The Odinson Effect

by blueberry01120

Summary

Loki’s always, kinda, sorta, probably, definitely had a crush on his older brother, which yes, is weird as hell, but he’s always comforted himself with the fact that since it’s never gonna happen. Like, have you seen Thor? Even if they weren't brothers, which they are, he wouldn’t need to waste his time with Loki.

But then it does, happen that is. Somehow, someway, sweatily and repeatedly.

Which is fine, right, because the worse that could happen is their parents finding out, and there’s no chance of that with how much they work. And they wouldn't ever believe that their golden child would do something this bad if they even did.

Except that’s not the worst that can happen.
(Spoiler alert: it turns out Loki can get pregnant.)
Notes

This happened over a week several weeks ago
Chapter 1

Their parents are out of town for the weekend which means yay, Thor’s throwing a party and Loki’s locking himself in his room from 8:00 pm to 8:00 am.

Or that’s originally the plan.

“You’re invited,” Thor tells Loki’s face-up ass—not that he’s looking on purpose, he’s seen better ones than Loki’s, so Loki can’t bother flattering himself—while Loki’s stockpiling food for the night slash grabbing the things he’s not sacrificing to some idiot with the munchies like that stash of gingerbread men the last time Loki has a sneaking suspicion was Thor and Volstagg. “People don’t not-like you anymore. And you’re pretty friendly when you’re drunk.”

“No offense?” Loki offers Thor as a lifeline, but the uber manly jaw muscles managing to flex through his stubble tips Loki off to why Thor’s quiet. He’s too damned busy helping himself to Loki’s can of pizza *Pringles*, having the audacity to scrunch up the corners of his eyes all pissed off when Loki snatches them away from him, yelling that Loki “can’t be mad I’m being honest when you’re always like someone has to be honest out of the two of us.”

Actually, yes, Loki can be mad though he isn’t over Thor thinking he’s cooler when he’s drunk (it’s not like he hasn’t heard that one before; it’s school consensus at this point) and Thor can’t hide behind honesty when Loki said that pertaining to Thor not lying to Mom about coming home so trashed that one time and letting Loki do the lying like he’s good at. Whatever.

“Hey, if it’s about your weird ass thing with Clint—”

Nope.

He asks Thor for one favor, “Pretend I don’t even exist, thank you,” and takes his *Pringles* and leaves Thor to fill the keg he keeps behind a Tom Brady cutout in the back of his closet.

Their parents definitely know. It’s just like most things involving Thor being a dumbass party animal, they don’t give a shit.

At least the same courtesy extends to the flipside, Loki being a shut-in.

Come P-Day, Dad’s “I’m tired of your subliminal whining about nine-screen gaming, son” tape gag that’s Loki’s big ass desktop is drenched in the blood of his dumbfuck *CS:Go* teammates while Loki’s swaddled in his cashmere blanket with noise-cancelling headphones turning his whole world into cyka blat, gunfire, and 20-something guys asking Loki to say phrases for them because his voice-accent combo is the shit. Aka living the only life he’s ever wanted to live. Because being downstairs pretending to like people that definitely don’t like him whether he’s drunk or not, like they’re not looking at him and then in his direction wondering how bitter he is that Thor’s in the corner with some unrealistically gorgeous girl’s lipstick all over his mouth versus sucking down DIY s’mores curled in the most comfortable chair in the world, his bowl chair, with no one around to bother him—is it even a choice?

Between matches, he’s and pouring himself some of the apple-strawberry smoothie Mom made him after he whined about being left alone with Thor for the weekend (her apology for the party she knew was coming.) Not even tempted to glue himself to the window to re-scar himself with Thor’s
tongue in one cheerleader’s mouth and his dick in another’s in the gazebo. Maybe it’s because he’s not a 14 year old virgin listening to Thor tell his friends about the latest hole through his headphones in the backseat on the way to school anymore, not fixated on the wrong, the weird things keeping his dick up at night, but Loki would like to think it’s him being past the whole resenting not being as popular and worshipped and athletic and charismatic and tall and blond and beautiful and muscular as his brother thing.

He hallucinates that something hits his door. Completely imagines it. Because no one—no one—is stupid enough to bother him. So, he readjusts his headphones, hums to fill in the sparse places where he might hallucinate another knock-like sound, and doesn’t look at the door.

Then the not-knocking turns into flat out battering on his door that ignoring isn’t an option unless he wants to go the weekend alone in a house with Thor without a door. Which like hell he does.

He’s sucker punched with not only the trop pop they’re playing but the beating his door’s taking and the yells of, “Emergency!” that Loki recognizes in the pit of his spine as Fucking Thor.

He flips the lock and wrenches the door open.

The only red is the solo cup in his hand.

Loki goes to close the door, but Thor’s got a hand—along with his, like, 150 pounds on Loki—on the doorjamb and a barely smile that’s all bravado, not substance, and telling him, “Come on, bro. I came to use your bathroom.”

“Not even including yours or Mom and Dad’s, there’s eight other bathrooms in this house besides mine.”

“But I’m already here,” Drunk, Loud Thor says. “I burned 3 minutes of my bladder’s grace period knocking on your door, and the hose is long but not that long, Lo.” On sober Thor’s behalf, Loki holds a ‘did a really just say that’ hand to his forehead and decidedly does not, you know, look. “Do you want me to christen mom’s pretty Persian hallway rugs—“

“Runners.”

“—yeah, those, runners?” Thor’s satisfied with himself for getting that one. “Or piss in a vase for one of those poor maids to find in like a month? Lo, you know when a man’s basic needs aren’t being met he’ll go to desperate measures.” Thor stares down at him with those prying blue eyes of his. “Three minutes. Five tops. Then I’ll leave you to do whatever you were doing.”

Loki’s a good brother. A great brother. And if Drunk Thor does pees somewhere stupid if Loki doesn’t let him use his bathroom, that’ll screw up his whole ‘being a great brother’ shtick, won’t it? So, extra long-suffering so even Drunk Thor will pick up on it, he moves aside—like that matters since Thor grazes him so hard he’s moved back like a millimeter—for Thor to use his bathroom for whatever reason his drunk mind’s concocted, and Loki, he goes back to his chair to calmly sip on his smoothie while Thor pisses all over the place in there to the sound of him singing that Maroon 5 song with the howling, way more howling than there actually is in the song, but it’s such benign obnoxiousness that it’s borderline endearing.

Stockholm Syndrome. He’s at peace with how badly he’s got it.

The make-shift mirror of his sleeping laptop changes its reflection from Loki calmly sipping, so calmly, to Loki sipping with a pair of jeans hanging onto an Adonis belt for dear life and oh, those are abs, bare abs, and Thor doesn’t have a shirt on. No, his shirts crumpled in his fist because Drunk
Thor decided that taking his shirt off was necessary for pissing. That’s plausible given that Drunk Thor is, well, drunk.

For the sake of himself more than anything, he chews his straw to death instead of thinking too hard about the shirtless Thor humming that song—they’re brothers; they’ve seen each other naked, it’s nothing, definitely nothing to get annoyingly warm over—or that the last twenty seconds of his five minutes pass without him fucking off downstairs back to the party, his party. Because the weird whatever in Loki’s encouraged about Drunk Thor’s nonexistent attention span keeping him up here in Loki’s room.

It’s so… ‘relieved that Thor’s pushing his new girlfriend away because Loki’s walked into the room and Thor wants him to come sit down next to him to watch that action movie with Keanu Reeves in it he’s been telling Loki about and didn’t see with him when it was in theaters.’

“I know you’ve had a lot to drink,” Loki says, “but I refuse to believe you forgot how to get out of here.” He twists around in his chair to face Thor, who’s dropped his shirt on Loki’s floor, great, but has the nerve to, well, eye fuck Loki like he’s the one in the wrong here for being a sober, fully-dressed, level-headed person trying to enjoy his night in peace. He gets picking Thor’s shirt up out of the way—it’s his shirt now, he doesn’t have enough red t-shirts—and while he’s down there, tells Thor, “I’m never going to let you live this down, by the way.”

“Don’t expect you to.”

Thor’s hands move to his hips in Loki’s periphery, which is eye-roll worthy since if anyone should be rocking the disapproving akimbo arms, it should be Loki. But Thor’s hands, they’re pushing down, and the delicate balance of jean to skin at his waist falls down, down, down to dark blond curls then… then. Then penis. Huge, Loki’s forearm huge, and pink and veiny and hanging there hard over the biggest balls Loki’s ever seen. Thor stepping out of his jeans frees Loki’s attention to stop staring and stand up with that between them.

That cock aiming at his thighs with its hugeness. Holy fuck.

His mouth has stopped working.

“I’ve seen how you look at me. I know how much you want me, Loki.”

So his mouth starts moving, but no words are coming out. No “definitely not because we’re brothers and brothers don’t want to fuck each other” or “you’ve had something batshit insane to drink because um, what the fuck, this isn’t happening.” Only a fucking, “Um.”

“Um.”

Thor’s mega-cock strokes the top of his thigh, burning hot through Loki’s PJs, and Thor’s all skin, endless, perfect, sun-loved skin teasing Loki with all the warmth that’s got his head feeling sort of float-y and heart tripping over itself, so he breathes, big mistake, since underneath the beer, it’s two lungfuls of that cologne Odeur 53 Loki got him for his birthday last year, the cologne that Loki adamantly doesn’t think of when he’s jerking off.

“What about—we’re brothers. I—you’re drunk. You’re drunk. I’m not. This—“

“Does my cock look like I’m drunk?”

(no.)

He’s pulled up from the ground and clutches onto whatever material thing he can which happens to
be Thor, naked, hard-on-is-in-the-crease-of-Loki’s-ass Thor who’s looking into him with gaping pupils that’ve flat-out corrupted all the pure blue. Possessed. Like, like in Loki’s “weird” dreams.

“I lied about needing to use your bathroom.”

“Uh huh.” Loki flexes his fingers just so, pressing back against them all that meat in Thor’s shoulders. “What are you gonna do next?”

Thor’s answer is his mouth, sucking the words out of him, the, “because it definitely shouldn’t be this,” and Loki’s hands let go of Thor’s shoulders to grab onto him, to latch onto his arms to etch his fingerprints into of them while he bleeds Thor’s lips, proves to the lingering disbelief that Thor is real.

He sucks bruises into Thor’s neck that’ll hurt for days, scratches cuts along his spine that’ll sting till they heal, puts his mark on Thor like he’s wanted to since he knew what wanting someone this way was. Thor squeezing his ass so hard he’s gasping, hands so big they hold all of him. Telling him, “This has always been mine, Lo. Tell me it’s mine,” and Loki, he nibbles at the shell of Thor’s ear and says, “If it’s yours, take it.”

Loki’s heart’s beating in his cock, eager for Thor’s hands learning his sides, the ticklish parts in between ribs, how his palms can circle Loki’s arms so easily, how they pin his wrists to the bed that’s impossibly soft compared to how unwavering Thor is. Everywhere. That effortless stubble dragging down his stomach, making him tense against the delayed burn. He struggles against Thor’s hands putting his wrists in one of them and shudders when it’s absolutely useless. Because Thor, yanking down Loki’s PJ’s to his knees then to his ankles, he has Loki how he’s always wanted, how he’s always hated, but needs now.

He kisses the insides of Loki’s thighs in a rush, relieving the burn of his beard with spit that sends chills up to taint, so he’s tensed when Thor bunches his legs up to bare his hole, feeling it wink while Thor takes it in, and Thor huffs out a laugh and they’re kissing again, just as urgent and full of teeth and tongue, Loki stopping to breathe when something hot and balmy and ropy presses against him, Thor just teasing and reveling in it, in “your perfect little asshole, baby, I’m gonna pump it full of my cum,” and Loki, he “uh huh”s around the knuckles he bites down on when Thor’s thumb stretches him, the intrusion too much and not enough all at once. No, no, he wants that, him, his cock, this fuzzy place in his wet dreams that’s too just small enough for his fingers to circle around, so heavy and full, foreskin slipping back from the shiny, eager red tip, so that Thor murmurs, “Fuck,” thumb slipping and pulling Loki’s hole open till it stings, but Loki can’t help but trace that smear of wet leading to Thor’s cock, can’t help dragging it over, threatening himself with Thor.

“Wait,” a rational part of him interrupts. He’s letting go of Thor’s cock, reaching above him for the nightstand on the other side of his bed, very aware of how impatient Thor’s getting when the candles and lighters are all Loki’s hand finds, so he rolls over onto his dick, that feeling way too good. Thor squeezes his ass cheeks as Loki digs out the strip of condoms and tears one off. Loki’s back on his ass handing to Thor, vaguely worried about how Thor might react.

“Should make you put it on with your mouth,” Thor’s saying around it between his teeth, ripping it open in what should be alarming because condom integrity and all, but is just way too sexy. “My cock’s too big for this,” he says before he’s even got it on, and looks at Loki for the okay, fine, whatever, but Loki’s not Thor’s first, okay, but Loki just watches the latex hat spread of the tip of his dick. Then snap. “Told you.”

Holy shit.

Thor pulls the broken condom off and puts his hands on Loki’s knees to them right back where they
were against his shoulders, pulling the skin around Loki’s hole taut again. “I got tested a week ago. I’m clean.” His finger finds its way right back in to draw a breath out of Loki with how rough it is. “I saw you are too. When I looked in your records that day I was working with Mom. Knew I was gonna do you bare then.”

Him being annoyed by that is superseded by Thor brushing over that spot that has volts tickling his spine. “Please stop talking and—oh my god—fuck me.”

“Don’t rush me. I’ll get there.” Thor never looks away from Loki, from the reactions he’s letting slip through onto his face, the lip bite when two of Thor’s fingers, so thick and long, pry him open, feeling him, filling him, how he pants through his teeth and pleads, “Don’t stop, don’t stop, don’t stop.” Then Thor does, shifting behind him, above him, and Loki, he is emptied of all his air during the heart-dropping slide of Thor tearing him open with his cock, so big he has to touch where they meet to reassure himself this is real.

He moans the loudest sound he’s ever made when Thor pulls back, and he’s shoved up the bed when Thor shoves back in so deep Loki’s just impaled way up to the top of his head with Thor’s cock, claimed everywhere inside over and over, and Loki tells Thor, letting out these deep noises that rumble over Loki’s cock, to fuck him harder and harder, he needs it, he’s going to die. God, he’s going to die from that buzz that’s blocking out everything below the waist and getting nudged up his spine with each of Thor’s shoves up into him, spanning Loki’s ass raw with his thighs. Promising Loki with the look in his eye he’s going to be feeling it for days, weeks even, the light from Loki’s desk only catching the left side of his face, his lips lifting up to meet Thor’s.

He cums with Thor’s balls cradling his ass, that center point where Thor’s inside him the only thing he can feel, the intrusion, the burning stretch, the fullness. The influx of warmth. He shudders, but Thor’s inside of him—Thor’s inside of him—keeping him stretched and pumping him full of warmth right behind Loki’s bellybutton, moaning against Loki’s mouth and putting sloppy kisses there Loki can’t even think of reciprocating, so numb. In a good way. A really good one.

Thor doesn’t say anything while he slides his dick out yet the silence, it isn’t necessarily awkward. It’s... amiable, the kind of silence that’s familiar eating breakfast with Thor. Except Loki’s holding a tissue against Thor’s cum dribbling out of his beating asshole and Thor’s pulling his pants on over his deflating dick—and Thor’s a shower, but that’s not news; Loki’s seen him in basketball shorts a million times—and they’re not cutting Mom’s pancakes and drinking orange juice.

There’s fleeting eye contact then Thor’s leaving, going back to his party but Loki’s not torn up over it. Not like he might be if Thor left when he should’ve and Loki would be alone in his room, yeah, but not naked in his bed with handprints aching all over him in the shape of those holding onto his in framed photographs across the room, smaller and unmistakably... fraternal.

Thor’s red solo cup is in the bathroom trash can.

Loki’s going to be the only one who remembers this. Isn’t he?
The (first) Morning After

#

The morning after happens as follows.

“Hey.”

“Hey.”

(There are bruises all over Thor’s neck, red smears in the light mess of his stubble, and his lips are swollen. Loki’s got a split lip he doesn’t remember feeling and beard burn on the sides of his neck. There’s a moment where they look at one another, taking the fallout in, but neither of them outwardly thinks about it.)

“I went out and bought breakfast.”

“Thanks.” Loki finds an egg and gouda cheese croissant in the bag and doesn’t wince at how uncomfortable it’s going to be coming out the other end later. It hurts to sit down. He just leans on the kitchen counter. “How was the party?”

“Great. Volstagg broke one of Dad’s golf clubs sword-fighting with Clint, but Dad’s been looking for an excuse for new clubs for a while. Oh and Natasha punched Tony in the gut for accidentally grabbing her tits when she was trying to help him up. He totally cried.”

“Yeah, ‘accidentally.’ He thinks they’re fake, and since he’s totally never going to have sex with her, there’s no other way for him to test that out besides molesting her. At least that means he’s gotten it through his head he has no chance because if he had any, he threw that away.”

“Natasha’s only nice to him because she wants to get close to Pepper.” Thor’s tongue darts out to lick whipped cream from his thumb, and Thor looking like, you know, sex embodied, it’s a bright idea to Loki’s dick despite how Thor doesn’t mean it to be. “Tony never had a chance.”

“Duh, I’m the one that told you that.”

“But then I confirmed it on my own. Give me some credit. I’m not oblivious.” Thor grins. “I’m definitely the best you’ve ever had.”

Even with Thor focusing on eating, Loki struggles to not peel off his skin and that feeling of being found out, a really rare feeling for him with 90% of the lies he’s ever told panning out. Pretending to not have the hots for his fucking brother, that wasn’t exactly a lie to his own credit, but still. Thor knows and knows that Loki knows he knows which is way worse. Like way, way, worse. “That’s… your opinion.”

“It’s not like I’m gonna tell Barton I fucked you way better than he ever could,” he ices the shit cake with.

Loki’s at a loss for words because of how, he doesn’t know, proud Thor is over it, which instead of flattering him, which it wouldn’t in any universe since he does not and never has ever entertained the delusion he’s anything more than Thor’s sometimes useful younger brother to Thor, it confuses him on a ‘someone sane can’t think this way’ level. “You do remember that I am your brother. Right?”
“Why do you think I had to have a few drinks last night? It’s fucked up, I know, but I was bored of stealing your underwear, and you were up there in your stupid, cute PJs, and Hogun and Jarvis said they’d watch the party, so it was a good time.”

“You, you’re the one who’s been taking my underwear? I thought the washer was eating them.”

Thor shrugs because he’s invincible. Or thinks he is. “I’ve spent the past six years of my life beating myself up over wanting to screw my brother, okay? You didn’t even realize because of how hard I repressed it. And don’t be a hypocrite. Mom’s told you how bad that is,” he tells Loki like... like Loki’s in the wrong here. Which fine, he usually is maybe, but now? “I don’t feel guilty or regret it because that, Loki, that was... that was GOAT.”

And now he remembers that it’s his brother Thor he’s talking to.

“GOAT.”

“Yeah, GOAT, greatest of all time of the sex I’ve ever had. And you and I both know I’ve had a ton of it.” The understatement of the millennium, but it’s always that or hyperbole with Thor. “I’m not gonna let the possibility of Mom and Dad being mad, when who me or you is having sex with isn’t any of their business anyway, keep me from living a fulfilling life. You do that all the time. But you just lie about it to their faces afterward.”

“You’d lie to them too if you could. I’m the one who does it because I’m the only one who can.”

Loki’s arms cross, so his fidgeting isn’t obvious. “So. How did you know?”

“It’s been killing you, waiting to ask. I detected that all on my own.”

Loki rolls his eyes so hard it hurts.

“It’s like this. Take the fact that you’re my brother out of the picture, and you’re like everyone else who’s wanted to fuck me. Like, dude, seriously, I have peripheral vision and reflections exist if you’re gonna check me out all the time.”

“Just because when most people are looking at you to check you out doesn’t mean I was. Maybe, maybe I was being jealous. Yeah, because I’m not 6’4”, 2-something, blond, and the best thing since sliced bread. That sort of thing would lend to staring.”

“Look, I know when someone is into me. I’ve never been wrong about it.”

His eyebrows do that annoying jump that always precedes a smirk. Then there it is. His perfect kissable lips just hinting at turning up. “Wasn’t wrong about it last night.”

“Bite me.”

A mistake—success—saying that to the guy who owns his weight in football and track records. Loki’s not even blinked and he’s trapped between a wall of Thor and the counter, flush against Thor if he as much as inhales too deep. Impossible since being this close to Thor seems to take his breath and any chance of getting it back away.

“noticed you didn’t sit down like you usually do,” Thor says. “You sore?”

The self-indulgent part of Loki places his hands on Thor’s pecs, which do in fact flex when he moves his arms, bracketing Loki with them. “Why? Are you going to lick it better?”
“Turn around.”

So, after a totally accidentally jab of Thor’s nipples with his thumbs, Loki does, gripping the edge of the counter preemptively. A good thing since the shock of having his ass bared and spread apart in the fucking kitchen requires some steadying.

“Lo, you honestly have the most gorgeous asshole I’ve ever seen.”

His “Thanks?” morphs into a minor shriek when Thor’s tongue, so unfamiliarly velvety and wet and warm there, touches him. Beginning his undoing that peaks with him, hard-on begging for “more, more, more” against the sill of the counter, telling Thor, “fuck me, please.”

In one holy shit, this sounded better in my head slide, Thor is, filling in places Loki only recently learned existed and could ache, his hands swallowing Loki’s hips to guide him forward and back on that “thick and ruthless, fuck me with it, hell yes” cock of his. Loki gets a hand around his own just to ease the pressure, but Thor’s slamming into him, growling, “baby, I’m cumming,” and Loki, he explodes.

Ropes of pearly white all over the Better Homes and Gardens Holy Grail of granite countertops. It shouldn’t be so hot—Loki blames the soundtrack of Thor repeating, “fuck” right into his ear—but there’s one last dribble down his knuckles into a neat puddle for good measure.

“Dude, I’m, I’m gonna marry your ass.”

Loki’s so going to enjoy this while he can.

#

Mom beams over Thor promising to protect his dignity with those turtlenecks she keeps buying him because they look good with his manly jaw—please, anything looks good on him—and Dad, not even pretending to give a shit about his broken club or that Thor did throw that party because it’s his perfect boy, slaps him on the shoulder and shortles over Thor “finding the thrill of a biter” like this one time long, long ago he starts vividly reminiscing about. Loki, having a good sense of self-preservation, tries to duck away to go “help mom,” but Thor, he paralyzes him by just grabbed a handful of his shirt right above his ass and whispering, “No, this is your fault, so you’re suffering with me.”

The nasty details of Dad’s last century hook-up aside, it is suffering. For other reasons like being shoulder to bicep with Thor like they’re partners in crime, not cum. Bumping shoes underneath the dining room table which Thor would’ve brushed off but instead holds eye contact with Loki to dare him to try anything because he’ll pay for it later, so Loki’s holding onto his fork to stay in Mom’s raving about Bora Bora’s clear blue water and not go careening back into his bed with Thor above him.

It is suffering, resurrecting Monday morning to an irritating perma-blush on his neck courtesies of Thor’s stubble and a quiet soreness that makes him walk funny.

When Thor comes knocking, Loki puts on his most annoyed expression, which cracks into a thousand charmed pieces at that draft of ozone and driftwood and spearmint, the halo of blond flyaways in the morning light, and Thor showing himself off in a chunky gray turtleneck that’s begging to have fistfuls taken of.

“Looks great right?” He smiles, a crescent of white that isn’t as rare as Loki’s awe would like to think it is. “I should thank you. Might’ve never had a reason to wear it.”
“It’s about time you realized how my stunts work out for you in the end.” He tilts his head with Thor, so they’re mirrored. Like Loki’s reflection will ever be so perfect. “You like the beard burn? I look like I was wearing a helmet and crew neck and got sunburned.”

“Nah.” Thor’s wrist, limp but so uber-masculine, leans on the door jamb above them both. “You look like you do when you’re getting fucked.”

“Well, I’m sure Clint will appreciate the déjà vu.”

Thor’s jaw pulls to the side, sucking all the happy out of his cheeks. That has no right behind as hot as it is.

“Give me a second to get my backpack. Then I’ll be ready.” He grabs off his desk his laptop and the physics lab report he forbid Tony from printing out, not wanting it to be ruined with spilled coffee despite Tony’s objections about it “adding charm,” and squats down—not wincing that much—to drop them both in when the door clicks shut.

His snatch of the zipper closed and jump up is thoroughly useless. He’s seized by the backpack straps, and to stop himself from being rubbed raw by beard, Loki shields Thor’s stubble with his hands, at the same time pacing Thor while he acquaints himself with the taste of that chocolate protein smoothie he’s in love with, with the mouth behind the legendary kisses he only thought he’d ever imagine.

“Mom and Dad are gone, and the housekeeper doesn’t come for another two hours, so if we’re quick about this, I’ll make my stat exam on time and you won’t get another strike toward detention for being late,” Thor says.

Loki plays stupid. “For what? Us reviewing for your exam?”

“What? I only need a C on that. I don’t want to worry about that. I wanna worry about this.”

“But need you worry about that. You should study. A C, that’s abysmal.”

“I studied already. I don’t have time to study hard enough to get better than what I’m going to get, so I’d be wasting my time.” Thor moves in front of him when Loki goes to open the door, pouring out annoyance over this situation like, like this isn’t just brothers with benefits. “But I’m hard already.”

“How about you get an A on that test, and then I’ll blow you right then and there,” he says, which gets Thor grinning and out of the way, so he can go into a more open space where he’s not liable to skip school to have sex with his brother.

What the fuck is that sentence even.

“Finally eat out Titan’s hairy ass this weekend I see,” says the dumbass genius Loki has for a lab partner in physics. Tony rubs at that millimeter of black prickles on his jaw he’s gardening to hide his baby face. “Congratulations. You’ve somehow done worse than Barton.”

“How hard did you cry when Natasha punched you? Did your nose all scrunch up and go snotty?”

“How about you get an A on that test, and then I’ll blow you right then and there,” he says, which gets Thor grinning and out of the way, so he can go into a more open space where he’s not liable to skip school to have sex with his brother. The only part of Natasha Romanoff made of flesh is her rack. Now,
I’m more sure of that than ever. The woman’s an android liberated from the ruins of the USSR. We Americans, a sympathetic bunch, are trying to give her the authentic human experience, high school being a part of that. Arguably the most important one.”

“Did you apologize to her yet?”

“I said sorry after she punched a hole in my duodenum. Yeah, I said sorry. I even sent her some of those candy boxes from the Soviet Union. Has she accepted my apology yet? I don’t know. I’d ask Steve though.” Tony raises his voice so that five-year-old-boy-who-pledges-allegiance-to-Jesus haircut a seat in front angles their way. “As self-anointed president of the Natasha Romanoff Boobie Defense Force, he’d know.”

Steve, who’s already scowling, starts off, “Tony, it’s fine that you act out to get attention. You grew up feeling neglected. You’re an only child and your parents work a lot. But when you involve other people, that’s where the line is drawn,” which bids good omens for the ensuing argument.

“Eavesdropping on my sessions with my therapist, nice. But no, you’re no more right than she was, which she wasn’t. At all. I act out because I want to. The attention’s a consequence. Sort of like helping a wasted guy up off the ground. When your arms are occupied, some boobs are bound to get grabbed. You’re making a bigger deal than it is. Maybe it’s you, Mr. Junior Politician, who really wants the attention.”

Loki’s snickering a little bit, which opens season on him.

“You’d think that you of all people would know how who you surround yourself with reflects on who you are as a person,” Steve tells him, shoulders all square like he’s delivering some heroic monologue. “It’d be taking Tony’s agency away to say you’re dragging him down to your level.”

“Just like you can’t drag Bucky up to yours because you’re so high up on that horse.

Steve’s too incensed with both him and Tony and too polite to talk over the teacher, so that’s the end of that.

Until he hears about it later from Thor because Steve thinks Thor needs some brotherly love to get his act together. Who knows? Maybe after Loki’s taken Thor’s dick so many times he’ll fit into that rigid mold Steve and too many kids at this school with their snide disgust at his carpet/beard/ass hair burn have of what a good person is.

Loki might’ve thought Thor was the closest thing he knew to a good person besides Mom—a person who looks at vaginas all day is either a pervert or a saint—but then again, Thor’s been sniffing his underwear to jerk off in since Loki was 12, so he can’t be all that good.

In retrospect, a lot of Thor’s decisions, like his move into Loki’s locker when he’s got a great one in the senior hall people would kill for, they’re put into a different light now that Loki knows what he knows.

In his post-physics pit stop at his locker, he spritzes himself with Thor’s scent pushing Thor’s varsity jacket away from the books on top of the pile, their Tower of Babel, maintained by their combined efforts because Thor doesn’t want to waste precious time with the bros searching for books while Loki just doesn’t want his locker to be a mess. But it works.

Someone comes up to loiter behind the locker door, a. too short, b. in scuffed up vans and tube socks with the purple stripes on the top, and c. not beaming out a golden aura. Aka undoubtedly Clint.

Before Loki’s even looked at the face, the alfalfa patch of ash blond—not straw or yellow like
Thor’s—hair sticking out of his baseball cap’s asshole—because Clint’s cool and cool people wear their hats backward by the way—is like Loki’s own ding, ding we have a winner. Too bad it is Clint’s face with the wide smug smile he specially tailors for Loki, and no, that has not nor will it ever make him all warm and fuzzy inside.

“What the hell happened to you?”

Funny coming from the guy with yet another mystery band-aid on his nose.

“Sex.”

“With who? I mean--who with you?”

He’s about to say Thor because Barton knows that Loki’s one bad day away from a padded cell, might be just what he liked about Loki, but there’s a minor commotion behind him he doesn’t bother to turn around for.

Thor moves too fast anyway.

With his signature, “hey,” Thor throws his arms around Loki from behind, slapping him in the chest with the paper in his hand. It’s definitely a test. “Guess who just got a fucking 94% on his stat exam? Clint, man, nice seeing you. Tell everyone I took Loki out to lunch, so I won’t be making it for five-a-side.” And he’s spinning Loki around and half-dragging him with absolutely zero effort.

After Loki chokes on Thor’s dick in the backseat of his G-Wagen—he’s an adrenaline junkie, suffocating himself stuffing his throat full of salty, beating, Thor-wielding cock just so he can press his nose into Thor’s pubic hair for the full package of musky manliness to cum hard in his fist to—they do go out to lunch.

(It hurts Loki to eat food as much as it does to get rid of it now, great.)

Thor got an A; they both got an orgasm. No regrets.

#
On that note, Loki pulls out the get-out-of-class free card signed by the ancient teacher in charge of Botany Club, who thinks Loki’s the next Isaac Newton. Thor’s popularity is a sign of the end of times, etc., at his chem teacher who’s too busy chatting in Korean with Helen Cho, his crush, a student but boundaries, they’ve never stopped anyone—Loki knows this better than anyone—to do more than bat Loki away.

(ha, ha, praying mantis, he looks like one, he doesn’t need Scott Lang telling him that for the billionth time, jerk ass.)

He shoves what little bodyweight he has into the door to the greenhouse, Botany Club headquarters if the club actually met more than once a semester to placate administration’s suspicions—their fundraising shouldn’t cover the thousands of designer flowers they plant each holiday—and slips through inside, where his pain receptor’s silent treatment after lunch ease as he follows the breadcrumbs of grassy skunk.

A grow light declares the three gold stripes running up the arm of Thanos’ favorite Gopnik-core Adidas jacket—because he embraces his Russian mob boss aesthetic entirely—in the soupy dark.

“You don’t really look any more shit than you usually do,” Thanos tells him as he’s sitting down. Loki grabs a joint from the open cigarette case at the table’s middle. “Yeah, thanks.”

“You’re welcome.” Thanos blows smoke circles. “Go ahead and tell me about it, so I can get pretending to care out of the way, and we can move on to more important things.”

Inhaling stings his flayed open throat meat, but when the smoke settles in his lungs, saturating every
space with that dry heat, Loki’s on a fluffy cloud floating way above any soreness. “Um, I had mind-blowing sex, and I’m hopefully going to keep having mind-blowing sex. The end.”

The infamous Thanos eye smile. “Yikes, you genuinely have feelings for this person.”

“Oxytocin is a powerful drug.”

“How big is his dick? It bigger than mine?”

Loki’s choking on it—the smoke, not—no. No. Don’t think about it. Don’t think about it. Don’t think about it. Thanos’ all shadowed, and he’s on the other side of the table, and—Loki doesn’t turn his head the other way to look at it, dug up out of the graveyard of his memory, swinging—no.

“I asked you if it was bigger than mine.”

“Yes. Okay? It’s bigger than yours.”

Thanos, joint hanging out the corner of his mouth says, “Elizabeth Ross, when we were lab partners last year in anatomy, she told me Bruce Banner is nine inches hard. She told me because I told her the cat we were dissecting looked like her boyfriend and was probably hung like him. Banner and you, you’re in the same Calculus 3 class. Don’t make that dumbass face, you twink. I’m making an observation.”

“I should just implying to everyone that I’m actually screwing you,” he says, focusing on that pain when he presses his ass into the chair because it’s from Thor, associated with Thor, and Thor’s safe, “so Hela ignores you for a week until you beat up one of those Chads who’re always talking at the back of our Lit class again.”

“Getting screwed by me. At least be realistic.”

Ronan arrives to suck the joy—superficial joy—out of the room in his thirty layers of shirts wafting everywhere—it’s real fashion unlike Loki in his “off-the-rack” clothes wouldn’t understand—slamming down the stack of cash from his morning sales to the deficient willingly buying a gram for 30 bucks, like they could’ve ignored him. He’s mad Peter Quill extorted him to pay the market $20 because Ronan technically isn’t allowed to be selling weed, and Thanos, laughing his ass off, says, “That wouldn’t have happened if you weren’t such an unlikeable piece of shit, you fuck.”

“You’re the last person in this school to talk about likeability. You’re student body president because you intimidated everyone else into dropping out.”

“Into not wasting either of our times. I’m the most qualified person to be president, Kree. Can’t believe you’re still mad you’re vice-president. You would’ve been impeached in like a month. You’re—have you heard yourself talk? You listened too hard to your psycho Pentecostal masses. It’s infected you, the evangelism.”

Ronan scowls. “Yet you’re grooming this cocksucker to run next year.”

“The sky doesn’t get mad when you call it blue,” Loki replies. He’s been called worse by non-Ronan people. “But cheer up. In no time, the whole school’s going to think that I’m getting screwed by Thanos, so your chance with Hela is coming up.” He drops the roach into the nearest trash can and before Thanos gets all sadomasochistic about his star-crossed love with Hela and refocuses his annoyance at Ronan, Loki excuses himself for Lit.

It’s his only class with Thor.
He’s as impassive as normal about the whole in the same class with his cooler older brother and his totally ultra-cool football friends. All of them are there in their gathering at the back of the classroom laughing and “ooh”ing over their phones, one of the rare occasions where looking for the tallest person doesn’t net him Thor, but Drax’s bald head, not that, that stops Thor from being the centerpiece with his perfect teeth and his ‘god wove it of gold no big deal’ hair, and lunch, it’s a really unbelievable memory given how mortal Loki is.

And not just because he’s a little bit high.

“If you’re fucking Bruce Banner,” Hela says, recovering him back to the real world outside of Thor’s perfect everything digging her manicured matte black talons into his arm, “I want all of the disgusting details.”

They sit in the front because Loki is the only person in this class that knows anything and he “hates the shit out of” Hela according to Hela.

“He calls me Enrico, you know, for Fermi when we’re in the heat of the moment, and he”—Loki holds out his hands about yay wide—“has a dick the size of a volumetric pipette.”

“Talking about losing your virginity to her boyfriend?” Fandral butts in as he saunters in, the punter, always the last. “I understood how big of a deal sex is for the unlucky ones like you that don’t get it. Even awful sex.”

“The poor women who’ve been with you know all about the latter,” Loki says.

“Pencil dick,” Hela sings in Norwegian.

Volstagg, Hogun, Sif, Brunnhilde, and Thor all look at the three of them in various stages of trying not to laugh at how outraged Fandral looks.

Loki and Hela, they’re not that shy about how funny that is.

“I’m just trying to keep my name off the list when your little black veil mafia goes postal,” Fandral tells them, so scathing, so original, and finally goes to mind his business canoodling with his bros.

As the teacher comes in, his phone goes off.
“That your super-secret dick dispenser?” Hela asks.

Because Loki’s doesn’t actually like lying—debatable—he tells her, “Maybe.”
Loki’s super-secret dick dispenser down the hall formerly only known as Thor’s daily routine used to be: wake-up, jerk-off—he’s walked in, before this was a thing—shower, eat, school, fuck around, sport A, eat, sport B/C, sport D/E, eat, homework, shower, sleep.

Now? It’s more like Thor flips a coin where one side is eat/sleep/sports and the other’s simply fuck with a 50/50 split that Loki and what used to be his ample amounts of free time swear favors 40/60 for fuck.

Not that he’s complaining. No, no, he is opposite of complaining. He’s… rejoicing. Singing “You Make My Dreams Come True” by Hall & Oates acapella from the rooftops with a colorful ensemble spelling out ‘I’m having sex with Thor’ dancing behind him, himself sleep-deprived and bruised and somewhere on him, covered with a dry, pasty white substance that’s sticky or flaking depending on how long it’s been.

Wake-up? Sex.

Breakfast? Handjobs in the half-bath off the kitchen but be quiet because Dad’s reading the Times and drinking his coffee on one of his slower mornings.

Bathroom break? Rub cocks in a bathroom stall after an emergency text five minutes ago or a blow job interrupted when Phil Coulson comes to talk to his parents about joining the military, which theoretically de-kinkifies the mood, but with some slow licks on the head, makes Thor cum ‘almost shoots Loki eye out’ hard.

Lunch? In the back of Thor’s truck or back home after speeding there going 20 over the speed limit but the cop that stops them is a fan of Thor’s so he lets them off with a warning.

“Wasn’t that fucking awesome?” Thor asks Loki’s stomach and waistband, and Loki pauses while taking off his pants—he’s stopped wearing underwear at this point—to say, “A little bit.”

The whirlwind of vacillating between Thor, his lips, his tongue, his hands, his arms, his chest, his cock, his magical cock, and this mundane lifestyle of schoolwork and class politics and Botany club and getting groomed by Dad to go into CS like a good boy, it defines this nonexistent line between his times with Thor and his times without him, between this thing of fantasy and reality.

So, the only time he has a hold of his head is in the library where he’s Loki, the regular the Facebooking librarian sometimes entertains. It’s purgatory, this place out of time and space, just grazed by the outside light that escapes in to catch the dust lingering in the air at odd intervals. The dust, pre and post-thing with Thor, it’s stayed the same.

While rushing to get dressed for cross country practice in fifteen minutes—the drive there is fifteen minutes—Thor asks him, “Where do you go after your last class sometimes?” because he couldn’t find him earlier, and Loki tells him the library. “Really? I thought you went there first period.”

“I do. I like the library.”

“Said no one ever. Before now. Congratulations, Lo. You’ve joined the club of breaking a record.”
Because it’s Thor’s pillow, not Loki’s, Loki has no qualms throwing it at Thor.

If Thor’s having the same pseudo-crisis of reality where cross country and football and soccer, they’re his library, his shine doesn’t dim over it. Because Loki has an infinite list of ways he’d rather spend his Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights than screaming himself hoarse without Thor’s cock inside him, all of the endless glory Thor achieves on the court and field is hearsay and highlight reels peeking over shoulders in hallways, but Loki gleans that Thor’s not, well, as focused as Loki is about their thing.

Before it’s argued that he went four years not realizing his hots were reciprocated, that was more of a pessimistic thinking issue than Loki being the oblivious one. Why look when he knew what’d be there, nothing? That sort of thing. But even with Thor jumping into his morning shower to “wash his back,” Thor tracks Lorelei’s tongue around her lips and checks out the depth of her cleavage during their intelligent conversations.

She’s goddamned gorgeous just like her sister, one of Thor’s many exes, and Loki who’s pretty good at math, has done it to conclude Thor barely has any time to breathe the way he’s living let alone take her up on her open offer of whatever goes, but people at this school whisper loudly and Loki’s heard more than a few rumors about Lorelei and Thor.

As keen as Amora is on occasionally attacking him to bitch about Thor and Skurge and the cheerleading squad and why can’t straight guys be more like Loki she could take over the world with someone like him at her side, Loki’s not about to ask her, “Is my big brother fucking your little sister?” Amora’s a blond demon, and Loki’s still appreciating Thor’s dick too much to lose it now to murder.

Or have Amora say, “Yes,” and confirm that ugly, insecure thought deep down that this thing between him and Thor, it’s just—it’s physical.

Like it should be because he and Thor are brothers and while sex is way up there, love or whatever this obsessive feeling tripping up his heartbeat when Thor exists in his general vicinity, that. That’s… wrong.
Loki languishes in his bed to Cage to the Elephant, gazing at the glow-in-the-dark star and planet stickers stuck up there on the ceiling by some 12 year old Thor on his tippy toes so Loki wouldn’t break his neck standing up on stacked pillows.

He gasps when some 18 year old Thor belly flops on top of him, tossing him up the air for the briefest of stomach-flipping moments that shows on his face because Thor’s just laughing his ass off, body crossing Loki’s at Loki’s shins so he’s not crushed by Thor’s weight. Thor’s always considerate of how much bigger he is than him, even balls deep in him.

Loki pulls off his headphones. “I hope you had fun.”

“I did.” He touches Loki’s thigh, not like sexual or anything but. Thor’s bun is a disaster of hair falling in his face, just the way Loki’s come to like it. “You looked so peaceful. Couldn’t help myself.”

“It’s been too long since I’ve had one of these ‘how is he the older one’ moments. Thank you. I’ve missed them. Hearing all the time from adults how mature you were, it really inflated my ego since I knew at least I was more mature than you, so I had to be the most mature person in the world.”

“So you’re blaming me for you being a know it all, pain in the ass all those years.”

“Blame implies that there’s room for debate. It’s 100% your fault.”

“Is it, huh?” Thor straddles him, catching his wrists and pinning them next to Loki’s head, but it’s comfortable. Safe. Coveted in the black of Thor’s eyes like he’s noticing parts of him for the first time. “You have the longest eyelashes I’ve ever seen. They’re always ticking me when we kiss.”

Thor leans down and well, presses his cheek to Loki’s, an awkward, stubble-stabbing position. “How do you get into that soft ass indie, man? Try hard rock. It’s won’t bite you.”

There’s the doorbell.

Thor gets up unsurprised, so Loki says, “Please, don’t tell me it’s Fandral.”

Loki follows him since he’s too concerned about who it is to bother answering, but stops at the top of the staircase in case it is Fandral. And it isn’t. It’s Natasha and Clint and Sam and Steve and Janet and Hank minus their teeny tiny little baby daughter, the group of them obviously not here to study hard.

He’s justified in going downstairs for answers despite Sam and Steve exchanging surprised looks over him mingling. In his own house.

“Hey, Loki,” Natasha says. Smiling in her Natasha way in lipstick as red as her curls, so impossibly fingerable that Loki has to look away to metaphorically smack his hand away from his own flat hair, a jump in humidity away from a wavy nest. “You’re looking good these days. Less closed off.”
“It’s the insane sex I’m supposedly having with Thanos,” he says. Then asks, “Where’s Tony?”

“If we’re lucky, upside down in that god awful Audi convertible in a ditch somewhere,” says Hank, which Steve shakes his head and is all, “Tony’s not a bad guy, not bad enough to warrant wishing something like that on him,” and anyone with a sense of humor could pick up Hank was joking, even if prudes like Steve didn’t get it, so after Hank gets out, “I’m not wishing, I’m hoping. There’s a difference. You’d have heard it if your head wasn’t shoved so far up your ass you had shit in your ears,” legendary, Janet diffuses the situation by finally answering Loki, “He took his own car to the party.”

“His ass refused to be in the same car as Steve,” Sam says. “Because Steve hasn’t kowtowed to his demand for an apology for the ‘emotional duress he’s been under’ the past few weeks with Steve’s sexual harassment awareness campaign.”

“It wasn’t an attack on Tony. Sure, I got the idea from what happened,” and Steve blah blah blahs about the crusade Loki’s paid cursory attention to, being that he’s junior class president and as senior class president, Steve’s his superior, but here, Loki’s free to walk away.

He follows slamming drawers to the kitchen where Clint yells, “Where the hell did you say the band-aids were, Thor?” the dumbass in the completely wrong neighborhood if he’s looking for band-aids.

Clint notices him watching, turning his face toward Loki to expose that angry, bleeding gash on his forehead. “Nice to see you take glee in my suffering.”

Loki rolls his eyes and tells him to follow him so he doesn’t lose what blood his little brain needs.

“Hey, my brain is fully sized, thank you.” Clint shuffles into the half-bath off the kitchen behind him, kicking the door shut like Mom would have his head for. He drops down on the toilet seat lid, all spread knees and elbows on his thighs. “Surprised you didn’t get invited to Quill’s little shindig.”

“I’m friends with Thanos.” Loki irrigates out the dead blood likeMom would do with him and Thor, and Clint hisses, but he gets the feeling, no, knows that it’s for show because Clint is ridiculous. “Thanos threatens and tries to kill him on a bi-weekly basis because he’s with his younger sister.”

“How could I forget that? You are on the dark side.”

“How’d you get this one? Get beaten at the skate park for showing off with your sick kick flips?”

“No. I was on a BART over to Tash’s and some prick kept bothering this small guy, real small, like Peter Parker, you know, 9th grader in your physics class? I asked him to stop nicely, and turns out he had a pocket knife. Why is it always the crazy guys have pocket knives? Then again, normal people wouldn’t have pocket knives. But I still kicked his ass, so it all worked out.”

Loki’s forced to step outside Clint’s leg for leverage to wipe on antiseptic ointment, and Clint decides to be helpful with hands on the outsides of Loki’s thighs. Neither heavy nor light just there. “Do you want to fuck me?”

“What?”

“Now. If I asked you to fuck me, would you want to?”

Clint’s got a line on his forehead that’s pure what the fuck. “For a second there, I thought I had déjà vu. Maybe I did die, and I’m reliving the craziest moments of my life, your ‘I scratch your back, you stick your dick in mine’ scheme,” he says. He calms, replaces his hands. “Why? Is not-Bruce-or-Titan getting boring? Need someone you can depend on to find your prostate?”
The door opens.

Thor’s staring at them like this is the worst thing he’s caught Loki or Clint doing.

“Hey, you see those things at the end of your arm. Well, if you clench them like this you can do”—Clint leans around Loki, pushing his shoulder, cushioned with some muscle, flush to Loki’s waist—“this. Knocking, that’s what they’re made for.”

“This is my house.”

Loki smooths down the dry outer layer of the band-aid and ta-das. “Mom told us to knock unless the door is open or someone invites you in, Thor.” He turns to lift brow at Thor. “Aren’t you proud of me? I helped someone out of the kindness of my own heart.”

“Yeah, congratulations for helping the one person who should be able to put on a band-aid all by himself.” Thor shrugs on his varsity jacket, the lightning rod of his Chadliness, literally magnifying the douche-rays so he has to put on his platinum aviators to shield his own eyes. “Clint, come on.”

Between Thor and the proud purple Colorado Rockies wearing dunce that claps Loki on the shoulder, Loki clearly has awful taste in men.

“Thanks for the patch job.” He slips out past Thor.

“Don’t wait up, alright.”

“Wasn’t going to,” Loki says more to himself than Thor.

Not falling asleep isn’t the same as staying up.

#

Dad bangs his door off the hinges at the ass crack of dawn, and the warm weight on Loki’s back shifts and there’s a grumble that’s distinctly not the voice in his head. Thor, because who the hell else has shoulder length blond hair and would be in Loki’s bed, he burrows deeper into a pillow rather than suffer with Loki, who after some internal fuck this, fuck him, fuck that, drags his half-asleep corpse to the stop Dad from finishing what Thor started a few weeks back. His poor door can only handle so much.

“Loki.” Dad’s dressed for work because you don’t become a billionaire sleeping in on Saturday, the suit making his, “where is your brother?” more urgent than it ever needs to be.

Loki just steps aside and gesture to his bed, Dad stepping in since he does only have one eye and the sun hasn’t even come all the way up.

Mom’s come to see if Dad’s gone here’s Johnny on Loki’s door but to her obvious relief—she puts a hand to her heart and her arm around his shoulders to pull him into her—gets to witness Thor recreate their relationship as three and five year olds who had blocks and bugs in common.

They let Loki crawl back in bed.

Thor’s the next one to wake him up shaking him because he’s awake and Loki just hast to hear how Drunk Thor was psyched to sleep next to Loki and about his drunk ninja-craft getting in here quietly and getting mostly undressed by himself. He thinks it’s totally hilarious mom and dad saw and pats himself on the back for dodging Dad’s invitation to work by overwhelming them with “parental
“Where are you going?”

Loki’s up and headed for his bathroom. “I need to return some library books,” he says, and before the bathroom door shuts, adds, “See you later,” which is as good as a get out Thor’s getting.

Loki takes his bike into the marrow of Cupertino. His calves barely burn locking it up outside the drug store, but he’s faintly out of breath going inside, his age or more like lack thereof thinning his already thin arms as he rubs them, not cold but unaccustomed to wandering past the candy bars and Q-Tips into the Family Planning section, half-pregnancy tests and half-condoms.

Some start-up fratboy snatches a box of ribbed Trojans down then goes on his merry way, deliberately not looking at Loki.

Loki grabs a box of Durex XXL.

The cashier asks about school. Loki pretends to be a Stanford student like that somehow softens the discomfort of him, stringy, definitely teenaged him buying the biggest condoms offered.

They weigh a ton in his backpack talking to Dad, who’s freshly home for lunch, always with his great timing, on the front stairs. He’s been thinking about this morning—great—and oh, look, it’s Thor coming out of the house, come here, Thor, I was just talking your brother to death, hopefully you’re not in a hurry because you both are going to be here for an eternity.

“I have soccer practice,” Thor tells Dad’s one ear because that goes straight out the other with Dad saying, “Yes, of course, you do, and you’ll be on your way after I finish.”

Good brothers suffer together.

“I’ve noticed you both spending more time with one another.” He has no idea. “I thought perhaps, Thor, you were getting help on your schoolwork from your brother. It’d explain the turnaround in your grades.” Grades Loki’s been getting his whole life. “However, I realize that you two have finally achieved what I’d hoped having two sons. Because you boys, in the future you will need each other. There is no support like that of family.” A shoulder smash for Thor, a shoulder smash for Loki. “It’s nice to see you two realize that on your own, to set aside these petty, teenage differences and bond.”

Ooh, he has no idea.

Loki books it out of there before Dad makes any addendums, shoulders aching from all the strap tugging when he was standing out there. For all of his troubles, he unwraps a condom to test on himself, cross-legged and with a hard-on out of habit since by this time of day he would’ve already cum like twice on a bad day, and for the hell of that, jerks himself off into it despite the little bit of give that has it sliding all over the place, which works in his favor because he doesn’t have to go further than random Thor handjob memory to get off.

He’s removing the damns and hells from his and Tony’s lab report when Thor strides into his periphery.

Thor’s hands go to Loki’s traps, squeezing out the tension there. “I could’ve given you a ride to the library this morning. I totally have a librarian fantasy I need to fill.”

Loki shushes him.
Thor’s chuckle rattles the joints of Loki’s vertebrae. Contrary to popular opinion, Thor can keep his mouth shut for longer than 30 seconds and not explode with his divine grace.

After saving, Loki swivels around. He tilts his head back like he’s going to kiss Thor, like Thor expects, but nope. He could if he wanted, but he swaps breath with him instead. “Maybe one day if you’re lucky and you keep getting those good grades, I’ll get some glasses with the chintzy chains and punish you for talking in the library.”

“Oh, really?” Thor puts himself out of arms reach in these deliberate steps backward, and there they are, the abs Loki could play percussion on. He’s effervescent and cocky and trying, barely, and only putting on his ‘Music I Like Fucking Loki To’ playlist with no shirt on.

But Loki’s cock is all let’s get some of that, and his legs are like yeah, let’s help that happen. Thor right up against Loki when he gets up, crowds him against the desk so Loki’s reacquainted with Thor’s semi against his bellybutton, with how big and strong Thor is compared to him. And Thor scooping him up and dropping him on the bed without doing more than flexing the muscles under Loki’s exploring hands, Loki forgives that “Sorry” by Justin Bieber is playing.

Not fast enough they’re both naked, all that hot skin branding his, and Loki, he escapes getting lost in Thor’s lips to put a hand on his chest to push him back enough for Loki to reach the nightstand.

Lube, condom.

Uncapping the lube, he drops the condom on the bed and goes to lie back down, Thor’s usual appreciation of Loki’s asshole bypassed for focusing on the condom. Fine, he’s going to put it on, now, right? But when he picks it up, he stares like he’s never seen one before.

“What the hell is this for, Loki?”

Loki refrains from lubing his fingers to finger his asshole before ignorance ruins softens his hard-on. “You put it on your dick, and it catches all of your cum. They cover this in sex ed. Tell me you’ve used a condom before.”

“With other people. I always use them. I remember each and every time I haven’t used one before. But us, we don’t use condoms. We don’t need them.” Thor squints at Loki. “Right?”

Thor’s fifth limb is still standing at full attention, so forgive him for getting distracted staring. It’s insane. He took the whole thing, and he’s still walking. Until the pillow—one of Loki’s throw pillows but then again, he might like it more now—smothers it.

Thor really wants an answer.

Loki shrugs. “I don’t know who you’re having sex with.”

“You.” Thor’s all exasperated about it.

“But—“

“Before you start saying some more crazy shit, no, I’m not, have not, and will not be having sex with anyone but you as long as we’re having sex. Why would I? Loki, seriously, I get that you think I’m a massive whore, but you’re not—just know I’m not fucking anyone else, alright?”

Loki sighs. “Okay.”

“And you’re not having sex with anyone else, right?”
“Thor, really—“ He stops himself when Thor doesn’t return his amazed look. “No, I am not having sex with anyone else. Not with Thanos. Not with Bruce. Not with Clint. There, are you happy now?”

“If you say we don’t have to use condoms, yeah,” Thor says. Like a hopeful child.

“We don’t have to.”

Thor kisses him, smiling. “Good. Good. I like being as close to you as I can.”

Loki pauses in freeing Thor’s cock from the throw pillow to meet his eyes, the stomach-seizing sincerity in them.

Thor looks away, and shouting “Curry,” shoots the condom into the trash can across the room.

Idiot. A sexy one, but still, an idiot.

Chapter End Notes

Hank Pym is a dick across all universes. But a loveable dick.
“Besides being the biggest closet case in the world,” Thanos preaches, “Steve Rogers is an overcompensating, roid-raging, bible fucker—yes, Ronan, that’s you too—so we’re going to disregard his opinions on how Halloween should be celebrated, and do it my way.”

Loki’s settling in his seat to the chorus of outraged gasps, in a tug-of-war between the granola bar and cum smoothie churning in stomach and the urge to laugh his ass off because there’s no better way to start off one of these early-morning school council meetings than Thanos being a total asshole to the most clenched one of them all.

Eyes extra unsettlingly blue in the projector, Thanos flips to the next slide of his PowerPoint while Ronan gives himself an ulcer snarling over the table like it’ll protect him if Thanos wants to kick his ass—from experience, Thanos can flip a table—and Steve, pouting into his fist, he gets comforted by Pepper—Thor’s giving Thanos the stink eye on his other side, but come on, he’s not exactly making an effort to help Steve back in—as Steve claws back into the safety of his closet.

Thanos is talking their annual Halloween carnival, budget, blueprints, contractors, not exciting subject matter, but not anything worth egging the acid at the pit of his diaphragm up and up and—

Hello, Johann’s boots.

There’s some shouting and cursing in German—*fick dich, fick* that—that warps Schmidt’s mouth to comical proportions which Loki enjoys in the back of his mind where there’s not the sharp tinge of vomit on his tongue and his middle’s not cramping to a singularity.

“Shut the fuck up,” Thor tells Johan, then asks, “Loki, shit, man, you okay?” He’s over Loki’s shoulder, and when one of those scalding hands burns its way from between his shoulder blades to the bare skin of his neck, Loki flinches.

He chances the move to look above the table, and Steve of all people is holding a bottle of water while Maria Hill, looking more annoyed than Loki is at himself for puking, drops a trash can underneath it and says that she’s already called the janitor.

Thor takes and thanks Steve for the water, and like a good ol’ big bro, he uncaps it and tries to hold it up to Loki’s mouth when thank you, he can drink it by himself. “You think you’re going to puke again?”

