. It was kind of adorable how excitable Tajima was though, he thought, oblivious of the soft smile that had settled on his face.

"Hey, Tajima, don't you have stuff to do for school though? It's getting pretty late, so if you've got homework for tomorrow you could do it while we're waiting for dinner."

"Nah, I'm good." The grinning boy crossed his arms behind his head. "I'll just borrow Izumi's tomorrow before class."

Hanai stared at him, his expression torn between irritation and disbelief, until it settled for irritation and he grabbed the other by his shirt.

"You will not!"

Tajima's grades already were suffering. If things got any worse he wouldn't even be allowed to keep playing baseball anymore, so Hanai could and would not have him slack off – especially not when he was using a visit to *his apartment* as an excuse to procrastinate. He was Tajima's friend but he was also their captain, after all. They couldn't afford losing a player like him just because he was too lazy to study.

"You want to eat here? Fine. But you better get to work first. Show me what you've got to do."

Hanai dragged Tajima to his bag and only let go of him, when the shorter boy unhappily dug out his English book.

"We've got to write a summary for that story we read in class", explained Tajima factually.

"Alright, so do that, then."

"I can't."

"Why not?"

"Because I didn't get half of the plot." Tajima groaned and crossed his arms in front of his chest. "It was so *boring* that I stopped paying attention and then I kinda missed the teacher's explanation. Plus, I couldn't stop thinking about that magazine I found in the locker room the other day when I-"

"Alright, I get it. Please spare me the details. Bottom line is you didn't understand the story, right?"

"Yeah."

"Do you have it here?"

"Yeah."

"Well, then let's go through it again and I'll try to help you out wherever you're stuck."

"...Okay."

Hanai was surprised that Tajima didn't object to his proposal but, while he didn't appreciate him choosing his bed of all places to sit down on to study, he wasn't going to complain. The baseball prodigy willing to do school work without further objections already seemed like a miracle, after all.

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It was amazing how someone who had proven himself to be such a genius on the baseball field could have such difficulties understanding a foreign language, Hanai pondered. It would have been one thing if Tajima was simply having amazing reflexes and his skills had been limited to the physical aspect of the sport. Running fast, having a feeling for how to bat to send the ball flying wherever he wanted to,... The sort of skills their opponents feared Tajima for.

He had also proven himself to have an amazing memory however, remembering the exact scores of a game, inning by inning, after having watched it no more than once. Skills that made him an even more dangerous player than any of their opponents suspected and extremely valuable asset for his own team.

So how could he fail to remember a few foreign words? To Hanai it was a mystery.

He spent half an hour going through the short story with Tajima, explaining it whenever the other didn't understand – which was more often than Hanai had hoped – until they had finally finished it. By the end of it Tajima seemed a little more confident in his understanding of the plot. Formulating a summary with his own words proved to be a whole new level of difficult, though.

Hanai had known that Tajima's English grades hadn't been particularly good but he hadn't expected him to be *that* bad at the foreign language.

The summary he had let Tajima write and was now given to correct spoke volumes though: It was complete gibberish. Hanai struggled to not let it show on his face while reading it. He knew Tajima was watching his every reaction and didn't want to discourage him.

"Well... It's... Huh..."

"That bad?"

"It's not... *good*."

"It's okay, you can tell me if it sucks."

Hanai sent him a hesitant look. "Most of it doesn't really make sense. How about we work through it again? I'll help you this time."

The captain leant forward so that the both of them could see Tajima's summary clearly when his mother's voice suddenly interrupted them, calling from the living room: "Dinner's ready!"

"Coming!" Hanai answered loudly, knowing that Tajima had only stuck around to wait for dinner and that it was futile trying to get any more work done now that it was ready. He put the summary down and pushed himself off the bed but the other didn't follow. It honestly surprised him, that Tajima hadn't dashed ahead in the first place, so he turned back to check if he was alright. The words that followed surprised him even more, though.

"Can we continue afterwards?"

"Huh?" Hanai blinked confused. The last thing he had expected was Tajima wanting to continue working on his assignment. Why was he so serious about it all of a sudden? He knew he should be happy about the other's newfound eagerness to do his homework well, but it confused him nonetheless. "Sure, but it's getting kinda late. Are you sure you don't need to go home?"

"It's fine! My parents are out tonight anyway and my family's not gonna miss me." Tajima answered with a grin. "So let's dig in and then continue where we left off! Come on, the food's gonna get cold!"

With that, the excited boy jumped off the bed and led the way out of Hanai's room.

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"It's so nice of you to come visit Azusa when he's being sick, Yuuichiro."

His mother's words made Hanai's face heat up with an annoyed blush.

"Mom." He didn't even have to word what bothered him for her to understand.

