My Hero Academia: Spirited Remix!

by Vanfell

Summary

Heroes! What every young boy and girl wish to be when they grow up! But insidious villains wait in the shadows to bring the heroes down and out. Will they succeed? This the story of Izuku Midoriya on his path to becoming the Number One Hero! And, the story of Vanfell Zephyr’s dream to become the world’s first quirkless hero.

A novelization, as well as a remix of events of the popular manga; My Hero Academia. OC’s present as required by the story.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes
The Quirkless Zephyr

The day had finally arrived. I honestly couldn’t believe it, truth be told. When you build such an event up as much as my family and I had, it achieves a kinda mystical feel to it. It made my spine tingle with every step I took. My fidgeting had started again, wasn’t too able to walk straight. Kept rubbing the ring my mum gave me. Nearly snagged on all the bandages wrapped around my palms. Mum had wrapped it for me. Gave my fists the protection they’d need, support, all that fancy technical junk. Keeps the bones tight together and stuff. Means I wouldn’t break em, fracture em, blah blah blah. But when you’re quirkless that sort of junk is important. Doubly so when you’re trying to get into the hero course of the most prestigious school in Japan. I hoped my English accent wouldn’t throw people. Course, my dad had taught me how to speak the language. Queen's english wasn’t gonna do me any good, living in the Land of the Rising Sun.

Didn’t really get the liberty to divulge in my thoughts for much longer. I’d reached the big ol’ U.A building. Shit wasn’t like this back home in the U.K. We were far behind in the spectacle element. Japan had nailed it, made heroes look amazing and hype. So I granted myself a cheeky moment and grin up at the symbol. If all my work paid off...this was the place I was going to go. Make a name for myself but more importantly make a symbol out of myself. Found myself interrupted. Some spiky haired blond guy had yelled at someone with hair that I could only describe as broccoli. Had half a mind to tell the blond guy to cut it out. Dude seemed like trouble. But he was gone and so was the issue. Broccoli kid nearly tripped over. Luckily some girl stopped him. I didn’t think much of that as I continued to head into the auditorium. Had to get told what the exam was going to be like. Much as I tried to resist I couldn’t help but shadowbox a little bit. A few flurry of punches, some bobbing and weaving, breathing regulation. Got a few odd looks, but I was already reaping them in. Why not have a little fun?

The auditorium was already fairly packed by the time I got in. By no means was I the last bloke in, but I certainly wasn’t the first. Made sense. Mother and Father had made sure that everything was sorted out. Which had taken quite a long time despite my protests. Whatever, there were plenty of seats. Shimmied my way down a row of seats and plopped on down. Rolled my neck a bit. It was the only part of me that was stiff. No real way to warm your neck up, so my routine had missed it out. Sat in front of me was Broccoli hair. Weirdly the blond dude was next to him. I felt like I ought to say something but it really wasn’t my place. Had enough to worry about. Adjusted my jacket, ran a hand through my hair. Caught a glimpse of a few of its brown strands falling out. Needed a haircut soon I suppose.

Then the figure of a familiar man came into view. Blonde hair up like a parakeet, check. Bad taste in sunglasses, check. Garish headphones and neck speaker, check. It was none other than good ol Present Mic. Bit of a loud bloke but when you’re in radio, I guess you have to be. Shame the crowd was so quiet. Broccoli kid muttered something, bout listening to the radio, before the blond guy shut him down.

“YO, PAY ATTENTION LISTENERS. WE’LL BE PUTTING YA TO THE TEST, WITH A TEN MINUTE GAUNTLET IN OUR REPLICA CITY DISTRICT! TAKE WHAT YA LIKE, AND HEAD THERE AFTER THIS PRESENTATION.” The man bellowed. He likely didn’t have any other setting. I had my serial number, so that’s all I had to worry about. “WE’LL SPRINKLE SOME “VILLAINS” OVER THE CITY. THREE DIFFERENT KINDS, THREE DIFFERENT POINT VALUES! DISPATCH EM WITH YOUR QUIRK, SCORE POINTS. AND NO DIRECTLY ATTACKING OR INTERFERING WITH YOUR FELLOW EXAMINEES, THAT'S AGAINST THE RULES. CAPISCE?” Mic had rung out once more. Yeah, capisce. I was going to have to dispatch them without my quirk, but that didn’t really matter.
“Excuse me, may I make an inquiry?” A spectacled kid had stuck his hand right up. Always one idiot with a question. He went on some long triade about how the handout had four villains listed. To be honest, I hadn’t even looked at the handout. My head was too focused on the exam. Think he also called out broccoli. Bit of a twat move to do that in front of the whole auditorium. Present Mic explained how it was some sort of trap robot that would rampage when cornered. Kid sat down, and shut his trap. Good shit.

“WELL, THAT’S ENOUGH FROM ME. I’LL LEAVE YOU ALL WITH A PRESENTATION ON THE “SCHOOL PRECEPTS” OF THIS ACADEMY OF MINE.” Would it be bad to admit I zoned out here? Only came back to reality when he said worth my time. Which, somehow, he promptly did. “NOW, AFTER THAT PEARL OF WISDOM LISTENERS, I HAVE A HOT RUMOUR TO SHARE.” The auditorium started to bristle at this, a few people cocking their heads. I wasn’t too fussed, till he opened his mouth again. “THIS YEAR, WE MIGHT JUST HAVE OUR FIRST QUIRKLESS CANDIDATE!” I just about shat myself. Weirdly enough, Broccoli boy had a flash of panic on his face. But Mic, bless his eternal fucking soul, didn’t stop there. “HEAR HE’S ENGLISH TOO. Oughta ask him for tips.” I didn’t hear much else after that. I’m sure a few people had heard me muttering. Damn.

The presentation had ended. Everyone got split into smaller groups after that in accordance to your serial code. Looks like I’d drawn the short straw. Ended up with Broccoli boy, Blond dude, the bird that had saved Broccoli boy, Question twat, and some metrosexual french looking...guy? We were outside the city replica, pretty impressive stuff from U.A. I was back on the shadow boxing grind. Keep the hands quick and ready. Bit of stretching. No talking, unless I wanted this lot to crawl up my arse. I felt confident. Everyone did really. Didn’t give the exam a punt if you weren’t. Cept this Broccoli boy seemed to be right proper fucked. He was getting ragged on by question twat again. Felt my eyes roll into the back of my head. Almost moved over to intervene. Almost. Then I did. Cause everyone was making jabs and jibes bout the poor fella.

“You lot going to shut the hell up and focus on yourselves? Broccoli here got just a good chance as any of us.” Silence briefly fell. Course it did.

“Oh my~ Such a british twinge. Am I writing in deducing you to be our quirkless candidate~” Sang the french guy. Almost twinkled too.

“I thought quirkless people were crippled losers? Hell’s this guy doing here?”

“Why the hell is U.A even letting fodder like this in? Thought it was meant to be prestigious.

“Got a feeling this fodder.” I shrugged my jacket off at this point. Now my skin was pale as all hell. The jersey I was wearing, my mom’s initials blazing across it, didn’t hide much. Nor did the shorts I had on under my tracksuit bottoms. What this meant however was my body was on full display. Eight years of brutal nonstop training had blessed me with the finest muscles in the group. Hell, in the entire exam minus some quirk shenanigans I’d wager. “Could knock you on your dipshit arse.” But before the assertion could get challenged, Broccoli tried to get in between us. I was also a wee bit upset as well that none of the girls had whistled. Talk about a confidence knock.

“ANNNND START!!!” No one moved. “WHAT’S THE MATTER!? NO SUCH THING AS A COUNTDOWN IN A REAL BATTLE. RUN!!!” Present Mic’s dulcet tones rang out. Dulcet, if you were deaf.

I couldn’t worry about that for too long though. My feet snapped into action. All those years running 5km’s races had paid off. Front of the back, although question twat snapped ahead of me. Fella had engines on his leg, what do you expect of me eh? Regardless I was second into the fray. Guess when you didn’t have to train a quirk, you’d be physically ahead of everyone else. Needed to focus on the
weaker, brittle robots. That’s where I’d find my points. Skidded around a corner and came face to face with one. Lucky ol me. It had locked onto me. Good. Figured I could outspeed whatever they shot at me. Just about right to boot. Managed to vault myself atop of the bot just as the rubber bullets went wide. Slammed my fists down. Metal bent. Figured it was pretty weak stuff. Tried to throw me off, but I managed to find purchase by grabbing one of the guns on the side. Slammed my foot down on the panel with just as much force as my fists. It crunched, and from the noises I heard, must have scuppered something inside it. One point down. A whole lot more to go.

Managed to bust five more one pointers. Reality had dawned on me that just punting that lot wouldn’t get me anywhere. But I couldn’t do so with just my fists. New plan. Managed to bait a trio of the scorpion like two points. Was up on a balcony. All it took was coiling my body around their shot. Idiots dropped the entire balcony on themselves, eating me a cool six points. Not to mention a solid piece of lead piping. Had twelve points so far. My lungs were burning like a fucker. Conditioning is one thing, and you think it preps you for the real thing. Confidently can say that it don’t. Corner of my eye caught a couple of girls bout to get reamed by the one pointers. Figured. Rubber bullets. Managed to jam myself in front of them before they got lit up. Breathing was going to be harder with a cracked rib. Gave them a nod and kept moving forward. Two points had a weak point in their tails, had seen the plating. So if I can shimmy my pipe in between and jackhammer it I could start to rack the points up. Just needed enough to pass. Shoved the feeling of wanting to vomit down as I broke forward into a proper run. Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more; Or close the wall up with our English dead. Shakespeare. As my dad taught me.

I couldn’t feel any part of my body nearer the end. Racked up a decent forty points. My ribs were in agony. Felt like I’d gone ten rounds with my mother. If my mother was an insane army of robots utilized by the school of my dreams. That is to say, not like my mom at all. Must be going dotty upstairs. Hard to focus when you’re flooded with adrenaline, pain, and cautious hope. I had managed not to run into any of the “trap” robots, which was a pretty good deal. Not sure I had anyway to deal with em. Pipe had worked on the two pointers, and I’d scrapped out a win against a three pointer. Not bad for some quirkless kid. Head was bleeding. As were my arms. Knuckles ached, raw flesh. That’d scab over tonight. Bile burnt the back of my throat, hell my nose started to burn. Sweat coated my entire frame. One hell of a challenge. If this was what being a hero was like, then I’d need to pick it up. Eyes had begun to droop by now. Mic mentioned something about the timer ticking down. That’s when the vomit started to leak from the corners of my mouth. Vision started blurring as well. Swore I saw that Broccoli boy suddenly fly through the air and total one of those “trap” robots. Fucking hell, if that’s what I had to go up against...I fell on my face.

Woke up back home. First instinct was to presume the whole thing was a dream. I’d go to sleep, and it was time for the next of training for the event. Course when my bursted in and started hugging me it confirmed otherwise. I’d completed the entrance exam, and we’d hear back if I’d made it in a week from then. Entire body was stiff. Hadn’t got the chance to stretch. Gave my mom a kiss, and she left me to my own devices for a little bit. Dad came in after about twenty minutes of thinking. Gave me a pat on the back, a speech, and also my dinner. Steak and chips. Fit for a king. Aching body meant that I ought to sleep again. So I gave a few stretches, texted my mate, and lapsed back into my kip.

The following week somehow both jogged and ran. It felt like forever and at the same time it was as if it never existed. Course I kept training like clockwork. Up at 4am. Two hour run, then breakfast. Four hours of upper body, legs, and cardio. Lunch, then the tuition. Go for a swim at 6pm till 8pm. Then bed and repeat. Kept playing the events of that exam over in my head. Thinking what I could have done better, what I did good, all that shit you do when you’re doubting yourself. Doubt was a huge thing. Afterall, how could a quirkless nobody like me make it into U.A? Thought seemed absurd.

Then we got a letter. Nothing unusual about that. When your ma is a world class boxer, you get a ton
of fan mail. Cept this letter was from U.A High School. Hell of a fan mail. As it turned out it was something far more important.

“Vanfell Zephyr! It has come to my attention that you are quirkless! You put on a rousing display at the exam!” Felt surreal to be sat in our sparse living room, around a holographic projection of All Might. He was no Edgeshot, but I suppose he’d make do. “With the passing grade you achieved on the written exam…” Barely passed as expected. My education wasn’t shoddy but at the same time my dad was no teacher. “And the score of 49 on the physical element…” My fists clenched. Brow was thick with sweat. Mom was on tenterhooks, dad couldn’t even stay in the room. Had his ear pressed to the door, listening in. “YOU’RE IN! WELCOME TO U.A!” Well bloody hell. Dad almost ripped the door off its hinges as he leapt in, tackling me in a hug. My mom, bless her, broke into tears. Shock was my response. I sat there, silent, as it sank in. I really could be a hero.
The Quirk Apprehension Test

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It was a momentous day. U.A was opening its doors for the new generation. Those who had been skilled enough to make it in via the exam process, and the recommendation students. Only 1 in 300 applicants could make it in, and in dire years it was less. Thirty six total students, split into two classes of 18. U.A itself was a beautiful building. Sleek, modern, proud in its place as the premiere school for budding heroes. It was everyone's dream to go to such a place. Izuku just found himself glad that he had been able to realize it. Had he never stepped forth to save Kacchan... it might have never happened. He still couldn’t come to grips with the fact that All Might himself had gotten involved... and passed on his quirk to him. The thought sat heavy on him, just as his uniform sat heavy on his frame. A metaphorical weight in both cases. It was just yet another reminder that his dream was somehow becoming true. Piece by piece. The next step was not to let All Might down, and to make his mom proud. Her smile that morning had spurred him forward. If he had it his way, she’d never cry again. His thoughts swung back to the reality of the situation. A giant door presented itself to Izuku. One would imagine it had to be that large so as to be accessible to anybody’s quirk. His real concern was the guy who kept calling him out with the engine legs. As well as Kacchan... with any luck they’d be in Class B.

"Remove your foot from that desk! To do so insults prior U.A Alumni, and the craftsmen who built it!" Barked the leg engine guy. To Izuku’s despair, Kacchan was the individual getting called out.

"Don’t give a shit. What hovel are you from?" It seemed that he hadn’t gained any charm since the last time Izuku had seen him.

"Somei Private Academy. My name is Tenya Iida."

"Somei? Elitist fuck then? Should blast you to hell."

"You’re awful. Do you really wish to become a hero?" Iida stopped for a moment. He had spied the figure of Izuku hiding in the doorway. He shuffled over, preparing to introduce himself again. “I’m from Som-”

“I heard you before! I’m Izuku Midoriya, pleased to meet you Iida…” Izuku squeaked, placing his palms up in a defensive position.

“Midoriya... you. Perceived the real nature of our exam. And I did not. I misjudged you, the superior candidate!” Izuku gave no response to such praise. He felt like it wasn’t true. But before he could react an even more terrifying situation birthed itself into his life.

“Curly hair! The plain looking boy!!” Exclaimed a female voice. His entire body went rigid. It was the nice girl, and she was far too cute for her own good in that uniform. “You made it, just like me! Makes sense, the punch was awesome!!”

“Ah, uh, no! I mean, you spoke on my behalf, I... uh.” Izuku had turned red, as opposed to green. Her gesticulations and upbeat nature had induced a sense of that in him. All Bakugou felt was a burning feeling. Somehow Deku had made it in. When he had pressured him to explain why, the shit had stood up to him. Unprecedented. Something must not make sense here...

“Yo, you’re that Broccoli kid right?” A meaty hand slapped down on Izuku’s shoulder. He span to
find himself face to face with...the quirkless one.

Vanfell had readily accepted that he made it into U.A. There was no time for him to deliberate on if it was a dream or not, or if he deserved it. Entry had been obtained. His training continued, as he would need to keep his body up to snuff. His next door neighbour, Koichi, might have been more pleased than he was. When he’d jogged over, the fellow had been nigh ecstatic.

“That’s great, Van! You must be pleased, what with the whole quirkless thing.”

“Well, yeah. It’s really good. But, I wasn’t going to break down if I didn’t make it in. Could always become a Vig like-”

“I don’t think you’d be suited to this sort of life. Beside, Pop and I wouldn’t let you risk yourself like that.” It was a quick reply. Vanfell rolled his eyes and shoulders as he swayed side to side.

“More than capable of looking after myself, mate. Mom taught me all her skills. Figure I’d give the bums on the streets a th-”

“Best if we don’t go down that avenue, okay Van? I’m super happy for you, and that’s that. Got to dip, Pop and I have patrols to run. Get an early night!” Koichi almost saluted before gliding away. So Vanfell sighed and returned home. His mother had dinner on the table. He munched his way through the pasta and slumped into bed. He woke up at 4am. Had to get his run in. Cool air let him focus his thoughts and concentrate. Today was the first day of the rest of his life. Stepping forward to make his dream come true. He’d be able to be a beacon for all those quirkless people out there, the 20%, their symbol. Breakfast was ready when he came in. He spotted the orange hair of his mom zipping out of the room as he went at the oatmeal. Filling meal for a busy day. Ate a banana as well, and downed a protein shake. Hopped into the shower, hopped out, then hopped into his uniform. It was scratchy. His dad had to help him with his tie.

“Then you just do this, and voila. Tied. Now, Van.”

“Yeah, geezer?”

“You go out there, and you do your best, ok? Your mom and I are incredibly proud of you. Don’t waste this.”

“Gerald! Thought I told you not to lay it on heavy, you prat.” His mom had come into the room. Her arms were folded as she slapped his dad upside the head.

“Charity, I’m merely telling him I how feel! If that is laying it on heavy…”

“Figure it’s time for me to head to school now, yeah?” Charity and Gerald both looked at their son. Behind Gerald’s spectacled eyes glistened tears and Charity did naught to hide the liquid starting to swell at hers.

“Knock ’em dead, champ. You earnt this.” She almost howled before scooping him into a bearhug. After breaking free, Van grabbed his satchel, kissed his mum and dad, and zipped out of the door.

He had been the first to arrive. Class started at about 8:25. Yet here he was, ass planted in a seat at 7am sharp. He’d been the first to arrive. Then question twat had came in. A brief exchange had enlightened him as to the fellas real name. Van had then told him to bugger off and leave him be for now. Wasn’t really in the mood to try and make amends after the shit show that was their introduction. He supposed he could just take a kip at his desk. But another student had walked in just as he had deliberated. Black hair up in a spiky looking ponytail. She had bangs and seemed to carry herself confidently. She was a pretty good looking gal. So much so that Van had sat up straight. He
itched at his chin while she chatted to IIida. She turned her head to look in his general direction. Vanfell had intended to have some line or quip.

“Mghrmh.” Intentions are often different from execution.

“Ah. Are you not in the best of health right now?” The girl asked. She had an air of concern to her voice.

“Just had an itch in the er, throat.” He extended his hand for a shake. “Va-”

“Mhm. Vanfell Zephyr right? You’ve made quite a stir! Being quirkless and in the Hero Course. I believe you’re the first one.” He got cut off. More importantly she knew who he was.

“Uh. Yes. Vanfell Zephyr. Am I?” He scratched at the back of his head. “Never thought about it like that, heh. Mind if a fella asks for your name?”

“Oh! Momo Yaoyorozu. You are the first quirkless individual in the Hero Course! When I read the paper, I instantly delved into the history and former classes. Of which there were no individuals lacking a quirk. Thus y-”

“Yeah. I’ve gathered as much. Don’t think I saw you at the entrance exam. Would have remembered.” He realized a bit too late what he had just said. Laying it on too damn thick.

“Ah, I wasn’t present. I’m a recommendation student, so I wasn’t required to take the written exam, nor the physical element.”


“If you are suggesting in anyway that it was nepotism, then you are sorely mistaken. I was recommended wholly on my merits!”

“Course, course. Er, just er.” He needed a way to spin this back around. Couldn’t have such a pretty face so pissed off at him. “Jitters, ya know? Intimidating to be in front of such a talented girl when I’m quirkless and all…” He awkwardly scratched at his hair. She seemed to go silent for a moment before nodding.

“Yes. It must be difficult to not have something unique about you.” She nodded.

“Right. Sure. You know your seat number yet? I’m in number 19.”

“Oh! It seems we’ll be seated next to each other. I’m in number 20.” Momo exclaimed. She promptly pulled the chair back and placed herself in it.

“Figuring you must have a quirk then. Beside looking as pretty as ya do.” Smooth, least he thought it was.

“Creation. I am able to fashion any non-living material from my skin. It operates via molecular manipulation of my fat cells.” She went on a long drawn out speech. His comment was even noticed. But it was entertaining, the vigor that she put into it. By then time had flew, and Izuku had arrived.

Which is where we left off. Izuku felt a hand slap down on his shoulder, Vanfell having come over to greet him. The quirkless student gave a courteous nod to both Izuku and Ochako, before folding his arms.
“Vanfell. Pleasure to meet the both of ya.” He grinned widely. Izuku couldn’t help but wilt. The fact that this guy was quirkless, and a hero course student… Surely it wasn’t possible? All Might had suggested as much and yet there seemed to be a rebuttal before him. His head started to race with questions. Could he have done the same thing? Made it into U.A quirkless? Should he have tried. Or would it have not mattered, been pointless? His thoughts nearly consumed him, before Ochako subtly nudged him.

“Hiya! I’m Ochako Uraraka.”

“U-uh. Izuku Midoriya”

“Very well! Sounds respectable.” Vanfell nodded, before slipping back to his seat. Ochako resumed talking to Izuku, who was back to his red face.

“Entrance ceremony, guidance sessions...I wonder what our teacher will be like…”

“If you all want to do is socialize, then get out.” A tired voice came from behind the two students. They turned to see a tired looking man in what appeared to be a… sleeping bag? The situation became even more surreal when he pulled out a juice pouch. “This is…” Then it was promptly SUCCED into oblivion. “The hero course.” Silence fell over the 20 strong class, as the figure roused itself to a standing pose. “8 seconds to pipe down. Time is precious. You lot aren’t rational, are you?” Izuku pondered to himself about this man. It was likely he was their teacher. It was strange though. He looked unkempt, scruffy, and all together done with the concept called life. His unusual scarf was perhaps the only well-kept thing about him. The man shuffled himself out of the sleeping bag.

“I’m your homeroom teacher. Shouta Aizawa. Pleased to meet you. Now, get into your gym clothes and head out to the grounds.” His demand was swift as he himself ambled on out, dragging his feet. Some of the students were quick to action. Vanfell, Momo, and a girl with earphone jacks for ears were all promptly in motion. Izuku, Ochako, and IIida on the other hand stalled slightly. Their eccentric teacher had somewhat rattled them. The three of them shared a glance before rushing to get outside.

The group had congregated around Aizawa. Some of the group swore they knew who the hero in particular was. When pressured to provide an answer however the reality was clear. No one was actually sure who he was. Quite a lot of the group were also busy being impressed with the athletic facilities. Vanfell, a spiky red haired male, and one with a tail were all engrossed. Izuku on the other hand found himself searching his brain for the details on this hero. He swore that the haggard man had made an appearance in his journal. Unfortunately, he had left it with his usual clothes. Had he had it on hand he would have been able to deduce who the figure was. Perhaps it was…? But before he could continue that thought, Ochako nudged her elbow into his back. The boy snapped back to reality. Their teacher had started talking, explaining how things were going to go. Naturally the students had a fair measure of apprehension. He had already gone off plan by bringing them out here. Perhaps he had some ghoulish and cruel regime planned.

“Time to be tested on those quirks of yours…” He drawled. The class shuffled in place slightly, before Ochako interrupted.

“Weren’t we meant to have an entrance ceremony? And guidance sessions?”

“If you want to waste time, and not be a hero, be my guest.” Came the response from the teacher. When all he received was incredulous silence he groaned. “U.A is pretty freestyle in teaching. That applies to the teachers as well.” The scruffy man went on to continue before a voice cut through.

“You know, sir. It’s a test on our quirks, yeah? Now, if one of us were to say not have a quirk.”
Vanfell had piped up. It had to be expected, he’d caught a few glances during the description.

“I guess you just do the test. Unless you want to be expelled. Foreigners don’t have records, so I ought to get a baseline.” The English student fell silent. Bakugou muttered something to himself about quirkless maggots, and how they should know their place. Aizawa adjusted himself before turning to look at students. “Soft-ball throwing. Standing long jump. 50 meter dash. Endurance running. Side-to-side stepping. Upper-body training. Seated toe touch. Figure you all did these in middle school. Quirks banned. Country still insist on banning quirks when averaging these records. Irrational really. Bakugou. How far could you throw in middle school?”

“Sixty seven meters.” The blonde haired boy stepped into the ring at the beckoning of the teacher.

“Great. Try with your quirk. Do what you need to, just don’t leave the circle. Give it everything.”

“Awesome.” Bakugou limbered up. Soon his arm was cocked back, the ball gripped in his hand. With a heave and a fling, Bakugou launched the ball. With an explosion. A big one. That promptly sent the ball flying. “DIE!!!!” He screeched as it flew through the air. The sheer force of the explosion buffeted the field with wind, several of the student’s hair suffering as a result. Aizawa yawned as he lifted a small device to show the class. 705.2 m.

“Important for us to know our limits. That’s the first rational step to figuring out the kind of hero you’ll be.” The class erupted into a variety of reactions.

“Dope.”

“705 meters? For real?”

“So we can use our quirks, for real! Man, the Hero Course is awesome!” The reaction from Izuku was somewhat less happy. The boys face had clouded over. This was not good for him. He had no idea this was coming, and was plagued with thoughts that often occur when one is put on the spot. Vanfell on the other hand, had a wide grin. His physical conditioning ought to carry him here. Even if this lot had “wicked” quirks, he could overcome that. No goddamn problem.

“...Awesome you say? You’re hoping to become heroes after three years here…” Aizawa’s face had taken on a grim mannerism. He had become a looming presence, as everyone felt a sense of dread. “And you think it’ll be all fun and games? Right. Student with the lowest score across all events, will be judged hopeless. Expulsion will be their reward.” Such a statement elected a wide variety of reactions. Vanfell, Bakugou, and the red-haired male all proceeded to get fired up. To proudly declare that they would easily pass this test and general exclamations about their ability. Their peers, for the most part, reacted with general shock but not despair. Izuku on the other hand could feel naught other than the vile twisting and turning of his stomach. His place at U.A was already at stake, after all he had gone through to get here.

“All or nothing…” He muttered to himself. He couldn’t even regulate his power yet, that was the thought tattooing itself through his brain.

“Your fates are in our hands. Welcome. This is the Hero Course at U.A High!!”

Some of the students couldn’t quite come to grips with the idea of expulsion on the first day. A few had already moved on and accepted the reality of it. Confident they wouldn’t fail, they didn’t really concern themselves with it. But others were not so keen. “The lowest scorer is expelled? But it’s just the first day! I mean, even if it wasn’t, that’s not fair!” Ochako’s voice rang out her face wrought with concern. It was a view shared by quite a few people.
“Life ain’t fair. Wouldn’t sweat it when ya have a quirk.” Van murmured to himself with a shark like grin. Aizawa sighed. The teacher didn’t seem to share her opinion. Afterall, she had based it on emotion. Irrational.

“Natural disasters. Highway accidents. Villains. Disaster is ever-constant. Japan is full of unfair things. Heroes are the ones who fix that. If you figured McDonalds would be where you spent your evenings, I’m afraid to tell you that for the next three years, U.A will run you through the wringer. That’s Plus Ultra. Use your strength to beat it. Bring it.

“A trial by fire, I suppose. Such is being at the top…” Muttered IIida.

“That was nothing…” Grinned Bakugou.

“Bout time I knocked some people dead in this exam.” Declared Vanfell. He tried a sly wink at Momo. Alas, no dice. And so our valiant students exam began with the opening exam. The 50-Meter Dash. Many of the students were pondering as to why the 50-Meter Dash was the distance of choice. Several of them thought that it ought to be the 100-Meter Dash. Though they would never find out the reason themselves, the 50-Meter Dash was served to emphasise a burst of speed. The 100-Meter Dash was used to test an individual's acceleration. But in heroics, the need for a snap burst of speed was considered far more important. As such, the 50-Meter Dash became the test utilized. The first students to take the exam were IIida and Tsuyu Asui, a female with a mutation quirk granting her the properties of a frog. IIida was clean through the line in 3.04 seconds. It was an fitting result given that the male had engines in his legs. A clean burst in third gear as he would let tell his fellow students. Tsuyu charted a reasonable 5.58 seconds. The next two students were Ochako, and the individual endowed with a tail, Ojiro. Izuku took a keener interest in these two. Not to say that he didn’t take an interest in the others. His analytical nature dictated that he ought to keep tabs on all them. Something he shared vaguely with Vanfell. The quirkless student had been noting the nature of his classmates abilities. Ojiro did little beside using his tail to burst himself forward. He finished ahead of Ochako. The girl had attempted to lighten her clothes and shoes as a means of making herself faster. It didn’t give her particularly special results. She clocked a time of 7.15. She took solace in the fact that she was faster than she had been in middle school. These two were followed by the rather eccentric blonde male. He was, as many a bored white girl would call, “extra”.

“Heheh. So dull minded. All of you.” He mused, rubbing his chin, and turning his head. The moth looking girl next to him rolled her eyes as she limbered up. Mina Ashido cleary had no time to listen to this. “If we can use our quirks…” Aoyama leapt into the air. His laser blared clean from his navel! A truly fantastic display, with a truly disappointing landing. He fell short, rolling, and launched himself once more. In the end him and Mina, who had merely ran, had came in with 5.51 seconds. “Had I fired a mere instant earlier, my stomach would have exploded!” Declared Aoyama with his now trademark flare. Geez. Talk about extra. Aizawa meanwhile could only give himself a content yawn. He was content to note that they had all pushed their quirks to the logical limits. The more creative applications would lead to a quicker time. Bakugou and Izuku were next. Izuku was too concerned with damaging himself to utilize his quirk. Hopefully his rapid training with All Might would suffice. Bakugou on the other hand…

“EXPLOSIVE SPEED!!” Declared the boy as he splayed his arms behind him. Two explosions ripped forth leading him to fly over the line in 4.13 seconds. Izuku was caught in the back blast. He managed to cross the line in 7.02 seconds. His mind was racing. There were 7 more events. Everyone, with the exception of Vanfell and Momo who were next to go, had utilized their quirks to produce incredible records. Yet, were he to employ his power his body would be wrecked. He would have to regulate. His mind promptly fled back to a meeting he had held with All Might.

“S E N S A T I O N. That's the trick!” Bellowed the gaunt figure that was the number one hero in
“Of course, All Might!”

“You’ve already experienced 100 percent power.” Stated the man, as he shadow boxed. It was a past time he had picked up in his small-might form.

“And it really messed me up…”

“Then this oughta be easy! Remember how that felt? How was it?”

“Kinda tingly? Like, foom…? Yeah. An egg in a microwave.”

“So plain, yet unique!” Small Might bellowed with a trademark gush of blood. He quickly wiped his mouth and lifted a finger. “If that’s how you see it. Turn the power down, shorten the cooking time. Make that egg not explode! Think about it!! You’ve three weeks, don’t stop picturing that image. Not something that can be done overnight, but I believe - no. I know you can do it!!” He snapped back to reality. Van and Momo were both on the line.

“Listen, alright. Don’t feel too bad when I blitz ya, okay? Conditioning is my gig.” He declared. There wasn’t a hint of arrogance, just mere confidence. He received a wave of eyerolls from the other students.

“Best of luck to you. I want us to both do well! My conditioning isn’t lacking either, though your brashne-”

“GO!” Yelled Aizawa. Grunting, Vanfell was first off the line. His body was a well oiled machine. In 4.20 seconds he had crossed the line. Momo was not far behind, skidding through at 5 seconds. They both inhaled, giving each other a content nod. It seemed they had both clocked in the upper echelon for the group. Thus wrapped up the first aspect. The next step was grip strength. Izuku was up first. The thought of the egg in the microwave flowed through his head. A shudder flowed through his body as he gripped the device. Don’t. Explode. The device beeped as Izuku exhaled. He lifted it to look at his result. 56kg. Up 16 points from Middle School at least, but he wasn’t sure if his quirk had been employed. It was handed over to an unusual looking fellow. Housing multiple limbs, some of which had extra eyes, and a face mask it was Shoji. He gripped the device with his many hands. The result was displayed for all to see. 540kg up from 46kg.

“540kg!? Are you a gorilla? An octopus? Both!!?” Groaned Sero, a man who could dispense tape from his elbows. Shoji had no comment. He merely passed the device over to Vanfell. There was a mild curiosity from the group on how well he would perform. Gripping the device, his knuckles turning white, the student lifted it for all too see. 100kg.

“Pretty good, eh? Kind of a big deal.” He beamed, as Bakugou started to growl under his breath. First Izuku, then this guy? Cut him a fucking break or something. Quirkless runts ought to know their damned place. The other students all gave it a punt. Those with quirks suited to such a test were able to clock impressive results. Kirishima, the red headed child, was able to make a rock hard vise-grip to bolster his result even further. It was a manly display, such was the consensus of the entire group. Once that element of the test was over, the group were prompted to conduct themselves to the standing long jump. Bakugou and Aoyama were able to procure impressive results. As one might imagine the ability to generate explosions proved a decent method of propulsion. Aoyama merely repeated the same trick, theatrics and all. He was perhaps destined to be an entertainer as opposed to hero. At least, that’s how Vanfell saw the matter. Izuku might have made a comment or a thought. But he had the desperate need to regulate his power in his head. His mind cooked up the image of the egg in the microwave. He turned the heat down, the timer down, and then slammed the door.
shut. He leapt forward! With a rather average result. If he were quirkless. Which perhaps at the time
of the jump he had been. Had he not used the quirk? It was difficult to tell which only served to
make his anguish worse. Momo and Van both made impressive leaps. Doubly impressive due to the
fact that Momo had neglected to use her quirk, and Vanfell didn’t have one. But Momo was able to
note that by this point, the quirkless student was beginning to tire. She deduced that he had foolishly
given his all early. His logic was that he needed to make a good impression. In reality that wouldn’t
be the case if his results started dropping from here on out. The next event went on regardless.
Side-stepping. Some gremlin looking individual with grapes for hair, was able to display some
impressive results. He hadn’t shown prowess in any other event in particular, although more so than
Izuku, so this was perhaps his time to shine. Ojiro was able to use some decent results via his tail.
This event was perhaps the least impressive thus far. Throwing was the next event. Ochako was the
one who stole the show this time around. Her quirk removed the gravity of the projectile, which in
turn lead to her scoring infinity. Incredulous reactions all around. It was a boon for her certainly.
Bakugou had his impressive throw already. The other students did their best. Froppy launched the
ball with her tongue, Ojiro with his tail. A rock faced individual called upon a flock of nearby
pigeons to carry the ball into the sky for him. Koji Koda was rather pleased with this result, even if
he didn’t announce it. A bird like individual, Fumikage Tokoyami had his shadow punt the ball into
the sky. What a team the two made. Vanfell ambled up to the pitch. Cocking his arm back he flung a
beautiful pitch. It fell a bit shorter than he had hoped for. He was starting to feel the lactic acid build
up in his body. Rookie mistake he’d made, he supposed. He’d gone all out from minute one in an
attempt to impress his teacher. All he’d received was a few withering glares. Momo followed him.
She paused for a moment rubbing her chin. She rolled her sleeve up preemptively. It was a throwing
competition. So, a baseball bat wouldn’t work as she had first thought. She would have to ride on her
conditioning. Unlike Vanfell she had taken strides to maintain her energy. Her arm cocked back,
then arced forward. In terms of technique, Momo had performed the perfect throw. Her ball sailed
through the air and went a sizeable distance. Pleased with this, she rolled her sleeve back down and
stepped out of the ring.

Izuku had been plagued with the same thoughts that he had been plagued with since the start.
Everyone else had amazing records. His concern was that the next events would not lend themselves
to an amazing display. Endurance running, upper-body, toe touch, were not so easy to make huge
strides in through quirks. He was fully aware that at this rate he would have the lowest score.

“Midoriya-kun isn’t performing well…” IIida mused, his arms folded. It seemed contrary to his
performance at the sports tournament.

“What do you expect from a quirkless runt!” Bellowed Bakugou jabbing a finger in the air at Izuku.

“You know fellas, not all quirkless people are weak. Izuku over here just setting a bad example.”
Vanfell interjected. Bakugou and him quickly devolved into a petty squabble over the matter. This
only served to worsen Izuku’s already terrible mood. But as he stood upon the line, he remembered
his mother that morning. All Might telling him he can be a hero. So his arm cocked back. Energy
surged forth as he gritted his teeth. GO!

“46 meters.” The ball landed with a weak thud as Aizawa watched Izuku with a close eye. The
young man couldn’t understand. He had tried to used his quirk. “I “erased” your quirk.” He declared,
fixing a glare on Izuku. All Might, who was hiding behind a few trees watched on from a distance.
“That ridiculous entrance exam. You getting in is completely irrational.” Aizawa continued on. But
all Izuku could think about was how slow he had been. Of course, it made sense now. The goggles.
It was the Erasure Hero, Eraserhead!! His quirk nullified others via eye contact! He then realized that
he had declared that to the crowd.
“Eraser? Who?”

“Think I’ve heard of him. He’s like, an angler-type hero?”

“What a piece of shit quirk. Just cause someone ain’t got a quirk don’t mean they easier to drop…”

A short distance from the students, All Might let his own thoughts progress. Aizawa, as All Might knew, hated media appearances. Interfered with his work. Indeed, young Midoriya, me and this guy just don’t see eye to eye.

“I saw it. You can’t control that quirk. You’d just be incapacitated again. Did you hope someone would step into help you afterwards?”

“N-no. Not at all!”

“Whatever you planned.” Aizawa’s scarf shot out and coiled itself around Izuku. No one was entirely sure how the thing worked. When pressured, Aizawa would often merely remark on the fact that it just worked. It was left at that. Theories were presented. The leading one was it was magic. “It would have inconvenienced those around you.” Izuku grunted, trapped in this verbal barrage. “Way back when, a certain hero with blazing blood, saved thousands during a disaster. He made himself a legend. That reckless streak runs in you. Except you are useless after saving just a single person. Izuku Midoriya. With that power of yours… you cannot become a hero.” Every word was delivered coldly. It was a verbal beatdown. The scarf fell away, Aizawa’s eyes returned to normal, and he sighed. “You’ve your quirk back. Try again. Get this done.”

“Are you worried for him? I’m not worried at all.” Aoyama asked Ochako. He had however failed to contemplate that she knew him only as the eccentric twinkling man. Whoops.

“Seems like he received some special instruction.” Were IIida’s thoughts on the matter.

“Yeah. Instruction to get out.” Bakugou would never miss a chance to take a shot.

“Figure you need instruction to shut your mouth then, eh?” Vanfell shot back, feeling his irritation with the blonde kid growing. Yet another squabble broke out. Aizawa pondered to himself. He was curious if he’d go all out and fall swinging. Perhaps he’d back out and resign himself to failure. Either way, his chances were zero. Izuku knew this himself. He couldn’t regulate his power yet. His muttering continued. Now he had to bet it all on this single throw. All Might himself had told him it’d take time. Indeed, the man was worried from his hiding place. Izuku was in dire straits. But deep down, in his core, All Might knew that he’d find a way. The boy had shown his true colours in that sludge incident...he would not bow out and fail here.

“You have…” Aizawa started to speak. Izuku knew what he had to do. He was going to go full power. “No chance.” He knew what Aizawa said was true. He couldn’t be a hero yet, not at this rate. He’d have to work harder than anyone else. It was simple. He’d give it his all. In the smallest way. His power! Funnelled into a single finger. All Might felt a grin creep onto his face.

“SMASH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” Izuku howled out. The ball exploded out of his hand, the force from his finger sending it flying. Bakugou was taken aback. Izuku, able to do that? No way… it wasn’t real. Aizawa consulted the device. Izuku was in a world of pain. His finger dripped blood and he was fully aware that the bone was broken. But Aizawa’s mind was racing.

“He didn’t utilize his full power. He just concentrated into his fingertip…”

“Sensei! I… can still move!” He declared holding back his tears.

All Might let out a sigh of relief. He had been worried for a second. He wasn't sure what the hell
Izuku had been doing. The boy was unable to regulate his power. But at the same time he couldn’t let his body get destroyed. So, he had put all his power into one finger. What a super cool move! Maximised power, while minimizing damage. The students shared similar reactions to All Might, except more verbal.

