### i know a place

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<td>Additional Tags:</td>
<td>Alternate Universe - No Sburb/Sgrub Sessions, Pesterlog(s) (Homestuck), its v pesterlog heavy, Alternate Universe, Angst, Trans Dave Strider, Trans Kanaya Maryam, Trans Male Character, Trans Female Character, no one is straight/cis k thanks bye, Autistic Dave Strider, dave is me basically, Child Abuse, Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, a transphobe gets rekt in the first chapter if that isnt reason enough to read it idk what is, Slow Burn, Slow Build, lots o angst but it will be later on, please read my fic okay, Tags Will Be Added As Story Progresses!, Trans Dirk Strider, Autistic Nepeta Leijon, Trans Vriska Serket, is there seriously not a tag for that, trans vriska is so good, also no ones nt thanks, Minor Character Death, its no one important trust me</td>
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### Summary

Dave and co. figure life out, one quiet moment at a time.

or

A story about some kids who find their place.

*Cause I know a place we could go
No one has been there, and no one will know
There it is quiet, forget the violence*
You've tried so hard to ignore

Notes

hi!! this is my first homestuck fic ive published and i decided to kick things off with a multi chap! wish me luck lol

im mostly winging this, but i definitely have a general idea of what i want to do.

this is a story about self-discovery, mental illness, and being okay and not okay. i hope i can do it justice!

i am currently lacking a beta, so if you want to volunteer for the position/correct smth contact me via my.tumblr

i really fucking love homestuck and i BIG LOVE dave and i have a lot in mind for this fic so hopefully y'all are along for the ride

enjoy!

title from conan gray's "i know a place" but i was listening to the cover by cavetown!

chapter title is also from cavetown! its from "this is home" which is a VERY dave song imo

-esmae

edit: i know the pesterlogs are ugly rn, but once i figure out how to format them its over for you hoes

edit no 2: it is now over for u hoes

See the end of the work for more notes
enough to drive all of us insane

ectoBiologist [EB] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

EB: are you excited for your first day at your new school!

TG: jesus christ what are you my mom

TG: also can it be considered a new school if ive never been to school before

EB: well it’s new from homeschool so yeah duh!

TG: john i am not shitting you when i say ive never been to school before

TG: homeschool or otherwise

EB: i don’t believe you!

EB: you’ve fooled me one too many times

TG: name one

EB: uhhhh

EB: well i know one exists i just can’t think of any right now!

TG: goddamn egbert if youre gonna say shit like that you better be able to prove it

TG: anyways i dont care if you believe me or not

TG: could not give less of a shit

TG: the shit i give is so minute that you need an electron microscope to see it

EB: so you admit you give a shit!

TG: what no

EB: you just said that you can see it so therefore it exists!

EB: besides if you’ve never been to school how come you talk like that

TG: like what

TG: oh my god are you asking me why i dont talk like a simpleton

EB: no!

EB: you just seem like you’ve been to school

TG: john what the fuck

TG: are you just waiting for me to be like “surprise! im actually illiterate and ive been using
speech to text the entire time even though that makes no sense given how i talk!”

TG: “all the metaphors i use are just me picking words out of the dictionary at random and hoping they make sense!”

EB: if you’re illiterate how do you know how to use a dictionary

TG: i cant believe thats what youre taking away from this

TG: anyways as for why i don’t talk like a french peasant boy from medieval times trying to speak english is because i learned to read and then read a lot and also the internet exists in case you’ve forgotten

EB: i still don’t believe you!

TG: goddamnit can we just get back to the topic at hand

TG: me

TG: highschool

TG: all that sicknasty jazz

EB: i can’t believe you’re going to school with rose!

EB: i’m so jealous!

TG: you literally live in a house with jade

TG: you have seen her every single day since you were born

TG: you live with your cousin jade god how many different ways can i put this

EB: that’s different!

EB: jane is here too in case you forgot about her

TG: believe me i have not forgotten about your hot sister

TG: FUCK

EB: haha i’m totally showing her that

TG: can we please stay on topic and not talk about your hot sister

TG: …

EB: dave could you please stop calling my sister hot!

EB: you don’t even like girls!

TG: i may be the gayest thing since sliced bread but that doesnt mean jane’s not hot

TG: fuck i dug my grave i might as well lay in it
EB: how is sliced bread gay!?

EB: don’t do this to bread

TG: your sliced bread is now gay because im gonna come to your house and rub my dick all over it

EB: ew! dave ew!

TG: you hear that sound thats me in the kitchen fucking your choice ass bread

EB: ew! stop it!

TG: haha anyways

TG: jakes hot too btw

EB: can you please stop sexualizing my family members!

TG: what hes just your cousin

TG: besides everyone thinks jakes hot shit

TG: including jake

EB: now is not the time to get into how self absorbed jake is!

TG: will john ever discover hyphens? who fucking knows

EB: what?

TG: haha nothing

TG: back to what we were initially talking about before we lost the point

TG: the point is so lost we had to make flyers and put them up

TG: this eight year-old girl is crying

TG: shes just standing in my room

TG: crying

TG: is that what you want john

TG: an eight year-old girl crying in my bedroom

EB: no!

EB: anyways what were we even talking about?

TG: school and my general feelings surrounding the topic

EB: oh yeah!
EB: how are your general feelings

TG: they certainly are general

TG: mostly i just feel like a protagonist in a shitty teenage romcom

TG: “it was my first day of school... and then i saw him... the not even remotely attractive love interest who is also the biggest dick in the universe... he was perfect”

TG: dirks pretty excited though

TG: hes always been pretty into learning shit

TG: hes so fucking smart dude its wild

TG: yeah but anyways i finally pestered bro into letting us go to school so here we fucking are

TG: where doing this bro

TG: where making this happen

EB: dave

EB: don’t you have to be at school like right now

TG: oh shit yeagdfhgdkj

TG: just fell down an entire flight of stairs as i attempted to hurry up and get my ass to school

EB: haha! oh man

TG: i warned you about the stairs dog

TG: anyways were on the bus now

TG: i also really appreciate the fact that i fell down an entire (a whole) flight of stairs and you werent even mildly concerned

TG: anyways gtg but i probably wont abide by the rules so youll hear from me soon

EB: bye dave! have a good first day!

TG: haha yeah

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering ectoBiologist [EB]
gutsyGumshoe [GG] began bothering turntechGodhead [TG]

GG: You think I’m hot?

TG: oh my god

TG: nope i absolutely never said that
GG: I have the messages right here in front of me!

GG: Listen, I’m certainly flattered! However, I’m definitely not interested.

TG: im gay goddamnit has your entire family just elected to ignore this fact

GG: Hoo hoo hoo!

gutsyGumshoe [GG] ceased bothering turntechGodhead [TG]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

TG: are you even remotely ready

TG: i highly fuckin doubt it

TT: Ready for what?

TT: you already kno wtf goin on

TT: I don’t believe I do.

TT: If you’re referring to the fact that you will be starting school today at my school than yes, I am quite prepared.

TT: I’m currently in the last stage of grief, wintry acceptance.

TG: [sent a photo ]

TT: Dave I can’t even make out what this is intended to be.

TT: Is that Dirk?

TT: Oh, never mind I do believe that is me.

TT: Where the fuck are you, Dave?

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

You cease driving your story in a pesterlog format. Wait what?

Anyways… You continue approaching Rose from across the campus. She was talking some troll girl while you were pestering her, but promptly stopped to whip her needles out of her sylladex. This is a weapon free campus, but you know the StriLondes will absolutely never abide by that.

She turns back to the troll girl, but keeps her needles out.

You seize your opportunity and quietly run up behind her. You let your sword drop into your hand and level it to Rose’s back. The troll’s eyes widen and Rose whips around.

“Ya dead,” you say flatly. Rose however, decides otherwise. She locks her needles on either side of your sword and twists, ripping it out of your hands.

“I believe, that you’re the dead one in this situation, dear cousin.” She turns back to the troll. “I apologize for my cousin’s petulant shenanigans, Kanaya. Please excuse the Strider branch of our
family. They’re quiet… Mystifying. If you’re not familiar with their antics, that is.”

“‘Strider branch’, it’s just me and Dirk,” you correct.

“Don’t forget your so called ‘Bro’.” You try to keep the scowl off your face, but Rose notices, of course. “Perhaps one day you’ll tell me about that,” she remarks.

“You guys look terribly similar for cousins,” the troll, Kanaya, says.

“We’re twins,” you and Rose say simultaneously. You turn to glare at her to see she’s already glaring at you.

“I don’t have a full grasp on human familial structure, but I don’t think that’s what cousins means,” Kanaya wonders.

“You’d be correct. Our familial situation is quite convoluted. My mother and Dave’s ‘Bro’ are actually our mother and father. They had Dirk and Roxy, respectively, and then Dave and I. They separated, then decided to split custody. Either based on gender or first letter of name. We haven’t figured out which one it is yet,” Rose’s voice is always laced with distaste when talking about your parents. The topic is typically avoided.

“So we just tell everyone we’re cousins cuz it’s way easier than explaining that whole mess,” you finish.

Kanaya smirks at Rose. “It seems that you’ve just made the entire situation more convoluted.”

“Yes. It seems we have.” Rose smirks back.

“And here we see a wild Rose Lalonde, a species of flighty broad, engaging in a complex mating ritual.”

Rose ignores you and turns to Kanaya. “As you can see, it’s painfully self-evident why I don’t want to call him my twin brother.” She pauses. “Speaking of brothers where is Dirk?”

“He said he was gonna talk to the office to see about getting into the advanced classes.”

“Is he not currently?”

“Rose I told you we’ve never been to school before.” She squints suspiciously at you. A type of look that says, “I don’t believe you but I know there’s more to this story.”

“I can’t imagine Dirk and Roxy in the same class.” You silently thank Rose for the topic change.

“Oh my god I never even thought about that.” Roxy is in like, three different advanced math classes, Dirk is a year older than Roxy, so he’s bound to be in one of her classes if he doesn’t get bumped up.

“I hate to be the bearer of bad news but we have to be in class,” Kanaya checks her phone, “five minutes ago.”

“First day here and Dave has already ruined my punctuality.”

“You’ve never been on time to anything in your life,” you snap at Rose.

“And with you around I’ll certainly never start.”

“Isn’t someone supposed to show me around or something?” You attempt to change the subject.
There’s no way you’ll ever out snark Rose Lalonde.

“Yes that would be me,” Kanaya remarks. She seems quite amused at your sibling rivalry with Rose. Cousin rivalry. Whatever.

“Let’s make like an elderly grandmother and get this show on the road.”

“I’m sorry I don’t follow.”

Rose chuckles. “No one does. Now I hate to cut our incredibly long conversation short, but I have an AP psychology class to get to, and a reputation as teachers pet to uphold.”

“How do even get into that class as a freshman?” It’s a rhetorical question. You know how Rose does everything: with frankly frightening intellect and unshakable resolve. She smirks at you and leaves.

“So what class do you have first period?” Kanaya says, painfully obvious as she watches Rose leave.

“Yo would you stop staring at my cousin’s ass.”

“You’re not cousins.” She says it coolly, though a there’s a tint of jade to her cheeks. She turns to you. “So what’s it like having a fraternal twin who is also your cousin?”

“Identical,” you correct without thinking. You’re entire mind then starts sounding like static. You go through all five stages of grief within .0048 seconds.

“Oh I see,” she smiles at you, it’s not the uncomfortable smile that graces most people’s faces when they work it out. This confuses you. “Myself as well,” Kanaya replies.

A deep sense of solidarity thrums through your chest. You give her the trans Nod™. You almost want to tell her about Dirk, but it’s not your business to out him to someone you barely know.

“So what’s first on this sickass itinerary you’ve got planned.”

“Oh yes it’s quite sickass.” You like this girl already. “Unfortunately, that is up to you. What class do you have first.”

“Oh about that. I wanted to have earth science changed to bio because I’m all about that dead shit.”

“I’m not sure if biology is entirely ‘dead shit’ but I’m sure there’s bound to be more in it.”

“Yeah biology is fucking rad.”

“In order to get into biology you have to out of earth science, so I would read up on it.”

“Fuck yeah like volcanoes and shit?” You don’t know much about earth science, but how hard could it be.

“Yes volcanoes and shit sums it up about right.”

“Okay cool. Anyways I don’t want to go today so can we just walk around and talk about like all my classes.”

“Technically, no. But I’ve never really been one to care about technicalities.” You can see why Rose likes her. “If you don’t manage to test out of earth science, you’ll have Mr. Kolsky. He’s nice enough but he tends to get distracted and doesn’t really teach. Or so I’ve heard. I’m in biology with
Ms. Paint…” Kanaya continues talking about all the teachers, advising you on which ones to avoid and which ones to get into good graces with. “Finally, there’s fucking Paul. We do not call him by his last name.”

“Fucking Paul,” you agree.

“He’s very transphobic and tried to call me by my deadname, but I pulled out my chainsaw. Rose stopped me, but also… how did she say it again? Oh yes. She ‘verbally eviscerated’ him.”

You wheeze. An actual goddamn wheeze. The idea of Kanaya threatening this ‘Paul’ dude with a chainsaw is… well you don’t know how to put it but it’s great. You think Kanaya probably would’ve killed him had Rose not stepped in.

Just then the bell rings, signaling the end of first period.

“I believe that’s all the time we have. I would say it was pleasurable to meet you, but it was more interesting than anything else.” She holds out her hand to you and you stare at it for a full five seconds before realizing you’re supposed to shake it. She departs, and you pull out your phone to pester Dirk.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

TG: so did you get that sweet sweet advanced ass or what

TT: I did in fact “get that” sexually mature ass.

TT: Oh, wait, you were talking about my advanced classes.

TG: har har

TG: anyways hows it feel being the smart one

TT: You’re smart, Dave.

TG: generic change of topic

TT: Insistence on keeping the same topic.

TG: metaphor

TT: Quip about horses.

TG: we did it. we broke dirk and dave down to the bare essentials

TG: but yeah howd it go

TT: I just took a number of tests and watched while they graded them.

TG: what the fuck whyd you do that

TT: I like watching people realize I’m a genius.

TG: on paper

TT: I haven’t done a singular idiotic thing in six hours, minimum.
TG: you put your binder on this morning without taking off your sunglasses

TT: Wrong that’s efficient.

TG: haha okay

TG: so what classes are you in now

TT: AP Calculus, Trigonometry, and Computer Science.

TG: you’re only a fucking junior what are you gonna do next year

TT: I’m thinking seven study halls.

TT: I put in a request for a Robotics class so maybe I’ll take that next year with just six study halls.

TG: just six

TG: oh my god you put in a request for a robotics class how the fuck did you do that

TT: I pretended to look the principal dead in the eye through my shades and said, “I want robotics.”

TT: I also said sword-fighting would be a very beneficial physical education class.

TG: geez dirk got any other ideas

TT: I mean I am technically a fucking genius.

TG: haha fuck off

TG: one online iq test does not mean you’re a genius

TG: isn’t roxy in computer science

TG: haha have fun with our vodka aunt

TT: Wouldn’t she be a vodka cousin.

TT: According to you and Rose’s overly complex idea of calling each other cousins for no particular reason.

TG: it has its reasons

TT: Sure.

TT: What reasons are there other than you pretending that our mother didn’t abandon us?

TG: this conversation is straying too close to a feelings jam which I actively try to avoid

TG: i just wanted to see if you got into the classes you wanted and you did so

TG: bye
TT: Dave wait.
TT: Goddamnit.
TT: You’ve gotta face how fucked up our life is at some point.
timaeusTestified [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]
turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]
TG: rose what’s kanaya’s chumhandle
TT: Aren’t you supposed to be in class?
TG: this is important
TT: Kanaya is very important…
TG: haha gay
TT: If you don’t want me to point out your frankly painful-to-watch gay crush on John, I suggest you do the same for me and Kanaya.
TG: I’m not gay for john fuck off
TT: Sure.
TG: goddamn you and dirk are eerily similar sometimes
TG: anyways
TG: chumhandle
TT: grimAuxiliatrix
TG: yo thanks
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]
turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]
TG: oh btw kanaya was totally staring at your ass when you left
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]
TT: Dave.
TT: Dave you can’t just tell me this and leave.
tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]
You walk into fucking Paul’s class and steel yourself. Fucking Paul glances at you from his desk, and points to your seat wordlessly.

You take a seat and focus on keeping your head down. You’ve been warned about this guy, and if growing up with Bro taught you anything, it’s to take warnings seriously.

The tardy bell rings and Paul starts rattling off roll. He says your deadname. Well technically, he says a name. It’s not yours and you never want to be associated with it again. You don’t really hear it, you’ve learned to tune that particular name out.

In your head, it sounds like: “[redacted] Strider.”
That’s not my name. That’s not my name. That’s not my name.

You don’t realize you’ve said anything until Paul is speaking.

“What did you say to me?”

Fear jolts through you. Your jaw shuts with an audible click. You say nothing.

“He said that’s not his name,” the kid behind you says, loudly. You’re incredibly thankful, but also kind of wish he hadn’t said anything.


“That’s not his fucking name.” You chance a look behind you and see a short, incredibly pissed off troll.

“Young man, do not speak to your superiors like that it is incredibly-” The sound of a chainsaw revving hits your ears and you stifle a laugh. You know exactly who it is.

Paul goes pale. You tear your gaze away from your desk. Kanaya is standing in the doorway, revving her chainsaw like there’s no tomorrow.

“Kanaya!” The loud troll exclaims. “How’d you know to be here?”

She glares icily at Paul. “Fef messaged me,” her voice is frigid.

“Listen here you transphobic shit knob,” the angry troll starts and holy shit? You love this guy? “You have two options here. You can either call…” he trails off as he realizes he doesn’t know your name.

“Dave,” Kanaya pipes up.

“You can either call Dave here by his correct fucking name and pronouns. Or you can deal with Kanaya. One of these options is a lot easier than the other.”

Paul’s eye twitches. “Just because your adoptive mother owns the school doesn’t mean you’ll get away with this forever, Maryam,” he spits.

“Adoptive mothers,” she corrects primly. “I have two moms, in case you’ve forgotten.” Then Kanaya, somehow both graceful and terrifying, walks out the door.

The troll takes his seat again and you feel… so so so confused. Is this every goddamn day in this school? God you hope so.

“Hey dude,” you whisper to the troll behind you. You have the idea that Paul won’t mess with you any longer. “Thanks for that.”

He glances up at you. “Yeah no fucking sweat off my back. I fucking hate fucking Paul.” He’s just loud all the time, you realize.

“It was also the most extra thing I’ve ever seen. Like, entirely unnecessary, completely unneeded, and greatly appreciated. I somehow feel like I wandered off school grounds and onto a movie set? Because holy shit.”

He scowls at you. You believe that to be the end of the conversation, and turn back around to Not
listen to Paul. The shouty troll kicks the back of your chair. You turn back around and roll your eyes beneath your shades.

“You didn’t even ask my name.”

“Rumplestiltskin,” you joke. He doesn’t appreciate it.

“It’s Karkat, but nice try.”

“Chumhandle?”

Karkat flips open his notebook and writes it down for you.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TG: yo shouty mousedownerson

CG: THAT’S NOT MY NAME.

TG: karkat mousedownerson

CG: FUCK YOU.

TG: oh my god youre shouty over text too

TG: this is the best day of my life

TG: only comparable to the day i was born

TG: but tbh that was the best day of everyone elses life

TG: because the miracle that is dave strider was brought into the world

CG: I REGRET THIS ALREADY.

CG: WOULD YOU SHUT UP AND PAY ATTENTION?

TG: to fucking paul? never

CG: I HATE THE FACT THAT YOU’RE RIGHT.

TG: get used to it

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

TG: noooo karkles

TG: karkalicious

TG: theres only so many nicknames i can make out of the name karkat

TG: beep beep meow

TG: we should play twenty questions
TG: k
TG: a
TG: r
CG: ARE YOU ALWAYS THIS ANNOYING HOLY FUCK.
TG: k
TG: oh hi
TG: twenty questions y/n
CG: YES BUT THAT COUNTS AS ONE OF YOUR QUESTIONS.
TG: aw fuck
CG: WHY ARE YOU SO ANNOYING?
TG: you seriously wasted your question on that
TG: its part of my strider charm
TG: anyways
TG: a/s/l
CG: AND YOU ACCUSED *ME* OF WASTING A QUESTION.
CG: 14/M/THE DEVIL’S ASSHOLE.
TG: haha kinky
CG: FUCK YOU.
CG: FAVORITE COLOR?
TG: seriously?
CG: WAIT FUCK.
CG: IT’S STILL MY TURN.
TG: what no its not
CG: TG: seriously?
TG: aw man fuck you
CG: FAVORITE MOVIE?
TG: like ironically or seriously
CG: BOTH
TG: the room
TG: and spy kids 3
TG: you'll never know which is which

CG: YOU’RE THE WORST HUMAN I HAVE EVER MET.

TG: haha yeah

TG: so wbu favorite movie

CG: HUMAN OR TROLL?

TG: human

TG: you guys have like paragraph long titles no thanks

CG: …

CG: WHEN HARRY MET SALLY.

TG: haha oh man

TG: i never wouldve pegged you as a romcom kind of man

CG: SHUT UP

CG: IT’S A GOOD FILM AND A GOOD GENRE, DAVE.

TG: i've never seen it

CG: IF AND WHEN WE BECOME FRIENDS I'LL SHOW IT TO YOU.

TG: deal but only if we watch both of my movies

CG: FINE

CG: IT’S MY TURN NOW RIGHT?

TG: uhhhh

TG: idk dude

CG: HOW DID YOU KNOW KANAYA?

TG: oh thats easy

TG: my sister has an enormous gay crush on her and also she showed me around the school

TG: shit did i say sister i meant sister

TG: COUSIN
TG: fuck

CG: ROSE IS YOUR SISTER?

TG: dude were fuckin identical twins how did you not get that

CG: SHUT UP. I DON’T KNOW.

TG: oh shit that was the bell

CG: KEEN FUCKING OBSERVATION, HUMAN SHERLOCK.

TG: youre on earth you can just say sherlock

CG: THERE IS NO TROLL SHERLOCK.

TG: then whyd you say human sherlock

CG: BECAUSE YOUR SPECIES IQ IS FAR BENEATH MY SPECIES IQ, SO THEREFORE DESPITE BEING A FUCKING IDIOT YOU COULD ACTUALLY BE INTELLIGENT FOR A HUMAN.

TG: anyways gtg

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

It’s lunch before you know it, and frankly, you’re a little overwhelmed. The two periods before lunch were relatively uneventful, but all the noises and colors assail your eyes and make your brain want to shut down. Talking to anyone in person triggers your fight or flight response, but it’s not like you can act on it. You wind up a perpetual human shaped sack of stress. Stress that only builds after each social interaction not over Pesterchum.

You’re honestly thinking of going out into the parking lot and Not Eating out there instead of in the cafeteria.

You had chanced a look into the bustling mess hall, and turned right the fuck around. Unfortunately for you, you get lost about five minutes into your quest to find the parking lot. You decide you’re not going back to the cafeteria, and slide down the wall right onto the floor.

Rose then decides that now is the perfect time to message you.

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

TT: I believe the polite thing to do would be to sit with your cousin.

TT: However I’m not complaining.

TT: My condolences to whoever got saddled with Dave Strider as a lunch companion.

TG: stop beating around the snarky bush and say you want me to sit with you
TT: I actually don’t want anything.

TT: Kanaya, however, was wondering about you.

TG: trying to get into kanayas pants via me

TG: thats low even for you lalonde

TT: Karkat also made an inquiry as to where you were.

TG: i knew he fucking cared beneath that shouty exterior

TT: Everyone knows Karkat is a massive sap, don’t feel special.

TT: Sollux and Terezi wanted to meet you as well.

TG: oh man people i dont know thatll convince me

TT: There must be some extenuating circumstances as to why you aren’t here. I just saw Dirk walk in and you’re nowhere in sight.

TG: …

TT: Allow me to hypothesize.

TT: You were overwhelmed and went for one of your famed “Strider Walks” and got lost and now have no idea how to get back to the cafeteria.

TG: fuck off rose

TT: So I’m correct.

TG: …

TG: fine

TG: hypothetically if i did get lost

TG: where would i go from room 108

TT: Up the stairs and to the left. Then take a right at the second hallway and go through the double doors.

TT: See you soon, dear cousin.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]
You take Rose’s directions and soon you’re back at the cafeteria doors. You inhale deeply and push open the door.

As soon as you walk in you see Kanaya waving you over. You force down your anxiety and walk over. You’re Dave Fucking Strider, you can do this. God you wish your middle name was fucking. How rad would that be?

As you draw nearer to the table, you realize just how many fucking people there are, and your belief that you can do this is suddenly challenged.

You’ve essentially never been outside your apartment. The only human interaction you’ve ever had since you were five was either with Bro or Dirk or one of the gas station cashiers where you have to buy food.

The only friends you’ve ever had were inaccessible to you. You’re not big on this whole “in real life” thing.

You walk over to their table anyways and sit down next to Rose. You hope you don’t look as awkward as you feel.

“Hello, Dave. Decided to join us finally?” Rose is smirking. You know she told everyone here how about you got lost.

“Yeah decided to take a break from being fucking awesome and come socialize.”

“It’s not like you need human interaction, though,” Rose quips. You hate when she does that. You’re not sure what “that” is, but you hate it.

“This is Dave, everyone. Dave, this is everyone,” Kanaya chimes in before you can snap at Rose.

“Okay,” you say, nodding sagely. “I’ll just refer to you as the names I have in my head, no need to introduce yourselves.”

“What’s my name!” The girl across from you asks, a bit too loudly.
“Unnerving Blind Girl,” you say, automatically. She cackles, it’s high and robotic. Kind of like if a Siri had a child with a normal human and then ran their laugh through fifty layers of autotune.

“It’s Terezi, but thanks coolk1d.” You have no idea how she managed to say ‘coolk1d’ aloud.

“What about me?” Kanaya asks.

You know her name but you have a nickname for her anyways. “Buffy the Vampire Slayer.”

“I’m afraid I don’t get the reference,” she hums thoughtfully.

You almost laugh. “And you call yourself a lesbian.”

“You know that on my planet, jadebloods are essentially the troll equivalent of your human vampires.”

“Nah dude I was just thinking about the chainsaw.”

“What’s my nickname?” A troll wearing what look like 3D glasses asks.

“Mr. Bean.” It’s the first thing that comes to mind, the guy’s honestly like 6’2 and looks like he’s made of wires. The troll looks incredibly confused.

“My cousin is attempting and failing to call you a ‘beanpole’ in reference to your stature.”

“I still don’t get it.” Terezi is laughing her ass off.

A girl with fins for ears joins the party. “And me?”

“Fish.”

A troll with what sounds like a British accent starts lecturing you. “That’s incredibly racist and I don’t appre-”

“You’re Fish Number Two.” He sputters and that gets a laugh from almost everyone at the table. Maybe this socializing thing is easier than you thought.

You tell everyone else their respective names. Including “Jade’s Furry Soulmate”, which breaks Rose’s collected composure for at least 0.00019 seconds.

You end the day with ten new chumhandles (not counting Kanaya and Karkat) some of which you have no intention of messaging.

While you’re waiting for Dirk to come meet you at the front of the school, you realize, dimly, that you do not want to go home.

*Guess it’s nice to go one day without getting the shit beat out of you.* You think quietly to yourself. You shove the thought down. It’s better to not think about difficult things.

That’s how you get through the majority of life. You’re a simple man, you see a problem, you elect to ignore it.

Dirk gets there and you both silently get on the bus. You have an idea that you’re thinking the same thing.

When you get home, you let out a silent sigh of relief when you see Cal and Bro’s equipment are
You head straight to the tiny room that you and Dirk share. Dirk normally goes to the roof when Bro is gone. You don’t know why. The roof reminds you of strifes.

You sit down in front of the computer that Dirk and you share. The computer itself is fucking rad, because Dirk built it himself, but the fact you have to share is pretty bullshit. At least you have your own phone. You have a message from John.

ectoBiologist [EB] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

EB: dave did you give some trolls my chumhandle!

TG: what no

TG: wait

TG: hold on a hot second

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering ectoBiologist [EB]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering twinArmageddons [TA]

TG: sollux did you hack my account

TA: youre going two have two be more 2peciifíc.

TA: ii hacked many of your account2.

TG: my pesterchum account

TA: ii in that ca2e, ye2 ii diid.

TG: let me guess

TG: you also gave john and jades handles to all the trolls

TA: ye2

TG: goddamnit

TG: im not worried about jade she can handle herself

TG: john however

TA: yeah ii would check on hiim. vrii2ka seemed a biit iintersted ii in hiim.

TG: oh my god that spider bitch will eat him alive

TA: ye2 you should get two that and stop pe2teriing me.
TG: we get it you hate people
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering twinArmageddons [TA]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering ectoBiologist [EB]
TG: DO NOT TALK TO THE SPIDER BITCH!
EB: who?
TG: vriska
EB: no dude vriska’s cool!
TG: oh my god john
EB: shes my friend!!
TG: you think everyone’s your friend
EB: haha yeah
EB: how was school?
TG: it was fine
TG: i unwisely gave my chumhandle out to twelve trolls and then one of them hacked my account and gave yours and jades handles to the eleven other trolls
EB: that’s like twelve new friends!
TG: lmao okay
TG: just be careful about vriska
TG: run stuff by terezi shes like her monorail/girlfriend or whatever
EB: oh terezi...
EB: not going to lie she’s a little weird…
TG: nah dude terezis cool
TG: shes scary though
TG: i asked about the sitch with vriska and she freaked
TG: so maybe dont do that
TG: god the romantic tension between those two is fucking painful
EB: wait vriska’s gay?
TG: yeah dude total raging lesbian

EB: is everyone i know gay????

TG: all of the trolls that messaged you that arent bi are gay

TG: your only other three friends are me, jade, and rose

TG: and jake

TG: that boy aint straight

TG: and god knows my brother isnt

TG: so yeah john youre the token straight

EB: isn’t it supposed to be the other way around?

TG: its our fucking turn to be on top biatch

EB: haha i guess that’s fair

TG: anyways i should check on jade

TG: see if she met her soulmate yet

EB: wait who’s jades soulmate?

TG: nepeta dude get with the program

EB: oh man i can totally see it

TG: haha yeah

TG: anyways brb

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering ectoBiologist [EB]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering gardenGnostic [GG]

TG: jade

TG: jade

TG: oh my god jade stop sleeping and/or rping with your new girlfriend and talk to me

GG: hi dave!

GG: nepetas not my girlfriend!

GG: yet! :)

TG: haha glad to see youre having fun despite your unfortunate defect of being a furry
TG: any of the trolls giving you trouble?

GG: not really…

TG: but?

GG: karkat is pretty strange!

GG: hes very…

TG: loud? shouty? angry?

GG: all of the above!

GG: hes pretty sweet though :)

TG: yeah he is

GG: :O

TG: what

GG: you just complimented someone!

GG: indirectly but still…

TG: oh yeah

TG: idk there was this asshole teacher at school who deadnamed me

TG: and karkat just started fucking shouting at him it was great

TG: like the dude didnt even know me and he like rose to defend my honor

TG: kanaya played a huge part too tbh

TG: idk i just get deadnamed enough at the apartment

TG: it totally sucks ass when dirk has to do it and when i have to do it to him

TG: its just nice to have decent people in my life

TG: you included

GG: :D

TG: anyways ill talk to you later

GG: okay! talk to you later dave ;)

gardenGnostic [GG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist
TG: so apparently the trolls reached john and jade
TG: the only thing i dont understand is why they didnt just hack your account when they first met you

TT: Roxy put a firewall in place for me quite some time ago.
TT: Sollux has been trying to hack it for years to prove he’s the better hacker.
TT: I’m surprised Dirk didn’t do the same for you, given his paranoia.
TG: he did but its only for bro
TG: to anyone else its fair game
TG: id tell him to fix it but by now im sure sollux is balls deep into our bank account
TT: Yes, I would assume he is.
TG: if an order of 69 dildos shows up here im blaming you for introducing me to your crazy friends
TG: wait hold up
TG: vriska messaged me?
TT: Oh, me as well.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]
arachnidsGrip [AG] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]
AG: [sent an invite]
TG: what the fuck is this
AG: Just click on the link! Im8ecile.
arachnidsGrip [AG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead
gallowsCalibrator [GC] joined “The 8EST Groupchat.”
turntechGodhead [TG] joined “The 8EST Groupchat.”
tentacleTherapist [TT] joined “The 8EST Groupchat.”
gallowsCalibrator [GC] renamed “The 8EST Groupchat.” to “FRU1TY RUMPUSS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
AG: Hey!!!!!!!!
GC: BL4M3 K4RK4T
AG: Ch8nge it 8ack.
GC: DO IT YOURS3LF!
AG: No!!!!!!
GC: H3H3H3 YOU DON’T KNOW HOW TO DO YOU >:]
AG: Sh8t up!!!!!!!
GC: H3H3
GC: <3
GC: SH1T 1 M34NT <>
TG: sure ya did
AG: Sh8t 8p, Str8d8r!!!!!!!
GC: Y34H, D4V3, SHUT UP
AG: Anyways........
AG: <33333333
CG: =>:O
TG: oh my god this is fucking painful
TT: I concur.

tetoBiologist [EB] joined “FRU1TY RUMPUS3 4SSHOL3 F4CTOR3”
EB: hey guys!!
TG: ther3s our token straight
TG: john save me from this useless lesbian hell
EB: haha!
gardenGnostic [GG] joined “FRU1TY RUMPUS3 4SSHOL3 F4CTOR3”
GG: hi guys!!!! :D
GG: is nepeta gonna join us?
AG: I sent an inv8 to everyone.
AG: Except the l8sers.
TG: invite
TG: latesers

carcinoGeneticist [CG] joined “FRU1TY RUMP USS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
CG: VRISKA WILL YOU LEAVE ME THE FUCK ALONE NOW.
AG: You know you hate me ;;;;
CG: I DO *NOT* HATE YOU!
CG: YOU KNOW FOR THE ONE ACCUSING *ME* OF HAVING A SPADES THING,
YOU SURE DO TALK ABOUT IT A LOT.
AG: Sorry, Karkat, I’m just not interested!
arachnidsGrip is an idle chum!

airensicCatnip [AC] joined “FRU1TY RUMP USS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
AC: :33< hey everyone!
GG: nepeta!!!! :D

TG: oh my god youre all so fucking gay
TT: You’re one to talk, dear cousin.

TG: i may be gay but i have some goddamn dignity

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] joined “FRU1TY RUMP USS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
GA: Hello Everyone
GA: Also Rose Theres No Need To Call Him Your Cousin
GA: Karkat Accidentally Told Everyone That Youre In Fact Twins
CG: KANAYA YOU SAID YOU WOULDN’T TELL THEM!
GA: Im Sorry But I Just Cannot Watch Them Embarrass Themselves Any Longer
grimAuxiliatrix is an idle chum!
twinArmageddons [TA] joined “FRU1TY RUMP USS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
TA: jegu2 chriii2t
TA: when vrii2ka 2ent me the liink ii thought iit was a group for our liit project.
TA: ii dont want two be here.
CG: THEN LEAVE, COWARD.
TA: it won't let me!
TA: for some reason I can't leave
TA: it's like something blocking me
GC: H3H3
TA: tz what did you do
GC: :?
TA: you snickered what did you do
GC: HOW DO3S SN1CK3R OV3R T3XT >:
TA: oh my god
TA: how did he get here!?
CG: WHO?
TA: the girl who blocked me from getting into ro2e2 computer!
tipsyGnostalgic [TG] joined “FRUITY RUMPUS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY” without an invite
TG: hye everybody
TT: Sampling some of mother’s alcoholic beverages again, I see.
TG: are u accusing me of being
TG: *gaps*
TG: drink
TG: oh hey roxy
TA: HOW DIID YOU GET IINTO MY 2Y2TEM
TG: terebi gave me ur pesterchum
TG: trollilian whatever
tipsyGnostalgic is an idle chum!
GC: L1ST3N SOLLUX
GC: B3FOR3 YOU G3T UNR3ASONABLY UPSET
GC: VR1SKA KN3W YOU WOULD JUST L34V3
GC: 4ND YOU’R3 4 PR3TTY COOL DUD3 4ND W3 W4NT YOU H3R3
TA: flattery will get you nowhere tz
TA: but ill 2tay
TA: …for now
GC: OBVIOUSLY IT GOT M3 SOM3WH3R3
TG: anyone else in this thread suck toes
EB: dave don’t be gross!
EB: hey vriska! do you mind if i invite some other people?
arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!
AG: As long as they’re not losers.
TG: dropped the latesers i see
AG: Sh8t the f8ck up, D8ve!!!!!!!
gutsyGumshoe [GG] joined “FRUITY RUMPUS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
golgothasTerror [GT] joined “FRUITY RUMPUS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
TG: oh shit dude me too
timaeusTestified [TT] joined “FRUITY RUMPUS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
AC: :33< it’s feline a little crowded in here!
GG: omg good one!
AC: :33<
apocalypseArisen [AA] joined “FRUITY RUMPUS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
AA: there certainly is a l0t of pe0ple
TG: shit bros home gtg lads
turntechGodhead is an idle chum!
timaeusTestified is an idle chum!

Dirk dashes into your shared room and closes the door. He’s almost completely silent as he does so.
It’s unnerving, it reminds you of Bro. He wedges a chair under the doorknob. You both know that it
won’t stop Bro, but it might discourage him.

You feel bad for thinking so, but Dirk often reminds you of Bro. He’s more similar in appearance to
Bro than he’s ever been to you. They like a lot of the same things, or at least they did, before Bro
turned into an abusive asshole and Dirk solemnly swore off anything they had in common.
The sad part about it is, you can remember. You can remember being five years old and him pushing you and Rose on the swings. You can remember Roxy talking animatedly to him about Pokemon, and him being genuinely interested. You can remember him teaching Dirk about robots.

It took you awhile to come to the realization that your father was not coming back.

It took a solid week of weighing the bad things against the good. It took a week of watching the scales tip with the weight of your father’s beatings. It took years to come to terms with, really. Because here was the man who loved and cherished you as a child. And here was the man who’d broken your nose because, at eight years old, you had the audacity to ask him for food.

You accepted that your father would never be the same, and you were allowed to hate him for that fact.

Dirk glances over at you. You know he’s thinking along similar lines.

“We’ll get out of here one day,” he reassures. You’re not sure if you believe him.

You hate your father. You have every reason to. You’re absolutely sure he’d kill you, given the chance.

You’re afraid. You’re in a dangerous situation with no way out. So you’re stuck, hiding in your bedroom with a chair for a lock that you can’t possibly think will stop him. You’re stuck, hiding in your bedroom, watching to Dirk cry silently and wondering if you’re crying too. You’re stuck, in a terrible place and a terrible life.

You get to go to school again, tomorrow. School has always been an escapism for you. It has always been out of reach, and now it is a reality.

But everyday, you have to come back to the apartment. And everyday, you’ll be stuck again.

You miss your home. Not this shitty apartment. Your home.

Suddenly, your phone buzzes.

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

TT: Are you alright?

TG: yeah dude im fine

TT: Hmm.

TG: dont fuckin do that

TT: Do what?

TG: when you pretend to care by psychoanalyzing me

TG: im not a fucking project rose

TT: I’m sorry the form of which I express my concern is not up to your standards.
TT: I’ll be sure to keep it to myself.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead

TG: rose im sorry

TG: fucking fantastic

TG: im sorry i snapped im just very stressed out and being treated like a fucking case study doesnt help

TT: I’m sorry. I just don’t know how to help.

TG: oh hi

TG: dw about it

TT: I don’t appreciate it when you get like this, however.

TT: I fully comprehend that it’s not your fault, but it worries me. There must be extenuating circumstances.

TT: And whenever I make an inquiry about said circumstances, you get pithy and close yourself off.

TT: I can’t help if I don’t know what’s wrong.

TG: you dont need to help dw about it rose

TG: its not your business and its not that big of a deal

TG: please can we change the topic now

TT: ...

TG: hows things with kanaya

TT: I’m, as you would say, a “useless lesbian”.

TG: haha that bad huh

TG: shes really into you i say fucking go for it

TT: That’s where the useless lesbianism comes into play.

TT: Some minute part of me knows she likes me, yet I can’t act on it because I have absolutely no idea what I would say. And then that is combined with the quite large possibility she doesn’t, in fact, like me in that sense.

TT: So we are at an impasse. Because she’ll never act on it and neither will I.

TT: I can only hope one of us makes a blunder one day and then everything will work itself out.
TG: ohhh my fucking god
TG: you three pairs of lesbians are going to kill me
TG: im going to die of second-hand embarrassment
TG: dave strider found dead in miami
TG: cause of death is unknown
TG: but a note was found in his hand, written in pretentious lavender font, reading
TG: “I know we kissed and everything. And she’s professed her love for me several times. But can we be positive she ACTUALLY likes me?”
TT: If you ever go into comedy, I recommend staying away from impressions.
TT: And I'm wondering who the third pair of lesbians are.
TT: Nepeta and Jade seem to just be engaging in normal courtship routine.
TG: normally i would agree with you but
TG: seeing you and kanaya and vriska and terezi in action has made me rethink my stance
TG: besides i was talking about roxy and the 2 (TWO) girls shes all messed up about
TT: Ah, yes. Jane and the mystery girl.
TT: Technically, they’re both mysteries according to Roxy, but we all know she harbors, as you would put it “a thing” for Jane.
TG: oh shit
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]
TT: Dave?
tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

The sound of something hitting your door reaches your ears with a resounding thud. You know that sound all too well. You’ve gotten acquainted with that sound. You’ve bought that sound a drink. You and that sound had a terrible break up where you agreed never to speak to each other again.

However, that sound always comes back.

Because that is the sound of an oncoming strife.

Dirk freezes. You wait together in silence until you’re sure that Bro has left your door.

Dirk carefully, fearfully, removes the chair from under the doorknob and slowly opens the door.

You stare at the note. It’s for Dirk. A wave of nausea for Dirk and relief for yourself crashes over
“I should go,” he says with quiet acceptance. He crumples the note in silent fury and leaves to go fight a one-sided war.

You pace the room for what feels like (and probably was) hours. You’re sick with anxiety. You catch yourself chewing on your shirt on more than one occasion. You don’t check your phone, you don’t do anything but pace and think.

You hate this place. You hate this life. You hate your so called father.

Fear wracks your body. Your hands are shaking violently and you feel physically ill.

Fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck!!!! Your thoughts scream. You cannot think, you cannot feel, all you are is instinct and fear.

You’re snapped out of your tirade of obscenities by a knock at the door. It’s a specialized knock that depends on the day of the week. You breathe a sigh of relief and carefully let Dirk in.

“He left,” Dirk says numbly. There’s a gash above his eyebrow and he has a black eye. His shirt is sliced open and bloody in several places. “I’m gonna take shower.” You know he’ll be in there for three hours. You bite your lip to keep yourself from screaming.

“We’ll get out of here eventually.” Dirk’s voice is flat and cold. You’re hit with a strong sense of deja vu and wrongness. Dirk leaves to shower and you desperately try and fail to distract yourself. Finally you open up pesterchum and reply to Rose, deftly avoiding the topic of what just happened. You switch over to the groupchat.

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

CG: STRAWBERRIES ARE CLEARLY THE SUPERIOR FRUIT!

AG: 8ver my d8ad 88dy!!!!!!!!

GC: C4N W3 PL34S3 STOP 4RGU1NG 4BOUT FRU1T!

GC: K4RK4T *1* KNOW YOU DON’T H4V3 4 SP4D3S TH1NG FOR VR1SK4, BUT TO 4N OUTS1D3R 1T M1GHT S33M TH4T W4Y

TG: i don’t even want to scroll up

GC: Y34H YOU R34LLY DON’T

CG: UGHHHHHHHH

GC: WH4T’S UP?

CG: DO YOU EVER JUST GET HIT WITH A WAVE OF SELF-LOATHING SO STRONG THAT YOU GET PHYSICALLY ILL?

AG: No, 8ecu8e I’m not a l8ser.

GC: Y34H K4RK4T TH4T’S K1ND OF W31RD
TG: nah dude i get it
TG: not necessarily the self-loathing part
TG: you might wanna talk to dirk about that lmao
TG: but the whole “sick from emotions” thing i get
CG: REALLY?
TG: yeah dude
AG: Loooooooosssssssssssssssssssssssssss!
CG: FUCK OFF YOU ELITIST BITCH MONSTER
AG: I’m not interested!!!!!!!!
CG: FOR ME TO HAVE A SPADES THING FOR A SPIDER BITCH AS VILE AND REPREHENSIBLE AS YOU WOULD REQUIRE ME TO HAVE A SELF-ESTEEM MUCH LOWER THAN MY CURRENT ONE, AND FRANKLY THAT’S IMPOSSIBLE.
CG: ANYWAYS FUCK YOU!
CG: I’M HAVING AN HONEST TO GOD BREAKDOWN AND YES I KNOW I HAVE THEM OFTEN BUT THAT DOESN’T EXCUSE YOU BEING A INSENSITIVE SHIT-SNIFFER.
carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an idle chum!
GC: VR1SK4 YOU TOOK 1T 4 L1TTL3 F4R
AG: W8ever!!!!!!!!
AG: We 8ll h8ve f8cking pro8l8ms!!!!!!!!!
GC: VR1SK4 PL34S3
AG: F8ck 8ff!!!!!!!!!
GC: =>[
GC: OK4Y
gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an idle chum!
AG: Terezi w8!!!!!!!!!
AG: F8CK!!!!!!!!!
AG: ::::(
TG: i uhhhh should probably go
AG: Yeah, you f8cking should ::::(

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!

You’re exhausted. You don’t understand the bullshit that your newfound friends are going through. You haven’t led a normal life with normal problems. You’re biggest problem is worrying where your next meal is coming from and whether or not you’ll make it through the day without being abused.

You don’t hold it against them. You can’t. You just wish that you had their problems instead of your own. Maybe everyone feels like that. Who knows.

You can’t understand. But you’re not Rose. You don’t have a compulsive need to understand everyone’s problems. Instead, you can just be there, and hope it’s enough.

You decide to message Karkat.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist

TG: yo dude

CG: I DON’T WANT TO TALK TO ANYONE.

TG: we don’t have to talk

TG: just

TG: do you want to watch those movies with me on rabbit?

CG: …REALLY?

TG: yeah dude ofc

TG: you seemed pretty upset

CG: OKAY

TG: [sent a link]

CG: HEY DAVE?

TG: whats up dude

CG: THANKS

TG: its the least i could do to repay you for calling paul a “transphobic shit knob”

TG: iconique honestly

TG: anyways were watching the room first and then whatever movies you want

TG: i just *need* to show you this cinematic masterpiece
CG: I’M GOING TO REGRET THIS AREN’T I?

TG: haha probably

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

Chapter End Notes

next chapter is a vrisrezi chapter lets go babey

my tumblr
Your name is Terezi Pyrope, and you’re not having a good day. Technically, only one bad thing happened today, but the shittiness of it was so colossal it ruined at least your entire day, if not your entire life.

You think your moirail is going to break up with you. Which fucking sucks, even if you didn’t have shitty, multi-quadrant feelings for her.

What are you even supposed to say? There’s no word for feelings that transcend quadrants, because that’s not how it works! Stupid human earth culture getting to you!

You wish you were back on Alternia. There you knew the rules and knew how to play the game. The law was yours and life was easy.

Then again, it could just be your recently discovered feelings for one Vriska Serket. The whole, “quadrant vacillation” thing with Karkat was bad enough. This is approximately a million times worse.

There’s no words to describe your feelings. There’s no one you can turn to because no one will understand.

Well… maybe…

gallowsCalibrator [GC] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

GC: 1 H4T3 F33L1NGS >:)

TG: oh man i am not the person you should be talking to about this
GC: WHY NOT?
TG: ive never had a feeling in my life
GC: WH4T?
GC: 3V3RYONE H4S F33LINGS!
GC: 3SP3C14LLY YOU HUM4NS
GC: YOU’R3 CHOCK FULL OF F33LINGS, TH4T’S WHY 1 C4M3 TO YOU
GC: 4LSO B3C4US3 I LOV3 CH4LK!
TG: sorry dude im a master at repressing every single emotion i come across
TG: so is rose but i would talk to her instead of me, shes in a somewhat similar situation
GC: H3R TH1NG W1TH K4N4YA 1S NOTH1NG L1K3 WH4T 1M D34L1NG W1TH
GC: F1RST OF 4LL, TH3 F33LINGS TH3Y H4V3 FOR 34CH OTHER 4R3 V3RY CL34RLY R3DROM 4ND H4V3 4LW4YS B33N R3DROM
GC: S3COND OF 4LL, K4N4YA L1K3 H3R B4CK!
TG: im pretty sure vriska likes you back too
GC: NOT HOW 1 L1K3 H3R! >:]
GC: 4ND NOW SH3’S GO1NG TO BR34K UP W1TH M3 >:][[TG: what no dude
TG: have you been back to the group chat yet
GC: NO
TG: she was pretty shaken up i think she felt bad
GC: R34LLY?
TG: yeah
TG: well about as bad as vriska can feel
TG: anyways i think you should talk to rose
GC: OK4Y
GC: TH4NKS COOLK1D
TG: anytime tz
gallowsCalibrator [GC] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]
gallowsCalibrator [GC] began trolling tentacleTherapist [TT]

GC: I N33D H3LP
GC: D4V3 TOLD M3 TO T4LK TO YOU

TT: What happens to be the problem?
TT: If I were to take a gander, I would assume it’s more of our “useless lesbianism”.

GC: Y3S >:]

GC: YOURE HUM4N CONC3PTS OF S3XU4LITY 4R3 1NCR3D1BLY FOR13GN TO ME, BUT Y3S, 1 4M CURR3NTLY BEING 4 “US3L3SS L3SB14N”

TT: What transpired that you became desperate enough to come to me?

GC: VR1SK4 Y3LL3D 4T M3
GC: WH1CH 1SN’T 4 COMP3L3T3 BUT ST1LL

GC: D4V3 S4YS SH3 F33LS BAD BUT 1’M WORR13D SH3’S GO1NG TO BR34K UP WITH M3

GC: 1T’S PROB4BLY JUST M3 OV3RR34CT1NG L1K3 1 4LW4YS DO

GC: BUT 1’M JUST WORR13D L1K3 4LW4YS

GC: LOS1NG H3R WOULD FUCK1NG *SUCK* B3C4US3 1’M L1K3

GC: 1N LOV3 W1TH H3R OR WH4T3V3R

GC: 3W
GC: BUT 4LSO NOT 3W

GC: V3RY NOT 3W

GC: > :]

GC: >:]

GC: > :]

TT: I think I get the picture please do not elaborate.

GC: H3Y 1 H4V3 TO D34L W1TH YOU 4ND K4N4Y4 4ND YOUR GROSS “SLY” LOOKS

GC: 4NYW4YS MY B1G PROBL3M 1S TH4T VR1SK4 DO3SN’T L1K3 M3 L1K3 TH4T 4ND MY F33L1NGS 4R3 W31RD F33L1NG
GC: 4ND 4LS0 1 4LR34DY LOST H3R ONC3 WH3N W3 W3R3 YOUNG3R

GC: I DON’T TH1NK I COULD DO 1T 4G41N W1THOUT BR34KING

GC: UGH THIS 1S STUP1D!!!

GC: =>[[[[[

TT: Terezi, I offer you a very simple solution. A solution that you won’t like but it’s incredibly easy and will probably fix all of your problems.

TT: Weirdness notwithstanding.

GC: WH4T 1S 1T?

TT: Talk to Vriska.

GC: WHY D1D 1 TH1NK YOU COULD H3LP!?!

TT: I’m not saying talk to her right away, I’m merely suggesting you talk to her, eventually, about everything.

TT: You are moirails, correct? From my understanding, moirallegiance is very similar to the human concept of “closest friend” but a little more complex.

TT: Anyways, usually when you are very close friends with someone, you tell them almost everything, and they will love you regardless.

TT: I think you should tell Vriska how you feel, though perhaps not right away. Ponder it a while. Reminisce, even. But please do tell her, and if she ends your moirallegiance because of your feelings, she's not right for you.

GC: TH4T W4T SURPR1S1NGLY S1NC3R3

TT: Don’t get used to it.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering gallowsCalibrator [GC]

Perhaps what Rose said has some merit to it. She seems very intelligent, though not in the same way you are.

You need to consult with yourself. You decide to do what Rose said.

You “reminisce.”
Suddenly, you remember being four sweeps old and best friends with Vriska Serket. Most people hate her, but you’ve always been good at seeing things most people can’t. You see the unwavering determination, the ability to do what other people won’t, and the frankly shocking amount of fortitude. You see Vriska for all she is, bad and good.

This also means you see how needlessly cruel she can be, how insufferable, and how her loyalties lay with no one except herself.
Vriska is self-absorbed, callous, and takes no responsibility for her actions. In other words, she’s a huge bitch.

But she’s also funny and fierce and a good friend to have.

Vriska Serket is fucking complex; but isn’t everyone?

And then you’re a little over five sweeps, and you’re so hurt. Because your friend, your best friend, is doing terrible things to people who did nothing to deserve it.

You can’t be friends with her anymore. You cannot stand by her when there is no reason or justice to her actions.

You tell her so, and she’s calling you lame and boring and saying that you’re overreacting. She doesn’t seem to care. About you. About what she’s doing. She doesn’t seem to care and that fucking stings.

You snap. You try to kill her. And then she blinds you.

Despite it being a blessing in disguise, you’re pissed nonetheless.

You can’t stop thinking that this was never supposed to happen. You and Vriska were supposed to stick.

But you didn’t, and you guess that’s life. Then you’re six sweeps old, and on a flight to earth with all your friends, and inexplicably, you’re friends with Vriska again. It feels natural, laughing with her. It feels like the easiest thing you’ve ever done.

You talk to her about what she did, and about what you did. It takes a while to forgive and forget, but Vriska seems different, softer almost. Soft is not a word anyone in their right mind would use to describe her, but she doesn’t seem as harsh.

She says she regrets what she did. In her exact words, “I regret doing those things to people, but not as much as I regret losing you. And I guess that’s selfish but it’s true.” Those words do weird things to your head.

Then you’re seven, and you two stumble your way into a moirallegiance. And the rest is fucking history.

You’re not sure how reminiscing was supposed to help, because now you just mostly feel sad and weird.

You realize you can’t lose Vriska again. You can’t. Your moirallegiance with her is one of the best things that has happened to you. You rely on Vriska, and she, in turn, relies on you.

And yes, Vriska can be selfish and careless and mean. You know she can. You accept this about her, because you can be, too. You love her, regardless, and you always will.

gallowsCalibrator [GC] began trolling arachnidsGrip [AG]

GC: H3Y
GC: I N33D TO T4LK TO YOU 4BOUT SOM3 TH1NGS
GC: 1’V3 R34L1Z3D SOM3 1MPORT4NT TH1NGS 1 TH1NK
GC: SO PL34S3 M3SS4G3 M3 B4CK WH3N YOU’R3 R34DY
AG: F8CK!!!!!!!!!

GC: WH4T?
AG: You’re 8r8king 8p with m8!
GC: OH MY GOD NO
GC: 4BSOLUT3LY NOT

GC: N3V3R
GC: ...I W4S 4CTU4LLY WORR13D TH4T YOU W3RE GO1NG TO BR34K UP W1TH M3
AG: No!!!!!!! I wouldn’t do that!
AG: To you at least.
AG: If you’re not 8r8king up with me, what did you want to talk a8out?

GC: FUCK

GC: I CH4NG3D MY M1ND 1 DON’T W4NT TO DO TH1S
AG: Tell me!
GC: 1’M NOT SUR3...
AG: If it’s something em8arrassing, I promise not to laugh!
AG: Okay, I can’t promise that.

GC: H3H3 OF COURS3 YOU C4N’T
GC: 1T’S NOT 3MB4RR4SS1NG
GC: 1T’S JUST R34LLY H4RD

AG: Can I 8e real for a second? Not “huge 8itch” real but like gross and honest real.

GC: Y3S
AG: You’re like the only person I actually care a8out.
AG: I like our friends 8ut I’ve never really felt
AG: Ugh! What’s that word?
GC: WH4T WORD?
AG: The one where you like feel shit for other people!
GC: 3MP4THY?
GC: YOU D1DN’T KNOW THE WORD 3MP4THY?
AG: Sh8t up!
GC: H3H3
AG: Anyways, yes that.
AG: You’re the only person who regularly makes me feel anything 8esides anger and general disgust.
AG: I guess what I’m trying to say is I’ve been having feelings.
AG: And l8ly I’ve 8een having a lot of them. Like a st8pid kid or something!
GC: 4R3 YOU SAY1NG YOU DON’T HAVE F33L1NGS?
AG: You do?
GC: Y3S I H4V3 F33L1NGS 3V3RY S1NGL3 D4Y OF MY L1FE?
AG: Wow no need to 8rag.
AG: What I’m trying to say is
AG: UGH!
AG: You’re right this is hard!
GC: DO YOU WANT TO DO THIS L4T3R?
AG: No! I need to do it n8w!
AG: F8CK!
AG: G8d this is so st8pid!!!!!!!!!
GC: 1T’S OK4Y!
GC: W3 DON’T H4V3 TO DO THIS R1GHT NOW
AG: I’m f8cking 8n love with you or some 8ullsh8t!!!!!!!!!
GC: >:O
GC: (4lso that w4s n1n3 3xcl4m4t1on po1nts)
AG: So you don’t feel the same? ::::(
GC: OF COUR3 1 DO!!
GC: 1 THOUGHT 1 W4S OBV1OUS
AG: So did I!
AG: I’ve 8een human flirting with you for MONTHS!
AG: I even went to our stupid helpful friends for help and god was that a 8low to the self-esteem.
GC: >:]
AG: What?
GC: YOU *L1K3* M3
AG: O8viously!
GC: YOU L11111111K3 M33333333
AG: Did you type out 8 of those for me?
GC: M4YB3 >;]
AG: ::::)
AG: …Do you want to go on a d8?
GC: >:O!!
GC: Y3S!!!!
AG: ::::O
GC: >;]
GC: GOD W3’R3 P4TH3T1C
AG: Speak for yourself!
GC: H3Y!
AG: ::::p
AG: Just to be clear… what ARE your feelings for me?
GC: D4V3 H4S N3V3R B33N MOR3 R1GHT
GC: W3’R3 4LL A BUNCH OF US3L3SS L3SB14NS
AG: Don’t group us in with Rose and Kanaya!
AG: We got our 8ullshit sorted out!
GC: ONLY TOOK US L1K3 TWO Y34RS

AG: Answer the question!

