Where's My Goddamn Dinosaur?

by njw

Summary

Tim closes his eyes, calculating. Based on the energy involved for a one week reset, he’s looking at a minimum displacement of about five years for the copy. His eyes sting as he fully grasps that if this works, one Tim will get to reunite with his friends and family, hold them and speak to them again, and work together to unleash all the contingencies and strategies he’s come up with to kick those invading alien assholes the fuck out, and the other Tim, the copy… won’t. He’ll wake up somewhen, isolated and traumatized, without friends, family, or any allies at all.

Well, shit. Whatever, at least Other Tim will know it worked. And he’s never minded the idea of sacrificing himself to save others. He confirms the calibration of the device, and pushes the big red button. Of fucking course there’s a big red button, supervillains are so predictable.

His last thought as the lights explode in his head and he tastes color is *I hope computers are a thing whenever Other Tim lands. I’d hate to be put on trial for witchcraft. Fuck it, if I overshoot I’m gonna ride a goddamn dinosaur. Hell. Yes.*
Chapter 1

Red Robin’s shaking as his gauntleted hand closes on the device, lifting it out of the triple-locked box with all the reverence and care he has time for, which is to say, none. This is it, the one chance to avert disaster, to stop it all from ever happening. He wobbles a bit as he carries the tech across the Cave, collapsing back into the seat at the Batcomputer still displaying the file that gave him back a dim flicker of hope.

He turns the device in his hands, willing them steady and hardly daring to breathe as he checks the interface and power supply. This is the only possible chance, and even with it, he’s calculated the odds. They’re not good. The tech is risky, just as likely to blow him up along with a good portion of the eastern seaboard as it is to successfully send him back in time one week. He forces his breathing steady as he acknowledges that will not be a problem. He saw the footage, heard the reports before the comms went chillingly quiet, and he knows, he knows, he knows, there’s no one left out there to worry about.

He’s panting now as the images spin sickeningly through his head, out of control and nauseating like a roller coaster ride on fear gas. Red Hood appearing out of nowhere in front of an energy gun and taking a shot in the chest meant for Batman, looking just as shocked as Bruce at his action, their faces a mirror of grief and regret as he bled out in a cowl-less Batman’s arms. Bruce’s face as he ordered Tim back to the Cave to coordinate everyone and research a potential save that didn’t pan out in the end, leaving him to watch helplessly on the monitors as Batman went down under one of the aliens’ energy weapons trying to protect civilians, as Nightwing brother my big brother no no no tumbled out of the air falling falling falling without a net, Robin’s scream of fury, resounding with rage and grief, holding a glorious and bloody last stand over his father and brothers’ bodies and ending a too-small too-broken form collapsed on top of the pile of invaders he brought down with him.

Black Bat halfway across the world going silent on comms, and never checking back in she would have, she would have if she could. The smoking rubble of the Clocktower Babs no, blown up, along with half of Gotham, Batgirl almost back to the Cave and Alfred upstairs when the planet-killer bombs went off and vaporized everything above ground level across most of the continental United States and probably the rest of the world, he couldn’t confirm because the satellites had been taken out of the sky in the aliens’ opening salvo. God, Steph, Kon, Bart, no, I can’t raise any of the Titans, even the Watchtower is dark. What the hell is the point of metas being invulnerable if they can’t even survive the end of the world?

The Cave on lockdown is reinforced, resistant to every potential outcome a paranoid Batman could come up with over the years, and so Tim keeps surviving. Alone. He pulls it back, forcing useless emotion out and order in to his thoughts. If he gets this right, he can fix it. He can still fix it.

Tim focuses on the device, locking away all other thoughts and emotions. No need to process his grief and loss when in a few minutes he’ll either have everyone back, one week ago with foreknowledge to prevent this whole mess, or he’ll be dead and beyond sorrow’s reach.

As an added complication, even if the device does work as advertised, the potential energy produced by rolling back everything for one week, the accumulated energy of every action that would have been during that week, will be immense.

According to Bruce’s recordings of the villain who had this device, that extra energy will be focused
on the user. While the user and the original universe go back in time one week, an identical copy of
the user will be created, like a reflection or echo, and that copy will be propelled much farther into
the past, into a new alternate universe which will spin off and diverge from the original universe from
whatever moment in time the copy lands. His head hurts thinking about the physics involved, but
Bruce checked the math meticulously and it all fits.

Everything on the device appears to be intact. He closes his eyes, calculating. Based on the energy
involved for a one week reset, he’s looking at a minimum displacement of about five years for the
copy. His eyes sting as he fully grasps that if this works, one Tim will get to reunite with his friends
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whenever Other Tim lands. I’d hate to be put on trial for witchcraft. Fuck it, if I overshoot I’m gonna
ride a goddamn dinosaur. Hell. Yes.

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Tim wakes up in the Cave and opens his eyes, sitting up abruptly where he apparently fell asleep at
the Batcomputer. Dick jerks back guiltily, uncapped pen in hand and Tim knows with the intuition
born of years as this man’s little brother (and also the fact that he lived through this exact scene a
week ago) that the man was about to ink a picture of his namesake across his forehead. Dork.

He doesn’t give a shit anymore, and launches himself at his big brother who starts to defend himself
before realizing it’s a hug and reciprocating enthusiastically. “Hey there, Timmy, what’s wrong, did
you have a bad dream or something?” The genuine concern and care on Dick’s familiar face make
Tim swallow hard around the lump in his throat before he can answer.

“Or something. Um, hold on.” Right, plans. Saving the world. He’s got this. He spins in the chair
and calls up the satellite feeds (ha! Not shot down yet assholes!), zeroing in on the cloaked invaders,
sending their tactics, estimates of their numbers, weapons capacity, and weaknesses to every major
superhero organization on the planet with instructions for neutralizing them with extreme prejudice.

Messages start to light up across the board as pieces fall into place and defenses lock in. The invaders
aren’t even going to get a foot in the door this time. Tim allows himself a sharp-edged grin, aware his
expression is probably bordering on manic and not finding it in himself to care. After all he’s been
through, he’s earned this.

Dick gapes at the display. “Some dream, little bro. Holy shit,” he says faintly, watching the Justice
League unleash hell on the forcibly decloaked ships. “What…?”

Batman speaks from immediately behind them, like the huge creeper that he is. He’s staring at the
screen as though he can glare it into submission. “This is an extensive plan with details about the
enemy you have no means of knowing, even with your contacts and skills.” His eyes narrow. “You
used the doomsday reset device.” He turns to stare at Tim accusingly. “You could have destroyed the
world.”

Tim can’t suppress a flinch at the censure in that voice. “There wasn’t much left to save, B,” he
admits in a whisper, voice gravelly.

Frowning, with a momentary stillness only those close would recognize as a suppressed flinch, Batman pulls off the cowl and Bruce puts a hand on his son’s shoulder. “You’re safe, Tim.” His hand tightens like he doesn’t want to let go.

It feels good, it feels so good when he thought he would never hear that voice, never see his adopted father again.

And Tim is shaking and Dick is hugging him now and Bruce is holding them both and. It’s true. He’s safe. The contingencies are progressing smoothly, the earth is defending herself, all the Bats are answering his call and reporting back to the Cave for debrief and to get ready to do their part. The Titans are on it, going through the task list he shot over to them and in a minute, he’ll get on comms and answer their questions and provide reassurances.

Later, after the battle’s over and the Bats gather at the Cave to tend each other’s wounds and celebrate the win with Alfred pizza (there’s nothing like it in the world), they’ll go over the footage from the alternate future saved on his wrist computer. They’ll watch their future (past, not future, never again if he can help it) selves fight and fall together.

They’ll deal with the emotional fallout. Jason and Bruce will bluster and break down, and come together without the impetus of a mortal wound driving it this time. Dick will hug all his little brothers into submission. Steph and Tim will paint each other’s nails purple and watch dumb movies while drinking margaritas from coffee mugs because class. They have it. Cass will come home, take one look at him, and hug him until his smile turns real. Alfred will watch it all benevolently, and make sure the kitchen always has a fresh batch of cookies armed and ready to be deployed.

It’s good. It’s so much better than just good. And if, once in a while, Tim wonders about Other Tim. Well. He drinks an extra mug of margaritas for him, and pictures him riding into the sunset on a motherfucking t-rex. Hell. Yes.

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Tim wakes up in the Cave and opens his eyes. He’s slouched in a chair in front of a version of the Batcomputer he doesn’t recognize. It’s a bit clunky and outdated compared to the one he’s used to, and his eyes widen as he scans the Cave, pulse racing at what he sees. Or rather, what he doesn’t see. Batmobile, cars, bikes, everything’s an older model than usual, and the Redbird’s missing.

That isn’t what catches his breath in his throat so tight he feels like he’s suffocating, though. It’s the case. Jason’s memorial case, the one he used to talk to when he was Robin. The painful display showcasing the tattered uniform of a murdered boy as both a reminder and heavy accusation for everyone to see. It’s gone. Or rather, it isn’t there yet.

“Well, fuck me,” Tim whispers. “I’m Other Tim.” He heaves a shuddering sigh, feeling the adrenalin drop of days fighting invaders with no real down time, followed by more than sixty hours alone in the Cave getting everything ready for the plan. Well, clearly he won’t be the Tim enacting that plan.

He slumps in the chair, feeling a headache coming on. “Where’s my goddamn dinosaur?”

Chapter End Notes
Tim, alone at the end of the world: *Cracks knuckles, pulls solution out of ass to fix everything* “I got this!”

Everyone else: *Shower Tim with hugs, pizza, cookies, nail polish and gratitude* “Yay!”

Other Tim: *Wakes up in the past, exhausted and alone* “Fml.”
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Tim blinks, focusing and dismissing errant background thoughts like the strategic rundown of the Batman suit’s weak points, plans to establish a new cover identity in this time, and a wistful desire to check up on and possibly befriend his younger self. His thoughts sharpen to a single profoundly important point. Jason’s not dead.

Jason Todd is still alive. Jason isn’t dead. Yet.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Tim isn’t sure when he last slept, only that he’s definitely passed the seventy-two hour cutoff beyond which he usually begins to experience light hallucinations. Just mildly concerning but impossible things, like Bruce with actual bat wings, Dick choosing celery over cereal, Red Hood proudly wearing the old dildo helmet in battle, or Damian smiling sweetly. Total nonsense, obviously, but harmless. Whatever.

He thinks about the others, and knows if at this point in time Jason isn’t dead then there’s no way any of them even knows Tim exists, because he hasn’t yet pushed his way into their lives to become Robin and eventually grow to be part of the family.

His eyes prickle and his heart aches at the knowledge he will never see his family again, and if he does, it will be as a stranger. The idea of having to physically defend himself against them almost makes him physically sick.

Batman is not going to be pleased to find an unknown intruder here, and he’s definitely the type to punch first and grunt interrogatively later. Tim wonders morosely if today’s the day he’ll finally have to implement time travel contingency 36: travel to a time that predates his involvement with Batman, subpart c: fighting his way out of a hostile Batcave.

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Tim spins back to face the Batcomputer, fingers flying to input the root access codes he knows Bruce implemented years ago in case the computer is ever subverted by a villain and Batman needs to regain access after losing control.

He knows the current rotation of passwords and how Bruce thinks, so he extrapolates the patterns back and he’s in in under a minute. Bruce will receive a notification, but Tim’s able to delay it so it won’t send for another twenty four hours. Plenty of time.

As soon as he’s in the system, he checks the date while contemplating his tenuous position in this
time. Based on the state of the Cave, Jason’s definitely already Robin. Depending on when this is, Tim should easily be able to save Jason.

Whether he can make it past Bruce’s legendary paranoia and get the man to extend him some measure of wary trust depends on his ability to avoid drawing his attention too early and spooking him.

As long as he can ease Bruce into knowledge of his existence with calmly reasoned dialogue, as much supporting evidence of his benign intentions as he can haul together, and maybe an offer to let Martian Manhunter into his brain to vet his claims, he probably won’t need to fight his way out of the Cave today—oh holy shit.

It’s the day. The day.

Jason Todd is already in the Joker’s hands, and in less than four hours he will die. No.

Tim is moving before he even finishes the thought. He will not allow that to happen. Jason Todd, cocky, foulmouthed, self-sacrificing, brave and so damn broken, future asshole and literal pain in the neck. Is not. Going. To die. Today.

Tim grabs a duffel and starts filling it with everything on the list currently growing in his mind. As an afterthought, he starts an upload to the Batcomputer, just in case. After all, he’s all about the contingencies.

He spots something in a darkened section of the Cave, and smiles wickedly as the plan forms in his mind. Jason Todd’s introduction to Batman will have nothing on this. Stealing the tires off the Batmobile? Please.

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The Batplane hums as Tim speeds towards the coordinates he input from memory. Good thing he obsessively studies old case files and knows the details of his predecessor’s demise down to the exact location and floorplan of the warehouse where Jason died.

He sets the autopilot ten klicks out from the destination so he can perform a final check of his equipment, calculate his angle of descent, and drop out of the plane.

He doesn’t look at the clock. He refuses to be too late.

Tim uses the plasma cutter to burn through the locks holding the door closed, the same locks that killed Jason the first time around. Batman’s report and painstaking reconstruction of the blast included trajectory for where Jason’s body landed, indicating the boy had been right by the door when the explosion occurred. Just a few inches away from safety.

Mindful of that, Tim opens the door quickly but carefully, and catches his breath at what he sees. Jason Todd is right there. Not the Red Hood, hulking and furious and even more dangerous when wounded. Jason, Robin, the Robin Tim followed as a kid and admired and cared about. The boy he wanted to be friends with.

And… holy shit, Jason’s been beat to hell. Left eye swollen almost closed under a torn domino, blood on his chin from a cut lip or worse, hands bound in front of him, back defiantly straight, poised wavering slightly on his knees fractures in both legs according to the autopsy report, god he must be in agony.
His feet are bare and there is a trail of blood on the floor behind him that makes Tim want to destroy something he dragged himself to the door and it was fucking locked.

His mind unwillingly jumps to the Jason in his original timeline, the pain and fear he must have felt in his last moments, the despair when he realized no one was coming for him in time. He wants to throw up. He wants to scream. He... needs to focus on the Jason in front of him, the only one he can actually help, can save.

Jason’s relatively undamaged right eye blue blue blue, I don’t remember Jason’s eyes ever being this blue is wide in shock and over his shoulder Tim spots the bomb, ominous red numbers counting down.

“Wh—” Jason’s question cuts off in a startled yelp as Red Robin swoops him up carefully be mindful of his injuries, spinning on his heel and diving away from the building like the hounds of hell are after him. Tim bounds away, ending in a leap as the explosion rattles his teeth in his skull and booms.

He covers Jason with his body and wraps his cape around them both, huddling close to provide as much protection as possible and finding a moment to note that even now, with Jason more than a year younger than him at a month shy of sixteen, the other boy is already an inch or so taller. Stupid giant, Tim thinks with an absurd amount of fondness, curling his head and arms over Jason’s.

Tim feels the heat of the explosion and his ears are ringing with it while bits of debris cannon into his back. Something heavier bounces off his head, and he collapses, sprawling across Jason who huffs and jerks at the impact.

Tim blinks slowly, staring at the pretty flames dancing against the frozen night sky. Jason’s hair is tickling his nose. Wow, his hair is surprisingly soft. It smells really nice, too.

Jason is stirring under him and trying to say something but he can’t hear it because oh, yeah, he used his hands to protect Jason’s ears like an idiot. He pushes up on his hands, carefully lifting his weight off the injured boy who is staring up at him with stunned relief and gratitude in wet blue eyes.

His head is swimming; is it sleep deprivation finally catching up, or did he hit it on something during the blast? He can’t really remember now and that should probably be concerning.

Everything looks far away and blurry all of a sudden. Maybe he’s got dust on the lenses. He flips the white outs up and blinks as the cool air hits the skin around his eyes with a bracing shock.

Jason looks worried now, so Tim tries to reassure him. His mouth doesn’t feel like it’s working right. “It’s gonna be okay, Jason. Bruce’s gonna roll up on his motorcycle in like three, two, one—” He doesn’t notice the stunned look on Jason’s face at his words because at that moment the motorcycle roars up the mountain toward them.

“No! JASON!” Batman’s, no Bruce’s despairing howl cuts through the night and Jason and Tim both turn as one towards the dark figure running in the direction of the burning warehouse, urgency and desolation impacting his usually graceful movements. Tim’s never seen Batman lose it so completely.

Jason must make a noise, because Batman’s head snaps toward them. Suddenly he’s right there, carefully but quickly lifting Tim off of Jason and checking them both over with efficient movements.

His voice is rough, desperate, still far more Bruce than the Bat as he growls, “Robin, report.” Both boys straighten automatically at his tone and words.

“Don’t know how long I was unconscious, B. Joker escaped—”
“We should start heading south. I programmed the Batplane to land in the clearing off the access road there—”

Batman’s eyes visibly widen behind the cowl as both boys on the ground start debriefing simultaneously. “The Batplane is in a clearing south of here.” He repeats, allowing the silence to press the unknown boy. His looming figure and expectant stare are usually more than enough to get someone talking.

Tim nods, darkness pressing in and sinking fast. He feels oddly floaty, but Bruce is here and Jason’s alive so everything must be fine.

“Yeah, I grabbed everything I could think of in the Cave to save Jason, even the defibrillator and some oxygen in case I didn’t make it here in time to save him from the explosion. It was suffocation from the smoke that actually killed him you know, that’s what the autopsy report said anyway.”

His voice tapers off to a mumble, eyes closed and unaware of the twin expressions of shock and horror on the others’ faces.

“Should be a relatively easy fix since he didn’t get blown up this time. Set the broken bones, wrap the ribs, clean and bandage the lacerations, morphine and antibiotics. Um, grabbed some of his extra blood bags, it’s in the cooler. You know I’m type O so you c’n give ‘im some from me too if y’ run out of A pos…” His voice trails away as he succumbs to the built up tension and stress of the past few hellish days and passes the fuck out.

Chapter End Notes

**Jason:** *Prepares himself for death*

**Other Tim:** *Saves Jason, proceeds to perv on him while concussed* “You smell gooooood.”

**Jason, suspicious but flattered:** “You better be fuckin’ cute, asshole.”

**Other Tim:** *Falling asleep due to concussion* “I’m so glad you didn’t die again, Jason! Oh hey I saw your autopsy report that one time.”

**Jason, Batman:** “…THE FUCK?”
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Jason stares at the unconscious stranger who just saved him from certain doom by way of explosion, or no, wait, fucking suffocation what the actual fuck. The guy’s wearing a suspiciously familiar uniform, like an amped up version of the Robin costume with a useful-looking harness. Jason kinda wants one.

But there are more important things to deal with first, like who the fuck this guy is, the really fucking unhealthy way his pupils were two different sizes before he closed his eyes, his knowledge of their secret identities, how he knew exactly what Jason’s injuries are, and what the fuck he meant when he mentioned a motherfucking autopsy report.

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Oh, and also godfuckingdamnit Jason hurts, so maybe some treatment for all the how’s my forehand the motherfucking Joker did to him with that crowbar goes on the list, too.

Other points to consider later are the gentleness with which the stranger handled Jason, how carefully he covered him during the explosion protecting him like he was something precious, the things he mumbled after about Jason’s hair being soft and smelling really good. Which, huh.

Jason’s not sure what to think about that yet. Maybe he’ll figure it out once the dude’s mask comes off. His eyes were really pretty and his voice didn’t sound like an old lech…

Possible explanations he’s come up with for the dude so far include: one of Joker’s henchmen who got cold feet and is really into cosplay (although that doesn’t explain his knowledge about their identities), Bruce’s hidden love child who found out about their secret lives and is trying to live up to his heritage, or a new Robin Batman’s secretly been training to replace him. That last option seems depressingly likely, considering how much he and B have been butting heads lately. Fuck everything.

The idea that Bruce could replace him makes his heart clench painfully and he has a spasm of reluctant sympathy for Dick.

Of course, none of those account for the shit the guy was rambling about there at the end, like how
he knew all about Jason’s injuries and has apparently seen his goddamn autopsy report Jesus fuck what the hell.

Jason side-eyes Batman consideringly as the man recovers from his shock and makes quick work of removing the cuffs from Jason’s wrists, rubbing his hands briskly but carefully to restore circulation. Yeah, replacement Robin or love child, definitely, maybe with a bit of time travel thrown in for kicks.

He watches Bruce, who’s staring at Mr. Unconscious again like he’s just grown a second head and it’s also babbling about impossible and upsetting things.

Jason takes a deep breath. If Bruce has been hiding a love child or replacement Robin from him, and the kid’s grown up to be a goddamn time traveler, it makes sense Bruce is a little thrown. This situation calls for a delicate touch. Jason’s all about delicate. Really.

“Hey B, so this guy knows our real names and he’s dressed like a Robin. You wanna come clean now and skip the awkward denials? Cause I figure either he’s some kid you picked up and started trainin’ on the side, or he’s a slip o’ your dick you been training and tryin’ to hide.” Fuck, was that too crude? I probably should have said “love child”. Damn, he’s not even saying “language”, he must be really fuckin’ affected by all this.

Bruce stares at him silently, somehow managing to convey his horror without actually changing his facial expression. “No.” Bruce begins checking Mr. Unconscious over for signs of injuries besides the concussion.

“Okay, any chance you got a love child you didn’t know about then?” Jason presses on resolutely. “Sure you’re real careful now, but everyone makes mistakes and you woulda had to’ve been awful young at the time.” Bruce looks slightly pained, so Jason quickly reassures him.

“No worries, man, with Brucie’s rep honestly you’re lucky a dozen more brats haven’t popped up outta the woodwork already. And this one seems like he’ll fit right in! He can skip the panties and go straight to the big vigilante pants!” Jason ignores the sound of Bruce choking. He understands; old people get kinda set in their ways. An unplanned kid at his time of life, it’s a lot to take in.

He squints at the unconscious guy, trying to judge his age. It’s pretty hard to make out much through the costume, and the cowl covers most of his face. His pale smooth chin doesn’t give anything away, but his lips are sweetly curved, pink and soft-looking.

Jason wonders what the rest of him looks like, then shoves the thought away. Stupid fucking full-face cowl. He imagines a younger Bruce-face under the cowl and scowls, suddenly much less interested in what the guy looks like.

Bruce has actually turned his head to stare at Jason in pointedly disbelieving silence, which, okay, Jason’s kinda rambling like a crazy person but he just had a really traumatic experience and that guy said some freaky shit and Jason’s in a fucking delicate state okay, god fucking damnit. Fuck.

Jason’s voice climbs louder and he gestures angrily, ignoring the sharp pain the movement causes. “I’m not judgin’, B, okay actually I’m really fuckin’ judging what the actual fuck that guy said fucking autopsy report B—”

Jason doesn’t notice the wobble in his voice until he’s being pressed tight against an armored chest, strong arms wrapped around him and picking him up like he’s nothing. He gasps wetly, and now he’s being tucked into B’s lap like a little kid.
“It’s okay, Jay-lad.” Bruce’s anything but silent now, his voice in Jason’s ear a constant stream of comfort and reassurances. “You’re okay. We’ll figure everything else out later. What matters now is you’re safe.”

That loving embrace, that caring voice, the way something relaxes in Jason that had been small and tense and scared ever since he first heard that horrible laugh and realized he was in for a world of pain, it all comes together to mean safety to him now. After all he’s been through, everything Joker did, this proves to be Jason’s breaking point.

He stops trying to hold it all together. His body wracks with the force of his sobs as he shakes apart in the safety of his dad’s protective embrace, letting Bruce stroke and soothe him.

“I’ve got you, son.” Bruce bends his head down and holds on even tighter, which does nothing to hide the fact that the goddamn Batman is shaking. Jason feels wetness in his hair and realizes with a kind of humble, stunned awe that Bruce is crying. For him.

Somehow it never occurred to him that Bruce actually loves him. Him, Jason Todd, not the soldier for the Mission, just the boy. He clings tighter, letting himself believe it, feeling a wounded part of him that’s still young and scared and hurting from Willis’ fists and Catherine’s inadequacies and Sheila’s everything start to finally heal a little.

He manages a shaky grin. Things with B over the last few months might’ve been a hell of a lot easier if he’d had this little epiphany sooner. He’d been so sure B would just throw him away because he fucked up, that he was just a disappointment… fuck if he hadn’t had that wrong, and it’s shocking how good that feels.

“I’m so sorry, Jason,” Bruce breathes shakily.

Jason blinks. “The hell for? You’re not the one who beat the shit outta me and tried to blow me up.” He feels Bruce’s entire body flinch.

“It’s my fault. And… I was almost too late. I was too late. If this man hadn’t been here…”

God. Jason can’t handle this much emotion, he’s already gonna be processing this shit for a year. Time to redirect. “Quit blaming yourself for everything, B, nobody needs you getting all fuckin’ broody.” Bruce huffs a hoarse laugh and finally meets Jason’s eyes.

“I am the reason you were in danger in the first place. Jason, can you ever forgive me?” Bruce whispers, still clutching Jason close.

“Fuck that, there’s nothing to forgive, B,” Jason manages. And if he lets himself enjoy the comfort of the hug a few moments more, well, it’s not like there’s anyone here to judge. Mr. Unconscious doesn’t count.

* 

Bruce carefully unloads both boys from the Batplane onto beds in the Cave, mindful of their injuries and aware their Bat-training means they’ll wake up fighting, even under the influence of anesthetics and the kind of pain medication that would floor a grown man.

He is positive the unknown boy is somehow one of his; the boy’s words, the familiarity of the traps Bruce encountered and disabled as he removed the boy’s uniform to tend to his (many) injuries, his very appearance and evident trust for both Bruce and Jason all attest to his being one of them.

It remains to be seen how, and for what purpose he is here. If the boy is from the future, he is either a
fool to risk destabilizing the timeline just to save one life, however precious, or he is running from a future so dark that timeline isn’t worth preserving.

If the boy is from an alternative universe, it must be close enough to theirs to match the circumstances of Jason’s capture and- and- his mind stutters, unable to confront the thought that, but for the intervention of this man, his son would be dead. He stares at the sleeping unknown, struck again by the familiarity of his now-exposed face but unable to place him.

No matter. He will find out who the boy is, and his circumstances. If he is from another universe, Bruce will draw on his vast resources and contacts to send him home. He imagines another version of himself, coping (probably badly) with one of his boys being missing in another universe, and winces.

If the boy is a time traveler running from something, he will protect him and provide for him. He owes him that much and more for saving his son.

Alfred approaches, hooking the boys up to monitors and replacing the fluids in their IV bags. The older man smiles fondly and brushes Jason’s curls back from his forehead, hand lingering a moment to hide its tremble.

Bruce winces at the lines of exhaustion on his old friend’s face, put there by too many stressful nights. The knowledge of how very close they came to the worst tonight, the fact they almost lost Jason, is almost enough to make him want to hang up the cowl for good and take his children somewhere far away, protect them from this life and its inevitable consequences.

Almost.

Not for the first time, Bruce wishes he were a better man.

Alfred interrupts his introspection, glancing at the other bed. “Have you any word on the identity of our young guest?”

“No yet. I had to get them both stabilized, and then I was occupied with flying the plane and monitoring their condition. Jason,” Bruce’s jaw tightens, too weary and emotionally wrought to prevent a spasm of pain from flashing across his face. “That damned clown almost…”

“Indeed, Sir, and he shall be dealt with in due course. For the moment, the young master is home where he belongs, and I have sent Master Richard a message including a full report of tonight’s events summarizing Master Jason’s injuries and prognosis.”

“Are you certain that was a good idea? Dick is tied up on a mission in space with his team; he can’t do anything helpful at this point.”

Alfred levels a piercing stare at his eldest charge, straightening minutely. “And it is my opinion informing Master Richard of his brother’s near escape is less a matter of his potential usefulness to the Mission and more a matter of duty to one’s family. He was most distressed at this turn of events and expressed his intention to return post-haste.”

Bruce only manages to hold his old friend’s gaze for a moment before he glances away, focusing on the reassuring rise and fall of his son’s chest. “You’re right, Alfred. Thank you.” He doesn’t look up as Alfred finishes up with the boys and leaves the Cave.

Bruce is predictably brooding when Dick rushes into the Cave still in the fingerstripes, clutching his
domino. He hasn’t stopped to change or even think really since he got Alfred’s message. Sure, it said Jason was stable, but what if…?

Dick hurries to Medical and sweeps a penetrating look over Jason’s still form, noting his little brother’s healthy color and steady respiration. He sways as the tension leaves his frame, face lax with relief.

When he realized Jason had been captured by the Joker… God. The boy looks smaller than usual, swathed in so many casts and bandages. Dick quickly checks his vitals, just to confirm what his eyes are telling him. Jason’s going to be okay.

Alfred was upstairs polishing the good silverware at 4 am, though, so something must be really wrong…. If Jason’s going to be fine, then… Dick looks again at Bruce’s stiff posture, the tension in his back and neck, the bleakness in his eyes.

Ah. Yeah, that makes sense. Okay, time to distract B so he doesn’t hole up in the Cave for the next week or three, ignoring everyone and obsessing about all his mistakes. Letting the Boss sink into a spiral of depression and self-blame isn’t going to help anyone, not when Jason’s recovering and Joker’s still on the loose. So, I’ll just pick a fight and give Bruce an outlet for all that scary emotion he’s trying to internalize, the sad sack… yep, time to put the fun in dysfunctional once again!

Dick looks back to Jason and does a double take, realizing there are bodies in two recovery beds. What the…? Guess Alfred’s report didn’t mention everything. I didn’t realize his rescuer was hurt too. He sees tousled black hair on both pillows, and with rising and not totally feigned indignation turns to confront Bruce.

Welp, this is as good an excuse as any to yell at him and rile him up. The things I do for this family… okay, for Alfred. Alfred and his delicious, delicious cookies…

“Another one, Bruce? Really?” Dick gestures, sweeping an arm dramatically toward the sleeping boys. “We’re not freakin’ potato chips, B, you can have just one!”

He knows there’s probably a semi-reasonable explanation for the new kid’s presence when Jason was attacked. Bruce probably hasn’t stuck another kid in his costume without telling him about it. Doesn’t have another black haired, blue eyed boy lined up and waiting in the wings for when Jason gets too hurt or too violent to patrol. Probably.

He huffs, eying the aggressively stoic line of Bruce’s back. Although maintaining his perfect stillness, the older man is starting to look slightly hunted. Well, any reaction is better than the silent brooding and angst at this point.

Dick stares at him. “He has blue eyes, doesn’t he?” At Bruce’s pointed silence, Dick rolls his eyes. “What am I saying, of course he does.”

No reaction. Time to push a little harder. “The first step in the recovery process is admitting you have a problem, B. Are you ready to acknowledge your addiction to collecting orphans who look like you? I want to help you, Bruce, but first you have to admit you have a problem.”

Bruce’s back looks slightly offended now, win, plan ‘needle Bruce until he quits brooding like a giant man-bat baby so Alfred stops needlessly polishing all the silverware upstairs instead of baking cookies’ is totally a success, and without any punches being thrown, so Dick grins, bouncing in place.

“What did this one steal, anyway, the hubcaps? Or did he just try for the whole Batmobile? It had to
be something impressive to catch your attention after Jason’s impressive debut.”

Bruce busies himself at the Batcomputer, avoiding looking at Dick. “It was the Batplane, actually,” he mutters under his breath. Dick’s eyes widen and his mouth falls open as he rocks back on his heels.

“Wait, really?!” Bruce ignores Dick, who walks over to stand between the two beds and study the unfamiliar boy critically, hands on his hips. “Well, he definitely has guts.”

He smiles at the sleeping boy, noting the lean musculature, soft-looking straight hair he wants to push out of the kid’s eyes, startlingly pretty features for a boy, and abundance of bandages to match Jason’s. “Wait, how did he get so messed up? From the report Alfred sent me, I thought they weren’t caught in the blast?”

Without waiting for an answer, Dick sits on the other bed by Jason’s hip, tousling what he can see of his little brother’s curly hair, a stormy look settling on his normally sunny face at the number of bandages covering him.

Alfred’s detailed report of the injuries beneath those wrappings appears in his mind’s eye, taunting him with reminders of just how close he came to losing this little brother whose awesomeness he has only recently begun to appreciate. His stomach drops thinking of how cold he was to Jason in the beginning, how much time he wasted taking out his issues with Bruce on the boy who took his place.

Thank goodness he came to his senses and started being a real brother and mentor to the kid a few months ago. And thank god for this random kid. Even if he turns out to be a spy/plant/pod person here to take over the world, he’s earned Dick’s deepest gratitude for saving his baby brother.

He startles at Bruce’s voice. “The boy’s injuries predate the explosion; most are in early stages of recovery indicative of several days’ healing. We also treated him for dehydration and malnourishment. His current state is the result of exhaustion.”

“So you’re letting him sleep it off before you start the interrogation?” Dick inquires carefully, knowing what Bruce is like and deciding he might just stick around for a few days and provide a buffer for the poor kid from Bruce’s… Bruce-ness.

Bruce’s face twitches like he wants to roll his eyes but he doesn’t because dignity. “He seemed to know our identities, and some of what he said was troubling.” At Dick’s concerned look, Bruce huffs, raising an eyebrow like he knows exactly what Dick is worried about. “I will listen to his explanation and evaluate every possibility before making my decision.”

Jason’s fingers twitch slightly in his sleep, and Dick gently takes that hand in his, hoping his presence will soothe any nightmares. “And Jason?”

Bruce turns in his chair, a grim expression settling on his face. “You saw the summary of Jason’s injuries. The contusions and lacerations should heal well, although some scarring is unavoidable and the internal bruising may still be problematic.”

Bruce swallows, then continues roughly, “We are monitoring that, as well as the concussion which is actually the most concerning injury. Joker must have struck his head more than—” Bruce’s voice rasps and cuts off as his face twists in grief and barely suppressed rage.

“He’ll have the casts off his legs in about six weeks. As for his mental state… we’ll just have to wait until he wakes up. He recognized me when I found them, seemed to remember the events of his
capture, and generally acted like himself. Dr. Leslie assures me that everything so far points to the possibility of a full recovery.”

An unfamiliar chime catches their attention and both men turn to stare at the Batcomputer. “What…” Bruce types a few commands and the screens fill with windows, a slew of villain profiles, case synopses, and records of major catastrophic events with future dates spilling across all the screens in the Batcave. “…The hell is this?”

Chapter End Notes

Alfred: “I informed Master Richard his little brother barely survived his terrifying ordeal.”
Alfred: “You are the actual worst human being Master Bruce.”

Dick, peering over Batman’s shoulder suspiciously: “Are you hiding ANOTHER orphan over there?”
Batman: “….No?”
Dick: “You have a problem, Bruce.”
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Dick stares at Tim after he has finished explaining the exact methodology used to reset their universe by a week to save the world. “So what you’re telling me is there’s another Timmy, and he’s trapped God knows where in time in another universe, and there’s nothing we can do to help him?!”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Dick stares at Tim after he has finished explaining the exact methodology used to reset their universe by a week to save the world. “So what you’re telling me is there’s another Timmy, and he’s trapped God knows where in time in another universe, and there’s nothing we can do to help him?!”

Tim winces. Dick’s eyes are starting to look a little wild. “Um, yes?” Dick starts pacing, both hands tugging at his hair as he mutters under his breath.

“So he might be trying to survive in the middle of World War II, or crossing the prairies in a covered wagon, or helplessly wandering around before life crawled out of the primordial ooze?!”

Tim nods, and Dick sucks in a breath, grabbing Tim by the shoulders and shaking him. “This is not good, Timmy, Other Tim can’t live on primordial ooze alone! Other Tim needs coffee to function properly, Timmy, not ooze!”

Tim takes a sip from his cup in blatant acknowledgement. Truth. Ah, delicious life-bringing coffee.

He eyes Dick carefully, still a bit surprised by the overprotectiveness that seems to be Dick’s way of compensating for the guilt he feels after pulling his head out of his ass and realizing what a, well, dick, he’d been to Tim back when B was lost in time. It’d been a few months of groveling with some embarrassingly emotional heart to hearts, but things are pretty good between them these days.

Tim considers, and decides maybe Dick hasn’t quite groveled enough to let it go completely just yet.

He loves his brother, and he understands where the older man was coming from back then. He’d been walking through hell himself, it makes sense he only had the strength to share with one little brother. Still. It’s never nice to be picked last.

Yeah, he’ll wait just a little longer to tell Dick he and B are already working on a way to find Other Tim and bring him home. It won’t actually hurt anything to let him stew a bit more, and Tim’s really enjoying the little warm glow he feels listening to Dick worry about Other Tim. It’s oddly reassuring to see how much he cares.

Tim and Bruce haven’t gotten much from studying the device itself, but they did manage to identify a magical anomaly in readings taken from Tim’s own body that might just lead them to Other Tim.

If the magical anomaly is related to Tim’s use of the device, there is a strong chance an experienced magic user may be able to treat it as a beacon to find another Tim with the same anomalous trace, somewhere in the Multiverse.
Dick doesn’t need to know about that just yet.

“I’m not happy about this either, Dick. Especially since Other Tim knows everything I knew when we pressed the button. He understood the risks, and accepted them.” Tim sighs quietly. “As far as he knows, no one’s coming for him.”

Dick whimpers, looking horrified, and honestly Tim is starting to feel slightly guilty. *Arkham*, he reminds himself. *Damian in my uniform. This is nothing in the grand scheme of things.*

“Stop tormenting Dick, Tim.” They both suppress a twitch as Bruce materializes immediately behind them. “Get down to the Cave. Zatanna is on her way to trace the anomaly we talked about and locate Other Tim.”

Tim nods. He starts to head out, then pauses and looks back over his shoulder at the big brother he has always loved, through everything. “Aren’t you coming?”

Dick follows with a confused, “Wait, what?” A moment later, “You knew there was a way to find him, didn’t you, and you just let me worry. *Tim-my*, you grew up *mean!*”

Tim smirks at him wickedly, then ducks to fend off Dick’s predictable noogie attempt. He doesn’t actually mind when Dick manages to capture him and hugs him tightly.

“We *can* fix this, Timmy,” he whispers into Tim’s hair.

“I hope so.” Tim really doesn’t want to think about the alternative.

The sappy moment is broken when Damian drops on them from above (seriously, has he just been lurking there clinging to the ceiling this whole time? *Why*). The twelve year-old bounces off of Tim’s back (which, *ow*) to land neatly on his feet beside them.

“Grayson, I demand the right to accompany you. If you insist upon pursuing this moronic quest, there will be *another* idiotic Drake added to this family to sabotage us with his blundering inadequacy. I must be present during any discussion of this matter to mitigate whatever foolishness you are planning.”

Dick grins happily, dropping one arm around Damian’s shoulders and tugging Tim along with the other. “Sure, Dami! It’ll be some good brotherly bonding.”


*Laever ruoy hturt ot em! Wohs em eht yaw ot eht yob.* Zatanna’s eyes glow with an otherworldly light and her long black hair stirs as though lifted by unseen breezes. Tim feels an odd sensation, like something tugging inside his chest, and the magician exhales.

“Almost… got it,” she mutters, concentrating.

Jason tilts his chair back, putting his boots up and getting dirt on the Batcomputer where he was writing a report when they all trooped in, and no one says anything about it. Jason’s only been tentatively working with the Bats a few months and nobody wants to upset the current truce. He’s even been coming in to the Cave and carrying on actual conversations with Bruce since the footage of his not-death proved to both of those idiots how much they care about each other.
Tim’s still not used to seeing him around the Cave instead of just meeting up on patrol or for rooftop pizza and hanging out after closing a joint case, but he thinks it’s a good thing. For the most part.

“So, what’s the verdict? We gonna hafta go rescue Other Timmers from a dragon in the Middle Ages?” And there’s Jason’s trademark shit-eating grin. Damn, if they really do have to rescue Other Tim from something Jason’s never going to let them hear the end of it.

Damian sneers from his perch on the dinosaur’s head. “Todd, you imbecile! Even someone with your staggering lack of intellect should realize dragons are not real. More importantly, this is lunacy! There is no adequate reason to expend effort to retrieve this Drake clone from the consequences of his own foolish choices!”

“Thanks, Damian. Nice to know where you stand. Next time I save the world I’ll be sure to leave you out of it.”

Damian ignores him, of course. “I am already expected to tolerate the bumbling ineptitude of one Drake; I refuse to countenance the superfluous addition of another. If you insist on bringing him back here, I shall assume one of them is expendable and act accordingly.” His voice lowers menacingly.

“Dami! No using either Timmy for target practice!”

“Cold, Baby Bat,” Jason sounds a little too approving. Such an asshole. Wearing those stupid jeans, all tight across his stupid thighs… Tim blinks quickly and looks away. What the fuck.

His life is already a train wreck, the last thing he needs is an ill-advised crush on Jason-tried-to-kill-me-Todd. He mercilessly crushes the tiny voice in his head that sounds a lot like Steph repeating “look at your life, look at your choices,” on loop. It sounds like she’s laughing.

“It will be for his own improvement, Grayson. Survival of the fittest. He should feel honored I am willing to thin the herd. Not that I expect him to express his gratitude.” Damian stares at Tim and narrows his eyes.

Tim rolls his. He knows if he looks at Damian’s eyes too long, the younger boy will interpret it as a challenge and attack. It’s weirdly endearing.

Dick sighs tolerantly. “No, Dami.”

“It will be nice in some ways to have two of me around.” Tim idly thinks about everything he would accomplish if he could just send Other Tim to all those boring Wayne Enterprises meetings… and the insipid galas… and the excruciating interviews with Vicky Vale… it would be glorious.

“Tim, you can’t force your clone to do all of your work while you play on your computer and eat donuts.”

“…But, Bruce…” He doesn’t play; most of his best work is done on the computer. With Other Tim’s help, he could accomplish twice as much. At least.

“For one thing, he’ll have the exact same idea.”

Tim taps his fingers regretfully. “True.” Well, maybe they can trade off. Other Tim is him. He’s sure they can come to a reasonable and awesome compromise.

“I have traced the magical anomaly.” Zatanna is used to the Bats, so she just ploughs through their chatter with a threatening glare. “As we suspected, I was able to follow the signature to the newly
created universe which contains the copy of Red Robin.”

Bruce leans forward slightly. “Can you bring him back?”

Zatanna shakes her head. “The energies between universes are balanced precariously as it is. Because he was integral in the creation of that universe, there is a strong chance his forceful removal would mean its destruction.” Everyone freezes.

Tim sucks in a breath, feeling like he’s been punched in the gut. Shit. He realizes in that moment how much he had come to depend on bringing Other Tim home, and now it feels like he’s being asked to abandon a piece of himself.

*Sorry, Other Tim…* His heart clamps painfully.

She doesn’t leave long for that piece of news to sink in before continuing.

“I also deciphered the nature of the magical anomaly, which is related to the use of the time travel device. Apparently, the scientist who created the device found a mage to help him control the time travel aspect of its use. *When* the clone travels is directly influenced by the most pivotal moment in their past. Ah, what you might call their heart’s desire.”

“What?” The confusion on Dick’s face is mirrored on everyone else’s. Seriously, magic sucks.

Zatanna smiles at him. “The moment in time he most wishes to return to, the moment of regret that most shaped his entire life.”

She sobered. “I do not know Tim well enough to hazard a guess, but for example, for you, Bruce, it would be the same dark night a mugger approached you and your parents outside the old theater in Crime Alley.” She looks at Dick. “And yours would be the last time you performed with your parents.”

Bruce and Dick stiffen in shock. “Wait, so whatever Tim most wants to change, his double gets the chance to do that?” Dick looks a little like he’s thinking about using the device. Worryingly, so does Bruce.

Tim carefully edges the device back into the box and locks it shut. Bruce glances at him knowingly, and he shrugs. Whatever, not risking the damn thing exploding and taking them all with it next time it gets used. Maybe he should arrange to have Clark take it to the Fortress of Solitude.

Zatanna nods. “Perhaps. If the event may be changed by a simple action, then yes. If it is something inevitable, like the death of a loved one from old age, he will simply live through it again.”

Bruce turns to Tim. “Your deepest regret. The death of your father?”

And. Tim’s voice is husky. “I don’t… really know.” He clears his throat. “Um, there are a lot of deaths, people I lost, that could fit the bill. I honestly can’t say which one some magical spell would decide is most important.”

And really, his mother and father’s deaths were huge, but so were Steph’s, Bart’s, and Kon’s not-actually-deaths. And losing Robin probably lands on the list too. “Is there any way you can check?”

Zatanna nods, and concentrates again. “Nehw erew ouy nugeb,” she intones, then pales.

Tim has a bad feeling about this.
Zatanna swallows. “I recognize this date, when the new universe began.” She turns, and looks straight at a startled Jason. “It is the date of your death.”

Oh. Shit.

Jason’s mouth falls open in shock as he sits up abruptly while his feet drop to the floor with a muffled thump. The Cave erupts in a cacophony of voices, startling the bats which in turn start flying around and screeching, and by the time anyone thinks to look for Tim, he’s gone.

Chapter End Notes

**Dick:** “Oh my god Other Tim’s lost in time and space!”

**Tim, snickering:** “Yep, totally lost. Sure wish we could find him. He must be so—”

*guffaws* “—lonely, and scared!”

**Dick, distraught:** *Sobs*

**Damian, unimpressed:** “So what?”

**Dick, weeping:** “We’ll never find him!”

**Zatanna:** ‘Found him! Also, Tim’s gigantic secret crush on Jason!”

**Tim:** “Meep.” *Flees*

**Jason:** “The FUCK—”
Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Tim drifts up, slowly becoming aware of the low hum of computers, the astringent scent of antiseptic, the feel of soft sheets against his aching body, and the constant quiet rustling in the background. Bat Cave, his mind thinks groggily.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Tim drifts up, slowly becoming aware of the low hum of computers, the astringent scent of antiseptic, the feel of soft sheets against his aching body, and the constant quiet rustling in the background. Bat Cave, his mind thinks groggily.

A momentary panic tries to take hold as fragments of a strange, oddly detailed dream about the end of the world and time travel and Jason as Robin of all things float through his tired mind, before he dismisses it all and stagers out of bed.

Just a dream. If I really traveled through time and did and said all that in front of Bruce, I’d definitely wake up restrained in an interrogation cell, not bandaged in Medical.

Fuck, someone must’ve gotten me good. Scarecrow maybe? Whatever he drugged me with this time must’ve been strong, that was one hell of a trip. Guh, coffee.

He finds his way to the stairs up to the Manor more by feel and sense memory than anything else, considering his eyes are still mostly closed. He follows the background murmur of voices and promising aromas to the dining room where he cracks his eyes just enough to check his usual seat is, in fact, empty before dropping his tired hurt ass down.

“What the fu—”

“Language.”

“Huh. That’s… Is he even awake?”

“Doesn’t look like it.”

Tim ignores the voices and slits his eyes open again, scanning the table for—ah, there. He snakes a hand out and snags the target from where it was hiding from him behind a newspaper.

“Did he just…?”

Smothered chuckle. “Yeah, he totally did.”

Tim moans as he takes his first sip, then cradles the warm mug to his chest while murmuring endearments to it.

“Oh my god did he just whisper ‘my precious’. He did. He called it his fucking precious.”
“Language.”

“I feel like we should leave the room. I’m getting a little uncomfortable watching this.”

“Whatever, dick. This kid is fuckin’ gold.”

“Language. Jason!”

“Hmm, I wonder if he’s awake enough to respond to his name. Hey, Timothy. Timothy!”

Ugh, full name, why. Words. He can words. He forces his lips to move and make talking noises to appease the voices. “Mmmmph.” Eh, close enough.

“Timothy, why did you take Bruce’s coffee?”

The caffeine is starting to kick in and his mouth remembers how to talk. “Tim,” he mumbles. Then he registers the question.

He scoffs, eyes still mostly closed. “Who else’s would I take? Yours? I don’t know how you can even bring yourself to call that sugary adulteration coffee.” He takes another sip. Ah. Perfect. “Bruce takes his the way I do, black and bitter like our souls.”

Laughter. “Hey, I’m startin’ to like this guy.”

“Well, geez, you should, he voyaged through time and space to princess-carry you from your fiery doom.”

Wait, what?

“Fuck you, Dickface, it was more of a modified fireman carry.”

“Language.”

Tim frowns. That… doesn’t sound right. They shouldn’t know about his dream.

…And come to think of it, Jason’s voice sounds a little different. Happier, maybe. Not quite as deep. And he’s being unusually tolerant of Bruce. There’s less shouting than normal and someone should totally be throwing punches by now.

Which means…

Oh god it wasn’t a dream.

Tim whimpers softly, determinedly keeping his eyes closed. Ah, sweet denial, don’t fail me now. When I open my eyes I will be in my own universe. It’s a little shitty and a lot of things are messed up but it’s home, damnit.

“Oh, I think he’s waking up. Open your eyes, Timmy, you’re safe here!”

At those words, in the voice he has trusted since he was four years old, Tim opens his eyes and stares right into Dick’s, registering worry and amusement in those dark blue eyes.

Tim tips his mug back to get the last drops. He has a feeling he’ll need more coffee. He smiles and waves awkwardly. “Hi.”

He runs the last few minutes of conversation through his mind, trying to force it to make sense.
“Wait, how did you know my name?” He narrows his eyes suspiciously. “Was I mumbling in my sleep?”

Jason grins across the table at him. “A little. When I was down there you kept muttering somethin’ random about a dinosaur. Dunno what that was about.” Tim cringes internally. Great.

Bruce is smirking faintly. “Do you remember programming a data upload into the Batcomputer with a timed release?”

Tim winces. Ah. “The legacy drive.” That… was not supposed to happen this way. Well, at least it means B has the basics on his background and situation, and more importantly, apparently believes it, hence the not waking up restrained thing. “How long was I unconscious?”

“Over twenty four hours.” Tim groans. Yeah, maybe he should’ve given himself a longer time limit to make it back to the Cave and get back into the computer before his legacy drive autodeployed. In his defense he was working under a time crunch when he set that up.

“That was supposed to be a backup in case I didn’t make it, so others could still benefit from the data I have about the alternate future.”

“Which you have already changed.” Bruce’s face is blank, giving away nothing and staring at him with Bat levels of intensity.

So it begins. “Would you rather I hadn’t?” Tim shoots back.

“Nope!” Jason pipes up insouciantly, earning a quelling look from Bruce.

Tim shrugs. “If you read all the plans on the drive, then you know there are redundancies in place to account for the future here diverging. I have records of the corrective actions superhero organizations and governments of our world implemented in response to recent major disasters and supervillain activities to prevent them from recurring.”

He spreads his hands. “With those in place here, it won’t really matter if an event happens a few weeks later or a few cities over because the warnings and measures to combat each event were designed to be flexible. Even if some things change we should still be able to prevent most of the upcoming major disasters, or at least act to mitigate more quickly and effectively.”

“You realize your interference may end up making things worse in the end. There are too many variables to properly account for, even with all your calculations.”

Tim taps his fingers on the table, then smiles ruefully. “I thought about that too, and decided allowing known negative events to play out unhindered is worse than the potential side effects of interfering. If we always waited until we knew everything before acting, we would be frozen in indecision for eternity while Gotham collapsed around us.”

He clears his throat. “I, uh, had three days alone in the Cave to think about all this before I activated the device. I mean, a lot of that was spent planning ways to save my original world, but I spent part of it working on contingencies for Other Tim depending on when he landed.”

Dick’s brows slowly rise. “…Did you just refer to yourself in the third person as Other Tim?”

Tim stares at him unblinking. “…Maybe?”

“Just how much sleep did you get during those three days alone in the Cave?”
Wow, they just met and somehow Dick’s already a mother hen. “…That’s not important right now.” Tim steals Bruce’s coffee again, which Alfred replaced at some point, and drinks deeply. So good.

Dick looks like he’s trying not to laugh. “Well, I guess that answers that question. Lack of sleep explains some of your more… creative contingencies. Like the one where you had a whole plan for kickstarting the scientific method early if you landed pre-seventeenth century, or the one for taking care of baby Hitler.”

Jason looks intrigued and slightly horrified. “Were you gonna kill baby Hitler? Cause I see where you’re comin’ from an’ all, but even if it’s Hitler he’s still a baby—”

Tim shakes his head. “Oh, no, I was going to kidnap him and give him to a nice Yiddish family in the Bronx to raise. He never would’ve gone so far off the rails if he had a nice bubbe to keep him in line.”