“What a hero-like record! Good job Deku-kun!” Ochako beamed, throwing her arms in the air as a cheer.

“The finger seems swollen. Much like the entrance exam. What an unusual quirk.” Iida complimented Izuku… in his own way.

“Stylishly done~” Aoyama nodded, twinkling.

“Fuckin’ aced it! Eat shit Bak-” Vanfell turned to be smug at the blonde boy. But Bakugou seemed to be engulfed in despair.


“It’s a capture weapon. Carbon fibers, special alloy wire. Geez. Stop using your damn quirk already. Getting dry eye over here.” Growled Aizawa, as his eyes blazed at Bakugou. His hair also seemed to stand on end. No one questioned this. Aizawa just… kinda …worked. “What a waste of time. Prepare for the next event.”

“Is your finger okay?” Ochako had hurried to Izuku. It was a nasty sight for sure, bruised, black, mangled flesh.

“Ah.. yeah.” Izuku nodded. Bakugou retreated into his thoughts. Till now, Izuku had just been another pebble. Irrelevant. But now? He was more…more than he was supposed to be. This thought stuck with him as they returned to the final events. Vanfell came first in the endurance running. Iida had almost matched him, but tired out earlier. It seemed those early morning runs had paid off. To the surprise of all in attendance however, Momo swept the last two events. The girl was able to dominate in upper-body strength, as well as the seated toe touch. Her conditioning, coupled with intelligent use of energy had seen her through. She gave herself a contented nod as the students grouped up for the results.

“Moving on. Results. Lowest score gets expelled.”

“My only record worth mentioning was the throw…” Izuku thought to himself engulfed in pure despair.

“The total scores simply reflect your performance in each events. Waste of time to explain the process, so you just get the final rankings.”

“But I sucked at everything else! The endurance running in particular, my pain was so bad. It’s over…”

“Oh. Before the results. The matter of expulsion. I lied.” Aizawa yawned in a nonchalant manner. The students paused, the majority of them confused. “That was a rational deception, employed to bring out the best in you lot.” He chuckled to himself, finding that to be the utter peak of comedy.

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAT!??” Izuku, Iida, Ochako all
screamed out in unison.

“Well, of course it was a lie. Not hard to figure out.” Momo said, looked at the three. They all seemed to be overreacting a bit. Vanfell scratched the back of his head. This teacher was kinda a punk. Maybe he was better than he first thought. The students calmed themselves. It was time to read the results.

1. Momo Yaoyorozu
2. Vanfell Zephyr
3. Shoto Todoroki
4. Katsuki Bakugou
5. Tenya IIida
6. Fumikage Tokoyami
7. Mezo Shoji
8. Mashirao Ojiro
9. Eijiro Kirishima
10. Mina Ashido
11. Ochako Uraraka
12. Koji Koda
13. Tsuyu Asui
14. Yuga Aoyama
15. Hanta Sero
16. Denki Kaminari
17. Kyoka Jiro
18. Toru Hagakure
19. Minoru Mineta
20. Izuku Midoriya

Izuku could only think about how lucky he was to still be here. He was starting at the bottom. He would have to climb, to learn, to make it to his dream. Aizawa promptly gave him a nurses note. Recovery Girl, the individual who had patched all the examinees up, was the nurse. The students promptly burst into conversation. A few individuals muttered something about the top two.

“How did Yaoyorozu, and Zephyr come in those spots? They barely used their quirks!”

“It would seem that their conditioning regime was highly effective. Coupled with their steady approach to the test as a whole, it is only natural…” IIida mused, launching into a long spiel. Yaoyorozu declined to comment, but Zephyr stuck his head in.

“It’s called being a goddamn hunk of muscle. You lot ought to try it.” He winked. Bakugou screeched. Others found his arrogance off putting. But all of them knew from here on out not to underestimate due to the lack of a quirk. The rest meandered in and out of conversations about how they might have improved, done better. While this occured, Aizawa was meandering away.

“AIZAWA! You big fat LIAR!” All Might bellowed as he lept in front of the man.

“All Might. So you spectated. Nice to know you don’t mind wasting time…” Came the nonchalant reaction.

“A ‘rational deception’!? It’s been over a week since April Fool’s day! Last year you expelled an entire class of first years!” All Might was not going to let up! He would strive to expose the truth! “You heartlessly discard those with no prospects. Yet you go back on your word? Do you sense that boy Midoriya’s potential as well!”
“...As well?”

“You will support him, yes? I know it’s not your usual style, but…”

“He doesn’t… have zero chance.” Aizawa chose his words carefully as he kept moving forward. “If he did, he’d be gone. It is the height of cruelty to let a person chase half-baked dreams.” And with that he was gone.

“Right. Let’s agree to disagree…” All Might watched him go. So that was Aizawa being kind.

“HEY ISN’T THAT ALL MIGHT!”

“Wow…”

And thus the first day at U.A concluded. The test had taken up the whole day. Yet for the students, it had felt like a short but fiery trial. Izuku was exhausted, slumping as he stumbled forth. A hand slammed down on his shoulder with a hefty weight.

“How’s your finger?” Iida inquired, having snuck up on Izuku.

“Iida! It’s fine. Recovery Girl fixed it…” He snapped back to the encounter. She had kissed it better, but he had felt tiredness wash over him. Recovery Girl had explained the process.

“My quirk boosts your natural healing factor. But that sort of thing requires stamina. Keep hurting like this, you’ll run out of stamina, and die.”

“I’ll DIE!?” He had wailed. Her response was to give him pez. From a Kamui Wood pez dispenser. Cool. But Izuku knew he couldn’t go on like that…

“But Aizawa-sensei sure fooled us. He made me think ‘This is how it is at the top’, yet our own teacher fooled us like that…” Izuku was glad to find that Iida was not scary, but rather serious. A female voice rang out.

“Heyyyy! You two! Going to the station? Wait up!” Izuku knew that voice anywhere, already. It was Uraraka.

“Ah. Infinity girl.” Iida stated bluntly.

“I’m Ochako Uraraka! Uh, you’re Tenya Iida and Midoriya… um.. Deku-kun! Right!!”

“Deku!?”

“Huh? During our test, that Bakugo said “DAMN YOU DEKU!!” Right?”

“Well, uh. My real name is Izuku. Deku is Kacchan being a bully.” He said, flushing red and making many a hand gesture. Ilida was deep in thought.

“A demeaning pet name, I suppose.”

“Ah, sorry! But, you know “Deku.” It just yells DO YOUR BEST!!” She stated, with a beaming smile. “Kinda like it. Sounds nice.”

“DEKU IS FINE!” A tomato was less red than Izuku’s current face. Iida was not impressed.

“Have some spine! Was it not an insult?”
“It’s like the copernican revolution..” Izuku whimpered hiding his flushed face behind his hands.

“Coperni wha?”

All Might had observed from a distance. Young Midoriya had made friends. It was pleasant and brought a smile to his face. But the gaunt man was wholly aware of what was to come next. Hopefully the kid wouldn’t rest on his laurels. For tomorrow the real test would begin.

But it wasn’t tomorrow. For while the day at U.A had ended, the day itself was still young. It was only late afternoon, and thus the students would return to their own lives and hobbies. Several of them went home to recover from their exams, and to workout. Others went into town to have a good time. Vanfell Zephyr on the other hand intended to mingle with his fellow students for a while longer. He’d got permission from his mom, sending a quick text her way. Now he could only hope the other student would. The lad sailed forth to talk to Momo! Before seeing a potential kink in his plan. She was currently talking to another student. He knew who she was. It was a short gal, only 5’1, with purple hair. More notable was her ears. They had jacks hanging from her earlobes. Wasn’t sure what they did. Guess she could listen to music without needing headphones? Or as he approached deep in thought, it was likely she can channel some semblance of sound through them. That would be the offensive ability. Either way she must have been Kyouka Jirou. So lost in his thought, Vanfell nearly bumped into the two.

“Yo, idiot. You gonna look where you’re going?” Jirou’s voice dripped with painful derision. Vanfell made a rather high pitched yelp, skidding to a halt. His head swung up, as he scratched the back of his head.

“My bad, eh. Was just uh, thinking about you know…” He tried to reach for an answer. Just a few more seconds, and he’d have a perfect retort.

“You can think? Would have fooled me.” Jirou snapped back, the momentum wholly hers. Momo hadn’t yet said anything.

“I, well. Hope I can think. Figure I’d be drooling and unable to speak otherwise. Bit of a dumb question, eh?” Vanfell gave a beaming grin as he felt as if he had seized upon some unbeatable comeback.

“Vanfell, I imagine she was using sarcasm. I doubt Jirou believes that you are entirely unable to think.” Were the first words that Momo had to add to the conversation.

“I don’t know. Right now he’s really giving off that impression. Guess that test took a toll on him.”

“Yeah. Finishing in second was pretty hard. Afterall, how else am I supposed to compare to someone with apple earphones as their quirk?” There it was. An actual good comeback. Momo tried to contain laughter as she attempted to mediate.

“I fear we’re on the wrong foot. Jirou was just agitated that you nearly walked into her. Everyone is tired from the test today.” She explained. “Although, we all performed excellently!”

“Easy for you to say when you came in first.” Jirou came back. Vanfell shrugged.

“Everyone performed well. You’ll get the chance to shine eventually, Jirou. Now, shall I make a proposition?”

“Oh? What exactly do you have in mind?” Momo perked up. Jirou cocked her head in minor interest.
“Know a damned good place to get noodles. Udon style, if I remember right. Not too far from the first stop on the train.” He’d put his plan out there. There was a silence that set him on edge. Both girls seemed to be deliberating on the matter. Then they both gave a nod. Wiping the metaphorical sweat from his metaphorical brow, Vanfell finally inhaled. The three made their way to the train station. On the journey to the train, and the train ride itself, the three talked about inconsequential manners. The train soon dropped them off at their station. From here Vanfell lead their charge for sustenance. Jogging ahead of the two girls he slammed his shoulder into the noodle store. While he was gone, Jirou paused and stuck her arm out.

“You sure we ought to go ahead with him, Yaoyorozu? Guy could be making a scene in there right now.”

“Hmm. No, I doubt that. He doesn’t seem the sort to cause a ruckus. Would reflect poorly on him. Doubly so given his standing as the only quirkless student.”

“Alright guys! I got the noodles on the house!” Van had cocked his head out of the door of the store, and gesticulated vividly. “Come onnn!” And thus, the two girls gave each other a smile and moved inside with him. It was a cozy store. There wasn’t much room inside. A counter took up a premium of the available space, while two small booths sat nestled in either corner. Van waved the girls over to one of these booths. They could already smell their noodles. The chief cocked his head over the counter.

“Please enjoy! Always a pleasure to serve friends of my number one patron!” He bowed his head in respect. Momo and Jirou both thanked him in turn and then watched with astonishment at the speed with which he zipped back into the kitchen. Sliding into the booth, both Momo and Jirou sat next to each other, Vanfell was already going at his noodles.

“You guys.” He talked in between hurried mouthfuls. “Don’t know how good this is. Shouldn’t even really be eating it.”

“Oh? Do you have a particular health issue that arises from the consumption of noodles?” Inquired Momo.

“Just think he doesn’t want to end up fat. Seems the guy who would eat a lot of this once he got started.” Jirou mused, as she slowly worked at her own.

“Nah, nah. My mom is real strict when it comes to my diet. Noodles have too much salt, which in turn causes dehydration, which in turn causes reduced performance, which in tu-”

“Causes my reduced interest?” Jirou teased with a slight smirk. She found herself enjoying the noodles, and surprisingly the company. Van paused at her remark before giving a vigorous nod and laugh.

“I see. My family are fairly lax with my diet. I need a copious intake of calories in order to fully utilize my quirk.” Momo added.

“I’ll make sure to keep that in mind. Buy you a cake for after class tomorrow.” Jirou remarked. Her statement elicited a slap of the table from Vanfell.

“Speaking of class! Do you think Eraserhead is going to be our teacher for the whole year?” Barked the boy.

“Not sure why he wouldn’t be. Beside that deception he pulled, he seems alright.” Jirou replied, slurping up a noodle.
“Given that the deception was a simple enough lie to disprove, he has no particular issue. Er, well. He could wear slightly more appropriate and professional attire. And shave.” Momo mused. Her bowl of noodles were already consumed, even before Vanfell. She didn’t even notice the fresh bowl, given the sheer speed that had been used in its replacement.

“Shit, you don’t think he's a bit up his own arse? Seems like a guy who ain’t had fun since he was a kid.”

“Figure you and him must have that in common then.” Once more Jirou dispensed her wit. Vanfell rolled his eyes as he drummed his fingers on the table.

“Wit abound from the apple headphones.”

“Ah, I meant to ask you both.” Silence hung over the group for a moment. Vanfell and Jirou both raised an eyebrow at Momo. “Something that I had forgotten.” Momo blinked slightly, embarrassed. She broke into a laugh and leaned back. “It seems that the day has caught up on me!”

“Has been a hell of a day really. Exhausted. Only the first day as well. Kinda scary, innit?”

“It can only get more difficult from here.” Jirou nodded. “But I figure we’ll be alright. Figure it out as we go.”

“So long as we all work together, and support one another, we shall excel!” Momo declared with zeal, energy, and enthusiasm. It was infectious. She then grasped upon her missing question. “Phone numbers! Shall we swap phone numbers? So as to keep in contact.” Momo quickly generated a pencil and paper from her arm. Her number was scribbled down, and passed around. Vanfell and Jirou both wrote their own numbers down, and then the trio programmed their phones. Content with his ramen Vanfell wiped the broth from his mouth.

“Now, much as I’d love to stay with you lovely ladies, I need to get to bed. Ta-ta!” With a wave, Vanfell left the shop. Momo and Jirou both raised an eyebrow at Momo. “Figure you and him must have that in common then.” Once more Jirou dispensed her wit. Vanfell rolled his eyes as he drummed his fingers on the table.

“Wit abound from the apple headphones.”

“Izuku had had a...long day, to put it lightly. At first it had started off as a nervous ordeal. Stepping into U.A, the place of his dreams, had been surreal and terrifying. Meeting his classmates for the first time had also been a daunting task. Then matters only got worse with the quirk test they had. Seeing the manner in which his peers conducted themselves, coupled with how his teacher treated him. Not to mention the stabbing pain of having a quirkless student in his class. It had set his mind ablaze with self-doubt and questions. Even more so than usual. All Might had said he couldn’t be a hero without a quirk. Yet that boy was there, and had even come second in the exam. Though Izuku hadn't done poorly. Well. He had. Last place was rather poor, but rather he had figured out a means of utilizing his quirk. It was a self-destructive method still, which would be a problem, but at the very least he had a means of keeping up with the other students. His thoughts were a jumble as he returned home, pushing the front door open to the apartment he shared with his mother. He stumbled in, dropping his bag off as he shut the door behind him. It had been nice to make friends today. Ochako and Iida were both pleasant people, even if if the latter had been fairly frightening to deal with at first. He placed his backpack down by the door, and sat down Grunting he pulled his shoes off and placed them adjacent to the backpack.

“Mom! I’m home!” He yelled out into the hallway. He heard the sound of clattering, dishes, cutlery, and other such things being dumped into the sink rather rapidly. Soon his mother had arrived. Izuku felt her arms wrap around him, soon engulfed in the warm embrace. He responded in kind by squeezing her tight. She promptly dragged him to the living room and planted him onto a seat. She
sat across from him, eyes already glistening with proud tears.

“So, how was it! The first day at U.A I mean. Oh Izuku, I’m so proud of you…” She was holding back the tears, as Izuku gave her a wide smile.

“Oh, you know. It was great! We met our teacher, he's the Erasure Hero, Eraserhead! Had his carbon fiber scarf. I tried to figure how it worked but I couldn’t figure it out. I’ll have to ask him as some point, to have such a versatile capture weapon would be useful.” Izuku prattled on about Aizawa, while Inko listened along. She loved the sheer passion he had in his voice when he talked about this sort of thing. But she eventually did want to know about how he had done.

“That’s wonderful! Sounds like a bit of an eccentric teacher, but I’m sure he’ll look after you. How did you do sweetie?”

“Me? Oh well. I came last in the test we took today. It was hard to figure out how to utilize my quirk in such short notice. Kickback damaged my arm...in the exam. But I’m figuring it out.”

“Don’t worry too much Izuku! You only just got it, miracle that it was. The others have had years to figure out theirs. Knowing you and that big brain of yours, you’ll catch up no problem!” She smiled at him, doing her best to reassure him. She hadn’t been all that great in the years leading up to this...but there was still time to turn it around. Izuku nodded before leaning forward. He thought about telling her that there a quirkless kid. He knew his mother didn’t really read the newspaper so she wouldn’t have known. But he decided against it. It would do nothing but fuel her guilt that he knew she carried, and make her worry. Instead he gave her a big wide grin.

“I think I’ll get there soon! You supporting me is the perfect boost to give me the edge. Thanks mom…” He moved to hug her again. Soon they’d be having dinner. Inko had made spinach salad with ginger dressing. A healthy meal for her budding hero. Once they’d finished the phone started to ring. She picked it up with her quirk, before waving Izuku over.

“It’s your father. He can’t talk long, got to go back to work.” She said, passing the phone over to her son.

“...Izuku?” The tired voice of Hisashi Midoriya came down the line. Izuku was used to his father not being present as well as exhausted. His father worked for a performing company abroad. Often he was simply in charge of managing their paperwork, appearances, media interviews, the works. On occasion, when a crew member was ill, he would step in as a performer. His quirk allowed him to breath fire, and thus he was able to do a fair few tricks. He preferred not to though.

“Yeah dad, I am here.” Izuku murmured into the phone. He didn’t even realize he had used All Might’s signature line.

“How’d the day go? Mother told me you had a good day, figure she wouldn’t tell me otherwise.”

“It was a good day! I’ve made friends, I’ve learnt how to use my quirk more effectively, and I didn’t get expelled.”

“Figured as much. Good job…” Izuku was able to hear what sounded like several falcons down the line. It must have been the animals for the circus that he worked for. “Got to go Izuku. Things are getting frantic here. Love you son, keep it up.” The line went dead, as Izuku hung the phone up. The boy exhaled through his nose, before his personal cell phone buzzed. All Might wanted to see him down at the beach. He scampered to the kitchen, told his mother that a teacher needed to see him after hours, and then rushed to the beach.
All Might was sat on a bench. He had made sure to scout the area and ensure that no one else was present. So he could rest in his gaunt form. How he hated that feeling, the fact that he had to make such a decision. If he had his way, he would forever be in the muscle form. But reality has a way of denying us our way, and thus he accepted that this was the way things had to be. His thoughts were interrupted by the arrival of Izuku. The kid was dashing across the sand nearly tripping over himself. All Might couldn’t help but smile. The kid was really something special.

“You called me All Might? Is something the matter? Was my performance in the test not up to standard? I promise you, I’ll be able to regulate the quirk eventually. It’s just a matter of making the egg in the microwave. Perh-” Izuku was cut off by a mock punch from All Might to his cheek.

“Young Midoriya. I called you here to tell you how pleased I am. Today was an excellent success.”

“Really? I came in dead last though, and damaged my finger. I still lack the control over OFA…”

“It will come in time. No one expected you to have complete mastery by now. Plus, you made friends today! Excellent!”

“A-ah, that I did. Iida and Ochako. They are both amazing people. When Ochako got brought the infinity sign up! And Iida’s time in the 50-meter dash.”

“These friends will be vital! A support network to help you through U.A during your time there. They seemed fairly impressed with your own record too kid. Don’t leave that out.” All Might gave him a smile.

“A-ah. My record wasn’t really all that impressive. It cost me my finger. It could have much better, had I figured out a better way to us-” Izuku was cut short by All Might bellowing blood in indignation.

“Kid! Being so harsh on yourself isn’t the way forward.” He shuffled off the bench, and lifted Deku’s arm up. He placed his palm atop of Deku’s palm. “You’re going to do great Izuku. Plus Ultra! Say it with me!” All Might inhaled. Izuku inhaled. “PLUS! ULTRA!” All Might and Izuku let their voices ring out. The hero smiled. Deku wasn’t resting on his laurels. He was striving to be better, and stronger. Izuku smiled. To have such a mentor, and to have this mentor believe in him…he really could become a hero. But he paused for a moment, and stepped back.

“All Might, sensei.”

“Huh kid?”

“You told me when I was quirkless, that I couldn’t be a hero.” All Might nodded. Indeed that had been what he said.

“D-does Vanfell Zephyr not refute your claim then?” Izuku asked, inhaling slightly as he rubbed his palms together. All Might paused for a moment. It was true that there was a quirkless student now. All Might paused to think about it for a short time.

“No. He doesn’t refute it, Young Midoriya. He is an exceptional and different case to you. He trained since he was seven, and has a world class boxer for his mother. Couple this with his family having access to copious funding…his situation was worlds apart from yours.”

“A-ah. I see. That’s reassuring.” Deku nodded...and then lurched forward. He wrapped his arms around All Might, and let loose with some tears into his shoulder. A mixture of joy, apprehension, and everything else. “Thank you All Might, thank you for everything!” All Might said nothing, but
held the young lad close. It was going to be an interesting future.

Chapter End Notes

So here we have the quirk apprehension test. Not a whole lot wrong with this arc, so I don't really have to change much. Added some scenes with Vanfell, Jirou, and Momo and what not. Momo and Vanfell coming in as high as they did is justified by their conditioning more than anything else. Next up is the battle practice! Look forward to getting some expansion on the U.A Hero Course kid's training and their matchups!

Plus Ultra!
The next day rolled around with little fanfare. For Izuku and Vanfell it was still a dream that they were going to U.A, but it was one that had began to dull itself upon reality. The other students at U.A had not quite put the school on the same pedestal that these two had and thus U.A became something akin to an exciting daily fixture. Izuku didn’t have much to do in the morning. His mother had already packed his bag for the day and laid out his uniform. Breakfast was already ready as he wolfed it down. Oatmeal. It was the sort of food that would stick with you through the day and ensure you always had energy. Now that he suddenly obtained a quirk, his mother had thrown everything into supporting him. All Izuku had to do now was not let her down. Her, All Might, Dad… he’d make all of them proud. A kiss, a hug, and his bag slung over his back and he was gone.

The morning routine was somewhat more involved for Vanfell. Part of him had hoped that his mother would let him take a day off. The ceiling light being switched on at the regular proved otherwise. Back to his usual training regime as he pulled his shorts on. Laces tied up, running shoes on. A brisk early morning jog around the block would help him wake up and get in the zone before class today. Part of him wondered what his classmates would think. He’d done better than practically all of them in that test. Beside that one girl. She was amazing from what he’d seen. In terms of energy, skill, appearance, and all that. Seemed she was good at running from the fact that she was right next to him and keeping up. Wait.

“Ack! Do-on’t sneak up on me like that!” The English lad squawked in pigeon-esque Japanese. His face had flooded red as his hands started to flail. How the hell had she got here?!

“Oh! Van-san, right? You’re the quirkless boy from class!” Momo asked without skipping a beat. Vanfell didn’t get how the hell she was able to just be so cute like that. His breath had got all ragged as he tried to speak.

“Van-san, y-yeah. Momo, right? Heh, like. What you doing round here?” He cursed himself as he realized he made two mistakes already. Calling her by the first name was sloppy, and his second question was just stupid.

“Ah, Van-san. Typically we use last names in Japan.” She wasn’t insulted or flustered which was good. Her head tilted midrun. “I live here. My house is just at the end of the round, if you’d like me to show you!” The way her face lit up with glee was something else.

“Yo, uh sure? Never knew you lived near me. Wild.” Vanfell was out of his depth for sure. Swallowing he managed to focus himself. Luckily for him she seemed to focus on her running as well. The two went side by side for ten minutes, before cresting a hill. Momo brought herself to a halt and put one hand on her hip. The other hand pointed at a rather impressive mansion. Vanfell blinked. To him it looked like something out of an old novel depicting the life of a Victorian heiress. She was bloody rich!?

“So...you live in there?” He asked slowly. It was so big and had so many rooms! More than anyone could need if he was being blunt.

“Yes! I live in the upper loft in the west wing. It is adjacent to the library, laboratory, as well as the swimming pool. Then in the east wing we have the extensive gym complex, the ballroom, and our first dining room.”

“First dining room? What could you possibly need more than one dining room for? Rest of it sounds pretty alright, I figure. Laboratory is a bit weird.” He mused scratching head. “I’d show you my
house, but I doubt it matches up.” He mused. She was… ah. What was that old song his dad used to sing to his mother all the time? Uptown Girl, that's what it was.

“Ah, I’d have no reservations. My family home is the way it is due to our financial status. I imagine your house is just as capable.” She explained. It was kinda hilarious how innocent she was about her cash flow, least Vanfell thought so. Shrugging his shoulders and giving an easy grin he set off jogging home. He didn’t keep an eye on if the girl followed him. When he arrived he saw she had.

“Right then. Uh...my house. Got two bedrooms. We have an upstairs and downstairs toilet, which is pretty nice. Living room. One training room, a dining room, and a bathroom. Yep.” He nodded as he scratched his head again. Nervous tic.

“Exactly as I thought. A capable abode. I can’t imagine why you had to worry about it. Now, if you’ll excuse me. I’ll see you in class!” She waved as she jogged off, heading home. Damn girl. She was already in his head. Now he just couldn’t wait to go to class.

The start of class came quickly. While U.A might have been designed to teach individuals how to be Professional Heroes it also held a duty to educate them properly. As a result classes held prior to noon were all required normal subjects. Japanese, English, Math, History, so on and so forth. For the majority of the students their only thought on the matter was that this was exceptionally normal. A few of them shared a few laughs and snorts at the fact that Present Mic taught them English. A loud mouth radio braggart made absolute sense in hindsight. Vanfell revelled in the English class. Given his nationality it only made sense that he would. It was easy and he could show off. Izuku was able to keep up with him for the most part. He figured the kid must have an acute brain or something like that.

When it came to Japanese however, he struggled compared to the rest of the class. He knew the language well enough. But in a brief break, he’d received a note from Momo. In his rather pubescent head he had deemed it to be a declaration of affection, and excited had peeled it open. Only to find that in reality it was a statement about his rather “lack-lustre” pronunciation. It had stung. He huffed as he leaned over and nudged Izuku. He reacted by jumping. Izuku was only used to getting nudged when it came from Bakugou. Which meant that he was usually getting nudged to be hit. He calmed himself when it saw it was only Vanfell, though he also found the boy intimidating. Swallowing, he cleared his throat.

“A-ah. You need something, Van-san?”

“Izuku, right? Now, I figure you’re a smart cookie, eh? Need ya to help teach me Japanese pronunciation.” Vanfell asked for assistance. It was almost as if a different mind had taken over Izuku. While he was still clearly on edge, he lept into helping the boy with vigor.

“Well, the pronunciation is going to be difficult for a non-native. You’ll need to work on the long vowels and the double consonants.” The two engaged in long conversation on the matter. But soon it was lunch, and the class made their way to the cafeteria. The food was high quality, at a low price. It was served by a pro hero, Lunch Rush. Izuku had white rice. Vanfell had bought his own packed lunch from home. The rest of the students handled their own arrangements, but it was clear that no one had their thoughts on the food. In reality it all came down to what was coming next…

“IT’S MEEEEEEEEEE!” A booming bellowing voice rang out through the classroom. Every single student was instantly enraptured, grabbed, and their eyes swung towards where the voice had come from.

“You came!” Izuku almost squealed when his idol arrived. His face was the most lit up out of all the students. Bakugou had a huge shit-eating grin, Ochako’s dimples flushed, Iida seemed almost not
like a robot for the time being. Vanfell wasn’t so impressed, as he lifted an eyebrow and rolled his eyes. “Through the door. Like a normal person. Ah.” Izuku tried to calm himself, as the class gossiped and muttered among themselves.

“Yo, Jirou. Can’t get around it, All Might is gonna be teaching us.” Kaminari muttered out of the side of his mouth to the girl seated next to him.

“His look is so Silver Age… and he’s drawn differently from us.” She replied awestruck, doing her best to stop her jaw from dropping to the table.

“Oh. Don’t see the big deal myself…” Vanfell almost had to stifle a yawn, as he folded his arms.

“God, just look at those muscles. He’s so limbre…” Mina almost seemed to be swooning, murmuring in dreamy tones as she rested her hands beneath her chin. The built hero moved up to the whiteboard. Striking a pose that seemed like a dab locked in midair, a hand gripped the board.

“FOUNDATIONAL HERO STUDIES! IN THIS CLASS WE’LL LAY YOUR HERO FOUNDATION THROUGH MANY A TRIAL! You’ll get a lot of credit for it!” He bellowed out. Heroic timbre laced every aspect of All Might’s voice as the class waited on bated breath. The board span on its hinges and flipped. “LET’S JUMP RIGHT IN WITH THIS!” All Might boomed out again. BATTLE was written in thick… black… sharpie. On the whiteboard. No one seemed to notice as emotions ran wild through the room.

“Fucking yes!” Bakugou licked his lips as he almost flew to a standing position. His face was full of energy, his eyes wild.

“Battle? Hmm. A chance to refine my abilities.” Momo nodded as she carefully lifted herself from the chair.

“Fighting, kero?” Tsuyu croaked to herself as she pondered what this could mean, tapping a long finger against her chin.

“BLAZING MANLY SPIRITS CLASHING! WHAT MORE CAN YOU ASK FOR!” Howled Kirishima, stood tall on his desk, arms splayed wide. All Might gave the class a dazzling grin. It almost blinded Vanfell, who squawked nearly falling over. He muttered something about “trying too hard” before standing up.

“TO GO WITH YOUR FIRST BATTLE… WE BROUGHT THE GEAR! THAT YOU REQUESTED TO SYNERGIZE WITH YOUR QUIRKS! OR LACK THEREOF!” He flashed a thumbs up to Vanfell, who merely gritted his teeth. The whole class’s attention was quickly grabbed when four rectangular divisions slid out of the way. Each division held 5 boxes, each numbered after the seat that each student was assigned to. It was quickly apparent that these were the costumes that each student had drawn up and requested.

“Our costumes!? Hella dope.” Jirou grinned. She knew that her costume wouldn’t be anything special compared to some, but the girl still couldn’t wait to get ahold of it. Izuku gripped his box tightly as his excitement grew. His mother had made his costume for him… so he wondered how it would be. The young lad was fairly certain what it’d be like and he already felt pride swelling. He was going to do her proud, he was going to do All Might proud. He would show everyone that he deserved to be here.

“Hop into your costumes, and we’ll be ready to roll! Gather at the Beta grounds, and remember! These costumes that you wear into battle are vitally important lads and lasses!” All Might beamed, slapping his hands onto his hips as he strode outside. The student scurried to the bathrooms, ready to
step into the first iteration of their heroic clothes! As the group headed to do so they heard All Might’s last words. His cape billowed as he went, his charismatic booming voice ringing in their ears.

“And don’t forget! From here on out, you’re all officially HEROS!”

It was still surreal for Izuku. His costume...he was actually wearing it. His mind was a flow with many a thought as he made his way to the training grounds. The whole process of getting a costume had been somewhat more complicated for Izuku than the others, he had to presume. Prior to entering the academy each student was required to send a report. Said report needed to detail their quirk as well as their body specs. From there a company affiliated with U.A digested said report, and produced the appropriate costume. Specific details are accepted in this process. Izuku recalled the rather awkward situation that he had found himself in three weeks ago. To him it was as if it were yesterday. He had been on the phone with All Might, having a chat concerning the issue.

“I need to get to city hall, and get my quirk report done for my costume… thing is, I registered as no quirk. Not sure what to do.”

“Oh, quirk registration?” The tired voice of his hero in his regular form came down the line. “Just update it.”

“I can do that!?”

“Well, you know how they assess and register everyone’s quirks during first year at elementary and middle school? Every now and again, they’ll accept updates to the records. Use the example of a quirk which was originally something along the lines of, firing water from within one’s body. Later, it turned out to be drawing moisture from the surrounding air. If the revision isn’t too wild, it’ll be accepted. You’re no quirk, so it should be alright!” Izuku listened enraptured...when he heard the front door swing open.

“I’m home!!!” His mother had arrived. His finger jammed down on the phone hanging up the call. His face was spooked, but luckily for him his mother barely seemed to notice. He’d have to apologize to All Might later… but he turned his attention to his mom. “Izuku! I’ve got something for you, to celebrate your new school life. Might be getting ahead of myself…” She presented what appeared to be a jumpsuit. Izuku couldn’t shake the feeling that it looked familiar…

“A jumpsuit?”

“It likely won’t be very cool. But, I found you asleep from strenuous study. My eyes caught your notes…” Izuku made a squeak at this remark. His notes were nerdy to the extreme, and his mother seeing them spooked him for a moment. But then she kept talking and he brought his attention back to her words. Inko had a tired look on her face, years of guilt bubbling to the forefront. “All those years ago… I said things I shouldn’t have. I feel awful now, Izuku. I’m disgusted I gave up on you so easily. But you never gave up, chasing your dream, never quitting. I’m sorry, Izuku.” He went to speak.

“Mo-” But before he could finish, he caught the tears in her eyes. The lump in her throat and the way she swallowed.

“Here on out… I’ll never stop cheering for you!” She wrapped him into a tight warm hug. Izuku held himself there, quietly running a hand up her back. All Might had given him this chance… but his mother was giving it her all. That jumpsuit had become the basis for his costume. Within it was his mom's love, her worry, her dreams. It wasn’t efficient, or the most advanced costume. The mask was somewhat dorky, with the large jutting, sharp ears. But Izuku didn’t care. He was proud to wear that as his costume! The young lad skidded to a halt as he arrived at the testing ground. All of the
class had arrived before him, so he did his best to appear natural. All Might glanced at Izuku, flashed a smile, and then laughed full of joy.

“Time to see what you’re made of, embryos! The Trial of Battle awaits! Loving everyone’s style, very cool!” All Might was being truthful. To see all of these students before him in their garb reminded him of his time at U.A and all that had entailed. Some of the students didn’t quite share his opinion.

“Everyone is cool? Meh… not quite.” Vanfell muttered to himself. From what he saw some gremlin-looking child was wearing a diaper. If All Might figured that was cool, Van felt he’d need a chat with the teacher after class. His gear on the other hand felt and looked pretty damn good. Vanfell had not wanted to look flashy. He was here to prove himself a hero, and for that to work there couldn’t be any gimmicks. This had been the instructions he had planned to send to U.A, but reality had intervened. He remembered for a moment. He’d been out in the yard, pummeling the boxing bag. His phone was on speaker nearby, and U.A had just picked up. Before he could speak however his phone was snatched up.

“Sorry! It seems my son accidentally dialled you, ah!” Charity gripped the phone to her ear. Vanfell’s face flared with anger for a moment. He swatted at her with one hand, but she ducked it with ease. A flicker of cheeky disappointment crossed her face. She wasn’t pleased he’d missed. She promptly hung the phone up and sighed. She ran a hand up through her long ginger hair. The sun caught it in such a way that it seemed to be on fire. Charity let her lip curl upwards, and rested the hand holding the phone on her hip. Her orange eyes glittered as she focused herself on Vanfell.

“The hell you trying to do, old fart? Interrupting like that? Was about to send in my costume details. I’ll look like a proper prat when I call em up back up.”

“Nah. We not using the U.A companies. Figure you ought to have the best, and no offence intended to the lot they got employed. But, I got some friends, yeah.” Charity started to explain, tapping her foot. She clocked Vanfell around the back of the head and shook her head. “Tighten the form. Left side is loose.” Her son grumbled, and fixed his form.

“You have friends, eh? Koichi doesn’t count. He’s friends with everyone.” Vanfell shot back with a sly smirk.

“Koichi is a lovely lad, and you could learn some manners from him. No, I do have friends. Few blokes down in London running a start-up for hero costumes. ‘Eard they got some banging technology.”

“Gonna get to the point mom? Dad chats less shit than you these days.”

“Ought to kick your arse for that, cheeky sod. Well, I sent in a hero costume design to them for you. They’ll file the paperwork with U.A tomorrow, and get it all sent over…a thank you. Figure that’s the good manners you ought to learn from Koichi.”

“Doing shit without asking me, not really conductive to a good mood.” He’d grumbled. As he waved her off, Charity opted not to pressure the issue further. She’d already done it, so he’d have to deal with it. He snapped back to reality and the present. As it turned out the costume wasn’t half bad. It started off with a simple white collared shirt, no tie. The next step was a sharp red waistcoat. Vanfell had read the manual they’d left in the box. It was made out of experimental fibres that had been developed. They absorbed and deadened the impact of kinetic force. This tie into another aspect of the costume. His white collared shirt had regular sleeves, up until they reached his hands. Sewn into the fabric were a pair of “gloves” formed out of blue boxing tape. According to the operations manual the stored kinetic energy could be discharged via the boxing tape. Meaning… more powerful
punches. It was tech unique to the U.K… figured it ought to give him an edge. He didn’t fail to notice that the colour scheme was that of the U.K flag as well. A slight smirk danced on his lips. Trousers were boring though, just plain and black. He’d slapped a pair of running trainers on to finish the look. Found that he looked sharper than most of the class that was out here with him. The odd look was flashed his way. Jirou meandered over and nudged him with her shoulder. He swung his head over and gave her an easy grin.

“All right, Jirou? Interesting costume. Pushing that goth vibe, eh?” He teased. Her costume wasn’t bad, far as he saw. Just plain. Girl had a black jacket, coupled with a peach top. Had a few rip marks near the collar and bottom, must have been “aesthetics.” Black pants, some boots, and a choker. He had heard from a mate back home that birds with chokers were freaks… eh.

“Nervous, but good. Pushing that accountant vibe, eh? Interesting strategy to rely on doing taxes mid-battle.” She teased as she folded her arms, and drummed her foot against the ground. It would be starting any minute. Vanfell went to give her a witty retort, she was sure he would. But when she looked up at him she almost had to slap his jaw back into place. The English student was staring off into the distance and she swayed her head to where he was looking. She snorted and then felt a flush of red rush to her cheeks. Ah, that would explain it quite nicely. Yaoyorozu had… an interesting costume. It was a red leotard and a pretty one at that. Pretty exposing. Her chest was quite on display as was her stomach. Her boots left large swathes of her legs visible as well. Two golden belts were also on the costume, but weren’t exactly the items catching the attention of Vanfell and Jirou. Jirou recovered first and shook her head. Her earphones jabbed Vanfell in his ribs as he wheezed.

“Ack! The hell you doing Jirou?!” He barked as his own red face glared into hers.

“Stopping you from getting a hell of a lot of trouble for staring!” The two of them were equally flustered, have a brief go at each other. Both of them locked up rigid, standing at attention when Yaoyorozu moved over to join them. The elegant student barely seemed to notice the discomfort of her classmates.

“Izuku had been looking all the other students up and down. He’d let his eyes catch on Vanfell for a little longer than the others. Something about the fact that was a quirkless student here… just ate at him. Is that what he could have been? Maybe if he hadn’t just, well, given up on his dream when he was young. It was intimidating, but his mind was snapped away from the thought when a familiar voice beamed out.

“Ah! Deku-kun! Your costume is cool, super practical too!” Ochako had finally found him. She’d been searching through the crowd when she’d spotted those ears. Truth be told she found them adorable. Izuku slapped his hands to his face as he looked the girl up and down. Her costume was… tight. There really wasn’t any other way to put it. He swallowed hard. She seemed to have a skin tight suit, and a dome akin to what astronauts wore.

“Uraraka-san… whoaaaaaa.” Was the only attempt at communication that succeeded. Damned tricky talking to women. The girl didn’t seem to quite understand his gaze. She rubbed the back of her neck as she huffed.

“I should have drawn my request a bit better… suit came out tighter than I had wanted it to.” Izuku went to reply. But some kid wearing a diaper was swinging over. There was a faint crust of drool
hanging around his mouth as the midget looked Ochako up and down. He went to talk to Izuku, before the muscular Vanfell scooped him up. Izuku cocked his head. He vaguely heard the English boy mentioned something about keeping nasty “shite” to oneselfs. Seemed he was lecturing the diaper wearing student. Just as it seemed chaos was about to ensue, a voice rung out.

“Sensei! Concerning the battleground, will we be utilizing the mock city from our entrance exam?” Iida had lept in with a question, dragging everything back on track. His costume was rather slick, although to Izuku it was hard to discern. It made him look like one of those old power rangers, but metal and that was good enough for him. All Might shook his head, and in the process got a glimpse of Izuku’s ears. The man winced slightly at just how transparent his adoration was… before focusing back on the task.

