100 Miles Away From The Starting Line
by SmallKatas

Summary

The letters were slanted to the right, unlike his own handwriting. His eyes widened. All Might left him a note.

“I’m sorry to make my stay so brief. Had you been conscious, I would have stayed to chat. Your notes are very detailed and you seem to understand even the minute points of my and my colleagues quirks. It is quite an impressive feat. I’m sure some of them would use your ideas. I wish you good luck on your journey to becoming a hero!”

Midoriya was shaking in his seat. All might believed in him. Maybe he really could do this. Maybe he could be a hero. And yet…

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Midoriya decides to say screw you to all the haters and joins General Education in order to become the first Quirkless Hero.
Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
Smile

Quirkless.

Midoriya rode home from the doctor’s office in his mom’s car. He couldn’t bring himself to speak to her. The silence was stifling.

The doctor had a blank, apathetic expression on his face as he gave Midoriya and his mom the news. With just a single word he completely shattered Midoriya’s existence.

Quirkless.

Everyone he knew had a quirk at this point. They were normally used in daily life. Midoriya had never even met a quirkless person before. Hell, even his parents had quirks. His mom could make things fly around in the air and his dad could breathe fire! Why wasn’t he left with one of those?

“Izuku, sweety, we’re home.”

His mom’s voice breaks him out of his stupor. Silently, he climbed out of the door and walked into the house. It was colder than it should have been.

“How about I make us some katsudon for dinner?” His mom prompted. He could tell that her smile was strained, if only barely. To anyone else it would have seemed warm and kind, but Midoriya knew what her real smiles looked like. He could see her lips quiver as she forced the brave face.

“. . . That sounds good.” He said without meeting her eyes. It took all of his effort to keep his voice steady. If he looked up into what he was sure is pity in her eyes, he wouldn’t be able to hold the floodgates back.

He walked back to his room. All Might’s smile stared into him. He wanted that so badly, to stare evil down with a bold smile, to protect innocent lives, to be a symbol people could look up to.

To be a hero.
But how could he be a hero without a quirk? Every hero he saw all had amazing powers, especially All Might. He wasn’t sure when, but tears had started to fall from his face. He could never be a hero. Not like All Might who could save hundreds, always with a smile.

Midoriya took the poster down. He did his best not to tear it. Right now, the smile hurt to look at, just like his mom’s. He wiped his face with his sleeve, but the tears wouldn’t stop. Letting out a sob, he curled up onto the ground. Maybe the empty pain in his chest would subside if he cried it out.

This was how Inko found her son, curled up and crying around an All Might poster.

She wrapped her arms around her son’s small frame. She cried out, “Oh, Izuku!”

“It’s alright, baby. Everything is going to be fine.” She rocked back and forth as Midoriya sobbed into her shoulder. A few minutes later, the tears finally began to run dry on his face, but his breathing remained ragged.

She looked down at him with soft eyes, “I’ve made dinner. Are you hungry?”

Midoriya nodded his head. His face was raw and eyes puffy.

The two of them ate dinner in silence. Her son never even spared her a glance. His face remained blank. It broke her heart to see him like this. Midoriya knocked over his All Might figurine onto the ground. Without a thought, Inko pulled it back up to the table with her quirk. Her son’s expression morphed as he watched the figurine ascend. There were so many emotions in that one look, most notably envy and grief. Midoriya finished his meal and left without a word.

“Izuku would you like dessert?” She tried, anything to get him to give her a smile, but Midoriya did not answer. The door to his room shut with a resounding clang. She finished her own katsudon and took the dishes over to the sink. As she reached for the faucet, her arm knocked over an empty cup onto the floor. She subconsciously took hold of the cup with her quirk. Inko glanced down at the cup, now hovering in the air. Her eyes widened, and a sudden flash of guilt made her drop the cup again. Before it could roll away, she bent down and picked it up. She might not be able to give her son a quirk, but she could still show him support.
By the time she was finished cleaning up, the clock read 9:37. It was an hour after her son’s curfew, but she could still hear noises coming from is room. She cracked open the door to see her son at the computer watching that same video of All Might. Noticing her presence, her son slowly turned around. There was a smile on his face, but not the one she wanted to see. It shook as he withheld the tears pooling in his eye.

“Heros are so cool, Mom. I can still be one too, right?” His voice was so soft, she could just barely hear it over All Might’s signature catchphrase. Her heart broke over the way it shook.

“Izuku…” She breathed, “I’m so sorry!” She cried out. She felt her son’s tears roll over her shoulder and soon she was crying too. He wasn’t sobbing anymore just staring off into space. What she was sorry for, she wasn’t quite sure. She was sorry that he was in this condition in the first place, she was sorry he could no longer be a hero, she was sorry he would have to watch all of his friends develop their quirks while he was left behind.

When Midoriya stopped crying, she carried him to his bed and turned off the computer. She climbed into her own bed and hoped that she could help him through this development.

Midoriya walked underneath the bridge as he came home from school. Kacchan’s words had hurt him. At one point, Midoriya was sure the two of them were friends, yet now they had stopped being so. All Midoriya was to Kacchan was stupid, useless Deku. Midoriya took in a deep breath. He would show them all. Just because he was quirkless didn’t mean he was useless.

A noise from the drain startled him out of his inner monologue. He turned around to his growing terror as a mass of mud rose out of the sewer. Frightened, Midoriya began to run away from the monster, but slimy entrails took hold of his ankles and pulled into it. The monster was saying something to him, but he couldn’t hear it over the beating of his own heart. The mud slid down his throat. Midoriya clawed uselessly at the monster to no avail. Darkness began to fog his peripherals. He was going to die. Everyone would read in the news about the poor, helpless quirkless kid that couldn’t do anything to save himself. The darkness grew bigger. Midoriya wished he could have said goodbye to his mom.

At the very end of consciousness, he heard something. He’d recognize those words anywhere.

*It is okay for I am here!*
In a second, the pressure in his throat was gone, replaced with sweet air. Just as his vision let out, Midoriya could see his idol standing before him as he faced down the monster.

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Toshinori cleaned up what was left of the villain into soda bottles. He signed. In his prime, he’d have taken the villain down long before it’d have ever gotten hold of a civilian. A child, no less. Said child was still lying unconscious on the ground. He’d have to wait for the kid to wake up before he could leave. He walked over to the boy, intending to shake him awake when something catches his eye. On the ground lie a journal with the title Hero Analysis for the Future No. 13. Huh, so this kid wanted to be a hero. He flipped the book open and skimmed it. The notes were very detailed, the kid had obviously put a lot of thought into them. He found his own page in the journal.

Sightings of All Might are generally only once a day. This could mean that his quirk uses a lot of energy and puts him out of commission every time he uses it. Right now he likely only has enough energy for a couple hours of use. His main tactic is overpowering the enemy with shear force to minimize use of this energy. Despite his inability to use the quirk 24/7, he seems to have gotten stronger over the years. It’s like his quirk gains more strength the more he uses it. The only weakness I can see is him over using his quirk and running out of energy.

Toshinori blinked slowly. That was surprisingly spot on. There was no way for the boy to know about One for All, but what he could put together on his own was very accurate. Toshinori spots a pencil by the kid’s bag. He signed the journal and left his own note in the margin.

Toshinori looked over at the sound of a groan. The boy had woken up.

“Oh thank god you are alright! I’m sorry you had to get involved with that villain.” He smiled. “Luckily, I was able to trap him in these bottles!”

Toshinori showed him the soda bottles that currently held a greenish goop inside. Midoriya could only stare up with a dazed look in his eyes. He was definitely a fan. Toshinori looked down at his watch. His time was almost up. He had wanted to ask the boy about his notes.

“Ah! It seems I have lost track of time. I best be on my way now.” He started to walk away. The kid seemed to break out of his daze and began to panic.
“Wait!”

Toshinori turned around as the boy grabbed his journal and promptly screeched.

“All Might’s… Autograph!” The boy seemed so elated, Toshinori couldn’t help but smile.

“Ha ha ha! Anything for a fan! Although, I really do have to head out now. Thank you for your support!”

Before the kid could react, Toshinori was already jumping away.

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Midoriya stared up at the dot in the air that was All Might. The man had left as quickly as he had came, leaving Midoriya in a daze. That just happened. All Might saved him. They always say that you should never meet your idols, but All Might was everything that Midoriya ever imagined.

Kacchan will be so jealous when he hears about it, him being just as much of an All Might fan as Midoriya.

Midoriya struggled to his shaky feet. He’d better get moving now, otherwise his mom would worry for his well being. He crossed under the bridge, steering clear of the residual gunk. Life carried on as usual, like All Might and the villain had never even shown up.

Midoriya strolled up to his houses front door.

“Mom, I’m home!” He shouted as he kicks off his shoes.

“Hi Izuku! I’m over here watching that crime show you like.”

Midoriya walked over to his mom who was nursing a bowl of over salted popcorn by the TV. His mom smiled up at him.

“How was your day, Izuku? You came home a bit late today. Did Katsuki-kun keep you?”
"What?! No, I came right home mom, Kacchan didn’t do anything."

"Izu, honey, your uniform is singed and your hero journal is fried. You honestly can’t think I would believe that right?" The smile had long since fallen from his mom’s face, replaced with a worried frown. Midoriya was half tempted to tell her what Kacchan had told him to do, but bit back the words.

"That wasn’t his fault! There was a villain attack that happened on the way home. It started a small fire and my journal was knocked into it." It wasn’t a complete lie. But of course, Midoriya had to have gotten his observant nature from somewhere. His mom was staring him down, and her frown was still present. Looking down, she sighed.

"Please be careful next time. You know I don’t like those ‘villain’ fights.” Yeah she definitely doesn’t believe him. At least he wouldn’t have to explain meeting All Might.

"Would you like to catch the end of the show? They’ve already figured out the criminal though so you might not enjoy it."

"That’s okay mom, I have homework that I’d like to finish now."

The tension left Midoriya as his mom’s smile reappears. Midoriya walks back to his room and shuts the door. Tossing his bag on his bed, he made his way over to the worn out desktop. His mom didn’t have enough money to buy him a new one, but it’s not like this one can’t do its job. The research paper wasn’t due till the end of the marking period, but he wanted to find good sources now.

He glanced over to his damaged journal. Of course it had to have opened onto All Might’s autograph. Although… Now that he wasn’t in complete shock, he noticed a script underneath it. The letters were slanted to the right, unlike his own handwriting. His eyes widened. All Might left him a note.

I’m sorry to make my stay so brief. Had you been conscious, I would have stayed to chat. Your notes are very detailed and you seem to understand even the minute points of my and my colleagues quirks. It is quite an impressive feat. I’m sure some of them would use your ideas. I wish you good luck on your journey to becoming a hero!

Midoriya was shaking in his seat. All might believed in him. Maybe he really could do this. Maybe
he could be a hero. And yet…

There was no way Midoriya could pass a test meant for flashy hero quirks. It was like a race through a pitch black cave without a light while everyone else had industrial grade spotlights. Going back to the computer, Midoriya exed out of his tabs. The research paper could wait.

The Yuuei entrance exam had been the same for years, otherwise the changes would have made news headlines. If he started preparing for it now, it might just give him enough time to be ready. He pulled up a frequently asked questions forum on how Yuuei’s entrance exam functions.

**What is the entrance exam?**

*The exam is broken up into three parts: physical, written, and course custom. These tests are designed to be difficult so only those who can handle the course load are chosen.*

**What is the written portion?**

*The written exam is broken down into three parts: a series of multiple choice questions, short answer questions and an essay at the end. Incorrect answers do not deduct points, so it is advisable to answer all of them, even if it is just a guess.*

**What is the physical portion?**

*The physical is arguably the toughest part of the exam. Everyone that takes the exam will be put in a constructed city scape and will have to destroy as many robot “villains” as possible. These robots are categorized into their point values: 0, 1, 2, and 3*

**What is the course custom?**

*There are 4 courses at Yuuei. Each course has a custom exam for students who wish to take that particular course. They are as follows: Hero Course - quirk demonstration*, General Education - A prewritten essay**, Support Course - Portfolio of designs, Business - A prewritten essay**

*Demonstration done in tandem to physical.

**Essay prompts can be found here*

Midoriya let out a sigh. Of course they’re going to score quirks. Studying would help him a lot in the written, but there were only so many points. He’d never make it into the hero course. He scrolled through some more questions, but the just confirmed what he already knew. The physical course had a threshold for points and he would never meet it given his current state. He was about to rest in
defeat when one of the questions catches his eye.

**What is general education?**

*Gen Ed has a bad reputation for being the hero reject course. While it is true that general education students often score lower than those in the hero course, the class is just as, if not more, rigorous as the hero course. The are expected to finish their work load in a timely manner without dealing with hero work conflicts. Students who graduated this class generally go on to prestigious careers. It is also possible for a student to transfer from gen ed to the hero course, although that requires extreme dedication.*

Midoriya gasped. He could transfer into heroics. This is how he’ll become a hero. Screw Kacchan, screw his teachers, screw this messed up ideal of flashy quirks. He was going to be a hero. He could handle a multiple choice test and an essay. With those taken care of, the only thing left to worry about is the physical.

Midoriya walked out of his room. His mom was now over at the kitchen making dinner.

“Did you finish your homework, dear?”

“Oh, that’s not due for a while now, I just wanted to get a head start.”

“You work so hard. Could you pass me the knife?” She holds out her hand. Midoriya spots the knife on the other counter.

“Here it is,” he hands over the knife.

“Mom?” Here goes nothing.

His mom turns to him, “What is it, Izuku?”

“I want to learn self defense.”

Inko blinks up at him.
“Okay… where do you want to learn?”

Now it was Midoriya’s turn to blink.

“Oh I uhhhh… haven’t gotten that far.” More like he didn’t think she would be okay with it. Inko sets down the knife.

“Izuku, as a mom, I will always worry about you. That doesn’t mean I don’t trust your judgment. If you want to learn self defense, that is okay by me.” She grins at him. “Actually, there was this one girl who came by early with fliers to a new dojo in town.”

Midoriya’s eyes lit up. “That would be perfect!”

“They have sessions on tuesdays and thursdays. I can call to sign you up if you’d like?”

“Yeah that would be great! Thank you so much!”

“You don’t have to thank me. Now go clean up, dinner will be ready soon.”

Midoriya ran over to the sink to wash his hands. This was a great idea. Everything was finally working out for him.

This was a terrible idea. Nothing was working out for him.

Kacchan was currently glaring him down. He had almost made it out without aggravating his bombastic friend. But of course, didn’t the universe hate him so.

“You’ve been giddy as fuck all day. I can’t stand your goddamn muttering.”
Midoriya backed up slightly, but stopped at the presence of a wall.

“I’m just h-happy that’s a-all.” Stupid stutter.

Kacchan didn’t look convinced. The boy leaned over Midoriya and growled.

“Spill”

“I’m just going to training for the Yuuei exam!” He spoke all at once. He really should leave now.

“You're still trying to get into Yuuei? You useless piece of shit, no amount of training will prepare your quirkless ass for that test. Why can’t you see that.”

Stand your ground, Midoriya. His words can’t hurt you. “I,” He breathed, “want to be a hero.”

Kacchan’s glare never broke. It felt like he was trying to find something in Midoriya’s eyes. Finally, he huffed.

“You know what, I don’t give a shit. Don’t come crying to me when you fail. You’re nowhere near my level.”

Kacchan left the room. Midoriya needed a minute to breath. He hated this feeling of weakness that fills him in Kacchan’s presence.

He can pull himself together. He has ñbefore. One shaky foot in front of the other and soon enough he’s outside again. Today was Tuesday. His first training lesson at the dojo.

The dojo itself wasn’t hard to find. The building had a garish pink façade. There were some other teenagers mulling around inside. Some obviously had more training than others by the looks of their stretches. One of them had their legs spread open and reaching forward, while another was doing what looked like a modified lunge. It would be best if he copied their stances, although not completely so he doesn’t pull a—
“Hi there!”

Midoriya was startled by the sudden voice that he dropped his backpack onto the ground. While he’d been assessing the group, a girl with bright pink hair had come up to him.

“You look like the intellectual type! Pleased to meet your acquaintance!” She said loudly.

“Oh! Uhhh yeah I guess I’m smart, how’d you uh guess?”

“What an outstanding job, Midoriya! You can totally talk to girls!”

“You mutter really loudly.” She smiled like that was a compliment.

“Ah… you heard that, whoops, I guess, haha…”

The girl brushed off his awkward commentary and instead launched into her own conversation.

“My name is Hatsume Mei, but you should probably just call me Mei since my mom is in charge here.”

“Your mom’s in charge? Wait does that mean she’s the teacher?” Mei nodded. “That’s so cool! My name’s Midoriya Izuku.”

“Alright then Izuku, we’re going to be best friends from here on out! Got it?”

Midoriya gives a sharp nod and is promptly dragged over to an unoccupied corner. Mei was showing him where to stretch when another pink haired woman came out. Midoriya knew immediately that this was Mei’s mom. The similarities were striking.

Just looking at the woman, he felt his nerves leave him. She had this calming atmosphere about her. All of his thoughts about Kacchan and Yuuei felt far away. But there was some off putting about it. The emotion felt unnatural to him. Her eyes were roaming the dojo, yet they never really landed on any one of them. Instead, it looked like she was staring at something just above everyone.
It must be her quirk, he decided. She could probably manipulate emotions by looking at whatever she kept staring at. It must be pretty strong to be able to affect an entire room of people, but the drawback to that would be the effectiveness of the emotions, which would explain him feeling odd.

The woman looked over to him, but now she was looking at him, rather than over him. In fact, so was everyone else with varying degrees of surprise on their faces.

Damn. He must have said all that out loud.

“That was amazing!” The woman said. “No one has ever figured out my quirk that quickly! In fact, most don’t even realize I’m using my quirk. How’d you figure it out?”

“Oh, well, the emotion didn’t really feel like my own. You also weren’t actually looking at anyone so I just put two and two together.”

“You have some pretty good observation skills.” She gave the room a big smile. “Sorry for using my quirk on you all. There was too much nervous energy. No good for Judo. My name is Hatsume Taniko.”

By now, everyone had gathered around Hatsume-Sensei. She was dressed in a white uniform with a black belt. Her hair was longer than Mei’s and pulled up into a tight bun.

“To start off today, we’ll do introductions. Since we’re on the topic of quirks, we’ll go with that. Say your name, your quirk, and something unique about your personality. Then you can come up and grab your judogi. I’ll introduce myself first. You guys already know my name. My quirk is empathy and I enjoy engineering.”

Hatsume-Sensei pointed to a boy who then introduced himself. Midoriya probably would have listened, but he was too busy panicking over what he should say. Would Hatsume even teach a quirkless kid?

“My name is Hatsume Mei!” Mei calls out beside him. That means he was next. “My quirk is Zoom. I can look at really far away things or really small things. I also love building robots and devices!”
Zoom was a pretty useful quirk. It’d really help when working with wires. He took a deep breath.

“My name is Midoriya Izuku. I like analyzing things. I um… don’t actually have a quirk.”

There was complete silence. A few kids started to murmur to each other. Midoriya should have expected this to happen. He’d be kicked out for his own ‘safety’ and would have to start all over again.

“Well, come on, then.”

He looked up to Hatsume-Sensei holding out a judogi. He stood up a grabbed it. The kids had continued to introduce themselves, but he could still see pointed looks in his direction.

The last person grabbed their judogi, so Hatsume-Sensei addressed the group once more.

“The changing rooms are to the right. Be out here in five minutes.”

Everyone broke into chatter as they went to change. The room was a bit cramped with the benches in the middle, but everyone fit fine. Midoriya made his way over to one of the stalls when someone stopped him.

“What does a quirkless kid think he can do in a fight?”

Midoriya turned around to see someone about a year older than him. The boy had a mess of orange and yellow hair all steeped to the left side of his face. There were also spikes all over his arms and face. The first boy to introduce himself: Yahashi Atou, quirk: Spikes.

“You should probably just head home to mommy. Leave fighting to the boy’s that can take care of themselves.” The boy smirked.

“But I can take care of myself.” Midoriya replied. “Besides, Judo has nothing to do with quirks. It was invented long before the first quirk manifested.”
“Traditionally, yeah. But the most common kata these day all involve the use of quirks. You’ll be left behind.”

“Oh yeah, because spikes are perfect for use in martial arts.” Midoriya’s eyes widen at what he just said. Yahashi’s eyes narrow.

“My spikes are perfectly fine. They have more use than not having anything.”

With that, the teen walked away, bumping into his shoulder along the way. Midoriya changed in silence. When everyone was done, they took a seat in front of Hatsume-Sensei.

“Alright everyone. For our first lesson I need a volunteer. How about…” she scanned the room, “You.” She pointed to Yahashi. Getting up, Yahashi flashed a sententious smirk.

“In judo, you will throw and be thrown around a lot.” Grabbing onto Yahashi’s shoulders, she performed a sweeping hip throw and had Yahashi pinned to the ground. “The most important thing,” she continued, “is knowing how to hit the ground without hurting yourself.”

She got off of Yahashi and offered her hand. He was making his way back to his seat when Hatsume-Sensei called out to him.

“Yahashi, I do not tolerate any form of bullying in this dojo. You’d be wise to watch what you say.”

Yahashi flushed red. “Yes, Sensei.” He said as he bowed. As Hatsume-Sensei turned back to the group, she met Midoriya’s eyes and gave him a wink.

“Now, with that out of the way, I shall demonstrate the different forms of ukemi, the safe ways to break your fall.”

Hatsume-Sensei has them break into pairs to practice falling. Mei makes a beeline for him.

“Is it true that you’re quirkless?” She asks. Of course. The one person who he was hoping to be his friend only cared about his lack of quirk. He sighed.
“Yeah, I’m quirkless.” He doesn’t look up at her eyes.

“That’s so cool!”

His head shot up to see a wide, open-mouth grin on Mei’s face.

“I have so many inventions that I’ve wanted to test out. Since you don’t have a quirk, you could theoretically test all of them. You’ll help me with my babies right?!”

“B...babies..?”

“My inventions, dummy.”

“Oh right. I… guess I could test them?”

“Awesome! We’ll talk after practice.”

Midoriya smiled. Was this what having a real friend was like? Talking to Kacchan hadn’t felt like this since before Kacchan’s quirk developed. It felt good. Great even.

The two of them continued to fall in the way Hatsume-Sensei showed them. By the end of the class, Midoriya felt sore all over. At least he hadn’t broken anything.

“You can text me at this number. Try to find time to come over and give my babies a whirl.”

“Alright! See you Thursday, then.” Midoriya asked.

“I’ll be here.” Mei smiled.
“Ah, one moment, please Midoriya-kun.”

Midoriya turned around to see Mei’s mom walking over to them.

“I’m sorry for putting you on the spot during introductions. I’ve never meet a kid your age that was quirkless.”

“Oh no it’s okay. People usually don’t realize it. I’m use to it.”

Hatsume-Sensei studies him. She’s likely looking at whatever she sees due to her quirk.

“By any chance, are you interested in becoming a hero.”

Midoriya’s eyes widen in surprise.

“How did you know?”

“Your journal is poking out of your bag.”

Midoriya yelps and is quick to zip up his backpack.

“What school are you planning to attend.” Hatsume asked. She looks more serious now. Midoriya is in perpetual surprise. Before today, no one had ever stood up for him, much less take his dreams seriously.

“I want to go to Yuuei.” Midoriya says.

“You know Shiketsu has an easier entrance exam right?”

He does know that. “Yuuei is the school All Might went to. That’s the hero I want to be like.”
He waited for the ridicule. She would denounce his ability right there and he’d have to go on without any support. Well, that’s what his life has been up to this point. Why should anything change now.

“Midoriya-kun I want you to listen to me. The Yuuei entrance exam is made for the best of the best. You are not the best of the best.”

There it is. He’d been anticipating the words, but actually hearing them hurt so much worse.

“That doesn’t mean you can’t become the best of the best.”

Midoriya’s eyes shot up at her words.

“You seem like the determined kind, Midoriya-kun. Are you willing to put in the effort it takes to be the best of the best.”

“Of course! I would put in twice the effort.”

“I want you to look me in the eyes.”

And he did. He stared down her lime eyes with his own dream filled ones.

“I think you can be a hero, Midoriya-kun. I’ll talk with your mom to get you a training schedule.”

No one had ever told him those words before. He really could do this. Hatsume-Sensei and All Might we’re counting on him.

“Oh, and Midoriya?”

“What is it?” He asked.
“Hold your head up and keep that smile on your face.”

Midoriya’s lips turned up. He was going to make it into Yuuei. He was going to save people with a smile.

He was going to be a hero.
Midoriya starts training for the Yuuei entrance exam and promptly encounters a very bad habit.

So I know I said only one update a week but...
I have no self control so I wrote this in three days.
Enjoy! (^-^)

The schedule that Hatsume-Sensei had given him was simple. Including class practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays, now he was supposed to run ten miles before and after school, he had fitness training on Mondays and Fridays, and wednesdays and Saturdays were personal judo lessons. Sundays were his rest days to finish homework.

A few weeks into his training and Midoriya was already starting to see definition in his biceps. Before, Midoriya would have considered 30 pounds heavy. Now he could lift 100 pounds without breaking a sweat. Hatsume worked him hard, so this rest day was a gift.

Despite being so tired thought, Midoriya still got up at six to do his morning run. Midoriya knows he should be resting after yesterday’s spar left him super drained, but he couldn’t just sit around. Besides, the extra training will do him good.

He had chosen to run around the park near his house. The park trail was exactly 10 miles and the walk to and from his house to get there gave him a few minutes to warm up and cool down. Kacchan also hated the park rangers there, so he didn’t have to worry about running into the fiery teen.

Based on the Palmate Maple he just passed, Midoriya estimated he was about halfway through the run. He and his mom used to go to the park when he was younger. They would always sit by the Maple and enjoy its leaves that remained dark red even in the summer. It was his favorite tree.

His little trip down memory lane had unfortunately left him distracted. Of course he would run right
into someone. It was just his luck.

Falling to ground, Midoriya felt the wind being knocked from his body. Now that he was on the ground, he realized just how tired he was. His legs burned from overuse and his vision couldn’t quite focus. Slowly, he got to his feet.

“I’m so sorry about that! Are you okay?” He asked the stranger. He had dark blue hair and his glasses were askew.

“I’m quite fine. Besides this was my fault. I was on the phone with my brother and not looking where I was headed. I give you my deepest apologies.”

*Formal*, Midoriya thought.

“I wasn’t looking either so I’m partially to blame.”

“I must keep going then. Farewell.”

*Really formal*, Midoriya smirked.

Midoriya continued his run. He’d probably never see the other again, so he was kind of sad he didn’t get a name. His legs continued to protest the running. Maybe he should have taken it easy today.

Midoriya had memorized the different landmarks around the park trail. He should be coming up to the bridge in a few seconds. He’d always stop at the bridge to feed the ducks.

He slowed down when he saw the dirt transition into wood. Apparently, the ducks had recognized him and were now quacking away.

“Be patient, will you.” Midoriya admonished them, but he had a smile on his face. He pulled out his bag and began rooting around for the granola bars. They were somewhere at the bottom, underneath his hero analysis journal and first aid kit.
Finally pulling out the bars, he ripped them open and started throwing the chunks to the duck. Midoriya realized how hungry he was as well and to a bite out of one. The ducks made happy quacks. Midoriya smiled and continued to run. He’d need to get home and eat some actual food.

__________

Math class was Midoriya’s final class of the day. It wasn’t his favorite subject, but he found fun in getting to a solution. He never really liked his teacher in this class though, so that could be why he hasn’t been enjoying it at all lately. He just wanted the bell to ring so he could go down to see Hatsume-Sensei. But no, they had to work on a challenge problem for the next ten minutes which Midoriya had solved in the first three minutes. By the amount of chatter going on in the room, he wasn’t the only one.

In the meantime, Midoriya pulled out his hero journal. He had some new ideas to help Mei out and didn’t want to forget. He wished Mei went to his middle school, but she was home schooled. Having a friend to talk to regularly would have been nice. At the very least Mei was always a text away. As if on cue, he felt his phone start buzzing.

**HATSUME MEI IS THE BEST at 14:03**

- do you know if spiders feel pain?

**YOU SHOULD PUT A PASSWORD ON YOUR PHONE at 14:03**

- stop breaking into my phone thats private

Midoriya changed his contacts back for what felt like the gazillionth time.

**Mei at 14:04**

- spoil sport
- you never answered my question btw

**Izuku at 14:05**

- ??????
- why would i know
- i mean im pretty sure they do
- please dont experiment on spiders thats mean
Mei at 14:06

- im not going to experiment on spiders
- i cant believe you would accuse me of such a thing
- but theoretically
- would they feel pain if say
- they were shocked with 100 volts

Izuku at 14:08

- stop electrocuting spiders mei

Midoriya chucked to himself. He was interested in this new contraption she’d built. Usually he’d stay with Mei after training to troubleshoot any of her designs.

Midoriya hears the bell ring and quickly puts away his things. He would have run right out the door if his teacher hadn’t spoken up.

“Midoriya-kun, a moment please.”

His teacher was at his desk viewing his laptop. Midoriya stumbles over, doing his best to avoid eager students trying to leave the classroom.

“Midoriya-kun, I noticed that you still haven’t chosen a real high school to go to yet.”

“But I have. I’m going to Yuuei.”

His teacher sighed. “I said ‘real’, Midoriya-kun. It’s nice to have dreams but there are times when you have to look at the bigger picture. You can’t possibly believe you’ll get in to Yuuei of all schools without a quirk, right?”

Midoriya closed his eyes. People said this all the time. He had to ‘be real’. But now, he could see the light at the end of this tunnel, and nobody, not his teacher, not Kacchan, nobody, is going to take it away from him.
“I mean really, your grades are phenomenal, all As for every class in every grade level. I’m sure a school like Sakura High would be perfect for your expe—“

“With all due respect, Sensei,” Midoriya interrupted to the surprise on his teacher’s face. He’s never spoke up before. “Yuuei is real for me. I’ve had to deal with people telling me I can’t be a hero everyday of my life since I was diagnosed. I still haven’t given up. I won’t ever give up. I am going to Yuuei whether or not you think it’s appropriate for me."

Midoriya took a second to breath, then continued, “And when you see me winning at the Sports Festival next year, I want you to think long and hard about how much better I could’ve been if you had supported me.” With that, Midoriya left the room. His teacher didn’t protest.

Midoriya didn’t regret speaking back to his teacher like he thought he’d be. It actually felt good, finally speaking up. He felt another text come in from Mei.

Mei at 14:16

- okay i might have electrocuted a few spiders but they totally deserved it

Midoriya laughed. What did he ever do to deserve Mei.

“Who are you texting?” Oh great, Midoriya recognized that voice. Couldn’t people just leave him alone today? Was that too much to ask for?

There stood one of Kacchan’s goons. They took everything thing he said hook, line, and sinker and always took it out on him.

“I’m texting my friend.” Midoriya spoke softly. The confidence he’d felt with his teacher completely evaporated.

“You shouldn’t lie, Midoriya. You don’t have friends.” He had a devilish smirk on his face. If Bakugou was the brawns, then Kaitou was the brains. He never threw a punch at Midoriya, instead preferring to cut him down with words. It worked more often than Midoriya would like to admit.

Midoriya walked away with his head low. He just wanted to go to training. That’s it.
“No one would ever be friends with a quirkless nobody like you. Who ever this ‘friend’ is, they’re just lying to make you feel better about yourself.”

Midoriya kept walking. He could feel tears at the corners of his eyes. Mei was his friend. She said so before she knew he was quirkless. There was no way she was lying.

Hatsume-Sensei observed his footing.

“Adjust your dominant foot. Its bowed to far to the right.”

Midoriya had been trying to get this move down for the past three sessions but it wasn’t clicking. In all the other things he’d been taught, he was able to learn them within the first lesson. This time was different.

“Alright, why don’t we take a break.” Midoriya made a noise of protest but Hatsume-Sensei stopped him.

“You’ll never do it right when you’re that frustrated. Come over I’ll make us some tea.”

Midoriya followed her into her apartment. It was connected to the dojo with a traditional shoji style screen door. He’d been in the apartment many times when Mei wanted to experiment.

The room was small. It had a kotatsu in the middle with red curtains lining the windows. Midoriya sat down at the kotatsu. The room had a traditional theme which Midoriya liked.

Hatsume-Sensei came out with the tea. Midoriya drank some and felt some tension leave.

“So, what’s got you down, Midoriya-kun?”
Midoriya casts his eyes down. “I can’t get the move right.”

Hatsume-Sensei studies him. Or, more precisely, she studies his emotions.

“It’s more than that. Is there something going on at your school?”

Midoriya stayed silent. Hatsume-Sensei sighs.

“You don’t have to tell me about. I just want you to know I’m here for you, okay?”

Midoriya nods. “Hey, Sensei, how does your quirk work exactly?”

“I can see people’s emotions as auras around them. When I first got my quirk, I asked my mom what they were and she was so confused about these ‘colors’ I was seeing.” Midoriya laughed at that.

“If I focus on an aura, I can manipulate what it is. My parents thought I’d become a psychologist or something like it. If it’s just one person, I can make it a complex emotion, whereas with a group I could only do something simple.”

“That’s so cool.” Midoriya replied.

“You’re the first person to think so.” She smiled at him.

There was a loud bang come from the basement. The door opened to Mei covered in soot.

“Please tell me you didn’t explode anything important, Mei.” Hatsume-Sensei says in her mom voice.

“Nope! I had blast protection.” Mei had a crazed smile on. Midoriya had the sudden urge to run away. He is sadly unable to as Mei’s eyes land on his.
“Oooh little Izuku is done training. Come on I have a a new baby I need to show you.”

Midoriya looked to Hatsume-Sensei for help, but she just smiled at him. “Have fun.” And then she left.

Mei dragged him down into the basement. It was littered with scrap metal and designs. The first time he came down, he’d tripped over everything as he tried to get to the work bench. He’s used to Mei’s antics now, so he barely pays any mind to the clutter on the floor. On the table, there lie what appears to be a laser pointer. He picked it up. Despite its small size, it weighed quite a bit.

Mei was jumping in excitement. “Hit the button on the back.”

Midoriya pushed the button, and is promptly thrown into a wall. His vision spins, and he’s pretty sure there shouldn’t be two Meis in front of him. He takes a deep breath, and his vision goes back to normal. Now he is able to see a fire on the table.

“How. It might need a dampener or an arm brace to keep the kick back to a minimum.”

“You think?” Midoriya grumbles. “What the hell was that?”

“It’s my new baby! It’s like a laser pointer, but it shoots out electricity instead!”

Midoriya thinks for a moment. “I think an arm brace would be best. Maybe you could build one into a gauntlet and the trigger would be making a fist.”

Mei gasped. “That would be perfect! That would make it easier to add a bigger resistor as well. Oh! What if we made interchangeable resistors to change the power output?”

“I think you would need to have set resistor levels and have them rotate into place.”

Mei smiles at him and starts pulling out materials. She has him come over and pulls out a tape measure.
“What are you doing?” He asks her.

“Well duh, I’m taking measurements for your gauntlet. You’re the one that’s going to use them after all.”

Mei measures all the components of his arm and hand. She has him work on the resistor loop while she builds the gauntlet. An hour worth of testing and breaking walls elapses, and by the end of it, the two have a pair of custom made laser gauntlets.

“Here’s the laser sight so you can see what you’re going to hit.” She points to the red dot on top. “When you close your fist, your fingers will pull down on the trigger and the electric beam will come out of here.” She points to a dot underneath the first.

Midoriya points the sight to one of the targets set up in the basement. He closes his fist.

Electricity shoots out and does not hit the target. Instead, the beam hits multiple areas, most of them being scrap metal on the floor. Oh and circuit breaker on the wall. The lights go out, and the two are plunged into darkness.

“MEI!” Hatsume-Sensei calls from upstairs.

“I’ll work on the accuracy later.” Mei says before heading to the stairwell. Midoriya takes off the gauntlets and follows.

The room upstairs is also dark. Mei’s mom stood with her arms crossed.

“I told you not to break anything important.” She says sternly.

“Actually, you just asked if I did break something important.” Hatsume-Sensei was not amused.

“It was my fault, Sensei.” He blurted. She looked over at him surprised. Midoriya looked down. “I hit the circuit breaker. I’m sorry.”
“You may have done the actual breaking, but Mei created what you used to break it. Neither of you is getting off the hook.”

Midoriya grimaced.

“I’m going to call the electrician. Midoriya-kun, it’s getting late. You should head home.”

“What about the move..?”

“Don’t sweat it kid. We’ll work more on Saturday. Go home and rest.”

He nods. Midoriya goes to the dojo to get his belongings. Mei follows.

“When you visit next time, it should be ready for you.”

“Thanks, Mei.”

Midoriya can’t help but remember what he was told earlier that day.

_They’re just lying to make you feel better about yourself._

“Hey, Mei?” She looks up. “We’re friends right?”

She looks confused for a second. “Of course we are. You’re the only person I’ve ever let into my work space.”

Midoriya realizes she’s never had a friend before him. He was her first friend just like she was his. How could he have ever doubted her.

“Right, sorry. I just wanted to make sure.”
Midoriya left the dojo and made his way home.

The walk home was brief, only about 10 minutes.

The front door is unlocked, so he walks in.

“Mom! I’m home!”

“Welcome home, Izuku. How was practice?”

“It went well.” He lied.

“That’s great! I’ll have dinner done in a few. You go work on homework.”

Midoriya heads over to his room. Luckily, there wasn’t much homework due tomorrow. His research paper was pretty much done. It only needs a title and for Midoriya to look for grammatical errors.

He did his best to focus, but there was something nagging at the back of his head. Midoriya closed his fist. Hatsume-Sensei said they’d work on the move more on Saturday, but he wanted to learn it now. Maybe if he’d practice more now, he could surprise her by being able to do it.

Mind set, Midoriya runs out to the front door.

“Hey, Mom! I’m going outside to practice!”

“Wait honey, what about dinner?”

“I’ll have it later. You don’t have to wait up for me.”
“...Alright. Be safe, Izuku.”

Midoriya runs outside to his backyard. There was a large oak tree in the middle that he’d climb on when he was younger. Then Kacchan decided to explode the branches. The tree would have burned down if his mom hadn’t been there. After that, they were never allowed to play on it.

Midoriya walked up to the tree. It wasn’t a punching bag, but it’ll have to do. Midoriya got into the stance and threw a fist at the bark.

“Gah!” Pain shoots up his arm. He opens and closes his fist. Midoriya grimaces as his knuckles scream in protest.

Midoriya takes a deep breath, then throws another punch. This time, the pain isn’t as bad. Midoriya smiles. He could master this. Hatsume-Sensei would be proud of him.

A few more punches later, he could barely feel the pain. That had to mean he was getting stronger. He grinned in excitement. It was actually rather fun. He never understood why people would enjoy hitting things, but now he did. It was so easy just to let out his pent up frustration. Maybe this is why Kacchan would always punch things when he was mad.

Letting out a yell, Midoriya spun his hip into a roundhouse kick. His foot connected with one of the low-hanging burnt branched. With a creak, the branch snapped off onto the ground.

He stared down at the branch. In his training, he’d gotten a lot stronger. Midoriya had never felt this powerful before.

He still had a long way to go, though. The sun was starting to set, so he’d only stay out for a few minutes more. He needed to master this move.

———

Okay, so maybe a few minutes wasn’t the best way to describe it. Midoriya ended up staying out for a little over two hours. Close enough.
Midoriya went to his room and pulled out his first aid kit. After all of that punching, his knuckles were bleeding. It didn’t seem that too bad, but he made sure to take care in wrapping it just in case.

On his desk was a plate of tamagoyaki. Midoriya smiles. His mom would be upset if he didn’t eat anything.

The food had long since cooled down, but it was still good anyways. His mom had the best cooking. Midoriya finished the meal and went to proofread his paper that was still on the monitor. Yes it was late, and yes he was tired, but really needed a good grade on that paper so he’d only stay up a little long.

Midoriya finally went to bed at 1:38 am. At the very least, it wouldn’t be the first time he only got a few hours of sleep. It would all be worth it so long as he made it into Yuuei.

Midoriya got up at 5 to go for his run. His legs burned more than usual, but that just meant that they were getting stronger.

In school, most of the things his teachers said went over head. He felt so tired that paying attention was hard. Luckily there were no tests coming up. He’ll just have to catch up on notes tomorrow.

“Midoriya, pay attention.”

Midoriya shoots his head up at his teacher. He must have been muttering again.

“...Sorry, Sensei.” He says quietly.

Midoriya did his best to pay attention. They were learning trigonometry. The teacher gave them a mnemonic for memorizing Sohcahtoa. Midoriya just blinked slowly. There was too much information.

The bell rings, signaling the end of math. Midoriya began to put away his things.

“What’s got you so out of it today.”
Midoriya shoots up at Kacchan’s voice.

“Umm it’s nothing.” Even Midoriya is unconvinced. “I didn’t sleep much last night.” It wasn’t a lie at the very least.

Kacchan glares at him. His eyes dart down at Midoriya’s hands.

“What the hell happened to your hands, Deku?”

Midoriya gulps. “They aren’t that bad. You don’t have to worry—“

“I’m not fucking worried about you, you piece of shit! Dammit you can’t even take care of yourself, and you think you can save others? How the hell do you think you’ll be a hero?”

Midoriya breathed slowly. It didn’t matter what he said. Kacchan had never believed in him. He would continue on with his training.

Midoriya walked away without making a comment. He just needed to get down to Hatsume-Sensei’s dojo. He’d show her the move and they’d start working on more challenging kata.

The dojo was close to his school so he made good time without needing to run. In the dojo, there was only three others: Mei, Hatsume-Sensei, and Yahashi. Mei waved at him.

“Izuku I figured out the problem with the gauntlets! We still have some time to— wait what happened to your hands?”

“Oh this? It’s nothing really. I was just doing some practice at home.”

Hatsume-Sensei had come over by now. She gasped when she saw the bandages.

“Midoriya-kun follow me. Have you changed those at all today? You’ll get an infection like that.”
Midoriya walked with her to the bathroom. She began to unravel the bandages. They had collected some dirt and grime during the day.

When she got rid of the bandage she gasped. Midoriya’s knuckles and fingers were completely mangled. Dried blood covered his hand while new blood began to seep out of the reopened wound.

“Midoriya-kun, what happened to you?”

“I was just practicing, Sensei. I wanted to show you the move that I was having trouble with. I didn’t have a punching bag at my house, though, so I used a tree instead. I was able to get it down. I can even show you when you’re done!”

Midoriya was expecting Hatsume-Sensei to be proud. He was not prepared to see her face contorted in horror.

“Midoriya-kun, you can’t really believe that this is alright?” She says softly.

“But you said… you wanted me to give my all.”

“I didn’t mean hurt yourself!” She puts a hand to her face. “Hurting yourself in any situation is never the answer. Do you understand?”

Midoriya nods, but he doesn’t quite understand. Hatsume-Sensei seems to know this.

“Alright Midoriya-kun, I’m going to tell you a story. There’s this pro hero, his name is Eraserhead. Have you heard of him?”

That name did sound familiar. “I recognize it.”

“Given the fact that he’s an underground hero, just recognizing his name is pretty good. Eraserhead is my favorite hero since he’s one of the few that have a decent understanding of martial arts. His quirk can only erase other quirks, so he relies on his ability to fight being better than his opponents.
Now Midoriya I want you to close your eyes for a second and imagine.”

Midoriya complies and closes his eyes.

“Imagine that Eraserhead had been reckless and hurt himself like you did. His punches wouldn’t be as strong because he’d be punching through the pain. What would happen in this scenario?”

“He’d lose.”

“It’s more than that, Midoriya-kun. He’d be a liability to the rest of his team. They’d have to save him when they could have been saving other civilians. You’d be at an even greater disadvantage. Not having a quirk means the only thing you have is your fighting skills. You have to use them wisely and respect your body’s limits.”

She finished wrapping new bandages onto his hands.

“I need you to promise me you’ll never do this again. Training be damned, I need you to be okay.”

Midoriya takes a shaky breath. “I promise.”

Hatsume-Sensei smiles at him. “Good. You understand that I have to tell your mom, right?”

Midoriya nods. He’d rather his mom stay out of it, but sometimes actions have consequences.

“You’ve made a lot of progress these past few weeks, Midoriya-kun. I’m afraid that I’m going to have to insist that you take the next three days off.”

“What?!” Midoriya is shocked. “The exam is coming up, though. I need to be ready!”

“You will be. I have been watching you very closely these weeks and I know you have been overworking yourself. Use these rest days to recover your strength. Then we’ll be back to work.”
Sighing, Midoriya agrees. He couldn’t argue with Hatsume-Sensei.

They went back out. More people had arrived by now and were stretching.

“Midoriya-kun?”

Midoriya turned to his teacher.

“When you were telling me about your hand, you were expecting me to be proud. Why?”

Midoriya looks down. “The only way for me to get my teachers’ attention is if I score the highest. Otherwise they’ll mostly just ignore me. I’m used to working myself to the bone.”

Midoriya sees a flash of anger on Hatsume-Sensei’s face. “...Your teachers have done you a great disservice. Making you work until you physically can’t just for a pat on the back. It’s despicable. You don’t need to do that here. I recognized your skill your first day here.”

Midoriya does his best to hold back tears.

“Thank you, Hatsume-Sensei.”

Midoriya goes to stretch with Mei. She starts going on and on about the gauntlet. She’d installed a glass lens to focus the beam so it doesn’t go haywire again. Hatsume-Sensei called everyone to attention and began to announce the day’s plan.

Training was long today, even longer since Hatsume-Sensei made sure he was only doing easy movements. For the first time, the judo class felt boring. He ducked down as Mei threw a punch.

“Alright everyone! Good job today, practice is over.”

The students began to chatter with their friends. Midoriya sat down and took a drink of water.
“Hey Midoriya-kun, I have an assignment for you.” Hatsume-Sensei says walking over.

“I had planned to give this to you later, but I figured you’d be bored over the weekend.”

Midoriya looks at the list she hands him. On it were multiple hero names.

“They’re obscure heros. I want you to analyze four things about each of them.”

Midoriya looks at her surprised. “You want me to analyze them?”

She nods. “Being able to think rationally in a battle is great. Being able to find weaknesses quickly is even better. When you’re in a real fight, the only thing you have going for you is training, so you need to train your mind as well.”

Midoriya grins. “What do you want me to do?”

“Analyze their quirk, their fight style, their weaknesses, and their strengths. Think you can do that?” Midoriya nods. “Good. I’ll see you on Monday.”

“Mom! I’m home!” Midoriya yells out as he shuts the door.

“Izuku!” His mom comes running out of the kitchen and starts looking over him.

“I just got a call from Taniko-Senpai. She told me not to let you exercise until Monday. What happened?”

Midoriya laughs nervously. “I sort of went overboard with the training. She just wants me to rest.”

His mom frowns. “Are you sure you’re okay?”
“Yes, Mom, I’m fine.”

She doesn’t look like she believes him, but she drops it.

The three days go by agonizing slow. Hatsume-Sensei was right when she said he’d be bored. Midoriya had finished the assignment she gave him a while ago. She seemed to prefer underground heros more than spotlight heros.

Out of all of them, Pro Hero Blindsight was his favorite. Her quirk was bending light around eyes. If she made eye contact, then she could bend light and blind them temporarily. From what he could tell, the more light there is in the surroundings, the harder it is to bend it away. She also can’t work well in a crowd, since she has to keep eye contact.

That’s why she’s an underground hero. In a dark alley, she’s completely at home. Midoriya had watched all the videos of her that existed and he really enjoyed how quick she could take down villains.

Midoriya was rewatching one of those videos right now to pass the time. It wasn’t working. He had too much energy and nothing to do with it.

Suddenly, Midoriya has an idea.

“Hey, Mom, do you want to go on a picnic?”

His mom comes around the corner. “That sounds like a great idea, Izuku! Do you want to make the sandwiches?”

“Sure.”

The two of them haven’t gone on a picnic in so long. It was so beautiful outside. A robin landed in the palmate maple. There was a comfortable silence between the two.
“Izuku?”

Midoriya turns to face his mom.

“I’m so proud of you. You have put so much effort into your dream. I’m never going to stop worrying about you. I might just worry more if you do make it into Yuuei. You are going to be an amazing hero. I’m so sorry I didn’t believe in your dreams from the start.”

Midoriya smiles at her and holds back tears. “Thank you, Mom. It means a lot.”

The two continue their picnic, occasionally pointing out a bird or taking a bite out of a sandwich. All in all, it was a great way to spend his last rest day.

Starting Monday, training picked back up, and Hatsume-Sensei was definitely pushing him. Midoriya did his best to take care of his body. The Entrance exam was only a few days away now.

“Midoriya-kun, tell me again how you are going to pass the physical.” Hatsume-Sensei questioned.

“Stay focused, find the weak points, and exploit them before the others can get there.”

“If you think someone will get there first?”

“Don’t be afraid to fight.” Midoriya replied automatically.

Hatsume-Sensei smiles at him. “As long as you use that head of yours you’ll be fine.”

Midoriya sure hoped so.

Chapter End Notes

Me: Bakugou is a dick
Me @ Me: He still cares about Midoriya
Me: Their relationship is unhealthy
Me @ Me: He's bad at communication

I really hope you guys enjoyed this! I probably won't update this quickly again, but like, I had this weekend off and I'm impatient as hell. Up next is the Entrance exam!
The Entrance Exam

Chapter Summary

Midoriya begins his Yuuei experience with the infamous entrance exam. He makes a friend along the way.

Chapter Notes

I got so much positive feedback from the last chapter, thank you so much everyone!!!!!!!!

This chapter includes my take on the written exam. It's sorta a compilation of my knowledge of AP English exams, the SAT, and college exams. I had a lot of fun writing it.

There is real math in this chapter (Or, I guess I should say imaginary math). If you are bad at math, just take my word for it, it's not necessary for understanding the story. I'm just a shameless math nerd :P

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Yuuei gate loomed over him. It cast a shadow that could reach all the way to the road. Behind it, Midoriya could see the Yuuei building. In front of it, a queue blossomed in front of a table. A staff member appeared to be examining paperwork.

Midoriya waited in the line for a few minutes before reaching the front.

“Name?” The man asked.

“Midoriya Izuku.”

The man sifted through application forms while mumbling the alphabet.

“Midoriya Izuku: applying for hero course and general education,”
The man squint at the sheet of paper.

“Quirkless, huh? Well, good luck to ya. You’ll need it.” The man said as he stamped the application. He held out a card.

“No one can enter Yuuei without an ID. This is your guest ID, keep it with you at all times, and if you lose it please tell a faculty member. They will be walking through the halls at all times.” The man droned to him.

“Here’s your map of the school, you will be in lecture hall five for the written exam. Next!”

Midoriya stuffed the ID card into his pocket and walked through the gate. He half expected something to go wrong and set off an alarm, but he made it through unscathed. Midoriya admired the building. He was finally here.

“Out of my way, Deku.”

Midoriya turned sharply to see Kacchan approaching with a deadly glare. He jumped out of the way with a squeak.

“S-sorry, Kacchan. I didn’t see you there.” He laughed awkwardly.

Kacchan walked passed him without a word. Midoriya sighed. Kacchan wasn’t going to steal this chance from him. He was going to be a hero. Midoriya took a step forward. His eyes widened as his foot caught on his shoelaces.

*Or maybe I’ll just die.* Midoriya thought as he fell forward. He closed his eyes and anticipated the force of concrete on his face.

Five seconds later he still didn’t feel the ground so he opened his eyes. He was… hovering?

“Are you okay?”
Midoriya looked up to see a girl with bouncy brown hair holding him up.

“I saw you falling, so I came to help. It’s bad luck to fall on an important day.”

“O-oh right. Um, thank you for helping me! How did you…”

“My quirk is anti-gravity. I made you float so you didn’t fall.”

Midoriya smiled at her. “That’s a cool quirk. Good luck on the exam.”

“You too” She skipped off. Midoriya hoped to talk to her again. She seemed genuinely empathetic.

Midoriya followed the map to the lecture hall. Once he entered onto the pitched floor, he quickly estimated about 200 kids clumped throughout the tiered seating, talking to peers. Midoriya spotted Mei. When he sat next to her, she started raving about new invention.

“You’ll definitely like it once it’s finished. I’m going to get a—”

“Quite down everybody!”

The students’ voices diminish as they stare at Pro Hero Midnight at the lectern.

“Thank you. I will be watching over the written exam. Before we begin I have a few guidelines to explain. If you have a cell phone, please deposit it into this bin here. If your phone goes off during the test, your test will officially end in that moment and be considered complete, regardless of how far you progressed in the material. Begin”

The room stirred as people rose from their seats. Midoriya followed, as he did not want to be the one student who had their phone interrupt the exam.

When everyone returned to their seats minus their cell phones, Midnight continued.
“Each section is worth 25% of the total written grade.” As she spoke, a third year student aid passed out booklets and sharpened pencils. “Do not crack the seal until I give the word. The sections are math, to be completed without a calculator; math with a calculator; reading and writing comprehension; and a written essay. If you did not bring a calculator, that is on you. The first section will be one hour. Good luck, your time starts now! Break the seals.”

After splitting the tape on the side of his booklet, he scanned the questions. Math may not be his favorite subject, but that didn’t mean he was bad at it. In fact, the problems were down right easy as far as he was concerned. He did not have to skip around much to find and solve the basic ones. When he found one he didn’t know immediately how to solve, he’d just move on. There’d be time at the end to finish those.

Midoriya made it to the end of the section with ten minutes to spare. In total he had skipped seven problems, so if he budgeted his time he could answer all of them. None of the were multiple choice, which could leave room for arithmetic error. Midoriya couldn’t imagine how hard it’d be to grade all of these tests by hand.

“Everybody, there is one minute left. Please finish whatever question you are on and close the book.”

One minute turned out to be just what he needed. Midoriya closed the test booklet just as the timer began to ring.

“Books closed everyone. You will not be able to go back and check answers. I’ll give you five minutes to stretch and then we’ll begin the next part.”

Midoriya threw his arms behind his back and rolled out the crick in his neck. He felt confident in his answers.

“Hey, Izuku, what did you get for finding the square root of i? I got one over the square root of two plus one over the square root of two times i.”

“I’m pretty sure it’s plus or minus, since the square root of a variable is two values.”

“Aw crap, I always forget that.”
“You probably got everything else right.”

The next parts go by in a similar manner. No multiple choice, just showing work and writing short answers. Finally, it was time for the essay.

“You will have 90 minutes to complete this essay. Whatever prewriting you have will also be graded, so please remember to do it. At least 30 kids last year barely annotated the reading,” she groused. Then her voice resumed it’s efficiency. “Good luck.”

Midoriya was glad Yuuei had a page on their website dedicated to essay prompts. The web page was broken up into three sections: Business course prompts, Gen Ed course prompts, and practice prompts for the written exam. There was also a help page. He had no idea how many hours he’d put into writing essays and checking them over with Yuuei staff. It was probably about as much time as he put into his physical training.

It payed off now. Midoriya had seen this prompt before on the website, albeit there were a few changes. This was his favorite subject by far. He loved being able to deconstruct and analyse literature, peeling away layers of understanding. His teachers told him he had a flair for it, and right now he hoped those compliments were more than diplomatic teacher politeness. Language teachers said he and Kacchan were the only ones who really understood the ‘meaning’ behind something.

Midoriya finished writing and looked up at the clock. Fifteen minutes left. Just enough time for him to read it over. His eyes glide over the paper, lips forming the words. He tries his best not to mumble, but based on a few pointed glares he didn’t succeed.

“All right everybody, times up. Pass your tests forward.” Midnight called out to everyone.

Midoriya could hear some grumbling protests from those who didn’t finish.

“If you have a portfolio or application essay to turn in, please do so now. Otherwise you can make your way to lecture hall three for a briefing on the physical exam.”

Midoriya and Mei walked down the aisle and to the front. Midnight was sifting through test booklets and arranging them alphabetically.
“Put them in the bin over there.” Midnight points to a plastic bin without looking up.

“Your quirk is so cool!” Midoriya blurts out. Midnight looks up at him.

“It’d be really helpful during a hostage incident since you’d just put all of the captors to sleep. Or if there was a villain ambush. Or if you were trying to help someone in hysterics. Or maybe…” Midoriya kept rambling. He had a list of situations that Midnight would excel in just like the rest of the pro heroes.

Midnight laughed. “You know, most people pay more attention to my costume than my quirk.”

“Well, yeah, your costume is functional. It gives you complete control over the potency of your sleep gas.”

