**Displaced**

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**Summary**

Keith's roommates basically ditch him and leave him out to dry. Now he's bumming it around campus and Lance just happens to catch him when Keith finally breaks.

**Notes**

This is a fic where i just shoved everything that was happening to me onto Keith. Sorry bud, but you were the best fit. So yeah, self-inset up the wazoo.

Unbeta'd, don't hound me about typos, ill fix em later. <3

Edit: Fixed all the grammar and spelling errors

See the end of the work for more notes
Chapter 1

Fuck this.

Just fuck everything. He was just so done with everything.

What was the point of it all? What was the point of befriending these two people only to have them pull out of a contract because he had shit happen?

Keith groaned and raked his hands through his hair. His bed was too warm, but honestly? Working on homework right now was a no-go, he was too frustrated, and his engineering homework wasn’t due till Monday anyways. Plus, it was Thursday with only one class tomorrow. So he had tried to take a nap. Keyword tried. An hour later, full of angry groaning and muttered curses, he had not a wink of sleep.

Stuff happened at home, and money was tight. It wasn’t as bad before, Keith helping out as much as he could with his job on campus, but the limited amount of funds he was getting from home all but dried up. His sister just had to go and get into trouble. Hope she learned her lesson.

So because of that, he hasn’t been able to make rent for the past couple months, and their lease was almost up. He had already talked with his roommates about it all, and he thought they understood, but he guessed not. Keith rolled over and face-planted his pillow. Last night they told him that they and the landlord weren’t comfortable with leasing with him anymore. Sure they were nice about it, but that was the general message, and at the end of the lease, Keith was to move out and find a new place to live. What sucked more, was that the university couldn’t guarantee him a place to live either. Rooms had been scarce ever since they upped their acceptance rate, and now he was on a wait list. A fat lot of good that did him.

Qrow hopped onto his back, curling up into the dip just above his hips. The black cat set to purring like a small motor. A smile fought its way onto Keith’s face. Whatever this cat did to him, it was beyond him, but Qrow always seemed to know when he needed some comfort. Keith rolled his head to the side and looked into his room.

His desk was a mess of papers and prototypes, aeronautical engineering was kicking his ass, but in the long run, it was what he wanted to do. His laptop was open and the slideshow of pictures of his adventures with his family and friends from school faded in and out. Clothes were piled into one corner while his laundry basket was full of clothes that were still folded from the last time he did laundry. The walls were bare; he didn’t want to risk damage to the walls. It’d come out of his security deposit if there was any. Like, he knew this was a temporary thing. As soon as he graduated he was going to be shipped out west, probably Texas or Florida, for a job. He was never going to stay here for long. But he still had another year of school before that happened.

And now he was basically homeless.

And now he was basically homeless.

Fucking great.

Keith sighed again and rearranged his arms so he was comfortable again. Qrow was still purring away on his back. He swore he was secretly a machine that Pidge built him so he wouldn’t be lonely, but he had Qrow since he was a kitten, so obviously, he grew. Oh well.

He relaxed into his bed, Qrow’s purrs washing away some of the tension in his body, just enough for him to fall asleep for a light nap.
Well, his week was up. Keith took the weekend to move everything that he couldn’t carry in a backpack to a storage unit. He seriously thought he could get away with living in one of those, but no running water or heating was something that he couldn’t just live without, especially for Qrow. 

His ex-roommates didn’t seem too remorseful about his leaving, they literally only had to move their shit down the hallway. He dropped off his key to the landlord and left. Qrow was in a crate, bungee corded to the back of his bike. The poor guy was going to hate him for a bit, but he had to get to class. Then he’d sneak him into class, no way was he going to leave him on his bike like that.

Thankfully traffic wasn’t too bad and Keith was able to get a decent parking spot. Grabbing his back he slipped it onto his shoulders before reaching for Qrow.

“Okay bud, think you can stay quiet in my hood while we get to class?”

The cat blinked at him and remained quiet. Keith couldn’t tell if that was a good or a bad thing, but he picked him up and put him in the hood of his jacket. Qrow squirmed around a bit before settling, Keith could feel his whiskers on the back of his neck and his tail was draped over his shoulder. He flicked back into his hood and started walking to class.

Professor Coran was a lively instructor, liking to walk up and down the aisles between desks, checking to make sure everyone was taking notes. Keith purposefully sat in the back, a few seats away from everyone as more students trickled in. Coran was at the front of the room, pulling up his lecture slides and getting ready for the lecture in general. Keith pulled Qrow out of his hood and set on his lap, the desk covering him up. He pulled out his notebook and a pen with one hand, keeping the other on Qrow so he wouldn’t get the idea to jump down. The poor guy had to be feeling a little restless by now.

Keith ran his fingers through his fur, massaging him behind the ears, just the way he liked it. It calmed his little friend down some, enough to let him curl up in his lap and relax there. And just in time too, Coran started the lecture and Keith had to focus on taking notes.

But, like everything else Keith has had to deal with in life, nothing good lasts for long. He still had a hand on Qrow, but the cat had enough of being quiet. He meowed loudly, glaring at Keith with amber eyes.

Lecture stalled to halt and all eyes turned to him. Fucking hell, this couldn’t be happening, he had no idea the what the contingency was about pets in the classrooms were. He couldn't get kicked out, could he? He was an honor roll student; they wouldn't just drop him for thing like this… would they?

“Everything okay back there Keith?” Coran asked. He was standing at the front of the room, chalk in hand has he was sketching out some scenarios for a design challenge.

“Perfect, Profes – ”

“Mrrrooooww!”

Keith could feel the embarrassment radiating off his face in hot waves. Really Qrow, he had thirty minutes left of class, and the cat simply had to make his mind be known about being cooped up.

Coran gave him a long look before turning back to the board. “You can let it roam about the classroom as long as it doesn’t cause any trouble, Keith. But do see me after class, yes?”
“Yes, sir.” Keith lifted his hand from Qrow’s back and that climbed up onto his shoulder, peering around.

A couple girls closest to him aww’d once Qrow was comfy, and some other guys whispered about needing to get a cat now. Keith ducked his head and finished drawing out what Coran had on the board. The professor called their attention back to the front and continued to explain the design challenge that they were going to have due next week. Something about creating a quadcopter from an RC car. Keith had missed the point of the assignment when Qrow had started to wriggle around on his lap. His attempts to keep him quiet had been in vain clearly, but at least he had some ideas for the project that he could get started on in lab tomorrow.

Qrow hopped down and meandered his way through the room, people would reach down and pet him, boosting his ego when they called him a "pretty kitty". Eventually, he made his way to the front of the room. He jumped onto the lecture stand and faced the class, his amber eyes wide and curious about everything around him. Keith was just praying that wouldn't cause a mess.

His cat remained on the lecture stand till the class was over. Keith shoved his things into his bag and waited for the room to empty out before approaching his professor. Coran was typing with one hand while the other scratched Qrow under the chin. Guess everyone liked his cat then.

“Uh, Professor, I – I can explain…”

Coran looked up and smiled kindly. “Don’t worry, my boy, you’re not in trouble. I think the little tyke likes this class.”

Qrow gave a short mrrt in agreement, eyes closed and purring loudly. He was such a sucker for attention.

“Then… why…?”