Bruce frowns. “The sociopolitical climate and factors which resulted in the Second World War are far more complicated than—”

Jason interrupts. “Yeah, yeah, B, that’s great an’ all, but we’re getting a little off topic here.” He raises a brow challengingly. “So, when were you guys gonna tell me about this legacy drive thing? Anything interesting about the future I should know? I mean, I guess I must’ve been dead there, but…”

Bruce tenses and Dick looks away guiltily. “That information is need to know.”

Jason looks mutinous but subsides with a glare that says that discussion will be revisited later.

Dick directs his attention back to Tim. “You should’ve seen Bruce when your program started sending off evidence packets to GCPD. The vein in his forehead did that thing—”

Tim shrinks back in his chair slightly, all too easily able to visualize a furiously silent, apoplectic Bruce trying unsuccessfully to rein in a misbehaving Batcomputer. Wow, how did I not wake up in interrogation.

“Ah, yeah, I think I can picture that. So you were both sitting right there when it started…?” Sigh. “Of course you were.”

He fiddles with a lock of hair. “Um, does it help to know that evidence should be enough to put away forty-seven murderers, twenty-three major drug dealers and fourteen serial rapists for crimes they have already committed?”

Bruce tilts his head consideringly, and Tim continues. “In my original timeline, most of those guys weren’t even on our radar until they committed additional crimes down the road. Things that won’t happen now, here. We collected the evidence in those packets afterwards as we investigated each criminal and found more crimes in their past.”

“Some of the information you sent out led to the Joker’s apprehension.”

It’s too early to interpret Bruce’s intense stare. Tim speaks slowly. “…Do you want me to feel bad about that?”

“I was thanking you, actually.” Of fucking course you were, that was obviously your thank you glare. Learn to emote! It is impossible to read micro expressions before my third cup of coffee.

Alfred places a plate in front of Tim and he murmurs his appreciation as Bruce leans forward,
demeanor serious.

“Your actions to date and the data in the drive support your position as a potential ally. Of course, we will have to verify your background, and deal with your younger double knowing our identities after confirming his knowledge. I also have a few questions I need answered now.”

He nods at Dick and Jason. “Boys. Finish your breakfast.” A glance over his shoulder. “Tim, with me.”

Tim remains in his chair a moment longer, recalculating. He never expected Bruce to just believe him, not without suspicion and paranoia and tests and yeah, probably the interrogation cell.

This version of Bruce is different. Softer, he thinks. This is a Bruce who never lost Jason, and it shows.

A throat is cleared nearby, and Tim glances up, startled. Jason Todd is staring at him, a smile forming on his handsome young face, brows raised over blue eyes dancing with suppressed mirth. “You gonna follow him, Prettyboy, or should we ask Alfie for some seconds?”

Wow, his eyes are really blue. It’s so strange to see them without the green, and his hair without the white streak. It’ll be interesting to see if it stays black, or if it starts to grow out white now… and I’m totally staring again oh god. Why am I like this.

Tim feels his face heat as he jerks to his feet, embarrassed, ignoring the broad grin Jason’s wearing now. “Uh, yeah, I was just…” He shakes his head before hurrying after Bruce, determinedly not glancing over his shoulder to see if the others are laughing under their breath at him. He already knows; they definitely are.

Dick watches Tim practically flee the room, and turns to Jason. Whatever he was about to say dies on his lips as he takes in the full glory of his little brother’s face in that moment. Jason’s cheeks are lightly flushed, he’s got a little smile, and he’s staring after their guest with a dopey look that can only mean one thing.

Oh. Yes.

Jason has a crush. That’s so flippin’ cute Dick just wants to capture his adorable little brother in a hug and squeeze until he goes limp. But wait. This is perfect.

He’s been wanting to do something nice for Jaybird, to make up for being such a terrible big brother for so long. And now he has a chance to help Jay woo his first boyfriend.

Dick feels a predatory grin forming on his face. Oh I am going to have so much fun.

Okay, he can do this. I need to start out subtle so he doesn’t suspect a thing. “So, Jay, he seems nice.” Jason glances up, then does a double take and looks immediately worried at whatever he sees on Dick’s face.

“Oh, shit. No. Dick, no.” Damn, there must be too many teeth showing in his grin. He just can’t seem to control it right now. In fact, it feels like it’s stretching even wider. “Oh my god. Dick. Whatever you’re planning. Don’t do this. Please, don’t you fucking do this to me.”

“Aw, but Little Wing! You’re becoming a man. Can’t a big brother be supportive?”
“I will find a way to destroy you.”

Dick laughs. “Wow, I should have realized earlier, honestly. When you woke up in Medical this morning, you were just staring into space with your mouth hanging open. I was terrified you were catatonic or something from your injuries, but then you started blushing and I realized you were staring at Tim in the next bed!” Dick grins. “He is really pretty, isn’t he?”

“Seriously. I’ll dye the damn fingerstripes neon *pink* with fucking *glitter*, replace all your cereal with flax seed, make the horns on all your vehicles play *La Cucaracha*, fuck, Dick, I’ll even tell B about the time you—” Dick lunges forward and covers Jason’s mouth with his hand, darting a quick look around the room.

“Sh! You never know when he might be watching.”

“*Jesus,* he is such a creeper.”

“Yeah, he really is.”

“Dick, seriously though, I can handle this myself. So, you gonna leave me alone about this Tim thing?”

“Not a chance.”

“I hate you so goddamn much.”

“Love you too, Little Wing.”

*

The door to the library opens and Jason looks up, then watches with interest as Tim slinks in after his talk with Bruce. The poor guy looks like he’s been through the wringer, and Jason can empathize with that. B is a lot to handle, especially when the safety of any of his flock is at stake.

Jason sets his book aside. “Hey, Tim, ya got a minute?” Tim startles at the sound of Jason’s voice, big blue eyes widening and pink lips parting as he turns and spots him.

He’s just so *pretty*. Seriously, it isn’t fair. He couldn’t just be badass and heroic and interesting and *from the future*. He has to be drop dead *gorgeous* to boot. How is Jason supposed to deal with that?

He hasn’t been knocked on his ass by a crush like this since he met Wonder Woman, and that was different. Seriously, *Wonder Woman.*

Jesus, Jason needs to pull himself together or he’s gonna fuck this up all on his own, no “help” from Dickiebird necessary. He smiles and pats the cushion next to where he’s settled in the corner of the couch, casts propped up.

“Um, sure.” Tim pads over, the cuffs of the sweatpants he’s wearing dragging on the ground, too-big shirt exposing delicate collarbones.

Jason almost swallowed his tongue at breakfast when he realized Alfred put Tim in some of his clothes. It’s enough to give a guy *ideas*, seeing the other boy all sleep-ruffled and wearing his stuff.

Jason blinks and looks away, desperately trying not to blush. *Wow, great start, dumbass. Stare at him with your tongue hanging out, real charming. Fuck.* “Uh, yeah, so I just wanted to say thanks. For, uh, savin’ me.”
“I didn’t… I mean, of course I’m really glad I was able to save you, but I don’t…” Tim shakes his head. “My ending up here was completely unpredictable, a byproduct of something else I was doing. I don’t deserve your thanks.”

Jason shifts awkwardly, rubbing the back of his neck. “B explained who you are and how you kinda time traveled by accident or whatever, but the first thing you did when you got here was jack the Batplane and save me. I think that deserves some gratitude, yeah?”

Tim smiles faintly, looking away. “Um, I guess if you look at it that way. You’re welcome?” He meets Jason’s eyes again. “I’m just glad you’re okay.” He eyes the book in Jason’s lap and his smile widens. “Are you reading Jane Austen?”

“Fuck you, she’s amazing,” Jason snaps back on autopilot. Shit! Now he’s gonna think I hate him—

…And Tim’s laughing softly, face happy and open. “I never said she wasn’t! It’s just I used to wonder a lot about you, back when I was Robin, like what kind of books you read and stuff. It’s kind of unreal to be sitting here with you like this now.”

On impulse Jason leans forward and ruffles his hair. The long straight strands slide through his fingers like silk and he brushes them carefully back from Tim’s face.

“Your hair’s really soft.” He grins at the confused surprise on the other boy’s face. “Bet it smells real nice, too.” Tim looks slightly alarmed now, so Jason relents. “Just returning the favor, Prettyboy. Don’t you remember?”

Tim’s eyes are huge now and he looks more like something small and fluffy and vulnerable than a badass vigilante. Jason wants to pick him up and put him somewhere safe. Like his bed. Huh. Who knew that was something Jason would be into?

Jason didn’t, but he does now.

“Oh my god. I didn’t.”

Jason’s shoulders shake with laughter. “Depends. Didn’t what?”

“Harass you and say awkward things about your hair while I was concussed.” At Jason’s lopsided grin, Tim covers his eyes. “That’s it, I give up.”

Jason tries to peek under the hand to see Tim’s eyes. “On what?”

“Trying to make any of you think I’m cool. I had a chance to make a good first impression and I already blew it with my talkative concussion and pre-coffee sleepwalking. I did my best, damn it. I made a good start with the rescue and all, but it’s obviously just not meant to be.”

“You stole the Batplane. I think that cancels out everything else and makes you forever cool.”

“You would think that. Batmobile tires, right?”

Jason’s grinning and Tim’s chuckling again when Jason’s phone chimes, so he pulls it out and checks it quickly, then wishes he hadn’t.

Dickhead: he totes likes u! Put yr arm around him! ｾ(ᘥ_ᘥ)ｧ

Jesus Christ. Jason rolls his eyes and shoves his phone back in his pocket.

“Something wrong?” Tim looks a little concerned, so Jason shakes his head and tries to stop eying the corners suspiciously in an attempt to locate the camera Dick is almost certainly using to watch them. Fuckin’ bats.
“Naw, just Dickie bein’ an idiot.”

Tim relaxes. “Nothing to worry about then. Ooh, I have a bunch of blackmail videos of Dick being an idiot. Wanna see?”

He pulls out a slim laptop from… somewhere, and sets it on their laps while tapping on the keys and bringing up a promising looking image of Dick… in the Batsuit?! The pants are missing for some godawful reason, leaving him wearing just the top half of the suit and a pair of Superman underwear, those are definitely roller skates on his feet, and he’s about to collide with a horrified Riddler. Poison Ivy is looking on in what appears to be fascinated disgust.

Jason is laughing when he realizes his hand is still resting on Tim’s hair. He freezes, then carefully settles his arm on the back of the couch behind Tim’s shoulders, leaning close so they can both see the screen. He feels hyperaware of the heat of Tim’s body and can’t quite keep what must be a really dumb grin off his face.

His phone chimes eight times in rapid succession, Dick, so he turns it off, trying unsuccessfullly to keep from blushing while he surreptitiously flips off the camera he’s pretty sure Dick’s using to spy on them. “Yeah, sounds great.”

Tim smiles, relaxing into his side, holy shit he’s the perfect size and his hair does smell good.

He clicks play and Dick on the screen collides with the Riddler and collapses in a tangle of limbs and Batarangs and curses. Tim sniggers and Jason falls a little harder.

Damn, I’m fucked.

Chapter End Notes

Pre-coffee Other Tim: “Hrrgh.”
Dick: “…Is he still concussed?”
Jason: “He sounds like a zombie.”
Pre-coffee Other Tim: *Steals and drinks All The Coffee, wakes up* “Oh hello there everyone.”
Jason: *Blushes and stares at Other Tim*
Other Tim: *Catches sight of Jason, blushes and stares, flees*
Dick: *Evil grin* “Oh, JASON.” *Plans several chapters worth of humiliating matchmaking pranks*
Jason: *craps pants*
Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

Batman frowns. While convenient for their purposes, midnight is an unusual time for a twelve year-old to be home alone. In a house this size, there should at least be servants even if the parents are out. “Are you certain?”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

“It still seems needlessly dramatic and unnecessarily intimidating to do this in costume.” Nightwing rocks back and forth on his feet, clearly antsy to get moving.

“It is necessary,” Batman growls. “If he doesn’t know the truth about us, showing up in our civilian identities would be potentially compromising.”

“It’s gonna scare the fuckin’ kid shitless.” Robin’s voice warns across the comms. It’s true. Bruce intends to frighten the boy as little as possible; however, three costumed vigilantes bursting into a civilian child’s home will probably be traumatizing regardless of their intentions.

“Language, Robin.” It’s futile, of course, but Bruce still harbors faint hopes of teaching Jason proper communication skills. Very faint hopes.

“You’re just mad you couldn’t come along. Don’t worry, Little Wing, the casts can come off in a few weeks! You’ll be flying again in no time!”

“Shut up, dickface.”

“Chatter. Code names.”

Red Robin clears his throat, and the others fall silent. “He’s home. There’s no one else in the house.”

Batman frowns. While convenient for their purposes, midnight is an unusual time for a twelve year-old to be home alone. In a house this size, there should at least be servants even if the parents are out. “Are you certain?”

“Yes. As I recall Mother and Father were on a business trip to Brazil for over four months at this point, followed by another trip to Japan for the holidays without returning to Gotham in between. Well, they may be in Peru at the moment; they always had an interest in the archaeology there and rarely saw fit to inform me of minor changes in their itinerary.” Red Robin shrugs.

“The housekeeper usually stops by between six and seven to leave dinner on weeknights. She shouldn’t be back until Monday. No one else ever comes out here.”

“Jesus,” Robin whispers, sounding appalled.

Red Robin is completely nonchalant, apparently oblivious to having shocked the others. It sounds like he is implying his younger self will be left entirely unattended for over forty-eight hours, with only nominal adult supervision thereafter. Surely not.
Bruce’s disquiet is rising with every word that falls so casually from Red Robin’s mouth. *What kind of family leaves their child alone like this? Why does Red Robin seem to think this is okay?*

“I just saw a shadow cross in front of the light in the kitchen window, so my alternate self is—”

“Call him Tiny Tim!” Robin interjects.

“...Tiny Tim...” A quiet sigh. “...That’s going to stick, isn’t it? Fine. Thanks for that, Robin. Anyway, he’s in there.”

Best to evaluate the situation for himself before drawing conclusions. “Let’s go.” Batman takes the lead, dropping through the window and pausing in the shadows to take in the scene while the others follow.

It only takes a moment for him to realize something is very wrong with this picture.

For one thing, the boy is tiny, much smaller than he should be for his age. Granted, Red Robin is on the small side as a near-adult, but this is egregious. Bruce would have placed him as under ten years old, not more than twelve.

He is huddling on a stool pulled up to the counter, a meager peanut butter and jelly sandwich dangling from limp fingers as he stares at the intruders in frozen shock.

The house is eerily silent, and it is clear Red Robin was correct in his statement no one else is here.

The kitchen is almost painfully clean, appliances and counters gleaming and nothing out of place with the exception of the child. Everything looks showroom-perfect, a stark contrast to the warm, lived-in and welcoming feel of Alfred’s domain.

Wide blue eyes peek out at them from beneath a tousled fringe of black hair. The boy slowly sets the sandwich down on the napkin in front of him. He opens his mouth a couple of times, still staring, then manages to speak in a soft, small voice. “B-Batman. Nightwing.” He shoots a quick curious look at Red Robin, then continues, “How may I be of assistance?”

No need to drag this out. “You know our secret identities.” The words come out as more of a growl than he intends, damn it.

The boy jumps, looking shocked and terrified. Guilty. So it’s the truth, then. This child guessed his most well-protected secret.

Nightwing starts forward slightly before checking himself, obviously desperate to offer comfort but unwilling to potentially frighten the child further. Bruce suspects he’ll be getting another lecture from Dick after this on how not to terrify vulnerable civilians.

It doesn’t matter anyway. It is clear Red Robin’s information is correct; this child closely resembles the time traveler, sporting the same delicate features, though softened by youth. His reaction to Batman’s statement supports the existing body of evidence.

Red Robin sighs and shakes his head, rolling his eyes. “Satisfied?” Without waiting for an answer from Batman, he crouches down in front of the boy, who is now staring at him with even wider eyes and appears to have stopped breathing.

“Your voice—you you sound like—” The child shakes his head rapidly. “But that’s impossible!”

Red Robin removes his cowl and smiles at the boy, whose eyes grow impossibly wider. “Improbable
but obviously not impossible.”

“But why would you come to me, the paradox, what if—”

“Irrelevant in this instance. Parallel universe situation, more or less; divergent from this universe a couple of days ago. Think sandbox; changes are safe; interaction with our alternate selves is allowable.”


This is wasting time. With Batgirl and Robin both out of commission, Batman and Nightwing need to maximize patrol hours to keep the rogues in check. “You two can carry on this discussion later. Right now, we need to secure the evidence.”

Red Robin and the child both turn in eerie unison to stare at Batman, and then the boy lets out a small, hurt-sounding noise.

“He… He cuts himself off before completing his request, looking away and clenching his hands into little fists clutching the hem of his pajama shirt.

The boy’s distress is understandable; he has kept this secret for many years and most likely dreaded the inevitable confrontation the whole time. Bruce looks at the child, so tiny and frightened and alone, but Batman needs to make sure all potential avenues for compromising their identities are blocked.

“Show us the photographs, Tim.”

The boy draws a tremulous breath, then nods and hops off the stool to lead the parade of vigilantes through the silent mausoleum of a house to a sterile, completely impersonal bedroom. A small backpack hangs near the door, the only indication a child might live here.

Bruce thinks of his boys’ rooms, overflowing with books and posters and clothes and the general detritus of everyday life, and a few more pieces of the puzzle Tim Drake represents fall into place in his mind. No wonder the boy chose to live vicariously through others. There is nothing for him here.

The child produces a sturdy box after opening a hidden compartment in the wall and disarming several traps. At least he seems to have some idea of security. The nagging concern that has been present in the back of Batman’s mind since he found out about a child knowing his secrets and possessing photographs documenting his night time activities subsides marginally.

“Here,” the boy whispers, offering up the open box. Bruce notices the boy’s small hands are shaking, and his eyes look wet. One tiny hand reaches after as Batman takes the box, then clenches and retreats.

“May I…” His soft voice wavers. “May I please keep just one…?”

Batman stares, and the boy seems to shrink, wrapping his arms around himself in a pathetic approximation of a hug.

Nightwing is glaring at Batman like he’s a monster, and Red Robin is… Red Robin’s hands are twitching, and Batman can’t tell if the other vigilante wants to reach for his younger self, or if he is trying to suppress the urge to wrap his own arms around himself similarly.

Robin is silent on the comms, but somehow Bruce can still hear the judgement.
This is intolerable.

“We aren’t taking these away from you to destroy them.”

The child—Timmy—blinks rapidly.

“Oh. But… I… even if you’re just taking them away to keep them somewhere safer, I was hoping… I want one with me so I can look at it when I’m… please…” His voice is wobbling, and Bruce abruptly feels too large, too clumsy, too brutish to interact with someone this young and vulnerable.

“What one do you want to keep, Timmy?” Nightwing’s voice is so gentle. Bruce never manages to sound like that.

“The first one,” Timmy whispers. “The one that started it.”

Red Robin nudges Batman to the side and rifles through the photos and albums efficiently, clearly familiar with their organization. “He wants this one.”

The photo he extends is a glossy 8 x 10, slightly faded with age. Batman recognizes the image of a young Dick Grayson cuddling a toddler Tim Drake on his lap, both beaming, from the background files on Tim Drake, Robin 3 aka Red Robin he viewed while exploring the legacy drive.

He sees the way both the elder and younger versions of Tim lean slightly towards the photo, like flowers following the sun. This is… more than he wanted to know about Tim Drake.

It is not really something in Batman’s purview. Bruce sighs, scrubbing his hand over his face.

“We can leave that one. Timmy…” He hands the child the photo, which he clutches gratefully to his chest. “We aren’t planning to destroy or keep the photos. We are going to give them back to you, after we design a reliable failsafe which will protect them from being compromised in the event someone else tries to access them.”

The boy actually sways slightly, face flooding with relief before carefully blanking out again. “Oh. Um, thank you.” He scrubs his arm over his eyes, sniffing wetly.

Nightwing is still glaring at Batman expectantly.

“Timmy.” Batman waits until the boy looks up again. “We can’t leave you here alone. You’ll be staying at the Manor until your parents return from their business trip.”

The child jerks in shock, and Red Robin tilts his head in confusion. Bruce wants to simultaneously tuck them both away somewhere safe, and flee from their all too obvious emotional need.

There is a child in question. He is not going to run from that.

“You don’t need to… It was just for this week. I was fine. I’m not a baby.” Timmy is babbling, almost frantic. “Mrs. Mac had the flu, but she’ll be back next week. It’s fine. Please don’t call my parents.”

He has been completely alone in this house for an entire week?

The boy needs to stop talking right now, or Batman isn’t going to be able to keep himself from paying a visit to everyone who has ever had a hand in his care.

“It is not fine.” He’s growling again, but he doesn’t care. “Red Robin will help you pack a bag.” He turns on his heel and leaves the room, signaling Nightwing to follow.
Bruce lingers outside the door, as does Nightwing once he sees Batman has stopped. Nightwing frowns at Batman until he catches the conversation going on inside the room, and then he begins to listen just as carefully as Bruce is.

“…You’re sure they aren’t mad at me?” Timmy’s voice is a whisper.

“They aren’t, not at all. They just want to make sure their secret is safe, and keep you safe as well.” Red Robin’s voice is quiet and a bit rougher than normal.

“Okay.” A pause. “So… you’re a time traveling alternate universe me.”

“Yeah, pretty much.”

“That’s amazing. Um, would you… do you think you could…”

A small, warm laugh. “Sure, after we get you set up back at the Manor and you get some sleep I will totally tell you all the awesome stories about my adventurous life as a time traveling Tim-clone.”

“Wait, clone?”

“Tomorrow.” Pause. “Okay, I’ve got everything you’re likely to need. Remind me to get you some warmer clothes; I remember always being cold at night chasing the Bats around on patrol but not wanting to raise Mother’s suspicions about why I might need heavier winter gear.”

“Oh. Um, thank you?”

Chuckle. “No problem. There are a lot of things I want to do for you. You need someone to play chess with, for one. And nerd out with over cool tech. Oh, and I can teach you self-defense for someone with our body type way better than anyone else.”

“That sounds… it sounds great.”

A pause, then a little ragged sound like a cross between a laugh and a sob. “So, w-when are you going to leave?”

Silence. Then.

“Timmy?”

“Y-yes?” So small-sounding.

“…I’m not going to leave.” Voice firm, determined. Decisive.

A small hitch, a muffled sob, and then a plaintive whine. “Everyone I-leaves.”

“I know. I know. But I won’t. You matter, okay, Timmy? You’re so important to me, and I promise I will take care of you and not just leave. You don’t need to be perfect, or better, or fix whatever you think is wrong with you that makes Mother and Father stay away. Okay? I have had a lot of time to come to terms with our abandonment issues, and I will do whatever I can to make you believe this. Trust me. It isn’t your fault. It never was.”

More quiet sobs, and soft soothing noises. Dick is staring at Bruce like his heart is breaking, and Bruce swallows around the unwelcome tightness in his own throat before gesturing and moving away from the door.

Far, far more than he wanted to know about Tim Drake. It… hurts. It’s always painful to encounter
mistreatment of a child, and it’s so much worse when the child in question is one he’s starting to think of as his.

“Robin,” he whispers when they are far enough away not to disturb the boys.

“Yes, Boss?” Jason’s voice sounds a little watery. He’s clearly been listening in and watching the feed on the suit cam.

“Please ask Alfred to ready a room.” He clears his throat. “And see if he has time to prepare some hot chocolate.”

“Will do, B.”

When Bruce looks up, Dick is smiling.

* 

Timmy’s face is relaxed and peaceful resting on the pillow, his tiny form nestled comfortably into a pile of soft blankets. Tim watches his steady breathing a moment longer before carefully closing the door and stepping back, jerking in shock when he backs into a solid chest.

Bruce draws him a little way down the hall before speaking, a frown gathered at his brow. “Why didn’t you warn us he was neglected? We would have retrieved him earlier if we had known.”

“You… what?” Tim’s eyebrows feel like they’re climbing to his hairline. “He’s not… it wasn’t like that, not really.” He is so not prepared for Bruce to react this way. Seriously, what even?

Bruce continues to stare at him. His eyes narrow slightly. “It is completely inappropriate to leave a child his age unattended for long stretches of time.”

“Really? You never seemed to mind before!” Tim freezes, shocked at his own outburst.

Bruce looks confused, which, of course. Wrong Bruce. “Sorry! I’m… sorry, that was uncalled for. It’s just, this was always the status quo for me. I wasn’t given a room at the Manor until after my mother’s death. Um, about a year after I started training as Robin. Up till then I lived at home.”

“I… Batman sent you back to that place, every night?” Bruce’s voice is raw, tightly controlled with emotion leaking through.

“…Yes?”

“In God’s name, why?”

“Batman didn’t want anyone to find out I was Robin, so I had to be home at night in case my parents called or showed up unexpectedly.”

“That situation is intolerable. How could he…”

Bruce looks pained, and Tim doesn’t really know how to handle that. “It was fine. It really was. It’s not like he even wanted me to be Robin in the first place. I was…. It was fine.” Tim’s voice trails off. Bruce is just staring at him.

“I can’t even begin to imagine what I, he must have gone through, losing Jason. I think it must have changed him in ways I cannot contemplate. He must have been so afraid of being responsible for another child, if he chose to send you back to that rather than taking you in himself.”
Now Tim is the one staring. How are you actually Bruce Wayne. Wow, I had no idea you were ever this in touch with your emotions. He shrugs. “I’m just glad you don’t have to find out, B.”

And he is surrounded by warmth, eyes wide in shock as this younger version of a man he thought he knew holds him close. “Thank you, Tim. And I’m sorry for everything you went through because of any version of me.”

Tim laughs a little at that. “Hey, it really wasn’t that bad. I think I turned out all right, anyway.”

Bruce pulls back, and that soft light in his eyes is… pride. “That you did, Tim. Probably no thanks to me.” He claps his hand on Tim’s shoulder, holding on for a moment before retreating, leaving Tim in the hall outside Timmy’s room.

“You can come out now,” Tim says quietly after Bruce’s office door clicks closed.

Jason sheepishly wheels himself out of his bedroom, well-defined muscles in his strong arms and broad shoulders on display in a white tank. “I’m pretty sure we both noticed your door was cracked, by the way.”

Jason shrugs, clearly not caring. “Bats. Should I say sorry for eavesdropping?”

Tim smiles. “No, it’s fine. I mean, it’s not like I have a leg to stand on there.”

Jason grins up at him. “Yeah, you were a cute little stalker, weren’t you? He’s fuckin’ precious.” He huffs a laugh. “Speaking of the kid, you got a new name figured out yet?”

“What do you mean?”

“You know, since we have two Tims now. And you need a legal identity anyway so you can have a drivers license and get a job and shit. You hafta choose a new name.”

“No way! I’ll make a new identity, but I’m keeping the Tim part.” Tim lifts his arms high above his head, enjoying the stretch, then wonders why Jason is looking away and blushing. Huh.

“I already started working on it. I established some antecedents and then wrote to Mother claiming to be my late Aunt Adelaide’s son. Mother hated Aunt Adelaide and considered her an embarrassment to the family capable of anything, so she won’t be that shocked when a hitherto unknown illegitimate son turns up. And Timothy was Grandfather’s name, so Adelaide might reasonably have given me that name before putting me up for adoption.”

He sighs, rolling his shoulders. Wow, he really needs to get back into an exercise routine. Maybe he’ll start training Timmy tomorrow. Dick’ll probably want to help, and Jay can watch and give pointers. He can’t wait till Jason’s below-the-knee casts come off; it’s going to be so much fun to spar with him. Get his hands on him, and- right. Inappropriate thoughts. Bad Tim.

He drags his mind back to the present, trying not to blush.

“I said in the letter my adopted parents passed away and I want to find my bio family. She’ll most likely investigate, vet my claims, and then cordially ignore me. I’ll ask to meet Timmy, and after that it won’t seem odd if we strike up a friendship.”

“So wait, you’re gonna make Tiny Tim change his name then? We’ll start callin’ him by his middle name or something?”

“No, what? Why should either of us change our name?”
Jason squints skeptically. “That’s not… I mean, won’t it be fuckin’ weird to have both of you answering to the same name? Like, confusing?”

Tim grins, gently nudging Jason’s foot with his. “You’re all just going to nickname the hell out of both of us anyway. I don’t think it will be an issue.”

“Guess so, Prettyboy.” Jason smirks up at him, and Tim feels his face heating up. “But I still think it’s fuckin’ odd.”

“Michael Jackson gave all his children the same name.”

“Yeah, cause he’s clearly the best role model.”

“Compared to us isn’t anyone…?”

“No.”

“And since all the kids had the same name, they each got nicknames. It worked out great!”

“Tim, they fuckin’ called the little one Blanket.”

“That’s… cute, in a sad, kind of creepy way.”

“Fuck that shit, I’m callin’ the kid Tiny Tim. Or Timbit. Or Baby Bird. He’s so damn small, no wonder you’re so little.” Tim narrows his eyes, and Jason backpedals.

“Uh, little but fierce. Pint-sized powerhouse? Oh fuck that just pissed you off more. You’re really scary when you look like that. Jesus Christ that look is the last thing your enemies see, isn’t it?” Jason is laughing under his breath, holding both hands up in surrender, so Tim relents.

“Just don’t call mini-me Blanket.”

“No promises.” They laugh together, and then Jason sobered. “Maybe we can call him Robin.”

Tim startles, eyes widening, and he stares at Jason. He reaches out swiftly and takes Jason’s hand. “You’re Robin, Jason. You’ll be better soon, and you can patrol again-”

Maybe he…. God, maybe Jason doesn’t want to be Robin anymore. If Joker managed to take this from him after all, Tim is gonna be pissed.

“No- not like that. I mean, he can be Robin, and I’ll be… someone else.” Jason smiles a lopsided smile and turns his hand in Tim’s, tangling their fingers together. “I think… I think I’ve been outgrowing Robin for a while, and I was too stubborn to notice. I want to make a new name for myself.”

And, oh, Jason. That’s…

“Wow. That’s… that’s awesome, Jay. Any plans for who you’re going to be?”

Jason’s face lights up in a grin, and he dexterously turns his chair one-handed and starts rolling down the hall, tugging Tim along. “I got some ideas sketched out in my room. Wanted to run them by you since your suit’s got some sweet upgrades. Take a look?”

“Sure, sounds great.” It really does. Tim helps Jason maneuver his chair into the bedroom, kicking the door closed behind them.
The hope and happiness on the younger boy’s face as they sit shoulder to shoulder on his bed and work on crafting his new vigilante identity, one untainted by the past, fills Tim with a surging sense of wonder.

His heart is fluttering in his chest and his palm is tingling where Jason held his hand earlier. He can’t stop smiling as he pulls out his tablet to help turn Jason’s dreams into reality.

*

The rain drums against the window as Barbara pulls herself painfully out of the wheelchair and onto her bed. The darkness outside accentuates the emptiness that seems to be all she has left and she clenches her hands on the laptop, half-tempted to fling it against the wall.

What’s the point of checking on the files, now? What use is she? Sometimes she thinks the Joker took everything good that was in her, that leaving her like this was the biggest joke of all to that monster.

She knows it hurts the others to see her like this, which was probably part of his plan, so she hides and doesn’t let them visit.

She knows it makes Dick sad when she pushes him away. Well, it hurts her too. How is she supposed to forget everything she lost, when every time she sees him she is reminded? How can she even begin to try to rebuild their relationship, when her foundations have been shattered and from now on the two of them will always, always be on unequal grounds?

It would be different if she could still help somehow. But her vigilante skills are irrelevant now. She is broken, and no matter how she rails against her fate, she knows. She will never fly again.

Still.

Dick is good about keeping away when she asks him to, but usually he presses a little. A text here and there, an email, stopping by just to drop off a scone and some coffee from her favorite bakery.

He hasn’t been here to see her in a week, and he’s barely sent any texts. He came back early from his mission, but didn’t check in. This isn’t like him.

Something is wrong, and she is going to find out what. If her friends, her family are in danger, by God she will find a way to beat someone unconscious with her wheelchair if she has to. She will not allow anyone else to share her fate. To be broken.

Her fingers move on the keys, uncertainly at first, then faster as she penetrates the layers of security on the Batcomputer. Batman never locked her out, really, so it isn’t difficult.

What she finds, though… the blood drains from her face, then rushes back in fury. Jason. According to recent reports, he almost died, murdered by the same monster who shot and paralyzed her, and she never even knew.

Worse, even if she had been informed, it isn’t as though she could have done anything. She swallows, feeling every ache in her violated and slowly healing body a thousandfold. What she wouldn’t give to be able to stand side by side with the others and fight.

She wants to call Dick. She wants to slam her computer shut and curl up in bed to try to forget everything for a few hours. She wants to be whole again, to put on her suit and visit the Cave and see for herself that Jason is all right.
Still… behind the general information and ordinary servers storing neatly organized reports and profiles, there is something interesting going on.

Something new.

Babs accesses the hidden drive easily; she knows Batman’s security too well to fail. She quickly scans the information, eyebrows rising as she absorbs the contents of the files. From the future, her mind whispers.

She needs to know. She doesn’t want to know.

Babs clicks on her own file, opening Pandora’s box.

“Oh,” she breathes, in wonder. She feels a flicker of a smile on her face, a real one like she hasn’t worn in a long while. Her eyes fly across the screen, and she laughs, joyous and open. “Oh, yes.”

Chapter End Notes

Other Tim: “So here’s where child-me lives, alone, by himself, all the time. Ooh look there he is let’s go chat!”

Batman: *Appalled silence*

Timmy: *Impossibly adorable, pathetic, and lonely* “I am already resigned to your inevitable betrayal and/or mistreatment of me. Oh, you want to take my one comfort object? …Of course, here you go.” *Sniffles, hands over one comfort object while trembling pitifully*

Batman, unable to cope with feels: “I… can’t… okay, fuck this. You’re coming home with me and I’m smothering you in blankets and hot chocolate.”

Other Tim: *Genuinely unnerved* “Who ARE you and what did you do with the real Batman.”

Jason, popping out of nowhere: “Hey Prettyboy wanna go do a thing in my room with me?”

Other Tim, blushing but totally down for it: “Hnngh.”
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Red Hood ditches the bike to bring down three shitheads mugging some poor slob in an alley, channeling his ever-present fury into his fists but leaving the fuckers alive for the cops before taking to the rooftops. He’s following the signal from the tracker in Tim’s shoes and his heart is racing as he closes in on his prey.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Red Hood ditches the bike to bring down three shitheads mugging some poor slob in an alley, channeling his ever-present fury into his fists but leaving the fuckers alive for the cops before taking to the rooftops.

He’s following the signal from the tracker in Tim’s shoes and his heart is racing as he closes in on his prey.

Paranoid little asshole always finds ‘em when they’re in his fucking phone, but he only checks his shoes every three days. Oversight.

Goddamn, this family. It’s like they go outta their way to make it hard for Jason to watch their stupid backs.

The tracker stops at a safe house he knows isn’t on the Bat’s books. Of fucking course, Little Red and his fuckin’ contingencies.

He mercilessly crushes the curl of wistful affection that tries to accompany the thought. Not a good idea, Hood.

Jason disables the alarms before dropping silently through the window, knowing Timmy isn’t gonna thank him for following him here and he definitely won’t be pleased Jason knows how to get past his security.

Whatever.

Right now, Jason doesn’t give much of a shit what little Timmy wants.

Apparently, the Replacement’s been keeping secrets, and until Jason finds out exactly what those secrets are, he’s gonna go ahead and assume the worst.

It’s hard to be optimistic when every other fucking thing in his life has always gone horribly wrong in the most destructive, painful way possible. He’s not holdin’ his breath for that to change.

He already died choking once, waitin’ on a rescue that never came.

As he infiltrates the safe house, Jason shoves down the small part of himself that wants to be optimistic.
So some dumbass spell says the most important day of Tim’s life was the day Jason died. Maybe it doesn’t have to mean something awful and soul-destroying that will suck all the joy out of the friendship he’s been tentatively, incredulously cultivating with the younger boy, mostly in shock the kid is still willing to even spend time with him after everything he’s done.

And. He wants.

Wants this to turn out to be something good, hopes it could mean Timmy might like Jason, might care about him. Could maybe learn to want more with him, someday. Like how Jason wants more from him.

And.

It’s really fucking stupid. These feelings are so goddamn stupid, and Jason’s an idiot for having them.

As though the kid he legit tried to kill more than once, the guy he hurt and blamed for everything, heaped abuse on and whose trust he broke, over and over, like that guy could ever want Jason.

Jason knows he can be an idiot sometimes, but even he’s not that fuckin’ dumb.

Too many times, he’s reached for something good only to have it turn to filth and disappointment in his hands. Sought love, and found only betrayal and pain.

He deserves it, to be honest. Deserves Tim’s disgust and dislike. Fuck, if Tim wants to go back to that day just to watch Jason burn and make sure he does it right this time and stays dead, he’s justified after the way Jason treated him when he came back.

It’s just—Tim is so… he’s sweet, gentle and idealistic in a way he shouldn’t be after everything he’s been through, smarter than the rest of them put together with a snarky razor wit that makes you laugh even as it cuts you down.

He’s grown up steel-strong with the kind of convoluted morality Jason could lose himself in, mind and heart wrapped in a slim, beautiful, deceptively delicate body Jason would be more than happy to let take him down. Fuck.

Kid’s gorgeous, inside and out, and even though he knows Tim’s the definition of off-limits, Jason’s only human.

He wants.

But what he wants is impossible, and he burns away that stupid, stupid hope the same way he gets rid of all the other painful, dumb feelings he can’t keep himself from having. It’s easy, so easy, to let the rage rise up and take over.

It’s better this way, really. Whatever Tim has to say won’t hurt as much if they’re both pissed as hell at each other when he says it.

And Jason won’t let himself hope for something impossible.

He’s not falling for it again.

He just… needs to know.

* 

Some idiot is in his safe house. Tim glares into the darkness, refusing to move from his chosen
position curled up on the couch, wrapped in his fluffiest blanket. He just wants some time alone before he has to deal with the fallout from tonight.

He can’t stop his brain from analyzing the possibilities, though.

Twenty percent chance it’s ninjas coming to (fail to) kidnap him again. Thirty percent it’s Dick, wanting to cuddle and talk about his feelings. Honestly, he’d vastly prefer the ninjas. Forty percent it’s Red Hood with a raised gun and a snarl. Ten percent on some irritatingly unpleasant combination of the above.

A thump and muffled curse reach his ears and he sighs, burying his face in the cushions.

“Get out.” Tim’s voice rises quietly from the darkness of the living room. He knows Jason isn’t going to listen to him, but he has to try. “Just go away, Jason.”

There’s a glint from the shadows as Jason tosses a knife at the wall switch, smirking at Tim’s snarl when the room floods with light. There’s a tension in his frame that sets Tim immediately on edge. Uh oh. Here we go.

“Not gonna happen, Baby Bird.”

Tim sits up, blinking as his vision adjusts and clutching his huge blanket tighter. Maybe he can postpone this until Hood calms down a little. “I’m not in the mood for company. How about you come by tomorrow?” When I will safely be far away, maybe across the country with the Titans…

Jason pretends to consider it, then shakes his head. “Naw.” His grin is sharp, eyes cold. “Just gimme some answers, and I’ll be outta here.” Jason saunters over and sprawls out beside the smaller boy, ignoring his annoyed huff.

At Tim’s extended silence, Jason roughly scrubs a hand through his hair, scowling. “So.” He works his jaw. “The most important day of your life is the day I died. For some fuckin’ reason.” He waits pointedly, glaring.

Tim worries his bottom lip with his teeth, and nods. At least none of Jason’s guns are out. Well, except the ones on his arms oh Jesus stop it now is so not the time for this. It is never the time for this.

He sees the way Jason’s face is darkening and his stomach starts to knot.

Tim feels horribly exposed, his careful masks ripped away by a stupid spell. Flayed, on display. Now everyone knows how deeply he cares about Jason Todd. That Jason’s the most important person in his life, and he’d do very nearly anything to protect him from suffering. Even time travel, apparently.

Wow, I’m pathetic.

God, Jason knows, and he’s furious, and now he’s going to tell Tim what a presumptuous idiot he is. How unwelcome his feelings are, how he’s the very last person Jason would ever be interested in that way. His eyes sting and feel hot at the very thought and he blinks a couple of times, scrambling for control, praying Jason won’t notice and throw it in his face.

Fuck, he never wanted this. Jason was never supposed to know. He had a handle on his feelings, kept ruthlessly pruning the little crush back. He was fine.
It was easy enough. He knows he’s always been one of Jason’s biggest triggers, and the last thing he wants is to bring Jason pain or make the other man uncomfortable with his unwelcome feelings. He used that knowledge to keep the crush from igniting into anything… more.

He’s been happy just to spend a little time with Jason here and there, beat up bad guys with him, and make him laugh sometimes. It’s been fine, good, even.

Well, now that’s over.

And now Tim is facing what is most likely to be Jason’s brutal rejection while a sick, clenching feeling tightens his chest like a vise. It hurts to swallow and his whole face feels hot.

This is going to suck.

“So that reason was, what? Because it’s why you got the gig? Made you into someone who was worth somethin’, got to be Robin? Only it wasn’t all it was cracked up to be, was it? People died, didn’t they. Your friends. Your fuckin’ parents. And then after all that, you fuckin’ lost it, weren’t even good enough to keep it.” Tim is flinching away, barely controlled little movements at each verbal jab.

Oh… Jason’s really going for the throat. Of course he is, it’s what he does.

His words slip through Tim’s defenses and lodge like daggers in all the places he already hurts. Jason’s always been the best of them at finding sore spots and using words as weapons.

Tim feels his shoulders curl involuntarily inwards as he waits for the other man to go on, to get to the heart of the matter and rip into him for daring to want Jason.

Jason’s voice is deceptively soft as he stares at Tim, ice in his eyes and face set in an expression Tim hasn’t seen directed at him in a long time, hoped never to have aimed at him again.

“That it, Replacement? You wanna go back an’ talk to little Timmy, change things and make it so you never start down this path, never get into the life? Is the day I died the day your life started going to shit? Just another thing that’s all my fault, right?”

That’s… huh. Not where Tim was expecting this to go.

He stares, shocked out of his defensive curl. Jason… apparently somehow has no idea about Tim’s crush, has the wrong idea completely.

Holy shit, that’s a relief.

Of course, he still has to deal with an angry Jason and find a way out of this situation without either of them ending up unconscious.

“Or was is because you wanna be a real fuckin’ hero, go back an’ save me so B never even needed you at all. Make them all happy, wouldn’t it, so goddamn happy, if they could have that fucking kid back, the one who never broke, never died, never came back wrong. If they never had to deal with me.” Jason’s breathing heavily now, shoulders tense and hands clenched into fists.

And that is… so not okay. Jason should never feel like he is unwanted, like he is unloved. It isn’t true.

“So which is it, Timmy? I think I have a fuckin’ right to know.”
And Jason is so wrong, but telling him the truth might set him off even more. Tim can lie to Batman, after all, surely he can think of something innocuous but convincing enough to placate Jason—

Jason is full-on glaring at Tim now, and Tim realizes numbly any lie will just make him angrier. *What am I supposed to do?*

“Well? C’mon, Pretender, for once in your life just tell the goddamn truth!” Jason’s voice breaks halfway through and he flushes furiously, swiping a shaking hand across his eyes and sniffing harshly.

And Tim.

Takes another look at Jason, really *looks* this time.

Jason is tense, but his hands aren’t covering his weapons. He’s poised to *flee*. His eyes aren’t ice anymore, they’re just… *sad*. His body is curved away from Tim, like he’s afraid Tim’s going to *hurt* him.

Jason isn’t stupid. He *can’t* have missed the implications of what Zatanna revealed earlier. Must have realized the most logical explanation. He’s blustering, throwing out other possibilities, but… he’s… *scared*.

Tim can’t lie to him now. Not about *this*, not when Jason’s looking right at him with that vulnerable, *hurt* expression in his gorgeous teal eyes. Even if he hates it, even if it makes things *worse*, Jason deserves the truth. To know how much he matters to someone, even if it’s just Tim.

Tim takes a deep breath.

“You’re an idiot.” *Hmm, not the best start. Should’ve planned this better…*

Jason blinks and rears back slightly, offended. “What the fu—”

Tim swallows and hurries on. “The reason I wanted to go back to that day was because you *died*, you gigantic *dumbass*. I *care* about you and I just wish I could save you from going through all that *pain!*”

“You… what.” An expression of honest amazement washes over Jason’s face and he turns his body toward Tim on the couch. “Really?” Tim nods, and Jason shuffles his feet and rubs the back of his neck. “But… why?”

Writhing internally, Tim squeezes his eyes closed and forces himself to just say it.

“Because you’re smart, and funny, and *brave*, and you don’t want anyone to know it but you’re so *kind*, and self-sacrificing, your mouth is so dirty after talking to you I usually feel like I need a shower, you’re cocky but I even like *that* about you, you’re such an *asshole* and you take being a pain in the neck *way* too literally sometimes, you…”

There’s a big warm hand covering his, just resting there softly. He keeps going.

“You *hate* pizza with Canadian bacon and onion and artichoke hearts, but you keep showing up on rooftops with it just because it’s my favorite…”

“It’s fuckin’ disgusting, Baby Bird.” Jason’s deep voice is so warm, wondering, *Tender*.

“And yet I’ve watched you *eat* it because you don’t want anyone to realize you’re actually secretly
very thoughtful and generous.”

“Hey, don’t go nuts.” Jason’s hand squeezes his. “I’m still an asshole.”

Tim nods, because that’s absolutely correct.

“Timmy. Tim. Open your eyes, yeah?” Tim shakes his head, and an infinitely gentle warm hand cups his face and slowly turns his head. “Please?”

He can’t avoid this forever, and if Jason sounds like that he’s probably not about to punch Tim in the face.

He opens his eyes.

Jason Todd is staring at him like he’s a wonder, eyes softer than he’s ever seen them and slowly spreading smile softening and lighting up his whole face.

“Hey there,” he says softly. “So… I’m tryin’ not to jump to conclusions, but that sorta sounds like…” His hand on Tim’s cheek is trembling. “You like me. Maybe you more than like me.”

This is.

This is nothing Tim ever expected. Jason isn’t mad, isn’t disgusted. If anything he seems happy.

Tim nods. “Um, yeah. I, uh, kinda thought it was pretty obvious after Zatanna blurted it out for the whole family, but I guess you need a little more reassurance? We should probably work on your self-esteem. You, uh… you really don’t mind?”

Jason laughs, long and low and maybe just a little bit unhinged. “Why the fuck would I mind the guy I’ve been into for months sayin’ he’s into me, too?” He tentatively pulls Tim towards him and presses a quick kiss to his temple, holding him there for a moment before chuckling softly.

Jason’s smile fades a little. “The idea did occur to me, but it seemed more likely there’d be some other explanation than you’d want… I mean, fuck, Timmy, I fuckin’ hurt you so bad, so many times. How can you even look at me…?”

Despite his size, Jason looks so vulnerable, like a word from Tim could break him again.

Never.

“Do you still want to hurt me?”

“No.”

“I think the fact you survived everything you’ve been through, dealing with untreated PTSD and Lazarus syndrome and… and so much, Jason, and made it this far is… incredible. I’ve tried to help you where I could, but I… I know I’ve always been a trigger for you, so I try not to push, to just let you come to me when you’re ready. And that’s… it’s fine, Jay.”

“It’s not fuckin’ fine!”

“If it got us here, it is.”

“Jesus, kid.” Jason looks pained.

And Tim… doesn’t want to see pain on that face, not now and not ever.
He turns his head slightly, feeling the roughness of Jason’s callouses on his face as he presses a kiss to Jason’s palm. Jason gasps softly, then lifts Tim’s hand in his and brushes kisses over his knuckles.

“Baby Bird,” he whispers helplessly, the corners of his mouth curling.

Tim smiles back. “This is what I want,” he whispers, and Jason just looks at him for a moment, heart in his eyes, before nodding.

“Yeah, okay.” He kisses the back of Tim’s hand again. “Okay, Baby Bird. I got you.”

They relax into the couch together, slightly stunned. *Holy shit, that just happened.*

*Now what?*

After a minute or two, Jason turns back to Tim, an unholy light kindling in his eyes and lips spreading in a familiar cocky grin.

*Uh oh.*

“So, you want a piece of this.” He leers suggestively and Tim blushes *hard.*

“Jason,” he says warningly. Not that it’ll do any good, when Jason’s looking at him like *that.*

“Does that mean Other Timmy has a thing for baby Jay? Is your clone pervin’ on my li’l alternate universe baby bro?” Jason waggles his eyebrows suggestively. “Do younger guys *do* it for you, Baby Bird? Do I need to go over there and give him *the talk*?”

“I don’t have to listen to this.” Tim starts to stand up. “I forgot why I like you.” He grimaces. “And please don’t call him baby Jay, it’s weird. Anyway, there’s no reason to think either of them would be interested in… in getting together.”

Jason loops one huge arm around his waist and pulls him down into his lap where he cuddles him like a giant teddy bear.

“Flying to my rescue in the most romantic fashion? How could they *not* fall for each other? Whaddaya think he did, Timmers? Probably rode up on a sexy black motorcycle, threw open the warehouse door and growled ‘Jason Todd. Come with me if you wanna live.’ Baby Jay didn’t stand a chance, probably creamed the scaly panties on the spot and woulda dropped ‘em if his hands weren’t all tied up. Hey, think Other Tim’s into kinky shit like that?”

“Oh my *god* why are you still talking.” Tim’s hands cover his face, but it isn’t enough to hide his blush. Even the tips of his ears feel hot.

“Sorry Baby. You said it yourself, my mouth *is* filthy.” Jason winks. His voice drops an octave. “I can do other things with my mouth to dirty you up, make you need a shower.” He waggles his eyebrows ridiculously again and Tim can’t help but laugh, even though he’s reeling from the heat flaring in his core at that deep, sexy *voice.*

*My god. Jason has a sex voice. I thought his usual voice was his sex voice, but apparently it gets even sexier.*

He inhales shakily. *I may not survive this.*

“Oh my god.” Tim’s laughing now and Jason’s chasing his mouth. They’re both laughing when they kiss for the first time, and it feels so *right.*
And.

Tim has tried so hard to hold back, to not let himself want this because he could never have it. He buried it so far down, denied it so long he is genuinely shocked by the depth of emotion coursing through him.

I didn’t know.

He feels dazed, shivering as big hands trail gently over his hair, his shoulders, down his sides to rest on his hips while Jason takes him apart with his mouth. Kisses him so tenderly, like nothing he would’ve ever expected from someone as big and rough as Jason. So much better.

I had no idea I was in love with Jason Todd.

His arms are wrapped around Jason’s big, solid shoulders, and somehow his legs are settled on either side of Jason’s thick, hard, glorious thighs. He resolves to bite them later and shakes a little at the thought, another wave of heat coursing through him.

Jason’s kissing his neck now, thrills of sensation rippling through his entire body from their points of contact and he’s gasping, whimpering, and Jason’s groaning and clutching him impossibly closer.

And in that cold, aching place deep inside, where he always tries not to feel, never lets anyone see how lonely he is, how much he wants…

The banked welter of emotions this man awakens in him, from incomprehension to anger to fear to protectiveness to desire to love…

…Ignites.

Chapter End Notes

Jason: “Ima smash some truth outta that devastatingly attractive li’l fucker”
Tim: *Scared of confrontation but still checking out Jason’s guns* “Eep!”
Jason: *Uses anger to try to hide vulnerability and gigantic crush on Tim. Fails.*
Tim: *Blorts out gigantic crush on Jason*
Jason: *Dopey grin, inappropriate humor*

*Kissing and lap-sitting ensue. Tim feels mysteriously pleasant ache in his pants, likes it.*
Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

The knock makes Tim jump because he wasn’t expecting anyone to try to use the front door now that the contractors are finished for the day. Most of the people he knows would just come in through the window, anyway.

“Hold on Jay, someone at the door. This should only take a minute.”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The knock makes Tim jump because he wasn’t expecting anyone to try to use the front door now that the contractors are finished for the day. Most of the people he knows would just come in through the window, anyway.

“Hold on Jay, someone at the door. This should only take a minute.”

“No problem, Prettyboy. I’ll be waitin’.” Tim rolls his eyes but smiles at the nickname, leaving the comm in.

He’s had to spend some time overseeing the renovation on his new headquarters in person to work on some of the secure areas himself. It’ll be worth it to have the Nest up and running again with living quarters for him and Timmy above and Red Robin’s domain below, including state of the art computer bank, gym, crime lab and vehicle parking. It’ll take a bit longer to rebuild the Redbird, but he can get by with a couple of Ducatis until then.

They’ll still spend most of their time at the Manor, but he needs his own space as well to properly establish his civilian identity separate from the Waynes.

