AMA
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Summary

The Phantom Thieves hold an AMA on the Phansite after everything is said and done.

Notes

Sorta based off of this one-shot from my gallery:
https://archiveofourown.org/works/11180643/chapters/26387823
ADMIN: Welcome to the first and only-ever AMA for the Phantom Thieves. They will be taking usernames Joker, Skull, Panther, Mona, Fox, Queen, Oracle, and Noir in place of their actual names and identities, which will not be discussed here. Any questions regarding their true identities or pictures, as well as questions about the speculated identity of any of them (anything like the picture of the Shujin boy supposedly being the leader, along with pictures that came after of what people speculate to be the rest of the team) are to be deleted. Furthermore, they have specified to me that any questions about their current activities or methods are also blacklisted, and will be deleted or otherwise ignored. They can answer questions for about an hour, after which the AMA will close. Please be courteous and respectful and remember there's another person behind the screen! With that, let the AMA commence.

Joker: Welcome, everyone. I am the leader of the Phantom Thieves. As stated by the admin, I cannot confirm nor deny any of our identities. I hope this AMA will clear up some uncertainties and misconceptions about us, after which point, you'll never hear from any of us again. Let the questions begin.

Anon: are Fox and Panther furries

Panther: No!

Queen: Why is this the first question we get?

Fox: What is a furry...? Are you asking if we're hairy? Not particularly... but Panther does have quite the head of hair.

Panther: Shh!

Joker: Fox, that's not what a furry is.

Oracle: Here, I'll answer for him: yes. Yes he is. We don't discriminate on our team.

Queen: Oracle, no.

Oracle: Oracle, YES.

Anon: CONFIRMED.

Fox: No, truly, what is a furry? Can someone please enlighten me...?

Oracle: You're not ready for this conversation, Inari.
Anon: Wait, so Fox doesn't even know what a furry is?? Really??

Fox: I am not in jest. I truly have no idea what a "furry" is.

Anon: Oh, you sweet summer child.

Anon: No one tell him! PRESERVE PRECIOUS BOY’S INNOCENCE!!

Anon: Fox pls

Anon: NO ONE TELL HIM!!!

Joker: I'll tell you later, Fox.

Fox: Alright...

Anon: BOOO

Anon: JOKER PLS

Joker: That's enough. There doesn't happen to be any furries on our team by chance, but we're not going to make fun of them. As long as they're not hurting anyone, we don't care. Next question.

Anon: Okay but are you single??

Anon: JOKER PLS BE SINGLE

Joker: Sorry, folks, but I'm in a happy relationship with Queen.

Queen: I can confirm this. He's quite the gentleman, and we're very happy together.

Anon: RIP every fan who wanted to bang Joker

Anon: Conflicted, bc Joker is hot but also, is cute with Queen

Anon: I SHIP IT

Oracle: Congrats, guys, you just made a ship canon.

Queen: It's sort of weird that people are... "shipping"... real people.

Joker: I don't mind it. ;)

Queen: Joker...

Joker: (☞ﾟヮﾟ)☞

Queen: JOKER.
Joker: ILY. ❤️

Queen: ...I love you, too. ❤️

Skull: 1. Cute. 2. Get a room!

Anon: AAAAAWWWAAAAWWAAAAMMM

Anon: CUTIES!!!

Anon: MY HEART CAN'T TAKE THIS

Anon: 💟💟💟 JOKER + QUEEN 💟💟💟

Anon: OTP!!

Anon: Queen ur so lucky, he's 1. hot and 2. adorable, oh my god

Joker: More like the other way around. I am lucky to have her by my side; she is a wonderful, smart, beautiful person, and I can't believe she wants to be with me.

Queen: Joker... you're making me blush...

Anon: okay im dead the cuteness killed me RIP

Anon: im vomiting rainbows

Anon: @ other phantom thieves are they always like this in person

Panther: Only on rare occasion, but we've never seen their texts to each other.

Mona: I have. They are sometimes in texts, but it's usually because of Joker being the biggest romantic sap there is.

Skull: Dude, you don't go telling everyone that! That violates the bro code!

Queen: Well, it is true. I find it very cute.

Joker: Stop... you're killing me... this wasn't what this AMA was for...

Anon: Excuse u this was EXACTLY what this AMA was for

Oracle: His face is SO red RN, HA!

Anon: RIP Joker

Anon: the cuteness was overpowering. death by cute.
Noir: Joker is much quieter in person.

Oracle: He's sort of like those people who lurk on forums but IRL

Joker: I just talk when I need to. Next question.

Anon: okay but who came up with 'Phantom Thieves of Hearts' and the first calling card, it sounded stupid

Skull: Hey!

Panther: We let Skull design it on his own because he asked. We didn't look at it before he posted it; mistakes were made. He wasn't allowed to do it by himself after that; Fox took over the design of the card and the logo.

Skull: Shuddup! I thought it was cool!

Anon: LMFAO OH MY GOD

Anon:

Skull: y'all are dicks

Joker: It's okay, Skull, I thought it was... good for a first attempt. We all have to start somewhere.

Skull: Thanks, Leader.

Anon: Joker CONFIRMED for Team Dad™

Skull: In that case, Queen is Team Mom... OMG, she actually IS a Team Mom!

Queen: That's enough.
Anon: OH MY GOD CUTIES

Anon: Skull, listen to your mother

Skull: She ain't my mom!

Joker: Hey, is that how you speak to your mother?

Skull: DUDE.

Joker: Next question.

Anon: Okay, so, we all know what Akechi did (kind of? without knowing his method?) and he was Shido's bastard child. Why didn't you just change his heart?

Joker: Oh boy. Okay, so, that sort of dips into asking about our methods, but I'll tell you as much as I can. The simple version is that he had our... abilities. That made it impossible to change his heart.

Anon: lolwut

Mona: Once you gain the power to steal distorted desires, you become immune from having your own heart stolen. It's physically impossible.

Queen: We know this doesn't sound like it makes sense, but we'd have to explain our methodology for it to make sense, and we can't do that. You'll have to take us at face value; if we could have, we would have.

Noir: Akechi could have certainly used it, for all the misery he caused. I can't forgive him, but... I pity him.

Anon: why tho???

Noir: Akechi was a very sick person who needed help, and he focused so much on revenge that he didn't care about anyone he hurt along the way. I understand having a parent who does bad things--I've been in that situation, and I know it well--but that doesn't excuse his actions. He had no one to guide him, and no one to confide in. His anger and anguish blinded him.

Noir: I will never, ever forgive him for personal reasons, but... I sympathize with him. The whole thing is just a great big tragedy.

Oracle: What Noir said. I hated him, and I hated his guts also for personal reasons, and I still hate him. He thought his own power was enough. He never saw his full potential as Joker did because he didn't care about anyone else.

Skull: Nah, fuck that guy. I don't give a shit what his motivations were. A bunch of us had bad parents, and Joker was basically all alone and miserable when we met him, but none of us turned into fucking homicidal assholes.

Joker: That's enough, Skull. I can't say I don't resent Akechi, but he's dead and gone and was a very
sad person. It's a pity we couldn't save him from himself, and I think we should leave it at that.

Anon: ...this is so sad

Anon: :( : ( : (:

Anon: I agree with Skull, fuck that guy

Anon: Akechi-kun needed serious help


Anon: Okay, but who or what is Mona?

Anon: Yeah wtf no one can find anything about them

Mona: MWEHEHEHE. That very fact is the sign I am the greatest at Phantom Thievery! The best thieves aren't the most famous!

Joker: ...this is going to be a long AMA.
Chapter Notes

I was too lazy to bold everyone. I'll do it later. Enjoy.

The chapter in which Joker reveals more than he wanted to.

EDIT: if you have any ideas for Anon questions, please feel free to comment!

Anon: V. IMPORTANT QUESTION FOR Y'ALL: what are your Hogwarts Houses

Oracle: OH BOY OKAY SO I'M A RAVENCLAW AND SO IS INARI BC HE KNOWS NEXT TO NOTHING ABOUT HP

Fox: I have been informed Ravenclaws value knowledge, so I'll accept it.

Panther: I'm a Hufflepuff! ^^

Queen: I'd be a hatstall between Ravenclaw and Gryffindor, but ultimately, probably Gryffindor.

Mona: I thought I was a Gryffindor, but the others keep calling me a Slytherin.

Skull: I'm a... what's it called, 'hatstall'? Hatstall between Gryffindor and Hufflepuff. I'mma go with Gryffindor.

Noir: Hufflepuff for me!

Joker: Ummm....

Oracle: OH BOY, JOKER IS THE GREATEST HATSTALL OF THEM ALL. We have him pegged between Slytherin, Gryffindor, and Hufflepuff. He's RIDICULOUSLY HARD TO PLACE because he values fairness like nothing else, but he's also super brave, to the point of which he allowed himself to go to jail and fake his death, consequences be damned, but DAMN if he isn't the most crafty and cunning mofo there is, and he's ambitious to boot. BUT HE COULD ALSO BE RAVENCLAW, BC HE IS LIKE RIDICULOUSLY SMART AND ALWAYS GETS ALL A's, GOOD AT STUDYING

Anon: ...am sort of terrified of Joker now

Oracle: We're p. sure the sorting hat would burst into flames if put on his head.

Mona: Personally, I think Joker's a Slytherin, too.

Joker: Yeah, probably. Let's go with Slytherin.

Anon: 10/10 excellent sorting
Anon: it makes sense the leader is a Slytherin I guess

Anon: @ NOIR AND PANTHER, BADGER RAVE

Anon: Okay, listen, this maay be tipping too far into appearances and who we think you are, but
JUST TALKING ABOUT THE SILHOUETTE FROM SHIDO'S CALLING CARD: Joker, damn,
son, how do you get your hair that fluffy and cute?