“Our battle will be indoors! If you take a few step steps, you’ll be there!” All Might explained, starting to move forward. He lectured at the same time! After all, he had to impart knowledge onto these budding saplings of heroic trees! “The aftermath of villainy is often seen outdoors. Yet the statistics show that the majority of work is indoors. Imprisonment, house arrest, the black market… in this hero-abundant society…” He paused before striking a pose, slapping his hands on his hips. “Any villain worth his salt is hiding in the shadows! For this test, you’ll be separated into a villainous group, and a heroic group… for a TWO-ON-TWO TEAM BATTLE!!” This revelation sparked a mass of discussion. Izuku felt his face waver slightly. Anybody partnered with him would be at a major disadvantage. That is, if he didn’t think fast and on his feet. His face set in a resolute pose. He only hoped he avoided Bakugou as his partner. Vanfell cocked an eyebrow. Teamwork, eh? The student wondered if anyone would look down on him, or be unhappy to be paired with a quirkless kid. But his fists would soon change their mind. Bakugo… sneered. He was strong enough not to need a pitiful excuse for a student as a partner. All this lot would do is slow him down…

“What about the foundational training?” Croaked Tsuyu. All Might was quick to respond clenching a tight fist.

“THIS IS FOUNDATIONAL TRAINING! EXCEPT WITHOUT ROBOTS!” He bellowed with a booming heroic roar. What All Might hadn’t banked on was the rush of questions that started to flood out.

“How do we determine the victor and loser?” Momo inquired firmly, with a hint of steel in her voice.

“Is it okay if I just blow these fuckers to hell?” Bakugou snarled, his grim fiery glare fixed on the floor.

“Do we risk getting expelled like Aizawa-sensei’s exercise?” Ochako asked her face flushed with concern.

“If we are to be in different groups, what is the most effective method of separation?” Iida lifted his arm, concerned with the fairness of such a battle. Friends could team with one another, and so forth.

“Isn’t my cape killer~~” Aoyama twinkled, trying to pull some attention his way. All Might grunted and wheezed.

“HHnnn. IF YOU ALL SPEAK AT ONCE, I HEAR NO ONE!” His voice bellowed out, still happy but with a hint of tiredness. But he rummaged around in his cape, and plucked a folded piece of people out. “This training exercise will involve some ‘villains’ guarding a nuclear weapon they plan to deploy. Brave heroes must thwart them and their scheme before it’s too late!”

“Sounds like golden age shite to me…” Muttered Vanfell. Izuku was more impressed, if not a little taken aback, that All Might had a cheat sheet.
“If the heroes defeat the villains, or reach the nuclear weapon before the clock ticks down, they win! If the villains manage to keep the weapon the whole time, or defeat the heroes, they win! Simple! Your teammates, as well as opponents, will be chosen by…” There was a dramatic pause, as All Might seemed to produce a lottery box out of nowhere. “LOTTERY!”

“Is that really the method!?” Iida bellowed in surprise. Such a random method was surely not optimal.

“Well. Professionals usually find themselves forced to do on the spot team-ups with other heroes they might not know. This is likely testing that.” Izuku explained. Iida paused, realizing this to be the case. Ochako hummed to herself as she realized that sounded right. She was impressed by just how smart Izuku was in regards to this stuff.

“Always with our eyes on the future are we…” All Might mused to himself, before throwing a hand in the air. “ANYWAY! Let’s start this!” And thus, the lottery process began.

The teams were generated swiftly. Much to the stress of Izuku, he found himself paired with Ochako. She was pleased, but Izuku couldn’t shake the feeling that some greater being was conspiring to force the two together. Todoroki and Shouji were another coupling, although little in the way of discussion or reaction came from either of them. Momo and Vanfell were both pleased to find themselves teamed up. Momo was somewhat apprehensive of if Vanfell would pull his weight… whereas Vanfell was concerned if the girl would have a wardrobe malfunction. Iida and Bakugou were not a match made in heaven. Squabbling had already broken out, Iida taking quite a bit of issue with the attitude of his partner. Bakugou gave as good as he got, spouting unpleasant words right back at a fiery pace. Mina was perfectly fine with being teamed up with Kirishima. It seemed the two went way back, and had a lovely friendship! Koda and Aoyama were paired up. The timid rockman was a tad overwhelmed by Aoyama being, well, Aoyama. Kaminari and Jirou were paired up, and a storm of banter had already kicked up. It was difficult to keep track of what was being said, but it seemed to all be in good taste. Tsuyu had been paired with Sero. Long range offence and utility abound in that matchup. Ojiro had been paired up with Tooru. Though he couldn’t see her beyond the gloves, he saw that they already had… synergy. Tokoyami was burdened, the crow stuck with the gremlin diaper menace.

Once all the teams had met and talked for a moment, it was almost time to start. Izuku had still not managed to say anything to Ochako, despite his best efforts.

“Woah! Are we linked or something? Pleased to be with you!” Ochako was all sunshine and energy as she always was. All Might slammed his hands into the ballot boxes, and pulled out two groups… and Izuku felt his gut dance. It was going to be him… vs Bakugou!? He didn’t get long to dwell on it. All Might had already started the explanation.

“This situation has our villains inside first! After five minutes, our heroes will be let in as well. Spectators will be able to see what unfolds through our surveillance system! Thus, young Iida and Bakugou can get inside the heads of villain kind! This is practical training, so go all out! No fear of injury. Of course, if things get out of hand, it’ll be cut short…”

The building was two fold. The first portion, the lower section, was a maze. The walls were tight and numerous. It was an oppressive environment that would make it easy for the villains to prey on the heroes. Said maze lead to an open room, with a pair of stairs. This was the only wide, open area on the lower floor. It lead to the upstairs. This portion of the building was big and spacious. There were several windows and pillars. A nuclear bomb sat in the middle, a fake replica of course. This location was where Bakugou and Iida were conversing. Bakugou had his head down. All Iida observed was the explosion aspect of his costume that sat behind his head. Two heavy gauntlets also covered his
“While it is only training, it hurts to be a villain. I suppose I merely need to defend this... papier mache bomb.” Iida mused as he examined the room. He was attempting to plan his defence but Bakugou had other matters on his mind. His body was coiled with a raging fire of anger. His voice was surprisingly calm when he did speak, though it was laced with a foul venom.

“Deku found himself a quirk, after all right?” He asked Iida. Iida blinked and looked at Bakugou.

“Hm? You saw it yourself, did you not? His herculean strength. Seems fairly high risk, but. You still plan to just do a head on assault. Of course.” Iida sighed and returned back to planning. Bakugou seethed internally.

“Were you fooling me all along? Fucking NERD!”

Izuku and Ochako were outside. The two students were committing to knowledge the map of the building. It wouldn’t do to carry it inside, so they would have to remember it. Ochako was happier about this lesson compared to what Aizawa-sensei had pulled earlier.

“Looks like no penalties this time! Relieving, and All Might is just as nice in person!” She beamed at Izuku. But the young man looked rather stressed out, his face contorted into a grimace. “Ahh! You don’t look happy!!” Izuku shook his head and focused.

“Oh, sorry. It’s just our opponent is Kacchan ...and Iida-kun as well. Just really tense.” Ochako’s face morphed into a softer, if such a thing was possible, one as she sighed.

“I remember now. Bakugou is the one who keeps bullying you, right?”

“...I hate him. But I also look up to him, that ambition, confidence, strength... and quirk. He’s better than me in so many ways. Yet, this time... I don’t want to lose. If that makes any sense.” Izuku replied, adjusting his mask. He was already feeling the tension build and boil in his stomach.

“Oh, its fate then! The bonds between men!” Ochako giggled, and nodded. Izuku tensed and his motor mouth returned.

“Yikes! I’m sorry for running my mouth on about something that really has nothing to do with you, I-” Izuku blabbered before being interrupted by a finger wave.

“It does too! We’re a team, silly! Time to do our best~!” Ochako beamed a smile at Izuku and turned to look at the building. It was time to knuckle down and deliver.

TRIAL OF INDOOR BATTLE: START!

The rest of the class was able to view the battle. Several basement monitors were running. All Might and Class 1-A were all collected around them. No one said anything just yet. It was a nervous atmosphere, everyone milling around in their costumes. This would be the first time anyone showcased their abilities post the entrance exam. All Might had pencil and paper in his hand, as he addressed the class.

“Now, watch and formulate strategies of your own!” He then slipped into his thoughts... “Midoriya my boy!! You are just another student here, so no favoritism! You’ll be graded just as harshly as the...
And with that Izuku and Ochako set about their task. They had opted to infiltrate the building as opposed to a full frontal assault. It would give them the element of surprise, and force the defensive team to be more proactive.

“Infiltration: Success!” Ochako beamed as she climbed in through the window. Izuku wasn’t quite as pleased as her.

“Lots of blind spots, so let's be cautious…” He huffed. His own thoughts were running wild. He couldn’t adjust one for all… so no using it for hand to hand. Far as he was aware, he’d kill them. So all the two had was his base strength, and Ochako’s zero gravity. Izuku noted that the space was tight and closed. So he should make full turns, as per his notes. All the information cemented itself in his mind. He hoped it would be enough to make a difference. Ochako was tensed and ready as well. She kept her hands moving. If she needed to touch something, a few seconds could make the difference.

“What!? A sneak attack?” The diaper wearing child, Mineta, yelped as he watched the monitor. Izuku and Ochako barely had time to react as a figure leapt around a corner. Bakugou screamed through the air, releasing a powerful explosion. Izuku twitched, reacted, and dove. Taking Ochako down with him, he managed to evade most of the attack. Grunting, he turned his attention to his partner.

“Just clipped me… you okay Uraraka-san!?”

“Y-yeah! Moved like a bolt.”

Bakugou hissed as his attack hit nothing but the wall. The boy leaned against it for a moment.

“Dammit Deku, don’t dodge me!”

“Figured. If I’m his opponent, Kacchan’s priority will be to beat me up!” Izuku stated. Half of his mask had been blown away in the explosion, as he watched Bakugou. In the spectators booth, there was much chatter.

“What a cheater! Ambushes aren’t manly!” Kirishima, the boy with spiky red hair howled.

“They make for good strategy! They are in the throes of battle after all!” All Might bellowed back. Mina, the purple alien-esque girl swung her head back to Kirishima, and the monitor in rapid fashion.

“But Midoriya dodged really well!!”

Back in the fight… Bakugou reared up from the wall. He’d had enough of this damn nerd. His face contorted into a raging fire of ill intent.

“I’ll blast you just enough, so that they don’t cancel the fight!” He roared, swinging a right hook. His fist swung through the air. Izuku moved in, wrapping his arms around it. Twisting his feet, the green-haired lad hauled Bakugou into the air.

“Wow! Just like an expert!” Ochako yelled. Bakugou couldn’t believe it. Did Deku just fucking read him? There wasn’t much time for him to think about that fact though, as his back slammed into the ground. Stunned silence fell over the spectators. It hung for a moment.

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“Kacchan… you always started with a big right hook! No way I can count how many times I’ve seen you do it. I analyze and take notes on all the heroes I thought were amazing… including!” Izuku grunted as he watched Bakugou getting back up. His childhood friend turned his head, hate etched across every inch. “The same notes you blew up and threw away! I’m not the Deku you rest!”
equated to a worthless guppy anymore!” Izuku felt his mind flash back to Ochako talking about how she liked his name… ‘I’M THE ‘DEKU’ WHOSE VIBE IS ‘NEVER GIVING UP’!!’ He bellowed out.

Bakugou felt his body tense, and almost explode with rage as he roared back. “NOW I’M REALLY PISSED!” He couldn’t get over it. Deku honestly thought he had a shot? Damn shit still hadn’t used his quirk either… what a fucking joke!

“Oh! Bakugou! Tell me what’s going on! Situation update!” Iida barked down their comms line. This only served to irritate Bakugou further.

“Shut up, and keep guarding! I’m really fucking pissed right now…” And with that, the boy hung up. Iida groaned.

“I didn’t ask you how you’re fe- He hung up! That little…”

“What is he saying? We haven’t got sound through the footage…” Kirishima asked, as he watched the scene unfolding. He wished they had audio, would have made the whole excursion more interesting.

“Teammates can communicate via wireless transceivers! They also all have a rough sketch of the building! Of course, there’s the capture tape! Once that’s wrapped around someone, they’re captured!”

“Time limit is 15 minutes, and the heroes ain’t informed as to where the core is, yeah?” Vanfell muttered, his first contribution. All Might confirmed it was a gusto filled nod.

“Yikes! The heroes have a huge disadvantage in this scenario…” Mina murmured to herself. All Might managed to hear her, as he pumped his arms in the air.

“Didn’t Aizawa teach you kids our motto? Say it with me now! PLUS ULTRA!”

But the fight didn’t stop itself to let the kids do that. Bakugou was already on the move again, throwing his arms behind him. His face was set with anger as the explosions hurtled him towards Izuku.

“Uraraka-san, go on wit-” Izuku tried to give her instruction, as she was behind Bakugou. He doubted Bakugou had any intention to deal with her either, given his burning hate for Izuku. His sentence didn’t get to be finished, as the leg of his opponent slammed into his back.

“You don’t have any chance to look away!!” Bakugou bellowed. But he felt something odd wrapping around his foot. Izuku had managed to somehow snake the capture tape into position. His notebook, #10, page 18. The next step was figuring out what came next. Izuku knew Kacchan, and if he was right, he would start getting hasty. So he scrambled forward, rolling forward. Another right hook, coupled with an explosion swung wide, as Izuku managed to evade it.

“Look at him go!! He’s not used his quirk, but he’s still going toe-to-toe!” Kaminari yelped out.

“The hell you trying to say, Sparkie?” Vanfell grunted from his position in the back of the room. Kaminari yelped again as he started waving his hands in front of him. He blabbered on about how he hadn’t intended to offend Vanfell. Overall, Vanfell’s flash of temper gave way to a smirk. Kid was entertaining at least. Izuku was doing good, as well. He wasn’t doing what he would do, but the fact that he was able to keep up… pretty impressive. All Might watched Izuku and let himself have a moment to his thoughts.
“He’s impressively fast on his feet. The lad who has taken noted for who knows how many years… his head must be flooded with hero knowledge!”

All Izuku could think about however was the fact that he managed to get Bakugo, and evade him. He thought about what All Might said to him. It gave him focus and strength. Bakugou had pushed his back against the wall…and he knew the rest wouldn’t be so easy. But, he still felt vindicated. That being said, he needed time to make a plan. So he whirled, darting around a corner.

“GET BACK HERE! DEKU!” Bakugou roared, while Izuku scrambled to hide. There was no way a head-on confrontation would work right now… his opponent was just too strong. “WHERE ARE YOU HIDING? YOU LIED TO ME, DIDN’T YOU. LAUGHING AT ME ALL THIS TIME? WELL? THAT QUIRK IS PRETTY DAMN FASHY. USE IT, SO I CAN SHOW THAT MINE IS EVEN STRONGER!” Bakugou continued to roar and rage. Izuku heard explosions… his temper must have been swelling up something fierce. The class spectating recoiled… Bakugou seemed to put them in a state of unease. Vanfell just cocked an eyebrow, and puffed his hair out of his eye. All Might… couldn’t help but feel that the boy was overconfident. Izuku had just laid out his feelings, and yet Bakugou was still swelling with confidence. He scribbled notes while continuing to observe the unfolding situation.

Izuku had managed to find a spot to hide. He needed to fix his breathing, he was being run ragged. There wasn’t much time left though, so he needed to plan. It had gone as expected thus far. Ochako had been disregarded. Kacchan was focusing on him instead. Had the opposing team formed a decent strategy, Iida would have been the lead. He would have outclassed both Izuku and Ochako in speed… so they clearly had no plan. It was Kacchan letting his blind rage cause him to fly off the handle. Thus… Iida and him were not in unison. Had they been, a joint attack would have ended their chances from the start. It was for the best that Izuku hadn’t gone with Ochako. Ochako had to reach the core… it might as well be a 2v1. Based on the assumption that he could be Kacchan… but Izuku knew he could. Just had to focus on his palms…

Bakugou had his own thoughts brewing. Memories from before. That quirkless loser… had told him he was going to compete with him now. Actually had a spine. Told him he was coming to U.A., and he couldn’t stop him. All that shit just now about the “Deku” who never gives up. It made him fume. Then there was the matter of their childhood…

“From now on, a ‘Deku’ is a person who’s totally useless at everything!”

“Wow, Kacchan! How many times did it skip!?”

“7 times! What about yours, Deku!?”

“…Zero…”

The day that he got his quirk at kindergarten. All that praise. How he had been told it was perfect for hero work. Everyone there had told him just how awesome he was…and by extension how they weren’t. Izuku was just a pebble. Quirkless runt, the least amazing of all. But there was one day in particular…

It was a warm day. The Bakugou hero squad had decided to explore a forest, in search of any villains! Of course, Bakugou would take the lead, and Deku would be stuck at the back. It had been a pleasant adventure, trekking through the forest. Eventually they had arrived a large log, stretching over a shallow creek. It had been business as usual… until Bakugou had slipped. Splashing noises indicated that he had fallen, landing in the creek.

“KACCHAN FELL IN!”

“ARE YOU OKAY?”

“Eh, he’ll be fine. He’s tough.”

He remembered that day, crystal clear. He had been fine, not a singular scratch on him. Hadn’t been a real fall in the slightest, and the creek? Barely deep at all. But that bastard… Deku.

“Are you okay? Do you need help? If you hit your head, that’d be bad!” He had whined at Bakugou. That expression… he was looking down on him. Disgusting, thinking he was better. Then
the same fucking thing with the sludge creature. “Your eyes were pleading for help!” All of it served to cause a flame to explode inside Bakugou...a declaration burning in his head.

I AM ABOVE YOU!!!

Elsewhere, events continued to transpire. Ochako had managed to evade Bakugou as per the plan. The heroine in training had also managed to find the necessary route to get up to the bomb. She was slightly concerned for Deku...but she believed he could pull it off. She had to do the same! No letting the team down. Squatting, secluded behind a pillar...she spied her opponent.

“Found you!” She mused to herself, as she watched Iida. The boy seemed to be deep in thought...and monologuing?!

“Bakugou is rather rancid naturally...but that fits the parameters for this exercise. If one follows that logic...I ought to act more like a villain as well. This is simply another test to become a splendid man worthy of the Iida family name! Place yourself in a villain’s shoes...NOW I AM QUITE EVILLLL” His body radiated foul and malevolent energy as he concluded his “speech.” Ochako couldn’t help herself, guffawing. He was just so earnest! Unfortunately, the noise generated from this alerted Iida to her position. He turned. “So you’ve come Uraraka-kun…” A sense of dread started to fall over the girl as she looked around the room.

“!”

“I figured you’d come here solo as soon as Bakugou ran off! Your quirk causes whatever you touch to float… bearing this in mind, I moved to counter you by giving this floor a proper cleaning! Now there’ll be no tricks you can pull! You’ve miscalculated, ‘hero’!” It was capped off by a rather over the top laugh… but Ochako realized it was quite the spot of trouble.

“It looks… so clean…”

Izuku was still deep in thought. He had noted that Bakugou had changed his patterns in order not to get read again. A kick had been the opener. So he’d caught on… no getting under his guard. He’d need a plan.

“Deku-kun!!” His earpiece exploded in sound.

“Uraraka-san! What’s up?” He replied instantly. She sounded stressed...not good.

“I got found out by Iida-kun, sorry!” She noted that he wasn’t edging closer. She could tell that he didn’t know where she was… and Iida still didn’t quite want to his gloves off on her. Izuku realized that she was right above him. She was in the middle room, fifth floor. Cogs in his mind started turning.

“Not much time left… and if we run out they win!” He replied down the line. Of all the places, this was the one he didn’t want to lose in. But Kacchan came around the corner. His gauntlets, grenade shaped, made a clicking noise.

“It’s ready. Why ain’t you using it, Deku? Looking down on me?” The blonde haired boy had rounded the corner. His eyes were bloodshot, narrowed, and filled with malice. There was no choice. Izuku was going to have to do it here and now.
“Kacchan! I’m not afraid of you anymore!!” A declaration of war, clear as day. It barely seemed to phase Bakugou.

“I already know about your obsession. My explosions are sparked by the sweat on my palms.” He lifted one gauntlet up, pointing it at Izuku. “It’s like secreting nitroglycerin that can explode. Now, if the specs are how I want them to be… I can store the sweat. And…” Izuku and All Might both realized what was happening, as Bakugou reached for the pin.

“Bakugou! My boy, stop this! You’ll kill him!” But the words from All Might, who was clutching his mic, were lost on Bakugou. His face was wild, feral, and spittle flew from his mouth.

“WON’T DIE IF HE DODGES!” And with that… the pin was pulled. The explosion rippled out, quite like nothing Izuku had experienced before. Blinding smoke, the heat, and the sheer amount of force that buffeted forth was just insane. The building shook, both Uraraka and Iida unaware of what was exactly happen. Smoke started to clear… the building now had a gaping hole in it. Izuku had just about managed to dodge, but the rest of his helmet had been blown away.

“The hell! This is just a lesson!” Kirishima raged. The other students shifted uneasily. It wasn’t quite clear what the overall opinion on Bakugou was just yet… but it wasn’t positive. “Are you insane!!” Izuku yelled, panting as he pushed himself to stand back up. Such an explosion… it was just crazy!

“Better use that quirk of yours, Deku. I’m going to destroy you… at your max.” Bakugou snarled, the smoke coiling around him as if he were some demon.

“What on earth!? Is that Bakugou? Just what does he think he’s playing at!?” Iida yelled, as the aftershocks continued to ravage the building. Ochako saw the chance that she had been looking at. She placed her fingertips together, started, and leapt forward. She had hoped Iida wouldn’t react… but he did. The “villain” lunged. “Oh no you don’t!” But much to his surprise, Ochako flew into the air above him.

“Skill Release!”

“You can make yourself float!?” Iida yelled. It seemed that had to be the case. Ochako had applied her quirk to herself, and was using it to sail to victory!

“Takes a toll on me, but how do you like it!?” She exclaimed, fingers reaching for the bomb laid out just in front of her. What the girl hadn’t accounted for was Iida’s burst of speed. He managed to snatch the bomb from right in front of her, and skid to a halt. Planting it down, he watched as Ochako slammed into the wall.

“So long as you can’t touch me, you’re not a threat! I’ll just stall for all the need, gyehe!” His villain voice… needed some work.

“...Ungh. I can’t let Deku-kun down… he’s doing his best out there,” Ochako muttered to herself, as she pushed herself back to a standing position.

“...Hehe, isn’t this great? Something wrong, Deku? Get up! Still can fight, right!” Bakugou grinned as he stepped forward. The aftermath of his explosion was all around him, as Izuku grunted. No way that explosion was anything less than an eruption. Not good, his suit must have increased his range.

“What’s the situation, Uraraka-san?”

“Some nerve to ignore me!” Bakugou continued to advance.
“Sensei, please end this! Bakugou’s lost it, he’ll kill him at this rate!” Kirishima barked to All Might.

“Bastard like that… entering the hero course? ...Cut me some slack…” Vanfell muttered to himself, as he scratched his hair.

“No…” All Might muttered. He knew the true situation, as he was the only one who could hear what they were saying. He knew there was a part of Bakugou that was wholly calm… was he really that petty? “Bakugou, my boy. If you launch another attack like that, I will end this exercise forcibly, and you will lose. Firing an attack with such an extensive damage radius, indoors defeats the defensive purpose of the stronghold! Hero or villain, it was just foolish. Once more, and you’ll be failed on this exercise!” He knew as a teacher he ought to end this now, yet…

To say that Bakugou took such instructions poorly would be an understatement. His hands shot to the side of his head in a fit of rage as he screamed. “SCREW IT!” But in his rage, he failed to notice Izuku… and his communications.

“Pillar by the window! Roger.” Izuku replied to Ochako. But reality quickly reminded him of the angry opponent flying his way. Bakugou had launched explosions behind himself to propel him towards Izuku.

“LET’S JUST BRAWL!” Bakugou’s hate and anger permeated every single word. Izuku knew he couldn’t dodge. Bakugou was flying too fast for evasive maneuvers. So he had to make a counterattack at the right time. Snapping forward, he went for it. Only to be rewarded with an explosion to the face, and Bakugou whirling behind him. Izuku didn’t get time to react, before an explosion smashed him in the back, and sent him sprawling. This elicited a slew of reactions.

“A deliberate misleading of his opponent… followed by using his quirk to redirect himself mid-air to his advantage. Wouldn’t count him as a clever type, but those were subtle motor skills.” Todoroki explained.

“Landing such an attack, and not being blown away by the inertia all concurrently… he must be able to adjust his explosion power very minutely.” Momo observed.

“Can’t say I like him… but he’s talented.” Kaminari sighed, in a tone filled with regret.

“Bleh. Izuku isn’t putting up much of a fight… don’t buy into this hype too much.” Vanfell’s lip curled. That attack was so easy to see coming if one considered the quirk Bakugou had. Disappointing showing from Izuku.

“Gahh!” It was difficult for Izuku to keep pace like. Bakugou wasn’t giving him a chance to recover, there was no time.

“HERE IT COMES! THE RIGHT HOOK YOU LOVE SO MUCH! TAKE IT!” Bakugou bellowed, as his fist collided with Izuku’s side. He didn’t let Izuku fly away however. He gripped the boy by the arm, and fired an explosion. Spinning around, Bakugou lifted him into the air… and slammed him hard into the floor. “Deku… YOU ARE BENEATH ME!” Izuku slammed into the ground… and couldn’t focus. Bakugou was just too damn strong to beat quirkless, it was decided. No choice, he was going to have to use it. The spectating room exploded once again, the heated exchange prompting a slew of commentary.

“This is just bullying! Rewind the tape, its clear Bakugou was already captured!”

“Is he really a hero in the making, or just a thug looking for a license?”

“...I thought Midoriya was hitting above his weight, but… you can’t deny it. In battle sense,
Bakugou’s a beast!”

Back in the battle, Izuku scrambled to his feet. Nearly falling over himself he scurried away from Bakugou… reactions were less than impressed.

“He’s running away!” Mina exclaimed, sounding disappointed.

“Not the most manly choice, but I’d do it too.”

“Shut up, and pay attention.” Vanfell now had moved the front of the room, watching the screen. His hand gripped his sleeve tightly as he shook his head. “Might be eating those words…”

Bakugou continued to advance on Izuku, his face still forged into that of hateful rage. This whole thing was starting to really piss him off. “JUST USE IT ALREADY! YOU LOOKING DOWN ON ME? EVER SINCE WE WERE KIDS, THAT’S HOW YOU’VE BEEN!”

“...That’s not it.”

“YOU LOOKING DOWN ON ME, FUCK FACE!”

All Might knew he ought to stop this. He had to step in, end it… but. He didn’t want it to end for them.

“Kacchan, it’s because you’re amazing that I wanna win! I WANT TO WIN AND SURPASS YOU! HOW DO YOU NOT SEE THAT, DUMBASS!?” Izuku couldn’t help but shout. His face had set itself in grim determination.

“GET THAT EXPRESSION OFF YOUR GODDAMN NERD FACE!!” Bakugou roared back in kind, as All Might’s fist clenched tight around the mic. Heroics had to be put aside! He knew that this was the first time they’d ever shown each other their real feelings. Such a battle was required… for the future Izuku envisioned for himself.

“Man, Bakugou really won’t let it go, huh?” The students could only watch now. It seemed the final moments of the fight were arriving. Izuku lurched forward, throwing one arm back. Bakugou did the same, throwing another arm behind him. Izuku’s arm rippled. Wind started to coil around it, as his clothing ripped away. It was clear that he was putting his full destructive power into it.

“DETROIT…” At the same time, Bakugou ignited his palm. It was clear he was going for an explosion of a similar calibre to the one that he thrown out earlier. Such destructive force was about to collide!

“SENSEI! ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! SENSEI!” Kirishima yelled at All Might once again. The #1 tensed, and started to bark into his microphone.

“ATTENTION, BOTH TEAMS. THE MATCH IS SUSP-”

“I’M HERE, URARAKA-SAN!!!!!!!” Izuku screamed. All Might paused. It couldn’t be. Ochako moved quick, wrapping her arms around a pillar much to Iida’s bemusement. Izuku had known he couldn’t win. Not in a one on one. But.

“SMASHHHHHHHHHH!”

The two attacks arrived. But at the last second, at the last moment, Izuku threw his arm up. The effects manifested instantly. Wind pressure from his insane power ran clean up the building. It was if the floor was made out of paper, and the windows mache. Rubble rained as the strong building was quickly blasted apart by Izuku’s attack. And Ochako’s pillar was uprooted… and weightless!
“Sorry, Iida-kun! Here’s my new improvised super move!” She lifted the pillar, akin to a baseball bat. All the floating debris was her new payload! In one swing, it was all directed toward the male student.

“HOME RUN COMET!”

“You call that a home runnnnnnnnnnnnn!?” Iida threw his hands up to protect against the debris. Ochako broke it out again, her prior move. Floating herself weightless, she flew clean over Iida. There was nothing stopping her now!

“You’re telling me… that from the start.” Bakugou looked up at the hole in the ceiling. That damned nerd had a plan this whole time… “Damn it… I was right. You are looking down on me!!” By now the smoke had cleared. It became clear that Izuku had only just above survived the explosion.

“I didn’t plan to use it, because I actually can’t. My body isn’t able to take the strain from this quirk. Aizawa-sensei told me but… this was my only plan.” And as this exchange finished, Ochako managed to slam herself into the bomb. Retrieved!

“THE HEROES…” All Might’s voice boomed into the arena. Izuku couldn’t do it anymore. All the pain from the explosions coupled with mangling and blowing his arm out caught up to him. He fell to the ground, out cold. Bakugou’s face… morphed into the absolute image of despair. He was aghast, not entirely sure what had happened.

“THE HERO TEAM WINS!!!!!!”
Battle Trial Arc: Part 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

“The losing team is fairly unharmed. Our victors are collapsed. In other words, they lost the scuffle but won the match.” Tokoyami commented.

“This was only ever just training though…”

Bakugou was trapped in the hellish cage that was his thoughts. Deku had exploited his right swing, reading him like a book. In addition, he’d managed to come up with a way to beat him. So in reality even though they were both going all out… His breathing became shallow. It was difficult to focus as the hideous truth began to worm its way into his head. He had lost. To Deku. He seemed to blank out, unaware that All Might was stood behind him, one hand on his shoulder.

“Time to come back young Bakugou, my boy. Time for the critique.” Behind the duo, Izuku was laid out on a stretcher, being attended to by U.A’s special Mini Conveyor-Bots. His injuries were so severe that he had not yet regained consciousness. “No matter if you win or lose. You take one look back, reflect on the experience, and move on with your life.” All Might explained, as he gently shepherded Bakugou to the monitor room. Ochako and Iida had already arrived. Everyone else was milling around, waiting for AM to explain.

“Figure Izuku ought to be the most valuable player in this one. His tactic won the day, after all! Manly to boot!” Kirishima beamed. All Might arrived, and shook his head the idea already shot down.

“In my opinion, the best in this match was young Iida!” Iida’s only response was gurgling and a jaw that nearly made contact with the floor.

“But weren’t the winners Ochako and Midoriya?” Tsuyu asked, one finger pressed to her chin in thought. All Might rose a arm into the air. While this occurred, Ochako had difficulty looking at anybody, and Bakugou seemed to be staring off into some sort of void, located on a rather mundane spot of floor.

“I wonder! Why do I think so! Who knows!” All Might fielded the question the the crowd. In an instant, Momo had lifted her hand into the air.

“Yes, All Might-sensei. It is because Iida adapted the most to the situation. Having seen the fight, Bakugou was clearly motivated by a personal grudge. His behaviour as such, was totally arbitrary. Furthermore as stated earlier, his large range attack was simply foolish given his arena. All of this applies for Midoriya. Ochako got sloppy halfway through, with a reckless final attack. If that had been an actual nuclear weapon, no such attack would have worked. Iida on the other hand, devised a counter-strategy against his opponent. While he was somewhat slow in reacting to the last attack, the hero team’s so called ‘victory’ is being too nice in calling this ‘training’ and that it got dangerously close to skirting the spirit of the rules.” Silence hung over the room, as Iida felt blessed by such words of praise. Once All Might was sure Momo had finished speaking, he lifted a thumb.

“W-well, young Iida might have been a bit too stiff but… correct.” Holey moley! She had said it all. She exhaled as Van watched with a bemused interest.

“We should always start our studies with what’s familiar! And if we don’t cheer each other on
properly, then we'll never reach the top!” She remarked. Vanfell gave a cheeky smirk to himself, and looked away. Made sense she was a recommended freshmen.

There was minimal downtime before the next fight. Midoriya wasn’t needed for spectating purposes, and so they moved ahead on schedule. Some concern came up among the class over Bakugou. While no one could say they liked him, he did seem somewhat spaced out. But at behest of All Might they left it be, and prepared for the next fight. The teams for this match were Todoroki and Shoji for the heroes. Neither said a word to each other. The villains were Ojiro, and Tooru… whose exchange was a little bit more lively.

“Ojiro! I’m getting a little excited, so I’m going to take my gloves and shoes off!!” The invisible girl gesticulated.

“Uhh…” Ojiro couldn’t muster in the way of verbal response. But his mind ticked over quickly. Hagakure was an invisible person, so it made sense. She was also a girl. So it made it hot. Once that was done, the fight began. Shoji had wings for lack of a better word. His quirk allowed the tip of his tentacles to replicate parts of his body. So he placed ears at the tip of each tentacle. It was an intel gathering move, one which bore fruit. For the heroes, information was obviously king.

“One of them is on the north side, of the fourth floor. The other is on the same floor, and barefoot. Does the invisible one intend to ambush us for the capture?” Todoroki didn’t respond with a direct answer to the question. Rather, he curled his fingers and stepped forward.

“This will get hairy, I’d head outside. If they want to make this a defensive game… this won’t be a big deal for me.” Once his teammate was outside, the youth set to work. Ice rippled from his right side. It moved quick and in large volumes. Before most of the students could react in the viewing booth, the entire building’s exterior was encased. It glittered in the sunlight. Inside was the same… it was as if a winter storm had blown through. Ojiro couldn’t do much as Todoroki entered in the room containing the bomb.

“Ngh..!?"

“You can move, if you want. Do be aware though, that losing the skin off the sole of your foot… won’t help you fight.” Todoroki exhaled as he moved forward.

“He made sure his ally was exempt from the attack, and he didn’t damage the core… even weakened the enemy position. He’s something else…” All Might, and the other students with the exception of Bakugou and Vanfell, found shivers running through his body. Hagakure tried to move, but couldn’t. Todoroki placed his hand on the bomb, and the victory was announced.

“My fault. The divide between us is just too big.” Todoroki muttered, as he left. Bakugou saw the power… and he couldn’t quite believe it. There wasn’t a major reaction but it only served to add to the feelings swirling inside him. With that the fight concluded. Todoroki made sure to produce some heat from his other side, freeing the opponents from their predicament…but the defeat was fresh in their mind.

The third fight was due to start. It seemed like it was going to be one that divided the class again. On the hero side was a duo full of vim and vigour. Kirishima, and Mina. It seemed that the two knew each other quite well. They didn’t bother to discuss strategy during the five minute set up period. Both of them believed that they’d be able to figure it out on the fly, and that wasting time on stratagems would only stress them out. The villain side was where the division lay. No one doubted Momo. She had shown herself to be extremely intelligent with her analysis of the prior battle. The recommendation student had also clocked in at first on the physical exams that Aizawa had conducted. 1-A had a firm belief that she would do well, just as they did for Kirishima and Mina.
Rather the doubt and concern fell upon her teammate. Vanfell Zephyr, a student who broke the mold. No one was still quite sure of what to make of him. He was, as far as they could tell, the first quirkless hero course student in the world. Vanfell had also just skidded in as the last non-recommendation student. 36th out of 36th entrants. Much talk had centred on if he was in U.A on his own merits, or if he was there to fill some nebulous “diversity quota.” Even All Might didn’t know what to think. Zephyr made him recall his words to Midoriya, about needing a power to be a hero. Yet, it seemed that before him was a rebuttal to those very words.

“Soooooo, Iida. What do we think about Vanfell and his chances!” Ochako turned to her friend as she made gestures with her hands, shaking them up and down. Iida adjusted his glasses, and tapped his chin.

“Well. If he is in U.A on his own merits which we have to presume he is, he is clearly capable to some degree.” He made his own hand gestures as he discussed this with Ochako. Unfortunately for the girl, he went into a rather long-winded spiel.

“Wonder if he’ll be better at fighting than Midoriya was, before ya know. Whoosh! Exciting stuff.” Kaminari grinned, throwing a mock uppercut for emphasis.

“We’ll see. He could be all bark and no bite. Let the results show us.” Was the rather blunt reply from Todoroki, watching with folded arms. Bakugou was stood in the back and his teeth were grinding together. A quirkless runt in his class? He’d get wiped by anyone with a quirk. Had to. Just the way the world worked.

“Oooh! Aren’t quirkless people like, considered disabled? Maybe he’ll surprise us!!” Tooru exclaimed, as Ojiro tensed, and nudged at her invisible form.

“Hagakure, you can’t just say that sort of thing you know...” But none of this was heard by the actual teams themselves. It was showtime for the four students. The villains had their five minutes of preparation time. It would be essential that it was used properly. Vanfell bobbed and swayed on his feet. A bit of shadow boxing as he turned his focus to Momo. Her quirk was pretty useful, given they were on the defensive. Seemed she’d already got to work, reinforcing the walls. Couple that quirk with the intelligence she had displayed earlier, she was amazing. But he wasn’t going to let his end down in the slightest. All eyes would be on him for sure, time to stand and deliver.

“Hey. Yaoyorozu.” He made an effort to be formal this time. “Figure you’ve already got a plan figured out. What do you need me to do?” The female didn’t even turn to face him, as she answered.

“Don’t be a liability.” It was curt, but seemingly absent of malice. Despite this, Vanfell failed to take it well.

“The hell? You trying to suggest I could end up being a liability?” His tone was tight. All Might, who was the only one who could hear this, could tell a nerve had been struck.

“Given that you a lack a quirk, it is a distinct possibility. Everyone else participating in this exercise have multiple options open to them, due to their quirks. Kirishima through his hardening can lend himself to offence or defence. Mina can burn the floor out, or burn you down in a frontal assault. I can create any item pertinent to our defensive efforts. Inherently, you bring nothing to table. Thus, the chance for you to be a liability is far higher than anyone else present.”

“Right.” Vanfell felt his hands curl into fists. He exhaled as he shrugged. “Fair dues really. Way you see it, you got unlucky. We’re friends outside of a fight, but no one wants the quirkless tag-along,
“eh?” His lip curled as he shook his head. It was always the case when it came to these people. “Turning this into a defensive fight ain’t going to work for us. Mina and Kirishima, what I’ve seen? High tempo personalities. We turtle up, they’ll dictate the fight. Rule one of a fight. Don’t let someone else dictate it.” Momo watched Vanfell for a moment, out of the corner of her eye. He made some interesting points. But they were limited in how hard they could go on the offensive, solely due to his lack of a quirk. Outfitting him with equipment via her quirk wouldn’t circumnavigate the problem. Defence was the only option when one had such limited options at their disposal…

“STARTTTTT!” All Might’s heroic voice rocked through the building. It was the signal that Mina and Kirishima could start advancing into the building. Vanfell could tell that Momo wasn’t entirely done with her defences, he’d interrupted her for too long. She seemed to be flustered for a moment, as he gritted his teeth.

“Finish up here. I’ll buy you the time you need.” He grunted as he darted out of the door. Momo watched him go and swallowed. Just what exactly did he intend to do? Against the two of them, by himself. Her lip twitched, as she set herself to the task at hand.

“Alright Mina! Stick close behind me, and I’ll be the unbreakable shield we need!” Kirishima grinned as the two entered into the building. He was confident they could come out on top. Vanfell and Yaoyorozu were both lacking in raw offence capability. No way they’d break him!

“Uh huh. Sounds good Kirishima...just don’t go getting all middle school edgy on me, okay!?” Mina replied back. All Might gathered that the two of them must have known each other prior to arriving at U.A. Kirishima was taken aback, about to splutter a reply.