Poor Jason’s stuck at the Manor with both B and Dick mother henning, so Tim’s taken to wearing a comm and just chatting with him on a private channel when he has to go out.

*Maybe I’ll bring him some chili dogs from his favorite vendor when I head back later. We can marathon some Firefly tonight. Timmy’ll fall asleep after the first episode, and then…*

Tim thinks about waking up the other night with his head pillowed on Jay’s shoulder with Jason’s arm warm and comforting around him, breathing in Jason’s clean spicy scent, and blushes at the heat that rises at the memory.

*Maybe, tonight…* He smiles, heart picking up at the thought.

The knock sounds again. Right, the door. Time to get on that.

Tim is wearing ripped jeans and an old t-shirt he may have stolen from Jason’s closet. He’s covered in paint spatters and his hair’s probably a crazy mess.

He is in no way prepared to face what he finds when he opens the door.

*Janet Drake* is standing there, elegant and immaculate from the sleek fall of her perfectly coiffed
straight black hair to the discreet gloss of her Louboutins, stilettos Tim as a child always suspected she could (and would) use to kill a man.

As she pins him in place with a comprehensive visual scrutiny during which he is positive she catalogues every tiny flaw in his appearance, she manages to convey disapproval of his everything with a single arched eyebrow and disdainful twitch of her fine nostrils.

In that moment he realizes his childhood impressions may have vastly underestimated this woman.

Please don’t murder me with your shoe, Mother. He swallows, throat suddenly dry.

“Timothy.” Janet Drake glides past him into the apartment, leaving him to trail in her wake. “We need to talk.”

Janet Drake watches Tim as they sip coffee out of mismatched mugs he grabbed from the Manor. She is making it clear through body language alone how horribly beneath her this is and Tim is valiantly pretending she doesn’t scare him shitless.

Janet is enthroned on a bar stool at the breakfast bar because the rest of the furniture isn’t scheduled to be delivered until tomorrow. At least he had coffee to offer her. Reasonably good coffee. Okay-ish coffee. Ugh, fine, awful, shitty gas station coffee.

Janet’s face spasms slightly as she pretends to drink said coffee.

She’s judging me on the coffee. Damn it, this is not representative of my taste! This is the coffee of convenience, Mother, not preference!

Tim stares at her like she is an apex predator and he’s a bunny. I have no contingencies for this, he thinks wildly. Why wasn’t this a contingency?! Curse you, Past Tim, for failing to anticipate this exact possibility and preparing for it!

“I wish you had let me know you were going to drop by, Mrs. Drake. I would have arranged more… appropriate… refreshments to offer you.” The society mask settles into place smoothly enough, but he still feels far too exposed facing his mother without the armor of an expensively tailored suit.

Janet scoffs delicately. “Neither of us cares a whit about refreshments, Timothy. Let’s not waste any more time on pleasantries.” She smiles at him. It isn’t her worst smile, though as always it fails to reach her eyes.

“Very well.” She’ll let him know what she wants in her own time. “I infer from your presence here you must have received my letter, Aunt Janet? …May I call you Aunt Janet?”

He hadn’t expected her to seek him out. He never anticipated having to meet her. She should have responded to his letter with a letter of her own, after retaining her own people to perform a background check on his carefully faked identity.

She isn’t even supposed to be in the country right now. She should never have confronted him like this.

She actually rolls her eyes, stunning him into silence. “I instructed you to dispense with the pleasantries. That includes quibbling over the finer points of your attempted deception.”

Well, shit. Apparently Mother paid better attention to Aunt Adelaide than he thought, and now he’s
caught.

He’s going to have to placate Janet so she doesn’t prosecute over his attempted identity fraud, then he’ll need to find another way to establish a new alias… Hell, without the Drake connection he’ll have to revamp his *entire plan* for taking over care of Timmy-

“Stop looking like that, Timothy, I can see you *thinking*. How many times have I *told* you never to give away your true emotions? Don’t give *anything* away for free. I will never understand how you can tolerate *existing* that way, *feeling* everything. It must be so exhausting.”

“Um…” His brain is not processing properly, because it *sounds* like she’s—

“Timothy, honestly. As though I wouldn’t know my *own son*. As soon as my private investigator sent me a photograph of you, I knew. Your father is still in South America; I thought it best to deal with this myself. What Jack doesn’t know won’t hurt him.”

“Oh my god.”

“Oh dear, it’s worse than I thought. How early did I *die* in your universe, child? Any version of me would *certainly* have taught you faith in *anything* is a weakness to be despised and summarily avoided.”

“Mother…!”

Tim is not absolutely certain he hasn’t slipped and fallen on his head while working on installing the security systems. This could totally be a dream, right? Fine, whatever, he’ll go along with it. *Why not.* “It was just an expression, don’t panic. You died when I was thirteen, and my universe is *this* one, they just diverged a few weeks ago and, to grossly oversimplify a long story, I ended up here.”

“Well, that is reassuring.” Janet sniffs. “I suppose the circumstances of my impending death are mutable?”

“Already dealt with.”

Janet tilts her head a degree. “Appropriately, I assume?”

“Well, the parties responsible are in Interpol’s hands facing charges in multiple nations, several of which are severe enough to warrant the death penalty.”

Janet purrs. “Excellent. You know the proper way to treat our enemies.” She waits expectantly.

Of course Tim remembers the lessons she taught him as a child. “Yes, Mother. Enemies must be so thoroughly destroyed they will be unable to seek vengeance later,” he recites.

She nods, satisfied. “Mercy is an expensive indulgence rarely worth the cost.”

Tim stares at her again, remembering exactly the thrill of love and fear he felt toward this woman as a child because *she is inspiring the same feeling in him now*. He still admires her on some level, still longs for her approval.

*Damn it. I thought I grew out of this.*

She sighs, smoothing her fingers over her skirt. “That explains it, of course.” She smiles at him ruefully. “I died, that ridiculous fool in black leather adopted you, you allowed yourself to be dragged into his pointless, quixotic crusade, then you got yourself flung willy-nilly through the
space-time continuum and here you are.”

Oh, holy shit.

“You knew?” Tim squeaks.

“About Bruce Wayne’s alternative lifestyle choices?” Ew.

“Must you make it sound like a sex thing, Mother?”

“Darling, he’s the one who prances around in tight black fetish leather and collects nubile, flexible young boys who obey his every order while wearing tiny little shorts that barely cover their a—”

Gross. Stop. Ew. “Please don’t finish that sentence. Also, never say any of that again.”

“Only if you assure me you wore pants.”

“As it happens, I did. Well, tights.”

Janet’s eyes flicker in approval. “Of course you did. You are my son, after all.”

She inhales deeply. “Now. We need to legitimize you, but I refuse to allow any son of mine to be attributed to Adelaide.” She says the name with deepest loathing, unusual heat flashing briefly in her ice blue eyes. “Here.”

Tim takes the thin folder she offers, his brows rising as he peruses the documents within. “Mother, this is ridiculous,” he protests, horrified. “It’s like a soap opera!”

“The general populace love this kind of thing, darling, you’ll see, they’ll eat it up.” Janet’s tinkling society laugh is as disturbing as ever. “The media will embrace it as a human interest story and Drake Industries’ stock will gain fifty points overnight.”

“You really don’t think people will have an issue swallowing this crap?” He wants to believe people are smarter than this, but…

“Of course not, darling. People wish to be deceived; the secret to success is giving them what they desire.”

Tim is still staring at the forged fertility clinic records, birth certificate, and court records he has spread out on his lap. “You’re planning to claim you had fertility issues in your early twenties, and had two embryos frozen.”

“It’s plausible enough to pass. Sadly, one of the twins didn’t survive the freezing process.” Janet fakes a moue of sadness. “Your father and I were devastated, of course. We went ahead and used the surviving embryo five years later, when we were ready for a child. Imagine our shock when we found out recently the clinic was being investigated for selling stolen embryos.”

She dabs at her dry eyes with a silk handkerchief. “It was difficult, tracing the records, but we managed to find the couple who had been given our other son after the clinic lied and stole him. The couple had unfortunately passed away during the intervening years, and after tracing a nightmare of foster care records, we found our other son living on the streets.”

“For shame,” Tim murmurs sardonically. “It isn’t going to seem weird to anyone that you suddenly have twins five years apart in age?”

“This is Gotham, darling, and we’re wealthy. If you’re not sprouting tentacles or absolutely raving
mad no one’s going to care. Trust funds cover a multitude of sins. Besides, it’s perfectly feasible if one embryo was used immediately and the second five years later. We’ll call you Aloysius—”

Oh hell no. Tim snorts, raising his chin. “I refuse to be called Aloysius, Mother—”

Janet frowns. “It’s ridiculous for both of you to be named Timothy; even the mouth breathers in the media will ask questions about that—”

There is no goddamn way Tim is going to be fucking Aloysius for the rest of his life. Jason will laugh himself sick.

“Just say you named twin A Timothy and twin B Jackson, and the test tube for Twin A which was stolen had the name Timothy on the label. The other family must have used the name, because reasons, and you and Father named the surviving twin Timothy Jackson in honor of his supposedly-dead brother. Boom. Two Tims.” He emphasizes his point with jazz hands.

An amused smile twitches Janet’s thin lips. “Now it’s even more like daytime television. The herd will simply love it. Sixty points, at least. Very well, darling, I’ll have the paperwork adjusted.”

“You frighten me, Mother.”

“Another lesson I apparently never managed to teach you thoroughly.” She sighs. “Well, at least we have time to rectify that now. Remember this always, darling, it is better to be feared than loved.”

“Duly noted.”

“Now, I wanted to find out your actual degrees and university associations before I have them forged here… Timothy. Timothy. What is that face? I know how intelligent you are. Do not tell me you haven’t at least earned a college degree by now.”

“But you’ll know when I lie.”

“Timothy, what on earth did Bruce Wayne do to you?”

“Made me CEO of Wayne Enterprises as a teenager? Running a multibillion dollar global corporation while prancing around in tights leaves shockingly little time for scholastic endeavors.”

“…I see. In that case, do you have any preferences? I’m thinking MIT…”

“Actually, I think I’d rather earn the degree myself.”

“Very well, darling, I’ll have your records prepared through high school graduation and when you are ready I’ll have you enrolled at the college of your choice. I suggest at least a business minor in addition to your other interests, which you will most likely be able to test out of considering your existing experience and knowledge base.”

“I’ll take that into consideration.”

“As for funds, I am setting up accounts in your name—”

“That isn’t necessary.”

“Isn’t it? The shell corporations you used to launder the money with which you acquired this property aren’t quite as securely hidden as you seem to think they are, darling. Of course the authorities would never figure it out, but I suspect Wayne might in time. Also, I feel as your mother I may be expected to inquire as to how exactly you obtained money associated with drugs, murder for
Tim rolls his eyes. “Relax, Mother, I just liberated a number of accounts associated with some criminals I took down when I landed in this time period. The money was just going to sit there; I’m putting it to better use.”

Janet smirks her approval. “Still, use the accounts I’m setting up for you. At the very least it will obfuscate the money trail to the point even Wayne would have trouble tracking any of it back to a more dubious source.”

It makes sense. Still… Tim frowns. “Mother… why are you doing all of this for me?”

“Don’t be silly, darling, it isn’t for you. Well, not specifically. It always pays to diversify, you know, and it will be preferable to have two heirs and successors, one of whom is actually in a position to begin taking responsibility for the company if necessary. Also, you’re much more interesting now that you’re older. I expect you shall be quite entertaining. I won’t even say anything if your younger brother chooses to follow in your foolish footsteps and risk himself in Wayne’s crusade… As long as one of you survives to inherit our company.”

Tim blinks slowly. “Sounds fair.”

“You’ll look after him, of course.”

“I’d like to.” Tim and his mother look at each other for a long moment then, and she sighs impatiently, tapping her polished nails on the counter.

“Don’t look at me like that, Timothy.” Tim raises his brows in question. “Like that, so… transparent. So vulnerable.” Janet’s staring at him, a curiously grim expression on her face Tim can’t quite place. He doesn’t think he likes it.

“This is why I kept having to leave, you know,” Janet’s voice is soft, deadly quiet, and Tim feels chills creeping up his spine. “I always knew I was no place for a child. I minimized your exposure to me because I could not stand how very open and trusting you were. So soft. So small. I would have destroyed you, had I remained.”

“Even now, looking at you, I am very nearly consumed by the desire to tear into you, rip out the parts where you are weak. I could find the places where you’re hurting, bleeding vulnerability, and rend them open again and again until all that’s left of your heart is a thick layer of scar tissue which feels nothing at all.”

“I could make you stronger, like me.” Janet Drake tilts her head, darkly considering. Her eyes aren’t quite focusing on him anymore. “You would let me.”

She sips her coffee and gives a delicate shrug of her elegant shoulders.

He’s staring at her, and he doesn’t know what is on his face right now but going by her expression she finds it amusing. “I told you, darling, I’m no place for a child. I never was.”

She smiles at him then, a glittering, knife-sharp thing that it takes him a moment to recognize.

Once he does, he wants to laugh, or maybe cry.

That’s his Red Robin smile.
Tim closes the door behind his mother in a kind of stunned, emotionally drained stupor.

He almost jumps out of his skin at the comm crackling to life but relaxes automatically when Jason’s rich, warm voice sounds in his ear.

“What the actual fuck, Timbo, and here I thought my mom was a piece of work. Jesus Christ.”

Tim just flops down on the floor and sprawls, shutting his eyes and letting out a relieved sigh as the tension slowly leaves his body while he lets Jason’s soothing deep voice wash over him. “That was… a thing that happened.”

Jason snorts a laugh. “No fuckin’ kidding. You need me? I can probably jailbreak and get over there in twenty. Pretty sure I can figure out a way to work the pedals with these casts.” He’s laughing but Tim can tell he’s serious, and warmth blooms in his chest at the knowledge Jason cares about him, wants to be there for him.

Tim smiles, eyes still closed. “It’s not worth setting back your recovery or the manhunt that would follow. Want chilidogs?”

“Prettyboy, you know the answer to that question is always yes.”

“Noted. I’ll get on it, once I’m sure my legs are working again.”

“Jesus, Tim. My mom sold me out to the fuckin’ Joker, and I actually think yours might be worse. What the actual fuck.”

“Shut your mouth, I’ll have you know she was on her best behavior just now.”

“That was her being friendly?”

“Yep. It’s a good thing, really. She knows about me, and she’s letting me know I can basically do my thing here. And she’s okay with us taking care of Timmy. Trust me, we would not want her working against us.”

“Oh I believe that.”

“And let’s not get into a mama trauma contest, Jay, of all the Bats, Damian will definitely win.”

“Why? Wait, who the fuck is that?”

“…Bruce’s secret illegitimate genetically engineered son Talia al Ghul made in an artificial womb and raised as a baby assassin. Talia dumped him in B’s lap when the kid was ten with orders to claim his place as Batman’s heir by killing me, used him as a weapon against Batman and a pawn in her own ongoing Daddy drama with Ra’s, and finally murdered him at the age of twelve using a secondary backup clone slash twin of himself whom she created solely to replace him. We managed to bring him back, but, uh, after all that he’s not ever gonna be what anyone would consider well-adjusted, y’know?”

“Holy shit.”

“I know, right?”

“We’re getting the kid the fuck outta there, yeah?” Jay’s voice is concerned.

“Oh hell yes. B and I have been working on this since day one. We have a plan, it’s just taking a while to come together because Talia. We’re gonna get him out of there. We’re saving Damian.”
Dick watches as Tim works Timmy through a series of stretches and katas, a look of fierce concentration and pleasure on the small boy’s face. Jason rolls up in his chair, finishing the last bite of a chili dog and tearing open a bag of chips, grinning at the sight of the two on the mats.

Jason’s face is going all goofy again, and Dick kind of understands. The Drake boys are adorable together. Dick wants to coo as Tim smiles in affection and pride while gently correcting the kid’s form.

“That was great, Timmy. Now, just keep repeating the movements like I showed you. Eventually, you’ll internalize the technique to the point you’ll be able to execute it automatically.”

The little boy looks shocked at the praise, then lights up like the sun, big blue eyes sparkling and a happy smile illuminating his face.

Dick makes a mental note to compliment the younger Drake as often as possible, adding it to the list right below giving the kid as many hugs as he can handle. He’s obviously touch-starved, and apparently deprived of simple affection and approval as well.

Poor kid. I can’t believe he was right next door all this time, alone. At least we’ve got him now. And from the sound of it, the Drakes aren’t even going to fight for him.

When Tim returned to the Manor earlier looking tired and worn only to announce he had seen his mother, and she expressed no interest in raising Timmy, it hurt Dick’s heart. How can anyone not want him?

Timmy’s movements are already smoothing out and becoming more graceful. After another repetition, the child bites his lip, then glances at Tim before timidly speaking. “So now that Mother won’t object, will you consider letting me try to be Robin?”

Tim’s mouth drops open slightly in surprise before curving into an amused smile. “You were listening in on the comms earlier while I was talking to Jason, weren’t you. I can’t believe I didn’t anticipate that.” He sounds fond.

Timmy shrugs, looking down to hide his bashful flush, then peeking up hopefully. “But may I? Please?”

Tim’s brows furrow in concern. “Are you sure that’s what you really want? You don’t have to. I mean, you can be anything. What we do is dangerous, and—”

The younger boy interrupts, speaking rapidly and passionately. “I know that, you of all people know how well I understand. And you know I never thought someone like me could ever be Robin.” He looks over at Jason, then back to Tim before inhaling and squaring his delicate little shoulders.

“…Not until I met you, another me, and saw all we could be. What I have the potential to become. We live in a dangerous world you won’t be able to shield me from forever, and I want to have the power to protect myself and others. The things you’ve done, the stories you’ve told me, all the people you’ve helped. It’s so much more than I ever could have dreamed, and you’re living proof of what I can be if I try. Now that I know that, do you really think I’ll be willing to settle for anything less?”

The little boy’s eyes are shining with conviction and hope. Like this, he hardly resembles the painfully quiet, shy child from the empty house.
Tim sighs, but he’s smiling. Timmy’s eyes widen and a dawning grin threatens to take over his whole face.

“I think that if I tell you no, I’ll catch you patrolling by yourself in a home-made costume within a month. Fine, Timmy, but you can change your mind at any time and no one will be disappointed. I’m proud of you either way.”

The kid’s practically vibrating out of his skin in excitement and he’s the cutest thing Dick’s ever seen. “Okay! I won’t change my mind, but okay.”

Tim huffs a laugh, shaking his head. “I have a few extra rules you’ll have to follow,” he cautions. “First of all, your costume will have pants. We can start with a redesign of my old Robin costume, although I have a few new ideas for added protection.” Timmy nods agreement, beaming.

“You’re not going out on patrol until after you reach the height, weight, and training level requirements I set. And you’ll always patrol with a partner, and return to base immediately if any of the major rogues engage—”

“Geez, Prettyboy, gonna give him a curfew too?”

“Actually—”

Jason starts laughing. “You’re just as bad a mother hen as Dickiebird.”

Tim blushes, rolling his eyes and giving Jason a smile. “That’s not humanly possible, stop exaggerating, Jay.” He looks at Timmy. “Well, what are you waiting for? If you’re going to be Robin, you’d better get back to training!”

Dick settles back to watch Jason watching the two Drakes training on the mats. He can’t hold back a grin at the lovesick look on his little brother’s face.

He’s so completely gone on Tim, and it’s totally mutual. I wonder what else I can do to help them along…

Ooh, I’ll stuff his pockets with condoms! Better safe than sorry, after all… It’s what any responsible big brother would do! Dick giggles maniacally inside his head, already planning.

Good thing he keeps a massive stash of various brands and styles of condoms in the Cave, mostly for pranking purposes. He surreptitiously gathers what he needs, then makes his way over to the others.

As he watches, Jason looks down at his below-the-knee casts, brows drawing together in a petulant frown. Well, now that just won’t do. No one needs Jason setting back his healing by trying to get the casts off early and overdoing it.

Distraction time.

Dick nudges Jason to get his attention and whips out his phone, typing rapidly. “Hey Jay, I know you’ve been working on dreaming up a new vigilante identity—”

“You mean you found out because you were fuckin’ spying on me and Tim the other night like a creepy perverted creeper and we caught you listening at the door—”

Dick shrugs. “I’m a Bat, spying is how we show we care. Also, you’re my little bro and you were alone in your bedroom with an older man. As your big brother, it’s my job to make sure you’re being safe.” He gives an exaggerated wink and Jason goes bright red.
Jason buries his face in his hands and groans. “You actually hate me, don’t you.”

Dick smiles, bouncing on his heels while he scrolls through the Audobon society website on his phone. *Wow, there are a lot of different types of jays. Who knew?* “Don’t be silly, Jay. Anyway, I’ve got some ideas for your codename. Unless you want to just go with Jaybird?”

“Fuck you.”

“Yeah, and Bluejay’s too obvious, right? Ooh! You can be Mexican Jay! You already know how to curse in Spanish.”

“Cállate, gringo!”

“There you go! It’s perfect!”

“Shut the fuck up, Dick, I don’t need your help.”

“Okay, okay… oh hey, Purplish Jay! Your costume would be fabulous!” Both Tims are snickering quietly in the background now, listening in.

Jason glances their way and flushes, turning to growl at Dick. “What will it take to make you go away and leave me alone?”

Dick grins and fires off his next idea. “Curl-crested Jay! Because of your curly hair!”

“Dickie all these names are terrible, like your fashion sense. Please stop.”

“I had no idea there were so many types of jay! Gray Jay! The costume would be so boring, but it rhymes!”

“No.” Jason throws a chip at Dick, which Dick catches in his mouth and eats. *Mmm, barbeque!*

“Why the fuck do I gotta be a real bird, anyway? It’s not like yours is a real bird. The fuck is a Nightwing?”

“My handle’s based on a very meaningful and moving Kryptonian legend, which you already know, thank you very much. And speaking of, you could totally be my Flamebird! Wanna be a part of my legend, Jayjay?”

“It sounds awesome, except Flamebird and Nightwing are fuckin’ mates. I’m uncomfortable with that, because you’re my brother, Dickface. Your attentions are making me uncomfortable. Do I gotta talk to B about this? Cause your pseudo-incestuous attraction to me is really fuckin’ unwelcome, Dickie.”

Dick rolls his eyes. “Ew,” he complains without heat. “Fine, be that way. You would be lucky to be my Flamebird.”

“Yeah, whatever.” Jason’s eyes are on Tim again as he flips his lean, slight body gracefully through a floor routine while Tiny Tim watches with awe and something like hero worship in his enormous blue eyes.

Dick huffs a laugh as he recognizes elements of his own style. *Weird to think I’m one of the people who trained him, in another life. Kinda cool.*

Jay’s hand creeps down to his cast and he’s starting to look distant again. Dick can sympathize; Jay’s probably itching to get out on the mats and tangle with his crush.
But Dick’s a good big brother, and as such he will be the best damn distraction he can be. Otherwise, odds are he’ll find Jason sawing off his own casts and hobbling around on his injuries trying to coax Tim into an extremely inadvisable sparring match.

Also, he hasn’t planted all the condoms on Jason yet. He still has to hide the glow in the dark condoms, the ones with little Bat logos on them, and the ones in Nightwing blue. Oh, and the ones with Batman’s disapproving face on them, those are great. He hasn’t put anything in Jason’s left back pocket yet, so that’s where these need to go.

More distraction needed. He scrolls through a few more bird names, then starts chuckling. *Hahaha, yes…*

“Well, if you aren’t interested in being some kind of jay, how about a boobie? Ooh, there’s one called a *Masked Boobie!* That’s *perfect* for you, Little Wing!”

Even in a wheelchair, Jason’s quick and clever. He manages to get Dick’s phone away from him and he’s waving it threateningly when Tim jogs over, glowing slightly with exertion.

“What are you guys doing? I sent Timmy off to shower; he’s done great today, but I don’t want him to overdo it.” He eyes their aggressive postures suspiciously. “Are you guys fighting? You shouldn’t be aggravating Jason’s injuries, Dick.”

“I’m helping Jason choose a vigilante name!” Dick smiles winningly.

“What? But you already chose—” Jason slaps a hand over Tim’s mouth, shaking his head, then starts tugging him away. Tim looks surprised, but goes along willingly.

*Wait, what? Already chose…?*

“C’mon Prettyboy, B said fabrication’s done and I wanted to wait till you were done with Timmy so we could see it for the first time together, since you helped design it and all.”

Tim allows Jason to pull him by the hand. “Oh, wow! I didn’t expect it to be finished yet. Bruce must’ve fast tracked it.”

“Yeah, I think he was just glad to be able to do somethin’ for me. He’s still kinda cut up about what almost happened.”

“*You have a new costume, Jaybird? Can I see?*” If the boys want a moment alone, he’ll give it to them, but this is too exciting not to want in on.

Besides, he’ll make up for it by entertaining Timmy later so the lovebirds can hang out without a little brother tagging along. Maybe he’ll ask Bruce to show the kid the darkroom he had installed. That’ll definitely keep him happy and distracted long enough for Jay to finally make a move.

*Man, I’m an awesome big brother. I hope Jay appreciates how much I do for him!*

Jason regards Dick for a long moment, then rolls his eyes. “Sure, whatever, Dickhead. It’s over here.” He leads them to a side branch of the main Cave where two new displays are set up. And the uniforms inside… *Wow.* He recognizes the Red Robin costume, but the other one…

Dick lets out a low whistle as he takes in the new costume in the display on the right. *This is really amazing, Jay. I’m so proud of you.*

*Jayhawk,*” Tim breathes, staring raptly at the display. He grins and hugs Jason, eyes sparkling. “It’s
even better than I expected!”

Dick raises his eyebrows at the name. “Pretty sweet, Jay, I’ve got to admit. But if I’d known you were leaning toward fictional birds, I would’ve suggested Mockingjay!”

“Shut up, Dickhead.” Dick cocks his head and raises an inquisitive eyebrow. Maybe there’s more to it than just a cool-sounding name?

“So… what’s the story behind Jayhawk, anyway? Does it mean anything?”

“Jayhawk was what they called people who fought against oppression and slavery during the Civil War… but not, y’know, legally, like soldiers. Jayhawks were just regular guys who saw somethin’ wrong an’ raised hell to set it right, even though it put ‘em on the wrong side of the law at the time.”

Jason stares at the costume on display, the corners of his mouth curling slightly. “Seems fitting, doesn’t it? Y’know, for a vigilante.”

Tim puts a hand on Jason’s shoulder, and Jason reaches up and rests his hand on Tim’s. They’re so adorable Dick can hardly take it. Just kiss already!

“Jay likes that meaning best, but Jayhawk also combines the names for the blue jay, a scrappy bird known for being loud and aggressive, and the hawk, a fierce hunter that takes its prey using strength, strategy, and stealth. The name’s basically tailor-made for Jason.”

Dick cocks his head, taking in the details of Jason’s new uniform and identity and marveling at how well it fits his little brother.

“Yeah.” Loudmouth, aggressive, fierce, strategic and stealthy as needed? That’s absolutely Jason. “It really works. Good job, guys.”

The new suit is awesome, sleek and intimidating, mostly black with a red domino and red accents. Only… hmm, that’s different. “Where’s the cape?”

“No capes!”

“Aw, Little Wing, did I inspire you with my Nightwing costume?”

“Fuck no, you just want pervs to have a clear view of your ass! My lack of cape’s strategic. I’ve fuckin’ seen the Incredibles, I’m not gonna risk it, like some people. Tim.”

“Hey, mine’s breakaway! No getting sucked into jet engines here, I promise.”

“Okay, okay.”

Something’s itching at the back of Dick’s mind as he looks at the new costume, but he can’t quite—Oh my god, yes. Yes.

Dick almost squeals in excitement at his realization. “You guys have matching uniforms!”

Both the younger boys shift uncomfortably, looking anywhere but at each other. “What? No we don’t.”

Dick points excitedly from Jason’s black suit with red accents to Tim’s red suit with black accents. “Besides the cape and cowl thing, you guys totally match! You’re gonna look so cute patrolling together!”
Jason flushes red and shoves Dick away with a hand to the face. “Shut up, Dickhead. C’mon Tim, let’s get the fuck outta here.”

“Wanna grab some snacks and start that Firefly marathon in my room?”

“Fuck yeah!”

*

“Uh, Jason…”

Jason refuses to look up from where he’s sitting with his face buried in both hands. He doesn’t want to have to see the look of shock, revulsion, and rejection on Tim’s face. Doesn’t want to know what those pretty eyes look like, narrowed in scorn.

Maybe if he never opens his eyes again this won’t be happening oh my fucking god.

“…Jay?” Tim sounds uncomfortable. Oh Jesus fuck of course he does. Who the hell wouldn’t be? How the fuck do I fix this? Goddamn you, Dick.

Tim clears his throat. “Not to sound like I’m judging your choices or anything, but… Um. That was a lot of condoms that just cascaded out of your pockets when you climbed on the bed.”

Tim hesitates a long, incredibly awkward moment.

“…Big plans?” He asks carefully.

Oh god I traumatized Tim, and now he’s never gonna fuckin’ wanna be alone with me in my room again for fear I’ll fuckin’ jump him. He probably thinks I did this shit on purpose.

Jason releases a pained whine and hunches further in on himself. Maybe if I just play dead he’ll go away and leave me in peace to wither in humiliation and shame. I’m gonna fuckin’ kill Dick.

“…I’ll take that as a no.” A hand settles on his back and rubs comfortingly. “Dick, right?” Tim’s voice sounds surprisingly understanding.

That makes Jason look up, blinking, face still painfully hot.

Tim doesn’t look much better, blushing prettily and biting his lip while trying to avoid looking at the many condoms scattered all around them on the bed.

Good fuckin’ luck with that, there’s gotta be a couple dozen of the damn things, all different sizes and lurid colors, labeled with horribly embarrassing things like XXXL or Big Boy or with pictures of the goddamn Batman on them. Jesus Christ, how the fuck does anyone even get it up with that staring them in the face?

Jason shudders and forces his eyes away. “Yeah. Pretty sure he planted ‘em on me while he was fuckin’ around showin’ me those stupid birds on his phone. I can’t believe I didn’t notice what that asshole was doin’. Fuck!”

Tim grins. “Dick’s like, the condom ninja. I watched him plant one in Batman’s utility belt once.”

Jason perks up a little. “Seriously? What happened?”

Tim’s shoulders start shaking with soft laughter. “Well, that was one of the nights B was meeting up with Catwoman—”
“Oh, gross. Stop talking now, I don’t wanna hear about Catwoman and my Batdad doin’ the nasty. I’m gonna hurl.”

“They used Dick’s condom.”

Jason makes a face. Gross. “Why do you know that? Wait, no. I really don’t wanna hear—”

“Catwoman thanked Nightwing for it over the open comms. Dick was so horrified and disgusted he actually fell off a building.”

“…Dude.”

“It’s fine, he remembered how to fire his grapple before hitting the ground. And he quit planting condoms on people after that.” Tim starts gathering the condoms into a neat little pile, which he tucks into a pouch. Jason is interested in what Tim intends to do with all of those. Very interested. “That’s usually the best solution with Dick when he’s being an ass.”

“Troll the troll?”

“Troll the troll.” They share a delightfully evil smirk, then settle down to watch the show. God he’s perfect for me. No one else would be able to handle my fucked up family, for one, and he’s badass, smart and sexy to boot.

Jason leans back against the headboard and lifts his arm for Tim who settles in against his side with a soft sigh and a smile, his hand just happening to land on Jason’s. It’s so small compared to Jason’s.

Heart racing, Jason tangles their fingers together and uses his free hand to snag the popcorn and bring it over.

He tilts his head down just enough to let his lips rest on Tim’s soft, sweet-smelling hair and just breathe him in, loving the way the smaller boy feels pressed so close against him, warm and thrilling.

He wonders again what Tim’s planning to do with all those condoms. A few ideas definitely spring to mind. Jason thinks about it some more, and grins, shifting his hips slightly to avoid embarrassing himself. Oh the possibilities.

Still gonna give Dickie hell for that stunt, though. Fucker deserves it.

Chapter End Notes

Janet Drake: *Appears out of nowhere*
Other Tim: *Frozen in shocked horror* “???”
Janet Drake: “I figured out Batman’s secret identity, predicted the entire course of your life so far, and am using that knowledge to make All The Disturbing Innuendos about you and your Batfamily.”
Other Tim: “OMFG. Also, GROSS.”
Janet Drake: “Well at least this won’t negatively affect the stocks.”
Other Tim: “???”
Janet Drake: “Look after your little brother. Otherwise I’m pretty sure I’ll literally eat his heart at some point. Ta!”
Other Tim: “???”
Jason: “Dude, she’s gone. Are you sure your mother isn’t an actual fuckin’ DRAGON?”
Other Tim: “…No. That… would actually explain some things.”
Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

“We’re in position. Alpha team is go. Bravo, on standby. You are here in a support role only and are not to enter the facility unless we call for backup. Understood?”
“Acknowledged.”
“Got it, B. Go rescue the kid.”
Batman is already gone. Nightwing flashes one last grin at the boys, and leaps after.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Batman’s flying the Batplane and brooding while Red Robin and Jayhawk sit shoulder to shoulder, whispering and laughing softly. Dick smiles softly at the sight.

It’s a pretty good feeling to have a real team of Bats again after the pain of losing Batgirl as a fighter and almost losing Jason altogether. Dick’s mind skitters away from thinking about what else he lost when Babs was shot. He has no right to be selfish when she’s the one who was hurt. He just… misses her.

Anyway, he’s had a lot of great distractions lately, including his little brother Jay, and Timmy who feels like a second little brother, and Tim who is basically his brother-in-law. Now he has yet another little brother they need to save.

Dick scans his team, evaluating them for mission readiness. All three look vigorous and strong. Jason’s physical therapy has been going well enough for Batman to clear him for this mission, with strict orders to stay on the plane in a support capacity only. Good luck enforcing that, B.

Training together has been going great. It’s almost uncanny the way Red Robin fits so seamlessly into their fighting routines, although there were a few hilarious hiccups before everything really clicked.

He’s glad he has footage of the time Jayhawk and Red Robin were executing a beautiful tag team takedown on Batman, and B managed to pick Red up like a child and hurl him at Jay hard enough to knock both boys down.

The funniest part was how the pair just lay there nose to nose in a tangle of limbs, Red sprawled on top of Jay whose arms were wrapped around the smaller boy because he’d tried to shield him from the impact. They’d just stared at each other, blushing, faces tilting infinitesimally closer until Batman cleared his throat and the two sprang apart like they were on fire.

Man, I can’t believe they still aren’t official. I thought for sure the condoms would do the trick! Or the forged love letters, or gluing their hands together…

Why are these guys so resistant to love? Oh well, I won’t give up on you, Jaybird! Hey, maybe a romantic team name will help you two get your act together!

Mind made up, Dick claps a hand on Jason’s shoulder, causing him to jump. “Yeah? Somethin’ up,
“Not really, Little Wing. It’s just so exciting to be on a mission with Red Robin and Jayhawk! You guys are so dang cute in your matching uniforms. Hey, we should pick team names for the mission!”

“Team designations for this mission are set. Alpha for Batman and Nightwing, and Bravo for Red Robin and Jayhawk.” Batman’s always such a killjoy.

“Well, that’s just boring. Hmm, your team colors are red and black… Like a valentine! Team Valentine! It’s so adorable!”

“That’s dumb, Dickface. Hey, your team colors are black and blue and you’re a pain in my a—”

Dick is grateful when Tim interrupts. “Aren’t Valentines usually just red?”

“Yeah, Dick, you gotta think of somethin’ red and black.”

“Like Mordor.” Tim’s smiling. Have his teeth always looked so sharp?

“Sure, or Satan!” Jason looks so happy saying that. Why.

“Ooh, Sith Lords!” Tim and Jason are grinning at each other now, bonding over their shared darkness. It’s… sweet, in a way, but not really the direction Dick was hoping this would go.

“You huge nerd,” Jason says affectionately.

Tim rolls his eyes and nudges Jason. “What? You always know exactly what I’m talking about, stealth nerd.”

Dear god none of those ideas are anything like as cute and romantic as I was planning. Why did I think this would end any better than everything else I’ve tried?

Like the condoms, which are still mysteriously falling out of his pockets at the most humiliating moments, such as in front of Alfred or Bruce or Timmy, who blinked at them with huge eyes and then picked one up, innocently asking Dick what they were.

The love letters, which were somehow rewritten in Dick’s handwriting with very explicit pornographic details added and sent to Superman. Poor Clark can’t even meet his eyes without blushing now.

The glue, which apparently wore off within half an hour but those little brats pretended to be glued together for three entire days, even going so far as to sleep in the same bed and shower at the same time to further the ruse. By the third day Dick was terrified his well-intended prank had gone horribly wrong and the boys would actually need to be medically separated. They had waited until he was googling ‘worst superglue accidents’ and panicking before nonchalantly letting go of each other, and then they had laughed and laughed at him. So cruel.

Why are they both so awful? Team Satan?! Mother of god. Abort! Abort!

Dick hurries to interject before the little monsters can keep going. “Or like an adorable little ladybug! Ladybugs are nice! I’m gonna call you guys Team Ladybug!”

They’re both staring at him like he’s insane. They’re probably right. He grins. Try me.

“Oh my god. He means it. No. Dick, no. We cannot strike fear into the hearts of criminals everywhere if they hear you call us that.”
“Take that shit back, Dickhead! Take it back!”

“Language. Chatter. We’re in position. Alpha team is go. Bravo, on standby. You are here in a support role only and are not to enter the facility unless we call for backup. Understood?”

“Acknowledged.”

“Got it, B. Go rescue the kid.”

Batman is already gone. Nightwing flashes one last grin at the boys, and leaps after.

*  

Batman and Nightwing head rapidly toward the planned rendezvous. They’ve advanced too far into the facility to easily retreat before it becomes clear something is wrong. Very wrong.

Dozens of black-clad ninja swarm out of nowhere. For each enemy they take down three more engage, knives and katanas sweeping in lethal arcs.

Batman spins back to back with Nightwing, fists bunched and tensed for battle. He knows without looking Nightwing has his escrima sticks out and ready, probably twirling them with those superfluous flourishes Batman was never able to train out of the boy.

This was not the agreement. They were going to stage a fight to give the appearance Talia had resisted when Ra’s investigates Damian’s disappearance. It was a grudging compromise, reached after weeks of negotiations and Batman was so sure Talia would keep to it. It was to her benefit, after all, preserving her position with Ra’s while also removing Damian from the immortal’s influence.

Batman and Nightwing should have been met by a handful of Talia’s most trusted ninja. There are far more ninja than expected, and no sign of Talia.

If she lied… Bruce’s heart pounds with fury and he experiences a stab of fear for his youngest, the little boy he never knew existed and has yet to even meet. If Talia harms Damian, or any of his children in some misguided plot to gain favor with her villainous father… It must not come to that.

I cannot lose any of them.

He had been so certain of how she would react. That the woman he knew in his youth, actually cared for once upon a time, would make the right choice for their son when faced with the potential negative consequences of her actions.

If he has made a mistake… he will never forgive himself.

“These aren’t Talia’s.” Batman throws a ninja into the crowd, knocking several others off their feet while he kicks out and spins, a boot to a face and batarang to a shoulder taking down two more before he comes up punching, brutal blows to the head and chest flooring the next attacker.

He catches the katana as it slips from the downed ninja’s suddenly limp arm and knocks the hilt into the jaw of another creeping up on his back, grabbing him as he falls and using his unconscious bulk to sweep the legs from under two of the four ninja Nightwing is fending off.

Nightwing slams them both on the head with his escrima sticks as they fall, taking them out of the fight, then rolls nimbly across Batman’s back to catch a knife on his gauntlet before it lands in Batman’s neck, ducking immediately afterwards to dodge a barrage of throwing stars.
“Are you sure? We were expecting a show, so when she tells Ra’s we took the kid by force it won’t be immediately obvious she’s lying and basically handed him over with her blessing.”

He falls into position at Batman’s back, escrima sticks up, then bounds forward to engage, catching blades on his escrima to defend and then driving the sticks into weak points and spinning smoothly into powerful high kicks to attack. “Maybe you have different definitions of a show of force?”

“Not to this degree.”

They fight together like clockwork, their many years of partnership obvious in how they anticipate each other’s actions.

It isn’t going to be enough.

They continue to fend off the attacking ninja, but it quickly becomes clear they are going to be overwhelmed. Even the best training and teamwork can’t hold out forever against superior numbers when the enemy is using lethal force and the defenders are not.

Batman goes down blocking a blow to Nightwing, winded, taking his attacker with him. *Damn it.*

Nightwing leaps to defend him, growling into the comms, “Guys, we could use a little help here!”

Nightwing yanks a katana out of a ninja’s hand and deftly turns it to clock the man with the hilt while simultaneously using his other hand to pull himself into a one-armed handstand off another ninja’s shoulders and bring the heels of his heavy boots down to knock out two more ninja.

“Alpha could use some backup. *Team Ladybug, you’re up!*”

Even in the heat of battle, Dick is intrinsically incapable of resisting an opportunity to tease his younger brother. If Bruce weren’t struggling to breathe, he’d be suppressing a put-upon sigh.

There’s a long moment of silence over the comms during which Batman regrets many of his life choices.

He then makes it back to his feet, assisting Nightwing in taking down four ninja as six more descend from the ceiling.

Red Robin’s calm, cool voice is steady over the comms. “Team Satan, on our way. Hold on, Alpha.”

The last thing they hear before the comms go down is Jayhawk’s mutter. “Fuckin’ *ladybug.* Jesus fuck. God damn Night-wang~”

*

Talia waits for her Beloved, stroking her fingers soothingly through their son’s hair. She can see Damian is anxious, although he hides it well.

He is still so young. His training so far from complete.

Her breath catches, and for a moment all she wants is to gather her baby up in her arms and flee with him, somewhere far from her father and her past and everything that would consume him before he is even allowed to become a man. She could forge him into the weapon he was born to be, strong enough to never be hurt, never fall.

But she knows that is no solution.
After all, she herself is the greatest danger to his life and happiness.

Damian’s little hand finds hers and holds on tightly, a weakness he would normally know not to indulge. This once, she allows it.

She forces herself to recall the revelations Batman shared with her about the future in his bid to sway her in order to give him access to Damian.

Her precious child, conceived and created with so much hope and love in a stupid, naïve bid for her Beloved’s attention. She knows how he feels about family, and thought providing him a new family ready-made would be enough to finally bring him to her side.

Apparently not, if the information from that horrible future is to be believed.

And when her original plan failed in that dark future she moved on to another, and then another… each taking her another step down a dark, twisted path of loneliness and hatred.

In that terrible future, when Damian chose her Beloved’s way over hers she created a clone of her boy, force-grown and designed to be perfect but instead without a soul, heartless. That monster in turn killed her little child. Her Damian.

Forever killed his love for her.

When she first viewed the scenes in the files her Beloved sent to her and saw the little, still figure lying in a pool of blood, Damian’s face forever frozen in an expression of terrible pain, she vomited. And then she wiped her mouth and forced herself to read every line, watch every video, have it all analyzed for signs of tampering.

Forced herself to cope, when all of it checked out as genuine.

She never wanted to know to what depths she would sink if pushed to her limits. Now she cannot strip the knowledge from her mind. And the worst part is, it isn’t even a surprise. Not truly. She was forged and hardened from her own babyhood to be thus, after all.

The true surprise is that she is capable of caring for anyone at all, however flawed her love.

*But I can do one thing right, for my little prince,* she thinks, still carding her fingers through his baby-soft hair, remembering how fine it was when it first grew in. His plump little hands reaching for her, his small rosy cheeks and happy baby smiles. His laughter, which she heard less and less often as he grew. Silenced by her own hand, and the training she put him through.

*I can let him go, and save him. What my father did to me, I will not do to my son. I refuse to ruin him too.*

It was particularly disturbing to discover her father apparently considers Damian to be little more than a spare body, one Ra’s plans to possess should his own ever fail him. *Of course.* He has an ulterior motive in everything he does; she was a fool to ever believe him truly supportive of her plans to entice her Beloved with a son. And he will most certainly oppose her if he discovers she intends to send the boy to her Beloved.

*Never,* she thinks passionately, her other hand tightening on one warm little shoulder. She has exercised the utmost care to avoid her father’s notice, and only her most loyal servants accompanied them to this place. Her caution has to be enough.

*Please, let it be enough.*
Her Beloved’s care will be safer for Damian than hers, this she knows in her very bones. Acting as one of Batman’s Robins is dangerous, but she will keep a good supply of cloned organs at the ready. Her child will not die. Her little prince, with his bright eyes and round little cheeks, he will thrive.

Though as long as Ra’s wants him, he can’t be completely safe.

After Damian is safely away with his father, she will regroup and revise her plans. Her Beloved promised a trade of additional information regarding future League of Assassins activities in exchange for Damian. She can use that foreknowledge to protect Damian, and ultimately overthrow her father.

Talia is what her father made her to be, a deadly weapon. She may not be able to change her own fate, but she’ll be damned before she allows anyone to destroy her son. Even if it’s Ra’s.

Even if it’s herself.

Really, she’s almost certainly damned anyway.

Ra’s made her into a weapon. She will cater to his wishes, remain by his side, and stay close. She will find the perfect moment, and she will strike.

She smiles.

Her Beloved will be here soon.

Talia cards her fingers through Damian’s hair, and waits.

*

Jason hates the idea of splitting up, but the comms just went down so something’s obviously really fuckin’ wrong.

Batman and Nightwing need help right fuckin’ now and someone needs to get to the control room to get rid of whatever’s jamming their comms and get back into the facility cameras, or they’ll all be sitting ducks and this whole rescue mission could end in failure.

Red’s the best with tech. If he can make it into the security systems, they’ll have a chance of making it out of this whole clusterfuck in one piece. Still, leaving him behind aches like a missing limb. Better hurry the fuck up so I can get back to him, then.

Jayhawk flies through the compound, barely pausing to evade the occasional enemy he encounters. He doesn’t have time to engage. His heart’s pounding with fear for his father, his big brother, his little brother he hasn’t even had a chance to meet, his- his Tim.

Fuck, fuck, please let everyone be okay.

He follows the route Alpha team was supposed to take, and pauses outside the door of the room where the others were planning to meet with Talia al Ghul and Damian. The kid.

That fuckin’ bitch, if she... if she...

His mind can’t even complete the thought, icy terror and hot fury warring within him at the thought of a mother and another betrayal. Visions of a fiery warehouse and swinging crowbar with a soundtrack of that horrible mocking laughter flash through his brain and he shakes his head violently to clear it.
A ninja approaches, spinning his katanas through the air in elaborate arcs and stalking smoothly toward him, smirking.

*Ain’t nobody got fuckin’ time for this, jackass.*

Jayhawk punches the ninja in the fuckin’ face and the guy goes down like a lead weight, katanas clattering across the floor anticlimactically. *Moron.*

Jay takes a deep breath, cracks his neck, and throws open the door.

* Red Robin watches Jayhawk disappear around a corner, and the urge to follow after, *protect* him, is nearly overwhelming.

*He’s barely recovered. What if…?*

Red forces himself to focus on the mission. If he doesn’t figure out what the hell’s going on with the comms and get back into the security footage, they’re *all* going to pay for it. He takes off, making his way through the compound by memory. Fortunately not much seems to have changed between now and his time with the League, in that distant, painful future that will never be.

There’s resistance at the control room, but Red quickly neutralizes the three ninja on guard. Something about them… their fighting style, their clothing…

*Oh shit. These are Ra’s al Ghul’s elite personal guard.*

They’re never found far from their master. *Well, fuck.*

Red secures the unconscious ninja rapidly, stepping over the corpses of Talia’s guards he encounters once he makes it in. Well, that answers that question. Talia doesn’t appear to have betrayed them; rather, Ra’s figured it out somehow and moved on his own against all of them.

He’s balls deep in the security systems monitoring the feeds and unjamming the comms, keeping an eye on what’s going down with Alpha team and watching Jayhawk’s progress while at the same time fighting off attempts by the League to take back control when he spots *Ra’s* in the room *with his family.*

And reinforcements are streaming into the compound, dozens of them, converging on Alpha’s position.

Red *growls,* fingers a blur as he activates traps, locks doors, and herds the incoming ninja *away* from where Jay has almost reached the others. He’s familiar with the available security in the facility and knows how to turn it against intruders… *but the attacking ninja know the systems too.*

They’re fighting back efficiently, cutting through locks and disabling traps. He manages to gas some but most secure their gas masks in time.

*Damn it.*

He needs to be faster, *better.* Needs to be good enough to save everyone.

He wishes like hell he could do this remotely or had time to set up some programs to do it for him, because now *Jayhawk* is bursting into the room with the others. Jason, who isn’t even supposed to see any real action today, is up against *Ra’s al fucking Ghul* and there’s *nothing* Red can do to *help.*
Red needs to stay on the computers to keep their escape route open, and-

He watches in horror, unable to intervene as Jayhawk goes down.

*Jason is down and he isn’t moving.*

Plans unfold in Red’s mind, rapid-fire possibilities he tests and rejects one after another. Leaving the control room to help will result in mission failure and team elimination or capture without someone on the security systems and coordinating the escape. But the team *needs* him there in the room with them, or he may very well be the only survivor of the mission which is *not an option.*

There’s only one plan that saves everyone, and all it will cost is himself. It’s a bargain, really. He was never meant to be in this universe anyway, and he’s accomplished most of what he set out to do. The others will even still have a Tim Drake when he’s gone. He feels a sharp stab of regret at the thought of Timmy. *I promised him I wouldn’t leave…*

But Timmy’s used to broken promises. He knows how to pick himself up and keep going.

It’ll be fine.

Red knows exactly what to say to pique Ra’s al Ghul’s interest. God knows he’s done it enough times in the past without even trying.

He’s planning to offer a trade after making himself sound so enticing, so *fascinating,* Ra’s can’t refuse the lure. All he has to do is mention a few key little tidbits, knowledge he shouldn’t possess. Throw out a few Lazarus pit locations, some League secrets. He knows he’ll be able to convince the immortal to trade the others for him.

And.

He feels scared, and sad. He's been so happy here, felt so safe and loved, it hurts to contemplate giving that up. Once the others are free he’ll make a good effort to escape, but knowing Ra’s the opportunities will be few and far between.

And considering what he knows about the nature of Ra’s al Ghul’s *interest* in him…

He probably won’t make it through this encounter… *intact.*

What he managed to avoid once before may happen now, with no Cass to arrive at the last minute and save him. *I’m so sorry, sister,* he thinks sadly, knowing Bruce will keep looking even if he can’t. *I should have been able to find you by now.*

But even *that* will be worth it if the others survive.

Tim’s afraid.

He's also Red Robin, and he's never minded sacrificing himself to save others. In fact, he’s starting to make something of a habit of it.

And if his heart *aches* at the thought of leaving all of them, giving up Jay and the potential between them he’s been hoping to explore someday when they’re both ready, well, he’s at least grateful to finally know what it feels like for his heart to be *full* before it breaks.

He looks at the screen and freezes, blood draining from his face at what he sees.

There’s no more time.
Red’s hands are hovering over the keyboard poised to open the line to that room and make Ra’s an offer he won’t refuse, when he hears a crackle followed by the last voice he would have expected.

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Damian raises his head at a sound from outside the room and quickly steps away from Mama, immediately missing her warmth but lifting his chin and straightening his shoulders proudly.

Father’s first impression of him must be one of strength and courage if he is to have a chance at winning his approval. He dare not hope for love.

Mama’s lessons over the past three months have been thorough, teaching him of his Father’s legacy and great power, his strength and intellect.

Father is a great man, a valorous and decorated veteran of many battles and Damian is still very young. He has been trained since birth, but he is not yet the master swordsman, superlative martial artist, and elite assassin he is meant to become. He has not even taken a man’s life yet.

Father has other sons and though they are not of his blood, they are older and already proven warriors. Damian does not know if he will be enough to defend himself should they decide to kill him in order to prevent him from claiming his birthright.

His lower lip wobbles, and he clenches his fists, scowling ferociously to control it. What if he decides I am unworthy? An unfamiliar wrenching pull in his chest takes his breath as a shadow falls across him.

But it does not matter if he is prepared, for the great dark form looming over him must be Father. A huge, gauntleted hand moves toward him, and Damian braces himself to show no reaction, no matter how harsh the blow.

But… the hand in his hair is gentle, and now the big man is crouching before him. The lips beneath the cowl are tugging into a smile.


Damian’s breath catches. I please him, he thinks, feeling an answering smile beginning to form.

