"Why don't you take a swan dive off the roof? Maybe you'll get a Quirk then!"

So he did.

And he did.

--

Now being cross-posted on my Wattpad, ChrysanthosAO3, as well as my fanfiction.net, chrysanthos!! ^^
"Why don't you take a swan dive off the roof? Maybe you'll get a Quirk then!"

So he did.

It honestly wasn't that bad, Izuku decided, because he was facing away from the ground. He had heard the old adage "don't look down!" growing up whenever they someone was at a high altitude, so he had decided to face the sky as he fell to his inevitable death.

It was a much better thing to look at than the inside of your eyes or the plain old ground, he decided.

He slammed at full speed against the stone.

He knew nothing more.

Izuku's eyes slammed open, and the beautiful blue sky greeted him.

Pain wracking his whole body, Izuku sat up. "Psh, can't even kill yourself correctly, huh?" Izuku muttered, wincing as he brought his arm up to scratch his neck. "Looks like I really am good-for-nothing. Maybe I can get Kacchan-" The name stuck in his throat. Kacchan was the one to send him off the roof in the first place.

Izuku slowly got up, legs wobbling as if he had only just learned how to walk. Sighing, as he had left his shoes on the roof, he made the painful trek up to the school's roof. Collecting his belongings, he left the building and headed home.

Leaving only the birds to find the incredible blood stain on the ground.

Walking down the streets of Musutafu, he noticed, to his confusion, a great crowd of people
gathered around a single marketplace. Hearing the murmurs of people around him, he quickly gathered that it was a Villain attack. Making his way to the front of the crowd, his suspicions were confirmed.

Unfortunately, he also confirmed that Kacchan was being held hostage and being used as a weapon against the various Pro Heroes that had been gathered. He dimly heard Deatharms say that they could only wait until a Pro Hero with a compatible Quirk managed to get to the scene.

But by then, Kacchan would be dead.

Before he knew it, he was running towards the deadly combination, not hearing the crowd lurch behind him or the assembled Heroes cry out in shock. Not thinking, barely breathing despite his body being overworked, he took off his backpack and threw it at the mud-like villain. As it flew towards it, the backpack came undone, ejecting its contents. Izuku took this temporary distraction to launch himself at Kacchan.

He pushed him.

Izuku wasn't sure why he pushed Kacchan, but as he did, he felt a small heat gather against his palms. All at once, a hole was ripped into the center of the Villain as Kacchan suddenly flew backwards at an incredible speed, luckily crashing into a fruit stand.

Izuku stared in shock at Kacchan, then his hands. "H-How did I..." He muttered, but this was enough of a distraction for the Villain to suddenly engulf him.

"Dumbass!" He shouted, "You shouldn't have gotten distracted! The loss of that kid's regrettable, but I can make do with you as a flesh suit! Now sit back, this'll only take a few seconds!"

"Do not fear!" Came a familiar voice. "Why?! ..."

When it was all over and done with, Izuku was praised by the Pro Heroes for his impressive usage of such a powerful Quirk, but was also lightly scolded for not letting the Pro Heroes do their job. Kacchan was praised for remaining calm and was even praised for having such a powerful Quirk.
Izuku bit his tongue, there was no reason for them to know that Kacchan had driven him to--

Well, they wouldn't have believed him, as he was alive and well.

And that was what was bothering Izuku as he walked home. He was alive and well, even though he clearly remembered jumping off the school's roof. He even had left his school supplies and shoes on the roof, and he had ended up on the ground as well. But if he had survived the jump, shouldn't he have had more than a few seconds of aching? He should have at least also gotten a couple broken limbs. And what was that weird thing with Kacchan just flying away from him...?

"Deku, you're mumbling." Came a rough voice from behind him, and Izuku jumped nearly ten feet in the air.

"K-Kacchan!" He squealed.

"Deku, you..." Kacchan began, "Why did you do it?"

"What?"

"Why did you make me think you were Quirkless, you piece of shit?!"

Izuku's eyes widened. Did he have a Quirk...? It would explain the force, but what would that be...?

"Forget it, Deku." Kacchan turned away from him. "Listen, stay out of my way. I don't want to see you, and I don't want to hear you, and I especially don't want to be fucking saved by you, got it?" Without waiting for an answer, Kacchan stalked off.

Izuku sighed, and walked back to his house.

Come to think of it, he was feeling pretty tired...
The rain fell hard that night, and in the middle of the night, Izuku woke up coughing. Walking to the bathroom, he sipped a glass of water before going back to his room.

Illness overtook him that night, and he woke up not a few seconds after his fever reached a boiling pitch. Once he did, however, the fever died down, and he fell back to sleep.

He took no notice of the vomited blood on his sheets until he awoke the next morning.
Chapter Notes

So far, the closest guess I've gotten to Izuku's Quirk is "Every time he dies, he gets stronger".

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The next few days were... Interesting.

After Izuku got over his initial shock of his sheets being covered in blood and bile, he quickly pushed them into the washing machine and thought back to what could have possibly-

The Sludge Villain.

Which brought his thoughts to Kacchan.

Kacchan had been held longer by the Sludge Villain than Izuku had been, and if the Sludge Villain had had some sort of disease that made the victim sick enough to vomit up their heart...

Without a second thought, Izuku put on his shoes and rushed to Kacchan's house, where, sure enough, he found his parents in a state of disarray.

"Izuku?" Mr. Bakugou said, "You've come at a bad time... Katsuki is... Not doing well..."

"Katsuki!" Mrs. Bakugou wailed from another room.

"I understand, Mr. Bakugou." Izuku said, walking in, "B-But I think I have an idea of what to do... I-If Kacchan is willing..."

Mr. Bakugou looked, worried, towards his son's room, before taking Izuku aside. "To be honest, I'm not sure if it's a good idea." He sighed, "The boy takes too much after his mother... Mitsuki holds grudges very well, and if the way Katsuki's been talking about you is any indication..." Mr.
Bakugou gave a sort of noise that showed how good of an idea it would to mix the powder keg of a sick Kacchan with the object of his ire.

"U-Understood..." Izuku stuttered. Did Kacchan really hate him that much? To be honest, he wasn't that surprised, but he was still hurt. "Th-Then at least let me make him some tea... I want to help...!"

Mr. Bakugou seemed to think it over, before sighing. "Sure. You remember where it is? It has been a few years since you were last over..."

"I-I think?" Izuku said, "J-Just tell me where the cabinet is."

Once Izuku got the necessary information, he made his way to the kitchen. Getting the tea, he slowly prepared it as he mentally prepared himself for what he was about to do. Though he wasn't sure what gave him this idea, he just knew that it would work.

Making sure that Mr. Bakugou wasn't looking into the kitchen, he quickly took a knife and nicked his finger, letting the blood slowly drip into the tea as it boiled. Washing the knife and sucking on his fingertip, he finished the tea and brought the cup to Mr. Bakugou, who was currently speaking to his wife.

"U-Um..." He said, catching their attention, "I-I know it's sudden, but-"

"Oh! Izuku!" Mrs. Bakugou interrupted him, "I'm afraid Katsuki can't play today. He's really sick, but he's fighting every step of the way. I don't know where he gets it from..."

"R-Right..." Izuku replied. He had an idea where. "W-Well, I made Kacchan some tea, so..."

"Oh, great!" Mrs. Bakugou said, "I'll let him know you'll be i-"

"N-No!" Izuku squeaked, and both of the Bakugous eyebrows raised. Shit. "I-I mean, I d-don't want to get sick, you know? I think it's a good idea for Kacchan to just... Get the tea from one of you!" He offered the cup to Mrs. Bakugou, who took it.
"Okay." She said warily.

"Th-Thank you, I'll just be going now..."

"Thank you, Izuku. Say hi to your mother for me!"

With that, Izuku left the house as fast as he could.

"Masaru, it's Katsuki!" Mitsuki shouted, running into the living room.

"Mitsu, dear, your volume..." Masaru sighed, "What about Katsuki? Is he alright?"

"He's better than alright!" Mitsuki said, uncomprehending of the sudden turnaround, "His fever's gone, his breathing's stable... It's all fine! It's like he was never sick!"

Masaru blinked. "What?"

The next incident happened two days later, when Izuku returned to school. Apparently, the fight with the sludge villain had been widely broadcasted on the evening news, and currently everyone who had recognized him were now praising him for having such a cool and powerful Quirk, and were now saying that with a Quirk like that, he was a shoo-in for UA.

It was fake, and Izuku hated it. He almost started to cry, actually.

But the weird thing was how Ka- Bakugou was avoiding him as if he was the Horseman of the Plague. Izuku sighed for the third time that day as he stared at Ka- Bakugou (he really wanted to drop saying "Kacchan", but old habits died hard), and the girl next to him who had a sound echoing Quirk if he remembered correctly looked at him strangely.
When this newfound respect continued into the next day, and the day after that, Izuku realized that literally the only thing that had kept his life from being like this always was the fact that he just happened to be born without a Quirk.

_Except he had a Quirk, apparently, he just didn't know what the criteria to activate it were._

The third incident came Tuesday evening, when he fell asleep in the bathtub.

He had filled up the bathtub with quite a lot of hot water, and this had soothed him to sleep.

He woke up at the bottom of the tub, totally submerged. Immediately, he surfaced, and spat out all the water that was in his mouth.

Except the water kept coming, in a steady stream that contained more water than what should have been in a human body of any size.

Izuku closed his mouth, and opened it again. When nothing happened, he thought about the odd torrent of water, and the liquid immediately came gushing out until Izuku shut his mouth again.

It was at this point that a sobbing Midoriya Inko crashed in through the door, holding her cell phone.

"I-Izuku!!" Izuku's mom shouted, wrapping her arms around her wet son. "Micchan! You won't believe this, but Izuku's okay!" She sobbed into the phone. "I had thought the worst when I saw Izuku was at the bottom of the tub and he wasn't moving- What? Why didn't I call an ambulance? Micchan, you know how to do CPR, I would have had you guide me..." Her quavering voice faded as she walked to a different room.

Izuku paid it no mind. He had fallen asleep in the tub... He was at the bottom... His mom had found him at the bottom and was going to perform CPR... Judging by how cold the water had been when he woke up, it dawned on Izuku that he had drowned in the tub.
He had died.

Izuku immediately thought back to when he woke up in the middle of the night with a fever, then woke up in the morning with blood and vomit all over his sheets. Then he thought back to the day before that, when he had certainly hit the ground after jumping off of the school roof.

Had he died those times then?

If so, how did he get antibiotic blood and super-strength? And, just recently, how had he been shooting copious amounts of water out of his mouth?

This required analyzation. And luckily, Izuku was practically already a Pro at that.

Chapter End Notes

It should be obvious at this point, I think, but I'll have it spelled out sometime in the future.

Remember, the main thing about evidence in a mystery: we, as the audience, can only work with the evidence we are explicitly given.
Capillata

Chapter Summary

Time flies, and we find ourselves on the precipice of Izuku's journey to heroism...

Chapter Notes

Correct guess: "so is it that everytime he dies he gains a quirk and they have something to do with they way he died?" Congratulations to "idonutknow" for being the only one to fully identify how this Quirk works -- the rest of those who guessed get runner-up because you gave me answers that were half-right.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

July 19th

It has been about a month since I first accessed my "Quirk", and I am currently still trying to make sense of it.

My current hypothesis is that whenever I experience what would have been a fatal accident, I don't actually die, I just pass out for about five seconds. After that period, I awaken with some sort of ability tangentially related to what would have killed me.

Of course, I need to test this hypothesis, and I also need to figure out whether or not I actually die. Although my initial guess last month was that I actually die, it doesn't explain my ensuing revival - - You would think I would have at least a couple broken bones by now but all I got from jumping off the school was a dull pain. Maybe it's regenerative?

Beyond that, it doesn't explain what I did for Kace Bakugou, nor how I knew that I would be able to do this. Perhaps I have some sort of latent ability to stop other peoples' death?

Needs testing.
July 25th

It doesn't make sense.

An instinctive usage would make total sense, but that doesn't explain what happened that would have granted me the power to heal *Kō* Bakugou of his illnesses.

I really need to test this, because I'm running off of some potentially misguided hypothesis. Maybe I do die, but I then absorb the "flames of life" from some departed soul?

I've heard of children getting combinations of their parents' Quirks (*Baka* Bakugou has something similar), but that sounds really far-fetched.

Then again, so does suddenly waking up at 14 on the pavement with a Quirk that makes you unkillable.

---

August 6th

I managed to test my hypothesis.

I got bitten by a spider. Specifically, a red-backed spider.

It's kind of anticlimactic, really. You go with your mom on a trip, you stay at some sort of rustic inn, and in the middle of the night, you wake up to a highly venomous spider biting you in the jugular vein.

Unfortunately, I don't get some sort of power that lets me stick to surfaces or foretell danger or anything (which would have been valuable, seeing as I seem a lot more accident-prone lately -- I keep accidentally cutting myself on things).

I can create string now, though.
It's kind of lame, to be honest. It's not even prehensile or sticky or anything. It's just string.

I mean, I can make as many threads as possible, which is nice I guess, but it's pretty useless compared to the other ones I have.

Even my water jet (I need to come up with a better name, but it's still better than "projectile water vomiting") could probably be used in a fight. Oh well, maybe it's good for capturing villains.

Maybe I should test how strong it is.

On another note, am I becoming too blase towards the idea of my own death? To be fair, I don't think I've ever died once, and I seem unkillable, but just once I'd like to do something without the very real possibility of getting injured.

August 20

So apparently I can only have one ability active at a time.

To test this, I decided to start playing with the string and then shoot some water into the tub. When the water appeared, the string suddenly disintegrated.

I tested this again, though, and I cut the string off before shooting water, and it seems the string will stay so long as it's not physically attached to my body.

I nearly avoided dying again, though. I decided to go over to that beach nearby, and I tripped over a discarded microwave and almost fell into a fridge. Luckily, I activated my big hit (also needs a rename) and gave it a palm strike that sent it flying backwards. I fell into the sand instead.

After getting up and activating my antivirus blood just in case of any pathogens, I decided that, since no one else seemed to be doing something about this, I should clear up the beach. Who knows, I've been meaning to work out, maybe this'll be my opportunity.
I should also start dieting, as exercise is only half of a workout, and you need food for energy, but the right kind of food too. Maybe I can ask some dietitian online?

I know I bought some weights a long while back with mom’s credit card, so maybe I can use those too...

Before Izuku knew it, eight months had passed, and it was time for the UA Entrance Exam. Despite his complete inexperience with Quirk usage, K-Bakugou's (he was getting better at replacing Bakugou's name in his mental filter, but every now and again he still slipped) ever-present distance, his beach cleanup regimen (he was almost done, he just had to figure out how to remove the trash itself), and just general nerves, Izuku was absolutely certain he was ready to go in there and be the greatest hero candidate UA had ever seen.

Of course, there was still the likely chance he’d end up falling underneath a train and end up becoming some sort of fucked-up teke teke caricature, so he decided to ask his mom to drive him to the school directly after he showered (he didn't take baths anymore - even though he didn't remember drowning, he still lived through it, and he didn't want to know if he could survive the same thing twice). It was a relatively quiet trip, with Izuku listening to music as he watched shapes fly by, but sometimes his mom would ask a question.

Before he knew it, there he was.

UA Academy.

Izuku breathed in, steeled his nerves, and took his first step.

He ended up tripping himself.

This is fine, he thought as he fell forward. This is totally fine-

He stopped falling.
Izuku blinked. A pretty face waved into his field of vision.

"Oh! Sorry about using my Quirk on you so liberally, but doesn't it seem like bad luck to trip before an exam?" With absolutely no trouble, the girl moved Izuku into a standing position and then touched her fingertips together. Izuku stopped floating, and landed softly on his feet. "Good luck in the exam! I bet you'll do great!"

And she was gone.

Though Izuku had died (he had returned to the first hypothesis he had, and had accepted he had died, though he still didn't understand why he had regenerated from all wounds upon revival) four times and almost died many more, he was still a shy, inexperienced fifteen-year-old. So one could absolutely forgive Izuku for immediately turning bright scarlet.

*A GIRL TALKED TO ME!!! A CUTE GIRL!!! HOLY SHIT!!!*

Cheeks still red, Izuku hurried into the entrance hall, took a number, sat down, and waited.

He knew that this was going to be the absolute best day ever.

This was the absolute worst day ever.

Forget when he had committed suicide and then gotten sick with some sort of fast-acting degenerative illness. Forget when he accidentally got stuck in that broken oven and had panicked for a solid fifteen minutes before he realized he could have just kicked the door open in all that time. Forget when he was nine and he failed to purchase All Might Poster n4023 Gold Variant (*It was a limited edition collectible. Bakugou, what do you know?!*). This was the worst day of his life.

First of all, he had tripped in front of that cute girl. That was crime one.

Second, that weird boy with the glasses called him out in front of an entire auditorium of people just for mumbling under his breath. Seriously? Was he *that loud* over *Present Mic, the Voice Hero*
himself? How’d he even hear him?! The guy was across the room!

The third point just combined the two, as he had gone over to thank the cute girl, and the weird guy just started shouting about how he was some sort of analytical mastermind! Sure, Izuku may be analytical, but he was not a mastermind, he was a total dumbass when it came down to it!

Wait. Hold on.

Izuku shook his head and continued his search for any and all point robots. Herein was point four. After getting over the shock of the initial rush into the testing grounds, he had yet to find a single intact robot, the only one he had encountered was quickly destroyed by some cute French boy who could shoot lasers. He was going to finish the exam with zero points! This was officially the worst day ever!

Suddenly, the ground began to shake, and a shadow loomed over the testing hopefuls. Izuku looked up, and his jaw dropped almost comically.

It was a giant robot. The exact robot Present Mic had told everyone not to engage, as it was pointless (in both the sense that it was futile, and that it offered precisely zero points).

Well. This is reason five as to why this is the worst day of my life.

As Izuku stood stock still in shock, barely registering the movements of the other examinees, he could still hear a small plead for help. Izuku snapped to attention and looked to the source of the sound.

It was the nice girl who kept him from falling. She was trapped under some rubble, and judging by the slight green pallor of her face, she was probably slightly nauseous from overusing her Quirk. It would make sense; all Quirks had some limitation - Bakugou's explosions had an upper blast force limit, Izuku's mom could only move objects under a certain weight, and even Izuku himself had to die to get any abilities to actively use, and even then he could only use one at a time.

Snapping back to reality, Izuku noticed that the Robot was advancing towards the escaping students, and smashing the buildings around it as it went. The girl was in its trajectory.

"FIVE MINUTES!"
The choice was obvious.

As Izuku took off, he failed to notice one Iida Tenya stop in his tracks. As he watched the shady, problematic kid from earlier rush towards the zero-point robot, he quickly assessed the situation: a boy he had labeled from the start as a troublemaker had rushed without a thought for some girl he barely knew. Tenya thought that he would do the same. At least, Tenya hoped.

Izuku didn't have any sort of strength-enhancing ability. Testing out his powers on the debris on the beach proved that his forceful blows did not, in fact, give him temporary strength, but instead imparted an incredible amount of kinetic energy into his kicks, punches, and palm strikes. So, thinking fast, Izuku headed into the trajectory of a piece of rubble, and kicked.

True to form, the rubble flew at the leg of the robot and tore a hole in its chassis. As sparks flew, Izuku quickly switched to the water jet. He had been working on improving the range and pressure behind the water itself, and it came out with the force of a shower hose, spraying onto the open circuitry. As smoke began to fly, Izuku took a piece of railing, tied a string to it, cut the string with a piece of glass, then aimed the makeshift harpoon and hit it with a palm strike, sending it flying into the malfunctioning robot.

Three minutes, Izuku thought as he grabbed onto the flying string, *I guess I can go to Ketsubutsu if I fail this exam... I heard Ms. Joke teaches there, she's kinda cool.* The railing pierced itself in the robot's main head, and Izuku trailed after it, like some kid hanging onto a demented kite. As Izuku swung towards the robot, he cocked his fist back and delivered the mother of all left hooks.

The robot didn't stand a chance.

Granted, it wasn't totally destroyed, but the goal wasn't to destroy the robot, it was instead to send it flying back so that it wouldn't harm the girl. However, it was clearly damaged from the impact, as well as the high velocity with which it sped into the buildings behind it.

Leaving Izuku falling at terminal velocity at the two minute mark.

"Huh, so I'm gonna die like this again." Izuku thought out loud. "Wonder what I'll get this time, maybe some sort of hyper-endurance? Maybe I'll be able to bounce like rubber. I'm kinda tired..." Izuku's musings were stopped when he noticed his descent halting. He felt a slight pressure on his arm, and when he looked, it was the girl again, on a floating piece of rubble, looking like absolute hell.
"R... Release..." She just managed to get out as she struggled to put her hands together, and just like that, they were both on the ground, Izuku totally exhausted on the pavement and the girl throwing up from overwhelming landsickness.

"Th-thanks..." Izuku panted out, mouth sort of dry, and he struggled to get up, "I've been wanting to tell you that... I... Shit how much longer... I wasted so much time... I need... Even a single... P-"

"TIME UP!!"

Chapter End Notes

Quirk: Turritopsis

Current Abilities:

- High Velocity Impact (Cause of Death: Jumping off a building)
- Antibiotic Blood (Cause of Death: Illness)
- Water Jet (Cause of Death: Drowning)
- Highly-Tensile Thread (Cause of Death: Spider Bite)
Chapter Summary

The aftermath and the first day.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It had been a rough week.

Not only had Izuku had to lie about how, exactly, he had defeated the gigantic robot (the string he could chalk up to being crazy-prepared and the water to buying something from a vending machine, but the various impacts were something that couldn't just be explained away) when he recounted his story to his mom, but his mom had just started crying once he, in his frantic storytelling, had told her how he apparently developed a Quirk in the middle of saving a cute girl.

As it turned out, Izuku's mom was crying because not only had Izuku been a late bloomer in Quirk manifestation, but also because it was so powerful and the way it had awoken sounded like something from a romance. She then asked if Izuku had gotten his Quirk registration changed.

He had not, in fact. Which just added into the roughness of the week. Paperwork, no matter how streamlined, still sucked.

Finally, after seven entire days of anxious waiting (Izuku had yet to go down to the beach, but at one point he looked into trash removal services, so he was expecting things to be finished very soon), it happened.

"Iiiizukuuuuu!!" Izuku's mom had cried, and as Izuku sped into the hallway (nearly crashing into the wall), he saw his mom shaking and on all fours, holding a letter. "It's for you!! It's from UA!!"

And thus, Izuku had found himself sitting at his desk, lights totally off save for the desk lamp illuminating the solitary envelope. Izuku's nerves were in haywire; what if he failed, as he thought? What if he didn't fail, but he wasn't good enough for the hero course? What if they put him in support? What if he was general studies? Maybe they would make him the school mascot? What if he was ONLY the school mascot and they had him go to kindergarten for the rest of his life? What if it was a bomb?!
That last one made Izuku pause. How would death by explosion even affect him? The last times he had died, his body had been pretty much intact, but a bomb at such close range would likely eviscerate him and leave him a mess of limbs and ashes. And even if he did revive, what ability would that give him? Could he turn whatever he touched into a bomb? Could he make exploding bubbles? What if he just was able to make paper explode?

Izuku shook his head. Now was not the time for "potentially"s. Now was the time for definite action. With that in mind, he grabbed two corners of the envelope and tore it open.

A holographic projector fell onto the desk with a clatter, along with a note. Izuku read the note.

To play, press the center button. Then you shall know your results.

Principal Nedzu

That was straightforward. Izuku pressed the indicated button, and a screen lit up into existence.

It was All Might.

Izuku's jaw dropped. He hadn't seen All Might since the day he was saved from the Sludge Villain. What was he doing announcing exam results?

All Might stood motionless for a solid three minutes before an offscreen motion was made. "What? We're rolling?" He asked. "Ahem. Good Evening, Young Midoriya!" All Might boomed, "I am here! And I am delivering your test results! What? Camera two?" The angle changed, and All Might belatedly looked to the new camera. "Right then! To start with, Young Midoriya, your written portion was sufficient enough to pass!" (What All Might was not telling Izuku, but what I shall tell you now, is that Midoriya had, in fact, done pretty great) "You need brushing up in the areas pertaining to linguistics, but otherwise you are doing well enough! However, as you know, that is only half the battle!" A large scoreboard appeared behind All Might. "For your physical examination, you scored..."

The number hit zero, and, instead of going anywhere upwards, remained at zero, despite the drumroll that would insinuate otherwise.

"...Zero villain points!" All Might shouted after an awkwardly dramatic pause.
It was as Izuku feared. He h-

"That's not all, however!"

What?

"I was a television show host in a past life; if I may direct your attention to this screen?!" All Might took out a remote and pressed a button, converting the gigantic zero into a shot of the cute girl he had saved and who he immediately knew to be Present Mic.

"Um... Present Mic?" The girl was saying.

"Hah? Yeah, female listener?"

"Um... During the exam, I-I'm sure you saw, but I was saved by this boy with really curly hair and freckles, kinda plain looking, but, well, he saved me from certain death, but he was talking about how he needed a single point, and I-I think he meant that he doesn't have any points?" If Izuku muttered, the girl could definitely ramble on. He felt a connection to her. "So, anyways, my point is, I just... I want to give him half of my points!"

Izuku blinked.

"Oh?" Present Mic said, "What if that means neither of you two get in?"

The girl faltered. "...Th-then give him all my points! It's better a boy who selflessly leaps to other peoples' defense than a girl who gets sick every time she uses her Quirk!"

Izuku blinked again, and this time, he found that he had teared up sometime during the exchange. A girl he had barely talked to, a really pretty girl, had done this? For him? 

"Worry not, female listener!" Present Mic said, "You'll still be getting in! But we're not going to give the young man the points."
"What?! But-"

"Don't fret it! Things'll work out! Promise!" The screen paused.

"Young Midoriya," All Might said, "What you did for that young lady, that selflessness your actions inspired in her, was absolutely stunning. We almost never see it in these exams (I think)."

He pressed another button, and the board lit up again, showcasing a list of names and two columns with numbers in them. "The physical examination was not simply graded on the amount of villains defeated; indeed, there was a second portion to this examination! Rescue points! And Young Midoriya, for your selfless acts, inspiring visage, and overall coolness factor, our panel of judges have decided to award to you..."

"Seventy rescue points! Though you still do not have any villain points, you are catapulted by the rescue points to overall seventh place!"

Izuku's jaw dropped. Did that mean...

"Young Midoriya, you still have a lot to learn. That is why I am here. Come."

Izuku's eyes welled up.

"This..."

The tears flowed.

"Is your hero academia."

Izuku began to openly cry.

He had done it.
"You have your books, right? Pens? Ruler? Key? All that?"

"Yes, mom, I have it."

"You remembered your tissue? Sickness mask? Underwear?"

"Mom!"

"Pfft, hahaha... Just messing with you, Izukun."

Izuku smiled and put on his shoes. It was nice to hear his mom worry about him. "I'm off, then!" He opened the door.

"W-Wait, Izuku!" His mom said. Izuku turned towards her, and his eyes met Midoriya Inko's tired, yet loving gaze.

"I'm so proud of you. Go do your best at becoming Japan's number one hero."

With a swelling sense of happiness that not even a lightning bolt from the clear skies could burst, Izuku nodded. "Thank you, mom. Love you." And with that, Izuku ran down the steps of his apartment building and made his way to the streets.

Izuku looked at one of the giant screens playing the news; apparently, All Might had officially given a statement that he was going to be teaching at UA himself, and he was looking forward to teaching Heroics classes. Izuku thought back to the message. So that meant that All Might was going to be a teacher? What if he was his teacher? What if he was his HOMEROOM teacher? Izuku didn't know if he could handle the suspense.

Izuku got hit by a car.

This was probably long overdue, Izuku thought to himself as he flew through the air in a perfect arc, It has been a while since anything really bad happened.

And with that, Izuku hit the street in such a way that his neck snapped perfectly, killing him.
Five seconds later, Izuku woke up, yet he kept his eyes closed. His neck actually really hurt this time, and he waited for it dull down to a faint throb before he opened his eyes.

It was quite a sight. About three different people (one of them likely a Hero, considering her outfit) were all reprimanding who he assumed to be the driver, who had run a red light. Not only that, they probably all believed that he had just gotten badly injured instead of died. Lucky for him, then; he hadn't made it public that his Quirk made him immortal, he was not starting now.

Slowly, he got up, to the sounds of surprise from some onlookers. Ignoring them, Izuku looked around and started to gather his things, which had scattered with the impact.

"Kid, you alright?!" A voice he recognized as Deatharms shouted, running over to him.

"Ugh," Izuku winced at the loudness of the man. Turns out he had a slight headache, too. "I'm fine... Wait, hold on..." Izuku cracked his neck. "Now I'm fine. Can you hand me my watch? I think it fell off..."

"Huh? Sure." Deatharms moved away, and by the time he had come back, Izuku had finished picking up his loose affects and placed them into the bag. "This All Might watch, right?"

"That's it, thank you, Deatharms." Izuku said, absentmindedly putting on the watch, "Sorry if I'm not the stuttering wreck I normally would be, I think I died."

"Really?" Deatharms replied with a bit of a chuckle, "Coulda fooled me, you're pretty active for a dead guy!"

"Guess I am, eheh..." Izuku sheepishly smiled, then looked at his watch.

His eyes bugged out.

"I'M LATE!!!" Izuku squealed, jumping to his feet. "I'm gonna miss my train!!!" And with that, he ran off to the station.
Deatharms blinked the guy's speed. "Fast lil' kid, ain't he?" He muttered.

Somehow, Izuku had made it in time for his train, and after an incident-free train ride, he was once again here.

UA Academy.

This was it. Izuku took a deep breath and took his first steps as a student of those hallowed halls.

It went a lot better. He didn't trip.

Pleased with his small success, Izuku made haste and went into the hallways. The class schedule he had gotten placed him in Class 1-A, and while he was happy that they at least considered him talented enough to be in the premier class of the year, he was worried. Bakugou was also pretty powerful, and he didn't know what he would do if either he or that weird glasses kid were in the same class. On the other hand, he wouldn't mind that girl being there too. Once he finally located the (comically oversized) door, he took another deep breath.

This was it. Again.

Izuku mentally crossed his fingers. *Not Bakugou, not megane, yes nice girl, maybe that French kid?*

Izuku opened the door.

"WOULD YOU KINDLY GET YOUR FEET OFF OF THE DESK?!!"

"Haah? And what are you gonna do 'bout it, prep school?"

They were both here.
Aizawa Shouta was unamused with his current class of wannabe jokers.

Sure, they all probably knew what their Quirks were and how to count to ten and all that nonsense, but personality-wise? He hated them.

Except for that girl with the big hands. She just exuded some sort of calming energy.

"So, you think this is a game, huh?" He said, responding to the kid with the bright yellow hair. "Then how about this... Loser gets expelled."

A stunned silence fell over the twenty hopefuls. Good. Less of a headache this way.

"You'll find," He continued with no prompting, "That UA is known for encouraging free will. This extends to the teachers. In my case, I've decided to exercise this by making sure you understand exactly what you're good for. If you can't even show me any potential, you're good for nothing." He pulled up the list. "First trial is the fifty-meter dash. First up, Bakugou Katsuki and Midoriya Izuku."

As the students lined up, Aizawa made special note of Midoriya Izuku's actions. He (and everyone else with a tactical mindset) had noticed several odd things with Izuku's skillset, including (and especially) the jets of water from nowhere and the string without a source. Principal Nedzu had even analyzed the string and couldn't find any fabric it resembled. If Aizawa was kidding himself, he would say Midoriya Izuku had multiple Quirks.

But that was silly. There was logically a near-zero chance of that.

"3.12 seconds."

Scratch that. There was now a near-one hundred percent chance of that.
Izuku blinked as he found himself at the finish line. Was he faster now? Normally that would have taken him about eight seconds, but now he was at three?

If Izuku had time to think any more, he didn't get it; he noticed how some of the other students used their Quirks (the French kid using his laser as a propulsion system was genius, honestly, and he wondered if he could replicate it with the water jet), and he quickly began to come up with potential uses and counters to the Quirks being shown off. This conveniently distracted him from the mystery that was his newfound speed, and also, incidentally, from Bakugou's restrained anger.

The next few tests passed without any real event. A girl had used her Quirk to create a clamp in the grip test, and he had overhead another girl who was holding the grip in her hair about how she was jealous of a really tall (and, in Izuku's opinion, hunky) boy's six arms, whose grip strength was easily proportional to the amount of arms he held it in. The French guy really seemed to love his lasers, and Izuku thought he had seen him sparkle at one point or another.

Then came his turn in the softball pitch. Izuku took one look at it and knew what he was going to do. He took the ball. He tossed it upwards. He swung a punch at it.

"58.2 meters."

Izuku blinked. "What? I... I thought I..."

"...I've 'erased' your Quirk," Came a dull voice, and Izuku turned towards the source.

His homeroom teacher. Aizawa Shouta.

With glaring red eyes.

Izuku suddenly knew which Pro Hero he was.

"I'll be honest with you, I got suspicious of you during the actual entrance exam, but when you
exhibited that speed earlier when you certainly hadn't had it during the exam... It confirmed my suspicions." Suddenly, Izuku felt a soft, yet strong, presence on his back, and he was drawn forward towards the totally-unwrapped teacher.

"...So that's who you are..." Izuku muttered, "You're the Erasing Hero, Eraserhead... You're an Underground Hero whose Quirk is to erase other peoples' Quirks just by looking at them..."

"You've heard of me. Good." Eraserhead replied. "The speed, the water, the string, the strength..." Eraserhead paused. "Your Quirk evolves to suit your need, doesn't it?"

Well, if that's what he wants to hear... "...Yes." Izuku replied. Eraserhead was pretty scary up close, like some sort of predatory cat, and Izuku really wanted to stop being in his clutches.

"Good, that's all I needed to know." Eraserhead sighed, and he closed his eyes. "I'm giving y-"

That was all Izuku heard before he passed out.

When Izuku woke up, he was on the ground, his classmates surrounding him. His head was on something soft, so someone likely had it in their lap.

"D-did someone get the license plate of that car?" Izuku made a weak attempt at a joke.

The kid with the gold hair (Kami-something? Kamoshide, probably) stifled a snicker, and was immediately slapped by a girl with extremely long earlobes.

"Dude, you good?" Asked a redheaded boy, Kirisame if he remembered correctly, "You sorta fell over moanin' and stuff."

"Yeah!" Said the cute girl from the exams, (Urameshiya? No, totally incorrect.) "You looked like you were in pain, so we dragged you over into the shade. You're currently on Shiozaki-san's lap."
"Eh?" Izuku turned his head, and he looked into the face of the girl with the prehensile green hair.

His brain caught up to him.

"Aii!!" He screamed, jumping out of her lap, "S-s-s-s-s-sorry!!! I-I didn't mean to-

"Oh, it's quite all right," Shiozaki replied, smiling serenely, "It's the least I could do for a classmate in need."

"If you're quite done," Eraserhead shouted flatly, "Midoriya needs to pitch his ball."

"What?!" Shouted glasses boy (Iino?), "But Aizawa-sensei! Midoriya-san is likely totally unable to-"

"Actually," Midoriya interrupted, kinda touched that this guy he thought disliked him at least cared for his well-being, "I'm feeling all right, at least enough to throw the ball..."

With that, Izuku walked over, and picked up the ball. He clenched his fist, and activated his kinetic energy impact ability (he really was shit at names, huh?). Throwing the ball in the other hand, he timed the punch just right.

"614.9 meters."

Now that was a pitch.

In the end, no one got expelled (to the relief of Hagakure, who was apparently totally invisible). He only barely avoided directly facing Bakugou's ire, lucky for him, although for the rest of the day all Bakugou could talk about was "shitty Deku" this and "Quirkless Deku" that. And, to top it all off, he apparently could now run at high speeds.

Besides the part where he got hit by a car and then passed out in front of his peers from what he assumed was the pain of every death at once, all in all it was a decent firs-
"Hey!"

Izuku turned. It was the cute girl and the glasses boy, only now Izuku could place names to faces: Uraraka and Iida.

"Midoriya-san!" Iida shouted, "I must apologize to you for my conduct towards you before the entrance exam!" Iida bowed a perfect ninety degrees. "It was wrong of me to embarrass you in such a manner!"

"Pfft, I'm sure he forgives you!" Uraraka said, slapping Iida on the back (carefully not touching him with all five fingers, Izuku noted), "Isn't that right, Deku?"

Izuku twitched slightly at the painful nickname. Great. Bakugou had convinced the whole class that his name was "Deku".

At Izuku's slight flinch, Uraraka frowned. "Huh? Isn't that your name?"

Izuku mutely shook his head. "No, that's just what K-" He stopped himself. "Bakugou. It's what Bakugou calls me."

Iida and Uraraka shared a glance. "So, it's a derogatory insult." Iida deadpanned, glasses glinting dangerously. Izuku suppressed a shiver.

"Well, I like it!" Uraraka said, in an almost defiant manner, "It gives a sort of 'can-do' vibe! Like "Dekiru!!", y'know?" Uraraka swung her fist in a sort of "good luck!" motion, then paused. "Actually, then what is your name? Cause if it's not Deku..."

"Ah!" Izuku stammered. A girl was asking his name? "M-My name is Midoriya Izuku... Y-your's?"

"Uraraka Ochako!" Uraraka grinned.

"And I am Iida Tenya!" Iida shouted, extending his hand, "A pleasure to meet you!"
Izuku shook Iida's hand, and as Uraraka threw her arms around them, Izuku knew this was going to be a good school year.

Chapter End Notes

Quirk: Turritopsis

When Izuku dies, he is revived without injury. He also revives with an ability related to the cause of his death. Only one ability can be active at a time. Currently unknown if his body has to remain intact to gain an ability, though.

Current abilities:

- High-Velocity Impact (Cause of Death: Jumping off a building) - Imparts a large amount of kinetic energy into an object by impacting it.
- Antibiotic Blood (Cause of Death: Illness) - Cures illness by ingesting his blood. Izuku can just activate it and it'll work immediately on him, though.
- Aqua Stream (Cause of Death: Drowning) - He can spew a steady stream of water from his mouth.
- Thread Weaving (Cause of Death: Spider bite) - Can create highly-tensile threads from his skin, but it's easier to create them from his hands.
- Marathon (Cause of Death: Car accident) - Can reach a running speed of sixty kilometers per hour in ten seconds.
Chapter Summary

Exposition and Therapy

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

After the incident that was his first day, Izuku fell into a surprisingly normal rhythm. UA, despite its lofty reputation, was still ultimately just a high school, after all. The only real difference, he supposed, was that regular high schools didn't have their classes taught (and lunches served) by Pro Heroes.

However, despite his amazingly mundane studies, he really only felt it was a prologue to the true event at the end of the week. It was the event the entire class was talking about, what the entire school couldn't stop gossiping about.

All Might's class, Foundational Hero Studies.

There were several rumors. All Might was going to pit the Heroics classes against each other in a tournament of skill. All Might was going to have everyone introduce themselves and their Quirks. All Might was going to take the class with him on a patrol. Theories and speculations ran wild, and Class 1-A was no different.

Speaking of Izuku's homeroom, he couldn't think of a more colorful group that he was a part of before (not a hard action, as he hadn't been part of a group before the Sludge Villain incident, and even then, he hadn't wanted to be around the people who had mistreated him for being apparently Quirkless). Seriously, he was actually included in his classmates' discussions, and it was almost surreal, being liked just for existing instead of for having a Quirk. In any event, he had quickly become good friends with Uraraka and Iida, and at least knew the names of Asui Tsuyu, Shiozaki Ibara, and Kouji Kouda (who he had befriended by showing him a couple of Cat's Cradles, the silent boy luckily not asking where he was getting the string).

However, even Izuku's newfound friendships couldn't curb his excitement for Friday.

It almost seemed like a dream. The class sat at their desks, waiting for All Might to arrive, when, like a trumpet on Judgement Day...
"Students! I am here!" Boomed All Might's voice, and everyone sat up straight.

The door slammed open, and All Might leaned forward at a forty-five degree angle, hanging in the doorframe.

"And I am coming through the door like a regular person!!!" All Might continued, striding into the room completely unlike a regular person.

"Woah, isn't that All Might's Silver-Age costume?!" Whispered a student's voice that Midoriya placed as Ashido Mina's.

"It is! That's so retro!" Replied Kirishima (not Kirisame, as he had thought) Eijirou.

All Might stood at the desk for a solid two minutes before moving again. "Students, as you have no doubt heard, I am your teacher for Foundational Hero Studies, All Might!" All Might took out a remote, "Before I can begin the class, I have something to present to you all!"

All Might pressed a button on the remote, and panels opened up in the walls, revealing several numbered briefcases.

"Each briefcase pertains to your student number, if you are unsure as to what your number is, then do not fear! For I have the list right here!" All Might continued, "As for what is contained in the briefcases, it is nothing more than your hero costumes, created faithfully from your initial design sketches sent in when you were accepted! Get changed and meet me at Grounds B for further instruction as to the actual class!" And with that, All Might stepped back and let the students converge on either the briefcases or him.

Izuku, though he desperately wanted to go to All Might and thank him for his actions a year back, eventually decided against it, and instead went for briefcase eighteen. While they had, in fact, sent in design ideas, his mom had been kind enough to make his suit for him. It was one of Izuku's older ideas, emulating All Might perhaps a little too much (okay, maybe a lot much; the teeth-patterned mask was kind of a huge giveaway when combined with the antennae), but he had been so moved that he had instead mailed it into UA to see if he could use it instead. It was allowed, as it turned out, so Izuku was now wearing a suit where his mother's love permeated every stitch. It felt nice.
It was also a little tight around his biceps; maybe he should send it in for a couple of tweaks.

Before long, Izuku was suited up and he and his fellow classmates were at Grounds B.

"Ah yes," All Might said, already there, "Now, you resemble the heroes you long to be!"

"Deku!" Uraraka said, slightly scaring Izuku from how suddenly she said the name, "Is that you?"

"Y-Yeah, Uraraka!" Izuku turned to her and took in her outfit.

"I love your costume! It's so cool, kinda like some sorta killer moon rabbit or something!" She said, practically radiating admiration, "I think they did pretty fine on my costume too, but I kinda wanna find the designer who did this and kick his ass - it's kinda tight around my butt."

Izuku's face immediately flared up. "U-Uraraka!"

"Yeah, honestly," Ashido Mina came over to them, having overheard the conversation, "Like, my chestline should not be this low! Then again, I think that was an error on my part. Not so good at drawing, you know?"

"They certainly altered my costume," Shiozaki said, walking up to them in a plain white robe with a brown utility belt and sandals. "I remember that I requested that my costume be longer than this..." ("This" was actually a conscious design change by a woman designer: keeping in mind Shiozaki’s required agility, she had shortened the hemline of the robe so that the girl wouldn’t trip every time she needed to run.) "Hagakure-san, you're really all right with your design?"

"You kidding?" Said a pair of floating gloves, evidently Hagakure Tooru, "Fits perfectly! Maybe you guys just had shitty designers."

"Hagakure-chan, are you naked?" Asked Asui Tsuyu, putting a finger to her face.

"What? No." Hagakure sounded confused, "That'd be weird. I'm wearing a suit made from my own hair that gives it light-refractive properties once I put it on. It's really ingenious, isn't it?"
"Damn right!" Shouted Kirishima Eijirou, and Izuku had to tear his gaze away from the boy's rock-hard abs, "That's so cool!"

"Fellow students!" Came a familiar voice from a walking suit of armor, "We are getting off track!"

"Woah, Iida, is that you?" Izuku interrupted, kind of stunned by the mix of Medieval and Dieselpunk in Iida's costume. "You look so cool! Like a real knight!" Y'know, if knights drove motorcycles instead of rode horses.

"Ah, uh, you think so?" Iida stammered, rubbing his armored neck. "Th-thank you, I- Nevermind, please give your attention to All Might!"

"Thank you, Young Iida!" All Might said, having not moved an inch the entire time, "Now then, for our first class, we shall have a Trial of Battle!"

Silence.

"Ah. Is that the correct term?" All Might cocked his head. "Nevertheless, I shall explain! This will take place within one of the buildings. One team of two will be guarding a nuclear weapon; these two will be Villains. The other team of two will be infiltrating the building in order to stop their nefarious plot; these two will be the Heroes! And how will I determine teams? Simple! For I have here..." He stepped aside to reveal a lottery machine. "A lottery machine! Teams will be decided randomly! Now, this is a timed trial, and if time runs out, the villain team automatically wins! If the heroes touch the nuclear weapon, then they win! That is not all, however!" All Might took out a roll of tape. "This is specially-branded capture tape; if a person is completely caught by the tape, they are then out; if either team is fully captured, then the opposing team wins! Any questions?!"

Iida's hand shot into the air at an alarming speed, and All Might selected him. "Sir! How are you going to be grading this?!"

"Simple, Young Iida! Remote viewing via camera! Not only that, but we will be giving each of you wireless communicators to further help you in your endeavors!" (Todoroki Shouto's uncovered eye twitched, but no one save Aoyama Yuuga noticed) "If this is all, then I shall now pull the teams!"

In the end, Izuku got Team C, with Shouji Mezou, the boy with the six arms. Izuku had never actually talked with Shouji before, but from what he could tell he was a rather serious fellow, so
maybe they could make it through unscathed. He actually felt sorry for Sero Hanta, though, as he had been teamed up with Bakugou in Team G.

"Now that we are all in teams," All Might said, pulling out a box with orbs in them, "I shall now randomly decide who is in what position for the first match!" And then, grabbing two balls at random, he threw them into a box behind him (where was he getting these things?). "And so, match one shall be..."

Oh.

Oh no.

Oh no, no, no, no, NO.

"Team G as the Hero Team, and Team C as the Villain Team!"

Izuku wanted to curse whichever deity (Izanami, Bishamon, even Akkorokamui if he had to) was fucking with him now.

"Midoriya?" Said Mezou, very much worried even though his face wouldn't show it (not helped at all by the mask), "Are you alright?"

"Y-Yeah..." Midoriya said, staring off into space away from Mezou, "I'm totally fine. Totally calm. Y'know, I've been wondering how it would feel to die from an explosion. That sounds good, right? Maybe I'll die and I'll get sent to the afterlife and then the Enma will be like 'You lived a good life, you get to be reincarnated,' and then I'll come back as a baby. I wonder how that would be-"

"Breathe," Mezou found himself saying, patting Midoriya on the back awkwardly. Midoriya was an enigma, he decided as the much-smaller boy quelled his mumbling under the apparently soothing touch of his second right hand. "You were totally catatonic until I got you moving again. Is there something wrong?"

"N- It's fine." Midoriya said, turning away.
"Are you sure? You can trust me." Mezou said, "I'm all ears."

When Midoriya turned to Mezou and saw that he had shifted all six of his arms into ears, Midoriya looked startled before laughing quietly. "That was a terrible joke."

"It was, but it's best one I've got offhand." And with that, the ears were hands, to Midoriya's laughing groans.

"Man, you're so bad at this!" Midoriya laughed (it was a cute laugh if Mezou was being honest). Midoriya sighed. "It's just... Okay, fine, it's Bakugou."

Mezou blinked. "Bakugou Katsuki?"

"Yeah, we were... Childhood friends. Or at least, I thought we were." Midoriya looked out the window. "Problem is, I was a late bloomer - I didn't get my Quirk till a lot later in my life, and Bakugou got his pretty much as soon as he could read. All his life, he's been told that he was the best of the best, and me, well, when the doctors told my mom that I was Quirkless..."

Mezou flinched. "He started bullying you?"

"That's... One way of putting it. We sorta stopped being friends around seven, when he beat me up for protecting a kid from his gang."

Mezou winced, absently glad that the communicators had to be manually activated to allow access for All Might - this was some seriously heavy stuff that he didn't think Midoriya was ready for just anyone to hear. "You went to someone about it, right?"

"That's the thing - I didn't."

Mezou blinked, and so did his third and fourth eyes. "Come again?"

"The fucked up thing is, I still looked up to him. We'd known each other practically since birth, and
He was perfect, in every way, and I was just... Useless, Quirkless Deku. Did you know that's how I got that nickname originally? If you read "Izuku" with different kanji, you get "deku", as in a wooden puppet. It was a reminder that I was nothing but a stone beneath him.

Mezou found his hands had reformed and were now clenching into fists. "You aren't."

"Pfft, I know that." Midoriya said, sitting down and leaning against a column. "Now, at least. I got my Quirk recently, like I said. You know how Aizawa-sensei said Aizawa-sensei had me confirm that my Quirk reacts to things and evolves to counter them?"

Mezou blinked. He hadn't, actually, but he supposed it was during that episode during the softball toss. "Vaguely."

"Well, you remember the Sludge Villain attack? I sorta, uh, awoke it during that. I was the kid who pushed that other kid out of the villain's body with a single shove."

Mezou blinked again. "Wait, that was you? They wouldn't stop talking about you on the news for three days!"

"Oh, you watch the news, nice." Midoriya muttered, then said louder, "Bakugou was the kid who was captured, and later, he told me about how he was so mad that I had had a Quirk this whole time and never told him. Probably thought that I had lied to him this whole time to make him look bad or something."

Mezou felt his growing ire towards the ash blond return. "How self-centered can you get?"

"It wasn't all bad. But, I, I guess, uh..." Midoriya stuttered, then paused and took a deep breath, "Earliethatdayhetoldmetokillmyself."

Mezou felt a void appear in his stomach. "Repeat that. Slower."

Midoriya grimaced. "Bakugou. He, uh, told me to jump off the school's roof. Before the incident happened."
Right. That was it. Mezou was going to find Bakugou and risk the third-degree burns it would give him to snap the little asshole into six pieces.

Midoriya must have sensed Mezou's mounting wrath, and waved his hands in some sort of placating manner. "I-I obviously didn't go through with it! It's just- That, combined with his general attitude towards me, and the way he sorta avoided me afterwards for pretty much the next year... I just, I can't imagine how much he must hate me."

"Probably as much as I hate him now." Mezou muttered.

Midoriya gave a weak laugh, but sobered up quickly enough. "So, uh, the thing is- Bakugou's more likely to come after me than he is to work with Sero. So it's probably best if I leave you here to guard the weapon while I-"

"No." Mezou immediately shot him down. "You are not going to sacrifice youself for that little piece of shit."

"Shouji, please," Midoriya said, "Bakugou is already going to come after me anyways, and he's pretty strong regardless. If I can lure him away from you, all you would have to do is take on Sero, and if I remember correctly, his Quirk is probably no match for your general physical strength."

Mezou thought it over. While he certainly didn't like the idea of Midoriya being alone with Bakugou in any capacity, he could still see the strategy behind it. "Fine, we'll do it. But how do you know he's coming after you?"

"Please," Midoriya rolled his eyes, "A school-sanctioned event to legally beat me up? He's probably been dreaming of this the moment we entered middle school."

"I am liking this plan less and less." And hating Bakugou more and more.

"We are about to begin!" Came All Might's voice suddenly, and Shouji grew extra ears in anticipation. Midoriya moved to the door.

"We're talking about this later." Mezou found himself saying to Midoriya.
"...I'd kinda like that." Midoriya replied, not looking at Mezou. Mezou took that as a confirmation that they would, indeed, talk about it - Mezou didn't like saying things he didn't mean.

"If both teams are ready, then..."

**START!**

Chapter End Notes

Meant to start the Battle Trial Arc proper here, but I got tired and ended up writing an extended therapy session.

You all saw how my first change to the makeup of canon was the addition of Shiozaki-chan, now here's my latest in many changes: Battle Trial Lineup.

I'll likely run the other matches in the next chapter as well.

Since this is a chapter where Izuku doesn't actually die, I don't think I need to refresh you on his capabilities!
Chapter Summary

The Fated Battle Between Men

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

As Sero Hanta aimed his elbow, he gave another rough sigh. All those minutes of trying to strategize with Bakugou, and it just kept on devolving into some weird rant about how "Deku had some nerve thinking he was hot shit just 'cause he's got a Quirk now". Honestly, he had thought that Bakugou was kind of a cool dude, but after all that ranting, he was just kind of tired of him. So, it came as no surprise to Hanta when Bakugou just charged right on into the building without even considering what Sero would be doing.

At least Bakugou had told Hanta to stay out of it. He was glad to do so, honestly. He was absolutely one-hundred percent certain Bakugou was just going to hunt down and doggedly pursue poor Midoriya. At least the green-haired boy was fast.

Closing one of his eyes, he aimed and fired a line of tape up to the roof of the building. When it got to the third floor, he cut the line of tape and fired from the other elbow, also stopping and sticking to the third floor. Hanta continued like this for what must have been three minutes before he managed to put together a long rope made of his own tape. If all he had to do was touch the weapon, then he could easily just sneak up past the two. Midoriya could only run fast and had that weird mega punch ability, and Shouji just had extra arms. They couldn't quite react to what they didn't see coming.

Hanta grinned as he lowered the visor on his helmet. He began to climb up the rope of tape. Around the second floor, he noticed that the window his foot was on was shaking, and Hanta figured that Bakugou must have found Midoriya. Giving a small prayer to the Lucky Gods for Midoriya to at least survive the exercise, Hanta gained footing on the windowsill and shot more tape up, giving him extra line and passage to the fifth floor, the top floor.

After climbing to the floor and confirming that the window he had chosen to ascend to was not, in fact, the one closest to the weapon, he climbed up to the roof and made his way over to the appropriate side. He had seen a vague figure he could easily guess to be Shouji (due to the sheer size of the boy), but he couldn't quite make out what he was doing due to the combination of the light casting shadows and his own tinted visor. Putting some tape on the edge of the roof, he tied the other end around his waist and made his way down. Shouji wouldn't see him coming. He reached the window.
Shouji was standing right there, looking directly at him.

Hanta stared at Shouji. Shouji stared at Hanta. Neither moved. Slowly, Shouji opened the window.

"Are you going to get in here and let me capture you, or am I going to have to do this the hard way?" Shouji quirked his eyebrow.

"I think I'd prefer to come in there and capture you," Hanta replied casually as he swung in. "How'd you know which window I was at?"

"My Quirk, Dupli-Arms," Shouji said, unfolding his six arms so that they resembled a fleshy spider web, "Allows me to turn the end of each arm into a body part. Six ears make for incredible surveillance." To prove his point, he turned two arms into ears and four into eyes. He then formed them into hands and folded his front two arms.

"What? Man, that's cool," Hanta groaned, putting his hands to his head, "My stealthy tape maneuvers never stood a chance!" Hanta paused, and grinned. Not that Shouji could see it. "Then again, there's more than one kind of stealth!" He shouted as he shot his tape over Shouji's shoulders directly at the weapon that had been moved to the middle of the room. The tape had managed to make contact before Shouji grabbed it and pulled on it, launching Hanta towards him. Hanta's eyes widened as Shouji readied a three-handed left hook.

That's when the floor exploded with enough force to throw both boys and the weapon to the walls.

Several Minutes Earlier...

Izuku's head spun with stratagems and tactics as he made his way down the winding, monochromatic hallways. This wasn't some trash on the beach that he was trying to find, nor was it an errant point robot he was hoping to come across so that he could be accepted into school.

This was Bakugou. Sure, Bakugou made his life hell for the most part and was an inconsolable jerk when he wasn't lording himself over Izuku, but he was still incredibly powerful. In this weather, Explosion had no weaknesses. Izuku wasn't quite sure if his water spout was useful for this sort of
thing or not, but it would likely interact with the explosions and create steam and make things generally worse for Izuku and then Izuku would die of steam burns and then the jig would be up and-

_Breathe. Breathe, Izuku._

Izuku thought about what he knew about Bakugou's fighting style. Bakugou tended to lead with a right hook. Right, fair. However, if he could remember the layout of the building correctly, Bakugou would be coming from around a corner where it would be incredibly awkward to swing his right fist - a right turn, from Bakugou's perspective, that would force him to use his left hand. Therefore, Izuku would have the defensive advantage.

Of course, there a major problem: Izuku wasn't sure where Bakugou even was in the building. Bakugou was just as likely to be hiding around a left turn to ambush with a right hook as he was to just jump out from a right turn. Not only that, Bakugou had the instincts of a killer whale and power beyond that, so Izuku would have to counter all of that-

"DEKU!!!!!!!" Bakugou screamed, jumping out from a corner on Izuku's left. Bakugou had made a right turn, his left arm already swinging with incredible force at Izuku's head. Having planned for this possibility not seconds ago, Izuku reached up, grabbed Bakugou's arm, then used the momentum to flip Bakugou over his shoulder, slamming him into the ground.

"Bakugou..." Izuku said, "Normally, you begin with a right hook, but since there's only one ground entrance to the building, and I knew you would be hounding me singlemindedly, I knew you would have to come from behind a left corner, forcing you to use a left hook!" It made more sense in his mind, but whatever. "I used the environment and your own personality against you!" Seeing Bakugou's eyes glare at him with such intensity made Izuku slightly tense up, but despite his fear he readied himself in a battle pose. "Uraraka-san said that Deku sounds like 'Dekiru' once... Bakugou, I am no longer the Deku that can't do anything without help! I am now the Deku that proclaims 'I can do it!'!"

Izuku sincerely hoped that Uraraka was listening.

"Hey, All Might?" Ochako said, pulling on All Might's cape, "Can you turn on the sound? I kinda wanna hear what they're saying..."
"Hm?" All Might said, looking at Ochako, "Young lady, I am afraid that the only communicators I could buy that were not blatantly obvious are closed-circuit! Which means that the only people who can hear them is me if I so choose!"