Midnight laughed again. “Hey, aren’t you the kid All Might mentioned? With that sludge villain?”

“All Might… mentioned me?” Midoriya’s eyes grew comically wide.

“Yes I remember now! He said you had really thought out quirk theories. I thought you’d be trying out for the hero program.”

“I am! I’ve applied to both the hero and the general education courses.”

“What, not confident in yourself? Honestly, if All Might has a good word for you then you should be solid.”

“It’s not that… it’s the quirk demonstration I’m worried about.”

Midnight sighed. “I wish they’d change the exam already. They probably would have if the society wasn’t biased to more flashy quirks. Better headlines, you know. If you want some advice, though, I can tell you that they aren’t judging your quirk. It’s about how you use your situation to your advantage.”
“Th-Thank you, Midnight.”

“Good luck, kid.”

Midoriya and Mei walked down to the lecture hall. It wasn’t as noisy as the written exam room, but people were whispering among each other. Midoriya saw Kacchan sitting alone and moved to sit next to him. Kacchan just glared.

“You never told me about this ‘sludge villain’. You have to tell me the details!”

“Okay, okay, I will tell you when this is over.” Midoriya grinned at Mei.

“HELLO EVERYBODY!”

Midoriya’s attention was drawn to Present Mic in the middle of the room.

“Welcome to the physical exam! Before we begin, can I get a ‘Hey!’?”

Midoriya could practically hear the crickets.

Present Mic continued on without hesitating. “The aim of the physical is to destroy as many of the ‘villain’ robots as possible! Each robot has a point value of 1, 2, or 3 depending on their difficulty. There’s also a zero point robot, but we generally advise everyone to avoid these rather than fight them. Does everybody understand?”

There were more crickets.

“Great! I will put the testing locations on the screen, please go to where you are assigned!”

The screen behind Present Mic lit up. Scanning for his name, Midoriya realized he and Mei were in different locations.
“Dang it, I was hoping to use you as a dummy.” Mei said to him.

“What if I used you as a dummy?” Midoriya retorted

“You wouldn’t though. You’d just freeze up at the entrance and I’d have to save your butt by destroying the thing.”

“I don’t freeze!”

Mei’s eyebrow rose.

“Stop that, Mei.” Midoriya pushed her shoulder. Mei gave a loud laugh.

“Really though, I hope you do well. If you don’t then I’ll be in Yuuei without somebody to electrocute.”

“I’m so glad you only want me around to cause me bodily harm.”

Mei grinned at him and bumped his shoulder. Going outside, the two parted ways and head to their respective testing grounds.

There was a giant gate that towered over him. Outside of it were the examines. Midoriya looked around for someone he recognized. There was that girl with the bouncy hair. He should go talk to her and figure out her name.

Midoriya began to walk over when a voice called out to him.

“Hey! Green haired kid!”

Midoriya turns around to see a familiar face topped with blue hair.
“Wait, aren’t you the person I ran into at the park? I never got your name.” Midoriya said.

The teen stopped abruptly and bowed deep. “I am Iida Tenya. My apologies for knocking you over.”

“It’s cool!” *Did he say his name was Iida?* “Iida as in Ingenium, the pro hero?” Midoriya couldn’t stop the excitement in his voice.

“Ah!” Iida looked surprised. “Not many people recognize my name right away. My brother is Ingenium.”

“He’s such a cool hero! I made lots of notes on his quirk. I can show you after this if you’d like?”

“That would be most beneficial! Thank you!” Iida bowed again.

“No problem! My name is Midoriya Izuku.” He held out his hand for Iida to take.

“What are you all waiting for?” Present Mic’s voice came over the intercom, “The test has begun!”

Midoriya turned his head to see everyone sprinting off into the now open gates. He tried to catch up with them but was soon left in their dust.

Through the dust he saw the double doors had opened into a vast polished urban landscape. Uniform buildings rose into the sky like giant, empty rectangles. None of the structures bore names or logos or storefronts. It exuded a sanitized apocalypse, ghostly but clean. To punctuate the organized engineering, a line of glossy paved roads turned right angle corners, forming a proper grid. The robots could be lurking down any one of those corners, behind buildings.

Midoriya cautiously turned a corner from the center lane of a nameless street. Suddenly, he came face to face with a one of the robots. It stared down at him with yellow lenses. It stood at nearly twice his height. He could see the blaster revving up. Midoriya needed to move. How to destroy it before it destroyed him?

Fear paralyzed him.
None of his limbs could move. All he could do was stare back at the giant. The blaster glowed, readying a load of searing light, but before it fired, Midoriya saw a flash of blue. When the light subsided, all that remained of the robot was a pile of metal.

“Thank for distracting it for me. We probably won’t see each other again. Au revoir!” said a thin boy with sparkly blond hair. The boy ran away as fast as he had arrived.

Midoriya stood there in shock, but quickly regained his composure. He raced toward an open square, what might be a city center. That robot just the first one. He knew what to expect now and could take them down. He’d be fine.

Or so he thought, until he came to the center of the staged city. Everywhere he saw the destroyed remnants of robots. He ran into another sector and found even more parts and pieces. He saw Iida and the girl from the entrance both reaping the robots.

“28 points.” The girls said with heavy breath.

“45,” Iida said as he zoomed by.

45 points already?!? Midoriya was still at zero. There wasn’t enough time to catch up to them! Was this really it?

Midoriya was going to go running off again, but the ground started shaking. There was a low rumble and a regular pulse of movement. It also sounded like… footsteps?

Midoriya heard screams and saw people collectively running in one direction. The rumble grew louder, and now Midoriya heard the boom of collapsing buildings. Dust from the fallen rubble clouded his vision and made him cough. The dust settled and now Midoriya saw why people were running still.

Ahead of Midoriya loomed a robot so massive that it surpassed the height of the surrounding buildings. It bore fists the size and shape of school buses. Midoriya couldn’t even see the top of it without craning neck. The thing towered over Midoriya and cast a shadow dark enough to feel like it was late evening rather than just past noon. It was the Zero Point robot.
Midoriya knew he should run. There was no benefit to staying. Despite this, Midoriya’s eyes strayed and landed on something, or rather, some one. The brown hair that belonged to the girl was covered in dust and dirt yet it remained recognizable. She struggled under a sheet of thick concrete, pulling at her foot trapped under debris.

Midoriya doesn’t realize that he’s running to her until he’s there. Everyone else had preferred getting away over saving her. All in all, this was probably the stupidest thing he’d ever done, but Midoriya would be damned if he just left her there.

“Are you hurt?” He asked the girl.

“My ankle is twisted I think. I can’t reach the rubble on my leg.”

“I’m going to get you out.”

Midoriya ran over to her leg. A giant piece of cement was jutting out of the ground. Her leg was trapped underneath it. Her foot appeared to be at an unnatural angle. Midoriya tried to push the rock off of her. His muscles strained with the effort. Even after a minute of pushing, it never budged.

Midoriya jumped as the robot’s foot landed to the ground, throwing up a new wave of dust. The robot was only a few steps from crushing them.

“There’s not enough time for me to push this off. I have to stop the robot.”

Midoriya scanned the premise for anything that could help him. He could see rebar, shards of broken glass, and tons of cement. His eyes land on a long piece of rope from some banner.

*It’s bad luck to fall on an important day.*

Midoriya’s eyes widened. He could trip the robot.

Running over to grab the rebar and rope, Midoriya organized a plan. He tied the end of rope to one of the loose rebar and ran to the robot.
A giant hand whistled toward him, so he ducked into a makeshift roll. The knuckles like drain covers barely grazed his back, but Midoriya managed to elude the beast.

Winding around the feet, Midoriya leaped up to toss the end over the top of one foot. When it caught, he circled the other foot. He dodged to the left, to avoid another swipe, then snapped the rope upwards to wrap the the legs. It barely grazed Zero Robot’s ankles. He started to repeat the process, but before he could make a full revolution, the robot leg lifted and shook the ropes away like they were silly string. It was useless. Midoriya wasn’t fast enough to get the rope around the legs before it moved. He needed speed. Where could he get speed?

“Midoriya!”

Midoriya turned around to see Iida running towards him. Of course! Iida’s quirk was Engine just like Ingenium.

“Iida, we need to trip the robot! Can you run this rope around its legs?”

Iida nods and grabbed the rope from him. Midoriya watched as Iida’s engines came to life, an orange flame burning bright. Iida took off and circled the feet much faster than Midoriya could ever hope to run. The robot lifted its foot again, but this time the rope didn’t slide off. Midoriya ran over to Iida and held onto the rope with him. Midoriya could feel the force of the robot threaten to pull the rope away but he held on.

Unable to walk, the robot visibly lost its balance. Midoriya saw the head tip forward, followed by the body. He and Iida finally let go of the rope, as the robot leaned into one of the still intact buildings, across from where the girl lay. The building collapsed under the weight of the robot.

“Yeah! Wooohooo! We did it Iida!” Midoriya shouts. He remembered the purpose of tripping the robot in the first place and raced over to the trapped girl.

“Iida come over here and help me push.”

With the strength of both of them combined, Midoriya feels a slight shift in the cement. The rock moves up barely an inch, but it’s enough for the girl to pull out her foot.
“Is your foot okay? I can help you walk to the—“

A loud buzzer sounds off. Midoriya hears the intercom come on again.

“The test has ended. Please exit the facility. If you are injured, stay where you are.”

It’s over. He’d been so busy trying to help one of the people he was competing with that he didn’t go looking for any robots worth points. Midoriya felt tears burn his eyes.

“I just wanted one point…” He doesn’t notice the guilty look on the girl’s face.

“Well, you’ve certainly done some damage.” An older woman walked over to them. She has a large syringe pinning up her hair.

“Don’t worry, that twisting ankle will only take a minute to fix up.”

The woman bent down and placed a wet kiss on the girl’s ankle. In a few seconds the ankle turned back into a natural position.

“I feel tired.” The girl said.

“What’d you expect? It’s a twisted ankle. You two,” she pointed her finger at him and Iida. “Let me see your hands.”

She looked over their hands with a disgruntled expression. “Mild rope burn. Get some burn cream on them when you get home you’ll be fine.” With that the lady left to treat others.

Midoriya hung his head low as he left the city scape. He felt angry at himself. Not even one single point earned. He’d have to kiss the hero course goodbye after that farce of a show. Midoriya hoped that he’d still be allowed into general education but that was a fat chance.

The gate to Yuuei was no longer foreboding, yet seeing it didn’t ease him.
“Izuku, wait up!”

Midoriya turned around to see Mei running over to him. She had a bright smile on her face.

“Hey, Mei. How did you do in the physical?”

“Terrible. I didn’t get a single point.” Her smile never fell.

“Why are you happy about that?”

“You only need a good score on the physical for the hero course. I’m going to support, and once they see my babies they’d be idiots not to accept me.” If anything her smile got bigger. “And how did you do Mr. I’m-going-to-be-the-first-quirkless-hero?”

Midoriya laughed. “You totally called it.”

“Called what?” Her eyebrows dip in confusion.

“I froze like a deer in headlights. Right at the start, too. Someone with a laser saved me.”

Mei threw her head back and laughed hard. “See what I mean? I’m calling it right now; this whole setup was a conspiracy to keep us apart. The staff must have known that together we’d have taken down everything so fast that nobody else would have had a chance.”

“ Apart we both get nothing but together we get everything, even the points from the other testing areas,” he joked along with her.

“Of course. Just grab a working blaster then storm the other facilities. We’d have gotten so many points. They should just call this a mistrial or something so we can be together.”

Both of them laughed together. Mei was a special friend to cheer him worked. After that
performance, he really needed it.

Midoriya was content to walk home with Mei when he heard his name being called again. When he turned around, Iida was running to them. The boy bowed deeply once he’d gotten to them.

“Midoriya, I’d like to apologize.”

“Apologize? For what?”

“When I first saw you, I didn’t recognize you. I didn’t really think you belonged with everyone else who were trying out for Yuuei. I went over to prevent you from distracting the girl. My prejudgment of you was completely wrong and seeing you run in to help her for no benefit to yourself made me realize that. I hope you can forgive me.”

“Of course I forgive you. Oh! Do you still want to see the notes I have on Ingenium?”

“Yes, that sounds great.”

Midoriya reached into his bag a pulled out his hero analysis journal. He flipped to the page on Ingenium and held it out to Iida.

After reading for a moment, Iida spoke up. “These notes are incredibly detailed! I never considered only activating one engine at a time.”

“Try it!” Midoriya grinned.

Iida walked a few paces before lifting his leg. Iida concentrated hard since only activating one engine required a completely different tactic than igniting both. A fire bloomed on one leg while the other remained dormant. As the leg lit up, the propulsive force threw Iida off balance. In only a few seconds, he was on the ground groaning.

Midoriya paced back and forth while contemplating what went wrong.
“It could be your center of gravity. If you lean back more, the force won’t knock you down. You also probably don’t need as much power behind the engine since you aren’t running.”

“Less power, lean back. I’m going to try this again.”

Iida leaned until his back was almost perpendicular with his other leg. The flame started again, but this time it was smaller. Iida started rotating on his leg like a wheel on an axle.

“Yes!” Midoriya shouts. He’d never had a chance to test out his theories. Seeing it work boosted his mood.

“You can do so much with this! When you’re running you can use this to make a sharp turn, or if you’re fighting you can put more power into a kick!” Midoriya rambled. He was so excited to see the limits of Iida’s quirk.

“May I take a photo of your notes? I feel like my brother and I can benefit from them.”

“Yes of course! I can work with you on it as well, if you want!”

Iida nodded his head. “That sounds great. I hope to see you in the hero course, Midoriya.” Midoriya felt a swell of pride at his words. Iida thought he deserved to be in the hero course.

“I will do my best!”

Midoriya was working with Hatsume-Sensei. It had been five days since the exam. Right now he was learning shoulder throws. The longer he went without an answer from Yuuei, the more he worried. He wanted to get in so badly, but would Yuuei even allow a quirkless kid to enter?

“You’re in your own head again, aren’t you?” Midoriya looks over at Hatsume-Sensei. “You know that just putting on a smile and cheerful attitude isn’t going to fool me, right Midoriya-kun?”
“Sorry…” he replies.

“How about instead of being sorry, you tell me what’s up. I can’t help if I don’t know what’s got you down.”

Midoriya is quiet for a moment before letting his smile drop into a frown. “I did horrible on the physical exam. What if I don’t get in?”

Hatsume-Sensei shrugged. “If you don’t get in you don’t get in.”

“But—”

“You’re so focused on Yuuei that you can’t see the bigger picture. Wanting to go to Yuuei because your idol went there is fine but not when it prevents you from being your own person. I’m not here to train an All Might 2.0. I’m here to train you, Midoriya-kun. Tell me, are you just going to quit if you don’t make it?”

“Yes.” He grumbled.

Hatsume-Sensei gave him a glare only a mom could muster while Midoriya’s face contorted into a You-asked-for-it expression.

“I don’t have time for your sass. Answer my question.”

Midoriya sighed. “I don’t want to quit. I’m just worried.”

“It’s okay to be worried, but let’s say you really didn’t pass. What are you going to do about it?”

Midoriya was quiet for a moment. “The Shiketsu entrance exam is in two weeks. If I don’t make Yuuei I can try there.”

“That’s a start, Midoriya-kun. The world isn’t going to end if you fail.”
“I was just so terrified. Everyone else was destroying those robots left and right, but I was just frozen. I’m not supposed to be so afraid.”

“Midoriya-kun, it’s a naive ideal I think that heroes don’t feel fear. Fear is a part of us. If you want, we can work on building your confidence. Just know that you will always find yourself in a situation where confidence isn’t enough.”

Midoriya took a shaky breath in. “Thank you, Hatsume-Sensei.”

“No problem, kid. In my personal opinion, though, that school would be foolish not to accept you. Already you’re more compassionate than some current heroes.”

Midoriya mumbled a ‘stop’ as a blush grew on his face. Hatsume-Sensei just laughed.

“Come on, we still have practice to do. Let’s see that throw.”

Midoriya smiled. Leave it to Hatsume-Sensei to attack the problem at its source.

Midoriya went home sore that night. Dinner was much the same as it always was with Inko asking him about his day and him responding. He’d gone to his room for the night when he heard a crash in the hall. Midoriya opens the door to see his mom hurrying to him.

“Izuku, it’s here! The letter from Yuuei, it’s here!”

Midoriya grabbed the envelope from her and ran back into his room. He took a deep breath as he sat down at his desk. The letter bared an intricate seal with the Yuuei logo on top. It was addressed to him. In a sense, it was Schrödinger’s Letter. Right now, he was both accepted and denied at the same time, and he would only collapse into one state once he opened the letter.

He just had to rip off the band-aid. Midoriya tore open the envelope and two things fell out. One was a paper with writing on it, the other a small video projector. With a press of a button, the projector turned on and Midoriya sees a holographic projection of Pro Hero Ectoplasm.
“Good evening, Midoriya. I have the results of all of your tests. For the written, your score was once of the highest out of everyone who took it. The cut off was reaching the 70th percentile. Your score was in the 96th percentile. This score is something you should be very proud of. For the quirk demonstration, despite not using a quirk, you scored five points as you showed the judges your problem solving abilities were strong and that you can be reliable without using a quirk. Your physical score is really what I want to talk about though. You did not score any points from destroying robots. Despite this, there is something you should see.”

Behind Ectoplasm, a TV screen came to life. Midoriya gasped as he sees the girl from before walk in front of the camera.

“Umm hello? Present Mic-san?”

“Yes?”

“I want to give someone my points. The kid with the green hair… he saved my life. He mentioned that he didn’t have any points so I wanted to give him some of mine, as gratitude.”

“You cannot give other people points. Do not worry though, the student will be fine.”

After that, Ectoplasm cuts the footage.

“When you ran to that girl’s aid during the physical for no benefit to yourself, you demonstrated the quality we here at Yuuei want most in our heroes-to-be: selflessness. It is why we have a second point system in the physical we keep secret. These points are called rescue points, and your actions earned you a total of 27 points.”

Midoriya felt his chest swell. He’d gotten points. Maybe he did get in to hero program.

“Sadly, your total score is not enough to qualify for the hero course.” Midoriya felt his soul deflate on the spot. “Do not be discouraged. I have your Essay for the general education course right here. As the head of the general education department, I read and graded all of the essays. Yours was the most well written out of all of them.” Midoriya’s eyes widen. “You’ve probably figured out what I’m about to say. Congratulations Midoriya Izuku, you have been admitted into class 1-C, my class. I expect you will do great things in the future.”
With that, the hologram turned off, and Midoriya left the room, screaming for his mom.

Chapter End Notes

How many movie references can I cram into one chapter?

Idk but it sure is a lot.

Anyways, I really hope you enjoyed, I had a lot of fun writing this chapter and setting up an Iida & Midoriya friendship.

Next chapter is Midoriya’s first week at Yuuei!
Welcome to Yuuei

Chapter Summary

It's Midoriya's first day at Yuuei. What could go wrong? The rat probably has something to do with it. Along the way, Midoriya some how gains a colorful band of loser friends.

Chapter Notes

Happy Friday! Thank you all for the awesome comments I got last chapter, please keep them coming. The OC interactions were so much fun to write, so I hope you all enjoy.

Also I'm a hardcore Shindeku shipper so if at any point it seems like Shinsou is flirting, that's why. I don't think I'll make it a romantic pairing in this story since this is about Midoriya's development to becoming a hero.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Midoriya stared up at the sign above him. On it read 1-A. His class room was further down the hall, but he wanted to see the hero kids first. Midoriya’s journal was in his hand. He had about 15 minutes before class started, so he could use that time to take notes on the hero kids’ quirks.

“Oh hey! I’m so glad you made it!” Midoriya turned around to see the girl with brown hair walking towards him. “Well, after you.” She motions to the door.

“Oh I’m not in this class.” Midoriya laughed. “I’m in general education, class 1-C.”

“Really? I guess I assumed you wanted to be a hero with how you acted during the exam.”

“I do want to be a hero! I just, um, don’t have a really flashy quirk.” He scratched his head nervously.

“That’s no fair. Well, have fun.” She smiled at him and Midoriya realized he still didn’t know her name. “What’s your name?” He asked.
“Oh! I’m Uraraka Ochako. See you later?”

“Yeah, see you.” Midoriya watched Uraraka go into the class. From outside, he could hear Iida’s voice yelling at someone about feet on the desk. Midoriya rolled his eyes. Already, he managed to find a colorful cast of friends. At least, he hoped they were his friends. He hadn’t told them he was quirkless yet.

Midoriya walked away along the hallway. Some kids were milling around at the intersections. Windows lined the outfitting wall. He could see the Yuuei gate at the bottom. It looked much smaller from a few floors up into the air.

Midoriya followed the map to his class. The door was large and a plain grey. Above it, a sign said 1-C. Midoriya took a deep breath and pushed open the door. He flinched back from how loud it was inside. People were laughing and conversing. No one spared a glance in his direction. A kid was bouncing around from group to group. He was trying to get the attention of others.

“Hello! What’s your—” The kid was pushed away as someone else joined the conversation. He pouted when the group ignored him. Midoriya felt bad for him.

The kid looked over at the now open door. He made a beeline to Midoriya. Some classmates sent the kid looks of annoyance as he pushed through them to get to the door.

“Hello there! I’m your new classmate, Tensou Enerugii! Would you like to sit next to me? I can help you with your stuff!”

_Is this what people perceive me when I get hyper excited?_ Midoriya pondered. Tensou spoke a mile a minute and it didn’t even phase him. The boy was wearing what looked like multiple winter coats over his uniform.

“Sure! Where do you sit?” Tensou’s expression went from excitement to surprise to even more excitement in the span of less than a second.

“Over here!” Tensou turned on his heel and started pushing through more people to get to a seat in the far corner. The annoyed faces on the other students faces changed to pitied amusement when they watched Midoriya follow. Midoriya tossed his bag down on an empty beige desk and took a seat next to Tensou.
“My name’s Midoriya Izuku.” Midoriya holds out his hand for Tensou to shake. When he looked at the outstretched hand, Tensou got nervous.

“I, um, can’t really touch you. My quirk and all.” Tensou laughed.

“Oh what’s your quirk?”

“Energy transfer. If I touch people, I steal their energy and they get cold and tired like me.”

“That’s awesome! Can I see?”

Tensou blinked slowly. “You want to have your energy stolen? I mean, I guess I can show you…”

Tensou grabbed his hand. It felt extremely cold, like one would expect of a dead body. Midoriya could feel the cold traveling up his arm. His fingers ached. It felt like he’d grabbed an icicle without gloves. Midoriya released his hand and grabbed his journal from his bag.

Midoriya began to jot down a few notes. He wondered if Tensou could transfer energy other than thermal. Maybe it applied to all types of kinetic energy. He’d have to test if Tensou could also absorb sound and light. ‘Transfer’ also means emitting energy. Could Tensou give people energy as well? That would be very useful in a battle since he could help people keep moving even if they’re tired.

“You got all of that from one touch?!”

Midoriya craned his neck away from his journal to see Tensou mouth agape. Goddamn mumbling again. He really needs to fix that.

“I guess. You have a cool quirk. It’d be fun applying to different situations.”

“You really think so?” Midoriya nods. “Thank you so much! Is your quirk like, analysis or something?”

Midoriya scratched his head. He knew someone would ask sooner or later. He really wished it had
been the latter.

“Well, you see—”

“Hey.”

Midoriya turns away to see another boy staring at him. The boy had wild purple hair that appears to have forgone being brushed. Midoriya could guess that he didn’t sleep well by the deep eye bags.

“Your stuff.” The boy said. “It’s on my desk.”

Midoriya looked over at his bag. He had set it down on the desk next to the one he sat at since it was empty. Midoriya scrambled to put all of his stuff away.

“Sorry about that! My name’s Midoriya.” He smiled up at the boy. Midoriya watched as the boy ghosts into his seat without a reply. Taking out a book, the boy showed no interest in conversation.

Midoriya’s eyes were drawn to the door when it opened again. In walked Ectoplasm. “To your seats, everyone, I don’t have all day.”

The students made their ways to the different desks. All of them were aligned in four neat rows of five. The back three were taken by Tensou, him, and the purple kid.

“Welcome to General Education. I’m sure you know me, so we’ll save introductions for later. General Education is not a rejection program for the hero course. Your expectations will be just as high as them since you are in a Yuuei course. The standard classes you will all take are at a higher level than if you were in any other course. I will pass out your schedules. Spend the rest of homeroom however.”

When Midoriya got his schedule, Tensou was already climbing over his desk to compare it to his.

“Math is first period. Will you let me borrow your notes? I have a hard time paying attention to teachers.”
“Sure.” Midoriya turns to the kid next to him. “What do you have first period?”

Finally, he looks up at Midoriya. “Math.” And back to looking at his book. The bell begins to ring, and the boy walks away before Midoriya could talk to him.

“C’mon let’s go.” Tensou got up and ran out.

In the hallway, Tensou was telling Midoriya about his time in middle school.

“Gii-Chan wait up!”

Midoriya turns around to see a girl running over to them. She stood about a foot over Midoriya but Tensou stood a few inches over her.

“I found my rat!” The girl is smiling wide as she held out a plump rodent.

“Why did you bring her to school? The teachers are going to freak!”

“Come on, Ayame isn’t scary.” The girl turns her head and *wow her irises are completely white.* “Who’s the little green bean?”

“Green bean?” Midoriya asked confused. “Why do you have a rat?”

“This is my pet Ayame! She keeps running away.” The girl holds the animal out to Midoriya. Ayame reaches for him and squeaks.

“This is Midoriya! He has this really cool analysis quirk. We just met and he was asking questions about my quirk I’d never even thought of!”

The girl looks him right into his eyes. “Analyze me.”
“Analyze you? Umm, well, your quirk has something to do with vision, right?”

She nods. “I’m a dream walker. I can see other people’s dreams when I sleep.”

“That’d be pretty handy for getting information. If you were trying to get information from someone, all you’d have to do is fall asleep. Can you dream walk when you are awake? That would be easier since you could relay information easier than if you were also asleep. Or maybe dream walking while your awake only lets you see daydreams…” Midoriya looked at her to see a lost expression.

“Hot damn.” She said.

“I know right!” Tensou exclaimed. “Do you have math first period too, Yu-Chan?”

“No I have English Language class. Hopefully I’ll see you later.”

“Bye!” Tensou called as she walked into an adjacent hallway.

“Who was that?” Midoriya asked him.

“That was my best friend. Her name is Aruku Yume, but I just call her Yu-Chan. We’ve been friends since we were five years old.”

Midoriya smiled. Things were already going better than middle school. He could now count two friends on his fingers, maybe even a third if Aruku joins their band of misfits.

Math was boring to say the least. Cementoss was their teacher, and boy did he drone. They were mostly just given practice problems to finish. Some groups of people spoke in hushed tones with each other. Cementoss chastised them, and silence fell once again. History was very much the same, droning teacher teaching a lesson he already knows. Midoriya couldn’t wait to get to third period. Even in middle school, Quirk Theory class was fun.

The bell rung and Midoriya put his stuff away.
“Hey Midoriya, do you know what we have to do for homework. It’s really confusing.”

“I can help you with it after school if you want?”

“Thank you! What class do you have next?”

“My third period is quirk theory.”

“Dang, I don’t have that.” Tensou pouted.

“See you at lunch then?”

“Yeah! See you!” Tensou skipped off in the other direction.

Midoriya made his way to the quirk theory classroom. He recognized the teacher’s name on the schedule, but couldn’t quite place it. Seeing the hero would jog his memory. He got to the class with a few minutes to spare. Midoriya scanned the class. The only person he somewhat knew was the purple haired kid in the back. Midoriya plopped into the seat next to him.

“What’s that book about?” Midoriya asked him.

The boy looked up at him. “It’s a fantasy story, written before quirks.” His head dropped back down. Looks like conversation was going to be a challenge. Midoriya liked challenges.

“What’s your name?” When the boy didn’t move, Midoriya spoke again. “My name’s Midoriya.”

“You mentioned already.” He said.

“Well then, aren’t you going to tell me yours?”
The boy starts glaring at him. “I’m not here for small talk. I’m to be a hero so leave me alone.”

A challenge, indeed. At least Midoriya had the boy talking now. “I want to be a hero too! I’ve been learning judo for awhile now.”

The boy smirked at him. “You better keep up then. I don’t plan on going easy.”

Midoriya smiled. Bingo. He might not have the boy’s name yet, but getting him to speak up was the first step.

“Settle down everyone, I already have a headache.”

The room quieted at once. Midoriya looked up at their teacher. He had shaggy black hair and scarves wrapped around his frame. Midoriya recognized him instantly.

“It’s Eraserhead.” After Hatsume-Sensei told him about the hero, Midoriya had researched all that there was of the hero. The man was good at staying hidden; the only videos that existed of him were granny dark footage.

Eraserhead sighed. “Refer to me by Aizawa, please.” Aizawa began to write on the blackboard. “I need to do a baseline. Take out a sheet of paper and write this scenario down. Turn it in at the end of class.”

Midoriya read the board. You are a civilian with a telekinesis quirk. The alley you are in is closed off and in front of you is a villain with an unknown quirk. What do you do?

“I’m going to take a nap. Good lu—”

A faint squeaking filled the air. Aizawa walked over to the air vent on the wall. The vent burst and out came a familiar white rat.

“Ayame? How did you get into the vent?” Midoriya bent down to pick up the rodent. Once in his arms, the rat climbed him and found a comfortable position curled up in Midoriya’s hair. Aizawa’s eyes bored into his soul. Midoriya had the audacity to look sheepish. Aizawa put his hand to his face
and sighed deeply.

“It’s only the first day of school, Shouta.” Aizawa mimicked a high pitch voice. “What on earth could go wrong? Everything, Hizashi. Everything will go wrong. Just finish your work everyone.”

The room settled down and Midoriya got to work. The rat chittered as he scribbled. Telekinesis is a tricky quirk to work with. People like his mom were limited to small uses, while others had a wide range of their ability. Given how the question said ‘citizen’, Midoriya assumed that less power was the way to go.

Since there was no place to run, the best option would be use the surrounding materials. Alleyways generally have dumpsters, so there’d be a lot of small items to throw. The villain had an unknown quirk, which ruled out mutant quirks. Emitter quirks generally prefer range fighting or close combat, so the best place to be was close enough that they cannot use a ranged quirk, but not close enough for be touched. Plus, if you keep launching small items, it would disorient the villain and prevent him or her from accurately using a quirk.

The villain wouldn’t give him time to type out a quick a text, so the best way to get the attention of the heroes would be to make as much noise as possible. Even the weakest telekinesis quirk could fire a rock or brick into a nearby car window, setting off the alarm. Do that a few times, and the villain might even race off before reinforcements appear.

“Your mumbling is making Aizawa glare.” He heard a whisper at his side.

Midoriya shut his mouth. “Sorry.”

“Don’t apologize to me. Apologize to the grump.”

“Right.” Not even one day in and his teacher already hates him. Great.

Midoriya writes in a concluding sentence just as the bell rings. People start chatting and placing their papers into the bin up front. Midoriya felt Ayame tighten her grip on his scalp as he stood up. Aizawa gave him a tired expression.

“Keep that rat out of my classroom, Midoriya. I don’t want to spend my free time cleaning up rat droppings.”
“S-sorry sir. I won’t let it happen again.” Midoriya ignored the fact that Ayame wasn’t even his and he therefore had no responsibility for her. He handed over his paper. Aizawa took it and began to read it over. Of course Aizawa would read his first. He must be on the teachers shit list.

Midoriya made his way down to the lunch room. The place was huge. Students were laughing and screaming everywhere. Some gathered in small clusters, others lounged atop tables that encompassed their whole class. Midoriya spots Purple Hair sitting alone in the back corner. Midoriya walked up to him and smiled.

“Ready to tell me your name?” The boy didn’t look up at him, but Midoriya could see a lip twitch in the trace of a smile. “Of course you’re not.” Midoriya sat down anyway and pulled out the bento his mom made. There was a few minutes of silence between them before Midoriya spoke again.

“I really don’t like calling you the Purple Hair in my head.” Midoriya saw him hide a larger smile.

“Fine, fine, I’ll tell you my name. It’s Shinsou.”

Midoriya felt his lips curl up. “I win.”

“Yes, you win. Can I go back to reading now?” Midoriya nodded and Shinsou’s head dropped back down. A few minutes later, Midoriya heard a familiar voice.

“Man, you really like sitting in the back. I could hardly see you back here!” Tensou took a seat on his left. He looked over at Shinsou and his eyes widened.

“Midoriya, you know who that is, right?” Tensou whispered to him. “That’s Shinsou Hitoshi. I heard from some people he had a villainous quirk.”

Shinsou flipped a page in his book. He appeared to still be reading.

“I don’t know. I just assumed someone as nice as you wouldn’t want to hang out with someone like that.”
Shinsou flipped another page. Midoriya could see his knuckles turn placid.

“You do realize that he’s listening to everything you’re saying, right?”

Tensou’s face turned pale. Shinsou sighed and moved to stand up.

“Shin—”

“No, I understand. You don’t want to hang out with the ‘villain kid’. I heard it all before.”

Shinsou starts walking away with his lunch.

“Wait!”

Shinsou turns around to face him.

“Tensou, apologize.”

Tensou gave Midoriya a bewildered look. Midoriya narrowed his eyes at him.

“S-sorry, Shinsou. I didn’t mean to be, well, mean.”

Shinsou stood still for a moment. Then he took a seat again. “Apology accepted, I guess.”

“What is your quirk, if you don’t mind me asking?” Midoriya said.

“Brainwashing. I control people.”

“That’s not villainous, though! You could save lots of people since you’d be able to stop fights
before they began. You’d be a great hero!”

Shinsou looked surprised. “You don’t have to say that, you know. You aren’t going to hurt my feelings.”

“I mean it! All you have to do is take control of a villain and boom, you win.”

Shinsou laughs. “You are something else, Midoriya.”

“Oh, that’s right!” Midoriya turned his head to Tensou. “You were going to tell me more about your analysis quirk.”

Midoriya chuckled awkwardly. “About that… I actually don’t have an analysis quirk. Or a quirk in general.”

Tensou looked at him confused. Of course he’s going to make me spell it out.

“I’m quirkless.”

“Wait really?! But you’re so good at analyzing quirks and stuff. Are you sure?”

Midoriya sighed. “Yes, I’m sure. I am just as quirkless now as I was when I was four.”

“You still want to be a hero,” Shinsou said. Midoriya turned to him, expecting to see a doubtful expression, but Shinsou’s face was one of curiosity instead.

“Obviously. I have to keep up with you, right?”

Shinsou laughed. “You’re crazy.” Midoriya had heard those words so many times, so the lack of maliciousness was refreshing. Midoriya was glad that his friends were taking it so well. He had feared they’d just leave him like everyone else in middle school.
“Gii-Chan! Midoriya! Some other kid!”

Aruku hurried to them. She was balancing food and her school supplies in her hands as she wove through lunch tables.

“Are you guys excited for next period? I know I am. Apparently the gen ed course gives students a taste of everything. We get a mini hero class next!”

“That’s so cool!” Midoriya’s eyes lit up. “Oh, wait.” Midoriya reached into his hair and pulled out a now disgruntled rat, freshly woken from her peaceful nap. “She got into an air vent, I think.”

Aruku gasped. “I had no idea she left her cage.” Aruku pulled out a small metal box. Some of the metal was broken in the corner. “Ayame! Don’t chew through the cage!”

Ayame squeaked in a pattern that sounded suspiciously like mockery.

“She was too much trouble, was she?”

“Other than the fact that she made my quirk theory teacher hate me, she was actually really well behaved.”

“Oh that’s not a big deal. Once they see you analyze the crap out of everything, they’ll love you.”

“Yu-Chan, Midoriya is actually quirkless.”

She looked surprised. “Damn. I would have never guessed. That’s actually really cool.”

“You think so?” Midoriya asked.

“Yeah, totally!” She took a seat opposite of Tensou. “I mean, you got into Yuuei! I doubt a quirkless person has ever gotten as far as you have.”
“Thanks, Aruku.”

Midoriya watched more people file into the lunch hall. He spotted Uraraka and Iida sitting at a table with all the hero kids. Thankfully, Kacchan was absent. He waved at the two of them. When Uraraka saw him, she got Iida’s attention. The two of them stood up and earned a few questioning looks from their peers.

“It is great to see that you made it, Midoriya. Though, I was disappointed when I didn’t see you in 1-A,” Iida called over to him. He and Uraraka segued toward Midoriya’s table.

“Bruh you’re friends with the hero kids? Stop being so cool, Midoriya, or we’ll have to ban you from the losers club.”

“I did not agree to that name!” Shinsou points a finger at Aruku. She just shrugs. “You sat here.” The two continued to bicker about the ‘group name’ of all things in the background.

“Your name’s Midoriya?” Uraraka asked. “I thought it was Deku. That’s what Bakugou called you at the exam.”

“Ah that’s um… Deku isn’t my name. It’s actually an insult.”

“Oh! I’m sorry. It sounded really cute, like dekiru.”

Midoriya smiled up at her. “Then why don’t you call me that? I like the sound of it.”

“Alright, Dekiru-kun!” She grins at him.

“Oooh, can I call you that too?” Aruku asked.

Midoriya nodded.

“Welcome to the losers squad, Dekiru-kun.” She either didn’t hear Shinsou’s protests or chose to ignore them completely.
“So how were your classes, Midoriya?” Iida asked him.

“I’m pretty sure Aizawa-Sensei, my quirk theory teacher, hates me.”

Uraraka’s lips turned down into pity. “Aizawa is the hero course teacher. He seems pretty harsh. Not even one day in and he’s already expelled a kid.”

“Not expelled.” Iida adds, and Midoriya feels a flash of relief. “The kid was just moved down into 1-B since he wasn’t taking the test seriously. What was his name again?”

“Monoma Neito, I think. He seemed pretty cocky.”

“Wonderful.” Midoriya sighs. “The one teacher that I wanted to please is the one I screwed up with.”

“Don’t be so harsh on yourself, Dekiru-kun. I’m sure he’ll like you eventually.”

Midoriya wasn’t so sure.

Uraraka started asking questions to the others. With her and Iida, the conversation was lively. People were cracking jokes and talking about their day so far. Midoriya could even see Shinsou cracking a smile. He’d been missing out on so much in middle school. Back then, he was under the impression that Kacchan was the best friend he would even get. Not once had the laughter at the table been directed at him or his situation. It was nice. Having friends, real friends, was the best thing that could have happened to him.

“Having fun there, Izuku?”

Midoriya turned around, a smile already on his face. Mei plopped down on the opposite side of the table.

“Well aren’t you just Mr. Popular, hanging out with hero kids. You won’t forget about me now that you have your own little harem here, right?”
“Stop that, Mei.” He pushed her a bit. She laughed.

“Wouldn’t be able to forget about you if I tried. You’d just come up and explode me again.”

They both laughed at that. Mei joined in Uraraka’s questions, and started telling them embarrassing stories featuring Midoriya. Real friends, Midoriya decided, were way better than whatever relationship he had with Kacchan.

———

Midoriya walked into the gymnasium. The ceiling rose high above him, like that of a warehouse. Ectoplasm stood in the center, waiting for class 1-C to gather around him.

“We’re going to be doing some exercises today.” That received a long groan from the students. “Oh come off it. It won’t be that hard. I know a lot of you want to transfer into the hero course, so this will be your first look. You’d be doing work much more rigorous there. To begin, I want to see how much you all know about self defense. Break up into groups of two and start sparring.”

The students started chatting immediately. Midoriya could see his classmates pair up with their friends. Tensou walked over to him.

“Want to spar together? I’ve never done it before.”

The two of them found an unoccupied mat. Tensou seemed uncertain.

“So, I just try to hit you?” Midoriya nodded. Tensou raised a fist. It was aimed at Midoriya’s face. Training kicking it, Midoriya reached up and grabbed his fist despite how cold it was. It had much less force behind it than Midoriya was used to. Tensou’s eyes grew wide. On autopilot, Midoriya twisted Tensou’s wrist to the left.

“Ow ow ow ow!” Tensou’s face scrunched up. Midoriya let go, and Tensou started nursing his hand.
“How did you do that?”

Midoriya shrugged. “I take judo.”

“Yu-Chan is right, you need to chill with the awesome.”

Midoriya laughed. “Come on, go again.”

Tensou threw another punch, stronger this time. Midoriya dodged it, ducking down under the arm and kicking out his leg. His leg sweeps through those of Tensou. He lands on the ground with a grunt.

“You really aren’t playing around.” Tensou told him as Midoriya helped him of the ground. “I’m regretting choosing you as my partner.”

“Everyone! Listen up!” Ectoplasm calls out to them. “I can tell most of you aren’t putting in any effort, so we’re going to do things differently.”

Tensou sighed in relief. Now he didn’t have to be beaten by Midoriya.

“Sit down.” Ectoplasm instructed. “I will call two students up to spar in front of the class.” Some of the kids began to protest but Ectoplasm was having none of it. “If you didn’t want to spar in front of the class, you should have spent more effort alone. First up, Midoriya and Aruku.” He read from the class roster.

Midoriya walked up onto the mat. Aruku gave him a cocky grin and held up her arms, her white eyes sparkling in excitement. Midoriya noticed that she had no defined stance, and her hands were open wide. Hatsume-Sensei had told him what to expect from taller opponents. They always believed the advantage they gained from height is bigger than it really is.

“Start.”

Aruku made her first mistake when she tried to rush him, just as he predicted she would. In one swift movement, he stepped out of the way, and she ran off the mat. Aruku turned around, appearing
slightly aggravated.

“What, afraid to hit a girl? I’ll survive.” Second mistake, he thought. She rushed forward again. He grabbed her outstretched arm and pulled it over his shoulder. Aruku coughed loudly when her back slammed into the mat. She rolled over and breathed in, but she didn’t stand up. Third mistake. Midoriya reached down and pulled her arm out as she tried to stand up. He twisted the arm and pushed it into her back.

“Okay, okay I’m out, I’m out.” She grunts out. Ectoplasm nodded. He calls out the next group and Midoriya took a seat to watch. Midoriya realized how completely inexperienced everyone else was. The boy up threw a clunky punch, but so slow that if Midoriya had been up there, he would have landed multiple hits. It looked like nobody actually cared, and that made Midoriya angry. Why should they be at Yuuei if they weren’t going to work for it?

He was called up a few more times. The first one he ended the fight by getting his opponent into a choke hold and the second he did the same sweeping kick he did to Tensou. Ectoplasm had him demonstrate the move for the class.

Midoriya now stood in front of the class after winning his fifth spar. “Alright everyone.” Ectoplasm spoke. “I will give extra credit to whoever tries to pin Midoriya. If Midoriya wins, he gets the extra credit.”

The room was silent. Some students looked between each other and whispered if they should go for it. A few appeared nervous even.

“Nobody? Alright the—”

“I’ll fight.”

Midoriya’s eyes landed on the the person the voice came from. Shinsou stood there, and made his way to the mat. He wore a blank expression. Just like everyone else in the room, he didn’t have a concrete stance, yet there was something different about him. Shinsou held none of the cocky air that Aruku had, despite their heights being similar.

“Start.”
Shinsou moved. He didn’t go straight for an attack. Instead, he started to circle Midoriya. He was waiting for something. *He wants me to attack first,* Midoriya realized. In all of Midoriya’s other fights, he’d waited for his opponents to hit first. Midoriya clenched his fists and saw Shinsou’s eyes flicker down, confirming his suspicions. Shinsou was going to use his strategy against him. Very clever.

Midoriya rose his arm to be in line with Shinsou’s face. Shinsou was ready for it and brought up his arms protectively. Midoriya smirked. *Too easy.* Without his arms covering his chest, Shinsou was defenseless. He seemed to realized this just a little too late as Midoriya swung his leg into Shinsou’s abdomen, forgoing his punch entirely.

Shinsou clutched his stomach as he was knocked off balance. This didn’t deter him though, because just a quickly he was rushing Midoriya. Midoriya was caught off guard when Shinsou wrapped his arms around his torso, trying to push him down. That kick was always enough to end a fight with his usual sparring partner, Mei. In the next second, Midoriya regained his composure.

He wouldn’t be able to get Shinsou’s arms off of him, not with the way he locked them together. Instead, Midoriya lifted his legs and wrapped them over Shinsou’s thighs. He pulled his head into the crook of Shinsou’s neck before leaning all of his weight backwards. Shinsou fell forward. When Midoriya felt the mat against his back, he used the momentum from the fall to roll Shinsou onto his back.

Shinsou had let go of his torso sometime during the fall. Midoriya grabbed them and pinned them over Shinsou’s head.

“I win.”

Shinsou rolled his eyes.

“Good job both of you.” Ectoplasm said. “You both earn extra credit.”

Someone from the crowd spoke up. “But Shinsou didn’t win. Why does he get extra credit?”

“I said ‘try’ to pin Midoriya. He obviously has had previous training, I knew he’d win in the end.” There were sounds of protest. “I also knew that none of you actually have motivation to be in the hero course. Maybe this has given you some.”
Ectoplasm has them do drill exercises after that. More than once, someone came up to ask him how he fought so well. By the end of class, Midoriya was more than flustered. Shinsou caught him on the way out of the gym.

“Looks like its me that has to catch up.”

“What are you talking about? You did great! You watched my strategy the entire time.”

“Yeah, and look what good it did me.”

Midoriya pouted. Then, an idea popped into his head.

“How about this: Meet me here after school and I’ll teach you some moves.”

“Oh yeah?” Shinsou replied. “What do you get in return?”

What did he want? “Experimenting.” He blurts. Shinsou raises an eyebrow. “That is to say, can I experiment with your quirk? I have lots of questions.”

Shinsou is silent for a moment. “That works, I guess.”

“Cool! See you later, then?”

Shinsou chuckled. “Yeah, see you later, Midoriya.”

The two part ways to their next class, and Midoriya never felt happier.

Chapter End Notes

I would probably die for all of my OCs.

For some clarification, since Midoriya did not make it into Yuuei Hero's Course,
Monoma got his spot. He was extremely cocky during the test and when he failed, Aizawa had him transferred into 1-B because he did not deserve to be in class 1-A. Now there is a seat open in class 1-A.

Got any OC ideas? please send them, I need a whole class of people so I don't have to call everyone by "The Girl" or "The Boy". My Tumblr is @smallkatas https://www.tumblr.com/blog/smallkatas come send me messages.
Midoriya was surprised by that number of the reporters standing outside the next day. He’d just alighted the train station when he stepped into a human swarm at the Yuuei Gate. From his vantage point, Midoriya saw teachers trying to calm and corral the journalists. He barely walked a foot closer to the gate when someone shoved a camera into his face.

“What’s it like being taught by All Might?” The reporter prompted. “Is he really as kind as the media says he is?”

“I-I’m not in the hero cour—” he had not finished his sentence before the reporter lost interest.

Midoriya began to push through the reporters, many of whom were not above interrogating children. He bumped into multiple tripods and was yelled at as a result. Finally, Midoriya crossed through the gate. He had never been more glad for the security system. It was the only thing holding the vultures back.

Midoriya looked down at his watch and realized the lateness of the hour. He sprinted off into the school building. The bell rang as he walked into his classroom, breathing heavy.
“Thank you for getting to class on time, Midoriya.” Ectoplasm said as Midoriya took a seat. “I have a very important announcement for all of you.”

The students pulled away from their conversations and stared attentively at their teacher.

“Every class has a student representative and assistant student representative.” Midoriya sees Aruku’s white eyes light up with excitement across the room. “These representatives will work with the teachers to make your school life better. Today we do elections.”

Ectoplasm passes out note cards for everyone. Writing his own name would be too selfish. He looked over at Aruku. She seemed more excited now than before class started, fidgeting in her chair. Midoriya wrote a name on the paper, then folded it up and handed it to his teacher.

Once Ectoplasm received every card, he started tallying on the blackboard. Most students only managed one vote. Likely voted for themselves. Midoriya’s eyes tracked down to his name. He held back a gasp. Next to his name marched three tallies. His eyes scanned further down the list to see Aruku’s name bore a single, lonely mark.

“Congratulations to Kudaketa Garasu, the student representative, and Midoriya Izuku, the assistant representative.” Small applause. Aruku looked bummed.

Midoriya glanced over at Kudaketa. She had four votes according to the tally. Her back disdained the chair, ramrod straight. Her pitch hair controlled in a taut bun atop her head, not a single strand out of order. No wonder people voted for her. She exuded the atmosphere of authority.

The class filled the silence with chatter. Midoriya ignored the noise and flipped through his notes.

“Hey.” Midoriya turned his head to see Kudaketa, standing beside his desk, her phone out. “Give me your number. It’ll make it easier to communicate,” she said, tone monotonous. He gave her his phone without a word. As soon as she punched in his number, she left.

The bell rang, signaling the end of class. He picked up his stuff and left the classroom. Maybe today the classes wouldn’t be as boring.
The classes were definitely boring, but at least this time they were actually being taught stuff. All of the classes the day before had been about testing and baselines. Speaking of baselines…

“You all did terrible in the places I expected you to be.” Aizawa says to them. Midoriya could feel his soul deflate. “I’m going to hand back your papers and discuss where you went wrong.”

Midoriya waited for his paper with bated breath. When the paper did come around, Midoriya’s eyes landed on the pink pen ink. Good the text read. It underlined his note about bringing heroes to the scene. At the bottom of the page there was another note. Come speak with me after class. Oh boy, that wasn’t ominous at all.

“The main point of the prompt,” he pointed to the blackboard with the rewritten scenario, “is that you are the citizen.” He underlines the word. “Somebody tell me, what prevents citizens from doing hero work?”

Midoriya raised his hand. He learned about that the year before, but Aizawa did not point to him. Instead, he pointed over at Kudaketa who also had her hand raised.

“It was the Vigilantism Prevention Act.” She said.

Aizawa nodded. “The Vigilantism Prevention Act prohibits people without a hero license from causing harm to villains. Only a handful of you seemed to remember this.” Aizawa took a seat at his desk.

“This class is here to help you in the real world. You are not likely going to be heroes in the Gen Ed course. Recognizing what to do in that situation will be the best thing you learn this year. To start off, how many of you, in your papers, mentioned anything about bringing actual heroes to the scene?”

Midoriya raises his hand. Along with him, Shinsou and Kudaketa put palms in the air.

“If you are ever confronted with a villain, no matter what your quirk, your first thought should be ‘How do I get help?’ not ‘How do I win this battle?’ Because it isn’t a battle.”

Aizawa continued to tell them about their errors in perspective and how they should act in a real
scenario. Midoriya didn’t realize when he’d started writing in his hero journal. Only when his pencil felt heavier, did he notice the few remaining pages. He’d have to get a new journal soon.

The bell rung, signaling the end of third period. Everyone strolled out talking. Shinsou gave him a questioning look when he approached Aizawa’s desk.

“You wanted to speak to me, Sir?”

Aizawa nodded. “How often do you analyze these type of situations?”

That was unexpected. “I like going around to villain fights and taking notes. So, often, I guess.”

“It’s obvious that your work wasn’t done to an academic standard.” Ouch. “While your notes were detailed and hit the points I wanted, altogether they were a disconnected, garbled mess.” Was that supposed to be a complement?

“If you want to improve, I suggest taking time to think before you write. You have no brain to mouth filter right now, which could cause you problems. Look for what’s important and write those down. It might even help that mumbling problem you have. Understand?”

“Yes, sir.” Midoriya said.

“You can leave now. Tell your friends not to loiter on the way out.”

Midoriya looked over at the door. Shinsou stood outside looking at his phone. Aruku didn’t even hide the fact that she was waiting. She smiled and waved when his eyes met hers.

“Hey guys. You know you didn’t have to wait for me right?”

Shinsou shrugged. “I wondered what you were talking about. You can’t blame me for being curious.”

“Oh, Aizawa was just telling me how I could improve my writing.” Midoriya set the pace as they
walked to lunch.

An alarm blared, halting them in their places.

“What th—”

Students ran back and forth. A third year passed Midoriya. He heard her say something about a break in. The alarm has never gone off before, said another. It only took a few minutes for the hallway to become clogged with Yuuei students. Everyone tried to follow the procedure for a break in, but everyone remembered it differently. Multiple, sweaty students took charge in contradicting directions, causing confusion and anxiety.

“Dekiru-kun, wait!” Aruku shouted at him.

Midoriya turned his head back to see Aruku by the window. She mouthed something to him, but he couldn’t hear. Aruku darted a quick glance out the window and determination set her jaw. Midoriya saw her close her eyes.

In the next moment, Midoriya longer weathered the jostling crowd in the hallway. Right now, the world felt blurry. He stood in front of Yuuei, but he couldn’t feel the grass he spied under his feet. Something solid blocked his movement. The gate loomed before him. He saw the reporters, but they were on the opposite side, inside school grounds. They must have triggered the alarm when they crossed without ID.

Don’t worry. He heard, but not really. It’s more like the words formed into his head. They had no voice but they somehow existed. Be calm. The only intruder is the press. Midoriya did feel calmer.

The world melted away to the hallway once more. It was still crowded, but people were no longer pushing and shouting. A whisper of people asked what happened. Midoriya saw Aruku crash to the floor.

“Are you okay?” He pushed his way over to her. She slumped against the out facing wall, propped on her right hand.

“I’m… tired.” She breathed. “I tried doing what you said yesterday, about dream walking during the day. Doing it to everyone at once may have been a bad idea…”
“Are you kidding? That was great! Now everyone knows not to panic. You never told me that you could walk in multiple people’s dreams.”

“It’s not like that… I can send dreams to multiple people. I can only walk in one at once.”

“I guess that makes sense.” Midoriya pondered. “We should get going. The alarm is still going off, so the evacuation is still in process.”

Shinsou and Midoriya helped Aruku to her feet. She wobbled a bit before getting a solid footing.

Finally, the mixed-up evacuation protocol got them outside in the rear of the building. Their homeroom teacher took a head count. Iida and Uraraka were also outside. Aizawa finished class 1-A’s accounting, so Midoriya called them over.

“Dekiru-kun, are you alright? We didn’t see you at lunch.”

“I’m fine. Were you guys in the main hallway by the cafeteria?”

Uraraka nodded. “You should have seen Iida! He used my quirk to get above the crowd so he could calm everyone down. I knew I placed the right vote for our student representative.”

“Y-you voted for me? I’m honored.” Iida bowed deeply.

“It’s kind of weird though, right? I mean, reporters shouldn’t be able to get past that kind of security. I wonder how they did it?” Now Uraraka mentioned it, it did seem peculiar. Midoriya would have pondered, were it not for the loudspeaker.

“Attention everyone!” The group turned heads to Principal Nedzu. “Thank you for handling this situation with order,” he said, surprisingly without a note of sarcasm. “We will be ending classes early as a result, but they will pick up tomorrow without delay.”

“Do you want to walk home together, Dekiru-kun?”
He was about to agree but something stopped him. Midoriya looked over at Aruku, cheerful again now the tiredness had worn off.

“I actually have to speak to my teacher. Maybe tomorrow instead?”

“Okay!” She skipped off.

School was dismissed a few minutes later. Midoriya walked to Ectoplasm’s room. The teacher sat at his desk reviewing papers.

“Umm, Ectoplasm?” The pro hero looked up.

“Yes, what is it Midoriya?”

“I don’t want to be the assistant representative for our class. I think Aruku would be a better candidate.”

Ectoplasm appraised him. “Why wouldn’t you be a good representative? You show excellent focus in the class which is more than I can say about some people.”

“Today during the evacuation, I didn’t do anything. I was just swept up into the panic. But Aruku… she took complete control over the situation. I think she’d be a much better leader than me.”

“Just because you can’t help all the time doesn’t make you a bad leader, Midoriya. If you are sure, then I suggest you talk to Kudaketa and Aruku.”

“Alright, Sir.”

Midoriya did as his teacher suggested. Kudaketa didn’t seem to care either way. She told him to
forward Aruku’s information to her. Aruku on the other hand…

“Thank you thank you thank you thank you!”

He’d told her in person. She was now squeezing the life out of him. Almost dying of asphyxiation was becoming a trend, apparently.

Homeroom hadn’t started yet, so there weren’t many people in the class. Aruku finally let go of him when Kudaketa came over.

“We have an announcement to make at the beginning of class.” She said to Aruku. “I’ll talk about it while you hand out the flyers.” Kudaketa handed Aruku a stack of papers and left.

“Thanks.” She snarked back. “Let’s take a look at what my emotionally stunted partner has given me.”

The flyer had big bold lettering on it. The words read ‘Shadow Program’. Underneath the words was a description of where and when to meet for people wanting to join.

“Shadow program, huh? Thank sounds fun.” Aruku said.