“I just wanted to let you know that I do not mind you bringing your cat to lecture as long as it's well-behaved. Some other professors may not be so agreeable.” Coran's hand moved to stroke Qrow’s back. “Consider this a fair warning for the rest of your classes today.”

Keith gathered Qrow in his arms and nodded. "Sure thing, Professor. Sorry about today. He's normally not this vocal."

“Not a problem, Keith! Class was a little livelier with him around, I think.” Coran smiled cheerily. “Now shoo, you have another class to get to, yes?”

He smiled back in return. “Yeah, see you.”

Keith turned and left the room, Qrow happily purring in his arms. The little traitor. He let his shoulders slump as he walked out of the building and made his way to his normal study spot. He maneuvered the cat back into his hood and thankfully now he was willing to stay put there.

The math building had a library on the same floor as his next class and that’s where he went. He found a table in the back corner, hopefully far enough away from everyone so they wouldn’t notice how his hood moved every once and awhile.

Hopefully, the rest of the day wasn't too catastrophic.

Either Keith was extremely lucky or his professors were taking pity on him. For the whole week, Qrow had accompanied him to his classes. Well, except for the labs. Then he dumped that cat on
Pidge and made her deal with him for two hours. Thankfully, that was only twice a week, and again he was lucky that Pidge didn’t have any classes then.

His sleep schedule was shot, and showering at the gym was becoming a habit. He still hadn't found a place to live yet, the university still hadn't gotten back to him. Keith was cursing himself for choosing a college so far away from home because if he was closer, he would totally commute. His bike got good mileage and Qrow wouldn’t be so stressed about the constant moving around. And he knew his cat was getting tired of it all. More than once, he had been kicked out of libraries and the student union because they had to close the building down. Pidge was nice enough to let him crash on her futon one night, her roommate being over at her boyfriend’s place. So yeah, one uninterrupted night’s sleep was all he considered good this week.

Keith was walking out of the gym, Qrow sitting on his shoulder, when it finally, sort of, hit him that he was homeless. It took him a whole week to realize that, and the constant angry buzzing that he had in his head stalled out into silence. The realization made him feel so defeated, and he hadn’t talked to his advisor about potentially taking a semester off just to rake up enough cash to pay for an apartment, even a hotel room. They could do weekly rates, right?

Qrow nuzzled his cheek, sensing his stress. Keith kept walking. His bike was back in the parking garage, but he had that right permit to keep it there without getting a ticket. He silently thanked past him for doing that. He just had to keep moving, he didn’t really care where he wound up but he knew that if he stopped that he was going to break.

It was late out, the sun having gone down, and campus was fairly quiet. The occasional student walked by, but neither he or they made eye contact or stopped to make conversation. Keith was sure that he just looked so worn down. He avoided looking at himself in the mirror as much as he had to, the bags under his eyes were dark and bruised while his face was – hell, he couldn't even tell. He looked and felt like shit. There was still another couple of weeks left of school, but he didn't know how he could make it. Not like this.

He found a bench and just sat. Qrow was quiet and he moved to sit in his lap. Cars passed, headlights painfully bright as he stared them as they went by. Fuck, what was he supposed to do?

At some point, his mom called, and he tried his best to sound okay, lying about his living situation. Yeah, he found a place, he’s living with a couple of friends. No, he was just walking back to class, so traffic is all the noise you’re hearing. Yes, he was doing fine, Qrow was good too. Eventually, his mom hung up and Keith just existed. He honestly didn't know what to do.

Keith just… disconnected. He felt so lost. He didn’t know what to do. It played over and over again in his head. What was he going to do?

He doesn’t know how long he sat there till he heard a car door slam shut.

“Hey man, you okay?”

Keith blinked and looked up.

It was some guy with caramel skin and bright blue eyes. He looked concerned, and Keith just stared at him. Was he okay? Absolutely not. Could he tell this stranger that? Probably but it’s not like he wants to.

“Hey, dude, you seriously don’t look alright.”

Qrow meowed and blinked up at Keith. He still hadn’t moved. God, he just couldn’t bring himself
The man put a gentle hand on his shoulder and bent down to his level. "Look, I'm not a creep or anything, but I've seen you slumming it around campus. I got an extra bed you crash on for a while."

The damn broke. Tears sprung spilled down his cheeks, no warning, no anything. Keith sobbed, choking on air. Qrow curled into him and the man looked shocked. It’s not like every time he came up to someone they just broke down.

He didn’t stand there and watch Keith cry. He grabbed his back and offered Keith a hand up. Qrow climbed onto his shoulder when Keith took his hand. The guy’s car was still running and he put Keith’s bag in the back seat before opening the passenger front seat. Keith ran on autopilot and just slipped in, Qrow keeping his balance on his shoulder till he sat down. The guy closed the door and ran around to the other side to climb into the driver’s seat. Keith was still crying, barely holding it together.

He just felt so broken.

They got to the guy's place, Keith's tears dried on his face and he was empty. Emotions weren't a thing; he was a shell of what he was before everything fell to shit. He barely remembered the car ride here. Did the guy even introduce himself?

Keith had Qrow in his arms as he essentially stumbled into the guy’s apartment. It was a nice place, something Keith would remember in the morning. Another cat meowed and jumped into the guys’ arms, a gray tabby with blue eyes. He gave it a quick nuzzle before setting it back on the ground and taking Keith’s arm.

“The bedroom you can stay in is back here, the bathroom is right across the hallway, so it’s kinda hard to get lost.” He led him through the place and into the room he was talking about. It had a futon and a couple gaming consoles hooked up to the TV. The room looked barely used.

The guy let go and set about flattening the futon out into a full-sized bed. He moved over to the closet and dug out a pillow and blanket. “Here, you can crash here for the night.”

“Why?” Keith croaked. His voice was hoarse from the crying and sounded like he should have been buried in the ground.

The guy looked over at him before looking away and rubbing the back of his neck. "I see you on campus a lot, like dude, you keep getting kicked out of places because of it being so late. Plus, Pidge would just randomly have your cat, and like no offense to her, but she wouldn't tell me shit when I asked why she had it."

“You know Pidge?”

“Yeah, you know her too?”

Keith nodded. Suddenly it felt like the world was a lot smaller. Pidge barely talked to anyone.

“Then you’re Keith, right?”

Another nod.

The guy smiled. In the morning, he would freak out about how nice that smile was, but now Keith
just couldn’t muster anything.

"Cool, good to know I didn't pick some crackpot from the streets. Pidge doesn't shut up about you, so I'm kinda surprised she hasn’t brought you around yet.” Pidge’s friend planted his hands on his hips. “Right, well, you can stay as long as you need. Just get some sleep dude, I’ll let Pidge know you’re with me.”

He walked past Keith, giving him a small pat on the shoulder before closing the door behind him. Qrow jumped out of his arms and Keith stumbled to the bed. He collapsed face first into the pillow.

He didn’t remember falling asleep.

The guy knocked on the door in the morning, calling for breakfast, and Keith reluctantly got up and made his way to the kitchen. Qrow padded along behind him. The other’s cat came over to greet him, meowing happily. Keith caught his reflection in the mirror of the bathroom as he passed it. He had the worst case of bedhead ever. He gathered it up and tugged an elastic around it. There, now he was somewhat presentable.