Joker: Ha, it's always been like that. I've tried brushing it or pushing it down but it ends up just
puffing back up. Can't do a thing with it.

Anon: that is the opposite of a problem

Anon: WHY ARE YOU SO ADORABLE WTF

Joker: I'm not cute!

Queen: Yes, you are. I love it your hair, it's so adorable.

Joker: Well, see, if you think that, then I guess it's not a problem.

Anon: you two are going to make everyone vomit from the fluff

Noir: Joker DOES have quite the fluffy head! It's so cute!

Joker: Mona's cuter, though.

Mona: CUTE???

Panther: Well, he's not wrong about you being cute! It's part of your charm!

Mona: Panther...!

Skull: dude, you're literally a ahsdyfg8AG8agfYGA PANTHER LET ME TYPE LET
GOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

Anon: wtf is going on over there

Fox: Pardon the interruption. Panther and Skull are having a bit of a... spat over how much we can
reveal about Mona.

Joker: Alright, question answered, let's move on.

Anon: BOOOOOOOOOOO

Anon: JOKER UR NO FUN WHATS THE POINT OF YOUR CODE NAME

Joker: Next question.

Anon: How did you guys pick your targets? There are lots of obvious foreign targets; why did you
pick the ones you did?
Joker: Without going into too much detail, we had a rule that we had to unanimously agree on a target before going after them, and the searching process and determination took time. Usually... pressing factors ended up being the deciding factor.

Mona: Changing a heart takes a LOT of time and effort, so it wasn't anyone we took lightly.

Anon: What took you guys so long to deal with Medjed? Did you wait for theatrical purposes?

Skull: LOL NO THAT WAS A REALLY STRESSFUL MONTH

Fox: We actually had to find and recruit someone who could deal with Medjed, because none of us knew what to do. That took up the entire time.

Queen: Thankfully, we met Oracle, and she's worked wonders for us.

Oracle: Hehe, all in a day's work! You guys were just so pathetic and helpless I HAD to do SOMETHING.

Anon: How did you recruit her?

Joker: She was spying on us and bugged one of our hideouts. She asked us for help with something we won't disclose, we helped, she helped us, and she's been a key member of the Phantom Thieves ever since.

Oracle: I am the tech guru and memer extraordinaire. Not like that weirdo Inari.

Fox: Why do you keep calling me a weirdo?! You're the strange one!

Oracle: FITE ME

Skull: You're like a full foot and a half shorter than him! Chill!

Joker: Break it up, you two.

Anon: I SHIP IT

Anon: the height difference tho

Anon: the sexual tension is real

Oracle: WTF NO ( ’⊙ landfill ’ )

Fox: What? What gave you that idea?!

Anon: just kiss already

Oracle: brb barfing

Anon: okay so. Serious question for you, Joker. What was it like in jail? What was it like living when everyone thought you were dead? I’d ask how you escaped, but that goes into methods, right?

Joker: Oh, God. Okay, big can of worms, right there.
Joker: Well, to start with, we had planned for me to get captured so the others could get away and fool Akechi. I knew the entire time this was going to happen, but it doesn't make it any less terrifying, but I did what I had to to keep my teammates safe. They're what matters most to me.

Mona: Joker...

Skull: Dude...

Anon: just fuck me up

Joker: Anyways, I got arrested. I know the cops are gonna be pissed when I leak this, but after they booked me, they tried to interrogate me. I didn't talk. So they injected me with amobarbital, IDK how much, and beat the shit out of me. I got knocked out, and the rest is sort of a blur.

Joker: I remember waking up, and being forced by some asshole to sign a confession. He knocked me to the ground and kicked me in the gut, then slammed my head into the ground. After that point, everything was REALLY a blur, but I sort of recall looking at the security camera and hearing the man tell me that they wouldn't get in trouble for police brutality with video evidence. After that, I was interrogated, but everything after that is all a blur.

Skull: I'm getting pissed again... god, he was such a mess when we got him back... fuckers.

Queen: The doctor told us he had several bone bruises, a concussion, a few cracked ribs, and several wounds she had to stitch. It's sort of lucky, in a sick way, that Joker can't recall many details of the time.

Anon: Pics or it didn't happen

Oracle: Joker's (very reluctantly) giving me permission to post some injury pics with his face edited out, so here. We want to you see what the police did to him. (Attached: injurypictures.png)

Anon: ...OP delivered...

Anon: JESUS TAP-DANCING CHRIST

Anon: YOU POOR BABY OH MY GOD

Anon: WHAT THE FUCK WHAT THE F U C K THEY JUST BEAT THE SHIT OUT OF A TEENAGE BOY WHAT THE FUCK

Anon: okay now I'm actually crying, I am so sorry we all hated you during that time, you poor thing, oh my god

Anon: @ everyone who said 'good' when he 'died': how do u feel now???

Anon: OH MY GOD I'M SO SO SORRY

Anon: im sobbing this is fucking terrible

Anon: HUGS
Anon: @ THE POLICE, WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU?!!!??!!??!?!!??!!

Queen: Take a good, hard look at them. This is what they did to him. This is something the perpetrators will never get charged with. They deleted the video evidence, and even if they didn't, they would have claimed he was being belligerent. He wasn't, and couldn't, because he was heavily drugged.

Anon: ;-;

Anon: I've seen Amamiya-kun in gym changing, these perfectly match up with his injuries we saw when his shirt was off

Anon: Ren you poor thing we're so sorry, you've had the shittiest year ever

ADMIN: Please remember the rule about talking about their supposed identities.

Joker: Anyways, about what it was like when everyone thought I was dead... it sucked. I pulled my ass out of bed the next day (and pissed off all my teammates) to start the search for Shido's heart.

Skull: Fuck's sake, dude, you shouldn't have been up!

Joker: We didn't have time to waste. I have no regrets.

Queen: Your ribs probably would have healed better if you had relaxed for at least a week, if not more. We stole his heart with time to spare.

Joker: when are you guys gonna stop being annoyed with me for getting out of bed immediately after having the shit beaten out of me?

Panther: never

Anon: Friendship

Anon: wtf is wrong with you Joker

Anon: dude don't fuck around with your injuries, tf

Joker: Anyways, I spent the whole time either inside or walking around with a hoodie on. I lived in fear that someone would find me, find out I was alive, and arrest and kill my teammates and I. I got absolutely stir-crazy after a few days and went out, much to the others (and my doctor's) frustration. It all turned out okay, though, after a really depressing month. But it was more than worth it, and I'd do it again-- anything to keep my team safe and make Shido pay.

Anon: ... I want to hug you so bad

Anon: dude you're fucking crazy you should have been in bed

Anon: Joker CONFIRMED for having balls of solid steel

Fox: He was giving everyone a conniption whenever we saw him out and about or moving too much. Our dear leader doesn't care enough for himself.
Joker: It doesn't matter what happens to me. So long as you're all safe.

Joker: That sounds a lot more angsty than I intended it to be, oops, sorry, please ignore that.

Oracle: I am responding on the behalf of the entire group, because we're all just staring at him with disbelief rn:

Oracle: JOKER WE LOVE YOU

Anon: Are... are you okay???

Anon: Dude, please get therapy, you're fucked up from all of this

Anon: ^^^ you've been through trauma, take care of yourself

Joker: It's being handled. I'm fine, so long as my team's with me.

Panther: AAAAAAAAAWWWVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVVV

Anon: OH NO CUTIE

Anon: FRIENDSHIP TRULY IS MAGIC

Joker: Next question, please.
Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

Thanks to Vivvav for some protips and suggestions for this chapter! If you have any anon questions you'd like to ask the PT, I'll try to incorporate it if I have inspiration for in the next chapter.

Anon: So is Mona like a 5-year-old or something? He's tiny.

Mona: EXCUSE ME? I'M NOT 5 YEARS OLD!!

Anon: holy shit sorry, calm down, jesus

Joker: Mona, relax.

Mona: I will NOT relax! What sort of idiotic Phantom Thief would let a 5 YEAR OLD on their team??

Fox: ...but you're not evenaaudhaf8uarq0BNWGB XSUIBA9abasf-bgsu9bs

Queen: Sorry about that, we're having technical difficulties!

Anon: Okay, what the fuck is actually going on with Mona? I'm assuming he's the tiny cat figure we saw?

Joker: That's classified.

Anon: what if he's that cat we see in Amamiya's bag at school all the time

Anon: he always talks to that cat like it's a person

Anon: wait, isn't his cat named Morgana...? Mona, Morgana?

Anon: HOLY FUCK IS ONE OF THE PHANTOM THIEVES JOKER'S FUCKING CAT

ADMIN: I shouldn't have to explain why I deleted your comments.

Oracle: He's not a cat! He's just an otherkin who is human-kin!

Oracle: ADMIN WTF I THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDS

ADMIN: Oracle, please don't tell anyone more than they need to know.

Oracle: Grr...

Joker: Okay, fine. Mona's a friend of ours, a HUMAN friend, who happens to have dwarfism. He's
one of our best. Does that answer your question?

Mona: Yeah, what he said!

Anon: bullshit

Anon: k so how much of that statement was actually true

ADMIN: Take them at face-value.

Oracle: Besides, Joker is the REAL cat.

Joker: No, we're past this.

Panther: We are absolutely NOT past this!

Skull: LMAO

Anon: whut

Fox: Joker has several feline-esque elements. Were he not human, he would most certainly be a cat.

Joker: They're just kidding, let's move it along.