“B, you know I hate to cut this short, but remember we’ve got incoming.”

There is another man, not quite as large as Father, dressed in black marked with bright blue stripes. Nightwing, Damian remembers from Mama’s lessons. The elder and more formidable of Father’s adopted children.

Robin is smaller, less trained. Damian would far prefer to be tested against him, but he will fight whomever he must to earn a place at his Father’s side.

Nightwing moves like the trained warrior he is, taking up a guard position by the door. Damian flinches internally at the thought of fighting for his life against this man, but he is Damian al Ghul, Ibn al Xu’ffasch. He was raised to rule the world.

No matter what, he must stand firm. He will show no fear.

Father stands abruptly, and Damian tenses. “Talia. What have you done.”

Mama’s head whips back, dark eyes flashing in warning. “Nothing we did not discuss, Beloved. As
you can see, here is our son, as promised. Now where is the data we agreed upon?"

“We did not discuss over fifty ninja—"

Her eyebrows shoot up, a rare reaction of honest surprise. “What are you talking about—”

They both fall silent and into ready stances as the door flies open and ninja stream into the room.

Nightwing and Father immediately take protective stances between the intruders and Damian, and Mama shoves him roughly behind her back like a helpless child while drawing her daggers. Damian snarls at the treatment, but subsides. For the moment.

He will prove himself to his Father in the coming battle.

Damian draws his katanas and leaps at one of the oncoming ninja, only to find himself clotheslined by a huge arm and flung to relative safety.

“Stay back,” a deep voice growls, and Father moves.

Damian can scarcely follow the battle that ensues as bodies fly through the air to smash against the walls with dull thumps. Father and Nightwing are dancing in the center of the room, coordinated attacks decimating the attackers, while Mama twists and flashes around the perimeter taking out ninja from behind and discreetly providing finishing blows.

“Talia,” Father shouts, and Mama laughs mockingly.

“I do not live or fight by your rules, Beloved.” Her lips curve in a smirk and her beautiful face shines with battle lust.

A ninja aims his blade for her, and Damian darts forward, landing a disabling blow. He’s slammed from the side by something heavy and turns only to see Nightwing… attacking him?

No.

There’s a hilt and a few inches of blade sticking out of Nightwing’s shoulder, which is positioned between the attacker and Damian’s face.

Nightwing blocked the blow. He protected Damian.

I do not understand. He should resent me, glory in my removal so as to ensure his succession to my Father’s place. What has he done?

“How?” Damian whispers, brow furrowed in confusion.

And Nightwing.

Turns, forcing his grimace of pain into a semblance of a reassuring smile. His voice when he speaks is gentle, caring. “You’re my little brother, Damian. I’ll always protect you.”

And he ruffles Damian’s hair, pushes him back into the corner, and takes up a defensive position in front of him, turning his vulnerable back on Damian.

Even Mama never fully lets down her guard around Damian. Why would she? She trained him to attack any weakness he sees, and she would certainly not hesitate to attack him if she thought it necessary. He wonders uncertainly if he should stab Nightwing now. This is likely to be his best chance. But…
He does not wish to do so. Nightwing sounded... kind. He smiled, and called Damian his brother. He is protecting him even now, grunting as he absorbs a body blow and throws his attacker at one of Father’s opponents, tumbling both enemies into the wall.

Is this what brothers do?

Damian stares, wide eyed, unable to reconcile Nightwing’s actions with anything in his previous experience.

He sees the blade swinging toward Nightwing’s unprotected back, and knows the threatened injury will be permanently crippling if not immediately fatal.

All his mother’s teachings scream at him to allow the blow to fall, removing a potential obstacle from his path.

His katana is moving before he consciously decides, deflecting the blow into the wall. He leaps and uses Nightwing’s conveniently placed back as a springboard to jump off and land a punishing kick on the enemy’s head, riding the unconscious body to the ground before finding himself plucked away and tucked safely behind Night—his brother.

…Who is turning his back on the fight to crouch down and reassure Damian. “Little D, thanks for that, but you gotta stay put! We don’t want you getting hurt, okay?”

What. Little D?

…His brother is an imbecile.

As Nightwing resumes battle, Damian resolves to protect and teach this foolish sibling, who by all appearances is not in possession of a sense of self-preservation. Surely if Damian can impart some of his knowledge and superior skills to his new brothers, Father will recognize his worth.

An unnatural quiet falls over the room, and Damian’s eyes fly up to see Mama frozen, a nearly-decapitated enemy slipping from her hands. Father is poised facing the door like a bull about to charge, and Nightwing has shifted to nearly block all view of Damian from the door.

The enemy ninja have all fallen, so what…?

“Ah, Detective. Had you warned me you were planning to visit, I would have ensured a more fitting welcome.”

Grandfather.

Oh, no.

Mama’s face is pale and there is a fine tremble in her fingers, her lips drawn back to bare her teeth. The last three months of traveling with Mama have been a revelation regarding Grandfather, and from what she’s told Damian he knows never again to trust the man’s smiling façade. Ra’s al Ghul is the reason Mama is giving him up to Father earlier than planned. His showing up now is a disaster.

Father straightens slowly, huge and imposing. “Ra’s. What do you want.”

“I merely desire to see my family, of course. Surely that is not a crime worthy of your personal investigation.” Grandfather slides like a serpent, moving imperceptibly closer to Damian.

Both Mama and Father lurch forward slightly, and ninja drop from the ceiling to surround each of
them.

A trap.

Nightwing growls and presses Damian farther back into the corner. Damian’s brow furrows. Nightwing is a great warrior, but Grandfather is over six hundred years old and will not fight fairly.

And Father is edging closer, as though to intercede.

Damian has just met his father and brother, and Mama is snarling and clearly plotting a path of blood to reach her child.

He is not about to lose any of them now simply for one of Grandfather’s endless machinations.

“I think it is time the boy receive some real training, Daughter. He will be leaving with me.”

“Never!” Her voice is furious.

Ra’s sounds mildly disappointed. “You are disobedient, Daughter. Perhaps by the time I bring you back you will have learned to be more cooperative. If I have further use for you and deem you worth the trouble. Until then, know you have brought this fate upon yourself.”

Damian sees the ninja closing on Mama, and she is only going to be able to block two of the four blades descending on her. His vision tunnels and he goes low, easily darting between legs as he weaves through the maze of bodies and pops up between Mama and her attackers, katanas and body in position, squeezing his eyes shut.

It is not very brave, perhaps, but… he does not wish to see his death coming.

Mama is screaming in denial somewhere above him. She will never forgive him for this.

She told him Father likes to save people. Damian wonders if he would have made Father proud.

Talia’s scream dies off, and Damian wonders if the blades were so sharp he felt nothing. If so, he is grateful. A clean death. A warrior’s death, protecting his mother. That is not something to regret.

There is a rasping noise sounding right next to his ear, and he realizes something large and heavy is beginning to press against him.

Damian opens his eyes.

Father’s armored chest fills his vision, spots of blood dripping down from where the hilts of the attackers’ blades protrude from his flanks and shoulders. Damian blinks, drops of warm blood falling on his face.

His cry is high and thin, like a child’s. Distantly he realizes he should feel ashamed of that.

“Father! No!”

“Don’t worry, son,” Father murmurs roughly, falling heavily to his knees. Damian grabs his shoulders and tries to support him, but he’s so heavy.

“Father!”

Nightwing and Mama are fighting desperately side by side, standing between them and Ra’s. Mama’s using the poisoned blades, but they are only so effective against Ra’s and his elite forces, all
of whom are, like Damian himself, immune to most poisons through constant low-level exposure.

They are going to fall, and Grandfather will kill them all and take Damian away to do who knows what with him. When he asked what she was afraid Grandfather would do to him, Mama just went very quiet and left, returning days later drenched in blood. Damian never asked again.

Damian looks at Father, who is breathing with difficulty as he pulls a katana from one of his wounds and shifts awkwardly on his knees to face the fight, wielding the still-dripping katana to defend Damian.

It no longer matters what Grandfather wants with him. He is Damian al Ghul Wayne, Ibn al Xu'ffasch, and he will fight and fall with his family.

He whirls and spins, protecting Father’s back and tossing knives into the main battle in aid of his brother and mother.

Damian’s chest is tight with exertion and his arms nearly numb with exhaustion when the door swings open again and an unfamiliar figure flies into the room feet-first, plowing Ra’s into the ground.

The unknown assailant, clad in a black and red uniform with a stylized bird on his chest, wastes no time, taking advantage of the surprise and kicking Ra’s in the head repeatedly, snarling startlingly descriptive imprecations.

Nightwing and Mama press their foes back and Father is standing now, having removed the other blades from his body sometime during the fight. Nightwing throws him a disbelieving look as he stands there dripping blood, and Father shrugs.

“They were shallowly lodged. It was the poison that slowed me down, but I was able to administer the antidote.”

“Of course you were.” Nightwing shakes his head as they turn to face the unconscious body of Ra’s together.

The unknown tilts his head cockily. “Hey, Boss. You look like shit.”

“Language,” Father replies. “Good timing, Jayhawk.” He gestures slightly, and the other, Jayhawk, replies with a flurry of hand signs, to which Father nods. “Secure them.”

But Ra’s rises up like something from a nightmare, gaining his feet and flowing seamlessly in a series of nerve strikes that freeze Jayhawk in place before he collapses to the ground like a puppet with its strings cut. “Amusing,” Ra’s drawls, “but pointless. I suppose you are the street rat?”

Mama looks away, toward Father who is starting forward desperately to intervene and save… the street rat? Was not Father’s other adopted son, Todd, taken from the streets…?

Damian stares wide-eyed as his Grandfather easily picks Jayhawk up and dangles his other brother by the nape of the neck like a misbehaving puppy.

Ra’s smirks. “Shall we behave in a civilized manner?” He ignores the bloodstained bodies piled around the room, focusing instead on his errant daughter and Batman.

“I admit it was my initial intention to simply dispose of all of you… however, I must confess the sheer wasted potential is irritating. After all, if allowed to continue you will one day inevitably come to the realization that if someone stands between you and your goal, the most expeditious method of
removing them from your path is to walk up behind them and stab them through the heart. Once you reach that point, you will become even more interesting than you already are, Detective.”

He raises an eyebrow pointedly, looking from the young man hanging limply in his hand to Damian. “I propose a trade.”

Father growls and Nightwing jerks as if wounded. “I would never trade one of my sons for another!”

“Ah, but if I offer you no other choice? Truly, Detective, your inflexible morality is your greatest impediment. What will you do now? Save one child, or neither. Either way, your honor is stained and you are one step closer to me.”

Father appears frozen in indecision. Put thus, the choice is clear, at least to Damian. If he allows Father to sacrifice his other son for him, Damian will never be anything more than a reminder of his failure.

That is not what he desires.

Damian tugs on Father’s arm. “Father! Father, you must leave me with him. Grandfather is unlikely to kill me, but he will not hesitate to do so with my brother.”

Ra’s smiles, smug avarice and greed twisting his features into a Mephistophelian mask. “Listen to the boy, Detective. You have very little time to make your decision. I have over a hundred reinforcements on the way, and they will converge on this room in under two minutes. All of your children are in my hands, and I know you brought no other allies with you, for the girl’s injury was irreversible, wasn’t it? Pity. Your conveyance will have already been confiscated. If you survive this day, it will be on my sufferance.”

Father inhales, a painful, stuttering breath. He opens his mouth to speak-

*And the lights go out.*

Damian hears a cry, several percussive cracks, and a duller, meatier thud in the darkness.

A moment later, the lights flicker back on.

There is another man in the room, in red with black accents. He is cradling a stirring Jayhawk tightly in his arms and kneeling with one knee and a bo staff pressing roughly into the prone body of Ra’s al Ghul.

“Red Robin, no,” Father breathes, sounding pained.

Red Robin glances up, startled, and then flashes a playful smile. “Oh, hey there B. No worries, he’s not dead, just super-unconscious from all the horse tranqs I punched into him while I was taking him down. He’s enhanced, he can take it.” He flicks an unsympathetic glance down at the still form. “… Probably.”

Over Red Robin’s shoulder, Damian spots movement and automatically reaches for a throwing knife, blanching when his hand slaps nothing but fabric. As the downed ninja readies a knife to stab Red Robin in the back, Damian starts forward with a warning cry that dies in his throat when Jayhawk fluidly twists in Red Robin’s arms to pull a weapon from Red Robin’s harness and throw it, pinning the ninja’s hand to the ground.

Red Robin glances over his shoulder, then draws Jayhawk closer in to his chest, briefly pressing their foreheads together and grinning. "Thanks for the save, Jay."
"No problem, Prettyboy, just returning the favor." Jayhawk smirks back, then squirms. "Uh, I can probably walk on my own now y’know."

“I know.” Red Robin rises smoothly, still carrying Jayhawk in his arms, and strides toward the hall with no regard for the unconscious body beneath his feet. Damian narrows his eyes.

Actually, it appears he is intentionally trampling Ra’s, driving his boots in more than is strictly necessary.

Damian is uncertain exactly who this person is, for he only knows of two adopted sons of Bruce Wayne, but he is obviously an ally. Damian decides in that moment he likes this Red Robin, and resolves to kick Ra’s several times himself on the way out.

Father seems the type to prefer not to strike an enemy while they are down, so Damian will have to pretend he tripped. Multiple times.

A heavily mechanized voice grates from hidden speakers, causing everyone except Red Robin to jump slightly and take defensive stances.

“Comms are up again and I’m holding the enemy off for now, but you all need to move before they kick me out of the system. Ra’s has some good tech support and they’re putting up a hell of a fight. I won’t be able to hold them off remotely indefinitely.”

“Who-” Nightwing begins, and Father’s mouth drops open slightly in shock.

“Oracle,” he whispers, stunned. “But how—”

“At your service. And like I said, you need to move, now. Story time later. I’m in their security systems and I currently have a hundred ninja on lock down. I’m keeping them away from you and the Batplane, but as soon as they boot me from the system and regain control they’re going to open those doors and your position will be compromised.”

“Can you lead us out?”

“I have a safe route as long as you start moving now.”

Father wordlessly hands something small to Mama, who nods at Damian and melts into the darkness of the corridor to make her own escape separately. Mama, he thinks, heart clenching. But then Nightwing is there on one side and Father on the other, both leading him forward.

They make their way out, Jayhawk’s arm draped over Red Robin who in turn has an arm around the larger man’s waist. Damian eyes the pair speculatively, noting their closeness and obvious mutual affection.

Ah, now I see. Red Robin is clearly Jayhawk’s paramour.

He ponders that circumstance for a moment, and realizes he approves. Red Robin is apparently both skilled and brave, a suitable mate for one of Damian’s brothers and acceptable ally for their family.

Perhaps if the two wish to procreate one day Mama will offer them use of one of the artificial wombs in her laboratories. Yes, Damian will mention it to her once she feels it is safe to resume contact with him. It is clearly his duty as a brother.

As they make their way from the facility, Damian hears Nightwing whisper, “Who or what is an Oracle?”
And Red Robin starts to laugh.

* 

Yawning, Tim hurries into the living room after hearing the boys’ voices from down the hall. He’d suspect Alfred of having drugged him when they got back last night, but he’s pretty sure he passed out from exhaustion on the Batplane all on his own.

He has a fuzzy memory of Jay carrying him upstairs and kissing his forehead before tucking him in. Tim should probably be more embarrassed than he is about that, but finds he just can’t stop smiling. He wishes he’d been awake enough to invite Jay to stay.

Unfortunately, by sleeping in he seems to have missed his chance to carefully manage the introduction of Damian to Timmy.

This isn’t going to end well, he thinks grimly, remembering his own first encounter with Damian al Ghul. Well, I won’t let either of them get hurt this time.

In the room, Damian is staring at Timmy, entirely unimpressed. “Who are you?” The tiny child demands, drawing himself up to his full height and attempting, though not very successfully, to look down his nose at the older boy.

Timmy blinks rapidly, clearly not sure quite what to make of the haughty seven year-old. “I’m Timmy.”

Damian scoffs, then peers intensely at Timmy’s face, ignoring Timmy’s unnerved expression and quiet attempts to edge away.

Damian then spins, pointing dramatically at Tim. “He looks like you! Is this your brother? You may be Todd’s paramour, but you have not been adopted by Father and may not impose your siblings on the family! I shall not allow him to usurp my position as Father’s heir!”

Tim laughs softly, eyebrows flying up. Wow. “Um, paramour? You really don’t need to worry about that, Damian. Timmy is… well, yes, you can think of him as my little brother. But we’re Drakes, not Waynes, so no worries about competition for your inheritance, we have our own.”

Damian interrupts, tiny brows drawing together in fierce concentration. “Silence, Drake! When I inquired as to your background this morning at breakfast, Grayson implied you to be a time traveler of some kind from the future… of course! This is the child version of you, native to this time.”

Timmy’s eyes are alight with curiosity and interest. “You put that together really easily. You’re very intelligent, aren’t you?”

“Tt.” Damian scoffs, but his cheeks are tinted slightly red. “You, on the other hand, appear to be a puling weakling with no training to speak of. Normally I would defeat you soundly and cast you aside; however, in this case…” The boy stares fixedly at the older Tim, then directs his frowning gaze at Timmy until the boy squirms awkwardly.

“Based on the combat performance of your older self, with proper training you have the potential to develop into an adequate warrior, suitable for a support position serving my family. Trusted allies are invaluable and I shall have need of you when I one day ascend to Father’s position.”

He nods decisively, apparently unaware of the dumfounded expressions on the others’ faces. “I shall train you,” he announces.
Tim barely sees him move, but years of experience dodging the older Damian’s attacks are more than enough preparation. He catches the blade in the air a foot from Timmy, the boy’s gasp the only sound in the room. Timmy’s blue eyes are open wide and his face is pale with shock.

“No, Damian.” Tim slides the knife away because there is no way he’s giving it back to the brat. Though I don’t know what good it’ll do; he probably has at least six more concealed on his body.

“But he must become stronger! At his current level, he is vulnerable to even pitiable scarce-trained brigands! Do you wish for him to be killed? Better he be injured now to teach him a lesson than slain the first time he is truly attacked in earnest.”

Tim pauses. “You… throw knives at people to make them stronger, because you’re worried otherwise they could get killed?”

Damian glares at him. “Of course not!” He blusters unconvincingly, blushing. “I am not worried about him!” He sneaks a glance at Timmy, then looks away, an oddly earnest expression on his vivid little face. “I simply wish to train him appropriately, so he will survive to properly serve my Father, and one day, myself.”

Wow. Tim considers the many, many times the older Damian attacked him, and wonders. Somewhere along the way, the attempted blows definitely changed from potentially lethal to merely crippling.

I think that might have been Damian expressing his stunted affection, in his own special Damian way. Huh.

Realizations aside, he needs to do something about this. There is no way he’ll allow Damian to terrorize Timmy, well-intentioned or not. Timmy deserves to feel cared for and safe.

“No throwing knives at people unexpectedly, Damian. I’m going to be training Timmy because I have a very good understanding of his capabilities and potential. Your skill level is way above his right now in certain areas, so you can help, but you need to keep in mind the difference in your abilities. I’m not going to let either of you get hurt, okay?”

Timmy nods, having recovered from his shock. Damian grumbles a bit, but seems resigned to the compromise.

“Hey guys!” They all turn to see Jason, jogging into the room and grinning. He’s carrying something that…

Oh. Oh, this could be very bad, or very good.

“Jay, are you sure that’s the best idea?” Tim eyes the box of objects in Jason’s arms, mentally enumerating the myriad ways this can go so very wrong and not finding it in himself to care.

“I heard you talkin’ to the brats about throwin’ knives. You gotta admit these are better than that, at least! And it’s good training! Work on their aim, strategy, teamwork.” He smiles winningly, nudging Tim with his arm.

The boys are picking through the items in the box now, whispering excitedly amongst themselves as they select their weapons. Tim sighs, and finally admits that this is definitely happening.

“Fine,” he says, deftly nipping the weapon he wants out of the box and ignoring Damian’s outraged cry. “But I’m on your team.”
Bruce makes his way up from the Cave wearily, blinking heavy eyes and thinking of nothing so much as a hot shower and bed. He feels his age in every bone on days like this, but it is worth the occasional all-nighter to keep his family and his city safe.

He and Oracle definitely put a crimp in Ra’s efforts to divide Gotham last night. With the havoc they wrought on his finances and communications structure, Ra’s will be lucky to pull his empire back together within five years. And knowing Talia, she’s not going to give him the chance.

He smiles, thinking of Babs. Her intervention came as a complete though welcome shock. In retrospect, it really shouldn’t be a surprise she found the legacy drive and used the information therein as impetus to rebuild herself as the vigilante hacker and computer expert Oracle a little earlier than expected. Babs has always been a fighter, but her brain is her greatest weapon.

Having her back like this eases an ache he didn’t even realize was present. And Dick was practically walking on air the whole trip back from rescuing Damian, texting with someone and giggling at their responses.

As he closes the secret passageway into the Manor, Bruce freezes, hand still on the clock, musings scattering.

Something… something is off. He holds completely still, not even breathing, and listens carefully. There. Faint, but distinct shouting in the distance.

Batman glides down the hall, following the sounds of disturbance. He can distinguish several voices, raised in cries of anger and distress. Has Ra’s managed to infiltrate the Manor? Unthinkable.

A worse thought occurs. Damian has been raised and trained by the League of Assassins. He has potentially lethal skills, probably hasn’t had any exposure to normal children, and may not even realize how vulnerable they are… how breakable.

A child’s cry rises above the clamor, piercing and recognizable. Timmy. It doesn’t matter who is attacking, only that he stop them before it’s too late.

He flies, no time to retrieve the suit or more weapons. The items he has on him now and his training will have to be enough.

My boys, he thinks, anguishered. He has to be fast enough, strong enough. Knowing what he does now, having glimpsed the depth of desolation which will follow the loss of one of his children… he will not allow it. He can’t.

Batman bursts into the room from which the battles noises are emanating, and is immediately hit by projectiles in his upper thigh, face, and torso. At least three opponents, he thinks, willing himself to move and scanning the battlefield for his children.

His pounding heart slows and the red haze over his vision fades away as he absorbs the scene.

Damian and Timmy are bunkered down behind the couch, which has been propped against the wall to create a cave of sorts. The boys are peeking out from behind it, weapons at the ready.

Tim and Jason are in a fort which appears to have been constructed using the remaining furniture in the room. Armchairs, bookshelves, the desk, and various coffee tables and cushions all appear integral to the design.
Bruce eyes the edifice consideringly, impressed by the apparent structural integrity. He frowns slightly. They should have allowed for more space inside; by his estimates, the two boys must be lying practically on top of each other in there. Well, they’ll have learned their lesson and will know to build it better next time.

The boys’ weapons are poking out through narrow slits on the second story, their startled faces barely visible through the gap in their defenses, Jason’s chin resting in Tim’s hair.

All of the boys are staring at Bruce with huge eyes. Damian clutches his weapon tightly, and Timmy’s chin wobbles. There are no enemies in the room.

Bruce rubs his eyes tiredly, feeling the faint nausea of adrenaline let down and exhaustion. “Boys?”

“Fuck, sorry B! We thought you were Dickface!”

“Language.” Why does he even try at this point? He feels more tired than ever.

“It is true, Father! Grayson was bursting in through all the doors and windows, and attempting to snipe us!” Damian climbs out from behind the couch and gesticulates earnestly. “We did not intend to attack you!”

Timmy crawls out behind him and steps close to Damian. “We’re sorry,” he apologizes softly, chin tucked a little toward his chest and shoulders curling in slightly.

Bruce looks at the little boys, who don’t seem to have noticed they are standing in defensive formation watching each other’s backs. Tim and Jason clamber down from their fort and land side by side, flushed and chastened.

This is why I am bad at being a parent.

Bruce thinks a good parent would probably lecture all the kids about horseplay in the house. A good parent probably wouldn’t even have to tell their children not to have pitched battles in the living room using modified nerf guns, because the idea wouldn’t even occur to well-brought up children.

He doesn’t care.

His tiny son, who has been used and taught to inflict pain and raised as a goddamn assassin since birth, is playing happily with his other children. His second boy, beaten and almost broken just three months ago, is on his feet again, smiling and laughing and best friends with his rescuer.

And then there are the Drakes, who may not be his in the eyes of the law but they belong to him anyway, damn it all. Tim is still grieving the loss of his former life, but adapting and fitting in beautifully here. Timmy is blossoming in response to the affection and approval he was starved for all his life.

All four of the boys are still staring at him, looking like they expect him to growl and take away their fun.

He steps forward, scooping a surprised Damian up and resting him on his hip. He takes Timmy by the hand and leads his two youngest away. “I think Alfred should have a snack ready by now. Come along, boys.”

He glances back over his shoulder. “Not you.” Jason and Tim freeze guiltily in place. “You are older and therefore responsible. You need to set a good example for your brothers. I expect the three of you to clean up this room before lunch.”
Jason gapes. “Three—” His eyes dart around the room, checking the windows and corners. Tim spins to put his back to Jason, both boys lifting their weapons defensively.

A flurry of nerf darts bounce off everyone in the room as Dick cackles, strafing them all from his position dangling off the chandelier.

Bruce snorts as he herds the youngest out of the room, the shouts and sounds of continued battle rising behind them. He’s sure they’ll do as directed and clean up. Eventually.

* 

Jason puts the nerf weapons away in one of the lockers, already looking forward to the hijinks the little ones are bound to get up to with them in the future. He and Tim’ll hafta see about engineering some more powerful weapons to escalate things. Maybe a nerf cannon? Or some kinda nerf rocket launcher—

His mind skips to a stop on his way past the Batcomputer. B left it logged on, he thinks, shocked. 

Fuck, Bruce must be riding on fumes right now if he made a rookie mistake like this.

Jason’s in the chair in a heartbeat, quickly searching out the legacy drive everyone’s been so adamant about keeping him out of. The fuck is their problem, anyway, he thinks, rolling his eyes and glancing quickly at first Dick’s file, then Tim’s. It can’t be that ba—

He hits a certain name in the file and stops, reads it again. Then again, because this can’t be right no no no I died. And anyway, I wouldn’t, I couldn’t, not to Tim—

Jason keeps reading, anguished and horrified. Oh no.

His heart skips a beat, then drops into his shoes.

* 

Tim calls for Jason to come in and looks up from where he’s playing with his tablet on the bed. His welcoming smile drops right off once he sees the look on Jason’s face. “Jay?”

He’s alarmed by the other boy’s pallor and the stunned, shocky look in his eyes. He quickly sets the tablet aside and sits up, reaching for Jay. “Hey, what happened? Are you okay?”

“Finally gotta look at the legacy drive, Tim.” Jason’s voice is hoarse like he’s barely holding it together. “The fuck didn’t any of you tell me?” he snarls, sounding wounded and angry.

“Tell you what?” Tim has to be careful. Oh, god. This isn’t… He shouldn’t have to deal with any of that mess.

“That I came back as a fuckin’ psychotic zombie and tried to fuckin’ murder you!”

Tim fidgets, looking down guiltily. “Jay,” he breathes. “I’m so sorry. I never wanted you to know about that. It isn’t going to happen here, so I didn’t want you to have to bear the burden of what might have been. And… you never asked me much about the future, so I didn’t think you really wanted to know?”

Jason sniffs angrily and rubs his sleeve over his eyes. “When I woke up in Medical after you saved me B just told me the bare bones about who you were. Told me you were from the future, ‘bout how you were the kid next door an’ stalked us and made yourself Robin ‘cause B was verging on a psychotic break he was so fuckin’ cut up after I died.”
Tim nods, not wanting to interrupt and maybe drive Jason away.

“I didn’t… I didn’t really want to know more. I mean, I was curious about the future, but it’s all changin’ anyway so it didn’t really seem to matter. And I didn’t wanna make you think about it too much ‘cause it makes you sad, rememberin’ everything you left behind.’ His face screws up like he’s trying not to cry. “I wish I still didn’t know.”

Tim’s throat is tight. “Jay, I’m sorry. I’m so sorry. I should’ve… I should have realized you’d find out eventually. I should have told you.” God, I’m the worst.

“Told me how? ‘Hey Jay, guess what? In the timeline I came from, you came back from the dead like a fuckin’ flesh-eating zombie, turned into a goddamn serial killer, and beat the motherfuckin’ shit outta me multiple times before I was sixteen fuckin’ years old.’ What the fuck?”

Tim winces. “Um, yeah, I probably wouldn’t have put it quite like that.”

“I just don’t get why the fuck he was so mad at you. I mean, hating Joker makes perfect sense, that piece of shit deserves to die. Hating B, yeah, that sucks, but I was goin’ through a bad patch with him for a while there and I can see myself bein’ hurt and pissed if I came back and it seemed like I never even mattered to him. But why you?”

“I… I replaced you, Jay. It… I took Robin from you—”

“What the fuck? No you didn’t, I was fuckin’ dead.”

Tim shrugs. “The Jason who came back saw it differently.” He smiles a little. “I was actually surprised you took it so well, to be honest.”

“You came back to the past for me, saved my fuckin’ life, and the first time I saw you after B told me about you being a Robin you were wearin’ my clothes and swipin’ B’s coffee. Fuckin’ goddamn adorable. There was no way in hell I’d be mad at you for somethin’ like that.”

“Well, I’m really glad. But… he was.”

“Too fuckin’ right. I can’t…” Jason gags slightly. “I saw the photos, the video footage of him attackin’ you. I don’t… Jesus, Tim.” He scrubs at his eyes, voice trembling. “How can you even stand to look at me? You should hate me. Oh Jesus fuckin’ Christ, are you scared of me? Scared I’ll hurt you if you don’t do what I want?” Jason’s face blanches in horror at the thought.

Tim takes a step toward Jason, who takes a step back. “Jay, no. No.”

“If it’s not that… if you’ve just been… I dunno, bein’ nice all this time ‘cause you felt like you owe it to me or somethin’… just stop. You… you don’t owe me shit, Prettyboy. I don’t want you forcing yourself to spend time with me when the sight of me must make you sick.”

Jason’s shoulders are hunched and his voice is trembling. Tim launches himself at the other boy, wrapping his arms around him. “No no no, oh Jason no,” he soothes, getting a hand in the taller boy’s hair and stroking while his other arm drapes around his neck and pulls him close, pressing them together from chest to thigh. “Never. I love spending time with you. You’re my best friend. I never once was afraid of you.”

“Really?” Jason’s voice sounds small and muffled, hurt. Tim feels horrible for making Jay feel like that.

I need to fix this.
“Really. You know, where I came from, things had actually gotten a lot better with the other you. We patrolled together, hung out.” His voice is soft. “I think we were even friends, by the end.” He smiles. “We had a blast solving cases together and eating rooftop pizza. He’s over the pit syndrome now, so he’s just a regular asshole, not a crazy one anymore.”

Jason stares down at the smaller man, still wrapped in his arms. His brows draw together slightly.

“You were in love with him, weren’t you.” Jason’s eyes close, his face twisting in pain.

“No! I… I wasn’t.” What the fuck, what gave him that idea?

“Of fuckin’ course you were, you don’t know how you sound when you talk about him. The hell am I then, runner up?”

Oh no, Jay… Tim’s chest tightens in dismay at the distress in Jason’s voice and he tugs the taller boy even closer, rubbing his cheek against him.

“No. Jason, no. I… I loved him, yes. Pretty much always have. But I wasn’t in love with him. I… knew it would never be reciprocated, so I never let it get that far. He’s a good person who’s been through hell. He was my hero as a kid, of course I loved him.”

“And I promise, you’re not some kind of stand-in for him, oh my god, I mean, obviously I have a type, but you’re so much more open, and enthusiastic, and you’re awesome, and you have so much less anger in you all the time. You’re really a different person and you’re wonderful and I have had so much fun getting to know you.”

If anything, Jason looks even more horrified. “Wait, you loved me even as a kid… does that mean Tiny Tim is in love with me? Oh my god. Oh my fucking god. I hugged him yesterday. Does that make me a pedophile?”

“What, no. No, Jesus. You are not a pedophile, you idiot holy shit. That is not how that works.”

“Are you sure?”

“Do you want to have sex with Tiny Tim?”

“Fuckin’ gross, no that’s disgusting I’m gonna barf!”

“See? Timmy having a crush on you wouldn’t make you a pedophile, it would just make everything awkward. Besides, he doesn’t.”

“But you just said—”

“Loving someone is different from being in love or having a sexual interest. Also, I was a late bloomer, okay?”

“What the fuck does that mean?”

“Well, you’ve seen Tiny Tim. He’s just barely getting used to ordinary, simple human contact. Socially, his development is delayed. With all of us helping, I think he’s progressing way faster than I did with learning how to be a real boy. It took me a long time to level up to actual crushes and sexual attraction and whatnot.”

“Yeah? How old were you?”
“Fourteen.”

Jason breathes a relieved sigh. “So since I was long dead by then, you never crushed on me.” Tim fidgets, looking away, and Jason narrows his eyes suspiciously, raising a questioning brow and smirking a little.

Tim sighs. “Ugh, fine. I was fourteen, and I had a dream about you in the Robin costume.” Jason’s grinning now, and Tim blushes. “It’s not funny! I had my sexual awakening dreaming about a guy who’d been dead for almost two years at that point! I thought I was a necrophiliac, Jason!”

Jason snorts. “What, you wanted to dig me up and get freaky, Prettyboy?”

“Oh my god of course not, gross, Jason.” Tim hunches his shoulders defensively. “I was fourteen, and not well socialized? I thought a necrophiliac was someone who wanted to have sex with a person who had died. I didn’t understand it meant dead bodies.”

Jason can’t help bursting into laughter. Tim’s still blushing ferociously and trying to hold back his own laughter.

“Shut up, you jerk. It was tragic!”

“Tragically hilarious.”

Tim soberes. “But really. I wasn’t… I could have been in love with the other Jason, but I wasn’t. It was friendship between us, nothing more.”

“And…” Jason’s biting his lip, rubbing the back of his neck. “Me. What’s between you and me.”

Tim carefully reaches out and touches Jason’s face, tracing his cheekbone and lips with his thumb. “More,” he breathes. “If you… if that’s what you want. I’ve been… well, waiting on you. To finish healing from the attack, get to a good place again, and decide what you want.”

“I know what I want,” Jason growls, the intensity of his gaze making Tim blush. Jason pushes Tim’s hair out of his face, cups his cheek. “And what do you want, Prettyboy?”

“You,” Tim breathes.

You’re all I want, oh god. Can I really have this?

Jason’s arms are around Tim and he’s pulling him to his chest again, tucking him into his body like that’s where he belongs. It’s so warm in Jason’s arms. Tim is trembling minutely and he doesn’t care.

They stand together like that for a while, just holding each other close. Jason closes his eyes and speaks into Tim’s hair. His voice is soft, hesitant. “Just one more question, Prettyboy. Do you ever wish… you could go back to there? To him?”

Tim swallows, blinking suddenly hot, stinging eyes. Easy question. “Jay… no. At first, maybe, before I saved you and got to know you guys. Not now.”

“So if you had the choice…?” Jason sounds so hopeful. Tim tightens his arms around him. I won’t let you down, Jay. Not now, not ever.

“I’d stay here, with you.” Tim looks up into Jason’s pretty blue eyes, and there really isn’t anywhere in any world he’d rather be. Jason smiles, crinkling the corners of his eyes, and then he’s closer. So
And it’s like gravity, pulling him in, and Tim’s on his tiptoes and then. *Jason’s lips*…

Jason’s warm lips, kissing him oh-so-tentatively, careful, like he’s afraid Tim will run away. So Tim cradles Jason’s face in his hands and loses himself in the kiss, melting into the taller boy’s embrace, happiness welling up inside him and overflowing as a joyous little laugh Jason answers with an irresistible grin.

*I’m not going anywhere, Jay.*

They pull back a little, still holding onto each other, flushed, smiling and breathing a little hard.

Jason leans in to kiss him again, a tender softness in his eyes Tim’s never seen. “I like the sound of that, Prettyboy.”

Tim smiles and rests his head on Jason’s shoulder for a moment just breathing him in before a loud thump on the door and the sound of giggling outside makes him sigh. *Damn it.*

Alfred sent the kids to summon them for lunch.

“*We’re coming in! Cover your shame, there are children present!*” Dick’s playful bellow and more giggles resound through the closed door.

Tim and Jason make eye contact and immediately look away, blushing. *Oh my god why is Dick such an embarrassment.*

Tim looks at Jason again, wanting to make sure the other boy is okay before facing the Batfamily circus again. “*We good, Jay?*”

Jason snorts a laugh and takes his hand, kissing him easily one more time before leading him over to open the door. “*Yeah, Prettyboy, we’re fuckin’ great.*”

Chapter End Notes

**Batman:** “*Stay in the plane, boys.*”

**Red Robin and Jayhawk:** “Okay!” *Immediately follow Batman and Nightwing into the compound*

**Nightwing, Batman, Damian:** *Take turns attempting to sacrifice selves for others*

**Damian:** *Heart grows three sizes*

**Ra’s al Ghul, all creepy-like:** *Dangles Jayhawk by the neck* “I like a little breathplay.”

**Red Robin, horrified and protective:** “YOU BASTARD!” *Rescues Jayhawk, cuddles him close while vengefully trampling all over Ra’s unconscious form*

**Damian, carefully observing Jayhawk and Red Robin:** “I ship it.” *Tramples all over Ra’s unconscious form in solidarity*

*Damian:* *Throws knife at Timmy’s face* “Know that I only hurt you to make you STRONGER!”

**Timmy:** *Whimpering* “I feel so attacked right now.”
Other Tim: *Catches knife in air* “No using weapons against each other in the house, kids.”

Jason, holding box full of weapons: “Hey guys let’s use these weapons against each other in the house!”

Other Tim: *Makes heart eyes at Jason* “Okay!”
“Tell me what you want, what you like, Baby Bird.” Jason cradles Tim in his lap, marveling over how good the smaller man feels in his arms. He’s imagined this so many times, and never even got close to the reality.

This chapter bumps the rating to explicit, so be prepared. I thought Jason would be the one pushing the rating, but Tim surprised me. Enjoy!

“Tell me what you want, what you like, Baby Bird.” Jason cradles Tim in his lap, marveling over how good the smaller man feels in his arms. He’s imagined this so many times, and never even got close to the reality.

“Um… I don’t… maybe it would be better if you just showed me what you want?” And there’s a note of… something… in his Baby Bird’s voice that Jason doesn’t fuckin’ like.

Jason pulls back and looks at Tim, assailed by a sudden suspicion. “Tim.”

“…Yes?” Tim is blushing and he isn’t meeting Jason’s eyes.

“Timmy, are you trying to tell me you’re a virgin?” Jesus how even, he knows Tim dated Blondie for a while there.

“What?” Tim’s face is flushed so pretty and the look in his eyes… Jason needs to focus right fuckin’ now, or things are gonna be moving too damn fast to stop and get the answers he needs.

“Baby Bird, it’s an easy question. If we have sex right now, am I gonna be takin’ your virginity?”

“…Well that depends on your definition of virginity. There’s actually a broad spectrum of potential sexual acts in which people may or may not choose to engage-”

Yeah, Timmy’s just gonna keep talking unless Jason interrupts. “Let’s go with first orgasm in the presence of another person.” Tim’s face falls and he retreats slightly, body language closing down and sending Jason a lot of messages he really doesn’t fuckin’ like.

No. No. Fucking NO. He’s seen people react like this to mentions of sex, and he never, Jesus, even at his fuckin’ psychopathic worst he hated people who hurt others with sex, never wanted that for his Replacement… for Tim.

A deadly calm settles over him as a familiar rage-filled green haze creeps into the edges of his vision. He barely recognizes his voice when he speaks, a deep, dark growl promising retribution and pain to whatever fuckin’ animal in human form dared to make Timmy look like that. “Who.”
It’ll break his year-long no-kill streak, but it’ll be *so goddamn worth it*. Dickie and Timmy’ll look sad at him, but forgive him eventually. Alfred will probably cheer him on; behind the stoic façade, that guy’s secretly a lot more pragmatic than the rest of the family, and protective as all hell to boot.

Damian would probably help. Little shit pretends to hate Timmy, but Jason’s on to him. Under all that spite and verbal abuse, the brat’s just trying to hide how much he cares. Jason fucking *gets* it, it’s his own damn coping strategy. If you show someone they matter to you, you give them the power to hurt you. Drive them away and at least it’s your own goddamn choice when they’re gone.

But he saw the look on the kid’s face back in the Cave when they found out Other Tim was trapped in the other universe. Sad, scared. *Sorry*, before he covered it up with sass and scowls. In his own *asshole* way, Damian cares.

Yeah, Demon would definitely wanna wet his katanas on the guy who hurt Tim.

As for Bruce… well, Jason never really expected to stay on his good side long anyway.

Timmy’s worth it.

Tim’s head shoots up at the quiet fury in Jason’s voice, and his eyes widen. “Whoa. Oh, no. Jason, no. Not… it’s not… whatever you’re thinking.” He shakes his head in frantic negation.

Jason eyes the smaller man carefully. In his experience it isn’t uncommon for survivors to deny anything ever happened. Tim’s *strong*, but he has self-esteem issues sometimes, something Jason didn’t exactly improve with all his fuckery over the years. He consciously gentles his voice. “Then what is it, Timmers? You can tell me.”

“Oh god you don’t believe me. *Why.* I’m going to have to tell you the story now, aren’t I, or you’re going to just keep *looking* at me like that.”

Tim buries his face in his hands and Jason carefully refrains from putting his hands on him. No matter how much he wants to comfort him, being touched is probably the last thing Tim wants right now.

“I was fourteen,” Tim starts, and Jason sees green.

Whatever is on Jason’s face makes Tim’s eyes widen and he rushes on. “*I swear* it’s not what you’re thinking! It was Dick—”

Jason’s growling now and Tim rolls his eyes, using his whole body to hold Jason down. Huh, he hadn’t even realized he was trying to stand.

“Jason *no, ew, god no.* I swear, you’re overreacting. *This was not a ‘show me on the doll’ situation,* Jason, stop panicking and just *listen* to me.”

Tim hides his face in his hands again, seeming to find it easier to talk without being forced to maintain eye contact. “This is so embarrassing. Oh my god, why *this.* Okay. So, I think Dick and Bruce were fighting again at the time or something, and apparently Dick wanted to hang out with me but was trying to avoid running into Bruce. So he decided to come in through my window…”

Tim groans, somehow burying his face even deeper in his hands. “…At the *worst possible moment.*” He releases a shuddering sigh, face bright red in remembered humiliation.

Jason stares, fog of rage lifting because apparently it is unneeded. *And thank fuck for that.* “Wait, so you’re sayin’ Dickiebird just walked in on you jackin’ it?”
“At the most inopportune moment, Jason!”

“So he saw you shoot off? Jesus, Baby Bird, that kinda sucks but it isn’t—"

“I was also using a toy, Jason!”

And Jason. Can’t help but picture it, Timmy spread out all pretty and flushed with a vibrator spreading his ass, other hand on his cock, opening his eyes just as Dickie drops all unaware through the window and—

Jason imagines the look of horrified surprise on Dick’s face and starts laughing so hard he almost falls off the couch. Tim covers his eyes again with one hand and uses the other to hit Jason repeatedly with a pillow.

“Stop that, it’s traumatizing, I was traumatized, Jason! Dick couldn’t even look at me for a month! Do you know how difficult it is to patrol with someone who turns red and starts stuttering in alarmed panic every time he sees you?!” He punctuates each sentence with a fierce swing of his pillow.

Jason holds his hands up in surrender, face red and shoulders still heaving with silent laughter. “Okay, okay, Jesus, Baby Bird, quit it, ouch, damn you’re deceptively strong. Fuck. I’ll stop.”

Tim sighs and relents, curling up against Jason’s chest and resting his head on his shoulder. “Once he could bring himself to speak to me properly again, he gave me the talk, Jason. And a giant box of condoms. And I think he told Bruce about it, too, because that was when B made me watch the slideshow.”

“Oh, shit.”

“Right?”

“Ultimate boner killer. No wonder you never had sex after all that.”

Tim hits Jason with the pillow again. “I’ve done stuff, but… and anyway, the concept of there being a single definition of virginity is imprecise and exclusionary.”

Jason spreads his hands and shrugs. “I just want to make sure I’m doin’ right by you, Baby. Not pushin’ you into somethin’ you’re not ready for. Takin’ care of you like you deserve.”

Tim smiles up at him, eyes luminous under the long sweep of his eyelashes. “I’m not worried about that.”

“Well, I am.”

Tim squeezes Jason’s hand. “I’ve kissed, a lot. Done more. Messed around with Steph back in the day, Kon before we figured out how tragically straight he is. I haven’t had penetrative sex, which I suspect is what you’re really trying to ask about.”

Jason heaves a relieved sigh. This, he can work with. “Okay then, I’m up for anything, but we can just do what you’re comfortable with…”

Tim’s eyes glint dangerously, and Jason recognizes Red Robin’s razor sharp smile. His pulse surges at the sight, and heat flares as his pants start to feel a little tighter, a conditioned response to seeing that look on Timmy’s face. It usually means Red’s about to do something incredibly badass and more than a little terrifying.
“Jason,” Tim fuckin’ purrs. “Excuse you, did I say I wanted to stay inside my fucking comfort zone?”

And he sticks his motherfuckin’ hand right down Jason’s pants.

*Jesus Christ on a titty-fuckin’ cracker,* Jason thinks, whimpering and thrusting up helplessly. It feels so fucking good.

*My Baby Bird’s gonna kill me. And I’ll take whatever he gives me and beg for more, and this time when I die I’ll go out a goddamn happy man.*

Tim palms him and fuckin’ squeezes, still wearing that smile.

Well what the fuck is Jason supposed to do with that?

Oh, right. He grabs on with both hands and kisses that sexy smile right off Tim’s pretty face. Jesus. Jesus. He stands up abruptly, taking Tim with him as the smaller man automatically wraps his legs around Jason’s waist.

Tim’s kisses have gone from sweet to sinful, and his mouth and touches are stoking the fire in Jason’s belly so hot he’s not even sure he’ll make it to the bedroom without embarrassing himself.

Fuck that.

He kicks open the bedroom door and lowers his warm, willing armful of Tim carefully onto the bed. This is Timmy’s first time, sort of, probably.

He’s gonna take his time and do this fuckin’ right.

*

Jason feels so huge and hard pressing Tim into the bed and wow, he is good with his hands. Mouth too, oh god. Tim’s making really embarrassing noises but Jason seems to like it, growling and chasing Tim’s lips for more kisses when he tries to pull back to just breathe oh my god.

Suddenly Tim feels cold and he reaches after Jason why stop, no, where…? But Jason is back a moment later, shirt and jacket gone and so much skin to touch, oh god, some of it smooth and some rough with scars and all of it hot and wonderful and Tim must lick it all.

He shoves at Jason who allows himself to fall over on his back, surprised. “Baby Bird? You need me to slow down or—”

Silly, sweet Jason asking stupid thoughtful questions with his stupid thoughtful face. He shuts up fast when Tim’s mouth latches onto his throat, and then Tim starts working his way down Jason’s gorgeous, muscled chest.

Tim feels drunk on the sounds Jason is making for him, because of him. He takes his time exploring the other man’s body, cataloguing the places that make him cry out and press up seeking more.

Mmm, sensitive nipples. Very nice. And…

He traces the worst of the scars with his tongue, and Jason goes insane. By the time Tim works his way back up, Jason’s flushed and panting, pupils blown. His hair looks like he’s been outside in a hurricane.

Pleased, Tim licks the tip of Jason’s nose. Jason wrinkles it and laughs, surprised. *Adorable.*
“Jesus, Baby Bird. If this is you as a virgin, when you’ve had more practice you’re either gonna kill me or make me a very happy man. Maybe both.” His voice is rough, an octave deeper than usual, and Tim feels it drawing the heat up inside him.

“I’d like to make you happy.” Tim lets Jason pull him in for more kisses.

“Yeah? Wanna lose the shirt, then?” Tim nods, and Jason helps Tim remove it by running his huge hands along his flanks and up under the shirt, lifting it off. He presses his lips softly to Tim’s exposed chest as he lowers him back on the bed, then takes his time driving Tim crazy with his lips and tongue, finding and exploiting every sensitive spot Tim didn’t even know he had.

When he gets to the scar from Tim’s splenectomy, Jason pauses, tracing it with his thumb and letting out a soft noise. Closing his eyes, he kisses it reverently.

Jason gives the same special attention to every scar that he caused on Tim’s body.

Tim didn’t even realize Jason remembered all of those, but he doesn’t miss a single one and that realization brings with it a deep, sweet ache in Tim’s chest. Oh, Jason.

By the time Jason pauses in his exploration, Tim’s a breathless mess melted into the pillows, somehow down to just a pair of black boxer briefs, and Jason’s hovering over him, grinning, gloriously nude except for his bright red boxers.

“You back, Baby? Kinda lost you there for a sec.”

“Hnnngh.”

Jason’s grin widens, a smugly satisfied look settling on his face. He leans down and kisses the corner of Tim’s mouth. “Yeah?”

Tim manages to get a hand up and sinks his fingers into Jason’s curls, carding through them and tugging Jason’s handsome face down for more kisses. “Yeah.” He can’t stop smiling. This is... about as far as it could possibly be from what he expected to be doing tonight. And so, so much better.

Speaking of doing...

He runs his fingers along the waistband of Jason’s boxers and looks at Jason questioningly. This isn’t going any further without enthusiastic consent from both parties.

Jason flushes lightly and nods, tugging his boxers off and then helping Tim remove his. He’s back before Tim has time to even think about being self-conscious, covering him with his warmth and kissing him slowly and thoroughly until the heat builds and Tim’s thrusting up against Jason, god Jason, so hot and hard and Jesus Christ he feels huge.

I want that inside me.

“Really, Baby Bird? Are you sure?” Jason’s voice is rough and a little shaky, his control fraying as they continue the delicious slide of their bodies against each other.

Weird, it’s like he read my mind. Can Jason read minds?!

He actually feels Jason’s laugh rippling through his body. “Baby, no I’m not reading minds, you’re talkin’ out loud.”
Tim looks at Jason’s face, so close he can see the faint freckles on his cheekbones and the fine lines that appear at the corners of his eyes when he laughs. *So pretty.*

He wraps his legs around Jason’s muscular waist, lips parting at the increased sensation. Jason groans and buries his face against Tim’s neck, swearing. Tim looks right into Jason’s eyes and makes absolutely certain he is using his outside voice when he says, very clearly, “I want you to fuck me.”

Jason cups the side of his face in his big hand and rubs his thumb softly over Tim’s bottom lip, eyes tracing his expression. He smiles, lips parting in a silly grin. “Yeah, okay.”

And then Jason’s gone, placing a pillow under Tim’s hips, back in a moment pressing kisses down Tim’s chest to his belly and lower, fingers circling Tim’s entrance. “Hey, Baby Bird, you showered tonight right?”

“Wha…? Yeah, I took a shower to calm down a bit, right before you showed up. Why do y—Jason, what are you—ohmyfuckinggodpleasedon’tstop!”

Tim’s panting, his back arching and his legs trembling where Jason’s thrown them over his shoulders while he’s—

He’s—

*Oh* god. *Oh sweet Tesla,* yes. *So much yes.*

Jason’s coarse stubble rubs against the delicate skin of Tim’s inner thighs and the soft crease where Jason’s mouth—

His mouth—

…Jason’s hot, wet mouth is pressed into an intimate kiss with Tim’s *aching,* intensely sensitive entrance. He whimpers, squirming and twitching and arching up even as Jason’s big strong hands gently hold his hips in place. Tim’s toes are curling with the sensation, aching cock leaking against his belly as Jason’s *tongue* teases and flicks at him and then pushes gently *in.*

Tim’s hips buck and he cries out, but Jason holds him steady and just inexorably continues the slow, exquisite torture. Jason’s tongue is… it’s gliding, *thrusting* slowly in and out of Tim’s body, his every nerve alight with pleasure, unbearably, almost impossibly good and yet still *not enough.*

Jason pulls back to bite gently at Tim’s thighs, words tripping over each other like he’s not even aware he’s saying them. “I gotcha, Baby. Been wanting to do this so long. Get you nice and wet, use my mouth on you, open you up for me.”

He mouths at Tim’s balls, licks a sloppy stripe up the underside of Tim’s cock to press a slow, wet kiss to the sensitive head, taking it in to suck for an excruciatingly wonderful moment. “Take you slow and easy, like you deserve. Like it fast and hard sometimes too, Baby, *so good,* gonna make you *scream* for me, but been wantin’ to take it slow with you like this the first time. A little softness to balance out the hurt, y’know. I *need* it, Baby, need to take care o’ you.”