"Man, all this high-tech gear and they can't even invest in surround sound?" Ochako overheard someone (Kaminari Denki, if she was right) whisper.

"Hey, look, Sero stopped climbing!" Hagakure Tooru said, apparently pointing. "But why? He's not even at the third floor yet!"

"Forget Sero, Haga-chan!" Ashido Mina replied, "Look at Bakugou and Midoriya!"

Izuku dodged Bakugou's third lunge, this one exploding with slightly less force than his last one.

Izuku really hadn't thought this through. He was still trying to predict where Bakugou would come from when Bakugou himself had interrupted Izuku, after all.

Izuku saw Bakugou's knee coming directly towards his face, and dropped low to the ground. Suddenly remembering the capture tape, he unraveled some of it and slung it around Bakugou's leg. Bakugou, obviously realizing what Izuku was trying to do, brought his leg down and kicked Izuku in the head. Izuku, recoiling from the pain, rolled off to the side, dropping the tape.

"You're the Deku that 'can do it'?" Bakugou said, picking up the tape, "Give me a fuckin' break! You're still the same useless piece of shit you were when we were kids! Getting a Quirk didn't make you fucking invincible, Deku!" With a blast, the tape went up in flames. "In fact, I don't know why I thought things would be different! I left you alone that year 'cause I thought you would finally get serious, but look at you! You're still a total fucking Deku!"

Izuku blinked, partially to clear the ringing pain wracking his skull and partially to process Bakugou's words. Was Bakugou... critiquing him?

"But I gotta say..." Bakugou said, advancing on Izuku. Izuku scrambled to get to his feet. "I'm actually glad you didn't jump off that roof..." Bakugou's hands began to spark. "Because that means I get to beat the shit out of you right here and now!" And with that, Bakugou lunged at Izuku, swinging his right arm. Izuku instinctively grabbed it and flipped Bakugou again, only this
time, Izuku felt incredible pressure, force, and heat on his back that threw him down the hallway.

"How's that for your pwecious wight hoowk, Deku?" Came Bakugou's taunting shout from where he stood, "Didn't you think I would have planned for that, now that you oh-so-kindly explained my own fucking fighting style to me?!

Izuku couldn't think of anything else to do. Activating his high speed ability, he ran down the hallway, away from Bakugou. At least he could keep Bakugou busy until time ran out.

"GET FUCKING BACK HERE!" Bakugou screamed, "I'M NOT DONE WITH YOU YET!"

"Man..." Kaminari Denki said, looking somewhat queasy, "Bakugou is... Intense..."

"Intense?!" Jirou Kyouka shouted from next to him, "He's a raving lunatic! Look at him, he's just beating Midoriya to death!"

At everyone else's quiet murmurs of agreement and disapproval of Bakugou Katsuki's actions, Shiozaki Ibara approached Toshinori. "Mr. All Might..." Shiozaki Ibara said, "I do not wish to be seen as a 'party-pooper', but could you please cease this battle? I fear for the worst for Midoriya-kun if this goes on any longer..."

Privately, Toshinori agreed. This was far too much for Midoriya Izuku. However...

"Young Bakugou," Toshinori said into the microphone, turning on his line and allowing him access to Bakugou Katsuki's earpiece, "I am giving you a verbal warning. If you continue to act in this manner, I will stop the exercise and give you detention. Am I clear?"

"Detention?!" Satou Rikidou shouted, "Dude should be suspended for doing that!"

"Am I clear, Young Bakugou?" Toshinori repeated into the microphone.
"...Yeah, yeah." At this, Toshinori let out a breath he hadn't known he was holding.

"Very well. So long as you understand the consequences, I shall let the exercise continue."

Izuku ran into the room at the end of the hallway, a large atrium with two large pillars and windows that let in large amounts of light. Unfortunately, besides the window, there was no other escape route. He was a cornered rat.

"Oh, Deku..." And here's my cat, then. "Guess what?" Slowly, Izuku turned around to face Bakugou, who seemed to be deliberately walking slowly down the hallway. "My gauntlets aren't just a weird design quirk, you know; I had them specifically designed to collect my sweat. I did this so that I would not only have a way to cover my range problems, but also so that I could have a strong attack when I would logically be tired out from fighting..." Bakugou pointed an arm at Izuku, and Izuku could barely make out the sparse light glint off the barrel embedded into the grenade-like design.

Oh.

Oh.

"So," Bakugou continued, grinning widely as he wrapped his finger around the seemingly-decorative pin on the gauntlet, "Guess what'll happen if I pull this pin, firing all my collected, explosive sweat?!"
Bakugou Katsuki pulled the pin. There was a flash of light, the ground shook, and the feed cut off.

"What?!" Kaminari Denki shouted, "What the fuck happened?! Where are they!"

"Obviously, the explosion was strong enough to overheat the cameras, or something!" Came Jirou Kyouka's panicked reply.

"Jesus!" Kirishima Eijirou shouted (to Shiozaki Ibara's disappointed look, which quickly turned to a gasp at his next statement), "Look at Sero and Shouji!"

Hanta groaned as he stirred against the wall. He hadn't been knocked unconscious, but everything still hurt. From what he could tell, there was now a huge hole where the floor should have been, the weapon was against another wall (intact, from what he could tell), he could distantly hear Bakugou's shouting from inside the hole, and Shouji was just standing up.

"Sero!" Shouji shouted, "Are you alright?!

"Yeah!" Hanta replied, "What the fuck was that?!

"You tell me!" Shouji retuned. "I swear, if that piece of garbage Bakugou as so much as singed Midoriya's hair-"

"Wow, protective much?" Hanta interrupted as he slowly made his way to where Shouji was, "Bakugou wouldn't do that, would he?"

"You'd be surprised," Shouji gruffly replied, holding out one of his hands, "At what he's already done."

"Hm?" Hanta replied taking the hand and crossing the gap, "What do you mean?"
Shouji seemed about to reply when Hanta heard a crumbling sound. By Shouji's head turn, he heard it as well. Both looked slowly to the weapon, which was in the shadow of a piece of rubble about to fall from the ceiling.

At once, Shouji jumped to push the weapon out of the way. Hanta, cursing under his breath, wrapped some tape around Shouji's leg. Shouji reached the weapon the moment the debris fell from the ceiling, and Hanta pulled Shouji back once the weapon was out of the way. The debris grazed Shouji's hair fringe.

Shouji looked at Hanta. Hanta returned Shouji's look. The two began to chuckle.

"TIME IS UP!" They suddenly heard in their earpieces, knocking them to the ground with how loud it was.

Izuku was up against the wall, literally and figuratively. Bakugou had him cornered, and Izuku didn't want to push him away using the impact ability for fear of rupturing his childhood "friend"s organs.

"It's over, Deku..." Bakugou said, "I don't know how you managed to dodge that, but this time, there's nowhere to run."

"TIME IS UP!" Came All Might's shout from Bakugou's earpiece, knocking Bakugou off balance. Izuku, despite being grateful for the interruption, was also glad he had lost the earpiece in the explosion that had occurred.

Contrary to what Bakugou believed, you see, he had, indeed, hit Izuku with the blast, and Izuku did, in fact die. However, the blast was so strong that when Izuku revived, it was still going on, and Izuku automatically unleashed his newest power, which had, apparently, killed him again, destroying the earpiece. Luckily, Bakugou was too busy looking between his gauntlet and the gigantic hole in the roof to notice Midoriya's resurrection in the corner, but he had not ignored Midoriya's attempt to escape down the hallway again.

All Might's voice continued to shout, and Midoriya almost missed his declaration: "THE VILLAIN TEAM WINS!"
Bakugou's jaw dropped to the ground.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the wait! I forgot to eat.

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Quirk: Turritopsis

When Izuku dies, he is revived without injury. He also revives with an ability related to the cause of his death. Only one ability can be active at a time. Currently unknown if his body has to remain intact to gain an ability, though.

Current abilities:

- High-Velocity Impact (Cause of Death: Jumping off a building) - Imparts a large amount of kinetic energy into an object by impacting it.
- Antibiotic Blood (Cause of Death: Illness) - Cures illness by ingesting his blood. Izuku can just activate it and it'll work immediately on him, though.
- Aqua Stream (Cause of Death: Drowning) - He can spew a steady stream of water from his mouth.
- Thread Weaving (Cause of Death: Spider bite) - Can create highly-tensile threads from his skin, but it's easier to create them from his hands.
- Marathon (Cause of Death: Car accident) - Can reach a running speed of sixty kilometers per hour in ten seconds.
- Self-Destruct (Cause of Death: Explosion (Quirk of Bakugou Katsuki)) - He can explode his own body with incredible force. This produces some heat and has incredible upwards force, enough to smash through four layers of cement. Using this power instantly kills him though, and dying through this manner does not grant him any additional abilities.
Dipulmaris

Chapter Summary

Results and Battles

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Bakugou didn't move. Izuku didn't move. Both were frozen in place. Numbly, Izuku registered All Might's words. His team had won, due to time running out.

Izuku had won.

Izuku flinched as a piece of debris fell from the ceiling some few feet away. Right, he thought, Maybe it's more like Shouji-kun won. Idly, he noted that Bakugou was totally unbothered by the falling rubble, and was still totally unmoving.

Suddenly, Izuku felt a large, extremely warm hand on his shoulder. "Young Midoriya, it is time to hear the results of your exercise. Would you like a blanket to cover up?" Came the soft, yet undeniably firm voice of All Might. It was then that Izuku realized that his costume had been eviscerated from the waist-up (Midoriya Inko, being the thoughtful mother she was, had prepared for the possibility of explosions in Izuku's chosen line of work and had purchased blast-retardant fabric; unfortunately, the store she purchased from had only so much of the material in the color she wanted).

Izuku suddenly realized he was effectively half-naked in front of All Might himself. He gave a slightly panicked squeak, turned bright red, and shook his head so hard it was a wonder it didn't fall off. With a single fluid motion, a baby blue blanket was draped over Izuku's shoulders. It was ridiculously soft, all things considered.

"Get going, young Midoriya, and please wait with the other students," All Might told Izuku, and as Izuku turned away, he could have sworn All Might had said, "As for you, Young Bakugou, there will be consequences for disobeying a direct order and you will be spending-"

Izuku didn't hear any more; he was moving down the hallway and, following his memory, managed to find his way out of the maze-like corridors. Exiting into the light, he made his way to the designated surveillance building, where he was suddenly accosted by a soft body.
"Dekuuuu!!!!" Cried Uraraka, hugging Izuku tightly and nearly cutting off his circulation, "You're alright!"

"Hey, Uraraka!" Kirishima said, "Let the guy breathe!"

"I can't help it! You saw him fighting Bakugou!" Uraraka returned, letting go of Izuku. As Izuku took a deep breath, Uraraka pointed to Kirishima, "Deku deserves all the hugs he can get for putting up with that!"

"That may be, kero, but Midoriya-chan has been through quite the beatdown." Said Asui as she put a finger on her cheek, "If anything, he should at least go to the nurses' office."

"Hey, that's right!" Said a very tall (and, if Izuku was honest, rugged) boy, "Yo, Midoriya, you should really go get your injuries checked out! Bakugou hit you directly in the back with one of those explosions of his!"

"Wh-" Izuku suddenly remembered that no one here knew about his immortality, and were, in fact, genuinely worried about injuries that had surely healed after that ridiculously huge blast. It was a weird feeling, having someone other than his mom worry over his general health. "Guys, I-I think I'm fine, really, my mom got this nice shock-proof fabric-"

"Your mom made your costume?" A punkish girl interrupted, "Cute." Normally, this would have been an insult, but Izuku couldn't detect any real ill-will.

Kouda approached Izuku and tapped the blanket wrapped around Izuku's shoulders. It was the quiet boy's way of asking about why he had the thing on him in the first place. "Oh, the heat from the big explosion ripped up part of my costume," Izuku replied after figuring out what Kouda had meant, "I'm gonna have to send the costume in for repairs, probably get the fabric replaced for something else."

There were a couple more questions in peoples' eyes, but the class fell totally silent, and when Izuku turned around, he understood why.

Bakugou had walked in.
Bakugou gave a sweeping glance around the totally silent class (who returned the glance with mixed looks of distaste and apprehension), before his eyes fell on Izuku. Izuku felt his body flinch, and the two stared at each other before Bakugou simply walked past Izuku and leaned against the far wall.

Kirishima walked over to Bakugou and tried to strike up a conversation, but Bakugou was totally unresponsive and kept on staring directly at Izuku. It honestly creeped Izuku out. Suddenly, two very strong arms grabbed Izuku from behind and whirled him around, and Izuku found himself looking into the face of Shouji Mezou.

"Midoriya! Are you hurt? What did that asshole do?!" A sort of strangled noise came from Bakugou's direction, but luckily Shouji seemed to choose to ignore it. "That blast was strong enough to take out the entire fifth floor!"

"We'll find out, Shouji, calm down!" Sero Hanta said, slightly behind Shouji. "Let Midoriya go, though, he's been through enough. Also, he should fix his blanket, it's kinda, uh..." Sero gave a slight pink blush, and Izuku was aware that the sudden movement had displaced the blanket. With a mortified squeak, he realized he was now effectively showing his body to not one, but two handsome boys, and immediately covered up (but not without a wolf-whistle from either Hagakure Tooru or Ashido Mina, and dear Izanagi he wanted to die permanently).

Luckily for Izuku's sanity, All Might returned at that moment and pulled out a remote. Quieting down the class, he pressed a button and began playing various highlights, two of which were Izuku's initial counter against Bakugou's left hook and Bakugou's wide-scale blast. At the sight of the latter, Izuku gave a slight sigh of relief that the cameras had cut off then; he didn't want to explain suddenly reviving from being atomized.

When it was over, All Might turned to the class. "All right!" He intoned, "Considering these points, who here can tell me precisely who I should declare the Most Valuable Player in this first trial of battle?!" After a second's pause, a single hand rose. "Yes, young Yaoyorozu!"

"Sero Hanta, All Might-sensei." Yaoyorozu Momo answered promptly, with no hesitation.

All Might didn't move.

"When you consider Bakugou Katsuki's actions," The way Yaoyorozu said Bakugou's name with a detached sneer was not lost on Midoriya, "It is clear that he made no attempt to even work with his teammate, and instead acted on a personal grudge against Midoriya Izuku to seek him out, completely ignoring the entire purpose of the exercise. Not only that, that wide-scale blast put not
only Midoriya at risk, but also Shouji Mezou, Sero Hanta, and the nuclear weapon, and should not have been used in an indoors setting to begin with."

All Might was motionless.

"Midoriya's actions, while noble, were also not without flaws either." Yaoyorozu continued, "He seemed to seek out Bakugou in an attempt to neutralize him and distract him from taking on Shouji. This strategy, while admirable on paper, was too dependent on the target, and likely would never have worked on anyone besides Bakugou. Not only that, he recklessly put himself in harm's way and indirectly caused the aforementioned wide-scale blast." Izuku thought that last part was a bit harsh, but he supposed it was fair.

All Might remained still.

"Compared to the first two, Shouji did not do much. He played a defensive role well, and even attempted to keep the weapon out of harms' way, yet in doing so failed to consider the danger of actually being hit by debris - it was very lucky that Sero's Quirk was what it was, otherwise Shouji would be in the medical ward for a broken spine, or worse." Shouji blushed at the criticism, but said nothing.

A fly landed on All Might's maybe-corpse, decided the poor man was still alive, and flew off.

"Which brings me to Sero Hanta." Yaoyorozu said, not even pausing in her miniature lecture, "Of the four, he did the best independently: he focused on the goal; when his initial attempt failed, he tried an alternative method; and he saved Shouji from injury despite the two being on alternate sides. My only criticism of his overall performance is that he seems to perform better on the defensive, and as such, his strategy seemed to function more on the premise of misdirection." Sero gave an embarrassed chuckle as he rubbed the back of his head.

All Might blinked, the first motion from the man in five minutes. "That- That is absolutely correct..."

"We, as hero students, must not only consider our strategies, but also the ramifications of our actions and how to overcome new, unforeseen obstacles." Yaoyorozu finished, turning to the totally silent class, "This is why we are here: to learn, to grow, and to become excellent heroes!"

It was then that Izuku remembered that Yaoyorozu was a student admitted through special
recommendations, and this was likely the reason: Yaoyorozu Momo had the intelligence and
decisive thinking of a goddess.

"R-Right..." All Might said from his place next to the lottery boxes, "I-I couldn't have said it better
myself... W-Well then, shall we begin the next battle?"

"Ah, All Might-sensei..." Shiozaki raised her hand. "Shouldn't Midoriya-san go to the nurse? He
has been through an awful lot, and that kick to the head should have at least given him a
concussion..." Shiozaki gave a worried look to Izuku.

"Wha- I-I'm fine, Shiozaki!" Izuku said, smiling in an attempt to appease the Christian. "Besides, I
kinda wanna watch the fights, you know? It'll help me see more of everyone's Quirks!" Shiozaki
didn't seem happy with that, but she at least dropped the subject, which relieved Izuku somewhat.

"If that is all..." All Might said (and was that a glint of worry in his shadowed eyes, or was Izuku
imagining that?), "Then I shall call the next battle!"

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**Battle #2**

**Villain Team (E): Shiozaki Ibara and Aoyama Yuuga**

Ibara clasped her hands and turned away from the weapon she was supposed to be guarding. With
a bit of willpower, she had her vine-like hair weave into the floor beneath her and emerge around
the weapon, encasing it like a cocoon. Detaching the vines, she sighed and turned to admire her
handiwork.

Unfortunately, Aoyama Yuuga was standing in the light, and the sparkles coming from the boy's
incredibly shiny armor and general presence nearly blinded her. "What do you think..." He said,
"Of Midoriya Izuku?"

Ibara blinked. *This is sudden.* "Midoriya-san is a fine boy. I wish he would look after himself,
though." She replied evenly.
"I see, I see..." Aoyama said, turning away from the window where Ibara belatedly realized he was admiring his reflection in. "I think he has a crush on you."

It was a good thing that Shiozaki's hair wasn't attached to the vines around the weapon, because her hair tensed up at the thought. "Wh-what are you saying, Aoyama-san?!"

"Ufufufu-~" Aoyama chuckled, "It's not a bad thing, *mademoiselle*. After all, he seems to have a crush on half the class anyways. I mean, I expected him to have a crush on me, because, well..." Aoyama bent over backwards in a way that his breastplate really shouldn't have allowed for. "*Look at moi-*~ However, he's obviously the type to not simply choose a single *personne*-~"

"...I don't appreciate you saying such things about Midoriya-san." Ibara replied in a dark tone that surprised herself.

"Ufufu-~" Aoyama straightened up and shrugged, "It was simply a thought, *mademoiselle*. I believe that I shall seek out the enemy, as my Quirk is the absolute best for offense. *Au revoir, ma belle-*~" And with that, All Might called time, and Ibara was alone.

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**Hero Team (B): Asui Tsuyu and Todoroki Shouto**

"Asui..." Shouto said, "Your Quirk gives you the general weaknesses and strengths of an average frog, yes?"

"Kero?" Asui croaked, looking at him, "That's correct, yes."

"I see..." Shouto said, "Then you're vulnerable to the cold?"

"Todoroki-chan," Asui said, visage totally unreadable, "What are you planning?"

"Asui-chan, so that I don't accidentally put you out of commission, could you stand as far back as you like when time is called?" Shouto requested, "I'm going to freeze the building."
“Ah, I see, kero.” Asui nodded. “Very well.”

“START!” All Might’s voice boomed, and immediately, a wave of frost emitted from Shouto's right foot. Asui, true to her word, gave a great leap backwards at the same time. Before the minute was up, the entire building was a citadel of ice.

“I will be right back,” Shouto said, and, getting Asui's shivering “K-K-K-Kero...” in response, made his way into the building, past Aoyama Yuuga’s shivering and frozen form (were his sparkles frozen in mid-twinkle?), and all the way to the fifth floor bomb room, where he found Shiozaki Ibara with her feet frozen to the floor and a huge ball of vines behind her. Considering he couldn't see the weapon, he supposed it was within the vines. As Shouto walked forward, Shiozaki, shivering profusely, moved her hair into a sort of attacking position.

“That won't do you any good,” Shouto said, stopping right next to Shiozaki, "And we both know it. Now then, unless you wish to be frozen further...” It was a surprisingly harsh statement from him, sure, but they were acting. She was a villain, if only for this exercise.

With an incredible shiver, Shiozaki dropped her hair, and Shouto walked up to the vine ball. Touching it with his right hand, he froze the foliage even further, encasing it in an incredible layer of ice, before touching it with his left hand and melting the ice around the entire building. The vines, not able to stand up to the rapid changes in temperature and general erosion, shattered into pieces, and Shouto touched the weapon.

"HERO TEAM WINS!" All Might shouted in their earpieces, and Shouto turned around to see Shiozaki's vines just scant centimeters from his body.

She had been attempting to capture him the whole time. Well played.

"Todoroki’s so powerful..." Izuku whispered.

Bakugou said nothing, and instead, his vacant stare seemed to get even more empty.

Todoroki Shouto got MVP.
"Alright, Satou, I'm going to go on ahead!" Tooru said, holding her fingers out in a peace sign, "You wanna guard the weapon?"

"Huh?" Satou replied, "Hagakure-san, don't you wanna guard the weapon? A great defense is a good offense, after all..."

"Well, yeah!" Tooru said, "That's why I'm going to go ahead! Hello, invisible girl? I can just sneak up on them!"

"But..." Satou sputtered, "You're tiny!"

"Yeah, so?" Tooru said, "Doesn't mean I can't take care of myself! I'm a big girl, I braid my own hair and everything! I got past those entrance robots, didn't I?"

"Oh yeah, I was wondering how you did that..." Satou muttered, putting his hand on his chin in thought.

"What do you mean you wondered?! I pulled you out of the way of that big robot!" Tooru couldn't believe it. Satou didn't remember that vital moment?!

"To be fair, I was pretty out of it..." Satou said sheepishly, "My Quirk kinda makes me stupid when I overuse it..."

"Oh..." Tooru nodded in understanding, "Okay... So, I'm gonna go ahead?"

"Huh? Oh sure..." Satou said, and Tooru began to remove her gloves and shoes. Suddenly, she got a wicked idea.
"Pervert!" She said, pointing (not that Satou could see it), "Don't watch me undress! T-Turn around!"

"Wh- Oh!!" Satou blushed and turned around. A second later, he said, "Wait, you're wearing a suit anyways!"

Tooru stuck her tongue out at him and skipped out the door.

**Hero Team (H): Jirou Kyouka and Ojiro Mashirao**

Mashirao watched as Jirou lifted her earlobe and stabbed it into the wall. After a brief second, the pointed upwards. "I'm hearing movement from the floor above us, but it's only one set of footprints. Judging by the footfalls, it's likely to be Hagakure, as she's much smaller than Satou."

"Wow, you got all that from a single listen?" Mashirao said, amazed, "That's really cool..."

"Heh, I guess..." Jirou said, obviously pleased with herself. After a second, she looked over Mashirao's shoulder, "She's behind you, but I can't precisely tell where."

Someone swore behind Mashirao, and he turned around to see no one there. Taking a stance, Mashirao concentrated. "Jirou, I want you to go up and get to the weapon."

"What?!"

"A good defense is a great offense, Jirou!" Mashirao said, "I'm going to protect you as you ascend, but I'll be fending off Hagakure at the same time! It'll have to be you!"

"...R-Right." Jirou said, obviously unsure.

"I'll be right behind you," Mashirao said, looking over his shoulder and giving her a thumbs up,
"Don't worry."

Jirou gulped and nodded, before she stabbed her earlobe into the wall and shattered it. Jumping through the hole, she ran down the adjacent hallway.

Mashirao blinked. He didn't know she could do that. But now was not the time to worry about that; Hagakure was coming for him. He took his stance and waited.

And waited.

It was after five minutes and All Might finally shouting "VILLAIN TEAM WINS!" that he realized he'd been had.

Hagakure won MVP.

Chapter End Notes

Izuku doesn't die here, but I wanted to wrap up that particular battle! Also did two other battles, and I'll post the other two next chapter, along with the "confession scene".

Anyways, yesterday was my birthday! I'm now even more powerful than ever before!
"..."

"..."

"..."

"..."

"..."

"...So..."

"I will go on ahead."

"Hey!" Uraraka Ochako shouted, but it was no matter and of great insignificance. For this gambit to succeed against such powerful adversaries, it required a vanguard of pure blackness, a legion of Hell's own rakshasa, a- Oh, he was floating.
"Release." Uraraka Ochako whispered, and Fumikage alighted softly on his feet. "Tokoyami, at least listen to my plan!"

"I have no reason to, really..." Fumikage growled. He idly hoped these were the correct descriptives for dialogue.

"But why?" Uraraka Ochako breathed.

"Because," Fumikage bemoaned, "I have a creature of pure darkness dwelling within me, aching to be released, and I must keep it in check by becoming the ultimate in offensive ability."

"...So... Your Quirk is some weird possession thing?" Uraraka Ochako roared.

"Hey, nice to meet ya." Dark Shadow crowed, emerging from its sheath within the recesses of Fumikage's sanctum. "I'm Dark Shadow, Fumichan's Quirk." It extrapolated, to Fumikage's noises of offended consternation, "Did you know Fumichan thinks like the protagonist of some bad fanfiction?"

"Really?" Uraraka Ochako sang, "What kind?"

"Enough!" Fumikage shouted, willing Dark Shadow away. He was not blushing, either. "I am going to go on ahead - my 'Dark Shadow' is perfect for indoor operations, as that is where it shines the brightest..."

"Dude," Uraraka Ochako said, "You lost me."

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**Hero Team (I): Ashido Mina and Yaoyorozu Momo**

"So, how do you wanna do this?" Mina said, stretching and turning to Yaoyorozu, only to see her staring intently at the provided capture tape. Mina watched as Yaoyorozu unclipped a book from her back, flipped to a page, unrolled some of the tape, then formed a small wooden object out of her hand. Ripping a piece of the capture tape off, Yaoyorozu struck the match she had made on the ground, lighting it. Yaoyorozu then set fire to the tape.
"Y-Yaoyorozu!" Mina shouted, "What is this?!" She said, only to be met with mumbling from the girl. *What the hell?!* Mina thought this Yaoyorozu chick was smart! Why was she burning up the tape?!

"I see..." Yaoyorozu said, standing up. Yaoyorozu then faced Mina and unclipped her top.

"WHOA!!!" Mina said, turning away, "Yao-chan, w-we've only just met, *what the hell are ya-*"

"What?" Yaoyorozu said, the sound of clipping her outfit back together reaching Mina's ears, "You saw me back in the changing room. Besides, I turned away from the cameras, it's not like I flashed all of our classmates. Here, I managed to examine the material the tape's made of and I made extra. Take some." Mina turned back to Yaoyorozu, who indeed had an entire new roll of tape in her hand.

"...Yao-chan," Mina said, "After this, we are sending out for a new costume from the Support companies."

"Oh? Is this about how much skin my costume covers?" Yaoyorozu said, looking at her costume thoughtfully, "I had actually asked for less, you see-"

"What?!!" Mina shouted. Just who was this chick?! "Yao-chan, you really need someone to give you an idea on how a costume is supposed to work! It's supposed to fit your Quirk, yeah, but you also need it to be stylish and at least real clothing! I'll help you design it, too!"

"..." Yaoyorozu looked thoughtful. "Thank you, Ashido-san. I will consider your offer. In the meantime, here's what I'm going to suggest for our course of action..."

A minute later, Mina ventured into the building alone, with Yaoyorozu acting as a sort of mission control. Making her way up the stairs, she found her way unobstructed until halfway down the third floor hallway.

"So..." Tokoyami said, facing away from her, "You came... Ashido Mina..."

"Wh- How'd you know it was me?!" Mina said, totally flabbergasted.
"Yaoyorozu Momo wears heels." Tokoyami replied, "It's rather unnecessary."

"Yeah, we're working on fixing that..." Mina said sheepishly.

"I understand, and I wish you luck in your endeavors." Tokoyami said, turning around, "However, your path ends here, hero! Come, 'Dark Shadow'!" He shouted, and suddenly, a giant dark claw swung out of Tokoyami's cloak. Reacting instinctively, Mina coated her hand in acid and flung it at the claw. The claw retracted as soon as the acid made contact, and a bird-like apparition floated out of Tokoyami's cloak, nursing the acid burn.

"It will heal," Tokoyami said, "But you must go after Ashido!"

Mina, seeing her chance, coated her feet in a more viscous acid and began to skate towards Tokoyami, unraveling the tape as she went. Throwing some more acid at Dark Shadow, she watched it pull back. Mina skidded to a halt and threw the tape with a good pitch, hitting Tokoyami in the face.

Dark Shadow, in response, tore up the tape.

"Oops..." Mina said, "Did not think that through..."

And thus, Dark Shadow charged at Ashido Mina.

Yaoyorozu Momo was on the third floor when she checked in on Ashido. "Ashido-san, come in. What's happening?"

"Waaah!!!!" Came the cry from Ashido directly into Momo's earpiece, "I'm being chased!"

"What?!" Momo replied, "Should I abandon the plan and come over?!"
"No, nonono, it's a really good- BACK!" There was the sound of a liquid hitting a solid, and a slight sizzling sound as well, "Well, I mean, I don't think we planned on a shadow demon possessing Tokoyami, so-" 

"Shadow demon?" Momo interrupted Ashido. "Ashido, can you tell if it's avoiding lights?"

"Uh..." There was a wet skidding sound, and silence, until, "Yeah! It's trying to avoid the windows when it's not attacking me!"

"I see..." Momo said, pulling out the Yaoyopedia and flipping through it. "...Ashido-san, do you have sunglasses?"

Mina listened to the new plan with some trepidation, but the more she listened, the more she decided that she liked it. Coating her feet in the slipperiest acid she could make, she turned around and raced towards Dark Shadow. As she approached it, she coated her arms in acid, and cocked one of her arms back. In response, Dark Shadow reared up, raising its claw in a counter-cross. Getting closer to the weird shadow demon, Mina dropped to her legs, and let her inertia and the slippery slime she had coated her arms in slide her under the legless demon.

Hearing Dark Shadow's noises of confusion, Mina followed the trail of shadow back to Tokoyami, Dark Shadow hot on her trail. Tokoyami viewed her with some form of surprise, but he simply took a battle-ready stance.

Looking behind her and seeing Dark Shadow loom behind her, Mina talked into her communicator. "Now, Yao-chan!!"

An unbearably bright light suddenly beamed through the windows, and Mina cursed her lack of foresight to bring the matching sunglasses she had for this costume. Squinting in the sudden light, she saw Dark Shadow shrink magnificently, and Mina crashed into the stunned Tokoyami.

Acting quickly, Mina took out the replicated copy tape and wrapped it around Tokoyami. "Hah! Captured you!" She said, getting off of him. She closed her eyes and shielded them with her arm. "Dunno what's making all this light though... What did Yao-chan do?"

A couple of minutes later, All Might's voice shouted "HERO TEAM WINS!", and the light went
Momo took the remote control she had crafted to work specifically for this precise object out of her stomach. Reforming her clothes, she panted; this had taken a bit of a toll on her, and she was feeling slightly tired. Nevertheless, she continued her climb up this building's stairwell, having positioned the device so that it wouldn't fall over without her support.

Reaching the rooftop, Momo heard in her ear Ashido's "Now, Yao-chan!!" Pressing the button on the remote, the gigantic LED flashlight she had created and rigged lit up, bombarding the entire side of the Battle Trial's building with a white light whose surface area was greatly amplified by the concave lens she was using.

Working quickly, Momo created a harpoon gun using the fat in her chest, and fired it at the ledge above the window. Making a strong sling, she tied the other end of the line to a post and ziplined down to the window. Momo braced for impact.

Momo crashed through the glass window and hit Uraraka Ochako in the process, knocking her into the weapon, which thankfully didn't collapse. Momo winced at the amount of light she was beaming into the building and quickly made sunglasses. Noticing that Uraraka's collision had caused the weapon to start floating aimlessly, Momo ran over to Uraraka, quickly took out the capture tape and tied it around Uraraka's arm, and then pressed Uraraka's hand to her stomach.

Immediately, Momo began to float, and she reached for the weapon when it floated out of her reach. Attempting to move gave her no additional air, and Momo began to float away from the weapon. Time was running out, and Momo didn't know what to do. If only she knew how to make a rocket or a booster jet-

Wait.

Momo didn't know how to make a rocket offhand, but she knew how to get good propulsion. Momo instantly created a small cannon in her hands. Twisting herself so that she was facing away from the weapon, Momo pulled the string, and was hit by the recoil of her miniature cannon, launching her at the weapon. She missed it, luckily, but she managed to touch her hand to it.
"HERO TEAM WINS!" All Might shouted, and Momo quickly recreated the remote she had made for the flashlight and pressed it, turning it off.

MVP: Yaoyorozu Momo

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**Battle #5**

**Villain Team (A): Kouda Kouji and Iida Tenya**

"I... Am very unused to playing the villain..." Tenya said, concealing his nervousness, "But if it is what is required of me, then I suppose shall do my part..."

Kouda said nothing, and was indeed whispering to a rat on the ground. After the rat... saluted?... to Kouda, it scampered off, and Kouda looked to Tenya.

"I-" Tenya was about to ask why Kouda was talking to a rat, but decided not to. "Kouda-san, you spend time around Midoriya-san, right?"

Kouda thought for a bit (or at least it looked like he was thinking) and nodded. He needn't have, honestly; both Tenya and Kouda were indeed friends with Midoriya, though they had never interacted themselves.

"Well, do you think Midoriya-san felt this kind of nervousness when he went?" Tenya said, "After all, we are at this school to become heroes! Yet... Is it all right to act as a villain?"

Kouda put his hand to his mouth in a sign of thinking, then walked over to Tenya and patted the boy on the shoulder. Kouda gave a rocky smile that inwardly made Tenya's heart melt and erased his doubts. He could do this, and Kouda's thumbs up just assured him further.

"Yes, you're right..." Tenya said, unable to suppress his own smile, "This is a test to see if we, as Heroes, can act undercover as Villains if need be..." Tenya stood at attention (missing Kouda's look that conveyed No, not quite, where did you get that from), "In that case, I shall be a model Villain!"
Hero Team (J): Kirishima Eijirou and Kaminari Denki

Things could be going better, in Eijirou's opinion.

First, there was the matter of Bakugou. Eijirou had honestly thought the dude was cool, he was a passionate dude, and that was absolutely manly. However, Bakugou apparently had something against Midoriya, and this was apparently the explanation for his beatdown during the trial. Bakugou also still couldn't compute that, for all his fighting, he had still lost, and hadn't even responded to anything besides really large shows of power, like Todoroki's glaciation of the entire building and Yaoyorozu's giant flashlight. Bakugou was a sore loser, and that was decidedly un-manly.

Second, Eijirou didn't want to fight his opponents. Kouda was one of the nicest people in the entire class, and probably the entire school, and it was adorable watching him learn string tricks from Midoriya, who seemed to be able to procure the threads from nowhere (If Eijirou didn't know better, he'd have said that Midoriya's Quirk was making string). Similarly, Iida, though kind of a stickler for rules even to his own detriment, was super passionate, ultimately helpful, and generally nice, in his own robotic way. Eijirou hoped that being assigned to the Villain Team wouldn't be too hard on either of them.

"So, how do ya wanna do this?" Kaminari said, cracking his neck.

"Huh?" Eijirou looked at Kaminari, and, as a challenge, also cracked his neck as well as his knuckles and his arms. "Ain't it obvious? Our Quirks are perfect for direct combat! We go in there, run down the place, get the weapon, and we win!"

"Yeah, I like that!!" Kaminari said, and he held out his fist. Eijirou fistbumped Kaminari. "Whoo!! I'm stoked! Let's go!" Kaminari said, and Eijirou grinned at the boy's enthusiasm.

And thus, the two went through the hallways of the building. Everything was totally silent, save for the occasional rat running along the corner of the hall.

"Yuck..." Kaminari said, "All these rats... Did you know UA had a rat problem?"
"Not really?" Eijirou returned, "I mean, I heard that the principal was a sentient rat or something..."

"Whoa, really?" Kaminari turned to Eijirou, "I thought the principal was a bear! You saw him, right?"

"If you're going by the ears, that doesn't make sense," Eijirou said, "Cause those are definitely tanuki ears. I should know, I went to middle school with a kid with a tanuki Quirk."

"Really? Cool!!!" Kaminari said, "Could he like, shapeshift or something? Could he control sand? Was he good with money?"

"Uh..." Eijirou stopped to think. "If I remember correctly, he could transform leaves into other objects temporarily."

"What? That's cool! Probably useful, too!" Kaminari said, "Maybe we'll see him soon or something, you know?"

"Doubt it, I think he's in another school..." Eijirou said, looking out the window. On the windowsill, however, he noticed another rat. "...Hey, Kaminari? Is that rat watching us?"

"Huh?" Kaminari looked at the rat on the window, who was indeed staring at the two. "... Yeah, that's creepy." Kaminari looked away and immediately squeaked, drawing Eijirou's attention away from the rat's weirdly-smug face. "Dude, look!"

They were surrounded.

By rats.

All of them, ready to pounce.

Eijirou instinctively hardened his skin while electric sparks danced across Kaminari's hands. A large rat with an ear that looked as if it had been chewed by bugs stood on its hind legs. With a small cry, the rat pointed with its weird little hand-paw and the legion of rodents descended upon the duo.
"Wah! Take this!" Kaminari shouted, and sent out an electrical impulse that didn't affect Eijirou too much, but indeed affected the rats extremely well, forcing a great amount of them down, convulsing but very much alive. "H-How'd'ya like that?!" Kaminari slurred, the voltage used in that shockwave having impaired his brain somewhat, "Th-There's plenny more where that came fr'm!"

What Kaminari didn't see, but what Eijirou saw, was a glint at the end of the dark hallway, and a massive form speeding down the corridor; indeed, Eijirou jumped back from the accelerated form of Kouda Kouji, who used his inertia to deliver the God of all Right Crosses directly into Kaminari's face. Eijirou and the still-conscious rats watched, slack-jawed, as Kouda jabbed Kaminari's head and uppercutted his stomach, then grabbed Kaminari's hair and kneed him in the face before delivering a powerful right hook. Shaking himself out of his stupor, Eijirou took advantage of the rats' distraction and backed away, fleeing to the upstairs as Kouda showed Kaminari exactly how he had gotten into UA in the first place.

Making his way to the weapon room, Eijirou saw a lone figure sitting dramatically in the light. Combined with the setting sun and the wind blowing from the nearby broken window, it felt like a scene out of a Western.

"So, you've arrived, Hero..." Said Iida, rising out of his sitting position, "I expected as much, but to come alone... You must have experienced casualties."

"Yeah, turns out Kouda's a real beast if you hurt animals in front of him." Eijirou shrugged. Iida gave a small laugh; Eijirou wondered exactly how much of it was out of discomfort. He did that sometimes, laughed when he felt uncomfortable about things.

"Yes, I expected as much..." Iida said, turning around, "No matter! N-Now, Hero, we shall settle this... Like true men!"

Eijirou sucked in a breath. That was the coolest thing he had ever heard, ignoring the obvious waves of self-doubt coming off of Iida. "Hell yes! Let's go for it!" Eijirou said, hardening his body and slamming his fists together, creating sparks. As he rushed at Iida like a juggernaut, Iida's engines began to rev. Iida dashed at Eijirou, and Eijirou held out his arm in an attempt to clothesline the larger boy-

Iida appeared on the other side of the tied-up Eijirou.

"E-eh?" Eijirou blinked.
"VILLAIN TEAM WINS!!!" Shouted All Might.

"I apologize, Kirishima-san!" Iida said, immediately bowing in apology and quickly removing the capture tape, "It was a dirty trick to play, but I was acting the role of a Villain, and so-"

"Dude, no hard feelings!" Eijirou laughed. He was kinda bummed that he had lost so easily, but Iida was super smart and fast, of course he'd be able to do this. "You knew exactly what to say to get me to charge right at you! I didn't even know you could run that fast!"

"Yes, well..." Iida looked away, "I suppose, seeing Midoriya-san move so quickly has awakened a bit of a competitive streak in myself..."

"Yeah, dude's incredible, huh?" Eijirou said, "So manly, for such a little guy, too!" Eijirou cracked his fingers. "C'mon, let's go see who got MVP! I bet it's you!"

"I highly doubt it, Kirishima-san!" Iida said, walking back with Eijirou out of the room. "It is surely Kouda-san! He is a wonderful motivator and, apparently, an expert brawler!"

So it was with great surprise that Iida accepted MVP for incredible efficiency and not losing his absolute shit and sending a classmate to the infirmary with a busted face over a rat.

"I don't get it..." Recovery Girl said.

"Hm?" Izuku said, sitting in the infirmary, as he had promised Shiozaki.

"Judging from what you told me, you should at least be showing signs of a concussion, multiple lacerations, fourth-degree burns, something of that nature..." Recovery Girl listed off symptoms that Izuku clearly lacked. "Yet you don't even have a seasonal allergy! What's going on here?!"

"Um..." Izuku stuttered, suddenly aware that his cover was about to be blown sky high. "...Lucky?"
Recovery Girl stared at Izuku in the eyes, and Izuku was never more afraid of an old woman half his height. "...Luck. I see." Recovery Girl sighed, and rolled back in her chair. Taking out a piece of candy, she gave it to Izuku, who took it with as much of a calmness as he could muster. "I don't suppose you'll believe me if I told you that we have total confidentiality, considering I am a licensed doctor on top of a hero?"

Izuku looked away and plopped the candy in his mouth. He took it back out, removed the wrapper, then put the candy itself in his mouth.

"Right... Just, if you're going to be this lucky," Recovery Girl sighed again, resigned, "At least don't make more work for me. I would ask you to escort young Kaminari back to your classroom, but he's still unconscious and I would like to monitor him. At least that Kouda kid was apologetic..."

"Yes, th-thank you, Recovery Girl." Izuku said, excusing himself. Once he was halfway down the hallway, he gave a sigh of relief - that was close. If he hadn't had the convenient excuse of that piece of candy, he may have actually told Recovery Girl about his Quirk.

Izuku paused on that outside of his homeroom. He really needed to name his Quirk, but he had extremely bad taste in names - All Might Junior came to mind.

As Izuku pushed open the door to his homeroom, he was met with a selection of cheering, to his surprise.

"Midoriya, you're back!" Said Kirishima Eijirou, "Man, we were all just discussing our battles, and you know what? I wanna just say that you're probably one of the manliest dudes I've ever met! Taking on Bakugou like that, man, that's so cool of you!"

"He got his ass handed to him, though..." Jirou Kyouka said next to him, "But when the fight began, he did pretty well. I'm Jirou, by the way." She turned to Midoriya and held out her hand. Midoriya shook it as that rugged boy from earlier came up.

"I'm Satou Rikidou!" Satou said, "If you want, I can give you some tips on how to brawl! You probably would have lasted longer, I bet!"

"Satou-san, do not be rude!" Shiozaki said, coming up behind him.
"Eh? But I'm just saying-"

Shiozaki gave Satou a look, and he fell silent. Smiling, Shiozaki looked to Midoriya. "I suppose Recovery Girl healed you up then?"

Immediately, Izuku started to sweat. "Uh, y-yeah! R-Recovery Girl's great! One kiss, and my injuries were healed!"

"That's so cool!" Kirishima said, leaning in (conveniently ignoring Izuku's blush), "...Eh, wait, what about Kaminari?"

"That's, uh..." Izuku stepped back, "K-Kaminari's still out of it, so Recovery Girl can't heal him as effectively. Her Quirk relies on the patient retaining at least some semblance of consciousness to work at full strength... Although, that begs the question: is she able to use her Quirk on comatose patients? Is she a licensed surgeon on top of being a doctor? If so, does she have an assistant on call to replace her should her line of work call her away from UA? What are their qualifications?"

Izuku rambled, mostly to himself, before he looked up and caught everyone's staring. "A-Ah, I-I'm sorry, I just tend to, uh-"

"Haha, man, don't worry about it!" Kirishima slung his (incredibly muscular) arm around Izuku's shoulders. "It's good to see you thinking at full speed, after that kick to the head!"

"Yeah, Deku!" Uraraka said, walking over, "It's great seeing you up and rambling! It wouldn't be a day without you mumbling!"

Izuku squeaked and covered his mouth. "D-Do I really do it that much?! Oh my god, you should have told me, I would have--"

"Continued, because that's who you are, and we love you for it." Shouji interrupted firmly, to everyone's vague murmurs of agreement. Izuku blushed over the general sense of acceptance. Out of the corner of his eye, however, he saw motion: Bakugou surreptitiously making his way out of the room.

Bakugou was storming out down the path away from UA when Izuku managed to catch up to him.
"Bakugou!" Izuku shouted, and Bakugou stopped in his tracks. When Bakugou didn't turn around, Izuku figured this was as good as it was going to get. "I-I have something to tell you!"

"...What?" Bakugou distantly replied.

Izuku inhaled through his nose. He really, truly, did not want to reveal it like this, but... "It's about my Quirk."

"What?" Bakugou's voice rose, but he still didn't turn around. "What about your fucking Quirk?! Are you gonna tell me about how you lied to me all those years? Those fucking ten years, you lied to me just to make me look bad?!"

"Wh- No!" Izuku shouted. What the fuck is he talking about?! "I-It's, I didn't know I had a Quirk until the Sludge Villain!"

"...Explain. And then never mention that fucking day again."

"I-" Izuku gulped. "Wh-when you told me to jump off the school roof in middle school, I... I... I did."

There it was.

Bakugou said nothing.

"I jumped off the school roof, and I hit the ground, and I... I died." There's no going back now. "I-I died, and I, uh... I came back. To life. And, uh, I can't stop dying. I think my luck's actually gotten worse? Uh, b-but more importantly, that's how I got that strong push ability... So, uh, th-thank you for that? I mean, it's kinda, uh, weird to thank you for telling me to kill myself, so, uh, um-"

"Deku. Shut up."

Izuku looked at Bakugou for the first time in minutes to see that Bakugou had finally turned
around and faced him. Bakugou had also stepped forwards, but unlike the close proximity that Kirishima had with him earlier, Izuku felt nothing but trepidation about Bakugou's new position.

"You..." Bakugou said, eyes darkened, "Who in the fuck would believe the bullshit you just spouted?!!"

Well. This is interesting.

"What the fuck are you talking about?! You died?! What the fuck?! You just fucking, died and came back to life, like some sort of phoenix?! You want me to just believe that you fucking died cause, what, I told you to jump off a building?! Obviously, you didn't fucking die, cause you're standing right here, shitstick! You've always been pathetic garbage, but this is a new low, you fucking Deku! And you think- you think you can take on the kids in this school?!!"

What? When did I-

"Don't fucking play dumb!" Deku flinched as he realized he had said his last thought out loud. "You study peoples' Quirks as a hobby, you've seen our classmates! That half-and-half-looking asshole and vinehead and that fucking flashlight girl! They're all so- so powerful and I, I just- You come to me and- I- Aargh!!!" Bakugou picked up a rock and threw it into the trees, blowing it up. "Deku, I don't care about where you fucking got your Quirk, or how you've been hiding it, or what the fuck ever else, but know this!" Bakugou got uncomfortably close and poked Izuku's chest. "I. Will. Be the best Hero in the world. And you? You'll be nothing. You got that?!!" Bakugou swiftly turned around and screamed, "FUCK!" as he stormed off into the sunset.

"B... Bakugou..." Izuku whispered, putting a hand to where Bakugou had poked his chest, slightly singing the fabric.

"Could you hear anything?" Shouji Mezou asked Jirou Kyouka, his ears shifting into mouths and eyes.

"No," Jirou sighed, retracting her earlobe from the glass she had stabbed it into, "What do you think they were talking about?"

"Obviously," Ochako said, "It was the fated battle between men! A declaration of rivalry!"
"...Fated... Battle?" Ashido Mina looked at Ochako warily.

"Somehow, I don't think it's as simple as that, kero..." Tsuyu croaked.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for taking so long on this!!! I died. :3c

Anyways, this is my Christmas present from me to you: the beginning of Bakugou's "characterization" arc. It's not a redemption; I'm exploring his character without pulling some nonsense about how "he also deserves pity uwu".

Also, you all are giving me ideas about the USJ attack!!! Thank you all so much for feedback!!!!

He has not named the Quirk yet, perhaps after USJ.
"Pardon me, what can y-!"

"Waagh!!"

"Oh my goodness, are you okay?!"

"I'm fine..." Izuku said, rubbing his head even though it had been his ass he had fallen on. Taking the offered (perfectly manicured) hand, he stood up and found his hand in a vice grip.

"Great, now that we've established that..." The reporter grinned, holding a mic to his face, "Zetsukuma Junko for News 94! What can you tell me about having All Might as a teacher?"

It occurred to Izuku that this was, in hindsight, something he should have prepared for. After all, he had checked the hero forums last night and found some of his yearmates (or at least, who he assumed to be his yearmates - he had no idea who "BattleFist39" or "MidnightHurricane" were) raving about All Might's teaching abilities. And in this age of information, forums were bound to have scoop-hungry reporters circling like buzzards.

"Uh..." Izuku's mind drew a total blank, but suddenly he found himself yanked backwards into another person.

"Izu-cha~n!" Said the surprisingly cheery voice of Jirou Kyouka, "What're ya doin' in that bimbo's hands? Ain't she a lil' too o~ld?"

"O-old?!" Zetsukuma stamped her foot, clearly offended by Jirou's statement.
"Yeah, ya hag!" Jirou said, pulling Izuku through UA's gates, "And don't let me catch ya hangin' onto Izu-chan again!" Once they were out of sight of the reporters, Jirou finally let go of Izuku. "Phew..." She said in her normal tone of voice, "Sorry, Midoriya, for doing all that, but you were obviously uncomfortable, and that bitch was just, ugh."

"Oh... Uh, thanks?" Midoriya said, unsure of what just happened.

"Don't mention it." Jirou shrugged. She looked at him. "Seriously, don't. It's not that you aren't a catch, but I'm not into boys."

"O-oh... Uh, nice?" Midoriya asked, "I, uh, wasn't gonna, um... Uh, any girl catch your eye?"

Jirou's face flared up, but she quickly collected herself. "...Yaoyorozu." She stated, and then pulled open the door. Midoriya followed her to find a small group of people gathered around Yaoyorozu's desk.

"I was thinking of an open back," Yaoyorozu said, drawing on a piece of paper, "So that-"

"But you'll be wearing a crop top!" Ashido said, pointing to a different section, "If you're wearing a backless outfit, there's nothing preventing your boobs from slipping out!" Izuku's face heated at the mere mention of the concept, but he said nothing as he walked up to today's commotion.

"Ashido Mina, I have concerns about the patterns and colors you've chosen." Tokoyami Fumikage said, holding up his own swatch of palettes.

"We'll burn that bridge when we get there," Kaminari Denki said, waving off Tokoyami's sputtered "Cross!", "What I'm saying is that her boots shouldn't cover her legs so much. Your Quirk relies on flesh, right?"

"Fat," Yaoyorozu said, scribbling something in the margins of the paper, "My Quirk relies on my body's lipids to create objects."

"So, kinda like poop?" Sero Hanta threw out from across the room, only to be met by Jirou's enraged punch.
"Disgusting," Shiozaki sniffed, "Yaoyorozu-san, may I recommend a cloak? That way, you can cover yourself if you accidentally shred your clothes."

"That makes sense..." Yaoyorozu mumbled, "But in that scenario, is my regular outfit not usable?"


"Uh, Yaoyorozu..." Izuku spoke up, having walked up to the group during the entire exchange, "Why not put zippers on the outfit, so that you have detachable parts?"

"Well, see, we thought about that..." Kaminari said, "But we eventually threw it out cause it would require a lot of flexibility to reach those zippers."

"Yeah. Plus, what if it catches in the middle of battle?" Ashido shrugged. "Why not just give her shorts to begin with?"

"So y' see, what we're arguing about right now," Kaminari continued without missing a beat, "Is the top. We can't just have her shred her top whenever she makes like, I dunno, a blanket, but we can't deny the possibility of her doing that."

"What about just an opening in the back, then?" Izuku offered, "Not a totally backless thing, but it's still connected in the back at the top and bottom, so that there's an open space in the middle?"

"But then where would that top bit go, then?" Tokoyami wondered.

Izuku looked at their design so far. It was simple design: gloves, crop top, shorts, flat-soled boots that went up to her knees, utility belt...

"...Does the crop top need cleavage?" He wondered aloud, and they all looked at the design.

"...Kaminari Denki." Tokoyami growled.
"Hey, I didn't suggest that!" Kaminari's voice pitched up.

"...I apologize..." Shiozaki said, blushing, "I was working under what I'd seen of heroes like Ryukyuu and Uwabami, and..."

"It's alright, Shiozaki-san," Yaoyorozu smiled, "I truly didn't see anything wrong with it, either..."

"Well, maybe if it covered her neck," Izuku continued, "And didn't cover her arms, then maybe..." Izuku trailed off as he realized that he was effectively commandeering the whole design process, and he drew his hand back as if it were electrocuted. "Ah, s-sorry! Got carried away there, aha... Uh..."

"No, no, thank you, Midoriya-san..." Yaoyorozu smiled, "This'll surely help with the design process... It makes sense, too, so I'll try to incorporate your ideas."

"Ah, you don't have to-" Izuku assured Yaoyorozu.

"No, no, I insist! You're such a great help, Midoriya-san!" Yaoyorozu said.

"Alright, now that that's settled..." Tokoyami sighed, "Ashido Mina, your pattern ideas are atrocious."

"You wanna take this outside you tengu-looking motherfucker?!"

"I'd prefer it," Aizawa said, walking into the room, looking even more frazzled than usual, "If you would take it to your desks, instead. Homeroom will now begin."

Immediately, everyone was in their seat, staring directly ahead.

"Alright. Now then..." Aizawa sighed roughly, "I really have no choice, but I'd like to get this out of the way..."

The class gulped with anticipation. What sick exercise would Aizawa inflict upon-
"We need a class representative."

Oh.

"Basically, here's the deal: I don't care how you do it, we just need one," Aizawa said, walking over to his sleeping bag (which Izuku was certain he had seen Bakugou purchasing at one point) and getting in. "So get it done before the period's over, alright?" And so Aizawa was asleep.

The entire class immediately sprang into an uproar, or at least the most quiet uproar they could manage, with every student, from Aoyama to Asui Tsuyu, totally ready to take on the position of representative of Hero Course Class 1-A.

"I think that I would like to be class president," Aoyama sparkled, "After all, the position was positively made for me, non?"

"Humility is an important virtue," Shiozaki said, "Even so, I believe I would be the best fit for the position..."

"Actually, can I be class president?" Ojiro Mashirao raised his hand, "It'd be nice to have a responsibility like that."

"Please, you got tricked by me and Hagakure!" Satou Rikidou said, "Speaking of, it should definitely be Hagakure, y'know?"

"Nah, I don't wanna do it. Too much pressure!" Hagakure said, "Besides, Ashido could probably do it!"

"Yeah!" Ashido cheered, but not too loudly, "I'd love a leader position like that! Let me do it!"

"As if!" Bakugou sneered, a bit too loudly, "I should be class pres, because I'm obviously the best!"
"If you're the best, then how did Deku outsmart you?" Uraraka smugly giggled, and she high-fived Shouji, "No offense, Deku."

"None taken, Uraraka," Izuku smiled.

"What'd you say, round-face?!"

"Bring it on, napalm-breath!"

"Classmates!" Iida said, standing up, "Why do we not simply hold a democratic election?!"

"Because people would just vote for themselves?" Kaminari suggested, "We don't really know each other well, so..."

"Then that is for all the better!" Iida replied, "Because then the person with the most votes is definitely the correct choice to lead us!"

"Okay!" Uraraka said, turning away from her heated staring match with Bakugou (who happened to blink the minute her eyes broke contact, rendering the match as a tie), "So, everyone then write down your choices for class rep and the persons with the top two votes will be president and vice-president!"

Kouda quickly made a small origami box, and everyone wrote their choices for class president. For Izuku, it was an easy choice: Iida Tenya, as the boy seemed like he would surely enjoy such an activity. In fact, Izuku thought as the votes were being tallied, there's no way that anyone but Iida will be president.

"Cheer up, class pres!" Uraraka said as she sipped her juice, "If you won that means people believe in you!"

"I understand that, Uraraka..." Izuku moaned from inside his arms, "It's just, what do I do as class president? I don't know the first thing about leading a classroom, I'm used to being told what to do. I've never even had a pet, or a potted plant, or anything, how can people expect me to be a good
"Why should you apologize?" Iida said, "It is precisely the reason that you question so many things that I voted for you. There is no doubt in my mind that you would be an excellent leader."

Izuku blinked. "You... voted for me?" Izuku asked.

"So did I!" Uraraka said, "Who'd you vote for?"

Izuku was startled. He had actually gotten four votes - who were the other two? "Uh, Iida?" When Iida looked at him, Izuku realized it sounded like he was asking for Iida's attention. "I-I mean, I voted for you, Iida! Y-You just seem like the type to really want the job, and, well, you'd probably be much better at it than I am, so, uh..." Izuku trailed off, red in the face.

"Um... R-Right..." Iida flushed, stuffing a whole onigiri into his mouth.

