Posted originally on the fanfiction.lol at https://fanfiction.lol/works/946.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Categories:	Slash (M/M), Queerplatonic Relationship
Fandoms:	Genshin Impact (Video Game), Paradox Live - All Media Types
Relationships:	Kaedehara Kazuha ~ Miyama Kei, Kaedehara Kazuha/Miyama Kei
Characters:	Kaedehara Kazuha (Genshin Impact), Miyama Kei
Additional Tags:	Alternate Universe - Setting Change, Crossover Pairings, Setting Change - Modern
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-08-29 Words: 4,559 Chapters: 1/1

by JadeRiverDay

Summary

Kei admits it: he does not believe himself worthy of Kazuha’s love.

It is his greatest fortune that Kazuha disagrees with his beliefs.

Kei and Kazuha have a sleepless night.

Notes

I actually posted to ao3, sqwa, and tumblr, but sqwa is down and I don't like how tumblr looks, so now this fic is also going here! this fic was inspired by insomnie by joseph kamel, so I recommend listening to it for vibes! the title is , which means romantic or romance nowadays, but it used to mean unrestrained

See the end of the work for more notes

When Kei wakes, the first thing he notices is the distinct lack of sound. Not the coolness of the bed next to him or the sheets pushed towards him; oh, he does notice those, too, but the silence where the sound of breathing should be, that is what he notices before he opens his eyes or reaches his hand out.

In any other case, the quiet would be a gift, something he would welcome gladly. In this case, it is neither.

He opens his eyes to see the empty space besides him, only confirming what his hearing had already told him.

Kazuha is not here.

A lance of panic pierces through his heart before he can shove it down roughly to focus. The sheets are cool where Kazuha should be, meaning he has been missing for some time. The blankets pushed towards Kei's side leave ample room for Kei himself, a testament to Kazuha's considerate nature but betray nothing about the reason for his departure.

Kei listens. The world is quiet, never silent. He once thought the lack of true silence was a pity, but Kazuha taught him how to listen in even the quiet. It was Kazuha who helped Kei turn the curse of his sensitive hearing into a double-edged sword instead.

There is a breeze drifting through the apartment that should not be present. Kei is certain that all the windows, save for the bedroom, were closed before he and Kazuha retired. That unexpected wind spills through the crack under the bedroom door, swirling through the hallway from the living room. Listening even more carefully, Kei can hear the faint sounds of the world outside of the apartment, the hum of near-empty streets, faint voices of a conversation from another building away.

The balcony door must be open.

He sits up in bed, pushing the blankets off of him before slipping out of the bedroom and padding his way to the balcony. As he thought, the balcony door is open, and there Kazuha is, leaning against the railing as he looks out towards the city.

However sensitive Kei's hearing is, Kazuha more than makes up for the difference (albeit small) in his own skill for listening. Kei's habit is to walk quietly (lest he wake up Rokuta, a heavy sleeper, or Itsuki, a much lighter one), but Kazuha is the one person who can still hear his footsteps coming from behind him. Still, his only indication of noticing Kei's approach is for his gaze to drift from the stars to the space on the balcony left of him.

Kei takes the space wordlessly offered to him, feeling the weight of Kazuha's gaze on him. He settles his arms on the balcony railing and looks out for whatever it was Kazuha was watching, listening, perceiving. His own skill in observation is lacking in comparison to Kazuha, so it comes as no surprise that in the stars, he cannot find what exactly had brought Kazuha out here.

Kei detests disturbing the quiet, but one question remains burning in his chest, an inadvertent reflection of his deepest fears. It still feels childish for something so simple as a cold bedside to elicit a reaction so primal, yet Kei cannot help himself all the same.

“Did I wake you?”

Instinctively, Kei’s eyes snap from the stars to Kazuha.

Kazuha, who does not detest disturbing the quiet, who listens and understands more than anyone else, who is always so close, yet so far.

