

SENSEI'S BOYFRIEND



Her name is Aiko Yoshida. We call her Sensei, which means teacher in Japanese.

This is her story.

On the first day of high school, she saw the most handsome boy she had ever seen; just looking at him made her cheeks turn red. She had never seen anyone like him before.

Her heart told her to talk to him, but her mind said no. You see she was very shy and afraid.

Every day she saw him in the hallways of the school when they changed classes. When he looked at her, she would look away and turn red all over again. It was like this all of the time. She wanted to talk to him, but she was afraid he would not like her.

She told her girlfriends about him and they told her she needed to let him know how she felt, but she did not know how.

She was just too shy to do it.

At the end of the school year, she was invited to a party with her friends from school. She had never been to a party before.

Her mother took her to the store to buy new clothes. She went to the beauty parlor and had her haircut. She had a manicure and a pedicure. Her mother was spoiling her.

“It’s about time you did something with your friends,” her mother told her.

She arrived at the party earlier than most of the other invited guests.

“Aiko, I’m glad you made it!” her friend Kiyoko said, as she ran to the door to

greet her. "I've invited all of our friends."

When her friends began to arrive, she had fun talking and laughing with them.

She was talking with a group of girls, when one of them told Aiko to look at the door to see who was coming. When she looked up, she saw the handsome boy walk into the house. She turned her back to him and became very quiet.

One of her friends told her she needed to meet him, but she did not know how. Her friends teased her, but she did not care. He was just too handsome to notice her.

The summer passed quickly and when she returned to school, she saw the handsome boy getting books out of his locker.

When she walked past him, she tripped and her books fell onto the floor.

Surprised, the boy looked over at her.

She was so embarrassed she almost ran away.

"Can I help you?" he asked, as he bent over to help pick up her books, which were scattered across the floor.

"Ah..., ah..., OK," is all she could say.

After he picked up her books, he talked to her.

"Here are your books. I hope you're OK. You fell pretty hard," he said to her.

"I'm OK," she answered, still not looking him in the eye.

"Hi, my name is Kohsuke Sato, what is your name?" he asked while he tried to make eye contact with her.

Still looking down at the ground since she was embarrassed about tripping, she said, "My name is Aiko, Aiko Yoshida. Thank you for picking up my books," and then she ran down the hallway, too embarrassed to continue to talk to him.

Her friends heard what happened. They teased her and told her they thought she had dropped her books on purpose to get his attention.

"I would never do that. It's too obvious. I just wasn't paying attention to where I was going, and I really tripped," she told them.

Her friends just laughed.

A few days later she met a nice boy in her chemistry class. His name was Naoto. They sat at the same table and became friends. He helped Aiko with her homework and the labs they did for class assignments.

At lunchtime, he would sit at her table and talk with all of her other friends. He was nice, but Naoto just wasn't a boyfriend.

When Aiko entered her third year of high school, her mother put her in an after school academy, as is common in Japan, to help her with her studies to prepare for university. In Japan, they are called cram schools. They help students learn beyond what they teach in the classroom at school and prepare them for tests.

Usually the academy begins after school and continues until ten o'clock. Then the students go home to do their homework.

The first day of the academy was fun, but what made it hard for her was the handsome young man was in her study group. She had a very difficult time because she was too shy to look at him. Every time she looked at him, he was looking at her. This made her very uncomfortable.

The next day in school, Aiko met with her friends for lunch. Her friend Naoto sat next to her.

"I heard you went to the academy last night," he stated.

"Yes, how did you know that?" she asked.

"A friend of mine is in your study group and he told me you were there," Naoto told her.

"Really? Who is it?" she asked.

"Kohsuke," he answered.

"Kohsuke?! You're friends with Kohsuke?" she asked.

"Yes, we've been friends since elementary school," he replied.

"Why didn't you tell me this before?" Aiko asked him.

"I didn't know it mattered to you," he responded smiling.

For the rest of the meal Aiko was silent.

That night, in the academy, Kohsuke sat next to Aiko. She was very uncomfortable. She did not like it. She even thought about changing to another academy.

The next day, at lunch, Naoto came up to Aiko and asked if she would like to meet Kohsuke at the café after classes.

She was shocked. How was she going to talk to him? He made her so nervous all the time.

“Will you come with me?” she asked Naoto.

“Sure. We’ll meet at your locker right after school,” Naoto agreed.

The rest of the day Aiko was very anxious. She could not concentrate on her studies. She was afraid she would do or say something very stupid. She did not want to be embarrassed again.

After school, Naoto met Aiko at her locker.

“Are you ready?” he asked.

“I don’t think so. I’m so nervous. For some reason, I feel very awkward when I’m around him. I don’t think I want to go,” Aiko confessed.

“Come on. He’s a really great guy. You just have to get to know him,” Naoto explained.

Aiko went with Naoto to the café. Kohsuke was sitting by himself in the corner waiting.

As soon as Aiko sat down, Naoto left. Aiko was panicked. What was she going to say? What was she going to do? She was so uncomfortable.

Kohsuke was the first to speak.

“Hi, Aiko. Thank you for joining me today. I’ve wanted to do this for a very long time. I just wasn’t sure if you wanted to meet me. You’re usually so quiet,” Kohsuke began.

“I’m pretty shy when I’m around boys,” Aiko said softly.

“Can I tell you something?” Kohsuke asked.

Aiko nodded her head.

“I’ve noticed you since the first day of high school. Did you know that?” he asked.

Aiko was shocked.