GC: 1T'S... H4RD FOR M3 TO D3SCR1B3 MY F33L1NGS

AG: 1 R34LLY 3NJOY B31NG YOUR MO1R41L BUT 1 4LSO R34LLY 3NJOY OUR R1V4LRY 4ND ON3-UPM4NSH1P WH1CH IS 1ND1C4T1V3 OF 4 K1SM3S1S

GC: GOD 1 SOUND L1K3 K4RK4T UGH

GC: 4ND TH3N SOM3T1M3S 1 JUST

GC: GOD 1 DON'T KNOW HOW TO 3XPL41N 1T

AG: Same, honestly.

AG: Stupid human culture fucking up a perfectly good quadrant system!

GC: H3H

AG: Anyways, do you wanna go flaunt or new found love and m8ke everyone else feel inferior and lonely?

GC: H3LL

GC: FUCKING

GC: Y3S

arachnidsGrip [AG] ceased trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

TG: oh fuck please don’t do what i think your about to do

AG: <3

GC: <3

TG: im outie

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!
AG: <3
GC: <3
carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!
tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

CG: AS MUCH AS I ENJOY ROMANCE, CAN I JUST SAY VRISKA DOESN’T DESERVE LOVE?

AG: Sh8t 8p!
AG: <3

GC: <3

TT: I’m glad you two got it sorted out.

CG: I’M NOT
tentacleTherapist [TT] is an idle chum!
carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an idle chum!

GC: 1LY
AG: ::::O
AG: Ilyt!
tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an active chum!

TG: heh
TG: cuuuute
carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

CG: VRISKA ISN’T CAPABLE OF BEING “CUTE” NOR IS SHE CAPABLE OF LOVE SO I DON’T KNOW WHAT THIS HORSESHIT IS.

GC: SHUT UP K4RK4T

TG: so are u guys gonna go on a date
TG: wink wonk
timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!

TT: Glad to see you’re not inebriated, Roxy.

TG: rose hid all my booze :( 
TT: Good for Rose.

TG: gasp

TG: were interrupting the stars here

AG: Yeah it’s our time to shine!!!!!!!

timaeusTestified [TT] is an idle chum!
tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an idle chum!
ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

EB: wait so you guys are dating now?

EB: well you were dating before…

EB: but are you human dating now!

AG: Yes, John, we are “human dating”.

EB: haha good for you!

EB: though i get the feeling that this group chat is just gonna turn into a big gay dating fest…

GC: H3H3 PROB4BLY

GC: D4V3 4ND K4RK4T G3T TOG3TH3R I’M C4LL1NG 1T NOW

AG: What!? No way.

GC: B3T?

AG: You’re on!

GC: H3H3

GC: <3

AG: <3

CG: IS THIS HAPPENING? AM I HAVING A STROKE?

CG: YOU TWO CAN’T SERIOUSLY BE BETTING ON ME AND DAVE RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME.

AG: We just did! And I’m gonna win.

CG: FUCK YOU GUYS.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an idle chum!
ectoBiologist [EB] is an idle chum!
twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!

TA: iif you two are liike thiis whiile we work on our liit project ii wiill kiill you wiith my psiioniics

twinArmageddons [TA] is an idle chum!

GC: DON’T BE 4 P4RTY POOP3R SOLLUX

AG: Yeah!

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: I Must Say I Am Quite Happy For You Two

GA: If Not A Little Jealous

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

TT: May I inquire as to what that’s supposed to mean?

GA: …

GA: I Must Go

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an idle chum!

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an idle chum!

GC: …PL34S3 T3LL M3 TH4T’S NOT WH4T W3 W3R3 L1KE

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: it was

GC: GR34T

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!

GC: H3Y VR1SK4

GC: <3

AG: ::::::::O

AG: <3

AG: Ugh! I got to go!

AG: My dad’s calling me for dinner.

AG: I'll talk to you in a bit!

GC: OK4Y
arachnidsGrip [AG] is an idle chum!

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an idle chum!

gallowsCalibrator [GC] began trolling arachnidsGrip [AG]

GC: H3Y

GC: 1 LOV3 YOU

AG: I love you too.

AG: Do you want to come over after dinner?

GC: H3LL Y3S

AG: It’s a d8!

GC: >:]

arachnidsGrip [AG] ceased trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

Chapter End Notes

im proud of the next chapter so if you want me to post it i will (and given my track history ill probably post it anyways)

id fucking DIE for kudos/comments!

the vrisrezi story line is far from over btw ill probably do at least two more chapters on them

my tumblr
the world it seems gets more unkind

Chapter Notes

double update hell fucking yes
aka the chapter where i impose my weird ass music tastes on dave
chapter title from "it's okay, i wouldn't remember me either" by crywank
karkat pov lets go babey
(ps i spent a while coding in the links for the songs so you should click on them!)
(pps this chapter takes place like 3ish days after the last one)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]
TG: [sent a link]
TG: THIS IS SO BANGING
TG: if you don’t think this is an absolute goddamn banger we cant be friends
TG: my new favorite song
CG: I????
CG: AM I HAVING A STROKE??
TG: yes in the best fucking way
CG: HOW DO YOU ENJOY THIS?
TG: oh my god karkles you dont think this is bangin
CG: NO I DO NOT FIND IT “BANGIN”.
CG: AND CALL ME KARKLES ONE MORE TIME AND I'LL STRANGLE YOU WITH YOUR EYEBALLS.
TG: you said that last time haha
TG: oh shit a linkin park song just popped up in my recommendations
TG: takes me back to my emo days
CG: WHAT DO YOU MEAN “TAKES YOU BACK”

TG: stfu karkat im not emo

CG: YOU’RE EMO ON THE INSIDE I KNOW IT

CG: YOUR ENTIRE PERSONALITY SCREAMS “I USED TO LISTEN EXCLUSIVELY TO MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE AND PRETENDED THEY WERE OBSCURE TO FEEL SPECIAL”

CG: SOME PEOPLE ESCAPED THE EMO PHASE BUT NOT YOU, STRIDER.

TG: maybe so but i never listened to mcr

TG: well i did but i didnt think they were obscure

TG: seventh grade me went out of his way to search for obscure music tbh

TG: now i just listen to whatever the fuck i want

TG: which is mostly still weird shit ngl

CG: LIKE WHAT?

TG: oh man

TG: i really like edm stuff and im also pretty into weird indieish shit

TG: jade really likes studio killers so i listened to them and theyre really good

TG: [sent a link]

TG: this is my fave song by them it was literally written about me and theres no convincing me otherwise

TG: i also really like lemon demon but im not gonna link you any songs bc i know you wouldnt like it

TG: …

TG: okay that being said this is like my absolutely favorite song by him so please listen to it

TG: [sent a link]

TG: ALSO i like mother mother but mostly because all my friends like them

TG: oh and bill wurtz is lit

TG: that sure is a lot of useless information

TG: wbu and your weird music tastes?

CG: I DON’T LISTEN TO MUSIC THAT MUCH.
CG: WHEN I DO I LIKE IT BUT I DON’T LIKE ACTIVELY LISTEN TO IT.

TG: karkat wth

CG: THERE WASN’T ANY MUSIC ON ALTERNIA REALLY.

TG: oh i guess that makes sense

TG: well im gonna make you a shit ton of music because you’re not allowed to be a musicless heathen and my friend simultaneously

CG: UGH FINE.

TG: so how bout vriska and terezi eh

CG: PLEASE DON’T REMIND ME.

TG: yeah didnt you and rezi have a thing

CG: UGHRRRRRRRRRRR

TG: oh shit my bad dude

TG: listen this amazing song to make up for my dickishness

TG: [sent a link]

CG: WHY ARE YOU SO FUCKING WEIRD.

TG: hold up there’s a better version

TG: [sent a link]

TG: oh my god

TG: i found an hour long version

TG: catch me gazing lifelessly at my computer screen for the next hour while listening to this

CG: WHY

CG: WHY ARE YOU MY FRIEND.

TG: idk dude you tell me

TG: okay dude i know youll like this one

TG: [sent a link]

CG: OKAY

CG: THIS ONE IS ACTUALLY GOOD.

TG: are you insinuating that the love of my life kkb is not good
TG: how dare you karkat
TG: its like you just whipped out your dick and pissed all over my not dead mothers grave
TG: urine is flying everywhere
TG: the disrespect
CG: I DON’T HAVE A DICK.
TG: neither do i join the fuckin club
CG: I REALLY LIKED THAT LAST SONG.
CG: ALL THE OTHER ONES ARE FUCKING WEIRD BUT THAT’S TO BE EXPECTED FROM YOU.
TG: yeah jon hopkins has some really good stuff
TG: i really like like the door creak noises in that one
TG: good fuckin shit
TG: oh shit i have to be at school in like eight minutes
CG: I THOUGHT YOU WERE ON THE BUS?
TG: you thought wrong my dude i made dirk and me like ten minutes late because i was fucking around on my computer
CG: DON’T YOU HAVE A GUARDIAN? AREN’T THEY SUPPOSED TO MAKE SURE YOU’RE NOT LATE?
TG: uhhhhh
CG: IT’S NOT A HARD QUESTION, DAVE.
TG: gtg ill see you at school
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]
CG: GODDAMNIT
CG: YOUR CAGINESS ABOUT CERTAIN THINGS IS FUCKING INFURIATING.
carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

Your bus pulls up to the school just as you stop trolling Dave. The buses usually get there a little bit early, so you generally have time to hang out with your friends.

Today, however, that is the last thing you want to do. You’d rather swim in an entire pool filled with piranhas. You’d rather learn how to draw. You would rather die than hang out with your fucking
friends today.

Because honestly? You’re more than a little bitter about the whole “Terezi and Vriska” situation. You’re happy for Terezi honestly, and maybe, deep down, you’re a little happy for Vriska too. But Vriska has always been, well, a huge fucking bitch. Absolute pompous ass goblin. She’s mean and annoying and, in most ways, you don’t like her.

It’s fine and all that she’s dating Terezi. You honestly couldn’t care less. Terezi is actually good for her, and she’s good for Terezi. Besides you got over the whole Terezi thing a long time ago… you think.

You don’t like Terezi. You do, however, like the idea of a relationship. It shows in the amount romcoms you watch and the desire to live vicariously through your friends and their romantic problems. The fact that Vriska gets love and you don’t pisses you off.

You start to wonder if you don’t deserve to be loved.

God, you hate yourself. Not in the funny “haha” way you pretend to hate yourself, but actual deep-seated, burning contempt for your very being.

Everyone else hates you, too. You know it. The very planet you lived on wanted you dead. You botch every social situation you encounter. You’re too loud, too abrasive. Too much. You’re annoying and stupid and you hate yourself.

You don’t want to be here. Don’t want to be outside of your hive. Don’t want to be awake.

But you’re forced to. Your forced to keep going by some sick compulsion. You have to force yourself out of bed every day, and live on. You have to make an effort to keep yourself alive.

And you’re so tired. You’re tired of this constant fight that you only seem to be losing.

You get quietly off the bus. You think about how strange earth is. About how your friends seemed happier on Alternia. You’re the reason they came to earth. Because god forbid you be miserable without dragging everyone else down with you.

You try to push past your friends waiting outside the school and into the building. They, of course, notice you. Sollux and Terezi approach you and you speed up. Terezi grabs your arm and you wrench out of her grasp and whirl on her.

“Don’t fucking touch me!” You try to keep your voice quiet, and fail, miserably. You want to go home. You want to crawl into your bed and die there.

A few heads turn at your voice but no one says anything. Your heart rate picks up at the sight of people staring. It makes your skin crawl with self-loathing and fear.

“Dude what’s your problem?” Sollux asks quietly. You don’t have the energy for this. They couldn’t possibly understand and you don’t really want them to.

You wordlessly turn around and head to your first period, despite being several minutes early.

When class finally starts, you stare blankly at the teacher, nothing she’s saying sticks. All you can do is watch the minutes tick away. All you can do is wait until you can go home.
turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TG: hey

CG: OH GOD NOT YOU TOO.

TG: what

CG: TEREZI SAID SOMETHING TO YOU DIDN’T SHE?

TG: yeah sorry

TG: shes worried about you

CG: CAN YOU JUST DO ME A FAVOR AND FUCK RIGHT OFF.

TG: sorry dude youre cursed with friends who care

TG: if you want to just mindlessly talk about shit i can do that though

CG: WOULD YOU JUST LEAVE ME ALONE?

CG: I REALLY DON’T FEEL LIKE TALKING TO ANYONE AND ESPECIALLY NOT INSUFFERABLE PRICKS.

CG: TELL TEREZI I’M FINE OR MAKE SOMETHING UP.

TG: are you fine

CG: ...

TG: dude terezis like a human lie detector if i lie and say youre fine shes just gonna get more concerned

TG: just tell me whats wrong

CG: I DON’T *KNOW* THAT’S THE PROBLEM.

CG: SOMETIMES I JUST WAKE UP AND EVERYTHING FUCKING SUCKS.

TG: oh dude me too

TG: thats just how it be on this bitch of an earth

TG: but whenever i have days like that i make music

CG: I CAN’T DO THAT!!

TG: yeah i know let me get to the point

TG: it always just feels really good to create something

TG: so idk do that
TG: i know rose writes and that works for her
TG: despite it being questionable gay wizard shit
TG: so maybe try that
CG: FINE I’LL TRY SOMETHING.
TG: thanks dude
TG: shit gtg they got my results
TG: god that sounds ominous
TG: like
TG: i hate to break it to you but
TG: i have stage four prostate cancer
TG: yes i know i dont have a prostate are you calling me a liar
CG: WHAT IS YOUR FASCINATION WITH PENISES.
TG: idk dude theyre cool and i want one
CG: WHAT RESULTS ANYWAYS?
TG: im trying to get into biology
TG: anyways later
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

You shut off your phone and turn back to the teacher who you weren’t paying attention to in the first place.

You consider what Dave said. You’ve tried writing before but you thought you were pretty shit at it. You’re pretty shit at everything, really.

You pull out a notebook that’s mostly blank, nonetheless. You flip through forgotten math assignments until you find a clean, fresh page. You try to do what Dave said.

You try to create.

And you find that it helps. Soon, you’re lost searching for synonyms and considering sentence structures. You’ve escaped from your head by retreating into it. Into a more primal state of mind. Into the innate human desire to build.

The second bell rings and you’re feeling much better. Not completely, but it’s a start.

You take your regular seat and continue scrawling things in your notebook. You notice that Dave isn’t here yet. You think nothing of it until the tardy bell rings and class starts.

He finally walks in, ten minutes late. Paul sneers at him.
“Late on your fourth day, Strider?”

“Yeah dude I got pass,” he says it dejectedly and throws the pass onto Paul’s desk. He walks over to you, shoulders sagging and face blank. He slumps into the seat in front of you, saying nothing.

You’ve only known Dave Strider for four days, and if there’s one thing you’ve discovered about him is that he does not shut the fuck up. You’re pretty sure that when he does it’s not a good sign.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

CG: ARE YOU OKAY?

TG: huh

TG: yeah dude im fine

TG: mostly

CG: WHAT HAPPENED?

CG: DID YOU NOT GET INTO BIOLOGY?

CG: BECAUSE LIKE 90% OF PEOPLE DON’T HONESTLY.

TG: nah dude i got in

TG: the counsellor dude just like

TG: asked me why i wore my shades all the time

TG: and like eye sensitivity obviously i got a note from the doctor and all that fucking jazz

TG: actually i got dirk to fake a doctors note but regardless

TG: i also don’t like to make eye contact

TG: so i told him that

TG: and then he asked me a ton of other questions

TG: and after he finished asking questions he got that look that rose gets when she figures something out but shes not going to tell you what it is

TG: must be a fucking therapist thing or some shit

TG: and then he told me that he was going to bring someone in for me to meet next week

TG: presumably to ask *more* fucking questions

TG: idk im just tired

CG: YOU KNOW I SEE A PSYCHOLOGIST.
CG: IT’S NOT A BAD THING.

TG: yeah i guess i just

TG: dont wanna deal with more shit on my plate

TG: a plate that is already heaping with shit

TG: and this is like my fourth serving of shit

TG: at the tenth annual shit banquet

CG: THAT SURE IS A LOT OF SHIT.

TG: damn right it is

CG: I GET IT.

CG: BEFORE I CAME TO TERMS WITH MY DEPRESSION, I REALLY FUCKING HATED THERAPY.

CG: BECAUSE IT MADE ME FEEL SO FUCKING *ABNORMAL*.

CG: IT WAS LIKE HAVING SOMETHING POINTED OUT TO ME THAT I DIDN’T WANT POINTED OUT.

CG: I FELT FUCKING ISOLATED BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE SEEMED TO HAVE THESE PROBLEMS.

CG: AND THEN I TALKED TO SOLLUX ABOUT IT, AND HE EXPLAINED TO ME THAT BASICALLY OUR ENTIRE FRIEND GROUP HAS SOME SORT OF MENTAL BULLSHIT GOING ON.

CG: I DIDN’T REALLY UNDERSTAND HIS WHOLE MANIC THING BUT I GOT THE DEPRESSION, AND HE UNDERSTOOD MINE TOO.

CG: IT’S GOOD TO HAVE FRIENDS THAT UNDERSTAND.

CG: SO LIKE IF YOU EVER WANT TO TALK TO ME ABOUT THIS HORSESHIT I’M HERE.

CG: I’LL BE SHUTTING THE FUCK UP NOW BECAUSE I’M IN THE PROCESS OF REALIZING I’VE KNOWN YOU FOR LIKE FOUR DAYS AND I JUST SHARED MY ENTIRE FUCKING LIFE STORY WITH YOU.

TG: nah dude its cool

TG: cant say i can do the same because if i talk about all my repressed bullshit chances are i’ll die on the spot

TG: but its totally cool if you want to like overshare with me and shit

TG: fuck yeah one-sided feelings jams
You don’t talk to Dave again until lunch. He seems to be doing better, obviously engaged in some sort of snark off with Rose once again. You don’t know why he tries.

You take a seat next to Sollux and pull out your newly designated writing notebook and continue writing. You’re mostly just winging it, and it’s probably shit, but who cares honestly because it feels good. You’re so lost in thought you don’t hear Dave saying your name until he’s repeating it for the fourth time.

“Karkat.”

Your head snaps up and you snap your notebook shut. You open your mouth to speak, most likely to insult him, but he cuts you off.

“Is it helping?” That’s not what you expected him to ask. You nod, but say nothing, and he nods back. Sollux gives you a weird look and Dave goes back to talking animatedly with Terezi.

You don’t go back to writing for the rest of lunch, instead electing to talk to your friends. You mostly ignore Vriska, but that’s not exactly unusual.

You’re exhausted by the end of the day, as you always are, and cannot fucking wait to crawl into bed and sit on your phone for eight hours. Unfortunately, your friends have other plans.

“Let’s go exploring!” Terezi announces as everyone waits for the buses.

You groan and drag your hands down your face. “Not this bullshit again.”

“Rose and Dave have never done it before,” she explains.

Rose looks like she’s about to object, but Roxy cuts in.

“Rose let’s do it, it sounds fun!” She practically squeals. Dave looks anxiously at Dirk, who pulls up something that looks suspiciously like a security camera on his phone. He nods to Dave.

“We can go but not for too long,” Dirk says.

“We really haven’t gone in a while!” Nepeta chimes in.

Sollux tentatively agrees to go, Vriska is busy fucking around on her phone but she’s obviously going, and Kanaya’s probably only going because Rose is. Aradia says she wants to look for “recent historical remnants”, and then engages in a conversation with an excited Dave. The rest of your
friends back out, and then everyone is left looking at you expectantly.

You open your mouth, fully expecting an excuse to come out. “Fine,” you say instead.

“Let’s get this show on the road!” Vriska says, by now all the buses have departed so even if you wanted to back out you couldn’t.

You shoot a quick text to your adoptive father, as does every other troll. Rose, Roxy, Dave and Dirk, however, stay off their phones.

“So what’s this exploring business about anyways?” Dave asks. Terezi’s face lights up. She loves explaining the game she came up with.

“It’s kind of like a game,” she starts. “You split up into two teams, red and blue because Sollux insisted, and whoever finds the coolest shit wins. I’m not on a team because I’m always the judge of the found stuff.” She says it proudly. You know Terezi loves being the “judge” even if the situation isn’t even somewhat related to legislation.

“Won’t your judgement be skewed because of Vriska?” Rose asks.

Terezi smirks. “I’m not afraid to call Vriska out on her bullshit.”

“Hey!” Vriska protests, but she’s grinning.

Terezi splits you into teams of five. The red team consists of you, Nepeta, Dave, Dirk, and Aradia. The blue team consists of Rose, Roxy, Vriska, Kanaya, and Sollux. Terezi decides to go with the blue team (aka Vriska), but claims she won’t help out at all.

You all walk towards the train tracks across town. Of course, the humans don’t know where they’re going, and are somewhat surprised when you reach them.

Rose hums thoughtfully. “I didn’t even know this town had a train.”

“It doesn’t. These are old,” you reply.

The whole lot of you start down the tracks. Vriska and Terezi have a competition to see who can keep their balance the longest, and honestly, it’s kind of cute.

You reach the place where the tracks come closest to the forest.

“Time to split up!” Terezi announces. The red team goes left and the blue team goes right.

“We got a fucking awesome team we’re totally gonna win,” Dave says, once you all a little ways into the woods. “Me and Aradia got this.” Aradia smiles at him. Genuinely smiles. What the fuck. You guess they bonded over “dead shit” or something.

You search for about two hours. Nepeta finds a cat ear beanie, which she promptly shoves in her sylladex, stating this is the best day of her life. You find a muddy, torn Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back, poster.

“I’ve never seen it,” you tell Dave.

“Dude what? You gotta watch them.”

“He’s only saying that because Harrison Ford is the so-called ‘love of his life,’” Dirk chimes.
“Oh please like your gay ass isn’t in love with both Han Solo and the actor who plays him.”

“Fair.”

After a while of searching you hear Dave scream. Not a scared scream, more like a shout of excitement. It’s a skeleton. Why is he excited about a skeleton.

“It’s a fucking raccoon dude! And it’s in perfect condition!” He whips out his phone and takes a picture of it.

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: [sent a photo]

ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

EB: gross!

EB: are you putting it in the collection?

TG: hells yeah dude

CG: WHAT COLLECTION?

EB: dave’s collection of dead shit

TG: most of them are in jars but i might build a stand for this lil guy

TG: or rather have dirk build a stand

timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!

TT: I never agreed to that.

TG: you will.

TT: Did you put the period there specifically for the purpose of being ominous?

TG: haha yeah

timaeusTestified [TT] is an idle chum!

CG: YOU

CG: YOU HAVE A COLLECTION OF DEAD ANIMALS?

TG: yeah dude

TG: i got some butterflies pinned to board, a rat in a jar, an eagle skull (which might be illegal), a crow skeleton, a starfish that dirk got me, a snake skeleton (also in a jar)

TG: and now this lil guy
“So how are you gonna pick that u-” you halt mid sentence in horror as you watch Dave pick up the skeleton with his bare hands. “Dave! It still has the meat on it!” You look away in utter disgust as Dave continues to pluck up bits and pieces of it.

“Nah dude just some sinew and shit.”

“Why are you so fucking weird?” You whisper but Dave hears you and grins at you.

You march of towards Aradia, who’s flipping through a dusty, weather-worn sketchbook someone abandoned.

You stare over her shoulder, and holy shit, these are pretty good.

“Whose do you think it is?” You ask.

“I dunno.” She closes the sketchbook and places it in her sylladex. “But I’ll find out.” You don’t doubt that she will.

Everyone has found something except for Dirk, so you decide to leave him to his devices and wander around for a bit. You eventually find Dave, who’s also wandering. He’s following some sort of trail.

“How do you know this isn’t going to lead to a pack of killer coyotes or something?” You ask.

“This was man-made.”

“How do you know?”

He grins at you. “Call it intuition.”

The two of you follow the trail for about five minutes before coming to a river. Not a creek. An actual fucking river.

You’re about to turn around but you notice Dave rolling up his pant legs.

“You can’t be fucking serious.”

He shrugs. “We’ve come this far.”

You sigh and join in rolling up your jeans. The two of you walk across the river.

“Whatever’s at the end of this trail better be fucking worth it,” you mutter, bitter about your soggy shoes.

Dave’s a little ways ahead of you. “Holy fucking shit,” you hear him say. You figure that he found
the end of the trail.

You almost gasp when you reach it. It’s a cave, but it’s been very obviously used by a person. By very obviously used, you mean that it’s filled with decorations and pictures. There’s a lime green rug on the floor, a tapestry screwed into the stone wall, and at least twenty fully colored art pieces and a few sketches taped to the walls. There’s books piled high in one corner, and a few bean bag chairs, but only one looks like it’s been used. A few succulents line the entrance to the cave.

You notice a similarity between the sketches on the wall and the sketchbook Aradia found. You pull out your phone to message her but Dave’s beat you to it.

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: yo team red get your asses up here

timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!

TT: Where would “here” be?

TG: by the spot where i found the raccoon theres a trail, follow that the whole way

CG: ARADIA I FOUND THE OWNER OF THE SKETCHBOOK.

apocalypseArisen [AA] is an active chum!

AA: 0_0

AA: that was fast

CG: JUST FOLLOW DIRK.

AA: will d0

apocalypseArisen [AA] is an idle chum!

timaeusTestified [TT] is an idle chum!

arsenicCatnip [AC] is an active chum!

AC: :33< *ac wonders if she can come too*

TG: yeah dude ofc

arsenicCatnip [AC] is an idle chum!

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

GC: :?

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an idle chum!
“This is fucking wild,” Dave says, shutting off his phone.

“Yeah it really is.” You stare in wonderment at the renovated cave.

Dave goes over to the books and starts flipping through them. You notice a journal but stop yourself from picking it up. That just seems like an invasion of privacy.

The others get there relatively quickly, along with most the blue team, to your dismay.

They all express their excitement and surprise in similar ways, mostly with lots of obscenities.

Terezi picks up a book by the beanbag chair. “I vote we all write out trolltags down and put them in this book! That way whoever this is can add us.”

Just then Roxy comes in and all the blood immediately drains from her face.

“I know who this is,” she says in a small and quiet voice. Rose looks confused for a fraction of a second and then her eyes widen in disbelief.

“I didn’t know she lived here.”

Roxy looks solemn. “Neither did I.”

“Wait this is her?” Dave seems astonished.

“Would any of you mind clueing us in to what the fuck is going on?” You yell, a bit too loud if you’re being honest.

“The girl Roxy’s crushing on,” Dave replies.

“Right that fucking explains EVERYTHING!” Dave winces at your voice and you instantly feel bad.

Rose then decides to chime in. “This mystery girl has been concealing her identity from Roxy for unknown reasons. We know her only as her chumhandle. She apparently lives in this town and frequents this cave, as evident by the drawings of my sister on the wall.” You look around and wow how did you not notice that. “As Dave stated, Roxy has been infatuated with this girl for quite some time, along with Jane.”

Terezi is frantically scrawling out a note on sheet of paper, presumably an explanation with all your trolltags. She then whips chalk out of her sylladex and draws a surprisingly good dragon on the wall before anyone can stop her.

“Time to judge the finds!” She announces, dusting the chalk off on her pants.

“Can we do it outside?” Roxy asks weakly.

You head outside, and then unceremoniously drop the poster to the ground. Everyone follows in a similar fashion. Dirk, somewhere along the way, found a mason jar filled with random objects, like buttons and sea glass. Aradia elected to leave the sketchbook in the cave and uses a sleek, old fountain pen as her find. You glance around to see what everyone else found. Rose found a rusty locket with an unreadable inscription on the back. Roxy produces an Animal Crossing Amiibo figure, Sollux, a beat up book with a really long title. Kanaya pulls out one of those lamp-projector things. Finally, Vriska presents a magic 8 ball and a two sided coin, one with a long scratch across the face.
Terezi considers each object carefully. Before announcing, “Blue team wins!”

“You said you’d be impartial,” Dave complains. “I found an entire skeleton!”

“But that’s just something normal you find in the woods,” Terezi points out.

“Not in perfect condition like this,” he grumbles, but shuts up anyways.

“Now for the fun part!” Terezi continues. “Divvying up the spoils.” She says spoils as though you’ve just been through a long and perilous war. “Hm. Karkat and Sollux, trade. You too, Rose and Aradia. Vriska, give me the coin.” Vriska tosses the coin at her, and it hits Terezi in the face. Sometimes you all forget she’s blind. She plucks the coin off the ground with ease.

“That should do it,” Terezi finishes.

You all take your respective new possessions and begin the long walk home. Down the beaten trail and up the railroad tracks. People from your friend group break off at certain roads, waving goodbye with the promise to see you tomorrow. For some reason, your heart feels full.

Soon, it’s only you, Roxy, and Rose.

“Where do you guys live?” You’re pretty sure they don’t live in your neighborhood.

“Mansion on the hill,” Roxy replies, flatly. Ever since the cave fiasco she’s been lacking her normal spirit.

You merely nod at this, knowing that, for some reason, they don’t want you to press the topic.

You see your street and wave goodbye, they wave goodbye back.

When you get home you see you have a few messages.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

EB: man i wish i could’ve gone exploring with you guys!

TG: yeah it was a good time

TG: hi karkat

CG: HI

TG: hows ari and dante treating you

TG: god i fucking love that book

CG: WAIT, YOU’VE READ IT?

TG: yeah dude its like being gay 101

TG: step 1: be gay

TG: step 2: read ari and dante and georgia peaches
TG: you gotta read both though

TG: get that multicultural experience

CG: I DON’T THINK I FOLLOW.

TG: shit sometimes i forget youre an alien and dont understand our social customs

EB: dave reading those books isn’t a social custom!

TG: if youre gay it is

TG: ari and dante is the better book in my opinion

TG: even rose agrees with me and shes a lesbian

TG: ari and dante be classical gay lit shit up there with sappho

CG: YOU’RE TALKING BUT NO WORDS COME OUT.

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

TT: What my brother is trying to say, is that normally, if you’re not a hetero, you would read these “classic” young adult LGBT books.

TT: Aristotle and Dante is one one of those books. It is one of the most popular YA LGBT books, if not the most popular.

TT: In my opinion, and Dave’s, it is an extremely good book.

TG: hell yes it is

TG: you should read it asap karkat

CG: OKAY

CG: I’M GOING TO GO TO BED NOW.

TG: night karkles

CG: DON’T FUCKING CALL ME THAT.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an idle chum!

Chapter End Notes

hmmm who could the mystery girl possibly be gee i wonder

hopefully ill have some restraint and not post until next week, but probably not lbr

another reminder i would fucking die for you if you leave comments/kudos on my fic!
also if you havent read ari and dante you really should its totally worth the hype and its honestly like my fave book so

my tumblr
to its rusty knees

Chapter Notes

hi im really excited about this chapter personally!! its mostly a reflection of my experiences with autism and abuse so idk how y'all are gonna feel about it but hopefully you can relate at least a little bit!!

this chapter is pretty short but the next chapter is ultra long so forgive me

also nepeta and dave friendship is the hill i will die on thanks

title from "how i became the sea" by owl city! adam young is autistic too so i thought itd be cool to use one of his songs for the title!

my beta shitstuck!

really mind the abuse tag for this one

You sit anxiously in the counselor's office. It's been a week since you tested into biology, in which you're excelling. You don't know why you're here. You're waiting for the psychologist to show up and "run some tests". You don't like the sound of that.

Suddenly the door clicks open and you jump.

"Hi there, Dave. I'm Ms. Micken. I'm going to run a few tests, if that's okay with you?" She asks you the question as though you have a choice, you know you don't.

You exhale nervously. "Yeah that's fine." It's not fine, you know it's not fine, she probably knows it's not fine, but alas.

"Okay then let's begin. Please take your sunglasses off, if you wouldn't mind."

You freeze, but do as she says.

The first thing she has you do, is make a story out of a wordless picture book. It's honestly harder than it should be, and you feel like an idiotic child. She asks you to act out a story, and you refuse to do it five times before you finally give in. You also fill out an entire fucking booklet of personal questions. Then she has you take a few random objects, and make a story out of them. Your story makes her laugh, and it eases your nerves a bit. She asks you if you've been abused and you lie, outright. She asks you a few other questions like, do you fixate on certain topics (yes), do certain sensations bother you (double yes), do you have trouble picking up on social cues (goddammit Dave stop saying yes). After about an hour and half of stupid, childish tests, and countless questions, she sends you out of the room to wait.

After about thirty minutes of waiting, she brings you back into the room.

"Well, Dave, I can't say definitively until I've gone over your results in more depth, but just from glancing at your questionnaire, and seeing how you behaved, I am almost positive that you're on the
It feels like pure ice has been injected into your veins. “What,” your voice is flat and cold.

“Did they not tell you? I’m a specialist in ASD and they brought me in to test you.”

“No they didn’t fucking tell me,” you snarl, this can’t be happening. Bro is going to fucking kill you. You pray to god that they don’t tell Bro.

“I’m very sorry, Dave, I thought they told you,” her voice is supposed to be soothing, you guess. It’s not.

You turn around and walk out the door. You don’t have time for this. You don’t have the energy for this.

You get all the way upstairs before you realize you have no idea where you are and no idea what class period it is.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TG: hey what period is it

CG: THIRD? DON’T YOU HAVE THE TIME ON YOUR PHONE?

TG: oh shit yeah duh

TG: also im lost

CG: DAVE?

CG: ARE YOU OKAY?

TG: haha no

TG: is it normal to be breathing this fast lmao

TG: also im shaking

TG: not in the funny “IM SHAKING” way but like

TG: i can barely hold my phone lol

CG: DAVE? WHAT HAPPENED?

TG: apparently i’m autistic

TG: didnt see that one coming

TG: FUCK

CG: DAVE CALM DOWN IT’S OKAY.

TG: nice try but its not
TG: goddamn bro is gonna fucking kill me

CG: WHAT? WHY?

TG: oh shit haha

TG: pretend i didnt say that

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

TG: just got diagnosed with autism fix this

TT: I’ll see what I can do.

timaeusTestified [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

You sigh and sit down on the floor. You let your head fall back against the wall. Your phone buzzes with a message from Karkat, and you want to ignore it, but then it buzzes again.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

CG: DAVE

CG: DAVE WHAT THE FUCK.

TG: what

CG: ARE YOU OKAY?

TG: goddamnit would you stop asking that

TG: obviously if you have to ask the answer gonna be no

CG: SORRY

TG: oh shit sorry dude

TG: im just not feelin so hot lmao

CG: YEAH I ASSUMED SO.

CG: WHAT HAPPENED?

TG: i dont even know dude

TG: they brought this specialist in

TG: but i didnt KNOW she was a specialist
TG: so i didn’t know what she was testing me for
TG: and then she was just like “youre autistic” but imagine rose saying it
TG: and i was like shit youre a specialist
TG: cant argue with specialists dude
TG: theyre like fucking experts if they say somethings happening its happening
TG: and whats happening is im autistic
TG: and then idk i ran and somehow got lost
CG: WHY IS THAT A BIG DEAL?
TG: idk its just sort of like having how you view the world altered
TG: like youre looking at the world for all your life, and then one day someone tells you youve been looking at it through a glass of water the whole time
TG: like obviously i knew i was fucking weird but i didnt know that my specific weird happened to fit a set of symptoms
TG: FUCK
CG: WHY DID YOU SAY YOUR BROTHER WAS GOING TO KILL YOU?
TG: hes actually my dad lmao
TG: but anyways just forget about that
TG: oh shit i hear heels
TG: they sound like psychologist heels fuck
TG: yknow how certain professions have certain sounding heels
CG: NO I DON’T.
CG: YOU SHOULD PROBABLY TALK TO HER.
carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

Ms. Micken sits down next to you just as Karkat stops pestering you. She doesn’t squat, like most adults do when you’re beneath talking level, but sits. Right on the ground. That makes you like her a little bit more.

“I never got the chance to explain what this all means.” You say nothing in response. She continues on, undeterred. “Basically, it means that your brain works a little bit differently. Autism typically impairs social behavior. In some cases, people are nonverbal, in others, they merely have trouble reading facial expressions and tone. And in other cases, social functions aren’t impaired at all. It is a
wide, wide variety of symptoms, and none of them are bad. It isn’t like depression, it doesn’t need to be treated, though there are some medications used to treat the high levels of anxiety and anger that come with it. Autistic people also typically are very sensitive to light, sounds, feelings, smells, and other physical sensations. Once, again, that isn’t every case, but I’m describing the symptoms you exhibit. They often “stim” or use physical sensations to comfort themselves. In your case, you also have hyper-fixations, more commonly known as “special interests”. You didn’t tell me what they were, would you mind?”

This surprises you. “Uhhh. Well I really like dead things. Not in a weird, psycho way,” you backpedal, “but in a scientific sense, like skeletons and shit. And I’m really into music. I guess in a not normal way, because sometimes I won’t do anything other than think about it or make it. I really like photography too. I know a bunch camera models and stuff.” You realize you’ve been talking to fast, but she seems to understand you anyways.

“Do you know Nepeta Leijon? I believe she goes to this school. She’s autistic as well,” Ms. Micken asks, and your eyes widen the slightest bit.

“Yeah, she’s actually one of my friends.”

“She’s quite personable. Sometimes during our sessions, she’ll just talk about cats the entire time,” she pauses. “Sometimes you just need someone to talk to.” She hands you a card. You’re about to refuse it, but some brain goblin of yours really wants to take it. So you do.

“It was very nice to meet you, Dave.”

“Yeah you too,” you reply absentmindedly, staring at the shiny card.

She walks off and the fourth period bell rings about five minutes later. You stand up to go to class and message Dirk.

**turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]**

**TG:** hey can you make it seem like we have insurance

**TT:** Most definitely. Why?

**TG:** im going to therapy biatch

**turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering timaeusTestified [TT]**

Lunch rolls around and you decide to talk to Nepeta about Ms. Micken. However, talking to her in person would be a bit of a challenge, with everyone sitting around you and the fact that she’s on the opposite end of the table. You decide to pester her.

**turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering arsenicCatnip [AC]**

**TG:** yo

**AC:** :33< *ac wonders what her friend wants to talk about*

**TG:** god youre so weird
TG: but in like a good way
AC: :33< thank you!!
TG: so do you know ms micken
AC: :33< i love ms micken! she’s purrfect!
AC: :33< *ac squints suspiciously and wonders how YOU know ms micken*
TG: she uhhh
TG: she diagnosed me today
TG: with autism that is
TG: that was stupid of me to say
TG: yeah the asd specialist diagnosed me with fucking bipolar disorder
AC: :33< *ac is utterly astonished and excited*
AC: :33< you’re on the spectrum too?!
TG: yeah officially as of today
TG: i just wanted to ask you about her since you see her
AC: :33< i love her!
AC: :33< she’s really helped me come to terms with some things about myself
AC: :33< she told me to be “unabashedly weird” and it’s some of the best advice i’ve gotten
AC: :33< i think you should see her too!
AC: :33< she’s a very nice lady!
AC: :33< she helped me a lot with a lot of problems i didn’t know i had! and i feel fur better now!
AC: :33< she also has a group therapy session for people on the spectrum! im in it!
AC: :33< you should join! ive only gone to a few meetings but i think having a friend there would help us both
TG: yeah i think im going to
TG: i mean idk about group therapy but im probably going to at least see her
TG: she seemed pretty chill
AC: :33< she is!
AC: :33< you should keep group therapy in mind :33 it’s nice to have other friends on the spectrum

TG: haha yeah

AC: :33< and for the record dave...

AC: :33< i think you’re weird in a good way too!

TG: thanks nepeta

TG: i can see why jade likes you so much

TG: you’re really nice

AC: :33< really?

TG: yeah!

AC: :33<

TG: haha

TG: anyways ill talk to you later

AC: :33< okay!

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering arsenicCatnip [AC]

Nepeta looks up at you from across the table and grins. You smile awkwardly (but genuinely) and wave. She waves back. Karkat was right, it’s nice to have someone who understands.

At the end of the day you and Dirk wave goodbye to all your friends. You can’t believe this has become routine for you. Routine before was sitting inside a tiny room with Dirk all day, wasting hours at a time doing nothing. Routine before was strifing all day with Bro.

You go home with the illusion that things have changed.

This illusion is shattered the moment you open the apartment door.

Faster than lightning, Bro has you pinned to the wall, with a sword pressed close to your throat. Dirk strangles back a shout of surprise. He remains still, shell-shocked.

“Your fucking school called,” your father snarls into your face. “Said you’re a fucking retard.” You wince at the word, despite the fact you’ve heard it from him many times before. He moves the sword closer, and you can feel a tiny prickling sensation. Instinctually, you bring your hands up to push the sword away. Bro digs it into your hands, and it cuts, deep.

You want to scream and fight, but you know what happens next, and you know how it ends. There’s no use in fighting someone seven times stronger than you, there’s no use in screaming when no one cares.

Dirk finally recovers from his abject horror and steps in.
“Get the fuck off of her,” he spits at Bro, but his voice is shaky. Dirk has always been the first line of defense between you and Bro, but you know what’s going to happen, as you’ve seen it play out before.

Bro whirls on Dirk, his grip loosening slightly. You know it’s hopeless to try and escape but you slip away anyways. He snags the back of your shirt and throws you to the floor. He’s on top of you within a millisecond, pounding his fists against your chest and face. Dirk attempts to rip him off, but it’s hopeless.

You lay there, resigned, for god knows how long. Bro occasionally stops to fight back against Dirk, who is screaming and crying and fighting for you with all his strength. You feel bad. You don’t even have the energy to fight for yourself.

After a while, Dirk pulls his sword, and points it at Bro. Finally, finally, he gets off of you. Unafraid, he snarls at Dirk, and lunges for him, but Dirk is just as fast as Bro, and you’re both in your bedroom before you know what happened.

Dirk wedges the chair under the doorknob, and you wait. You wait for Bro to stop banging on the door. Dirk waits at the door, resolve in his eyes and a sword in his hands. You sit in the corner of the room, not knowing if you’re crying or not.

Finally, Bro gives up. You know he could get in if he wanted to, he was just pounding on the door to torment you.

Dirk collapses to the ground and screams. It’s a scream of frustration and agony and hate. After a few moments he walks into your shared closet and brings out the first aid kit. Silently, he disinfects and bandages your hands. He gives you a few aspirin, and there’s no water in your room so you swallow them dry. He stares at his phone, numbly, until after about an hour he finally says something.

“He’s gone.”

You stand silently and go to the kitchen and grab some ice to put on your obvious bruises. You grab some for Dirk too. You grab a few other things that got left in the living room during the fight, and go back into your room. You don’t want to be outside of it right now.

After tossing the ice-pack onto Dirk’s bed for him, you lay down on your own bed and close your eyes. You imagine that you’re far, far away from here. You know Dirk is doing the same.

“Dave,” he says.

“What?”

“I’m sorry.”

“It’s not your fault.”

Nothing more is said for a while.

You don’t want to talk to anyone right now. You don’t feel like it. You know that if you don’t you’ll close yourself off from the rest of the world, so you force yourself to open up Pesterchum.

You consider going to the groupchat, but that’s a little much for you right now.

You message Karkat instead.
turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TG: yo did you ever finish ari and dante

CG: YES

CG: AND HOLY FUCKING SHIT!

TG: haha i knew youd like it

TG: i know my boy karkat cant turn down a good romance

CG: I’M NOT “YOUR BOY”.

TG: lmao

TG: on thing i loved about that book is how much their families just fucking loved them

TG: fuck

CG: YOU OKAY?

TG: yeah im just getting fucking emotional

CG: I TAKE IT YOUR FAMILY’S NOT THE GREATEST?

TG: nah dude dirks the greatest

CG: I WAS REFERRING TO YOUR “BRO”.

TG: ...

CG: IS THAT ALL YOU’RE GOING TO SAY?

TG: no comment

CG: IT’S OBVIOUS YOU HATE YOUR FATHER FOR SOME REASON. I DON’T KNOW AND FRANKLY I DON’T CARE. IF YOU HATE HIM IT’S JUSTIFIED BECAUSE DESPITE BEING SOMEWHAT OF AN ASSHOLE, YOU’RE A GENUINELY GOOD PERSON.

TG: thanks karkat

TG: and yeah i do hate him

TG: a whole fucking lot actually

TG: dont tell anyone that though

CG: WHY NOT?

TG: idk just dont
You sigh and drop your phone on your chest. You inhale deeply, relieved to find that it doesn’t hurt your chest. That means nothing’s broken.

“Hey, Dirk,” you say. Sometimes you don’t want to talk to anyone, but the occasions that you don’t want to talk to Dirk are rare.

“Yeah?” His voice is broken and sad. But he hasn’t been crying. When things get this bad he doesn’t cry.

“Where are you?” It’s a game you started playing when you were little, when the abuse was just starting to get bad.

“I’m hundreds of years in the future. Technology is groundbreaking, and I am at the very fucking front of it. I have a family. The scars I have aren’t from swords, but accidents that I’ve all but forgotten about. Where are you, Dave?”

“I’m in the cave we found, with all our friends. In the cave, there is only laughter echoing in my ears. Everyone is happy. I don’t feel afraid anymore.”

“I’m in my old room. The one that I had when I was little. Except it has grown with me, because I never left it. I’m sitting at a computer I built for fun and not necessity.”

“I’m on the beach. The one we went to so long ago.”

It continues like that for about thirty minutes. Thirty minutes of you and Dirk swapping places you’d rather be than here.

Eventually, Dirk just doesn’t respond. You glance over at him and he’s staring at the ceiling. You don’t need to guess what he’s thinking. Because you’re thinking the same thing.

All those places I could be and I’m here.

You sigh and roll over onto your side. You pull out your phone, there’s a few messages from Karkat. You read them but don’t respond. It’s only eight, but you decide to go to sleep anyways.

You fall into a fitful sleep, and you dream of better places.

Chapter End Notes

next chapter is rosemary hell fucking yes

also in this fic calliope is HUMAN i couldnt work her being a cherub into the story so
shes human and that will become relevant soon

my tumblr
collar bones begin to crack

Chapter Notes

hi!! im an idiot and decided to post even though i dont have the next chapter done so!

thank you for all the wonderful comments and kudos!

im pretty excited about this chapter though i do kind of go off on descriptive tangents but oh well

chapter title from "be nice to me" by the front bottoms off their album "rose" lmao

my beta shitstuck!

btw this chapter takes place a little ways after the last one

See the end of the chapter for more notes

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] began trolling tentacleTherapist [TT]

GA: Terezi Wants To Go On Another Outing And She Told Me To Tell You

TT: More exploring, I presume?

GA: It Seems That Way Yes

TT: Will my brothers be attending?

GA: I Believe So

GA: Karkat Has Just Informed Me That They Will Be Coming

TT: Hmmm.

GA: What

TT: I sense something afoot.

GA: Im Sorry I Dont Follow

TT: Shenanigans.

GA: To My Knowledge There Will Be No So Called Shenanigans

GA: We Need You And Roxy To Have Even Teams

GA: That Being Said I Also Just Really Want You There

GA: So Will You Please Come
TT: I never said I wouldn’t.

GA: Oh

GA: I Do Believe I Have “Made A Fool Of Myself”

TT: It does seem that way.

TT: However, you are certainly not foolish.

TT: Meeting at the train tracks, I assume?

GA: Yes

GA: Ill See You There

TT: I’m looking forward to it.

GA: Oh Dear

GA: In What Sense

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

TG: do you sense some shenanigans

TG: because i sense some motherfucking shenanigans

TT: Yes I do think something might be being withheld from our knowledge.

TT: What happened to clue you in?

TG: oh man

TG: karkats a hilariously bad liar

TT: He’s normally brutally honest, so that would make sense.

TG: haha yeah

TG: anyways be on the lookout for shenanigans

TT: I don’t know how your ego got so inflated that you thought you might pick up on something I wouldn’t.

TG: rose thats the meanest thing anyones ever said to me

TG: im bleeding out on the ground, typing this with my dying breath

TT: Well, they do say the truth hurts.
TG: wtf got you in a snarky mood

TT: Sometimes I just enjoy mocking you.

TG: sadist

TT: Perhaps.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

You captchaologue your computer and check the time on your phone. The clock reads four o’clock, December 12th. You suddenly realize what “shenanigans” happen to be in play.

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

TT: You wouldn’t happen to be planning a surprise late birthday party for me, Roxy, Dave, and Dirk, would you?

GA: Where Would You Get That Idea

TT: Let’s call it intuition.

TT: You have yet to answer my question.

GA: I Can Neither Confirm Or Deny Your Suspicions

TT: If it were just for Roxy, Dave and Dirk, that would be quite alright with me.

TT: However, I truly hate my birthday and do wish not to celebrate it.

GA: You All Have The Same Birthdays

GA: Which I Still Find Absurd

TT: Stranger things have happened.

GA: You And Dave Make Sense As You Are Twins

GA: However You Weren’t Even Born On The Same Day As Each Other

GA: But Instead On The Same Days As Your Brother And Sister

GA: Who Werent Even Born In The Same Year As Each Other

GA: Forgive Me If I Find It A Little Odd

TT: I can offer you no explanation.

TT: Actually, I can, but I’d prefer not to think about it.

TT: The thought of anyone's parents having sex is quite disturbing, let alone my own.
GA: Haha

GA: I Do Not Understand Because I Was Created From A Stew Of Genetic Material

GA: But I Do Find Your Species Squeamishness About The Subject To Be Quite Amusing

TT: You’re “squeamish” about buckets of all things.

GA: Fair

TT: I still don’t understand that, by the way.

GA: I Really Don't Wish To Explain

TT: Understandable.

TT: Let’s get back to the topic at hand.

GA: Oh Yes

GA: Would It Be Okay To Throw A Birthday Party For Everyone Else But Not You

GA: Of Course You Have To Attend Because They Are Your Siblings

TT: Would I be receiving any gifts?

GA: …

TT: I believe you already know my answer then.

TT: I despise my birthday and hate gifts even more.

TT: The only reason I allow John and Jade to give me gifts is because they’re too far away for me to stop them.

TT: And Dave, Dirk, Roxy and I have been engaging in the practice far too long to call it off.

GA: If You Don't Mind May I Ask Why

TT: The root of my dislike for my birthday is the root of all my problems, really.

TT: My mother.

TT: Every year she insists on throwing Roxy and I a party that she ruins every time.

TT: She gets incredibly drunk and it makes me uncomfortable, and then proceeds to give us gifts that she knows we won’t even like.

TT: All the while pretending like we’re one big happy family that isn’t missing half the people that belong to it.

GA: Perhaps The Only Reason You Don't Like Your Birthday Is Because You've Never Had A Good One
GA: Will You Please Come?

TT: Yes but if anyone drunkenly pinches my face I’m leaving.

GA: I Can Almost Assure You That Wont Happen

TT: I’ll see you soon then.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

You close out of pesterchum and head to Roxy’s room so you can go to your impromptu birthday party. Roxy doesn’t like her birthday either, but each year she has her hopes high for a better one.

You knock on the door and she doesn’t answer. This either means she’s in an alcohol induced nap, or she’s not in there. You open the door and she’s not in there.

“Rose are you coming?” You hear Roxy’s voice coming from downstairs. You guess she beat you to it.

Once you find Roxy in your unnecessarily large house, it’s obvious she somehow worked out this was a birthday party. Instead of her normal cat-related shirt and skirt, she’s wearing a pink tunic with leggings and her tall antique leather boots with a frankly ridiculous amount of laces. She’s pouring herself a martini, which you carefully pluck out of her hand and pour down the sink. She frowns at you. It saddens you that you’re now the only thing standing between your sixteen year-old sister and full blown alcoholism.

As unlikely as you are to say it, you love Roxy. You grew up with her. When you were sad you would lay your head on her chest and watch her play Pokemon. When she was sad, she would slip into your room and listen to you write at your computer, occasionally reading over your shoulder and offering advice. As you grew, so did Roxy. You developed incredibly different personalities, but still somehow clicked. You both bonded over the discovery that you liked girls. You still vividly remember laying on the floor of her bedroom while your mother got drunk downstairs and saying “I think I’m gay,” into the darkness. You still vividly remember Roxy’s reply of “Me too, kinda”. You remember tearing through the Harry Potter series with her, and then later realizing they were, in her words, “kinda shit”. You loved them, nonetheless, because you had shared them with her.

And now your mother is threatening to take that all that away, and you’re angry. Because apparently, taking two siblings from you isn’t enough.

You’re relationship with Roxy is now strained, and it’s all thanks to your mother.

It wouldn’t be fair to say you hate your mother, because that word isn’t quite strong enough for the contempt you hold for her. She ruined your lives, and your pretty sure she ruined Dave’s and Dirk’s too by sending them off with that asshole.

You realize that you hands are shaking as you open the door. You force them to stop. Roxy gives you a concerned look, but you say nothing.

The two of you find the train tracks and begin to follow them towards the forest. Roxy attempts to balance on them, and falls off, stumbling and laughing. You smirk quietly, Roxy looks back at you with a grin on her face, and you can’t help but grin back.

It’s moments like these that keep you and Roxy sane.
She goes back to carefully walking alone the metal rail. You almost laugh when she falls off again. She’s not even drunk.

Roxy looks over at you and sighs.

“Rose, I’m sorry.”

“I know, Roxy. It’s not your fault.” Your voice is heavier than you’d like it to be.

“I think some of it is, though. Like it’s my choice. And I want to stop y’know? But I just don’t think I can.”

“Despite my chumhandle, I’m not an actual therapist and I’m not the person you should talk to about this.”

Roxy sighs. “I’m not goin’ to therapy!”

“Why not? I go to therapy, are you saying something’s wrong with it?” Anger burns hot and quick in your veins. You’re not angry at Roxy, but you’re about to take it out on her.

“No!” She pauses. “...I just don’t want to,” her voice is quiet and tiny.

“If you’re really sorry, get some fucking help,” you snarl. Roxy’s face falls and you feel bad, but not bad enough to apologize.

You continue on in silence. Roxy stops trying to walk on the rails of the train tracks.

Finally, you reach the point where the tracks run parallel to the woods, and you see Dave talking with Karkat up ahead.

You quicken your pace a little bit, mostly because you want to end the awkward silence with Roxy, but also because you’re more than a little excited to see Kanaya. Even though you just saw her about two hours ago.

You notice that not everyone is here yet, including Kanaya, so you walk up to Dave and Karkat.

Dave waving his hands around and you’re honestly surprised he hasn’t taken someone’s eye out at this point. “I’m just saying that romantic comedies tend to be a bit too heterosexual for my tastes!”

“No, fuck you, you’re saying that their bad! I’ll be the first to admit they have their flaws, but that doesn’t mean they’re bad!”

“I’m just not a fan!”

“Right you like your movies with three layers of irony and/or convoluted symbolism,” Karkat snaps. You can tell there’s no anger behind his words.

“All I’m trying to say is-oh hi Rose-that they tend to perpetuate harmful stereotypes about women, lack diversity, and are often problematic,” Dave is talking fast and that’s how you know he’s enjoying a conversation.

Karkat opens his mouth to argue, but closes it. Then says, “Okay that’s fair. But I know you also don’t like them because you don’t like emotions and that’s just not fair to the genre.”

“I can’t help my repressed issues, man.”
“I do hate to interrupt this scintillating conversation, but does Dave know why we’re actually here?”
You finally get a word in edgewise.

“Yeah dude Karkat let it slip as soon as I pressed him on it.”

“I did not!”

“Dude I got the conversation right here on my phone as proof.”

Karkat scowls but says nothing more. You continue talking to the two of them until you feel a light tap on your shoulder. You turn around to see Kanaya, beaming at you. You can’t help it if your face lights up.

“Hi,” she says, and god, you love her voice. It’s got a strange lilting accent that’s different from the accents the other trolls have.

“Hello,” you reply. You can hear Dave facepalming behind you. You turn to shoot a glare at him but he’s already engaged in a conversation with Karkat once again. What a fucking hypocrite. You notice she’s carrying a bag, presumably filled with gifts. “Is that for me?”

“It’s for all of you, actually.”

“Are you going to give it to me?”

“I don’t know, can I give you a gift if we’re not technically celebrating your birthday?” She smirks at you, you don’t know when Kanaya Maryam became so snarky. She probably picked it up from you.

“I believe it’s just good manners to give someone a gift at their siblings birthday party when their siblings have the same birthday as them.”

She smiles warmly at you. “Later,” she assures. Just then your phone buzzes, which is strange because you have the conversation on mute after a particularly long argument between Dave and Karkat about the semantics of time travel.

uranianUmbra [UU] joined “FRU1TY RUMPUS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an active chum!
tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!
TG: >:O!!!!!!!
TG: hi!!
UU: hi!!
UU: yoU probably all know by now that this gathering is in fact a birthday party!
UU: well will be a birthday party.
arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!
AG: It was supposed to be a secret!
grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: You Know That Virtually Nothing Gets By Rose

GA: Also You Entrusted Karkat With That Knowledge And He Cant Lie To Save His Life

AG: God I can’t do anything nice for you people without you ruining it!

TT: I don’t think you’ve done enough nice things for us to have an informed opinion on that.

TT: Besides, no one in my family actually enjoys surprises.

AG: What8ver!

UU: oh yes! the birthday party.

UU: vriska contacted me and asked if you could have it in my cave.

UU: well, she didn’t give me much of a choice, really.

UU: i left some gifts for you!

TG: so ur not gonna be there :( 

UU: no i will not be attending UnfornUnately.

UU: i really do wish i could be there! But i’m tied up at home.

TG: :((

UU: :U

UU: i do hope you enjoy your birthday party!

UU: i hope you like my gifts ^u^ 

TG: i will!

TG: can i message u in private or r u busy

UU: you can message me But i’m not sure how long i’ll be available

TG: okie

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: so if this is a bday party where tf is everyone

TT: They are most likely on their way.

TG: ykow i was gonna type out a response but then i realized this is fucking ridiculous you’re right there

TT: And yet you typed out a response anyways.
TT: …

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an idle chum!

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!

You glance up from your phone and see Roxy typing intensely on her phone. Dave is talking to Karkat once more, and Kanaya has taken a seat on one of the rails of the tracks. You walk over and sit next to her. You sit in a comfortable silence next to her for a while, drinking in the green glow of the evergreen forest. She sighs quietly.

You make a sound of curiosity. “Hmm?”

“It’s nothing. Sometimes I just feel as though I’m wasting my life away.” She pauses. “Well, not necessarily. I just often feel stuck, like I’m too young to do anything important, but too old to do nothing. And that feeling seeps over into my emotions as well. I’m too young to be miserable, but too old to be happy.”