Midoriya made a noise of agreement. The information about what the program was vague, so Midoriya was glad Kudaketa was going to explain it in more detail.

“Everyone to your seats, your student representative has an announcement for you.” Ectoplasm calls.

Midoriya hadn’t realized when everyone meandered into the room. Kudaketa stood at the front of the room looking pristine.

“Today registration for clubs and other activities open up. There is a special activity only open to general education. It’s called the Shadow Program.”

Aruku distributed the stack of papers. Some kids read them over while others tossed them aside in
favor of talking to their friends and ignoring Kudaketa.

“There is only enough room in the program to allow three students to shadow. If you get accepted, then you will skip class time to watch the course you are shadowing. It’s a great opportunity, especially if you want to transfer. Sign-ups are at the front desk,” Kudaketa said, sitting down again.

“Dekiru-kun, we should totally do this! The flyer says we can shadow the hero department. Wouldn’t that be awesome?”

“It would.” He replied. Midoriya turned to his other friend. “Shinsou, do you want to do it as well?”

“You aren’t going to ask the human thermometer?” Shinsou retorts.

“I’m not a thermometer! Besides, skipping class for that probably wouldn’t be the best idea for me. I’d never make up the work.”

Shinsou shrugged. “Fine. I’ll join.”

“Don’t give me that. I could see your eyes light up when Kudaketa mentioned ‘transfer’. You want to do this just as much as I do.” Midoriya gave him a knowing grin.

Shinsou grins back. “Maybe so.” Midoriya rolled his eyes.

The three walk up to the front. The sign up sheet had multiple names already on it.

“It’s probably not going to be the first three people that sign up since there’s another gen ed class,” Aruku said as she penned her name.

“I guess we’ll have to see.”
The flyer instructed them to meet at the gym room after school. Midoriya texted his mom that he’d be staying late. She replied a thumbs up emoji. There were a bunch of other kids sitting around. Aizawa walked in after them.

“I don’t want to waste my time. Get into groups of two or three, no groups of four. Come up and tell me which course you want to shadow.”

“Hey, we’re already a group of three. Let’s go.” Aruku pulls on Midoriya’s arm. The three of them made their way to Aizawa.

“We want to shadow the hero course.” Midoriya told him. Aizawa wrote something down on a clipboard.

“Names and quirks.” He said monotonously.

“Aruku Yume! My quirk is dreamwalk.” Aruku said brightly.


“Umm my name’s Midoriya Izuku. I’m quirkless.”

Midoriya was surprised when Aizawa didn’t even pause his writing.

“You can head back.” He said.

Midoriya walked away in slight confusion. The only other person to never question him was Hatsume-Sensei. Midoriya wasn’t sure how to feel about that.

“Hey, you’re that ninja kid from before!”

Midoriya turned around and breathed in slightly. The boy in front of him looked eerily like Kacchan. The only difference were the black roots into bleached hair.
“Um, I’m not a ninja but I guess you’re talking about the sparing, right?”

“Man, everyone would’ve killed to be on your team after that. Then you go pair up with a villain and an airhead. You really think you can win this thing with them?”

Midoriya frowned. “They’re my friends, so yes, I do think we can win.”

The boy laughed. “That kind of confidence will get you killed. You want to shadow the heroes, right?” Midoriya nodded. “That’s another thing that’ll get you killed. Heroes don’t actually give a damn about saving people. The whole idea of pro heroes is stupid.”

“If you hate heroes that much, why bother joining the shadow program?” Midoriya retorted.

“I’m shadowing support. Top Knot over there,” he tilts his head over at Kudaketa, “recognized my name. My parents graduated from support. She’s using me so she can transfer there, and in exchange she does my homework for all the classes I miss because of this. It’s a win-win scenario.” He grins smugly.

“Oh I’m sorry, is Atsuko giving you a hard time?” A girl sauntered over and leaned on him. Atsuko’s grin folds into a snarl.

“I told you not to fucking call me that! My name is Nakamizu!” He pushes the girl off of him. “And stop burning me!” She just laughed.

“Kitten here has some anger issues. He thinks he’s a tiger. My name’s Fuyou Jyoukimi, resident space heater.”

Nakamizu yelled profanity at her. Midoriya glanced over at Kudaketa. She gazed with resignation at her partners, appearing tired. Her eye twitched nearly imperceptibly. Kudaketa walked to Aizawa by herself. When everyone finished forming groups, Aizawa addressed the group again.

“So, there are two teams that wish to shadow the support course and five teams that want to shadow heroics. Only one team will get to do the shadowing, so I’ve put together a competition. Think of it like the entrance exam. There’s a physical and a written. We’ll do the physical first.” Midoriya heard
kids groan at the thought of doing physical activity.

Aizawa lead them outside. Midoriya gasped. In front of them was a giant maze. The walls were about half his height. On the left and right side were structures with keys hanging off of them. In his hands, Aizawa held blindfolds and handcuffs.

“Your job is to work as a team to get through the maze and find the keys to your handcuffs. There are two of them. When you get out, one person will grab one of these.” Aizawa lifted a pole from the side wall, indicating the platform on top. “You will have to balance a ball on top of this pole and walk to the end of the track.” Aizawa pointed to the finish line behind them. “Quirks are allowed, but no hurting people. Your score is based on time. Any questions?”

The teams remained silent so Aizawa continued.

“Team leaders, step forward.”

Shinsou and Aruku glanced at Midoriya so he walked towards Aizawa. His teacher met him half way and efficiently snapped a set of handcuffs to each of his wrists. Then he attached the other ends of each to Shinsou and Aruku. One of the handcuffs was blue, the other red. A blindfold was placed over each of them. He repeated the procedure for the other teams.

“You may begin… now!”

Midoriya heard the sound of a stopwatch. Both of his hands were rendered useless with the handcuffs. He felt Shinsou and Aruku pull him along in different directions simultaneously. His thigh hit the wall.

“Ow…” he muttered. His hand darted out to right himself despite the resistance. He felt something bumpy. Whatever it was, Midoriya knew it wasn’t a wall.

“Guys check this out.” He whispered.

A hand fell onto his own. He wasn’t sure whose.
“It’s an arrow.” He heard Shinsou say at his right. He felt the symbol, too. One pointed to the right, another to the left. The middle arrow pointed to the exit where they’d started.

“We can follow them to the keys.” Aruku said.

They shuffled to the right. Midoriya stubbed his toes on the walls a few times and hit his hands on the arrow displays even more. The maze didn’t look that spacious from the outside, but it sure was taking a while. Shinsou pulled him into another turn. He heard Fuyou yelling.

“We need to go this way. The keys were on the sides.”

“You’re blindfolded, you don’t know where the sides are.” Nakamizu launched back at her.

“This was a bad idea.” Kudaketa grumbled.

“Yeah you don’t say.” Nakamizu replied.

Suddenly, Midoriya felt something searingly hot run into him.

“Ahhh!” He took a step back. He lost his balance and pitched forward to the ground, pulling Shinsou and Aruku with him. They landed on their backs in a tumble.

“That wasn’t my fault! You were in my way.” Fuyou again.

“The least you could do is say sorry.” Shinsou huffed.

“Fine, I’m sor—” Her voice cut out. Midoriya was about to ask what was wrong when Shinsou spoke.

“Stay there for the next five minutes.” Midoriya didn’t need eyes to know he was smirking. Shinsou helped him and Aruku off the ground.
“Hey, you can’t do that!”

“I can and I did. Come on.”

The three baby stepped into another turn. Midoriya felt dizzy from disorientation.

“Over here!” Shinsou called. Midoriya heard a cord rip. “I got the first key.”

They walked out of the area. Nakamizu and Kudaketa yelled at Fuyou to move. The next arrow display was easy to find. Midoriya was disappointed that he couldn’t really do anything in the middle other than talk to them. They had control over his hands and his feet. If he’d known that this was the job of team leader, he wouldn’t have picked it.

Underneath the blindfold, Midoriya’s eyes widened. Aizawa intentionally put him and the other leaders in the middle to inhibit them. It was supposed to be a team activity after all. Clever.

They bumped into other groups. Shinsou put his quirk to use quite often, telling multiple people to just stand still. If Midoriya hadn’t been stressed, he probably would have laughed.

They made it to the other key in quick time. Aruku grabbed it. Shinsou led them back to the entrance. It took another few minutes of awkward stumbling but they managed it. When Midoriya felt the walls disappear, he pulls off his blindfold. Shinsou and Aruku do the same.

The keys are red and blue just like the handcuffs. With a small click, the handcuffs hit the ground. Midoriya ran over to the pole. Placing a ball at the top, Midoriya took his first step. The pole wobbled a little. Nobody else was in the field, so he had time. He tried another cautious step. The ball didn’t fall. Midoriya picked up his pace slightly. The finish line wasn’t far. He just had to take a few more steps.

“Midoriya, back to start.” Aizawa said.

Midoriya’s eyes slipped to his feet. There, the ball rested. He picked it up and returned to the start. It was okay. He’d be more careful this time.
Midoriya replaced the ball on the pole. He walked forward. This time would be better, all he had to do was walk. He could do this simple exercise for his team. Three minutes and he'd reached the halfway mark. A few more steps and they’d win. Midoriya moved slightly faster and this time saw the ball fall in front of his face.

“Midoriya, back to start.”

Midoriya took a deep breath. It was fine. They still had the lead. Third time's the charm, right? He started again. He has to do this. He walked slower than before, barely inching along. Yet as he reached his fail place, his nerves caused his hands to slip. Down came the ball.

“Midoriya, back to start.”

Midoriya’s heart pounded. He deliberately avoided looking at his teammates. What must they be thinking? He told himself he still had time. They had the lead, or so he thought. Just to the right of him, Kudaketa made the halfway mark. Her hands were noticeably steadier than his. He hadn’t even realized she’d shown up. He trotted to the start line.

Midoriya wanted to win so badly. But right now, Kudaketa had the obvious lead, and not just in distance.

“Shinsou, can you go instead? I don’t think I can beat her.” Shinsou looked surprised but nodded.

Midoriya felt his anxiety set in. Shinsou had a lot of distance to recoup in his wake. The realization that they wouldn’t win chilled him. It hit Midoriya like a punch to the ribs. Shinsou and Kudaketa both tred at the same, measured pace. He’d never be able to pass her.

“Team Kudaketa, 16 minutes 36 seconds,” Aizawa announced as she crossed. Fuyou cheered and Midoriya saw Kudaketa finally show emotion in the way of a small smile. Despite being sad over the loss, Midoriya knew she deserved it.

“Team Midoriya, 17 minutes 4 seconds.” Midoriya looked over to see Shinsou at the finish line. Aruku cheered loudly and ran over. Forcing a laugh to hide his shame, Midoriya followed.

“I’m really sorry guys. We would have won if I hadn’t screwed up.” Midoriya scratched his head.
“Second place isn’t that bad.” Shinsou replied. “Besides, we can still make it up in the written.”

“I still feel bad though. It’s my fault we even have to make it up.”

They walked to the picnic tables arranged on field. Kudaketa’s team was already there.

“That took forever!” Fuyou whined.

“Stop crying, we won.” Nakamizu said. He turned his head to them when he saw Midoriya approach. “See, I told you that you would lose. Should’ve picked a better team.”

“It wasn’t their fault we got second, it was mine. We’re still going to beat you in the written.” Midoriya said.

“So you say.”

The other teams began to filter through the maze. Others had problems with the pole. Aizawa called out their times and places. As teams finished, the students joined them at the tables and made light conversation. Midoriya heard the disappointment they tried to hide in their voices. Not making first was a hard pill to swallow.

“Good job. Now we begin the written,” Aizawa said when the last group passed the finish line. He handed each person a small packet. The questions inside were simple—all multiple choice. The topics were basically a middle school academic review. When Midoriya finished, he handed the test to Aizawa. The teacher took it and started to grade it immediately.

The students were silent when everyone finished. The only sound were a few birds and the soft scratches of Aizawa’s pen. Midoriya could tell by the other students’ expressions that they wanted to discuss the test. Nobody was brave enough to break the tension.

Aizawa voice came suddenly. “Let’s head back inside, and I’ll announce who won.” The students walked in as a bulge, finally talking and laughing about silly mistakes they’d made.
“I have averaged your scores. The time you got on the maze gave each test bonus points. The winning team is Kudaketa’s. They will get to shadow support.”

They’d lost. Of course they did. Well, at the very least, he’d have other chances to prove himself. He’d cost his friends their win. They’d earned the opportunity, but he’d not been able to control his emotion. It hadn’t even required a quirk. Just calm and focus. And he still screwed it up. Midoriya stood to leave the gym when Aizawa spoke again.

“The second highest score was Team Midoriya. They will be shadowing for heroics.”

What?! Midoriya’s head shot up. He stared at Aizawa. They… won?

“But, Sensei, didn’t you say only one team would win?” One student asked.

“I did say that. I wanted you to put your all into this, and the only way you would is if you thought it was a single slot. Really, it’s the winning teams for each course that get to the shadow program. Kudaketa’s team will shadow support and Midoriya’s will shadow heroics. It was a logical ruse.” Aizawa picked up the papers and stalked out of the gym.

“We did it.” Midoriya said, stunned. Aruku’s face broke out into a giant smile. She pulled both him and Shinsou into a big hug. Shinsou’s face of discomfort and confusion at the hug nearly made Midoriya laugh.

“I can’t wait to start doing hero-y things with you guys!” Aruku says. “Oh! I should probably go. My mom’s cooking dinner and she doesn’t want me to be out late. See ya!”

One by one, students left. Today was a start to something great, Midoriya thought.

———

Aizawa was tired. Usually he’d take a nap after school so that he wouldn’t be dead during his night shift at the agency. The Shadow Program completely threw off his schedule. Outside, Hizashi waited for him. His hair was down in a more casual appearance today.
“Heya, Shou! Thought you’d want a lift!” Hizashi called to him. Aizawa made a noise of disgruntled agreement.

“So how’d the thing go? Those kids seem faster than last year, eh?” Hizashi said once they got into the car.

“They were. Kudaketa and her team are shadowing support and Midoriya and his team are shadowing my class.”

Hizashi looked surprised. “Two teams? That’s odd. Ever since you first sponsored the shadow program, you made it clear it was only three people who advanced. Why the change?”

Aizawa leaned back in his passenger seat. “The hardest thing to teach is knowing when to stop. Midoriya understood that his frustration at losing was hurting his team, so he took a step back. He could have kept going, but it would’ve made things worse for his team. He has potential.”

“The great Eraserhead thinks a student has potential?! What high praise! You know you could have just said it was favoritism, right?”

Aizawa glared at him.

“Or you can just be super philosophical. You do you. Can you introduce me to this kid some time? It’s not often that you actually like a student.”

“Fine. Just let me sleep for now.”

“Okay, Okay, I’ll stop.”

Aizawa had a feeling that Midoriya was going to be the death of him, indirectly or directly. Hopefully the kid wouldn’t do anything stupid on the field trip like bring that rat. Thirteen would freak out if they saw that thing. Aizawa closed his eyes and felt the lull of the car put him to sleep.
A Disaster Waiting to Happen

Chapter Summary

Midoriya and his friends attend their first event as the Class A-1 shadows. Of course, things can never be simple with them. Aruku will not forget today.

Chapter Notes

Me: Oh wait, you don't know what Aizawa looks like. Here, I'll show you.
*pulls out picture of Aizawa*
Mom: Oh wow, he looks like a curmudgeon.
Me: :/

Thank you guys for the great response from last chapter! There is something that I need to say before you all read this one though.

*******************TRIGGER WARNINGS*******************
Suicide is briefly mentioned, basically Midoriya brings up how Bakugou told him to kill himself.
There is a lot of gore in this chapter. I felt like the only way to show that this is essentially a terrorist attack was to go all out, especially with Aruku. If you can not handle blood and violence, please skip Aruku's pov. The other povs have some gore as well, but not to the same degree. I will include a summary of Aruku's pov in the notes at the bottom. If any of the other sections are too much, just ask me in the comments, I'll give you a summary of the scene. Please take care of yourselves.

With that out of the way, I did make changes to USJ conflicts. I don't want to just retell canon so this is my take on the events. I hope you all enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Walking into school, Midoriya noticed the lack of reporters. They probably didn’t want to be arrested again. Midoriya saw a familiar bob of pink hair beyond the gate.

“Heya, Izuku! Guess what I got you?” Mei said.

“Something that could potentially kill me?”

“It’s the gauntlets! I fixed them!” Mei held out the white gloves. “I even put a life seal on them. They can survive a hurricane now.”
“I have no idea why you think I’m just going to stand outside in a hurricane, Mei.” He rolled his eyes.

“You never know!”

Midoriya laughed. They made their way up to their respective classrooms, splitting up at a junction in the hallway. Ectoplasm’s classroom was boisterous, as usual. Tensou spied him, eyes bright.

“Congrats, Midoriya! I heard you got into the shadow program,” he said.

“Yeah, it was really close.”

Homeroom was normal for the most part. Ectoplasm silenced them, Kudaketa and Aruku gave an announcement to the class about the winners of the shadow program, and then everyone conversed quietly. The mundane morning broke when the door opened, and in came Aizawa.

“Midoriya, Shinsou, and Aruku, your shadowing begins today. Follow me.” Upon delivering the edict, he turned on his heel and left the room.

Shinsou blinked at Midoriya. “Should we take our bags? Do we need anything?”

Midoriya shrugged, shouldered his bag, and bounded down the aisle, bumping classmates’ shoulders in his zeal. Aruku beat him to the door as Shinsou raced to catch up.

Aizawa guided them through the hallways at a brisk pace. “You will be missing the entire day, so any work you miss will need to be made up.” he said without turning or pausing. “If your grades drop, you will be removed from the program. Do not embarrass me.”

He led them outside where a white transit bus idled by the curb. Class 1-A students milled around it.

“Everyone, these are the Gen Ed students shadowing your class. We will be leaving shortly so get on,” Aizawa said. Uraraka and Iida looked up from their conversation and smiled at him.
“Midoriya, I must thank you for those notes on my engine. My brother thought they were amazing.” Iida bowed deeply. “His maneuverability has improved drastically. You’ve really helped him.”

“I’m glad! I could work with the both of you some time if you want! That is, um, if it’s okay with your brother, of course…”

Iida nodded. “I think that is a great idea. We can plan something after the field trip.”

Students filed onto the bus. The small group of friends he’d accumulated followed. The bus was large on the inside, with enough seats for everyone. Midoriya had Aruku and Shinsou beside him while Uraraka and Iida buckled in across the aisle.

Aizawa climbed on and addressed the group. “We are going to leave now, but first I need attenda—” a small squeak at Aizawa’s feet stopped him. Ayame was sniffing Aizawa’s toes. He took a very tired breath.

“Midoriya, I told you not to bring the rat to school.” He ran a hand down his face.

“Actually, Ayame belongs to me.” Aruku spoke up. “She just really likes Midoriya.”

“I don’t care who the rat belongs to, why is it here?”

“She’s my emotional support.” Aruku said.

“I… okay, fine, just keep her on the bus. Don’t bring her with you.” Aizawa sighed. “I’m going to take attendance.”

Names are called as Aruku scooped Ayame up and into her bag.

“You should invest in a better cage,” Shinsou said.
“I know, I just keep forgetting.”

Aizawa finished role call. He went to the front of the bus and wrapped himself up in a sleeping bag. He was out like a light. They began to move.

“So, you guys are from Gen Ed. What’s it like?” asked a student. He was blonde save for the black streak in the shape of a lightning bolt.

“We mostly have standard academic classes. The shadowing is special.” Midoriya replied.

“That’s so cool!” A black haired boy said. “How hard was it to join? You guys must be really talented!”

Midoriya heard a scoff. He knew that voice. It sent a shiver down his spine.

“Deku isn’t talented. He’s a useless piece of shit.” Kacchan says.

“Come on, Bakugou, that’s mean.” A spiky red head said.

“He can’t do anything right. I have no clue how he got his quirkless ass into the school in the first place. The teachers probably pitied him or something.”

Midoriya remained silent, accustomed to Kacchan ridicule. He tensed, counting the seconds until other voices joined the laughter. They tire of the mockery soon enough. His mom encouraged him to speak up to Kacchan, but Kacchan’s derision didn’t affect him anymore. He had proof of his talents.

“Deku is a complete idiot. His friends are probably no better. You shouldn’t go near them or you’ll lose brain cells.” In the rear view mirror, Kacchan had a vicious smirk on his face like he believed he owned the situation. Something in Midoriya snapped.

“Don’t you dare say that!” Midoriya shouted, turning in his seat, straining the restrains. Kacchan looked taken aback, before his smirk rolled into a snarl.
“You better keep that big mouth of yours shut, Deku, or I’ll—”

“Or you’ll what. Burn me? Push me down a hill? Beat my face in? Tell me to, oh how did you put it that day, ‘take a swan dive of the roof’?” Midoriya’s eyes bore into Kacchan’s. “You know, I don’t quite remember what you said. Why don’t you remind me?”

Faces twisted into surprise and shock. Some even looked disgusted. Nobody said a word.

“Go ahead, Kacchan. Tell me to kill myself. You had no problem doing it in front of your friends back then. Is it because you’re not the top dog anymore?” Kacchan’s face twisted in muted rage. Midoriya continued. “All my life, you flaunted your amazing quirk in my face, telling me I was nothing. Well guess what, Kacchan! I’m tired of it. In this race to being a hero, I began a hundred miles from the starting line while teachers and adults gave you the head start. Now I’m here, so you need to understand; this idiot’s quirkless ass is going to be a hero no matter what. If you want to be a hero with me, you need to stop acting like a villain.”

Kacchan was livid. He bared his teeth. “You want to fucking go, Deku?! I’ll kill you!” Kacchan stood up and stalked toward him. Midoriya unfastened his seat belt. In a fluid movement, he lifted from his seat in defiance.

“I’ve lived with your petty insults and threats for years, Katsuki. You can’t do anything to me anymore, so don’t you dare insult my friends. They don’t deserve your abuse.”

Katsuki clenched his fist, sparks beginning to fly. Midoriya saw the swing coming and closed his eyes. The punch didn’t come. Midoriya opened his eyes to see Aizawa awake from his nap. Aizawa’s capture scarves were wrapped around Katsuki’s fist and torso. His bright red eyes intimidated Midoriya.

“I don’t know what history the two of you had and right now I don’t really care. This is a school sanctioned field trip; any behavior unacceptable there is unacceptable here. You two are going to have a long, uncomfortable chat with me when we get back. Sit down.”

Midoriya did as told. Aruku placed a comforting hand on his shoulder. He smiled in thanks.

“Dekiru-kun, did Bakugou really tell you to…” Uraraka whispered.
“A-ah, um, it was a while ago. I’m fine now.”

“’It was a while ago’ doesn’t excuse what he did. You don’t deserve his abuse either.” Shinsou said.

“Thanks.” Midoriya said, taking a deep breath.

The rest of the ride was mostly silent. Tension thickened the air. Some people made light banter, but it felt clunky and awkward. Midoriya knew Uraraka and Iida wanted to ask a billion questions but he refused to look at either of them. He regretted yelling at Katsuki even though he deserved it.

Katsuki. Not Kacchan.

Midoriya looked over at the boy who’d once been his best friend. He had so desperately wanted things to go back to normal between them. Guess that would never happen.

Midoriya glanced out of the window and saw the USJ dome. The building was huge, rising into the sky to meet the clouds. When the bus stopped, Aizawa had them file off and into the building.

The arena was an open expanse with staged disaster settings littering the area as far as the eye could see. Midoriya had to suppress a gasp as his eyes roamed over the place. They stood on a raised platform striped in yellow, red, yellow carpet overlooking a half a dozen themed zones.

Midoriya saw Pro Hero Thirteen say something to Aizawa. Midoriya could barely hear them, but he swore Thirteen had said All Might. Thirteen held up three fingers. Midoriya was curious. Would All Might show up in three hours?

“Good morning, everyone!” Thirteen said as Aizawa strolled to the back of the student group. “Today, you will be learning about a job performed by heroes that is equally as important as fighting villains: search and rescue.”

“The USJ facility has many different terrains from which to learn.” Aizawa said next. “You will be split into teams of heroes and injured. The gen ed students with be taking notes on strategy, execution, creativity, and teamwork and are required to suggest improvements, many of which may be incorporated into future training.”
“Before we begin, there are some guidelines. First…” but Midoriya wasn’t listening anymore. Instead, his eyes focused on the pool of black mist swirling in dead center of the arena. It grew by the second.

“Umm, Sensei?”

Thirteen stopped talking, searching for the voice.

Midoriya pointed to the mist. “What is that thing?”

Thirteen frowned, and slowly twisted around. The mist expanded exponentially, looming gaining in size and stature on the buildings. Bodies emerged from the inky black. It was a warp gate.

“Everyone get back!” Aizawa shouted. He put on his goggles. “Those are villains. Kaminari, see if you can call for help.”

Midoriya spun to watch Aizawa speed over the ground through the students to stand in front of them. “You’re not going to fight them, are you? I thought you only specialized in a surprise attack against one or two villains. There are loads of them down there!”

“I wouldn’t be a hero if I only had one trick, Midoriya. Thirteen, get the children to safety!” With that, Aizawa’s quirk activated. His capture scarves tangled in the air. Aizawa leaped off the platform and soared down to meet the villains.

The villains had little to no experience in combat without quirks. Aizawa hadn’t even touched down before he’d already taken out three of them. Aizawa wrapped his scarf around one villain and swung him into the ones currently charging him.

With his eyes covered by the goggles, none of the villains knew whose quirks were being erased until Aizawa knocked them out. For someone who didn’t fight large groups, Aizawa was doing a number to them.

“Midoriya, come on! There’s no time to analyze!” Midoriya turned around to see the others running away with Thirteen. Iida had stayed back to get him.
The class sprinted to the exit, Thirteen in front. Suddenly, the black mist took form before the doors. Midoriya stared at what he could only assume were the warp gate’s yellow eyes.

“My name is Kurogiri. We are the League of Villains,” said the warp gate. “Our information said All Might would be present. Has there been a change?”

What did they want with All Might? Midoriya thought. Thirteen told them to stay back, but Katsuki and the redhead don’t listen. Katsuki launches an explosion at the warp gate, filling the platform with dark smoke.

The mist clouded around them. “Iida!” He shouted. Midoriya couldn’t see anyone anymore, just the murky black abyss.

———

Aruku was not having a good time. She came to the field trip expecting normal class shenanigans and fun hero work. Fighting villains was not on her to-do list. The weird portal guy had dropped her off in the ruins sector.

Crumbling buildings loomed over her. Rusty paint peeled from the sidings. The ‘pavement’, if it could be called that, was cracked and uneven. She saw more loose stones here than she’d see in gravel.

An explosion drew her attention. Her eyes widened as a piece of cement flew through the air, aimed right at her. Aruku ran and didn’t stop to look back.

The ground shook when the boulder rammed into the road. The terrain opened up and Aruku fell. She rolled down hill and felt a sharp pain spike through her legs. She tumbled to a stop at a plateau in the area. Aruku’s vision spun. She pushed herself up.

“Ack!” She grimaced. Stars of pain blotted her eyes. She craned her neck to her leg. Her femur pierced her skin. Blood trickled down the wound like syrup and just as sticky. Aruku gagged as iron filled her nose. Her breakfast came up in a yellow-brown stain on the surface of the ruined road.

“Help!” She croaked. “I can’t move!”
There were voices in the distance. Two of them.

“Help!”

Feet slapped the concrete faster. Two people came into vision.

“Oh my god, that doesn’t look good.” The redhead said. “Bakugou, you know first aid, right?”

Aruku recognized the boy called Bakugou. Midoriya had yelled at him on the bus.

“You don’t touch me.” She sneered as he approached.

“Oh my fucking god.” He said. “Do you want to bleed out instead? You are just making yourself a bigger goddamn liability.”

“Fine.”

Bakugou yanked some rebar out of solid concrete. “Take off your shirt.”

“I’m not going to do that!”

“It’s already fucking ripped. I need to wrap a splint with it.”

Aruku grudgingly removes the tattered gym uniform top. Bakugou tears of a piece of the shirt and shoves it into Aruku’s mouth. Aruku’s leg squelches as the bone is pushed back into it. The fabric muffled her screams of pain. With the bone back in, Bakugou ties the rebar to her leg creating a makeshift splint.

“Shitty hair, you carry her.”
The redhead comes over to her and wraps his arms around Aruku’s middle.

“Why did you take his insults?”

“Bakugou doesn’t actually mean anything by that. It’s just what he calls me. My name’s Kirishima.” He smiled.

“Aruku.”

They walk along the broken path. Kirishima made good conversation while Bakugou remained silent. Bakugou froze.

“Well, how do you do?” came a sickly cheerful voice. In front of them stood a man. A mask covered half of his face, the other half twisted into a chilling grin.

“I don’t pride myself on hurting children, but Shigaraki is counting on me to do my job. So sorry We can’t stay and chat.”

“Shitty hair, step back, I got this one.”

_Step back?_ Aruku glares at him. Just because she had a broken leg didn’t mean she was done for. Aruku would not sit there and do nothing. She had this one. Aruku looks into the eyes of the villain. His arms had morphed into long blades. Her reality melted away.

Day time dream walking differed from night time. The first image isn’t that of a dream but of what the man saw. It’s her own body held up by Kirishima and Bakugou preparing to attack. The villain was still awake, but she had full access to his thoughts.

Making pleasant dreams was easy. People kept the things they loved most at the forefront of their mind. Aruku hated making nightmares. She hated the journey it took to find what someone feared. It was always hidden deep and it caused her pain to experience.

His greatest fear was trypophobia. Holes were easy to make. Aruku lifted herself out of his mind. Her vision was once again of the villain. He had started a monologue or something, since Bakugou
still hadn’t attacked.

Aruku started small. She wanted to build the nightmare realistically, so the first holes she made popped up in the surroundings. She felt confusion in the villain’s mind. She makes them grow larger, sucking up rocks in close proximity. Adrenaline filled up the villain’s brain, but he still had control of him.

She opened a hole in Bakugou’s forehead. Blood streamed out like a waterfall. Their attacker’s heart pounded and he stepped backward. All monologuing ceased as he jabbed a finger at the hole out to Bakugou. Aruku created the illusion of Bakugou’s eyes rolling into his skull, leaving empty black sockets in their place. Blood flowed like tears. She gave Kirishima a similar makeover, and then started forming bloody holes in other places on their bodies. It was safe to say that the villain was freaking out.

He averted his eyes from the scene. Now he was looking down at his sword arms. Aruku opened holes in them as well. The man screamed. An unnatural amount of blood pooled at his feet. He couldn’t escape it. The blood was drowning him. Black swirled in the vision. Within a few seconds, he was out like a light.

“What the fuck was that?”

Aruku came to a moment later, back in her own body. The one thing she could never do was be in the mind of someone unconscious. She felt like she had woken from a long nap.

“I have no clue.” Kirishima replied.

“I made him hallucinate drowning in his blood.” Aruku spoke up. There was silence as the boys took in her words. “It’s my quirk.”

“Wow. Remind me not to get on your bad side.” Kirishima laughed awkwardly. He sidestepped the villain collapsed on the ground and continued walking. “Come on, Bakugou, we have to find the others.” Aruku took pride in the dumbstruck look plastered on Bakugou’s face. Served him right.

Midoriya felt like he was floating in the air. Darkness surrounded his field of vision. He couldn’t tell
what was up or down. The mist finally gave way to light.

Oh. He’s falling.

Midoriya didn’t have time to take in his surroundings. He hit water feet first. It rushed into his eyes and mouth and nose. He felt the burn in his lungs almost immediately.

Someone was in the water, and not a good someone by the way they were charging him. He tried to swim away but his swimming skills were minuscule compared to the person following him.

There’s a green blur. There’s another person, one Midoriya remembered from the bus. She knocked out the other person without hesitation. A long tongue comes out of her mouth. It wrapped around his torso and pushed him above the water. She placed him down on the boat. This was the shipwreck sector. The tongue came up again, but this time she more or less slammed the person into the boat. She came up a moment later.

“My name is Asui Tsuyu.” She said.

“Midoriya Izuku. It’s nice to meet you, Asui.”

“Call me Tsuyu, kero.”

“O-oh, um, okay, Tsuyu-Chan.”

Midoriya looked over the railing. Twenty-something villains floated in the water. They looked like they were just… waiting.

“Can you guys tell me your quirks? We need to think of a plan of attack.”

“You want to attack them?!” The other boy said. “You’ll get us all killed!”

“My quirk is frog. I can climb and my tongue is very long. You said you were quirkless before.”
Midoriya nodded.

“My quirk is sticky balls.” The boy said. “They grown on my head and they stick to everything except me.”

*How the hell did this kid make it into 1-A?* Midoriya thought.

“See?! I told you, we’re going to die! My quirk is totally useless for battle and you’re freaking quirkless!” The boy wined.

Midoriya stopped listening to him. He looked back out at the villains in the water.

“As-Tsuyu, you said your quirk was frog?” Tsuyu nods. “But that doesn’t make sense. Why would they put you in a water zone?”

“You are right, they should have put me with fire. Maybe they don’t know our quirks.”

The villains don’t know about their quirks. More importantly, they don’t know he’s quirkless. Midoriya looks down at his gauntlets.

“I have an idea. Tsuyu, can your tongue reach the water slide?”

“I believe so.”

“I need you to swing us from it. Follow my lead.”

Midoriya climbed onto the railing. Some of villains’ expressions changed. They were overestimating their chances. Midoriya pointed the gauntlet at them, fingers outstretched. He clenched the fingers down onto the trigger.

A bolt of lightning discharged. The sector appeared darker when compared to the blinding light. The
bolt hit the water and Midoriya heard screams. Water boiled rapidly around the lightning. Midoriya couldn't see all of them, but those villains he did see contorted in pain. They fell below the water as they lost control of their muscles.

Midoriya felt a tug at his middle and soon his feet are no longer on the boat. Tsuyu swung them away while the boy threw ball after ball at the villains.

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Shinsou emerged from the mist disoriented. He recognized that he was falling, but where he was falling to evaded him. The drop was shorter than he expected. His head rammed into an outstretched rock. Shinsou groaned in pain. His hand met something sticky on his forehead. He slowly rose his feet. Where was he? He could see the USJ dome, so he still had to be inside. A rocky mountain towered behind him. Mountain sector was his best bet.

Ice darted past him. He jumped out of the way just in time for it to coat the surroundings. Shinsou followed the origins of the ice. He took root behind a large rock. One of the hero kids was decimating the villains by the handful. A villain ran at him from behind. The kid moved out of the way with grace and grabbed the spear. The villain froze solid.

“I’m not interested in hurting everyone,” The kid spoke to one of the villains. “But that ice will kill your cells from the outside in. It’s in your best interest to tell me what you know.”

“Fuck you!” The villain shouted. “I won’t tell you anything about the League.”

Well. They certainly did not have time for this.

“Hey, dipshit!” Shinsou called as he walked out from behind the rock. The villain sneered at him.

“The fuck yo—” his eyes went white, and Shinsou felt his hold on the villain’s mind snap into place.

“Tell us everything about you and this League of Villains.” Shinsou orders.

“Our leader is Shigaraki Tomura. He wants to kill All Might.” The villain spoke monotonously.
“Our job is to keep the kids spread out so that they can not fight.”

“You did that terribly.” The kid said. “Besides, All Might isn’t here.”

“Shigaraki has these creations, Noumus he calls them, that are as strong as him. He will not stand a chance.”

“I never thought I’d see the day when someone doubts All Might.” Shinsou said. “We need to find Midoriya.” He said to the kid beside him.

“The quirkless kid?” He asks. Shinsou notes the lack of a judging tone.

“Yes, him. He’s probably figured out they want to kill All Might by now and is making a plan that will possibly kill himself instead.”

An explosion in the distance echoed from the shipwreck zone and Shinsou looked up in time to see a familiar green blur.

“Case and point.” He gestured to it. “Goddamnit, Midoriya.”

Fortunately, Iida had not been in the mist. He, along with a few others, avoided it and were behind Thirteen.

“Kids, stay back!” Thirteen shouted. They activated their quirk Black Hole. The vortex sucked in the black mist surrounding them. Some of the students cheered.

“You are a rescue hero, Thirteen.” The warp gate said. “It makes sense that you would have very little combative experience.”

Iida felt a pull of wind behind him. He turned around to see one of the warp gates.
“Iida!”

Iida turned to Uraraka. She stood directly in front of the portal. It was pulling her in.

“I’ve got you!” He shouted. Iida ran over to her and grabbed her arms. Uraraka’s feet were pulled up by the force of the black hole. He was not strong enough to pull her out of the current. The black hole pulled her continuously. Her shoes were ripped apart. Skin peeled off her newly barred feet.

“Thirteen! You have to stop!” He yelled. The wind pressure died a moment later. Iida and Uraraka collapsed.

“Uraraka, are you okay?” He asked her. Uraraka’s feet were raw with blood. She silently screamed with teeth grit and face in a grimace, clearly struggling to hold back tears. The black hole had done more damage than he expected from such a distance.

“My quirk is useless against him.” Thirteen said. “I can’t do anything if he can just redirect it. Class rep, you must get help from the heroes.”

“I can’t leave her like this.” He points to Uraraka, who was now biting her lower lip with a vengeance, eyes tight closed. “I should stay here since I’m the leader people are counting on.” He floundered around, searching for something to wrap her feet with. Their hero outfits were too tight to rip off.

“We are counting on you to get help from the heroes.” Thirteen said.

“I can watch Uraraka!” Ashido said, dashing over. “My acid quirk certainly can’t help her, but I can carry her. I’m strong.”

“You can do this, Iida.” Uraraka smiled. “We believe in you.”

Iida’s resolve broke. He nodded to them and let Uraraka fall into Ashido’s arms.
“You all really aren’t smart. I can hear all of your plans.” Kurogiri says.

Iida fired his engines. He zipped past Kurogiri. Ahead of him, a portal formed and he was headed straight for it. The movement he took felt natural. One engine cut off and the other propelled him into a sharp turn. His engine turned on again, and he picked up his run, completely missing the portal. When another portal popped up, Iida repeated the move. He ramped up his engines, now going twice as fast.

Iida reached the door and pulled it open. He zoomed out right before Kurogiri got there. Outside, Iida had no limits, so he focused every ounce of energy he could summon into the engines. He had to find All Might. Everyone was counting on him.

———

Midoriya waded through the shallow water. Tsuyu had swung them far away from the shipwreck. They were close to the center of the dome now. Aizawa was taking out villains left and right, but he was slowing down. Aizawa nailed a hit into the villain’s seeming leader. He was covered in disembodied hands. One of them fell off his torso.

“You are so cool, Eraserhead.” The leader said. He grabbed Aizawa’s elbow. Midoriya gasped as the skin turned grey before falling off entirely. What remained of the elbow was a bloody mess of decayed skin.

Aizawa broke away from his grip. Some lesser villains had surrounded him. Aizawa activated his quirk and threw one to the ground. He turned around and took a step back. In front of him was a monstrosity. The beast reached forward and grabbed Aizawa’s face.

Midoriya saw blood. Aizawa’s goggles fell to the ground. His legs were shaking. Midoriya wanted to scream and help him, but he couldn’t move. Aizawa’s face slammed into the concrete.

“Do you like my Noumu, Eraserhead? He’s as strong as All Might is. Tell me, where is All Might? He was supposed to be here. I know that you know where he is.” Noumu slammed Aizawa’s head again. “Tell me!”

The warp gate appeared behind the leader. “Shigaraki, we have a problem.”
“A… problem?”

“One of the kids escaped. It’s only a matter of time before the heroes arrive.”

“Escaped… you let one escape.” Shigaraki started scratching his throat. “Kurogiri, if you weren’t a warp gate I would disintegrate you.” Shigaraki hung his head. “I guess this is game over. We have to leave.”

*What did they mean by game over?* Midoriya thought. *They couldn’t leave like that, could they?* It seemed too improbable. Why go through all the trouble of breaking into Yuuei only to flee when things soured.

“Before we go, we should leave All Might a present.”

Shigaraki looked at him and Tsuyu. He started walking forward at them. Midoriya was frozen, reminded of the entrance exam. He’d been frozen then too. This time though… the fear was so much more visceral. It permeated his skin right to his core. He looked at Tsuyu to his left. Her body shook as he approached. Midoriya saw her face in his mind, skin flaking away into nothingness like Aizawa’s elbow.

*Use that head of yours and you’ll be fine.* Hatsume-Sensei’s voice filled his mind. Right. He didn’t have time to afraid. Midoriya lifted his gauntlet into the air as Shigaraki raised his own. The world progressed in slow motion. His fingers gripped down on the trigger.

Shigaraki was thrown back several feet. His body convulsed as the electricity passed through him. His muscles seized, but he didn’t scream. There was just laughter.

The spell had broken on Midoriya’s legs. He raced out of the water to Shigaraki. Midoriya rammed his fist into Shigaraki’s jaw, making the man hit the ground again. Midoriya landed another one as he tried to stand up.

“I won’t let you hurt my friends!” He yelled. Shigaraki was angry. He reached out a hand which Midoriya batted away. His other hand grabbed Midoriya’s right forearm.

After years of being bullied, Midoriya thought he knew pain. He was woefully wrong.
A scream ripped though his throat as he collapsed to his knees. His arm seared where Shigaraki made contact. Warm blood flowed down to his fingers. Then the pain stopped. His arm throbbed, but Shigaraki’s quirk stopped digging in further. Midoriya wrenched his arm away.

“You really are cool, Eraserhead.” Shigaraki said. Aizawa’s head was raised, blood coating his face from a multitude of cuts. His eyes were bright red. He erased Shigaraki’s quirk as he grabbed Midoriya. Noumu pushed Aizawa back into the ground.

Midoriya punched Shigaraki’s face again. His arm hurt, but he wasn’t out of commission yet.

“Noumu!” Shigaraki yelled. Not even a second later, and Noumu was there, blocking his hit. Noumu grabbed his good arm. Midoriya felt his elbow shatter. It hurt like hell. His arm is bent into the wrong direction. Noumu threw him to the ground.

Midoriya lifted the arm Noumu didn’t break, though he wanted to curl it into himself. It bled from Shigaraki’s hold, but he could still use it. Midoriya clenched down on the trigger in his gauntlet and... nothing. No bolt of electricity came out. He tried again. Goddammit, Mei. She told him that it could survive a hurricane, but omitted the key fact that each gauntlet could only discharge once. Brilliant.

Noumu dropped his foot down onto Midoriya’s arm. If his arm worked before, it didn’t now. Throbbing, searing pain extended up to his shoulder. Noumu moved away and Midoriya saw how what once had been an arm was now a useless piece of ripped flesh. Feeling receded, alarming more than the pain had. Midoriya felt nothing in his arm. That can’t be good.

“I win. I don’t really care if I kill All Might now. Seeing one of his student’s mangled body will break him. It perfect.” Shigaraki stalked toward him. This wasn’t the end. Midoriya had to do something. But his arms were destroyed and his gauntlets had no juice. He refused to give up. What could he do?

_I wouldn’t be a hero if I only had one trick._

He didn’t have to use his arms to fight. Shigaraki raised a hand above him. Midoriya threw up his feet and kicked it away. He used the momentum of his legs to flip back onto his feet. Shigaraki’s expression was hard to gauge with the hand over his face, but Midoriya made out the gape of his mouth. He had not expected Midoriya to rise.
Midoriya spun around and kicked Shigaraki’s face. He got up quickly, stars popping behind his eyes, but he ignored them. Midoriya headbutted him on the forehead back to the ground. Shigaraki looked mad again. Midoriya suspected that he would activate his quirk like he did before. Shigaraki did exactly as Midoriya predicted, and this time Midoriya knew how to dodge accordingly. He ducked down and struck his leg into Shigaraki’s rib cage. The man bent over a threw up whatever he ate that morning.

With Shigaraki occupied, Midoriya ran to Aizawa, useless arms swinging like double pendulums at his side. The movement sent waves of indescribable pain right into his brain, but he pushed forward, thankful feeling had returned.

“Aizawa, it’s okay! Everything’s okay. I’m here.” Midoriya panted.

“You sound like All Might, kid.” Aizawa rasped. “You could have been killed, running head first into a villain like that.”

“The important thing here is that I haven’t.” Midoriya looked over at Tsuyu. “You guys have to get him back to Thirteen. I’ll stay and fight.”

“Like hell you are.” Aizawa said. “If I go back, so do you. I’m not letting someone die on my watch.”

Midoriya was about to argue, when a metallic bang filled the air. At the top of the platform stood All Might. Midoriya felt the collective sigh of relief.

“Everything will be alright.” All Might’s voice boomed in the silence. “Why? Because I am here.”

Midoriya had heard those words over a thousand times and they still did wonders to his moral.

“Finally.” Shigaraki sighed. “The game starts now.”
Aruku's POV Summary:
Aruku is sent to the ruins zone. An explosion causes her leg to break. Bakugou and Kirishima find her and Bakugou gives her first aid. The three of them encounter a villain with a shape shifting quirk. Aruku doesn't like how Bakugou sidelines her, so she breaks into the villains mind and gives him a nightmare. Essentially, she made him hallucinate and likely gave him permanent trauma.

If you couldn't tell, the scene on the bus was what inspired me to write. In all the gen ed fics I'd read, Midoriya never spoke back to Bakugou and I just really wanted that catharsis. I really hope it didn't seem to ooc.
Ruin and Recovery

Chapter Summary

All Might saves the day, but consequences should never be ignored. Midoriya has a long way to go before these consequences fade.

Chapter Notes

Hope you guys had a happy Passover/Easter/April fools day!

Cheers for anyone in anatomy AP right now! I may have let my interest in being an EMT show in here...

Hope you guys enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Toshinori was never the smartest hero in the field. He trusted his gut more than he trusted a carefully thought out plan. A plan could go haywire right when things got dicey, and then he’d be in for trouble. His gut had told him to go to the USJ, even though Principal Nedzu told him to rest. It wasn’t like he’d exhaust himself. He could stretch his ten minutes as long as he stayed in the back.

A body slammed into him. He really needed to stay out of his head. “All Might! All Might! You have to help!”

“Young Iida, what is the problem? You’re supposed to be at the USJ.”

Iida was breathing very slowly. The kid closed his eyes as he gathered his thoughts. “The USJ,” he spoke between breaths, “is under attack. By villains.”

Toshinori’s blood ran cold. Villains? At Yuuei? How did they get through security? Toshinori schooled his expression. He had to wear the fake smile, so long as it helped young Iida.

“They said they were looking for you.” Iida sayid less winded.
“Go to Nedzu. He’ll inform the other teachers.”

Iida nodded sharply. He turned and revved up his engines.

“You are very brave, Young Iida.”

Iida paused for a moment, but didn’t turn around. The poor child had so much weight on his shoulders.

“Thank you, Sir.” Iida was gone in the blink of an eye.

The smile dropped from Toshinori’s face. Contrary to popular belief, he didn’t always smile when he fought villains. He only did it for public eye, and to reassure civilians. The idea that someone would willingly torture children just to get to him enraged him.

One For All strained his muscles as he raced toward the USJ. He had ten minutes. Less if the villains posed real fights and he needed to use more power. The USJ dome rose above the horizon. Toshinori did not stop his run. Instead he threw a punch into the air. The wind pressure knocked the doors open.

All eyes were on him as he spoke his signature line. A group of students on the platform looked to him with relief. Some cried, tears outlining their smiles. But Toshinori himself held no such smile. His students and friends have been through so much today. He had never felt so angry.

Toshinori channeled One For All through his body. Power hummed beneath his skin, but stabbed at his injury. He released the power and he dashed though the mob of villains. Time slowed down as he moved. He landed blow after blow to unexpecting villains. Their heads contorted as the pressure threw them back several feet.

At the center, Toshinori grabbed the students he saw plus Aizawa. The students all looked around, dazed by the new surroundings.

“Bring him to Thirteen. I’ll keep them busy until reinforcements arrive,” he told them.
“Don’t hurt yourself anymore than you need to.” Aizawa mumbled. His face was nearly unrecognizable from all the blood and swelling purple blotches.

“All Might, Sir, their leader said the giant Noumu was just as strong as you. Be careful,” a student said. This student… wasn’t a part of class 1-A. Where did he recognize the boy from?

“Don’t worry about me, my boy!” Toshinori replied. “Worry about your own safety. Go on now.” He turned around to face the leader. If Toshinori still had had a stomach, it would have churned from seeing all of those hands. Toshinori leaped forward. One For All rose into his arms.

“Carolina SMASH!” He punched the villain. Wind swirled the concrete dust below him. Toshinori looked up, but did not see the leader. Instead, a creature twice his height stood unharmed from his attack. Toshinori punched it again, but it did not even budge. Hitting its body didn’t do anything so maybe the head instead? Punching its face just made it angry. It must be a shock absorption quirk.

“Hitting Noumu isn’t going to do anything. The best strategy would be to gouge his flesh, but he won’t let you do that.” The leader laughed.

Gouge his flesh, huh? “Thanks for the tip!” Toshinori shouts back. Toshinori grabbed Noumu by the torso and lifted. He leaned backwards, and slammed the body into the ground.

Dust filled the air, but something was wrong. There was an uncomfortable pressure on his injury. The dust cleared away. A portal had formed where he had slammed Noumu. It gripped his injury and dug its fingers deeper into the freshly opened wound. Toshinori grimaced in pain as his shirt soaked through with blood. The villains laughed.

“You move too quickly for us to see, All Might. That’s why we made Noumu. He was there to keep you occupied while.” The warp gate spoke. “My job is to close my portal with you inside and kill you.”

Toshinori struggled with the hand on him. He had to pull it off. Noumu held a firm grip upon him and would not budge.

“All Might!”

A student ran at him. Toshinori remembered, that was the kid he saved from the sludge villain.
Toshinori has given him a note encouraging him to be a hero. Now, he was running to help Toshinori, just like a true hero would. Toshinori felt proud. The kid ran with a strange, arm-flailing gait. Must have something to do with his quirk. He couldn’t see wait to see what it was.

Midoriya didn’t know why he ran. He saw the blood on All Might’s shirt, leaching the white, spreading and spreading. The world couldn’t lose All Might. He was world’s symbol of peace. And he was Midoriya’s personal hero. So he ran, his arms screaming in pain with every jolt of his feet hitting the ground. The warp gate appeared before could get there. But he also could not stop his momentum. And neither could they. He ran into it.

Cold. Nightmare dark. Sour breeze.

An explosion knocked him aside before the portal transported him away.

“Move out of the way, you piece of shit!” Katsuki? Where did he come from?

Katsuki shoved Kurogiri away and held him to the ground. A sheet of ice spread out from behind him. Midoriya turned around as the ice froze Noumu’s right limbs.

“We heard from a little birdy that the League wanted to kill All Might.” Shinsou walked over. “Obviously, we weren’t going to let that happen.” Shinsou nodded to the kid he came with and Oh my god, it’s Todoroki Shouto, he’s Endeavour’s kid. If villains weren’t literally trying to kill them, Midoriya would have asked him about his quirk.

“Shinsou, your head is bleeding, are you okay?”

Shinsou glared at him. “Your arms look like my mom tried to boil moldy ramen in mud water, but no, I feel like shit.”

“Maybe you should sit down?”

“You missed the entire meaning of ‘sarcasm’, Midoriya.”
“Hey, Bakugou, where should I put her?” someone asked.

“I don’t fucking know, by the tree or something.”

The redhead was carrying Aruku. Her shirt was tied around her leg. Blood soaked through it.

“Aruku!” Midoriya stumbled over, head started to swim. “What happened to your leg?”

Her eyes opened slowly. She was silent for a moment, processing his words. “Bone broke. Feel tired.” She spoke slowly.

“Um, I don’t know much about blood loss, but you definitely should not sleep,” the redhead said as he placed her on the grass. “Oh, wait, I haven’t introduced myself yet!” The boy looked at Midoriya. “My name’s Kirishima.”

All Might had freed himself from Noumu. Shigaraki said something to him, but Midoriya could not hear it. Suddenly, the Noumu stood up from the portal. The ice on its arm and leg shattered, taking the body parts with it.

“How can it still move...” Todoroki said. Muscles ungulate from the break and begin to grow. Not even a minute later and the arm and leg are completely regenerated. Was the quirk not shock absorption, then?

“I never said he only had one quirk. This is Noumu’s super regeneration.” Shigaraki replied. “Noumu, retrieve Kurogiri.”

Noumu was fast. He sprinted to Kurogiri and Katsuki with a forming fist. Katsuki wasn’t fast enough to dodge that thing. Midoriya had to do something.

A huge cloud of dust mushroomed from the collision. When the dust cleared, Katsuki was no longer on top of Kurogiri. Noumu had taken his place.
“Katsuki!” Several feet away from Kurogiri was a wall separating the sectors. There, All Might stood with an unconscious Katsuki in his arms.

“You saved him. Good job, hero.” Shigaraki said. “You hit me before you saved that kid. Why is violence for the sake of others heroic? You’ve probably killed a fair share of people, haven’t you, All Might?”

Shigaraki stepped forward. “I’m sure many of my people have saved others too. But does the media treat us with even an ounce of respect? No. We don’t fit into their conventional role of heroes any more than you fit into villainy.” Shigaraki scratched his neck. “I’m mad, All Might. Hypocrites like you shouldn’t determine what’s good versus evil.”

All Might placed Katsuki down beside him. Kirishima ran up and carried him back to the others by the trees. He was waking up now, eyes dazed.

“Noumu, Kurogiri, you go after All Might. I’ll take care of the kids.”

Shigaraki headed towards them. Midoriya went for his battle stance. Struggled to flex the muscles of his arms, but it was if his body had forgotten how. It only felt pain.

Wind filled the air, pausing Shigaraki. All Might landed punch after punch onto Noumu, but it didn’t do any damage, despite how strong the punches were.

“What are you all waiting for?” Shigaraki’s directed his voice to the villains behind him. “Kill the kids.”

Midoriya turned. The mob of villains that they’d forgotten about charged forward. Katsuki had gotten to his feet, his rabid hair the only thing showing what he’d just been through. Sparks flew off of his hands, a wicked smile grew over his face. Before Katsuki could do anything, ice shot from Todoroki’s foot.

“What the fuck, Half ‘n Half? Those were mine!”

“This isn’t a competition, Bakug—”
Midoriya darted between the two. He ran towards a frozen villain. The villain had an outstretched limb at the perfect level for stepping on. The moment his foot contacted the ice, it shattered. Midoriya planted his other foot onto the villain’s unfrozen head. He jumped into the air.

Midoriya landed on an unfrozen villain. He wrapped his legs around her head and leaned forward. She fell backwards into three other villains. Midoriya stood up.

A sharp pain ripped through his arm. A villain had grabbed it with his three hands. Midoriya rolled his eyes. If you had three arms, why use them all for the same thing? It left the villain defenseless on his right. Midoriya threw his leg up and struck the villain in his temple. The hands let go and the villain collapsed unconscious to the ground.

A different arm whipped past him. Todoroki’s ice froze the owner to the ground, but the villain stretched it faster than Todoroki could freeze it. The hand grabbed Todoroki’s torso and threw him into a tree. Midoriya ran to him. He had hit the tree trunk head first.

Todoroki groaned, but was mostly unharmed other than a possible concussion. “I’m fine, you didn’t have to come here.” He said rising.

“There’s frost all over you. I think you’re over using your quirk.”

“I said I was fine, Midoriya.” Todoroki said. His eyes glanced behind Midoriya. “Turn around.”

Midoriya looked behind him. Three villains had blocked them off from the others. Midoriya tried to understand their quirks. The woman had cloth-like fibers growing from her fingertips. He could use that to tie the other two up. Midoriya dashed forward, but before he could reach the woman, more villains arrived. Their eyes were a blank grey.

These new villains started to attack the ones around them. Midoriya and Todoroki stood by the tree in confusion. Shinsou walked through them with a shit-eating grin on his face.

“We should leave. If one of those guys hits one of my guys, I’ll lose control of them.”

The three of them moved away. Everywhere was mayhem. Villains littered the playing field like pawns in chess. Kirishima slid past them, feet digging tracks into the ground.
“Why is it that just a tap can break my hold on those goons?” Shinsou sighed. The villains he controlled wore twisted snarls and their eyes were no longer grey.

“At least they’re not cornering us anymore.” Midoriya replied.

“Given our injuries, this situation isn’t much better.” Todoroki said. Midoriya rolled his eyes.

“PLUS ULTRA!”

Midoriya saw Noumu fly into the dome’s ceiling. Noumu burst through it and soared into multiple clouds before disappearing from view.