Jason ducks back down to resume tongue-fucking Tim, and he’s already making Tim want to scream.

Tim is moaning continuously and on some level he’s aware he’s a flushed mess, one arm draped over his eyes because he knows if he looks down and sees *that,* sees Jason doing this to him he’ll go off like a rocket. And he wants… he wants more, wants *everything.*
“Shh, it’s okay, Baby, I got you,” Jason must’ve stopped at some point, because he’s kneeling up, rubbing Tim’s thighs with his big warm hands, murmuring reassurances. “I heard you, Baby Bird. Everything I got, it’s yours.”

*Oh, I guess I was thinking with my outside voice again.*

Jason’s chuckling as he does something with his hands. “Yeah, Baby. That pesky fuckin’ outside voice. Real confusing, I know.”

*Jason’s such a shit. He’s lucky I love him.*

Silence.

Jason’s staring at him with big wet eyes, and Tim pulls himself up far enough out of the pool of sensation he’s drowning in to realize what just happened. Oh shit. Stupid outside voice, how dare you betray me.

“Uh…”

But Jason’s smiling, a hopeful little tug at the corners of his mouth. “You mean that, Baby?” He whispers.

“Of course I do,” Tim tells him helplessly.

And Jason’s kissing him, pressing his whole body against Tim’s, and Tim wraps his arms and legs around him to just hold him close. “Fuckin’ love you too, Baby Bird. Been comin’ on for a while now. Tried not to, since I didn’t think you wanted… Wasn’t gonna tell ya, didn’t wanna scare you away. But fuck it, you fuckin’ said it first so it’s your goddamn fault.”

“God, you’re such a romantic.”

“You know it.” Jason grins into the kiss and his hand reaches between them, warm slick fingers circling then pressing gently in and working where Tim is already wet and relaxed. Time stretches like taffy as Tim sinks back into the bed and the kisses and Jason, Jason, Jason’s mouth and hands and oh god how is this so good.

And Jason’s hovering over him, waiting for something, and Tim’s panting, moaning, what the hell is he waiting for goddamnit I want that in me yesterday why must he torture me so, and now Jason’s chuckling under his breath and whispering endearments as he pushes in.

*So.*

*Slowly.*

A long, wet glide of heat and hardness stretching and filling Tim like nothing before, no toy can compare to the aching burn and velvet softness over steel strength that is Jason. Tim doesn’t even realize he’s whining until Jason’s pressing soothing kisses all over his face, catching Tim’s hands where they’re clutching the blankets and rubbing them, coaxing them open and intertwining their fingers.

“Okay, Baby?” Jason nibbles Tim’s bottom lip softly. “You good?”

His body is adjusting around the feeling of fullness, and he can feel. *God. Everything.* He can feel *Jason’s heartbeat inside him*, and their connection in that moment is more indescribably intimate than anything Tim has ever experienced.

He blinks up at Jason, just enjoying the moment, and then realizes Jason’s face is starting to look
worried, and he’s beginning to carefully withdraw—oh hell no. Tim locks his legs around Jason, pulling him back into place. “Good, I’m good!” He breathlessly hurry to reassure the other man. “Just a little overwhelmed, but totally in a good way.”

Jason smiles, then smirks, hitching Tim’s hips up and pulling out almost all the way in one long, slow drag before pushing back in smooth and fast, sending sparks shooting up Tim’s spine and behind his eyes. “Yeah?” He breathes, husky.

“Hnnngh.” Tim’s pretty sure his eyes are crossed right now and why’s Jason chuckling? Such an asshole. Ugh, but he’s really good at sex so Tim can forgive him. This time.

Jason’s sliding in and out at a steady pace now, the sensations building, aching heat spreading up Tim’s core and through his belly and oh god oh god oh god…

The heavy heat in his belly gathers until he feels like he’s one shallow breath away from coming, and then it keeps building. Jason adjusts his angle slightly, and each of his next few thrusts brings a thrilling wave of yes within Tim until it’s so much, too much, all good I need oh god more more more YES Jason Jason Jason…

And then it all surges up and sends Tim quivering and tightening and whimpering over the exquisite edge, clenching down hard and carrying Jason along with him.

*

Jason feels blissfully relaxed, a sense of absolute comfort and satisfaction permeating his entire being. Whatever the fuck he’s wrapped around is the most comfortable fucking thing in the world and he needs one in all his safe houses. Fuck it, he’s going back to sleep.

“Mmmph,” the comfortable thing says.

Huh. That’s fuckin’ weird. Hell, I better not be high on pollen and hallucinatin’ again. Least it’s not a shitty trip with fucked up nightmares. Soft, sweet-smellin’ talkin’ pillows are a helluva lot better’n motherfuckin’ clowns.

Jason grumbles, not wanting to move, then shifts slightly so he can crack an eye and check out the talking pillow. Oh fuck, that’s no pillow. Holy fuckin’ shit best dream ever.

He slams his eyes shut to try to prolong this beautiful, wonderful, impossible dream where he’s naked in bed with Tim Drake, curled around Tim’s nude, sleeping, gorgeous form, the smaller man’s pale perfect skin marked by love bites Jason remembers making wait a fuckin’ minute…

Jason’s eyes fly open and he meets Tim’s amused gaze. Not a fuckin’ dream oh Jesus fuck that really happened what the fuck.

“Hey,” he says, distracted. Tim’s bedhead’s fuckin’ adorable.

Tim’s grinning at him now. “Hey there, Jay.”

“Is that coffee?” What the fuck…? The hell did that come from?

Tim clutches his mug possessively. “Mine!”

Jason laughs softly, “Tim I’m—” Tim’s pulling away, and Jason tugs him back into his arms, sitting up to hold him. “Baby, I’m not trying to take away your coffee. I was just wondering where the fuck it came from, you were asleep a minute ago.”
Tim’s eyes dart to the floor, and Jason’s both horrified and impressed to see a coffee maker tucked discreetly under the bed. There are wires connecting it to… something. That shit better not be fuckin’ explosive but fuck knows really.

“Tim what the fuck is that coffee maker fuckin’ hooked up to? Is it sentient? Tim, is your sentient coffee maker gonna kill me in my sleep? That’s somethin’ I need to know if we’re dating now. Wait, we are dating now, right?” Damn, that last bit came out fuckin’ vulnerable-sounding. Shit.

“Relax. It’s just a remote vital sign monitor. The coffee machine is programmed to start the coffee when the person in the bed shows signs of waking up. It’s great, I’ve got one in all my personal safe houses. And we’re definitely dating. Gotham-style, obviously, since we tried to kill each other first, then beat bad guys up together, then fucked. Maybe we’ll go on an actual date next.”

One in every safe house? Jesus Christ. And probably nothing at his safe houses in the way of actual nourishment. Jason makes a mental note to quietly add proper home-cooked regular meals to his Baby Bird’s lifestyle. Also, take him on a date, fuck, skipped that step, Jason’s a shit boyfriend already but he’ll do better. It’s time and past for someone to step up and take care of this boy, and Jason’s more than happy to be the man to do so.

Tim smiles beatifically and takes a long sip as Jason stares at him for a moment, then leans in to pat him gently on the head.

“Fuck yeah, that’s my Baby Bird. Got any coffee for me?” Tim produces another mug for Jason and tops off his own again. “Jesus Christ that’s fuckin’ strong. Think you could set up a tea maker under there too?”

Tim considers, then nods. “That shouldn’t be a problem.” He takes another sip, then freezes. “What was that?” Jason pauses to listen just as a crash sounds outside the room.

Instantly both vigilantes are on their feet, mugs tossed aside. Tim silently retrieves a folding bo from beneath the bed, locking it into position and gesturing for Jason to check the other side.

Jason feels around under the bed and comes up with a tranq gun. He lifts it, raising an eyebrow, and Tim shrugs. “Ninja,” he mouths. Jason nods, and they both raise their weapons, facing the bedroom door in defensive stances just as it starts to swing open.

“Tim-my!” Dick’s voice calls out from the hall. “You can’t hide away in here forever, you’ll get rickets from lack of natural light and scurvy from subsisting on hot pockets and coffee. Dami and I brought you some OH DEAR GOD WHY—”

“Grayson, what is it? Get back, fool, you are unarmed! Let me through, I shall slay whatever foul miscreant has murdered Drake—”

“HOLY INCEST, BATMAN! Little brothers, noooo! What—no Dami NO—wait, where were you even hiding that katana—no, do not go in there! Look away, Little D, look away! My eyes have SEEN things, Damian, things I can never unsee. DON’T LOOK AT THEM!”

Jason listens to the sounds of a struggle in the hallway, somewhat disappointed he isn’t gonna find out where the fuck Baby Bat keeps a goddamn katana in his civvies. By the horrified look on Baby Bird’s face, he really doesn’t wanna know.

That, or he’s embarrassed to be caught by their brothers like this. Yeah, on second thought it’s probably that.

“Noooo! Dami, you can’t go in there! There’s debauchery in there, Damian, run! It’s too late for
Jason snort-laughs at the absolutely hilarious distress and misery in Dickhead’s voice.

_Fuck yeah, this is gonna be the gift that keeps on giving, isn’t it._ He glances over at Timmy and feels a little bad, ’cause his Baby’s blushing all over and probably not getting as much of a kick outta this as Jason. Tim’s classy like that.

Well, let no one say Jason’s not a motherfuckin’ gentleman. He hands Baby Bird his own shirt from the floor, then preens at how cute his tiny boyfriend looks fuckin’ _swimmin’_ in _his_ clothes.

He hears a whimper from the doorway, and turns to see Dick standing with one hand over his own eyes and the other covering Damian’s.

“Are you guys decent yet? If you don’t cover up I won’t be able to look at you without wanting to throw up a little and also scream, and that’s gonna leave a stain. And also permanently traumatize me holy shit _why._”

Tim’s decent enough, probably; Jason’s shirt hits him at mid-thigh. Jason, still standing there fully naked, cocks a hip and grins. “Yeah,” he lies, “We’re decent now Dickiebird.”

“Oh thank god- _ew_ what the _hell_ Jason what is _wrong_ with you?”

“Do not attempt to answer that question, Todd; we shall be here all day.”

And Tim’s chuckling, slinking over to pour another two mugs of floor coffee, and then curling up invitingly in the bed. Fuck, that looks comfie.

Jason tosses the tranq gun to the side and joins him, pulling the sheet up to modestly cover Tim’s legs. Wouldn’t do for Baby Bird to get cold. Tim rolls his eyes and tugs the sheet over Jason’s junk before handing him his new coffee. “Cover that; I don’t want Dick to actually vomit in my apartment. Who do you think’s gonna clean that up?”

“Trick question. You don’t clean, you just move safe houses.”

“No, Jay, that’s _you_. I have a cleaning service, actually. I just don’t want to subject them to that.” Makes sense.

A yelp sounds from the door as Damian succeeds in forcing Dick to release him by the simple expedient of biting his hand. Freed, the little gremlin strides into the room, glaring. “Disgusting, Drake! Todd, I expected better of you at least!”

Both of them turn to face him, frowning. Jason wishes like fuck he and Tim had a little more time together before facing familial disapproval, but fuck it, whatever. He can take it. He just hopes these assholes don’t make Timmy feel bad about being with Jason.

Jason puts a protective arm around Tim, drawing him close and ignoring Dick’s pained whimper of bewildered horror at the gesture. “Back the fuck off, both of you. It’s not like we’re blood brothers or some shit. Fuck, I wasn’t even _alive_ when B adopted him and we’ve never lived together. If anything, it’s more like we each had stints in the same foster home, years apart. Besides, it’s none o’ your fuckin’ business anyway.”

“Tt.” Damian’s brows draw together in a confused scowl. “What are you blathering about, Todd? Why should I care if you and Drake choose to fornicate? At least in this relationship, you cannot reproduce and perpetuate your unfortunate characteristics on unsuspecting future generations. No, I
was referring to your blatant lack of responsibility toward the ill-fated Drake clone!"

Now everyone’s looking at Damian. Tim tilts his head in confusion. “Um, what? Didn’t you threaten to stab Other Tim if we brought him back to this universe?”

Damian puffs up. “Of course I did! My position on the issue has not altered. However, the rest of you pretended to care about the clone’s fate, until you encountered a single minor setback, and then you weak-willed clods simply gave up. I take offense at the failure of tenacity you have displayed, a weakness of which you should be ashamed. Instead of mounting even the smallest pretense at attempting to overcome the obstacle, you chose instead to run away and engage in this dalliance.”

Fuckin’ what? Damn, Ra’s did a number on this kid. Gotta introduce him to urban dictionary sometime, get him outta the eighteen hundreds.

“Did you just call our love a fuckin’ dalliance, Bat Brat?” Tim’s muffling a laugh in Jason’s chest and Jason idly strokes his hair, grinning at the way Dick turns slightly green and wretches in abject dismay, moaning softly.

“Is it not a mere dalliance? What, are you in fact wooing Drake?” Damian eyes them carefully, head cocked, then nods stiffly. “Ah, I see. In that case, felicitations. If either of you harms the other I shall castrate you both.”

Tim jerks, eyes widening in shock as Jason chokes a little. Yikes.

Dick’s head whips around to face Damian, his expression one of mingled pride and lingering distress. “Dami, was that a shovel talk? I’m so proud of you, Little D! I just wish your first shovel talk hadn’t been addressed to our brothers, who are apparently now in a relationship with each other Jesus God why.”

Dick sinks his hands into his hair and yanks, continuing to mutter under his breath, darting little glances at the pair on the bed and looking away quickly while wincing as though physically pained by the sight. The others watch him for a moment, then collectively ignore his minor breakdown.

“Uh, that’s not exactly how shovel talks are supposed to go. Usually you only threaten the person who messes up.” Tim’s trying not to laugh and Damian’s glaring at him.

“Tt. My way is more efficient.”

Damian folds his arms dismissively over his chest and raises his chin. “This is all beside the point. Your pseudo-incestuous affair aside, you have all obtusely missed the most blatantly obvious point of Zatanna’s revelations.”

Dick finally manages to tear his eyes away from the sight of his mostly naked little brothers cuddled up together. “What’s that, Dami?”

“The clone is unable to venture to this universe. However, there is nothing which would prevent Drake from crossing to that universe, where he may check on the clone’s status and provide assistance if required. The clone is a Drake, after all, and doubtless requires rescue by this point if he has not yet succumbed to the inevitable consequences of his own stupidity.”

Tim raises an eyebrow. “I’m not sure if you’re worried about Other Tim, or if this is actually a plot to get rid of me, but that’s a really good point. Thanks, Damian.” He smiles sunnily as Damian sputters and glowers.

Jason frowns. “Other Tim’s probably fine, Demon Brat; Timmy’s anything but dumb.”
Damian snorts in disgust. “I have witnessed Drake refuse sleep for over three days while working a case, imbibing nothing during that time but repulsive energy drinks laced with coffee. Last week, I watched him in such a state place a decayed, putrid organic sample in an empty coffee mug, then absentmindedly drink from it moments later. I refuse to acknowledge the intellectual prowess of such a person!”

“Hey, that was horrible! *It tasted of burning, sadness and death!* You were watching and *didn’t stop me*?” Tim sounds appalled.

“Tt. Of course not. How else shall you learn if not from your numerous mistakes?”

“Ugh, that was the actual *worst.* I had to brush my teeth like eight times to get rid of the *taste*…”

*Putrid organic sample…?* Jason really doesn’t fuckin’ wanna know.

He shakes his head, listening to the two go back and forth. They’ll just keep bickering forever if no one stops them.

Jason interrupts by tugging Tim in for a deep, thorough kiss, ignoring Dick’s wild exclamations of consternation and Damian’s scoffing. “Anyway, Baby Bird. The brat has a decent point ‘bout you maybe bein’ able to go check on Other Timmers. Wanna go back and talk to Zatanna about it?”

Tim melts into his embrace. “Mmm, sounds good.” He glances at the pair in the doorway, eyes glinting mischievously, then smirks up at Jason, eyes sparkling. “Maybe just one more round first.”

They barely hear the others’ rapid retreat amidst exclamations of horror and disgust over the sound of their own laughter.

“You’re mean, Baby Bird.” Jason grins down at the precious man in his arms. *How the fuck did I get so lucky.* “It’s fuckin’ sexy.”

Tim stretches, pressing against him in all kinds of interesting ways. “I aim to please,” he purrs, and then starts kissing a path south *oh fuck he was serious.*

Jason rests a gentle hand on Tim’s hair, careful not to pull as the smaller man damn near sucks his brains out through his cock *fuck fuck how is he so fuckin’ good at this, perfect, he’s perfect holy fuckin’ shit.*

*Jesus Christ,* he thinks helplessly, trying not to let his hips buck. *Baby Bird’s gonna kill me with amazing sex.* Tim looks up at him and smiles, eyes dancing and pretty lips stretching around *Jason’s cock.* *God damn.*

Fuck, he can’t *wait* to pin Timmy down and *return the favor.* See him squirm and make all his fuckin’ delectable little noises, all for Jason.

Jason doesn’t know what he did right somewhere along the way in his fucked up life to deserve this, how the *hell* he managed to make it here, with *Tim,* but he has no regrets.

*Gonna keep you, Baby Bird. Take care of you proper, like you deserve.*

*Fuck yeah.*

Chapter End Notes
Jason, gently holding Tim’s hand: “And we can go slow, stop whenever you want, Baby, anything you need…”

Tim: *Sticks his hand down Jason’s pants, squeezes* “I want you inside me right fucking NOW.”

Jason: *Immediately SO turned on* “Sir yes sir!”

*Dick: *Mind broken by sight of little brothers naked together. Horror and revulsion at sudden revelation of baby brothers as sexual beings made a thousand times worse by the fact they’re obviously doing it WITH EACH OTHER*  

Jason, delighted: *laughs forever*  

Tim, mortified: *Passes beyond the point of maximum embarrassment, ceases to give a fuck. Drinks some floor coffee*  

Dick, crying, with crazy eyes, whispering: “My little brothers are innocent… and sweet… they’re all virgins, and always will be. A bad dream, it was just a bad dream…”  

Damian, completely DONE with all of them: *Facepalms*
Chapter 11

Chapter Summary

Tim’s vision clears damnably slowly and he furiously curses magic in all its forms as he falls into a ready stance, bo poised defensively in front of him. Now that he’s here, he just needs to ascertain how dire the situation is in this universe.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Tim’s vision clears damnably slowly and he furiously curses magic in all its forms as he falls into a ready stance, bo poised defensively in front of him.

Now that he’s here, he just needs to ascertain how dire the situation is in this universe. If Other Tim managed to save this world’s Jason, then he’s probably in Batman’s custody and may even have managed to eventually prove his benevolent intentions… after undergoing Bat-level scrutiny, of course.

Tim has override codes in case he needs to break Other Tim out if the poor guy’s still languishing in an interrogation cell in the Cave.

If Other Tim didn’t manage to save Jason… well, then the outlook is significantly less positive. Other Tim probably would have avoided approaching Batman in the aftermath of Jason’s death and may have run into trouble in any number of ways, ranging from detainment or injury while fighting crime to simple starvation, illness or injury due to his lack of resources and support in this time.

If anyone figured out Other Tim is from the future, he may even have been captured and tortured for information by someone with considerably less restraint than Batman. Tim brought supplies in anticipation of potentially landing in a cell somewhere beside a weakened and severely injured Other Tim. He can break out of almost anywhere with what he has on him.

And if Other Tim didn’t manage to save Jason and Batman then arrived at the scene of Jason’s demise to the sight of Other Tim suspiciously present nearby or possibly even holding a dead Jason…

If that’s the case, well, Tim just hopes like hell he isn’t about to find out Batman made an exception to his main rule for Other Tim.

No, he thinks furiously, trying not to imagine how he would feel if Batman came at him with intent to kill, mad with grief and out of control. I can’t… That can’t be what happened to Other Tim.

It would destroy me.

There’s a startled gasp nearby, and then the sound of a familiar voice eases Tim’s tension considerably. Well, at least Other Tim’s apparently still alive, definitely a plus. Also, the spell seems to have correctly sent him to Other Tim’s location and didn’t misfire and drop him on the wrong side of the world or something.

Sweet. Two for two so far.
“Hey,” someone who must be Other Tim says in Tim’s voice. He doesn’t sound like he’s been undergoing brutal interrogation recently. Awesome, things are really looking up. “Wow, you came prepared. Is that an electromagnetic pulse gun…? And those modified grenades look nasty, what were you expecting… oh. Gotcha. Rescue mission. I don’t know if I should thank you for coming to save me or resent your underestimating my ability to avoid getting myself into a shitty situation here.”

Tim’s finally able to focus his eyes and take in the… uh, Manor library. Well that’s anticlimactic. He notices a third person in the room, a very small, oddly familiar-looking boy… Oh, hey, Tim cubed.

Two identical sets of wide, curious blue eyes stare at him from the couch where Other Tim is curled up around a tablet in the corner and the mini-Tim is reading with his feet in Other Tim’s lap. Well, he was reading. Now he’s sitting up and setting his book carefully aside, regarding Tim with fascinated interest.

Huh, so Timmy’s here at the Manor. That alone is a major indication everything went well for Other Tim. He wouldn’t have contacted Timmy if his position wasn’t fairly secure. Well, that’s a relief. Tim pushes off his cowl. “Hey there.”

They seem fine, but… It’s hard to let go of the worry he’s been carrying with him for so long.

He slowly approaches, kneeling down in front of the couch and checking Other Tim over for obvious injuries. Other Tim tolerantly allows the inspection. By the rueful look in his eyes, Other Tim knows what Tim’s doing and why.

His double seems healthy and content, well-rested and unafraid, and Tim feels the tightness in his chest start to finally relax as relief floods his mind. I’m so glad you’re okay.

“Gotta say, I really didn’t expect to find you safe and sound in the Manor. I’ve been worried about you.”

“I can tell.” Other Tim smiles. “As you can see, things didn’t go too badly here. But I appreciate your coming to check up on me. And don’t think you’re getting out of telling me how you managed to even find me. That shouldn’t have been possible, but I guess I should know better than to expect you to let that stop you.” They share matching grins.

The door swings open, and Jason Todd strides into the room. But this isn’t Tim’s Jason, his loving boyfriend who swept him up in his arms a few minutes ago and held him close before reluctantly sending him on his way for this mission. Jason had been pissed when Zatanna said including anyone besides Tim in the spell would destabilize the universe faster. He’d tucked most of the modified grenades and a few other choice weapons into Tim’s harness himself before kissing him senseless and growling at him to come back.

This Jason is shorter and less built, still a couple inches taller than Tim, with wide shoulders and a good start on the musculature he’ll have when he’s grown. His hair’s solid black and his eyes are a shockingly clear blue, and something about that, seeing the evidence of Joker’s crimes wiped from his body, makes Tim wants to smile and cry at the same time.

You did it, he thinks, shooting a glance at Other Tim. You really saved him.

Then Jason smirks and opens his mouth, and that is a look with which Tim is very familiar.

“The fuck? Did someone feed one of the Tims after midnight? Jesus fucking Christ, now there’s three!” He’s grinning, walking over to lean a hip on the arm of the couch and rest a hand on Other Tim’s shoulder.
Dick follows Jason into the room, doing a double take when he spots the extra Tim kneeling in front of the others. “Wait, another? What. Wow, Jaybird, you’re collecting a harem of Tims!”

Jason blushes. “Shut up, Dickface.”

A little squeak draws everyone’s attention to where Timmy is flushed red and curling in on himself slightly. “Um, I don’twannabeinaharem,” he whispers in a small, mortified voice, avoiding all eye contact.

Other Tim’s eyes widen in dismay while Jason blanches and begins edging away from the couch in guilty discomfort.

Tim glares at Dick. This is clearly his fault. “Don’t traumatize the baby Timmy!”

An awful clanking and clattering sound emanates from the ceiling, and then the vent cover drops into the room followed by two small feet and a scowling little ball of spite and outrage.

_Holy shit, there’s a tiny Damian here too. Wow, Other Tim’s been busy. Oh no, the little gremlin’s going for Timmy!_

Tim starts to move to block the baby assassin, but pauses as he realizes Damian doesn’t have any weapons drawn and is actually… _taking up a protective stance between Timmy and Jason?! What the actual fuck?_

“Tt. Your nefarious plot has failed, Todd! I shall not allow you to incorporate Timothy into your harem against his will, you licentious reprobate! I will not permit you to subjugate him with your prurient wiles!”

As Jason chokes on nothing and all three Tims look on in stunned amusement, Dick grins. “You tell ‘im, Dami!”

Damian clasps a bemused Timmy’s hand and tugs him urgently toward the door. Timmy’s small for his age and Damian’s big for his, so their height difference actually isn’t that extreme and Damian looks fully capable of manhandling Timmy out of the room for his own good if he struggles.

“Hurry, Timothy, before he casts his lecherous spell and you succumb to his carnal enticements as well.” Damian’s earnest concern is enough to get Timmy moving.

Jason wheezes in distress, collapsing across the arm of the couch and partially onto Other Tim’s lap. “Oh my fuckin’ god, _why._”

Other Tim rubs Jason’s back consolingly. “As per usual, I blame Dick.”

“Um, Damian? I’m pretty sure Jason doesn’t actually want to seduce _me_—” Timmy is still blushing.

“That is merely what he wishes you to believe. We must be ever vigilant, Timothy, lest he pounce the moment your guard is down! Come, to the Cave! It is the most defensible position.”

Damian glances at Tim where he’s still knelt in front of Other Tim and then pauses, regarding him seriously. “Greetings, Second Drake. I regret I was unable to save you from this salacious fate; however, you appear to be a trained warrior and as such I welcome you both as Todd’s second concubine and a useful ally to my Father and our house.”

_Oh dear god what fresh hell is this. Concubine. What._
The boy trails his gaze slowly from Tim on his knees at Other Tim’s feet, up to Other Tim, then finally to Jason sprawled across Other Tim’s lap. “Feel free to resume your copulation once we have departed. Todd, I shall castrate you if you harm either of your concubines or attempt to recruit Timothy to your harem again. Felicitations.” He nods gravely as Tim stares at him, speechless with appalled shock, and then the two are gone.

The fuck.

Seriously, what even.

Tim looks to Other Tim for an explanation of what the hell just happened, but Other Tim is giggling helplessly with his face pressed into Jason’s back and Jason still appears to be in shock so there’s no help there.

“Um, what?” Tim addresses the entire room in hopes someone will explain what the actual fuck is going on, finally rising to his feet and stepping back from the couch.

Dick smiles happily. “Dami and Timmy are getting along so well! Aren’t they cute? They’re both learning how to have a friend!”

Okay, definitely another universe. Damian being nice? Possibly a sign the people here are being mind-controlled somehow… Tim resolves to watch for other potential signs of mind-control. Maybe Other Tim isn’t as safe as he thought. “So… what was all that about Jason’s harem?”

Dick looks guilty. “Oh, sorry. I didn’t think about how uncomfortable that might make you feel. Your Jason’s kind of a jerk, right?” He continues before Tim has a chance to answer. “It’s just Tim and Jaybird finally made it official, and I’m so happy for them!” He beams. “Just in time, too. I was running out of ideas for how to help them get together!”

At that, Other Tim’s head snaps up, an expression of absolute shock on his face. “Wait, what? You were trying to get us together?” He looks at Jason. “Did you know about this?”

Jason straightens up, dropping down to sit beside Other Tim and draping an arm around the smaller boy, tucking him into his side and tangling their fingers together. “Well, yeah. Uh, I thought you knew about that? I mean, he glued our damn hands together, Prettyboy, it was kinda obvious he was tryin’ to set us up in his own fuckin’ clumsy, hellaciously embarrassing way.”

“He was trying to set us up? Oh my god, how is he so bad at it? I honestly thought he was hazing me and giving me a hard time for trying to date his little brother! It seemed like he was warning me off, not encouraging me.”

“Well, we can’t all be good at everything,” Dick grumps, crossing his arms over his chest and frowning. He then spots Other Tim and Jason holding hands and lights up. “Anyway, all’s well that ends well, guys. And you are the cutest couple and I’m so happy for you!” He bounces up and down on his toes, clearly brimming with joy.

Tim feels even more like he’s stepped into the twilight zone. Wow, Dick’s approval and support is actually kind of scary. I’m almost glad mine’s still appalled by me and my Jay as a couple. Actually, Dick’s utter horror every time we kiss is a source of constant delight and will never stop being hilarious.

Hey, hold on a minute…

“Wait, you’re actually dating Baby Jay?”
“Oh my god never call him that again. Now I feel like a sexual predator.” Other Tim’s embarrassed, turning his face away to avoid meeting Tim’s eyes. *Huh. Well this is awkward.*

“You’re not a goddamn sexual predator Tim, we’ve talked about this *you are only like a year older than me.*”

“You’re still only sixteen…”

“…Which is the age of consent in New Jersey!”

“They’re taking it slow,” Dick whispers loudly to Tim, beaming with fraternal pride, just as Tim remembers…

*Damn it!* Everyone turns to look at Tim, and he blushes. “Um, wow, timing. Ah, not lamenting your sex lives or lack thereof. I just realized, you guys made me lose a bet with my Jay.”

Jason looks interested. “Yeah? What was it?”

“He bet you two would be a couple by now.”

Other Tim snickers. “Yeah, you lost that one all right. What’s the penalty?”

Tim blushes *hard* and Other Tim’s eyebrows fly up as he begins blushing too. “Uh, you don’t have to answer that if you don’t want to,” Other Tim says quickly.

“No, go ahead and tell us. I wanna know what Old Man Jay got him to fuckin’ agree to that has him all flustered like that.”

Tim meets Jason’s eyes for a moment, then involuntarily drops his gaze to his mouth, blushing harder. *It’s not like I won’t enjoy my forfeit, but I really don’t want to talk about it in front of these guys. Jay’s the exhibitionist in our relationship, not me.*

Other Tim’s still staring at him in wild surmise. “Really? You and Jason?” He blinks a few times, flushing, mouth opening and closing wordlessly. “When we’re alone you’re telling me *how* the hell that happened.”

Tim nods, and is surprised when both Dick and Jason scowl.

“But Jason in your universe was mean to you! We saw the files. He *hurt* you!” Dick reaches for Tim, a concerned look on his face. “You shouldn’t stay with someone who hurts you.”

Oh god, mother hen instincts activated.

“Hey, no, it isn’t like that! He hasn’t been that way in years, we’re actually really happy together.” Tim doubts Other Tim has told them much about his Jason, especially if he’s been busy falling for Baby Jay. They’re working on outdated information here.

Jason opens his mouth to argue, expression determined, but at that moment the sound of a throat clearing draws their attention to the doorway.

Bruce is standing there, looking mildly perturbed with a puzzled frown on his face. “Jason, what are you doing? Damian just burst into the Cave shouting something about you and Timmy, and *honor castrations*, and forceful induction into your *harem*—”

He stops, taking in the situation in the room at a glance and then sighs, shoulders drooping a weary notch. He looks at the newest Tim beseechingly. “Please tell me you didn’t use the doomsday reset
device again.”

At Tim’s surprised silence, Bruce huffs, sounding exhausted. “At least tell me you already have a plan for mitigating whatever world-ending disaster you came back to prevent this time.” He rubs his temples.

“At least tell me you already have a plan for mitigating whatever world-ending disaster you came back to prevent this time.” He rubs his temples.

“No matter how hard Tim stares at Bruce and tries to force his brain to make sense of what the hell the man just said, he’s coming up empty. Mind control, his brain whispers. Poorly executed mind control can result in inane babbling. Fight it, Bruce! He resolves to watch the others even more carefully.

“Ah, yes, of course.” Better not let them know I’m on to them.

Bruce smiles wryly. “Any more of you, and the children will outnumber the adults in this house by a four to one ratio.”

Jason’s brows draw together in a frown. “That math doesn’t work out, B.” He’s right. More evidence Bruce is being mind-controlled… poorly.

Other Tim nods. “Yeah. Timmy, Dami, Jason, I guess you can count me since I’m not eighteen yet. That’s only four, five if you count the new Tim. And you and Alfred make two adults.”

“Are you hiding more orphans somewhere, Bruce? Remember, the first step to recovery is admitting you have a problem!” Dick grins.

Bruce huffs. “The math works out fine. You forgot Dick acts like a child too. In fact, he’s so rambunctious he counts as two children. That makes seven, so one more hypothetical Tim would…” He stops, shaking his head as if to clear it. “This conversation is ridiculous and pointless.” He turns back to Tim, who is harboring grave doubts about all of their sanity at this point. “Let’s get down to the Cave and address whatever issue sent you back this time.”

Alfred appears like magic at Bruce’s elbow. “Can whatever cataclysmic event you traveled through time to prevent wait for a few minutes? The pizza is ready. Ah, I believe I made a sufficient quantity to accommodate everyone, including our guest.”

“Of course, Alfred,” Tim says politely, walking toward Alfred. He’s never going to say no to Alfred pizza, not in any universe. He’ll properly explain the situation while they’re eating so poor Bruce can stop worrying about the nonexistent impending apocalypse or whatever.

Haha I’m definitely gonna have fun with his misperception first though. Wonder if I can convince B it was a zombie apocalypse? Or maybe that Poison Ivy’s toxins went airborne, made it into the jet stream, and the whole world descended into an unspeakable and endless orgy…

It’s his own fault for apparently not having figured out how the device really works yet and then making assumptions. Silly Bruce.

The others stare at each other for a moment, then shrug and follow Alfred. There’s always time for Alfred pizza.

*
Jason’s holding Tim’s hand under the table, interested gaze fixed on their visitor sitting across from him. Tim. Someone who looks and acts almost exactly like his boyfriend. So cute, he thinks, then immediately wonders if he should feel guilty for that thought.

Naw, he decides. They’re the same person, so I don’t gotta feel bad forthinkin’ he’s hot. Damn, imagine them together… Fuck yeah. He blinks, realizing both Tims are eying him with identical knowing smirks and he’s kinda been staring right at Visitor Tim for a while. Oops.

Huh, Visitor Tim sounds really dumb. “Wait, what the fuck should we call you? It’s gonna get fuckin’ confusing with three Tims around now.”

“Language.” B’s been kinda quiet since Visitor Tim trolled him about the whole time travel thing. He’s probably embarrassed his magic-detection equipment’s shit compared to what the other Bruce is packin’ and he wasn’t able to figure out how the device really worked.

Whatever, he’ll get over being butt-hurt about it eventually and it was fuckin’ hilarious as shit when Visitor Tim actually had B convinced his last sight before jumpin’ back in time was an orgy made up of Batman, Killer Croc, Nightwing, Deathstroke and Man-Bat. Jason’s never seen quite that combination of disgusted horror and pained revulsion on B’s face. It got even worse when Visitor Tim mentioned Deathstroke and Nightwing were kinda doin’ their own thing off to the side, leavin’ B to get it on with Killer Croc and Man-Bat. B turned green and looked like he was actually gonna fuckin’ hurl before Visitor Tim finally relented and told the truth.

Tim and Visitor Tim look at each other, then turn to Jason in eerie unison. “We call ourselves Tim, Other Tim, and Timmy in our heads,” Tim says. Visitor Tim nods.

Okay, so new guy’s Other Tim-“

“No,” both Tims interrupt, voices creepily in sync. Jason’s Tim continues, “I’m Other Tim. He’s Tim.”

“What, no. I’m not callin’ you Other Tim! I guess we could call him Tim and you Prettyboy.”

“You’ll let me call your Tim Prettyboy?” Dick sounds skeptical, as well he fuckin’ should.

“Try it and I’ll end you, Dickhead.”

“I refuse to address your first concubine so informally, Todd. I must address my elders appropriately. Drake and Second Drake are both worthy of my respect.”

Concubine? Bruce mouths the word, obviously completely lost. Jason snorts a laugh and doesn’t bother to explain. Damian’s B’s kid; he’s just gonna hafta fuckin’ deal with the brat’s weirdness. Jason thinks it’s goddamn hilarious the boy’s still convinced both older Tims are part of Jason’s harem.

Honestly, the idea’s starting to grow on him. He eyes the two Tims again, gaze lingering on the big blue eyes, matching sets of smiling pink lips, and lithe frames, one sexy and dangerous decked out in Red Robin and the other cute and just plain irresistible wearing Jason’s clothes. Hnngh.

Fuck I gotta get the hell off this train of thought or somethin’ else is gonna be growin’ on me…

Jason desperately thinks about the least sexy things he can imagine, namely Joker in a banana hammock holding a condom with Batman’s disapproving face on it in one hand and suggestively workin’ a shakeweight with the other, staring intensely at Penguin who’s waddling through a slow striptease and reaching back to do something unmentionable with his umbrella…
Jesus Christ! Jason squeezes his eyes closed but can’t escape the horrible image now eternally inscribed in his mind. The fuck did that come from, damn I think I just killed my boner forever. Fuck.

Timmy rolls his eyes, swallowing a huge bite of pizza and looking at them like they’re all complete idiots. “Then just call the new one Red since he’s wearing his uniform.”

Both older Tims shrug agreeably, and Jason nods. That’ll work. Although… “So, you guys both know what the other is thinkin’, huh? That’s… kinda disturbing actually.”

Tim chuckles. “We don’t, really. I mean, we’ve had totally different experiences for the past three months so we’ve grown apart a bit. It’s just easy to predict each other’s responses because we have very similar thought patterns.”

Red nods. “We’re essentially the same person, split at the critical instant this universe spun off our original.”

“Yeah, only one of us was luckier than the other.” Tim’s smile slips and Red looks at him with concern, eyes huge and sorry.

Dick cocks his head, interested. “Which one?”

“Me,” both Tims answer softly, then stare at each other, mouths falling open in surprise.

After a moment, relieved little smiles dawn on both of their faces and they laugh softly, still looking at each other. “I see how it is,” one of them says, and the two share a wide grin.

Jason squeezes Tim’s hand under the table. Fuck I’m so glad he’s happy here, with me. Glad the other’s happy too. He presses an impulsive kiss to Tim’s cheek, smiling.

Dick frowns, turning to Red. “But back to what we were talking about earlier… It’s one thing if Tim is dating Jay here; they’re clearly made for each other.”

Bruce twitches. “They’re dating?” He jerks his head around and stares at Tim and Jason in undisguised shock.

Jason and Tim both crack up at the look on his face and even Dick doesn’t manage to smother his chuckles. Jesus fuckin’ Christ, how could B not have realized…? It’s not like we’ve been tryin’ to fuckin’ hide it. We literally just kissed in front of him. World’s fuckin’ greatest detective, ladies and gentleman…

“…But the Jason in your world went crazy and attacked you and now you’re in some kind of relationship with him.” Dick gently sets a hand on Red’s shoulder. “Red, if he’s still hurting you or coercing you in any way, please, please don’t stay with him.”

Red looks startled and horrified. “Wait, no—Dick, he’s not, we’re not like that at all!”

Bruce and Damian are both staring at Red and glowering, and Alfred quietly emerges from the kitchen, eyes narrowing.

“Red,” Bruce says slowly. “Are you saying you are engaged in a romantic relationship with the revenant version of Jason in your universe who became a drug lord, slaughtered untold numbers of criminals, attempted to murder you multiple times and nearly succeeded in doing so at least three times?”

Red gulps. “Yes?”
“I see.” Bruce’s gaze flicks to Dick, and he nods minutely. Dick sighs and relaxes. Alfred exhales slowly and retreats to the kitchen with an air of relief.

“What…?” Red looks so confused.

Jason takes pity on him. “They’ve decided to keep you, Red. Things in your universe kinda suck, so you’re ours now.”

Red’s eyebrows fly up. “What, no—”

“Your Jason’s a crazy asshole and we don’t want you to get hurt.” Jason shrugs, winking. “I actually wouldn’t be totally against the idea of startin’ a harem—” He cuts off when Tim’s head snaps around to frown at him. “Sorry, Prettyboy. Guess we gotta talk about that first, but I’m sure we’ll work somethin’ out. I mean, you two are both hot and awesome, you just need to learn to love yourself—” He cuts off when Tim elbows him in the gut. Gently, because Tim knows he’s just kidding. Mostly.

“You shall add to the strength of our family with your prowess as a warrior. And with both you and First Drake serving as Todd’s concubines, Mama is certain to provide an artificial womb for your procreation. She will wish to keep our family strong.”

Oh my god what the actual fuck.

Jason shares a panicked look with Tim while Red blanches and everyone else gapes at all the what now that just came out of Damian’s mouth. The little boy in question is happily eating his pizza like he didn’t just offer Jason a fake womb in which to grow his firstborn child.

“Uh, thanks, Damian, that’s very thoughtful of you,” Tim says faintly. “Let’s… um, table that discussion for now.” For fuckin’ ever, Jesus fuck what the hell. Jason doesn’t like the look on Dickiebird’s face right now, all soft and misty-eyed like he’s already imagining tiny little nieces and nephews with Tim’s eyes and Jason’s grin.

Although… holy fuck that’s a cute image. Jason shakes his head to clear it. There’s no fuckin’ rush, they can think about that shit later.

A moment of silence, and then Dick goes serious again and resumes trying to convince Red to stay.

“And your Dick is a total fucknugget who completely dropped the ball when you needed him most, and took Robin away from you. I can read between the lines on what’s in the file. I know how much that means, how much it must have hurt you, Red.”

Bruce drives the point home. “The Batman in your universe at the very least tolerated and abetted your parents’ ongoing neglect and denied you the affection and care demanded by basic human decency, as well as the paternal love and appreciation he damn well owed you.”

Jason stares in shock. Bruce swore! Holy fuckin’ shitballs!

Red blinks rapidly, thrown. “I don’t understand why you guys… you don’t even know me…” He looks at Tim. “Wait, is it because of you? They want to protect me… because you… Why are they all so protective of you? Are you mind-controlling them somehow? What did you do to them?”

As the Bats all stare at Red, bemused, Tim smirks. “Dance, monkeys, dance,” he deadpans.

Red’s eyes dart around the table as though he actually expects them to leap up and start dancing. Jason kinda wants to, just to give him shit, but he manages to control himself. Barely.
Dick looks sad. “Is it really more believable to you that Tim would be mind-controlling us than that we would actually just want to take care of you?”

Red and Tim both wince. *Fuckin’ ouch. That’s a yes.*

Red shakes his head, apparently accepting their concern as genuine. “Not gonna touch that one. Anyway, it’s not up for debate, although I do appreciate the thought. My Jay’s over the pit rage, and he’s the gentlest, most romantic and considerate partner I could ever want. These days the most hurtful thing he does to me is take away my coffee after I hit forty eight hours without sleep. And he makes up for that with *amazing* sex.” He smirks wryly.

“I can see you guys have a pretty good thing going here and that’s *awesome,* but I am actually really happy with how things are back home. Oh, *and* I only have about six hours here before your universe unravels and ceases to exist due to my continued presence. So there’s that.” He sinks his teeth vigorously into a slice of pizza, groaning in satisfaction while everyone processes what the fuck he just said.

“…I see. Perhaps lead with that next time,” Bruce murmurs flatly.

“Wait, so you being here’s gonna fuck up our whole goddamn *universe?* What the fuck, Red?”

“Language.”

“Oh what the fuck ever, B, you cussed like a motherfucker earlier so I can say whatever the hell I want.”

“Master Jason.” *Oops.*

“Sorry, Alfie.”

Dick looks worried. “Well, not to sound unwelcoming, but that seems like a… *poor*… outcome for everyone involved.”

“Timothy, why are you so unconcerned? Todd’s second concubine has doomed us all!”

“No he hasn’t.” Timmy continues placidly eating his Canadian bacon, onion and artichoke heart pizza. *Fuckin’ disgusting,* Jason thinks fondly, watching his boyfriend and Red grabbing more slices of the same unholy pizza abomination.

Tim starts laughing softly before explaining. “You guys don’t need to worry. Timmy and I both know there’s no way Red would have risked anything going wrong like that. Did Zatanna put a limiter on the spell?”

Red nods, smiling. “Yup. It’ll pull me back before we hit the critical point, and you guys’ll be safe. I’ll be home in my universe, no harm, no foul.”

Alfred magically reappears carrying a large tray filled with delicious goodness. “More pizza, sirs?”

“Thank you, Alfred.”

“Oh fuck yeah!”

“Language.” Pause. “Jason, Tim. In light of recent news, I have something down in the Cave I want to show you—” It’s the look on B’s face that gives him away. *Oh shit. He can’t mean—*

“Oh dear god, he wants to show us the *slideshow.*” Tim sounds horrified, and rightly so. Jason’s
seen the slideshow, and he’s already been traumatized enough without having to watch it again.

Dick sweeps a glance over all of them and then dives at Bruce, capturing him in a bear-hug and startling a grunt out of the older man. “I’ll hold him off, guys, run! Save yourselves!”

“Stop it, Dick. You are overreacting.” Bruce struggles against Dick’s hold, but Dick clings tenaciously, plastered to him like an octopus.

“I went to too much trouble to get those guys together for you to ruin everything for them now! I’m not gonna let you drive them apart with your nightmarishly graphic pictures of STDs and horrifically traumatizing freak sex-related injuries!”

“Thanks, Dickface, you’re a real fuckin’ pal. Go, Prettyboy, go!”

Red and Tim make eye contact, then grab the entire Canadian bacon, onion and artichoke heart pizza and sprint out of the room together. Jason edges after them, carefully eying Bruce to make sure the man isn’t going to break free and capture him at the last moment.

“Dick, release me this instant! The boys need my help! I need to make sure they’re being safe!”

“Jaybird, I can’t hang on much longer, he’s like a bull! Go!”

Damian’s brows furrow inquisitively as he innocently asks, “What slideshow is this, Father? If it is a general safety orientation against disease then should not Timothy and I view it as well?”

“Um, I don’t think that’s the kind of slideshow we want to watch, Dami…” Timmy blushes, then stuffs another slice of pizza into his mouth, hunching into his seat.

“Nonsense! Right, Father?”

Bruce looks hunted. “Ah…” He throws a look of desperation at Alfred, who simply hums and leaves the room.

“I am certain you can handle this matter yourself, Master Bruce.”

Jason tears after his boyfriend and his boyfriend’s twin, laughing.

Jesus Christ, this family.

He’ll catch up to the others, kiss Tim, and then give him and Red some time together by running interference to keep the others off their backs. Those two probably have a lot to talk about, and apparently not much time to do it.

Meanwhile, he’ll think of ways to get out of having to watch the goddamn slideshow again Jesus fuckin’ Christ. Fuckin’ Bruce.

*

“So you can only stay a few more hours?” Tim’s not sure exactly how he feels about that, but it isn’t pleasant. Seeing the guy who stayed behind, himself as he would have been but for random chance, is a heady experience and he isn’t anywhere near ready for it to end.

He wants to catch up, find out what’s happened with everyone he left, and show Red everything he’s done here, all the ways the people in this universe have surprised him.

I never expected to have a family again. I want him to know, to understand how happy I am.
Talking to Red’s unlike anything else. Timmy feels like a little brother, but Red’s…. a piece of himself. A few hours doesn’t seem like nearly enough time.

“Yeah. Zatanna said it was safe enough for that long.” Red shrugs with a halfhearted smile as he finishes up his last bite of pizza. “It’s a good thing you turned out not to need my help after all; it would’ve sucked for me to break you out of somewhere and get you halfway to safety only to get yanked back by the spell.”

“Ah, yeah, that definitely sounds awful and I’m glad we managed to avoid it.”

Red laughs, tossing Tim a familiar-looking datahedron. “Here. This should help with a few things. Consider it the expansion pack.”

Tim examines the object, recognizing the same alien tech from the depths of the Cave he’d used to store and transport the legacy drive. “Oh, cool. Does this have the stuff we wanted to bring back that wasn’t available on the Batcomputer?”

“Yes. Plus some other things I thought of later. The others suggested some stuff too. Oh, and I got Cass to give me a comprehensive list of the places she remembers from her childhood, where she spent time while she was homeless after running away from her father…”

Tim swallows, feeling tears sting his eyes. Yes. Of all the things he wanted to prevent or fix and people he wanted to help when he came back to this time, Cass is the one he’s been most in danger of failing. Even with Batman’s assistance, he hasn’t made any progress in tracking her down.

“Thank you,” he breathes.

Red smiles softly. “She’s my sister too.”

Tim rolls the datahedron between his fingers. “Hey, I checked the Cave for this and apparently B doesn’t have it yet. Did you check out its antecedents like we wanted?” Red nods, a trace of a smile still on his face. “It’s alien tech, isn’t it.”

“Yup.”

“Um, is it actually safe to have the one from your universe here?”

“Probably not.”

Tim’s eyes widen and he stares at Red, startled. “What the hell, then why did you bring it?” He rolls his eyes at himself. “Don’t answer that; obviously it was an acceptable level of risk when weighed against the potential benefit or you would never have done it.”

Red grins, eyes dancing. “Man, I really wish I could bring you home with me. Even Jay doesn’t get me as intuitively as you do.” He shrugs. “And yeah, that thing needs to be with me when I leave, so we should make sure to upload it soon. Otherwise, doomsday, collapse of this universe, blah blah, you know the drill.”

“Right, I get the point. As long as orgies with supervillains aren’t involved…” Tim tilts his head, a smile slowly growing on his face. “Hey, once I get the data off of this I’m going to put some things on it for you. Clips of the family, Timmy being adorable with Dami, that kind of thing. Oh, and you have got to hear the conversation I had with Mother. She’s… well, let’s just say it’s… memorable.”

Blanching, Red sputters, “You talked to Mother? Dear god, why?”

Tim shrugs. “One does not choose to talk to Mother. Mother simply happens.”
“Point.” They share another moment of peaceful understanding, and then Red sighs.

“I’m sorry you can never go home,” Red says, brows drawing together in sorrow as he lowers his eyes. Tim knows intimately the regret, the guilt behind that expression, and it doesn’t belong. Not now, not about this.

Tim smiles softly, bumping his shoulder into his twin. “Relax, Red. I am home.” He grins, taking his double’s hand and leading him off to the Cave. Better get that download started as soon as possible, just in case.

* 

Red pulls Tim in tight, holding him close. It isn’t as weird as Tim would’ve thought, giving himself a hug. Feels good. “Take care of yourself,” Red whispers.

“You too,” Tim murmurs into his hair. “And take care of your Jay, yeah?”

Fuck this sucks. I love it here, but it hurts that I’ll never know how things turn out back there, never get to talk to my Kon and Bart and Steph and everyone again. Red’s my last connection to them, and now I have to smile and say goodbye while he goes back to live that life.

His eyes catch on his boyfriend, standing supportively nearby as he and Red say their farewells in Jason’s bedroom where they retreated to get away from the well-meaning interference of the rest of the family.

Thank fuck for Jay. I don’t know if I’d manage to hold it together without him.

“Oh, I’ll take good care of him,” Red winks. “Same to you.” He snorts a little laugh. “Remember how we didn’t know where you’d land in the time stream and we were so beat up and exhausted and over it by that point we just had no fucks left to give, so we decided fuck it, we’d ride a goddamn dinosaur? …Look at us now. We both found something so much better to ride—” He’s laughing at Tim, the jerk. Just because some of us decided to take it slow…

Tim squeaks and puts a hand over Red’s mouth, blushing furiously, but it’s too late. Jason’s breaking into laughter, putting a big hand on Tim’s lower back. “That’s what the dinosaur thing was all about? Jesus, all those times you were fuckin’ mumblin’ stuff about dinosaurs in your sleep, and you just wanted to go for a ride? Hell, I could help you out with that, Prettyboy…” He smirks, winking at Tim’s vivid blush.

Red laughs delightedly as he lets go of Tim, who is immediately pulled back into Jason’s arms. “And on that note…” He grins, giving a little wave as the magic swirls around him and he begins to fade away. “By the way, check your pocket!”

“What-?” But Red’s gone, empty space filling the place where he’d been.

Tim reaches slowly into his pocket, pulling out a phone that definitely wasn’t there before the hug. Red, you crafty little shit, he thinks fondly. The phone chimes repeatedly and Tim’s brows climb as he reads the texts.

Red: I may not be able to visit you again, but Zatanna enchanted this phone so we can at least keep in touch. I didn’t mention it before because this way if it doesn’t work only one of us will be disappointed

Red: If you’re seeing this message, it worked!
Red: Oh fuck me it didn’t work did it

Tim freezes, hardly able to believe what he’s seeing.

“Prettyboy, hey, this is a good thing, right?” Jason’s voice is soft, gentle. Why…?

Jason reaches over and uses his thumbs to gather the moisture from Tim’s eyes. Oh. He blinks a few times, feeling the smile forming on his face as happiness wells up within him. It isn’t really goodbye. Jason leans in and kisses him tenderly.

