

Bilateral Symmetry

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/24576733) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/24576733>.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warnings:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence , Rape/Non-Con
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Heat Guy J
Relationships:	Daisuke Aurora/Boma , Clair Leonelli/Boma
Characters:	Daisuke Aurora , Clair Leonelli , Boma (Heat Guy J)
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2020-06-06 Words: 3,602 Chapters: 1/1

Bilateral Symmetry

by [orphan_account](#)

Summary

Boma tries to keep his relationships with Daisuke and Clair separate, but things get complicated.

Notes

Warnings: Drug use, profanity, references to rough sex.

He walks the streets most nights, sometimes above the ground and sometimes Underground. Judoh is teeming with life, a vibrant city of carefully segregated light and darkness. Boma prefers the flickering shadowlands in between, uncomfortable about choosing sides. The criminals and the lawmen are both so adamant in their righteousness, but he still finds it difficult to tell them apart.

The message came to him by way of a filthy street urchin. *Meet me tonight. You know where. I want to hear everything.*

The human part of him feels guilty, but the wolf in Boma only senses danger, and recoils. He could run away, away from Judoh and the waiting confrontation that can only end in disaster. His head hurts. The drugs haven't been working so well anymore. All the memories are there, but jumbled and confused. He can't think, but he feels too much.

He'd kill for that smile, for that unspoken promise that he wouldn't ever have to be lonely again, even with all the pain that came after. He honestly doesn't remember when it started. But it probably went something like this:

"Yeah, I'm taking the night off. I know... You'll get the paperwork. Don't worry." Daisuke sighed, rolling his eyes. "Yeah, I'll be on time tomorrow, Kyoko. I will. Goodnight."

He was leaning up against the side of the building, cel-phone tucked against his shoulder as he scrawled messy notes on the back of a takeout receipt. Boma watched him surreptitiously, crouched a short distance away. It was late afternoon and they'd both been up since dawn yesterday, tracking down a mohawked would-be-bomber all over South Judoh.

Boma wasn't tired yet. Neither was Daisuke.

It was a rare occurrence, finding the young officer alone. The hulking mechanical man, J, was always a constant presence, but he and the other cop, Eduardo, had lead their quarry off in handcuffs. Daisuke had exchanged words with them, but didn't follow.

Usually, Boma would be gone by now, back in the shadows he knew so well, trying to forget that he'd ever been human. But Daisuke had looked at him expectantly, and he felt compelled to wait.

Finally, he shut the cel-phone off and closed it with a snap. "Boma?"

"What is it?"

"Let's go for a drink." Daisuke didn't even wait for assent, just started down the street toward the harbor district, white jacket billowing in the afternoon breeze.

Boma hesitated, and then followed.

On the other hand... on the other hand... Maybe it wasn't quite like that....

"You're not leaving yet." Clair ordered. He was playing with a collection of drugs on his desk, arranging the dozens of little colored pills and packets of powders into pretty patterns on its surface. Every so often he'd pop a pill between his teeth, smacking his lips like they were sweets.

"You have another job for me?" Boma asked. His hand tightened on the hilt of his katana, just in case the Vampire had other men hidden out of sight. He'd learned never to relax at Company Vita, and never in the presence of the Vampire.

"Maybe."

His pupils were dilated, and his heart rate was rapid. Clair kept the lights in the office dimmed, so it would have been difficult for a normal human to discern. The wolf in Boma, however, could sense everything. Nonetheless, it was never enough to predict Clair's sudden movements, or the shifting intentions behind them. He doubted the demons in the young man's head knew as much.

"Mauro, get out." Clair jerked a thumb toward the door, and the old retainer with the fretful face obediently took his leave. As the door clicked shut, the Vampire grinned at Boma, hands folded neatly on the desktop in mock seriousness. "Now we can talk man to man. Or should that be man to wolf?"

Boma didn't answer, didn't have an answer.

Clair shrugged, popping another pill in his mouth. "Well, whatever. I'll find out for myself."

They went back to Daisuke's apartment, though Boma had intended to leave much earlier in the evening. But then he saw the quantity of alcohol that Daisuke managed to down in one sitting, and felt responsible for seeing him home safely.

"Can I get you coffee or something?" Daisuke asked. Boma shook his head, keeping a watchful eye on his friend's movements. Aside from some redness to the face and slight slurring of speech, he didn't seem very intoxicated. There was something odd about Daisuke's physiology, now that Boma was in a position to observe it more closely. Daisuke always smelled a little different from other humans, but Boma had always attributed that to spending so much time with the android, J.