Everyone silently stared at All Might. The man’s form was in the same position as when he punched Noumu, fist stretching to the sky. Someone clapped softly. The other hero students followed. Soon, all of them applauded him as his fist came down to his heart.

“Back in my prime, I would have only punched him five times to get the same effect.” All Might smiled sadly. “This took me a little over two hundred.”

“That’s not… possible.” Shigaraki spoke. “Noumu was designed to be your equal, how did you…”

“It’s because he’s All Might!” Kirishima shouted. “All Might never loses!”

“Well then, Shigaraki, you wanted to kill me. Do you still think you can?”

“This wasn’t supposed to happen…” Shigaraki mumbled while scratching his neck. He looked back at All Might. “The pros aren’t here yet. We can still win Kurogiri.” From underneath the hand, Shigaraki’s face twisted into a sadistic smirk.

Shigaraki ran forward. Midoriya’s eyes glanced between the two. All Might didn’t move. Shigaraki reached him and All Might pulled his arm back into a fist. A sickening crack filled the air as All Might punched Shigaraki’s jaw. He flew through the air and hit the ground hard. The hand on his
face had fallen off. Shigaraki’s face was a mix of blue, greys and purple bruising and his jaw hung swollen.

Shigaraki growled. He got to his feet, but before he could run again, shots rang out. He collapsed with bullets tearing through his limbs. On the platform, a line of heros stood. They were saved.

Relief drained Midoriya’s remaining adrenaline. He dropped to the ground and finally let himself breathe deeply.

Kurogiri wrapped Shigaraki in a portal, protecting him from Snipe’s gun fire. The two left while the rest of the League was apprehended.

Cold surrounded Midoriya’s arms and he breathed a sigh of relief. Todoroki and Shinsou had taken a seat beside him.

“You know you’re an idiot, right?” Shinsou stated. “How did you even do that to your arms? I never thought limbs could rest like that.”

Midoriya did his best attempt of a horrifically painful shrug. “Noumu. Shigaraki.” Midoriya realized that they should probably find help. Midoriya tried to stand but something resisted him.

“I froze your arms to the ground. We’ll wait for the paramedics to get here.”

Midoriya pouted. Shinsou laughed at his expression. His eyes traveled over Midoriya’s head and the smile slowly faded.

“Shit.”

Shinsou got up and ran out of view.

“Shinsou? What’s wrong?”

“It’s Aruku!” He called back. “She’s unconscious, I think. I can barely feel her pulse.”
Todoroki stood up. “I’ll find an EMT.”

The minutes grew long. Midoriya grew restless under the ice. It was supposed to be cold but he only registered a numb chill. He should have been more careful. It took a few weeks for all the scabs on his hand to go away after he punched the tree. It’d take months or even the rest of the year for his arms to recover from this.

Eight people in navy blue uniforms ran over to them. The four in the rear roll gurneys.

“Someone contact Chief. We have two 15-year-olds with various fractures.” The lead woman said. She knelt by Aruku. “Compound tibia fracture, bone visible. Lots of bleeding, an artery was likely punctured. She needs an emergency blood transfusion now.”

“Chief said he’s getting the ambulance ready.” Another woman replied.

“Do you know how she broke her leg?” She asked them.

“Bakugou and Kirishima brought her here.” Todoroki replied.

A male EMT walked over to Midoriya. “Can you tell me what happened to you?”

“I was fighting with Shigaraki. He had some kind of disintegration or decay quirk and grabbed my right arm. Then Noumu grabbed my left arm and crushed the elbow and stepped on my right arm. Todoroki froze me to the ground.” Midoriya said.

“Smart kid. Musen-san, tell Chief to get another skin graft prepared.”

“Another one? That’s the third one this month and it’s been one day!”

The man nodded as she turned on the walky-talky. “Kid has comminuted fractures in his elbow and humerus. Probably some torn humeral ligaments, too. Could you unfreeze him?”
Todoroki placed his hand down onto the ice. Steam sizzled and soon Midoriya laid in a pool of water. Three EMTs immobilized his arms and hoisted him onto the gurney. The same happened with Aruku. Some EMTs stayed to treat Shinsou and Todoroki.

“Everyone here will go to the hospital, even if they are visibly uninjured.” The lead woman told them. “We need to get the serious conditions out first.”

The gurney’s movement lulled his brain. Midoriya heard chatter as he passed through the USJ. It was tense chatter, but still posed as a white noise to his brain. He wanted to keep himself awake. Police or other EMTs might need to ask him questions still. But sleep felt like a brilliant idea. Besides, he was safe. He’d just take a quick nap and wake up when they reached the hospital.

The ambulance doors slammed shut with him and Aruku inside. The EMTs bustled around them as they tested Aruku’s blood and hooked up IVs. Midoriya eyes drooped. The hospital was 20 minutes away. He’d take a quick nap and be ready for everyone’s questions there. Eyes finally closed, Midoriya fell into a dreamless sleep.

Midoriya was aware of his eyes first. The eyelids glued themselves to his eyes. Smell came next. The sterile smell of bleach burned through his sinuses. Midoriya felt something soft on him, a blanket maybe. Bright light burned through his eyelids.

Midoriya slowly opened his eyes, but quickly closed them. The light outside was too bright to look at. Midoriya groaned softly. He heard movement by him. A hand fell on his shoulder.

“Izuku? Are you awake?” Mom.

“Izuku!” Mei.

“Give him some space.” Hatsume-Sensei.

Midoriya groaned again. His arms ached. “Mom?” He asked without opening his eyes.
“It’s me, sweety. I’m here.” The hand on his shoulder squeezed comfortingly. Midoriya opened his eyes. The light hurt, but he needed to see them. His mom was on his right while Mei and Hatsume-Sensei stood to his left. They all looked worried.

“How have the others gotten here yet?”

His mom looked confused. “The others?”

“The woman said everyone would go to the hospital. Have they arrived yet?”

“How, everybody else checked out days ago.”

Days? I was only asleep for a few minutes. “Mom, how long was I out?”

Inko exchanged a look with Hatsume-Sensei. “It’s been a little over a week.”

“A week? I probably missed so much work and Aizawa said I’d be removed from the shadow program if my grades dro—”

“Izuku stop panicking.” Mei said. “I brought your school work with me so we could work on it together.”

Midoriya sighed. What would he do without Mei? Midoriya craned his neck around to the table beside his bed. Various assortments of get well cards and trinkets littered the table.

“We should go call the doctor. He’ll want to know that your awake.” His mom said. Inko left the room, leaving him with Mei and Hatsume-Sensei.

“Sensei… I know you told me not to hurt myself, but I really didn’t have a choice. I’m sorry.”

Hatsume-Sensei sighed. “Villains literally attacked you and yet here you are, apologizing to me. No one is blaming you for what happened, Midoriya.”
“I still feel bad.”

“That means you’ve learned something, at least. Maybe next time you can think of a plan where you avoid injury.”

The door opened. His mom walked back in along with a man in a white coat. He smiled warmly at Midoriya.

“My name is Dr. Shujutsu Igaku. How are you feeling right now?”

Midoriya shrugged. “My arms actually have feeling in them so that’s a good thing. They do hurt though.”

“You may experience chronic pain in them from now on. The healing quirks here weren’t strong enough to heal the bones all the way. Luckily, your arm didn’t reject the skin graft.”

Midoriya looks down at his arms. A jagged splotch of discolored, hairless skin in the shape of a hand traveled up from his elbow to his shoulder. Other sections of scar tissue twisted down to his hands.

“The fractures needed surgery to fix. If you had continued your fighting, we may have not been able to do even that. Since you did stop, all you need is some physical therapy and your normal functions should come back.”

“What about the pain?” Midoriya asked.

Dr. Shujutsu sighed. “The injuries severely damaged your nerves. We can prescribe some painkillers but that’s about it. Nerves won’t repair themselves.”

Midoriya leaned back into his bed. After what happened, of course he’d need physical therapy. It’s amazing that he’s not paralyzed.

“Lucky for you, Hatsume-san has agreed to being your therapist, so there won’t be any additional
“Maybe a trip to the bathroom first.” Hatsume-Sensei and his mom laughed. After a bathroom break, Midoriya was directed to the gym. There wasn’t much in the way of decorations, mostly people in casts trying to walk. He sat down at one of the tables.

“Take this, Midoriya-kun.” Hatsume-Sensei held out a stress ball. “Squeeze it and hold.”

Midoriya took the ball. Squeezing was easy. His fingers didn’t resist the action. After a few seconds of holding them closed, his hand started shaking. His fingers all of a sudden felt extremely weak. Midoriya let go of the stress ball.

“Try stretching out your fingers.”

Midoriya rolled his fingers along the joints. They popped as he unkinked them. He grabbed the stress ball again. Midoriya’s fingers held longer but still felt sore when he released.

“They aren’t going to be magically fixed after one session. I’ll mix physical therapy in with our personal lessons. I just wanted you to regain control with your hands first. Why don’t I leave you here to work on your other hand while I get you something to eat?”

Hatsume-Sensei left the room. There was an open window to Midoriya’s right. Birds chirped happily and tree leaves rustled in the breeze.

“Excuse me, are you Midoriya Izuku?”

Midoriya turned. A man stood in a black suit with a friendly smile.

“I’m Detective Tsukauchi Naomasa. You were one of the few people on the front lines so we need to ask you questions, if that’s okay.”

Midoriya looked behind him to see another man. His body was emaciated and his suit hung off his body.
“Sure. I’m open to questions.”

“Where did the warp gate send you?”

“The shipwreck zone. I was there with Tsuyu and some other kid.”

“How did you escape?”

“I electrocuted the water with my gloves.”

“Your… gloves?” Tsukauchi scrunched his face in confusion.

“They shoot lightning. They were on me when I came in. They ran out of battery, though, so I can’t show you how they work. Not that I would in here, since it’s a hospital.”

“It’s fine, we believe you.” Tsukauchi laughed.

“Midoriya, you are in general education, correct?” Midoriya was surprised when the other man spoke up. His voice was strangely familiar despite never having met the man.

“Oh! Yes, I’m in gen ed. I’m shadowing the heroes.”

“And you fought the leader.”

“Um, yeah, that’s right.” Midoriya sighed. “I was in trouble at the end there. If All Might hadn’t appeared then, I probably wouldn’t be here. I didn’t realize how little charge the gloves store.”

“Why didn’t you just use your quirk?” The man asked.
“Well, um.” Midoriya sighed again. “I don’t have one. I’m quirkless. And yeah, I know what you’re thinking but I’m not going to quit. My dream is to be a hero and nothing will stop that.”

The man looked rather surprised. “You ran to help All Might despite not having a quirk or support gear?”

“Oh, did All Might tell you about that?” Midoriya scratched his head. “I guess it does sound stupid when you put it like that. But I couldn’t just leave, you know. I had to help.”

The man is silent for a moment. “I think it was really brave of you.”

Midoriya smiled widely. “Thank you, Sir.”

“Midoriya-kun, I got some sunomono. Your mom wanted to check you out soon.” Hatsume-Sensei placed the bowl down in front of him. She looked up at the detectives. “Who are you?”

“We were just asking Midoriya about the USJ for the investigation. We can leave now.” The two stood. The man’s eyes lingered on Midoriya but when Midoriya tried to meet his eyes, the man looked away. He hadn’t gotten the man’s name.

“We can leave after this.” Midoriya said as he shoveled the sunomono into his mouth. Apparently, one week of being unconscious left a person very hungry.

After Midoriya finished eating, Hatsume-Sensei worked with him more. His arms felt sore, and they ached from his scars.

He was in the car with his mom now. The road passed by in a blur of color. His eyes didn’t focus on anything out there. He was too tired to really look.

“Hey mom?” He asked.

“Yes, Izuku?” She replied.
“Can I invite my friends over for dinner tonight? They haven’t seen me in a week.”

“That sounds like a great idea, sweety! They can help you with your school work too! Why don’t you tell them now.”

Midoriya opened up his friends’ group chat.

*Losers Squad Group Chat*

**HATSUME MEI IS THE BEST!!! at 14:56**

- hey im awake
- gdi mei

**HATSUME MEI IS THE BEST!!! has changed their name to Midoriya**

*Midoriya at 14:58*

- anyway im not dead
- do you guys want to come over for dinner
- mom is making katsudon

*Personified Insomnia at 15:00*

- im down
- you should sleep

*Midoriya at 15:01*

- hmm irony much
- been asleep for a week but thanks

*Human battery at 15:04*

- yu-chan say shes down!!! also me too
Midoriya at 15:04
- aruku is with you?

Human battery at 15:05
- yea her apartment isnt big enough for the wheel chair so shes spending nights here

Midoriya at 15:06
- !!!!!
- shes in a wheel chair???

Human battery at 15:06
- dont worry shes fine

HATSUME MEI IS HERE at 15:07
- izuku if you dont want me to be in your phone then you should make a password
- also im here open up

Midoriya at 15:07
- im not there????
- how did you get to my house so fast???

HATSUME MEI IS HERE at 15:08
- duh im magic
- and my mom is a Hell Driver

Personified Insomnia at 15:09
- wait midoriya you dont have a password

Midoriya at 15:10
- betrayal never comes from an enemy
Midoriya sighed. His friends were a handful.

“They said they’ll be there.”

His mom squealed in delight. “It’s been so long since I’ve been a host! Do you think they’ll like the katsudon?”

“Everyone loves your katsudon, Mom.”

Mei stood at the door as Midoriya got out of the car. She had a bright smile on her face. Hatsume-Sensei stood next to her.

“We met again, Midoriya-kun.” Hatsume-Sensei said while rubbing Midoriya’s hair.

“I brought some tools so we can fix the gloves!” Mei said cheerfully. She held out a large duffel.

“Wait… didn’t you just come from the hospital? Where did you get those?”

“Mei has tools everywhere, even in my car, which she’s going to clean up once she gets home, right Mei?” Hatsume-Sensei sent her daughter a pointed look. Mei rubbed her hair sheepishly.

“Well then, let’s go inside now. Taniko-senpai, will you help me cook dinner?”

Inko and Taniko walked to the kitchen. Mei grabbed Midoriya’s arm and pulled him into the living room. They disassembled parts of the gauntlets and recharged the battery. Mei pulled out some wires.
“I’m going to add a resistor. That way the discharge will only be a fraction of the total battery and should give you a few more uses per hand.”

“That sounds perfect.”

The doorbell rang. Midoriya walked to the front door as the chiming music played. Shinsou was on the other side of the door. He had a small bandage over his forehead.

“Your arms don’t look like shit.” He stated.


Tensou and Aruku came next. True to word, Aruku sat in a wheelchair with her leg supported in a cast.

“I was really lucky, apparently.” Aruku said. “I have AB blood type, so it was easy for them to get me a blood transfusion.” Aruku looked down. “My leg was really messed up. It probably won’t be healed until after the sports festival.”

“That’s terrible!” Midoriya said. Aruku would have done so well.

Aruku shrugged. “I kind of deserve it.” She sighed. “While I was in the ruins zone… this villain attacked us. I wanted to stop him and I used my quirk and…” Aruku breathed deeply. “I never want to do that again. I’ve wanted to be a hero for so long, but that was so real. I don’t know if I want to do that for my job.”

“It’s okay if you’re unsure now! You still have three more ye—”

“Midoriya.”
He closed his mouth. Aruku’s hair shielded her face. “That man, Shigaraki, said something about heroes being just as violent as villains. I hurt that man with his own mind, left him unconscious on a pile of rocks.” Aruku clenched her fist. “I’m no better than he was. I can’t be a true hero like this.”

“But you can.” Midoriya said. Aruku finally looked up at him. Unwiped tears streamed down her face. “It’s because you feel guilty. Those villains hurt people without feeling like they’ve done something bad. You’re willing to pay the emotional cost of causing someone pain, in defense of others. That’s what makes you a hero.”

Aruku is silent for a moment. Then the tears come faster and Aruku can’t hide her sobs. She wiped them away. “Th-thank you, Midoriya.”

“Dinners ready!” Midoriya’s mom calls.

Sitting around the table, Midoriya lets himself forget about villains. His friends are all there, cheerfully catapulting pork into each other’s mouths and laughing when someone missed. Aruku smiled for the first time that night.

Chapter End Notes

If anyone is wondering about how All Might punched Shigaraki, its because in this story, OfA isn't draining into Midoriya, so he has more strength and could deal one last punch.

Its time for the Sports Festival! Has Midoriya learned his lesson about hurting himself yet? We will see.

Come scream at me on tumblr @smallkatas I want to know what you guys think!
Lines Are Drawn, Lines Are Blurred

Chapter Summary

Things are shaky after the USJ incident. Midoriya can’t fathom why so many people are talking to him.

Chapter Notes

Yo, hows everyone doing? I’m right now at a hotel for my marching band competition and it went really well. The drum line got a major complement despite my rolls sounding shitty.

This chapter is a bit of an intermission between the USJ arc and the sports festival. I felt like keeping the two so close together would rush the story. The plot lines in this story were mostly just snippets of ideas I had for chapters that never fit right. I’m glad to say they do now!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

When Midoriya got to school the next morning, Monday reared its ugly head. A gaggle of reporters stood blocking the gate, yelling at teachers on the other side. Midoriya tried to push through them. They barely budged.

“Um, excuse me, Sir, could you please let me through?” No response. Midoriya asked again and even tugged on his suit. The man apparently took offense to that and pushed Midoriya away.

The shove left Midoriya off balance and his began to fall. Something soft wrapped around his body before he hit the ground. It righted his body. Midoriya looked up. Aizawa stood there, glaring at the reporter.

“I’m so sorry, Sir, I didn’t mea—”

“Don’t apologize to me.” Aizawa snapped. “Apologize to the kid you pushed.”

“S-sorry kid, I just didn’t want you messing up my shirt.”
Midoriya wanted to reply, but Aizawa pulled him away. The crowd of reporters made a wide opening for Aizawa, which only served to make him grumpier. They passed through the gate without further incident.

“It’s like they’ve forgotten that this is an academic facility. All they want is some new story on the hero course. Yuuei is just some goddamn idol factory in their eyes.” Aizawa sighed deeply and ran a hand over his face. “Are you alright? That should’ve been the first thing I said.”

“I never actually hit the ground so,” Midoriya shrugged, “only a bit tired.” Aizawa snorted in agreement.

Aizawa led him down the hallways in silence. Midoriya noticed they passed his usual turn into the gen ed hall.

“Wait, my classroom is over there.” Midoriya pointed.

“You’ll head there later, follow me for now.” Aizawa didn’t turn around as he spoke. They walked briskly down the hallway to a room labeled staff lounge. Aizawa opened the door.

“Finally, I’ve been waiting in this room for too fucking long.”

Midoriya paused outside the door. Why was Katsuki here? He timidly walked through the door. Katsuki’s eyes snapped to his.

“What the fuck is useless de—”

“I told you that you would have an uncomfortable chat. This is it. Class starts in twenty minutes so don’t waste my time. Take a seat, both of you.”

Silence stifled the air. Katsuki glared away at him. Midoriya felt a need to fill the air.

“I’m sorry. For speaking up, I mean. I shouldn’t have yelled back.”
“That’s not what I mean.” Aizawa sighed. “No one is in trouble. I want the two of you to talk about what happened.”

Katsuki made no move to start anything so Midoriya spoke again. “I’m sorry for yelling at you, Katsuki. I should have just dropped it.”

“Don’t apologize, Midoriya. I just want the two of you to talk.”

“I, uh, don’t know what you want me to say?” Midoriya scratched his head.

Aizawa sighed. “Bakugou, did you tell Midoriya to kill himself?”

“We weren’t even at Yuuei then. Why does it matter?” Katsuki grumbled.

“My job as a teacher is to make sure all of you are safe.” Aizawa said. “Right now, I need to know if I can keep the two of you in the same room. Based on what happened on the bus, I’m inclined to keeping you apart.”

Katsuki leaned his head back. “Fine! Yes, I said that, but it wasn’t like I actually meant it. I knew Deku wasn’t stupid enough to actually do it. It was just a joke!”

“A joke?” Midoriya whispered. “You think whether I live or die is just a joke?”

“Don’t fucking twist my words, Deku.” Katsuki snarled at him.

“I’m not twisting anything! It might’ve been a joke to you, but it really hurt me. We were friends!”

“We weren’t friends. All you ever did was follow me around and get in my way.”

“Why do you hate me so much?! All I ever wanted to do was help.”
“I don’t fucking need your help!” Katsuki stood up. He still managed to loom over Midoriya. “I’m supposed to be a hero, not you! I was supposed to be the first person from our shitty middle school to get in to Yuuei, but you had to fuck that up. You can’t be a fucking hero, Deku. Why can’t you quit it already?”

Midoriya stood up next. He wasn’t nearly as tall as Katsuki, but, thanks to judo, he had defined muscles. Katsuki took a step back in surprise. “Don’t call me that! I am not useless! I made it here despite everyone telling me I couldn’t. You want to know why I did? It’s because I want to save people.”

Midoriya took a deep breath. He took a seat again as he collected his thoughts. “I want to save people. Nothing you can say can change that. I’m not here to be your rival. I want to be your friend.”

The warning bell rang. Aizawa stood up. “You two are dismissed. The only way either of you are going to solve any of your problems is if you communicate.” Midoriya nodded to his teacher. He ran out the door in a hurry.

Katsuki was about to leave as well, but Aizawa stopped him. “You’ve been praised ever since you got your quirk. You’re used to being the only amazing person in your school, but this isn’t your middle school anymore. At Yuuei, everyone is amazing, even Midoriya. I won’t be hearing you call him by that name again.” Aizawa left, leaving Katsuki to stare at the door.

Midoriya arrived at homeroom on time. The bell rang as he slid across the threshold. He sent a nervous look to his teacher. Ectoplasm nodded and gestured to his desk. Midoriya took his seat, thankful he wasn’t being marked late.

Tensou leaned over to him. “How are your arms doing?” He whispered.

“Better. They’re still sore as hell.” Shigaraki’s handprint stood out against his pale complexion.

“Could everyone settle down, please?”

The class’s attention moved to Ectoplasm at the front of the room.
“One of the biggest events happens this week: the Sports Festival. It was delayed quite a bit due to recent events, but Principal Nedzu did not want to cancel it entirely. Everyone in this class will participate.”

A groan filled the air. “Don’t give me that. You are Yuuei students, act like it. Your standings in the festival will help you with internships.”

That was new. Midoriya hadn’t heard anyone talk about there being internships in gen ed.

“If you put in effort, people with influence with notice. If you don’t, then expect to be on your own come internship week. The Sports Festival is also the time where teachers look to us for possible transfers, and class 1-A has an open spot. That’s all I have to say.”

Ectoplasm took a seat. Chatter rose again, this time the Sports Festival was the only topic. Tensou leaned over to his desk again. “You and Shinsou are going to do great! I’d probably poop out in the first ten minutes.”

“Shinsou and I have been training after school. You’re welcome to join us if you like.” Midoriya replied.

“Sure! Honestly, I’m just happy I can be in the Sports Festival at all, much less actually get past the qualifiers.”

“You know how badly I want to be transferred. Our best shot is all we can hope for.” Midoriya smiled at him.

The bell rang. Midoriya got up and left the class with his friends. They’d made a habit of walking to class together since they’d gotten learned their schedules. Shinsou was usually on the outside, hovering by him and Tensou. He followed at their pace but was always too far to pull into a conversation. Each time they walked he got a bit closer, so it was a win in Midoriya’s book.

After third period, Aizawa told Midoriya and Shinsou to meet him at the hero training facility once
they finished lunch. Midoriya hurried Aruku down the hallway. She told him a story about some bully being afraid of snakes, so she made him dream of snakes for a whole month.

“I never really thought about the effect it had on him. He just slept in class a lot, so I felt like having fun. Nothing too explicit, just enough to make him stop messing with Gii-chan.”

Outside, a group of students waved. Iida and Uraraka on crutches detached and joined Midoriya and Shinsou.

“Did you break a leg too?” Aruku asked.

“No, my feet were just messed up. I’m fine.” Uraraka answered.

“Midoriya, I must thank you. The move you taught me helped me escape and get All Might.” Iida bowed.

“You don’t have to thank me for that…” Midoriya scratched his head.

“Can we thank you for fighting that Shigaraki guy?” Kirishima approached them next. “Cause that was super manly of you.”

“I only did what you guys would have done. Really, you don’t need to thank m—”

“We are thanking you, Midoriya-Chan. You can’t stop us.” Tsuyu joined the group.

Midoriya waited for them to extend their thanks to Shinsou, eager to shift the focus. Plus, he had his own thank to add.

“Yo, how’s your leg, Aruku?” Kirishima bent down to look at the cast. “Will you be in the Sports Festival?”

“I can’t, doctors orders.”
“That’s too bad! You would’ve been a force to be reckoned with.”

Aruku laughed along awkwardly. Discomfort tensed her features. Midoriya glanced at Shinsou, both to check on him, and provide cue to his friends. Shinsou’s impassive expression did not seem to expect compliments.

“Everyone, gather over here.” Aizawa’s voice was much quieter than Ectoplasm’s, but his students compiled more quickly.

“Since our trip to USJ was useless for its intended purpose, we’ll be making the best with the training facilities here. You should remember the rules from before. You’ll be in teams of rescuers and injured. The gen ed shadowers will take notes. Let’s get the teams selec—”

“I AM HERE!”

Midoriya snapped to the voice. All Might posed for the class in his usual yellow striped suit. Midoriya felt like he would die of excitement right then. Hopefully the man stayed and let Midoriya ask questions.

“You are late is what you are.” Aizawa grumbled. A trace of bravado deflated from All Might’s smile. “Your groups will be randomly selected.”

Aizawa called out names. Kirishima was paired with Sero, Iida with Aoyama who Midoriya recognized from the exam, and Tsuyu with Yaoyorozu. Katsuki was paired with Kaminari.

“Uraraka, I think it would be best if you stayed with the gen ed students due to your injury.” Aizawa said when he finished.

“That’s okay.” She said.

Aizawa announced the first teams. Tsuyu and Yaoyorozu would be rescuing Satou and Kouda. The rest of the class left them and walked to the viewing room. Multiple surveillance TVs hung off the walls.
“This is similar to our hero vs. villain training.” Uraraka told him. “Bakugou blew up one of the buildings when he was on the villain team.”

Midoriya laughed. ‘I’d believe it.’ He took out his hero journal. He ran out of space in number 13, so this would be the first thing he wrote in number 14. He penciled Tsuyu’s name at the top.

Presently, Aizawa wasn’t with them. He was preparing the injured team. All Might supervised class 1-A. Midoriya wanted to ask him questions, like how his quirk produced so much wind pressure. Midoriya pulled out his old journal and added details to his All Might drawing.

“How many of those do you have?” Uraraka asked.

“I just started journal 14.”

“That’s so many! How do you have time for all of that writing?”

“I mostly forget I’m even doing it.” Midoriya felt All Might’s eyes on him. When he looked up, All Might had turned away and was announcing things that happened on the screen.

“It appears like Young Asui and Young Yaoyorozu have located the injured!” He said proudly. Midoriya squinted at the screen. Rocks covered Satou and Kouda. Tsuyu reached for one of them. Those rocks are too unstable. If she moves them, the whole pile will collapse. They need something to support the structure the rocks had created before they start moving them.

Tsuyu pulled a rock out of the pile. Just as Midoriya thought, rocks rolled down the pile. Yaoyorozu and Tsuyu fled before they were covered. Twice as many rocks buried Satou and Kouda.

“How did you know that would happen?” Uraraka asked him. Others stared at him with questions on their faces. Goddamn mumbling.

“You guys saw those rocks, right? They were too loose. The only way to get them out would be to block the rocks. It’s just simple physics.”
“Man, I can’t understand algebra, how am I supposed to do physics in battle?!” Kaminari let out a dramatic moan.

“Maybe you should study more.” Iida replied.

“Study? What is this foreign language you speak of?”

“Young Midoriya has provided a useful point, and it appears that Young Asui has realized this.” All Might pulled them back to their classmates. Yaoyorozu drew a large wooden board from her chest. She wedged the board between the rocks, to keep them stable as Tsuyu pulled Satou out from under them.

*Yaoyorozu has a creation quirk!* Midoriya thought. *Those are pretty rare.* He scribbled in a description to the next page. She made materials from her body, so that must mean she’s transforming material from her body. Midoriya wondered what her limit was.

“You mumble a lot.” Uraraka said.

“Oh! Um, sorry about that.”

“Don’t be sorry. It’s actually kinda cute!”

Midoriya hid his face in his arms while Uraraka laughed.

“I’m not cute.” Midoriya grumbled.

“No, I’d say ‘adorable’ described you better.” Shinsou cut in.

“Hey! You’re supposed to be on my side!” Midoriya laughed and playfully pushed Shinsou. Now all of his friends laughed. They ceased once Aizawa returned with the four students trailing behind him.

“Next two groups: Bakugou and Kaminari as the rescuers, and Iida and Aoyama as the injured. Follow me.”
The two groups left the room with Aizawa. Midoriya was surprised when Katsuki didn’t even stop to glare at him.

“Are you going to draw pictures of all of us?” Uraraka asked while pointing to the illustrations of Tsuyu and Yaoyorozu which accompanied the notes.

“Well, maybe not draw all of you, but I will take notes on everyone. I want to transfer to this class. Might as well learn the competition.”

Midoriya glanced at the screen. Iida and Aoyama hung out of a building window, Aoyama’s cape the only thing preventing their fall.

“That can’t be safe. I thought Aizawa wanted you guys to practice saving people, not potentially dropping them from a three story building.”

“Come on, Midoriya, where’s the fun in that? Everyone can use a bit of danger in their life!” Sero said.

“Hey Midoriya, how would you solve this problem?” Kirishima asked.

Midoriya was silent as he examined the situation. “You can’t move the cape since it’s holding all of their weight. I would probably lift Iida through the window first, careful not apply pressure to the cape, then pull up Aoyama.”

When he arrived at the scene, Katsuki ended up doing just that, albeit with more explosions and yelling than strictly necessary. Midoriya was glad nobody fell. Aizawa came back with the four of students.

“Currently Bakugou and Kaminari have the best score. The faster you finish, the better grade awarded.”

The next groups left with him. It was pretty monotonous, all things considered. The injured people would be stationed beforehand, Midoriya would tell the class what he’d do, and then he’d critique the rescue. What did the aspiring heros do right or wrong?
He hadn’t noticed when the rest of the class gravitated over to him, but they now payed more attention to him than to their classmates or All Might, who made lofty interjections here and there. Midoriya wished he could go out and demonstrate his ideas rather than discussing them.

“That was the last group.” Aizawa said. “Your scores were calculated based on how quickly you saved the injured. In first place was Todoroki and Tokoyami. Second was Bakugou and Kaminari, third was Hagakure and Jirou. Next time we do this, I expect all of your times to improve. Got it?”

A cacophony of students all shouting ‘Yes, sir!’ hit Midoriya’s ears. Aizawa turned away when Kirishima called out.

“Hey, Sensei, can we see the shadowers try?”

“I’m afraid that’s against the rules.”

“Pleeeeeease!” Kirishima pleaded. “Midoriya’s been coming up with these awesome theories. Leaving him out isn’t fair.”

“Are you volunteering to be the injured pair, then?”

“Sure! Come on, Sero.” Kirishima pulled the boy up from the chair. Aizawa rubbed a hand over his face.

“I’m only allowing this because we have extra time. Don’t expect this to become a pattern.” Aizawa said while escorting them out.

The city scape was barren. Midoriya walked through it hyper aware of the crunching footsteps along the pavement.

“This is going to be awesome!” Kirishima patted Midoriya’s back a bit harder than intended. “I wonder what everyone is talking about in the room.”
Aizawa stopped them. “Kirishima, Sero, follow me. You two wait here.” He pointed at Midoriya and Shinsou. The three walked away and were soon out of view.

“What do you think the change will be?” Shinsou asked.

“Not sure. Most of the other students were in ruins so we should start there.”

They waited a few minutes before Aizawa returned. He held a stopwatch.

“When I say go, your time will begin. Your job is to find the injured and get them out of their dire situation.” Aizawa paused for a moment. “Go.”

Midoriya and Shinsou ran. They headed in the direction that Aizawa had taken. They passed a few buildings along the way, some with rubble outside them. Midoriya didn’t see anyone hanging from the buildings. Hopefully that was good news.

“Midoriya, over here!” Shinsou said.

The building before them was large. Half of the wall had been blown out. It didn’t resemble any of the other buildings.

“This has to be it.” Shinsou said as he walked through the broken doorway. There was a dimly lit staircase going to the next level. The stairs creaked as they climbed. Nobody in the next level, but the ceiling was broken up. Through the open hole, Midoriya saw Sero. Midoriya and Shinsou ran up the next flight of stairs. Sero smiled widely when he saw them.

“Hey, guys!” Sero waved. “So apparently my arm is broken and Kirishima’s unconscious.”

Kirishima giggled slightly. “Or at least he’s supposed to be.”

“So I guess our job is to get you on to our side of the hole?” Shinsou looked down the gap. The open floor stretched all the way across the room with Sero at the far end. Jumping it wasn’t possible.

“Yep. Simple, right?” Sero jokes.
Midoriya started looking for something to bridge the gap. His eyes landed on the room’s walls.

“Shinsou, the walls are made of wood planks.” Midoriya wedged his fingers into the edge. He yanked the board off and stumbled backwards. Midoriya rested the board over the hole. It was too short by a long shot.

“We could use more of them, but we don’t have anything to hold them together with…” Light bulb. “I got an idea. Sero, could you move over?”

Sero crouched on the other side of Kirishima. Midoriya lifted the wooden board and threw it to the other side of the room. It hit the wall with a loud clang.

Midoriya walked back down the stairs. “Shinsou, do you think that you could lift me up?”

“I’m not nearly as strong as you, but you seem to know what you’re doing.” He followed Midoriya taking the steps two at a time. Once there, he bent down to give Midoriya a knee. Midoriya was hoisted into the air where he could now reach one of the jagged rebars. Midoriya’s arms ached as he pulled himself on top of the floor.

Midoriya dragged the wooden board over to the edge. He lifted Kirishima onto it like it was a gurney.

“Shinsou, I need you to hold me up again.”

Shinsou sidled backwards up to the edge where Midoriya sat, legs dangling. Then with his left foot, he nudged off his right sneaker. When it hit the floor below, he repeated with his other red shoe. He shimmied out, stretching his legs over the abyss. Shinsou grabbed his ankles and gently drew them to his shoulders. Slowly, gently, Midoriya eased his weight off the edge.

Suddenly, he dropped. His feet planted firmly on each of Shinsou’s shoulders. His friend dipped and wobbled, but recovered, never taking his hands from Midoriya’s ankles. Balance restored, Shinsou turned around, understanding his friend’s plan without words.

Midoriya took a deep breath and inched the board towards him and off the floor. Midoriya angled
Kirishima’s makeshift pallet slightly, using his chest as leverage. Then he took the weight.

It was insanely heavy. Midoriya felt his scars burn as he struggled to hold Kirishima in the air. Midoriya all but dropped him onto the floor. Shinsou quickly dropped into a controlled squat, maintaining balance. He reached up to steady Kirishima’s descent. Then Kirishima was safe on the floor.

Midoriya hopped off Shinsou’s shoulders.

“Sero, could you sit on the edge?” Shinsou said. On a count of three, Shinsou lifted him from the legs. Shinsou placed Sero down on his feet.

“Test complete.” Came the speaker.

“Wooho!” Kirishima shouted as he stood up. “Nice job guys! Man, I really didn’t expect you to lift me like that Midoriya. How strong are you?”

“I’m not that strong…” Midoriya mumbled.

“C’mon dude, give yourself some credit. I never would have thought of what you did.”

“Face it Midoriya, you’re going to have to accept a compliment sooner or later.” Shinsou said.

“I nearly dropped him. If it wasn’t for you, Shinsou, we would have failed. You took my weight and Kirishima’s. That was amazing.”

Shinsou laughed. “I’ve never squatted so fast in my life.”

Midoriya looked at Kirishima and Sero, waiting for them to compliment Shinsou. They said nothing, only headed down the stairs.

Aizawa waited for them outside. “Good work.” He nodded, then led them back to the room. “We don’t have a lot of time left, so hurry up.”
They walked back into the room. Everyone started talking about how awesome Midoriya’s performance was. It was both overwhelming and uncomfortable. Shinsou did not get praised, and neither did the other groups.

“Midoriya and Shinsou made the unofficial 5th place for time, however they showed the most teamwork out of any of the groups. I had meant to use the extra time for their presentations but that will have to wait until later.” Aizawa glanced at his watch. “You are dismissed to your next period.” And then he was gone.

“Dekiru-kun, you did so well!” Uraraka said.

“It wasn’t just me out there though. Shinsou performed as well as I did, if not more so.”

“Well, yeah, but I can still be happy for you right?”

“We should get to our next class…”

“That isn’t an answer, Dekiru-kun.”

Midoriya left the girl hanging. He rushed out the door and away from his peers. He felt bad for leaving like that, but he really couldn’t take it anymore.

“Midoriya, are you alright?” Shinsou asked him when he caught up. “You’re mumbling a lot.” Aruku looked at him with a worried expression.

“I’m okay. I’m not used to people complimenting me is all.” Midoriya sighed. “You don’t have to worry. I’ll meet you after school.”

Shinsou didn’t look convinced. “See you then.”
“Harder.”

Shinsou strained his muscles as he punched. Midoriya blocked it like it was nothing, twisting his fist around.

“Stop, stop, I’m done, I need a break.” Shinsou grimaced.

“We can’t have a break! The Sports Festival is too close for us to just sit around.”

“We’ve been sparing for an hour, Midoriya. I need to sit down.” Shinsou walked over to the gym room bleachers. He collapsed onto the seat and grabbed his water bottle.

“Five minutes, Midoriya. You should drink some water too.” Midoriya still looked annoyed. “You can’t expect me to be invincible. You’ve been training like this for months and I’ve just started. I’m nowhere near your level.”

“But you are near my level, that’s why I want to help.” Midoriya slammed his fist on the bleacher. The bang was the only noise in the gym for a few moments.

“Midoriya, are you sure everything is okay? You’ve been unapproachable since the training exercise.”

Midoriya sighed as he sat down next to Shinsou. “Everyone there, they completely ignored you and Aruku. They only talked to me. You guys deserve just as much attention as I do.”

“That’s what’s got you upset? I don’t really care if people pay attention to me. I’m used to nobody paying attention to me.”

“So am I! Barely anyone in my school spoke to me, much less praised me. Now everyone thinks I’m amazing when I’m really not.” Midoriya sighed. “You worked just as hard as I did at USJ, but you weren’t even acknowledged. It’s too much for me.”

Shinsou shrugged. “You heard what Shigaraki said. People with quirks like mine are unpopular. We could do a hundred good acts but that wouldn’t matter to them.”
“Well, it should. It’s not fair.”

“That’s why we’re going to do our best in the Sports Festival, right? To show everyone watching that we can defy their expectations.” Midoriya looked up. “We’ll show class 1-A what class 1-C is capable of and then they won’t be able to ignore me. Deal?”

“Deal!” Midoriya smiled. “Now let’s get back to work; your five minute break is up.”

Shinsou laughed before getting into his fighting stance.

“Move your fists, one should be in front of your chest while the other in front of your face.” Midoriya grabbed his arms and moved them. “Better.”

Shinsou threw a punch. Midoriya blocked it like before but didn’t twist his hand. Instead Midoriya threw a punch of his own, which Shinsou tried to duck under. Midoriya’s fist clipped the edge of his head. Shinsou tried to kick Midoriya’s legs out from under him, but Midoriya jumped over them.

“Hey guys sorry I’m late— whoa that was awesome!”

Midoriya spun to greet Tensou. Shinsou decided to use the distraction to his advantage. He punched Midoriya’s face, knocking the boy over.

“Shinsou! That’s cheating.” Midoriya pouts as he rubs his face.

“I finally knocked you down!”

“If I’d been paying attention—”

“Weren’t you the one that told me ‘Always keep your guard up.’?”

“I don’t remember saying that.”
“Well, one of our memories have to be off.”

Tensou stared at them in awe. “That was really cool.”

Midoriya stood up. “Want to spar? I can show you a thing or two.”

“Um, sure.” Tensou made a fist. He hit Midoriya in the shoulder.

“That… wasn’t even close to a punch.” Shinsou told him.

“I don’t know how to punch…”

“Teaching you the correct technique would take too long. Do you have any other ideas for how to win a battle?” Midoriya asked.

Tensou hummed in thought. “Oh, what about this?” He wrapped his arms around Midoriya and pulled him into a… hug?

“You do realize people aren’t going to stop fighting because of the power of friendship, right?” Shinsou said.

Tensou released Midoriya, who stumbled slightly before falling to the ground shivering.

“Oh no, was that too much?! I’m really sorry Midoriya, um, should I go get a blanket or…”

“No, no, it’s okay. Actually, that’s perfect. All you have to do is get close enough to grab a person and you’ll win.”

“Maybe for the tournament, but I won’t have nearly enough energy for the qualifying rounds.” Tensou shrugged. “I guess I’m just not really a ‘hero’ type.”
Shinsou would have given a lot to understand what was going on in Midoriya’s head. His face was a guarded frown. The boy looked down at his watch.

“Shit!” The boy scrambled to his feet. “I had to be at the dojo ten minutes ago. Bye!” And he ran out the door.

“So much for sparing.” Tensou hung his head.

“I can work with you.” Shinsou got into stance. Tensou’s frown is instantly replaced with a smile.

———

“I’m so sorry I’m late!”

Midoriya ran into the dojo panting. He hadn’t been this winded in a while. Tensou sapped all of his juice.

“Calm down, Midoriya-kun, I was actually still getting set up.” Hatsume-Sensei said.

Midoriya looked around the room. There wasn’t anything set up in there at all. “What are we doing?” He asked cautiously.

Hatsume-Sensei smiled at him. “It’s outside. Follow me.”

The two walked through the alley way of the dojo. Behind the building was a mass of shrubbery. There in an open field surrounded by bushes and trees was a target.

“Ever done archery before?” Midoriya shakes his head. “Well you’re going to learn. First things first, we have to determine which eye is dominant. Put your fingers in front of your face in a triangle and pull back toward your eyes.”
Midoriya did as she demonstrated. He didn’t quite understand why this showed eye dominance, although he only learned eye dominance was a thing just then.

“So that means I’ll be shooting left?”

“Yep! Archery should help you regain your mobility with your arms while also giving you a weapon for the Sports Festival. Two birds with one stone.”

Hatsume-Sensei led him through a series of stretches. He had to keep his arms in a T stance and then mocked drawing back the bow string.

“Put on this arm guard. It’s not much in the way of protection, but it does stop the bow string from snapping your wrist.”

He wrapped the arm guard onto his wrist. It fit snugly. Hatsume-Sensei passed him the bow and had him stretch the bowstring back without the arrow. The cord was taught in his grasp. His left hand shook as he pulled it back.

“Your right arm is scrunched up.” She pulled his arm back to its original straightness. “Keep pulling your left arm back to your cheek.”

He pulled his arm back to his cheek. It hurt a lot. His fingers had gone numb and he felt they were about to release.

“Good. Now, slowly relax the bow, don’t let go of the string until no tension is left.”

Midoriya sighed as his arms let go of the weight. It really wasn’t that hard to do, but his arms were recovering. He rubbed them gently.

“We aren’t going to actually shoot this during this session. I just want you to feel comfortable with
Hatsume-Sensei had him practice more with pulling back the string. Keeping his right arm from bending was the hardest part out of all of it. Hatsume-Sensei corrected his form along the way. By the time they were done, Midoriya’s arms burned like hell and his fingertips were numb.

“Good work today. Archery will help you in the future, but you can’t master it in a day. In the Sports Festival, you’ll probably only manage shooting an arrow into the general vicinity of where you want it to go.” Hatsume-Sensei’s eyes brightened up. “Mei wanted to show you some of her designs. She’s probably in the basement.”

The stairwell to Mei’s workshop was practically clean, save for a new grease stain. Midoriya weaved around the scrap metal chunks.

“Aha, there you are! I have so many things to show you!” Mei ran up to him. She pulled him through the mess to her bench.

“I have a few custom tip arrows here. This one,” she held up an arrow with an orange bead, “is explosive. This one,” she grabbed a blue beaded arrow, “makes a deafening noise. Mom can confirm that it is loud.” She grabbed a red arrow. “This one makes fire. I’d show you, but they only ignite once.”

“Am I really aloud to have these in the festival?” Midoriya asked.

“You’re not in the hero course so, yes. All you gotta do is declare what you’ve brought. Can you make me a list of all the items you need?”

“If you say so. You better save some of your babies for yourself.”

“Obviously. I’m keeping the best ones.”

Midoriya laughed. “Good luck getting sponsors.”

“Good luck getting transferred.”
What would he do without Mei?

Chapter End Notes

Me: this story is just a gen fic, there will be no romantic pairings.

Also me: subtextual izuocha, kirideku, shindeku, and bakudeku if you squint very hard. Curse my multishipper heart.

I’m a serious fan of archery, if you can’t tell. They should honestly make an archery sports anime because I’d watch the hell out of it.

Get ready for the Sports Festival! Things are gonna be fun!

*******IMPORTANT UPDATE FROM 4/15*******
So uhhh, I'm an idiot. As I said before, I went to a band competition and we got to go to an amusement park. I took my phone on one of the big roller coasters and it fell out of my pocket. It is essentially totaled right now, although I was lucky enough to get it back. I do most of my writing on my phone because I do not have a personal computer (this one is my dad’s). I’m getting it repaired on Saturday, so you can expect chapter 9 to come out the following Friday, April 27. Sorry for the inconvenience.
The Sports Festival begins and a new rivalry emerges. Midoriya is happy to have such good friends backing him up.

Heyo I'm alive and so is my phone! If you weren't here last time, I dropped my phone off a roller coaster and it delayed this chapter.

Thank you to whatthefuckugou for submitting and OC! I'm still accepting them if anyone is interested.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Alright, Izuku, I think I got everything you need.”

Midoriya and Mei commandeered one of class 1-E’s workshops. The room had a musty air of wood shavings mixed with a metallic tang. Different machinery lined the walls, some school property, others projects in varying states of completion. The Sports Festival would start in twenty minutes. Mei rooted through her bag of goodies and heaved out multiple car batteries.

“I can understand most of the stuff you wanted on there, but these batteries still confuse me. Why do you want five car batteries?”

“Long story. Probably best if you don’t question my plans.”

Mei huffed out a laugh.

“I need to leave now. Thank you for everything.”

She waved. “If you want to thank me, do it by making a name for my babies. I’m expecting you to win, ya’know.”
“You have too much faith.”

“Oh definitely. Why else would I be trusting you to protect my babies? You’re the biggest klutz I know.”

“Thanks,” he deadpanned. She gave a thumbs up in reply.

“Don’t break your back carrying all those car batteries!” She called out to him as he left.

Midoriya weaved through the halls. A bow, multi-use grenades, a couple feet of rope, an electromagnetic pulser, a pair of gauntlets, and zoom goggles that definitely weren’t modeled after Eraserhead. That’s all he had. It would have to be enough.

As he trotted along, the precarious stack of new car batteries wobbled. Of course, given his luck, that’s the precise moment he ran into someone coming out of the other hall.

The collision knocked him off his feet. Terror flashed through his eyes as the batteries tip over. They hit the ground one by one quickly followed by his own ass hitting the linoleum tilling. He grunted.

“My apologies, I didn’t see you.” Said a familiar voice. “How much power do those gadgets need?” She sent a pointed look to the batteries. It was Kudaketa.

“Oh, those aren’t for me.” Midoriya dusted himself off. “But it doesn’t take much to power them. Most don’t need power to work, just a mechanical input.”

Kudaketa studied him. “I thought you wanted to be in heroics, not support.”

“I do want to be in heroics. These level the playing field.”

Kudaketa turned away. “Well, you aren’t the only one with support. I might not want to be a hero, but I intend to win just like before.”
“There’s room for three on the podium. We’ll see who’s in the middle.” Midoriya could not see her face, but the edge of her cheek quirked just enough for him to know that she smirked. After picking up the dropped batteries, the two parted ways, and Midoriya continued down the hall and Kudaketa walked to the support workshop.

He had told Tensou to meet him in the gym before the festival. He glanced down at his watch. Twelve minutes left. Inside the gym, Tensou spoke to Aruku. Midoriya wanted to wave but his hands were occupied.

“Hey, Midoriya!”

“Hey, Dekiru-kun!”

Their waves make up for the lack of his.

“Shinsou taught me how to block a punch!” Tensou said excitedly. “He tried to teach me how to throw a punch as well, but I was too scared of hurting him.”

Aruku grabbed his bow off Midoriya’s back. “You never told me you did archery.”

“It’s a new development. I can barely pull the arrow back.” Aruku humed in acknowledgment as she examined the bow.

“Why do you have a bunch of car batteries?” Tensou asked.

“Oh, right!” Midoriya handed them to Tensou. “Your quirk is energy transfer, so I wanted to see if you could transfer chemical energy as well. Grab those wires.” The car batteries didn’t normally have exposed wires sticking out. He’d asked Mei splice them. It made them significantly more dangerous, but they didn’t explode when he dropped them. Everything was under control.

Tensou grabbed one wire. As he made to grab the other, a spindle of electricity arced to his finger. Aruku let out a noise of wonder.

“This feels really weird.” Tensou said. “Like, normally when I absorb energy, it’s just a steady
warmth coming in but this… it feels like I’m a circuit board.” As if on cue, Tensou’s shaggy brown hair stood up on end.

It didn’t take long for the battery to be drained. Midoriya noted that the absorption rate decayed exponentially based on the sparks of electricity on Tensou’s skin, becoming more infrequent as the battery drained. He’d have to write that in his journal when he got the chance.

Four minutes from the start of the festival. Tensou finished draining the last of the batteries. Electricity sparked off his skin like Tesla coils. He had a mad glow in his eyes.

“Thankyouthankyouthankyouthankyou!” Tensou gripped Midoriya into a hug and lifted him off the ground. This time, the normal blizzard cold of his arms was missing, replaced by warmth.

“Tensou, your skin is warm!”

He looked incredulously at Midoriya. “Seriously?!?”

He let go of Midoriya and placed a hand onto Aruku’s bare arm. She gaped in surprise. “That’s amazing!”

“Hey, we should probably be getting down to the field now.” Midoriya said after a cautious glance to his watch.

“Race ya’!”

Tensou was out the door in a second, not phased by the weight of the wheelchair he was pushing. Aruku cheered at the speed. Midoriya knew he wouldn’t beat them so he walked leisurely instead. It was a beautiful day outside. The sky held no sign of storm, just a vibrant sun radiating the field.

“Oh, Midoriya, I had hoped to see you.”

Midoriya turned around. Ectoplasm was there, offering an encouraging grin.
“Was there something you needed, Sir?”

The man shook his head. “I just wanted to inform you. There are people in the stands that will do nothing more than see you from the surface. But you already knew that.”

Midoriya nodded slowly.

“There are other people.” Ectoplasm continued. “They have the potential to see yours, but they need a reason.”

“A reason? What do you mean?”

“Make them remember you. Show them that you exist and that you aren’t going to stay in the shadows. That’s the only way they’ll support you.”

Midoriya frowned. “But that isn’t fair. I shouldn’t have to do anything for basic respect.”

“It isn’t fair. That’s why this broken system needs to have a person like you in the spotlight.” He patted Midoriya’s green mop of hair. “I can count on you to do that, right?”

Midoriya mock saluted him. “I won’t let you down, Sir!”

“You should get going, then. The opening ceremony will begin in…” he checked his watch, “one minute ago.”

“Oh! Thank you, Sir, bye!” He waved and ran down the hall. Tensou and Aruku were waiting for him.

“What took you so long?” Aruku asked.

“Ectoplasm wanted to talk to me.” Midoriya slowed to catch his breath. “Are we on yet?”
“No, they’re announcing 1-B now.” Tensou said. Midoriya heard the cheers from the audience outside. The group is ushered over to the other students and soon they are marching out onto the field.

“

And here we have class 1-C and 1-D, the General Education!” Crackled the speakers. The announcer, Midoriya recognized, was Present Mic. They walked up to the stage where Midnight stood. The other classes were announced in rapid succession.

“He barely acknowledged the other classes.” Aruku said beside him. She wore a deep frown. The speaker shifted to the microphone Midnight held.

“Good morning everyone!” A loud cheer ran through the stands. “Before we begin the proceedings, the top scorer on this year’s entrance exam will give a speech.” The crowd grew louder. “Top scorer, Bakugou Katsuki, come up!”

Bakugou Katsuki got the highest score? Midoriya watched him climb the stairs. Now that he thought about it, it did make sense. Katsuki could destroy those robots left and right. The crowd silenced as Katsuki approached the microphone. Anticipation filled the air.

“I promise,” Katsuki spoke, “to win first.” And then he left. Class 1-A looked mortified by his declaration.

“What a pompous brat.”

Midoriya swiveled to his right. “Shinsou! When did you get here?”

“I found you while everyone was focused on that idiot.”

Angry whispers filled the crowd of first years. He could hear a few snippets of conversations. They didn’t like Katsuki’s attitude, nor how quickly he wrote the rest of them off, but Midoriya knew him better than that. Katsuki wanted a challenge, and they were going to meet it now, whether they realized it or not.

“Alright everybody,” Midnight’s awkwardly cheerful voice took over again, “we are going to begin. Make your way to the starting line. The first qualifier is an obstacle course!”
The first years were all huddled into a tunnel. Midoriya could see light shining from the other end, but it was impossible for him to tell just how long it was.

“On your marks, get ready…” Present Mic’s voice echoed. “START!”

The tunnel was by no means narrow. It was about as wide as a classroom, yet even that much space can feel claustrophobic when the entirety of the first year squeeze through it. Midoriya pumped his legs, forcing himself in front of the many bodies. A buffer between the students who could run versus those who couldn’t immediately formed. Midoriya was luckily in the former.

Midoriya breathed deeply. His breath collected in a translucent white mist. Midoriya’s eyes widened. Now that he thought about it, the air felt much colder than it should be. Frost built from the sides and grew into a sheet of ice. There was only one quirk user he knew that could do that.

They made it out into the light only for everyone to be encased in solid ice. Midoriya struggled against the fractals that bound him but remained stuck. Todoroki forged ahead of the group, now the only one mobile.

To Midoriya’s left, Kudaketa bent over. Her hand rested upon the ice and within seconds it shattered. Was that due to the support gear she said she had or her quirk? Midoriya didn’t have time to deliberate it, he had to get free.

Midoriya pulled his bow off of his back. He sent a small prayer that Hatsume-Sensei wouldn’t be too angry about what he was about to do now. He slammed it down onto the ice and was rewarded with the crinkling sound of broken glass, or in this case, ice. He ripped his foot out of its frozen prison and started to work on the next one. Midoriya glanced up and stopped in his tracks.

All the class 1-A students had broken free already, or had avoided the ice entirely. At the lead, multiple zero point robots looked down at Todoroki. Midoriya would have called out to him, tell him to watch out, when the ground around Todoroki froze solid.

Todoroki swung his right arm forward to the robots. It only took a few seconds—maybe only one, but Midoriya wasn’t counting—for a glacier of ice to grow and consume the robots. One obstacle complete, Todoroki ran off without looking back.

This was the power of 1-A. Midoriya had to prove he was on par with that.
Yet as Todoroki ran, Midoriya noticed something. Frost snaked up Todoroki’s right hand and throat. Midoriya couldn’t see his face, but he remembered from the USJ that frost had been there as well. The only thing Midoriya could conclude from that is that Todoroki is at his limit early in the game. By the end of the race, he would have to slow down. Midoriya would have to use that to his advantage.

Midoriya slammed the bow into the ice around the other leg. Once he pulled it loose, he sprinted. The robots began to collapse as he ran towards the others. He narrowly avoided a piece of falling metal. There was a smaller piece of metal already on the ground. A part of Midoriya wanted to take it with him, but it’d likely just slow him down. He ran past the disabled zero pointers.

A cacophony of screeching steel plating grated Midoriya’s ears. During the exam, nobody save him and Iida braved the robot. Now that they were forced to, many of the 1-A students were showing off by taking them down one after another. Jokes on them, Midoriya was moving on to the other challenge.

The second obstacle was a deep canyon with platforms of rock jutting out. The platforms were connected through metal wires. Katsuki had just gotten to the other end after flying over the challenge entirely. Iida crossed over too. His balance wasn’t the best, but his engines allowed him to pass without moving his feet. Shinsou got onto the wire while being carried by an entourage of brain dead students, smiling all the way. Typical.