And so, the table dissolved into relative silence.

That is, of course, until the intruder alert began to sound.

In the end, Izuku abdicated the position to Iida. Aizawa didn't particularly care, and everyone agreed that it was probably a good idea - after all, Izuku was particularly skittish in front of large groups. Izuku agreed, but also thought it was a little unfair; he was getting better at public speaking, surely, and was also working on being more fearless.

Being virtually unkillable was a valuable trait in regards to that last bit.

Nonetheless, the week sped by again, and suddenly, it was Thursday.

"Midoriya-kun!" Yaoyorozu said, calling him over, "Has the support company sent you your repaired suit?"
"Ah?" Izuku said. *This is sudden.* "No, they haven't... I'm thinking of just wearing my gym uniform to tomorrow's Hero Studies exercise, honestly."

"Hm..." Yaoyorozu thought, "You said the fabric that survived was blastproof?" She asked, pulling out her phone.

"Y... Yes?" Izuku said, wondering exactly what Yaoyorozu was doing.

"Do you know what your measurements are, Midoriya-kun?" Yaoyorozu asked him nonchalantly, taking out a piece of notepaper and writing down several complex chemical compounds.

"Wha- N-No, not really..." Izuku stuttered, having an idea of what Yaoyorozu was doing.

"Hm, that'll make it complete guesswork then..." Yaoyorozu hummed, and then, without warning, she stood up and grabbed Izuku's biceps.

"Eep! Yaoyorozu-san!" Izuku squeaked, attracting the attention of Iida, Jirou, and Ashido.

"Hm, your biceps are surprisingly large for someone of your build..." Yaoyorozu hummed, totally unconcerned with the scene she was making, "So it wasn't my imagination that you found your sleeves slightly tight last Friday?"

"Wh- Yaoyorozu-san, how did you-"

"You were pulling on the sleeves," Yaoyorozu said, writing down some numbers and question marks, "Which indicated discomfort according to the tightness. Now then, if you'll excuse m-"

"Ah, Y-Yaoyorozu-san, you don't have to, uh, make me a new costume..." Izuku stopped her.

"Oh? Is this about my Quirk?" Yaoyorozu blinked. "Don't worry, I'll go to the restroom to do so-"
"Nonono, I mean, that makes sense, do that, but, just," Izuku sighed, "You don't, have to do this for me. I'll get my costume in due time."

"Hm?" Yaoyorozu looked confused. "But I want to do it; it wouldn't be fair for everyone else to be fully equipped while you're left struggling. Besides, I wanted to thank you for your input on my new costume. You're such a good help, and I've already given gifts to the others who have helped me, so..." She trailed off.

"I-" Izuku almost felt like crying. "Th- Thank you, Yaoyorozu-san... I... I'd like that, actually... Uh, th-the new costume, that is."

Yaoyorozu smiled. "Wonderful, I'll get on making it during lunch!"

"Fellow students!" Iida cried, "Please get into your seats! Homeroom is about to begin!"

And Thursday passed as such, and it was, once again, Friday.

This particular Friday, however, would prove to be Izuku's worst Friday to date.

Not that he would know.

Chapter End Notes

There's no real way to get to USJ from where I ended it here, so it'll be next chapter, I absolutely promise! You won't be disappointed, I assure you. ( *^_^*)

Also, please keep in mind that I've been writing every canon detail from complete memory! ( 'ω' )
Toshinori landed, knocking Trapezius Head Gear out and releasing the hostages immediately.

"Whoops! My bad!" He boomed, looking at the villain's unconscious body. "But I suppose I was in the right place at the right time, then?"

"I'd say, All Might!" Air Jet said as the family reunited, "Good thing, too; my Quirk isn't good with hostage situations, so all I could really do was stall for time until someone else arrived..."

"It's quite alright, Air Jet-san!" Toshinori grinned, "But for now, I must be off! After all..." And with a mighty bound, he leaped into the air, shouting, "I am on my way to work!"

While he was mid-bound, Toshinori thought about how wonderful it was that he was back in Japan. After all, though he had built up an image in America as well as the epitome of a classic superhero, he always had a fondness for Japan's streets. After all, they were where he grew up.

Speaking of growing up, he was absolutely thrilled that he had gotten the open teaching position. It seemed that, ever since his own mentor's retirement from teaching (and Toshinori here had to suppress a shudder from the sheer memory of Gran Torino's teaching style), UA simply couldn't find a suitable Foundational Hero Studies teacher that lasted more than three years (a record held by his predecessor, the impossibly strong Daiyama Sakura, who had retired to live the rest of her life out with her wife and son), which is how he had gotten his position as the teacher of a new generation.

And what a generation! Toshinori thought as he landed on a roof, knocked out a sniper that police were having trouble with, and leaped off again, waving to the police. *If I do indeed find my successor among these fledgling heroes, they would indeed become the absolute pinnacle of heroism! Not just a symbol of peace, but a symbol of hope!* Toshinori almost wanted to cheer, but it likely would draw odd looks from anyone who happened to be looking up, so he held back.
"Alright, today for your Foundational Hero Studies class, it'll be a joint effort." Aizawa drawled from the front of the classroom.

"Huh? Where's All Might-sensei?" Ashido immediately whispered.

"I don't know... Hey, do you think he's alright?" Sero replied.

"I know! He's probably caught up in traffic!" Hagakure said.

"But then, wouldn't he just try and run here?" Kirishima wondered.

"I think-"

"Quiet." Aizawa commanded, activating his Quirk to increase his intimidation factor. The class instantly calmed down, and Aizawa deactivated his Quirk, his hair flopping back down. "Anyways, I'll be accompanying you, due to recent security concerns, where we'll meet up with All Might and our guest lecturer." Aizawa pressed a button, and their hero costumes protruded from the wall. "Take your costume and meet me outside. Or don't, and fail. Whatever." With that, Aizawa walked to the door and stopped. "Oh, and Yaoyorozu? Midoriya?" At this, Izuku sat straight up.

"Y-Yes, sir?" Izuku asked.

"Even though your official uniform still isn't back from the support company, you're allowed to use the replica that Yaoyorozu made for you." When Aizawa said no further, Izuku nodded. Apparently satisfied with that response, Aizawa then turned to address Yaoyorozu. "Yaoyorozu, after going over your design with the Support course teachers, we've decided to let you use your new design today in a test run. Afterwards, however, you'll have to give your costume to the Support course so that they can analyze it and see if they can make sure it's feasibly combat-ready. Am I clear?"

"Yes, Aizawa-sensei!" Yaoyorozu said, "I understand."
"Good. Get dressed." Aizawa left.

"Midoriya-kun, I'll be waiting for you outside of the girl's bathroom when you're ready for your new costume," Yaoyorozu said, taking out a notebook, "It will be done in about two minutes, so please don't worry about time."

"Thank you again, Yaoyorozu-san," Izuku said, grateful.

"Oh, no, thank you!" Yaoyorozu said as she walked out, "After all, you've been such a good friend, I almost feel like we've known each other for years!"

Izuku blinked. It actually had felt like years that he'd known everyone, despite it being two weeks, at the very most (save Bakugou, but Izuku rarely counted him anymore).

After the couple minutes had passed (Izuku passing the time by playing with some string), Izuku got his costume, changed, and found himself outside, standing with the rest of his friends in front of a bus.

"Deku!!" Uraraka said, grabbing his hand and grinning, luckily ignoring Izuku's immediate blush over her grabbing his hand, "You look so good! Is it all blastproof now?"

"And waterproof, as well," Yaoyorozu said, walking up behind Izuku in her new outfit, "I tried not to deviate from the original design too much, but I also decided to give Midoriya-kun goggles, in case his mask gets shredded somehow and he wants to protect his eyes."

"Ooh, thinking ahead, huh, Yaomomo? That's smart thinking!" Uraraka said, "And your new outfit looks great, too! I love the shorts, and the boots, and your cloak, and the color, and- oh, it's all just great! It's so much better than your last one!"

"I... Thank you." Yaoyorozu blushed, then said, "Yaomomo?"

"Hm? Don't you like it?" Uraraka tilted her head, "I thought I would give you a nickname, but if you don't want me to, I can just-"
"No, no, I like it!" Yaoyorozu said, waving her hands, "I've just... Never been given such a cute nickname before."

Uraraka turned an interesting shade of pink before turning away. "R-Right! Ahaha! Shall we get going?!

"Fellow students!" Iida cried, already next to the bus, "Please enter the bus in double file so that you may find your seats easily!"

"Man, calm down, prez..." Kaminari said, as relaxed as his costume.

"DOUBLE FILE!!"

The whole point was moot, as it wasn't even that kind of seating on the bus anyways. Iida was inconsolable the whole rest of the drive.

"Sooo, Deku," Uraraka said from her seat next to Izuku, "What do you think is gonna happen today?"

Before Izuku could answer, Kirishima butted in from his seat directly across from Izuku. "Ain't it obvious? We're gonna go on patrol! Why else would they call in a third guy?"

"Yahoo, man!" Kaminari cheered, "If that's the case, I'm totally stoked!"

"Stoked? Yahoo?" Jirou muttered, just loud enough to be heard, "What century are you living in?"

"Hey! Class rep, Jirou's making fun of me!" Kaminari whined to Iida, who was still crying.

"Oh, please, I didn't mean it," Jirou rolled her eyes, "You're honestly hard to hate, you know that."

"Yeah, yeah..." Kaminari said, and he turned to look out his window.
As Izuku watched this scene with faint amusement (after all, Kaminari and Jirou's little episodes were a daily thing and never resulted in either party's feelings hurt), he heard a croaking voice next to him. "Midoriya-chan."

Izuku looked to his left to see Asui. "Oh, hello, Asui-san." He greeted her.

"I'd prefer it if my friends called me Tsuyu, kero," Asui said.

"Oh, uh, sure, As-" At Asui's deadpan stare (or was it her regular stare?), "Uh, Tsuyu-san?"

"Good enough." As-Tsuyu shrugged. "Here's the deal: I tend to say precisely what's on my mind. I'm self-aware to know that, at least, kero."

"Yeah?"

"Your Quirk is reminiscent of All Might's." A-Tsuyu stated plainly.

"It is?" Izuku said, blinking. He wasn't quite sure exactly how string creation and water shooting was reminiscent of All Might, but- Oh, wait. Tsuyu had never seen those aspects of his Quirk.

"Nah, Tsuyu," Kirishima said, "See, Midoriya's got the speed and the impact, sure, but have you ever seen him pick up anything heavier than fifty pounds?" He shrugged. "It's similar, yeah, but until Midoriya picks up an oven, I'm not convinced it's totally "reminiscent"."

"Ah, I see. Then my mistake, Midoriya-chan," Tsuyu nodded.

"I-It's alright, A-Uh, Tsuyu-san," Izuku said, somewhat uneasy now that his Quirk was the center of attention.

"I mean, don't get me wrong, Midoriya's Quirk is pretty cool, and it's even kinda flashy, too!" Kirishima said, hardening his arm, "I'm kinda jealous, y'know? Compared to Midoriya, my Quirk ain't nearly as impressive. I'm hard as diamonds, but I'm not as shiny, you know?"
"Well, all that glitters ain't gold, Kirishima!" Ashido said from her seat next to him, "After all, Bakugou's Quirk is flashy, and he's a total jackass!"

"What'd you say, raccoon-face?!" Bakugou shouted from the back of the bus, where he was sitting alone.

"She said that your personality is totally reminiscent of a moldy turd encased in sewer sludge," Kaminari yelled back, to everyone's laughter.

"What was that, you loquacious piece of shit?!

"He said that you suck," Shouji stated.

"WHAT WAS THAT, TAKOYAKI?!"

As the laughter pealed around him, Izuku blinked as he realized that, for once in recent memory (that he observed; it's very likely they were doing this to Bakugou on a daily basis), everyone on the bus absolutely detested Bakugou's general attitude, and were gladly taking the piss out of him. It was... Nice.

"Calm down, we're here." Aizawa woke up just as the bus came to a stop. "We're still on school grounds, mind you, but because our campus is so extensive, we have several facilities that can only be reached in a timely manner by vehicle. Everyone off."

Once everyone was outside an enormous building topped with a geodesic dome, Aizawa pulled open the doors, revealing...

...The Universal Studios Japan?

It was a stunning space, with several different areas, all separated by paths that came to a nexus at a beautiful fountain plaza. And standing at the top of the staircase was none other than the famous rescue Hero, Number 13.
"Hello there, future heroes!" Number 13 said, waving their suit-covered arm, "Welcome to this facility of my own design! I've thought out and created each and every single one of these sub-areas, each one designed to help you with your rescue skills! From fires, to shipwrecks, to landslides, to even getting lost in the forest!"

"Woah..." Izuku breathed, almost as starstruck by the facility as he was by Number 13.

"Now, I initially wanted to call it the "Ultimate Space for Jams"..." Number 13 laughed, managing to look sheepish through their pitch-black helmet, "But eventually, we decided on a more fitting name! The "Unforseen Situation Joint"! Otherwise known as USJ!"

"...So, it is Universal Studios Japan..." Izuku heard Kirishima mutter. The other students took this as a chance to start talking among themselves, and Aizawa made his way over to Number 13.

"Hey, Thirteen..." Izuku managed to hear Aizawa whisper, but just barely, "Where's All Might?"

"He's not with you?" Number 13 asked back, "Then he's probably just running late."

Aizawa gave a rough sigh. "I know I gave him a cell phone, why doesn't he ever just text us in these scenarios..." Turning back to his class, Aizawa shouted, "Listen up! This is Thirteen's facility, so you better show complete respect towards their policies and rules! If you don't, you'll probably die."

Izuku was less concerned about that than he'd like.

"Ah, yes, you see, I have just one or two things to tell you!" Number 13 said, holding up two fingers. They held up a third one. "Or, maybe three? Or four? Five? No, six, or perhaps seven? Or maybe..."

They... Keep adding numbers... Izuku thought, a bit surprised about how much of a dork Number 13 was.

"Ah, yes!" Number 13 said, holding up one finger, "This is the most important thing I wish to impart upon you today! You are to use your Quirks to help people, yes? That is what rescue work, a vital aspect of heroism, requires of you!"
"Yeah!" Uraraka said, "I think it'd be swell to be a rescue hero!"

"Ah, that's so nice, miss," Number 13 sounded pleased, "But I want to stress this one point, and I cannot stress this enough: your Quirks can be used to harm as well as help."

Silence.

"Take, for example, my Quirk, Black Hole," Number 13 continued, "It's an incredibly volatile Quirk that will, guaranteed, spaghettify and atomize any form of matter that gets in its way. As such, it's better for clearing debris in Hero work than it is apprehending villains. After all, what were to happen if I used it against a human being?"

The silence gained an uncomfortable aura to it.

"I see you understand my point." Number 13 nodded, "Even a non-physical Quirk, like, say, Brainwashing, can have disastrous effects when abused. That being said, I doubt any of you would ever harm your fellow students that badly!"

As the class gave a bit of nervous laughter, Izuku's eyes darted to Bakugou, who seemed a bit aggravated at Number 13's speech. When Bakugou's eyes turned towards Izuku's and met his, Izuku immediately averted his gaze towards the fountain plaz- wait, hold on. The fountain's water supply was cutting in and out.

"Um, Number 13-sensei?" Izuku said, "Is the fountain supposed to do that?"

"Hm?" Number 13 turned around and looked, and so did Aizawa, "What do you mea-" They stopped.

There was a purple-black microcosm of smoke, swirling above the now-defunct fountain.

As Izuku stared, a feeling of total dread filled the pit of his stomach, one not unlike the one he felt
when he was facing Bakugou. As the entire group watched, a hand reached out and grabbed the smoke (or, at least, four fingers did - there was a distinct lack of thumb) and pulled it away, like one would a curtain.

A single red eye, the rest of the face covered by another hand, glared out at them.

Izuku watched in horror as the smoke slowly expanded, taking on glowing yellow eyes as transient as the smoke itself. A man shambled out - a man covered in hands, all gripping him in various places, as if it was their last act before the rest of their bodies ceased to exist. Behind him stood an enormous behemoth of a man, skin the same blackish-blue color as a particularly bad bruise, bulging eyes made all the more gruesome by the exposed brain above the beast's sharp, toothy beak.

"Wh-Who are they..." Hagakure whispered, though Izuku knew she knew the answer as well as he did.

"...Villains..." Izuku said quietly, terrified to the core as more villains poured out of the smoke, every one a villain that he was certain he had seen been arrested in the previous year, all from different parts of Japan. There was Kirigami from Hokkaido (captured by Native during one of his fundraisers for the Ainu museum), Medusa from Okinawa (brought to justice by a joint effort between Hound Dog and Ectoplasm), and even Mako (imprisoned after an impressive fight with Selkie), among countless others, each one as deadly as the last.

"Huh? Only two?" The man covered in hands said, his incredibly raspy voice almost whining, "Kurogiri, are you sure that intel was correct? Where's All Might?"

"Shigaraki Tomura," Kurogiri said, mostly reforming into a smaller, more coherent blob of mist (not smoke, apparently). "It appears that All Might is simply running late, and that is why he is not here."

"Really? Is that it?" Shigaraki Tomura said, scratching his neck with his fingers, "Ah, man, and we assembled such a huge party... The boss isn't even here..." Shigaraki Tomura scratched at his neck, and scratched, and scratched, and as tension built up between this surreal standoff that couldn't be happening between Izuku and his classmates and teachers versus this legion of villains, Shigaraki Tomura stopped scratching. "I suppose it's alright, I guess..." He said, "After all... We have a whole squad of minibosses to kill here, now, don't we?"

At the villain's jeering cries, Izuku tensed up. Though he knew he was immortal, he knew his classmates weren't, and beyond that, Izuku had the feeling that the villains would capture him the
moment he resurrected and would hold him for ransom, or even worse, try to experiment on him and try to recreate his Quirk, or maybe even kick his Quirk into overdrive using that Trigger stuff he had read about and-

"Breathe slowly, Midoriya," Izuku heard Ojiro Mashirao's voice call out to him, a hand rubbing his back, "You need to relax. Panicking won't do you any good."

"No, it won't." Aizawa agreed, having put his goggles on and unraveled his bindings. "Thirteen, I'm counting on you to get the kids out of here."

"What?!" Kirishima, Ashido, and Kaminari shouted.

"It's too dangerous," Aizawa said, "You all wouldn't stand a chance against even one of these villains, much less ten. Even I can see Yaksha and Unagihime among them, and those two alone could take down all twenty of you."

There was some sustained murmurs, but other than that, the students agreed.

"Thirteen, while you're running, call for help using the radio," Aizawa said, "Kaminari, see if you can call for help using your Quirk; you know Morse Code, right?"

"Y-Yes, sensei," Kaminari said, clearly surprised that Aizawa remembered his obscure hobby, and he immediately began transmitting a slight electromagnetic wavelength to try and attract attention from UA proper.

"Me..." Aizawa said, getting ready to leap, "I'm going to hold them off."

"What?! But, sensei, they outnumber you a hundred to one!" Izuku shouted, "There's no way..." He trailed off as Aizawa threw his binding around the welcoming arch and held tight.

"Don't worry, Midoriya," Aizawa said, "I'm thirty-one. I've picked up some tricks here and there." And with that, Eraserhead flew into battle.

Izuku stood, transfixed, as he watched Eraserhead move. The man was as fluid as oil and as
cunning as ten ravens. What he lacked in power, he made up for in speed, managing to dispatch Gatling Knuckle and Medusa in mere seconds and moving on to Caineghis, Archdark, Seth, and others, knocking them out with incredible precision and holding them at bay by virtue of his goggles hiding exactly where Eraserhead was looking.

"Midoriya-kun! Let's go!" Izuku heard Number 13 shout, and Izuku had to tear his gaze away from watching Eraserhead use a wrapped-up Dragon Fang to mercilessly beat Ink Blot and Yaksha to turn around and bolt. "Kaminari-kun, can you reach the school?" Number 13 asked as they ran.

"No!" Kaminari shouted, "It's like there's someone with an interference Quirk among them!"

_Interference... Interference... Izuku wondered, What villain in the past year had a Quirk that could interfere with radio waves? Think, Izuku, thi-

"I think not."

Izuku skidded to a halt and looked at the towering pillar of mist before him - Kurogiri.

"My name is Kurogiri," Kurogiri said, surprisingly polite despite trying to kill them, "And my current task is to separate you all and scatter you to the four winds!" And with that, Izuku suddenly found himself choking on black mist. It was a chaotic storm of darkness, and he could barely see anything. Thinking quickly, Izuku put his new goggles on, just in case he got a face-full of dirt and was blinded totally.

"Deku!" Uraraka shouted, grabbing onto him, "Is that you?!"

Izuku would have answered, had he not suddenly found himself crashing into water, Uraraka separating from him from the impact. Opening his eyes after bracing for impact, Izuku drew back as Mako came swimming at him, mouth wide open, ready to tear him to pieces.

_Hm. Maybe I'll come back with shark skin?_ Izuku idly wondered, and stopped swimming for a brief second.

Suddenly, Mako was kicked in the face by Asui Tsuyu.
"Tsuyu?!" Midoriya shouted, getting a mouthful of water.

"Midoriya." Tsuyu said, totally unbothered by her surroundings. At once, she shot out her tongue and wrapped it around Izuku's waist. Tsuyu then leaped out of the water, pulling Izuku with her out of the small lake and onto the nearby sinking boat; they were in the shipwreck zone.

"Forgive me for saving you second, Midoriya-chan," Tsuyu said, "But Uraraka-chan was closer to me when we arrived.

"U-Uraraka?"

"R-Right here, Deku..." Uraraka said from her position against the wall, "Good thing Tsuyu-hon was here, huh?"

"Yeah..." Izuku said, looking over the railing of the boat to see that, not only was Mako still gazing hungrily at him, but so was Diver Down, and Triton, and Black Lagoon, and Captain Tenille, and even Sirena, among at least a dozen others, all capable warriors on land and even fiercer combatants in water.

"I think, kero," Tsuyu said, poking her cheek, "That we're in deep, huh?"

Izuku couldn't agree more.

Chapter End Notes

Another chapter, after such a short time? I must be a clone! You'll have to kill me to find the real author. (•‿•)

In all seriousness, I honestly can't wait to bring you all pain and joy! I'm so glad you're all enjoying my fic, it means so much to me!

Also, "spaghettification" is a real process in astrophysics concerning black holes! Ain't that somethin?
“Is everyone alright?” Rikidou said, letting go of Shiozaki, “Sorry for just grabbing you like that, Shiozaki-san.”

“It’s quite alright, Satou-san,” Shiozaki said, straightening her robe, “Thank you.”

“We’re fine over here!” Shouji called out, Sero emerging from the flesh-cave Shouji’s arms had made. The two made their way towards Rikidou.

“Ditto!” Ashido shouted, jumping out from her place in a heavily blushing Iida’s arms. She rushed over, Iida following her.

“Yo, has anyone seen Thirteen?” Rikidou asked as the six students reconverged.

“Yeah, I think he’s attacking Kuruguru or something,” Sero said, pointing to Thirteen attempting to suck up the aforementioned villain using his Quirk. “Attempting” was the key word here - it seemed that Kurogiri had a limitless supply of mist, and was somehow maintaining distance from Thirteen through this manner.

“Okay, even I can see that this is a stalemate,” Ashido said, turning away from the spectacle, “So, we need to do something.”

“Like what, though?” Shouji’s second left arm said, “Aizawa-sensei said that our top priority should be to evacuate.”

“And just leave Number Thirteen here? Unacceptable!” Iida managed to shout and whisper at the same time.
“I feel as though Kurogiri is planning something,” Shiozaki said, still watching the duo’s fight, “After all, his mist was powerful enough to scatter us throughout USJ…”

“Wh- How do you know everyone else is in USJ?” Ashido said, “For all we know, Kurogibli could have kidnapped them and smuggled them off to some secret lair!”

Suddenly, an enormous glacier arose out of the Landslide Zone. All six students looked at the mountain of ice, then slowly turned back to each other.

“So, everyone’s still here, I guess…” Sero said slowly, “So I guess just sneaking out is out of the question.”

“…But that doesn’t leave blitzing out,” Shouji muttered.

“What was that?” Ashido said.

“It has to be Iida!” Shouji continued, turning to Iida. “Iida, your Quirk was made for this!”

“M-Made for what?” Iida said, obviously confused.

“Of course!” Sero realized, hitting his hand with a fist, “Class prez, if you manage to escape, you’ll be able to just run back to the school and get help! You’re, like, the overall fastest in the school!”

“Well, I do think Midoriya-kun is faster than I am-” Iida began to protest.

“But Midoriya-san isn’t here, Iida-san…” Shiozaki said, “So it has to be you.”

“We’ll try and cover you,” Rikidou said, “So get ready to run!”

“V-Very well…” Iida said, still unsure but obviously up to the task, “If you all are placing your faith in me… Then I shall try to live up to your expectations!”
“Yeah! You can do it, Emergency Exit!” Sero said, slapping Iida on the back as Iida got into a sprinting position.

“I shall be off!” Iida shouted, and before Rikidou could reply, Iida was running off, speeding past Kurogiri and Thirteen’s deadlock. This, of course, caught the attention of Kurogiri.

“I won’t let you escape!” Kurogiri shouted, and broke his concentration to attempt to move towards Iida; the only result, however, was him being drawn closer to the void of Thirteen’s Black Hole.

“I think you mean that I won’t let you escape!” Thirteen said triumphantly, “Iida-kun! Get going and get help! I’ll hold him off!”

As Iida reached the doors and began to pry them loose (Rikidou should have thought about the electric doors requiring electricity), Rikidou felt a hand tug on his costume. Turning, he saw Shiozaki shakily pointing at something.

“Number Thirteen! Look out!” Shouji shouted, and Rikidou turned to see that Shouji’s warning came too late.

A portal made of black mist was tearing up Thirteen’s suit, using their own Black Hole against them. Rikidou’s blood ran cold as he watched the Black Hole’s strength decrease significantly as Thirteen went down, suit in tatters, revealing a dark black void underneath the thick fabric.

Rikidou was almost glad that the suit’s remains didn’t reveal any of the wounds Thirteen surely had; he probably would have thrown up an organ.

“Number Thirteen…” Sero whispered.

“Now then…” Kurogiri said, turning towards Iida. Ashido suddenly straightened up and whispered into Sero’s ear. “To dispose of you!”

A band of tape shot forward and hit the only solid part of Kurogiri’s body - the metal collar that covered what appeared to be the back of Kurogiri’s neck. Kurogiri turned towards Sero, the tape
sticking to even more of his collar.

“So, I was right!” Ashido said, her hands dripping with acid, “That collar is a target! I bet his whole body’s physically focused on that thing - no one’s just made of mist!” Ashido threw the acid at Kurogiri’s collar, who warped the acid onto the pavement below him. This didn’t stop Ashido, who began to skate on the floor using slime, with Sero on her back providing more tape. “Shouji, is everyone still in the compound, like we thought?”

“As if that iceberg isn’t enough proof; I’ve already checked,” Shouji confirmed, his arms already shifting back from ears. Rikidou realized that while he was paralyzed with fear, Ashido, Sero, and Shouji had been working on a counter-tactic. “All twenty students are still within USJ, including us. There’s one in the fire zone, three in the shipwreck, two in landslide, two in city, us six, one that’s just hiding and shivering, three in the mountains, and I’m getting some footsteps that match the weight of our smaller classmates in the storm area, so that’s all of us.”

“Then, they’re all safe?” Shiozaki asked.

“I wouldn’t say that…” Shouji replied, “Kurogiri is clearly capable of killing us. So then, why would he simply rely on scattering?”

Rikidou, Shiozaki, and Shouji digested this. They all knew they answer - further ambush.

“Go, Iida!” Ashido cheered, and Rikidou looked to see that Kurogiri was physically taped to the ground, having been distracted with trying to swat down Ashido that he neglected Sero entirely. During this time, Iida had been pulling the doors apart with all his might, and at last, he had pried them open. “Make sure to get Recovery Girl, too - Thirteen might still be alive!”

“I refuse!” Kurogiri shouted, sending mist towards Iida. Suddenly, green vines entwined themselves around his collar and slammed him into the ground. “What?!”

“I won’t allow you to hurt my friends!” Shiozaki shouted, her hands clasped hard in prayer and her hair already detaching from her scalp, “Unfortunately, I am a holy woman, and I don’t wish to beat anyone senseless… So, uh…” She looked to Rikidou. Rikidou understood.

In a flash, Rikidou felt his thoughts go numb - he had poured down his throat the required five grams of sugar needed for his muscle growth, and he took the vines from Shouji’s hands, and with a one and a two, the Villain was swung in the opposite direction, towards the big city.
“Run, Iida!” Shouji shouted, “We’ll hold them back if they get past Aizawa-sensei!”

Rikidou wasn’t sure what Iida said in response, but he was sure it wouldn’t matter - the class president was fast. Running wouldn’t be a problem - even he knew that.

“Alright, what a bounty!” Cheered an ox-headed Villain - Gouzu, if Shouto had to give him a name, “Boys, ready to cash in?! We get to kill some kids and get paid! What’s easier than this!”

“Practically anything else, I’d think.” Shouto said as he flash-froze the ground in front of him, creating an enormous glacier that encased every villain up to their necks in ice.

“Wow…” Came a soft voice behind him. Shouto flinched because he hadn’t realized he was there. “It’s one thing to see it from a distance, and another up close…” Turning around, Shouto realized that he had almost frozen Kouda Kouji, who had been incredibly silent up until this point.

In fact, Shouto was certain he had never even heard Kouda Kouji speak until now, even after Kouda Kouji’s interactions with Midoriya Izuku.

“Kouda-san,” Shouto addressed Kouda Kouji, “I’ve frozen all the villains in this area. Do you wish to go ahead and try to see if there’s a way to regroup with our scattered classmates?”

Startled by the direct addressing, Kouda Kouji nodded furiously and ran off, a lot quicker than Shouto would have guessed for a boy of his size.

Sighing, Shouto walked calmly up to a Villain - he mentally named this one Kunekune - and stared him in the face. “Hey,” He said, “Why were you hired to kill us?”

Denki squealed as he dodged a swipe from a villain with a lion Quirk.
“Oi, Kaminari,” Jirou drawled as she swung her machete, hitting a villain with the broad side and knocking her out, “Are you gonna keep running or stand and fight? I’m sure Yaoyorozu can make a weapon for you easy.”

“It certainly seems like it would be easy,” Yaoyorozu absently replied, knocking villains to the ground left and right using her staff, “After all, your battle style does seem to lend well to hit-and-run tactics.”

“Battle style?!” Denki screeched, narrowly avoiding a kanobo. What was with these girls?! “I’m running for my life!”

“Pheh,” Jirou scoffed as she stabbed her earlobe into the ground and shattered it, tripping up a bunch of villains into each other, “Aren’t you a man? What kind of man doesn’t fight?”

“A smart one!” Denki shot back, “I’ve never used my Quirk against another person! What if I electrocute myself?!”

“Then I’ll create a lightning rod,” Yaoyorozu said as she threw her cloak over a villain’s face and hit them several times in succession. She did all this while a new cloak sprang out of the open segment in her outfit’s back. “There’s no way to know until you try, Kaminari-san!”

“Yeah,” Jirou said, and the next think Denki knew, he was kicked into the very muscular chest of a Villain, “So go fetch.”

“Jirou, you traitoooor!!!” Denki screamed, and he instinctively grabbed onto the villain’s pecs and let loose a discharge of electricity. At once, the two were surrounded in lightning. Denki blinked. “Oh, hey. I’m unaffected. I guess you can use me as a stun-gun, then.”

Yaoyorozu threw a weighted net and caught a pair of villains. “Seems like a good idea, so long as none of the villains we face have electricity-type Quirks.”

Denki wanted to make a Pokemon joke, he sorely wanted to, but this was not the time. He instead settled for grabbing an incoming whip and sending an electric charge through that.
Fumikage tsked as he gazed upwards. “Well, this simply won’t do.” He elucidated.

He was absolutely certain these were the correct words.

“Hey!” Shouted some reprobate villain, “Pay attention! Because Full Force is gonna kill ya! Ain’t that right, Centerfold?!”

Suddenly, Full Force was suplexed into the ground by some phantom force, as if an invisible demon had arisen from Avici to-

“Tokoyami-kun! I’m here to rescue you!”

Oh, it was just Hagakure Tooru.

Fumikage stilled. *Wait, Hagakure doesn’t know,* he thought. “Hagakure-san, stay back!” He called out to Hagakure.

“Why?” Hagakure asked, already beating the stuffing out of an antagonist that Fumikage assumed was Centerfold, “Did a Villain turn you into a bomb or something?”

Fumikage blinked. He hadn’t considered that anyone could have a Quirk that devilish. “N-No, it is simply a burden that could harm you if I even so much as speak of it!”

“What, are you a secret crown prince to some kingdom?” Hagakure asked, her voice laden with sarcasm as she ventured ever closer.

“Hagakure-san-” Fumikage started, before Dark Shadow emerged from the depths and lunged at Hagakure, “W-Watch out!” Fumikage watched in stunned discontent as Dark Shadow lunged at Hagakure’s last known position.

Chapter End Notes
Hoo-ee! Sorry for taking so long, I couldn't quite get the dialogue to happen the way I wanted to. But here we are! You get to see what some other students are up to! ^0^

...Unfortunately, you all must be aware of my policy of doing everything from memory? Weeeell, I saw the anime episode these scenes are particularly based on, and, well, 1) I forgot how bad of a character Mineta is, 2) my order of events was totally off, so I kinda got discouraged. :x

HOWEVER, so many people were enjoying Nutricula without the exact series of events, that in the end I was able to complete this chapter! No Izuku action in this one. I was going to add it in, but the scenes I had planned would have lengthened this 6-page monstrosity even further (perhaps even to ten pages!), and certain things require certain timings. I can promise you something interesting next chapter, though! :D

As you'll notice, with Uraraka shifted, I had to move in Shiozaki, and then I thought, "Why not?!" and switched around Hagakure and Kouda! But something seems wrong! Is Hagakure alright? :o

I'm enjoying reading your comments and theories! However, if I were you, I'd be concerned with Stain. Specifically, the fact that Izukun doesn't have One for All, so he has no reason to go to Gran Torino! So then, what's he doing in Hoth anyways?! :?

Kurogiri is definitely strong, but he seems so hyperfocused at times. Take a rest, Kurochyan! ^^;

After this arc is over, I have quite a scene planned. Two or three, in fact. Before I fall asleep, did you know this Quirk was initially meant for an OC I had in the works? I ended up giving her the ability to slow down time, but I think I prefer it this way! :>

One last thing: you all remember Izukun and Bakuchan's middle school classmates? A couple of them may become relevant soon enough! Oh, but that's the far future! We still need to get through this arc. I'll keep mum about it, but I'm just so excited! >U<

...Although, in the end, this begs the question: who replaces Shiozaki?
Tsuyu stared at the plethora of villains. The villains stared back. Tsuyu focused on a particularly snake-like villain, who stared at her. The two remained unmoving until the villain looked away. Tsuyu allowed herself a small smile. “Midoriya-chan,” she said, turning back to Uraraka and Midoriya, who were discussing something. “The villains aren’t doing anything.”

“They- er- they aren’t?” Midoriya asked, looking over the railing on the ship.

“If I may make a guess,” Tsuyu continued, putting a finger on her cheek in thought, “I would say that they don’t actually know what our Quirks are or what they do. After all, if their purpose was to kill me, why would they put me in the watery area?” Tsuyu pointed at the domed building covered in flame decals. “My Quirk gives me the strengths and weaknesses of a frog, so I’m more at a disadvantage in hot areas because I dry out.”

“Hey, yeah…” Uraraka said. Making a fist, she shattered one of the windows (Tsuyu was happy to see that her hand was gloved) and grabbed one of the shards of glass. “Here, my Quirk removes gravity from an object. If what you’re saying is right, Tsuyu-hon…” Uraraka then touched the glass with her fingertips, making it float. She then sent it over the water and released it. Tsuyu, Uraraka, and Midoriya watched as a couple villains swam a few centimeters further than they would need to for an ordinary shard of glass.

“So, they don’t know our Quirks.” Tsuyu nodded. “But then again, we don’t know Midoriya-chan’s Quirk either, do we?” She turned to Midoriya, who immediately began visibly sweating.

“M-Me?” He stammered, suddenly looking like he would rather be in the water still, “Y-You know my Quirk, Asui-”

“Tsuyu, kero.”
“...Right, Tsuyu-san. Uh, y-you heard Aizawa-sensei, it’s a reactive Quirk that gives me powers as I need them.” Midoriya explained, shifting his eyes away from her. Interesting.

“Like the strings, Midoriya-chan?” Tsuyu asked, and Midoriya flinched. Very interesting. “I’ve seen you make those strings, Midoriya-chan, and I know that those aren’t part of a momentum-based Quirk, like your speed or your kinetic energy.”

“Hey, that makes sense!” Uraraka said in an epiphanic tone, “You had that really strong string back in the entrance exam, too, but you didn’t have that really good speed!” Oh, so they were exam mates. Tsuyu wondered who else was in their arena - she only recognized Kaminari from hers.

Midoriya started to tremble. “I-I-”

“Man, I’m tired of waiting!” Shouted someone from the water, and suddenly an enormous blade of water cut into the ship. The ship began to rumble as it slowly started sinking.

“Shit!” Midoriya swore, and Tsuyu felt her eyebrows rise into her hair. She didn’t know that he swore. “Tsuyu-san, Uraraka-san, I promise I’ll tell you guys about it afterwards, but right now, we have a huge problem! Unless we do something now, we’re really gonna be in trouble! Uraraka-san, your Quirk is low gravity, right?”

“Zero gravity, actually,” Uraraka replied, “But virtually the same, yes!”

“Alright... Then...” Midoriya proceeded to grab a shattered board and just managed to rip it out of the floor. Tsuyu felt impressed. “I have an idea!”

Within minutes (it was lucky the ship was sinking so slowly), there was a huge pile of debris and miscellaneous objects like bottles and lamps from the interior of the ship. Midoriya, working quickly, generated some string from his hands and loosely tied the objects into a huge ball.

“Alright, Uraraka-san’s gonna float me and the ball into the air, and the moment that she releases her Quirk, I’ll use my kinetic energy ability to spike it into the water. If I’m right, not only will the ball explode like a shrapnel grenade, it’ll create a whirlpool that’ll suck them in, with the string naturally tangling them up like seaweed at a beach!”

“Interesting...” Tsuyu said, “But what about us? Won’t we be trapped in the pull as well?”
“Not exactly…” Midoriya turned to her, “Because that’s where you come in! The water is your territory, and if you’re able to grab me with your tongue and leap far enough away from the whirlpool, and we can just swim to safety!”

“I see…” Tsuyu nodded. Made sense. “But what if it doesn’t work?”

“…” Midoriya looked like he wanted to say something, but he looked like he was physically holding himself back. Tsuyu didn’t need him to, though - she fully understood the risk.

“Very well,” Tsuyu said. She then coughed up some mucus and spit on the string, to Midoriya’s slight disgust. “My mucus is slightly toxic. Not enough to kill, but enough for a light stinging sensation. It’ll help detail them a little, I think.”

“Uh… Thanks.” Midoriya said. He turned to Uraraka. “Ready?”

Uraraka cracked her knuckles. “As I’ll ever be.” She touched the ball with her fingers, then Midoriya, floating them both up. “Although, Tsuyu-hon,” She said after a minute, “I do worry what’ll happen if this doesn’t work.”

“The villains seem pretty confused, though, so we’re good on that end.” Tsuyu said. Seeing Midoriya’s wave, Tsuyu said, “Go.”

“Release!” Uraraka whispered, turning off her Quirk, “I hope this works. I have someone I’d like to dinner.”

“Oh?” Tsuyu said, grabbing Uraraka around the waist and preparing to jump. “Perhaps Midoriya-chan?”

“What?! N-No, I m-”

“COMET…” Came a loud scream, “SPIIIKE!!!!!!” And with that, the ball exploded into the water with extreme prejudice.
“There it is.” Tsuyu jumped, holding the gobsmacked Uraraka in her arms and shooting her tongue with pinpoint accuracy, wrapping it around Midoriya’s waist. Flinging him towards the other side of the ship, where there were few currents, Tsuyu could only think about how cool that whole thing was.

“Fuck! Why the hell do these strings sting so much?! It’s like we’re in a jellyfish bloom!”

“Ow- What the- Is this glass?! Are you kidding me?! This really isn’t worth it!”

Toshinori gave a forced smile as Principal Nedzu continued to talk and talk and talk. He loved the administrator like one would a pet dog (if their pet dog were also potentially a small bear or a large rat), but goodness him, he had a class to get to. Speaking of…

*It really is odd that Aizawa has yet to contact me… Toshinori thought, Considering he is the one who gave me a cell phone in the first place… Not to mention, Hirooki has yet to call me either… Just what is going on…*

Suddenly, the door slammed open. “Pardon me for intruding!” Shouted a particularly out-of-breath Iida Tenya, still in his hero costume. Were they back already? “But All Might-san! Principal Nedzu-san! There’s huge trouble!”

“Calm down, young Iida,” Principal Nedzu said, hopping off the couch, “What seems to be the matter?”

“Villains!” Iida Tenya shouted, causing Toshinori and Principal Nedzu to freeze. “They’ve invaded USJ! They’ve taken out Number Thirteen-san, and Aizawa-sensei is currently fighting them off! There’s almost a hundred villains there, and they’ve blocked off all communication! The rest of my class is also trapped in USJ, and they sent me due to my Quirk being the best for marathon running!”

“Even counting young Midoriya?”
Iida Tenya shook his head, “One of the villains has a warping Quirk that allowed him to scatter us like sand in the wind! I was the nearest to the door, and I am unsure as to where in USJ Midoriya-san is!”

“Oh dear…” Principal Nedzu said, “This is extremely serious, young Iida.” He turned to Toshinori. “All Might, you go on ahead. Either capture them or simply stall their departure; so long as you buy us time, you can do whatever you wish. Young Iida.”

“Principal!”

“Come with me.” Principal Nedzu left the room, with Iida Tenya following him. “We’re going to raise the alarm.”

Fumikage watched in frozen horror as Dark Shadow leapt at Hagakure’s location. That horror turned to relief as Dark Shadow missed Hagakure’s rain-soaked outline by a good hair and smashed a building behind her, burying a villain under rubble.

“Oh… Wow…” Hagakure said, probably awestruck.

“I-I do apologize-”

“Cool!”

What.

“That was awesome, Tokoyami! I didn’t know you could make Dark Shadow do that! Your control must be really precise!”

What.

“It’s power and speed and precision are so good! What’s it’s range, then? It’s strong, so it’s gotta be a close-range type, right? Is its staying power any good? It’s probably a B if it’s so strong. Oh,
but what about its developmental potential? Is it-

“Hagakure-san!” Fumikage interrupted her, throwing a rock at a Villain with discreet toad-like properties, “This is truly not the time for this! I need to tell you something about my Quirk, but first we must remove ourselves from this situation!”

“Pfft, easy!” Hagakure said in a teasing manner. With almost no effort, she picked up Fumikage in a bridal carry, to his shock and Dark Shadow’s amusement. “Get outta the way!” She shouted, barrelling down an alleyway past the buried (yet still alive, if the moans meant anything) villain.

As they made their way through the rainy city, Tokoyami extrapolated. “You see, my Quirk is more of a curse than anything, a demonic possession-”

“An evil spirit that yet stands beside and fights for and with you?” Hagakure interrupted, clearly amused. “Hm, left or right?”

“Left.” They continued running. “You are partially correct- that is how he acts in the sunlight, when shadows are at their weakest. However, in the umbral abyss of darkness, he becomes a raging demon on par with the fiercest of daitengu, the wildest of yamanba, and the most savage of all the rakshasa in the hell of needles! It is in this lightless oblivion that he controls me, not the other way around!”

“So, why not walk the road of twilight?” Hagakure asked. “Also, do we risk going through the door and coming out the other side, or do we make this upcoming right?”

“Right, there may be some villains lying in wait in the buildings.”

“Good plan.”

“Now, Hagakure-san, I must ask you to keep this most darkest of secrets, as I fear what this information could do in the hands of, say, Bakugou-”

“Man, no one likes him, huh? I think he’s kinda hot.”
“What-”

“What-tempered, that is! Ahaha, got ya! But yeah, my lips are sealed.”

“You are an imp, do you know that? Make this left. Also, what did you mean by ‘road of twilight’?”

“Oh, man. So, there’s this kid named Sora, right? And he’s just an island boy who dreams of adventure…”

Shigaraki Tomura watched as his mook party members struggled against the midboss. Really, he didn’t know why he thought this would go as he planned out. It was simple. Stupidly simple. Mind-numbly simple! And yet, it all went wrong the minute All Might didn’t show up.

That stupid All Might! He should have just waited. Time-sensitive events were the worst, he knew, but today he was reminded that escort missions were even worse than that, because some of the party members were getting antsy over the fact that they couldn’t kill the generics, and then All Might wasn’t even there in the first place, and-and-

Tomura scratched his neck, taking off some dried-up skin. The Noumu behind him watched him. At least they still had their max-level dps-tank hybrid. He really would have to thank Sensei for the great gift of this Noumu, because apparently some of his higher-level units were complete nimrods, if that gigantic glacier, those explosions, that huge Discharge attack, the calls for backup from the fire zone, the huge geyser from the shipwreck zone, and even the fight before him was any indication.

How hard was it to kill a bunch of kids so weak they didn’t even constitute as Stage One Midbosses?!

Tomura continued to scratch and gritted his teeth and growled and stared at the scene and - hold on.

There was a pattern.
He still had a chance.

He grinned and stopped scratching.

At once, Eraserhead was before him. Tomura reached out to him and watched as his hand came in contact with Eraserhead’s neck. Just as he predicted, Eraserhead’s hair swept up in a sort of phantom force as his Quirk failed to activate.

“I see… So I was right…” Tomura chuckled and his grin grew wider. Eraserhead ripped Tomura’s hand off and the two began to trade blows. “Eraserhead, your goggles… You pride yourself on them, hm~? They’re used to hide where you’re looking, so you can handle crowds easier, ri~ght?”

“…What are you getting at?” Eraserhead growled.

“I’m saying, you can’t be keeping eye contact at all times. There have to be times where you blink.” Eraserhead tsked. Perfect. “Those intervals are when your Quirk stops working, and your hair flops back down. And that interval…” Tomura grabbed the bindings flying around them and disintegrated them the moment Eraserhead blinked. “Has been steadily increasing for the past few minutes!”

Eraserhead swore and kicked some dirt up. Tomura couldn’t see, but he could make out a huge figure leap in front of him. Excellent.

The dirt settled, and Eraserhead found himself staring up at a massive behemoth of a monster.

“Say hello…” Tomura paused, and grinned through Father, “To Noumu.”

Ochako was carried up to shore, totally soaked. Looking to her right, she saw that Tsuyu and Midoriya had also made it. Looking back, she saw that the villains were all fighting and entangled, and the ones that weren’t were trying to keep their brethren from sinking after getting knocked out by debris. She gave a relieved sigh; they had won this one.

Then she looked down at her hand and found it grabbing Tsuyu’s shirt in a very risque manner. She
immediately let go, blushing extremely heavily.

“We don’t talk about this?” Ochako whispered to Tsuyu.

“Sure, kero.” Tsuyu replied.

Midoriya made it to shore, finally. He coughed up some water and kneeled in the shallows. Looking forward, he gasped in shock. “Guys, get down!” He yell-whispered, and the three sank so that they were stomach-level in the water. Ochako followed Midoriya’s gaze, and gasped at the sight.

The giant monster was pinning Aizawa-sensei down, face first in the concrete.

“Pitiful,” Said the periwinkle-haired man standing above him, “And you call yourself a hero? It took me seconds to figure out how to defeat you. A waste of a midboss, I’d say.”

“Shigaraki Tomura.” Said Kurogiri, materializing behind Shigaraki Tomura. Ochako blinked, shocked by his appearance. “I deeply apologize, but a student has escaped.”

“...What?” Shigaraki said in a dangerous tone that put Ochako’s skin on edge.

Apparently Kurogiri either had gold balls or was more powerful than he appeared, as he continued without hesitation. “One of the faster students managed to escape my grasp.” Ochako sighed in relief - that was clearly Iida. “I have taken out Number 13-” She heard Midoriya let out a horrified gasp. “But I was held back by a combination of four other students-”

What her classmates did, exactly, Ochako didn’t hear, because Shigaraki had grabbed the metal plate holding Kurogiri together and brought him close to his face. Ochako noted that he had his pinky out, like she did sometimes.

“You let.” Shigaraki gritted out. “One of those mooks. Escape?!!”

“Shigaraki Tomura,” Kurogiri said, “You know very well that if you dispose of me, you will be easily captured, Noumu or not. Let me go this instant.”
“You… You…!!!” Shigaraki growled, and threw Kurogiri back a few centimeters. “Mrgrgrgrrrrrrrrraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaagh!!!!” He began to scratch furiously at his neck with both hands. “Are you kidding me?! This is game over! Reinforcements will arrive, and half of our units are down! The *one* cleric I brought is OOC, and none of my strats will work because they have Snipe, and Ectoplasm, and Midnight, and Present Mic, and Recovery Girl, and that *fucking* Principal! 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With not even a sound, Noumu crushed Aizawa-sensei’s face into the ground.

Shigaraki turned back around. “Let’s try this again.”

“Y-” Suddenly, Midoriya jumped out of the water. “You get away from her!” He shouted, throwing a fist at Shigaraki. Ochako instantly knew what Midoriya was trying to do: his kinetic energy thing that he had been using since before the school year! This was sure to-

Midoriya’s fist met a wall of organic black-blue, like one would find on an infected wound. Surprisingly, it remained in place, despite taking the whole punch.

It was Noumu.

Noumu took Midoriya’s face, and in its gigantic hands, Midoriya’s entire head was engulfed in its grip.

“I am getting…” Shigaraki droned in an icy fury, “Pretty fucking sick and tired of you kids. Noumu…”

Noumu’s grip tightened, and Midoriya’s body went frighteningly still. Ochako felt a pit grow in her stomach.

“Crush.”

Suddenly, at that exact moment, the doors to the USJ exploded, drawing Ochako, Tsuyu, Kurogiri, Shigaraki, everyone’s attention due to the echoing sound.

There, in the afternoon light, stood the silhouette of All Might.

“Ah, All Might, then…” Shigaraki mumbled, “Looks like death shall not be taking me after all… What a great NG+…”
Ochako almost didn’t pay attention to that - her attention was drawn to the scariest sight she had ever seen in her entire life, bar none.

All Might’s complete lack of a smile.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter, if things go right, is going to be the end of USJ! Oh, but Izuku promised something to the girls! Will he be around to tell them? :0

I hope I captured Shigaraki’s rage and fury well!!! I find it helps for me to speak the dialogue as I’m coming up with it, so if it seems a little personalized to my speech patterns, sorry!!! ^^;

Nedzu is a huge threat. Knowledge is power, and the little guy's a nuclear plant. :3

Quirk: Turritopsis

When Izuku dies, he is revived without injury. He also revives with an ability related to the cause of his death. Only one ability can be active at a time. Currently unknown if his body has to remain intact to gain an ability, though.

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- High-Velocity Impact (Cause of Death: Jumping off a building) - Imparts a large amount of kinetic energy into an object by impacting it.
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- Hard-Headed (Cause of Death: Head crushed) - A localized form of Hardening that focuses entirely on his head, rendering it more durable than titanium. Doesn't protect his neck, though.
Conulariida

Chapter Summary

Titans, Rage, and Revelation

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Needless to say, Yagi Toshinori was furious.

Allow me to take you through a hypothetical situation. Imagine, for the longest time, that you have held a high score at a beach arcade game. This game is particularly popular as well, so you have contenders all year round attempting to beat your score. You don’t have the highest score, but no one can beat yours, and that’s what matters.

Suddenly, someone beats your score. So you beat theirs. And they beat that, and you beat that, and so on and so forth, until you waste away getting the ultimate highest score. You attempt to fix your irreversible muscle atrophy, but then you decide that you can simply use your knowledge to disseminate tips from the shadows of game forums.

And then you learn from one of your pupils that two incredibly uppity teenagers decided to take that game cabinet, throw it into the ocean, then film themselves smashing it in a lurid music video.

Toshinori was absolutely certain that this was the worst possible metaphor for how he felt, but it was how he envisioned it as he ran over. Rage didn’t quite come easily to him anymore, not after decades of smiling, optimism, and physical pain. He was rather out of practice, so he had tried to come up with a fitting scenario.

However, as he arrived to the scene before him, with a congregation of villains in a plaza; his students tending to Anakuro Hirooki’s shredded suit; Aizawa Shouta unconscious in a mangled, bloody heap on the ground; and, if he was seeing that right, Midoriya Izuku’s unmoving body in the hands of some gigantic monster, something within Toshinori awoke. A feeling that hadn’t truly emerged since Nana-sensei had perished at the hands of All for One.

Wrath.
“Ha! It’s All Might!” One of the villains in the plaza shouted, Gatling Knuckle if Toshinori remembered the news bulletin correctly. “Now it’s a party!”

Within seconds, Toshinori had taken care of every villain bar the two threatening his students.

“Ah, All Might!” The man covered in hands said, “So kind of you to join us… I was just getting acquainted with one of your students…” Toshinori couldn’t see his face, but he could hear the leering grin from behind the hand. “Come on…” He reached down, and Toshinori’s heart lurched as he saw Uraraka Ochako flinch away from the man. “Why don’t I escort them to the Netherworld?”

Immediately, Toshinori rushed at the man, a Malibu Smash prepared to blow the disgusting villain to another planet. “You shall do no such thing!” Toshinori roared, and his arm came into contact with the man’s head.

Except it wasn’t.

Toshinori’s arm met solid muscle, and the force dissipated, as if he had hit a particularly thick mattress. As the smoke cleared, he realised that he had struck the behemoth that was previously holding Midoriya Izuku by the neck.

Even worse, the monster looked totally unfazed, as if it didn’t know that it had just been hit with a move Toshinori once used to clear a building.

“Allow me to introduce ourselves…” Grinned the man, though Toshinori couldn’t see his face. “I am Shigaraki Tomura, and this...” Shigaraki Tomura patted the side of the monster, whose tongue lolled out of its sharp-toothed beak. “Is what we like to call the Anti-All Might Weapon mk1: Noumu.”

Izuku slowly opened his eyes to see Tsuyu and Uraraka’s worried gazes. In the distance, he could hear the sounds of traded blows and minor explosions, though they were incredibly muffled, as though they were happening underwater.

“Midoriya-chan?” Tsuyu asked, also muffled. Izuku finally realized that his ears were merely underwater, and he, with some difficulty, lifted himself out of the water. At once, Tsuyu was at his
side, helping him to his feet. “Are you alright, kero?”

“Did someone get the licence plate of that car that hit me?” Izuku mumbled, attempting to lighten the mood with a little humor. Uraraka and Tsuyu weren’t amused.

“Midoriya-!” Uraraka cried, throwing her arms around Izuku. Izuku lit up, not used to the sudden physical contact with this incredibly cute girl, as he awkwardly placed his arms around her. “I thought- We thought-”

“I didn’t think anything, actually,” Tsuyu said, “I was too occupied with All Might appearing, kero.”

“Still!” Uraraka replied, “Midoriya-kun could have died had Noumu not been distracted!”

Izuku grimaced a bit; this did not go unnoticed, as Tsuyu immediately caught his gaze. Izuku felt himself go rigid. Did Tsuyu know now? He knew the froggy girl was pretty smart, but if she put it together now, of all times…

“Wait, you said All Might is here?” Izuku shook himself out of his stupor as he focused on a previous statement.

“Oh! Yes!” Uraraka unwrapped herself from Izuku and pointed towards the plaza. “All Might is here, and he’s fighting the Noumu!”

“Is that Bakugou-chan and Todoroki-chan?” Tsuyu asked, and Izuku looked over to the fight.

It was a sight to behold.

Kurogiri off to the side, held at bay by Bakugou, Kirishima, and Todoroki. Shigaraki, standing over Aizawa’s unmoving body and jeering at All Might.

And All Might, locked blow-for-blow with the Noumu.
“Give it up!” Shigaraki shouted as All Might and the Noumu’s fists intercepted each other, cancelling out the blow entirely. Izuku blinked in shock - he had seen countless times what a singular punch could do to a building, let alone a human being. So for the Noumu to be perfectly matched in ability with All Might- Tsuyu’s hand on Izuku’s shoulder indicated that he was mumbling again. He tuned back into the fight. “…Thanks to Noumu’s Shock Absorption Quirk! And combined with his Herculean Quirk and his Sonic Speed Quirk, you might as just lay down and die!”

“Shock Absorption…” All Might said, unleashing a perfectly-countered barrage of punches, “I’ve got it! Thank you for sharing with the class, Villain!”

The Hekatoncheires, if Izuku remembered correctly from his middle school self’s obsessive research into obscure heroes (Hekatoncheire was an upcoming hero from Greece who had partnered with Snipe to find a Villain hiding in Kyoto), were a trio of Greek titans that each had one hundred arms. Watching All Might and Noumu fight like this, trading punch after punch, blow after blow, and neither gaining ground on the other was probably like what it would be like if those gigantic titans had turned on each other and began to box.