Anon: pls tell us more about kitty Joker

Anon: I NEED

Oracle: OKAY SO. 1. Joker hates water. 2. He attacks anyone who touches his stomach. 3. He can stretch in the WEIRDEST POSITIONS KNOWN TO MAN like it's nothing. He does this regularly, creeping out literally everyone. 4. He always lands on his feet. 5. Just look at the hair in his silhouette and try to tell me that is NOT fluff that would belong to a cat. 6. He just... HE ACTS LIKE A CAT.

Fox: Why in the world do you say his positions are creepy? He's a perfect model for sketching poses!

Joker: I do not act like a cat!

Oracle: THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT A CAT WOULD SAY

Anon: Joker CONFIRMED for literal cat

Anon: HOW ARE YOU SO CUTE JOKER, HOW DO YOU LIVE WITHOUT EXPLODING INTO FLUFF

Anon: KITTY JOKER YAAAAAS

Joker: No.

Noir: But you're so cute, Joker-kun!
Mona: HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

Joker: You're all mean.

Queen: Please stop picking on my cat boyfriend.

Joker: HONEY PLEASE NO

Oracle: Top 10 Anime Betrayals

Anon: AAAAAAYYYYY LMAO

Anon: OOOOOHHHH SHIIIIIIIIIT

Anon: I CAN'T BREATHE

Anon: Yes hello 119 I'd like to report a murder

Joker: Who said it was "pick on the leader" day?

Panther: We love you, too, Joker. <3

Anon: dude you're the leader of the PT, you set yourself up to be the subject of memes, accept your fate

Skull: ^^^^^ WHAT THEY SAID, 10/10, ACCURATE

Joker: Okay, but for the record, I was elected the leader. I didn't actually volunteer, they just sort of said "Kay, you're in charge."

Mona: You didn't have to say yes, you know. I would have done it, but we saw that glint in your eyes, and it's true that you're a natural leader.

Anon: who gives a shit you're still in charge, you're going to be on the receiving end of memes

Noir: Besides, Joker is planning on majoring in political science and going to law school. His position as leader is perfect practice for him!

Anon: Do you wanna be a politician, Joker?

Joker: Yeah, kind of. I want to do better than Shido did. I'm sick of all these rich assholes getting elected and bribed to be some corporation's shill. It is inherently flawed, and not true democracy. I have a lot of opinions (not gonna go into it but I am very liberal) and I want to do something to reform the system. I don't know how successful I'll be, but I'll be damned if I don't at least try.

Joker: Right now I volunteer for a politician, though I'm not going to say who. They've been a real mentor to me and encouraged me to go into the field with an honest heart that stays honest, regardless of what life throws at you.

Anon: I've seen Amamiya interning for Yoshida sometimes, as a matter of fact.
Joker: That's flattering, but I'm not even anywhere near getting my degree, and I don't have nearly enough experience to even consider taking on that responsibility. That's a long ways off and a lot of work. Thanks, though. Perhaps one day, if I'm lucky.

Anon: IF YOU'RE LUCKY???

Anon: BITCH WE ARE GONNA PUT YOUR ASS IN THE SEAT OF PRIME MINISTER SO HARD YOUR HEAD WILL SPIN

Anon: oh my god you're so pure I WILL SUPPORT YOU

Joker: You don't even know who I am, but thanks.

Anon: AHAHAHAHAHAHA WHAT. DON'T KID YOURSELF. LITERALLY EVERYONE KNOWS WHO YOU ARE.

Anon: REN AMAMIYA FOR PM!!!

ADMIN: While I support the sentiment, please be mindful of the rules.

Joker: That's kind of you, but remember to always look at every potential politician critically, even me. No one, and I mean NO ONE, should have the cult of personality that Shido commanded when he was elected. Even good leaders mess up sometimes, and they need to be not worshiped, but seen as they are.

Anon: you're only making us want you more.

Joker: I know. I'm irresistible. ;)

Joker: Just keep what I said in mind. Don't let fervor blind you, never again.

Anon: How about the other PTs? What do y'all want to do?

Panther: I want to be an actress in action movies!! Or a famous model. Or both.

Skull: Gee, I dunno... I'm thinking about maybe becoming a P.E. teacher, but a good one, not a dick like the one we first changed the heart of. I want to a good influence.

Mona: I'm not sure yet what I want to be. At the moment, I'm happy helping out Joker, but I know there's more out there. I'll find it one day!

Noir: I'd like to open a little cafe, with everything homegrown-- even the coffee beans!

Fox: I am an artist, now and forever. I want to change the world and challenge society with my art.

Queen: I want to be a police commissioner.

Oracle: Well, I'd like to make take up my mother's research, and do some programming stuff. I'll probably end up majoring in computer science.
Anon: Good answers!!

Anon: @Noir, hook me up with some choice beans

Anon: Joker + Queen = ULTIMATE POWER COUPLE

Anon: @everyone

Anon: MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE

Panther: Thank you all!!

Skull: Did we just get Shia LeBouf'd

Fox: I have never seen this before. It is... inspiring.

Oracle: JUST DO IT, FOX

Joker: Next question, please.
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

Thanks for your suggestions! (Esp. Fish) Keep them coming! Also, there are some suggestions from last chapter I intend to use for the next chapter, but this one was getting lengthy, so I decided to post it. Next question next chapter is gonna be about their Metaverse outfits!

Anon: So is there anyone who knows your "secret" identities outside of the PTs?

Queen: Yes, a few. Most of which are Joker's doing.

Joker: They were accidents, I tell you!

Anon: DEETS

Noir: Joker has a propensity to offer to help those he gets close to. Many of them had been in dire straits, or otherwise threatened by someone who needed a change of heart. Joker asked for their oppressor's names, and we changed their hearts.

Queen: Subsequently, they all figured out who Joker really is because only he could have orchestrated the mysterious change of heart of whoever was plaguing them. It's sweet, and we would do it all again, but it's led to more people than we originally wanted knowing about us.

Joker: They needed help. We couldn't ignore them. Besides, all of them helped us out after finding us out when we needed the help most.

Fox: We will decline telling you who or how many people know.

Anon: Awww, Joker! You're so sweet!

Skull: Joker is actually probably the nicest person I've ever met. He is physically incapable of NOT helping someone, no matter what happens.

Anon: Good Guy Joker

Oracle: that's such an outdated meme, Anon.

Joker: The only one we'll admit knowing, because he himself is also anonymous, is...

ADMIN: Me!

Anon: SO ADMIN WAS AN ACCOMPLICE ALL ALONG

ADMIN: If you want to call me that, go ahead. I have no regrets, and I was the first outside their group to figure them out. I made the Phansite and I told them I knew, and it's been quite the
adventure ever since!

Joker: Admin's been the closest out of all those in the know to a full-fledged member of the Phantom Thieves.

Panther: He's been a source of confidence when we were low, a friend to us, and he believed in us when no one else did.

ADMIN: I could say the same of you. I owe you all so much. You could have changed my own heart when I lost my way, but you helped me change myself because you saw the good in me. So... thanks.

Anon: AWWWWWWWWWW

Anon: FRIENDSHIP IS MAGIC

Anon: Mishima CONFIRMED for Admin

ADMIN: New rule: no talking about the Admin's supposed ID.

Anon: Question: aside from Oracle, did you all start together, or did you gain members as you went along? Do you accept applications for new Phantom Thieves?

Joker: 1. We gained members as we went along and 2. No.

Mona: The founding members back with Kamoshida were Joker, Skull, Panther, and I. We were the forerunners.

Skull: We weren't even gonna do any more changes of heart, but I said we ought to be an official team, so we did it.

Panther: We had just come into our ability to change hearts, and we realized there were many more evil people out there we could change, and people we could help.

Joker: We formed the original quartet of Phantom Thieves. By the next target, however, we recruited Fox.

Panther: He had been stalking me because he wanted me to be the model for his next art piece, and things happened from there.

Anon: Fox das inappropriate

Fox: I just wanted to capture her visage! What's inappropriate about it?

Panther: @Skull, Joker, and Mona, any of you say ANYTHING more and you'll regret it.

Anon: someone please say something more

Joker: Nope.

Skull: LOL NO I DON'T WANNA DIE

Mona: I would NEVER!
Fox: I am eternally grateful for their help. I was hostile to Joker and Skull at first, but they all ended up (somewhat accidentally) showing me their methods, and showing me what I didn't want to accept. So I joined them, and haven't looked back since.

Queen: I joined next, though I suspected who they were for about a month before finally getting undeniable evidence. Skull was angrily (and loudly) complaining about Akechi’s first comments about the Phantom Thieves, and Panther was wondering if they were in the right (they were, and she accepted they were, don't worry). I believe his exact words were: "IF SOMEONE ELSE COULD HELP 'EM, WE WOULDN'T BE DOIN' STUFF AS THE PHANTOM THIEVES TO START WITH"

Anon: Skull u loudmouth

Skull: HEY PANTHER GOT RECORDED TOO

Panther: I'm sorry...

Fox: You shouldn't have been talking so loudly about our activities in a public place.

Queen: Anyways, I caught their conversation on audio and confronted Joker with it. Then I... I'm not proud of this, but I blackmailed them into doing something about Kaneshiro. At the time, we didn't even have a name, but I assumed they could change him without one.

Queen: We can't. They spent several days researching Kaneshiro, just trying to find him, but I grew impatient. I ended up trying to find Kaneshiro on my own to help them. I ended up getting kidnapped, and they rescued me, but Kaneshiro took incriminating pictures of all of us to try to extort us.

Queen: I was then irrevocably involved, so they decided I would help clean up this mess. They brought me into the fold, and showed me their methods (which shocked me at first, they brought me in with little warning). Together, we changed Kaneshiro, and I was a member from then on.

Anon: A+ story, good shit

Anon: so Joker + Queen is: enemies to friends to lovers

Anon: SO ROMANTIC

Joker: I don't know that we would say enemies... maybe 'people who have disagreements with each other' but tbh I thought she was beautiful from the get-go.