“You two done flirting? Figure it’d be rude to knock your heads together if ya ain’t focused.” Vanfell had already made it down the flight of stairs. Both of them head on. He exhaled. He knew he could do this, clenching his fists tight together.

“The hell? Does this idiot think he can two of them on at once!? With no quirk!” Mineta, the diaper child, gesticulated wildly in the spectator booth.

“Time to see if he can stand and deliver! And the hero team would do well not to underestimate him. Any villain can be a surprisingly dangerous threat, young Mineta!” All Might replied. But internally, he had to think much along the same lines. It seemed foolhardy for Zephyr to charge straight into battle. Even if he intended to buy Yaoyorozu time, it was almost equivalent to self-sacrifice.

“Heh! You got guts, Vanfell! Manly as hell... but you’re not gonna beat me!” Kirishima yelled, fire burning in his voice. Before Mina could get a word in edgewise, the spiky haired youth had barrelled towards the quirkless foe. So she reacted quickly.

“Ejirou! Slow down, wait for meee!” She exclaimed. Acid seeped out of her shoes. Sliding on it to pick up speed, Ashido flung herself into the air. Flying just shortly behind Kirishima, she collected a glob of acid in her hand before flinging it at Zephyr.

“Good opener. I can’t attack you head on. Too hard.” Vanfell muttered to himself. The lad darted forward. He placed a hand on Kirishima’s shoulder, and then swung his legs up. His feet planted on the shoulders of the boy, before springing him into the air. “So I just won’t hit you.” Kiri’s attack had been simply too slow, going wide. The acid whizzed past Vanfell’s face, as Mina could barely respond. She was flustered by the fact that she was suddenly sharing airspace with the quirkless student. His hand gripped her by the throat and he made sure to slam her into the ground as the two landed. Loosening his grip instantly, he rolled further away to avoid an immediate counter-attack, as he exhaled.
“Heh! Just like Midoriya!” Kaminari grinned, mimicking the movements that Vanfell had just pulled off. It wasn’t quite as smooth, as All Might grunted. It had been impressive on the part of the boy. He knew Kirishima was too durable, which meant that he would be able to support the weight of Vanfell. There was no way Ashido would have seen that attack coming, leaving her defences wide open.

“Mina! You good!?” Kirishima barked as he darted to help her up. She rolled her neck and fixed her eyes on Vanfell.

“Fine! He’s quick… but there’s only one of him!” Mina watched Vanfell. They hadn’t pushed him into a corner yet, so he still had plenty of directions to move in. But before she could say anything further, Kirishima had already launched himself forward again. He was going to smash this guy head on, not hold anything back. Vanfell moved quickly. This time he opted to slide through the legs of Kirishima. Another attack from the red-haired boy went wide. Mina snapped her wrist, sending a wave of acid where she predicted that her foe would be standing. But spinning on his heel, Vanfell forced Kirishima into a headlock. He knew he couldn’t hold it long, not with the way his opponent was bucking. All he needed to do though… was spin! Turning himself and Kirishima around, the acid aimed for Vanfell splattered onto Mina’s ally. With a huff, Vanfell shoved Kirishima forward. This fight was already forcing him to be fast on his feet. But he was keeping up. That’s all that mattered.

“Damn. Acid still stings Ashido!” Kirishima yelled, as he skidded to stand by her again. Their opponent was just a beast. Every single attempt they had tried so far had been countered.

“Wasn’t meant for you, you butt! How is this guy holding his own like this!?” She huffed. But she had a thought. “Ejiro! Charge em, get em!” She grinned. Vanfell cocked an eyebrow, as Kirishima barreled forth. He was like a bull in a china shop. But before he could react to the attack, he watched the acid girl flick it into the air. Part of the floor above him… broke off, melted away. Vanfell had to move, skidding quickly to the left to dodge the falling debris. It broke harmlessly atop Kirishima, and also threw up a cloud of dust. No way to tell where the attack was coming from. His head exploded in pain, as Kirishima rose from the dust. Vanfell didn’t think before throwing a haymaker of his own back. So his hand exploded in pain. Nothing broken, the tape was keeping it solid. But the fact that the attack hadn’t hit him in the torso meant it had been full force. And now he was trapped in a corner. Sure, he could bob and weave against Kirishima alone, but the added acid made things more dangerous. He hoped that Momo could handle it from here.

“He’s strong, fast, and intelligent. Those factors can only carry you so far.” Todoroki watched, gripping his sleeve.

“Nah, come on man. You’re underselling him! Gonna whip out some big suplex right about now!” Kaminari continued to gesticulate, now fully buying into the Vanfell hype. But All Might could tell. Zephyr was in a bind. It was his pride that had stuck him in the situation.

“Vanfell! Move!” His ear twitched as he heard the female voice of his partner come down the earpiece. His leg twitched as he sprung over Kirishima. Acid sizzled against his face as Mina reacted, but he was clear. Looking through the hole in the floor, he watched as a grenade dropped down. It promptly exploded, though it seemed to lack the shrapnel. Compressed air sent Kirishima and Ashido sprawling. A female figure emerged from the smoke, with a bo staff firmly grasped in both hands. Momo planted her feet as she looked at Vanfell. The quirkless student cocked an eyebrow.

“Heh. Could get used to being saved by a pretty broad like you.” He rose his fists, and got back into fighting position.

“Divide and conquer. Get Kirishima away from Ashido, and handle him.” She remarked. “Modified
my plan, but it doesn’t work if both of them are present.”

“Talk about good timing! She just dropped down right in time in order to save Zephyr!” Ochako pumped her fist in the air beaming widely.

“Yaoyorozu made the perfect arrival. It would seem she is continuing to live up to what is expected of her. Despite her stellar effort however, she is attached to a partner who is wildlessly reckless.” Iida lost himself in yet another tangent.

Vanfell nodded. If she had a plan to deal with Ashido, he needed to take on Kirishima. He’d already come up with a contingency plan if he had to fight the lad head on. Time to put it into action. He broke into a run, hauling away from the group.

“Hey, hedgehog hair! If you’re a real man, fight me by yourself! Or you chicken?!” Vanfell taunted. It was a bait, intended to fire his opponent up.

“What the-! ‘Course I can take you on by myself, what kind of a MAN do you take me for!?” Kirishima practically roared in response. He broke off after Vanfell, intending to chase him up the stairs.

“Ejiro! Waitttttttttt!” Mina groaned. He went from edgy to over the top! Acid started to seep from her boots as she made to follow him. But she found herself falling forward, tripping over a… fence! Just before she fell head-first into the floor, she felt a bo staff slam into her gut. She was sent staggering back as Yaoyorozu shook her head.

“You’ve got other concerns!” And so it seemed that the battle had finally split. The teams were separated. This exchange had only taken a minute and a half, and so much of the battle still lay ahead.

Vanfell positioned himself against a wall. This was going to be rough, but if he was right about everything running through his head then he could win this. Kirishima was in hot pursuit. Not much time to relax and get ready. Dancing on the balls of his feet he exhaled. Any second now…

“HEY! FACE ME HEAD ON AND STOP RUNNING!” Kirishima arrived, almost as if on cue. He didn’t have the capture tape on him, just as Van had expected. No way his opponent would go for the capture if he could have a fight. Time to go the distance…

“Alright then. You actually got to hit me though. Not like that head blow earlier.” Vanfell taunted his opponent. Had to get the fire swelling in Kirishima.

“HEAD-ON! JUST HOW I LIKE IT!” His opponent yelled back, his manly fire overwhelming. Both lads lurched forward. Kirishima went for the head right away, but Vanfell threw his arms up. It was a strong punch, one that hurt for sure. But it had hit his sleeves. He shoved Kirishima, tapping him on the head. Old boxing technique. Wind your opponent up.

“Come on! Not worth my time to punch you back!” He taunted. His arms were kept guarding his face. With no other real option left open to him, Kirishima unloaded a slew of punches into the torso of his opponent.

“I’LL GIVE YOU EVERYTHING I GOT!” The red-haired youth was putting everything into these attacks. Vanfell felt the pain swimming, but he could handle this. Resisting the onslaught, he shoved Kirishima away, and tapped him on the head again. He still hadn’t thrown a single punch just yet.

“Has he actually got a plan? Or is he just letting himself be a punching bag…” Jirou muttered to
herself. All Might wondered the same. From this vantage point it looked like Vanfell was simply goading Kirishima. Did he intend to wear him down, exhaust him, and make them both drop at the same time? It would be in line with the intended self-sacrifice from earlier.

“FIGHT BACK DAMN IT! THIS AIN’T MANLY!” Kirishima was started to feel a bit torn up about the whole thing. It didn’t stop him from throwing out the punches, but it did frustrate him. Sure, tanking his barrage was manly. But at the same time, he was pounding on someone who wasn’t fighting back.

“S’matter tough guy? Can’t knock a liability out?” Vanfell gritted his teeth. Kirishima was breaking him up inside, and the pain was starting to spread. Sure, each blow was weaker than the last but it didn’t matter. The quantity and overall strength was starting to overwhelm him. But he shoved the boy away again, tapped his head, and spat. No blood. Yet.

“Liability…” All Might twitched. The hero watched the fight with a slight spike in interest. Had he been wrong about Van merely intending to sacrifice himself? Was the actuality that he was trying to prove himself…? He knew the burden the boy carried, but even still. This was foolhardy to the extreme! But for now, it seemed the two students were at an impasse. Kirishima, fuming, was watching Van from a distance. Vanfell, despite having an opening to work with wasn’t taking it…

Elsewhere, Ashido and Yaoyorozu were in pitched battle. Ashido had since given up on the idea of following after Kirishima. His opponent was quirkless, and with his resolve she was sure he’d figure it out. For now she had to keep her focus on Yaoyorozu. Her opponent was skilled with the bo staff. It was only down to all her dancing skills that she was able to dodge. She wasn’t even given much time to counter-attack or respond. But she knew eventually Yaoyorozu would make a mistake. There! Yaoyorozu made a horizontal strike at Ashido’s head. She limboed under it, and flicked her wrist. A thin line of acid cut the bo staff in half, rendering the weapon useless. Springing up, she swung a kick at Yaoyorozu. It connected, her opponent sent skidding back. Yaoyorozu huffed. Then she turned on her heel, and shoved the door behind her open. Without a word she ran into the corridor. It was a gamble. She had to hope that Ashido would follow her. If she did, then this fight was already over.

“...What a cunning ruse! Yaoyorozu-san has laid out a variety of traps and pitfalls. She of course knows them expertly, having placed them herself. Ashido-san will be running blind! How insidiously evil!” Iida exclaimed. His hands went up, right, down, and left. To a person who didn’t know his mannerisms, it looked quite a bit like a dance. Uraraka nodded as she swallowed.

“Yaoyorozu is pretty smart. But maybe Ashido can handle it! Burn through the traps with her acid!”

Ashido bolted right after Yaoyorozu. She didn’t bother to open the door. Instead she melted a hole through it, which she lept through. Confidence surged through her. Yaoyorozu was on the run! She didn’t even notice the tripwire she had broken before it was too late. A slew of crossbow bolts with rubber tips shot at her from the walls. She managed to leap over them, just barely dodging. But when she landed, a pressure plate went off. A net above her opened. A piano dropped, about to fall on her. She flicked a string of acid into the air, slicing it down the middle. But as she did so, a collection of what appeared to be… flashbangs!? She threw one arm up to defend her eyes, but it was too bright. Her world became a sharp flash of white. Yaoyorozu moved forward from her hiding point. An extension of the wall, she had formed. The girl knew she’d need to eat up after this, and was thankful that her partner had given her the time needed to do this. Expertly leaping over another pressure plate, she grabbed Ashido and threw her over her shoulder. The alien-esque girl landed on what appeared to be a… net? Then it shot into the air, as Yaoyorozu pulled a lever she had planted earlier.

“I wouldn’t melt your way out of the net. I calculated the fall. You won’t die, but from that height
you’ll be ko-ed. Consider yourself restrained, hero!” She played into the “villainous” role that she had been assigned. Iida had done so, and it would behoove her to act the same.

“H-hey! No fair!” Ashido whined from inside her cage, as Todoroki furrowed his brow.

“Impressive. A trap array that she knew how to traverse…”

“ASHIDO HAS BEEN ELIMINATED!!” Yaoyorozu heard those words as she ran out of the room. Her plan had gone well. Rigging all the crossbows to one trip-wire had been stressful, and it might not have worked. The plastic shell shaped like a piano was a tad theatrical, but she was playing a villain! Now she had to go and help Vanfell.

“Vanfell! Come in!” She barked down the transceiver… but she didn’t hear anything. He’d turned it off!? Or maybe it had been damaged and broken? Her head rushed with options as she made for the stairs.

All Might’s announcement promptly ended the Mexican standoff. Vanfell lifted his head, sweat dripping to the floor. Yaoyorozu had done it. Not that he expected anything else. It didn’t embolden him. He was tiring and couldn’t really focus. Kirishima on the other hand reared back.

“ASHIDOOOOOOOO. GAH! I’LL AVENGE YOU!” His body hardened with renewed vigor. He broke forward, and was upon Van in an instance. His stomach erupted into a fresh batch of pain. Kirishima was renewed, and giving it everything he had. Even with his suit dampening the effects, it was overwhelming. His eyes started to blur as he strained just to keep on his feet. And with his weakening composure, his guard broke for a moment. Kirishima saw his chance.

“CRIMSON RIOT UPPERCUT!” The blow swung up clean through Vanfell’s guard. He saw it coming out of the corner of his eye as it slammed into his jaw. Spittle flew as his head seemed to rattle. It was as if he’d just been hit by a brick wall as he fell clean on his back, thrown back. Kirishima exhaled, and gave what seemed to be a victory roar. Vanfell struggled. His vision was going black. Guess he'd done this much.

“He really ought to say down. If he gets back up, he’ll just get knocked down again, kero.” Froppy muttered.

“He fought well. But in the face of such overwhelming defence and offence there was naught he could do.” Tokoyami sighed as he watched the fight seemingly come to an end.

“You’d think he’d hold back against a disabled student!!” Hagakure frowned, swinging her arms up and down in frustration.

“Hagakure!” Ojiro swatted at her with his tail, as All Might peered in at the monitor. It seemed to him that Vanfell was down and out. He wasn’t sure what his plan had been in the first place, but he’d managed to last long enough. It was all he could it seemed. His voice slipped into the microphone.

“ZEPHYR HAS BE-”

Vanfell felt his world spinning. He was tired, tired as anything. It would do him well to just go to sleep here, rest. Not have to deal with the rest of this. Yaoyorozu could finish the tired Kirishima off. ...But that would make him a liability. Couldn’t KO anyone, couldn’t go the distance. His suit. It was charged. He had to get back up. His legs wouldn’t move… so tired. Then he heard it. All Might’s voice. About to say he’s been eliminated. Not on his life. Gritting his teeth, he forced his eyes open. His palms slapped against the ground and then forced him back to his feet.
“YO, ALL MIGHT. I DIDN’T HEAR NO BELL!” He roared down the headpiece as he stood up, back straight. The spectator booth erupted into yelling. One man made sure to figurehead the hype.

“BADASS, DUDE! I TOLD YOU GUYS HE’D GET BACK UP!” Kaminari exclaimed, pumping one fist in the air up and down. All Might was taken aback… but Bakugou wasn’t surprised. Make it this far being quirkless, you had to have something up your sleeve. It was insane to think though. All these people going all out…

“Heh. Gotta say Zephyr, you’re manly as hell! But I’m gonna beat ya!” Kirishima remarked. This quirkless guy was insane to get back up again. He’d get knocked down just as soon though! Moving in for a haymaker, Kirishima was surprised to hit nothing but air. Vanfell had sidestepped the blow.

“Gotta thank ya, Kirishima.” Vanfell grinned. His suit activated. A cushion of kinetic force wrapped itself around his fist as he slammed it clean into Kirishima’s ribs. It both insulated the fist from harm, while making sure to hurt his opponent. The red haired lad took a step back as Vanfell grinned. Another punch came from Kirishima. Vanfell made sure to meet it with his other fist, the kinetic energy making sure he won out.

“Ngh, the hell!? You been holding out on me, man!?” Kirishima barked. All of a sudden Vanfell was dodging, and matching him!?

“Your blows are dead. Makes sense. Quirk is transformation based. Means you got to focus to use it right? More tired you get, harder that becomes.” Vanfell replied with a heavy one two punch combination to Kirishima’s stomach. Kirishima couldn’t believe it. Somehow Vanfell had found a way to hurt him!? He was also on the money with the description of his quirk. Still.

“Enough to knock you down! Crimson Riot Haymaker!” He flung a blow right for the head of his opponent. Vanfell twitched and swayed. The attack hit nothing but air. He took a single step back, and threw his arms back. Before Kirishima could react, an insane barrage of blows descended on him. Each insulated with the same kinetic force Vanfell had been using before.

“This suit of mine, weakened every blow of yours. Took part of the kinetic force from the punch, fed it into the fabric. Now? I’m just dealing out what you dealt to me!” Vanfell taunted. His body was burning up, but he had to finish this. His suit was running through the kinetic energy, it had to be enough to beat Kirishima now, or he was done. All Might couldn’t believe what he was seeing. His entire plan had been predicated on letting Kirishima air it out on him, in order to turn the power back around! Kirishima kept his guard up, hoping to weather the storm. But a blow to his stomach made his arms fall loose. Vanfell flung one arm all the way back. The quirkless student channeled all the remaining energy into it. His eyes narrowed as he roared.

“KINETIC REVERSAL HAYMAKER!” It swung forward. As it collided with Kirishima’s face, he heard those words from Yaoyorozu. Don’t be a liability. The force erupted and smashed Kirishima into the floor. His hardening broke. Exhaustion coupled with the sheer power of that last attack was enough to knock him clean out. Yaoyorozu arrived at the top of the stairs just in time to see Vanfell collapse, as All Might screamed down the intercom.

“KIRISHIMA IS DEFEATED! VILLAIN TEAM WINNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!!”

The stunning turnaround from Vanfell caused the spectator room to burst into the equivalent of a riot. There were people incredulous that he had managed to pull something like that off.

“Holy crap! He had a plan the entire time!? Letting himself get beat up though!? What a masochist!” Mineta exclaimed, spittle flying from his mouth. Others found themselves rather lukewarm on the
victory, though grudgingly impressed.

“Guess he had the technical skill mastered. But geez, nowhere near as exciting as the last two matches.” Sero ran a hand through his hair as he shrugged. Todoroki and Bakugou stewed to themselves on the matter. Others were celebrating the amazing come-back. Even as the room seemed to calm down, upon the entry of the students, it exploded again. Vanfell found himself having to lean on Yaoyorozu for support.

“You have an easier time with Ashido then?” Vanfell coughed out. His body was swimming in the pain as it caught up to him. Yaoyorozu nodded.

“It was a simple matter of luring her into the trap that I set. You were right to suggest we couldn’t be solely defensive.” Yaoyorozu paused and sighed. “I do wish you hadn’t harmed yourself quite so much due to my words though!” An incredulous Vanfell fell into swift bickering with his teammate.

“We’ll win next time Ashido!” Kirishima slammed his fists together as he walked in. “Zephyr was more manly than I thought!”

“Maybe next time you won’t go running off and leave me to end up in a maze death trap!!” Ashido yelled at him, as those two also fell into swift but well meaning bickering. But the four of them were interrupted by All Might walking over to start the critique. But before he could, Iida lept in front of him. Ochako tried to grab him, but failed as she felt her cheeks flush red in embarrassment. All Might went to talk to Iida, before a mountain of words erupted.

“ZEPHYR-SAN! I MUST APOLOGIZE! YOU SEE, I INITIALLY WROTE YOU OFF AS A FOOLHARDY INDIVIDUAL WHO HAD NO PLAN. THE WAY YOU CONDUCTED YOURSELF REMINDED ME OF Bakugou, AND THUS I FELL INTO A STEREOTYPICAL VIEW. I SEE NOW, I WAS WRONG! CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE MEEEEEEEEEEEEE!?” He shouted, his hands talking almost as fast as he did. Vanfell blinked.

“Sure…?” He coughed and scratched his head. Who knew question twat was this eccentric. All Might gently lifted the still gesticulating, and now crying, Iida to the side. Ochako tugged him into the back of the crowd, as All Might cleared his throat.

“The stand-out student for this match is Yaoyorozu! To save time, I’ll give the explanation this time, oho!” He placed a hand on his hip as Yaoyorozu seemed flustered all of a sudden. “Yaoyorozu got into the role the most! She also showed a keen tactical mind as well as a knack for some on the spot improvisation. When her partner ran off, she shifted her plan appropriately and utilized her quirk to the fullest!”

“YO! What about Zephyr!? Did you not see that turn around, sensei!” Kaminari yelled as he threw his hands up and down. Jirou felt her face sink into her hands, as the teacher turned to address the student.

“Zephyr indeed had a strong comeback! However, everything else left a lot to be desired! Knowing himself to be at a disadvantage, he attempted to engage two opponents at once. Not only this, but his plan against Kirishima was fool hardy! It depended on him being able to survive whatever was thrown his way, and he nearly didn’t. Leaving his teammate at the start is also an area for improvement.” The discussion continued to go on. Vanfell heard these words and gripped a fist tight. He didn’t care what All Might had to say on the matter. He’d won, and that's all that really mattered…

Vanfell was sent to the nurse's office despite his protests. Yaoyorozu on some level felt as if her
words had induced him to go as far as he did. So she made sure to walk him down there. Both of them were aghast at the injuries Izuku had sustained. He was rigged up to the an IV drip, and his arm was in a cast. Recovery Girl gave Vanfell the kiss he needed, much to his distaste, and shooed the two into a separate room. It was to make sure that Izuku wasn’t interrupted while resting. Vanfell fell into a seat and propped his feet up onto the table in front of him. Yaoyorozu was sat across from him. There was awkward silence for the first few minutes.

“So… you handled Ashido all right then?” It was a start at conversation. Not the best, but something he could work with.

“Oh, yes. Ashido has a versatile quirk. Using it to my advantage was the best idea that came to mind. The traps were merely a failsafe.” She explained as Vanfell laughed. “L-laughing!?”

“Must be hard being this good, right? Intelligent, strong quirk, fit as hell. Guess you’re vying to be the top of the class, eh?”

“Well, what is the point of enrolling such a prestigious school, if one intends to settle for anything other than the top?”

“Right, right. See, hard for me to think that way. Not possible for me to be where you can be. Struggled hard enough with Kirishima today.” Vanfell shrugged.

Yaoyorozu wasn’t entirely sure how to answer that. She paused for a moment.

“Well. You showed today that you can hold your own against those with quirks, yes? It is a start. We are only at the starting line! It would be foolish to get ahead of ourselves.”

“Heh. You always know how to come up with an answer.” He scratched his face and sighed. “You gonna do anything fun after school gets out today then?”

“I imagine I’ll have some time to dedicate to violin. I’ll have to study, revise my notes, prepare myself for tomorrow, and what not. Then fifteen minutes for the violin, before an early night.”

“Busy schedule. I just have to go swimming, and then the nights mine. Gonna have to rest up, but eh. Figure I can get some television in.”

“Oh? Do you have a favourite programme to watch? Maybe the boxing channel? I saw a rerun of one of your mother’s matches last night.” Yaoyorozu nodded.

“Now, if I tell you, no laughing alright?” Vanfell had a serious look on his face as he rolled his neck. Yaoyorozu tilted her head, but then nodded. “Pretty big fan of that drama. Bout the villain who loves the hero. Trashy, but i-”

“You watch that show as well!? I thought myself to be the only one. It has it all!” Yaoyorozu’s face lit up. “The writing is intricate, and paced. Camerawork is expertly done, and the romance is just amazing!” She exclaimed, as she beamed at him.

“Yeah, it is pretty good, ain’t it. Best character has to be the cop, in my opinion. Tough, firm, but also dedicated to getting the pair together.”

“He is a standout, but the villain! His roguish looks, his staunch outlook on the world… ah-” Yaoyorozu felt herself flush red for a moment, as she watched Vanfell trying to hold back laughter. The two went on talking for a good while.

Back at the training, the rest of the matchups continued. Everyone found themselves inspired by Izuku, Todoroki, and Vanfell. All the prior battles had got them fired up, pumped, and ready to give
it everything! Jirou had to suffer through battle with Kaminari, and Froppy worked expertly alongside Tokoyami. Eventually, every battle drew to a close. It was time for the wrapping up of things, and then dismissal to go home.

“Excellent work everyone! Beside young Midoriya and Vanfell, there were no major injuries! Yet, none of you held anything back. And for the first full training exercise, you did amazing!” All Might exclaimed, beaming a warm smile to the group. There was some tension as the group expected some sort of twist after what Aizawa had pulled.

“So honest… right after Aizawa-sensei’s lesson? Seems kinda like an anti-climax.” One voice muttered from within the throngs of the class. All Might heard this as he turned to walk away.

“Honest lessons are also in line with our ‘freedom’ here on campus! Now, I must go share my critique from earlier with young Midoriya! Get changed, and head back to the classroom!” All Might exclaimed. With a raise of his arm, he stepped forward and zipped away at high speed.

“Is he in a rush? All Might’s pretty cool…” Mineta mused. All Might was moving fast, but even as he went his gaze fell upon Bakugou. The student had a silent gaze on his face, his head dropped and sunken. Filled with self-confidence… An inflated heart was dangerously weak. He ought to give him counseling right away, but… “I’m near my limit just from class… shit!”

Thus, All Might arrived at the nurse’s office. Luckily, Vanfell and Yaoyorozu had been dismissed by Recovery Girl. It meant he could shift into his true form without having to worry about anyone finding out the truth. All Might had planned to talk to young Izuku, but upon arrival…

“BARELY ANY TIME HAS PASSED AT ALL, YET THIS IS HIS THIRD TIME HERE! WHY DIDN’T YOU STOP THEM, ALL MIGHT?” Recovery Girl fumed at the #1 hero from her swivel chair as she shook her head. With a meek look on his face, All Might put his hands ups in front of him.

“I apologize, Recovery Girl…”

“Don’t apologize to me! Just yesterday he dealt with crippling exhaustion. I can’t treat him all in one go anymore! I administered emergency first-aid, and hooked him up to an IV. Now, there’s no other choice beside revitalizing him gradually over the whole day!” She exhaled and shook her head. “For Pete’s sake… this is the disciple you granted your power to. That’s why you shouldn’t indulge him!”

“I have nothing to say in my defense.” All Might felt awkward. He lifted one hand, rubbing at his neck. “I wished to understand how he felt and so I hesitated. Also uh…” He lifted a finger to his mouth, with sweat beads dripping from his head. “Let’s not be so loud discussing One For All!”

“Yes yes, I know, Mr. Natural Born Hero. Mr. Symbol of Peace.”

“This true form of mine and my injury are common knowledge among the pro teachers of Yuuei, but.” He paused, holding a hand in front of him. “The nature of my quirk is only known by you, the principal, some of my closest friends, and young Midoriya, of course.”

“It’s not like I’m itching to rest my laurels at the top. It is really so vital to be a “natural born hero” or “the symbol of peace?” Recovery Girl inquired, as she turned her back to All Might.

“Without this symbol, this society of superhumans would fall to evil.” All Might was earnest. His master had not passed the quirk unto him for no reason. “Such is… the responsibility of he who holds this power.” Recovery huffed, paused, and sighed. She looked at the prone form of Izuku Midoriya as he rested in the bed.
“If that’s the case. Then you need to learn how to properly guide him all the more!!”

Izuku was out for the rest of the day. His injuries had been fairly intense. By the time he regained consciousness, the school day was over. The student was disappointed. He had wanted to see all the other battles. It would have been amazing to see how the other students used their quirks. After all, U.A was prestigious. Their talent had to be amazing. There was also the matter of Vanfell… Had the quirkless student won his battle? Had he continued to be a harsh reminder to Izuku of his failings, as well as All Might being wrong? Or had he failed, and there was nothing to worry about? There was also the matter of him being bound up by Aizawa-sensei. He pushed the door to the class open.

“Oh hey Midoriya!!! Nice job back there!!” Spiky red hair was the first thing the student saw, as Kirishima greeted him. Before Izuku could get a word in, he was also beset by Mina. The two of them flung words at him, much like an assault.

“Well, I couldn’t hear what you said, but that was some heated stand-off, man!”

“H-huh⁈?”

“You dodged like a real champ! The first match was so intense it fired us all up!!” Mina exclaimed, clenching her fists.

“Yo. I’m Kirishima Eijirou! We were just finishing reviewing the exercise!” Kirishima exclaimed.

“Heya! I’m Mina Ashido! You dodged him super well.” The horned girl pouted for a moment. “Wish I’d done that vs that quirkless guy…” Even while being bombarded by all these people, Izuku caught upon this. Had Vanfell actually won his fight?

“I’m Asui Tsuyu, but call me Tsuyu, okay?” The frog like girl jutted in. Elsewhere in the classroom, there were other antics going on. Tokoyami was seated on a table, and Iida wasn’t taking this too well. His wild gesticulations, and yelling, proved that his conviction was nigh-unshakeable. Kaminari was also trying his luck with Ochako.

“Hey, Uraraka. Wanna go out to eat? What food do you like?” He asked, with a sly grin on his face. The girl seemed a bit absent-minded however.

“Mochi… Oh, Deku-kun!” She yelped as she saw the boy, cast and all. Much to the chagrin of Kaminari, she darted over to him. “Your injuries! Are they not healed yet⁈?” She exclaimed, clutching the equivalent arm on her own body. She had concern written all over her. It was kind of cute, but Izuku was quick to placate her.

“Ah. Don’t worry! This is just because my physical strength is a bit sapped… more importantly Uraraka-san…”

Izuku had noted that the majority of the class had stopped him. The only exceptions had been Vanfell, Momo, and Jirou. But as Izuku had found out, they all took the same train. They had simply departed early. The important one was still around. He’d been silent since earlier… and was heading home. Izuku hoped that with any luck he’d be able to catch up with him. He dashed out of the school building, and ran as fast as he was able to. Kacchan was right there, he’d made it.

“KACCHAN!!” He exclaimed, coming to a halt as he yelled out. The blonde haired student paused, and turned his head. He didn’t seem to be in much of a talkative, or good, mood. Izuku paused. He hadn’t even told his mom. His secret that is. But… “This is all I think I need to tell you!” He paused again. Was he really going to tell Kacchan? “I obtained this quirk from somebody else.” The silence hung for a moment. Kacchan’s face didn’t shift much, but Izuku’s stomach did somersaults. “No
matter what, I can’t tell you who. But...it's true. Even if it sounds like a comic book.”

“.....!?” Bakugou furrowed his brow. Just what the hell was this damn nerd rattling on about?

“In addition, I still can’t use it fully, not properly. It’s a ‘borrowed’ power I can’t make my own yet. It’s why I tried to beat you without it. But...” Izuku remembered Vanfell. How the quirkless student was driving ahead, carving a path. “But even then, in the end I couldn’t win. And relied on it anyway! I’m still nowhere near strong enough... and so---” Standing up now, he let his face focus on Kacchan. “One day, it’ll be my own power. Then I’ll surpass you, by my own merit!” Silence fell over the two students. Bakugou’s face was shocked. He was still processing what Izuku had said, letting it sink in. Izuku now realized that he might have just said perhaps a little bit more than he had intended to. Bakugou twitched.

“What the hell is that...? A “borrowed power?” I don’t get what the hell you’re trying to say. You come here just to make an even bigger fool of me!? Huh!? Even if not...” It seemed he’d been relatively calm. Bottling his rage down for the first segment of what he had to say. “THEN SO WHAT!!?” In an instance, it was as if a dam had been broken. “TODAY YOU BEAT ME, BASTARD!!! THAT’S ALL THAT MATTERS. AND DID YOU GET A GOOD LOOK AT THAT ICE GUY? I THOUGHT HE WAS NOTHING BEFORE!” Bakugou screamed. His face was aghast, a mixture of rage and sorrow plastered upon his features. A hand grasped at his face, digits sinking into his flesh in vivid frustration. “What that ponytail idiot said really sunk in... FUCK!” Wrenching his hand back to his side, Bakugou lifted his face to glare at Izuku. Tears were beading up in his eyes. “FROM HERE ON OUT!! I...! FROM HERE ON OUT, YOU LISTENING? I’M GONNA BE NUMBER ONE!!! AND DON’T YOU DARE GET THE IDEA THAT YOU’LL EVER BEAT ME AGAIN!!! FUCK!!!” He raged as he turned his back. Wiping his face, the student started to stomp off. Izuku exhaled, and then felt a heavy weight full over. Then a blistered gust of wind flew past him. All Might!? The hero was darting towards Bakugou. His hands gripped on the boys shoulders.

“Baku! Gou! My boy!! I’ll tell you this once. Self-confidence is indeed vital. You aren’t mistaken that you have talent akin to a pro! From here on out, you can climb ever higher...” But before All Might could go any further, he found himself interrupted.

“Let go of me, All Might. I can’t walk when you’re grabbing me like that. I didn’t tell you before, so let me fix that. I’m gonna surpass you as well. I’m going to vault over you as top hero!” Fire still spilled from Bakugou as the pro hero let him go, his face taken aback. All Might never knew just how difficult teaching was. As Izuku watched his childhood friend fade into the sunset...he noted that his fuse had been lit. He was still chasing Kacchan as well. In a way, things hadn’t changed.

A few days later, the students would soon come face to face with the threat that All Might had alluded to. Deep in the dusty depths of the city, there was a bar. On the surface it appeared to be your simple run of the mill, worn down establishment. The interior told a different story. A figure placed a newspaper on the bar, next to a shot glass.

“Have you seen this? He’s become a teacher...” The voice was silky smooth. It belonged to a mist like figure. He wore a simple suit. His hands and face seemed to be solely made out of mist. Metal was wrapped around his neck, as his yellow eyes focused on his counterparts in the bar. A young figure sat in a stool. A multitude of hands clutched to his form. Two around the neck, and a notable one attached to his face.

“Hey...” This figure had a scratchy voice. One that would belong to a juvenile delinquent. Yet his aura was one of pure malice, unadulterated hate. “What do you think would happen. Once the “Symbol of Peace”, got snuffed out by villains...?” His voice dripped with derision. His eyes fell
upon a bird like creature. It’s brain was exposed, the eyes showing no intelligence. It’s body was black, muscular, and clearly engineered. Little did anyone know what was to come…

Chapter End Notes

So, that was the battle test arc! I took express care to make sure Vanfell wasn't overshadowing anyone. Sorry for the delay in release date for this arc! We should be back to normal, soon. Look forward to an exclusive look at the criminal underworld next chapter, as well as the student rep material! Plus Ultra!
It was a sunny morning. Birds chirped and flew from branch to branch. The leaves swayed gently in the breeze, and the morning dew glistened. A quiet and secluded community set itself to rousing themselves. One house at the end of the road housed a rather particular man, an interesting case. Giran. His neighbors knew that he was a businessman and an effective one at that. The aspect that they weren’t privy to was the actual nature of his work. It was true. The man did work in the business field. The legality of his field was a different matter entirely. Giran, or as his work associates knew him: The Broker. Information, black market items, costumes, all of these were part of the services he offered. For the right fee, any one of those things could be delivered.

There was also another element of work that he was known for. Scouting and recruitment. For a finders fee, the man was more than willing to find allies and potential employees for people. On the particular morning, he found himself receiving a phone call. His long fingers snatched his phone up. It had a rubber pink bunny case. A cute appearance which stood in sharp contrast with the man himself. Medium length gray hair, accompanied by side-bangs, which shone with a thin veneer of grease. There was a thin mustache creeping along his lips, alongside a rather sparse goatee. The most interesting aspect of his appearance was his scarf. Though it wasn’t organs, it held that appearance. It added an uncanny air about the man.

“Yes…? Recruitment drive?” Giran paused and took a puff on his cigarette. He exhaled and smirked. “If the funds have already been transferred, consider it done.” With that he hung up and slipped his phone back into his trouser pockets. Breakfast wasn’t important, not now. His client needed him to finish recruiting. There was a villain group that was planning an attack. Big one, or so he was told. U.A. students and the Symbol of Peace were the targets. Ballsy move from his client, not that Giran cared. Too many people acted like All Might had ended their criminal enterprises. Reality of the situation was simple. Adaptation. Everyone wanted to be a flashy villain, in the news, getting the attention of the world. Then they had the gall to be upset when things could be traced back to them, and All Might could blow them away. If you wanted to get ahead in this life, all it took was a bit of tact and information. Whatever. The man financing this attack was special, an old friend. How could Giran refuse…?

Elsewhere, the day was just starting at U.A. The students were trickling in ready for yet day of education. It wasn’t quite your... average morning, however. Izuku found himself besieged by the media. A microphone was jammed in front of him, as he jolted straight.

“What’s it like learning from All Might!” Chirped the female reporter. She had brown hair and a rather rounded face. There was shark-like intent in those eyes, searching for the next big scoop!

“Eh!? Ah… sorry. I’m due at the nurse’s office…” Izuku mumbled, ducking his head, and scurrying off. It seemed he had avoided the jaws of journalism for a little while longer. Yet the intrepid reporter was not to be stopped. She pounced upon… Ochako!

“Tell us! How does the symbol of peace look in front of the class!??” She barked. Ochako tilted her head, face lighting up, as she flexed her muscles and struck the trademark pose.

“How he looks!? Um… Super muscley! Yeah!” She beamed. The reporter felt she wasn’t going to
get much out of the girl, nodded, and lept towards… Iida!

“Tell us about… All Might, the teacher!” She presumed that this student would give more. Iida lifted his hands, and inhaled.

“Every day with All Might is a reminder that I am enrolled at this preeminent education institution. Aside from his obviously apparent dignity and presence, he is also rather humorous. We as students are privy to observing his many facets. We have also been given the opportunity to discover just what makes a top hero a top hero.” It seemed the poor reporter was going to be stuck with this child for quite a while. Once he finally stopped talking, she spotted another potential person to jump on.

“When All Might is… wait!? You’re the kid from the sludge incident!!” She squealed, hoping to get something out of him.

“Buzz off.” Was the response from Bakugou, and a grinding of his teeth. So she lept to the next student. He carried himself properly, but had a messy head of brown hair. The lad had spied her coming.

“Huh…? Press?”

“Yes! What can you tell us about how All Might interacts with the staff at U.A High!??” she inquired jabbing the microphone right in front of him. His response disappointed her as he rolled his eyes and shoved his palm at her.

“You got the first quirkless student ever, and you ask him ‘bout All Might? Piss off.” Vanfell grunted, and jogged away shaking his head. The reporter cursed herself for a moment, before leaping at the very next person she could find. Persistence was her strong suit after all! Her boss had said so as well!

“Does All M- YOU’RE A MESS! W-who are you anyway!??” She spluttered. A disheveled man wearing what seemed to be pajamas stood in front of her. He wagged his hand back and forth.

“He’s off today. You’re interrupting our classes. Please leave.” Aizawa grunted as he shuffled into school. The media masses didn’t seem to listen. There were cries for information about All Might, inquiries about why Aizawa was so sloppy, and a feeling that they’d seen him somewhere before. It wasn’t much of a surprise. All Might coming to teach at U.A was rather a big deal, shocking the whole nation. The media uproar didn’t halt for a few days. Aizawa made it through the gate. The plucky reporter from before shuffled forward, closer to the gate. Her cameraman could only give a vague warning for her not to do so. As soon as she was in front of the wide entrance to U.A, there was a soft humming and beep. A huge metal gate slammed down from the top, and one rose from the point. It clamped itself together, blocking entrance as the Reporter leapt out of her skin.

“Wahhhhhhh! What on earth!?"

“It’s the U.A. barrier. Least, that’s how we call it.” Another reporter chimed in.

“E-eh? What do you mean!?"

“Whole shebang locks down if someone who doesn’t have a school I.D or visitor pass approaches the gate. Heard they have more sensors through the whole campus…”

“The cheek! No entry, and no comment!”

“Yo, for real. Two days, and not a single byline?” As the media descended into yelling, no one noticed a greasy blue haired boy watching from the very back…
In U.A proper, Aizawa was addressing the class. He had wasted little time, so there hadn’t been much chance to talk among the students. Every sat quietly in their seats, some students fidgeting here and there. A stack of papers rested on Aizawa’s desk, the students presuming them to have to do with their battle training from yesterday.

“Good work with the battle training. I examined your grades and evaluations…” He tapped the papers. As if on cue, all of the class went stiffed sat up right. Aizawa turned his head. “Bakugou. Stop acting like a child, and wasting your talent.” His words seemed to have an effect on the lad, whose face clouded over.