She responded in a squeaky voice from being surprised, “Really? Since the first day of school?”

She coughed and got her voice back.

“Really?” she repeated.

“Yes, and on the day you tripped in the hallway, I wanted to talk to you, but you ran away,” he continued.

All she could say again was, “Really?”

“I was hoping when we became members of the same study group that we would get to know each other. I can tell you’re very shy,” he stated.

“Not normally,” she answered. “For some reason it’s just when I’m around you.”

“Why is that?” he asked.

This made Aiko very nervous. She did not know how to answer his question.

“No, really. Why are you so shy around me?” he asked.

She thought for a moment and then told him the truth.

“When I saw you on the first day of school, I felt something very strange. I didn’t know what it was. Some of my friends said I had an instant crush on you,” Aiko told her story.

“And every time I have seen you since, I’ve had the same feelings. I don’t understand them,” she continued.

Kohsuke sat back and laughed.

This made Aiko very uncomfortable. She did not know why he was laughing.

Then he leaned forward, took her hand, and said, “I’ve felt the same way about you. I get butterflies in my stomach when you are around me. I like it. I’m glad we finally got to talk,” he confessed.

They sat and talked for several hours. Aiko was beginning to get relaxed around Kohsuke. Soon they were seen together all the time.

When the last year of high school arrived, the students had to prepare for the college entrance exams. In Japan, every student takes the same exam at the same time. The scores on these tests determine what college or university a student might attend.

Once the scores are announced, students may begin the process of applying for a university.

Like all of the other seniors, Kohsuke and Aiko studied very hard. There was not a lot of time to spend together, but they called each other and enjoyed the study group they were in.

After the test results came out, both Aiko and Kohsuke had very high marks. They could go to any school they wanted.

Kohsuke decided to enter an engineering school. His father told him he could get a good job if he attended the top engineering school in the country.

Aiko on the other hand decided she wanted to be a teacher. This meant they would be going to different universities.

They made plans to meet as often as they could. It took two hours to travel to a place between the two schools.

They did this during the four years of university. During the summers, they both had jobs, so they did not have as much time as they wanted to spend together. They were determined to make it work. They were very much in love.

Upon graduation from university, they planned to get married.

What happened next changed everything.

Aiko had the opportunity to study in the United States in graduate school. She had dreamed of studying in America since she was a young girl, but she had never talked about it because she thought it would never happen.

She talked it over with Kohsuke. They agreed she should go. It would only be for two years. They could see each other during the summers when she returned to Japan.

Kohsuke took a job with a prestigious company in Tokyo.

Aiko went to graduate school in the United States.

After Aiko finished graduate school, she was offered a very good teaching position at an American high school teaching Japanese.

She wanted to teach Japanese, but she also wanted to be with Kohsuke. She had a very big problem.

She decided that to teach Japanese to American students was what she wanted to do with her life.

It has been many years since they have seen each other. Occasionally they write letters and e-mails, but as the time has gone by, Aiko has begun to realize that she has made her choice and that unfortunately Kohsuke was not a part of the plan.

She remembers their time together and wishes he could join her in America, but that is not going to happen.

* * * * ~ ~ ~ ~ * * * *

Last week I heard that Sensei had decided to return to Japan and not teach in my school anymore. Kohsuke visited her in America and helped her to see that life with him is much better than being alone. They will get married in Tokyo and Aiko will continue to teach Japanese to American students in Japan.

VOCABULARY: (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. handsome _____ | a. devotion, commitment |
| 2. cheeks _____ | b. consciously, knowingly |
| 3. beauty parlor _____ | c. foolish, silly |
| 4. spoil _____ | d. surprised, stunned |
| 5. scattered _____ | e. good looking man |
| 6. on purpose _____ | f. part of face below eyes |
| 7. shocked _____ | g. salon, place for beauty |
| 8. stupid _____ | h. pamper, indulge |
| 9. panic _____ | i. dispersed, tossed about |
| 10. dedication _____ | j. scared, terror |

TRUE / FALSE:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Aiko saw Kohsuke in college. | T / F |
| 2. She saw a handsome boy on the first day of school. | T / F |
| 3. Aiko talked to the boy in the hallway on the first day. | T / F |
| 4. Aiko decided not to go to the party. | T / F |
| 5. Noato was Aiko's boyfriend. | T / F |
| 6. Kohsuke dropped his books in the hallway at school. | T / F |
| 7. Aiko went to an academy after school. | T / F |
| 8. Aiko went to an engineering school. | T / F |
| 9. Kohsuke got a good job in Tokyo. | T / F |
| 10. Aiko teaches English in Japan. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. When did Aiko first see Kohsuke? _____
 - a) first day of high school
 - b) first day of the academy
 - c) first day of university
 - d) during the exams

2. What did Aiko drop onto the floor? _____
 - a) magazines
 - b) lunch
 - c) backpack
 - d) books

3. Where did Aiko meet Kohsuke? _____
 - a) park
 - b) cinema
 - c) café
 - d) mall

4. Who introduced Aiko to Kohsuke? _____
 - a) Kiyoto
 - b) her mother
 - c) Noato
 - d) the café owner

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. When did Aiko first see the handsome boy?

2. What was the name of the handsome boy?

3. Where did Aiko go for additional classes?

4. Who did Aiko meet in her chemistry class?

5. Why did Aiko go to the beauty parlor?

6. What did she have done at the beauty parlor?

7. Where did she meet Kohsuke?

8. To what kind of university did Kohsuke go?

9. Why did Aiko go to America?

10. What did Aiko teach in school?