"Oh, I'm sorry! I thought you and your teammates went by first names by now. Back when I was your age my friends and I dropped the formalities after the first few months." His mother sent Tajima an apologizing look which he waved off with a grin.

"Don't worry, Mrs. Hanai. Some of us already go by first names, but Hanai's a little more uptight." Tajima laughed, earning a blow to his side by Hanai's elbow.

"Hey!"

"What? It's true!"

"Hanai, where are your manners?" His mother sent him a scolding look. While she was used to her son being somewhat rude to her sometimes, she wasn't going to let him act like that with their guest in her presence. Especially not at the dinner table with her daughters watching. While her husband didn't really seem to mind, she wasn't going to allow it.

Hanai opened his mouth to say something, glanced from his mother to Tajima to his sisters and settled for a frustrated grumble instead.

"He's just here for the food anyway."

His mumble must have gone unheard because dinner resumed calmly afterwards with his mother offering Tajima seconds he gladly accepted and his sisters chattering on about their ballet class, the short argument swept under the rug and forgotten. Before long the small argument didn't matter to Hanai anymore either and he joined in on the dinner table conversations. It had been kind of silly to begin with anyway. By the time they were walking back to his room he had already forgotten all about it. Until Tajima suddenly addressed his words, that was.

"You're wrong, you know?"

"About what?" asked Hanai, confused about the statement that had come out of the blue. Tajima wasn't even looking at him while they were talking, which in itself was pretty odd, regardless of what he was going to say.

"I'd never turn down homemade food-" *Or any kind of food*, thought Hanai but kept quiet to let Tajima finish. "-but it's not the reason why I came to visit."

"Um okay."

Hanai didn't know what to answer to that and, contrary to his expectations, Tajima did not elaborate, leaving them in awkward silence. A moment passed and Hanai decided to ask him himself before it would get any worse.

"Why did you visit then?"

Suddenly Tajima's stare was on him, causing an uneasy feeling to rise inside his chest. Why did it still make him so nervous? He really should be used to it by now.

"How are you feeling?"

"Uh... Okay, I guess?" Tajima's inquiry wasn't exactly an answer to Hanai's question but the eyes resting on him pressured him to give a specific reply anyway. "I don't really feel sick or dizzy anymore. I've got a bit of a headache and I'm kinda tired but that's about it. It could be a lot worse."

"Alright, that's good." The shorter boy seemed satisfied with the answer and directed his gaze back ahead to the door they had reached. "I just wanted to make sure."

Once they were back inside Hanai's room, Tajima headed right over to the bed and picked up English notes they had left behind for dinner. Hanai's eyes followed him while his mind still pondered over the conversation they had just had. Did Tajima mean that he had visited to make sure Hanai was feeling better? So he must have been worried about him, right?

Somehow the thought that he was important enough for the other to come to his apartment late after school and baseball practice to make sure that he was feeling better was flattering and cheered Hanai up. He had believed that only Mihashi and Izumi were receiving that kind of special treatment. Perhaps he had been wrong.

Or perhaps he was reading too much into it and, while Tajima had been wondering about his health, it had just been Sakaeguchi's request to bring him the school notes that had pushed the boy to visit him.

The idea muffled his happiness a bit but before it could do any further damage, Tajima's voice pulled him out of his thoughts, hazel eyes looking at him expectantly. The homework had found its way back into his hands.

"So, you said my summary doesn't make any sense, right? Does that mean I have to start again from scratch?" Hanai couldn't believe that Tajima seriously wanted to continue his homework. He might have to start believing in miracles again.

"Well, you don't have to rewrite everything but some key ideas don't make sense." Hanai explained while he seated himself next to the other. He was feeling sleepy already, the dinner and his weakened body both certainly playing a role in it, but if Tajima needed his help, he couldn't possibly send him away. If they hurried and worked effectively the other would be able to head home before it was getting too late anyway.

"Here, let me show you."

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Hanai drowsily opened his eyes only to find himself sitting upright on his bed, back against the wall and an English book resting on his lap. He was groggy from sleep and his mind took some time waking up. The alarm clock on his bedside table gave away

that it was 1am. He breathed out a sigh and lifted his hand to rub the sleep out of his eyes. Or that's what wanted to do when he noticed some resistance keeping his arm down. He became aware of the warmth at his side and something weighing down on his right shoulder, making him sleepily glance to the side. He froze. The sight of Tajima, asleep and resting against him, woke him up at once.

"Tajima?"

Hadn't he gone home? The last thing Hanai remembered was waiting for the other to finish reviewing his summary and he had probably fallen asleep doing that. But why hadn't Tajima woken him up? Or his parents? He was certain that his mother would have checked on them if their guest hadn't left the apartment at a reasonable time, if only to make sure that it was alright with his parents for him to stay out this late. Or to spend the night over, as he apparently was.

