**every cloud has a silver lining**

**by** sorethroat

**Summary**

From: yaoyorozu@ua.net  
To: iida@ua.net  
Subject: Concerning Midoriya

Hello Iida,  
It pains me greatly to be requesting this but could you please speak to the the production team about angling the camera upwards? We all love Midoriya, he’s a great guy, and he really does look so good in those new fitted trousers but it is negatively affecting productivity around here with our executive producer and we are falling behind.
Thank you,  
Yaoyorozu Momo

or

Todoroki insists it's not unprofessional to have a crush on the weatherman.
i'm sorry .. i'm so sorry .. :{ but i need this
i have been CONSUMED w this dumb idea since this equally dumb art i did @ the bottom ..
so heres the part that has proper grammar at least LMAO

the full art is here! im on tmb @ ssawbones!

See the end of the work for more notes.
This whole mess starts when Midoriya Izuku stumbles into the wrong floor.

He's a blur of freckles and apologies, his face red and winded from running up six flights of stairs. His hair's sticking up in wild shapes, his suit is mismatched -- not in a way only a trained eye can tell, like mixing Burberry with YSL, but in a way where his jacket is mustard pinstripe yellow while his pants are green -- and he's clutching his briefcase to his chest like it's filled with blackmail or laundered money, his prosthetic hand gripping the handle so hard it's almost a little bent. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, Uraraka, I know I'm late."

Hi. I'm Todoroki Shouto. Do you believe in love at first sight? is what future Todoroki would have told him to say.

"Uraraka is on the second floor," he grunts instead, pointing to the door that's still swinging in recoil. In that moment Midoriya becomes a broken man, as if his smile drops all four floors down but leaves his body behind to flounder. "No," he gasps like a fish keening for air, slumping down against the wall (in a way Todoroki-in-a-few-weeks would try to convince himself was indeed attractive) and scrubbing weakly at his face. It might be tears, it might be sweat. "No, no, nooooo…"

Momo murmurs next to his desk as they watch him tremble back to his feet, eyes scrunched shut with determination. He bids them goodbye and they hear his footsteps start to gain dangerous momentum down the stairs.

Momo files her nails as slowly and calmly as she speaks. “You think he’ll make it?”

Todoroki manages an ‘eh’. He’s a little plain -- he could even be considered forgettable -- and from an on-screen talent assessment, there’s not much marketability in a nervous presence like his. If his demeanor doesn’t get him, the fact that he stretches his neck a little too much like a turtle will. The world is brutal like that.

“But he’s your type.”

Todoroki coughs his coffee out all over his desk and informs her that he never said that.

The rest of the morning is so uneventful in comparison that Todoroki finds himself visiting the coffee machine every hour just to make the day go faster in between calls and budgets and contracts. He’s on his fourth trip when his slacking schedule lines up with Bakugou’s.

"Morning, diva."

"Dumb shit nepotism two."

"You've demoted me to the second one." Todoroki slides down into the only chair in the break room with legs that aren’t uneven. There’s no particular reason why he engages in conversation with Bakugou other than the fact that his venom gives him a little jolt that coffee won’t.

"Deku's here now," Bakugou says like it's adequate explanation, and it's as if his voice grows tender with some sort of sweet childhood memory as he hammers his jar of spicy pickles against the counter.
"Is he the one who came in?"

Bakugou's eyes narrow. "Yeah. Got himself into the morning show, don't know how, think it's something between him and the head of the network. And there's pickle juice in my fucking eye, you see that?"

Todoroki pauses. "I see it."

“He planned this.”

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From: “T. Shouto” <tshouto@ua.net>

Date: November 9, 2016 11:03 AM

Subject: Welcome

To: <midoriya@ua.net>

Hello Deku.

Just wanted to make sure you made it okay to your set.

And from all of us, welcome to Yuuei. We all look forward to seeing you around.

Sincerely,

EXPLOSION MURDER VARIETY SHOW Crew

Yuuei Studio

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From: “T. Shouto” <tshouto@ua.net>

Date: November 9, 2016 3:43 PM

Subject: Fwd: Re: Welcome

To: <bakugou@ua.net>

Hello Bakugou,

Fuck you.

See attached

-------- Forwarded message --------

From: "Midoriya Izuku" <midoriya@ua.net>
Hi there!

Thank you so much! I made it! Don’t worry at all! I am just the new meteorologist but I’m a big fan of you guys!

Umm... lastly, I’m so sorry if there was a misunderstanding, but my name is Izuku, unless that was intentional. I’m sorry if I did anything to make you feel that way...

- Midoriya Izuku

“Yes. Just send the biggest one,” Todoroki rubs his temples under his fingers, rifling in his desk drawer for his migraine medicine. “Please.”

“Name on card?”

“Bakugou Katsuki,” he sighs, swallowing them dry.

The second time Midoriya shows up on floor six, his face is a shade of red that envies Momo’s louboutins, and Todoroki isn’t there to see it. If Todoroki had the connections, he would be in a bomb shelter. Instead he’s at the cafe across the street, watching the choppy security footage on his laptop and listening to Kirishima snicker a play-by-play into the phone.

“I’m sorry, so sorry, but thank you,” he hides himself behind the muffin basket, which still isn’t big enough to eclipse his smile. “They’re really good! Uraraka and I ate half of them already…”

It’s here that Kirishima interjects “whoa, man.. all the nasty carrot cake flaxseed ones are gone. He’s an animal.”

Todoroki’s ashamed of himself for the shiver that goes up his spine. "Uh. Keep going."

“We’re going to save the rest for Iida! He likes these.” -- Of course Iida would like blueberry. Goody two shoes. -- “I didn’t mean to guilt anyone, I was just confused… I guess I thought I got
“I’m a dumb bird. I shit on cars. Signed, Bakugou Katsuki.” Kaminari gapes, reading the card Satou had printed.

“I don’t know what you guys had to do to Kacchan for him to let you guys do that!” Midoriya’s laugh is cherubic.

“I never-- HALFIE,” Bakugou snarls, inhuman, and leaps from his desk.

“... and that’s what happened,” Kirishima relays, voice rumbling with his laughter and the static. “Are you coming back? It’s all good now, Midoriya had him do some breathing exercise, haha!”

“No. Don’t ask where I’m going,” Todoroki mumbles, closing his laptop, and he’s halfway in his car by the time he sees the door of their building swing open for Bakugou Katsuki.

“Good news, everyone! If you’re in need of a shower, you can just step outside! W-we have an 80 percent chance of rain tonight, so please pack your umbrellas, or share one with someone you love dearly...” God, he’s cute. Bad, but cute. Midoriya waves his hands around so much that he smacks the green screen behind him and sends a wobbly ripple through the map. “Everyone please try your very best to stay dry! I will be too! Okay, back to Uraraka...”

After a few weeks pass and Midoriya Izuku becomes routine, everyone on floor six observes what they dub ‘the problem’, where Todoroki arrives to the office early but sits down at his desk, opens his laptop, and stares with a mask of impassivity at the TV stream. He does not let anyone engage with him for a good twenty minutes.

There’s a bet going around on what will get him to answer. Today is Momo’s turn to step up to plate. "Todoroki, it's been floating around the office that 'he's ripped under that dad-suit'. Just thought you'd like to know."

"That's not relevant to me."
"My apologies, I forgot you already caught on." Momo follows his eyes to the misbuttons in Midoriya's shirt, that show gaps of freckled skin whenever his tie shifts out of place.

Todoroki tells her they're real professionals so his job is to pay attention to detail. He takes a labored sip out of his tea but his mouth is still dry.

The office exchanges hushed and anxious descriptions of the way Todoroki fixates on the screen (intense, buglike, hawkish) as Midoriya draws a clumsy circle across the interactive map’s surface with no regards to the tucking integrity of his shirt. Stupid All Might tie. Those pop culture references make him good with kids -- not that children really seem like a target audience when no child would turn on the news for fun -- but it’s the sentiment that matters. It’s good for the parents who like the morning show or tune in at breakfast long enough to be trapped by that big sweet smile. It’s bad for Todoroki Shouto, who just wants to rip that tie off.

He never thought the sentence ‘being cockblocked by All Might’ would apply to him.

"I bet he smells really good," Todoroki mumbles, even after the camera has switched to Uraraka and Iida discussing construction work. Momo taps her finger on her chin, waiting patiently for the cologne catalogue he's going to spout out down to the brand, and he makes up his mind on what fantasy he wants to go with. "Like oranges, like he's just peeled an orange and now the orange peel smell is all in the air and everyone asks who's been peeling oranges..."

"Todoroki. I didn't know you were into the Mister Rogers type," Kaminari hangs over his desk.

Todoroki whips his head to look at him. “That is not true.”

It's an easy misconception to make but there's a clear distinction. He’s still working on the narrative but Midoriya's more like a soccer mom; once he showed up to the building in a monochromatic teal tracksuit, and he’s certain that there’s fruit leather in his briefcase.

"Please go back to work," Tokoyami scolds them both, though his eyes are pleading, and Todoroki closes out of the TV stream and clears his throat.

He'll defend himself properly later.
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GO BEYOND!!
Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

it's going to be longer than i thought. TT ___ TT i'm sorry. i need to hit all the romcom tropes i guess. LMFAO

They’re all about to doze off from exhaustion in the meeting room when Kaminari suggests the segment.

"Do you owe something to the cast? Or their number one fan Todoroki?" Bakugou hisses at him, and Todoroki looks at him with unadulterated murder in his eyes.

“We have celebrities read mean tweets already,” Bakugou continues, grumbling. There’s no shortage of mean tweets. ‘lmao does anyone know who Kamui Woods is?’. ‘Hey Snipe ‘True Grit’ was in 2010 get the f**k over it’. ‘Gran Torino is so old he look like he was put through a taiyaki press’.

“I’m just saying it would be fun and like it’s the local news and we don’t have to book anyone expensive and we wouldn’t have to do a lot of wooooork,” Kaminari says, the last of which is appealing to all of them.

Midoriya lets himself feel a little jittery. He feels like that’s allowed of him. Ever since Aizawa sent in the memo he’s been skittish and jumpy, bouncing his leg so quickly that Iida asks him if everything’s okay, and his reply comes in a falsetto “of course”.

A man from the late night crew comes to visit him during makeup, and the weatherman gapes at him with the bleak fear of a caribou about to be ran over when he recognizes him as ‘the hot one’ from his disastrous first day. He’s hot up close too. Perhaps hotter. Midoriya wants to die. He coughs on the powder that Hagakure is patting onto his face, and wishes it would lodge in his lungs and kill him.

“You alright?” the man asks, gently like he’s approaching a wild animal, and Midoriya doesn’t want to admit his deep voice when it’s laced with concern goes right to his heart so he just mumbles back ‘yep’ and fidgets in his seat as the man introduces himself as a producer and starts to coach him on what to do.
“It’s pretty simple. It won’t be on the real set with the audience, it’ll be filmed in a separate set and then played on a screen, so don’t worry. You just stand where we’ve marked the floor with tape, then when I give you the cue you read this and look a little hurt.”