The guy was humming along to some random song, flipping pancakes on the stove. Keith cleared his throat.

He looked over and smiled and damn, that was a bright smile. “Morning!” he chirped, “I told Pidge that you wouldn’t be making it to classes today, so she’s letting your professors know.”

“Oh, uh, thanks…”

“Lance, the name’s Lance.”

“Thanks, Lance.”

Keith stood there awkwardly, not really knowing what to. Lance continued to flip a couple more pancakes before stacking them on a plate and handing it to Keith. “Here, eat. Forks are already on the table.”

“…thanks.”

He walked over to the table and grabbed a fork. He sat down and tucked into the pancakes. A few minutes later, Lance was joining him at the table.

“Oh, by the way, I don’t know how much you remember last night because you dissociating pretty hard, but I’m serious about letting you stay as long as you want. My landlord is pretty nice. He’s taken in some homeless people – not that you’re homeless, more like temporarily displaced – but yeah he’s let people stay in some of the empty apartments here when it gets cold and stuff.”

Keith just nodded along. Boy, this guy was chatty in the morning.

“So yeah, you can stay as long as you need. And Blue seems to like your kitty. What’s its name by the way?”

“His name’s Qrow.”

“RWBY fan, huh? Man, I’ve been meaning to watch that, but Pidge said I need to watch Fullmetal something before that. Don’t know what the big deal it about it…”
Lance rambled on and on, and it was pleasant. Keith didn't really have this back at his old place. It made him feel welcome, and it was nice that Pidge knew the guy. He'd have to grill her about him later, but for now, he was content to eat pancakes and listen to him talk.
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Keith is basically still in denial about Lance letting him live with him. Eventually he will come to terms with it.

Chapter Notes

Well, i really couldn't get half of this out of my head when i need to be working on other thingssss, soooo here ya go. Next chapter will be an epilogue of sorts and then this little guy is done!

Edit because i was too excited to update: but thank you guys so much for support, i really do appreciate it. just as an fyi in case it was confusing, but this fic was inspired by recent events, not entirely based off of them. i am struggling to find a place to live for next school year, but there is nothing i can do about it till may-june. this is really just my way of venting my frustrations and hopes in a healthy way versus self destructing and sacrificing my semester to stress. again, thank you so much, i love all of you. <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Qrow and Blue got along well. Surprisingly well in Keith’s opinion. It was a little unsettling how much time his cat spent time with Lance’s. But it wasn’t like he could simply take Qrow and be like no you can’t do that.

Fuck, he was jealous of his own cat having a friend.

He really needs to make more friends.

Well, he was on the upswing. Lance was now considered a friend. Hell, he took Keith in when he was literally on the verge of a breakdown on the side of the street, didn't abandon him when he started to bawl his eyes out and is letting him stay till Keith could get back on his feet again.

It honestly freaked Keith out.

Like, what was he supposed to do to repay Lance for this? For all of his generosity? For the extra money he was spending on food and other essentials? Keith honestly felt like he was digging himself a deeper and deeper hole the longer he was here without at the least helping Lance with rent.

Yet at the same time, Keith felt like he had a place here. Lance included him in things, and it had only been what? Two days? And here Lance was, refusing to let Keith help with groceries, slipping what little cash Keith had back into his wallet when Keith was sure that he put it in a place where Lance wouldn’t see it.
But it was a futile effort. Lance put his foot down. Keith was to focus on getting his life back together before he would try to think about repaying him.

Lance had picked him up on a Thursday and now it was Sunday morning. And Lance had company.

Three people showed up, bring stuff for brunch, and if it weren’t for Lance dragging Keith out of his new bedroom, they wouldn’t have known that he was there. (Plus, he was really glad it wasn’t a weekend where he worked, his stress levels had been through the roof, and dealing with people would have made him snappish.)

“Guys! Here’s Keith! I told you he was still alive.”

Lance shoved him into the living room and kitchen combo and was greeted with Pidge, a large guy, and a body builder.

Pidge all but tackled him when Lance pushed, and Keith struggled to keep himself standing.

“You’re an idiot, you know that!” Pidge chastised. “Do you know what it’s like to get a call from Lance of all people in the middle of the night to say that he picked you up from the gutter?”

“Yeah, I know – wait, what? Gutter? I was sitting at a bus stop!” Keith shot a glare at Lance.

“Bus stop, Shmus stop.” The taller guy waved a hand around, dismissing him. “Anywaayyss, the big guy in the kitchen is Hunk, he lives down the hall. And the model setting up the table is Shiro, he’s the landlord I was telling you about.”

Keith glared at Lance before turning to wave at both Hunk and Shiro. Pidge was still clinging to him, and honestly, he couldn't blame her. He dropped off the map for a couple of days and no doubtedly gave her a heart attack.

Lance bounded past them and headed for the food, blue eyes alight with interest. Keith and Pidge did this awkward three-legged shuffle to the table. She was still muttering about how he was an idiot and to never do that to her again. It warmed his heart knowing that she cared.

Qrow and Blue were chilling over on the window sill that overlooked the small dining table that Lance had set up. Keith was sure that Qrow was laughing at him, his tail flicking this way and that as his ears were perked.

A few minutes later, Hunk announced that everything was ready and Pidge finally let go of Keith to go grab food before Lance beat her to it.

The way she acted around Hunk and Lance made Keith wonder if she has known them just as long as he has known him. He and Pidge were childhood friends who lost contact when Keith's family had to move to a different area – cheaper living since again, money was tight. It resulted in him having to change schools and what not, but he had picked up jobs at that point, trying to help, and all of his free time was spent going to school and working. He shuddered inwardly at the thought of all the late nights he pulled to get his homework done.

Shiro was watching them fondly too, a gentle smile on his face and a hand planted on his hip. To be honest, he looked like some adoptive father of three rambunctious children. And Keith just happened to be the friend that spent the night and woke up to this.

God, he was in such a strange situation.
Eventually, the three hooligans got their food and sat down at the table, arguing about whatever homework they were going to work on. Keith took that moment to get his own food. There were eggs, bacon, hash browns, homemade biscuits and gravy. Hunk had brought in a Tupperware dish full of sweetbread from the looks of it. Keith piled his plate high, the many days of missing meals throughout the week catching up to him and everything just smelled so freaking good.

“So, you’re staying with Lance?”

Keith looked up to see Shiro standing next to him and filling his own plate. There was a dull roar from the table where the other three were, and they were all so engrossed in their own conversation that he and Shiro were forgotten for the moment.

“Yeah, it should only be temporary, though,” Keith answered. “This was kind of… a last minute thing.”

Shiro smiled and doled himself a generous helping of the gravy, pouring it over his biscuits.

“There’s no rush, I really don’t mind.”

Why was everyone so understanding? Keith was ready to defend himself at every turn, and here it was like they just took his word for it. How could they just go through life believing everything everyone ever told them? Keith looked down at his plate and sighed. The last couple of days, while he knew that this was only supposed to be temporary, they had been the most relaxing he’s had in a long time. Excluding the fact that this past week was another monster entirely, but compared to his old roommates, Lance made it his goal to make sure Keith felt at home. Drove him to campus so he could get his bike. Then took him to the storage unit so he could grab some clothes and other things for Qrow. Just what was this boy? He threw Keith for a loop.