Truthfully, Kazuha’s departure itself did not wake Kei; he doesn’t remember being disturbed in his sleep. Kei could answer no and claim that Kazuha had done nothing to warrant his sleeplessness, but that would be dishonest to them both, a disservice to the relationship that they share.

Kei does not trust easily, both unwilling and unable to truly believe in the best of others. He can let go of neither his grudges nor his loved ones, having lost everything and everyone once before. His deepest fears are not unfounded, having all been proven true by his past experiences, but he has entered a new chapter where his fears no longer ring true.

A life where he is truly living, no longer drifting listlessly after having lost everything, no longer driving singlemindedly to his impossible goal, no longer disregarding himself in favor of everyone he loves.

Kazuha brought him that.

Kazuha showed him it was worth closing the chapter on his old life, the one where he was only surviving and not thriving. Kazuha defied his impossible goals and his intangible ideals so thoroughly that it was impossible for Kei to hold onto both Kazuha and the things he swore to live by. Kazuha taught through demonstration how to love both selfishly and selflessly, how to love someone without compromising on one’s self, because to compromise meant it was no longer simply love.

They were all hard lessons to learn. Even now, Kei is still learning.

Kei’s gaze flickers across Kazuha’s face, his body, his surroundings. His scarlet eyes shine from starlight. His arms are crossed on top the railing with his sleeves rolled up. His unkempt hair is untied left at the mercy of the night breeze. Above all else, Kazuha looks as if he belongs here, on this balcony, on this night, in Kei’s life.

“No,” Kei answers, “but I never sleep well without someone sleeping beside me.”

Before, it was Rokuta and Itsuki who made sure that he would never sleep alone. Now, it could still be Rokuta and Itsuki that could sleep besides him, but now, it is Kazuha whom Kei wants to accompany him both awake and asleep.

Kei hears more than he sees how Kazuha takes a deep breath, composing both himself and his response.

“Shall we go back to sleep, then?” Kazuha asks as if it’s the easiest thing in the world. He pushes himself off of the balcony railing and turns to face Kei in one fluid motion, extending a hand to invite him back inside.

He accepts Kei’s honesty easily without explaining or justifying his presence outside. For Kazuha, such an explanation or justification is neither necessary nor obligatory. In a way, it serves as another lesson for Kei to learn, that even as he loves, he will never know everything about those he loves. For Kei, if he were really curious, he could simply ask and Kazuha would answer. At first glance, that seems to be a simple concession, but it is one that speaks volumes to both Kazuha’s way of caring for him and how Kei has changed because of him.

As much as Kazuha is considerate of Kei by asking, Kei wants to do the same for Kazuha.

Kei leans back, glancing between Kazuha’s eyes and his extended hand, considering the offer being given to him. After no more than a moment’s hesitation, Kei shakes his head.

“I would like to see the world that captivates you more than dreams.”

If Kei still sought to change the world for a better tomorrow, he must first better his understanding of the world that Kazuha loves now.

He knows that there is no objectively correct answer to Kazuha’s considerate question, but the small yet warm smile he receives is more than a simple affirmation. It is more than a gesture of his gentle encouragement and more than a symbol of his undeserving love. It is a part of Kazuha given to Kei freely for Kei’s eyes and memories only. The significance of that will never be lost on Kei, who knows better than to take anyone’s presence in his life for granted.

“It is the world you live in,” Kazuha replies. His scarlet eyes do not leave Kei’s face even once, the weight of Kazuha’s gaze sitting heavily, yet not suffocatingly so, upon Kei’s heart.

The world that Kazuha loves is the one that Kei lives in. For some miraculous reason, what follows from that is that Kazuha loves Kei, too.

It is a fact that Kei finds hard to accept, let alone understand. Even now, Kei is still learning how to accept being loved.

He has to tear his eyes away from Kazuha, so he turns his own gaze to the night sky. Out of the corner of his eye, Kei notices that Kazuha turns back to the balcony, but the way that he steps closer to Kei does not go unnoticed by either of them.