Queen: When he first saw me in a library, two months before I actually joined, he visited me just to try to talk to me, but I brushed him off, so he left me alone.

Anon: Good shit, he's a keeper.

Queen: Quite!

Anon: Joker CONFIRMED for feminist! :D
Joker: You don't bother people who don't want to be bothered. It's common courtesy. Incidentally, however, I am a feminist.

Skull: Literally all of us are feminists, dude.

**SEXIST COMMENTS DELETED**

ADMIN: The next person to say something inappropriate will be IP banned, courtesy of Oracle. Who is, by the way, a woman, as are half of the Phantom Thieves.

Oracle: Already did it. blocked. blocked. blocked. youre all blocked. none of you are free of sin

Anon: Queen, you've got one hell of a boyfriend, nice catch. A feminist AND hot AND a gentleman AND just ADORABLE ALL AROUND.

Queen: I know. We're quite happy together!

Queen: That being said, your comment just turned Joker very red in the face. He's covering his face at the moment. I think I can see the blushing behind his fingers.

Panther: I think you broke him...

Anon: RIP Joker

Fox: As our leader is momentarily indisposed... the next to join us was Oracle, after she bugged our hideout. At the time, she didn't know it was our hideout, but nevertheless discovered us.

Oracle: They were just so helpless and frustrated over what to do about Medjed. So I asked them to do me a favor, they helped, I helped, and I joined permanently, as mentioned before.

Anon: What did they help you with?

Oracle: Secret.

Noir: I was next. I found and followed Mona one night when I found him all alone, and ended up discovering him as a Phantom Thief when he was in grave danger. I rescued him, and he taught me the ropes. I joined officially as a Phantom Thief thereafter.

Noir: I was in a very precarious situation of my own, something only the Phantom Thieves could help me with. I was desperate and depressed, and felt trapped. I had been a huge fan of the Phantom Thieves, who were by that point well known, and prayed they would help me.

Noir: I still believe to this day that my crossing paths with Mona and joining them was fate. I couldn't express my joy: I found the Phantom Thieves! They were going to help me! And better yet, I got to become one! It's been wonderful!

Anon: Awww!!

Anon: Dreams really do come true!

Joker: And that's all of us. The original four of us discovered the method to change hearts by accident, and just sort of ran with it.
Anon: What about Akechi?

Skull: He ain't one of us, and never was.

Anon: I still want to know the story behind that.

Queen: Very well. Do you remember when he came to Shujin for the school festival and declared he knew who the Phantom Thieves were, before being interrupted by a phone call? He was actually using it to pull us aside to reveal he had evidence about our identities, and blackmailed us into helping him with the next target, who will remain anonymous.

Joker: He claimed that he had only known about our methods for about two months, but we knew this was a lie. Oracle bugged his phone and found evidence he was going to betray us, so we used the opportunity to turn the tables and ultimately change Shido's heart. He joined with the code name Crow.

Skull: "Joined" my ass! He was just a fink who tagged along.

Several anons and Vivvav helped me out with parts of this chapter. Enjoy.

Also, I finally learned how to effectively put in gifs and images. So there's a few ahead.

Anon: Can we pls have pics of everyone's thief outfits in color? You can blur out the faces. I just want to see them for cosplay purposes.

Queen: Cosplay?!

Oracle: Ask and ye shall receive! (attached: ThiefOutfits.zip)

Anon: YEEEEEEES

Panther: FOR THE RECORD WE DON'T GET TO CHOOSE OUR THIEF OUTFITS, I DID NOT PICK MINE, I HATE IT, DON'T LOOK AT IT

Queen: I hate mine too!

Oracle: I don't know why you guys are so upset! I love both your outfits! Mine's cool, too!

Fox: Personally, I love my thief outfit.

Noir: As do I!

Skull: Mine's okay. Mask is the best part though.

Joker: And mine is...

Anon: HOT 10/10

Anon: JOKER YOUR OUTFIT, HOT DAMN

Anon: ASHFSGJNHUIAHNiua8ihuAHUAAAAAAA PANTHER HOLY SHIT

Panther: I SAID DON'T LOOK!!

Anon: I LOVE IT

Anon: Hot

Anon: FOX AND PANTHER HAVE TAILS LMAO

Anon: Queen wtf r u smoking, ur outfit is awesome, what are u embarrassed about
Queen: It's not my... aesthetic.

Anon: EXCUSE YOU BIKER QUEEN IS BEST AESTHETIC

Anon: I can see why Joker would love it

Anon: CUE THE FANART FOR EVERYONE

Anon: k but where's Mona's

Oracle: He doesn't have one. He runs around naked when we do thief stuff.

Mona: THAT'S NOT TRUE

Skull: I mean, it's kind of true? You're like... half naked.

Anon: PICS

Mona: No! Also, Skull is a liar!

Skull: What you'd say?!

Mona: You wanna go, punk?

Skull: BRING IT.

Joker: Don't make me come over there!

Anon: OH SHIT JOKER LAYS DOWN THE LAW

Anon: and I had popcorn ready to go and everything!

Anon: You guys wouldn't happen to have Akechi's, would you?

Oracle: As a matter of fact, I do. He had two, both of which I'll show you him actually in, because his identity is out officially. (Attached: AkechiThief.png)

Anon: That crazed look in his eye in the second one is actually terrifying, Jesus

Anon: @ PTs, u had to fight that guy???

Anon: am actually scared of second one, holy shit

Anon: the first one tho, LMAO THAT MASK AND CAPE

Anon: NERD

Anon: did he poke people's eyes out with it

Joker: No, but he did stab me in the back with it.
Anon: OH SHIT

Anon: damn if Akechi was alive he'd have to be taken to a burn unit

Anon: Akechi's ghost = ROASTED

Anon: Anyways, you guys said something about not choosing your outfits? What? Did you like reach into a box and whatever you grabbed first was your outfit?

Joker: Sorry, but that goes into methods, and that's blacklisted.

Anon: You're shitting us

Queen: No, we're actually 100% serious about this. To explain where the outfits came from is also related to our methods. We do not actually have any copies left of the outfits, and we can't tell you how we got them.

Anon: oh my god you're serious

Anon: what the fuck were you guys up to

Skull: Stuff that would make us sound crazy if we told you, my dude.

Anon: So what's everyone's favorite part of being a Phantom Thief?

Fox: That is difficult, but I personally derived great inspiration from fighting Shadows.

Fox: Fighting... Shadows?

Fox: What?

Fox: OH

Anon: WAIT WHAT DOES THAT MEAN

Anon: METHOD???

Anon: TELL US MORE, PLS KEEP GOING FOX

Anon: WHATS FIGHTING SHADOWS-

Anon: PLS LET ME HELP I WANT TO FIGHT THE SHADOWS TOO

Joker: Nothing we're going to share with you.

Oracle: DAMN IT INARI

Fox: It was an accident!

Skull: Who's the one slipping up now?

Anon: I left for five minutes for a bathroom break and come back to this. What did I miss???
Anon: *touches the ground* Something terrible happened here...

Oracle: Anyone talk, and I'll unleash the ban hammer.

Anon: So the Shadows, with a capital S, must be their targets...

Anon: So they really DO beat them up!!

Joker: Okay, you know what, Admin? Don't delete these. It's too late. No doubt the slip up has been reposted elsewhere.

Joker: I'm going to set the record straight. We're not going to clarify what, exactly, a Shadow with a capital S is. Yes, we had to fight them, and as for them being our targets... yes and no. No, we did not physically harm any of our targets. We don't attack people... at least not in the physical sense. Fighting Shadows was key to our method, but that's all I'm going to say.

Anon: I want to know more so bad

Joker: I know, but you're going to have to bear with us. There's a reason a lot of finicky details about the whole Conspiracy in the news isn't being clarified.

Noir: If we can at least mention fighting Shadows, then I'll admit that, while there were many enjoyable parts about being a Phantom Thief, actually fighting Shadows was so much fun! Fighting must be my method of stress relief! It was always such a thrill to cut down the enemy as they approached...

Anon: Jesus Christ

Anon: Noir confirmed for being actually terrifying

Anon: pls step on me

Noir: What?

Joker: Ignore them. They don't mean anything. You don't need to know.

Panther: For me, it was helping those in need who were saved by someone near them having a change of heart. All the work made it worth it. Also, I always have felt out of place, and I stick out like a sore thumb. People either fetishised me or ignored me coldly. The other Phantom Thieves never did this to me, and treated me as an equal. The good we were doing plus the sense of belonging made it very rewarding.

Skull: My reason's a lot like Panther's, and for the first time in a long time, it felt like I had a place to belong, around my true friends.

Queen: I, too, felt as though I had lost my place to belong. I was lost, confused, and didn't know to break out of the cycle of being a slave to society and its expectations. They freed me, and showed me so much more of this world that I would have ever dreamed. Combat was also enjoyable, though.

Fox: Much like the others, aside from using combat to increase my artistic repertoire, I felt a sense
of belonging.

Mona: The thrill of the heist-- exploring, planning, and successfully stealing a heart gave me a thrill like no other. High stakes and high rewards!

Oracle: They gave me my life back, and walked with me every step of the way I needed help. I had a bone to pick with Shido and Akechi, though, and finally avenging someone I know who had a mental shutdown was satisfying.

Joker: My team, and everyone I befriended on the way-- they're my favorite part of being a Phantom Thief. I thought I was doomed to be a pariah all my life after being falsely accused of something I won't get into. They got to know me, became friends with me, and actually like me for me.

Joker: So, to the rest of the Phantom Thieves: thank you for giving me a chance. Thank you for being my friends; you made this wild ride worthwhile so many times over. Also, commit this to memory, because I am never going to say this to any of you ever again. I am not a very fluffy person.