Midoriya tries focusing on his forehead instead of his stoic face and his mouth as it moves. “Mhm.”

“That’s it. Feel okay?” His smile is crooked. Midoriya's alarms go off and start to shut off his brain's executive functionality. "I’ll be talking to you through this earpiece. You’re probably used to that from Aizawa.”

Imagining Aizawa does a good job of bringing Midoriya back down to reality, where people are normal and not terrifyingly beautiful and have no problem berating him. To the side, Hagakure announces she’s done, nudging him away from her station.

Iida stammers ‘news anchor Iida Tenya looks like he has a lifting Instagram and yells at you for skipping leg day’ and Mirio laughs his way through a barrage of remarks about his terrifying soulless grin, and then it’s Midoriya’s turn.

"Okay, we’re going to cut to your camera soon. Just relax and read that like I showed you.” The producer’s voice floods in calm through his earpiece, so pleasant compared to Aizawa’s grumble that Midoriya feels himself melt a little. He takes a deep, deep breath.

“That weatherman looks like he’s about to cry someone give him a xanax,” Midoriya giggles -- it’s sorta true. He’s switched to diazepam, actually. But as his eyes travel down the printout, he feels his face prickle with heat and mortification. “To the Plus Ultra morning weatherman...” Midoriya swallows. Is this okay to read? “I want .. you to put that .. Terminator fist up my ass.”

His earpiece is silent.

Bakugou is cackling so loudly that it can be heard from outside the room. Kaminari wails that they have to redo the take if it’s picked up from the mic, but Kirishima insists it will never be the same as the first time, so they decide to just go with it, and Midoriya stumbles dazed off to the side where the rest of the news anchor cast is recovering. The late night crew truly is a different breed, his mind supplies him as pithy comfort.

“Can’t believe people said that about me,” Amajiki mopes, shovelling takoyaki in his mouth like a
clinically depressed chipmunk. “‘Voldemort with hair and a nose’ ..”

“Maybe people were just being mean because the late night show asked them to,” Midoriya suggests, though he’s not sure how to feel about his own. He’s also not sure if he’s comfortable with the fact that there’s a sound bite of him saying that available to the public.

“That means Voldemort could be attractive with hair and a nose!” Mirio laughs loudly, and his booming consolation echoes around the set. Amajiki looks like he’s short-circuiting trying to think of an adequate response to him.

They watch him pick up the entire tray of fried chicken and hurry out the door, head down.

Most of the local news crew is still huddled around the refreshments table, curious -- and mildly envious -- that the late night crew gets craft service that isn’t just fruit pastries and baby carrots and bitter coffee. Uraraka is wildly upset that she didn’t get to show up at all, because no one tweeted anything mean about her.

“Do you think she would like that?” Midoriya mumbles to Iida, pointing to a plate of rice cake with one hand while grazing the dumpling assortment with his other.

“Good choice. This is her favorite,” Iida responds in a hushed whisper, and they shovel the snacks next to the bean buns in the tupperware Iida’s holding. Uraraka calls it the ‘Poor Unfortunate Uraraka’ box. Uraraka has a lot of sway over them if it means Iida will break etiquette for her.

Midoriya is surveying the rest of the table and eating rice cracker mix out of his metal palm when a hand falls on his shoulder. He shrieks, scattering the bits and crumbs on the ground in a five foot radius in front of him, and hurries to crouch down and clean up before he can face his assailant.

“Please don’t worry about that,” a soothing voice floats above him.

“Oh!” Midoriya startles, spilling what he already gathered. He wipes a crumb off her shoe with a napkin before he stands up, thinking it’s the least he can do. “Oh, um .. Yaoyorozu, isn’t it?”

“Midoriya,” she greets him courteously, giving him a smile that makes his back relax. “I’m so happy to catch you. We brought you here because this episode had another purpose, Midoriya. You’re a pawn. Part of a larger plan.”
Midoriya trembles.

Yaoyorozu is polite enough to hide her mouth behind her hand as she snorts out a laugh. “I’m sorry. Kyouka told me you make a funny face when you’re scared.”

“Kyou... Jirou from sound?” He’s still in a state of shock. He didn’t know Jirou was so treacherous.

“Yes. You met Shouto today, didn’t you? He was the producer.” She’s so kind, motherly. Midoriya feels like he has whiplash. “Sorry if he was mean to you.”

“No! Not at all!” Midoriya gives her a shaky laugh. “Actually, he was really nice!”

“Oh, that’s wonderful. He loves your work, you know,” she nods, almost like she’s holding back a laugh of her own, and Midoriya feels his bones tingle in fear. “Can he come to your show’s Christmas party tomorrow?”

And Midoriya doesn’t know what he’s getting into by saying yes.

The pre-holiday season is hell. According to Kaminari, who considers himself the ultimate authority since his last job was Uniqlo in the day and stand up comedian at night, this time of year is universally miserable for everyone, with Todoroki being the one exception.

Todoroki in cold weather is a force nobody will confront -- something about how he isn’t affected when everyone is at their wit’s end is eerie. Todoroki, to anyone’s knowledge, isn’t bothered by holiday stress because he turns off whatever makes him a human with emotions. Todoroki has sent his gifts in advance. Todoroki has written all his cards. Todoroki will make the bone chilling phone calls no one else will. Todoroki will bring the nice cookie platter and watch with nonchalance as the office picks at it like scared vultures under his supervision. Todoroki works like a machine. Nothing gets in his way. No one will challenge him. And maybe Todoroki thrives in the vague and confused sense of fear that settles over the office when he strides in on a -10°C day and shakes the snow off his shoulders like a polar bear, no coat to be seen.

They cram taping into fewer days to give themselves a few more days off, and Bakugou looks like
he’s on his last marble before ascending to a new level of anger. Todoroki spends some of his time wondering how to agitate him further. It might be good for ratings.

“Hey, we’re done for the day,” Momo shakes his shoulder as he’s lost in the logistics of suckerpunching Bakugou in the face with a snowball mid-episode. The one where he has to be a mall Santa. He could pull it off, it just wouldn’t be legally pretty.

“You daydreaming about something? About Midoriya’s terminator fist?” Jirou’s voice cuts in unexpected, rough around the edges where Momo’s isn’t, and Todoroki blinks up at the both of them. He doesn’t need to be reminded about yesterday’s big disaster where he didn’t make a move when he had the chance.

“Why are you here?” Todoroki says flatly. He’s so infamously bad at not sounding hostile that just about everyone is used to it, Momo’s girlfriend included. The both of them snort with laughter before dragging him down the stairs to the Christmas party on floor two.

Floor two.

Midoriya’s floor.

Midoriya, who’s chattering happily like a little twittering bird with his crewmates, Midoriya with the angel face, Midoriya with the sweet red tipsy flush across his freckles. He has more of those than usual, more than Todoroki has subconsciously mapped out, probably because the foundation on his face is wearing off. They’re lit so softly by the candlelight and the lights on the stumpy little Christmas tree they’ve set out. If Todoroki told himself his downfall would be freckles he would have laughed in his own face.

“Momo,” Todoroki grits out from his teeth. “You didn’t even give me a warning.”

She looks at him innocently, as if the devil isn’t puppeteering her every wicked move. Kirishima laughs, boisterous after winning a drinking contest or two, and fits a red solo cup into his hand. It’s fitting that none of them have outgrown red solo cups even if they house ridiculously expensive champagne.

Todoroki tries blending in by the table of cheese platters and takes a sip to forget the situation he’s been berated into. One more sip to keep him company until he can slip out the door. It’s many sips and maybe several cups later that the one and only Midoriya is in front of him, laughing and swaying
until his cup sloshes over both of them.

“Why are you frowning? Frowny-face? It’s early Christmas! You should let your hair down! Have some fun!” Midoriya talks a mile a minute, reaching up and tousling his hair with enough force that he’s sure he could generate static electricity. Midoriya loses his balance doing so, and when he stumbles into him Todoroki really can’t breathe after feeling the press of his warm skin.

“Goway,” he slurs. “Ugh. Stop being hot.”

“Uhh.. whaat?” It’s cute that Midoriya is one of those can’t-stop-giggling drunks. Todoroki’s spinning head urges him to file that away for later. Midoriya is too busy scrawling his number on Todoroki’s palm with a sharpie to notice, cap between his teeth.

“No .. stay .. ‘snuh’in,” Todoroki backpedals, a miracle of linguistics, puts his palm on Midoriya’s cheek and some part of him wonders how he’s going to explain that away when Midoriya leans forward and whispers something about the spirit of Christmas and puts his hot mouth on Todoroki’s.

Todoroki doesn’t watch a lot of romantic movies or have time to read a lot of books but he swears on his life that time really does stop for a second there. Midoriya comes up for air, or something like that, something irrelevant to the fact that their breath matches pace in hot, shallow pants and Todoroki’s alive, very much so, to witness Midoriya dizzily smearing the taste of eggnog off his lips.

“Oh and thanks for the muffin basket, t shouto at U A dot net...” Midoriya purrs, gives him a slow smile coy and earnest, one that’s far too sweet for what he just did, and starts to ruin the moment by attempting to give Todoroki an exaggerated wink (that drunk-Todoroki thinks is incredibly unbelievably ridiculously hot) when suddenly he looks down and screeches.

“You .. you .. it’s your -- !”

Todoroki looks down and yeah, it’s his. His jacket is on fire from the candle they knocked over.

“Midoriya,” he tries to get in, calmly, while Midoriya's jaw hangs in abject terror.

“Fire extinguisher -- fire extinguisher is out in the hall by the--” Midoriya mumbles, sprinting off of him and out the door so fast Todoroki can swear he sees skid marks in the carpet. He shucks off his traitorous good-for-nothing jacket and smotheres out the fire with his shoe before Midoriya can come
Todoroki flees the scene early but it turns out he doesn’t even have to worry, because Midoriya trips in the hall and falls on his face so hard he knocks himself out. When he wakes up, shaking stars from his eyes and losing all recollection of the past hour, a blurry Uraraka is hauling his limp form over her shoulder, his feet dragging on the floor behind her.

“Who brought the alcohol? I said no alcohol,” Uraraka growls, freezing the partygoers in place. She’s looking at puppy-eyes Kirishima in particular, who, since the era of Bakugou, doesn’t understand what it’s like to have lightweight friends.

“I thought -- thought it would be fun.”

“Fun,” Uraraka parrots menacingly.

It’s fun for everyone except anyone who has to be responsible at all. Midoriya tries to get up, kicking his legs uselessly aganst Uraraka. “Ah.. gotta be on set…”

From: "Yaomomo” <yaoyorozu@ua.jp>
Date: December 16, 2016 5:32 PM
Subject: (no subject)
To: <tshouto@ua.jp>

Todoroki,

Did you go home early? Please get home safe.

P.S. We’re done pitching for the season, so I don’t know why you put this in the queue, but we can’t just air a segment about how ‘love is nothing but an evolutionary weakness’. Even Bakugou thinks it’s a little much.
“No, no, no,” Iida is blocking Midoriya physically with his massive body, seconds after the shorter man stumbles with determination towards the set door. Midoriya considers if it’s viable to duck under his legs. “You are not taping today.”