The Norwegian shouldn’t comfort Loki so much, but he’s shivering and his throat burns, and he can feel his stomach sloshing around. Yes, it’s very likely he’s going to puke again.

“Loki, if you ralf again and interrupt me, I’m going to shove my fist so far down your throat I wear
you like a bracelet. Here, you twinky disaster.” Thanos extends a joint toward him. “Light up a joint outside. You’ll be fine.”

Loki accepts the joint for extra brownie points with Thanos on top of him taking Thanos' advice and getting himself toward the exit.

Weaseling out his seat, Tony drawls, “I’ve really had to go to the bathroom this whole time.”

“Sit the hell down. I didn’t excuse you, Stark.”

The classroom doors shut him out in the empty marble and granite echo chamber of a hallway.

Yeah, no. He’s not going to confirm the conspiracy theories hatching in there at rumor ground zero, so they can follow up *Loki’s in a dom/sub relationship with Thanos* with *Loki’s got cancer* or, or… *gasp, Loki’s pregnant*. When he’d have a bigger chance of a malignant brain tumor button mashing his vomit reflex.

In the bathroom, no one’s there to judge him for screaming his tar black soul—it’s been voted into law, that description of his soul—into a toilet. And if they are there, they feel awkwardly obliged to hover outside the door and do half-assed emotional triage. James Rhodes, you know, Tony’s BFF who’s no doubt heard his firsthand account of Loki ruining Johann Schmidt’s Doc Martens Monday morning, freaking takes off his ROTC jacket and rolls his sleeves up like Loki’s bleeding anything but stomach acid, and holds his hands up all passive aggressive and defensive when Loki tells him that no, he’s not fine, but he doesn’t need him to hold his hair.

(he’s been wearing a hair tie around his this wrist this week for a reason, duh)

“You should talk to mom,” Thor has the nerve to say at lunch, this underlying *Why am I here then* in his eyes because Loki’s too nauseous to eat a bagel let alone suck Thor’s dick, sorry not sorry.

“Throw up is her forte. She’s an OB/GYN. People are always coming to her when they’re puking. You remember you used to get sick all the time when we were kids? You’d be puking these puddles so huge that I’d get scared you were going to die from throwing up all your organs. Mom was laughing when I came to her crying about it. ‘Throwing up is the body’s way of getting rid of the bad stuff.’”

Loki chews his ice chips. The only food he’s eaten today and stayed down. “Except I don’t have anything inside of me to get rid of.”

When Thor’s food, or what was supposed to be Thor’s food, comes with a bowl of soup the waitress puts down in front of Loki, Loki sighs since Thor really doesn’t understand that anything, *anything*, he eats is going to un-eat itself as soon as possible.

“It’s chicken broth, Loki. There’s almost nothing in it. You have to eat something.”

“You’re only saying that because we haven’t had sex in three days.”

Thor smiles extra hard at the waitress while she asks them if things are alright like she’s not jumping to the most normal conclusion, they married young or something, childhood friends, blah blah blah, not brothers fucking, because Thor’s too pretty to be involved in that.

“Pretty sure she’d still be down if you asked to go out back,” Loki says. “When you look like you do, what’s a little morality matter?”

“Eat your soup, Loki.”
He manages to keep it down, but it comes out the other end at a urinal a period later. Then ten minutes after that. And one or three more bathroom breaks after that, that have declining the joint Thanos offers because it’s likely in five minutes he’ll be out of the greenhouse to go piss for the billionth time today.

Loki skips the library to go fill a Safeway basket with chicken soup and saltine crackers.

He’s got his paper Safeway bag clutched against his chest when he comes home some hour later than usual, the grand staircase teasing him when he even looks its way because he’s sure as hell not equipped to walk up it on anything less than all fours.

Let alone in the high heels coming around the corner. But Mom, she’s superhuman. And home early. Not that that’s a problem. Well, shouldn’t be, but he’s got his own amateur re-feeding kit when Mom doesn’t even know him starving to death was a possibility.

Loki promised to be open with her a few months ago. This isn’t exactly proof of said openness.

“Mom. Hi.”

“Hi, Loki. I see you did some shopping,” she says. She’s coming toward him very carefully, but her smile has him tranquilized. “Does this have to do with how upset your stomach has been?”

Fucking, “Thor.”

“You’ve been pushing your food around at dinner. When I came into your room Tuesday night to talk to you, I heard how sick you were in the bathroom. Your brother called me Wednesday to ask what excessive vomiting was a symptom of. I hoped you’d tell me this morning, but I had an early call, so I couldn’t coax it out of you.” And ah, the hand on his bicep, it’s like a lullaby to not just the muscles clenching there but all over.

“I didn’t want to bother you.”

“Oh, I know. You’re so fiercely independent. It reminds me of myself when I was your age.” She switches to holding his arm, pulling him away from the stairs and fleeing—as fast as he can crawling—to his room to subsist off soup and crackers till his body gets its shit together. She doesn’t agree with him being annoyed his body—she says it’s beautiful, he should appreciate it, his body needs love—but that’s the motherly and doctor-ly instincts co-conspiring to stop him from feeling like he’s in trouble or a patient in Mom’s office when she tells him to sit down.

Without the Safeway bag shield. “I promise nothing is going to happen to your soup, sweetheart.”

Yeah, fine, he believes her, but it’s human to cling to lifelines.

Her hands are supernaturally soft when she checks him out for swollen lymph nodes, irregular breathing, the usual beacons of illness, which none of any of his give off any signs of going off Mom’s deliberating look.

“You are running warm,” she says. “This is the time of year the flu goes around.”

“I thought my immune system had actually learned something when I was sick all the time.”

“Your body on goes on the information it’s given from the flu vaccine. It can only do so many miracles.” She runs a hand over his hair passing by to get to the shelves behind him. “If you’re going to have sex in the next week, Loki, no kissing. I know it’s so unromantic, but you don’t want to get whoever it is sick.”
Loki’s not surprised she knows what beard burn looks like—Dad is Santa Claus—but he’s holding down embarrassment in addition to the bile because Thor’s the Mom gives the sex disclaimers to.

“Thank you, Mom.”

She wraps one of her hugs up in a smile for the road.

With her mind, the first thing out of his mouth—besides the cracker he was about to eat when Thor stumbled into his room—is, “We can’t have sex or kiss for a week. I have the flu.”

“The flu?” Thor mentally crosses off all the end-of-Loki’s-life diseases on his list. “I should already have it. But I don’t. Because I never get the flu.”

“Yeah, yeah, go ahead, brag. All the energy your body’s stolen from your brain to put into your muscles better have more advantages than running fast and throwing far.”

“Right, I have a soccer game at Healdsburg tomorrow afternoon, so I won’t be in school.” Thor tests the quarantine spinning Loki around in his chair and getting if-Loki-falls-forward-they-kiss close. “You’re gonna have to actually use a driver.”

“I’ll call an Uber.”

“Or Fandral.”

Loki unleashes the poison glare. “I’ll call an Uber.”

“Already told Fandral at practice you’d need one and he had to give you one or I’d cock block him with Amora.” Prince Douche backs up, but Loki, he’s actually tall when he’s not next to Thor, has these long legs great for leaping at Thor, who plucks his arms out from in front of him and locks him against his chest using his arms as leverage. Oh right, some of Thor’s trillion trophies are for wrestling.

The sensation of his organs catching up to his still body, it… annoys his stomach.

“You’re really testing this no sex for a week thing, sexy snow elf.”

Oh, please, not that nickname again.

“Let me go.”

“So you can attack me? I’m not that dumb.”

Loki yanks himself out of Thor’s arms, away from Thor, and sprints and barely makes it to the toilet.

Thor, hovering at the door, looks at Loki hugging the toilet and says, genuinely, “Sorry.”

Loki would throw the glass of water he hands him at him except he sort of needs it, and Thor pets his hair, so he doesn’t feel like complete, flaming trash.

#

He’s showering, humming BANKS, conditioning his hair, all-around enjoying himself. Which when he’s got the door partially propped open for an easy getaway to the toilet isn’t the easiest to come by, but whatever. Loki’s been sicker for longer. Flu is child’s play.
All it has on him is puking.

And going off the red polka-dotting the light tiles, bleeding from his ass.

He’s bleeding from his ass.

He didn’t even bleed after Thor.

After some bending to see if it’s not just in the neighborhood--and it isn’t, it’s clearly trickling out that spout—he exits the shower into his bedroom and calmly, very calmly, in a wet t-shirt and boxers, rushes to the other end of the house and knocks on his parents’ door and prays to anything and everything Mom’s still home.

When she opens the door, “I’m bleeding,” just slips right out. She asks where.

He tells her where.

She tells him to go get dressed.

She doesn’t drive in the direction of his school. She drives toward Stanford, toward work, because that’s where they end up, at the hospital, where Loki’s not small enough to hide in her shadow anymore and all the nurses and doctors they pass notice him, go to say hi but get the hint when he stares at that impersonal linoleum instead of acknowledging these people seeing him at this absolute worse. He endures the stares from the nurses at the station Mom talks to, presses himself close to the wall but not too close because with his luck, his wish of getting sucked into one would come true here, and he’d have to witness pregnant women screaming bloody murder and gushing body fluids for eternity.

It’s a relief being led into one of those claustrophobic exam rooms with chopped up bodies on the walls and creepy cartoons warning about getting vaccinated and hand washing. And he hates these places.

His mother is fine with him sitting in a chair and doesn’t force him to sit on that stiff paper on the exam table, the smallest mercy. She lowers onto a stool, solidly in doctor mode with a clipboard on her thigh. Then the questions start.

No, he doesn’t have migraines or cramps or diarrhea or eaten anything their cook of longer-than Loki’s-been-alive hasn’t made or from a restaurant he’s never been at before the vomiting and bleeding, but yes, he’s tired and he’s warm and cold and weak because he can’t keep anything down, and even though it’s bleeding, his ass doesn’t hurt.

“When’s the last time you had unprotected sex?”

“Sunday,” he says but doesn’t mean to. Because Mom’s expecting never. He knows that, the expectations, but he’s so bad at living up to them as always.

“Loki.” She’s disappointed, and he wants to die. “We’ve talked to you about how important safe sex is. You told me you were having safe sex with Mr. Barton.”

“I know, okay. I know. It’s, it’s different. We’re only with each other, and I trust them. They’ve been tested. They don’t have anything. I don’t have anything.”

“How many times in the past month?”

“I don’t know. 50?”
The sound of her pen is angry.

“How many of those times were receptive?”

“18.”

She holds a hand to her forehead, and after a moment of reminding herself it’s not her fault Loki’s turned out to be a disappointment on as many fronts as he can be, she leaves.

Loki’s really hating the decision not to use condoms. Not because it was wrong. But because at least Mom wouldn’t think he’s as irresponsible as Thor. When he’s not. He’s the responsible one. It’s… his thing.

He gets a text while he’s waiting for Mom to come back and disown him.

A nurse comes in. Without Mom. She hands him a sleeve of saltine crackers and chitchats about Harker and how her niece or nephew goes to the elementary school, glaringly not referencing that Mom’s chosen not to come back in to see him.

He bites through a cracker when the needle pierces his arm. Just hours after where he never wanted the see blood, here, the one time he’s already with it, when it’s getting drawn in a sterile setting. Even if it’s going to detect some fatal disease.

She asks him to pee in a plastic jar. Fine, that’s not a hard thing for him to do these days with how
his bladder’s shrunken. She returns post-pee to collect the jar and the vials of blood, and she tells him, “Tell your brother I said good luck with the push for the championship.”

Which one.

He’s down to five crackers when Mom returns.

And it’s Mom, not Dr. Freysdottir.

She hands him a manila folder then sits down in the chair beside him. Like she’s expecting a certain reaction from him. And not a positive one.

There’s a prescription note in Mom’s impeccable cursive he lifts up.

Medical jargon, medical jargon. Pregnancy test conducted on patient that returned positive. His conclusion that he has ball cancer is dashed away in the next sentence since they anticipated that and ran some other test and. And. The test for that came back negative, so.

So. So, the patient is pregnant.

What?

“Mom—‘ He’s up because this, it, it can’t be possible.

“There’s a .001% incidence rate for male pregnancy. That rate is 2% in Norwegian males.” She touches his arms, and it’s just—it’s too much. It’s too much. “You’re one of those 2%. I’ve sent for a genetic screen to confirm if you have the gene for your medical records, but Loki, love, you’re pregnant.”

He’s—Thor’s baby. It’d be Thor’s baby, and Thor, he’s his brother, and they both, they have the same father and the same mother, who carried them in there, who pushed them out of the same—they’re brothers.

This baby is his brother’s.

“I can’t be. I’m 16. I can’t be.”

He can’t be having his own brother’s baby. He can’t be having Thor’s baby. He just, he can’t.

“I can’t have this baby.”

“Yes, you can. Loki, look at me.”

He does, but those, they’re darker but they’re Thor’s eyes, and Thor is his brother, and Loki’s having his baby.

“You’re going to have this baby, and I and when the time comes, your father will be with you every step of the way. Do you understand? You won’t be doing this alone.”

“What if—what if I don’t want to have it?”

She takes her hands away. “Then, as your doctor, I would set you up with the appropriate resources to have the abortion.”

Of his and Thor’s baby.
“I need an abortion.”

“Loki—“

“It’s Thor’s.”

His brother’s.

Her son’s.

She doesn’t get it. Of course. She has faith in them to not fuck each other, to not have conceived this mutated incest proto-baby incubating inside of Loki, but they did just that. “What do you… mean?”

He rubs at the tingling skin on the back of his neck, his throat getting so thick it’s almost hard to breathe. “The baby, it’s Thor’s.”

He has to sit down. There’s nothing inside him left to keep him standing. Nothing.

A hand’s on his back.

Mom lowers herself down next to him. Almost like she’s in shock. “You don’t need to think about what you’re going to do right now, Loki. You have time. Right now, you need to take care of yourself.” She gently squeezes his shoulder, but. He’s somewhere else where he can breathe. Where having his brother’s baby, it—he can wade through it and breathe.

He’s having Thor’s baby.

When he blinks, something wet falls down his cheeks.

Mom’s crying when he looks at her. “I love you, alright?”

She gets up and leaves.

He struggles to feel alone. He hates it.

Chapter End Notes

Frigga is a master of suppressing her what the fuck reactions being an OB/GYN.
Loki’s serve bounces into double’s alley.

It’s him, the ball machine, the flood lights because the sun set fifty serves ago, and the housekeeper Mom sent out to pour him water and force snacks on him under the guise of spectating.

Mom and he haven’t spoken since she told him she prescribed him a pill, a sorry from life for screwing him over, to offset his… morning-noon-and-evening sickness.

So, no, he can’t blame this serve stumbling over the baseline and the next one sinking into the net on nerves over flash-forwards of him slipping in his own puke. He’s shit. Maybe getting knocked-up is a cosmic sign he should quit since if this thing pans out, well, he won’t be playing in the spring. He’ll be waddling around with some, some parasite sucking the life out of him, if he has any left by then balancing school and extracurriculars and fucking pregnancy.

The ball machine coughs up dry.

“Lo!”

Thor.

He lowers his tennis racket, doesn’t smash it into wire and fiberglass on the court. Because Thor will ask what’s wrong, and since he sounds not-distraught, he hasn’t spoken to Mom yet to hear the big news.

In that varsity jacket, Thor’s the high school experience Loki’s now definitely never going to get. Like he was before, but now, no, there’s absolutely zero chance he gets to party with the popular kids, to effortlessly beat other teams’ asses with the whole school behind him, with his hundreds of friends texting him on the bus ride back home congratulations, meaning it.

They wouldn’t be saying that if they knew that while Thor stays this perfect Loki’s going to distort with their fucking baby.

It’s not fair.

“You look way better than you did last night,” Thor’s telling him, but Loki’s looking out at the yellow highlights across the court, at his scrawny legs, at his flat, tight stomach. “Are you cured?”

“Well, it turns out I didn’t have the flu, so yeah, I guess I am.”

“Thank god. I was having nightmares about you throwing up your heart. Weird shit, man.”

He plucks at his racket strings. “Did you talk to Mom yet?”

“Yeah, when I came in. She asked about the game and reminded me I have dinner with Dad and some of his business colleagues tomorrow night. Why?”

Oh.

“I was wondering if she told you that one of the nurses at the hospital said good luck about
championships. She didn’t tell me which one, but maybe she might’ve told Mom,” Loki says. “I guess she didn’t tell her at all.”

Thor absorbs that, yet another good luck, and starts walking backwards from Loki. “I’ve got to go call Fandral back because he left me around ten voicemails bitching about you standing him up. But I’ll see you at dinner, ‘kay?”

Loki sits dinner out.

#

Even in the same house, Loki avoids Thor tragically easily.

#

An orange clasp envelope is propped in the space between his laptop screen and keyboard, his name in Mom’s handwriting in the middle. He’s too naked, too wet to do anything more than chuck it into his backpack and continue psyching himself up for his Monday morning perp walk.

He doesn’t set himself up for stammering failure by waiting for Thor to show up to his door to tell him he’s leaving. No. The second Hela’s text comes—five minutes and I’m ditching you—he sneaks out to her jag situated out past the guardhouse, not that she’s in it, up at the window flirting with one of the younger guards who in his naïve southern accent calls her Lady Hela and barely nods at Loki when he passes by.

“I like men who’ll get themselves bloody for me,” she tells Loki. “You think you’re the superior sex then a woman in a short skirt with a brain comes by and your dick’s whispering for you to cut your heart out and serve it to her on a plate. Or him for you. Release a blond-hair, blue-eyed guy in your sights and you’re a disaster.”

Arguing with Hela about her two-going-on-three-year-old suspicion he has the hots for his older brother—she’s right, but he’s not about to tell her that—rubs elbows with him thinking about the baby that he’s having with his older brother, and Loki’s too tired of thinking about that, so he reaches over to drag the volume up to shouting-talking-as-needed.

Just… screw him. Okay? Screw him. All of these people in the parking lot side-eyeing him in their precious friend groups thinking people only tolerate you because your dad has fuck everybody money, fantasizing about his Regina George comeuppance. They wished this on him. Because he’s different, because he’s not afraid of burning bridges because his last name, the get-out-of-jail-free card they’re jealous he has, it’s the only one that matters.

The double-edged sword that is. When Dad finds out—Loki’s going to get pushed out the private family jet without a golden parachute, that’s for sure. The cushy C-suite job under the firstborn son and heir, Dad’ll gift that to a cousin just to make a statement that Loki can fuck around to his heart’s content as long as it doesn’t embarrass Daddy, not when he’s not Thor.

Because Thor—first of all, he wouldn’t get himself in this position, that’s what Dad would say, because Thor has the stuff to be a real man. To be an Odinson. But if Thor did, Loki bets his ass Odin would slap him on the wrist and then say, “Leave it to you, my boy, to secure the family legacy.”

You know that they say. First.
He skips Lit—and the run-in with Thor where he’d get asked about where he was this morning, etc.—to sit on a toilet—on a toilet paper barrier, duh—in the one bathroom near the gym no one uses because anyone in the area is going to PE, and the locker rooms have bathrooms, that he blew Thor in two weeks ago, and open up the super serious orange envelope.

Spoiler alert: he’s got the gene. And the baby. Without a shred of doubt because Loki didn’t get this smart denying plain evidence.

He sucks it up. He slips out before the bell, so he has a head start to getting the hell out of here when everyone swarms out around him.

There’s someone running toward him. White hair, running, who else would it be besides Pietro Maximoff, that tenth grader Tony calls the “ADHD Poster child”?

He’s already moved aside when Pietro serenades them all with, “Move!”

His bag’s tugging on his arm, hit by Pietro’s. And then it’s upside down and emptied onto the ground. Because his sense of kinesthesis, which was pretty damned good, had to be from tennis, it’s prematurely gone when it’s not due for, what, another ten weeks when he’s capricious and even more pregnant. Shit.

Loki kneels down to put this part of his life back together.

“You couldn’t have spilled your pencils?” Wolfgang von Strucker’s signature black, military-lite galoshes, his thin-lips smirking to the best of their ability. “Is it too hard for you to be helpful?”

The asshole bends over to grab a mechanical pencil Loki’s about to and hands it to him. Yes, he’s helping unlike everyone else taking a detour around him, but still. Asshole.

“Not for someone who on purpose shaves their hair so it looks like peachfuzz,” Loki says. He reaches for his physics folder, but a hand plants itself on it in that deliberately, in-your-face helpful way.

Wolfgang books it the hell out of here. Lucky.

Heimdall, you know, Sif’s step-brother, fixes his creepy light brown eyes on Loki. Always like he knows everything, and Loki doesn’t have a clue. “Of all the many, many bad traits you have, being clumsy isn’t one them.”

“This wasn’t my fault.” Loki snatches the folder because fuck you, Heimdall. You know-it-all dick.

“It never is.”

Loki shrugs his backpack, now full again, onto his shoulder and gets up, and Heimdall does too, but he’s got an inch on Loki that lets him look down on him literally as well as metaphorically. “Wolfgang was chasing Pietro. I’m not sorry for being in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

Heimdall even has his hands held behind his back for the full self-righteous dick demeanor. “When you surround yourself with negativity, it’s bound to follow you around.”

“Like when you shove a stick up farther and farther up your ass, it’s bound to get stuck up there,
right?"

“I’m not as well-versed in that area of my body like you,” Heimdall tells him. Because he’s always the bigger man, he says goodbye too, but fuck that and fuck him.

It’ll be his luck that Heimdall replaces him as Dad’s back-up son. Dad’s always had a soft spot for his hard ass.

But not for Loki.
Unconstructive Collaboration

Chapter Notes

Hashtag fuck Thor

See the end of the chapter for more notes

#

His vitamin and mineral bingo card, B1, B2, B3, B9, B-12, C, and D, calcium, of a prenatal supplement goes down good with Mommy Dearest’s hearty and healthy breakfast he argues about once when he’s tired and a granola bar has all the same nutrients in it but gets told, “This isn’t about only you anymore, Loki,” and that’s the end of that.

“You’ve looked hateful lately,” Thanos says at lunch, the only time they constantly see each other now that Loki’s stopped going to the greenhouse outside of Botany Club meetings. Hela’s taken Loki’s place after Loki convinced her Thanos’ obsession with her is sort of like glove if you squint which is better than the heart-shaped chocolate tier love on the market. But the trade-off is Hela eating lunch with the drama club now, and Thanos, he’s been dragging Loki out to this dive bar instead of letting him eat alone. “That could be fixed if you smoked some weed.”

“I’m not in the right mindset to take full advantage,” Loki replies.

“Why?”

“I’m just… not.”

Right then, Alexander Pierce texts Thanos about taking some money out of the super top secret student council fund—aka the weed money--to pay for some ultra-patriotic veteran-turned-politician’s speaking fee for the Veteran’s Day parade, which is so funny to Thanos he changes the subject to how he and Loki can force Pierce to kiss somebody’s ass he doesn’t want to. Which Loki rubs his hands at the chance to do because the farther away his mind is from how fucked his life is, the easier pretending it isn’t is.

Not talking to Thor like, what, he’s the father of this baby and before this week were fucking on a regular basis but when he has to, the moments they run into one another because Thor’s squatting in his locker and as far as he knows, it’s bad luck he and Loki haven’t had any time together one-on-one, talking to Thor like he’s the popular big brother Loki’s estranged from. For the past week and a half, he has been, but not in any meaningful, impactful way. Because one minute too late, he’s walking into Lit behind him or making eye contact over the dinner table Mom’s scrutinizing for all the hints she missed they were fucking in the first place.

She asks him, after dinner when he’s waiting for the cook’s mom-approved night snack, when he’s going to talk to him, Thor, about it. It’s his right to, not hers, but there’s only so much time she can give him. And Loki tells her, “When I figure out what I’m going to do.”

She wants him to keep it. He’s well aware. Her love for life supersedes her disgust over it being her double-grandchild. But she’s not the 16 year old who’s pregnant with their older brother’s baby,
okay? She’ll never understand.

He’s the one with the fucked up genes that make him, a fucking boy, capable of bearing life. The biggest joke in the world, him being shoved around and teased by those kids when they lived back in Tonsberg over how girly he is. Turns out he’s so girly he can get pregnant. Mom says he has a gift, but this is only a gift to those kids on the playground that all these years later they were proven right. Loki can’t even be a man right.

Thor’s best ex Sif would feel so vindicated, wouldn’t she, you’re a bitch but lucky to be born male so you get away with it.

Did he get away with it? This feels like the worst karma in the world.

#

He sighs outside the door. Better get as much fresh air while he can.

It barely smells like pot inside.

Thanos’ cigarette case is closed on the table, and Thanos has his hands clasped under the grow light, no joint in them or between his lips. Hela’s MIA.

It was after school that one time, and when Loki asked if they were waiting for anyone else, Thanos stood up and told him no. They weren’t waiting for anyone else. No one else was coming to look for them.
Is it bravery or stupidity that keeps Loki standing? Like courage would help. It’d be even better for him probably, having something to break.

“Sit.”

Which isn’t some relief. Not when it’s Thanos thinking across the table.

“So, you got yourself knocked up.”

Blinking is the only action Loki’s capable of.

“I thought Odinson was the retarded one, but you’ve got him on shock value,” Thanos says. “What? You were puking then you stopped smoking pot then Odinson’s getting tough with me in PE because he thinks I have a role in you not speaking to him. Speaking, screwing. Odinson couldn’t have been more transparent about missing your boipussy.”

That cringeworthy word would make him puke if he weren’t on an antiemetic.

“I’ll give you the ride to and from the clinic for the ol’ wire-hanger treatment. I’ve always wanted to be involved in an abortion.” Coming from someone who’s gone to pro-life and pro-choice rallies with a skull-shaped sign saying ‘Pro-Death’ and pissed off both sides, the embodiment of the ‘Intelligent, Nihilistic and with a Wicked Sense of Humor’ copypasta.

Supportive isn’t the right word. Thanos is Teflon to it. But his morbid curiosity overlaps with Loki’s circumstances, which while it has a lot of potential to get fucked up, as is, it’s less for Loki to worry about.

Loki tells him, “I’ll let you know if I need it.”

He might.

#

Loki’s leaning on one arm, and with the other, turning the pages of the Lit reading, a book he’s read before but came here to the library, you know, among other reasons, to refresh himself on. The words aren’t exactly sticking, but that’s not on Loki. It’s on Peter Parker’s whisper-talking to Bruce diagonal him about the Calc homework because fuck the please, no talking signs around the library and fuck the collaborative study rooms and especially fuck Loki.

Yes, fuck Loki. Fuck his needs. Fuck his wants and his dreams, and fuck his future. Oh, Stanford, the school of his dreams that he’s bound to get into? Fuck that, you’re raising a baby you didn’t even want or need now.

No offense to the baby. It’s not their fault. He gets that, but sorry, kid, he’s entitled to be bitter for a while when Brock Fucking Rumlow is bragging, but whispering, to Jack Rollins that he, of all the football players with good sportsmanship, is going to Penn State to jack-hammer sorority girls and tackle spines in half.

Brock I look like every skeevy guy you meet in a bar alley way and expect sex for beating up your boyfriend Rumlow is going to his dream college, smooth sailing on his early admission, and Loki, he’s going to waddle through his junior year and struggle with building his application, academics, and raising a goddamned baby through his senior. Alone.

He shushes Parker.
“Go ahead. Keep going, Peter,” Bruce tells Parker, glaring at Loki.

Loki won’t be too pregnant to smother Banner in his sleep come their academic decathlon trips in the spring. He collects his belongings to go stray the shelves and read in peace.

His arm’s grabbed. No, seized, crushing all the muscles in his upper arm so hard that pulling only makes it worse.

“I’d appreciate you not cutting off my circulation, thank you,” he says, turning to… Thor.

He has a blank expression on his face that Loki’s never… he’s never seen before. His grip on Loki’s arm stays tight when he literally drags him like they’re five and Loki’s having a bit of a temper tantrum because Sif wiped mud on his shirt except Loki has to comply or else friction burn from the ground as hilarious as it must look to everyone slyly watching them. Ha, ha, ha, Loki’s in trouble with big brother Thor.

Loki’s tossed into the collaborative study cube and misses the ground by catching himself with his own legs. His heart leaps when the door slams, half-expecting the glass to shatter, but nope, not even a spider-web crack for someone to come running to spare Loki of whatever the hell Thor’s about to yell at him about. Loki settles himself into a chair, and Thor’s lingering, watching, waiting, quiet like Thor never is.

There’s something under Thor’s arm.

Thor reaches for it and pulls out—he pulls out an orange envelope and drops it on the table.

Loki’s name is written on it.

It’s been a week since he looked at it in the bathroom, and he got what he needed from it, so he had no reason to ever look in it again. Didn’t really want to when he’s struggling to not picture it on every piece of A4 paper he has in his hands these days. But he’s had it in his bag. This entire time, it’s been in his bag.

It is. It shouldn’t be there on the table, but it’s in his bag. He knows it is.

“I got that from Sif last period who got it from Heimdall,” Thor says. “She thought I needed to see what it said.”

Heimdall, that, that asshole, he didn’t have any right to, to take or look at Loki’s things. And Sif, she has fucking some nerve. Oh, I’ll never be as awful a person as you, Loki. I have morals. What fucking morals? She violated his privacy for revenge over, what, him pouring henna in her hair in sixth grade because he caught her and Thor kissing when she told him, a lie, that she wasn’t like all the other girls trying to steal him away.

She was. She is. She, she wants Thor all for herself except she doesn’t know.

She doesn’t know.

But Thor, he does.

“Thank fuck Heimdall was the one who got it. I would’ve found out I’m going to be a fucking dad from Tony Stark’s big fucking mouth!”

“You mean stole it from me! It’s not like I frivolously dropped it. No, someone knocks the contents of my backpack on the ground, and he uses it as an opportunity to try to find something to ruin my
“Ruin your life? My life is ruined, Loki. My life is ruined. Over.” Thor turns his back on him with his hands in his hair like this is the end of the world, and déjà vu overcomes Loki. Not from memories. No. From dreams. This is what he saw coming. “My dream school Duke, they’re, they’re moving heaven and earth to make sure I’m there next year. They’re going to build a team around me. Do you know how big of a deal that is? It never happens, not like it is for me. I can’t have a baby.”

Thor can’t have a baby. Well, that’s the end of this then. Why didn’t Loki and the baby think of that?

“You’re not having a baby,” Loki says. “I’m having a baby.”

“Stop pretending like you’re the victim here.”

“Fuck you. I’m not sorry I didn’t anticipate conceiving a baby that would inconvenience your ascendency to college basketball divinity. Woe is me, I’m the dumbass who insisted no condoms because I thought I was invincible. I am the one who has to get an abortion because I’m pregnant with my own brother’s incest baby.”

Loki shuts his eyes and tries to catch his breath. He can breathe, he can breathe. In, out, in, out. In, out.

There’s something on the arms of the chair—Thor’s hands. Veiny, clenched.

He looms above Loki. “Loki… we’re not—we’re brothers, but we don’t have the same parents. Mom and Dad, they’re not—you don’t have the genes they gave me, so you don’t need to do that, get rid of it or anything. Don’t. Alright?”

There’s nothing, nothing to suggest Thor’s kidding in his eyes, that he’s holding back for Loki’s sake. Nothing to suggest he’s lying. But—no, no, no, no, no. He has to be. He has to be lying.

But he’s not.

Thor’s not lying.

“How do you know that?” he asks, quietly, not trusting his voice to not crack.

Thor moves away, so Loki can bite his lip as hard as he can to stop the burning in his eyes. “When Mom made me shadow her at the end of the summer, I looked through your medical records after I went through mine. I was bored. Your blood type is O, but Mom’s and Dad’s are AB and B. I paid attention to that lesson in AP Bio. I pointed it out to her it was a mistake, but she told me it wasn’t. You’re adopted.”

He doesn’t have any pity looking at Loki. Whether that’s bad or that’s good, Loki doesn’t know. “Her and Dad told me not to tell you. They said you didn’t need to know, and it wasn’t my place to. But I couldn’t pretend in my head that things were the same. I didn’t need to feel guilty anymore about being attracted to you. So, after a few weeks, I went for it.”

And here they are.

Loki knew it. He knew it. All those years, he did.

Mom—Thor’s mom could’ve told him. When they were at the hospital, Loki telling her that the baby was her only real son’s, thinking that he was her son too, she thought maintaining the lie was more important than the safety of her grandchild, but of course she tried to sway him away from getting rid
of it because at the end of the day, it still is her only son’s baby, is her blood like Loki’s never been. Jokes on him, he thought she cared about him—all these years of falling back on her when, when Odin, who’s always struggled to pretend to be Dad, to pretend to love or care about him like he’s loves Thor, all of these years of trusting that she loves him—but she’s not Mom. She doesn’t have to care about him.

She cares about Thor’s baby. If it wasn’t his—she would’ve offered him the ride before Thanos. She would’ve personally performed the abortion if it meant Loki could go back to staying out of the way, and she could preserve her perfect real family.

Loki—he has his own family. He doesn’t need them anymore.

Loki wouldn’t put it past Thor’s mom to try to steal his baby like she stole someone else’s and palmed it off as her own to try to raise Loki’s baby better than she raised him. Odin would like that, to punish Loki for not being as good as a real son would be.

He puts the orange envelope into his bag while Thor’s talking about Loki doesn’t know. “You don’t need to worry about this,” Loki says, interrupting him, but. “You have your own future and your own plans, and you didn’t want this, so you don’t—just forget you even heard about it. I can take care of this by myself. I don’t want you involved, especially when you don’t want to be. Just focus on, I don’t know, whatever you need to.”

“I’m not the bad guy, Loki.”

“You’re right. You’re not. I’m not saying you are.” Loki holds onto his backpack straps. “Please, just stay out of this. For the good of everyone.”

Thor has his arms crossed, and one of his shoulders shrug. He doesn’t look convinced. Who cares? Loki gets the hell out of there.

Chapter End Notes

Your male brother gets pregnant and doesn't tell you and you're like the greatest thing since sliced bread. Freaking out isn't the worst reaction. Though Thor is a dick no doubt.
Worst Case Scenario

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

#

iMessage
Tues, Sep 13, 9:34 pm

Do you still have the homework from your Calc B class?

No.

iMessage
Today, 1:15 pm

Can you come over to my house right now

Why

Um

IDK

I'm waiting for the Uber at the front entrance. It should be here in five minutes.

So hurry your ass up.

I didn't even say yeah

You didn't tell me what I'm coming over for.

I'm skeptical
“How much cash is this? 50, 100 grand?”

“250.” Loki zips up the carry-on, interrupting Clint’s ogling of the birthday money Odin’s friends and business partners have given him over the years, and he’s been hording since he read *Catcher in the Rye*, the what-not-to-do book for running away from home, which he’s been planning on and off to do since Odin patted Thor on the back at Thor’s 16th birthday and told the whole dining room Thor’s the best son he could’ve asked for. In retrospect, another red flag that maybe his black hair isn’t a recessive trait.

“So, why are you packing up all your precious belongings again? I don’t think you got to telling me that part before you worked your mojo on me.”

“The people who call themselves my parents have been lying to me about being my parents.” He bashes open the picture frame of him, Thor and Thor’s parents in Iceland when he was ten. His social security card, his fake ID. “And I didn’t find out from them.”

“You mean you’re adopted.” Duh. “Hm. Believe it or not, I wouldn’t have called that. Your dad, when I see pictures of him I swear I can see the resemblance. It’s in the eyes. Eye. It looks like yours except not green.”

“Confirmation bias.” Loki asks Clint if he can carry the cash, which like hell he can, his brother never lets him carry over ten thousand, and before either Fake Mom or Fake Dad comes home for an early lunch, they’re out of there.

The Uber driver is psyched to help pack the bags into his trunk.

“Have any plans of where you’re actually staying?” Clint asks.

“I’ve never had to use ID when checking into a hotel when I pull out my gold card, so probably at the Rosewood until I figure out something more permanent.”

Clint’s looking down at his shoes, rocking back and forth on his heels like he does when he wants to say something, and Loki’s heard more than enough from anyone today, so he’s not eager when Clint looks up at him. “I can’t believe I’m asking you this, but.” He sighs. “Any thoughts about staying with me? Just for the time being. After you get through this betrayal thing with your parents.”

“I’m not going to ‘get through’ it. They’ve been lying to me my entire life.” Loki prods at the sore soon-to-be bruise on his bicep from Thor’s manhandling. If he checks into the Rosewood, it’ll be a day before Odin is unlocking the door by a copy of the key the concierge graciously gives to him,
and Loki will be forced back here to talk when there’s nothing, nothing at all, he wants or needs to talk about. “Okay.”

Fine, he’ll stay with Clint. They won’t be expecting that from him.

The housekeeper, his—Thor’s mom’s favorite to sic on him, braves the obvious do-not-disturb mood around him to ask where he’s going, and Loki tells her, “The Rosewood Hotel. I won’t be back for dinner.”

At least they’ll have something to point at when they say they looked for him. He’s a good son like that.

#

Clint’s grizzled turbo-Chad brother Barney, the Warriors player, tells Clint, “Keep this one. You tie him down and you don’t have to work another goddamned day in your life. Won’t have to bust your ass playing basketball, can get yourself your prized college education you want while sitting on your ass like this one will,” and Loki rolls his eyes and says something snarky like he’s expected to, but he wants to tell him that no, Loki’s going to be working double time getting himself through college, a baby on one hip and reminders of a family he thought he had but never did pulling at the other.

“He’s as big a wise ass as he looks in the post-game interviews,” Clint says. He closes his bedroom door, not necessarily meaning anything deep about it, but Loki and Clint have only ever been in bedrooms with the doors closed when before, during, and after screwing. Which Clint assures Loki there won’t be any of. It’s not Loki, it’s not him. It’s “the chance that this could get fucked up if it goes wrong.”

Whatever. Loki has no clue where he’s coming from since nothing got fucked up the last time they screwed around, not until Clint got antsy about sticking his dick in his best friend’s little brother behind said best friend’s back. No, Loki wasn’t going to go public about being Clint Barton’s fuck buddy. Too many people already knew from Clint not bothering to lie about it.

Funny he does it no problem now when Loki asks him to not tell Thor that he’s here. Loki doesn’t buy him not wanting to get his ass kicked for getting in the middle of this as his motive. Not when Thor threatened to kick his ass over Clint and Loki’s arrangement and Clint still wanted to tell everyone.

“Who is the mystery guy anyway?”

Loki’s rucking his hands through his wet hair in the Jack and Jill off Clint’s room, ignoring that Clint’s shirtless and leaning in his doorway like some fuck interest in a Hallmark soft-core chick flick. “If I told you, you wouldn’t believe me.”

“Try me.”

“Whoever you think it is, it’s them.”

“Bruce? He’s been rocking the stubble this year, but I know it’s not him. First of all, he hates your guts and thinks the fires of hell burn inside you. He wouldn’t take the risk of getting his dick singed off. He’s smarter than me.”

“Clint, that’s the most ambitious thing that’s ever been said to me. Are you sure you aren’t trying to come onto me?”
“Second.” Ignoring Loki, that’s a good strategy. “He’s heartbroken over breaking up with Betty. I bet he’s celibate on principle.”

Loki tip toes up to Clint, eye to eye with him with the extra inch. “You know how persuasive I am.”

Clint slides the door shut in his face and a muffled, “Sweet dreams,” drifts through.

Loki ends up lying awake watching his phone vibrate across the nightstand.

#

Loki takes the school day off.

#

Clint’s got a soccer game that leaves Loki alone in the house with Barney.

Barney, who’s Clint with any decorum, love for skateboarding, acknowledgment of authority, selflessness, and humility stripped away. All-in-all, he’s not completely awful. Okay, he shit talks Thor for “getting in Clint’s way” on the soccer field and thinks Loki’s lucky that he’s actually adopted and not related to Thor, which is fucking dumb, and tells Loki he’ll fuck his perfect mug up if he tries anything shifty with Clint, but he’s aware that he’s a dick. That’s impossibly hard to come by.

He puts Loki in contact with his real estate agent without too many questions. “Filthy rich people have daddy problems just like the rest of us,” Barney comments, and Loki can’t deny that. Blood or no blood Odin was always a crap dad, and he’s the Holden Caulfield to Loki’s blueprint of being a good parent, a what-not-to-do.

Clint comes back as Barney’s leaving for a game in San Antonio, wishing him the luck they didn’t have. They lost. Badly. And it’s Thor’s fault, but no, no, actually, it’s Loki’s, yes, Loki’s. Going off Thor’s emotionally constipated post-game heart-to-heart with Clint where he said one thing—and him being prompted by Clint bringing up Loki’s family shitshow, which Clint says he said he heard from Loki but nothing else, it doesn’t matter—but Thor, and Clint quotes, said, “This L, it’s all Loki.”

“Oh, kiss my ass,” Loki says in equal amounts to Clint and Thor because Clint’s got one foot on Thor’s side, bro code and loyalty and all of that Chad bullshit. Loki goes to get the hell out there, and Clint’s following like Loki might be looking for a gun, saying all this Thor apology shit, that it’s gotta be tough on Thor to suffer for the actions of his parents, pure projection because post-fuck Barton’s an open-book and Loki’s heard all the allusions to the rags before the riches. At least, at least, the woman who’s been lying about being his mother was going to buck-up and help him—again—raise this baby she didn’t even push out when Thor, he was there, happy to do all the pushing in when Loki bent over for him like all the rest of them.

“Where are you going?”

Loki’s got his jacket, his wallet, sunglasses because he knows his eyes are red, and he’s getting the hell away from Clint. “Don’t wait up.”

He walks to a Starbucks a few blocks away with his hands shaking his pockets. He sits right by the window, and of all the blond heads that pass by, none of them are Clint’s. Loki never pegged him as the following type. At least not for Loki. Not like—
There’s a hand waving in his periphery.

A small one. Obviously. An infant that small should have small hands. Should have a small head too, but it seems all kids in the newborn to three years old range didn’t get that memo, including this platinum blond little boy gumming because he has only like two front teeth at Loki. In the tiniest voice, he says, “Hi.”

To a complete stranger. To Loki, every bit the poster child for unapproachable, dark-ass Clubmasters hiding his eyes, the main component in human-to-human interaction, on top of his morgue-escapee skin. His own pre-adult peers are creeped out looking at him too long.

But this little boy’s smiling at him.

Loki waves.

Equally platinum blond mom comes with a frappucino and a thousand apologies. She’s only existing by him, and her son’s staring up at her like, like she’s the world. Without her telling him to, he wouldn’t wave Loki bye-bye, and even then, it’s half-hearted as hell. All that matters is Mommy.

Loki looks down at himself. His tees loose, but where it wrinkles against him, he’s as starved looking as he’s ever been.

His little pea of cells in there, they’re going to love him for doing nothing but birthing them. The 300 points for writing your name on the SAT of parenting.

The woman—or man, maybe this gene, it’s vertically passed—that gave birth to him couldn’t even do that. What does that say about them? Short-sided, overgenerous, giving their baby’s love away to someone else—Loki can’t imagine doing that, passing up the opportunity for someone to love him with none of the terms and conditions.

Thor has so much love that he figures he can pass this up. But he can’t. This isn’t Sif or Amora or whoever-the-fuck-else he’s called girlfriend or Barton or Fandral or any of those friends he has. This is his own flesh and blood, his baby, that he insisting on making with Loki when he couldn’t get a condom on his dick.

Loki’s not going to feel bad that family ever meant something to him. However bad it blew up in his face.

After he finishes his decaf chai latte, Loki treats himself to Mediterranean at a sit-down the black card he flashes but doesn’t use—not even Odin can trace cash—covers the whole six month reservation wait thing.

One pro in the forest of endless cons of being lied to his whole life.

#

Clint’s olive branch: maining Hanzo while Loki plays McCree in *Overwatch*.

Loki’s never going to get tired of 12 year old boys crying and grown men threatening to kill him for modding.

#
"Mr. Odinson—"

"You can just call me Loki. Please."

He and the real estate agent get along fine after that.

Apartment hunting lures him dangerously close to the house compared to the safety of being fifty miles away in Oakland. Mountain View’s outer limits to the west are five minutes from an emotional mistake in an Uber—or a car, shit, he really has to get one—but the apartment that skirts them, too much for too little, hell no, Loki’s not interested in.

Ten minutes though that’s five extra minutes for him to snap the fuck out of it and go back home. A twenty minute drive from school, forty minutes less than the clusterfuck that’s Clint’s. Twelve minutes from Stanford because fuck if he’s not going because he did a dumb teenager.

And 5k a month. He’s got 250 grand in a duffle bag and who knows how many millions of bracelets and watches in a locked briefcase. 5k is nothing.

Post-apartment hunt, Clint tells Loki, “It must’ve been great growing up rich.” Thoughtlessly rubbing his ass on the kitchen counter while his popcorn’s popping bursts of buttery goodness for Barney’s game. “Really sets you up for success in life.”

“I was raised the first eight years of my life almost exclusively by au pairs. The one I learned English from—she was posh obviously—she only lasted as long as she did because she liked wrinkly old dick. They didn’t last long after that,” Loki replies. “And being rich didn’t make the other less rich but still rich kids like me. Still doesn’t.”

“Yeah, but your parents made sure you were taken care of, right? Paid the au pairs. Yeah, your dad screened for how DTF they were too but the crazies were weeded out, right. They kept you fed and clothed by the best. Sure, they weren’t around, but that’s better than them being around, doing the bare minimum to keep you alive, and kicking the crap out of you when you drew any attention to yourself.”

Loki pushes at the light blue bruise that’s already faded from his arm.

“I get they lied. They played favorites. But your parents gave you a good life. There are kids who’d kill for that even if it meant some emotional neglect. It’s better than being in a group home. Or with two blood parents who had no business having kids. They chose you. That’s a bigger deal than them keeping you around because you were what they got by nature.”

“It’s not that they lied to me. It’s how they lied to me. Do you know how I found out? From Thor because, because my mom let me believe for weeks that there was a chance there was something wrong with my baby just so she didn’t have to tell me that my worst fears were true.”

“Baby?”

The microwave dings, but Clint doesn’t move to get it.

“I… I might be having a baby.”

“You? Like you’re—” Clint’s hand makes a curve around his stomach.

“That is what happens when someone’s pregnant.”

“I thought I was surprised with Jan.” Clint finally grabs his popcorn, more for an excuse to turn away
from Loki and make all the *what the fuck* faces he’s holding back out of respect for the baby, not Loki. He already respects the baby more than Loki. That’s a given with Clint. When he gets it out of his system, between mouthfuls of popcorn, he says, “Sorry about your life, congratulations, and good luck. Think I covered my bases there.”

He times till Clint should have found his way to the couch. “Don’t tell anyone.”

“Like they’d believe me,” Clint shouts. “It’s like you forgot they think I’m as crazy as you are.”

#

Loki’s antiemetic gets him through the hour-long commute to school on public transit.

It’s not the humbling experience Clint’s hoping to rub in his face—Loki’s done BART—but one that makes him text the real estate agent that he wants that twenty minute commute with the two bedrooms, pool, and furniture. She volunteers to be his over 18 cosigner for the lease, the apartment, more like his apartment since all that’s left is his signature and the handing over of the keys.

He’s too excited for the varsity jacket not in his locker, the dismantled Tower of Babel, to sink his gut. More room for him. No need to rush between classes switching out his books and folders. He prefers knowing what to expect out of it, raising this baby, the confirmation that he’s doing this alone.

The best way to do anything if you ask Thanos.

“You don’t know how jealous I am your shitty parents aren’t your shitty parents.” Thanos is at Loki’s locker for one of his rare appearances acting like a normal human being, which intimidates them even more. Gasp, they could be just like him if they tried. Loki’s enjoying the fast zone he has behind him now. “The incompetent pricks that raised me, I have video footage of Suisan shitting me out of her gash, and I’ve paternity tested A’Laars. Remember how disappointed I was when that came back a match.”

Disappointed aka feeling like beating the teeth out of Drax Douglas’ mouth. Yeah.

“Ooh, look what the sad-ass cat dragged in,” Thanos calls over Loki’s head.

Loki chances to see who it is.

Duh. Really, who else would it be?

Irritatingly all messy and mussed like Loki didn’t tell him not to worry his pretty blond head off like that wasn’t already Thor’s plan.

Thor shoulders past those not quick enough to move out the way or expecting him to be somewhat self-aware like he manages to be. Usually.

“Instead of your little brother, go fuck yourself, Thor,” Thanos says in the same tone someone would say goodbye. It does serve the same purpose for him. “When you’ve finished with this, come to my car, so you can feed your tapeworm.”

Thanos is more supportive than Thor. Loki’s close to telling Thor to go fuck himself too.

“Can we make this fast? I need to eat.”

Thor chooses to look past Loki instead of at him. “You’re not staying at the Rosewood.”
“Oops, caught me.”

“Mom has been worried to death about you. She’s refusing to have family dinner until you’re home. She says we’re not a family without you. Dad agrees. He’s—if you don’t come home by yourself, you know Dad will make you.”

“If he’s afraid I’m going to air the skeletons in the family closet then tell him I’m not. Not until I’m in my forties and he’s shitting in diapers and I write my tell-all,” Loki replies. “I’m taking care of my family like I can’t count on them to. Look at it this way. He doesn’t have to worry about stopping me from embarrassing the legacy because I’m removing myself from it, ‘kay?” He points at himself. “Me and my baby, we have everything we want and need.”

Oh, is this Thor actually looking at him? “Good, you’re… keeping it.”

“I am. Now that I know my baby won’t for sure come out with two hearts, no brain, and a tail, I can finally be relieved. I could’ve been longer ago, but your mom--“

“You’re fucking kidding me.”

“Your mom,” he repeats, “she decided to put my baby in danger for the sake of keeping up appearances. Because she knew if I knew, I wasn’t going to play pretend and act like everything is fine. Not like you.”

“Cut the shit. Mom didn’t tell you because she was afraid what the stress might do to you. She loves you. When she found out I told you, she—I’ve never seen her that mad. She hasn’t talked to me since. I don’t know when she’s going to start talking to me again. Maybe when you come home.”

“She’ll forgive you. I give it a week tops. You’re her baby,” Loki says. “Or you’d be holding your breath a long time because home, Thor, isn’t Borson Manor for me anymore. I don’t expect a house-warming gift from you, but guess what, I’m back to being the responsible one. I got myself an apartment for my baby and me without Mommy and Daddy.” He pats Thor on the arm hard. “Good luck at the next game. From what I heard, you’re gonna need it.”

When Loki’s far enough away, he drops the smirk.

He’s never seen Thor looking so… normal.

Chapter End Notes

Clint’s a good person (and maybe slightly dickmatized.)
Also continued #FuckThor
Chapter Notes

The Craft is a bomb ass quintessential 90s movie 'bout teenage witches (it's Heathers with magic.) You should go watch it. You'll realize how often pop culture references small things in it.
Fasolada is a bomb ass Greek soup.
Everything is bomb ass. Except Thor. #FuckThor

See the end of the chapter for more notes

#

After a “mazel tov go fuck yourself” to Loki’s I just got off the phone and I now have an apartment news, Thanos donates Wolfgang and his Audi to Loki’s move-in because Wolfgang worships the ground Thanos’ stomps on. Wolfgang, even with the two hour round trip, San Jose to Oakland, Oakland to Mountain View, his snark-o-meter hangs around an eight out of ten, but he also wants his German Christmas Market plan not to get shit on by Thanos and knows Loki’s his way and means, so duh he’s shutting up about being treated like the irrelevant Prussian nobility he is while carrying Loki’s luggage.

Him humming a Lena song instead of interrogating Loki about Thanos’ personal plans for the Fall Festival in a few weeks suits Loki fine.

Loki’s own personal set of keys unlocks the front door—which is the least they could do but still, symbolically, it means a lot—and he allows the door to swing all the way open, holding out his arm when Wolfgang tries to go in, because dramatic effect.

His industrial chic hideaway. Hell yeah. He didn’t move out to move into a miniature of his not-Mom and not-Dad’s Norsk Versailles, the palace of lies. Even without him there. His apartment, it’s sterile—minimalist. Wolfgang likes it—but none of the rooms overflow with metaphorical second place trophies. Picture frames wait for new memories instead of the captured ones rotted by the false pretenses they were taken under. No trinkets from vacations he doesn’t remember that fondly anymore. This is a blank slate. His and his baby’s blank slate.

Christening his kitchen counter, Loki and Wolfgang eat Moroccan take-out over Chem homework, plans for Loki’s hostile take-over of Rogers’ Thanksgiving turkey drive—they’re in Santa Clara County. Only half the people celebrate Thanksgiving because only half are Wonder bread Americans like Steve Rogers—and of course Wolfgang’s Christmas Market proposal Loki now openly supporting because it’ll overshadow Pepper Potts and the sophomore president Liz Allan’s cliché winter wonderland thing.

Then Wolfgang leaves to go get his good night’s sleep. Leaving Loki alone in his own apartment for the first time.

He’s torn between fuck yeah and holy shit, so he just sighs.

The—his doorbell rings.
Loki checks for any of Wolfgang’s belongings that he might’ve left and come back for, but he’s empty-handed opening the door, ready to tell him that no, he’s still not going to pitch banning small children from the Fall Festival because they like staring at Baron’s peach fuzz haircut.

Except it’s not Barton.

It’s—um, Frigga. His not-Mom.

She’s in her white coat, so she must’ve come straight from the hospital. Loki’s apartment is along the way, but she wouldn’t know that. She shouldn’t. She shouldn’t even be here.

“Has a PI been following me?” he asks.

“No. No, your friend Clint, he told me where you’d be when I spoke to him earlier,” she says.

Barton, god, of course.

“Well, I’m fine. The baby’s fine. We’re… both fine.”

She’s touching him, touching his shoulders, and Loki melts like he’s been conditioned to, hating that is body’s still deep in on the lie. “Don’t treat me like I didn’t change your diapers for a year and a half, like I didn’t breastfeed you until my breasts were black and blue. I sat by your bedside when you were running a fever of 104 and you were nothing but a head full of black hair and this glass-shattering cry. Loki, I am your mother. Blood has never been a factor in that.”

“You let me believe I had to get an abortion.”

“I’ve been an OB/GYN for forty years. Never ever have I put myself before my patients. Never.” She stares up at him, pissed. “You are my baby boy. I know you. I know how you are, how you feel, how sensitive you can be. With a pregnancy with risks as high as this, I had to make a decision. Keeping you safe was more important than being honest with you like I have always, always tried to be.”

She goes inside, calling his bluff because there’s no way he’s going to kick her out. He doesn’t think he’s physically capable of forming the words with his lips to.

He closes the door. “Why didn’t you tell me before then?”

“Your father, he never wanted you to feel different because of the circumstances of your birth. I—you’re my son. You’ve always been my son.” She sits in the wall nook. “While I am thankful to the people who conceived and birthed you, I couldn’t stomach the thought of you feeling like you weren’t wanted. When you were. I’ve always wanted you. And I wanted you to see me like I saw you, that I was your real mother like you are my real son.”

“But I’m not.”

“Why not? Because I didn’t give birth to you? Eight months compared to sixteen years. I’ve loved you for all of them.”

Loki feels sort of stupid standing, so he sinks into the spot beside her.

“You’ve always been so resourceful,” she says, looking around. Proud in the… mom kind of way. “Everything your father and I taught you, you learned from. I knew that you’d be safe and able to take care of yourself, but getting yourself an apartment in four days—no, I wouldn’t put that past you. Now your brother, I’d be sure he’d blow through his checking account by going to some garish
penthouse suite.” She nudges him with her elbow. “That wasn’t clever either. Sending us there when we knew better that you’d never go somewhere that obvious.”

“I couldn’t pass up the opportunity of sending Dad—“ He pauses. ‘Dad.’ Old habits die hard. Or not pissing Mom off dies harder. “—to a five star hotel after a long day’s work expecting to nip this in a bud, losing his mind while everyone relaxes. He’s been trying to white wash his Wrath of Silicon Valley image, but come on. He’s barely changed.”

“Your father’s changed. He didn’t send his private security to strong-arm you home, did he?” Mom has a crueler sense of humor than people give her credit for. “He won’t be happy you’ve moved yourself out. I’m sure he’ll demand Thor moves in with you—“

“No thank you.”

She gives him the sweetie, you’re about to be disappointed eyebrows. “You two were keen to spend time quality together under my roof. Your fear of condoms has paid off in spades, and you’re both terrified of one another.”

“Maybe terrified of the possibility of having a close call with responsibility, sure. And I’m not terrified of anything but morning sickness,” Loki replies. “As far as the history of our ‘relationship’ goes, this isn’t out of the ordinary. Before Thor realized he could trade me doing his homework for intimidating people I hated—“

“Loki, that’s awful.”

“—we weren’t the best of brothers.”