Every punch connected with each other, every blow was countered, every counter was met with an equal and opposing force, cancelling it, all leading into one another and all taking less than a second to pull off. Suddenly, Izuku was reminded of when he saw Bakugou fawning over All Might's fighting prowess as a child. Izuku himself had never seen what Bakugou had seen in that fight.

Until now.

Suddenly, one of All Might's fists connected with Noumu's chest.

"You threaten my students..." All Might growled out, and Izuku wondered if anyone else could hear it over the sounds of fists connecting, "Hurt my coworkers... And then have the gall to say that you want to kill me!" All Might was able to land a punch directly in Noumu's face, which he then followed up with a roundhouse kick that sent Noumu into the ground.

Izuku idly wondered if his shock matched Kurogiri and Shigaraki Tomura's.

As Noumu bounced back up from recoil, All Might moved to Noumu so quickly it almost seemed that he teleported. "I must thank your master for telling me you had shock absorption, rather than shock nullification, as it makes this easier!" He shouted, meeting Noumu's rising body with a fierce right hook, immediately followed by a left uppercut. With that, All Might began an unceasing barrage on Noumu, each blow delivered with such speed and power that Izuku felt like he was seeing double ten times over.

"So, Villain!" All Might shouted, "Do you know of UA’s motto?! It is a saying passed on from one generation to the next, each echo making it stronger and stronger! It is simply this! Go Beyond!!!" All Might stopped, and Izuku could have sworn that the fist he had cocked back was glowing. "Πηγή... " All Might unleashed his charged-up punch on Noumu, and a loud explosion that could have rivaled Bakugou's resounded throughout the entirety of the USJ.
With a singular cry, Noumu crashed through the ceiling, never to be seen again.

“You mentioned earlier that you heard I had become weak…” All Might continued, dust and smoke surrounding him, “Well, it made me a little curious as well. I decided to see how many hits I could get on Noumu before I could send him flying. And it looks like I managed to get in…"

"...One thousand hits." Toshinori finished, basking in the afterglow of his victory. There was a small pause as his statement sank in to all who were watching. Shigaraki Tomura, especially, seemed to be between convulsing in shock, screaming in anger, and just plain fainting dead on the spot. “So then… I ask of you, Villain, to come quietly. You’ve lost, you see. You no longer have your Noumu, and since your entire plot seemed to revolve around him killing me, I would say that I now have the upper hand!”

Of course, Toshinori knew that his words were all posturing. Amid the dust cloud was a bit of smoke rising from his neck. Toshinori’s neck was absurdly long for a man his age, he knew, so if part of his neck returned to “normal”, it would be of no concern. What was concerning, however, was what the smoke symbolized to him.

_I am talking a big game_, Toshinori thought, _For a man who just used up all of his energy taking down that Villain, Noumu... So if they call my bluff, then..._

Luck was not on Toshinori’s side, for suddenly, Shigaraki Tomura started to cackle. “_You?!_” He screeched in his unearthly, raspy howl of a voice, “The _upper hand?!_ Look at you! You _have_ gotten weaker, All Might! If you’re so strong, then why don’t you take just a single step forward?! Haah?! Prove me wrong, All Might, you rat bastard son of a bitch!”

“That’s enough!” Screamed someone, and Toshinori immediately knew who it was - he, Shigaraki Tomura, and the third villain who hadn’t properly introduced himself looked over towards Midoriya Izuku, who was flying at breakneck speeds towards Shigaraki Tomura. He had folded his arms at his sides, presumably for minimum wind resistance, meaning that his (unusually sharp-looking) hair was going to be the first thing impacting Shigaraki Tomura’s body. Despite the apparent danger to either boy, Toshinori couldn’t help but feel good about this prospect.

“You?” Shigaraki Tomura lazily reacted, as if his sudden mania had never occurred. Rolling up his
sleeve, he remarked, “Didn’t I already kill you?” As Toshinori processed this statement, Shigaraki Tomura got into a pose. “Oh well. Let’s make sure it’s a permadeath, then.”

Suddenly, before Midoriya Izuku could make contact with Shigaraki Tomura, his head vanished into a portal, and all inertia was somehow lost. Toshinori blinked as Midoriya Izuku immediately panicked, his limbs beginning to flail wildly - clearly he hadn’t expected this turn of events.

Mashirao blinked in shock as a familiar leg kicked the Villain he was about to assault in the head at full force. “Deku?” He wondered aloud.

Momo, Jirou Kyouka, and Fulgurant all looked up at the right arm floating above the battlefield (Kaminari Denki was too busy being braindead to notice). Momo thought she recognized that glove.

Hagakure Tooru gave a small yelp as a hand suddenly came out from the exit door they were about to escape through.

“Hold!” Fumikage commanded, for he thought he recognized the forearm that disappeared into miasma below the elbow, “Midoriya Izuku?”

“Oh no…” Shiozaki Ibara whimpered, and Mina tore her eyes away from the horrific sight of Midoriya Izuku getting eviscerated to see his *fucking foot right there*. Mina’s eyes widened and she looked rapidly between the floating leg and Midoriya’s vivisected body, hoping that this was some nightmare she was getting in the middle of class thanks to some bad wasabi.

Tsuyu felt like she was going to throw up.
“Shigaraki Tomura!” Kurogiri declared, having sent various parts of Midoriya-chan’s body to parts unknown, “Allow me!”

“Monsieur Midoriya?!”

Slice.

Bakugou Katsuki had never felt such a mixture of rage and sheer horror than he had at this very moment. That fucking Slime Villain be damned, this was the worst thing he had ever seen.

He didn’t even like Deku!

In fact, Deku could just go fucking die, for all he cared!

But…

Seeing Deku’s lifeless body fall to the ground, not even with any limbs or anything, just a stumpy, vivisected corpse that pooled blood for a good few seconds…

Katsuki saw red, more than he ever had before.

This was a fury he had never experienced before in his life. It wasn’t an insulted reflex born from disgust, it wasn’t an infuriated rampage created out of incredulity, hell, it wasn’t even a bored furor to keep the little turd in his proper place.

This was red-hot wrath.
Kirishima retched next to him. Feh, for all his talk of manliness, he was still pretty weak. Though Icy-Hot or whatever his name was looked ready to burst into flames. Katsuki just hoped that that wouldn’t get in his way-

Wait, what?

Before Katsuki had realized it, his feet had begun to move on their own.

“You…” Katsuki growled through his teeth as his gauntlets lit up, “ You SICK SONS OF MOTHERFUCKERS!!! ” He leapt towards the crusty-looking fucker that got killstealed by his assistant. “ EAT NITRO, SHITLICKER!!! ”

“ Another one?” Katsuki’s target groaned. Groaned! The fuck?! “Kurogiri, let me take care of this one. He’s probably not even a worthwhile NPC, probably like, Villager D or something.”

“ I’LL SHOW YOU VILLAGER D! ”

Time slowed to a standstill. Katsuki with his palm unleashing sparks, this asshole reaching up to touch Katsuki’s face. Katsuki belatedly realized that just rushing in probably wasn’t his smartest idea, but this fucker just killed Deku! The only one who was allowed to do that was him! Without Deku, he was just -

A bullet went through the Villain’s hand, knocking him back before he could make contact. Katsuki blinked in shock. A second, third, and fourth bullet pierced the Villain’s other hand and feet, sending the Villain reeling and Katsuki crashing into the floor.

Somewhere behind him, Kirishima shouted “The teachers!”, but Katsuki couldn’t care less about that right now.

He had landed on Deku’s no-longer bleeding corpse.
“Ugh… Ow… Goddamn it…” Izuku mumbled, his eyes fluttering open. For some reason, he both could and couldn’t feel his body. He attempted to move his arm - for some reason, it didn’t work. “Okay, so I’m numbed right now. That’s not good…” Izuku tried to turn his head. That worked somewhat - he could now make out that he was in the bushes, in a small plot of grass behind the bushes, no less. “Alright, so I’m not captured by Villains, I guess… Although… What-” The memories of what killed him this time hit him like a spotlight on a hungover gambler, and he groaned. “Shiiiiit…” Izuku moaned, “I’m gonna have to explain it to everyone now… Stupid, stupid, dumb-”

“Erm… Midoriya-kun?” Came a meek and accented voice, and Izuku realized he wasn’t alone.

“Aw shit,” Izuku sighed, “And it just had to be someone I knew…”

“Er, yes- Un moment, s’il vous plaît -” And with that, Izuku found that he was among the company of none other than Aoyama Yuuga, who was without his distinctive sparkles and rather looked like he was about to pass out.

“Oh, uh, h-hey, Aoyama-kun!” Izuku greeted the vaguely-French boy, “I-I’m, uh, sure you’re wondering why you’re holding my previously lifeless body?”

Mutely, Aoyama shook his head no.

“Oh.” Silence. “Did you, uh, figure it out on your own?”

Again, Aoyama shook his head no.

Izuku sighed and looked away from Aoyama’s admittedly stunning facade to contemplate his next question when he caught sight on his reflection in Aoyama’s armor.

His head’s reflection.

“Well. That’s new.” Izuku remarked.

“I’d certainly say so!” Aoyama choked out, looking even more faint somehow, “Midoriya-kun,
just what is going on?! Why did your head just fall out of the sky in front of me?! How did you survive that?! Come to think of it, there are several other things I should be asking you but to be perfectly honest, I feel like I might throw up just seeing the stump you have for a neck!"

Izuku paid the barest attention to him, busy mumbling to himself as he was. “...So I suppose my new ability doesn’t protect my neck… But why can’t I move my body? It’s as if it’s extremely numb… Could it be because I no longer have nerve connections? But wait, is my body alive currently due to this new ability, or am I a living Schrödinger’s human? And what is the range of this, and–”

“Monsieur!” Aoyama shrieked, and Izuku immediately shut up and cowered as much as a disembodied head with no neck could. Aoyama seemed to feel bad, and immediately scooped Izuku’s head into his arms in some sort of weird, armored hug. “Ah, pardonne moi, just… I am not good with horror, and seeing this in the midst of a Villain attack, it is–”

“The Villains!” Izuku started, hitting his head against Aoyama’s breastplate. “Ow. Aoyama-kun, we’ve got to get in there!”

“What?!”

“The other students! If we can get them all to distract Shigaraki Tomura and Kurogiri long enough, then maybe we can save Aizawa-sensei and All Might from total annihilation!”

“B-Back up, Midoriya-kun!” Aoyama stammered, “Who?! Annihilation?!”

“Aoyama-kun, I’ve seen how powerful your navel laser is!” Once, as a manner of propulsion, but that was unimportant, “Right now, I’m just a disembodied head and the secret of my Quirk’s gonna be blown wide open anyways. You’ve gotta carry me back into the fray and guard me while I rally everyone into fighting!”

“Midoriya-kun, you’re still just a head, won’t that freak everyone out?”

“I think some situational awareness would let everyone look past that little detail. Besides, I’m alive, aren’t I?”

“You do not want me to answer that.”
“Come on, Aoyama-kun! This is what we’re here for, isn’t it?! We’re here to become Heroes, and that means that we stand up to all Villainy, even at the cost of our lives!”

“Easy for you to say.” Aoyama muttered as he slowly got up, legs shaking. “You’re apparently immortal.” Aoyama took a deep breath, then walked over to the edge of the bushes. “Kurogiri deposited me here when he scattered everyone. It was perfect for me - I was so scared that I couldn’t even move… But Midoriya-kun, you’ve given me enough of a drive to… To get out there and evict these trespassers from our school! Our academia!”

“I’m Aoyama-kun!” Izuku cheered as Aoyama lifted his head above Aoyama’s head, “Now let’s go save our friends!”

“Oui!” Aoyama nodded. He took a deep breath, and then, as he charged through the underbrush, began screaming.

“Guys!!” Izuku shouted over Aoyama’s screaming, but his train of thought was immediately derailed by Aoyama’s screaming dying down and his coming to a complete stop.

Izuku stared.

Aoyama stared.

The rest of Class 1-A and several teachers stared back.

In front of them was the rest of Izuku’s body, segmented and covered in what looked like vines and charcoal briquettes. R18 Hero Midnight and Hound Hero Hound Dog were holding back Todoroki Shouto, who had his flames burning dimly from his palm. Ashido Mina and Kaminari Denki (who looked somewhat vacant) were apparently in the middle of arguing with Midnight and Hound Dog when Aoyama and Izuku had grabbed their attention. Bakugou had on the strangest emotion Izuku had ever seen before realizing it was both relief and anger. Uraraka looked like she was about to vomit. Recovery Girl dropped her jaw from her position kneeling over Aizawa-sensei’s prone maybe-corpse. All Might was nowhere to be seen, but that was probably for the best.

“M-Midoriya Izuku?” Principal Nedzu whispered. Well, shit.
“Uh…” Izuku blinked. Aoyama slowly lowered Izuku’s head and brought him to about chest level - any lower, Izuku realized, would put him in range of the Naval Laser. “H-Hello?”

The gathered crowd immediately began to riot.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you all for the beloved comments! Sorry for the impromptu hiatus, things have just been wild on my end! I at least wanted to get this in before my summer classes started!! ^^

So now everyone who is everyone knows! Or do they? Stay tuned to see their proper reactions! :D

It's cute how Mina and Denki's first reaction is "funeral pyre" and Momo and Ibara just, agree on principle. Nedzu just wants the body to go to Inko so that she can grieve properly... :(  

But Izuku's still alive! She doesn't have to grieve! :)  

 Maybe.

--

Quirk: Turritopsis

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- Hard-Headed (Cause of Death: Head crushed) - A localized form of Hardening that focuses entirely on his head, rendering it more durable than titanium. Doesn't protect
- Pull-Apart (Cause of Death: Warp Gate (Quirk of Kurogiri)) - He can segment and pull off any part of his body! He can't move them around, however, and he can't regrow them, so it's probably a good idea to at least keep an arm on your body! At least when detached, he feels no pain from it!
After what felt like hours, but was probably 10 minutes, Izuku had managed to calm everyone down enough to demand why, exactly, his body was about to ritually cremated. Ashido Mina (looking bright magenta as she explained this) eventually confessed that she thought that it was only fitting that a true warrior should get a funeral pyre, and Kaminari Denki apparently agreed heavily (or as heavily as his rebooting brain would allow).

Izuku let out a sigh and closed his eyes. He would have rubbed the bridge of his nose had he had an arm. Alas, it was somewhere in the pile of rubble and foliage.

“Guys, please,” Izuku said over a new bout of argument over whether or not to go forward with the cremation plan. Apparently the teams were now “Izuku’s alive so we really shouldn’t destroy his body” and “He’s just a head, what can he do, and besides, we went through all this trouble to set up this fire pit”, rather than “Izuku deserves a warrior’s funeral - getting burned on the battlefield he died on” and “No one does that anymore, guys, let’s just try to piece the body back together, dress it up nice, and give him a proper funeral for his mother”. “Can I please just have my body back?”

“About that,” R18 Hero Midnight spoke up, letting go of Todoroki (who was apparently arguing for Izuku to get his body back), “What, exactly, is going on? Your transcript when you applied for this school said you were Quirkless, and then you posthumously changed that to “Kinetic Energy” Quirk, and then Aizawa said you had an Adaptability Quirk, but from what Asui-chan here was just telling me, it’s not even that! So just what the hell, kid?!”

“Kayama-san,” Principal Nedzu began, looking at Midnight rather strangely, “How do you have access to the students’ personal files?”

“I’m teaching their Contemporary Hero Art History course,” Midnight shrugged, “I gotta know some things.”

“Yes, but how do you have Midoriya Izuku’s file from the beginning of the year?”
“Hizashi made everyone keys to your office,” Replied Midnight, pointing at Present Mic nonchalantly. Present Mic looked as if he would rather be somewhere else.

“Yamada-san,” Principal Nedzu sighed, “I shall talk to you later. Right now…” Principal Nedzu walked up to Izuku. “Young Midoriya, can you ambulate on your own?”

“Uh…” Izuku said, not used to talking to the principal as it was his second week at school and he had seen the vaguely rodent-like (canine-like, if Kirishima were to be believed) mammal maybe twice in his life, “Not that, I’m aware, no…”

“I see…” Principal Nedzu hummed, “Can you move your other body parts?”

“I don’t know,” Izuku replied, “I tried moving them earlier, but I couldn’t tell what was happening. Everything just feels really numb right now.”

“Interesting…” Principal Nedzu nodded. “What if I were to place your head back onto your body?”

“Sir?” Shiozaki asked from where she was.

“Merely thinking, young Shiozaki,” Principal Nedzu explained, “Of Doll Hero Bisque, who could rotate and remove his limbs at will, as well as reattach them. He was quite popular in Japan, not so much in his home country of France.”

“Oh!” Kirishima exclaimed, banging his fist on his palm, “I think I remember Bisque! Dude’s totally retro, heard he’s got grandkids now! I’m surprised you know about him, Principal!”

Principal Nedzu chuckled as he walked over to Izuku’s head. “I always look to the Heroes of the past, young Kirishima. After all, one can learn a great deal from history, and apply it to the future of Heroism. That’s just one reason we teach it at UA. Now, would you all help me unearth young Midoriya’s body?”

“Of course, Principal!” Everyone replied, and they all set to work undigging Izuku’s corpse.
"I think what the principal was trying to say," Kirishima shouted from over everyone’s movement, "Is that we should do what Bisque did and try to put his limbs back where they should be!"

"That makes sense, I guess…” Ashido said, “But which leg goes where?"

“Aren’t his legs different lengths?” Kaminari asked.

“Why would they be different lengths?!” Jirou snapped.

“Sometimes they are.”

“What?!"

As pandemonium erupted over the apparent jigsaw puzzle that was Izuku’s body, Principal Nedzu stopped in front of Izuku and Aoyama. “Young Aoyama, would you like to go and help your classmates? I would like to have a private word with young Midoriya."

“Ah, oui,” Aoyama nodded, and handed Izuku over to Principal Nedzu, who seemed to stagger a bit under the weight of Izuku’s head. Izuku would have been insulted, but then again, Principal Nedzu was a dog-sized rat.

Or was he a dog-sized bear?

Maybe he was just a dog that looked like a rat?

“Do you often mumble like this, young Midoriya?” Principal Nedzu asked, clearly amused. Izuku made a small ‘eep’ noise. “Because truth be told, after all the genetic testing done on me, I myself am not even sure what my species is - I’ve quite outlived any wild specimen, at any rate.”

“Sorry, sir,” Izuku mumbled, “Bad habit.”

“It’s quite alright, I assure you,” Principal Nedzu assured Izuku, “But here is what worries me… The Villains believe you dead, yes?”

“...I… Guess so?” Izuku began, “That’s kind of what my plan earlier hinged around - my still-alive head acting as a decoy so that everyone could gang up and take out Shigaraki Tomura and Kurogiri-”

“Ah, are those their names?” Principal Nedzu asked, “For the police report, of course.”

“P-Police?” Izuku stammered.

“Of course,” Principal Nedzu replied, “There has been a major breach of security by an entire league of villains. Not to mention young Uraraka’s mention of a “Noumu” which I am certain needs to be found by us before the Villains get it back. Which brings me back to my previous point.” Principal Nedzu nodded, having come full circle. “The Villains perceive you as deceased. There is no doubt in my mind that they have surveillance on the school, if not before, then certainly now. Meaning, they’ll see you and your classmates coming to and from school, especially you, who is supposed to be dead. Not only that, due to certain… Events, that are coming up, it may be wise to-”

“Principal Nedzu!” Satou cried out, “We’re done!”

“Ah, we shall discuss this later,” Principal Nedzu sighed apologetically. Izuku almost wanted to apologize in return. “Right now, we shall see if my hypothesis is correct.”

“Right, right,” Izuku said. He would have nodded if he weren’t just a disembodied head.

Principal Nedzu carried Izuku over to his body, which, while still segmented, at least appeared to have the parts in the right place.

“...Why are my legs different sizes?” Izuku couldn’t help but ask.

Jirou smacked Kaminari upside the head and Kouda promptly swapped them around.

“Well, young Midoriya,” Principal Nedzu said, placing Izuku’s head on his neck, “How do you feel?”
Immediately, Izuku cracked his neck, startling everyone who was watching. Someone who sounded a lot like Ojiro retched somewhere in the background.

“I can move my neck, at least,” Izuku confirmed, ignoring everyone’s discomfort, “Also, I can feel my sides now, so I think that as long as the rest of it goes as I think it will…”

Tsuyu walked right up to Izuku and put his arm against the cut where it came from. Immediately, they came back together, with a small meaty “thwp”.

“Arm works,” Izuku confirmed, moving it around as if to show off. He then picked up his other arm and placed it back on his body. He then reattached his legs. “Aw man…” Izuku sighed, “The costume’s torn up again… Sorry, Yaoyorozu-san…”

“It’s alright, Midoriya-kun,” Yaoyorozu replied, looking both at and away from him, “I can just make another-”

“No, no, I think this time I’ll just give it to the support company,” Izuku tried to assure Yaoyorozu, uncomfortable that the girl was trying to help him, “It’s just a simple patch job-”

“As much as this is fun to watch,” Recovery Girl said, walking up to the group, but mainly to Izuku, “I would like you to come with me, young man.”

“Ah, Recovery Girl-san!” Iida said, gesticulating wildly, “Shouldn’t Midoriya-san remain here?! After all, he needs-”

“To be away from high-stress situations, I think!” Recovery Girl shouted back, helping Izuku up, “And a police interrogation is definitely one of those! Come along, Midoriya.”

“You know, it’s alright,” Izuku tried to reassure Recovery Girl, “I can walk on my own. I just died, it’s not like I got my legs broken or anything.”

Somehow, that didn’t reassure anyone.
And so, UA was closed for three days. For the weekend, and for one extra day to increase security around the school. There were news reports (in which all student were listed as “alive”, which was a risky gambit in Izuku’s opinion, but it would likely make the Villains think that UA was covering something up, so it at least bought time to regroup), sure, but they were quickly overshadowed by another one of Native’s legendary fundraisers - for a Hero that didn’t see much action in the field, he was certainly a Hero people loved to give money to. At least this time, it was for a more contemporary cause (usually most of his fundraisers were for the Ainu Museum, who certainly enjoyed the half-Ainu Hero’s charity) - that being for UA’s security systems. UA graciously accepted the money, which they used to fund their increased security.

Regardless, the three days. It was currently the third day (Monday), and Izuku was bored out of his mind, and yet, his mind was racing at breakneck speeds.

Izuku hadn’t given out his home address to any of his classmates, and he didn’t want to meet up with any of his classmates at all over the weekend. He had his classmates’ numbers, sure, and he liked messaging them, but whenever they would try to grill him on his Quirk, Izuku immediately changed the subject. Izuku didn’t want to have to repeat his explanation to anyone, so-

_Bakugou._

Izuku sat up in his bed.

_Two of my abilities are directly due to Bakugou_, Izuku realized.

He groaned and fell back onto the bed, sheets long since been cleaned and disinfected from his illness-related death. Izuku didn’t actually fully blame Bakugou for his initial death - it was Izuku that was weak enough to go through with it, Bakugou just aided by baiting him. If anything, Izuku blamed himself.

However, the explosion from two weeks ago…

Izuku shoved his face in his pillow. How was he going to explain that?

Izuku didn’t want to actually get Bakugou in trouble - far from it, actually. Deep down, despite everything, he still actually _liked_ the son of a bitch. Sure, Bakugou was the indirect cause of all of
this, but if he hadn’t done what he did, Izuku wouldn’t have discovered his Quirk. Besides, he had saved Bakugou’s life like, twice now. A third time by keeping mum would be nothing.

A more rational part of Izuku’s mind began berating him, pointing out every last one of Bakugou’s flaws in high-definition surround sound. Unfortunately, it was interrupted by his mother calling Izuku for dinner.

Izuku froze.

What am I gonna tell mom?

Contrary to popular thought, it was very hard to keep things hidden from Midoriya Inko.

Over the past year, she watched her darling Izuku grow in leaps and bounds after obtaining his Quirk. However, certain things didn’t make sense. Ever since she had seen him crawl out of that tub (a scene that often replayed in her otherwise-very rare nightmares), Izuku seemed to become increasingly clumsy, as if he was completely unused to his own body. Not only that, but his story on how he had activated his Quirk late (which itself was already odd; the doctors thought that his Quirk, by all means, should have activated ten years prior - he showed all the potential for one, down to the minutest vestigial traits) started to fall apart when Inko gave it some thought. After all, where in the world did Izuku get military-grade thread and just happened to have a bottle of water when he had left the house with only train fare and a pencil?

Even in the off chance that he had bought it beforehand and snuck it under his clothes, Inko hadn’t noticed any depletion from her bank account indicating otherwise, and she didn’t give Izuku nearly enough allowance to purchase the thread after subtracting the cost of all his All Might merch.

Speaking of Izuku’s hero obsession, for an entire year, he was glued to a journal that he refused to let even Inko read. This alone was odd - Inko usually got to see Izuku’s Hero drawings, and Inko, though a more casual fan, was always willing to give Izuku a few tips on anatomy. Inko sighed as she pulled some bowls towards her - they were having katsudon tonight. She had seen the title of the journal once - “Self Study”, which was either very good or very bad. She hoped it was the former.

“Izuku!” Inko called out, “Dinner!”
When Izuku came out of his room, looking rather gloomy, Inko’s protective instinct immediately jumped into overdrive, but Inko suppressed it rather handily. She had practice - that particular instinct had been flaring up constantly ever since Izuku had started sneaking off to wherever he was working out after he finished his homework. Since Izuku just kept on coming back sweaty and nowhere near injured, she had started to disregard the instinct, but she still worried.

“Izuku, I made your favorite!” Inko said, placing a bowl at his spot at the table, “Katsudon!”

Izuku’s face lit up instantly, and Inko felt better immediately, seeing her son so happy. The two sat down and ate their food. Inko asked about Izuku’s friends, and that sent Izuku into a dizzying tirade about how much he loved all the friends he was making. Inko smiled as Izuku began to retell how great of a friend Yaoyorozu Momo (the heiress of the Yaoyorozu Corporation!) for remaking Inko’s costume as best as she could. Inko had spent some money making the costume, and she was happy to hear it was at least well-liked enough that Izuku’s friend would make a replica unprompted.

“So, Izuku,” Inko began as Izuku wound down after recounting a particularly funny incident from Friday involving a boy from the Support classes getting rejected by Hagakure Tooru during lunch, “Did anything else happen on Friday?”

Izuku froze in mid bite. Inko mentally bit her lip for being so tactless before pressing forwards anyways. “I saw on the news that your Hero Studies class was attacked by villains.”

Izuku began to chuckle sheepishly. “Y-You saw that…. Huh…”

“Yes, and well…” Inko breathed in. Here went nothing. “Why weren’t you with the rest of your classmates in the panoramic shot?!” She blurted out.

Izuku blinked in shock and recoiled a bit - Inko felt some remorse for making her son react like that. “Uh, well, uh, I- Recovery Girl! She’s the school nurse, and she took me in to get healed up, since my, uh, wounds were so bad-”

“As bad as Eraserhead and Number 13?” Inko interrupted Izuku, “Because your name wasn’t listed among theirs, even though their wounds were also rather bad.”

Izuku fell silent.
“Izuku…” Inko said, pushing aside her bowl of katsudon and placing her hands on Izuku’s, “I’d rather you not keep secrets from me. I-I know that’s a bit selfish of me, but-

“No, no,” Izuku interrupted her, and he placed his hands over hers instead, “I-I wanted to tell you, mom, but you were so happy that I got into UA and then I didn’t want you worrying-”

“It’s my job to worry about you, Izuku,” Inko replied, “What’s one little thing like a Quirk going to do?”

“If only you knew…” Izuku mumbled.

“And I would like to,” Inko said, “Please, Izuku. I-I don’t quite understand Heroics, my major was in real estate. Just - if you don’t want to worry me more, you should tell me. Because, truth be told, I’ve been getting more and more worried ever since I found you in the tub that night.”

Izuku flinched, and Inko felt her guilt and fear mount and skyrocket. “It-It’s kind of related to that…” Izuku said, and he went into the kitchen. Inko heard her son rummage around in the sink before he came back out with the pot she had used to make dinner. “Mom,” Izuku began, sitting across from Inko again, “Here’s the truth about my Quirk.”

And with that, water started to flow out of Izuku’s mouth into the pot, as if someone had turned on the faucet on a bathroom sink. Inko watched, wide-eyed, as the pot filled up to maximum capacity from the seemingly endless stream of water coming from her son’s mouth. Izuku shut his mouth and placed the pot next to him. He then grabbed something in his palm - a string, as it turned out, coming out of the direct center of his palm. Inko gasped - the string had suddenly disintegrated as Izuku’s head took on a “sharper” quality, imitating his mockup sketch of his classmate Kirishima Eijirou’s Quirk. Finally, as his hair returned to its softer state, Izuku grabbed his arm and pulled.

As his arm came off, Inko wanted to scream. She wanted to, terribly. However, all she really could do was let out a breathy whimper as he reattached the arm back where it should be. Izuku looked back up at Inko after all that was finished, and he immediately began to tear up.

“M-Mom,” Izuku said, “Please don’t cry… C-Cause then I wanna cry, and, and, well-” Izuku whimpered, and Inko belatedly realized that she was, in fact, crying.

“Oh, Izuku…” Inko breathed through her tears, and she stood right up and rushed around the table to hug him, knocking some water out of the pot on the floor.
“Mom…” Izuku replied, hugging her tightly, “I- The truth about my Quirk is, that, well, I did drown.”

No.

“And also, I fell sick. And I also got my head crushed.”

No…

“And my body was burned alive, and I got decapitated, and a spider bit me, and a car hit me—”

My baby…

“But, most of all, mom,” Inko heard Izuku breathe in deeply, “I- The reason I know I can do all this…”

Izuku…

“…I jumped off the school roof, mom. I’m sorry.”

Inko’s sobs filled the apartment, and through her convulsions, she could feel Izuku sob with her.

Inko looked at the moon over the sea. Despite the roiling emotions within her matching the turbulence of the waves, she couldn’t help but feel impressed.

“And you cleared up all this garbage by yourself?” Inko asked her son, who, though red-eyed, was clearly feeling more relaxed about the whole situation than she was.
“Yeah,” Izuku replied, staring at a boat on the horizon who clearly wanted to moonbathe, “I decided I needed an isolated place to strengthen myself. One where people wouldn’t ask too many questions if I ever, I don’t know, broke my spine lifting a weight.”

“Izuku-”

“I never died on the beach, mom!” Izuku said immediately, as if that was supposed to comfort her, “I just- If I ever cut myself and got tetanus or something, I always used my antibiotic blood to heal myself. Plus, I didn’t have to pay money for a membership.”

“I guess that’s a good point…” Inko sighed, “But you couldn’t have told me sooner?”

“I-” Izuku paused. His next words came out as if he were ashamed. “I didn’t know how you’d react to having an immortal son.”

“I wouldn’t say immortal…” Inko said, “So much as undying. But, on the plus side,” Inko gave a hollow laugh, “At least I won’t outlive my son!”

Izuku gave a joyless laugh too, and they fell back into watching the waves crash against the rocks.

“You know, I should pull you out of UA,” Inko said, and she could feel Izuku look at her in shock, “My instinct as a parent and as a guardian tells me I should really pull you out and transfer you to a nice boarding school somewhere in Kyushu. But… As a mother… I can’t bear to see you torn away from your friends. I love you, Izuku, but that means that I have to see you happy too. And what makes you happy is Heroes, is becoming the greatest Hero. What makes you happy is going to your dream school with the best classmates you could ever have and being taught by your all-time favorite Hero. Heroism is a career path fraught with danger - even I know that. But…” Inko sighed and closed her eyes. “Izuku, what I’m saying is. even if I don’t fully understand why, exactly, you want to be a Hero, I know it makes you happy. So, I’m going to be behind you, one-hundred percent from now on!” Inko opened her eyes, and looked to her son. Oh hell, she thought, seeing Izuku starting to cry again, Now I’m about to cry.

“M-M-Mom…” Izuku croaked out, “I - Th-this is… A-Are you sure? What about your happiness?”

“When you’re happy,” Inko managed to say even though she could feel tears of her own begin to prick at her eyes, “I’m happy. That’s what parenting is all about, Izuku…”
Izuku said nothing, and instead hugged Inko. Inko hugged her son back.

And the Midoriya family stood there, embracing under the sliver of the waning crescent moon.

A crab scuttled into the water.

It was Tuesday. Izuku wandered through the halls, both wanting to get it over with and hesitating horribly. Things were awkward at home, though not as awkward as they could be - there was just a sense of mortality that hadn't been there before. But there was also an overwhelming feeling of support as well, and that was indispensable, as far as Izuku was concerned.

Izuku stood in front of his homeroom’s door. Letting out a sigh, he pulled it open.

And immediately dodged a rubber eraser. Izuku blinked.

“Sorry ‘bout that, Midoriya!” Sero shouted, and Izuku watched as he and Kaminari set up a fleet of miniature trebuchets, “Kaminari doesn’t have any aim ‘cause his Quirk’s AoE!”

“I’ll show YOU AoE, you cheap dollar store washi roll!” Kaminari returned as he began to load his trebuchets with more erasers.

“What are they doing?” Izuku whispered to Hagakure.

“Beats me,” Hagakure said, shrugging her uniform. She turned back to her conversation partner, Tokoyami. “So then Terra sees that Master Eraqus is about to kill Ventus just for realizing that Vanitas is his darker half—”

“What?!” Tokoyami replied, sounding vaguely scandalized, “Who let this man around children?”

“Yaomomo made them catapults so that she could get some alone time with Jirou,” Ashido
explained, pointing to the back of the classroom where Yaoyorozu and Jirou were discussing something. Or, at least, Yaoyorozu was talking; Jirou was busy looking over the moon. “Gotta say, I’m kinda jealous…”

“...Of who?” Izuku asked.

“...Both?” Ashido cocked her head. “Does that make sense?”

“Kind of?” Izuku replied, “I knew a girl in middle school who wanted to date two of my other classmates at once.”

“Really? What’d she do?” Ashido asked, sounding more interested than she really should have been.

“I don’t know,” Izuku shrugged, “I didn’t like her all that much - she bullied me for a good part of that time.”

“Oh,” Ashido looked both disappointed and apologetic. “I, uh… Sorry?”

“Not your fault,” Izuku shrugged.

“Students!!!” Iida said, standing stiffly upwards, “It is time to begin class! Please, get in your seats and put away your toys!”

“These ain’t toys, class prez!” Kaminari whined, picking up his trebuchets and taking them to his desk anyways, “They’re tools of siege and war!”

“Look like toys to me,” Jirou snickered to Shouji.

“Who asked you?” Kaminari sulked.

“Hey, Shiozaki-chan?” Izuku asked, “Who do you think’s going to teach us today? I mean, Aizawa-sensei can’t have healed up that quickly…”
“Hm?” Shiozaki looked a little wary of Izuku for some reason, but replied nonetheless, “I’m not sure… His wounds can’t have recovered that quickly…”

“Shh!” Ojiro said, “Someone’s coming!”

Suddenly, through the door, stepped…

...A mummy?

“Class will begin.” Said the mummy in Aizawa’s voice.

“Woah!” Ashido shouted, “Is that you, Aizawa-sensei?!”

“What’re ya doin’ outta the hospital so early if you’re so bandaged up?!” Satou cried out.

“Oh, these?” Aizawa said, looking at his dual casts through the bandages covering his face, “They’re just a formality. I feel perfectly healthy, honestly, but Recovery Girl said I should keep these on for another few weeks… Or months… She said preferrably forever, since the wounds were so bad…”

“B-But you’re healed, right?” Uraraka asked.

“Yeah, that’s what makes this frustrating,” Aizawa sighed, “I feel healed, and I know it healed, but doctor’s orders, I guess. Speaking of frustrating things…” Aizawa pointed a cast towards the class, and belatedly, Izuku realized he was pointing at him, “You. Midoriya Izuku. Care to come up to the front of the class and share your little story of how you’re alive after apparently being decapitated?”

The whole class slowly turned to look at Izuku.

Even Bakugou, who was uncharacteristically silent.
Izuku had never wished to be permanently six feet under harder than now.

Chapter End Notes

Behold! My horrifically off-kilter updating schedule!! :D

...That is, no schedule.

Anyways, I wanted to write the next scene in very badly, but I felt this was a good stopping point! As such, the next chapter will be a direct continuation, and also hopefully introduce 1-B! ^o^

To be honest, this was probably long overdue... And also kind of inspired by what I envision to be the perfect mother to be like... I, er... You know what, never mind that. Just know that Inko is the best mother in the world, and also, what the fuck is Nedzu's species supposed to be. :P

This chapter feels short, due to the slow pace of the chapter, but that's only an illusion - the chapter itself is 11.3 pages long and over 4000 words! Considering it took two days to write, I'm subtly impressed with myself!!! :>

Also, it has come to my attention that, as of my writing this, this is the 59th most bookmarked BNHA fic on AO3, and also 97th in kudos!!! :O

I-I'm not used to being in the spotlight this much - normally, all my fics fade into obscurity and darkness, and I'm fine with that, so just - to be this popular, I-I'm speechless, truly. I'm thankful to all my readers - I don't expect to be driven any higher than these places, but as it stands, all I can say is just... Thank you, all. :)

Next chapter: Bakugou probably gets to talk, who knows. I had an Inko-centric chapter, anything can happen. ;3
With every step Izuku took towards the front of the class, the more he felt as if he was about to be hung at the gallows. Which would be an interesting death, honestly, perhaps locked room murd-
He needed to focus. Where was he? Right, gallows. With ev- oh, someone was grabbing his hand.

“Midoriya-chan…” A- Tsuyu whispered, letting go of his hand, “You don’t have to speak if you don’t want to, kero.”

Izuku thought it over.

He took another step forward.

When he got to the podium, he took a deep breath before turning around and facing the class, who seemed to match his apprehension, but raised him curiosity in response.

“So…” Izuku began shakily, “My Quirk…”

No one said anything. Izuku felt a little weak in the knees from the amount of staring everyone was doing, and wondered why he didn’t feel this way back at USJ.

Then he remembered that he was fearing for his life at USJ and also that he couldn’t feel his knees. Or the rest of his body.

Izuku took another deep breath, then sighed. “So, uh. Aizawa-sensei says that he thinks my Quirk is adaptational, that it reacts to situations and counters it-”
“Not anymore, I don’t,” Aizawa interrupted, and Izuku mentally thanked his teacher for drawing some of the attention away from him, “I got the gist of what happened while I was out from Midnight and Present Mic. I’ll also be relaying everything that you say to All Might and the other staff members, as ordered by Principal Nedzu himself.”

“Oh, uh. That’s… That’s excellent, then…” Izuku said. He should have expected that, honestly. “Will, uh… Will you be telling Number 13? Are they doing alright?”

“Number 13 is doing fine, their injuries have been healed expeditiously by Recovery Girl,” Aizawa replied, sounding bored out of his mind (though it was hard to tell his actual emotion - his face was covered in gauze and he always sounded bored), “They’re on the staff role, I’m telling them, too. Continue.”

“Oh, uh, right,” Izuku nodded. Blinking, he turned back to the class, before he turned back to Aizawa. “Do you want my notes on my Quirk? Because I have hand-written notes that I’ve kept since I’ve awakened my Quirk.”

“That’ll be fine and appreciated, Izuku, now please, continue.” Aizawa said with a forceful tone.

“Right!” Izuku shouted, standing straight up and facing the group, “For a majority of my life, I thought I was Quirkless!”

Silence. Todoroki raised a hand.

“How?” He asked, “Most children who are born with Quirks awaken them at age four at the latest. You very clearly have a Quirk, so… How did you think you were Quirkless?”

“Oh, uh…” Izuku thought back, “Well, uh, when I was nearing my fifth birthday with no indication that I had a Quirk, my mom took me to a doctor that specialized in rearing children with Quirks. Turns out, Quirkless children are born with certain vestigial traits like an extra bone in their pinky toes, so when a child is developed enough, they look for these signs to determine if a child will have a Quirk or not. Er… I don’t have those extra bones. They, uh, they kind of made it a big deal that I hadn’t activated my Quirk yet, but they just said that as long as I was healthy, I should develop one in due time.”

“And they didn’t call you in for, like, a follow-up?” Kirishima asked without raising his hand. Iida looked almost livid, though if it was due to the constant interruptions or Kirishima’s lack of
“Oh, they did,” Izuku replied, “Unfortunately, uh. My Quirk still hadn’t manifested, and it was my sixth birthday, so we kind of lost hope. Uh, also, about two years prior, I was, um, subjected to bullying?”

Kirishima blinked. Aoyama stopped smiling. Shouji’s eyes narrowed and one of his hands became an eye and began staring at Bakugou. Bakugou, to his credit, was refusing to look at anyone and rather became astutely interested in the ceiling.

“Man, that’s messed up,” Kaminari whistled. Ashido nodded in agreement. “Because you thought you were Quirkless? Man, kids are messed up.”

“It, uh,” Izuku looked away and began scratching his arm, “It wasn’t just in daycare.”

Kaminari froze.

“It lasted all the way into middle school.”

Ashido and Tokoyami both looked like they were about to track down all of Izuku’s middle school classmates. Another one of Shouji’s eyes began staring at Bakugou, who was very interested in his desk now.

Tsuyu stood up and wrapped Izuku in a very big hug that smelled vaguely like water lilies. At once, Kouda, Satou, Kirishima, Uraraka, Kaminari, and Ashido also followed in her footsteps and immediately buried Izuku in a giant group hug.

It felt… nice.

“Uh, guys? Midoriya’s kind of… Crying…” Sero spoke up, and Midoriya blinked his eyes and was surprised to find that, yes, he was crying over how much his friends loved him. It was about the second or third time he had cried in the last 24 hours, and he was honestly surprised that he was this popular among his peers after years of isolation, both forced and self-imposed.
Bakugou had yet to move.

“It, uh, it reached sort of suicide baiting levels,” Yaoyorozu and Hagakure gasped, and Shouji now had three eyes pinned on Bakugou, “B-B-But I never went through with them!” Izuku immediately followed that statement with, sticking to his earlier lie to Shouji during the Battle Trial. “I, uh… But, uh… I…. After school one day…” Izuku gulped, this was now or never. The hug had dispersed by then, and almost everyone was on the edge of their seats. “I, uh… I fell out a window.” He finished lamely.

“You… Fell out a window?” Shouji spoke up for the first time that day. Luckily, he had turned his eyes away from Bakugou when he said this, so no one had seen how heavily he was glaring at Bakugou.

“Well, it was a fourth-story window,” Izuku sheepishly replied, “So it was very high up.”

“How did you, fall out of a window?” Sero asked.

“I, uh…” Izuku didn’t think this far ahead, honestly. He just thought they’d accept the window at face value. “O-One of my notes blew out the window? S-so I was trying to catch, it, and then I just, uh. Fell.” Izuku gulped. “I woke up on the ground, looking at the sky and my limbs hurting. Uh, I realized I could walk, and I just, uh. Got my stuff and walked home.”

“That’s. That’s it?” Ashido blinked.

“Hold on…” Bakugou growled out. Izuku flinched; he forgot he was there in the midst of creating a scenario without Bakugou. “This wouldn’t be that day, would it?”

“Y… Yeah, it was that day…” Izuku confirmed, “Th-The Sludge Villain attack on Mustafar.”

Bakugou tsked and looked out the window.

“Hold on, that was you?!?” Kirishima blurted out, “You’re the mystery kid with the strongest push in the world?!”
“I think it’s a bit more complicated than that, but uh, yeah.” Izuku nodded.

“They wouldn’t stop—”

“Talking about it on the news, I know,” Izuku sighed. “This next part’s kind of important, though. Turns out, the Sludge Villain’s body was so full of pathogens and diseases, and his fighting style seemed to revolve around suffocating his victims and filling their lungs with his body, that in the middle of the night, I uh, fell seriously ill.”

Bakugou stiffened up, and slowly looked towards Izuku.

“So ill that, uh. I died. Again.”

“Hold on, again?!” Kaminari shouted, “What was the first time?!”

“The fall, obviously!” Jirou replied, looking somewhat pale, “Midoriya’s died twice by now—”

“Well, eight times total, but—”

“EIGHT?!”

“Erm, maybe it’s best if I show them off?” Izuku said.

“Later,” Aizawa said, bringing some calm to the calamity, “Right now, I would like to clarify something - you died? ”

“Y-Yes?” Izuku said.

“How do you know?” Aizawa asked.

Izuku thought back to the sheets covered in blood and vomit, how he had woken up in the middle
of the night almost delirious from fever, and then fallen asleep to wake up with no symptoms and those messy sheets.

“J-Just trust me on that, okay?” Izuku requested, and at Aizawa’s nod, Izuku continued his story, “So uh, I didn’t actually know that these were legitimate deaths until about my fourth one, but, uh, anyways, I remembered that Bakugou had also been held captive by the Sludge Villain, though he had gotten less possessed and, beyond that, always had a stronger immune system growing up—”

“Wait, back up,” Sero said, “You and Bakugou knew each other?”

“We were neighbors,” Bakugou replied gruffly, not tearing his gaze from Izuku.

“Uh, yeah, our moms are friends,” Izuku nodded. “So, uh, I ran over to his house, and, as it turns out, Bakugou was also violently ill. However, he showed less symptoms due to the reasons I previously stated. So, uh, this next part is gonna sound weird, but, uh, I made him some tea—”

“Tea?”

“-With a little bit of my blood in it.”

Bakugou’s eyes widened, and so did everyone else’s.

“I don’t why I thought to do that, it just sort of, came to me while I was making the tea, and well, uh, from what I heard from Mr. Bakugou, it apparently worked.” Izuku blushed heavily - actually recounting the events, it was extremely weird, but there were weirder Quirks in his opinion - like his old classmate that could make his neck extend as long as he wanted. “Um. So. Uh. I’ve been using that ability whenever I’ve been feeling even slightly feverish, and from what I can tell, my blood can just. Cure diseases.”

“Like Jesus?” Kaminari asked, and he got slapped lightly by one of Shiozaki’s vines.

“Midoriya-kun,” Shiozaki asked, “Are you certain you died?”

“I fell out of a four-story window and also I drowned, Shiozaki-san,” Izuku deadpanned, “I think
I’d know if I’d died.”

“You drowned?!” Ojiro shouted.

“Oh, uh, yeah,” Izuku said, realizing he had just revealed his next death, “I, uh. Fell asleep while taking a bath.”

A beat.

“That’s anticlimactic.” Hagakure mumbled.

“They can’t all be cinematic deaths, Hagakure-san,” Tokoyami replied, “What ability did you get from that?” He asked.

“Tokoyami-kun!” Iida shouted, sounding somewhat scandalized.

“No, he’s right,” Izuku sighed, “I’ve noticed that every death is followed by a new ability. For the fall, I got the power to create huge impacts with my strikes. For illness, a cure for illness. For drowning, I got, uh, this.” And with that, Izuku began pouring water out of his mouth.

“Ah, une gargouille,” Aoyama said, looking green.

“Kind of,” Izuku said, stopping the ability and just letting the water pool at his feet, “I’ll clean that up, Aizawa-sensei.”

“I’d appreciate that.”

“I have a question.” Kaminari raised his hand.

“Yeah?” Izuku said.
“If you drowned at Tokyo DisneySea, would you become a mermaid?”

As Jirou throttled Kaminari, Uraraka looked away from the scene and turned to Izuku. “Wait, you said it was your fourth death that you realized you started dying?”

“Well, really, it was after I woke up in the bottom of a cold bath, but I fully came to terms with it after a red-backed spider bit me on the neck sometime in August of that year.” Kouda winced, and Izuku didn’t know if it was because of the boy’s entomophobia or because he knew precisely how poisonous the spider could be; Izuku often saw Kouda reading nature articles when he wasn’t studying or working on his string tricks. Speaking of… “Uh, Kouda-kun? Uh, I haven’t been totally honest with where I’ve been getting the string. I’ve, uh, been making it.”

Kouda took it well. He just looked a little queasy and didn’t faint at all.

“So, uh, that’s the state I was in around the Entrance Exam. Four deaths, and four abilities.” Izuku continued, “So it’s actually kind of lucky that apparently, my deaths are regenerative.”

“Could you explain, Midoriya-kun?” Yaoyorozu asked, raising a hand with a ballpoint pen in it, and Midoriya realized that she was taking notes on his untimely demises. It was almost touching, knowing someone else cared enough to keep track of his deaths.

“Well, you’d think someone would notice me walking with broken bones through the streets of Mustafar, but all I had was some dull pains,” Izuku shrugged, “It’s just a feeling I have, but I have yet to be proven false, especially with my next death, which was right before the first day of school. Uh, I got hit by a car and my neck snapped upon impact with the ground.”

“Is that why you looked so surprised when you heard your time for the meter dash?” Aizawa asked. At Izuku’s nod, Aizawa nodded back, letting him continue.

“So, uh, then-”

“Wait a minute!!!” Uraraka interrupted, “I just remembered! When Aizawa-sensei used his Quirk on you, you passed out after he deactivated it! Was that you reliving all of your deaths at once?!”

Izuku blinked. He had forgotten about that. “Uh. I don’t know? That’s probably it.”

“Uh, it’s alright? I’d forgotten about it, actually…” Izuku shook his head. “I’m getting off track. Uh, my next death was due to a gas leak. A building I was passing by exploded, and I was caught in the blast.” Not at all what happened, but when he was planning out his story, he decided that he would try to exonerate Bakugou from the whole thing. A more rational part of his brain screamed at him when he did this, saying that it was the perfect time to get revenge on the asshole for ruining his life for so long. Izuku had countered with the ultimatum: which would be worse for Izuku’s long-term health, his ruining the already-volatile boy’s chances at his dream career, or leaving him be and just letting him go around not thinking he was responsible for the death of an immortal child?

Judging by Bakugou’s stare… Well, it actually wasn’t clear what Bakugou was feeling. He looked oddly devoid of anger, though, which was strange.

“So, uh, gas explosion. And now I can self-destruct. That, uh, that’s kind of what destroyed the fifth floor, Shouji and Sero. Sorry…” Izuku rubbed his neck.

“I mean, I can’t get mad because I got a good grade, but it was kind of reckless, Midoriya…” Sero groaned, “And now I feel like an asshole because that’s that I focused on.”

“I don’t blame you, Midoriya,” Shouji said firmly, “You probably did it in self-defense, and you didn’t know how potent it was.”

“That’s, uh, pretty correct, yeah,” Izuku nodded. “So. USJ. You all saw the, uh Kurogiri thing, and now I can detach my body parts. But, uh… Uraraka, Tsuyu, you’re gonna hate this-”

“It was Noumu, kero?” Tsuyu interrupted, “You went weirdly still when it caught you, like you had stopped fighting. Also, you mentioned that your deaths had a regeneration factor, so I assume you actually were crushed by Noumu’s hands, kero.” Uraraka nodded, looking sick, so Tsuyu answered for her. “Uraraka-hon agrees.”

“Uraraka- hon ?” Ashido grinned.

“Uh, that’s, uh, actually it, though…” Izuku mumbled. On one hand, he was glad it was all aired out (more or less), but on the other hand, it was all pretty- “Oh, right! I can make my head all hard cause of the crushing thing, so it’s kind of like Kirishima’s Quirk in that sense, except I can only do my head!”

“So, it’s more like Crimson Riot’s Quirk?” Kirishima asked.

“Yeah!!” Izuku perked up immediately. Kirishima always knew what Izuku was talking about whenever he started rattling about more retro Heroes, and this was no different. “So, yeah, that’s my Quirk! Any, uh, any questions?”

Ashido raised her hand. “Have you named it yet?”

Izuku blinked. “Uh, no. I’m kind of bad at naming, so, I’ve been holding off on that…”

“Alright! Then our next thing is to help you come up with a name!” Ashido said, and Izuku was surprised with how many people immediately nodded and agreed with her.

“Wh- That’s it?” Izuku asked, “No tears? My mom was sobbing when I told her last night-”

“Well, that’s your mom,” Kaminari said, waving off his concerns, “You’re a bit of a cryer, so I bet your mom’s much worse…”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Jirou growled at Kaminari, and pounced on him.

As the whole class burst into discussion, Izuku wondered wh-

“It’s because shock is a hell of a drug,” Hagakure whispered into Izuku’s ear. Izuku jumped ten feet into the air, but luckily, he wasn’t a very good jumper to begin with, so he maybe only hopped a centimeter.

“Sorry, couldn’t resist,” Hagakure grinned. Or at least, Izuku thought she grinned. She certainly
sounded like she was grinning. “Anyways, take it from an aspiring prankster extraordinaire - shock lets you give whatever information to people and they’ll just go with it. It’ll take maybe another two days for them to understand the gravity of what you just said, but…”

“Alright, I think that’s enough about Midoriya,” Aizawa spoke up, and Izuku looked over to see him perusing Yaoyorozu’s notes on Izuku’s Quirk. “Now, if we could all just settle down-”

“Sensei,” Kaminari said, “We’ve just been given some of the most shocking news of our young lives-”

“You’re talking like an old man again,” Jirou pointed out.

“Quiet,” Aizawa said, activating his Quirk to increase his intimidation. Everyone fell silent. “Good. Anyways, I have an announcement that concerns you all as well. Next month, UA will be hosting an incredibly important event.”

Half the class gulped. This sounded intense.

“It’s our Sports Festival.”

Izuku internally cheered. UA’s Sports Festival was a national event that had overall replaced the Olympic Games in popularity in Japan (not least in part to legendary athlete Kuwata Shinmyoumaru, whose literal Quirk was Baseball, getting banned from the Games due to suspected cheating, causing Japan to boycott to this day). Not only was it entertainment on a national scale, it was also a way of UA showing off how its school was the ultimate in Hero studies. But wait - the Sports Festival was an annual event, yes, but to have it so soon after a villain attack?

“Midoriya,” Aizawa’s voice snapped Izuku back to reality, “Are you listening? Because this next bit concerns you: “until further notice, Midoriya Izuku cannot participate in the Sports Festival”.”

“What?!?” Kirishima shouted, “Why not?!”

“Because the villains think I’m dead,” Izuku replied before Aizawa could, “This is to make the Villains think I’m still dead while in actuality, I’m safe and in hiding. Right, Aizawa-sensei?”
“Pretty much, yeah,” Aizawa shrugged, “Otherwise, I’d let you participate. But, you know, we’re trying to keep up a masquerade, so, you’re gonna be stuck in the bleachers with Management.”

“But that’s not fair!” Ashido cried, “Midoriya-kun should be allowed to be in the Sports Festival! He’s been through enough as is, let him live a normal school life!”

“I think his school life stopped being normal when he got killed by a Villain…” Ojiro muttered.

Bakugou just continued staring at Izuku.

Izuku, though he agreed with Aizawa, honestly, could do without Bakugou’s stares. It was really starting to creep him out.

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“So, I’ll see you at lunch, Deku?” Uraraka asked.

“You bet, Uraraka!” Izuku said, walking over to the door, “Aoyama-kun, are you sure you don’t want to join us?”

“Oh, non, merci!” Aoyama sang, pulling out a very fancy box, “For you see, today maman packed me extra macarons!”

“Ooh, macarons!” Ashido attempted to tackle Aoyama, “Gimme gimme!!”

“Merde!” Aoyama swore, “Mademoiselle, if you must have a macaron, ask Satou-kun to make you one!”

“I dunno how to do that yet,” Satou shrugged, “So you’re on your own.”

Midoriya smiled, looking at the bickering group as he opened the door. *Maybe my luck has changed for the better?* He thought, turning to look where he was going. *After all, to have friends like these...*
He slammed face first into something hard.

No, that was incorrect. At first glance, it was hard, but it was also a little soft. It was also moving up and down in a steady rhythm.

“Uh??? Hello??? Are you alright!?” Shouted a voice Izuku didn’t recognize, and he suddenly realized that he had crashed face-first into someone’s extremely muscular chest.

“Yaaaah!!!!” Izuku screamed, blushing and jumping backwards and surprising Iida, who caught him in his arms. Izuku felt his extremely red face turn even brighter when he realized that Iida was probably just as muscular.

“Ah! Good to see you are healthy!!!” Shouted the boy who he had accidentally gotten a face full of cleavage from, “I am sorry for blocking the door, however, I decided that now would be the best time to see our rival class with my own two eyes!!!” He was a very tall boy, about the same height as Iida, only his head was shaved and he had the same expression Kirishima had whenever he was about to say something profoundly ‘manly’. “It is very good to meet you, and all the rest of your class!!!” If Iida could perfect a ninety degree bow, this boy could go beyond that, bowing so hard that he almost cracked a hole in Aoyama’s desk (which was scooted forward so that Aoyama could better see this fiasco).

“U-Uh…” Izuku said intelligently, still red as a monkey.

“Oi, Yoarashi…” Said a boy with spiky silver hair, “We didn’t come here to fanboy! We came here to issue our challenge!”

“Huh!!” Yoarashi shouted, shooting straight up and almost hitting his friend in the process, “Oh! Right!” He held out his hand with the force of a typhoon, clearly waiting for someone to shake it. “I am Yoarashi Inasa! Class 1-B, Heroics department! This is Tetsutetsu Tetsutetsu! Also Class 1-B, Heroics department! We are here to say hello officially to you all, Class 1-A, Heroics department!”