When he asks the stars what it is that Kazuha sees in this world, the one that Kei lives in, the one that Kazuha loves, the one that Kei wanted, perhaps still wants, to change, he receives no answer. Kazuha himself remains quiet, whether observing the world himself or waiting for Kei to ask him, Kei doesn’t know. The stars do nothing to distract him from his own swirling thoughts or from the imagined coolness he feels when Kazuha’s gaze leaves him.

Kei knows what it feels like to be loved by Rokuta and Itsuki in their own ways, but he has always been their older brother. He has always been bound by duty, if not also blood, to

watch over and care for them, to take on the weight of their heaviest burdens so that they may live a lighter life. He loves them just as they love him in return, but in his mind and his heart, there will always be that divide that separates him from his brothers.

It makes it easier to disregard himself in the name of love. It makes it harder for him to understand how to accept being loved.

Kazuha is the complete opposite.

Kei never had any obligations towards Kazuha. They are bound by neither blood nor duty, only a coincidental encounter that left Kei reeling so much that he felt compelled to pursue the one who left him so unmoored. If Itsuki and Rokuta are the solid ground from which Kei can find his footing, then Kazuha is the tempest that sent him flying into the sky, something so dangerous, yet so illuminating all the same.

After all, everything truly does look so small from the heavens.

Once Kei managed to make landfall, he could not have honestly claimed to have been unchanged by such an experience: the simple coincidence of meeting Kaedehara Kazuha, the arduous journey of pursuing Kaedehara Kazuha, the priceless privilege of loving Kazuha.

He could no longer live a life wholly grounded once he had known what it felt like to take to the skies.

Yet, that came with the understanding that it was a privilege to have been able to see the earth from a bird’s eye view. Not everyone could stomach seeing the world from so high or from so far away, yes, but not everyone would have the opportunity to even try.

Then, Kei was fortunate for Kazuha to have given him the wings to fly for just that brief moment. It was long enough to force him to re-examine the ideals he held so closely to his chest, but not long enough that he would burn himself from trying to fulfill them.

Perhaps that explained why Kei had pursued Kazuha so seriously, so obsessively. It wasn’t solely because Kazuha had so thoroughly defied everything Kei had lived by that Kei sought him out to find a way to reconcile his ideals with Kazuha’s beliefs. That was an impossible task. It could have also been because Kazuha had shown him a taste of the skies, and Kei had only just discovered that it suited him, too. Perhaps the skies suited Kazuha better, but Kei wanted to be there, too.

Perhaps it was because Kazuha was there that it felt like a second home.

If Kazuha loves this world and Kei who lives in it, then Kei loves Kazuha and the world he lives in.

When Kei speaks again, his voice soft along the night breeze, he doesn’t face Kazuha as he does so. Whether out of fear that he would lose the courage to break the blessed quiet or out of respect for the world that Kazuha has shown him time and time again, he couldn’t say. Still, Kazuha has stepped close enough that even his warmth can be felt from here.

“Besides me, what else do you see?”

The only change to Kazuha’s slow, even breathing is when he breathes in to give his answer.

“I once heard a story that we are all born under constellations,” Kazuha replies, just as softly. He stands downwind from Kei, so even he must strain slightly to make out Kazuha’s words. “Those stars accompany our lives from the day we are born to the moment that we die. Some believe that fate is carved out in the stars, while others believe that the stars are only witnesses to fate.”

Kazuha points out to the stars. Kei has to lean over to see exactly which stars Kazuha is pointing to, but Kazuha is patient and allows him to take both his space and time. He finds them soon enough: a set of six stars arranged in an open diamond formation.

“I once asked what constellation would best suit me, what stars would watch over me,” Kazuha continues. “The name given to those stars is *Acer Palmatum*, after the Japanese maple. The stars outline the sections of a single leaf.”

