

# (Un-)perfect

Von Cleo

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She had been everything he could have wished for.

Caring, funny, good looking, intelligent... she had combined every aspect he searched for in a woman.

Well, maybe her humour wasn't quite common and there had been some arguments because he didn't get her sarcasm every time. And maybe she wasn't exactly the model type, but she did not look that bad either, right? And it really was a good point to have his girlfriend and soon to be fiancée to be the one to criticise his decisions because she was the one actually thinking about it, while he was the one to act on instinct and listen to his emotions.

They had been perfect, from the moment they met on the campus of university where he waited to pick up a friend when she had talked to him, mistaking him for one of those law students.

They still had been perfect a couple of weeks later, when he finally told her that he was actually no student at all and earned his livings with brewing coffee and being an unsuccessful musician.

They also had been perfect when he took her out on a date, bought her stuff he couldn't help but find ugly, and later on invited her to watch him perform on one of his concerts where several young musicians and indie bands tried to find someone interested in their music. He even tried to find them perfect when afterwards she didn't make any compliments about his music and he could see how she had to restrain herself from picturing her own opinion.

Of course, their sexual intercourses had been perfect, the way she liked her coffee a bit too strong had been perfect, just like the way she was always late, like she had barely any time for him because of her university work, like the way she cuddled up against him, nearly squeezing his arm a little too hard, like the way she was so shy when she introduced him to her friends.

They had been perfect, because he had given her a lot of space.

It was perfect, he thought, that she didn't have to mistrust him. She was way more open, telling him about her friends and that guy she met in university, a business student, being only a good friend, without him having to force her.

She had also been perfect, making a very, very, polite excuse when he asked her out to have dinner with him on their anniversary where he finally wanted to propose to

her after three years of being together.

Of course, there was university work and this guy from university had problems with his non-existent girlfriend and she had still been perfect when he heard her phone ringing and a way too loud male voice starting with "Sweetie, you'll come over tonight, won't you?", after she accepted the call. The way she tried to hide her blush and to turn down the volume of her phone looked also perfect, as if practised.

And just like that, sitting in this bar he found meandering after waiting for 2 hours in the restaurant, because maybe, *maybe* she would come, remembering their anniversary, Yasuda Shota realized, while staring at his third drink and feeling the ring in his pocket pressing heavily against his thigh, that it was over.

There was music playing somewhere in this room, he discovered when the bartender handed him his fourth glass.

It was the first time he lifted his head a bit, scanning the interior of the bar.

His first thought was that he must have been very desperate, choosing the first possible place to get trashed at. It was what he would describe as the farthest thing from perfect.

There was no specific type of furniture, but different kinds of tables and chairs and stools. Not even their colours did match so the bar seemed very colourful. At least this went along well with the walls that were paved with all kinds of paintings, newspaper cut outs and lamps.

On the second thought, the people sitting around alone or in little groups seemed to fit in here, just as if they were part of this curious interior. There was only one glance needed to realize that.

In the middle of all the chatting and drinking people, he detected the source of the music.

There was a guy, sitting at the edge of a red armchair. He must have been around his age, a strained look on his face and multicoloured braids decorating his long, dark brown hair that he kept pulled back. There were bracelets dangling from his wrist, touching the guitar when he bent down to play some cords.

After repeating the same melody for a couple of times, each time playing a slight change somewhere, the music stopped, he sat up and the expression on his face became even more strained.

There was a pen and a piece of paper in front of him which the unfamiliar guy used to write down cords, Yasuda assumed, for he was quite familiar with composing music. He was a musician, too, after all.

Well of course, he was not that good, and there was hardly anyone who had ever heard of him, as his girlfriend liked to remind him more often than actually needed.

Ex-girlfriend, he corrected himself with a deep sigh.

Yasuda averted his gaze from the musician, focusing on the drink in front of him instead.

It was over. For real.

Normally, Yasuda Shota was a very rational-thinking person. But their relationship seemed so right, that he had not wasted any second thought on their unequal status, their uneven ideas about how to spend the rest of their lives and of course their different priorities.

This had been a terrible mistake, he realized at that moment.

Another sigh escaped his lips and he brought his glass to his lips, taking a rather large draft.

From the corner of his eye, he spotted someone sitting a couple of bar stools away, apparently alone, apparently female, apparently very attractive, apparently *perfect*.

And he was single, right?