Anon: 
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAWWWW

Anon: THAT'S SO SWEET, OH MY GOOOOOD

Oracle: BRB, all of us are hugging Joker. He's getting very red in the face. I think he might be crying.

ADMIN: Please give the Phantom Thieves a moment to pull themselves together. I think Joker's comments spurred something.

Panther: JOKER YOU LOVEBUG YOU'VE BEEN DOING THE SAME FOR US, NONE OF US BELONGED EITHER BUT YOU NEVER JUDGED US

Noir: WE LOVE YOU TOO JOKER

Skull: Dude... Joker... best friends for LIFE!

Fox: You're one of the greatest sources of light in my life. You're like Theo.

Mona: You and I, Joker... we're partners in crime for life!

Queen: Joker... we love you, too.

Anon: SCREAMING

Anon:
Anon: I'm vomiting rainbows
Anon: this is the fluffiest goddamn exchange I've ever read in my life
Anon: FRIENDSHIP GOALS
Anon:
Anon: I think my heart just exploded
Anon: Amamiya-kun... I'm so sorry
Anon: We had the transfer student all wrong for so long...

Joker: Next question, please.
Chapter 6

Anon: How did y'all come up with your code names?

Mona: I gave Joker his code name. He's our trump card-- our wild card, if you will.

Skull: Mine came from my mask. I called him Mona and it stuck.

Panther: I got mine because of my outfit. Joker actually suggested 'kitty lady' to me (hopefully jokingly!) and I said if they were gonna call me something related to a cat, choose Panther, because it sounds somewhat more ferocious.

Skull: STORY TIME: When we were coming up with Panther's code name, Mona said "She's a cougar!" without knowing what a cougar is, and she got SO PISSED IT WAS SO FUNNY

Panther: No it wasn't!

Anon: LMAO!!

Panther: ( #´Д´)

Fox: Mine came as a result of my outfit, though I originally asked to be called Da Vinci. They said no, and Joker came up with Fox. It stuck.

Queen: Mine took a few moments to come up with, but Mona mentioned that I was "like an empress" and Joker suggested the name Queen. It fits perfectly.

Oracle: They all came up with a bunch of really lame code names for me. Goggles, PC, Mech, Hacker, and Pharaoh came up. I specifically told Joker (who came up with Pharaoh) that I would curse him if we used that.

Oracle: I came up with the name Oracle on my own. With my vision and skills, I guide them to victory. I function as their navigator, hacker, and intelligence, along with Mona.

Noir: I had mine ready and planned! Noir is French for black, and I wanted to be a heroine of justice, but the Phantom Thieves are on the darker side of the law. I chose the name to remind me of that!

Noir: That, and the French come up with such lovely things! Like the guillotine! ^^

Anon: I think I just shit my pants

Anon: Noir r u a yandere??

Noir: Oh! I never thought of it like that... I suppose so!

Anon: Noir confirmed for most terrifying Phantom Thief

Noir: That's sweet of you, and I strive for that, but Oracle and Joker are probably the scariest. Joker can survive almost anything, and he's the most powerful out of all of us. Oracle is a genius hacker
and can find anything about anyone in here with ease.

Anon: literally all of the PTs are terrifying in their own way

Anon: What makes Joker so powerful?

Mona: We can't tell you much, but it has to do with his heart. That's all we'll say. That, and he's no pushover physically.

Anon: can we see ur 6-pack

Joker: No.

Anon: Aww...

Joker: Anyways, Akechi wanted to be called Karasu. We told him to use Crow instead. Next question, please.

Anon: Why did you guys send calling cards out? It would have been easier to not do that and it would have created less evidence to skip doing that.

Mona: Actually, the calling card was a necessary step. It's impossible to steal a heart without a calling card.

Anon: Can you elaborate on that?

Mona: Basically, the target has to be cognizant that their heart is something that can be stolen. The effect is short-lived, and we have to act within a few hours or else we can't steal it at all. It does not work twice.

Joker: I was actually really hesitant about doing the calling card at all, but we had no choice.

Queen: Honestly, if it wasn't for that step, none of you would know we even exist.

Anon: So you guys WEREN'T just being Extra™

Anon: And I guess the how the heart is stolen is blacklisted?

Skull: Yep!

Anon: So the reason you guys did that big thing for Shido and all those letters for Kaneshiro... you guys didn't know how to deliver the calling card directly, right?

Joker: Correct.

Anon: K but was anything you guys did actually illegal?

Queen: Do you WANT us to incriminate ourselves even more?

Anon: No...

Queen: That's what I thought.
Anon: Skull will u date me please

Skull: WHO, ME?!

Anon: Yes, you, you're cute!

Anon: ...Skull? You there?

Oracle: You broke him. He got so red in the face.

Skull: I mean... yes? If you're a chick.

Anon: SCORE, pick me up at 8.

Skull: Hahaha... yeah... where? What do you want to go do? I'm game for anything!

Fox: Skull, you would have to reveal your identity to do that, and you don't even know who they are.

Skull: ...oh.

Skull: (((( Sorry. But uh, You guys probably have a pretty good idea of who I am, right? Hit me up IRL.

Skull: ADMIN WHY

ADMIN: You know why, Skull. I'm doing this for your own good.

Skull: :((((((((

Anon: HAH COCKBLOCKED

Skull: Shaddup!

Panther: Skull's girl crazy, but when he actually gets asked out...

Oracle: Skull be like:

Joker: Hey, be nice to him. Skull is a good guy.
Anon: So, we see that you all get along really well. How did you guys get such a close group dynamic?

Queen: We just happen to get along. Working together for long enough lets you really get to know each other.

Noir: We respect each other's differences and bond over similarities! Friendship makes our team strong!

Anon: so you're telling me you revealed the Conspiracy and Shido using the power of friendship?

Panther: Yes!

Noir: And weapons, too, but friendship was vital to our mission!

Anon: Noir continues to terrify everyone

Fox: We also regularly hang out and hold group bonding sessions!

Anon: Group... bonding... sessions??

Anon: wait what do you do during those??

Queen: He just means we take time to hang out with each other and bond.

Anon: K, so, like the previous anon said, what do you guys DO during those?

Mona: Whatever we feel like, I guess. Usually it revolves around food! Either we pick up, go out to eat, or have Joker cook.

Anon: Joker cooks?

Oracle: He makes the BEST food, oh my god

Queen: He's quite the natural chef!

Panther: His food is always SO GOOD!

Skull: I'm drooling just thinking about the curry he makes... and now I want some.

Fox: Joker, will you please make us curry after we're done with this?

Joker: Sure. Hang on, BRB, I'm actually gonna go get it started. I had ingredients ready in anticipation of this, and it's gonna take awhile to cook.

Anon: can I have some too pls

Anon: *holds up bowl*

Joker: Sure, if you can figure out our hideout.
Anon: CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

Queen: Don't encourage them!

Oracle: Alright, he'll be awhile. Anyways, we also started playing Dungeons and Dragons at my suggestion to bring the group closer together. I'm the DM.

Anon: HOLY SHIT REALLY?

Anon: NEEEEERDS

Anon: PLS BROADCAST YOUR GAMES ON TWITCH, I'LL WATCH

Anon: GRABS POPCORN

Queen: Er...

Anon: YOU KNOW WHAT YOU GUYS SHOULD DO??? DO IT WHILE WEARING YOUR THIEF OUTFITS.

Oracle: That sounds like so much fun! I'll just use the tech I used before to warp our voices!

Queen: Oracle, we don't even HAVE our outfits anymore...

Anon: I make cosplays; if you give me your measurements, I can make you guys your costumes if you give me time.

Noir: Tempting!

Queen: Thanks, but we'll have to pass on that.

Fox: But I always rather wanted an actual copy of my thief suit... it was comfortable.

Oracle: Grr, fine. If we ever decide to broadcast our games, we'll have Admin announce it and link to it. Also, we'll... cover our faces or something. And I'll change our voices somewhat. It'll be fun!

Oracle: And maybe they'll stop messing up all my plots and quest lines.

Skull: lolno

Anon: As a fellow DM, I feel your pain, Oracle.

Anon: YEEESSSSSSS PLS DO IM SO EXCITED

Anon: I'LL TAKE IT

Mona: Joker's still busy... to continue the topic, we also always had a celebration party after a successful mission, though the party after Okumura... got cut short...

Anon: What exactly happened with Okumura, btw?
Noir: ...

Queen: Pardon us. This is something of a personal matter for Noir; we're not going to discuss it unless she's comfortable.

Noir: ...No. I want them to know what happened. I want them to know what Shido and Akechi did to President Okumura.

Anon: Haru you poor thing...

Anon: we love you Haru, you're so brave

Anon: Ugh, fine, since the admin deleted my comment

Anon: we love you, Noir, you're so brave

Noir: Thank you. Please be patient, as this will take awhile to tell...
Noir: When I met the Phantom Thieves, they couldn't even decide whether or not to actually go after President Okumura. How I met Mona is actually tied to that-- due to their rule about a unanimous decision being necessary to begin to steal a heart, Mona got angry and left. When he ran into me, he wanted me to try to go after Okumura with him.

Noir: I was an amateur, and I didn't know what I was doing, but it was invigorating. Within a day, of course, the others found Mona and I. After a day, we reconciled, and I revealed I had a stake in the matter of Okumura.

Noir: Without revealing too many details... I knew him ever since I could remember. He used to be an ambitious, driven, and stern man, but was tempered by love. He was, by all accounts, a good man.

Noir: He had lost his way, and was hurting everyone around him. I couldn't stand idly by and let this happen. In a move I regret to this day, I begged the Phantom Thieves to change his heart. They agreed, finally in unison.