He looked over at the table. God, they were all smiling, and Lance? Lance just fucking lit up the whole room. Where did this literal embodiment of sunshine come from? And what did Keith do to the higher powers to warrant even meeting him? Lance’s eyes sparkled with mischief, the goodhearted kind, not the kind like Pidge where you just knew you were going to regret what was going to happen in the next few minutes. No, this was the kind where a terrible pun was going to be dropped or a pickup line that was bound to make Keith groan then and there, but blush madly over it later that night when they had both gone to bed. And now? Lance was doing all of those things. Cracking jokes with Hunk and Pidge around mouthfuls of food and just overall making a fool of himself. But no one was judging him for it, they were all laughing along, having the best of times. It made his old apartment sound like it was a funeral procession to his cacophony of sound.

“Well, if you don’t find anything else,” Shiro said, breaking him out of his observation. (Keith was totally staring but Keith hoped Shiro wasn’t going to say anything.) “The complex will be accepting new leases in the next couple of weeks. Lance doesn’t seem to mind sharing the space, but we do have some reasonably priced singles open.”

“Uh, th–thanks, Sh –” Keith cleared his throat, suddenly overcome with emotions again. “Thanks, Shiro. I’ll keep it in mind.” And he ran away, sitting down at the table next to Lance, leaving the seat at the end of farthest away from Shiro open.

He heard Shiro chuckle as he sat down. Yeah, Shiro knew something, Keith was sure of it. He dug into the food, moaning a little bit when he got to the biscuits and gravy. Holy fuck was it good. Qrow hopped over and pawed at his hand, begging for some of it. Keith offered him a bit of the biscuit, figuring it was the safest option on his plate. Qrow took it hungrily, ears flattening in pleasure as he started purring after he swallowed. Keith smiled and scratched under the cat’s chin. He really was thankful he had the little guy, as much as he complained about him sometimes, but Qrow was a good cat. Keith wouldn’t trade him for the world.
“Oh god, you spoil your cat worse than I do.”

Keith was still giving his attention to Qrow when Lance leaned around him to watch.

“He’s had a rough week, too. He deserves a little something for being forced to sit through half my classes.” Qrow’s purring ramped up to another level, audible to the whole room now.

Lance laughed. “Oh yeah, like he didn’t love half the attention he got. Pidge could barely keep people away.”

“Excuse you, guys kept thinking it was okay to come up and talk to me while I was watching him,” Pidge scoffed. “It was like, ‘oh she has a cat, let’s go talk to her and ask her pointless questions about him so she can get the sense that we are flirting with her.’ Like no offense, but tools like that can fuck off.”

Hunk nearly choked on his orange juice, inhaling it and Pidge had to slap him on the back a couple of times to get him to breathe properly. Loud laughs escaped him and before Keith knew it, Hunk was throwing his head back.

“Oh my GOD! One of those creeps, just no, god, one of those creeps tried to hook up with her, haha, and god, the glare-!” He dissolved into more laughter, shoulders shaking and a hand pounding the table.

Pidge nodded solemnly. “It’s true; I don’t think he recovered any of his brain cells after tore him apart.”

Keith leaned over to Lance who was chuckling too. “Do I want to know?”

He shook his head, that easy grin in place. “Nope, no you don’t. It was that bad.”

“Noted.”

Shiro was chuckling along with them, his plate nearly cleaned off. In fact, Keith was really the only one who wasn’t almost finished yet. He tore into his food while everyone sat around and chatted. From the sound of it, Lance and Hunk were childhood friends from the cradle, and Pidge met them in high school. (Keith had moved away during seventh grade.) He was glad that Pidge found new friends, he never wanted her to be alone after he left.

Sooner or later, Shiro got up and left. He had a shift down in the leasing office. Keith watched him go, and then the rest of the table got quiet. Qrow was still purring away on the table next to him and Keith finished off his plate.

“So, Keith,” Pidge said suddenly.

“Mm?” He looked up and she was staring at him critically.

“When are you going to, oh I don’t know, actually get a place? I can’t keep lying to your mom about it.”

“Mom called you!”?

"Yeah, it was like, yesterday, after Lance picked you up." She narrowed her eyes. "You weren't very convincing on the phone."

Keith looked away and pouted. “It was a rough night, don’t wanna talk about it.”
“I keep telling you that it’s fine that you stay here,” Lance added. “Maybe you can just call and check in with her about it, so she doesn’t have to worry.”

“Still doesn’t stop money from being a problem,” he huffed.

“Again, not a problem, my dude. My old roommate moved out because they’re graduating and Shiro’s been letting me pay the single price till I get a new roomie.”

Hunk piped in. “Seriously, don’t sweat it. Shiro is super understanding about the money situation since he went through something similar after he came out of the military.”

There was no winning here. Keith sighed and picked up his plate to go rinse it off before putting it in the dishwasher. Qrow padded along behind him, hoping for more tidbits.

“I got some homework to do, so if you need me, I’ll be in the room,” he announced as he passed them. He couldn’t look any of them in the face, he didn’t want their pity.

Over the course of the next few weeks, Keith low-key procrastinated about finding a new place. He refused to believe it was because of Lance’s offer, or Shiro’s promise to let him move in with Lance or into a single if he signed a lease. Classes went back to normal, and stress levels were down, and Keith saw a flash of disappointment from Coran when he walked in without Qrow. Some of his classmates even grumbled about the loss of Keith's cat turned classroom pet. Needless to say, he wasn't going to go back to Lance's place and tell him that. The cat's ego was already too big as it was because Lance doted on him just as much as he did with Blue.

Keith did call home though and thankfully got his mother to answer and not his dad. The ‘I Told You So’ speech was honestly so overused that Keith just avoided it entirely. Plus, he was going to bite the bullet and actually tell his mom what was going on. She deserved to know. The scare he gave her the last time she was called was something he really regretted.

“Yeah mom, I’m doing a lot better, a friend took me in till I can find my own place.”

“Is it Katie? She mentioned something about letting you stay with her.” His mom still sounded worried, but not as much as she had when she answered the phone.

“It’s a different friend, but he knows Pidge too.”

“Good, good.” She sighed and Keith grimaced. God, he hated making his mom worry. “You can tell us this stuff you, sweetie. At least keep us updated.”

“I know, Mom, I just don’t want you guys to worry. With everything that’s happened there, I should be the least of your worries.”

“Keith, hun, it’s ok to tell us what’s going on. Amelia is dealing with the repercussions of what she did and she’s grounded indefinitely, so everything is going fine.”

“Yeah, but that doesn’t stop Dad from being an ass.”

“Your father is… he’s dealing with it in his own way. He’s just disappointed in her.”

Keith sighed. “As long as he doesn’t make her life a living hell, alright? He shouldn’t pull the same shit he did to me with her, ya know?”

“I’ve been keeping them both in line.” She sounded tense. Guess Dad has been a little more than
just hard on her about this. “When the semester ends, try to come home with Qrow, okay? We miss you, and so does Scrum.”

Keith smiled. “Yeah, mom, I’ll make it home once the semester ends and finals are done.”

“Good, well, I need to go feed the little monster, so feel free to call anytime, sweetie, okay?”

“Sure thing, Mom. Love you.”

“Love you too, bye!”