There was no girlfriend he would be cheating on, there was no responsibility, no relationship following if he just tried to drown his sorrows with a quick one night stand, wasn't it?

Well, it would have worked for sure, he thought, if he had been sober enough to phrase a half way proper pick-up line.

But the "I lost my cell phone number, mind to give me yours?" per se was a rather bad choice, and coming out in a not so proper but rather slurred and drunken way, with Yasuda swallowing some vocals, it was predetermined to end in the girl leaving the bar after emptying her cocktail over his shirt.

So it was no surprise he felt the liquid running down his clothes a couple of moments later.

Before another sigh could leave his mouth, he decided that maybe it was best to call it a day and go home where he could try to catch some sleep.

But he had barely asked the bartender to hand him the bill when a voice behind him made him turn around. "Not really the most brilliant choice of a pick-up line, man. I'm afraid to say she was right to ditch her Martini on you. I'm Subaru by the way." Smiling widely and leaving his guitar ajar his bar stool, the guy Yasuda had been watching just several minutes ago sat down next to him, asking the bartender for a Bacardi cocktail and holding his hand out for Yasuda to shake it.

"Ya...Yasuda Shota" he replied, taking the offered hand. "Ah, I'm bad with names, so I will stick to Yassu, okay?" It did not seem like this was a question at all by the way the other guy casually spoke those words, reaching for his cocktail. But Yasuda didn't mind.

"So... were you dumped by your girlfriend or something? You seem very desperate." Yasuda nodded slowly and suddenly, his own cocktail started to look very interesting. Just like the face of the bar, the flashy cocktail decoration standing at one corner or the colourful bracelets around Subaru's wrist. There were six and it seemed as if they were meant to represent the colours of the rainbow, with the addition of a black one.

Therefore, there didn't seem to be a blue bracelet.

And suddenly, Yasuda felt a hand on his back, giving him a not so light pat. He was happy that he had just put down his glass.

Out of the corner of his eyes, he could see Subaru shaking his head, a big grin on his lips.

"Cheer up, man. There are many other fish in the sea." The bracelets rattled when he sipped on his cocktail. "You know that this line is just as old-fashioned as my failed pick up line?"

There was laughter filling the air, easing the atmosphere.

"You're a musician? I heard you playing your guitar just now." It had been a while since he had last spent his evening alone in a bar his girlfriend would surely not set a foot into. And enjoying himself with a guy he barely knew and that did anything but fit in his girlfriend's opinion would have been a no-go.

But he was here, sucking in every second.

"Na, wish I was, but I suck at composing. If it were only for the lyrics..." The rest of this sentence was gulped down together with a good part of Subaru's drink, accompanied by another rattle of pearls coming into contact.

"For me, it's just the other way round", Yasuda explained. "But I don't think it sounded that bad. You should try to compose more." And it felt irritating and relieving at the same time.

There was a certain point where he resigned talking to someone about music on such a level. Not as if any of his ex' friends gave a damn about composing. There was no reason for it when you had a master's degree in law or business, anyway.

"Says who?" Subaru seemed to be one of those persons he could not read very well. For example it was hard for Yasuda to exactly say what he intended to convey with his expression, a mixture of interest, scepticism and amusement.

"Says me." Yasuda wondered whether it was possible to get addicted to the sound of the laughter of the other man. "Sorry, man, but... how should I say this? You...well... don't look like you are into composing music."

"Right now, I may not look like it. But it's been a hobby for some years now. Believe me or not, I even managed to play at a festival a couple of month ago. It's not much, but takes some skills to get selected."

There was a short silence, filled with Subaru's eyes widening with each second the silence continued.

"YOU are THAT Yasuda Shota? Whoa, I saw you at that festival, your music is just awesome. I tried looking for you, but the earth seemed to have swallowed you! There was no one who could tell me where I could find you." Subaru's outburst had been sudden and unexpected and it made Yasuda nearly fall off the stool.

But there was a certain glow in Subaru's eyes when he took out his cell phone that made it impossible for him to deny the other man's request to give him his cell phone

number. And it was not the alcohol which made him see things, he was fairly certain.

“We have to meet again, Yassu. Definitely.” After what seemed ages, both guys decided to finally detach themselves from each other. They had spent hours discussing their favourite bands and songs and the songs they tried to publish and real life and those damn pop idols and nail polish.

When he waved Subaru good-bye, watching after him as he melted into the crowd of pedestrians, there was a warm feeling filling Yasuda’s chest.