“I can do it, I have to do it,” he protests, swaying in place. “For Ssshouto…” Midoriya pauses to hiccups before continuing. “I had a couple drinks. So what? This morning I pounded six shots of espresso... I’m a monster. I can feel the soberness in me. I am a vessel for soberness. I distribute the soberness evenly over my body... Gooooood morning Tokyo, oh my oh my goodness your humidity is soaring...”

“Please don’t.” Iida whispers, frightened at the imagery alone. “I ask you not to.”

“And a hero gives help even when it’s not asked for,” Midoriya garbles.

After promises of subbing Mirio in and a carpet bombing of verbal threats from Uraraka and the deployment of every intimidation tactic a hesitant Shouji Mezo knows, the crew manages to coax him into the elevator.

“Go down to the lobby, okay? We called you a cab,” Ojiro pats his back. Midoriya curls his fingers into a thumbs up.

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From: "Midoriya Izuku" <midoriya@ua.jp>

Date: December 16, 2016 11:03 PM

Subject: I'M SORRY

To: <tshouto@ua.jp>

It’s fine. Shit happens
A week passes and Todoroki makes a considerable effort out of not making eye contact with anyone until the attempted high-fives and whoops from Kirishima die down. He resumes his regular life and it’s quite fine, thanks. He still watches Midoriya’s broadcasts, he just does it on full lockdown with his office door closed and the blinds pulled all the way shut, his hands covering his face. He makes an embarrassed groan now and then and it’s convinced Kaminari that he’s doing something scandalous in there. Todoroki doesn’t blame him.

It’s during their usual communion at the coffee shop, at the table by the window where the sun filters in just right to make the seats warm and the two of them perch like cats of some distinguished Siamese pedigree, that Todoroki notices Momo is smiling at him.

“What,” Todoroki says, mildly unnerved. It’s a nice smile, actually. Not professional or practiced, just a mark of genuine happiness. That’s part of why it strikes fear into his heart.

“I didn’t say anything,” Momo says, still grinning big. Almost a little smug. Knowing. Prowling. Todoroki has seen many, many action movies but not enough to know how to actually disarm someone who’s stolen your friend’s identity.

She’s still smiling as she sips her coffee. Her lipstick doesn’t even transfer to the cup and the look on her face says she knows it. Todoroki narrows his eyes. Nothing had seemed off about her when she was ordering -- it was a different blend every morning, and he’s never questioned her molecular level knowledge of coffee roasts, but everything seems uncertain now.

“This is unusual behavior for either of us to be showing before nine AM,” he says, slowly, cautiously.

“I can be happy for you, can’t I?” Momo makes a ‘tsk’ with her perfect straight teeth. They glare at each other for a good bit before she gives in -- “I’m just happy you’ve hit it off with someone.”

“Someone?” Todoroki parrots blandly, more out of confusion than mockery. “Who?”

“Midoriya,” she groans. “The love of your life for the past month who likes you back. That you were seen making out with at the Christmas party. It’s the hot topic around the office. They think he’s been blowing you under your desk.”

“Oh,” Todoroki coughs. “Oh. Uh. No.”

“I wasn’t saying I believed the last part, Todoroki.”

Todoroki braces himself. “I’ve actually been avoiding him since I became a fire hazard.”

“Oh my god .. you’re giving up on your one chance at love? Over your pride? The one time love has even occurred to you outside of work?” Momo grabs his shoulders with the strength of a vice and jostles him.

“Hey,” Todoroki says venomously. “It’s not my fault I didn’t feel the need to be looking when we had a plan to just get friend-married for the financial convenience in exchange for me being your beard in high school.”
“That was a joke and you know it!” Momo nearly snarls. This is a new side of her, Todoroki thinks, as she points her perfectly manicured finger at him. Maybe it’s about his indirect attack on Jirou, who probably doesn’t deserve to be in their line of fire. “Todoroki Shouto, even if we were any semblance of straight I would still never date you. You’re a trainwreck.”

“I’m aware. The sentiment is returned,” Todoroki gives her an equally chilly scowl.

“And nobody believed us either so you were a shitty beard,” Momo snipes, matter of fact, trying to take a sip out of her empty cup.

They glare at each other until the temperature in the room drops, and Todoroki is the first to back off, swiping the custard tart from her side of the table and frigidly shoving it in his mouth as he gets up and stalks away.

[Momo]
That’s right
Run away
With ur tail between ur legs
To live the life of a coward
Can’t u at least text him

[Shouto]
Shut up YAOYOROZU
Choke on your 20oz 4 shot ¼ decaf Espresso Milano 220 degree no foam rice milk cappuccino extra sprinkle

[Momo]
You......
I would NEVER drink decaf

“Uraraka?”

“Yes, Deku?” She hums, trying to tame his hair with a blowdryer. Midoriya wasn’t sure what she did, only knowing that he absolutely couldn’t tell the difference -- similarly, he knows Kacchan does something with his hair before he starts taping but it still looks like that, so can anyone really tell? The bottom line was that she wouldn’t let the stylists touch it.
“I think I freaked that producer out with .. what I did,” He whispers glumly, dabbing concealer on the purple under his eyes. Apparently looking like you don’t get enough sleep is frowned upon even if it makes you relatable to the masses. “I want to apologize again but he starts walking the other way when I see him.”

Uraraka gives him a look of confusion. “I mean... he’s still really into you. Iida had to make a folder to filter the emails about it.”

Midoriya snorts, the concealer brush vandalizing his cheek. “Y-you’re funny.” He reaches for a sponge to blend it out, but Uraraka grabs his arm mid-air.

“Hey! Don’t cover up the freckles.” Uraraka chides, swabbing him with makeup remover instead. “The freckles bring in the big bucks, Deku.”

“Says who?” Midoriya’s about to cover his face with his sleeve and get foundation all over his suit. His best-tailored suit, the one that he’d passive aggressively complained was ‘a little too well fitting’ and ‘made him scared of bending down’. Uraraka catches him again before he can ruin it, slapping his arm away.

“Upper management. And me! Both are important! I have a pie chart if you want to look. Just call him.”

“Uraraka! We’re going live in 3!”

Midoriya sighs, clumsily trying to fix his tie on his own before he’s cued in, and it’s like the flimsy weakwilled knot he makes is just more proof that Uraraka knows what’s best for him.

“Why are you so.. fucking intense today?” Bakugou scowls, passing his desk with his apple cider. Todoroki’s forgotten to turn his office into a bulwark of privacy today, and no one knows whether they should feel relieved or concerned.

Todoroki doesn’t even bristle this time. He doesn’t even see Bakugou in his peripheral. His hands are steepled in front of his face in concentration. Kirishima has to mouth to Bakugou some unintelligible string of words -- to which Bakugou yells “I can’t hear you dipshit” -- and silently gesture to his laptop screen, where Midoriya is giving a slightly more flustered version of his usual forecast, nervously rubbing the back of his head, three whole consecutive shirt buttons forgotten, tie so loose it’s about to slide off his neck, and Midoriya does indeed have a six pack under there.

From: "Uraraka Ochako” <uraraka@ua.jp>

Date: January 5, 2017 1:45 PM

Subject: Yoohoo

To: <yaoyorozu@ua.jp>
Hi Yaomomo,

Deku will change to a looser tailored suit if (and only if) we could we get a directory of everyone’s birthdays? It’s for parties!

-Uraraka (Party Planning Committee)

From: "Yaomomo” <yaoyorozu@ua.jp>

Date: January 5, 2017 1:50 PM

Subject: RE: Yoohoo

To: <uraraka@ua.jp>

Hello Uraraka,

Of course. As much as it hurts me, I attached an Excel spreadsheet.

Tell me if there is anything else you need, please.

-Momo

From: "T. Shouto” <tshouto@ua.jp>

Date: January 5, 2017 1:52 PM

Subject: A matter

To: <iida @ua.jp >

Iida,

You know we’re friends, right?

Good friends?

Friends who have done a lot for each other, who support and inspire each other?

Which is why I want to ask, did Uraraka tell you why she’s extorting us?

-Todoroki (your good friend)
Midoriya rehearses about five times, quickly running through the lines when the camera’s not on him, writing over and over until his actual meteorologist script is covered in chickenscratch love letters.

“And Deku, how is the week looking?”

The camera switches to him. “Oh, um, I have no plans, really.”

A tense silence falls over them. Iida looks like he’s passing a kidney stone.

“Because! It’s snowing!” He fumbles, flapping his hand around the weekly forecast with reckless abandon. ”This week’s highs top out at negative two degrees celsius! Snow is general over Tokyo, so expect icy roads and walkways to be closed. Please bundle up and don’t catch a cold! Spread coconut oil on your hands to keep them from cracking, and be assured that the sun will come out again and spread new life in spring–”

Uraraka gives a frenzied laugh to the camera. “Thank you for the forecast, Deku! Coming up after the break is our nature show with our very own Tsuyu! Have you ever wondered what animals do over the winter? Sleep? Well ... you would be correct!”

Outside of the building, holding an umbrella in his shaking hand, Midoriya is wildly veering off script.

“H-hi, this is Midoriya and I just wanted to ask if you wanted to go out to dinner with me? Oh, uh, I want to treat you since I think I embarrassed you, so many times... so you don’t have to see it as anything more than an apology, or a thank you for the muffin basket, but, ahh, how do I put this, it could be a date if you wanted it to be, a proper one, I would .. love to …” He stammers, fully, without brakes.

“.. a-and that’s all! Thank you for taking care of Kacchan and everyone s-so I’m going to hang up
now so please call me back if you’d like! Oh u-um please say yes or no to if it’s a date or not! Bye!”
The message ends up being 4 minutes long, and he reaches tears almost three times, and god, he hopes the guy doesn’t listen to the whole thing or he would die.

“Ready to go?” Uraraka pops her head out of the door, Iida immediately holding his umbrella over both of their heads before the onslaught of snowflakes can reach her.

“Yeah!” Midoriya smiles, wobbly. “I’m feeling better, I think.”

He doesn’t get an answer back.

A week passes and he’s with Uraraka, both of them sleep-deprived after they’ve been dragged in early and held back late to write up some scripts covering last-minute stories about some icy road pile-ups. The both of them are draped over the couches in the lobby and watching all the video files he has on his laptop in shuffled order, hoping to distract themselves from how early they have to come in the next day. With Tamaki and Mirio recording rush coverage on top of their usual nightly news, the two of them decide to just give up and sleep over, since they have to be up at 3 in the morning to tape anyway and Kaminari on floor six is a drug dealer that specializes in five hour energy and ‘high class’ mints he’s pilfered from conferences.

“Oh, if you liked that one, I have an even better --”

“No! No! I can’t handle any more of that dog,” Uraraka gasps for breath. “It walks too much like Tenya at the company breakfast after he’s had too many mimosas...”

Another wave of laughter shakes them, and Midoriya holds onto her shoulder like he’s dying. “And how .. how many is that?”

