



Echoes of the Gazebo

Riko Fariko



Fariko walked slowly through the crowded hallway of the boarding school, the familiar chatter of students echoing all around him. Although he had lived here before, everything felt completely different this time. Deep down, a quiet voice whispered that he didn't truly belong here anymore.



A cheerful boy named Putra suddenly approached with a bright, welcoming smile. He introduced himself warmly, assuming Fariko was a new student looking for guidance. Fariko was caught off guard, softly explaining that he was actually just returning to the school.



Before long, the two boys became inseparable, spending their afternoons sharing meals and laughing together. Fariko admitted that he used to spend all his time alone during his previous stay. Putra smiled warmly, promising that from now on, Fariko would never have to be alone again.



Sitting under the shade, Fariko quietly asked Putra why he was always so remarkably kind to everyone he met. Putra gave a soft laugh, explaining that everyone in a place like this simply needs a friend to lean on. In that gentle moment, the emotional distance between them began to melt away entirely.



Late that evening, under the dim lights of the quiet courtyard gazebo, Putra finally let his guard down. He confessed how exhausting it was to always pretend to be strong and hide his vulnerability from the world. Fariko listened intently, sharing that he understood the heavy burden of that pain all too well.



The peaceful bond shattered instantly during a tense misunderstanding where Fariko lost control of his emotions, crossing a serious line. Putra stepped back in shock and anger, stating clearly that the outburst made him deeply uncomfortable. Panicked and deeply regretful, Fariko watched as Putra demanded space and walked away.



The next day, the hallway felt icy as Putra intentionally avoided Fariko's gaze while walking past. Fariko rushed after him, desperately begging for a single moment to explain what had happened. Without turning around, Putra quietly replied that sometimes explanations simply come too late.



Determined to make things right, Fariko approached Putra in the sunny courtyard to offer a sincere, heartfelt apology. He admitted his complete thoughtlessness and confessed that he only realized the value of their friendship after losing it. Putra listened in silence, his expression heavy with conflicting emotions.



Putra softly explained that while he did not hate Fariko, he simply was not ready to pretend everything was normal again. Forgiveness and rebuilding broken trust would take a long time, and it could not be rushed. Fariko accepted this painful truth, asking only for a distant chance to prove he could change.



As the golden sunset painted the sky, Fariko sat alone in the quiet gazebo, listening to the gentle evening breeze. He realized that true friendship requires understanding and respecting personal boundaries just as much as sharing moments together. Though their paths were moving apart for now, he felt a quiet gratitude for the growth born from the pain.