“...Got it.” He muttered, not making eye contact with his teacher. Aizawa then let his face swing to Izuku.

“And… it looks like Midoriya ended yet another day with a broken arm.” Izuku yelped and jolted in his seat. His eyes seemed to bore holes into his desk as he felt that sense of concern and regret wash over himself again. “Learn to control your quirk. Just trying ain’t going to cut it. I despise repeating myself. But you do have potential, assuming you can overcome this. Work at it, Midoriya.”

“Okay!”

“Now onto home-room business… apologies for this sudden announcement, but today…” A feeling of looming evil washed over the room. Everyone in the class felt dread rest on their shoulders. Was it going to be another brutal pop quiz? All attention was on Aizawa as the man gave out a breathy sigh. “You’ll pick a class president.”

Giran scratched his jaw. The streets were agitated today. Different than usual far as he was concerned. He had felt it coming for a while now but this morning had confirmed it. His old friend was starting his new scheme. A big shakeup was coming to Japan, slowly but surely. Giran supposed he ought to play a part in it. His paycheck definitely encouraged him to do so at least. Apparently the majority of the recruiting was already done. Shigaraki and Kurogiri had done most of it. A cult of personality bolstered by support from his old pal. All Giran needed to do was find a particular specialist. Signal jammer, or so he was told. Should be easy enough. There was a wide variety of quirks that he could use for this, but he felt as if he should go for the special touch. It had been revealed to him that there was a electrical quirk user in U.A. Why not find another one for the signal jammer? His face had a smirk on it as he strolled along. A cursory glance down an alleyway revealed a mugging. Much as All Might did good… the retirement of Knuckleduster had caused the back alleys to descend back into malice. What a crying shame. He knew where to go, and who to hire. No point in wasting time. Besides, everyone gave him a wide berth unless they were stupid. No one particularly wanted to irritate The Broker…

It didn’t take Giran long to arrive. It was a small shack. His fist rapped against the door gently. There wasn’t much else around. Poverty and poor urban planning tended to do that. It reminded Giran vaguely of his childhood in the slums. Meh. His fingers plucked a cigarette from his breast pocket. Another set of fingers span his gun up before pumping the trigger. Flame flickered from the barrel as the cigarette bloomed into ignition. Smoke coiled up into the air as the door was wrenched open. A bulky figure with sunken eyes stood in the frame. He hadn’t quite noticed who he was talking to yet.

“The hell do you want, asshole?” Then he paused. His eyes looked Giran up and down as he swallowed. Giran took distinct pleasure in puffing smoke into the face of the man before baring his teeth in a grin.
“To discuss employment prospects with you.” Giran shrugged and splayed his free hand wide. “If you’re otherwise occupied…” He let the sentence hang in the air. The figure before him shook his head, splayed his fingers wide, and spluttered.

“B-by all means. Please, come in.” With that, Giran stepped inside.

The announcement of choosing class president had caused 1-A to devolve into hysterics. There was a wide variety of reactions though they all seemed to lean towards loud yelling and gesticulation. Everyone was throwing their hands up and yelling out why they would be excellent for the role.

“I WANNA BE PRESIDENT. LET ME DOOOO IT!” Kirishima bellowed. Mineta was right up on his shoulder, stubby hand splayed out.

“UNDER MY RULE, GIRLS WILL HAVE TO SHOW 30 CM OF THIGH!!” Mina was off to the side, her hand waving up and down.

“I wanna be a leader!!” She beamed out. Jirou was rather more restrained than her companions, quietly lifting her hand.

“I’d like to do it.” Aoyama rested his chin on hand, while shooting his other hand up. A few sparkles sheened off him as he sighed dramatically.

“A VOTE FOR A QUIRKLESS PRESIDENT IS A VOTE FOR DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION!” screamed Vanfell. “DO YOU WANT TO BE QUIRKIST?” In the background Bakugou and Izuku were sticking their hands up. It was surprising the level of enthusiasm. In a normal school, the position was just boring tasks. So no one really wanted to do it. However, in the Hero Course at U.A it would mean leading the group. A position fit for a top hero in the making.

“Quiet down, everyone!!” A stern commanding voice rang out. A few classmates turned around as the voice continued on. “Leading the many is a burden of heavy responsibility! But ambition does not equate to ability! This sacred office demands the trust of its constituents...if this is to be a democracy then I put forward the motion...that our true leader must be chosen by election!” It was Iida, off on a tangent. Vanfell puffed his cheeks out. Course question twat had to make a fool of himself.

“Not sure if you gathered champ, but this is a classroom. Not congress.” Vanfell shot back. Other students seemed to have their concerns as well.

“But Iida, we haven’t known each other long enough to build any trust.” Tsuyu pointed out.

“And everyone’ll just vote for themselves!!” Kirishima groaned. Iida shook his head, and made his usual jabbing hand chop motion.

“Precisely why anyone who manages to earn multiple votes… will be best suited for the job!!” He span his head to Aizawa who already deep inside his sleeping bag. “Will you allow this sensei!!?” Aizawa grunted and shrugged.

“However you do this, be quick.” And so the vote commenced. It was anonymous. A makeshift ballot box was put together. Scraps of paper were distributed and everyone tallied down their vote of choice. Soon they were all dumped inside. Aizawa, a neutral third party, much to his chagrin tallied
the total. Izuku took the lead.

“I GOT THREE VOTES!?” He yelped as he splayed his arms in front of his face. Right beneath him was Yaoyorozu coming in with three votes...a tie. Everyone else seemed to receive a singular vote. With the exception of Vanfell and Iida, who seemed to collapse on the floor at this news.

“What the!? Who the hell voted for Deku!?” Bakugou bellowed as Sero snorted.

“Guess we know it wasn’t you.” Off in the background, Ochako looked away and whistled to herself. She figured it was best to not let Bakugou know. She found him fairly scary.

“Z-zero votes... I thought as much! This is the harsh reality of this sacred office!” Iida groaned, hunched on the floor. Yaoyorozu looked at him somewhat confused.

“So you voted for someone else? But, you proposed this election? What exactly do you want, Iida?”

“It would seem discrimination is alive and well! All of you, filthy quirkist bastardsss!” Vanfell wailed from beneath his desk. His face was planted on the floor, and his legs splayed wide.

“...A tie? Decide between yourself who’s the president and vice president. Not like I care either way.” Aizawa grunted. Izuku was clearly stressed out, still not quite able to come to grips with the fact that he was in the running for president. Yaoyorozu was quite content with her position though she did hope to go for president.

“I know Midoriya's got the right stuff for this!”

“Yaoyorozu was pretty cool, analyzing our battle training.” Iida however sat in tight silence. It seemed no decision was going to be made just yet... as it was time for lunch!

The lunch hall was rather packed. Izuku couldn’t quite grasp how many kids were in the building.

“So many kids here…” He muttered. Iida, sat across from him nodded. He scooped curry into his mouth as he explained.

“Well. Beside the hero course, we have the students from the support and business courses. We all come together for lunch.”

“This rice... is tasty!” Ochako exclaimed as she sat there enjoying her meal. Izuku sighed a little, scratching at his head.

“I’m just a little worried about whether or not I can really be class president... maybe Yaoyorozu would be better suited…”

“You can.” Ochako nodded in between mouthfuls.

“Worry not. Midoriya. Your grit and decisiveness in a pinch, make you perfectly suited to lead us all. Tis why I voted for you.” Iida swallowed another mouthful.

“One of those votes was you!?”

“But, didn’t you want to be president too, Iida? You got those glasses and everything!” Ochako replied. Izuku really did notice that Uraraka really said whatever popped into her head.

“Again, ambition and suitability are different matters. I humbly made the choice I deemed correct.”
“Humbly…?” Izuku was a bit confused. Ochako’s face lit up as she clutched her hands tight and beamed.

“The way you talk… Iida, are you… a rich kid!?” She exclaimed. Iida recoiled slightly. His face dipped near his plate as he muttered.

“I don’t like people to know, so I attempt to hide it. But…yes. Mine is a renowned hero family. And I am the second son.”

“Whoa, cool!”

“Do you know of the turbo hero Ingenium?”

“Of course!! He employs 65 sidekicks at his office in Tokyo. So you’re…!” Izuku’s obsession with heroes ran wild again as his face lit up.

“How very informed. Yes, he is my brother!” Iida seemed to glow with admiration as he pressed his glasses up.

“He’s so frank about it!! Wow!!” Ochako nearly spat her food out laughing at his enthusiasm. “He leads the people with his unwavering adherence to rules and regulations. A truly beloved hero!! Tis my admiration for my brother that’s inspired my own desire to become a hero.” Iida paused and gave an earnest look at Izuku. He recalled the apology he had given the land for the practical exam incident. “Though I realize I’m not yet ready to lead anyone. As the superior candidate it was right that the role should go to you, Midoriya.” The other two students smiled at Iida. They had a conversation about how Iida never smiled like that normally. Elsewhere in the cafeteria…

“Honestly, can you believe it?! Not a single vote for me. It’s whack, Yaoyorozu! Whack…” Vanfell groaned as he idly nudged at his curry. The two students were sat together. Usually, Jirou would be with them. However she was occupied with Kaminari today, leaving Vanfell and Yaoyorozu together.

“I would imagine it might be due to your somewhat coarse personality. Those who aren’t acquainted to your habits might find you somewhat of a blowhard.” Yaoyorozu lifted the sushi into her mouth as Vanfell snorted.

“Yeah, yeah. Like how if people didn’t know you, they might figure your brutal honesty to be insulting right?”

“I would expect them to be similar, yes. Hopefully people can overcome that issue through closer interaction with me!” She exclaimed in return. Vanfell scratched at his hair as he shrugged.

“Guess they’ll have to. Miss President. All fancy, eh? You nearly ran away with that thing, if it wasn’t for Izuku.”

“Yes… I did accrue more votes than I had expected. Iida and you both received no votes… so I presume you didn’t vote for yourself?” She tilted her head, intrigued.

“Nah. What kind of person votes for themself in this sort of thing? If you’re gonna win, ought to have enough people that like you to vote for you.”

“Ah. I voted for myself. Does that deem me as a lesser person in your estimation?” It was a careful question from Yaoyorozu. Vanfell paused as he pondered his answer.
“In your case, nah. Figure you’re smart enough to know if you’re qualified or not. Load of people just tend to think they are hot shit. That's the issue.”

“I see…” She chewed on her sushi deep in thought. Vanfell noted the way her face tended to cloud over ever so slightly when she slipped into her thoughts. It was endearing. “I do believe myself to be apt for the role… though I must confess there are some doubts. Am I truly a proper fit, compared to the rest of my peers?”

“Eh, don’t see why you wouldn’t be. You’re plenty smart, good under pressure, pretty face. All leaders need those qualities. Figure you’re better qualified than Izuku, anyway.” Vanfell picked at his curry as he said this.

“Ah… I’m not entirely sure I’d go quite so far. He’s just as talented as me. I do think there would have been some merit in putting you in the position.” The girl began to venture further into line of thought when a dreadful alarm screamed through the school hall. Vanfell grunted. Izuku reared up from his chair.

“T-the alarm!?” He yelped as Ochako nearly spelt her food.

SECURITY LEVEL 3 HAS BEEN BROKEN. ALL STUDENTS. PLEASE EVACUATE IN AN ORDERLY FASHION.

Giran placed himself carefully into the wooden chair that had been pulled out for him. His cigarette smoke still coiled around his head as he exhaled. A circular puff floated upwards as he gave another smile which bared his teeth.

“Don’t mind if I smoke, right?”

“Course not. Guests can do whatever they like. ‘Specially when they say they got a job for me.”

His host was a large man. Wide shoulders, muscular arms, and a bullish head. If Giran had to guess, the man was no stranger to fights. There were scars on his face and it looked like it had given many a headbutt in the day. If his intelligence was correct this ought to be a fairly easy sales pitch. So he resumed smoking as he drank in his surroundings. You could tell a lot about a potential employee from how they lived. This one… was on the razor’s edge. The expensive booze told Giran that he once had a rather good life. All the cheap food containers, and the rather ripe smell also told Giran that that life was a thing of the past. His tv had a thin layer of dust on it. As did the kitchen appliances. Fella must not have been paying his electric bill. Course with all the envelopes piling up in the trash, he figured the fella wasn’t paying his rent either.

“...Looks like you need the work, right? Must be hard for you.”

“Hard for me? The hell do you mean by that?” His mark growled glaring at Giran from across the room. Giran just gave a lazy puff of the cigarette and shrugged.

“Electric quirk. Everyone out there, wants to pigeonhole you right? You must get a lot of, “oh, why don’t you just work in a power plant!”, right?” The mark grunted, sagged, and sighed in response.

“Yeah. They don’t get it. Bastards just want to pigeonhole you. Judge you by the quirk, not who you are! Ain’t defined by my quirk… not like you can choose this shit, y’know!!”
“Course, course. Rough out there. Heroes, kids, even the civilians. They think they can tell people how to live their life. Put you in a societal box, right?” Giran puffed on his cigarette and leaned an elbow on the table. “Just, drives you mad right?”

“Damn! You really get it. Everyone expects you to live the life they think you should. Heroes don’t get it. They say ‘if you don’t want to be one of us, just work at a power plant.’ But, hell. What if I just want to be a builder!? Some other prick with a better quirk gets in. Load of shit.”

“Politicians don’t do anything to change it either. Everyone is just content to let the system work. Painful truth is, friend, you’re just a little cog in a big machine.” Giran drawled blowing on the cigarette. “But. I can give you a way out of that machine. Shake it up while you’re at it.”

“...It pay well?”

“The best. Premium.”

“...Go on.”

“You know that big school, U.A., right? The place where they breed the next generation of heroes. Little bird told me bout an exercise they are having. It’s going to be attacked. A signal jammer… well. They’d be essential.”

“You trying to pigeonhole me as well!?” His mark seemed to suddenly grow agitated as he slapped the desk.

“Nah. You don’t have to take the job. I could have picked any other person. With a proper quirk. Figured, you need the help. Figured, you deserve the chance to give a society a shock. Course, if you think I’m wrong…” Giran shrugged. His mark seemed to calm down as he shook his head, and sighed.

“No, we’re good. Lost my temper, we’re fine. I’ll do it. Just contact me when, aight?” He asked, rubbing his head. Giran flashed another teeth baring smile as he stood up and dusted himself down. He sauntered over to the door and nodded.

“Course. We’ll make sure society hears the voices of those they’ve forgotten about. Easy peasy. I’ll call you.” He gave a thumbs up, tossed a wad of money at the man, and exited…

Back in U.A., chaos had fallen over the campus. Iida waved his hands in trademark motion.

“What’s security level 3!?”

“It means someone got inside the building! Hasn’t happened in my three years here!!” A random third year explained, before darting for the exit. “Anyway, hurry up and get outta here!” So Iida, Izuku, and Ochako, made a rush for the exit. Of course when they emerged through the door they found them stuck in a throng of people. It was ridiculous to say the least. Sardines in a can had more freedom to move than the U.A students did. It seemed wild panic when combined with a large student body did not make for cohesive escape conditions.

“Ow, ow!!”

“Stop shoving!!”

“Waittt, I’m gonna fall!!”
“Bloody push me again, I dare you!” Amid all the chaos, Ochako, Izuku and Iida found themselves pinned and catching multiple elbows.

“Wahhh! What’s going on?!” Ochako whined.

“Such a rapid response to danger!! I’d expect no less from this great institution!”

“Maybe a little too rapid. Everyone’s panicking…” Izuku then felt his legs started to go out from under him. “I’m going down!” All he heard as he started to fall was Iida and Ochako shout out his name. Iida knew something had to be done. His only thought was just who could have infiltrated. Forcing himself up against the window, he spied the answer. It was...the press!? It seemed the teachers were under siege outside.

“Give us All Might!! He’s in there right!?!” A slew of microphones were jammed, rather ironically, in front of Present Mic.

“HE’S OUT TODAY!!”

“Just give us a comment, that’s all we want!!”

“If we give you people an inch, you’ll ask for a mile.” Aizawa shook his head, lifting his hands to placate them.

“This is completely illegal. Villainous even. Can we blow them away already?”

“Lay off it, Mic. They’ll write whatever they want either way. Wait for the police.”

Iida now knew what had to be done. He pushed himself free from the wall and tried to shout out. “There’s no danger! It’s just the media!! Everyone call d-” His information was interrupted by an elbow, and the continued screaming and yelling.

“Owwww!!”

“Hold on, I’m falling, I’m falling!”

“You push me one more time, I’ll bash your shit in mate.” Ida’s thoughts reeled.

“Where are the teachers!? Are they all dealing with the press!?” He spotted Kirishima and Kaminari, who seemed to realized there was no cause for alarm. Everyone just seemed to fall into a state of panic.

“EEK! Iida!” Ochako yelled reaching for him.

“Uraraka!” What would Midoriya do? Or Ingenium? At a time like this!? In an instance, he knew what had to be. “URARAKA! MAKE ME FLOAT!” He bellowed. Her hand slapped his, and Iida flew above the students. His next step was to figure out what would draw their sight and focus them. Right above the exit sign… His hands pulled his trousers up, letting his engines breathe.

ENGINE. BOOST!!

Iida flew through the air, spinning in a rotational pattern. Izuku spied him from the throng of people crushing him. He then saw Iida slam into the wall above the entrance sign. His hand gripped a metal pipe giving him the purchase he so desperately needed. “EVERYONE…” He knew it had to be short. Concise. And... “EVERYTHING’S FINE!!” Bold! “It’s just the press! There’s nothing to panic about. We’re fine!! This is U.A.!! Behave in a way befitting this great institution!!” His words
reached the whole crowd. It seemed, for now, U.A was placated. Soon the police were on the scene and the reporters were driven away. Normalcy returned to the campus after the rather sketchy event that had just transpired.

I-A managed to make it back to their classroom, and somehow Vanfell managed not to assault anyone. It seemed Izuku and Yaoyorozu had an announcement to make to the class.

“Go ahead, Midoriya.” Yaoyorozu gently started. Izuku nodded and cleared his throat.

“W-we’d like to choose the other student council members! But before that… this is important. I believe Iida...is better suited to be Class President!

“Figure you mean Vice Pres, right? If you’re stepping down… Yaoyorozu should be the Pres. Iida can be vice.” Vanfell grunted from his seat. Izuku nodded, spluttered, and agreed.

“R-right. Anyway, we all saw how well he led everyone in that crisis! I think he’s a better fight for the job than me.”

“Ah! Sounds good!! Iida really showed his stuff in the cafeteria. Not that I’ve got issues with Midoriya.” Kirishima made a manly fist.

“He was like a beacon pointing to the emergency exit.”

“Whatever. Just get this done. What a waste of time…” Aizawa groaned from inside his sleeping bag.

“I will accept the job then!!” Iida bellowed, slamming an arm into the air.

“You can do it, Mr. Exit Sign!!”

“Exit Sign Iida! Do your best!”

“Kill it question twat!”

But it wasn’t quite over for U.A. While Aizawa handled homeroom, the teachers stood outside the gate. It seemed to have been… dissolved. It laid, crumbled and in pieces. Nedzu, the mouse-like president, held his hands behind his back. “No ordinary reporter could have done this. Someone instigated this whole affair… Did some evildoer manage to slip in? Or do they intend to wage some greater war…?”

Giran yawned. It was getting late. He’d wrapped up his business for the door. Chill air nipped at his heels. His fingers adjusted the scarf sat around his neck. Usually he would head straight home. Tonight though there was a brief diversion. A visit to an old friend. To give her a heads up for what was to come. He owed her that much, at least. So he made his way through winding alleys, and dirty streets. Soon the smell of street food, sweat, and the odd tint of blood. Street fighting was still a wonderfully large business in the world of quirks. If anything it only made it all that more popular. Giran was known to place bets on the outcome. Always on one person in particular, and never anyone else.

“Steady, Rappa. I got my eyes on you.” A young woman, barely older than the U.A students, grinned. She pointed a hand, with a metallic claw laid over it, at a bulky man in a mask. She was making her way out of a ring, when she spotted Giran. Her tall form paused, as she ran a hand up through her messy, clipped, black hair. Giran noticed that she still had that permanent layer of dirt on
her skin. Her piercing blue eyes gleamed out from under her bangs as she strode over.

“Gomi. Continued the winning streak, I hope.” He drawled as he gave her a warm hug. She rolled her eyes as she gently pushed him away. Adjusting her tank top, she jammed her hands into the dirty pair of jeans she had on.

“Yeah. Hard fight. I figured it out in the end.” She shrugged.

“The hype machine tells me it was an easy one, heh. Imagine that. A quirkless girl with her own hype machine, eh?”

“Blech. You know I hate that hype machine shit. Don’t bring that up, old man. Quirkless old man, with that nasty scarf.”

“Oh, how your jesting wounds me so. Come on, sit down for a minute.” Giran pulled Gomi along by her arm, over to a secluded alley. They both sat down, resting their backs against the cold brick wall. He offered her a cigarette.

“Prize fighter can’t be smoking, Giran. Peak form and all that.”

“Boring. Little bit of nicotine never killed anyone.” He lit up and puffed away. He turned his face to her and puffed.

“Care to explain why you dragged me out here? Was bout to head home.”

“You’ll be staying with me for a bit, Gomi. Something big is coming. I figure you’ll get a nice part to play in it. So I gotta keep you close.”

“...Alright. Never let me down so far. But you’re leading me on, I’ll carve your balls clean off.” With that, Giran laughed. The two sat there, quietly chatting as night soon fell over Japan...

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the delay! This chapter took a long time to get out. I hope you enjoy it! I'm taking Giran, http://bokunoheroacademia.wikia.com/wiki/Giran, a minor character from BNHA and making him a bit more important. A new OC has been added, and I've generally spruced up some aspects of these small events. Expect USJ soon!
Unforseen Simulation Joint Arc Part 1

It was a Wednesday morning. Around 7:35. Everyone was on their morning commute. Coffee beans, newspapers, and it would seem violence were the order of business. An unlucky family found themselves in the grips of a bulky pink thug. He was large and his flesh seemed to continue up and over his head. It was akin to a hood. One metal chain ran over his right shoulder and his cargo pants had notable padding.

“See this lucky little family? Try to come after me, and I’ll snap their necks! Got it? Back off, heroes!” His voice was bellowed forth, aimed at two heroes. Kamui Woods landed square on his rear, head tilted up at the sky. Mt. Lady clutched her arm and shook her head.

“Trapezius Head Gear! Serial robber and murderer…”

“Not only strong, but a quick thinker…” Kamui Woods muttered from his rather cold seat on the concrete of the road. It was difficult for either of the two to make any inroads against this brutish opponent. The mother, trapped in the arms of the villain, was in hysterics. She wildly screamed for the heroes to save them, and at the least to save her daughter.

Kamui Woods snapped his bindings forward. It seemed Trapezius Head Gear had mastered the ancient forbidden art of sidestepping. It was seemingly a hard counter to the valiant efforts of everyone's favorite Tree Hero.

“And now to make my escape!” Bellowed the villain, wildly laughing. In his glee, he seemed to not notice the heavy stomping that came from behind him. Kamui Woods, Mt. Lady, and the police lifted their heads. A bombastic voice with hope woven into its fabric boomed forth.

“Fear not, good family.” A figure blurred behind the villain. One hand came up in a meaty swatting motion.

MISSOURI SMASH!

The villain seemed to collapse, felled in a single blow. His form slammed against the concrete as the family were now safe in the arms of none other than… All Might! “Why you ask? Because I’m on my morning commute!” He bellowed, as they were cradled in his arms. He was not in costume, rather his striped suit. His hair stood up as majestic ever, and so did his presence. Instantly the crowd of civilians watching the incident unfurl erupted into wild gesticulations, cheering. One woman even attempted to throw her shirt at All Might, before being tackled to the ground by a police officer. He seemed to inspire quite a bit of endearment.

“We appreciate it, but…” Mt. Lady sighed as she rubbed her arm. Kamui Woods was laid out on the floor. Again. His legs faced upwards, as he contemplated the sad reality that All Might may as well have put them out of business. The officers saluted All Might, who returned the gesture in kind.

“Thank you, sir! We had our hands full with this one…”

“Glad to help. I mustn’t be late, so farewell!” But just as All Might uttered these words his ear twitched. Something about a hit and run in the distance. He knew he ought not to… but. “Hmm. I mustn’t be late… However.” He sprung in the air and sailed forth. His thoughts shifted to a darker place as he travelled. As far as he was aware, his speed had dropped. Not only this, but his power was weakening ever since he’d pass it on. All of these issues were compounded by the fact that his maximum duration had shortened ever since the slime villain… Then his memory seemed to snap
back to another moment.

“You told him!”

“I’m sorry! I haven’t even told my mom… but… I just had to tell him something. I’m so sorry.” It was his recollection of a conversation with Izuku. He realized now that perhaps it was a consequence of him being so sincere. After all, Izuku wasn’t one to brag or boast.

“Luckily, Bakugou seemed to think you were pulling his leg… I can forgive this time, but please don’t tell another soul. You must be aware of the great responsibility that comes with this great power! Should the world learn of it, I have no doubt that all sorts of crooks would come to try and steal it! This secret is all that stops our society from falling into chaos! It’s also meant to protect you, understand…?” All Might sighed. Suitable successor or not… Young Midoriya was still just a 15 year old kid. He had to make it clear to him! His thoughts were interrupted by hearing that… there was a hostage crisis in the next town over!? Wahhh!

It was about midday at U.A. Not a whole lot had happened. School had been slow, as usual. The students, beside those such as Yaoyorozu, didn’t really find much joy in their non heroic lessons. English didn’t do much beside make Vanfell extremely smug, more so than usual. Lunch was the usual affair. The students relaxed, enjoyed their food. Soon they hurried back to class. It was time for their hero training, the class that everyone looked forward to in particular. Aizawa stood before them, and yawned.

“Time for today’s basic hero training… This time All Might, myself, and one other will supervise.” His wording elicited a reaction instantly.

“This time…? So it's a special class?” Izuku muttered. Sero jabbed his arm up as he yelled out.

“So, uh, what’re we doing exactly!?” The student asked as Aizawa rummaged in his pajamas, fidgeting his hand around. He then presented a singular white flashcard. It had the word RESCUE emblazoned across it.

“Preparing you for disaster relief, from fires to floods… It’s rescue training!” The class seemed to have a fairly positive reaction to this.

“Rescue, eh… sounds like another rough day.” Kaminari noted, as Mina nodded her agreement.

“Come on, this what being a hero is all about! I’m pumped!” Kirishima bellowed, waving his arms at the two complaining students.

“I’ll be right at home in a flood. Ribbit.”

“Rescue? Give me a break, I just want to punch shit…” Vanfell muttered. The class was silenced by a glare from Aizawa.

“Hey. I’m not done.” He then lifted a small clicker from his bandages. The costume rack slipped out of the wall. “Up to each of you whether or not you wear your costumes. As some of them are ill-suited to this sort of activity. Training site is a bit remote, we’ll be taking a bus. That’s all. Get ready.” With that the students were free to get up. It seemed the majority, if not all, were using their costumes. Vanfell debated against leaving his behind, but shrugged it on. It was a quiet moment for the most part. Izuku knew this training would help him become the great hero he knew he could be! Just time for him to do his best! And so the young students moved outside, heading to the bus.
Ochako and Izuku walked near each other, with Ochako leading in the front. She was fully costumed, minus her helmet. The girl figured that it might get in the way during rescue training so she opted to leave it behind. Tilting her head back slightly, she noticed something off about Izuku.

“Hmm? You wore your gym clothes, Deku? Where’s your costume!?” She asked a bit confused. Izuku felt his face flush red as he went to explain.

“It didn’t survive battle training in one piece.... The school’s support company is repairing it. Gotta wait for now.” Just as the two got near the bus, Iida and Momo were in full force. Iida was yelling about how the class needed to line up according to their I.D numbers and fill the seats in an orderly fashion. Much to Iida’s despair he found it wasn’t the sort of bus that leant itself to that. He fell into despair once aboard the bus. Momo had known, but had opted to say nothing. So the class filed themselves into whatever seat they wanted. Izuku was a little concerned. Vanfell had fallen asleep next to him, and was veering towards falling on his shoulder. His snoring was also a tad loud… It seemed this wasn’t the only issue that Izuku would have to deal with.

“I generally say what’s on my mind, Midoriya.”

“Oh!? What is it, Asui?”

“Call me Tsuyu. Your quirk resembles All Might’s.” When this remark came out, Izuku just about wet himself. The boy was so awkwardly panicked, that he didn’t even notice Vanfell’s head slumping into the crook of his shoulder. No one from 1-A seemed to comment on Vanfell. Momo did give somewhat of a leery look...with perhaps a hint of jealousy?

“R-r-really!? Nah. I mean, uh, well, uh.” Izuku struggled to find an answer.

“Hold up, Tsuyu. All Might doesn’t get hurt, so they’re already different. Though, that kinda simple strength enhancing quirk is awesome! Can do a lot of cool stuff with it. Not like my hardening. I’m aight in a fight, but it’s real boring…” Kirishima sighed. Izuku was pleased that he was bailed out. He was also quite impressed as Kirishima hardened his arm. It made a click clack noise. Izuku leant forward to look at it, with the unfortunate side-effect of Vanfell falling out of his seat onto the bus floor. He didn’t wake up and no one wanted to move him.

“I think that’s pretty neat, though. Your quirk is more than enough if you wanna go pro!”

“Pro! But don’t forget, heroes gotta worry about popular appeal!!”

“My navel laser is both strong and cool~ Perfect for a pro~” Aoyama twinkled a little as he held his face in his hands.

“So long as you don’t blow your own stomach up!” Mina giggled. Aoyama was not amused as he seemed to sink into a pit of despair.

“You wanna talk strong and cool? That’d be Todoroki and Bakugou.” Kirishima pointed to the spiky haired lad. He was sat next to Jirou, who was listening to music. Bakugou had been oddly quiet, it was peaceful truth be told. Indeed, all he did after the praise from Kirishima was make a quiet, tch and turn his head away.

“But Bakugou’s so unhinged. He’d never be popular.” Tsuyu pointed at him. All hell broke loose, as Bakugou snapped forward. His hands gripped the railing in front of him, as Jirou swayed to her right trying to avoid catching an elbow.

“THE HELL YOU’D SAY, TADPOLE?”

“See.”

“We’ve only just started socializing, and yet you’ve already made it crystal clear to us just how much your personality has in common with the unpleasantness of a steamed turd…” Kaminari wagged a finger at Bakugou while smirking.

“YEAH, OKAY, MR. VOCABULARY. HOW ABOUT I POUND YOU?” Then a figure rose up
from the floor instantly. Vanfell seemed to sit up instantly, and rotated his head to glare at Bakugou.

“WHY DON’T YOU SHUT UP, MATE, BEFORE I COME OVER THERE AND MAKE YOU SHUT UP, YEAH.” As the bus devolved into chaos, Izuku clutched his head. He couldn’t believe that Kacchan of all people was the one getting bullied. Guess that’s U.A for ya! In the back of the bus, Ochako and Momo were sat watching the whole thing unfold. Momo was not impressed, to say the least. She placed a hand to her mouth and shook her head.

“What a vulgar conversation!”
“*I think it’s fun.” Ochako giggled as she watched the whole thing unfold. Aizawa groaned, as the bus turned a corner. His voice cut through the chaos instantly as he sighed.

“We’re here. Look sharp, now…”
“Okay!!”

The students filed out of the bus and made their way to the USJ proper. There wasn’t any tomfoolery or horseplay this time. Everyone was focused and excited. It was important to them that they didn’t make a fool of themselves, or mess this up. Today was an important day…

“WHOAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!”
“IS THIS UNIVERSAL STUDIOS JAPAN?!” The students had quite the reaction the facility. It was sprawling; a vast complex divided into several zones. There was a zone filled with a cityscape burning, a flooded zone filled with huge quantities of water, and a zone that seemed to be the aftermath of a landslide. The students were then greeted by a figure in what seemed to be a… spacesuit? No one questioned it as, truth be told, there were stranger costumes out there. The figure cleared their throat and spread their arms wide.

“Every disaster and accident you can imagine. I built this facility myself. I call it… The “Unforeseen Simulation Joint!!”

“It’s the Space Hero, Thirteen!!” Izuku’s face lit up with glee. Ochako was excited as well, shaking her fists up and down just as cute as ever.

“He’s a gentleman hero who does his best work in rescue scenarios!” The rest of the students had their own reactions. Vanfell shrugged. Rescue work was boring. He’d rather be cracking skulls, and fighting. Iida gave a full body bow, as ever. Momo forced him to stand up right and the two broke into a minor squabble over presentation. While this was occurring, Aizawa shuffled closer to his colleague.

“Thirteen. Where’s All Might. I thought he was meeting us here…”
“About that, Senpai. It would seem he just about reached his limit during his morning commute. He’s resting in the break room.” Thirteen remembered the phone call, in which All Might just about fell over himself apologizing for the situation at hand. Aizawa groaned and rolled his eyes.

“The height of irrationality.” Guess they ought to be on guard just in case. “Whatever. Let’s get started.” Aizawa turned to the class, as Thirteen nodded in agreement. The Space hero faced the students and lifted a hand.

“Before we do, I have or two points. Or three. Four. Lots of points.” The students groaned as they heard this information. Thirteen was unfazed. “As I’m sure many of you are aware… my quirk is called Black Hole. It can suck in and tear apart anything.”

“And you’ve used it to save people in all sorts of disasters!” Izuku blurted out. Ochako seemed to be starstruck, swinging her head up and down in an excited nod. Vanfell kinda leered at her, before taking a step away from her.

“Indeed… however, my power could easily kill. I’ve no doubt there are some of you with similar
abilities. In our super-powered society, use of quirks is heavily restricted and monitored. It may appear a stable system. But, we must never forget that it only takes a single wrong move with an uncontrollable quirk for people to die.” Amid all this talk of quirks and whatnot, Vanfell was grumbling to himself. Momo rammed an elbow into his ribs to shut him up as he huffed. “During Aizawa’s physical fitness test, you came to learn of your own hidden potential. In All Might’s battle training, you experienced the danger that your respective quirks can pose to others. This class… will show you a new perspective! You will learn how to use your quirks to save lives! Your powers are not meant to inflict harm. I hope you leave here today with the understanding that you’re meant to help people.”

“So cool!!” The class, despite their initial apprehension, had got into the speech. Beside the odd individual. Bakugou and Vanfell were clearly bored out of their minds. Bakugou because he already knew everything that he had just been told. Vanfell mostly because he didn’t really care all that much.

“That is all! I thank you for listening!” Thirteen bowed. Ochako beamed and Iida broke into rapid clapping. Aizawa, leaning on a railing, cleared his throat.

“Great. First off…” But he paused. His ears pricked up. Something was making a noise it ought not to. It was akin to something materializing into existence. His head turned. It seemed that he was, unfortunately, right. A… portal. It was black, seemingly tearing its way into existence. Then a hand could be seen, gripping at the edge of the portal. Then it revealed itself. A young looking male face. Messy, greasy, unkempt blue hair. One singular, bloodshot red eye. The other was covered… as was most of the face. By a… hand!? Aizawa turned his head back to the students. “HUDDLE UP, AND DON’T MOVE.” He barked.

“Huh?”

“Thirteen! Protect the students!” By now the portal had fully opened. The figure with the hand over his face had fully emerged. His entire body seemed to have hands clasped to it. By now Aizawa could see what looked like eyes in the portal. And a whole flood of figures had stormed out. Including a bulky bird-like creature, with its brain on full display.

It was ironic. They appeared before the students during their rescue training.

“What the heck’s that? More battle robots, like during the entrance exam?” Kirishima tried to see past Aizawa. The homeroom teacher had now placed a set of goggles on. “Don’t move. Those are villains!”

They learned that what the pros were up against…

The portal was indeed a person. It shifted, once the mass of villains had fully exited it body. A silky smooth voice wafted out.

“Thirteen and Eraserhead, is it…? According to the staff schedule I received the other day… All Might is supposed to be here.

“Of course. That whole incident was this scum’s doing…”

“Where is he…?” The hand covered figure scratched at his neck as he swung his head to look at the sky. His voice was whiny, like a petulant child. “And I brought so many playmates… All Might… The Symbol of Peace… Is he here…? Maybe some dead kids will bring him him here…?” It was starting. Somewhere, Giran reclined in his seat and lit a cigarette. Aizawa’s scarf fluttered in preparation...

What they face in the field… is… Evil Unleashed!
“Villains?! No way!!”
“What villains’d be dumb enough to sneak into a school for heroes?”
“Give them a taste of a quirkless fist, if they try to bloody step to me.” Vanfell gritted his teeth, as he shook his head. Not an ideal situation. His eye flickered to Momo, almost instinctively. He wasn’t quite sure why that happened. His fingers started to curl into fists as he swallowed. Damn…

“Sensei. Aren’t there intruder sensors?” Momo asked to Thirteen.
“Yes, of course there…!”

“Are they only here, or also at the main building…? Either way, if the sensors aren’t working…” Todoroki looked over the crowd. “It has to be one of their quirks that’s doing it. This place is far from campus. This is a time where there’s few people here. So maybe they aren’t as dumb as they seem. They must have an objective… this is a well-coordinated sneak attack.”

“Thirteen! Begin evacuation! And try calling the school! One of these villains must be jamming the sensors. There’s a good chance one of their electric types is causing the interference…” Aizawa turned to Kaminari. “Kaminari. Try using your quirk to signal for help.” The electricity using student nodded. Aizawa then turned, as his bandages started to coil and float around him. Izuku lurched forward.

“But, Sensei, you can’t fight them all alone! Against that many… even you can’t nullify all their quirks!! As Eraserhead, your fighting style involves erasure and a quick binding capture… head-on battle isn’t…”
“No good hero is a one trick pony. Thirteen! Take care of them.” And with that, Aizawa threw himself forward. The hero sailed through the air flying over the stairs. His bandages trailed behind him as he hurtled toward the villains.

“Ranged squad. Let’s move.” A villain with gun barrels on his fingertips barked. A woman with long hair groaned and shook her head.
“Our intel said it was just meant to be Thirteen and All Might!! Th’hell is this guy?” She growled. A figure wearing an odd mask, giving him the appearance of a pig shrugged.
“Dunno. But he’s coming at us all alone…”
“A DEAD FOOL THEN!!” Yet, all of their quirks seemed to disable.

“Huh. I can’t shoot?” Aizawa had wasted no time. Still sailing through the air, the pro hero had locked his sight on all three of these thugs. His bandages snapped out, wrapping tightly around the trio. As he landed, he tugged tight. All three of them were hauled into the air, heads slamming together. The villain’s soon realized what was happening.
“That’s eraserhead!!”
“You dumbasses. He can shut yer quirks off just by looking at ya!”
“He cancels quirks?! Heh heh heh. Let’s see if that trick works against us Heteromorphic types!!” A bulky mutant snorted. His skin was rock like, and he had multiple arms. Before he got a chance to make a move against Aizawa, however, a fist smashed into his face.

A bandage swung low, wrapping around the mutant’s leg. “Only against those with emitters, or transformative quirks.” Tugging it forward, he flung the rock mutant into the air. Another villain threw a quick blow at Aizawa. The hero managed to duck under it just in time. “Statistically, guys like you tend to shine...in close-quarters combat.” He darted forward. The rock mutant slammed from the air, down onto the other assailant, as Aizawa glared at the remaining crowd. “Which is why I’ve got countermeasures for you.” The villain horde watched him carefully. The fight continued, but
Aizawa seemed to barely be slowed down. The blue haired villain groaned. His fingers scratched at his neck again, more frantically this time.

“He’s good at hand-to-hand...and those goggles hide his eyes, so don’t know the quirks he’s cancelling. Even a whole mob of us isn’t slowing him down. I see. I hate pro heroes. Ordinary villains don’t stand a chance against them…” Back at the top of the staircase, a full attempt to flee was underway. All except for one student.

“Wow! He can hold his own even when outnumbered…” Izuku was in awe at Aizawa. Iida groaned and jabbed a hand forward.

“This is no time for Analysis Deku! Hurry up and evacuate!!” But it would seem that it was all for naught. The portal creator seemed to have made his way over to the top of the stairs. His form extended, a hazy black mist that seemed to block the entire avenue of escape.