“Jus-- just one!”

Midoriya falls off the couch.

The elevator dings and they try to silence themselves, Uraraka slapping a hand over her mouth and reaching for the mute button like her life depends on it. Midoriya tries to roll himself under the couch, hitting his head on the leg and curling into the fetal position with a whine that only unprofessionalism can produce.

“Oh, hi.” Uraraka’s voice has such an odd, cold tone to it that it makes Midoriya freeze, afraid to
show his face until he hears the revolving door slow to a halt.

“Who was that?” he whispers.

“Just a security guy!” Uraraka smiles at him, cheery again, and Midoriya slumps in relief.

“You should be nicer to them! They do a lot for us. I t-thought it was Mr. Aizawa,” his voice goes deep and trembling at the mention of their supervisor, and both of them quake in fearful laughter at the idea of being caught in such a compromising position. Through the tall glass windows, he swears he catches a mismatched head of hair heading towards the train station like a ghost sighting.

“Oh, Deku, what’s this? Is this you?”

Midoriya pops his head up, scrambling to right himself on the couch. “Oh, that is me. This was in America.”

*Look, look over here! Smile, boy!* 

Gawking and gangly, the wind pulling his hair like whips, a younger, grainier Midoriya turns to the camera and flashes a cheeky grin. It pulls almost painfully at his face.

“I think my stepdad was filming, that’s why I kept it.”

The camera swings around to the blonde man, strong and shouting, but it’s lost in the wind.

“Mr. Toshinori, like from the studio?”

Midoriya nods. They both agree he looked in better health then, before the accident that made him settle into a life that was more phone calls and desks.

Uraraka boggles at the screen as the tornado swirls closer, tearing shingles off houses and devouring dust.
“Isn’t it scary?” Uraraka’s eyes are wide. “Even with all these calculations, you can still never be sure if it gets you.”

“A little.” Midoriya pauses, watching himself on the screen. “It seems dumb now, but I guess I just wanted to be a little fearless, you know?”

Todoroki doesn’t always stick around for filming, but today was a network higher-up’s supervising visit, and he urged Todoroki to stay because his presence would “build morale”. He isn’t sure if that’s an insult or not, but watching Bakugou berate some lovely cheesemakers for “taking cheese way too seriously” isn’t his preferred way to spend the evening. The sky is saturated in black by the time Todoroki steps out the elevator, tugging at his tie like it’s constricting his breath. He has enough attention left to nod at Uraraka on his way out, giving a smile that looks stunted with courtesy, a little awkward on his lips.

“Oh, hi.” Uraraka scowls at him, hovering protectively over the floor as if she has something to hide. He doesn’t think much of it.

“You have 8 new voicemails.”

The train howls, screeching as it saws down its tracks. Squinting at his phone under the harsh fluorescent lights, Todoroki takes a deep breath and enters his pin.

“Son, this is--”

“Voicemail deleted.”

“You can’t keep changing your number--”

“Voicemail deleted.”

“Did that bitch put you up to this?”

“Voicemail deleted.”

“You think you’re so smart, but--”
“Voicemail deleted.”

“--you would be nothing without me.”

“Voicemail deleted.”

“H-hi, this is Midoriya and I just wanted to--”

“Voicemail deleted.”

The sound of his phone screen cracking against the flooring isn’t pretty. Cursing, he scrambles to pick it up, examining the ugly diagonal split and pursing his lips.

It isn’t until he’s gotten to his apartment and sent a few snippy texts to Kaminari for shaming him into changing his (protective, minimalist, utilitarian, if not a bit unsightly) case with unyielding criticism (‘hey, the aggressively heterosexual plumber store called and wants its phone back’) that he works up the courage to respond. He still has a picture of Midoriya’s number from when it was scribbled onto his hand, and Todoroki’s face burns preemptively as he listens to each dial tone stretch out longer and longer.

“Ochako! Ochako!” Midoriya hisses at her, and Uraraka blearily wakes from her dream that Tsuyu from the nature channel had brought her Amazonian lizard-headed friend over for brunch. The tinny rendition of his ringtone, some old retro superhero theme, pierces her ears.

“H-he’s calling, he’s calling!”

“Answer,” she groans, rolling over and possibly choking herself on her necklace.

“Just like that? Answer? Are you crazy?”

When Midoriya picks up, he sounds distinctly out of breath, yelping out something that sounds like a
cockatiel squawk instead of a conventional greeting.

Todoroki clears his throat. “Midoriya?”

“Ahh! That’s me! Hahaha, I was thinking you were ignoring me! I mean with good reason--”

“I got your voicemail.” He keeps it simple. To the point. Revealing nothing more than necessary, like the fact that he hadn’t heard more than two seconds of it.

“Oh… um, so … how about it?”

Todoroki uses all the improvisational skills he can. “Y..es.”

“Really?” Why does Midoriya’s voice squeak like that? “Wow, that’s great!” Regardless, he can feel the relieved smile over the phone. They decide to meet at the train station after work, and Todoroki still isn’t quite sure what he’s said yes to.

Uraraka mashes her face into the couch cushion while Midoriya endures the call, stammering and squeezing her hand so hard she feels her circulation cut off. She realizes in this moment that if Midoriya was using his prosthetic she probably would have actually shattered a bone or two or all of them.

There are long pauses in between. Then they hang up.

“I was scared, but that .. was easier than I thought,” Midoriya mumbles, nervous smile peeking through his fingers.

“Oh Deku,” Uraraka slurs, checks her watch and rubs her sore eyes. Still three more hours to sleep. “A dumb boy scares you more than a cyclone does?”
Midoriya picks a place that’s small and local, one where the waitresses joke around with him about getting ‘his usual’ and thwap him on his nest of hair with their notepads. Todoroki still isn’t sure what the purpose of this get-together is, but he knows he can’t collect himself if he considers it a date, and he knows he wants to melt into the seat and die.

"Todoroki? Like . Endeavor Studios?"

Todoroki realizes it’s one of those types of meetings. He awkwardly shifts in his seat. Midoriya sits there and it’s as if he’s buzzing, trembling, nervousness etched into his smile, and Todoroki wonders if the camera just doesn’t pick it up as well, or if he’s scared because he’s never had a business dinner before. He ponders over what to say, trying not to wrinkle his nose.

"Well, originally."

"That’s so exciting! What made you come here? Different climate? Different shows to produce? Different company culture? I heard there’s not much wiggle room in Endeavor Studios so maybe you had some creative difference," His eyes are sparkling now. He’s so passionate, truly, that Todoroki gives him a pained smile.

"I thought it would piss off my old man if I spent his money funding Bakugou’s shitty idea," he says quickly, hoping Midoriya can’t hear.

Midoriya looks beautiful choking on his water.
The rest of the meeting went uneventfully. As always, Midoriya is painfully cute and Todoroki barely holds it together and Sapporo Black Label is an angel. The last one seems the most relevant now. Todoroki hiccups, cutting his thumb on the lid as he cracks open the pull tab. The apartment is dark and silent except for the steady sound of his mouse, dragging email after email out of his inbox.

From: "Todoroki Enji" <t@endeavor.net>
Date: Jan 11, 2014 1:42 AM
Subject: You will regret it
To: <tshouto@ua.net>

Why don’t you mark them as spam, Shouto? He’s not sure if he’s dreaming that voice or if the alcohol is speaking to him. It sounds like his mom.

“So I can be reminded every day that he can’t get to me anymore,” he mutters. The mouse click-clicks in staccato. This kind of ritual follows him home. The motion of it soothes him. Makes him feel in charge of something. He needs to remind himself there’s some things in this world his dad can’t touch, like his peace of mind.

Then why do you go back and read them when you’re alone?

Todoroki sucks his cut thumb before it can bleed. He doesn’t know.

“Still, look at where you are now! Self-built!” Midoriya had beamed at him, while they piled napkins over the spill.

“Stuff only works out because my old man’s name is on it.”

“Well, no one stays up at night to watch Todoroki Enji, stupid, they stay up to watch Kacchan suffer through Manners School because you sent him there on live TV.” Midoriya gave him a big big smile.

And Todoroki had realized it was kind of simple like that.
[Ochako]
Deku!

How was your date? <3

[Ochako]
:( what happened?

If neither of you climbed out the bathroom window, it’s still a success you know.

[Uraraka]

Are you okay? Call and i’ll come over?

[Deku]

what does it mean if i went in for a hug and he shook my hand…
"I heard you two were childhood friends." he corners Bakugou while he's bent over the espresso machine. Bakugou shrieks and presses the wrong button of the many, many buttons, and curses as apple cider splashes angrily into his mug.

"Who the fuck?" the host all but snarls at him, upturning his mug over the sink. Tokoyami has been writing those incidents off as 'miscellaneous expenses'. Todoroki doesn’t care. He will put this office through an apple cider draught by proxy of Bakugou if he needs to. It’s just collateral damage.

He clarifies. “Midoriya.”

Bakugou puts his mug back into the holder with so much grace a chip flies off the rim. "Deku? Yeah, I guess we are," he spits, but there's a hint of something defensive in there. Todoroki wedges his proverbial foot in the door.

“Tell me,” he says, so quietly and calmly he thinks he scares himself, “his weakness.”

And Bakugou is, for the first time in his life, the one staring at him in silence.

“...no,” Bakugou tests, as if he’s stepping on a minefield.

He elbows Todoroki in the gut on his way out.

Chapter End Notes

in case it's not common knowledge 'beard' is slang in the gay community for when someone gay is fake-dating someone else to appear straight!! i love the concept of todoroki and momo being each others high school beards LMFAO
Chapter 4

As things turn out, a few days of being force-fed comfort food by Uraraka and Iida does a body bad but a heart pretty good. Midoriya feels on top of the world, truly, running on friendship and willpower and playing russian roulette with each large coffee he ingests before his nervous system fails, right up until Todoroki strolls into the elevator he’s riding down to the lobby.

“Todoroki! Good afternoon!”

“Your eyes are red,” The taller man remarks with a frown, but if a frown could be warm, Todoroki’s was. Midoriya reaches the epiphany that he’s not really that over this producer he’s only spoken with a few times.

“Oh, are they?” (they are, a little, stinging gently as he rubs his face with his metal knuckle.) The morning show’s finished taping, but it’s rush hour and he’s not looking forward to squeezing himself into a subway car with the density of a sardine can. “I had to get up at five.”

Todoroki stares at him, expression unreadable, before lowering his voice in conspiracy. “You want to sleep on the softest leather office chair you’ve ever seen?”

Midoriya’s mouth opens and closes like a koi fish, and for a second, he thinks Todoroki’s laugh makes this whole one-sided crush thing worth it.


“He was tired,” Todoroki whispers, as if it’s completely fine. He’s gazing with a disgusting amount of softness and affection, two things Todoroki has up until lately been notorious for lacking. It gives Bakugou a feeling that Web MD would call indigestion or late stage stomach cancer.