Mom shakes her head. “I thought you two had found common ground.” Sensing his, and bed and desk and dresser and counter-esque comment, her eyes tell him to not even dare.

Fine, but he has to hold in the smile though.

“Normal common ground,” she says. “I wanted you to be close, but not this close. It’s… unusual. But it’s much too late to lecture you about proper conduct with your brother now that you two have gone and given me a grandchild.” She pats his knee. “You created this baby together. You’re going to take care of it together.”

Wishful thinking but Loki skipped any fantasies of co-daddying with Thor right off the bat. Mom’s always had more faith in Thor to be a compassionate, selfless person like her than the selfish twat her husband has been the better part of his life.

Mom gets up, straightening her dress. “Now. Come show me around. It’s so cold. I need to see what I can do to make this a home worthy of my baby boy and his baby.”

She barely conceals how disapproving she is of the entire place, but Loki appreciates the effort.

#

He ambushes Clint Barton after Calc, with his presence warding off Pietro’s twin sister Wanda aka the school’s resident The Craft cosplayer.

“See you survived the night in your new place.”

“You told my mom the address without even asking me.”
Clint makes that annoying *well what can I do* face. “You told me and I agreed not to tell Thor. You didn’t tell me I couldn’t tell your mom.”

“Is this revenge for having to spend more than 30 seconds with Wolfgang outside of school?”

“Partially. It’s also ‘cause I like it when things don’t go your way. The look in your eyes is always priceless.”

“You weren’t even there.”

“But I’ve seen it enough to imagine it in my head. Knowing that it did happen that day because of me.” Clint smirks. “Good shit.”

For that, Loki grabs Clint by his forty-year-old-bachelor-with-a-boat-in-Fort-Lauderdale short sleeved button down and plants a deep kiss on his stupid smirking mouth.

There’s a silent *gasp* that reverberates through the hall around them.

Clint’s startled. “Poison chapstick?”

“How about now the entire school thinks my beard burn in August came from your pubes.” Loki winks and over his shoulder, tells Clint, “Congratulations.”

To Loki. Now that everyone’s gotten an answer that isn’t Thanos the unsubtle stares they get when going to lunch downgrade to the side-eyes virtue of them being Loki and Thanos in the same proximity. Thanos forgives the fact that Loki kissed Clint where people can see with their eyes reading the texts from Wolfgang disappointed in Loki’s “everyman Joe Sixpack” taste, and Bucky Barnes laughing his ass off with Brock and Jack Rollins at the back of their AP Gov class. “You chose Clint Barton as your public baby daddy,” Thanos points out, “stupid or genius. Definitely crazy.”

Yeah, there’s that little consequence a few months off, but Pym would be seeding the idea that Clint’s the father when it came out anyway because Clint told Janet and Janet told Hank about the not-friends with benefits deal, which he thinks is a cover for a secret relationship Loki and Clint are not and never will be in.

This is Clint’s fault for trying to get the last laugh with Loki. No one—no one—gets one over Loki.

In Lit, Natasha borrows the seat on Loki’s other side that Darren Cross usually sits in—and Cross passive aggressively stands there waiting, but isn’t arrogant enough to actually say anything—and says, “Clint, who tells me everything from what he dreamt about last night to the color of his shit this morning, neglected to fill me in that you’d wormed your way back into his tighty-whities when he said he was doing community service.”

Thor has a once over from Hela—who takes it as kindly as her middle finger to him is—to Natasha that’s devoid of any apologetic feelings or vulnerability or anything that someone who thinks about how their actions effect anyone but them feels. He glares Cross into moving out of the way. Like hell they’re going to take care of this baby together. Thor would sooner kill himself.

“Then you know how great of a kisser I am,” he says. “Consider it like a thank you.”

“Noted,” she says and tells Cross, who’s all sarcastic thank you, “You can have your seat back.”
Dad’s agreement to not abuse his power and wealth to destroy Loki’s life comes with a few terms. One, Loki has dinner at the house on Fridays and Saturdays and Sundays if possible, no exceptions, two, Dad gets a copy of the key—which Mom takes under the guise of needing it more thankfully—three, Loki has to spend the holidays at the house, and four, no “funny business,” but Dad’s still under the impression Loki’s seen someone else’s genitals like once and he’s a responsible young man that’s totally not pregnant, so four’s just for show.

While Dad’s still operating under the assumption that Loki is not pregnant, it’s reasonable.

Mom says when the pregnancy is more “settled,” aka Loki is less likely to lose the baby from the stress of a blow out with Dad, they’ll break it to him that he’s getting a grandchild for the holiday cards to his business buddies for that extra umph his brand new image as a charitable family man is missing.

Funnily enough Thor has a wrestling match way up in the cold part of California Friday night, so Dad’s dream of a family reunion over dinner’s put on hold. He rides the high of negotiating Loki back, of getting his family back together because he’s infallible so it’s okay when he lies which Loki eating at his table totally proves, and celebrates tomorrow’s dinner in advance while Loki ignores him, personally proud of how badly he shattered the lie and that this, this is those pieces haphazardly
put back together.

Taking off his jacket in his own home later makes up for having to humor Dad’s ego.

He’s excused from Saturday Family Time by a business trip to Uppsala, Mom showing up around 8:00 carrying a dinner-for-two-sized cloche. Thor’s got a soccer game in Fresno tomorrow morning he’s over Sam Wilson’s to “decompress” for. An emergency Caesarean—and Loki’s not thinking about that happening him. He’s not thinking about it—Sunday night keeps her away, but the cook drops by with dinner on Mom’s behalf because she doesn’t trust Loki to not feed himself and by extension the baby with take-out goat gyros and moussaka and *hnnng*, the magical fasolada from the place down the block.

He doesn’t mean to, well, not like maliciously, but he interrupts Thanos’ victory speech over Gamora breaking up with Quill—which long story short: Quill’s mentally a man whore, and Gamora’s not waiting around for him to act on his urges—to ask if Thanos knows any good Greek restaurants in the Bay Area because Loki’s a walking appetite.

“I’m Greek, you cumrag,” which Loki should see coming, but after Thanos gets the rant about the similarities between his “brainless human mannequin” mom and Loki out, during another of Loki’s moods way more insulting than it isn’t at the moment, Thanos shoves him toward his car to skip Chem for Souvlaki in Palo Alto.

Loki tells Mom during dinner later that he has to be nearing the nine to eight week mark or the Great Ballooning because where the hell else is this food going, not to some kidney bean chilling out in the depths of his gut. She invokes Thermodynamics, that it’s a hell of a lot of energy to sustain a “neo-uterus” as she calls it and the pregnancy hormone menagerie in a body that’s not exactly made for it, and on top of that, a growing being, *and* Loki himself.

“If you’re afraid of getting bigger—“

“No, Mom, this isn’t a vanity thing. I’m not Thor.”

She rubs her hands down his sides, way too amused by his legit concerns for, you know, a medical doctor. “You are going to be beautiful no matter what size you are. And I am not saying that only as your mother. You being stick thin is not why you are a beautiful young man.”

Thanks, Mom.

But he’s being earnest about the *when the hell am I going to get concrete proof I’m pregnant* deal. Huffing down four or so full meals a day should reflect in the mirror. His jeans fit fine. His shirts, they’re as flat as can be against his body. Even Sif, who should not know but does because she’s a hypocritical, noisy asshole like her brother, studies his dark cable knits underneath his trenches and blazers for his baby’s big debut. Shame would be required for her to not make suspicious eye contact afterward, but Sif’s walking on Thor’s sunshine since rumor has it, he’s gifted his dick back to the masses, to her secret joy, like she’s not drooling for it three years after their summer romance.

Sif should get on his level. He’s pregnant with Thor’s baby, like a month out from their last hook-up, and he’s already over it.

Thoroughly.

*(maybe the sex sort of when he’s alone but he’s got a lot of material to draw from)*

#
Hela swipes to ignore the text from Thanos that pops down the top of her screen, dimming the skeleton war meme she’s showing Loki. About her ignoring her devoted boyfriend, Loki doesn’t ask since he’s not in the mood to get kicked out of his own apartment by the heel of Hela’s in-the-mood-to-speed-bag-some-hetero-balls Manolo Blahnik boot.

“You’re not going to talk about your big brother’s dick snot taking root in you?” she asks.

Because Thanos the devoted boyfriend.

“You know I hate babies, so I’m not holding this against you. Too hard.” Hela locks her phone and steers the conversation away from memes to Loki’s baby and its dumbass father. “Thought you would come away with the clap or chlamydia, but you do way worse. You’re keeping it too? Gross. Why are you so self-destructive?”

“Superiority complex, childhood neglect, the usual rich kid blues.”

“You had an open opportunity to cut off your umbilical cord to Marcus Aurelius, but you doubled down. Now you’re stuck for another 18 years.” Hela’s smoky eye sharpens her squint uncomfortably. She sips from her iced coffee that’s caffeinated so Loki can live vicariously through her. “But you want that. Thor was always endgame even when he was your blood brother. Disgusting. Thor, he’s generic Scandi man handsome. Why not… Bucky Barnes? Rogers would’ve been jealous, but he’s too comfortable hiding behind Jesus to tap that.”

“I’m fucked up.” Loki tosses the throw pillow off his lap. He’s restless, has to get up and move to the single-seater to sate the independent itch. “I could’ve gone down to Stinson Beach and found some 6 foot something, easy breezing blond guy with a baritone voice who wasn’t raised as the brother I was always in the shadow of. That was my interior monologue for the past four years.”

“Thank the devil you exist or else I’d be the person with the shittiest taste in men I know,” Hela says. “I’m looking forward to the mess you as a parent is going to be. Pea green shit dried in your hair, coke-y purple circles under your eyes. You’re not ready for this, and I’m living for it.”

“You act like suffering isn’t what I’m made of,” he tells her. “I’ll have something cute to show for it this time.”

“Only if it gets your hair color and self-awareness.” In the most sarcastic, lazy-ass way imaginable, Hela knocks on the end table. “Don’t want your chaos aura to jinx you.”

Loki threatens to fill the homecoming queen ballot box with write-in votes with her name on them if she doesn’t admit that Loki’s fuck-up has gifted his baby with the genetic jackpot, blond hair and all. She says she’ll buy him baby hair dye if they’re cute enough to be “salvaged.”

#

Justin Hammer drags his weasely ass up to Tony and Loki’s table to do that thing where he curls his lips into an asshole because he hasn’t quite worked out how to pout, having like no lips and all, and after Tony offers him the advice that step one to finally getting laid is to stop drowning himself in Dior Homme, he says, “Tonight, I’m throwing a little belated anti-Columbus Day party for the Culture Awareness Club,” the club that Christine Everhart, that cheerleader Tony’s banged and Loki’s had the misfortune of seeing unenthusiastically get her mouth slobbered on by Hammer, coincidentally heads. Columbus Day was also a week ago. “If you’re not afraid, Stark, you can stop by and see how real parties get thrown. You too, Loki. I’m sure there will be boys your type there.”
Tony turns the cackle up to 11, alerting the teacher—and Steve Rogers and his evil eye—that he and Loki clearly aren’t focused on their lab. And he doubles down, telling the teacher that they have the same endgame, teaching people how to not be d**asses. “Because there’s no way this won’t be a disaster,” Tony whispers—his take on one—at least when the teacher’s given up on him. “I don’t think I can miss this one.” He jabs Loki with his elbow then finally remembers hey, lab. “I’ll text you when I’m on my way to pick you up. Because let’s be real. I’ll be your best bet at finding someone your type.”

Loki’s “that’s funny but I’m not going” is cut off by the bell. It gets better though because Steve descends upon Tony, and an argument starts that takes them in the opposite direction of where Loki’s headed.

So, he resorts to texting him.

Which, in theory, would put an end to that thing, whatever the hell that was, but in Loki’s life, theory is rarely put in practice. Like never. The same rate of people listening to what he has to say and realizing that he’s right. Clint Barton—who’s totally not been put up to convincing Loki by Tony, who thinks they’re secretly dating, no way—most of all should know that nine times out of ten, Loki’s points are the only points, but no, he leans against Loki’s locker with this e/h expression that rings all of Loki’s alarms that something stupid will come out of Barton’s mouth, and lo and behold, “I think the party is actually a good idea.”

“So, you have been talking to Tony.”
“Yeah, but only about the trebuchet meme he sent me earlier.” Clint smiles, but Loki’s not. “I get that it’s not your scene, the red solo cups and the music they play on the radio. But it’s an experience you’re not gonna get in X amount of months. Jan and Hank go to parties, but they’re gone by 11:00. At most good parties, things don’t start get going till 12:00.”

“I feel like there’s an implied, ‘you stayed with me, so you have to come,’ in there.”

“Worst that happens, it’s boring.”

No, no, no, for Barton, that’s worst case. Worst case for Loki is Barton’s best case.

People don’t hate him anymore, Thor said. Especially when he’s drunk. Well, they’re just going to have to settle for not hating him. That is if he goes.

All the reasons he has to can be summed up to oh, it’s one of those you need an underdeveloped brain with no concept of accountability or consequences experiences. Then, Luke Cage’s “yo, man”ing Thor on the other side of Volstagg in the back of their Lit class and asking, “You picking me up for Hammer’s party?” and Thor is responding, “Of course, bro.”

“I’m going.” Loki tells Clint when they meet up at Loki’s locker. Evades Clint’s questioning look about the two-period turnaround of his opinion by offering to pay for lunch at Loki’s new favorite Greek restaurant down the block as an apology for the kiss last week, accepting the shift of the subject to his eating habits and how Clint and Thor used to talk about the number of Lokis they could bench, well, before Thor realized Clint was screwing Loki and stopped talking about him outside of his threats that he’d punch Clint’s block off if he even breathed in Loki’s direction weirdly.

Which doesn’t piss Loki off as much as it should, not for the reasons it does rub him the wrong way —like the fact that Thor was whoring around the whole time, but no, god forbid if Loki gets some too. Where is Thor now? Really, he’s out pre-gaming while Loki’s standing with Clint outside his own apartment because Thor’s a piece of human garbage with abs and a minor case of narcissistic personality disorder. Thor warded off Clint because of some brotherly fear of him hurting Loki, and oh look at that, Thor did that all by himself. Douchebag.

Tony pulls up in a gold—gold-gold, not yellow-gold, but like wedding band colored—Lamborghini which is totally a fuck you to Justin Hammer who has this exact car in gray. Jarvis in the passenger seat looks rightfully done with the whole situation. “I wasn’t expecting a two for one pick-up here.”

Having refused to get in when Clint opened the door, Loki gets in after him, knees flush with the passenger seat. Didn’t Tony have picked a bigger car to be a douchebag in? Take a page from Thor’s book?

“He helped me out with some homework.” Clint tells Tony, a case closed implied.

Tony gets, “If you two are doing some extracurricular activities, I’ll owe Pym a grand, okay, and I don’t like paying Pym, so if you tell me, I can spin this in my favor now,” out then moves on to more important things like oh, Tony’s grand plan to get Bruce and Betty Ross back together. Yeah, that’s happening while her psycho police officer dad has a gun and a heartbeat. Loki entertains that delusion for a total of ten traffic lights before poking Jarvis into a conversation in Mandarin, which he rarely gets a chance to flex down in San Jose, about Jarvis’ summer back in Chelsea where the au pair who honed both Loki’s—and Thor’s—English skills and Dad’s dick was from. At least being a single parent Loki won’t have to worry about any nanny he hires stealing dick under his nose because if Thor were around—yeah, as Thor’s loudly shown, he does not care enough about Loki to not do a Jude Law.
Loki’s settled on miffed when Tony pulls into the inch of space left in Hammer’s driveway, which isn’t the biggest being attached to one of those Bayfront homes that are shit out of luck when the earthquakes come to visit.

“Pretty good showing all things considered,” Barton says, which Tony scoffs out, saying, “Duh, people like to come see a train wreck.”

Clint’s house has spoiled Loki with this cool breeze fresh off the bay. Because out of the car, he’s expecting it, the catastrophe it turns his hair into to balance out the freshness in his lungs because Loki can’t ever get too much good. It’s, like, against the cosmic rules.

Thor’s truck stands out in the lines of cars. Just as Thor likes it.

Loki would key it as he passes, but Clint’s too good of a bro to not wrestle the keys out of Loki’s hands. One day maybe. One day. Maybe even tomorrow.

Or later if this party is complete shit.

Loki’s loathe to cross into the realm of squealing synths and fist-bumping bass and auto-tuned vocals decrying authoritarianism and responsibility because YOLO, honestly a damning take down of the imperialism Christopher Columbus stood for and all the dancing radicals showered in the flashing lights dying Loki’s vision rave, they agree, but behind him, Barton’s urging him deeper inside by walking forward, speaking not that Loki can hear him over the revolutionary EDM. Loki reaches back to dig his hands into Clint’s arm, so he doesn’t get any ideas of ditching Loki like Tony does to flirt with Christine Everhart across the writhing mass of fuck no.

In the kitchen there’s Chad’s chanting and a sneak peek of stubble on a chiseled jaw tilted up toward the nozzle snaking back down to a keg on the ground they’re shouting, “Chug! Chug! Chug!” around. If not that then the gray t-shirt IDs that as none other than Thor.

Thank whatever the hell is or isn’t up there for Jarvis, who leads them out the back door where the music’s less loud and the air is breathable. And the view is pretty good too.

Loki turns to Clint and his finally audible, “You cool?” Despite the overwhelming urge not to, he nods. “I’m just failing to see how this wasn’t a bad idea.”

“Hey.” It’s Natasha. With Pepper. They’re not holding hands or touching—they’re still deep in the liking each other but not out loud phase—but after shoulder bumping Clint, Natasha resumes facing slightly toward Pepper who’s full-on aiming herself at Natasha, sending Loki and Clint and everything else split-second looks then going back to watching Natasha or technically her lips while she and Clint talk too low to hear without straining.

Pepper catches the end of him staring and shifting in her pumps, subconsciously sure to keep them aimed in Natasha’s direction, says, “I see you’re doing better than the last meeting.”

“Mono,” he replies, and she nods, hmimg like it explains it all, but just to prove she’s listening when she really could give a shit about it. “I’m on an extensive treatment plan to get it all out of my system. You won’t see me throwing up tonight, from the alcohol or it. No drinking.”

“That sounds like something Tony needs to be on.”

Tony’s emerged out onto the patio with a bottle and an insincere arm around Hammer’s shoulders, shouting a hey their way but continuing on the other direction.

“I should go get him before he does something like push him in the bay,” Pepper says, and she’s
clacking after Tony with her fists balled up by her sides, and aw, telling Clint, “See me before you go,” Natasha’s right behind her.

“They’re cute together,” Loki tells Clint.

“They are,” he replies which he instantly regrets. “I shouldn’t have said that.”

A remix of Lady Gaga’s “Born This Way” gets a collective “woo” inside.

Loki pats Clint’s chest and says, “Didn’t tell me anything I didn’t know.” He goes back into the mouth of the beast to slide between the horde of Chads in the kitchen and grab himself a bottle of Coke, hold the gin, to decline any future offers of hey, man, want a drink which yes, he does—it’d help dull the edge of all these eyes on him, judging him—but no, he can’t have one, so it’s coke he’s sipping while bobbing his head stood against a wall like every other damned party he’s ever been to.

An M.I.A. song comes on, and fuck it, Loki wants to dance.

Darren Cross’ stalking by, and Loki hands him his empty glass and tells him to take care of it.

Don’t touch me loops in Loki’s ears as he edges into the crowd, them helpfully moving aside, so here Loki is in the middle of the crowd with Bucky Barnes doing these cheesy old school dance moves in all Chads’ arsenal to get boys and girls going tee-hee, so funny and fine, it’s a little funny, but Loki closes his eyes off to Bucky being an idiot and because he won’t be able to in months, he goes full crypto snake charmer, totally aware that there’s way too many people within arm’s reach, but suppressing the flight urge to enjoy the moment for the novelty that it is, as a story he’s going to tell him or her down the line about his un-glory days in high school.

There’s a heavy-ass hand on his waist that forces him around.

Loki’s partying eyes unveil Thor. Great.

“What are you doing here?” Thor’s shouting over the music, gifting Loki a gust of beer. The pink light really brings out the bloodshot in Thor’s eyes.

Loki just stares at Thor.

Thor takes that as permission to snatch a fistful of his jacket at the shoulder and drag him through the crowd.

It’s some bedroom, empty at least after Thor tells those inside to get the fuck out, Loki gets the opportunity to yank himself away. “Don’t touch me,” he says through his teeth because he’s just too pissed to unclench his jaw. “The last time you did when you were drunk, you got me pregnant.”

“I wasn’t drunk,” is what Thor gets out of that, ironically slurring through it. “Are you drinking? You shouldn’t be drinking. You’re—you.”

“I’m me?” Loki’s not laughing because it’s funny. It is in a really fucked up way. But he’s laughing because this, it’s just his luck. Get pregnant by Thor and the worst parts of Thor come out to play. “But no, I’m not drinking. Because I care about this baby. Unlike you.”

“I love you.”

“What?”

“I don’t know what I’m supposed to do here, alright? I’m not like you. I don’t have a plan for every
plan for every fucking plan. I just—I don’t. Mom says I’m going to do the right thing, but I don’t know what the right thing is to even do it. I’m sorry.”

He’s sorry? Whoop dee freaking doo. The party Loki came here for wasn’t for Thor’s pity.

He’s done.

“I was 12.”

Loki stops. Because he’s stupid.

“I was 12 and you were—you just turned 11. When I realized I was in love with you.” Thor has to be aware of how incoherent he sounds, looking distraught which fits him as well as normal doesn’t. It feels like emotional blackmail except Thor would never. He just—he wouldn’t. “We were on a vacation back in Tønsberg that summer, and, and I found some rope down in the basement looking for a football, and I said I wanted to make a rope swing, which you told me was a bad idea because the trees were waterlogged from all the rain, but no, I said. No. You’ll see. It’ll work. When the branch broke, I thought I was going to die, how hard it was to breathe, and I was laying there, thinking I can’t believe Loki was right, again, why is it that he’s so smart. He’s got to be the smartest person in the world. Then you were kissing me. That’s what I thought at first. The way your lips felt—I don’t think I’d ever popped a boner that hard. But you were giving me CPR. Trying to. I didn’t care if it was working because I realized if I just laid there you’d keep kissing me.”

God, Loki remembers that. He remembers the panic, how angry he was at Thor for proving him right in the worst way, and if Thor wasn’t dead, he was going to kill him. Obviously, Thor wasn’t dead.

“You tried to punch me when I got up. The look in your eyes—when I pinned you down in the dirt, I was thinking I’m gonna have him. I didn’t know how, but I just knew I was gonna have you. Forever. When you noticed my boner, it was like falling all over again. You were my brother, my little brother. What kind of freak was I?”

Thor said he’d race him into the water, leaving Loki confused out of his mind about that fleshy stiff thing that’d been on his thigh and even worse, he wasn’t disgusted just curious about.

Curiosity killed the cat in the worst of ways.

Thor’s up, moving toward him, and there’s nowhere else for Loki to go but against the wall. Eau de Beer aside, he’s Thor, made of sunlight and testosterone, and it’s been a long time since they’ve last been this close, like this, and his hair’s fucked up, skin’s glowing from these tiny droplets of sweat Loki wishes he didn’t associate with Thor with way less clothes on than this. “Tell me what I should do. Tell me—“

Loki pushes down on Thor’s shoulders till Thor gives at the knee, the most disappointed oh in his eyes that no, Loki won’t feel guilty for. They’ll be even now. No. No—what Thor said to him that room when he found out—this is what he owes Loki. A guilty blow job is the least of what he owes him.

Thor’s unbuttoning Loki’s jeans, unzipping them.

The door opens.

Stephen Strange and that Palmer girl.

Thor’s on his feet, but the confused look from Strange tells the whole shitshow of a story. Whatever. Who cares what they think? And this is Thor’s doing anyway. His problem. He can’t expect Loki to
help him when where’s he been to help Loki? Where? At another party like this but instead of knelt in front of Loki it was someone knelt in front of him?

Loki leaves.

He rationalizes not keying Thor’s truck with Luke Cage and Jessica Jones being near it. Thor would just get it fixed anyway.

Loki catches an Uber home.

Loki erases them all.

Chapter End Notes

Frigga's trying ya'll. She's trying.
Thor's a sad sack. Dude needs to learn to emotion outside of sex. But he's never really needed to learn to, so.
AIM by M.I.A. slaps, guys. Listen to it.
Loki passes by Thor talking on the phone out on the front stairs, the douche chills from the “sounds fucking dope” and “bro” within the same five words instantaneous. Why, god(s) why, of all the people Loki had to procreate with, it had to be King Chad of Doucheland? Seriously. Now that the mystique of Thor Odinson’s been unclothed, Loki’s not enamored. Back when he was sitting across the douchebag who made his stomach feel funny—embarrassing in retrospect, so embarrassing—Thor being all, “We could lose every game this month, and we’ll still make it to the finals,” to Dad asking about the soccer team, that he captains, and its shitty 55/45 win record, Loki would roll his eyes but he’d be eating it up along with his meat and potatoes. Oh, cavalier yet confident Thor. He doesn’t even pretend like he’s buying it.

Dad casually throws it out there that the annual dinner for Mom and his foundation is Sunday evening, so this’ll be their only family dinner—thank fuck, Thor’s got a soccer game in Eureka tomorrow--for the weekend. It’s annual, so it shouldn’t be a surprise, but still, nope.

No so hard he asks Thanos on their Botany Club outing to pick up pumpkins for Tuesday night if he can arrange an emergency botany club meeting for Loki to excuse himself to for Sunday evening, but Thanos tells him, “Your dad is mine without the Noble Prize but 50 billion dollars. If I have to suffer him this weekend because the fucker wants to criticize my festival to my face, you do too.”

Okay. He doesn’t have Thanos’ backing, but he calls Dad that night when he’s in his office having his three but more like five fingers of rum contrary to what he tells Mom deep in his tortured patriarch mindset. He butters the man up with “Daddy”s and “Yes, Sir”s.

Loki’s whole I have quote-unquote stuff to do tactic falls flat on its face.

So, he grumbles his way into a tailored suit one of Dad’s assistants drops off he begrudges for fitting him as perfect as it does, ruining that But I have nothing to wear excuse. He couldn’t start showing today the one time it’d really help him?

At least Mom—the super special occasion dangly platinum pearl earrings swaying to hypnotize him into reliving a dozen different memories of standing at a car with her in her queen gowns—she’s happy. “Look at you glowing.”

“It’s the contrast between my ghost skin and the black suit, Mom.”

She pushes him into the backseat of the car for that.

Varsity jackets and flannels upgraded, Thor’s in the passenger seat. A first. Since usually it’s the two of them in the back instead of Loki and Mom, but Loki gets the strangest feeling that Mom did that
The first time he actually interacts with Thor—interacting being touching shoulders with, which considering what they’ve done, shouldn’t be all that intriguing to his body, but pregnancy hormones. That’s all—is out on the steps of the venue for the family pictures to be put on the foundation’s Facebook and website and Twitter because their family’s beautiful, and people like looking at beautiful people, are more likely to trust them, simple as that.

They’re all expected to do their diligence maintaining the family brand, and Thor and Loki, they’re at the age where there’s no more being glued to Mommy, so their father slaps them on the back for an ol’ dad and his two boys picture for the 40-something housewives to coo over Odin’s “genes”—hah, the only genes Loki has in common with them are in his womb courtesies of Thor—and releases them unto the room.

Dad’s colleagues and/or ass-kissers and/or friends cream their trousers and dresses to him over his amazing brother Thor, Thor the football and basketball and soccer and wrestling and lacrosse and track and field star and messiah and did you see he can throw a ball, yeah, he can throw a ball really far and he can catch one too! They ask Loki about his plans for college, sucking their teeth in approval, hum when Loki starts talking quarterly performance and stocks and the market, not impressed just sort of this is just what we expected, have an apple-scented star sticker because unarguably Loki’s the smart one.

But Loki’s boring. He’s safe, and where he’s not, he’s weird. Unlike Thor whose charisma they’re counting on making up the intellect difference. Thor will open his mouth and blind clients with his divine smile, bring the testosterone to the board room that Dad did, that Silicon Valley has been missing. Loki’s just another limp-wristed nerd, right. Thor is the future, the legacy.

Those champagne flutes on the table sing their siren song to him, but Loki takes his frustration out on the dinner napkin instead, tosses it onto his lap and yanks it so taut Mom would be proud if she wasn’t busy talking to Sif’s step-mom/Heimdall’s mom and her BFFL Rán—one of her only friends Dad hasn’t banged mostly because Sif’s Dad is a fucking monster—on the other side of her.

It’s shit luck that Heimdall’s seated next to him. When Heimdall finally arrives in an aura of holier-than-thou self-righteousness, the chosen fragrance of him and his sister who’s stood up trying to talk herself up to her future-father-in-law Dad—really, she could be doing a shit job and Dad wouldn’t care because he’s got a faceful of boobs, the creepy old coot—Heimdall has the nerve to say hi to him when he comes to sit down.

“Pretend I don’t exist,” Loki says.

“I wish that were possible,” he replies. “I would’ve started doing it a long time ago.”

Loki does the side-eye, poison glare fusion on him, but at the level of asshole Heimdall’s at—seriously, he has a gold Rolex on—he’s impervious to the move.

The table of Dad’s right hand men and women and their families fills in around Loki with coming to join them last, with his tie fucked up around his neck and the top button of his shirt undone, eyes wide like his pupils aren’t gulping in all the light in the room, it’s Number One Wine Fan: Thor.

The sports star who’s getting into gymnastics by the look of him swinging his leg over the back of the chair instead of pulling it out and going around it to sit down like a normal, sober person. Thor’s next to Sif, who shoves his arm away when he tries to put it over her shoulder for one of those bro hugs.
Loki hides his mouth in his sleeve to cough away the laugh that would get him glares from the whole confused-embarrassed-astonished-incensed—the latter Mom and dad obviously—table. Come on, it’s like they don’t really know Thor.

Dad plays it off with one of those, “My wild boy, I remember those days of my own,” to put the spotlight on him where he can control it. A good strategy, it’s not like the man is stupid or lacks common sense, but Sif and Fandral’s joint agreement to keep the alcohol away from Thor because they’re helpful cookies breaks down by the fifth course where the plates are removed and Thor uses the opportunity to reach across the empty space and voila himself a bottle of Prosecco.

“Isn’t this supposed to be a celebration?” Thor asks. “Saving the world doesn’t have to be all paperwork and talking.”

Plan B: Dad turns the conversation toward Loki and Loki’s presidency and Loki’s tennis team captaincy and Loki’s number one class rank and oh, his team’s the number one ranked academic decathlon team in the country. If it’s supposed to be an olive branch that Loki’s his son after all, look, it’s about 16 years and a big reveal too late for that. After Loki’s half-hearted parry back, Dad resorts to, “And he moved out recently to start to build his independence. For Thor’s many talents, he could stand to learn some responsibility from Loki.”

The laughter that sputters out of Thor along with some wine, getting Fandral, the complete queen, flinching away while Sif wipes off the tablecloth is the fakest shit Loki’s ever heard. “Responsible? Loki’s more responsible?” he asks Sif, Heimdall, Mom who says, “Thor” like he’s not lost his filter already. “He’s the one who got himself pregnant. Real responsible.”

Oopsie.

Their father’s on his feet with the thousand year stare in his eye. “You,” he tells Thor, “go.”

Loki takes a nice drink from his champagne glass of sparkling water while Mom turns to stave the meltdown brewing inside her speechless husband. Sure, Loki’s distantly annoyed that Thor’s gone and gotten Loki disowned, but he cut his losses when he moved out. He did it for Mom. Not for his so-called dad.

Sif’s chastising Thor like it’s not her damned fault he knows in the first place.

“You could’ve warned me you were going to tell,” Loki says.

“Like you were ever going to. I sure as hell didn’t find out from you.” Thor grabs the Prosecco with zero finesse and stands up. “Excuse me; I’m not that hungry anyway.”

Sif, Fandral, Volstagg, and Hogun file off in pursuit of their dearest leader.

Dad gets up to go punch a wall somewhere, and Mom goes after him to make sure he actually doesn’t.

Loki’s fine with his seat.

“Now the truth is out that you’re pregnant,” Heimdall says.

“Yes. And if I’d been given some time, we could’ve made it more dramatic. More me. You’d believe me if you opened the cloche for the sixth course and it’s little cradles with candy babies in them.”

“This isn’t a moment of levity,” he replies.
“Not for you. For me, I’ve been holding this in for weeks.” Loki sighs. “I should’ve gotten Thor drunk from the get-go if I knew he’d do the dirty work for me.”

Loki enjoys the sixth course more than the last five.

#

“Who’s the father?”

“I don’t know.”

Dad stops his slow pacing to turn and look at him. The smile’s all for show. “Fine then. Don’t tell me. I’ll find out soon enough.”

With Dad moving out of the way to pace, coincidental emphasis on Thor on the other side of the fountain, his flyaways bleached into spider webs by the moonlight, ruffled by the breeze that must have him thinking the whole world’s moping alongside him. Boo hoo Mom dispossessed him of his Prosecco.

Loki’s the one getting a lackluster lecture from Dad he expected more screaming from since he went out of his way to move them out into the courtyard behind the venue where if his father gets the urge to lose his shit, the entire board of directors for the foundation won’t realize that he’s the same old “Bad Wolf.”

He pokes the bear with, “Are you mad?”

“Of course I’m angry,” Dad shouts. But it’s not… vicious. Not enough to justify any hatred Loki could have tomorrow morning. “You and your mother conspired to keep the knowledge that I’m going to be a grandfather from me. I have every right to be ‘mad.’”

"Don't blame Mom for this. She didn’t tell because she knew I didn’t want her to."

"I had no plans to. Your mother, she is a caretaker, a woman." Alert: Chauvinist Bovine Defecation incoming. "Protecting you, your brother, that is her first instinct. She is all heart. That is why I married her, had children with her."

And here Loki thought it was love. His mistake.

"I suppose I’m glad this all wasn't a revenge plot for our… decision." To lie about him being adopted. Yeah. He’s still too personally offended to say anything that could be twisted around to imply he was in the wrong. Which he never is. “But you still believed you could shirk your responsibilities to hide from the consequences of this… teenage oversight. If you had chosen honesty, this mess your brother’s made out of the truth—I would not have to clean up after you two. Now I need to shore up the news that my 16 year old son is pregnant. You’ve put me in a very difficult position.”

Loki’s sagging his shoulders, turned in on himself. He has a role to play: the apologetic little boy cowering to Daddy Dearest. Whatever. If it gets the man off his back, he’ll even summon some tears.

Dad relishes the gloss on Loki’s eyes—one extra disappointed word and the tears, they’re ready to go—and before he goes to save the day with a speech to the room about family and being the most amazing father in the world complete with subliminal sorrys for the witnesses to the big news of the night, drops on Loki, “You and your brother would do well to remember your places in this family.”
Sure, dad. Sure.

Mom emerges from the surrounding gardens to first lure Thor out of his feelings, so he’s sulking a few steps behind her when she comes up to hold Loki by the shoulders and smooth over any of the caustic things her husband might’ve said, “Just give him time he’s only found out,” and “No matter what, we love you.”

“Great way of showing it,” Loki says behind her to Thor. “I don’t get it. Wah, I squirted some sperm into my adopted little brother—"

“Loki!”

“—and now I’m going off to my dream school to stick my dick into cheerleaders and third stringers and professors between playing basketball for millions of adoring fans. Fuck you. I’m the one who should be pulling the Holden Caulfield. I’m the pregnant one!”

For the sake of Mom who doesn’t deserve to referee her sons making a fool of their family, Loki doesn’t enter the building.

Thor just doesn’t have a care in the world about what Loki’s saying, does he, walking up to Loki like he’s a nuisance that if he waits long enough will tire himself out and run out of things to say. Fuck no. Loki could go on for fucking years about Thor and his victim complex when things don’t perfectly go his way like usual. That’s Loki’s life, things not going his way.

“You’re going to go to Duke for a General Studies degree to placate Dad and an open invite to the NBA where you’ll fuck around for a few years till Dad gives you a three year heads-up he’s going to retire, so you can get your MBA riding on your last name and a convenient donation from Dad for a new building on an HYP campus. Please, I know how this goes.”

He’s screaming over his heartbeat. “Me? I’m going to get into school on my own merit and have to work my ass off raising a baby, but I’ll be lucky if the Wall Street Journal does a profile on me 20 years from now where my non-bullshit degrees and ‘single fatherhood’ will be glossed over, buried between the golf claps for me being a team player as Chief Executive Cleaner-Upper. While you snort cocaine off hookers assholes when you’re not showing up late to meetings I’ve always arrived on time for. Fuck you, Thor. Fuck you!”

Thor blinks. He blinks. He fucking blinks.

Loki makes him feel it physically, the rage, pushes it all into him, so that he stumbles back a centimeter that means the world. That Thor is movable—Loki shoves him again. And again. And his palm doesn’t open in time, so he bangs on Thor’s chest, wanting, needing to stir something vulnerable inside him. “Hit me back,” he tells him. “It’s not like you care about this baby.”

His wrists are grabbed.

Thor holds them between them like Loki’s effort means nothing. “Shut up.”

Loki pulls, pushes, yanks, shoves, but his wrists remain in Thor’s vice grip.

Until Thor lets go of him. Like he’s had the luxury to from conception, Thor bails, goes back to the party where he’ll get cuffd on the shoulder and… and loved and accepted without trying. For someone so privileged, he’s goddamned selfish. His own flesh and blood. He can’t even share some of that endless love and acceptance with their baby?

Mom’s already prepping the band-aids for the festering chasm compliments of her and her husband’s
gold standard parenting. “Loki, he’s not himself.”

That’s what she goes with, really?

“He’s been a mild alcoholic since eighth grade. He can handle the truth after a bottle or two of wine,” Loki says. “I’m going home.”

#

Thor doesn’t get any apology to him, and Loki frankly gives zero fucks about getting one from him.

Thanks to him, Dad’s breathed new life into their dead text conversation. And then some.
Education. It's an invaluable experience you'll need to pass onto your child.
Every hour. Without fail.

Oh, and the lunchtime anecdotes. Let me talk about why you’re such a pathetic disappointment for taking it up the ass, you little homo, and not dumping your babies in any willing orifice at the prime of your life to the tune of thousands of dollars in abortions and hush money like I did and as always making me proud, your brother does too, sonny boy.

Kill Loki. Or at least put him into some cryonic sleep where he’ll wake up 100 years in the future where Dad’s finally retired to a tropical island to creep on the pretty young masseuses till he mummifies and the cross country and soccer teams aren’t plastering Thor for Homecoming King posters every-fucking-where, and then he and his baby can live in peace.

Like Lunchtime Lectures aren’t enough, Loki’s Lit teacher has the stellar idea of pairing him up with none other than T-Douche for a poetry project like the only poetry Thor and the Chads in the back of the classroom acknowledge is the one they make in backseats after games with cheerleaders (and not their little brother because Thor’s clearly pretending that period of his life didn’t happen since if it didn’t then no baby.) The obvious, “Why not Hela or someone I’m not related to?” gets a giggle and a spiel about how growing up together has made them more interconnected and some other bullshit that Loki throws into the trash where it belongs like any possibility of Thor having any input on this project because “I’ll put your name on it, and you’ll read a few words when we present, got it?”

Thor finishes up his pressing text message, flexing his jaw on some gum that codes red cinnamon when he exhales all over Loki. He then very pointedly slides his Lit book over and opens it in *a no, bro, I don’t have it way.*
“I do the first half, you do the second,” Loki amends instead of why is it always you, you, inescapable dick? “Great.”

Why is it always Thor? Seriously.

Mr. Inescapable shows up—in a fucking fitted cap, they’re inside—last to the Homecoming Committee’s gloat-a-thon, so where else can he take his hasty seat but in the empty one next to Loki, who’s next to Thanos in the far corner for the quiet ditching halfway through. He cocks his chin—at Loki? Yep—and pulls his phone out under the table because he’s already got homecoming king and he showed up, so what more can they want from him, which is really just Thor in a nutshell, right; you should be honored I’m here because I’m Thor.

“Regret that you chose that to drop his baby off in you really settling in,” Thanos whispers to Loki. Loud enough that Thor glances sharply at him. “Tables have turned, Big Odie. If that was my baby, if I couldn’t bully him into the D&E, I would pretend to care.”

“Why don’t you mind your fucking business?”

Pepper shuts up in front.

“Potts,” Thanos says, “keep talking. Ignore Odinson. He’s only window dressing.”

Loki ignores that Thor’s looking at him the rest of the meeting. He gets the fuck out there to go lock himself in a bathroom stall and coach his heart rate down because panicking isn’t consequence-free anymore, and he’s not going to be the one to blame if… if something happens to this baby, not when the whole time he’s been all-in.

What do you have to be tense and angry about? he wants to scream at Thor. Thor makes eye contact like an obligation when they’re talking their poem in Lit, un-Thor-like with how dull the blue is, but no, to his surprise, Thor’s putting cogent thoughts together. Loki scrapes his fingernails on the book pages instead of across Thor’s eyes till they turn red.

“Can you stop looking at me like that?” Thor has the nerve to ask.

“Why did you tell Dad?”

“I was wasted. I needed to get it off my chest.”

“The only thing that should be on your chest is muscle.”

Thor calms himself behind his hands. When he takes them away, he tells Loki, “I should’ve kept my mouth shut or asked you beforehand. You’re right. I shouldn’t have done that. It’s useless telling you how I feel, and I don’t want to start a fight, so.”

“It’s not a fight if one of us does the talking and hitting,” Loki replies. “Mom probably already said I was emotional and not thinking when I hit you, but even if I was, I’m not sorry.”

“Okay, then.”

“I wish you wouldn’t have pussied out to telling Dad you’re the father too,” Loki says. “If anything, that’s the part that annoyed me.”

“You want me to tell him?”

“Yeah. If you’re going to do it, go all in. I don’t give a shit about getting disowned. I’m doing alright
on my own.” Loki shuts his Lit book. “But then again, that was a decision motivated by self-centeredness and telling him would’ve ended way worse for you. Not as bad as me but Dad-when-Aunt-Freya-gave-pictures-of-him-and-his-one-mistress-in-Monaco-to-Mom bad.”

The bell rings.

Loki doesn’t loiter around.

Thor keeps up with him no effort though. “I wasn’t pussying out because of me,” he’s saying.

Loki reaches for his locker’s combo, but Thor’s hand slams on top it, the petty fucker.

“Lo, you remember that Dad would’ve strangled Aunt Freya if a housekeeper hadn’t heard all the glass breaking. It’s one thing if he would’ve gotten physical with me, but with you? I was fucking sloshed, but I knew that would’ve been fucking stupid to put you in harm’s way.”

Thor’s got that pained, confused face that appears once in a blue moon when Loki’s the impulsive, shallow-thinking one in the situation. Loki’s not stupid, okay, doesn’t like looking stupid ever, so he refuses to be all contrite.

“I didn’t vote for you for king,” Loki says. “I voted for Johann Schmidt.”

“He hates you.”

“I know. I just want him to get called up to the stage for the confusion.”

“But you only have—you rigged it, seriously?”

“I took 50 out, put 50 back in. You won anyway. Spoiler alert.”

“I kind of knew that already.” Thor manages to not make that sound arrogant. Because it is the obvious truth. “Promise me you won’t tell Dad though. Okay? Not yet. Mom never lies to him, and she hasn’t told him. You trust her more than me.”

“You sound like you care.”

“This is our baby, you know, me and you,” he says. “Of course I care.”

Loki looks at Thor’s hand still covering the lock. “Can you move your hand?”

“No, not until you promise me you’re not going to tell Dad this baby is ours. In any way. No loopholes. Nothing. You’re not going to ‘inform’ or however you’re going to try to rework it in your head Dad. You get me, Lo?”

“It’s impressive how effortlessly you’re a douchebag,” Loki says. “I promise I’m not going to tell Dad. Happy now?”

Thor finally moves his hand and shrugs a shoulder. “Eh. I guess.” He pats Loki passing behind him. “Catch you later.”

Loki watches him walking, strutting really, away. He tries to resume hating Thor, really does, but it’s unsuccessful.

#
Loki’s past two times at homecoming have been middling at best, so no, he is not going to the stupid hand egg homecoming game tomorrow evening to see Thor and Carol “I’m Such Hot Shit” Danvers get crowned or the dance tomorrow night, thank you.

Since Rep. Collins Carbonell’s in D.C. and Howard’s in New York, Tony’s conscience and self-doubt respectively, Tony charms Christine Everhart, that blonde cheerleader who’s blown Thor, into co-anchor position for the morning announcements and tells the entire school to get “turnt” down at the Stark mansion in Napa where they’ll definitely not—Tony pulls down his sunglasses to wink—be any wine. A glass of red wine a day won’t drink the baby away, sure, but Tony doesn’t know there is a baby, so Loki tells him in Physics, “No, a med I’m taking for the puking a few weeks ago doesn’t work if I drink.”

His antiemetic says no such thing, but whatever, it gets Tony’s hopes down even though he’s now convinced Loki has lupus—because dramatic irony, it’s never lupus on House, of course it’d be in real life.

Anyway, Hela’s bringing her Hannibal box sets and a bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon over—Thanos is in Olympia for a Rising Minds in STEM conference till Sunday night—so really fuck homecoming.

Thor, who’s been eavesdropping on his and Hela’s conversation, says, “Sounds fun.”

“Because Hela’s all about fun.”

Thor does the air between the teeth thing. “Let’s not get carried away,” he says. “She tried to stab me with a steak knife on vacation. Remember that? She’s got those long talon nails. Wrestling it away from her, not fun for me.”

“You had a super mysterious band-aid on your cheekbone.” Loki plays with the pages of his Lit book, and his lip slips between his teeth as Punished Thor, stubble shorter than it is now and hair too, with a white band-aid under his annoyed looking eyes comes stage center. “Fun, fun, fun.”

Thor’s got an eyebrow cocked when Loki rejoins reality. Awkward. “So, um, where tonight are we finishing this for Monday?”

“Tonight?”

“Yeah. Tomorrow, I have soccer practice before 4:00, the game at 6:00, homecoming at 9:00. Sunday, I’m going up to June Lake with Hogun, Fandral, and Danny Rand. I only have tonight to do it.”

“You’re going skiing,” Loki comments. Judgmental as hell because that deserves it. “Then I’ll do it, and you can do whatever.”

Thor sighs. “You’re serious, and I wish you weren’t.”

Loki smiles. “You bet your perfect ass I am.”

Because Loki’s above all else a dick, he congratulates Thor on winning homecoming king and the 100% on the homework, which Thor’s still adamant no, Loki’s not soloing while Loki’s pulling a vanishing act—while he’s still small enough to pull it off—and making the decision for him.

He should get used to it, Loki making the decisions. What the baby eats, like now, which despite Mom’s instructions to the chef, whether Loki opens his mouth and swallows decides what the baby’s eating, and tonight, Loki’s in a Greek mood, so he tells the chef that the only thing he’s eating
tonight will be Greek. Mom’s not gonna fire them after 17-going-on-18 years, and they’ve put up with Loki’s bullshit for 16 of them, so yay, Greek food it is.

Loki pauses his game of *Fallout 4* when his front door starts unlocking and gets up to go out meet Mom for his hug.

Mom’s “Loki!” comes from down the hall.

“I’m here.”

Mom has tall, blond, and smirking company.

Loki wishes he wasn’t here. Which he? Doesn’t matter. Either way, at least he wouldn’t be in his own home with Thor the Inescapable.

“This place is amazing, Lo. Maybe you should’ve took me with you when you moved out,” Thor says. “Bathroom?”

“Down the hall to the left.”

Thor grins when he passes by in his aura of Odeur—the great irony of Loki’s off-hand gift becoming signature Thor—and vanilla conditioner.

When Loki hears the door shut, he asks, “What is he doing here?”

“Thor told me you two have a project—”

“That I was taking care of.”

Mom doesn’t hide how disinterested she is in a conversation about this. “He’s your brother.”

“When has that ever been a consideration in our person-to-person interaction, Mom?”

Ah, incest, the checkmate.

“You two are going to be spending the rest of your lives around each other”—she’s avoiding any platonic/fraternal/sexual qualifiers for the sake of her sanity, no doubt—“so get used to it.”

Thor returns in time for Mom poking fun at Loki’s Greek food fixation. Nice of him to try to defend Loki by taking credit because it’s clearly the baby with good taste they had to have gotten from someone who sincerely enjoys beer. Okay. Sure, Thor.

Thor’s relegated to Loki’s left because Mom cares more about maintaining the fraternal feelings than mimicking Big Family Dinner at her house where Thor and Loki are in a stare down. In a way, Thor’s at the head of the table, but the head’s only as important as the brain inside it.

And Thor’s fixated on homecoming. The game but still, connected enough to homecoming the institution that Mom can indulge her inner Marie Antoinette, fluffy dress lover and partier extraordinaire, and be all, “Thor, I don’t know why you’re going stag. You should’ve taken Brunnhilde even as friends. You two go so well together, and she’s such a nice girl.”

Astounding. Like Thor’s dick hasn’t been in this ass. Mom is capable of mental miracles.

“I still don’t see why you,” she’s talking to Loki, “aren’t going to homecoming. I love to see you in a tuxedo, sweetie.”
“Mom, I already told you I have plans to jump off the Golden Gate Bridge.”

She gives him the seriously, Loki look.

“That joke doesn’t work when you’re pregnant,” Thor tells him.

“Or does it work even better?”

“Edgy.”

“The edgiest.” Loki doesn’t break the stare-down teething the meat off his fork. “But I’m not going to homecoming because I’ve got plans with Hela, way better plans than, what, watching Thor and Carol Danvers be blond and pretty and dance and avoiding any punch because it’s definitely spiked and not with wine.”

“Carol is queen,” Thor says. There’s the Chadliest “yeah!” implied somewhere in there. “Phew, dodged that Amora-sized bullet.”

Mom can’t even deny that. “Hela’s expressed some very strong things about not liking children, so her supporting is good for the future of your friendship. You two could be like Rán and I.”

“Yeah, no,” Thor says. “Hela’s not going to be around the baby. She’s legitimately crazy. She’s dating Thanos. It’s bad enough Loki’s friends with the psycho—“

“You’re still hanging out with that boy?” Mom interrupts. “He’s dangerous. I don’t like it, Loki.”

“Exactly,” Thor shouts. “I’ve been telling him this for years. When Loki puked in a student council meeting at the end of last month and everyone else sane in the room was worried, Thanos offered him a joint, Mom, a joint. And said he’d beat his ass—sorry for the language—if he puked again.” Thor squares his already massive shoulders up. “That wouldn’t have happened. But the point is he said that at all.”

Oh, wow, Thor, real opinionated now.

Mom’s got the concerned face. “You need to limit how much time you’re around him. That stress, that isn’t good for you or the baby.”

Thor’s expression is all I agree, the douche. Yes, he’s not lying about the big-brothering about Thanos, but now when Mom is in me-Mom, you-obedient-children mode, real opportunistic to bring it up.

Real Loki-like.

Post-dinner, Mom invites the chef out onto the balcony for to share a glass of Pinot Grigio with her, so Loki and Thor can get to that project together.

Loki props himself against the shins of the couch while Thor commandeers the armless chair that’s going to smell like his cologne and shampoo and the spring shower fabric softener in his sweatshirt the housekeeper uses back at the big house forever now.

“You have the work you already did?” he asks.

Loki slides it out his folder then across the coffee table.

Thor acknowledges its existence and proceeds to ball it up like who gives a fuck. Because partner project, blah, blah, blah, I’m an arrogant jackass who thinks he’s got something intellectually to
prove. “If you actually know it, you don’t need a piece of paper to reproduce it. Rote versus meaningful learning, right? That’s what you told Strange that one time.”

Shut up, Thor.

Sincerely. When did he stop whisper-shouting over mobile FIFA under his desk at the back of the classroom with the Chad Squad and start paying attention to what Loki and the other brain live students talk to the teacher about? Loki’s always held that Thor’s Achilles heel is how much he doesn’t give a shit about nothing not sex and sports, but Loki has a back and forth here with Thor over a seventeenth century poem, alright?

“I’m happy all the years of justifying to my crush to myself because you are actually smart when you try have been vindicated,” Loki tells him after they’ve finished. Not deterred that Thor’s texting tonight’s booty call and not paying attention to him anymore. Because this is the Thor he’s familiar with, the one in spite of all of this he obsessed over, all unapproachability. “Being raised by me, they’re going to be well-rounded and smart anyway, but it’s good they have a solid foundation to build on.”

Thor takes the implied great, you’re sort of smart well. “Being raised by us.”

Loki absolves himself of anything his face says by busying himself tidying the books in his backpack. Avoid unnecessary conflict for Mom. She just wants a calm night with her boys. He can give her that. Loki’s a good boy.

“Hey.” Thor touches Loki’s bicep.

“Hm?” Loki crosses his arms after he turns for the illusion of not being at lip’s length with Thor when he’s got his hands down on his hips, middle fingers glowing arrow signs to, um, you know.

“I’ve always been there for you. Always. And that’s the truth. You can deny it all you want, but no matter how pissed off at you I am or pissed off at me you are, at the end of the day it’s just me and you. With each other’s backs.” Thor thinks better of smiling even a little bit. Good decision. “Now, we’ve... we’ve got a baby neither of us planned for or saw coming, and that sure as hell changes things. Fucking everything for me. But for you too, for all of us. But I’m not gonna stop being there. I don’t know where you got that idea from, Titan, Hela, whoever. Doesn’t matter. I’m gonna be there for this baby, Lo.”

“Three weeks ago.”

Thor’s confused.

“Three weeks ago, in the library, I was the only one in that room there for me and this baby.”

Thor clenches his jaw and fumes because what can he say?

Mom and the chef come back inside, and Mom asks Thor if he’s ready to head back the house because it’s getting late, and Loki should be getting to sleep, Thor too. Tomorrow is a big day for him.

Thor hangs back by the door while Loki hugs Mom goodbye, Mom quietly reminding him about his appointment Sunday.

Goodbye is a silent look shared before the front door closes.
Hela shows up for their Hannithon with a cheesing patchwork quilt of flesh who’s holding one of those sketchy brown bags from beer distributors in one hand and six pizzas in the other, herself smirking harder than that time last year she hooked up with Skurge after all his shit about “no one but Amora.” “This is Wade,” she says. “We’re fucking.”

For several reasons, “What?”

Hela whisks him out the doorway with a hand that’s 100% let me tell you, young padawan. “Thanos, he tries too hard. I like that he kisses the ground I walk on, but I don’t feel that spark with him. His desperation is boring at this point.”

Wade just walks into Loki’s kitchen and makes himself real comfortable, rambling aloud about anchovies and not being sure if Loki would like them because most people don’t like them when he doesn’t see the big deal because he’ll eat a pizza with anything on it, and oh yeah, Loki’s pregnant, right, which is totally cool, and so on until the end of the universe because his skeleton’s mouth will be moving when the heat death happens.

Hela melts into the noise, sincerely blissed out. How?

Loki collects himself so he doesn’t scream at her for being clearly massively fucking suicidal. “This is what I get for trying to be a good friend. It is. If I would’ve let him pine over you while you went back and forth about not being sure about commitment, you wouldn’t be setting yourself up for double homicide.”

“Triple,” Hela says. “He’s going to kill you too. If he finds out. He won’t. He’s too narcissistic to believe I would cheat on him. Because he’d drag his ball sack through glass for me.”

“But would he do it to hear you fart through a walkie-talkie like me, sweetheart?” Wade shouts around a sandwich of pizza. Like a slice between two slices. Yeah. Loki’s not joking.

Hela laughs like a 50-something hostess at a garden party telling her fellow socialites about the teenage gardener she’s boinking. “Wade likes babies. You’re having one. He’s a snarky bastard like you too. And don’t get me started on his relationship with his parents. You two should get on better than you and Thanos.”

Yeah. No. Not when Wade can’t shut the fuck up throughout the first episode about how hard he ships Hannigram, which Loki and every other person with two eyes who’s ever watched Hannibal does too, and moans like a porn star at all the gore. Hela even tells him to shut up, which gets him all, “Oh, yeah, baby, like it when you verbally abuse me,” and finally, no, he doesn’t shut up, but he whispers which Loki can handle.

During a silent scene, Wade asks, “So, when are you and Thor gonna start doing the do again?”

Hela simply shrugs at Loki’s glare. “I only confirmed.”

“The day you shut the fuck up.”

“Meow. I get it. The scars are still fresh. He rejected you in your time of need—“

Loki bashes Wade in the face with a throw pillow. “I’ve decided I like Thanos better.”

“But you like Thor best,” Wade says.
At the end of the episode, Loki invites Wade to leave, which he does sans Hela because she’ll just catch up with him later for a night cap—gross—and *Hannibal* is more important to her than Wade right now.