“Watch and learn everybody!” Came Mei’s voice. She pulled out a homemade gun like a miniature harpoon. She pulled the trigger and the hook shot out faster than Midoriya’s eyes could track it. It embedded itself into the cliff side. Mei slapped another button, and her boots flare up. Rocket boots and a grappling hook. Why hadn’t he thought of those?

Mei launched herself across the chasm. The boots kept her propelled as the grappling hook retracted. She finished the obstacle after only a few seconds. Midoriya had to get moving now. There were too many people jockeying in front of him.

Midoriya unraveled his rope. The wire was thrice enough, more of a cable, so walking along it wouldn’t be too much of a problem, but even then there’s a chance of mistakes. He tied the rope around him so that it felt comfortable, but not too loose. The other end of the rope was tied to the wire. Now that he was tethered, he could fall without risking his performance.

Midoriya took a step onto the wire. It gave slightly, but was still taught. Wobbling slightly, Midoriya placed his second foot. His balance was absolute shit. Every single step, his arms did the airplane thing. In the time it took for him to make it over to the first platform, multiple people had moved on
Midoriya was being too safe. He had the tether in place, all he had to do was move. His pace quickened. Now he was at a decent walking speed, yet others were faster. Present Mic had been narrating Todoroki’s lead for awhile, so Midoriya still had time to catch up.

From what he could tell from the announcements, the next and final obstacle was a minefield. Midoriya was already coming up with a plan to beat Todoroki. At some point, his pace had increased to that of a light jog. The end was only a few feet away, so of course his own feet chose that moment to slip.

He fell over the edge other the wire. His rope tether coiled pain from the bristles to his chest. He should have tied it tighter. All it does now is ride up on him. Still, it’s better than falling the entire way.

Midoriya grabs onto the wire. His scared arms shake with the effort of his weight but he pushed them anyway. He crouched on top of the wire and slowly rose to his feet. About ten other students had passed in the time it took for him to rescue himself. Back on track, Midoriya ran the rest of distance to the cliffside and breathed happy relief from the solid land.

The next obstacle isn’t far away. It appeared to be an open field of dirt. Suddenly, a plume of pink smoke exploded from the ground, throwing some kid into the air. Minefield.

There were two people in the lead. Midoriya focused his zoom goggles on them. Todoroki was running on a sheet of ice, allowing him to bypass the mines entirely. The sheet melted as he got farther away, likely to cover his tracks. Behind him was Katsuki flying through the air, propelled by his explosions. Neither of them paid any attention to the mines.

Midoriya didn’t have the time to be careful now. The only way for him to win was to run full speed. There had to be a way to avoid the mines... of course! Midoriya reached down to his electromagnetic pulser on his utility belt. He flipped the switch and on turned a rolling vibration. Any electronics within a eight foot radius would shut down, including his gauntlets.

He took a cautious step onto the field. Nothing. Five more. Still none. Midoriya smirked. He lifted his legs and broke out into a run. When the mines got out of range, they exploded.

Katsuki and Todoroki looked back at the succeeding explosions. Katsuki glared at him before the
two both continued their fight for first. They didn’t see him as a threat.

“It looks like we have a runner for third place! He’s moving too fast for the mines to catch him! Hmm? Hey, Eraser, who is he? I don’t have his profile.” Present Mic said.

“You only have class 1-A’s and 1-B’s profiles. Midoriya Izuku is from class 1-C.” Aizawa said.

“Class 1-C?!? A general education student hasn’t placed in the top ten in years, and this kid looks like he’s going to make a solid third! Isn’t that interesting listeners?”

Midoriya couldn’t hear the crowd but he assumed that they were cheering. Everybody loves an underdog story, yet nobody thought he would pass Katsuki or Todoroki. He would have to prove them wrong.

Katsuki and Todoroki moved faster than he could run. He couldn’t catch them if they were going at top speed. He needed to slow them down.

An idea sparked in Midoriya’s mind. Not only could he slow them down, he could stop them entirely. Midoriya leaped off the ground, momentum carrying him a few feet. In air, he flipped off the electromagnetic pulser, and braced for landing. His feet clipped the end of a mine, and he was thrown high into the air.

“It appears Midoriya from general education has messed up! Will this be the end of is third place win?”

Yes it will be, Midoriya thought, but it’s the start of my first place win.

Katsuki and Todoroki hadn’t turned to him while he was in the air, too focused on their own performance. With the electromagnetic pulser off, his gauntlets were fully functional. He pointed his arm to his two competitors, and pulled.

The electricity hit them directly. Katsuki fell out of the air as his muscles convulsed. He fell right on top of the land mines, throwing his body around like a rag doll. Todoroki had a kinder fate, as he just fell onto his sheet of ice.
“Woah! It looks like Midoriya hit the mine on purpose! Both Todoroki and Bakugou have stopped their pursuit!”

Midoriya turned his electromagnetic pulse back on, and bent his knees. He hit the ground hard, but used his momentum to roll to his feet. He was in first now, but Todoroki and Katsuki would regain their mobility soon. He didn’t have time to look back. He pumped his legs harder.

Present Mic was narrating everything he did, as if it they were the most ground breaking actions. Hearing the narration did have its benefits, though, like how he now knew that Todoroki and Katsuki had recovered. He ran harder, and his legs burned.

The tunnel was so close. All he had to do was win. He promised Ectoplasm that he’d make himself known. The tunnel closed around him, the light at the end his goal. The cheers grew louder, but so did the sound of Katsuki’s explosions. Midoriya felt Todoroki’s ice nipping at his ankles.

Midoriya breached the exit, sudden light flailing his eyes. Cheers from the audience filled his ears. He lumbered forward and collapsed onto the ground. Todoroki arrived right after he did with Katsuki in tow. Katsuki’s face was twisted in rage.

“Midoriya Izuku wins first place! Talk about a come back! I don’t know about you folks, but I totally did not see that coming.” Present Mic said.

“It was easy to see he wasn’t going to settle for third.” Aizawa replied.

“Ah, that’s right! Midoriya is currently shadowing the heroics course. Any chance he’ll be transferred based on his performance here?”

“The Sports Festival does influence future transfers, however it still isn’t everything. I believe that if Midoriya were to continue at this rate, he will likely be transferred. Especially given the open slot in our class.”

He had a chance to transfer. He’d be whooping with joy had he not been so tired. Or the object of Katsuki’s glare who was currently stalking over to him oh shit.

“What the fuck do you think you’re doing, huh?”
“Finally beating you?” He said like it was obvious. “I’m going to win the next one too, just you wait.”

“‘Just you wait’? ‘Just you fucking wait’? You fucking piece of shit this is my win! I’m supposed to be the hero, not you. You useless fucking…” Katsuki clenched his fish. “Fuck you!” He marched off.

*He didn’t… he didn’t call me Deku.* Midoriya watched him leave. That was… odd.

A few minutes later, people began to file through the tunnel. Many collapsed just like he did. Shinsou emerged, still being carried like royalty.

“What on earth are you doing?” Midoriya walked over to him.

“What do you think I’m doing? I’m maximizing my advantages.” Shinsou smirked. “Put me on the ground.” He instructed. The students followed his voice robotically. After they set him down, their eyes regained color and their faces showed emotion. They ran away from him.

“Well, I guess that’s one way to finish.” Midoriya murmured.

“MIDORIYA!!”

Midoriya shifted his head as Tensou barreled into him and lifted him of the ground in one smooth motion. Tensou’s body temperature felt like around room temperature.

“Oh my god this was so cool!!” Tensou put him back down. “Did you see those robots? There were so many! And that guy with the ice like whoosh and crash and ohmygodthiswassomuchfun!” Tensou continued to wave his arms wildly and make loud noises with his mouth.

“Odd, he wasn’t acting like this before…” Midoriya muttered. Shinsou raised an eyebrow.

“What the hell did you give him?”
“Batteries.”

“Like, actual batteries?”

“Five car batteries to be specific.”

Shinsou blinked at him. “You are crazy.”

“That’s why you hang out with me, though.”

“Touché.”

Midoriya smiled at him. Tensou had at some point fallen to the ground and was trying to make a snow angel. It probably would have looked good if there had been snow. Tensou gave them a dopey grin. Maybe five was too much.

“Everybody, gather around!” called Midnight. Midoriya and Shinsou migrated with the rest of the group, both pulling Tensou up by the legs. He laughed happily along.

“Congratulations to everyone here! From the couple hundred students who began the obstacle course, you 42 are the ones who continue.” A cheer ran through the crowd. “Only 16 of you will move on to the tournament. The way to win is get as many points as possible.”

Midnight turned on the screen behind her. “The second qualifier is a human cavalry battle! You will all form teams of three or four and each of the points you individually won from the obstacle course will be added up and displayed on a headband. The more headbands you have, the more points you have!

The screen changed over to a score board. “The person who got 42 earned five points. Each subsequent place gets five more points, with the exception of first place.” Midoriya’s eyes widened as he read his point value. “First place will have ten million points. Whoever has possession of the ten million headband by the end of the match will instantly be in first place. You have ten minutes to find your groups and strategize.
Midoriya felt hungry stares on him. People sent glances to him as they formed their groups, yet nobody came to him. They didn’t think he could keep it the entire time.

“So, what’s the plan, Midoriya?”

“Shinsou? I’m going to be a huge target, are you sure you want to be on my team?”

“It’s not like anyone else is going to accept me willingly. Besides, one babysitter isn’t going to be enough for him.” Shinsou nodded to Tensou who was currently staring into space. “You’re on Midoriya’s team, right?”

“Hmm? Oh, yeah, I’m with you guys.” Tensou stood up, excess energy finally worn off.

“Alright, that means we need one more.” Midoriya looked around. Maybe Uraraka? No, she was talking with the 1-B group. Iida was fast, but no he was with Todoroki. Kirishima had been nice, maybe he’d… of course he was with Katsuki. He didn’t have any other options…

“So I had some ideas I think you’d like, Izuku. I know you were watching my amazing babies earlier, so—”

“Mei! Do you want to be on our team?”

“I’m already on your team? Didn’t you hear me just now? I mean really, Izuku, everyone’s going to be watching you, it’s the perfect time to make my babies known.”

Leave it to Mei to make something totally not about her babies completely about her babies.

“So, strategy: we avoid everyone. I can hook you guys up to my rocket boots. The sky’s the limit, as they say. It’s the best place to be when avoiding the mob.” Mei said happily.

“…That could work. How many boots do you have?”
“Three extra pairs. You won’t need them since we’ll be carrying you.”

“Ah, that reminds me!” Tensou said. “Do you have any insulating gloves? Extended periods of me touching others never goes well.”

“I might have the solution for you!” Mei reaches into the pocket of her gym outfit. “These are my work gloves, so you can ruin them all you’d like.” She grinned.

“I wouldn’t ruin them…”

This will, in all likelihood, become a train wreck. Midoriya thought. Hopefully we can keep control until the other teams lose interest.

________

“On your mark,” said Midnight.

Midoriya tied the headband around his forehead.

“Get set,”

Shinsou and Mei gave him thumbs up.

“GO!”

Teams shot foreword, all with the same goal: get the ten million. Even teams that were closer to each other than to him had the singular focus. Midoriya braced his arms on Mei’s and Shinsou’s back.

“Now?” Shinsou asked.

Midoriya shook his head. “Hold.”
The teams got closer, blocking off visible exits. Within only a few seconds, their team was cornered in one plane, but they were still too spread out.

“It looks like this is it for team Midoriya. It’s kind of a shame, I was really rooting for him!”

“You didn’t know who he was twenty minutes ago.”

“C’mon, Eraser, don’t be a downer.”

“Hold.” Midoriya said. He could hear Katsuki’s explosions more pronounced now. Just a few more seconds…

“NOW!”

The takeoff was rocky. Shinsou’s legs flying everywhere as he tried to steady the group. It only took one shift of the boots for the whole team to dip.

“What’s this?! Team Midoriya is in the air! Is that even legal?”

“Hatsume submitted all the paperwork needed for her ticket boots. No rules have been broken.”

“We have to come down soon or else we’ll burn all the gas.” Mei said.

“Find a clear area.”

“Roger that!” Mei had much more finesse with the boots than Shinsou and Tensou. At the very least, she was good at giving directions. They touched down at an unoccupied corner of the arena. Some of the teams still charged them, but others had given up and started going after the other teams.

One team charged faster than the others, but Midoriya only saw one member. The others must be hidden under his many arms. The arms parted slightly and something shot out. Midoriya just barely
dodged it. It was Tsuyu’s tongue. The tongue retracted back into the person’s arms and out came a barrage of purple balls. He recognized those too.

“Guys, don’t touch his balls!” Midoriya shouted. Mei giggled. “I swear to god, Mei, I’m going to murder you after this.” She laughed harder.

Their group had a way to run, so they did that instead of flying. For some reason, Tsuyu’s team doesn’t follow them, and Midoriya heard what sounded like a pained wail.

“My boot, I think it’s broken…” Tensou said.

“Broken?! Do you know how much those parts cost?”

“I’m sorry!”

“Nah, it’s cool, I get most parts from the junkyard. The boots were mostly made for free.” Mei smiled innocently.

There was a lengthy silence as Tensou processed her words.

“Midoriya, your friend is really mean.”

“I figured that out already. No need to remind me.”

“Hey!”

“We have trouble coming, at your nine.” Shinsou said, breaking up the car fight.

Midoriya recognized the team coming at them. At the head was Kudaketa. Her lackies from the shadowing program were below her and someone else with a mask was in the rear. Midoriya had seen him in class 1-C but didn’t know his name.
Midoriya pulled out his bow, intending to fire a warning shot. He readied a normal arrow in his bow. His right arm shook as he drew back, but he was able to release.

The arrow didn’t travel very quickly. Within the time frame of Midoriya releasing the arrow and it grazing the team, the person in the back had pulled out a literal medieval shield and reflected the arrow. He took the shield and shoved it back into his skin where it was replaced with a realistic tattoo.

The group hadn’t stopped running as he stored the shield. Kudaketa reached out to his forehead. Midoriya had no way to stop her, so he held out his bow in front of him, hoping to block her, but she grabbed the bow instead.

The bow vibrated in his grasp. A second later, the fiberglass shattered into small shards. The bow string whipped across Midoriya’s face.

When Midoriya opened his eyes again, he no longer saw Kudaketa or the arena. He was back at USJ staring down Shigaraki. Shigaraki, who disintegrated his bow. Shigaraki, who was about to disintegrate him, grotesque hand reaching toward his face. Midoriya’s legs were bound and unable to move, his arms useless and bloody.

Midoriya did the only thing he could do in that situation. He pulled his head back and slammed it into Shigaraki’s. Hard. Shigaraki’s nose bent unnaturally and gushed blood. He fell to the ground.

“Kudaketa has fallen to the ground! Her team is disqualified.” Present Mic’s voice pulled him back to the present.

Shigaraki was nowhere to be seen. It was just Kudaketa lying on the ground covering her nose. It did nothing to help the blood which streamed over her hand.

“Kuda-chan, are you okay?” The masked individual asked, running over to her. He pulled a handkerchief out of one of his tattoos and handed it to her.

“Thanks, Shirushi.” Kudaketa said. She slowly rose to her feet. “The game’s still running.” She ripped off her two headbands, “975 points total.” She handed it to Midoriya. “You probably won’t need it, but I have no use for it.”
“What, not gonna wish us luck?” Shinsou teased.

“I don’t believe in luck. If you’re happy to win without effort, I’ll be happy to keep them.”

“We’ll take them.” Midoriya said. “Thanks. I’m sorry about your nose.”

“You don’t need to thank me, I’d rather you tell this society to take its stick out of its ass.” Kudaketa began to walk to the med bay. Her teammates followed. “See you later.”

“You too.” Midoriya tied the headbands around his neck. The timer was still counting down.

The game wasn’t over yet.

Chapter End Notes

Kudaketa’s quirk is Shatter. She can vibrate things at the frequency where they tear themselves apart. Midoriya saw the close resemblance to Shigaraki’s quirk and had a minor PTSD episode.

Next chapter will feature the end of the cavalry battle and the beginning of the tournament. I’m not going on any roller coasters this weekend so expect the next update to be on schedual.
Climbing to the Top

Chapter Summary

The cavalry battle ends, and the tournament begins it's first round. That's really it. I don't know what else to summarize. Tensou gets the spotlight for like, 300 words.

Chapter Notes

Ack, sorry for the delay, I know I said this would be up on friday but then I had prom which was super fun and then my girlfriend had her birthday party and then today I had to go to an award banquet. That doesn't even begin to go into how shitty the standardized testing was this week. All and all it was really just busy, but the chapter is out now and I hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Midoriya’s team had been skirting around the edge of the arena for awhile now. He could tell his teammates were tired of holding him, but they only had a few minutes left. They could hold onto the head band for that long.

The group turned around and fled from their attackers and ran right into Todoroki’s team. Talk about going from the frying pan into the fire.

Yaoyorozu pulled a sheet out of her body and covered her team with it. Kaminari released a devastating amount of electricity in the direction of other teams that were still after them. The electricity stopped the teams in their place, as Todoroki froze them all in place so that even after they recovered from the electrocution, they wouldn’t be able to move. Conveniently, the ice blocked any exits Midoriya’s team could have made.

Shinsou looked up at Midoriya. Midoriya gave a short nod. Shinsou smirked.

“Hey Iida!” He called. “Remember me?”

Iida was about to reply, but Todoroki said something to him. Iida’s mouth abruptly closed.
“Shit. Todoroki knows my quirk.”

“It was a good plan. We just have to stay on the defensive for now.”

Midoriya watched Todoroki’s team. Even from this distance, Midoriya could see something in Iida’s expression change. He looked determined. The rest of his team were sporting various stages of confusion on their faces. For only a moment of time, a blink and you miss it, Iida’s engines burned blue.

Midoriya’s hand reached up to his head as Todoroki’s team turned into a blur of dark blue. A weight snapped his neck back by the headband. Midoriya could pinpoint the exact moment when the headband ripped off his head, but couldn’t do the same for his own actions. Instinct hazed his mind.

He grabbed the outstretched arm holding his headband. All it took was a small squeeze, and an electric charge rival to Kaminari’s was released. The shock slowed them down, but Iida’s boost was still enough to bring them to the other end of the ice wall. Smoke plumed from the team as the panted.

“You… you saw through what I was about to do…” Iida said between breaths. “I hadn’t told anyone… about recipro burst.”

“It doesn’t matter.”

Iida looked up at Todoroki sharply. In his hands hung a charred headband with the label of over 10 million points.

“We win.” Todoroki tied the headband around his neck where two others rested.

“No you haven’t.” Midoriya said. Todoroki studied him. “The timer is still ticking. You don’t win until the timer reaches zero.” There was still a minute forty left. Thirty-nine. Thirty-eight. Todoroki raised his right arm, ice already growing.

His right arm. An idea took form in Midoriya’s mind. Todoroki had a fire quirk. He’d seen him and his father on TV many times. Yet Todoroki hadn’t made any flames in the time Midoriya had known him. For some reason, Todoroki did not want to use his fire quirk and was overcompensating with his ice.
“When we charge,” Midoriya whispered to his teammates, “fake his right but charge left.” He was given a series of nods. “Ready…”

“*One minute remaining!*”

“Now!”

Midoriya’s plan worked. Todoroki was convinced that he was going to hit right and threw up some ice to block them. Midoriya’s team skidded left at the last second. Todoroki’s eyes tracked his own with dawning understanding.

Midoriya reached forward to Todoroki’s unguarded neck when Todoroki’s left hand came up, slower than his right, with swirling flames. Midoriya pulled his hand back from shock.

From his peripheral, Midoriya saw Katsuki’s team quickly approaching, but he had better things to worry about.

Like the fact that Todoroki seemed just as shocked by the flames as Midoriya was. He stopped the fire. Midoriya used his current distracted state to punch Todoroki in the face. Todoroki lost balance and fell backwards as Midoriya’s team moved away. He wasn’t able to grab the headband.

“*Wow, folks, look at that! Midoriya’s strategy appears to be knocking off other opponents so they can’t retaliate!* It seemed much more effective than Team Monoma’s grab and go method.” That… wasn’t what Midoriya initially planned but sure, let’s go with that. “*There are 20 seconds left!*”

“We have to go back.” Midoriya told his team.

“Are you sure? We already have the two headbands from Kudaketa, we should just sit here.” Tensou said.

“Either we win first or we don’t win at all, even if we score. We *have* to go back.”
“...Alright. Shinsou and Hatsume, climb on top of me.” Tensou said. “We’ll be faster if it’s only one person moving.”

“Are you sure you won’t tire out?” Midoriya asked.

“I can use whatever heat bleeds through your clothes as energy. Just climb on to me.”

Midoriya helped pull Shinsou and Mei onto Tensou’s back.

“You know, I forgot just how large you were.” Shinsou said. “We ready?”

“Ten seconds!”

“Go now!” Midoriya yelled as his team charged. Katsuki’s team raced theirs, attention solely on Todoroki’s team. Tensou pumped his legs harder. Midoriya only needed a few feet, and he’d grab it. He stretched out his hand to Todoroki’s left side again. Just a few more feet…

“Times up!” Present Mic yelled. Katsuki’s team stopped abruptly when the timer ran out, throwing Katsuki onto the ground. He started to yell profanity at his teammates.

Tensou took this as a time to relax, and promptly fell to ground with everyone still on him.

“If you need me,” yawn “I’ll be asleep.” Midoriya and Shinsou laughed.

“Okay, everyone, this is the moment you’ve been waiting for! In first place, Team Todoroki!” The crowd cheered. “Second place is Team Bakugou!” Slightly less cheers. “Third place was a huge surprise, at 975 points, Team Midoriya from general education!”

The cheer he received was much larger than Katsuki’s, but Midoriya didn’t get much satisfaction from it. Everyone loved an underdog story, but they really didn’t know him.

“Finally fourth place is Team Ken— wait a second it’s actually Team Uraraka! When did that happen?”
“Sometime during the last ten seconds, Uraraka stole Kendou’s headbands.” Aizawa replied. “You should have watched more closely.”

Present Mic brushed the dig off. “In any case, you four teams move on to the Tournament! Before then, we have some activities planned for the teams that did not make it.”

Midnight stood on the front stage and displayed the preliminary matches. Midoriya’s name was written in the first match. Of course. Paired with his name was Kaminari’s.

“This will be fun.” Shinsou said beside him. Midoriya looked for his name.

“Shiozaki… she was one of the 1-B students on Uraraka’s team.”

“After my match.”

Shinsou was in match seven, the second to last preliminary. The final match paired Uraraka with Katsuki.

“You want to fight Katsuki?”

“It won’t be much of a fight, now, will it be? I can’t wait to see his face.”

Midoriya laughed. “Uraraka could still win.”

“Then I’ll just see his face from the nosebleeds after she beats him, although I’d rather it be me.”

Midoriya laughed some more. His team made their way to the cafeteria. Shinsou was giving Tensou pointers about how to use his height to his advantage. Midoriya dragged behind them.

A hand fell onto his shoulder. Midoriya turned around and saw Todoroki standing there, holding a tissue to his bleeding nose.
“I need to talk to you. Follow me.”

“Where are we—” Todoroki grabbed his arm and pulled him along. Todoroki pulled him to a secluded archway lined with shadows. Midoriya stood tense as Todoroki stared at him.

“I’m s-sorry about your nose.” Midoriya said finally. “Whenever I punch people with these gauntlets, I break something.”

“It’s fine. I’ll see Recovery Girl later.”

More silence. Midoriya felt very uncomfortable for some reason.

“You figured out my quirk.”

“The fire? I mean, you’re pretty famous. It would have been hard not to know.”

“I’m talking about my weakness. You knew I refused to use my fire.”

“I… actually just thought you were stronger with ice. Why wouldn’t you use your fire? There are so many benefits to it, like temperature regulation and—”

“I refuse to use my father’s power. My old man is a terrible excuse for a father. I will win this festival without him. Don’t expect me to go easy on you because I’m only using ice.”

“I don’t want you to go easy on me.”

“Good.” Todoroki turned and left. Midoriya, for some reason, felt inexplicably angry.
“Midoriya, there you are!” Tensou called to him. “We saved you some soba.”

“Where were you?” Shinsou asked.

“Oh, I was just in the bathroom.” Midoriya scratched his head. Shinsou raised his eyebrow. He’s probably sassing me in his mind. Midoriya tried to send him a don’t-question-it look. Shinsou shrugged.

“I can’t wait for the tournament. Midoriya, you’re first, did ya see?”

“I saw. Do you think you’re ready?’

“No. But I’m excited!” Midoriya and Shinsou laugh.

“Everyone, please head to the stadium stands. First pair Midoriya and Kaminari, please go to the arena.” Aizawa said.

Midoriya waved goodbye to his friends. A couple people from class 1-C gave encouragement as he passed. The sun was high in the sky when Midoriya came back out. He squinted up at the cheering crowd. Midoriya took his place within the rectangular arena. Kaminari sauntered up not long after.

“The way to win is to either knock your opponent unconscious or push them out of bounds. Begin!”

Kaminari had a wide grin on his face. Electricity swirled around his limbs.

“I know that you’re quirkless, so I’m going to go easy. It’s really cool how far you advanced despite everything, but I think we both know who’s moving on.”

Midoriya scowled. He would have preferred to have his bow, but the grenades would have to do. As Kaminari readied his charge, Midoriya tossed a concussion grenade into the air, right in the path of Kaminari’s electricity. Midoriya crouched down and covered his ears.

Kaminari discharged his quirk, but it never reached Midoriya. The moment the lightning grazed the
grenade, the arena flared with light and devastatingly loud noise. Despite covering his ears, Midoriya winced at the sound.

Still, he recovered quicker than Kaminari (or the audience, for that matter). Kaminari was on all fours, ears leaking blood. He looked up at Midoriya when he walked over. His yellow eyes rolled around unfocused.

“I’m not here to go easy. I won’t fight if you don’t bring your all.” Midoriya halled him to his feet. Kaminari stumbled, and fell again. He didn’t register Midoriya’s comment. Midoriya reached back and rammed his fist into Kaminari’s face. He stopped moving.

Midnight ran over and examined Kaminari.

“Kaminari is unconscious. Midoriya wins the first match!”

“Would you look at that, Folks! This kid from gen ed keeps surprising us! All without using his quirk, no less. I know I’m not supposed to play favorites, but Midoriya seems like a good contender for a metal.” The crowd cheered in response. “In any case, out next match is between Tensou Enerugii and Ashido Mina.”

Midoriya walked off the arena as a team of medics carried Kaminari away in a stretcher. He had a dopey look on his face that seemed more morbid than funny given all the blood leaking out of him. *Maybe I did go a bit too far.* Midoriya grimaced.

Tensou passed him as he left. He gave Midoriya a Pat on the back and then started to talk to himself. He appeared rather tense. Midoriya made his way down to the stands with the rest of the classes.

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Tensou had always wanted to be a hero. He had watched the hero battles and played make believe at recess. But then again, everyone wanted to be a hero. He still liked the idea of heroism, but fighting?

Ashido launched more grey acid at him. He poorly dodged it and felt his gym uniform singe away. He ran away and tried to rein in his high pitch squeals.
Yeah, fighting was not his thing.

The match had started pretty well. Tensou ran in close like he planned to, but before he could grab her, she started flinging globs of literal acid. *What the actual frick.*

“It looks like Ashido has him cornered now. Tensou had been running around in circles this entire time, trying to tire her out,” No, that definitely wasn’t his plan. He didn’t really have one at all. “But it seems like she had the upper hand all along. Tensou is now unable to flee.”

“C’mon, what’re you, afraid to hit a girl?” Ashido teased.

“I’m actually afraid to hit anyone…”

“I promise I won’t bite. Just try.”

Tensou took a deep breath. He knew he’d have to fight for real sooner or later. It would be good to just get it over with. He closed his fist and drew back like Midoriya would. He slammed it forward with all of his strength.

His fist connected with Ashido. The crowd was completely silent.

“Is that it?”

Tensou opened his eyes. He didn’t realize they were closed. Ashido stood in the same place she had before, completely unharmed.

“I can’t tell if you are just that weak or if you’re playing some game with me.”

“I was actually just trying to distract you.”

“Huh—”
Tensou, now close enough to grab her, wrapped his arms around her waist and lifted her into the air. The familiar feeling of heat rushing into his body was comforting. He really needed the extra strength.

Okay, so maybe Tensou did lie earlier. He did have a very crappy last-second plan. Lead Ashido to border, drain her energy, push her out of bounds. He was now at step two. Ashido was growing limp in his arms as she didn’t have enough energy to struggle.

“What is this? It looks like the tables have turned! I can’t see what’s happening too well from up here, but it looks like Ashido isn’t moving anymore.”

Tensou felt a weak hand on his forearm. He had to give it to her, she was definitely a fighter. Something pricked at his skin where her hand touched. Then it turned into a burn, searing and painful. He dropped her with a hiss. Excess acid rolled off his wrist.

Ashido wasn’t steady, but where she lacked in balance, she made up for in strength. She pushed Tensou backwards while he was too busy worrying over his acid burns. Tensou made to grab her again.

“Tensou is out of bounds!”

Tensou looked down at his feet. His left leg had moved backwards to steady him. He didn’t realize how close to the border he’d been. Ashido smiled widely and collapsed onto the ground.

“It appears Ashido has fallen unconscious despite being unharmed!”

“Sorry…” Tensou said to Midnight as she examined Ashido.

“Nothing to be sorry about. You can leave now.”

Tensou left the arena. He moved faster than he normally would’ve because of Ashido’s energy and because he didn’t want to miss the next match.
Midoriya greeted Tensou as he returned to the stands. “You did really good. You should’ve won.”

“Nah, its cool. I’m not much of a fighter anyways. She did good.”

In the arena, Todoroki and Sero stood. Midnight started the match and Sero quickly released tape and restrained Todoroki. Sero spun the tape around, attempting to launch Todoroki over the border. Todoroki’s hand grasped the tape.

Midoriya would have to rewatch the battle later in slow motion. In less than a second, the open arena suddenly sported a new glacier, three stories tall. The whole west side of the stadium was frozen over. At the heart of the glacier, Sero was immobilized.

“Sero, can you move?” Midnight asked.

Sero struggled, or shivered, Midoriya couldn’t tell. “I can’t.”

“Since Sero is unable to fight, Todoroki wins!”

The crowd cheered. Midoriya watched Todoroki thaw the ice with his left hand, the one he said he would win without. He looked incredibly sad then.

“The next match will be between Hatsume Mei and Iida Tenya.” Aizawa said.

Mei walked out into the arena, Iida following her lead. Midoriya noticed Iida was wearing support gear. He recognized the metalwork.

“Iida, you can't have support gear. Anyone that has support must declare it before the festival.”

“My apologies, my opponent wanted me to wear them. She said that they would compliment my quirk nicely.”
“How considerate! I suppose since both of you are on board, I shall allow it. Let the match begin!”

If Midoriya had been asked to give his opinion on whether a battle lasting over an hour was fun to watch or not, he probably would have said it’d be exciting. It really, really wasn’t.

Mei started to list the pros and cons about her grappling hook now. From the start of the match, she had been talking nonstop about her babies. She even brought a microphone so that the audience could hear her better. The audience was bored to the point where people in the stands were falling asleep.

“As you can see, the guide wings on the side keep the hook on course!” She fires the hook and Iida just barely dodged. “The sensors build in to Iida’s gear can detect metal objects. Without them, this baby goes too fast to avoid.”

“Do you know when she’ll finish?” Shinsou asked him.

“She’s going down the list of her portfolio. The grappling hook was one of her newer inventions, so there shouldn’t be that many more. At least, I really hope so.”

Turned out, the match lasted another hour. Midoriya had no idea how she fit so many gadgets onto her person. He felt really bad for Iida. She wasn’t even fighting him, just playing.

“Those are all my inventions. I hope you all consider me, Hatsume Mei, to design your support!” She walked over to the boundary line and simply skipped over it.

“Hatsume is out of bounds! The match is over and Iida wins!” Midnight rushed. She was probably just as tired of the fight as everyone else.

Iida left the arena, eyes downcast. Midoriya felt bad for him.

“Well, that match sure was, uh… interesting, we’ll go with that.” Present Mic said. “The, uh, next match is between Tokoyami Fumikage and Kirishima Eijirou.” Present Mic’s usual cheerfulness was
The fifth match began as the rest did. Kirishima and Tokoyami appeared to be having the most fun out of everyone, a huge smile plastered to Kirishima’s face as he fought.

Tokoyami’s quirk intrigued Midoriya. He had complete control over a phantom crow. Midoriya had never seen a quirk like it before. There seemed to be a secondary mutation quirk that turned Tokoyami’s head into that of a crow as well.

Midoriya wrote about the quirk in his journal. He saved a page for each student at Yuuei, should he ever meet them all. He would use a different journal to record pro heros’ quirks.

Tokoyami’s shadow threw Kirishima into the air. The crowd cheered thinking that the match was going into Tokoyami’s favor. Kirishima fell to the ground, but before he hit the ground, Kirishima hardened his arms and dove into the rocks. His legs were still sticking out but that didn’t matter. Kirishima had thrown up a lot of dust right into Tokoyami’s eyes. His shadow appeared disoriented as well.

Kirishima climbed out of the ground. With a hardened fist, he sucker punched Tokoyami right in the gut. Tokoyami’s shadow attempted to retaliate, but Midnight called out.

“Tokoyami is out of bounds. Kirishima moved on.” The crowd cheered loudly despite rooting for Tokoyami to win only a few moments prior.

“What an amazing fight! I can tell, these 1-A students will go far. Moving on, we have Yaoyorozu Momo against Tetsutetsu Tetsutetsu... wait is that really his name?”

“Yes it is and the speaker is still on.”

“Whoops. Uhh, just come to the field.”

Midoriya noticed the similarity between Kirishima and Tetsutetsu. They were more or less carbon copies of each other with different color schemes. Tetsutetsu went for the same weak spots as Kirishima had with Tokoyami. Yaoyorozu even made the same mistakes despite having watched the previous battle.
It was really sad seeing Yaoyorozu cross the boundary line. Her whole body sagged forward in defeat as her opponent was announced the winner. She seemed so much more lost than when he had first met her with class 1-A. Midoriya wondered where all of her confidence went.

Shinsou was up next. He gave Midoriya a nod.

“Ready to raise some hell?” Midoriya asked.

“Hell yes. See you after I win.” Shinsou smiled as Midoriya laughed.

The match had started, however his opponent had decided to give a speech before she did anything.

“Thank you everyone for giving me the opportunity to be here. I will not let you down.” Great. Now everyone is in love with her.

“You done yet?”

“Ah, yes, my apol—”

Shinsou snapped into her mind. It was too simple, really. No one understood the power of words, apparently.

“What’s this? Shiozaki has stopped moving! What on earth is going on down there?”

Shinsou rolled his eyes at the disembodied voice. “Walk out of bounds.”

Shiozaki turned around and walked away. Her eyes had turned a dull white, almost dead look. Her body looked relaxed, but he could feel her mind wasn’t. He could feel her confusion and stress as she tried to stop her movement, but it would never be enough.
“Shiozaki is out of bounds! That must have been the shortest battle yet!”

“I don’t think it can really be called a battle, Hizashi.”

“Close enough.”

Shinsou released Shiozaki’s mind. She blinked and moved her arms around. “What… was that?”

“My quirk. I think they want us out of the arena.”

“Oh, of course!” She started to leave. Shinsou trudged along behind her.

“Your quirk is very powerful. Why are you not in heroics?” She asked him.

“The exam.”

Shiozaki was silent. “That is a shame. I shall pray for your speedy transfer into heroics.”

“That really is not necessary.”

“I am doing it anyways.”

Shinsou sighed. Why did these people have to be so odd? Shiozaki parted ways with him when they got to the stands. He walked over to his spot. A key person was missing from the scene.

“What’s Midoriya?” He asked Tensou.

“He said he wanted to talk to Uraraka from 1-A. She’s up next.”
Right. She was going up against Bakugou. Midoriya refused to tell him or the others about his history with Bakugou, but Shinsou had a pretty good idea of it. He hoped Midoriya would be alright.

———

Uraraka paced around the room. Theoretically, her plan could work. It’d be dangerous as hell, but if that’s what it would take to win, she was willing to go there.

“Uraraka, there you are!”

Uraraka turned around. Midoriya had a wide grin on his face. He clutched his journal in his hands.

“I had some ideas about what you could do in your match. Katsuki’s physically way stronger than you, so an evasive tactic would work best.” He spoke with his head in his journal, flipping through pages.

“Wait, wait, wait. You made a plan… for my fight?”

“Yeah! I know Katsuki better than anyone, so I thought I would help.”

“Wow, I really appreciate that…” Uraraka frowned.

“I’m sensing a ‘but’ in there.”

“I think you’ve forgotten that we’re still rivals.”

The smile dropped off of Midoriya’s face, eyes blown wide in surprise.

“That’s not to say that we can’t be friends! I just… don’t need your help right now. I want to win through my merit alone.”
Midoriya’s smile returned, softer this time. “Then I guess I’ll wish you good luck. Well actually… I don’t think you’ll need any.”

“Thanks.” She grinned.

“Oh, there is one thing you should know. Katsuki is going to put his all into this fight, even if it is just the first one. If you want to win, you’re going to have to match that intensity.”

“That’s obvious. Trust me, I have everything under control.”

Okay. Have fun.” Midoriya walked away. Uraraka sat down and breathed deeply. She could do this. Nothing would stop her.

Uraraka walked down to the arena. Bakugou was already there, waiting for her.

“If you’re going to forfeit, do it now. I’m not going to stop just because you’re hurt.”

Uraraka scowled. “Forfeit isn’t an option.”

“Let the match begin!” Midnight shouted and Uraraka was off. It wasn’t a question that Bakugou was stronger than she was. On the ground, he was always on guard, so her only option was to get him into the air.

She remembered the heroes versus villains activity they did at the beginning of the year. Bakugou wasn’t one to flee, he faced his problems head on with a powerful right swing. He was more focused on the power than his open left side. All she had to do was get through the opening and tap him, and she’d have the upper hand.

Just as she predicted, he readied a blast with his right arm. She ducked down low as the blast whipped her hair.

Uraraka reached for him, but the blast was much stronger than she prepared for. It threw her back all
the way to where she started.

This is okay. I can work with plan B. Uraraka grabbed a couple rocks and let them fly out of her way. Bakugo’s explosion created a ton of smoke. In clouded her view so she could barely see in front of her. That meant Bakugou also couldn’t see very well.

Uraraka took off her gym uniform shirt and let it float away. She had an idea where Bakugou was. She could only hope he’d take the bate.

Uraraka jumped out of the smoke screen behind Bakugou. He had her shirt in his grasp, back facing her. She reached out to grab his shoulder.

At the last second, Bakugou must have seen her in his peripherals. He launched another explosion in her direction. It was enough to throw her back another five feet.

Uraraka didn’t let it slow her down. She was back on her feet and ran forward again, all along the way sending rocks into the air. Bakugou didn’t notice them. She got close again and, like before, Bakugou blasted her away. He was too strong to allow her near.

“I’m still standing!” She shouted at him. “Explode the arena all you want, I’m not going down.” She raced forward again. There was an obnoxious grin plastered to Bakugou’s face. She wouldn’t give up that easy.

Bakugou blasted her away.

She refused to give up.

Her feet burned. The constant running over the past few minutes took its toll on her injured soles. But she would not give up. Even as first and second degree burns lined her skin, she would keep fighting.

Uraraka’s attention was drawn away from Bakugou to the crowd. They booed loudly.

“What kind of a hero are you trying to be?!” One hero shouted from the stands. “If you’re that
strong, just blow her out of bounds already. Stop toying with her!”

More people began to boo him. Bakugou just growled.

“Who the hell do you think you are?” Aizawa-Sensei shouted over the speaker. Uraraka gasped. Her teacher would frequently be annoyed with them, but never angry and he never yelled. “Can none of you understand the mere basics of this fight? If Uraraka is still standing, then that means she is just as strong as Bakugou. Nobody’s been toying with anybody. The only person acting un-hero-like is you all. Sit down, shut up, and think about the students you’re yelling at before you speak.”

Aizawa went off the speaker and the stadium quieted. It seemed Bakugou had also been distracted by the jeering.

“I guess this is it.” Uraraka said as she put her hands together. Time for plan B. “This was fun.”

Bakugou raised an eyebrow before looking up to the sky. Throughout the match, all the rocks she’d grabbed had floated high into the air, away from Bakugou’s line of sight. Uraraka released them all at once, and they came crashing down. She held back the vomit from quirk use.

Uraraka ran forward. This would be the only chance she had to grab Bakugou. She could weave around the rocks as they fell. Bakugou lifted an arm to the sky. She was almost there, only five more feet.

Just before she reached him, Bakugou launched an explosion out of his hand to her rock rain. The explosion was much bigger than the ones he’d used to keep her back. The sky lit up with fire and smoke. Uraraka yelled as the shock wave pushed her back to the boundary line, but not yet over it.

When Uraraka looked up, the smoke had cleared. All of the rocks that had been falling were gone. Shit. She hadn’t considered he could just blow them to fucking smithereens. She got to her feet and her stomach rolled uncomfortably.

“I figured you’d have something up your sleeve.” Bakugou smiled devilishly. “The real fight starts now.”

Uraraka smiled through the pain. “You’re on.”
She ran forward, but something was wrong. Her feet slapped the cracked concrete, and her vision blurred. Dark fuzz clouded her peripherals.

_No… this isn’t over. I can still fight… I can still win!_

It was like an out of body experience, hitting the ground. She knew she was down, and that she had to get up. She could hear people speaking to her. But she couldn’t move, couldn’t even look up. She was puking. Medical was taking her away.

_Put me down! The fight… the fight isn’t over… I have to… keep… going…_

Uraraka lost consciousness.

Bakugou marched back to the class 1-A stands. Angel Face wasn’t there. He hadn’t thought much about fighting her beforehand since he barely knew her, only that she’d sit at stupid fucking De— Midoriya’s table everyday. He hadn’t expected their fight to be enjoyable. He almost wanted to keep fighting her when she woke up. Almost.

“Hey, Bakugou, man, that was awesome! We were rooting for you the whole time.” Tape Arms said.

“I can’t believe you can blast a fragile girl like that! I probably wouldn’t have had the guts.”

Bakugou clenched his fist. “How the fuck did you get fragile from that?” He wasn’t expecting them to reply. The class was silent as they pondered his comment. Round two was starting next.

Chapter End Notes

Comments seriously make my day, even if I forget to reply, know that I read and reread comments daily.
Round two begins next chapter!
Midoriya paced the hallway, planning for his battle with Ashido. She was strong, no doubt, but didn’t think much about the situation. That was how Tensou could trap her. His best bet would be to lure her into a false sense of security. Recovery Girl walked out of the health room.

“Is Uraraka awake?” He asked.

“She’s still out cold, and probably will be for the next hour or so. You should head down to the arena, I’ll call you down later.”

“...Okay.” His shoulders sagged.

Midoriya still had time before the second round began when he reached the gym locker room. They were doing some kind of intermission activity. Midoriya decided to use the time to take inventory. His bow was destroyed, so he had no use for the arrows. He stuffed the quiver into his locker. Hopefully, the lack of the extra weight would yield more mobility.

He also didn’t need the electromagnetic pulser. Ashido didn’t use support gear last battle, so chances were she wasn’t about to use any now. That more or less left him with his gauntlets and grenades. He should have asked Mei for more things.

Oh well. He’d just have to put his plan into action and hope Ashido didn’t catch on. Midoriya left the gym and forged on to the arena. Ashido waited by the arena entrance, stretching.
“Hey, Midoriya, right?” She asked. He gave her a nod. “You’ll be more fun than your friend right? Our match was super boring. He couldn’t even hit me.”

“I think I can manage.”

“Great! Well, c’mon then, I think they’re starting.”

Midoriya followed. The arena had been repaired from Uraraka’s fight. No trace of the battle could remain, save for the acrid smoke permeating the air. Ashido scrunched up her nose in unconscious disgust, but Midoriya didn’t react. He was used to the smell.

“All right everyone, settle down, settle down!” Present Mic said. “We are about to begin the first match of round two. On the right, we have Ashido Mina, one of the students from 1-A and a good contender to win this match. On the left we have Midoriya Izuku, the student from 1-C that continues to surprise us, all without showing his quirk! Will he make it to the semifinals? I sure can’t wait to see!”

Midoriya took a deep breath as Midnight announced the start of the match. Ashido made the first move, throwing a ball of acid his way. It wasn’t a very fast throw, so Midoriya dodged it easily.

Midoriya walked carefully around her, doing his best to read her actions. She didn’t seem to like that he was avoiding her.

“I literally asked you if you were going to be boring earlier. You said you wouldn’t be, yet here you are. Fight me!”

Impatience. He could work with that. Midoriya ran forward to her. She smiled and threw more acid. He had judged that she was strong before, but it was obvious that she didn’t know how to use that strength. He ducked below the acid and swept her legs out with one of his own. She hit the ground hard.

“Oh…” she said. “When I said fight, I didn’t mean like that.”

“What did you mean then? Did you really think I’d let you win?”
“Hey! I didn’t say that! I just didn’t expect you to be… you know.” She waved her hand for emphasis. His eyes narrowed. He could punch her back to the ground, but she was too far from the boundary. He wanted to avoid injuring someone as badly as he had Kaminari.

Ashido rose and ran at him. She launched a right fisted upper cut, aimed squarely at his jaw. Her style was brute strength, versus swiftness. Her body’s twisting wind-up motion had all but shouted her intention. Midoriya ducked, then shot a fist straight at her gut, connecting. He didn’t put all of his strength into it, but it was still enough to make her double over.

Midoriya backed away. She followed him and swung with a wide right, her arm not quite at taut, then a wide left, which he expertly evaded. Her whole body was off balance. She growled in frustration.

Midoriya darted two quick steps forward and socked her once in the lip, then danced back. Her head snapped back and she yelped. Her arm flew at him in retaliation.

For the first time that match, Ashido managed to land a hit on Midoriya. He fell to the ground. Ashido stood before him, grinning.

“A-ha! Finally!” She pumped her fist in celebration. She stuck her arm down towards him, acid spitting from her fingertips.

Midoriya reached out and grabbed the arm and pulled her down to him, her expression of glee turning into one of surprise. He rolled on top of her in a second, pinning her with his arms.

Ashido tried to push him off of her, but Midnight’s voice drew her attention away.

“Ashido is out of bounds! Midoriya wins!”

The crowd cheered happily at the sudden outcome. Ashido looked dumbfounded.

“When did I..?” She looked down at the white border her right hand had crossed over.
“Try keeping your guard up next time.” Midoriya said as he stood and offered a helping hand. Ashido looked at it for a moment, not sure what to do. She hesitantly grabbed his arm and he pulled her to her feet.

“Thanks.” She said. “Sorry about what I said earlier. You’re actually really talented for a quirkless person!”

Midoriya turned his head away and sighed. “Don’t mention it. I’ll be leaving now.”

Midoriya walked away. She scrambled after. “Why the rush? You’re not going to even talk a little?” Midoriya was silent. Ashido continued without seeing his tension. “You were the kid that was analyzing everyone at the USJ make up, right? Your ideas were pretty cool. I wished I could’ve thought of them.”

Ashido was apparently really good at holding up a conversation by herself, like she didn’t even realize Midoriya wasn’t answering her questions. Midoriya had to admit that it was better than listening to silence.

“This is where we part ways.” Ashido spoke. They passed through the door to the stands and walked toward their classes. Midoriya glanced behind to her. She did not see him as her face turned down into a frown.

“Holy hell that was cool!” Yamada exclaimed when he got off the air. He made sure to turn it off this time. “I really didn’t expect him to win there. I can see why you’d sponsor him, Shouta.”

Yamada and Shouta sat in in the announcer booth. It was small and there were only two plastic chairs by the speaker. A coffee stain was visible on Shouta’s side. Yamada announced all of the Sports Festivals since he’d gotten the job. It let him use his quirk without making peoples’ ears bleed. He usually dragged Shouta up with him so that he would have actual company.

The booth had worn down with time. The original lemon paint on the walls looked less like paint and more like the color of decay. At least the place still smelled somewhat tolerable. Yamada still liked the place, despite its shortcomings. Especially since Shouta was here.
Shouta grumbled in response and fidgeted with his bandages. “He wanted her to hit him.”

“Eh? Why would he want that?”

“He wanted to push her over the boundary. By letting her think that she won, he could get the upper hand. It’s a smart strategy, but I wish he hadn’t let himself be hurt while doing it. The kid’s too reckless for his own good.”

“Wait, so he planned the entire match?”

“It looks like it.”

Yamada grinned at him. “I said it once and I’ll say it again: I can see why you’d sponsor him.”

“Hmph.”

“Don’t give me that! He’s your favorite. I can see it in your eyes.”

“Hizashi, my face is covered in bandages, you can’t see my eyes.”

“I can still tell.” Yamada reached over and turned on the speaker. “The next match is between Todoroki Shouto and Iida Tenya. Winning second in the obstacle course and first in the cavalry battle, Todoroki is most likely to win. Don’t discredit Iida, though. He’s the brother of Ingenium. Who do you think will win, Eraser?”

“Both students have merit. Either way, it will likely be a quick match.”

Yamada turned off the speaker as Midnight started the match. Both boys were off.

“What is his quirk, anyways? I’ve never seen a student get through the first qualifier without using their quirk, much less the second round of the tournament.”
Shouta was silent. Yamada raised an eyebrow at him.

“I don’t have the right to say anything about that. If Midoriya wanted people to know, then he would tell them. He hasn’t, and I wish to protect his privacy.”

“Quirks don’t really have privacy anymore. I mean, this whole festival is being broadcast to everyone in Japan. Everyone’s going to know about it sooner or later.”

Shouta sighed. “Midoriya’s quirk situation is… complicated. I believe he would rather people learn about it later.”

Yamada shrugged. “Whatever you say.” He switched on the speaker. “Iida made a powerful kick to Todoroki’s face! Now he’s dragging him to the boundary. Is this the end for Todoroki?”

Yamada shut off the speaker. Shouta sighed.

“Do you really have to make all of those rhetorical questions?”

Yamada gasped dramatically in the way Shouta secretly liked. “Of course they’re necessary! How could I, the best announcer Yuuei has seen, do my job without rhetoric? I’m building suspense in the audience!”

“Narration is not suspenseful.”

“Is too!”

“I’m not doing that again.”

“Fine.” Yamada grinned. He flipped the speaker back on. “Look at that! Todoroki froze Iida’s engine! The ice has now encased his entire body. With that, I do believe that Todoroki will move on to the next round!”

Yamada smiled to himself as the crowd cheered. Todoroki melted the ice covering Iida while
rubbing the cheek that Iida kicked. Iida appeared disappointed.

“Are you going to fill out the transfer form?” Yamada asked Shouta.

Shouta was silent for a moment. “I can’t until the semester ends. Otherwise he’d be taking a final exam for a class he’d barely been in. After finals… maybe. So long as he continues to work hard.”

“The kid is determined, I’ll tell you that.” Yamada turned on the speaker. “It’s the third match of round two! Kirishima Eijirou from 1-A will be facing Tetsutetsu Tetsutetsu from 1-B.” He turned and whispered to Shouta. “Did I say it right?” Shouta nodded.

“Is it me or are these two really similar?” Yamada asked the audience. “I suppose it doesn’t matter. Let the fight begin!”

Midnight looked at the announcer booth in annoyance. It was her job to say when the fight began.

“I can’t tell if you are genuine or faking the enthusiasm.” Shouta said.

“Of course I’m being genuine. The fakers have horrible followings. Nobody wants to listen to people who aren’t excited as they are. Speaking of which…” Yamada turned on the speaker. “Kirishima and Tetsutetsu are the perfect match, it seems. Every punch one throws, the other throws the mirror.”

Kirishima punched Tetsutetsu in the face. “Oh, that’s gonna hurt.” Tetsutetsu followed with the exact same swing into Kirishima’s face. “Hurt times two. I wonder if either of them can get an opening without the other using it.”

“They’re both equal to each other, in skill, strength, and quirk. I find it hard to believe that this match could end in one victor since the other would have done the exact same thing.” Shouta added.

“Kirishima and Tetsutetsu are both activating their quirks now, both of which are hardening types.”

Kirishima landed a punch into Tetsutetsu’s face at the same time Tetsutetsu hit him. Both students fell to the ground and made no effort to get up. Midnight approached their bodies.
“Kirishima and Tetsutetsu are both unconscious. Round two, match three ends with a tie.”

“A tie?! We haven’t had a tie in, well…” Yamada counted his fingers. “I don’t think there’s ever been a tie.”

“Since they’re unconscious right now, we’ll just move on with the program and come up with a tiebreaker in the meantime.” Shouta said before shutting off the speaker. “I need a drink. I’ll be back.”

Shouta got up from the chair and left the announcer box. Yamada glanced over at the bag he left. Sticking out was a blank class transferral form.


———

Bakugou stretched his arms out. Angel Face made him use more power than he initially wanted to. His arms strained with tension. He rolled them out and grimaced as pain bubbled over. He sighed when it popped out.

“The final match of round two will begin soon!” Called the speaker. Bakugou pushed himself off the wall and marched out. When he came out, the crowd didn’t cheer as loudly as before his fight with Angel Face, although it was still more than Eye Bags got. In fact, the people had mostly finished cheering by the time that he walked out.

“In this match, we have Bakugou Katsuki, one of the top members from 1-A. He made a declaration that he would win this festival, but will he make it? Shinsou Hitoshi is from 1-C, but he made a very strong finish in his last match.”

Bakugou cracked his neck. This match would be over quickly.

“Begin!” Midnight shouted.
Bakugou had gathered sweat into his hand. He flung his arm forward as the droplets ignited, sending a powerful wave of smoke and fire into Eye Bags’ direction.

“Is that all you can do?” Eye Bags asked. “Brute force it and hope you’ll win? That isn’t very interesting.”

Bakugou opened his mouth in a growl, but shut it quickly. He’d watched Eye Bags face down Vine Girl. He wasn’t going to beat Bakugou that easily.

“Come on, say something. Don’t you care that I’m hurting your precious reputation?” Eye Bags smirked. “I suppose you don’t. You act more like a villain that I do, even with a perfect quirk.”

Be quiet you fucking piece of shit. Bakugou launched another explosion at him. Eye Bags moved slowly, but that didn’t matter if he could keep his footing.

“You know, people like you are so lucky that you don’t even know what chance you are wasting.” He spat. “I had to climb my way here with broken and bloody fingers, and it’ll all be for nothing if I lose. Because all anyone will remember is that Bakugou Katsuki, the perfect hero-in-training won.”

Bakugou grit his teeth and ran forward. Just shut up already! He punched Eye Bags in the gut with a sharper explosion. He flew backwards, rolling to a stop along the arena floor.

“You didn’t have to work a goddamn day in your life!” Eye Bags shouted as he crawled to his knees. “You were given an amazing power from your birth and you abused it! How do you think that makes the rest of us feel?!”

Shut your fucking face! You don’t know shit about my life! Bakugou charged forward, another blast sparkling at his fingertips. Eye Bags looked up at him from the ground, a smirk dancing over his lips.

Without warning, a hand grabbed Bakugou’s outstretched arm. Eye Bags had grabbed it. He pulled it down, using the force to throw Bakugou to the ground, and him back to his feet. Their positions had flipped.

“Midoriya taught me that. You know, the one you call ‘useless’. News flash: He isn’t, and he is already ten times the hero you could ever hope to be.”
Bakugou growled. “Fucking shut up al—”

Eye Bags’ smirk grew larger.

Bakugou was aware of his surroundings. He could still see things in his peripheries, but he couldn’t look at them. Couldn’t turn his head to them. He was stuck in place, aware of everything yet seeing none.

“Walk out of bounds.” Eye Bags said.

Bakugou didn’t move of his own volition. His legs marched away from his mind, headed straight from the boundary line.

NO! Fucking MOVE AWAY goddammit! But Bakugou couldn’t change his neutral facial expression, much less his actual legs.

There had to be a way out. He’d be finished already, if Eye Bags had just ordered him to turn and march the shorter distance. Instead, he’d sent him forward, across the longer length of the area, giving him more time to think. Bakugou had seen Eye Bags engage his quirk before. How the fuck do I counter this?

USJ. Bakugou had seen him at USJ. He made those villains attack their companions, although it wasn’t effective in the long run since they broke free of his control. If they could break free, so could Bakugou.

The boundary line was only a few feet away. He had to think fast. Those villains got free because they got hit. So all he needed was some kind of sudden jerk.