“Bye.”

Keith lowered the phone and stuck it back in his pocket. Currently, he was leaning up against his bike in the parking lot, keys in hand and getting ready to head back to the apartment. Lance was stuck in class till almost ten and Keith was going to be left to fend for himself and take care of the cats. A few days ago, Shiro had slipped Lance an extra key to the place and Lance attached it to his keychain. Keith had tried to argue against it, saying that he could just wait for Lance, but the other boy had flashed him one of his smiles (like the ones that made Keith feel things he didn’t think he could feel) and Keith lost his ability to speak for a few minutes. Which gave Lance the win, so now Keith had a place he was staying at indefinitely, a key to it, and the landlord subtly trying to get him to just move in. On top of that, he was pretty sure that he was crushing on Lance. And that just made his will to find a different place wither away to nothing.

Yup, he was fucked.

He sighed and shoved his helmet on and straddled his bike. Key in the ignition and kick-starting forced it alive and away he went.

He was lost in his own little headspace, trying to find a way to pay Lance back. Keith couldn’t cook, he’d set off the smoke detector enough times to learn that as a fact. So that was out. He could buy dinner since Lance wouldn’t accept money outright, but it could appear in other ways. Keith smirked as he wove through traffic. Yeah, ordering something sounded like a good plan.

It only took a few minutes to reach the apartment and as soon as he finished feeding Blue and Qrow, he orders a pizza and just chilled on the couch. He scrolled through social media, catching up on everything that he missed while in class. Qrow hopped up onto his stomach and curled up, his small little engine going at maximum overdrive. He laughed and rubbed behind his ears. Qrow was happy here, and that thought made it even harder to want to find a different place.

The pizza guy arrived and Keith gave him a decent tip before he closed the door. It was only seven and Keith was so hungry that he really couldn’t wait up for Lance. He ate three slices before he cut himself off from having the rest. He set the oven to warm and slipped the pizza box in before he found himself bored on the couch again. He wasn’t feeling watching TV or even playing a video game. (Lance had shown him how to work the both TVs but Keith was still pretty unsure how to do everything without Lance at least being there.) Every app he went through bored him to death after about five minutes. Qrow was curled up on top of him again; Blue even joined, curling up in the pocket created between his shoulder and the armrest. She was purring away, a lighter sound than Qrow’s motorboat.

It didn’t take long for the two of them to lull Keith to sleep, one hand on top of Qrow and the other dropping off the side of the couch, phone in hand.

He’d find out much later that Lance took pictures and sent them to Pidge, Hunk, and Shiro. The
traitor.

Chapter End Notes

My tumblr: thespace-dragon
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Guess who gets a home!!! (Btw, please read the note at the beginning)

Chapter Notes

Ok, so before we really get into this chapter, which is like hella long for this fic, but I just wanted to personally say thank you for reading this, and thank you for the support.

When I first found out that the people I was supposed to be moving in with for the next fall semester wanted to pull out of a triple apartment and into a double, it was kind of shocking and not shocking at the same time. I hadn't expected other extenuating circumstances to happen and make it so I couldn't make a down payment on the apartment. (roughly $700 which is a huge sum for me) So, knowing that, it was the smart decision to pull out of a situation that was going to break the bank for me damn near every month. And then turning to the university, they can't give me any word until the incoming freshmen have signed up for housing. So yes, technically I am homeless/displaced for next semester. It was a hard thing to swallow when I first realized this and I literally walked my campus way late at night just to get my head in the right spot.

After a couple of days, I was able to just accept it and focus on classes because I needed to keep my grades up. A few weeks later, and going home for the weekend to visit family, I talked it out with my parents and we were able to come to the conclusion that if the uni doesn't get back to me about a housing placement, that they would definitely help me find a studio apartment off campus that will more than likely be dirt ass cheap, but it would be a home till I graduate school.

So, things are okay, I'm doing okay, and I thought it was time to make sure this fic, which spawned from roiling, angry, and bitter feelings, should end on a happy note with the best situation possible. And of course, knowing me, some angst shows up, but hey, it resolves itself and I'm really happy with where this vent fic ended up.

On that note, most of this fic is based on true events, but not all. It is not a carbon copy of my life, and I took a few liberties. I should have put this at the beginning or even the second chapter, but again I wasn't really in the right mindset.

Thank you again for reading this and giving me your moral support, you all have no idea how much that means to me.

Enjoy the last chapter. <3

EDIT: my lovely friend Smiles4Voltron made a wonderful piece of artwork for the ending scene of Displaced. Please go love them. I seriously cried. ;u;

See the end of the chapter for more notes
So it’s been a month.

A month of living with Keith.

And he has yet to sign the housing lease, which Shiro has shoved at Lance at every given opportunity, and Lance has put on the table for Keith to sign. Pen included.

Like, what gives? Lance sees him around campus, practically glowing because the boy was finally getting the damned sleep he needed, and the fuck won’t move in.

It wasn’t like Lance was oblivious, Keith wanted to move in, he could see it in the way he relaxed around Lance’s apartment. Hell, Blue liked him and she was almost pickier than Pidge. Not to mention, his cat Qrow loved hanging out with Blue. They were like best buds, it was ridiculous!

Lance stewed over this as he stirred the spaghetti sauce. Keith has been awkward for the past week. Take last night for example. Keith came home, Lance had just gotten out of the shower and was cooking like normal, just minus a shirt. Keith had made this strangled sound and ran to his room. The dude didn’t even come out for dinner. In fact, Lance was pretty sure that he came out after Lance had gone to bed.

So Lance decided to test something. He was pretty desensitized to dudes not wearing shirts, swim team did that to you, but this time Lance was wearing booty shorts and a loose crop top – just enough skin to tantalize. This was normally what he wore around the apartment anyway, but when Keith ‘moved’ in, he took to wearing t-shirts and longer shorts.

He switched to stirring the noodles, making sure they didn’t stick to the bottom of the pot. Over the past month, he’s really gotten to know Keith, hell his work schedule was pretty consistent with classes being over and switching to full time. So he always left and came back at the same time. Lance wasn’t doing much except making it to conditioning for the offseason. (It usually was them diving around off the diving boards until coach told them to at least do 400 meters. Then it was back to boards for more shit.) And because of the routine, everything became so fucking domestic that whenever ever Lance griped to Pidge or Hunk, he could see them holding back the fake gags. It wasn’t only them either, Shiro had this look on his face nearly every time he saw Lance and Keith in the workout room together.

But back to what Keith was like.

Keith was a pretty cool guy, insane at video games and Lance blames Pidge for that entirely. He can’t cook, so Lance was stuck making all the meals for him, even making him lunches – oh fuck.

Okay, so maybe he had subconsciously noticed that this was all happening and he was slowly falling for Keith and… no, it was the biggest reason why he wanted Keith to stay. Well, it was one but on top of that, he really didn’t feel like downsizing to a single flat versus the two-bedroom and two-bathroom combo he had now. Lance liked having someone to chill with every night, and his last roommate had been a gremlin and practically lived in the university libraries. He hardly saw them at all. But Keith was around a lot, which was great for a social butterfly like Lance. He needed someone to ramble too, and for too long he’s been talking to Blue which made people look at him weird when they came to visit and he was having a full conversation with his cat of all things.