“And you said I have bad taste,” Loki tells her.

“You do, but what can I say?” Hela grins. “For great sex, mine is worse.”

When they take a break because Thanos’ calling Hela—and some earlier fuck has her in a good enough mood to not ignore it—Loki, okay, might, definitely open Instagram, which he never uses, only has just because, and go to the Tony’s account, the only one he follows since Tony posts everything, and appreciate this picture of Tony getting unilaterally out-fucking-shined by Thor unironically in a red brocade smoking jacket that goes well with the spikey gold crown, both being over-the-top in the worst way, but over-the-top, that’s Thor in his element.

There’s something off about Thor’s smile though that sits weird in Loki’s head throughout the rest of the season. Loki lets Hela assume it’s paranoia over Thanos finding out. Because that’s the truth too.

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Chapter End Notes

#KindofFuckThor?
He’s getting his head on straight. Not every day you get your lil bro preggo, so.
Oh, yeah, Hela the goddess of death’s banging Deadpool on the side. Suck a fuck Thanos.
Let's Try This Again

Chapter Notes

Fun facts: Tony's contact pic is from a birthday party where he got a face full of cake. 
Loki was, as ashamed as he is to admit, there. 
Loki’s lockscreen image is a Beksinski painting. 
Hela's contact pic is of a skeleton in a crummy yellow wig. 
Thor is actually not a dick when he tries.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

#

The pre-Fall Festival run-through moves past in a churn of Thanos projecting Daddy issues onto the room, Nick Fury’s creative reuse of “mother fuck” against the executive council and Loki—because he’s grouped in with them when Thor’s MIA—Tony showing Loki pictures of his “Jabba the Trump” costume under the table while Jarvis pays attention double-time, and resolutely not checking the time on his phone, definitely not.

And by definitely not, he means 50% of his battery’s worth of lock button mashing.

“Go piss your Saturdays away spreading antibiotic resistant clap, you vapid shitheads,” Thanos tells them all, and Loki’s never heard sweeter words from Thanos’ mouth.

Loki goes from everything’s going to be fine to I’m carrying a mutant to what if there’s no heartbeat then back to they’re perfect on the ride to Stanford, almost tipping the chauffeur very well-paid by his parents in his frantic dash inside. He tells the receptionist his name like she didn’t greet him, “Hi, Loki,” and scribbles out the worst rendition of his signature known to man.

The extremely pregnant woman he sits across even looks mildly concerned.

He hides a little behind his backpack no matter that it only comes up to his collar. But symbolically, alright? He’s hidden. Spared from the judgment of the creature drooling over blocks in the toy containment area at room center. He doesn’t need something that can barely walk thinking he’s lost it.
He replies, “I’m keeping you on your toes,” to keep his hands from tearing apart his backpack. These green-white lights bring out the withdrawing coke-head in his complexion, which he’s not—it was once or twice at the summer house in Mykonos two years ago—thank you lady they’ve built him up as.
“Hey.”

All at once, cinnamon, fresh air, musk, blond hair, sun-kissed skin, flannel, muscles, testosterone-flavored dark roast coffee of a voice.

Thor’s settled in his chair before Loki’s brain can match oh, right, this is Thor with heart-stopping shock.

Thor is here. And this is real because all the heads in the room have turned Thor’s way like they do in every room, open space, small gathering without fail.

They are not in June Springs.

“What are you doing here? Shouldn’t you be upstate skiing?”

“I cancelled after Mom told me when your appointment was. She wants me to be here too.”

“I don’t. I don’t want you involved at all.” Loki’s whisper shouting. Fine. The second Thor came in he’s gasp pregnant feminine boy with the all-star baby daddy, Norwegian or not. “You don’t want to be either, and I’m not going to force you to be miserable around the baby.”

“Nobody is forcing me to do anything.”

“I want you to leave.”

“I’m not, so tough shit, get over it.” Wow. His knees fall open with the sheer size of his sperm-
crammed balls, knocking against Loki’s right. “This is my baby too.”

He says that now? After Loki’s—well, they’re still early in the pregnancy, so there’s not a lot to miss on that front, but still. Now?

Loki grabs a *Parents* magazine. He yanks it open. “Loki, why aren’t you nice like your brother?” Oh, right, because he’s not.” His page-surfing is paused by an article about natural birth with a graphic picture of a raw newborn attached that Thor’s reading over his arm, so Loki passive aggressively skims to turn the pages too fast for him to enjoy it, the dick. “How was the game last night? Useless crown the only thing you win?”

“No.”

Thor’s rescue—tell-your-brother-I-said-good-luck nurse calling out, “Loki.”

Oh, she beams. Sure Loki gets the scripted how are you back and forth on the way back to the exam room, but she can’t get, “I’m good. Thank you,” out quick enough to turn her attention to Thor and the not-so-dire-after-all championship run the football team’s doing, the, “Go right in here,” and “Take a seat on the table,” after thoughts between the more pressing issue of worshipping Thor.

The icing on the cake: “It’s so good of you to be here to support your brother.”

Loki snickers out loud, which she brushes off thinking it’s Loki being Loki, but her boss knows better.

Thor helps himself to a chair underneath happy-go-lucky “your many options for birth control” pamphlets, legs sprawled open, arms crossed but in the cool way where his dom arm’s free to flash his eyesore Rolex, the first one Dad bought with his own money and forgot to get a refund for clearly. “What?”

“You’re not passing that tacky watch down to your niece slash nephew.”

Thor’s got the eleven lines of perplexity between his eyebrows. Before, oops, the fucked-up-ness of this comes to him, eyebrows stretching up to those irritatingly loose pieces of hair all on his forehead. “Technically, they’re your niece and nephew too.”

“Barely. I’m doing all the parent work right now.”

Three quick and soft knocks and in floats Mom who pats Thor on his shoulder and Loki on his thigh while gushing about how she’s been anticipating this appointment all day, and just eat your heart out, Julie Andrews, Mom takes magical mom to a whole other ignoring-incestuous-implications-because-baby level.

She even sanitizes her hands with pure glee. “Loki, I hope you managed to eat with how anxious I know you got yourself.” She presses her fingertip on his sternum. “And something not Greek. All of that goat meat is full of saturated fat. Lay back. Get yourself comfortable.”

Full body cringe at the paper crinkling under him.

“Wolfgang von Strucker, my VP, brought me Zwieback toast and black tea this morning,” Loki tells her. “As a preemptive bribe. But it was good.”

“That’s still nice of him.” Mom’s rolled up the stool to the bed and sits down like the refined goddess she is. Opening the notorious, rainbow-tabbed manila folder, she asks Thor about the game, but unlike the nurse, sounds like she could not care less and moves on to asking Loki if the tea was
caffeine free, considering murdering Wolfgang for the five seconds it takes for Loki to reassure her that no, it wasn’t, he asked before drinking any.

“Wolfgang has a whole thing about caffeine being for the weak anyway.”

Thor’s tickled. “I don’t know if you know, Mom, but he’s also friends with Titan too.”

The really look from Mom to Loki.

“Actually, wrong,” Loki tells Thor but Mom too. “Wolfgang is Titan’s groupie. Like 90% of Thor’s friends who aren’t Sif, Fandral, Volstagg, and Hogun.”

“They have better taste than you and von Strucker.”

“Do they?”

Thor scoffs. “I’m nothing like—“

“Boys.” Mom shuts them both up with The Look.

The rest of Mom’s are you doing the bare minimum of being a good incubator questions don’t leave any space for a segue into any of the other shady characters Loki ensconces himself with, questions she answers for him after a double-check stare down to read if he’s lying or not (he’s not. He doesn’t lie about lame things.) But then, last but not least, “Have you had sex since you had blood drawn earlier this month?”

Mom definitely reads the eternally embarrassed look in Loki’s eyes. “What? It can’t be worse than the last time.”

She’s stood now, so Loki only has her back to judge whatever look she’s giving Thor.

Or Thor’s hasty aversion of his eyes to the glorious linoleum. “No.”

“No to what? The 50 occurrences of unprotected sex in a month. 50, Thor. It’s like you both have a phobia of condoms, but you, you’re experienced with these things. I bought you a box of a hundred at the start of August, and you promised me you were using them always. He’s your younger brother. Even when you want to be reckless, you’re supposed to protect him.”

“No to the question,” Thor says. Always the brave one, he makes eye contact with her. “He and I—we… haven’t in a while. A month.”


Loki complies like a cadaver would as Mom hovers over him, sit up this way, breathe in that way, roll your sleeve up this way, lay back down that way. He lifts up his shirt and unbuttons his jeans—Mom sighs about his skinny jeans, but she always does—and slides his waistbands down to ass-crack-is-out level, no complaints about that goddamn paper poking and cracking against him.

“You’ll wish you wore more sensible jeans if you have to take them off today,” she says, grabs the transducer—yes, Loki’s been reading books about this in preparation—from the machine. She lifts a wand, less Harry Potter, more Hitachi without the fun attachment at the end, out of its holder slightly. “I reserved this weeks ago, going off the last male pregnancy I handled around 15 years ago. If this doesn’t find that baby, we’ll have to go another way.”

Loki’s clenched.
Mom goes over to the cabinets for something. But Loki’s not alone for long since lo and behold, Thor meanders up. He looks over the machine like he would the Large Hadron Collider—aka: not impressed at all—and actually fiddles with the more invasive transducer.

“Come on, don’t be scared, alright?” Thor sounds sincere. Bad things usually happen when Thor sounds sincere. “I’m bigger than this, and you took me no problem.”

The nonchalant perfect teeth-included smile really seals the why am I feeling the pre-boner tingles when Mom looks like she wants to kill us deal.

Mom moves Thor, who’s scratching at the back of his neck looking for the chip that’s turned him into an idiot, away. She gets the warning out that the gel might be cold through clenched teeth, which Loki braces for, but it’s lukewarm if anything. The transducer burrowing into his abdominal muscles isn’t a five-star massage, but the lampshade-shape of gray noise on the monitor has settled into dark spaces that are organs on the same street as his proto-womb.

There’s a mass of black. Then there’s a bunch of gray circles gathered together like some crappy drawing of a baby. Like the head’s too big and the arms and legs are nubs, but—they’re wiggling. That’s his baby.

“Holy shit,” Thor’s saying, “that’s, that’s my baby.”

A hand, Mom’s, grasps his. “My little grandbaby.”

“I’m relieved there’s actually something in there. I thought—I don’t know—maybe I was pregnant but.”

Thor’s eyes dart from the screen to his. They’re glossy, but that might be just from staring too hard at the screen. “The heartbeat—what about the heartbeat?”

“Calm down. I know you’re excited,” Mom says to him, letting go of Loki’s hand to touch the machine.

The rapid whoosh follows along with the onscreen waves, constant, “Good?” he asks which Mom says, “Great,” to. Their great little heartbeat.

“They’re on the larger side, but that’s to be expected with how big of a baby Thor was,” Mom says. “You look to be around nine weeks along. Since you don’t have any menstrual period, your due date 38 weeks from the point of conception.”

Thor has his phone aimed at the monitor, bottom lip bitten with his concentration face. He’s taking pictures. Outside of Raiders and Warriors games, cute things, and selfies to annoy Loki by forcing him to be in them, Thor’s not a picture-taking person. “That’s May.”

“The week of May 22nd,” Loki confirms. “A week after graduation.”

“They wouldn’t want to miss out being Daddy’s best graduation gift,” Thor says. Casual like when he’s joking, Thor-joking, not Loki-joking. Dad jokes for the discerning Chad.

Mom hands Loki napkins to wipe off his stomach that Thor unnecessarily acts as the middle-man for, but Loki takes them and doesn’t point that out which is like thank you for him.

Thor makes himself comfortable at the edge of the bed, looking over his shoulder at Loki. “You still owe me one though.”
“That’s your father talking, not me. I taught him about the miracle of childbirth and how strong people are for going through it,” Mom says. “You don’t owe him anything but a broken hand when the labor contractions start.”

Mom has them both at a fearful impasse.

Because labor—Loki still has the baby inside him, so he focuses on that, on the upsides of being this early in his pregnancy like his first sonogram. He asks for three copies, one for personal keeping, one for the refrigerator, the other to carry around to confirm to Thanos that it isn’t a tapeworm and to Barton that it isn’t a demon.

“Can I get…?” Thor’s counting past five fingers.

Mom gives Thor an exasperated, I can’t believe I raised this being look. “There’s a photocopier at the nurse’s station you can use if it’s that urgent, Thor. Otherwise, there’s one at home.”

Loki drops his napkins in the trash cans like a functioning human being, you know, stood up and having walked to the trash can.

“Okay. One for me.”

Loki’s arm brushes Thor’s when he’s settled in to wait for his copies, a jolt trickling from that spot down to his fingertips and up his shoulder into his spine to make his skin consciously aware of all the clothes against it. Especially the clothes at that finger pinch of space separating their arms.

Thor tells him, “You first,” and Loki’s replying, “Thought I’d never hear that—“ stopping himself because Mom’s reached peak happy and no one will try to ruin that for her and escape alive. So, it’s “—again,” he saves with.

Thor and he meet eyes though, and Thor’s not buying it like Mom.

(he thought he’d never hear that without Thor balls-deep in him.)

Considering the massive—like nine inches plus—role Thor’s judgment played in Loki being handed sonograms of a baby that’s actually inside him, Loki’s not interested in what Thor’s buying.

Besides the peanut butter smoothie on the way to the big house.

#
At dinner, Dad projects all his family legacy hopes and dreams onto a black and white picture of his 5 millimeter long grandchild, telling Thor X and Y about “when you have your first child far in the future” as Thor mhms and nods and stuffs the chiseled-ness out of his cheeks with even more food than Loki plus one’s putting down.
When they’re down in the foyer waiting for Mom to come and give Loki her goodbyes, alone, Loki’s compelled to poke his abs to check if they’re still there.

They are. Big time. As in Loki’s finger’s lucky to not be broken.

“What was that for?”

“I forgot for a second that all the food goes straight to inflating your muscles and fueling your hair’s shine.”

“Usually you eat half your plate and then you’re done. Weird to see you keeping up with me. Almost.” Thor’s fingertip barely pokes Loki below the belly button. “You’re not there yet.”

“Boys.”

They do not, he repeats, do not leap apart. It’s more of a flinch and step back.

Mom has an air of suspicion about her, but really, she’s too easy-going to not give them and their fraternal bonding the benefit of the doubt like, you know, she did when their bonding was decidedly not fraternal. But there’s a warning in her “drive safe” that edges past reasonable doubt and makes Thor go out of his way to not touch Loki, opening doors like Loki’s contagious with a nervous smile that Loki’s over and done with by its second appearance on the ride home because Mom wouldn’t approve of Loki’s observation, “The worst case scenario of you deep-dicking your little brother has already happened.”

Which it has. Yes, Loki sees what Thor’s saying, “But she’s only been aware of it after the fact. The baby is the only proof as far as she’s concerned. I don’t blame her for wanting to keep it that way.”

But—he and Thor are standing in Loki’s hallway when Loki says this—“It was only sex. Like you told me after the first time. You have had sex with a lot of people. I’m only different because you can’t not return my calls forever and forget my name when I confront you in the hallway with another girl on your arm.”

He turns away from the incoming offended look from Thor to unlock the door.

“I definitely would’ve called you.”

Really? Is he forgetting Loki knows him, knows him?

“As of 24 hours ago, you were avoiding me because the thrill of the taboo of screwing your brother backfired when you got me pregnant,” Loki says. “There would’ve never been any taboo in the first place if I wasn’t your brother. I’d be another Ian Boothby.”

Thor does not recognize that name. Q.E.D. “Um… Ian, Ian… Oh, you mean Darcy’s boyfriend. That was once. I don’t even remember anything about it. But I bet he had a good time. Isn’t the whole point?”

“For you clearly.” Loki tells him goodnight, starting to close the door in his face, but Thor stops it to tell him that he’ll be here to pick him up in the morning.

He is. Promptly and with breakfast courtesies of Mom micromanaging the chef.

Loki kind of, sort of overlooks the tragic Jack-o-Lantern sweater Thor brings up, “But It’s Jeremy Scott. You love Jeremy Scott,” when Loki doesn’t take the bait of him fishing for compliments for.
Admittedly, add the murky-looking morning light, and the loud orange tragedy is less—or Loki’s digested food filling him up has him in a forgiving mood—but not less enough for Pepper Potts in an hideously orange t-shirt dress that’s “so appropriate and festive” to go manicure-to-the-mouth “that’s so adorable” over.

Loki excuses himself from the growing cell of student council’s good apples to go find Thanos for the festival ground walkthrough, but Thor insists on coming along, something about, “Oh, I didn’t trust myself not to start talking about the baby.” Whatever. Wolfgang shortens his planned spiel with Thor glowering in his general direction and Everett Ross keeps the Bellatrix Lestrange jokes to a minimum because Thor’s friends with his bestie T’Challa.

When Thor stands there and doesn’t talk—good.

When Thor tells Thanos—who, duh, greets Thor like he usually does, calling him, “The honorary Alabaman, a brain-dead sibling fucker”—“Get over it already, man, your sisters are never going fuck someone as fucked-up as you, Titan.” Bad. Very bad.

“What the fuck did you just say to me?” Thanos has the murder stare on Thor whose smiling like a jackass like Thanos doesn’t have two inches and a few dozen pounds on him despite how many wrestling trophies Thor has.

“Do you both want to be expelled and in a coma your entire senior year?” Loki asks.

“You’re still dickmatized, Loki. You always hated the bastard. Let me un-pretty his face real quick. That’ll have him humble.”

Loki drags Thor away to sanity.

No, not sanity. Because Thor shrugs the whole thing off like he isn’t ten minutes out from a life or death scenario. “He wasn’t going to hit me.”

“How do you know that?”

“Instinct.” Thor daps up James Rhodes who cocks his chin at Loki. “The next time that happens, don’t get between us like that.” He claps Loki on the shoulder and says, “Catch you for lunch.”

#

“I’ve been meaning to apologize.”

“Hm?” Loki’s mastering the fine balance between veal—no lamb, his and Mom’s son slash surrogate’s compromise—and Tzatziki sauce in his gyro, and voila. Perfect. “I’m listening. I’m just multitasking.”

“Loki.”

His gyro can wait he guesses.

“I need to apologize for how I handled finding out. I shouldn’t have lost my shit. How I acted after too. I don’t have any excuses except I… I was scared shitless and decided to be a selfish coward. I’m sorry.”

Earnest apologies have always been more of Thor’s area, but forgetting how vindicating it feels being on the receiving end of one because Thor’s the kind that never apologizes when he believes
he’s right, never, it’s something Loki would rather fast-forward over because there’s expectations of reactions and just—he just wants to eat.

“I already knew all of that, but okay.”

“Shut up.” Thor avenges himself stealing some fries from Loki—he went with loukaniko, the sausage, his loss. “So, you forgive me?”

“Holy shit, you have no right to be this needy. I’m the pregnant one.”

Thor only throws up his perfectly un-manicured eyebrows, opening his eyes up wide in a pushy *are you or aren’t you?*

“I don’t know. I’ll think about it.”

“Good.” Thor holds up a sausage like the spokesman for all that is Germanic and pure, and Wolfgang von Strucker sheds a tear somewhere. “Go ahead and eat. I don’t want you to be mad at me for any more reasons.”

A weird sound exits his mouth as the savory goodness enters.

Thor stares at him, like Loki’s wrong for enjoying his food.

“What?”

“Nothing. I’m glad to see it’s good.”

While the gyro’s making sweet love to Loki’s taste buds, Thor excuses himself in a hurry to go call someone or something because Loki’s boring him.

Loki will eagerly be boring as all hell as long as he has a gyro in his mouth.

#

**How to eat pumpkin pie with a Kylo Ren helmet on: with the helmet off.**

At a picnic table behind a bohemian scarf, shawl, and loose, bad-patterned accessories tent where the boy in tortured black robes eating an entire pumpkin pie—dolloped with whipped cream—by himself would ruin the chill vibes so he goes ignored.

Then dressed-as-a-lady-bug Mantis—one thing Loki knows is he’s not naming his kid after an insect like her parents—who’s also in Botany Club, wanders his way and considers knowing him a good enough invitation to sit and stare at him with her big black voids for eyes, and getting flashbacks from the last time she tried asking him his life story, sticks with, “You don’t eat my happy brownies anymore.”

Aka her life-changing weed brownies.

“I’m pregnant.”

She’s still on cloud ten. “That’s incredible.” She claps one too many times. “I love babies!”

Loki’s fine with her going on a tangent about the human larvae—look, he’s feeding this baby amazing pie; they can’t be mad at him—since he’s too busy eating to be expected to participate in any meaningful way besides “mhm.” He even shows her the sonogram because he’s earned the right
to be proud of his bean baby, and okay, the *oh my god they’re so cute* shriek, it tries his eardrums but it’s the reaction his baby deserves.

There’s staring this way now, but it’s worth it. He’s down to one slice anyway.

“Hey, it’s your brother.” Mantis points behind Loki toward the crowds.

“Loki!”

Yes, without even turning around, that is Thor.

Thor marches up in his Roman gladiator gear like he’s an effortless badass, which in a tunic and skirt, that’d be a challenge if Thor’s thighs weren’t like overflowing with bulging muscles, wow. Above the waist, above the chest, above the neck. And there, Loki can focus again. Thor gives the nicest hi to Mantis, who congratulates Loki one more time on the baby and is on her way, then gets all stone-faced with Loki. “You told me you’d meet me an hour ago at the chocolate fountain.”


“You’re wearing a helmet and wouldn’t tell me what your costume was!”

“And? Who else isn’t going as sexy Harambe, kitten headband, or tone-deaf satire?”

“You were Nero last year.”

“Yeah and I carried around a violin.” Loki, now pie-less, puts on his helmet. “You and your bros took that idea and decided, ‘oh, dude, let’s be gladiators to show off our hot bods.’ You’re going to be that ‘cool’ dad. Embarrassing.”

Thor’s walking function is broken from the possibility of him being embarrassing doing anything ever, so Loki gets a head start to awe knee-high children and discomfit sexy astronauts and their moms and dads. A five second head start but they’re five priceless seconds. Then Thor’s hands are heavy as hell on his shoulders, and Loki’s suddenly palatable.

“You talk to Titan since this morning?” Thor asks over the bleating, twee indie music that’s all Tony Stark’s “New England” vibes.

“No, I’m not getting screamed at for you being stupid because we have the same last name,” Loki replies. “And him accusing me of being ’dickmatized.’”

Well, it’s good Thor thinks it’s funny.

“Don’t be ashamed. My dick changes people.”

Hip stroller-pushing mom’s more interested in finding that out firsthand than covering little Paisley or Argyle’s ears. And Loki knows without turning around Thor’s giving her The Look. Gross.

Speaking of gross, there’s a generic blond haircut testing the length of his gladiator skirt, one leg up on a hay bale to make sure the whole of Santa Clara County gets a glimpse of Squeeze Me and Slap Me.

There’s Barton.

He sheds Thor’s hands while Brunnhilde as Lara Croft the Ballsack Raider distracts him.
Clint’s talking to someone so small they’re invisible from behind. Surprisingly not Natasha but some graham cracker girl dressed as Velma from *Scooby Doo* that laughs with her mouth open. Whatever.

Loki touches Clint’s bicep, and it jumps while the rest of him plays it cool.

He turns around and there’s not enough time to blink before, “Hey. Loki.”

Velma doesn’t shoo, and Clint doesn’t shoo her.

No, he slides an arm around her shoulders, so she’s flush to his side like a little woodland creature.

The bunny to Jane Foster’s mouse.

“Laura, this is Loki,” Clint says. “Loki, this Laura.”

Laura. Huh.

“I don’t blame you for going to another school to get a girlfriend when Thor’s already been in every girl and most boys here.”

Clint and his little Laura share one of those *gee golly, oh boy* looks. “I warned you he’s like this,” he tells her. Then to Loki, “She’s a senior and my lab partner in Anatomy. She’s on the soccer team. I’ve seen you at one of those games.”

“It’s okay. We’ve never actually met,” she says. “We’ve never had any reason to. You have your own thing going on, and me, I’m more… down here on earth.”

Lol, ha, ha, Loki’s so crazy, right.

Thor acclimates his arm around Loki’s shoulder while he, “Sup, man”s Clint. No, he’s not going to stop Loki from rubbing it in little Laura’s face that deep down Clint likes Loki’s crazy.

“Well, it’s good to know the reason you could resist fucking me those days I was just next door,” Loki says.

“One of many,” Clint replies, that slam-Loki-against-the-wall-and-make-him-feel-his-hostility glower just creeping in, and little Laura’s waving their goodbyes like a good little diplomatic girlfriend.

She has the nerve to say, “Congratulations on the baby.”

He doesn’t need Laura’s congratulations.

Loki shoves Thor’s arm off him. Because Thor’s arm’s there and Thor can take it, takes it like it affects him less than the confirmation preceding, “So, you were staying with Clint,” does.

“It sounds like you already knew, so let’s skip the part where you act mad.”

Thor begins pouting but then laughs. “It’s hard to get mad at you when you’re wearing that helmet.”

But he likes it when Thor’s mad.

No, he doesn’t tell him that. He tells him—after accosting the medium-sized child carrying the cup of brains that smells of cherries—to make himself useful and do crowd control around them.

Loki takes the helmet off, the rush of air sobering to the post-Barton restlessness. Thor’s stare gives away the helmet hair Loki shakes free not once but twice until he asks, “Is it really that bad?” and
Thor stops.

Only to examine the fit of the skintight Hawkgirl costume Sharon Carter has on in the “Mummy dog” line. She shakes her head and flips him off when she catches him, but if there weren’t a Sam Wilson, Thor would be switching lines like pretty blond girls are rare here.

“I don’t get it,” Loki says. “What is it with you guys who’re out of Playgirl sticking your dicks in Miss Midwest? First, it was you with Jane in that annoying relationship you had last year. Now, it’s Barton with this Laura.”

“Jane’s gorgeous, Loki. She doesn’t dress like it, but she is. You have to admit that.” Yeah, don’t hold your breath, Thor. “But Jane was into me. We were good friends. I thought we’d try it out. We’re better as friends, and I won’t see her as anything but a close friend, but I don’t regret it.”

Betty Ross and Leonard Samson, who’s in Loki and Bruce’s physics class and Bruce stays seething at because Samson’s dating Betty, are in front of them in the brain cobbler line, and Leonard says hi to not just Thor but Loki too, which Betty chastises him for when he turns back around.

For good measure, Loki tells her, “I didn’t fuck Bruce, by the way.”

She acts like she’s ignoring him, but she’s secretly glad her boo is untainted.

“Clint and Laura, they’re the same level. She’s cute. He’s like… a seven. Alright looking I guess.”

“You’re saying that because you’ve never seen him naked.”

“I have, and I don’t remember because it was nothing special.”

“You weren’t looking hard enough. Because with a dick like that, he’s more like a nine. It has a downward curve, Thor. You know where the prostate is.” Loki squeezes Thor’s bicep with both hands, fingertips overlapping like by a pinch, which clearly doesn’t hurt with the bored way Thor’s looking down at him. “Clint I, we’re compatible. Laura’s so easy. Doesn’t he want a challenge?”

“Why do you give a shit?” Thor says slowly. Like Loki might not understand what he’s asking.

“Because Clint’s hot and attainable and has the special personality it takes to put up with mine. You’d think I would be the first choice for him settling down, which I’m not saying I wanted to do with him because no, I did not and do not, but he goes with her? I’m trying to understand what makes these boring girls relationship-worthy.”

And if he wants no strings attached sex, he has to go find someone completely new.

Brain cobbler’s slid over the counter, and Loki grabs them both since Thor’s hands are full of helmet and shield.

“I’m attainable.”

With a mouthful of creamy, sour-sweet, Loki can only make an irritated face as Thor for internalizing, for whatever reason, attainability as a goal he should aspire to when being Thor and being attainable, they’re just… mutually exclusive.

“To Amora and Heidi Klum,” Loki says.

“Shut up. You look like a supermodel.” Thor’s moved in his way. “I’m not saying that as your brother. I’m saying that as one of those special personalities.”
Loki tugs the spoon out of his mouth and jabs it into his cobbler. “I see what you’re doing.”

“What am I doing?”

“Trying to rush me into forgiving you, dick.”

Thor’s opening up his pretty lips to apologize because knows better than to deny the truth to Loki.

“Schwarzenorway,” calls Tony Stark somewhere not-far-away-enough-to-make-a-timely-escape behind Loki. There’s a shuffling sound over the grass that explains Thor’s bemused expression beholding whatever Tony’s cobbled together.

Might as well bite the bullet.

After putting his helmet back on, Loki turns. Thankfully no Howard Stark, just Tony’s mom Representative Collins Carbonell, who’s definitely regretting the past 16 years of her life, and Tony slug-sliding his diarrhea green univalve which pales in comparison to the ill-fitting half-suit, the four rubber orange chins and piss yellow strings Tony’s got glued on top of the bald cap hiding his hair.

And Jarvis, the Starks’ exchange student, in a long brown wig ponytail and a Slovenian flag one piece that goes right with the chain connecting him to Tony—okay, Loki’s ‘Don’t Feed the Tony Stark (with laughter)’ Rule has an exception.

Not that anyone else knows. He is in a helmet. Thankfully. He’s got an image to maintain.


Tony gasps. “Of course, it’s tall, dark, and mopey under there. Good call, Mom. Hey, Kylo Ren, wise decision not to go with Khan. You’ve been set up from birth to ace this one.”

“You suggested Khan to him. I don’t think he was ever seriously considering it.” Okay, that’s not Jarvis’ BBC-worthy accent, but from Loki’s exposure to the first-lady-to-be—it’s gonna be her, most people are idiots—a really, eerily good Slovenian one.

Tony tugs on Jarvis’ neck chain which just gets an eye-roll. “Trophy slave princess wives, can’t take them anywhere outside the tower. Sad!”

“Good job landing your mom on future President Trump’s shitlist,” Loki says.

“He didn’t mean that,” Thor says, “the President Trump thing.”

“No, I did.”

“High energy recognizes high energy,” Tony says and then shouts, “Make the Galaxy great again!”

Rep. Collins Carbonell has the Steve Rogers-appropriated smug self-assurance from middle part down bun to kitten heels. “Howard considers it a badge of honor, and I would too. God forbid that man win. We’ll already be doomed anyway.”

“Fake news, Mom.”

She tells Thor she looks forward to seeing him for door-to-door vote harassment next Monday and gets Tony’s mockery of her political career back on track.

Tony drags Jarvis forward by the chain.
Loki hands Thor his helmet to resume eating his brain cobbler.

“And I thought you loved me.”

“Ew, where did you get that idea?” Loki says.

They agree to not raise a Tony Stark.

Chapter End Notes

The process of Thor getting his head out of his ass has begun.
Loki and Thor are getting back to where they were before Thor was a fuckhead and Loki had a bun in the oven.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

#

There’s a photocopy of the sonogram magnet-clipped to the door of his locker. Thor’s stats and Euro books are back in there too.

#

Thor walks into Calc 3 about twenty minutes into the period.

The weasel in a sweater vest that’s the teacher stops mid-slide to squeak out the least passive aggressive hello Mr. Odinson in the world and moves onto the next slide like Thor’s not whispering, “Mind if I steal this?” in violation of his the only language you speak in this room is math policy and isn’t carrying a chair across the room, fucking with his precious furniture arrangement, to Loki’s table.

Thor privilege.

Even Erik’s happy at the same time sharing, which that word’s used as loosely as possible since Erik would break the table in half if he wasn’t made of sleep deprivation and bones, a table with Loki. He entertains Thor in a whisper in bleh Swedish like the best of friends.

Thor says something that resembles “oh shit right, I have a picture” and dives into his wreck—folders have pockets for a reason, Thor—of a backpack and resurfaces with, um, a sonogram. He shows Erik. Like… like it’s nothing.

“What are you doing?” Loki asks, joining the little Swedish club.

The teacher raises his voice. Then his voice cracks. He lowers his voice again.

“I trust Erik.”

“I don’t.”

“The feeling’s mutual,” Erik pipes up.

Loki rolls his eyes. “He doesn’t deserve to see pictures.”

“Isn’t that for Thor to decide?” Erik says.

“When he’s the one doing the heavy lifting, he can show who he wants,” Loki says.
“I already showed him so…”

“Because you’re a dumbass.”

The teacher’s stopped talking and is now staring at his shoes.

“Can you please save the theatrics for after class?” Yuck, it’s Bruce. “I don’t need to speak Norwegian—”

“Swedish,” Erik says.

“—to know that shrill tone in your voice,” Bruce tells him. He’s the next table over, so close enough for Loki to jab him in the spine with a pencil. “I’m sure with all of your dramatic skills, Loki, you’ll manage to do it in five minutes.”

“No need to be a white knight, Banner,” Thor says. “Go ahead,” he tells the teacher. “I didn’t mean to cause such a ruckus. Teach your class.”

When the bell rings, Thor gives Loki that lingering pointed look that’d be lecherous on anyone less attractive, but he’s Thor, so it just annoys Loki because it’s so hot.

“Why are you even here?”

“Why not? I have PE this period. The football coach is my grader.” Thor charms Peter who’s eleven years old next to Thor into putting his chair back on the other side of the room. “I’ve got a 100 for the semester. When I want to show up, I show up. When I don’t, I don’t.”

Erik hasn’t stopped staring at Loki.

“What?”

“Are you really pregnant?”

Thor grins. “Hell yeah, he is. Isn’t it exciting?”

“But—Thor, you said that the baby was yours.”

Dumbass.

Thor puts a hand on Erik’s shoulder. “But you’re not gonna tell anyone that. Right? You’re a cool guy. This, it’s—people won’t understand,” he says. “Loki’s adopted.”

Huge dumbass.

“Oh, I could’ve figured that,” Erik says. Nigger. “I’m torn between congratulating you and giving my condolences.’

“I know, right,” Thor says forgetting Loki’s standing there because when his brain catches up with his mouth, he tries to hide the grin and be all contrite. “I mean—“

“Don’t show up to any more of my classes you aren’t in,” Loki tells Thor. “And remember before you go around showing off sonograms because adopted or not, we’re brothers to the world.” He adjusts his backpack strap and points at Erik. “If you tell anyone, I will destroy you.”

“See you at lunch,” Thor shouts after him.
Loki flips him off.

#

Mom shows up with dinner. And Thor.

For the third time in a row.

“Don’t you have a game or something?” Loki asks, and Thor says that yeah, he just came from one. They won—“Boo”—and they’re going to finals, which Thor’s so psyched about he tucks Loki’s sides into his massive hands and tests Loki’s vestibular sense above the ground, not far, no, but Loki’s glad to be back on the ground when Thor remembers baby.

“Are you okay?”

Mom’s enjoying Thor’s concern over in the kitchen.

“No, there’s another human being growing inside me.”

“I’m being serious.”

“So am I.”

“You’re fine then. I get it.”

The temptation to ruffle and rib Thor for lording his strength over Loki like always is just too great to be all, “Oh, Thor, I’m fine, honeybun,” when Thor’s brain catches up his muscles. Consider it comeuppance for puberty playing favorites with Thor and Thor being oblivious about it all those years when Loki grew up but Thor grew up more and even outward too.

Loki’s never wanted to be Arnold Schwarzenegger. Let’s get that straight. It wasn’t jealousy. It was his teenage libido fucking him over, no lube, with hey, you like blond hair, blue eyes, bitten-red, kiss-me lips that your brother happens to have, and oh, what about muscles on muscles on muscles like his and the deep, booming voice, fuck yeah.

Old habits die hard, don’t they?

At lunch, Thor’s pulled out a stats quiz he saved special for Loki to review with him because T’Challa, who’s in his class and probably got perfect, he’s totally not going to be around later for the hour round-trip to Berkeley where he’s not forced to stuff his food down his throat.

Thor’s pen acrobatics while he mulls bring out the thick strings fanning out from his wrists to his knuckles, his knuckles pushing into his lips when Loki’s advice’s being absorbed, and they’re so full there’s nowhere for them to go but out, making it look like he’s pouting over significance tests. They’re a little chapped from him biting them, but they’re so pink it looks good. Loki’s aren’t so they’d tickle and stick more against his, and okay, he’s been staring.

Thor chuckles so irritatingly sexy being cavalier about it, sticking his pen behind ear in this casual motion that’s so fuck I almost came Loki has to finish the half bottle of water he has. He continues on to the next question not shy about catching Loki, which almost trips Loki up, but no, he’s spent the past four, five, maybe six years of his life with Thor trying to take up all the space in his mind.

Thor “makes up” for lunch after Friday Family Dinner stopping for gelatos they eat on the hood of his truck, Loki’s hop up there unnecessarily helped by Thor’s hand on the small of his back, because
Robert Frost’s infected Thor with an existentialist nature itch that watching the sun set and stars struggling through the light pollution scratches. He lets Loki listen to the new Tove Lo album on the stereo even though he’s not a fan and Loki turns it up to feel the bass in the back of his skull—he assures Thor the baby can’t hear yet, and Thor says, “Good,” because, “You have shit taste in music, Lo.”

And Thor with his screaming glam rock T.Rex and spacey pop Air, too cool for Loki, his music’s impeccable, worthy of their baby’s first sounds, and when Loki’s not bowing at his feet in the white glow of his iTunes library in Loki’s half-dark apartment, Thor insists on force-feeding him electro rock, setting these theoretical scenes where Thor’s got headphones to Loki’s conjoined watermelon and there’s the first strong kick to “Baby Strange” which Thor covers in his strained parody of the rock yell.

Loki’s got his legs in Thor’s lap as Led Zeppelin, the compromise if Loki’s ever going to consider one, drifts around.

Then he’s cracking open his eyes in the dark needing to pee with sound of breaths out of rhythm with his behind him.

“You okay?” Thor asks in a sleep deep voice when Loki climbs back in, shifting around in that absent way, and Loki tugs the blankets over his shoulders, his knees to his chest, and tells him, “Mhm.”

Loki wakes up in the morning because past eight hours he’s starving, and he’s hovering at the island while Mom’s minion chef cooks when Thor emerges in his boxers and a grin that has no right being that bright when he still looks that tired.

“Where’d you get your bed? It’s insanely comfortable,” Thor says, rolling shoulders so his whole middle comes alive with muscles. He squeezes Loki’s side when he passes to grab a water out the fridge to bump Loki’s thigh with with when he comes back around.

Thor’s… Thor.

He convinces Dad—aka one of Dad’s assistants Dad tags along with to take the credit and do the talking—to drop him off some clothes before Dad’s flight to Seoul, and they show up with two folded-Loki-sized suitcases instead of the weekender a handful of outfits to choose from would fit in—like Thor needs more than one with how blasé he is about clothes looking like he does—not an accident, Dad’s, “I think this arrangement could be good for you boys,” reveals. What arrangement? Dad doesn’t elaborate, just “take care of my grandchild” and he’s off.

Thor thinks it’s funny and just shoves them into Loki’s closet after he’s picked the first set of joggers and a tee out of it to wear to soccer practice. Where he presumably goes back in to grab the casual clothes he comes out with and strips down to put on while Loki’s lounging in an armchair by the big bay window in his room and decidedly not watching him in his periphery. Complaining about Thor taking up real estate in his closet should feel appropriate, but Loki, he chooses to keep correcting Thor why Novak Djokovic is greater than Federer.

(for all the reasons, but that’s not exactly a convincing argument)

#

Mom asks about Thor’s sleepover—either the chef or Dad or Dad’s assistant or her noticing Thor not coming home last night—in her diplomat face.
“I should be getting used to it, right?” Thor says. “Running back and forth between here and home—I don’t say this a lot—but it won’t be possible.”

Mom agrees, but Loki can feel the weight of her looking between the two of them when they’re talking. Like the days after she first found what’d been going on right under her nose.

There’s nothing going on, he wants to tell her. But.

He doesn’t.

(Just in case.)

Chapter End Notes

Frigga does not know how to handle this whole her sons banging each other deal ahlite
unrelated but America's fucking trash foh man.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

# Sleeping alone Saturday night is odd. Sunday night, it's an open invitation to insomnia.

Tell me, who did your brother get pregnant?

“Are you stupid?”
“I got caught up in the hype,” Thor says. He does the defensive hands around his backpack straps. “The adrenaline. You meditate before matches to get it under control so you don’t break any rackets. I use it to my advantage.”

He’s got Thor cornered at his truck because Loki has the right to accost him before everyone else does, seeing as, oh yeah, he is who Thor got pregnant. That glaring fact that would keep soccer balls from under jerseys for most adrenaline-high people who have precious basketball scholarships and sponsorships and what Thor was really concerned about in the collaborative study room, reputations on the line.

“It was a game against DC. You know how much I hate them. And how hard it is to beat them.”

“And did you?”

“But my goal got us a draw.”

Whoop dee fucking doo.

Loki’s caught mid-turn to go do something better with his life than hear Thor’s shoddy reasoning, wool lapels biting him in the ass hard, how stiff and easy they are for Thor to man-handle him into staying by. “What?”

Thor’s fingertips tuck hair behind Loki’s ears. “I was happy. I am happy. Snow elf—“

“Don’t call me that.”

“—I’m gonna be a dad. Like Mom told me the first nine weeks, they’re when we’re more likely to… to lose the baby, but Lo, we made it to the tenth week.” The corners of his eyes have gone all pinched. “I’m just so fucking excited.”

Thor giggles? That doesn’t seem like a manly enough word for any sound coming out of Thor, but without the testosterone direct injection, it’s that laugh from hiding together in Dad’s study when out in the hallway Fandral’s complaining about being it.

“You’re ridiculous,” Loki says.

“Which is why you love me.”

“I thought it was the sparkling blue eyes and forty year old frat boy sense of humor.”

Hands on his head.

Thor’s thousand eyelashes, the sprinkle of freckles under his eyes, wrinkles in his lips.

The air on his mouth becomes heat, hot, hot, hot skin, but not burning, at least only metaphorically. Literally Thor’s lips, sealing against his, the confetti noisemaker popping, the ‘Hey, I Want Us to Kiss’ on the marquee, reciprocation with clothes on for Loki to cling against and no orgasmic endgame—duh, he’s getting hard, but it’s the journey, not the goal—the ooey gooey fruity filling.

“Thor!”

Are you fucking kidding him?

His mind’s still too foggy with post-kiss fuzzies to summon the shame expected of him and Thor, which he’s glad to see Thor, who’s gone the ol’ hands in his pockets to try to casual it up route, is struggling with too.
Thor’s shit-eating grin is definitely an accident, but it’s definitely what he wants to do deep-down. “Sif, Fandral, Volstagg, Hogun, it’s good to see you guys.”

Sif deserves all the shock overloading her narrow little mind. Fandral too even though he’s not as personally invested as ex-Future Mrs. Thor Odinson, so he’s more hung-up on the fact that Loki and Thor have been brothers to him his whole life, and brothers, they don’t really kiss—or fuck but they don’t know that. Yet.

“You two were kissing,” Captain fucking Obvious Volstagg says. “You two, you’re, you’re brothers. You don’t kiss!”

Hogun’s been playing the long con with the no facial expression thing for an eyebrow lift that’s all intrigue.

Thor nervous laughs. “Well, there have been some things I’ve been meaning to tell you.”

Loki turns away from them but leans up to Thor’s ear and tells him, because fuck that, they’re not his friends like the made it crystal clear to him when they were younger, so Loki owes them shit, “Good luck explaining.”

#

Tony asks about Sunday, and Loki, scribbling down the last of his notes, he pauses for three seconds to glance around them to give the eavesdroppers time to play it cool and the ones second-guessing their personal principles of not minding their own fucking business the shove over the moral boundary they need because if it’s good gossip even Loki’s not going to want it to get out. To Tony and his audience, Loki clears his throat and says in a disbelieving, sort of tortured voice, “He’s my own brother, and I don’t know.”

“You serious, or are you saying that because your brother’s in such deep shit that you’re not risking your trust fund playing Gossip Girl?”

“Like I’m not the one who’s been waiting for years for him to knock someone up,” Loki replies. “When I find out whatever the hell that was about, which I will, you bet your ass I’m going to spread it as far as I can. Imagine the fallout.”

The intake of information as they judge Loki for being a traitor and everything bad and icky they already knew he was despite immorally getting the information in the first place.

Sharon whispers to Steve in front of them, “Did you hear that?” and because Steve’s a boy scout, fills him in, but Steve dismisses it all because, “Thor’s more responsible than that.”

Oh, Steve, and your Jesus-like faith in humanity.

From patients Tony through 5 around them, the dirty deets of Thor’s celebration reach random ninth graders high-fiving at their lockers because, “Thor’s a pussy-slaying legend, dude, and I know he’s got the pullout game of a champion,” levels of impact by lunch.

Little do they know.

Loki smiles licorice sweet at Volstagg when they pass by each other.

Thank you, thank you, you’re all too kind. Loki knows he’s the shit.
“How’d it go?”

Thor finishes texting then takes Loki’s Physics book from him to slot into its rightful place in their Tower. “They’re not going to tell anyone,” he says. “Sif, she said I’m not the man she thought I was. Whatever the hell that means. I pointed out to her I’ve been attracted to you even before me and her were together. She punched me in the—” Thor makes a pained face. His ball are only metaphorically made of steel. “I don’t think we’re going to be talking for a while.”

“Good,” Loki says. “Not the getting punched in the balls part. I’ve been there.”

“I remember that. Sif used her knee on you though.”

“Because that’s so much better, right? But after, I was thinking well there goes my chances of having kids, and I’d only had them for maybe five months at that point. I was 12.” He shrugs. “I really had no clue then.”

Thor’s suspiciously staring at him. “T’Challa told me I should beware of backstabbers in my family. He said he heard some ‘interesting rumors’ from Tony.”

Loki lets his head lull to the side all coy. “I might have had a hand in some interesting rumors.”

“I don’t get it. It’s like you actually want everyone to hate you.”

“I don’t care what these people think. But I care what… what Dad thinks. What might the headmaster think about a rumor about his all-star athlete and the son of number one donor being a teenage dad?” Loki says. “We’re in a good place with Dad with this. I’m trying to keep it that way as long as possible. Like I promised.”

“Why are you so much better at this than me?”

“Because you’re so rich, charismatic, tall, beautiful, and athletic that you never had to compensate in any areas with intelligence.”

“You don’t have to be an asshole when you tell the truth, you know that right?”

Loki slides up flush to Thor, engulfing himself in Thor’s atmosphere of bodyheat and cologne and this inherent sexiness that’s there for the sole purpose of whispering dirty things to Loki’s hormones and blood. “I know, Thor, but you and me, we both like it, don’t we?” He takes a large step back, so Thor’s left hanging. “Now, feed me.”

They share a milkshake.

They’re in one of the study nooks on one of the higher floors in the library where talking in an inside voice, which is like whispering for Thor, is acceptable with their Lit books open between them and a book of Robert Frost poems Thor made them take a detour through the poetry section to grab for.

“The sturdy seedling with arched body comes/Shoudering its way and shedding the earth crumbs,”’

Thor finishes aloud. “Kinky. Like old people talking about how they used to fuck in drive-ins. ‘Putting in the Seed’ is not Frost’s best.”
“I thought that’d be your favorite. You can relate to vaginas and clits and all of that. Your dick can at least. You’re like the resident expert on school campus. They should get you for sex ed if you ask me.”

Thor’s looking at him in the top of his periphery. “Are you calling me a slut, Loki?”

“If say that something is round, glowing, in the sky, the earth revolves around it, am I saying that it’s the sun?”

“Yes. You are.”

“Don’t get all in your feelings. I’m not—I am judging you, but that’s based on me and my feelings about sticking your dick in anything with a pulse. It’s your nature. You like having sex with lots of people. That’s just who you are. If I looked like you, I might even do the same.”


Loki tries and instantly fails to hide how skeptical he is of that. “You know, just forget I even said anything.”

“Seriously.”

For Thor’s sake, Loki looks him in the eye. Thor’s telling the truth, which is really, really, really hard to believe. “I can count on both hands the different girls you’ve gone upstairs or into a room alone or outside with in the past month according to post-party hallway gossip consensus. That’s all wrong. When before, it’s been right 75% of the time.”

“Yeah. Why is that so hard to believe? It’s expected of me. People see what they want to see. They jump to conclusions.” Thor gestures to Loki. Whatever. “Even if I wanted to, I couldn’t.”

“Why not?”

Thor gesticulates helplessly. “I can’t.”

“Why can’t you? If you say because you can’t or couldn’t, I will shank you with this pencil.”

Thor exhales into prayer hands then rubs his knuckles on the table. “Because Thor… Thor is not interested.”

Speaking in third person. Okay. Thor rarely achieves that level of narcissism, let alone talking about why he can’t have sex with—oh.

Ooh.

“I’ve been terrified of getting someone else pregnant. The Saturday after I found out, Lorelei was dancing on me. Aggressively. I was trying to distract myself. But I couldn’t stop thinking about how I got you pregnant. I got fucking smashed that night, thinking I get drunk enough, can’t even think about thinking, but nope. I never tried again to save myself the embarrassment.”

“You couldn’t get hard,” Loki says.

Thor nods like a millimeter.

He very sincerely does not mean to, but Loki bursts the fuck out in laughter.
Thor sighs, but he’s not broken about it like most average-sized men are because well, hard or not, it’s still an arm, so he can afford to laugh a little—a few inches worth of little. “My meat hasn’t been this tenderized since my first boner.”

“Look at you having dry spells like us mortals. Though it’s kind of a crime against humanity that eighth wonder of the world hasn’t been getting used to its full potential,” Loki says. “You should’ve gone to a playground, used your powers for evil, and seduced a mom-to-be. Can’t get pregnant if she already is.”

“Is that what you told Clint?”

Funny, Thor.

Like he’s going to engineer Loki into a corner. “No because we have not had sex since you walked in on him—after not knocking—getting dressed in my room at the end of July. Remember, Laura.”

“But you kissed him.”

“Because I wanted to piss him off,” Loki says. “I’m sure it pissed Laura off too, so he can thank me for giving them the push they needed.”

“Pissed me off too.” Thor’s thoughtlessly teetering on the legs of his chair. If he cracks his head open, Loki will smother him in his coma for being so arrogant and leaving a story to tell their kid about how half of his genes are from a dead dumbass. “Be straight with me, and don’t—”

“Impossible.”

“—try to distract me by joking,” Thor says. He sets his chair back on all fours. Plus one for convincing Loki to actually answer. “Do you, like, legit like Clint?”

“I like that given some work, some managing of expectations, it wouldn’t be the worse relationship in the world. I don’t think that anymore. But during my acceptance phase that I wasn’t going to marry my older brother, I forced myself to be more realistic. It’d never be what I wanted, but it’d do the job for however long it lasted.” Loki folds his hands. “No, I don’t like Clint. I like that he gave me great orgasms.” Okay, Thor’s grimace is priceless. “But no, I don’t like Clint.”

“So, you were using him. Okay. Don’t get why him specifically—“

“He’s blond, taller than me—by an inch, but still it’s something—and athletic,” Loki says. “It was Clint or Fandral, so you should be happy.”

“Fandral wouldn’t have said yes.”

Loki says, nice and thick, “Okay, then.”

“Wait. What do you mean by ‘okay, then’?”

“I mean Fandral’s got a thing for twinks.”

“He told me he sees you like an annoying little brother.”

“You did too for a while.”

“Yeah, but I always wanted to—” Thor stops. “Oh.”

“Yep.” Loki stacks up his books and stands. “We’ve got dinner with Mom so.”
Thor’s there when Loki’s grabbed his belongings and turns to go. Someone his size should not get to be that quiet. “I didn’t try too because I didn’t want to be with anyone but you. Don’t tell me that you didn’t push Barton like you knew you could because you only want me.”

“I’m pregnant with your baby. That, Mr. I’m Not Oblivious, is all the information you need.” Loki pushes at Thor’s bicep. “If you’re finished stroking your ego, I’d like to go before Mom gets any ideas about us fulfilling your librarian fantasy.”

Thor’s unusually silent on the drive to Loki’s.

Chapter End Notes

They’re getting there. Also, yay, Thor wasn't whoring around. He could've if he'd tried to get the snake back in action, but why would he when he's in lurve with our Loki. I'm gonna try to finish this fic ya'll. I'mma try. But I got so many other ideas for other fics, but that can wait. It gotta.
Swallowing Pride

Chapter Notes

Again, fuck this country sometimes, a lot of times. Lel at Loki not really sharing the same concerns, but he's Loki. He's not about politics too much in this AU.

GUYS SOMEHOW THIS DIDN'T GET POSTED WTH NOW ITS OUT OF READING ORDER BYE

See the end of the chapter for more notes

#

Alexander Pierce’s preaching about how wise he is in front of the star-spangled shitshow of a stage
for the ceremony later that Steve’s half-heartedly slobbing Pierce’s knob for behind Loki, next to Thor, who has his hair in that half up-do that says *fuck yeah am I gorgeous enough to half-ass a bun* which yeah, asshole, but also yeah, the sexiest asshole that Loki’s sliding up the grey t-shirt of in the back of his mind.

Because Thanos skipped the meeting and on principle of hating America, Ronan’s skipping the whole week, Fury’s de facto leader. Loki dislikes Nick Fury—disliked. He tolerates Nick Fury, maybe can even… like him. Because Nick Fury interrupts Pierce’s applause to tell them all they’re free to not stay and listen to Pierce’s P.S. Liberal tears, which Loki takes to its logical conclusion—extreme—that he doesn’t need to stay for the parade or ceremony at all.

Loki’s got better Veterans Day plans.

He about faces.

Thor’s listening to Phil Coulson whisper into his ear about who cares, he’s absently got his eyes on Loki, so it’s not that important that Loki’s sweetly enthused, “Hi,” is worth Phil’s head shake and long-suffering “Thor, we’ll talk when you’re not sidetracked.”

Phil’s out of the way, but Loki winds his hands around Thor’s forearm and asks, “Do you want to skip the parade to go to my place and play *CS:GO*?”

“That’s kind of fucked up, man.”

Hell yeah Thor does.

There’s no better way to commemorate America than *pew pew* and the Fuck family to the whiners crying “kill steal!” when Loki and Thor polka dot an enemy with bullet holes they were *whine* totally gonna get. Thor’s all “For Valhalla” and bloodlust, which annoys the hell out of Loki when he’s about to ambush and Thor just jumps in spraying everything but works when he’s about to get ambushed because the rest of their team’s doesn’t know how “on my signal” works. At least they die of their own stupidity when it’s Loki. Because when it’s Thor, Thor shoots them in the head because getting kicked for teammate killing means time to put his chin on Loki’s shoulder and “fuck yeah” at Loki’s kills.

“We’re not gonna have time for this in a year,” Loki says, laying on his arm on the couch while Thor raids his kitchen.

Thor reappears with a bag of Doritos in his teeth, two waters, a Gatorade, and the bag of delivery from the American grill Steve told Thor has the best fries in the Bay Area. He thanks Loki for taking the Doritos from his mouth. “Worst case scenario. Best case scenario,” he says, dropping down next to Loki, “we get the night to ourselves because they sleep the whole night through. Imagine that.”

“Yeah, imagine that because that’s the only place it’s happening,” Loki tells him. He steals a fry out the bag, but before eating it, says, “I think your divine luck’s running out on you, buddy.”

The fry is… No, actually, it’s fucking great. Not that he’s telling Steve that. Screw Steve.

“Are you saying that we’re not lucky to have this baby?”

“Are you really trying this? Remember, I’m not the one who said his life was over when he found out. So, if you want to collect blackmail material when I’m the favorite then be ready for the day I tell them, ‘Daddy, he freaked out on me because he didn’t want you.’”

“You wouldn’t.”
“Would I?” Loki eats another fry. “You’re right. I wouldn’t. I’m going to actually be a good parent.”

“You are already.”

“Aw, Thor. You’re… improving.”

“Gee, thanks.”

They kiss one of the saltiest kisses Loki’s ever had.

Then: “How are we gonna handle video games?” Thor’s asking.

“11, 12 years from now. That’s how.” Fry time. “We’ll tell them about the downsides of violence when that conversation comes up after they sucker punch some kid on the monkey bars at five. Limit the amount of violent media they absorb to age-appropriate action movies. I don’t know. What Mom did with us.”

“I want them to do a martial art though. They should learn how to fight.”

“No MMA.”

“Obviously.”

Loki boops Thor’s nose. “Improvement already.”

Thor lets Loki steal half his fries.

#

“Gonna give me a kiss for good luck?” Thor’s got his duffle bag on his shoulder and his black warm-up suit on that amps the sexy up to unacceptable levels for Loki’s mental health which Loki’s never going to tell him. Especially before he goes to ruin some kids’ hopes and dreams in Upland because even though Thor doesn’t need any more trophies, the secret is he hella wants them.