Noir: The process involves fighting Shadows, and there's always one powerful one we have to fight before we take the heart.

Noir: If the heart-- the treasure-- is taken without killing the Shadow, no harm befalls the target, but they will start feeling remorse.

Noir: We took the treasure and left, leaving the Shadow intact. But then... as soon as we left... Akechi came, and shot and killed the Shadow, leading to mental shutdown and death.

Noir: We had been celebrating our victory when we saw the moment of mental shutdown on television, and everything froze. For a moment, we wondered in terror if we accidentally killed him, and panic almost choked me. I scarcely remember much else of the night, save for being told by a doctor that he wasn't going to make it, and I cried and cried for what felt like forever.

Noir: I still wonder to this day if I had been greedy in my request. If I had accepted my fate, would he have been spared? Is it my fault...?

Anon: No!

Anon: Oh, sweetheart, no, this isn't your fault, don't blame yourself.

Joker: Back. Noir... this wasn't your fault. It was never your fault. Never forget that. We know who killed Okumura.
Queen: Even if you hadn't joined us, Okumura was manipulated to be top of the poll on the Phansite. They were trying to bait us, and even if we hadn't taken it, they probably would have sent him a fake calling card like they did to the principal of Shujin Academy, then killed him anyways and blamed us. They planned to eliminate him from the start.

Fox: Our actions did not matter; the result would have been the same either way. I'm just sorry that the target was someone so dear to you.

Anon: This whole thing is just so fucked up on so many levels

Anon: Shido is the worst piece of shit to walk the earth

Anon: FUCK AKECHI

Joker: Stop.

Noir: I stand by what I said earlier. I can't forgive Akechi, but he was very, very sick and needed help. I can only pity him at this point.

Mona: Are you okay, Noir?

Noir: Yes. I'll be fine. Thank you, Mona-chan.

Anon: You guys have had it hard, I'm sorry

Skull: Listen, before he died, he still felt bad about what he did and wanted to make things right. You did that. Even though shit went down after, you at least did one last good thing for him before that asshole killed him.

 Panther: You redeemed him, Noir. He was finally good before the end.

Noir: It wasn't just me; it was all of you as well. I have no words to express my gratitude.

Anon: hugs

Anon: Why were you guys so hesitant about taking on Okumura without knowing all of this, tho?

Oracle: Joker's gone back to take care of the curry. We just felt like we were becoming entertainment, not an actual force for good.

Panther: Things were happening way too fast, and it was really scary.

Fox: We worried about the morality of choosing a target simply because the masses clamored and demanded we did, as if it was merely sport. Changing a heart wasn't a game-- it was a serious matter!

Anon: ...oh.

Anon: Sorry... I guess we got carried away.

Anon: We believe in you!
Anon: Onto perhaps a mood-lifting question that should hopefully prove funny: what's the weirdest thing you guys saw when going after a heart?

Panther: Oh, god.

Queen: Would you like an itemized list?

Anon: yes pls

Queen: ...I meant that as a joke.

Skull: For me, when we were going after Kamoshida, we saw him dream of a room full of topless teenage girls in pain. That was pretty fucked up.

Anon: Jesus

Anon: okay I change my mind sorry I asked

Panther: You haven't even told them about the penis monster on a chariot...

Anon: THE WHAT

Queen: You don't want to know. We don't want to know. We wish we could forget it.

Anon: TELL US

Fox: We found a... phallic monster on a chariot. We can't really go into context, but it was... very unsettling.

Anon: yikes

Skull: It gets worse. So, like, we defeat it and get going, but--

Oracle: LO AND BEHOLD THERE'S LIKE FIVE MORE OF THEM CHASING US DOWN A DARK HALLWAY IT WAS TERRIFYING

Anon: YIKES

Anon: I just vomited in my mouth a lil

Anon: ...mistakes were made asking that question

Anon: Were those the scariest moments of your career, too?

Joker: Back. No, the scariest was the time we faced off against a Shadow we call the Reaper. We really should have fled, but we thought we could take it.

Oracle: It ended up with an almost TPK. Everyone except for Joker and I got knocked out at one point. We thought we were actually going to die.

Oracle: Joker managed to knock it out when he was hanging on by a thread. I got everyone else up,
and they were mostly okay once treated, but Joker was stumbling and really messed up.

Oracle: We took everyone to the doctor. They all turned out okay.

Oracle: And that's the time the entire party almost died!

Anon: jeebus

Anon: how are you all even still alive

Oracle: Me. I am good at what I do.

Mona: Ahem.

Oracle: And Mona, too!

Joker: Next question.
Chapter 8

Anon: How did Joker fake his death? We know he came out really fucked up, but we assume you guys had a plan? You had to fool Akechi to pull it off, too.

Queen: We'd have to explain our method of stealing hearts IN DETAIL for it to make sense, so we can't tell you much.

Fox: Even so, the whole act was very difficult to pull off, and took a lot of planning, even with our abilities.

Joker: Truth be told... I had faith in my team, but not in myself. I wasn't sure I was going to succeed, but I had to try.

Panther: He didn't tell us that until after the fact because he was worried we would worry even more than we already were.

Oracle: If so much as one step failed, Joker would have died. There's no question about it; Akechi would have assassinated him.

Noir: Part of the act required Joker to talk and follow through with part of the plan on his own, but he was so heavily drugged that it's amazing he did what he was able to do.

Joker: I honestly remember hardly anything from the interrogation room other than being beaten to near-death... and then being really, really smug for like a second before blacking out. I do remember very intensely focusing on what I was saying, but I don't remember exactly WHAT I said. It's really confusing to think about it.

Anon: tbh it's a miracle you don't have permanent brain damage

Fox: We had to act normal during this whole event to not draw suspicion to ourselves. It was difficult; I couldn't focus. All I could do was worry about Joker.

Skull: Same. I was just in this sort of... daze once my job was over, waiting to see if he made it. It was effin' terrifying.

Anon: I'm getting stressed just reading this

Anon: Onto hopefully cuter news: I notice that Joker and Oracle seem really close. Why is this?

Joker: Oracle's like a little sister to me.

Oracle: And he's like a big brother to me. We have what you'd call a sibling relationship.

Oracle: We're not actually related, but that's how it is.

Oracle: He's a good big brother. He keeps creeps from bothering me when we're out, and he plays video games with me AND talks about building PCs and stuff! We built one together already. He's always there for me, and I'm always there for him!
Joker: Love you, too, Oracle.

Anon: AAAAAAAAAWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWW

Anon: Joker you are literally the sweetest person alive holy fuck you're so cute

Joker: No, I'm notasafushgyu8ba8baBHFS80BSG8G0ASGUBSHelp

Anon: k who tackled him

Panther: Oracle. She jumped on him and started mussing his hair and yelling about him being cute.

Noir: He's so red in the face again!

Anon: WHAT A CUTIE

Anon: a pure boy

Joker: k I'm going back to check on the curry bye

Anon: DAMN IT, GUYS, YOU SCARED HIM OFF

Anon: k so can you tell us about your weapons?

Queen: No.

Anon: AWWWWWW

Noir: I HAVE AN AX! ^^

Anon: and the trend of Noir scaring the shit out of us continues

Queen: Noir!

Noir: What? It doesn't have to be used violently! I am rather fond of it, though...

Anon: lowers hands over balls

Anon: im scared

Skull: Us too, dude. Us too.

Anon: So, uh... y'all got any hobbies?

Skull: I like to run and work out, and play video games.

Panther: I like to shop! I also enjoy video games. Doing makeup is always fun, too.

Queen: I enjoy aikido, motorcycles, and reading.

Fox: I like painting and sketching, but if not art, then I do rather enjoy going out for the rare meal and to a movie.
Oracle: Video games and internet, my dude. I also make mods for games and build my own PCs.

Noir: I love to garden, and I also enjoy watching wrestling! I also have a fondness for cooking.

Mona: I like to make things and go for walks.

Joker: Back. I like to read and play video games. I also sometimes go fishing.

Anon: Noir likes wrestling... why am I not surprised

Anon: @ Joker and Queen, y'all got any book recs?

Joker: *Arsène Lupin, Gentleman Burglar.*

Queen: *The Illusory Popess* is good, too.

Anon: k onto other news, how does it smell in your hideout while Joker's cooking?

Fox: Intoxicating. The aroma tantalizes every sensation, and every desire I have is focused on waiting for the no doubt heavenly feast awaiting me.

Oracle: IT SMELLS REALLY GOOD, WE'RE SUFFERING HAVING TO WAIT

Skull: Stop... I'm already hungry as it is...

Panther: Uughhh, I wish it was ready noooow...

Joker: Needs awhile longer, guys. Time is necessary for quality.

Anon: i need

Anon: pls share

Joker: I'm making an entire pot. I'll have leftovers, but good luck finding us.

Queen: What did we say about tempting them?

Joker: ... Not to do that?

Queen: Exactly. Please don't pay his teasing any heed. We need some peace once this is over. Speaking of which...

ADMIN: The AMA is almost over. Make sure you get your last questions in.

Anon: WHAT NO

Joker: Sorry, but we've already revealed too much as it is. We'll entertain a few more questions, however, before we disappear again...
Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Anon: So everyone knows your "secret" identities by this point. Why are you still trying to hide?

Mona: What are these identities you speak of?

Joker: If we up and announced who we are, we'd never get any peace. I don't know about you, but I highly value my privacy.

Joker: Let's say I was, theoretically, the Shujin boy you all seem to think I am. I've heard he's had quite the rough year, what with everyone spreading false rumors about him. I'd also imagine that if he was me, he'd want his personal privacy and respect at last. Nothing more, nothing less.

Joker: But then again, this is all theoretical, so what do I know?

Anon: Hint taken.