Right. So, he liked Keith. He could accept that. He was cool with that.

Totally.
He was being serious here! Keith was hot and he was a nice person, and he was friends with Pidge. That said something about his character.

Question was, did Keith like Lance back?

The door squealed as Keith walked in, slamming shut not too long after.

Guess he was about to find out.

“Hey! Hope you don’t mind spaghetti for dinner,” he said as Keith walked through the living room.

“Yeah, it’s fine. Gonna go change.”

Lance rolled his eyes. Sometimes Keith had a one-track mind. “Okay!”

The pasta was done and Lance went through the motions. Turning off the burner, setting a colander in the sink, and grabbing a pair of oven mitts. They were a gag gift from Hunk, they had little kitten faces on the front and a paw mark on the thumb and colored in a pastel pink palette. Lance thought they were adorable. He used them all the time cooking. He strained the noodles and flipped the other burner off, letting the sauce settle. Rolls were in the oven and could use a few more minutes, a timer was set anyway.

Lance made the habit of cooking more than what he needed for just the night, saved money that way. He could make about four meals in one night and that would last him nearly the whole week.

The timer dinged for the rolls and Lance bent to pull this out of the oven, hips high in the air. He heard a strangled noise behind him. Rest in peace, Keith, it’s about to get worse. Lance straightened up, his best ‘I don’t know what the big deal is’ expression on his face and slid the steaming pan of rolls onto the stove top.

“How everything good, Keith?” he asked.

Keith was pretty much frozen on the spot, gnawing on his lip, face lit up with a blush. Lance could feel his own blush coming. The way Keith’s helmet mussed up his hair was totally unfair. Now one should look that good after having a bucket shoved on their head. Keith’s hair was messy, bangs hanging in his face and a few strands were hanging around his neck from his ponytail. Another evil tactic by his not quite roommate.

The other man nodded and looked away quickly, casting his gaze to the ceiling in what looked like a prayer. Lance couldn’t hide his smirk anymore. Yep, Keith was into him.

He’s so going to tell Hunk after dinner.

Keith staggered over to the table and sat down, still staring anywhere but Lance. The swimmer set the table, letting Keith sort himself out. Internally he was cheering, it was like his birthday or something.

“You sure you’re good there, bud?”

Keith still couldn’t formulate words and just nodded, still avoiding looking at Lance.

Okay, he had to take some pity. “Coolio, well, help yourself, I’m cold now that I’m out of the kitchen so I’m going to grab some pants.” And he flounced off. He could hear the rush of air leave Keith’s lungs and some mumbling. Lance could barely keep his laughter quiet enough so Keith
couldn’t hear.

He grabbed a pair low-riding sweats and slipped them on. Making his way to the table, Lance saw Keith digging into a heaping plate of spaghetti. Lance slid into his seat gracefully and dished his own food. Keith was still a little red over the bridge of his nose and around his ears, but Lance thought it was adorable. Seriously, how could this guy be so freaking cute and hot at the same time? Life was unfair sometimes.

Dinner passed with barely a word exchanged between the two of them. Keith was shoving food into his mouth as fast as he could, and once he was done with his plate, he grabbed two rolls and ate those just as fast as before. Lance swore this guy ate on the regular, but he was putting food away like it was his last meal.

Lance opened his mouth to ask him if he was actually okay but Keith picked up his plate and left. He choked out a quick good night and practically fled to his room. He watched him go, eyes wide, and kind of surprised by the sudden retreat. Not that there was anything else that Lance could actually do to get Keith to stay out there, but oh well.

He propped an elbow onto the table and twirled his pasta, smiling to himself. Keith was into him. Shit, now he was left to do the dishes.

Keith flopped onto his bed and groaned. What in the actual fuck was Lance doing wearing *booty shorts and a crop top*? He swore he saw his soul leave his body when he came back to the living room and kitchen to see Lance’s perfect ass in the air and those legs? Fuck, Keith was a mfucking goner, there was no way he was going to survive living in this apartment when he was ready to just —

Nope, not going there. Not at all, no Keith, that was bad. That idea needs to be thrown out the fucking window.

He groaned again and rolled over, tossing an arm over his eyes.

Fuck.

His phone pinged and he picked it up.

**Pidge: so when r u moving in w lance**

Keith scowled at his phone and angrily typed a message back.

**Keith: its only temporary.**

**Pidge: right, u ogling after him says otherwise**

**Keith: wtf are you talking about????**

**Pidge: nope, u r figuring it out on ur own**

What in that actual fuck, Pidge? Keith tossed his phone away from him. She has been doing that at least every other day and it was honestly starting to get annoying. He couldn’t just move in with Lance. He felt like he was just using Lance that way. Keith didn’t want Lance to see him moving in because it was convenient and he was taking advantage of the open space. Not to mention there was the fact that his crush was getting worse and worse each night.
The fucking booty shorts and crop top combo had to be a sin somewhere. And the way Lance was built just made it fucking worse. Like what the fuck. There was no way legs like that were legal, and his ass was definitely not allowed, no way in hell were they.

Keith flipped over onto his stomach and face planted the pillow, groaning again.

Yeah, this was a mess.

Lance: **HUNK THIS I HAVE AN EMERGENCY**
Lance: **LIKE WE ARE TALKING WE NEED TO CALL 911 ASAP**
Lance: **HUNK BUD, YOU GOTTA BE UP WTF WHERE ARE YOU**
Hunk: dude, wheres the fire?
Lance: bro you are NOT going to believe what I just found out
Hunk: wait did you find out Keith signed the lease finally?
Lance: no but I fucking wish he would! he keeps giving me this run around about it being a temp situation or something
Hunk: at this point you should just forge his signature
Lance: don’t tempt me bro
Lance: **WEVE GOTTEN OFF TOPIC**
Lance: **DUDE IM PRETTY SURE KEITH HAS THE HOTS FOR ME**
Hunk: and that’s new how?
Lance: **WAIT YOU KNEW??????????????**
Lance: agakfjihadf
Hunk: dude lance buddy pal bro
Hunk: its not that hard to miss
Lance: **WTF WHERE HAVE I BEEN**
Hunk: pining after keith
Lance: I came here to have a good time and I honestly feel so attacked rn
Hunk: *rolling eyes emoji*
Hunk: ok so how did you figure it out
Hunk: I can feel you bouncing in your bed from here
Hunk: half a city away
Lance: and I still resent you moving all the way over there but I'm glad you're happy with Shay :D
Lance: ANYWAYS
Lance: so I was wearing the booty shorts and crop top things and I thought he'd nearly choked
Hunk: so what you normally wear?
Lance: no nononon dude Hunk I have been wearing TSHIRTS for like the past month around him
Lance: cuz ya know that most dudes aren't comfy with all this gorgeousness
Lance: but yeah I've been doing that and dude I felt so free wearing that
Lance: and he fucking walks in, goes to change and comes back and fucking chokes
Lance: he didn't say a damn thing throughout dinner and I spent good time making that spaghetti
Hunk: was it your mom's spaghetti?
Lance: IT WAS MY MOM'S SPAGHETTIE
Hunk: smh dude xD
Lance: dude c'mon
Hunk: lance you're a meme why are you like this
Lance: if I had an answer to that id tell you
Hunk: did he atleast like your mom's spaghetti?
Lance: bruh it was like he couldn't eat enough of it
Lance: I swear he had like two servings on one plate
Lance: he has no sense of portion control and I'm fucking jealous that he still looks that hot even though he eats shit all the time
Hunk: lmao
Hunk: you'll live
Hunk: sounds fake but ok
Lance: when the hell did you notice that we liked each other??
Hunk: Brunch that first weekend
Lance: ????