Loki kisses him. “That’s for bad luck.”

“Dick.”

“Asshole.”

“Seriously though. Kiss me good luck. Please?”

“When did you get so superstitious?”

“When I shit the bed because you were mad at me. You were right. But I could’ve had a record-breaking season if—”

“—you hadn’t been such a dick,” Loki slowly finishes for Thor. He kisses Thor, meaning for it to be a quick thing, but Thor, his tongue, and his hands on Loki’s ass have other plans. Loki breaks free for air. “You can’t play football in college.”

“What?”

“CTE. That permanent erosion of your brain?”

“Oh. Wasn’t going to anyway.”
“Good.” Loki withdraws his arms from around Thor’s neck. “Lose tonight and I will tell them all about how Daddy is a choker.”

Thor being annoyed about Loki being Loki aside, he does win all thanks to him, so.

#

Instead of “your dick my ass,” Loki tells him, “Raspberry Danish and a cinnamon roll.” More likely to happen with Thor’s newfound self-control doing air support for the vow of Loki-related celibacy he telepathically made with Mom since she’s clearly not okay with them fucking exclusive of the pregnant thing. Fine. He gets it, but his libido has no morals or ethics when the flannel Thor wore yesterday’s just lying on a chair and Loki’s fresh out the shower without Thor’s ness all over him.

In Thor’s flannel and only Thor’s flannel, all cotton-y goodness tickling his skin, Loki slips the pretty less-than-Thor-sized gold dildo that came in the mail yesterday morning into his hole till the fake silicon balls are flush to his ass, laid up against the pillows so he can see the stretch to go along with the feel. The stretch, knowing that something, someone’s inside of you. Thor inside of him. He moans when he presses back in, grinding the dildo up on that spot that gets his cock tingly.

Thor grinding his endless cock deep inside him, holding Loki down, his arms all on his wrists, on his hips, on his thighs, making him and his little ass take it like he needs. Fuck, he wouldn’t let him touch himself, so Loki doesn’t, just holds tortures his nipple until it’s numb, begging Thor for it
harder and deeper. And his shaking hand can only go so hard and deep, so Loki plants his heels into the bed and stands up, squats down on it, on Thor’s cock, and he holds onto the sheets and rides it.

Thor, Thor, Thor, Thor.

“Loki?”

His eyes open to Thor.

Real Thor who’s in the doorway looking very shocked.

“Hee.” Loki’s knees shut, and he shifts onto them, so it’s only the tip inside him. “You said you were— that you were going to soccer practice.”

“Skipped it.”

“How did you—?”

Thor holds up a key. “That’s my shirt.”

“Yeah.” Loki only stops the moan a little when he shifts back onto one heel to get the angle right to sit back down on it. Because he’s not going to not cum because Thor, who’s seen him in way more explicit positions, is here.

Thor’s dropping everything on the bureau and shrugging off his jacket. “Wait, just—”

With Thor climbing into the bed all close, Loki slips back on the whole length of it, his noodle-y legs just opening right up as he falls onto his stuffed-up ass, all the sticky, milky lube slobbering out around the balls. He tempers the gasp when Thor’s fingers rake up the insides of his calves, his thighs because Thor’s got a look in his eye that’s way too good to be true.

Thor grabs the base of Loki’s cock and his eyes flick up to Loki then he just takes Loki down, all of him, and the wet-warm, how Thor’s lips, the shade of sex itself, pout around him, his cheeks go hollow matching that soft flesh on the sides of Loki’s cock—Loki’s simultaneously thankful and profoundly pissed when Thor pulls off.

The dildo shift inside him in Thor’s other hand.

Loki shoves his hand into Thor’s hair to tether him when he inevitably dies in two embarrassing seconds.

When Thor sucks him down again, playing with the dildo too, Loki’s a thousand percent not responsible for the sounds coming out of his mouth. Because Thor’s so, so messy and so heavy-handed and so not like Loki is in his place that there’s no mistaking even with his eyes shut hard that it’s not Thor’s rough palm following his mouth up and down and up and down and off because Thor’s a miracle working at keeping Loki right there, right there until the big fuck.

Loki’s cum-fried brain defaults to laughing, and a yelp when the dildo’s pulled out of him, while his neurons firework all over.

Thor gets onto his knees, wiping his swollen lips with the back of his hand. “Your cum is”—he clears his throat—“sweet.”

He and that time he came in own mouth last week know that. But Loki goes with, “Mhm.”

There’s a wet spot in the dick area of Thor’s jeans.
Thor notices that Loki’s staring. “It didn’t take much.”

“I see that.” Loki nestles himself in the sheets when Thor keels over beside him, pushing Loki’s leg up so at least they’re half closed and cool air’s not drying lube on his ass. Speaking of sex fluids, Thor’s jizz is oozing through the pores in his jeans and stamping a damp spot on Loki’s thigh that’s gonna flake later. Worth it. “So, you stole Mom’s key then?”

“No, last week, I asked nicely. Crazy, right?” Thor takes advantage of Loki turning to glare to slide his arm around his shoulders. “She gave it to me.”

“On the grounds of what? Not fucking your little brother?”

“I’m pretty sure she’s pretending we’ve never had sex ever and used magic to make this baby, so no.” Thor’s rubbing the sleeves of his, as in not-Loki’s, shirt. “High key, I’d probably do the same thing if our kids started screwing each other.”

“Another reason why there’s only going to be one of them.”

“Only one of them?” Thor’s looking at Loki like he’s supposed to say something else, but what? “Dude, we’re not just having one kid. We gotta have enough for my five-a-side team. Unless you mean have this one then wait a few years.”

“No, I mean forever. Thor, one is more than enough, and this one will be like two since neither of us is at all prepared for it or at a place in our lives where having a baby is easy.”

“You said we aren’t raising Stark. Half of the way he is, is because he’s an only child.”

“A quarter if that. He’s the way he is because his parents neglected him, which would’ve been way worse if there was an Antonia Stark running around.” Loki stupidly expects Thor to cede that point at least, but nope, Thor’s as hard-headed as ever. He closes the shirt around him as he sits up out of Thor’s arm. It’s hard being taken seriously naked. “I don’t expect it to be as obvious to you as it is to me. You are the firstborn, the favorite.”

“What does that have to do with anything?”

“Um, how about everything?” Loki says. “I grew up in a you-sized shadow. Everything I did it was either compared against you or ignored. Up until I realized how dysfunctional that was, my self-esteem was a chain-link fence. Feeling like I’m not enough, every day is—it’s a struggle to overcome those thoughts. I’m not going to do that to my own child.”

“That’s from shitty parenting, not there being two of us. Baby—“

Loki yanks away from Thor and gets off the bed. “I should’ve known you wouldn’t understand,” he tells him. He strips Thor’s shirt off and throws it at him. “If you want truckload of babies then you’re going to have to find someone else to have them.”

He slams the bathroom door behind him.

#

Thor’s watching a replay of Sweden getting their asses handed to them by France out here in the living room in one of his signed Ole Gunnar Solskjær tees that feels like silk how many times it’s been washed. He doesn’t look at Loki all that bothered by being distracted by from the shit show. “It’s not looking good for us Skandis.”
Loki gets onto the couch and scoots up close to Thor who’s gotten really fond with Loki’s bubblegum shampoo and his grapefruit body wash. At the pulse point below his ear, there’s a surprise of Thor’s cologne. Loki leans against Thor’s shoulder and winds his fingers into Thor’s tee.

They spend the rest of the game debating why Sweden’s a disappointment to all of Scandinavia.

Until they start making out.

Chapter End Notes

SEX
“You free from say 3:00 to 12:00 tonight?”

Thor’s ambushed him coming out of Chem, so he has to interrupt Tony mid-ramble to tell him, “Not now,” the long sought after kill switch for Tony Stark’s motor mouth. Thor’s too concentrated on Loki to realize the gift he’s just given Loki, and if they weren’t in a hallway surrounded by people who think they’re brothers, Loki would kiss his face off.

“For a cross country meet, soccer or football game, or wrestling match, no,” Loki says. “For anything else, maybe.”

“You’ll be home then.”

Loki stops at his locker but instead of wasting even a little putting in his combo, he dedicates all his brainpower to trying to figure Thor the fuck out. Because Thor’s a springer, you know, just throws it at Loki as it comes to him without any of the forethought, but this, this sounds like forethought.

“I don’t like this,” Loki says.

“Don’t like what?” Thor looks down at himself. “You told me to wear the sweater.”

“Shut up.” He hates himself. “Yes, I’ll be home.”

There’s no “good” which isn’t a good sign here, not today. Thor just moves on to talking about his PE dodge ball rivalry with Rocket Raccoon—who despite the name and the absurd haircut is not a cute little raccoon but a tiny jerkass—and his newfound obsession with baby animals so Loki’s on the brink of insanity each second before 3:00 pm.

And 3:00 pm wanders by and Loki’s pacing in his apartment like a dolt, open season for the intrusive thoughts to be all this is a trick like Loki’s 12 again and Thor’s discovered girls can do cooler things with their mouths than lie like Loki. Like Loki’s not fucking pregnant by Thor. So, no, not a trick. Not anything to lose his mind over either so what better way to purge himself of the awful, melted-sticky-something feeling after his heart’s stopped racing than League of Legends.

He’s in the middle of battle when out the corner of his eye the front door opens, and blond, big, it’s obviously Thor, so—

That sound.

Is that crying?
Loki uses his shoulder to take off his headphones. Huge mistake. That horrifying crying, that’s definitely not Thor.

“I get that you’re in the middle of a game,” Thor says, hugely passive aggressive, “but I need help over here.”

“You should’ve warned me—“

“I asked if you’d be free!”

Loki wins. No thanks to Thor and the screaming bumblebee hat with arms and legs he’s bouncing up and down against his chest.

“Is that Hope?”

“Who else would it be?” Thor holds Hope away from him toward Loki, so Loki has no choice but to take her for the sake of her tiny little shoulders.

Her crying decrescendos to a whimper Loki mocks, offending her so much she just pouts and digs her tiny little nails into the skin around his collar like just because he’s not Thor’s size he’s liable to drop her. Which is impossible. She’s cat-sized terrifyingly because so was Thor at one point, and look at him, he’s a massive dumbass who has her for what reason?

“I offered Jan and Hank to babysit.” Thor takes the diaper bag off his shoulder. Okay, him carrying a little bumblebee diaper baby, that was funny, and the residual fear in his eyes, that too.

“And Hank, who thinks you’re at the left end of the IQ bell curve, said yes.”

“I told them we’re pregnant and showed them a sonogram? Come on, you can’t get mad. You’re holding a baby. Look at these teeny tiny ears.” Thor pinches one, and Hope giggles. “Unlike our baby, she can hear you.”

Loki puts the heel of one hand on one of her ears and his fingers on the other because her head’s so small. “Oh, look at that,” he tells Hope. “You can’t hear me.”

Hope jabs a clammy finger at Loki’s eye. She seems satisfied he has to close it to not get it gauged by a baby.

“It’s a matter of time before one of your friends tells another one of your friends who doesn’t know, say Steve, and then he tells his beard Peggy who tells her dear niece Sharon who tells her boo Sam who tells Bucky who tells so-on and so-forth, you short-sided—dummy.”

“’Dummy’?”

“Yes, dummy.” As his eyelashes are pulled at, Loki takes a breath, gives Hope her ears back, and extracts her hand from his face. “There’s a good idea buried somewhere beneath all of this.”

“I know.”

“Your mom is a nice person,” Loki tells Hope. “Be like her. Not like your dad or like Thor over there.”

Hope babbles which Loki takes as “I can’t promise you anything.”

When she’s not babbling, Hope’s the best listener ever. Thor says that’s because she can’t talk back like other people can and do to Loki, which fine, he has a little bit of a point, but actually, no, Hela’s
a good listener and she scalps Loki every other sentence. It’s not like Hope isn’t a dynamic individual with thoughts and feelings. She just expresses them with spit bubbles, unintelligible noises, and body language, a lot like Loki’s sometimes tempted to.

The piss in a diaper thing, not so much.

Thor cracks his knuckles and declares, “Watch how it’s done,” as Hope kicks around on the diaper-changing pad on the breakfast table, not really able to flip around and crawl off because her diaper’s so absurdly full. Really, it’s good she’s hydrated? Anyway, Thor changes her diaper like it’s the end of the world outside, and they’re about to go sprinting for their lives.

“Did you want her to pee on the table? No, didn’t think so.”

Thor tests out his choo-choo here comes the plane skills on Hope and the liquefied banana Jan packed for her snack even though she’s enthused to eat as long as there’s food going into Thor and Loki’s mouths too, food with more chewing involved than hers despite her little chubby cheeks trying.

“I read at ten months babies copy you to learn,” Thor’s saying as he and Hope clap on the ground at absolutely nothing. “Could start teaching them how to kick a ball at this age if they could walk.” Thor turns around to smile because Loki, like most rational people, doesn’t think that’s funny.

Hope does but she also thinks Loki turning her around when she’s crawled herself into a corner is, so she’s not exactly the arbiter of comedy.

The crawling though it’s mind-boggling how fast she goes from in Loki’s periphery to that sharp corner of the dining room table Loki’s going to totally have to replace in his child-proofing spree to come. But Hope’s pea-sized with the energy stores of one, so in the middle of Thor’s re-watch of the Sweden-Hungary game he recorded earlier, there’s a sleeping Hope on his chest, and Thor’s too engaged with watching to notice till Loki’s hands on his mouth keeping in the happy cheer after Sweden scores.

Thor sets her down on Loki’s bed so gently it’s like she’s one of those dandelion seed heads one breath will just scatter.

Or a sleeping dragon.

An hour later, a now awake, screaming dragon.

Hope’s sitting up with a magenta face testing her lung capacity and for Thor, has this betrayed look that shatters something inside of Loki and Thor too given how distraught he is trying to calm her down. He declines Loki’s offer to take her, and Loki, swallowing down any scathing remark, he goes through the checklist of what could possibly be bothering her aloud with Thor.

Poopy diaper, that’s where Thor comes up positive.

“You can take this one,” Thor says.

“Oh wow, so generous.” Loki braces himself, but imagining mashed, digested banana and milk and god(s) or devils know what else, doesn’t compare with getting slapped in the face and fingered up the nose with it.

Thor, with his face in his shirt, says, “Pretty sure this violates that conversation of mass theory.”

Hope’s contented to have the slasher film wiped off her butt and delicate orifices, which Loki would
be too in her place, and has a good old time while Loki cleans her up and strains the limits of his antiemetic.

When Loki cradles her to his chest, telling her how welcome she is, she gets agitated against his chest and holy shit, she bites his nipple. Hard. And when Loki justifiably stops her and holds his now sore nipple, she gets pissed. She’s hungry, fine. She could’ve just not bit his nipple.

Thor thinks it’s hilarious. If he weren’t getting her bottle ready, Loki might throw the fruit bowl at him. Before he hands it to Loki, he tests it on his wrist. So, he knows a thing or two. “She probably senses you’re a mommy too.”

Loki’s too dumbfounded to snatch the bottle. He takes it calmly and hands it to Hope, supporting it with his own hand on the end but not interfering with her fierce ten-month-old sense of independence. “Because I’m carrying the baby doesn’t make me ‘mommy,’ okay?”

“I didn’t mean it like that.”

“I know,” he says. “I might not be as masculine as you, but I’m still a man.”

“Trust me, I’m aware.” Thor pinches his ass as he kisses his temple. “Let me burp her?”

Thor’s really psyched about having someone a tenth of his size, if that, around to show off how strong he is. Not necessarily to Loki but to that overinflated ego of his that’s really loving how weightless Hope must be to him and how overqualified he is to scoop her in the air like she likes and to tickle her silly and to spin her around and oh, there’s puke all over Thor’s shirt.

Revenge is best served liquefied.

Thor panics that Hope’s dying for a total of two seconds then remembers he’s stupid with Loki’s help and calms down and hands Loki the queasy baby.

“She’s full of liquid and you spin her,” Loki says. “Great plan.”

Thor’s grabs his shirt at the back and pulls it over his head, so his muscles and their muscles and the muscles on those muscles get a breather. Great plan actually, uh-huh.

“You should throw up on Thor all the time,” Loki tells Hope.

She giggles and when Thor reclaims her, “a little puke doesn’t faze me, man,” her eyes go wide as her brain processes that all of that skin belongs to one person. Really, Loki can’t blame her. It’s unbelievable.

“Never too young to recognize the guns.” Thor flexes his arm, and Hope’s poking and prodding like this can’t be real, until she realizes that Thor’s got nipples too, but Thor’s stops her mouth before she can snap down. “No biting Uncle Thor. Come on, I’ll feed you, and I’ll wait to spin you around after, cool?”

Pacing with her in his arms, Thor tells her about the first time he got to feed the small pink thing Mom claimed was his little brother, how scared shitless he was of breaking Loki so he stayed perfectly still, tried not to breathe too hard, and Loki was just staring at him so hard. “Prepared me for the future.” The corner of his smile from here where Loki’s leant on the back of the couch. “I’ve never seen eyes green the way his are. You’ve seen them. You’re never gonna see another pair like them. Swear.”

Thor thinks he’s real charming when Loki comes to take Hope to burp her. Not charming enough to
negotiate Hope into letting his hair go though. His glorious golden tresses, ha, come back to bite him in the ass, hasn’t it?

He’s rescued by the doorbell when the chef arrives, but little clever Hope pulls the yearning baby move, reaching out her stubby arms for him like the five or so feet is an ocean, and whoops, now she’s got two fistfuls of his hair to flail around. Thor sighs at Loki’s *told you so* look and makes himself and his soon-to-be brutalized scalp comfortable at the kitchen counter chatting up the chef about baby-friendly food, reminiscing of his early days on solids when picky baby Loki was still on bottles.

“You ate everything and anything,” Loki says. “Of course I was picky compared to you.”

The doorbell interrupts Thor.

It’s Mom.

She’s telling him about her surprise twin birth earlier when Mom sense detects the baby babble.

“What’s that?”

“We’re babysitting.”

Hah, sorry, Thor, Hope as a baby supersedes even her firstborn son. Mom being Mom distracts Hope from playing with Thor’s hair by existing nearby, and Hope willingly lets go to reach out to Mom who picks her up and hugs her and tells her how adorable she is and asks if Loki and Thor have taken care of her because nothing less than perfect is good enough for any baby ever to Mom.

“She’s gotten so big,” Mom says. “Thor, where’s your shirt?”

“Covered in baby vomit.”

“What did you do? Throw her around?” Mom tsks. “Loki, you have to intervene. She can’t stop him and tell him to put her down.”

“Thor’s better at learning from experience than being told,” Loki replies.

Mom side-eyes him. And Thor for sounding like he almost laughs. “Thor, go put a shirt on. You’re not eating dinner like that.”

“Yes, Mom.”

Bye, bye, back dimples.

Mom hands him Hope to change her diaper—it’s a number one, phew—and hovers, which turns diaper changing into a brain surgery because like hell, if Loki, who’s the one Mom rarely corrects, is falling short in her expertise. She doesn’t say anything about the job he did, so good, he didn’t shit the bed.

“She bit Loki in the nipple earlier,” Thor says at the dinner table because he’s classed it up enough for Mom in a San Francisco Giants jersey.

Mom feeds Hope a carrot she only has her two top teeth to chew through, an ordeal for her it seems, the grimace she makes while doing it. So cute it strains Loki’s cheeks to not grin. “You were a biter too. She’s used to being breastfed. She didn’t mean anything wrong by it.”

Thor’s looking at Loki like he’s going someplace with this. “So, I read somewhere on the internet
“That guys, pregnant guys, they lactate too. I mean, is that true?”

Hope stares at him as she gums another carrot.

“They’re full of the same hormones that induce it. Why wouldn’t they? Your brother will.”

“Hot.”

Mom’s glare would spontaneously combust anyone with shame.

Thor cheeses instead.

Loki kicks him in the shin. His ankle getting locked between Thor’s legs is worth it. Since Loki has more freedom with his leg held hostage than Thor does holding it hostage and can accept Hope from Mom over the table to feed her mashed potatoes she huffs down faster than Loki can refill the spoon.

Thor confirms that Jan packed bath time supplies to Mom.

Mom unsurprisingly stays after dinner to supervise.

Loki and Thor devise a good cop, bad cop strategy--Thor does the distraction, and Loki does the washing. By the laws of chaos that surround all babies, very similar to the chaos that surrounds Loki, Hope wants to eat bubbles instead of play with her rubber ducky, and she doesn’t want to stand still for Loki to lather her up more than one square inch at a time. But they manage.

Hope laughs her ass off as Loki fastens the snaps on her doozy yellow onesie. The sleepy laugh.

Thor cradles her against him and lies down on the bed. “I’ll stay with her.”

Mom kisses him on the cheek and smooths the hair down on Hope’s head. Out at the front door, she touches Loki’s cheek, saying a thousand things but none of them out loud, déjà vu to all the frustrated moments in her office after calls home when Loki fought back or when his preemptive strikes landed too hard for the adults’ tastes but Mom just said that it’d all be alright.

The apartment’s eerily quiet after the door shuts behind her.

Back in the bedroom, Hope’s sleeping on a sleeping Thor.

Loki shuts the door and goes to read a book out on the balcony.

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“I never would’ve taken you for the baby type.”

Janet’s in a camel leather jacket that elevates her pixie cut from rebelling college freshman to mid-20-something rising star at a lifestyle app startup over in Cupertino. Either way out of Hank’s league. But Loki’s hyperaware of the gulf of two years between them, that he’s the before to Janet’s after, the maturity glow-up.

Even Hardcore Henry Pym’s in the backseat condescending to Thor about putting in a car seat “without strangling my goddamn baby, dopey jackass” in a whisper because Hope’s drifting off back to sleep.

“Happy to proven wrong,” Janet says.
Thor’s the gentle waves down at Half Moon Bay around this time of night in a human body. Genuinely, so wholly calm the overflow rubs off on Loki so Hank’s smug look fails to do anything but hope—could they have chosen another name maybe?—he makes this quick.

“Barton’s not claiming your kid. Says he doesn’t know who the dad is but it’s not him.”

“Because he’s not the father,” Thor says. “I told you, I am.”

Hank doesn’t believe that and looks to Janet who’s no comment, focused on being a good friend totally not judging Thor hard in her head. “I get it. You’re close. You want to go to bat for him like he’s done all your foolishness all these years. But you don’t need to go that—“

Okay, Thor’s tongue’s in his mouth.

Thor and his tongue pull back, but his arm gets comfortable around him.

“Jesus Christ, what was that? You Europeans, goddamn, I don’t understand it…“

Janet hugs Thor—the arm around Loki keeps him from removing himself from even being near that—and thanks him for babysitting, that Thor’s going to be as good of a father as he is at everything else at this rate. Yeah, sure, inflate his ego more. She thanks Loki too, congratulating him, and Loki congratulates her on cancelling out Hank’s awful genes in Hope.

Impressively while getting into the car, Hank’s still ranting about the degeneracy and amorality of the world and how difficult it’s going to be to raise a kid in this world but unlike Thor and Loki and everyone else, he has Janet to “be a beacon of light in all this ethical dark.”

Hank pulls off at a reasonable speed. Hope’s really a miracle worker.

“I bet I’m gonna like him one day,” Thor says. “Years from now but one day.”

Chapter End Notes

Hank tha god of burns. But really, those darned rootin tootin yuropeens with their mouth kissing.
Thor’s stopped giving fucks because he’s Thor, and Thor is short-sided. It'll bite him the pretty ass soon enough.
Hela, Hogun, and Volstagg sit in Thor’s backseat, and it isn’t the start of a shitty joke—confusing Loki’s life for one is an easy mistake—but the compromise sealed by one of Thor’s sloppy pretending-that-it-doesn’t-count-as-sex-because-Mom-guilt-eventhough-Thor-never-says-that-because-Mom-and-sex-in-the-same-sentence-ew blow jobs this morning.

Two of Thor’s friends equals one Hela. No argument there.

Thor and Volstagg are complaining about a bad call the ref made at last Friday’s hand egg game. You know, real enthralling stuff. Yet Loki’s adjustment of the volume is Cmd-Z’d by Thor’s on-steering wheel buttons like Loki’s the bad guy.

He fishes his ear buds out of his bag.

Hela pokes her face between the headrest and door, so she’s at his ear. “As soon as you found out, you should’ve fucked Barton. You fuzz some of the dates. He’d be scared out of his mind. I’m surprised he can tie his shoes. He wouldn’t realize till you told him in an argument at little Clint Junior’s 8th birthday he’s been raising another man’s child.”

“That’s fucked up.” Not Loki—he agrees but in a positive, Hela’s the Romi to his Michelle way—but Volstagg bursts into the conversation.

“Fucked up? Ha. Being stuck with him”—she points with her middle finger at Thor—“for 18 years plus is fucked up,” Hela says. “When I was making fun of Loki for having a crush on his brother, it was the fact that it was Thor I was making fun of. I wouldn’t have given a shit if his big brother was Fandral. He’s gross, but not the worst. Pencil dick knows how to work a clit.”

“Speaking from experience?” Volstagg asks.

“You don’t have to answer that question,” Hogun suggests.

So, of course, Hela does. “Who do you think whistle-blew pencil dick? Fandral’s the thirstiest fucker around.”

Thor’s superior. “All I have to say is your boyfriend is Thanos.”

All the eye rolls at the Chad “Oh,” analogous to the Chimpanzee shit’s-going-down scream, from Volstagg. “You can’t talk. Holy shit. You’re, Miss, blacklisted by association with that maniac. Tainted forever.”
That’s—Loki’s not tainted forever. No. Volstagg’s talking about Hela because she’s with Thanos, with him like... Whatever. It doesn’t matter. Loki’s not tainted. No need to dwell to it.

“By his spit? It digests and dries quickly. His cum on the other hand, sorry, Thanos actually knows what a condom is.”

Volstagg’s just living for the drama. “She’s kinda got a point there, Thor. You were always telling us, ‘I’m not risking my dick to get off.’ I admit in the heat of the moment, getting caught up, I’ve been there, but—”

Thor says, “No, man,” while Loki gags and Hogun clears his throat.

“—let me finish, you asses—I know how to pull out.”

“Kill me,” Loki says. He turns and tells Hela, again, “Kill me.”

Hela’s tongue between her teeth while she cackles clashes with her black lipstick. “Why when I can see you suffer? You’ve been begging for Thor’s goo shooter for years. All that shit you talked about his baseball bat having a bigger STD stockpile than the CDC, and you let him go raw. Like I said, you got worse than herpes.”

“Shut up,” Thor tells her.

“Make me, fuccboi.”

Loki swears on his life he doesn’t mean to laugh, okay, but he just, it happens, and Thor, who’s solidly in defensive mode, takes it as Loki cosigned all of what Hela said. So, first thing out of the truck, Thor gets real close to Loki to hiss, “She compared our baby to herpes.”

The one statement that Loki did not agree with, he fixates on.

“They’re both permanent.”

“For fucks sake, you’re shitting me. You just let her walk all over—“

“—you, yeah.” Loki’s stopped outside the hospital entrance rather than bring the argument inside.

Hela goes around them and shoulder shoves Thor.

“Hela’s got a brand of humor you’re not buying. Whatever. But she’s here. And who isn’t? Sif. And Fandral.”

“Everything cool?” Volstagg asks as he and Hogun arrive on the scene.

“Fantastic,” Thor says. All pissy, he leads the way.

Hela’s already found herself a seat in the OB/GYN waiting room and asks, “How far is he in his feelings right now?” over the Parenting magazine she’s grimacing through.

Answer: tremendously far.

Mom’s glee fails to stir him when is that a smile teasing the corners of Hogun’s lips after she’s warned Hogun she’s going to draw blood today?

“I’ve grown out of the fear of blood, Dr. Freysdottir. Promise.”
“I haven’t grown out the love for it,” Hela says. She’s leaning in over Loki toward the arm Mom’s
drawing blood from because Mom doesn’t want her trying any “funny” stuff—okay, funny as hell—
and Hela wants a front row view of Loki’s “life juice.” “Are you going to DNA test to make sure it
is Thor’s?”

“Because I’d forget if I had someone else’s—” Loki self-censors because Mom has a needle in his
arm, and no, she wouldn’t hurt him, but she doesn’t have to go out of her way to make it comfortable
for him.

“I was asking the doctor. She’s probably hoping it’s someone else’s secretly.”

“No,” Mom says. With a cotton puff that’s almost Loki’s shade over the insertion site, she slips the
needle out. “I trust that my son wouldn’t be as irresponsible with anyone else as he was with Thor.”

“Dr. Freysdottir’s low-key savage.” Volstagg’s stopped conveniently staring at the half-woman on
the wall now that Loki’s bloods off in a vial over on that tray behind Mom. “But, ma’am, I agree. I
said, and Hogun will back me up, that Thor should’ve used condoms. Thor told us he always does.
The man has a condom stockpile in his glove compartment. But clearly he didn’t.”

“Like I knew I could get Loki pregnant,” Thor says. “We’re both clean. We’re guys. We’re—were
only fucking each other. Why would we need condoms?”

Mom tapes the cotton puff on Loki’s arm. She’s shutting everyone up on anticipation for her
response because direct reference to the obvious, that Thor and Loki did the nasty. As brothers are
not wont to do. “Loki, can you lift your shirt up for me?”

Anticlimax.

Thor comes out of his brooding chair to witness their 3D honey sculpture baby squirm their arms and
legs, the beginnings of toes and fingers at the ends of them. His—very not microscopic—massage
Loki’s shoulder while Mom looks around, examining for anomalies that got Loki’s throat tight
reading about in the library and keep his heart behind his eardrums. He squeezes when everything’s
fine.

They just exchange a look since kissing is a no-go.

“This is a better Alien movie than Prometheus,” Hela says.

“Xenomorphs are cute,” Loki replies. When Thor makes a face, Loki insists, “They’re cute.”

Volstagg starts sobbing into Hogun’s shoulder. Something about the “beauty of life” and children
being gifts and all kinds of Mom-bait. Funny how he shuts right up when Loki mentions stopping for
phở on the way home. Loki tells him, “Never get pregnant, or you might eat us out of earth and
planet.”

Besides Mom, Hela, and Hogun, Thor gets the reference. Loki’s so proud he lets Thor do the doting
baby daddy thing and hold out his trench to put back on which he’s never going to be huge and
pregnant enough not to do, but it’s the final shove needed to get Thor out the macho stoic mindset
right back to showing off his copy of the sonogram to the nurses they pass because “my baby,
they’re so perfect.”

Loki’s smug as fuck making eye contact with Hela while they wait for the elevator and Thor reaches
his ass off saying that the baby has his nose and his chin to Hogun and Volstagg.

Thor’s always been the only choice for a reason.
“It’s two hours of your life. Two whole hours. You spend triple that on CS:GO no problem. But for something that matters to me, no, it’s too long. This could be my last football game ever, Loki.”

That is how Loki ends up, on a Friday night, here at the bottom of the stairway to his living hell, the no-man’s land where the all black everything’s gonna make him standout in the hey, that person’s weird way, which will give way to hey, that person’s Thor’s little brother to ew, that’s Loki. Loki swallows his pride. The crowd’s thinning out, filling in the spaces in the quilt of white and crimson, so in two minutes, American national anthem time, he’ll be the only one of these stairs, and fuck if he’s doing that to himself.

Loki spies with his little eye a second row vacancy next to… Bruce Banner.

Versus thousands of people. Head to head, Loki’s got more experience with stink eye from Banner.

Behind the glare of his glasses, Bruce’s tranquility shatters in half to the familiar angst-tinged flavor of exasperation.

“I don’t know who’s a bigger surprise here, you or me,” Loki says. The plus of the school’s unhealthy investment in football—the seats here are foam. “You I think. Aren’t these things too intense for you?”

“Some of us learn to treat our problems. It’s called personal development.” Bruce, the dork, uses her pointer finger to push his glasses up his nose. “Tony invited me. And by invite, I mean, if I didn’t come, threatening to erase my cloud because the ‘don’t be evil’ mantra doesn’t extend by inheritance, he says. So here I am.”

“But he’s not here himself?”

“He went off with some cheerleader from the other team. I don’t know. Don’t really want to.” Would anyone?

Whatever it is Tony’s doing to disappoint that cheerleader takes him through nationalistic karaoke. Bruce, the ultra-hippie, vegan tree-fucker he is, abstains all self-righteous about it—he and Steve Rogers are friends after all—while Loki stands next to him checking out Thor’s pert ass in the stretchy white pants showing off his jock strap lines that’d totally sting if snapped back and leave red marks Thor would make that one open-mouthed shock face at—great, someone’s in Loki’s—is that Dad’s bodyguard?

It is. Tyr, Dad’s dirty hands, blocker of Loki’s prime view, in a Raiders ball cap like he plays poker on Wednesday with Steve Rogers Senior. He moves, but the anthem’s ended and Thor’s moved too, so lost cause there. Tyr does the signature hair-behind-the-ear-earpiece-press maneuver and the sleeve-cough-command cover-up.

When Loki waves, Loki can hear it in his head, Tyr’s grunt.

Another of Dad’s guards has ninja’d into Loki’s row during the America, Fuck Yeah adrenaline rush, and the random next to Loki and his random wife, they’re told, from what Loki can hear over the announcer riling up the crowd, there’s two ivy league educations in it for you if you scoot your ass.

Monetary coercion. Dad’s daily bread.
Lying low in some oversized red windbreaker and Dadcore wash jeans and yuck the chunky Nike sneakers because Dad’s stuck in the 90s, Dad scoots past, looking down at Loki under the Marvel cap he’s got in to get Loki’s reaction to the big reveal that gee golly Dad’s here too. Whatever. “Hello, son.” He notices Bruce and gives him the fake not-smile smile. “Young man, it’s been a while. Bruce your name was?”

Bruce has a pained look nodding. Ooh, yes, right, part of the silent Dad-hating majority.

“A gift from your mother.” Dad forces a take-out box into Loki’s lap. “She worried you’d eat whatever greasy American food they’re serving here, and we both know that’s not up to standard for my grandchild.”

And Loki’s just lucked up on being the vessel for that grandchild, right?

Back in Norwegian: “But it’s good to see you here. You should be trying to enjoy what’s left of your freedom while you still can.”

“This isn’t my idea of a fun Friday night.”

“Fun is a privilege. Learn that now. It’ll be valuable for you soon enough,” Dad says. “Your personal feelings aside, you should be out here cheering for your brother on the top of your lungs regardless. If anyone deserves your support, it’s him. If not for him, your irresponsibility would’ve destroyed the future of my company.”

Dad can’t even give Loki the courtesy of his attention, so devoted to the son that can do no wrong. There’s no anger in his words or his face. Anger requires some care, some effort that Dad’s stopped putting into Loki way before the baby.

Like Loki’s ability to give a fuck about Dad’s opinions. He plugs out the screaming and the commentary Dad won’t have for him because light-hearted father-son talks are a privilege too. Good riddance. The dropping clock’s Loki’s cue to bottom out the Phantogram in his ears.

Steve throwing, the other team trying but failing to tackle, Thor catching, Thor scoring—does that even need to be said—it’s all a formality to the lopsided halftime score line proving to the naysayers, the handful of them left, that Thor’s the overflowing package and life’s really not fair.

(hopefully the baby will get that instead of Loki’s luck)

Lorelei’s totally-not-on-purpose-wedgie congratulates Thor, her bent over getting her pom-poms she just had to drop near Thor’s stuff on the bench and not where all the other cheerleaders put their stuff. She plays “Oh, I didn’t see you there,” and Thor, instead of letting her down easily like, like he should, he poses for a selfie with her and he lets her snuggle in close for a picture Liz Toomes, the little ninth grade president, like just has to take tee-hee.

She whispers something in his ear that she follows with a deliberate tongue swipe over her stripper red lipstick. Gross.

“Let’s go see your brother,” Dad tells him, patting him on the back like he’s comforting Loki for the inner turmoil he must be feeling after that, right. It’s a decent proposal though—Thor shirtless in those pants—so Loki complies. Dad invites Bruce too because the more people to witness the majesty of his sperm, the better.

Cherry-eyed and grinning, Baked Tony runs into them—literally in Bruce’s case—and his filter’s at the moment more like two soggy strings the shouted, “Hey, it’s King Leopold,” slips right through.
Dad’s judging Howard Stark’s parenting so hard right now. The irony. “Mr. Stark. I’ll take a guess and assume neither of your parents could make it. So busy doing whatever it is they contribute to the world.”

“Not over-engineered products better off being slung as status symbols, ‘cause that’s what they are. They sure as hell aren’t ‘technology,’ not in any honest sense of the word.”

“Don’t forget the slave labor and exploitation of Chinese factory workers,” Bruce says. “The King Leopold reference sort of hinges on that.” He pulls out his phone, which doesn’t gleam with the golden apple on the back. “And before you ask, no. I try not to be a part of the problem.”

“Rare to meet a consistent man in this world,” Dad says.

If Dad’s expecting Loki to not defer to spectating, well, he should’ve not been a shitty dad. Loki’s stock in this conversation ended when Dad decided to give his future job to Heimdall.

“You call it exploitation. They call it making a living. I call it business. Your analogy is tasteless at best. But you’re children. You thrive on emotion, on impulse.” Dad has a pointed look for Loki. His mouth does a smile-like action. “For example, Loki here getting himself pregnant on teenage whim.”

…really?

Dad peeks at his ugly ass Rolex. “Only eight minutes left. I should get to your brother while I can.”

You fucking vindictive, asshole. Shaming Loki like it’ll un-pregnant him. It’s not Loki’s fault that his plan of exploiting his power to find out Loki’s baby daddy fell through because he has too much faith in his perfect firstborn to put two and two together. Like Loki’s going to spill now. Fuck that.

“Uh, por que?” Tony says.

Dad’s abandoned the crime scene, so Loki’s forced to do clean-up.

“You heard him right. I’m pregnant.”

Malicious compliance is his fucking jam.

“The only thing I think Ronan’s putting in that weed is holy water and shredded bits of the Bible, so um—I heard you say what I think I heard you say, not, ‘hell no’ like I expected? Bruce?”

“Yes, he said he’s pregnant.”

“I am. Come on. Think about it. Why would Thor put the ball under his shirt? He was celebrating. He’s going to be an uncle,” Loki says. “I don’t carry the sonogram around in my wallet like him, but if you ask, he’ll pull it out and tell you how excited he is.”

Tony’s mouth’s fallen open, half because of the weed, half because he can’t believe what he’s hearing. “Nope, there was something else in that weed.”

“Male pregnancy has the same statistical likelihood of ASA, the disease where blood collects—“

“We know, Bruce,” Tony says. “We’re all smart cookies here. At least, I thought that. Because teenage pregnancy, like I told Pym before he punched me in the face—no regrets there—not very smart. Loki, tell it to us straight, who did your brother get pregnant? You’re covering for him or something since word on the street is guy strokes so fast he can light a fire, probably has broken many a condom—“
“Me, I, Loki, am pregnant.” He gives Bruce the *See, even you realize I’m not lying* look.

Bruce concedes.

Tony Stark is finally shocked speechless. “Huh.”

Huh, the perfect word to describe how curious it is that Dad’s skipping dropping the bomb of “oh boys good game did I mention I’m going to be a grandpa courtesies of Loki” on James Rhodes and Danny Rand and Drax and Bucky, but not, in some condescending father-to-son, Sam—who’s just as shocked as Tony but topped off with a wince smile—and T’Challa—who’s blank-faced because he’s apathetic as fuck toward Loki.

By the end of halftime the whole football team will know Loki’s pregnant and Dad will know—think but they’ll fall for the intimidation—one of them did it.

Dad approaches Steve contemplating Jesus alone on a bench, and Loki witnesses from afar, the slow transition from half-concentration to interest in seeing where Dad’s fatherly figure lecture’s going to the pieces Dad’s laid out that Loki’s pregnant connecting in Steve’s mind. Steve looks astonished.

Dad’s entire demeanor shifts from caring to suspicious as fuck.

Like Loki would ever.

Loki braves the swarms of shirtless Chads and their staring nipples for the biggest pecs of them all, totally not getting more worried by the second that Thor’s gone off and accepted whatever offer Lorelei put on the table because Thor’s fulfilled with where they are now and doesn’t need or want whatever anyone else has.

At a urinal, it’s Thanos, and Thanos’ pulling his—no, no, no, nope, not again, doesn’t need see that again, and thank everything, it flops out, out of sight behind the divider at the urinal. “Didn’t know you had a piss fetish.”

Loki would turn around, but Thanos looking at him now, so he teaches his mouth how to move again and says, “Sorry, I was looking for Thor.”

“Fuck Thor.” Alrighty then. “Why?”

Ivan Vanko goes over to a sink which is as far from Loki as Thanos is, so everything he says can and would be heard by him. And it might’ve been weeks since they’ve last spoken one-on-one, but nothing’s changed about Loki having to answer Thanos.

Loki gets closer but keeps his eyes above Thanos’ shoulders, high enough that the bottom edge of his vision finishes at Thanos’ chest thankfully. “Um, Dad’s telling the whole world I’m pregnant to try to flush the father out because in spite of his feverish searching for the past few weeks by combing my phone records, tracking my phone’s location, and backdoor reading my texts, he’s come up short.”

Thanos laughs which diffuses the tension. Kind of, a little bit. Barely. “So, you have to go warn Thor’s fragile ego Clint Barton’s gonna man-up for his kid. Can’t have him throwing a temper tantrum.”

After the trickling’s stopped, Thanos aims himself and his—what Loki refuses to look down at like Thanos’ daring him to, but Loki just, he can’t, not without reliving the salad Mom packed him, or not even that, how about embarrassing himself because he freezes like a little bitch. So, Loki relies on the cues of the blurry things below him, between them, for it being tucked away from Loki. “You’ll
have to get off Thor’s dick for a second during Thanksgiving break to catch me up on how your retarded plan to be a parent’s panning out.”

“Loki?”

Thor fina-fucking-lly shows up. The reason for Loki to move himself away from Thanos. He’s annoyed, which Loki gets. He hates Thanos. But annoyed Thor, Loki’s so equipped for him. “You okay?” He looks over at Thanos washing his hands and chatting with Vanko, who’s completely silent and no doubt hoping for him to go away. “What are you doing in here?”

“I was looking for you, but I should’ve realized you’d be somewhere with Lorelei,” is not what Loki intends to say at all, but eh, he says it. He regrets it like a motherfucker when Thor gives him this confused look that says Loki’s going to have to explain himself to the point his insecurity will be loud and clear.

“What? Why would I be with Lorelei?”

Would it really be too much for Thor to ask Loki before wrapping an arm around him and Tarzan-ing him away from Thanos, who’s not even worried about touching Loki? Yes. When Thor barely blinks after, resuming his regularly scheduled staring into Loki’s soul, it clearly is.

“I just saw you getting close. Nothing. Forget it.”

Thor side-eyes—and it’s so sad how hot it is because it only happens when Loki’s extra pathetic—him. “She was telling me she was having a party tonight and when I told her I was going, she demanded a selfie to make up for it,” which isn’t that bad. Until he says, “There’s nothing going on between us,” in a deadpan.

“Oh. Well.” Loki’s hands need something to do instead of clutching into that white spandex second-skin he’s got on that exhibit his excited nipples, so he crosses his arms, holding onto his biceps. “Dad brought me in here to visit you. Do you know where he is right now? Talking to Steve.”

“Talking to Steve? Steve hates—no, dislikes, hate’s too strong a word for anything Steve does—talking to Dad, and Dad hates talking to Steve. Why?”

“Because he’s telling your entourage one-by-one I’m pregnant to see who’s the most scared shitless because anyone would be scared shitless my baby is theirs. Steve seemed pretty scared shitless, so I bet that’s going well.”

Thor full-body tenses—making Michelangelo shed a tear on the other side as David’s put to shame while Loki, who’s here right in front of him, is frozen out of the sheer lack of brain power at his disposal because it’s all gone to the ‘gawk at Thor’ reflex—then says, “Don’t do or say anything. I’ve got this.”

Whatever the hell that means. One thing for sure is Loki’s going to find out. He follows after Thor on his one-man mission. Until Thor stops on top the obnoxious logo locker room center, one of his hands held out behind his back telling Loki to stop too.

“Everyone.” Thor’s voice is raised, but it’s not yelling. Pissed off Thor yelling is DEFCON 6 for all in a mile radius. In the middle of the locker room, everyone’s within leaping-and-getting-their-faces-caved-in range. Including Thanos. Yikes. “I have a few words I’d like to say. Today’s one of the last football games I’m ever going to play, and I’m probably going to set a few records on the way to winning. It’s a night worthy of telling you something I’ve been wanting to for a damned long time now.”
What the hell is Thor going to do?

Dad’s turned away from Steve toward Thor. Cautiously interested over Loki’s obvious influence in Thor’s impromptu halftime speech which he should be but not like he’s thinking.

Thor takes those steps back separating him and Loki so he can wrap an arm around Loki. Or putting himself between Loki and Dad, so if Dad approaches, he’ll have to get through Thor first. But that’d mean—Thor can’t be doing what Loki thinks he’s doing. He wouldn’t. Not here, not now. “Loki’s pregnant.”

There goes Dad’s caution vindicated. Dad rises from the bench to do something, what, even he’s probably not sure, but something now that Thor’s stolen his thunder. Thor did better with it than Dad ever would’ve.

“You’re all wondering who the father is, so I’ll get it out of the way,” Thor says. “I’m the father.”

Thor, Thor, Thor.

It’s the disbelief that gets Loki smiling with Thor despite himself.

“But seriously, you can tell everyone you want, tell your friends, your moms, your dads. Whoever. This is good news, and I want to share the joy with as many people as I can. But if I hear any of you say anything but that this is baby is about to be the cutest thing that’s ever existed, I’ll introduce my foot into your ass, no lube.” Thor’s teeth are glinting in that lopsided smile. “Remember, as far as you know, I’m the father. Cool?”

Shock and outright disgust for everyone!

“What?” Steven Christ says to Bucky because incest, that’s one of those parts of their book they’ve distanced themselves from even in a joking manner. He looks at Loki like he should be the most appalled but is disappointed when Loki isn’t.

Loki rolls his eyes to cement Dad’s perception that it’s dark humor Loki’s edge-lord squad specializes in.

Thanos’ visibly chuckling over at his locker. Even he’s got to be a little impressed with Thor.

Loki is. “I can’t believe you did that,” he murmurs to him as the soundtrack to Chaddom starts right back up around them. “Weaponizing preconceived notions. You’re—I’m proud.”

Thor’s tongue sweeps over his teeth, tempting Loki with it.

“Thor.” Dad’s swooped in. “I was getting finished telling your friends how pleased I was with your performances out on the field and noticed you were missing. Then you came and gave your speech.” Of which he was not a fan. “I see your brother already got to you first.”

“Can we talk?”

Dad blames Loki with his eyes then tells him, “Of course.” Like no one else would have the privilege of, Loki most of all, because forbid he passes up an opportunity for a power play, Dad lets Thor lead the way over to Thor’s locker. And fuck is he proud of it. Everyone in the locker room knows who Dad’s favorite is. “Before you continue, I must say how proud I am to see you continuing to take care of your brother. At least one of you sees the importance in being responsible.”
Instead of giving in his feral urge to lose his shit—caping for Loki to Dad is a little known expertise of Thor’s—Thor drops himself down on the bench and in a one-off ode to his Id, turns on his amazing ass to Dad. “Thank you.” He grabs that spandex shirt he wears underneath his uniform and continuing with the brazen disrespect of not dedicating his full attention to Dad, pulls it on. Loki’s swooning to the stars. “Dad, I don’t get why it’s so important to you to know who the father of the baby is.”

Well damn, Thor. Screw beating around the bush.

“A father has a responsibility to his child, whether it was planned or wanted, to be there from the beginning. I have a responsibility to make sure this happens.”

Puh-lease.

Bucky and Steve conveniently visit Sam, who’s locker is at the shut-up-and-you-can-eavesdrop distance. Loki would want a front row seat for the bullshit too. Dad’s built a billion-dollar empire on it.

“I’m here,” Thor says. “Loki and me and Mom and you, why can’t we be enough?”

“It sounds like you know who the father is and have strong opinions about it.”

“I do. When I found out—Dad, it took me weeks. It’s not the easiest thing, them being the father.” Thor speaks in third person effortlessly. “Dad, take it from me, I get that you want the full story and you want to lay into them, but you don’t want to know.”

“It’s that bad?”

Thor’s hands settle on his knees. “Yeah.”

“Do you have anything to say?” Dad asks Loki. “Aren’t you going to defend yourself against the accusation that your choice in partner is that poor?”

“No.”

Dad’s aggravated either over the anti-climax or over it not being, well, Thanos or someone to justify any unilateral decisions he’s got planned for Loki’s baby because it’s for the best or he’s trying to protect them. Asshole, please.

The coach starts shouting about how they all need to get their gear on, skips telling Dad, and by extension Loki, that he should go too because he wants to keep Dad’s donations rolling in post-Thor’s graduation.

“I’d wish you luck in the second half, but I doubt you’ll need it.” With a look of pure contempt thrown at Loki, Dad gets the fuck out of there before he destroys his rebuilt public image in a high school football team locker room.

Thor bumps into him standing up definitely on purpose. He doubles down nudging Loki’s ass with his helmet. “Come walk with me.”

Loki does, close, so their arms are pressed together, him being shorter than Thor saving him from getting chopping in the head by Thor’s shoulder pads. Thor stops their walk at the mouth of the tunnel, which Loki would think because where he’s stopped, he’s like a *Sports Illustrated*—the sports version, not the boobs and bikinis—cover, just barely touched by the blinding stadium lights, the heroic captain, saving everyone’s nights, including Loki’s.
“I can’t believe you did that,” he says. “If you wouldn’t have pulled that off right, Dad would’ve realized there was something up, and it would’ve been over. Three months ago you couldn’t lie to Dad for shit. Now, look at you.”

“Do what I have to do to protect my family.” Only Thor’s fingertips cradle his sides, but this, the two of them stood here this close, it’s definitely in 80s high school sweetheart territory. Not brotherly in the least. “What did you and Thanos talk about?”

Real slick, Thor.

“How I’m going to run off to Paris with him and Hela to be a sibling spouse, what else?” Loki slips out of Thor’s slack hands. “I told him what Dad was doing, and he thought it was funny, told me I was dickmatized, the usual.”

Bucky and Brock come by in their helmets snarling “Ready bro” and throwing high fives and fist bumps at Thor that Loki dodges for no reason since Thor’s got not getting Loki slapped and punched covered like the brother bear he is.

“You should get going,” Loki tells Thor.

“I should.” Thor’s embarrassingly obvious about rehearsing the kiss that’s not going to happen, not here, in his head. Funny that the thing that made it so exciting for him is now a curse. Welcome to Loki’s world. His helmet goes on, and okay, Loki’s imaging tangling his fingers in the bars and contorting his lips to catch Thor’s on the other side. But that’s been a weird fantasy of his pre-actually having sex with Thor.

“Stick around after the game.” Thor’s front halves out of the tunnel for a quick hit of the high of being worshipped. ”I’ll drive you home.”

“If you went to the party, I wouldn’t hold it against you.”

“I’m not,” he says, not even looking at him, “and you would.”

Loki records the 88 on the back of Thor’s jersey, the blond hair hiding ‘Odinson’, Thor’s fists in the air because this is the ‘Daddy was a stereotypical jock’ moment he’ll tell his daughter or son when they ask what Thor was like in high school.

In other news, Dad doesn’t talk to him for the rest of the night.

#

Thor shoulder bumps him and shoves the ten trillionth congratulations your brother one-upped you in teenage irresponsibility text disguised as a vanilla “congrats brah” in Loki’s face like three minutes ago Loki didn’t say, “I don’t give a shit. Stop showing me them,” because Thor’s still Loki’s brother in the non-protective, non-mutual-understanding-of-their-parents ways.

If one, they weren’t in pubic—in a restaurant at that—two, Mom wasn’t sitting across them, and three, these pancakes weren’t spongy disks of heaven, Loki would spear Thor’s hand to the table with his fork.

Mom sets her spoon down sighing. Uh oh. “You two need to stop whatever it is you’re doing and act like brothers should.”

Loki’s thankful for that stopping Thor and his next fucking congratulations text in his tracks, but
because of the closest to a direct reference to the extra-fraternal relations outside a clinical setting they’ve gotten yet? Is it worth it?

“But I love Loki,” is not the answer Mom wants to hear from Thor.

“Of course you do. He’s your brother.” She’s firmly back in the see no incest, speak no incest mindset. Under the pretense that platonic-brother magic created this baby, she starts discussing the impending descent of their extended family on Borson Manor for Thanksgiving, shudder, and how mysterious hickies on Loki—the ones from last night are all Thor’s fault—will shift the chatter from how to who, which if Thor’s wearing matching hickies—again, Thor’s fault because Loki had to get even—could go scandalous real fast since sibling incest isn’t that long ago in the family tree for Grandma. And if Grandma plants the seed in Dad’s head, well, rest in pieces to everybody.

“I’ll just stay with Loki then,” Thor says, still not on the same page or even the same chapter as Mom. He’s really missing the underlying point here: Mom would rather they just not. “Dad would be cool with that. Someone to keep an eye on him. Since Dad thinks he’s been banging Howard Stark.”

Aka the devil himself.

“Better choice than Tony,” Loki replies, Thor agreeing. Anyway, Dad might’ve suspected Howard Stark for a hot second in his stages of grief last night—where he got absolutely wasted on vintage rum in his study according to Mom—but it’s a matter of time before what Thor said just validates Dad’s beliefs that Loki’s a slutty gay like those homos in San Francisco—she tries to tell Loki Dad doesn’t think of him like that but his tone whenever referencing Loki’s “preference” tells the whole story—which Mom, the woman who took him to pride the summer after he came out in a rainbow sundress, thinks is an improvement over the truth.

“For now,” she adds. “Your father expressed to me that he was relieved it’s you, Loki, and not Thor. That with the roles switched it’d be an ‘unmitigated disaster.’”

“He’s been telling me that from day one. ‘You’re lucky it isn’t Thor so he can save the world. You should thank him for being responsible.’”

“She doesn’t mean it that way.” And Thor’s pissed why? “She means Dad thinks I’m too much of a fuck-up to be a father. I know because he told me too.”

The pancakes have turned to nondescript mush waiting around in Loki’s mouth. He swallows, shivering a little at the ew reflex of it sliding down his throat.

“I think I hate pancakes now,” Loki says. He’s left hanging by Mom quietly sipping her tea and Thor brooding. Great. “Well, you have a chance to prove Dad wrong now. I actually think that it’s more fun doing that than getting handed his approval on a silver platter. Gold platter. He’d never use silver for you.” He deserves Thor’s really, now look, but what, it’s the truth, isn’t it? “Dad’s an asshole. Old news. You’ll be a way better father than him, I can say that already.”

Mom “Loki”s out of loyalty more than genuinely believing her husband isn’t a trash parent. She’s way too wise to not have realized that the second he looked down at Loki with his scraped open knee and said, “Thor doesn’t cry like this,” to the fucking four year old.

The bacon—turkey, Mom says he eats too much red meat—rinses out some of the trauma of the slop he chewed the pancakes into.

Lips, Thor’s lips, syrupy, are on his, and alright, they’re kissing?

Thor pulls away and leans back in his chair. “Thanks.”
Mom, oh Mom, hails the tea cart down for more, staring intently at the lady.

“I’m taking that as a retroactive thank you for everything I’ve ever done, so you’re welcome.”

Thor’s smiling when he takes a piece of Loki’s bacon.

#

Loki’s interrupted mid-CS:GO match by the doorbell.

In his headset, Tony argues with him about not getting it like Loki’s going to just let his mom stand out there while he commits virtual homicide. Unlike him, Loki actually respects his mother.

A giant cardboard box screaming fragile in red in brown UPS shorts stands there. Except Loki didn’t order anything recently, which no, the deliveryman insists he must’ve because the address is there on the package, and setting it down, revealing that yes, there is a person behind the box—he apologizes for not telling Loki hi and asks him about his day, which whatever, Loki says hi too just to get back to the important things—points out that they’re both right. It’s Loki’s address, but not Loki’s order.

While it’s probably against some rules, Loki signs for Thor’s package because what’s in it to make Thor think hm, I should send this to Loki’s instead of home where I’ve sent everything else I’ve ever ordered.

“Have a nice day, young man.”

Yeah, sure. Loki hip checks the front door shut, carrying the box that’s just small enough for Loki to see over the top of it. Thor’s innovative use of internet shopping consists of sports memorabilia and blow up dolls he hides for Loki to find, after not shitting his pants because that only worked once, and stab to death with pens. Loki’s gentle—very gentle because fragile. He’s not Thor—shaking of the package gives some muffled thumping like there are boxes inside, but they don’t sound big enough to be Thor’s latest pair of cleats.