“Look, he was too sleepy to eat,” Todoroki continues, with no regard for Bakugou’s personal property as he carefully pries the chopsticks from the dozing weatherman’s hands. The lunch box goes safely on the desk instead of dangerously balanced on his lap.
Todoroki watches Bakugou close his eyes, as if it’ll make it easier, and he knows he’s doing that one breathing exercise that Midoriya had accredited to anger management. He counts the veins that pop out of Bakugou’s forehead.

“Then. Next time use your own.”

“I like your tone. They told me you’ve been working on that.”

Bakugou’s face is beet red with restraint as he mixes up his ‘thank yous’ and ‘fuck offs’. “Fucks a lot,” he growls.

As the week passes the rest of the office decides it’s better to keep things the way they are, because Bakugou never works and thus is guaranteed to never be sitting there. It’s convenient for Midoriya, who takes a liking to occupying the chair, or as Bakugou shouts, ‘usurping his throne’, showing up to fill the space of time where rush hour makes the commute home like being ferried through the seven circles of hell. Kaminari takes the longest to notice, thinking for a few weeks that Todoroki has brought in a bonsai tree that he eats lunch with and speaks to rather lovingly.

“Thank you for keeping me company, Todoroki.” Midoriya hides his eyes from him behind lashes of pine and Todoroki wheezes into his napkin.

“Of course. Anything for you,” Todoroki says as if on autopilot, and he’s unsettled by how much he means it.

“You’re so smooth! How do you do it?” the anchor sighs at him, picking apart his lunch. It looks tediously healthy, vegetables crammed tight under the lid and a grain blend speckling the rice that he insists on sharing. According to him, Todoroki can’t just eat cold soba forever. Todoroki won’t challenge him.

“I think you’re perfectly fine as is, Midoriya.”

Midoriya groans, head lolling into his arms. “See?”
Todoroki flashes him an easy smile to betray the amount of production value he’s put into resting his hand on Midoriya’s shoulder (longitude, latitude, air resistance, static electricity, lighting, angle). Midoriya makes a noise of approval and slowly worries himself into a mumbling mess before he remembers he has ten minutes until the next train, and he yells goodbyes and thank yous as he sprints out to flee down the stairs. Todoroki watches him until the door swings closed, and lets out a deep, shuddering breath.

Midoriya’s weakness is flowers. Todoroki’s wrestled that much out of Bakugou, who wants to make it rather loud and clear that just because he’s been on-and-off friends with Midoriya for the better part of his life there is no mushy correspondence between them just because he knows Midoriya was a ‘plant hoe’.

“HR has been telling you to watch the derogatory language. Do you know what type of flowers he likes?” Todoroki presses.

“You think we’re like best fucking friends or some shit?” Bakugou hisses at him.

Todoroki’s staring practice with Momo yields him some good results. Bakugou curses and tells him he doesn’t know because he just got him a Lowe’s gift card every year.

“Oh. That’s considerate but not very romantic,” Todoroki sighs. A bouquet of Lowe’s gift cards?

Bakugou hisses in frustration, then picks up Todoroki’s “WORLD’S SECOND BEST BOSS” mug and smashes it against the kitchen counter.

“Midoriya! There’s something for you in the lobby,” Iida announces, louder than he needs to, and Uraraka is peeking around his shoulder as Midoriya shakes himself awake from his inconspicuous desk-nap.

“Got it,” Midoriya wobbles up from his seat and they all wonder if he’s sleepwalking by the way he wanders towards the exit door. There’s a breathless yelp, followed by a couple catastrophic noises, and then an “I’m okay” floats up from the stairwell.
What looks like a literal serial killer greets him downstairs.

“You Midoriya?” he drones, piercings rattling as his tattooed jaw moves.

“I who what?” Midoriya squeaks.

The man gives him a slow, searching look and then squints down at his palm where some name must be scribbled. Midoriya takes this moment to assess the situation and most of the outcomes involve running for his life. He looks terrifying in the way a judgmental hot topic employee does, with just a thousand more body modifications. His appearance isn’t the problem -- he just radiates a complete lack of any desire to be here.

“Don’t know if I’m reading it right,” he shrugs, and drops a heavy bundle of flowers into Midoriya’s arms, mostly apathetic to the fact that Midoriya briefly loses balance. “Ask Shouto whatever it meant.”

[Dabi]
I don’t get it. Tomura and I both got a look and he’s not really that hot

[Shouto]
You DELIVERED THEM???

[Dabi]
Family favor lol

“If his face stays that red, do you think he’s gonna overheat?”

“The capillaries in his skin might burst,” Tsuyu whispers with her biological expertise. For once her subject isn't amphibians, but he’s pretty close to one.
Midoriya is hunched over his desk, and everyone murmurs in agreement that he looks like a prized heirloom tomato with his green hair and his red red face.

“Deku, are you okay?” Uraraka asks softly.

“Oh god,” he groans, hiding his face. His voice is muffled but wistful. “He said that to me too, once… ‘are you okay’… it was while I was choking on some water, it was so thoughtful--”

“Is this about Todoroki?” Uraraka’s eyes dart over to the large bundle of sunflowers crowding Midoriya’s desk.

Midoriya nods, looking on the verge of tears, which is standard Midoriya. Uraraka laughs and pats him on the head, like soothing a sheep, and Midoriya collects himself enough to continue.

“I need to tell you something,” he whispers like he’s leaking the details of a political scandal. “I love him…”

“I know,” Uraraka says solemnly, rubbing his shoulder. The whole office knows. Midoriya has unintentionally informed them multiple times. They’ve been sent a few memos about it. They’re all happy with it, the problem is just how god damn slow Todoroki moves and how many times they have to have Midoriya redo takes.

Midoriya interrupts her with a sneeze. And another. And another.

“Deku… could it be that you’re…” Uraraka prods again, gentle.

“No,” he denies quickly and nasally.

“You can say it. This is a safe space. Between you and me, if you’re...” Uraraka gazes at the arrangement again, daisies staggered in between big bright sunflowers. It was unfortunate that the symbols of innocence and adoration were so good at producing pollen. Midoriya’s eyes are watering now. “Uh, allergy prone--”
“I’m not and I’m in love.” Midoriya itches his face.

“Todoroki!” Midoriya tracks him down the next day, calling out his name across the lobby, and Todoroki freezes.

By the time he turns to look at him, he catches Midoriya midway through the motion of pulling off his motorcycle helmet and Todoroki’s brain unleashes into a stream of consciousness consisting of useless gibberish. The most real-world thought he can collect is ‘uh’, which doesn’t help him at all when Midoriya grins up at him, face flushed and hair sticking to his freckled cheeks like a frame around a Jackson Pollock.

Midoriya thanks him for the flowers. Todoroki swallows. Come on, think of something. “Uh.”

“I-it was you, right?” Midoriya smiles nervously at him.

“Yes,” Todoroki says, breathlessly. He nods vigorously and it helps him reaffirm it to himself, like he didn’t just get black out drunk and order a shit ton of flowers ‘for the love of his life’ and it was, in fact, deliberate. All part of his plan. “Yep.”

“They’re beautiful,” Midoriya scrubs tears from his eyes. “Just out of nowhere, I... I’ve never had a - - a friend do that for me.”

Todoroki’s not a fan of cliches so he will refuse to say his heart particularly sank. Perhaps it hits a big dumb ice rock and goes down like the Titanic while an orchestra plays. He gives Midoriya’s shoulder one decisive pat. “I’m happy you liked them.”

Bakugou doesn’t have time for this shit and by ‘this shit’ he means Ponytail blocking him entirely from entering Todoroki’s office. She stands there, stance like a Spartan warrior drinking fancy tea Midoriya has recently gifted floor six, as if she’s trying to wean herself off her caffeine addiction by shooting herself up with caffeine in a less disgusting form.

“I’m trying to fucking work,” Bakugou sneers. He’s holding a folder he needs to discuss with
Todoroki, and inside the folder is some bullshit segment Todoroki wants him to do as always, and Bakugou doesn’t want to do it, as always, but he’s written adjustments to the script and needs to know if his thirty seven cuss words can go past the censors. He sidesteps and she predicts it, heel clicking forcefully on the floor as she counters his move.

“He’s in a bad mood.”

“Since when is he not in a bad mood. Let me in .”

“He’s sensitive and upset with you for not telling him Midoriya has a hay fever problem.”

Bakugou contemplates throwing fists with Yaoyorozu but realizes she has a million different places inside her designer jacket to hide a shank and she’s probably not afraid to use them. He opts to just look through the blinds instead, where Todoroki is inside looking *perfectly fucking fine* but wiping his stupid eyes with a rich-fuck handkerchief because Midoriya’s broadcast today is him doing visits at the children’s hospital. Todoroki looks so stone-faced and weepy you’d think he was a middle aged man watching his son go off to college but it’s just Midoriya picking up some kid like Simba.

“Dumb fucks I work with,” Bakugou mutters, practically throwing the folder at Yaoyorozu. She catches it and slides it through the crack under Todoroki’s office door.

Midoriya has taken to exploring his desk while Todoroki writes out segments. His last victim was the green tea mints that Todoroki has meticulously hid from Kaminari, and apparently no one has taught Midoriya how to eat mints before, because he nibbles on them like a squirrel instead of just putting them in his mouth. And the office *reeks* with implicit relief that Todoroki has found someone equally incapable of behaving like a normal human.

“Who’s this?”

“My mother,” Todoroki looks at the frame Midoriya’s holding, and finds the words coming out easy instead of tight and clipped. The picture is a candid one, one before protection orders and identity changes, one where she’s laughing soft and surrounded by his siblings at the Narita airport. “She lives far now, but we video call.”
“Oh! I want to meet her,” Midoriya smiles at the picture as if she’s right there, meeting him too. “You smile like her.”

Todoroki feels his heartbeat stumble. “She would like you.”

As it ends up, Todoroki makes it two weeks into his scheme of entrapping Midoriya in the throes of affection when he hits a threshold. The day is like any other: Todoroki is putting up a bulletin board of Bakugou’s complaints against the rest of the staff when Midoriya shuffles in through the door of floor six, sniffling and red-nosed, jacket crusted with snow that bypassed his umbrella.

“On-site duty again?” Todoroki asks him, with the innocence of someone who hasn’t recorded the broadcasts for the past month, and Midoriya just groans in response.

He abandons his jacket and curls up into a pitiful clump in his usual spot, Todoroki draping his coat over him, and Midoriya yawns for what’s probably hours under the soft layer of warmth until Todoroki’s phone buzzing noisily in his pocket jolts him awake.

“It’s yours,” Midoriya grunts, rubbing his eyes and fishing for Todoroki’s phone to give him. His eyes accidentally snag on the message displayed on the screen.

[Momo]

You wear coats to work now? Abandoned your power move?

Todoroki gently plucks the phone from his hands.

[Shouto]

None of your business

Todoroki has been trying incredibly hard to reverse his first few impressions. So so hard. He hasn’t worked this hard since he was at Endeavor Studios breaking at least five different child labor laws. He tries to keep five different expressions from crossing his face as he slips his phone face-down onto the table with a clack.
Backed into a corner, realizing that they've reached the point of no return, the event horizon of his attempted hey-please-don’t-think-I’m-an-ass-despite-earlier-meetings redemption arc, Todoroki plays his last card.