Hunk: dude he could barely keep his eyes off of you

Hunk: it was kinda cute but really everyone has seen it for awhile

Lance: EVERYONE???

Hunk: yeah everyone

Hunk: pidge is vouching for you, so you better bake her some pb cookies or something

Lance: hunk we both know you make better cookies than I do

Lance: you sugary sweet and im hot and spicy~

Hunk: ……

Lance: so yeah cookies are out

Lance: ill make her dinner or something when I get the chance

Hunk: hahah you do you bro

Lance: I always pay my debts bro you know me

Hunk: true true

Hunk: anyways, shay wants to watch a moive so I gtg

Hunk: good luck with keith!!!

Lance: TELL SHAY I SAID HI AND I LOVE HER

Lance: enjoy the movie bro, get some ;D

Hunk: GOOD NIGHT LANCE

---

Lance and Keith danced around each other for the next week. It drove their friends crazy and honestly, the inner turmoil the both of them were dealing with was beginning to set Lance on edge. Again, it’s been over a month now, and Lance swore that each time he came back to the apartment, more of Keith’s stuff was in the place. His room had been decorated with taped up movie posters, some of them looked ancient, Starwars, Star trek, Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter, fucking Mulan too. Okay, scratch that, Keith had a lot more Disney posters than Lance would have thought. At least he had good taste in movies. And that didn’t even cover the video game concept designs he had printed and taped up too, like some of that had to be special releases from cons.

Anyways.

Lance was determined to get Keith to move in with him. He laid the charm on thick, flirted like his life depended on it and still no dice. He was pretty much at his wit’s end here and Keith was about as immovable as Shiro. Either that or Keith was as dense as a brick.
But if Lance was struggling, imagine how Keith was feeling. He could barely stand to be in the same room as Lance without one: blushing like made, two: stuttering, three: staring – that was a big one. Keith caught himself staring on more than on occasion and sometimes Lance picked up on it, sometimes not. It was a stressful situation and Keith felt like he was back in high school fighting off the onslaught of crushes. He was a grown man for fuck’s sake, why did he feel like a horny thirteen-year-old?

Keith wove in and out of traffic, speeding along the asphalt on his bike. The wind felt great in his hair after his workout, he forgot his helmet in his room this morning before he left for work. He really had to talk to Lance about this whole thing, really make it clear that this was temporary. There was only so many times he could be asked the same question over and over again. At least Shiro seemed to get that. But Pidge and Lance were a different story. Okay, Hunk was pretty chill, but you know, he still asked a lot like the other two did.

He pulled into the complex’s parking lot and coasted his bike into a spot. His nerves were starting to ramp up, the thought of confronting Lance starting to get to him. It really shouldn’t have – it was just a conversation after all – but still, the confrontation. Keith always managed to put up a good front, the resting bitch face on point, and the bad boy exterior made people second guess going after him. (And he didn’t spend all those extra hours after work in the gym for nothing.)

So, yeah, confronting Lance, who had an amazing smile, great sense of humor, good-natured, blue eyes that Keith fucking drowned in each time he looked into them, legs for freaking days, and an ass that Keith was honestly jealous of… yeah, sounded like a plan.

He was screwed.

So. Freaking. Screwed.

Keith adjusted the shoulder strap to his backpack and took a deep breath. He could do this.

…

He took the stairs to delay the inevitable.

Good going Keith.

This was going to go really, really well.

Okay, so he was trudging up the stairs. Progress being made, good. He could do this. Maybe.

Yeah, he probably didn’t, but if he didn’t do it now it would keep happening. And as much as Keith liked Lance, he didn’t want to snap at the guy.

He made it up to the fourth floor and started walking down the hallway, dragging his feet. Fuck, he was like a sulking toddler. Why was he like this? It was a conversation, Keith, a conversation! He ran a hand through his windblown hair and sighed. All he had to tell Lance was that this was temporary and that he was looking for another place.

That was a total lie, but it was on his to-do list.

A few minutes later, he made it to the door, a cheerful greeting board smiling at him. He grinned at it as he keyed himself in. Keith tried to be quiet coming in, but the door announced everyone coming in with its squeaky hinges and you had to damn near slam it to close it.

Alright, Keith was in. He groaned at himself. Way to quote a goddamn cheesy spy movie line, you
Lance was humming along to the radio in the kitchen and Keith bee-lined it to his room. Along the way, he saw the lease information on the table and blue pen on the table. He cringed and kept going. Going to talk about that in a few minutes, just let him keep delaying okay?

Lance called for him just before he reached the safety of his room. “Hey, Keith! You got a moment?” Fuck.

“Uh, yeah, sure.” Keith reluctantly turned around and walked back to the kitchen. “What’s up?”

Lance had this determined look on his face as he flipped the veggies in the frying pan – the way the pros did it. “Yeah, it’s about the lease.”

“Lance, I told you –”

“Nope, nonono, you’re gonna listen to me because I’m tired of dealing with whatever –” he gestured with his other hand between them, eyes still on the frying pan “– this is between us, okay?”

Keith slammed his mouth shut and listened. He’s never really heard Lance sound this serious before, not even when he was talking about homework and finals. Keith only knew him as the light-hearted, good-natured guy. Not this serious person before him.

“Oh, okay…”

Lance glanced at him with a small smile before focusing on the food again. “Okay, cool, didn’t mean to sound mean there, but yeah, you saying this is temp is really getting old when you basically aren’t looking.”

Keith looked down at his feet and toed the ground. Lance had him spot on. No denying that.

“Yes…”

“So, dude, hear me out, and like, just let me keep going, okay?”

Keith nodded.

“Alright,” Lance took a deep breath and continued to cook as he started talking. “Like, I don’t know if you noticed, but everyone wants the best for you, ya know? I know Pidge hates seeing you stressed out like this, even though you don’t look stressed to me, but hey, maybe I’m too close to the source here.”

Keith huffed a small laugh and Lance grinned at him.

“Anywhoodles, so yeah, we want the best for you. You need a place to stay, and I’m not talking the temporary kinda shit, I’m talking like legit settling in a place where you won’t have to worry about getting kicked out at the drop of a hat or slumming it on campus. Not really good for your health, man.”

“I know,” Keith muttered. That was something he knew all too well in his opinion.

“Right, then dude, what’s keeping you from moving in here?” Lance asked. “Like, I see your room, it looks like you already live here, and if it weren’t for the small amount of clothes that winds up in the laundry, I would think that you actually did.”
Keith screwed up his mouth and looked away, glaring a hole into the fridge. “I… I don’t want you to feel like I’m taking advantage of you or anything.”

Lance scoffed. “Dude, I don’t know how you could be taking advantage of anything if I’m literally telling you to move in with me.”