Whatever. Loki sets it on the breakfast table and returns to CS:GO and the annoyed Tony who’s complaining just to complain because they won the last match without Loki—not as easily, but still they did.

“But seriously, who is the Dad?” Tony asks with random Russians and 13 year old boys listening. “Thanos? I don’t think it’s Thanos. You’re around him, but you don’t like him. Like Pym and I.”

Someone fresh out of puberty congratulates Loki for “fucking her right in the pussy.”

Tony starts snickering, and Loki preemptively tells him to shut the fuck up because he’s not about to end up the “preggo dude lmao” Tony’s little Twitch stream fanboys spam in the comment sections of Tony’s compilation videos.

“Your dad’s the dad,” Loki replies.

Tony gets blown to fuck by a grenade he totally could’ve dodged if he wasn’t stroking out at the image of gray-ass, smug-ass Howard Stark with Loki, and the chat explodes with, “rekt’s, the currency of approval of the average 13 year old boy. “I’m just gonna assume it’s Clint’s,” he tells Loki post-ashurt.

Everyone’s going to assume it’s Clint’s. That works for Loki. Clint should’ve asked him before giving out Loki’s address to his mom. Then Thanos being the baby daddy wouldn’t be some fringe
belief that people—see: Ronan—no doubt hold.

Thor finally shows up wearing dried mud and sweat, and after he’s put a warm kiss on Loki’s temple, Loki covertly pauses to watch Thor inspect the box, which ignites a bright white smile at odds with all the grime on Thor—the necessity of him being here to open the box neutralizes Loki’s feelings about Thor’s dirtiness in his clean apartment—and Thor, he freaking picks up the box and tosses, “I’m going to shower,” over his shoulder like Loki’s not dying to know what’s inside it.

Screw CS:GO. When the shower stops, Loki happens to come into the room, which is his bedroom so who gives a shit what flimsy rationale he has. He’s decidedly not staring at the box, just casually existing nearby it, when the en suite door opens and Thor and the million droplets of water on his muscles—all of them, including the built-in arrow to Penis—come out. Hot as fuck, and Loki’s dick goes nuclear at that, but really, that’s nothing new, Thor being hot as hell naked. Wow, he never thought he’d think that six months ago, but here they are. With an unopened box.

“Everything cool?”

“It depends on what’s in the box.”

He’s happy that Thor thinks that’s funny. “How do you feel about Thanos’ dismembered body?”

“If you’re expecting me to shovel, sorry, I’m pregnant.”

Thor, thank everything and anything, touches the box with clear intent to open it. “I thought you might open it.”

“Good thing I didn’t. Not in the mood to give birth in prison.”

“Dad wouldn’t let us go to prison,” Thor says, peeling back the tape, the most glorious tape-peeling Loki’s witnessed for other reasons besides Thor’s bulging veins in his forearm coming out to say hi. “I’m sorry to disappoint you, but it’s not Thanos’ chopped up corpse.”

“Gasp. What will I ever do with my broken heart?”

Thor, asshole, pushes the packing peanuts out onto the bed, but at the same time, exposes… a tiny Adidas shoe box. He isn’t shocked or pissed that the rest of it’s clearly missing if he bought himself a new pair of sneakers. The exact opposite actually. He’s smiling. “They made 7k pairs total. Do you know how many in size 1? Ten.”

They’re the tiniest Ultra Boosts Loki’s ever seen. Nothing spectacular in terms of color, just the super duper futuristic cyan and gray combination, but. They’re so tiny—he can fit one in his palm.

“I went overboard some.” Thor’s pulling at the second and the third and the sixth shoe box out. “But they’re pairs that I have already or ordered too, and I have to match my kid.”

Everything goes blurry, and tingles are bothering the inside of his nose, and no, no, no, honestly, this isn’t happening.

“Lo, hey.” God, Thor, thanks. Now, the tears are flowing hot down his cheeks which makes no fucking sense. This is a happy moment. But he’s fucking crying. Fuck. “I’ sorry. I didn’t mean—“

“No. No.” No, the only word he can say without sobbing. So, he has to use his physical language like he’s the baby, grabs for Thor’s shoulders and slides his arms around his neck so Thor can’t see his stupid bright pink face. He hopes this baby isn’t as pale as him then they won’t look flayed when they cry. But even if they are, Loki will love them.
Thor too, this big, sentimental doofus, laughing into Loki’s hair. “I did good? I think I did good.”

His tears have intermingled with the water on Thor’s back. There’s the lightest blond peach fuzz on Thor’s skin Loki noticed thousands of years ago of course, particularly during those times when Thor would be the doting big brother and hold him while cried after Thor dug the real emotions out of him. Some things never change, do they?

Loki leans back in Thor’s arms to face him, hopefully a less aggressive pink now. “And I thought being mildly horny all the time was the worst of these hormones.”

Ignoring the towel Loki could accidentally nudge off, Thor’s totally naked. Hm.

Mhm.

Loki kisses Thor like he’s going to suck some of the goodness out of him. He might. Depending on how you define goodness, and if it resembles Elmer’s glue, super sexy, right. Loki separates their lips to give Thor the I’m totally going to fuck your brains out smirk, shamelessly indulging his hands with the contours of Thor’s chest, going down, down, down to the cum gutters teasing the holy shit big outline under the towel Loki slips his thumbs underneath to—have his wrists caught by Thor.

“Can we talk for a second?”

“Are you honestly asking me that right now?”

Thor releases his wrists but also takes a seat on the bed—and the packing peanuts, like little sprinkles of extra absurdity on this absurd sundae—in a less than come-fuck-me manner. Like Thor has to adjust his hard-on so it’s not tenting his towel. Clearly, this isn’t the best time to talk. “Listen, I…I don’t want to just be in you. I want to be with you,” Thor says.

Oh?

“I don’t want you to think that this is only sex. Last time, I gave you that impression, and I’m sorry. I was stupid and… scared if I said I wanted a real relationship you’d freak out on me about the brother thing. Which I knew the truth about but you didn’t and I couldn’t tell you which really fucked me up, but that’s no excuse. I should’ve told you. Because good relationships are built on honesty, and I want us to have a really good one.”

Loki nods for Thor to keep vomiting words. To get these icky ooey gooey feelings dripping all over him out of the way and those tickles in his stomach to stop. He just came here for sex, for fuck sake. “Oh-kay.”

“So, let’s be exclusive.”

Loki’s at a loss for words because Thor, he somehow manages to be beyond words like it’s nothing. Now of all times to forget what those muscles in his throat do, that one in his mouth does. No, he remembers how to breathe. Then, it’s a matter of translating that muted snow feeling inside into sounds his mouth can make.

Loki asks, “Like boyfriends…?”

“No, the same as boyfriends.”

“Okay.” Loki smiles out of reflex but composes himself. “Yeah.”

Thor’s arms wrap around his middle, and as the ground’s stolen out from under Loki, replaced with
packing peanuts and the bed, oh my god, he gives into the urge to squeeze himself and Thor into this one being so Thor can never leave him again, so Thor’s all his, hugging Thor’s shoulders till his arms are really tight.

“You’re super hard, man,” Thor says into his ear.

Loki pulls back, but grinning Thor—and so much for composure—has got him safe and secure right under him. Like always. “My dick thinks you’re sexy even when you’re being mushy.”

“I’ve been planning how to say that in my head for like months.”

Well, Loki’s been planning how Thor would say it in his head for years. When he’s tired or daydreaming and his mind gets away from him and the strict ‘No Thinking About Being in Love with Your Brother’ policy gets a little loose. They’re not skiing in the Alps or on a Tahitian beach, but Thor’s here, and he’s—thinking the word’s throwing the alarms—Loki’s boyfriend. Officially and exclusively.

“So, are we having sex right now?”

“Hell—"

The fucking doorbell.

Thor shouts, “Fuck.” Loki, yeah, that’s what he’s supposed to be on his way to doing, but.

“This can’t be happening right now,” Loki says. “It’s been two months since I’ve gotten fucked, Thor. Two months. Tell me it’s another package you’ll just pick up from the office later?”

“We could just pretend we’re not here. Wait. Shit, I texted Mom I was heading here after practice. She hasn’t talked to me since breakfast yesterday.”

“Dad’s in Dubai tonight. So, dinner’s here. She might’ve gotten off early. I don’t know.”

“Shit.”

They’re staring at each other as one of their phones starts vibrating on the dresser across the room, still fully torqued and touching. Beyond a place where they can straighten themselves out and will their hard-ons away.

“We can make this quick, yeah?” Thor asks.

Loki “uh huh”s him as he helps Thor get his jeans down and his cock out, and Loki has the honors of pushing the towel off Thor for a glorious unveiling of Thor’s cock, as insanely and overwhelmingly huge as ever, the fingertip of seconds Loki gets to gawk at it, overlaid by a ‘belongs to Loki, his boyfriend’ by the giggly parts of him. Thor presses them together in his big, warm fist, Thor, his boyfriend’s fist—Loki’s already almost there.

They cum together. All over Loki.

He changes his shirt, trembling and weird in his skin like, like it’s brand new. Thor touching him makes it bearable, how hard and fast his heart’s going, but after yesterday, Thor walking with him to the door in a towel holding him wouldn’t fly with Mom.

Or for other reasons, Hela.

“What the fuck? It took you long enough.” She stomps in, no Wade trailing after her. Fortunately for
Loki’s post-orgasm high. He doesn’t need it dampened by being an accessory for her infidelity. “I called you twice.”

“I was taking a nap. Pregnant people take a lot of naps during the first trimester.”

“’Nap,’” she says when Thor comes out in joggers, no shirt. “I thought I saw his fucking truck. I was about to take a brick to it.”

“Fuck you too,” Thor says in this cheery tone. He pats Loki’s butt passing by and declares that he’s got the TV for a soccer game, so Hela should get prepared for some shouting.

Loki leads her out onto the balcony to enjoy the sunset.

“Gross, you’re whipped,” Hela tells him. She complains about how all the Lokis in her life disappoint her—her dad’s the Loki who Dad named Loki for because Dad hates him so much he wants to raise a better Loki or something—and Loki hugs his knees to his chest while he still has the ability to and half-heartedly listens because he’s pretty fucking great.

(but he doesn’t say that aloud or he’ll jinx it)

Chapter End Notes

Thor’s getting the hang of this being a mature person thing. You go, Thor Coco.
Poor Frigga. She signed up for teenage rebellion, not incest.
Flash Thompson’s “Good morning, Marvel. We’d like to start off these announcements by congratulating our zealous junior class president Loki Odinson on the pregnancy. We don’t know how that happened or how that works, but uh, good luck,” on the morning announcements about lays out what Monday’s got special just for Loki.

Loki’s chipper macroecon teacher decides that taking a break in their usual curriculum to discuss the economics of parenthood is a supportive gesture because Loki’s been vocal about the later the knuckle-draggers around him have kids to corrupt with their bull, the better it is for him and the world, which the 250k 18-year investment is sure to scare the likes of Peter—Quill not Parker—into
using condoms, thank whatever god or hell beast, so sure, Loki approves—enthusiastically especially when Quill shuffles into his space at the end of the period to say, “Tell me you didn’t one-up the crazy girlfriend.”

Ah, a Thanos-is-the-father truther in the wild.

Quill follows after him closely because he’s dated Thanos’ favorite little sister. He’s been there, done that suicidal behavior thing. “All those times I warned Thor, ‘you let him hang out around Thanos. He’s going to get burned. Get him out while you can.’. Following after him because he’s dated Thanos’ favorite little sister. He’s been there, done that suicidal behavior thing. “But you went and got yourself attached. Willingly.” He tries to close Loki’s locker, but Peter’s missing inch or two cancels out the muscle, so Loki holds it open. “Gamora’s dying for the opportunity to get away from that maniac. She doesn’t say it, but I know. You don’t know what you did to your kid.”

“Guaranteed their height and IQ are going to be higher than yours?”

Peter turns away to rage to himself out loud. His mistake.

Loki’s sure to be gone whenever Peter turns back around.

He’s missed fear and loathing behind consensus reaction to him in the hallway. They’re hiding in their lockers to get away from him again, shoving through each other to avoid contaminating themselves with his evil or worse, targeting themselves to his famous older brother. Thor’s respect is commutative.

Somewhat.

Loki doesn’t need to hear every junior Socrates’ powers of hindsight when Bruce, Bruce would be the quick-to-rage parent behind every serial killer, and Peter—Parker—hasn’t grown his first pubic hair to talk about parenting outside of playing house, the little freshman, and the only thing Erik’s stuck his dick in is his fist so what would he know about safe sex?

Steve Rogers’ pity is worse than all the disapproval.

“If I would’ve given you a ride,” Tony tells him, earnest and exasperated and not paying attention to the lab their doing. Wow, how unusual. “I know people, discrete people. You know I’ve had my run-ins with the fallibility of latex, but I don’t deserve to suffer for that. Neither does some kid I’m not ready for. It’s one thing for you to be masochist, but this? There’s no undo button once they pop it out of you. Don’t let your teenage angst ruin the rest of your life.”

“I’m infinitely more mature at this moment than you’ll ever be, so why would I ever do anything you’ve done?”

“Zero times any value—which infinity isn’t, sorry—is zero, so.”

“Consider this: I want this baby.”


“Tony, cut it out,” Steve says. If he’s expecting thank you, fuck no and fuck him.

“Steve’s a bro,” is Thor’s response to Loki’s anti-Steve feelings, dick. “He’s an empathetic guy. I’d feel bad for you too if you’d got pregnant by someone else.” Gee, thanks, Thor. Loki’s relieved to hear 23 chromosomes are keeping Thor’s pity at bay. “I’d pity myself too.” Like that makes it any better. “And pity would be like low”—Thor holds his hand above the ground—“on my list. I’d be
pissed. Really fucking pissed. I’d kick Clint’s face in because he’d be responsible. But I don’t need to worry about that because,” he says, “you’re all about this and only this.”

What’s worse: Thor’s body roll or Loki liking it? How about both?

Thor’s arm retakes its place around Loki’s shoulders, and he’s leisurely as hell guiding Loki down the hall. “So, what do you say we skip the rest of the day and go see that new Harry Potter movie you and Hela were talking about last night?”

“You actually paid attention to that conversation?”

“How else could I know when to shit talk her back? And I always listen to you.” Thor cocks his chin at Stephen Strange who’s walking up the front stairs with Wong No-last-name and given the shoddy explanation Drunk Thor undoubtedly gave to Strange and Palmer, Strange’s barely contained called it expression doesn’t surprise Loki at all. “Brock Rumlow bet me a grand the baby’s Thanos’. I just bought a bat, but can’t have too many.”

“You obsession with bats doesn’t make sense considering you really don’t have anything to compensate for.”

Thor unlocks the trunk, so Loki can put his backpack inside. “Can’t bash Thanos’ head in with my dick, dude.”

“Okay, Ted Bundy.” Loki lets the fact that Thor’s serious about that in some way slide because wanting to bash Thanos’ head in isn’t exactly an uncommon sentimental on this campus, and Thor’s the kind of person to wait in parking lots after games to fight a player about a foul. “I do hope you’re feeding me before the movie.”

“No, I’m letting you starve.”

As Loki eats, Thor shows him the beginnings of his ideas for baby names, 75% of which involve athletes.

#

Thor’s of the mindset if Mom asks, he’ll tell her, but if she doesn’t, is he going out of his way to? Hell to the no.

It’s good he and Loki are of like minds.

#

Last year, on the week of Thor’s birthday, Thor skipped the whole week of school to take his besties to Dad’s Greek island only to come back that Saturday, the day of Thor’s actual birthday, for Mom and Dad’s extra special “dinner for him, with a black eye and a neck of hickies Loki was compelled to try out on Clint later because—he doesn’t know—he needed a healthy outlet and Thor wasn’t it? Who knows; who cares. Anyway, last year, Thor told Loki three weeks before that he could come if he wanted—Loki passed, not wanting to be there to see Thor fuck tanned Greek girls, no—and the year before that, when Thor went to Aspen—Loki went then—he told Loki two and a half weeks before.

Thor’s birthday’s two weeks—13 days but round up—away.
“Volstagg,” Loki calls out to the mountain with ginger hair ahead of him.

Volstagg comes to an obviously reluctant stop and uses his beard to do most of the smiling for him. “Loki, what can I do for you? Without seriously injuring myself or lasting emotional damage.”

“So, that’s a no to carrying the baby for them then,” Loki replies. “Do you know where Thor’s planning to go for his birthday? I think he might’ve told me yesterday at dinner, but I wasn’t really paying attention. I got a little, a lot distracted by all the food. It’s a problem.”

“Who’re you telling?” Volstagg pats the sack of fat keeping—among other things—him from Thor’s majesty. “Uh, I don’t know. Hasn’t said anything to me about going anywhere.”

Fandral, in their brief conversation after Lit, says the same.

Either Thor didn’t tell them or they’ve gotten good at lying and aren’t telling.

It’s most definitely the former.

Loki’s cool, more than, when Thor interrupts him in the library to ask for an edit on one of his college app essays since a, Loki gets some vicarious thrill of touching the college process that’s still a year away and won’t be anything like he imagined, and b, it’s an opportunity to feel—metaphorically—out the truth from Thor.

Thor’s draped in his seat like he’s had the longest day of his life, which probably would feel like a nanosecond compared to Loki’s longest, but still, where’s the fuzzy blanket to wrap around him and tea to warm him up on the inside?

There’s always a heart-falling-out-his-ass moment when his mind realizes that Thor’s eyes are fixed on him—obliviously after not being fixed on him—because there’s something inherently predatory about them for all the reasons it’s insanely sexy it’s terrifying. He’ll never tell Thor this.

“Is it good enough?” Thor asks.

Thor could keyboard mash, and they’d let him in wherever, so this, his love letter to basketball, it’s more than good enough.

“Getting them out the way now, so you can spend your birthday week partying, where, Singapore, Abu Dhabi?”

“Don’t think I’ll have much time to myself during Thanksgiving break, so I’m not gonna have time to write any essays,” Thor replies. “And no, I’m not spending that week partying. I spent October partying, I don’t want to go to any more parties or get blackout drunk any time in the near future. I’ve been sober the whole month.”

“Are you joking?”

“Nope. I’d rather go out to dinner. Maybe some place downtown. Sure there’s a three star Greek restaurant somewhere in San Francisco.”

Loki studies Thor’s face for any signs and symptoms of whatever the hell’s gotten into him. “Did Mom forbid you or something? If she did, I can talk to her—”

“Loki, how many times do I have to tell you no one can force me to do anything I don’t want to do? Geez.”
“I just—my mind’s blown.”

“I could arrange for other things to be blown. But later. Come on.” Thor not just grabs his backpack but Loki’s books on the table. “You’re gonna get hungry in ten minutes, and I’d like to beat the baby.”

“That’s called child abuse, and I won’t stand for it.”

Thor comes over to push Loki into motion between the shoulder blades, really mastering this gentle man-handling thing he’s been doing.

#

Yeah, they’re not just going out to eat for Thor’s birthday. Loki’s mushy feelings won’t allow it.

Chapter End Notes

Ooooh Thor's birthday is coming hmmm
Join the Thanos Is the Father Truth Movement. We meet in the library on Thursdays at 3:00 pm. There's free cosmic donuts.
Single hours are keeping Loki from a six day vacation from strangers belly-watching when he’s in the vicinity because Thor’s generosity with the sonograms he carries in his wallet and his varsity jacket and has bestowed his inner circle of Chads with is getting received like an elaborate rouse.

Which, fine, Loki gets because this past April he started that rumor about Phil Coulson being dead when he dropped off the face of the earth for that internship he totally didn’t do with the CIA—Dad’s got friends in higher places than D.C. with soft spots for his sons—and you know, after all the boo-hooing, Coulson turned out to not be dead. They’re skepticism is justified. But hey, Loki only implied he was dead, and Thor’s nowhere near good enough a liar to fake the dopey smile he has rolling up with his boys, voices so loud Loki doesn’t need to be a lip reader to pick out the “baby” every other word.

Loki’s locker closes in time with Thor’s arrival, flanked at a Loki-safe distance by his friends. “I’m doing lunch alone then?”

“No.” Thor’s glance over his shoulder at his bros combined with Thor’s purposefully casual arm on a locker, kill Loki now. “Tomorrow’s Thanksgiving which is when we’d have a team dinner or something, and Friday’s the game, so our coach had the idea since today’s lunch is a long period we could all meet up and eat together. That cool?”

“Yeah, but my healthy brain will tell you I’m not on the team.”

“Neither are,” Thor’s saying, looking behind him, “Sharon or Colleen or Quill—“

“I get it.” Loki the little brother’s got a thousand snappy remarks. Loki the—and he’s never going to get used to calling himself this in reference to Thor—boyfriend doesn’t say any of them. “You’ll only have yourself to blame when I piss someone off.”

Fandral, Hogun, and Volstagg riding in the backseat are familiar territory that Loki can navigate blind, and they’ve had an excess of a month on everyone else to get over the whole him being pregnant thing. With the added bonus of it being Thor’s. “Sif hasn’t made it to this checkpoint,” Fandral says after Volstagg pats him on the back for doing the bare minimum as a decent friend and getting the fuck over it, which all Loki can say to is, “Duh.”

Sif’s been playing the long-game of becoming Mrs. Thor Odinson with the impression her competition is the Amoras and Janes of the day. All along, her final boss was right there in front of her, like the last person she expected Thor to go for. Literally Volstagg was more competition than Loki. That has to be a nuke to the ego.
Having that laid out on the table for them, just makes them sympathetic to her. Seriously?

“Sif is a female nice guy,” Loki tells Thor.

Thor shuts Loki’s door. “Dude, let it go.”

What? Fucking surprise Volstagg, Hogun, and Fandral are in silent agreement like the obedient bitches they are. Their stupid squad. Loki’s lived 90% of his life around their cultish bullshit. He thought that one day they’d mature and along with that the ability to think for themselves would come. What was he thinking?

Loki drops it with a smile. Fine. Thor can have that, Sif’s honor, if it’s so important to him. Prince Popular, defender of friends, conqueror of worshippers. Really, they’re not even a step from Thor’s truck when Steve and Bucky and Sam and Sharon and T’Challa and his girlfriend Nakia and so fucking many people get in formation in Thor’s entourage because that’s whose it is. Thor, the centerpiece.

And because things never change, Loki’s just there.

Thor pulls out Loki’s seat at the stupidly long table—off center because Thor’s is center—while carrying on a conversation with Steve who’s going to sit across him a lot, like Loki’s an afterthought. Or better, like Thor used to treat Amora and Brunnhilde and Jane and Loki would comfort himself with because even though he was never gonna be his brother’s boyfriend, at least he wouldn’t be treated like that.

James Rhodes’ plus one Tony, who’s skipping that anatomy class he has with Clint, negotiates his way into the other seat next to Loki—like Volstagg wasn’t jumping at the opportunity to get away from him—and this group lunch deal, brainwashing by Hela and the drama club that’s been jonesing for him to join their ranks seems like it would’ve been the lesser of two evils.

His neighbor across the table Bucky is staring, and Loki just can’t be assed to fake more than indifference at the moment. “Regretting saying yes?”

“I’m regretting a lot of things, including that there’s not food in my mouth.”

“Who are you telling? Steve here used to joke I should check to see if I’d been infected with one of those aliens from the movies. Now, he hit his growth spurt and all this.” Bucky’s feeling up Steve’s arm while Steve goes cotton candy pink mid-sentence. A thousand percent heterosexual and platonic. Sure. “It takes a whole lot of fuel. So, he can’t talk much these days when he’s out-eating me.”

“I put in what I put out,” Steve tells his dearest Bucky.

“Always knew you were egalitarian between the sheets, Steve,” Tony says.

“Yeah, Peggy’s a lucky girl,” Loki says.

Food is finally making its way down the table, so Loki can have something to excuse him not talking.

As Bucky falls into Steve laughing, Pope Innocent sighs and replies, “I didn’t mean it like that.”

“We get what you mean, Steve,” says Thor, reminding his future selves that Loki’s not a cardboard cutout but flesh and blood by pressing a hand between Loki’s shoulder blades. “Eat big to stay big. What I’ve been telling Loki for years. He’s been keeping up with me lately. In no time, he’s gonna
be out here.”

Even Steve Rogers’ concerned about Thor thinking hold his hand way out from his stomach is self-preserving behavior.

“Bold move saying that around a pregnant person,” Bucky says.

“You say bold,” Tony says, “I say freaking suicidal.”

“Loki knows I can’t wait until the whole fucking world—“

“What up, fuckers?”

Thanos.

Yep, his first instincts did good, going off the fuck reaction across the table.

Thanos’ arms embrace the tense silence all the chatty chads have fallen under like an ironic Vegas replica of Christ the Redeemer complete with the chintz of cough-syrup purple aviators and the shiny “fuck you and your eyesight” gold Adidas jacket. You can almost miss Nebula and Gamora scowling behind him.

Not Quill though. That’s bravery, throwing heart-eyes to Gamora right with Thanos in punching-the-life-out-of-him distance. He embarrassingly tries to talk to her when Thanos tells her and Nebula to go find seats “among the fuckbois,” which pans out exactly as expected since Gamora’s never been one to play into Thanos’ hand, and deep in the throes of douche-mode, Thanos’ just jonesing for a reason to do to Quill what he did to Drax who hasn’t learned shit, saying, “Who invited this dickhead?”

“I’m defense team captain, Douglas.” Thanos ruffles Brock Rumlow’s already fucked hair. He stops behind Jack Rollins, who too is awfully quiet. Loki can’t see Thanos’ eyes, but he can sure feel them. And Thor’s fingers digging into the meat of his neck. “Loki, had faith you’d be here.”

“I’m Mr. Congeniality for food.”

“Sure as hell not for the shit company,” Thanos replies. He’s behind Bucky now.

What Loki’s always liked about Bucky is his enduring pride in himself and his left-hook. Unlike 99% of this table, Bucky would get his ass kicked with proud shoulders, shoulders that’ll be broken in no time, but still. Where Steve’s just being obstinate next to him, Bucky’s leisurely about his confidence.

Thor could learn a thing or two instead of giving Loki the worst deep-tissue massage known to man and challenging Thanos into a round of “Who can lose more teeth?”

“Is there an asterisk there I’m not hearing? Or are we doing a thing where at the end of this I pop in to say, ‘excluding Tony Stark who the majority of people agree they’d want to spend a Hangover-style night in Los Vegas with’?”

Steve shakes his head in less of a disapproving way but more of a wow, I’m actually in awe of how brave you are to be yourself right now way. Only around Thanos.

“I’d choose Loki.”

Those muscles in Thor’s temple flex because he’s grinding his teeth.
“Hey, Loki, how about you come sit down next to me? I like talking to you unlike those fake fuckers around you. Right, Rogers?"

As Thanos pats him on the shoulder, Steve’s pushed into quiet prayer.

“Um.” This maybe definitely has something to do with Thor accusing Thanos of wanting to fuck his sisters. A thousand percent. Thor couldn’t have made it any more obvious where Loki got the idea to go low contact with all his posturing when Thanos’ breathing the same air as Loki. No better way to rub his nose in it than a power play in front of the people that hold him up as invincible. Which Thor isn’t.

Loki’s not gonna be responsible for proof of that.

His motion to get up though gets him about a millimeter off his chair before his ass’s flush against it again.

Thor’s warning him with a side-eye. “Loki’s gonna pass.”

“No,” Loki says. He very pointedly grabs Thor’s wrist and holding eye contact with Thor, he slides from underneath his hand and free. When he goes to let go, Thor flips their positions, his grip on Loki’s wrist not the tightest it could be but there’s a threat there, very ‘tell Mom and I’ll get you later.’ That’s the way the table minus Thanos and Thor’s buddies see it, a little brotherly dispute.

Thor’s grip loosens enough for Loki to pull away. “You don’t have to go.”

“I know.” Loki whispers, “You should call Sif. She’ll love to sit next to you.”


Out of deference of Thor and Steve, Loki guesses, no one’s claimed either end of the table. Until now when Thanos does, by virtue of being, well, Thanos, declaring it the head of the table, one final laugh over all of them for trying to predict anything Thanos does. The only predicable moment is Thanos gesturing to the guest of honor seat for a bonus fuck you to Thor, who else. They could’ve called that.

Eric Savin gives him the most half-assed chin cock because he, like many, thinks disrespecting Loki will somehow piss off Thanos, like Thanos wouldn’t laugh his ass off. And his bestie Aldrich Killian’s trying to get in with Thanos for the student body president nod next year. Fuck them both.

When Thanos opens up the menu, everyone conveniently gets the huevos to talk again.

“Hela’s not coming to Thanksgiving dinner with the Titan clan tomorrow because her family is going to be with yours,” Thanos says. “I wish she’d take me as her date. Would love to drive Old Man Odin crazy implying I’m the dad.”

“He’s lost hope for someone that predicable,” Loki replies.

Thanos’ no longer looking at Loki passively over the menu. “Looks like we’re playing musical chairs.”

Sauntering up like his balls have gotten even bigger than his dick, Thor.

Eric gets up happily.

“You guys are always talking about such interesting things. Thought I’d hear for myself,” Thor says.
The smug. God, the smug. He pours himself back against his chair like all he’s missing is a cigar and a naked model on a fur rug in front of him.

Nebula lets out a disgusted sound, tired of Thor already. Gamora murmurs something to her that gets her rolling her eyes then meets Loki’s eyes, giving him the what-the-hell-are-you-looking-at eyebrows. And the winner for the least enthused about tonight goes to Peter Quill’s ex-tsundere. He’d congratulate her, but he doesn’t want to get stabbed by her or worse by Thanos, who has a warning glance for Loki, before resuming his Thor stare-down.

Thor asks, “What did I miss?”

“Me talking about Loki’s shitty-ass adopted dad.”

Loki has clothes covering his body, hiding all the knobs and dents, but he tugs his sweater sleeves down into his palms for the, what, millimeter of coverage. No, he doesn’t go glossy-eyed or meek like they’re all expecting. He’s not even depressed about it, himself, anymore. Just over it.

Because Thor’s too busy eye-fighting Thanos over what’s not even his battle, Loki does the job of accepting the bowl from Ellen Brandt.

“Oh, wait, did people not know that? Everyone, Loki’s adopted if you didn’t know that.” Thanos grins. “You’re welcome.”

“Is that supposed to mean anything?”

“No, it doesn’t mean anything. I know that. Loki knows that. You and your parents don’t because you would’ve been honest from the beginning if it didn’t. Blood means nothing. I treat my sisters how I do because it’s how they deserve to be treated. It’s not lies and amino acids that maintain our relationship.” He puts a hand on Gamora that she becomes deadwood in, that feeling Loki’s felt so many times projected out onto her, the urge to get away but the instinct to not get your ass kicked. But Thanos loves Gamora.

Gamora swallows visibly when Thanos lets her go. She snatches the salad from Loki.

“Are you listening, Quill?” Thanos shouts down the table. “This baby isn’t mine because if it were, I would’ve gut punched Loki into spontaneous abortion weeks ago—“

“If you fucking touch Loki—“

“If I fucking touch Loki…?“

“—I’ll fucking murder you.”

“Really?”

“Really.”

“You believe that but Loki’ll tell you, what you believe with me isn’t what you get. I think that’s what he likes about me. The chaos.”

“Loki doesn’t like you, man. He’s afraid of you.”

“Did he tell you this himself, or is that your underdeveloped lizard brain projecting?”

Thor starts laughing. Slowly at first but it picks up, turns into this stomach-clutching thing that has him tilting back in his hair, head thrown back. He recovers, all flushed, and takes a drink of water.
“Afraid of you? I knew you were crazy, but delusional too? You’re the whole package, brah.”

Gamora clears her throat. Everyone’s just forgetting who Thanos is today, aren’t they?

“Your kid’s going to be a retard,” Thanos tells Loki.

“They’ll be pretty though.”

Gamora’s looking between Thor and Loki. Well, Quill will be relieved to soon hear that there won’t be a little Thanos Titan running around soon.

Maybe if everyone knew Thor was going to be a daddy, he’d be less likely to threaten his life since they’d all hold him accountable for counteracting the ill-effects of Loki’s parenting, and he can’t do that if he’s in an indefinite coma.

On the bright side, they’ve all been primed now that they know Loki’s adopted.

#

Shout out to Volstagg, Fandral, and Hogun for being there to keep Thor from going berserk on the ride back.

Of course, Thor glares, but Loki’s comfortable with that.

#

Mom’s distraught that the whole school and by extension the metropolitan area will know Loki’s adopted by the end of the week—honestly, though, why is she so ashamed?—but Dad’s confident that the statement about Loki being pregnant, which drops tomorrow morning as part of the ‘Happy Thanksgiving from the Borson Family’ Mercury News slash Facebook slash LinkedIn slash the company website press package, will overshadow it, and because Thanos’ “a certifiable psychopath” no one will believe him anyway.

Loki’s ambivalent about whether it sticks or not, the truth that his paranoia over Thor being the favorite has been grounded in some biology, postnatal mother-newborn bonding and stuff. It was always a fear of his, that he was adopted even if it would’ve explained his severe case of second-child syndrome, because it’s the kind of thing no amount of academic decathlon trophies or tennis medals or Father’s Day hiking getaways can make-up for. Now, him being adopted, does it really change anything?

They’ve already done stellar jobs with parental parity. No undo button on the feelings of neglect and inadequacy.

“We don’t need to share this with the family,” Dad affirms before they all leave his study.

Loki’s mhm isn’t committed enough for Mom who tells him, “You won’t go behind our backs on this.” No, he’d never. Well, to the extent of his “I won’t”—and the repeat because they’re both skeptical of the first one—to the both of them. Because if it scares them that much, that they’re that ashamed of adopting him, then good if it spreads. They lied to him his whole life. They deserve to suffer a bit. They deserve to suffer a lot, if it’s shame that they feel. Shame for choosing him instead of being stuck with him and wanting him like his—those people out there that conceived him didn’t.

What the fuck does that mean? Like, just taking a second to think about it, isn’t that incredibly
fucked up?

“They think they’re doing what’s best,” Thor tells him. He and Loki are up in Thor’s room where Thor hasn’t been since Sunday—Loki since forever—and no cousins or aunts will come barging in to hear the fresh juice. And Thor can glower at Loki without Grandma slapping him upside the head and telling him to fix his handsome face. “You can’t hold that against them.”

“That’s one of the last things I’d hold against them,” Loki replies. “Thor?”

“What?”

“Do you get why I’m afraid of Thanos?”

“He’s got six inches, a hundred and fifty pounds on you, and no self-restraint.”

“No. I mean, yeah, but no.” Loki wrings his fidgety hands. “You know that voice in your head that tells you when something is wrong, that whatever you’re doing is going too far, so you stop? Thanos has that voice, but that voice tells him not to stop. After he beats Drax until he was unconscious, he told me he regretted stopping and would’ve kept going if Gamora hadn’t come and got in the way. I’m not Gamora. If you provoke him, Thor, he will not stop until you’re dead. Do you get that?”

“You think I’ll lose.”

“Holy shit, are you listening to me? I’m saying that it doesn’t matter how strong you are because you’re fighting Thanos. Thanos is murdering you. You hate him and everything, and you joke that you’ll kill him, but—”

“Who said I was joking?” Thor lies back on his bed. “No, I’m not gonna kill him. That’d be too easy.”

Loki climbs onto the bed, over Thor, balancing himself with a hand on Thor’s chest. “You’re not gonna do that and escape with a few scratches, so just—stay sane. If not for yourself or for me, for the baby.”

Thor presses a palm to Loki’s stomach. There’s nothing there yet, but Loki’s getting firm. “Okay.”

A housekeeper comes knocking with a message from Mom to get their asses downstairs, so Loki promises his boner later and Thor kisses him hard “so it’ll be easier to stop myself if I want to later.”

Like that was ever a possibility when Cousin Balder, dickhead, is regaling Thor in his adventures in Chadhood back in Tønsberg which prompts Thor to try to one-up him with all his stories about Amora and Sif and Jane and Helen and Brunnhilde and a revolving door of girls and boys that he definitely doesn’t know the names of, the two or three-peats, the one-night-stands, a lot of bodies only meaningful enough for fucking, and Loki’s not invested enough in who wins their game of NBA 2k17 to stick around for that.

Leading him past Grandpa Bor and Uncle Villi and Uncle Vi’s “let’s be old together and drink old men liquor” gathering that leads them to somehow, someway decide “hey, boy, come in here and join us” is a good idea. Loki ducks his head in the cigar smoke turning them into gray blurs with beards they mock him for not having. “You still 12, son, where are the hairs on your face?” Ha ha the epitome of humor. Grandpa says, “Sit down. Have a drink,” at, what, a million years old his voice sounding like he’s coughing up dust. Loki bullshts about being a lightweight, bearing the chuckles and Uncle Vi’s “these sissies taking over the world with their western educations will be the end of us.” Whatever, old man. Loki slips out during their complaining about Dad being uppity
while they drink his rum.

His shit luck doesn’t disappoint when he’s out minding his own fucking business playing some *Animal Crossing* on his DS—made especially for family gatherings—and Uncle Frey comes over to bother him, gleeful when Loki shuts his DS, the sadistic asshole. During his super passive aggressive “How have you been doing because I’ve been doing amazing” intro, he runs his fingers through his hair like Loki’s still the six year old confused why he had black hair when Mom and Dad and everyone-fucking-one were blond—spoiler alert: no, it wasn’t Grandma Bulla—and flippantly mentions his tennis scores at his local country club and “Oh, Loki, aren’t you still trying to play tennis?”

Loki declined last year when Uncle Frey, high the HGH and hormone replacements helping his hairline to hold on to his precious locks he totally doesn’t dye, asked for material proof Loki earned those tennis medals when he wouldn’t imagine asking Thor that about track or wrestling or soccer or football or lacrosse or baseball.

When Loki says fine, he’ll go a few rounds because he knows at 50-something Frey’s knees aren’t the most forgiving, Frey puffs out his chest and tells Loki no don’t worry about him, laughs about the folly of youth.

Yeah, yeah, the folly of youth, practicing his scrawny little ass off just so he could wipe smug smiles off faces.

A housekeeper runs off to tattletale about Loki being reckless to Mom because she and Loki’s grandmothers and aunts and cousins file out onto the terrace after Loki’s changed into one of his tennis kits over in the pool house, the all green kit that makes him look villainous as hell, because he needs this moment to be burnt in Uncle Frey, across the court his own kit, which he packed just for now, to knock Loki down a peg.

Loki’s had a trying day, first lunch with a bunch of people he doesn’t like and Thanos being Thanos and Thor being Thor then blaming Loki for trying to be smart and now he’s here with a bunch of people he’s not even really related to who rationalize them being critical with him as tough love and looking out for family—fuck that.

Uncle Frey jokes that Loki’s getting the best of him the first one, two, three games Loki wins, his pride eventually graduating to Loki’s actually pretty good, which Loki and his medals and trophies could’ve told him, but Loki, he asks if Uncle Frey can go again, and Uncle Frey’s pride hasn’t graduated that much where bowing out would be an option, so yes, Uncle Frey agrees, slogging through the double-team of age and plain old fatigue, getting a grip on Loki’s shots but rarely, too many times still, hitting a shot past Loki.

During the handshake after Aunt Grid’s convinced Uncle Frey to stop embarrassing himself, he says, “If I was your age, that would’ve been a different story.” Because Loki’s wins always have a drawback. How about, “I think being pregnant cancels out the age. Sorry.”

Sorry to Mom more than him. She had a beautiful toast planned out and everything.

Loki grabs the Gatorade from the housekeeper and lifts it to the lot of them at the railing. He’s always disappointing the family.

“Dude, you kicked his ass,” his little—by age, his Loki’s height already at 14—cousin Hermod tells him. He corners Loki after he’s changed, skateboard under his arm. “When did you become cool?”

“Cool is a word that applies to Thor. Don’t put that evil on me.”
Mom definitely doesn’t think it was cool, Loki sending her older brother into a midlife crisis. Not that she calls it that, rolls her eyes when Loki does. “Don’t push yourself so hard. You could’ve stopped after the first two games. He got the point.”

“I didn’t want only him to get the point.”

Uncle Frey passes by and into the dining room.

“He doesn’t believe you’re pregnant,” she says.

“Because I said it. When you say it, he’ll realize how past his prime he is.”

Mom lightly cuffs him on the arm. “He’s only four years older than me.”

“Your niceness and intelligence make you immortal,” Loki replies. “He has neither.”

Uncle Frey’s way on the other end of the table, the one so long it’s in two time zones in the dining hall Loki associates with these family dinners around Thanksgiving and those when Dad’s feeling self-indulgent about quarterly profits and wants to brag about his wife and his favorite son to his coworkers and their kids. Unlike lunch earlier, Dad and Mom are at the heads with Loki at Mom’s right hand and Thor at Dad’s, how it’s always been in these large group settings, not Mom’s incest-y behavior prevention.

It works out in her favor though.

Grandma Bulla, Dad’s mom, watches him eat like it’s real fascinating stuff, and Loki’s going to kill himself after tomorrow’s dinner if it’s going to be like this.

“Can I be excused?” he asks before dessert, appetite gone. “I don’t feel well.”

Dad’s the one to tell him, “You’re excused.”

Loki lingers in the house for about 15 minutes, yes, the ETA to his Uber but he could walk out and down the driveway to wait but doesn’t. It’s weird, finally, after years and years of faking stomach aches and coughs and fevers, that being pregnant has excused him from an extended family dinner. Like before what was important was maintaining images but now, Dad couldn’t give a shit about where Loki fits into that image.

He could cancel his Uber and go sit in a den and wait until everyone finishes, but.

Loki’s never been a part of this family, not really.

Tomorrow he’ll have Hela to escape with instead of the random guy that asks, “Your family in the tech industry?”

“Like you have no clue.”

Chapter End Notes

Everyone's being primed for the truth.
In the dead of night, Loki’s jostled awake by the dim-large-and-vaguely-human-object-that’s-probably-Thor who outsources the job of keeping Loki warm—it’s definitely Thor—from the covers.

Loki eats Cinnamon Toast Crunch and watches demonic air balloon SpongeBob Squarepants Chesiring down at New York City with Hela and her part-time not-boyfriend Wade the 25 year-old Canadian freelance comedian in the early light of the morning.

“We could skip it,” Hela says, feet on Wade’s head. “My dad will call about 50 times and leave a screaming voicemail about being unloved by those he cares about the most, but he does that once a week, so like I give a fuck.”

Loki’s dad would kill him and a half. This apartment, the plan to be a single-parent, bye-bye to that if Loki goes no-show. And fuck, it’s tempting to do just that, the anarchist, “fuck you I don’t do what you tell me” thing like showing up an hour late last year because he and Thanos got so high, he would’ve gotten the whole room baked by scent alone, and Loki didn’t want to be responsible for Grandpa Bor finally croaking. Thinking about it, most anarchists don’t have kids or any on the way. Real interesting.

There’s movement in Loki’s periphery that turns out to be Thor slyly peeking out from the bedroom. Aka a sign from the universe to tell Hela and his inner anarchist, “No, I’ll go.”

More immediately, Loki goes to hear Thor’s grumpy complaining about their amazing early-morning company. Surprisingly Thor doesn’t complain the second Loki’s in earshot. No, he waits after, “Hey, Good morning,” to be all, “That’s what you got up for this morning? For her?”

“Oh on the bright side, I was sleeping pretty well before I got woken up by her and her great idea.”

“Is that a metaphor?”

“I don’t even know.”

Before he puts his shirt on, Thor gets an ounce of something funny out of that. If he only knew. “Why didn’t you come find me last night before you left?”

“Because I’d have to interact with way too many people I don’t like.”

“Could’ve waited for me.”

Loki could have. Thor’s right. But he didn’t. “How was your night?”

“Good. Balder and I, we went to a Warriors game. Dad has that corporate pass and everything. I’ve been so busy I forgot.” Thor clears his throat on purpose. “So, I told Balder.”
Loki’s eyebrow does the, “What?” for him.

“That we’re together, that we’re having a baby.”

“And he took that not awfully since you’re here, right?”

“Yeah. Yeah, he told me he couldn’t imagine wanting to fuck Hermod, but he won’t tell.”

“His hatred for me doesn’t overrule his love for you. That’s sweet.”

“He doesn’t hate you. He thinks you think you’re better than him because you’re great at everything, which you do.”

“Great at everything?” Maybe Thanos was right, and you do keep projecting.”

Thor puts his dick area in Loki’s face. “What did you say?”

“What did I say?”

“Something about how you’re a little shit begging for me to bend you over this desk—“

“Get away from each other. I’m coming in.” Hela has incredible timing, doesn’t she?

Thor refuses to do that out of spite, but Loki pushes him back. “Is it your fucking life’s goal to cock block me?”

“If it pisses you off this much, you bet your stupid ass it is.” She poses in the doorway, so obviously satisfied with herself for whatever it is she did with Wade last night. Gross. “I’m leaving with Wade to go serve breakfast to orphans. He does charity. Isn’t he everything?”

“Wade? Who’s that?” Thor asks.

“Nothing,” Loki says as Hela tells him, “Twice the man you’ll ever be.”

Thor’s so miffed he walks away into the closet. Good. He’s the last person who needs to know Hela’s cheating on Thanos. Like he wouldn’t let that slip in one of his petty arguments in PE.

“I’ll see you later?” Loki asks.

She winks and replies, “Maybe.” Luxuries of the non-pregnant.

For the sake of this kid, Loki shovels himself into a presentable state, slings his laptop bag over his shoulder, and follows Thor’s lead at an appropriately brotherly distance. Where he remains until Volstagg’s hand egg team of a family is getting out of their cars to come swarm Thor with hugs while Loki prays to become one with the hedge behind him. In a break of arms, Loki leans up into Thor’s ear to tell him he’s got to go use the bathroom, not exactly an uncommon thing with him these days, even though he doesn’t. Not at that moment. He does after he’s gone inside and dropped off a “hi” to Mom and fielded the cheek stroking and reminiscing from her and his aunts and Mom’s besties, so technically, it’s not a lie.

Balder, who’s using his Mr. Macho Sexy Man voice on the phone, almost runs into him when Loki’s coming out—because this house doesn’t have nearly a dozen bathrooms, right?—and covers the receiver to say, “Who’s the disappointment now, cousin?” As if, “Still you,” isn’t the most obvious reply in the world. Balder glares, but whatever, Loki could pop out five kids in high school and still finish ahead of Balder, poster boy of coddled Chads with more confidence than ability.
His quota of one-on-one family interaction generously fulfilled by Balder, Loki hides out in the gazebo way out near the tree line.

Since the tradition of Thanksgiving’s almost exclusively American—like most-food centered holidays, yeah, he went there; but for once, he’s not complaining—Loki’s in no shortage of Russians and Poles to shoot the shit with like no one inside would with him.

Sif’s in there. Her parents are like family to Mom and Dad. Another reason why stumbling through “Go fuck yourself, loser” in clumsy Russian is number one.

Loki’s screaming at the prick on his team who got himself killed and forfeiting the win when Thor locates him.

Thor kneels down to pet his spine like Loki could ever not see him coming a light-year away.

Loki pulls out his ear buds and rolls his shoulders under the guise of tension from hours of playing but really, there’s chills dancing around his spine where it joins his tailbone from Thor’s touch. Embarrassing, he knows. “How are things going with Sif? You make up yet?”

Thor, a living-breathing Levi Strauss advert, tagline ‘Live the American Dream’, leans against the post with his hands in his jeans. “She’s talking to me now without reminding me that she thinks I’m a colossal piece of shit.”

“That’s good.” Loki gets up from the table but keeps ahold of the back of the chair. “I know how much she means to you.”

Thor steps to Loki, saying fuck that to any buffer space for plausible deniability if someone comes in so all that body heat grips Loki before Thor’s hands do. “Don’t do that.”

“What?”

“My friendship with Sif is nothing like yours with Thanos.”

Again: what?

“Pause. Rewind back 30 seconds then let’s press play. I tell you, ‘That’s good,’ something about knowing how much Sif means to you. When did Thanos come into this?”

“You implied it.”

“No, I implied that, that I’m not thrilled you and Sif are back to being friends again. Passive aggression, it’s kind of my thing,” Loki says. “Why are you thinking about Thanos? You despise his existence. Shouldn’t you be using the opportunity of not having to see him for like—well, until tomorrow night, to act like he doesn’t exist? Or is that a strategy I’m the only one who ever considers around here?”

Thor sighs. “I don’t know. He’s like, he’s like cancer. He gets into your head. I’m sorry.”

Loki presses a kiss to Thor’s lips. He gets it. Like profoundly. “So, what made you come all the way out here? Not Uncle Vili trying to challenge you to an arm wrestling match because his broken arm’s healed again?”

Oh, Loki wishes. With a really apologetic smile, Thor remembers why he came out here: they’re all due inside for the dinner of the century.
Loki’s beyond dread. Just get this all over with.

Hermod’s seated next to him, nudging Loki with his elbow because he’s hype for sweet potato pie. No sweet potato pie or any of the food in the middle of the table could make this, being invisible until he’s mentioned off-handedly only to become the main course when the bomb drops.

He speaks too soon.

After a bite of mashed potatoes, the savory cousin to the sweet potato, frankly, Grandpa Njord’s borderline pornographic descriptions of him bringing Old Man and the Sea to life—they all get it; he loves sailing, alright—go on mute while his taste buds sing the Hallelujah Chorus, and then there’s the stuffing imbued with this gravy Loki would totally believe is angel’s blood that has him smiling at Heimdall, who’ve been openly staring, smug as hell, which is his loss because all that energy he’s spending on that, Loki’s spending reaching nirvana. Literally.

(Metaphorically.)

Dad’s playing the spoon on his empty wine glass and shutting up a hundred “my life is so much better than yours” anecdotes, and the sweet potato pie hasn’t even been unveiled yet. Which was gonna be Loki’s personal consolation prize for getting verbally tarred and feathered and not pitching a total bitch fit over it, but whatever, Loki’s appetite’s at pull a straight-face-and-bear-it level. “Thank you all. Thank you all. Tonight I would like to say a few words,” Dad says, a lie. He’s a goddamned windbag. “Recently, I’ve been reminded of the importance of family.”

And so it begins.

As Dad jerks his dusty dick off all over their eager faces—mostly eager, Hela’s got her eyes under the table where she’s texting Wade or something and Thor, well, Loki’s getting to that—Thor zones out like’s not right there, effects of never being on the hook for anything but being there. Loki doesn’t blame him. He’d do the same in Thor’s place, better than him pretending that he cares about Dad’s roundabout allusions to Loki’s mess that he, Dad and Dad alone with maybe some tips from Mom here and there, single-handedly cleaned up.

Thor makes the amused eyebrows at Loki that have always gone along with those “it has to be over at some point” at corporate dinners where Dad’s the guest speaker. He turns away—before Mom catches them—smiling just a tiny bit.

Feeling the tingles his cheeks, Loki is too.

Then Dad says, “And although it wasn’t initially ideal, next year my family will have another member all thanks to my son Loki,” and an onslaught of attention seizes Loki without as much as a heads up. Thanks, Dad. “I taught my sons mistakes were part of the learning process to becoming the men they’ll one day be. Of course, I had no idea Loki could get pregnant when saying this. Perhaps if I had, I might’ve let Frigga take the reins. She’d always dreamt of having a daughter, and in many ways, she’s gotten her wish.”

Ha, ha, ha, because Loki’s one of those fucking gays, right?

Mom’s barely holding in the embarrassment. And she said Loki was just imagining things.

Loki refuses to be ashamed for something he had zero control over especially when Dad, over there smirking, isn’t ashamed for being an asshole a hundred percent voluntarily.

“Before the compromises were made due to my success, I wanted a large family. I’d long since come to peace with having two children as had my wife. One day we’d have grandchildren. As it turned
out, that day is coming soon. Frigga and I are at a place in our lives where raising another child—
because children raising children won’t do this world any good—will be a gift. Not work, never
work. Because family, you see, is duty. I myself didn’t learn this until later in life, but now I see that
there is nothing more important than family.”

Mom can squeeze his hand all she wants, but Loki won’t and doesn’t raise a glass to toast Dad in a
lot of words deciding that this baby, his baby, is by transitive property theirs to do with as they please
like they did with Loki and his life. Fuck no.

If they expect him to join in on the chitchat over dessert, they’ve learned absolutely nothing about
Loki in the 16 years they’ve known him.

“I’d like for you to stay after you finish that,” Mom says, stalling him from exiting the dining hall
with his well-deserved slice—or three, who gives a fuck—of sweet potato.

“I’d like for your husband to not be a colossal piece of shit,” Loki replies. When Aunt Freya comes
near to talk to Mom, Loki gets the hell out of there. His room’s not exactly a secret hideaway, but no
one is putting in the effort of coming up to bother him when all they’re gonna get is their skeletons
yanked out and a reinforced grudge.

No one not Thor.

“I’d say something about knocking, but this isn’t my room anymore.”

He drops his ass onto the bed next to Loki, pissed. “What he said wasn’t fucking alright.”

“Wow, it wasn’t?” Loki will not let this ruin his pie. He will not. “It really fucking sucks to have
your entire ability as a parent to be dismissed before you’ve even had a chance to be one. I’d say
sorry, but just based on what you said when you found out, you don’t deserve it, so.”

“I get it. I do. All of it, the being dismissed and not—“

“I know what you mean.”

Loki’s sniffle is soggy, but Loki would rather cry over baby shoes than over Dad living up to
expectations. He has sweet potato pie, and it’s fucking amazing, surpassed his hopes and dreams, ten
out of fucking ten, would yearn for again. He won’t cry.

“I’ve already told you about how I’m gonna be there for the baby and you, so I won’t repeat myself.
I know how much you hate that. But me personally—Loki, I feel like I’m leaving you to fend for
yourself. It has to be this way. Dad can’t know. I get that. But fuck if I don’t feel useless.” Thor
unclenches his fists for a split-second. “On the low, yeah, mentally I’m right here beside you. Or I try
to be. Physically? I don’t know. I just—I don’t know.”

And by physically he means symbolically. Sex is like last on their list of issues. And it’s only on
there because Thor has been a goodie two shoes and refused to deep-dick Loki since Mom’s
expressly requested no funny business.

It’s the pie. And if it’s not the pie, it’s spiting Dad. And if it’s not that then it’s Thor, somehow, to
blame.

“Do you want to move in with me or something?” Loki asks.

“Permanently?”
“You’re already there temporarily.”

“Yeah.” Thor, for Loki, holds in the grin then just says fuck it. He grabs Loki’s shoulders and roughs him up. Brotherly instinct. Not like Loki didn’t think it was the hottest thing ever always. “Yeah, moving in, that’s what I was thinking. Read my mind.”

Loki “mhm”s around his fork, fighting off the visions of Chads sweating testosterone all over his furniture roaring while cheerleaders spin on their dicks with leftover sparks of cinnamon. Have faith in Thor. He’s had a key for weeks.

Thor spills himself back onto the bed, his version of gently so the jostling only stabs Loki’s fork in the side of the mouth instead of the cheek. “Dad’s not gonna take our baby away, okay?”

He could be all, “Um, duh,” but Loki’s still got a whole other piece of sweet potato pie left and Thor’s flashing happy trail, a little known masterpiece, between his sweater and jeans, so he nods while munching on his pie.

This being a team thing with Thor, Loki’s eighty-twenty on blowing up in his face, which is way optimistic for him.

They end up sneaking out when Loki suggests that Hela’s a conversation with Fandral away from coming up to ruin the moment which Thor refuses to give her the satisfaction of.

Chapter End Notes

Odin with that there A+ parenting.
Titanium

Chapter Notes

[Jay-Z laugh] y'all thought I wasn't gonna finish this.
Nah, bros, I've got you.
Happy New Years and all of that good stuff.
Let's all mourn the lack of Daft Punk's Alive and common sense.

This chapter we discover why exactly Loki and Thanos are friends and why exactly
telling Thor is a bad decision. Put your XD glasses on, buckle that 5 point seatbelt and
suspend that disbelief. Enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

20

#

M83’s Junk is singing along with Loki at this red light that might last an eternity, which won’t be all
bad since Loki guilted Thor into being the diversion when he saved a whole sweet potato pie from
those uncultured palates, and on the entertainment front, Thor looks dangerously hot and open to
ideas of car sex in the tail lights in front of them.

“You know what.” Thor yanks the steering wheel left. The truck goes left—and up, onto the median.
“We don’t need to wait here anymore.” ‘Here’ being the space that no longer exists in the rearview
because the laws of man don’t apply to Thor, traffic ones included. “You know why? Because we’re
going shopping.”

Loki cuts off his impassioned half of the last bridge in “Go!” “There’s an hour until it’s officially
Black Friday. Are you crazy?”