Sweat dripped over his fingertips. He could feel it glistening over his forehead from previous exertions. If he could ignite it, he’d be free.

Bakugou couldn’t control his body, but only mutation and transformation quirks were physical manifestations. By that logic, he could still use his emitter quirk, which was mental.

Ignite. Still nothing. The boundary was only two feet away.

Ignite! Another step closer to the end.

IGNITE!

The world flared bright in front of Bakugou. His feet stopped their constant pace as Bakugou’s skin burned. Normally, he could regulate how much sweat was exposed to his explosions, but that requires motor functions.

Bakugou turned around to face Eye Bags, breathing heavy. Eye Bags didn’t look happy.

“Congrats. That’s never happened before. You’re not going to talk again, are you?” Bakugou smirked. “Thought so. Well, I don’t plan on giving up.”

Bakugou ran forward. He couldn’t use his explosions again, he’d just damage his body more, so he relied on his fists. Eye Bags was stronger than he looked, taking direct hits to his torso and face unflinchingly. But everyone has their breaking point.

Eye Bags punched Bakugou in the shoulder. He seemed to realize his mistake in slow motion, as Bakugou grabbed the arm and flung him over his shoulder.

Eye Bags hit the ground with a sharp cry. His torso just barely crossed over the boundary line.

“Shinsou is out of bounds.” Midnight said, shock lacing her voice.

Eye Bags breathed heavily and refused to look up at Bakugou. He left without a word.

“Shinsou! Hey Shinsou!” Called a voice from the stand. Bakugou guessed it was 1-C’s stand since
he could see De— Midoriya there. The girl who called out waved at him.

“You did so great Shinsou!” She yelled.

“Yeah! You had one of the top 1-A students on his heels the entire match!” Some guy said.

Now the pro heroes were talking. “A quirk like that would be useful in the field. Kid has a pretty good grasp on it too.”

“Your story is over yet!” Bakugou recognized that voice. Midoriya.

Eye Bags stared at his supportive classmates. Tears welled in his eyes. “Thank you.” He said as they started to fall.

“Tsk.”

Eye Bags turned to him, slightly shocked by the sound.

“What the fuck are you doing, huh?” Bakugou said. “You’re gonna accept defeat just like that because people are praising you?” Bakugou shook his head and left.

“What is your problem?!” Eye Bags shouted at him.

“You want to be a hero, you always go for first and never settle for second best. Fight me again when you’ve figured that out.”

Bakugou left. He had no reason to stay and chat.

Todoroki left the stands when Bakugou broke free. He knew the other student well enough that the
fight would end predictably from that point. He didn’t need to stay and watch.

Todoroki turned a corner and saw his old man waiting, arms crossed.

“Shouto.” He said as he pushed away from the wall.

“You’re in my way.” Todoroki said without looking up. “I need to get to the arena.”

“Shouto, listen to me. Whatever this rebellion is, it needs to stop. You are so much stronger than anyone could imagine. Yet here you are, wasting all of my hard work.”

“Frankly, I don’t give one crap about what you think. Get out of my way.” Todoroki pushed passed his father and down the hall.

“You are acting like a child!”

“I’m acting like a human person, which you seem to forget I am.”

His old man sighed. Todoroki didn’t turn around, but he could hear his father’s footsteps growing quieter. There would be another argument. Things would get more strained between them. That was just how things went. Still, the arguments always took a lot out of him. He needed to breath.

“Ah, sorry, Sir, I wasn’t watching where I was going.” Todoroki heard a familiar voice in the direction his old man had gone.

“You should have been more careful.” His old man replied in a huff.

“Wait a second… You’re Endeavour!” Todoroki placed the voice as Midoriya’s. Todoroki really should leave, but his curiosity betrayed him.

“Yes, I am. Who are you, exactly?”
“Midoriya Izuku, Sir. I’m up against Todoroki.”

“Right, the gen ed kid. I wouldn’t hold my breath if I were you. My son will deal with you quickly.”

“...Excuse me?”

“Everyone in the stands have been praising how lucky you were to make it this far without using your quirk. They can’t wait to see you use it.” His old man scoffed. “But I know better. You have one of those superficial quirks, don’t you? I know the kind. They’re useless for hero work and useless against my son.”

“All quirks can be useful.” Midoriya said coldly. “Even superficial ones. It just takes a bit of creativity.”

“‘Creativity’? You can’t survive on creativity. Not in the real word.”

“Well you certainly don’t. I could think of ten different ways to use your quirk that doesn’t involve hurling flames at someone, but whatever gets the job done, right?”

“You listen here—”

“I don’t have to listen to you and neither does Todoroki. If he wants to win without his quirk, then let him. But it won’t matter, since I’m going to win, no luck, no quirk. Good bye.”

Todoroki’s eyes widened momentarily as he heard footsteps coming his way. He walked away briskly, hoping Midoriya wouldn’t catch him eavesdropping on their conversation.

“Ah, Todoroki, wait up!” Midoriya called. Todoroki turned around. Midoriya wore a bright smile on his face. Todoroki had a hard time imagining that this person dissed his old man.

“Shouldn’t you already be out there?” Midoriya asked when he caught up.

“My old man held me up. He wanted to talk.” Todoroki felt no reason to lie when Midoriya had
already seen him.

Midoriya frowned. “Why do you not want to use your fire. Other than your ‘my-dad’s-a-jerk’ excuse from earlier.”

“It’s not an excuse!” Todoroki took a deep breath in. “You don’t understand.”

“Well obviously I don’t. Why else would I be asking?”

Todoroki closed his eyes. He really didn’t need this right now. All he needed was to win. But winning against Midoriya wouldn’t change anything. His old man already didn’t acknowledge the other, even without knowing Midoriya was quirkless.

“Does it have anything to do with your scar?” Midoriya asked.

Todoroki sucked in a breath. He really didn’t need to be having this conversation right now.

“That’s a part of it. I have my own reasons for not wanting to use my fire. Can you please just drop it?”

Midoriya looked at him. There was some emotion that Todoroki couldn’t recognize in his eyes. It looked akin to anger, albeit muted.

“No, I won’t. I’ll stop asking you about it now, but this conversation isn’t over.”

Todoroki sighed. He would have to work with that. The two walked in silence. It was unsettling to see Midoriya without his smile. He appeared lost in thought, the odd emotion swirling through his green eyes.

Todoroki stepped onto the field first. He was met by a wave of cheers from the audience. Present Mic announced the start of the semi finals, but Todoroki wasn’t listening. He watched Midoriya and Midoriya watched him, the emotion festering into a cold rage. Todoroki didn’t know what he’d said to make Midoriya act that way.
“Begin!” Midnight called.

Todoroki didn’t waste time. A column of ice shot out from his foot in Midoriya’s direction. It’d be better to finish the battle quickly. It wasn’t that he didn’t respect Midoriya’s skill, but the longer the battle lasted, the more ammo he gave to his father about not being ‘powerful enough’.

Todoroki was too focused on the glacier that he was making to notice Midoriya headed straight for him. He registered the pressure on his cranium as a punch, although it was much stronger than last time. Midoriya had hit him in his left temple, causing stars to dance in his vision.

Todoroki stumbled away, cradling his head with his hand. He looked up just as Midoriya’s fist slammed into his face. His hand migrated to his throbbing nose. Blood soaked his hand. Todoroki shot out a column of ice as Midoriya ran at him again. The ice did little to block him, as he simply climbed over it.

“Would you look at that! Midoriya is overpowering Todoroki! I did not expect that!”

Todoroki dodged Midoriya’s punch and encased his hand in ice. The block of ice weighed his hand down and made his punches slower, easier for Todoroki to dodge. Midoriya pulled back and readied another punch. Todoroki ducked down, expecting Midoriya’s fist to fly over his head, but pain still exploded in his face.

Todoroki hit the ground. Midoriya had punched him with his free hand. Blood streamed over his eyes, blocking his vision. He blindly threw a spike of ice in Midoriya’s direction as he tried to get to his feet. What little of the world he could see spun in his vision. He felt like he was about to be sick.

Midoriya was stuck in the ice spire. He pulled at his arm as he tried to break free. This was his chance. Todoroki shot out another spike of ice, hoping to immobilize the other. Just as he released the ice, Midoriya broke free with a brilliant display of lightning. The lightning ripped through his ice like butter and launched Todoroki backwards. He gasped as the electricity coursed through his muscles. For a split second, he couldn’t breathe, couldn’t control anything, just like during the obstacle course.

Todoroki struggled away as while Midoriya stalked closer to him. Todoroki kicked up his leg and tried to freeze Midoriya in place. Midoriya barely needed to move to dodge it. Frost caked onto Todoroki’s arm and face, slowing him down.
“Fucking fight me!” Midoriya yelled as he slammed his fist into the ground. It would have hit Todoroki’s head had he not rolled away.

“You’re insane!” Todoroki yelled back as he kicked Midoriya’s arm away. He didn’t make any ice this time. Midoriya barely flinched.

“Todoroki, you are hurting yourself right now! Frostbite will knock you out faster than I can, but you still won’t use your fire!”

“I can’t!” Todoroki shot out more ice from his leg, but Midoriya skirted around it with ease.

“Can’t’ or ‘won’t’ use it?” Midoriya shattered his new ice wall with his gauntlets. “You’re a goddamn coward! Your fire can save you, but you won’t use it because of some fucking daddy issues.”

“It’s not that fucking simple!” Todoroki shouted.

“Yes, it is!” Midoriya shouted back. “Todoroki Shouto, I am quirkless and you haven’t even scratched me. Where the fuck is your commitment?”

Todoroki charged at Midoriya. The other didn’t show any other emotion other than rage. No surprise, no shock. Midoriya pulled back to punch him out of his run. Todoroki braced for the impact.

The punch came and Todoroki felt his arms strain as he held the fist in place. The force pushed him back a few yards, his feet digging into the ground. He froze the gauntlet, this time with a larger sphere of ice, before letting go.

Midoriya winced as the ice pulled his arm down, but his eyes quickly filled with resolved determination. He swung his arm around his body like it was a hammer throw. Todoroki realized what he was about to do to late. He couldn’t dodge the ball of ice headed straight for his head.

The ice shattered on impact. Pain webbed through his brain. He couldn’t think straight. He stumbled away.
“Goddammit, Todoroki!” Midoriya shouted. “Is all of this just a joke to you?”

Midoriya grabbed him by his gym shirt and hauled him into one of the ice spikes. His blood was everywhere.


“Why are you doing this? Just take the win already!” Todoroki spat blood onto the ground.

“It wouldn’t be fair.” Midoriya pushed him into another spire of ice. “Everyone here has put their all into this festival. Everyone except you!”

Midoriya kicked him to the ground. “Do you want to be a hero?” Todoroki didn’t answer. “I said: do you want to be a fucking hero?!”

“Yes!” Todoroki shouted.

“Then quit half assing this goddamn fight! A hero always goes for first and never second best! What you’re doing here, not using everything you have, is pissing on all the heroes that fought their way to the top.” Midoriya kicked him down as he tried to stand up. “Use your fire!”

“You don’t fucking know me! You don’t know what he’s done to me!”

“I don’t fucking need to! It doesn’t matter!”

“I can’t.” Tears welled in Todoroki’s eyes. “I can’t use his power.”

“It’s not his power anymore! You’re the one using it; it belongs to you. It’s your power!”

My power... The only other person to tell me that was… Warmth coursed underneath Todoroki’s...
skin. It rolled beneath the surface like magma, wanting to break free. He finally let the volcano erupt, filling the world with light and heat.

Chapter End Notes

My favorite head canon is that Midoriya is a very brutal fighter that isn't willing to fight dirty.

Who here is excited for Erasermic week? I can't wait to post my stories!
An End and a Beginning

Chapter Summary

The fight with Todoroki ends, and Midoriya has to accept the consequences of his actions.

Chapter Notes

Eyyyyy what up people! I'm back with another chapter that accidentally got too long. I wanted to finish the sports festival this chapter, but seven thousand words in one chapter is a bit too much.

PSA: I can't reliably update this story on Fridays so from now on, the story will update on Saturdays.

Also, today is my dad's birthday and tomorrow is my birthday. I can't wait to stuff my face with cake.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Todoroki remembered his childhood bitterly. His old man would ‘train’ him for hours on end, beating him down till he puked. He probably would have kept beating him after that if not for his mom.

Mom.

For the longest time, he could only conjure her crazed eyes in his mind. He only saw that moment when she threw the kettle of boiling water at him. I can’t even look at him, Mom. He’s too much like Enji. Words said in seeming private, over the phone, to his grandmother. Eavesdroppers rarely heard kindnesses, and Todoroki was not the exception.

He did not blame his mom, but he could not connect with her anymore, either. Todoroki Enji had abused his wife. He’d hurt her, psychologically. No wonder she feared and disliked his image. Those memories of abuse interrupted every good memory he and mother shared. They’d be sitting on the sofa, listening to the droning TV and laughing. Then she’d look at him and her eyes would fill with shame. Todoroki hadn’t laughed since then.

But that’s what Todoroki thought about now. Sitting down on the couch, his mom holding him in her arms. They were watching the news, something Todoroki did all the time. His old man never let
him watch any shows for kids his age. But the news was fine.

All Might was on the screen. All Might—Todoroki’s favorite hero. He’d never told his old man, which was fine. He could tell his mom.

“You’ll be an amazing hero just like him someday, Shouto.” His mom had said with a smile as she rubbed his hair.

“I… I don’t know if I want to be a hero.” Todoroki had murmured to her. Her eyes widened in surprise.

“Dad is a hero, and he bullies Mommy. I don’t want to be like that.” Todoroki didn’t look at her as he spoke.

“Shouto…” he heard sadness in his mom’s voice. “Here, look at the TV.”

Todoroki looked up. All Might’s signature smile greeted him.

“While it’s true that quirks are passed down through blood,” All Might told the interviewer, “the blood connection itself doesn’t matter. The moment someone develops a quirk is the moment that it is theirs.”

“See?” his mom said. “Just because your father is mean doesn’t mean you have to be. You can use your power to be the person you want to be.”

*My power. Not my old man’s.*

“Okay Mommy,” he gave his mom a smile, “I’ll do my best!”

He hadn’t seen his mom since he was six, much less talk to her. He wanted to forgive her for so long, but the longer he waited, the more cowardly he became.

After she went away, it was just him, his old man, and his sister. His brothers were there too, but
they never spoke to him. He was so alone in his grief for her. And all the while his old man would not stop calling Todoroki his creation. His masterpiece. His power.

Yet, for just this moment, Todoroki forgot about his old man. He forgot of all the pain that he’d felt throughout his life. All that existed was him and Midoriya staring down in a field of ice and fire.

“I…” Todoroki said, “I want to be a hero.” A smile took form on his face, just like the one he gave his mom.

“Midoriya,” Now his opponent was smiling too. “Thank you.”

“Don’t thank me yet. I still haven’t beaten you.”

Despite me being at full power, you still want to win. You are absolutely insane, yet I have so much to learn from you, Midoriya.

Todoroki ran forward. His head hurt like hell, but it was clear now. When he swung his arm at Midoriya, it wasn’t slowed down by accumulated ice. In fact, there was no ice or frost anywhere on his body. The flames had melted them away.

Fire danced out of his arm. Spindles of heat arched outward, forcing Midoriya into a roll to dodge them. It was the first time in the match that he’d put Midoriya on the defensive, but Todoroki wouldn’t take the satisfaction yet.

Midoriya pulled a small barrel-like thing off of a utility belt. He tossed it in Todoroki’s direction. Todoroki’s eyes widened when he realized what it was. Grenade. He dove for cover behind an ice spike.

The grenade burst. Todoroki had expected a shockwave, but instead there was just smoke. Lots of smoke. Within seconds, all Todoroki could see was a fluffy screen of green. Todoroki shot his fire out around him, but the smoke just filled in the gaps. He could only see about a foot’s worth of a radius.

Suddenly, Todoroki saw something flash in his periphery. He sent fire in that direction. He crept forward, looking for what he hit. There, on the ground, was a burning gym shirt.
Todoroki’s eyes widened. Shi—

Something, or more accurately some one , rammed into him. Midoriya had jumped onto his shoulders and steered him into a wall of ice. His forehead took the brunt of the hit, leaving him disoriented.

“Not fair,” he murmured.

“Totally fair. You could’ve used strategies from other matches as well.” Midoriya teased. Of course Midoriya would tease him right now in the least opportune moment.

Todoroki pushed away from the ice and charged blindly into the smoke. He slammed Midoriya down onto the ground. Todoroki lit his arm up with fire, but Midoriya didn’t stay still long enough for him to bring it down.

Midoriya kicked his legs off the ground and flipped into a standing position. With a roundhouse kick, Midoriya had locked his leg onto Todoroki’s burning arm. It must’ve hurt like hell, but Midoriya didn’t show any pain in his face. A fluid pull later, and Todoroki hit the ground.

Midoriya tried to punch him on the ground, but he rolled away. Todoroki activated his fire in his leg and propelled himself off of the ground. He swung the fire at Midoriya while covering the ground in a thin layer of ice, thin enough to appear invisible in the sun’s glaring light.

Midoriya must have predicted his fire since he went for his smooth dodge. He did not, however, predict the ice and slipped in his execution. Midoriya’s head slammed into the ground. Todoroki got a little satisfaction out of seeing that given all the pain Midoriya had dealt to his head.

The smoke had cleared somewhat. Todoroki could see the stadium and most of the arena, although sights in the distance were foggy at best. Before, Todoroki had been too busy being a human punching bag to take in the arena.

A multitude of jagged ice spikes littered the arena like teeth, while his original glacier was beginning to cast a shadow over him and Midoriya. It was tall enough to block out the light of the sun. The only source of light that remained was his fire, webbing out from his arm and face.
Midoriya got to his feet, much slower than before. The ice on the ground left him disorientated, giving Todoroki the lead. He skid over the ice easily. It had become second nature to him over the years. Midoriya did not move, likely so that he wouldn’t fall again. The boy watched him like a hawk.

Todoroki kicked out his left leg, creating a wall of fire, while his right leg made a wall of ice. He had Midoriya trapped now. Suddenly, Midoriya dashed forward, the ice barely hindering him. The motions of his feet… *He’s copying me!*

Midoriya sung his left leg off of the ice. Todoroki didn’t have time to think, he just reacted. He leaned backwards as Midoriya’s leg swung over his face and torso. A small pinprick of skin from Midoriya’s ankle grazed his cheek. He activated his ice before the foot could move away, freezing Midoriya’s ankle solid. The weight spun Midoriya off course.

Midoriya walked with a jerk in his leg. The ice prevented him from gliding over the ice. Midoriya seemed content with brute forcing it, though. His feet slapped the ground, causing the ice to shatter in his wake.

Midoriya reached forward with his gauntleted hand. Todoroki threw up his right arm for protecting, feeling the air cool around it. But Midoriya wasn’t trying to punch him, only to grab him. The charged metal wrapped over his open skin.

In a split second, Todoroki’s body was cloistered in agony. Sparks of electricity escaped from the gauntlet, but most of the power went into his body. His muscles tensed, curling in on one another.

The electricity fogged up his brain. Todoroki thought he was falling, but he couldn’t tell which way was up or down. Was there a ringing in his ear, or was that the roar of the stadium? He didn’t know. All he could see was Midoriya’s face, shrouded in determination.

Todoroki couldn’t feel his left arm as it fell into his range of vision. The only thing he could control was his quirk, feeling heat roll under his skin. He couldn’t control his arm but he wanted to. He *needed* to control it.

Fighting the pulse of the electricity was near impossible. His muscle fibers ripped as he pushed past the pain and contortions. Todoroki’s hand brushed over the side of Midoriya’s face and his neck. His fingers gripped the skin hard. Midoriya’s face shifted, from determination to surprise, and from surprise to pain.
Todoroki’s back hit the ground. All the air was knocked out of him. Black danced over the edge of his vision, and what things he could see blurred. It was now that all the pain and broken bones in his face hit him full force. Saliva dribbled off of his chin and mixed with the blood covering him.

The pain… it was too much. Todoroki was able to stay awake the last two times Midoriya had electrocuted him through adrenalin, but that had all burned up by now. He just felt tired, and the black swirled closer, enclosing him from the outside. Only one thought burned through his muddled mind.

I want to win.

And then he blacked out.

Midoriya ached. His arms and legs. Face. Everything. It wasn’t exactly painful per se, but Midoriya did not like it. He opened his eyes, but closed them right away. Too bright. Also too loud. It sounded like people were arguing. The voices… he couldn’t quite place them. They sounded familiar, but his brain just wasn’t working. Something pricked into his arm. A moment later, the aches disappeared. He wanted to thank whoever did that, but his mind decided that sleep was better than politeness.

Midoriya woke up again later. The aches were less present now. Whatever he’d been given must have worn off. Learning from his last mistake, Midoriya did not open his eyes. He could see through his eyelids that the lights were blaring. People were talking but it was more bearable. He could even pick out the individual voices.

“He didn’t get to show everyone my bow while he was beating the 1-A kid. God, that would have given me so much publicity.” Mei said.

“You are really insensitive.” Tensou said. “He is literally unconscious two feet away from you, and all you talk about is publicity.”

“Yes? What else should I talk about?”
“Maybe that you’re worried about him?” Shinsou said.

“Pfft. He’ll be fine, I don’t need to worry.”

Midoriya groaned, announcing his presence. “It’s nice to know,” he said sleepily, eyes still not open, “that you care so much about me, Mei.”

“No problem!”

“I’m pretty sure that’s the wrong answer.” Aruku said.

Midoriya opened his eyes. The light still hurt, but he wanted to see his friends. He tried pushing himself into a sitting position.

“Oh no, you don’t.” Recovery Girl stomped over to him. “Stay laying down. You might not have that many injuries, but electrocution is electrocution. Down.”

Midoriya was unable to argue with her glare. He lowered his backside back onto the lumpy mattress. Then he realized what she said.

“Wait a sec, what do you mean I was electrocuted?” Midoriya asked. “Did I electrocute myself?!” He twisted his head to look for his gauntlets.

“Not intentionally.” Shinsou said. “That Todoroki kid grabbed you as you were electrocuting him. The electricity must have just traveled through you.”

“Oh… so then I lost.” Midoriya closed his eyes. He’d been so close to the final, and now he couldn’t reach it.

“Actually… neither of you lost. You were both unconscious, so it was a tie.”
“It was really awesome to watch! You were like bam and bam and he was all ‘oh my head!’.” Tensou gesture wildly.

“Don’t get too excited now.” Recovery Girl crossed her arms. “I have the final say on if you go back into the tournament.”

“Huh?! But I feel fine!” Midoriya pleaded.

“Doesn’t matter if you feel fine. You aren’t fine until I say you are.”

Midoriya deflated. “Okay. When are Kirishima and Tetsutetsu going to resolve their tie.”

“They already have!” Aruku said. “You were still unconscious. Kirishima won, so he’s going up against Bakugou now, I think.”

“So our tiebreaker will be after their match.”

“You keep assuming that I’ll let you have a tiebreaker.” Recovery Girl said, exasperated.

“My injuries aren’t that bad, are they?” Midoriya asked.

Recovery Girl sighed. “You only had burns along your face and your leg and some hairline fractures along your fingers. I’m more worried about the boy you nearly killed.”

The room was silent. Midoriya’s mouth was open in shock.

“Is he— will he— he’ll be okay, right?” Midoriya babbled.

“Right now, I can’t say anything a for sure. He’ll recover, but whether or not he’ll be be the same as before is debatable.”
“What… what did I—”

“You want to know what you did to him? Well, I have a list right here.” Recovery Girl grabbed a rather large sheet of paper. Midoriya winced internally.

“Let’s see… broken nose, cracked temple, fractured and dislocated jaw, at least five teeth broken or missing, dislocated shoulder, multiple fractured ribs, misaligned vertebrae—thank god you didn’t actually break that — and internal bruising and bleeding.” Recovery Girl fixed him with a glare. “Just to name a few.”

Midoriya was silent. How the hell was he supposed to answer to that.

“Now, to be fair, I can fix broken bones easily. It’d take time and a lot of stamina on Todoroki’s part, but I could fix them. What worries me the most is what I can’t fix: his heart beat.” Recovery Girl took a seat, looking exhausted. “He’ll need a temporary pacemaker until he can get to a real hospital, which I’d rather happened sooner than later. Now do you understand why I don’t want either of you to keep fighting?”

Midoriya remained silent, stewing in guilt.

“It’s because I don’t want you to hurt someone else like that, and because he could have a literal heart attack if he keeps fighting.” Recovery Girl sighed deeply. “Maybe now the school administration will finally understand why I’ve been protesting the Sports Festival since I started working here. School children shouldn’t be beating each other up for entertainment.”

“I went too far.” Midoriya said. “The rest of the Sports Festival isn’t that bad.”

“You assume that you two were the only ones with horrible injuries. While Todoroki was most certainly the worst, almost everybody comes in here in various stages of brokenness.”

Midoriya had no idea what to say. What was he supposed to say to that? Well, yes I beat this kid senseless, but I promise it won’t happen again. It wasn’t like he could change what he did to Todoroki with a promise.

“I’ve already told you my opinion on the matter. You can’t change the fact that I don’t want either of you on the field, but I’m willing to compromise.”
Midoriya’s eyebrow rose. “What do you mean compromise?”

“You can do the tiebreaker, but whoever wins doesn’t participate in the final. You’d get an automatic second place.”

“But that defeats the pur—”

“It’s either that, or I just pull the both of you. Nobody wins. I’m not willing to risk the two of you in another fight.”

Midoriya pondered his options. “I think… we should wait for Todoroki to wake up. He should have a say in this decision.”

“Fine by me.” Recovery Girl said. “At least that means you’ll get some rest. Might want to take a look in the mirror, too.” Recovery Girl got up and walked to one of the far doors. “I’ll be performing surgery for the next hour. If you need something, you’re going to have to wait.”

Midoriya breathed a sigh. “What did she mean about the mirror.”

“You have, uh, quite the burn scar on your face.” Tensou said. “It doesn’t look bad! But it is different.”

“Can you hand me a mirror?”

“Oh, I have one.” Aruku said. She handed him a makeup compact.

Midoriya looked into the compact, and winced at the sight. Starting at the base of his jaw and traveling down to the side of his neck was a hand print.

*Of course I’d get another hand print. My body will be covered by the time I graduate. At least this one looks nicer than the one on my arm.*
“It’ll probably fade with time.” Tensou said. “You’ll be good as new soon enough!”

“Thanks.” Midoriya said.

“You were pretty awesome back there. I don’t think I’ve ever seen you so brutal. Not even at USJ.” Shinsou said.

Midoriya sighed. “I was just so… angry at him. It felt wrong that he would just waltz in and only bring half power while others were beating themselves up just to get extra juice.”

“Wait… you were trying to make him use his fire?! Do you have some kind of a death wish or something?” Aruku said.

“Is that why you didn’t end the match earlier on?” Shinsou asked.

“Pretty much.” Midoriya replied.

“I’ve said it once, I’ll say it again: you are insane.”

“Shinsouuuuuuu, that’s mean.” Midoriya whined.

Shinsou shrugged. “Sometimes the truth hurts.” Shinsou reached down into his bag and pulled out a soda. “Wanna know what my favorite part of the match was?"

“Where did you get that soda?”

“My favorite part,” Shinsou continued without pause, popping the tab, “was when you shouted that you were quirkless to the entire audience and then beat Todoroki’s face in.”

“O-oh you guys heard that…” Truth be told, Midoriya had forgotten that there even was an audience at all.
“It was a pretty powerful statement. Pretty sure the whole crowd gasped all at once.” Shinsou said. He took a drink, then said, “When you guys stopped moving, I don’t think anyone spoke. We were all waiting for you to get up, but you didn’t. When the gurneys came out, we decided to go down and see you. Recovery Girl wouldn’t let us in for awhile.”

“I was scared.” Aruku said. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen you unconscious before.”

“Sorry.” Midoriya said.

“You don’t have to apologize!” Tensou said. “It’s really not that big of a deal. We were just worried.”

“Thanks.” Midoriya said. “I feel like I’ve thanked you guys and apologized to you, like, a million times since I woke up.”

“Then stop.” Shinsou said. Then he tipped his head back and drank his soda.

Midoriya leaned back into the pillow. The mattress was not comfortable at all, but it was still better than nothing. He closed his eyes and let his shoulders relax. Tension left his body slowly, and the mattress grew more comfortable. He was completely exhausted and sleep seemed like a great idea.

“Hey, if you’re gonna pass out again, I want to head back to the stands. You’re good, right?” Shinsou asked.

“Yeah, yeah, you can,” Midoriya yawned widely, “go now.” His voice trailed off into a murmur at the end.

“Damnit, Midoriya, you made me yawn.” Shinsou said. Midoriya wasn’t awake enough to laugh, although he did want to. He crushed the can against Midoriya’s bedpost and tossed it into the Hazardous Waste Bin Aruku had kindly opened with her foot.

Midoriya heard the door open. Aruku and Tensou gave him fair wells as well. The door shut and Midoriya was left in an almost silence of white noise. The hum of the monitor watching his vitals layed a calm beat while the air conditioner hummed a soothing lullaby. Despite the blaring lights, Midoriya quickly found sleep.
Midoriya woke up some time later, he couldn’t really tell. There was no noise in the room save for the machinery. Midoriya yawned and pushed himself to a sitting up position. None of his friends were there and the lights had been turned off. Well, they were all turned off save for a single light in the back that was always on.

“Recovery Girl?” He called out. A rattle came from the room in the back.

“Oh, good, you’re up.” Recovery Girl said as she walked in. “Todoroki’s surgery went well. He’s been awake for awhile.”

“Why didn’t you wake me up when he did?”

“You’d never get sleep otherwise.”

Midoriya sighed. Yeah, he deserved it, but she was being pretty harsh.

“Todoroki, come in here, we need to talk.” Recovery Girl called into the room. Todoroki walked into the room. Their eyes locked. Both of them shared a mutual wince.

Todoroki’s lip had multiple sutures around the edges. His forehead had staples that were just barely hidden by his hair. The side of his face had unnatural swelling from his temple to his jaw, forcing the blue eye into a squint. His left arm was in a sling and his neck in a brace.

“Um, sorry for, uh, messing up your face.” Midoriya said. It sounded cringy even to his ears.

“Sorry for burning yours.” Todoroki said while scratching his head with his free arm. The silence stuck to the air like stale water, disgusting but not entirely unbearable. Recovery Girl looked done with her job.

“You have two choices for the rest of the tournament. Either you drop out entirely, or you have the
tiebreaker to see who wins second place. You are not allowed to fight anymore.”

“What?!” Todoroki said. “That’s not fair!”

“No, it isn’t, and frankly, I don’t care. You’re lucky I’m even giving you a choice at all.”

“Does it have to be an instant second place finish?” Midoriya asked.

“I don’t see how it could be any other way. You can’t fight for first place anymore, so the only option would be for you to take second.” Recovery Girl replied.

“Well… what if the fight for first place isn’t a ‘fight’. It doesn’t have to be physical, does it?”

Todoroki blinked. “That sounds like a good idea. You just don’t want us to fight, but you’re not against the actual competition. Please?”

Recovery Girl sighed. “I’ll talk with the officiators. If they can think of some type of challenge that isn’t physical, I’ll accept. If they can’t, then one of you’ll just take the second place.”

“That works.” Midoriya said, smile taking over his features. Todoroki sent her a nod.

“Alright. No hard feelings if this doesn’t work out. I’m going to find Aizawa.” Recovery Girl stood up. “You can do whatever in the meantime.”

The door shut, and Midoriya was left in silence. Both him and Todoroki couldn’t look at each other. Todoroki took a deep breath.

“Midoriya… I really want to thank you. Before, I only wanted to win this because it would spite my father. Now… I want to prove to myself that I can win for my own goals.”

“Our tiebreaker better not be quick then.” Midoriya replied.
The atmosphere lightened up around them. Midoriya climbed out of bed and walked barefoot to the only window the room had. It overlooked the Yuuei grounds. The sun was dipping into afternoon. Midoriya turned around to Todoroki who was messing with a white node on his chest.

_I wonder if he would have still needed that if I had gone easier._ Midoriya was upset that he’d lost control so easily. He should have been more careful. He’d promised his mom he was going to be careful after USJ, but he broke that promise. Now Todoroki might not recover.

Midoriya didn’t know how long he waited. Eventually, Recovery Girl walked back through the door. Both he and Todoroki got up, eager to hear the news.

“I’ve talked with the teachers.” Recovery Girl said with a sigh. “They can’t make the matches anything other than fights. It wouldn’t be fair to the contestants who fought all of their matches.”

Midoriya’s shoulders collapsed. The smile he had before was no longer visible, masked with a deep frown. Todoroki shared his sentiment.

“Come on now. They’re going to start the tiebreaker soon. I assume you both want to win second?”

Midoriya nodded solemnly. This was his own fault. Now he was paying the price. Might as well be a good sport about it. He took a deep breath and forced the smile to return, even if it didn’t feel real.

“That’s the spirit.” If Recovery Girl could see through the façade, she didn’t say.

She led them out in silence. The crowd was just as big as when he left it, and they cheered loudly when he and Todoroki walked out into the arena.

_“I’m sure that all of you are excited for the tiebreaker! However, there is an announcement that needs to be made. Midoriya and Todoroki have both suffered major injuries, and have been pulled from physical combat.”_ Present Mic said. The cheering stopped, replaced with some confused whispers and some booing.

_“Why are you all booing?”_ Aizawa asked. _“Would you rather the students be sent to the hospital with life threatening injuries?”_ The booing ceased. _“Since both students cannot fight, whoever wins the tiebreaker wins second place. Bakugou Katsuki wins first by default.”_
Oh. So Katsuki won his fight with Kirishima.

Midnight walked over to them. She helped him take a seat at a small table in the middle of the arena.

“The tiebreaker will be an arm wrestle. That shouldn’t aggravate your injuries, right Todoroki?”

“It’s only my left shoulder that got dislocated. I can arm wrestle.”

“And you, Midoriya?”

“I’m good.”

He grasped Todoroki’s right hand with his own. The hand was cold while his own felt warm. Todoroki looked at him with a blank face. His eyes drooped.

“Whatever the outcome is, I want to thank you.” Todoroki said.

“I gave you arrhythmia, but sure, I accepted your thanks.”

“That’s… I don’t think that’s how ‘you’re welcome’ works.” Todoroki said with an exasperated sigh.

“Are you two ready?” Midnight asked. They nodded. “Alright, when I say three. One, two,”

Midoriya braced his arm.

“Three!”

Their arms locked together, each trying to push the other down. There was no overall movement of
their hands. Midoriya’s arm equally countered Todoroki’s.

Equal output wasn’t enough, though. If Midoriya wanted to push Todoroki’s arm down, he needed to push harder than he was. Todoroki wouldn’t give him an inch, holding their arms at a stand still.

Todoroki started to push down. The extra force strained Midoriya’s elbow. Their final showdown all came down to who was stronger. Midoriya had only started training the year before while Todoroki had been training all of his life. Midoriya’s hand started to move the wrong way.

Midoriya pushed back, scrunching up his face. His arm started to burn where he’d previously broken it. It felt like his arm was being torn off. Todoroki, at least, appeared to be straining himself as well.

Five grueling minutes elapsed as Midoriya wrestled Todoroki, his arm steadily dropping all the way. When his arm touched the table, it didn’t make a sound. The audience likely wouldn’t have known he’d lost, had he not released.

“Todoroki wins the tiebreaker! He will earn a second place finish in the tournament!” Midnight called.

Midoriya didn’t listen to the crowd. His shoulders sunk down, and he leaned forward into the chair. He’d tried so hard to win and now he had nothing. A part of him wanted to run away. Go back home to his mom. He could pretend this didn’t happen and go to school like normal.

“Midoriya, are you just going to sit there?” Todoroki asked. Midoriya took a deep breath and pushed off of the chair. He was met with an applause from the audience.

“Alright, you two had your tiebreaker. We’re going back to the infirmary room now. They’ll call you down to be on the podium, but until they get it ready, you’re staying with me.” Recovery Girl said and all but dragged them back inside the school.

Midoriya was sent back to his room and Todoroki to his. The silence was stifling. Suddenly, the door swung open. Midoriya expected to see Recovery Girl, but there was another familiar face instead.

“Detective Yagi? What are you doing here?”
The man appeared startled. He must’ve not realized Midoriya was there.

“Ah, Young Midoriya. I have been working at Yuuei for awhile now.”

“Oh so you’re undercover?”

“Something like that, yes.”

Recovery Girl walked through the doorway. Her expression turned from annoyed to really annoyed.

“You.” She walked around the room and grabbed a binder from the rack.

“You fill this out. I’m busy with Todoroki.” Recovery Girl said as she handed him the binder. She was out just as quickly as she’d come in.

Detective Yagi opened up the binder. It looked like a medicine log.

“What’s that?” Midoriya asked him.

“Oh, this is just how Recovery Girl tracks my medicine use. I injured my myself really badly during my… occupation, so I’m in here a lot.”

Detective Yagi started to fill out information into the log. Something about the handwriting was familiar to Midoriya. Suddenly he remembered.

“Hey, look at this!” Midoriya said as he pulled out his old hero analysis notebook. He was thankful that Shinsou brought it over. Midoriya flipped to the page he had of All Might.

“Your handwriting looks really similar to All Might’s!” Midoriya pointed. Detective Yagi seemed to freeze up. “See, his handwriting has a really strong right lean. You also curve your A’s like him. And your Y’s look kind of cursive. Actually, now that I’m looking, all of the letters look the same…”
Midoriya looked up at Detective Yagi. Midoriya’s eyes widened. The hair, the voice, the suit that Midoriya could have sworn he’d seen on All Might before—

Yagi clamped a hand over Midoriya’s face, eyes stricken with panic.

“Yes, I’m All Might.” He whispered. “Promise me you won’t scream when I take my hand away.” Midoriya nodded quickly. The hand was removed and Midoriya took a deep breath.

He was sitting in front of All Might. And he was apparently emaciated and had no muscle.

“I never imagined someone would identify me based on my handwriting of all things.” All Might laughed. Midoriya stared in awe, before regaining his composure.

“Um, All Might, Sir, I have a question, I wanted to ask you it for a long time, uh—”

“Relax, my boy. You can ask me anything.”

“Oh, okay…” Midoriya took a deep breath. “Do you think that a quirkless kid like me could become a hero?”

All Might was silent. He seemed to be in thought.

“Young Midoriya, can you tell me why you want to be a hero, I believe I’ve forgotten.”

“Oh, well, I just want to save people with a smile, just like you.”

“Hm.” All Might said. “Is that why you made Todoroki use his fire?”

“Yeah.”
“My boy, I think you have a noble reason to become a hero. However, I think you might have strayed from your goal during your battle.”

“Huh?” Midoriya said confused.

“When you were fighting Todoroki, it looked less like you were trying to save him and more like you were trying to win at all costs.”

“Well, yeah, being a hero means going beyond. Plus Ultra.”

“You’re missing the point. A hero that wants to save people fights from here,” All Might pointed to Midoriya’s heart, “and here.” He pointed to Midoriya’s brain. “Not here.” All might held up Midoriya’s fists. “Understand?”

“I think so…”

“Great! Then what are you waiting for? Go fight for third place!”

“Eh?! But Recovery Girl doesn’t want me to fight…” As if on cue, Recovery Girl chose that moment to walk through the door. She took one look at All Might and narrowed her eyes.

“Don’t you even think about it, Toshinori.”

“I think Young Midoriya has learned his lesson. You should let him fight for third place.”

Recovery Girl stared All Might down. Then she sighed. “You’re going to be the death of me. You’re luck you weren’t severely injured.” She pointed at Midoriya. “If some other kid comes in here and has to go to the hospital, I swear I won’t let you leave this room til morning.”

Recovery Girl left the room. All Might made to follow.

“Um, Sir? You still didn’t answer my question…”
“You’ve made it this far, my boy. Find the answer yourself.”

All Might left. Midoriya scrambled to get out of bed and reached for his gauntlets by the window, but something stopped him.

*A hero fights with his heart, not his fists, if they want to save someone.*

Midoriya took a deep breath. He walked away, leaving the gauntlets, still covered in Todoroki’s blood, by the window sill. He would win third place without them.

Chapter End Notes

For those of you who don’t know, arrhythmia is a disorder where the heart beats irregularly. There are many types of arrhythmia, some lethal, others benign. In Todoroki’s case, it was cased by the large dosage of electricity messing up the electric pulses set by the brain. In my sister’s non-medical analogy, Midoriya punched Todoroki with a defibrillator.

Next chapter: The sports festival ends, and the repercussions of Midoriya's actions begin.
Kirishima met him in the hallway as Midoriya was leaving.

“Hey, dude! I just heard over the announcements that the third place match was going to happen—woah your face!”

Midoriya sighed. “Yes, I know it’s burnt.”

Kirishima’s eyes widened. “Sorry for bringing it up. I couldn’t see you that well from the stands, so it was shocking.”

“Is it really that bad?” Midoriya asked rubbing the leathery layer. The skin would peel at some point.

“Nah, it’s not bad. I think it suits you.”

“How does a giant handprint burn suit me?”

“You know, you’re not really supposed to question when people compliment you. Trust me.”
“Okay,” Midoriya said. He was about to stroll away.

“Hey, where are your glove things?” Kirishima asked while pointing to his hands. His knuckles had thinly scabbed over.

“I left them back in the infirmary room.” Midoriya paused. “They caused too much damage, so I’m not using them. I’m not using any support gear.”

Kirishima’s eyebrows rose in surprise. “Woah, are you sure about that? Don’t you need them to make up for your… uh…” Kirishima trailed off.

“I don’t need to make up for anything,” Midoriya snapped. “I’m fighting with my own strength.”

Kirishima lifted his arms out in surrender. “Didn’t mean to offend you, man, chill out.”

Midoriya sighed. “Sorry. Let’s head out.”

“Okay!” Kirishima gave him a sharp-tooth grin.

Outside, the crowd roared, happy there’d be one more match. He heard people chanting his name.

“Are you all ready, listeners! This is the match you have all been waiting for! Actually, no, you guys were waiting for the final, but this one is sure to be fun anyways!”

The crowd cheered, as they had been the entire day.

“In this match for third place, we have Kirishima Eijirou, the first person to win a tiebreaker. He has shown quite the skill throughout this tournament!”

Kirishima waved to the audience.
“And then there’s Midoriya Izuku, coming to this match all the way from general education! In his last match he made an emotional declaration about him being quirkless! Man, this kid is making all kinds of firsts—”

“Hizashi.” Aizawa stopped him.

Present Mic coughed. “Right, without further ado, Midnight, start the match.”

Midnight looked between the two of them. “Let the match begin!” She said with a flourish.

In the previous matches, Midoriya was quick to act. This time it was different. He studied Kirishima from afar, knowing that the other was about to run headlong into him.

Kirishima’s quirk activated, and he sprinted forward. Midoriya had watched his fight with Tetsutetsu, and ducked down as Kirishima made a similar move.

Midoriya hadn’t realized that his gauntlets had hindered him. With all the power they held, it turned all of his fights, even the ones before the Sports Festival, into punching contests. Everything he’d learned with Hatsume-Sensei was more or less rendered useless.

The punch swung over his head as he ducked. Kirishima wasn’t expecting him to move so quickly, and stumbled in his execution. Midoriya pivoted around Kirishima as he spun to face him.

Kirishima charged forward again, this time his skin even harder. Midoriya leaned away from Kirishima’s right arm, and placed his hand on the other’s shoulder.

The simple downward push knocked Kirishima’s body off balance, and he crashed to the ground. Midoriya would have held him there, but Kirishima recovered faster than he intended. Midoriya skirted Kirishima’s fist by less than an inch.

Midoriya liked learning judo. It had come easy to him, and pinning other people much larger than he was exhilarated him. However, judo isn’t inherently about punching someone till they break. Judo is about efficiency. It’s about going into a spar, and knowing who won after thirty seconds.
Most importantly, judo is simply about pinning the opponent to the ground the fastest way possible. Midoriya could have taken the many openings in his last battle to win quickly. If it hadn’t been for Todoroki’s attitude, he probably would have. He had no such hang ups with Kirishima.

Kirishima moved erratically. He charged, swung his fists, and hoped something connected. This pattern was a constant in his fights. Midoriya dodged with grace, waiting for a hole.

Bingo.

Kirishima angled his body to the left, leaving his right arm unguarded. Midoriya grabbed it and yanked. Kirishima’s body hardened and his weight increased dramatically. The extra pounds strained Midoriya’s arms and he sloppily let go. Kirishima didn’t hit the ground, only stumbled away.

Kirishima must’ve realized that brute force wasn’t going to help him. When he got up, he didn’t charge. He was waiting for Midoriya to make a move.

Midoriya charged forward. His mind was completely focused on what he wanted to do. Win the match quickly with as little damage as possible. Kirishima threw his arms up, ready to defend Midoriya’s advance. His expression shifted from confidence to confusion as Midoriya kicked his legs up in a forward-facing flip. For a split second, Kirishima’s arms dropped down as he backed up. That was all it took.

Midoriya’s legs landed on Kirishima’s shoulders. The force of his landing made Kirishima stumble. A second later, Kirishima fell. Midoriya grabbed his arms and forced them into the ground.

Kirishima struggled to get out of Midoriya’s grip. His hardened skin bit into Midoriya’s calloused hands. Three seconds. Two. One.

“Kirishima is unable to stand. Midoriya wins third place!” Midnight called.

Midoriya slid off of Kirishima. He stood up and held out his arm. Kirishima looked at it for a second before grabbing it. Midoriya pulled him off the ground.

“And that concludes our final match! Midoriya won without swinging a single punch!” Present Mic said. “We will have a short break while we ready the podium.”
Midoriya took a deep breath. The adrenaline was wearing off. His muscles didn’t even burn. All he felt was numb exhaustion. He could probably fall asleep right there in the arena.

“Yo, nice job, man!” Kirishima patted him on his back, waking him from his reverie. “You really had everything under control there. I couldn’t even get you on offense.”

Midoriya shrugged. “I practice judo.”


Midoriya followed him with a small smile on his lips.

Up in the stands, Toshinori observed the student. The other teachers in the stands chatted loudly about Young Midoriya. Their opinions blended together in a stream of white noise. Toshinori pulled out his phone. His fingers hesitated on the call button after he located a familiar number. He took a deep breath and pressed.

The call picked up on the second ring. “Toshinori? You haven’t called in awhile.”

“Did you watch the Sports Festival?”

“It’s on right now.”

Toshinori’s eyes locked onto Midoriya’s receding form. “I think… I’ve found someone.”

“…You’re an impulsive son of a bitch, you know that, right?” A sigh. “I’ll see what I can do.” With that, the call hung up.
“Dekiru-kun, you did so good!”

Midoriya was surrounded by people the moment he walked inside, some his friends, some strangers. Uraraka stood at the front of the crowd with a bandage over her forehead.

“Uraraka! How are you?” Midoriya asked, shying away from the rest of the people.

“Well, I lost… but that’s not important. I’ll do better next year.” She smiled sadly.

Midoriya looked through the sea of people. “Where’s Iida?” He asked.

Uraraka frowned. “He left early. Said something about his brother. I wouldn’t worry about it.”

That was unsettling. Midoriya wasn’t able to think about it as more people ran up to him. The faces he saw started to blend and overlap. Was that pink haired girl in I-C? Was that toothy kid on his school route? People took pictures with him and shook his hand. They remarked on how he was so cool and quirkless to boot! He wanted to leave.

“Midoriya, Todoroki, and Bakugou, please head to the basement.” Aizawa said over the speaker. Midoriya’s shoulders sagged, relieved. He pushed through the mob as it dispersed. He gave Uraraka one last wave before descending the stairs.

Midoriya approached a door muffling voices. One was loud enough for him to make out words, the other exasperated. He pushed open the door.

“—stand on the podium and wave to the crowd. It really isn’t hard.” Cementoss said.

“I don’t want to fucking stand on the podium!” Katsuki yelled at him.

Cementoss ran his hand down his forehead. “You won first place. You have to stand on the podium.”

“I didn’t fucking win anything! You assholes just handed it to me. That isn’t how it fucking works! I
was supposed to fight.” Katsuki’s eyes fell on Midoriya’s half hidden form. “You. You fucking prick. This is your fault.” Katsuki stalked toward him.

“I, um, I have no idea what you’re talking about…” Midoriya mumbled.

“Don’t you fucking play that game with me. You ruined my chance to prove myself to everybody! I spent all this time waiting for a fair fight with Half ‘n Half, but you had to steal that from me.”

Midoriya took a deep breath. “You’re right that it was my fault, but I’m not sorry. I will never be sorry for working my ass off to get here. Besides, you still got first. Isn’t that what you wanted?”

“I wanted to *win* first! This whole thing is bullshit!”

“People’s lives aren’t bullshit.” A voice said behind them. Midoriya turn around and widened the door. Recovery Girl and Todoroki paused at the opening. Midoriya made room for them as they walked in.

“I sincerely believe that, had he fought, Todoroki wouldn’t have lived to see the end of his final match. You were going to win on one technicality or another. Which would you prefer?”

At that, Katsuki was silent. His face twisted in unspoken emotions. He growled. “I prefer not to win on either.”

“Well, sometimes we don’t get what we want, do we now.” Recovery Girl retorted.

A buzz vibrated the air. Cementoss picked up the walky-talky.

“*Are you ready down there? The crowd is getting antsy.*” Present Mic said.

“They’ll be up in a minute.” Cementoss said into the receiver. He addressed the group. “Everyone on the podium.”

Midoriya and Todoroki climbed onto their respective spots. Katsuki didn’t move.
“I’m not going up there.” Katsuki said.

Cementoss sighed. “I don’t have time for this.”

Cement pooled out of his hand. He made chains and a cement spire from the first place podium. He grabbed Katsuki by his torso and put him onto the podium.

“Let go of me!” Katsuki yelled as Cementoss wrapped the chains around the spire.

“Sorry, kid. You really left me no choice.” Cementoss grabbed the walky-talky. “We’re ready to go.”

The ceiling opened up to reveal the arena. The podium rumbled, then grew from the ground. They were in the middle of the arena surrounded by the cheering audience. He could feel some confusion wafting through them as they looked at Katsuki.

“*Ladies and gentlemen, the winners of the Sports Festival! The medals will be handed out by the one and only All Might.*” Present Mic said. As he spoke the number one hero somersaulted through the air and landed on the ground in front on them.

The crowd cheered loudly. All Might walked up to him and placed the medal around his neck. He smiled up at his hero.

“It looks like you followed my advice. I’m proud.” All might said before giving him a hug. Midoriya is 90% certain that his heart stopped beating. *The* All Might was hugging him. Midoriya felt like he was about to explode.

All Might let go and moved on to Todoroki. Midoriya couldn't hear what he said to the boy but he gave Todoroki a hug as well. Finally, Katsuki.

Throughout the entire ceremony, Katsuki had been struggling against the chains that bound him. Although his smile never faltered, All Might appeared perturbed by the behavior.
“Young Bakugou! Congra—”

“Don’t you dare put that thing on me.” Katsuki glared at the medal like it offended him. “This first place means nothing to me. I don’t give a shit that the audience accepts it ‘cause I sure as hell don’t.”

All Might put the medal over him anyway. Katsuki leaned away from it but was ultimately unsuccessful. Cameras flashed and people asked them questions. Midoriya doesn’t know how long they were on those podiums.

By the time Midoriya got home, it was dark. He opened up the door, eyes drooping closed.

“Izuku!”

His whirlwind of a mother latched on to him, startling him from his stupor. He smiled and wrapped his arms around her in a hug.

“I was watching, from the TV, and they said that you were too injured to fight and, and, and—” His mom broke out into tears. “Izuku, you can’t scare me like that. You told me that you’d stay safe.”

“I’m sorry, Mom.” He didn’t know what else to say.

She sniffled. “It’s okay. Come here, let me see that medal.”

He pulled it off of his neck. “It’s not first, but—”

“Don’t give me that.” She waved him off. “We need to find a place to hang it up.” His mom walked away, holding the medal up against different walls. Midoriya decided to leave her to it and turned on the TV.

“—ing news for tonight. Earlier today, Pro Hero Ingenium was injured by a villain dubbed ‘Hero Killer: Stain’. The hero killer was put into police custody after his fight with Ingenium. Ingenium sustained major lacerations to both of his legs, as well as minor lacerations and bruising along the rest of his body.”
Ingenium. That was Iida’s brother. Was this the reason that Iida left the Sports Festival?

“We’ve just been given more information. The hero killer has supposedly escaped police custody. Residents of Hosu City, please be on the lookout for this man.” A ghostly image of the hero killer appeared on the screen. “If you see him, alert the police immediately.”

Midoriya pulled out his phone a dialed Iida’s number. It rang once. Twice. Three times.

“This is Iida Tenya.”

“Iida—”

“I am unable to use the phone. Please leave a message.”

“Damn it.” Midoriya hung up the phone. He debated whether or not to call him again, but if Iida didn’t pick up the first time, he likely wouldn’t pick up at all.

“Izuku, I’ve found a good place to hang the medal.” His mom poked her head into the room. Looks like he’d have to talk with Iida in person the next day.

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Quirkless Kid Wins Third Place at Annual Yuuei Sports Festival

This year’s Sports Festival will go down in history as one of the most eventful. The first years’ festival is usually uninteresting, most people tuning into the third years’ festival instead. After the recent encounter with the League of Villains, many had eyes on the new heroes in training.

The nation was shocked to learn that one of the finalists is quirkless. This kid marks the first Yuuei student to have such a condition. He is also the first to actively be a hero. This student cemented himself in history by winning third place.
spicysause: Congrats to that kid!! I probably never would’ve been able to do that.

alrightallmight: Fake as hell. Honestly, the whole thing seems a bit too perfect. That Todoroki kid who clearly has the power to be a hero didn’t get to fight, but that kid does? Even though he was injured? Yuuei set the whole thing up. I doubt he’s actually quirkless. Yuuei just wanted the press.

tiredandangry: Use his name!!! It’s Midoriya Izuku!!

    spaceballs237 replying to tiredandangry: did you even read the article? they say his name plenty of times

KillMeNow: what the hell is Yuuei even doing? I used to respect the school, but first the whole USJ villain attack and now letting a quirkless fight against people with quirks! That poor kid could’ve been seriously injured.

    hero4life replying to KillMeNow: he didn’t seem like he was in that much danger. I’d say his opponent was worse off. But yeah, I totally agree that Yuuei has some fucked up safety measures.

shalame: you go kid! stick it to the system! my daughter is quirkless and she has not stopped talking about being like ‘that green haired hero boy’. You are an incredible inspiration to everyone.

Midoriya closed the article. The hero news network has been filled to the brim with articles about ‘a Quirkless that medaled’. His awkward middle school photo was plastered along with a sensationalist headline.

Midoriya pulled his hood over his head and yanked the strings tight. Yeah, he probably looked suspicious, but he’d rather that than being recognized on a crowded, sweaty train.

In the end, it was useless. As soon as he got onto the train, his eyes locked with a young girl. Her
eyes blew wide and she pulled at her mother’s arm while pointing to him. Midoriya looked around for somewhere to hide.

“It’s Midoriya Izuku!” The woman said, and Midoriya grimaced, for what was sure to be a painfully long train ride to Yuuei.

Seconds later, a barrage of strangers moved up to him. They were asking him questions he couldn’t hear. He tried to ignore them.

“Midoriya, Midoriya, are you really a quirkless?” Someone yelled.

“Of course I’m quirkless, why wouldn’t—”

“Can you sign an autograph?”

“Oh, I want an autograph too!”

Paper and pens were shoved in his face. Midoriya just wanted to get off of the train. His prayer was answered as the train stopped. The door opened and he made his hastily retreat. People groaned in annoyance. Finally, he breathed a sigh of relief.

Midoriya looked up at the train sign. This was not Yuuei’s stop. Shit. He’d have to walk there now. Midoriya turned to the exit, but bumped into someone.

“Ah, sorry, I wasn’t watching where I was—wait, Iida?”

“Oh, hello, Midoriya.” Iida said without his usual vigor. “Are you waiting for the train as well?”

“Actually, I just got off. Everyone kept asking for an autograph, so I had to escape.”

“The train left?!” Iida pulled out his watch. “I let time get away from me. Follow me, Midoriya, we mustn’t be late.” Iida walked away briskly. Midoriya smiled. There’s the vigor.
Midoriya followed him. “Iida, how’s your brother?”

Iida paused. He breathed in deeply. “So you heard?”

“It was all over the news.”

Iida sighed. “This isn’t something I want to talk about.”