“Oh… Hi?” Uraraka said, taking Yoarashi’s hand and shaking it. Yoarashi swelled up and looked like he was about to burst into song. “I’m Uraraka Ochako. The boy you just scared was Midoriya Izuku, and the one carrying him right now is Iida Tenya. Um-”
“Oh shit!!” Yoarashi shouted, “Did I scare you?!” He rushed into the room and grabbed Izuku’s hand. Izuku immediately began to combust. “Fuck! My bad! I wasn’t meaning to stand so close to the door, it’s just that all of us wanted to catch a glimpse of the class that survived a full-on Villain assault, and-”

“All of you”? Uraraka interrupted, and looked out the door. Izuku’s curiosity overpowered his hormones enough to let him get up from Iida’s embrace and follow suit.

Indeed, there was a small crowd gathered outside the door, all of them mumbling to one another.

“Oh.” Izuku said, suddenly feeling faint. “All of you.”

“Step aside, Deku,” Said a rough voice, and Izuku immediately moved aside - it was Bakugou, looking less pissed than usual, but still very pissed. He scowled at the crowd. “Move it, ya side-characters!”

“Don’t just call them side-characters!” Iida immediately screamed at him.

“Stop antagonizing the other classes!” Uraraka shouted.

Of course he would do this, Izuku thought.

“Side character? Wow, that’s mean…” Said a monotone voice, and a boy who looked as if he had never seen a pillow in his life stepped forward. “Aren’t you supposed to be, I don’t know, heroic, or whatever? Not that I can say anything, being Gen Ed, but…” He rolled his eyes and fixed his gaze on Izuku. Izuku felt almost transfixed by the boy’s purple eyes, though he didn’t know why.

To give him some credit, Izuku supposed, he has a very intense gaze.

“I guess this’ll be easy, then…” The boy said nonchalantly, before turning around and walking into the crowd. “Name’s Shinsou. I wish you luck. You’ll need it.” And he was gone.

Bakugou scoffed before glaring at the other classes. He let off a couple explosions in his palms. “Well?! Scram, you unpaid extras! I gotta eat somethin’!”

“Yoarashiiii…” Tetsutetsu whined as the crowd dispersed.

“Wha? Oh right.” Yoarashi cleared his throat. “Class 1-A! This is a formal declaration of war! We, Class 1-B, are now your rivals! And it doesn’t matter who-” Yoarashi looked directly at Todoroki, who seemed to flinch, “You are, we will succeed in the next Sports Festival, and we will win!” Yoarashi then took out a notepad and pen and scribbled something before handing it to Izuku. Izuku looked at it and immediately wished he could explode right then and there. “Mark your calendars, for your days are numbered! How was that, Tetsutetsu?” Yoarashi asked Tetsutetsu as they walked out.

“Pretty good, maybe a little less screaming next time?”

" You are telling me not to scream?! That’s almost funny!"

“What is it, Deku?” Uraraka asked, looking over his shoulder.

Kouda looked as well, and so did Iida and Kirishima. Kouda gave a few soft shakes of laughter.

It was Yoarashi’s phone number.

It had been three days since then. Friday, to be exact. Izuku had, in fact, at least sent a cursory text to Yoarashi. From the absolute whirlwind of replies he got back from the very energetic boy, he was able to figure out that most of 1-B somewhat resented 1-A’s time in the limelight to varying degrees, with it most notable in some boy named Monoma Neito. Not only that, Yoarashi also requested that they be friends on a forum they were both on (his handle was MidnightHurricane, while Izuku’s was AllMightJr), before belatedly realizing that the forum didn’t have a friending system.

Izuku was walking to lunch with Shouji, Jirou, and Uraraka when, suddenly, while the three were arguing about something (apparently, Uraraka was a fan of a Vocaloid producer, raijinP, and was trying to get their opinions on his latest song (Jirou didn’t like the genre, Shouji just plain didn’t like it)), Izuku felt a hand grab his wrist and pull him into a side hallway.
“Alright, Deku. Spill it. What really happened that day on the school roof?”

It was the last person Izuku wanted to confront over his Quirk at this point. Izuku thought he disbelieved him when he told the truth, why would he think that was the truth now?

“Well?” Bakugou Katsuki demanded, impatience and rage bubbling under his cold gaze, “I’m fucking waiting.”

Chapter End Notes

The explanations aren't over yet. :3c

Next massive change: Yoarashi! Why is he here, and who the hell is replacing him in Shiketsu?! I've got all THAT planned out, too, o~hohohoho!!! >:D

Not only that, they're currently forbidding Izuku from participating in the Sports Festival! How will this affect the story? :0

In the next chapter, Izuku finally explains himself to Bakugou! Perhaps this time, he'll listen... :>

I didn't mean to write out such a long exposition, but, tbh, if it was a straight retelling of the plot, I wouldn't have put it in. The lies are there for a reason. ;)

Even so, most of it is still the truth. But Izuku's journal holds the true story - Yaoyorozu's notes contain the fabrication. Everyone currently follows the "official" variant. Which history will usurp the past? I think I'll enjoy finding out myself. ^^
Bakugou Katsuki was nowhere near stupid.

Ever since he was an infant, he knew that he was a cut above everyone else. Everyone loved him as a baby, everyone loved him as a child, everyone loved him all the way through middle school.

By the time he was three, he could read kanji and interpret them into other meanings. By the time he was four, he had the world’s strongest Quirk. By the time he was six, he had defeated several fourth-graders all on his own, without taking a single scratch.

By the time he was seven, he had abandoned his weakest link.

Or so he had thought.

Deku, Katsuki thought as he stormed down the hallway, *Is the source of all of my problems*. If that little asshole hadn’t ever gotten into his head that Katsuki *apparently* needed help from someone so far below him on the social ladder, Katsuki wouldn’t be having these emotions. He had always been an aggressive child, but that was because everyone around him was weak. What was the point of being nice to people beneath him? Kindness was for the weak. And Katsuki was strong. He was the strongest.

But…

*Deku*… Katsuki thought as he bit the inside of his mouth. That son of a bitch *lied* to him. Lied about being Quirkless, lied about how strong he *truly* was. Sure, the dumbass hadn’t known he wasn’t Quirkless, but by his own admission, he was supposed to have a Quirk regardless! If he had just said that he was waiting to see what would develop, Katsuki *maybe* would have gone easy in him!
Maybe.

Katsuki heard that weird round-faced girl (Uramote? Whatever.) talking behind him about some sort of music producer or whatever, and figured that Deku would be with her. The two were friends, they liked eating lunch together. She would let him borrow Deku for a little bit.

Deku, Katsuki snarled in his head, refocusing on the issue at hand. What the hell did he think he was doing, exactly? Katsuki had known, back then, in the courtyard, that Deku was telling the truth. After all, Deku could never lie to Katsuki’s face - he always looked downwards when talking to Katsuki, though, so that’s probably how Deku could avoid lying to Katsuki. But even turned around, Katsuki could tell that Deku was telling the truth that day.

Deku had actually jumped off the roof.

No, don’t be stupid, Katsuki’s more rational side thought, He was lying to you, like it was all some sort of cruel prank. It’s all some stupid joke, and he got the power somewhere else. Why else would he just ignore me during the last year of middle school? Cause he didn’t want to explain himself to me. But, if that’s it, then...

Katsuki stepped into a side hallway as he shook his head. Why did he care about that? He hated Deku, and didn’t want to understand his motivations. As far as Katsuki was concerned, the isolation was Deku’s fault. After all, Deku never gave him the tea in person, how was he supposed to know Deku was telling the truth about that illness.

But I did get sick, didn’t I?

“Uh, I didn’t listen to it?” A familiar voice cut into the haze of rumination that set Katsuki’s natural rage on edge. Deku.

“Good, it was terrible,” Said the weird six-armed dude, Shougi or something.

“It is not!” Said Uramote.

Katsuki grabbed Deku’s hand and pulled him into the hallway. Letting him go almost immediately,
Katsuki scowled.

“Alright, Deku. Spill it.” Katsuki growled, “What really happened that day on the school roof?”

Deku turned to Katsuki with a look of shock in his eyes. Katsuki almost scoffed. Really, what did this fucking moron expect?

“Well?” Katsuki demanded, crossing his arms, “I’m fucking waiting.”

Deku stared at Katsuki. Katsuki returned the stare, and Deku looked away. Figured.

“Wh-what do you want to know, Bakugou?” Deku finally asked, as lamely as he looked.

“What the fuck do you think?” Katsuki returned, “You jumped, didn’t you?”

The Deku froze, and Katsuki felt his eye twitch.

“You dumb motherfucker,” Katsuki growled, “You really forgot that you literally fucking told me you jumped off the school roof yourself? You’re stupid as all hell, Deku, but this is a new low, even for you.”

Deku, for all his guts, was silent. Ha.

“Also, what in the fuck do you mean you died of illness? If that was real, I should have died of illness too, dumb asswipe. Not only that, but no one has any concrete proof that you actually did heal me, so who’s to say you’re not lying about that? My mom gave me that tea, and you were nowhere in the house-”

“Y-your dad said,” Deku finally spoke up, weirdly quiet. So much for all that confidence he had a few days ago, the spineless coward. “That you wouldn’t w-want to see me-”

“You know what?” Katsuki interrupted Deku, “He’s probably right. I don’t even want to see you right now. But right now, I have a bigger beef with you than even some weird blood poisoning
scheme from when we were kids.”

Deku looked at Katsuki in the eyes, confusion dancing in them. God, he hated his emotions. Confusion was for the weak who didn’t understand strength. “I-I didn’t-”

“Don’t interrupt me, Deku,” Katsuki commanded, reminding Deku of his place. Deku, to his credit, immediately went silent. “What the fuck do you think you’re doing, trying to protect me?”

Deku’s eyes widened. Check.

“Listen, you piece of shit. The school can’t punish me for actions that didn’t happen during school or school-sanctioned events. Meaning that your little, weird ass ruse of protecting me isn’t even going to-”

“But I was trying to protect-”

“I don’t need your fucking protection, Deku!” Katsuki hissed, suddenly bursting with all the pent-up rage he had built up over the past year, “I don’t! You’re Deku, and I’m Katsuki, and I’m strong, and you’re not, and how dare you look down on me, you worthless, fucking, Deku!”

Deku stared at Katsuki. Katsuki panted through his teeth. Neither moved.

Finally, Deku spoke up.

“If it helps, Bakugou… I don’t blame you.”

Katsuki froze. What.

“Well, I mean, I blame you a little,” Deku continued, “You did kind of bait me really heavily that day, and you did sort of make my life hell for most of my life-”

“Deku.”
“And also you sort of led even the teachers against me, but I don’t blame you for other people’s prejudices—”

“Deku.”

“But when I jumped from the roof? That was ultimately my decision. In another life, I could have simply chosen to walk away after getting my journal. But in this life, I decided—”

“Deku.”

“-That I would take my own life. It was better to die, I thought, then it was to live Quirkless in a world that reviled the weak.”

“Deku, stop.” Katsuki demanded. He saw his vision blur for a second, but a blink cleared that up. What the hell was that?

“Course, it didn’t work out.” Deku didn’t stop. “When I came to, I was lying face up. I distinctly remember sliding backwards off the railing on the roof, so that’s probably why—”

“Stop it.” There it is again.

“So I got my things, and left. But, well, you know about the Sludge Villain, so I won’t mention it. Oh wait, I did. Uh… Sorry…”

“Stop…” Can’t he hear me?

“Anyways, after that, I woke up in the middle of the night, feverish and parched. When I woke up the next morning, I found that I had puked all over my bed, with blood mixing into the vomit. My fever was gone, but I got the worst feeling…”

“I’m warning you…” If you don’t stop...
“And that’s when I, uh, put my blood on your tea in an attempt to heal you. Seeing as I had figured out that my blood supercharges my immune system back when allergies were plaguing the school a few weeks later, I later figured out that-”

“Midoriya.”

Deku stopped. He looked at Katsuki, and widened his eyes in shock.

“Ka-Bakugou…” Deku whispered. Katsuki looked at Deku directly in the eyes - what was Deku about to say? “Are you… Crying?”

Bakugou Katsuki was not crying. He was not.

But then, what’s wrong with my eyes?

Bakugou Katsuki, by the time he was age fifteen, had killed a boy. Twice.

“Bakugou, are you alright?!” Deku immediately began, concern lacing his voice. God, Katsuki hated when Deku did this - acted like Katsuki was someone that needed saving. “I-I already told you that I don’t blame you for anything-”

“Well, you should!” Katsuki interrupted him, grief quickly overtaken by rage, “I killed you! Hell, I killed you twice! For once, stop being such a crybaby loser and show some anger, or, contempt, or- or something!”

“Are you criticizing me again?” Deku asked, sounding dazed, “Because it sounded like you were back when we fought in the battle trial-”

“Nevermind that!” Katsuki groaned, “Why the hell aren’t you blaming me for anything?! I literally killed you twice!”

“Well, again, the first time wasn’t your fault - I did it of my own volition-”
“I should still be considered an accomplice to that one-”

“Well, I’m the victim, and I say I did it of my own accord-”

“I don’t think you decide that-”

“And besides,” Deku continued, “I don’t think you were aiming for me-”

“What?” Katsuki stopped him. “Aiming for you? The fuck are you talking about?”

Deku stared at Katsuki. Katsuki felt a stone drop into his stomach.

“Deku.”

“Uh, Bakugou, uh, what-”

“Deku, what do you mean by-”

“Bakugou, did you think that the second death was-”

“The illness? Yes, because I was the fucking damsel in distress that caused you to get sick in the first place. Deku. What do you mean by aiming? ”

Deku gulped, and looked away. Katsuki, against his judgement, followed Deku’s gaze to Katsuki’s own right hand.

The stone descended into his legs, then into the very Abyss of hell itself.

“No.”
“Bakugou-”

“No. No.”

“Bakugou, please-”

“No, no, no No NO-”

“Kacchan!”

Katsuki froze. Deku stared at him, eyes wide and his hands covering his mouth.

Neither moved. Neither spoke.

“K- Bakugou…” Deku reached out to Katsuki.

“Don’t touch me.”

“Bakugou, listen,” Deku said.

“Deku, don’t fucking touch me-”

“Bakugou-”

“Midoriya fucking Izuku, if you so much as poke me with your hair follicle, I will-”

Deku suddenly wrapped himself around Katsuki. Katsuki froze entirely.

Bakugou Katsuki, at age six, had to listen to Midoriya Izuku, also age six, talk about how he was
gonna be the greatest hero. Katsuki scoffed, because obviously he was going to be a better hero than dumb old Deku, who didn’t even have a Quirk. Moron.

“I’ve forgiven you, Bakugou. Well, of my deaths, not of your other actions, but, you know.”

Bakugou Katsuki, age fifteen, began to uncharacteristically cry in the arms of Midoriya Izuku, also age fifteen, over Deku’s various deaths at Katsuki’s own hands. What good was a hero who did nothing but murder his own classmates? Only villains did that.

Moron.

“For the record,” Midoriya said, “I only really kinda blame you for the explosion, and even then, I think that you actually weren’t aiming at me, and that you were actually expecting me to dodge - although how you thought you thought I was going to dodge with the onsets of a concussion, I don’t know.”

“Gimme a break, Deku,” Complained Bakugou, “I just wanted to put you in your place again. Y’know, for old times’ sake.”

“You never tried to explode my entire physical form before,” Midoriya shot back, “Usually it was just my school things. Which is also one of the things I’m not forgiving you for- that journal was special to me.”

“Right, right, I’m sorry.”

“Apology accepted, and it’s under consideration.”

“Bastard.”

“Asshole.”

Midoriya and Bakugou fell silent. Finally, one of them spoke.
“What are you gonna tell teach?” Bakugou asked, his voice hoarse.

“Well, I’ll just give him and Principal Nedzu Yaoyorozu’s notes on the subject, and that’ll be the official story.” Midoriya replied with some air of finality.

The two were silent again.

“You know, if I were anyone else, you really would have killed me-”

“If you were anyone else,” Bakugou interrupted, “I wouldn’t have even done that shit.”

“Ah, so you actually wanted to kill me?” Midoriya sounded amused, if anything.

“Shut up, I thought you would dodge.”

“Well, I certainly gave that impression, didn’t I?”

“I’d say, you bitch.”

“Motherfucker.”

Silence.

“This doesn’t mean we’re friends, Deku. I still hate you, and I still hate everyone else, but… I guess, I should at least try to simmer down. No one else in this school is immune to my explosions, and out there? I don’t think there’s a career for someone who outright kills the villains instead of bringing them to justice.”

“Actually, I have a hypothesis that Kirishima Eijirou might be able to withstand your blasts, but I’ve never seen the two of you fight each other, so…”
“Who?”

“The… You seriously don’t know?”

“The only people who matter in this school are me and All Might, Deku.”

“Then how do you know my name?”

“I’ve had the unfortunate pleasure of growing up with you.”

“Fuck you. Anyways, Kirishima’s the redhead who keeps trying to make friends with you.”

“Oh, shitty-hair?”

“You seriously don’t know your own classmates’ names?”

“Again, I don’t care enough.”

“You really should.”

“Bite me.”

The two fell silent again. Finally, Midoriya spoke up.

“We should probably get to lunch. Uraraka, Shouji, and Iida are probably wondering where I am-”

“Hold on, let me- Oh fuck, lunch ends in ten minutes.”
“What?!” Midoriya screamed, “We gotta get in there!”

“I’ll beat you there, asshole.”

“My Quirk allows me to run at fast speeds after that car accident—”

“God, how many times am I gonna have to apologize—”

“You were nowhere near me for that one—”

“I still feel fucking responsible for it, ’cause I caused the first one—”

“You did not—”

“Again, I fucking did—”

Uraraka pulled the trio into the broom closet, and Jirou listened through the wall using Earphone Jack.

“…They’re gone,” Jirou said after a bit, “So, now what?”

“I say we beat the shit outta Bakugou,” Uraraka muttered, punching her hand.

“Nah, you’ll get detention,” Jirou stretched her arm, conveniently missing Uraraka’s subtle gaze after she averted it when Jirou was done, “Besides, it’ll tip Midoriya off that we listened to the whole thing.”

“I say,” Mezou spoke up, “That you leave it to me.”

“Uh…” Jirou blinked. “Okay, why?”
“I’m…” Mezou closed his eyes, and grimaced under his mask. “I’m making good on a promise I made to myself.”

Bakugou Katsuki was going to pay.

Yoarashi 23:01 > man so youre not even gonna be in the sports fest?????? aw and i was gonna show you some killer moves!!!!! its not gonna be the same if youre in the stands!!!!!!!

You 23:02 > I’m so sorry!! Maybe next year, they’ll let me participate?

Yoarashi 23:02 > man i guess
Yoarashi 23:03 > although i know a couple guys in management actually
Yoarashi 23:03 > i should introduce you!!!! that way you wont be lonely!!!!!!!!!

You 23:04 > You’d do that? Thanks!

Yoarashi 23:04 > no problem!!!!!! (•••)

You 23:05 > /////////////////,fkmjehlfgmop

Yoarashi 23:05 > what does that mean????
Yoarashi 23:06 > midoriya?????
Yoarashi 23:17 > oh shit are you dead????
Yoarashi 23:23 > no wait youre probably asleep
Yoarashi 23:25 > night!!!!!!!

Chapter End Notes
I've decided to sit down and write this in one take! And then edit it in one take! So perhaps that's two takes? o.o??

I should really note that Izuku (bless his heart) only forgives Bakugou for the DEATHS, not necessarily for anything else. Who knows what Bakugou's thinking. In any event, the two aren't actually friends, but their worst animosity is eliminated. Now they're just regularly mean towards each other, like a healthy rivalry. ^^;

Next chapter is to bring consequences, yes yes. How shall I go about this? You shall see, yes yes. :>

Did you know someone's reposting this story on Wattpad? They said it was my story, however, which makes it kind of funny to me! Especially since they're only up to chapter eight! It's almost cute, honestly. It's cute. :)

If you reread the chapter named after the Flame Jellyfish, you'll see a little detail that repeats in this chapter - I'm very proud of myself, in that regard! ^u^^

Edit: After considering things, the consequences will come later - as, in the order I had presented them, the actions wouldn't have made sense within the plot's timeline. I would very much like to keep the story linear - no matter how pumped I am for the next part. I apologize for details in this author's note that led to any noticeable anticipation - however, I believe that the end result will be satisfactory enough to make up for the lack of instant gratification. :)
Mezou, despite all his wanting to, could not very well confront Bakugou face-to-face. He knew his limits: Bakugou Katsuki, for all his faults, was still extremely powerful, with a Quirk with almost zero weaknesses. It was pure dumb luck that Bakugou’s only serious opponent to date happened to be Midoriya, who could regenerate from his deaths. And *speaking* of deaths, Mezou could not fucking *believe* how easily Midoriya forgave Bakugou for killing him! Three times! Either his friend was dumber than he thought (very unlikely, given his high grades), or Midoriya Izuku was somehow the nicest person in the world.

“Woah, Deku! What’re those?!” Kaminari Denki shouted, and Mezou was pulled out of his reverie of schemes and plots to see Kaminari pointing to Midoriya’s arms, “Those look gnarly as hell!”

“What’s Kami-kun speaking like an old man about this time?” Sero asked, walking over, also shirtless. The class had just finished the day’s Foundational Hero Studies exercise (in which All Might had pretended to be a straggler Villain attacking them at USJ again), and were currently suitting down.

Mezou came over to get a better look.

“G-Guys, they’re not that big of a deal-“ Midoriya stammered.

“Dude, you said yourself that you regenerate from all wounds,” Kirishima said, pointing to a scar that circumnavigated Izuku’s bicep, “So what’s *that*?!”

“They’re also on his legs and neck!” Kaminari supplied, pointing out the matching scars.

“I-I really don’t know where they came from, I just thought they were a rash-“
“And you didn’t run your antibacterial blood thing?” Sero asked, quirking an eyebrow.

“They look like,” Kouda whispered, “Jellyfish stings.”

Mezou blinked and turned to Kouda. “How do you know what those look like?”

Kouda fell silent. Mezou didn’t push it.

“I- Well, uh,” Midoriya suddenly began digging in his bookbag before he pulled out a green journal, “I have in my Quirk journal my latest hypothesis, give me a sec, uh, where is it, notes on explosion, notes on detachment, here we are-” Midoriya mumbled all of this very quickly without breathing, “‘Scars have become apparent after Kurogiri’s attempt on my life via decapitation. Notably, they match up with the bisectons made. Perhaps the nature of the wound may leave lasting marks?’ That’s what I have… Written…” Midoriya seemed to suddenly realize he was reading aloud his own record of his Quirk, and quickly stowed the journal away. “I-It’s only a theory, though!”

Mezou suddenly got an idea about what to do with Bakugou.

True to Yoarashi’s word, he had introduced Izuku to his friends in the Management Department.

Well, “introduced” was a strong word. What he had done was physically pick Izuku up, drop some boy with ink-black skin in his place, and carry Izuku off to a table where two boys, one with glasses and one with an enormous beehive-style hairdo, were arguing about the stock market.

“Oh, hey Yoarashi,” Said a stockier boy who seemed to be comparing food prices for different minimarts, “Is this Midoriya?”

“Sure is, Nomi!” Yoarashi replied cheerfully, placing Izuku in the lap of the boy with glasses (who was so startled that he just ended up staring at Izuku the whole time. Izuku was incensed that he apparently weighed nothing to his yearmate.), “Midoriya Izuku! Midoriya, this is Nomimono Urikomu! You’re sitting in the lap of Garaochi Toujiru, and his friend is Yuikami Bousuke!”
“Pleased to meet you, Midoriya,” Said Nomimono, putting the charts into a manila folder before putting them away, “We all know each other’s names now. How did you meet Yoarashi?” Nomimono at least seemed polite, Izuku decided as he got off of Garaochi’s lap.

“I helped issue a challenge of war to his class!” Yoarashi said, sitting down next to Nomimono, “And then I gave him my phone number!”

“Wow,” Yuikami smirked as he looked between Yoarashi and Izuku, “You certainly work fast, don’t you?”

Yoarashi blinked. “What?”

“Oh my god,” Izuku muttered before turning to Garaochi, “Uh, hi?”

“Uh, hello,” Garaochi replied, apparently still startled. He fixed his glasses, coughed, and turned back to Yuikami. “Anyways, I’m telling you that unless Hawks, I don’t know, somehow becomes a Villain, his stocks are only going to go up and up! He’s the biggest sensation in the past-”

“You’re forgetting the impressive performances of Kamui of the Woods and Mount Lady,” Yuikami interrupted Garaochi, “And unless Snatch suddenly drops dead-”

“What? Native will overtake him? Native’s been stagnant for three years on the market, he’s lucky that-”

“Wait, are you guys discussing the Hero Stock Market?” Izuku interrupted.

“Yeah? What else would we discuss?” Garaochi looked at Izuku weirdly.

“Uwabami’s new hair-care product and how she could market it…” Yuikami muttered.

“B-But you’re my age,” Izuku stuttered, “Are you even allowed to play the stock market?”

Garaochi looked at Izuku weirdly, as if out of both pity and confusion. “My name,” He finally said,
“Is Garaochi Toujiru.” He then went back to arguing with Yuikami.

“Is… Was that an answer?” Izuku asked Nomimono.

Nomimono’s shrug only cemented the weird place Izuku found himself in.

It wasn’t bad, he decided as the bell finally rang, just a different kind of weird.

So he was oddly relieved when, the next day, Aizawa introduced him to Management Course 1-J, which also happened to be Garaochi, Yuikami, and Nomimono’s homeroom.

“You know,” Yuikami said offhandedly, “I feel like if I styled your hair, it would increase your value to investors tenfold.”

“Investors don’t care about looks!” Garaochi immediately replied, “They care about strength and efficiency! Something that I’m certain that Midoriya, as a member of 1-A, has in spades!”

That immediately set the entire class on Izuku, eyes and wallets gleaming.

*Forget relieved,* Izuku thought ruefully as he dodged all questions about himself and his Quirk, *This is absolute hell.*

And so the month went by. Izuku, by this point, had resigned himself to not being in the Sports Festival, though he desperately wanted to at least be in the front seats, or maybe the commentator’s box, oh, or maybe he could sneak off and get into the third-year stadium-

“Do you mumble like this all the time?” Yuikami remarked, sitting next to him as they ate lunch. Izuku, wanting to at least get to know his host class, had decided to keep eating lunch with them. Garaochi was currently in the middle of discussing some soda brand’s performance on the actual stock market, and Nomimono was nodding seriously. Apparently, Nomimono was planning on selling drinks.
Izuku started. “Uh, sorry. Sometimes, I, uh, just start thinking out loud. If I do this during the Sports Festival, uh-”

“I’ll probably listen in, honestly,” Yuikami said, eating his angel hair pasta with only vague interest. “When you go on about Quirks and Heroes, you really do tend to go on. Especially when you’re drawing in your little journal.”

Izuku felt his face heat up. “Oh, oh, god, do I really mumble all that much?” He squeaked.

“You do.” Garaochi interrupted, “But it’s very insightful. You have quite the knack for analysis - you may as well be pro-level with your analytical skills alone. Honestly, if you ever grow weary of Heroics, you’d do quite well in Management.”

“Oh, is that praise coming from you, Tou-chan?” Yuikami smirked, and Garaochi immediately began to bicker with Yuikami. Izuku smiled softly - Yuikami and Garaochi’s daily spats reminded him of Kaminari and Jirou.

Speaking of his class, everyone was pumped up over the Sports Festival. Apparently, Yoarashi and Tetsutetsu’s challenge had lit a fire in everyone’s guts, and not even Todoroki Shouto, the coolest and calmest of them all, could resist the call to battle. It inspired Izuku too, if he was honest - even if he couldn’t participate for the Sports Festival, it didn’t mean he couldn’t train like he was preparing for it.

So, Izuku began to train his abilities. He hadn’t fully tested his two newest ones, so he decided to ask Yaoyorozu to help make him some test dummies, all of different materials.

When his headbutt ability managed to crush every one except for the final one (which Yaoyorozu had explained to be at the top of the Rockwell Scale, whatever that was), Izuku chalked his slight headache as a sign that his test was a success.

Next was the detachment. This one was simple - see the distance Izuku could have his limb removed from his body. He simply enlisted Iida to run to the edge of the school’s campus, and Izuku would go to the other end. Iida, after looking a little uneasy, agreed, and the two found that Izuku’s detachment didn’t seem to have a set radius. The two reconvened, and Iida carried Izuku back to the school gates (much to his embarrassment, but Iida had insisted it would be faster this way).
Speaking of faster, Izuku had been attempting to get his dash to have less start-up time - initially, it required him three seconds to get to maximum speed, so he was attempting to reduce that time to something more respectable, perhaps half a second.

As for the string ability, he was lost until he had an interesting idea - if the strings were still a part of his body, couldn’t he move them remotely? He asked Shiozaki about this latest idea.

“Well…” Shiozaki hummed, “I suppose it could work… After all, my vines used to do whatever they willed, but after strict control and patience, I was able to move them at my own will. What you are suggesting is certainly within the realm of possibility - not even you can possibly know the limitations of your own Quirk, Midoriya-kun.”

So, Izuku had begun working on making his string somewhat prehensile. As for his blood, he had no way of figuring out how to improve that beyond human experimentation, which Izuku was extremely against. Kinetic energy seemed to be impossibly strong anyways, but Izuku was still thinking about ways to improve it. Similarly, the explosion also didn’t really need work, but if Izuku could name something, he would probably wish that it didn’t eviscerate his clothes that weren’t blastproof. As for the water jet, Izuku was working on the distance and pressure, and was making some headway in that regard - it was like a garden hose now.

One day, about a week before the actual Sports Festival, Yuikami pulled Izuku aside. “Midoriya!” Yuikami shouted, even though they were in a broom closet.

“How many closets does this school have?” Izuku idly wondered.

“More than you know, I’d bet,” Mumbled a third kid. He had scruffy red and black hair which went over one of his eyes, red eyes, and was lean in size.

“Oh, uh, hi?” Izuku blinked. “I’m Midoriya Izuku. You’re, uh-”

“This,” Yuikami said, patting the boy on the back. Probably too hard, since the boy flinched. “Is Yamikumo! He’s gonna be helping me in my next zany scheme!”

“I am?” Yamikumo asked.

“Your next zany scheme?” Izuku asked.
“Didn’t Yoarashi tell you I do this?” Yuikami asked.

“No? He just mentioned he knew you guys and then put me at your table.”

“That’s weird.” Yuikami frowned, “I thought he’d have remembered to tell you about the zany schemes I put him through in middle school. Anyways, here’s the current one—”

“Can I not be a part of this?” Yamikumo interrupted, “I have to go eat so that I can train for the Sports Festival. I have a lot of work to do if I’m going to win.”

“Oh, you’re gonna be in the Sports Festival?” Izuku turned to Yamikumo, “Are you in 1-B?”

“Pft, hardly,” Yamikumo blew some of his bangs out of his face to temporarily reveal a perfectly normal red eye, “I’m 1-C. Gen Ed. I’m going to win, though.”

“Well…” Yuikami pulled out a clipboard from somewhere, “Not according to these statistics I’ve compiled of the top five students from 1-A, 1-B, and 1-C, you’re not. Compared to all fifteen of these students, you’re probably equivalent to… Hitoshi Shinsou, Class 1-C, near the bottom. I’ve gathered these statistics using the Quirk of Nomimono Urikomu, Ranking. Interestingly, Midoriya Izuku, here, Class 1-A, is number three in overall statistics, and among the betting pools running in the Management Department group chat, would be one of the favorites to win if he weren’t currently disqualified.”

Yamikumo, who had tensed up when he realized he was among an expected contender for winner of the Sports Festival, relaxed when he heard Izuku wasn’t competing. “Why?” He asked.

“I don’t know,” Yuikami replied, putting away the clipboard, “But Midoriya’s certainly very annoyed by it, aren’t you, Midoriya?” Yuikami then turned to Izuku with an expectant look.

“Uh,” Izuku honestly wasn’t sure what was going on, “Kind of? I mean, I understand why they did it, but still… It’s a great chance to prove myself. I mean, there’s always next year, yeah, but…”

“...But you want to do it this year, as part of the UA experience…” Yamikumo repeated. “I feel the same way, honestly. Truth be told, I don’t really care about winning the thing - it’s just a means to
an end for me. Gen Ed kids are allowed to participate so that we can have the chance to prove we
deserve to be moved into the Hero Course. I’m actually pretty fine in Gen Ed. Heroics seems kind
of high-stress lately.” Yamikumo smirked, like that was his attempt at a joke. “I don’t care about
the UA experience - I get enough of it just being here. But you want the whole thing, don’t you?”

“Yes,” Izuku replied, “I do. But I can’t.”

“Not without my help, you can’t.” Yuikami replied.

“Hm? How’s that?” Yamikumo asked.

“The reason I asked you two in here today-” Yuikami began.

“You dragged me in here,” Izuku pointed out.

“Same.”

“Don’t interrupt,” Yuikami said, “Midoriya, you clearly want to be in the Sports Festival, despite
any denials you’re about to give. I’ve overheard your mumblings about it. Yamikumo, you want to
not be in the Sports Festival, as you’ve just confessed. Therefore, I have a proposition.”

“Oh boy.”

“I am going to use my Quirk!” Yuikami declared, “Face Off! I can take two peoples’ facial and
bodily traits and swap them around! This includes hair and various other little things!”

“That’s… Interesting…” Yamikumo said dimly. Izuku, however, was highly intrigued.

“Is there a time limit?” Izuku immediately asked, wishing he had a pen and paper, “What about
effective radius? Do I need to do anything to maintain the facade? What about trauma? Is it
painless? Uh-”

“About three hours, one hundred and eighty meters, no, only extreme trauma like a physical injury,
and I’ve been told it mildly stings.” Yuikami answered in short order. “My plan is that before the Sports Festival proper, I use Face Off to swap your and Yamikumo’s faces and various other features, like hairstyle and things like that. Then, you participate under Yamikumo’s name, and Yamikumo gets to chill in the bleachers with us!”

“I’m pretty sure Management-types like you don’t really chill,” Yamikumo remarked.

“Hush.”

“I, uh,” Izuku interjected, “You don’t have t-”

“You’re right, I don’t have to! But I want to!” Yuikami explained, “You’re Yoarashi’s boyfriend, it’s the least I can do-”

“Boyf- what?!” Izuku immediately turned red. Yamikumo looked between the two as if he was watching a particularly amusing tennis match.

“You guys aren’t dating?” Yuikami asked.

“No!” Izuku shrieked.

“Damn, that means I owe Garaochi money,” Yuikami muttered, then said aloud, “I’m still doing it. I’ve decided on it, and you know that once I decide on something, the deal is finalized.”

“Question.” Yamikumo raised his hand.

“Yes?”

“Are you single then?” Yamikumo asked Izuku. Izuku buried his face in his hands.

“Yes, please stop asking about my love life,” Izuku moaned, mortified.
“Damn, my next question was gonna be to ask you out.”

Izuku’s gaze whipped up faster than a storm, “Wha-”

“Anyways, if he’s gonna be me,” Yamikumo continued, unfettered, “He’s gonna have to learn how to act like me.”

“Oh absolutely, I can’t swap personalities or Quirks,” Yuikami replied, clearly a little amused by these antics, “Only physical traits. So if we want this little ruse to be successful, you guys should probably learn how to imitate each other for a bit.”

“Very well.” Yamikumo stretched. “Shall we, then, Midoriya?”

Izuku thought it over. The plan did make sense; he wanted into the festival, Yamikumo wanted out. There was also an element of risk to it that appealed to him, as alien as that felt. “Oh, what the hell. Let’s do it, Yamikumo.”

“Please,” Yamikumo said, smiling, “My name is Akatani Mikumo.”

Chapter End Notes

I apologize for not getting to the good part (Bakugou's death), but we need time for that to even make proper sense. I have it all written out, too. Shame. :(  

Anyways, you’ve seen the Management kids here before in canon, actually! In chapter 26, you’ll see All Might remarking about how the Management Department is the same as ever, and you’ll see these three in the background! Well, it's really four, but you know, XP  

Anyways, the only endgoal relationship I'm promising is that somehow, Jirou, Yaomomo, and Mina are gonna get together. Whatever's going on with Izuku and his many crushes is just, happening. ^^''

I personally feel that this chapter's a bit short, but to be fair to myself, the interim month was glossed over in canon. :#  

Finally, I was told to put this in the notes.

--

Midoriya: kind of want to go on an adventure tbh
Akatani: would you consider selfcest an adventure
And so it was that Izuku found himself meeting Akatani Mikumo after school for the final week before the Sports Festival. Akatani would teach Izuku little miniscule things like his gait and his general tone (which was a lot more deadpan than Izuku was used to, but he was getting the hang of it). Izuku was a quick learner when it came to imitation, as it turned out.

So, often, the two would have small lulls instead before they decided to head home. Despite Akatani’s noted interest in Izuku, Akatani himself ended up saying that it was probably too much trouble to try and fight for his hand. Izuku was silently relieved - Akatani was certainly attractive, but he didn’t need a potential romance with someone he was about to impersonate.

Speaking of…

“Hey, Yamikumo?” Izuku asked on the third day of their meetups. Akatani had said that one of his childhood friends, Sakuretsu, had given him the nickname, and he often answered to that more than he did Akatani. “I’ve been meaning to ask-”

“Then ask.”

“Do I have to be as sarcastic as you?” Izuku asked, quirking an eyebrow.

“With any luck, you won’t even have to talk to anyone,” Akatani replied, “Was that your question?”

“No, no, not really,” Izuku sighed, “You said it yourself that you didn’t want to be in the Hero Course, right? Then, why do you want to win the Sports Festival?”
Akatani fell silent.

“Uh-”

“By the time I reached my fifth birthday,” Akatani said, oddly distant, “My Quirk had yet to manifest.”

Izuku froze.

“My dad took me to the doctor, and she showed us some x-rays, and as it turns out, I have vestigial traits that preclude me from ever even developing a Quirk,” Akatani continued. “Still, at least I had my friends. Sakuretsu, for instance. Whenever kids started to bully me for being Quirkless, Sakuretsu would jump in and beat them up with the help of his Quirk, Landmine.”

Izuku felt pangs of empathy. He reached out to touch Akatani’s shoulder. Akatani, for what it was worth, didn’t shy away.

“One day, Sakuretsu and I swore on a tree on a cliff,” Akatani said, “That we would become Heroes and protect the weak. Sakuretsu’s in Isami right now, and he sends me updates every now and again about his Hero coursework. I, meanwhile, managed to get into Gen Ed.

“The more I studied the Hero industry, however, the more I sort of became really disillusioned. Did you know that, even in the Silver Age of heroism, there were no Quirkless Heroes? Every Hero in Japan’s history has had a Quirk in some form or another, be it something small like telepathy or something stupidly, obscenely powerful like electromagnetism. There have been no recorded Quirkless Heroes - at best, they were vigilantes, and they’re not at all endorsed by the Hero Industry, so they don’t even count.

“I don’t want to enter the Hero Course anymore,” Akatani continued, “I can’t compete with everyone there, Quirkless as I am. You heard the stats, I’m about the same level as Shinsou, and his physical capabilities suck. However… In the world of Gen Ed, the Sports Festival is the perfect opportunity to show the school itself that we deserve reconsideration. I’m told the Heroics entrance exam doesn’t lend well to non-damaging Quirks?”

Izuku thought on it. A test focusing on defeating robots, was it simply a test for Quirks of sheer raw power? It did seem really unfair to the more subtle Quirks that relied on actual human thought and physiology. Izuku nodded, and Akatani continued. “I applied for Gen Ed from the start, so I
had no way of actually confirming that, thank you. Shinsou sometimes talks about it, but he’s a little untrustworthy. Anyways, there are plenty of Gen Ed kids who have perfectly fine Quirks - I’ve heard of a kid in 1-D who can create viruses. However, due to the nature of the Heroics exam, they have no way of showing this. Therefore, the Sports Festival, a nationally-syndicated event, is the perfect time to show off to the faculty.

“My plan,” Akatani revealed, “Was to win without using a Quirk or support gear at all. With enough luck and strategy, I would beat everyone with sheer raw muscle, and then, when they offered me a place in the Heroics Department, I would throw it right back into their face. After all, whoever’s heard of a Quirkless Hero?” Akatani smirked. “In this scenario, I’m saying this on live television, and it causes a lot of societal whiplash.”

“Wow…” Izuku breathed, “You… Your reasonings are way better than mine…”

Akatani snorted. “Yeah, I bet. Wanting to break into the Sports Festival illegally just because you can is pretty selfish, if you ask me.”

“So is wanting to win just to prove a point to the school board, I’d think,” Izuku shot back. He sighed. “But, you’re right. If I get caught-”

“If we get caught-”

“If I get caught,” Izuku carried on, “It’ll ruin my teachers’ faith in me, and I might get expelled, or worse, they’ll send me back to middle school, and I can’t go back to middle school, everyone’s so mean there, or maybe they’ll draw and quarter me, which is fine, I think, but-”

“Woah, woah, breathe,” Akatani patted Izuku on the back awkwardly. After a brief moment of silence, “If it’ll ruin your teachers’ faith, then… Why don’t we be just a little bit more selfish?”

“What?” Izuku looked up at Akatani.

“Here’s my idea…”

“So,” Aizawa Shouta sighed roughly, “Let me get this straight.”
Before him sat three children: Yuikami Bousuke, from Management; Akatani Mikumo, from General Education; and his current most problematic child, Midoriya Izuku, who looked like he would rather be anywhere else.

“You are deliberately ignoring the Principal’s orders,” Shouta began, and Midoriya seemed to sink into himself. Christ, he already couldn’t deal with this. “Employing two other students in this hairbrained scheme, thereby making them accomplices,” Yuikami looked like he wanted to say something. Shouta didn’t let him. “And attempting to cheat at the Sports Festival by impersonating someone else and competing under their name. Am I correct so far?”

Akatani raised his hand. “Is it really cheating if I don’t want to be there?”

“Unfortunately, yes,” Shouta replied, “Midoriya Izuku, this is the fourth-most reckless thing you’ve done while you’ve been a member of this class-”

“Fourth?” Akatani asked Midoriya.

“What have you been doing before coming to UA?” Yuikami also asked, but clearly more amused.

“I am speaking.” Shouta glared at them. When they fell silent, he continued. “Midoriya Izuku, I have half a mind to expel you right here and now for your utter disrespect for rules put into place for your own protection.”

Well fuck, now the kid looked like he was on the verge of tears. Shouta couldn’t deal with this- it was like he was a smaller Tensei (Tensei was more of a hellion in his youth, but the others were clearly Hizashi and him in this scenario). He breathed roughly through his bandages. “Akatani Mikumo, are you certain you give your complete consent to being impersonated in a nationally-broadcasted public event where everybody who’s somebody will be watching?”

“Are you kidding?” Akatani asked, incredulous. “That description just makes me want to be in it less and less. Shit, I’ve been wanting to get out the Sports Festival more the month's gone on. I’m perfectly fine with not participating.”

Midoriya shot Akatani an odd look. Shouta didn’t care. “Yuikami Bousuke, are you certain this Quirk of yours will work?”
“Absolutely, barring major injuries like a broken nose or something,” Yuikami replied, sitting straight up and staring into Shouta’s eyes, “Midoriya should be able to fake being Akatani so long as he remains within my effective radius of one hundred and eighty meters.”

“I see…” Shouta dearly wanted something to drink right now. “Well, Midoriya, you’re very lucky that I just so happened to overhear your desire to participate and therefore deliberately placed you into the one first year class with a cosmetic Quirk.”

“Uh, sir... What? Does this mean...” Midoriya choked out, tears welling up around his eyes again. *Oh hell.*

“I am going to take the fall for you…” Shouta inhaled through his nose, “*Just* this once. If you screw this up, I’m going to kill you.”

“Thank you, Aizawa-sensei!” Aaaaand now Midoriya’s crying again. *Great.*

“Midoriya, are you alright?” Yuikami asked, startled, “Why are you crying?!”

“My *only* condition is that you don’t use your Quirk - I don’t know what Akatani has, but it’s very likely that it’s nothing like yours, so you’ll have to act Quirkless for the entire thing.” Shouta extrapolated.

Akatani looked somewhat annoyed, but seemed to agree with Shouta. Weird, but whatever.

“And don’t think I’m doing this out of any personal bias,” Shouta followed up, “Think of it as a training exercise; sometimes, Heroes need to go undercover. This will be pretty much the same thing. Only with fewer consequences should you be discovered. Understood?” At Midoriya’s tearful nod, Shouta sighed once more. “Good. Now, get out.”

“Hey, Midoriya, you alright?” Mikumo asked the minute they got out of the classroom.
“Y-Yeah, I’m fine, it’s just-” Midoriya took a bit of a shuddering breath, “I’m, uh, still not used to being scolded like that.”

“ Weird, I got scolded a lot as a kid.” Yuikami frowned. “Of course, that’s because I would swap the kneecaps of people who were mean to me. Whatever.” Yuikami shrugged. Mikumo shot a look at Yuikami.

“Well I’m not you, Yuikami,” Midoriya replied with a weak smile. Mikumo allowed himself a small smile as well - at least the weird air had mostly dissipated. His gambit had probably succeeded - Midoriya was now technically cleared to be in the Sports Festival, and he got to sit out and take credit for the inevitable victory. Maybe his plan would work after all.

The days slowly passed, and Izuku felt as though he had dodged an enormous bullet. However, at the same time, he also felt a completely different gun pointed at his head - he now had the threat of the school-sanctioned masquerade blowing sky-high. This was simultaneously the best and the worst case scenario for Izuku.

All too soon, the day of the Sports Festival arrived. As everyone gathered together, Izuku swung by the locker rooms in the stadium (UA was a fantastic school, but where did they get the budget for all these buildings?) with Yuikami in tow.

“Oh, guys!” Izuku said, poking his head in, “Just wanted to come by and wish you all… Luck…” He trailed off at the odd mood of the room.

Bakugou and Todoroki were glaring at each other, Todoroki standing in front of Bakugou’s seated form. Shouji was glaring at Bakugou. Kaminari and Jirou were frozen, apparently in the middle of another minor debate when whatever the fuck had just happened occurred.

Nobody spoke. The tension in the air grew sharper.

“Ah, Deku!” Uraraka exclaimed, cutting through the gloom, “What are you doing back here?” At once, multiple pairs of eyes turned to look at him, save Bakugou and Todoroki, who continued to glare at each other.
“I-I, uh, I came to, uh…” Izuku stumbled, “I was just gonna tell you guys, uh, good luck and stuff. Uh. What’s going on?”

“Nothing,” Bakugou stated without breaking his glare. Todoroki nodded, although his glare seemed to soften at Izuku’s words.

“Okay then…?” Izuku said, confused, “I’ll just, uh. I have to go, uh. Meet up with someone? Yeah, I’ll do that.” Izuku slowly pulled out of the room and closed the door.

“What was that?” Yuikami asked. Izuku flinched - he had forgotten Yuikami was there.


Izuku and Yuikami walked in silence down the hallway. A door opened, and a familiar voice called out, “Shinsou, don’t wait up. I just have to go to the bathroom.” Akatani stepped into the hallway and closed the door. Catching Izuku and Yuikami’s eyes, Akatani nodded, and the three made their way to the bathroom.

“Okay, as I said, this’ll sting a little,” Yuikami said as they hid behind the door. At once, his palms disappeared from his hands, leaving behind rectangular slats in his hands. “Otherwise, it’ll take physical injury to revert the body back to normal, and even then, the whole illusion won’t break unless you suddenly, I don’t know, explode or something.”

Izuku suddenly got a bad idea about the tournament, but before he could voice any concerns, Yuikami chopped the side of Izuku’s face with his right hand.

“Face Off!” Yuikami declared, and the world temporarily grew dark.

Chapter End Notes

I'm soooooo sorry for the hiatus!! I'm absolutely terrible at writing interim chapters!!! I want the good actiony sequences as much as you do, but between classes and my inability to write filler I'm just a real mess!!! v.v

Anyways, Yuikami’s Quirk is based directly on Tsuji Aya from JoJo's Bizarre Adventure! Her Stand, Cinderella, basically does exactly what Face Off does, only
with one person at a time. As a side note, Bousuke is spelled with the kanji for exchange, "貿". ^^

I'm actually now crossposting this fic to Wattpad, as there have been literally two separate reposts of the fic. Hopefully, this means I can take my rightful place as God, but we'll see, honestly - I'm not at all used to the formatting of the site... x.x

Thank you to everyone who've been commenting in this interim period! I understand times are tough for this fic, but hang in there!!! I'm gonna try my best! ...When I have time, that is, ahaha... ++;;;;;;

...Ah, that's right. Sakuretsu... I'm sure you understand who he is.
“EVERYBODY SAY ‘HEY’!”

As the crowd exploded into a roar, Yamada Hizashi couldn’t help but grin. This. This is what I love about DJing, he thought, The sheer energy everyone gives, it’s almost intoxicating! I love it!

“Welcome, listeners, to the First-Year Division of the annual UA Sports Festival!” Hizashi paused to let the subsequent cheers die down. “I’m gonna be your host with the absolute most, the Voice Hero, Present Mic! It’s a beautifully sunny day here in May, and with me today is my hubby and coworker, Aizawa Shouta! How ya doin’, Shouta, my man?!”

Hizashi turned to his boothmate, who was glaring at him with absolute murder underneath all that gauze. Hizashi didn’t care - that was a normal expression for him. “Two things, Hizashi,” Shouta said, slightly muffled. Luckily, the mic picked up what Shouta was saying, no problem. “One, I’m not your husband.”

“Well, Shouta,” Hizashi said nonchalantly, picking up the mic as he leaned back in his chair, “I’m not keeping you here. You can leave whenever you want.”

“Really?” Hizashi said, cocking his head as the stadium began to laugh, “Damn, guess I gotta tell Kan that we gotta return those cruise tickets-”

“Yet,” Shouta cut Hizashi off, and Hizashi grinned, “I’m not your husband yet. Sekijirou, don’t you dare cancel our tickets.” Shouta seemed to realize he was being sucked into Hizashi’s impromptu manzai routine and collected himself. “Secondly, you just dropped out of nowhere and dragged me up here. I’m supposed to be in the opening ceremony.”

“Well, Shouta,” Hizashi said nonchalantly, picking up the mic as he leaned back in his chair, “I’m not keeping you here. You can leave whenever you want.”

“Hell no,” Shouta sighed, “Someone’s got to keep you in check. Someone else can take care of the
“Well, I’m glad you said that, Shouta. But first!” Hizashi turned his attention back to the crowd, “Ladies and gentlemen! Humans of all genders! Animals of divine intelligence! I give to you, the first years of UA Academy!”

Izuku walked alongside Shinsou Hitoshi and some girl who had a third eye on her neck into the blinding sunlight of the arena. Despite the seeds of nervousness certainly rooted in his gut, he knew the plan would go off without a hitch, provided he didn’t get too reckless.

Which was already a pretty tall order, but Izuku was positive he could manage it.

“NOW, everybody! Give it up for the Athlete’s Oath, presented by none other than the R18 Hero, Midnight!” The crowd cheered loudly as Midnight slowly swaggered up to the microphone, cat-o-nine-tails in hand and a sensual grin on her face. Izuku blushed slightly and looked away, incidentally towards Shinsou, who was staring ahead with a stony face.

“Should… Should an R18 Hero really be the one presenting the Athlete’s Oath to a bunch of fifteen-year-olds?” The girl with three eyes asked.

“Hey, all of you! Pipe down!” Midnight shouted at the mass of assembled first-years, “And will your student representative, Bakugou Katsuki, come up here?!”

At the crowd’s cheer at the arrival of the student representative, Izuku silently realized that it made some sort of sense. After all, if he remembered correctly, Bakugou was the one who got the top spot in the entrance exam. They had probably decided upon it the moment that Bakugou got the highest score.

“Feh.” The girl spat, “He only got to go up there because he’s in the Hero course. Disgusting.”

“Yeah,” A stocky boy behind her agreed, “Treating us like afterthoughts… Right, Yamikumo?”

Izuku forced his borrowed face into an annoyed scowl (which was surprisingly easy) and nodded.
“Annoying…” He muttered with some sort of dark intent.

“Man, you got intense all of a sudden, huh…” The girl said, before punching Izuku’s arm lightly, “I like it. Means you’re finally taking this seriously?”

“The Athlete’s Oath…” Bakugou’s voice rang out into the arena, and the stadium fell dead silent. Izuku looked up, and immediately saw something odd about Bakugou.

He was scanning the crowd.

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Mikumo stared at Bakugou Katsuki as he delayed giving the Oath just so he could look around the crowd.

“He’s looking for something…” Garaochi Toujiru muttered next to him. Yuikami had given Mikumo a crash course on who Midoriya actually knew in the Management Department. “Maybe a parent or something?”

“Nah, do you see that glare?” Yuikami whispered back, “He’s definitely going to make a challenge of some sort.”

Bakugou Katsuki’s gaze stopped at Mikumo, and Mikumo froze up.

“The Athlete’s Oath…” Bakugou Katsuki repeated, “Commit this to your memory, because I’m only going to tell you once.” Bakugou Katsuki made direct eye contact with Mikumo. “I’m going to take first place. That’s all there is to it.”

The students began to riot.

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As the assembled General Education Department began to go completely berserk over Bakugou’s declaration, Izuku silently wondered what Bakugou was looking for in the crowd.
“Now then, without further delay, here’s the first part of the Sports Festival!” Midnight cheered, bringing the attention back to her. Gesturing with her cat-o-nine-tails, she pointed to the gigantic monitor behind her, which spun through titles like a slot machine reel before eventually stopping at “Obstacle Course”. “Yes! The Obstacle Course race, which has sent more than 150,000 students crying home in shame!”

Izuku remembered the Obstacle Course from the Sports Festival three years ago. Watching a recording of the event on NND, he remembered it traditionally being a lap around the stadium with three obstacles - a forest of spinning trees whose branches randomly extended to knock people over, a huge Olympic-sized pool filled with some sort of odd slime, and a recreation of some European castle filled to the brim with booby traps. Those were the obstacles three years ago, and Izuku knew that there was a certain rotation to each portion of the track.

“Izuku, pay attention,” the stocky boy from earlier patted his back, “The race’s about to start.”

“Have you always mumbled like that?” The girl asked.

Izuku gave her a shaky smile. “Just my nerves. Ignore it.”

She gave him a weird look, then got ready to run.

Shinsou Hitoshi was talking to a few students. Izuku wondered what that was about, then got in his starting position.

*Let’s see... He thought, I can’t use my speed ability, otherwise the jig’ll be up... So for this first part of the competition, I’ll have to resist using any part of my Quirk... And then I’ll have to do this for two more events... This could actually be pretty tough...*

The lights counted down, and Present Mic’s voice rang out.

“START!!!!”
The first event was… going as smoothly as it could have been, Izuku decided.

As it turned out, the first actual obstacle was actually the width of the starting gate - it was easily unsuited for the literal hundreds of children that were taking part in the Festival, and Izuku very likely almost broke a toe or something. That was ignoring the fact that Todoroki had frozen several of their yearmates to the ground.

The “real” first obstacle was the zero-point robots from the entrance exam, and while Izuku’s Gen-Ed “classmates” expressed sheer surprise over the exact size of the things, Izuku used the confusion to harvest a giant piece of sheet metal to use as a shield. After all, Izuku didn’t exactly know what 1-B had in store, but he didn’t put anything past them, including pot shots.

Actually, all of the 1-B students seemed to be deliberately hanging back. Odd.

“YAHOO!!” Screamed Yoarashi as he summoned incredible winds to literally carry him to victory. Well, almost all, Izuku thought.

During the robot obstacle, Todoroki had flash-frozen one of the robots, causing it to fall apart in front of the other students. Apparently, he had accidentally caught Kirishima and Tetsutetsu in the rubble, who both declared that if it had been anyone else, they would have died. Izuku thought it was kind of sweet that Kirishima probably deliberately excluded Izuku from this statement, as Kirishima absolutely knew Izuku was undying.

Second obstacle was a series of tightropes across a chasm, and Izuku had to give UA some credit for the budget, as well as wonder where they got the budget. He simply used some of the wires on the sheet metal as a zipline and made his way across that way after finding the one rope that actually connected to a lower point. He did have to commend that Support Department student for her inventions - maybe he could get one if he asked.

Of course, that brought Izuku to his current issue.

A literal minefield.

While it was extremely unlikely that the mines would kill anything, they would certainly send Izuku back quite a ways if he touched one.
That gave Izuku an idea. He looked carefully - the mines were buried in the back under clear mounds of dirt, but they were extremely well-hidden towards the front. This was clearly a sadistic design choice to give everyone a huge chance, no matter their progression, to be sent all the way back to the beginning. However, if Izuku exploited this…

“OUT OF THE WAY, CANNON FODDER!” Screamed a familiar voice, and Bakugou literally rocketed past Izuku by using his explosions’ recoil to shoot himself forwards. Yoarashi was laughing as he used a tornado to achieve the same effect, and Todoroki was neck and neck with both of them by using his ice to create an elevated path. Izuku had no time to lose - he shoved the scrap metal into the ground and began digging.

Other students passed him by, and Izuku noted with some interest that they all were 1-A and 1-B students. He wondered what had happened to the Gen-Ed and Support classes, but shook the thoughts away and added another landmine to his growing pile. Soon, he was clearly overtaken by the Support girl from before, and Izuku looked at the large pile of landmines with some pride. Carefully placing the sheet metal over the pile, Izuku grabbed the wires and jumped onto it.

