

## That Day

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# **That Day**

by [origami10](#)

## Summary

The -first- time Kei and Kai went beetle-hunting... What really happened that day?

## Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

It was a hot and sticky August afternoon when the twigs crunched under the boys' feet as they hiked through the forest. The cicadas droned as sweat seeped through their shirts, though the beating sunlight didn't make it all the way through the dense leaves overhead.

"Are we almost there?" Asked Kei. He wasn't too sure of the forest, but Kai had promised there was a place where they were sure to find rhinoceros beetles, which would be great for his summer project. His teacher would be impressed, especially if he could keep it alive until school started again, and everyone knows if you have a rhinoceros beetle you're the coolest kid in school.

"Not yet." Answered Kai, keeping his eyes straight on the dirt path ahead. "But it's not too much farther."

They trudged along, winding steadily uphill.

Ten days, or maybe it was ten minutes, passed. All the trees were starting to look the same, rough bark covered with moss, and they were still going slightly uphill.

"Are we close now?"

"I think it's around here. I'll know it when I see it. Anyway, let's stop for a minute. It's important to keep hydrated." Kai pulled out two water bottles from the oversized pockets of his tan shorts.

The two of them sat down on a fallen tree to the side of the path. It was a bit damp as a seat, and it was also crawling with bugs. "Woah, look at all of these! What do rhinoceros beetles eat again?"

"I thought they eat tree sap."

"Oh, right."

Kei handed back his half-full water bottle. "I'm going to check around here and see if I see any!" He said as he stood up and walked around the log, away from the path and a little further into the brush. It wasn't hard to make his own path, but it was clear that no people had been disturbing the beetles.

Kai looked up from under his sun hat at the light filtering through the trees as he drank his water. He was pretty sure the big sappy tree was about two minutes up the path from here, but it wouldn't hurt to look around here too. Who knew, maybe there would be a beetle for Kai too?

He was shoving the water bottle back in his pocket when he heard a CRASH in the near distance. A...? Kai didn't know what could have made that kind of noise, but it was in the direction Kei had wandered off in, so he jumped over the log-bench and weaved through the few nearby bushes.

"Kei!"

"Kei!!!"

No answer.

"KEIIII!" Kai gave it his all. No one was around to be disturbed by the shouting. Where was he?!

He walked a few steps further towards a big bush, and then discovered it wasn't a bush at all—a tree had come toppling over, and the leafy crown hitting the hillside must have made that huge thump. He ran a wide perimeter around the branches, and jumped on top of the good-sized trunk to get a better view. The tree must have been getting old, but it was still a sturdy look-out point.

"Keiiii!!!" Kai tried one more time. Still nothing.

Maybe Kei had gone back down towards the path?

He looked down to find footing to jump off the other side of the trunk, and saw...

"KEI!?!"

He could see his friend's legs and wrinkled t-shirt, but— Kai jumped off the trunk, his eyes open wide, heart beating fast.

"K...Ke..." His vision was starting to cloud from tears, there was no way this could be happening, his friend...

...s head and one shoulder weren't visible, crushed under the fallen trunk that Kai had just been standing on. It was too late, even if it were possible for Kai to lift the tree, there was no way, Kei was just DEAD now and... Kai's head starting swimming, from more than just the heat of the day...

...and then he twitched, the shoulders jerked away from the tree as darkness fell, no, poured from the shadow beneath the log. The missing shoulder reappeared, and suddenly Kai blinked and he could see Kei's face, the closed eyes and the furrowed brow, the white cheek swirling in shadow against the fallen leaves and hard earth.

Kei lay still then, and Kai blinked again, thinking he had mis-seen something, but his eyes adjusted and there was still, unmistakably, hair splayed out where the tree trunk met the ground, the same color but never connected to the hair that had just solidified against his friend's ashy face.

Kai wasn't sure whether to stumble back in fear or race to check his friend's pulse when Kei stirred and opened his eyes, then looked around wildly before his gaze landed on Kai.

"Kai...?" He mumbled, sleepily. "What... What happened?"

Kai's eyes widened once more as he said "You DIED, Kei, you were definitely just DEAD, de.. De..definitely... Just...d..didn't see, uh.. where you were going, and tripped and hit your head against that tree...!" His explanations ebbed as he considered what he was saying. He knew what he had seen. His friend had just come back from the dead. But... that wasn't



possible. No one would believe that, and as more moments passed, he was having a hard time believing himself.

Kei sat up to look down at the now-torn shirt at his shoulder, and propped himself up with one arm as he inspected the dirt smudges all down his front. "Really? I must have hit it hard! I don't remember anything."

"Yeah, you, uh... It must have been pretty hard." Kai stared at the ground. That was the only explanation, so the next step was to make sure his friend was safe. "Is your head okay?"

"Yeah, it feels fine! I bet I'll get a huge lump on my forehead later, though." Kei picked himself off the ground to stand up. He said looking down again, "Mom'll be really mad about these clothes, though."

"Yeah, maybe... We better go home for now, and make sure you're okay." Kai grabbed Kei's elbow, and led them back onto the path. "I can always take you to find beetles another day." He said, as he glanced up and his eyes met Kei's.

"Yeah... Another day...."

## End Notes

Hi guys!! I hoped you liked the story!

I feel like the more I learn about this series I'll have to go back and edit the story, but I was thinking, what if Kai already knew Kei was an Ajin?

Any and all comments are appreciated, please talk to me!! :D

Edited 3/23/16

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