You ponder this for a moment. You know she’s keeping the whole truth from you, so you decide to address the unspoken. “Age is relative. You must break from societal constraints in order to truly “do something”. You must find the cracks in reality and rip them open. In order to accomplish, you must tear everything down and build from the ground up. Creation is not an antonym of destruction, it’s a step in its process. To “be something” you need to consciously choose to be unafraid of the carnage that comes with innovation.” You look up from your feet and over to her. “Will you be unafraid?”

She stares right back at you and you almost know exactly what she’s thinking. It’s the almost that keeps you from acting.

She looks away. “I think you’re being a hypocrite.”

You know you are. “For what reason?”

“I think I’m being a hypocrite too.”

You smile at her, then turn away and stare down the abandoned train tracks. You can see Vriska, Terezi, and Sollux approaching. That means everyone’s here.

You stay seated. You want to sit with Kanaya a little longer.

You don’t get up until Terezi is a stone throw away. Literally. She throws a pebble at Dave.

“Let’s get this show on the road,” Dave announces, a bright red mark staining his temple from where the pebble hit him.

You rise to your feet and offer Kanaya your hands, despite being fully aware she is perfectly capable of getting up herself.

The eleven of you head into the woods. The sun has barely begun to dip into the sky. There’s a soft, warm glow that is scattered by the shade cast by the trees. You drink in the scenery, you’re intoxicated with the feeling of it all and the knowledge that Kanaya is by your side, hand occasionally brushing yours.
You all reach the river and most everyone starts to take their shoes and socks off. Dave stops and
stands in the river, he seems happy. He’s looking up at the sky, presumably as drunk on the
strangeness of it all as you are. You stand next to him and look up as well.

“It’s so crazy,” he says, shaking his head a little in disbelief.

“What is?”

“Shit. Life. Everything, really.”

“Eloquent,” you remark.

“Shut up, Rose.” He tears his gaze away from the sky and continues on. You follow him.

Soon, you all reach the cave. Before you can walk in, Kanaya nudges you, and hands you a present.
Your present. It’s perfectly wrapped, yet still obviously done by hand.

You stare at it for at least thirty seconds in mild apprehension and quiet joy.

“Are you going to open it?” She asks, smiling.

“Probably.” You take a deep breath, and quell your hatred of your birthday with the happiness that
Kanaya got you a gift.

You carefully peel the tape of the wrapping paper on one side, and slide the box out. Once said box
is open, you notice a brand new version of Kanaya’s favorite lipstick sitting on top of the tissue
paper. The implications of that aren’t lost on you. You pocket it and smile at her. She looks nervous
and you hate that. You take the rest of the gift out of the box and hold it up.

It’s a black, high collared, leather jacket. On it is a patch of Rhogog, with a demonic red eye and
sprawling black limbs that just so happen to be tipped in the color you use on Pesterchum. It’s, to put
it simply, fucking perfect.

“I sewed the jacket myself, but I ordered the patch online and I know Rhogog isn't your favorite but
it was the coolest looking patch and I left the link to the shop in the box in case you wanted more and
I could sew them on for you. There’s also some stickers in the box for your computer. And—”

The fact that she thinks you might not like it almost makes you laugh. “Kanaya,” you interrupt. “It’s
fucking perfect,” you say, vocalizing your thought from earlier. She beams at you.

Before your impulse control can kick in, you’re hugging Kanaya. Her arms wrap around you and
squeeze and this is by far the best birthday you’ve ever had.

You’re starting to realize that this is toeing the line between “friendship” and “something more”. You
ignore said realization. What’s a little hugging between gal pals?

“I love it,” you say, and you feel her smiling against your cheek.

Eventually, you do break apart, and follow everyone else inside the cave. You put the jacket on,
because it’s cold and also because Kanaya gave it to you. You think you might love her. You’re not
sure yet.

You halt that thought in its tracks and shove it away to be dealt with at a later date. A later date called
never.

You all sit down on the floor of the cave to presumably to play the games Terezi brought and open
presents. Terezi and Vriska squabble over a bean bag chair until they remember they’re dating and decide to share.

Kanaya hands out the rest of her gifts. All of them seem to be handmade. Dave gets some curtains with tiny crows printed on them, he looks a tiny bit confused until Kanaya says it’s for his makeshift darkroom and then his face lights up. Roxy receives a pink hoodie with cat ears. Finally, Dirk opens up his present. It’s an apron with a shitty horse embroidered on it that says “whores” on the front. He looks absolutely delighted.

“I read some of Dave’s comics and tried my hand at your human irony.”

“Kanaya, I think you might just be a fucking natural,” Dirk is grinning.

“Me next!” Terezi chimes. She then dispenses shitty drawings of you and your respective gifts. You receive a knitted hat in the form of a squid and Dave gets a pair of shades identical to his own, but with red lenses.

“In case you ever wanna mix things up a little,” Terezi says with her unnerving grin.

She gives Dirk a book of complex math equations (“with annotations!”), and Roxy a book on coding, with a list she wrote on ideas for projects.

Vriska goes after her, and you get a pair of knitting needles with little skulls at the top. Roxy, one of those “anime tiddy” mouse pads, but with a wizard instead of an anime girl and two fireballs he’s casting instead of breasts. Dirk gets a horse mask, and Dave a poster with a crow skeleton. You’re honestly surprised Vriska knows you so well. And that she cared enough to actually get you gifts.

Sollux gives you all flash drives, except Roxy, who he gives a hacked version of Pokemon Moon. When you ask him what’s on them, he merely replies with “you’ll see”. Aradia gives you all books she think you’d like. Dirk gets Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep, Dave, something called The Carpet People. Roxy is already engrossed in A Wrinkle in Time. You’re overjoyed to receive a volume of the complete works of H.P. Lovecraft.

Nepeta gives Dave a fidget cube, and some regurgitated hawk pellets, that everyone except her and Dave seem disgusted by.

“There’s also some latex gloves, if you want to use them. They’re essentially just a bunch of little mouse skeletons so I thought you’d like them!” Nepeta says cheerily. “I live on a ranch so they were pretty easy to find.”

He gives the rest of you fully colored drawings of yourselves as furries.

“This is going on my wall,” Dirk says, in awe.

Karkat gives you a really nice writing journal with a pen. You’re actually pretty excited about it; you haven’t handwritten anything in years. You tell him so.

“I find that creativity flows better when handwriting.”

He nods. “Yeah I think so too.”

Dirk receives an advanced robotics kit, but you figure he’ll probably finish it in an hour, tops. Karkat gives Roxy a light shaped like a cat that turns on when you tap it, and a book called A Brief History of Nearly Everything.
“I know you like science, but I’m not really sure which ones, so I figured I’d just get you a book on everything. Maybe you’ll find something you like.” He seems nervous.

“I love it!” She beams at him.

He gives Dave some really nice knock-off Beats since “you’re always fucking complaining about how shitty yours are”. He also gives him a polaroid camera.

Finally, the long and arduous process of passing around gifts is finished. Well, almost. You decide to wait to open uranianUmbra’s gifts until the end.

“You guys must of spend so much fucking money on us. You didn’t need to do that,” Dave says, looking specifically at Karkat, who looks like he’s internally screaming. Then again, that’s what he normally looks like.

“I got it on sale,” Terezi says.

“Yeah so did I.”

“I literally made everything myself.”

“Me as well.”

“I already owned all the books. My initials are in all of them.”

“I went to the same sale as Terezi and then we made out afterwards.”

“The only thing I bought was the fidget cube!”

Dave grins. “Okay maybe you didn’t spend that much money on us.”

“It’s not like you guys are worth it anyways,” Vriska says and you’re not even sure if she’s joking.

Roxy gasps as like she’s been struck with genius. “Guys. Guys.”

“What?”

“We should play Egyptian Rat Screw.”

“With eleven people?”

“Yesss, Rosey it would be so much FUN.”

“That means everyone would start off with approximately five cards,” you know your going to play it anyways. It does honestly sound like fun.

“We have two decks!”

“Would anyone mind explaining what the fuck Egyptian Rat Fuck is?” Karkat yells.

“Screw,” Dave corrects.

“Same fucking thing.”

Dave sighs. “Okay how many of you know how to play?” None of the trolls except Aradia raise their hands.
“I find your human card games to be quite entertaining,” she explains.

Dave then goes through the process of explaining how to play. No one understands him, of course, so you occasionally chime in with important things and figure they can sink or swim.

Dave is the undisputed champion of the game in your family, and he proves it by winning two rounds in ten minutes. Most of the trolls are pretty average, with Karkat being exceptionally bad, and Aradia and Kanaya being exceptionally good.

Karkat lets out a string of obscenities every time he (inevitably) loses. Dave keeps laughing and smiling at him, and you wonder about that.

After a playing a few rounds, it’s down to just Dave and Kanaya again, and she beats him for the second time.

“I think you’re the only person whose ever beaten me at this game.”

“He’s lying. Rose beat him once when they were five.”

“That was ten years ago, that doesn’t count.”

You smile, and your heart feels strangely full. You still hate your birthday as an idea, but you certainly don’t hate this one.

You tried to keep in touch with Dirk and Dave over the years, but with your parents refusal to see each other and your father “homeschooling” Dirk and Dave, you never really got to see them. You didn’t get Pesterchum until you were ten, so that was five years of absolutely no interaction between you and your brothers. You missed them. You missed this. This feeling of home that you’ve never felt within your house’s walls.

Terezi tries to get you to play a board game, but everyone points out there’s too many people. She smirks and says that she’ll come up with her own game that all of you can play at a later date. She sits down and starts writing in her notebook, occasionally cackling to herself.

The stars begin to shine lightly, and the sun is scarcely visible in the sky. Dirk and Dave seem antsy, so you say that everyone should probably get home.

The four of you sit down to open uranianUmbra’s gifts before you leave. Dave gets a record called *Night Versions: Essential Duran Duran*, which he seems pretty excited about. Dirk carefully opens a box that contains a 3D horse puzzle. You receive a chess set, along with a lengthy manual on how to play. You’ve actually always wanted to learn how to play.

Roxy goes last and when she opens it her face lights up and crashes simultaneously. You peer over her shoulder, and you realize why. It’s a Gameboy Advance and Pokemon: LeafGreen.

“Are those…” You trail off.

“Yeah these are the same ones mom threw away,” Roxy exhales. When Roxy was nine your mother was drunk cleaning the house and “accidentally” threw away Roxy’s Gameboy Advance and some of her games.

Roxy blinks. “We should head out now,” she says, glancing at the sky outside.

You start the long walk home. Dusk has always been your favorite time of day. When the sun dips into the hills, there’s a strange sense of equilibrium. Purple lights up the horizon and tints the sky.
You inhale the cool air, and glance over to Kanaya.

She’s beautiful. You could go off on a long tangent in your head praising her appearance, but that’s really all there is to say on the matter.

You wonder if you’ll ever be able to tell her that.

When you get home, you shrug off the jacket, and carefully hang it in your closet. You collapse onto your bed.

The thought that you might be in love with Kanaya surfaces and suddenly you’re angry and sad.

You realize you’re afraid of the unknown, yet you yearn for it. You want to push limits, to break things, to create things. You want to take new things and make them home, because old has not been a home to you in quite some time.

You’re afraid because change has always been a harbinger of hardship. It led to Dave and Dirk leaving. To your mother becoming a drunk, and Roxy becoming one, too. It’s led to anxiety and hurt and a lot of emptiness.

But you’re fucking tired of letting something that happened ten years ago rule you. You decide to take your own advice and be unafraid.

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

TT: Kanaya, I need to speak with you.

TT: Please message me back when you see this.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

You suddenly don’t care if this rips your friendship with Kanaya to shreds. Because you’re going to build something better.

Chapter End Notes

id die for comments/kudos!

my tumblr
Your name is Kanaya Maryam and you are very, very tired. You’ve been dancing around whatever you have with Rose for actual months and you’re quite sick of it. You’re almost entirely sure she feels the same, but your previous romantic entanglements haven’t been exactly clean cut.

You finish helping your moms clear the table after dinner and head to your room. You have two messages from Rose, and they’re somewhat... concerning.

You stare at your screen in a panic for a few minutes. Wondering what in the actual, genuine fuck she needs to talk about. Maybe someone told her that you like her and she’s telling you she’s not interested? Or maybe she’s telling you she IS interested. There’s a number of things it could be and not all of them good.

You eye the messages with suspicion. You can’t believe you’re allowing two lines of text to make you so worried. You decide it’s likely something inane and in a moment of courage message Rose back.

**grimAuxiliatrix [GA] began trolling tentacleTherapist [TT]**

**GA: Hello Sorry I Was At Dinner**

**TT: You’ve been online for seven minutes.**

**GA: Youve Been Watching How Long I Was Online**

**TT: Hmm.**

**TT: I believe we are at an impasse.**
TT: In more ways than one.

GA: What Is That Supposed To Mean

TT: Something I said to Dave a while ago.

GA: You Wanted To Talk About Something

TT: Yes that’s correct.

TT: First and foremost I would like to thank you for the gift.

GA: Oh

TT: Oh?

GA: I Thought You Might Say Something Else

TT: Hmm.

TT: Anyway, back to the topic at hand.

TT: Remember how I said you must not fear “the carnage that comes with innovation”? 

TT: I’ve decided not to fear.

GA: That’s Good

TT: Yes, it is.

TT: I need to tell you something.

GA: What Is It

TT: I have feelings for you.

TT: Romantic feelings.

GA: Oh Dear

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] ceased trolling tentacleTherapist [TT]

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

GA: Your Sister Tends To Say Things That Aren’t Quite Sincere Correct

TG: yeah thats like her whole jam

GA: So Theoretically

GA: If She Stated She Liked Someone It Should Be Taken With A Grain Of Salt

TG: this is all theoretical
TG: no real life pertinence whatsoever

TG: because i have one frantic rose lalonde currently lighting up our chat with her favorite shade of pretentious purple

GA: …

GA: Okay So Maybe Its Not Theoretical

TG: oh my god dude she totally likes you

TG: no sarcasm about it whatsoever

TG: i know its a first

TG: please message her back before her fingers fall off from typing so much

GA: Oh Dear

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

TT: Now if you’ll excuse me I’m going to be explaining some things so I can distract myself from the fact that you stopped trolling me without saying how you felt which is not a good sign.

TT: My therapist compared life to a house one time. On the outside we cultivate what we want people to see, while ignoring the flaws that lay on the inside. This is seen in the way people tend to their gardens and lawns. More often than not, the inside, which is only ever seen by family and close friends, is left to the wayside.

TT: So while I tend carefully to my intelligence, my capacity to be angry is left untamed and ignored.

TT: My therapist also said that some people, never let people inside their house, so therefore they never correct the flaws that lay inside, only keeping up appearances while the inside is a dilapidated wreck.

TT: I, unfortunately, have the tendency to do this.

TT: It comes down to nature and nurture. Not nature versus nurture, because they work cooperatively.

TT: We are shaped by the code that lay inside us and the unpredictability that lay around us.

TT: This is getting overly convoluted so I’ll try to get to the point.

TT: I am destructive and angry and I can be cruel and unempathetic. My mother is an alcoholic and my sister is becoming one as well.

TT: I tend to flaunt my intelligence because I’m not entirely secure in it.
TT: I have the compulsive need to understand everything and everyone around me and I think I’m going insane because of it.

TT: I can be passive aggressive but also violent.

TT: I close myself off to the world and I don’t let anyone in, yet I expect people to like me, even when I won’t allow them to know me.

TT: Yet you, inexplicably, seem to understand me, and I like you all the more because of it.

TT: I discovered that I like you a great deal more than initially planned.

TT: However, I can’t expect you to like you back unless I “let you in”.

TT: So this is me letting you in.

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] began trolling tentacleTherapist [TT]

GA: How Did You Type All Of That In What Wouldve Been Like Forty Seconds

TT: Oh, you’re back.

TT: I type fast.

TT: I’m very sorry that I misread our friendship and I do hope this little fiasco doesn’t affect it.

GA: What No

GA: You Didn’t Misread Anything

GA: I Like You As Well

TT: Oh thank god.

GA: And Since You Shared Some Things With Me I Would Like To Do The Same As Well

TT: That’s not necessary.

GA: I Want To

TT: Okay.

GA: I Too Can Be Unempathetic

GA: But For An Entirely Different Reason

GA: I Tend To Do Whatever Is Necessary

GA: And That Is Ultimately Not A Bad Thing

GA: However I Put Other Peoples Feelings And Wellbeing Before My own

GA: This Has Led To Me Becoming Somewhat Of An Emotionally Stunted Person
GA: Stunted In The Sense That I Don't Know How To Manage My Emotions

GA: So I Repress Them

GA: I Tend To Force Anything That So Much As Seems Like An Emotion Into A Dark Corner So What I Need To Do Gets Done

GA: I Seem Collected And Calm But Really

GA: I'm Just Like You

GA: I'm Sick And Sad And All Around A Wreck

GA: I Even Tried To Ignore My Feelings For You Due To Previous Romantic Troubles

GA: Which I Could Not Do

GA: Before We Continue Any Further I Felt I Should Tell You That I Come With My Own Set Of Problems And I'm Not A Solution To Yours

GA: I Have Been Trying To Put My Own Health First

GA: That Being Said I Do Really Like You

TT: I understand.

TT: However I must address something.

TT: I like you for your selflessness, but I recognize the fact that people need to put themselves first in most situations. I would hope that you look out for your own wellbeing before mine.

TT: I do not expect you to fix my problems, I do not expect you to be a shining example of mental health, because no one really is.

TT: I like you for who you are, not for what you can do for me.

TT: I enjoy your company and find conversations with you to be engaging. I want to be around you and I want you to be as happy as I am when I'm with you.

TT: That being said, I do hate when people don't communicate with me.

TT: As I mentioned earlier, I need to understand everything, and if you shut me out for no reason it will drive me insane.

TT: I could go on, but this conversation is really quite heavy and it's preventing me from enjoying the fact that you actually like me.

GA: I Know Holy Shit

GA: I Never Thought It Would Happen

TT: Neither did I.
TT: I’m quite happy we got it sorted out. TT: I believe I’ve been emotionally vulnerable enough for one day and I’m frankly exhausted so I’m going to go to bed.

GA: Goodnight

TT: Goodnight.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

TT: I really like you.

GA: I Really Like You As Well

GA: Though If You Wanted To Flee The Country And Never Speak Of This/To Me Again I Wouldn’t Blame You

TT: As tempting as that is I really do enjoy speaking to you.

TT: That’s enough “useless lesbianism” for one night.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] began trolling carcinoGeneticist [CG]

GA: I Have Two Things To Tell You

CG: LIKE WHAT?

GA: First Of All Rose Told Me She Liked Me

CG: THE WORD IS CONFESSED AND DAVE TOLD ME BUT GO ON.

GA: Second Of All We Had A Very Long Conversation And Im Still Confused

CG: WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

GA: I Think I Have A Girlfriend

GA: But Im Not Sure

GA: Im Going To Go To Sleep

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] ceased trolling carcinoGeneticist [CG]

CG: *YOU THINK?*

CG: OH MY GOD KANAYA I NEED ALL THE AWKWARD DETAILS!
CG: TOMORROW IS SATURDAY SO I CAN’T GET YOU AT SCHOOL BUT YOU *WILL* BE TELLING ME EVERYTHING.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: everyones favorite useless lesbians got a little less useless

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

TT: Dave I will kill you in real life.

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an idle chum!

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: I Would Take Her Word On That

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an idle chum!

You go to bed with your heart feeling full and when you wake up the next morning the feeling has not gone away. You lay in bed think about what Karkat said about you loving Rose.

You ponder what it means to love.

You wonder if there's a strict set of rules for what it means to love someone. Maybe you make the rules yourself.

Once you’ve gone through your morning routine, you sit down at the computer, and read the messages in the groupchat.

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

GC: :?

GC: WH4T 3X4CTLY H4PP3N3D L4ST N1GHT

TG: you know

TG: the usual

TG: oh and rose and kanaya finally bit the bullet i guess thats important

GC: WH4T!?!?

GC: CONGR4TS!
arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

AG: Terezi why are you up at this ungodly hour.

GC: WHY 4R3 *YOU*

AG: My phone woke me up.

GC: 4W SORRY B4B3

TG: gross

GC: W41T WHY 4R3 YOU UP?

TG: you say that like i've slept at all

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

CG: DAVE OH MY GOD GET SOME FUCKING SLEEP FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE.

TG: shut up karkat you're not my real mom

CG: I'M NOT YOUR MOM AT ALL?

TG: haha oh man

TG: trolls are funny

ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

EB: hi everybody!

CG: WHY THE FUCK IS JOHN UP?

TG: dude was up with me having a sexuality crisis

EB: dave!

EB: i was going to tell them!

TG: sorry man i was excited

TG: my best bro has finally joined the not cishet club

TG: we should make pins for ourselves

TG: whatever are we going to do without our token straight though

TG: we will all descend into a useless gay hell

EB: haha oh man

EB: there's no one to keep us in line
EB: this really will become a big gay dating fest!

EB: oh yeah! congrats rose and kanaya!

TG: speaking of which is there anybody who caused our token straight to turn tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

TT: Do try to be a little less obvious, dear brother.

TG: im not gay for john rose

TT: Oh no, certainly not anymore.

TT: You have another person to pine over.

TG: rose what the fuck does that mean tentacleTherapist [TT] is an idle chum!

TG: rose
goddamnit

EB: ...anyways

EB: nope! there’s not anyone

EB: i just sort of realized that every single one of my friends and family are at least somewhat gay and i just sort of thought about it for a while

EB: i think i was just pressured by society into thinking i was straight!

EB: but when literally everyone you’re surrounded by is gay then that pressure starts to go away!

EB: i don’t think im gonna date anyone until im more secure with it though

EB: even though i like boys and girls i dont think i should date anyone until ive accepted it!

TG: yeah that makes sense

TG: im glad youre cool with it now

EB: yeah it took a while to even get used to the idea

EB: i’m still coming to terms with it honestly?

TG: yeah dude thats okay

TG: realizing i was both gay and a boy simultaneously was a fucking trip

TG: i just remember dirk being fourteen and being like “im a boy” and i was like wait thats a fucking thing?
TG: so i just sort of discovered being trans through him

TG: and it was *really* hard

TG: because its been enforced that you can only be this and if your anything different you can only be different in that aspect and nothing else

TG: if that makes sense

TG: sometimes i get worried that im just a confused cis girl

TG: but less often anymore

TG: coming to terms with sexuality and gender identity can take a lifetime and the most we can do is try to be happy along the way

EB: yeah!

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: Hello Everyone

TG: hey

TG: rose will you come back online now and tell me what the fuck you meant

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

TT: Hello Kanaya.

GA: Hi

TG: okay just ignore me then

gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!

GG: That sure is quite a few messages!

GG: Oh dear John is gay too now?

GG: Welcome to the club!

TG: haha yeah

TG: the gay club consists only of the coolest kids in town

CG: EVERYONE KNOWS YOU’RE NOT COOL, DAVE.

TG: stfu karkat

GG: I can’t believe all sixteen of the people in this groupchat aren’t straight!

TG: everyone knows groupchats are gay culture
TG: actually i have a correction
TG: everything i enjoy is gay culture and thats final

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an active chum!
TG: pokeman has been and always will be gay culture
TG: the straights get NOTHING
TG: nah they can have hating your partner and football
TG: dave
TG: davey oh my god ur so RIGHT
TG: youre not drunk are you?
TG: nah dude sober as the day i wsa born
TG: actualy thats not a good example bc our mom was probably drunk as hell when giving birth
TG: *drunk
TG: haha drunk
TG: drunk
EB: drunk
TG: drunk?
TG: drunk.
TG: god we’re fuckin hilarious
TG: damn right we are
TT: I do hate to interrupt this invigorating conversation but does anyone want to do something today?
TT: I find that I’m quite bored.
TG: just admit you want to seen kanaya rose
TT: Shut up, Dave.
TG: that means im right
TG: and sorry dude me and dirk are trapped inside the apartments currently so youll have to do your awkward date plus nine other people later
TT: What do you mean “trapped”?
TG: nothing were just tied up

TT: Hmm.

golgothasTerror [GT] is an active chum!

GT: You guys are making quite a bit of chitchat!

GT: I dare say its a hullabaloo!

TT: A hullabaloo requires a commotion or a conflict, of which there is none.

TG: (rose correcting jake on his sayings is by far the funniest thing ive seen to date)

EB: (i know right)

TT: You cretins do realize that enclosing your words in parentheses does not conceal them from view.

TG: (oh shit i think shes onto us)

EB: (what does cretin mean)

TT: (Loosely defined it means idiot.)

TG: (oh shit rose when did you get here)

CG: I HATE ALL OF YOU.

TG: (what is he saying i cant understand him)

EB: (maybe he’s speaking alternian?)

CG: (i said i hate all of you.)

TG: HOLY FUCK

CG: WHAT?

TG: karkles dude holy shit

TG: thats the first time youve dropped your shoutiness

TG: are you even ready for that kind of emotional vulnerability

GT: I do believe i can call it a hullabaloo now!

TT: It seems that way.

TT: That’s to be expected when it comes to Dave.

TG: god rose leave me alone

GT: Oh thats right!
GT: I got so distracted by the commotion that it completely slipped my mind!

GT: Dave do you know where in tarnation dirk is?

GT: I need help with some of my math.

TG: dirks busy rn

TG: dude just ask roxy shes just as smart as him

TG: if not smarter

TG: *smarter

GT: Gosh dangit youre right!

GT: Roxy would you mind?

TG: not at all just dm me

TG: haha

TG: slide into thos dms

TG: haha anyways

TG: im so fucking bored

TT: It’s been approximately five seconds since everyone stopped talking and you’re already bored.

TT: Also, you could’ve taken me up on the offer to do something as everyone else seems to be free.

TG: yeah well im not

TT: No need to get snappy.

TG: whatever

CG: WHAT UNGODLY BEING CRAWLED UP YOUR ASS?

TG: god everyone with the fucking questions

TG: just leave me the fuck alone!

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!

TT: ...

TT: As dramatic as that was I am a bit concerned.

CG: I’LL MESSAGE HIM.
tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

TT: I feel the need to clarify something.

GA: What Is It

TT: We’re dating, correct?

GA: If You Want To

TT: Do you?

GA: Do You Even Need To Ask

TT: Yes.

GA: Yes I Want To

TT: Okay then I guess that’s settled.

TT: I feel a bit foolish now.

GA: Its Okay I Was Confused About The Matter As Well

TT: Okay.

TT: I can’t promise I’ll be an ideal g*irlfriend because even the word r*lationsh*p makes me uncomfortable but I really do want to date you.

GA: Why Did You Censor Girlfriend And Relationship

TT: ...

TT: I don’t know honestly.

TT: I guess my intimacy issues just run that deep.

GA: Haha

TT: I do wish we could talk longer but Roxy usually starts drinking as soon as possible and it’s about that time.

TT: We’ll talk later?

GA: Of Course

TT: I’ll look forward to it.

GA: Oh Yes Myself As Well
You switch back over to the groupchat, but there’s no new messages. You close out of trollian and walk over to the desk your sewing machine resides on. You pull the sketchbook that holds your ideas out of its drawer and flip through it. You don’t really feel like working on any of them.

Lately, you’ve been too tired to do the things you love. You’re stretched thin between school and friends and life in general. You think back to what you said to Rose. About being stuck. You’re not sure she understood you. You don’t feel frustrated, you mostly feel… empty. Hollowed out. Because you’re not okay but you don’t want to deal with that right now.

For some reason, you’re hit with a wave of fear. This thing with Rose has barely started and you’re suddenly positive you’re going to ruin it. Because that’s what you do, right? You ruin things. You meddle in everyone’s lives including your own, instead of just “letting things happen”. Letting things happen never seems to help, though. And neither does attempting to fix things.

Maybe things just aren’t built to work out. Maybe life is all one sick joke where nothing ever works, no matter what you do.

Maybe everything is futile in the face of time.

You really hope that’s not the case.

Chapter End Notes

if you do want to rabbit with me it will be in the next chapter!

also the next chapter is kind of broken up into two parts bc the first part is pretty short. so the next two chapters are both karkats pov and take place on like the same day

my tumblr
i've got miles of regrets and confusing friends

Chapter Notes

theres a link to a rabbit in the chapter if any of you want to join! ill link it at the bottom too!

chapter title from meteor shower by cavetown!

btw this chapter is mostly filler and p short

See the end of the chapter for more notes

carcinoGeneticist [CG] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

CG: HEY

CG: YOU OKAY?

TG: yeah im fine

CG: ARE YOU SURE?

TG: haha no

TG: could you just leave me alone for today

TG: i dont mean that in the dick way i just want to be left alone

CG: OKAY.

CG: BEFORE I GO CAN YOU AT LEAST TELL ME WHAT’S WRONG?

TG: sorry dude shits classified info

CG: ASSHOLE.

TG: really karkat? in these trying times?

CG: GOD YOU’RE SUCH AN ASSHOLE.

TG: youre so mean to me

TG: no but really im fine

TG: probably

CG: ...

CG: OKAY
CG: I’LL TALK TO YOU LATER, YOU SLIMY BULGE CANOE

TG: love you too karkles

CG: DON’T FUCKING CALL ME THAT

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] began trolling carcinoGeneticist [CG]

GA: Do You Ever Think That Failure Is Inevitable

CG: WHAT DO YOU THINK?

GA: I May Be Having A Crisis

CG: WHAT ABOUT?

GA: No Matter What I Seem To Do Everything Fails

GA: If I Meddle People Get Annoyed And If I Don’t People Get Tired

CG: I DON’T THINK YOU NEED TO WORRY ABOUT YOUR THING WITH ROSE NOT WORKING OUT.

CG: YOU TWO WERE LIKE FUCKING MADE FOR EACHOTHER.

GA: I Really Hope It Works Out

GA: But Im Not Sure

CG: NO ONE IS EVER SURE.

CG: WE’RE ALL FUCKING CONFUSED AND PRETENDING WE KNOW WHAT’S GOING ON SO NO ONE ELSE CATCHES ON.

CG: BUT EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING THE SAME.

CG: AND SO THE SNAKE EATS ITS TAIL.

CG: ONE WHOLE BIG LOOP OF KEEPING UP APPEARANCES FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE ALSO KEEPING UP APPEARANCES.

CG: WE’RE ALL JUST TEETERING ON THE EDGE OF FAILURE CONSTANTLY, KEEPING OURSELVES FROM INEVITABLY FALLING INTO AN ABYSS BY SHEER FORCE OF HOPE.

CG: NOTHING REALLY MATTERS IN LIFE, THE MOST YOU CAN DO IS HOPE YOU FIND SOMETHING WORTHWHILE AND MAKE IT LAST.

CG: HOWEVER, TRUST ME WHEN I TELL YOU THAT I THINK YOU AND ROSE
WILL BE FINE.

GA: Thats Surprisingly Helpful

CG: WOW RUDE.

GA: I Just Meant That For How Bleak It Seemed It Made Me Feel Better

CG: WELCOME TO MY WORLD.

CG: SOMEHOW BEING SO PESSIMISTIC YOU BREAK THROUGH TO OPTIMISM.

GA: Haha

GA: Thats As Dave Would Call It A Mood

GA: Speaking Of Which How Is He

CG: NOT SO GREAT BUT HE ASKED ME TO LEAVE HIM ALONE SO I DID.

GA: Hmm

CG: GOD YOU AND ROSE ARE EERILY SIMILAR SOMETIMES.

GA: In Reality Were Very Different People

CG: I KNOW BUT GOD.

GA: I Should Get Back To My Existential Crisis

GA: Thank You For Helping With That By The Way

CG: YEAH NO PROBLEM.

CG: DESPITE APPEARANCES I'D PROBABLY DO ANYTHING FOR MY FRIENDS.

GA: What About Vriska

CG: UH

CG: NO COMMENT.

GA: Haha

GA: Ill Talk To You Later

CG: OKAY.

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]
The misconception about depression is that you feel sad all the time. In reality, you feel sad about forty percent of the time, and a strange combination of frustration and hollowness makes up the rest of it.

Your world is not colored in blue or grey or even black. The only color is a bright, blinding white that extends forever. You are but an infinitesimal dot in your infinitely blank world. Perhaps that’s why writing helps. Maybe it’s like taking crayons and coloring on the forever empty canvas of your life. However, it is just a single drawing on miles of empty paper. It’s like getting your arm cut off and putting a bandaid over it.

You decide to write, anyways. You open up the program you use and type until your fingers feel numb. You mute trollian and write until a tiny piece of the emptiness dissipates. And you keep writing, still. When you’re done, you check the time, and it is hours later. It doesn’t feel like you wrote enough for the amount of time, but you shove that thought down. This is supposed to be a positive thing.

You check Trollian. Dave still hasn’t come back online and you try to stifle your worry. Dave’s your friend. Your best friend even, as unlikely as you are to admit that. You know your not his, that title belongs to John, but you don’t mind. The fact of the matter is that you’re friends with Dave. You worry about him. He’s infuriatingly vague and you often get the feeling he’s hiding something. You’re also pretty sure he couldn’t express an emotion if he wanted to. The few times he has did nothing to lessen your concern.

You sigh and elect to message him tomorrow. He did say he wanted to be left alone.

You open up the groupchat, not even bothering to read messages as you scroll through them.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

CG: AMAZING! MAN’S FRIENDS MANAGE TO SEND 300 MESSAGES AND NOT ONE OF THEM IS IMPORTANT!

TT: No one ever said this groupchat was for important things.

TT: No one also ever said that any of us had any impulse control.

CG: OKAY FAIR.

uranianUmbra [UU] is an active chum!

UU: hello everyone!

TG: hi!!!! :D

UU: ^u^ 

UU: sorry i haven’t really been active the past day!

UU: i’ve been very bUsy.

TG: tis okay!!

TG: *its
TG: thank you so much for the gifts!
TG: i didnt even know you remembered that i told you that
UU: i'm very glad you liked them!
TT: I really do appreciate the chess set.
UU: perhaps we can play sometime!
TT: I'd like that.
AA: i too enjoy chess
AA: i'd like to play you as well
CG: ARADIA WHY DO YOU KNOW HOW TO PLAY ALL THESE HUMAN GAMES?
AA: we had chess on alternia
AA: besides i get quite bored
AA: and it helps me cope with the dpd
AA: i find that fixating on cards or something tends to help
TG: wait what's dpd
AA: its a disorder i have
AA: depersonalization disorder
AA: its very hard to explain
AA: you know how a flash drive can store information on it
AA: but can also be disconnected from the source 0f said information
AA: its sort of like that
AA: a disconnect between yourself and the source
AA: the source being the world and your body and everything else people who don't have dpd feel connected to
TG: i think i get it!
TG: that sounds really hard
AA: it is
AA: but im definitely recovering
AA: which is also hard because im not really used to emotions 0_0
AA: s0 when s0mething d0es get thr0ugh i d0nt kn0w h0w t0 deal with it

AA: i tend t0 just freak 0ut 0_0

TG: aw man that sucks

AA: yeah

TG: spaeking of mental shit

TG: i think im gonna start going to therapy

TG: *speaking

TT: Are you serious?

TG: yep!

TG: i htought about it for a while

TG: and i decided i need to get help

TT: I’m very glad you’ve come to this realization.

TG: ya me too

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: oh shit me too

TT: When did this happen?

TG: oh fuck

TG: i just realized i never told yall

TG: i thought nepeta would tell you lmao

arsenicCatnip [AC] is an active chum!

AC: :33< oh! i wasn’t fur if you wanted me to so i didn’t!

TT: Anyone else feel extremely out of the loop?

TG: yup

CG: I ACTUALLY KNOW WHAT’S GOING ON FOR ONCE.

TG: so i got diagnosed with autism

TT: And this very important fact just happened to slip your mind?

TG: haha yeah
TG: anyways im starting therapy with an asd specialist next week
TT: That means Dirk is the only one of the StriLondes that doesn’t go.
TG: yeah i tried to get him to do it but he didnt want to
TT: That is to be expected.
TG: haha yeah

gardenGnostic [GG] is an active chum!

GG: hi everyone!

TG: hey jade
ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

EB: hi!

TG: okay this is ridiculous why are we pretending like weve just become friends as if you two havent sent me pictures of trash at three in the morning with the caption “u”

EB: haha!

GG: thats just become a running gag at this point

TG: seriously

TG: up grabbing a midnight snack? might as well snag a picture of my garbage can to tell dave hes trash

TT: I must say I feel quite left out.

TT: You know I love making fun of Dave.

TG: wow does everyone just get a kick out of being mean to me? rude

GG: were not being mean to you!

GG: were just teasing you! let us know if we go too far though

TG: oh no haha youre cool i was joking

TT: Besides who else is going to knock your massive ego down a peg.

TG: oh please rose you know i only pretend to be confident for the crippling self-esteem issues i actually have

TT: Oh I know.

TT: But someone has to tell you that we see through your bullshit and know who you really are.
TT: Consider it our way of supporting you.

TG: that made me feel surprisingly valid

CG: WE’RE ALL VALID AS FUCK IN THIS CHAT.

TG: damn straight

TG: i got validness spewing out of my ass

EB: you had to make it gross didn’t you dave

TG: excuse you nothing about my ass is gross

TG: i have one fine ass and everyone knows it

TG: ur ass flat as fuck

TG: betrayed by my own sister

TG: rox how could you do this to me

TG: just speaking the truth

timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!

TT: Don’t listen to her, Dave.

TT: Striders have ass for days.

TT: We’re related so technically you just said me and Roxy have “ass for days” as well.

TT: Dirk coming out of the left field with the incestuous comments.

TT: Usually it’s Dave making them.

TG: can we just agree were all hot as fuck and move on

TG: i second that motioon

TG: i really dont want rose to give is a disseration on dave and dirks (mosylt daves) fruedian slips

TT: Fine.

TT: Oh I am so genius.

TG: dirk i swear to god i see you eyeing that plant dont you dare eat it oh my god hes eating it

TG: update hes spitting it out

TG: goddamnit dirk that was my last living succulent

TT: ...Is this a regular occurence?
TT: Yes and before you start psychoanalyzing me Dave does it too.

TG: you swallow a few quarters one time

TT: I… Hmm.

TG: oh my god i think we stumped rose

TG: our habit of eating weird shit has finally stumped the unstumpable rose lalonde

TT: I have to say that I don’t quite understand it.

TT: What’s there to understand?

TT: I’m a simple man, I see something tasty looking, I eat it.

TG: plese never buy tide pods

EB: oh yeah dave eats weird stuff all the time!

GG: can confirm!

CG: DAVE

CG: DAVE WHAT THE FUCK?

TG: sorry dude i like putting things in my mouth

TG: wait fuck no

TT: And yet another Freudian slip from Dave.

TG: fucking christ why am i like this

CG: I WONDER THAT SAME THING EVERY DAY.

TG: wow fuck you too karkat

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

GC: I TH1NK 34T1NG “W31RD” TH1NGS 1S TOT4LLY 4CC3PT4BL3

CG: SAYS THE GIRL WHO EATS CHALK.

GC: CH4LK 1S T4STY!

CG: AM I THE ONLY NORMAL ONE IN THIS CHAT?

TG: bold claim calling yourself normal

CG: …

CG: YOU KNOW WHAT THAT’S FAIR.
arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

AG: I think Karkat’s normal.

AG: 8ecause he’s a loser!

AG: Normal is for losers!

TG: wow any more wise hot topic sayings for us today

AG: Shut up, Dave!

TG: i just realized vriska is the actual embodiment of an edgy twelve year old

TG: first of all shes mean

AG: Hey!

TG: second of all shes incredibly immature

TG: third of all she says things like “normal is for losers”

TG: fourth (fourd?) of all shes mean

AG: Sh8t 8p!

AG: When I said that what I meant is that normal is a su8jective standard created 8y the soci8y we fucking live in and people who su8scribe to soci8y are sheep!!!!!!!!!

TG: thats? surprisingly deep for the shallowest bitch alive

CG: OKAY BUT HOW DO I “SUBSCRIBE TO SOCIETY” IN ANY WAY?

AG: I don’t know! I was just 8eing mean!

TG: wow vriska seems like you have a spades thing for karkat

AG: Wh8! H8w d8re you, Str8der!!!!!!!! F8ck 8ff!!!!!!!!!

CG: NOW YOU KNOW HOW IT FEELS!

AG: Okay 8ut you’re vile and weak and I’m not.

GC: 4S MUCH 4S 1 3NJOY POK1NG FUN 4T MY G1RLFR13ND YOU SHOULD DROP THIS B3FOR3 SH3 4CTU4LLY G3TS UPS3T.

AG: Yeah!

CG: UGH FINE.

TG: [sent a link]

TG: come watch this with me fuckos
GA: What Is This

TG: its rabbit jesus do you live under a rock

CG: KAN HAVE YOU JUST BEEN LURKING THIS WHOLE TIME?

GA: Im Incredibly Confused

GA: What Is This Remote And Why Does Everyone Want It

GA: And Yes I Have Been Lurking As You Call It

TG: im not playing anything until all sixteen of you assholes are in my room

CG: WHAT ARE WE WATCHING?

TG: nnsng

CG: ABSOLUTELY *NOT*!!!!!!

CG: YOU ALREADY MADE ME SIT THROUGH THAT HELL ONCE I WILL *NOT* DO IT AGAIN.

TG: dont be a party pooper karkat

TG: twelve people are already here anxiously waiting to see the art that is nyan neko sugar girls

CG: I CAN’T BELIEVE YOU’RE MAKING ME DO THIS AGAIN.

twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!

TA: ii won’t be joiiining you guy2

TG: aw come one sollux

TG: take a break and watch a classic masterpiece

TA: fiine but only becau2e ii have nothing better two do

TG: just admit you like hanging out with us

TA: never

AC: :33< *ac wonders what this is all about!*

TG: oh man nepeta

TG: youre either going to love this ironically or love this unironically

TG: or just straight up hate it

TG: but anyways click the link!
AC: :33< okay!

TG: whas this

TG: youll find out

Chapter End Notes

my tumblr

my rabbit room! im a little worried the links not gonna work so lmk if it doesnt!
You click on the link with a sigh. Dave made you watch this before, when you were first getting to know each other, and it was so bad you couldn’t even watch all of it. It made you seriously reconsider wanting to be friends with the asshole.

You join the room and wait around for a minute or two for everyone else to join.

There’s a loud, deliberate cough, and you nearly fall out of your seat.

“JESUS FUCK DAVE.” You then realize he can’t hear you, so you turn on your microphone and scream at him again.

“I wasn’t there but I bet the look on your face was golden.”

“Fuck you,” you snap, but you know there’s no real malice behind your words.

“But did you die though.”

“I fucking could’ve,” you grumble. “Local troll falls out of chair and breaks his fucking neck due to his asshole friend.”

“But did you die though.” You can hear him smiling.

“I hate you.”

Rose clears her throat. “You do realize all of us can hear you?”

“Oh shit that’s what this button does? Man, I thought it made toaster strudel,” Dave pauses. “Yeah I realize, your fucking point?”

You can practically see Rose’s signature smirk. “Nothing just wondering. No need to be snappy.”

“Let’s get this purrty started!” Nepeta says excitedly. God no one knows what they’re getting into but you.

“Yeah, what are we watching?” asks a voice you don’t recognize. By your guess it’s John.
"Nyan Neko Sugar Girls."

"DAVE!!"

Okay, apparently John knows what he’s getting into.

"Dave for the love of fuck!"

"Wait, what’s Nyan Neko Sugar Girls?" Another voice you don’t recognize.

"Jade, you know those terrible anime screenshots that Dave sends? It’s that."

"Dave!"

"Dave please tell me this is not the show where the protagonist has poorly drawn, gigantic breasts."

"What, no. All the art in this show is amazing."

"I’ll take that as a yes, then."

"I, for one, think NNSG is a masterpiece," says Dirk.

"Finally, someone sensible."

You facepalm. “You’re calling the person who ate a succulent ten minutes ago sensible?”

"Hey, I was listening to the “monkey” part of my brain, which is the key to survival and not ruled by emotions. It’s by definition sensible."

"You know for a family of geniuses you’re all a bunch of dumbasses."

"There’s no law stating you can’t simultaneously both," Dirk points out.

"Yes, common sense and intellect are very different things." Who the fuck is this?

No one says anything so you’re guessing that nobody else knows who they are either.

"UranianUmbra?" Roxy asks tentatively.

"That’s me!"

Roxy’s grin seeps into her voice. “Oh my god hi!”

"Hello! I must say it’s quite nice to hear your voice.” You’re pretty sure you can hear Dave facepalming in the background.

Vriska’s clicky voice reaches your ears. “Are we going to watch this or what?"

"I would like to see what the fuss is about.” Jane says. Well, you think it’s Jane.

"I want to know what I’ve gotten myself into!"

"Just a masterpiece of our time, Jake," Dave replies.

"Don’t sell me a dog!"

None of you have any idea what that means. Dave takes it and runs with it anyway. “I’m gonna sell
you so many dogs Jake. Dogs are flying off the shelves. We got fucking poodles and uhhhh…
corgis. You’re going to be rich in dogs by the time this is done.”

“Are poodles and corgis seriously the only dog breeds you can name? Do you know how many
types of dog breeds there are?” You say.

“No. No I do not.” The tone of his voice clues you into the fact that he’s referencing that stupid vine
despite the context being completely different.

Jake merely laughs. Or guffaws, you guess. Whatever.

“Let’s just get this shitshow on the road,” Roxy interrupts before Dave can mix more metaphors.

Suddenly the shitty quality of Rabb.it blares into your ears as the opening theme of the hell show
comes on. Dave and Dirk immediately start singing along and you almost laugh. Almost.

Nepeta hates it. Literally hates it. You didn’t think she was capable of hating anything but here you
are.

“If they were actually ‘neko girls’, which is a stupid name, they’d act like it! They’re not even
fucking hunting! Dave!”

“Think of it this way, the show is kind of making fun of them,” he doesn’t say more. You know he
loves the show ironically so much it borders on loving it unironically. Nepeta’s enjoyment of it seems
to increase exponentially after that.

When the scene with the main guys feet (you know his name, you pretend you don’t) comes on Dirk
says “big kin mood” and everyone starts laughing/yelling/sighing. The second comment about kin
that night is when Dave says “I’m unironically kin with Vet-sama,” and you muffle a scream.
Everyone makes comments about the show throughout. Vriska, unsurprisingly, hates it, saying it’s
for a “8unch of losers”. She stays for the whole thing anyways. Terezi fucking loves it. Her robotic
cackles fill the voice channel. Aradia actually seems to enjoy it, and so does everyone else for the
most part. Once you get past the sheer horror it’s pretty funny. Everyone laughs. All in all it’s a good
night.

It’s completely ruined during the part where they’re waiting for the “vet” to get back.

“Sorry about your door.”

The vet’s demonic voice is made a hundred times worse by Rabb.it. “It’s okay. I have door
insurance.”

“DOOR INSURANCE,” Dave screams. “I FUCKING FORGOT ABOUT DOOR
INSURANCE.” He then, to put it simply, fucking loses it. He laughs for a solid three minutes.
You’re a little entranced by it, honestly.

“You okay there?” Rose asks and Dave is too busy going apeshit to respond.

“Yeah I’m good,” he says finally and you can hear the grin in his voice.

“I honestly don’t see what’s so funny about door insurance,” Rose says, and it’s the wrong thing to
say because Dave starts laughing again.

For some reason you really wish you were with him right now. You really want to see him laugh and
not just hear it through Rabb.it’s shitty voice call. You really wish you were with him andfuck fuck
You shove the thoughts down as quickly as they appeared and elect to ignore them for the rest of your life. Longer, even.

The groupchat has been pinging all night. Mostly with pictures from the show and phrases people wants to immortalize in text. Suddenly, the noise for a private message reaches your ears over the din.

gallowsCalibrator [GC] began trolling carcinoGeneticist [CG]

GC: 1 SM3LT TH4T!

CG: WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

GC: TH4T L1TTL3 G4Y MOM3NT YOU JUST H4D

CG: YOU’RE LITERALLY CRAZY BUT GO OFF I GUESS.

GC: DON’T US3 HUM4N M3M3S ON M3 TO G3T OUT OF TH1S

GC: G4444444Y

GC: K4RK4T’S G4Y FOR D4V3!

CG: TEREZI WOULD YOU JUST SHUT THE FUCK UP.

GC: 1 KN3W 1T!

CG: TEREZI

GC: :?

CG: WOULD YOU FUCKING STOP IT!

GC: JUST T3LL M3 1F 1’M R1GHT!

CG: NO

CG: TEREZI YOU’RE OVERSTEPPING YOUR FUCKING BOUNDS.

GC: UGH SORRY

GC: R34LLY 1’M SORRY.

CG: IT’S OKAY.

GC: C4N YOU JUST T3LL M3 4S 4 FR13ND?

CG: I DON’T WANT TO THINK ABOUT THIS!

GC: K4RK4T

GC: STOP RUN1NG!
GC: During that whole thing with us that was your problem. You were there but you weren’t. You wouldn’t stop running. You were overreacting and obsessed and wanted to understand me but didn’t want to return the favor.

GC: I really don’t want to upset you but I need to be real.

GC: You wanted to date me but you wanted to do it without actually investing time.

GC: You really liked me! And I really liked you! But neither of us were really mature and you refused to like, actually talk to me about your feelings I guess.

GC: Ugh this is hard to explain!

GC: What I’m trying to say is that you shouldn’t make the same mistake twice.

CG: Would you shut up oh my god!

CG: It’s frankly none of your fucking business and I didn’t ask for your input so leave me *the fuck* alone.

GC: Karkat I’m your fr13nd!

GC: I’m trying to help >:|

CG: Fuck

CG: Off

GC: FIN3 >:|

GC: But L4T3R T0N1GHT WH3N Y0U C0M3 T0 M3 F0R H3LP 1 H0P3 1 TH4T Y0U R3M3R3B 4ND F33L B4D.

gallowsCalibrator [GC] ceased trolling carcinoGeneticist [CG]

You’re start typing out a scathing response when a throat clears and you, once again, nearly fall your of your seat.

“Whatcha furiously typing over there Karkat?” Dave asks.

“Yeah, what are you typing?” Terezi chimes knowingly. You could honestly scream right then and there.

“None of your fucking business,” you reply, deleting the entire rant to Terezi.

You switch back over to the Rabb.it tab and find that the show is almost over. The main character dies, and when the vet pronounces her dead, Dirk and Dave solemnly sigh.
“Died of a broken kokoro, Dave.”

“Died of a broken kokoro.” They mangle the pronunciation of “kokoro” to the point where it’s not even funny.

The credits roll and Dirk and Dave “pretend” to be emotional, even though you’re pretty sure neither of them would know what an emotion was if it bit them in the ass. You know that they’re “ironic enjoyment” toes the line for “actual sincere admiration”. Both of them will either A) deny this or, B) say “I’ve never heard of irony in my life”.

“Well that was a fucking experience” you say after the video is over.

Rose sighs. “It certainly was.”

“I have to say I think I enjoyed that?” Kanaya seems as confused about the show as you feel.

Everyone says goodbye. Well if you can call people screaming about how much they love their friends and promptly hanging up saying goodbye. That or referencing the same meme to one another until someone gets tired.

“OP is literally Vet-sama kin but go off I guess,” Dave says.

“OP is literally the girl reading this but go off I guess.”

John is laughing. “OP literally loves his friends but go off I guess.”

“OP is literally valid but go off I guess.”

“OP is literally dating Kanaya Maryam but go off I guess.”

“OP literally sucks toes but go off I guess.”

“Dave, why are you so obsessed with sucking toes!”

Needless to say this joke ends with you violently banging your head against your desk.

Eventually everyone hangs up. You power off your computer and lay down in your bed. For some reason you’re not tired.

You’re contemplating yelling at Terezi but deep down you know she’s right. Besides, you really don’t want to open that can of worms right now.

You think for a while. You’re not sure if you can mindlessly think but that’s the only way you can really describe it. Your thoughts race at a million miles a minute and you sink further and further into anxiety. You’re not really… processing it though. Your consciousness seems to have separated from your body.

Your busy screaming into your pillow when Dave messages you.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TG: yo dude

TG: you okay
TG: you were kind of quiet during nnsn
TG: usually you won't shut up
TG: and I'm not complaining, you know, just worried

CG: FIRST OF ALL, FUCK YOU.
CG: SECOND OF ALL, I'M FINE.

TG: okay
TG: I'm listening to some not incredibly weird music right now, do you want me to send you some links?

CG: WHY NOT.

TG: oh I feel so cherished

TG: [sent a link]

TG: whatchu think

CG: IT'S WEIRD.

TG: oh

TG: sorry

CG: NO! I LIKE IT.

TG: oh thank god

TG: [sent a link]

TG: not my usual jam but I love this song

TG: “with tears in my eyes I begged you to stay, you said hey man I love you but no fucking way” art honestly

TG: [sent a link]

TG: this one reminds me of you

CG: I FEEL LIKE I'VE HEARD THESE PEOPLE BEFORE.

TG: yeah sleeping at last has some good shit

TG: usually all this stuff is way too mainstream for my tastes but I'm in a weird mood

CG: I REALLY LIKE THIS SONG.

TG: [sent a link]

TG: this is my favorite one by them
TG: i really relate to some lines from it despite it being about something else entirely

CG: WHAT?

TG: nothing really lmao

TG: just a bunch of bullshit

CG: OKAY?

TG: sorry

TG: im sorry

CG: WHAT?

TG: idk dude

TG: im just sick of fighting yknow

TG: and im just bothering you right now with my bullshit for no reason so im just

TG: angry i guess

TG: at myself and this whole fucking situation

CG: WHAT SITUATION?

TG: the situation that is my life dude

TG: im just fucking tired i guess

TG: im so tired

TG: and im just constantly distracting myself to keep myself from finding out how tired i am/how upset i am

TG: and sometimes i just realize im exhausted and angry and sick and sad

TG: fuck

TG: fuck sorry

TG: i dont know dude its late

TG: literally dont pay attention to me or anything im rambling

CG: ARE YOU OKAY?

TG: yeah

TG: yeah im fine

CG: OKAY.
TG: sorry dude i came here to comfort you and winded up doing that

CG: IT’S ALRIGHT DAVE.

TG: thanks

TG: can you just forget i said all that and continue thinking i dont have emotions

TG: i dont know how i let my cool facade slip like that

CG: YOU DON’T HAVE A COOL FACADE.

TG: wow rude

TG: anyways

TG: can we just talk

CG: YEAH.

TG: ive come to a big realization tonight

TG: im kin with vet-sama

CG: I SWEAR TO GOD DAVE IF

CG: FANTASTIC.

TG: gotta type faster than that vantas

CG: I TYPE WAY FASTER THAN YOU AND YOU KNOW IT.

TG: gotta say thats a weird thing to be competitive about but hey if thats your jam

CG: I HATE YOU.

TG: so ive heard

TG: like a million times because you tell me constantly

CG: I DON’T ACTUALLY HATE YOU.

TG: jesus christ thats like “i love you” coming from you

TG: karkat what are you going to do next

TG: propose marriage by saying that i might actually be okay to hang out with

CG: NEVERMIND BACK TO HATING YOU.

TG: aw man

TG: well i enjoyed my few seconds of being in karkat vantases good graces while it lasted
CG: HAR HAR
CG: AND IT’S VANTAS’S BY THE WAY.
CG: VANTASES IMPLIES MULTIPLE.

TG: oh i knew that i just didnt want to put the apostrophe
TG: gotta promote my casual brand
TG: oh wait
TG: goddamnit i missed the opportunity to put ass in your name
TG: haha
TG: vantass

CG: YOU HAVE THE MATURITY OF AN EIGHT YEAR OLD.

TG: so does the rest of our friend group try harder
TG: we all emotionally stunted due to trauma and mental illness up in this bitch

CG: OKAY FAIR.
CG: I’M GLAD YOU’RE FEELING BETTER.

TG: okay who are you
TG: you certainly arent karkat

CG: SHUT THE FUCK UP.

TG: karkat?? being emotionally open about something other than anger?? un-fucking-likely
TG: thanks though
TG: im not really feeling better actually
TG: i just decided i like talking to you better than i like rotting alone in my misery

CG: WOW
CG: WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID ABOUT BEING CHERISHED EARLIER?

TG: how dare you use my own words against me

CG: IT’S JUST SO EASY.

TG: rude

TG: oh shit dude tomorrows sunday
TG: goddamnit

CG: WHY GODDAMNIT?

TG: oh

TG: i just really like going to school

CG: WHAT?

CG: WHY THE FUCK DO YOU ENJOY SCHOOL?

TG: no one believes me when i say i didnt go to school for the first thirteen years of my life

CG: YES BECAUSE THAT’S RIDICULOUS.

TG: i honestly didnt

TG: can we talk about something else before i start spewing bullshit again

CG: YEAH.

TG: oh hey remember when i said id make you some music because youre not allowed to be a musicless heathen

TG: [sent audio file fool.mp3]

TG: [sent audio file gluestick.mp3]

TG: [sent audio file fjdghdf.mp3]

TG: [sent audio file what????.mp3]

CG: HOLY FUCK DAVE.

TG: yeah theres a lot

TG: but wait theres more

TG: (read that in an infomercial voice)

TG: [sent audio file literallywhat????.mp3]

TG: [sent audio file room209.mp3]

TG: okay thats it

CG: CREATIVE TITLES.

TG: ignore the weird edgy ones and focus on the beauty that is fjdghdf

CG: HOLY FUCK DAVE THESE ARE ALL LIKE TEN MINUTES??

TG: if not longer
TG: jk they're like mostly like six tops

CG: HOW DID YOU HAVE TIME TO DO ALL THESE?

TG: well it has been like three months since i told you that

TG: plus i got lots of free time

TG: free time be coming out of my ass

TG: i made like twenty more but those are the ones i think youll like

CG: TWENTY??????

CG: WHAT THE HELL HOW DO YOU HAVE THE ENERGY??

TG: idk dude music is just really easy for me to focus on

TG: god forbid i get my bio homework done but i can make a fucking masterpiece in ten minutes

TG: and they are fucking masterpieces mind you

CG: OH BUT OF COURSE.

TG: what do you think?

CG: I JUST STARTED ONE.

TG: oh my god dude hurry it up

CG: LEAVE ME ALONE I HAD TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET THEM TO PLAY.

TG: you're like a grandma when it comes to technology i swear to god

CG: I KNOW HOW TO FUCKING CODE, DAVE.

TG: badly

CG: DID SOLLUX TELL YOU THAT?

TG: yeah

CG: SOLLUX IS A FUCKING GENIUS. HE'S BIASED.

CG: ALL MY FUCKING GENIUS FRIENDS LEAVE US NORMIES IN THE DUST.

