A little help from my friends

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by FallLover

Summary

On their first day back in school, Nakamura runs into Kawamura again. But as he walks home with Hirose, Hirose has some surprising thoughts about noticing the earlier interaction, and Hirose’s feelings about his relationship with Nakamura.

Notes

This was first published on Archive of Our Own.

The fanfic title is from "With a Little Help from My Friends" by the Beatles.

See the end of the work for more notes

Nakamura sat a little closer to the front of his second-year class, and there were even some faces around him he didn't recognize, though everyone had been polite so far. And the sunny sky heralded a decent day that was neither too cold nor too hot, though frustrating to the children trapped inside school for most of it. But when Nakamura glanced to his left, he saw Hirose's familiar face grinning at the student next to him, before Hirose looked Nakamura's way, almost as if Hirose sensed Nakamura's gaze.

And Hirose grinned.

Nakamura smiled warmly back. They'd already met before finding their seats and even walked to class together, but Nakamura couldn't help but glance at the boy that, even after break was over, he was still madly in love with. He was so happy they had class together again.

They'd done a lot over break together: they'd seen more movies, attended an AquaPet concert, gone to two different aquariums, and even went to the beach a couple times with and without Ohmori. Nakamura did more that break than he ever had with anyone, and he felt so *alive*. Being back at school was frustrating, as school usually was, but it meant he'd still be seeing Hirose all the time, knowing they were in class together again. And Nakamura tried to make the best of things, as he'd seen was possible around Hirose.

Things could be a lot of fun, even if they weren't quite together in the way he wanted. Even if more difficulties came their way, Nakamura would manage them. At Hirose's side.

While walking back to class during a break, he saw Kawamura in the hallway, looking just as she had before the break. She smiled brightly at him and waved as she approached, and surprisingly, asked for his LINE ID. "But only if you're comfortable…" She sounded like she expected him to turn her down.

Nakamura smiled and replied, "Sure." After all, he liked talking with Kawamura, and maybe they could chat about *Love-Ben* some more. He'd liked doing that at the autograph event they went to, even if it had been embarrassing, as he'd had no one to talk about it with before (Hirose liked manga but had different tastes). Kawamura was a reliable friend who gave him priceless manga of him and Hirose. He valued their friendship. And since they weren't in the same class this year, he knew he needed to work harder to maintain that bond.

Kawamura beamed at him before glancing around nervously. Then she said, "Um… Nakamura-kun… have you…?"

Nakamura waited patiently.

But then Kawamura shook her head and said, "Never mind." Then she grinned and continued where she was heading.

Nakamura wondered what she was going to ask as he returned to class. Maybe if he'd seen the notice for the next *Love-Ben* café?

At the end of the day, Ohmori said that he had to stay behind for club activities, so Nakamura and Hirose walked home alone together.

“You seemed pretty close with Kawamura earlier,” Hirose teased as they walked down the quiet road together.

Nakamura shrugged and replied, “She was asking for my LINE. I haven’t spoken with her since break started.”

“Oh?” Hirose asked. “Did you miss her?”

Nakamura considered this and said, “Not really. I had a lot of fun with you over break.” His face was a little warm as he said it, but he’d grown a lot more comfortable with Hirose recently, and felt able to admit such things. “But she’s a friend, too.”

“*Just* a friend?” Hirose asked.

Nakamura looked at Hirose, who was watching him with a narrowed gaze. Hirose had a particular way of badly pretending to be the opposite of what he was, and Nakamura had started cottoning onto it more and more, even if he wasn’t necessarily always correct about what in particular Hirose really felt. But the questions seemed *very* pointed…

Nakamura’s eyebrows rose in surprise as he realized *just* what Hirose might be thinking. “Yes! Just a friend! I’m not interested in her like *that*… She’s just nice!”

Hirose nodded, but added, “I’m not so friendly with Sakamoto, though.” He laughed then and added, “She kind of glared at me one time we made eye contact today. She probably still hasn’t forgiven me for making her cry.”

Nakamura frowned, and wondered if the whole thing bothered Hirose more than he let on. “You’re still okay with the break-up though, right?”

“Yeah,” Hirose said with a shrug.

“Then it’s up to her to figure out how to live with it,” Nakamura said. “She dumped *you*, after all. And… And if she bothers you… I’ll support you!” He wasn’t sure how that worked, but if Sakamoto was going to make a big deal out of it, then… Nakamura would do his best!

Hirose blinked at him for a bit in surprise, and then grinned, “You’re a better guy than I am, Nakamura.”