Subaru was someone he could talk to, not someone who wanted him to listen.

This was what he had been missing the past few years.

Yasuda had not thought he would see Subaru again so soon, when he was calling him barely half an hour later to ask him whether he knew a place he could sleep at that night.

He did not think his ex-girlfriend would have been that fast with exchanging locks.

There was a kitschy nameplate on the door, all flowers and cursive letters, telling him that Subaru’s last name was Shibutani.

The apartment itself was ...maybe not tiny, but highly undersized. And untidy. Well, rather an utter mess.

But Yasuda couldn’t have imagined it in any other state.

After deciding that he would try to free the other guy’s kitchen from all the leftovers and empty boxes the next day in return for letting him stay over night, he changed into the oversized band t-shirt Subaru had lent him and huddled under the covers next to him. Well, the bed was big enough to fit both of them and it was way more comfortable than sharing the couch with some worn clothes, magazines and game cases.

He didn’t know why, but the next days flew by like nothing.

After Subaru had woken up, all sleepy eyes and shuffling into his living room in way too long pants, and exclaimed something like “Oh my god, that carpet had actually been RED?!” , it was decided that Yasuda would stay for a while. (“And you really think it’s okay for me to stay? I mean, we can split the rent and stuff.” – “Are you crazy? You’re better than any maid I could afford. Just learn how to cook and I’ll think about buying you your own futon.” Yasuda chuckled. “But for now we take turns in sleeping on the couch. There’s no way I’ll be sleeping there for the rest of my life!”)

It also turned out that the coffee shop Yasuda worked at part time was quite near.

Sometimes Subaru would stop by, ordering a coffee latte and staying until Yasuda's shift ended so they could head home together.

And it was somewhere during this progress that Yasuda Shota became Yassu.

...Not that he actually bothered.

When he first heard his cell phone ringing that day, he thought it was Subaru, informing him that he had to work overtime. He worked at a company that repaired cars and his boss was kind of bitchy when having a bad day. Which happened quite often.

But he was surprised when he read the text message by his ex girlfriend, telling him that she would be away for the afternoon and he could come over to pick up his belongings, keys could be found in the flower pot next to the doorway.

On his way back home, he bought some hair colour from some shop he passed.

He secretly hoped the smile the shop assistant gave him had nothing to do with him looking too old to actually bleach his hair.

"Gosh, you're blond! Looks cute, man. What's for dinner tonight?"

Yassu was used to Subaru's sudden exclamations by now, but they never failed to make him smile. He placed a cup of ramen in front of Subaru who took a seat at the kitchen table, smiling widely and waiting for his dinner to arrive, like a child on Christmas. "They were blond before, but my ex told me to dye them black again and grow up." "I don't know what you're doing to the ramen, but you should always do it from now on!" There was a rattling of bracelets touching when Subaru handed him his bowl to demand a second serving. The childish grin hadn't vanished from his face, but Yasuda knew that the other guy listened to what he was saying. But he had his own way of dealing with things.

And it was somehow relieving that he was not forced to talk about his former relationship.

"By the way, I picked up my stuff from my old apartment. Is it okay for me to keep it here for a while?"

The next thing he would see was only an empty chair where Subaru was once seated. He found said guy in the living room, opening one of the boxes Yasuda put there after

arriving home. "It's okay for me to spy, right?" he asked after he dived through a layer of music sheets, T-Shirts and old photos. Yassu just smiled "Of course. But can you wait a minute? I'll just do the washing up and than we can look through the stuff together."

"Hey, Yassu! I think you made a mistake. This must be one on your girlfriend's." The blond was busy placing his beloved acoustic guitar next to where Subaru's guitar was leaning against some shelf, acting really carefully. When he turned around to look what Subaru's just found, he felt the sudden urge to blush. It must have been faith that Subaru managed to find the girliest of his skirts.

"Uhn... actually, this belongs to me. I had a wild youth and... stuff." Subaru would not mind. Surely, Subaru would not mind. It was Subaru. He would not mind, would he?

"It's looks hot, you should wear it." Where the only words he got from Subaru before said roommate dived back into the boxes.

Two days later, both guys had an evening free from work and spent it in the living room, Yassu in one of his beloved skirts, Subaru with a new Tattoo decorating his right hand, showing a skull – it was not the prettiest picture he could have chosen, but it somehow fitted him ("I'm wearing fingerless gloves more often than not, anyway").