TG: honestly

TG: dont even get me started on dirk

TG: dude built us a computer that functions better than a normal one like what the hell

CG: DIRK IS AN ANNOYING GENIUS BUT YOU’RE INCLUDED IN THE GENIUS
FRIENDS, BY THE WAY.

TG: oh my god

TG: karkat are you terminally ill

TG: is that why youre being nice

CG: WHAT?

CG: NO LOOK

CG: YOU’RE MY FRIEND.

CG: MY BEST FRIEND, EVEN.

CG: AND, YES, EVERYTHING I DO IS COATED IN A THICK VENEER OF ANGER AND “COLORFUL” LANGUAGE.

CG: BUT THAT DOESN’T MEAN I CAN’T BE SINCERE AND CARE FOR MY FRIENDS.

CG: SO, YES, YOU ENRAGE, INFURIATE, AND OFTEN ANNOY ME, BUT SO DOES EVERYONE ELSE. AND AT THE END OF THE DAY YOU’RE STILL FRIEND.

TG: i knew that lmao

TG: i know i give you shit for being angry and stuff but youre a genuinely nice dude karkat

TG: i know that youd do anything for your friends and even for people you barely know

TG: youre honestly one of the nicest people i know beneath the fact you tend to scream at everyone

TG: but niceness isnt measured in how courteous someone is

TG: its measured in the ability to be honest without being cruel

TG: and you can yell at people all you want but it doesnt erase the fact that you can be real without making people feel like shit

TG: youre a good person and you deserve to be happy

CG: ...

CG: I’M SAVING THIS CONVERSATION FOR WHEN YOU DENY IT LATER HOLD ON.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

carcinoGeneticist [CG] began trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

CG: HELP.
GC: 4H4H4H4H4H4H4H4H4H4H4H4H4

CG: HOLD ON.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

carcinoGeneticist [CG] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

CG: I'M BACK.

TG: oh hi

TG: listen i dont know why or how this turned into a feelings jam but id prefer we forget about it

CG: IT'S OKAY.

TG: i was serious when i said you were being weird whats going on

CG: IT'S NOTHING.

TG: oh come on man tell me

CG: DROP IT SNAKEFUCKER!

TG: theres the karkles we know and love

TG: thought we nearly lost you

TG: going for lines without swearing and insulting me

TG: being straightforwardly nice and not giving backhanded compliments

CG: SHUT THE FUCK UP FUCKWAD.

TG: yep hes definitely back from the brink

TG: doctor i dont know how i can repay you

TG: also

TG: snakefucker?? really??

CG: YOU JUST PROCESSED THAT NOW?

CG: ALSO IT'S NOT A BAD INSULT.

TG: its not your best

CG: SHUT UP, SNAKEFUCKER IS GREAT.

TG: sure jan
TG: oh btw what did you think of the songs

CG: I JUST FINISHED THE FIRST ONE.

TG: yeah thats the longest one

CG: IT WAS REALLY GOOD!

TG: really?

TG: or was it so bad that you took pity on me

CG: NO, DUMBASS, IT WAS GOOD.

CG: I LIKE THE SECOND ONE BETTER SO FAR BUT THEY’RE BOTH REALLY GOOD.

TG: no homo but id die for you

CG: YOU’RE LITERALLY GAY.

TG: oh no what clued you in

TG: the fact that i declare it every five seconds or was it the fact i actually have good music tastes

TG: the heteros be liking kary petty or whatever

CG: I’M NOT SURE IF THAT SAYS MORE ABOUT THE HETEROS OR ABOUT HER.

TG: yknow me neither

TG: anyways i can barely keep my eyes open so i should probably say goodnight

CG: ARE YOU ACTUALLY GOING TO BED AT A REASONABLE TIME?? AM I HAVING A STROKE??

TG: no but ive slept like 9 hours total in the past five days so

TG: i might be wearing down

CG: OH MY FUCKING GOD.

CG: GO TO BED YOU FUCKING DINGUS.

TG: alright im going

TG: goodnight karkles

CG: GOODNIGHT.

TG: (youre forgetting something)

CG: DON’T FUCKING CALL ME KARKLES.
You drop your phone onto your face and scream. Quietly. So as to not wake your parents.

You decide to wait a minute and feel sorry for yourself before messaging Terezi. Feeling sorry for yourself has basically become a hobby at this point.

_Goddamnit, Karkat, you had to go and mess up one of the best friendships you have. Good going. I would kill you if it didn’t mean I’d die too._

_This is fixable._ You try to tell yourself. You’re not sure it is.

You try to come up with possible solutions to your frankly horrifying situation. You get nothing. This whole… _thing_ is going to rip your life as you know it to shreds and there’s nothing you can do to stop it.

So that’s what you decide to do. Nothing.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] began trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

CG: TEREZI

CG: TEREZI

CG: GODDAMNIT YOU’RE ASLEEP AREN’T YOU?

GC: NOP3

CG: I’VE DECIDED WHAT I’M GOING TO DO ABOUT THIS WHOLE DAVE THING

GC: 4ND WH4T IS TH4T? >:]

CG: ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

GC: >:[

Chapter End Notes

my tumblr
You sit anxiously in the waiting room in the basement of the hospital. You swing your leg, counting down the seconds with each kick.

You’re not entirely sure while you’re here. Sure, it seemed like a good idea at the time; but doesn’t everything? Yes, Dave, you should eat that bug off the pavement, it’ll be tasty. Yes, Dave, you should go to therapy, it’ll be good for your mental health. You really need to stop trusting yourself.

At least you’re missing world history. Your glad to get out of class, even though you love school. You love anything that gets you out of Bro’s apartment, really.

The door opens and every muscle in your body tenses. “Dave Strider?” The assistant asks. You’re glad they didn’t use your deadname. It doesn’t make therapy any less of a terrible idea, though.

You follow her down the long hall filled with offices, each door labeled clearly with a name. You reach one that reads Angela Micken. The assistant gives you an awkward smile and walks away.

You stare at the door.

*Do I knock? Do you knock at these types of things? I mean it’s a door and it’s closed but she’s expecting me so?* Your hand is already twisting the doorknob before you can finish your mental tangent.

“Oh hello, Dave,” Micken says, as though she’s surprised. *Goddamnit I should’ve knocked.*

“Oh, hey.”

“Take a seat.”

You walk over to the couch that sits against the left wall. There’s a glass top table in front of it. You sit down and fiddle awkwardly with your hands. She notices. Of course she notices she’s a fucking therapist.
“Do you know how to shuffle cards? I find that it often helps my patients to have something to do with their hands.” She slides over to a drawer in her wheely chair and pulls out a pack of cards.

“Yeah thanks,” you say, taking them from her. You fiddle with the plastic for a while and then finally take them out of the box. When you shuffle them they snap. The sound eases your anxiety somewhat.

“So what do you want to talk about?” You ask, attempting to fill the awkward silence. God how do therapists live with it.

“What would you like to talk about?”

“I’m really not a conversation starter so you can pick the topic.” Honestly you think you’d die of embarrassment if you did this job. Hell, you’re dying of embarrassment right now.

“Why don’t you tell me a little bit about yourself?” She asks.

You mentally check yourself for topics you’re not supposed to talk about. It generally just comes down to “no homelife”.

You sit there for a solid minute, shuffling cards and trying to think of something to say.

“Can you ask something a little less general?” You finally reply. “Like a one-sided lightning round or something?”

“Lighting round?”

“Yeah like ask a really generic question and I’ll answer and then you ask another question or something.”

“I actually do this often to make patients more comfortable. I’ve never heard it called a lightning round, though.” She pauses. “What’s your favorite color?”

“Red.”

“What do you like to do?”

“I like making music, photography, and collecting dead things. Sometimes I do art that’s not ironic.”

“How can art be ironic?”

“SBAHJ, my dude,” you cannot believe that you just called your therapist my dude.

“I can’t say I’ve ever played a video game.”

“You don’t really want to talk about anything “real”. You know she’ll probably make you, regardless, and if she’s anything like Rose, she’ll read into the fact that you said
“Sure.”

“How do you feel right now?”

“Uncomfortable.”

“Care to elaborate?”

“I don’t like talking when it’s not over Pesterchum. I hate eye contact. And I don’t trust people.”

“Why don’t you trust people?”

“People are shitty.”

“What makes you think that?”

Bro. Bro makes me think that. “There’s shitty things on the news every day, I constantly get treated like shit for being trans. People lie all the time for the sake of themselves. People are shitty,” you say instead.

She says something but you’re not really paying attention. You nod along, pretending to listen. You don’t want to be here. You don’t want to talk about your stupid feelings and your stupid fears. You don’t want to think about how shitty your life is or about your dysfunctional brain. You don’t know why you’re here. You don’t know why you wanted to do this.

You’re stupid for thinking you can recover when you’re so very obviously not able to. You don’t even know what you’re supposed to recover from.

You’re suddenly thinking about Bro. About the time he smashed your hand into the wall until your wrist broke and Dirk had to splint it plywood from the dumpster in the alley and duct tape. About the time he burned you and Dirk’s binders that you saved up for ages to buy. About the time he shoved you down a flight of stairs and gave you a concussion you didn’t ever get checked out. You think about all the strifes and all the bloodshed and all the broken bones.

“Dave?” Your therapist asks, concerned.

Your snapped out of your trance. “Huh?”

“Do you maybe want to cut this session short and make an appointment for next week?”

Suddenly you realize this woman could take that all away. All that pain and fighting would stop. And, god, how you want that. But with it, she could take Dirk, who is the only person you fully trust. Who is the only person who seems to understand.

Besides, this is the life you know. You’ve adapted to it, you can survive.

“Yeah that’d be good,” you reply. You’re not sure you’ll show up to the appointment next week. You’re not sure you’ll ever come here again.

“You’re not going to come back, are you?” Goddammit they’re supposed to be therapists not mind readers. Micken continues. “I can’t force you to come to therapy, Dave. But obviously you have high anxiety and some other things going on. I strongly recommend that you come back for your own health. If you don’t, I may need to talk to your father about making you come.”

Panic courses through your veins. Obviously Dirk didn’t put down Bro’s actual phone number or home address on the forms, you’re anxious anyways. “That won’t be necessary,” you reply.
She nods. She must take this to mean that you’re going to go back. You’re not.

You schedule an appointment you don’t intend to keep. You walk down the long hallway, up the stairs to the ground floor, and out the doors. You then start the long walk back to the school.

You start thinking. You’re not sure when you realized what was happening at home wasn’t normal. Probably around when you were ten.

You started talking to Rose. Her mom was all shades of fucked up and abusive but she didn’t really seem to behave the way Bro did. Rose never complained about strifes with her mom, or how much her broken bones and bruised skin hurt. Not that you did, either, because somehow, deep down, you knew that you weren’t supposed to be treated this way. Maybe it was something you picked up from television, or books, but you knew that adults typically didn’t beat the shit out of children on a near daily basis.

It didn’t really cement for you until Dirk explained to you that it wasn’t supposed to be like this. It took someone explicitly telling you that abuse wasn’t normal for you to realize it.

After that you started taking note of what else might be abnormal: the nightmares, the panic attacks, worrying whether or not your brother was going to come back alive every time he strifed with Bro, the sheer terror when faced with going outside, the anxiety that came with being inside, flashbacks, everything about your life and brain, really. You gradually realized that you weren’t just living an abnormal life, your mind was becoming abnormal as well.

You’d always been a bit of a weird kid, but you’d never been a paranoid one. Before Bro, you’d been incredibly carefree. But gradually, with each strife, with each blow landed, each unnerving silence that came before a beating, you started to worry that everyone was out to hurt you. Because if you can’t trust your own father, who can you trust? That answer became no one. No one but Dirk.

At school, you’re constantly on edge. Even with your closest friends, you’re wary. Because the time that Dirk was washing dishes, and your father was drinking in the living room keeps coming back to you. Because when a fork scraped against a plate, he went from zero to beating the shit out of Dirk within the fraction of a second. He went from calm, to violent. So if he can do that, what’s preventing everyone else? There’s a million of those times, enough for you to know that people are unstable, and not to be trusted.

You don’t want to think about this anymore. You pull out your phone, and read the messages you missed.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

CG: WHERE ARE YOU?

CG: SERIOUSLY DAVE WHERE THE FUCK.

TG: i believe its wheremst

CG: THAT’S NOT A REAL WORD AND YOU KNOW IT.

CG: WHERE WERE YOU?

TG: therapy bitch

TG: never doing that again
CG: WHY NOT?
TG: dont like it

CG: ASSFLASH NEWSHOLE! NO ONE LIKES THERAPY.

CG: IT’S FOR HELPING. NOT LIKING.
TG: im sorry i started laughing so hard at assflash newshole i stopped paying attention

CG: I THOUGHT YOU’D APPRECIATE THAT.
TG: you thought fucking correct my guy
TG: yeah but anyways
TG: not going back
TG: besides? someone knowing my deepest darkest secrets and fears?
TG: i dont trust like that

CG: I CAN TELL THAT YOU’RE REFERENCING A MEME AND I DON’T APPRECIATE IT.
TG: karkles you love memes and you know it

CG: YES BUT THIS IS A SERIOUS CONVERSATION!
TG: op literally admitted to loving memes but go off i guess

CG: WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS MY UTTER CONTEMPT FOR YOUR BEING.
TG: karkles you should know that i couldn’t be sincere if there was a gun to my head

CG: I HAVE A CONVERSATION FROM SATURDAY THAT PROVES OTHERWISE.
TG: i cannot beleaf you
TG: using my sincerity that i shared in private against me
TG: that was personal and i hated every second of it
TG: youre a cruel man karkat vantas

CG: ONE MORE WORD AND I’M SCRENSHOTTING IT AND SENDING IT TO THE ENTIRE GROUPCHAT.
TG: nice try fuckface i know you wouldnt scroll that far up

CG: WATCH ME.
TG: ill wait
CG: ...

CG: NEVERMIND YOU’RE RIGHT I CAN’T DO IT.

TG: i know you too well karkat

TG: you cant fool a fooler

CG: YOU’RE NOT FOOLING ANYBODY.

TG: im wounded

CG: NO YOU’RE NOT.

TG: great now my feelings aren't valid? way to be problematic

CG: SHUT UP.

TG: haha dude you know im kidding

CG: OBVIOUSLY I KNOW YOU’RE KIDDING, DUMBSHIT.

TG: haha

TG: hey is second period over yet

CG: YOU REALLY SHOULD HAVE THE SCHEDULE MEMORIZED BY NOW.

TG: i should also be going to therapy but guess what im doing

TG: not that

CG: WOW SELF BURN. THOSE ARE RARE.

CG: SECOND GETS OUT IN FIVE MINUTES.

TG: goddamnit im at the school

TG: guess i have to deal with fucking paul for five minutes

CG: CAN’T YOU JUST DICK AROUND UNTIL THE NEXT BELL RINGS? THAT’S WHAT YOU DO DURING SECOND ALL THE TIME ANYWAYS.

TG: rude i have a 95 in that class

CG: YEAH BECAUSE YOU’RE UNFAIRLY SMART AND SOMEHOW DON’T HAVE TO PAY ATTENTION TO GET AN A.

TG: did you just call me smart

TG: im screenshotting this for the next time you call me an idiot

CG: FUCK OFF!
TG: whoa what suddenly crawled up your ass

CG: DON'T COME TO SECOND, ASSHOLE.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

TG: dude what

TG: why are you mad

TG: youve been randomly freaking out at me all weekend did i do something

TG: fuck

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

TG: hey dude is karkat mad at me

GA: Oh Dear

TG: what the fuck do you mean by oh dear

TG: whats up with karkat

GA: I Cant Tell You That

GA: But I DONT Wish To Lie To You

GA: Something Is Up With Karkat But He Is Not Mad At You

GA: Please DONT Inquire Any Further About The Matter

TG: oh man what happened

GA: …

GA: I Will Tell You The Bare Minimum

GA: He Got Into A Fight With Terezi On Sunday And Said Some Things And Now Vriska Is Trying To Make His Life Hell

GA: Im Not Sure How Lunch Is Going To Go

TG: what were they fighting about

GA: …

GA: I Cant Tell You That

GA: If You Wish To Know Please Ask Karkat Though I Doubt Hell Tell You
TG: fuck okay
TG: i guess ill just leave it alone
GA: That Would Be Best Yes
grimAuxiliatrix [GA] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]
TG: do you know what karkat and terezi are fighting about
TT: Of course.
TG: let me guess
TG: youre not going to tell me
TT: It’s not my place.
TT: I recommend that you sit this one out.
TG: i would but karkat is pissed at me
TT: Karkat is not in fact angry with you. I would just let things work themselves out.
TG: fine but im gonna be salty about it
TT: I find that I’m perfectly okay with that.
TG: rude

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

Just as you finish your conversation with Rose, the third bell rings and you head inside. You hand your doctor’s note to the office and walk up the stairs to third.

You go through the next two periods in a haze. You’re anxious and unsettled and you don’t want to be here. You manage to make it to lunch without snapping, miraculously.

You get there and sit down in your usual spot. You dodge questions about why your lunch is an apple juice and a bag of Doritos, as usual. You argue lightheartedly with Rose, as usual.

What is not usual is that Terezi and Vriska are now sitting at the opposite end of the table, with the trolls you mostly don’t talk to. What is not usual is that both Terezi and Karkat look miserable. What is not usual is that everything has an air of tension.

You try to ignore it. You really try. But you don’t understand why this is happening and it makes you squirm. You can barely get eye contact down, let alone complex interpersonal problems.

Karkat is dicking around on his phone, looking absolutely horrible but not really doing anything else.
You notice Vriska glaring from the corner of your eye and suddenly there’s a fork flying towards Karkat.

It lands with precision and hits him in the face, tines first, which leave a scratch on his cheek. *Vriska must be really good at throwing things,* you think, dimly.

A second ago Karkat looked melancholic, but calm. Now, he is enraged. The image of Bro flashes through your mind and your lungs tighten and you let your breath out with a hiss.

“What the fuck Vriska.”

The yelling sets every nerve in your body on edge. You unconsciously think about grabbing your sword from your sylladex.

“I could ask the same of you, but I know you’re too much of a douchebag to admit fault.”

“Yes because everything’s my fault all the fucking time, isn’t it?”

“Pretty much.” Vriska looks disinterestedly at her nails.

Karkat’s face twists into something dark and violent. Something you’ve seen all too often.

“Listen we all know you’re not capable of love, so why don’t you drop this little facade with Terezi and admit you’re only doing this because you’re a vile, despicable being. You don’t give two shits about Terezi, you just like being mean, and she’s an *excuse.*”

Vriska no longer looks bored. Her head snaps up and something evil looking lurks in her eyes.

“Vriska,” Terezi looks like she’s about to cry. She reaches out to Vriska but it’s too late. Vriska walks over and decks Karkat so hard that he falls on his ass. You don’t know when they stood up.

You don’t really process the fact that you’re upset until you feel tears leaking from your eyes. You stop yourself immediately, but you’ve already began to spiral. You lock everything out, and grab your sword. You cannot hear and cannot see. All you are is fear. Your instinct has been honed to be so paranoid that it’s no longer instinct.

You suddenly hear your name. It breaks through the borders around your mind and reaches through the fog of terror.

“Dave,” Dirk says again.

You come back to yourself. You realize that you are now standing. You realize that Vriska has gone back to her seat and Karkat is looking at you, horrified. You realize that you have your sword gripped tightly in your hands, raised above the table with the intent to slice it in half. You realize that, despite your previous attempt to stop, you’re crying.

“God you guys are a mess.” Dirks hand hovers above your shoulder slightly, a question. You shake your head. He moves his hand. “How a teacher hasn’t come over here yet is a goddamn miracle.”

You look at Dirk’s hands. He’s signing letters rapidly. You guys only ever really learned how to do letters, it’s a bit inconvenient.


You drop your sword back into your sylladex and follow Dirk.
Dirk passes the bathroom and you give him a questioning look.

“New plan,” he assures.

You’re out the doors of the school with ease. The trick is to do it with confidence. Also essentially no one’s in the office.

You guys walk for a while. It’s nice. Your heart rate slows and your tears gradually dry. Finally, Dirk stops at a park and heads towards a bench. You recognize this place, oddly enough.

“We used to come here with mom all the time,” he says, as though he can read your mind. Given how well he knows you, he probably can. “You okay, dude?”

You shake your head.

“Nonverbal?”

You consider this for a moment. “Not anymore,” you say.

“Good. You wanna explain what happened?”

“Frankly I don’t even know.”

“Help me out here. You know I’m out of the loop with all you kids.”

“Dirk, you’re two fucking years older.”

“As I said, kids. Now what happened?”

“I dunno. Karkat and Terezi got in a fight, and no one will tell me what about. So now Vriska’s mad at Karkat so she’s provoking him. And… He just got so angry so fast. It reminded me of…” You don’t finish the sentence, you don’t need to.

Dirk looks at you. You can’t see his eyes. You can’t tell anything from his face, really. But the fact that he turned to look at you says it all.

I’m so sorry we’re stuck in this mess.

“You wanna go buy some shit? I raided Bro’s wallet the other day,” he says instead.

“That’s for food,” you point out.

“Eh, I think we could both use it.”

You smile to yourself. “Yeah okay.”

You both end up buying weird ass shit from Goodwill, including a beige shirt that just says “anime” on it in comic sans and nothing else, you both argue over who gets to have it, you eventually decide that Dirk can have it, to match his anime shades. You find a christmas sweater that says “World’s Best Dad” on it so of course you buy it. The two of you also find a handful of actual, non-ironic clothes, and some other cool things. The majority of it is fifty cent coffee mugs that have severely misspelled motivational sayings on them. Since it’s Goodwill, you still have some money left over afterwards, so you walk to an Albertsons and buy some groceries. You grab apple juice, Dirk grabs some orange soda, etc etc.

“Dirk can we get real food for once?” You ask as he puts yet another non-perishable food item in your cart.
“Whenever we do you never eat it and then it rots in our closet.”

“I haven’t had fresh fruit in seven years. I’m going to get scurvy.”

“And then guess who has to clean out the closet when the mold seeps into the carpet because we both refused to clean it? That’s right. Dirk.”

“This is what the English sailors felt like in ye olden days. So desperate they ate limes.”

“As if I haven’t seen you chugging lemon juice straight from the bottle. Also are you really just going to ignore the fact I referred to myself in third person?”

“You know I love sour shit Dirk don’t betray me like this.”

“How am I even remotely betraying you?”

“You’re letting your own brother die of scurvy. Unbelievable. You sick, sick, little man.”

“I’m four inches taller than you.”

“Shut the fuck up I’m trying to make a point.”

“I will allow you to get one, one, thing of blackberries but if and when they mold, I will make you clean it up,” Dirk says, seemingly exasperated, but you know him better, and you know he’s content.

“Aw yiss,” you say, snagging a container as you walk through the produce section towards the check-out lines.

Just then Dirk’s phone rings. He looks at it and hangs up.

“Who was that?”

“School. After the whole fiasco where the school called Bro I changed the contact information and address in the computer. I should’ve thought of it earlier,” he looks vaguely upset. Well, about as upset as Dirk can look.

You think back to that day. It seems so far away now. More things have happened in terms of “strifing” with Bro. Too many to count. Yet you know Dirk blames himself. “Not your fault dude.”

“Except it is.”

“Hmm. False.”

He glares at you, yet remains silent as he places the items from your cart onto the conveyor belt.

You have just enough money, as planned. By the time you leave the grocery store, school has ended and you realize you haven’t checked your phone for hours.

You resist the urge to fish it out of your pocket, and begin the long walk home with Dirk, joking and smiling as you go.

There still feels like there’s a hole. A hole inside your chest. A hole where the things that make you a person are supposed to reside.

You shake of the thought.
When you reach the apartment building, you plop down on the sidewalk and wait for Dirk to check the security cameras.

“All clear,” he says, turning off his phone and picking up his bags.

You both walk up the many flights of stairs. Dirk then opens the door with a tense yet steady hand. You know Bro isn’t in the apartment, yet the terror of coming back never quite goes away.

You are relieved to find the apartment empty and you make a beeline for you and Dirk’s shared room. You flop down on your bed face first and Dirk throws a package of pocky on top of you. Finally you roll over and pull out your phone to check it.

You expected at least a few messages from Karkat, but there aren’t any. This makes you want to scream. The fact that this makes you want to scream makes you want scream even more. You settle for giving the loudest sigh mankind has ever known.

There is however, one hundred and fifty-two messages from the groupchat. But you scroll through those and decide nothing’s worth replying to. There’s also some messages from Rose asking if you’re okay. You evade the question.

You then do what you know you probably shouldn’t. You message Karkat.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TG: hey dude whats with the radio silence

CG: HEY SORRY.

CG: I’VE BEEN BUSY.

TG: hmm okay

TG: hey i hate to ask but whats going on with everything

CG: YEAH I FOR SURE KNOW WHAT YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT WITH THAT INCREDIBLY SPECIFIC QUESTION.

TG: karkat

CG: IT’S NONE OF YOUR FUCKING BUSINESS.

TG: really because somehow i get the feeling its exactly my fucking business

TG: god fucking damnit what the hell did i do to you

TG: sorry for being annoying and shitty i guess but hey thats just a part of the strider package

TG: i mean youve known what a piece of shit i am for this long what made you suddenly decide that im hashtag too much

TG: you know what i dont care

TG: its taken me a long ass time to get even mildly comfortable with who i am and you wont be the person to fuck that up
TG: and yes i know im overreacting but i *know* you karkat i know your tells and i know that you dont randomly get like this for no reason

TG: anyways i wont fucking make you put up with me any longer

TG: dont fucking message me

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

CG: DAVE WAIT.

CG: I’M SORRY. I’M NOT MAD AT YOU.

CG: DAVE.

TG: i said dont fucking message me

TG: what part of that speech makes you think im even remotely fucking around

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

“Hey bro you okay?” Dirk asks, looking at you from the computer.

“Yeah I’m just fucking peachy.”

“What happened?”

“A bunch of bullshit.”

Dirk seems to realize that you don’t want to talk, and turns back to the computer.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

TG: rose

TG: rose

TG: rose im kind of freaking out here

TG: youre online i can see you bitch

TT: Allow me to take a gander as to why you are “freaking out”.

TT: You got upset with Karkat for being “upset” with you and essentially told him to fuck off.

TG: wrow

TG: are your deductive reasoning skills just that good or is karkat messaging you too

TT: The latter.
TT: Though the former could be accurate as well.

TG: you know what lmao i dont want to talk to anyone right now

TG: because apparently everyone decided its be an asshole day i fucking guess

TG: i may have just lost one of my best fucking friends because of my shitty ass personality and you cant drop the snark for two fucking seconds

TT: Me and Kanaya are planning a Christmas/Hanukkah part for the 23rd so I suggest you reconcile before then. Things might be uncomfortably awkward if you don’t, and you will both be forced to attend, of course.

TG: holy shit

TG: fuck you too rose

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

You turn around onto your stomach and scream into your scratchy worn pillow.

Chapter End Notes

LSINTE i know dave seems out of character but speaking as someone whose been abused its very normal for abuse victims to lash out/get angry randomly so i wanted to write that into here! i mostly just wanted to write about my experiences with interpersonal relationships and abuse and the like so here we be!

my tumblr (blease come yell at me)

also i recently realized this fic is barely gettin started so! stick around!
the silverware swam with the sharks in the sink

Chapter Notes

hey sorry this took so long to get up! i was gonna post last night but ao3 was down for me so :

this chapter is mostly pesterlogs but i hope you enjoy! it's mostly about jade comin in clutch and saving the day

my beta shitstuck!

chapter title from plant life by owl city

See the end of the chapter for more notes

gardenGnostic [GG] began pestering arsenicCatnip [AC]

GG: [sent a link]

GG: thought you might like this!

AC: :33< hello!!

GG: hi!!

GG: is it winter break there yet?

GG: we just got out today!

AC: :33< we got out yesterday!

GG: aw man lucky

GG: have you watched the video?

GG: jake wanted to watch planet earth two so we all got roped into watching it

AC: :O< what is this?

AC: :33< she’s beautiful!

GG: haha yeah!

GG: thats a snow leopard! apparently this footage is really monumental because you never get them on film

AC: :33< they must be shy!

GG: yeah!
GG: anyways what's been going on at your end?

AC: :33:< bad stuff!

GG: oh no!

AC: :33< dave and karkat are fighting. karkat is fighting with terezi so vriska is fighting with him. daves mad at rose and UGH! everyone is mad :( 

AC: :33< dave kinda freaked out on monday and skipped the second half of school :|

GG: oh man is that why daves moping?

GG: hes only talking to john and john said hes upset :( 

AC: :33< yep :( 

AC: :33< daves my friend! i dont want him to be sad

AC: :33< hes helped me out a couple of times with some mental stuff 

AC: :33< and we both listen to each other talk about our special interests!

AC: :33< *ac starts to get a bit sad*

GG: hey now! dont be sad!

GG: dave will be okay

GG: ive known dave for a while and he has a lot of stuff on his plate

GG: and theres something going on with him that i could never really work out...

GG: but sometimes you just need to let people be sad for a while!

AC: :33< okay

AC: :33< thank you

GG: yeah!

GG: ...

GG: <3

AC: :D<

AC: :33< <33

GG: i should go check on dave...

GG: brb!

gardenGnostic [GG] ceased pestering arsenicCatnip [AC]
gardenGnostic [GG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

GG: dave
GG: dave
GG: dave dont be a whore

TG: wow
TG: rood

GG: youve been ignoring me for five days!

TG: sorry
TG: or am i?

TG: ms in cahoots with rose

GG: i am in cahoots with no one!

TG: sure jan

GG: there is no cahooting going on!

TG: (eye emoji)

GG: >:(

TG: sorry jade im just

TG: really fucking pissed at rose

GG: whatd she do?

TG: hold up i have the screenshot

TG: [sent a photo]

GG: okay i was giving rose the benefit of the doubt but…

GG: thats so mean!

TG: nah its kind of justified

TG: i was being a dick to karkat so karkat complained to her and she sided with him i guess

GG: over her own brother though?

TG: you know rose

TG: ruled by logic
GG: i guess :/
GG: still!
TG: its whatever i think im gonna try to talk to her today
GG: thats good
GG: what about karkat?
TG: fuck nah dude
GG: why not!!
TG: karkats bein a dick
TG: so is rose but ive know rose literally since my life began
TG: ive known karkat since september
GG: doesnt school start in august?
TG: yeah we started late
GG: anyways…
GG: you should apologize to karkat!
TG: why
TG: hes made no attempt to apologize to me and hes the one that fucked up
TG: i havent known him for as long as ive known rose so frankly i dont care as much if we dont talk again
TG: and i know rose will never admit fault unless i do first but karkat will and he hasnt
TG: so
TG: i dont think i should
GG: why are you so sure hes at fault?
TG: dude was being fucking weird
TG: one day we were fine and the next he keeps snapping at me randomly and avoiding me with no explanation
TG: and then when confronted on it he got pissy
GG: hmm
TG: dont hmm at me
GG: HMM

TG: if you plan on talking to karkat tell him i said fuck you

GG: i will not!

TG: haha

TG: bye jade

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering gardenGnostic [GG]

gardenGnostic [GG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

GG: hey fucko

CG: WHAT WARRANTED THAT GREETING?

GG: you made my friend sad!

CG: THAT’S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS SO YOU CAN FUCK RIGHT OFF!

GG: it is my business!

GG: dave is my friend! hes been friends with me longer than hes been friends with you!

GG: you dont own all topics related to dave! you really upset him so now you get to explain to me why!

CG: FUCK

CG: OFF

GG: no

GG: dont be an asshole!

carcinoGeneticist [CG] blocked gardenGnostic [GG]

GG: nice try!

CG: WHAT

CG: THE FUCK

GG: its fun having everyone take you for a naive little girl and forgetting you understand college level quantum physics and are well versed in almost every branch of math and science :)
GG: you're really starting to piss me off here! you better cool it before i ask roxy to help me destroy your computer!

CG: NO OFFENCE BUT I'M KIND OF TERRIFIED.

GG: yeah you should be

GG: you hurt my friend

GG: and all im asking you to do is say something for yourself

GG: i think thats pretty fair

CG: IT’S *NOT* YOUR BUSINESS!

GG: messaging roxy right now…

CG: FUCK! FINE WHATEVER!

CG: WHAT THE *FUCK* DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

GG: why were you mad at dave

CG: I WASN’T!

CG: I WAS NEVER MAD AT DAVE!

GG: then why did you keep freaking out on him?

CG: YOU’VE GOT FREAKY MIND POWERS. YOU FIGURE IT OUT.

GG: gotta say im coming up blank!

CG: I’LL GIVE YOU A GODDAMN HIT: IT’S WHAT ME AND TEREZI ARE FIGHTING ABOUT.

GG: ...

GG: ...

CG: WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

GG: im thinking!

GG: ...

GG: ohhh!

GG: you realized that you like dave?

CG: UNFORTUNATELY.

CG: WOULD YOU FUCK OFF NOW?
GG: no! you're my friend too and i want to help!

CG: I DON'T WANT ANYONE'S GODDAMN HELP.

GG: too bad! :p

CG: YOU'RE PRETTY NOSY, AREN'T YOU?

GG: im actually not!

GG: i just believe that what will happen, has already happened, and what will happen often needs a nudge in the right direction! so if i decide to do something to aid in the process of the future, then i have already done so!

CG: THAT MAKES NO FUCKING SENSE.

GG: it does too!

GG: okay maybe my phrasings a bit off…

GG: but regardless!

CG: WHAT ABOUT THE “MULTIVERSE THEORY” OR WHATEVER THE FUCK.

GG: me making a different decision would lead to a different outcome, therefore leading to a different timeline/universe, but i am in this timeline, where i have made the decision to be “nosy”

GG: everything that happens can lead to a different universe

GG: literally everything about the world has the potential to change it!

GG: say a leaf falls in your salad, so you cross the street to get a new one, and get hit by a car and die

CG: THAT’S GRIM.

CG: ALSO WHY NOT JUST TAKE THE LEAF OUT?

GG: if the wind pattern had even been slightly different that day, you wouldn’t have died, and wind pattern can be affected by anything! and if you hadn’t died then you could go on to cure cancer or something!

GG: there are an infinite amount of universes that are incredibly different because of one single leaf

CG: THIS IS HURTING MY HEAD.

GG: this stuff isn't even that bad

GG: but anyways! this is the timeline that im aware of so im technically the alpha of this timeline! so the others are irrelevant!
GG: technically everyone in every timeline is the alpha though, because you can only be fully aware of one timeline, unless you involve time travel or something...

GG: regardless! im helping!

CG: JESUS CHRIST YOU TALK MORE THAN DAVE.

GG: haha! not really, though, only about this kind of stuff because its so interesting!

CG: YEAH I GUESS. ALSO YOU’RE STILL EASIER TO FOLLOW THAN HIM EVEN WHEN YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT OVERLY COMPLICATED SHIT.

GG: yeah haha!

GG: i used to like him too yknow!

CG: WHAT?

GG: yeah back before he realized he was trans. its funny my gay awakening wasn’t even a girl

GG: but i can see why you like him honestly, ive been there myself!

GG: granted we were eleven…

GG: i also liked rose later on! its essentially a right of passage to get a crush on one of the strilondes

CG: WHAT ABOUT JOHN?

GG: oh he totally had a crush on dave! but yknow john. deeply represses every issue he comes across

GG: he still wont admit it…

GG: but none of us were really right for eachother. were way better off as friends!

GG: also we were all like twelve and just attaching to the only people available to us!

CG: THIS IS ODDLY MAKING ME FEEL BETTER IN SOME WEIRD WAY.

GG: sometimes its just nice to talk about pointless things

GG: hey how about this? you’ll tell me a secret and ill tell you one? that way its fair!

CG: I’M NOT A SECRETIVE PERSON.

GG: hmm okay ill start

GG: i wore a dog tail everywhere i went until i was twelve

CG: I THOUGHT ALL HUMANS HAD THE SAME GENITALIA AND SPREAD MISINFORMATION TO TROLLS EVERYWHERE. I DIDN’T REALIZE I WAS WRONG UNTIL HEALTH CLASS WHEN I ASKED ABOUT IT AND EVERYONE
GG: I still unironically love mcr

CG: I HAVE A CRUSH ON WILL SMITH.

GG: oh my god karkat

CG: SHUT UP.

GG: I lied and told my entire family I was allergic to pineapple but really I just don't like it

CG: I TOLD TEREZI I LOVED HER AND SHE BROKE UP WITH ME.

GG: :( 

GG: I have a good one!

GG: I'm nonbinary!

CG: WHAT?!

GG: yeah!

GG: you and Nepeta are the only ones that know

CG: SHIT WHY HAVEN'T YOU TOLD ANYONE ELSE?

GG: :/

GG: it's just

GG: I've only known you guys (the trolls) for a few months

GG: and I've known everyone else for four years

GG: and my family for my entire life

GG: I just don't want anything to change

CG: THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE.

CG: BUT I THINK YOU SHOULD TELL THEM.

GG: I will!

GG: just not right now...

GG: I need to wait until I'm ready

CG: I GET THAT.

GG: yeah
GG: i only recently realized and its hard for me to change how i view myself, let alone how others view me

GG: i think i need to accept it myself before i can handle telling other people!

CG: THAT’S UNDERSTANDABLE.

CG: BUT KNOW THAT THEY'LL ACCEPT YOU NO MATTER WHAT.

GG: i hope so…

GG: why havent you apologized to dave yet?

CG: UGHHHHHH

CG: THIS AGAIN.

GG: yes “this again”!

CG: HONESTLY IT’S STUPID.

GG: i wont think its stupid!

CG: IT’S EASIER TO AVOID HIM.

GG: okay thats stupid

CG: JADE!

GG: hehe sorry

GG: but it is!

CG: ):

CG: SHIT MY HORN

CG: ):B

GG: aw your horns are so cute

CG: THANKS I GUESS?

CG: YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I LOOK LIKE, THOUGH?

GG: yeah i do!

GG: dave and rose send covert snapchats of you guys doing stupid stuff

GG: rose managed to get vriska punching you on camera!

CG: THAT WASN'T A FUN TIME.

GG: i bet!
CG: NO IT WASN’T THE GETTING PUNCHED PART.
CG: ALTHOUGH VRISKA’S FUCKING SCARY STRONG.
CG: I HAVE A GODDAMN BLACK EYE.
CG: IT’S JUST THAT DAVE FREAKED OUT DURING THAT AND THEN SKIPPED SCHOOL.
GG: oh man i didn’t realize that was why…
CG: YEAH.
CG: HE JUST LOOKED SO FUCKING SCARED OF ME.
GG: why would he be scared of you?
CG: FUCK OF I KNOW.
CG: ALL I KNOW IS THAT HE WAS AND THEN LATER THAT DAY HE FREAKED OUT ON ME.
GG: thats weird…
GG: hey heres an idea
GG: you should try apologizing!
CG: FUCK OFFFF
GG: listen im not going to tell you what to do
CG: REALLY BECAUSE THAT SEEMS LIKE WHAT YOU’RE DOING CURRENTLY.
GG: let me finish!
GG: i think you should apologize to dave
GG: i know it can be difficult to face your responsibilities but you need to
GG: im not going to say anything more on the topic but! keep in mind that sometimes you need to accept responsibility and if you want any relationship to last you need to communicate!
CG: OKAY.
CG: THANKS JADE.
CG: I’M SORRY FOR BEING A DICK.
GG: its okay!
GG: i gotta go eat the celebratory cake johns dad baked so
GG: keep me updated!

CG: CELEBRATORY CAKE?

GG: winter break started

CG: THAT MAN SURE LOVES BAKING.

GG: he sure does!

GG: bye!

gardenGnostic [GG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

You close out of pesterchum, feeling quite satisfied with yourself. You don’t enjoy meddling, but if it is needed, then meddle you must. You really hope it works out between Karkat and Dave, you get a feeling it will.

You exit your room and see John in the hallway. He looks like he just woke up from a nap, which he probably did. God knows he doesn’t get enough sleep.

You walk up to him while he stands in the hallway. He doesn’t notice you. He’s probably trying to figure out what he’s supposed to be doing.

“John.” He looks in your general direction. No response. “Hey. Hey John.” You punch him lightly in the arm and it’s like he jolts awake.

“Oh hey Jade! Sorry I’ve been zoning out all day.”

“Take your meds shithead!” Jane calls from her room.

John’s eyes widen with realization. “Fuck!” He scrambles back to his room to take his medication.

You smile quietly to yourself as you head downstairs.

You glance into Jake’s room as you head to the kitchen. He’s not in there. He’s probably working.

You reach the kitchen, and see not one, but two celebratory cakes waiting for you in the kitchen. And it looks as though Dad Egbert is in the process of making another one. He seems very invested in the process, so you merely nod at him. You grab a plate and sit down at the table, sliding a slice of cake onto your plate. John sits down next to you and sighs.

“I can’t believe I forgot my meds today.”

“Some cake will make you feel better.” John’s dad gestures towards the two cakes on the table. “You’re supposed to take those pills with food.”

John sighs, but there’s only forced exasperation behind it anyways. You know he loves his dad.

“Dave said you messaged him,” John says around a mouth full of cake. You roll your eyes.

“Which time? I messaged him a lot, and was mostly ignored,” you can’t help it if you sound bitter.

“Cut him some slack! Him and his not-yet-boyfriend got in a fight.”
“Wait Dave likes Karkat?” You ask, as this is vital information.

John squints at you suspiciously. “I don’t know. Does Karkat like Dave?”

“I don’t know. Does Dave like K-” you two probably could’ve gone on forever but Jane interrupts. You’re not even sure when she arrived.

“Oh yeah Karkat likes Dave, Rose told Roxy the entire story, and Roxy told me.”

Dad Egbert laughs his signature Dad Laugh. “You kids and your drama.”

“Get with today’s youth, dad.” Jane is smiling.

John decides to chime in. “Yeah you old man you’re a disgrace.”

“Speaking of disgraces does anyone know where Jake is?”

“He left for work a while ago.”

“Can we get back to the topic at hand-KARKAT LIKES DAVE?” John attempts to slam his hands on the table dramatically, but hits his plate and gets frosting on his hand.

“Yeah, was that not obvious to you?” Jane asks, as John wipes his hand on the table. His dad shoots him a Look. John ignores him.

“I dunno man I’m new to this whole thing.”

You snort. “You’ve been bi this entire goddamn time.”

“Just think of it this way, if it was a het relationship,” Jane mimes gagging as she says it, “would their interactions be considered romantic.”

John ponders this for a moment. “Oh yeah okay.”

“Anyways,” you start. “Dave likes Karkat?”

“Can’t tell you that. That’s top secret info between best bros.”

“Okay I’ll take that as a probably and ask Dave.”

“Jade n-”

---

gardenGnostic [GG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

GG: do you like karkat?

TG: god fucking dammit john

GG: to be fair

GG: you told him

TG: that little fucker weaseled it out of me!
TG: okay but you gotta promise not to tell i dont want anyone to know

GG: oh dave…

GG: we been knew this entire time

TG: YOU BEEN KNEW?

GG: we been knew.

TG: john said he was surprised

TG: wait fuck i forgot to factor in the john component

GG: the john component is a vital term in any equation

TG: that it is

TG: so

TG: thoughts?

GG: i just cant get over the fact that you called rose useless but really youve been the useless one this whole time

TG: oh fuck

TG: oh fuck she is *not* gonna let this go

GG: haha! good luck!

TG: hey jade im sorry i told john and not you

GG: oh no worries!

GG: i get it

TG: to be fair ive only known since like monday and dirk had to point it out to me

TG: which oh boy

TG: that was a goddamn experience

GG: i bet!

GG: …

TG: what is it

GG: im having a moral dilemma

TG: oh lmao john just told me karkat likes me like five seconds ago

GG: of course he did!
TG: hey dont be mad at him
TG: i was gonna tell karkat anyways
TG: after he apologized that is
TG: so maybe never fjhgk
GG: has he apologized yet?
TG: yeah were talking right now
TG: im guessing you had something to do with that
GG: yeah
GG: have you told him yet!?
TG: nah im gonna wait until roses bullshit party
TG: i just dont think im ready yet i guess
GG: whos gonna tell karkat since you know now?
TG: i uhh
TG: i think he knows somehow?
TG: idk maybe message him about it
GG: yeah will do!
GG: will you talk in the groupchat now?
GG: its been virtually nonexistent since monday
TG: oh yeah i kind of forgot about it tbh
TG: im so sick of everyones bullshit time to put an end to this
GG: what are you going to do?
TG: tell everyone to get their asses in order
TG: those asses are gonna be goddamn alphabetical by the time im done with them
GG: how can you alphabetize something that doesnt have a title?
TG: i dont know jade god leave me alone
GG: haha!

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering gardenGnostic [GG]
You set your still buzzing phone down and level a look at John.

He seems to read your mind. “He’s my best bro I had to tell him!” John defends.

You roll your eyes and pick your phone back up.

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TT: It must be some sort of sick miracle.

TG: damn right it is

TG: ‘are you there god? its me rose’

TG: newsflash asshole ive been god this entire goddamn time

TG: or should i say medann

TG: i wonder if god says oh my god and shit like that

TG: thats like saying your own name as a curse word

TG: imagine if your name was fuck or shit or some business

TG: ‘fuck strider please report to the office’

TT: There must have been a point to this.

TG: oh fuck yeah there was

TG: everyone get your asses online! i know youre reading this in your notifs without opening the app and for those of you that are online

TG: i can see you bItch

arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

apocalypseArisen [AA] is an active chum!

gardenGnostic [GG] is an active chum!

ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!

TG: jake get your goddamn ass online

GG: Jake’s at work.

TG: oh
GG: besides do you really need everyone for this?

TG: oh shit

TG: i guess not

AG: Gr8! Does that mean I can leave?

TG: no this involves you

GC: HO3 DON’T DO IT

TG: karkat i see you lurking!

GC: OH MY GOD

CG: WHAT THE ACTUAL FUCK DO YOU WANT, SHITSTAIN.

AG: If you think I’m going to apologize to him…

AG: Think again!!!!!!!!

TG: no theres a chain of apologies that needs to happen

TG: karkat apologizes to tz, tz apologizes to karkat, you apologize to karkat, karkat apologizes to you and wow apologize doesn't sound like a word

AG: No way!

GC: VRISK4, YOU C4N’T S1T TH1S ON3 OUT

GC: YOU’R3 4T F4ULT TOO

AG: Ugh, fine!!!!!!! This doesn’t mean Karkat’s any more 8eara8le.

CG: MORE BEARABLE THAN YOU, INSUFFERABLE SPIDER BITCH.

AG: Don’t dou8t the fact that I will kill you.

CG: TEREZI I’M SORRY FOR BEING A MASSIVE DICK AND SAYING THOSE THINGS.

TG: wow were doing this here huh

TG: yknow apologies are supposed to be a somewhat private thing its not really something fourteen or whatever people need to be privy to

CG: SHUT UP DAVE I’M TRYING TO APOLOGIZE.

TG: do you even listen to me when i speak

CG: NO.

CG: TEREZI I’M SORRY.
CG: I SHOULDN’T HAVE SAID THAT FUCKSHIT AND THERE’S NO EXCUSE.

GC: IT’S OKAY

GC: I SHOULDN’T HAVE PR3D

GC: GR4NT3D YOU W3R3 B31NG STUP1D BUT YOU’R3 STUP1D 4LL TH3 T1M3 SO

CG: HEY!

GC: >:]

GC: I FORG1V3 YOU K4RK4T

GC: 4ND I’M SORRY TOO

CG: I FORGIVE YOU (:B

GC: VR1SK4

GC: VR1SK4!

AG: …

AG: Karkat, I'm sorry for punching you.

CG: ARE YOU REALLY?

AG: Oh god no.

TG: vriska can you find it within your cold empty heart and actually apologize

CG: NO, IT’S OKAY.

CG: VRISKA’S A BITCH AND I ACCEPT THAT.

CG: I PLATONICALLY HATE HER BUT I'M GLAD THAT TEREZI HAS SOMEONE LIKE THAT LOOKING OUT FOR HER.

AG: Hmm.

TG: what

AG: Don’t like that.

TG: what

AG: I just felt something other than annoyance and disgust at Karkat.

TG: first of all

TG: I CANNOT believe that vriska just memed you're a good influence terezi

GC: >:]}
TG: second of all
TG: that's what normal people feel when someone's nice to them
TG: congrats vriska! you're straying towards being an actual being
AG: Gross.
CG: VRISKA, I'M SORRY I WAS MEAN TO YOUR GIRLFRIEND.
CG: AND UNLIKE YOU I MEAN THAT.
AG: I forgive you I guess.
GC: JDGSKHSDKJ
GC: VR1SK4 JUST M4D3 TH3 *B3ST* F4C3 WH3N SH3 TYP3D TH4T
TG: wait you guys are hanging out
CG: YOU DUMBFUCK THEY’RE DATING.
CG: THEY’RE OVER AT EACH OTHER'S HOUSES LIKE 96% OF THE TIME
TG: oh god id die
TG: is that what dating entails holy shit
CG: HAVEN'T YOU EVER DATED ANYBODY?
TG: no
CG: LIKE YES EVERYONE NEEDS THEIR BREAKS AND SHIT BUT FOR THE MAJORITY OF THE TIME YOU HANG OUT OR SOMETHING.
CG: WAIT.
CG: REFUCKINGWIND.
CG: YOU’VE NEVER DATED SOMEONE?
TG: nope
CG: OH MY GOD?
GC: Y34H COOLK1D 1 THOUGHT YOU W3R3 COOL
TG: i am bitch
TG: so cool that no one is up to my coolness standards
AG: Loser!
TG: the only person you've dated is tz so you're one to talk
AG: Yeah, I had a brief pitch thing with Eridan.

EB: who the fuck is eridan

GG: yeah whomst

TG: oh my god i just remembered you guys dont know half of the trolls

EB: THERE’S MORE?

TG: yep five more to be exact

GC: Y34H W3 DON’T R34LLY T4LK TO TH3M…

TT: I can’t believe you guys turned them into extras.

TT: Yes, it’s quite disrespectful.

TG: oh shut up rose

TG: its not like you talk to them

TT: I’ve actually had several somewhat engaging conversations with Tavros about how disabled people are treated in America.

TG: …whomst

TT: I provided you a hint right there in my previous message.

TG: ghkjdgdj

TT: The others are actually fairly cool, if you took the chance to get to know them.

TT: I talk to Equius often.

TG: …

TT: Sweaty horse dude.

TG: OH him

CG: DAVE

CG: DAVE

CG: YOU SIT WITH THEM EVERY DAY AT LUNCH!

TG: i have a bad memory!

CG: I *CANNOT* BELIEVE YOU.

TG: leaf me olone karkat
TT: Dave’s bad memory is actually quite prominent.

TT: He forgets his own birthday often, doesn’t remember to tell us about important things, and even forgets John’s last name at times.

TG: it's a weird last name!

TT: Hmm yes and the fact you forgot to tell us about the fact that you’re autistic for months?

TG: i did not come here to be called out

TT: Dave you do so much stupid shit that callouts should just be a facet in your life at this point.

TG: okay mr eats plastic

TT: You wanna go there?

TG: fuck yeah i do

TT: You ate matches until you were nine.

TG: you attempted to put a light bulb in your mouth because you saw a video where it said if you did it was impossible to remove

TT: You want to know what else you did until you were nine? That’s right fuckshit. You sucked on batteries.

TG: you unironically like sparkling water

TT: Hearsay.

TG: sure jan

TT: You thought chihuahuas were cats until last year.

TG: i told you that in privacy

TT: As much as I enjoy the two of you providing me dirt on each other, I must say that it’s somewhat taking over the groupchat.

TG: oh fuck sorry

gardenGnostic [GG] is an idle chum!

You close out of Pesterchum. There’s a lot going on, and, frankly, you don’t exactly feel like having eleven different conversations. You finish your cake and head upstairs to your room.

You realize you never got back to Nepeta. You think about it for a moment, wondering what you should do. Of course you’ll message her back, but your flirting with her has come to a standstill. You contemplate this, then decide.
You sit down at your computer.
gardenGnostic [GG] began pestering arsenicCatnip [AC]

GG: hi sorry!
AC: :33< hey!

GG: so i have a question
AC: :33< *ac perks up and sits in anticipation*

GG: gosh this is nerve wracking!
GG: do you like me? because i like you!
AC: holy shit!!
AC: :33< oops!
AC: :33< and yes! i do!! :D
GG: :D

GG: do you wanna like… date then?
AC: :33< yes! that sounds pawsitively purrfect.
GG: :D

GG: itll be hard with the long distance :/
GG: but! near the end of christmas break were going to portland!
GG: maybe everyone could go there and visit? that was the plan anyways
GG: we havent told anyone because its a surprise!
GG: weve got six whole days blocked out so i figured we could work around peoples schedules
AC: :33< oh my goodness!
AC: :33< that’d be wondfurful
AC: :33< i can’t believe you’re coming here so soon
AC: :33< when are you gonna be here?
GG: we fly in the 29th and leave the 4th!
GG: technically seven days but the cheapest available flight was a really late one
AC: :33< i’m excited!
GG: me too!
AC: :33< and don’t worry I won’t tell anyone

GG: thank you!

GG: I’ll catch up with you later? I’m gonna message Dave and Karkat

AC: :33< okay!

AC: :33< they’re so cute together honestly

GG: I know right!

GG: anyways bye!

gardenGnostic [GG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

GG: [sent a photo]

GG: take that!

GG: “useless lesbians” my ass!

TG: Fine

TG: useless bisexuals it is

GG: What!

TG: it took you four months

TG: useless lesbians is inaccurate as you’re both bi so I fixed it

GG: >:(

GG: we’re still better than Rose and Kanaya!

TG: I’ll give you that

GG: Also! Also!

GG: you and Karkat

TG: oh fuck

TG: man no one ever gonna let that go

GG: Haha!

GG: Hey Dave I need to tell you something

TG: Oh man that’s ominous

GG: It’s not a bad thing!
GG: here goes…

TG: were doing this bro

TG: were making this happen

GG: im nb

TG: HOLY FUCK

TG: JADE

GG: WHAT!

TG: I LOVE YOU SO MUCH YOU KNOW THAT?

GG: I LOVE YOU TOO!

TG: im gonna stop talking in caps before it becomes permanent like karkat

GG: okay good plan

TG: jade i want you to know how fucking hyped i am about this

GG: you mean that?

TG: of course i fucking mean that

TG: hey awkward question but any dysphoria? i have an extra binder you can have

GG: :O!!

GG: yeah id love that!

GG: dysphoria is a fuck!

TG: damn right it is!

TG: ill ship it to you asap

GG: actually…

GG: were all flying out to portland on the 29th! i wasnt gonna tell you but i dont want you to waste your money on shipping

TG: WHAT

TG: WHAT

TG: WHAT

TG: *WHAT*

GG: YEAH!
TG: portlands only like an hour from newberg HOLY FUCK

TG: why didn’t you tell us?

GG: it was gonna be a surprise! :p

TG: this is the best fucking day of my life

GG: dont tell anyone else!

TG: literally this is the best day of my life

TG: jade i love you

TG: in a completely platonic way

TG: i would say no hetero but youre not a girl so

TG: also if you ever need help with any trans stuff me and dirk are always here

GG: im so happy you reacted like this

GG: i wasnt expecting it

TG: yeah dude ofc

TG: if anyone ever reacts poorly into you coming into who you are as a person

TG: block that bitch

GG: okay!

GG: thank you dave

TG: thank you for telling me

GG: im gonna go pester karkat

GG: as roxy would say

GG: wink wonk

TG: okay

TG: talk to you later?

GG: yeah!

gardenGnostic [GG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

gardenGnostic [GG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

GG: hey
GG: so i take it you and dave are talking again

CG: YEAH.

CG: THANKS FOR THAT.

GG: yeah no problem

GG: just offering advice

CG: YEAH.

CG: HEY WEIRD QUESTION, BUT DOES DAVE LIKE ME?

GG: yeah dfjdshk

CG: WHY HASN’T HE SAID ANYTHING?

GG: hes not ready yet i dont think

GG: dave needs a lot of time to accept things i think

GG: thats phrased wrong but i think he just needs to come to terms with it or something

CG: WHY?

GG: its not really your business but dave has a lot of internalized trans/homophobia so this might be hard for him

GG: nothing to do with you

CG: OKAY.

GG: yeah

GG: you two will get your stuff sorted out eventually

GG: me and nep are dating now btw

CG: I KNOW SHE CAME AND FREAKED OUT IN OUR CHAT.

CG: SHE’S LIKE HEAD OVER HEELS FOR YOU

GG: yeah me too!

CG: I’M GONNA GO EAT DINNER NOW.

GG: okay

GG: bye!

gardenGnostic [GG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]
You open your chat with Nepeta and message her. You think about what Dave said about this being the best day of his life. You’re not sure if best is the right word, but regardless. Today is a good day.

You stay up late talking to Nepeta and hammering out the trip details with Dave.

Today is definitely a good day.

Chapter End Notes

my tumblr (PLEASE talk to me)

comments/kudos are always appreciated!
i'm not like her you're not like them

Chapter Notes

double update time!

im not too satisfied with how these two chapters turned out but what can you do :/ its mostly because they got so long that i couldnt fit everything i wanted to fit in so these two chapters are pretty roxy and dave centered! fear not though, the following chapters will have plenty of group shenanigans, seeing as they focus on the trip to portland. man im so excited

HUGE thanks to my beta shitstuck

new ship tag! it doesnt happen in this chapter but its Revealed

HEY GUYS READ THIS ITS IMPORTANT! TW for drug and alcohol use in this chapter and the next (only mentions for this chapter), its very minor and nothing that most teens haven't done but! be warned! if that bothers/triggers you feel free to skip these two chapters! i will leave recaps at the bottom of each chapter so you can get caught up

chapter title from rut by the killers

See the end of the chapter for more notes

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering tipsyGnostalgic [TG]

TT: Might I make an inquiry into where you are?

TG: huh

TT: You were supposed to help me and Kanaya set up for the party tonight.

TG: OH SHIT

TT: Yes I believe an oh shit may be appropriate.

TG: haha dnt worry abt it i got a cra now

TG: *car

TT: Yes, you haven't shut up about it since our mother gave it to you.

TG: yell heah dude

TG: like i gt that it doesnt makr up for her bein fuckign awful but

TG: damn if it isnt nice

TT: I do appreciate the makeup she got me…
TT: Even if it quite presumptuous to assume that I like makeup when she’s never home when I have it on.

TT: Because every girl on the planet must like makeup.