Nakamura shook his head as he thought, *You don’t know how jealous and upset I was when you were dating her.* In a way, it still hurt, but not as badly as it had at first. “That’s not true.”

“Well…” Hirose began, slowly. “When I saw you with Kawamura, I was kind of jealous.” He avoided Nakamura’s gaze when the other boy looked at him.

“Why?” Nakamura asked, surprised.

“I imagined you going out with her and that’d make me kind of sad, I guess,” Hirose said.

Nakamura's heartrate picked up. *It'd make him sad if I was dating Kawamura? Why?* Sure, Nakamura had been sad when Hirose had dated Sakamoto, but… But surely Hirose wouldn't feel the same for the same reasons?

"I like hanging out with you," Hirose continued. "But I don't want to monopolize you…"

"You can monopolize me all you want!" Nakamura insisted. It wouldn't ever be the way Nakamura wanted, but Hirose could have all the time Nakamura had. All of it! He just had to ask!

Hirose smiled at him and asked, "Really?" The wind ruffled his hair.

Nakamura's face was hot, despite the breeze, as he replied, "Really." He wanted Hirose to know that Nakamura would *gladly* spend all the time they had together. They were only in high school for so long, after all. And maybe they wouldn't be in the same class in their third year.

"Do you mean it?" Hirose continued, teasingly.

"Yeah," Nakamura said, hoping his feelings came through properly.

Hirose stopped walking, and Nakamura stopped walking, too. Hirose looked up at Nakamura, his expression a little more serious. "And what if… I wanted more than friendship? What would you say?"

Nakamura's lips parted in surprise. He wasn't sure he heard right. Maybe he was daydreaming again.

But time passed and Hirose was still gazing at him with a determined expression.

"Do you really mean that?" Nakamura asked, and his voice shook ever so slightly.

"Yeah," Hirose said. And Nakamura could see his cheeks were a bit pinker. He looked away, a little embarrassed, and said, "I uh… I've been looking stuff up over the summer, and I thought, well… maybe I was just… imagining things. But being back in school, it made things feel more real."

"What things?" Nakamura asked, wondering if he was just hoping too hard. If Hirose meant something else.

"How I feel about people. And you, specifically." Hirose said. "Because I really like you, Nakamura."

Nakamura's heart raced as he heard, *I really like you* on repeat over and over in his brain, and he thought he might shake out of his skin. "You really like me?! So you…? You want…?"

Hirose stepped closer to Nakamura, and there was a hint of worry in his face.

"You want to date?" Nakamura finally asked. He hoped this wasn't some joke of the universe and also not a dream. But there wasn't much else to conclude from the conversation. They

had spent a lot of time together over the break, and had a lot of fun. But Nakamura always thought that was all there would ever be.

He'd been happy with that. Or at least tried to be. But if Hirose wanted more than friendship, then… Then—!

Hirose nodded at him. "If you do, too."

Nakamura's knees gave out.

Hirose reached out to grab Nakamura before he fell to the ground. "Nakamura! What's wrong?!" Despite being shorter, he was rather strong.

"Of course I want to date you!" Nakamura burst out, before he realized Hirose's hands were pressed against his back, and Hirose's scent was in Nakamura's face. His own face felt wet from overjoyed tears already and his throat was tight. "Of course I do!" *Please don't be a dream!*

Hirose blinked in surprise, and then grinned at him. "Well, okay then!"

Nakamura gazed at Hirose's happy face, and it didn't fade away into a dream. He could feel Hirose's arms around him, and eventually steadied himself to stand. And Hirose was still there, gazing warmly up at him.

When Hirose pulled back, his left hand went to Nakamura's right, and he laced their fingers together. "This is still pretty new to me, though, okay? I don't want you to end up dumping me like Sakamoto did…"

"I would never!" Nakamura said, still unsure he wouldn't dissolve at any moment.

Hirose laughed and said, "Okay! Then… I guess we're dating, huh?"

Nakamura nodded. He wasn't sure he was doing any of this right, but he didn't care. If Hirose was happy – and he seemed to be – that was all that mattered. *Dating?! Us?!* He hoped he didn't die of joy.

"Wanna go hang at my place?" Hirose asked.

"Sure!" Nakamura said, and Hirose towed him along, as the afternoon sun shone on their backs.

End Notes

Thank you so much for reading <3 <3 Kudos and comments are love! If you'd like to read more of my work, you can subscribe to the fanfic and/or my author page! My Archive of Our Own page, when it is back up, has my completed archive of work, and will be the first to be updated with new works (usually), so that is the best place to subscribe to me.

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