Anon: "I'm not saying I'm that person, but I'm saying in THEORY I'm that person." Got it.

Joker: Piss off.

Anon: OH SHIT LMAO

Anon: I know we're not supposed to ask about current activities, but at the risk of being deleted, why have you all stopped stealing hearts?

Joker: It's alright, Admin. We've decided to answer this to settle the matter once and for all.

Fox: We have ceased stealing hearts, permanently.

Anon: NOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!!!

Anon: WHAT WHY???

Queen: We lost the ability to do so; we did not make the decision lightly, and none of us wanted to stop or give up our power.

Joker: We had to. We can't tell you why or how, but it's done and over. We have no more power to change a heart or steal distorted desires.

Anon: Does this have anything to do with how suddenly everyone wanted Shido out after like a week of still blindly following him?

Joker: Very perceptive of you.

Anon: Is that a yes or no?
Joker: You decide.

Mona: It doesn't matter. We just can't, and we'd still be doing our stuff if we could, but we can't.

Panther: We'll just have to change the world in a different way! ^^

Noir: We've already done so much, but there is always more to do. We intend on working in our own ways, and together, to make this world a better place, for everyone.

Oracle: We just hope we've inspired all of you to get out there and do something good in this world! We all have to pull our weight if we wanna reform society! Go out, plant some flowers, help an old lady cross the street, whatever!

Skull: Yeah! And don't be bigoted assholes! Maaan, it SUCKS that we lost the power to steal hearts... there's still plenty of bigoted assholes out there with hearts ripe for the taking...

Anon: I FEEL SO INSPIRED

Anon: IM GONNA SHOVE AN ENTIRE RAINBOW UP MY ASS

Queen: What?

Oracle: FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS ANON

Skull: what the fuck

Joker: If it helps you become a better you, Anon, then go for it.

Queen: Joker!

Joker: Next question:

Anon: Hey, Joker, Queen, how did you two start dating?

Queen: That's a very long story, one that the AMA does not have time for.

Anon: YES IT DOES

Joker: No, it doesn't. We'll just tell you this: it started with her just asking me what people our age do for fun. I took her to an arcade and it just sort of ran from there.

Panther: There's SO MUCH MORE to their cute story. Maybe one day they'll write about it.

Anon: Can you at least tell us who confessed first?

Queen: Joker. I was talking about not knowing anything about romance and that I'd have to study the matter. Joker then said "I'll be your study partner" and it clicked.

Anon: AND YOU FELL FOR THAT LINE???

Anon: smooth
Joker: I'll have you all know I happen to be an excellent study partner.

Anon: ayyyyy

Anon: (°_5°)

Anon: you smooth motherfucker

Queen: NOT LIKE THAT-- I MEAN-- THAT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!

Queen: I just mean... he's... a good, serious, study partner when I need him?

Anon: I'll bet he is (°_5°)

Queen: I MEAN FOR SCHOOL AND EXAMS! He's also good at tutoring Skull and Panther for exams, but especially Skull.

Skull: Shaddup!

Anon: @ Skull and Panther, maybe you should be each other's study partners (°_5°)

Panther: NO!!!

Skull: im ded goodbye

Anon: One last question. I don't know who else to ask about this, and I don't know if you can help me or not, but I want to try. I've been having weird, recurring dreams, of this thing in the sky yelling it's a god, then a demon lord suddenly showing up and shooting and killing it. Also, everything is all red and people were disappearing into black fog. I'd dismiss it as a nightmare, but it's happened a few times.

Anon: You guys have to know a lot about the human psyche. Any advice?

Anon: Yeah, me too!

Anon: HOLY SHIT ME TOO I'VE BEEN HAVING THAT DREAM

Anon: THIS IS SO WEIRD

Anon: Do any of you have any advice???

Anon: Wait, where did they go?

Anon: Um, hello??

Anon: SHIT DID THEY UP AND LEAVE US

Joker: Sorry for the pause. We, unfortunately, have no useful information for you. They're probably just dreams that manifested due to stress; try to take some time to relax and treat yourself and see if that helps.

Anon: But several people seem to be having the same dream...
Queen: Unfortunately, we know as little as you do on the matter. We talked for a few moments and have decided that that piece of advice is our best solution for the time being.

Fox: Should we discover the cause of your dreams, we will announce it on the forums.

ADMIN: And that's it for the AMA! Thanks for coming, everyone! This AMA will be archived for those who missed it, and we hope you enjoyed it! We also hope this answered some questions and settled some uncertainties for you all.

Anon: WAIT ONE LAST QUESTION WILL YOU GUYS EVER DO ANOTHER AMA???

Joker: No. Have a nice day!

Anon: COME BAAAAAAAACK

"It's over. It's finally over." Ren breathed, leaning back in his futon. He ran a hand over his face and sighed. "That felt so long."

Mishima peered over from his laptop, having made Ren and Morgana's work table into a temporary work station. He frowned. "What about that last question? Do you think we answered it well enough...?"

Morgana scoffed from his spot by Ren, rolling on his back. "What were we supposed to tell them? Besides, they don't need to know."

Mishima blinked at the cat, then looked to the others around the room on assorted laptops and phones. Makoto sighed and put her phone in her pocket, shaking her head. "He said 'what were we supposed to tell them?'"

"Oh." He sighed. "Yeah, I guess you're right. Even I hardly can believe what I remember. How would you even begin to explain that Ren is the Trickster--" Ren winced at the title, "--or that the world almost ended?"

"Still, it's weird," Ann huffed, "I thought no one remembered anything except for us, but people are having nightmares about it..."

"I'm sure it will fade, or the public will come up with their own stories for why the dreams happened." Yusuke said with a shrug from his spot by Ryuji around the table dragged in front of the couch. "I believe this was good, and will tie some loose ends up." He smiled tiredly. "Ren, is the curry ready?"

Ryuji perked up at the word, and beamed at Ren. "Yeah! I'm starving!"

Ren laughed, lightly, and nodded. "Yeah, it's done; I have it cooling downstairs. Come on, let's eat."

"Good work, everyone!" Haru cheered. "I could do with a plate of curry and a cup of coffee after all of that..."
Stay tuned for an epilogue!
"Amamiya, I can't believe I've never had your curry until now." Mishima leaned back in the booth he sat in, spoon held up as he closed his eyes in ecstasy. "This... may be the best thing I've ever eaten." His eyes fluttered open, and he focused intensely on the plate of curry and rice in front of him, and dug in with gusto. "Ohm muh gawwwwwwd," Mishima moaned, mouth full of curry, "thish ish soooooo gooood."

"Don't talk with your mouth open." Makoto scolded from the bar, though she herself had already gone through half the plate. "I'm aware the food is excellent, but it's gross to do that."

"You're so lucky, Queen," Ryuji moaned in delight, arm around his plate defensively as he sat by Mishima, "your boyfriend can cook like this anytime for you. I hope one day I meet a girl that can cook even half as good as this..."

"Why don't you ask that person who asked to go on a date with you if they can cook?" Ann teased, smirking over her already empty plate across the table. Ryuji glared at Mishima, who shook his head and wrinkled his nose at Ryuji. Mishima scoffed.

"You know why I did what I did. You'll find someone someday, Sakamoto."

Ren laughed as he plated his own serving in the kitchen, and approached the bar still in apron to sit beside Makoto and Morgana, the latter of whom was eating out of his bowl with gusto. "I could just teach you to cook, you know. Anyone of any gender loves a partner who can make good food." He grinned. "I could tantalize any man or woman I want with this curry, and you could, too!"

"It'd certainly work on me." Yusuke agreed. Haru giggled from the table she shared with him. "And me!"

"That's not why I started dating you, you know..." Makoto teased dryly. Ren snickered as he took his seat.

"Yeah, but the curry is what got you, line and sinker, right?"

Makoto playfully shoved his arm. "No... but it is a very nice side benefit."

"Teach me your secrets." Ryuji begged, eyes wide with hope. Mishima nodded, quickly, eagerly.

"Me too!"

Ren shrugged. "Sorry, I was mostly joking. The curry's a house secret. That being said, I can still teach the two of you to cook like pros for anyone you're trying to woo."

"I'll take it!" Mishima exclaimed.

"Lessons start tomorrow after Leblanc closes?" Ryuji questioned, and Ren raised an eyebrow, thinking for a moment, before nodding in assent and fully turning his attention at last to his supper. He was halfway through his plate when the bell above the door jingled. Ann's gentle gasp was
heard before he could even move his head to look, and was met with the sight of Shiho in her new school's uniform, who smiled softly as she clutched the strap of her bag with her hand. There was a short silence before Ann stood from the table, eyes wide.

"Shiho..."

"Suzui-san..." Mishima gasped.

"Hi," she greeted quietly, "curry for one more?"

Ren rose to his feet, smiling warmly at her. "Yeah, take a seat, I'll bring it to you. What would you like to drink with it?"

"Water is fine." Shiho replied, even-toned. "Thank you... Joker."

Ren hardly reacted, glancing backwards for a split second before shrugging and carrying on towards the kitchen. The others flinched; Ann's shoulders deflated slightly, and she hesitated before speaking. "So... so you know."

"I'm not stupid, Ann. I know you're Panther. I know you're all Phantom Thieves." She sighed. "I'm disappointed you never told me, but I'll forgive you if you tell me everything, and I mean everything, especially with Kamoshida." She spoke as she took her seat by Ann, meeting her eyes. Ann hesitated and looked to Ren as he approached with the curry and a glass of water, setting it down before Shiho with a smile, which she returned. Ren met Ann's eyes and nodded before returning to his seat to finish his meal. Ann met Shiho's eyes once again, and she sighed.

"Okay, but... you're probably not going to believe most of what I tell you."

"Try me."