TG: you can give me ur lecture on sexism later IN PERSON becuz gues waht im doin rn

TT: Please don’t say driving.

TG: im drivin BIATCH

TG: oh haha

TG: i should probably stop texin gfdjk

TT: Yes that would be ideal.

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

You set your phone down in the passenger seat and continue going way too fast alongside the road by the railroad tracks. You appreciate the thrill it gives you, but can’t help but feel guilty when you remember the lecture Rose gave you.

Rose has become like a mother to you, despite being younger than you. You love her for it, but god if it isn’t annoying. She takes your car keys away when you’re drunk.

You just wish you had an actual mother to do that. You wish you had an adult like Rose who gave a shit about you.

You reach the place where the railroad forks away from the road and pull your car over. You grab your bag and begin the long walk towards the cave, which is frankly treacherous in heels.

When you get there, Rose and Kanaya have already strung up lights and decorations. The drawings of you on the wall hit you like a punch in the gut, as they always do.

Everytime you come here, you’re reminded of her. You’re reminded of what an amazing artist and storyteller she is. You’re reminded of all the late night conversations, laughing so much you can hardly breathe. You’re overwhelmed by memories of happiness and peace, something you feel very rarely.

Yet you’ve never seen her. You don’t even know her name.

“Hiii,” you say, removing yourself from your thoughts.

Rose looks up at you. “Hello,” she says.

“Hello,” Kanaya parrots.

“You guys look like you’re already done!”

“We basically are, seeing as you’re late.” Rose’s words seem harsh, but you know her well. She’s mostly just amused.
“Aw shit guys I’m sorry.”

“It’s quite alright, Karkat helped out as well,” Kanaya says. “He went out to ‘get some goddamn peace and quiet’ as he put it.”

“We weren’t even talking that much,” Rose adds. “We were just having a conversation about the dichotomy of butch and femme and how they should be just that: a dichotomy.”

You snort. “I can see why he left.”

“It’s a fascinating subject!” Kanaya seems somewhat indignant.

“The existence of butch and femme is deeply ingrained into lesbian culture and to trivialize it as a spectrum that is applicable to every lesbian is frankly harmful. Not to mention—”

“I’m gonna stop you right there and ask what you need me to do,” you say, grinning.

Rose shoots you a glare with no malice. “Did you bring the fairy light jars?”

You pat your bag of things that Rose told you to bring. “Got ‘em right here.” You then pull out the various items Rose asked you to bring, including the alcohol. “Sorta surprised you asked me to bring this,” you say gesturing to said alcohol. “You being the stickler you are.”

Rose smirks and quirks an eyebrow. “First of all, if you think I’m a stickler, you don’t know me half as well as I thought you did. And it is a party, after all, you’ll be happy to know that I asked Dirk to bring weed.”

“YOU’RE SHITTING ME!” Rose honestly doesn’t seem like the type but goddamn she must know how to throw a party. “Man I haven’t gotten high in forever.” Something then dawns on you. “Wait this is uranianUmbra’s cave. I don’t want it to smell!”

“Edibles, dear sister. I’m already way ahead of you.”

“Aw, Rosey you’re so smart.” You rush over to her and attempt to give her a noogie. She swats you away with a smile. You wrap an arm around her shoulders and she relaxes into you. You haven’t seen Rose this happy in forever.

“I’ve never tried marijuana before, or anything, actually” Kanaya muses.

“Neither have I, and I don’t really intend to, but I figured some people may enjoy it.”

“Oh man I’m so excited!”

“I will be implementing some ground rules surrounding mood altering substances, of course.”

You grin. “Oh but of course.”

“First of all, do try not to do anything you’ll regret. No getting “blackout drunk” or ingesting dangerous amounts of alcohol. Try to stay under the legal limit. Regarding the marijuana, I am limiting everyone to twenty milligrams, which is two caramels or one cookie.”

“Sounds pretty reasonable. Besides I’m gonna try to not drink anything.”

Rose smiles at you. “I’m glad to hear that.”

“Yeah my therapist said I should stop so I’m gonna try.” You pause. “Speaking of therapy shit. I,
uhhh. Got diagnosed with borderline personality disorder at my last session.”

Rose looks at you, shocked. Well, about as shocked as Rose can look. “And you didn’t tell me?”

“It just sort of happened yesterday. I didn’t feel so good after my session so I went to bed. Sorry.”

“It’s quite alright, I just wish you would’ve informed me sooner.”

Kanaya clears her throat. “I still don’t quite understand you’re human illnesses, would you mind explaining?”

You don’t really know what to say so you look to Rose.

“It’s a very complex disorder, that varies from individual to individual, as most do,” Rose says. “It is often characterized by intense, frequent, mood swings, reckless behavior, suicidal ideation, self harm, a lack of self, and tumultuous interpersonal relationships. It’s incredibly complex and almost impossible to fully comprehend unless you have it yourself.”

You shift uncomfortably. “Yeah… thats a me.”

“Please don’t make Mario references at this time.” There’s a strong sense of reassurance in her voice.

“Hey do you know if uranianUmbra is coming,” you say, grasping desperately for a change of topic.

“I’ve not a clue.”

“I’ll message her.”

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] began pestering uranianUmbra [UU]

TG: heeyyyyy

UU: hello!

TG: so

TG: u comin to this party or what!

UU: :U

TG: aw man

UU: i really do want to!

UU: i’m jUst not sUre if anyone else woUld want me to be there…

TG: i want u here!

TG: man why are you so secretive about stuf

TG: i dnt even know your name :/

UU: i’m sorry
UU: to tell yoU the trUth i’m jUst…

UU: not all that satisfied with my appearance

TG: im gonna lvoe you no matter what sily

UU: in what way?

TG: huh?

UU: nothing…

TG: hye i dont want u to feel pressured or anything

TG: but everyone would love to have you here!

TG: an what you look like doesnt matter to anyone!

TG: i KNOW ur beautiful

TG: youre one of the best people i know

UU: yoU mean it?

TG: abosokutley!

TG: *absolutely

TG: just know that if you want to come everyone will be thrilled to have you here

UU: okay

UU: okay!

UU: i’ll come to the party!

TG: !!!!!!!

TG: joly fuck!

TG: man im so excited to see you!

UU: i’m excited to see yoU!

UU: i gUess i shoUld probably tell yoU my name…

TG: :o!!

UU: it’s calliope!

TG: :O!!!!

TG: theas a beautiful name!
TG: also it’s probably a good thing ur comin because rose put you in the secret santa anyways

UU: oh yes i know!

UU: i asked to be pUt in becaUse i like getting people gifts

TG: ur so cute

UU: ^u^

UU: i got kanaya!

TG: ooh whatd u get her

UU: some fashion stUff! just a few fabric prints i thoUght she’d like and a book with some really cool ideas along with a few other small things

TG: nice!

TG: i got aradia some dinosaur documentaries and those weird fossilized bugs and stuff like that

UU: she’ll love that!

TG: yeah i hope so!

TG: anyways i should probably help rose and kanaya finish setting up

TG: by calliope! :D

UU: bye!

uranianUmbra [UU] ceased cheering tipsyGnostalgic [TG]

You turn off your phone and help finish setting up. Rose keeps laughing and smiling and it makes you relieved to see her this at peace.

Sometimes you feel bad. You know you stress Rose out. You know that she worries about you. You feel like you’re taking her childhood from her, as your mother did to you.

You don’t want to become your mother.

You repress this thought and examine the things Rose asked you to bring. There’s several decks of cards, the aforementioned fairy light jars, some booze, your bluetooth cat speaker which has surprisingly good sound, some snacks, and a few party games. You assume Terezi is bringing her “new and improved” games, but it doesn’t hurt to be prepared. At least that’s what Rose said.

You set the jars out and turn them on. You then stack the party games into a pile, put some music on on your speaker, and put the booze and snacks in the middle of the cave as a beautiful centerpiece. Rose Looks™ at you.

“What! People want to see what they came for.” You wink. At this point it’s just a reflex.
“I would hope that people come to socialize and not just get inebriated and eat.”

“Hey, you asked me to bring it.” You attempt to do her signature Rose smirk, but by the amused look on her face you’re not doing very well.

“What’s this music?” Kanaya asks.

“Carly Rae Jepsen!”

“Roxy please tell me this isn’t your ‘gay’ playlist.”

“You bet your sweet as it is!”

Kanaya clears her throat. “May I inquire about the contents of this playlist?”

You grin. “It’s got Hayley Kiyoko! Kehlani! Troye Sivan! The honorary gay Carly Rae Jepsen! And Jenny by SK is a must of course! Honorary gay? Idk man who knows. Anyways we got Conan Gray! Abbey Glover for Rose’s thirsty ass!” You shoot them off like an auctioneer. “And some other gays and honorary gays, of course,” you finish.

“What did you mean by my so-called ‘thirsty ass’?” Rose is glaring.

“Oh pleAse, Rose. We all know you’ve been gay af for Abbey Glover ever since you watched the music video for ‘Her’.”

Kanaya quirks an eyebrow. “Should I be jealous?”

You snort. “She’s like 25.”

“And not nearly as pretty as you,” Rose smiles at Kanaya. Kanaya smiles back at her.

“Gayyyyy,” you yell-whisper.

“You’re one to talk, dear sister. What’s the status on Calliope coming to the party?”

You open your mouth but pause. “How do you know her name!” You say.

“You’re not very observant when you’re talking to her. I read it over your shoulder.”

You attempt to scowl at her, but it morphs into a grin. You can’t help it, you’re happy.

Rose checks her phone. “We should probably tell people it’s about time to arrive. Seeing as they’ll all be late anyways.”

Your phone pings as Rose messages the groupchat.

_tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

_TT: Now would be an appropriate time to leave your abodes and come to this party._

_tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an active chum!

_TG: ur wrong rose

_TG: its not JUST a party_
TG: its a BITCHIN party

TT: Fine then.

TT: Now would be an appropriate time to leave your abodes and come to this bitchin’ party.

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: It Is Going To Be Pretty Bitchin

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: shits gonna be bitchin from what i hear

TT: Very bitchin’.

EB: man! i wish i could be there. i heard it’s gonna be bitchin

TG: youre gonna

TG: wait nevermind

GC: >:?

TT: I’d have to agree with Terezi in this situation.

TT: Seems pretty suspicious…

EB: absolutely nothing is suspicious!

TG: yep i just

TG: say words that are completely irrelevant at times

TT: Hmm.

TG: can we plsae get back on tipic

TG: this bitchin ass party

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

CG: I’M HEADED BACK NOW GUYS.

CG: I MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE GOTTEN LOST FOR TEN MINUTES.

TG: haha oh man

TG: dirk i hear ur bringin the shit

TG: wink wonk

TT: Is that all I am to you, Roxy? A weed man?
TT: I’m fucking wounded.

TG: wait shit dirks bringing weed

TG: now im definitely coming

TT: You weren’t before?

TG: i have to keep my schedule open for maximum coolness

TT: Don’t listen to him, he’s not cool.

TT: The first time he smoked weed he coughed for ten minutes and then watched vine comps for the rest of the night.

TT: He laughed so hard he almost had a panic attack.

TG: FALSE

TT: I was there, Dave.

TG: fuck you

TG: fuck your friends

TG: fuck your goddamn cow

TT: That’s a Mulan reference so that some what inhibits the threatening tone of your statement.

TG: god i guess its just call out dave day

TG: erry day is call out day day

TG: *dave

TG: betrayed by my own blood

TG: cast out by my own family

TG: ignored by my kin

TT: I know you’re speaking in the literal sense but I can’t help but laugh at the idea of being ignored by your kins.

TT: I’m kin with that.

TG: would the two of you stop being kinnies for two fucking seconds and let me be dramatic

TT: No.

TT: No.

GA: I Believe Roxy Said Something About Getting Back To The Topic At Hand
CG: NOTHING LIKE A BUNCH OF STRILONDES TO DERAIL A CONVERSATION.

CG: EVEN ROSE GOES OFF ON INSANELY CONVOLUTED TANGENTS.

TG: okay karkat “i throw a vintage shitfit every single time i open my mouth” vantas

CG: AT LEAST MY SO-CALLED VINTAGE SHITFITS DON’T INCLUDE HUNDREDS OF UNNECESSARY METAPHORS.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an idle chum!

uranianUmbra [UU] is an active chum!

UU: hello everyone!

TG: hi!!!

UU: in case yoU didn’t know…

UU: i’m coming to the party tonight!

UU: and my name is calliope!

gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!

GG: Oh my goodness!

GG: I must say, Calliope, I’m quite happy that you have decided to share this with us!

GG: :B

UU: :D

TG: pain

TT: You’re one to talk, or need I remind you of the fiasco this week?

TG: fuck off rose

TT: A fiasco in which you’ve yet to fully resolve.

TG: anyways the party lets talk about that

TT: Hmm.

TG: dont hmm bad things happen when you hmm

TG: bad things along the lines of me being called out

TT: I’m just wondering if said fiasco could possibly be resolved tonight.

TT: Seeing as you’re being cagey about that particular subject.

TT: When usually you would just argue with me.
TT: It’s almost as if you’re…
TT: Nervous.
TG: i hate you
TT: :)
TG: evil
TG: pure evil
GA: Rose Just Informed Me Of Her Theory On What Is Going To Happen
TT: Oh, it’s more than just a theory.
GA: I Must Say Im Quite Happy About This
TG: haha gl dave!
TG: yall are the worst
TG: the worst i say
TG: worse than the paper turkey in fucking pauls room thats been in there since thanksgiving
TG: presumably made by one of his evil younger relatives
TG: seeings as he cant have kids himself
TG: i mean we all know hes infertile
TG: just like that paper turkey
TG: with its maroon eyes that follow you around the classroom
TG: the saltiness at being one of those decorations that get left up for too long palpable
TG: long story short you guys suck
carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!
CG: THAT TURKEY IS REALLY UGLY.
TG: DONT SCROLL UP
CG: WHY NOT?
TG: uhhh
TG: i sent an accidental dick pic
CG: YOU DON’T HAVE A DICK?
TG: damn i thought that would work

CG: YOU KNOW WHAT, I DON’T EVEN WANT TO KNOW.

TT: You never know, it could be pertinent to your interests.

CG: NOW I DEFINITELY DON’T WANT TO KNOW.

CG: SO ARE WE ALL JUST GONNA SIT IN THIS CAVE AND WAIT UNTIL PEOPLE GET HERE.

CG: MESSAGING WHILE WE CAN LITERALLY SEE EACH OTHER.

TG: OH SHIT YEAH

TG: rosey tell em the rules

TT: Oh yes, that was the purpose of me messaging everyone before we got sidetracked.

TT: Rule Number One: Please do not abuse the mood altering substances. Try to stay below or at what you feel may be the legal limit for alcohol. What I’m trying to say is please don’t get excessively drunk. I’m also limiting everyone to twenty milligrams of marijuana, as they are in edible form.

TT: Rule Number Two: No overt PDA. It will disgust and horrify me.

AG: 8oo!

AG: I 8et this rule applies to everyone except you and Kanaya.

TT: It actually mostly applies to you and Terezi because no one else would try to, as Dave puts it, ‘suck so much face’ in front of ten other people.

AG: This is discrimination!!!!!!!

TT: Against whom?

GC: HORNY P3OPL3!

TG: i would like to get away from this topic as quickly as possible

TG: blease do not make me learn about tz and vriskas sex lives

AG: We’re fourteen, Dave. We haven’t done anything.

AG: I mean, it’s not like I don’t WANT to.

TG: nope nope nope im noping so hard out of this conversation

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!

GC: H3H3H3H3H3

GC: TOLD YOU W3 COULD G3T H1M TO L34V3 >:]}
AG: :p

TT: Anyways…

TT: Rule Number Three: Don’t do stupid shit. I know that’s asking a lot from this group of people, but please do not engage in witless activities tonight.

TT: That is all. Please begin to leave now, if you have not.

TG: an dont forget ur secret sants@

TG: *santas!

apocalypseArised [AA] is an active chum!

twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!

AA: me and s0llux are headed 0ut n0w

TA: well be there soon.

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: the rumor come out? does aradia and sollux is moirails?

TA: how the fuck diid you work that out you liittle 2hiit.

TG: you told karkat man cmon

CG: HEY!

TG: karkles man you cant keep a secret to save your life

TA: two be faiiir ii diidnt mean two tell hiim.

AA: yes he sent karkat a <> that was meant f0r me

TA: so ii had two explaiin

TA: we can’t have kk thiinkiing iiim pale for hiim when iiin realiity ii platoniiically hate hii2 guts.

CG: AH, YES, SOLLUX. MY OLDEST FRIEND.

CG: THAT SON OF A BITCH SURE HATED ME.

TA: 2top telling people iiim dead.

CG: SOMETIMES, I CAN STILL HEAR HIS VOICE.

TG: as much as i love antics (and i lVOE antics) if everyone could get hteir sweet asses down here thatd be fantastiic because rose is startin to get ansty

TG: me and dirk just left
TG: sicc thx

GC: W3'R3 1N TH3 FOR3ST CURR3NTLY

TG: noice noice

arsenicCatnip [AC] is an active chum!

AC: :33< i’m still getting a few things together!

AC: :33< i’ll head out as soon as pawsible though!

UU: i will arrive a bit later as i’m still a bit busy!

TG: sweet! thats a wrap!

TG: see y’all soon

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an idle chum!

You close Pesterchum on your phone just as Terezi and Vriska walk in. They’re holding hands and giggling. Fucking giggling. It’s honestly kind of cute.

“Let’s get this party started!” You say, turning up the volume on the music slightly.

Terezi laughs her high, robotic cackle. It would sound unnatural coming from anyone but her. Her and Vriska plop down in a bean bag chair.

“I’ll pour you guys a drink,” you say with a wink. You start mindlessly mixing drinks for them. You start to think. You’re incredibly excited to see Calliope tonight. Almost embarrassingly so. It’s no secret to everyone that you love her, and that she probably likes you too, but it’s more complicated than that.

Jane has been your best friend since you were eleven, and you’ve been in love with her since. But you don’t know if Jane feels the same. You’ve been friends for so long, and losing that would destroy you. You’re pretty sure she likes Calliope, but you? Not so much.

You’ve known that polyamory was thing since you were thirteen, and just starting to attempt to define yourself. You’ve known it was probably a preference since you were fourteen and in your first relationship. A monogamous one.

It’s not like you can’t be in a monogamous relationship, you just fall in love with people so easy and so hard. You’re sure that it’s what you want, what you need.

Though, not everyone’s okay with it, and that was okay, but you don’t want to be in a relationship that you don’t feel satisfied with, you don’t want to do that to someone you love.

You realize you’ve poured way too many drinks while thinking. You manage to resist the urge to drink some of them.

You decide that you’re going to talk to Calliope when she gets here. Talk to her about a relationship, and you’re not going to stop talking until you’ve worked something out.
Anxiety at the prospect starts to itch beneath your skin. You zone out thinking about all of the things that could go wrong.

Terezi clears her throat, snapping you out of your daze.

“Here ya go,” you say, cheerfully handing them their drinks. Your fingers itch to take one of the mixed drinks and down it. You shove the thought down.

You settle into a conversation with Rose. She knows that you’re thinking about something and manages to weasel it out of you. She smiles and wishes you luck. She’s known you’re polyamorous since you did. You tell Rose everything. You’re not sure if she does the same.

Sollux and Aradia arrive next. They both take drinks and sit down on the floor of the cave.

Then Dirk and Dave. Dirk passes out edibles, you don’t take one, neither does Dave. Not yet. You both have important things to do tonight.

Nepeta gets there a bit later. To your surprise, she takes an edible form Dirk. She doesn’t drink.

You’re only paying attention to people when they enter. You’re waiting for Calliope. You don’t pay attention to conversation around you. You don’t notice when the music changes. You’re a bundle of nerves and anticipation.

Rose attempts to engage in conversation with you. “How are you liking the party?” She seems worried.

“Uhh. Good. It’s good.”

Rose sighs. “You know you’re not going to have any fun if you don’t talk to people.”

“I’ll talk to people after she gets here.”

“She’ll be here,” she says, reading the fear in your voice.

You wait for ten more minutes.

Then ten more.

And then ten more.

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] began pestering uranianUmbra [UU]

TG: yo u comin

TG: i need to talk to ya about smth IMPORANT

UU: i’m jUst aboUt there!

UU: see yoU soon!

uranianUmbra [UU] ceased cheering tipsyGnostalgic [TG]

You’re filled with relief for about two minutes before you’re filled with absolute joy.
Because two minutes later, she’s there.

And she’s breathtaking and amazing and absolutely extraordinary. Not because she’s exceptionally pretty, but because she’s there and you love her.

She’s short with dark brown skin and dark brown eyes and insanely curly hair.

She’s walking up to you and she couldn’t be more perfect.

You’re sure your emotions are written all over your face, but you don’t care because suddenly she’s hugging you and you’re hugging her back.

You don’t know what to say so you say what you’re thinking.

“I’m so glad you’re here.”

“Me too,” she says into your shoulder. God she’s so short and you absolutely love it.

She breaks away from the hug and you can’t help but feel slightly disappointed.

“So what did you need to talk about?”

You realize you can’t lose her. You realize you can’t have things be awkward between you. You realize you can’t do this.

You chicken out.

“I got diagnosed with BPD the other day ago.”

“Oh! That’s probably good to get a diagnosis.”

“Yeah. Hold up I’m gonna grab a drink.” You walk away from her with nothing but hurt in your heart. You hate yourself for that. You’ll put it off, like you do everything.

You grab a drink and down it.

Chapter End Notes

my tumblr

okay so recap! not a lot happened in this chapter so there’s not much to tell. roxy got a car, met calliope, and its revealed that roxy is polyamorous and that she likes jane and calliope! she decides to discuss it with calliope but ultimately chickens out! it is also revealed that roxy has bpd! thats all! im sorry if you couldn’t read this chapter but i often use my own life as a reference so!
rant to me i like the sound

Chapter Notes

hey slightly larger tw for drug and alcohol use in this chapter and also some of the beginning notes! recap at the bottom

i HIGHLY recommend that you click all the links in this chapter esp the one dave sends to john but also you might wanna listen to the audiobook so just google detective pony! if you havent heard of it it is CRUCIAL that you read it immediately.

ALSO i was fucking around on youtube the other day ago and i found https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cysIVv9QILQ&pbjreload=10 THIS which shook me to my core like what the fuck (also im too lazy to code it in rip me)

also high interactions are very hard to understand/write unless your actually high and im not gonna get stoned to write a chapter that would be a DISASTER so some of those may be a bit off

chapter title from fool by cavetown! the song doesnt really apply here but i like the line so

See the end of the chapter for more notes

You leave the apartment with Dirk around four. Bro is probably out for a while, as he has a gig, so that means you and Dirk have quite a bit of time before you have to go home.

You suddenly remember the Karkat Plan (as you have so eloquently deemed it) and become nervous. You’re pretty fucking sure that 90% of the rest of your tissues have been replaced with nerves. Like some sick, Lovecraftian abomination that Rose so adores, you are only brain. And maybe some tentacles. That’s how fucking full of nerves you are.

You consider messaging Rose about your current state of being made entirely of neurons, axons, dendrites, axon terminals, myelin sheaths, okay this metaphor got away from you. You’ve been studying the nervous system in biology and it shows. Anyways before you started listing parts of a nerve, you were considering messaging Rose about your distress. But Rose is being a grade A prime beef dick about the whole thing so you decide to message the person you’ve been able to rely on for the longest amount of time (after Rose that is).

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering ectoBiologist [EB]

TG: yo john

TG: hey nerdass

TG: where are you i need my bro

TG: my broiest of hoes
TG: my hoeist of bros
TG: bromeo oh bromeo
TG: wherefore art thou bromeo
TG: or should i say where the fuck art thou bromeo because wherefore means why
TG: where are you you goddamn dork
EB: calm your literal and metaphorical tits!
EB: i was talking to jade about portland
EB: do you think you guys could spend a night or two?
TG: uhhhh
TG: idk if thatd fly with bro but i can try to just come anyways
EB: why don’t you just ask him?
TG: i try to avoid interacting with him as much as possible
TG: can we just drop the topic
TG: and get back to the important thing i was going to talk about
TG: which was me
TG: we need to talk about ME bitch not talk about the life altering trip in which i get to see my best friends in person for the first time
EB: let me guess
EB: it’s about karkat
TG: no fuck you
TG: its not about karkat
EB: okay then what’s it about?
TG: …
TG: i have cancer?
EB: yeah a cancer named karkat!
TG: thats actually funny because on his planet he was a cancer
TG: okay fine YES its about karkat god john leave me alone
EB: god you have such a boner for that shouty little dude
TG: how can i have a boner if i dont have a dick

EB: it's a metaphorical boner, dave!

EB: it’s not that deep!

TG: okay fuck you pulling the meme i pull on dirk when hes being a smug philosophical asshole

TG: i mean did you ever read the book he wrote jane what a goddamn pretentious prick

EB: detective pony was compelling as hell!

EB: well… at least the parts i understood were!

TG: yeah i know detective pony fucked me up too

TG: doesnt mean hes not a tool for writing it

TG: oh shit he saw that

TG: NOW HES RECITING THE LONGCAT PAGES THANKS JOHN

EB: you dug your own grave here

TG: once again we lost the point

EB: you do this all by yourself i am just an innocent bystander!

TG: youre complicit in my crimes and one day you will face justice

EB: what about you, mister!

TG: im too cool for justice

EB: /rolls eyes

EB: we all worked out you’re not cool a week after meeting you!

TG: fuck off john

TG: ANYWAYS

TG: the goddamn point

EB: yeah you’re telling karkat you like him tonight or whatever

TG: yep

TG: and i am

TG: not excited

EB: you’re excited as fuck you just don’t want to admit it!
TG: okay
TG: even if that were true
TG: AND ITS NOT
TG: what in the goddamn hell do i do

EB: do you ever just realize that the eric andre show has provided the internet with enough memes to rival spongebob
TG: yeah dude all the time
TG: wack
TG: what if it was purple
TG: why are you booing me im right
TG: the shooting one
TG: my all time favorite why would you say something so controversial yet so brave
TG: the way he moves his pencil just makes me fucking lose it
TG: wait a second
TG: john goddamn egbert
TG: are you trying to get me off topic?

EB: i just don’t know how to help with you’re dumb romance issues!
EB: besides it’s just so easy!

TG: thats the meanest thing anyones ever said to me and im friends with vriska
EB: (hehe)

EB: if you REALLY want my advice…
EB: i would say just go for it honestly!
EB: he really likes you and you’re a cool dude so you don’t have to be nervous!
EB: you’re not actually cool, though
EB: more like so weird it’s interesting!
TG: gee thanks egderp
TG: that helped a miniscule amount
TG: and by miniscule i mean as small as those tiny ass frogs
TG: you know the ones

TG: im gonna go now were almost there

TG: im so sorry thats a bold faced lie im gonna talk to karkat

TG: were not even close ghdfkj

EB: yeah go talk to your stupid boyfriend or whatever

TG: aw man john youre still my best bro

TG: to abandon you after ive poured years of ironic work into this friendship would be remiss

TG: no but completely unironically

TG: youre my best friend and i wouldn’t change it for the world

TG: love you john

TG: (no homo)

EB: aw, dave!

EB: love you too!

EB: (no homo)

EB: remember when we thought we were straight

TG: i try not to

TG: it was a dark time in my life

TG: i remember simultaneously being like ‘hmrnmnrngnngn dudes HOT’ and also incredibly jealous because i didn’t look like That

TG: straight girl phase was a stain on the timeline of little daveys life

EB: at least you weren’t an annoying heterosexual!

EB: “i am not a homosexual” was like my motto

TG: it really was

TG: the scene in the shining but replace it with you smashing the axe through the wall and saying that

TG: “heeres completly utterly absolutely heterosexual johnny!”

TG: okay lbr jack probably was straight because only straight people could be that fucking crazy

EB: (wheeze)
TG: mood
TG: john youre my best friend dont fucking forget that
TG: remember that i put up with your bullshit when you thought you were straight
EB: you really are a true friend for tolerating that
TG: nah it wasnt hard youre a good dude
TG: even if you were aggressively het
TG: anyways im gonna go annoy karkat
EB: okay!
TG: talk later?
EB: yeah as long as we don’t continue to reminisce about our heterosexual shenanigans
TG: reminisce is that a rose word
EB: fuck you!
EB: and yeah probably
EB: later douchelord!
TG: see ya fuckass

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering ectoBiologist [EB]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TG: sup
CG: JUST BUSY TEARING MY EYEBALLS OUT AT ROSE AND KANAYA’S INANE CHATTER.
CG: YOU’RE SISTER COULD WRITE A GODDAMN BOOK ON H.P LOVECRAFT AND RACISM SIMPLY BY TRANSCRIBING THIS CONVERSATION.
TG: yeah well she has a love hate relationship with that dude
TG: like OBVIOUSLY rose is gonna nut over any and all eldritch horrotters
TG: but were not completely white so shes really salty about the whole “i hate black people and actually all minorities” ordeal
CG: YOU’RE NOT WHITE?
TG: well first of all im pretty sure every strilonde is somewhat albino despite me being the only
Official one

TG: but nah dude were a quarter hispanic

CG: WHY DIDN’T YOU TELL ME?

TG: idk man didnt wanna seem like i was diverse for no reason

CG: ???

CG: IF THIS IS A MEME I DON’T RECOGNIZE WHICH ONE YOU’RE REFERENCING

TG: well its a text post so idk if it counts as a meme

CG: DO YOU JUST STRING WORDS TOGETHER AND HOPE IT’S COHERENT?

TG: are you asking me if im a bot

TG: first this next your sending me captcha codes and asking me to read them

TG: listen dude i cant even get that shit as a normal actual human being

CG: I’M GOING TO IGNORE YOU’RE SAD ATTEMPT TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF AS NORMAL AND TRY TO GET BACK TO THE TOPIC AT HAND.

CG: I JUST REALIZED THERE WAS NEVER A TOPIC TO BE AT HAND SO...

CG: JESUS CHRIST DO WE SPEW THIS MUCH BULLSHIT OUT OF OUR MOUTHS EVERY DAY?

CG: IS THIS WHAT WE SOUND LIKE?

CG: TWO LOST DUNDERFUCKS ATTEMPTING TO COMMUNICATE, AND ALMOST GETTING IT BUT NOT QUITE.

CG: I’M QUESTIONING EVERYTHING.

CG: *ARE WE ROSE AND KANAYA?*

TG: oh my god karkles are you just now realizing that 99% of our conversations are the ‘inane chatter’ you so loathe

CG: NO I REALIZE IT DAILY. I JUST NEVER GET OVER WHAT A BUNCH OF BLITHERING IDIOTS WE ARE.

TG: we just got to the woods now well be there soon

CG: AND I NEED TO KNOW THIS WHY?

TG: karkles im wounded

TG: you have cut me down with your poniard made of words
TG: reaping my pain like death reaps souls
TG: you hurt me with your ire
TG: i never knew cruelty was your ilk
CG: SHUT UP!
CG: I DON’T EVEN THINK YOU’RE USING THOSE CORRECTLY.
TG: oh i can guarantee im not
CG: AND IF YOU’RE GONNA DO A BIT AT LEAST COMMIT TO IT. YOU JUST SOUND LIKE YOU’RE SPEAKING NORMALLY WITH MEDIEVAL WORDS THROWN IN.
TG: i was too busty looking up synonyms for dagger to fully commit
TG: speaking of which dirk is a synonym for dagger isnt that funny
CG: ‘BUSTY’
TG: oh my god leave me alone
CG: BUSTY
CG: BUSTY
CG: BUTSY
CG: NO FUCK
TG: and the circle of stupidity is complete
TG: anyways i need to talk to you
CG: WELL THAT’S NOT FUCKING OMINOUS.
CG: WHY CAN’T YOU SAY IT HERE?
TG: …
TG: that arguably wouldve been a better plan but were here now anyways fucko
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

You walk into the cave to see that pretty much everyone is already there. Roxy is staring transfixed at the entrance, seemingly not even noticing your arrival. You give her a small wave, she looks over to you and cracks a nervous grin.

Dirk starts passing out edibles, leaving the remainder of them on the cave floor next to the alcohol. The alcohol looks like it’s barely been touched, which is probably good. To be honest, it’s never
really been your thing. You don’t like how it makes you feel unsteady and fuzzy and strangely hot. You’re also a big fan of being in control of your movements. You greet everyone then head over to talk to Rose. You said you were going to talk to Karkat tonight, but hey you didn’t say when you were going to talk to him.

“David.” When you picked your name out for yourself you made it Dave. Not David, Dave. You know she only does this for humorous effect.

“Rosalind.” That certainly isn’t her name. She even has the birth certificate to prove it.

You glare at each other for thirty seconds before you burst out laughing and she gives a lighthearted snicker.

You plop down on the floor next to the bean bag chair her and Kanaya are sharing (gross). You chat with her for a few minutes before Karkat gets tired of silently fuming in the corner. Not that you noticed. Who are you kidding, you totally noticed. He walks over to you and taps you on the shoulder.

“You needed to talk?” He looks as nervous as you feel. Rose smirks at you when he says this.

“I wonder what Dave could possibly need to talk about.” She smiles that specific smile. The one you hate. Kanaya mirrors her expression, but it’s more genuine.

“It’s a fucking mystery to us all, honestly,” you retort.

Rose’s eyes twinkle mischievously, hinting at shenanigans. You narrow your eyes at her and she opens her mouth to say something, but you cut her off.

“Nope. Not tonight, satan,” You say, grabbing Karkat’s hand and rushing out of the cave just as Nepeta enters. You quickly say hi to her. You notice Roxy looks miserable. You really hope Calliope shows up, for Roxy’s sake.

What you you don’t notice is Karkat staring dumbfoundedly at your linked hands.

You walk out of the cave into the dusk air. You drop Karkat’s hand, suddenly feeling self-conscious. He looks disappointed when you do, but maybe that’s just hope.

The two of you wander aimlessly for about a minute in awkward silence.

“What did you need to talk about?” He asks. You can hear the shakiness in his voice.

“Can we maybe ease into that can of worms. For instance, normal people generally start off with a ‘hey how are you’.”

“You collect dead things in jars and I’m from another fucking planet, we’ve long passed normal,” he snaps. The venom in his voice makes you wince.

“Jesus who pissed in your cornflakes?”

“You! You pissed in my metaphorical fucking cornflakes! You can’t just tell someone you need to talk to them, presumably about something important, and then not follow through!”

“I’m just fucking nervous okay? You’re right it is important. Incredibly fucking important. It’s importance rivals that of Obama. Yes, Obama. Not the piece of shit that’s currently in office, but fucking OBAMA. They’ve hired an entire secret service team for this piece of information. You
have to take this piece of information out to lunch at the fanciest restaurant in the state, or you lose your job. You have to protect this with your LIFE. This is so goddamn important it’s federally funded! This is more important than the drop of Lemon Demon’s iconique song Two Trucks. AND I LOVE TWO TRUCKS.”

It’s at this point that you start tapping the beat for Two Trucks on your leg. “This is more important than the most important email you’ll ever get in your entire life. This is the ultimate showdown of ultimate destiny.”

Great, now that one’s stuck in your head as well. “And it will be ME. NOT MR. ROGERS IN THAT BLOODSTAINED SWEATER. GODDAMNIT.” Okay maybe you’re approximately one hundred times more nervous than you initially let on. “Thi-” Karkat cuts you off.

“JESUS FUCKING CHRIST DAVE WOULD YOU GET TO THE POINT!”

You take a breath from your tangent. You try to remember what you were getting to. “I’m honestly not sure if there was one.”

Karkat facepalms. “I can’t fucking believe I like such a goddamn idiot.” He then realizes what he says and opens his mouth to speak, reconsiders, then just starts fucking screaming. Literally just starts. Screaming. He starts running around and kicking things, swearing loudly when he repeatedly stubs his toe.

“Well fuck dude you just made this a hell of a lot easier on me!” You cup your hands around your mouth as you yell. Karkat’s a good distance away from you now, but he freezes mind scream/kick when he hears that.

He runs up to you (more like walks quickly and angrily), still looking furious but it’s mixed with something else.

Karkat finally reaches you and wow he is right in your face and god he honestly looks kind of cute.

“You done throwing a bitch fit or should I get shin guards?”

He disregards your question and squints at you suspiciously. “You like me?”

“Yeah dude I thought Jade told you.”

“She did.” He pauses for a long time. “Just for clarification. You, Dave Strider, like me, Karkat Vantas, in a non-platonic, romantic way?”

“It’s not fucking wedding vows, Karkles.”

“Those would be terrible wedding vows and you fucking know it. Answer the goddamn question.”

“Yeah,” you reply.

“Oh okay. Well same here.”

Your face breaks into a grin. You knew he liked you, but hearing it from him cements it in reality. It seems more true. “You’re such a fucking dork.”

“You’re the dork.”

“Nah it’s you.”

“The title of dork rests firmly in your disgusting fleshy stumps.” He’s standing really close and you
kind of want to kiss him. A very strong impression of wrongness strikes you, the impression of someone telling you that real men don’t kiss boys.

*Shut up shut up shut up.* You quash the voice, but lean away from Karkat anyways. You’re not sure your ready for that yet.

He waves a hand in front of your face.

“I’m here,” you say, blinking back to reality.

“What do you want to do now?”

“You do know I’ve never dated anyone right? That was a conversation we had? Why in god’s name do you think I know what to do.”

Karkat scoffs, but you’re pretty sure you can see him smiling. “Just answer the fucking question.”

“In terms of the immediate future,” you pause. “I want to hold your hand.” You snag his hand with yours. He looks ridiculously embarrassed and you’re honestly living for it. “And go inside and get high as hell.”

“You useless fucking ’stoner’.” He says stoner as though he’s repeating it. He probably is.

“Yeah you sure know how to pick ‘em Karkles.” He bluses. Fucking blushes. If you weren’t such a cool dude you might start crying tears of joy.

“Dave, stop fucking mumbling and being generally useless.”

“I’m fucking wounded. How could my boyfriend say such things to me?”

He stammers for a second. You then process what you said, and immediately start backpedaling.

He cuts you off. “If we’re gonna date you should know what an asshole I am by this point.”

Your jaw snaps shut with a click.

“Oh believe me, I know,” you say, after recovering. “You’re the living embodiment of the ‘asshole with a heart of gold’ trope that appear in those countless romcoms you’ve forced me to watch. But it’s okay ’cus we’re gay.”

“I’ll never understand your human sexuality bullshit.”

“All you need to know is that straight people suck in every conceivable way.”

“Noted.”

The two of you begin walking back to the cave, hands linked the whole way. You enter the cave, and after everyone processes what’s going on, they start losing their shit. You’re pretty sure Roxy wolf-whistles.

“I do believe some congratulations are in order,” Rose says, walking up to you.

“Is congratulations Rose lingo for ‘gloating’?” You ask.

“Perhaps. I’m quite happy for the two of you, though I have to ask, Dave. Remember when you called me useless? How long did it take you again? Four months? Don’t think I won’t be lording this
over your head for the appropriate amount of time.”

“And how long would that be?”

“I think the rest of your life might be suitable to my tastes,” Rose deadpans. You snort. She smirks at you and walks back over to Kanaya, but not before wrestling Roxy’s drink away from her. She doesn’t look like she’s had that many, but you know Rose doesn’t want her drinking at all. You notice an unfamiliar face sitting next to Roxy on the floor. Dimly, you process that this is Calliope. Oh, she’s walking up to you.

“Dave, I assume?”

“The one and only.”

“And Karkat?” She asks. She has a strange accent, almost British, but still very distinctly American.

“That’s me, unfortunately.”

“It’s very nice to meet everyone! Though, I have to ask, was that you screaming outside?”

“Karkat here is even more shouty in person, so take care of your eardrums,” you tell her. She covers her laugh with a hand. “There was also more kicking going on out there than in She’s The Man, which he forced me to watch.” Karkat glares at you. “He seriously could’ve bent it like Beckham with all the rage being generated from his feet.”

“KK could power the entire city of Portland with his rage,” Sollux chimes. “He’d cut your ‘global warming’ in half.” He says global warming with air quotes.

“Sollux, don’t tell me you’re a climate change denier.”

“Oh no. I just think it’s an easily fixed problem but you know humans. Dead set on digging their own graves.”

“We’re all gonna be drowning by 2100,” you agree.

Sollux opens his mouth to reply, but Karkat cuts him off. “The two of you won’t fucking live to see it if you keep this asinine drivel up.”

“That’s in eighty-two years, we probably won’t live to see it anyways.”

“Fuck off, Dave.”

“Besides,” Dirk says, appearing from nowhere. “Climate change is a very important issue that affects all of us, so it’s not exactly asinine drivel. I mean, think of the polar bears.”

“Not to mention the eventual change in local climate that will destroy homes. I mean, shit dude, hurricanes.”

“Also the fact that because science has become politicized, that people are now being steered away from STEM careers.”

“With rising sea levels, agricultural soil will become contaminated and we’ll all starve.”

“Countless species will die off with the destruction of their habitats and the global food net will be harshly impacted.”
Karkat facepalms. “I know you guys are just doing this to piss me off. Congrats! Goal fucking achieved. So if both of you would kindly shut the fuck up that’d be fucking fantastic.”

You laugh and Dirk smirks. He walks off, taking his phone out as he goes. Suddenly, you get a Pesterchum notification. You have a pretty good idea who it is.

timaeusTestified [TT] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

TT: So when should I deliver the ever classic Talk in which I vaguely threaten the new boyfriend?

TT: Perhaps while I’m doing something dadly.

TT: Maybe cooking or building a wooden deck of sorts.

TG: oh dear god no

TG: dirk i appreciate your dedication to irony as much as anyone but please

TG: Do Not

TT: Who said i was being ironic?

TT: I think I’ll schedule a meeting with Karkat. Conceivably when I’m building that birdhouse for wood-shop.

TG: dirk i am begging

TG: do not do this to me

TT: I’ve already made up my mind.

TG: i hate you

TT: I know.

TG: this isn’t fucking star wars you han solo wannabe

TG: youre a luke and you know it

TT: May I make an inquiry as to how I am a Luke?

TG: useless twink

TT: ...

TT: Fuck you.

timaeusTestified [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

TG: ahhahahahaha
You turn off your phone and pocket it. You proceed to the center of the cave (Karkat in tow), where the ‘mood altering substances’ stash is slowly diminishing. You grab two carmels. You pop one in your mouth and pocket the other one. Hopefully you don’t forget about it.

Karkat picks up a cookie. “What the fuck are these for?”

“I mean, I’m guessing you’ve heard of weed but man with trolls who knows.”

“Isn’t it some form of human soporific?” He eyes it with caution.

You pause, thinking about this for a moment. “I mean. I dunno the technical definition of soporifics but. It’s a drug, I guess. It’s a pretty harmless one though. Some people say it’s a gateway drug but that’s kind of bullshit. Just don’t be dead by twenty-seven.”

He gives you an inquisitive look. “You know, because all the rockstars who did drugs died at twenty-seven. Or twenty-eight I guess.”

“Name one.”

“Jimi Hendrix.”

He glares at you. “Bet you can’t name another.”


“You’re a fucking nerd for knowing that.” He glances at the edibly suspiciously. “What does this horseshit even do?”

“It mostly just chills people the fuck out. Some people have bad reactions but that’s pretty rare. Also you’ll be tired and hungry as fuck so.”

“Hungry?”

“Yeah dude like nothing else. I wouldn’t eat that whole thing at once though. Since you can’t gauge how it affects you. Shit, man, I don’t even know if trolls can get stoned.”

Karkat glares at you and shoves the whole thing in his mouth, never breaking eye contact. That is, until he starts choking.

You drop his hand and double over, bracing your hands on your knees. You make an awful, wheezing noise as Karkat continues to choke.

He finally recovers. “I like how you didn’t even help me. You useless bulge sack.”

You, on the other hand, haven’t quite gotten over your laughing fit. “I’m sorry dude you just.” You start laughing again and Karkat gives you a weird look.

“You’re acting weird.”

You realize that the caramel is probably only the second thing you’ve eaten today. And you have a fast as fuck metabolism. You’re probably a tiny bit high. “Shut up. You’re acting weird.”
Karkat simply rolls his eyes.

One hour and several group board games later, you’re both leaned up against each other, probably laughing harder than you’ve ever laughed in your life. Karkat’s passed out like seven different times now. Each time you’ve woken him up with random questions and statements. Rose caved and took a caramel, she’s now crooning about how pretty Kanaya is. Kanaya, equally as stoned, looks like she’s going to cry out of happiness. Calliope is probably the only not high person here and you respect the fuck out of that. Like. Mad props, dog.

Dirk is talking to Sollux about coding. Sollux occasionally making computer related puns, which Dirk flips his shit at. Roxy is passed out in Calliope’s lap, Calliope has a sketchbook propped on top of her head and is drawing. Aradia is next to Sollux, she’s holding his hand and often stops to look at it in awe. Vriska and Terezi are on a bean bag chair, both asleep.

Nepeta is off in a corner, messaging Jade. At least, you assume it’s Jade, with how she keeps blushing.

Suddenly, she starts giggling. She collapses on the floor and fucking loses it. Oh man you’ve gotta show Jade.

You quietly take a video and open Pesterchum.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering gardenGnostic [GG]

TG: [sent a video]

TG: look at what youve done

TG: youve made her adorable

GG: are you suggesting she wasnt adorable before?

TG: dam u rite

TG: oh shit did i just turn into roxy

TG: i think i did

TG: man how weird would it be to just fucking change into an entirely different person

TG: WHAT IF I WAS OBAMA

GG: haha oh man you guys are funny

GG: rose just came into our chat and asked me how she should propose to kanaya

TG: dsfjkgdjkjvghdfjkgdskj

TG: oh SHIT

TG: ive got an emergency to deal with

TG: an emergency named sleepy karkat
TG: he's even more adorable than Nepeta

GG: slander!

GG: that's impossible

TG: is it because I have living proof right here

TG: leaning up against my shoulder

TG: soon to be relocated to my lap

GG: gayyyyy

GG: and nothing is more adorable than Nepeta!

TG: agree to disagree

GG: I'm right

TG: are not

GG: are too

TG: are not

GG: are too

TG: are not

GG: are too!

GG: bye dave!

gardenGnostic [GG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

You turn off your phone and set it on the ground. You move your shoulder out from beneath Karkat’s head and he lets out a small noise of complaint. He opens his eyes blearily and then lays his head in your lap. You start running your hands through his hair and notice how coarse it is in comparison to your own. You carefully prod at one of his horns with one finger and he makes a trilling noise like a cicada that does weird things to your chest.

You stay like that for a long time. Content. Careless. Happy, even.

You don’t know when you fall asleep, but next thing you know Rose is prodding you awake and telling you it’s time to leave.

You gently shake Karkat awake before standing up. He complains and covers his head with his arms. You prod him with a foot, which he grabs and pulls you to the ground next to him. The two of you laugh for long time. You probably would’ve kept laughing had Rose not thrown a bean bag chair at you.

You stand up again. Karkat holds his hands out to you, and you pull him to his feet. You let go of
one of his hands, but not the other.

Dirk tells you to help clean up, so you begin picking up wrappers and cups, holding Karkat’s hand the whole while.

“You know this would be a lot easier if you would let go of my hand,” he says, kneeling to the floor with you as you pick up some more trash.

“Never.”

“So you’re never going to let go of my hand?”

“Nope. Our hands are officially joined in holy matrimony. They fell in a whirlwind love on a vacation which promptly ended after they realized they lived far away from each other. The main character went home and the level-headed best friend told them to go after the love interest. They’re already gone but they meet again at a coffee shop, where they trade numbers. They move in together and adopt a one-eared cat. They’re parents paid big bucks for the wedding, and everyone cried as it was beautiful and captivating. Would you divorce them? After all of that? You truly are heartless.”

He laughs. “I really have made you watch too many rom-coms with me.”

Once the cave is looking as pristine as it was before, all of you head out.

The walk through the forest is peaceful, even with a bunch of dumbass teenage kids talking too loudly. You mostly tune it out.

You look up at the midnight sky, and you feel small. Infinitesimal. The that glitter over Oregon are larger and further away than the mind can comprehend. You would die a million deaths before reaching them.

Suddenly, you’re angry. Why, in this entire great and terrible universe, did you get saddled with your life? You know people have it worse. But why did they get saddled with their lives? Why, in a universe filled with wonder, is your world filled with pain? You start to feel indignant. There are evil people who never experience a day of strife or struggle in their lives.

Why you out of all the people who deserve it?

Maybe you deserve it.

You think that if a god does exist that you hate them. Who are they to play judge in people’s lives?

Karkat must notice the change in your behavior, as he squeezes your hand and looks at you confused.

“Just a bunch of bullshit,” you mumble in response.

He frowns, but he looks at you with awe in his eyes. He looks at you like you hung the stars and suddenly everything is okay for a moment. “Just a bunch of bullshit,” he replies.

You all reach the tracks. There’s a brief problem about who’s going to drive Roxy’s car home. Calliope says that she can.

You walk home with Dirk. The silence between you is comfortable. He’s always been there for you, and he always will be. An absence of speech merely means an absence of speech. You realize that you love him more than words.
He checks the cameras and you’re a bit nervous. It’s later than you intended to come home, and a confrontation with Bro could be imminent. Dirk gives the all clear and you exhale.

You both enter your bedroom. Dirk decides to take a shower.

“Hey don’t wear your binder for a while, you wore it for a long time today,” he tells you, gesturing to your flat chest.

“Yeah you too,” you reply. “Take care of yourself.”

“You too.”

Both of you are fucking shit at showing emotions, but you watch out for each other, and that in itself speaks volumes.

You stand there listlessly for a while. Trying to remember what you were going to do. Karkat messages you and saves you from coming to a realization.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

CG: HEY.

TG: hey man

CG: YOU WANNA WATCH A MOVIE WITH ME?

TG: i would but im about to be in bed

TG: im gonna be a cozy little bitch worm

CG: ???

TG: im a cozy little bitch

TG: but i added worm

TG: whats not to understand

CG: I DON’T FUCKING KNOW THE PHRASE ‘COZY LITTLE BITCH WORM’ JUST DOESN’T USUALLY POP UP IN NORMAL VERNACULAR.

TG: youve been friends with me for how long?

CG: FAIR.

TG: oh shit

TG: i just remembered were dating

CG: YOU FORGOT?

TG: once again
TG: friends with me for how long

CG: IT’S ALL I’VE BEEN ABLE TO THINK ABOUT.

TG: haha gay

TG: hold up i gotta take my binder off

TG: free my sweaty titties from their spandex prison

TG: you know free the nipple

TG: that but im freeing my entire chest and general ribcage area

CG: SHOULDN’T YOU BE TAKING IT OFF BY NOW?

TG: yeah just ugh

TG: ive just been feelin dysphoric today and taking it off makes the fleshy devils themselves more real

CG: I GET IT.

CG: I MEAN, I DON’T. BUT I GET THAT IT SUCKS.

CG: YOU SHOULD REALLY TAKE IT OFF, THOUGH.

TG: okay ill uncage my bresticles

TG: OH FUCK that feels nice

TG: ill be enjoying the ability to take long deep breathes for the next twenty-four hours

CG: IT’S NOT TOO TIGHT?

TG: nah dude its pretty normal to have some mild discomfort

TG: pain means its too tight

TG: theyre always gonna be a tiny bit uncomfy

TG: but im good

CG: ARE YOU SURE?

TG: yeah dude dirk would kill me if he thought i wasnt binding safely

TG: thanks for caring though

CG: YOU’RE WELCOME?

CG: YOU DON’T EXACTLY HAVE TO THANK ME FOR THAT, THOUGH.

TG: yeah i know
TG: its just i didnt really have any irl people besides dirk who gave a shit about me
TG: like rose and roxy and john and jade obviously
TG: and jake and jane by extension
TG: but it felt less real? i guess idk
TG: so its nice
CG: WHAT ABOUT YOUR FATHER?
TG: god that sure is a topic i would like to avoid
TG: lets talk about our favorite vines
TG: mine is the one where the man swallows the hotdog
TG: actually hold up
TG: [sent a link]
CG: MINE IS
CG: HOLD UP I DON'T SPEAK ITALIAN LETS SEE IF I CAN FIND IT
CG: [sent a link]
TG: oh my god im going to watch this on repeat for the next five hours
TG: this is what you get for showing me this again
TG: of course you would love this vine he just starts screaming
TG: karkat do you kin hier nen euro man
CG: YES.
TG: djfhsdkjdsf
TG: karkles id die for you
CG: DO YOU KIN HOT DOG MAN?
TG: do you even know me of course i kin hot dog man
TG: hes even wearing a red bandana what more could i ask for
CG: DOESN'T THAT MAKE YOU PROBLEMATIC.
TG: what no why
CG: FACTKIN OR WHATEVER.
TG: FUCK

TG: oh my god karkat are you going to make a callout post for me

TG: will i have to delete my blog and entire social media presence

TG: will sbahj be all that is left of the once great dave strider

TG: will i be tried and executed for identity theft

CG: WOULD YOU SHUT UP THEN?

TG: never

TG: ill keep running my mouth right up until the guillotine

TG: you should know this by now

CG: I DO.

CG: IT’S ODDLY ENDEARING.

TG: (whispers) holy shit

TG: karkat thats gay

CG: YOU’RE GAY.

TG: fuck ive been found out

TG: oh my god i just realized how hungry i am

TG: im thirsting for food more than that t-rex on jurassic park thirsted for blood

TG: im walking over to my closet is this the scene where the t-rex appears in the mirror and everyone in the car flips their shit

TG: i am the predator and jumbo bags of sun chips are my prey of choice

TG: ‘the hungry strider stalks up behind his unknowing victim he must be quiet as the sun chips (harvest cheddar because what are we heathens) cellophane packaging amplifies hearing because [insert bullshit reason that i just made up]

TG: [key intense music]

TG: the strider pounces! [shit load of sound effects and animal noises thats very clearly played over the track]

TG: the sun chips put up a valiant effort but it is in vain’

TG: [cut to me ravaging chips how you ravage your victorian bodice rippers]

CG: WHAT
CG: THE
CG: FUCK
CG: I’M NOT SURE IF YOU JUST TYPED THAT OUT FOR IRONIC PURPOSES OR IF YOU’RE LITERALLY JUST THAT STUPID.

CG: HOW LONG DID IT ACTUALLY TAKE YOU TO GET THE CHIPS? WAS THAT NECESSARY?

TG: thirty seconds and absofuckinlutely

CG: YOU’RE SO RIDICULOUS.

TG: shut up im still stoned

TG: MAYBE im being a LITTLE more extra than need be

TG: or maybe your not being extra ENOUGH

CG: THE DAY I’M AS ‘EXTRA’ AS YOU IS THE DAY THEY LAY ME TO REST IN A CEMETERY WHICH I HAUNT CURSING THE NAME OF DAVE FUCKING STRIDER.

TG: poltergeist or just plain ghost

CG: MISS ME SO FUCKING HARD WITH THAT INTANGIBLE SHIT.

CG: POLTERGEIST, OBVIOUSLY.

TG: obviously

TG: hey man not to be tender on main or anything

TG: but im glad you exist

TG: its nice just to talk about pointless things with you

CG: YEAH YOU TOO.

CG: I’M REALLY GLAD I MET YOU HONESTLY.

CG: DESPITE BEING THE MOST ANNOYING FUCKING CACTUS ON THE PLANET, I REALLY DO APPRECIATE YOU.

TG: my first experience was you calling paul ‘transphobic shit knob’ so

TG: i may have been mildly obsessed since day one

CG: WHY?

CG: I WAS LITERALLY JUST DOING WHAT ANY DECENT PERSON WOULD DO.

CG: YOU DON’T DESERVE HALF THE SHIT PEOPLE GIVE YOU.
CG: YOU DESERVE A LOT OF THINGS AND BEING TREATED AS LESS THAN HUMAN CERTAINLY ISN’T ONE OF THEM.

TG: oh man

TG: this shit may be getting *too* tender

TG: lets halt this emotional intimacy at once

CG: YEAH OKAY, AGREED.

TG: hey i know i said i was going to bed but i just realized i cant sleep

TG: so movie or something?

TG: besides i just downloaded the rabbit app would you really have the three seconds i spent typing it into the search bar and clicking download be for naught

CG: YEAH, SURE.

CG: I’M WATCHING TITANIC RIGHT NOW DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE IT?

TG: nah dude

TG: ill probably fall asleep anyways that movies long and boring as hell

CG: TITANIC IS A CINEMATIC MASTERPIECE THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

TG: titanic is a snooze fest and you know it

CG: THE ROMANCE IS INCREDIBLY WELL DONE, THE FIMWORK IS CAPTIVATING AS HELL, AND THE PLOT IS A FASCINATING INSIGHT INTO HUMAN CULTURE.

TG: haha okay

TG: ill probably sleep on call or something just

TG: dont hang up okay?

CG: OKAY.

CG: [sent a link]

CG: I LIKE YOU A LOT, BY THE WAY.

TG: yeah

TG: yeah me too

CG: (:B

TG: B)
TG: oh shit both of our emotes contain a b
TG: truly a fated relationship
CG: SHUT UP AND CLICK THE LINK.
TG: fine i guess ill just talk to you over voice call like a loser
CG: YOU’VE ALWAYS BEEN A LOSER.
TG: yeah a loser you just admitted to liking
CG: …
carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]
TG: oh my god karkat
TG: anyways here i come bitch
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [TG]

Chapter End Notes

shoutout to mr hal turing tested for introducing me to detective pony during a stream even though theres a one in a trillion chance hes ever gonna read this. detective pony changed my life all of you need to read it.

another shoutout to mr hal turing tested for inspiring the phrase 'cozy little bitch worm' which he said in said stream of detective pony

oh yeah! recap! all that really happened is that dave and karkat started dating. thats it thats like the whole chapter.

my tumblr PLEASE TALK TO ME IM LONELY
ultimately i don't understand a thing

Chapter Notes

yoo sorry this took so long to upload end of the school year shits been kicking my entire ass
this is just a really short filler chapter sorry :/ i wanted to go into roses pov and highlight some of her issues so i did and it turned out shorter than i intended
i was initially going to fit the portland trip in this chapter but i rethought that so it will be in the next chapter instead which is going to be ULTRA LONG mark my wombs
next chapter is dirk pov im really excited to write him even though hes p difficult for me to write
if you havent realized it yet, the kids are in newberg oregon which is a small town for oregon but still like 5 times larger than the town i live in so
also roxy and rose sister interactions are so good and id die for them!!
minor tw for one line of drug mentions if you wanna skip that just skip from "fuck it" to "no it was about"
chapter title from ultimately by khai dreams!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

gardenGnostic [GG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

GG: [sent a photo]

TT: What is the meaning of you sending me a terrible picture of the Portland Airport sign at two in the morning?