But J wasn't here, and the odd scent was clearly something innate to Daisuke. It reminded Boma slightly of one of the machine rooms in Magnagalia Prison, full of sensitive equipment that the scientists talked about in hushed voices. They weren't the ones who had built the machines. The scientists were afraid of *them*, the beings Boma had only ever seen pictures of.

"You hungry? I've got croquettes, or crab salad, or there's leftover takeout..." Daisuke was rifling around in his mini-fridge. The apartment was small and modest, with few fixtures and little decoration. Boma took a seat, and glanced over at a framed photograph of Daisuke with a taller blond man, probably an older brother from the resemblance.

Boma looked away reluctantly. "Thank you. I don't need anything."

"You know, you don't need to keep that on while you're here." Daisuke sat down on his futon with a mug of coffee. He was finally showing signs of fatigue. "Your hologram, I mean."

"Oh." Boma immediately felt uncomfortable. Why did Daisuke want to see the face of the wolf, the monster that the scientists had forced him to become? Did he expect that the hologram was only necessary when he wasn't dealing with people face to face? Didn't he realize...

But it was clear from Daisuke's apologetic expression, that he did. "Hey, I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that."

"No. It's all right." Slowly, Boma reached up and turned off the hologram mechanism, watching Daisuke's expression. Most people couldn't help but react to the grotesque sight of the black-furred wolf's head, the inhuman gold eyes and the snarling maw of the beast. Even those who managed not to react outwardly couldn't hide the other signs of fear from Boma: changes in breathing, respiration, and circulation.

He wasn't the slightest bit surprised when Daisuke exhibited every sign that he knew so well, even though they were more subdued than a normal human's. The Celestials, even half-bloods, were well known for their physical discipline.

But then Daisuke put the mug on the floor, and stood up. And then he walked right up to him, and gingerly reached toward the wolf's head, long fingers stroking and petting the gnarled fur. No fear at all in his eyes, but something else.

And then, to Boma's utter shock, Daisuke leaned in, and kissed him firmly on the side of the muzzle. "You're gorgeous, you know that?" he whispered.

Boma would have sold his soul to be able to kiss him back.

"Take off your clothes."

Boma was on his feet in a moment, katana drawn and at the ready. "I don't think so," he hissed. The Vampire was unarmed, and could be disposed of in seconds. If he was quick and he was careful, he could escape from Company Vita's building in one piece. The place had formidable security, but nothing nearly as complicated as there had been at Magnagalia.

Clair laughed at him. "Fine. If you're going to be a prude about it, I'll go first." He eased out of his jacket first, and tossed it to one side. The silk shirt came next. Then the snakeskin belt and leather pants. Then shoes, socks, and finally boxer shorts. The jewelry, including a

diamond-studded pendant in the shape of a grenade, stayed on. Surprisingly, there wasn't a single weapon concealed in any of his clothing. Boma figured that the artillery was probably behind the desk.

When Clair was finished, he sat back down in his desk chair, looking bored. "Well? I'm waiting."

"I refuse." Boma didn't like where this was going. Clair was too difficult to read, and the situation was getting more bizarre by the minute. He started edging toward the door.

Clair let out a sigh of impatience, and popped another pill. It clacked against his teeth. "Well, at least your pants. There's no way we can fuck if you're still wearing those."

Boma stopped dead in his tracks. Sure enough, his wolf senses were registering Clair's arousal, though the drugs had done a fine job of obscuring it. He also smelled like he was about to have a coronary. "I do not agree to this."

"Oh, come on. I've got condoms and stuff." He opened a desk drawer and scooped out a disturbing number of foil packets, tossing them on the desktop for Boma to see. "I'll double your fee for the last job too. What do you think of that?"

"No." Boma said flatly. He didn't take his eyes off Clair, waiting for the gun or the grenade that would inevitably come out. The Vampire was being playful for now, but these moods never lasted.

Clair regarded him silently for a moment, then he continued, his voice harder-edged. "I don't make this offer to everyone. You really should be happy that I like you, mutt. Do you know what happens to the people I don't like?" He leered. "Mauro has to clean their brain matter out of the carpet. He hates that."

"You're threatening me." Boma eyed the door again. There was a good possibility that the old man had locked it on his way out, and any number of guards could be waiting for him already. He wasn't so foolish to think that the office wasn't under surveillance.

"Of course I'm threatening you!" Clair erupted into high-pitched laughter, and then he was up on his desk with a Glock in his hands, pills scattering left and right. "Who do you think I am?!" he bellowed.