“WHAT!!!” Hizashi screamed as a huge mushroom cloud erupted on-screen. “WHAT WAS THAT?”

The crowd burst into equally-confused screams, which then turned to cheers as the red-haired student flew forwards, hanging onto the piece of sheet metal he had been carrying the entire portion of the competition for dear life.

“It seems he used the scrap metal for protection while using the landmines as propulsion,” Shouta remarked, “He’s careening for the group towards the front, though.”

Time seemed to slow down.

Shouto wasn’t sure who this boy was, but he was clearly resourceful, and he understood just enough about physics to bend the obstacles to work in his favor.
Shouto, Bakugou, and Yoarashi all looked back as the red-head rocketed forwards. Shouto watched as he twisted midair, and, apparently intending to use the metal like one would a pole in a vault, slammed the metal downwards.

He hit Yoarashi in the face.

Shouto’s eyes slightly widened as Yoarashi and the metal both went down, impacting another landmine, and the newcomer careened forwards, landing on the dirt path just beyond the field. He rolled into a standing position and sprinted away towards the finish line with incredible speed for someone who likely wasn’t in the Hero Course.

“What the fuck was that?!” Bakugou screamed. Shouto silently agreed, and then landed on his feet at the end of the obstacle. Bakugou crashed onto his back, but immediately jumped up. They both began to run as fast as they could to catch up to the other boy, with Yoarashi likely hot on their heels.

Izuku’s lungs burned slightly with the amount of Quirkless running he was doing. He really needed to work on that.

“...TO THINK, THAT THE FIRST MAN TO MAKE IT BACK WAS NONE OTHER THAN...” Izuku heard as he ran into the stadium, “AKATANI MIKUMO, FROM THE GENERAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT!!!! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?! ” The stadium broke into uproarious applause and cheers, and as Izuku wiped his face with his gym shirt, the sheer reality of what he had just done impacted him like a five-story drop.

He had completed he Obstacle Course in first place.

“I... What the hell…” Mikumo muttered.

“It’s risky, yeah, but he managed it,” Yuikami replied, sitting on the other side of Mikumo, “And he did it without breaking cover, either. It’s kind of scary, to be honest with you.”
“Hey, Yuikami,” Garaochi Toujiru caught Yuikami’s attention, “Discuss this with me. This… Akatani?... Kid, he’s in Gen-Ed, right? What do you think are the chances of him being, like, marketable?”

“Well, everyone loves an underdog, you know?” Another boy butted in, “Even if he loses next round, he’s definitely gonna be a face character for a good week. Plus, everyone knows red-heads are pretty marketable.”

“And there’s the fact he hasn’t shown his Quirk,” Yuikami said, fully turning towards Garaochi, “So there’s that air of mystery about him. I’m told girls dig that.”

“Whew, you guys talking about Akatani?” Nomimono Urikomu said, walking over with a clipboard and an empty drink tray, “Gotta say, I don’t know what he did over the past week, but his ratings are off the charts. If I didn’t know better, I’d say he’s actually a Heroics member in disguise.” Nomimono Urikomu filled up the tray with sodas and other beverages with practiced ease and walked back into the crowd. “Ice-cold drinks! Get your drinks here!”

“Overall, once he shows off his Quirk, I think it’d be time to start pushing him as like, at least an unpaid intern or a secretary to some local Heroes.” Garaochi Toujiru replied, his glasses glinting as what appeared to be bar graphs oscillated on the lenses, “I think Akatani Mikumo is going to be a hot, once-in-a-lifetime commodity once that Quirk appears. All I can see is stocks shooting way, way up.”

For the first time in the past week, Mikumo felt even the tiniest bit of apprehension about this plan.

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Somewhere, in the back room of a seedy cafe and bar, a lone man scratched his neck.

Chapter End Notes

What a hiatus... x.x

For the Yamikumo chapters, they’re going to be named after crabs instead of jellyfish.

Why crabs? Well, the answer's obvious.

It's... Crabtivating! :D

...That aside, the reason behind this hiatus is twofold. The lesser reason is that I
refused to do research on the exact dialogue of this part of the manga. I eventually caved, though. OTL

Second reason is because it was finals season, and I had several performances to prepare for and do. It was a lot of fun, and I got full marks in those classes! ^^

I've made a Discord for the fic, too! Join it for my delirious ramblings about BNHA, as well as, I guess, update information? For this and various other fics. My only request is that you follow the rules. discord.gg/enQnkkv
Chapter Summary

Interlude, Hatsume Mei

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“I’ve never seen anything like it! In a come-from-behind victory, Akatani Mikumo, without using a Quirk at all, has taken first place in the Obstacle Course!” Present Mic screamed over the uproarious cheers of the audience. Izuku heaved, catching his breath, before scanning the audience to find Yamikumo in the crowd. Once he did, he gave thumbs up, causing the crowd to go even wilder. *Just look at that confidence!*

As the final student ran in, a light beeped and the gates closed immediately. “Oops!” Midnight said as she re-appeared on the concrete dais in a vaguely magazine-like pose in a cloud of smoke. “No more students than forty-two! Sorry, students forty-three to a billion, but you gotta sit in the bleachers and sulk until the next Sports Festival! We’ll provide you with some activities after the next event, but for now! Romance! Drama! Bloodshed! Only here, at UA Hero Academy!”

Izuku distantly wondered if being a part of the Hero industry also meant being a part of the entertainment industry as well.

“Regardless, congratulations to the students that did make the cut! As such, here are the results!” Midnight called out, “In first place, Akatani Mikumo, of General Education Course class 1-C! In second, Todoroki Shouto, of Hero Course class 1-A! Third, Bakugou Katsuki, of Hero Course class 1-A! In fourth, Yoarashi Inasa, of Hero Course class 1-B! In fifth, Shiozaki Ibara, of Hero Course class 1-A! And all the rest are on the screen behind me!” With that, Midnight thrust her cat-of-nine-tails at the Jumbotron behind her, illuminating a huge grid showing Izuku’s stolen face, three of his classmates, and the boy he had been texting on and off the past month. Underneath them was a long, sprawling list that ended at the number 42: Aoyama Yuuga.

Izuku felt vaguely sorry for Aoyama.

“These forty-two students have earned the right to advance through the UA First-Year Sports Festival!” Midnight exclaimed, to everyone’s cheers and, Izuku noted, to the Gen Ed classes’ jeers from the stands. Counting the classes quickly, Izuku quickly determined why the Gen Ed classes were reacting so badly - the only Gen Ed students to get through were, incidentally, him as Yamikumo, and Shinsou Hitoshi. Everyone else was in the Hero Course or, in the case of someone
named Hatsume Mei, in the Support Course.

“And now, the second event!” Midnight announced, snapping Izuku back to reality. He couldn’t miss this. “What could it be?! What could it be?! I already know what it is, of course, but I shiver in anticipation just thinking about how you’ll react!” As the screen spun like a slot machine reel, moving through things like “Test of Courage”, “Battle Royale”, and “Kokkuri-san”, it slowly slowed down before landing on three words.

Human Cavalry Battle

A weirdly hanafuda-styled Principal Nedzu appeared to the left of the event name, and to the right of the name appeared a bunch of cranes. The audience went wild over the very concept of the Cavalry Battle, but Izuku had a few concerns. Luckily, so did his competitors.

“Excuse me, kero,” Tsuyu-san raised her hand, “How would a Cavalry Battle work as a one-man event?”

“Excellent question from Asui Tsuyu, in-” Midnight quickly looked at a tablet. “-Fourteenth place! Indeed, this will be a team battle! Our students will freely form groups of two to four students, and the rest you’ll understand from this diagram!” Midnight pressed a button, and the image on the screen fizzled out to a picture of Number Thirteen, Blood King, and Present Mic all carrying All Might. “Basically, it’s just like any other cavalry battle! You become a huge mass of sweaty bodies and you run around and try to snatch other teams’ headbands! However, there’s a special naughty twist to this little battle of ours!” Midnight held up a white headband. “Each individual student has an increasing amount of points, and each team’s headband will be the cumulative amount of points from each student based on their placing in the prior event! For example, if you placed forty-second, like Aoyama Yuuga from Hero Course class 1-A-” (An anguished “Madame!” arose from the crowd of muttering students.) “-Then you’ll get 5 points! Forty-first place gets 10 points, and so on!”

“So it’s easy to understand then, hm?” Shouji muttered aloud.

“Jeez… Kinda sucks to be the guy on top, huh?” Kaminari whistled.

“However!” Midnight announced, “There’s a special prize for the special boy who came in first! That’s right, his point value is instead going to be a whopping ten million points!”
The entire arena went dead silent.

“Ten…” Shinsou Hitoshi muttered.

“Million…” Hatsume Mei grinned, her goggles automatically activating and gliding over her eyes.

“P-Points?” Izuku choked out, breaking into a nervous sweat.

As everyone’s laser gaze turned to Izuku, he began to feel like he was swimming in a vast sea of fear and despair.

This was the definitive start of hell.

Regardless, Izuku’s brain went right to work. While Midnight went into the exact particulars of the cavalry battle, he was going over each and every one of the Quirks of the 41 other contestants.

Well, the Quirks he knew about. Yoarashi was weirdly tight-lipped about everyone from his class, but he at least gave Izuku the names of each Quirk, and while he wasn’t sure what “Comic” or “Black” would do, he could at least guess.

He was vaguely terrified of what a Quirk called “Copy” would do, but that wasn’t important right now. As every one of 1-B’s Quirks were, in the end, a total mystery to him besides Tetsutetsu Tetsutetsu, Yoarashi, and Hiryu Rin’s, they were totally out. So that left 1-A, Shinsou, and Hatsume Mei. Shinsou would probably be able to figure out that Izuku was just wearing Yamikumo’s face if he slipped up even once, so he was out. Hatsume Mei was a wildcard, so she wasn’t necessarily out, but she wasn’t his first pick, either.

No, his first pick was-

“Uraraka Ochako?”

Uraraka turned to face Izuku. “Oh, hey. Akatani Mikumo, right? Man, you were great in the
obstacle course, let me tell you! Do you have some sort of foresight Quirk or something?” Uraraka smiled, before tacking on, “Also, how did you know my name?”

“Uh,” Izuku stuttered, “I-I’ve been doing some private training with Midoriya Izuku over the past week.”

“...Really.” Uraraka said. It wasn’t a question. Izuku began to feel a weird sense of dread.

“Y-Yeah? He trained me in speed, mostly, but I wanted to get stronger for the Sports Festival, and I had one of the Management Course guys recommend me, and, uh, well, uh…” Izuku trailed off, but Uraraka had eased off the strange aura of malice.

“Okay, cool. Cool, yeah, alright, that makes sense.” She muttered, mostly to herself. “So, uh, did you want something in particular?” She asked.

“Well, Midoriya mentioned you once or twice. And by that, I mean he started rambling about your Quirk, and then he showed me some weird journal he has of his classmates?” Izuku had, in fact, been keeping a journal of his classmates’ Quirks, but he wasn’t about to show them. “Anyways, he told me to keep you in mind in case I needed an ally or something, and, well, here I am. W-Would you like to team up? With me?” Izuku fumbled into asking.

Uraraka stared. Izuku began to fidget. “Sure!” Uraraka replied cheerfully. “So, do you have anyone else in mind, o

“Team up with me, Mr. First Place!” Butted in Hatsume Mei. Well, it’s who Izuku assumed was Hatsume Mei, at least - he had seen her scream her own name as she used her various gadgets to clear the obstacles in the obstacle course, but this girl was just shoving her entire being into his face. Not to mention the goggles that obscured most of her face. “In case I haven’t introduced myself, I’m Hatsume Mei, world-class genius, gadgeteer extraordinaire! I’m the future owner, producer, inventor, CEO, and executive chef of global self-owned corporation, Hatsume Industries!!! And me and my darling babies are going to help you win this cavalry battle and, more importantly, get the industry big-wigs to take notice of me and my beloved, darling Hatsubabies!”

Neither Izuku nor Uraraka moved.

“Wh-Wha
“But wait, there’s more!” Hatsume Mei interrupted Uraraka and pulled out a gun. “If you act now, I’ll make you my very first client!” Izuku could almost hear commercial music as Hatsume Mei kept on pulling out various gizmos from who-knows-where. “Benefits include unlimited access to me and my beautiful, always dazzling, always useful Hatsubabies™! Copyright pending! We in the Support Course dedicate our lives to helping Heroes fight crime by making their Quirks run like a dream through special support items! And while you, yes, you!” Hatsume Mei drove a finger into Izuku’s chest. “Aren’t exactly in the Hero Course, you could be, if you just invested in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! In the amazing, darling babies of Hatsume Mei’s amazing and wonderful Hatsume Industries!!!”

Izuku and Uraraka didn’t move.

“So

“I bet you want to try them out first, huh?!” Hatsume Mei pulled out a jetpack.

“Hey, wait, that’s Air Jet’s jetpack!” Izuku interrupted whatever spiel Hatsume Mei was about to embark on, “I’ve, uh, seen him on TV! He’s a local hero that made news once or twice, but that jetpack is pretty distinct!”

Uraraka stared at Izuku and Hatsume Mei as they began to talk about Hatsume Mei’s “Hatsubabies (Trademark Pending)”. Lost in thought.

“Okay, so, where’s…” Izuku looked out to the crowd of students, and sighed when he saw Iida conversing with Todoroki and Kaminari. “Well, that figures…”

“What?” Uraraka asked.

“Well, uh, Midoriya recommended Iida Tenya as well, and if I’m not mistaken, that’s him on that kid with, uh, the burn scar’s team.”

Uraraka’s gaze followed Izuku’s finger, and winced. “Ooh, yeah, Iida and Todoroki would make a good combo. We’re gonna have our work cut out for us, I think…”
“Yeah…” Izuku bit his thumb in thought, then immediately stopped biting once he got worried that if he broke the skin, his whole hand would revert back into his own hand. Suddenly, he got an idea. “I think I know who else I want on our team.”

“Hey, sweetie, wake up.” Hizashi poked Shouta. Shouta groaned as he slowly shook himself awake.

“Stop calling me pet names.” Shouta glared at Hizashi, who grinned at him. Shouta sighed roughly and moved on. “...Are these the teams they’ve come up with? Interesting…”

“Let’s go! Everybody! Say Hey!!!” Hizashi screamed into the microphone, and the arena cheered, to Shouta’s annoyance. “Let’s go, ladies and gentlemen and theydies and men who take th-”

“Heretofore,” Shouta interrupted whatever the fuck his boyfriend was about to say, “We’re about to begin UA’s First-Year Sports Festival’s second main event. The Human Cavalry Battle.”

Izuku fastened the velcro strip of the ten million, three hundred and thirty-point headband as he sat atop his assembled team. “Are we ready, guys?”

“Yeah!” Uraraka assured him.

“Kyaaahahahahaha!!” Hatsume cackled gleefully. Izuku chose to take that as a yes.

“Yes, Akatani-san.” Shiozaki replied.

“Alright,” Izuku took a deep breath, then shouted, “Let’s do this!”
I love writing Mei.

It's just a brief interlude while I cook up the full cavalry battle! While it will be vastly similar, there WILL be some portions of it that will be changed! Please remain patient!! ^^;;;

Also, I've changed the chapter titles for the chapters where Izuku's disguised as Mikumo - instead of jellyfish, it's crabs! Because Mikumo here has red hair, and some crabs are red. Or so I have been told. ;)

I just wanna say thank you for all the fantastic reviews I keep getting! It's so fantastic that you all love my fic so much! :D

I don't have a lot more to say lol. Here's some crab kaomojis I found, though!

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“Listen up,” Monoma Neito addressed his classmates. [Team Points: 305]

“There’s only one target here today,” Todoroki Shouto said to his team. [Team Points: 610]

“And the lucky fucker is…” Bakugou Katsuki sadistically grinned, cracking his neck. [Team Points: 660]

“…Likely going to be us.” Midoriya Izuku said with all the calm he could muster. [Team Points: 10,000,330]

“START!!!” Present Mic screamed.

Immediately, every team began to fall over each other to go after Izuku’s team. Izuku actually leaned back from shock - though he knew this would be the outcome, it was still shocking to see.

“This is a fight for those ten million points!” Yoarashi screamed as his team charged at Izuku’s team. “Everyone knows it, so get ready for a real beatdown!” [Team Points: 695]

“Akatani-san,” Shiozaki said, her hair beginning to move into a defensive stance, “I am awaiting your orders.”

“My orders?!” Izuku replied, “Run away, naturally!”

“No, you don’t!” Shouted a boy with a face like a skull. At once, the ground began to soften into
“That’s his Quirk, huh,” Izuku tsked, “But we can still escape! Uraraka, Hatsume!” At their nodded affirmations, Izuku pressed a button on a trigger. “Hang on, now!” Hatsume’s Air Buster Replica started up, and at once Izuku’s entire troupe began to fly over the teams advancing on them.

“What?!” Yoarashi shouted, twisting to look at them, “Since when could they fly?!”

“Yoarashi, it’s clearly that Support girl’s junk!” Tetsutetsu supplied.

“IT’S NOT JUNK! IT’S A FULLY-FLEDGED JETPACK THAT WILL TAKE THE WORLD BY STORM!!” Hatsume screamed.

“Jirou!” Hagakure commanded, not paying attention to Hatsume. [Team Points: 385]

“Already on it!” Jirou responded, sending her earlobes flying at Uraraka’s Hatsuboots. However, they were easily deflected by a whip made of thorny vines.

“When it comes to defensive power,” Izuku said, “Something like your Quirk is hugely appreciated, Shiozaki-san! I’m so glad I- Midoriya likes to write about his classmates’ Quirks.”

“Thank you, Akatani-san.” Shiozaki nodded. “Midoriya-san truly is something else; you were lucky that he wasn’t allowed to participate, truly.”

“Haha, yeah.” Izuku began to sweat.

“Hey, we’re landing,” Uraraka interrupted the awkward moment, to Izuku’s silent delight.

“How are the Hatsuboots?!” Hatsume asked eagerly, “Don’t they run like a dream?! They also come in adorable steel blue and a really cute rose gold!”

“Your ‘babies’ are fantastic, Hatsume!” Izuku assured Hatsume, although he really wanted to go into detail about their function and utility in the field. When he still thought he was Quirkless, he
had often looked into various different Support companies to see how he could use their gear to simulate having a Quirk.

“Quick, while they’re distracted!” Hagakure shouted, allegedly pointing forward, “After them, guys!”

“W-Wait a second, Hagakure!” Satou said, “Where’s your headband?!”

Hagakure stopped. She felt around where her head probably was. “What?!?! Where’d it go?!?”

Monoma chuckled as his team carried him away from the panicking students. “I’m such an opportunist, right guys?” He asked his classmates.

“IT’S ONLY BEEN TWO MINUTES, BUT IT’S ALREADY A COMPLETE RIGAMAROLE!” Present Mic announced, “EVERYONE’S GOING AFTER THE TEN MILLION, BUT THERE’S OTHER HIGH-BALLERS DOWN THERE TOO, HUH? MAYBE THINK ABOUT THEM WHILE YOU’RE SCRAMBLING AROUND!”

“A scramble?” A dark voice intoned, “Foolish human… This is a slaughter of darkness!”

Izuku turned to the source of the voice, and was confused to see Shouji with his arms creating some sort of weird flesh cocoon. “Shouji?! But he’s alone!”

“We need to create distance between ourselves and the others!” Shiozaki shouted, “Perhaps the fuel consumption of those jet boots isn’t the best…”

“My darling Hatsuboots are perfect!!! But maybe the Air Buster Replica needs more power…”

“Uh, about the boots…” Uraraka began, “Something’s latched onto them!”

Izuku looked down at the boots, and saw a dark mass grabbing onto the left boot with surprising force.
“Wait- This is Dark Shadow!” Shiozaki supplied, relieving Izuku because now he didn’t have to blow his cover. “But where’s-”

“Here!” Tokoyami shouted from within the flesh cave on Shouji’s back, and Shouji opened up briefly to show off Tokoyami’s face, with the rest of his body hidden. [Team Points: 460]

Suddenly, a familiar pink appendage shot out of the darkness, which Izuku barely managed to dodge.

“Tsuyu-hon?!” Uraraka cried.

“Hey, Uraraka-hon,” Tsuyu croaked as she also made herself visible, “No hard feelings, kero. Can I still come over on the weekend to watch TV?”

“Is now really the time?!” Uraraka shook her foot, which was still being grasped by Dark Shadow. "Sure! Bring your siblings too if you want, I love having them around!"

“Nice. Thank you, kero.” Tsuyu nodded, then vanished back into the darkness. "Now, perish."

“Hang on!” Izuku pressed the trigger again, and the team took off, the light from the jetpack’s booster’s suddenly activating causing Dark Shadow to flinch instinctively, giving Shiozaki a good chance to physically beat Dark Shadow off with her vines. “That was close, guys!”


“It’s fine, just a little scratched up!” Uraraka reported.

“At least the damage is mild, Hats

“HEY THERE, DUMBASSHOLE!” Bakugou screamed as he flew towards Izuku with the scariest look he had ever seen on his face, “FUCKING REMEMBER MEEEEEEE!!”

“Shiozaki!!” Izuku instinctively shouted, and Shiozaki immediately put up a wall of thorns, which
Bakugou promptly swatted away with a small explosion.

“You think that’ll stop me, Saladface?! Think again!!!” Bakugou screeched dementedly.

“Then it’s my time to shine!” Hatsume announced. She pulled out a gun. Bakugou’s eyes widened, but before Hatsume could pull the trigger, a piece of tape shot out and caught Bakugou in the shoulder, yanking him back to the group.

“Hatsume!!” Izuku screamed.

“What?! It’s an airsoft gun; relax!” Hatsume shouted back.

“Looks like the rising star Gen Ed student is no slouch at tactics!” Present Mic screamed, to the cheers of the audience, Of course, he has the entirety of 1-A on his heels, and they’ve been no slouch either, having survived an entire Villain attack just this year! Now, at the halfway mark, let’s check the leaderboards! Keeping in first place with their 10,000,330 points is Team Akatani! And…” Present Mic audibly paused. “Wait, what’s going on?”

Izuku turned to look at the illuminated board. He immediately understood why.

“TEAM TODOROKI’S THE ONLY 1-A-HEADED TEAM WITH ANY POINTS?! WHAAAAAT?!”

“It’s so simple, really,” Izuku heard, and he turned to see a blond boy (Monoma Neito, if he remembered right) snatch the headband clean off of Bakugou’s head. “It’s almost sad, Class A.”

“Give me that headband back you shitface!” Bakugou screamed at Monoma.

“When Midnight announced an obstacle course as the first event, it was stupidly clear they weren’t going to thin out the numbers too much,” Monoma continued, ignoring Bakugou, “In fact, it was startlingly obvious with any sort of thought that you didn’t necessarily need to lead the pack in the first event, just, you know, make sure you got in before the cutoff. Forty seemed like a reasonable number. So, by that logic, we, Class 1-B of the Heroics course, hung back and observed your Quirks, habits, and dynamics. All so we could overturn your pretty little faces and grind them in the dirt.”
“Everyone in 1-B was in on it?!” Kirishima exclaimed.

“No,” Monoma admitted, “But that really helped, honestly; it caused you to drop your guard around us. After all, only some kind of idiot shoots for first place out of the starting gate, like some dumb racing dog seeing a rabbit leg, instead of patiently coming up with a plan to match what they’re going against.”

Bakugou visibly twitched. Izuku got a bad feeling about this.

“Then again…” Monoma continued smugly, “A racing dog might have less pride. Why were you aiming for first place, anyways? You’re already famous, ri~ght? Mr. Sludge Victim?”

Izuku wondered if Monoma Neito had some sort of death wish.

Kirishima audibly gulped.

“S… Say that again…?” Bakugou ground out.

“What? Aren’t you one of the famous victims of the Sludge Villain? You had to get rescued by some other kid too, right? And then you got attacked by Villains a whole year later! Ohohoho~!” Monoma laughed smugly as he held the back of his hand near his mouth. “Well, au revoir, Villain Bait! Perhaps we’ll meet again sometime!” He made a show of placing Bakugou’s headband around his neck.

“Oi… Kirishima, right?” Bakugou rasped out, entirely still. “You other two… Ashido and Sero?”

“Bakugou?” Sero asked.

“Remember when I told you the game plan was to pursue the ten million, no matter what? Well, plans have changed.” Bakugou still didn’t move, but everyone was frozen staring at him. Izuku whispered to his teammates to carry him off silently while Bakugou was emitting pure malice.

“I’m not going to be satisfied…” Bakugou began to grin. His aura shifted from malice to hatred. “...Until we wipe these fuckers off the face of the planet, CAPICHE?!”
“Hmph, as stuborn as I expected,” Monoma muttered, “Then come get me, idiot.”

“Let’s go, let’s go, let’s go, let’s go…” Izuku kept muttering to his carriers as they snuck away from the brewing bloodbath.

“I’m afraid…” Said a cool voice, and they stopped. It was Todoroki, Yaoyorozu, Iida, and Kaminari. “You’re not going anywhere.”

“...Looks like evasion isn’t going to be easy anymore, huh…” Izuku muttered.

“It appears they won’t let us leave without a fight, Akatani-san…” Shiozaki said.


“Already charging up!” Kaminari replied, “But we got multiple bogies inbound, so I can’t go full power!”

“That’s fine,” Todoroki replied, “Half is enough. Yaoyorozu, create a rod as well.”

“Understood, Todoroki-san.” Yaoyorozu nodded, already on it.

“Now then,” Kaminari grinned, “INDISCRIMINATE DISCHARGE! 1.3 MILLION VOLTS!” Kaminari screamed as he unleashed a weaker pulse of electricity that merely stunned everyone in the vicinity, save for Todoroki, as he was surrounded by Yaoyorozu’s insulator sheet.

Todoroki grabbed the created rod stabbed into the ground and channeled his ice down it, freezing everyone in place. “Iida, forward. As for you…” He took the headband off of a girl with orange hair, “I’ll be taking this. Now…” Todoroki turned to Izuku’s team.

Suddenly, Izuku’s team shot straight into the air.
“Wait a second?! What?!” Hizashi screamed, “How are they still able to fly?! What?!”

“If you were paying attention to Team Akatani, and not just Team Todoroki,” Shouta began, “You would have noticed Shiozaki use her Quirk to create a grounding rod of her own into the ground - her vines.”

“So she channeled the electricity into the ground using her vines? But that’s dangerous!” Hizashi replied, “Her vines are attached to her head, ya know!”

“Shiozaki can detach and grow her hair at will, as well,” Shouta continued to explain, “So what she did was create a sort of cage of vines around them, and then drive them into the ground. The electricity fried some of the vines, but were ultimately attracted to the vine cage. And the vines acted as a perfect lightning rod. So, while Hatsume’s jetpack-”

“AIR BUSTER REPLICA!!” Hatsume Mei screamed from the arena.

“-Air Buster Replica would otherwise have been fried from the electricity, it emerged just fine thanks to Shiozaki’s quick thinking.”

“Shouta, my man,” Hizashi smirked, “Is that pride I hear?”

“Shut up and commentate.”

“Wahoo!” Hatsume cheered as they flew over Todoroki’s team and the ice spires surrounding them, “Shiozaki, right? You’re my number one favorite client right now! I’m officially giving you a 5% discount on any and all Hatsume Industries goods!”

“I appreciate the thought, Hatsume-san,” Shiozaki replied, “But I would rather not receive such gifts for my actions.”

“Okay, 6%.”
“No.”

“You drive a hard bargain, lady. 5%.”

“You can’t just-”

“Coming in for a landing!” Uraraka shouted as they landed. She sighed.

“So, we’ve evaded capture for now, huh?” Izuku muttered. Hearing a scream of rage, Izuku turned and watched as Bakugou matched explosions with Monoma Neito- wait, what?

“Huh, interesting…” Hatsume muttered as she focused on the duel, “Perhaps that blondie has a copying Quirk? It’ll be fun to develop for that one, I’ll tell you now…”

“IT’S NOW TWO MINUTES LEFT!” Present Mic screamed, “IF I WAS ONE OF THE REMAINING TEAMS, I’D BE GOING AFTER THAT TASTY, TASTY TEN MILLION!”

A cannonball grazed Izuku’s face and embedded itself in the arena wall.

Izuku’s team did an about face to see Todoroki’s team in a hole in the ice, several spent cannons littering the ground behind them.

“Akatani,” Todoroki said, “We’re taking those points.”

“Shiozaki! Hatsume! Uraraka!” Izuku called out.

“Yaoyorozu,” Todoroki commanded, and the ice exploded outwards, the smell of gunpowder filling the air, “Iida, are you ready?”

“Hang on, Todoroki-san!”
“Hey, Ura-whatever, what are you-”

“RECIPROBURST!”

The arena was awash in light.

“I can’t see!!” Hizashi screamed, “I’m blind!!! Shouta!!! Help me!!!”

“No,” Shouta replied, his voice still muffled, “I also can’t see.”

“Shouta, help your husband of nineteen years-”

“You’re thirty-one. And we’re not married.”

“Wait, the light’s dying down! I can see!!”

“Is it? I have dry eye.”

“Oh, do you have your eyedrops? I’ll put ‘em in.”

“In the pouch on my left hip.”

As the light died down, Izuku slowly opened his eyes.

“What…” Iida said from behind them.
“Urarara!!” Hatsume shouted, “Why would you just take my darling Ultralight Flare?! I said it was a prototype for a reason!”

“Why would you make it so bright?!” Uraraka replied, incredibly dizzy.

“For spelunking in space, duh!”

“What?”

Izuku felt around his head. When he felt the fabric of the headband, he breathed a sigh of relief.

“TIME’S UUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!)”

Chapter End Notes

I actually didn't realize that having Shiozaki on the team would change the events so much, tbh. I'm very happy with myself. :D

The Bakugou/Monoma matchup still goes as canon, except Bakugou actually knows Sero and Ashido's names. Bakugou still has a ways to go before he totally calms down, but he's making progress!!! :3

Just... Don't ever mention the Sludge Villain to him. He doesn't do well, being reminded that he caused someone's death (however indirectly and non-lasting). ^^;;

Uh... Yeah! That's p much it! G'night! >;<
“Alright!!” Present Mic screamed. “Let’s see who’s in the top four!”

“In an amazing turn of events that no one even thought would happen, we have Team Akatani, having held onto their enormous ten million for the entire battle!!! Naturally, they’re in first!”

Izuku was totally frozen, somewhat in shock that he had even gotten first place. He was broken out of this by Uraraka throwing her arms around Izuku and shaking him in a vigorous hug. Izuku began to tear up out of happiness. Behind them, Hatsume was looking over her gear, and Shiozaki was happily waving to the audience.

“In second, Team Bakugou!”

Bakugou screamed as he grasped his knees, his exhausted team milling around behind him. Ashido shook some acid off her hands.

“In third, we have Team Yoarashi… Wait…” Present Mic stumbled over the leaderboards. “What?! How did this- Team Shinsou’s in third?!”

"I humbly thank you," Shinsou gave an insincere smirk as he walked away from his dazed and confused teammates, "For your cooperation."

"H-How did we lose…” Tetsutetsu said gloomily, “Yoarashi’s strategy should have been invincible, stealing everyone’s headbands with his winds…”

“I APOLOGIZE! IT’S ALL MY FAULT!” Yoarashi apologized profusely, slamming his head into the ground from a standing bow.
“Yoarashi, you’re bleeding!” The skull-faced kid shouted.

“W-Well, in fourth place is Team Todoroki! Better luck next time, kiddo! But, say hey! Don’t despair! You’re going into the final round with the other four teams!”

The audience broke into cheers and applause. Todoroki didn’t seem to hear them, though - Izuku saw that he was staring brokenly at the ground.

Todoroki’s eye shifted so that it was looking directly at Izuku. Izuku began to sweat.

“Well, time for lunch! Then we’ll announce the third round proper!” Present Mic announced, “Shouta, my man, you wanna get a bite to eat?!”

“Goodnight, Hizashi,” “Shouta”, whoever he was, replied.

“D-Don’t fall asleep, we can go to that cat cafe you like, or something!!”

“Yuikami.” Akatani caught Bousuke’s attention. Bousuke looked to his disguised conspirator.

“Yeah, Midoriya?” Bousuke replied.

“We need to get down there, right now,” Akatani said, standing up and pulling on Bousuke’s hand.

“Wh- But we need to go eat!” Bousuke protested, “The teachers’ll probably take notice, or-”

“I’m pretty sure if we go eat,” Akatani interrupted him, “Then Mi- Akatani is going to get out of range.” He pointed to the arena. Bousuke followed Akatani’s hand, and saw that Todoroki Shouto was dragging the disguised Midoriya off the field, away from his classmates.
“Let’s hurry,” Bousuke immediately agreed, and he and Akatani began to make their way down into the outskirts of the arena. At some point, he suddenly crashed into a familiar muscular chest.

“Oof- Oh, hey Yuikami! Hey, Midoriya!” Yoarashi said cheerfully. “How do you think I did?! Pretty good, right? I mean, minus the… End of that, I guess.”

“Hey, Yoarashi,” Bousuke replied, shaking his head, “You know I focus more on sponsorships and advertising. If you want actual numbers, Garaochi’s who you want. Or maybe Midoriya. Swear he should’ve been in Management.”

“Haha, you’ve told me. Well, Midoriya?” Yoarashi asked Akatani.

Akatani was busy staring at Yoarashi. He shook his head. “I’m sorry, what was the question?”

“Pffahahaha!” Yoarashi burst out laughing, “You’re a riot, Midoriya! Don’t worry, I know you need to eat, so I’ll let you and Yuikami run off! I… I’m just looking for someone, don’t worry.” Yoarashi got strangely quiet. Bousuke got a bad feeling.

“Yes, thank you, Yoarashi, we’ll save you some food.” Bousuke urged Akatani along.

“Uh…” Bousuke and Akatani stopped. “I’m sorry, but… What did you want to talk about?”

“Mi- Akatani!” Akatani called, and the two figures in the small enclave froze.

It was Midoriya and Todoroki Shouto.

Izuku was quietly happy to see the two. “Hey, Yuikami. A- Midoriya.”
“Oh, he’s here,” Todoroki sighed, “That makes this easier, then. Now I don’t have to corner you later, Midoriya.” He looked at Yuikami. “You don’t need to be here.”

“Unfortunately, Midoriya is my responsibility today,” Yuikami replied curtly. Izuku didn’t think he appreciated Todoroki’s tone. “So I’m not letting him out of my sight.”

Todoroki seemed conflicted. Finally, he sighed. “Alright, but remain silent. This is more between me and them.”

Akatani moved over to stand beside Izuku. The two looked at each other, then faced Todoroki.

Akatani looked back.

No one moved.

“A-Anyways,” Izuku continued, “We aren’t related—"

“I’m sorry, Midoriya,” Todoroki said, “It’s just that you two think too much alike. I’ve never met Akatani until a few hours ago, but from the moment he began to make his move he’s been almost your tactical mirror. The only real difference is that he’s more careful than you are.”

“Ahaha, yeah,” Izuku laughed, “Careful.”

Akatani gave him a swift glare. Izuku felt weird, seeing his own face glare at him.

“A-Anyways,” Izuku continued, “We aren’t related—"

“Allegedly,” Todoroki interrupted.
“And even if we were, why would we have different surnames?”

“That’s my next question,” Todoroki replied, “Are you two, like, All Might’s long-lost sons?”

Yuikami began to laugh.

“Please, don’t laugh,” Todoroki requested, but Izuku didn’t blame Yuikami at all. He didn’t really talk to Todoroki all that much, but he never took him for a conspiracy theorist. “Allow me to explain.

“From the very beginning of the Cavalry Battle,” Todoroki began, “I felt a sort of… Presence, to you, Akatani Mikumo. One incredibly similar to one I’ve felt from my classmate, your supposed twin, Midoriya Izuku.” Izuku wanted to take this seriously, but it was getting hard with Todoroki’s deadpan voice. “And it was a similar presence to one I’ve felt from All Might. Midoriya, you remember; when All Might destroyed the Noumu - that presence. That pressure. That power. That’s why I think you two are somehow related to All Might, be it his sons, his nephews, whatever.”

“...I-I see…” Akatani said. Izuku silently began to sweat. He should've given Akatani lessons on how to be him - Izuku didn't stutter nearly that much. “Uh, w-well, I-I’m just a huge fan, I guess? So much that I just emulate it! I-I- You’ve seen my Quirk, it’s not really anything like All Might's, you know?”

“A likely excuse, considering that no one actually knows what All Might’s Quirk is,” Todoroki shot back, “Plus, your speed and impact abilities are very similar to All Might - who knows, maybe All Might’s Quirk also stockpiles abilities.”

“That- That seems highly unlikely.” Izuku cut in.

“It does, huh…” Todoroki sighed. “As you may well know, my father is Endeavor.”

Yuikami fell over.

“Endeavor’s the number two Hero,” Todoroki continued, “And he has been for a while now. So, with you on top, Akatani Mikumo, and a potential heir to All Might… It’s pretty much my fate to crush you into dust.”
Izuku got a sinking feeling in his stomach.

“My father… He’s the type of man who will do anything to surpass everyone.” Todoroki said, although the fondness one might have when talking about their father was incredibly absent, replaced with a cold inferno of an unplaceable emotion. “He can never take any loss well, and he only thinks about victory. Which is why he feels that his standing as the Number Two spot, behind All Might, is the worst thing in the world. It’s consumed him. However, he knows that he can’t beat All Might by himself. He may be hotheaded, but he’s no fool. So he devised a certain plan.”

“Wh-What…” Akatani croaked out, “What did he do?”

“Midoriya, are you aware of the concept of Quirk Marriages?” Todoroki asked after a brief pause.

Izuku’s eyes widened in realization.

“Around the second generation of humans with Quirks, or perhaps the third, they were incredibly in vogue. A person with a strong Quirk would forcibly marry another person solely for their Quirk, simply for an incredibly powerful offspring.” Todoroki plowed on, unfettered. “Designer babies born from an inconsiderate generation’s lack of ethics. Thanks to his money and fame, however, my father was able to coerce my mother’s family into marrying her, all for her Quirk, Iceberg.

“He forced into into a marriage, forced her into birthing child after child, all so he could create me, the perfect fusion of Iceberg and Hellfire, for the sole reason of surpassing All Might.” Todoroki grit his teeth and angrily slammed a frost-covered fist into the wall behind him. “It’s Hell. It’s Hell, and I hate it. I hate being a tool born into this world for the selfish desires of a horrible man!”

Todoroki took a deep breath. He softly touched the scar on his face. “In my memories, Mom was always crying…” Todoroki said. A single tear seemed to appear in the corner of his blue eye, but it soon vanished. “She told me my left side was horrible, that she couldn’t stand to see me for who I was going to become… She said this as she poured boiling water on my face.”

Izuku wanted to throw up.

“Soon after, she was admitted into a mental hospital under her maiden name,” Todoroki gave a shuddering sigh. “Not under the Todoroki name - it would ruin Endeavor’s image, for the public to know about his crimes. Keep it all in the family, under wraps, as he continued to train me to be the
weapon that would overthrow All Might.” Todoroki grit his teeth. “And that is why… That’s why, Midoriya, you’ve never seen me use my left side. My fire could surpass my father’s, if I really wanted it to. However, I’m going to make my father rue the day he ever conceived me. And my revenge… Begins with becoming the Number One Hero, without ever using my left side. He’ll get what he wants, oh yes… But not in the way he wants. Not with his power. Only my Mom’s power. He won’t see a trace of himself in me as I rise to the top. And in doing this…” Todoroki seemed to swell with pride, though he kept an intense expression trained on Akatani. “I’ll have denied him everything. ”

Izuku couldn’t believe that this was the underbelly of Heroics. He wanted to be sick. He felt sick. He didn’t dare turn his head, but from the corner of his eye he could see Yuikami’s angry expression, Akatani’s stricken face…

“I still think you two are All Might’s twin sons,” Todoroki said as he walked into the sunlight, “But nonetheless, Akatani Mikumo, that won’t stop me from destroying you in the upcoming round. I apologize for bothering you.”

Izuku had to say something.

“Todoroki,” Izuku spoke up, “I’m here… Because other helped me. A- Midoriya helped me, Hatsume, Uraraka, and Shiozaki helped me, my friend Sakuretsu spurred me into even entering UA… And, well, All Might may be the strongest right now, but… He’s… He’s my inspiration. I’ve been wanting to be like him, ever since I was little and the doctors told me I was Quirkless.”

Todoroki’s eyes widened minutely. Izuku didn’t care.

“Everyone’s been helping me, up to this point, and I- I want to return the favor. I want to thank them for helping me, by becoming the strongest Hero. Despite my weaknesses, I want to show them that all of the help they’ve given me isn’t for nothing! So, while I may be totally outclassed, and I have a weak motivation…” Izuku clenched his fist. “I’m going to return your declaration of war, Todoroki! I will do whatever it takes to beat you!”

Todoroki and Izuku gazed into each other’s eyes.

Unseen, Yoarashi looked at Bakugou with wide, angry eyes, tears streaming down his face. Bakugou returned the look, but without any noticeable emotion.
Katsuki was about to follow after the weird shaved-head that had gotten all his points stolen like a
dumbass, but a single line stopped him.

“Midoriya, what, pray tell, the *fuck* is wrong with your class?”

That was Deku’s voice. But, what-

“Yamikumo, I really didn’t know that was going on-” And that was fucking Cherry Top’s!
The *fuck*?!

“I cannot BELIEVE this!!!” Screamed that weird Beehive fucker from Management, “Of ALL the
Heroes to turn out to be absolute SCUMBAGS, it had to be ENDEAVOR?! FUCK, when I
graduate, he’s going into the TOILET! I’m going to dedicate an entire CHAIN of stores to selling
Anti-Endeavor merch! He’s going to be RUINED, and then I’m going to take his kneecaps and
replace them with his eyes, and then-”

“Yuikami, please, not now,” “Cherry Top” said, “We have more pressing issues at hand.”

“Angry as I am to admit it, Midoriya’s right,” “Deku” said, “If your head was even a centimeter to
the left, your ear would have been totaled, Midoriya! What are you thinking?! If you’re this
reckless in the second qualifiers, how are you going to be in the third event?!”

“He’s right, Midoriya,” Beehive said, “My Quirk reverts under physical damage, you know! It’s
only a localized reversion, yes, but it’s still a reversion! You can’t just go around with mismatched
ears! And then you’d have Akatani in the stands with a bleeding ear, nonetheless! You need to be
careful!”

“I-I am trying to be careful!” “Cherry-Top-But-Most-Likely-Deku” replied, “It’s everyone else
who’s trying to kill me!”

Katsuki wanted to interject, but he knew now wasn’t the time.

“Besides, you know how last year’s tournament event was a foam sword match?” “Deku-But-A-
Redhead” continued, “Maybe it’ll be something else non-lethal, like gymnastics! Parkour and
flexibility’s important for heroes that don’t have the natural ability to fly or whatever.”

“I’ll keep that in mind for my next yoga class,” “Deku’s-Weird-Pod-People-Replacement” said sarcastically, “Just, be careful, alright?”

“I am careful!”

“That declaration of war to Todoroki wasn’t careful, that was reckless, what if you face him?”

“The chances of that are… Kind of good, but those are odds I’m willing to take, honestly.”

The voices were fading as they walked towards the school.

Leaving Katsuki alone with his thoughts.

“Say hey, everybody!” Present Mic screamed, and the audience cheered as everyone returned to the arena. “We’re back from our date to the cat cafe-”

“I can’t believe you dragged me to the cat cafe.”

“You didn’t want to leave.”

“Shut up and commentate.”

“Regardless, if you’re one of our students that didn’t make it into the second or third round, then don’t you worry! It’s still a sports festival, so we’ve got all kinds of sports festival-type activities prepared for the interim. But first, take it away, Midniiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiight!”

“I’m so pleased to announce the next event!” Midnight cheered, doing a weird pose that Izuku previously thought humanly unachievable, “You see, the best way to get the blood pumping is
through a little action! And what’s more action-packed than a sixteen-way one-on-one tournament-style bracket-based battle royale?!

Izuku immediately had a horrible feeling about the upcoming hours.

“Your placing in the tournament will be up to chance!” Midnight explained, holding up a box. “You’ll each draw a number, and we’ll determine the matchups using that. Once that’s over with, we’ll do the festivities, and make the tournament the big climax! Of course, it’s up to you if you want to get worked up with the festivities, but I like to save myself up for the big point!”

Izuku wondered if Midnight was doing this on purpose as she struck another pose.

“Without further ado, will the first-place team plea-”

“Um, I’m sorry, but… I’d like to drop out.”

Everyone turned to the source of the voice: Ojiro Mashirao.

“Ojiro?!?”

“Wh-Why?! This is your big chance to get noticed by the pros!”

“What the fuck, dude?!”

“I-I…” Ojiro took a deep breath. “I can’t do it. Th-The cavalry battle, I- I can’t remember any of it. Up until the very end, I just can’t remember a thing.” One of Ojiro’s teammates (an extremely nervous-looking boy) jolted as if he had been stung by a bee. “I-If I had to say, I’d say it was his Quirk, but…”

Ojiro turned his gaze to someone next to Izuku. Izuku turned to see Shinsou Hitoshi, who averted his gaze the minute he noticed Ojiro.

“It’s just… I know this is a great opportunity, and I appreciate that I’ve gotten here, but…” Ojiro
stared at his hands. “How am I supposed to properly enjoy a reward that I don’t remember working for? I’m a finalist, but I don’t know how or why that happened! It’s pathetic, and I won’t stand for it! Everyone else got here on their own merits, but I’m here through unknown means! I can’t take it, I’m sick of it! So I’m forfeiting.”

“W-Wait, be reasonable, Ojiro!” Hagakure said, rushing over to Ojiro.

“Yeah! By that logic, they should disqualify me, too, because I don’t remember anything about the Cavalry Battle either!” Ashido admitted.

“You threw acid at my face.” Monoma said.

“Shut up.”

“I-I’m not talking about logic,” Ojiro said, covering his face, “I’m talking about my pride, as both a martial artist and a Hero hopeful. It’s just… It’s not right, and I want to do what’s right.”

“Ojiro-san…” His nervous-looking teammate whispered, before he raised his hand as well, “F-F-For similar reasons, I, Sh-Shouda Nirengeki, w-would also like to withdraw! This is a contest of skill, so for someone who did nothing to advance… I-I don’t like the sound of that, i-it has to be against the rules! It spits on the name of the sports festival, I-I’d say!”

“He’s… He’s so manly…” Kirishima began to cry. “They both are… I support you, Ojibro! Broda!”

“Broda?” Kaminari asked.

“This is,” Present Mic interjected, “Really unusual. Is there precedent for this? I have genuinely no clue.”

“That means that it’s up to the event coordinator to decide.” Aizawa continued, “Which would ordinarily mean me, but since you kidnapped me, that means it’s up to…”

“Hmph, me, huh?” Midnight said, her face turning dark. She grabbed the end of her cat-of-nine-
tails and twisted it. “You boys are being very naughty, you know… You’re being very, very naive, very green…”

Midnight whipped the air with a sharp crack. “I LOVE IT!!!!”

She… loves it? Everyone collectively thought.

“SHOUDA NIRENGEKI AND OJIRO MASHIRAO HAVE NOW OFFICIALLY WITHDRAWN!” Midnight continued.

Aoyama placed his hand on Ojiro’s back. “Mon ami, I shall win this tournament pour tu! But mainly pour moi.” He sparkled. Ojiro wiped his tears.

“Since fifth place went to Team Kendou, they get to send in two of their-”

“But, going by Shouda’s logic,” The orange-haired girl, Kendou apparently, interjected, “We shouldn’t send anyone in either - we got three headbands and then were frozen in place for the rest of the battle. Rightfully, it should go to the team everyone thought would be in third place.” She pointed to Yoarashi.

Yoarashi took a second to react, but his face lit up into a huge surprised grin. “US?!”

“Yeah, Yoarashi!” Kendou gave a good-natured huff, “You guys kept giving it your all, so it just… Feels right, you know?”

Tetsutetsu and the other two began to cry tears of joy as all four boys rushed over and dogpiled Kendou.

In the end, it was determined that Tetsutetsu and Yoarashi were to move on to the final round.

“NOW THAT THAT’S SETTLED!” Midnight brought the attention back to her. “Everyone’s
drawn their lots, so we can reveal the tournament!”

The screen began to spin like it was some sort of blender, before it slowed down, revealing a simple brackets with the following first round matchups:

- Akatani vs Shinsou
- Todoroki vs Kaminari
- Yoarashi vs Yaoyorozu
- Iida vs Ashido
- Tetsutetsu vs Kirishima
- Shiozaki vs Sero
- Bakugou vs Hatsume
- Uraraka vs Aoyama

“These are the first round matchups for the tournament!” Midnight declared, “After that… Who knows! Stick around to find out!”

Izuku took a brief second to remember that he was under Akatani. But after that, he realized something even more pressing.

*Looks like I’ll be fighting Todoroki after all...* Izuku thought, *That is, if I win my first match against...*

“Hey, Akatani,” A calm voice said as he placed his hand on Izuku’s shoulder, “Good luck, okay? But, you know, it’s nothing personal. Just business.”

Before Izuku could answer, he suddenly felt a very muscular appendage cover his mouth.

“Akatani, don’t answer him!” Ojiro commanded, also standing behind Izuku, but with his tail covering his mouth.

Shinsou Hitoshi held up his hands. “Yeesh. Don’t know why you want to protect my own classmate from my Quirk, but okay. Flex, I guess.” He smirked as he walked away. “I’ll be seeing you, Akatani...”

*So, it’s this soon, huh...* Todoroki thought.
“Aoyama, huh…?” Uraraka thought aloud, not noticing Aoyama gazing intently at her.

“Hello, Bakugou? Bakugou Katsuki?” Hatsume walked up to Bakugou, “Hi, I’m Hatsume Mei, Girl Genius, Worldwide Sensation, MasterChef Junior, and Future CEO o-”

“You were on De- Cherry Top’s team, right?” Bakugou interrupted her. Hatsume twitched. “Fucking, whatever. Leave me alone, I gotta figure out how to smash your cheap-ass toys.”

“Oh. I see.” Hatsume said with surprising calm. “Well, I just wanted to wish you luck.” She turned around and walked away.

This time, Mikumo found himself being led by Yuikami.

“At this rate, my Quirk might just time out or something, and that time out might be soon,” Yuikami explained as they made their way down to the locker rooms, “So we gotta-”

“Midoriya! What are you doing here?” Midoriya called out to them, and Mikumo looked up to see Midoriya and Ojiro together.

“Oh, Midoriya, you know him?” Ojiro asked, surprised.

“I- Uh,” Mikumo stammered, “I-I helped him, uh, strategize. You know, for Bakugou. And Todoroki, and stuff.”

“Ohhh, makes sense,” Ojiro nodded, “I think. Like I said, I think Akatani’s classmate may have wiped my memories using his Quirk.”

“Yeah?” Mikumo urged, pretending to be intrigued about something he already knew. “What do you think it is?”
“Mind control.” Ojiro declared confidently.

Chapter End Notes

Even though this is an interim chapter where I just regurgitate information you already know, I like how long it is!! ^^

So, here's another change - matchups! How will this affect the story?! Who will win this time?! :O

My money's on Sero.

Thank you to everyone for the great comments! Don't hesitate to share this fic with your friends, honestly! I love seeing people read my fics for the first time! :D
“Face Off!”

As Izuku’s sight returned, he immediately began to steeple his fingers. “Yamikumo, you could have told me sooner that Shinsou’s Quirk was Brainwashing.”

“So-rry ,” Akatani grumbled as he felt his (Izuku’s, technically) jaw, “I didn’t think Shinsou would make it this far. My money was on Suzumiya, but beggars can’t be choosers I guess. So I probably owe Fukusan some money.”

“We need to focus,” Yuikami interrupted, clapping his hands together as if he had just finished dusting something. “Do you have any strategies, Midoriya? Any tips, Akatani?”

“Yeah,” Akatani replied, “You can’t respond to him. His Quirk is voice-activated, and only activates once someone responds to anything he could say. That’s probably how he ensnared those other three students, and maybe how he got Yoarashi’s headbands.”

“And weaknesses?” Izuku asked, head whirling with possibilities.

“Well, as long as you don’t react to anything he says,” Akatani confirmed, “You’ll be fine. If you do go under, a simple physical jolt should be enough to break you out of it. It could just be something as light as stubbing your toe or bumping your elbow, but that should be it.”

“I see,” Izuku sighed, getting up from the table he was sitting at, “Thank you, Yamikumo. I think I have an idea of what to do.”

“Remember, you can’t use your Quirk, Midoriya,” Yuikami warned him, “Otherwise your HR
“Well, isn’t all publicity good publicity?” Izuku smirked. Yuikami blinked.

“Wow, for a second, I thought my Quirk released itself,” Yuikami grinned, “Akatani, you’ve been making our little Midoriya into a sassmaster, huh?”

“Never say that again, what are you, 90?”

“THANK YOU, CEMENTOSS!!!” Present Mic’s voice rang through the halls.

“Time to head out, Midoriya,” Yuikami said, opening the door and walking out, “I’m heading up to the stands, Akatani. Don’t be too long.”

Akatani watched Yuikami leave before turning to Midoriya. “Midoriya, you can switch back with me if you want.”

What?

“I’m going to level with you. This plan - it was ill-conceived from the start. Yuikami may be brilliant, but he should stick to pomade. I mean, I take the credit for your actions? Time and time again, you’ve just been out-thinking everyone, proving everyone wrong, and it’s my face you’re wearing while doing it.” Akatani exhaled. “Midoriya, I don’t- I don’t think I could ever replicate what you can do in a million years, even if you personally taught me anything. Not only that, but realistically? Yuikami’s Quirk can’t hold forever, and you’re nowhere near Quirkless either, not like me. Shinsou’ll know immediately that it’s not me the minute you open your mouth, too - you’ve been lucky so far, but your luck can’t hold forever, and-”

Izuku held up a hand, his mind swirling as he considered all of Akatani’s points. Finally, he came to a decision.

“I’m going to compete.”
“Midori-”

“Yamikumo, I want to finish our plan. Besides, you’re talking as if I’ll be responding to Shinsou. It’ll be fine, I promise.”

“... At least tell me what your Quirk is.” Akatani eventually requested.

“Why?”

“Because if I know what your Quirk is, I could commission Support Gear to help replicate it.”

Izuku considered it. “...You could never replicate it.”

“What-”

“Remember when Todoroki theorized that All Might’s Quirk also stockpiles abilities? He implied that my Quirk did as well. And he’s right; my Quirk is a mish-mash of abilities I’ve gotten from... Certain events.”

“Events?”

“Deadly events. Events that killed me. Events that ended my life. I’m immortal, Yamikumo, and every death gives me more powers.”

Silence hung in the air as Akatani processed this. Izuku got up. “Believe me or not, Yamikumo, but I’m going to win this tournament disguised as you, and without revealing my Quirk. You’re going to become the very first Quirkless Hero, Yamikumo-”

“What if I don’t WANT to be a Hero anymore, Midoriya?!” Akatani interjected, “Ignoring how batshit insane and unbelievable your so-called Quirk sounds, being a Hero- Going through this- I’ll be gaining everything by doing nothing! Your friend - Ojiro - that’s why he dropped out, isn’t it!!”

Izuku thought about this. “Yamikumo, you haven’t done nothing. You’ve been my friend. You told
Aizawa-sensei about our plan. You told me how Shinsou’s Quirk works. That’s not nothing at all. And plus, if you truly didn’t want to be a Hero…” Izuku smiled. “Then you would have forced me to switch back.”

“…You’re kind of selfish, you know that?” Akatani said, “Does dying make you more reckless or something?”

“Probably, but I like to think that my luck’s just gotten worse.”

“And now, the first match!!! In this corner of the ring, we’ve got the unknown, the mysterious, Shinsou Hitoshi, of Class 1-C! And his opponent is the meteoric rising star of the Gen Ed Department, Akatani Mikumo, of Class 1-C! Hey, it’s a festival of Gen Ed! What’s up with that?!

“Anyways, rules are simple! It’s like sumo, only you can do whatever you want! A win is determined by knockout, forfeit, ring-out, or otherwise complete immobilization! Recovery Girl’s on standby, so you can get as crazy and as wild as you want! No killshots though - we aren’t that good! So if you try to murder someone, you’re pretty much out of luck! Oh, but below-the-belt stuff is a-ok!”

“Forfeit, huh…” Shinsou muttered just loud enough to catch Izuku’s attention, “Hey, Akatani. May the best man win, alright?”

Izuku, remembering Akatani’s advice, kept his mouth shut and nodded. Though his nerves were lighting up like a Christmas display, he knew th

“By the way,” Shinsou interrupted Izuku’s train of thought, “What was that monkey from 1-A doing earlier?”

Izuku twitched, an action that did not go unnoticed by Shinsou, who grinned.

“START!!!”

“Oh? Is he your boyfriend, Akatani?” Shinsou prodded, “Whatever happened to that Shougami kid
from Isamu? Beyond that, I didn’t know you were into dumb animals. I mean, you already know what my Quirk is, right? Why would he want to protect you from it… Unless you’re a little… Monkey-spanker…”

Izuku flushed bright red, and began to storm up to Shinsou. “I’m seriously going to fucking hit you,” Izuku ground out, totally embarrassed.

He froze in mid-stride.

“Huuumuuu…” Shinsou exhaled, “Check and mate, Yamikumo.”