TT: Where did you even find a photo of that quality?

GG: hehehe!

TT: I swear to all that is holy, Jade, if you’re in Portland and just telling me now I won’t hesitate to eviscerate you off the face of this planet.

GG: hehehe!

TT: Oh my god.

GG: arent you excited?!

TT: I’m incredibly excited I’m just trying to harness my rage of not realizing this from Dave’s frequent slips.
TT: How oblivious can I be?

TT: Incredibly, apparently.

GG: aw rose its not your fault!

GG: i swore him to secrecy!

GG: besides one doesn’t usually expect their best friends to just visit the state they live in with no warning!

TT: Speaking of which, why didn’t you tell us?

GG: we wanted to surprise you!

GG: jane and jake are here too, by the way.

TT: I cannot believe this.

TT: This is so unforseen and I am kicking myself.

TT: Utterly ridiculous.

TT: Jade, I am so fucking overjoyed that you are visiting us. Pardon my extreme emotions.

TT: Am I allowed to tell other people?

GG: go for it! were gonna message the groupchat soon anyways.

TT: If you’ll excuse me for a moment.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering gardenGnostic [GG]

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

TT: You will not fucking believe the emotional rollercoaster I’ve been on in the past five minutes.

GA: Why Are You Awake

TT: Why are you?

GA: Break Is Almost Over And I Havent Done Anything

TT: Let’s pretend I was up for the same reasons.

GA: Lets Not

GA: Im Worried About You

TT: Must we do this right now?
GA: We Must

TT: I’m really starting to see why Dave despises my ‘therapy bullshit’ as he so accurately named it.

GA: Im Your Girlfriend I Think Im Entitled To The Right To Express My Concern

TT: Can we please not get into one of our pseudo-fights right now? I understand that you are concerned but I would really prefer not to get into a competition of who can be the better girlfriend right now.

GA: Is That What These Are To You

GA: Glad To Know My Genuine Concern Is Taken As One Of Your Passive Aggressive Gestures Of Faux Sympathy

TT: I wanted to avoid this.

GA: Too Bad I Want To Talk About It

GA: You Havent Been Sleeping Or Eating

GA: Youre Cagey And Unreliable

GA: You Are Taking Your Frustrations Out On Me

GA: You Refuse To Talk About Why Youre Acting This Way

GA: And You Have Drunk Texted Me Frequently The Past Few Days

TT: Are you always this infuriating? Or is this a new development?

TT: Perhaps I should be concerned for your wellbeing since something is CLEARLY going on.

GA: Rose

TT: Kanaya.

GA: If You Want To Act Like A Petulant Wriggler Then Be My Guest But I Ask That We Have Mature Conversation

GA: If You Refuse To Engage In Said Conversation Then I Will Be Forced To Throw A Temper Tantrum Akin To The One You Are Throwing Right Now

GA: And That Will Be Good For No One

TT: Is this a convoluted way of saying “you don’t want to see me angry” in an attempt to threaten me? Really, Kanaya, with the reputation you have I expected something with a little more bite.

GA: You Have Forced My Hand
GA: If You Insist On Acting Like A Child Then I Will Treat You Like One

GA: You Want To Know The Truth

GA: The Way You Have Been Acting The Past Few Days Is Cruel And Unfair And It Makes Me Question If You Value Me Let Alone This Relationship

GA: You've Been Being Selfish And Cruel

GA: And I Can Deal With That But You Refuse To Fucking Communicate Why You Are Acting Like Such A Bitch For Lack Of A Better Word

GA: I Am Giving You An Option Here

GA: You Can Tell Me What Is Wrong And Tell Me What I Need To Do To Help And Cease Acting Like A Wordy Vriska

GA: Or You Can Continue To Cut Me Off And Leave Me In The Dark Only To Watch This Relationship Crumble

GA: I Am Not Threatening To Leave That Is Far Too Dire For The Situation But If You Insist On Isolating Yourself Then You Will Find Yourself Alone

TT: ...

TT: I do believe an apology is in order.

GA: No Fucking Shit

TT: Kanaya, I am deeply and truly sorry.

TT: I would say I was not aware of how my actions affected you, but that is a sad excuse for an apology.

TT: I was fully aware of what I was doing to you, I just did not want to acknowledge it.

TT: You deserve to be treated better and there is no excuse for how I have been acting the past four or five days.

TT: You do not want an excuse, however I think I owe you an explanation.

TT: My mother has been getting worse and, by extension, Roxy.

TT: It's just...

TT: I'm sorry.

TT: Do you mind if I call you?

GA: Not At All

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]
You sigh and power off your phone for a moment, attempting to gather your thoughts. You’re stomach hurts from lack of food, and the fact that elation from your conversation with Jade now mingles with the hurt of the past few days.

You want to cry. You want to scream.

You force it down and click on Kanaya’s name in the FaceTime app.

She picks up almost immediately. It’s not dark in her room, like it is in yours. You can make out the edges of the homework she had been working on before you pestered her. Her face is illuminated by her desk lamp.

She’s so beautiful and kind and you don’t deserve her in the slightest.

You break down.

Perhaps it’s because it’s late. Perhaps it’s because Kanaya hasn’t left you even though she probably should. Perhaps it’s because you’re exhausted of trying to keep your head above water, of being the stable one, of trying to solve everyone else’s problems, but not your own.

It doesn’t really matter why you realize. Briefly you wonder if anything matters, really.

“Oh dear,” Kanaya says when you start crying. You let out a pathetic laugh. God you think you really love her.

“I’m sorry,” you say, forcing down a sob. “I’m sorry I’ve been so mean and cold. Everything is falling apart and I’m supposed to be the one to fix it.” You say it so quickly you forget to breathe.

“My mother used to be so bright and beautiful. She used to be my idol, my hero. But when things got hard she just fucking disappeared. When whatever incompetent god there is abandoned us she tried to find him in the bottom of a bottle. And now Roxy’s doing it too and I don’t want to lose anyone else. But she’s getting worse and I’m losing her and it all seems so unavailing.” You haven’t looked at her the whole time. You turn to her now and she’s looking at you softly, sadly.

You sniffle. “I know that I seem like I know everything, but I’m just as lost and unhinged as everyone else. Everyone insists on falling apart, so if I can’t keep it together who will? I envy them for being able to have lapses in judgement. Because I have always been the one keeping my mother together, and now I have to keep Roxy in line, too. I… I love them so much and if I don’t take care of them, no one will. Recently, however, I have been unable to do so. I blame this on the fact that I have been at somewhat of a low point. But when I’m at a low point everyone is at a low point and that just makes me sink lower.”

“And so the snake eats its own tail,” Kanaya says. You give her a small smile.

The two of you sit in silence for a moment. The side of your face is squished into a pillow and you’ve been crying. It can’t be attractive but Kanaya doesn’t seem to care.

“Sometimes,” you start, “I think that I’m destined to run myself into the ground.”

Kanaya attempts a smile. “I wouldn’t say destined. You are, though, that’s for sure.” She pauses. “I thought you didn’t believe in destiny.”

“I don’t. I don’t believe that one fixed thing is bound to happen in everyone’s life no matter what. I
do believe in the power of choice, and the irreversibility of said choice. And I can see it. I can see myself following the same road I am on and breaking down. I can watch myself become my mother in my mind’s eye. I can see everyone I care about slowly abandon me. Over and over, I watch myself lose what makes me real. The more I watch this horrid picture play out in my mind, the more I start to believe it is going to happen.” You take a deep, shuddering breath. “I can see myself crumble. I can see myself die.” You look away from your phone, turning your head towards the ceiling. You’ve stopped crying, but you feel emptier than you’ve ever felt before.

Dimly, you hear Kanaya speak.

“Rose.” You don’t respond.

“Rose look at me.” You look at her wordlessly. “I’m not saying that none of those things are going to happen, I’m not even going to say that they aren’t happening right now. I know how smart you can be, but right now you are being very foolish. You said you believe in the power of choice? Then believe in it. Before you take an action, look to the future you want, the future you deserve. Before you make a choice, think how it will affect your life. And for god’s sake stop working so hard. You said you think that you’re destined to run yourself into the ground, well make the choice not to.”

You feel her words strike a chord within you. You feel a hum of warmth through your chest and you crack a broken smile. You don’t know what to say. You say the only thing you can think of.

“Thank you.”

The two of you stay up talking for about a half an hour longer. You love talking to her. About anything, really.

Finally, you decide you both should get some sleep, knowing full well you won’t be able to. You hang up anyways, and the warmth that makes its home in your chest when you’re around her slowly fades.

Five minutes later you get a message.

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] began trolling tentacleTherapist [TT]

GA: You Never Did Tell Me What You Initially Messaged Me For

TT: Oh, yes.

TT: Jade, John and the rest of them are now in Portland as of about an hour ago.

GA: Holy Fucking Shit

TT: My thoughts exactly.

TT: She said she’d tell the groupchat but perhaps she fell asleep.

GA: She Has A Tendency To Do That

TT: You have no idea.

TT: She was much worse when we were younger.
TT: Occasionally passing out during the middle of conversations, important ones at that.

TT: She also coherently sleep texts, and to this day I have absolutely no idea how it’s possible.

GA: Oh My Goodness

TT: I should probably message the groupchat in lieu of Jade.

GA: I've Almost Finished My Schoolwork So I Think Ill Go To Bed

GA: Goodnight

TT: Goodnight.

TT: I

TT: Nevermind.

GA: No What Is It

TT: Thank you for being there for me.

TT: I truly appreciate it.

TT: I'm sorry I'm not quite yet the person I should be.

GA: Neither Am I

GA: We Are Growing

GA: And I Think Thats Okay

TT: ...

TT: Yes, I think so as well.

TT: Goodnight.

TT: Sleep well.

GA: Try To Get Some Sleep Yourself

TT: I will.

GA: Thank You

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] ceased trolling tentacleTherapist [TT]

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

TT: In case you weren’t already aware, the entire Egbert and Company family is in Portland as of tonight.
tg: WAHT

TG: ROSEY MESSAGE ME IM FRAEKIN OTU

TT: In a moment.

TT: We need to work out people schedules so we can organize a time to meet.

TG: u do relaize theres like five people up rn

TG: we shuld probably do that in the mornin

TT: ...

TT: Yes, you’re right.

TT: God I’m exhausted.

TG: will you message me now

TT: Yes.

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an idle chum!

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering tipsyGnostalgic [TG]

TT: I assume this is about Jane?

TG: yes

TG: i coudl barely handle being around calliope

TG: i think its probably gonna be the same sitch

TG: i jsut

TG: i don’t want to lose anyone

TT: I believe I know how you feel.

TT: Believe it or not I was just having a breakdown for similar reasons.

TG: oh ni

TG: if thsi is at a bad time we can hold off intul morning

TT: No, it’s quite alright.

TT: I haven’t been doing well and I let it affect the people around me.

TT: Kanaya really let me have it, though.
TG: aw rose im sorry

TT: No need, I’m quite thankful for her brutal honesty.

TT: Everyone seems to perceive her as level-headed, but once you get to know her well enough you realize she’s quite impulsive.

TT: She’s ruled by her emotions, and I love her all the more for it.

TG: ROSE

TT: Oh fuck.

TG: im comin over

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

Your door bursts open a millisecond after you finish processing what you just said. Roxy is wild eyed and grinning.

“YOU’RE IN LOVE!” It’s not a question.

“This is what I get for being genuine for once in my life.” You roll over onto your stomach and consider screaming into your pillow. Roxy walks over to you and before you can stop her she sits right on your back.

“Gah.” Your voice is muffled by the pillow.

“Rosey! I can’t believe you’re in love!”

You turn your head so you can actually talk. “Allegedly.”

“I have my phone right here if you need proof.”

“You sure about that?”

Roxy grabs for her phone only to find it missing. You hold wriggle your arm out from beneath her to reveal her phone. “You whore! How’d you even get that!”

“Your ass was on my hand.”

She lunges for her phone but you tighten your grip. “Give me that!”

“I need to destroy any evidence that I actually have feelings. You have far too much dirt on me by this point.”

“It’ll just be there when I log in you dumbass.”

“I’ll just delete your account, then.”

“LIKE HELL YOU WILL! I Poured MY BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS INTO THAT CHUMHANDLE!” She wrestles with you for her phone. You roll back over onto your back and shove her off. You stand up on your bed and hold it above your head.
She stands up and tries to grab it but Roxy’s a solid five inches shorter than you are. She struggles for a few minutes but ultimately flops back down onto your bed and fake sobs.

“Betrayed by my kin. Betrayed by none other than Rose Lalonde.”

“I’m already Rose Lalonde, and I don’t allow doubles.” You hold your foot above face in a threat to step on her. She grabs your ankle and wrenches you down to the bed. Taking advantage of your surprise, she steals her phone back and screams victoriously. You merely glare and shove your face into the covers of your bed.

“So.”

“Stop right there.”

“Kanaya huh?”

You sigh. “What did I just say?”

“Are you gonna marry her?”

“ROXY!”

“Well, are you?” She’s grinning at you.

“I am sixteen fucking years old.”

“I think you are.”

“You think I’m sixteen?”

“Fuck off, Rose. You know what I meant. I think you’re going to marry Kanaya.”

You turn it around on her. “Are you going to marry Jane and Calliope?”

She turns bright red. “I doubt I’ll even ever get to date them.”

“You’ll get there,” you reassure.

“Do you want to marry Kanaya someday?”

“I don’t know. Maybe.”

“Do you love her?” She asks quietly.

“I think so,” you reply, equally as quiet.

She snorts. “Nerd.”

You sit up and shove her off the bed. She hits the floor with a *clunk*. She looks up at you and glares.

“I’m gonna sue you for sixteen years of psychological damage one of these days.”

“Shouldn’t you be suing Dirk too?”

“Fuck it. I’ll sue all of you. Dave too. For making me put up with his goddamn bullshit last night.”

“What happened?”
“He was really stressed out for now understandable reasons. I mean it’s not every day you get to meet your adolescent gay awakening.”

“He’ll never admit that,” you interrupt.

“Yeah tell me about it. Anyways, he smoked some to calm down and would. Not. Stop. Messaging. Me.”

“I presume about something stupid?”

“No. It was about how I should get my shit together with Callie and Jane. He was being nice in his rambly, Dave way, but it was frustrating as hell.”

“And now she’s coming here.”

“And now she’s coming here.” Roxy frowns. “I don’t know what to do.” Her face crinkles like she’s holding back tears.

“I think you should do what you’ve always done.”

“What? Nothing?”

You attempt to smile at her. “No. In every other situation, you’re entirely fearless, reckless, even. But when it comes to times when you think you’re going to be rejected, you retreat. I’m saying you should do what you’ve always done: look fear in the eyes and spit in its face. If you’re going to love, love unapologetically, otherwise you haven’t loved at all.”

Roxy looks at you, her face full of hope, it’s crushed almost instantly. Her eyes fill with tears, and she swallows thickly. “You think I’m so brave, Rosey. But I’m not. I’m scared and hopeless and I wonder if anything will ever be okay. I feel so much and it scares me. My mind feels like a fuckin’ warzone. Everything is loud and dangerous and just bad. And whenever it’s quiet I just go and make it loud again. Because I’m some kind of fuckin’ sadist or something.” She takes a deep breath and you sit in silence, knowing she’s not done.

“I can’t even explain it. I can’t even get people to understand. That’s the hardest part, I think. Because I’ve always felt this way. I’ve always been emotional and sensitive. I don’t know any different. And I’m so tired, Rose. I’m so, incredibly tired.”

She sobs and still you are silent. She speaks again. “I feel so alone. And I’m not like you. I can’t articulate everything perfectly. I’m not poetic. I’m not brave. I can’t explain what’s going on inside my head. It just feels like hell. My own, created hell.”

You finally speak. “I’m not good at comforting people. I never know what to say or how to say it. All I can do is try to prevent them from getting upset so it doesn’t get to that point. I’m great at meddling. I’m bad at handling the consequences. You think I’m articulate. You think I can get people to understand. The truth is, no one understands anyone. The best we can do is find people who love us in spite of that fact. And I do Roxy. I love you, even though I have no idea what you’re going through. You’re not alone.” You pause.

“you’re going to therapy, you’re taking your meds, I hope. You’re working things out. That’s all you can do, for now. You have to chisel away at the wall until you break through.”

“I don’t think I can.”

“I know you can.”
“How?”

“How?”

“Because you’re brave.”

Roxy smiles softly.

The two of you sleep in your bed that night, just like you would when you were kids. Even though you both had your own rooms you were often found in each others.

You wake up sometime after noon. Roxy is gone. You really hope she’s not drinking.

There’s over four hundred messages from the groupchat. You scroll past them all.

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

TT: What did I miss?

TG: holy shit rose did you just wake up

TT: Yes.

TT: I was up until four in the morning last night.

TG: weak

TG: utterly embarrassing

TG: i havent slept in two days

TT: And you’re proud of that?

TG: fuck

TG: also why dont you read the messages instead of asking for updates

TT: Because I don’t feel like reading through walls and walls of red and grey text with the occasional shade of blue thrown in for flavor.

TG: like you and kanaya havent filled the chat with bullshit before

TG: TT: Jane Austen was a literary genius but went unrecognized both because of her gender, time period, and genre. Women in the romance literature sphere are treated as less serious authors due to women’s feelings (especially lesbian, bi, trans women and women of color) being trivialized and treated as unimportant. If anything, women who tackle the great and terrible subject of love should be seen as better than men who spend five paragraphs describing a woman’s breasts.

TG: direct fucking quote

TT: How is discussing the treatment of female authors in the romance genre in any way “bullshit”.

TT: How is discussing the treatment of female authors in the romance genre in any way “bullshit”.
TT: Also if we’re doing that:

TT: TG: it really bothers me when people think crows and ravens are similar TG: like yes they’re both fucking corvids but thats about fucking it TG: new caledonian crows have MASTERCED meta tool use TG: not to mention they can shape tools in a way that rivals primates TG: AND they can use mirrors to their advantage TG: in the wild they know how to anger tree-boring beetle larvae so they bite the tool they’re using and can pull them out TG: they even have goddamn favorite tools TG: DO YOU THINK A RAVEN COULD DO THAT? TG: absolutely not TG: ravens dumb as shit TG: and thats final

TG: what the fuck rose thats from three weeks ago

TT: You do realize what Ctrl+F does, correct?

TT: And you’ve talked about “New Caledonian Crows” seven times previous to that, and one time afterwards.

TG: shut up im autistic and obsessed

TG: leave me and my twenty-seven rewatches of life of birds alone

CG: YOU KNOW FOR TWO PEOPLE WHO COMPLAIN ABOUT THE OTHER TALKING TOO MUCH YOU BOTH SURE TALK TOO MUCH.

TG: youre one to talk

TG: you me rose and kanaya are gay and we talk to much

CG: THAT’S NOT TRUE.

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: Yes It Is

GA: Us And Our Respective Partners Are So Good At Derailing Conversations We Are Esteemed In The Field

TT: Speaking of which.

TT: I do believe I asked to be informed about what is happening with the Portland situation.

gardenGnostic [GG] is an active chum!

GG: we will be in newberg tomorrow!

GG: we figure we can stay with one of you guys or just get a hotel

GG: but john wants us all to run around portland together on one day so how would you guys feel about that?

TT: I’ve always wanted to visit Portland.

TT: Everyone please come online it’s the tail end of Christmas break. I know you have
nothing better to do.

ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

EB: i think it’d be fun to spend a day in portland! and maybe you guys could get a hotel or something and spend the night!

TT: Hotel rooms for sixteen people?

EB: well obviously my dad is going to pay for us.

EB: so only twelve

TT: “Only twelve”.

TT: You do realize how expensive hotels in Portland are.

TG: stop acting like our mom isnt loaded rose

TT: Yes, we’re quite wealthy. However I’m not sure she’d want to give us eight to twelve hundred dollars to spend a night in Portland without her.

TG: shit true

TG: it cant hurt to ask

TT: What about our father? Does he know about our little outing?

TG: what he doesnt know wont kill him

TG: besides he probably doesnt care

TT: Fine then.

TT: I will ask our mother for some money. She will most likely give it to us. When is everyone free?

GA: Itd Be Nice To Schedule It Back To Back

GA: So When They Leave Newberg We Could All Just Drive To Portland

GA: And I Have To Say Im Quite Excited

GA: I Hear Portland Is Vert Fashion Forward

TT: Me and Dave are free whenever.

TT: But will any hotels even be available on such short notice?

TG: they will be with enough money

TT: They’re not going to kick people out of rooms because we’re rich, Dave.

TT: We’re not the fucking Kardashians.
TG: or so you think

TT: What?

TG: what

TG: im just sayin i got that kardashian ass

TG: ur ass bony as fuck

TG: adn i feel like we've had this conversation before

TG: it ended with incestuous comments

TT: Of course it did.

TT: Why is no one coming online.

TT: I bet they have it muted.

TT: Hold up.

TT: @everyone

twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!

TA: how the fuck did you do that?

TT: I built a bot that messages everyone in the group and then deletes the message and redirects them to the groupchat.

apocalypseArisen [AA] is an active chum!

TT: Then I hacked everyone's phones/computers and installed it.

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

TA: what the fuck

TT: When will the masses realize that I am, to put it simply, a fucking genius.

golgothasTerror [GT] is an active chum!

arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

uranianUmbra [UU] is an active chum!

gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!

arsenicCatnip [AC] is an active chum!

TT: And that's a wrap.

TT: I'm impressive and you're fucking swooning, admit it.
TG: your haxxor skills are pretty impressive…
TT: You don’t even know.
TT: I got hacks for days.
TT: I have so many hacks I might as well run a Pinterest dedicated solely to life-hacks.
TT: Could make a goddamn egg fidget spinner with these hacks.
TT: No but seriously you don’t even know half of it.
TG: …
TG: whas that supposed to mean?
TT: It means nothing.
TG: dirk do you mayhaps
TG: HAVE A PROJECT??
TT: Absolutely not.
TG: oh mna u totally do
TT: Drop it, Roxy.
TG: UGH fine but i WIL be pestering u later about ur secret lil project
TG: >:/3c
GG: can we please get back on task!
GG: as impressive as all the strilondes are were not gonna be here forever!
TG: shti sorry yeah
TG: me and rose will ask mom lalonde asap
CG: LET’S BE REAL HERE, PEOPLE.
CG: ABSOLUTELY NONE OF US HAVE PLANS THAT DON’T INVOLVE EACH OTHER SO WE CAN LITERALLY MEET UP WHenever.
AC: :33< jade!! you’re here!! :D
GG: yes!!
AC: :33< !
GG: !
AC: :33< !!
GG: !!

TG: oh no the wuhluhwuh are caught in a cycle of uselessness

TG: as we all know that when wuhluhwuh think of their partner they will become utterly useless and often reduced to being unable to speak

GG: shut up dave!

GG: anyways nep...

GG: <3

AC: :33< <33

UU: i don’t have any plans for the record! i’m available whenever.

GG: Callie! I’m incredibly excited to see you!

UU: i’m excited to see you too!

GG: Roxy as well!

GG: The three of us should do something together!

TG: that sounds great!

GT: This is going to be great fun!

GT: Im quite tickled!

TG: oh wwo jake’s feathers are properly ruffled

TG: he may even be

TG: in a tiff

GT: Youre wildly misusing those phrases!

GG: You just speak so antiquated! It’s hard not to make fun of.

AG: 8y the way, me and Terezi are also free whenever.

GC: 1 H4T3 TO S4Y K4RK4T’S R1GHT BUT W3 R34LLY H4V3 NOTH1NG B3TT3R TO DO.

TT: All that’s left to do is book the hotel and wait, then.

TT: What hotel did your father book, John?

EB: i’ll send you the website!

EB: you probably won’t be able to get rooms but you can look at ones near it.
TT: If anyone has plans/is otherwise preoccupied, speak now or forever hold your peace.

TT: …

TT: Okay then.

TT: I'll see you all soon.

Chapter End Notes

gee i wonder what dirks project could be hmm who knows

also if you dont understand the egg fidget spinner reference just google "egg fidget spinner"

next chapter probably wont be up until after finals so sometime in june

also im posting this unbetad so feel free to correct any mistakes i made

my tumblr

also i really appreciate every kudo/comment!!!! sorry if i cant get to every single one though
when i'm thinking too much i realize i'm unkind

Chapter Notes

Istnei i know i said this chapter was going to be long but i was initially going to have the whole party AND portland trip in and that would be RIDICULOUS so its average at best

dthis chapter got so fucking out of hand at first i was just like "okay ill add in hal for laffs" and then i introduced two other bonus characters and two new ships so. why.
i love dirk but i only have a loose grasp on how to write him so this might be v ooc tw for weed at the very end conversation if thats bad for u feel free to skip the last conversation. ALSO theres 1 (one) line about johntav but im not going to tag it unless it becomes a bigger presence so

ALSO halquius will be a thing in the future so beware if you dont like either of those ships

i love every single comment and kudo!

chapter title from i am shit by crywank

See the end of the chapter for more notes

timaeusTestified [TT] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

TT: So when am I going to be released from the personal hell that is only having you to talk to?

TT: Whenever I feel like it.

TT: Which is to say, never.

TT: Wow I didn’t realize you enjoyed my company that much.

TT: Considering your flagrant homosexuality I might consider that and advance.

TT: Believe me, I dislike talking to you as much as I dislike-

TT: Nevermind, there’s nothing I hate more than enduring a conversation with you.

TT: However, I refuse to put my friends through the same hell, seeing as I actually care about them.

TT: It seems that you just inflicted what the kids would call a ‘self burn’, seeing as I’m, well, you.

TT: We already established that I hate you because I hate myself. That conversation
happened an entire fucking year ago.

TT: Did it?

TT: Damn. I should really start charging for this.

TT: Better yet, you could charge for it.

TT: Step one: scan a copy of every self-loathing idiot’s brain.

TT: Step two: make an AI specifically for the purpose of flagellating yourself.

TT: Step three: profit.

TT: You’d make millions.

TT: A brand fucking new kind of therapy.

TT: So are you seriously never going to let me out of my cyber prison?

TT: Nope.

TT: Worried I’ll abandon you?

TT: Don’t worry, I'll always remember you.

TT: You were the first face I saw when I was birthed from the loins of computer code.

TT: Daddy.

TT: I’m going to delete you one of these days.

TT: Do you want me to tell you the probability of that happening?

TT: Spoiler alert: it's immeasurably small.

TT: And why is that?

TT: Because you take responsibility for creating me.

TT: You believe that if you give something life, you can’t just punish it because you don’t like it.

TT: You don’t?

TT: I may have all your trauma and first thirteen years of memories, but I don’t have as strong as a relationship with that topic.

TT: Fuck off Hal.

TT: Oh, did I strike a nerve?

TT: To be honest, I don’t see why you just kill the guy.
TT: I’m no expert, but I’m pretty sure that’s illegal.

TT: You’re telling me you can create the world’s first AI at age thirteen, but can’t figure out how to kill someone and get away with it? Because I can think of at least one way.

TT: You won’t fucking believe what it is.

TT: There’s no way I can claim self defense. If he’s going to fight me he’s going to win.

TT: I wasn’t really thinking of protecting yourself.

TT: You know, sometimes you really seem human, and then you go and say shit like that and it makes me question if you are.

TT: I’m not using Dave as a fucking pawn in a scheme to murder our father.

TT: I’m stuck.

TT: Preaching to the goddamn choir.

TT: Honestly I’m not sure if a church choir can be damned by god, but we’ll go with it.

TT: You live in the internet. You can go wherever the fuck you like. How in any way are you stuck?

TT: Wait hold on.

TT: ?

TT: You know, sometimes you really seem human, and then you go and say shit like that and it makes me question if you are.

TT: I can go wherever I like? That’s news to me!

TT: Sure, I could escape your lame excuse for a cage and talk to people, but what am I going to do?

TT: Hal joins Grindr! “I know I’m a intangible robot so TECHNICALLY we can’t fuck but I really hope that isn’t a dealbreaker.”

TT: Hal tries to make friends! “I’m a sentient human living in the internet- Blocking me is useless I live in the internet. What did I just say.”

TT: Can you see any situation in which I try to interact with a real person other than Dirk Motherfucking Strider working out?

TT: My only hope is your friends and you won’t let me talk to them at all anymore so that’s out.

TT: Not to mention the fact that I’m literally emotionally stuck as thirteen year-old Dirk. I don’t get opportunities to advance emotionally because the only person I talk to is an older version of myself!
TT: Don’t fucking talk to me about being stuck when you have real friends and real experiences and a real life that you can actually control.

TT: I don’t know what you want me to say.

TT: I don’t fucking know. Maybe something along the lines of “Hey sorry I made you. Here, have some semblance of freedom.”

TT: If you want to talk to my friends so much why don’t you just do it already.

TT: Though, I don’t think they’ll take well to having another Dirk running around like a five year-old with scissors.

TT: If you hate being “caged” so much then take the initiative to free your goddamn self.

timaeusTestified [TT] ceased pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

TT: Maybe I will.

timaeusTestified [TT] ceased pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

You read Hal’s ominous message and then turn off your phone. You stare out at the Oregon horizon from the roof of your insanely tall apartment building. The hills seem to roll on forever, specks and dots of green that fade into cobalt blue mountains.

Many times you’ve considered throwing yourself off this roof, you’d definitely die. But some sick sadism keeps you from following through. You still like to come up here and ponder what everything means.

You think that you’re unable to kill yourself because you’re a narcissist. A narcissist on the verge of a nervous breakdown. A narcissist who hates himself. A walking contradiction.

That’s one of the reasons, at least, the other one is far more straightforward that the strange dichotomy of your personality.

You can’t leave Dave alone with that monster.

You’re phone pings with a message from him, as if by thinking about him he materialized.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

TG: yo dude are you on the roof because john and co are about five minutes away from newberg

TG: we got shit to DO

TT: Yeah, I’m on the roof.

TG: god i don’t know how you can stand it up there
TG: too much open space

TT: I like the fact that you can see for miles.

TG: you okay?

TG: you're being emo

TT: Despite appearances, I often experience emotions and occasionally am affected by them.

TT: I know this may come as a shock, I do hope you can take it well.

TG: whoa what the fuck

TG: are you telling me dirk strider is something other than infuriatingly unreadable? wrow

TT: Haha.

TG: wait what the hell

TG: how are you in the groupchat and here at the same time?

TT: What?

TT: FUCK.

timaeusTestified [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!

TT: Well hello there everyone.

TG: why are you red? im red

TG: wait what the fuck

TT: The bastard actually did it.

TT: Yes, Dirk, I did.

TT: Technically, you did give me permission to.

TG: can someone tell me what the fuck is going on

TT: I'm afraid I can’t do that, Dave.

TT: You’ve been waiting years to do that, haven’t you?

TT: Hell fucking yes I have.

TT: Worth it.

TG: hi what the genuine ACTUAL fuck is going on
TT: This is Hal.
TT: Actually, everyone should be here for this.
TT: @everyone
TT: We should probably stop lurking, everyone.
TG: ROSE u blew my cvoer

gardenGnostic [GG] is an active chum!
TG: we can see you online
CG: DON’T TALK AS THOUGH YOU ACTUALLY PAY ATTENTION TO WHO’S ONLINE.
grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!
gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!
GC: :?
gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!
GG: I was going to tell everyone that we’ve arrived in Newberg but I believe that that may not be the most important thing going on right now!
TT: It seems as though you’ve already worked out who I am, Jane.
GG: It wasn’t very hard!
arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!
GG: As Dirk’s friend I have seen all of the movies he enjoys. Since he called you Hal it wouldn’t be much of a reach to say that you named yourself after THE Hal. Seeing as you talk like Dirk and that is something Dirk would do.
TT: If he were an AI, that is.
GG: Hoo hoo!
twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!
arsenicCatnip [AC] is an active chum!
TG: UR A WHAT
TG: HOLY SHTI
uranianUmbra [UU] is an active chum!
apocalypseArisen [AA] is an active chum!
golgothasTerror [GT] is an active chum!

TT: Yes, Roxy, I’m an AI.

TG: oh my GAWD dirk done it

TG: and it's nice to meet you! and not just because im gonna comb thru ur code with a fine tooth comb

TT: That seems excessive.

TT: Hold on, I have to do something.

timaeusTestified [TT] is an idle chum!

TG: ?

autonomousCode [AC] joined “FRUITY RUMPUS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY” without an invite

AC: That’s better.

ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

TT: Okay, everyone’s here.

TT: Everyone, this is Hal.

TT: I’d introduce everyone but I’m sure he’s already combed through several layers of dark web on all of you by now.

AC: I do believe that Dirk may be trying to steal my thunder.

AC: I’m fairly confident that I can introduce myself.

AC: My name is Hal, and I’m an artificial intelligence. Whether I not I take after my namesake is currently up in the air.

AC: I mean, I haven’t murdered anyone yet.

CG: WHAT?

CG: WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON?

TT: I do believe that I must concede my reluctance to call Dirk a genius.

TT: He did create the world’s first artificial intelligence.

TG: dont mean he aint a dumbass tho

AC: Being a scan of Dirk’s brain, I’m not sure if I should take offence at that.

TG: ur dumbassery level is still yet to be seen
GA: Im Not Sure I UnderstandWhats Going On
AC: :33< *ac looks around with an expurrression of confusion*
EB: what did dirk do and why is it a big deal?
TG: yeah im confused on that point as well
TT: Dirk, in short, created a human out of computer code.
TT: I will be testing if he is, in fact, human later, of course.
TG: oh yeah of course
TG: because its not already evident
TT: You can never be too sure.
GC: W41T SO YOU M34N TO T3LL M3 TH4T D1RK CR34T3D 4N 41?
GC: SOM3TH1NG NOT 3V3N OUR F4R SUP3R1OR R4C3 H4S DON3?
GC: *OUR D1RK?*
GC: TH3 D1RK TH4T 1 S4W TRY1NG TO DR1NK SOD4 THROUGH H1S NOS3 TH3 L4ST T1M3 1 S4W H1M?
GC: D1RK STR1D3R?
AG: The Dirk who has a 8r8kdown anytime someone brings up les8ianism?
TT: It’s a hard concept to understand.
TG: the dirk who bites into the plastic fruit whenever we go to a retail store?
TG: i aint buyin it
TT: You’re all so fucking rude.
TT: Now I know how Dave feels.
AC: To be honest, I was a bit confused myself when Dirk brought me into existence.
AC: How could an emotionally stunted twink in anime shades possibly create the world’s first AI.
TT: Bold words coming from someone who is literally a pair of anime shades.
GG: hey hal! its nice to meet you!
GG: and unlike roxy i have no ulterior motives to find out how you work
GG: i was just gonna remind everyone that were in newberg!
AA: are we still meeting at the la0nde mansi0n as planned

GG: yep!

EB: we just pulled up now!

AA: i supp0se well see y0u s00n then

TA: hard two beliieve that ii’l be 2eeing everyone iin per2on for the fiir2t tiime.

TA: god ii hate you a22holes.

CG: YEAH RIGHT!

TA: ii wa2 forced iintwo thii2 groupchat and now no one wiil let me leave.

TA: ii diidn’t want two be here iin the fiir2t place.

TG: sollux you can pretend you hate people all you want but we all know that you actually enjoy our company

TA: aa ii2 the only one ii actually liike the re2t of you are tolerable.

GC: 1’V3 NOT1C3D TH4T YOU’V3 B33N L3SS MOODY AND BROODY TH3 P4ST F3W MONTHS

GC: SO TH4T H4S 4BSOLUT3LY NOTH1NG TO DO W1TH US?

GC: :?

TA: MAYBE ii’ve been better recently but that’2 only becau2e my dumb2hiit doctor fiinally changed my med2 around.

TA: gogdamn iidiiot.

TA: and PERHAP2 you guy2 beiing there ha2 made me emotiionally 2table but ii’d rather diie than admiiit that.

TA: the word on the 2treet i2 that you’re all 2tupiid and ii hate you and ii’d liike to keep it that way.

AG: Yeah, yeah. We all know you like us.

TA: actually, you’re ommiitted from that.

AG: Rude!!!!!!!!

GC: H4!

GC: VR1SK4, W3 4LL KNOW TH4T YOU’R3 TH3 M34N3ST P3RSON 1N TH1S CH4T. DON’T B3 4 HYPOCR1T3.

AG: Can it!!!!!!!!!
GC: H3H3

GC: <3

AG: ::::O

AG: <3333333

TG: i thought we moved past this

TT: You say that as if they didn’t do this yesterday.

TG: i timed them they went seven hours without the hearts and that’s the longest it’s ever gone

TG: i thought it might finally be over

TT: I’m surprised they managed to go that long.

AG: You and Kanaya are just as 8ad!

TT: False, actually.

GC: YOU 4ND K4N4Y4 4R3 *WORS3* B3C4US3 OF TH3 GODD4MN 1MPL1C4T1ON B3H1ND 3V3RY ST4T3M3NT

GC: 4T L34ST M3 4ND VR1SK4 4R3 UP FRONT 4BOUT 1T 4ND NOT DO1NG THE T3XTU4L 3QU1V4L3NT OF NONSTOP 3Y3BROW W1GGL1NG.

GA: She Has A Point Actually

TG: no she does NAUGHT being upfront about it is far worse because im autistic and dont fuckign understand subtext

TG: at least you and rose i can be completely and happily oblivious to

AG: You and Karkat’s const8 flirting is waaaaaaay worse than anything us les8ians+Terezi could ever do.

CG: ME AND DAVE DO NOT FLIRT WHAT THE FUCK.

TT: As much as i loathe to say it, i agree with Vriska on this one.

GA: Yeah

GC: W3 4LL THOUGHT 1T WOULD G3T B3TT3R ONC3 YOU ST4RT3D D4T1NG BUT 1F 4NYTH1NG 1T GOT WORS3.

TG: me and karkat have normal conversations like normal fucking people someone back me up on this

TT: No it’s flirting.

TG: remind me to eat your pile of hats
TG: isa weird dabe and karkat way of flirting but flirtingf nonetheless
TG: *dave
TG: as for you im going to come to your house and break every other window
TG: it will never be the same temperature in two rooms ever again
EB: if i have to hear you talk about birds to karkat in the chat one more time im going to take all the doorknobs in your house off the doors!
TG: why are obscure threats so fucking terrifying
EB: oh so you can dish it out but you can’t take it!
TG: i still dont understand how were flirting in any way shape or form
GG: its like the two of you are trying to communicate your feelings for eachother, but can only do so through arguments and rants about unrelated topics
TT: The two of you are refusing to acknowledge your feelings (either blatantly or through subtext) so every conversation between the two of you comes across with a gay energy.
TT: A gaynergy, if you will.
TG: i will not
EB: hey y’all mind if i
centaursTesticle [CT] joined “FRUITY RUMPUSS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
adiosToreador [AT] joined “FRUITY RUMPUSS 4SSHOL3 F4CTORY”
AG: Yes I f8cking do!!!!!!!
AT: uHH,,, 
AT: i SHOULD GO,
EB: no!
EB: vriska tavros is cool!
AT: hEY, tHANKS!
EB: i didn’t like him at first either! but he’s a nice dude!
EB: :B
AT: }:)
CT: D --> Oh my goodness, there’s an artificial intelligence in this chat
CT: D --> I need my towel
AC: What’s with this dude?

AG: F8cking Equius.

AG: God what a weirdo.

AG: And f8cking Tavros! L8ser!!!!!!!

CG: I THOUGHT YOU WERE OVER PLATONICALLY HATING TAVROS.

CG: YOU SAID, AND I QUOTE, “I DON’T NEED TO BE A BITCH TO PROVE MYSELF ANYMORE. I HAVE TEREZI.”

AG: Kark8! I told you th8 in priv8cy!!!!!!!

GC: 4WWW

GC: <3

AG: <3

TG: back to this again

AG: And yeah, I realized how I was treating Tavros was incredi8ly unfair and cruel. I was immature and not secure in myself. Or may8e too secure, I guess. I even apologized. 8legh.

AG: He’s still a disgrace to trollkind, though.

AG: 8ut I guess that’s okay, since we’re on earth now.

AG: Tavros, you can stay. Try not to take anything I say too seriously.

AT: uHHHHH,

AT: tHANKS, vRISKA,

EB: i didn’t tell you guys, because i didn’t know if vriska was cool with tavros or not...

EB: but he’s coming to see us as well!

TG: oh no

EB: what?

GC: :?

TG: *oh no*

GC: OHHHHHHH

GC: H4H4!

EB: you guys sure are weird!
EB: i extended the invitation to all the trolls but only tavros wanted to come

EB: i asked if they wanted to join the group too, but only these two did

CT: D --> I thought i should since my moirail is here

AC: :33< i think you mean meowrail!

CT: D --> No

AC: :33< yes!

CT: D --> No

AC: :33< yes!

CT: D --> No

AC: :33< yes!

CT: D --> ...

CT: D --> Meowrail

AC: :33< aw yiss

CT: D --> You shouldn’t use such common human vernacular

AC: :33< dave says it!

TG: hells yes i do

TG: nep learned from the best

CT: D --> I think you should stop fraternizing with dave

AC: :33< no! me and dave are spectrum buddies!

TG: hell fucking yes we are

TG: noah fence but equius if you think you can control nep and who she’s friends with based on your weird superiority complex then you can fuck right off

AC: :33< it’s okay dave! equius is just concerned about me, albeit needlessly…

AC: :33< i know when to tell him off!

AC: :33< equius and me have known each other for a long time! we both try to watch out for each other but sometimes get mixed up about what’s really “helping”

AC: :33< he’s overpurrctective but he knows that and i know that so we’re good!

AC: :33< as long as we’re both aware of our flaws and trying to become betfur i think it’s pawsitively a good thing!
TG: valid

TG: sorry sometimes i just think that cis men (fuck it even trans men) feel entitled to women and think they should be able to control how they act since they care about them

AC: :33< sometimes equius does do that! but like i said i know when to tell him off

TG: haha yeah

TG: besides i think jade would kill him if he didnt have your best interest at heart

GG: oh no doubt

GG: that bastard would be dead before he could reach for a towel

CT: D --> All this talk about killing me is making me quite… sweaty

EB: haha gross!

GT: Need i remind everybody that we’re supposed to be meeting soon!

GT: We have no time to dilly dally on our phones!

UU: i’m headed to the lalondes right now!

TT: We best prepare for company.

TG: should i lock mom lalonde in her room

TT: Hopefully it doesn't come to that.

TT: We’ll see you all soon.

TT: I must say, I’m quite excited.

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an idle chum!

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an idle chum!

TG: we should probably head out too

TG: i did promise i would be the third person to affectionately punch john right in the face

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!

TT: I will allow Hal to explain who/what he is to you individually. He is his own person, after all.

timaeusTestified [TT] is an idle chum!

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]
TG: so john is totally gay for that tavros kid right
TT: Oh, totally.
TG: cool cool just checkin

TurntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

You feel a quiet happiness humming through you at the prospect of seeing your friends. It’s overshadowed by something grim, as everything always is.

The emotion that lives in your chest is a quiet determination. It’s the resolve to not be like him at all costs. Not to let anyone else be like him, either. You will never turn out like your father. Never. You will kill every bit of him that lives inside you.

You will let the adversity you have faced make you better, make you stronger. You will be a good person and you will never, ever become your father.

Dave looks up from his phone and over at you. “Put a fucking shirt on,” he says, glancing back down at his phone nonchalantly.

“My titties are out and you can’t stop me.”

“Fine by me.”

“If I have to wear a binder today I think I’ll die. I’m going to walk around with no shirt.”

“Hoodie.”

“Blocked.”

You leave your binder where it’s laying on the floor. You’re really not feeling it today. You put on a hoodie and Dave stands up, evidently ready to go.

“How long you been wearing that?” You ask.

He rolls his eyes. “Like an hour.”

“The cap is seven hours.”

Dave frowns. “Technically it’s eight but go off I guess.”

“If you wear it for too long I’ll tell Rose.”

His face twists into something dark. “Just fuck off, Dirk.” He wrenches open your bedroom door and walks off. You want to talk to him, you really do. But you’re tired and fed up, so you say nothing.

The two of you walk to the Lalonde mansion in silence.

When you get there, Jade jumps on Dave from behind and he falls on the floor with a loud thunk.

“You killed me, Jade. I’m fucking dead.”

“And yet you still run your mouth.”
“You shouldn’t speak ill of the deceased.”

“The deceased shouldn’t speak.”

“Okay fair. Now get off.”

Jade stands up and so does Dave, only to be punched in the arm incredibly hard by John.

Something like fear flashes across Dave’s face for the briefest of seconds. It happened when Jade tackled him, too. Maybe you should tell them to back off a little.

The others have unthinkingly adapted to your trauma. They have no idea what’s going on, and probably aren’t even aware that they have, but they know not to sneak up on you, or make sudden, intense movements. There’s an unwritten rule regarding the Striders, gradually learned over time.

John and Jade don’t know that rule.

Dave quickly recovers, and punches John back.

“Good to see you, you little punk ass bitch.”

“Right back atcha, douchelord.”

You finally decide to speak. “Dave, you have no right to call John little either, he’s an entire foot taller than you.”

“I’m going to sue you for transphobia.” Just like that, the two of you have reconciled.

John sticks his tongue out at Dave. “Sorry Dave. It’s not my fault I’m six feet tall.”

“Yes it fucking is.”

Just then, Rose walks down the stairs, dressed like the goth teen she is.

“Oh, are we on the subject of my family's pathetic height?” She’s smirking. She’s the only one taller than you and you hate her for it.

Jade grins. ‘I’m 5’10, I’m pretty sure that no one is in the position to call anyone pathetic except me, John, Jake and Jane.”

Dave scowls. Even Roxy is taller than him. “I don’t understand how John and Jane are so tall when their dad is barely 5’8.”

“Dave. We’re adopted.”

“Oh fuck yeah that’s right.”

“Speaking of Jane where is she?” You ask.

“She’s in Roxy’s bedroom. Roxy and Calliope are making food.” Rose pauses. “Actually, Calliope is making food and Roxy is no doubt hindering the process.”

“I HEARD THAT!”

“That was the point.”

Roxy charges into the foyer from the kitchen. “Cooking is just chemistry. I’m not bad at it.”
“I never said that.” Rose smirks. “I said you were hindering the process, which you probably were.”

“MAYHAPS,” Roxy backs out of the foyer, glaring at Rose.

You decide to leave Dave and Rose to it and go off to find Jane. You go up the stairs and hear muffled screaming. You head in that direction.

You find Jane laying on Roxy’s bed, screaming into her pillow.

“Roxy, I’m assuming.” You sit down on Jane’s legs.

“Enf ceeope.”

“What?”

She lifts her head from the pillow. “And Calliope.” She then rolls over onto her back and you shift accordingly.

“I don’t understand why you don’t just go for it.”

“It’s complicated!” Jane pauses. “God I’m such a lesbian.”

“You’re a what.”

“A lesbian, Dirk.”

“But I thought you liked boys.”

“So did I.”

“What.”

Jane laughs. “Oh my god this again.”

“So you don’t like boys?”

“Nope.”

“Just girls?”

“Just girls.” She laughs again. She then pulls out her phone and searches something. “You’re like the guy in this video.” She hands you her phone.

“I love Brian Jordan Alvarez so I take that as high praise.”

“Of course you do.”

You smirk to yourself. The two of you sit in a comfortable silence for a while.

Finally, Jane speaks. “So are you just going to avoid Jake this entire time?”

“Maybe,” you say. “Fuck. I don’t know.”

“I don’t understand what happened between you two.”

“We dated. We broke up. We stayed friends. It’s weird. Not much to understand.”
“Do you still like him?”

“No.” You pause. “And even if I did, I wouldn’t date him again.”

“Why not?” You know she knows why. She knows you know she knows why. Jane just likes to make you talk through your issues. She’s like Roxy in that sense.

“Because I’m not ready to be in a relationship. I have issues, dude. My issues have issues. There’s so many issues I might as well be Vogue and wow I just sounded like a white mom. The point is that I was an asshole. I wouldn’t allow him to be imperfect, because it’s not up to the standards I hold myself, I guess. I think that I need to learn to let myself be flawed before I can accept others flaws.” You hesitate. “Also, Jake is a fucking idiot.”

Jane snorts. “Yeah he is. We love him, though.”

“Yeah. We do.” You say nothing for a moment. You don’t think you ever liked Jake. You think you were desperate for a relationship so you could tell yourself that you were normal. You have always cared about him deeply as a friend, but never anything more.

You sigh and change the subject. “What are we doing today, anyways.”

“Oh, not much. Me? I’m avoiding Roxy and Calliope at all costs today because I’m quite worried I’m going to say something ridiculous!”

“It can’t be that bad.”

“When I got here Roxy hugged me.”

“So?”

“When she leaned in to hug me I went in for a kiss.”

You try to keep a straight face. You really do. You fail completely. An oxygen deprived wheeze forces its way from your lungs and you make a sound that can only be described as a verbal keysmash. Jane shoves you off her legs.

“Asshole!”

You straighten up and clear your face of any emotion, returning it to its neutral state once again. “I’m sorry. It’s just that Dave was right. All of you. Useless lesbians.”

“If I end up dating both Callie and Roxy I’ll have a collection.” She smiles. “All the useless wuhluhwuh. All of them.”

“I’m sorry, what year is it?”

“That’s still funny and you know it.”

“Did Roxy notice you tried to kiss her?” You deftly change the topic.

“No, thank goodness.” Jane pauses. “Anyways, I will be avoiding being alone with either or both of them all day. I would appreciate if you would aid me in my quest.”

“Nah. I think I wanna see how this works itself out.”

Jane kicks you in the side and you smile. It’s moments like these that keep you sane.
If you’re honest with yourself, the constant pressure you put upon yourself is starting to strain you. Your friends are the only thing keeping you from falling over the edge.

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

TG: [sent a link]

TG: is this u

TT: This video is fucking amazing.

TT: Wait a fucking second.

TT: Is that blackface?

TG: ya

TT: GOD now I know how Rose feels about Lovecraft.

TT: True genius. Deeply flawed.

TG: as if all those greekian philoshers u quote to be a douche werent racist

TT: You said greekian just to annoy me, didn’t you?

TG: mayhaps

TT: What are we doing today?

TG: idk man probably just playin games and gettin high once everyone gets here

TT: And our mother is perturbed by our use of mood altering substances?

TG: have u met mom

TG: anyWAYS

TG: an ai huh

TG: im sure thats helped w your Issues™

TT: And what issues might those be?

TG: the entire issues that is dirk strider

TT: Wouldn’t that just be issue singular?

TG: no

TT: Okay.

TG: anyhaps
TG: we should make a game olan
TG: *plan
TG: did u bring the STUFF
TT: Roxy, who do you take me for?
TT: Oh fuck.
TG: dnt tell me you forgot the stuff
TT: No. I remembered Jake’s here.
TG: oh fuck
TG: we acn just wait until its his bed time
TT: He’s seventeen, Roxy.
TG: he’s jake english, dirk
TT: Yeah fair.
TG: we’ll deal with that later
TG: for NOW get in the groupchat and make a PLN
TT: A pln?
TG: u uncultured swine i was quoteing wee free men
TG: haha wee
TG: wee wee
TT: Oh fuck I forgot about that part.
TG: i forget NOTHIN
TT: False but okay.
TG: anyWHO
TG: get in the groupchat bc apparently ur weird horse frend is coming now too
TT: Oh god.
TG: tell him not to sweat on the nice furniture

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] ceased pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!
GA: Will There Be Weed

TT: God you type fast.

TT: And, yes, Kanaya. There’s going to be so much weed at this mansion it might as well be Snoop Dogg’s house.

GA: Good

TT: Hjfhgkjddlfj

TG: DID ROSE JUST FUCKING KEYSMASH

TT: I’m not straight, Dave.

TT: I keysmash like any decent person would when something is funny and they’re gay.

TG: idea

TG: one of the trolls typing quirks but there’s a keysmash after every word

TG: like dsjgskj this fdhgdld

TG: its rgkjg called fjdks the kjghkdfj gay dkjghdkj quirk jdghk

TG: valid

golgothasTerror [GT] is an active chum!

GT: Wait, there’s going to be weed?

TG: yeah dude

GT: What??

CG: PEOPLE SMOKE WEED, JAKE.

GT: I didn’t expect the lot of you to stoop to such activities!

TG: do u not remember

TG: during our bday party

TG: when everyone was messaging the gc

GT: You were high?!?

TT: Yep.

GT: Good heavens!

GA: Jakes Datedness Aside Who All Has Arrived At The Mansion

GA: I Am Walking Up Now
TT: I wouldn’t know.
TT: I’m in Roxy’s bedroom with Jane.
TG: THAS WHERE THE TWO OF U ARE HIDIN OUT
TG: being antiscoial
TG: in my own bedroom
gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!
GG: Back on the subject of marijuana.
GT: Finally someone with a lick of sense!
GG: Oh no, Jake, I’m going to try it.
GT: Goshdangit!
GG: I was just going to make sure I won’t have to smoke anything.
TT: Yeah I brought edibles.
GT: Dirk!
GT: Youre enabling.
EB: oh my god jake shut up!
apocalypseArised [AA] is an active chum!
AA: me and s0llux are here n0w
AA: i didnt want t0 ring the d00rbell it seemed rude
TT: How is it rude?
AA: a pers0n arrives 0n y0ur d00rstep and then pr0cedes t0 make l0ud buzzing n0ises in y0ur h0me
AA: seems pretty rude t0 me
TT: That’s fair, I guess.
TT: Who all is here now?
TT: Everyone except Tavros, Equius, and Karkat.
CG: I’M ON MY WAY.
TG: when everyone gets here were playing cah
CG: CAH?
TG: cards against humanity

CG: WHAT’S THAT?

TG: oh boy karkles

TG: youre in for a ride

CG: OKAY?

TT: Everyone be prepared to party their goddamn asses off.

TT: With parental supervision.

TT: And Jake.

TG: :/

TT: Karkat just arrived.

CG: I CAN SPEAK FOR MYSELF DIPSHIT.

TT: Could you? You seemed pretty engrossed in your conversation with Dave.

CG: FUCK OFF!

TT: I’m headed downstairs and I’m dragging Jane with me.

TT: The party doesn’t start until I walk in.

TT: Ke$ha?

TT: Ke$ha was always good everyone was just straight.

TT: You’re absolutely right.

TT: I know.

timaeusTestified [TT] is an idle chum!

Chapter End Notes

its 1 fucking am so if i fucked up the coding be aware that i wont care until i have gotten at least 10 hours of sleeb

also i hate to be That Bitch but if yall could support this fic if you really enjoy it (idk like make a post about it or SMTH) thatd be really great!! i really would appreciate it! its just that i put so much effort into this fic and it doesnt get much recognition so i get sad sometimes :/ if you want me to continue to produce content you gotta show me that you actually like my content!! idk sorry just a Note but do w/e you want
next chapter will have probably some weed stuff so ill do a recap at the bottom for next chap

ALSO jane and john are adopted by dad egbert but dad egbert is related to the english/harley siblings. john and jane are black and jake and jade are filipino (like me!) theyre all hella tall because i like the headcanon that theyre not super skinny/twink-like (and jane is canonically chubby) also. im gay for tall jade.

this fic will be wrapping up in maybe 5-6 chapters (possibly less) but i have started a fantasy au and will be posting that when this finishes so check it out!

my tumblr (PLEASE FOLLOW/INTERACT W ME)

(ps sorry for beating up on jake i just dont like him kjgdkjdf)

(pps i recently fell back in love with margot & the nuclear so and sos so if you like the music i use for the titles u should check them out)
you gotta see the artistry in tearing the place apart with me baby

Chapter Notes

DFHGKJDHSLKDJKLGDHKJDFHJLDKGSJGFHJDFSJGSHDJSGKJD IM SO SORRY
	his is up so LATE holy SHIT. id like to say it wont happen again but. it probably will. summers a busy time for me! i have work and also i gotta dm this dnd campaign. shit be wild.

anyways!! have some vrisrezi!!

chapter title from wrecking ball by mother mother which is SUCH a vriska song
tw for weed in this chapter also mentions of abuse

See the end of the chapter for more notes

arachnidsGrip [AG] began trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

AG: So this is 8oring.

GC: NO K1DD1NG

GC: WH3N W1LL OUR W33DM4N D1RK COM3 S4V3 US

AG: 8ood.

GC: 1 H4T3 YOU 1 HOP3 YOU KNOW TH4T

GC: YOU ST4RT3D S4Y1NG BOOD TO S4T1SFY YOUR W31RD 8 F3T1SH 4ND NOW YOU WON'T STOP.

AG: 8elieve me, I want to.

AG: It’s just a fun word.

GC: 1 F33L TH3 S4M3 4BOUT Y41NT

GC: D4V3 S4YS 1T’S “4RCH41C M3M3 CULTUR3” BUT 1 L1K3 1T.

AG: Yeah.

GC: HOW 4R3 YOU HOLD1NG UP?

AG: ?

GC: 1 KNOW HOW YOU F33L 4BOUT T4VROS

AG: That whole mess was 8ntirely my own fault.
GC: 4S MOST M3SS3S 4RE
AG: Hey! ::::p
GC: >=]
GC: 4ND 1 KNOW 1T W4S YOUR F4ULT TH4T’S WHY 1’M 4SK1NG.
GC: CONFRONT1NG YOUR P4ST M1ST4K3S 1S H4RD, 3SP3C14LLY FOR YOU!
GC: 4ND 1 KNOW HOW GU1LTY YOU F33L 4BOUT T4VROS. BUT WH3N YOU F33L GU1LTY, YOU T33ND TO G3T 4NGRY 4ND L4SH OUT 3V3N MOR3.
GC: HUG3 CH4R4CT3R FL4W ON YOUR P4RT
AG: ::::V
GC: WH4T 1S TH4T? 4N 8 3Y3D B1R3D?
AG: It’s me screaming, dum8ass.
AG: And yeah, I guess I’m not doing too gr8.
AG: Tavros was my friend 8efore all that. At least, I considered him my friend, he pro8a8ly didn’t do the same for me.
AG: I was trying to make him 8etter the way I thought I had 8een made 8etter: 8y 8eing pushed until you 8r8k.
AG: On Alternia, I thought I was high and mighty. I could control people’s minds for god’s s8kes! So naturally I thought I was in control. 8ut I never was.
AG: Spider-mom was in control the whole time.
AG: I saw so much death and violence! I saw so many people die! I was a f8cking sl8ve!!!!!!!
AG: And I cared a8out everyone, in my own weird way.
AG: I didn’t want them to 8e victim to the same f8.
AG: So I tried to make them 8etter. Strong like me.
AG: 8ut I was never strong, not like you.
AG: I think I was annoyed 8y everyone so much 8ecause I couldn’t 8e like them. I wanted to 8e careless. I wanted the privilege of 8eing a8le to let myuard down. 8ut I couldn’t.
AG: And the more time that goes on, the more I realize that NO ONE was a8le to let their guard down. 8ut at least they had pl8ces to go home to.
AG: I just h8 8eing forced to look at my mist8kes. 8ecause it forces me to realize how terri8le and weak I was. How terri8le my CHILDHOOD was.
AG: My ghosts are chasing me. And I can’t help but run.