Now that Kazuha points it out, Kei can see the shape of the leaf in the stars. A single leaf drifting in the cosmos, having fallen far from the tree it once came from, it will never find a place to make landfall. Kei could think of nothing else that could suit Kazuha better.

Because Kei is still selfish, he asks, “What kind of constellation do you think would suit me?”

Kazuha hums quietly in thought. “I am no astrologer, but that does not mean I cannot think of something that would suit you.”

He points to another part of the sky, closer to the horizon than his drifting maple leaf. Kei watches as he traces the stars into the top half of an octagon and wonders just what it is Kazuha sees.

“*Testudo Ater*, the black tortoise,” Kazuha names the stars. “In some stories I’ve heard, it carries the world on its back, but in doing so, it may never live in the world whose weight it bears. Yet, it still continues to bear that burden so that those who live in that world may live.”

Kei pointedly continues to stare at the stars, imagining that black tortoise against its starry outline, as he feels Kazuha’s gaze settle back on him once more. He feels it more than he hears the direction of Kazuha’s breathing. He does not look back at Kazuha because he already feels more than seen.

The world that Kazuha so loves, the world that Kei once wished he could change, when Kei still had that kind of resolve, he had resigned himself to never be a part of it. Come to think of it, it’s not all that different from how he separates himself from Itsuki and Rokuta. Even now, he wishes for their happiness at any cost, even if that cost is himself. Once upon a time, he wished to reshape the world in his vision, even if he could never live in that vision himself.

Kei had told Kazuha many things about his ideals that he is no longer certain he desires to pursue, but he had never told Kazuha this. Hell, he never admitted this to anyone for fear that it would somehow find its way back to Itsuki and Rokuta, and the fact that he feared such a possibility is something he still refuses to examine. Not only has Kazuha listened to and remembered those ideals, but he has also considered them enough to have seen them through to their logical consequences. Knowing this now, Kei feels seen, exposed even, but not terribly vulnerable.

He trusts Kazuha. That is the truth, but not all of it.

He loves Kazuha despite how Kazuha shattered his heart and his soul. Kazuha loves him despite all the imperfections he has from both before and after he put himself back together.

“It sounds like it’s only me you’re seeing in that world,” Kei notes, his voice barely above a whisper.

This time, the answer doesn’t come as easily to Kazuha as before. A breath, a pause, and another breath later, he finally answers.

“It is only natural to see the one you love in every part of the world you live in.”

That takes Kei’s own breath away and leaves him at a loss for words.

Even though it was Kazuha who had so thoroughly shattered his heart, thrown his soul into the depths out of which he knew not how to swim, it was also Kazuha who listened, who took the pains to understand Kei’s ideals so that he knew how to better question them. It was Kazuha who held a mirror up to the hollowed sword that was Kei’s beliefs, and it was also Kazuha whose careful hand melted it down to be reforged into something far stronger.

Kazuha saw Kei. Despite, or perhaps because of, all of Kei’s imperfections, those flaws even Kei himself thinks unsightly, Kazuha still saw something worth loving in Kei.

As much as Kei wishes for the opposite, he is not a kind person. He is selfish, naive, driven for all of the wrong reasons, and deluded himself into believing himself righteous. Even the kindness extended to his family is selfish because he selfishly cannot bear the thought of losing them again. In his naivety, he had pushed away everyone who could have understood him because he had truly believed that no one else could. To pursue those ideals he once held so dear, the person he was the least kind to was his own self, for he could think of no better purpose than to become a martyr for those same ideals. So entrenched in his delusions, he fervently hoped such action, and only such an action, would convince the world.

Kei admits it: he does not believe himself worthy of Kazuha’s love.

It is his greatest fortune that Kazuha disagrees with his beliefs.

Kazuha listened and understood those ideals, but he would not allow Kei’s ideals to compromise his own. The fact that such simple disagreement was all it took for Kei’s own resolve to shatter is a testament to the fragility of Kei’s ideals, but the fact that Kazuha is still here with him, that Kazuha still loves him, is a testament to the strength of Kazuha’s.