“I’m done for the day, do you want to catch dinner?” he offers, and as Midoriya stares at him like he’s crazy and sputters that most everywhere is closed by now, he clarifies. “At my place. Uh. Not as a friend. Like a date. I’m asking you out on a date.”

Pink spreads across Midoriya’s face like a heatmap.

It turns out they don’t make it past the empty lobby, because Midoriya’s already on him once the elevator doors close, sliding his hand up Todoroki’s chest and pulling off his tie so deftly he wonders if Midoriya’s set up a long con plan to get in Todoroki’s head instead of just being a fast learner. Todoroki realizes that’s a little presumptuous if the plan involved dubious job performance from day one.

He doesn’t have a lot of time to think over niche markets of cute but absolutely terrible weathermen, because Midoriya hooks his fingers in Todoroki’s collar and pulls him down, and Todoroki swallows an embarrassing groan that makes Midoriya’s face heat up under him.

"I want to," Todoroki says between breaths, their teeth clacking lightly. It's hard to form a thought when facing the fact that Midoriya is a good kisser but an even better kisser sober. "Make something clear --"

"Mmf?" Midoriya replies with characteristic eloquence, Todoroki’s lower lip between his teeth.

"I'm not under the influence," Todoroki says seriously.

Midoriya laughs, and laughs, and for a moment it's perfect. Todoroki has had a pretty shit life but this makes him glad he made it. Among other things. Of course. Probably. He doesn’t have time to think about other things because he’s stupidly happy, so happy he’s nervous.

Then Midoriya pulls back, smiling so soft and brushing his thumb against Todoroki's left cheek and
that’s when Todoroki hears a little noise of confusion.

His stomach lurches. Oh, no, no.

Midoriya's eyes are darting quickly from his thumb, the pad of his finger marked with foundation, to Todoroki's undereye, where the damaged skin is exposed, laying unnaturally smooth and red, puckering where the burn ends.

"To--"

Todoroki winces, shoving him back hard with his arm. Midoriya takes a couple stumbling steps back and looks at him like a kicked puppy, jaw slack but eyes pulled wide with hurt, and that’s when Todoroki realizes the worst feeling in the world is knowing you're the reason for that face.

"Shit, I'm sorry, I.. " Todoroki stands up, covering his half of his face. This isn't what Midoriya signed up for, he realizes. Some guy with baggage. “This was a bad idea.”

“Todoroki,” He can hear Midoriya scrambling to his feet. "I won't ask, just--"

"You don't need to know," Todoroki says, and the words feel like barbs in his mouth, hurting as they come out. He hates how angry he sounds. Maybe the apple really doesn't fall far from the tree.

Midoriya's mouth closes, and thins into a shaky line.

Midoriya doesn't talk to him when he's driving him back to his apartment.

"Have a good night, Todoroki," Midoriya says, more tired than Todoroki's ever heard him sound, and it’s jarring, like seeing the same shape but switched to a completely different camera angle so it’s barely recognizable. The worst part is Midoriya’s still smiling like it’s all okay, but it’s frayed at the edges.
Momo is still up when she answers the door for him.

"You … did what? "

"I know," Todoroki grits out. "And I'd appreciate it if we never spoke of him again. I already have a witness protection program name picked out."

"That isn't going to work. You can't keep putting up a big cold wall whenever you can't face something."

Todoroki narrows his eyes, biting his cheek to keep from saying that if he ran away from his problems for 23 years he can certainly keep at it. He opens his mouth to spit out his defenses. "I d--"

"What, you’re gonna ignore him like you ignored your mom?"

Momo's face drops immediately after the words leave her. Both of them stare at each other in stunned silence, like declawed cats.

"I'm sorry," she says quickly. "That was.. you didn't deserve that. I had no right to bring--"

"It's okay," Todoroki slumps, running a hand through his hair. "I mean, you're right."

"It wasn't my place," Momo murmurs, head dipped down.

Todoroki shrugs, stepping into the apartment where the light casts shadows under his eyes without much mercy. Momo visibly winces -- it's obvious now that he's been crying. He sits down stiffly on the couch where Jirou's blankets are draped in a messy pile, and when Momo comes back from the kitchen with an armful of unhealthy snacks he's busy tidying himself up like he needs some sort of handle on his life and fixing his tie is the most available solution.

Todoroki laughs bitterly. "I thought getting rid of my dad would get rid of my stupid emotional availability problems."

“Don’t feel bad about it, it doesn’t work like that.”

“I did kinda fuck up.”

"We all do," Momo sighs. "It's realistic to."

They sit there in silence for a while. Momo lights a nice scented candle. It's green and smells like anjou pears and Midoriya likes pears and is also green and Todoroki tries not to snap at her over her choice of mood lighting.

"I've been rather inconsiderate to you, since the beginning of your predicament with he-who-shall-not-be-named." Momo is sheepish. Her private school roots show whenever she's uncomfortable -- even if Todoroki considers her someone more at ease with her emotions than he is, they both lapse into formalities as banal comfort. It's safe that way.

"You actually being wrong is rare," Todoroki snorts, as haughtily as he can with his voice so hoarse. "So I'd like to have a moment to gloat."

"Don't joke! You could even say I've been an asshole," she sighs, plunging her spoon into the tub of fancy custard that was meant for Todoroki's grief. So much for the formality. "It's just that you…" she fumbles with her words. "You've been different ever since you met Midoriya. It was nice to see you happy."

Momo's got an analytical head -- sometimes Todoroki wonders if maybe it's not how she is naturally but how she's trained herself to be, so she could stay on top of things. Safe. They're both sort of control freaks, so they're good friends, but their shared understanding of shelter makes it easy for Todoroki to see why she likes Jirou, who is the opposite of rigid, who may have introduced herself by vomiting on her on at a concert but makes Momo laugh louder than she was taught polite. Maybe Momo sees the same for him in Midoriya.

"I appreciate it," Todoroki says, and he does. "You're more considerate than you think."

"I don't know about that. Jirou's mad at me because I ate some nice pudding she was hiding," Momo says, lowering her voice to a whisper. "All of it. I don't know what came over me… I told her I could buy more but she said it was a betrayal of the heart so I'm sleeping on the couch tonight…"
"That's not the same, but thanks," he snorts. Poor Momo, banished to their nice leather sofa that's very obviously Momo's selection. Their apartment is split into puzzle pieces, furniture clashing disastrously since they obviously compromised between Momo's love for extravagant upholstery and Jirou's love for Craigslist. He does feel a little better, for a second, but then he's sent into crushing despair again because he wants to have those dumb problems with Midoriya. The ones that don't really matter, the ones they'd pick on each other about with smiles on their faces or passive aggressive post-it notes with gross hearts drawn on them.

"You started mumbling like he does," Momo laughs at him. "You'd probably never have my problem because Midoriya eats like a rabbit on the olympic swimming team. Maybe if you broke into his birdseed."

"Or his unsweetened probiotic yogurt," Todoroki laments, and they share a quiet, dignified laugh until Jirou pokes her head out the bedroom door and asks if they need to put on a bad movie to make Todoroki feel better.

"You must be really desperate to invite me over," Bakugou snorts.

"Kacchan," Midoriya's voice practically hisses from the other end. That childhood nickname sounds like a death threat.

'I need the comforting presence of an emotionally stunted asshole right now,' Midoriya had said to him, but there's that underlying layer of 'I don't want anyone to shoot Todoroki point blank with no hesitation' that explains why he didn't call on his morning show friends.

And under that, a deep seated 'I do genuinely want your company and friendship' that both of them think is hilarious.

"Yeah, yeah… you crying?"

"That's what I'm best at," he can hear the scowl, somehow.

"Shit," Bakugou pauses, performing the most illegal parking job ever outside the gate to Midoriya's
apartment. He's gonna have to climb it. "Don't get water damage on your phone again."

He hears Midoriya laugh before hurling the phone at his wall.
“So you’ve developed several defense mechanisms because of the environment you grew up in. Based on our conversation, you tend to believe that love is conditional, which makes you sabotage or isolate yourself when you’re afraid you won’t meet perceived expectations. You worry that your difficulty externalizing your emotions will take a negative effect on your relationships with others. This has become something you want to solve because recently you’ve been forced to confront these feelings about yourself by external circumstances. Does that sound right to you?”

Shinsou drums his pen against his clipboard. Todoroki’s unsure of how he pulled all that out of him in an hour when they started off talking about Todoroki’s breakfast.

“It is,” Todoroki admits. “But, uh.. could we do something about the toys over there?” He can’t stop staring at the stacks of blocks and action figures piled by his feet.

“Do they bother you?” Shinsou drones calmly. “Let’s unpack that.”

“No, not like that -- it’s just -- it feels weird,” Todoroki says, feeling too large for the small plastic chair he’s sitting on.

Shinsou stares, facial expression unmoved. “Todoroki, when you made the appointment, you were aware I was a child psychologist.”

“...yeah,” Todoroki says, resigned. He did go because a child psychologist for an overgrown child seemed about right, but Shinsou is also good at what he does. He has a knack for asking the right questions.

“You can play with them if you want, that’s what they’re there for,” Shinsou says, pen starting to move on his clipboard, and Todoroki tries not to take it personally. He makes an ice fortress with the light blue legos. To his exasperation, he can hear Shinsou writing something down.
"We’re out of time for today, so I’d like you to start a weekly chart of how you’re feeling. I’m very happy you’re getting help. That’s as your distanced specialist. As your old college roommate I’m going to severely beat your ass for not telling me you changed your phone number six times."

Todoroki nods. Shinsou isn’t done.

"You know your oldest number changed into a phone sex operator. I asked ‘hey Todo what’s up’ and the person on the line was like ‘oh I can be Todo if you want. I’m wearing red panties and nothing else’. The image? I didn’t want it."

"... I ..." Todoroki sputters, mortified. "I’m sorry."

"Good. We’ve made good progress," Shinsou says, giving him a lollipop and a sticker. The sticker has a smiling dog on it that says ‘What you SAY in here STAYS in here... UNLESS’ followed by a dozen lines of fine print. Shinsou grins at him. “See you next week. Tell me if you get laid.”

"Have fun not working, asshole?" Bakugou greets him in the lobby with his usual vitriol, something that pretty much translates to 'oh honey you’re home'.

"I thought Momo sent out a memo," Todoroki mumbles. He’s just here to pick up a couple letters. "And you're not working either."

"Shit, that was real? You really went to therapy?" Bakugou looks at him incredulously, and Todoroki doesn't exactly appreciate his disbelief when he's the one who had to retake anger management four times. At this point, one more four-week class on his punch card and he gets the sixth free.

"Yep," Todoroki says, not divulging much more. He remembers what Shinsou told him about communicating, and reluctantly gives up another sentence through his clenched teeth. "I want to be. A less. Closed-off individual."
"Wow. Deku making you go through the Gauntlet of Self Help? Is he having you pass the Five Impossible Trials of the Recovery Model?"