“I shan’t permit that.” He drawled. Aizawa noted from below that it had only take a singular blink for the mist man to get up there...not good. “Greetings. We are the League of Villains. Forgive our audacity, but...Today we’ve come here to U.A High School. A bastion of heroism. To end the life...of All Might, the Symbol of Peace.” The figure almost crooned, as the students were taken aback. Izuku in particular felt his face morph into one of shock. “We were under the impression that All Might would be here today. But it seems his schedule has changed. Well, no matter.” Thirteen stepped forward. A cap on one of their fingers flipped open. “My roles remains unchanged.” The mist moved, about to encircle the group. However, three figures snapped forward. Kirishima and Bakugou seemed to move as a unit. Both of them launched an attack at the same, a large explosion and sharp chop. It seemed to smash into the misty figure. Vanfell grunted as he sprung forward, smashing his fist at a very specific location. He...hit metal?. His theory had been confirmed, but he didn’t get much time to follow up. The misty figure recoiled. “Not if we end you first…” Bakugou growled. “Betcha didn’t see that coming!!” Kirishima bellowed with a manly roar. The figure seemed to sigh and tut. “That was close. Yes. Students though you may be, you are the best of the best.” He ultimately seemed unharmed. Thirteen tried to reach forward, to grab Bakugou and Kirishima. Unlike Vanfell, they hadn’t moved backwards and were out in front by themselves. “No, get back. Both of you!” But was too little, too late. The mist expanded growing as wide as it could. There was little chance of escape at this point, as the cold yet suave voice rippled out again.

“BEGONE.” The mist seemed to grab and tug at those caught in it. Todoroki was the first to vanish, lifted off his feet. Izuku, Tsuyu, and Mineta were the next to go, swiftly followed by Bakugou and Kirishima. “WRITHE IN TORMENT.” Yaoyorozu and Jirou were the next to go. Vanfell saw that Kaminari was slipping away as well. Lunging forward, he gripped the boy by his arm. His glance made it clear he didn’t intend to let him get taken...but it seemed neither of them had a say in the matter. Both of them slipped into the mist, and out of sight. “UNTIL YOU BREATHE YOUR LAST.” The only reason that everyone wasn’t sucked away was the fast reactions. Shoji had barrelled himself free, clutching Sero and Mina in his arms. The multi-limbed strongmen had then thrown all three of them to the crowd cradling them beneath him. As a result they were safe. Iida managed to grab Ochako just in time before jetting clear of the portal. It seemed...these were the only people who had managed to avoid capture...

Izuku was falling. That was the first thing he noticed. Ideally he hoped it wouldn’t get worse. Then he noticed he was falling into the flood zone. It had got worse. His thoughts ran wild...

“He teleported us! Must be his quirk! They want to kill All Might?! Just what the hell is going on here?” Izuku wasn’t granted much time with his thoughts however.

“THERE YOU ARE!” A brutish looking shark villain growled at Izuku. The poor boy yelped in panic...coughing up quite a storm of bubbles. “Ain’t a personal thing kid, but eh. SAY GOODBYE!” The shark bared its teeth as it lunged towards Izuku. His mind swam, see what I did
there, as he tried to figure out a plan. He couldn’t move in the water. Think, think… but he was lucky. Tsuyu slammed clean through the water. Her feet smashed against the cheek of the shark, and held her there for a moment. It seemed she had the diaper wearing Mineta behind her, attached to her body. Her tongue shot out, wrapping around Midoriya.

“Midoriya.” Her voice was deadpan as ever, as she sprung off the shark. “Goodbye.” Tsuyu it seemed was a master of banter. She brought her head above the surface and gently deposited Izuku on the cruise liner in front of them. She felt Mineta’s hands moving for her chest. He also seemed to mutter something about how for a frog, she had nice boobs. Before said hands could reach said boobs, Mineta found himself slammed onto the deck of the boat. His landing was a tad rougher than the one Izuku had. Tsuyu then clambered up the side of the boat, and lifted herself onto the deck.

“Thanks, Asui…”

“Call me Tsuyu. But we seem to be in trouble here.” She wasn’t wrong. Izuku thoughts were running wild. The mist man had mentioned All Might’s schedule changing…

“They know our schedule. The simplest explanation…is that they caused the media rush the other day, to get their intel. Just like Todoroki said. They’ve been waiting for this chance…and they prepared for it well.”

“But, but! There’s no way they could ever kill All Might! He’ll thrash’ em once he gets here, bam pow!” Mineta yelled. His voice was strained. The boy was clearing try to stay positive despite the hellish situation unfolding around them. He was even doing mock punches, akin to those that All Might performed. Tsuyu leaned her head in, looking at him in particular.

“Mineta…they must’ve figured out a way to kill him. Otherwise, why come here just to get beaten? I wouldn’t put it past them. That one guy promised to kill us too, after all. Who says we can even hold out until All Might gets here.” Tsuyu explained. It was blunt but to the point. Mineta had stopped listening, rushing to jostle Izuku’s arm.

“M-m-m-Midoriya!!” He jabbed a finger towards the water. The shark from earlier had returned, and was screaming something about how he’d kill Tsuyu. Other villains slowly splashed up around the boat, glaring at what they presumed to be their prey. “A whole school of them!!” Mineta whined. Izuku wasn’t paying attention however. He was lost deep in his thoughts.

“So they must have figured out a way to beat All Might…that must be it. Doesn’t make sense otherwise. Why kill him though? Because he stands against villains? Against evil? Because everyone calls him the symbol of justice? I mean…there has to be some specific reason…” But Izuku was stumped. Every memory, every positive image he had of All Might flooded to his mind. It was difficult for him to be objective. “Hell if I know!” Izuku straightened his back. His face was determined. “If they…if there is even a chance that they have a way to beat All Might! We have to…”

An entire group of villains, stood frozen. Their bodies were unable to move, bar for the chattering chaos of their teeth. It had happened so fast. Todoroki stood before them, a disappointed look glazing his face. “You all lost to a child. Pathetic. Come on now. You are adults, right?”

Bakugou and Kirishima found themselves in a room filled with rubble. The landslide area was to be their battleground. One villain was already out cold, his head the resting place for Bakugou’s boot. Both of the young men surveyed the surroundings…they were going to put up one hell of a fight.

Yaoyorozu, Jirou, and Kaminari were in a mountainous region. The tall Class President was already producing long staff from her arm. Jirou was pulling a machete from the thigh of Yaoyorozu, and Kaminari awkwardly sparked up. Vanfell was nearby, but off to the side, in a throng of villains. His face lit up, with an almost feral inclination plastered across it. “Ain’t gonna be gentle fellas. Not one bit…”
Out in a flaming city Ojiro found himself alone. Perched atop a lamppost his tail swayed behind him. This was going to be difficult. No way he could handle them head on, too many of them. Hit and run was going to be the only way out of this. He steeled himself, exhaled...and found his centre. It was plain to see that it was time to work.

Those who were still near the entrance were now getting back to their feet. Shoji and Iida stood beside Thirteen, as the misty figure started to recollect itself. This wasn’t going to be an easy situation to defuse...but they could do it. They didn’t really have any other option. Dire straits...

Aizawa was still in the thick of things. Despite the sheer amount of fodder he was tearing through, it never seemed to end. The blue-haired villain hadn’t made any move yet. There was also the bird like creature from earlier, but there wasn’t enough time to focus on that.

**“WE HAVE A FIGHT TO WIN!!”**

U.A was quiet. All Might was resting by himself in the staff room. Midnight had brought him some tea earlier which he had enjoyed. It seemed however that he couldn’t reach Thirteen or Aizawa.

“Good reasons or not, I put my hero work ahead of my teaching. Rather foolish. What do I tell them?” He shuffled in his small form, pondering. “Anyway. I should be fine to go in another ten minutes...” But he paused and shifted into muscle form. With a spray of blood from his mouth he declared! “No, I’m going!” However his intentions were interrupted. A small mouse like hand slid the door to the breakroom open.

“The principal! Yes. Am I a mouse, a dog, or a bear? All you need to know is that I’m...the principal!” Nezu declared proudly as he moved into the breakroom. All Might was sat on the floor, knees up to his hands. He was akin to a small child.

“Your coat is looking marvelous today, sir!”

“The secret is keratin! No human could produce such luster.” Nezu didn’t seem to care too much about his coat however, as he presented a table. On it was a short blurb of a news article. It detailed how All Might had resolved three incidents in under an hour. “Enough of that though. Look!! The ne’er-do-wells in this city haven’t let up, even though you came to town. Yet rushing off the moment you hear there’s trouble is so very like you!” Nezu sighed and shook his head. “You haven’t changed in the slightest... Your injury and its after-effects have limited you as a hero. Not to mention, the busy work requiring in educating the successor to One For All. But, you being the stubborn “Symbol of Peace” that you are...refuse to make any of these things public knowledge. Hence my recommendation that you teach here.” Nezu had a habit of going on long-winded spiels. “So try taking it easy once in a while.” He finished for a moment, leaping himself up onto a sofa. During this time, All Might let his muscle form hiss away, shifting back to his regular, more gaunt form. Nezu then began to speak again, much to the author’s despair. “Even today, you would only be able to attend a portion of the class. It is true that I did offer you the position, yet you must not forget that you also accepted it. Thus, I’d appreciate it if you tried a bit harder to prioritize your role as a teacher. This city has plenty of hero agencies to deal with common criminals.”

“You’re absolutely right. That’s why I was just planning to head to USJ...” All Might was relived he got a chance to speak. However much to his chagrin Nezu started up again. He poured some tea, and wagged a finger.

“But, you’d be forced to return soon thereafter, no? So why not enjoy some tea and crackers with me? I can tell you about my theories on education.” All Might groaned when he realized Nezu was pouring tea. It seemed there was no stopping Nezu once he gets going. What bothered him the most however, was that his call didn’t even go to voicemail. The fact he couldn’t get through at all...

“First, on the inevitable stresses and burdens when walking the line between hero and educator...”
“Sensei, you haven’t changed either…”

USJ was still in chaos. The platform near the entrance was currently the staging ground of a desperate and dire situation.

“Where is everyone!? Can we confirm their locations?!” Iida bellowed. He was feeling an intense sense of guilt. As an class official, he should have done more to prevent this. Yes, he had saved a select few of his peers. But perhaps Ingenium...would have been able to save more.

“They’ve been scattered, but they’re all in the facility.” Shoji replied, his quirk stretching and straining to ascertain everyone’s location.

“Physical attacks are no good! He just warps away...this guy’s quirk is too tough to handle…” Sero gritted his teeth. It wasn’t a good situation. The mist man was a safe distance away from them. He was clearly fast and skilled. In terms of just overwhelming him it didn’t seem like that was going to be an option. Thirteen realised this. They turned their head.

“Vice President!”

“Yes!”

“Your job...is to run back to the school and report on what’s happening.” Iida’s face twitched at this remark. Thirteen continued on. “The alarm system hasn’t activated, and the phones aren’t working. The alarm system uses infrared tech. The fact that it hasn’t activated even though senpai - that is Eraser Head - is down there nullifying quirks means...that whoever is interfering with the system has hidden themselves well. That being the situation, your going back is our best option!” The mist man swayed slightly as he listened to the heroes plan. Iida did not take such a suggestion well. His head shook immediately.

“The Vice President can’t very well abandon his class…”

“Retreat. Out the emergency exit…” Shoji muttered. “There are exterior alarms. This lot must be only causing trouble here.”

“So, if you can get out, they can’t follow you! Cut loose with that speed of yours!!” Sero nodded behind his mark.

“Please, use your quirk to save us all!!”

“Just like in the cafeteria...we can provide all the support you need. And we will! Do it!!” Ochako gripped her hands tight as ever, as she did her best to encourage him. But this positive attitude was interrupted. The mist man was shooting back toward the group his evil intent looming over them.

“Aside from the fact that you have no hope...what sort of fool discusses strategy in earshot of the enemy?”

“It hardly matters if you overheard. You can’t stop us!” Thirteen retorted. Their quirk began to kick into gear. Time to act!

Elsewhere Mineta was in a full blown meltdown. The small lad had tears streaming down his face as his mouth went as far open as it could.

“How can we possibly fight, dumbass?! These guys might even be tough enough to kill All Might!! You’re contradicting yourself Midoriya! Our only chance is to hide somewhere until the U.A heroes come to rescue us!! Izuku wasn’t phased. His voice was steady and calm. More so than he thought it would be.

“Mineta. Those down there. They’re clearly suited to aquatic combat, right?”

“STOP IGNORING MY POINT!!”

“So the ringleaders must have recruited their team knowing about USJ’s different environments…” Tsuyu tapped her chin.
“Right! Their intel told that much at least. However, with all their careful planning one point stands out.” Izuku lifted a hand to gesture at Tsuyu. “They zapped you, Asu-err. Tsuyu into the flood zone!” Izuku stopped. His point was obviously clear to see. But there was a silence.

“Take your time, then.”

“What’s your point already?” It seemed the point was not clear. Not in the slightest.

“Oh okay, right...what I’m saying is that they must not know about our quirks!” Izuku clenched his fist. Tsuyu flashed back in her mind, remembering how she’d be right at home in a flood. Ribbit.

“If they’d known about me having frog powers...I’d be dumped into the firey area.”

“It’s exactly because they don’t know about quirks...that their strategy was to scatter us and overwhelm us with numbers. They have us beat when it comes to numbers and experience, so there’s only one way for us to win! Exploit the fact they don’t know our quirks!” Izuku glanced over the side of the boat. “Look. They’re not trying to get on board! That supports my theory.” Indeed, they weren’t moving yet. But Izuku also knew they weren’t underestimating them. Still it gave them time to think and work.

“I can just really high and stick to walls. My tongue can stretch to a maximum of 20 meters. Also, I can spit up my stomach to clean it, and secrete a poisonous fluid. I say “poisonous,” but it really just stings a little.”

“S-secrete…!”

“Those last two aren’t that useful. Just forget about them.”

“Secrete.” Mineta seemed to be rather fixated on that word.

“I have super strength, but immediately after using it...it messes me up. My quirk, it’s a double edged sword.” After Izuku finished his sentence, Mineta pulled one of his strange orb like balls from his head. Another one instantly grew back in its place. He squished it to the wall and it promptly stuck there.

“It’s really sticky. If I’m feeling good, it’ll stick there all day. A new one’ll grow in the old one’s place. But if I take too many, I’ll start bleeding. They’ll bounce of my own body without sticking to me.” Mineta explained, slapping his hand against the one attached to the wall. Izuku and Tsuyu were silent. It hung. Mineta felt tears well up...and then he threw his hands wide and screamed. “Like I said we just gotta wait to be rescued! My quirk is terrible for fighting multiple opponents!” He wailed. Izuku threw his hands up quickly, trying to calm his classmate.

“N-not at all. It’s a great quirk. We just have to think how to make use of it.” But before Izuku could start that process, a massive blade of water bisected the boat. It rocked and swayed. Izuku managed to scramble, grabbing Tsuyu’s hand.

“I’m getting bored over here. Let’s end this.”

“So strong! He split the boat in two...” And then, it seemed Mineta reached breaking point. His hands reached to hi hand and swung like a windmill. Several of his sticky balls plopped down into the water.

“AAAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHH” He wailed, tears streaming from hs face as he looked at Izuku.

“Why’d you panic!? Damn...now the enemy knows your quirk!!” But Izuku paused. It seemed the aquatic foes were hesitant. They didn’t want to touch the balls. They didn’t know what they were...

“That boat’ll sink in a less than a min. Once you’re in the water, you’re seafood...”

“Wah he’s right!!”

“Mineta. Did you really come to U.A to become a hero?”

“Shadd up. You’re crazy for not being scared. We were just freaking middle school kids a couple of months ago!! I never thought we’d be in a life-or-death situation so soon. Ahhhh I just wish I couldn’t gotten to grope Yaoyorozu’s boob-orozuis before I dieeeeeeiiiieeed!!"
“The moment when the enemy thinks they’ve won...represents your best chance”. All Might said that during a documentary interview.” Izuku clenched his fist. “This is the only way we can win!!”

The villains were growing restless. They’d been keeping an eye on the boat ever since they’d first split it in half. Now, it seemed that the children weren’t going to do anything. Some of them smelt the blood in the water.

“Hear that little one whining? What a bunch of babies.”
“Hey. Shigaraki said not to get careless. Age don’t matter. Their quirks do. Clearly...our quirks got the advantage in the water.” Drawled the same figure who had sliced the boat in half. But two villains lifted their head. It seemed...one of the children was moving?

“Just like Kacchan then…” Izuku thought to himself. He sprung himself from the railing into the air. “GO TO HELLLLLLLLLLL!”
“Feh. Just a dumb kid.”
“No matter how big a smash I pull off. They’ve got us surrounded, so I can’t hit them all! And even if we somehow make it out of the flood zone, they’ve got more! I can’t lose my whole arm…”
“Soon as he lands...we’ll gut him.”
“So...the egg...doesn’t explode.” Izuku placed one finger atop of the thumb. All he had to do was what he had done before. His quirk started to ripple in place as he flew through the air. Focus, and execute. Mineta couldn’t believe it. Izuku had been shaking too. He had been just as scared as him. So how...how!!?

“DELAWARE SMASH!!”

All of the force smashed into the water. It was a powerful blow...and Izuku’s finger broke. The pain rippled through his body but it didn’t matter. His objective had be achieved. Right now the water was in chaos, spreading far and wide. The villains were caught in the shockwaves, as Izuku span his head.

“TSUYU!! MINETA!!” Tsuyu was instantly ready. Springing into the air, she held Mineta close to her. Her tongue wrapped around Izuku pulling him away, stopping him from falling.

“What the...Midoriya…” Mineta whined out again, as he started flinging his balls as fast as he could. “Always doing the coolest things!!” They splashed and plopped into the water as they had done before. “WHEN ALL I CAN DO IS...!!” The villain’s weren’t sure what was happening.

“We’re getting dragged in!??”
“These are that kid’s...what the!? They won’t come off!??” It seemed that Mineta’s balls had found their mark. The villains were now caught in a rapidly closing whirlpool of water. Soon they were nothing more than a writhing mass of trapped bodies, caught together.

“By delivering a strong shock to the water’s surface...it spreads. And once it rushes back into the center…” Izuku groaned through the pain.

“They’re all washed up.” Tsuyu made sure to spring the trio away, as the water exploded into the air. The villains howled as they were flung high. It seemed Izuku’s plan had paid off! “Looks like we beat our first challenge. Or something. Good job, you two.” Eventually the trio sailed themselves clear of the boat. Izuku was let loose from the tongue, and Tsuyu continued to drag Mineta by his scarf. The gremlin child seemed a bit pleased with himself.

“I took a real clean dump this morning. They should be stuck together all day.” No one paid much attention to this statement. Izuku was lost in his thoughts muttering out loud as seemed to be the norm.

“Lucky that caught them all. Honestly that was a real gamble. Had they’d been smart, some would
have hidden under the water’s surface. Guess they weren’t thinking ahead...still...got be careful here..”
“Stop it, Midoriya. That’s scary.” Tsuyu replied in her usual flat tone. “So what should we do now?”

Our first battle ended with our first win! - I
If you consider relying on Mineta a win - V

“Right. For now, calling for help is our top priority.” Izuku explained. Tsuyu vaguely checked that his finger was ok. “We ought to follow the shoreline, and make for the exit. Avoid the plaza all together.”

But I’d made a deadly wrong assumption. - I

“Right. Looks like Aizawa Sensei is drawing a large number of them to the Plaza.” Tsuyu noted. It was true. Aizawa was still handling the fight fairly well. But…
“There’re too many of them. Of course, he’s more than holding his out there, but...it’s too much for him. He knew that, but jumped into protect us…” Izuku mused. Mineta’s eyebrows went angry as he glared at the green haired boy.
“Don’t tell me you’re that dense Midoriya.”
“I’m not saying we should dive right into the fight. Just...wait for an opening. And see what we can do to lighten Sensei's load.”

Thinking that we stood a chance against these enemies...was a grave miscalculation. - I
Course...at the time we were all too cuffed coz of the sheer fact that we weren’t instantly killed. - V
“Divine and conquer, huh?” Todoroki exhaled a cool breath. His left arm was coated in ice. “Forgive me for saying so, but…” It seemed that the vast horde of villains in front of him had that in common with his arm. The landslide zone had quickly found itself turning into a vague winter wonderland. Ice coated the entire area directly in front of the student. He moved forward slowly. After all, there was no risk coming his way whatsoever. “Forgive me for saying so, but…it’s hard to see you guys are more than thugs with quirks you can’t even handle…”

“Bastard!! The second he was warped here…” One of the villains groaned form within their icy prison. It had been a second. One moment Todoroki hadn’t been there and they were free. The next he was present and they were frozen. “Is he really just a kid…?” Todoroki moved forward, placing himself in front of one of them. He slipped into his thoughts for a moment.

“Damn brat…”

“Hey. At this rate, your skin’ll rot away from frostbite. But. I’m trying to become a hero. And heroes don’t do such horrible things. WHat makes you think you can kill All Might…? Tell me the plan.”

The mountain zone was one of the more chaotic situations to be sure. It had two sections. On the right side was were Jirou, Yaoyorozu and Kaminari found themselves. They were encircled by a large group of villains. Off to the side was a rickety bridge. It connected their platform to another. This other platform was where Vanfell found himself. There were no villains behind the quirkless student. However they were directly in front of him, blocking the route to the other students. The situation was fraught...

“Uwahhhh!” Kaminari ducked. A villain had thrown a fairly beefy right hook at him. The student had just managed to scramble away in time. “Damn! My whole life!! It just flashed before my eyes!!” He skidded back to the center of the zone. Yaoyorozu slammed her staff into a villain as he arrived. “The hell are these guys!? What’re they doing here!!?” Kaminari was clearly not taking it well, as the three students stood back to back. The villains were clearly still cautious. They weren’t willing to just launch themselves at the students...though they were fairly aggressive.

“Worry about it later.” Jirou barked. She ducked under a kick from a thug, swiping her machete back in turn. The villain scrambled away, clearly intimidated for the time being. “We need to figure out how to get away from this mob.” Yaoyorozu let her eyes swing to the other side of the mountain zone. Vanfell...he wasn’t a liability. He was however, clearly outnumbered. “As well as reaching Vanfell.” It was her duty as class president to leave no one behind. It was also her duty as a friend.

“Yo. You’re a lightning guy, right? Just fry ‘em to a crisp, would ya?” Jirou barked as she managed to sidestep another attack. “Weren’t you paying attention during battle training?! We were partners!” Kaminari yelled out. “I can only cover myself in electricity. Sure, I can discharge it. But I can’t control it! I’d take you guys out too. It’s like with Todoroki’s power!! I’m trying to call for help…” He tapped the strange earpiece that was part of his costume. “But my transceiver is jammed! Get it?! You can’t rely on me here. I’m relying on you!! Ain’t a brawler like Vanfell…”

“Sure blab a lot off a guy. Fine.” Jirou slammed her foot into Kaminari’s back sending him rocketing forward. “Be a human stun gun!!”
“Seriously?” Kaminari found himself pressed up against the villain from earlier. His power activated subconsciously. His entire body was soon sizzling, crackling, and sparking. His foe shuddered, spasmed, and fell to his back. It seemed this tactic was working. “Hey. It worked. I’m pretty strong!!”

Meanwhile across the bridge in the other side of the mountain zone, Vanfell was getting his bearings. The quirkless student was up on the balls of his feet. Already bobbing and weaving on the spot, his eyes flickered around in a circle. He was surrounded, but not as bad as the others. Only five guys. He exhaled from his nose as he curled his lip upwards into a sneer. If they wanted to try and kill him, it was going to be more difficult than they thought. Something was odd though. They weren’t attacking yet.

“You lads here to admire me, or kill me? C’mon make up your minds…” He taunted. It wasn’t easy for him to make the first move. For a starter, he had no clue what their quirks were except for the obvious mutant. The only thing said mutant had going for him was an extra arm, sprouting from his back. Ought to be easy enough to deal with, so long as he kept eyes on it. The other four varied from skinny, to bulky. Two of them were carrying weapons, while the other two weren’t. He figured those with the weapons didn’t have impressive quirks. Meant that only two of the five were a real threat. Focus them down first, and then handle the rest.

“Shut yer trap kid. Too damn cocky for a runt who don’t know he’s dead…” One of the villains with a weapon hissed. Despite this assertion they still didn’t want to make a move. The gears turned in Van’s head. Did they...not know? Now he let a smile wrap itself around his face.

“Heh. Damn, and here I thought you lot came prepared. Guess you’re just as rookie as we are.” Vanfell rolled his neck. The villains weren’t sure what he meant by that. Not that they got much time to react. Vanfell snapped forward leaping himself toward one of the armed villains. His left arm curled itself into a right hook, taking him completely off guard. As the villain staggered back, Vanfell grabbed at him. Managing to secure a grip on his clothing he brought his knee up and the head of the villain down. They met with a sickening crunch as Vanfell then threw his now unconscious foe to one side.

“The hell!? This kid got some sort of speed booster?”

“Au-Natural. One can of quirkless whoop ass, en route.” He snorted. Something was pulsing in his veins, and it was a rush. These idiots thought he had a quirk. They had quirks, and here they were. Being trounced by a quirkless kid. The three armed villain and the last remaining armed villain went for a twofold attack. Vanfell knew that the three armed villain was aiming for his torso. So he let every hit slam into his suit. The wind did sail out of him slightly, but nowhere near as bad as Kirishima had done to him. His suit was charged. Spinning his body, Vanfell ducked under the slash of the machete. He rose up with blistering speed, letting loose a kinetic boosted uppercut. Two of the thugs were down. Now only three to go. The third arm managed to backhand him across the face. So he rolled with the punch and skidded back. The trio closed up, blocking the bridge. No easy way through without a head on assault. Vanfell spat on the floor.

“This kid...making bums out of us!” One of the thugs with a strong quirk clearly had enough. Vanfell’s eyes twitched. The air had just got cold. Said thug had blue hands. Some sort of ice quirk. Aight. Then the other thug seemed to start...profusely...sweating. Ok. All the quirks were in play now. He didn’t get much time to react however. A slip and slide attack came out from the sweaty guy, clearing aiming for his ribs. Vanfell dropped his arms low, and guarded. His face then exploded in pain as he was sent skidding backwards. A cold mark rested against his face, as the sweaty thug slipped back over. Damn. Hard combination to beat...but he could. He had to. His life was on the line.
“All you guys got? C’mon, I hit harder than that!” He roared. None of them seemed to take it well. In an instant, the sweaty guy was lunging for Vanfell. His slide through the boy’s legs before he could react. A painful kick slammed into the back of Vanfell. He slipped forward from the force and the sweat, into a brutal double punch to his ribs. But his plan was almost ready...he rolled. Barely dodging a brutal attempt to slam him in the head from the three armed thug, Vanfell huffed. Now…

“Sorry kid. Brave for a quirkless reject. Now though? Die!” The ice cold hands and sweat villain hurtled towards him. His legs jerked forward. One hand on the shoulder! Leap! He sailed over the sweaty foe, and landed on the shoulders of the icy fisted villain. He headbutted the thug before he could react, and then grabbed one of his arms. Jamming it downwards, it connected with the slick pool of sweat. In an instance, the sweat froze around the feet of the two foes, as Vanfell flung himself forward. One to go! The three armed thug was all that stood between him, and his friends. Gritting his teeth he grasped the third arm as it came for his head. This came at the expense of two powerful shots to his stomach. His suit was ready!

“Sorry pal.” Funneling all his charged energy directly into the third arm, there was a beastial scream of pain from the thug. His third limb broke. Vanfell took the chance, slammed his head into the villain’s, and then threw him behind him. The bridge was clear! Go, go go!

“Just rely on me guys!!” Kaminari beamed as he still hugged himself against the large villain. Jirou rolled her eyes a little bit.

“Well, that was easy…” But what the two of them had failed to notice was two villains moving from the group. One of them had a large rock attached around his fist. This would clearly insulate him from the effects of Kaminari’s electricity. The other wore a pig like mask and had two daggers. He lept into the air, as the rock hand swung for Kaminari’s head.

“Stop messing around, you punk!” Jirou was fast. Her soundwaves rippled forward, shattering the rock just in time. What this meant was that a bare fist slammed into Kaminari’s face. As a result the thug was electrified, howling and spasming in pain. However there was no time for her to react to the flying thug—who was suddenly caught in a net. Yaoyorozu had sent it flying from her elbow as she smashed another villain into the ground with her staff. She was working as hard as she could, managing to hold her own.

“Get serious, you two!” She barked. Her voice was tense as the fight continued to rage. The villains were starting to get more and more aggressive. Yaoyorozu had been distracted by Jirou and Kaminari. She didn’t see it until it was too late. A meaty paw was swinging down for her head. She twisted her body as best as she could, trying to get her staff to block the attack. But it would seem she didn’t have to. The villain was sent sprawling away from her. Another villain had been thrown at him. Her eyes caught on a commotion in the backline of the villains, near the bridge.

“That’s right! Stay.” She saw Vanfell grip a villain with flowing locks by their hair, His knee smashed into their face, before he tossed them to the ground. He then slammed his foot between the legs of another foe before headbutting them. This was...far more violent than she had seen from him before. She snapped back to defending herself, but it bothered her. Vanfell was letting loose...could he be enjoying this? The thought didn’t have much time to trouble her however, as he soon rolled next to her. Their backs pressed together as he took in ragged breaths.

“Come here often?” He teased, as she rolled her eyes. Yaoyorozu was quick to notice something else. Vanfell’s sudden presence within the group...had made the villains restless. Not good. Her plan was still cooking. A large swathe of them charged forward toward the group.

“Focus and fight!” She yelled back. Vanfell nodded. The two seemed to click instinctively. Yaoyorozu slammed one villain with her staff, before tossing it to Vanfell. Using it like a reverse
pole vault, Vanfell flung a villain over his head, before twirling the stick back to Yaoyorozu. To an
outside observer it was akin to a tornado of punches, and fancy staff moves. Jirou sighed. Her earjack
clicked into her boot.

“I actually had a pretty good plan in mind, but Kaminari, you…” She shrugged. In an instant a
majority of the new wave was stalled. They fell to their knees, clutching their ears and screaming in
pain. “In my costume request, I asked for a way to focus my sound in one direction…” But before
she could say anything else she had to block a sword swing. Her machete clanged against the metal
as she strained to hold the opponent back. Her knees started to buckle as Vanfell moved quick,
throwing a long reaching jab. It wasn’t looking good…the group was about to be overwhelmed.

“It’s ready!!”

“Huh?”

“It took some time.” Yaoyorozu hunched over. Her back started to bulge. Some of the more skittish
villains darted backwards. Her costume started to rip at the back. “That’s how it is with larger
objects.” A large sheet flew out of her back, wide enough to cover herself, Jirou, and Van. It landed
on them, as the villains tilted their heads.

“A sheet!? Trying to shield yourselves?”

“A 100 mm thick insulation sheet. Now, Kaminari.”

“Gotcha.” The electric quirk user gave an almost sadistic grin to the villains stood before him. Some
of the more acute ones figured out what was coming. They scrambled forward. “Y’see. I’m
actually… SUPER STRONG!” Kaminari let loose. A blast of electricity enough to put a power grid
to shame sprayed out. The villains couldn’t dodge such an attack and howled, screamed,
spasmed…and fell. It seemed the battle was over.

“Now then…I’m worried about the others. Let us hurry and regroup.” Yaoyorozu remarked from
beneath the sheet. Vanfell and Jirou were both a tad...preoccupied with other concerns. The two had
flushed red faces. Jirou had a hand over her mouth, and Vanfell was doing his best to keep his…
spirit in check. They both stuttered in harmony.

“You’re, uh, having a wardrobe malfunction…” While also thinking “Damn, she’s stacked…”

“I can make more clothes.” Yaoyorozu stated plainly. Indeed, her costume was already starting to be
repaired. They moved from under the sheet to find Kaminari with a rather...brainless expression on
his face. His thumbs were jacked up and he was shoving them back and forth.

“Weh~” It seemed using his quirk like that turned him into more of a moron than usual. The four
seemed to have beat back the threat,but they didn’t quite notice a hand smashing out of the ground
from behind them.

The city was on fire. There were villains rampaging through. And all Ojiro had was his tail. He
perched himself atop a lampost. He was lucky that he’d ended up in such a landscape. Though his
quirk was usually rather dull and plain, here it could shine. It would give him extra mobility, so long
as he swung himself from these posts. It also gave him an easy way to run circles around the villains.
This whole thing was fairly insane,but he could survive. If he stayed nimble and fast on his feet, then
these thugs ought to not be able to keep up with him. Much like the other students, Ojiro had a vague
idea of what was going on. The sheer number of people that had been brought in made him feel like
they weren’t that dangerous. It was a diversion tactic, to take their eyes elsewhere. It didn’t matter for
him though. Even if he was near the main plan there wasn’t much he could do. He was about on the
same tier as Vanfell—which put a pang of pain in his plain heart.

“Ain’t there meant to be a damn kid here? Hell, wanna gut them. Dumb kids thinking they rule the
world…” One of the villains had came into sight. It seemed the smoke was helping cloud Ojiro from
their vision. He remained perched atop the lamp. When the villain sauntered beneath...he extended
his tail down. It coiled around the thug, flung him into the air, and then hit him like a baseball. Ojiro sent the fellow flying through the window of a building. One down. He flung himself across the street, rolling through the window of a building. If he stuck to the shadows he’d be able to get out of this with no problems. His body hunched low to the floor as he carefully padded forward. His thoughts darted to the other students and if they’d be ok. In particular he was concerned for Vanfell. Sure, Ojiro only had a tail. Vanfell had nothing. Hagakure would have a pretty easy time he guessed. For all he knew she could be with him right now. The thought made him laugh slightly. Then he saw two villains stood in a doorway.

“This heat, shit. Killing me out here.”

“Shut yer trap. They booted a kid here, and we gotta get him.” Neither of them were happy with the outcome. Ojiro’s tail wrapped around both of them. They yelped, but before they could react their heads smashed together. Two more down. Who said head on fighting was the only solution? He padded forth again, emerging out into the street. In front of an entire mob of the villains. They turned. They saw him. They lunged. Ojiro sprung into the air slapping his tail down on one of their heads. Propelling himself into the sky, it was time to lead them on a merry chase. Up and away!

“Twenty-three seconds.”

“So, you’re the boss?” Aizawa huffed. The fighting was starting to take its toll on him. Despite him telling Izuku that no hero is a one trick pony, endurance fights like this weren’t his forte. It didn’t seem like it would end anytime soon. But, the blue haired ringleader was making a move forward now.

“Twenty-four seconds. Twenty seconds.” Shigaraki, the blue haired villain, gripped Aizawa’s bandage. In order to do that, he clearly needed solid reflexes. Aizawa ducked under a mook. Pressing low to the ground, he erupted up, and tugged on the scarf.

“Seventeen seconds.” Shigaraki remarked. However he was pulled in close, and an elbow slammed into his stomach. His body swam with pain. But he ignored it. “Difficult to tell when you’re scampering around, there are moments when your hair falls in front of your eyes.” He moved his hand to the elbow of the teacher and pressed all five digits against it. A sickly crumbling, and cracking nose began. “Everytime you finish a given move. And your max duration is getting shorter…and shorter.” Shigaraki gave a breathy chortle. “Don’t overdo it now, Eraserhead.” The elbow kept dissolving, the flesh peeling away. Aizawa didn’t have time to feel pain, or bleed. His hand swung up, a right hook smashing Shigraki across the face.

“My elbow was disintegrating!” That thought ran through his mind, but he didn’t get long to think about it. Two thugs tried to slam him down, but he managed to roll. His bandages threw them to the ground as he gritted his teeth. Shigaraki was getting up from the right hook and started muttering again.

“You quirk… It’s not good in long, group battles, eh? This is kinda different from your usual work, right? You specialize in quick sneak attacks. Still, you jumped right into this fight. Hoping to make the kids feel safe? So cool. So cool. By the way, hero. I’m not the boss here.” Aizawa twitched. The bird like figure had seemingly instantly appeared by his side. A meaty hand reached for him.

“Thirteen. It would seem a disaster relief hero, can’t measure up to even the most ordinary of heroes when it comes to a fight.” The mist man drawled. Mina and Sero reared back, as the scene unfolded. A portal opened behind 13. Their quirk continued despite this…the black hole ripping their suit clean open. It was catastrophic damage to put it lightly. “And now you find yourself ripped by your own power…” 13 fell to their knees. They’d been warped They were done for. Ochako’s face dropped, as Shoji grunted.
“Iida. You were told to run.” Shoji lifted his arms, his eyes focused on the mist villain. Iida twitched. He turned and gritted his teeth.

“Damn…” His engines exploded to life as he made a break for it, his arms swinging back and forth. “My dear scattered children... It would hardly be to our benefit if you called for your teachers.” His misty form coiled in front of Iida.

“They’re... counting on me! The whole class!! It’s up to me!!” There was seemingly nothing he could do. It seemed the portal was going to send him away. But in an instance Shoji had wrapped his arms around the misty foe.

“GO! Quickly!” His eye looked behind him at Iida, as the young lad burst off again.

“Everyone!! Just hold on!!”

But the situation had grown dire. Momo and Vanfell span on their heels to see a villain raise up out of the floor. It seemed that Kaminari hadn’t quite managed to fry everyone... and was soon grabbed. And back with Izuku, Tsuyu, and Mineta... it seemed that it was all falling apart.

Villains. What pros deal with. We... hadn’t seen anything, yet. I&V.

The bird like creature had Aizawa pinned to the floor. One hand held him by his right shoulder. His goggles lay smashed in a pool of blood and his face was pressed against the floor. The other creature of the monster had... snapped Aizawa’s arm. It squatted there, not going any further. But the damage had already been done. Shigaraki snorted and squinted his eye. His voice had a sickly perverse smugness to it.

“Meet the Anti-Symbol of Peace. The bio-engineered... Noumu.”

The collapsed zone was a mess. Even before the attack of the villains it was one of the more destroyed zones. It was seen as an important one by those at U.A. There was no doubt that fire and flood training was important. However, most hero work came from dealing with villains and their repercussions. Most villains tended to operate within urban environments. This mostly came down to their being more targets to work with, though rural villainy was a pertinent issue. As a result, special focus was placed upon the collapsed zone. This zone was where Bakugou and Kirishima had found themselves. They had quite easily blown their way through the opponents that had stood in their way. Bakugou’s quirk coupled with his instincts had proven overwhelming, and none of these villains had the power needed to break through the rock hard defence that Kirishima brought to the table.

“That’s all of ‘em. Buncha mooks.” Bakugou exhaled and lifted his boot from the face of one of them. Kirishima dropped one of his opponents as he rubbed his face clean of the sweat. It had been a mess for sure, but they’d came out alright.

“Great! Now, let’s move and help the others. If we’re here, I bet everyone else is also still in USJ! I’m worried bout those guys who don’t really have ways to attack.” Kirishima grunted. He wasn’t concerned about Vanfell though. That kid could handle this. Nor was he worried about Izuku. Something told him those two had it covered wherever they were. “Thirteen Sensei’s probably got his hands full since we rushed ahead like that.” Kirishima continued on. He didn’t notice the chameleon villain padding across the roof of the collapsed zone building. “None of this would’ve happened if we just let him handle the mist man. As men, we gotta take responsibility…”

“If that’s what you want, go on alone. I’m gonna beat that warp gate guy to a pulp!” Bakugou exclaimed. He seemed to have no flare for concern for others.

“Huh? Still pulling that immature crap at a time like this? Normal attacks don’t work on him anyway.”
“He’s how these punks are getting around. Bring him down, and they’ll have nowhere to run. It’s not like I don’t have a way to beat him.”

“Yes. Keep chatting. Let your guard down.” The chameleon villain was now behind Bakugou. He flicked a knife into his hand and lurched forward. One stab and this kid would be dead! But then Bakugou turned. One hand gripped the villain by the head. An explosion rippled out and the foe fell to the ground out cold.

“I mean...if all they have to send against us are these idiots. We should be fine.”

“Great reflexes! you sure are calm of a sudden.” Kirishima said, taken aback slightly as Bakugou was usually like ‘Die!!’

“I’M ALWAYS CALM, YOU DAMNED BROOMHEAD!!” Bakugou bellowed back, flipping the middle finger. Kirishima just laughed and grinned.

“Ah, there it is.”

“I’m outta here…”

“Hold up! You gotta trust your pals…! Be a man, Bakugou! You’ve convinced me!” Kirishima smashed his two fists together. It was time to act! Like manly men! Manly!