Kei saw the world and its imperfections and decided that he would change them. Kazuha saw the world and its imperfections and decided that he would love them. Kei no longer believes himself capable of changing the world in the way he once wished, but Kazuha has never stopped loving the world that he wished to love.

That world apparently includes Kei, too.

That world apparently reflects Kei.

Perhaps it is asking too much of Kei to even begin to understand the world that Kazuha loves. Perhaps he should change his perspective. Perhaps his focus should be not on the world that Kazuha lives in but on Kazuha himself, for Kei has never quite loved the world, but he has loved Kazuha.

He loves Kazuha.

If it is only natural to see the one you love in every part of the world you live in, then that explains why he already sees, hears, and senses pieces of Itsuki and Rokuta scattered across his life, but he sees Itsuki and Rokuta every day. He has no need to seek out their traces when he can easily seek out their persons.

Once again, Kazuha is the complete opposite.

Kei swears he can hear Kazuha in every passing breeze. He turns around every street corner and hopes it'll be Kazuha's face he sees. Now, he'll look up to the stars to find Kazuha's constellation. He'll do all this and more because this is the only way he can keep Kazuha within reach.

Just as Kazuha seems to see Kei in every part of his world, Kei also sees Kazuha in every part of his own world because he loves him.

Kei knows that he misses Kazuha terribly when he's gone.

Now, it seems logical, even natural, that Kazuha does the same for him.

The stars and Kazuha witness that realization blooming in Kei's chest, but it will be Kei alone who remembers its significance.

On a good day, Kei finds difficulty in conveying his own heartfelt emotions. On a night like this, as sleepless as it is, with as grand of a revelation as he has had, the words become impossible to find, let alone speak aloud. Too many thoughts swirl around in his mind, his heartbeat thundering in his ears and chest, yet they all fall away when Kei finally pulls himself from the balcony, shunning its grounding presence as he turns to meet Kazuha's eyes.

The dim starlight does nothing to conceal his burning gaze, muted scarlet like cooling embers that only need a single spark to ignite into flames.

"It's getting late," Kei says carefully.

"It is," Kazuha agrees easily, but unlike before, he makes no move to head back inside.

Kei agrees with Kazuha's intention; this is not how this night should end. Kazuha writes poetry, Kei composes music, both of them understand the weight of words, yet Kei can find nothing that comes close to what Kazuha deserves, what Kazuha deserves to hear.

Then again, in Kei's eyes, he is wholly unworthy of Kazuha, yet Kazuha chooses to love him anyway. It follows that his words will be equally unworthy, yet Kazuha will still choose to listen and understand them anyway.

"The world that captivates you more than dreams," Kei murmurs, his gaze flickering downwards, lest he lose his courage once again, "it would be my greatest honor to be a part of it. Out of everything in the world, there must be others who are more deserving of your attention than me—"

Kazuha opens his mouth as if to interrupt, but Kei continues before he can.

"—But even so, selfishly, I'm happy that it is me who is reflected the most in the world you see."

Kazuha closes his mouth.

Now that he has found his thread, the words come much more easily. His courage surges back in full force. If his words are unworthy, then at least allow him to look in Kazuha's eyes as he speaks.

"You have made the impossible possible. I never imagined that I could love in any other way, yet now, I see more of you in my world than even Rokuta or Itsuki. Everything in my world that isn't them is you, yet even tonight, you show me more than everything. My world was already you, and now, even the stars are you."

It is only natural for you to see the one you love in every part of the world you live in. Now, Kei sees Kazuha not only in the world around him, but in the sky above him, in the stars watching over him, in the constellations named by him.

"Kazuha, I love you."

Kei has said those words to Kazuha before, but never like this. He once said them in anger, once in desperation, and once in despair, but now, he says it as a promise.