"No," Todoroki says slowly, but he has to admit it's funny that Midoriya was the one who put Bakugou through all that. "That’s not why. But either way, that guy… seems compelled to drag peoples' problems out of them…"

Bakugou snorts. "Yeah. He's like that."

"Like what?" pipes a cheery voice.

Todoroki wants to die. He has to book another therapy session just to forget about this one moment, where Bakugou ducks in fear and Todoroki just stands there like there's rocks in his feet while Midoriya gives the most terrifyingly oblivious smile.

"Midoriya," he greets shakily.

"Todoroki!" Midoriya smiles at him. “Can we talk?"

“I’m sorry,” he says quickly, after the door to the bathroom closes behind them.

“Don’t be sorry. You actually don’t even have to tell me anything.” Midoriya shuffles in place, looking down at his feet. “I just wanted to see you.”

Todoroki’s back slumps with relief. If he could, he would say ‘great!’ and just walk out the door, but he realizes that if he’s ever going to have a domestic life with Midoriya bickering over stolen pudding he wants to do it without hiding half his entire face from him. “Last night is a long story.”

Todoroki takes a deep breath and finds out it doesn’t help. It’s just going to be tough no matter how much air he has prepared for himself. “My family’s a mess and my mom felt really guilty about it. About letting it happen. My old man forced me into acting as a kid and she hated it.” Todoroki writes scripts all day, he’s wrote a million, he knows how to arrange the events and how to keep flow, but this is different. He’s clumsy, he fumbles. He’s not sure if any of it makes sense -- there’s something about the act of recalling things that make them seem ridiculous to say out loud, picking and throwing out unnecessary details that he’s sure will trip him up later. “Then she poured boiling water on me to disfigure my face. No one wants an ugly kid on their screen, so it worked. But she got put in the hospital, because of me.”

"Hm," Midoriya says, just a noise. "I don't think it was your fault." His face is soft with empathy. Understanding. All that kind of stuff. It’s going so well that Todoroki just keeps opening his mouth.

“I know it’s not what you expected, it’s scary and hard to look at, I should have told you ... but I guess I didn’t want you to look at me and think of my father.”

The look on Midoriya’s face makes Todoroki think he’s about to burst. He swallows, trying not to back out of the room and run for his life or what remains of it after Uraraka hunts him down and throttles him to death in a dark alleyway for breaking Midoriya's heart.

“Why would I think of your shitty dad and not you?” Midoriya asks quietly.

“I don’t know,” Todoroki says, throat thick and heart hammering like he’s been caught in the act of something. “It's weird, I hate him but I can't stop thinking about it. I hate that part.”

“I don’t think it's weird,” Midoriya gives him that wobbly smile, the one that’s not full-on bright. It’s starting to grow on him too. “And Todoroki, I like you. All of you.”

It turns out hugging Midoriya feels really nice. He's dreamed about this a few times before, maybe like twenty if he’s being approximate, and it’s never been as nice as this. Like one of the seven wonders of the world, one of the others being suspicious street food. Todoroki never thought he'd be a bear hugger but here he is, burying his face in Midoriya’s warm shoulder and probably ruining his nice suit. His very nice suit that keeps Todoroki from getting anything done, that he finally wore again today maybe out of spite.
It’s fine. Todoroki will pay for the dry cleaning.

“Todoroki, I never would have took you to be a squeezer,” Midoriya wheezes under him, a giggle or two slipping through.

“What did you just call me?” Todoroki pulls back, frowning at him.

"Nothing.” Midoriya purses his lips. He’s smiling. “I want to kiss you, but something bad always happens when I do.”

"You know the third time’s the alleged charm," Todoroki says, as dry and barren as the coffee machine’s apple cider reserve, and Midoriya says that he cannot be-lieve Todoroki had such a terrible line in his vocabulary before Todoroki kisses him and this time it really is perfect.

Until there’s a cough from the stall.

Todoroki backsteps and hits his head on the automatic paper towel dispenser, hissing “shit” as the machine beeps and slowly unfurls a sheet onto him. Midoriya has just been full-on screaming the whole time, from “A FUCKING GHOST” to “ah, Todoroki, your head!”, and then when the stall slowly creaks open Midoriya jumps a foot straight into the air. His prosthetic makes a horrific crack against the extravagant marble sink.

“I’m really really sorry,” Sero staggers out, looking traumatized by every single aspect of this.

He rushes out the door.

Todoroki turns on the sink and splashes an excessive amount of cold water on his face. Midoriya is whimpering slightly over his injury, which involves two crushed fingers.

“Are you alright?” Todoroki frets, trying not to drip water all over Midoriya’s arm. It’s sparking in a way Todoroki can really only describe as immensely concerning.

“I’m fine.” Midoriya giggles again, as if it’s funny that Todoroki is worried the love of his life might get electrocuted and die. “Hatsume’s used to it. She’s like twenty minutes away.”
“Midoriya. Please let me drive you.”

To his great big relief, Midoriya agrees.

"You know. You tasted like my green tea mints," Todoroki comments as they leave the bathroom, a suspicious inflection in his voice to hopefully distract Midoriya from thinking too hard about what just happened. In the background his mind is toiling away at how to get Sero to sign a nondisclosure agreement before he gossips to Kaminari, who might as well be the town crier.

"I stole the box from your desk," Midoriya admits. "And I ate the whole tin this morning."

Against his own will, Todoroki hears himself snort.

“Hey! I don’t know if you recall, but my feelings were hurt! By you!”

“Midoriya, I think there were at least thirty mints in there. They were all caffeinated. Are you okay?”

“I have the right! And I’m fine! I feel very fresh!”

Todoroki wants to put up a fight but Midoriya looks like a scorned squirrel the way he sort of puffs up his cheeks like that. “Midoriya. For the rest of your life I promise you can have as many as you want.”

[Shouto]

Momo.

I want to inform you that we just had our first argument over food
“Todoroki! What .. your car .. what happened?” Midoriya gasps, pointing a shaky finger at Todoroki’s car.

Todoroki follows where his finger’s pointing, to the back window that’s been shattered so thoroughly that every square inch of visibility has been obliterated. Midoriya probably didn’t notice last night. It’s been that way for several months, actually. For several months Todoroki has been driving on the faith of god.

He’s silent for a long time. “Bakugou with a crowbar can run faster than a car can drive in city roads with moderate traffic.”

Midoriya’s eyes stay wide for the duration of the trip.

From: "Yaomomo" <yaoyorozu@ua.jp>

Date: February 11, 2017 6:45 PM

Subject: NDA

To: <tshouto@ua.jp>

You are so lucky I am such a good dear friend and know so many ways to incapacitate a fully grown man.

Tokoyami will handle the NDA.

P.S.

I’m really proud of you. :)

P.P.S.
Do NOT use that sentence against me. I can and will use the full details of the bathroom incident against you

[Deku]

Ochako … make a note … capricorns are really daring drivers

[Uraraka]

That’s so cute!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! <3 that love is affecting your judgment skills

[Uraraka]

Okay that was mean!!!! I know you love him but he cannot park...
I think he was taught that cars are supposed to go right the middle of the line

[Deku]

Ok he is a little scary. he speeds so fast!
And only puts his right hand on the wheel… he said “I will never use my left”
:{
IM SORRY I SPLIT THIS UP INTO SO MANY CHAPTERS JUST TO SPAM THEM ALL AT THE SAME TIME LMFAO it just felt rite this way .. but i didnt want any cliffhangers TT __ TT

From: "Aizawa Shouta” <eraserhead@ua.jp>
Date: February 12, 2017 6:45 PM
Subject: Concerning your performance
To: <midoriya@ua.jp>

    Quit drawing hearts on the map. I know you think you're being stealthy and I know your boyfriend is watching but so are four million people plus me.

    Don’t make me email you again.

    -Aizawa

From: "Bakugou” <bakugou@ua.jp>
Date: February 13, 2017 9:01 AM
Subject: RE: Valentine’s Day
To: <tshouto@ua.jp>

    HEY MORON DO YOU FUCKING PROMISE ON YOUR LIFE THAT IF I HELP YOU YOU WILL STOP FUCKING SIGNING ME UP FOR YOGA COUPONS MY FUCKING INBOX

From: "T. Shouto” <tshouto@ua.jp>
Date: February 13, 2017 9:03 AM
Subject: RE: RE: Valentine’s Day
To: <bakugou@ua.jp>

    But then what will I do every time they ask for an email?
"An apartment fire isn't really weather," Midoriya mutters under his breath, but brightens up as the camera turns to him. "Hey everyone! Even though it's snowing, Valentine’s Day sure is heating up on the outskirts of Hosu! Firefighters from Tokyo and its surrounding prefectures are using ground crews to put out this raging --"

Someone taps his shoulder.

Midoriya’s heart climbs into his throat. Crew members usually don’t interrupt him on live broadcasts, and never on camera -- usually just the earpiece is enough to communicate whatever they need to. He tears his eyes from making intense friendly contact with the camera and Jirou from sound actually winces and pulls the boom mic back in anticipation of Midoriya’s scream, but all that comes out is a weak warble.

“T-todoroki?”

“Midoriya,” Todoroki sheepishly glances to the side. He’s holding a flower bouquet like a shield, the fire billowing from their left lighting up his face. “This isn’t really the location I had in mind, but happy Valentine’s Day.”

“You-- you-- the--“

“They’re hypoallergenic.” And Todoroki flashes a smile crooked enough to make Midoriya’s knees wobble.

“Aizawa’s calling,” Shouji’s voice buzzes in through their earpiece. “He... is not happy.”

“Switch to camera two,” Ojiro sighs, as Midoriya bowls Todoroki over on national TV.

“I’m gonna fucking throw up,” Bakugou groans. Bringing him in the news van was Momo’s idea.
“Was that live?” Todoroki mumbles, as they stumble back to what the firefighters call ‘a safe distance’ and Midoriya peppers his face with kisses. Todoroki imagines he must sort of look like a demon in this lighting, with the smoke pouring out in plumes from the apartment and the concealer melting off his scar. And he should probably feel some sort of anguish or dread or any other feeling usually correlated with public humiliation, but he’s so happy he’s gone right around the horseshoe and now he just feels at peace, like how someone would feel on their 14th century deathbed dying of dysentery but overconfident in the idea that they haven’t done anything to warrant a terrible afterlife.

“Yeah,” Midoriya does that dopey cherub laugh again. “You’re so pretty.”

Todoroki’s face burns. “Alright, that’s enough.”

“Hey,” Midoriya whispers to him, while Todoroki fumbles with the keys to his apartment. Todoroki’s supposed to be relieved that it all went well but all he can feel is his heart slamming its way into a taiko drum performance. “Um, could I charge my batteries somewhere?”

Midoriya’s laughter might be because of the look of bewilderment Todoroki gives him, hand paused on the doorknob. Midoriya holds up his own hand, each finger making a quiet whirr as his wrist moves.

“Oh, of course,” The apartment is too cold to harbor human life when he opens the door, and he turns the heating knob as Midoriya crouches down by an outlet and unscrews his arm from its socket. “I’m still sorry about… breaking your fingers.”