There was triumphant madness in his eyes.

There also was a spike his libido, enough for the wolf to react instinctively. He steeled himself for violence, blood pumping and ready for a fight. His feral aggression was rising, along with the urge to conquer and dominate and assert his control over the one who had the gall to try and tame *him*.

The beast in Boma was awake. It sought out all the weaknesses and vulnerabilities in Clair Leonelli, ignoring the real danger of the gun and the guards. Suddenly all of that was of little importance compared to the open invitation of a bared white throat, drug-wild eyes, and that grin that said he wouldn't go down easy.

"You don't want this." Boma managed to say, regaining his rational mind for a few precious moments. "You'll get hurt. I won't be able to stop it."

"Stupid." Clair giggled. He pulled back the hammer on the Glock, and aimed straight at Boma's head. "That's exactly what I want."

The shot missed, and Boma was on the desk in an instant, intent on wiping that irritating smirk off the Vampire's face.

He didn't remember much after that.

Sex with Daisuke was a casual thing. They never really discussed it when it wasn't happening, and Boma understood perfectly well that it was never going to lead to anything else. Sex was stress relief for Daisuke, nothing more. He was always friendly, always kind, but he kept the important things to himself. He never talked about his friends or his work, though they were interrupted by the police pager more than once. Boma gathered up the courage ask about his family a few times, but Daisuke was very good at changing the subject.

Boma should have walked away after the first night. But he kept finding himself there, waiting by the docks, and then up in that little apartment, usually just when the sun was going down. And they'd eat together, taking turns bringing food and beer. Daisuke always did most of the talking, and Boma never felt obligated to talk back. Sometimes they watched sports games on television together, or cleaned their weapons, or had friendly sparring matches on the roof of the apartment building after dark.

And then they would be on the threadbare futon, and Daisuke never treated him like he was less than a human being, or less than an equal. Sometimes he topped, and sometimes Boma did, and it was okay, whether Boma left the hologram on, or switched it off. It didn't matter to Daisuke. He had a soft mouth, a firm body, a wicked tongue, and impressive stamina. Boma liked watching his face as he came, the blonde hair catching fading sunlight like a golden halo around his head.

He didn't mind that Daisuke was rarely there the morning after. He didn't even mind that Daisuke sometimes forgot who he was in bed with, and someone else's name crossed his lips.

It wasn't personal.

Clair set up regular appointments for them at the casino, on the weekends. If Boma didn't keep those appointments, he'd send a few goons to track him down. After the first time they interfered with one of Boma's hunts and caused him to lose his quarry, he gave in and played the Vampire's game.

Company Vita's precious young master was a psychopath with a sadistic streak. Few realized that he was just as much a masochist, and good at it. No matter what kind of mood Boma was

in, Clair could always bring out the beast. Usually all it took was a few threats, or some sly insinuation about being a dog at his master's call.

And then they'd fight, and then they'd fuck. Boma always got the upper hand, and he was never the bitch. As for Clair, he was at his most lucid when he was bruised and bitten underneath him, screaming taunts at Boma to make sure he wouldn't stop. No matter how much abuse Clair took, it never seemed to be enough.

Boma kept enough presence of mind to make sure he never hurt him that badly. No marks on the face. No wounds that needed more than a stitch or two to close. All it took was a few pills and a few shots, and Clair couldn't feel a thing anyway. But Boma did hurt him. And he did enjoy it.

Of the numerous bodyguards around them, the only one who seemed to realize the extent of what was going on was Giovanni, who made no secret of his enmity. He was protective of Clair, possibly in love with him, and tried to alternately bribe or threaten Boma to walk away.

But Giovanni stopped saying anything to him after Clair found out, and nearly put the poor man's head through a wall.

"Were you with someone else?" Boma could smell it, the scent of another young man all over Daisuke's clothes. It wasn't anyone he could identify, but there was a whiff of smoke, and a hint of alcohol, that gave him a good idea of the probable circumstances.

"Hmm? Oh, it was just an old friend of mine. He's a musician at the club down on Seventh." Daisuke was hardly paying attention, trying get his clothing to look at least minimally presentable.

It was barely twilight and they were both getting dressed already. Daisuke had to put in a late shift, and their usual visit had to be cut short. Boma understood, but he was tense, his body still on edge. Daisuke was tying his shoes, completely oblivious to him. It was maddening.

Before he really knew what he was doing, Boma reached out and grabbed Daisuke by the wrist, jerking him forward. "You don't need to be there so early, do you?" His voice was low and more aggressive than had intended.