Yassu had acquired the lyrics Subaru had written before and now both of them tried to compose a somewhat proper arrangement to go along with it.

"That sounds amazing! YOU are amazing", Subaru said between two slurps of the ramen they had for dinner somewhere in between.

"Nah, the lyrics and the feeling are just easy to convert into music. You are the amazing one, writing such deep lyrics."

And suddenly, Subaru put down the cup he had held before (it was not not empty of course), stood up and went over to his bag that was lying in a dim corner of the room. Just several moments later, he came back, a flyer in his hand, handing it to the blond on the couch.

"I think we could pull it off", were the only words Subaru said.

It was a colorful flyer announcing a 'Musical Festival & Band Competition' that promised a recording contract to the winning group.

Yassu just smiled. "Of course, we're awesome."

("Don't be so full of yourself!" Subaru hit him on his head. "But I'm cute." Another hit followed.

"I think we should start looking for a drummer and a bassist.")

It may have only been a couple of days, barely two weeks, but to Yassu there was no way he would want to trade the life he led at the moment for any other experience in the world.

Said life consisted of sleeping, cooking, taking care of Subaru, brewing coffee and music.

And no further thoughts of his ex-girlfriend.

He discovered that it was way more comfortable to not act how he was told to, to wear what he wanted to and to crack stupid jokes whenever he felt like it.

Of course, there had been a time before his time as a university student's boyfriend, where he had tried to compose music and to earn his living by selling bad coffee.

But it had never felt so free, so himself, so right, as it felt now in the Subaru's presence.

Subaru never asked any questions.

This way, there would not be any awkward answers.

So there was no need for him to think about the past, anyway.

Yassu sighed when he found himself in the, by now quite familiar, supermarket, searching for some special kind of rice. The one Subaru would not complain about being 'too fluffy' or 'too rice-y'. ("The word rice-y does not even exist, Subaru!" "It does! I use it, so it has to exist!")

Just as he was about to grab for the pack he luckily found, his cell phone started to ring, the ring tone telling him that Subaru was the one calling him.

The pack of rice in one hand, he opened his cell phone with his other, scanning the area as if to check if there was someone who looked as if they were to eavesdrop and sell the information to some random yakuza-boss. And really, there was this suspicious looking shop assistant smiling at him from the neighboring aisle, moving the same can of peas for the fourth time.

It was the same shop assistant that had smiled at him with that illegible smile when Yassu had bought the hair colour.

Or maybe it was just Yassu's imagination running wild.

"Hey. Whatever you're up to, make it quick, I have the feeling of being eavesdropped by a shop assistant who will definitely sell the information to the Yakuza."

Shit. In his thoughts this phrase had sounded so much cooler. Now he felt like being the biggest idiot on earth.

Not that the growing smile from the shop assistant did anything to set him at ease.

"You know this sounds kind of weird, don't you? You're sure that stuff you had for breakfast was still edible? Anyway, I've found us someone to play the bass. Maru, that guy I work with, seems to be interested. And from what I know he's really good", was Subaru's response from the other end of the line, sounding really excited.

"Wow, that's great, now we only need a drummer!" Subaru's smile, which Yassu could literally hear, was highly infective so that he caught himself smiling like crazy. Maybe that was the reason the suspicious shop assistant suddenly seemed to have disappeared.

That or he ran away, calling the Yakuza to sell the information.

("You really should stop spending the night watching those dramas, Yassu!" "But I LOVE them!")

Subaru hung up shortly after that, telling him to come home quickly, because he was hungry and his guitar was in desperate need of some new melodies.

Not that it actually bothered him. Subaru was always hungry.

So he continued his visit to the supermarket, grabbing some stuff Subaru and he would need, like Ramen and more rice and eggs for he was by now able to cook at least omrice.

When Yassu arrived at the cash point, he spotted some bracelets in a show case next to the cash register.

He remembered Subaru's lack of a blue one to complete his proper rainbow and suddenly felt the urge to get one for his roommate.

"Excuse me, have you any of those in blue?" he asked the cashier who turned out to be the suspicious shop assistant.

In his mind, Yassu calculated how long it would have taken to phone the Yakuza, tell them all the information and jump back to the cash register in time to smile at him innocently.

"I think there are some left, I'm going to take a look in the storehouse, if you excuse me for some minutes."

Well, at least the suspicious shop assistant was not that bad looking, with his brown hair styled like that, his long legs and... hell, that was quite a nice bum, Yassu thought, when said assistant hurried into the back of the shop, only to return with a blue bracelet.