Hanai heaved a sigh, somewhat annoyed that no one had woken them to make sure Tajima would make it home on a school night. It wasn't like there was anything he could change about it now though, so he returned his attention to his guest.

"Hey, Tajima."

There still was no answer. It seemed like the boy was sleeping soundly against his shoulder and wouldn't be woken up so easily. It was kind of adorable, Hanai had to admit, but there was something intimate about their position that made him blush uncomfortably.

"Tajima, wake up. We've got to get the futon ready for you."

He shook his friend's shoulders lightly to stir him awake. There was a small mumble but the other stayed asleep. Defeated, Hanai released a deep breath and decided to just go do it himself, moving away from under the boy, who flopped sideways onto the bed.

"...Huh? What's up?"

Apparently *that* had woken him. If Hanai hadn't been so tired, he probably would have been amused over the sight of a groggy Tajima, but he only allowed himself to watch the other for a brief moment before he went on to his closet. Hanai might have been sleepy but it was Tajima who would have to get up early in the morning, so the sooner they could go back to sleep the better.

"Seems like we fell asleep while working on your homework." Hanai explained as he went through his clothes. Trying to find anything remotely Tajima's size for him to sleep in proved to be a much more difficult task than he had expected. "It's too late for you to go home now, so let's find you some clothes to sleep in, prepare the futon and hit the sheets. You've got school tomorrow and it's already 1am."

"Mmh... okay", agreed Tajima sleepily before he put away his school things, stripped down to his shorts and slipped under the blankets of Hanai's bed.

"Hey, don't fall asleep again!" Hanai threw a pyjama at his head that Tajima reluctantly slipped into.

Even though it was the smallest Hanai had found, the top was still too big for the other. It was nothing compared to how ridiculously long the pyjama pants looked on him though and, right after he had tried them on, Tajima kicked them off again. *At least he's wearing boxer shorts*, Hanai thought when he realized that Tajima contented himself with just the top and returned the pants to his closet.

"Come on, help me set up the futon." Hanai sighed impatiently when he saw that his guest had once again made himself comfortable in *his* bed. Hadn't Tajima been the

one who told him to rest and get plenty of sleep? And now he was hogging his bed instead.

It was probably the lack of sleep but Hanai could feel himself getting grumpy at his uninvited guest.

"Screw that, man", yawned Tajima and shifted to the side to make room on the bed next to him. Hanai stared at him for a moment, about to object, before he decided that he was too tired to and didn't give a damn anymore. During the training camps they had shared futons, too. So...

Screw it, he repeated Tajima's words in thoughts, flicked off the lights and slipped under the sheets as well. It was just for the night anyway.

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It turned out that slipping into the same bed as Tajima wasn't as difficult as sleeping next to him, especially when their backs pressed against each other whenever Tajima shifted in his restless sleep. Hanai didn't mind the warmth the other's body gave off - there was something comforting about it, actually, even though it felt awkward to admit it - but relentless movements kept waking him up just when he was about to pass out.

"Tajima..." He grumbled unhappily when it had happened once again.

The feeling of the other's back moving away from his own let Hanai hope that his words were heard and that Tajima was finally going to give him more space to sleep in peace. That was, until he felt an arm move around his torso and was hugged close from behind.

Suddenly Hanai didn't feel tired anymore.

The level of embarrassment and uneasiness he had felt when he had woken up to Tajima leaning against him was nothing compared to what he felt now. The other's warmth engulfed him and the feeling of Tajima's strong heart beat against his back had put his own in his throat. Hanai had to correct himself. This was nothing like the training camps where the entire team had been sharing a room. This was nothing like the times the two of them had had to share a futon. This was nothing like anything Hanai had ever experienced with anyone in any kind of situation ever. Especially not in bed.

His face was beet-red in the darkness of the room.

When his head started to feel dizzy, Hanai realized that he had held his breath and gasped shakily to recover it, hyperaware how his body moved lightly against Tajima's with every inhale. This was driving him crazy.

"Hey, Tajima-..."

Hanai tried to loosen the arm's grip around his torso but he had to admit that Tajima was stronger than expected and seemed to hold even tighter onto him, the more he struggled against it. He was trapped, unable to shift away or turn around between Tajima's body and his iron grip.

When he understood that fighting against it didn't help, Hanai tried to get used to it

instead, drawing deep meditative breaths to calm his flustered mind.

It was okay. It was only Tajima, someone he appreciated and trusted. Tajima was sleeping and perhaps he just happened to be a snuggler who grabbed whoever or whatever was in reach during his sleep. Or perhaps he had needed comfort. It was true that ever since he had begun holding onto Hanai he had stopped shifting around restlessly. Perhaps he had been having a bad dream and holding onto Hanai was helping him.