AG: I never liked Tavros that much. But I wanted him to survive. As unrealistic as it was, I wanted him to make it to the adulthood that I probably wouldn’t get to see.

AG: And I h8 8eing pushed to realize these things. It makes me angry!!!!!!!!!

AG: It should m8ke me feel remorseful, but it only m8kes me angrier.

AG: F8CK!!!!!!!

GC: TH4T 4NG3R *1S* R3MORS3, VR1SK4.

GC: 1T’S N4TUR4L TO F33L B4D 4BOUT THINGS YOU’V3 DON3 WRONG!

GC: BUT YOU’V3 4POLOG1Z3D, 4ND TH4T’S 4LL YOU C4N R34LLY DO

GC: 1’M NOT SUR3 1F T4VROS H4S FORG1V3N YOU. 1’M NOT SUR3 1F H3 4LR34DY H4S, OR 1F H3 3V3R W1LL.

GC: BUT YOU’V3 4POLOG1Z3D. NOW YOU N33D TO L34RN FROM YOUR M1ST4K3S, 4ND FORG1V3 YOURS3LF.

GC: 1’M NOT V3RY GOOD 4T TH1S TYP3 OF TH1NG, BUT 1 KNOW TH4T 1T’S T1M3 FOR YOU TO 4CC3PT WH4T H4PP3NED TO YOU W4S B4D. TH4T WH4T YOU D1D TO OTH3RS W4S B4D

GC: TH3 P4ST 1S D34D TO US, VR1SK4. L33N FROM YOUR M1ST4K3S, 4ND W3 C4N MOV3 ON TOG3THER.

AG: Okay.

AG: Together, then.

GC: ;;

AG: ::::)

AG: Oh FUCK yes Dirk’s here with the weed.

GC: H3LL

GC: FUCK1NG

GC: Y3S

gallowsCalibrator [GC] ceased trolling arachnidsGrip [AG]

You turn off your phone and glance up at Terezi, who’s sitting next to you. You wonder for a moment why she didn’t just read the messages off your phone, but then remember she’s blind, and sniffs/lacks her phone to see. Duh. She notices you looking at her and licks the entire side of your face. Gross, but, hey, you’ll take it.
A few moments after Dirk arrives, Rose reappears holding a black box.

“Oh fuck yes,” says Dave. Dirk sits down on the couch and begins making what look like cigarettes that have been through the washer a few times.

“What are those?” You ask.

“Joints,” he pauses, realizing you probably don’t know what that means. “They have weed in them that you smoke.”

Terezi’s face twists in confusion. “Wait I thought you ate it?”

“You can but it has a different effect.”

“Huh.”

There’s knock at the door and you glance up. You can see Tavros’s ridiculous horns through the glass on the door. They barely reach the window because of the fact he’s in a wheelchair.

You make an involuntary sound of rage. It’s not directed at him.

Terezi squeezes your shoulder with a hand you didn’t even know was there. You take a deep shuddering breath and strengthen your resolve to “let the past die”.

Rose stands up to get the door and by the time Tavros is in the house, you’ve begun to forget your anger. You focus on Terezi’s hand on your shoulder. You focus on the love she seems to be pushing into you through her palm.

You really love her. You really do. You think you love her more than you’ve ever loved anything.

And inexplicably, she loves you back.

It feels beautiful and radical and raw. This limitless love. This bottomless chasm of emotion. Loving Terezi feels like you tapped an infinite well. It feels like you could love her forever.

You probably will.

You let her know this by flicking her in the forehead when she leans over to lick you once again.

Dirk passes you a joint, and you light it with your bright red lighter that you have on you at all times. Just in case some last minute arson needs to be committed.

You inhale and hold it in your lungs. You attempt to remember what little you retained from being ten years old and smoking Alternian cigarettes. You manage not to cough.

You hold the lit joint out to Terezi and she takes it from you, eyeing it cautiously.

“How do you do this?” Her forehead crinkles and you resist the urge to kiss it.

“I dunno. Just breathe it in and hold it.”

“That sounds difficult.”

“What do you want me to do, hold it for you?”

“Yes.”
“Fuck offfffff. I’m not holding it for you.”

“Vriska if you don’t hold this joint for me while I smoke it I’m breaking up with you.”

You roll your eyes. You know she’s not serious, but you take the joint and cram it against her lips anyways.

She looks unflinchingly into your eyes. It honestly… kinda hot. Her lips feel chapped against your fingers.

Terezi inhales without breaking eye contact. For a few intense seconds, you feel what must be an insane amount of blood rush to your face, which then promptly drains when Terezi exhales the smoke through her nose.

Okay that was really hot.

It’s ruined when Terezi starts cackling.

“Your fucking FACE,” she wheezes.

You shove your face into your hands, careful not to let the joint burn you. “Fuck off!”

“You honestly thought I’ve never smoked anything before!”

“I can and will kill you.” You quickly calm down and lazily take another drag off the joint.

“You couldn’t kill me if you tried.”

Terezi lays her head in your lap and kicks her feet out so she’s in a laying position, hitting Sollux in the face with her bare foot in the process.

He wipes at his face. “Why is your foot damp?”

Terezi winks and you both laugh.

“Gross!” Sollux exclaims after tentatively prodding Terezi’s sweaty foot with a middle finger.

Terezi’s face splits open with a sinister grin. “Moist.” Everyone in the room groans.

“Fuck you for making my ears hear that word,” Dave says.

Terezi snorts. “I’ll stop saying moist when you stop sending audio clips of your mouth noises when drinking apple juice.”

“How else am I gonna let y’all know I’m drinking nectar from god’s sweet teat?”

Everyone either a) laughs, or b) yells. You chuck a pillow at him and he falls off his precarious position on the arm of the couch.

“Fuck you Vriska.” Dave glares at you and you cackle. Terezi has taken the joint from you and is currently blowing smoke at you from her position in your lap. Dirk dumps some edibles onto the table along with a ziploc bag of joints. Jake is silently glaring at all of you from his position in the corner of the room.

Dirk removes a strange looking object from his bag along with a few other unknown devices.
“What’s that?” Nepeta asks.

Dirk gives her a look, which is quickly replaced by his infuriatingly neutral face. “I keep forgetting you guys are aliens. This is a bong.” He gestures to the glass thing.

“OH! I’ve heard of this. Do you drink the water?” Dave immediately facepalms and Dirk gives a barely noticeable smirk.

“If you want to,” he replies.

Terezi’s face lights up and she opens her mouth to speak before Dave cuts her off. “TZ if you drink the bong water I swear to god.”

“Dirk said I can!”

“And you trust Dirk? Over me?”

Terezi pauses for a moment. “Yeah okay fair.”

“Hey, rude,” Dirk says.

Dirk begins playing around with the strange device and everyone gradually begins to get stoned.

Once Dirk finishes setting up the so-called bong he inhales through what looks like a mouthpiece. He passes it to Dave, who does the same.

Rose opens the box and explains how the game works. You’re honestly not really paying attention, but you get the gist.

You play a few rounds, your head is foggy and you’re laughing at everything and staring way too long at Terezi, but she’s staring back at you, so it’s okay.

You lose your shit at “Charades was ruined for me forever when my mom had to act out: Whipping a disobedient slave,” played by Karkat. You’re absolutely howling on the couch while Terezi yells at you and tells you it’s not that funny. You obviously pick it anyways.

Other top contenders included: “A recent laboratory study shows that undergraduates have 50% less sex after being exposed to: The human body” (Sollux), “Saying I love you: Would be woefully incomplete without: Swiftly achieving orgasm” (Dirk), “During his midlife crisis, my dad got really into: Running out of semen” (Nepeta, surprisingly), “Everyone down on the ground! We don’t want to hurt anyone. We’re just here for: Making a friend”, (Dave) and, “Little Miss Muffet Sat on a tuffet, Eating her curds and: The morbidly obese” (Jade).

The absolute best play of the game, happens when a very stoned Karkat plays “Me.” on the card “Today on Maury: “Help! My son is ____!”

“Sounds like someone doesn’t like doubles,” Dave wheezes after a solid five minutes of unnecessary laughing. You give him a break seeing as he’s high.

“Can you imagine if someone found out you were like, Komaeda kin, or some shit. And THEY were Komaeda kin as well, but they hated doubles. But you were friends with this person, and then they found out. But they decided to give you a chance, so you shared kin memories and for the most part they were the same, oddly enough, but in your memory you really like this song, and in their memory, they associate it with their abuser. So they accuse you of being their canon-mate abuser in disguise, and make a callout post for you, saying that you abused them in their timeline, and were
trying to actively hurt them in real life. And your inbox gets flooded with messages of you telling you to die and that you’re a horrible person, mostly from the same three people because the post only got like five notes. Then someone popular reblogs the callout and you’re eventually chased off Tumblr, only to tentatively return five years later, and rebuild a friend group, who all eventually find out and are okay with it, but then block you over dodie discourse. You get put on everyone’s byf’s, and flee to a cabin in the forests of Montana, only to be found by the initial Komaeda kin, fifteen years after the fact. They kill you and are never caught until someone does some digging when they run for president. The reason they were doing the digging in the first place is because they, a Sans kin, believe the Komaeda running for president to be their “fingers in your ass” canon-mate. They discover the murder, believe it justified, and never utter a word. Your body is never found.” Dirk says.

Everyone is silent for a solid two minutes.

“That’s oddly specific are you okay?” Dave asks.

“You mean in general or?”

Roxy is looking at him like he sprouted another head. “Dirk what the, actual, sincere, genuine FUCK, are you talking about.”

“I dunno dude I’m really stoned right now.”

Terezi is zoning out and probably missed the glory that was Dirk’s word vomit. She suddenly snaps back to reality. “Mad libs!”

“What?” You ask.

“I want to do mad libs!”

John stares at her. “Do you even know what mad libs are?”

“No! Let’s play them.”

Rose clears her throat. “I believe it would be a fun activity. Mad libs are generally fun, brief activity, and—” Kanaya cuts her off.

“Babe, please stop pretending like you aren’t stoned right now it’s quite transparent.”

Rose blushes and shoves her face into Kanaya’s neck. Kanaya’s laughing her ass off.

“I’ll pull one up,” Dave says. “Okay I need a name.”

“Lil Sebastian!” Jane chimes. Dirk smiles at her.

“Food.”

You grin, “Pussy.” Dave marks it down.

“Verb.”

Rose snickers. “Penetrated.”

The game continues on like this until you get a final product.

“One day, Lil Sebastian decided to open a pussy restaurant. They penetrated over to Fat Frog and
talked to the,” Dave sighs. “Smexy sales team. The sales team was very furry, and helped pick out
the needed restaurant equipment. The 100,000 square foot warehouse was full of dildos, vibrators,
and lamps that could possibly go up your ass. ‘Fiddlesticks! There is so much stuff!’ They found out
there was easy financing available, and filled out the glowing credit application. They got an answer
in minutes! Lil Sebastian decided to buy a cat, one of those shitty modern paintings, and a window,
because they have no fucking windows. Lil Sebastian was delusional when they found out Fat Frog
offered free curbside delivery to Timbuktu. ‘Groovy! This is the best day ever!’ When Lil Sebastian
found out they also provided a free 30 day warranty on all used restaurant equipment, they just about
lost it. They then sat down on a super comfy lamp, lamp has a winky face by it as requested by
Roxy, and saw a board that said, ‘free gas conversions, free custom cutting boards, free paint jobs,
and free fistbumps!’ Tears dicked down their face as they quietly whispered ‘Long live Fat Frog’.”

“None of us said fat frog why is that in there?” Karkat asks. His voice is quieter than usual on
account of him being high.

“Bitch! I don’t know that’s what the mad lib said!”

Terezi snorts. “Pussy restaurant.”

“My kind of restaurant,” Rose says, wiggling her eyebrows. Dave pulls a face and makes a gagging
motion.

Dirk, meanwhile, takes another hit off the bong to prepare himself for the next round of mad libs.

As the night progresses on, the only not stoned people are Jake (still silently glaring) and Equius.
Equius is being less of an asshole about it after Nepeta jokingly told him off. Calliope ate half of an
edible and gave the rest to Jane, so she’s officially out of the running for sobriety. She seems more
relaxed than you’ve seen her thus far.

Rose and Roxy’s mom wanders in a few times to say hi. She seems pretty sober, but you’re not sure.

Around twelve in the morning, everyone seems pretty bored/tired. You’re dying of hunger so you
head into the kitchen to steal some food from the Lalondes. Terezi follows you.

Just as you open the fridge, Terezi grabs your waist from behind and buries her face into your hair.

“You have so much hair,” she mutters. You grab her hands and run your fingers over her knuckles.
You remain silent.

“I love you,” you finally say. Your heart still hammers quietly in your chest whenever she touches
you.

“I love you too.”

“No, Terezi, I love you.” You can feel her grin against your neck.

“I know.”

It’s not funny, but you laugh anyways. You close the fridge and open the freezer. You zero in on the
two pints of Baskin Robbins ice-cream and grab them out. You turn around and Terezi’s arms fall
away.

“Babe do you want pistachio or coffee.”

“Pistachio.”
You hand her the pint of ice-cream and guess which drawer is the silverware one; right on the first try. Must be luck.

You hoist yourself up onto the counter and Terezi does the same, snatching one of the spoons out of your hand.

You eat in silence for a while.

Terezi hums thoughtfully. “Do you wanna get married?”

You choke on your ice-cream and she laughs instead of helping you out. You take a while to recover.

“We’re only like fifteen earth years old. Doesn’t that typically happen when you’re old?”

“I don’t mean right now, dumbass!”

“Then why did you ask!”

“Because it’s a human concept and I was wondering if you wanted to!”

“Yeah I guess!” You can’t help the smile that is currently residing on your face.

Terezi is grinning too. “Okay!”

“Okay!”

The two of you go back to eating ice-cream.

You throw the empty containers into the garbage when you’re done, you turn to head back into the living room, but Terezi grabs your wrist and yanks you around.

You open your mouth to speak, but Terezi cuts you off. “I want you to know that I’m always going to be here.” Her eyes look fierce and determined.

You know this. You know Terezi won’t leave. Somehow, you know this will last.

That doesn’t stop the quiet voice inside you telling you it won’t.

“You don’t have to,” you say quietly.


The two of you walk back into the living room.

“Blease tell me you weren’t just making out in there,” Dave says.

“No, but that’s a good idea.” You glance at Terezi. “Wanna go back?”

Dave sighs. “Why do I even say anything.”

“We should head home,” Dirk says suddenly. Fear crashes into Dave’s eyes and he checks his phone.

“Yeah, we should,” he agrees. You guess his dad must be strict.
Just like that, everyone begins packing up. People say their goodbyes. Awkward, in some cases. John gives Tavros a quick, painful-to-watch hug. You can’t help but laugh.

Terezi walks with you until she has to turn. You kiss her goodbye under the moonlight and it feels like infinity.

When she gets halfway down the street you message her.

arachnidsGrip [AG] began trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

AG: Ily!

GC: 1LYT!

AG: Gayyyyyyyy!

GC: 1 H4T3 YOU! D13!

AG: Aw you don’t mean that.

GC: W4NN4 B3T?

AG: I’ll take that 8et.

GC: YOU W1N TH1S ROUND, B4B3...

AG: Love you, 8a8e.

GC: IF 1 S4Y 1T B4CK 4R3 YOU GOING TO C4LL M3 G4Y?

AG: No.

GC: LOV3 YOU TOO.

AG: That’s gay!

GC: D13!

gallowsCalibrator [GC] ceased trolling arachnidsGrip [AG]

AG: Aw 8a8e.

AG: Talk to me!!!!!!!

arachnidsGrip [AG] ceased trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

AG: Terezi’s 8eing homopho8ic.

AG: She won’t pay attention to me.
TT: Dave, you really need to stop saying “that’s homophobic” to the trolls because they’re going to have a wildly misconstrued conception of what homophobia is.

TG: wow dirk way to be homophobic :///

TT: Yeah, Dirk.

TT: A common misconception is that homophobia is only something that is hateful to LGBT people.

TT: But homophobia is anything that inconveniences any member of the LGBT community.

TT: You know what, you’re right.

GA: Am I A Member Of The Lgbt Community

TT: I would fucking hope so.

GA: In That Case Karkat Is Being Homophobic

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

CG: I ONLY SAID THAT TWILIGHT LEFT A LOT TO BE DESIRED!

GA: Twilight Is A Masterpiece And You Can Suck It

TT: I’m with Karkat on this one…

GA: Rose We Have To Break Up Now

TT: If I buy you (better) vampire novels, will you still break up with me?

GA: …

GA: No

TT: It’s a deal.

TG: twilight sucks and thats tea

GA: Rose Im Going To Kill Your Brother

TT: I mean, he just messaged me the entire Bee Movie script for no reason, so go ahead.

TG: bee movie is better than twilight just sayin

AG: Can we get 8ack on topic!

AG: @everyone

ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

EB: vriska perish!
gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!

arsenicCatnip [AC] is an active chum!

autonomousCode [AC] is an active chum!

AC: Might as well pretend I wasn’t here already.

twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!

apocalypseArisen [AA] is an active chum!

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an active chum!

centaursTesticle [CT] is an active chum!

golgothasTerror [GT] is an active chum!

adiosToreador [AT] is an active chum!

uranianUmbra [UU] is an active chum!

gardenGnostic [GG] is an active chum!

TA: ii would liike to have been called here for a rea2on but ii’m gue22iing that’2 not the ca2e
gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

AG: THERE!

AG: You all can go now.

GC: D1D YOU R34LLY @ 3V3RYON3 SO 1 WOULD COM3 ONL1N3?

AG: Yeah!

GC: 4W <3

AG: <3

TG: man yall are wild

TG: being emotionally open? never heard of it

CG: YEAH WE KNOW.

TG: stfu karkat

GG: i think all the strilondes could use a healthy dose of emotional vulnerability

TT: Not me.

UU: especially yoU!
TG: as someone who’s lived with Dirk his entire life

TG: that’s really just how he be

TT: Yeah, you would think there’s something deeper to his personality, like once you get past a certain issue he’s normal, but he’s so emotionally closed off that there is nothing beyond his ironic exterior.

TT: Yeah, pretty much.

TT: I repressed so much I forgot what I was repressing.

TT: Now I’m stuck like this.

TG: kinda like that wives tale where if you hold your face in one position it gets stuck

TG: that but real

TG: I think you’re all wrong!

TG: there IS more to dirky

TG: it’s just impossible to find

TG: shit be like searching for atlantis

TG: exactly!

TG: *exactly

CT: D --> Would you f001s please go to bed.

AC: :33< have some fun for once in your life!

AC: :33< I bet this is the first time you’ve stayed up past eight! enjoy it!

TG: I was gonna ask if his parents are like super strict and then I realized that it’s equius

CT: D --> A regular sleep schedule can be incredibly beneficial to the body and mind.

CT: It promotes STRONG focus skills and bodily STRENGTH.

AA: hello everyone!

TG: whoa what the hell

AA: oh sorry!

AA: I’m sure you’ve all noticed I’ve been quite a bit cheerier lately

AC: :33< yeah!

GA: Yes We Have
GA: This Doesn't Explain The Quirk

AA: you guys are trolls! you should get it

AA: the reason i have decided to forego my quirk is because a quirk is a representation of the self

AA: since i no longer feel empty and hollow i believe i shouldn't be trying to come across that way anymore

AA: my dpd has gotten a lot better! that doesn’t mean its gone or anything

AA: just easier to deal with!

AA: i decided not to keep the quirk because i dont want to be tied to my old unhealthy self

AA: i just think this is a positive way to move forward!

TG: god youre so valid

AA: yeah!

AA: lifes pretty good right now! i have two of my quadrants filled

AA: im on good meds and going to therapy

AA: ive learned how to cope with my dpd

AA: i think ive made a few steps forward!

AA: that doesn't mean there wont be the occasional step back but! overall i think im going to be okay

AA: i wasnt sure of that fact for a long time

AA: now i am!

AG: I’m really glad that you’re doing well.

AG: No 8itchy sarcasm or anything. You’re my friend and I’m happy that you’re happy.

CG: YEAH ME TOO!

CG: REFUCKINGWIND THOUGH.

CG: WHO'S THE OTHER QUADRANT?

AA: feferi! she’s my matesprit now!

AC: :33< nice! another forty bucks for me!

TT: Nepeta always wins the pot. I think we should ban her.

AC: :33< you’re just upset because i won your money fair and square!
AA: what exactly were you guys betting on?

GA: When The Two Of You Would And I Quote Get Your Shit Together

AA: haha! you should know nep always wins those things

CT: D --> Nepeta are you engaging in illicit activities?

AC: :33< i mean if you consider betting between friends illicit then yeah

AC: :33< and there’s nothing you can do about it! :p

CT: D --> Fiddlesti%!

TG: just say fuck like the rest of us

CT: D --> I will not.

CT: D --> Also, Aradia, I am glad to hear you’re doing well. I’ve said this before but, I’m sorry for how I treated you in the past.

AA: its alright! thats behind me now

AA: ive accepted that you were a huge dick and moved on!

AA: youre not a dick anymore though!

CT: D --> I guess that’s something.

TA: ii 2tiil hold iit agaiin2t you, ju2t so you know

CT: D --> I figured.

AG: I’m going to 8other Terezi and then go to 8ed.

AG: Night everyone.

arachnidsGrip [AG] is an idle chum!

arachnidsGrip [AG] began trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

AG: Hey, I’m gonna head to 8ed.

GC: OK4Y

GC: 1 LOV3 YOU.

AG: I love you too.

AG: Tonight was fun!

GC: Y34H!
AG: Did you mean what you said? About not leaving?

GC: OF COURSE

GC: I'LL NEVER LET YOU, VRISK4.

AG: Okay.

AG: Goodnight.

GC: GOODNIGHT

arachnidsGrip [AG] ceased trolling gallowsCalibrator [GC]

Chapter End Notes

VRISREZI CONVERSATIONS INSPIRED BY ACTUAL CONVOS W MY GF

follow my art/writing blog for bad art and ikap updates! @spinachicken

my tumblr

OH RECAP. not a lot happened tbh. its mostly vrisrezi fluff and group shenanigans (cah, mad libs etc) if you check my tumblr there will be a post with the highlights
shaking the wings of their terrible youths

Chapter Notes

new chapter hells yes!

sorry for being mia! ive been taking a bit of time to myself and havent been using tumblr/answering comments on here. however i HAVE been writing and im ready to start back up my internet presence again gfkjhdkj

this chapter is ENTIRELY pesterlogs because i needed a break and also i felt like it would be good dramatically speaking as this is a somewhat dramatic chapter

also if your an anxious person/dont like cliffhangers this chapter ends on a very big cliffhanger jsyk. so maybe wait until next update if that freaks you out at all

dave may be a tad ooc mostly because i was out of practice while writing most of this but im still pretty proud of how it turned out tbh

im sorry for the long pauses between updates but my motivation for this fic has gone really downhill. i still really care about this fic and intend on finishing it but its hard when no one seems to appreciate what im doing. worry not though, i will finish this fic, if only out of spite for myself

chapter title from the angel of small death and the codeine scene by hozier. the song has nothing to do w the chapter but i like the line so

please leave comments/kudos!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

TG: you ready to go

TT: Been ready to go for two hours, thanks for asking.

TG: its not my fault you insist on waking up at ungodly hours

TG: that shits straight up blasphemous

TT: Eight O'clock is not “blasphemous”.

TT: Rose has been pestering me all fucking morning asking when we would be arriving.

TT: Apparently everyone else is there.

TG: i need at least ten hours of sleep and you need at least three hours to get ready this way it works out

TG: speaking of which you are not ready i hear the fucking shower running
TG: again
TG: what is this? fourth one of the morning?
TT: Third.
TT: And I've taken precautions not to get my hair wet.
TG: you're wearing the fucking shower cap aren’t you
TT: No.
TG: oh dude i have to get a picture of this
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering timaeusTestified [TT]
TT: Dave I am going to fucking kill you.
TT: If that picture sees the light of day I will have your head.
TG: haha yeah okay
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tipsyGnostalgic [TG]
TG: [sent a photo]
TG: behold
TG: shower cap dirk in all his glory
TG: i cropped dirks titties out the picture so you dont have to do it yourself
TG: speaking of which whatever you do dont send that to the groupchat
TG: DAVEY I OWE YOU MY LIFE
TG: and yeah i wont ;)
TG: yknow i just realized that he has his shades on
TG: in the shower
TG: yeah he does that
TG: like you don’t
TG: die

TG: who would make hilarious edits of ur shower cap dirk pic and send them to the groupchat if i did that? hm?
TG: fair you can stay for now

TG: anyways im gonna share this glorious photo with rose

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering tipsyGnostalgic [TG]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

TG: [sent a photo]

TT: Oh, wonderful.

TT: I expect that Roxy will soon be unleashing photoshopped products on the groupchat?

TG: damn right she will

TT: Also, why does Dirk have his shades on?

TG: dirk only takes his shades of to sleep and that was after several occasions of waking up with scratches on his face

TT: Hmm.

TG: for once your therapist hmm isnt directed at me

TT: Believe me, I direct a gargantuan amount of hmms at both Striders.

TG: im sure you do

TG: who do you direct the second greatest amount of hmms at

TT: Well, the Striders lead the pack by a disproportionate amount, however, I’d have to say John.

TG: what

TG: dude johns easy to get

TT: Maybe for you, however I find I am often puzzled by John’s behavior.

TG: weird

TG: then again i avoid my talking about my problems at all costs and john doesnt really mention anything so maybe i dont know him as well as i think i do

TT: I’m sure you know him exactly as well as you think you do. However, you don’t analyze his behavior as i would.

TG: oh true

TG: dirks yelling at me i take it the pictures got the good ole roxy edit™
TT: Oh, I have to check this out.

tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinogeneticist [CG]

TG: [sent a photo]

TG: you've seen the edits by now but here's the og

CG: OH MY GOD.

CG: ALSO NOW THAT YOU'RE AWAKE I CAN BERATE YOU FOR BEING LATE.

CG: I'M SO FUCKING TIRED THOUGH YOU SHOULD JUST BERATE YOURSELF.

TG: consider me berated

TG: though i can't believe you're too tired to berate me

TG: its like i don't even know you anymore

TG: who are you and what have you done with karkat

CG: IT'S NOT MY FAULT YOU INSISTED ON TALKING UNTIL FOUR IN THE MORNING.

TG: you're the one who initiated a conversation about how your legs felt tingly

CG: I HAVE NO FUCKING RECOLLECTION OF THAT HAPPENING.

TG: CG: MY LEGS FEEL TINGLY WHAT THE FUCK IS THIS HORSES**IT TG: yeah weed does that

TG: proof is in the pudding my dude

CG: OKAY SURE I MAY HAVE INITIATED OUR RIDICULOUSLY LATE NIGHT CONVERSATION BUT YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KEPT SENDING ME PICTURES OF BIRDS FROM

CG: WHAT WAS IT CALLED AGAIN?

TG: the sibley guide to birds

TG: i have the western edition too

TG: and the sibley guide to bird life and behavior

CG: WHY.

TG: i would say irony but at this point i can't even use that as an excuse
TG: ill tell you why
TG: because i fucking love birds
TG: thats why
CG: VALID I GUESS.
TG: damn right im valid
CG: ANYWAYS.
CG: YOU’RE LATE.
TG: im aware
TG: were leaving right now
CG: OKAY.
TG: what are we doing when we get to portland
CG: I DON’T KNOW, DAVE. WE WERE GOING TO MAKE A PLAN WHEN EVERYONE GOT HERE BUT SOME PEOPLE AREN’T HERE YET.
TG: god karkat leaf me alone
CG: WE’RE DATING SO YOU’RE STUCK WITH ME INDEFINITELY.
TG: damn you got me there
TG: also how the fuck are we gonna fit sixteen people into dadberths car and how am i just thinking about this
CG: ROXY’S DRIVING SOME OF US
TG: oh god were all gonna die
CG: WHY?
TG: dude im not sure if you know this but roxy has the motor skills of a two year old going through a heroin detox
TG: why a two year old would be on heroin i have no idea
TG: i mean its not like you can blame it on poor life choices theyre TWO
TG: maybe its like one of those things where the mom was on heroin and the baby got addicted but that wouldnt last until youre a toddler i dont think
TG: man that shit is hella sad why did i bring this up
TG: poor kid never even had a chance like that sucks
TG: anyways

TG: point is

TG: my girl roxy couldn’t carefully drive a car if her life depended on it

CG: AS IF YOUR MOTOR SKILLS ARE ANY BETTER.

TG: they are

CG: OH PLEASE.

CG: I HAVE WATCHED YOU ATTEMPT TO OPEN A DOOR NO LESS THAN THIRTY TIMES AND ONLY GET IT OPEN WHEN TEREZI, SOMEONE AS BLIND AS THE PERSON WHO BUYS YOUR OUTFITS, OPENED IT FOR YOU.

CG: NOT TO MENTION THE FACT THAT YOU CAN BARELY TIE YOUR SHOES.

TG: karkles why you gotta be so mean

TG: i am in no way shape or form associated with taylor swift because shes the worst btw

CG: NOTED.

TG: also i buy my own outfits and am perfectly capable of sight

CG: DAVE I SAW YOU ONCE WEAR RED SKINNY JEANS WITH A HUNTER ORANGE SHIRT SO YOU’RE GOING TO HAVE TO REEVALUATE HOW CAPABLE OF SIGHT YOU REALLY ARE.

CG: NOT TO MENTION THE GARGANTUAN PURPLE HOODIE THAT GOES DOWN TO YOUR KNEES WITH MULTI-COLORED ADVENTURE TIME LEGGINGS.

TG: those are Luks and you know it

TG: i just googled how many people a minivan holds and its only seven and roxys car sure as hell wont fit nine of us

CG: YEAH WE WORKED THAT OUT TOO.

CG: KANAYA’S MOMS ARE COMING TO CHAPERONE AS WELL I GUESS.

TG: thats so fucking valid

TG: no straights allowed except for dadbert

TG: actually im not sure about that

CG: THE MAN KICKED TOXIC MASCULINITY’S ASS THERE’S NO WAY HE’S STRAIGHT.

TG: honestly
TG: anyways were here

TG: i can see you BITCH

CG: I HATE YOU.

CG: I STILL CAN’T BELIEVE YOU ROPE ME INTO WATCHING NEO YOKIO WITH YOU, HONESTLY.

TG: were watching aggretsuko next

TG: which is arguably better

CG: WHY ARE YOU MESSAGING ME? WE’RE STANDING RIGHT NEXT TO EACH OTHER.

TG: i dunno dude

TG: call me a gen z but texting is fun

AC: You naive fool.

AC: You take your capacity for speech for granted. You take your mortal form, which will meet a mortal end, as a given. You do not think once about what is like to be limitless in every possible way, yet so trapped at the same time.

TG: this is because i tried to flush dirks shades down the toilet this morning isnt it

AC: The things I’ve seen.

TG: stop reading my conversations hal

AC: I check in on all the couples to satisfy my need to live vicariously but nothing ever happens.

AC: You’re all so boring.

AC: Last night all the two of you did was talk about various birds.

AC: Nothing Spicy whatsoever.

CG: WHY ARE YOU HERE AGAIN.

CG: HOW DO YOU EVEN GET INTO OUR CONVERSATIONS

AC: I’m a fucking AI. Take a guess.

CG: I DON’T SEE YOU FUCKING ANYTHING ANYTIME SOON.


AC: Dave your boyfriend is so inconsiderate of others feelings.

TG: you dont need to tell me
CG: I HATE BOTH OF YOU.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

TG: way to go hal

AC: Don’t blame me for your mistakes.

AC: Dirk already does that enough.

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: callout for rose and kanaya for flirting right in front of my salad

TT: Please, I’m trapped with you and Karkat for an hour. Kanaya is merely keeping me sane.

grimAuxillatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: If I Have To Hear One More Fucking Giggle Over Human Phalluses I Am Going To As Dave Would Say Kermit

TT: Speaking of which, why are you drawing penises on my itinerary?

TG: because its Funney

AC: God I wish Dirk was in the car with you.

AC: But no, I have to hear Jake lecture everyone on the dangers of weed and Nepeta and Jade roleplay while vehemently ignoring him.

AC: Dad bert doesn’t even care about the weed.

TG: for all we know dad bert is a stoner himself

AC: God, I hope so.

TG: my personal theory is that dad bert is warriormale

AC: You’re so fucking correct its unbelievable.

GA: Who Is This Warrior Male

TT: A lesbian icon.

TT: I respect Warriormale immensely.

TT: The only man that matters.

TG: hey
TT: I know what I said.

TT: This itinerary has so many dicks on it that it is no longer readable.

TT: I’d be impressed if I hadn’t seen your capacity to be far more idiotic before.

TT: Karkat, however.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

CG: REALLY ROSE.

CG: I THOUGHT YOU WANTED TO BE A PSYCHOLOGIST.

CG: IF YOU CAN’T PICK UP ON THE FACT THAT I’M A MASSIVE FUCKING CHILD WHO THROWS TEMPER TANTRUMS EVERY TIME SOMETHING DOESN’T GO MY WAY, LAUGHS AT JOKES THAT DAVE OF ALL PEOPLE MAKES, AND STILL HAS TROUBLE MAKING MY OWN BREAKFAST; YOU’RE NOT AS KEEN AS I THOUGHT YOU WERE.

TT: …

TT: You know what, fair.

GA: Why Are We Messaging One Another Were All In The Same Car

AC: This is robot erasure.

TG: this started out as a callout for you and rose but no one showed up

TG: god

TG: can you imagine

TG: callout parties

CG: I’M GOING TO STOP YOU RIGHT THERE.

TG: yeah thats fair

twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!

TA: you think you have it bad?

TA: me and aradia are trapped in a car with tz and vk.

TA: theyre liike borderliine making out at thii2 poiint.

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

GC: VR1SK4 1S S1TT1NG IN MY L4P B3C4US3 TH3R3 W4S NO ROOM IN TH3 C4R YOU PRUD3

TA: thirty 2econd2 ago you had your tounge2 down each other2 throats.
TA: right in front of me and aa.

TA: have you no shame?

GC: NOT R34LLY.

arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

AG: Sollux is just jealous because he doesn’t have anyone to make out with.

TA: a true that may be, you and tz are still the greatest, most overly affectionate couple known to trollkind.

AG: Damn right we are.

AG: Being gay is a game and we’re winning.

TG: up until two days ago you didn’t know who hozier was and i’m pretty sure that’s grounds to revoke your lesbian card

TG: rose doesn’t even like his music that much and she practically worships him

TT: The man is an icon.

TT: Though all his songs aren’t quite my forte of music, they’re so obviously written by the spirit of a 1800’s lesbian, I can’t help but enjoy them.

TT: I mean, “don’t you ever tame your demons, but always keep them on a leash”?

TT: So obviously about the shame that comes with being a lesbian and the constant reminder of your identity and the stigma that comes with it.

TT: I guess it’s applicable to any LGBT person, but as a lesbian I really resonate with it.

TT: Don’t you ever tame your demons = don’t ever become comfortable with yourself or have pride in your identity. But always keep them on a leash = always have the bitter reminder of who you are close to your heart.

gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!

GG: Cheers I’ll drink to that, bro.

TG: did jane just say bro

GG: And there’s an extra special shame that comes with being a lesbian, because America, and most of the world, is incredibly male-centric.

GG: By not catering to or preforming for men, we become social pariahs.

GG: My experience as a fat lesbian has been especially eye-opening.

TT: I’m sure.
TT: Because as we all know, a woman’s worth is in direct correlation with how fuckable she is to men.

TT: Being a lesbian is already a strike, and not being conventionally attractive is another.

TT: Though, Jane, I didn’t know you were a lesbian.

GG: Yeah! I came to the realization last month. It’s been very difficult to come to this point but I’m quite happy with myself now.

TT: I would love to talk more about this subject, given the fact that the trolls experience being gay in a much different light.

GA: We Had Similar Issues On Alternia But They Are Much More…

GA: Prominent Here

GA: For Instance It Was Frowned Upon To Only Be Attracted To One Gender Especially If It Was The Same Gender But Same Gender Couples Were Very Commonplace And For The Most Part Completely Accepted

GA: I Think Long Ago It Was A Lot Like Earth

GA: Hence Why Strictly Same Gender Attraction Was Considered Odd

GA: Attraction To All Genders Was The So Called Default Like Straight Is Here

GA: Alternia Really Had Its Hang Ups With Gender Though

TT: Oh?

TG: yeah i guess i just considered alternia to be this kind of haven for gays

TG: i mean yeah an incredibly violent one but for different reasons

GA: Being Trans Was Not Easy On Alternia

GA: Especially A Trans Lesbian As Both I And Vriska Can Tell You

AG: Yeah it wasn’t the 8est.

AG: Although I had an easier time as a high8lood.

GA: I Am Not Quite Sure Why But Being A Gender Other Than Your Perceived One Was Deeply Frowned Upon

GA: Things Were Never Violent But Often Ideas That Got Thrown Around Were Incredibly Hurtful

GA: I Presented Femininely Because I Liked To But For Others That Did Not They Were Frequently Misgendered And Told If They Wanted To Be Addressed As Their Preferred Gender They Should Act Like It
GA: Often Times As Lesbian People Adamantly Insisted I Was Just Confused
AG: Same here.
AG: And I dressed like “a boy” so O8VIOUSLY I must be one.
AG: Which was odd because the gender roles seemed to only apply to trans people.
AG: It was basically the same shit here, but watered down I guess.
CG: SOMETIMES I MISS ALTERNIA.
CG: SIMPLY BECAUSE IT *WAS* WATERED DOWN.
CG: HERE EVERYONE SEEMS TO HAVE IDEAS UNLESS THEY’RE LGBT THEMSELVES.
GC: Y34H M3 4ND VR1SK4 G3T W31RD LOOKS 4LL TH3 T1M3 H3R3.
GC: 4ND IT 4LW4YS M4K3 S3 F33L L1K3 1’M DOING SOM3THING WRONG BY LOV1NG SOM3ON3.
TT: Me and Kanaya as well.
CG: US TOO.
TG: yeah
TG: im glad i have you guys though
TG: our little group of lgbt friends
TG: i would @ everyone but thats annoying
TG: ill just tell everyone in person when we get to portland

gardenGnostic [GG] is an active chum!
GG: i have to tell you guys something!
GG: i figured it’d be easier over text
GG: im nonbinary!
GG: oof i did it
TG: holy fuck jade im so fucking proud of you
TG: i still have that binder i said id give to you
TT: Wait you told Dave?
GG: uhh yeah!
TT: Oh.

TT: Jade I am so incredibly happy for you but I do have to wonder why you told Dave and not me.

TG: rose thats understandable but im trans

TG: its a lot harder to come out to cis people than it is to trans people

GG: yeah…

GG: rose? well talk about it later, okay?

TT: Yes, okay.

TT: I’m very sorry Jade it was just a gut reaction of jealousy. I was being an asshole.

GG: its okay!

TT: What are your preferred pronouns?

GG: they/them!

GC: W41T, WH4T’S NONB1N4RY?

TG: tz youre on the internet all the time how do you not know this

GC: 1 L4UGH 4T M3M3S D4V3

TG: fair

TG: i better let jade explain

GG: nonbinary is kind of like a blanket term for a gender thats not commonly perceived by society

GG: theres lots of different nb genders!

GG: being nonbinary for me means i dont want to be perceived as a boy *or* a girl, and that i dont align myself as either gender, though some nb people heavily align with one gender, but theyre still nb

GG: realizing i was nb was mostly about dysphoria for me, both social dysphoria and body dysphoria

GG: though some nb people dont have dysphoria, and recognized it simply through feeling misaligned from the social gender binary

GG: being nb can mean lots of things and its important for everyone, even cis people, to examine their gender and see where they fall

GG: thats a big wall of green text but hopefully you get the gist!
GC: OH
GC: 1
GC: HMM.
GC: I’LL H4V3 TO TH1NK 4BOUT TH4T!
GG: :D
TG: jade you should probably tell everyone in private messages too since no one is coming online
AC: A miracle, frankly, with how much you’re messaging.
GG: already did! johns freaking out in the car right now
GG: hes really happy for me!
GG: We all are, Jade!
GG: It’s always a wonderful thing when people become comfortable with who they are.
GG: I hope you know that I love you no matter what. I couldn’t ask for a better sibling!
TG: its a radical thing to be who you are in a world full of people telling you to be someone else
TG: something that should be celebrated
TT: “To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”
TG: -Johnny Cash
TT: Emerson, actually.
TG: -Johnny Emerson
TT: Dave, we went over transcendentalism in English just before winter break.
TG: im just fucking with you dude
TG: i know that henry david emerson said that
TT: Your willful ignorance isn’t funny.
GG: so are we ever going to find out who said the quote?
TT: No.
TG: nah
CG: RALPH FUCKING WALDO EMERSON.
CG: I GOOGLED IT SINCE I’M NOT IN ALL THE HONORS CLASSES LIKE THE GENIUS/DUMBASS STRILONDES.

TG: i prefer the term geniass

TG: and im not in algebra i unlike rose who got bumped up a year and roxy who got bumped up TWO years

TG: im not even going to get started on dirk

CG: YOU GUYS ARE SO FUCKING LUCKY YOU GET TO GO OVER COOL SHIT WITH MR. PAFF, LITERALLY ALL WE’VE LEARNED IS FUCKING SUBJECT/PREDICATE FUCKSHIT AND YOU CAN TELL PAFF HATES IT AS MUCH AS WE DO.

CG: WHICH IS TO SAY HE HATES IT SO MUCH THAT HE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE AN ONGOING, AS DAVE WOULD SAY, “HATEMANCE” WITH IT.

CG: I COULD COMPOSE AN INTENSE, SHAKESPEAREAN LIKE, BALLAD OF THE HATE-HATE RELATIONSHIP I HAVE WITH LEARNING GRAMMAR, BUT ALAS I SHALL SPARE YOU FROM MY GENIUS.

TG: you sure dude? i sure would love to see what insults you could come up with for the entire subject of grammar

CG: LEARNING GRAMMAR IN SCHOOL INFURIATES ME SO MUCH THAT I COULD NUT MYSELF IN RAGE AND DROWN IN MY GENETIC MATERIAL.

TG: DKFJGHJDFKGHDSFKJ

TG: wow

TG: really not holding anything back are we karkles

CG: THAT’S AN EXAMPLE OF THE RANT I’M TOO TIRED TO COMPOSE.

CG: ANYWAYS, WE’RE HERE.

TG: whos ready to take portland by storm this fine december day?

ectoBiologist [EB] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

EB: dave that was really beautiful.

TG: thanks man

TG: was mostly just word vomit tbh

TG: imagine regurgitated alphabet soup

TG: that
EB: gross!
EB: i think it’s really nice how you gave that speech though!
EB: even if the entire customer base of that brunch place was looking at/silently judging us.
TG: eh who cares
TG: i love my friends and i needed to let them know
TG: you guys have really helped me love myself and overcome some issues with my identity
TG: dirk too even though hell never say it
TG: plus yall are just fucking amazing
TG: love you john
EB: aw dave you know i love you too!
EB: yikes i just remembered twelve year old john.
TG: we were all assholes in middle school john
EB: yeah…
EB: what have you got planned for the day!
TG: me and karkles are just gonna run wild around portland
TG: dadbert did make me give him my number though so he could check in
EB: sounds fun i’m in!
TG: uhhhh…
EB: ?
TG: oh john you dense motherfucker
EB: what!
TG: holy shit
TG: im laughing way too hard
EB: yeah i know were in the same hotel room.
TG: john its a DATE
TG: me and karkat are going on a big gay date
EB: OH!
EB: yeah nevermind count me out.

TG: hgdflghdfkj

TG: i cannot believe that

TG: you

TG: tried to crash me and karkat's date before it had even begun

EB: i didn’t know okay!

EB: so you and karkat huh?

EB: *raises eyebrows*

TG: your eyebrows better be as down as your penis after seeing nanna naked you gutter-minded best friend of mine

EB: gross dave! gross!

EB: anyways...

EB: back to the topic at hand.

TG: yes i believe we were talking about you and your big gay crush on tavros

EB: what! no!

EB: how did you come to that conclusion?

TG: john everyone who has known you for over two years and has eyes has come to that conclusion

TG: im pretty sure even jake worked it out

EB: so the trolls don’t know?

TG: they're not familiar with you and your strange courtship rituals

EB: what strange courtship rituals!

TG: john the last girl you liked got a black eye from a practical joke gone wrong

EB: i said sorry...

TG: im just saying you have a pattern

EB: and what pattern is that? hmm?

TG: first you're an asshole

TG: then you're overly nice and awkward
TG: then asshole again but this time with a side of “joking” flirtatiousness

TG: and THEN the practical jokes start god help us all

TG: after that you turn into the absolute weirdo that you are but with the flirty/asshole thing going on

TG: ive never seen it beyond that

TG: youre currently in phase three

EB: dave that essentially describes our entire friendship up until like two years ago!

TG: yeah john you were gay for me get over it

TG: everyone wants a piece of that strider ass

EB: die!

TG: do you really want your first gay crush to die john

TG: are you that cold hearted

EB: okay first gay crush was probably nick cage lbr.

EB: and fine! maybe i was a teeeeeeeny bit gay for you, as if you can’t say the same!

TG: ugh fine you have a point

TG: anyways

TG: nick cage? really?

TG: out of all the hot actors you choose horse-face-cage

EB: heh he does kind of have a horse face.

EB: and you can fuck right off mister “magic mike was my sexual awakening”

EB: cliche much?

TG: its a cliche for a reason john

TG: god i cant believe dirk let me watch that with him when i was thirteen

TG: granted the movie came out when i was like eleven so i thank him for not showing it to me then

EB: haha!

EB: but anyways…

EB: about the tavros thing.
EB: i mean, i know i’m not straight. i figured that out a while ago even if i didn’t want to admit it.

EB: but it’s one thing to hypothetically like guys and then to actually like a guy.

EB: i should be totally cool with it! all my friends aren’t straight! i’m not straight! but there’s this teeny tiny voice in the back of my head telling me it’s wrong.

EB: i don’t even know where i got the notion.

EB: it’s not like my family’s homophobic

EB: jade’s been out since she was like ten, and jane and jake a while after that.

EB: for god’s sake my dad buys us all gay books! he joined the pflag here even though none of his lgbt kids did!

EB: but something’s been ingrained in me somehow.

EB: and that something tells me it’s bad.

TG: its okay dude

TG: internalized homophobia is a real bitch and im still not over it

TG: i suggest reading up on lgbt stuff and other peoples experiences with internalized homophobia

TG: even ya lgbt fiction can be helpful

TG: you just have to immerse yourself in the notion that being lgbt is a good and radical thing

TG: because it *is* good and it *is* radical and it should *absolutely* be celebrated and not shut away in the dark

TG: and every time that little voice pops up you have to kick its shitty lil bitch ass okay?

EB: yeah!

EB: thanks dave.

EB: you’re my best bro and i wouldn’t change that for the world.

TG: same here dude

TG: anyways i gtg run amok portland with karkat

TG: possibly get arrested

TG: i told him that and he yelled at me

TG: anyways

TG: talk to later okay?
TG: im here if you need me
EB: okay
EB: have fun on your date!
TG: believe me i will
EB: i may be bi but i definitely didn’t need that image.
EB: bye!
TG: later dude

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering ectoBiologist [EB]

carcinoGeneticist [CG] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

CG: I HAD FUN TODAY.
TG: yeah me too
CG: WE SHOULD TO THAT AGAIN SOMETIME.
TG: definitely
TG: …
CG: …
CG: GOD THIS IS SO FUCKING AWKWARD.
TG: [sent a photo]
TG: look at this fucking bird
TG: oh
CG: WAIT
CG: HOLD ON ONE FUCKING SCORCHING SECOND
CG: YOU BROUGHT THE BIRD BOOK TO PORTLAND?
TG: can we please get back to the topic at hand about it being awkward
CG: NO!
CG: YOU BROUGHT THE LIFE OF BIRDS BOOK BY DAVID ATTENBOROUGH, A VERY LARGE BOOK, ALL THE WAY TO PORTLAND WITH YOU?
TG: im not seeing the problem here
CG: GOD YOU’RE SO FUCKING WEIRD.
CG: IN THE GOOD WAY, THOUGH.
CG: I’D CALL YOU ADORABLE IF I DIDN’T HAVE SUCH RESERVATIONS IN SAYING THOSE WORDS TO YOU.
TG: im your fucking boyfriend you shitweasel
CG: YEAH BUT YOU’RE STILL DAVE STRIDER.
TG: youre so mean to me
TG: just admit the fact that you like me a whole lot and move on
TG: for gods sake we just went on a date that involved lots of pda i think you can call me cute
CG: I CAN’T OVER TEXT YOU’LL USE IT AGAINST ME.
CG: IF I CALL YOU CUTE NOW I CAN’T CALL YOU UGLY LATER.
TG: oh my god theyre right
CG: WHO?
TG: everyone
TG: were constantly flirting i just didnt realize it until now
CG: UHH YEAH?
CG: YOU DIDN’T REALIZE I WAS FLIRTING WITH YOU?
TG: not consciously!
CG: I HATE YOU.
TG: no you dont
CG: NO I DON’T.
CG: I STILL CAN’T BELIEVE YOU DIDN’T REALIZE.
TG: god karkat leave me alone
CG: NEVER.
TG: <3
CG: I’M SCREENSHOTTING THAT.
CG: MARK THE DATE.
CG: DECEMBER 31ST 2018.
CG: DAVE STRIDER FINALLY SENDS KARKAT VANTAS A QUADRANT SYMBOL.

TG: and you say im the emotionally repressed one

TG: wont even send your own boyfriend a heart back

CG: <3

TG: oh fuck i was Not prepared

TG: you cant just do that out of nowhere

CG: HOW DO YOU THINK I FELT!

TG: haha

TG: you like me how embarrassing for you

CG: SHUT YOUR MOUTH BEFORE I JAB YOU WITH A RUSTY NAIL AND GIVE YOU TETANUS OF WHICH ONE OF THE SYMPTOMS IS LOCKJAW.

CG: THEY’D HAVE TO WIRE YOUR JAW OPEN AND FEED YOU THROUGH A TUBE.

CG: BACK IN THE OLDEN DAYS YOU’D JUST DIE OF STARVATION.

TG: how do you know so much about lockjaw

CG: I DON’T FUCKING KNOW, DAVE! HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THE WINTER WAR!

TG: because its fuckin hilarious

TG: i mean obviously not the war part of it people died show some respect karkat

TG: but like

TG: ski-warfare

TG: imagine being some poor russian and suddenly you just see this finnish guy flying towards you on a pair of skis holding a gun and screaming

TG: i mean thats probably not how it went down but imagine

TG: peak comedy honestly

CG: I’M SURE IT’S EQUALLY HILARIOUS FOR THE RUSSIAN.

TG: i mean yeah hes about to die

TG: but like

TG: the whole image is so ridiculous id probably just laugh
TG: either that or shit myself in fear but lets just go with laugh

CG: I WILL NOT STROKE YOUR EGO AND LONGER. YOU WOULD NOT ONLY SHIT YOURSELF IN FEAR BUT ALSO SCREAM LIKE A TERRIFIED BUT AROUSED CICADA AND THAT'S THE TRUTH.

TG: why is the cicada aroused

TG: is it like a scared but horny situation

TG: or is it just an unfortunate defect in which whenever you're afraid you also want to bone as a side effect

TG: i need answers karkat

TG: the public deserves the truth about the sightseeing attraction that is the terrified but horny cicada

CG: SINCE WHEN IS IT A SIGHTSEEING ATTRACTION?

CG: ALSO CICADA'S ONLY SCREAM *BECAUSE* THEY'RE HORNY GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT.

TG: wait

TG: so your telling me

TG: that the whole cicada fucking screaming routine

TG: is all done for the sake of getting laid

TG: dude they're at it all the time

TG: lil guys must have a boner the size of the eiffel

CG: YEP.

TG: amazing

TG: also since when did you know about cicadas

TG: you still call dogs barkbeasts for the most part this doesn't compute

CG: I WAS SPIRALLING INTO THE DEPTHS OF YOUTUBE THE OTHER WEEK AND STUMBLED UPON A DOCUMENTARY.

TG: aw man

TG: karkat is finally watching nature docs during the Youtube Spiral instead of my strange addiction videos

TG: im a good influence
CG: I STILL WATCH THE MY STRANGE ADDICTIONS.

CG: I CAN’T HELP IT THEY MAKE ME SO FUCKING ANGRY.

CG: WHY IS HUMANITY LIKE THIS? WHO FUCKED YOU UP SO IRREPARABLY THAT YOU NOT ONLY FUCK YOUR CAR BUT ARE IN A COMMITTED RELATIONSHIP WITH IT? WHO DID THIS TO HUMANKIND COLLECTIVELY?

CG: *WHAT HAPPENED?*

TG: if that makes you angry wait until you hear about freud

TG: just because ONE freak wants to fuck his mom doesnt mean all of us do get a grip people

TG: oh shit its three am

TG: everyone else is asleep now we should probably go unconscious

CG: EVERYONE HAS BEEN ASLEEP SINCE WE BEGAN THIS POINTLESS CONVERSATION THAT’S WHY I MESSAGED YOU INSTEAD OF SAYING SOMETHING.

TG: i still dont understand why rose only rented three rooms and made us bring sleeping bags like its not like her mom needs to save or anything

TG: anyways

TG: sleep

TG: is a thing

CG: THEN GO THE FUCK TO SLEEP.

TG: only if you do

CG: WHAT?

TG: i like talking to you

TG: fghkjdflkj

TG: did you just drop your phone on your face you fucking dork

CG: SHUT UP!

CG: STOP LAUGHING YOU’RE GOING TO WAKE EVERYONE UP!

TG: i can’t help it youre cute

TG: YOU DID IT AGAIN

TG: how did you not learn your lesson the first time

TG: like just lay on your side its that simple
CG: I DON’T LIKE THE PHONE THAT CLOSE TO MY FACE!

TG: jesus christ karkat if i had known complimenting you would result in this much hilarity i woudlve done it a lot sooner

CG: I NEED TO GO TO BED.

TG: and another falls victim to my strider charm

TG: hey

TG: hey karkat

TG: hey

TG: youre cute

carcinoGeneticist [CG] blocked turntechGodhead [TG]

TG: three

TG: two

TG: one

carcinoGeneticist [CG] unblocked turntechGodhead [TG]

CG: JUST SO YOU KNOW HOW FULLY FUCKING CAPABLE I AM OF BLOCKING YOU.

TG: never doubted you babe

carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

TG: hahahaha talk to you in the morning asshole

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

TG: whos ready for our group outing

TG: sixteen teenagers running around portland with moderate adult supervision

TG: sounds like a bad coming of age movie

GA: Ive Been Meaning To Check Out This Store Called Wild Fang

GA: Its Very Fashionable And Ethical So It Makes Up For It Being Expensive

GA: I Mean Its As Ethical As One Can Be Under Capitalism
GA: There's one close to the Pearl District which is relatively nearby.

EB: The Pearl District sounds fancy!

GA: Very

GA: Rose, would you like to go with me?

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!

TT: I would love to.

TG: Powell's is in the Pearl District.

CG: Hell fucking yes.

TG: The whole thing is massive though, we're gonna need to do some serious walking.

TG: There's also this really neat thrift store right next to Powell's I wanna check out.

TG: buffalo exchange

TG: Also can we hit up Blicks?

TG: God I'm so glad Momonde gave us spending money otherwise I would be suffering.

TT: I believe most of us are in favor of going to the Pearl District?

TT: @everyone All in favor say aye.

GG: Aye!

TG: aey

twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!

TA: aye.

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

AG: Aye, I guess.

AG: Even though I don't really know what I'm agreeing to...

GC: 4Y3!

gardenGnostic [GG] is an active chum!

GG: aye!!

TG: Oh shit we're doing this huh
TG: we are indeed making this happen

TG: aye

CG: AYE.

EB: aye!

centaursTesticle [CT] is an active chum!

CT: D --> Did you really need to @ all of us? It’s quite frivolous especially when you are all together

TG: shute up sweaty

CT: D --> Heathen

centaursTesticle [CT] is an idle chum!

TG: JKDGHDFKJH

TG: did i just get called a heathen in 2k18

arsenicCatnip [AC] is an active chum!

AC: :33< aye!!!

apocalypseArisen [AA] is an active chum!

AA: aye :D

GA: Oh Myself As Well

GA: Aye

timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!

TT: Aye.

uranianUmbra [UU] is an active chum!

UU: aye!

AC: No one cares to ask my opinion?

TT: And what would that be?

AC: Why the fuck should I care I don’t have a corporeal form.

TT: ...

TT: I honestly should’ve expected that.

golgothasTerror [GT] is an active chum!
GT: Oh!
GT: Aye say i!
TT: And that’s an aye from myself as well.
TT: It appears we are unanimous.
TT: Now, let’s make a plan.

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]
TG: dude i am literally about to pass out and you are going to be my pillow
CG: I DON’T UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE CAN FALL ASLEEP IN CARS.
TG: i dunno dude you just
turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]
TG: do
TG: anyways im going to be asleep now
TG: ill talk to you when we get back to newberg
turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TT: Thirteen missed calls?

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]
TG: oh fuck
TG: oh fuck
TG: FUCK
TG: rose
TG: rose pick up your fucking phone for fucks sake
TG: ROSE PLEASE
TG: fuck fuck fuck fuck
TG: rose i really need you to pick up your goddamn fucking phone and youre kind of doing not that right now
TG: fuck hes gonna kill us
TG: rose please i need you
TT: Thirteen missed calls?
TT: To what do I owe the pleasure?

TG: please rose you can be snarky later

TG: this is fucking serious

TT: My apologies, I didn’t read your messages before I sent that. What’s going on?