Midoriya glanced at Iida. The other angled his face away. Midoriya hoped the other would be alright.

Iida’s mind raced. He wanted to stop thinking about his brother.

After his match with Todoroki, he’d been despondent. Winning the Sports Festival… he didn’t have a choice if he wanted to prove his worth to his family. He had to win. But he lost.

He was sitting in an abandoned room when his phone rang. His mother’s name was displayed on the caller ID.

“Mom, I’m sorry I failed.” He said fighting back tears.

“You lost?” His mom asked him. “Honey, I didn’t call about that. I wasn’t able to watch the festival. Tenya, your brother was attacked by a villain. We’re at the hospital now. Tensei wants to see you as soon as possible.”

Iida didn’t remember the travel to the hospital. He’d rushed out so fast, he was barely able to speak to Uraraka. Did he speak to Uraraka? He wasn’t sure anymore.

The biting smell of sterilizer tore through his nose when he walked through the hospital. The white walls and clean lines masked the air of disease and pain. He barged through the door to his brother’s room.
Tensei sat in his standard hospital bed. His legs were tightly wound in gauze while his arms were looser. He had multiple machines strapped to him, making him look more cyborg than human.

“Tenya! How did the Sports Festival go?” His brother asked with a large smile. Tears burned his eyelids. He rushed over to his brother and wrapped his arms around the other. Tensei ran a bruised hand through Iida’s hair. Iida cried into his brother’s shoulder. He cried until his face was red raw, his eyes puffy.

“Hey, it’s okay, Tenya. Look, I’m okay.” Iida looked up at his brother, wiping at his eyes.

“W-what happened?” Iida asked.

“I had a fight with a villain. He got me pretty good, but the police have him under custody.”

“Will you be al-alright?”

Tensei sighed. “The doctors said that my legs won’t heal fully. I might be able to walk again with a cane, but it’s hard to know now.”

Tensei placed a hand on his brother’s shoulder. “Tenya, I need you to promise me something.” He paused. “Carry on the Ingenium name for me.”

“What?! I can’t just take Ingenium, you’re going to get better.”

“With what the doctors told me, it’s a fat chance. Please, promise me, Tenya.”

“...I promise.” Iida said, but he didn’t mean it. He couldn’t take his brother’s name.

“Thank you. I do have some good news though.” Tensei smiled. “Nedzu called. He offered me a job at Yuuei. I think I’m going to take it.”

“You’re going to work at Yuuei?” Iida asked, a trace of positivity finally leaking through.
“Yup! We don’t see each other too often, so I’m excited. Once my legs heal enough for me to get out of this bed, I’ll be able to bug you all the time.”

Iida groaned. “You’re going to make a fool of yourself in front of my friends. Great.”

“That’s the spirit!” His brother laughed. The door to Tensei’s room creaked open. Iida turned around to the nurse.

“Visitor hours end soon. Wrap it up quickly.”

She closed the door, and an uncomfortable silence settled over them. At least, it was uncomfortable for Iida. Tensei didn’t seem to mind.

“Hey, Tenya, don’t do anything stupid, ‘kay?”

“What do you mean?”

“It’s just, you usually get tunnel vision when you’re emotional. You can’t change what happened to me.”

“I know that—”

Tensei silenced him. “Promise me you won’t go looking for trouble.”

Iida stared at his brother for a minute before sighing. “Yeah, I promise.” The words tasted bitter in his tongue.

“Good. Visit me again soon.”

“I will.” Tenya said as he walked through the doorway. The moment he left the room, his frown deepened. Iida felt the stares of others while he left, but he kept his eyes trained on the ground.
Two promises, one a name, the other his own reaction. Iida resented liars. But right now, his brother wouldn’t be able to rest with the truth. He couldn’t accept the Ingenium name, and he couldn’t sit by while that villain still lived. At least the villain was in prison.

Or so he thought.

Iida scrunched up his eyes. Maybe if he stopped thinking about it, he would follow through on his promise to Tensei.

Iida and Midoriya walked up to the school building about ten minutes late. Iida couldn’t remember walking from the train station, but apparently they’d arrived. He’d never been that late before.

“This is where we part.” Iida said.

“Iida, are you sure everything is okay?” Midoriya asked him.

Iida hated liars with a passion. “I’ll be fine. Don’t worry about me.” So fitting, that he’d become one himself. Midoriya wasn’t convinced at all, based on his furrowed brow. Iida wanted to feel bad for lying to his friend, but he didn’t have enough energy to care.

Iida walked away, through the school gate.

Midoriya carefully opened the door to class 1-C. As he opened it, the entire class turned to look at him.

“Midoriya, glad you could show up.” Ectoplasm said.

“I’m sorry for being late, Sir.”
“Relax, you’ve been excused. We assumed it’d be hard for you to get around in public. Take a seat.”

Midoriya bowed and sat down. Many of the kids still had their eyes on him.

“Now that everyone is here, I think we should give a round of applause to the seven gen ed students who made it past the obstacle course.”

The classroom clapped, and Midoriya wanted to shove his head into the desk. A minute later, the class’s attention returned to Ectoplasm.

“In my years of teaching, I have never seen a gen ed student make it to the podium. Very rarely has any of them make it to the tournament in general. I remember, back when I was still a sidekick, this first year from General Education won the Sports Festival. Until then, nobody really acknowledged gen ed. Suddenly, everyone was talking about it. That moment was one of the reasons why I chose to teach gen ed. Seeing you up there reminded me of that. Thank you.”

Midoriya really wanted to shove his head into the desk. It wasn’t like he hated the praise, but right now it just felt like too much.

“In any case, as you all know, internships are coming up.” Ectoplasm continued. “First years generally don’t get that many requests for interning as the second and third years do. Gen ed gets even less because most agencies pay attention to the hero classes. Don’t be upset if you don’t have a request, I’ll work with all of you to find a place to intern.”

Ectoplasm displayed the number of requests that each student received. Midoriya scanned the chart for his name. At the top was Kudaketa. She had 156 requests. After that was Tensou who had 73 requests. Then Shirushi, 34 requests. Fuyou, 23. Nakamizu, 18. Shinsou, 11. Finally, his name. He only had six requests. His name was the last on the list.

Six requests. He won third place, and only six people wanted him as an intern. It’s better than zero but six?

“I’ll pass out your request lists. Don’t expect there to be hero agencies on your lists. Most of the time, gen ed students are only requested by police departments or government agencies. Come up to the front if you didn’t get requested.”
Ectoplasm handed Midoriya his list. It took up barely the top of the page. He handed a stack of papers to Kudaketa next. Midoriya looked through the list. Police department, police department, government work, hero agency, police department… wait a second.

Midoriya reread the name on the list. Himitsu Hero Agency. A hero agency wanted him as an intern. Holy shit. Suddenly, Midoriya didn’t care that he only got six requests. He realized he still hadn’t looked at the last one yet. Gran Torino - Hero. Holy shit. Two hero agencies requested him. Midoriya felt like he was about to explode. How was he going to decide between them?

“Midoriya, where are you interning at?” Shinsou asked, leaning over to him.

“I don’t know… two hero agencies requested me.”

“Two? Damn, I thought one was good.”

“A hero agency requested you?” Midoriya asked excited. Shinsou handed Midoriya his list. Midoriya read the name Shinsou pointed to. Himitsu Hero Agency.

“Hey, they requested me too! We should go together.”

Shinsou was taken aback. He looked down at the paper, before penciling in Himitsu Hero Agency at the top of the form. Midoriya followed suit. Whoever Gran Torino was, Midoriya hoped he wouldn’t be too disappointed. He just couldn’t say no to spending time with his friend.

——

The joy that Midoriya had amassed from being requested by a hero agency had worn off by lunch. His classes didn’t give him any breaks, instead picking the work load up right where they left off. The shift in pace gave him whiplash.

Midoriya sat down at his usual lunch table. Originally, it had just been him, the loser squad, and Uraraka and Iida sitting there. Now Kudaketa, Todoroki, Kirishima, and Shirushi were there as well. Iida was missing.
“Good morning, Dekiru-kun!” Uraraka greeted him.

“Technically, it’s good afternoon.” Midoriya replied. “Where’s Iida?”

“He said he wasn’t hungry.” Uraraka frowned.

“He’s never skipped a meal before. I’m worried.” Midoriya scanned the room, hoping to spot him.

“Yeah… I am too.”

Midoriya sat down and began eating. The cold expression Iida wore as they walked to school that morning never left his mind.

“How many requests did you get, Midoriya?” Todoroki asked. “For the internship.”

“… I got six. Two of them were hero agencies.”

Uraraka spit out her drink and gaped at him. Todoroki’s expression remained the same save for a raised eyebrow.

“You got six.” Uraraka said.

“Um, yeah… how many did you get?”

“I got twenty.” Uraraka said.

Midoriya turned his head to Todoroki.

“I got a lot.” He said, deflecting Midoriya’s unasked question.
“You know, telling me how many you got won’t hurt my feelings, right?”

Todoroki still didn’t answer.

“He got four thousand.” Uraraka said. Now it was Midoriya’s turn to gape.

“Oh.”

“Yeah.”

Midoriya spent the rest of lunch silently stewing. Second place got four thousand internship requests while third place got six. What the hell. That kind of discrepancy couldn’t just be due to him being in gen ed.

The day blurred by after lunch. In no time, the bell had rung for dismissal. Midoriya saw Todoroki, Uraraka, and Iida leaving the building together.

“Hey guys, wait up!”

Uraraka waved him over. Iida didn’t look at him.

“Let’s walk to the train together.”

As they walked, Midoriya hung back near Iida. The boy refused to acknowledge him.

“Hey… you know you can talk to us if you need anything.”

Iida visibly tensed. “I don’t need anything Midoriya. Thank you.”

Midoriya wasn’t convinced, but he left the other alone anyways. Now it was Todoroki’s turn to stay back.
“Midoriya just wants to help.”

“I don’t want his help. I’m fine.”

Todoroki was silent. “Let me rephrase. Midoriya knows something is wrong. It’s only a matter of time until he’s beating your face in with kindness and dragging your limp body through his respect. I assumed you’d rather that happen on your own terms.”

Todoroki left him to stand there, contemplating that horrific image.

Chapter End Notes

I wanted Iida's brother to play a larger role in my story than he does in canon. I was already planning on changing the outcome of his fight with Stain, but taking away his disability felt really wrong to me. I decided that his injury would still be severe enough to confine him to a wheelchair, but he'd be able to walk around a little bit without it. Please tell me what you think because I'm still not quite certain about him.

Next chapter will be an intermission before the Stain arc.
The hype from the sports festival dies down and a new challenge arises. The internships begin.

I'm alive? I'M ALIIIIIIIIIVE

Uh, yeah, sorry for the impromptu hiatus on this story. I hit a large patch where I was uninspired. I was waiting to feel motivation again, but then I realized that I wouldn't get motivated by doing nothing. Hopefully I can keep up a scheduled now?

Saturday morning, a beautiful, lazy Saturday morning. No work to do, no worrying over Izuku, just a day to relax.

Or so Inko thought.

A soft rapping at the door interrupted her sleep. She groggily rose from the covers.

“Izuku? What is it?” She asked, eyes drooping shut.

“We’re out of cereal. And… basically everything.”

Right… she had to go shopping today. At least she had the rest of the day to hang around and marathon movies with Izuku.

Inko pulled herself out of bed. The morning routine went by quickly. A few strokes of a brush through her hair and later and a cup of black coffee later, she felt wide awake. She smiled at her son as she walked to the apartment door.
“Don’t break all of your bones while I’m out,” she teased.

“What if I only break half of them?”

“I won’t punish you, but you’ll be on thin ice.”

Izuku laughed. His attention fell to the window where they heard a soft racket.

“Oh dear…” Inko said as she got a closer look. By the front of the building, numerous people gathered by the door. Some flashed cameras at their window. Inko rushed to close the blinds.

“Mom… maybe I should get the groceries instead.”

“It’s fine, Izuku. I’ll use the back door to get out. Here, help me find my hoodie.”

Extra large green hoodie over head, Inko waved her son goodbye.

“Can you get some mochi, too?” Izuku asked.

“Not if you eat all of them.” She smiled. Her son laughed and returned her wave.

Inko left the apartment room. The back exit was hard to find if you just walked through the halls. It was hidden in a maze of stairs and rooms. Luckily, Inko knew a short cut.

Inko walked over to the east stairwell. This stairwell built up cobwebs on cobwebs from its lack of use. It was far from the main entrance and was the only staircase that wasn’t next to an elevator.

At the bottom of the stairwell, Inko walked around the staircase. Underneath the stairs, a neon green exit sign greeted her. She pushed open the door and walked through the alleyway, not a soul in sight.

The trip to the grocery store was quick. Their apartment wasn’t far from the store to begin with, so
Inko always walked there. It was the only bit of exercise she got.

She felt a few stares while in the store, but she wasn’t worried. The hoodie wasn’t the most fashionable thing in the world and had many coffee stains.

Inko made her way to the cereal aisle and grabbed Izuku’s favorite brand. It had just as much sugar as the rest of them, but All Might’s face plastered to the front of the box apparently improved the taste. Not that she really minded. It made her son happy, and that was what mattered to her.

Inko dropped a few boxes into her cart, then made her way over to the produce section. A voice made her turn around.

“Inko-chan! It’s good to see you!”

“Hello, Meiwakuna,” Inko replied with a smile. Meiwakuna was her neighbor. Sometimes Inko invited her over for tea. They didn’t talk much but Inko enjoyed what conversations they did have.

Meiwakuna was a slim woman with a short stature to match. Instead of hair, she sprouted leaves from her head thanks to her quirk. The leaves changed colors in the fall and fell of in the winter, leaving empty greenish-yellow stems. In the spring, they grew back along with purple irises.

“Did you ever fix the table?” Inko asked, easily falling into conversation.

“It took awhile, but yeah, the table’s fixed. Those kids are a handful.” Meiwakuna brushed the leaves away, but they fell back over her eyes.

“I watched the sports festival the other day.” She carried on. “I had to keep reminding myself that that was sweet little Izuku-kun every time he was on screen!” She laughed with her whole back, drawing Inko in as well.

Meiwakuna calmed down, her face dipping into a shallow frown. Inko stopped laughing as well, slightly confused by the serious atmosphere.

“Aren’t you concerned about him? I wouldn’t want my son to be hurting himself just to get a good
grade. Especially if he was quirkless. It really isn’t safe.” Meiwakuna said.

Inko’s brows rose in surprise. “Well, yes, I’m extremely worried about him. But that doesn’t mean that—”

“If you’re worried then you should take him out! No need to pay a school to hurt him.”

Inko’s eyes drifted down. “Izuku has wanted to go to Yuuei his entire life. I can’t take that away.”

Meiwakuna brushed it off with a wave of her arm. “He’s a kid! He doesn’t really know what he wants to do for his future. I mean, all the kids at my son’s school want to be heroes as well. It’s about time he started thinking realistically.”

“Why isn’t being a hero realistic? There are hundreds of active heroes.” Inko asked, folding her arms.

Meiwakuna looked at Inko like she was oblivious. “He’s quirkless, Inko-chan. Disabled heroes aren’t a thing.”

“You don’t know that…”

“You know Ingenium, right? He’s the hero with the engine quirk. He’s a great hero, but now that he can’t walk, he’s out of the business. It’s too dangerous.”

Inko took a deep breath. “Not being able to walk and not having a quirk are two totally different things.” Inko looked up, glaring into her neighbor’s eyes. “My son is going to be a hero.”

Meiwakuna sighed. “Just think about it. I don’t know what kind of a mother I’d be if I let my son walk head first into danger. I’ll see you later Inko.”

Meiwakuna walked away. Inko stared blankly at the apples and peaches in front of her, contemplating what Meiwakuna told her. It’s true that she worried about her son, hell, she got worried any time the TV mentioned a villain. But Izuku wasn’t her fragile baby boy anymore. She could trust him to chose for himself.
Inko made her way home after she finished shopping. The paparazzi had thankfully disappeared and she sighed in relief. It was much easier using the front door.

Inko made her way through the door of her apartment. Izuku greeted her with a smile immediately.

“He, Mom!” He said as he took some of the grocery bags from her arms. “Can I go over to Shinsou’s place? I wanted to experiment with his quirk.”

“That’s fine, dear, just be careful.”

“Sweet!” Izuku smiled brightly. All the things that could possibly go wrong flashed through her mind. Inko never wanted to see that smile disappear.

The two ate breakfast in peaceful silence. The moment Izuku finished his breakfast, he raced around the house to grab his bag and notebook. The door closed with a resounding click, leaving Inko in silence.

Something felt off but Inko couldn’t place it. Oh well. She cleaned up the dishes and spared a glance at the coffee table. On it, some of Izuku’s favorite movies were stacked. Right. Saturday was movie day. She started the tradition since Izuku did nothing but study all weekend. His absolute favorite movie, All Might: Origins, was missing from the pile.

Inko sighed. Next week they’d have movie day. Today would just be a small deviation with his new friends.

Inko didn’t want to admit she felt lonely.

“Midoriya, aren’t you getting tired?”

Midoriya shook his head, a happy smile on his face despite the heavy breaths. “We haven’t tried
everything, yet. What about things I don’t want to do, can you make me do that?”

“I’m not gonna make you do something you don’t want to do.”

“It’s fine, I promise I won’t get mad. I just want to see if I can break out of your control through will power alone.”

“Alright, alright. Midoriya?”

“Yeah?” Midoriya’s eyes glaze over from green to grey. His mind felt calm.

*Something Midoriya doesn't want to do… “Punch me.”*

Shinsou felt resistance immediately. The previously calm mind turned turbulent with panic. It still felt different than when Bakugou broke through his control.

Midoriya trudged over to him, footfalls even if slower than usual. His expression never shifted. 

*This may have been a Bad Idea.*

Midoriya pulled his arm back while Shinsou flinched instinctively. The fist slammed into his left eye, making Shinsou see stars. His control over Midoriya broke instantly and he fell to the ground.

“Shit! Oh my god are you okay?” Midoriya scrambled over to him. Shinsou groaned. “Shit. Fuck. I’ll go grab an ice pack.”

After grabbing a bag of frozen peas from Shinsou’s freezer, Midoriya shoved it into his face. Shinsou sighed at the cold relief.

“Maybe we should put this on hold.” Shinsou said.
“Yeah, that sounds good.”

Midoriya continued to fret over his rapidly bruising face when the doorbell rang. Midoriya ran over to answer it.

On the other side of the door, Aruku was leaning over to reach the doorbell. She stopped and smiled when he opened the door.

“Dekiru-kun!”

Midoriya smiled. “You’re out of your wheelchair!”

“Hell yes! I still have this stupid thing, though.” She gestured to the cane in her hand. Midoriya motioned her into the room, and her eyes landed on Shinsou.

“Jeeze, what fucked you up?”

Midoriya scratched his head awkwardly. “We were practicing with his quirk. I asked if he could make me do something I didn’t want to, so he ordered me to punch him,” Midoriya shifted his glare to Shinsou, “which totally wasn’t cool.” Shinsou huffed instead of replying.

“Wow. I wouldn’t peg you as a masochist.” Aruku teased. Shinsou threw the bag of peas at her. She ducked and broke out into laughter. The laughter stopped when the pea bag hit the wall and exploded, sending peas everywhere.

“... I am not cleaning that up.” Aruku said.

Shinsou sighed. He grumbled as he stood up.

“Wait, you don’t have to clean it up. I’ll handle it.” Midoriya said as he looked for a dust pan. Aruku hobbled over to the couch he was sitting on and slowly eased down on to it. Her bad leg sat funny compared to her good one.
“Where’s Tensou? I thought he was coming with you.” Midoriya asked.

“He said something about chores or whatever.” Aruku shrugged. “He’ll make it next time.”

Midoriya dumped the somewhat thawed peas into the trash can. He was just about to sit down when the doorbell rang again. His friends looked at him sheepishly. *We’re already sitting*, their expressions seemed to say, you should get the door.


Midoriya opened the door again and was quickly pushed aside. Mei didn’t even ask if she could come in.

“I bought some popcorn cookers! Let’s get this show on the road!” Mei said as she plops down into Midoriya’s spot. Midoriya resigned himself to sitting on the floor. Popping the movie disk into the player, Midoriya sat with her back against Shinsou’s legs.

“What’s up with your face?” Mei pointed to the black outline around his eye. Shinsou groaned.

“We’ve made some discoveries about Shinsou,” Aruku giggled as Shinsou nailed her in the side with his elbow, “but I’m not one to judge. We respect you and your life choices.” Shinsou nailed her again which only made her laugh louder. Mei had a confused grin on her face.

“Just ignore them.” Midoriya whispered.

The video player finished loading. *This is the movie you wanted to watch? It looks like it was made like, ten years ago.* Shinsou said.

“Okay, it’s old, but it’s really, really, cool. Just ignore the crappy CGL.”

“I watched this when I was a kid!” Aruku said. “Isn’t there a newer version?”

“I’m pretty sure that there have been at least five versions of All Might: Origins but this one is the
best in my opinion. I watch it every week with my mom. I’ve probably memorized the script at this point.”

Shinsou stared at him. “You have a problem. Why would you want to watch a movie that much?”

“C’mon, just give it a chance.” Midoriya pouted. Shinsou put his hand up in mock surrender. Midoriya grinned and hit the play button.

He spent the next hour or so doing interpretations of the dialogue in over the top voices. Every time he did his All Might impression, his friends would burst out laughing.

Midoriya hadn’t expected so many stares at school. His skin crawled as he glanced between random onlookers. Four or five of them would turn their head as he walk past. Midoriya walked faster.

After making it to the lunch room, Midoriya breathed a sigh of relief. He found his friends’ table and sat down.

“Do you guys know why everyone is looking at me?” He asked Shinsou.

Shinsou shrugged. “You did place third in the Sports Festival.”

“Yeah, but that was days ago. Why are they looking at me now?”

Aruku poked her head into the conversation. “A lot of people I talked to didn’t believe you were quirkless. Now that there’s been a fuck ton of articles about you, everyone’s jealous.”

“I think you mean ‘envious’.” Shinsou said.

“Same thing.”
“No, they’re not.”

Midoriya sighed as the two started bickering. He noticed Tensou walking toward them with his lunch. Except, he brushed right past their table.

“Hey, Tensou! We’re right here!” Midoriya called over. Tensou turned around quickly, his normally bubbly stature rigid. He smiled at Midoriya, but it didn’t reach his eyes.

“Sorry guys, I have a lot of math work to make up. I’ll catch you later.” And he walked away. Midoriya turned back to his friends who had stopped bickering about word usage. Aruku frowned at Tensou’s receding form.

“That’s odd…” She said to herself.

“What is?” Midoriya asked.

“I can’t remember the last time Gii-chan had trouble with math.” Aruku shook her head. “It’s probably nothing. So, where are you guys going for your internships?”

Midoriya smiled. “We were both requested by Himitsu Hero Agency! We’re going there together.”

“That’s awesome! Man, I wish I could’ve gotten a request. Wouldn’t have needed to do a butt load of research.”

“What’d you find?” Shinsou asked.

“There’s a small EMS department down in Hosu City. I’m their first intern!”

“Hosu?” Midoriya asked, more attentive. That’s where the last Hero Killer sighting was. Aruku caught his concern and waved him off.

“Relax, I’m probably not gonna leave the building. My leg might be out of a cast, but it’s still fucked up.” Shinsou snorted. “Anyways, what kind of hijinks do you think I’ll get to work with.”
“Paperwork.” Shinsou deadpanned.

“Quirk abuse accidents are the most common.” Midoriya said.

Aruku glared at Shinsou. “See, this is why I like Dekiru better.” Queue a red flush all over Midoriya’s cheeks. “He actually answers my questions without being a sarcastic little shit.”

“Why are you booing me? I’m right.” Shinsou muttered. Shinsou glanced over at Midoriya. “Great, now you’ve made it look like Christmas threw up on him.”

Midoriya covered his face with his hands. “Stop…”

“Fine, fine.” Aruku giggled. “So, what kind of hero stuff will you guys be up to then.”

Midoriya’s hands drop, revealing a frown. “I tried researching Himitsu, but I couldn’t find anything. Google only gives a location and a short About page but other than that, it’s like the place doesn’t exist. Nothing’s been in the news about them either.”

“Maybe it’s a small agency? Sometimes agencies only have one or two heroes.”

“But wouldn’t the agency be named after them then? There isn’t a hero with the name Himitsu.”

Aruku shrugged. “I wouldn’t think on to it too much. You’re gonna have so much fun. Much more than I will.”

“At least you get to spend all day in air conditioning.” Shinsou quipped.

Suddenly, the bell rung, signaling the end of lunch. The trio gathered their food and tossed it into a trash bin.

“See you guys later!” Midoriya called before walked to his next class.
School ended for the day and Midoriya walked out of the gates with his friends. He lost the conversation a while ago. Midoriya’s pretty sure that they were talking about weird animals but he’s not certain. He saw someone cross into his peripheral.

“Tensou!” Midoriya yelled. The boy turned to look at him like a deer in headlights. “We’re having a study session at my house. You should come.”

Tensou looked away and scratched his head. “Uh, sorry, I don’t think I can…”

“Weren’t you having trouble with math? We can help you figure it out!” Midoriya smiled. It didn’t help ease the other.

“I, um, already got it under control.” Tensou still hadn’t looked at him. “You guys go on without me, I’ll be fine.”

Tensou started to walk away. Midoriya’s frown set deeper.

“He never skips the study session.” Aruku said. “You guys wait here, I’m going to talk to him.”

Aruku hobbled away from the group. She would have just ran over to him, but speed walking hurt her leg as it is.

“Hey, Gii-chan, wait up!” She yelled. He stopped and turned around.

When she caught up, Aruku didn’t waste any time. “You’ve been avoiding us.” She crossed her arms.

“I’m not avoiding you, I just have things I need to do!” Tensou said defensively.
“What things?”

Tensou hesitated.

“...Chores…” He muttered.

Aruku sighed. “Can’t you tell me what’s wrong? Did one of us say something to upset you?”

Tensou shook his head violently. “You guys haven’t done anything wrong! I’m not trying to avoid you, I swear.”

“Is it your mom again?” Tensou flinched. “So that’s a yes.”

“Look, can you leave this for now? I need to get home.”

“I just want to help.”

“Yume—”

“Enerugii.” Aruku silenced him. “Let me help you.”

“There’s nothing to help with!” Tensou all but yelled. He ran a hand over his face. “I haven’t needed help before.” He smiled at her. “I’m fine, okay?” He’s not fine, not with that smile that hid most of teeth. She hated whenever he gave her that smile.

“Okay.” She said. No it’s not. It’s not okay. But she still let him walk away, just like before. Aruku turned back to the friends she left waiting, mind resolved. She was going to help her friend whether he wanted it or not.

__________
“Are you sure that this is the place?” Shinsou asked.

They’d spent nearly thirty minutes on the train and then spent another thirty walking along a dirt trail through a dimly lit forest. By the time Midoriya and Shinsou made it to a clearing, the sun sat just above the horizon, casting the nearly night sky in purple and red.

The sunset was all the color that they could see. The trees were shrouded in dull greens, barely visible in the lighting. The aforementioned building sat squarely in the center of the clearing with trees lining the perimeter. It was a giant cinder block made from smaller cinder blocks, all the same dirty white. The only clue that it was a building at all was the metal door in front. There were no windows, not even a sign.

“It’s where the GPS said to go.” Midoriya replied. He grew unsettled as he approached the door. He knocked on the door and winced at how loud the metal was.

Midoriya and Shinsou waited for a minute in silence. Anxious, Midoriya reached over to knock on the door again. Before he could, the door swung open wide. A woman with three eyes looked them over.

“Midoriya Izuku and Shinsou Hitoshi?” She asked. “Please come in.” She finished before they could answer.

Inside, the building was expansive. In the middle of the room were multiple desks with papers strewn across haphazardly. A few desks were in use by whom Midoriya guessed were heroes. The room was filled with people, in fact. How could there be so many heroes here, yet no news reports on their deeds?

The woman led them away from the commotion. They walked through a long branching corridor. Had it been dimmer, Midoriya probably would have still felt uneasy, but the hallway had enough lights to blind someone.

The woman led them to a small office that was about as bland as it could be. The only thing noteworthy about the room was a pencil with a cat head eraser on the desk.

“Wait here for now. You’ll be introduced to your mentors soon.” With that, the woman turned on her heel and left the room.
Shinsou sat down in the only available seat in the office. “Are you having any second thoughts about choosing this place?”

Midoriya frowned. “It’s… not what I was expecting. I thought hero agencies were more lively.”

“Who knows, maybe there’s another level just for partying and this first floor is just a façade.”

Midoriya snorted. “Yeah, I bet they even have a dance floor, too.”

“What’s this about a dance floor?”

Midoriya froze. That voice was familiar. No way.

“You two are late.” Aizawa said, walking into the office arms crossed. “You were supposed to arrive forty minutes ago.”

“Sorry, Aizawa-san, we didn’t realize how long the walk to get here would be.” Midoriya said.

“Refer to me as Eraserhead here. I’ll be one of your mentors while you are here. Welcome to Himitsu Hero Agency for Underground Heroes. Follow me.” Aizawa didn’t give them a chance to think as he was already walking away.

“Wait, Ai-Eraserhead, where are we going?” Midoriya asked.

“To meet your other mentor.”

Midoriya felt dizzy from all of the turns in the hallway. He hoped he wouldn’t have to navigate the labyrinth on his own any time soon.

“Your work in the internship will directly affect if you are transferred into the hero course. Right now there’s only one spot, so only one of you will be transferred.”
Midoriya’s eyes widened. Only one of them would get to move on. Midoriya glanced at Shinsou. He was smirking.

“I like competitions.” He said. His eyes met Midoriya’s and his smirk grew.

*Alright.* Midoriya thought. *You’re on.*

They moved around a bend in the hallway and came up upon a large room littered with work out equipment, dummies, targets, and a crap ton of other miscellaneous things lying about. In the middle of the room was a woman with back length black hair tied back in a ponytail. She was wearing a dark blue Kevlar suit with three utility belts strapped to her waist. The woman threw a knife at one of the targets. It hit the center.

“The students are here.” Aizawa said. The woman turned around and smiled at them. She walked over to them. As she came closer, Midoriya realized that he had seen her before.

“You’re Pro Hero Blindsight!” He blurt out before he could rein in his inner fanboy. “I’m a huge fan!”

Blindsight stopped, eyes blown wide. “...I’ve never been recognized before. How do you know who I am?”

Midoriya flushed in embarrassment. “I, uh, dug around hero forums for videos awhile back. You have a really cool quirk!”

“Well I’ll be damned. Hey, Eraser, you better tell Hizashi that I’m gonna win our bet now that I have a fan.”

“Bet?” Shinsou asked.

“We’re betting on who’ll have more fans by the end of the year.” Blindsight answered cheerfully. “I’m not even in the top 100 heroes, so I thought I’d end up with zero.” Blindsight took a seat on a workout bench. “So, you know me, but I don’t know you. I think that’s unfair.”
“My name’s Midoriya Izuku.”

“Shinsou Hitoshi.”

Blindsight smiled. “Rule number one in underground hero work, never give anyone your real name. You don’t know how much information people could get on you with just that.”

“Eh?! But you asked us to introduce ourselves…”

“No, I said it was unfair that you knew me already. You did the rest.” She laughed at his bewildered face. “Don’t sweat it, kid. In any case, you two are going to need hero names now. Got any ideas?”

Midoriya and Shinsou were quiet. He hadn’t thought about hero names in awhile.

“I’ll take that as a no.” Blindsight said. “Take some time to think, and we’ll be right back.” Blindsight walked away and Aizawa followed. They were left in silence.

Hero names. The last time Midoriya thought about them, he’d been six. Midoriya had made an entire list of names that he could use for when he became a hero, but, well… All Might Jr. didn’t really have a ring to it. Midoriya cringed as he remembered all of the All Might based names he’d made.


“You’re muttering again.” Shinsou broke the silence.

Shit. “Ah, sorry…” Midoriya covered his mouth with his hand.

Maybe he should be Mutterer: The Obnoxious Hero. The villains probably wouldn’t go near him then. Maybe… The Analyst? No, that didn’t sound like a hero name. He could go by a nickname. What was it that Uraraka called him… Dekiru? No, that’s too cutesy.

Maybe something that’s green like a vegetable. Ha. Pro Hero Broccoli, striking fear into the hearts of villains with good nutritious habits. Midoriya nearly laughed out loud. Nearly.
Clover? That could work, he was lucky after all, but something about it didn’t feel right. Most heroes named themselves after their quirk, so Midoriya could name himself after his fighting style instead. In that case, Clover wouldn’t be the greatest pick.

Midoriya looked around the workout room, scanning over the objects in the room, hoping a name would jump out at him. His eyes landed on one of the targets. It was filled with bullet holes and slices from the throwing knives. Midoriya knew what his name had to be.

The door to the room opened again and in walked Blindsight and Aizawa. They were still talking to each other in hushed tones, trading serious expressions. Blindsight turned to them and gave a smile.

“Figured it out yet?” She asked. Both boys nodded. “Alright! Now you can introduce yourself.”

“My name is Somniloquy.” Shinsou said. Damn. Midoriya suddenly felt like his own name was lacking. Blindsight turned to look at him.

“I am Point Blank.” Midoriya said, looking for her reaction. The smile on her face grew borderline manic. Oh. That’s why Aizawa’s friends with her.

“Point Blank, Somniloquy, let’s get started.” She said. Midoriya prayed for his sanity.

Blindsight had pulled out mats from the closet in the back. Instead of cleaning up the junk lying around, she just kicked it to the side and plopped the mat down on the floor.

“Alright, who’s first?”

Silence.

“Um, first for what?” Midoriya asked.
“Sparing,” She said like the answer was obvious. “Since you seem to be listening, Point Blank, why don’t you come up here?”

Midoriya shuffled forward. He was uncertain about sparing with an actual pro hero. Especially since the only adult that he’d sparred with before was Hatsume-Sensei.

Midoriya took a breath. Blindsight’s quirk relied on eye contact. She’d blind him if he looked at her. Possible fighting strategies flew through his brain as he took his stance.

“Whoever pins the other wins. Ready?” She asked. He looked up, but looked at what was behind her instead of at her. He could see a vague smirk in his peripheries.

“Yes.”

Midoriya expected her to run at him, but she doesn’t move. He’s tempted to look at her and read her expression, but kept his head tilted away.

Suddenly, she darted forward, fist inbound. Midoriya reacts on instincts alone and catches the fist with his hand. Yet, in grabbing the hand, he had turned his face to look directly in front of him. Blindsight had aligned the fist to be in front of her face and eyes. Midoriya barely had time to register the fact that they were an unnatural azure, before he couldn’t see anything.

A second later, he was pressed into the mat with his arm being contorted over his back. He groaned.

His vision came back like a flip of a switch. Blindsight release his arm and he got up.

“You did that on purpose.” He muttered.

“What’d I do?” Blindsight asked.

“You faked the punch on purpose.” He said a bit louder.

“Everything you do in a fight should be on purpose. Fighting reactively may work, but only if the
other person is also fighting reactively. You had a good strategy to start, though.” Blindsight gave him a pat on the back.

“It’s your turn, Somniloquy!” She said brightly.

The two got set up on the mat. Shinsou took on one of the stances that Midoriya had taught him.

“Ready?” She asked.

“Yeah.” Shinsou made the mistake of looking at her. Blindsight grinned as her eyes flashed.

Shinsou took a deep breath in. “So, your quirk is blinding.”

“Sort of.” Blindsight probably had more to say, but her azure eyes turned gray. Shinsou was smiling now.

“Pin yourself.” He ordered. Midoriya held back laughter as Blindsight lied on the mat while holding her own arm behind her.

Shinsou released her and held out a hand. She took it with a big smile.

“Good job.” Blindsight said.

“Thanks.”

Blindsight turned to Aizawa. “I like them.”

“Are you finished? We have places to be.” Aizawa said.

“There’s no rush. I just wanted to get to know them a bit.” Aizawa looked unimpressed. “Fine, we’re finished. We can head over to the meeting.”
Aizawa nodded and left the room with the other three on his tale.

“Oh yeah, I forgot to ask about your quirks.” Blindsight said.

“Mine’s brainwashing. I can control people if they reply to me.”

“Useful! And you, Point Blank?”

“Did you not watch the sports festival?” Midoriya asked instead.

“Nah, it’s too flashy for me.”

“Oh. I’m actually quirkless.”

Blindsight did a double take, eyes wide. “Really? I’ve never met a quirkless person as young as you.” She frowned. “Are you sure you want to be a hero? We aren’t going after random run of the mill villains here. It might be dangerous.”

Midoriya sighed inwardly. “I know that. It’d be dangerous regardless of whether I had quirk or not. Besides, this is an underground hero agency. Most underground heroes don’t rely on their quirks to begin with. Hell, you still had to fight me despite your quirk. I’ll be fine.”

Blindsight blinked. “Huh. I hadn’t thought of it like that.”

They continued walking. Finally, they arrived at a conference room of sorts. Aizawa opened the door and they were met with a dozen or so pro heroes.

“Everyone, meet the interns, Somniloquy and Point Blank.”

Chapter End Notes
I named dropped Blindsight in chapter two. Her quirk is bending light and activates upon eye contact.

Somniloquy means sleep talking. How do I know this? I'm a sleep talker! I freaked my sis out a bunch when we got bunk bed...

I chose point blank as Midoriya's hero name because it really captures his personality. Anytime he deals with a problem, he's very in your face about it. EX: Todoroki, Iida, Kouda, ect. I did not choose Deku because while it has a lot of symbolic meaning in canon, this is not that story.

Tell me what you guys think or check out my tumblr smallkatas.
Midoriya and Shinsou sat down in the back after the heroes gave their pleasantries. Slowly, chatter rose from the silence as heroes asked others about the plans for the meeting. Some looked excited at a case that required many of them, while others looked nervous.

The chatter died almost immediately when the door opened and a colossal man lumbered through. He looked the heroes down, a permanent scowl etched into his face by bushy eyebrows. The man wore a crisp, dark brown waistcoat and slacks.

His eyes landed on Midoriya and Shinsou in the back. Midoriya gulped as the man stared. He feared the man would throw them out of the room.

As the man stared, a grin emerged on his face, and Midoriya was surprised by how genuine it looked.

“Welcome, heroes in training!” He said with a deep voice. “My name is Kairos. I am the director of Himitsu. We all hope you enjoy and learn from your time spent here.”

Midoriya quietly let out a sigh. The man was threatening for sure, but seemed kind. The smile disappeared from Kairos’s face as he turned to address the heroes.
“Normally, I wouldn’t call all of you for a single mission. It’s usually more effective to send small
groups of you out to deal with multiple problems.” Kairos’s face was grim. “This time is different. 
We were tipped anonymous information about Hachiman’s trafficking ring.” Kairos dropped a 
manila folder onto the long rectangle table at the front center of the room. Heroes closest grabbed the 
folder, thumbed through the pages, pulled some and passed the brief to row behind them for those 
people to sift through the contents. The remaining heroes came forward and read over shoulders. Midorya and Tenso stayed seated, observing.

“If the information is true, then we aren’t dealing with only forty people. We have to deal with over a 
hundred or two, not to mention their ties with the economy.” Kairos sighed. “They have too much 
fluence. I need as many heroes as possible to snuff them out.”

Kairos moves over to the whiteboard at the front. “Let’s start brainstorming plans. We need to locate 
them, assess the threats, apprehend everyone with power, and rescue as many innocents as possible.” He wrote the objectives with a green marker.

A hero rose his hand. “We’ve apprehended some of the lower class henchmen. If we hook them up 
to trackers and send them off to Hachiman, we’d be led right there. It’d be like a Trojan Horse.”

Kairos nodded and wrote it down. Another hero rose her hand.

“I can design a virus to take down their computer systems. I might also be able to hack into their 
camera feed. It’d help with proving how accurate this anonymous information is.” The hero said.

Kairos frowned. “Assuming they have a computer system.”

“With how far their reach extends, someone is bound to have a computer or two,” she replied.

Kairos thought about it for a second, before writing it on the board. “Do the interns have any ideas?” Kairos asked, startling Midoriya.

“Um, do you know the villains’ quirks?” Midoriya asked. “It’d be easier to counter them if we knew 
what we were fighting.”

Kairos paused, before releasing a huff. “The people we are after aren’t villains.” Kairos said looking 
directly at him. “They’re criminals.”
Midoriya furrowed his brow. “But villains are criminals.”

“It’s true they break the law, but they do it carelessly because they know they’ll be caught. Villains strive for chaos. True criminals, on the other hand, don’t immediately break the law. They find ways to get around it, exploiting whatever loophole that only addresses villainy they find. They do this because they know they won’t be caught, they won’t be on the news, they won’t have fifteen minutes worth of fame. There’s a method to their madness.”

Kairos ran a hand over his face. “A new villain can be stopped and apprehended live as a crowd watches. A new criminal might not be found until the body count reaches double digits. Hachiman’s is in the triples.”

The man schooled his face again. “But, to answer your question, we do know of the leader’s quirk, as well as some of the higher ups.”

“In that case, it’d probably be a good idea to group people into teams. Each team would have a different target, and be composed of people who’s quirks could target the weaknesses.” Midoriya said.

Although, splitting the groups down too much could lead them into being overwhelmed. There would probably need to be at least three to four in case one of the vil— criminals got back up. Five, probably, to get the leader. Not to mention there were people they’d have to save as well. That could be a group with non-specific quirks since they’d probably only run into lower level lackeys.

Midoriya was kicked out of his revere when Shinsou elbowed him in the side. All of the heroes in the room had a mixture of annoyance or amusement in their faces.

Maybe he should name himself Mutterer.

Kairos turned back to the board and wrote a shortened (read: by a lot) version of what he said.

“Any other ideas?”
The day was wrapped up after the hour long meeting. It was nearly midnight. Midoriya and Shinsou were led to the room they’d be residing in for the week. It was pretty bland for the most part. The walls were a whitish gray while the sheets were stark white. The floor was a dark gray carpet. Two beds were set up by the walls.

Midoriya claimed the bed on the right. He sat down and started to unpack the few belongings he’d brought. The bed was lumpy and creaked of springs. Midoriya sighed as he kissed his sweet chance of sleep goodbye.

Shinsou padded over to his mattress as well. He sat down onto. The scream of springs was even louder than his. Midoriya thanked his luck that he chose the marginally better option.

“You think they’ll actually let us join a group for the mission?” Shinsou asked, startling Midoriya.

“I think Kairos will let us. I’m pretty sure that he wants to educate us.” Midoriya said.

“Yeah, but this mission is dangerous.”

“I guess we’ll know tomorrow morning.”

The two remained silent. Midoriya relaxed his back onto the bed and stared at the ceiling. The hum of the AC lulled him, exhaustion creeping through his muscles.

“Goodnight, Shinsou.”

“Night.”

Midoriya didn’t get as much sleep as he had expected. Hours were spent lost in thought and counting the cracks along the ceiling. At one point, Midoriya must have dozed off. There was a banging at the door.

Midoriya groggily sat up, wiping the sleep from his eyes. He cracked his neck and yawned. “Who is
“Be ready in five minutes, breakfast is being served in the cafeteria.” Aizawa’s voice is muffled by the door.

Wait, what?

“Where’s the cafeteria?”

“Down the stairwell, to the right.” The footsteps steadily grew softer.

Shinsou was already getting ready by the time Midoriya got his bearings. He yawned and pulled out his phone to check the time. 5:32, AKA god fucking awful o’clock in the morning. Once they were dressed, Midoriya and Shinsou stumbled through the hallway, following Aizawa’s directions. Somehow they managed to find it.

Midoriya’s stomach growled as he walked through the breakfast line in the utilitarian cafeteria. He grabbed a bowl of okayu and made his way over to Aizawa and Blindsight. It felt like school lunch after falling asleep the previous period.

“What’s the plan for today?” Midoriya asked them as he sat down.

“Logistics for the Hachiman mission and fitting you with hero outfits.” Aizawa replied.

Midoriya brightened up at that. “Can I use the support gear Mei made for me?”

“If you brought them here. There’s a support team here that can design gear as well.”

Mei’s stuff is probably better, Midoriya thinks, but doesn’t dare say out loud.

“We can head down there as soon as we finish eating.” Blindsight said. “Do you have any ideas for your costume?”
“I did draw a design I liked a while ago, but it’s probably not that good.”

“Can I see?” Blindsight smiled.

Midoriya was now very happy that he took his notebook everywhere. He flipped to the page of his drawing.

Blindsight read his annotations. “You should’ve named yourself Rabbit with this costume. It would’ve matched the bunny ears.”

“They’re not bunny ears!”

Blindsight laughed. “Just joking with you. I think you should get rid of them though. It’d be too easy for someone to grab them in a fight.”

“Oh.” Midoriya frowned.

“What about you, Somniloquy?” Blindsight shifted the conversation.

Shinsou shrugged. “Haven’t really thought about it.”

“That’s cool too.” Blindsight takes this as an opportunity to flip through the rest of the notebook before Midoriya could stop her. She landed on her own page.

“...Did you figure this all out just by watching videos on hero forums?”

“...Yes…”

“That’s impressive. You really are my biggest fan.”
“You aren’t the only hero in there.” Midoriya blurted out. “I record lots of heroes.”

“Even more impressive. You’re really talented for a quirkless person!”

The comment wasn’t intended to hurt, in fact she was probably trying to compliment him, yet it still did. He couldn’t just be talented. It was only when he was compared to the rest of his minority that his talents shone. Midoriya continued to eat in silence.

———

The support department was in the basement and Midoriya was glad to know that Mei wasn’t alone in her scrap metal clutter. He could traverse the mess of mechanical parts much better than the other three thanks to days spent in Mei’s workroom.

“This is so cool!” Midoriya said to Shinsou. “This agency is so much bigger than I had expected. I’m glad I chose coming here than Gran Torino.”

Aizawa froze. “Did you say Gran Torino?”

“Yeah, he was the other hero that requested me.”

Aizawa huffed. “That asshole.” It was said quietly enough that Midoriya probably wasn’t supposed to hear it. *What did Gran Torino do to Aizawa?*

Someone rounded the corner carrying a strip of sheet metal. That someone had a startlingly familiar top knot bun.

“Kudaketa?” He asked, making her turn her head. “I thought you didn’t want to be a hero.”

“I don’t. I’m interning with the support department here.”

“That’s so cool! Are you going to help us with our costumes?”
“I don’t know. Possibly.” She turned back to focus on her task. She placed a hand on the sheet. The sheet made a warbling noise that grew higher until the sheet snapped apart into several shards.

They were lead away by an older woman. She started taking measurements instantly. Midoriya gave her the notebook along with the criticism Blindsight had and the woman thanked him.

It didn’t take long for the suit to be finished. When Midoriya drew it, he’d expected it to be more of a jumpsuit. The end product was padded out in a layer of dark green Kevlar with burgundy trim on the sides. His mask had been turned into a helmet instead, viser completely covering his face.

Decked out in Kevlar plating, it was rather stiff to move in. Midoriya practiced a roundhouse kick and was disappointed in his range of movement. The weight left him off kilter, and he stumbled when his foot touched back down.

The utility belt was completely black. It had pockets for switchblades, flash bangs, smoke bombs, and first aid materials. There was also a pistol holster.

“These glocks fire blanks only. I don’t trust either of you with real bullets yet. Regardless, only use it in an emergency since it will only buy a little time.” Aizawa said as he handed over the guns. Midoriya hastily placed it into his hoster.

Shinsou’s outfit was similar to his in terms of style. The Kevlar plating was sectioned differently. Midoriya had three plates over his chest while Shinsou only had two. The color had been switched from dark green to black. Midoriya’s trim had sharp edges and ran over his suit like lightning bolts while Shinsou’s dark purple trim swirled over the suit.

They were absolutely brilliant in design, but Midoriya was slightly disappointed that they were so similar. He’ll probably ask Mei to redesign it later.

“The Kevlar should protect you if your reflexes aren’t good enough.” The woman said. “What do you think.”

“I like it.” Shinsou said as he examined his arms.
Midoriya was about to make a suggestion but Blindsight cut him off. “They look perfect. Thank you for designing them on such short notice.”

Midoriya frowned and opened his mouth to speak, but he’s soon herded out of the support department. On his way out, Kudaketa still morphed sheets of metal.

“Look at you. A real hero.” She said without looking up.

“It’s a cool suit.” But not perfect.

“There’s a radio inside the helmet for requesting backup. I can’t remember the agency’s frequency though. You probably won’t need it.”

“Thanks anyways!” Midoriya waved her goodbye.

Upstairs, heroes gathered. Kairos was splitting the heroes into three groups.

Kairos spotted them and nodded. “Wonderful, everyone is here.” He pointed to the groups. “Eraserhead, you and Somniloquy will be in the first group while Point Blank and Blindsight will be in group two.”

Midoriya felt excitement course through him.

“Group one, you will be the surprise attack team. Your job is to infiltrate the base, and locate Hachiman. Group two, you will be reinforcements. You will leave about 20 minutes after group one and subdue any remaining targets as well as aiding the rescue efforts. Group three will remain at the agency and provide support.”

Agreement reverberated through the crowd of heroes.

“Alright. Group one, let’s head out.”

The heroes began to walk away, but Shinsou stayed behind.
“See you in twenty.” He said.

“Good luck!” Midoriya replied. Shinsou walked away and caught up with Aizawa and the rest.

———

Shinsou perched himself on the branch of a tree. The foliage covered his body entirely, yet it still gave him view of the two guards by the door of the warehouse. They were just around the corner.

10:21, just nine minutes before the shift changes.

Shinsou glanced over to the tree to his right. Aizawa looked back at him and gave him a sharp nod. Shinsou breathed. He eyed the small stone in his hand. It was now or never.

He tossed the stone into the air. It clanged against the metal of a dumpster, breaking the dead silence. The guards reacted immediately.

“Who’s there!?” The first one yelled. When no one answered, the guard crept away from his post by the door. He approached the dumpster with apprehension, rifle drawn.

“I don’t like playing games. You best show yourself.” He walked over to the tree line, but didn’t look into the leaves.

“Come out, come out, wherever you—ARGG!” The guard hoisted up into the trees by Aizawa’s capture scarves. He locked the fabric over the man’s face and held him tight. His struggles slowed down, and eventually stopped. His arms sagged down.

“He won’t be unconscious for long.” Aizawa’s voice crackles through his helmet. A red-haired hero jumped over to Aizawa’s tree and placed her hand over the guard’s face. The hero took on the appearance of the guard. Within a minute, the guard was stripped and tied to the tree while the hero was wearing his clothes. The hero jumped off of the tree and walked around the corner, rifle in hand.
“Just a bunch of squirrels.” The hero said.

And now, the waiting game.

When the clock hit 10:30, the doors opened. Two other guards walked out. The rifles were handed off and then their infiltrator walked inside.

“Good job.” Kairos said. The heroes in their team began to jump out of the trees, landing without a sound. Shinsou stepped down onto a lower branch carefully.

Snap.

Shinsou’s breath stopped as the sensation of falling took over. He braced for the ground, but the pain never came. He slowly opened eyes he couldn’t remember closing. Aizawa held him in his scarves.

Shinsou sighed. “Thanks.” Aizawa placed him on the ground. He didn’t even have a chance to breathe before they were running. If the floor plans were correct, then there should be an cellar door just around back.

Bingo. The team slowed down as they approached the worn wooden door locked from the inside. They could probably brute force it open, but that wouldn’t be very stealthy.

The heroes stood waiting, glancing over their shoulders occasionally. Focus snapped to the cellar door as the sound of locks turning muffled their way through the wood. The door flew open, and the red-haired hero waved them inside. She had dropped her guard disguise.

The team of heroes sneaked through the warehouse hallways. One of the heroes from the third group guided them through the halls according to the floor plans they’d hacked.

Something was… off. The Hachiman trafficking ring was huge, with over a hundred estimated people involved. They should have seen someone by now.

Suddenly, lights flashed bright red and alarms blared sharp notes. Men appeared from all directions, all wielding various weapons and quirks. The only exit, the cellar door, was blocked off by a wall of
intimidating mutants.

Weapons started to fly, knives and guns and shards of metal all crashing in time to the siren, a masterpiece of cacophony.

Shinsou dodged a rogue arm. Crouching on the ground, he swung out his leg, causing his assailant to fall, head crashing into the linoleum.

Aizawa tackled two guys to his right. He wrapped them up with his capture scarves and ran them into each other. As soon as they passed out, two more men took their place, keeping Aizawa distracted.

A third man with a heavy gait walked behind Aizawa. The hero was too busy to notice the knife in the third man’s grasp. Shinsou did.

His legs moved on their own. In one fluid movement, he grabbed a dusty beer bottle off the ground and slammed it into the man’s head as the knife was about to descend. The bottle shattered into thousands of glittering shards while the man collapsed.

Aizawa finished dealing with the men and turned around. He looked at the man on the ground and then at Shinsou.

“Good job.” He said.

Shinsou grinned and nodded.

More criminals surrounded them. The team of heroes circled together. Shinsou looked all around him, fear closing in on his chest. Five heroes were on the ground. It was just him, Aizawa, and Kairos.

“Damnit! Where’s the backup?” Kairos muttered.
“Do we have time to go back to the support department?” Midoriya asked Blindsight.

“What for?”

“It think the Kevlar is a bit much.” Midoriya flexed his arms. The Kevlar didn’t give him his full range of movement. “I think we should scrap it.”

“The kevlar’s there to protect you.” She said, confused. “What if you get hit? You need it.”

“It’d be easier to dodge a hit without it.”

Blindsight laughed. “I probably have more Kevlar than you do and it’s fine for me. You’ll get used to it. Come on, we have a train to catch.”

Midoriya pouted, but followed her anyway. The train wasn’t too crowded. It gave him some time to work with his notebook. Kairos had given him the leaders’ quirks, so he didn’t want to waste any time figuring out their weaknesses.

Hachiman’s quirk was simple in theory. His arm could transform into a bow. As long as he had arrows on hand, he’d be able to shoot with a perfect bullseye every time. The best case scenario to defeat him would be to destroy his stash of arrows. Seemed simple enough. Although, that might not be enough. This guy probably isn’t the head of a trafficking ring for nothing.

“What did you say?” Blindsight snapped him out of his thoughts. His face went red.

“S-sorry. I mumble a lot.”

“You should probably learn how to not do that. Your opponent will be able to guess your moves before you deal them.” She smiled.

“Right…”
“Need me to go over the plan one more time?”

“I think I’m good.”

Blindsight ignored him. “Find the group and help them make their arrests.”

“Then go and rescue everyone we can. I got it.”

“And stay away from any fights.” She added.

“Huh? Shouldn’t I be getting experience from the fights?”

“These people are really dangerous. I don’t want you to get hurt.”

Midoriya frowned. “I can handle myself.”

“You can trust me. I’ve been doing this for years. I know what’s best.”

Midoriya sighed. He didn’t push the conversation any more. A ring sounded as the PA system turned on.

“We will be reaching Hosu Station in two minutes.”

Blindsight groaned. “What are we, like four stops away from Tokyo station?”

Something moved out of the corner of Midoriya’s eye. He turned to look out the window. His eyes widened.

“EVERYBODY GET DOWN—” The train lurched and the lights went black. A hole had been torn through the train. And in front of him…
It can’t be.

A Noumu?!

“Sorry, Sir, the train’s been delayed. There’s a problem in Hosu, a big one. We can’t make it to the rendezvous point.” Blindsight voice comes in through his speaker.

“Do what you can there. We’ll handle here.” Kairos replied.

“Roger that.”

Kairos took in all of the men around him. Fifteen to two and a half. Those aren’t good odds.

“What happened?” Eraserhead said beside him.

“Not now. I’ll explain in,” he glanced down at his watch, “three and a half seconds.”

“Enough talking!” One criminal yelled out. “One more word out of you, and I’ll shoot you all down.” He jerked his gun in their direction.

Kairos raised an eyebrow. “What about four words?”

A metallic bang filled the air just as Kairos clicked his watch. The world froze under his gaze, like he’d pressed pause on the fabric of time. Yet, the world wasn’t truly paused. The bullet slugged forward steadily. The sparks from the gun twinkled as they refracted new light. It would be a while before they faded to non existence.

Kairos walked forward, unaffected by the crawl of time. He approached the bullet as it sped toward his face. Although, ’sped’ isn’t an accurate word. It was more like inching to his face. Kairos reached
forward and plucked it free of the air. He positioned it where it would only hit the wall and released.

Kairos turned to face the man. It would be a while before he used his quirk again. Might as well have fun with it.