“That makes it even better.” There’s totally still the twinkle of Red-light-induced insanity in Thor’s
eyes, and Loki’s not talking about the reflected brake lights. “It adds to the urgency, gets you
hyped.”

“I’m pregnant.”

Loki would think with all those football trophies and awards Thor would be quick enough to catch it,
but that goes right over Thor’s head because the cheese-thigh squeeze combo and feeling up the
baby that’s more food than theirs is not the reaction Loki had in mind.

This, Thor manhandling him from behind—well, he did have that in mind but it was toward a bed—
any flat surface really, they’ve never been picky—not the line to hell in front of homemaker heaven.

The front of it at least. Because Thor’s got fans in some moms of kids Loki knows by name and
yearbook picture only at the front of the line who insist he, and by extension Loki, stay and chat,
Loki’s contributions being “mhmm’s” which he gets away with one mom-cred-boosting cheesecake
cookie he helps himself to at a time. Wash those down with some emotional whiplash. Really, “I can
see it. You’re going to start showing soon,” and, “You’re going to be so precious, sweetheart,” is so antithetical to Odin’s thoughts earlier, Loki would think he’s dreaming, if not for Thor’s hard-on stabbing him above the butt.

Loki elbow jabs Thor’s tailbone while Thor’s pulling out a shopping cart and explains to Thor and the line between his eyebrows, “That’s what I’ve been dealing with for the past hour.”

“I can’t help it. I’m excited.” Thor’s giving a shelf of Crayola standard pack colored ornaments, the shiny balls, the look. He grabs five boxes of them. Five boxes of 10. What tree—they don’t even have a tree. “You know what imagining your stomach that big does to me? Shit, my dick could scratch diamond, man.”

There’s a little old lady that abandons the more tasteful matte version at the end of the aisle to scurry away. Loki sort of wants to too.

Pushing Thor—unsuccessfully, he swipes two boxes into the cart—away from the glittery ornaments is a decent compromise. Loki, the ninja he is, empties some ornaments into other carts while both Thor and whoever’s backs are turned. Flashy, cheesy, and absurd are Thor’s jam. Loki can deal with absurd. The demented snowmen and neon rainbow lights stay. But the Warriors ornaments? Let’s just take those out.

Thor adds a roll of gold tinsel to the pile, and his eyes swipe across the cart and onto the Loki.

“What?”

Thor’s coming around the cart, so Loki takes a precautionary step back. The shelves moved forward because it’s at Loki’s heels, keeping him right here for Thor to do that thing where the blood in Loki’s body rushes to his head—both of them.

“I can forgive you hating on the strobe ones, the pregnant Mrs. Claus ones too. I don’t care what you say. They were cute as hell. End of. But I’m repping my Warriors.” Thor reaches around, and yes, those are Thor’s hands on his ass.

The ISS could see that kiss coming, but Loki stands there, empty-handed, after, existing solely in his lips, replaying it, the sensation, the latest of many but what will never be enough, of Thor’s lips on his.

Thor hums one of those deep, body-jumping sounds when Loki’s pulled back to reality by the sight of Thor getting further away and come to decorate Thor’s back with his body.

“So, it’s safe to assume you’re getting a tree to put this stuff on?” Loki asks.

“You should be more excited than me. Dude, this is our first tree outside of Mom’s jurisdiction. You’re all about asserting your independence, bro. I’m surprised you haven’t had this all planned out before me.”

“My priorities have sort of been eating, peeing, more eating, more peeing, some school work, us touching each other’s”—Loki smiles at the family they pass—“disco sticks—“

“Shout out to Gaga?”

“You got that reference. I’m such a good influence.” Gratuitous and prickly cheek kiss. “But getting a Christmas tree would’ve eventually come up. Probably a week before Christmas, but I’ve been occupied.”
“Do you remember when we went camping that summer when I was 8?”

“When I put a wolf spider in your sleeping bag and you screamed so loud you woke Dad—Odin”—Thor has a really? look Loki ignores—“up? You were so scared after I let it go outside you made me scoot over in mine. Yeah, I remember that.”

Thor slips Loki off him in order to squint at him. “I knew you did that on purpose. ‘It climbed in on its own, Thor. Maybe it was attracted to your body-heat.’” Is that whiny-voiced thing Thor’s impression of him? He could do way better than that. “What if it bit me?”

“They barely bite, and I knew you’d be too busy flailing to do it any harm.”

Thor’s too proud to admit he did go full Wacky Waving Inflatable Arm Man and the lying thing, that’s Loki’s, so avoiding the subject it is. “But what I was trying to get to before you side-tracked me was you didn’t realize till nightfall that you forgot to bring your lantern. I had mine, so it didn’t really matter, but your side of the tent would’ve been dark and creepy if I didn’t share.”

“You told me that. After you told me how great of a big brother you were and made me promise to do your homework for a week.”

“I was negotiating. And you put a spider in my sleeping bag.”

“You didn’t know that for sure.”

“You only did my homework for half the week.”

“Your other homework was easy.”

“You’re easy.”

“Yet it took you, what, five years to get the courage to put your dick in my ass?”

Who cares about that scandalized someone “God in heaven”-ing from the end of the aisle? Sheepish Thor does. Mom would be proud of the “sorry!” he shouts after them.

His hand locks around Loki’s arm, and not that Loki has much of a say (not that that’s a complaint), they’re walking again. “I’m going to get a Redwood.”

“That’s what lube is to prevent,” is like right there in Loki’s mouth but so is laughter, and Loki’s at the gray area where laughing might push his esophageal sphincters, which struggled with that last cookie, too far, and Sheepish Thor is one puking incident away from hyper-concerned, Big brother Thor.

He says instead, “Redwoods, which are Sequoia trees, are protected. Because they’re endangered.”

“We’ll see about that.”

Federal law, a challenge instead of a limitation to Thor.

Loki leans his head against Thor’s shoulder, a body-heat injection straight to the brain. “I want fake snow,” he tells him, “to put around the tree.”

“Snow belongs outside.”

“So do trees.”
Thor sighs, but when Loki looks up, there’s the side of a smile. “Then let’s go get some fake snow, snow elf.”

“Stop calling me that.”

“But I like it, so nah, I think I’ll keep doing it.”

“Dick.”

“Later. We gotta get your ugly snow first.”

Thor deserves the fistful Loki steals from the tree display and sprinkles him with whole-heartedly.

#

Thor’s sucking a big, tingly wet hickey on his neck.

He squeezes Loki’s ass, pulling it open so when he pushes them back together, Loki’s given an intimate reminder that his boxers are silk, cold silk, not like the silk at the tip of Thor’s cock, teasing the inside of Loki’s thigh and if Loki’s lucky, his own dick when Thor rocks in at that right angle.

They’re building up to that though, dick-on-dick contact. What’s even better than that? Dick-in-ass contact. But Thor’s content to play with Loki’s ass instead of actually doing something with it, really content going by the bar of solid gold wrapped in flesh in his boxers. Loki could make him even more content.

“Thor?”

He “hms” against Loki’s bruise then lets go so he can actually look at Loki. So sweaty. And his pupils, fuck, suck Loki into the void pretty please.

“I’ve been a good boy, right? Didn’t make a scene at dinner last night, went out shopping with you.”

“Um… yeah?”

“Good. So, fuck me.”

“I was about to—”

Loki gets on his elbows. “No, I mean all the way which you seem to have forgotten. Thor, I’m starting to believe that you don’t want to fuck me.”

Thor’s mouth falls open sort of stupidly. Then he’s making a face that’s distinctively mad. “You know what? I’m gonna pretend you didn’t just say that.”

“Then is this about Mom? Because you won’t have to feel guilty if you just lay there and I ride you.”

Thor grimaces. “Please, please, never ever bring up Mom in the same conversation as you telling me you want to fuck me.”

“Then why won’t you?” He’s pouting, yeah, but it’s why won’t you fuck me pouting. “Do you know I think about it all the time? Your cum, it’s always so thick and creamy and warm—“

“Fuck.”

“—but it’s been so long since you filled me with it.” Loki’s insanely tempted to bite Thor’s bottom
lip but settles on his own. “The hormones are chipping away at my self-control. You with your hair and your ‘look at my huge dick’ jeans and your muscles. I’m going to die if you don’t put your cock in me.”

Thor’s silence is not the good kind of Thor silence. “I want to. Shit, so fucking bad. But—Loki, come on—”

“No. You’re just going to disappoint me.”

Thor pinches his ass. “Take that back. I never disappoint you.”

Loki folds his arms like the petulant little shit he gets to be.

“If you let me finish, I was going to say I’m going to fuck you. I promise. Just after these next two games. Tomorrow’s the first of the basketball season. I need to be 100% on the court, not 99% inside your ass, 1% on the court.”

“Well, it’s a better place to be.” Loki sighs. “I can’t believe this. I bet Clint—“

“Shut up,” Thor literally growls into his mouth, which adds insult to injury on the whole Thor not sticking his dick in Loki’s ass deal. Fine, Thor’s handjob is magical even though he refuses to stick any fingers in Loki’s ass because slippery slope, but screw Loki—or not—for wanting his boyfriend’s ginormous cock to show him stars.

Loki boycotts the semi-final concussion-ball game cock-blocking him out of both principle and the fact that no, he’s not going to be surrounded by not just cheering classmates but super judgmental family members while Thor bashes his brain around his skull. Thor huffs but doesn’t push it because Dad’s bullshit last night is as fresh on his mind as it is Loki’s. And he’s “hype” about this apartment being their apartment. “I’ll be home by midnight,” he tells Loki, superfluously. It’s always been vaguely ‘back’ or ‘here’ or ‘in.’ Whatever gets the skip in Thor’s step.

Or the win on Thor’s record.

Thor interrupts one of Loki’s endless pee breaks grinning and annoying (“You pee a lot, dude,” yeah, like Loki doesn’t fucking know that) and proud of not the win because at this point in his life he’s numb to them, but of telling Mom and Dad about his move out.

“Mom didn’t really say anything, but Dad said he was glad I was going to be there for you.” Thor turns the faucet on for Loki. Really? “He’s not going to interfere.”

“He suggested that you should move in when I first did,” Loki replies. New information for Thor, it seems. “Obviously, I said no.”

Thor grabs onto his shoulder. “Only took you two months to change that into a yes.”

Loki futilely tries to persuade some of Thor’s leftover game high into let’s fuck Loki feelings, but Thor settles on eating his ass until Loki’s telling him “no, no, stop I’m gonna die” and on the cusp of that nirvana after Thor’s battering ram has hollowed him out but not quite there.

“After the game,” Thor tells him, “I promise.”

Loki’s fantasies/plans of riding the cum out of Thor in the backseat of his truck post-win disintegrate into pieces shaped like Uncle Frey and Balder and all the family still for some fucking reason around for the inauguration of Thor’s last basketball season as a high schooler, and by extension, a man or some stupid-ass symbolism like that.
Obviously, the answer to Thor’s, “Are you coming?”—and no, he isn’t, not with Thor’s dick not right where it belongs inside him—to that pre-game family get-together is a “Yeah, no.”

Thor starts ranting about Loki’s lack of support and blah blah “compromise” blah “part of healthy relationships.” He’s even flushing, that’s how dead serious he is. Hot as fuck. Loki’s not going to lie that 80-90% of his and Thor’s arguments haven’t been started with the sole of purpose of giving Loki’s freak dreams about his older brother ammo because spending his life with Thor has given him great insight to what buttons to push for the furrowed brows and clenched jaw that scream rough, angry sex.

Loki gets real contrite and smoothes his hands over Thor’s chest up to his shoulders, and like he couldn’t all those times, he kisses Thor.

Thor pushes him down onto the flat of his feet, not over it at all, but it was worth it. “Don’t come. I wouldn’t want you to do anything you don’t want to,” he says, and when he’s walking toward the door, Loki’s about to say “Good luck” as genuinely as possible just for one last go under Thor’s skin, but there’s his vibrating phone in his pocket with its awful timing.

Thanos’ calling.

“Hela’s calling,” destroys all of Thor’s interest in staying to hear Loki’s mea culpa.

Loki’s sure the baby feels that door slam.

He answers when he’s wandered himself back in the bedroom. “Hello?”

“I’m holding a pregame party at 5:00.” Thanos’ voice echoes. He’s at the gym probably. Because that’s what he needs, to get stronger. “Mostly student council kids. Von Strucker, Pierce, the other functioning brains from Student Council, we have to talk about Von Strucker’s Christmas Market without Fury, Hill, and Rogers crying about Von Strucker’s subtle Wehrbooism before the end of the month. Won’t do that in Retards Anonymous Tuesday morning. A three-in-one special. Celebrating you ruining your life, some good old basketball, and taking care of business.”

Thor’s contributed a picture of him putting Loki in a headlock hug back in middle school to the dresser. ‘Brothers’ the frame says underneath it.

“What’s funny?” Thanos asks.

“Just something I saw. It’s stupid,” he replies. “Um, what time?”

“Why? Need to wait for Thor to leave to let you off the leash?”

“I think I could be there by 5:30.”

“Be there then.” Thanos hangs up.

Talking to Thanos is the sort of thing that requires a rest period to remind his heart how to beat and to wipe the sweat off his palms till it stops coming. He’s being judged by grinning, 14-year-old Thor, but look, Loki’s not the one stealing his little brother’s underwear, so 14-year-old Thor can shove it.

To think he could die without Thor having fucked him for over a month.

#

Thor’s been gone 30 minutes when Loki climbs into Wolfgang’s passenger seat.
Wolfgang sings along to the pop music that’s indistinguishable from the American stuff except for
the German lyrics, pointedly not asking about Loki being pregnant since he, like Peter Quill, thinks
Thanos’ actually the dad. Difference being that Wolfgang’s psyched about it. No other reason for
him to have given Loki a ride since he’s all but gotten his Christmas Market idea approved.

It’s 5:15 when Loki sets foot in the driveway of Wolfgang’s Victorian—“Bavarian” he’d be all, but
come on, this is San Francisco, it’s Victorian—haunted house. He silences his phone but then it’s not
like he’ll have any use for it, and even if he did, it’s not like it’ll be any help, so he holds down the
lock button till it asks if he wants to power it off, and as he follows Wolfgang inside, he presses that
he does.

When he asks where’s the nearest bathroom—again, pregnant—Wolfgang tells him directions then
ditches him.

Loki follows the stabbing snare of trap music down the stairs where anyone who doesn’t worship
Steve Rogers as the Messiah on Student Council, which isn’t mutually inclusive with Loki liking
them, infests the place.

Thanos happens to look up from talking to Wolfgang, and the eye contact lasts half a second too
long for Loki to go slink off to play foosball until Thanos finds him.

Wolfgang has the slimiest smirk before he leaves the two of them alone. How could anyone ever,
ever, think that this—which there isn’t, a ‘this’—or anything between the two of them would be
anything but disgusting?

“What I don’t get is why is bothers you so much that people think we’re fucking,” Thanos reads his
face, not his mind thankfully. “I should be the one pissed. These bastards are accusing me of
cheating on the only woman I’ll ever love with you of all people.”

“Would you like Wolfgang instead then?”

“Getting stung by a paper wasp hurts like a mother fucker. Getting bit by a bullet ant hurts more.
Does that mean my ass wants to get stung? No. I’ll kill the wasp and the ant on sight.” Thanos’ hand
lands on Loki’s shoulder, and his fingers dig through the meat down into the bone so Loki has no
choice but to move where Thanos wants him to unless he’s feeling insanely masochistic. “Hela
hasn’t been answering my calls. How is she?”

Would it kill Hela to pick up the phone and call her obsessively invested boyfriend when not
bouncing on her mistress Wade’s dick? It’s like she wants Thanos to kill them all, which sorry, Loki
can’t enter that suicide pact since he’s sort of pregnant (and alone here with Thanos. Great.)

“I saw her at Thanksgiving dinner. We didn’t really talk, but she seemed alright.” And well-fucked
by not-Thanos. “You know how she gets sometimes. We’re friends for reasons other than us being
raven-haired minxes.”

Thanos finds that funny enough to not intimidate any more info out of Loki. And Thor says Loki’s
mouth is what gets him into trouble.

Thor’d be proud—he means, ignoring the part where Loki’s with Thanos and like everyone Thor
hates—that Loki keeps his mouth to full with food to risk too much conversation with Thanos. The
others move in to carry the conversational load like the opportunistic ball-lickers they are anyway.
They all need Thanos to know how they owe this Academy Award—wait, this fulfilled goal, sorry,
to Thanos for keeping those craniorectally inverted assholes in check. Darren Cross even fucking
applauds for “our glorious leader, Thanos, and all of us for being smart enough to get in line with his
cause.”

Wolfgang passes around bottles of beer to raise, but Loki declines for obvious reasons and asks, pointedly, the housekeeper for a bottle of Coke, decaf, because this room is too smart to forget that hey, alcohol and pregnant people do not mix.

On the other hand, cake, purple crystal sprinkle-covered cakes especially, those mix with pregnant him like… like his ass and Thor’s dick (should.)

Said cake was brought by Ronan, so Loki has to ask if there’s anything in it like drugs or cyanide because Ronan’s prematurely gone Jim Jones.

Ronan purposely goes stone-faced to try to hide how offended he is and says, teeth all clenched, “There’s nothing in it.”

Thank fuck for that. Because it’s a gangbang of chocolate and buttercream and by the third slice he feels sort of comforted about Thor not wanting to, what, fuck the walking incubator. But he touches him so that’s something, right? Sex isn’t the end-all, be-all either. Thor and he, they’re like soul mates.

Soul mates. Yeah, Loki likes the sound of that.

“Let’s go crash this game.” He less likes the sound of that.

But Thanos’ never given a shit about Loki’s or anyone else’s likes, so yeah, Loki’s sinking into the backseat behind Thanos, and ew, Ronan’s knuckles bump into his arm, echoing up to his elbow like Ronan’s bones are made of lead and he is a robot sent from the Vatican to restore Christianity to the mecca of atheism here in the SF Metro area. Ronan soullessly stares at him like he’s in the wrong, of course. Whatever. Loki looks out at the setting sun instead.

Has it ever been this much work to freaking unbuckle a seatbelt? Like seriously, he’s a few seconds away from giving up when thankfully it gives.

Uncharacteristically of Ronan, he’s patiently waiting for Loki to get out.

Oh, fuck.

“You said, you said there was nothing in the cake,” Loki’s saying with some difficulty since he’s high out of his fucking mind.

“Nothing but weed, but that doesn’t count.”

There’s laughing. Laughing.

The baby—oh god.

“Calm down.” Thanos, he’s beside Loki where the cool air’s coming from. “There have been studies, and your leech won’t come out with no brain from some edibles.”

According to the few studies that’ve been done. What if, what if there’s something that hasn’t been found? What if —

“Get out of my car before I make sure your kid comes out with no head.”

Standing fucking sucks. Walking? How about wading because the air has turned into gel, electrified gel that tingles his skin and seeps through to tingle his muscles too. And that’s just him. The baby,
they’ve developed reflexes this week and their brain, all of those new neurons growing—are they handling it okay?

Humanity has played around with weed for thousands and thousands of years. He and Thanos and Nebula, Ronan, all of these people packed in the bleachers, they’re living proof that weed can’t be so bad for a baby. Right? Yeah. Yeah. Duh. Like all of the people in Loki’s bloodline, whoever they are because they’re sure as hell not the same as those ‘family members’ cheering in the front row—and so fortunately too busy to notice Loki—over on the home side, a little bit of weed won’t hurt the baby.

Does that change that Ronan and Thanos lied? Fuck no.

This red hood with a face on it at the end of a row pings ‘I’ve seen that before,’ and Loki’s taking advantage of the arrival of Thanos’ freshman fan club to duck into that row and seek refuge next to Wade Wilson.

Hela not showing up to fill the seat Wade totally saved for her is the least she could do for Loki.

“Hi.”

“Hey.”

“Hi.” What but then oh because ha, ha, that’s not Wade repeating himself because his first hi was a “high” which Loki, to the trained eye like Wade’s probably are, is. “You brought my future murderer,” Wade says. “Nice of you.”

“More like he brought me.”

“And he’ll be worried about that. Your baby daddy doesn’t look too happy about your carpooling company.”

Loki turns from Wade and the pack of Twizzlers Loki’s stolen from toward the source of all that spine-chilling squeaking.

Thor is… not happy. But fuck Thor. Not everyone is 6 foot a million and jacked like a Gorilla on steroids with the impulse control of one to match. He can side-eye Loki all he wants, but at the end of the day, Loki does what’s right for both him and the baby.

What’s super right? How about not getting gut-punched Tuesday for ignoring Thanos’ calls or flaking, and that’s best case scenario. Loki would not put it past Thanos giving to that smug old asshole who’s nodding every single time Thor gets the ball through the hoop, all sage and proud, a ring and saying, “Guess what? Your sons are fucking. Oh and if that didn’t clue you in, that kid is theirs.”

Those cheers between Loki and Wade, they’re all Wade’s.

Benedict Arnold the Bladder is, as usual, not on board with Loki’s plans, this one being staying seated during halftime. “I’ll pay for all the food you want,” convinces Wade to be his two-in-one human body shield and escort from the bleachers to the bathroom—and the churro and popcorn and taco in a bag stand.

“Leif Erikson day looks to be coming early,” Wade says, around a mouthful of churro but still, intelligible—or not; non-sequiturs are Wade’s first language—and registering as something Loki should turn and follow Wade’s gaze to.
Thor.

That’s—yikes.

Loki turns back around and maybe if he just looks away Thor won’t—

“Loki.”

Yeah, that wasn’t that great of a plan.

Loki totally not guiltily faces Thor. It just happens that Thor’s eyes are at bird-of-prey levels of squint, which hot, but also, come on, Thor’s basketball uniform is a glowing white “look at me!” and everyone else is in real clothes. Like this is sort of funny.

Thor doesn’t think so. “You told me you weren’t coming.”

“For once, right?” Super sexy brow thing that Thor somehow doesn’t appreciate. Boo.

Thor’s got an arm around his shoulders, leading him away, and straining his arm back with a twenty he’s so not getting the change back from, Loki tells Wade to get a taco in a bag for him.

Thor really knows how to pick locations for super serious talks, yeah, back against a wall behind all the lines full of people that totally won’t notice them.

Loki takes a bite of churro. Hm, cinnamon-y goodness.

“Are you fucking high right now?”

He looks at Thor, who has the kind of look that means he’s been looking at Loki for a while now—and isn’t happy about what he sees. If it’s not Odin, it’s Thor. What’s new? “In my defense, I didn’t mean to be.”

“You’ve gotta be fucking kidding me.” Thor shows off his pretty teeth, all pissed. “What did they do? Dose you? That’s what you get for hanging out with Thanos. And how the fuck did that happen? You’re supposed to be at home, away from my basketball game you don’t give a shit about.”

“That’s where I was supposed to be.” Loki leans a shoulder against the wall, pushes some popcorn from that bag he’s got in the crook of his elbow into his mouth. “You wanted me to be here. I’m here. You should be happy.”

“’Happy’?” Thor whisper-shouts. Except Thor’s whisper-shouting is like shouting quietly. “You came in here with Thanos, Loki. You’re supposed to be staying away from him. So shit like you getting dosed doesn’t happen.”

Loki’s eyes are moving.

Judging from Thor’s ‘oh you fucking just didn’t’ expression, that move was an eye roll. Not called for? Eh, not really.

Thor’s about to tell Loki the fuck off, but here comes T’Challa to tell Thor, “Man, we need to get back out there,” in his soothing voice, soothing for Loki. Thor is pretty much beyond conventional means of calming down.

Angry sex later?
All those elbows and shoves—unpunished because it’s Thor, duh—yeah. Angry sex.

Blah, blah, Thor wins. Who cares?

Wade vanishes into thin air, leaving Loki without a scapegoat to explain to Thanos why he left without seeing him.

Has Loki ever mentioned that Hermod is his favorite cousin?

Hermod, who’s sadly acting on Odin’s behalf, comes to whisk him away to the home side for the predictable but no less bearable “I’m pleasantly surprised you’re here, Loki, so I can criticize you for whatever latest thing you’ve done wrong” talk with Odin. “You were with that psychopath, Loki,” instead of these narcissists he doesn’t say, “rather than where you should’ve been, enjoying time with your family. I’m disappointed as I’m sure your mother will be.”

“Nothing new there."

“If you put some of that sarcastic energy to better use, you could accomplish as much as your brother. You’ve only managed to get yourself—“

“—knocked up at 16, yes, I know.” Loki’s not high enough for this shit. “Excuse me, I’m gonna catch a ride home with Thor. Maybe living with him will mean he infects me with some of that positivity and good decision-making.”

Odin’s probably pissed when Loki turns his back on him. But like Loki said, what else is new?

Family, he can always count on them to make him feel just peachy.

#

Loki’s leaned against Thor’s truck with Gesaffelstein psyching him up for the argument that waits inside. That is when Thor quits playing the jilted protag to some corny basketball movie over in the locker room that’s no doubt deserted at this point since “party at my house” was traded between the crowds that’ve long dispersed.

Thor sulks out of the darkness like he, with all of what he has, has no business doing. He acknowledges Loki with a glare sent right back at him. Loki’s been standing here for half an hour, and he’s overdue for his late night snack. When Loki could’ve let Thor fester overnight and caught an Uber and been in bed with Ben and Jerry’s. Thor and his precious’ passenger side door—what a satisfying slam—can kiss his ass.

Loki pauses his music, takes out his ear buds. After the dome light’s dimmed off and they’re back in semi-darkness inside, he allows himself the drawn out sigh he deserves. “I went to your game. Supported you like a good boyfriend. What do you have to be mad about?”

“What don’t I fucking”—yelling in a closed space really—“have to be mad about? After I told you—no, no, no, after you told me, that he’s dangerous, and the only thing stopping you from being on the other end of his fist is you kissing his ass, you show up to a game—no, no, not just show up, but you show up high, all after you told me no. Didn’t tell him no, did you? I didn’t get in your way for years because you know what, you can make your own dumbass decisions. That’s your choice. But this is my baby’s life you’re playing with.”

“My bodily autonomy doesn’t end because I’m pregnant. Sure, this is your baby—“

“Shit, you’re actually acknowledging that.”
“—but it’s my body. If I want to be around someone I’ve been around for years without getting my ass kicked, which is the least I can say about your friends who are one ‘you’ away from jumping me,” Loki says.

“That’s bullshit.”

“But it isn’t. It’s funny, you know, that in a lot of ways you and Thanos, you’re exactly the same. You surround yourself with sycophants who’d kill for you because they’re so in love with your power. The only difference is that Thanos is honest with himself about it.”

“I’m getting real fucking tired of your bullshit comparisons between me and that motherfucker. He and I, we’re nothing alike. Nothing. And you can’t say with a straight-face we are or else you’re saying that you’re as afraid of me as much as him, and we know that’s not the fucking case.”

“You’re right. You are nothing alike. He didn’t tell me his life was over because he can’t, for whatever reason, play precious college basketball now that I’m having his baby and am going to be here on the other side of the country taking care of it while he’s over at his dream school.”

“Are you ever going to forgive me for that? Or are you going to keep bringing it up to try to shut me up with the guilt?”

“I’m only reminding you what I’m reminded on a constant basis.” He refuses to meet Thor’s eyes, basking in the street light for the extra kick to Thor’s hysterics. Fuck off. “I have to protect this baby. It doesn’t matter how you or I feel about it. If it keeps them safe, I have to do it. Listening to Thanos keeps them safe.”

“How the fuck does that make sense?” The angry laugh. “Honestly, right now you sound like an abuse victim.”

“No, I sound like a survivor.”

Thor’s shutting the fuck up for once.

“Thanos isn’t going to let me ‘break up with him.’ He gets bored of you. He—he’s the one who decides when it’s over. If this baby was Clint’s or someone’s, maybe he’d let me do what you want me to and just stay away from him. But it’s not. It’s yours, and he knows that you want nothing more than that, for him to let me go, so why would he? As long as it’s in his interest to keep me around, he will. What am I supposed to do with that? Tell him no?”

LOL, ‘No’ to Thanos.

“Thanos doesn’t take no for an answer.”

Thor doesn’t pounce on the opportunity to say “yes,” which is a surprise.

Loki risks turning his head.

By the look on Thor’s face, he’s said something he shouldn’t have.

“I mean —” Words, now of all the times to screw him over. “He just—he’s intimidating. You know that.”

“What did he do to you?”

“What do you mean? Psychologically? He’s instilled the fear of life in me.”
'Thanos doesn’t take no for answer,’ you said. How you said it —that’s why you go back to him because he’s hurt you before.”

The door handle clicks when he pulls it back.

The doors lock.

Loki pushes just to confirm. Yes, it’s locked. Five months ago, Thor locked him in his room when Loki declined to give him his other ticket to Lollapalooza. That was then. This? This is now. “Open the door.”

“You don’t get to decide when we’re finished talking because you don’t like what you’re hearing. That’s not how this works. It’s never worked like that. You should know that by now.”

“I don’t want to talk about this. Can you just respect that? This once?”

“Not when it’s about Thanos raping you!”

Fuck you, Thor.

“You don’t get to say that! You don’t, okay? It wasn’t.” Stay calm. Just stay calm. “What do you want to hear? Sorry to disappoint this idea you have about me, but I got down on my knees willingly. I did what I had to do. Don’t victimize me. I got over it.”

“That’s fucking rape.”

“I… I could’ve said no. I could’ve gotten punched like a real man. But I took the easy way out, the safer one.”

Thor’s getting out of the car. Oh, what, the truth too much? He needs air? He asked. He asked when Loki didn’t need him to, like he shouldn’t have. No, he shouldn’t have. Now he knows. He knows that, that—what happened to Loki, he knows.

He can’t be here.

After Thor finishes in the trunk but before he’s gotten back in, Loki leans into the driver’s seat to unlock his door. His finger’s on the lock for the driver’s side when he checks where Thor is.

Thor’s nowhere.

Loki presses against the glass for an angle behind, and there, Thor’s walking back toward the gym. What could be back there for him? Odin? He wouldn’t, no, wouldn’t go and tell so they can take Loki’s baby?

There’s something shiny in his hand, shiny and long.

A baseball bat.

What, that’s so —

‘Can’t bash Thanos head in with my dick, dude.’

Oh. Oh no.

He’s out the car and screaming so hard he sees stars at Thor’s back, “Stop!”
Either Thor can’t hear him or Thor does and ignores him. Does it matter? He’s still going to go kill himself at Thanos’ hands.

Run faster, run faster, run faster.

People, students walking this way. Yes, yes. Good. Help. Clint, Rogers, Barnes, Wilson, Coulson, the Carters, these are Thor’s friends. They’re athletic, strong, not anywhere strong enough, but Thor, he needs all and any help, so—who gives a shit about their feelings about him; Thor’s too important for Rogers to be preemptively skeptical because Loki’s out of breath and running, running for Thor’s life—Loki tells them, “Thor’s going to pick a fight with Thanos that he’s not going to win. You need to turn around and go help him.”

“Where?” Coulson.

“I—go for the Quad. Thanos… Thanos parked in a handicap spot over in front of Academic Hall.”

Thank any god for blind devotion.

“You okay?” Clint asks why? He looks down—Loki moves the hand off his stomach. He’s fine. He’s—Clint’s fucking standing here instead of following the others who are sprinting, and Loki grabs his sleeve and tells him to go.

There’s a knife in his lung jogging through the halls after the faint footsteps—Clint’s? They have to be Clint’s. The rest of them, they’re already there—but fuck it can’t compare to whatever Thanos will do to Thor.

He can’t run anymore. Shit, shit, shit. Sitting down—he’ll just catch his breath. It’s not about him. He couldn’t help, but they will. They’ll find Thor. They will. Have to. Not just for Thor or for Loki but for the baby.

Their baby.

There’s a sound, a quiet sound like, like a pencil… breaking around in the hall around the corner.

The Quad’s two rights and a straight away. He means, if—if—

Breathing doesn’t hurt so bad. It’s not him, his breaths, and heartbeat alone that long though. It’s a matter of him turning a corner, making that first left, and the voices come his way, all muffled and mangled together so Loki can’t tell who or what, only that there’s an urgency that gets him taking longer, quicker steps.

He’s in the hall to the quad, and the voices get crisper like they only would if the door the quad’s open.

There’s Clint’s voice getting closer.

Loki’s rushing toward it, to ask, but.

Thor.

Thor?

“Loki,” is weak, so weak and un-Thor. He’s barely holding his eyes open to keep them on Loki. But they’re alive, and they know him, meaning no traumatic brain injury—

Thor’s eyes close.
Clint keeps him from hitting the ground.

“What the fuck happened?” he asks, and he asks, no, tells Clint to call 911, and who gives a shit if Sharon already did, just fucking do it, and he double, triple checks that there’s a pulse still going under the thankfully still burning skin where Thor’s jaw and neck meet. But just in case, he feels for Thor’s wrist and checks that there’s a pulse there.

Something sharp looking stabs under the sleeve of Thor’s jacket.

He rolls Thor’s sleeve up a little.

He smears something—red. Bright red and the blood, because that’s what it is, leads up to—holy shit.

That thing sticking out of arm forearm, that’s not—that’s smeared in bright red and shiny and white. That’s bone.

Holy shit.

“Oh, fuck.” Clint’s not talking to the ambulance that needs to get here fucking yesterday.

Behind Clint, out in the quad, that water feature in the center partially lets show Rogers kneeling, over something, someone the way his eyes are focused down, and Barnes’ standing up next to him holding his bicep. Peggy Carter’s holding the baseball bat next to Sharon talking on her phone.

Where’s Thanos?

Thor’s alive though. And he remembers Loki’s name. That alone slashes his heart rate in half. He can almost lie to himself that Thor’s sleeping—if he ignores the heavy arm in his hands. Thor has escaped with a broken arm. How? Loki’s going to have to ask him that.

He’s being stared at.

Clint has a weird look on his face. “So the kid is his then.”

His? Whose?

…Thor’s?

No, of course he means Thanos.

“No.” He tries sounding less on the verge of hysteria. “Why? What’d you hear?”

Thor, god, he probably made some overdramatic speech about what Loki told him, and Barton and co. probably caught the tail end of that. Great. Now they’ll have all their conspiracy theories confirmed.

“Laura, who somehow missed that you two are brothers all these years of going here, she said you two were a cute couple. She swore up and down you two were screwing. Even after I told her you’re related. Well, mostly. After Thor’s ‘joke’ in the locker room about being the baby daddy, she was sure she was right. I’ve been thinking she’s seeing things, but now.”

“Now what?”

“I owe her an apology.”
“Thor is leaning against you unconscious with his insides on the outside, and you’re pitching me your incestuous—”

Loki’s cut off, thank fucking anything and everything, by paramedics pouring through an emergency exit.

He gets out of the way for them, enough at least. Thor never leaves his sight except for the split-seconds to rewet his eyes. Not even when a few paramedics struggle to drag someone draped over their shoulders out.

But when it’s time to put Thor, all restrained in the gurney like conscious Thor would refuse out of some stupid sense of pride, into the ambulance, Loki doesn’t wait to get in.

Chapter End Notes

BY GAWD, IS THAT THOR ODINSON'S MUSIC?!?
But seriously, Thor did it for the greater good. Let us take a moment and ignore the sheer stupidity of his acts to snapplause him. May he get well soon.
I’ll be back to attempting to regularly update now that I’ve gotten to a point of being ahead where I’ve got some buffer space. Also, have learned self-control to restrain the plot bunnies, those rascally cute little shits.
Enter: Consequences

Chapter Notes

Sorry, lads. I know. I know. I forget to update. It's weird. I'm a joker, etc.
Enjoy the fuckery. I have a blast writing it.

21

Six paces. Six paces and eight tiles, that yucky linoleum, separate the walls. Six paces for him.
Thor’s three shoe sizes bigger, and taller, on paper not a lot, but numbers can lie, and Loki knows
that Thor’s a whole freaking light-year taller than him — he’s that big.

That’s why Thor’s the safest place in the universe.

But no, Thor had to go and risk taking that from Loki. He had to get greedy. He’s in there, getting
put back together, because of his super frustrating tendency to be impulsive and way, way more
frustrating one to try and overprotect Loki. He did this, this stupid, amazingly impossible thing for
Loki.

Loki, okay, Loki is the only person alive that’s entitled to cry over Thor. The only. Not those
attention-whoring opportunists over in the waiting room putting on a show of how impressive their
tear glands are or how many trees they can waste by the handful on their puffy, red faces. They say
that Thor is their friend, and they say that Thor doesn't deserve this, and they're wrong, and they're
right because Thor isn’t their friend — okay, maybe Rogers and those guys but Thor doesn't deserve
this, them feigning boo-hooing like Thor’s fucking dead. They don’t even know Thor.

They don’t… they don’t know Thor likes syrup on his scrambled eggs or that he reads the fucking
Art of War for the thousandth time when he’s taking a shit or they don’t know Thor has a spot beside
the third notch of his spine that makes his toes curl. They don't know that Thor, that Thor holds him
and kisses him and that Thor helped make this baby—they don't know.

Anything.

Someone’s come from that self-pitying, self-important cesspool of a waiting room and moves without
any intention of passing with an air of fake pity.

Who else could it be but Mom?

Her hug smells of blueberries and new baby, and Loki’s going to be okay. He is.

“What happened?” she asks.

Loki has to sit down. The floor’s his choice. “Thor had the bright idea to go after Thanos with a
baseball bat after I might’ve showed up with him to the basketball game.”

“Oh, Loki.”
“I knew he’d be mad, but then we were talking and — I wasn’t there. I was — they slipped me something. It’s nothing bad. Mom, I swear. I wouldn’t have willingly taken anything, but some weed won’t hurt the baby, right? No. – I would’ve seen it coming, seen what Thor was going to do and stopped him. I would’ve—“

“This wasn’t your fault. You can’t blame yourself. Your brother is his own person."

“I know. I know. But I know that person, and I know how to get him to not do stupid things. Most of the time. I just… egged him on. If I would’ve kept my mouth shut.”

No. He’s been through this once tonight. Mom doesn’t need that burden anyway.

His hair catches on the grainy wallpaper. “They say that Thor broke Thanos’ jaw and a few teeth.”

“And he’ll be proud of that I’m sure.” Mom has the one look that’s just her trying to hide how pissed she is. The look from Loki’s first time here. He’s not on the receiving end, but. Still.

A nurse that recognizes Mom comes to say that Thor’s awake if they want to see him.

Loki takes the hand Mom offers to help him stand up even though he doesn’t need it because it’s more than just helping him to stand. Mom squeezes his hand before she lets it go.

They follow the nurse.

He’s vaguely anxious about the whole thing, seeing Thor. That’s not say he isn’t relieved too. But, well, the last he and Thor saw of each other, like, really saw of each other was Loki exposing the depth of his depravity, and who’s to say Thor won’t have decided that he doesn’t want this, a relationship-relationship now that he knows of… what happened?

They’ve all said it, Thor and Volstagg and everyone, how Thanos taints. And Loki’s tainted. So tainted.

Loki is happy to be behind Mom when the nurse stops at a door.

The nurse’s eerily white shoes step over the threshold and she’s saying, “Thor, I’ve brought you some company.”

Did you know the linoleum’s actually really gray without those fluorescent lights beating down on it? Well, it’s more of a warm-yellow tone beside the bed because that’s where the only light in the room is on.

“Thanks,” Thor tells her. His voice, even this hoarse, has the power to compel Loki to look up.

The bedside lamp is helping return all the tan to Thor that wasn’t there in the hallway or the ambulance.

The door shuts behind the nurse.

“I never thought I would raise someone so selfish.”

And his heart’s stumbled over itself at that, the viciousness in Mom’s—and yes, it’s Mom; he has to double take her eyes to make sure it’s not some rage demon that’s possessed her—voice.

“I wish I could put this all on your father, but even he in his worst days would have had the sense to not do what you did.”
Thor’s eyes start to shift this way.

“Don’t you look at your brother.”

Big mistake.

“If you’d done what you were supposed to and protected him like a big brother should have—“ Mom stops herself. Thankfully. She doesn’t mean it, but right now, that’s not what Thor needs to hear, more fodder to be “protective.” “There is no changing what’s happened. No. But that is why you learn from your mistakes, not repeat them. Not run off to beat some boy with a bat because you’re angry.” Her finger is up since Thor thought to try to open his mouth. “I don’t care about your excuses. Your excuses wouldn’t have replaced your child growing up without a father.”

Thor gets all broody.

“Your selfishness, your impulsiveness, it is not only you that needs to be taken into consideration before you try and get yourself killed now.” Mom goes over to the door. “I have an appointment. The parents to-be, I must say, are far more thoughtful of their unborn child.”

Loki watches the door slam behind Mom.

“Going to yell at me too?”

Loki gets over himself to face Thor, like a total wimp, all speechless with Thor this close. He’s not gonna say that Mom was wrong because she wasn’t. She told Thor the flat out truth, brutally, yeah, but he fucking deserved that, okay? He deserved that because he ran off without even thinking about Loki or the baby, and he can’t just fucking do that.

Thor’s blurry.

When Loki breathes out, there’s a sob — his sob, but fuck that, he’s allowed to cry. Thor almost died. No, not literally, but he could’ve. He so could’ve if things went like they were — not like they were supposed to, but if the universe hadn’t done that thing it always does and bend over backwards for Thor, Thor wouldn’t be here, warm and alive and breathing for Loki to hold onto.

A hand, Thor’s hand’s rubbing his back, and it’s so heavy and firm and Loki hates him so fucking much for risking this. “It’s okay, Lo. I’m okay.”

“Yes, you’re so okay with your how many bruised ribs and your broken arm. Obviously.” Loki adjusts his ear against Thor’s pec. Thor’s heartbeat pumps in time with the green line etching peaks and plateaus on Thor’s other side. “Why are you so fucking stupid? You, you should’ve stayed in the car. You should’ve yelled at me some more, told me how you told me so, that what happened, it was my fault—”

Thor’s palm’s meaty against his teeth, wrist burning against his cheek.

“Don’t you ever say that again. Okay?”

There’s nothing Loki can think to say to that.

Thor takes his away from Loki’s mouth. “If I’m honest, I don’t remember making the decision to get the baseball bat or to kick his ass. I remember you telling me. I remember hearing that I was too late. Then the next thing I know I’m standing over Thanos’ bloody mug. Him smiling up at me with bright red teeth. Clint pulling me away, telling me I needed to get out of there. You in the hallway.”
“That’s supposed to make me feel better? Knowing you blacked out?”

“No.” Thor licks his dry lips, the black stitches on the bottom one. “But you know what should? I beat him.”

Is he fucking kidding Loki?

Loki’s reeled back, so Thor gets the full view of how not comforting Thor’s ‘winner takes all’ jackassery remains. Seriously, he could’ve fucking died or worse, ended up a daily visit for Loki and their baby to make so Loki can sit bedside and reminisce from before Thor was in a coma.

“Wait.” Thor’s caught his wrist. “Where are you going? I’m sorry, shit. What do you want me to do? Cry? I saw Drax get his shit pushed in by Thanos like everybody else, heard the horror stories, heard you tell me how dangerous he was. He’s a psycho, but Loki, baby, I don’t get how you don’t know by now I’m pretty fucking crazy too. Especially when someone messes with what’s mine.”

This is where Loki’s supposed to assert his autonomy and say that no, he’s not Thor’s or anyone’s but his own, but that resolve comes second to the feeling of ‘I can’t believe this is really happening, and I need to enjoy it while it lasts’ that colors the backdrop of this Thing between them, him and Thor. In other words, fuck principles; he wants Thor instead.

And now that he has him, fuck if he can bring himself to really jeopardize that.

Thor knows that, is so smug over how much sway he has over Loki. “So, Doctor Loki, are you gonna kiss it better?”

The depressing blue gown does an awful job of turning off the dick-hardening factor of Thor’s body. Which Loki — or his dick — simultaneously appreciates and is worried about because Thor’s in a hospital gown, the un-sexiest piece of clothing in the world tied with nun robes. It being really convenient for getting to Thor’s dick should not be a thought on Loki’s mind.

Loki’s fingers slide under the blanket lying on Thor’s waist, coasting over the Thor-warm gown. They find dead space that means hem slash ‘Thor’s dick this way.’ No underwear — obviously, but still, Loki’s surprised for a half-millisecond when the soft skin of Thor’s semi greets him.

“Aw, Thor, poor baby.”

Thor closes his eyes, so Loki has an opening to sneak up on him — and admittedly creepily admire the new purple smudge under Thor’s right eye that speaks to the little brother in Loki that thinks Thor’s so brave and badass. He’s not. ‘Brave’ and ‘badass’ are respectively last and second to last on the list of things Thor is after testing his luck, which that weird weight in Loki’s gut proves isn’t so foolproof.

“I’m sorry to have to tell you this,” Loki says, “but your diagnosis of stupid can’t be cured.”

Loki’s thumb takes a journey under the head, drawing Thor’s eyes back out.

“I’m not stupid.” That’s Thor’s hand, the working one, dipping into Loki’s underwear. “I’m in love.”

“Shut up, Anakin Skywalker.” The sound he makes is the one for Thor trying to wring the blood out his ass cheek.

Thor looks down at Loki’s lips first, balancing out that Loki’s the one to bend down and introduce himself to the feeling of the stitches at five o’clock on Thor’s mouth, the memories of that coppery taste of blood, Thor’s blood, which has no place outside of him unless it’s Loki’s doing.
The door’s opening.

Loki’s hand is super fraternal on Thor’s stomach and his lips are equally super fraternal not on Thor’s because he’s tucked in the non-space between Thor and the bed. No reason at all for Odin to stop mid-door and mouth open to stare at them.

Right?

Odin closes his mouth in a smack of teeth that surprises Loki by not ending in a cartoonish glass-shattering noise. Same for the door he continues his anti-door crusade on. “I’m supposed to be on a flight to Dubai right now.”

Right.

“But instead I’m here because my idiot son”—shouting in an echo-y room, Loki loves that—“decided that he would throw away his last high school basketball season, oh, and his chance at one more football championship win on Thanos Titan.”

Thor’s peeved in Loki’s periphery. Loki would like to think because of the abandoned boner being hidden in the blanket by an act of some god or devil, maybe the same one who possessed Thor during that fight and saved his ass. But it’s likelier Newton’s Second Law of Odinson Emotions, for every Odin rage there’s an equal and opposite rage in Thor.

“What were you thinking?”

“I had to protect my family.” Thor flexes his hand on Loki’s hip now instead of his ass. “Isn’t that what you said, family above everything?”

Loki should’ve known he wasn’t an Odinson since he defies the Second law with brilliant sarcasm and wit aka disrespect aka what Thor just did.

Odin chooses to go with disrespect. Anything short of verbally bowing your head is disrespect to him. “Loki, would you leave your brother and I?”

How long has it been since Loki’s heard that?

Whatever. Odin will get tired of pretending that he’s mad at Thor for anything but endangering Odin’s perfect legacy then go on a tangent about how much he loves Thor, and Loki will be glad to not hear that.

Loki shifts.

Thor’s hand turns into a vice grip. “No.”

Odin’s eye gets annoyed.

“Anything you can say to me, you can say to both of us.”

Loki’s flattered, but this is about a dozen father-son speeches Loki was excluded from too late.

“Very well.”

Odin takes a deep ominous breath and unleashes a narcissistic diatribe about how he’s made lots of mistakes in his past but that doesn’t justify Thor making them or Thor holding those mistakes against him, and around the part where seats himself on the other side of the bed, Loki zones out on the dull gray cast on Thor’s forearm.
Odin’s *The Odin*, so contrary to the ‘Visiting Hours 7am-11pm’ sign Loki passed coming in here, Loki wakes up in a hospital bed next to Thor.

He wakes up strikingly sober.

Mom’s in a chair an arm’s length away reading one of her favorite Virginia Woolf novels *The Waves* in her bright white coat. “I brought you a change of clothes,” she says barely over the noise of the machines making sure Thor’s alive, looking up with one of her comforting smiles. “Go freshen up and we can walk over to the café for breakfast.”

Mom always has the best plans.

The minty sweater, definitely Mom’s choice with her obsession with putting him in lighter, less-angsty teenage shades, spreads down over his collar bone, nipples, the ‘no man’s land’ of empty space between the abdominal muscles Anatomy’s taught him the names of — nothing better for that extra sting in comparing and contrasting how much bigger they were on Thor than confirmation that they are, somehow, someway, the same species — but wait.

Wait.

The mirror shows it’s not an angle thing, that yes, the ‘congratulations, you’re three meals from starving to death’ shadow’s turned into a distant memory before the — what else can you call it? — perma-bloat below his belly button. No blaming the lighting either because hospital light is like visual truth serum (because Loki so needed reminding of those kids pulling back his sleeves and gasping at how obvious his veins were for a living person.)

Mom asks if he’s alright after he’s finally pulled down his sweater and come out of the bathroom, and “Yeah” isn’t a lie.

Loki’s phone, brought back to life with a near-full battery, says it’s 6:45 when they’re leaving Thor to get his beauty sleep, or 15 minutes until Thor’s woken up by his first visitors. Which to literally no one’s surprise will be Sif, Fandral, Hogun, Volstagg, Heimdall, and Sif’s dad. Loki’s prepared to stare ahead and pretend to not see them — it’s a big place, the hospital entrance, and it’s sort of dark, so — just like they’d do him if Mom weren’t there to be the good person she is and accept their sorries like Mom’s not made of diamond.

His feathers are ruffled, justifiably, at Sif’s openly accusatory stare the whole time them and Mom talk, but two stacks of pancakes and a quiche smooth those over.

Mom tells him Dad went and got Thor’s car this morning, which Thor will be so thrilled about. “He’s thinking of keeping it to deter your brother from driving,” she says, and Loki chokes a little on his decaf because that? That’s going to have Thor Cloud fucking 9. He’s so not going to mind that at all.

“Would he be out of line?” Mom asks. “Your brother was reckless. He should learn that dangerous actions have consequences.”

“That’ll be hard since he thinks he’s won.”

Mom rolls her eyes. “He can’t take credit for all of that maniac’s damage. He head-butt a paramedic, do you know? That’s where he got his concussion. Thor broke his jaw, took away several teeth, but there is nothing for him to be proud of.”
“It almost sounds like you wish he’d done more.”

Mom treats those paper napkins like the Egyptian cotton ones back at the house. “I don’t condone violence in any way. It creates more problems than it solves. With some, you can’t help but feel that no amount of words will help them.”

Mom is the only other sane person in this entire world.

So, Loki’s extra disappointed she ditches him in the orthopedic surgery ward for her day job. Because having Mom by his side might mean Loki slows down just a little bit in front of Thor’s room after the body to room ratio through the open door reads: “way too fucking many people in there.”

When a voice that’s sadly Tony Stark’s calls out, “Loki,” behind him, Loki swears to himself. He stops because he’s sadly not at the kind of distance where he can play the, “Totally didn’t hear you,” card.

“Just who I was looking for. More like Thor but I was curious too.” Tony pushes back out of the way with Loki’s hand on his ‘London Calling’ shirt.

The crowd around the bed parts.

“Loki.” Thor throws up the non-broken arm. He was smiling when Loki came in, still is, but it’s tainted with something. “Where were you?”

“Breakfast with Mom.”

“She didn’t come back?” Unsaid ‘to see me.’

Instead of saying that Mom’s still pissed off at him and souring the ‘rejoice, our dear leader is alive’ mood, Loki says, “She had an appointment she had to get to.” Why this doesn’t prompt Thor to continue with his conversation, who knows. Thor in his element is a psychological wild card. Loki ignores the afterimage of Thor’s stare to claim the seat that Volstagg empties for him, murmuring, half-jokey, half-petty, “Pregnant people sit first.”

Loki jabs his eardrums with his ear buds, and a genius playlist built from Lady Gaga’s “Speechless” supports him in his endeavor to stand the constant stream of unfortunately familiar faces in and out of Thor’s room bearing unshed tears and flower arrangements and Carlos Jr. because Thor’s too cool for the gourmet hospital breakfast.

From pausing his music, Loki learns from Steve Rogers that Phil Coulson got a minor concussion from a knockout from Thanos’ elbow and Barnes a dislocated shoulder and some torn ligaments from Thanos too. Rogers tells Thor that Thanos’ in a “medically-induced coma” due to the swelling in his brain, sounding less sympathetic than the ‘Christ Incarnate’ Boy Scout patch mandates.

It’s funny, that everyone takes unsubtle subtle looks at Loki from the corners of their eye when Thanos’ name is mentioned. What are they expecting? An evil cackle? A what, a twitch? There are a million reasons why that’s brain-meltingly dumb, namely that Loki, of all people, had the most vested interest in making Thanos go bye-bye.

But, wait, why would Loki want his baby daddy gone?

A round of applause to Thor for whistleblowing that conspiracy wide open. Loki can see it the tabloid headline, ‘Protective Brother Bear Mauls Foolish Little Brother’s Baby Daddy’ shouting in
Pepper Potts’ mind while she holds her bouquet of flowers as orange as her hair and beside her Natasha sends Thor Clint’s best, who wow, what a surprise, couldn’t make it.

Natasha almost gets away with the look she gives Loki during Pepper’s blah blah blah about Thor being reckless and no wonder he and Tony are friends. And well, Clint’s been sharing Laura’s theories. You’d think Natasha would enlighten Pepper. Guess they’re not at the truth-telling part of their relationship yet.

#

Thor’s surgeon and a nurse clear the room out to check that his arm hasn’t died under the weight of all those signatures on his cast. His surgeon is one of those guys who wasn’t cool in high school so lives vicariously through Thor’s nonchalant near-death experience. After giving Thor — and Loki because come on, they know how this is going — instructions on how to not lose his arm and taking it easy, winking because duh, Thor’s having all the sex he didn’t, Thor’s set free.

Stepping forward to help Thor get dressed stops with an, “I’ve got it,” from Thor, its lightheartedness betrayed by the hard look in Thor’s eyes. Okay then. Loki lets Thor double the time it takes him to dress two-handed all he wants. Thor flashes a smile and tells him, “See?” like Loki’s supposed to be impressed.

Thor pulls his car keys out of his pocket.

Oh. Hm. That.

“Dad got your car,” Loki says.

Thor doesn’t sound thrilled but says that yeah, he knows. Fandral drove by and his truck was done, so he figured that since Dad has the only other set of keys.

Maybe it’s Thor disregarding eye contact, or maybe it’s that look Thor gave him when he came in. Whatever it is, it makes Loki say, “He’s thinking of keeping it.”

Thor’s paralyzed over the weekender bag he’s rooting through on the bed.

Thor resumes with a vengeance.

“It’s not like you can drive with one hand.”

“You heard him last night,” is all Thor says. He changes the subject to having set a record for threes at last night’s game and how some NBA player Loki doesn’t know the name of came back in five months after their broken leg so if he trains hard enough in rehab, he can make it back in time for the end of the basketball season.

Loki saw Thor’s bone. He doubts that’s gonna happen.

He shuts up about it though. Thor’s at a level of okay that Loki can comfortably be at too, where Loki’s less overwhelmed by the joy of Thor in the company of “friends.” Loki holds a bouquet of daffodils from a freaking teacher during Thor’s first act of freedom, thanking his followers for wasting space, tears, and tissues in the waiting room and because he’s as narcissistic as he is generous, gives out some one-armed hugs Loki’s not — not — annoyed about the presence of boobs — like Loki doesn’t have and Thor doesn’t even pretend not to love, “thank you”-ing right into Lorelei’s cleavage — in.

Sif, Volstagg, Fandral, and Hogun in the chauffeured truck, the black, self-important ones, Odin’s
added insult to Thor’s injury with—fuck yes Loki’s annoyed by their presence.

Loki ends up front. Like old times, Loki the sixth wheel. While Sif strains over the armrest trying to be all Thor sees and needs, pathetically typical, and Fandral takes care of the head, Hogun focuses on the shaft, and Volstagg minds the balls like the dedicated friends they are, Loki charms the driver into a stop for ice cream.


“Seeing anyone?” Loki asks him as they wait for his peanut butter banana milkshake. “Or are you still committed to your one-sided polygamous relationship with Thor?”

Hogun doesn’t crack.

“You must feel really guilty not being there for Thor when he finally needed you.”

“You can handle himself.”

“But still.” Loki thanks the cashier, the coolness of the cup like consolation for this morning. “A pivotal moment like this and you can’t say you were there to support him. You know who can? Steve Rogers, Steve and Clint and Phil Coulson and Bucky Barnes and even Sharon and Margaret Carter. This the kind of thing that separates groomsmen from regular wedding guests.”

“You don’t have to worry. You’ll be the best man.”

Loki sips his milkshake waiting for the punch line.

“It’s not like he’ll be marrying you. Brothers can’t get married.” Hogun’s wise to walk the fuck away.