Iida saw the doors in front of him. Shoji had bought him desperately needed time. If the mist man reached him, it would be over. He had to save his classmates, and do his brother proud. Ingenium would see the day saved and there was no way Iida would fail to live up to that name.

“How impertinent…! I won’t allow you to leave!” The mist man flew towards Iida yet again. This time, it was Ochako who crossed the line and burst forward.

“What’re you gonna do Uraraka?!” Mina yelped. The alien girl was busy attending to the injured Thirteen.

“There!! See it!!” Ochako exclaimed. Iida didn’t hear anything which was going on. His thoughts were concerned with the automatic doors. Would he be able to kick them down? Were they too thick for that? Any time delaying him could prove fatal. But just as he was about to reach the doors, the mist loomed in front of him.

“You underestimate me, Four-Eyes!” It seemed to be the end of the line. There was no time to make a turn. If he stopped abruptly, his engines would stall. Gritting his teeth, Iida prepared to be launched across the USJ… “Now Vanish!” But it never came. The Mist Man seemed to groan, as Iida glanced behind him.

“I’m not sure why, but if you wear this thing...you have to have a real body in there!” Ochako gripped the metal frame as if her life depended on it. Activating her quirk, she flung the mist-man into the air with all her might. “NOW GO, IIDA!!” The mistman grunted. He’d been caught out. No matter. His body alone wouldn’t stop him from recovering. But then, something stuck against the back of the metal. Tape!? Sero grunted as he tensed, and held the mist man. Shoji lurched forward, and tore the tape. Clinging it with all of his arms, he span and flung the Mistman as far as he could.

“GO!” Iida didn’t waste his time. Forcing the doors open, straining, he broke free. Outside of the USJ he burst forth into as fast a run as possible. It seemed for now, the students had managed to get just one step ahead. Above them all, the Mist Man sighed.

“Canceling out quirks, pretty cool. Nothing special. Against crazy strength...you might as well be quirkless…” Shigaraki wobbled as he stated this. Noumu reached forward, gripping the one remaining good arm of Aizawa, snapping it like a brittle chicken wing.
“He snapped my arm like a twig. Looking at any part of his body should be enough to nullify him. That means...this is his base strength.” As Aizawa thought this, his head was lifted up. “He’s easily as strong as All Might...” And then it was smashed with sickening impact into the ground. The situation looked dire, as the three students, Midoriya, Tsuyu, and Mineta, watched on in horror.

“Not good, Midoriya. Time for a change of plans, yeah...?”

“Tomura Shigaraki.” The mistman rumbled and ripped his way into existence.

“Kurogiri. Is Thirteen dead?”

“He’s incapacitated, but there were some students I couldn’t warp away. And one of them escaped.”

“...Oh? Huh.” Shigaraki started to scratch at his neck. At first it was a slow and steady pace.

“Huhhh.” It seemed that as the villain grew more agitated and distraught, the pace increased until it was a rapid fire piston of scratching. “Kurogiri. You...I’d turn you to dust if you weren’t our ticket out of here. We won’t stand a chance against dozens of pros...It’s game over, man. It’s game over for now.” The villain turned his back and slumped. “We’re leaving.”

“...? Leaving?”

“Did he just they’re leaving??”

“I think so...”

“W-we’re saved! Yes!” Mineta lept forward, his hand reaching for Tsuyu’s chest. She dunked his head into the water.

“I’ve got a bad feeling Midoriya.”

“Yeah, to do all this and then just leave on a whim...” “Didn’t they wanna kill All Might? U.A’s just gonna be in more danger than ever if they get away now. Game over, he said? What...what are they thinking?”

“But before that. Let’s leave a few dead kids...” Shigaraki leapt forward at a blistering speed. He moved so fast that Izuku didn’t even see the movement until he was right on top of them. “To wound the pride of the symbol of peace!” Izuku could barely track Shigaraki. In fact, he couldn’t. The villain had moved faster than his eyes can move. One sickly hand with skin flaking off shot for Tsuyu’s face. With no time to react, it rested on her face. Nothing happened. “...You really are pretty cool.” Shigaraki tilted his head to look behind him. Aizawa had forced his head up, despite the injuries, in order to glare at the villain and disable his quirk. “Eraserhead.” And then Noumu smashed his face square back into the ground. Izuku had his chance.

“Oh no no no no no no” His body moved itself. Lurching forward and out of the water, Izuku cocked his fist back. One for All started to coil inside of it. It was going to be a 100% smash, there was no other option in this circumstance. He had to get this villain away from Asui. “This one’s nothing like the guys in the water. Asui! Run! Save yourself!” “Get off her!!”

“Nomu.” The smash connected. The sheer force of it did not disappoint. Dust and smoke kicked up, as water also splashed itself into the air. Izuku instantly noticed that he managed not to break his arm. “...?! My arm’s not broken?! This is when I manage to regulate the power? Did I really do it?! I know that smash connected!!” And then he saw the reality. The ‘Nomu’. Stood in front of Izuku was the beast... and it barely seemed to react. “Uh...” “So quick...when did he...? Wait. It didn’t...work...?!” His mind flashed back. If they had figured out a way to kill All Might...no. It had to be this beast?!

“Quite a move you just pulled off. And with a “Smash” too...you a fan of All Might? Well. Whatever.” Shigaraki lifted his shoulders and shrugged. The Noumu moved forward and lifted Izuku by the arm. It was all falling apart. Tsuyu shot her tongue toward Izuku. It was the only option she had. If she could pull him free. And Mineta, seemed roused. His small hand shoved at Shigaraki, doing his desperate best to keep the villain from managing to kill Tsuyu. But it seemed all too little, and all too late. Until the doors to the USJ were sent flying. The students up at the top of the stairs
burst into weary and relieved smiles. A figure emerged from the dust cloud...

“FEAR NOT. I...AM HERE.” All Might had arrived. He was in his suit, tie, and slacks. No suit. No smile. His very presence served to set the children at ease as he gritted his teeth. This situation made him froth with righteous anger. Shigaraki just tilted his head to look at the hero and exhaled.

“Ah...to be continued.”
“I had a bad feeling...so I cut my talk with the principal short and came right away.” All Might exclaimed. The students at the top of the stairs were in a variety of reactions. Ochako and Mina wept tears of joy, finally feeling safe. Shoji let his tense shoulders drop, and despite being behind a mask Sero was obviously quite pleased with the result. “Then I ran into Iida on the way.” Shigaraki had stepped away from Tsuyu now. Noumu had halted in his murder of Izuku, and Mineta was sobbing tears of joy. “He told me the gist of what’s going on here.” “And it made my blood boil!! You kids must’ve been so scared.” All Might fumed as he gazed down the stairs. “And my colleagues...did their best.” His gaze fell on the wounded thirteen. “However. That’s exactly why I have to stand tall now and declare…” “FEAR NOT.” He lifted a hand to his tie, and ripped it free exhaling. “I AM HERE!”

“All Might!” Izuku yelped. But he noticed the hero wasn’t smiling. It was a rare sight. Izuku could count on one hand the amount of times All Might hadn’t smiled while doing his work. “...I’ve been waiting, hero. You’re worthless trash.” Shigaraki hissed. There was real venom in his voice as he shook his head. The fodder villains shifted around awkwardly not entirely sure as to what was happening.

“That’s!! I’ve never seen him in person before...what a presence…”
“No backing down moron, we’re here to kill him.” The #1 lifted himself into a leap. The villains on the floor went to react, before finding their entire bodies exploding in pain. They fell on their back, out cold. In an instant, All Might had ripped through their entire formation and landed next to the prone form of Aizawa.

“I’m sorry Aizawa.” He apologized for not arriving in time. All Might noted the damage to his arm and face...before gently placing him over his shoulder. Turning his eye fell upon Shigaraki and Nomu. Then there was another blazing flash of movement. Tsuyu, Mineta, Izuku, and Shigaraki, all found a force exerted on them. The three students were wrenched into the other arm of All Might and taken to safety. Shigaraki felt the sheer wind from the movement blast the hand from his face. All Might landed a safe distance away from the villains.

“Everyone, to the entrance. Take Aizawa. He’s unconscious, so hurry!!”
“H-huh? Wait!! What?! So fast...!!” Mineta yelped as he finally realized what had just happened. All Might twitched briefly. Only Izuku managed to catch it...and he knew it wasn’t a good sign. In front of the heroes, Shigaraki was wobbling and shaking. His voice had grown more unhinged. There was a hint of bitter whining laced through out.

“Ahhhhh...no good...I’m sorry.” He stooped down and picked up the one hand that had fallen on floor. “Father.” Hissing, he placed it back on his face before scratching and rubbing his face frantically. “Throwing punches to save people. Ha ha ha. There’s our state-sponsored violence. You’re quick. Too quick to keep up with, but not as quick as expected. Could it really be true...?”
“Your head tilted to the side, granting a disconcerting view of his actual face. Crusty skin, one sunken eye, and thin lips stretched over his mouth. “That you’re getting weaker...?”

“It’s not use, All Might!! That brain villain!! One for-I mean, my attack wasn’t strong enough to break my own arm, but...he didn’t even flinch!! Up against that you...” Izuku scrambled. There was no way All Might could handle this villain. Not with his time limit and draining power.

“Midoriya. Kid.” All Might beamed his trademark smile and made a peace sign. “Fear not!” All Might launched himself forward. His two muscular arms crossed his body forming an X sign.

“CAROLINA...”
“Nomu.”

“SMASH!” The mighty blow slammed into Noumu. But...it had no effect. The creature seemed to barely react to the blow before throwing a meaty swing. All Might slid to his knees to avoid the attack, ducking under it.

“Seriously?” All Might smashed a blow into the gut of the beast. “No effect at all?” But the beast didn’t flinch.

“No effect. Because he has shock absorption.” Shigaraki stood on in glee watching the fight unfold. The villain was relaxed. He watched All Might slam another ineffectual blow into the head of the Noumu. “If you want to really damage Nomu, you’d be better off ripping him apart, piece by piece. Not that he'll give you that chance.”

“Thanks for the info. Appreciate it!!” All Might wrapped his arms around the beast from behind. He hauled the creature into the air and began a suplex. “No sweat!!” Smashing the beast into the ground from behind, there was a huge explosion. It put those that Bakugou could produce to shame.

“How’d a suplex make an explosion like that?! All Might’s in a whole different league!!” Mineta cheered. The three students were making a retreat. Izuku had Aizawa resting over his shoulders, while Mineta carried the teacher’s feet.

“Yet he’s a newbie as a teacher with those cheat sheets and All...” Tsuyu replied. But Izuku was lost in his thoughts.

“They might have a way to kill him... Meanwhile, we’re stuck here, helpless. Even worse...we’d only slow him down if they took one of us hostage. No reason to speculate about the villains...I just gotta trust in All Might!!”

“...It would seem they underestimated what All Might is capable off.” Shoji remarked, folding his arms. Ochako pointed down at the trio.

“Ah! It’s Deku and those guys!!” The young girl was quite relieved to see that he was in one piece. Something fuzzy in her head made her feel like she’d have been even more distraught had he died than she would have been for anyone else.

“But I know the truth!! I check the hero news every day in real time on my way to school. When Thirteen Sensei was saying how All Might wasn’t at USJ yet, it was subtle. But he raised three fingers. He must’ve meant All Might’s limit. That’d he’d already passed it today.”

“Go get im!! Get ‘im in the junk!!” Mineta howled out.

“Guess we were worried for nothing. He’s unreal...”

“And only I...and only I...” Izuku recalled the moment in which All Might revealed it. That he smiled to stave off the overwhelming pressure and fear he felt. “Know. His. Secret.”

“Ughh!” All Might gritted his teeth. Blood was leaking out and splattering down onto the face of the beast from his stomach!! Somehow the beast was able to grip into the wound...and then he realized what had happened. There was a portal. The body of the beast had been suplexed through. The head and arms as a result were now below All Might.

“So you hoped to drive him into the concrete...and seal his movements? It wouldn’t have worked. Nomu is as powerful as you. Well done, Kurogiri. Perfect timing really.” The mist man nodded, a safe distance away from Nomu. Fingers continued to sink deep into the wounded side of All Might’s stomach.

“What unbelievable power. Cut it out. That’s my weak point!!” “Impressive, for first time offenders...but prepare yourselves!!”

“I can’t say I enjoy the concept of having blood and guts inside my gate, but...if they’re yours, I’ll
happily oblige.” Kurogiri drawled, watching the #1 hero. “You see, it’s Nomu’s job to get around that blinding speed of yours and it’s my job to close the warp gate on you while you’re halfway through and immobilized. Thereby cutting you in two.” It seemed there was no way out for the #1 hero.

“Asu-Tsu...yu!”
“You finally got it right. Nice. What is it, Midoriya?”
“Take Aizawa Sensei for me!!” Izuku passed the teacher over to Tsuyu.
“Sure...but what’re you…”

“No, All Might.” Izuku realized that All Might was about to die. Something had to be done, no matter the cost! “There are so many things...so many!!” Tears started to well in his eyes as he snapped forward. His legs just started moving like they had done on that fateful day, that fateful day that he had met All Might. “That I need you...to teach me!!” “ALL MIGHT!!” He screamed as he threw himself forward. But it would seem that Kurogiri already had a comeback. His misty form floated towards Izuku. It seemed that the young student was about to be scattered back into USJ. But a figure flew through the air. Bakugou arrived, landing a devastating explosion on the metal guard that Kurogiri seemed to wear.

“Get...the hell outta here!! Deku!!” The angry student bellowed. His fingers made sure to grip tight as he slammed Kurogiri onto the floor. It seemed the counter to the mist-like figure had been found. Then, the left side of Nomu was coated in ice.

“So, I heard you people are here to kill All Might.” And to top it all off, Kirishima launched himself forward. A hardened arm swung at Shigaraki, who seemed rather bored when he dodged the attack.

“Crap!! Almost had ‘em!”
“You’re not all that. You misty mook!!”
“But scum like you could never kill the symbol of peace.”
“Kacchan...!! Guys!!”
And thus the students arrived. Noumu was frozen. All Might was free. Kurogiri was pinned to the ground. It seemed the battle had shifted. The four students stood ready as Shigaraki loomed in front of them.

“You’ve pinned down our way out… Well...this is a problem...” Shigaraki sighed as he glanced at Bakugou, who had Kurogiri pinned.
“You slipped up, you bastard! And it’s just like I thought! And you’re using that misty crap to hide your real body!? Am I right!? The parts you can turn into that foggy warp gate are limited.” It seemed quite a bind for them. Shigaraki watched quietly, not quite saying anything yet. “If your whole body was mist and physical attack didn’t work...you’d never say ‘that was a close’!!”
“Nn...”
“Don’t move! If I decide you’re doing anything anything fishy...I’ll blow you straight to Kingdom come!!”
That’s not very hero-like, dude.” Kirishima grinned awkwardly as he looked to Bakugou.

“Not only you have beaten our level, but you’re all at full health. Today’s kids really are something...our league of villains should be ashamed...! Nomu. Take out the explosive brat. We need our escape route back.” The students were a little confused by this. It seemed that the Nomu was trapped. How exactly was he going to deal with Bakugou. But Todoroki twitched. Something was off. The monster strained. The ice shattered, and the body went with it. Izuku’s eyes widened as he swallowed.

“His body’s falling apart, but he’s still moving...?!!”
“Get back, everyone!! What the…?! I thought his quirk was shock absorption.” The beast strained. It body seemed to be...growing back. Fresh muscle was straining its way into existence a grotesque sickening display. It’s black skin started to peel and grow back over as this process occurred.

“I don’t remember saying that’s all he can do. This is hyper-regeneration. Nomu is a superpowered living sandbag designed to withstand everything you’ve got.” And with that, the beast threw itself toward Bakugou.

“He’s fast!” All Might didn’t hesitate. In an instant, he threw himself in front of the blow. The punch exploded forward. Bakugou turned. He knew that blow was meant for him...but it hadn’t connected? A figure smashed into a wall. The sheer force of impact threw up enough wind to send the students sprawling backwards.

“Kacchan?! You dodged that!? Wow…!”
“I couldn’t see a thing…” “I didn’t. Shut up, you-” Bakugou gritted his teeth. It was clearly...him.

“This guy...doesn’t know how to hold back.” All Might coughed and spat blood from his teeth. It wasn’t lost on Shigaraki that All Might had opted to take the hit for the boy instead.

“Anything to save a comrade, right? Just like earlier when uh...that one.” He pointed a single finger Izuku. “The plain one. He came at me with everything he had. But violence, in the name of saving others is admirable? Isn’t it, hero?” Shigaraki’s voice was now out of control. Hate, venom, rage, and insanity all broiled together. “You know what, All Might? That pisses me off! Heroes and villains both thrive on violence, but we’re still categorized. “You’re good.” “You’re evil.” That’s how it is!! Symbol of Peace? Hah!! In the end, you’re just a tool for violence. Made to keep us down! And violence, only breeds more violence. I’ll show the world that by killing you!”

“What a load of shit. Idealistic criminals have a different sort of fire in their eyes.” All Might shook his head as he glared at the hand faced villain. “But you’re just enjoying yourself, you big liar.”

“...You got me. Saw right through…” There was a toxic sneer from the villain as he hissed. The students still were present.

“It’s three-on-five.”
“But Kacchan showed us the mist man’s weak point…!”
“These are some brutal dudes, but with us supporting All Might, we can knock em back!!”
“No!! Get out of here.” The pro hero instantly replied.
“Things wouldn’t have gone so well had I not stepped in.” Todoroki retorted, lifting a singular hand preparing for battle.

”All Might, you’re bleeding...and your time’s u-”

“Right you are Todoroki!! So thanks for that!! But...fear not! Sit back and watch a pro get serious!” The man threw back a arm, clenching his fist tightly.

“Nomu. Kurogiri. Kill him. I’ll deal with the children.” Shigaraki exhaled. It seemed it was all coming down to a head now. These brats wouldn’t be much of a threat to him. Slow and brittle… All Might extended a hand, and curled a fist tight.

“I’m afraid I barely have a minute left in this form...my power is declining faster than I thought it would…”

“Let’s clear this level and go home.”
“Even so. I have to stop these villains…”
“Heads up! We’re fighting after all!”

“Because I am…” A variety of lights began to flash within his head. Seven of them to be exact. A female voice lingered in his ear. It was time to live up to the promise that he made a long time ago. His face tensed. “I AM THE SYMBOL OF PEACE AND JUSTICE!!” Thus, he snapped
forward. Izuku and Shigaraki both realized now that there had been a change in the man’s demeanor. Both of them shuddered, and turned. All Might flew towards the beast and their fists met. Such force rippled forth that wind howled up. The students were sent flying away, and Shigaraki was also sent airborne.

“Weren’t you listening? One of his powers is shock absorption!” Shigaraki had an annoyed tone in his voice. What was this idiot intending to do?

“YEAH!! WHAT ABOUT IT!?” All Might bellowed in response. He lifted an arm and threw a punch. Noumu matched it. So he threw another might blow, which was matched again. His arms flew back and exploded into a sheer flurry of powerful blows. Their fists were moving too fast for the eye to track, and throwing up the mother of all storms. Izuku was sent skidding even further back. All Might’s groans and yells were purely guttural, beastial, clearly a man giving the fight every single iota of his energy.

“Woah!? He’s gonna fight that brain guy head on!?"

“Woah! Their so fast!” Kirishima yelped, as he was nearly sent flying.

“No! I can’t get near them!” Kurogiri hissed, as the sheer wind forced him to stand next to Shigaraki. This was not a good situation. The fight continued to rage on. The two monoliths were throwing out such force that the battlefield around them was tearing itself apart. All Might slammed a foot into the ground to anchor himself, as the two continued their brutal hurricane of traded blows.

“HE SAID YOUR QUIRK WAS ONLY SHOCK ABSORPTION, NOT NULLIFICATION! THAT MEANS THERE’S A LIMIT TO WHAT YOU CAN TAKE. RIGHT?” All Might kept raining the blows down. The hero noticed that he was starting to make headway. The beast had been knocked back one of his blows. So long as he kept this up...he’d be able to pull it off. His injured side erupted into fresh pain, as the Nomu managed to tag him. Pain swam through his body as he recoiled, but didn’t lose any ground. His eyes blazed blue as his head snapped forward. His sheer output by now, was throwing debris from the ground up. Tree’s found themselves uprooted and thrown into the maelstrom that was surrounding the fight between the two.

All Might was even managing to force the Nomu back. Earlier what had seemed an invincible beast was now being revealed to be quite the opposite. “SO YOU WERE MADE TO FIGHT ME BIG GUY. IF YOU CAN REALLY WITHSTAND ME FIRING AT 100% OF MY POWER, THEN I’LL HAVE TO GO BEYOND THAT AND FORCE YOU TO SURRENDER!” Shigaraki twitched. He thought All Might was weakening...but...somehow, the speed and power of his blows were increasing. Nomu was starting to wilt under the pressure. One barrage of blows broke through and knocked its head back. It recovered, trying to return the blows in kind, but All Might forced it forward. It’s head snapped back again. All Might felt blood spurt from his mouth, and fly into the windstorm. It didn’t slow the man down. No blood would stop him from failing his students. It splashed back on his face, as he kept up the brutally focused and targeted barrage. Everything was on the line!

“He’s giving it all, even though he’s injured...those aren’t just random punches either. They’re targeted! And every single one of them...is more than 100% of his power!” Izuku was watching the fight in awe. All Might threw a brutal uppercut. The Noumu was sent flying, smashing into the ground and through the trees. Shigaraki tensed his eye in agitation. This wasn’t supposed to be possible... All Might threw himself through the treeline as the bestial Nomu scrambled onto all fours and flung itself into the air to meet its opponent.

“A REAL HERO-!” All Might caught it mid-air sliding beneath its body. He then kicked it back into the ground, before slamming down onto it, surfing off its body. “-WILL ALWAYS FIND A WAY
FOR JUSTICE TO BE SERVED!” His move had hit Noumu with such force, that it had been forced back into the air. The #1 responded in kind. He flew into the air, arms gripping the beast as he spun it around before shooting it right back into the ground. The shocks threw up the entire region into turmoil. Nomu bounced up from its crater as All Might landed. The sheer force of the #1 tossed up even more of the already damaged arena. Time seemed to freeze as the Nomu hung in the air.

“NOW FOR A LESSON! YOU MAY HAVE HEARD THESE WORDS BEFORE! BUT I’LL TEACH YOU WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN!” The lights flickered again. A soft female voice whispered his name. All Might threw his fist back, clasping where he felt the lights. His fist glowed, as he slammed it forward into the Nomu.

"GO BEYOND! PLUS ULTRA!"

The sheer force hung at the beast for a moment, before exploding into a beautiful ripple. The force created shockwaves, and flung Nomu clean into the sky. It smashed through the USJ dome, leaving tremors that were felt across the entire facility. Nomu was sent all the way into the air with a dazzling little twinkle…

“Did a building just fly by? Or am I going crazy?!” Sero yelped from the stairs.
“IT was the brain foe. Such power…” Shoji couldn’t quite believe it.
“That’s All Might for you! That’s why he’s the most amazing hero!!” Mineta screamed, as the girls exhaled and agreed.

“That was like the finishing move in a video game! He beat the shock absorption right out of him! I’ve never seen that kind of brute strength.”
“Imagine having power like that. He must have been punching that monster so fast that he couldn’t regenerate…”

“Yes. I’m slowing down. Back in my heyday, just five of those punches would’ve been enough.” All Might lifted his fist up and crossed it across his body resting it against his shoulder. “But that was over 300 mighty blows.” “And now…my time’s up.” Smoke hissed and coiled around All Might. Any more movement would likely force him to revert to his small form. “Well, villain. How about we hurry up and finish?”

“You cheated…” Shigaraki hissed and clawed at his neck with a grimace detectable around the traces of his face.
“Hands up. And no quirks allowed. Try anything and I’ll kill him.” The electro villain hissed. This wasn’t the work he had thought Giran had meant. All things considered it wasn’t a surprise. Nor was he too broken up about it. Work was work, and if he managed to get out of this one he’d be paid well. Damned kids were stronger than he had expected. If he didn’t have an inherent resistance to electric quirks, he might have been fried as well. As it were, he was lucky. Kid wasn’t as lucky. Kaminari dangled from his grip, lifted by the collar of his jacket. Yaoyorozu, Jirou, and Vanfell all lifted their hands up slowly.

“Kaminari!”
“He got him! Kid got careless…”
“Figure you ought to let him go, aye?”
“As an electric-type myself...I don’t want to kill him. But I will, if I have to.” The villain hissed, as his hand sizzled and crackled with yellow electricity.
“Yay…whey…” It seemed in his brainless state that Kaminari didn’t quite realize the state of danger that he was in.
“He was waiting to ambush us when we thought they were all down. How did we not see this coming…?”
“An electric type…! He must be the signal jammer that Todoroki mentioned.” Yaoyorozu had figured it out in her head. It made sense…

“Get over there, and don’t move a muscle.” The villain wasn’t enjoying this. The fact that he was attacking kids was already bad enough. But now the situation was spiralling madly out of control. “I always thought this about Kaminari, but...you electric types. You’re all natural born winners, yeah?” Jirou drawled in a genial tone to the villain. One ear jack slipped down her back, aiming for her boot.
“What’re you…?” Yaoyorozu watched the girl with a cautious eye. Vanfell wasn’t doing anything either, his hands held up as his face tightened. Not good, damn it. This guy was dangerous. No time to take him off guard either.
“Never mind being a hero. There are so many different jobs you could do. This might sound naive, but...why become a villain? I just gotta wonder.” Her ear jack was nearly there...and then Yaoyorozu figured it out. If Jirou could keep him distracted long enough, she’d be able to launch a sneak attack. “...” The villain sighed. His eyes glared at the children. He understood why they were doing it. It was their only option. But something about it just rubbed him the wrong way. “Thought I wouldn’t notice what you’re up to?”
“Yayyy?!”
“It’d take a real idiot to fall for a kid’s stupid trick.” Course they had to make it difficult for him. Face of the girl showed that she had honestly thought it would have worked. Why couldn’t they just listen to him? The male was keeping his trap shut... “Heroes in training ought to take hostage situations more seriously. If you three come quietly, I’ll let this idiot go, kay? What’ll it be? Your lives or his? Now...don’t move…”

“..Man.” Vanfell stepped forward. His hands remained up. The villain hissed. Electricity began to crackle, and the two girls tensed. What the hell was Van playing at!? “I know how you gotta be feeling right now, right? Torn up that she just stereotyped you like that right?”
“...? The hell are you talking about kid? You want me to kill your friend, and you?”

“Me and you, we’re pretty much the same, right? I’m quirkless, you’ve got an electric quirk yeah? Society expects us to do certain things right? Gotta fit the role they figure we ought to fit, right? Like, Jirou here just figured you could do so many jobs, right?”

“...” The villain hissed under his breath. Kid was speaking some truth. His work had dried up. No one wanted to hire an electric quirk user for non power plant work. If his quirk didn’t help in some way? Application got binned before he even got an interview. “So what. Think I’m gonna let you go? Take me for an idiot, eh?”

“Nah. I understand, completely. You gotta do what you gotta do to survive, right? Play it out, make ends meet. You can’t get work, so you do this. Ain’t your fault that society is unfair.” Much as Vanfell wanted to rant about his own issues, he couldn’t. Keep it on the discrimination this guy faced. Though it ain’t as bad as what he had to deal with, screaming bout quirkless issues would get them all killed.

“...It isn’t fair, you’re right. Every job, every person, they just want me for my quirk. Just use it to make their houses work, keep their tv on. It’s insulting. No way I’d be a hero for those kind of people either. It’s such bullshit. What am I right? Just a walking quirk?”

“...Yeah. It’s wrong. I’m with you every step of the way pal, but you gotta play this smart, right? What do you think will happen if you kill us? Think the hero’s will let you go? You let us all go, yeah? You’d be a better man. And they’d go gentle on you. We all make mistakes, right? I’ll vouch for you...just let us go man...” The statement hung in the air. Yaoyorozu and Jirou didn’t say anything yet. Both of them felt something bubbling in them. Vanfell had gone in a direction they hadn’t expected possible. For him to agree with a villain...they hoped it was just a bluff. Hostage negotiation techniques, right?

“You’ve weakened? Not that I can see...we’re completely out-matched. How dare you do that to my nomu...you CHEATED!” Shigaraki was hunched over, shivering with rage. His fingers had curled into a claw, as he did his best not to lose control. “He’s not weak at all!! They...they lied to me?!” It sounded as if he wasn’t doing very well in that regard.

“...” More smoke coiled around All Might. The #1 knew he was running out of time, and fast. It was difficult to even maintain the form he had up right now. “Well? Coming to get me!? What happened to clearing the level...? If you can take me, then bring it on!!” The hero fixed a stalwart glare at the two villains. Both Shigaraki and Kurogiri recoiled, and shuddered. Their foe was confident, even after all of that?!

“Right...we’re not ready for this level yet...” Todoroki had started to make a move for the stairs. It seemed the students no longer had any business being here as far as he was concerned. Izuku however started to move forward towards All Might. Kirishima lifted an arm quickly.

“Midoriya! We oughta just hang back for now. Rush in and they might take you hostage, or something...”

“No! That’s...” “He’s bluffing! It’s mixed with the dust cloud , but that looks like the steam when he’s transforming!!”

“Can’t move anymore...that ‘Nomu’ or whatever was too strong! At this point, one more step and I’ll lose my hold! I’ll revert to my true form!” All Might mumbled to himself. Dried blood rested on his face, as his entire body trembled. “Well!? What’s keeping you!?” “Just a bit more!! Keep’em scared!! Just need to buy a little more time...!!”

“If only we still had Nomu!! If only!! He was taking those hits so well...!” By now, Shigaraki was ripping his skin apart, his fingers raking up and down the crusty flesh. Flakes fluttered down as Kurogiri sighed.
“Tomura Shigaraki...calm yourself. It’s clear that Nomu did manage to deal some real damage.” It was accurate. All Might did look fairly injured, considering that he was the #1. “The children are holding back for some reason. Reinforcements from the school are bound to arrive shortly. However, if the two of us double-team him, we still have a chance...” He was still calm despite the situation unfolding. Shigaraki lifted his head back.

“Yes...yes, yes...right...right...right...we can do this...the final boss is standing right there...” His breathing had become slower as he grew himself back to a calmer mental state.

“All Might'll take care of the big b**ds. Let’s go see if we can help the others.”

“Midoriya.”

“I’m the only one who knows...thinking about it, the mist guy’s probably the more dangerous of the two. And All Might’s probably at his limit...! If the mist manages to suck him in...” The boy was in a world of his own, muttering away.

“This...is revenge for Nomu.” Kurogiri moved forward quickly. He loomed over All Might, his entire form distorted preparing to use his quirk.

“Here they come!!” The mist swirled and twirled towards him. “Holy crap! Quickly...!! Everyone...” In addition to the portal, Shigaraki was launching himself forward. There was no way for All Might do anything...was this really the end? If it was...so be it.

“I’M THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS THE TROUBLE HE’ S IN!!” Midoriya flew through the air, straight toward the villains.

“M-midoriya?!” Kirishima couldn’t quite believe just how fast the boy had moved? One minute had been there, the next he was gone.

“He’s fast...!” Shigaraki gritted his teeth, his eye widened. All Might exhaled, as he saw his disciple fly through the air.

“...!! Broken again!! I managed to control it before!! But now...!!” Izuku had used his quirk, to throw himself at the foe. There had been no other option. He wasn’t fast enough without. Unfortunately it came at the expense of breaking his legs. They throbbed with pain, but he didn’t care. Focus. All Might needed him right now. “Made it!! Just gotta aim for his real body!! That’ll smash him away!!” His fist flew straight for the metal core. Just like Kacchan had done!

“GET AWAY FROM...ALL MIGHT!”

But it seemed that Izuku hadn’t considered all of the variables. As he flew toward Kurogiri, Shigaraki lunged forward. His hand shot into Kurogiri, and out the other side. Straight toward the face of the brave student who had flung himself forward. The villain started to cackle, giggling and snorting. Izuku could only gaze on in despair. That was the hand from before...Eraserhead...but it didn’t matter! He knew he wouldn’t get another chance. Do it! No matter the cost!

“...I appreciate it kid. You’re smart. Good head on your shoulders.” The electro villain sighed, and then shook his head. “I ain’t gonna be able to let him go. Sure, you offer me a way ought right? I trust you, maybe you don’t attack me. Those girls ain’t gonna listen though. Bit stupid of me to give up my advantage.”

“...” Vanfell twitched slightly. He gently took another few steps towards the electro villain. It was calculated. Now, if he had to, he could launch himself safely into attacking distance. “The hell did you just say to me?” His voice was a bit more unhinged than he had hoped for.
“...You alright there kid? Back it up. Calm it down. Not looking to have to kill you all. Behave.”

‘Course. I offer a hand to you, right? But you, you. Just think you’re better than me, right? Cause of
your quirk, innit? Looking down on me right? Imagine, ha-ha. Imagine you acting like you’re
oppressed!!” Spittle laced Vanfell’s mouth. He felt red hot anger churning in his stomach, as the
villain cocked an eyebrow. Jirou and Yaoyorozu shifted awkwardly on their feet. This situation was
turning to shit real quick.

“Kid. Last warning. Take a big step back. Cool your jets.” What the hell was this damned kid ranting
about!? He was quirkless, sure, but…

“How the hell can you tell me you’re oppressed!? Do your people get sneered at daily? Blocked
from hero jobs? Treated like a goddamn second class citizen!? We have to raise so far above to even
be considered EQUAL!” Vanfell screamed now. The veins in his neck bulged out, as his eyes grew
wild. “You know what!? Screw you bastard!” Vanfell howled. His suit was still fully charged. The
kinetic energy funnelled into his fists, as he leapt into the air. There was no time for the villain to
react. Both fists coursed toward the head of the foe…

Shigaraki’s hand flew toward Izuku, it seemed it was the end of the line. There was no way he could
handle the quirk, not without time to react. But as long as he saved All Might, it didn’t matter. But
then Shigaraki recoiled. A bullet smashed into his hand and his legs. The villain howled and skittered
away from Izuku. The student crashed to the ground, his face brushing against the dirt as he landed.

“They're here!!” All Might swung his head as he looked up at the top of the stairs. A figure wearing
cowboy garb stood at the top. A smoking gun was in his hands. Across the USJ, at the mountain
zone...Vanfell found himself hitting nothing but air. Two bullets had ripped through the villain’s
shoulders. Kaminari, and Vanfell both fell to the ground. Jirou and Yaoyorozu exhaled a breath of
relief. For a starter Vanfell had been stopped from doing whatever he planned to do. But…

“What the crap just happened!?” Jirou yelped, still not sure where the bullets had come from.

“Is it them!?” Yaoyorozu replied. She turned her head to the stairs as more pro heroes were arriving.

“We’re a little late.” Ochako spun on her heel at that voice, as Tsuyu held Aizawa up.

“Iida!”

“We brought everyone we could.”

“Your Class Vice-President is back! And I brought reinforcements!” He bellowed out. Amassed
behind Iida seemed to be all of the faculty. Bloodking, Nezu, Cementoss, Ectoplasm, Snipe,
Midnight, Hounddog, Power Loader, and Present Mic all stood ready for action. Some of the weaker
villains had started to recover and were getting back up again. They turned their eyes to the stairs,
and began to launch their ranged attacks. Present Mic tutted, and stepped forward. He inhaled.

“YEAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH-
H!”

His voice exploded forth as his quirk went to work . It forced the villains to clench their hands to
their heads as they desperately tried to remain standing. The sheer force behind his voice sent them
sprawling away. Ectoplasm stepped forward and vomited out a gooey white substance. Soon several
clones of the teacher emerged. They launched themselves forward, and soon set about smashing their
way through the amassed fodder horde of villains but the thugs stood no chance. Midnight wetted
her lips. All Might was in that mess somewhere, and she ought to go and pay him a visit. And all
these naughty villains were right in her way. Her bullwhip snapped against the air as she felt the glee
seep into her being. She moved quickly for a woman in heels. She could thank years of experience
for that. One hand tugged a hole in her skin tight suit, and her quirk went to work. A lovely sweet
gas filled the air, and for those who inhaled it, they were promptly sent to sleep. Those who figured it
out were met with a whipping, a kicking, and a beating~ Midnight was in sheer bliss!
“Ahhh, they’re here...game over. Guess we gotta try again another time Kurogiri...” Shigaraki sighed. As he went to move and leave however, multiple bullets ripped through his flesh. It seemed Snipe whose aim was impeccable was suppressing the villain. Kurogiri moved quickly, redirecting the bullets. Snipe grunted as he kept firing.

“Only ne’er do-well’s we can wrangle from this distance are...” Then was a sharp hissing and whooshing sound. As Kurogiri tried to retreat and get Shigaraki to safety...

“I’m getting dragged!! This is?! Black hole!?” It seemed that despite their injuries, Thirteen was refusing to go down without a fight. The rescue heroes quirk was in full force. Kurogiri was able to fight off from the distance, but it still made his life difficult. Shigaraki hissed from inside the portal.

“I may have failed here, Symbol Of Peace...” All Might coughed, and placed his hand on his shoulder in defiance once more. “But the next time we meet...you’re dead, All Might.” And with that declaration...Shigaraki and Kurogiri left the battlefield. Izuku lay throbbing on the floor.

What the pros have to face. What they’re up against... I&V

The other three students near All Might watched on in disbelief. Pro’s were really on another level. While in the mountain zone, Yaoyorozu checked on the now free Kaminari. It seemed he was alright. Behind her, Jirou promptly tied the electro-villain up with rope that Yaoyorozu had produced. Vanfell stood alone. His body was wracked with shaky breathing and rage. He had nearly gone too far. He’d just seen red.

We were confronted with that far too soon. I&V

Izuku whined, as he tried to lift himself up. He talked, presuming only he could hear his words. “I...couldn’t do anything...”

“That’s not true. If you hadn’t given me those few seconds...I’d be dead...!” All Might spoke. His form was broken, finally. He was in between forms. One half of his face was the small, skinny form. The other his super muscle form. “You saved me. Again.” Izuku felt tears wet his face.

“I’m so glad...you’re okay...!”

This attack would be the start of a greater incident to come, but...of course we had no way of knowing that. I&V

By now all of the fodder villains had been defeated. It hadn’t taken the heroes long to clean up. But something was bothering all of those who had gathered to save both All Might, and the students.

“What in tarnation...”

“They just fled. And after such a dramatic invasion...? Boring~” Midnight pouted. The faculty all had earpieces, that let them communicate. She sighed as she continued to saunter towards All Might, walking alongside Cementoss.

“They took us completely off guard...but let’s concern ourselves with the students’ well-being for now.” Nezu exclaimed as he was placed on the ground by Bloodking.
“Oh and…” Cementoss mused as he placed his hands towards the ground. Down with All Might, the #1 was feeling a bit concerned. Izuku knew his secret, but the other students were nearby…

“Our teachers…all these pros, gathered here. Look likes there was no attack on the school itself.” Todoroki remarked, as he gazed at the students. Kirishima however was more concerned with Izuku.

“Midoriya! You okay?!”

“Kirishima…!” And so the red haired boy ran towards Izuku. And by extension, All Might.

“*That Kirishima!! Kid has a good heart!! But wait. I’ll be found. No, stay back. Crap!*” But before Kirishima could make his way to his classmate, a rockwall shot up. Cementoss had manipulated the ground. Kirishima just about managed to stop. All Might was obscured from view as Midnight sauntered among the group. The pout on her face made it clear that she had wanted to put Kirishima to sleep. He should consider himself lucky.

“We need to make sure all you students are safe, so head over the gate. I’ll deal with the wound.”

“Makes sense! Roger that!~” Kirishima nodded and jogged off. All Might exhaled a sigh of relief, as he slumped to the ground.

“Thanks…that was close, Cementoss.”

“I’m a fan of yours, y’know. So let’s get you to the nurse’s office without revealing this side of you. But, honestly, you’ve got to stop overdoing it.” Cementoss moved to pick All Might up. But Midnight got there first, sticking her tongue out.

“And I’m quite the fan as well~ Look at the battle scarred hero, all torn up!~ Why it just sets my heart aflutter with sadism” The woman hauled All Might into a bridal carry. He didn’t complain, too focused on replying to Cementoss. He brushed a strand of hair out of his face, as the Cement hero lifted Izuku into his arms.