“Um, yeah,” Tim says roughly. “It’s great.” He punches in a quick reply to reassure Red.

Other Tim: Hello from the other side

Red: Holy shit it worked!

Other Tim: :)

Red: :)

Red: Gotta go you took too long to reply and Jay started collecting on the bet to cheer me up ohgodhismouthisamazing asfdasdj

Tim’s eyebrows rise at the last text and he feels his cheeks heating up as thinks about what exactly the other Jason is probably doing to Red right now.

Jason’s hands on him tighten and his breath catches as he reads the text over Tim’s shoulder. His voice when he speaks is a little rough, deeper than usual. “God damn, Old Man Jay sure works fuckin’ fast. Hey, fuck if we’re gonna let those assholes get all the action. C’mere, Prettyboy.” Jason tugs Tim toward the bed and lies back, pulling the smaller man down on top of him.

Jason arranges them so Tim’s straddling him, all of Jason’s heat and hardness dizzying and intense pressed against him. The evocative position and Jason’s big warm hands on his hips make Tim’s breath catch in his chest as heat kindles in his core. It feels so good and so incredibly right with Jason.

They haven’t had a chance to do much more than make out yet.

Tim really wants to change that. But only if and when Jason’s ready… he’s worth it no matter what. It’s just hard to remember when Jay’s spread out under him so delectably. God he’s so gorgeous, so wonderful, so amazing.

He leans down and kisses Jason thoroughly, grinning into the kiss as Jason’s hands slide up his back under his shirt. God Jason feels so good, I love being with him. I miss the people in the other universe, but if I had a choice I’d still stay here in a heartbeat. I’ll always choose Jason, my Jason.

Just as the kiss is getting heated, their hips starting to grind against each other, an authoritative knock sounds on the door. “Boys, you have a minute?”

They freeze, staring at each other in horrified realization.

“…Bruce is still going to make us watch the slideshow, isn’t he.” Tim closes his eyes and slowly lowers his head to hide his face in Jason’s shoulder, panting, trying to get his body under control. At least he can feel Jason’s just as excited as he is. Mmm, feels so good… Tim unintentionally presses himself down against Jay’s hardness, startling a groan out of the other boy.
“Oh, fuck-” Jason swears, rubbing his hands up and down Tim’s back. “Think we can make it if we go out the window?”

Bruce’s voice intrudes sternly through the door. "I’ve spent the last couple of hours updating the slideshow with additional details regarding the risks particular to homosexual male relations for the two of you. This is for your benefit, boys.”

Tim and Jason look at one another in petrified despair, blushing hotly. Well, we’re boned. And not in the fun way.

It’s all well and good that B’s a better father here, but there’s definitely a flip side to all that paternal affection and concern. I can’t believe I forgot he’s the goddamn Batman so of course he’ll approach parenting the way he does everything else that matters to him- with a terrifying level of obsession and intensity bordering on madness.

“I measured an energy surge up here fifteen minutes ago; I know Red went home, so you two should be free now to watch the… Wait, what have you been doing in there since Red left? Are you being safe?! Jason! Tim! Answer me right now! Boys!"

Yeah, not going to happen, B.

Tim remains still for a moment, then rolls to his feet, rapidly punching instructions into his phone. I got this.

Bruce pounds on the door again, and Jason bellows, “God damn it, old man, we fuckin’ get it, all right? You don’t gotta make us watch the damn show! We know! Sex is cleaner with a packaged wiener!”

Holy shit. He didn’t just say that to Batman.

“Oh my god,” Tim whispers, eyes huge. Bruce’s appalled silence is audible even through the locked door.

Jason grins like the magnificent bastard he is. “Don’t be a joker, wrap your poker!”

“Jason!” Bruce’s shout carries beautifully.

“Too soon?”

“It will always be too soon for that!”

Tim’s laughing softly, looking up from his phone and meeting Jason’s eyes. “I called the Redbird, she’ll be in the Manor drive in two minutes. We can make it before B catches on, and once we’re in the Nest on full lockdown even Batman can’t get to us.”

Jason’s already halfway out the window holding out a hand for Tim. “C’mon, Prettyboy, I got you. Let’s get the fuck outta here. Spend a day or so together in the Nest, then tell B where to stick his fuckin’ slideshow.”

Tim’s wearing his Red Robin smile as he takes Jay’s hand and climbs down with him. “We can deal with that when we get back from our little spontaneous vacation. Oh, and I think I can get him to back down.”

“Yeah?” Redbird’s pulling up and the doors are opening, thank fucking Tesla.
“Offer him a demonstration to prove we know what we’re talking about when it comes to safe sex. He’ll implode in horror, repression and embarrassment at the thought and never mention any of it again.” They jump into the car, ignoring the startled exclamations and pounding of pursuing feet.

Jason slides his seat back and relaxes as the car pulls smoothly out, batarangs bouncing harmlessly off the windows. “Jesus fuck Prettyboy, what the hell kinda plan is that. What if he calls our fuckin’ bluff?”

Tim grins, changing gears and laying on the speed as the Manor falls away behind them. “Well, then you’ll pull me into your arms, kiss the hell out of me, I’ll whip out a condom and-”

“Oh my god. It’s not gonna be a fuckin’ bluff?”

“More like a game of chicken, and we won’t be blinking first.”

Jason stares at Tim, then starts to chuckle. “Oh, Prettyboy. I fuckin’ like it when you’re bad.”

Tim laughs helplessly, feeling giddy with the excitement of the day, the promise of continued contact with his old universe, and being out on what basically amounts to their first date with his boyfriend. “I like you all the time, Jay.”

Jason leans in and drops a gentle kiss on his shoulder. “Same to you, beautiful.” He pauses, looking worried. “But seriously, we’re not gonna go all the way for the first time in front of my goddamn Batdad, right?”

“Of course not, Jason.” Tim rolls his eyes and Jason relaxes. “He’ll fold like Mr. Freeze in a fire-eating contest before we even make it to second base.” Jason snorts a laugh. “And if somehow he doesn’t, well, then I’ll watch the damn slideshow. You’re worth the trauma.

“Damn. I’m just glad you’re on my side.”

“Always.” Tim smiles at Jason as the Redbird pulls into the secret garage entrance at the Nest. “So, we were rudely interrupted just now. Want to make out like teenagers, watch some Star Wars, order take out, and make out some more?”

Jason grins, grabbing Tim’s hand and pulling him into a lingering, heated kiss, and then leading him toward the elevator. “Fuck yeah, Prettyboy.” He brings up their joined hands and presses his lips to Tim’s knuckles. “Sounds fuckin’ perfect to me.”

Chapter End Notes

Tim: “Hi guys!”
Other Tim: “Yo.”
Timmy: *Fascinated stare*
Dick: “Hey Jay has a Tim-harem!”
Timmy: *Squeaks* “I’m too young to be in a harem!”
Damian: “I shall slay any who attempt to incorporate Timothy into a harem against his will!”
Tim: “What the fuck kind of universe have I landed in?!”
Other Tim: “You get used to it.”
Bruce: “Wait, Jason’s dating? MY SON IS HAVING SEX?!”
Jason: “Oh fuck.”
Bruce: “YOU MUST WATCH THE SLIDESHOW OF DOOM!”
Other Tim: “Tim, save us!”
Tim: “Welp, I’m outta here.”
Other Tim: “Curse your sudden but inevitable betrayal!”
Jason: *Escapes through window, dragging Other Tim along* “YOLO fuckers!”
Bruce: “Waaaaaait! ARE YOU BEING SAFE??!!?”

Hey people, thank you for reading this story and giving it a chance. Special thanks to everyone who gave kudos or took the time to comment; those are amazingly encouraging and I appreciate each one. They kind of prove to me that real people are reading and enjoying this thing I randomly decided to make, and the feedback is awesome since this is my first attempt at fanfic so I really want to know how it's going over.

I also want to let anyone following this story know the final update will be in two weeks instead of the usual one week. The final chapter is the epilogue, which contains all the scenes I thought of while writing this thing which didn't fit within the timeline for the main story. I’d be done already, but the damn things keep multiplying every time I turn my back and it's going to take me an extra week to wrangle them into some semblance of order. It's already well on its way to being the longest chapter in the story. Wish me luck!

Lastly, if anyone who’s subscribed to this fic received a random update notice on Sunday and clicked on it only to be saddened because there was no new chapter… Sorry! But unless I was sleep-posting somehow (which, maybe? I totally used to sleepwalk as a kid), that wasn’t my bad. I blame a random archive glitch. But, to make up for any disappointment that may have caused, I wrote a bunch of silly little chapter summaries and stuck them in the end notes for each chapter. Go back and read ‘em if you feel like it, maybe they’ll make you laugh. Hope you enjoy!
Epilogue

Chapter Summary

Tim allows the phone to slip from his fingers, too distracted by Jason to care that he probably, okay definitely just sent a really embarrassing text to Other Tim. Whatever. Other Tim will understand when he’s older.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Tim allows the phone to slip from his fingers, too distracted by Jason to care that he probably, okay definitely just sent a really embarrassing text to Other Tim. Whatever. Other Tim will understand when he’s older.

He buries his face in his arms, moaning softly as Jason’s incredibly talented tongue finds a new angle and Jason hums in satisfaction at Tim’s squirming. Oh god.

He’s still mostly in Red Robin, the catches undone and pants pulled down just enough to give Jason access. The hood of the Batmobile is hot under him where he’s bent over it in the garage at the Nest and Jason’s huge, warm hands are holding his hips, keeping him from jerking too much as Jason slowly, thoroughly destroys him. So good, feels so amazing Jason Jay I can’t- I’m gonna-

“S’okay, Baby,” Jason pulls back just far enough to murmur the words. “Come for me, let me see you.”

And he dives back in, taking his sweet time and pushing Tim higher and higher until…

He falls.

And Jason catches him.

Next thing Tim knows he’s heaving ragged breaths, heart pounding coming down and he’s pressed against his boyfriend’s broad chest, strong arms wrapped tight around him. Jason’s whispering reassurances in his ear.

“So beautiful, Baby Bird, so gorgeous for me. You did so good. Was just what I wanted, what I needed. Fuckin’ missed you, Baby.”

Tim blinks, trying to pull himself together after that little round of welcome home, Baby. “I was gone for less than a day!” His eyes widen as he realizes Jay didn’t— “Hey, wait! We aren’t done yet, you haven’t—”

Jason kisses his temple, smiling against his skin. “Baby, I did. Damn, you have no idea how fuckin’ hot you are when you get like that.” He shifts, wincing and flushing a little. “Might need to change these pants soon though. Wanna get you upstairs, let you unwind a little, tell me all ‘bout Other Tim an’ how he’s doin’ before we start round two. Besides, if I bend you over an’ fuck you right here, Baby, I’m not gonna want to stop and we gotta get the damn Batmobile back to the Cave before B notices I took it.”
“Um, he’s probably already noticed.” Tim squints at the Batmobile and has a horrible thought. *Does Jason know to disable the cameras?*

Jason grins. “Yeah, that paranoid fucker. Whatever. Still gotta send it back before he decides to check it out for himself.” He notices Tim’s expression. “What’s wrong?”


“What about ‘em?”

Tim closes his eyes, thinking about how clearly the cameras would capture the… *action…* based on the angles and their body positioning. *Really fucking well, oh hell.* He tries, and fails, not to imagine Batman’s reaction to *that* footage. He whimpers.

Jason immediately tucks him closer, smile softening. “Hey, none of that, Baby Bird, I got you. The cameras *are* recording—”

Tim squeaks and buries his face in Jason’s chest. Jason laughs and tries to coax him back up. “Baby, *Baby,* the footage is only goin’ to your private server, triple encoded, *not* to Bruce. It’s safe. I had Babs set it up that way.”

“Oh my god. So Oracle almost certainly has a copy of this somewhere for blackmail purposes?”

Jason’s eyebrows fly up. “…You aren’t very trusting, Timmy. That’s fuckin’ hot.” He kisses Tim, slow and thorough. “Naw, she owed me a favor, I’m pretty sure she played it straight. We’re good.”

*Poor, sweet, gullible Jason. Whatever, Babs won’t use it for evil… I have far too much leverage on her for her to risk it. It would be a Pyrrhic victory at best.*

Tim smiles into the kiss, then retrieves his phone to key in the access codes and send the Batmobile back to the Cave on autopilot. Only…

Something’s wrong. There’s a program he doesn’t recognize trying to execute, and it’s already powered right through his firewalls and defenses. “*Shit,*” he whispers, because that’s *really* not good.

“What’s the matter, Baby Bird?” Jason’s tense, already reaching for his weapons. Tim doesn’t respond, too busy trying to prevent the invader from circumventing all his security, *horrified* it managed to get this far. It’s almost…

…”Like the program was made by someone who knows him. Knows them.* As that realization crystallizes in his mind, the program manages to finally execute and the screen is suddenly filled with Bruce Wayne’s face. Jason stifles a curse, but Tim’s pretty sure his boyfriend hasn’t noticed one key fact yet; this is *Other Tim’s* Bruce, not theirs.

“What the *hell*…” Tim whimpers as Jason leans over his shoulder to stare at the screen.

“Tim. Jason.” Bruce’s voice is serious. “I added this program to the datahedron you are using to transfer information between universes, and coded it to react to both of your voices to ensure your presence, in addition to one of you speaking my first name to avoid accidental activation during vigilante activities.”

Tim blinks. That sounds reasonable enough. What *doesn’t* make sense is what the hell the other universe’s Bruce felt the need to go to these lengths to tell them. Possibly an apology of sorts to Jason? The other Bruce and Baby Jay definitely seem a lot closer than the ones in this universe.
Or maybe he’s going to give some kind of ill-advised shovel talk, considering how up in arms everyone over there was about Tim dating the Jason in this universe. Yeah, that’s probably it. Unfortunately, Tim can’t close, minimize, or even mute the program so it appears the message will have to play in its entirety before he regains control of his phone. He sighs, already planning on ways to reassure and comfort Jason if the other Bruce says something hurtful.

The Bruce on the screen narrows his eyes. “It is my understanding the two of you recently began a romantic and sexual relationship.”

Behind Tim, Jason chokes. Tim winces, hoping against hope Bruce isn’t about to be a complete ass. Unexpectedly, Bruce smiles slightly. Actually, it looks more like a faint smirk…

Uh oh.

“What you are about to watch is set to autoplay. If you attempt to interfere, the programming will jump to all other electronic devices within an expanding radius, which will then autoplay the material. There are interactive questions at random intervals which must be answered correctly for the program to complete.”

Horrified comprehension is beginning to dawn in the back of Tim’s mind.

It couldn’t be… He wouldn’t…

Bruce is smirking outright now. “I’m sure you’ve seen some form of this training before, but I adapted this one specifically for the two of you. I took the liberty of adding supplementary material for additional precautions necessary when one partner outweighs the other by a large margin, as well as safety tips and recommendations for when a partner is affected by PTSD.”

“Oh my god,” Tim whispers, regretting everything.

“What the fuck. What the actual fuck, why am I even surprised Alternate Universe Bruce is the biggest asshole I ever met. Livin’ up to the original, the fucker. Is he talkin’ about what I fuckin’ think he’s talkin’ about?”

Bruce smiles, smugly satisfied with his remote dickery. “Enjoy the slideshow, boys.” Reflexively, Tim yanks the battery out of his phone, then slowly closes his eyes, not even needing Jason’s horrified gasp to let him know what a big mistake he just made.

When he opens his eyes, the slideshow is playing. On Jason’s phone, Tim’s tablet, Tim’s backup tablet, the screens in the Batmobile, the retractable screens on the walls of the garage, and almost certainly, every other screen in the Nest. Bruce’s voiceover attacks their ears in surround sound, and Tim whimpers. Jason pulls him protectively closer.

A photo of a particularly virulent STD fills the screens, and both Tim and Jason tilt their heads, unwillingly mesmerized, squinting to try to discern what part of the human body that could even be—

Oh god. That is so not right. Tim’s going to be sick. Jason rubs his back comfortingly. “It’s gonna be okay, Baby Bird. We’ll get through this, and then we’ll troll the hell outta Bruce to get him back for it.”

Tim blinks. “You mean the other Bruce, right? Um… how?”

Jason continues rubbing his back, a grin forming on his face. “Naw, we’ll fuck with ours. He’s easier
to get to. Besides, he’s an asshole too. Fucker totally deserves it even if he’s not actually the one who pulled this shit.” He glances at the Batmobile, and his grin widens and sharpens. “Might as well start now.”

And, oh, the look in Jason’s eyes has Tim halfway hard again despite the very explicit horror show slowly unfolding on every electronic device around them. “What—”

Jason tugs Tim forward and gently bends him over the hood of the Batmobile again, mouthing kisses on the sides of his neck and deftly undoing the catches of his uniform to slide it down and press his fingers right there. “This wasn’t part of the bet, Baby, but it sure sounds good right now and it’ll piss B the fuck off. You wanna?”

The way Jason’s moving his fingers, Tim can barely breathe let alone focus enough to speak. When did Jason even get the lube? I swear he carries that stuff with him at all times. He’s like the boy scout of lube. Wait, that doesn’t sound right…

Jason curls his fingers, and Tim loses his train of thought.

“Yes.” He clenches, and Jason groans. “Yes.” All thoughts about this being a bad idea evaporate. Except…

“What about the interactive questions? If we can’t… ah! …Answer them, this stupid slideshow… oh god, Jason! Th-there! …Will never end.”

Jason chuckles darkly, fingers sliding out and something bigger, blunter, and hotter pressing against Tim now. He pushes back, panting and moaning as he impales himself despite Jason’s curses and attempts to get him to slow down. He loves it. The ache, the stretch, Jason inside him, filling him and lighting up his every nerve with heat and pleasure. “Jay!”

So good, so full and scorching hot and amazing…

“Well, Baby Bird, I figure you’re the genius.” Jason begins a slow, teasing rhythm, rolling his hips gently and pressing kisses to Tim’s temples, his cheek, and then his mouth when he twists to chase Jay’s lips. “You can multitask, right?” He punctuates his question with a hard, deep thrust and grinding swivel of his hips that has Tim floating with pleasure, the world closing down to just the two of them and all other sounds and stimuli mercifully fading away.

“Hnngh.” Tim manages, and Jason presses his face into Tim’s back and laughs, then groans as Tim tightens around him and they both shake with how good it is.

Fuck it. Tim is a goddamn genius, and Jason’s pretty damn smart too.

They’ll manage somehow.

Tim arches his back, pushing his hips up and back into Jason’s next thrust, and lets everything dissolve into want and pleasure and Jason, Jason JASON oh god YES.

*  

Clark stares at Batman in shock. If this were anyone else he would assume they were pulling his leg, but—it’s Bruce. It’s hard to believe, but he can’t imagine this being Batman’s idea of a joke.

“What? No, that’s… how can that be? A clone? Of me?” His voice reflects his puzzled bewilderment. He can’t seem to comprehend what Batman just told him. If the invitation to the Cave to discuss some mysterious matter Batman refused to divulge anywhere else was a bit of a surprise, the news Batman just shared with him was a depth charge that is rocking him to the very core. He
realizes numbly that if this information is true, he may be feeling the aftershocks of this moment for the rest of his life.

“That is incorrect.” Oh thank Rao. Clark starts to exhale in relief, only to freeze when Batman inexorably continues. “The child will be a mixture of your DNA and Lex Luthor’s, not an exact clone of you.”

Clark chokes on nothing, eyes bugging out in horror. How does this just keep getting worse?

“Lex Luthor?! What… how is this possible?”

“Take a look at the information in this file; it contains the details of the CADMUS project as it is known to have occurred in the alternate timeline. Of course, the perpetrators managed to destroy most of their records in that universe. We will make sure that doesn’t happen this time.”

Batman’s voice is dark, and if Clark were thinking clearly he’d ask his old friend what personal stake he has in all this, but he’s too frizzled to grasp anything but the… the thing CADMUS is planning to make, the weapon with his genetic material mixed with Lex Luthor’s of all people. He feels furious, violated.

How dare they.

He swallows back his nausea. He has a responsibility to uphold here, and this is no time to fall apart. “How do we stop them from creating it?”

Batman’s eyes narrow. “We don’t. He already exists; now it is merely a matter of intercepting and retrieving him once they move him to a known facility to thaw him and accelerate his growth.”

Clark gapes. “But we have to! We can’t let them control a weapon with that kind of capacity for destruction! Why, the damage they could do with it if it has my powers—”

“He is a child.” Clark recoils at the banked rage in Batman’s voice, blinking in shocked bewilderment.

“What—”

“Not a weapon.” Batman still sounds furious, and Clark finds himself automatically scanning the other man for suspiciously Kryptonite-like bulges. He doesn’t see any, but that doesn’t actually mean anything with Batman.

Oh. Clark feels like an idiot and a bit of a heel, but… “Oh, I’m… sorry. That was… inappropriate.” He swallows, running a hand through his hair. “Still, this child was created or is about to be created with my genetic material, without my consent, and the other parent is someone I find despicable. I don’t think I can set that aside and just… accept it.” At Batman’s judgmental silence, Clark explodes. “You have no idea what it is like to suddenly find out you have a child you never asked for, with someone whose criminal actions and goals go against your every moral belief!”

A snort from across the Cave catches his attention, and for the first time Clark focuses on the children playing on the mats, whom he has been ignoring in favor of focusing on the enormity of the matter under discussion. There are two of them, both with black hair, one slightly taller with fair skin, the other shorter and sturdier with a golden brown complexion. They are… laughing at him?

The taller child is clearly the younger version of the time traveler, Tim Drake; at least, he matches the files and photos that have been rolled out along with the numerous contingencies and preparations Batman has been sending to the Justice League periodically over the past months since the older boy
appeared. The other… Clark frowns in puzzlement, unable to place him.

Batman sighs, pushing back the cowl. The look in his eyes is… dangerous, but his voice when he speaks is even and controlled. “Clark, I would like to introduce you to my son, Damian. I recently learned I had a child… with Talia al Ghul.” He walks over and picks the little boy up, smiling at the child’s chatter and taking the other boy by the hand as he begins to lead them up the stairs from the Cave.

Clark’s mouth drops open as the import of Bruce’s statement registers. Oh Rao, I really goofed that time. He knows exactly how I feel. Oh no, how do I make this better again?

“Wait,” Clark blurts out, mortified, feeling ten kinds of a fool. “You were going to tell me about the file.”

Bruce doesn’t pause or turn around. “I made a mistake.”

“What?” Clark can count on one hand the number of times he’s heard Bruce admit to a mistake, with fingers left over.

“I shouldn’t have told you. Just forget about all of this, Clark. I’ll take care of it.”

“You…” What is he going to do? How can he possibly take care of this?

Bruce turns at the top of the stairs, the child on his hip glaring down at Clark with a disturbingly accurate replica of Batman’s trademark scowl and the boy at his side smirking dismissively in a way that makes Clark feel embarrassed and small. “My children would love to have a little brother.”

He leaves Clark alone in the Cave, feeling uncomfortably like a naughty little boy who has been scolded and sent to his room without any of Ma’s apple pie.

Still, a child of his with Lex Luthor. How could he ever accept or trust someone like that? Luthor would be bound to have programmed the boy to be evil. Leaving him in Batman’s care is embarrassingly tempting, but in the end this is Clark’s responsibility and any negative actions the boy perpetrates down the road against Bruce and his family would be Clark’s fault. He can’t allow that.

Clark runs a hand through his hair, still reeling from Bruce’s revelations about the origins of his own youngest child. He doesn’t seem a bit worried the bad blood will tell in the end. He just treats the boy like any other kid. Loves him like any of his sons. Am I… being unreasonable and small-minded about all this?

Slowly, Clark reaches for the file Bruce left, and reluctantly begins to read. He speeds through the entire file, jaw dropping farther and farther in shock as tears begin to run down his cheeks.

Oh.

Oh my gosh. He’s… he’s good. He’s going to be really amazing. I… Oh Rao, I would’ve… If not for Bruce, I would have reacted so badly to this boy, and broken his little heart. I’d never be able to make it up to him.

Oh, Kon…

He reads the file again, more slowly this time, wiping the tears from his cheeks and sniffing loudly. A heartbeat he knows as well as his own returns to the Cave and waits patiently behind him until he’s composed himself again. “He’s going to be something else, isn’t he Bruce?”
“Yes, he is.” A quiet, resigned sigh. “The boys are actually looking forward to us adopting him and having him here, you know.”

Clark winces, hating to disappoint Bruce’s kids. “We’ll come visit a lot?” He tries.

Bruce stares at him, eyes measuring. “…Fine. But if I ever even suspect you aren’t treating that child well—”

Clark holds up his hands. “I know, I know, you’ll come after me with Kryptonite and the Bat-glare, and I’ll completely deserve it when you knock some sense into me.”

Bruce nods, a small grin quirking his mouth. “Exactly.”

“Kon’s going to be activated within the next few months, and that will be the optimum time to capture the criminals involved in the project and preserve the evidence to actually get them convicted. Your plan specifies we should try to move in immediately so we get him out when he’s a baby, before they have a chance to program or hurt him. It all seems reasonable to me, and I should have plenty of time to get my apartment set up for a baby and warn Ma and Pa they’re about to be grandparents.” He runs a hand through his hair. “So… now we just… wait?”

Bruce nods. “Now we wait.”

*

The sound of the ocean is a peaceful susurrus in the background and the warm, gentle breeze plays with Jason’s curls as he turns to look for his boyfriend.

Tim is standing there shirtless, beautiful pale smooth skin over sculpted muscles on display, ass to die for in his red swim trunks as he stares out the front of the thatch-roof hut at the sparkling clear waves lapping on the white sand beach under an endless blue sky dotted with fluffy white clouds.

I know I’ve been a damn good boy, ‘cause this is fuckin’ heaven.

“Gorgeous, Prettyboy,” Jason murmurs as he pulls Tim back against his chest and presses a kiss to his temple. Tim sighs and relaxes into Jason’s embrace.

“It is incredibly beautiful and peaceful here, isn’t it.” Tim smiles, eyes falling closed.

“Was talkin’ ‘bout you.” Jason nibbles more kisses down Tim’s neck, running his hands along his pretty chest and enjoying all that exposed skin. It’s made even better because Jason’s down to his swim trunks as well so he can feel pretty much everything.

Oh fuck, he feels incredible.

Tim starts laughing, twisting to face Jason and lifting his arms to drape them around his neck and pull him in for a proper kiss. “Oh my god could we be any more cliché. We are living a lifetime movie, Jason, I am not sure I’m comfortable with this.”

“Dunno bout that; if we were in a lifetime movie would we be at the romantic beach retreat along with my entire goddamn family?” Jason hears it just in time and jerks, lifting Tim off his feet and swinging him out of the doorway right as Damian and Timmy come flying into the hut. The boys kick up sand and trail water droplets as they chase each other through the room, careening off the furniture and then disappearing out the window as Dick’s voice rises threateningly in pursuit.

“Give it back, Dami, or so help me I’ll—”
Tim sighs, carefully wiping a water droplet off Jason’s cheekbone. “Okay, fine, we’re in a romcom. One of those endlessly annoying ones where the romantic leads are constantly being cockblocked by their crazy family.”

As if in agreement, another voice reaches their ears. “Hey, tigers, let’s get back to the hut for a little family time! We’ll give these nice people their interview, doesn’t that sound just great? Then we can all head down to the beach for some more fun in the sun, ha ha ha!”

Jason cringes in horror at the unwelcome sound of Brucie’s voice. While grudgingly acknowledging the Brucie persona as helpful for this mission, he still considers it cruel and unusual punishment to be forced to actually listen to it, let alone interact with it for extended periods of time. “You sure they need all of us in here for this, Prettyboy? You and me can’t ditch out and go find somewhere up the beach to get some goddamn alone time?”

Tim sighs and shakes his head regretfully. “The legacy drive expansion pack Red gave me listed dozens of locations where minor earthquakes occurred in the necessary timeframe, but this was the only one that actually incurred a small amount of property damage to a luxury rental where Brucie might potentially vacation. Having all of us here when it happens increases the emotional impact and will make his subsequent over the top actions with regard to earthquake preparedness more believable.”

Ugh, yeah, fuckin’ fine. Jason gets it, he just wishes they could be here for real, and without all the rambunctious brothers and fuckin’ Brucie hanging around. Not to mention the goddamn press. Although rubbin’ makeup all over each other to cover their scars was a damn fine way to spend the morning… He grins dopily at the memory of all Tim’s smooth, hot skin under his hands. “Yeah, okay.”

They move back and stand against the wall as the photographer arranges the family on the furniture in the spacious, airy hut. The little ones insist on climbing up in the rafters, much to everyone’s amusement.

Brucie smiles vapidly as he and Dick usher the reporter into the hut. She takes in the scene and smirks. “Thank you so much for granting me this exclusive, Mr. Wayne. We’ll be filming the whole time, but of course you will have last say on what’s included in the final cut.”

“No trouble at all, Ms. Lane! We’re more than happy to let the world take a peek at our happy little family vacation, ha ha ha!”

All the boys hide a wince. Fuck, Brucie just gets fuckin’ worse every time. This, this right here is how I know B’s actually a sadist.

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“Well, we’ll just get a few formal shots and perform the interview in here, and then head down to the beach for some action footage. Your oldest mentioned volleyball—”

A disorienting lurch makes them all stagger, and Jason automatically clutches Tim closer and covers him protectively with his body, leaning on the wall and anchoring them together as gravity loses its meaning around them for thirty dizzying seconds while loud crashing sounds and cries of alarm fill his ears.

Damn, that was a little worse than I expected for a magnitude 5.0 quake. Jason opens his eyes and immediately checks on the smaller boy pressed against his chest. “You okay, Prettyboy?”

Tim opens his big blue eyes and blinks slowly, then focuses on Jason. “Yeah,” he whispers tremulously, obviously stunned, and Jason’s worried for a second before he remembers they’re...
putting on a show for the cameras.

“I got you, sweetheart,” he hugs Tim close and runs a hand comfortably through his hair. “It’s gonna be all right.”

Tim’s eyes fill with tears and dart around the rest of the room. “The others? My little brother! Oh no, Timmy!” He sounds panicked and terrified, and Jason can’t help but hold him and murmur soothingly even though he knows it’s all pretend.

Brucie, meanwhile, has been slowly clambering to his feet from where he apparently staggered into the coffee table during the earthquake. He’s limping, face white with horror. “Boys? Dear god in heaven, what in the world was that? Boys! Speak to me!”

Dick sits up, blood trickling dramatically from a tiny cut theatrically placed on his cheekbone. “Dad? Dad, where are you?” He whimpers softly, hand reaching for his face as tears spring to his eyes. “It hurts!”

Jason barely manages to suppress a snicker. *Layin’ it on a little thick there, Dickiebird.*

Brucie falls to his knees, gathering his oldest in his arms and clumsily patting at him. “I’ve got you, sport. There, there. You’ll be just fine, I promise.” He throws a panicky look over his shoulder at Jason and Tim. “You boys are sure you’re all right? Call the helicopter, now! Dickie here needs medical attention, maybe surgery!”

Jason rolls his eyes but obediently puts in the call as Brucie crawls across the floor towards the wreckage where a small amount of the thatched roof collapsed into the cottage. “Oh god, where are they. Boys! Dami, Timmy, I’m coming! Boys!” His voice trembles with fear as he begins pulling aside loose thatch, exposing the two youngest clutching at each other.

They stare at him with big round eyes, and it is immediately obvious to Jason from their shaking shoulders and wet eyes that they are fighting laughter. The cameramen obviously don’t notice, because he hears a coo and murmurs of concern about the poor little kids.

Tim makes some kind of gesture that Jason misses, and the effect on the little boys is instantaneous. Tears well up in Timmy’s eyes and begin spilling down his cheeks as his lower lip wobbles alarmingly and he tightens his arms where they are already wrapped protectively around Damian. “It’s okay, D-Dami. I w-wasn’t gonna l-let you g-g-get hurt…” He trails off with a huge sniffle, looking like he’s about to start wailing.

Damian looks from Timmy back to Brucie, expression exactly like a traumatized and frightened seven year-old which is really fuckin’ weird on him, and then he just melts the fuck down.

“Daaaaaaaaddy!!!” He reaches for Brucie with both hands, tears streaming down his little cheeks. Brucie lunges forward, wrapping both boys into a crushing hug.

“I’ve got you,” he chokes, tears in his eyes. “You’re so brave, chums.” Under his breath, he murmurs, horrified, “My god, I could have lost them all. This must never happen again.”

He lifts his head, arms around his traumatized but very photogenic children, and stares into the middle distance with haunted but determined eyes.

A single manly tear rolls slowly down his cheek, glistening in a beam of sunlight that shines down in that moment through the hole in the roof to fall upon the trio. *What the fuck, seriously? How the fuck did Tim manage that?*
Brucie’s voice shakes as he presses a kiss to Damian’s head and holds both boys even closer. “Never again.”

Fuckin’ Brucie, goin’ for the Oscar.

Dick crawls over to them and is pulled into the group hug by Brucie. “But Dad,” he whispers fearfully, “even *you* can’t do anything to stop earthquakes!”

Brucie reaches out a hand toward Jason, and he obediently shepherds Tim over to crouch behind their family and complete the group shot. *Jesus Christ the things I fuckin’ do for these people.*

Tim immediately collapses into the group hug, wrapping himself around Timmy and whispering reassurances. Brucie takes Jason’s hand and presses it meaningfully, other hand still in Damian’s hair.

“Wanna bet, tiger? By Jove, we’ll *show* those earthquakes who’s in charge!” He actually releases Jason’s hand to shake his fist at the sky, and Jason just hopes his expression of pained horror and fiercely suppressed laughter looks suitably traumatized or whatever.

*Jesus fuck I can’t fuckin’ wait till this shitshow’s over.*

*“What the fuck did you do to get the little ones to play along like that? I thought they were gonna bust up laughin’ and ruin everything.” Jason demands as soon as the kids fall asleep on the plane back to Gotham, out of range of cameras. The camera crew is on a different flight, frantically editing footage and preparing to drop a far more exciting exclusive than most of them were expecting.*

Tim leans on Jason and closes his eyes, relief at having believably pulled off a difficult performance overwhelming him. *Thank god for Lois. She’ll make sure the right message comes across.*

“I promised we’d take them along on a patrol.”

Jason twitches. “Wait, really? Thought you were all about benching the kiddos at least till they have pubes.”

“Oh my god, *ew,* why would you say it like that—*why.*”

Jason shrugs, grinning and huffing a laugh. “Whatever. You knew what I was when you signed up for this with me, Prettyboy.”

Tim can’t help but laugh too. “Can I claim I didn’t read the fine print?” He kisses Jason, smiling. “Yeah, I know what you mean, but it was the only way to get them to play along and we really needed them on board to sell the whole thing. Now Brucie can start sponsoring a massive effort to retrofit vulnerable structures in Gotham against earthquakes, and it will be believable as something a crazy rich guy would do after a close call like that with his own family at risk.”

“We’re takin’ ‘em on a soft patrol, right?”

“Oh hell yes. We’ll send Nightwing ahead to clear out any actual trouble, and keep to the good parts of town. The kids won’t see any action, but they’ll get a chance to fly.” Tim smiles. The boys might protest at this interpretation of his promise, but they’ll have a great time anyway without being put in actual danger.

Dick turns to face them, smiling. “Sounds good. So do you think the retrofitting will be enough to
mitigate the damage when the 7.6 earthquake strikes Gotham, or are we still going to be facing down Cataclysm and No Man’s Land in a few years?"

Tim sighs. “Besides reinforcing Wayne Manor, we’re going to focus the retrofitting on the most vulnerable structures with the highest potential loss of human life; hospitals, schools, assisted living facilities, that kind of thing. There just isn’t enough money or time to do everything in the city before the Quake.”

Timmy pipes up without lifting his head from where he and Damian are curled together like puppies. “Mother texted. She’s willing to provide backing from Drake Industries for this effort in exchange for half the publicity once the earthquake hits and the media starts lauding us for all the preventative measures. She says it will be amusing to pretend to be horrified by our close call.”

Tim twitches in surprise, both at Timmy being awake and his actual words. He sighs, finding Jason’s hand and rubbing circles into his palm. I need to stop being shocked at things like this. From now on I’ll just assume Mother knows everything and act accordingly.

“That’s great, Timmy. I’ll add it to the plan.”

“So… we’re just going to have to accept the loss of life in whatever parts of Gotham we don’t manage to reinforce?” Dick sounds unhappy, and rightfully so.

“Of course not.” Tim smiles, glad to be able to set that worry to rest. “Babs is working on that, actually. She’s designing a credible nuclear and biochemical threat we’ll issue a few days before the Quake is due. Gotham will be evacuated, the Quake will happen with structural damage but no loss of human life, and then the bomb threat that caused the evacuation will quietly disappear. She’s good enough to wipe all traces so no one will ever figure out who was really behind it.”

Jason starts laughing softly, stroking Tim’s hair. “You really do think of everything, don’t you Prettyboy.” His voice sounds unbearably fond and Tim grins, hiding his face against his boyfriend’s shoulder as happiness wells up inside his chest.

“Funny you should say that, Jay. I figured you might want a real vacation after this planned disaster, so I may have booked us a week at a different resort on one of the other islands…”

“Ooh, sounds fun! When are we leaving?” Dick’s grinning like the asshole big brother he is and Jason growls at him.

“Dick, no.”

Dick grins wider.

Better cut this off before it escalates and ends with all of us crashed and shipwrecked on a desert isle, slowly descending into madness and drinking our own urine to survive… wow, that took a dark turn. Guess I really do need a vacation. Just a little mental health break with my gorgeous boyfriend…

“No worries, Jay, we’ll slip away tonight after patrolling with the kids. I’ll get Timmy to distract Dick.” Jason smiles and settles, tucking Tim more securely into his arms and sighing with pleasure, clearly already imagining a week alone together at a luxurious beach resort.

“Like I said. You always have the best fuckin’ plans, Prettyboy.”

*
She looks at the man, and the lines of his shoulders say guilt while his eyes are telling her brother love safe.

His mouth says, “I’m sorry.” She knows he has… regrets.

He is a traveler who was able to use his foreknowledge and skills to save every one of his family from some of their worst moments. All except her.

“I should have been able to find you sooner,” he says. I am unworthy, I don’t deserve your love, says his posture, the tilt of his chin.

Tears slide down his cheeks, and he brushes them away. Not enough, never enough, I’m sorry, so sorry, say his eyes, his hands, the tension in his jaw.

“I couldn’t… when your father made you kill that man when you were just a kid, I couldn’t have prevented that. I wasn’t here yet. But I damn well should have found you earlier. You’ve been living on the streets since you ran away from him, how could it have been so hard to find you…?”

“Brother,” Cass says, placing a hand on Tim’s cheek and stroking her gratitude into his skin, smiling to show her love for this sibling where these foreign words always fail her.

He still looks sad, sorrow written in the tilt of the corners of his mouth, the lines of his face. He is waiting for something, needs more reassurance. She wishes words were easier for her, or that he were able to read the language in her movements as easily as she understands his.

She is glad the woman, Barbara, has been teaching her the hand-talking. It seems like a reasonable compromise between extremes. But, it would be better now if she already knew more.

Tim needs…

“I… forgive. You,” her mouth lies. She smiles. She knows there is nothing to forgive.

* Clark arrives on planet after a grueling mission off-world, and immediately he hears it.

He wouldn’t ever have noticed if Batman hadn’t shown him the information about Kon the other month. He still couldn’t quite bring himself to believe this would really happen, thought they had changed the time stream enough with cutting off and preventing various disasters and attacks so these events might never come to be, but here it is, beating steadily in his ears.

This isn’t at all the time he was expecting it; it’s still months too early. Whatever effect their interference on the time stream has had, it must have spurred the CADMUS directors to fast track this project, for good or ill.

He thinks about the file, and the failings of the other Clark’s relationship with this child. His heart thumps hard in his chest.

How long has this heartbeat been there while he was off planet and unable to intervene, to save the boy? Days? Weeks?

With the speed at which they can grow clones, the boy could be almost any age. Is the child already a teenager, a full grown man? What if the brainwashing is already in place and the child who would have been Kon is lost to him already?
His heart *breaks* at the very thought, and he wonders how and when he came to love the boy who is and isn’t his son.

He’s soaring through the clouds, arriving at the lab and blasting through walls, hardly noticing anything else except that *heartbeat*, the one that almost matches his. He’s in the room before security even registers his presence, opening the tube and carefully lifting out the limp form within before he takes in its size.

*Oh*, he thinks, gently stroking one hand through the soft dark hair. *Oh, wow. Guess I’ll have to redo the nursery.* He’s *definitely not going to fit in that crib I got.*

The boy opens his eyes, and Clark smiles in wonder.

*

Kon stares at the boys in front of him, wondering how he is supposed to act in this situation. The tube didn’t teach him about what to do if you encounter children in what appears to be a large subterranean cavern.

He’s finding there are a lot of gaps in what the tube taught him, which is pretty annoyingly inconvenient.

At least Clark is always there to answer Kon’s questions, although he’s less than helpful about lots of things too, like explaining the meaning of those interesting-sounding words the men at CADMUS yelled at them as Clark flew him away after pulling him out of the tube.

He brightens. Maybe these boys will be able to help him with that. “Hello,” he says, trying to remember to smile.

Clark says people don’t like it when you glare at them all the time, not that Kon thinks he was *glaring*. He just has ‘resting asshole face,’ whatever *that* means. At least, he thinks so based on his careful research on the internet while Clark was at work. He tries to remember the exact phrase the CADMUS men used so he can find out the right definition. “I’m Kon. Do either of you know what ‘motherfucking asshole son-of-a-bitching tittyfucking cocksucker’ means?”

The boys look surprised for a moment, and then they both grin happily as the taller one opens his mouth to reply.

“No teaching Conner swears! He’s only a few weeks old!” Clark’s worried voice breaks in as he looks up from his conversation with the man in the suit who was introduced to Kon as Bruce.

The boy grimaces at that. “Sorry. My name is Timmy, and this is Damian.” He catches Kon by the hand and pulls him toward some stairs. “Come on, let’s go have a real conversation somewhere the dads won’t interrupt every three seconds.”

“Hey!” The other boys ignore Clark, so Kon follows suit, looking around with interest at the fancy house that is apparently situated above the cave. He’s glad the boys don’t actually *live* in a cave. He isn’t completely sure, but that doesn’t seem like a good living situation for children.

Damian clicks a clock into position, closing off the passageway, and eyes Kon carefully. “You were supposed to be an infant, another brother, ours to mold in our own image.” His speech sounds oddly formal and Kon’s not quite sure if he’s being insulted or not.

Kon blinks in confusion, feeling inexplicably judged. “I’m… sorry?” He tries. He hopes they didn’t bring him up here to be rude to him. He can’t beat up a little kid, and the taller one is smaller than
Kon too so it wouldn’t be fair to fight him either.

Damian shakes his head swiftly, a grin stealing into place on his features. “Although you are physically older than anticipated, of an age with Timothy if your father is to be believed, you are still nearly a blank slate. We have much to teach you.”

Timmy smiles, still holding Kon’s hand reassuringly. “We’ll start with those words you asked about, move on to training with nerf weapons, and end on some video games and popular culture. Based on our understanding of your education to date, you are sadly uninformed in all of those areas.”

“We shall have many opportunities for additional lessons, for Father intends to offer to care for you during those times your father is occupied with his heroic endeavors.”

Well, that doesn’t sound too bad. Not bad at all, really. Kon smiles, and follows the other boys deeper into the house as Timmy starts to explain something about a dress code when visiting the Bats. Apparently clothes with the Superman symbol are banned in Gotham? Weird, Clark should have warned him about that. He must’ve forgotten. Whatever, Kon can roll with that.

* 

Bruce barely manages to control his facial spasm as a grin attempts to crack his face in half when he sees what his boys have done to Clark’s kid. It wouldn’t do for his dignity as the Batman, but god does he want to smile like a madman right now.

Timmy and Dami are on either side of Kon, laughing and bumping shoulders as they babble on about whatever games they played together. The boy is smiling, unapologetically happy, a marked improvement on earlier when he seemed hesitant and unsure about the new environment and all the new people.

That isn’t what has Bruce nearly dancing inside, though.

The Superman shirt Kon was wearing when he arrived is nowhere to be seen. Instead, he’s dressed in a black t-shirt with a vivid red bat symbol across the chest, a cocky grin on his face and a little swagger to his step.

It looks good. Damn good.

Judging by Clark’s pained noise of utmost betrayal, he doesn’t agree with that assessment at all.

Bruce loses the internal battle, and grins.

* 

Dick just stares at Bruce, blinking slowly as he tries to wrap his mind around the presumption of all the crap that just came out of Bruce’s mouth.

No matter how he spins it, the words don’t change and he finds himself furious. He thought they were over this, that the better relationship they’d developed after Jason’s close call and the other boys coming into their lives was going to be the status quo from now on.

Apparently Bruce was just biding his time before going back to being a controlling asshole.

Well, that or he’s simply been enjoying Dick spending most of his time around the Manor, returning there in between team missions to spend more time with all his beloved little brothers. And now that Dick’s trying to spread his wings on his own again… “You have absolutely no right to tell me what I
can and cannot do,” he growls.

Bruce’s eyes narrow and his brows draw together as his jaw clenches and his hands tighten into fists. “I will not allow it!” He thunders, causing the rest of the Cave to fall silent. Jason and Tim roll to a halt on the mats, Tim on top, and both turn to stare at the spectacle. Timmy and Damian have disappeared, probably wanting to avoid the argument that’s brewing.

“Well, I don’t care what you think! Blüdhaven needs a protector, and I can do so much good there!” Why can’t Bruce understand that much at least? “Gotham has you, Jayhawk, Red Robin, and Oracle; you don’t need Nightwing. With the information on the legacy drive, I can root out corruption in the police force so much faster than my alternate self managed—”

Bruce’s face is white and… his hands are shaking, still bunched into fists. “Dick, I…” Bruce swallows, then closes his eyes and whispers, “Please don’t ask this of me.”

Dick feels so confused. His anger swirls, and then dissolves in the face of a Bruce who looks so wretched. “Bruce…”

Jason chooses that moment to pipe up from the mats. “Hey B, you gotta cut the cord someday. Dickie’s gonna be fine!”

Bruce swings his head around to face Jason, roaring, “You don’t understand! Blüdhaven broke Dick in the other universe! DO YOU WANT A BROKEN DICK, JASON?!”

Everything stops.

Bruce pauses, brow furrowed and mouth falling open slightly as if he is unable to process just how those words ever managed to come out of his mouth.

Jason breaks first, with a little snort that quickly dissolves into guffaws as he throws his head back on the mat and roars with laughter. “N-no, B… I can’t say that I do,” he manages.

Tim is giggling helplessly, collapsed completely onto Jason’s chest and rising and falling with his boyfriend’s laughter. “I also object to that, Bruce. Please don’t break my boyfriend’s dick.” And they’re both laughing hysterically again, as Dick almost falls on the floor with laughter and Bruce continues to stand completely frozen like maybe if he doesn’t move they won’t realize he’s still in the room.

Eventually, Tim rolls mostly off of Jason and just grins up at them. When he’s able to form words again, he throws a still-stunned Bruce a reassuring look.

“But seriously. If you’re going based on information from the legacy drive, there is no reason to think any of that’s going to happen to Dick this time around. We got the info to the Justice League in time to stop the bomb that messed Roland Desmond up in my original timeline, so he never had to inject himself with the experimental treatment and thus never became Blockbuster. And without that guy to find out his secret identity and go after everything he cares about both in and out of the mask, Dick can totally handle Blüdhaven. Jay and I can do a patrol there once a week to back him up, even. No need to stress out so much, B.”

Dick’s mouth has fallen open. “What.” He turns his accusing stare on Bruce, who has the decency to look vaguely uncomfortable. “Blockbuster?” The name’s unfamiliar, and clearly it shouldn’t be.

“I may have… limited your access to portions of the legacy drive I thought you would find… upsetting,” Bruce mumbles, studiously avoiding Dick’s eyes.
Dick inhales, ready to rain fury down on his head like hellfire, and only stops himself because two little heads pop out over the lip of one of the many shelf-like rock formations in the Cave walls.

Both Timmy and Damian are staring at Bruce with huge, round eyes.

“What?” Bruce sounds harassed.

“If you intend to ‘break’ Todd’s ‘dick’, Father, then we are going to observe. Timothy has never witnessed a castration and should not miss this opportunity.” Damian’s voice is just a little too deferential, face a touch too sincere. That little troll understands what Bruce really meant. He knows exactly what he’s doing. Dick can’t help the little curl of pride he feels at Dami playing with the family.

Timmy nods, biting his lip, looking entirely too innocently curious to be genuine. Little trolls, plural.

Dick actually sees the moment when Bruce checks out completely, as the look of overwhelmed, stunned dismay on his face fades to absolute blankness and he spins on his heel, striding away without another word.

The boys giggle, ducking back out of sight. Tim and Jason disentangle and roll to their feet before walking over to Dick.

“He means well, Dickie, he’s just fuckin’ shitty at how he shows it sometimes.”

Dick smiles at Jason’s concern. “I know. It’s… marginally easier to deal with when I remember all his high handedness is coming from a place of love.” He grimaces. “Now I have an inkling how you felt when you stumbled on all that stuff about the other Jason in the alternate timeline.”

Jason snorts. “Yeah, that secretive shit ain’t fun from the other side is it?”

Tim finishes doing… something… at the Batcomputer, then turns to face them. “I restored your rights to view all the files, Dick. Sorry I didn’t catch it before. I should have anticipated Bruce would do something like this.”

“No worries. Anything in particular you want to warn me about before I read it all?”

Tim hesitates, biting his lip. “Um, when you get to the part about Catalina Flores?”

“Yeah?”

“Don’t worry about her. She’s… not gonna be a problem.”

“Oh, you already took care of her too?” My family is so weirdly invasive, but it’s nice to have them all looking out for me. In their own creepy, way-too-involved way. Even Bruce.

“Nope. Oracle did.” Tim smiles, a sharp edged grin. Not for the first time, Dick takes a moment to appreciate Tim choosing to use his talents for good instead of evil.

Try as he might, Dick doesn’t manage to get either Tim or Babs to talk about whatever they did to handle Catalina Flores. After he reads the file, feeling sick at what happened to his alternate self, he finds he doesn’t really care too much, as long as she stays the hell away.

Seriously, I have the best family. Weirdly invasive, horrifically overprotective, and totally awesome.

*
Timmy meets Dami’s eyes as they lean back on the cool rock ledge out of sight of Bruce and their brothers, and they both dissolve into silent giggles.

“See? Told you it would get them to quit fighting.” Timmy grins.

“I acknowledge the validity of your claim,” the smaller boy says gravely, and Timmy rolls his eyes and wonders how long it will take his little brother to unlearn his habit of talking like a lawyer from a bygone era. “Although Mother’s method still seems considerably more direct.”

“You can’t just throw knives at everyone when they annoy you, Dami. Don’t you remember Tim’s lesson that first day we met?”

“Of course I recall Drake’s lesson. Knives were always so effective for Mother, though.” But Dami’s smiling, reaching to grab one of the water guns they’ve been modifying and start to work on it. He’s increasing the volume and force capabilities; Tim raises his eyebrow and makes a mental note to test the weapon before letting Dami use it on anyone.

Water at a high enough velocity can cut through steel and that seems like overkill for their constantly-escalating arms race with Tim and Jay. Although it might be useful for other things… He files away ‘water gun that can cut steel’ along with his other plans for a rainy day. Never hurts to have too many contingencies.

“This way is less likely to earn us a lecture or end up with anyone bleeding on the floor. Besides, it’s hilarious. It makes them all so uncomfortable whenever one of us mentions anything to do with sex, especially if we pretend we don’t understand.” Timmy snickers quietly, adding a large ketchup reservoir to the supersoaker he is currently retrofitting.

He pauses, considering, then also adds a relish reservoir. Maybe he can convince Alfred to play with them if he couches it in terms of also doubling as a lunch prep activity. He imagines Alfred stoically mowing them all down with wave after wave of condiments, and then narrows his eyes before adding a remotely triggered kill switch. It wouldn’t do for Alfred to change sides mid-battle.

“But what about if they begin to argue, and have not made an innuendo recently upon which to capitalize? How may I intervene in that case?” Dami sounds so earnest. It really bothers the little boy when people in their family argue. He doesn’t seem to have any frame of reference for fights that don’t end in bloodshed, so it frightens him on some level to hear the people he cares about yelling at each other.

Timmy smiles at his little brother. He’s got this. “Easy. That’s when you ask them where babies come from, Dami.”