Who does he think he’s talking to? An idiot? Loki’s… come to terms with the ceiling on this thing. And who’s to say that even if there weren’t, they would… get that far.

Loki’s—whatever.

The chauffeur opens the car door to Sif telling Thor, “…is the father?” the tail end of something that began with “Thanos” and alluded to Loki’s nothing with Thanos judging by the glare Thor’s giving Sif.

Thor, super-duper politely, snatches the milkshake from Loki but phew, leaves Loki’s cup of chocolate ice cream alone.

Loki might scream at Sif instead of calmly telling her, “I can say with full honesty that Thor is the only person to have fucked me raw and creampied me, thank you.”

Thor chokes a little, and Loki’s really proud because this predictability infecting him has deprived him of the joy of a candid Shocked Thor reaction.

“Didn’t need to know that,” Volstagg says.

“Yeah, didn’t have to say it like that, fuck.” Thor returns Loki’s milkshake, half-empty now. He, for whatever reason, tries to level with Sif, and his defense force wades into to help try and comfort Sif like her perspective isn’t totally hinging on the point that Loki’s a lying man-whore.

Too bad so sad that works zero percent. Loki’s heartbroken to see Sif get into that Uber waiting outside his—their apartment, just distraught.
The three of them following her into it would make it even better, but Thor’s luck trumps Loki’s and Thor wants them to come invade Loki’s—their space with their bullshit because Loki’s not enough to comfort him in this time of great need, Loki, his so-called boyfriend, the father of his child, brother, et cetera.

(In succession, Loki realizes how fucked-up that is, but then the implication, that it’s Thor he’s with, cheers him right up.)

He wishes he could enjoy what that entitles, celebrate that Thor didn’t die last night, but no. That’d be too good for him. And Thor wants to bro down around the FC Bayern match, so either Loki plops himself down in Thor’s lap like everything’s fine or gets out.

Loki’s needed a shower anyway.

His hormones have lowered their standards of what’s hard-on worthy from nothing short of anything Thor-adjacent to accept the pound of warm water down on him as passable. It isn’t. Not when there’s a perfectly—like 95% okay—functioning Thor out there who could and should like he told Loki he would, that no matter what, after the game he would refresh Loki’s memory of his cock in all those places inaccessible by fingers.

Loki shoves an arm out of the shower to grab that bottle of waterproof lube he bought on an optimistic whim weeks ago. He squeezes like half of it out on his fingers, leverages a palm on the wall, and the sting of two fingers kicks his heartbeat into hyper speed, Loki needing Thor’s dick inside him a century ago. It’s rushed and more pain than pleasure, but it gets him to where he needs to be so he can turn his back against the wall and scream at the top of his lungs, “Thor!”

Thor deserves this, to feel the sort of panic Loki felt yesterday.

He’s gotten to his third finger counting and just as many progressively louder calls of “Loki” when Thor tests the door hinges.

“What’s wrong?” Thor’s barely breathless. Loki can’t make out the expression on his face — until he slides open the shower. Yep, that’s wide-eyed, slack-mouthed panic.

That fistful of shirt Loki grabs, he uses to pull Thor forward, and Thor’s so caught off-guard he can’t help but stumble into the shower with Loki.

“Your cock’s not inside me,” Loki answers.

Thor turns the shower off as it dawns on him that “you tricked me.”

“Be annoyed later.” Loki unbuttons Thor’s jeans. “Sex now.”

“Now?” Thor’s left half is lightly misted, his hair damp and clingy to the backs of Loki’s knuckles when he winds his hand around the back of Thor’s neck, dipping his pinky into that On button at the top of his spine for the pretty way Thor’s eyes flutter shut, the perfect time for Loki to slip his arm the rest of the way around Thor’s neck and hop up.

Thor catches him with a hand on the ass. His palm, there has to be a bright red mark matching his heart lines and fingerprints, it’s so hot. His fingertips touch Loki’s hole, by accident says the confused look on Thor’s face, before he realizes and there’s that ‘oh’ followed shortly after by a ‘fuck’ in his eyes. “I mean, I did promise.”

That beating cock in Loki’s fist totally agrees.
“You did.” Loki kisses Thor, this time filled with all the tongue and the teeth and the relief that last
night’s never had the chance to be. The ‘I’m going to fuck you’ prelude kiss that Loki’s been missing
for fucking ever.

Aiming the—admittedly a lot bigger than Loki remembers—head of Thor’s cock is a joint effort, but
pressing it in, that’s between Thor and gravity, some momentarily nightmarish blood pact the rational
half of Loki’s ready to bail on when the stretch starts fully registering, a clusterfuck of amazing
friction and traitorous burning. Thor’s talking to him, asking him, “Are you okay?” he realizes when
the drawn out “ouch” by his nerves quiets down, and Loki’s teeth snap together when the friction
stops because there’s no more. Somehow, despite the odds and the rules of physics, he got it in.

Thor’s saying, “Oh, god,” for both the exact and opposite reasons that Loki is, “Oh, fuck.”

There’s... knocking? Not on the bathroom door but the bedroom.

Thor murmurs, “Shit,” then louder, asks, “What is it?”

“Is everything alright?” Fandral.

Loki tries to inhale deeply but he’s so full he’s breathing around Thor’s cock, introducing some static
friction down there that gets a sexy sound out of Thor and a really pathetic one out of Loki.

“Yeah.” Thor’s pausing, thinking. He cranes his head to look in Fandral’s voice’s general direction,
and his neck calls for Loki to press his mouth to, taste it, that build-up of saltiness and something he
just knows as Thor. “I think you guys should go.”

Some silent realizing on Fandral’s end. Then the door’s shutting.

“So.”

“So.”

“Fuck me.”

#

Loki’s panting, which he knows because air’s scraping in and out of his mouth, drying out his
tongue so it’s like sponge, because he can’t hear anything under the high-pitched whine and the
room’s covered in cotton, but no, not the sheets, no, no, no, they’re woven out of sadism, too much,
way too much... just no.

Yes. Yes, yes, yes, his heart’s beating in his ass, and his ass cheeks are so lubed up with cum, Thor’s
cum, they slip against each other if he even bends his knee, and his dick’s at not-getting-hard-in-the-
next-decade levels of exhaustion, and best of all, Thor’s in bed beside him. Alive.

“That’s one way to come back with a vengeance,” Thor says to Loki and ridiculously to his dick.
“Didn’t last long, but there’s that saying: the light that burns twice as bright burns half as long.”

“Lao Tzu,” Loki manages to say. He’s still out of breath. “Tyrell from Blade Runner according to
you, but who cares? It’s an alright movie.”

Thor’s sweaty-sticky chest presses into his arm. It, sweat, is shining all over his face because he can’t
even do tired less than gorgeous. “Are you—?”

“You asked me if I was okay about 28 times give or take in the process of getting your dick inside
me, so if you ask again, I will roll over on top of you and finish the job you started with a pillow.”

Thor’s laughing. “Fine then. I won’t ask that.” He puts his head on Loki’s pillow, so Loki turning his head is Loki initiating a kiss. “Are you cool with us blowing off family dinner to do cute couple things? Have dinner just the two of us?”

Loki tilts his head like a degree. No kissing, not yet. “As long as you know I’m going to quote ‘cute couple things’ from you for the rest of your life. ‘You’re going to stay at Grandma’s tonight because me and Daddy, we’re going to do ‘cute couple things.’”

Their kiss’s spit-scant but slow. Naked but less about the next round—that’s hours away anyway—and more about I want to touch my lips with you lips because I don’t do this with everybody but I want to with you.

“You fuck me then you feed me. What don’t you give me these days? Besides make occasionally stupid decisions.”

Thor’s arm sneaks around Loki then his hand, because Thor thinks he’s subtle, slides over Loki’s… bump. “Come on, I’m your Renaissance Man. You need it; I have it. Food, sex, body heat, a pillow, physical protection.”

Loki follows the curve of Thor’s pec with his pointer finger. “I’ve been thinking that about me to you for years.” He stops where Thor’s heart’s drumming his sternum. “About time you caught up.”

This feeling, Loki’s going to call it contentment.

(So when he doesn’t have it anymore, he’ll know where to look to remember what it was like.)
*air horn intensifies*
W-W-W-We da best music!

But seriously. Busy is so — the light from "busy" could have never reached the state of my life. That's how far from busy I was.

However -- and I know this isn't much consolation -- I do have ~10 chapters written ahead. It's been an issue of, er, the other elements of the story that I realized in retrospect required more than me putting my fingers to the keys. But hey, it looks cool though... right?

Also, long chapter!

I promised y'all I wadn't done. So, in the words of Mario, here we go!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

22: Reverb

#

A standing ovation for psycho Thor for raising the bar of Mom’s disappointment. With that red cast
on Thor’s arm constantly reminding Mom of Thursday night, the hickeys on Thor’s neck have a minimal effect on Mom’s already no-bullshit mood.

She explains how many and how often Thor should take the pain pills mostly to Loki because Drugged Thor is at level “openly holding Loki hostage in his lap in a vice-grip of his thighs at Loki’s hips and that un-brotherly hand on Loki’s ‘too low to be a food baby’ bump because he was, emphasis on past tense, pretending to comfort the tightness there Loki told him about — this morning Thor asked what it felt like; that’s all Loki had — but has abandoned all pretense of anything but groping Loki despite them being in front of Mom” of euphoric, and this isn’t likely sticking to any meaningful place in his brain.

And Thor said his arm wasn’t hurting that bad. Sure, Thor.

Mom tells Thor that Administration’s suspending him until Winter recess, meaning pretty much no school for him till January, and Thor decides “That’s awesome” is a thing to be said out loud, not Loki mishearing things either because Thor’s right there on Loki’s shoulder, and that’s not dumb enough, so “Hell yeah, free vacation” too. Yeah. It’s understandable that Mom ignores him completely. “Your father and Thanos’ father spoke. They’re not pressing charges. They agree that you’ve punished yourselves enough.”

“Yeah, I’m going to jail. Sure.” Thor pulls away from Loki, snickering like that’s funny, him talking to Mom like Odin does, hilarious. He releases Loki, but not without dragging his semi across Loki’s ass sliding from between him and the stool for a blush Loki has to look away from Mom to hide. “Whatever. My arm will heal.”

Thor answers an incoming call with, “The hell is up, man?” but fortunate for Loki and Mom, he’s taking his call down the hall to the bathroom or bedroom — whichever, doesn’t really matter because he can’t disrespect Mom in either — is a weight off Loki’s shoulders.

“He didn’t mean any of that,” Loki says. “Not tonally. He totally meant the words. This is Thor we’re talking about.”

“I know not to take it personally.” Mom’s reaching out, and she flattens her hand over his stomach — to the best of her ability now that it’s not so flat. “I started to show around my 13th week too. I was nearly bedridden in my last month because of how large I got.”

He almost asks, ‘But how big did you get with me?’ The ongoing loop of ‘you’re adopted’ in his mind, two months strong now, prevents that humiliating moment. But.

“Do you — what about my — about the woman who gave birth to me?”

Mom’s hand pulls back. All the tenderness is gone, hidden behind a neutral expression that Loki, he’s never found himself on the end of, not from Mom. “Why do you ask?”

Because…

He finds himself saying sorry before he knows why he’s saying sorry. “I didn’t mean — I just wanted to know what I could expect from my end. Who’s to say that they’ll be like Thor?”

“The pregnancy was routine. You were delivered via cesarean by me and an old colleague. That’s all you need to know.” She “Mom” smiles. But the smile’s not all the way there in her eyes.

What is she hiding?

He’d love to give Mom, the only person — well, one of the only two people’s he indiscriminately
trusted his whole life, but he means, it wasn’t from her he learned the biggest secret of his whole life. That was Thor, pulling the emergency brake. If she would’ve had it her way, Loki would be coming to peace with his baby being his genetic nephew just because.

Loki became something remotely human inside a totally different woman than the one telling Loki about the adorable cheeks on the baby she delivered this morning like Loki’s not the product of two complete strangers as far as Loki’s concerned’s DNA.

Mom clearly doesn’t want him asking anymore questions. Fine. He respects that.

But there are methods besides questions to get answers.

She’s asking if he’s alright, noticing that he’s only been half-assing some “Mhm”s and not hyper-focused on the containers of food she’s pulled out of a bag from that Greek restaurant Loki really likes.

Loki meets her eyes. “I was having a small crisis over how weird it is there’s another human being growing inside of me. And that I was once a human being growing inside of someone.”

Mom doesn’t give him That Look. A good start.

“Loki.” Thor’s borderline singing it. Mr. Great Timing has a loopy smile on his face Loki takes as forewarning to hide his ass against the counter over next to Mom, who Thor might try to ignore but will not hesitate to catch Thor’s arm and give him That Look.

Mom pats Loki’s arm and gives him a warm look before she settles in to listen to Thor ramble in a low voice about how cool “Erik” — Selvig, gross — is, and — Loki tunes out there because that’s enough bullshit for him, not just from Thor, from all sources if he’s honest.

That in mind, Loki’s not all unhappy when Mom entrusts him with keeping Drugged Thor alive.

“Thought she’d never leave,” Thor says, and same, but his reasons, reason more like — are in a different dimension than Loki’s. Yeah, Loki’s glad she’s gone so they can be alone to christen the bath like they’ve done the shower and the bed and the floor and the kitchen counter at like dawn this morning when Loki’s late-night snack got side-tracked by that alluring flat surface, but Loki now has a shitload of questions with zero answers for.

If Drugged Thor had them, Loki’s quite sure he’d have all of them and then some, how candid he is (Loki doesn’t need the soliloquy about how “fucking spectacularly sexy” Loki’s naked body is.)

If only they were in Loki’s medical file too.

Thor’s got the cast arm on edge of the tub, but the other underwater so he can hold on to Loki’s knee for some reason. Loki knows what Thor said, that he likes to be touching him all the time, which Loki gets in a very profound sense, but that’s him, Loki. Thor can’t — he just can’t feel the same way. It’s unbelievable. Thor wants him. Like, no, that statement doesn’t sound right.

“I can hear you thinking.” Thor’s eyelids still cover his eyes, but if they were open, they’d be on Loki.

A droplet of water breaks free from the tension on Thor’s skin and slides down that trench between Thor’s pecs down into the bubbles under them. Is Loki jealous? …Maybe.

But he’d like to enjoy the water before it gets all cummy and the bubbles get burst, alright?
He sinks deeper into the warmth, knees pushing out some foamy bubbles. “When you were bashing in Thanos’ teeth with your trusty bat, you wouldn’t have happened to say anything that would give Clint Barton the bright idea that we’re fucking, right?”

There they go, Thor’s eyes. “No, but I’m happy he knows. About fucking time.” His smugness turns down a little. “Why aren’t you?”

“I’m not not-happy he knows. It’s just his reaction was more like… disbelief instead of disgust, like it was it being ‘you’ that got him, not ‘you, my brother.’”

“Good. I hope he feels as betrayed as I did when I found out you two were fucking.”

“No one knew we were fucking. Mostly.”

“I didn’t. I should’ve. But I thought me shutting him down when he said he wanted to would’ve been end of story.”

“Clint Barton told you he wanted to fuck me?”

“Yeah. He told a whole bunch of us. Look — “

“No. Wait, I need the details to know who I should be pissed at and how much. Tell me, when and why did he tell you that?”

“Last summer. We were playing fuck, marry, kill. We’d been drinking, but none of us were drunk. Barnes said Natasha, Lorelei, and you. He was doing it fuck with me. They all knew, unwritten rule, they didn’t bring you into it. Barton said kill Lorelei, marry Natasha, and fuck you. He had to be joking, right? Trying to fuck around with me too. But when Steve got on him, says he’s been drinking too much. He forgot the golden rule: don’t stick your dick in crazy.”

“And you didn’t defend me.”

Geez, Thor could at least pretend he doesn’t totally agree, that Loki’s unreasonable for expecting him to have done the good big brother thing. “Barton tells him, ‘When crazy looks like that, you do.’ Dead serious. Now everyone’s forgotten about playing. They all wanna know what the hell he’s thinking. Me? I’m blindsided. Not about the wanting to fuck you part — you get it. Anyway, he’s saying, ‘Why do you guys think I go to tennis matches? You see him in those shorts?’ That snapped me out of it. I told him to shut the fuck up. He did. They never brought it up around me, and he kept the staring to a minimum. There. My boner’s gone.”

“If it’s any consolation, he felt so guilty after the first time, it took a lot of convincing for him to fuck me again. And I mean a lot of convincing.”

“But he did.”

“It’s not like you can blame him.” Loki can’t ever pass up an opportunity to mock pouty Thor. He wades through the deflating bubbles on his knees, the multitasker he is, braces himself on Thor’s legs to both not face-plant — though, he means, would it be all that bad given where he’d land — and tease Thor and his allegedly soft dick. “I’m addictive.”

Thor’s boner is definitely not gone.

“For my birthday,” Thor’s saying, “I want you to… top me.”

Loki has to change his grip from the tops of Thor’s thighs to Thor’s shoulders to counteract that jolt
of blood that ditched his head, the bigger, thinking one. “You do?”

A finger or two up the ass while Loki’s blowing him is as far as they’ve gotten on that front. Yeah, Loki’s thought about it, jerked off to it like a thousand times, but Thor’s been all, ‘It does nothing for me,’ and Loki’s not going to enjoy it if Thor isn’t, at least not without regretting it after.

“You figure you’re already showing. You might not be able to next month.” Wishful thinking on Thor’s part, the baby-bump-obsessed weirdo. “It’s now or never — or waiting a long time at least, right?”

“Why not now? Not that I’m pressuring you —”

“I want it to be… special. Yeah, yeah, go ahead. Laugh.”

Loki laughs, but he makes up for it straddling Thor’s thighs so their cocks meet, so good that Loki’s life goals for a split-second vanish and only ‘touching dicks with Thor’ remains. “Okay, Thor. If you’re a good boy and stay away from baseball bats, I’ll be your backdoor lover.”

Thor’s fist around their dicks is a totally agreeable “shut up.”

#

Opening the door to anyone but Mom is bad enough. Opening the door to not just Tony Stark — no, because that’d be somewhat easy to deal with — but — and Bruce doesn’t really count because he’s obviously not here willingly — right beside Stark, Steve Rogers and then there’s Barnes in his sling and Wilson and Rhodes and Jarvis and Pepper & Natasha — they come as a pair deal now, Loki’s decided — and can’t forget Wanda and Pietro Maximoff who’ve somehow tagged along.

Doors, they’re not made to just open, but shut too —

“Hey, guys!”

Loki’s stupidly hoping that Thor’s not unsurprised because he was expecting them or something and didn’t think to run this by Loki. This is Thor. He is — unsurprised. Being considerate isn’t a part of the Thor package.

Forced socializing isn’t a part of Loki’s.

As Thor welcomes his buddies and all of the noise-and the worst kind, people noise — in, Loki enacts Bunker Protocol aka a bag of kettle corn in his teeth, a bowl of fruit salad clutched to his chest, a jar of peanut butter because why not, tiptoeing over to hold his laptop between his free arm and side, and of course, most importantly, him stealthily going to the bedroom and locking himself in it.

A perk of having his own apartment was that the Bunker Protocol included the whole place, but no, Loki had to go and invite Thor to move in. The most popular man in the whole universe. What the hell was Loki thinking? Oh, right, they’re going to be a family. Gross. Who needs a family when you can have peace and quiet, which yes, Loki has in here, but it’s the principle. He could have it out there, had it as far as “peace and quiet” is a thing with Thor before the circus rolled in, but he can’t because Thor is social and Loki’s not enough.

Because that’s what it comes down to: Loki not being enough.

And it’s not a failing on Loki’s part. All responsibility rests with Thor’s ego’s bottomless appetite, that self-centered asshole. A pie chart of reasons Thor went after Thanos would be like solidly
‘because it makes him look bad as a big brother’ with a small slice of ‘sincerely feeling vengeful on Loki’s behalf.’ No matter why, Loki is not at all remorseful it happened. Fuck no. But let him not kid himself.

More than Loki, Thor loves other people hearing him talk in that super confident, compelling voice about — what is it now? Oh, the sledding incident from a few years ago in Switzerland — and there’s so many of them, Thor’s “friends,” some are on the floor, and Thor’s graciously standing despite the broken arm like a good host, not because he likes always being the tallest person in the room — but the way Thor’s telling it, he single-handedly saved this guy — it was a torn ACL, not a broken neck — and if mighty Thor hadn’t been there to ski him down, he would’ve died up there because that totally happens at the best ski resort in the world all the time to the mid-life crises that overestimate their skiing skills.

Loki has the fridge door to hide the annoyed expression he doesn’t.

“Hand me a Gatorade?” That’s Bucky Barnes Loki’s ‘I’m being watched’ sense has picked up then.

They’re Thor’s Gatorades, but they’re also Thor’s friends, so transitive property, right?

Loki slides the Gatorade toward Bucky’s right and working arm — he and Thor are mirrors of one another in the arm injury department — which gets a split-second miffed look from Thor in this direction Loki’s so smiling to himself about when he turns back around to grab the jar of green olives.

Bucky’s cranking open the Gatorade lid with his teeth because this is Bucky Barnes. Asking Loki to do it for him hasn’t even occurred to him to occur to him. Well, he succeeds. “So, Barton bail because it finally dawn on him that you’re pregnant?”

A tangy explosion into every crevice of his tongue.

“So, you’re not a Thanos truther?” Loki asks.

“Nah. You hated him with the best of us. Anyone could see that.”

“You mean, ‘hate him.’ That’s going to remain present tense for as long as I can live and can feel.”

“Amen to that.” Barnes smirks, all lopsided and cocky like the kind of person you’d expect to get a shoulder filleted by Thanos and not even flinch at his name, an idiot. Just like Thor. “I take you not answering as a ‘yes.’”

“I don’t know. What did he tell you?”

“That he didn’t have anything to talk about dealing with — and these are his words, not mine — ‘that lying asshole.’ Asked Romanoff and she said I’d have better luck asking you. So here I am.”

Something especially funny has Tony cackling and falling over onto Steve’s thighs, Steve shaking his head but not looking like he minds Tony invading his well-guarded personal space.

Loki leans forward some. “You have to tell me something first.”

“Clint warned me not to make deals with you. Worse than making deals with the devil himself.”

“I don’t think ‘the devil’ exists, so to me, that sounds like a shining endorsement to make all the deals with me.”
Barnes’s tongue pokes around inside his cheek. He spins around to get up off the stool, smiling. “I get the feeling you’re gonna ask something real outta pocket, so I think I’ll pass.”

Well, Loki was going to ask how Barnes was helping Steve come to terms with liking guys. Wise choice.

“Tell me I didn’t miss anything good,” Barnes says as he rejoins the conversation, Wilson responding, “You tell us. Can’t picture the two of you over there talking about the Lit homework,” in that suspicious tone, and he’s the perfect diversion for Loki’s great —

“Hey, Loki-dokey, come here.”

Is this a cringe?

Yes, this is a cringe.

Loki shields himself against their staring — not that he cares, but still — with his arms, crosses them to make it obvious, if it’s not already by the look on his face, that he’s not willingly here. At the edge of the rug that’s sort of a boundary between the living room and everywhere else is where he curls his toes in his socks and stops.

That isn’t meant to be a come hither for Thor’s information.

“Don’t even think about it,” Loki says about 17 — 18 in 6 days — years too late. His throat is one Thor-arm-flex, the move that launched a thousand wet dreams, from a headlock, and blood’s undoubtedly screaming bright, embarrassed-and-horny pink in his cheeks.

“Come on. Be social,” Thor’s saying warm into his ear, in Norwegian. “It won’t kill you.”

“You don’t know that. Do you even want to risk it? I’m sort of the life support for this baby.”

“Shut up. You’ll be fine.”

Jarvis got the look of so-so understanding — Loki was ambivalent about Jarvis adding Norwegian to his long list of learned languages for a reason — which could be enough for him to jump to that conclusion if Drugged Thor thinks any harder with the semi rediscovering the glory of Loki’s butt.

Thor, impulsive dickhead, he deserves Loki asking over the side conversations that’ve broken out and in English, “Where’s Clint?”

Natasha, sat on the ground near who else’s but Potts’ legs, gives Loki a look. She’s so onto him.

“Who cares?” Thor says. He releases his stronghold on Loki’s shoulder-neck area to reclaim stage center, galvanized by his own douchebaggery. “Give him some time. He’ll get over it.”

Thor’s ‘it’ and the ‘it’ that Wilson winces/Bruce looks up from his book/Rhodes uncomfortably shifts at are very, very different.

“Well, Barton told me he had other plans,” Wanda says. She’s completing this makeshift circle of theirs over in front of the TV stand, pretzel-style. “Probably has something to do with his skateboard.”

Snickering from Pietro. “He’s trying to distract himself from the fact he can’t deny that he’s ruined his life anymore, now with you being” — some gesturing to his stomach — “like that.”

“Clint hasn’t ruined his life,” and that’s Steve of course. “Sure, a teenage baby — “
“You guys don’t actually think — “ Thor interrupts himself to grin this shit-devouring grin. “This is your fault,” he’s saying in Norwegian, so ‘your’ is Loki. “You never would’ve kissed him, they wouldn’t be so confused.”

Tony’s leaned around Rhodes on the arm of the couch toward Jarvis, asking in a shoddy whisper, “You catching any of this?”

“If he is, he’s not going to tell you anything,” Loki says. English. “Percocet is like truth serum to you clearly,” he’s saying to Thor, in Norwegian, yeah, but that drug’s the same in both languages, “and you’re already distressingly transparent when you’re sober. Omission isn’t technically lying, alright, Thor’s conscience?”

“I’m not that faded.”

“Still think telling them the truth is a good idea?”

Thor shrugs. “I don’t know. Maybe. Maybe not,” he says. “Guess you’ll have to stick around and keep me in line.”

Stretching the collar of Thor’s sweatshirt to its limit to pull Thor down into a bitey kiss is so damned tempting, but unlike Thor, Loki knows that this thing, it has consequences that Thor might not be able to grasp but do very much so exist.

Back to English, Thor says, “Anyway, I told everyone I’m the father, so I don’t know why you’re all still having this discussion.”

They’re all taking that as Thor saying ‘the father doesn’t matter because I’m going to be the only father they know’ judging by the adoring expressions on all of them — minus faintly-alarmed-but-also-intrigued Jarvis and ambivalent Natasha — instead of Thor telling them the truth: he is the father.

It’s sort of funny in a sad, people are predictably closed-minded way — okay, brothers fucking is out there, but like with Clint, it’s less of the them being brothers thing that’s the hurdle and more of the part where it’s Loki that’s his brother. Whatever. Them not believing it works for him.

Loki sighs, and the free couch arm next to Bruce, Loki makes himself comfortable on — as much he can be in a roomful of these people.

Thor’s not so smug after Loki’s used Steve talking about last night’s cutesy boat date with Sharon Carter — who Tony shares Loki’s eye-roll-because-Steve’s-secondhand-quotes-sound-insufferable feelings over, thankfully, because come on, seriously, someone else has to be sane here — as an in to ask, what he didn’t get to ask Bucky, “And how does she feel about you liking guys?”

His unsure “Too?” when they all turn their stunned looks on him is a sour cherry on top of Thor’s extra special sundae.

“Not cool, man,” Wilson’s saying then they’re all shaking their heads and moving on, and surprise, surprise, not so soon after Steve’s standing up and saying all of the sudden that they should get going.

“I’ll go get your meds ready,” Loki tells Thor as he prepares to show them all out, smirking because it’s going to take more than two Percocet for Thor to try to usurp Loki’s smug asshole throne.

It’d suck super-duper bad if this deterred Steve and friends stopping by.
Oops.

#

Lying on Thor’s chest while he internally loses his mind because Bayern’s losing to literally Who FC, Loki gains a new understanding of why Hope kept falling asleep on Thor. Because Thor’s chest, it’s the Goldilocks zone of pillows.

Which means that through Loki’s phone the universe throws a tantrum in his pocket because it’s against the natural order for him to get a freaking break. Thor’s way too absorbed in the game to do more than watch Loki’s hand crawl between them — and by his dick, freshly taken care of thank you and you’re welcome — to dig it out.

Loki wouldn’t put it past you, know, Thanos to manage a phone call with a wired jaw, so he’s expecting it, his name.

It isn’t.

‘The California Academy of Sciences’ is calling him.

“Who’s that?” Thor asks.

The truth, that’s not an option here unless that birthday surprise wants to become a birthday expected.


“Come on.” Thor’s already that annoyed? “Ignore it.”

“I’ll take it outside, so I won’t ruin your game.” Loki’s up and heading to do just that, but Thor’s cast has drifted out to bridge the couch and coffee table.

“I told you. Ignore it.”

And Loki just does what Thor says. Sure.

Loki steps over Thor’s arm.

He’s banking on the fact that Thor’s baby is inside him on keeping Thor from locking him out on the balcony, shutting the door behind him instead of leaving it cracked — and risking Thor happening to overhear because he’s definitely muted the TV in there.

Loki gets it. The last time Loki said it was Hela, it wasn’t Hela, yes, like this time, but that time it was Thanos. Thor’s put two and two together given how that night ended. But this time? Loki’s innocent. That’s beside that point though because Loki doesn’t need to justify himself to anyone, not even to Thor.

Thor, that dickhead, will feel so guilty when he finds out what Loki’s really been up to. He’ll be groveling for days.

Good.

On Loki’s return call to the California Academy of the Sciences, Thor’s divine luck wins over Loki’s shit non-luck so that the wedding reception that’s had December 5th booked for months has cancelled yesterday. Hell yeah for cold feet.
Thor asks about his and Hela’s conversation or “How did it go?” like he’s hoping for the day Loki replies, “Shit. We’re not friends anymore.” It went fine, sorry for Thor. Loki cheers him up over that and Bayern’s loss by dragging him out to a bakery for green tea cake and shared milk tea Thor tries to steal all the bubbles from.

#

Between him and Thor, Loki’s not sure who’s less thrilled about Loki’s reintroduction to the artificial real-world of school.

Thor murmuring, “You’re skipping school. Okay? Thanks. Good talk,” to him when he’s snuggled up against Thor the Portable Sun, prepping for his eight hours till D-day, has Thor winning that one.

So, guilt is about 2% of Loki’s current emotional state, the other 97.99 being a feeling of “fuck everything but sleep (and food),” after his vibrating phone’s kidnapped him from the comfort of bed and he’s operating on the assumption that there will be no cute goodbyes exchanged between him and Thor this morning.

No, it’s just Loki and his candy store of prenatal supplements.

He mopes over his overnight oatmeal, the kind with walnuts and apples and bananas, in the kitchen, yes, only sitting in the little bit of sunlight there is this early. He’s allowed to wallow.

His spoon pops from the seal of his tongue after a satisfying yank.

In the smudgy spoon reflection, something moves. Something behind him.

Loki turns on the stool.

His heart squeezes the life out of itself, and his lungs? Yeah, screw air.

Thor, asshole, looks anti-apologetic.

“Are you trying to get me to go into way early labor?” Loki chases his breath down and catches it, no thanks to Thor, biggest ninja in history. “I peed myself a little.”

Like by a drop but for someone who hasn’t been in diapers for a long time, that drop is a lot.

“You deserve it, dick.” Thor’s shuffling over to the fridge. “You were going to leave without saying bye to me.”

“Well, you were sleep, and you looked so peaceful. I didn’t want to disturb you.” And Morning Thor is 50/50 for being a grumpy douchebag because his pain meds have flushed out of his system by the time he’s woken up.

Thor’s his usual self with a light sprinkling of the grump, clearly having popped a fresh dose after his morning pee, but then Loki’s phone’s ringing with a call from one ‘Tony Stark’ and when Loki goes to ignore it, Thor feels the need to only now mention, “Stark said he’d give you a ride,” like Loki would’ve appreciated some input.

“You think I’d let you sneak off with von Strucker or some shit?” Thor asks, strengthening Loki’s position that he’d prefer grumpy douchebag Thor right now over Thanos Bashing Thor’s drugged-up variant.

Jarvis opens the car door for him, and Loki’s grateful because he means well, but his thanks is pretty snippy, and he’s not all that sorry.

“You didn’t have to do this,” Loki tells Tony.

Tony looks at him in the rearview and says, “Not unless I wanted your brother to take a baseball bat to me. Since the last guy that happened to is eating through a straw, I think I’ll drop by and pick you up as long as Thor needs me to.”

“Thor has one working arm. He’s vulnerable.”

“One of Thor’s arm’s converts into two of mine. Are you trying to get me beat into the next century like your baby daddy?”

There’s not enough air on this planet to fuel the sigh that deserves.

“Thanos is not my baby’s daddy or father or genetic donor or whatever the hell you prefer. I did not make this baby with Thanos. I’d appreciate it if you could at least move onto the more reasonable theory that it’s Barton’s.”

If only Loki records that and forwards it to Flash Thompson to play on the morning announcement for all the side-eyeing conspiracy theorists in the halls. Who knew Tony’s half-convinced, “Okay, then,” would be the response Loki dreams of from all those cowards? Because at least it’d mean they asked instead of jumping to their and their friends’ conclusions about why perfect, rational Thor attempted murder on the least desirable person on campus. If someone asked, Loki would happily tell them the truth, but no, because Loki has lied once or twice or so — more like a dozen plus times — on a school-wide scale, they’re putting more stake in gossip than his own word. They can eat a bag of dicks. Seriously.

Barton’s fucking judgmental glare is an improvement. It’s that bad.

He could scream his lungs bloody, tell them all that guess fucking what, Loki’s non-platonic interactions with Thanos, long ago but not long enough, those weren’t exactly enthusiastically done on Loki’s part — that’s not to say it was what Thor thinks it was because it wasn’t, full fucking stop — nor were they likely to end in pregnancy, which if they were, do they think Loki would’ve… kept it?

This baby was made out of love and with Thor, who they’ve martyred to the extent they’d sacrifice Loki at that makeshift shrine they’ve ruined Thor’s locker, the real one, with, with wreaths and cutesy letters and some massive get well card put together by Lorelei, who’s stuck that selfie of her and Thor from that football game Loki went to center stage. That and the “tell Thor he’s in my thoughts and prayers” from randos totally aren’t plows to get in good with Thor in this moment of vulnerability.

Texting Thor People miss you is as far as Loki goes.
Thank you tho

How is it without me

The same. People love you. I'm the antichrist.

LMAO

Dude is supposed to be sexy right

Idk Steve's my source. I kinda tune out when he starts talking about Jessua and stuff too much

How's your arm?

You're texting, so you haven't OD'd on Percocet.

I'm cool.

Went down the gym

Met some neighbors

Guy above us works for Dad. He said he ran into him once like 3 weeks ago and got a raise for no reason.

Odin's trying to butter him up before he uses him as a spy.

*Dad

But what I thought too lol!
Hela, after she’s finished refreshing her blood red lipstick, tells Loki as he’s sitting down, “Try to be less smitten with that creature, or I’ll lose my lunch.”

So, it turns out the leftover school day (spotlight on Amora and her 21 hundred questions about Thor’s whereabouts and Thor’s sleeping routine and when does Thor eat and shower and oh she could be so much help to him if he’d let her or if Loki did, wink-wink, nudge-nudge, because Loki for some reason would want Amora to get back with Thor) doesn’t suck so bad when there’s the promise of awesome sex at the end.

Still though screw all of these people.

And make that a rotten bag of dicks.
Mom arrives during one of Thor’s half-drug, half-sex — not that Loki tells her this, just that Thor was tired, and why would she ask? It’s not like she wants to know — induced naps. She has eggnog — non-alcoholic for obvious reasons, but still, boo — to celebrate December and a bag of blank Christmas stockings and Christmas-stocking decorating supplies they used to gather around the table in that one dining room with the golden candelabra to pretend to be a Perfect Family with.

He doesn’t know if Mom misses it, if she resents that Loki and Thor have ruined that for her. She talks about how next Christmas won’t be the same, how they’ll have another family member, smiling down at Loki’s belly, like the means justify the ends, but Loki’s too aware of what he sees with Mom not being representative of what she’s genuinely feeling. This might be her way of rationalizing this fairly fucked-up situation so she doesn’t lose her shit. She has been married to the biggest whore in the world for over two decades. After hearing Odin bloviate about the importance of family but knowing how important his family was to him fucking someone else, she had to have picked up some defense mechanisms.

That explains her shutting down at the reminder that Loki did come out of someone else. Loki doesn’t want to corner her. That’d end as badly, if not worse than last time.

The stockings, Thor’s — done by Loki; you snooze, you lose — Loki’s, and ‘Little One’s’, all credit to Mom for the name because Loki would’ve went with ‘fetus,’ are drying when Mom grouses about how lacking in holiday cheer the apartment will be outside of them. Then Loki shows her to the hallway closet and the bags and bags of ornaments in them.

“I love your brother,” she says.

She even loves Thor’s California Redwood plan so much she commands Loki to open his laptop and use his Google-fu to fulfill that dream.

Somehow, someway, Thor’s dream will come true.

Loki pastes a post-it note that says, ‘Left. Be back before dinner’ on Thor’s forehead, so he won’t, or is less likely, to get angry phone calls.

“It’s good that your brother takes care of you,” Mom thinks, but she didn’t get the piss scared out of her yesterday morning. She asks what Loki’s planning for Thor’s birthday and does not buy, “Nothing much, dinner maybe,” at all. But Mom’s the type of person, the best type of person, that isn’t into ruining surprises, so she says, “I look forward to it, and I’ll have your father clear his Monday evening too.”

The scent of pine trees, that sweet but not too sweet, lively, soul-purifying smell, is like the final ingredient to this day, disregarding school, being good.

“I hope they’re not blond.”

Mom’s looking up at the trees. “Hm?”

“The baby,” he says, “you’re all blond, and I know it’s against the odds, but I’d like to have a non-blond around.”

“Who knows? Maybe your wish will come true.”

Okay. That’s something, right?
“Or I’ll end up with a blond-haired, blue-eyed baby. I’ll accept if they’re blond if they at least get green eyes. My eyes are one of my best features. Even Thor says he likes my eyes. He says there’s no other eyes out there like them. I’d be willing to give up my uniqueness if they have them.”

“He’s right.” Mom touches his arm. “I’ve never seen anyone with your eyes. It won’t matter what color theirs are. They’ll be beautiful, I know it.”

“So says the mom.”

“Yes but also you’ve both got good genes. You don’t believe the screening I did a few weeks ago?” Mom pats him. “I see a gorgeous tree over there.”

Mom having good aesthetic judgment is old news, but Loki sees the tree, eyeballing it, around a prayer to that Thor-loving deity up there short of scraping the ceiling at Loki’s apartment, and knows that this is the one.

Tyr, no Raiders cap this time, shows up with some of Odin’s other henchmen to strap the freshly chopped down tree onto the roof of the black truck they drove here in. Tyr’s stone heart beats real blood when Mom thanks him. He’d be an improvement over Odin. Loki slyly suggests that to Mom as they follow the ass of the tree, and Mom, she tells Loki she’s onto him with a look and says, “Of course he’s nice to me. I’m nice to him.”

Loki’s going to talk this over with Thor later. Will Thor initially be down? No, but Loki will get him on the bandwagon.

After Thor’s gotten over himself.

Instead of appreciating Loki’s “put some clothes on, I’m not coming back alone” warning text, Thor answers the sound of Loki’s key in the front door by yanking it open and pointedly staring at Loki. Loki opens his mouth to explain, but he’s being pulled forward and okay, Thor’s hugging him.

Loki says into Thor’s shirt, “I missed you too, but you should probably get us out the way.”

Just in time for the shout of, “Heavy load incoming,” Thor sidesteps and rescues Loki and their unborn child — not Thor because if he survived Thanos, he can survive some muscle-y guys and a tree — from being trampled.

Loki ducks from under Thor’s arms.

Thor’s watching Tyr’s brigade right the tree over in a corner Loki’s never gotten around to putting anything in. His lips are slipping apart, the sun he keeps in his mouth rising. “Told you our tree would be a Redwood.”

Mom derails the inbound-to-Loki’s-lips train of thought in Thor’s mind. Him inheriting her fixation on Christmas decorations on top of this being the start of Thor’s birthday month has cancelled out her disapproval, so Thor gets an arm around his back and Mom telling him how good of a brother and son he is. Back to status quo.

Knowing what he knows, Loki’s oddly okay with it? He has a reason why they’re blond and he’s not, why Mom’s always been naturally closer to Thor, and one that has nothing to do with anything he’s done. He can hang up those cool-ass crystal snowflake ornaments while Mom reminisces over her first Christmas as a Mom and not worry about why it’s always Thor’s early life she talks about, like Thor’s ever been forgettable.

Mom agrees — duh, this has already been settled; she actually has taste — that the Warriors
ornaments belong on a Christmas tree in a Warriors’ player’s house. Loki holds up the electric blue abomination and turns to Thor because isn’t that a coincidence. They know where a Warriors’ player’s house is. “Isn’t that a great idea? We could take a late-night trip to Barton’s house. These could be a peace offering.”

Thor squints the rays of crinkles around his eyes, and his hand lands on Loki’s shoulder which he then uses to spin Loki back toward the tree.

The sound of slapping registers a split-second before the muffled pain in his ass.

“Don’t make me put another baby in you.”

Loki and the red shiny ball ornament stare at each other in mutual “Did he really just fucking do that in front of Mom?” disbelief.

Like he didn’t, Thor guides Loki’s ornament-holding hand up to an empty branch. His obliviousness in some way allows Mom to pretend that didn’t happen and unfreeze on the other side of the tree.

#

The things Loki does for Thor.

His passive aggressively worded invitations to Thor’s party (To: Whoever the Hell, On Monday, December 5th, which you know is Thor’s birthday, we’ll be gathering at the California Academy of Sciences’ Planetarium at 5:00 pm precisely (after 5:40pm, no one gets in) to honor Thor. Bring a gift and a friend. It’s also a surprise party. For the unaware, that means telling no one. Thank you. – L.) are stood on top of books in some variously faith-in-humanity-destroying “arrangements” — Dear Brunnhilde, if you close your books before putting them in your locker, not only will the pages stop wrinkling and, it pains Loki, tear, but the binding will be strong enough to hold the pages in! Wow. Cool, right? You’re welcome — in the quiet of the Chem class Loki’s skipping.

Aversion of getting pummeled aside, Loki was/is — who knows? He’s in no place to come to the conclusion since Thanos isn’t exactly around — friends with Thanos because he benefitted. Loki would’ve had to bend and abuse the picture of baby Thor in the bathtub on the front of the invitation if he couldn’t open all their lockers, courtesies of the master list of combinations Thanos gave him “for the lulz” the first day of school. And baby Thor in the bathtub is too precious and chubby and covered in bubbles to be anything but cherished.

“If you do come out looking like him, at least you’ll be cute, right?” Loki tells his stomach after biting the bullet and giving Amora hers.

(Loki has no idea how that picture of the cheerleading squad, her and her sister center next to Thor, drooling over him ends up in the trash.)

#
Stay out of my locker you twat

Also I guess I'll come

‘RSVP through email only.’

Maybe if you treated your books better you'd be able to practice reading

Just saying

THIS IS WHAT YOU GET FOR NOT STAYING OUT OF MY LOCKER

TWAT

AND YOU'RE NOT PREGNANT IN YOUR FACE

SO WATCH IT
Stephen can make it. But he didn’t want to write an email to you. (I know, I probably made the same face when he told me.) I’ll be going as his plus one, so see you there.
Loki
To: Bruce Banner
12/2/16

That sucks. Because I already told Betty that you would be there (I figured that Thor being your old friend would overrule any aversion to parties for you too, and that it’s at the Planetarium, but oops, my mistake.) She said she wasn’t sure she was coming since it probably wasn’t her scene, but I said you were, and now she is so. I’ll make sure to keep her away from Tony. When he’s sober his type is ‘living.’

Bruce Banner
To: Loki Odinson
12/3/16

What why would you tell her that???? Thor and I haven’t had a serious conversation in over a year when we had classes together. What the hell would give you the idea that just b/c of him id be up for a party?? If I come I’m not staying the whole time. We have school the next day. I don’t even know what kind of gift I should get Thor. What does he like these days? Protein bars?

Loki
To: Bruce Banner
12/3/16

A year supply of protein bars and you’ll be Thor’s best friend. See you there.
-LO
And that’s only half-joking.

Thor’s a “thought that counts” sort of guy underneath all the posturing. Bruce could show up empty-handed, which he won’t, no one will because Loki bolded gift in the invitation and who doesn’t want to take the opportunity to show their devotion to Thor in a material way?

(Loki included.)

Loki skips the part where Thor catches him trying to cat burglar creep out of his own freaking apartment and asks, no, tells him, “Let’s go to the House around lunch. I need to get something from my room.”

“Uh, okay.”

Thor’s been “needing” his Xbone anyway — Xbone, Xbox One, tomato, potato — which is believable, yeah — especially because Mom’s refused to get it or let any of the staff on ‘anti-video game because they’ll rot your brain principle’ — but not Thor quick drumming his fingers on his knee the whole Uber ride worthy. No way he’s nervous about going home. When they were living there, it was always more Thor’s domain than Loki’s. The last, like, four, five years Loki lived there — here, he felt like a visitor, like he was their guest. He means, he was in a lot of fucked up ways, right, a visitor and a guest?

Being here without the buffer of other visitors — Loki wants to get what he needs and get out as soon as possible.

“I’ll come find you,” Thor says, patting him on the ass and going off down the hall like a man on a very important mission.

Loki’s got a mission of his own, up in his, or what was his bedroom. Untouched because Mom, a fact he’s eternally thankful for stepping into his closet, the light coming on and showing that it’s exactly as he left it those few months ago, methodically ransacked.

One of the shoe shelves back in the corner, at the bottom of it, he opens the drawer second from the bottom — never the bottom; it’s always the top or the bottom they look in first — and ignores the other identical minimalist white Common Projects shoe boxes and hone in on the one second in from the left.

The bright pink glittery abomination that was Thor’s birthday card this year shouts ‘Super Sweet 16!’ at the top of the pile of Thor-related keepsakes Loki’s been hording, rationalizing that it’d be him who’d get shackled with best man duties — fucking Hogun thinking he’s telling him something he hasn’t known vividly since “Thor” startled up that weird thing in him — but really, is Loki’s proof that at some point he and Thor, the future pro-basketball-player-turned-Fortune-10-CEO directly thought of him in the past. Pathetic, duh, but useful.

At the bottom, bingo.

Thor’s preschool storytelling project, a past #1 on Loki’s Bestseller list, ‘My Best Friend in the Whole Wide World Loki,’ in loud red marker and the prototype for Thor’s still blocky handwriting. It’s a book, bound and hardcover. It came blank, Loki remembers from getting it the next year when he was that age, 5, which is hard to believe looking through the pages Thor’s scribbled to the brim with green crayon grass and oversized suns — big semi-perfect circles in the middle instead of the corner like everyone else because Thor’s a born trailblazer — and cave painting-like drawings of him — hair the same yellow of the sun — and Loki climbing trees and hills and riding bikes and him giving Loki piggy back rides because in Thor’s own words “I’m the best big brother in the whole
world.”

Looking down at himself, at his stomach — debatable.

Loki closes it so the circle eyes of cave-painting Thor and cave-painting him — can Loki just mention that Thor mixed turquoise and green for Loki’s eyes? Points for detail — are staring at him, smiling their lipless smile for eternity.

Loki should find Thor before Thor finds him and his gift’s ruined.

Thor’s just leaving his room when Loki and his weekender of books and shoes — and Thor’s masterpiece of course — get to Thor’s end of the hall. In a tone that doesn’t have a single care in the world — and Loki gets that Thor’s all about his Xbox, but really? — he asks if Loki’s up for some Dark Souls III which Loki remembers offering to help him beat if he wanted in a sort of ‘say no and it’s your loss, not mine’ way he’s mastered these past four or so years dealing with post-girls Thor.

Loki has to stop before he’s finished the stairs to look at Thor and say, because he’s not getting off that easy, “Who knew you’d ask to fuck me — ?”

That’s the front door opening in his periphery.

Oh, what great timing Odin has.

“Boys. I wasn’t expecting you until dinner later.”

Thor’s Odin-related Stockholm syndrome draws him down the stairs to go face Dad on level. “Well, Loki needed to go raid his closet, and all this free time I have calls for an Xbox.”

“Because reading a book would be out of the question. Of course. How could I forget? This is the new generation I’m talking to. I bear some responsibility, I suppose, in your nonexistent attention spans.” Odin’s eye is borderline shut at this level of squint.

“Loki reads enough books for both of us.”

Odin steps toward Thor and holds out his hand. “The keys.”

“What?” is Thor’s response.

“The keys, Thor, to your truck. Let’s not play this game. I wish to save us both the embarrassment.”

Loki’s ear knows the feeling of the polished wood of the door to Odin’s study way too well trying to hear the verbal smack downs headed Thor’s way when Odin’s favoritism lost to Odin’s narcissism. But this — he always thought he’d be fine standing in the corner being quiet, said that one time before he was kicked out anyway, but this is… It isn’t like the hospital room where Odin was all shaken up so he toned it down. This is public humiliation, audience of one.

Thor’s working arm is moving, hand ducking out of view in front of Thor’s thigh, and — jingling.

Thor drops the keys, his keys into Odin’s palm.

“They’re better left with me, don’t you think? With your questionable decision-making skills now under the influence of drugs.”

Burn.

And words that Thor, Daddy’s Dearest who doesn’t know anything but Odin’s approval, needs to
hear as much as Odin needs to say them — not at all.

“I could hold them for him.”

Is that his voice?

Yep, Odin looking at him and remembering that right, there’s another one, confirms. That is his voice.

“No. They stay with me.”

So much for that.

Odin fucks off to go internal monologue about his masterful “tough love” parenting skills, twirling Thor’s keys around as he walks away with the renewed sorrow he’s fed off Thor strengthening him as Loki remains convinced his did during that streak of disappointment speeches in his freshman year when Odin looked better than Loki ever remembered. What’s the saying? Only three things are guaranteed: death, taxes, and what, Odin being a dick?

Loki should be glad that for once it’s not him on the receiving end of Odin’s dickishness, but look, at least it happened to him during his formative years so it’s the only thing he knows. Thor though? He hasn’t looked this betrayed since, well, he walked in on Clint Barton buttoning his jeans, shirtless, in Loki’s room.

The jingling is only around the corner, but fuck it and fuck him.

Loki kisses Thor because he is the only person who’s allowed to be an ass to Thor. This is unwritten law.

He pulls back when Thor tries to introduce tongue. Sex on the stairs would be a great fuck you, but also an unmitigated disaster, so no. As the sober one, he has a responsibility to not fuck up their lives.

Thor takes a break from looking down at him to glance around the foyer. “Let’s go home.”

#
Peter Quill
To: Loki Odinson
12/1/16
Hey
Can I bring Gamora? Or is that weird
P.S. impressed you got that email address. And stark said he couldn’t get me the one I wanted. Dick.

Loki
To: Peter Quill
12/1/16
Why wouldn’t you be able to bring Gamora? I’m taking this as an RSVP.
-LO

Peter Quill
To: Loki Odinson
12/1/16
See More from Peter Quill
RSVPing

Natasha Romanoff 12/3/16 NR
To: Loki Odinson

Clint is too. Surprisingly.

See More from Natasha Romanoff

#

3:30

Satan (aka Lorelei)

Heeeeyy, Loki, my invite must have gotten misplaced. It's ok. I know how busy you are taking care of your brother (刖_刖). You can just send me the time and stuff.
Thor’s emotionally-indentured servants Bubbles, Buttercup, and Blossom aid and abet their benched
football star and leader in his wanton ass-wiping with the rules in the school handbook considering that Thor’s suspension covers all school-related activities including football games, but they all know that no one’s going to stop Thor, football star and Odinson, from shouting at his teammates to honor his memory by getting yet another trophy for him.

Thor shows them the Christmas tree at full power, a collage that’s like the 60s, and they all move to go, but Loki grabs a handful of Fandral’s jacket and insists on him staying to watch longer.

“You know,” Loki murmurs, “the more you annoy me with shit like blabbing to Lorelei, the likelier it is it’ll one day slip out of my mouth to Thor you let me give you my first hand job.”

Fandral gets all flustered. God, it’s so easy. “It was a hand job, not marriage.”

“Yeah, Thor will totally see it that way. Like how he was super reasonable when he found out about your interest in me.”

Loki imagines there was a lot of close-quarter screaming given Fandral’s bitch-slapped look.

“So, you’re going to not be a complete slave to your dick?” Loki asks.

Fandral gathers his wits and prepares to say —

“What are you guys talking about?” Thor’s not even hiding that he’s already suspicious.

“Loki was telling me I better not ruin his plans for your birthday dinner with strippers,” Fandral says.

Loki makes a sound that means “see, it’s not hard to not be a complete idiot” to Fandral and agreement to Thor.

Thor snickers. “Unless they’re pregnant strippers. The place we’re going to, it’s got Michelin stars, so I don’t think they’ll go down that well, so you’ll have to do it afterward.”

“You’ve ruined him,” Fandral tells Loki. “This is all he talks about, getting his dick hard for some pregnant ass.”

“God,” Thor pretty much moans, throwing his head back. It’d be hot if it weren’t about Thor’s obsession with pregnant bodies, obsession Loki’s heard way too much of Thor’s horny ranting about this week. Thor can enlighten his bros about the beauty of a “body swollen with life, man” over in the bleachers at the school. Yeah, what a great idea.

Loki gives a nice shove to Thor’s shoulders and tells him to try not to break the other arm.

You don’t know the value of being alone until you can’t seem to be. That’s always been a guideline in Loki’s mind, but now? Yeah, that’s a life lesson. And he’s having a kid?

Loki strips down to his briefs, slides into a t-shirt that likely was Thor’s earlier in its lifespan and some tube socks with zero grip on the wood floors, introduces his laptop to the speakers’ auxiliary cord, pressing play to the finest of that “soft shit” Thor will get up and turn off, and he duets with Jared Leto and Julian Casablancas and while he’s at it, Thom Yorke, and spins and glides.

He stops. King of Limbs’ turned into Kid A which will get Loki all the shit from Thor if he comes back during it, but it’s a weird compulsion, to cradle his own stomach like it’s a separate entity and not a part of him. “Hi,” he’s saying. For someone known for his eloquence, there’s nothing about, “Um, I’m your dad,” that is.
Did his mom, the biological one, say that to him?

His black-haired, whatever-eyed mom.

Knelt on the ground next to the table his laptop’s on, he minimizes his music player and opens a Google window. He gnaws his bottom lip to numbness as he types and scrolls and scrolls some more, simultaneously annoyed at having to go answer other questions and relieved his fingers have something to do. If he’s giving his DNA to anyone, he’d like to make sure they’re not about to out his mutant baby-making-male genes to the highest bidder.

The all-in-one DNA testing, screening, and matching service won’t have the reservations that Mom does for his who’s and what’s and where’s. A loyalist part of him considers that he should, would feel guilty if this were five, six months ago when despite the occasional favoritism, Mom was firmly on his side and he was on hers, but in hindsight, how can anything, least of all placing the order for one DNA testing kit, compare to her life-long betrayal?

Waiting another 16 years — or technically, it’d be for Thor to stumble on something suspicious and demand them from her — for answers — no. Loki refuses.

“Guess who brought you a gyro?” Thor’s holding up a take-out bag, up over the knitted bald eagle head hat covering his hair. He kicks the door shut behind him and on any possibility of his friends coming in. Thor throws Loki the bag without warning, not that Loki needs it to catch it. Loki’s thanks is pretending to care enough to ask whether they won or not. They did. “It was hard work though.” Because Thor wasn’t there of course, Thor’s tone is saying.

Loki sucks the tzatziki off his thumb to keep himself from pointing out that might’ve also been because Thanos was missing. Even Thor’s expecting him to say something, sort of daring Loki to with how he stands over him, eclipsing the light. But all Loki has is a super innocent look under his eyelashes with his thumb between his lips. “I’m eating here, Thor.”

“You could alternate. Eat, suck, eat some more.”

“Are you willing to risk me forgetting I’m not supposed to bite down this time?”

“Good point.” Thor sinks down on the ground next to him. His cast rubs against some skin between Loki’s waistband and the t-shirt he has on, weirdly as associated with Thor in his head as angel-fine-hair-covered skin underneath it. “What’d you do? Other than poison your ears with Radiohead?”

His music’s paused but still open on his laptop.

Loki grabs the gyro and leans back onto Thor’s chest. “Poisoned my ears with 30 Seconds to Mars.”

Just for that, Loki reaches forward to hit the space bar and resume “Optimistic.”

Thor puts up with it with minimal complaining.

Chapter End Notes

RIP to 3(member)0 seconds to mars for y’all that care about that.
Will try to update regularly. Will probably update regularly. Less busy. Am in the same galaxy of busy at least.

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