The stars that Kei lives under, they have been given new life by Kazuha. The world that Kei lives in, it has been changed irreversibly by Kazuha. The ideals that Kei onced lived by, they have been shattered and reforged because of Kazuha. The person Kei has become now, it is in no small part due to Kazuha.

Out of all people, Kazuha is the only one who has successfully fulfilled Kei's ideals. Kazuha is the only person Kei knows to have changed his world, because the world that Kazuha changed was him.

The world that Kazuha loves is him.

How could Kei not love him in return? It is the least he could do for him.

Kei doesn't expect Kazuha to return the words to him, but neither does he expect the way that Kazuha's eyes widen and his lips part. Kazuha pulls himself away from the balcony, his sleeves catching the dust that settled there, and looks at Kei, really looks at him. His gaze wanders around Kei, to the pajama shirt that sits loosely on his shoulders, to the arm still lingering on the balcony, to the hand curled at Kei's side, and finally back up to Kei's eyes.

He looks at Kei as if he's seen him in a completely new light.

Perhaps, in a way, he has.

Kazuha does the impossible again. That look of muted surprise melts into a smile that warms Kei beyond anything he has ever felt before. The arm that still remained on the balcony railing slips off as he raises his right hand up to his chest.

"I love you, too, Kei."

Kei's heart bursts.

"You are deserving of a place in this world, just as everyone else is," Kazuha continues, his hand curling into a fist over his heart, "but you are more than deserving; you belong in my world because I want you there. If you think it's selfish for you to want to be in my world, then let me be just as selfish and wish for the same and the inverse."

He takes a step forward, close enough that Kei can feel his breath on his skin, that all Kei can see are his eyes, that all Kei can hear is his voice. "Let me wish to be in your world, too, and let us be equals. After all, all is fair in love and war. You and I have had enough of war."

The world was cruel to Kei, so he wished to change it. The world was cruel to Kazuha, too, so instead, he wished to understand the origins of cruelty. The goal was the same for both: so no one else would have to suffer as they did.

Two different approaches, one shattered and one not. Here and now, they converge.

"If it's with you, if it would make you happy," Kei says, his voice loud in his ears and a fierce warmth on his face, "then I would be happy, too, to be your equal in love."

Kazuha's eyes crinkle at their corners, obvious even in the low light of the night sky. Maybe Kei is only seeing things, but he could swear that the stars of *Acer Palmatum* shine a bit brighter out of the corner of his eyes.

"It would," Kazuha tells him. "It would make me very happy."

This time, it is Kei who reaches out to grasp the hand fisted against Kazuha's night shirt, just over his heart. As if his hand were sacred, Kei gently opens those fingers with both hands and intertwines them with his own, savoring the warmth pooling between their palms.

The warmth across his face, blooming in his chest, and now stored between his palm pressed against Kazuha's, Kei impresses it all into his memory before he pulls them both back home.

End Notes

I've actually had this pairing almost since 1nm8 was introduced and we got to know kei miyama, but I never got around to writing this ship (my much larger genshin paralive crossover looms over me). it had been 3 years since I wrote any paralive fics!

I also wrote this as an indirect reaction to the memory novel chapter, which also inspired another au that I hope I'll be able to write something for (a miyama brothers roleswap), but we'll see :)

please kudos and comment if you actually liked this!

and as a bonus for reading this far, here's a line I wrote, but couldn't fit into this fic

> "Making music to you is like traveling the world for me, isn't it?" Kazuha muses. "It comes as easily as breathing. If you couldn't make music, if I couldn't travel, it would suffocate us both."

and thoughts about this ship:

- both have sensitive hearing (kazuha uses it for the weather, kei suffers)
- both love talking about nature (kazuha literally travels to see nature, kei also couldn't stop guessing the wind for pictionary)
- both speak in sort of a flowery way and would understand each other perfectly
- both of them lost people close to them

I definitely have a type in fictional men

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!