Smiling another one of his oh so innocent smiles, the cashier packed his items into a plastic bag and handed it to him.

"Sorry for eavesdropping, but I overheard your conversation earlier. You need a drummer?" The smile on his lips was so bright Yassu was sure he could not resist, whatever suggestion the assistant would make.

"This is Tadayoshi Okura. I decided to call him Tacchon. He'll be our drummer."  
"You can be happy that Yassu already made up a nickname for you. I'm quite bad with names." This was Subaru's way of showing his approval, Yassu was sure.

The whole band-thing started to work well after the second practice.  
It worked very well, Yassu corrected himself.  
Okura turned out to be quite talented and that Maru guy Subaru picked up from work ("Seriously, Ryo's starting to get all bitchy because he did not get to join." "Your BOSS wanted to take part in the band?!") seemed to be really fast with learning cords.  
He was quite funny, too, always sharing his weird habit of doing a random "pan" gesture whenever he felt like it with the rest of the members.

The first time Yassu told Subaru about Okura not selling information to the Yakuza, he got laughed at. "No dramas for you this evening. Poor Tatsu. There is no way he looks like a yakuza member." Yassu only pouted and decided that there would be no dinner in case Subaru would really prevent him from watching his beloved dramas this night.

("Hey. I missed you shouting at me for calling Okura Tatsu. I thought you'd hate it when I mix up names." "I do", Yassu hummed, preparing the omrice. He knew that Subaru would not have been able to resist a well placed pout. "So what? Ouch!" If there was one thing Subaru learned about Yassu during the past weeks it was that he should never dare to mess with him and try to nibble on the food while he was cooking.

He did it, anyway.

"You started to call him Tacchon and that was my nickname for him. You should use your own." With a smirk on his lips, Yasuda cleaned the spoon he had just hit Subaru with.

"And maybe you should stop staring at his ass.")

("I'M NOT STARING AT HIS ASS!")

Yassu became quite acquainted to his new life.

Said life consisted of sleeping, cooking, taking care of Subaru, brewing coffee and music.

And no further thoughts of his ex-girlfriend.

Until one day she called, telling him that she wanted him back.

Later on, Subaru complained about the scratches Yassu had left on his hand while

telling her that he'd moved on and didn't want to see her anymore.

It was later that evening that he handed Subaru the bracelet. Subaru was quite drunk. And kissed him. Just like that.

It had only been a kiss. A stupid, quick, drunken kiss with no deeper meaning or intention behind it.

By now, Yassu thought he would know Subaru, would know that Subaru was quite carefree and asked based on the first thought that crossed his mind. And he was unpredictable when being drunk.

And maybe this was just part of how Subaru showed his friendship.

They were both guys anyway, right?

Of course there was cuddling and cooking and wearing skirts involved, but they were still guys. Chummy guys.

And he had had that girlfriend, right?

He liked boobs, really. And skirts.

Although most times he wished he was the one wearing them.

Girls were cute, right? Wearing nail polish and cuddling on random occasions.

But on the other hand, Subaru was quite cute, too.

In a befuddled way, though.

And the lack of boobs somehow came in quite handy when they were cuddling. And it didn't matter that Subaru's skin was not as smooth as a girl's skin. It made every touch feel real.

Maybe Subaru was right. Yassu was staring at Okura's ass.

Well, it was not that unfounded. It DID look nice.

Okay, maybe he should start to accept that he might be kind of attracted to men, too.

The fact that Subaru's hands suddenly started to catch his focus more often did not help to convince his mind that he might be straight, either.

(And really, Subaru should stop running around in nothing but a towel or his boxers.)

It was somewhere in between their third practice and Yassu's success in making a whole meal that didn't consist of any ramen, that Subaru decided to stop sleeping on the couch, for it was too uncomfortable ("And there are no proper curtains!", Subaru complained. "I need my room to be totally dark, or I won't be able to sleep!" Yassu laughed "And I know you do it only to spare me you being grumpy and bitchy in the morning. How very generous of you" It was not exactly what Subaru wanted to convey, but this would do... wouldn't it?)

Either way, there was no space for another futon in his room and neither of them wanted to sleep in the living room.

So they did the most rational thing that came to their minds.

Not that one of them did exactly word it, but it became quite a habit to them to slide under the blankets together once the lights were turned off and the lights from outside were shut away behind blinds.

