

In The Spirit of Things

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/17466995) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/17466995>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	F/F
Fandoms:	Dangan Ronpa - All Media Types , Dangan Ronpa: Trigger Happy Havoc
Relationship:	Sakura Oogami/Aoi Asahina
Characters:	Oogami Sakura , Asahina Aoi , Naegi Makoto , Kimura Seiko
Additional Tags:	Christmas , aoi is a useless lesbian , Makoto Is A Good Friend
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2019-01-19 Words: 1,408 Chapters: 1/1

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by [Icepath](#)

Summary

Aoi has trouble choosing gifts. It's okay though, her girlfriend loves her anyway.

When people saw Aoi, they usually thought of a couple of things. Energetic, hungry, and a massive lesbian. To her shock, people had only guessed that last part AFTER she'd started dating Sakura, but she couldn't complain about how accepting her classmates had been when they did come out as a couple. She still couldn't believe she was so lucky, but rather than saying it (like a certain white-haired upperclassman), she wanted to show Sakura how much she cared, and there was no better time to do that than at the Hopes Peak Academy Christmas party! There was only one problem...

She had no idea what to get.

Every gift, while starting out as a good idea, quickly felt lackluster, or predictable. She'd thought about asking, but that would ruin the surprise, and she didn't want to bother Kyoko with something as simple as helping her shop for a Christmas present. So here Aoi was, pacing back and forth in her room, a sugar cookie dangling out of her mouth as she hummed, deep in thought. If she wanted this to be special... she had to think like Sakura!

Closing her eyes and scrunching up her nose, Aoi tried her best to think of all the conversations she'd had with Sakura over the past few months. Her focus dwindled as she began to reminisce in memories. Their first kiss, which had tasted like the banana and strawberry smoothie Sakura had been drinking just moments before. The first record Aoi had broken at a tournament, and the absolute glee on Sakura's normally blank expression as the two of them met eyes. The first time they had met, bonding over their love for athletics. Their first date, to an ice cream shop, where Aoi had accidentally dropped her cone and Sakura offered to share hers so the smaller girl wouldn't feel so bad. However, her joyful daydreaming was interrupted by a worried voice from behind her.

"H-Hey! Aoi! Are you okay? You look a little spaced out." There was no mistaking the worried tone of Makoto. The poor boy was too kind for his own good, but maybe HE could help Aoi with her Christmas dilemma.

"I'm totally fine Makoto! Well, almost totally fine! Come on, I need your help!" And without any other warning, she took his wrist, yanking the unlucky student into her dorm, much to his dismay. "W-Woah! What's going on?!" He squeaked indignantly as Aoi's hands slammed down on his shoulders.

"You've gotta help me! You know how much I care about Sakura, right? I-I love her as much as I love swimming for peats sake!" She explained, the words falling out of her mouth as the panic set in. "But now it's the day before Christmas and I haven't gotten her a present! Nothing seems good enough, Makoto! I... I need your help..." she calmed down with those last few words, looking down at the floor with an expression that could only be described as shameful.

With a sigh of relief, Makoto took a hold of the swimmer's wrists, gently moving her hands back to her own sides before giving her a reassuring smile. "You know what Sakura likes best, right? What were some of the ideas you had?" He asked, sitting down on her bed.

With her hands no longer clutching the poor boy's shoulders, Aoi began pacing around the room. "Well, it started with me thinking I could get her some new workout gear, but we already have a full gym here at the school, so that would just be redundant! Then I thought 'oh well what if you got her something like a shirt or a new skirt?' But what if I get the wrong size? Or what if she rips it?" She vented out her worries, never stopping her back and forth movements around the room. "I was thinking of maybe getting her some new protein powders, but what if that's too stereotypical?" She continued. "Nothing seems good enough..." she finally sighed, flopping down onto the bed next to Makoto, who tentatively patted her back.

"You said protein powder was your most recent idea, right? W-Well... what if we asked Seiko or Mikan! They're always working together on new medicine!" He seemed to be getting more excited by the second. "If you get something from them, it'll be totally unique! Sakura will love it!" He clapped his hands, and Aoi sat back up, flashing him a grateful smile. "Thank you so much Makoto... sorry again for dragging you into this with no warning." She chuckled nervously, rubbing the back of her head.

"It's no problem! Just call me if you need any more help!" He responded, finally standing up and leaving the room.

With a plan in mind, Aoi sprinted across the school, dashing straight for Kimura's lab. Her bright blue eyes shimmered with determination as she ran, skidding around hallway corners with reckless abandon until she finally reached the correct room.

Seiko jumped as the door slammed open, revealing a only marginally tired swimmer. "Oh thank goodness you're here!" She sighed, striding towards the trembling chemist. "Do you have any special protein powder? I-Is it okay if I have some? I can't really give you anything back, but... oh this is going awful..." she rambled, her eyes going back town to the floor as she shuffled her feet.

She stood there awkwardly for a moment, looking anywhere except at the person she was asking a favor from, nervously worrying at her lip, when suddenly there was a soft *clink* on the hard metal table.

"You want to impress someone, right? Well... h-here you go... this one has twice the protein content of the usual powder, and it tastes like strawberries..." Seiko explained. She looked like she was about to say something else when she was pulled into a tight hug. "Thank you thank you thank you!! Thank you so much!" Aoi squealed, rocking the upperclassman back and forth in her arms. "I promise I'll make it up to you one day! Oh! What time is it?" She let go of the hug as suddenly as she had initiated it, spinning on her feet to look at the clock. "I'm late!!! Thank you again!!" She yelled over her shoulder at the frazzled girl before sprinting out the door.

One quick change later, and Aoi was pushing open the doors to the gym, looking around with bated breath until she spotted her girlfriend. Finally letting out a sigh of relief, she meandered towards Sakura with a smile, her hands behind her back.

"Ah, Aoi, I was getting worried you wouldn't make it~" Sakura mused, her gravely voice sending waves of adoration and trepidation through Aoi's very soul. She tried her best to

shrug it off, leaning her head on her girlfriend's shoulder. "I wouldn't have missed it for the world..." she sighed, closing her eyes. In that moment, all of her previous fears and doubts seemed to melt away. Why had she ever been nervous about this? Sakura loved her no matter what.

With a soft chuckle, she tapped Sakura's shoulder. "Hey, babe, close your eyes for a second? I'll tell you when you can open them!" She requested, standing tall and confident.

Sakura silently obliged, an amused smirk forming on her face. "Oh? Why am I doing this?"

"Because..." Aoi took Sakura's hands in her own, placing the bottle in them. "This is my Christmas surprise! You can open your eyes now!"

Sakura opened her eyes, which quickly widened in shock and excitement as she saw the gift now in her palms. "You... went through all the trouble to get a specially made protein powder, just for me..?" She asked, seemingly in awe.

"Y-Yeah! I really hope you like it... you mean so much to me, and... I would gift you the world if I could... but until I have enough gold medals to do that, I'm giving you this! Oh! And one more thing!" Aoi stood on her tiptoes, pulling Sakura down by the collar of her dress into a gentle kiss, humming quietly as she wrapped her arms around the taller girl's neck.

They stayed like that for a moment, the world seeming to stop before Aoi finally pulled away with a dopey smile. "Merry Christmas Sakura... I love you so much~"

The martial artist chuckled, pulling Aoi close in her arms. "I love you too Aoi~ Merry Christmas..."

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