Damian blinks at him like he’s stupid. “But I know where infants come from, Timothy! Despite my unusual antecedents, I am well aware normal children are conceived via disgusting exchange of seminal fluids during coitus and later emerge in an agonizingly painful manner from the maternal parent’s now-gaping and torn vaginal orifice amidst large quantities of intra-uterine fluids, blood, mucus, and frequently, stool.”

Timmy winces at that graphic little mental image. “Ew.” He shakes his head. “That’s not the point, Dami! They don’t know you know that, so just play it up.”

“But what if one of them attempts to actually inform me?”

“Can you really picture Dick or any of the others willingly explaining to you where babies come from?”
Damian tilts his head consideringly, then smiles. It’s a great smile, full of dark mischief. Timmy answers with his best bright, innocent smile.

It’s so much fun having a little brother.

*

“B, this is fuckin’ ridiculous.” Jason’s pacing the small isolation enclosure like a caged animal, glaring out at the Cave at large and Bruce in particular. The man in question continues calmly analyzing blood sample results at the Batcomputer, although he does refrain from correcting Jason’s language as a small concession to their predicament.

“I agree. So far there’s nothing on the tests to indicate the toxin is still communicable.” Tim doesn’t expect his arguments to work; Bruce is far too paranoid to let anyone out of quarantine until he is absolutely certain the unknown toxin is completely out of their systems.

Tim sighs as Jason continues to rant.

If only Ivy hadn’t chosen now to experiment with a new toxin, one that apparently isn’t completely counteracted by their usual antidotes. If only Bruce weren’t such a hardass and would just let Tim and Jason go to the Nest to quarantine themselves in comfort and privacy.

If only the quarantine area in the Cave were more spacious than a single twelve by twelve room built directly into the native rock. If only the entire front wall weren’t completely transparent, exposing them to the scrutiny of everyone in the Cave.

Jason paces by Tim again, and once more his eyes are drawn to his boyfriend’s magnificent erection, prominently displayed in the loose sweatpants that are all he’s wearing. Tim winces and adjusts his position again, drawing his knees up to his chest to try to hide his own toxin-induced erection.

Two sets of eyes follow his every movement, and he shudders. If only Bruce didn’t task Timmy and Dami with keeping an eye on us while B works on the cure.

“You guys don’t really have to watch us constantly, you know,” he tries. “I mean, you could just keep an eye on the monitors, right?”

Damian’s eyes narrow and he leans forward slightly, the better to stare even more intensely right at him. Tim curls up even more in response, feeling horribly exposed in just a pair of very loose sweatpants and with a raging erection to conceal. So awkward. “That is precisely what someone acting under the influence of an unknown toxin would want us to do. Drake in his right mind would know that.”

Well, damn.

Tim looks to Timmy for help, and the little brat just shrugs and smirks, typing something on his tablet. He observes Jason’s pacing for a moment, then adds another notation to whatever he’s working on. “I’m performing a behavioral study on you guys right now. It’s fascinating and I have no incentive to alter the variables and potentially skew the results.”

Brat.

A shadow falls over Tim and he glances up expecting it to be Jason, only realizing his mistake when his field of view is filled with golden brown skin, muscles, surprisingly little body hair, and Dick’s bobbing erection.
Tim recoils in horror and he slaps his hands across his outraged eyes. “Oh my god, you need to stop. Doing. That!”

Jason’s head snaps around, and he stomps over to growl at Dick and herd him away from Tim. “Fuck off, Dickhead! How many times I gotta fuckin’ tell you, stay the fuck on your fuckin’ side o’ the goddamn cell!”

“But Jaaaay, it’s boring over there all by myself!”

“No!”

If only Dick hadn’t also responded to the call tonight and gotten a faceful of toxin too. If only Batman hadn’t put all three of them in the same damn cell.

If only there had been more than two pairs of sweats in the quarantine room when Batman frantically stripped them and hosed the remaining pollen off their skin while they were still unconscious from the initial effects of the toxin, before shoving them all in here. If only Dick hadn’t chivalrously insisted he be the one to forgo clothing because there wasn’t enough to go around.

Jason stalks past again, scrubbing a hand over his face and muttering furiously. Tim’s brow furrows in concern. If only this hadn’t happened on a night when Jay’s clearly already upset about something else. And I can’t even ask him what’s wrong and try to comfort him, not with everyone watching.

This sucks.

The only mild saving grace is the standard antidote did work on countering the usual uncontrollable lust induced by Ivy’s concoctions. It just… failed when it came to mitigating the main noticeable physical effect. Cue raging, continuous erections with no actual sense of accompanying arousal and Bruce insisting everyone stick around to make sure there aren’t any other new effects.

Awesome. Thanks for that one, Ivy.

Tim is about to bury his head in his hands and just give up on salvaging anything from this night when a gentle “ahem” draws his gaze back outside the cell.

Alfred allows himself a faint smile, completely dignified as usual and characteristically entirely unfazed by the oddity of the sight confronting him. “Master Bruce, if you would?” He tilts his head marginally towards his armful. “I have prepared some supplies for our temporarily indisposed young sirs.”

Bruce turns his head, looking pained. “Alfred, I’d really prefer not to send anything into the cell. Depending on the results of the analysis, we’ll have to destroy any material that can’t be properly decontaminated afterwards.”

Jason spins to spit furiously at Bruce, “You gigantic asshole. You could have sent extra clothes in here for us to cover Dick’s fuckin’ dick at any time? B, what the fuck?”

“My priority is to make sure you’re all safe, Son.”

“Yeah? Well what about our fuckin’ mental health? Jesus fuckin’ Christ on a fuckin’ pogo stick what the fuck. What the fuck.”

Bruce sighs, presses a button with a longsuffering air and then turns back to the screens. A heretofore invisible drawer slides out of the Cave wall, and Alfred carefully places the items he is carrying in
the drawer which closes before an aperture opens into the cell.

“Ooh, presents!” Dick bounds happily over to investigate the largess while Jason hovers near Tim.

Thankfully, the first item is a pair of sweatpants which Dick pulls on, to the visible relief of absolutely everyone.

“Thanks, Alfie,” Jason says with real gratitude. “This right here is why you’re everyone’s favorite.”

Alfred smiles graciously, inclining his head toward Jason. “Ah, I appreciate the sentiment, Master Jason. I wanted to inform you I took the liberty of moving your reservations at Carbone to tomorrow evening. They were most cooperative once I explained you were unavoidably detained assisting with your father’s business.”

_Reservations? What…?_ Tim looks to Jason, but he’s staring at Alfred and gaping.

Alfred smiles warmly at Jason’s surprise. “I know how hard you worked to prepare for this evening, Master Jason, and so I thought to provide some small festivites here as your plans have been unavoidably postponed. I hope my little effort allows you to enjoy yourselves somewhat, even under these trying circumstances.” He inclines his head once more with a twinkle in his eye, then collects both younger boys despite their protests and retreats upstairs as a very confused Tim turns to Jason inquiringly.

“Jay? What was Alfred talking about?” A horrifying possibility occurs to him, and he runs through important dates in his mind, hoping desperately he hasn’t forgotten some special day. Jason has proven to be surprisingly romantic, and the last thing Tim wants is to disappoint or hurt his boyfriend.

It’s not Valentine’s Day, Jason’s birthday isn’t for another month, and the anniversary of the day we got together is a couple of months after that… am I missing something? What did I forget?

Jason’s blushing, rubbing a hand on the back of his neck and staring at his feet. He looks at Tim, then glances over to where an interested and thankfully clothed Dick is starting to paw through the other items Alfred provided. “Hey, quit it Dickface! Alfie made that shit for _us!_”

He rescues Alfred’s gifts and carries them back over to Tim, flushing even more as he carefully lays out a red and white checked picnic blanket, a small vase of flowers, plates, silverware, and glasses. He opens the wicker basket and a tantalizing aroma fills the cell, causing Tim to inhale in pleased surprise and Dick’s stomach to growl noisily. Jason regards Dick with a longsuffering air. “If I give you a plateful, will you sit in your corner and pretend you’re not here?”

Dick considers, then nods, accepting his plate of Alfred’s exquisite Italian cooking with a sigh of happiness and retreating to his corner.

Tim and Jason are left sitting facing each, a lovely meal laid out before them. There are even candles, flickering warmly in the… _are the Cave lights dimmer?_ Tim looks around, noticing the lights are _definitely_ muted, and… soft classical music is wafting through the speakers? _What._

_What the fuck._ He experiences a moment of utter disorientation and panic. _Is Jason going to propose?! I mean, I love him, I want to marry him someday if he’s into that but we’re still so young and Dick is right there and oh my god we all still have erections, holy shit he’s gonna propose in the Cave while we’re fucked up on toxins and Batman’s watching. Judging. Oh my god-

“Prettyboy,” Jason’s gentle whisper derails Tim’s runaway thought train and he looks up, eyes wide.
“Yes?”

“I meant for this to be so much better. Take you out, treat you right. Shoulda known somethin’ would happen to fuck it all up, but thank fuckin’ god for Alfred, right?”

Tim nods, still staring at Jason with huge eyes. Jason begins to fidget uncomfortably, squirming. “Uh, fuck. Unless you don’t like to make a big deal outta shit like this? I mean, it matters a lot to me, but I guess now thinkin’ about it while it’s the day I gained everything you kinda fuckin’ lost a lot that day… fuck. I shoulda fuckin’ thought this shit through. God damn it…” Jason scrubs a hand over his face, mumbling curses and red to the tips of his ears.

Tim blinks, pieces clicking into place in his mind, and suddenly his heart is pounding out of his chest. “Jay?” He reaches over and catches Jason’s hand. “It’s been one year today since I showed up in this world and saved you,” he breathes.

He feels a radiant smile just lighting up his face. “Oh my god, I’ve been here a year. I’ve known you for a whole year now. Jay!” He tugs Jason forward and leans over to meet in the middle for a kiss as his boyfriend’s worried expression disappears to be replaced with an enormous grin.

Jason pulls back after a moment to stare into his eyes and murmur, flushed, “You came into my life that day and saved it, Prettyboy, saved me. That’s a fuckin’ reason to celebrate forever. I love you, Tim Drake.”

Oh god why are we in a tiny enclosed space with Dick and why is Bruce watching what the fuck B if we were alone somewhere I’d jump Jay right now oh god, Jason-

“I love you too, Jason Todd. Oh, Jay. I love you so much.” Tim carefully crawls across the picnic blanket to climb into Jason’s lap and kiss him properly. Jason tugs him in as soon as he gets close enough, kissing him almost desperately. Suddenly, Tim’s erection is demanding a lot more attention.

Mmm, so good… Tim leans back in Jason’s arms and accepts the next morsel, gasping slightly at the dual sensations of the taste in his mouth and feel of Jason all around him. He sucks the tip of Jason’s finger into his mouth and licks it clean. Jason’s mouth drops open slightly, pupils blown and breathing fast as he stares at Tim.

“Oh sweet god take me now.” Dick covers his ears and huddles in his corner, resolutely ignoring them.

A knocking sound causes Tim and Jason to look back out of the cell, where Timmy is blushing faintly but smiling. “I finished my behavioral study using footage from the cell,” he says. “In gratitude for the extremely useful and hilarious results, I brought you guys the present for Tim you
had hidden in your room, Jason." He flashes a quick grin. “I know you wouldn’t want B to destroy it if it gets contaminated in the cell, so I’ll just leave it out here for you. Enjoy!”

As Jason sputters in shock, Timmy whips his hand out from behind his back, dropping something in front of the cell and then bolting from the Cave. Tim looks down at the present Timmy left on the ground, and then just stares at it, stunned.

It’s a giant plush dinosaur. The red t-rex looks both soft and inviting, and Tim immediately wants to cuddle with it. He can already tell it’s the perfect size to wrap himself around for a comfy nap.

Jason rests his chin on Tim’s shoulder, checking his reaction to the gift, then grins and chuckles. “There’s your goddamn dinosaur, Prettyboy,” he murmurs warmly. “Hope it’s everything you hoped it would be.”

Tim can’t stop smiling at Jason’s thoughtfulness, all the ways he shows how much he cares. He tangles his fingers in Jason’s hair and tilts his head back for a long, thorough kiss. “Thank you, Jay. It’s perfect.” He looks at the wonderful meal laid out in flickering candlelight, feels the strength and love in the arms around him, and closes his eyes, fixing the memory in his mind so he can come back to this moment whenever he wants.

Then he raises an eyebrow. “It’s really awesome and I absolutely adore it, but… it’s not big enough to ride, Jason.” He slowly smirks.

“Prettyboy, if a ride’s what you want, I got you somethin’ for that too… probably better wait till we’re alone to give you that present though.” Jason winks and tightens his grip on Tim.

A loud clatter directs their attention to where Bruce apparently just used the drawer to dump the newly synthesized antidote into the cell. “Take these now. The lingering symptoms should subside within twenty minutes; if your bloodwork reads clean at that time, you will be free to leave the cell.”

He narrows his eyes at Jason and Tim, clearly itching to say something else. He definitely hasn’t recovered from their resounding victory over the slideshow fiasco.

Tim snickers internally, remembering the look of abject horror on Bruce’s face when they innocently offered to demonstrate their safe sex skills to get out of having to watch the slideshow. Bruce had noped right the hell out of there immediately after Jason took Tim in his arms and kissed him, although that might have been more because of the pornographic moan Tim accidentally released than the kissing. Or maybe it was Jason’s answering growl…

Whatever, at least B hasn’t dared to bring up the slideshow again.

“Thank you Bruce,” Tim says sweetly as Dick quickly but carefully injects a dose of the antidote into each of them.

Tim picks up another interesting-looking morsel from the plate in front of him and holds it out. Jason obediently accepts the mouthful, then hums in pleasure.

Bruce twitches, clearly having difficulty biting back the lecture he’s so obviously aching to deliver on safe sex, and then spins to walk away, giving the plush dinosaur a wide berth.

Dick watches him go, and sighs tolerantly. “It’s okay, B, I got this. Jay, if you’re giving Tim your dick in a box, wait and do it tomorrow night. You’re both going to be sore after these erections finally go down so you should give yourselves at least a day to rest and recover before fun times.”

Tim squeaks and buries his head in Jason’s chest as Jay blushes and growls a response at Dick.
He closes his eyes, tuning out the brothers’ bickering and just enjoying the sensation of being in Jason’s arms and listening to his heartbeat.

He smiles. Best not-anniversary ever.

*

Jason steps out of the shower and wraps a towel around his waist rather than put any of his soiled clothing back on. Baby Bird doesn’t mind the smell of cordite most of the time, but he’s not a big fan of it in the bedroom. Jason smirks, stepping out into their room and locking eyes on his Timmy.

He starts to prowl forward, ready to drop the towel, but then he notices-

Tim’s… fuckin’ crying?

Seduction plans forgotten, Jason rushes to kneel in front of his boyfriend and catch those small hands in his even as Tim realizes he’s there and tries to hurriedly brush away the tears from his eyes, sniffling.

Horrified, Jason presses kisses first to one small hand, then the other. “Baby, sweetheart, beautiful, what’s the matter?” The edges of his vision flicker uncertainly green as he frantically tries to figure out what happened to make his Timmy cry. “Did someone hurt you?” His jaw clenches in fury at the very thought.

But Tim’s shaking his head, smiling apologetically. “No, Jay, nothing like that. I was just… well…” And his eyes flick down to where his multiverse phone is perched on the bed at his side.

Oh fuck no. Jason feels a spike of real fear at the idea that their friends, those other versions of them, are in some kind of danger and there is nothing they can do to help. “Oh shit.” He stares at the phone. “One of them got hurt?”

Tim shakes his head and just gestures limply to the phone again. Confused, Jason picks it up and scrolls through the last few conversations, then whistles. “Baby Jay and Other Tim both got into Gotham U? Fuck, good for them. They can stay at the Nest, do school and patrol all week, and weekends with the family. Those assholes really have their fuckin’ shit together.” He scrolls up some more, but there doesn’t seem to be anything else important.

“Why’s that make you sad, Baby?”

“I just…” Tim swallows, looks away. “I wanted to go to college, you know?” His voice is so small. And fuck. Of course. “Why the fuck don’t you? What’s stoppin’ you?”

“I… Wayne Enterprises, and the Titans, and regular patrols… you know how busy I am, Jay. I couldn’t. I mean, maybe I could rearrange the other things, but CEO’s a full-time job. I’m barely keeping my head above water as it is, no way in hell I could manage with school too.”

And fuck. That. Shit.

Jason grabs his phone off the bedside table, and Tim stares at him in confusion as he furiously punches a button. “B?” Tim jumps in surprise. “Yeah, no, nothin’s on fire, not bleedin’ out. Fuck, can’t I just call to talk once in a while?” Tim snorts, hiding a smile. “Yeah, just wanted to ask, you willin’ to take the CEO shit back if Timmy wants to go back to school? Just for a while or part time or whatever he needs to make the time to do his thing. And you give that shit back if he asks for it,
you hear? Yeah, okay. Cool. Later, Old Man.”

As he hangs up the phone, it occurs to Jason that he may have overstepped with this shit. **Well fuck, hopefully Baby Bird doesn’t kick me to the couch for doin’ that without fuckin’ asking.**

He slides the phone away, and slowly meets Tim’s eyes. *Whatever. It needed to be done. I’m not sorry, not for takin’ care of you Baby—* It finally registers what he’s seeing in Tim’s eyes, and **oh fuck.**

*Holy fuckin’ shit.*

Tim *growls* as he launches himself at Jason, and Jason isn’t sure if he should be defending himself or grabbing on for a hell of a ride until Tim’s got the towel off Jason and is halfway out of his own boxers, pinning Jason down and sucking marks into his neck like he’s staking a *claim.*

“I guess… that *works* for you, Baby?” Jason gasps out between kisses, hard as a rock and *aching* with it. He gets his hands on Tim’s tiny little hips and pulls, dragging them against each other until he’s growling with desire and need.

“What… gave it away?” Tim rasps, pupils blown and lips already swollen. He smiles, gentling his kisses a bit. “Thank you, Jay. I… wouldn’t have done that. Not for myself.”

Jason gets his arms around his boyfriend’s back and rolls them over, grinding down a few more times at an easier pace. He waggles his eyebrows, grinning. “I got a few ideas on how you can *thank* me, Baby Bird.” He leers suggestively and Tim rolls his eyes but he’s grinning as he reaches for the lube.

“Yeah? I’ve got some unexpected free time now, apparently… so let’s review those ideas. *Thoroughly.*” Tim wraps his legs around Jason and presses them both together, making Jason groan. “We’ve got all night.”

*Oh hell yeah.*

Jason kisses Tim again, and proceeds to show him the first idea on his list. Then the second.

They take a short nap and have some take out before they’re both up for the third.

Then the fourth, although that one takes a little longer because refractory periods are a fuckin’ *thing* okay, and Tim may still be under twenty, *barely,* but Jason’s not as young as he used to be what the fuck Tim *stop laughing—*

Then.

*Holy fuckin’ shitballs, is Timmy on fuckin’ pollen tonight or somethin’?*

“Baby, the spirit is *always* willin’, but the flesh is weak. And fuckin’ flaccid.” Jason curls his hips away from his insatiable boyfriend’s questing hand, appalled at himself but for once actually uninterested in sex.

Tim giggles, pressing his face into Jason’s neck and nibbling softly. “Sorry Jay, we can just cuddle if you want.” He smiles, wide and sweet. “I’m just so happy. I’ve been tired and stressed for so long, and there wasn’t really an end in sight… I just…” He sighs as he relaxes into Jason’s embrace. “*Thank you, Jay.*” He nuzzles Jason. “I love you so much.”

“I love you too, Baby,” Jason whispers, pressing soft kisses to Tim’s hair and temple. “You’re gonna
go to school, get a fuckin’ degree in whatever the fuck you want, and do whatever the fuck you feel like after you nail that shit to the wall. You deserve all that and more, Baby Bird.”

He strokes Tim’s back as his boyfriend relaxes into sleep, and idly wonders what he’ll have to do to get an identity that will stand up to scrutiny well enough to enroll in college. Because like fuck is he sending Tim off to do this shit alone.

Jason’s got his back. He smiles, letting his eyes fall closed.

* 

“But that’s impossible! You weren’t due to reach the height and weight requirements until well after you turned fifteen!” Tim’s shock and distress echo through the Cave, drawing the others from their various activities to where the Drake boys are carrying on a discussion that seems to have taken a turn for the worse.

What’s up with Prettyboy? Jason hurries over to check on his boyfriend, worried.

Timmy tilts his head, frowning. “Wait, really? You planned it so I wouldn’t be allowed to be Robin and patrol until I was fifteen?”

“Well, I tried! But apparently you’ve somehow hit the requirements a year early what the hell?”

“Language.”

“You’re gonna be Robin now, Timmy? Congratulations!” Dick pats the shorter boy on the back, smiling.

Jason’s frowning. “Wait. So if you based your predictions for Timmy’s growth on your own, that means he’s outgrowing you somehow?” That… doesn’t sound right.

“He’s an inch taller than I was at fourteen!” Tim sounds aggrieved, and Jason’s frown deepens. Not right at all… I don’t fuckin’ like where this is headed.

“Prettyboy, what the fuck?”

“Language. Unless there are other factors at work outside our current understanding of the situation, the most obvious likely explanation is malnutrition.” Bruce hesitates, looking tired and sad. “Tim, you weren’t… well-cared for, as a child and into your early teens. Isn’t it possible your growth may have been somewhat stunted by those circumstances?”

Shit.

Tim just blinks at him, eyes wide, and Jason draws his tiny little boyfriend close, tucking him protectively into his side. “It’s okay, Prettyboy, I’d love you whatever your height.” Honestly, he loves how small Tim is, and how beautifully they fit together. He kisses the top of his head and Tim buries his face in his chest.

“But my little brother’s probably going to be taller than me!” He wails. So fuckin’ cute.

Dick pats him on the back in commiseration. “So is mine,” he nods toward Jason, who’s already just about Dickie’s height and still growing. “You can kick Timmy’s butt at pretty much everything else, though.”

Timmy shrugs in acknowledgement. “For now,” he allows, eyes glinting with promise.
“Drake’s malnutrition and deficient stature aside, I gather the gist of this conversation is Timothy may now begin patrolling?”

Tim nods reluctantly, and Damian’s eyes light up as Timmy grins.

Bruce snorts. “Damian, I am the one setting your height and weight requirements to take over as Robin, and allow me to assure you they are considerably different from Timmy’s. Otherwise, I expect you would be patrolling at twelve.”

Damian glowers and deflates slightly, then recovers. “I shall continue to train with Timothy, and by the time I am Robin, he will be prepared to move on to a new identity and work as my partner!”

Bruce frowns slightly. “Robin is usually Batman’s partner, Damian,” he says carefully.

Damian sniffs derisively. “Yes, yes Father; of course we shall still support and protect you in the field. However, Timothy and I have trained together for years and work best as a team. Do not worry; although we could easily complete most missions on our own, we will certainly not exclude you.” He smiles patronizingly at a blinking, stunned Bruce before grabbing Timmy’s hand. The pair bounce away, probably to try on Timmy’s new costume and spar.

Bruce just stares after them, a slight smile tugging at his lips, and Jason laughs, squeezing Tim a little closer.

This fuckin’ family.

* 

Dean’s weight is crushing her into the bed, and Steph feels uncomfortably like she can barely breathe as he paws at her breasts. He’s clearly enjoying himself, though, if his loud groans and all the muttered swears are any indication.

His whiteboy dreads flop in her face as he pokes at her clumsily with his fingers, trying to do something down there. Honestly, she’s not sure what. It’s seeming less and less like he knows what he’s doing. She represses a sigh and dutifully moans softly, causing him to grunt and move his fingers away before reaching to struggle with his fly.

*I’m really not sure about this,* she thinks frantically as he starts to line himself up. Only, she already said yes, and it’s Friday night and her mom’s working a night shift, so there’s no good excuse for not doing this. Dean’s been pushing to go further for weeks now, and she doesn’t want to lose him, so…

Her whine this time is real, and Dean chuckles throatily. *Oh god this is going to hurt isn’t it,* Steph thinks wildly, trying and failing not to tense up, and—

A dark form hurls into her room through the open window, rolling twice before rising up and resolving into the figure of a man looming over them terrifyingly. His cape settles around him as he stares down at them in ominous silence.

Dean shrieks in terror and clutches the blanket to his chest as Steph jumps to her feet and wields the bedside lamp defensively in front of them.

The dark figure slowly straightens, and she is stunned to realize she recognizes the red and black suit design, the harness, the cowl and cape.

*Red Robin is in her room.* Her thoughts fly immediately to her criminal father and she wonders if he’s been up to something she didn’t know about.
Oh god oh god oh god Red Robin’s in my room, this is so cool, wait a minute I’m NAKED oh god oh god—

Red Robin regards them both for a long, frozen moment, then slowly, menacingly pulls something out of one of the compartments on his harness and extends it toward her. “Always practice safe sex,” he growls, like a public service announcement from the depths of hell.

She stares at his gauntlet.

*What.*

Yeah, that’s *definitely* a condom. With… Batman’s disapproving face on it, glaring at her. *Awesome.*

“Wow, you guys really take protecting the public very seriously, don’t you? Like, to disturbingly crazy extremes. Do you actually jump in windows every time you see unsafe sex about to happen? …How much time do you spend just looking in windows and trying to see if there’s condom action going on or if someone’s barebacking it?”

Behind her, Dean whimpers and empties his bladder. *Oh god, gross.*

She wrinkles her nose in disgust as he staggers away, still wrapped in her blanket, and then stumbles toward the door, smashing his shoulder into the frame as he fumbles it open and flees the room.

Steph and Red Robin just stare at each other in increasingly awkward silence as the sound of running footsteps in the hall is followed by the front door slamming and then the coughing, sputtering wheezes of Dean’s ancient Volvo peeling away from the curb.

Red Robin doesn’t even twitch, yet somehow Steph feels like he’s *judging* all her life choices. And damn, taking into account the total failbomb Dean just demonstrated himself to be, she can’t even blame him.

“You can do so much better than him,” Red Robin says, as if he’s the most intimidating yet still encouragingly supportive fairy godparent *ever.*

He presses the condom into her hand, staring at her meaningfully as he closes her fingers around it while never breaking eye contact.

*Yeah, definitely never gonna risk having unprotected sex again. Lesson learned, holy shit.*

And then he’s just *gone.*

“What the fuck.” Steph stares at the broken screen and open window for a while, considering the evening’s events.

Well, she’s pretty sure she’s single now. And after Dean’s pathetic performance tonight, both as an attempted lover and least effective protector *ever,* she’s not regretting that even a little bit. *Seriously, that jackoff just hid behind me when shit went down. What a douche canoe. I can’t believe I almost lost my virginity to that loser.*

And apparently Gotham’s protectors *really* care about Gotham’s citizens, albeit to a sort of weirdly invasive degree. That’s going to make her plans easier to put into action, now that her deadbeat criminal dad’s back in business… She smiles, finally picking her clothes up off the ground and eying the open window, shivering at the cool breeze. *Yeah, I’ll be sleeping on the couch until we can afford to get that screen repaired. Guess Red Robin’s kind of an asshole too.*
…But the next morning, when she goes to look, the window is closed and the screen is intact. She spins, mouth dropping open in shock. Did it even happen?

Her gaze catches on the bedspread, a beautiful and expensive-looking comforter covered in a design of flowers delicately picked in shades of purple and most decidedly not the cheap, ratty blanket soaked in fear-urine last seen wrapped around Dean as he fled her room, overwhelmed by his own cowardice.

She runs her fingers over it, admiring the softness, and then she looks at her bedside table and grins. There’s the condom Red Robin gave her, but now it has a whole box full of its friends sitting beside it.

“How. Guess Red Robin really wants me to practice safe sex.” Steph laughs, rolling her eyes. “Ugh, after last night he doesn’t have to worry about me having sex at all, for a while anyway. And if I start to reconsider an end to my abstinence, these little guys will totally Batglare me into submission.”

She shakes her head, then hops on her bed to start planning the best way to counter her idiotic father’s stupid plans.

* 

Spoiler backs away slowly, getting into position to watch Batman’s arrival as he follows the clues she’s laid out so he and the police can disrupt her father’s criminal endeavors. Her heart is racing and she feels like her face is frozen in a grin.

Being out at night in costume, spoiling her idiot dad’s plans is a rush. She had no idea it would feel this good doing her best to make things right while trying to counter everything he keeps doing wrong. She takes another step back, and freezes.

There is a hard chest at her back, and she can feel someone breathing. Oh god it’s Batman I’m gonna die shock can kill right? Or maybe it’s Red Robin, my sassy fairy godfather in Kevlar.

She slowly turns around, then huffs a breath and puts her hands on her hips. Well that’s unexpected. “Robin?”

He looks to be about her age, with tousled black hair and a sharp grin. He’s only a bit taller than her and slender, but mmm, he is fit. “Spoiler. Or should I say, Steph?”

Nice voice, too. He is cute. Whoops, quit perving on the nice vigilante and start paying attention, Steph.

She twitches, unsurprised that he knows her name considering Red Robin’s little visit but feeling oddly off-balance that he knows hers and she doesn’t know his. “And what should I call you?”

“Robin’s fine for now, but Red and Jay are probably just about done bringing your dad in and they’re sending us the Batmobile. Thanks for the clues, by the way.” He smiles brightly, then leaps from the building, landing neatly in a crouch as a big black car pulls up to the curb and she squeals inside at both the athletic display and the Batmobile oh god oh god oh god.

The door opens and he climbs in, then reaches for her hand. Swallowing, she starts to step into the vehicle, then pauses. “I’m pretty sure there was a PSA about this exact situation.”

“What, Robin offering you a trip to the Batcave in the Batmobile?”

Holy shit. “Um, I meant more the getting in cars with strange boys thing,” she says faintly. “You’re
gonna take me to the Batcave?”

Robin smiles again, and her heart skips a beat. *Oh, I’m in trouble. Down, girl.* “Yep! You’re doing good work, but we’re worried about you doing this on your own.”

She inhales, ready to protest if he tells her to hang up the cape. *No one can tell me not to do this. It’s my life, and my father’s debt to repay.*

He disarms her without even trying. “…So we’re gonna offer you training, equipment, and backup. If you take us up on it, you’ll be part of our team, sharing out secret identities and working together.” He smiles again, a slow, sweet smile that lights up his ridiculously attractive face in ways that should be illegal. He’s still reaching his hand out for her. “You in?”

Wow.

Like that’s even a choice.

Spoiler takes his hand, and steps into the Batmobile, heart doing a giddy dance in her chest. “Hell yeah, Birdboy.”

*

*Other Tim:* I did the thing

*Red:* Oh, you redid Redbird as a submersible? Cool, how’d you work out the pressure related buckling at depth issue?

*Other Tim:* No the other thing

*Red:* OMG. Brb

*Red:* Ok I got Steph, tell us what happened!

*Other Tim:* Dean pissed himself in terror, cowered behind Stephie, then ran away like a little bitch

*Other Tim:* Stephie looked like she couldn't decide if she wanted to punch him in the nads, or me

*Other Tim:* She clearly thought I was just casually perving on them, y'know, like you do

*Red:* Steph's laughing so hard she peed a little

*Red:* Ow fuck she punched me for telling you that

*Other Tim:* I know your pain. Steph hits like a truck

*Red:* Truth. And then there’s the crippling emotional pain on top of that when she laughs at you for crying

*Other Tim:* Ha ha ouch. In other news Timmy met Stephie, cue mutual raging crush

*Red:* This time I'm the one who peed a little

*Other Tim:* You are a goddamn tragedy
Red: Steph says thanks for keeping Stephie from getting knocked up, and don't let our horndog little bro undo all your hard work

Red: I say for the love of fuck don't interfere, they can't possibly screw that relationship up worse than we did

Other Tim: No worries, Dick's shitty matchmaking skills are on it. Their relationship will get screwed up in its own unique and beautiful way (btw what are we calling their ship? Stimmy?)

Red: …Let me know how that goes (hell no that name sucks. Spoilbin ftw!)

Other Tim: Of course! Tyl Jay's here

Red: Texting you was way funnier when your autocorrect kept changing Jay to Jesus

Other Tim: Yeah because you set it up that way asshole

Red: That's what made it funny. Also you telling me about how you 'made Jesus come in his pants', that was hilarious

Other Tim: This is Jesus. Jesus says shut the fuck up, Prettyboy's about to get lucky.

Other Tim: Oh fuck, you guys really do tell each other everything wtf. That was ONE time, damn it! Prettyboy came in his pants too, bet he didn’t tell you THAT

Other Tim: Hey, and tell Old Man Jason he was fuckin right about the back of the thigh and the inside of the wrists but I need him to explain the other thing in more detail

Other Tim: Even with how flexible we all are that one just seems fuckin anatomically improbably, and not very pleasurable because Tim's spine would be snapped in half and I'd have to break both my own legs to even get in that position. You two are freaks if you do that one on the regular. Not that I'm judging or anything cause otherwise it sounds fuckin’ hot

Red: This is Steph now my Tim's a blushing mess curled up on the floor whimpering

Other Tim: Yeah so's mine, it's cute as fuck

Red: They're adorable. Oh, did I mention the ear thing?

Other Tim: No is that fucker holding out on me, what ear thing?

Red: gtg Tim grabbing for phone will text you deets next time I steal this phone ;)

* 

Steph alights on the rooftop, lungs aching as she catches her breath and watches the police process the drug dealers and attempted rapists she left zip tied at the scene. She grins wide and happy despite the aches and bruises, knowing these assholes won’t be hurting anyone else for a long time.

I can do good, she thinks, feeling the giddy excitement welling up in her chest at the knowledge she can change the world for the better, doesn’t have to be defined by the limitations of her childhood or her moronic, criminal father.

Which… hmm. Kinda hard to not let myself be defined by him when I literally named my vigilante
“Damn,” she whispers ruefully, still half smiling and riding the adrenalin rush of taking down four men twice her size. “Shoulda thought that one through a little better.”

A mechanized voice speaks directly into her comm, startling her. “Spoiler? Report.”

*Oh snap, that’s— “Oracle?”*

*Oracle is talking to me she’s the most amazingly kick-ass vigilante ever she was Batgirl oh god oh god oh god, okay, you got this Steph, just don’t say something dumb and ruin it.*

“You sounded like you were in trouble just now and you’re out of range of my cams. Report?”

Hot damn, Oracle’s got her back. That’s amazingly validating and way intimidating. “Oh no, I’m fine. I was just… thinking out loud.”

“I’ve got a minute, if you want to talk.” *Oh god oh god oh god, damn it, self, do not blurt out anything embarrassing. Be cool.*

“It’s really nothing. Just, I realized with the name I gave myself I’m never gonna be able to completely separate myself from my dad, you know? And I really want to. Like, the fact that I am forced to share DNA with that waste of breath is deeply concerning to me.”

Silence for a few moments, long enough for Steph to start fidgeting. *Stupid, she didn’t mean it, shouldn’t have dumped all that on her.*

Then, “Come by the Clocktower. I have something I want to show you.”

* Babs hides a smile, enjoying Spoiler’s dumbfounded reaction to the uniform displayed in front of them. The younger girl is staring at it with huge eyes, hopeful but not quite believing the implied offer. With her background, Babs isn’t surprised by the suspicion. It’ll take a while to earn this one’s trust.

But it’ll be worth it if this keeps the driven, smart, mouthy girl in front of her from falling, hurting, undergoing torture, and *breaking*. From having to remake herself from the pieces afterwards. Like Barbara did. She sees too much of herself in this girl already to leave it up to chance, or the other Bats, to protect her.

Stephanie Brown is referenced in a decent chunk of Babs’ file on the legacy drive, and not much of it is positive. In another life, the two of them clashed and lashed out at each other again and again, too similar to make nice and work together until the younger girl almost losing her life acted as a wake-up call of sorts to that Babs. They worked well as a team, eventually. Babs is hoping to learn from their counterparts’ mistakes and get there way quicker this time around.

The girl in front of her reminds her *so much* of her younger self. That would probably hurt a lot more if she weren’t in such a good place now. It makes this, handing over *Batgirl* and finally letting go of the last hoarded piece of her old self, sting a little less.

*Also, she ruefully acknowledges, it’s probably a hell of a lot easier to pass down the suit willingly rather than have her take it without asking. I can see how a version of me might be a royal bitch for a while about that.*
But Batgirl is yours!” Spoiler takes a step back, frowning.

Babs rolls forward. “It was mine. And I remade myself, and now I’m Oracle. I had to find another path and define my own future. I sure as hell don’t need the old one anymore, and I want to give it to you. Think of it as a second chance.” She smiles, huffing a little laugh. “It carries a bit of a legacy too, but it’s not a bad one. And you can rewrite it with your own story now, if you want it.”

Spoiler stares at her for a long moment, then pushes back her hood and pulls down her mask, wavy blonde hair spilling over her shoulders. Her blue eyes are swimming with tears and Babs starts to reach for her, then realizes the girl is grinning, laughter bubbling up as she presses a hand to her mouth.

Babs stifles a smile again as she barely manages to make out Stephanie muttering under her breath, “Don’t say something dumb and ruin this, Brown.”

This is going to be so much fun. “Right, so that suit won’t fit, but I may have one in your size hanging around…” She presses the button to open the cabinet where Stephanie’s new costume is stored, then breaks into laughter at the stunned surprise on the other girl’s face. “So yes, I may have been planning to offer you this for a while. You’ve been on my radar. I was just waiting until you expressed interest in a change.”

“Wow.” Stephanie swipes the tears from her eyes, still smiling. “So… just so I have this straight, is this a hand-off, or are you offering to train me too?”

Babs’ mouth drops open in surprise. Whoops, guess I didn’t make that clear. “Steph, I’m offering to mentor you, and then work together. I’m planning to collect a team of vigilantes working as a group on our own and with the Bats; I’ve already got my eye on a few. I’ll introduce you to Cass later; her code name is Blackbat and she’s just about ready to start flying. You both have similar daddy issues in a way, actually. I think you two are going to be good for each other.”

“Oh, hell yes,” Steph grins. Both of them pause as Red Robin sends out an all-points call for backup to the Docks.

Barbara grins back, lifting a brow. “Sounds like you’re up, Batgirl. Suit up, and go kick some ass. I’ll be in your ear.”

“Like the angel on my shoulder?”

“…I can’t make any promises about being angelic all the time.”

Steph is laughing as she pulls on the new suit. “Sounds like we’ll get along great, then!”

Babs chuckles as she rolls over to her computer bank and pulls up feeds to check out the situation and figure out the best way to start field training her newest girl. This looks like the beginning of a beautiful partnership.

She watches the feed from Steph’s suit cam and directs her to the action where Jayhawk and Red Robin are back to back facing down way too many goons. Batman’s dropping in to assist the pair and four big thugs are closing in on Robin, so that’s where Babs sends Steph. “Let’s show those boys how it’s done, Batgirl. Give ‘em hell!”

*  

Cass is amazing. Steph wants to be her when she grows up. Or Babs. Really, they’re both so awesome it’s a difficult choice. She’s panting from the punishing workout sparring with Cass and
Babs just gave her, and damn but fighting a woman in a wheelchair is a way more challenging than anyone would believe. As Barbara likes to tell her, letting people underestimate you and learning to use it to your advantage is a powerful weapon for people like them.

Of course, Steph will never be able to shut up long enough to be Cass, so she should probably aim for Babs-levels of awesome.

“Why… here?” Her voice is quiet, but Babs and Steph both turn to face Cass where she’s perched in the upper reaches of the Clocktower watching them.

Steph tilts her head. “What, you mean why am I learning with you guys instead of just with the boys?”

Cass nods.

“Well, Babs offered. And yeah, the others have been training me too but I’m not going to say no to more training. Also, Batgirl. C’mon. Plus, Bats has a lot of little birds to train right now and there isn’t really that much extra attention to go around.” She smiles, chuckling. “And finally, you may not have noticed this but that Cave’s a real sausagefest.”

Cass looks confused as Babs snorts a laugh. “Right? It always smells like feet in there.”

Steph nods emphatically. “And worse!”

Babs is laughing outright now. “Yep, now the little ones are hitting puberty it's all awkward boners and spunk in the showers.” Cass raises an eyebrow slowly, tilting her head questioningly.

“Oh my god!” Steph is simultaneously delighted and appalled. Mostly delighted.

“Oh, sorry, you hadn't noticed that yet, had you. Once you start seeing it you’ll realize it's everywhere.”

“Ew! That's disgusting! And surprisingly unsanitary for a place with an actual butler. These rich people oh my god.”

“How is that surprising? Four boys became men in that Cave, of course you wouldn't want to shine a blacklight down there. As for Alfred, I guess that’s where he drew his line in the sand. Good on him, I say.”

“Damn.” Ugh, now Steph can't stop thinking about shining a blacklight in the Cave and watching every surface light up like a pornographic Christmas tree. This is going to be so embarrassing if she can’t get it out of her head before next time she sees Robin. Hate.

“I know.”

“Well, I for one am going to try like hell to forget this entire conversation.” Maybe I can manage, if I distract myself well enough with training and patrol… and don’t think about Robin in the shower oh god he’s so hot...

“Good luck with that! I have an eidetic memory.” Babs smirks slowly.

Steph is missing something. “Wait, how is that my problem?”

“Oh, I'm planning to keep bringing this up every so often when you least expect it. If I’m not allowed to forget, neither can you.”
“You're terrifying. Also, you’re my hero.”

Cass laughs, bright and happy. “Team,” she says, and they smile back. Together, they are gonna kick so much ass.

* 

“I need your help!” The desperation in Timmy’s voice jolts through Tim like an electric shock and he’s on his feet in seconds, tugging his little brother defensively behind him and ready to fight to protect him.

“Who,” he growls, ready to destroy any threat that put that terrible fear on his baby brother’s face.

“Oh god, no, why are you like this? Calm down,” Timmy plops down on the couch and drags a cushion onto his lap, curling up around it. “It’s not a villain. Just Dick.”

Tim breathes out, releasing plans and defensive strategies and stepping back from battle mode into his role as sympathetic big brother. “Fair warning, I triggered my emergency alert for you just now. I already cancelled it, but Jay’s still probably gonna show up any second.”

Even as he speaks, Jayhawk drops lightly through the window, chuckling as he puts away his numerous weapons and peels off his mask. “Damn, Timmy, overdramatic much? The fuck did Dickiebird do, anyway?”

Timmy lifts his woebegone face, staring at both of them with big, tear-filled eyes. “He figured out I have a crush on Steph, and he’s trying to help! He’s going to ruin everything!” He wails, collapsing with an arm across his face.

Jason and Tim stare at each other. They’ve been expecting this. “That is serious,” Tim says. “But I think I know what to do.” He looks at Jason meaningfully.

Jay steps up. “Yeah, little buddy. We’ll figure somethin’ out.” He huffs a laugh. “So, you and Steph, huh? Fuck, you two are gonna be goddamn adorable together.”

“Um, I hope so. Only… it’s complicated, you know? I don’t want to do anything about it until she knows about the legacy drive and everything. It… wouldn’t feel right, to get involved without being completely honest with her.”

Tim swallows, pain and pride lancing through his chest. If only I had been as smart as Timmy at his age, me and my Steph probably wouldn’t have been such a shit show. He looks at his Jay, and smiles. Well, I learned my lesson about trust in relationships. I’ll never keep something big from Jay, that’s for damn sure. And I trust him to do the same for me.

“That’s great, Timmy. We’re planning to let her in on the legacy drive really soon, once she’s had a little more time to absorb all the recent changes in her life. We just didn’t want to overwhelm her, especially considering she’s only fifteen and there’s a lot of negative information on the drive. The other Steph… went through so much.” He frowns sadly.

“I know.” Timmy smiles softly. “I think it’ll be okay. Just… Dick’s going to make it so much more awkward than it has to be, if he starts up with his pranks. Can you…?” And he turns his giant, liquid, helpless woodland creature eyes on Tim and Jason.

“We’ve got your back, Timmy.” Tim smiles. He’s immune to the eyes, of course.

“It’s okay, kiddo. We got this.” Jason grins reassuringly. God he’s hot.
It suddenly strikes Tim this is the first time he’s seen Jason all day, because their class schedules today were completely off from each other and they had one of their rare separate patrols to finish up simultaneous stake outs on opposite ends of the city.

*Well that just won’t stand. Sorry Timmy, not forgetting your problem here but I need some alone time with my boyfriend. You’ll understand when you’re older.*

Timmy raises his arm away from his eyes, blinking at them. “Really?” His voice is tremulous with hope.

Tim grins, knowing Timmy will recognize the evil glint in his eyes and not caring. “Why, of course, Son. You know you can always count on Daddy to look out for you.”

Timmy recoils in horror. “Oh my god what—”

“Daddy understands. You’re growing up, starting to like girls, getting hair in strange places—”

“What, no, I trusted you, why are you all so terrible to me—”

“No need to be embarrassed, Son. Daddy will do what needs to be done to keep that mean Dick from teasing you.”

“Why are you calling yourself *Daddy*, you’re like five years older than me, *is this a sex thing?* Oh my god this is totally a sex thing isn’t it, *gross Tim*—”

Jason’s laughing, shoulders shaking as he watches the brothers bicker. Tim looks up at him, a wicked gleam in his eye as he continues. “Listen to Daddy, Timmy. You run along now, Mommy and I need to talk—”

Timmy blanches, expression wavering between revulsion and curiosity. “Are you talking about *Jason?* Is Jason *Mommy* in this twisted fantasy of yours?”

Jason grins, deep rich voice rumbling as he replies, “You heard your Daddy, Timmy. Mommy says go outside and play. Daddy and I need some *grown-up* time.”

“Oh, *Mommy*—” Tim’s trying so hard not to laugh at the *look* on Timmy’s face.

Timmy stumbles to his feet and flees the room with a choked scream. Tim meets Jason’s eyes, biting his lip, and they barely manage to wait for the sound of the door slamming closed before breaking into uproarious laughter.

“What the actual *fuck,*” Jason gasps, collapsing onto the couch and dragging Tim after him, “was that?”

Tim, laughing helplessly, is barely able to reply. “I couldn’t help myself, Jay. He’s just so much fun to mess with!” He bites his lip, still grinning. “Thanks for playing along.”

“Always, gorgeous.” Jason shakes his head, biting back a smile. “Jesus fuck though, Prettyboy, sometimes you’re as bad as Dickie, teasin’ that kid.”

Tim gasps. “Take that back! *No one* is as bad as Dick!”

Jason grins, letting his eyes sweep all the way down his boyfriend’s lithe form, then back up as heat kindles in his eyes. “Or were you really just tryin’ to get us some *alone* time?”

Smiling, Tim pulls Jason into a kiss and leans back, moaning softly as Jason follows him down.
“Damn, you figured out my nefarious plan!” He kisses down Jason’s throat, then murmurs, “So what are you going to do about it?”

Jason growls, and Tim throws his head back as his boyfriend shows him exactly what he’s going to do to him. Several times, thoroughly, until they’re both panting, naked, satisfied, and somehow several rooms away from where they started.

“We are gonna help Timmy out with Dickhead, though, right?” Jason strokes his big hands up and down Tim’s sides.

Tim hums, ridiculously pleased with himself and enjoying his position curled up on top of Jason. “Of course we are.” He smiles, planning.

*  

“So our ship name is Redhawk? Well, that’s not too bad I guess. I’ve definitely heard worse.”

Dick perks up at the sound of Tim’s voice from the kitchen. It’s always nice to see all his brothers when he stops by the Manor, but Tim and Jay are usually at the Nest these days. He walks into the kitchen, grinning, as Jason replies.

“It’s fuckin’ weird is what it is, Prettyboy. The villains are using it. The goddamn Penguin’s takin’ bets on whether we’re a thing, and the fuckin’ thugs I beat up keep askin’ me when I’m gonna make an honest man of you.” Jason’s grumbling, but there’s a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth.

“At least they ship it?” Tim offers.

“What’s a ship?” Timmy is sitting at the counter nibbling on a cookie, watching the older boys who are making sandwiches. Mmm, Dick could go for a sandwich.

“It’s short for relationship,” Tim explains. “Shipping in this context is the public’s desire for a relationship between two people who aren’t necessarily actually involved with one another; usually celebrities, fictional characters, or in our case, vigilantes.”

Timmy blinks slowly. “So wait, Gotham’s rogue gallery actually ships you two?”

“Shows they got good taste, at least!” Jason preens.

Dick laughs, snagging a cookie. Alfred cookies, so good.

Tim continues his impromptu lecture. “For example, Batman and Nightwing have a large following who call their ship Batwing.”

Wait. What.

Jay cocks his head. “Oh, so if they knew Dickie’s secret identity, his super-secret and taboo forbidden love with Batman would be called Batdick.”

Tim nods. “Yes, or possibly Dickman. There are often multiple names for a pairing, some more… successful than others.”

Dick makes a face, losing interest in the cookies as his appetite ebbs the longer they keep talking about this. Ew. Why. “Um, guys?” He tries. “This is… interesting… and all, but maybe a change of topic?”

“But your super-secret and forbidden love with Batman, Dickiebird! Batdick!”
A choking noise from the door has them all looking just in time to see Bruce, turning on his heel and walking away from his progeny and their collective madness.

Dick wonders with a rising sense of doom if he should have done the same. But what did I do to deserve this? He can’t remember pulling any major pranks on Tim or Jason lately to get them on the attack like this.

Oh god, they’re still talking.

“Oh that’s fun! Dick’s ship names are so much more interesting when you take into account his secret identity. By those rules we could call the Superman Nightwing ship Superdick!” Tim is grinning, eyes dancing with mirth as Timmy giggles at his brother’s words.

Jason’s laughing out loud, but manages to gasp out, “Deathstroke and Dick! Dickstroke!”

Oh god. Dick wants to escape, but he has a feeling they would all just follow him.

“Lady Shiva and Dick, Ladydick. When Babs was Batgirl, Dickgirl.”

“Starfire and Dick. Firedick, or Dickfire?”

“Um, those both sound like STD symptoms. So yes, definitely Dickfire.” Tim’s a little shit.

“Deathshot and Dick. Deathdick? No, Dickshot!”

“Ouch. Sounds painful, I like it. Ooh, Mr. Freeze. Dickfreeze!”

“Beast Boy and Dick. Beastdick!”

“We should definitely text all of these ship names to everyone we know who also knows Dick’s secret identity!”

“Fuck yeah, Prettyboy! The JLA’ll get a kick outta this shit. These are fuckin’ hilarious! Fuckin’ Dickshot and Dickstroke. Fuck yeah.”

Dick whimpers. “Why?”

Still laughing, eyes glinting rapaciously, they turn to face him. “Lay off Timmy and Steph, Dickie, yeah? They’re not ready for your matchmaking bullshit.”

Dick frowns. “But I just want to help—”

“No, Dick. Steph isn’t used to our family yet, and we don’t want to scare her off.” Tim smiles coaxingly.


And that’s all it takes. Dick nods slowly, and the others watch him warily. “I see. You… really like her, Timmy.” Timmy nods, staring at Dick uncertainly. “Well then, I have to work my matchmaking magic on you two!” Dick bounces in place, beaming, as everyone in the room groans. “I don’t care if I’m made into a laughingstock, if I can do something to help one of my little brothers be happy!”

Timmy whimpers and starts repetitively banging his head on the counter. Jason looks to Tim. “Plan B, Prettyboy?”

Tim nods. “Already implemented.”
Dick frowns. “What’s plan B?”

Tim gently catches Timmy’s head, stopping him from hitting it on the counter again. “I texted Babs, Dick. She loves Steph and Timmy, and if you try to interfere in their adorable budding romance, she’ll totally destroy you.”

Timmy looks up, blinking. “She’ll… hurt him?” He sounds doubtful.

Jason rolls his eyes. “Naw, she’ll just cut him off. A few nights on the couch and Dickie’ll be singin’ a different tune.”

Dick’s eyes widen as his cheeks heat up. “You guys knew—”

“Of course we did. You’re in a family of detectives, Dick; secrets never last long. Congratulations, by the way.”

“You guys knew—”

“Yeah, congrats, Dickhead. Barbie’s way the fuck too good for you.”

A voice rings out from some hidden speaker, making them all jump and land in defensive stances. “What have I told you about calling me that, Jaybird?”

Jason grins and rubs the back of his neck. “Sorry, Babs. Uh, congrats on datin’ Dickhead I guess. Let us know if he’s ever bein’ a moron and we’ll knock some sense into him.”

Dick can hear the smile in Babs’ voice, and it still lights him up inside to hear her this happy again. There was a time he thought he’d never have another chance to hear that bubbling laughter, see that spark of fierce joy in her beautiful eyes.