________________________________________

“WHAAAT?! WHY DID AKATANI MIKUMO JUST FREEZE IN PLACE?!?”

“God damnit, Mi- Akatani,” Mikumo sighed roughly.

“What do you think Shinsou said to him?” Yuikami asked Mikumo.

“I’m not sure,” Garaochi cut in, “But I’m pretty sure that the betting pool’s up in arms. Akatani’s turning out to be a very bad investment.”

Mikumo flinched.

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“I’ve been saying that the Entrance Exam has been illogical for quite some time now, haven’t I?” Shouta sighed.

“Wait, what?”

“Here, I brought the files, Hizashi,” Shouta said as he took out Akatani Mikumo and Shinsou Hitoshi’s files, “Since Akatani Mikumo is Quirkless.”
“WHAAAT?! QUIRKLESS?!”

“Don’t interrupt.” Shouta wanted to slap Hizashi, although internally he knew he had the same reaction three days earlier, when he first read Akatani Mikumo’s file. “As I was saying, since Akatani Mikumo is Quirkless, he entered into the Gen Ed course from the start, expressing a wish to be the very first Quirkless Hero - although, with his luck and general attitude, he could have gotten a place in 1-B, perhaps. However, the difference between Akatani Mikumo and Shinsou Hitoshi is that Shinsou did apply for the Heroics course, but simply couldn’t make the grade due to his Quirk relying on human psychology, something machines sorely lack.”

“As someone whose Quirk also relies on the target being human,” Hizashi replied, “You feel for the kid, huh?”

“Shut up.”

“You have to understand, Akatani,” Shinsou said, “That it’s really nothing personal. It’s just that I’m going to get to the top of this competition, one way or another. Really sucks you’ve been outed as Quirkless, though.” Shinsou shrugged, a vague air of sympathy rolling off of him before promptly disappearing. “That being said, however, here is my command: Turn around, and walk out of the arena.”

Despite every thought in his brain protesting, Izuku could feel his body begin to move against his will. He slowly turned around.

_No, no, no, no, _Izuku tripped over his own two feet and his face slammed into the cement.

The arena went dead silent.

Shinsou stared.

Bakugou Katsuki stared.
Akatani Mikumo stared.

All Might stared.

In a seedy bar’s back room somewhere, a lone man stopped scratching his neck and took the hand off his face to make sure he saw that correctly.

Midnight stared. “Uh,” She said, “Ar

Izuku reeled up from the ground, hands over his nose and screaming to the high heavens. At once, the whole arena exploded, screaming over the complete nonsense that had just happened.

“ARE YOU *FUCKING* SERIOUS?!” Shinsou exploded, “THIS IS COMPLETE BULLSHIT!”

Izuku turned around, determination in his eyes. Shinsou flinched as Izuku stormed towards him

“H-Hey, about that thing about Shougami and that 1-A kid, uh… L-Look, between you and I, I’m the one who fell flat at the starting gate, while you never even signed up for the races despite being gifted with the luck to reach the finish line!” Shinsou scrambled as he braced himself. “You heard that Shouta guy! You could have been in the Hero Course this whole time! You’re blessed with the luck of being Quirkless, so you could have *never* known how horrible it is to have a Villain’s Quirk!”

Izuku? Blessed? What a joke. He had lived fourteen years of his life Quirkless, and they were the worst years of his life. Back then, if he had to choose between being Quirkless and having a so-called “Villain’s Quirk”, he would have gladly taken the Quirk. He knew Akatani wouldn’t have thought the same, and he didn’t think so now either, but…

“Some guys just have all the luck, huh?! The luck to be blessed with luck! It’s infuriating, watching someone with the luck to be a blank slate not attempt anything while those of us who exist to be Villains are stuck as we are!”

Izuku was lucky, he decided as he grabbed onto Shinsou’s shoulders. Shinsou’s eyes widened, but Izuku didn’t care. Izuku was lucky. He and Akatani were both lucky.
Lucky to have people who supported them unconditionally.

Izuku idly wondered if Shinsou had the same. He felt pity for the other boy.

“Why won’t you fucking say something?!” Shinsou screamed as he punched Izuku’s face. Undaunted, Izuku pushed Shinsou back to the boundaries of the ring. Shinsou, clearly catching onto Izuku’s plan, kneed Izuku in the stomach. “I’m not going down without a fight, Akatani Mikumo!” Shinsou declared, “And you can kiss my ass as I swipe first place from those dumbasses in 1-A!”

Shinsou went to punch Izuku in the mouth, but Izuku grabbed Shinsou’s wrist. When Shinsou unclenched his fist out of pure shock, Izuku simply bit into Shinsou’s hand. Taking advantage of the shock at the dirty tactic, Izuku grabbed Shinsou by the shirt and arm and, with one final cry, flipped Shinsou and slammed him into the dirt, directly onto the ring boundary.

“Sh-Shinsou Hitoshi is out of bounds!” Midnight declared, and Izuku wiped the sweat off of his brow, “As such, Akatani Mikumo moves on to the quarter finals!”

Hey, that move looks familiar…” Moon-face or whatever her name was muttered.

“Shut up,” Katsuki spat out.

Deku needed to be careful. That was the same flip from the Battle Trial.

“Hey, Midoriya!” Nomimono exclaimed, “Are you alright?! Your nose is bleeding!”

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“Well, it was a pretty uneventful and anticlimactic match, but give it up to our first preliminary bout!” Present Mic exclaimed, to wild applause.
“...Shinsou?” Izuku asked.

“Don’t say a word,” Shinsou commanded, despite Izuku no longer being under his Quirk, “Just... I’m sorry for saying all those nasty things. Anything goes, you know?”

Izuku was silent. Finally, “Hey, Shinsou? I can’t remember if I’ve asked you this, but if you’re so convinced your Quirk is villainous, why do you want to be a Hero so much?”

Shinsou was silent. He turned away. “Because I admire them.” He said plainly.

“Shinsou!!!” The girl with the third eye called out from the stands. Shinsou and Izuku looked up. “You did so well!!!”

“Yeah!” A muscular boy next to her agreed, “You’ll get ‘em next year! You and Akatani are so cool!!!”

“You both are the shining stars of 1-C! No, Gen Ed in general!!!”

“Good luck, Akatani!!”

“I’m sitting in front of some Pros, and they’re saying nothing but good things about you both!”

“Woah, Ms. Joke just said that she wants Brainwashing!”

“...Hey, Akatani?” Shinsou said, “Just remember, depending on how well we do here, we may be transferred into the Hero Course come next year.” Shinsou paused. “...Tell the real Akatani that, okay?”

Izuku jolted.

“It’s the nose,” Shinsou noted without turning around, “That’s not Akatani’s nose.”
“How did y-” Izuku’s words froze in his throat as he was caught in Brainwashing, which was immediately released.

“I know,” Shinsou said, leaving the arena, “Because you just told me.”

Izuku arrived in the health suite to find Yuikami and Akatani already there.

“Midoriya, young man,” Recovery Girl demanded, “You’ve got some explaining to do!”

Izuku idly wondered what ability giving himself an embolism would grant him.

Chapter End Notes

Sometimes the characters write themselves, is all I'll say about this! ^^
Shuuzenji Chiyo was absolutely livid.

Never mind the fact that Midoriya Izuku was functionally immortal. Never mind that he was not going to be the first nor the last student to visit her health suite this day of the sports festival. Never mind that the problem child in front of her was the textbook definition of recklessness. These were all facts she was well aware of, and had come to terms with quite easily.

However, the fact that Midoriya Izuku was enlisting other students into this hopeless charade of his…

“Young man,” She addressed Midoriya, “Would you care to explain why you and Akatani Mikumo are disguised as each other, and why Akatani Mikumo came into the health suite with a broken nose?!”

Midoriya Izuku’s mouth opened, but before he could answer, Yuikami Bousuke from the Management course chimed in.

“Miss Recovery Girl,” Yuikami said earnestly, “It was pretty much all my idea. And my Quirk. You see, Face Off-”

“I’m well aware of what Face Off does, Yuikami Bousuke,” Chiyo interrupted him, “I’m the one who painstakingly reviews the files of every student in this school to make sure you all need extra accommodations, such as how overuse of your friend, Garaochi Toujiru’s Quirk, Projection, makes him night blind.” Chiyo took off her visor and rubbed the bridge of her nose as she exhaled through her teeth. “Midoriya, are you aware that any damage done to you is transferred along with the reversion?”
Midoriya jolted in alarm and looked wildly between Yuikami and Akatani.

“I’ll take that as a no, then.” Chiyo confirmed. “Yuikami, dearie, if this is, indeed, your idea, then may I ask just what the hell you were thinking?!”

“I just… Forgot to say that?” Yuikami chuckled, rubbing a hand on his neck.

Chiyo wasn’t amused. “Is anyone else aware of this? Anyone important?”

“…Aizawa-sensei?” Midoriya supplied.

“And how did you manage that?!?” Chiyo couldn’t believe it. She had thought better of Aizawa Shouta than to enable such stuff and nonsense.

“…Honestly? We’re not entirely sure.” Akatani Mikumo eventually said.

Chiyo was about to berate all three of the students more, but was cut off by a low rumble.

“K-KAMIN-N-NARI D-D-DENKI H-HAS B-BEEN F-F-FROZEN IN AN-N ICEBERG?!”

“Oh my God…” Chiyo swore, “Look, you three, sort this out between yourselves and make sure that Midoriya doesn’t do even worse than he’s already doing. I’ve got to get ready to treat Kaminari Denki for freezer burn. Out!”

“Folks, we certainly live in a society!” Present Mic screamed to the audience’s applause, “And now that we’ve defrosted the arena, it’s time for the match that truly exemplifies this thought! As you may or may not know, UA has a special recommendations program for particularly gifted Hero wannabes, and while Todoroki Shouto was one of them, his match is over so who really cares?! No, the other three were Setsuna Tokage, who was eliminated in the Cavalry Battle, and the two you see entering the ring now!!!

“From 1-B, it’s the Type-A Typhoon! The Merciless Maelstrom! The Hair-Raising Hurricane!
Yoarashi Inasa began waving to the audience with both hands, his eyes wide and his mouth in an open-mouthed grin. The audience cheered at his sheer enthusiasm and apparent joy just to exist.

“And from 1-A, it’s the Honor-Roll Heiress!!! Beauty, Brawn, and Brains!!! From the Yaoyorozu Corporation, but your hands together for... Yaoyorozu Momo!!!”

Momo wished that Present Mic didn’t bring up the Yaoyorozu Corporation and her status as the sole heiress, but she was glad that the audience had cheered nonetheless - though what if they were only cheering because of her status? Slowly, the familiar chill of anxiety began to creep through her nervous system.

“Yaomomo!!!” Jirou Kyouka cried, and Momo turned to the 1-A box to see a very crudely-drawn banner being held by Jirou and Hagakure Tooru. The banner had the kanji for “fight” and “win” thrown everywhere, and was covered in glitter paint thrown haphazardly. “Good luck!!! We’re all behind you!”

Slowly, Momo’s apprehension began to fade away, replaced with confidence.

“Yaoyorozu Momo!” Yoarashi caught her attention. “I haven’t actually talked to you since the exams, but I just wanted to tell you good luck!”

“And you as well, Yoarashi Inasa.” Momo bowed. Not to be outdone, Yoarashi gave her a deeper bow.

“Are you both ready?!” Midnight shouted. “If so, begin!!!”

“Let’s get it over with real quick-like!!” Yoarashi announced, and at once, a powerful gale picked up and began to bombard Momo, pushing her backwards. At once, Momo understood what Yoarashi’s plan was, and she focused on using her Quirk to counteract it. After a brief second of visualizing what she wanted, a pair of spikes shot out of the soles of her feet and dug themselves into the ground, ripping up the soles of her shoes as they dug further and further in. Yaoyorozu fell backwards, her feet-spikes firmlyanchoring her in place, and she narrowly avoided placing her hands on the boundary line.
“AND YAOYOROZU MOMO NARROWLY AVOIDS BEING DISQUALIFIED!!!” Present Mic shouted, and Momo slowly fought the gale as she created an iron anchor and chain. She hooked the anchor into the ground in front of her and began pulling herself into an upright standing position with the chain.

“Not bad!” Yoarashi declared, clearly ecstatic that Momo had done well so far, “But what about this?!” Yoarashi suddenly lifted off, winds surrounding his legs and arms, and he flew at Momo at incredibly high speeds. Momo panicked and did the one thing that came naturally to her.

A metallic clanging sound resounded throughout the arena, and the audience lurched as the beheld the scene: Momo had, in her panic, created an incredibly ornate 16th century European rapier, which was generating sparks from its grating against Yoarashi’s wind-enhanced lariat.

“YAOYOROZU MOMO HAS CREATED A SWORD, WHICH IS OF EQUAL STRENGTH TO YOARASHI INASA’S QUIRK! HEY, IS THIS CHEATING?!”

“I’ll allow it!”

Momo grit her teeth from the sheer effort of holding Yoarashi back. Despite what Present Mic believed, it was taking all of her might to make the sword’s output energy equal to Yoarashi’s winds - she really should have made a bigger sword. Nevertheless, she began to form a shield with her other arm, which did not go unnoticed by Yoarashi, who twisted his body to kick at the offending arm. Momo’s eyes widened as the imperfect shield shattered into shards of metal shrapnel, which dug into her arm. Momo winced from the pain, which was the opening Yoarashi needed. Yoarashi, boosting his momentum with his winds, slammed his knee into Momo’s stomach, winding her and destroying her guard. Her foot spikes snapped, and she flew into the back wall.

“And Yaoyorozu Momo is disqualified by ring-out!” Midnight screamed.

“YEAH!!!! WHOOOOOOO!!!” Yoarashi screamed as he flew around the arena in celebration. Momo shook her head as she got up. She felt disappointed in herself. She wasn’t mad with herself, just… Disappointed. And that hurt her worse than if she was angry.

“Hey, Yaoyorozu, right?!?” Yoarashi shouted, landing in front of her with a soft gust of wind. “Don’t feel bad about losing, you know?! You did really well! You actually lasted twice as long as I thought you would - your Quirk’s really strong!!” Yoarashi held out a hand. “Let’s be friends, okay?!”
Momo stared at his hand. Slowly, she took it.

His hands were very big.

“THE FIRST HALF OF THE PRELIMINARIES IS ALMOST HALFWAY DONE!” Hizashi shouted, “Next up is… The battle of 1-A! Ashido Mina versus Iida Tenya! Who will win?!”

It was over before Hizashi knew it.

“So… I guess Iida Tenya moves on? It’s kind of anticlimactic, though…”

“Climactic, dramatic, all of that’s dumb as hell.” Shouta muttered into the microphone, “The most logical course of action is to get a match over with as soon as possible. Iida’s Engine Quirk gives him impossibly high speeds, so it makes sense that Ashido Mina, whose Quirk is to secrete acid, wouldn’t last long, if at all.”

“What? How does that track?” Hizashi asked as Ashido and Iida shook hands and parted ways.

“Iida’s entire game plan is likely going to be moving as fast as possible to push his opponents out of the ring, like what Yoarashi tried to do with Yaoyorozu-”

“Well, whatever! Next is… Kirishima Eijirou and Tetsutetsu Tetsutetsu!” Hizashi cheered.

His enthusiasm was short-lived.

“These two… Their Quirks are pretty much the same thing, though,” Shouta sighed, “So it’s basically a mirror match.”

“…You don’t say…” Hizashi slammed his head into the desk. Before he knew it, it was… “A TIE?!”
What did we expect, really?" Shouta gave a long-suffering sigh. "Whatever. We'll figure that out after the preliminaries are over. Next up is Sero Hanta versus Shiozaki Ibara. Who also have similar Quirks.

"WHAT?!"

Luckily for Hizashi’s sanity, the match was slightly more interesting to watch than Kirishima versus Tetsutetsu, in that Shiozaki was able to use the thorns on her vines to tear up Sero’s tape, leading to her decisive victory. Still...

"Shouta," Hizashi sobbed, "Shouta please, help me."

"What."

"Shouta help me, I’m dying." Hizashi fell onto Shouta’s lap. "I need a match that isn’t a total snoozefest. Please Shouta help your husband of sixty years."

"We’re both thirty-one, first of all. Second of all, the mic’s still on, so the students can hear you, asshole. Third of all, next up is Bakugou Katsuki versus Hatsume Mei, so unless you’re like my idiot boyfriend, you’re about to experience something interesting. I hope. You can’t see this, but Hizashi’s sobbing into my pants leg."

Mei grinned as Midnight called the match to start. She tapped her HatsuMic and cleared her throat.

"What the fuck..." Her witless opponent muttered.

"Hey, wait-" The announcer began.

"Mic check, one, two!!!" Mei shouted cheerfully. As she heard the reverb, she grinned even wider. "Welcome, one and all, to the first-ever official showcase for Hatsume Industries’ Support Gear branch! I’m your host, girl genius, golden-brained, monkey-pawed, and Wonka-approved"
chocolatee, Hatsume Mei! Isn’t it a beautiful day?!” She paused, and the crowd slowly gave confused cheers. “Wonderful! With me today is my beloved assistant, Bakugou Katsudon!”

“WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU CALLING A PORK BOWL?!” Her opponent screamed, launching himself at her. Deftly, Hatsume dodged his rush using her Gyroscopic Avoidance Filter.

“What you’ve just witnessed with the help of my darling assistant is the Gyroscopic Avoidance Filter!” Mei announced, “Patent pending! As you can see, it shoots hydraulic poles into the ground with nary a thought! Then, keeping your own center of gravity in consideration, repositions you to avoid unwanted advances, be they romantic or villainous! Or both!” Mei let this sink into the crowd’s collective conscious.

“What the- TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY!” Bakugou-whatever shouted at her, fury written on his face as he charged at her.

“But wait!” Mei gasped, “What if you’re being cornered?! Well, don’t worry!” She pulled out a gun and shot it at Bakugou, whose eyes widened in shock and rage as he suddenly found himself caught in a net. “Introducing, the HATSUNET!” Mei continued, totally unfettered, “Simply pull it out, point it at someone, pull the trigger, and voila! Instant capture completed! Can be used for initiative and self-defense! They’re up for sale on the official Hatsume Industries website, but you better act fast, or else they’ll all be snatched up before you know it!”

There was a huge scream of rage as Bakugou finally ripped the net off of him. His fists lit up with explosions as he began to beat mercilessly on the helpless net.

“They’re even blastproof!” Mei shouted with extreme glee as she noted that Bakugou’s Quirk was perfect for testing future iterations of her darling babies.

“I’M GOING TO KILL YOU!!!” Bakugou screamed as he turned his attention towards her. Explosions rippled across his arms.

“And if you’re against someone with a particularly volatile fire-based Quirk, like my lovely, darling assistant here,” Hatsume continued, pulling out one of her newest babies that she had invented during the time leading up to the match, “Then may I introduce the littlest newborn of the Hatsume Industries brand, my beautiful prototype, the Rainstorm Grenade! Simply pull the pin, throw it into the air (which I will demonstrate using the Hatsume-Brand Extending Arm) and watch the downpour become their downfall!!! It’s even good at fighting wildfires!” She announced as she watched the downpour wash away all of her opponent’s sweat. Hmm, she thought as he began to swear, So his Quirk’s sweat-based? That’s kinda funny. Enough about him, where’s... Her Quirk
scanned the audience before she found the contingent from the Kinoshita Conglomerate. Yes! They’ve taken the bait!

And so the game of cat and mouse continued for fifteen straight minutes. Whenever Bakugou got close to approaching Mei, Mei would out-maneuver him. Mei would spin and sell her varying gear, taking great pleasure both in the interest she was garnering in her beautiful, darling babies and the humiliation she was pouring on the plebian reprobate who so dared called her babies junk. Finally, Mei ran out of babies (and Rainstorm Grenades), and she simply stepped onto the boundary line.

“Thank you, one and all, for attending my conference! This is Hatsume Mei, daughter of Hatsume Miu and Miku, signing out! Bye-bye!!!” Mei shouted as she turned off the HatsuMic.

“I-” Midnight found her voice, “H-Hatsume Mei… Is disqualified? So Bakugou Katsuki moves on to the quarter-fi-”

“What the fuck was that?!” Bakugou screamed.

Mei didn’t even try hiding her pleased smirk. “I want to say I’m sorry… But I’m really not.” She walked away.

“Get back here and fight me like a woman!!!”

Once Katsuki had simmered down, Ura-whatever had won her match against Frenchy, and now Kirishi-something was trying to arm-wrestle that Tatsu kid to see who would go on to the quarter-finals. Katsuki didn’t care one way or another who won. However…

“Oi. Shitty, Cherry-Top.”

Deku turned around, and Katsuki had to swallow his anger that Deku was doing something so monumentally stupid as this.

“Oh, uh. You’re Bakugou, right?”
Katsuki wanted nothing more than to outright tell Deku that he knew. To just rat the bitch out to the highest authority figure he could find. Katsuki was playing by the fucking rules, why couldn’t Deku?

“Dude, are you alright? You’re, uh. Staring at me really hard.”

Katsuki threw the wadded-up bundle of cloth at Deku and stormed away before he could say anything. After he turned into an adjacent hallway, he slammed his palm against the wall and let an explosion rip. The wall cracked under the intense pressure.

Katsuki felt better. But only by a little.

Confused, Izuku unfolded the bundle of cloth to reveal it was a school gym uniform. Pinned to it was a note that said “Wear this if you know what’s good for you, asshole.”

Izuku frowned as he considered the note.

A conclusion reached Izuku’s brain, and he almost dropped the clothes right then and there from the realization.

Nonetheless, he eventually decided on a course of action.

Chapter End Notes

There's really only so many short matches you can write before you realize - what was the point of this? Why was this shown? ><::;
Todoroki Enji, Hero Name Endeavor, was not a man to seek out just anyone. No, no one in the entire universe mattered, except for three other people within this arena: All Might, that ridiculous old fool; Shouto, his stubborn progeny; and…

“End-” Akatani Mikumo gulped. “Endeavor?!"

Enji’s eyes narrowed as he sized up the rather scrawny child. To have come this far without outwardly using any sort of Quirk… How ridiculous. If not for that foolish Eraserhead, he would have simply assumed the boy had a Luck Quirk and been done with it. However…

“I want to congratulate you, Akatani Mikumo,” Enji stated bluntly, and Akatani Mikumo’s mouth snapped shut, “You’ve certainly done better than quite literally everyone would have expected from you. In fact, you’ve done as well as, say, All Might did back in his youth.”

There was some unfamiliar emotion swimming behind Akatani Mikumo’s eyes. It certainly wasn’t respect. No matter.

“As you may know, Todoroki Shouto is my son,” Enji continued, not waiting for a reply, “And that boy’s fate is to surpass All Might where I could not. That is the reason for his existence. Therefore, his fate here is to surpass you, who could very well be called the All Might of this competition.”

Akatani Mikumo was frozen. Hmph, perhaps the boy had nerves? As expected of some no-name General Educations student who stumbled into first place. As if he could be the next All Might. Enji wanted to scoff, but he simply didn’t want to waste the energy. He walked past Akatani
Mikumo and went towards the stairwell.

“I have approached you for this one reason, and this one reason alone: you are a stepping stone for my child. For that reason alone, you must act as a worthy obstacle - not that I think you can, Quirkless as you are. Farewell, Akatani Mikumo.”

Enji placed a foot on the step.

“You know… I’m not All Might.”

Enji froze. He turned to look at Akatani Mikumo, who was staring at the ground.

“Of course you aren’t All Might,” Enji sneered, “Wh-”

“I’m not All Might, Endeavor,” Akatani Mikumo repeated. Enji felt his flames swell in response to the lack of respect - the insolence - coming from this Quirkless child. “And similarly, Todoroki Shouto isn’t you.”

“What- you-”

Before Enji could properly formulate a sentence, Akatani Mikumo had scurried off, like the little rat he was. Enji took a deep breath to get his flames under control, then stormed back to his seat, leaving melted footprints in the concrete floors.

“Shigaraki Tomura, please observe these two. Perhaps they may yet become thorns in your side…”

A lone man scratched at his neck. “I doubt it, Kurogiri.”

“So, Akatani Mikumo…” Shouto asked, “Are you ready?”
Akatani, to his credit, simply stared into Shouto’s eyes. The gaze was unwavering. Shouto liked that - to him, it meant that Akatani was taking his challenge seriously.

“For the opening match of the quarter-finals, we have the greatest of the best! The boy who got the highest marks in the recommendation exams, versus the gen ed student whose been sweeping the sports festival away!!!” Present Mic screamed, to the crowd’s applause and cheers. “That’s right, it’s Todoroki versus Akatani!!! As always, anything goes apart from death!”

“Go!!!” Midnight shouted, and Shouto made the opening move - a wave of ice that quickly overtook the battlefield. Akatani futilely tried to outrun and escape the ice, but he soon found that his shoes were frozen to the ground he had jumped to.

“I apologize,” Shouto apologized, “But this match isn’t going to be a very long or exciting one, I’m afraid.” With that, he sent out another wave of ice, but made sure not to try and impale Akatani - rather, he decided the best way to freeze Akatani Mikumo was to simply fully encase him in a large chamber of ice. The end result was a huge spire of ice made from smaller spikes, all coalescing on each other until they acted as a sort of miniature cocoon.

“I would end the match,” Shouto recommended to Midnight, “I’ve incapacitated Akatani Mikumo. It’s over.”

A huge blasting sound stopped Shouto in his tracks, and he turned to see the top of the spire completely gone, replaced with what appeared to be an upwards explosion.

“What the FUCK is that!!” Yuikami screamed.

“I don’t know, Yu- Wait, forget that!!” Garaochi screamed, “Who the fuck are you ?!!”

Mikumo blinked, then blinked again. Did he have something in his eye?

“Wait, wh- oh fuck. Oh fucking christ. Midoriya, what the fuck did you do- Here, Akatani, take these napkins-”
“Wait, that’s Akatani Mikumo ?!” Garoichi screamed as Akatani slowly wiped soot off of his body with some napkins, “Then where’s Midoriya Izuku?!”

“God damnit, Deku,” Katsuki sighed angrily. This is why he gave the dumb idiot his uniform in the first place, sure, but it was still annoying.

Hizashi stared in mouth-gaping shock as Shouta quickly racked his brain to try and figure out how he could spin this. Of course Midoriya would take the first chance he got to fucking explode. Of course.

“Shouta!!!” Hizashi screamed, “I thought you said that Akatani Mikumo was Quirkless!!!”

“I did, yes,” Shouta seethed.

“Then what the fuck was that?!” Hizashi shouted. Suddenly, the ice cocoon exploded again, possibly because the first one hadn’t actually completely shattered the structure. Hizashi pointed at the phenomenon. “That!! What the fuck is that?!”

“Promise you won’t be mad, babe?” Shouta tried.

“AIZAWA SHOUTA, WHAT DID YOU FUCKING DO?!?”

“Fine. I gave one of my students a secret project. Sometimes, heroes must act undercover to infiltrate Villain lines. I, personally, think we don’t train this skill in the curriculum enough-”

“So instead of, I don’t know, petitioning to the principal-”

“I assigned one of my students to infiltrate the Sports Festival as a volunteer from the General Education department.”
“Shouta, I’m supposed to be the reckless one in this relationship! What the fuck- ”

“I didn’t think his luck would be this bad, though…” Shouta sighed roughly. “But, regardless… Ladies and gentlemen, people of all genders, I would like to present to you all, the secret twentieth student of UA’s Class 1-A…”

“...Midoriya Izuku.” The announcer on the TV said as the ice fell away to reveal Inko’s panting son.

“IZUKU?!” Inko cried, falling off of her sofa.

Shigaraki Tomura’s hand froze mid-scratch.

Chapter 25: Formosus

“Midoriya?!” Todoroki shouted, surprise clearly written on his usually-apatheic face. Izuku grimaced. *Well, this plan’s a bust,* he thought as he heard murmurs and jeers from the crowd.

“A- Midoriya Izuku, are you able to stand?!” Midnight demanded.

“Who cares about if he can stand?!” A voice shouted from the stands, “Isn’t this grounds for disqualification?!”

“I mean, it was an assignment from his teacher, and it was a pretty good idea, to boot! Kid just had the bad luck of facing a Quirk that stupidly OP!”
“Bad luck nothing! He—”

“But stealth is REALLY important—”

“Of course you’d think that, Chameleon—”

“And what is THAT supposed to mean—”

As the Pro Heroes began to argue amongst themselves, Izuku tuned them out. On any other day, he would have paid more attention to them, been writing everything they were saying down. Today, however…

“I can move, Midnight,” Izuku confirmed.

“Oh? Is Midnight going to let the match continue?!”

“Very well…” Midnight raised her hand. “The match will continue as-is! Now restarting, Todoroki versus Midoriya!”

Apparently, this decision had incredibly mixed reviews, but Izuku had no time to care - another wave of ice was coming his way. Izuku had a few scenarios come up in his mind, but instead just went with his gut instinct.

Which was, incidentally, to punch the incoming ice with his kinetic impact ability. Instantly, the ice exploded away from him and flew back at Todoroki, whose eyes widened as he put up a shield of ice to protect himself, catching the ice shards as they embedded themselves within the shield. All the ice quickly crumbled, however, as Todoroki let out a shivering breath. Izuku noted this, and also noted that there was now a solid wall of ice behind Todoroki - Izuku figured that this was to act as a buffer in case he managed to knock Todoroki back.

Suddenly, a wave of ice rushed up to meet Izuku, interrupting any other fledgling thoughts in his brain. Acting quickly, Izuku activated his speed and jumped back, only to be met from above by Todoroki using a large chunk of ice as a sort of snowboard (iceboard?).
“AND TODOROKI ISN’T GIVING MIDORIYA ANY ROOM TO BREATHE! THE PRESSURE’S REALLY ON!!!” Present Mic screamed, and the crowd roared.

Izuku couldn’t agree more. Without thinking, he spit water in Todoroki’s face. The water instantly froze on contact with Todoroki, and Izuku jumped out of the way of the collision course Todoroki had with the ground.

“WAIT, WHAT HAPPENED THERE?!” Present Mic shouted, and Izuku realized his mistake too little too late.

“Obviously, Midoriya shot some water into Todoroki’s face.” Aizawa explained as if it were the most natural thing in the world.

Izuku froze, both mentally and physically.

“What else,” Aizawa continued, “Did you expect from the Quirk Four Elements?"

Izuku’s jaw almost dropped.

Izuku’s jaw dropped anyways, since Todoroki uppercutted him in the stomach with a blunt ice spike.

“Is that the cover story now?” Todoroki asked, shivering as he shattered the ice covering his face. “Shame that it means I can’t beat you at your best…”

Izuku felt something swell up in his chest. It wasn’t quite anger, but… It was close.

“I really don’t want to hear that from you, Todoroki,” Izuku grit out.

“What?”
Izuku coughed as he got onto one knee - he was still a little winded, he found out. “I’ve been noticing something as time went on… You’ve been shivering a lot.”

This time, it was Todoroki’s turn to freeze. Thinking quickly, Izuku kept talking while he sent out some strings from his palm - while he had succeeded in getting them to be at least somewhat prehensile, he still wasn’t able to do anything particularly amazing with them at a proper speed. He needed a distraction, and this seemed like the perfect way to do so.

Analysis.

“Your Quirk is Half-Hot Half-Cold, isn’t it, Todoroki?” Izuku kept talking, slowly weaving the very thin threads through the ice, “I’ve noticed that the last couple of times you’ve fought with your ice, you’ve always used your Hot side to thaw everything around you, which likely includes yourself. So, the question is, what happens if you overuse your Cold side, then? Can I tell you my theory? I’m gonna- I’m gonna tell you my theory anyways. If you overuse your Cold side, you end up getting frostbitten and probably frozen entirely. So you have to use your Hot side eventually. However, you’ve done nothing but-”

“What,” Todoroki interrupted Izuku’s rambling, “Is your point, Midoriya?”

“What my point is, Todoroki,” Izuku continued, “Is that your Quirk would be so much more balanced and less self-destructive if you indulged in both sides.”

Todoroki stared at Izuku. Suddenly, he began shouting.

“Use- Use both?! Use the fucking Quirk my father gave me?! Todoroki shouted, as if years of anger and rage had suddenly become unbottled, “I’ve told you what he did to me and mom! I told you about-”

“You told me everything!” Izuku interrupted him, “And-”

“You don’t know the hell my father put me through!” Todoroki screamed.

“AND YOU THINK YOU HAVE THE MONOPOLY ON SHIT FATHERS?!” Izuku couldn’t help but scream back. “Do you know what’s happened to my dad?! Because I sure fucking don’t! He could be dead! He could be a Villain! Even worse, he could be cheating on my mom! My dad’s
been missing since before I was born, but I don’t stop breathing because they’re his lungs! They’re my lungs—”

“Do you hear yourself, Midoriya?!” Todoroki argued, both of them quite forgetting they were in a public arena, “So your father’s never been around to support you or your family! But at least you have a mother! My mother boiled me alive, so I don’t think—”

“So why don’t you hold your mother accountable?!” Izuku rebutted, “Why don’t you eschew Cold as well?!?”

“Because it wasn’t her fault!” Todoroki shouted, “Her mind was broken—”

“That’s not an excuse!” Izuku screamed, “I tried to kill myself! That doesn’t give me a free pass to run people over with trains!”

“You’re MISSING the POINT!” Todoroki fired back, and Izuku was made aware that the threads had made it to their target locations. “What Endeavor did was inexcusable! It’s all his fault! And mom would—”

“Your mother would what?!” Izuku shouted, “What would your mom do?! What was the last thing she told you?!”

Todoroki stopped. “Sh-She told me I was unsightly, but—”

“So where the hell are you getting these ideas of vengeance from?!” Izuku pointed out, “If anything, you should be declaring vengeance against her, too! Mental illness may explain actions, but they sure as fuck don’t excuse them!”

“She’s a victim of abuse!” Todoroki shouted back, looking slightly pale.

“There’s a lot of abuse victims that DON’T scar their children!” Izuku said, “Look! Both of your parents were horrible! But you know what?! You can’t just change who you are like that! My dad can breathe fire, but I’m not going to stop breathing anytime soon! A Quirk is just a biological process! Your Quirk is your Quirk, Todoroki! It’s not your dad’s, it’s not your mom’s it’s all fucking yours! So if you want to get revenge on your dad, then climb to the top without acknowledging who he is in the first place! Your first step to getting out of his shadow—” Suddenly,
Izuku stood up, clenched his fist, and pulled on the strings, causing Todoroki to suddenly fly forwards. Izuku cocked his other fist back. “-Is to cast your own over him!” Izuku declared, aiming a punch at Todoroki’s face.

Todoroki exploded.

Izuku was sent flying back into a jagged wall of ice, luckily keeping himself in the ring. When he opened his eyes, they widened.

Todoroki’s left half was on fire.

Also, his uniform’s left half was currently burning away, but Izuku tried not to focus on that.

“YEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEESSSSS!!!!!” Shouted a familiar voice, and Izuku and Todoroki looked up to the stands to see Endeavor also at full blast and making his way down to the arena’s sidelines. “That’s it, son! This is why you were born! So

Todoroki blocked Endeavor with a huge ice wall. “Shut the fuck up, old man.” Todoroki said as calmly as he could with an uncharacteristically euphoric grin on his face.

Izuku slid himself off of the ice wall. “Hey, Todoroki…” He said, “You’re breathing pretty heavy… Are you gonna be okay?”

“Yeah, yeah, Midoriya,” Todoroki replied, still grinning, “I’m- I’m just a little power-high right now.”

“Huh. Interesting…” Izuku said aloud. “Can you move?”

“I-I’m pretty sure, this is- phew , this is a lot.”

“Huh. Well, I’m pretty sure this match isn’t gonna last much longer…” Izuku thought aloud, then grinned back. “Sorry about what I said about your mom.”
“Nah, needed to hear it, I- Can we talk later about this? I kinda need to-”

“Yeah, yeah, I get it. Hang on, I wanna try-” Izuku suddenly axe kicked the ground and watched as the kinetic energy unleashed shattered the concrete beneath his feet. “Yeah, okay, that works. You ready?”

“Let’s go, Midoriya.”

Izuku picked up one of the shards of concrete, and palm striked it into the ground, causing more rocks to erupt into the air. At the exact same time, intense waves of chilled and heated air rolled off of Todoroki.

Izuku dimly heard Midnight scream something at Cementoss, but the ringing in his ears was too great to make it out. He roundhouse kicked the rocks directly at Todoroki, then, in a last-second attempt to emulate All Might, decided to see if he could replicate All Might’s Delaware Smash. Kinetic energy began to spark off of Izuku fist, and he swung with all his might.

Walls of cement erupted from the ground as the intense pressurized air and the high-powered cold heat wave impacted the walls from opposite ends, causing them to collapse inwards, and then violently explode.

“What in the f- JESUS!!!” Hizashi screamed, “Shouta, what in the HELL are you teaching these kids?! I can’t see a goddamn thing!!!”

Shouta couldn’t help but smirk. “Babe, I didn’t do anything. This is just the strength of the next generation.”

“Hoooooly shit…” Mikumo whispered, “Now I’m really glad I didn’t enter the festival…”

Yuikami was throttling Nomimono. “Why- doesn’t- your- Quirk- give- info- on- Quirks-”
“I don’t know!”

“What the fuck were they talking about?” That Blitzle son of a bitch blinked. “I couldn’t hear a thing. Like, they were yelling, but all the sound was being absorbed by the ice, so I couldn’t make out the details.”

“Oh, you’ll find out,” AM Radio grit out through her teeth.

Katsuki thought back to his own mom, then shook his head. All moms did that, right? Right.

Izuku woke up in the hospital wing.

“I lost?” Izuku asked.

“You certainly did!” Recovery Girl immediately began to scold Izuku. “And if your friends ask, I healed you!”

“You-” Before Izuku could ask for clarification, the doors burst open, and 1-A poured in, along with Akatani, Yuikami, and Shinsou.

“So, your name is Midoriya Izuku?” Shinsou immediately opened, and Ojiro tensed up behind him. “Nice to finally meet you.”

“Nice to meet you too, Shinsou-san.” Izuku replied.

“Dekuuuu!!” Ochako cried, launching herself at Izuku.

“Midoriya-kun!” Iida shouted, “How could you disregard the rules so-”
“That was cool as shit!” Kaminari cheered.

“Hah! So 1-A couldn’t get ahead unless they were cheating ?!” Monoma jeered, also here for some reason, “You really are-”

“What is your damage, kero?” Tsuyu demanded, “He’s in the hospital-”

“I told you we should have switched back when we could have,” Akatani chimed in, “But no, you had to-”

“Are you all in here just to yell at my patient?!” Recovery Girl screamed. “Because I’m about to lose my patience!”

“Guys, uh,” Izuku finally spoke up, after the shock of how many friends (and Monoma) he had had ebbed, “Isn’t Yoarashi and Iida’s fight next? Why are you all here?”

“Are you sure All Might isn’t your secret father?” Todoroki asked.

“Todoroki?!” Ashido laughed, “When’d you get a sense of humor?!”

“I’m certain,” Izuku deadpanned.

“Well, I’d rethink that theory, Mister Immortal,” Akatani said, “Because you managed to recreate the Delaware Smash with a single punch.”

“Immortal? Isn’t his Quirk just Four Elements? What’d I miss?” Yuikami asked.

“Don’t worry about it,” Kirishima brushed it off, “Your fight was just so mind-blowingly Manly that you just destroyed the whole battlefield! There was so much steam, dust, and debris that no one could see a goddamn thing, and then it turned out that Cementoss had made like, seven walls of concrete to separate you and Todoroki’s attacks, and they didn’t hold, and then they blew up, and-”
“What Kirishima-kun is trying to say,” Yaoyorozu spoke up, “Is that you and Todoroki-kun’s combined force could probably level a one-story building.”

“Why only one level?” Hagakure asked, “Is there a way to test this?”

“I’m not here to perform tricks,” Todoroki immediately objected.

“We’ve got time,” Hagakure dismissed his concerns, dragging him out of the hospital wing.

“Follow suit! Out!” Recovery Girl demanded.

Urikomu and Garaochi were talking when Yuikami and Midoriya returned.

Garaochi squinted at Midoriya. “So, are you the real Midoriya this time?”

In response, Midoriya began to emit an endless stream of water from his mouth.

“I’d say so, yeah.” Yuikami laughed, slapping Midoriya on the back so that some of the water got on Garaochi’s uniform.

As Garaochi and Yuikami began to fight again, Urikomu picked up a water bottle and handed it to Midoriya. “Sorry if it’s warm, but I wanted to save you a drink. I was gonna give it to Akatani after the Semi-Finals started, but…”

“No worries, thank you, Nomimono-san.” Midoriya smiled. Urikomu was about to protest when he saw the cold air around Midoriya’s hands.

“Oh! Is that part of your Four Elements, Midoriya?” Urikomu asked, and Midoriya blinked and looked down at his hands. Odd, but okay.
“...I guess it is.”

Chapter End Notes

Alright! Time to reveal why the last few chapters were crab-themed! ^o^

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mXZP_z6wIM

This video of a carrier crab carrying an upside-down jellyfish. Cuuuute~ >/////////<

Also, Akatani’s red. Crabs are red. XD

Goodness, though, do these characters write themselves! ^^'''

I think the other fights are gonna be one big chapter, tbh... |||OTL

Thanks for putting up with me!!! Things are hectic on my end, so here's hoping for a reprieve! :P

...That being said...

--

Quirk: Turritopsis

When Izuku dies, he is revived without injury. He also revives with an ability related to the cause of his death. Only one ability can be active at a time. Currently unknown if his body has to remain intact to gain an ability, though.

Current abilities:

- High-Velocity Impact (Cause of Death: Jumping off a building) - Imparts a large amount of kinetic energy into an object by impacting it.
- Antibiotic Blood (Cause of Death: Illness) - Cures illness by ingesting his blood. Izuku can just activate it and it'll work immediately on him, though.
- Aqua Stream (Cause of Death: Drowning) - He can spew a steady stream of water from his mouth.
- Thread Weaving (Cause of Death: Spider bite) - Can create highly-tensile threads from his skin, but it's easier to create them from his hands.
- Marathon (Cause of Death: Car accident) - Can reach a running speed of sixty kilometers per hour in ten seconds.
- Self-Destruct (Cause of Death: Explosion (Quirk of Bakugou Katsuki)) - He can explode his own body with incredible force. This produces some heat and has incredible upwards force, enough to smash through four layers of cement. Using this power instantly kills him though, and dying through this manner does not grant him any additional abilities.
- Hard-Headed (Cause of Death: Head crushed) - A localized form of Hardening that focuses entirely on his head, rendering it more durable than titanium. Doesn't protect his neck, though.
- Pull-Apart (Cause of Death: Warp Gate (Quirk of Kurogiri)) - He can segment and
pull off any part of his body. He can't move them around, however, and he can't regrow them, so it's probably a good idea to at least keep an arm on his body. At least when detached, he feels no pain from it...
- Temp. Control (Cause of Death: Half-Hot Half-Cold (Quirk of Todoroki Shouto)) -
  He can cool and heat up anything via touch. This change is limited to an upper and lower limit of ±30°C.
Iida Tensei was eating a panini when the UA Sports Festival coverage began anew.

Apparently, during that huge explosion between Todoroki-something and Akatani or Midoriya or whatever his name was, some of the cameras in the arena interior had shut off due to the sheer amount of extreme temperatures being thrown around casually. Tensei wasn’t sure what to make of it, really, but the whole match was weird to begin with.

For starters, the cameras in the arena didn’t have microphones, and neither did anybody in the arena proper - all commentary was done by Hizashi and Shouta (who apparently wasn’t supposed to be a commentator, but Tensei knew that wasn’t the case), and the sound would be muffled by the crowd’s huge disapproval for the Midoriya/Akatani kid’s being able to compete. Tensei didn’t quite get their anger himself - after all, stealth was indeed important for a Pro Hero to thwart certain operations. However, it was more a tactic for underground heroes, so he could understand why the grand majority of the crowd wouldn’t think of it like that.

Tensei took a sip of the lemonade he had ordered. On the other hand, he supposed, it was just like Shouta to teach kids about underground tactics to increase their longevity. The man’s logic was really incomprehensible to Tensei, but then again, Tensei wasn’t really strong in the logic department.

However, the fact that there were no microphones in the arena proper meant that no one could really know what, exactly, Todoroki and MidoTani were arguing about in the middle of all that ice, and why the little infiltrator had apparently purposefully provoked Todoroki into unleashing his full power. Oh well, maybe some mysteries will remain mysteries.

Tensei sat up as he realized that the next match was his own brother’s match against Yoarashi… something? Maybe his name was- oh, it was Inasa, according to Hizashi. Well, Tenya had a solid plan, but Tensei vaguely felt like he saw it before.
Tensei had to stifle a chuckle when he realized where he saw it before. Tenya had apparently memorized Tensei’s regaling of his own first Sports Festival, and was copycating him. As Tenya rapidly sped towards Yoarashi, Tensei smiled.

Indeed, just as Tensei predicted, Yoarashi twisted out of the way of Tenya, using his wind to literally flip over Tenya and land behind him. Tensei’s grin turned to one of nostalgia as Yoarashi blasted Tenya with high-force winds that sent Tenya flying out of bounds. Tensei shook his head and took out his phone, dialing Tenya’s number.

As the number predictably went to voicemail, Tensei cleared his throat. “Hey, Tenya! Just saw your match against Yoarashi! I’m about to get back on duty, but call me later so we can talk about your experiences! I know you’ve impressed one Pro already!” Laughing a little at his own joke, he paid for his snack, put his helmet back on, and headed into the streets of Hoth City.

As Kirishima and Shiozaki began their match, Mikumo sat down among his peers from 1-C.

“Oh, Akatani-kun!” Suzumiya greeted him, “Back from the bathroom?”

“I would have been back sooner,” Mikumo complained, “Had Ectoplasm-sensei not pulled me over to scold me.”

“Ouch,” Suzumiya winced, “That bad? Shouldn’t he take his frustrations out on that Shouta guy who’s apparently your stooge’s HR teacher?”


“Yeah, Shinsou-kun explained it to us!” Suzumiya smiled. “About how you were able to trick that Midoriya kid into disguising himself as you, so you could steal the victory from the Heroics course and prove Gen Ed’s superiority! You picked really well - his makeup’s so good, I doubt Harukawa-kun could have figured it out!”

“Fuck you,” Harukawa grumbled from his seat beside her, “Why ain’t you focusing on the match?”

“Because it’s boring and they’re Heroics students, duh.”
While Harukawa and Suzumiya began to lightly insult the competitors (wherein apparently the Kirishima kid’s Hardening Quirk was more than a match for Shiozaki’s Vines), Mikumo turned to Shinsou, who was staring at him intently out of the corner of his eye. Shinsou flashed an uncharacteristically small grin, then turned his attention to Otoishi, who was asking him fervent questions about how Brainwashing actually worked.

Ochako steepled her fingers and took a deep breath.

Breathe in…

Hold…

Breathe out…

Ochako immediately panicked. *Oh god, oh fuck, oh jesus, oh shit, oh son of a bitch, god dammit all to motherfuck, I’m going to be fighting Bakugou.*

Ochako didn’t like Bakugou for giving Deku that terrible nickname (even if Deku had okayed her using it, it still wasn’t right), she liked him even less because of what he did in the Battle Trial, and he was officially terrible because of how he killed Deku multiple times.

Yes, technically, that last time was manslaughter that didn’t even work because Deku was apparently totally immortal, and technically Deku did forgive him for that, but Ochako didn’t forgive him. It’s not as if forgiveness was universal.

Still, despite all of Ochako’s personal hang-ups with Bakugou, she knew strength when she saw it. Growing up in an impoverished area in Mie as the daughter of two construction workers, she knew some really strong people growing up, and Bakugou was probably stronger than any of them, and *oh Christ she was going to die -*

Ochako’s musings were cut short by the door opening gently. “Ah, Uraraka-san! I apologize, I didn’t think anyone would be in here!”
“It’s alright, Iida,” Ochako smiled, not needing to look up to recognize her class president’s voice. “I really should be heading up anyways. Is Shiozaki done?”

“Well, she’s getting trounced by Kirishima-san, but otherwise…” Iida trailed off. “Uraraka-san, you know you can talk to me or Midoriya-san about anything, right? Are you worried about Bakugou-san?”

“No- Well, yes, but- Wait, is Deku-kun with you right now?”

“No, he’s up with his Management host class.”

“I see…” Ochako sighed, and stood up. “Well, there’s nothing to it, I guess. If I think too hard about this, I’ll probably overthink, so I’ll just have to give it my all!”

“I see…” Iida replied, somewhat unsure sounding. “Uraraka-san, do you even have a plan?”

“Kind of? It’s still in the works, but-”

“AND FINALLY, KIRISHIMA EIJIROU WINS!” Present Mic’s voice echoed.

“That’s my cue, Iida-san.” Ochako smiled despite her nerves, and headed up to meet her fate.

“I… Kind of don’t want to watch this, kero…” Tsuyu muttered.

“Yeah… Like, I know Bakugou’s terrible, but this is just… Gonna be difficult to watch…” Jirou agreed.

“AND NOW… FOR THE QUARTER FINALS FINAL MATCH, IT’S GONNA BE HUGE! BOLD! SPECTACULAR! OR A HUGE SNOOZEFEST, WHO CARES.” Present Mic announced. “HE’S HAD A SPOTLIGHT SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND IS LOOKING TO PROVE HIMSELF
“Uraraka, right?” Bakugou asked, startling Ochako out of her budding plans. “Deku told me I should make an attempt at learning peoples’ names. You’re the one who makes shit float, right?” When Ochako didn’t respond, Bakugou roughly sighed. “Whatever. Just don’t hold whatever the fuck you got back, okay? Cause I’m not gonna do the same.”

“You’re weirdly mellow.” Ochako remarked.

Bakugou frowned. “The fuck’s that supposed to mean?”

“Go!!!” Midnight announced. Immediately, Ochako ran towards Bakugou as fast as she could, fingertips at the ready.

_OKay, plan A is to get in close enough that I just make him float and incapacitate his ability to move, _Ochako thought to herself, _So if I_

Ochako suddenly took an enormous wide-scale explosion at close range. It didn’t hurt nearly as bad as she thought it would, but it certainly did hurt. Ochako grit her teeth as she weathered the blow, and felt her gym uniform get singed. Why they didn’t make them out of blastproof material, she’d never know, but now was not the time to think about that.

A sudden flash of inspiration occurred to her. Quickly ripping off the shirt of her gym uniform, she removed its gravity before moving as fast as she could through the black smoke.

“Don’t you fucking-” But whatever she wasn’t supposed to do was cut off as Bakugou realized he’d been had by Ochako’s ploy, which is what all she needed as she closed the gap between them.

Bakugou’s blood-red eyes pierced her and he struck the ground with another explosion, sending her flying back. Ochako came to a skidding halt just barely in-bounds, and immediately took off towards Bakugou. She swiftly began to concoct another plan.
Bakugou didn’t give her the luxury to complete it, however, as he propelled himself across the field and let another wide-scale explosion off in her face. Ochako felt the ringing in her ears and the smoke in her lungs, but she couldn’t let her second of planning go to waste, along with this opportunity. Using the explosion as a smokescreen, she quickly began to levitate pieces of debris that had been liberated from the concrete thanks to Bakugou’s reckless blasts. A month wasn’t nearly enough time to change habits, and Bakugou’s battle style was still as wild and all-encompassing as ever.

However, it wasn’t enough for what Ochako was planning. She landed and charged again, this time from a different direction to minimize the chances of Ochako got hit with an explosion again, so she took the time to levitate some more debris Ochako had to weave out of the way of that explosion, s Bakugou threw another blast her way, and Ochako got more debris Ochako charged after her, and was the audience booing? Wha Ochako flew back from the blast, and the dust settled.

Bakugou was panting. Ochako was panting harder. She felt like she was going to throw up. Around them, everyone was screaming over how cruel Bakugou was for picking on a defenseless girl, and Ochako grimaced - what about her screamed defenseless, exactly?

Luckily, it seemed Aizawa-sensei was on her side, and began scolding the audience. “Who exactly started the idea that Bakugou’s been picking on a defenseless girl? Are you a Pro? If you are, I’d quit your day job if I were you. Go home and pick a new career if you can’t think of this logically. Uraraka Ochako has made it this far, and Bakugou Katsuki, as her classmate, knows better than to underestimate her. What he’s doing is being cautious of every time she charges at him. Simple logic.” Aizawa-sensei finished angrily.

Ochako held back the urge to vomit again, for reasons unrelated to Aizawa’s speech. “B-Bakugou,” She burped, “I want to thank you, really.”

Bakugou seemed to blink in shock.

“Thank you…” Ochako released her Quirk, and her growing nausea began to ease as the smallest pebbles began to rain from the sky. “…For not underestimating me.”

Bakugou’s neck almost broke, probably, as he directed his attention to the sky above him. There, all the debris that Bakugou kicked up and Ochako had levitated, had slowly collected until there was a veritable meteor shower just waiting to be unleashed.

And Ochako had just opened the gates.
As rocks fell to earth, Ochako couldn’t help but grin as the last three minutes of torment had finally come to a-

Bakugou screamed, and an extremely huge blast, much larger than any she had seen to date (beyond the one where he killed Deku) erupted out of his palms, atomizing both her debris and any hopes she had of winning.

Ochako stared blankly, unbelievingly, as Bakugou let out a shuddering breath.

“That…” Bakugou muttered, raspier than usual, “Was close.”

A vague sense of horror slowly caught up to Ochako. This was the best she could muster. This was supposed to be the crux of the fight. This was Bakugou coughed and licked his lips.

Ochako blinked as she realized Bakugou’s condition - he looked awful. He was coughing as if his throat was dry, and his skin was at least no longer dripping with sweat, but it was

Ochako’s train of thought rammed into a wall.

Bakugou’s sweat.

When she thought more on this inane concept, thoughts flying a mile a minute, it made more and more sense why Bakugou was able to become more powerful the longer things went on - because his Quirk was likely based in his sweat, and if it was, then it made sense why Bakugou would suddenly be horrifically dehydrated after using a fuckoff-huge blast like the one that ruined her last plan.

Ochako dropped to her knees, exhaustion catching up to her, but she knew she wasn’t out yet.

She had a new idea, but it was going to suck for her.
Ochako touched all ten of her fingertips to the ground, and immediately a new wave of nausea rolled over her, one stronger than one she had ever felt before.

"B-Bakugou..." Ochako managed to spit out without vomiting. Bakugou, who was noticeably less-winded than her, but still worn out, looked up from his coughing fit.

"What the fuck do you, uff, want, Moon-face?" Bakugou rasped out.

"Do you remember what All Might said, back at the USJ?" Ochako slowly managed to get off of her hands so that she was now kneeling on a single knee. "About the school's motto?"

"School motto? The fuck?"

"All Might was saying that it gets stronger the more it's repeated, the more it echoes through the will of the students..."

Nothing existed in the arena. Only Bakugou and Ochako mattered right now. Bakugou, to his credit, seemed to realize what Ochako was saying, and he rushed at her, arms outstretched in what appeared to be a lariat.

"The school motto!" Ochako shouted, slamming her hands into the ground, "It's to go beyond!"

A dull quake shook the ground, tripping Bakugou up and halting his advance. The ground began to crack.

"TO GO BEYOND!!!" Ochako screamed over the roaring crowd and the blood rushing in her ears and the acid churning in her stomach. "P- urp- Plus... ULTRAAAAAA!!!"

With that final cry, the ground erupted, and Bakugou was blown back as Uraraka Ochako ripped a huge portion of the ground out of the cement floor. With a scream of desperation, Ochako threw the enormous chunk of cement at Bakugou's flying body, impacting him and throwing him back a ways before the rock flew off on it's own trajectory.
Bakugou crashed into the back wall, totally unconscious.

The crowd began to riot.

“B-Bakugou Katsuki is unconscious!” Midnight announced, clearly as surprised as everyone else. “The winner is Uraraka Ochako!”

“Ochako-hon!!!!!!” Ochako heard over the crowd’s screams, and she turned to see Tsuyu-hon cheering her name.

Ochako threw up into the gigantic hole she made, gave Tsuyu-hon a thumbs-up, and then passed out on the floor.

Chapter End Notes

A short chapter, but I think it's an important one.

It ended up just being the Quarter-Finals. I ended it where I did because I liked that being the ending point. ^^;;;;;;;;;;;

Thank you all for being so nice in your comments!!
Ochako woke up in a bed, and immediately began to fight a wave of disappointment. “Aw man,” Ochako complained under her breath, “Don’t tell me that was a dream…”

“It was no dream, young lady,” Replied an elderly voice, and Ochako looked to her right to see Recovery Girl sitting on a chair, looking vaguely annoyed, “You’re very lucky nausea is extremely easy to treat, compared to napalm burns.” Recovery Girl gave a quick glare to the bed directly across from Ochako, and Ochako looked over to where Recovery Girl was glaring.

Her eyes met with Bakugou’s unnerving stare.

“Similarly, Bakugou-kun is very lucky that dehydration is also easy to treat, but if he’s going to overuse his Quirk like that, he’s going to have to take future precautions.” Recovery Girl half-scolded Bakugou while rummaging around a cabinet for something. Ochako met Bakugou’s unflinching gaze, and the two began a sort of impromptu staring contest.