Daisuke looked mildly taken aback, but he simply pulled his hand out of Boma's grip. "Cut it out. Kyoko's going to kill me if I'm late again." The gun holster went over his T-shirt, and the jacket over that.

When Daisuke left his apartment. Boma was already gone.

He found Clair curled up under the bed in the morning, shaking like a leaf and cursing through clenched teeth. Boma felt a pang of guilt as he realized why. The drugs weren't

working and Clair was in pain. Boma had been no rougher than usual, but there was no denying whose fault it was.

"We'll get something to knock him out," one of the guards told Boma tersely. "Don't let anyone in, and don't let the boss out of your sight." He slammed the door and locked it from the outside, before Boma even had time to nod an assent.

He didn't know what to do, and Clair was getting worse, thrashing on the rug and shrieking nonsense. Eventually, awkwardly, Boma crawled over to him and held him against his chest, pinning his wrists together firmly to keep him from clawing at his own face. He ignored the stream of insults from Clair, instead finding mild enjoyment in the feel of bare skin against skin, and the hardness of wiry muscles just beneath. It wasn't often that he had the chance to fully appreciate the Vampire's better qualities from a mostly human perspective.

When the guards came back with drugs of all shapes and colors, Boma pocketed a bottle of painkillers for himself, just in case.

"What's wrong with you?" Daisuke was angry and Boma couldn't remember why. He had his gun out of its holster, pointed at Boma's head, even though they both knew the chamber was empty.

"I'm sorry," he said quietly. His hands were shaking, and his fingers were sticky and red. He realized Daisuke was bleeding from an angry gash on his shoulder. The blood was soaking through the sleeve of his shirt, and the smell of it hung heavy in the air.

Daisuke shook his head. "I don't know what's gotten into you. One minute you're popping Bliss pills, and the next thing I know you're trying to kill me, or rape me, or... I don't know." His face contorted into a grimace, like he was trying not to cry. His voice was high and strained. It hardly sounded like Daisuke at all. "You want to tell me what's going on? You want to explain yourself?"

Boma didn't have any answer to give, though he could tell how badly Daisuke needed one. Dimly he remembered following him up the stairs as usual, feeling impatient, feeling restless. "I can't," he said.

His mind was reeling. He had to get out.

"Boma, talk to me!" Daisuke lowered the gun as Boma walked away, ugly desperation in his voice. "Boma!"

"Walk out the door and don't come back," Clair hissed. "You're more fucking trouble than you're worth, mutt." He had a grenade in his hands, fiddling with the pin under the nervous watch of Mauro and the usual contingent of bodyguards.

"If that's what you want," Boma replied. Any other answer would be dangerous.

"You don't even know why, do you?" Clair smashed the grenade down on his desk, prompting everyone else in the room besides Boma to dive to for cover. Clair rolled his eyes and tossed the projectile aside, pin intact.

"I don't." Boma couldn't think of anything that had changed over the past few days. If anything, he expected that Clair had gotten bored with him and had decided to cut the relationship short before they both really had to kill each other as a matter of principle. He'd been steeling himself for this for weeks.

But the Vampire was pulling a file folder out of his desk, along with a sheaf of photos. They were surveillance shots of Boma. With Daisuke Aurora.

Clair was glowering at him. "Did you think that I wouldn't find out about this? Huh? That you were doing Aurora right under my nose? Did you think I'd be happy?" He fairly shrieked with laughter. "Did you think I'd find it funny?!"

It's so easy to get lost in Judoh. That's the way Boma likes it.

The beast in him doesn't mind the solitude much. Its needs can be sated in other ways, and there's always the hunt, always the glory of the kill. But the human in Boma aches acutely at the loss of companionship. Of the simple, basic contact.

But if he wants to go back, he'll have to betray someone. There's a legacy of bad blood between the Leonellis and the Auroras, and choosing sides is inevitable. But no matter which side he takes, there's a good chance Boma will end up with another young man dead in his arms.

Maybe it would be better to run. Run and forget everything.

But when the note comes, he knows it's impossible to forget. He wants too much, needs too much. And he owes far, far more than he can ever repay. To leave now would be to kill the part of Boma that's finally coming alive again, to tear out what's left of his mutilated heart.

So he walks the streets, asleep and awake. He doesn't know what's going to happen, and he doesn't know if the beast is going to win, or if he will. There's only one way to find out.

Boma fingers the note in his pocket, and waits for night to fall.

The End

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