It was their own refuge, where no one would see how they fought their fights against themselves, against their sanities, against the will to just reach out a hand or an arm, to just grab hold of the other person, to never let go.

Naturally, both of them won their fight once they managed to fall asleep.

But it somehow ended with Subaru being quite clingy in his sleep and Yassu waking up with Subaru hugging him on a regular basis.

And there was no way he was going to do something against it.

Because, really, this way none of them had to explain something they did not want to couch.

(Okay, maybe he was falling for Subaru.

Stupid Subaru. Making him develop this stupid crush, with his stupid jokes and his stupid manners and his stupid cuddling attacks.

And his stupid attitude of kissing him when he was drunken. Or asleep.)

They sat in the living room, trying desperately to distract themselves from having any thoughts about music or cords or lyrics.

The TV was on, babbling something about a train accident and a donation affair, but neither of the two guys seemed to be listening.

Yassu's gaze was on Subaru, who tried to hide the fact that he was in deep thoughts about the following day, but failed due to some wrinkles showing how stressed he really was.

With a sigh, Yassu put the magazine he had tried to read (Could someone call it reading when you just stared at a sentence and tried to get what the single letters wanted to convey but failed?), bent over and grabbed Subaru's hand which had started to use the remote control to switch channels way too fast to actually get what was shown, to give it a light squeeze.

"I think it's best to call it a day." Yassu hoped that his smile conveyed what he actually wanted to tell.

*'Don't worry, everything will work out.'*

But the smile Subaru gave him was one of the most sincere smiles he'd ever seen. "I think you're right"

*'Thank you'*

When the day of the band contest finally arrived, Yassu woke up and was sure of two things.

First, he knew that it was not just a crush.

Second, he knew they could win this damn contest.

He started to untangle their bodies and headed for the kitchen to prepare breakfast. (And of course there was a smile on his lips, because he really liked to wake up in the warmth of Subaru's embrace, be it his arms or his legs embracing him.

And Subaru looked quite cute in his sleep.

Even if he was drooling.)

"We're way too early!" "We're not too early, even Tatsuyoshi managed to get here before us!" "It's Tadayoshi!"

There was not much left to do, once the instruments were tuned and they had finished make-up and putting on Yassu's self-designed group-emblem: a big, grinning smiley.

The other bands participating were quite cool and they spent the time waiting for their performance cheering each other up and exchanging phone numbers.

Yassu would definitely call that Yokoyama-kun later on, he seemed to be quite a funny fellow.

They heard the crowd screaming and cheering.

("There must be at least two million people out there!" Subaru could be such a child sometimes, peeking through the curtain now and then. "Don't you think you're overestimating that?" "Hm, you're right. Maybe it's just one million.")

Five minutes before their own performance, Okura suddenly got lost.

There was really a nice atmosphere in there, with everyone talking about music and clothes and stuff.

Yassu had found Okura a minute ago, while said guy was busy eating his way through the catering buffet.

They were on their way back to the stage entrance, when a female voice called his name and he turned around to see who wanted to talk to him.

And suddenly Yassu's world went blank.

“What exactly are you doing here? Have you ever looked at your hair? How old are you? 15? And what are you trying to pull off? Be a musician? You know your music sucks! Why don’t you finally realize that it’s time for you to search for a proper job?”

There it was, the monsoon, the never ending cascade of words, crackling down on him like rain.

He felt uncomfortable, insignificant, tiny, weak, failing in life.

She was there, doing what she was used to do, just as if there had never been a break up, like there had never been a time spent at Subaru’s apartment.

And suddenly he became Shota-kun again, the black haired coffee-shop boy with the high class university student girlfriend telling him what to do to acquire the perfect life he had taken for granted he would lead eventually.

“Anyway” Yasuda was sure that he blended out some of the parts she talked about.

“I really should not even think about taking you back. But I decided to be more grateful. How about you move back in? Once you got rid of that stupid blond and started searching for a proper job, of course.”

The only thing the blond was able to do was standing there, staring in the face of his ex-girlfriend and telling her a simple “No”.

One that made her turn on her way too high heels immediately and leave the building.

Watching her back as she left, he suddenly felt empty.

It was the same emptiness he felt when he first realized the end of their relationship. That girl just went out of the door, taking every perfection he had once held with her.

‘What exactly are you doing here?’ Her question was ringing in his head, giving him a headache.

Maybe it was best to just leave like she did, leave this life that was destined to end sooner or later in a not so perfect way.