That train of thought actually allowed Hanai to calm down.

He didn't mind Tajima hugging him, if it helped dealing with nightmares, and if he was completely honest with himself, the warmth he radiated was kind of comforting as well.

With the restless shifting having come to an end too, Hanai wondered if he was finally going to be able to get some restful sleep now. Instead of trying to remove the hand that was holding onto his side, he decided to give it a comforting squeeze for a change.

Finally coming to terms with his situation, Hanai released a deep sigh and closed his eyes. There really was something comforting about the hold, he had to admit, and he could feel himself relax in the warm embrace. Tajima's body was surprisingly comfortable and, despite his muscles, not as hard as he would have expected it to be. At least if one disregarded the bulge that pressed against Hanai's back.

"What the-!?"

With sudden, newfound strength Hanai freed himself from the hold and shoved Tajima away from himself, to the other end of the bed in terror. What the hell was he even dreaming about!? *And how could his sleep be so deep?* Hanai stared at the other's silhouette in the darkness, heart racing in his chest again, to make sure he was staying where he put him.

He hadn't signed up for this. He wanted to help Tajima but he really hadn't signed up for this.

Once again Hanai was on edge and unable to relax.

Boy, this was going to be a long night.

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The next morning Hanai woke up to the unfamiliar alarm of Tajima's cellphone and realized with embarrassment that the other man's limbs were once again wrapped all around him. His attempt to shift out of the embrace failed miserably and so he shook the other's shoulders again, a little more sternly than he had the previous night.

"...Hey, Tajima."

A sleepy mumble was the only reply he got trying to wake the other, though the persistent sound of the phone's alarm seemed to do the trick. Tajima reached over Hanai to silence the phone on the bedside table, then rolled onto his back to stare up at the ceiling.

"I don't think I've ever felt so prepared for English class." He turned his head to look at Hanai. "Thanks!"

All traces of fatigue seemingly gone, Tajima suddenly sat up and climbed over his friend to get out of bed. While Hanai was glad that he could contribute to Tajima's preparations for school, the boy had been the reason why he had barely gotten any shut-eye the previous night, so he couldn't share his level of enthusiasm for now.

Struggling to stay awake, he sat up as well and watched Tajima get ready for school, trying hard to keep the previous night off his mind. Once Tajima was fully dressed and had gathered all his things, Hanai slipped out of bed as well and guided his guest to the kitchen.

As expected, Hanai's mother had known about Tajima staying over. She had come to Azusa's room to check on the boys the previous night, and when she had found them passed out in bed from studying, she had decided to ask Tajima's parents if they minded him staying over. It wasn't often that Hanai had friends over, after all, and it had been getting late already anyway.

When the boys reached the kitchen the next morning, she had prepared a big breakfast and bento box for Tajima to take to class, that he excitedly accepted with thanks. He already had to rush to avoid being late for school, so there was no way he could have had the time to drop by at home to prepare his own, and spending an entire day of school without a proper lunch was a terrible thought.

Tajima thanked her again for letting him stay over before Hanai ushered him to the front door.

"Thanks for your help yesterday!" Tajima seemed in a really good mood again and offered Hanai a broad grin. Well, *he* hadn't been the one who had been kept awake all night because of a particular *someone*. Hanai tried to not blame him for having barely gotten any sleep himself - Tajima had been asleep, so it wasn't like he had done it on purpose, after all - but he couldn't wait to get back to bed. On his own.

"Thanks for visiting", responded Hanai and meant it. As exhausting as Tajima's visit had been, he had also appreciated it a lot.

Tajima promised to visit again soon, then ran off to make it to school on time. Hanai closed the door and heaved a deep sigh.

He wanted nothing more than to just go back to sleep and was already heading down the hallway to his room when his mother's voice called him back.

"Azusa, honey?" Hanai stopped in his tracks and made a tired hum to let her know he was listening. "Take good care of your friend, alright? He's a good kid."

The request was odd, especially since the friend in question was Tajima who was always upbeat and full of energy in the first place, and had plenty of other friends looking out for him. He was too sleepy to question his mother's sudden concern though, and decided to just go with it.

"Yeah, alright."

With a nod, he resumed his way to head straight back to bed. He would ask his mother what she had meant after he had finally gotten some well-deserved rest. For now, the wish to sleep ranked foremost his thoughts.

Well, right after Tajima and his visit. *I wonder how that English summary of his turned out. Did he ever finish it?*

He gave the question his last thought. Then his head touched the pillow and he fell into a deep, dreamless sleep.