“Todoroki! When you put it like that it sounds worse than it is,” Midoriya’s sitting criss-cross on the floor. “I like this new one anyway. It’s less heavy and the kids might like it.”

It has a new cover, now, lined with plastic that’s in All Might colors. Todoroki almost forgot about Midoriya’s comic book obsession.

“Hm. The kids, sure,” Todoroki grins at him and it’s weird to feel himself putting that much emotion on his face, but it’s growing on him.
Midoriya sputters at him, but lets Todoroki roll up his sleeve and wipe out the inner socket.

“I didn’t think you’d know how to do this,” the weatherman murmurs.

“I’ve been friends with Iida since high school,” Todoroki explains, and Midoriya’s mouth opens into an understanding ‘o’. It makes sense for Todoroki to be private school buddies with Iida -- they act similarly formal sometimes, even if Iida is more of a stickler for rules. Todoroki’s face looks a little scrunched with confusion. “Though, I think I underestimated the difference between arms and legs.” Midoriya's prosthetic is a little more complicated than Iida's are; it turns out legs mostly rely on simple things like physics and gravity.

“Don’t worry about it!” Midoriya waves his other arm, taking the cloth from him with a coy smile. “You’ll learn.”

They sit there for a little bit, not bothering to move to the couch or any seating arrangement that’s more fitting for two adult men in suits rather than sprawling out on the ground like they’re on a field trip. Midoriya gives him his whole weatherman manifesto, which involves elaborately punching the air and saying that he quit being an adrenaline-junkie-storm-chaser to “appear to the people and tell them the sun will always arrive in the end!” and Todoroki can’t help but snicker at his delivery even though it’s a very heroic task to accomplish in a five minute window of the morning news.

Midoriya tells him that he doesn’t use a skin-colored glove because he wants kids to think people with different hands are cool. Todoroki believes that part even if the All Might coloring is a little self-indulgent.

Everything starts to slow until apparently Midoriya decides Todoroki has been too comfortable in the conversation, too cushy, so he starts off on a tangent. “You know what’s kinda funny? I actually didn’t think you’d ask me out, not after that first time.”

Todoroki’s stomach thuds. “First?” What first?

“It’s not your fault! Umm, the dinner.. maybe I didn’t make it clear when I asked over the phone.. you seemed hard to read..”

“Oh..” Todoroki looks at the crack splitting his phone screen in half. “I didn’t listen to your voicemail, because I may have… um…”
And it turns out that he's been half right about the whole smell thing. Midoriya, contrary to his belief and delusion of clementines in soccer mom minivans, smells like the D&B Light Blue Uraraka attacks him with in the studio, but he smells like soap and clean laundry when he takes off his jacket. And he smells like grass and sunshine when he doubles over laughing, tears budding like daisies in his eyes.

“Todoroki! You should have had an ugly protective case like me! I put a hole in the wall with my phone and it’s fine!” Midoriya says, laughing so hard he probably can’t breathe, and making some rather concerning respiratory noises to show for it.

“That’s what I’ve been saying,” Todoroki says seriously, clenching his fists, intensity lighting his eyes. He won’t ask why Midoriya was chucking his phone at any walls. “You should have started working three months earlier to defend me.”

“Sorry! We can go shopping for a new one! What do you think about … navy … plus beige?”

“Oh, that’s so boring. It’s perfect,” Todoroki whispers. It’s even more boring than his first one, which was entirely beige.

It's when Midoriya's nuzzling into his neck that he stops and sniffs, as if he's trying to distinguish between Encre Noir and Encre Noir Sport. Todoroki put on both, under Kirishima's advice, just to 'throw him off'. Something about masculinity and aromas and sportiness that Todoroki’s sure Kirishima made up.

"You smell like plants."

"I love you," Todoroki blurs.

Midoriya gawks, closes his mouth, opens it again and says, blustered, that he’d like to go home with Todoroki more if it makes Todoroki feel like that.

[Shouto]

I think I fell in love with what they call a 'bad boy'
[Momo]

WHAT? Midoriya was a delinquent?

[Shouto]

No................. but he whispered "I forged my meteorologist license" in my ear and you know what?
It was.. hot

[Momo]

Never should have renewed that friendship subscription

It doesn’t take long after he steps through the door the next day for everyone to start sleuthing on his personal life. Kaminari guesses it the instant he sees the glazed look of exhaustion on Todoroki’s face.

“Oh my god. Midoriya’s a power bottom.”

Yaoyorozu smirks like a disney villain, extending her hand. Sero places a sum of 10,000 yen into it. She says she’s going to take Jirou out to a nice dinner. Sero doesn’t want to hear it, citing the fact that being a cameraman already makes him broke and he can’t have those kinds of luxuries.

“Kirishima, didn’t you bet too?”

“I didn’t lose yet. We have until next week to find out if he’s vers.”

“Just because you found his old Tinder? Everyone and their mother is vers on Tinder.”

“I trust him!”

Kaminari’s voice is added to the mix. “Um, he does cardio. He’s definitely capable of both.”
“Listen, I didn’t ask for a dissertation on--”

“Oh, you smell nice, Deku!” Uraraka remarks, finger paused on the trigger of the perfume she aims at him. Usually Midoriya just comes in smelling like nothing in particular, which is fine, but doesn’t leave an impression. No one has really prodded Midoriya about his newfound relationship status with Todoroki, which is rather kind and respectful of them to do even after all of them faced relentless verbal flogging by Aizawa after Valentine’s day.

“Do I?” Midoriya beams up at her. “I think I smell like--”

“--Calvin Klein.”

“Plants,” he finishes weakly.
epilogue!!!!!!!!!

Chapter Notes

HERE’S something that i think was too short and different in tone from the rest of the story but should take place like a few months later!!!!! i might add more tidbits but this is mostly the end!!! thank you guys for the wild ride .. q - q

Midoriya’s still unsure why Todoroki likes to come over, when Todoroki is the one with a nice penthouse apartment and showers that never ever go cold even after you’ve been blasting yourself with lava for a straight hour, but he’s not complaining. Todoroki says something about how ‘cozy’ and ‘sweet’ Midoriya’s little crummy apartment is. When he utters with full seriousness ‘I think home is where the heart is, Midoriya’, the weatherman realizes he has not just one, not just two, but a whole bank full of corny lines to woo him with that he’s probably never tried on anyone else. It makes him giggly.

But right now, Todoroki’s asleep. Most of the world hasn’t woken up yet, the sun still dozing under the horizon, but Midoriya’s blinking grog out of his eyes while sitting on his balcony, legs dangling over the rails and phone pressed up to his ear.

“Hi, son. You’re up early.”

“I am! I’m trying my best! How was your day? Did the doctors say anything new?”

They exchange hellos and silly complaints about hospital food and mean nurses until their conversation stills. The sun starts to pinken the sky.

“As you still having trouble sleeping?”

“No, I... I’m actually doing great.” Midoriya smiles into the phone, feeling his eyes sting. “Um, I told you about Shouto, right?”

“Yes. He seems like a nice boy.” the voice crackles. There’s a soft buzz of hospital noise, beeping heart monitors, the hum of sleepless machines that light up like fireflies. But he sounds happy, more than he’s been in a while, so Midoriya can’t let himself feel sad.
“He is,” Midoriya feels his heart flicker when he says it. “It’s weird, I guess I expected being in a relationship to be ... scarier.”

His laugh sounds like rustling leaves. “A lot of things you have to do are scary, but I hope I didn’t teach you that love would be one of them.”

“What are you doing?” Todoroki yawns, watching Midoriya come in from the balcony and proceed to buzz around making the most noise he can getting ready at 4 AM. He’s accidentally mixed up some of their clothes, but Todoroki decides he likes how his shirt looks on him. It’s revenge for how Midoriya folds his socks all mismatched colors because he thinks it’s cute if they don’t match, like his eyes and his hair isn’t enough.

“Hey! Go back to sleep! You have a cushy late-night-show schedule, so enjoy it, won’t you?” Midoriya scolds him, struggling to pull on a sock.

Todoroki doesn’t have the heart to tell him he doesn’t usually have this sort of racket as ambience sound, and stumbles out of bed to stop Midoriya from ironing his shirt while it’s on his body.

“Izuku. Uraraka will dress you if you can’t get it right.”

“No, if I just control the heat --” the anchorman scowls at Todoroki as he lifts the iron away from him and places it on the counter, safely unplugged. “You’re never staying the night again.”

Midoriya is cramming snow peas in his mouth and glaring, so Todoroki settles for kissing his cheek so he can watch Midoriya’s face turn pink again. “Have a good day, baby.”

“I guess,” Midoriya sulks, slapping a post-it note filled with hearts on the counter. Apparently Aizawa was serious about banning him from drawing hearts on the map, because he’s exiled Midoriya from his ‘liberty with the interactive mapping board’. Todoroki doesn’t know that was a removable privilege to begin with, but he can’t say no to the post-it notes. They’re making a pile on his desk that Bakugou particularly hates.
But if he was half right about the smell thing, he’s one hundred percent right about the soccer mom thing, because the last thing Midoriya does before barreling out the door is stuff fruit leather in his briefcase.
an update! :-D

Chapter Summary

i run my mouth for 20 years and also there's some art i drew and also thank you guys so much .. ; m ; also i talk about potential disaster wedding fic if thats what you love
THIS ISN'T REALLY A CHAPTER WITH ANYTHING IN IT AKJGNJKDF im just spamming it to say I AM SO SORRY I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO REPLY TO YOU GUYS' COMMENTS INDIVIDUALLY TT ___ TT LONG STORY SHORT I WAS STRICKEN WITH LIKE .. GOOD OLD DEPRESSION AND THE WOES OF LIFE and so. the idea of being my awkward self produced an immediate wave of mortification every single time and im so sorry!! BUT I READ EVERY SINGLE COMMENT AND .. YOU GUYS ARE SOOOOOOOO NICE I MAY HAVE CRIED ONCE OR TWICE IM JUST SO OVERWHELMED AT THE LOVE IN ALL OF YOUR HEARTS
and that being said THANK YOU SO MUCH .. ; M ; i never expected this corny stupid little idea of mine to get the kind of feedback it did, and it makes me so so happy to find out that you guys had a laugh and a good time!!!!! im also incredibly SHOOK that this hit 1k kudos and im just like aohgodfnjfd..

+ ... here's an actual update!! i'm going to add this work into a series where additional parts of this universe will be! ; - ;a so subscribe to that if you'd like to see future additions or anything!! i don't totally know how ao3 works so like. good luck to me on that LMFAO.. but i want to do this because umm what i've been working on lately is a really lovey dovey momojirou wedding from this au ... and todoroki and bakugou have to plan it. so what can it be other than a disaster

HERE'S the full! if you'd like! cries .. also that's a link to my tumblr!

UHHH REITERATING .. FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART THANK YOU GUYS SO MUCH YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH IT MEANS TO ME ;)/(; AND SEE YOU NEXT TIME !!!!