“Uraraka!” Deku called out, and instinctively, Ochako broke her line of sight to look at the door, where Deku had just burst in with her entire class hot on his heels.

“That was cool as FUCK!” Satou Rikidou shouted.

“No yelling in the infirmary!” Recovery Girl yelled at him.

“Ochako-hon!” Tsuyu-hon ribbited as she ran to her bedside. “Are you alright, kero?”

“I’m fine, Tsuyu-hon,” Ochako smiled, “Although maybe I shouldn’t do that again for a while.”
“Which part?” Kaminari asked, “Tearing apart the Earth, or battling Bakugou?”

Jirou lightly smacked Kaminari, glared at Bakugou, and then walked over to Ochako. “I almost didn’t want to watch the match, you know. Bakugou’s really tough, and it’s- it was awful, seeing you getting knocked around like that.”

Ochako blinked. “How long was I getting blown back? It all sort of melded together, and I thought I heard the audience start screaming about how defenseless I was.”

The other students exchanged glances before Deku spoke up. “You were setting up your meteor shower for about four solid minutes.”

Ochako jolted slightly. “I was? It felt like ten seconds!”

“Yes, well,” Yaoyorozu looked somewhat concerned. “Are you feeling alright, Uraraka-chan? I don’t think I’ve ever seen you do something on that big a scale.”

Ochako smiled softly, and her stomach suddenly protested. “It was… Let’s say, it was in the heat of the moment.”

Yaoyorozu looked unsure, but was seemingly satisfied.

Kirishima was off at Bakugou’s side, talking to him, but Bakugou was unresponsive.

Finally, it seemed like Recovery Girl had had enough, and began to shoo everyone out of the Hospital Wing, the door shutting behind her, leaving Ochako alone with Bakugou.

“Hey, Uraraka, right?” Bakugou spoke for the first time since Ochako had woken up. Ochako tensed. “Sorry for calling you Moon-face earlier. Old habit.”

Ochako frowned. “Okay, I accept your apology.”
Bakugou didn’t really react to that, instead studying Ochako’s face before asking: “Did Deku tell you how to fight me?”

Ochako scoffed. “The last time I saw Deku, aside from right now, was when I threw myself over him after his match with Todoroki. What, I can’t beat you without help?”

“No, no.” Bakugou stared at her some more. “In fact, that’s actually even better.”

Ochako got a weird feeling. “Bakugou, I’ll have you know you’re at the bottom of my list of dateable people, so-”

“What?” Bakugou looked confused. “Why would I want to date you?”

“Forget it.” Ochako scowled. “I hate you enough already.”

“Wait, what? What’s your fucking problem?”

“What’s your problem?” Ochako shot back. “I’d think more about the position you’re in, considering you killed Deku!”

Bakugou froze.

“Yeah, I heard the conversation between you and Deku. UA has a lot of closets.” Ochako remarked before getting back on track. “You killed Deku twice-”

“Three times,” Bakugou protested weakly.

“I don’t think that illness thing counts.” Ochako frowned.

“It should count,” Bakugou replied, “I was the one he was saving.”
“All Might doesn’t blame the people he saves from burning buildings for the fire,” Ochako pointed out.

“Yeah, but Deku died because of me for that-”

“Not the point!” Ochako frowned. “Well, it kind of is the point. The point is, you killed Deku and I’m more than ready to destroy you for it.”

Bakugou went silent.

“I deserve it.”

Ochako blinked. “You-”

Suddenly, the door flew open, and the two broke their conversation. Ochako sent a quick glare to Bakugou, and Bakugou gave a slight nod. This wasn’t over.

“Alright, Bakugou, you should be healed up by now,” Recovery Girl said, walking over to Bakugou, “I’m going to give you some candy. Take exactly one every three minutes. Don’t let anyone else have any.” Recovery Girl placed some gummies delicately in Bakugou’s hand and helped him up. “Uraraka, Asui Tsuyu wanted me to give you your phone. She got it out of your locker, and was going to give it to you once everyone else was gone.” Recovery Girl handed Ochako her cell phone. “Come on, young man.” And then Ochako was alone.

Ochako proceeded to turn on her phone, and nearly dropped it when it immediately began ringing. Quickly noting just how many missed calls she had (how had she gotten seventy calls in the past fifteen minutes), she answered the call.

“Ochako!” Cried a familiar voice on the other end, and Ochako’s breath stopped.

“Daddy?” She asked.

“That’s right!” Her father exclaimed, “Your mom and I have been tryin’ to get through to ya nonstop!”
“Ochako picked up, everyone!!” Ochako heard her mother distantly on the other end, and a bunch of people cheered in response.

Ochako blanched. “Wait, how many people are with you right now?’”

“Well, we’re at your cousin Yu’s agency,” her father explained, “And she’s hostin’ a watch party!”

“Oh, Jesus,” Ochako swore.

“What’re ya feelin’ down about?” Her father asked, “Ya won! Ya should be celebratin’!”

“Yeah, yeah, it’s just- I threw up on live TV, you know?”

“Eh, who cares about that sorta thing? All that matters is that ya did your best! Truthfully, we wouldn’t have cared if ya won or lost, but winnin’ certainly helps with your chances of gettin’ sponsored, gyahaha!”

“You- You wouldn’t have?” Ochako blinked, her eyesight getting oddly blurry.

“You- You wouldn’t have?” Ochako blinked, her eyesight getting oddly blurry.

“Of course not!” Her father replied happily. “You’re my daughter! I’m proud of ya no matter what happens! Even if ya’d lost that fight, I’d still feel the same way!”

Ochako began to tear up, and then outright cry. “Th-thanks, daddy… Y-You’re the best, y’know?”

“No sweat, kid!” Her father replied, “I gotta go, the next match is gonna start any minute. Call ya later, honey?”

“R-Right, daddy.” Ochako smiled through her tears and wiped her eyes on the bedsheat. “Talk to ya later.”
Shouto faced off against the larger boy, Yoarashi Inasa. He had definitely calmed down after his earlier power high, but imagining how his father must have looked after Shouto blocked him out on live television was almost enough to make him raring to go again.

Maybe there was something to the idea of using Endeavor’s own goals against him. Endeavor, Shouto was quickly realizing, was even dumber than he thought - a man who hated losing fathering a child to surpass his better, and didn’t seem to comprehend that that would include surpassing him? Complete fucking dumbass. Shouto felt the exhilaration of telling Endeavor that to his face rush through his entire body.

“Hey, man,” Yoarashi interrupted Shouto’s reverie, “You’re grinning real big.”

“Am I?” Shouto asked, realizing that he, indeed, was.

“You sure are,” Yoarashi answered, giving a grin of his own, “Thinking about something good?”

“You have no idea,” Shouto replied, imagining Endeavor’s face when he realized that Shouto no longer existed for his dream. Maybe Shouto would just beat out Endeavor in the hero rankings, and then not progress further? That’d be funny. Hilarious, even. Shouto felt like that he might do a little dance when this was all over.

“I might have an idea,” Yoarashi remarked.

“Begin!” Midnight declared, and Yoarashi took off into the sky. Shouto chased him down with a spike of ice, and Yoarashi spun acrobatically away from the ice and back towards the ground. Shouto created a shield of fire, which was blown away by the winds, but also destabilized Yoarashi’s trajectory at the same time, causing him to crash into the ground.

“Are you alright?” Shouto immediately asked.

“Bwahahahaha! Never better!” Yoarashi cheered, jumping up. “Shouto, you’re certainly cooler than I ever expected!”

Shouto’s eyes narrowed, despite his phantom euphoria. “Was that a pun?”
“Pfft, guess it was!” Yoarashi laughed, winds gathering around his body. “You’ve got a nice sense of humor, too!”

“Thanks, I guess?” Shouto supposed. *Can’t use my fire, it’ll get cancelled out against his winds. But if I only use my ice, he’ll figure out my strategy immediately. Plus, he can dodge at will.* Shouto chuckled out loud. *Is this what Midoriya puts up with all the time?*

“Hey.”

Shouto snapped out of his train of thought and looked to Yoarashi.

“You don’t gotta hold back or think so hard against me, you know?” Yoarashi said, “You didn’t hold back against Midoriya, and he turned out fine. Besides, I beat you once before already, didn’t I?”

Shouto blinked. “When?”

“Aw, you don’t rememb- The Recommendations Exam!” Yoarashi reminded Shouto, “I won at the last second?”

Shouto frowned as he tried to remember that day. He remembered coming in second, of course, but- it clicked. “That was you?”

“Hell yeah!” Yoarashi’s gales slowly gathered further. “You know, I used to hate you cause you were so rude to me back then, but then I heard about your shitty-ass dad, who I already didn’t like, and I gotta say, I totally understand where you were coming from!”

Shouto tensed up. “How much do you know?” He demanded.

Yoarashi grew silent. “...Everything?” He eventually admitted. “But don’t you go worrying about that! I don’t hate you or nothing, just your dad!”
Shouto thought about this sentiment, then grinned massively. “Fuck my dad?”

Yoarashi blinked in shock, then began to uproariously laugh. “Fuck your dad!”

Shouto began to laugh with him. “S-So, how do you want to do this?” Shouto asked, catching his breath.

“We go at it like men!” Yoarashi laughed, floating off the ground, “Nothing held back! You use your fire and ice, I use the strongest winds I can manage! Let’s make it a crossfire hurricane!”

“No idea what that means,” Shouto replied, his left side beginning to burn and his right side becoming encased in ice.

“I gotta introduce you to some classical music, man!”

“That’d be nice. Shall we?”

“Hell YEAH!”

Fire and ice met the maelstrom head-on.

“Hm…?”

Tensei coughed up blood, which pooled inside his helmet. “Y-You…” He rasped out.

“Oh, you’re still alive.” He remarked, “Maybe you’re not as much a fake as I thought… Mmm, on second thought, anyone who willingly continues their family’s history as a part of this disgusting institution of celebrity heroism isn’t really a real Hero, huh?”

“Y-You…” Tensei gasped out, “You’ll be stopped. Someone, with a heart of justice, is going to
stop you, Hero Killer Stain.”

Stain, the Hero Killer, stared at Tensei before laughing coldly. “Justice is relative, especially in a society that prioritizes band-aid solutions rather than solving the systematic oppression inherent in the system.” Stain explained. Sirens began to grow in the distance. “But I’m running out of time, so I guess I have to leave you alive for now.”

“W-Wait!”

“Oh, but if you’re going to be alive, I want you to give a message to the police: the only Hero that can bring me to your idea of justice… Is All Might himself. He’s the only real Hero in this world of fakes.”

“Wait, damn you!”

But Stain had already vanished.

--

Todoroki and Yoarashi panted as they stared each other down. Both were worn out, but they were smiling nonetheless. Around them was the ruined battleground, covered in scorch marks, melting ice chunks, and rubble.

Todoroki fell forward onto the ground.

“T-Todoroki Shouto has passed out! The winner is Yoarashi-”

Yoarashi also passed out face-first on the floor.

“Um.” Midnight stared at them for a second. “Yoarashi Inasa still wins, I guess?”

Slowly, the audience began to clap, then cheer. Robots carried the two off in stretchers, and Cementoss set about fixing the arena again.
Eijirou wanted to weep. Their match was so manly that he couldn’t believe it. But now wasn’t the time; he had to prepare to fight Uraraka.

...Nah! Eijirou was too pumped up! Uraraka was definitely a strong and manly opponent if she was that strong! Eijirou began to bounce in his seat as he waited for Cementoss to finish repairing the arena.

“Oi, Sh- Kirishima,” Bakugou asked, “You feeling alright? You’re next, you know.”

Eijirou was about to answer, but then Present Mic announced his match.

“Anyways, this next match is probably going to be… Well, not as intense as the last two matches, even though it involves Uraraka the Earth Shaker! It-”

“YAHOOOOOOOOO!!!!” Eijirou howled, leaping off the balcony seat. Ignoring everyone’s shocked cries, he activated Hardening and divebombed the ground, causing a huge explosion of dust to rise around him.

“What the fuck?!” Midnight screamed.

“I’m so ready!” Eijirou screamed, “Uraraka’s such a cool and manly opponent, I can’t wait to take her on!!”

“Erm,” Midnight asked, “Why are you calling Uraraka manly? Isn’t she a girl?”

“Manliness has got nothing to do with gender!” Eijirou declared, beating his chest with a fist, emitting a cracking noise from the two rock-hard surfaces impacting each other, “It’s about your spirit, your drive! It’s about the passion you bring into the ring, and Uraraka’s got that in spades!”

“Uh, okay?” Uraraka asked, having gotten into the arena during Eijirou’s spiel, “You’re… Pretty manly, too, then.”
“Hell yeah!!” Eijirou cheered, and he immediately ran across the ring to fistbump Uraraka, who returned it with some confused gusto.

“If you’re quite done,” Midnight interrupted their bonding session, “Begin!”

Eijirou immediately hardened and went to punch Uraraka. Uraraka barely managed to dodge, as he was already pretty close to her, but his skin managed to cut her cheek. Uraraka grabbed Eijirou’s arm and slowly, Eijirou began to float. Eijirou began to kick wildly as the ground vanished from under him, and Uraraka grabbed Eijirou’s floating body and spun him around.

Eijirou got kind of dizzy, but hardened his skin just in case - and a good thing, too, because Uraraka had just released her Zero Gravity, causing him to crash into the ground. Eijirou, though unharmed, was still a little dizzy, but he shook it off.

*Guess it’s a battle of stamina!* Eijirou thought as he charged at Uraraka again. *It’s too bad I don’t have any really flashy moves, cause this might take a while…* He pondered as he was levitated and spun around again.

As Tenya watched Kirishima and Uraraka’s repetitive battle, he felt a vibration against his thigh. Taking out his cell phone, he quietly excused himself and ducked into the hallway.

"OH, URARAKA’S RUNNING TO THE BORDER?! I DON’T THINK KIRISHIMA’S JUST GOING TO LET HER CARRY HIM OFF, THOUGH!!!” Present Mic’s voice echoed throughout the empty hallway.

Tenya clicked his tongue, then made his way into one of UA’s many broom closets.

“Hello, this is Iida Tenya.” He answered the phone without really paying attention to the caller ID.

“Tenya!!” His mother answered, sounding vaguely distressed, “Thank God you picked up!!”

Tenya felt concern shoot through him. “Mother?” He asked, “What’s wrong?”
“It’s your brother, Tensei!” His mother explained, “It’s- It’s awful!”

Tenya had never heard his mother lose her composure like this, so it must have been truly awful. “What about Tensei, mother?”

“He’s been attacked by the Hero Killer, Stain!”

Tenya’s blood ran cold.

Ochako slammed and rolled against the ground, but quickly righted herself so that she was on one knee.

Okay, so maybe this was a matchup that wasn’t quite in her favor. But if Ochako was anything, she was stubborn.

*Just like Deku.* A voice in her head supplied, and Ochako had to keep from reminding herself that Deku was less stubborn and more incredibly reckless and also undying.

Ochako used her Quirk on the ground in front of her, and, trying to control herself this time, ripped a much smaller chunk out of the ground, much to the crowd’s enjoyment. Ochako threw the impromptu boulder at Yoarashi, who jumped over her projectile with a huge grin on his face.

“Nice one, Uraraka!” He called out to her, and more winds were sent her way, blowing her back to what she knew was the boundary line. Ochako, thinking fast, ducked low to the ground and dragged her fingers across the ground. Gritting her teeth on the feeling of concrete on her fingertips, she activated her Quirk again and shrapnel of various sizes slowly rose into the air, quickly being sent over Ochako’s body by the force of the winds. Ochako’s gambit here was that there would be enough rocks to-

“Ochako Uraraka is out of bounds! The winner is Yoarashi Inasa!”
The stadium erupted into thunderous roars and applause, and Ochako slowly got up, slightly nauseous from using her Quirk like that. In the air, Yoarashi was apparently over the moon and screaming up a storm as he flew around in a sort of victory lap.

“FOLKS, IT WAS SORT OF AN ANTICLIMACTIC FINISH, BUT THERE YOU HAVE IT! THE WINNER OF UA’S FIRST-YEAR SPORTS FESTIVAL IS YOARASHI INASA FROM CLASS B! EVERYBODY SAY HEY!!!”

Ochako was on her feet now, and Yoarashi was now only hovering a few centimeters off the ground. Ochako walked up to her yearmate and smiled queasily.

“Well, I gave it my all, but you’re just too strong, you know?” Ochako said politely, sticking out her hand. Yoarashi immediately shook Ochako’s hand in return, never once breaking his huge smile.

“Maybe, but that doesn’t mean you can’t get stronger, either!” Yoarashi replied cheerfully as confetti began to rain down around them. “Hows about we have a rematch when we think we’re good and ready, huh? That way, we can see who the REAL airmaster is!”

“Airmaster?” Ochako asked herself, before responding, “Deal, Yoarashi-kun.”

Before anyone knew it, the Sports Festival had come to a close, and the students were all assembled on the pitch again. Izuku had initially felt concerned as to whether or not he would be allowed down at all, but Yuikami had apparently gotten Izuku permission to be so long as Yuikami was with him, so the two were now in the arena waiting for the podiums to rise up.

“So, disaster trio’s back together, huh?” Akatani smirked once Izuku and Yuikami had arrived, “There’s supposed to be a long weekend once the festival ends, so do you guys wanna go to the arcade tomorrow?”

“Can’t, I’ve got a stylist appointment.” Yuikami replied easily.

“Never would have guessed.”
“You’re worse than Garaochi.”

“Never met him.”

“Hey, Deku!” Kaminari called to Izuku as he walked over, Bakugou fuming behind him, “They let you back down here, man?”

“Huh? Yeah.” Izuku blinked. “Hey, do you guys know where Iida is?”

“Didn’t you hear?” Kaminari asked, “Apparently, Iida’s brother was attacked by a villain!”

Izuku was shocked, but before he could say anything, Midnight made her reappearance as fireworks lit up the afternoon sky. “Without further ado,” She announced as the ground opened up behind her and three podiums carrying four people rose up, “The awards ceremony!”

On the third place podium was Todoroki and Kirishima, standing incredibly close to one another. Kirishima was on the right, and was trying to strike up a conversation with Yoarashi. Todoroki, however, was staring directly at Izuku. When Izuku met Todoroki’s gaze, he flashed the tiniest upturn of his mouth before averting his gaze somewhere else.

On the second place podium was Uraraka, who looked vaguely nervous, but also immensely relieved.

And on the first place podium was Yoarashi, who was bouncing up and down on the balls of his feet as he tried and failed to set up a topic of conversation with Kirishima.

“And now, the medals!” Midnight continued over Monoma’s jeering over how 1-A was totally dominated (despite Yoarashi being the only 1-B member in the top four), “Presenting them this year… You know and love him… Give it up for…”

“I AM…” A voice called out, and Izuku’s heart leaped into his throat. Even after two months of having All Might teach his class every week, he was still the number-one All Might otaku in Japan (a title he carried with pride). Sure enough, All Might crashed in front of the podiums. “HERE!!! AND I AM
“That’s right!!” Midnight screamed over All Might’s announcement, “It’s everyone’s favorite Hero, All Might!!!”

CARRYING THE MEDALS!!”

All Might and Midnight both stopped dead and stared at each other with unreadable expressions. Midnight at least had the decency to look somewhat sheepish.

Nevertheless, All Might turned around and held up two bronze medals with green ribbons. “For you two, Young Todoroki and Young Kirishima, I present to you the bronze medal! Though it may represent third place currently, it does not mean you cannot reach and attain the stars in the future!” He placed the medal around Todoroki’s neck. “Young Todoroki, I won’t ask about your actions during the match, nor will I ask about your reasons for holding back all this time. However, I will say this - if ever you need help, I will be there.”

“Thank, All Might,” Todoroki said, “But… These are personal matters that only I can settle. I hope you understand.”

“...I know all too well the importance of personal struggles, Young Todoroki.” All Might said cryptically before pulling the much smaller boy into a hug. “Say no more. Whatever you must settle, I believe in you.” All Might pulled away and turned to Kirishima. “Young Kirishima, you showed so much fighting spirit today, it was simply astounding. That, combined with your good sportsmanship, gives you the spirit of a Hero the likes of which we all wish we could have!”

“Aw, All Might, bro, you’re too cool!” Kirishima grinned, showing off his sharp teeth. As All Might hugged him, Kirishima stated, “You can bet I’m going to become a manly Hero worth looking up to, just like my idol, Crimson Riot!”

“Ohoho! My boy, I look forward to it!” All Might replied jovially as he let Kirishima go and moved to Uraraka with a silver medal with a red ribbon. “And now, Young Uraraka! I present to you the silver medal! Your tenacious spirit, analytic mind, and incredible drive, even against insurmountable odds, were the very definition of our fair school’s motto! I can only hope you accept this medal as a promise to continue to exceed our expectations!”

“Of course, All Might!” Uraraka said cheerfully, but tiredly. “I’m going to be as good of a Hero as I can!”
All Might hugged Uraraka, but when he pulled away, Uraraka looked weirdly confused. Izuku wondered why that would be.

“And now, our winner, Young Yoarashi!” All Might announced, holding up a gold medal with a blue ribbon. “Your abilities have certainly gotten you to where you are now, but never forget that in the great world of Heroism, there’s always going to be someone that may be your perfect counter! That does not, however, mean you should lose heart!”

“I gotta believe in myself and my friends! Is that right, All Might?” Yoarashi cheered.

“Oh! Exactly so, my boy!” All Might chortled, placing the medal around Yoarashi’s neck, who had to momentarily jump down so that All Might didn’t have to climb onto the podium. All Might hugged Yoarashi as well, and Yoarashi jumped back onto the podium with a small gust of wind.

“Everyone, these are your winners!” All Might addressed the crowd, to everyone’s cheers. “But hold on! There’s more! Everyone you saw today, whether from Heroics, General Education, or Support, all had the potential to be up here! Competition, encouragement, pushing each other past their limits - these are the tenants of UA’s Sports Festival! Today’s seeds are tomorrow’s saplings, after all, and society is a mighty forest! So, in that spirit, let’s have one final cheer!”

“Plu-”

“THANK YOU FOR THE HARD WORK!”

As that fool All Might blundered his own speech, Tomura felt like disintegrating the television. However, TVs didn’t come cheaply, even with unlimited funding, and he really wanted to unlock that vehicle in Mario Kart 18 (which was the superior version, obviously, they should have stopped back in 2075 when they made it), so he settled for turning off the TV with the remote.

He disintegrated the remote, however.

“Midoriya Izuku… Huh…” He muttered.
Ochako frowned a bit as she left class that day. She wished she could’ve asked Deku to come with her, but she was told to come alone, and besides, Deku was currently getting added to the class group text, so he could wait to walk her to the train station.

Knocking on the door to the teacher’s lounge, Ochako entered to find a thin, lanky man in an ill-fitting suit having tea with the Principal.

“Oh, uh… I’m sorry to interrupt?” Ochako asked, unsure of what was going on.

“No, no, it’s quite alright,” The thin man coughed, his voice sounding oddly familiar, “Please, have a seat.”

“Should I leave you two be?” The Principal asked, an odd absence of care in his soft voice.

“No, it’s fine, this shouldn’t take too long.” The man replied, and he turned to Ochako. “Young Uraraka, my name is Yagi Toshinori. However, you may know me better as…”

Suddenly, he was engulfed in a puff of steam, and Ochako’s eyes widened and her jaw dropped.

“All Might.” Yagi Toshinori stated.

Shouto exhaled and opened the door.

And he stared.

She was picturesque. Staring out the open window into the streets below, cut flowers sitting beside her on a table. The curtains were drawn, allowing the sunlight into the room. It was like a painting.

“Hello, Nurse Umiyuri.”
She was his mother, Yukihara Rei.

“Hello, mom.”

Startled, his mother turned and stared at Shouto. Her eyes were nothing like the malice he had last seen from her, wide not from hatred, but from shock.

Shouto’s scar burned.

“Sh-Shouto.” His mother whispered. “I didn’t know you’d be visiting. Didn’t think Enji would tell you which hospital I was in.”

“Endeavor didn’t tell me anything,” Shouto said coolly, “Natsuo did.”

“I see.” His mother replied. “That was kind of him. He would be eighteen now, right?”

“Nineteen in July.”

“Of course.”

The two fell silent. His mother made to stand up.

“Please, remain seated,” Shouto requested, “I want to tell you something. Please do not interrupt.

“My most recent memory of you is you telling my grandmother that you were disgusted by the mere sight of me, and after that follows you pouring your tea water on my face. Even back then, I knew it was because of Endeavor’s horrible skills as a human being destroying your psyche. However, that doesn’t mean I’m simply going to forget that didn’t happen. What you did permanently scarred me, mother. I can’t simply forgive that - it led to me taking on a foolish mission. I thought that if I were to hold my fire back, I would somehow gain your approval. As if I weren’t my father at all, as if it were all you.
“That’s not fair to you or me. You, me, and Endeavor are all our own people. Endeavor doesn’t understand that, and you certainly didn’t at the time either. Yes,” Shouto held up a hand, “You weren’t in your right mind. But that’s not an excuse for what you did. Many people aren’t in their right minds and they go about their lives not hurting their blood relatives. Both you and Endeavor played a part in traumatizing me for the better part of five years, and I’ve had it. I’m not going to exist for you or him; I’m going to live my own life, and be my own Hero. Is that perfectly clear?”

Shocked silent, his mother nodded.

“That doesn’t mean I’m not open to making amends with you, however,” Shouto finished, “You were just as much a victim as I was, if not more so. However, I’m never going to forgive you for what you did to me. I’ll help support you in any way I can, but simply know that you’re not going to get my forgiveness for burning my face.”

As Shouto turned around to leave, he dimly heard his mother whisper, “I love you, Shouto.”

Shouto closed the door and walked down the hallway. He took the elevator down, and kept walking. Giving a curt thank-you to the nurse at the front desk, he continued to walk, only fully coming to a stop in front of the bench outside the hospital. Giving a shuddering breath, he opened the group text that Yaoyorozu had insisted he join.

**Kaminari Denki**
All I’m saying is that Santa is running a sweatshop and we're supposed to be okay with it?!
They probably don't even get dental!

**You**
Hello everyone

**Kaminari Denki**
ELF RIGHTS

**Yaoyorozu Momo**
Oh! Hello, Todoroki-kun! I was wondering when you'd use the group chat! I trust the long weekend is treating you well?

**You**
I guess
Shouto took a deep, shuddering breath before collapsing onto the bench.

**You**
I yelled at my mom

Momo looked around the trendy cafe and fidgeted with her skirt. She sorely hoped this was the correct course of action.

“Yaomomo-chan!” Called the voice of her classmate, Mina. Momo’s heart skipped a beat as the pink girl flounced up wearing yellow-and-green giraffe print and acid-washed jeans. “This place is in such a fancy part of town- why’d you call me here?”


“No, no, you’re both on time,” Momo assured her, “And is it really a fancy part of town, Mina-san?”

“You kidding?” Kyouka smirked good-naturedly, “My mom’d kill to open up a music store here.”

“Ditto with my dad,” Mina agreed, “But with textiles instead of music.”

“I see.” Momo bit the inside of her cheek. Steeling her nerves, she spoke. “I wished to speak with you both because I believe I am… Infatuated with you both.”

Kyouka flushed a light pink. Mina looked surprised. Momo figured that was a good enough response.

“Furthermore, I have not been as oblivious to events surrounding me as you think.” Kyouka flushed deeper, and Mina began to sputter. Momo pressed on. “Though I would like to avoid rushing into a relationship so soon, much less two, I thought that we must address this matter
“...Wait, are you saying we shouldn’t date now, but in the future?” Mina asked, scratching her head.

“What I am saying is,” Momo swallowed, “I am not... Adverse to a relationship with both of you. But... I think we are a bit young to begin dating properly.”

“What about Uraraka and Tsuyu?” Kyouka pointed out, “They’ve been dating since USJ.”

“Fair point,” Momo relented, “But I still feel as though I want to wait.”

“Ohhh, okay.” Mina nodded. “So you want us to court you like the princess you are!”

Momo blushed at being compared to a princess. “Wh-What?! N-No, I simply-”

“You want two dashing knights to sweep you off your feet?” Kyouka smirked, with Mina grinning wider by the second, “We don’t quite have horses, but my dad has a motorcycle.”

“I know how to ride a bike!” Mina supplied, “But there’s no better way to travel than my acid skating technique! Plus, I make a mean pudding!”

“Well, what if I compose a sonnet in her name?” Kyouka riposted, “That’s what knights do, right?”

Momo could only watch in horror (and excitement, if she were being truthful) as her new not-quite girlfriends began to come up with what they could do to “court” her.

...It was all very sweet, but in the end, Momo paid for their lunch, so perhaps she was the knight...?

Chapter End Notes
I won't say Horikoshi or Kishimoto were right about anything, but they were right about arc fatigue... @@

Sorry for the long wait, I didn't know how to write Yoarashi v Uraraka without making it extremely boring. Yoarashi's Quirk is really powerful, though, so... ^^;;;

Your comments truly are appreciated, they're actually what got me through my writer's block. Thank you so much, everyone!!! :D

Also, MinaMomoJirou isn't quite here yet, but I see Yaoyorozu as the type of person to not try and rush into a relationship, while Tsuyu's blunt style and Uraraka's personality lend to them starting a relationship relatively early.

Also, yes, I've decided Izuku's bi.

Thank you all for reading all of this so far!! ^^
The arcade was, understandably, noisy. Izuku had gotten much better with loud noises (being functionally immortal probably helped with his tolerance for… anything, probably), but sometimes the noise levels reached enough of a crescendo that he winced.

Suddenly, a hand landed on his shoulder, and Izuku turned around to see Garaochi Toujiru and Akatani Mikumo.

“Sorry, Midoriya,” Garaochi smiled apologetically, fiddling with his glasses, “But I never got a good look at Akatani’s actual face, so I had a bit of trouble finding him at the train station.”

“You saw Midoriya wearing my face.” Akatani pointed out.

Garaochi shrugged. “I need new glasses.”

“Since Friday?”

“Nah, more like a couple of weeks. My eyesight’s been getting worse.”

“I think Detenat might help with that?” Midoriya supplied. “Surely they’ve gotten orders for eyeglasses that automatically shift with your Quirk. At the very least, Hatsume Mei might help you.”

“Last time I went to Hatsume Mei,” Garaochi revealed seriously, “She tried to implant holographic technology into my tear ducts. That’s literally how my Quirk already works, why do it again?”
“I think we’re a little off-track,” Akatani interrupted.

“We are,” Garaochi agreed, “I wanted to talk to both of you about marketing.”

Midoriya’s eyes widened. “R-Right,” He said, surprised, “But, uh. Can we, not be outside of an arcade for this conversation? I don’t want to miss any of this, you know?”

“Of course, of course,” Garaochi nodded, “Apparently, Akatani knows which restaurants in the food court are good.”

“You just want me to pay for you,” Akatani grumbled.

“That’s right, that’s right,” Garaochi smirked, “So, lead the way.”

Eijirou knocked on the door. A crash was heard, and some unintelligible shouting, followed by the sound of... shattered ceramics? Eijirou grew increasingly uneasy, and was about to knock again when the door flew open, revealing an angry-looking woman with short, ash-blonde hair.

“Oh!” She immediately cheered up. “You must be Katsuki’s friend! I thought you’d be that dumbass Tanaka from two houses down.”


“Oh, yeah, no, give me-” Mrs. Bakugou turned to the house’s interior. “KATSUKI! YOUR FRIEND IS HERE!”

Whatever Bakugou had shouted from his room had clearly agitated Mrs. Bakugou, as she turned an interesting shade of red before screaming up at him, “AND WHOSE GODDAMN FAULT IS THAT?! GET YOUR BONY ASS DOWN HERE AND GREET YOUR FRIEND!”

Eijirou felt uncomfortable, but as Bakugou appeared, the feeling quickly was replaced at happiness
at seeing his newest friend. Bakugou had been pretty cold early in the school year, but after the whole USJ incident, he had approached Eijirou with what had amounted to an offer of friendship. Eijirou believed in second chances, so he had readily accepted this as Bakugou’s attempt at at least *trying* to be nice to people.

“Hey, Bakubro!” He greeted Bakugou.

“Hey,” Bakugou said back, “Come in, Shi- Kirishima.”

“So,” Toujiru began, dipping his fry into the cheese cup, “Marketing.”

“Aren’t you lactose intolerant?” Midoriya asked.

“Irrelevant,” He was, in fact, but Toujiru was on a mission, “Yuikami’s brilliant at merchandising, and Nomimono is good at actually selling things. I’m decent at both of those things, but my strengths lie in actually marketing you to agencies. I trust you know about the Hero Stock Market?”

“The what,” Akatani asked.

“It’s basically like the regular stock market, but it’s endorsement for Heroes.” Midoriya summarized, “But what, exactly, does that have to do with agencies?”

“High-profile agencies are on the lookout for promising neophyte Heroes,” Toujiru replied, “And lately, they’ve begun to keep their pulse on the Hero Stock Market. No one sees potential like investors, and the more investors flock to a promising young Hero, the more their stocks go up, and the more likely a big agency like Endeavor’s or Best Jeanist’s will snap them up.” Toujiru smiled, and he activated Projection, allowing the image of two particular line graphs to appear on his glasses. “Midoriya Izuku, do you know who the last Hero who had an all-encompassing Quirk like “Four Elements” was?” He asked.

Midoriya’s answer was immediate, like Toujiru knew it would be. “Patchouli Semaine, Hero Name Élémentaliste, Quirk was something that translated from French into Seven Elements, granddaughter of Doll Hero Bisque, retired from Heroism about twelve years ago to a house in Belgium, arrested for Vigilantism in Ireland nine years ago.” Midoriya rattled off.”
“Why was she in Ireland?” Akatani wondered.

“That’s not important right now,” Toujiru interrupted, “What is important is that I’ve been scouring the forums on your popular opinion. And while I know you religiously stalk all Hero news, Midoriya, I’m unaware if you know your own popularity. Here it is - you have mixed reviews. Some people see you as underhanded and conniving, others see you as attention seeking.”

Midoriya’s face fell, and Toujiru suddenly felt a pang of compassion. Gross.

“That- That doesn’t mean that it’s the majority opinion.” Toujiru assured him, “Look at my right lens. If it was the majority option, then the graph I’ve compiled should be pointing into the ground. As I said, you have mixed reviews. About forty, forty-eight are negative opinions. The other ones are praising you for your ability to follow directions, your ability to fool even Akatani’s friends, and, most commonly, your Quirk’s sheer versatility. You’re kind of a dark horse among the Class A students right now, but you’re not nearly as hated as some people think that you deserve.”

Toujiru frowned. “Still not really sure why you did that whole plan with Yuikami, but if I could be down there myself to observe everyone…”

“Akatani, you, on the other hand,” Toujiru turned his gaze away from Midoriya’s teary face (does he cry often?) to look to Akatani. “Are at the center of something interesting. Similarly, you are being held as a stooge and a martyr for being the “hapless victim of Midoriya’s machinations”. Which is dumb, because from what Yuikami told me, you were a willing accomplice. Anyways, those who aren’t saying stupid things are talking about the ramifications of a Quirkless kid being in the sports festival at all. There’s a few Support-minded people talking about making you items to keep you in the running. Quirkless people are talking about how, if you can get into UA, then they can do anything, you know, things like that. I think it’s unfair, considering you’re like, a few months younger than me, but what do I know about ethics, I’m a Management student.” Toujiru paused. “That was a joke.”

“Is there, like, a point to this?” Akatani asked, clearly uncomfortable, “Because I’ve finished my calzone, and I invited you on this little outing because Yuikami told me you’d be fun to wreck in Mortal Dance-Off.”

“Did he, now,” Toujiru muttered, then spoke aloud, “I’m saying this because I’m offering my services.”

Midoriya blinked the last of those burgeoning tears out of his eyes. Akatani just stared.
“More specifically, my services as a marketing consultant.” Toujiru specified, deactivating his Quirk. “Admittedly, you’ll be my first clients, but think of it like this: I’ll be able to help you keep your admittedly-middling ratings from spiraling downwards. Simple things like ‘Akatani, you should be seen with this brand’, or, ‘Midoriya, you should intern with Sir Nighteye’, you know, doable things. In return, after we graduate, and you two become nice little Sidekicks to big-shots, you recommend me to other burgeoning Hero wannabes who want to know how to make it big.”

“You talk like an old man,” Akatani suddenly said.

“How rude. I’m only sixteen.”

“Can-” Midoriya spoke up, “This is, wow. Uh, can I have time to answer? To think it over?”

“Of course,” Toujiru nodded, “I’m not going to pressure you, the offer’s just on the table. Same goes to you Akatani. If you go with someone else, well, I’ll be steamed, but I’ll understand. Marketing’s a competitive place.” Toujiru stood up. “Now, Akatani, I believe you challenged me to Mortal Dance-Off.”

“LEAVE YOUR DOOR OPEN, I DON’T WANT TO HEAR YOU TWO FUCKING!”

“SHUT THE FUCK UP!” Katsuki screamed, kicking his door shut. The noise somewhat drowned out his mom’s reply, but he quietly went over and opened the door a couple centimeters anyways. He turned around to see Shitty- Kirishima opening up a bag and taking out what looked like the novel they had been assigned by Cementoss.

“What are you doing.” Katsuki ground out.

“I-” Kirishima stammered. “Isn’t this. A study date?”

Katsuki felt his face grow hot. “Don’t fucking call it a date !” He did not squeal. “I called you over because I wanted to, fucking, confide in you before you heard it from someone else!”

Kirishima looked fucking surprised. What did he think this fucking was?
“Are you coming out to me?” Kirishima had the nerve to ask. “Because, like, if you are, I’m also gay, so—”

“Get fucking serious!!!” Katsuki aimed an explosive lariat at Kirishima, who hardened under the impact and fell backwards onto Katsuki’s bed, otherwise unharmed. “I want to tell you something else!”

“...You’re trans?” Kirishima guessed.

“No, you imbecile!” Katsuki was slowly losing his patience. “It’s about Deku!”

“...Deku’s gay? Because I think we all already knew that.”

“It’s not about that!” Katsuki barked. He paused. “Although I think Deku’s bisexual.”

“That, makes more sense,” Kirishima nodded. “Sorry, Ashido started dating Jirou and Yaoyorozu yesterday, so romance is kind of on the brain.”

Katsuki chose not to read into that. “I want to tell you,” Katsuki began again, “About me and Deku. And before you fucking interrupt, no, we weren’t a goddamn item.” Kirishima, graciously, shut his fucking mouth. “Me and Deku are pretty much childhood friends because our moms were. After Deku’s shitty-ass father vanished, my mom and Deku’s mom became, like, sisters. It was gross. So, we became friends, or some shit. I got my Quirk early, and you know it’s strong and whatever. Everyone was going on about how it was so good, and I’d be a good Hero cause of it. Used to think so, too. Still think so. I-I’ve been going through a lot this past month.”

Kirishima, for all he was worth, was paying attention.

“You already know that Deku didn’t realize he got his Quirk until he was like, thirteen. Well, when the news reached me that he was Quirkless, I just.” Katsuki took a deep breath. “I think I may have some sort of weird complex, like that motherfucker from the B class. Anyways, my thing is more like, Quirks are power, so the more powerful Quirk you have, the better you are, and Deku not having a Quirk made him... Nothing.” Katsuki hated to admit this. He really did. However, if Uraraka already knew, it was only a matter of time before she and whoever else knew told someone else. Kirishima was the only person he could actually consider a “friend” - Uraraka he recognized as a worthy rival, Deku was less of a friend and more of... also a rival.
“...I bullied Deku.” Katsuki said after the most pregnant pause he had ever endured in his life.

Kirishima blinked, then frowned. “Dude,” He said, “That’s extremely fucked up.”

Katsuki, for all he was worth, felt some semblance of guilt.

“It’s. It’s worse.” Katsuki grimaced. “You know how Deku said that he had fallen out of a window?”

Kirishima’s face fell even more, and Katsuki could feel himself feel worse. “Dude, you didn’t.”

“He made that shit up,” Katsuki confessed, “On that day, I told him that he could probably awaken his Quirk if he jumped off the roof.”

Kirishima was silent. Slowly, he got up, and then, without any preamble, punched Katsuki in the face.

“Motherfucker!” Katsuki choked out as he fell to the ground. After he lay there and let the pain radiate off his face, he sighed. “I deserved that, but did you have to-”

“Yes,” Kirishima said bluntly, “I did. I was bullied so, so hard in middle school. Not to the same level as Dek- Midoriya probably was, but it still got pretty bad. Of course I’d side with D-Midoriya in this scenario. You certainly picked the wrong person to tell this to.”

“I picked you,” Katsuki sat up, “Because you’re my only f-” Katsuki stuttered, “-Friend.”

“What about people from middle school?” Kirishima didn’t sit back down. “Shouldn’t you be telling them what happened?”

“Can’t,” Katsuki said, “They were just extras, following me around because I could kick their asses one-handed. Plus, they didn’t see Deku until after the Sludge Villain, and then they spent the year fawning over his new Quirk. It was annoying, so I stopped talking to them at all.”
Kirishima stared impassively at Katsuki. “Anything else?”

“He lied about the gas explosion,” Katsuki said, “Deku did, I mean. During the Battle Trial, I accidentally hit him with that fuckoff-huge explosion and killed him a third time.”

“Hold on.” Kirishima held his hands up. “Third?”

“The Sludge Villain. He went in to save me. As far as I’m concerned, that’s my fault too.”

“I think that doesn’t actually count.” Kirishima frowned in thought. “Because it was of his own volition to do so-”

“If that fucking mattered, then the first one doesn’t count either.”

“Hm, no, I think that one would still be your fault because you incited it.”

“I incited the second one by being the goddamn hostage.”

“That’s not how that works.” Kirishima interjected.

“How do you know that?” Katsuki argued.

“Because if that was the case, then it’d be All Might’s fault that Kurogiri killed Midoriya.” Kirishima pointed out. He blinked. “This is a really morbid conversation.”

“You’re just realizing that?” Katsuki gave a short, barking laugh.

Kirishima was silent. “...You know that I won’t forgive you for bullying Midoriya, right?” Kirishima pointed out.
“Yeah, yeah, he doesn't forgive me either. Fuck, I don’t forgive myself either right now.” Katsuki snapped.

“At least you feel guilt,” Kirishima acknowledged, sitting down next to Katsuki, “That means something, at least.”

“Don’t repeat yourself for no reason, I’ll ki-” Katsuki stopped himself. The words, previously his go-to threat, tasted like rot in his mouth. “…It’s redundant.”

Kirishima huffed. “It’s a start, huh?” He muttered, as if Katsuki wasn’t sitting right there.

They sat in silence.

“Sorry about punching you, Bakugou.” Kirishima offered. Katsuki inwardly flinched. So, I’ve lost Kirishima’s shitty friendship nickname, huh?

“It’s, it’s fine,” Katsuki admitted, “I deserve it for what I did to Deku.”

“I’m still sitting here,” Kirishima continued, “Because, somehow, I see some good in you, despite your… General attitude. It’s kinda manly, if you ask me.”

Katsuki scoffed at the idea that a murderer like him could be considered manly.

“I believe in second chances,” Kirishima stated, “And though this is technically a third chance, I guess you’re technically a three-time murderer. Even though Midoriya is alive and well. Do any of the murders count if he can’t die, actually?”

“Who cares, I just feel bad about doing them. Plus, he remembers them, so it’s not like they didn’t happen.”

“Fair point.”
Izuku felt himself get pressed uncomfortably against the train’s window as he rode to school. Rain streaked against the glass, fitting the dreary attitude Izuku had - the news had broken yesterday concerning Ingenium’s permanent retirement (even though he had known about his attack since Friday, the actual announcement from late last night still stung), and since no one could get through to Iida, Izuku had been reduced to scouring the hero forums on any information on Ingenium that wasn’t withheld in the news.

*Still nothing, huh?* Izuku thought glumly.

“A… ...ou…” “Hey kid!”

A hand was pressed into his back, and Izuku turned around to see a man with beady eyes and a friendly smile.

“I saw you during the Sports Festival! I think they said you were... Akatani Mikumo?”

“No, you simpleton,” An elderly woman chastised him, “He’s Midoriya Izuku. You know, my granddaughter has an earth manipulation Quirk, and she started going on about throwing around rocks just like you did, young man!”

“Feh, kid put himself in danger, if you ask me.”

“What danger? It was a school-sanctioned event where death was explicitly disallowed. He would’ve remained alright even if he didn’t reveal himself.”

“Um… Sorry, but… C-Can I have your autograph?”

Izuku suddenly realized that what Garaochi had said rang true - the train car was full of people both praising and deriding his choices. Wordlessly, he signed the loose leaf paper held out to him, and that started a whole other cavalcade of reactions.

All at once, though, he reached his stop, and he stumbled into the rain, umbrella barely keeping him from getting soaked.
“And there were just, so many people staring at me on the way over!” Hagakure’s sleeves wildly gesticulated.

“Indeed,” Aoyama sparkled, “I could not even move without thousands of people falling over moi.”

“At least you guys got people being nice to you,” Kaminari griped, “So many people were like ‘Sorry about that’, and ‘Better luck next time’!”

“Sorry,” Todoroki murmured.

“It is quite maddening, is it not, Shouji Mezou?” Tokoyami intoned.

“Even though we didn’t do much, I still got recognized,” Shouji hummed, “It is pretty interesting.”

“Good morning.” Aizawa greeted the class, and the room fell into silent order.

“Oh, your bandages are off, Aizawa-sensei,” Tsuyu remarked.

“I could’ve taken the bandages off any time,” Aizawa replied, rubbing the new scar under his eye, “Recovery Girl’s just excessive. Don’t worry about that, though. Today’s first period is Hero Informatics, so we’ve gotten a very special guest lecturer.”

Silence descended upon the class.

“You’re choosing your Hero names today.” Aizawa revealed.

The class burst into cheers.
They were silenced by Aizawa’s glare, amplified by his Quirk’s activation. “Shut up. Before we get into that, do you remember Friday, when I talked about the Hero draft picks? It’s just based on Pro Heroes and who they think will be ready for the work force in a few years. It’s one of the ways they invest in your future.”

Izuku was reminded of Garaochi’s lecture on how the Hero Stock Market worked.

“Of course, there’s still ample time for public opinion to turn against you during that time for one convoluted reason or another, and it’s very common for any of these offers to be rescinded in that time.” Aizawa sighed. “That’s why I prefer underground work. No goddamn reason to play nice with the press.”

“So,” Hagakure presumably raised her hand, “It’s better if we don’t get picked right now?”

“Pretty much. Or, maybe not. Who knows.” Aizawa shrugged, then fished a remote out of his pocket. Pressing a button, a bar graph lit up on the board. “Now, ordinarily, there’s a more even spread, but our three finalists have definitely stolen the spotlight.”

It was true. Uraraka had apparently gotten 3,974 offers, and Todoroki had received 3,989. Third to that was Kirishima, at just 962 offers. Izuku was surprised to see that he actually had a comparatively decent 311 offers, while Bakugou was just below Kirishima at 749.

Izuku faintly heard Yaoyorozu (who had 273 offers) congratulate Todoroki, while Kaminari (9) voiced that it was weird that Uraraka, who had gotten second place, had less offers than Todoroki; Uraraka was busy shaking Iida (352) so hard that any discernible features vanished to care.

Izuku’s phone vibrated multiple times. He had a feeling he knew who it was from, but he couldn’t check - Aizawa was talking.

“So, again, whether or not you were actually picked doesn’t matter,” Aizawa drawled, “Because, picked or not, you’re still going to be working with the Pros come next week. I mean, I guess you’ve all had some pretty fucked-up experiences, but there’s still nothing like field work and actually working with people who know what they’re doing.”

“So, we get to choose our Hero names!” Satou cheered.
“They’re just temporary,” Aizawa grumbled over the class’s renewed fervor, “You can change them any time, but that doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t pick wisely.”

“THAT’S RIGHT!” A voice called from nowhere. “OTHERWISE, YOU’LL KNOW HELL!” Smoke started pouring out from under the door, and it suddenly flew open. “For the name you choose now…” The voice continued as the smoke cleared, “May be what the world will call you, years into the future after your debut!”

It was the R18 Hero, Midnight.

Bending in such a way that Izuku absently wondered if she had dislocated her spine.

“So I called Midnight because I’m no good at deciding what a good Hero name is.” Aizawa explained as Midnight struggled to turn off her fog machine, “That doesn’t mean she’s wrong, though. Again, that’s another perk of being Underground. Deadeye’s changed her name about three times now and no one’s really paid much attention to it.”

“Then why haven’t you changed yours?” Kaminari asked, raising his hand.

“Hizashi picked it out for him,” Midnight smirked, “Can’t disappoint his husband.”

“We’re not married,” Aizawa sighed, picking up his sleeping bag, “But something you all should keep in mind when it comes to Hero names is your own futures. Do you see yourself in the future with this name? Do you want to hear this name every time people see your face? The name cements your public image, gives you a reputation. They help you reflect certain characteristics.” Aizawa laid down. “Right, you have an hour. Goodnight.”

In the end, after a rough start with Aoyama and Ashido’s names, things went somewhat fine. After Tsuyu had revealed her chosen name as “Froppy”, everyone had gotten hyped up to present their own. Shiozaki had gone with ”Maria”, Ashido had settled for ”Pinky”, and Satou seemed ready to start a feud with Ojiro over their similar Hero names. Bakugou had surprised Izuku with a sensible Hero name like “Ground Zero”, although he was pretty subdued with the announcement. Iida had concerned Izuku with the quiet solemnity with which he had presented… His own last name.

Finally, Izuku was the last one to go up. Izuku was no good with names, and he didn’t want to
casually reveal to the world that he was technically undead, so “Zombie Man” was out of the question. Still, none of his past Hero names, like “All Might Jr.” or “Neo-All Might” would fly. Still, doing something like Élémentaliste somehow felt... Wrong. Not just because it was another language, but because he didn’t feel like he could keep up the charade of “Four Elements” long enough.

“Midoriya! You’re up!” Midnight shouted, and Izuku hastily scribbled something on the whiteboard. He hustled to the front of the room, and presented his whiteboard.

“...Uh,” Kirishima raised his hand, “Midoriya, dude, are you, uh, sure about that?”

Izuku gave an unsure smile. “Well... I used to hate it, right? But, well, I guess I’ve just gotten so used to it, not in part to all of my friends. In fact, one of my first friends once told me it sounded like “Dekiru”, you know? So...” Izuku, Hero Name: Deku, looked into the faces of his peers, “I’ve decided that this is my Hero Name.”

Uraraka beamed. Bakugou looked somewhat sick.

After it was all over, they had to choose the agencies they were going to intern at. Izuku had 311 agencies to choose from, not least of which included Phlogiston Hero Faust, whose Quirk involved lighting water on fire. Under normal circumstances, Izuku would have overthought everything and broken down into a muttering wreck. However, this time, he decided to simply gather himself mentally and ask for other peoples’ opinion.

“Whoever plays to your strengths, I guess,” Shouji had shrugged, his third right arm having shifted into an eye to continue reading the agencies that accepted interns no matter what, “Your Quirk is startlingly versatile. Not only that, you’re the type of person who can get along with anyone.” Shouji paused. “Almost anyone, at any rate.” Izuku chose not to dwell on that last sentence.

Uraraka had chosen Gunhead, to his surprise - he knew that she wanted to be a Rescue Hero, so Gunhead’s combat-oriented style of Heroics seemed ill-fitting. “Well, getting stronger opens up all sorts of possibilities!” Uraraka had explained, “And besides, if I only stuck with one thing, it’d get boring! Plus...” Uraraka had begun to say something, and then shook her head. “Nevermind.” Izuku felt somewhat confused, but he could see what she was saying.

Unfortunately, this left him with two conflicting pieces of advice - Go out of his comfort zone, or
stick to his guns. So, he went to Iida.

Iida took one look at him, shuffled his form into other papers, and then went up to turn it in to Midnight.

But not before Izuku caught a glimpse of what agency he had chosen.

Izuku knew, in that moment, what he needed to do.

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Akatani Mikumo 08:02 > So I somehow got drafted? I’m going to be interning with someone named “Long-Leg”.
Akatani Mikumo 08:02 > Also I was accosted by Hatsume Mei. She wants to talk to you or something.

Izuku paused in the analysis he was currently typing up of Long-Leg and his partner, Long-Arm, and knocked on the door of Support Lab 9. There was a muffled explosion, followed by the sound of something embedding in the wall, and then the sound of breaking ceramics. The door flew open, revealing the oil-stained visage of Hatsume Mei.

“Ah, Midoriya Izuku! You’re just in time!” She announced, and with no further ado, pulled him in. She dragged him to a work bench absolutely covered in various machines. “Come in, come in! I’ve been expecting you!”

“Y-Yeah, I know- Oh, hey, Akatani,” Izuku greeted the redhead. He blinked. “Hi, Yoarashi.”

“Midoriya!!” Yoarashi cheered, rushing to Izuku and shaking his hand vigorously. “Good to see ya again!”

“I’m here for moral support,” Akatani deadpanned, wearing something that looked like a cross between a neck brace and a compass.

“And I’m here because Hatsume wanted to pawn the things you don’t want off on me!” Yoarashi supplied.
“Uh,” Izuku managed to say before something that looked like a pair of water wings was shoved in his face.

“The HatsuWings!” Hatsume Mei announced, “Perfect for aiding in water manipulation, and they also act as breathing apparatus! And here’s the HatsuForge! It absorbs excess heat energy from fire manipulation to pump sheer energy into your muscles! And then we have…”

It was about sixteen different inventions into the process that Izuku managed to stop her. "U-Um, actually, Hatsume-san..." Izuku interrupted Hatsume, "I-I don't think this gear's good for me."

"Oh?" Suddenly, the air chilled around the two, and a dark aura began to seep out of Hatsume as she continued to grin cheerfully, her eyes focusing sharply on Izuku. Izuku became acutely aware that he now felt like an ant under a magnifying glass - and Hatsume was the sun focusing her heat laser on his frail ant body. "Is there any particular reason why you're suddenly too good for my cute, darling, adorable, amazing little babies?" Hatsume cheerfully asked with absolute ice and venom dripping from every word.

"I-" Izuku squeaked out, actually feeling genuine fear for his life for the first time in what was probably months, "It's not what you th-think... I- Y-Your gear-"

"Your babies." Hatsume insisted, still cheerfully ominous.

"Your super-duper-extra-ultra-magnificent babies," Izuku hastily corrected himself, "Your gear is-top notch, it's just I can't p-personally use th-them."

"Oh, is that all?" Hatsume asked, and the dark atmosphere that had engulfed the room promptly receded and vanished as if it had never existed. Over in the corner, Power Loader breathed a sigh of relief. Yoarashi got out of Akatani's arms, which he had jumped into out of fear. "But why?" Hatsume ignored everything else and seemed genuinely curious. "I began designing this gear specifically for you once I heard your Quirk was Four Elements."

"Y-Yes, and that's actually why I can't accept it," Izuku explained, "Because that's- this is, um. Can I show you something to help you understand?"

"My mom always says that I should at least put on some make-up first whenever a boy asks that." Hatsume immediately supplied. Power Loader spat out the coffee he was shakily drinking to calm
Izuku blinked before he understood what Hatsume meant, and then felt his face heat up as he blushed furiously. "I-It's nothing like th-"

"Pfft, I know, I was just messing with you," Hatsume laughed, "Sure, I'll come with you, but I always carry at least two HatsuBlasters with me, so..."

"N-Noted. Uh-"

Hatsume dragged Izuku behind a folding screen and quickly erected a steel barrier around them. "Well?" She asked.

Izuku grabbed his hair and took his head off of his neck.

Hatsume blinked.

"So, er." Izuku began. "My Quirk isn't Four Elements."

"What else can you do?"

"Huh?" Izuku's head blinked.

"Spare no details." Hatsume had, in the span of those five seconds, taken out a pad of paper and had some sort of pen pressed to it. "If you can do all that crazy stuff in the Sports Festival, and you're revealing even more things to me, you must be able to do more."

"Uh, well, uh." Izuku stuttered.

"What?"
"It's just- You don't seem too surprised?"

"It's a Quirk," Hatsume shrugged, "There are people out in the world who probably have weirder ones than having like, a grab bag of whatever. Really, I'm more anticipatory towards the future."

"Why?" Izuku asked.

Hatsume put her pen behind her ear and gave Izuku the toothiest smile he had ever seen. "Because of the sheer amount of darling babies I get to create now, of course!"

Izuku walked up to the door. Gathering up his courage, he knocked on the door.

“One second!” The owner of the office shouted, and soon, the door opened, revealing a young man with tanned skin, red tattoos under his eyes, and neck-length black hair. “Oh. You're a bit early, aren't you?”

“I guess I am,” Izuku acknowledged. He looked around. “Um, is there anyone else in the building, or-”

“Yeah, no, today’s supposed to be our day off.” The man said, “I stayed behind because it’s my agency, and I have to greet our new intern, you know? So, welcome,” He spread his arms in a greeting gesture. “To the Native Hero Agency. I’m Akikaze Rera, better known as the Half-Ainu Hero, Native.”

Chapter End Notes

I know Native is like, a really sensitive thing, but I have a LOT of plans for him. :3c

Now Hatsume knows. It's just an open secret, huh?

I made you all wait a long time, so it's a long chapter by my standards. Sorry about that! ^^''

Also, Kirishima is trans and gay. Bakugou is gay.
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!