He walked around behind the man and lifted his shirt up over his face. He pushed the man forward until his feet lifted up. He moved onto the next guy, tossing away the gun, even though all it did was land in the air, and punched him in the face.

He didn’t react at all to the punch, the only movement a jerk of the head. Kairos left him and took care of the next men in similar fashion.

Another gun went off, the bang a low vibration in the air. The bullet had not even left the barrel before Kairos was there. He nudged the gun upwards into the ceiling. He waited for the bullet to appear before picking up the man.

With a grunt of effort, Kairos threw the man forward like a fat spear towards a group of mutants. The man never hit them, only remained suspended in air.

Two more nondescript gray shirts stood by the door. Kairos carefully united all of their shoelaces. He retied them, connecting both pairs of shoes in a cross hitch.

Kairos looked around the room. Fifteen men in various frozen states of disaster. It really hadn’t been good odds for them. Kairos moved around the shoelace victims and walked into the hallway.

Doors lined the abandoned pathway. He opened up doors to check inside. All of them were empty. They must have sent their entire arsenal to fight him. How flattering.

The last room was locked. Kairos kicked it in. Wood splinters hung in the air as Kairos pushed through the broken door.

It was a surveillance room. Cameras and computers provided soft, flickering light and a nearly undetectable hum. A man in dove gray uniform watched them, a slice of pizza nearing his gaping jaws. Kairos grabbed a bottle of wine off of the desk. With a quick flick of his arm, Kairos slammed the bottle into the man’s head. The glass spiderwebbed in slow motion, liquid peeking through the cracks.
Kairos grabbed the pizza from the man’s hand and left. The pizza was actually quite good, save for the badly burnt crust. He spit of the flakes of char and wiped his mouth.

Back in the room, the men had shifted positions slightly, and the first bullet was almost at the wall. Kairos walked over to the man he had delt with first. He placed the burnt pizza crust in the man’s hand, replacing the gun.

Kairos walked back to his original place in the room. He clicked his watch as time returned to normal. In a short sequence, men fell to the floor, the guy he threw landed on a pile on the ground, preventing others from moving, the shoe-laced victims tripped over air and face-planted, and the first guy landed on his side, wrestling with his shirt.

He got the shirt off of his face and aimed the pizza crust at them. Cue a dumbfounded expression at the pizza crust. Cue an even more dumbfounded expression when Eraserhead kicked his face in.

Kaios let out a breath when none of the men got off of the ground. He let himself sit down, mind cloudy. The world was unfocused and tilted under his gaze. Of course, he had to deal with this now.

“Director Kairos.” Oh, Eraserhead is in front of him. When did he get there? “Are you okay?”

“I’m fine. We need to keep moving and find Hachiman.” Kairos attempted to stand, but was pushed back down. Eraserhead reached into his pocket and retrieved a small device. A familiar prick went through his scared finger.

“Your blood sugar is too low. You need to sit out.”

“And leave the two of you alone? Back up isn’t coming, and we’re all that’s left. I’ll rest after.”

Eraserhead looked ready to argue, but conceded. The three of them left the room, Kairos wedged between Somniloquy and Eraserhead, arms on their shoulders.
The Noumu, thankfully, did not stay it’s welcome. With a roar, it had left the train. View unobstructed, Midoriya looked out through the gaping hole. Hosu, a small, unassuming city, burned. Flames chased off the dark skies of the night. Far off screams and screeches tore at his ear drums.

Blindsight had gathered all of the civilians into a safe corner of the train. No one was injured. She came back over to Midoriya.

“Point Blank, you stay with the civilians. I’ll take care of that Noumu.”

“I want to help.” Midoriya said.

Blindsight sighed and crouched down to his level like he was some kid being scolded. “You can’t help right now. There’s probably more Noumus out there. I can’t let you get hurt.”

“I’m not going to get hurt. I’ve fought a Noumu before.”

“This is an order, Point Blank. Stay with the civilians.” She led him back to the group of people, before jumping out of the hole in the train.

He determined to wait this out. Everything would be okay, and then they’d move on to Tokyo and help Aizawa and Shinsou.

Midoriya heard another scream and scraped that ideal. He jumped out of the hole in the train wall before he knew what he was doing.

He hit the ground hard. He winced as his legs took the brute force of the concrete. Shock absorbers. He’d ask Mei to add shock absorbers later. Midoriya pushed past the pain and ran into the street.

Mayhem. Noumus attacked from everywhere. Heroes fought them two or even three to one, only barely staving them off. Midoriya pulled up his phone and Googled the nearest villain attack crisis center.

A woman ran screaming through the road with only a white purse. A Noumu with six appendages and a foot-long tongue lolling from its mouth, charged her.
“Look out!” Midoriya yelled. He pushed her out of the way and the Noumu barreled past them, unable to slow its momentum.

“Are you okay,” Midoriya asked as he helped her to her feet. Her hand trembled in his, but she nodded.

“There’s a shelter not far from here. Take the main road and make a right. Don’t stop until you see the train station.”

“Thank you, Hero,” she said as she started running.

The Noumu who had chased her fought another hero with a water-based quirk. The Noumu was overpowering him.

Midoriya pulled out a knife from his utility belt. He waited for the Noumu’s face to be an open target. When the hero ducked, Midoriya threw the knife, hitting it in the exposed brain. It screeched and pawed at the injury. The hero took the opportunity to drive the knife in further. The Noumu collapsed, dead.

“Thanks, kid,” the hero said. “I really owe you one.”

“It’s no problem!” Midoriya replied.

“Hey, have you seen my intern? He ran off awhile ago and I’m worried. His name is Iida Tenya.”


“Thank you! When you find him, you two should both get to shelter. This place isn’t safe for kids.”

“Alright, Sir.” Midoriya said, then started running. Hosu City was where Ingenium was attacked. Midoriya doesn’t know Iida as well as his other friends, but he knew something was off the other day. Taking an internship in Hosu of all places, of course he was looking for the Hero Killer.
Midoriya ran through alleyway after alleyway. The Hero Killer wouldn’t want to attract anyone nearby, so he was likely far from the Noumus and heroes. It’s a good tactic. Nobody cared about screams in a dank alley during the Apocalypse.

Midoriya barely saw the burning buildings now. Without the terror filled civilians, the city was almost peaceful. Almost.

Rounding a corner, Midoriya froze. Hero Killer: Stain stood before him. He held a bloody katana. The other end skewered a person with dark blue hair to the pavement. Midoriya’s brain tunneled, focusing on one fact.

Iida was not moving.

Chapter End Notes

Kairos’s quirk is time manipulation. He can speed up and slow down time.

The names have fun meanings, look them up on wikipedia for some unintentional foreshadowing.
Midoriya faces down Stain and Shinsou faces down Hachiman

I'm alive!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I would like to say: This chapter was brought to you by my friend's sister who read this story and literally called me on the phone to talk to me about my work. Thanks for inspiring me to write.

With that, let's get on with the Stain fight!

Midoriya’s feet flew before his brain could focus. All other thoughts and concerns dimmed to the back of his mind. Only one thing was important.

Iida was not moving.

Iida was not moving.

I have to save him!

Midoriya’s legs ghosted up the side of a dumpster. Carried by nothing but instincts, he kicked off the lid and threw it into the air like a Frisbee. The plastic sliced a path through the dingy alleyway.

Stain turned his head in the nick of time, avoiding the makeshift discus. He extracted the katana from Iida’s shoulder in the process. Midoriya jumped off of the dumpster and stood between Stain and Iida. He lifted fists to his face, ready to fight.

“I won’t let you hurt my friend.” Midoriya’s voice shook at the beginning, but had more conviction towards the end.
Stain eyed him, crimson glowing in recognition.

“I remember you. You’re the quirkless kid from the sports festival.”

Midoriya’s fists tightened.

“Heh. You,” he pointed a crooked finger at him, “You have potential. I don’t prefer killing children, so stand aside. I’d like to talk with you after I deal with this phony.”

Midoriya stood his ground. “If you don’t like killing children, why were you fighting Iida?”

“He got in my way. He wasn’t even trying to save that guy over there.” Stain nodded to a body slumped against the wall. Shit, Midoriya hadn’t even seen him.

“No, it was just a petty revenge scheme. That’s not heroic. I’m taking him out now before he pollutes the rest of this hero society.”

Revenge scheme? What the hell is he talking about?

“...M...Midoriya...”

Midoriya glanced behind him and relief swelled through his veins. Iida was still alive.

“You have to go. He’ll kill you.” Iida said, voice strangled with effort. “Warn the heroes. I’ll be okay.”

“See? Your friend is telling you to leave.”

Shit. Midoriya pulled out his phone from his back pocket. He didn’t know how many of his friends were in Hosu, but he couldn’t do nothing. He needed to keep Stain talking while he sent out his location.
“He’s going to kill you if I leave. I am not going anywhere.”

“This isn’t your fight!” Iida shouted with all the volume he could manage, which wasn’t much. “This is for Ingenium!”

So that’s what this was about. “Iida, with all due respect, you are a fucking idiot.” Iida gaped at him from the ground. “Your brother wouldn’t want you to risk your own life for him.” Midoriya was angry now. “Not to mention everyone in our class! Do you really care that little about all of us? You don’t want me risking my life for you. Well guess what, I don’t want you risking your life period.”

Midoriya tapped send to all contacts and pocketed his phone.

“I am not going anywhere.” He repeated, staring the villain down.

Stain tsked. “You’re wasting your time protecting that fake. This society would be a much better place without people like them corrupting the title.”

Stain pointed his katana at Midoriya. “I’ll give you one last chance, kid. Stay back and I’ll let you live.”

Midoriya stabled his stance.

“I was hoping it wouldn’t come to this,” Stain said with a sigh.

Lightning fast, Stain raced forward. Midoriya ducked into a roll as the katana slashed where his head had just been. He straightened his body and leaned into his kick. He should have hit Stain’s face easily, but the damn suit wouldn’t bend! The move ended up being stiff and sloppy, giving Stain the opportunity to slice through the Kevlar. Thankfully, it didn’t go through the suit completely.

Stains slashed mercilessly with his katana, forcing him into a dance of survival. Stain pushed him further and further away from Iida. Midoriya ducked away from the katana as it sliced over him, leaving another cut along the Kevlar. Midoriya angled his body and kicked his leg up, ramming his foot into Stain’s hand.
Stain hissed and the katana fell from his grip. Midoriya lunged for it. He stood up, pointing the katana at its owner.

“Clever, kid. You do have potential.”

*Shut up, already.*

Stain pulled knives from his chest strap and started throwing them. Midoriya rolled out of the way. On the ground, Midoriya swung the katana wildly. He felt resistance as the blade cut through Stains leg.

Midoriya flipped onto his feet and spun the katana in a wide arc. Stain backed away with ease before throwing another knife.

Midoriya should have been able to dodge it. The knife hadn’t even been thrown that hard. Yet he was unable to crouch down, and the knife grazed over his neck, the one exposed part of his body.

Midoriya clamped a hand over the cut. It wasn’t deep, thankfully, but blood spilled out of it. That dodge should have been simple, but this goddamn suit messed it up.

Midoriya reached for the edge of the Kevlar and tore it off. The dark green plating fell to his feet, leaving only the white, glue residue.

Midoriya ran forward, relishing in the freedom of movement. He jumped into the air and twisted his body around until he felt Stain’s face crunch under his foot.

Midoriya landed gracefully in a roll out while Stain stumbled backwards, hand covering a broken bloody nose. Except, Stain didn’t even have a nose. Only a bone hole in his face spewing blood. It had previously been covered by his cloth mask. Midoriya wanted to throw up right then and there.

Ignoring his nausea, he continued his advance, readying the katana. Stain sidestepped him, grabbing his left arm and wrenching it behind him. Pain bloomed in his vision. That was the arm with the nerve damage.
Stain opened his mouth and a grotesque tongue emerged. Midoriya tried to break his arm free but moving it was too painful. The tongue slid over the cut in his neck, making Midoriya shiver in disgust.

Suddenly, all of his muscles locked up. He couldn’t move, couldn’t even struggle. Stain dropped him and his face smacked the cement. Midoriya wanted to get up again but his body refused to move an inch.

“There. I thought someone like you would understand my philosophy the most.”

“You don’t have a philosophy. You’re just a murderer.” Midoriya was grateful that he could still use his mouth.

Stain sighed. “Sometimes change requires extremes.” He turned away, walking back towards Iida’s prone form. “I’ll return for you in a moment.”

____________

Shinsou was, admittedly, not having a good time.

Kairos had since let go of his and Aizawa’s support, although it was more likely due to pride than actually being okay. Kairos’s legs shook with each step, breath ragged. Shinsou hoped he wouldn’t pass out.

Shinsou wanted to go back for the heroes they’d left unconscious, but waiting would only lead to Hachiman escaping. It was a lose-lose situation. At least Aizawa was okay. Shinsou probably wouldn’t have continued without his teacher, mission be damned.

“So,” Shinsou attempted to break the silence smoothly, but failed, “what happened to the backup team?”

Kairos paused his shuffle. “There was an accident at the train station. I don’t know the details, but it seemed bad. Actually, hold on.”
Kairos pressed the dial button on the side of his helmet and turned the dial, looking for Blindsight’s frequency.

“—where you are! Don’t mov—” A loud noise interrupted Blindsight’s voice. It was somewhere between a scream and a roar. Shinsou had never heard a thing like it.

“Blindsight, can you hear me?” Kairos asked.

“Director Kairos?! This is a really bad time—Hey! Safe house is that way, hurry!—Hosu is a fucking nightmare, Sir, I— shit!” The line went dead.

“Blindsight? Blindsight, answer.” Kairos said, but all that answered was static.

“...I have more questions than answers.” Shinsou said.

Kairos stayed silent. “It doesn’t matter what happened on her end. She, nor the rest of backup, are coming. We have to keep going.”

Right then, Shinsou felt his phone beep. Why did someone have to message him now? He really should have put his phone on silent. Whatever it was, it probably wasn’t important. He’d check it later.

Kairos took a step forward, wincing, but trying to hide it. Shinsou looked at Aizawa for any clue as to what he was supposed to be doing. Aizawa looked tired, well, more tired than usual. When he moved forward, Shinsou followed along, sending worried glances back at Kairos.

There was a door at the end of the hallway, much nicer than the other doors. For one, it was made out of wood rather than steel, and fine filigree wove around the edge.

Aizawa readied his capture scarf, and held up three fingers. Then two. Then one.

They kicked the door through, and it splintered all over the floor. Shinsou charged forward, fists raised in front of his face. They were in an office filled with grandeur and knickknacks that said ‘look at me, I’m rich!” Shinsou looked around but couldn’t see anyone.
“Well. That sure is a shame. I quite liked that door.” A new voice said. Shinsou whipped around as Aizawa activated his quirk. A lean set man examined the broken door with intrigue. He straightened, looking over the three of them. Shinsou felt unease with those piercing yellow eyes seemingly picking him apart.

“Well, I wasn’t expecting visitors today. I’m going to have to ask you all to leave.” He said in a bored tone.

“Hachiman,” Kairos spoke, “You are under arrest.”

“Arrest? What for? I haven’t done anything wrong. But you three, let’s see,” Hachiman started counting off his fingers, “trespassing, battery, assault, property damage. I have much more grounds to have you all sued.”

“You are under arrest,” Kairos continued, “for tax evasion.”

Hachiman’s blank gaze turned into a glare. If Shinsou was uneasy before, now he could literally feel his back crawl. “I will ask you all again. Leave.”

Nobody moved for a moment that managed to stretch into an hour. Over a thousand thoughts ranging from ‘Shit’ to ‘What do I do’ passed through his mind. At least they had the upper hand with Hachiman’s quirk erased. Except, situations change in a split second all the time.

In a split second, Aizawa blinked.

Hachiman activated his quirk. His arm shifted into a recurve bow made of flesh and bone. The bow string snapped into place with a sickly click. Aizawa threw his capture scarves forward with hopes to get purchase.

Hachiman dived to the ground in a roll. One of the scarves latched around his arm. Aizawa smirked as he yanked. Hachiman was raised off the ground, but landed firmly on his feet. With only one hand usable, Hachiman gripped the scarf and spun.

Shinsou’s eyes widened as Aizawa was lifted of the ground like he weighed not more than a pencil.
Hachiman grunted, and released the scarf, sending Aizawa flying into a bookcase. The shelves broke on impact, and book of a shapes and sizes cascaded down onto Aizawa.

Shinsou gulped.

“Why couldn’t we have just dealt with this peacefully? You made be break my favorite book case.”

Aizawa pushed himself up slightly, blood streaking his lower lip. Hachiman placed a foot on Aizawa’s back, and pressed down. Aizawa’s face smacked the the floor.

*Shit. Shit. Shit. This wasn’t supposed to happen. We had everything planned, how could it go so wrong? Shit. I can’t just watch Aizawa be beaten like that. What the fuck should I do?* Shinsou’s unruly mind contrasted his still form.

“Maybe once I kill all of you, you heroes will stop meddling where you don’t belong. You’d be more useful dealing with those villains that run amuck in the street.”

Hachiman reached up to the top of the book shelf that managed to stay in tack. A silver tipped arrow with black and white fletching rested with many other arrow types.

“It’s a shame you wasted your quirk for those grey shirts. I would’ve liked a real fight.” Hachiman drew back the arrow, aimed at Kairos. Kairos adjusted his stance, a smirk on his face.

At the last second, Hachiman shifted, pointing the arrow at Shinsou. Release.

There’s a narrow expanse of time between when you realize you are about to die, and when you actually die. That moment began for Shinsou as the arrow sliced through the air. It was the longest second he’d ever experienced.

Kairos had moved in front of him at some point, probably to block the arrow, but Shinsou was having a hard time processing everything.

The arrow embedded itself into Kairos’s shoulder, but somehow it kept going. Out of the shoulder with a spray of blood, the arrow continued until it hit Shinsou in the gut. He collapsed from the force.
“‘Two birds with one stone’ as they say.” Hachiman laughed, “Too predictable. You of all people should know I never miss.”

Hachiman stalked to them. Shinsou clutched his stomach where the arrow was embedded. The kevlar seemed to have done nothing to stop it, if the small stream of dark liquid was anything to go by. It felt like he’d been punched in the stomach repeatedly.

“Damn. I just had this floor cleaned. I better go call the cleaners again before that blood stains.” Hachiman said, sounding genuinely upset at blood possibly ruining the hardwood. What a prick.

Hachiman reached down and grabbed the arrow. With a sick tug, the arrow freed itself along with a crunch of flesh. Shinsou cried out in pain.

_Goddammit. Say something! Don’t let him kill you!_ Shinsou’s brain hollered at him. _Aizawa and Director Kairos are depending on you!_

“…Fuckin’…prick…” Shinsou grunts. Hachiman paused his monologue, wait when did he start monologuing?

“Excuse me?” Hachiman said, and then his eyes turned blank.

——————

Midoriya was running out of options. Stain was walking back to Iida and clearly had the intent to kill.

_Ok, Midoriya, think. Stain likes to talk, so how do we get him to talk. Stall for time. Something!_

Suddenly, Midoriya remembered. Didn’t this helmet have a comm built it. If he could shift his neck slightly, maybe he could reach something and call the heroes…

Click!
“Anyone there?” Midoriya said, softly so that Stain wouldn’t hear him contacting someone.

“Midoriya? Is that you? Did you guys arrest Hachiman?” Kudaketa’s voice crackled over, and relief immediately flooded Midoriya’s body.

“Stain!” Midoriya shouted. From this angle, he could barely see Stain holding the katana above Iida. Stain looked back at him annoyed.

“Stain? Like the Hero Killer: Stain? He’s working with Hachiman?”

“What do you think this will accomplish, huh? He’s a kid!”

“Wait a second. Are you stalling? Say something about his weapon if you are.”

“Killing heroes with that sword, it doesn’t actually solve anything.”

Stain looked mad now. “Will you just be quiet already. I have a job to do.”

“Shit okay, I’m tracking your headset. I’ll send one of the heroes to you…” pause, “What the… why are you in Hosu?”

“Were you the one behind the Noumu that stopped the train?” Midoriya asked.

Stain laughed. “I had nothing to do with that. Believe it or not, I don’t trust the League of Villains.”

“League of Villains,” Midoriya repeated.

“Fuck. Okay, I’m going to tell the heroes. Stay on the line, I’ll be right back. Everything’s going to be okay. Keep distracting him.”
“How does this solve the problem? All you’re doing is painting yourself in a bad light. You’re not actually trying to make things better. You’re a fucking hypocrite!”

*If I make him mad at me, he’ll focus on Iida less. That’s all I can do now.* Midoriya thought. Iida had been immobilized before him, so the best chance he had was to give Iida time. Once the two are up, it’ll only be a matter of time before the pros get here.

“I am making things better. When I kill, I take away one more hero that doesn’t belong. I am making hero society pure at heart again.”

“Why do you get to decide that? Who made you judge, jury, and executioner? I won’t lie, some heroes are bad at their job, but they don’t deserve to die for it. They deserve a chance to learn and change!”

“People don’t change. They don’t get better. You’ll learn that soon enough.”

Midoriya grit his teeth. It wasn’t gonna last. *Come on, Iida, move already! Move!* Midoriya’s pinky twitched. Midoriya focused on his hand. He could wiggle his fingers. *How is that possible? Iida was down before me.* Suddenly, Midoriya realized. It had nothing to do with time.

Midoriya grit his teeth. He had to move now. Stain had decided that their impromptu debate was over and was walking back to Iida. His arm shifted, feeling like it was made of solid lead. Then he moved his other arm. Stain was over Iida. He raised his katana over Iida’s body.

Midoriya kicked off the ground, stumbling into a sprint. Stain turned to look at him, surprise etched into his mug. Midoriya telegraphed a punch, swinging wide open. Stain raised his katana up to block his face.

At the last second, Midoriya threw his legs forward into a home run slide right under Stain’s legs. His fist made contact with Stain’s crotch. Midoriya rolled onto his feet and angled a kick into Stain’s throat.

Still recovering from the cheap shot, Stain reacted too slowly to block the kick. His head snapped back, and he stumbled away. His katana has already been near his face, so Midoriya couldn’t bring his leg back without a nick. It was okay though. Now there was distance between him and Iida. Midoriya wouldn’t be able to get both Iida and Native out of the alley by himself. He had to keep fighting until either the heroes got there or Iida got up. Midoriya readied himself.
“M...Midoriya, how are you standing?” Iida asked. “There’s no way his quirk could have worn out so soon.”

“It doesn’t have anything to do with time. I think it might be shear force of will, or blood type maybe. Either way, I’m up now, and I’m not going down.” Midoriya stared at Stain. Stain grinned.

“You’re smart. My quirk does have to do with blood type. You must be type O.”

So type O wore off faster. Good to know. Still, if he got down again, Stain likely wouldn’t fall for the same stalling trick twice. Fighting close range would be too risky. He needed to keep his distance.

Midoriya ran his hands over his utility belt. There had to be something…

His hand brushed over the pistol. How the hell did he forget that was there? Midoriya pulled out the gun and aimed it at Stain.

“Put your katana down on the ground.” Midoriya said.

Stain laughed. “You're holding it wrong. I bet there aren’t even bullets in that.”

“Do you want to find out?” Midoriya didn’t even know if bullets were inside of it. Why the hell did the heroes think putting it in his suit was a good idea?

“Please, stop doing this Midoriya.” Iida spoke up again. Damnit, Midoriya was getting real tired of his voice. “Leave already! You’re able to move again, why won’t you get help.”

“You want me to leave, Iida?” Midoriya snapped. “Pick your own damn ass off the ground and make me.”

Stain charged forward. With a sweep of his katana, Stain knocked the gun out of his grip. There goes not fighting close range.
Midoriya ducked under the blade as it came back around. He aimed a kick at Stains hand. Bones cracked as his foot plowed through them. Stain released the katana and Midoriya yoinked it out of the air.

Now on the offensive, Midoriya pushed Stain further back, leading with quick slashes. Midoriya might actually win this. All he had to do was keep Stain on the defensive until he made a mistake.

Or until Midoriya made a mistake. Stain grabbed his arm hard. Fuck not the arm again. His nerves drove nails into his brain.

Stain’s tongue shot out to the still bloody cut on his neck. Before he could lick it, Stain’s head was jerked to the side, an armored fist squarely in his face.

“Iida!”

Stain released Midoriya on reflex, and Midoriya took a few steps back.

“Iida, grab Native, I’m right behind you.” Midoriya said. Iida nodded, and ran over to where Native was still slumped over next to the building.

Stain recovered from the punch and rushed Midoriya again, tongue out. Midoriya grabbed a knife from his belt and haphazardly slashed Stain’s tongue. Part of it landed in a pool of blood in the dirt, while the rest went back into Stain’s mouth. Suddenly, Stain froze.

“Stain?” Midoriya said. Stain didn’t move. No way. Stain wasn’t immune to his own quirk. Midoriya felt like laughing.

“We did it.” Never mind, he was definitely laughing. “We beat the Hero Killer Stain. Holy shit.”

Midoriya collapsed on the ground in a fit of high pitched giggles. After a minute, Iida started laughing too. What a picture they made, laughing like maniacs with a know killer right next to them.
Eventually, Midoriya got up and dragged Stain out of the alleyway. Native still wasn’t able to stand, but he could move his arms at least. Midoriya approached Iida and wrapped his arms around him, squeezing tight.

“Sorry for some of the things I said back there.” Midoriya mumbled into Iida’s armor. “I’m really glad you’re okay.”

“Point Blank, do you copy?” A voice came through his helmet. Midoriya recognized it as the woman who’d designed his costume.

“I’m here.” Midoriya heard a small sigh from the other end.

“There are heroes headed your way. They should be there any second. Can you tell me the situation?”

“I found the Hero Killer: Stain about to kill my friend. We took care of him.”

Iida looked at him questioningly. “Who are you talking to?”

“The support from my agency.”

“What do you mean you took care of him?” The woman asked.

“He isn’t immune to his own paralysis quirk. I used it against him.”

Something caught Midoriya’s eyes on the far end of the street. There were people run toward them.

“It’s the heroes!” Midoriya pointed to them. “Hey! We’re over here!”

Midoriya didn’t recognize two of the three heroes. One was a woman with a navy costume and brown hair, the other was an old man with a yellow costume. The last hero, Endeavor, Midoriya recognized. He ran in the most angry way possible. Todoroki followed behind.
“Todoroki!” Midoriya called with a wave. He looked at Midoriya with surprise, but it faded to indifference as he looked from Midoriya to Iida and Stain.

“The hell happened here?” The old man hero asked, looking between Stain and them.

“I would like to apologize.” Iida said. “I went out looking for Stain, and Midoriya had to rescue me. It was foolish of me to do such a thing.”

“Idiot.” Todoroki muttered.

“You did this?” Endeavor pointed to Stain with a glare sent to Midoriya. Midoriya held his ground.

“Yup.” Midoriya thought he saw Todoroki crack a smirk. Endeavor’s brow twitched.

“We’ll take care of the rest.” The woman said. “You two should head to the shelter.”

Midoriya nodded. He and Iida started walking. Finally, it was over.

Famous last words right? Midoriya heard a screech over head. He turned around, right as a winged Noumu dived down to their ground. Midoriya barely had a second to react before it was picking him off the ground.

———

Hachiman’s mind was strong, but Shinsou held his grip.

“Grab a first aid kit a bring it here.” Shinsou ordered. Hachiman followed the task with dull eyes and robotic movements. The first aid kit was dumped at his feet.

“Tend to Director Kairos’s wound.” Kairos had since fallen unconscious from blood loss. Hopefully if he got treatment now, he would be okay.
Shinsou grabbed a pair of scissors from the first aid kit. He carefully cut off the kevlar and fabric around the wound. The skin around the edges was torn, likely from when the arrow was ripped out. Luckily, it didn’t look too deep, and it wasn’t bleeding too much. Shinsou grabbed a gauze pad and wrapped it to his stomach with a bandage. Some red spots poked through the gauze, so Shinsou wrapped it tighter.

Shinsou looked through the first aid kit for other things. He pulled out a plastic container of painkillers. Thank god. He tossed a few pills into his head and swallowed them dry. It tasted disgusting, but he didn’t care.

“If he bleeds out, you can shove that arrow up your ass.” Shinsou told Hachiman.

Now, he had to check on Aizawa. Slowly, Shinsou got to his feet. He grimaced as his stomach protested the movements. Aizawa was still covered in a pile of books. Hachiman must have knocked him unconscious when he stepped on him.

“Aizawa?” Shinsou shook his shoulder, but Aizawa didn’t wake up. Shinsou grabbed some of the books and threw them aside. “Aizawa, are you okay?” Nothing.

Okay. This was fine. Perfectly fine. Maybe the other heroes were awake by now and they’d help him.

“Record a confession of all of your crimes after you’re done with Director Kairos and send it to this number.” Shinsou tore off a blank sheet of paper from one of the books, wrote his phone number on it, and handed it to Hachiman.

“Yes.” Hachiman said.

Shinsou left the room and retraced his steps. He found the big room again, and, thank his luck, many of the heroes were mobile and had the villains in quirk suppression handcuffs.

“Hey!” Shinsou called out. They looked over at him, surprised. “Director Kairos needs your help. I took control of Hachiman and made him record a confession.”
“Which way is he?” A hero asked. Shinsou gave him directions, and three other heroes left to find him.

“Since backup isn’t coming, we need to take their jobs.” A remaining hero said. “We should separate and find where they’re keeping the people they’re trafficking. Somniloquy, you take the east hallway.”

Shinsou nodded. Following orders was something he could do. He took to the hallway, checking each room. Most were empty of life, trash and papers strewn over desks. One room did have a person in it, sleeping with his mouth wide open and snoring loud enough to wake a neighborhood. Shinsou decided to leave that guy be.

Shinsou reached the end of the hallway. He could probably head back and give them the all clear now, but being thorough never hurt. Shinsou opened the last door and gasped.

The room was dark, but the light from outside allowed him to see. Inside the room were a dozen or so cages with people tied up inside them. They had to be the trafficking victims. Shinsou’s eyes locked with a young boy who looked ready to cry. His face was gaunt and icy, bloody red cuts and bruises littering the skin Shinsou could see.

“It’s okay, the heroes are here. You’re safe now.” Shinsou whispered.

“I want to go home.” The boy sniffed.

“You will, don’t worry. I’m gonna get you out.”

A step broke the silence. “Are you now?” A new voice asked. Shinsou looked up. A figure walked out from the shadow, a sinister grin etched into his face. Of course there would be someone guarding them. Shinsou’s was nieve to think otherwise.

Shinsou could use his quirk and end this before it began, but that would mean relinquishing control over Hachiman. With the distance between them, Shinsou wouldn't be able to hold both men. If he wanted Hachiman to give his full confession and be detained without more injuries, he had to fight this guy with nothing but his own strength.

“Are you just gonna stand there and wait, kid? Or are you gonna run back to mommy.”
The boy in the cage backed away from the bars. He curled up in a dark corner with eyes squeezed shut. Shinsou refused to leave him like that. If Midoriya had taught him anything, it was to butt his head were it didn’t belong.

Spikes grew out of the guy’s fist. He was going to punch Shinsou. What did Midoriya tell him to in this situation?

Shinsou ducked the punch and side-stepped around him. In the time it took for the villain to spin around, Shinsou launched his counterattack: a sucker punch to the jugular. The man stepped back with a cough, leaving his chest wide open. Shinsou tried to punch him again, but more spikes formed along his body, grazing Shinsou’s knuckles.

Shinsou pulled his hand back with a grimace. It didn’t feel too deep but the cut was openly bleeding way more than normal.

“It’s my quirk. All of my spikes have an anti-coagulation toxin. You’ll bleed out from even the smallest cut.” The man’s grin grew sicker.

Shinsou needed to end the battle now. Midoriya told him that the easiest way to win a battle was to use the surroundings, but he could barely see anything he could use in this room.

Wait. If I can’t see the room, then that guy also can’t see it! Shinsou sprinted into the dark.

“Hey! Get back here!”

Shinsou felt around the floor in the dark. His fingers brushed up against something solid. It felt like a dumbbell. Now he just needed to get the guy over here.

“I’m right here dipshit!” Shinsou yelled. The man made no attempt to hide his foot falls. Using nothing but his ears to judge distance, Shinsou swung the dumbbell. It hit with a crack and the man fell over. Shinsou waited a second. When the man made no move to stand up, Shinsou patted down his body for a key to open the cages.

One by one, the cages were opened and the scared children inside were herded out the door. Shinsou
guided them through the hallways and out the back door.

Heroes, police, and EMTs were busy at their jobs. Hachiman was outside wearing quirk suppressing cuffs, eyes still glazed over. Shinsou tapped a hero on the shoulder.

“Should I release my quirk now?”

“Put him in the police car first.” The hero said.

Shinsou gave the order. Once the car door was shut, Shinsou finally released him, feeling a headache. Hachiman started yelling from inside, but Shinsou couldn’t hear him.

“I have kids here.” Shinsou said to the hero. They were all guided to the EMTs. As Shinsou’s cut and arrow wound were treated, Shinsou finally looked at the message on his phone.

**HATSUME MEI IS THE BEST!! at 15:32**

- *Location.png*

Why did Midoriya send his location? Was he trying to tell Shinsou that he couldn’t show up? But then why didn’t he just say that in the first place? Odd. Shinsou hoped he was okay.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys enjoyed! I have a tentative upload schedule where I post this story and my new story on alternating weeks. If you haven't read my new story, it's about vigilante!Midoriya. Please check it out!

Also, I take surprisingly well to feedback/criticism in a discussion format. I have therefore made a discord for you guys to ask me questions and yell at me when my updates are late. Come say hi! https://discord.gg/mpXSVha
Cheater

Chapter Summary

Midoriya faces the consequences for his actions, but it might not be such a bad thing after all.

Chapter Notes

Hi

I have no excuse.

Expect the next update to be in a month or two, but there will be an update. I will not abandon this story, so please keep supporting me.

Midoriya didn’t process the exact moment when he was lifted off of the ground. It was like his mind was left behind when the Noumu slammed him up into the air. It took a claw digging into his back to force him out of shock.

“Midoriya!” People yelled, most likely Iida and Todoroki, but he couldn’t make out the voices with the wind in his ears. Midoriya struggled against the grip of the Noumu. It had two arms with claws the size of daggers wrapped around him. He was sure the claw in the back was drew blood.

The Noumu belonged to the League. The League hated him. If he let this thing take him to the League, they would most definitely kill him. He had to break free now or he would die. Midoriya struggled harder and managed to push one claw off of his arm.

Okay, I can use my left hand now. Think, how do I get out?

His knife! He could reach his knife with one arm. Midoriya yanked his blade from its sheath and stabbed one of the Noumu’s arms. It shrieked in pain and the arm let go of him.

Midoriya remembered that he was at least three stories off of the ground. He picked up speed as his body sprawled through the air. He tried to slow his decent by opening his limbs and flailing them. It did nothing.
The Noumu did a full 360 and rammed into his body. Midoriya wasn’t falling anymore, but now he was being crushed to death by an oversized bat.

Midoriya gaped. No air found its way in. His vision speckled at the corners, and he no longer clearly saw the distance.

*Too tight. Can’t move.*

Suddenly, a hot flare blocked the Noumu’s path. It’s grip shifted, and Midoriya gulped down as much oxygen as possible, before the Noumu strangled him.

Where did that flame come from? It didn’t look like Endevour’s fire…

“Midoriya!” the voice called again, but now Midoriya could see. Todoroki’s face was burning with bright red fire and rage. The Noumu zig-zagged through the air as it avoided Todoroki’s fire, almost like it was afraid. Slowly, a plan formed in Midoriya’s head.

Another flare arched sourchingly close to his left hip. In a second, one of the Noumu’s arms shifted, and Midoriya once again had freedom with his knife. He slashed blindly and dug deep from the armpit to the wrist. It let go of Midoriya again.

It flew into its 360 pattern again, clearly aiming to grab him a third time, but Midoriya was ready.

“Todoroki, now!” Midoriya shouted, hoping that Todoroki understood his plan. Todoroki’s fire burst out larger than before, jarring the Noumu off course into a building. A glacier slide manifested from Todoroki’s foot and caught Midoriya on the way down.

Midoriya tumbled off the ice ramp to a stop, lying on his back. The heroes and his friends swarmed him, and he decided that now would be a safe time to pass out.
Midoriya woke to soft beeping. At first, it was a foggy white noise in the back of his head. Then the shrill notes became clearer and more annoying. Midoriya peaked an eye open, looking for the source.

He was in a hospital room. The beeping was coming from the heart monitor connected to his arm. He had a few bandages and gauze pads littered over his body. He didn’t remember accumulating all of the injuries. Midoriya sat up slowly, wincing in pain.

“Midoriya-kun, you must rest! Your injuries are much too severe to be sitting up.” Iida stood by his bed wearing similar bandages along his arms. Too tired to protest, Midoriya leaned back.

*I really need to stop ending up in hospitals so much. Mom’s gonna freak.*

“Midoriya… I would like to apologize for my behavior. You offered me help, and I stubbornly refused. Everything was my fault. So, I’m sorry. You are much more deserving of being a hero than me.” Iida bowed deeply.

“…Fuck, it is too early to be having this conversation.” Midoriya mumbled.

“It’s 2:36.”

“I could sleep til four if I wanted.”

“Staying in bed that long is unhealthy! It is best to wake up and go to bed at the same time everyday.”

Midoriya grinned. There he was. Good ole Iida was back. On the other side of the room, a door opened. A man Midoriya didn’t recognize walked in. He had a dog head and a black suit.

“It’s good to see that you two are awake and well.” The man said. Behind him, walked Blindsight, Aizawa, and the hero Midoriya had run into back at Hosu. When Blindsight looked him in the eyes, Midoriya felt guilty that he had disobeyed her orders.

“Allow me to introduce myself. I am Chief Tsuragamae Kenji of the Hosu police force.”
“Chief of police?! Why was someone like that here?

“While Hero Killer: Stain’s condition is classified, I can say that he is being treated for some minor, and some major injuries. I find it interesting that two students were able to afflict them.”

Tsuragamae looked the two of them over. “There are reasons that the Vigilantism Protection Act exists. With the rise of quirks in our society, the police were in a precarious situation. They determined that the best course of action was to make quirk use without a license illegal for the protection of the citizens. Even stopping someone like the Hero Killer is a breach of that law, and those who breach the law are punished accordingly.”

“But that’s not fair! That law only applies to quirk use and Midoriya is quirkless. Furthermore—”

“Tenya, quiet down,” said Iida’s mentor. Iida shut up immediately.

“I understand that you are quirkless. Because of that, the police force pulled a few strings. As of now, the Hero Killer incident went as follows: Pro Hero Native was attacked by the Hero Killer. Before he could deal the final blow, Midoriya Izuku provided a distraction and signaled the help of other heroes including Endeavor, and the Hero Killer was arrested.”

“...But what about me fighting Stain? Or Iida?"

“That information can not be given to the press. The heroes involved and the police force would have to deal with an immense blowback from the press, not to mention putting you at more risk. As for Iida Tenya, we would have no choice but to press vigilante charges if the media knew of his involvement.

“The police are giving you both an option. You can go unrecognized but unpunished, or you could go recognized and punished.”

Midoriya and Iida shared a look. Iida was clearly upset, but resigned. “Thank you, Sir. We chose to go unrecognized.”

“I’m glad. It would not be pleasant to sentence up-and-coming heroes. Unofficially, the Hosu City
Police Force thanks you both for your actions.” With that, Tsuragamae took his leave. Aizawa moved to fill in his place.

“Legally, you won’t be punished, but Yuuei is perfectly in its own right to discipline you. As of now, both of your internships are terminated. You have two days to find another, but the chance of you being accepted so late is low. Consider this strike one. One more, and you will be expelled.”

Terminated?! But they’d only just started! What was he going to tell Shinsou?

Aizawa left, leaving Blindsight and Iida’s mentor. While Iida got a stern talking to, Blindsight was silent.

“...I’m not sorry. For disobeying your orders.”

Blindsight rubbed her face. “That’s not what I’m upset about. It’s great that you saved people’s lives, but I wish that you wouldn’t put everyone in front of your own life. I mean, the Hero Killer?! You could have gotten seriously hurt!”

“I did get hurt. You did too.” Midoriya pointed out the gauze pad stuck to her cheek. “It happens to heroes all the time. Why are you worried so much about me being hurt than everyone else? It’s like everything you say to me is about my safety.”

“So I’m not allowed to care about you?”

“You care too much! You never said a word to Shinsou about hero work being dangerous, but you tell me every chance you get. I might be quirkless, but I am not weak.”

“That has nothing to do—”

“Then why? Why is it always about me getting hurt if it isn’t my quirklessness?”

Blindsight didn’t answer.
“I’ve had enough of people telling me that my safety is the most important thing. Me being at risk is supposedly a good enough excuse not to tell the world about my fight with Stain. What kind of risk, huh? The only thing I got from it was that people were afraid a quirkless kid could do their job better than they could.” Midoriya breathed. “I can take care of myself.”

“I guess you’re going to have to, since I’m technically no longer your mentor.”

Midoriya laughed dryly. “Good luck with Shinsou.”

Blindsight walked away. She spared him one last glance before she left. Midoriya wondered if he’d gotten through to her, if her views on the quirkless changed. Maybe she’ll look at him differently. Maybe she’ll see a hero before a liability.

Iida’s mentor finished chewing him out on the other side of the room. Soon, they were left to stew in silence.

“...Do you know where you’ll intern now?” Midoriya asked.

“I think I’ll intern at my brother’s agency, if he’ll have me.” Iida spoke softly.

“Your brother will definitely want you.” Midoriya smiled.

“But… I promised him that I wouldn’t do anything stupid. I betrayed his trust in me. What if… what if he doesn’t forgive me?”

“I doubt Ingenium is the type to have grudges. But if he doesn’t forgive you, then maybe we can find another agency together.”

Iida thought silently. “I think I would like that. Did you get any other hero agency offers?”

“Actually yeah, there were two agencies on my list. I chose to work with Shinsou, but the other agency looked good as well. I think it was Gran Torino or something.”
“I’ve never heard of that hero before.” Iida said, raising his hand up to his chin.

“Me neither, but it’s worth a shot if they liked my performance in the sports festival.”

“Well, I wish you good luck.” Iida bowed.

“Likewise.”

Midoriya’s mom picked him up not too long later. She fretted about his new injuries, including a new scar on his neck where Stain slashed him. Midoriya ran his hand over the raised skin. His arm was also worse for wear. The doctors gave him a numbing agent for his overstimulated nerves, but Midoriya still felt the phantom pain from when Stain grabbed him. At least he hadn’t broken a bone again.

Midoriya got home and opened up his phone for the first time since he sent the message to his contacts. There was eight new messages.

Loser Squad Group Chat

HATSUME MEI IS THE BEST!! at 15:32

• Location.png

Personified Insomnia at 18:48

• midoriya?
• what happened

Personified Insomnia at 18:51
we finished the mission

**Personified Insomnia at 18:56**

- are you okay
- what are you doing in hosu?

2 missed voice calls from **Personified Insomnia at 18:59**

**Personified Insomnia at 19:02**

- if you're in the hospital again I will murder you

3 missed voice calls from **Personified Insomnia at 19:08**

**Personified Insomnia at 19:13**

- please pick up
- you better be okay I swear to fuck

Midoriya felt guilty as he read over the messages. He got a few other responses from other friends, but none as panicked as Shinsou. Midoriya typed out a message.

**HATSUME MEI IS THE BEST!! at 11:26**

- sorry for making u worry, im okay.

Midoriya was surprised when his phone immediately started to vibrate. His phone’s display read *call from Personified Insomnia.*

He pressed answer and placed the phone to his head.

“You’re a fucking idiot.” Shinsou’s voice came through.
“Wow, great introduction, I feel very appreciated.”

“I saw the news. Was it true that you were there?”

“Yeah.”

“God damn. You really can’t stop attracting trouble, can you?”

“What can I say? It’s a gift.”

Shinsou laughed, making Midoriya grin. The grin fell after Midoriya remembered what Aizawa had told him.

“Shinsou, I have to tell you something…”

He stopped laughing and didn’t speak, waiting for Midoriya.

“Yuuei wasn’t too happy that I’d gotten involved with Stain. They… they terminated my internship. I won’t be going back.”

Shinsou sucked in a breath muffled by the phone.

“They’re letting me intern somewhere else since I didn’t break any laws. I’m sorry.”

“Where are you going to? If they’re willing to take you late, then they should let me join you.”

“Wait, join me?” Midoriya’s eyes widened. “Shinsou, you already have an internship, don’t let me get in the way of that.”

“I thought we were in this together, right?”
“Yeah, but that was before I got in trouble! Please don’t jeopardize your opportunity for me.”

Shinsou didn’t speak for awhile. Midoriya was afraid he’d hung up.

“It’s gonna be boring without you here.” Shinsou finally said.

“I have no doubt that you will find a way to make it exciting.”

“Have fun finding a new agency.”

“I’ll try.” Midoriya said before ending the call. By now, the rest of his friends had left messages in the group chat, mostly about Hosu. Midoriya would read them later. Right now he needed sleep.

———

Midoriya woke up a few hours later and set to work. He still had Gran Torino’s contact information from the list. He wrote a quick message explaining his situation and how grateful he’d be if he was allowed to intern there. Midoriya read the message over twice before sending.

Midoriya didn’t get a reply until the end of the day. Gran Torino had said yes. The reply was otherwise sparse, only giving an address and a list of gear to bring. Of course, that list had to include his hero uniform.

Midoriya glanced at the costume draped over his desk chair. He hated it. He really should send it to Mei to be fixed the way he wanted it in the first place. Hopefully, Gran Torino won’t be that mad if Midoriya didn’t bring it.

The agency was on the opposite side of the city to Shinsou, so he wouldn’t be able to visit during a break. Oh well. It was probably for the best, considering how it would only serve as a reminder of his fuck up.

Midoriya knocked on the door of the address he was given. He sucked in air as the door creaked
open to a dark room. A warning flag went off in his head as he carefully stepped inside. He didn’t have to survey the room for long, as his eyes immediately fell onto a body lying on the floor.

The man was short and pretty old based on the gray hair. He also wore a hero costume. That wasn’t what Midoriya focused on though. He focused on the dark red liquid pooled around the man’s body.

Midoriya took in a deep breath and tried to focus. He bent down to feel the hero’s pulse and sighed in relief when he felt one. Midoriya grabbed his phone to call an ambulance.

At least he would have, but at that moment, the man shot up and shouted. Midoriya flinched backwards.

“Ah, sorry. I dropped my sausages.” He hero said. He was holding a plate of sausages covered in a dark red hot sauce.

Midoriya felt annoyed. “Why didn’t you say anything when I came in? I thought you were dead.”

The hero didn’t say anything for a moment. Just stared.

“Who are you?” He asked.

“Midoriya Izuku. You requested that I intern with you.”

The man, he must be Gran Torino, said nothing. He squinted harder and repeated his question like he hadn’t heard him.

“My name is Midoriya.” Midoriya said louder, patience growing thin.

Torino didn’t seem to register what he said. “Toshinori? Is that you?”

Midoriya was done. “Look, sir, if you think this is a game, I’ll just leave. I have better things to do than play along with whatever mad plot you have in your head.”
Torino laughed with his whole body. “Relax, I’m messing with you. Let me clean up this mess and then we can begin.”

Midoriya took a seat on the couch. Gran Torino didn’t take long. He started moving some of the furniture out of the way.

“Alright then.” He said. “I need a baseline of your skill. Try to hit me.”

With all the hassle Gran Torino put him through, Midoriya didn’t feel the least bit remorseful for hitting him. He put all of his weight into his punch. Yet, instead of meeting flesh and bone, his fist sailed throw open air. Gran Torino was inexplicably on the other side of the room.

“No hesitation! Very good. I was expecting you to question me.”

Midoriya stood frozen, unsure as to what he was supposed to do.

“I told you to try to hit me. You still haven’t hit me yet.” Torino taunted.

*That’s how you want to play it. Fine by me.*

Midoriya ran forward and aimed another punch, but this time he payed more attention to Torino than his fist. Like before, Torino disappeared. He had some kind of speed quirk that let him fly around the room.

“You have a clear foundation in hand to hand, but you haven’t practiced much with fighting against quirks.” Torino said. Instead of waiting for him to make a move, Torino shot at him, landing a kick to his abdomen. “You take too long to think.”

*Sometimes thinking is important.*

Midoriya swiped at him, but Torino dodged. Next think he knew, Torino kicked him in the back. Then he flew away, bouncing off the walls. Midoriya couldn’t track him, and gained multiple bruises
from kicks. But there was a pattern to Torino’s attacks. Midoriya might not be able to track him, but he could predict him.

Midoriya feigned a punch at Torino. Just as he expected, Torino dodged away. Midoriya knew what was coming next and was already spinning around in time to swing his hand into Torino’s face, scratching his check.

Torino’s momentum still knocked him to the floor, but Torino didn’t move away. Instead, he brought a hand up to his cheek. There was a small cut, barely large enough for a single drop of blood to stain his finger.

“Well, it’s not exactly a hit, but it is more that I expected. I can work with this.”

After a two days of training, Midoriya could say that he really, really, hated Gran Torino. The kind of hatred that festers from annoyance. The man would go from pummeling Midoriya, to forgetting who he was, to making him cook for the two of them at a moment’s notice. It was horrible. At the very least, Midoriya was learning something from the training sessions.

“Your stance and balance are good, but you need to translate that into your hits. You put far too much weight into them. You’ve got to spread out the energy into your whole body. Keep yourself light on your feet.”

It was a new style of fighting for Midoriya. Torino made him aware of every part of his body, from a misaligned foot, to where his eyes pointed. It exhausted him more that his lessons with Hatsume-Sensei, but he was happy to improve himself in any way possible.

Midoriya punched and parried, making sure to feel the hits with his full self. It became easier to dodge Torino’s attacks and even make counterattacks. Of course, each spar ended with Midoriya ass-flat on the ground.

“Your stamina is improving. I think we should go on a patrol.”

Midoriya looked up. “A patrol?” He questioned.
“Yeah. If you keep fighting me and me alone, you’ll grow into some bad habits.”

“Well, I’m not exactly allowed to fight villains.” Midoriya rubbed his neck

“Ahh, right. You’re being monitored for that incident you pulled. I suppose it can’t be helped. Patrols are still a big part a hero work, so you’re not getting out of it. If a villain attacks, you can stay back and watch me take care off it.”

The idea of ‘doing nothing’ left a bad taste in Midoriya’s mouth. He hated staying away and possibly letting someone get hurt, but he didn’t have much of a choice if he wanted to stay in Yuuei. At least there would be a pro hero with him this time. Maybe there wouldn’t even be a fight.

Midoriya put on his costume. It hadn’t been repaired since he fought Stain. Slashed and tears emblazoned the fabric and splotches of glue residue from where he removed the kevlar had turned yellow with decay. Putting it on felt uncomfortable. He really hoped Mei could fix it.

On the walk, they didn’t encounter much. Gran Torino instructed him on how to address passer-bys and how a hero holds themselves on patrol. Most people stopped to say hi, but didn’t recognize him at first. A few asked him if he went to Yuuei, but there wasn’t any sudden moment of realization.

Midoriya wouldn’t say he was disappointed. His outfit was designed to blend in to the background, but he still hoped to be at least a little bit recognizable.

Midoriya couldn’t help but feel bored. He had never really taken the time to consider what heroes do when they aren’t fighting villains and saving lives. Who knew hero work could be so mundane? Still, it was work. Torino watched in silence as people offered him kind words. As soon as they left, Torino criticized how he spoke and what odd mannerism had found its way into the interaction. It was only thirty minutes of walking, but Midoriya found himself exhausted.

As they rounded a corner, Midoriya noticed a small head bobbing along the sidewalk. The kid’s lips stretched thinly over his mouth and he stood on his tippy toes, trying and failing to find whatever he was looking for.

“Gran Torino, that kid looks lost. Should we help him?”
Torino shrugged and gave Midoriya the Look. The Look that meant he was being judged again. Midoriya inwardly sighed. He walked over to the kid and removed his helmet to look as non-threatening as possible.

“Looking for somebody?” Midoriya asked. The boy jolted away and started to cry.

“It’s okay, I get lost too. Do you like heroes?” He asked. If anything, the boy started crying harder as he shook his head no.

That was surprising. Midoriya had never seen a young child that didn’t like heroes. He could feel eyes on him, and he knew he needed to keep the scene from escalating.

“That’s okay. I’m not a hero, so you don’t have to worry.” Midoriya spoke. The boy calmed down slightly.

“Y-you’re not?”

“Nope. I can help you find who you’re looking for. What’s your name?”

The boy sniffed. “Daito. I can’t find my sister.”

“Okay, Daito-tan, let’s look for your sister.” Midoriya said, and Daito giggled at the nickname.

They walked. Daito was still anxious, but his lips drew into a soft smile.

“So, any particular reason why you don’t like heroes?” Midoriya asked. Daito frowned.

“Everyone says I’d be a great hero,” he pouted and kicked a stone away, “it’s so annoying. All heroes do is fight and hurt people, like my sister. I don’t want to hurt people, so I would be a horrible hero.”

“Alright, what do you want to be, then”
Daito smiled larger than he had so far, his eyes shining with excitement rather than tears. “I’m gonna be a musician!”

Midoriya didn’t know what he had expected, but that was not it.

“I can play the flute, and the trumpet, and the clarinet, and the saxophone, and I want to learn more!” Daito said before jumping excitedly. He hovered in the air a few seconds before landing on his feet.

“Wow, was that your quirk?” Midoriya asked.

“Yeah, I can control the air around me. Sometimes I float when I get really happy.”

“Does it help you with playing music?”

Daito shrugged. “Nope. I can’t control the air I blow out. Besides, there’s more to playing instruments than blowing a lot of air into them, like the shape of my mouth and my finger placement.”

“But couldn’t you use the air around you to change the tone coming out of your instruments?”

Daito pouted. “That’s cheating.” He cast a suspicious gaze at Midoriya. “You’re not a hero, but you want to be.”

Midoriya knew he couldn’t lie when he was dressed in a hero costume.

“It’s been my dream since I was a kid.”

Daito looked at him with all seriousness a child could muster. “I need you to promise me,” he stuck out his pinkie finger, “that you won’t hurt anyone.”

Midoriya remembered the sports festival and Todoroki’s broken, bloody body. He remembered how
Recovery Girl yelled at him that Todoroki might never recover fully. He remembered fighting Stain with no restraint. He could never take back the injuries that he already made.

“I promise.” Midoriya said sincerely. He shook Daito’s pinkie.

They continued their walk, with Daito pointing out shops here and there that he liked. When they passed by the store where he bought his instruments, Daito spoke again.

“I’m not really the best flute in my section. Shiya-chan is the best. She can play four scales, and I can only play two. I’ll be as good as she is one day.”

“I say you can be better. Don’t let people tell you what you can and can’t do.”

Daito grinned before his eyes trail off behind Midoriya.

“Subako!” Daito shouted, running to a girl not much older than Midoriya. She looked nearly identical to her brother, but her right arm was missing just passed her elbow.

“Quit running off to all of the stores, you scared me half to death.” Subako said, hugging Daito close. She looked up at Midoriya with a smile. “Thanks for getting him back safely.” She squinted at him. “You look familiar. Have we met?”

“Not that I remember.”

She shrugged. “Oh well. Thanks again.”

They left, and Midoriya turned around, nearly running into Torino.

“Wha— Have you been following us the entire time?”

“Well, I can’t exactly afford to have you getting lost. You handled that situation well.” Gran Torino said as he watched the pair disappear in the crowd. “The news makes it seem like everyone supports heroes unconditionally, but that usually isn’t the case. At least for that boy, you probably restored
some of his faith.”

Midoriya grinned at the praise. Torino sighed.

“I can see why Toshinori won’t stop yapping about you. You got his heart, for sure.”

Midoriya bristled. “All Might talks about me?! What does he say?”

Gran Torino sighed again, preparing for an endless night of questions.

Chapter End Notes

Please comment, even if I forget to reply, I read and reread them. I love all interactions.

(Did anyone catch the symbolic meaning of the chapter title? I’m really proud of that one.)

Check out my discord and tumblr, I want to talk with all of you, It motivates me to write more.

End Notes

Hey everyone this is my first fanfic! I really hoped you enjoyed it. Updates will probably be only once a week since I have school and stuff. If you want to scream at me on tumbr, my url is @smalkatas. (I don't know how to make a hyper link, sorry.) Also you guys should really check out The Long Way Around it's an amazing fic and the inspiration of this story.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!