_I just want all of the others to be as happy as we are_, he thinks, eying Timmy wistfully and wondering if he can still get away with a few matchmaking schemes. _Just a little push in the right direction!_

“Don’t even _think_ about it, Boy Wonderful,” Babs warns him, laughing. “You know better than to try to get anything past _me_.”

He does. He really, _really_ does.

“Okay,” he sighs, grinning at the relief and happiness on all his little brothers’ faces. _Wait… this isn’t all of them._ “Where’s Damian?”

Timmy rolls his eyes. “He was supposed to be here, but refused to participate once he realized what this was about. He doesn’t like Steph at _all_, for some reason. I think he’s pouting in his room.”

Dick meets Tim’s and Jason’s eyes over Timmy’s head, and oh boy. Yeah, Dami’s jealous. Welp, surely this won’t come back to bite them all in the ass at a later date. Dick grins and swipes one of Jason’s sandwiches. _Mmm, pastrami._

“Hey, Dickhead—”

“Thanks, Jaybird!”

*

Steph digs her fingers into Timmy’s shoulders, trying not to blush at the low groan of pleasure he makes as she massages the tension out of his sore muscles.
Oh god he’s so hot. Wait, no, can’t make a move on him until I find out what the hell went so wrong between the other us. Seriously, what the hell happened there. Don’t want to repeat their mistakes and fuck things up with Timmy and lose a good friend in the process. Quick, Steph, distract! Ask him something random!

“Now that I know about all that other universe stuff from reading the Tim Dump, everything makes so much more sense. Especially you and Tim; god, I can’t believe everyone bought all that crap about you two being twins.” Perfect. A harmless, mild, neutral topic in no way related to sex. Go Steph!

“So if you and Tim are basically the same person, how come you don’t have a crush on Jason? Or do you?” Damn it! Bad Steph!

Timmy jerks under her hands, and she sees the smooth, pale, gorgeous skin on his back start to turn red as his blush creeps down. It makes it midway down his back and she wonders if it goes further under other circumstances… Oh god oh god not now. You’ve just asked him if he ever had the hots for the guy who is basically his brother-in-law, who is also probably listening right now...

Steph glances around the Cave to check, and sure enough, Jason is standing nearby with Tim and watching them bemusedly, a crooked grin on his face. He’s obviously laughing at her, the asshole.

Timmy clears his throat. “Um…”

Oh god he’s gonna confess his gigantic crush on his almost brother-in-law, and then he and Tim will fight to the death for Jason’s hand, and Timmy will die because he’s younger and less trained, and it’ll all be my fault-

“Actually, nope, I never had a crush on Jason.” Timmy chuckles, shaking his head in embarrassment. “By the time I was old enough for that kind of thing, he had already completely destroyed any chance I might ever have had to see him that way.”

Steph really doesn’t want to know, but… “How?”

Timmy shudders. “Back when I was twelve, he used to trap me under blankets, pass gas, and then laugh himself sick as I coughed, gagged, and begged for mercy while struggling to escape his noxious fumes.”

And that. Wow. Steph snorts, then claps a hand over her mouth, appalled but still giggling. “Oh my god,” she gasps, and Timmy’s shoulders start shaking as he laughs too.

“Right? So gross, I don’t know how Tim puts up with it. I have the worst family.”

Steph resumes the massage, still smiling. She doubts Tim has to put up with that; Jason probably treats his boyfriend very differently from his little brother.

Timmy’s family is pretty crazy, but so far they seem pretty damn awesome, too.

His head tips forward and he sighs, relaxing under her hands. She wants to lean forward and press a soft kiss to the back of his neck, wrap her arms around him and just hold him close.

Nope. Steph sternly reminds herself she’s here to learn, not perv on the hot coworker. She can control herself.

Really.
She looks at Timmy again, the long lean line of his back and firm muscles rippling under smooth, pale skin. She avoids looking at Tim, but now she knows that’s how Timmy will grow up to look. Timmy’s definitely going to be exactly as gorgeous as his terrifyingly beautiful big brother-slash-alternate universe twin. And that’s a mind trip, in and of itself.

Timmy’s cute now and he’s gonna be hot like the sun, with genius-level smarts, and he’s also probably the kindest, sweetest person she’s ever met. And on top of all that, he makes her laugh. It’s like he’s pushing all her buttons without even meaning to.

Yeah, she’s boned. Well, she will be. She smirks at the thought, then shakes her head.

Whatever, she’s still doing better than the other Steph was by this point, thanks to timely intervention from Red Robin and the other Bats. Apparently even the grant that helped her mother get her current job and helped her fight her way back from depression was thanks to Bruce Wayne. The Bats have been there for Steph for a lot longer than she knew.

Yay for not being a teen pregnancy statistic, her mind cheers, and she grins. There’s always a bright side.

* 

Tim and Jason are listening to Timmy and Steph while sorting and restocking med kits for distribution to the Bats’ safe houses. Tim chuckles at Timmy’s story about the blanket of doom and then he eyes Jason for a minute, smiling. “You did that on purpose, didn’t you?”

Jason grins. “Fuck yeah, after you told me about your little puppy crush I had to kill that shit before it could take hold with Timmy.”

“Where’d you get the idea to do it like that?”

“Fucking’ Dickhead. It's how he murdered the hell outta my crush on him, back in the day. Don't think he even realized how I felt, he's just naturally an asshole and thought it’d be good brotherly bonding to fart under a blanket and use it to torture me. Fuckin’ Dickhead.” Tim's snickering.

“What's so funny, Prettyboy?”

“It's just… that's exactly how Dick annihilated my nascent crush on him too, in the other universe. After a guy forces you to breathe his horrible gaseous emissions for five minutes straight, it's literally impossible to see him as a sexual being, no matter how hot he is.”

And I am fully aware subjectively speaking that Dick is a beautiful man. Just, no. Do not want. No thanks. Ugh, gross.

“I think watching him practically unhinge his jaw to eat his fuckin’ weight in Crocky Crunch plays a part too. Jesus Christ.” Jason shudders.

Tim nods, making a face. “Point. Actually, I posit the Crocky Crunch may be directly responsible for the otherworldly horror of that stench.” He grimaces in reluctant remembrance. “Anyway, good job doing your part to traumatize my little brother into never developing awkward feelings for my boyfriend. Well done, you.”

“You’re welcome, Prettyboy. Anything for the family.” Jason drops a kiss on Tim’s cheek, then catches his lips. After a sweet kiss, he grins into Tim’s mouth. “And it was really fuckin’ funny when he started screamin’ then gagged ‘cause screaming just made it so much worse.” Jason starts laughing, and Tim rolls his eyes, catches Timmy looking curiously over at them and finds himself cracking up too.
Timmy watches Jason and Tim clinging to each other as they nearly collapse with laughter, then shakes his head and looks back to Steph. She’s paused her massage, which is great because it gives Timmy a chance to try to get his rebellious body under control before having to stand up and embarrass himself with his reaction to her touch.

She’s so fun, and brave, and beautiful, and she smells like cinnamon and vanilla. He wants her to never stop touching him and it’s so awesome that she finally knows about the other universe and seems okay with everything.

Maybe now he has a chance. He smiles, then frowns slightly as a distressing thought occurs to him. He may not have a crush on Jason, for obvious reasons, but he’s not the only one here whose other self dated someone else…

“Steph, in the other universe that Steph and Tim were together for a while. Have you ever…” He squirms, only now realizing how awkward this question is. “Tim. Do you…” He flounders, but mercifully, Steph obviously understands where he’s going with the question because she blanches.

“Oh hell no, never. Uh-uh. Just, no. Holy shit, the first time I met Tim he was in Red Robin and he just burst into my room like a horror movie slasher during the sex scene where the virgin’s giving it up so you know she’s about to die. He thundered something about safe sex in a voice I still hear in my nightmares. Timmy, he made my ex wet himself in terror. That is not a first impression you can come back from.” She shakes her head vigorously.

Timmy blinks at her quietly, absorbing all that. Yes! The girl I’m crushing on is not in love with my older brother, definitely good to know. “Okay.”

For some reason, Jason and Tim are laughing even harder, now actually collapsed on the floor in a tangled mess of twitching limbs.

God, they’re both such dorks.

Timmy smiles. He loves those weirdos so damn much.

* 

Tim isn’t surprised when Steph approaches him in the Cave while the others are busy, hesitant and a little quieter than usual. She’s one of them and she has a right to know the facts. Sharing the legacy drive with her seemed like the best plan, although Tim cringes imagining what she must think of her alternate history.

Well, looks like he’s about to find out.

Steph shifts her weight restlessly, then sighs. “I just… it’s weird, you know?” At Tim’s questioning hum, she rolls her eyes. “That whole other life. Being Robin, fucking up, having a baby at fifteen and putting her up for adoption.”

Tim nods sympathetically. “I’m sorry we didn’t tell you everything earlier. We wanted you to find your feet first before overwhelming you with all the crazy.”

She huffs a laugh. “At least now all your weird fairy godfather crap makes sense. Thanks for looking out for me.”

“You are absolutely welcome.”
Now Steph’s blushing, and Tim has an uncomfortable feeling he knows what’s coming. “Um… so I just have to ask. Don’t answer if it’s too personal, I just… Why didn’t you and your Steph work out?”

Tim winces. Yep, straight to the hardest question.

He looks into her blue eyes, so young, and while he sees echoes of his Steph in this one, she isn’t. This child before him has not survived the challenges, battles, and defeats that shaped his Steph. Hasn’t carried the burdens, borne the scars. Will never have the same relationship with Timmy that he and his Steph shared, where they were broken again and again by others and sometimes by each other, and never healed quite right.

Tim takes a long, slow breath in. “It’s hard to point to a single moment or factor and say that’s the reason. But… we were so young, and we weren’t honest with each other about some really important things, like my secret identity when I was Robin, or when she let me believe she was dead. We hurt each other so badly, and even though we managed to forgive and be friends again eventually, we had broken something precious between us that couldn’t be fixed. So, best friends and nothing more, not again.”

Steph looks pensive, worry in her big blue eyes as she flicks them across the Cave to where Jason and Dick are now taking turns sparring with Damian and Timmy. She swallows, and when she meets his eyes again that determination and grit is all his Steph. “I’m not going to make her mistakes.”

Tim smiles. “I know.” He laughs. “You get to make your own.”

She rolls her eyes, relaxing a bit. “Thanks.” She smirks. “Is it weird that I kind of expect Red Robin to come bursting into the room, Kool-Aid man-style, every time I’m about to do something stupid now? It’s like you’ve become my conscience or something.”

“Oh yeah!” He grins, laughing. “Naw, I’m just your honorary big brother.”

“Big Brother is watching?”

“Always.”

Steph grins. “Now that I’ve read the stuff on the Tim Dump, I get how applicable that really is. Timmy never told me what a little stalker he was, the nerd.”

Tim dump? What the hell, does she mean the legacy drive? Tim blinks in confusion.

“The what?”

“It’s short for Tim data dump.” Steph is still smiling, like she hasn’t coined a horrible, horrible phrase that must never be used again in reference to Tim’s precious legacy drive. “I’ve learned so much from the Tim Dump,” she continues happily.

“Please don’t call it that,” Tim corrects automatically.

Steph growls.

Tim looks at Bruce, going over case files nearby, for help. Bruce shrugs minutely. “There was a vote,” he deadpans. “The younger team members felt it was unfair most of the items in the Cave were named before their time.”
“But Tim Dump sounds so much worse than legacy drive-”

Steph refuses to back down. “You will pry the Tim Dump out of my cold dead hands.”

Dick’s laughing voice echoes from across the Cave. “Phrasing!”

Tim groans as Steph bounds over to join the scuffles on the mats, bringing Timmy down so easily Tim is certain the younger boy is allowing it.

Ugh, Tim Dump just sounds bad in any context. Why, Steph, why.

Jason meanders over to Tim. “I lost my sparring partner, Prettyboy, and I don’t think I’m gettin’ him back any time soon. Wanna roll around on the mats some?” He grins, raising an eyebrow wickedly.

God, I love him.

Bruce twitches, but continues reviewing the files. It’s hilarious and also endearing how hard he tries to ignore their public displays of affection. He’ll never quite forgive them for escaping his slideshow. Tim has a feeling B will probably be even worse when it comes time to educate the younger kids, in recompense for their stunt. Poor Timmy and Dami. Oh well; with the slideshow of horrors, it’s every man for himself.

Tim takes Jason’s hand and allows himself to be pulled smoothly to his feet and into his boyfriend’s arms. “Sure, Jay, sounds good. I could use a nice… workout.”

Bruce flinches minutely and Tim decides to relent. He glances over at the mats… and wow, that move Timmy and Steph are doing is not regulation. His brows fly up. Any more involved and someone’s gonna have to cover Damian’s eyes.

Guess Steph decided to go for it. Well, they’re clearly very compatible.

Bruce and Jason both follow Tim’s gaze, and Jason grins while an unholy light kindles in Bruce’s eyes. Tim inhales sharply in recognition and horror. I know that look.

Oh shit. Sorry Timmy, I think you’re about to experience the pent up backlash from me and Jay escaping the slideshow of nightmares…

Tim grabs Jason’s hand and starts tugging him out of the Cave, collaring Dick on the way who automatically grabs Damian even though he clearly has no idea why they are fleeing the Cave. “What? Why—”

Jason realizes what’s going down and plants a hand on Dick’s back, shoving him up the stairs. “Dickie, look at B.”

Dick glances back over his shoulder, sucks in a gasp, and then picks a startled Damian up in his arms and starts bounding up the stairs followed closely by Tim and Jason, who are holding onto each other and laughing under their breath as they hurry.

Behind them, Timmy and Steph finally return to awareness of the world around them… but it’s far too late for them to escape. “Wha…?”

Damian tries to break Dick’s hold. “How could you, Grayson? I do not pretend to comprehend what madness has overcome you to believe there to be a threat in the Cave, but I for one am not about to leave any of our own behind! Timothy is still down there!”
“Trust us, Dami, it’s for your own good.”

“Yeah, Baby Bat. Seriously. You don’t fuckin’ wanna know.”

Bruce’s stern voice echoes up the stairs as the clock swings closed. “I see you two are considering becoming sexually active with each other. Please make use of these prophylactics, and pay careful attention to the following slideshow. There will be a quiz afterward. Remember, this is for your own good.”

Timmy and Steph’s squeals of horror and betrayal are the last thing they hear before the Cave slams into lockdown. Tim meets Jason’s eyes, and they share a moment of silence for their fallen brethren before their faces twitch into grins and then laughter.

Dick joins in and Damian continues to demand an explanation, threatening to call Kon to come break into the Cave and save Timmy from whatever nameless horror is being perpetrated upon him.

Tim’s eyes widen and Jason’s laughter choking off. “No need to call Kon, Dami; I swear Timmy’s fine. We just didn’t want to be in there while B gives him the sex talk.”

 Damian’s eyes narrow suspiciously. “Father is merely informing Timothy of how children are conceived? For what purpose?”

Tim blushes, and Jason answers. “It’s ‘cause Timmy and Steph are together now, Baby Bat.”

They all wait somewhat anxiously for Damian’s reaction to the news. Timmy’s his closest brother, after all, and they’ve always been very protective of each other. Damian simply nods quietly, eyes narrowed in thought, and Dick lets out a relieved breath. Tim watches Damian a moment longer, recognizing the look he gets when he’s plotting. Maybe Tim can come up with something to distract him so he doesn’t make Timmy and Steph’s lives miserable.

“Well, who’s up for some paintball?” Dick only looks slightly disturbed by the manic grins on Tim’s and Jason’s faces at the suggestion.

Sweet. They’ve been waiting for a chance to try their new modified paintball rocket launcher.

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“What is this?” Damian demands. “If you think you will be able to buy my forgiveness of Timothy’s poor judgement in seeking companionship with a harpy by giving me some expensive trifle—” He breaks off as a little head squirms free of Todd’s jacket. “A… puppy?” His dark eyes are soft and he strokes the dark gray head gently.

The puppy licks his hand and wiggles with happiness, causing a fierce upwelling of protective emotions within Damian’s chest.

“His name is Titus,” Drake says, smiling as Todd extracts the puppy from his warm nest and hands him over to Damian who automatically cuddles him close, nuzzling his soft fur. “Your alternate’s dog in the other universe. He’s the same little guy, I checked, although we picked him up a bit earlier here so he’s younger than when Dami got him over there.”

Damian swallows, a warm feeling permeating his entire being. Still… “Do not think this alters anything!” He hisses, cradling the puppy in his arms as he spins on his heel and stalks away. He will still go through with his plans.

But, first… he has a puppy to care for.
Damian crouches in the rafters of the empty warehouse, awaiting his target. It is unlikely the target has deciphered his trail of clues, defeated the many challenges he set in place, and managed to track him to this warehouse in time, but he must remain in place for the entire allotted time just in case she has been successful.

No matter how unlikely an outcome that is.

He is so startled by her appearance not five minutes before the expiration of the deadline he set, he nearly falls from the rafters. Fortunately, he recovers with sufficient rapidity to avoid that potential embarrassment.

Batgirl, blonde hair tangled, uniform singed and ripped in multiple places and still somehow smoking slightly despite obviously being soaking wet, limps into the warehouse dragging a scuffed baseball bat along the concrete with her right hand, left clenched around something small but likely equally incapacitating. “Show yourself, you bastard!”

Well, this is unexpected indeed. Damian rapidly reviews the numerous traps, challenges, puzzles, and false leads he set, which Brown must have overcome in order to find her way here. Astonished, he double checks his findings, but arrives at the same conclusion again.

She is… acceptable. Brown has shown herself to be a worthy mate for Timothy.

He smiles, and drops down out of the rafters to land before her.

Up close she looks even worse, bleeding slightly from several rips in her uniform and covered in an unidentifiable substance which reeks with an eldritch stench. Damian takes a small, nearly unnoticeable step back and resolves to breathe shallowly for the remainder of this encounter.

She is staring at him, a slightly unhinged look of astonishment and fury in her large, wild blue eyes. “What. The. FUCK.”

“Ah, Brown, I see you have conquered the suitor’s challenges I placed for you.”

Her right eye is twitching spasmodically every three seconds. It is oddly hypnotic and Damian finds himself staring at it in fascination. “You little SHIT, I AM GOING TO WRING YOUR TINY LITTLE NECK FOR THIS!” She launches herself bodily at him, screeching like a harpy. “I thought a BAD GUY had TIMMY! Why would you DO this?!”

Damian evades easily, mostly due to her limp and physical exhaustion. He will have to administer first aid soon; it would not do for Timothy’s paramour to experience any lasting harm from this encounter now that she has proven her devotion.

She stumbles to a halt, then blinks and looks around. “Wait. I’m still totally gonna destroy you later for this, but… where’s Timmy?” She spins to face him, suddenly entirely focused, every trace of tiredness gone. Her body is poised for action, a deadly promise in her eyes. “Tell me! Is he okay?!”

Damian’s smile grows. Yes, she is a fine mate for his brother, obviously dedicated already. “Timothy is perfectly well. I needed to get him out of the way for this ruse to be believable, and so I dared him to sneak out this morning and bring me one of Ma Kent’s apple pies for my birthday. He called Kon and left without letting anyone else know.” He checks the time. “In fact, they should be returning shortly. We have just long enough to clean up, and return home in time for pie.”

She is not moving. He glowers. “Come, Brown, pull yourself together! If we do not return to the
Manor with haste, that glutton Grayson shall consume all of the pie! With help from the traitors Todd and Drake, no doubt!"

Brown is simply staring at him. Her eye has resumed its twitching.


“Answer me one thing,” she finally says, whisper-soft and oh-so-dangerous.

He nods.

“What the fuck were you thinking when you did all of this.”

Damian’s brows furrow and he looks down as he answers. “Timothy is…” He shakes his head and starts over. “Many people in Timothy’s life whom he loved, who should have cared for him, have left him.” He hunches his shoulders defensively and scowls mutinously, raising his eyes to glare at her. “I had to make certain you were not the same!”

But.

Her eye isn’t twitching anymore, and there’s a smile lurking on her lips and a softer look on her face. She leans forward, and it takes him by surprise enough she manages to catch him by the shoulder. Instead of taking advantage to attack, she pulls him into a soft hug and he goes with it, surprised. She still smells repellant, of course, from the sewers he sent her through, but this close he can detect a trace underneath of something sweet, like some kind of flower.

“Thanks for being there for him, Damian,” she whispers, and he allows her to embrace him for a moment before straightening and attempting to recover his dignity.

“Of course,” he responds, lifting his chin. “I shall always be there for any of my brothers.” He spins on his heel and stalks over to the corner where he has stashed the first aid supplies. “If we hurry there should still be some pie. And you may pet Titus.” He nods magnanimously as he confers this enormous favor.

Brown follows, still smiling that soft smile. “Sounds like a plan, Baby Bat. Oh, but if you ever do anything like this again, expect retaliation.”

He looks at her approvingly. Yes, the paramour Timothy has chosen is eminently suitable. “I would be disappointed with anything less. Now that you have proven worthy, I shall ask Mother for an artificial womb for you and Timothy, of course.”

Brown’s eyes widen and her mouth drops open, in gratitude, Damian assumes. He smiles, pleased he is able to share such a fine gift with his siblings.

*

He blinks awake, and immediately realizes something is horribly, horribly awry. The foreign heaviness of his limbs, nearly insurmountable difficulty keeping his eyes open, and unnatural drowsiness all highlight the wrongness of this awakening.

Oh, and Ra’s al fucking Ghul staring down at him, a terrifying kind of hunger in his dark eyes, yeah, that’s also a pretty big clue.

_God damn it._
Timmy lets his heavy eyelids fall closed and is pleased when he manages to suppress the whimper that tries to escape. He can feel the bindings securing him to whatever he’s lying on, and he’s uncomfortably aware of the soft brush of the blanket casually draped across him touching him everywhere, implying he has been stripped completely out of the Robin costume.

This… is not something he really expected. Not yet anyway. He knows the nature of Ra’s al Ghul’s interest in Tim in the other universe, and the Drake brothers have layers of contingencies prepared for when Ra’s in this world finally gets a clue and comes after Tim.

They didn’t expect him to come for Timmy.

Ra’s has been lying low for the past few years, recovering from Talia’s machinations and plotting. Well, now Timmy has an idea what the immortal asshole has been up to during that time. Great.

“Ah, Detective,” Ra’s purrs. “I am glad you have decided to grace me with your conscious presence.” He smiles menacingly. “Although I could do this to you while unconscious, I must confess I prefer you awake, and aware.”

Timmy feels his eyes widening slightly as Ra’s traces a long finger down his cheek. He twitches away. Gross. “What do you want, Ra’s?”

“What every man wants, in the end.” Ra’s drags his eyes the length of Timmy’s body, which only serves to remind Timmy how distressingly nude he is beneath the blanket. He flinches slightly, trying to control his sudden desperate urge to twist away from the older man’s gaze and then take a bath in sanitizer oh god why. “A legacy.”

Timmy’s brow furrows, and he blurts out. “You want an heir? And you’re planning to use me? Um, besides the obvious fact that I’m absolutely going to fight you every step of the way and my family will destroy you for this, doesn’t that completely undermine your previous position that the best heir is one directly descended from you? Also, I’m fifteen. How could I possibly have proven myself sufficiently for you to think I’m worth all this? Maybe I can convince him not to do this… even crazy can be reasoned with sometimes.

Ra’s breaks into a Faustian grin. “Ah, but that is the best part! My disinherited daughter and grandson have proven disappointing in many ways; however, they have at least provided me this one great boon. Damian requested his mother provide a means for his brother and yours to reproduce together. I have liberated a copy of her research and now have the technology in hand to combine the genetic material of two males for reproductive purposes.”

He raises his brows. “And as for proving yourself, the information I have gathered over the past few years on your antecedents, and those of your interesting brother, has been most… enlightening. I can see why my counterpart in your brother’s original universe is so fascinated. But your elder brother has been quite well-guarded, and both he and his lover are sufficiently formidable opponents to make his capture… problematic. Imagine, if you will, my surprise and delight when you ventured out in a cape. All the same potential, none of the attendant difficulties. Younger, as well, and thus far more likely to… bend… to my whim, with time and… training. Perfect.”

The possibilities whirling in Timmy’s mind consolidate into one, and he gasps slightly as he fully realizes exactly what Ra’s is planning to do with him.

Oh shit.

Ra’s lifts an eyebrow at Timmy’s expression, clearly pleased. “Yes, I see you understand. My true heir will be of our flesh, Timothy; all our great potential, mind and body, combined into one.” Ra’s
licks his lips as he runs his hand down Timmy’s side through the blanket, squeezing softly. “I assume you will not contribute willingly?”

Timmy shakes his head, mute with horror and revulsion. **Oh god if he touches me I’m gonna puke. Maybe if I time it right I can get it on him. Hmm, possibly that’ll delay this whole shitstorm until someone gets off their ass to come rescue me…** He begins calculating the best possible moment and angle to vomit all over Ra’s. Ideally, during a kiss. **Gross.**

Ra’s smiles, greedily devouring Timmy’s shrouded form with his gaze. “**Good,**” he breathes. **“Now, admittedly I merely need to cause you to ejaculate to obtain what I need.”** He shudders slightly, breathing a little heavier now. **“The rest of this is simply for my **enjoyment.”**

**And ew, really?**

**Oh god he’s actually planning to—**

“I am pleased you are the one,” Ra’s murmurs as his head dips down towards… Tim squeezes his eyes closed but can’t do anything to shut out the other man’s voice. “Your brother is battle-marked, but you. Your skin is so soft, unscarred. **Untouched.**”

He feels breath on himself, and this time he can’t quite hold back the whimper. **No no no—**

Timmy’s mind skips and stutters in denial, no way to run, to fight, nothing he can do and Ra’s is about to—

**I wanted my first time to mean something. I wanted it to be with someone who matters to me. Steph…**

He feels the blanket beginning to slide across his skin as Ra’s slowly draws it aside. Just as he’s certain he’s about to be touched in a way he is very not okay with, an extremely welcome crashing noise fills his ears, along with the sound of Ra’s cursing.

Timmy opens his eyes, and his mouth drops open in shock.

Kon is standing over him in his red and black super-bat shirt **glaring** at Ra’s, fists clenched and with an expression of protective fury Timmy’s never seen on his impetuous friend. There’s a gaping hole in the room through which Timmy can see a series of blown out walls all the way out to daylight at what must be the edge of whatever compound Ra’s is using to hold him captive.

Damian, clinging to Kon’s shoulders, raises his dual katana with a cry of rage and **launches** himself viciously at the stunned immortal, impaling him through both shoulders and riding him down to the ground where he drives the katanas straight into the floor, snarling viciously.

“What is the meaning of this intrusion?” Ra’s snarls, flinging Damian off and attempting to get up. **“You shall pay—”**

Superman appears a moment later, both Red Robin and Jayhawk rolling smoothly to their feet as he drops them off and disappears again. They quickly split up, Jayhawk moving swiftly to assist Damian in securing the supervillain and Tim working on freeing Timmy.

“Why is he tied to a fuckin’ bed?” Jayhawk growls furiously, driving his gauntleted fist into the immortal villain’s face before he has a chance to answer. **“You sick fuck—”**

“Hey Rob, we’ve got your back,” Kon whispers as he breaks the cuffs, trying for a reassuring smile but unable to hide the anger and concern in his blue eyes. In the background, the continued sounds
of Jayhawk and Damian beating Ra’s into the ground are interspersed with the immortal’s sputtered threats.

Red Robin drops to his knees, hands hovering over Timmy’s face. “Timmy—” He whispers. “Are you…?”

Timmy manages a shaky grin. “Had to wait for the dramatic entrance, didn’t you?”

“I—shit, Timmy, I’m sorry. He hasn’t had you long, but he should never have had you at all. The minute we realized you were gone, we were looking for you. B even called in Clark to help, you know how much he hates doing that.”

Timmy laughs. “Yeah? He must have been worried. But what the heck is Dami doing here? Did someone drop the vigilante age to ten when I wasn’t looking?”

Damian sniffs, trampling over the unconscious form of his grandfather to approach and throw himself at Timmy, latching onto him like a limpet. “Kon used his superhearing to listen in on what the others were doing for the search, and then focused on your heartbeat and carried me to you.” He swallows, eyes bright and furious. “Kon would not tell me what he overheard occurring at your location, but it was obviously of utmost urgency to rescue you immediately and not waste a moment waiting for the others.”

Red Robin shrugs. “Clark couldn’t find you on his own, but he could sure as hell follow Kon so it all worked out.” His hands lift and hover over Timmy’s shoulder. “May I hold you?” Red Robin sounds so gentle and understanding. Timmy nods, and his big brother carefully gathers him in his arms.

Kon taps his ear, waves, and then takes off again as Superman lands quietly in the background, this time dropping off Batman and Batgirl. Batman immediately moves to confirm Ra’s is unconscious and secure, and suddenly Batgirl is right there with Timmy.

“Timmy,” Steph says hoarsely, reaching for him with tears welling up in her eyes. “I am going to kill that shrinkled old sack of scrotums for even daring to touch you, but not before I let Dami cut off his—” She chokes on a furious sob.

He sees the rage in Steph’s eyes, hears the fear and sorrow in her voice, knows what this looks like, and realizes exactly what they all clearly think already happened here. Oh fuck.

Timmy rushes to reassure her, them. “He didn’t touch me. He was going to, and he… said things. But. He didn’t touch me.” He lets out a shuddering breath, finally relaxing, and pulls Steph into the hug with him and his brothers. “I’m okay. I probably need some time to process this crap, but… I’m gonna be fine.”

He hears several exhales of profound relief the moment he tells Steph he’s really okay.

Jayhawk curses and swipes a hand over his eyes, then kicks Ra’s viciously one more time for good measure, and Batman just stands there and lets him, glaring at the prone supervillain like he’s hoping the asshole will wake up so he can have his turn beating him into the ground.

Red Robin clutches them all just a little tighter. “We’ll deal with this shitstain, and get you home, taken care of. Then it’s storytime, little bro. I’ve… had a close call before like this too.” He swallows. “Don’t know if I dealt with it in the healthiest ways, but at least we can talk about it. I’m here for you. We all are.”

“Fuck yeah,” Steph whispers, hand cupping his cheek and holding their foreheads together. “We’ve got you, Timmy.”
Kon drops in again, Nightwing tumbling out of his arms before he even lands to somersault through
the air and alight curled around the little group by the bed.

“Tiiimmmy!!!” He wails, somehow capturing all four them securely in his warm embrace. “So glad
you’re okay!” Nightwing sniffs, rubbing his face on Red Robin’s shoulder to dry his tears. Red
Robin sighs and smiles tolerantly.

Batman glances up. “Gotham?”

“Oracle has it in hand. And Blackbat decided to go to Agent A; she thought he wouldn’t want to be
alone right now.” Nightwing burrows his face into Timmy’s hair, and Batman nods.

*Of course Cass would think of Alfred. He’s probably had to sit way too many lonely vigils, waiting
for one of the family to make it home…*

Timmy just rests there, surrounded by his family and safe. “Thanks for coming to my rescue,” he
manages with a small smile.

“Always.” Red Robin promises.

“Thanks for hanging on until we got here,” Steph gives a small grin.

“Cease your maundering, Brown, he would have been fine for at least another five minutes.
Timothy, I assume you intended to expel vomit upon Grandfather should he have proceeded in his
attentions? I recognized the movements you were making in preparation. Knowing him, he would
have insisted upon cleaning up prior to continuing, which would have provided us all the time we
needed to save you.” Damian sounds dismissive, but he’s still clinging to Timmy like a baby koala so
the others just roll their eyes over his head and smile.

“Were you really going to do that?” Steph looks bemused but approving.

“Oh yeah, always use all weapons at your disposal,” Timmy nods.

“It’s like the first thing Mother taught us as children,” Red Robin agrees.

“Kon-air, ready when you are!” Kon grins as the others groan.

“Oh my god Kon we told you to stop saying that, we’re gonna make you
watch the movie
again if
you don’t quit it—” * Seriously, Kon. Why.*

“What movie?” Superman tilts his head inquisitively, and Timmy has a sudden doomed feeling as his
older brothers grin at each other over his head.

“Bad movie night, fuck yeah!” Jayhawk cheers, and Steph whoops as Red Robin snickers and
Damian complains. Batman stands stoically, but his silence feels approving. Timmy shakes his head,
nestling a little deeper into his pile of human blankets, and let himself grin, shaking a bit in reaction to
what *almost happened.*

But *almost* doesn’t matter now, surrounded by his family and friends and *safe.* He presses a kiss to
Steph’s temple and she looks up at him, smiling her joy at him being okay. He smiles back.

*It’s gonna be fine.*

* *

Talia’s head jerks up, instantly alert when a soft footfall disturbs her gloating over the unconscious,
beaten form of her despicable father. It has been a long three years, and any care she ever felt for the
madman at her feet has been burned away by the enormity of his actions.

He has lived for many lifetimes, and spent the entire time killing, plotting yet more killing, and
growing steadily madder. He must not be allowed to continue lest eventually the entire world be
forfeit in one of his insane plans.

I will not allow any to pull this victory from my teeth now. Should anyone dare, I shall spill their
blood without regret.

It was no simple matter to steal Ra’s away from her Beloved’s custody. Not easy at all, for her
Beloved and his family were infuriated by her father’s audacity in taking one of theirs for his
depraied purposes and had him secured so tightly it was the work of some months to extract him
from his imprisonment.

Still, if Talia could do it, so too could Ra’s, given sufficient time. And after escaping, he would never
stop coming after her Beloved, her son, and the unfortunate children who have become his
obsessions. A more permanent solution is necessary, and that is something her Beloved will never
understand.

Talia’s hands are dyed crimson and have been since childhood; so much blood, over so many years.
What she spills today will be a drop in the ocean, and she shall shed no tears over it.

The footfall sounds again, and Talia waits, ready for whomever dares approach her here. This
compound is so secret only a handful ever knew of its existence, and Talia is the only one left alive
with that knowledge. None could find it by mistake. She narrows her eyes as she watches the
doorway, then widens them at the sight of the interloper.

A woman is standing there, a civilian, elegantly attired in completely impractical clothing and staring
dismissively down her fine nose at the room, the crumpled form on the ground, and Talia herself.
Talia feels an unaccountable urge to straighten her spine and suck in her stomach.

What devil’s work is this, she wonders to herself, staring at the intruder.

“Ah, Ms. Al Ghul. Shall I call you Talia? I always find it easier to maintain a certain professional
distance while conducting business, but I suppose we are family in a way, aren’t we?” The woman
raises a brow, regarding Talia calmly with bright blue eyes burning with intelligence, familiar eyes…

Like a bolt of lightning, Talia realizes just who this woman must be, and yet the knowledge merely
raises further questions. How in the seven hells did the Drake woman come to be here? Reluctantly,
Talia slides her hands away from her weapons.

If this is the mother of her son’s brothers, she should at least listen. Disposing of her out of hand
would almost certainly cause issues in the future, and Talia has no desire to lose what love and trust
exist between herself and her son. Besides, she has grown fond of his brothers over the years, and
would prefer not to cause them pain. Still, if she gets in my way now nothing will stay my hand.

“You may. And what shall I call you? I do not believe your sons know that you are here.”

“Janet, and of course not, darling. And they never will.” Her face takes on a completely different
appearance, an air of grim determination hardening her lovely features into a mask.

Talia frowns. “I do not care what you do, only that you do not attempt to interfere with my
punishment of my father.” She tenses slightly, baring her teeth. “I can dispose of two bodies as well
as one, in such a way none shall ever find them.”
“Yes, yes, that’s all very well and good, darling, but I can’t help but be concerned about the existence of those pesky Lazarus Pits and the likelihood of a certain execrable annoyance returning to attempt to wreak his pathetic vengeance on our children at some later date. It’s an absolute bore, really, but then, perhaps we can make it interesting.” She shrugs lightly.

Ah. Perhaps they will not be at odds with each other after all. Talia smiles. “I have my ideas for that, of course. But what did you have in mind?”

Janet smirks. “It’s so important to be prepared for any contingency, isn’t it, darling? You see, I have been preparing for this particular circumstance for several years now, ever since I obtained a second son and learned of the threat your father presented to both my children. So delicate and vulnerable, aren’t they, I get chills simply thinking about it. So much effort and expense put into them, isn’t there, and then some megalomaniac comes traipsing along and wipes it all off the board.”

She inhales, straightening her shoulders. “Well, I couldn’t allow that, now could I? So I funded research with a very specific aim, which I do believe has been achieved. However, the product requires… testing…and that, my dear, is where you and he come into play.” She extracts a vial from her handbag, extending it gracefully to Talia who cautiously accepts and examines the unknown fluid through the glass.

“What does it do?” Her mind immediately jumps to acids, poisons, biological agents, and toxins. Useful possibilities, all, but no more interesting or effective than anything she already has in her arsenal.

“Oh, it was designed to counteract the effects of the Lazarus Pit, of course. Reverse-engineered based on a sample of pit water, obtained at no little cost, mind you. Fresh wounds which are treated with this solution will never be healed by the Pit, no matter how many times the body is submerged. At least, that is the hypothesis. Really, to properly test it out, we would need to inflict a large number of fresh wounds upon a convenient body, administer the substance, submerge the body in an actual Pit, and then verify the wounds still exist afterwards.”

Talia just stares at her, eyes wide at the implications. A serum to counteract the Lazarus Pit. This is both very dangerous, and very useful. This woman… would not make a good enemy. An uneasy ally, perhaps?

Janet smiles, a sharp, cold and glittering thing. “I suggest we make use of the excellent opportunity before us.” She lifts her chin and raises one fine brow as she looks down her nose at Ra’s. “Shall we start small? Perhaps a finger, toe, or other appendage—” She narrows her eyes viciously while staring daggers in the vicinity of the unconscious man’s crotch, “—may be severed and the formula applied to the injured tissue, which we will subsequently submerge in the Pit, and record the results? Of course there would need to be numerous repeated trials over an extended period of time prior to the final test, which would be to check whether the serum also counters complete revival.”

Talia tilts her head, interested. Far more brutal than I would have expected from a soft civilian. This woman is… unusual. It is well that Father did not meet her under other circumstances, or his interest in her family would most certainly have found another avenue. She imagines this woman as her stepmother, and shudders. Well, it at least would have been better than the reluctant child bride he wanted in his madness. Marginally.

She spins a knife idly in her hand and lifts an eyebrow, flicking a glance up and down the other woman’s figure. “Oh? And you were planning to conduct these trials in that outfit?”

“Yes, darling, it would show bloodstains rather unfortunately, wouldn’t it. Still, nothing to be done about that, is there?” Janet directs a rather pointed look at Talia’s knife, smirking.
Talia returns the smirk, eyes sharp. “I suppose I could lend my aid. After all, our sons are brothers. That does makes us nearly family.” She frowns waringly. “But… you should know I do not ascribe to my Beloved’s morality. I do not intend to allow Ra’s to leave this place alive.”

Janet tinkles a laugh, genuinely amused. “Oh, darling, I can tell already we’re going to get along famously. That fool’s mercy has cost him far more over the years than I am willing to pay. I will not risk my sons merely to propitiate his overwrought conscience.” She sends Talia a knowing glance. “Your Beloved, hmm? …Pity. Oh well, everyone has their flaws. Shall we get started, darling?” She smiles brightly.

* 

**Other Tim:** I think Mother may have killed Ra’s al Ghul

**Red:** Welp, at least he won’t be coming after Timmy again

**Other Tim:** Right? But shouldn’t I like, DO something about this? She keeps dropping disturbing little hints about it and giggling

**Red:** Eh, everything Mother says is disturbing on some level. Wait, giggling?

**Other Tim:** You know, on the inside. So you don’t think I have a moral obligation here?

**Red:** Seriously? I’m actually kinda jealous. MY Ra’s is still alive and creepin’

**Other Tim:** I guess the most disturbing part is somehow Mother and Talia are friends now

**Red:** Oh SNAP wtf

**Other Tim:** It’s horrible. They have tea together and only poison each other a LITTLE and now Talia’s giving us like, three more artificial wombs because Mother wants grandchildren

**Red:** Omg that sucks

**Red:** Hahaha you know what would be hilarious to do with all those extra wombs?

**Other Tim:** Oooh what?

**Red:** WELL...

* 

Bruce enters the Cave and immediately senses something is off. The impression is confirmed a moment later by the sight of… all of his children, gathered together. Concerning.

**Have I missed a birthday or other important milestone?**

He rapidly recalls every significant date in his children's lives, from the day Dick was born to each of their adoption days to Jason and Tim's anniversary to the first time Steph managed to take him down in a spar. Nothing matches, and his mind frantically reaches for any other explanation.

The other Bruce doesn't always notice or care about special days in his children's lives. The other Bruce is a prize ass and an excellent example of what not to do as a parent. Bruce is grateful for the guidance the legacy drive provides, but the knowledge of exactly how each of his beloved children was once hurt and broken, even in another life, is excruciating. He wishes he could go to the other
universe just to hug every one of them, hold them protectively close and apologize for his failures.

He eyes his children. They're standing grouped around the artificial womb Damian gifted to Tim and Jason on the first anniversary of the day they officially began dating. The boys managed to accept the present graciously, kindly hiding from the excited little boy how disconcerting they found the gift.

Perhaps something has happened to the device. Bruce heads over to investigate, and eight pairs of eyes watch him approach. He freezes, sensing predatory intent but unable to quite discern the source…

The hairs on the back of his neck rise as Dick's head swivels around to fully face him.

"Bruce! I'm so glad you're here. We have some wonderful news to share!" Dick is grinning and bouncing on his heels, stepping to the side to reveal… another artificial womb? What? Has Damian decided to provide a backup? Wait…

The others are rearranging themselves as well, and Bruce sees there are now four artificial wombs, each with a pair of his children beside it…

Oh dear god. What? No, impossible. Why on earth would they…?

"You figured it out yet? You're gonna be a grandpa, Bruce!" Dick beams and takes Barbara's hand. She smiles and brings their joined hands up to rest on the artificial womb containing… their child?

Bruce's mind seizes and fails to process the input it is receiving, stuck on the possibility of any of his children having children of their own.

"Yeah, Gramps! Dickie told us you been mopin' around all sad 'cause all your kids are growin' up and movin' on." Jason grins, wrapping himself easily around Tim and resting his chin on top of Tim's head.

Gramps?!

"Damian's still only ten," Bruce murmurs, stunned. "Grandchildren…"

Tim catches Jason's hands in his and squeezes them, darting a significant glance down at the artificial womb in front of the pair. Their child, apparently.

Mother of god.

"Once Dick told us about how you were pining for grandchildren, well, none of us had the heart to deny you what you wanted." Tim drops his gaze, smiling demurely.

Timmy's blushing, holding Steph's hand resolutely despite his obvious embarrassment. He lifts his chin. "After everything you've done for all of us, it seemed like the least we could do for you."

Steph, also faintly flushed, nods, lifting an eyebrow as she regards the womb before them with reluctant approval. "Yeah, B, and actually with the whole external womb thing it's way less of a hassle than if we had to do this the old fashioned way. I don't even have to give up coffee or cut back on the waffles! So thanks for that, I guess, Little D."

"I have told you not to call me that, Brown! While I accepted you as worthy of Timothy's hand once you completed the challenges of valor, I still expect a certain measure of respect from you!" He scoffs. "And you are welcome. Female warriors should not be forced to compromise their bodies and lose potentially years of physical conditioning merely to procreate."
Bruce looks at his youngest, something he has managed to avoid doing since he realized what, exactly, his children appear to be up to. Because if he looks, he'll be forced to acknowledge his ten year-old son and sixteen year-old profoundly abused daughter are standing together in front of the fourth womb... And the implications of that...

No. Just, no.

Cass smiles right at him, her big sweet smile that's broken his heart while filling it with joy every day from the moment he and Tim finally tracked her down on the streets and brought her home. The adoption was just a formality; Bruce knew immediately Cass was his.

His beloved, innocent little girl takes Damian's hand and places their joined hands on the womb. “Ours,” she says, still smiling brightly, and Bruce barely manages to suppress a whimper.

Damian nods. “Yes, as Cassandra and I have yet to locate our ultimate life partners, we both chose to contribute to your present in this manner. Please enjoy your grandchild, Father.” He looks at Bruce expectantly, clearly awaiting praise and gratitude, one hand still on the artificial womb and the other stroking Titus behind the ears as the puppy wags his tail and stares at Bruce as well.

Oh god my sweet, beloved, idiotic children think they've done well. They actually think this is something that I want. They did this wildly ill-advised thing for me.

I can't let them know they're wrong. They must never realize.

He forces a faint smile which feels more like a grimace. “I... don't know what to say.”

Dick grins widely, eyes dancing with mirth. “It's okay, B, your face says it all for you!”

Bruce jerks his eyes away from the four wombs where his grandchildren are growing right now. He needs to focus, prepare for the imminent babies. Birth certificates, nurseries, several nannies because the younger two sets of parents are still children themselves, and Jason and Tim are always so busy with training, patrol and college...

Dick and Babs can probably manage; they’re responsible enough adults. Well, Babs is responsible enough for all three of them. College funds, he'll need to set that up as well...

He looks up to find all his children staring at him expectantly. “Thank you,” he forces out. “You did... good.” He strains not to stutter over the word.

“I appreciate your consideration.” That comes out more naturally, because it's true. Even though they got it wrong, they did this terrible, life-changing, irreversible thing for him. “I love each and every one of you, and I'm certain I'll love them as well, just as much.” And that's the easiest of all, every word from his heart.

In that moment, he can even imagine it. A little girl with bright red hair and Dick's golden brown skin, a boy with Jason’s grin and Tim’s eyes. Another boy with blond hair that darkens as he gets older, who has his father’s mind and his mother’s laugh. A little girl with dark eyes and hair, exotically beautiful like both her parents.

For just a moment, he lets himself embrace it, allowing himself to see the joy as well as the inmitgable horror of this entire fiasco.

And all the kids are... laughing? His brow furrows slightly in confusion, realization slowly dawning in the back of his mind.
Jason's shaking his head. “Damn, B, when Prettyboy told me he wanted to pull one over on you I swore up and down you'd see through it in a heartbeat.”

“He hasn't slept properly in a few days, probably doesn't even realize what day it is. I took that into account.” Tim's smirking, and Bruce still doesn’t…

Oh.

Oh thank god.

“April Fools,” he murmurs with an air of realization. He is so incredibly relieved there is no room within him for any anger or resentment over the ridiculous prank.

His wonderful, horrible children dissolve into cackling, maniacal laughter, pleased to have succeeded in tricking him.

Bruce loves his children with all his heart, but they can’t be allowed to get away with this. A plan crystallizes in his mind, and though he writhes internally in embarrassed horror at certain elements, he knows instinctively it will be very effective. If he can pull it off.

He’s Batman. If anyone can do this, it’s him.

Bruce sighs, allowing his face to reflect disappointment and sorrow, and the laughter abruptly cuts off as everyone looks at him with varying degrees of trepidation.

Dick swallows, eyes wide. “Bruce…” He says carefully. “You didn't… actually want those grandkids right now, did you?” He sounds terrified.

Bruce smiles sadly, gazing into the middle distance. “It would have been good, in a way. They could have kept my baby company.”

His children stare at him in shocked disbelief. Jason is the first to recover.

“Wait, you knocked someone up? B you old dog! Guess we shoulda made you watch the slideshow!”

Bruce shakes his head at Jason’s assumption, lowering his hand and forcing himself not to break character as he runs it slowly over his flat belly. “Other way around, actually.”

He shrugs with real discomfort at the ensuing shocked gasps. “We still don't completely understand how this happened. It was a Justice League mission; a complex cocktail of aerosol toxins and pheromones was released, which ended up acting as a powerful aphrodisiac… everyone was affected.”

He clears his throat, looking down. “I'm the only one who ended up… pregnant.” He barely manages to choke it out. I'm Batman. I can get through this without laughing at the looks on their faces or imploding with horror at what I am implying. I can do this.

“Oh my god.” Dick starts forward, reaching for him. “Bruce. We’re here for you, of course we are. But… who's the other father?”

Bruce wills himself to blush. “The Justice League.” He lifts his chin and meets Dick’s eyes defiantly. “All of them.”

Everyone stares at him, and he stares back completely deadpan, still rubbing his belly challengingly.
Daring them to react. His mouth twitches, and he finally allows himself a smirk.

Cass doesn’t react at all. She knew the whole time, of course.

Dick’s eyes narrow, Babs rolls her eyes with a chuckle, Damian snorts as Timmy and Steph both stare in wide-eyed open-mouthed shock, and Jason dissolves into warm rich peals of laughter. “Oh fuck, B, you’re such an asshole. But we deserved that. Fuck, you’ve got balls. The whole damn Justice League, Jesus fuckin’ Christ.”

Tim smirks, texting on his multiverse phone. “He’s Batman. He can do anything… or anyone.”

The room descends into chatter, all the kids competing to see who can come up with the most egregiously terrible puns and innuendos. Bruce shakes his head, but he’s smiling.

Yes, his children are a handful. And he wouldn’t trade any of them for the world.

* 

Tim leans back against Jason’s chest, enjoying the view of the city skyline silhouetted against the rare clear night sky. The stars are shining on Gotham tonight, and it’s a beautiful sight.

Jason strokes his hip, nibbling kisses along his neck and letting one hand drift down. Tim sighs as his body takes an interest despite being tired out from what they just finished doing up against the floor to ceiling window in their penthouse apartment. “What’s on your mind, Prettyboy?”

“Just taking a moment to appreciate everything, Jay.” Tim gasps as Jason’s hand reaches its target and starts working him, slow and smooth. He whimpers, squirming back against his boyfriend.

Jason chuckles richly in his ear. “Oh, fuck yeah, I can get on board with that. Here, sweetheart, c’mere and lemme appreciate you again…”

And then Jason’s kissing him and touching him and he’s just. So happy, with a fierce, giddy joy that fills him and spills over as soft laughter.

Sometimes it’s still hard to believe this is really my life, that I can have this.

Jason spins Tim in his lap to face him, smiling playfully. “Whaddaya say, Prettyboy? Wanna go for a ride?”

And then Jason’s right there to remind me. This is real, and it’s ours.

Tim grins, rising up on his knees to line them up and then sliding down, slow and easy, savoring the delicious stretch where he’s still wet and ready from earlier. Jason jerks and swears, hands shaking a little on Tim’s hips.

Yeah, Jay,” Tim whispers, voice rough. “Sounds like a hell of a good time.” He smirks down at his boyfriend, whose hands settle more firmly on his hips as he starts to move.

And there’s nothing else in any world that can compare to this moment, right here and right now. Tim leans down and meets Jason for another kiss, tasting him and feeling him everywhere at once, waves of pleasure building with each roll of his hips as Jason rises up to meet him.

Sensation thrills through him until the stars blur and he’s overwhelmed by the heat and movement and Jason, Jason JASON-

And the stars are detonating behind his eyes as he sinks down all at once and comes apart, shaking
with it and tightening around Jason who’s shouting his name and thrusting up hard.

As he comes down, collapsed and panting across Jay who’s running a big warm hand gently up and down his back, Tim lets his eyes fall closed and listens to Jason’s steady heartbeat.

For just a moment, he lets himself think about a world where this precious heartbeat stopped, that night more than two years ago when Tim first came to this universe. For just a moment, his mind explodes with all the changes, the wonderful differences he has come to adore between this universe and the one he left behind. He feels the ghost of a wrenching sense of loss that accompanies even the thought of giving up any of this, never having had Jay.

And then, he opens his eyes and smiles like the dawning sun.

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for making it to the end with me, everyone! It has been amazing writing this story and seeing how people are enjoying it. Your comments and kudos have been inspirational and are each very much appreciated. Talking things out with people in the comments helped me clarify my own thoughts on character motivations and gave me new ideas for scenes, so thanks for that, too!

I’ve made this into a series because I don’t think I’m quite done with this universe. I pretty much poured every idea I’ve had so far into the epilogue (which, uh… I honestly did not expect it to become so huge. Oops? I hope you stopped and hydrated occasionally if you read that thing in one sitting!), but I’m sure more plot bunnies will come to me and I look forward to sharing the stories that spring from them.

Thanks again to everyone who’s commented, given kudos, or simply read and enjoyed this. If you have any thoughts on this universe, please share in the comments. You might give me an idea for the next story!

P.S. Yes, I finished this story on Jason’s death day on purpose. It seemed appropriate somehow, since that's what started this whole thing. :)

Works inspired by this Where's My Goddamn Batarang? by AdamantVibranium_SuperBoy

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