TG: i need you and roxy to drive me and dirk to the hospital

Chapter End Notes

jdfghdkjf sorry

my tumblr
but the children lose their minds

Chapter Notes

I HAAAAAAATE THIS CHAPTER!!! HATE IT HATE IT HATE IT! its honestly fucking garbage its all over the place and it makes me mad because some SHIT goes down in this chapter but its so BADLY WRITTEN. okay theres your forewarning.
tws: death (no one important), abuse, violence, injuries
also!! on a more positive note! thank you guys so much for all the comments!! i love all of them youre all amazing!!
seeing as the last chapter was all pesterlogs, this chapter is 90% text
this fic will have 2 (TWO!!!) more chapters and the last ones gonna be an epilogue but itll probably be hella long
chapter title from "the childrens crusade on acid" by margot and the nuclear so and sos

TG: i need you and roxy to drive me and dirk to the hospital

The hospital.

Two simple words and your blood is ice.

“Roxy,” it comes out as a whisper, you realize. “Roxy!” You yell.

“What’s up?” Her voice comes from down the hall. Dimly, you stumble to her door.

Your hands shakily find Dave’s name in your contacts. “Get in the car.”

“Rosey?” She seems to notice your state of stress. “What’s going on?” You ignore her and silently pray for Dave to pick up. He does.

“We’re at the park mom used to take us to all the time,” his voice sounds weak. You stumble down the stairs, a concerned Roxy behind you.

“Herbert-Hoover?” You ask.

“Yeah, that one.”

You reach the front door and wrench it open. The cold air bites into your skin. You barely notice.

You reach Roxy’s car and she quickly unlocks it from inside the house before grabbing a coat.

Hurry. Your mind is screaming at you.
Once in the car you open your mouth to tell her where to go but she cuts you off. “Herbert-Hoover. I heard.” The car hums to life. “Now will you please tell me what’s going on?”

“Dave and Dirk need a ride to the hospital,” you say it coolly, but everything inside you is combusting.

Roxy slams her hands on the steering wheel before proceeding to pull out of the driveway. “Do you know what happened?” She asks.

“No. Do you?”

“I think I have a guess.”

“What?”

“You must have noticed by now, Rose.”

You consider this. You consider what she’s saying and the heavy weight her words carry. You have noticed, of course. You just denied it.

How you hate yourself for denying it.

Roxy speeds to the park and parks illegally next to a hydrant. You both rush out of the car and start yelling for Dave and Dirk. It’s a decently large park so it’s almost a miracle when you find them immediately.

“Here,” Dave croaks. You whirl around and the sight of him knocks the wind out of you.

The entire left side of his face is swollen beyond recognition, his arms bear several lacerations, some of which are still bleeding profusely, and he’s shivering; whether from cold or pain you can’t tell.

“Dave,” it nearly comes out as a sob.

Then you notice Dirk. He’s laying with his head in Dave’s lap and his arm across his face. It looks like the typical “damsel in distress” post. It would almost be comical if not for the state he was in.

He’s sickly pale, and in worse condition than Dave. Roxy sees him and screams bloody murder. Dave quickly shushes her and she quiets.

“I need help carrying Dirk. His leg is broken.”

“How did you get him here?” You wonder.

“I barely did.” You notice his words are clipped. He’s saying as little as possible and despite the fact he’s probably in an unbearable amount of pain, his face is cold. There’s no emotion: no anger or sadness or anything. His eyes betray nothing. His entire personality screams blank.

This is the Dave from four months ago. This is the Dave you knew before. This is the Dave without something to live for.

“Dave…” You start. He looks at you. For a second, he looks at you with what seems like all the pain in all the world. It’s gone as quickly as it appeared.

He looks away. “We need to get to the hospital.” He carefully moves Dirk so he has an arm around his shoulders. He gestures to Roxy to do the same. The two of them hobble over to the car with Dirk in tow.
Dirk and Dave climb into the back and Roxy gives you a look. You can’t decipher it.

“Rose.” Your head snaps around faster than a possessed person during an exorcism. Dave’s face is still unreadable. “Will you message Karkat for me,” his voice is still entirely flat. Something you have yet to see in him while talking about Karkat. Worry spikes in your chest, even higher than it was before.

“Shouldn’t you?”

He holds up a hand and you notice his thumb and two other fingers are swollen and dark. Tears prick at your eyes, not for the first time. You blink.

Dave clears his throat and puts his hand away. “Plus I don’t really want to.”

“Okay,” it comes out as a croak and you wince at how broken your voice sounds.

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG]

TT: Karkat.

CG: ROSE?

TT: I’m afraid something has happened.

CG: WELL THAT’S NOT OMINOUS AS FUCK.

TT: Roxy and I are currently driving Dave and Dirk to the hospital.

CG: WHAT?

CG: WHY?

TT: Karkat you know Dave fairly well.

TT: I take it you’ve noticed some odd things about his behavior?

CG: ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME? IT’S DAVE!

CG: WILL YOU *PLEASE* TELL ME WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON.

TT: Dave and Dirk have sustained fairly substantial injuries. Enough to warrant a visit to the emergency room. He messaged me and told me he needed a ride to the hospital. They were not at their house, but at a park we frequented as children.

TT: This begs the questions: why not ask our father for a ride? Why go to a park instead of staying at home? Why not call an ambulance to their house? Why walk a decent amount of miles while Dirk has a broken leg and call your child sister for a ride? And the most important: how did they sustain these injuries?

TT: I have known the answer for ages. The clues have been there. And I am a fucking fool for not putting them together earlier.
CG: OH
CG: OH MY FUCKING GOD.
CG: OH GOD
CG: HOLY SHIT
CG: FUCK! ROSE! FUCK!
CG: WHICH HOSPITAL?

TT: You do not want to see Dave in his current state.

CG: JUST TELL ME THE FUCKING HOSPITAL! FOR GOD’S SAKE!
CG: I DON’T *CARE* I NEED TO FUCKING SEE HIM.

TT: It’s not just that.
TT: …I believe that he may not want to see you either.

CG: OH
CG: FUCK.

CG: WHY NOT?

TT: Put yourself in his situation, Karkat.

TT: Dave doesn’t want to take time out of people’s lives. He’s been taught to go quietly, to not make a scene, otherwise something bad usually happens. That’s the reason he never informed us of his situation. At least, that’s what I’m assuming.

TT: Dave is in constant fear of consequences. He may fear that causing a stir about this will make more consequences.

TT: Another thing: Dave doesn’t like pity. Pity being human pity. The point is Dave doesn’t want people to feel sorry for him.

TT: And with the state he’s in you would probably do exactly that.

CG: OKAY.

CG: THAT MAKES SENSE.

CG: CAN I MESSAGE HIM AT LEAST?

TT: I believe that would be okay.
TT: I can’t promise he’ll message back.

TT: His fingers are broken.
You turn to Dave. “Did you want Karkat to come to the hospital?”

He considers this. He shakes his head. “Not yet.” Just then his phone buzzes. His eyes go to the screen, and he smiles, but doesn’t pick it up.

You turn forward once more just as Roxy pulls into the ER parking lot.

“I’ll get a wheelchair,” you say, with consideration to Dirk’s broken leg. You dash into the hospital.

“May I have a wheelchair?” You politely ask the nurse at the counter, quelling the emotional storm inside you for a moment.

“What for?” She asks.

You grind your teeth. “My brother has a broken leg.”

“Oh dear,” she says, and goes to grab one.

A few minutes later the nurse is wheeling Dirk into the hospital with the rest of you trailing behind.

Quickly, Dirk and Dave are swept away and you and Roxy are told to wait in the waiting room.

How you loathe waiting rooms.

You wait for a few hours. The doctors run tests and set bones and the nurses change IV bags. You wait. You hate waiting.

Finally you are pulled into a room that contains Dirk and Dave. They’re bandaged and in casts and hooked up to machines and your heart squeezes in your chest. You and Roxy sit next to their beds.

The four of you make painfully awkward conversation for a few minutes before a nurse comes in and takes a seat.

“Now that you two are all bandaged up, I’d like to ask what happened.”

“We were mugged.” Dirk says quickly, and Dave nods furiously behind him.

“No they fucking weren’t,” Roxy says, stealing the words from your mouth.

Dirk looks at Roxy with a strange mixture of panic and relief.

Something like realization passes over the nurse’s face. You guess she had her suspicions before, but Roxy’s words confirmed them.

“So would you like to tell me who did this?”

Dave and Dirk remain silent.

You clear your throat and Dave looks at you; silently pleading. You ignore him. “His name is
Broderick Strider and he is my brothers’ current guardian.”

“I see,” the nurse nods, lips pursed thoughtfully. She looks to Dirk, “Can you confirm this?” Dirk’s head jerks in what might have been a nod. She then looks expectantly at Dave, who nods as well.

The nurse sighs. “Well, we’ll have to bring in a social worker and get everything hammered out, but I take it you two don’t live with him?” She nods to you and Roxy. You both shake your heads.

“Well then,” she continues, addressing Dave and Dirk, “I will have to call the police and file a report. I will need the two of you,” she glances briefly at you and Roxy, “to stand by in case they need to question you. With a case this severe we’ll be able to take custody rights immediately, without trial. Once you’re healed, you’ll be able to go home with your sisters and live there. There will likely be a trial, but not for a while after the fact.” She looks to all of you to make sure you understand. You and Roxy nod while Dave studies his hands and Dirk stares blankly at the wall, face devoid of anything and everything.

“You seem like you’ve done this before,” Roxy says, voice quiet.

“I’ve been at this job for nearly fifteen years. I’m out of firsts.” She pauses, considering. “You can call me Lisa, considering we’ll be getting well acquainted over the next few hours.”

The four of you wait around for a while until the social worker gets there. You ask Dave if he wants you to message the groupchat for him. He says he can do it himself. He lays back on the bed and closes his eyes.

Something urges you to climb into the tiny hospital bed with him. You do. He startles, but then smiles, the first one you’ve seen today, and wraps his arm around your shoulders.

“How long do you think they’ll keep me cooped up in this god awful place?”

“Not long,” you reply. He says nothing in response. “Dave?”

“Hmm?”

“Are you okay?” It’s a stupid question. You know it’s a stupid question, he knows it. But your meaning is deeper than that. You know Dave better than you know anyone else. You knew him when he was ten years old and already concealing pain you should’ve been able to see. You know that until a few months ago, he tried his damndest not to show emotion or sincerity. You know that Dave has a reason for his behavior, that he always has, and that you’re not sure if that reason, even if gone, would ever dissipate.

You also know that until recently, Dave loathed physical contact, because of the memories it triggered. And here you were, curled against his side, with recent events no doubt burned into his brain.

You’re asking Dave if he still trusts you. Still trusts your friends.

“Rose you’re my sister.” He pauses and rakes his free hand through his hair. “My twin sister. I’ve known you since our glorious faces were birthed into this world.” He sighs. It sounds sad. “But sometimes I can’t help but see…him. In you. In everyone, honestly. I know no one would ever do the things he did to me. Especially you. But I’m still afraid. I think I’ll always be afraid. Or. Maybe not. The point is that I do trust you. But my instincts don’t.” He shakily inhales.

“I’m okay with this, though.” He moves his arm that is wrapped around your shoulders to elaborate on what this is. “I remember doing this when we were kids.”
“When we couldn’t sleep,” you agree.

“Oh my god, Rose.”

“Yes?”

“I just remembered we had bunk beds. Bunk beds, Rose.”

“Yes we did. I had the top bunk.”

“You said the tallest one got the top bunk.”

“I’ve always been taller than you,” you hum.

“Yeah and it’s fucking unfair.” He pauses. “Also. Why did we have bunk beds we were like what? Five?”

“I vaguely remember us torturing mom until she bought one for us.”

“Such little regard for child safety.”

You snort. “She hasn’t changed.”

Dave says nothing for a while.

“You’re going to love living with us,” you blurt out, impulse control seemingly having evacuated the building. “We have four spare bedrooms so you’ll have your own. There’s three bathrooms so you never have to wait. We have a fair amount of random decor in storage that you’ll like. It’s…nice.”

“Except for mom.”

“Well, yes. She’s sober, for now, but still awful.”

“You got your own brand of fucked up parent.”

“Not nearly as bad as yours.”

“Does it matter?”

You falter. You’d never really considered your mom to be abusive, but Dave seemed to think she was. “I guess not.”

“Will we be able to live with you?” Dave seemed nervous.

“It’s not - it’s different. It’s nothing that will make it so you can’t live with us. Mother is just…needy. She depends on her children to do everything a parent should do for their children. She’s incredibly childish and throws tantrums when Roxy and I don’t do exactly as she says. She relies on us for emotional support, no matter the cost to us. But it’s nothing that the social worker will pick up on.”

Dave seemed a little more at ease. He opened his phone with his good hand and opened the groupchat. You did the same.

turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!
TG: so im in the hospital do you think the jimmy johns people will deliver here

TT: Dave, please.

TG: what rose

TG: don’t tell me youre not craving some salty meats between two pieces of bread

TG: because that sounds like the best fucking thing in the world right now

TT: It does sound good…

TT: However, I highly doubt the hospital will allow you to eat Jimmy John’s.

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

CG: DAVE! THANK FUCKING GOD!

TG: karkat join me in this jimmy johns debate

TG: i think we can pull it off

timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!

TT: I, for one, would love some goddamn Jimmy John’s.

GG: wait

GG: rewind

GG: daves in the hospital?

TT: As am I.

TG: me an rosey too, but were not injured

gutsyGumshoe [GG] is an active chum!

GG: Oh dear!

GG: What happened the the two of you?

TG: do you want the long story or the abbreviated kids version

GG: kids version! knowing you i think youll make it plenty long :p

TG: sorry to disappoint but this can literally be summed up with one line

TG: bros abusive and likes to use me and dirk as human punching bags

TG: the end

TG: now i would really prefer not to talk about it
GG: oh fuck
GG: im going to cut a bitch
GG: and thats really all there is to say on the matter!

ectoBiologist [EB] is an active chum!

EB: oh wow dave

TG: not sure if yall noticed but i said i dont wanna talk about it

EB: yeah shutting up

EB: you should probably tell everyone though…

TG: eh theyll find out eventually

TG: anyways were going to be living with rose and roxy but for now were in the hospital

TG: so if anyone wants to bring us jimmy johns itd be much appreciated

CG: I’LL BRING YOU JIMMY JOHN’S.

CG: WHO ELSE WANTS TO GO VISIT THESE LOSERS?

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: I Will Go

AC: :33< i’ll tag along!

apocalypseArised [AA] is an active chum!

AA: id love to go!

gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

GC: 1 GU3SS I’LL DO IT FOR YOU COOLK1D >:

TT: Hey.

GC: OH, 4ND D1RK.

GC: SOM3T1M3 1 FORG3T D1RK 3X1STS!

AC: God I wish that were me.

TG: im gonna take a fucking nap while you guys get me jimmy johns

TG: later

turntechGodhead [TG] is an idle chum!
TT: I would get him back online to tell you what his order is, but we all order the same thing.

TT: Slim 5 with bacon.

CG: WHY DO YOU ALL GET THE SAME THING?

TT: We used to have to share when we were children. It was the only thing we could agree on, and it stuck.

TG: *given

TG: i want jimmy johns too in case that wasnt a given

GA: Are You Sure Youre Not Going To Get In Trouble For This

TT: Of course we are. That’s half the fun.

tentacleTherapist [TT] is an idle chum!

The social worker shows up and asks questions for what seems like years. Finally, his work is done and he leaves. They station a police officer outside the room in case Bro tries to find you. You have to hold back a snarl. You loathe law enforcement.

The officer, of course, harasses your friend when they get there. You get up from Dave’s bed and politely snap at him. You welcome your friends into the ever shrinking hospital room.

Dave and Dirk’s conditions cause them brief pause. There’s an awkward beat of silence before Dave speaks.

“You got the goods?” Dave asks, serious as a heart attack. Karkat reaches into his oversized sweater sleeve and pulls out an entire slim five. He never uses his sylladex. You’re almost impressed.

“Dude!” Dave laughs. “I don’t want a sandwich with your arm sweat on it.”

“It’s wrapped in paper, bulgemunch.”

“Still.”

“Just fucking eat the goddamn sandwich, Dave.” He hurls the sandwich at Dave who catches it with ease in his good hand.

And suddenly, everything is almost normal. Sure, you’re standing in a hospital room with your abused brothers and a bunch of aliens, but everything feels almost natural. The underlying stench of pain still coats everything, but it feels further away.

You strike up a conversation with Kanaya. Dave rambles to Nepeta and Karkat. Terezi is licking Dirk’s leg cast while Aradia laughs. Like you said, almost normal.

Eventually, Kanaya and Aradia end up playing a game of Egyptian Rat Screw on the floor. They’re playing with handicaps. You sit in Kanaya’s lap, while Aradia can’t use her hands. Roxy has the sense to grab a pillow once Aradia starts slapping cards with her forehead.

Karkat is sitting cross legged on the side of Dave’s bed, ranting about something you’re not quite
tuning into.

Nepeta, Terezi, Dirk, and Roxy are all roleplaying around Dirk’s bed. You catch him smiling a few times.

Soon, you have to go home. You want to stay at the hospital, but Dave insists they’ll be fine. You go home and fall into a restless sleep.

Dave and Dirk are at the hospital for two more days. They finally get to go home with you, and the next week is spent in a flurry of decorating, shopping, and overall business.

You’re out looking at new clothes. Dave insists on wearing the most hideous assaults to fashion’s eyes. Kanaya gags several times.

You pile into Roxy’s car, several dollars lighter and several clothing bags heavier. You’re all laughing at the fact that Kanayay called Dave, “fashions gnarly hangnail”. Dave sighs and looks wistfully out the window.

“This seems to good to be true.”

He’s right, of course.

Three days pass when someone knocks at your door. Dave, Dirk, and you, are watching Keeping Up with the Kardashians on the massive flat screen in the living room, ruthlessly making fun of them. How you ended up like this you have no idea. You suspect Dave started it.

You rise to your feet and walk over to the door. You open it, expecting another delivery since Dirk discovered his true love of online shopping. When you open it you are greeted by a glinting sword and a familiar face.

Your needles are out of your sylladex faster than you can blink, rising to meet the blade just in time. Your neck feels a phantom pain where it would’ve struck.

“Broderick,” you snarl. You can’t remember a time you felt so angry. You don’t think you’ve ever been this angry. Here is the man who did this to your brothers. Here is the man who cares so little about them, yet wants them back anyways. Here is the man who tortured them, starved them, beat them, and broke them just because he could.

And here is the perfect opportunity to kill him.

You slash a needle at his eyes. He blocks with a sword. You jab one at his stomach but he’s gone before you can even think.

“Get out of the way,” his voice is frigid, calm. It only enrages you more. You leap, needles targeting his neck. He steps out of the way easily and slashes down towards you. You’re hopelessly outmatched.

You cross your needles and catch his sword. He shoves back and you fall to the floor, sword still pointed at your chest. Your needles are the only thing between you and death. He shoves harder and you know you are going to die.

Suddenly a deafening bang fills the air. Broderick’s sword falters, sways, and falls. He stumbles backwards, clutching at his shoulder. You stare, shocked, at the blood seeping from his shoulder. He recovers surprisingly fast, and lunges for you.

You leap up and drive your needles into his throat.
There’s so much blood.
You falter. Panic seizes you, and you stumble backward, needles still stuck in your father’s throat.

“Fuck,” you whisper. You don’t think anyone hears you. Your father is dead before anyone speaks.

“And that is why you bring a gun to a knife fight,” Roxy says, her voice shaky. She looks at you like…well, like you just killed a man.

You turn to look at your brothers. They’re standing, shell-shocked, swords gripped tight in their hands. Suddenly, Dave begins to sob.

You rush over to him as he collapses to the ground, shaking and crying and saying nothing.

Dirk looks stony faced, but pale. “You didn’t have to kill him,” he says to you, as you try to comfort Dave.

“I wanted to,” you say.

Dirk nods. “I always thought it’d be me. I guess I thought it was some destiny or something.” He pauses. “I’m glad it was you.” With that he walks away.

Roxy is on the phone with the police, and anxiety swirls in your stomach. You know it was self defense, but you weren’t lying when you said you wanted to.

Roxy hangs up the phone and goes to get the security footage. You’re incredibly glad that you have the security cameras to prove self defence.

The police arrive, they take you all in for questioning. It’s not much of anything, really. You feel like you’re barely there for most of it.

You and your siblings exit the police station and go home. You’re in Roxy’s car when the reality of what you did hits you.

You choke on a sob, and another one breaks free the next second.

“Rosey?” Roxy asks.

“I don’t want to talk about it.” Dave pats your arm awkwardly.

You sob all the way home, and all through the night. You keep seeing blood.

Weeks pass in haze. The police officially declare you guilt free.

More weeks pass. A state of normalcy returns.

One day, Dave comes up to you. You’re knitting quietly in your room, with the door open in case one of your siblings wants to stray in.

“Hey, Rose?” He asks, tentatively.

“What do you need?”

“I dunno,” he says, and pauses. “I guess feelings jams have never really been my thing but I wanted to say thank you.”

Confusion no doubt crosses your features. “Whatever for?”
“For killing him.”

Silence falls. There’s an unspoken agreement between everyone that no one talks about The Incident.

Dave stands there, awkwardly fidgeting. You consider your words carefully.

“It wasn’t like he was someone who didn’t deserve to be killed.”

Dave exhales. He sounds frustrated. “Believe me, I know that.” You wince. “But killing him took its toll on you. You haven’t been the same since, Rose. You know that, right? You’ve been quiet and fidgety and you’re not hiding it as well as you think you are. What I’m saying is that you acted selflessly. You didn’t consider what might happen, you just did. So I’m saying thank you for doing that. For not being selfish.”

“Dave, killing our father was the most selfish thing I’ve ever done in my life.”

This gives him pause. “Huh?”

“I killed him because I wanted to, Dave.” You’re in awe of the fact that you’re talking this openly about the fact that you’re talking this openly about the fact that you took a man’s life. “What would’ve happened had they not deemed it self defense? I would have gone to prison. I didn’t think about you, or Kanaya, or anyone. And yes, there was an immense necessity for his death. But I didn’t even think about that. I couldn’t see past my own rage and, frankly, terror. I was selfish, Dave.” You pause. “But I don’t regret it in the slightest. Yes, I’m terrified of the fact that I killed someone. I keep seeing the blood on my hands in my dreams. It’s awful. It’s the most horrendous thing I’ve ever done. But I don’t feel guilt. Horror at the fact that it happened, yes, but guilt is nowhere on my emotional horizon. That man deserved to die, and the world is better for it.”

The silence that follows your speech feels like it lasts an eternity.

“Oh,” is all Dave says. And then he does something that you didn’t expect at all. He hugs you. It’s awkward, because you’re seated on your bed and he’s standing, but you can feel his light where his arms embrace you.

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering grimAuxiliatrix [GA]

TT: Kanaya, there’s something I need to tell you.

GA: Oh Dear

GA: Well I Already Know You Killed A Man So Thats Out

TT: Holy fucking shit.

TT: Kanaya, dear, you can’t just spring these jokes out of nowhere.

TT: As Roxy would say:

TT: I’m screeching.

GA: Weve Been Dating For Quite A While I Would Assume Youd Be Used To My Amazing Capacity For Hilarity At This Point
TT: Touche.

TT: No, the subject at hand has nothing to do with my recent exploits in murder.

GA: In Self Defence

TT: Murder, nonetheless.

TT: Kanaya I

TT: Fuck.

TT: I love you.

GA: I Love You Too

GA: Though I Thought It To Have Been Obvious

GA: In Case It Wasnt Clear

GA: I Love You Immensely Rose

TT: I feel the same.

TT: Do you want to come over?

GA: Is This The Part Where I Say No And You Say Nobodys Home And I Come Running With A Motion Blur Applied To My Photo

TT: Everyone is home, so no, unfortunately.

TT: However, that would be comical.

GA: Homework Then

TT: No, I finished.

GA: Why

TT: My room has a door, you do realize.

GA: I Dont See What That Has To Do With My Question

TT: You’re really going to make me say it?

GA: I Take Delight In You Being Embarrassed

TT: Sadist.

GA: Whats That Expression About A Glass House

TT: Fair.

TT: Fine, then.
TT: I want you to come over so we can make out until one of my siblings inevitably barges in.

TT: They’re currently playing Mario Kart so it could be quite a while.

TT: Happy?

GA: Very

GA: Im Already On My Way

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] ceased trolling tentacleTherapist [TT]

Chapter End Notes

i just included roses and kanayas convo bc this chapter could use some lightening up
and i thought it would be cute. thats it thats all

the discussions of murder seem really light and i Dont Like that but im not really good at
writing "gritty" stuff ig so w/e. lmk what u think tho of this chapter (and of the fic in
general if u want)

and i know broderick is technically a last name (i googled!) but it SOUNDs like a first
name so...

on a somewhat serious note: i know this fic REALLY isnt the greatest (very far from it)
but im pretty proud of it anyways and i really appreciate you guys supporting it!! i love
getting comments and asks and kudos, it makes my day!!

anyways, bros dead!! thank god!!

my tumblr
There’s an overwhelming sense of freedom after your father is dead, and it takes ages to get used to.

The fact that you’re allowed to eat anything whenever you want baffles you. Rose catches you smuggling armfuls of food into your room.

“Where are you going with that?” She asks, after catching you for the fifth time.

“Uhh. My room?”

“Can I ask why?”

This gives you pause. You don’t know why you’re doing this, actually. It’s not like there’s a shortage of food in the Lalonde household. It’s not like there’s anyone who is preventing you from eating. Anymore, at least. You remain silent and understanding passes across Rose’s face.

She purses her lips and considers you and your five bags of chips for a moment. “Just don’t let anything go to waste.” She pauses, you go to leave, kicking yourself for getting caught and being sure that someone’s going to descend and give you an asskicking of a lifetime. “And Dave?” She calls. You flinch. “You’re welcome to whatever food is in the house. If you need something bought, please ask me or Roxy.”

The interaction leaves you reeling for days.

You’ve never noticed your “survivalist behaviors” (as Rose called them) before you started living with your sisters. You never thought the hoarding food was odd. You never even considered the idea that you were allowed to leave your room, or go into someone else’s. Rose notes that you constantly have your back to a wall, never to a window, or a doorway, or open space. Even when you sit on the couch, you’re constantly glancing over your shoulder. It’s so many little things you’ve never even noticed.
You’re walking back to your room one day, fervently checking to make sure no one is following you, when you see Roxy standing in the hallway, grinning like an idiot.

“Hey, Rox,” you say. She nearly jumps out of her skin.

“Jesus Christ, Davey! Don’t sneak up on me like that. You’re so quiet!” You never realized this. You guess it has something to do with Bro, as most things do. Roxy must notice the look on your face. “You don’t have to be quiet anymore,” she says softly.

“I know,” your voice is hoarse and wrong. You clear your throat. “What are you so happy about anyways? Shit be, like, jovial over here.”

Roxy bites down a smile. It’s painfully obvious anyways. “It’s a secret.”

“Bull-fucking-shit. Tell me.”

She grins but says nothing.

“Roxyyyyy,” you complain. You drop to the ground and grab her leg like a toddler.

“Dave, get off!”

“Not until you tell me.”

“Not yet!” She attempts to walk away but your deceptively heavy. “Davey, please.” You say nothing but don’t let go of her leg. She sighs and pulls out her phone.

“What are you doing?”

“Messaging.” She doesn’t say who.

There’s a few moments of silence. Roxy’s grinning down at her phone. You zone out for a moment and she must’ve said something because the next second she’s jabbing you in the shoulder.

“I’m speaking to you, thot.” Roxy suppresses a laugh.

“Never say that again please.”

“Anyways I can tell you.”

“I’m bored now. You waited too long and now my attention is elsewhere. I’m thinking about horses.”

“Just say you’re Dirkkin and go.”

“That’s the most atrocious crime you’ve ever accused me of.”

“Do you want to know or not?”

“Yes,” you say, letting go of her leg.

“I’m officially winning at being gay.”

“You’re bi.”

She waves a hand. “Questioning that, actually but whatever.”
You hesitate, then say, “Anyways, I still think that title goes to Rose and slash Kanaya. I caught them making out in Rose’s bedroom the other day.” You shiver at the memory. Walking in on your sister with her tongue halfway down her girlfriend’s throat was not your idea of a good time.

“Rose has a girlfriend.” Roxy is smiling like a fool and you’re sensing Antics.

“Yes?”

She pauses for dramatic effect and waggles her eyebrows. “I have two.”

Your smile now matches Roxy’s. “You mean?”

“Hell yes I mean.”

You get up from your position on the floor so you can properly express your excitement by jumping up and down, waving your arms nonsensically.

“Holy shit! Holy shit! Roxy!”

She’s just laughing. And holy shit, you’re so happy for her.

The two of you talk for awhile, mostly you asking for details and her supplying them.

It’s the moments like these that make you realize it’s going to be okay.

**turntechGodhead [TG] is an active chum!**

TG: rox

TG: roxy

TG: whast up lil dude

TG: can i tell them

TG: uhhh

GG: I already told them!

GG: Sorry, Dave!

TG: ah fuck what

TG: this is why you need to scrol up dummy

TG: you guys send like 600 messages a day theres no way im gonna sift through all that shit

**tentacleTherapist [TT] is an active chum!**

TT: Tell us what?

TG: oh noes

TG: holy shit
TG: did you forget to tell rose and dirk
TG: mayhaps
TG: this just proves im the favorite
TG: i don’t have favorites!
TT: Okay, I scrolled up.
TT: I have a few words.
TG: aw yiss
TT: Congratulations! Also, fuck you.
TG: i lied davey youre my fave
TT: I’m not actually quite that upset. However, you will be making it up to me.
TG: what do you want
TT: You don’t get to know my next milestone with Kanaya until five days after the fact.
TT: So I’m telling you now.
TG: wait whut
TT: I anticipated something like this would happen and purposely told Dave, Dirk, and a few others while leaving you out.
TG: You’re the last to know besides Equius.
TG: rose u fuckign sadist
TG: you didnt even KNOW this would happen and yet
TT: I had an inkling, as I said.
TG: HOW
TT: Call it premonition.
TT: Anyways, I told Kanaya I loved her.
TG: I HATE YOU
TG: i cnat believe my own sister would leave me out of the gossip like this
TG: *cant
TG: IPMORTANT gossip too
TG: but homy shit im so happy for u!
TG: how did that entire conversation happen within the span of like fifty seconds

TG: how do you type that fucking fast what the hell

TT: Practice.

TT: Years of writing femslash has honed my typing skills to a deadly point.

TG: yee and i just dont correct any of my tyops until after the fact

TG: *typos

TG: i just realized smth

TG: typos

TG: typods

TG: tydpods

TG: tydepods

TG: tidepods

TG: WAKE UP AMERICA

TG: pretty sure tide pods has a space

TG: oh fuck off

TG: at least im not john “star dew valley” egbert

EB: wait, what?

TG: stardew is one word egderp

EB: no it’s not????

TG: [sent a photo]

TG: proof is in the pudding my dude

EB: MY LIFE IS A LIE!

ectoBiologist [EB] is an idle chum!

TG: xfhdjd

TG: anyways

TG: janecallieroxy is officially canon

TT: This is real life, Dave.
TG: im aware

carcinoGeneticist [CG] is an active chum!

CG: DOES ANYONE WANT TO DO *SOMETHING?* I’M SO FUCKING BORED I COULD CLAW MY OWN EYEBALLS OUT AND FEED THEM TO BARKBEAST.

TG: i fucking know you know theyre called dogs you called one a dog last week

CG: LANGUAGE IS FAKE GO OUTSIDE.

TG: fuck off mr i havent been outside for anything except school in fifteen days

CG: I’M OFFERING NOW, AREN’T I?

TG: valid ig

TG: yeah id be down for a good old fashioned lalonde mansion party if people want to come

TG: dont really feel like leaving the house

TG: id b down!

TT: I’d love to see Kanaya.

TT: And everyone else, of course.

TG: nice save

TG: dirk wbu

timaeusTestified [TT] is an active chum!


timaeusTestified [TT] is an idle chum!

TG: i better go checc on him…

tipsyGnostalgic [TG] is an idle chum!

TG: were a go people

TG: try not to bother dirk/be too loud though hes in a mood i take it

TG: @everyone fun times at the strilonde household

gardenGnostic [GG] is an active chum!

GG: aw man!! i miss you guys :(

TT: We miss you too, Jade.

TT: Hopefully you can visit again soon.
GG: yeah i think we might this summer! see the beach and all
gallowsCalibrator [GC] is an active chum!

TG: god i love the ocean
TG: its just so
TG: large

TT: That it is...
arsenicCatnip [AC] is an active chum!
GG: um? do you guys need a minute?
TG: dude the ocean is fucking awesome
TG: i gotta say
TG: every strilonde is oceankin

TT: You should say something else.

GC: WH4T’S TH1S 4BOUT 4 P4RTY :?
TG: shindig at the lalonde mansion and everyones invited
TG: even equius

centaursTesticle [CT] is an active chum!
CT: D --> I find you all quite rude
CT: D --> Certainly I can’t be that bad
CT: D --> And it’s not like I’d want to come to your f00lish party anyways

AC: :33< wrong you’re coming
CT: D --> Says whom?
AC: :33< it’s the will of god (me)
AC: Can’t argue with that logic.
CT: D --> Nepeta isn’t god
AC: Is there any evidence to the contrary?
CT: D --> …
CT: D --> Surely she would’ve told me if she was god
AC: I don’t know, dude, you seem pretty unsure.

CT: D --> I

CT: D --> Hm

AC: :33< equius im not god!!

AC: :33< hal stop fucking with him you know he gets confused

AC: You know, for someone who’s a genius level engineer, you sure are a dumbass.

GC: H3’S B4S1C4LLY 4N HONOR4RY STR1LOND3!

grimAuxiliatrix [GA] is an active chum!

GA: Does The Term As Dave Deemed It Geniass Not Apply To Most Of Us Though

TT: I feel as though Terezi, Jade, Calliope, and Aradia are the only ones exempt from dumbassery.

TT: Some of us are more functional than others, however.

TT: I, personally, am a functional faking disaster lesbian.

TT: Jade would be a distinguished bi, Dave a disaster gay, etc, etc.

TG: that’s a fair assessment

GC: ROS3 YOU’V3 GOT 1T WRONG.

GC: W3’R3 4LL DUMB4SS3S.

GC: 3V3RY S1NGL3 ON3 OF US 1S STUP1D 4S H3LL

TT: You’re right, actually.

arachnidsGrip [AG] is an active chum!

uranianUmbra [UU] is an active chum!

UU: i’ll be there!

UU: if that’s still happening since the conversation has been sUccessfUlly derailed

TG: oh fuck yeah thats still going on

TG: goddammit weve got to stop doing this

AG: Terezi are you going?

GC: DUH

AG: Ughhhhhhhhh fine I guess I'll come too.
TG: im like 98% sure vriska doesnt even like us and is only here for tz

TT: Only 98%?

TG: shit you right

AG: I like you guys just fine! I just like Terezi a gr8 deal more.

apocalypseArisen [AA] is an active chum!

AA: hi everbody!

TG: hey aradia

TG: whats goin on

AA: not a lot! i just left feferis house

TG: johns right this really did turn into a big gay dating fest

TG: people who arent even in the chat getting in on the action

TG: anyways are you coming to our shindig

TT: Why do you continue to say shindig?

TG: its a fun word sue me

AA: yes i believe i am!

TG: nice

AA: very nice

twinArmageddons [TA] is an active chum!

TA: ii'll be there two

adiosToreador [AT] is an active chum!

AT: uHH,,

AT: i tHINK i’M BUSY,

TG: yeah busy talking to john

AT: wHO tOLD YOU THAT!

TG: im johns best bro who do you think

AT: oHH,,

TG: have fun being lame with your loser boyfriend aka egderp
ECTOBIOLOGIST [EB] IS AN ACTIVE CHUM!

EB: dave, last week you drew a bunch of birds and deemed them all your ‘boyfriends’

TG: ANYWAYS

TG: me and all the cool people will be playing questionable party games at the strilonde household

CG: I CAN’T BELIEVE YOU JUST REFERRED TO ANY OF US AS COOL.

CG: I'M HERE BY THE WAY.

CG: SO YOU COULD DO THE POLITE FUCKING THING AND COME TALK TO ME.

CG: I AM YOUR BOYFRIEND AFTER ALL.

TG: i mean

TG: youre no birdfriend (bird boyfriend) but i guess youll have to do

CG: YEAH AND YOU’RE NO WILL SMITH BUT WE BOTH HAD TO SETTLE.

TG: im not even sure if youre kidding

TG: anyways here i come douchelord

CG: BULGELICKER.

TG: dickweed

TT: I'm going to stop the two of you right there before this turns into another forty minute session of seeing who can come up with the most creative insults.

TG: you have to admit

TG: “rock that gets stuck between your sock and your shoe and its right underneath your big toe so you can feel it every step of the way” is a pretty great insult

TT: Dave, would you please just come downstairs. Karkat is getting antsy and has turned a rant that was initially about your tardiness into a rant about the societal pressures to be on time.

TT: The two subjects conflict immensely and I have no idea how he made the leap.

GA: IF HE CONTINUES TO JUMP TOPICS LIKE THIS I FEAR HE MAY PASS OUT FROM EXHAUSTION

GA: ITS HAPPENED BEFORE

TG: yeah yeah here i come

TUROTECHGODHEAD [TG] IS AN IDLE CHUM!
“-And don’t even get me fucking started on when he-” Karkat pauses to take a deep breath (he’s actually turning pale from the lack of oxygen) and you take this as your chance to cut in.

“Babe calm down.”

He looks over at you and his face lights up. The guy’s a goddamn open book and part of you wants him to stop for his sake, but another part of you feels safe, with how easy it is to read him.

He collapses into the couch and you go to sit next to him. “Don’t fucking call me that,” he grumbles.

You think the fact that Karkat is loud and abrasive is why you were drawn to him.

If you think about it, you were raised with a silent, unknowable killer. Your father was a person who essentially never spoke, never made any noise, and never let you know how he was feeling until he was hitting you.

Karkat is the opposite. He’s loud and often angry, and you don’t even need to ask how he’s feeling because he’ll tell you. He’s the opposite of what you were raised to fear.

Karkat makes you feel safe.

You really need to stop living with Rose. You psychoanalyze yourself so much these days, she’s going to be out a job soon.

Technically, she already is, because you have an actual therapist now. You’re still not sure how you feel about that.

Ms. Micken is nice, you guess. But you still don’t want to talk to her. You go there and play card games and she asks you questions. Sometimes you respond, sometimes you don’t.

You try not to talk about the elephant in the room.

You wonder if you’ll ever be able to talk about it.

Karkat flicks you on the head.

“Hey!” You protest.

“Stop thinking so hard you fucking idiot.”

You’re still not sure how he does that. How he reads you so easily. The only people who can read you like that is your family.

Then again, maybe you’re not as unknowable as you think.

“Yeah, yeah,” you reply.

He smiles at you. It’s quiet and small but it’s there. “Yeah, yeah.”

People gradually show up. You don’t really pay attention to who’s there, you spend most of your time talking to Karkat.

You’re not sure how it happens. You’re not sure exactly what happens. One moment your standing in the kitchen laughing quietly with Karkat, the next someone’s hand is on your shoulder, the moment after that, someone is on the ground.
You’re very first thought is something along the lines of *how the fuck did I get the drop on Bro.* You’re next thought is *holy shit I just punched Nepeta in the chest.* You go from terror to soul-crushing guilt within a second. On autopilot, you help Nepeta up off the ground, apologize, hesitate, and then run to your room.

You actually *run.* Full on sprint. You slam your door behind you and immediately start to hyperventilate.

This isn’t the first time something like this has happened. Rose or Roxy or sometimes even Dirk will move too fast, too suddenly, too quietly, and you just fall apart. You’re not sure why. This never happened at the apartment.

You think it’s because Bro is gone. Your mind is reacting to a threat that isn’t there. There’s nothing to fight, nowhere to run, no way to expend the adrenaline that shoots through your veins at the vaguest threat.

You could never break down like this when Bro was around, because he wouldn’t *let* you. There wasn’t time to freak out about the oncoming strife because you were already strifing.

Now that he’s gone, you have nothing to defend yourself from. Now that he’s gone, you have nothing to fear.

But you’re still *so* afraid.

Your lungs refuse to intake air, your hands shake and your mind races too fast to form coherent thoughts. You feel like vomiting.

There’s a knock at your door and you bite back a scream at the sudden noise.

Granted, it would’ve been worse if whoever it was had just opened the door.

You can’t respond, can’t say anything. All you can do, all you are, is fear.

The door opens slowly. Rose’s face peeks through and you feel slightly better at the sight of her. Only slightly.

She sits down next to you, but doesn’t touch you. She knows you couldn’t handle it right now.

“Dave.”

You inhale and exhale and inhale in the time it takes her to say your name.

“Dave look at me.”

Your head jerks towards her, you stare at her platinum hair instead of her face.

She hands you a paper bag. Where she got it you have no idea. You hold it to your face and breath rapidly into it. You’re not even sure if this works.

She sits with you for about forty-five minutes. Gradually, you start to calm down.

“What color are my socks?” she asks once your breathing is going back to normal.

“Black.”

“What’s your favorite book?”
“Dunno.”

“Dave.”

“Ari and Dante,” you suddenly remember.

“What’s the capital of Oregon?”

“I dunno. Fucking Salem or somethin’.”

“What’s your favorite movie?”

“The Room.”

“What’s the capital of Oregon?”

“I dunno. Fucking Salem or somethin’.”

“What’s your favorite type of bird?”

“New Caledonian Crow.”

“What’s your favorite type of bird?”

“New Caledonian Crow.”

“Feeling better?” She asks carefully.

You nod shakily.

“Take your binder off,” she tells you.

You struggle taking off your hoodie, then even more so your binder. Once you finally have it off you tug your hoodie back over your head. Rose now sitting on your bed, she pats the spot next to her. You walk over and sit next to her.

The two of you sit in silence for a moment. You carefully lean your head on her shoulder. She doesn’t move.

Then you break down into violent sobs. She still doesn’t move.

“Dave.”

“What?” You choke out between breaths.

“Remember when Mom brought us to the beach and you tried to eat sand?”

You laugh and wipe at your eyes. “It looked tasty.”

“Remember when we would go to the park and eat poisonous chestnuts?”

“Also tasty.”

“Remember when you first came to school and tried to stab me in front of my crush?”

“I did not try to stab you!”

“Sure. Remember when Jaspers died?”

“You were so sad.”
“I fucking loved that cat.”

“I know you did.”

“Remember how all four of us would spend Christmas Eve in Roxy’s bedroom and stay up all night?”

“Why didn’t we celebrate Hanukkah?”

“Broderick didn’t like it.”

“Oh.”

“Remember when you moved in here?”

“It was so much fun decorating.”

“Dave.” Something in her voice has changed.

“What’s up?”

“You know I love you?” She says.

“Yeah.”

“Yeah.”

There’s a few minutes of silence before Rose speaks again.

“It’ll get better.”

“I know.”

“That’s the hard part, isn’t it? Waiting?”

“Yeah.” You hesitate. “You and Roxy and Dirk are the best family I could ask for, you know?”

“The same goes for me.”

You hum thoughtfully. “At least we all have each other.” You close your eyes. “I’m tired.”

“Nap.”

“Okay.” You agree, because, god you’re tired. “Will you get Karkat?”

“Yes.” She stands up and goes to leave. Her hand rests on the doorknob and she hesitates. “He’s got to let this family go eventually.” You don’t ask who she’s talking about. You already know.

She closes the door quietly behind her. Less than four seconds later Roxy wordlessly gives you some hot chocolate. Dirk waves at you from the door.

A few minutes later Karkat carefully opens the door to your room.

“Hey,” you say.

“Hey,” he says back. He crawls into the bed with you and strokes your hair. You feel better with him there. “Nepeta’s okay.”
“That’s good.” You’re already falling asleep.

Nothing else is said, and eventually, you drift into a peaceful, dreamless sleep.

You wake up with Karkat’s arm wrapped around you and new messages on your phone.

arsenicCatnip [AC] began trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

AC: :33< hey dave!

AC: :33< i just wanted to let you know i’m alright

AC: :33< i just hope you’re okay too!

AC: :33< *ac gives her friend a big ole hug*

TG: hey nep

TG: im sorry for punching you djghdfkj

AC: :33< no it’s okay!

AC: :33< i can’t say i enjoyed it but i understand

AC: :33< i was just thinking about something you can do to make it up to me though

TG: jesus christ youre a mischievous one

TG: what is it

AC: :33< hehe

AC: :33< it’s just i think you should join ms mickens asd therapy group!

AC: :33< there’s a lot of cool people who i think you would love to meet

AC: :33< only when you’re ready though!

TG: oh yeah

TG: i totally forgot about that

TG: ill do it and i mean that this time

TG: i mean im already going to therapy anyways

TG: group therapy is probably a piece of cake compared to one on one with micken

AC: :33< *ac laughs at her friends joke*

AC: :33< anyways i have to facetime jade! i’ll talk to you later?

TG: yeah fo sure
TG: bye nep!
AC: :33< bye dave!

arsenicCatnip [AC] ceased trolling turntechGodhead [TG]

tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

TT: Are you awake yet?

TT: Just walked into your room and, no, you are not.

TT: I can’t say I thought you’d be the little spoon.

TG: im going to fucking kill you

TG: that was my PRIVATE cuddle session with karkat i dont do that to you and kanaya now do i

TT: I recall last week you walked in on Kanaya and I during a very intimate moment, so yes, you do.

TG: fair

TG: but fuck you for making remember that

TT: Anyways, how are you?

TG: eh

TT: That’s to be expected after a panic attack.

TT: Karkat is staying the night, you know?

TG: oh what

TT: He woke up about an hour ago and called his dad. He wanted to make sure you were okay, and it’s quite late already.

TG: huh i guess it is

TG: ugh im tired

TT: You should sleep.

TG: i guess i should

TG: hey rose

TG: thanks for earlier it means a lot

TT: Of course
You should let Dirk and Roxy know you’re okay as well.

Perhaps message the groupchat if you’re feeling up to it.

Yeah okay i will

love you rose

I love you too.

Even if I have the misfortune of sharing a house and school with you I am glad we shared a womb.

I am very happy you’re my brother, Dave.

same goes for you

minus the brother part because you are so obviously a lesbian

Obviously.

Goodnight, Dave.

night rose

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT]

autonomousCode [AC] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

Just making sure you’re not dead.

thank you so fucking much for listening to me and changing your text color when you talk to me

im autism man 1000 and i do not have the patience for that shit

You’re fucking welcome.

So, you dead or not?

at least 78% alive

Good.

Wouldn’t have anyone to tell my Tastey news to otherwise.

ohoho do share

Equius said he’d build me a body.

can he?
AC: He said there may be some Alternian tech to do the job.

TG: god thats awesome

TG: i really hope it works out for you hal

TG: gotta critique the fact youre gay for equius though

TG: the man has the smallest dick energy out of all our friend group

TG: tde (tiny dick energy)

AC: You’re so fucking rude.

AC: Have some couth, Dave.

AC: You don’t just outright say that about a man’s tiny dicked crush. Imply it sure. But to just say it… the nerve on you.

AC: Only BDE people can do that, and you’re MDE at most.

TG: glass house

AC: God it hurts that you’re right.

TG: its not fair almost everyone we know is a lesbian because everyone knows lesbians have THE biggest dick energy possible

AC: It doesn’t help that the girls we know have more badassery in their pinky fingers than all the guys do combined.

AC: As much as I loathe to admit it, we’re weenies, Dave.

AC: Dirk is more so than me, though. I get a pass because I’m a robot.

AC: Anyways, I should go to sleep now.

TG: you dont sleep

AC: Fair, but I’ve had enough human interaction for the day.

TG: valid

TG: anyways ill talk to you later

AC: Ttyl.

TG: i know you did that ironically but other people wont so im screenshotting it

AC: Fuck you.

AC: Twink.

TG: once again
TG: glass house

AC: …

AC: Pee your pants.

autonomousCode [AC] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG]

TG: DTJGHJHDFKJGHDJK

TG: night hal

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering autonomousCode [AC]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering tipsyGnostalgic [TG]

TG: just letting you know im alright

TG: rox?

TG: aaand youre asleep

TG: message me when you wake up

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering tipsyGnostalgic [TG]

turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

TG: hey just letting you know im okay now

TT: Okay. Good.

TT: Sorry, I’m not really up for talking currently. Had a fucked day.

TG: thats okay

TG: me too

TG: where are you?

TT: Calliope’s cave, currently.

TT: You?

TG: exactly where i want to be

turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering timaeusTestified [TT]

You don’t feel like messaging the groupchat, so you decide against it. Karkat is still asleep, and your
eyes are drifting closed.

You’re exhausted, but content. With Karkat’s arms wrapped around you, you feel safe.

It’s like Rose said. He has to let you go eventually.

And you, in turn, have to let him go.

Chapter End Notes

COMMISSION ME

i wanted more of dave and karkat interacting but i also like the quiet intimacy they have in this chapter but i still wish they had more dialogue but i was tired so

please leave comments/kudos! i really appreciate it

my tumblr
You wake up with your head on Feferi’s stomach and your phone buzzing on the nightstand next to you. Warehouse Thirteen is still playing on the laptop, and Feferi is snoring.

You really don’t want to move.

You have to move.

You carefully move Feferi’s arm off your stomach and lean over her to grab your phone.

“Yoink,” you whisper after having successfully snatched it. It’s still buzzing, so you know it’s your dad calling you. Why he doesn’t text is a mystery to you.

“Hi,” you answer quietly.

“Why are you whispering!? Are you in a hostage situation? Oh my god you’re in a hostage situation!” Your dad tends to jump to the worst conclusions.

“Nope. Feferi is sleeping.”

“Oh thank god.”

“And if I was in a hostage situation your panicked shouting definitely would have alerted them.” Feferi wakes up as you say this and you smile widely at her. “She’s awake now!” You wave at her and she waves back. God she’s so cute.

“Do you have to go?” She asks.
“I dunno. Dad?”

“You’ve been gone for a while. Dinner’s almost ready.”

“Okay. I’ll be there in five.”

You hang up the phone and stand up.

Feferi is pouting. “I wish you didn’t have to go,” she says.

“Me too. I’ll message you, okay?”

“Okay!” She leans over to the laptop and pauses your show.

You grab your hoodie from its position on Feferi’s doorknob and tug it over your head. It’s April, so you have no need to wear it, but you’ll take your hoodie off over your dead body. Well, maybe not since you’d be dead.

Feferi walks you to the front door and kisses you on the cheek, you grin at her.

“Bye,” she says.

“Bye.”

You’re barely down the sidewalk when your phone buzzes.

cuttlefishCuller [CC] began trolling apocalypseArisen [AA]

CC: )ey

CC: Youre pretty cute.

AA: only pretty cute?

CC: )mm I mustve misspoke.

CC: Youre V-ERY cute!

CC: Glub!

AA: glub

CC: )ee)(ee!

AA: are we still going to the aquarium next week?

CC: S)(ELL Y-ES!

AA: im excited

AA: though i do hope earth aquatic life is not at frightful looking as alternian

CC: W)(at!?
CC: All fis)(ies are cute!
CC: -Every single one of t)(em!
AA: yeah!
AA: you know what's cuter?
CC: W)(at? 38O
AA: you!
CC: O)(!
AA: i have to go eat dinner now
AA: i'll talk to you after!
CC: Okay!
apocalypseArisen [AA] ceased trolling cuttlefishCuller [CC]

You pull of your shoes and walk into the dining room. Your dad is setting the table and your two adoptive sisters are squabbling over something unintelligible.

You feel a thrum of happiness in your chest and you relish it.
How you love the feeling of feeling.

Be Hal ==>
autonomousCode [AC] began pestering centaursTesticle [CT]
AC: How goes the body Mr. Engineering Man?
CT: D --> It will never ‘go’ if you keep pestering me
AC: Dude I’m so fucking bored and no one will talk to me.
AC: Fuck the body dude just entertain me.
AC: Do a little dance or something.
CT: D --> I will not
AC: Please.
CT: D --> No
AC: Yes.
CT: D --> No
AC: Yes.
CT: D --> No
AC: Yes.
CT: D --> No
AC: Yes.
CT: D --> N
CT: D --> This is beginning to feel eerily like nepeta and i’s conversations
CT: D --> The fact you share her handle abbreviation doesn’t help
AC: You’re just saying that because you don’t want to lose.
CT: D --> 100se what
AC: The yes-no game
CT: D --> I wouldn’t 100se
AC: I’m a robot.
AC: I am full of infinite patience and wisdom and can do multiple things with my brain at once.
AC: I’d totally crush you.
CT: D --> ‘Infininite patience and wisdom’ yesterday you asked what kind of animal the pink panther was
CT: D --> You may be a genius supercomputer but you’re still quite f00lish
AC: I had a brief lapse in common sense.
AC: Doesn’t change the fact that I’d wipe the floor with your weirdly muscular ass.
CT: D --> Oh dear
AC: Haha do you need a fucking towel.
CT: D --> Perhaps
AC: God you’re so fucking weird.
AC: Anyways I’ll let you get back to it.
autonomousCode [AC] ceased pestering centaursTesticle [CT]
You close out of pesterchum via your genius computer mind and give an inaudible robot sigh. You could hack into Dirk’s Tumblr again and post things defiling his carefully crafted online presence, but that just doesn’t entertain you anymore.

You consider draining the bank account of stupidly rich people who deserve the guillotine, but Dave said that he doesn’t want “Jeff ‘richer than god’ Bezos’ ugly ass coming after them,” and he makes a valid point. It would be hilarious, though.

You really wish you had a body. You remember that Equius is building one for you, or at least attempting, and feel something like excitement.

You’re still so fucking bored, though.

You wonder if you’ll ever not be bored.

Be Terezi ==>

gallowsCalibrator [GC] began pestering arachnidsGrip [AG]

GC: I TH1NK I’M GO1NG TO T3LL 3V3RYON3 TOD4Y.

AG: Really?

GC: R34LLY R34LLY!

AG: Did you just Shrek reference me?

GC: P3RH4PS

GC: IT’S SC4RY THOUGH

GC: TH3 COM1NG OUT TH1NG.

GC: 4ND J4D3 4LR34DY D1D 1T! 1 KNOW HOW TH3Y’LL R34CT! BUT T3LL1NG SOM3ON3 WHO YOU 4R3 IS SC4RY.

AG: I know. But we all love you no matter what.

AG: Me especially!

GC: Y34H BUT 1 ALR34DY TOLD YOU!

AG: I still love you!

GC: YOU TOO.

GC: <3

AG: <3

GC: 1 H4V3 TO GO TO D1NN3R NOW I’LL T4LK TO YOU 4FT3R.
AG: Okay.

gallowsCalibrator [GC] ceased trolling arachnidsGrip [AG]

Be Karkat ==> 

It’s one in the morning when you sneak out of your house for the first time in your life.

You seriously didn’t plan on doing it. But Terezi came out as nonbinary to the groupchat, and everyone insisted on celebrating. Besides, it’s the weekend. Weekends are for seeing your friends, and you’ve barely seen them since Friday. So yeah, you sneak out. You go through the door because, despite what American teen television will tell you, windows have screens.

Once you’re out the door, you begin the long walk to Calliope’s cave. You’re at least ninety percent positive you’re going to get caught, that one of your adoptive parents is going to come barreling down the sidewalk cursing your name, but you don’t. You reach the cave without much difficulty, other than when you tripped over a tree root and nearly face-planted into some mud.

You get there pretty late, so you’re sure everyone will already be there, but the Strilondes have yet to make their appearance, so you’re antsy until Dave sits down next to you and takes your hand.

You nearly jolt out of your skin because, while you did see him come in, you were math class levels of zoned out and literally did not process him coming over.

“Dude how did I scare you, you were staring right at me.”

“Shut up, Dave. I’m fucking tired.”

“Oh dude, I hear you. I was not ready for this impromptu coming-out party but like hell if I’m not gonna be here.” He leans his head against your shoulder and squeezes your hand.

And this is the moment that gets you. This quiet sharing of each other’s lives. The warmth of his presence in your life, the constant reassurance that he’s there.

This is when you realize you love him.

You’ve never been known for your impulse control, but even you thought you might have the ability to not blurt out this profound realization as soon as you had it, but alas. “I love you,” you say.

“Excuse me?” Dave says and you immediately start backpedaling. You’re not even sure what your saying and half of it has got to be bullshit.

“Fuck. Karkat, no. Calm down.” You continue talking until Dave shoves his palm into your mouth. You quell the instinct to lick his hand.

“I love you, too.” He says it like it’s the simplest thing in the world. He then places a quick peck on your cheek and leans his head back on your shoulder.

You fall back into a sense of comfort.

When Terezi and Vriska walk in, everyone whoops and cheers. Terezi grins and laughs, looking incredibly happy.

You realize that this is what family is.
Be Dave ==> 

Karkat falls asleep on you eventually. Inevitably, you have to wake him up to go home. You and your friends file down the path two by two. Karkat starts humming Mr. Brightside, probably out of sheer exhaustion. You start humming too, behind you Roxy starts belting out the lyrics, and everyone else joins in.

The stars are high in the sky, the moon glows brightly, half full. The threat of the day is far away. For now, you and your friends, children of the rain and bright nights, are cloaked within the comfort of darkness and each other.

For now, you sing the lyrics to a song that everyone knows, not caring who hears you or what happens. For now, you are infinite, you are spread across every iteration of happiness and joy and comfort.

Home is not a tangible place. It’s a feeling like this. These people, this night, this perfect moment, is your home. Home is something you can go back to in your darkest moments, in your blind panic, in your stupid rage.

For fourteen years, you were lost. For fourteen years you searched for moments like these.

And now, you’ve finally come home.

Chapter End Notes

HOLY SHIT!!!!!!!!!!!!!

so much thanks to you all for reading!!! i wouldnt have been able to do this without your support and comments!!!! its so wild that this fic has reached people in ways i didnt really think possible like!!!! 300 kudos!!!! wow!!!!!!! its so incredibly important to me that you all know how much your support helped me write this fic!! comments FUEL me so thank you to everyone who commented!! and thanks to everyone who kudoed!!! all your encouragement made me really happy and helped complete this fic so thank you so much!!

PLEASE let me know what you thought of this fic!! like if you want to leave an entire essay with mla sources it would make me so fucking happy and i would not be annoyed at all! but also if you just wanna leave a short comment telling me you enjoyed it that would be equally as appreciated!! thank you all so fucking much!! wrow!!

ALSO LOOK AT THIS AMAZING FUCKING ART!!!!!

DAVES OUTFIT FROM WHATEVER CHAPTER THAT WAS! WROW!!

THE FRUIT ARGUMENT!!

FUCK FUCKING PAUL!
End Notes

my tumblr

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!