Keith crossed his arms and turned to lean back on the counter. His gaze flicked down to his feet again. “It’s not just that…”

The swimmer turned off the burner and slid the frying pan to the back of the stove top. The heady spices hung in the air, and Keith could feel his stomach start to gurgle for the amazing food Lance was about to serve for dinner. But he couldn’t focus on that, not when Lance turned to him, frown in place and hand placed on one of those goddamn hips.

“Then what is it, Keith?”

Keith didn’t answer, and the radio filled the silence. He hoped his bangs fell low enough on his face to hide his blush. He couldn’t say it. Lance was too fucking perfect for some bum like him. He was everything that Keith wasn’t: good with people, charismatic, caring, stress-free, beautiful… Keith didn't deserve that. Not when he was struggling to make ends meet, or when he was living off of financial aid and minimum wage job while attending one of better universities in the state. Hell, Lance was even here on a full ride for sports and his freaking grades from out of state. He was damn near as smart as Pidge.

He was just too good.

“C’mon, Keith, I won’t get offended or anything.”

Keith stalled more. It wasn't like he was embarrassed about it per se, but he didn't want to give Lance the wrong idea. He wanted to move in, he really did, but he couldn't just do that because he had a crush on Lance. It was unfair to him, wasn't it?

Apparently, he took too long answering again and Lance spoke up again, this time with his head down at the oven's level, checking on the tortillas warming inside. "If it's about your feelings for me, that's totally chill dude, 'cuz it’s mutual.”

Keith felt his stomach drop and he choked on his own spit. What?? Lance liked him back? He had to be dreaming. Keith gripped his arms tighter. This had to be a dream, there was no way he did. Keith was the epitome of a human train wreck, why would Lance of all people like him?


Lance straightened up. He looked confident with himself and Keith was sure his face looked like he wanted to bolt, and he did, but then Lance smiled at him and that feeling disappeared.

"It wasn't really that hard to figure out, I've known for a week now." Lance crossed his arms and leaned into Keith's space. "Everyone else knew from the very beginning.”

Keith swallowed, hard. Fuck. He was screwed. He couldn’t do this.

“L-Listen, I don’t want –” He cleared his throat, trying to get a coherent sentence out. “I didn’t – I don’t want you to get the wrong idea.”

“Keith, there’s nothing to get the wrong idea about here. You like me, I like you. It’s not that hard.”
He gnawed on his lip and looked away when Lance bent to get the tortillas and set them on the stove top with the vegetables. He started to pull the plates down from the cabinets while Keith still struggled to get his emotions in order. Lance brushed passed him and went to set the table while Keith stood there frozen. God, why was he like this?

“Dude, dinner’s ready, get your cute little butt over here.”

Keith blushed like mad and robotically made his way to the table and sat in his normal seat across from Lance. He pulled two of the tortillas onto his plate and spooned some of the stir fry into them. Lance was already munching on his own, looking insanely proud of what he created. Keith bit into his and fought back a moan. God, Lance was an amazing cook. He was being spoiled here.

He scarfed down both of the stir fry wraps and immediately reached for another set. They ate in relative silence, neither of them really feeling the need to say anything. The lease sat at the end of the table, the blue pen still there on top of it. Keith could feel its pull. He wanted to sign it, really he did. But he couldn't find it in himself to pick up the pen and do it. And it fucking sucked. He didn't want to be a burden anymore, and he didn't even know the price of this place. He couldn't just ask Lance to tell him, he felt like he was giving up. Sort of. It's a weird thing. He was trying to prove himself, but he didn't know who to. Himself? His parents? Lance? What was even the point, there wasn't any.

Appetite gone, he stood from the table and went to the kitchen. It was the normal routine: Lance cooked and he did the dishes. He rinsed his plate and put it in the dishwasher. Then he came back to the table to grab the leftover food and caught Lance’s stare.

“What?”

Lance shrugged. “What’s holding you back?”

Such an innocent question, but it required an answer he didn’t have.

Keith picked up the frying pan and the baking sheet. “Would tell you if I knew…”

Back in the kitchen, he pulled down a Tupperware container and spooned the stir fry into it before riffling around in a drawer for a lid. He slapped one on and turned to put it in the fridge but stopped when Lance appeared right there.

“Jesus, Lance you can’t just do that!” he squeaked. Fuck, he hadn’t even heard him get up.

Lance scrutinized him, peering at him with his deep blue eyes, keeping Keith pinned there in front of the stove top.

“If I didn’t know you better, I would guess that you’re scared.”

Keith gulped. That’s right, he forgot that Lance was a psych major, specializing in body language. Had he mentioned something about going into law? He couldn’t remember, but Lance was doing really well in reading him.

“What, uh, what makes you say that?”

“Well,” Lance began, gesturing from one part of his body to the next. “Your shoulders are tense, you have a tight grip on the leftovers – tighter than need be, you won’t look me in the eye, you have a guarded expression but your eyes are wide. Typical signs of being scared of something.” He gently took the dish out of Keith’s hands and turned to put it away. “So what are you scared of Keith?”
What was he scared of?

“I…” Keith started, but couldn’t finish. Lance turned back around and gave him an indiscernible look – somewhere between pity and sadness. “I don’t know,” he finished.

The other man blinked and took a slow breath. Keith looked down at his feet and stepped out of the way. Lance edged in the other direction and rooted around for a Ziploc bag to put the tortillas in. The radio was still playing softly in the background, filling their awkward silence. Keith couldn’t bring himself to say anything to break it, and Lance seemed content to wait for Keith to say something.

The food was put away and the two of them stood in the kitchen. Silent.

Keith kept chewing at his lip, it kept him from blurting something out that he didn’t want to say yet. He liked Lance, he wanted to move in, but… he really had no reason other than he didn’t deserve to. That was it. That was all he had.

“Look… I know that you really want me to move in but, ugh, I don’t want to burden you or Shiro with me being here. I’m kind of a screw-up and money is never consistent. And all of you have been so nice that it makes me really happy but I don’t think –

mmph!

Lips were on his and a warm hand cradled his cheek. Keith stiffened with shock and a second later Lance pulled away, his eyes pinning him where he was.

"Don’t ever say you don’t deserve something," Lance practically hissed. "It's a half-assed excuse. If you want something, you go after it, don't dick around waiting for it to come to you."

Keith blinked at him, eyes wide, as his brain processed what Lance had just said.

…Lance was right. Why was he trying to fight it so much? It wasn’t a hit to his pride, it did nothing but make him stressed out. So why did he have such a hard time accepting it?

“Lance, I –”

“No, Keith, goddammit, just – just let this happen, okay?” He sounded so pained. Keith hated hearing Lance sound like that.

He wound his arms around Lance and held him close. “I’m sorry.”

Lance tucked his chin over Keith’s shoulder and huffed. “Don’t fucking apologize, just sign the lease already.”

“Mmm, I’ll hug you for a while longer,” Keith hummed. “I’ll sign it later.”

“’Bout damn time. I’ll get Hunk to bake something special for brunch on Sunday.”

Keith laughed. “Looking forward to it.”
Chapter End Notes

And you know what? I finally finished a multichaptered fic. Go me xD

My tumblr: thespace-dragon
I also really need to stop updating to goddamn late at night, rip me

EDIT: Please reblog the artwork from HERE and please do not repost that artwork anywhere else!! <3

End Notes

My tumblr: thespace-dragon

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!