"Before she gets started, I'm going to say right now," Ryuji cut in, "that she ain't making any of this shit up."

While the group told stories and shocked Shiho to her core, other friends of Ren's walked in every few moments, seeking out curry as the reward for "discovering" the hideout: Shinya, Hifumi, Kaoru, Tae, taking a break from the clinic, and even Ohya, surprisingly sober for once, all came for dinner. Ren took their praise for his food with a quiet, prideful stride, smiling as they gushed over its quality in-between stories. By the end of the story, Shiho stared at the tabletop in silence, hunched over, and shook her head in disbelief.

"I can't believe you actually fought demon-things in the name of changing Kamoshida-- or anyone, really." she finally spoke. "If I can be honest, I'm sort of glad you guys are done with everything." She met Ann's eyes and shook her head. "It scares me, thinking about all the danger you and everyone put themselves in..."

"So you believe me?" Ann questioned hesitantly. Shiho nodded.

"I knew there was something supernatural about it all after a few people had changed hearts. I just never imagined what it truly was, or that you were involved." She leaned back. "I get why you guys didn't share as much as people wanted to know on the AMA now. The thought of a bunch of people finding a way to gain access to the Metaverse is terrifying, especially considering what Shido was planning to do."
"Glad you understand." Ren said as he arose, picking off empty plates and glasses, stacking them in his arms precariously as he headed towards the sink. He grunted under the weight. "We'll thank you to not share what we just told you with anyone outside of this room. Everyone who walked in after you is in the know."

"Got it." Shiho paused and giggled to herself. "It's a strange feeling, being part of this by knowing the details."

Ren was about to reply and almost had the dishes in the sink when the doorbell jingled again. He jumped, narrowly avoiding dropping the dishes in surprise. He fumbled to place everything in the sink, wiping his hands on his apron, and hurried to get a plate of the cooling curry for whoever came in when he heard Makoto gasp uncharacteristically loudly. Blood beginning to run cold, he slowly turned to see a gaudily dressed Eiko grinning widely.

"Yo, found your hideout!" she giggled. "I knew it! I knew he was a Phantom Thief-- but you, too, Miss Prez? You really are her! You're Queen!" She cackled. "Oh, this is so good. You have to tell me everything!"

"Eiko." Makoto uttered, stunned. "I... wasn't expecting you to..."

"Thought I'd surprise you rather than drop a text that I was coming by your boyfriend's place for a plate of that curry." She grinned as he placed a plate in what was his seat, dodging a withering stare from Makoto as Eiko giggled. "Wooow, your boyfriend's not just the adorable leader of the Phantom Thieves, but... hold on a minute." She quickly put some of the curry in her mouth and loudly vocalized her pleasure in the form of a drawn-out mmm. "Yep, a good cook, too! You really hit the jackpot!"

Ren let out an inelegant snort at the comment, which threatened to turn into full-blown laughter as Makoto glared at him, her cheeks red. Finally, she sighed and nodded. "Very well, then. But you're not to share a word with anyone, and I mean, anyone."

"Mm, okay, I promise." Eiko giggled. "Don't see the point, though. Basically everyone has you guys figured out." She shook her head at Ren. "You're in for a looong day tomorrow at school, dude."

Ren let out a sigh. "Yes, I know." he groaned as he turned away to handle the dishes, allowing Makoto to begin a story, praying she wouldn't share what she was told. Eiko sat, enraptured, while Ren tried to tune out everyone as he worked. He was faintly aware of Morgana hopping on the top of the fridge as he worked and peering down at him.

"She's right, you know," he warned, "the student body may have abandoned the old rumors about you being a criminal thug, but new ones have undoubtedly already begun."

"So?" Ren scoffed. "How bad can it be?"

"He's so cute!"

"So brave!"
"So pure!"

"I wanna ruffle that hair!"

"Do you think he'd let me if I asked nicely?"

"He looks so nervous... poor guy..."

"It's too bad he'll never trust any of us, not after what we did..."

"Man, Miss Prez really struck gold with him... she's so lucky."

"I can't believe we all thought he was a thug all this time!"

"So when he was asking around about Kamoshida and Kaneshiro's thugs..."

"He was looking out for us the whole time!"

"Even after what we did to him... what everyone did to him..."

"What an angel!"

"I want to hug him; he's been through too much, the poor thing..."

The first and most obvious thing Ren noticed was how much nicer everyone was to him. He found it deeply unsettling as people actually smiled at him in the hall and asked how he was. He managed to force a smile each time and reply with a curt "I'm fine" before hurrying away. Several came to him and apologized profusely for their conduct and prior fear of him. He brushed all the apologies away quickly and politely as possible.

When it was time for gym, he was aware of the stares and the soft gasps and whispers in the locker room once his shirt came off, and he tried to focus on the cold interior of his locker next to Ryuji's as he changed for gym. Ryuji was less subtle about his discomfort as he glared at onlookers.

"What the eff is wrong with you people? You don't go starin' at other people when they're changin'! That's weird!"

Ren felt a swell of affection for his best friend in that moment, which he communicated with the first genuine smile he had made all day directed at him, who briefly smiled back before waving away the onlookers. Most sheepishly turned away, save for one or two. "Ah, cool it, Skull." one cocky boy scoffed, "we just wanted to see the scars in person. They're bad-ass!"

"If he's actually you-know-who, then you've already seen them. Fuck. Off." Ryuji snapped, glaring bitterly. "And the name's Sakamoto. You don't get to call me Skull."

Ren heard the whispers all day as he walked between classes. Had it not been for his friends, he would have started wishing he was out of Shujin already. He glanced over to Ryuji and Ann at his side, and the whispers about them, too, were not missed. Ryuji was scowling, though Ann seemed far less perturbed. Ren sighed and shook his head. "Sorry, guys," he whispered, "this is my fault."

"No, it ain't!" Ryuji protested. "It's people who don't MIND THEIR EFFIN' BUSINESS who are bugging us!" His friends cringed as several students in the hall flinched at Ryuji's proclamation,
and Ann sighed, exasperated.

"Oh, shut up. You'll get used to it." She shook her head at Ren. "In any case, don't apologize for anything. We don't regret anything we did, and you did nothing wrong." She frowned. "You seem... more upset by these whispers than the last round. Are you okay?"

Their leader sighed. "Yeah. Yeah, I'm good. I'm just not..." He shook his head. "Not used to this much... affection from strangers."

"You did spend the last year being shunned by almost everyone," Mona added helpfully from the bag, "is it that you don't know how much of it is sincere?"

Ren shrugged. "I mean, the insults and rumors hurt, but at least they were honest in their hatred of me." He paled as his friends looked at him with something like a mix of pity and sympathy, and he shoved his hands in his pockets, averting his eyes. "But, you know what? It means nothing to me; I have you guys." He looked up at them and smiled. "That's all I need."

Ann turned her head to him, eyes full of fire, and whispered. "I am going to hug you SO MUCH when school is out and none of these people are here to see so I don't embarrass you... you understand me? You're getting ALL THE HUGS."

"Me too. I could go for a hug from you, too, Lady Ann." Morgana piped up from the bag, ears flopping back and eyes widening cutely. The three teens rolled their eyes, but Ann reached over to scratch his head, earning a purr of pleasure. Ren groaned as his cheeks flushed red, and the whispers in the background carried.

"Get back in the bag, moron!" Ryuji hissed nervously. Morgana scoffed, but retreated into the bag. His eyes stuck out from the dim bag still.

"So what? Everyone already knows I'm here. Why bother?"

"You know why." Ann said dryly. She looked back at Ren and smiled. "Anyways, I mean what I said. You can't say something sweet like that and not expect me to hug you later."

"Stop," Ren begged, "you know I blush at the drop of a hat. It's embarrassing." He scratched at the back of his neck. "But, uh... thanks."

Ryuji settled for a good slap on his best friend's back and a quick squeeze of his shoulder, inflaming Ren's cheeks further. "Who gives a shit what they see or think?" Ryuji said proudly. He snickered. "Sides, now everyone knows you're just a big softy under that strong and silent face you tried to keep, Leader."

"Am not."

"Are too."

The whispers came, again, but this time, none of them cared as they playfully bantered all the way to class.

All were dead tired as they returned at last to Leblanc, and collapsed in the booths as Sojiro
proffered food. The man raised an eyebrow. "I take it today's been hectic."

"Yeah, no shit." Ryuji pointed a thumb at Ren, his mouth already partially full of curry. "This guy has everyone fawning over him now like he's an idol! And he got invited to, like, a dozen clubs!" Ryuji swallowed and shrugged. "Him, and us, too. I got asked to rejoin the track team again, like, a million times! They kept saying somethin' about how a Phantom Thief would be the best addition ever to the team!" He rolled his eyes. "It's bullshit!"

"I know, right?" Ann agreed with a tired sigh. "I got asked to join a bunch of clubs too, and everyone was way too friendly..."

"Sounds like quite the day." Sojiro said with a shrug as he offered a bowl of cat food to Morgana, who meowed thanks to him as Sojiro ran a hand over his head. "Well, you all knew this was coming. Most people know who you are; the rumors may never die down. That's the price of fame."

"Yeah, we know. But we'll be fine." Ren said calmly as he ate the curry. "We've been through the worst, and we're still a team; we have each other's backs."

Sojiro grinned. "Good way of looking at it." He shrugged. "Oh, and when you're done eating, I need your help doing dishes."

Ren let out a dramatic sigh and laid back in the booth, head flopping back. "But Boss, according to everyone at school, I'm too pure and cute to do that..." He picked his head up and smirked wryly at Sojiro, who rolled his eyes but still ruffled the kid's hair affectionately.

"Keep that up, and I'll make dirty dishes for you to wash on top of the pile you already have, smart-ass."

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