“Gosh, don’t tell me that was that university bitch you dated? What is she? Your mother?” Yasuda snapped out of his thoughts once he heard the familiar voice of Subaru.

He had not even vocalized his ‘Hold me’, when Subaru was already by his side, wrapping his arms around the blond guy and caressing his back.

“You know that you did the right thing, don’t you?”

Yasuda swallowed.

"You know that you did the right thing!?"

The blonde looked up, a fake smile on his lips.

"But if they don't like what they see? But what if we fail, if we never make it, if..."

"Then we'll start right from the beginning again."

Yasuda had never heard Subaru sounding so angry, so desperate, so wounded. And he had never wished to see right into the face of a very furious Subaru, either.

"Why the hell do you give a damn about it, anyway? It's always like this, isn't it? Have you ever done something that you wanted but others didn't want you to do? Just look at that girlfriend of yours! Just to please her, you did everything for her, you changed your whole being! And look where it got you!

Is this seriously what you want to happen again? Giving in to what other people expect from you? So you will become the one suffering from it? Just think about it! When was it you really lived? When you were with her and her high class friends from university that laughed at you behind your back about how stupid you are or when... when you were living with me?"

Yasuda lowered his head. He could not stand to look into Subaru's eyes, staring right into his soul, following his words that hit him deeply, phrasing what he had tried to run away from.

He was right. He was so damn right.

In his search for perfection, for the things he had taken for granted he someday would own, there was one single item missing.

He.

And suddenly, he felt a warm hand on his shoulder. "But you know what, Yassu? Do what you think is correct. I'm following."

The warmth left his shoulder again, with Subaru departing to enter the stage.

There was no wrong or right when Yassu suddenly started to hurry after him, stopping him from climbing those three steps to the stage with wrapping his arms around him. And before they entered the stage, he kissed him.

Just like that.

Maybe Subaru had been right.

The crowd really seemed to consist of two million people, all cheering and screaming

once they entered the way too huge stage.

He was blinded by what seemed thousands of lights and Subaru was standing next to him, smiling brightly, glowing and illuminated, a sparkle in his eyes when starting the first lines.

And he felt it. With each line Subaru sang, he felt his guitar responding, wanting to reach, to surpass the power of Subaru's words, sucking them in and transforming them into power Subaru would take and transform.

A give and take. Approaching perfection.

*The truth is that I'm afraid and weaker than anyone. But I still have to move forward.*

Yassu thought that he had never understood those words better than now.

It happened just when he was about to enter the stage again, two moments before they would announce the results of this evening's competition, when Yassu was held back by a hand clasp on his wrist.

"Hey" Subaru's gaze was clearly focused on the floor and not at the person he was talking to.

Either way, the blond just smiled at him, answering with a "Hey" that must have had about the equal level of intellect as Subaru's.

"I'm...Sorry Yassu. I'm really sorry. I should not have mistrusted you. I just thought I would lose you to her and her perfect life. Call me jealous, if you like.

I just thought... you never seemed to search for perfection when we were together and... and I would really like it if you decided that you're able to keep up with me for the next couple of years, although I can't promise you that everything will be 'perfect'. DAAAAMN, I suck at words! It's just that over the last weeks, I... sorta fell for you and..." Yassu smiled at him, shutting him up with his index finger on his lips, while he linked their hands, let their fingers enwind.

"Just come on, they are announcing the results"

Of course they were excited.

Each of the forty-seven bands standing on the stage, waiting for the results to be announced, was excited.

Maru had even stopped pan-ning.

It was not about winning.

It was about taking part in such a big contest, experiencing how it was to have such a huge crowd cheering for them.

Really, there had been better groups, better performances, better lyrics.  
But for him, it was the way that counted. And really, it had been a damn long and steep way.

He felt content.

Too content to realize that the moderators had just announced them to be the wining group.

And just when he noticed Okura's screams and the biggest 'pan' Maru had ever pan-ed, and when he saw Subaru's arms, first raised above his head, then landing around his neck, it dawned on him that they really, really had made it.

And it was in that moment, that he finally realized something way more important.

He had always searched for something "perfect".

But now, he suddenly found that "perfect" was not what he had longed for.

It was at this point that his journey ended.

He felt Subaru's arms around his neck, their foreheads touching.

He saw the shimmer in his eyes, the big grin on his lips, he felt the butterflies in his stomach when they finally close the gap between them.

And they kiss.

Just like that