“I’d be dead if I hadn’t overdone it. They were just that strong.”

The bar was empty. Then it wasn’t. Kurogiri and Shigaraki had returned to their current dwellings. Shigaraki was still in pain, resting in a pool of his own blood. Kurogiri let the boy out of the portal, as he too hunched over. Both of them were not in a good condition. Shigaraki was unable to move from the floor. Kurogiri once he caught his breath would fetch the first aid kit. He’d also call their Doctor. This would pass, and be sorted with.

“Oww…I was shot. Both arms and both legs…” His voice was shaky, filled with sorrow and rage.

“We got crushed…he got Nomu too. Our cannon fodder was taken down in a flash...even those kids were strong...The Symbol of Peace is in perfect health….! You were wrong, Master…” Shigaraki whining was directed at a luminous computer monitor.

“No, I wasn’t.” The voice that returned from the monitor was one that would set dread in the bones of any forthright citizen. There was a hint of a slimy, primal evil throughout. “We merely got ahead of ourselves. Yes...we underestimated him. Good thing that League of Villains came cheap. What of our creation? Nomu? Did you retrieve him?”

“He was sent flying. And unless we ascertain his precise coordinates...no amount of warping will let us find him. I just couldn’t spare the time back there.”

“After all the trouble we went through to make him as strong as All Might...Well…that’s too bad. A real shame.”

“Strong. Right. There was one...one kid who seemed just as fast as All Might…”

“…Oh?”

“Without that pest, we might have killed All Might...but that kid...that brat…!”

“No use crying over spilled milk! This endeavor was not a complete loss. Find stronger troops! Take all the time you need! We can’t move freely! That’s why we need a symbol like you. Tomura Shigaraki!! Next time, the world know of the terror you represent!”
“16, 17, 18… Beside the one with the messed up legs...looks like they’re all unharmed.” The police had arrived at USJ. They had made sure to pull of the students out. Besides Izuku it seemed that indeed they were all fine. It was a miracle considering. Some of them had superficial scrapes and cuts, but otherwise...nothing.

“Ojiro...looks like it was into the fire for you this time. And all alone…? Nice going.” Tooru gently patted him on the tail. The boy had a strained look on his face as he shrugged.

“I thought everyone was alone...I only survived with hit-and-run tactics. Where were you, Hagakure?”

“The landslide area! That Todoroki’s crazy strong.” It wasn’t lost on the icy hot boy that he could have frozen her. The thought was...yikes.

“As for my location...anyone have an idea~?” Aoyama sparkled! Clearly all of the students would love to hear where he been during this brutal battle~!

“Right. Guess those lowlifes were spread out, waiting for us.”

“Looking down on us cuz we’re kids.”

“WHERE DO YOU THINK I WAS?!” Aoyama asked, patting Tsuyu on the shoulder.

“Where?”

“It’s a secret!!~”

“We’re gonna get you kids back to the classroom for now. This is no time to take your statements.”

“Detective. What about Aizawa Sensei…?”

“Both his arms were smashed to splinters. His face is also fractured. Thankfully, there is no brain damage. However, his eye sockets have been pulverized. There’s a chance he may suffer long-term loss of vision. Or so I hear…”

“Ribbit…”

“Thirteen has terrible lacerations across his back and upper arms, but his life isn’t in danger. All Might’s injuries aren’t life threatening either. It’s possible that Recovery Girl’s healing will be enough for him so he’s gone off to the nurse’s office.”

“And Deku...?” Ochako asked. Iida was quick to jump in as well.

“What of Midoriya…?!”

“Midori...ah. It seems he also made it to the nurse’s office in time. And I actually have business there myself. Sansa, I’ll leave the rest to you!” The detective turned, and giving command to the cat detective.

“Oh, understood.” He saluted. Ochako was taken aback. He wasn’t a dog?! “We’ll need to completely revamp our security systems…”

“Teleportation quirks are rare enough. Shame one of them had to go and turn villain.” Snipe groaned.

“Detective Tsukauchi! I have a report. We’ve apprehended what seems to be a villain a thicket about 400 meters from here!”

“In what condition?” The detective that had been in charge prior had asked. It seemed he was Tsukauchi.

“Understood.” He saluted. Ochako was taken aback. He wasn’t a dog?!

“We’ll need to completely revamp our security systems…”

“All Might and Izuku were both in the nurse’s office, resting. For the two it felt like heaven. Midnight had been present. The R-Rated Hero had been fawning over All Might. It had been a mixture of calm concern, and a fan girl like gushing over his injuries. Recovery Girl had had quite enough of it, and had promptly ejected her from the office. The old lady turned her gaze to the two patients.
“The situation being what it was...I can’t scold you two this time.”
“I think...I’ve probably shortened my time limit again...I’ll be lucky if I still an hour a day.” The hero forced himself to sit up.
“All Might!”
“Whaddya gonna do! Bad things happen!” The door to the office slide open as the hero said this.
Tsukauchi entered into the room, taking his hat off.
“Pardon me. Long time no see, All Might!”
“Tsukauchi!! Didn’t know you were here!” Blood spurted from his teeth as he looked at the man.
“All Might...! Is, uh...is this okay?! You’re—”
“Yeah! It’s fine! Why, you ask? Because this is my favourite detective on the force, good old Naomasa Tsukauchi!”
“Ha ha. Thanks for the weird intro. Not to rush you, but I’d like to ask about these villains, All Might.”
“Wait. Hold on. First. Are the students all right?! And Aizawa, Eraserhead? And Thirteen?!”
“...” The detective exhaled. So typical of All Might. “Beside your friend over there, the students’ve got nothing more than a few bumps and bruises. And the two teachers are out of danger, for now. If you three heroes hadn’t put your lives on the line...the students wouldn’t have made it out unscathed.” All Might looked at the detective and shook his head.
“I see. But, you’ve got one thing wrong, Tsukauchi. In this fight, the students put their lives on the line too! To be thrown into a real battle so young, and survive? Now these first years know how scary the big world can be. Have you ever heard of such a class?! Those foolish villains picked the wrong fight!! Because the members of Class 1-A are going to be mighty heroes indeed!!” All Might flashed a proud thumbs up to Izuku, as he beamed a smile. “I’m going to make sure of it.”

Vanfell rubbed his head. His legs dangled against the balcony railing, as he felt the wind brush over his face. The student was frustrated. Jirou had avoided him when they had got back. Yaoyorozu had also avoided him with her parents already collecting her.. No surprise the rich big-wigs had managed to get here so fast. He supposed it was only fair the two wanted to give him a wide berth. His teeth pressed against his lip as he bit down. He’d gone way too far against that villain. Something inside him had just broken. The devil had been let out, and there hadn’t been anyway to stop him. He supposed he was lucky Snipe had interjected when he did. Rubbing his head, he didn’t notice Kaminari hopping onto the railing next to him. He did notice however, Kaminari’s shoulder bumping into his.

“Yo, Van. You alright? Looking a bit rough there buddy! Should be like, smiling, right?! We survived those crazy villains attacking us!”
“...Heh. When you put it like that, I guess I’ve got a bit of a sour-face, eh? Yeah, was crazy. For a bit, I felt like it might have been the end.”
“You’re telling me! I swear. I’m glad I was shorted out. From what I’ve been told, I was taken hostage. Hey though, that’s cool right?! It’s off my bucket list already!”
“...Man. You’ve really got big goals goals right? Damn, here I thought being a quirkless hero was the be all end all, but shoot. Missed out on not getting to be a hostage!”
“...Hell yeah! I thought I was like the only one bro?! It’s like an essential part of being a hero.” Kaminari grinned, before laughing. “I hear you’re part of the reason I’m still alive. Mad props dude.”
“...Course. Just doing my bit, right? Gotta do what I can do.” Vanfell exhaled, and shrugged. “Figure we all did better than we should have done. Shit was real. We lived, they lost.”
“Yeah. For villains, they were kinda lame. Losing to first year students, when you’re a grown adult? Lameeee. That electro guy? Not got anything on me!”
“Y’know. Beside like...not going whey~ mode.” Vanfell teased. Kaminari got defensive, before Vanfell hopped off the railing and grinned. “Give me your phone number sparkie. Good to have
another mate.” And so the students swapped their information. Vanfell saw Kaminari off before being picked up by his parents. It seemed that he had survived the first live encounter with villains. The fact he was still alive...he’d relish in it. If Yaoyorozu and Jirou wanted to cut him loose? Who gave a shit right? He was strong enough to go it without them. Any problem could be solved, so long as you pushed hard enough.

Izuku shifted awkwardly at the train station. He had his bag over his shoulder, and his phone out. His mother had not stopped texting him since the incident. He had explained that he was alright and no, she didn’t need to come and pick up him personally. He’d be perfectly fine to take the train, like normal. She had been placated for now, but he didn’t doubt that she might start texting him again. Fingers crossed she let him have some time to himself though. His thoughts had been running wild. What had the villains wanted to achieve in killing All Might, really? Had they worked alone, or was there someone else behind the scenes? Did Midnight have a crush on All Might and vice versa!?! How could he have missed that vital part of trivia?! His train pulled up, and the boy shuffled on. Luckily it was quiet, so he managed to fall into a seat. He was ready to relax and let his mind run wild, but it seemed that the universe was against him.

“Deku!?” A female voice came from his left as his back went tense almost immediately. His face flushed a soft red. Uraraka!?

“U-uraka!?” The boy couldn’t believe it. It was the girl who had saved him from earlier? She rode the same train as him?!

“I had no clue we rode the same train! That’s so cool! I must have missed you every morning and afternoon!” She beamed as she scooted closer to him.

“R-right! Crazy! I kinda stand near the front, which is kinda crowded? Maybe that’s why?”

“Oh! Makes sense, haha! I always sit nearer the back, cause its quieter! I’m not a big fan of large crowds, so the front never works for me. We gotta work it out and sit together in the middle though!”

“O-ok! Sounds good, aha. Uh...are you alright? A-after today and everything!? Not saying if you’re alright in a general sense, that would be really rude, and that wasn’t my intention though I can imagine why it might be interpreted as such!” Izuku yelped as he started mutter, trying to analyze the situation and bring it back under ‘control.’

“Oh, yeah! I’m ok! It was really scary while we were there and everything...but we’re fine now! All Might, Thirteen, and Eraserhead all really saved us. If they hadn’t be there...”

“I think you did really great though Uraraka! I heard that you were part of the reason Iida was even able to escape, right? You managed to float the mist villain, right?” Izuku didn’t even notice that Ochako’s face had flushed red from his praise.

“Y-yep! But Sero and Shoji did most of the work. I just got him in the air...”

“But that’s really important! If he hadn’t been in the air, it would have been difficult to move him. He’s extremely mobile otherwise, so I think you’re underselling yourself!” Izuku prattled on.

Eventually, the two students slowly found themselves growing tired, the day catching up to them. Their conversation reached a natural conclusion...and slowly they drifted off. Both of their heads rested on each other’s shoulders as they slept all the way home.

Giran yawned. He shuffled his way out of the bedroom. It had been a good day, far as he was concerned. The woman in his bed snored a bit. He’d have to shoo her out later, but for now? Let her sleep. She’d earned it. A cigarette dangled from his mouth, as he lit up. Snatching his phone from its charger, thumbed open a message. A droll smile danced across his face, as he shrugged. It seemed the League of Villain’s had lost. Now, he could have told them that would happen for free. But that wasn’t conductive to business. Oh well. There was always next time right? Always another payment...heh.
Classes were cancelled the next day. I

But it wasn't like we could exactly rest easy, y'know? V.

And then...

"Everyone! Morning homeroom is about to commence! To your seats!!"
"Iida. We're sitting. You're the only one up."
"Morning." It was a surprise to the students to hear that voice in particular. Aizawa Sensei had arrived. He was bandaged head to toe, his entire face hidden away.
"You're back already Aizawa Sensei!? What an undeniable pro!!"
"Glad to see you doing well, Sensei!!"
"...If you can call that "doing well..." Ochako stated, taken aback. Aizawa shuffled up to the podium and shook his head.

"My welfare isn't important. Because your fight is far from over."
"?!"
"Our fight?"
"Don't tell me..."
"More villains?!"

"U.A's Sports Festival is fast approaching!"

SO NORMAL!

Chapter End Notes

So that's the USJ Arc! Again, nothing much needed to be changed here. I gave the Signal Jamming Villain some extended backstory, Vanfell his original scenes, and yep! Long work though, aha...
The teachers had called a meeting, post USJ. It was a debriefing as they went over just what the hell had happened. Tsukauchi was present and was leading the session. He had several sheets of paper in his hand, as he stood in the centre of the conference room.

“The one called Shigaraki. His quirk allows him to disintegrate anything he touches. We’ve been through the list of men in their twenties and thirties in the quirk registry, but with no luck. There wasn’t anything on the ‘warp gate’ user Kurogiri, either. Neither is registered, and both are using aliases. Their quirks aren’t on record, making them members of the underworld.”

“So you’re saying we know next to nothing? Figure we oughta learn fast… or the leader of those varmints, Shigaraki. His wounds’ll heal, and he’ll be back again.”

“Leader, huh…”

“What is it All Might?” Nezu asked.

“It’s just that nothing about this feels normal. It was an especially daring attack. And not just in the meticulous planning! He started going on about some ridiculous ideology. And though he didn’t say anything about his own quirk, he kept running his mouth bragging about that guy Nomu’s quirk…and when things didn’t go his way? He started throwing a tantrum! Well… I guess the business about the quirks was meant to provoke me.”

“Even so, it seems quite foolish in a battle to reveal one’s quirks and waste the element of surprise.” “Spouting a plausible yet deluded ideology. Bragging about the toy he brought along. And simple-mindedly thinking everything would go his way. If we think about how the attack was carried out, it seems clear that this Shigaraki character… couldn’t quite hide his childish nature. That sense that he does whatever he wants. He’s a man child.” The room shifted at this statement slightly. Vlad slapped the desk.

“A kid with too much power, you’re saying!?!”

“Maybe he never received general quirk counseling in elementary school…” Midnight mused, pursing her lips.

“The hell does that matter anyway?!”

“We apprehended a total of 72 villains at USJ the other day.” Tsukauchi took control of the meeting again. The teachers were surprised by the sheer volume of villains that had been taken in. “They were all just back-alley thugs, but. The question is why so many of them would agree to follow this ‘man child.’ Nowadays, our society is saturated with heroes. So maybe small-time villains like them, who always get kicked around are drawn in by that sort of pure, unaffected evil.”

“Lots of people out there who just can’t control their quirks, I guess.” All Might recalled someone saying that, at some point…

“Anyways. Thanks to you heroes, we can focus on our investigation. We’ll expand our search, and devote our efforts to apprehending the perpetrators.”

“A man child, huh In one way, he’s a lot like our students. He has potential to grow if he only had a proper mentor to follow.”

“It’s difficult to think about these things.”

“Sports Festival!”

“That’s totally ordinary!!”
“Come on! We just had that villain attack. Are you sure about this?!

“It’s necessary. To demonstrate that U.A’S crisis management protocols are sound… that’s the thought behind it, apparently. Compared to past years, there’ll be five times the police presence. Anyhow, our sports festival is the greatest opportunity you’ll get. It’s not an event that can be cancelled over a few villains.” Aizawa explained. The students shifted in their seats. Most people didn’t really disagree with their teacher. If they let this sort of thing get cancelled because of the villains, then they’d won. Mineta, however, didn’t seem to agree.

“You sure about that? Just a stupid sports festival…”

“Mineta… are you telling me you’ve never seen U.A.’s sports festival!?” Izuku asked, his eyes wide. It was nearly impossible not to know about it!

“Of course I have. That’s not what I mean…”

“Why don’t you shut the hell up then? Damn, always crying ‘bout one thing or the other with you…” Vanfell grunted. His mood had been notably sour. Despite him sitting right next to Yaoyorozu, she was ignoring him. Jirou had talked to him a bit, but not Yaoyorozu. And then to add onto it, this grape gremlin was winding him the hell up.

“Our sports festival is one of Japan’s biggest events! The Olympics were once the world’s sports festival. The whole country would be whipped into a frenzy over them. But as you know, that tradition has shrunken scale to a shell of its former self. And as far as Japan’s concerned, what’s taken the place of the Olympics is… the U.A sports festival!

“The nation’s top heroes will all be watching, right?”

“They’ll be there as scouts!” Yaoyorozu remarked. This set Vanfell off. He leant back in his chair, nearly falling out of it, as he scratched at his hair. Course, she could talk about all of that. But talking to him? Nah, guess that was asking too much right?

“They’ll be looking to hire us as sidekicks after we graduate. That’s how it’s done!” Kaminari grinned. He was quite animated about the whole situation. Jirou tilted her head to look at him and smirked.

“And a lot of those sidekicks never manage to go solo. They’re sidekicks forever. That’ll be you, Kaminari, you dunce.”

“Tch!!”

“Naturally, you’ll gain valuable experience and popularity if you’re picked up by a big-name hero. But your time is limited. Show the pros what you’re made of here, and you’ll make futures for yourselves. This happens once a year… so you’ve got three chances. If you’re hoping to become a hero, this is an event you can’t miss!” The students all took the words in. It was going to be a difficult time ahead of them for sure. Some of them found themselves wishing they were back in USJ. Others seemed to stew on their own issues. Vanfell couldn’t help but get antsy. He was going to have to show up on the big stage. Make a name for himself. Break through the barriers society put in the way..

Modern lit had been about as dull as everyone expected. There were those like Yaoyorozu and Todoroki who found it enjoyable. Tsuyu, Shoji, and Tokoyami were also some of the few who found the class enjoyable. But the majority of the class were glad when the bell rang, and class was over. Lunch time! It seemed the sports festival was the hot button topic. Kirishima was already get quite excited.

“This has got me so freaking pumped!!”

“If we show our stuff here, that’s one big step towards going pro!” Sero grinned, as he swayed his head. The majority of the students were huddled together, getting excited for the event. It was going
to have a huge impact on the class it seemed. Izuku exhaled carefully, a bit overwhelmed.

“Everyone’s so excited…” A meaty hand slapped down on his shoulder. Iida had arrived behind his friend!
“And you aren’t? This is our chance to add our names to the ranks of heroes. Of course we’re in high spirits!” Iida explained. He was swaying left and right, while having incredibly tense shoulders.
“You got a funny way of showing it, Iida. Weirdo.” Tsuyu ribbeted from his side. It seemed she was honest to a T.
“Yeah, I get that!! But… Iida…”

“Deku, Iida.” The two male students turned. They weren’t sure they had ever heard the voice that was calling for them. It was deep with the faintest trace of demonic. Ochako was the voice!? Her face was also blazing and more determined than ever. She looked akin to a mixture of Vanfell and Bakugou. This terrified everyone. “At this sports festival… let’s do our best!”

“Wah! What happened your face, Uraraka?!”
“What the…? You’re not looking very Uraraka, Uraraka.” Mina said, confused. Mineta and Tsuyu were stood near her. Mineta went to make a quip about Uraraka. He was promptly slapped in the face by Tsuyu’s tongue. Vanfell also then sprinted across the room, and tossed Mineta across the room into the mens bathroom, before returning to the group.

“Everyone!! I’M GONNA CRUSH THIS!” Ochako pumped her fist up and down. Everyone was a bit taken back. Even Kirishima, who usually got fired up by this sort of thing felt a bit awkward.

“Yeahhhhh, but talk about inconsistent characterization…”

“Come to think of it… I’ve never asked Uraraka…” Izuku mused to himself. So when the trio went down to lunch, he probed the question. They reached the bottom of the stairs, and Ochako answered upon the completion of their descent.

“Money!?”
“Yeah… just a little unexpected.”
“My family runs a construction company, but… business is bad. We’re poorer than poor.” The young girl rustled her hands inside her hair as she sighed. “Don’t mention that to anyone, okay…?”

“If you got permission to use it, wouldn’t your quirk help cut costs, Uraraka?” Izuku pondered. Ochako nodded as she swung her hands to the right.
“Right?! That’s what I said to dad way back!” They swung to the left, as her face dropped. “But…”

“You wanna work for the family!?”
“Yeah!! When I grow up, I wanna help mommy and daddy!”

After all of that had been said… her hand gripped her skirt. She lifted her head, determination etched across her features. “So I’m gonna be a hero. I’m going to make a lot of money… so that my mom and dad can have easier lives.”
“So she doesn’t just idolize heroes. She’s thinking of the practical as well…”
“Uraraka! Bravo!!”
“Ohh! Midoriya, my boy. Found you!!” The three students jolted straight stiff. It was All Might!? He had a sandwich bag in his hand. “Wanna… eat lunch with me?!” Ochako snorted and guffawed. “He’s like a schoolgirl!!”
“What’s this about…?”
“Sure…” And so the students separated. Iida and Ochako continued on to the usual lunch hall. The two were rather perplexed as to just why they’d be separated.
“Wonder what he wants with Deku.” Ochako mused, as she swayed, wondering what she was going to eat.
“I heard Midoriya dashed into help when All Might was attacked. Maybe it’s about that? And like Asui mentioned… they have similar super strength.”
“S’gotta be it!”
“Perhaps All Might has taken a liking to him. I wouldn’t be surprised.” Their conversation wasn’t all that quiet… and Todoroki tilted his head back to listen. Interesting.

“Just fifty minutes?!” Izuku yelped. It was a good thing that no one was walking by the break room. His voice wasn’t exactly quiet when he was surprised and stressed. Which he happened to be at this time.
“Yes. My time limit is getting shorter by the day. I can just about maintain muscle form for an hour. Here. Tea.” The #1 hero slid the cup across to his student.
“Sorr-“ Izuku began to apologize. He was cut off by All Might laughing and spurting blood from his teeth.
“Don’t apologize! We’re so alike, you and I.” His face grew serious. He lifted his hand and lightly pointed at Izuku. “I really want to talk about the sports festival. You still can’t regulate One for All, right? So what do we do?”

“Ah…” Izuku swayed his head to the side. “But there was one time….! When I attacked that brain villain… there was no kickback.” All Might leaned forward, surprised and optimistic.
“Ah! You did mention that!! So what was different?” Izuku began to mutter quickly, as he usually did when deep in thought.
“Different. The only clear difference was...I used it against someone else for the first time.”
“Umm....” All Might groaned. Why did he not have any actual advice to give the kid! He couldn’t whip out the teaching handbook. He scrambled, and grinned. “Sounds like you managed to pump the brakes without even knowing it. In any case, that’s progress. Glad to hear it.” He paused, and exhaled slowly. “Because in all honesty, the time I’ve got left as the Symbol of Peace is quickly running out.”
“Right.”

“And among those with villainous intent, there are some who’ve started to realize that. I granted you my power so that you could succeed me! This sports festival! t’s an event the whole country’ll be watching! And that means just one thing for us!! You. The next All Might the fledgling symbol…”

“Anonymous reporters rustled, and shuffled around. The one plucky female reporter from before was hoping to have some better luck. If she could just get the next big scoop, then her career was secure. This time she’d actually been allowed into the school. No nonsense with the gate. A man with a rather weak moustache, by her estimation, arrived. It was Present Mic. His nasally voice exploded forth,
Nearly blowing out her eardrums.
“Gather round, Mass Media! It’s time to once again see the High Schoolers you know and love revel in their youth...it’s U.A.’s Sports Festival. Everybody! Are! You! Readyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyy!?”

Two Weeks Earlier

Izuku wasn’t sure what All Might meant by his statement. Was he supposed to...no, that couldn’t be it. Maybe... no. The boy decided it was easier to just ask the man directly, instead of getting mixed signals.
“Tell them ‘I am here’? But how do I?”
“You know how the U.A. sports festival works right?”
“Yeah! Of course! The members of the support course, business course, general studies, and hero course all thrown together. We’re grouped together by grade level and we compete in a series of preliminary competitions...the winners of those move on to the main event... it’s like a round-robin tournament for each grade level.” All Might nodded and jabbed two fingers forward proudly.
“Exactly!! So it’s your chance to gain mass appeal for yourself!”
“Huh.”
“Huh, he says!” All Might groaned as he fell backwards, the sofa going with him. The hero couldn’t believe what his student was saying. His feet stayed pointed right up in the air as he groaned.
“No... right. I get what you’re saying. It’s just a question of if I can deal with this after what we just went through. It’s difficult to have motivation to stand out at this event, given All Might is already my mentor. As I am now, it wouldn’t even occur to me to make a big showing. Just like with the strength tests...”
“There’s no one more dedicated to the world of nonsense than you, kid!!”
“World of nonsense?”
“The slight difference between those who always aim for the top and those who don’t...it’ll come to matter in a big way once you emerge into society. I can understand how you’re feeling. I won’t force you... but. Just don’t forget that drive you felt when cleaning up the beach.”

So Izuku returned to class. The school day progressed much as any other. There weren’t any major incidents... until school was over. As 1-A went to leave their classroom, they came to see a rather daunting sight.

“What’s going on?!” Ochako yelped. She had been the first to try to leave the classroom. It seemed there was an entire mass of other students waiting outside the door. They were all milling around. It wasn’t entirely clear why exactly they were there.
“No way out! What’re they here for?” Mineta whined. Vanfell, who had moved next to Bakugou growled at the grape boy, who promptly shut his mouth. Bakugou then grunted.
“Scoping out the competition, duh, small fry. Cause we’re the kids who survived a villain attack. Figures they’d want a look before the sports festival.” Izuku and Mineta had a brief squabble over Bakugou. But then the explosive student dropped an explosive statement. “No point though. Get out of the way, cannon fodder.”

“Can we please not resort to calling those we don’t even know ‘cannon fodder’?! Iida yelled. Izuku was in palpitations, having to lean on a desk. The crowd of students shuffled... and then a tallish figure with messy purple hair shuffled forward. His voice sounded rather dry and drained, almost devoid of energy.
“It’s true. We came to get a look, but you sure are modest. Are all the kids in the hero course like this?”
“Huh?!”
“Gotta say, I’m a little disillusioned if this is what you’re offering.” The student rubbed the back of his head. His eyes were sunken, with large bags drooping beneath them. “Those of us who didn’t make the hero course are stuck in general studies and the other tracks. There’re quite a few of us, did you know that? Depending on the results of this sports festival, they might consider transferring us to the hero course. I believe the reverse is also possible for you. Scoping out the competition? For a general studies kid like me… this’ll be the perfect chance to knock you off your pedestals. Consider this a declaration of war.” But before anyone from 1-A could react, Vanfell had stormed past Bakugou. He stepped in as close to the general studies kid as he could, pressing his forehead against his.

“Let’s clear one thing up, you purple haired shit. You wanna whine about not making it into the hero course right? Look at me, then. Quirkless, and I’m right. Smack. Here. If you want to cry and bitch about being pathetic? This ain’t the door you’re looking for. Declaration of war? Careful you don’t piss yourself just trying to break bloody even!”

“…” The general studies student glared at Vanfell. His fist curled tight. It seemed that a fight was about to break loose, when Kaminari and Jirou zipped over. Both students gripped Vanfell’s arms, and pulled him away. Both set about calming him down as best as they could. The general studies student was close to blowing up, despite this…but was interrupted.

“HEY. I’M FROM CLASS 1-B NEXT DOOR!!” It was a rather solidly built figure. He had hair that looked like metal, jagged teeth, and bulging fiery eyes. “HEARD YOU GUYS FOUGHT SOME VILLAINS. WANTED TO FIND OUT MORE, BUT… ALL I’M SEEING IS TWO ARROGANT BASTARDS! YOU BETTER NOT MAKE FOOLS OF THE HERO COURSE AT THIS THING!” The figure bellowed. Izuku, Ochako, and Iida were already sweating bullets, thanks to Vanfell. They also noticed that Bakugou was silent… which was not a good sight. But he didn’t have anything to say. It seemed all he wanted to do was shove his way through the crowd.

“Wait, you jerk. What’re you doing to us?”

“Thanks to you we’ve got a whole mob of haters now!” Kirishima barked at Bakugou.

“I don’t give a crap.”

“Whaaaaa?!”

“I’m heading for the top. Why should I care?”

“Tch!! So straight forward and manly…”

“The top. He’s not wrong.”

“Don’t let him play you! All he’s doing is winning us enemies.” Kaminari barked, from his Vanfell duty. Jirou rolled her eyes as well.

“I imagine being a decent human being is why you should care.” But Bakugou ignored her and was gone. Izuku lapsed into his own thoughts, as the students all broke off into their own groups. Jirou went over to Yaoyorozu, leaving Kaminari to placate the angry Vanfell. Everyone else focused in… while Izuku realised. He’d been an idiot. Everyone had such focus and drive….

The two weeks began. Classes were still in session. However, the students were dismissed early. Hero training was cut, to give the students extra time to prepare for the tournament. Everyone had their own training methods. Iida went on some of the longest runs he had ever done. It would let his engines work smoother, and it helped him clear his head. Mineta… prepared his victory speech. Kirishima made sure to throw himself from buildings, hardening as he landed. It ought to boost his endurance, and make him unbreakable! Kaminari worked on increasing his ability to let out his quirk, without going into yay mode. Tsuyu did complicated movements with her tongue, Jirou doing the same with her earjacks. Yaoyorozu had been focusing on looking at the atomic composition of certain key items that would give her the best edge. Izuku focused on general muscle building, and finding a way to control his quirk… but one student…
The kitchen had been turned into the equivalent of a battle station. Papers littered the dining room table. Old tapes and CDs were scattered haphazardly all over the place. A large pot of coffee rested in the middle. The whole Zephyr family was assembled. Gerald adjusted his spectacles, and fixed his turtleneck. At his station was a whole string of calculations, and sums. His training plan for Vanfell, that he believed would give him the best chance of success. Vanfell was sat in the middle of the table leaning back in his seat. Frustration was dashed across his face, as his hands were pressed to the back of his head. He clearly didn’t want to be there.

“First day of training, you’re already busting my balls and wasting my time. G’damn, ma.” He growled, at a tall figure. Charity rolled her eyes, and tied her long orange hair up into a ponytail. Her sharp green eyes focused in on her son, as she adjusted the jersey she was wearing. It left her form on display. Despite her age, she was still extremely fit. Toned muscles rippled as she lifted a finger and wagged it at Vanfell.

“First day of training, and you’re already shitting the bed. All you did today was tire yourself out, with no real gain. Your training was unfocused, sloppy, and ineffective.” She rested a hand on the table and fixed a proper stare at him. “For someone who wants to come first, you’re training like a bum.”

“The hell!? Why you trying to tell me how to train. I got my ass into U.A, all you ever were was a boxer. Jog on…” Vanfell growled. Charity lifted an eyebrow. She wasn’t the one to defend herself however. Gerald cleared his throat from his battle station.

“Vanfell. You will not talk to your mother like that, for a starter. And secondly, she wasn’t just any boxer. She’s been called the Muhammed Ali of this era. She was in the top 10 for the quirked division of boxing… while being quirkless.” Gerald explained coolly. Her feat was impressive. The advent of quirks had changed the world of sports. Boxing in particular had seen the creation of two divisions. One for solely quirkless boxers, and one meant to be for those with quirks. However, nothing in the rules had barred quirkless people from entering. Charity had done so… and climbed rapidly. The woman watched her son, as he glanced away from her.

“Know this means a lot to you, champ. I ain’t trying to keep you down. Not telling you how to run your life. But if you want an honest to god chance to win this? Let’s get real.” She stated, as she moved over to her son. She squatted, letting her eyes align with his. “If you wanted to beat these guys easy? You’d need speed, and a quirk. You don’t have that. So what we’ll be calling on is good old fashioned blunt force trauma, horsepower, heavy duty cast-iron pile driving punches that’ll have to hurt so much they’ll rattle their ancestors. Everytime you hit em with a shot, it’s gonna feel like they tried kissing the express train. Let’s start building some hurtin’ bombs.”
The first step was the push ups. Vanfell made sure to have perfect form for these. Down, and then up. Straight back, perfect form. Usually, he only did a certain specified number. Today however he was going to exhaustion. To make matters even more difficult, he felt the boot of Charity pressing into his back. It made it more difficult to pull them off. Every sinew of his body screamed with fiery pain. His vision was blurred as the sweat on his brow trickled down into his eye. He reached about the 100th pushup, before Charity smirked.

“Y’know, back in my day, we used to do those one handed. Didn’t want to say anything, though.” Vanfell groaned, gritted his teeth, and forced himself onto one hand. Soon he’d pulled out another hundred of the push ups, but the more difficult one handed version. His body was shaking, but it wasn’t exhaustion yet. He kept pressing away at it, the thought of victory blazing away in his head. If this was what had to be done…

In between training exercises, Vanfell would get pulled to the battlestation. His father had been toiling away, looking over reports and tapes of 1-A that Vanfell had managed to get to him. Gerald knew how much this meant to his son. He also knew that just sheer physical prowess wouldn’t cut it. His son would need to be able to fight hard, and fight smart.

“Alright.” He pushed his spectacles up. “Aoyama. How do you beat him?”

“Dance around the laser. He telegraphs, and he ‘urts after he uses it. Use the downtime to get in, take him out.”

“Mina. How do you plan to handle her?”

“She prefers long range use of her acid. Fights like a dancer. Focus on dodging. Don’t get cocky, wait for an opening. If need be, trade. Take some acid to deck her.”

“Tsuyu. Mutant quirks tend to have exploitable aspects, if you’re switched on. Are you?”

“If she uses her tongue as a long range attack, grab it. Use it to pull her in close, and deck her. She ain’t able to use her tongue, then it’s an easy fight.”

“Iida. He’s fast. Not going to have much room to react to him, right?”

“Sacrifice an arm, clothesline him. His engines have to fire up if he wants to go fast. That gives me the tell, then I just gotta execute.”

“Ochako? One touch, and she wins. Got a way to avoid that?”

“Physicals. She’s shorter by a long margin. Gotta use my better speed and reach advantage to keep chipping her down, and then knock ‘er lights out.”

“Good. Back to training, champ. I’ll prep the next dossier to work through.”

His entire body was sore, every day. There weren’t any breaks, not really. Couldn’t afford them. Vanfell knew that his peers would be training hard as well. This meant that he had to train even harder than they did. He could rest when he was wearing that #1 medal, standing on the podium. His technique was key. Couple that with blistering strength, then he could take anyone. He squatted, as he attached the heavy ropes to his body anchored to his shoulders. Behind him was a wagon, filled with a multitude of heavy rocks and his mother. He wasn’t sure which actually made up most of the weight, but he’d never say that. The hill in front of him was steep. The task was to get the wagon to the top. Each step sent a burning pain through his body. It was taunting him. Give up. Quit. Look at how much you’re doing, just to have a chance? Quirkless bums like you have no place in this world. His teeth gritted, grinded. He wouldn’t falter, he wouldn’t quit. Though he had to pause at several times during the ascent, he never stopped. The crest of the hill was near. By the end, he was crawling. Hunched over, fingers scraping at the dirt. Sweat soaked his entire form, his legs spasmed, but he didn’t care. One final burst saw him manage to pull the wagon to the top of the hill, and he collapsed. Charity grinned as she stepped out, and helped him to his feet.

“We’re getting there, champ. Up and at ‘em. Dad wants you in the battle station. Race ya to the bottom?”

“...Bloody bring it on.” Vanfell grinned, as his ma and him barrelled down the hill. The grind never stopped.
Gerald had a large cup of coffee and huge bags under his eyes. The man clearly hadn’t been sleeping. Vanfell arrived and he nodded. Time to hit the books just as hard as he was hitting the training.

“Ojiro. He’s a martial artist like you. Got three limbs. This one is hard, right?”
“Nah. His tail is big, but it’s predictable. If I just factor in that he’s got more angles of attack, all I gotta do is move better. Ain’t gonna do him any good if he can’t tag me.”
“Play close as well. If you’re in tight, boxing lends itself to that. He can’t swing his tail too well if you’re breathing down his neck. Kaminari?”
“He’s a tricky one. I gotta bank on the fact that I can take a full blown shock from him. If I can, he’ll tard out. Then I win.”
“Better practice getting electrocuted then, eh? Sure Chari will love to do it for ya. Kirishima.”
“No head on assault. Grapple him. Dance around, toss him around the arena. He gotta start to lose focus and weaken after a bit. If our brawl still going then, I’ll unload on him.”
“Koda. He can control animals… not sure how relevant that’ll be.”
“About as relevant as he is. Not at all.”
“Shoji.”
“Not sure ‘bout him. He’s got more arms than me, pretty tough. Gonna have to make that one up on the fly.” Gerald nodded at his son, before rubbing his eyes.
“Keep it up, champ. You’re going the extra mile. Real proud of you.”

The days started to blur together. It was hard for Vanfell to remember what he did. School moved in strange waves. He was exhausted all the time, but just about managing to keep his grades at what they were supposed to be. His classmates noticed… but never said anything. He figured it was because they were looking down on him. He didn’t care. He got home, and it was time to work again. The old pull up bar was in the yard. He’d picked up some metal chains as he strapped them across his back. Charity lifted an eyebrow, and attached the large tires to them. His hands slapped the bar, and he lifted himself up. It was draining, burning, and hell. His arms burnt, his back ached, and he wanted to stop. Up. Down. Up. Down. He fell from the bar after his reps, hands slapping against the floor. Spit flew from his mouth. The student stood back up tall, and rolled his neck. Still more work to do. His tired hands gripped the jump rope. Swish, swish, swish. It kept going and going, as his eyes closed. He wasn’t going to lose. No one would be let down. Everyone who doubted him, doubted quirkless people, spat at him…they’d be put right in their damn place. Shifting over to Charity, she put up her pads.

“You got the speed behind your punches. Now, we just need you hit stuff, and it breaks. Let’s go, champ.”
“…Right.” His fists were quick. Technique behind each punch was almost perfect. His bread and butter combo. Jab, jab, body. Jab, jab, uppercut. His arms ached, but he knew he couldn’t stop because he was tired. Charity started trying to smack at him during the training, forcing him to defend himself. The two went at it until the sun started to dip, dusk washing over the duo. Back to the battle station.

“Jirou. She’s got range and that quirk of hers can be used in CQC. Seems a tricky one.”
“She’s got easy tells. USJ showed it to me. Her fighting, telegraphed to hell. Tell what she’s gonna do before she does it. No sweat with her.”
“Sero. That tape, he catches you with it, you’re done, right?”
“Nah. Same as the tongue of Tsuyu. If he doesn’t cut the tape loose, I’ll pull him in. Haymaker his ass out cold.”
“…Good. Tokoyami?”
“His power is in the bird. Get past that, he’ll crumble. Not much in the way of a plan, but it’s somethin’.”
“Todoroki. Gonna level with you champ. Not many ways in which you win this if you had your suit.”
“...I’ll figure it out.”
“Tooru.”
“Didn’t realize we were discussing the joke candidates…”

The next day saw a change in training partner. Charity had handed Vanfell over to their neighbor. Koichi yawned on the early Saturday morning as he propped himself up against a nearby sign. Pop had yelled at him for getting up so early, but she had relaxed when she’d found out it was for Vanfell. Koichi lifted an arm to check his watch. 5:59 AM… heh. Just before it turned to 6AM, Vanfell jogged over arriving.

“Hey Van. Training treating you alright? Hear you’re working out like a beast. Trying to surpass old man Knuckle or something?” Koichi grinned. Vanfell nodded as he had a focused look on his face. His fingers curled tightly into fists as he gazed at his friend.
“If I want to have any shot at getting my name out there, then yeah. That’s what I gotta do. Mind if we start?” Koichi was taken back a little bit. He rubbed his hair awkwardly and laughed.
“Bit more intense than usual, heh. How’s it going with the girl at school? Just want to ask before we get started and all… Pop made me ask.”
“...It’s irrelevant. All that matters right now is the tournament. Again, mind if we start?” Vanfell grunted. Koichi shrugged. It wasn’t normal, but he guessed Van really must have wanted to nail the tournament. So he started to glide, as he called back.
“I’m gonna go pretty fast. All Charity wants you to do is keep up. Ok!” And with that he zipped off. Vanfell broke off into the run. Koichi couldn’t help but worry the entire time. Vanfell managed to keep up for the whole way, even forced to sprint. The quirkless student got a ride home after he collapsed. Koichi rubbed his head as Charity came out to talk to him. Vanfell stumbled back inside as the vigilante gave a lazy smile.

“...You sure that kid ain’t training himself too hard? He’s reminding me of a guy I used to know. Ain’t a good thing.”
“Koichi… I appreciate the concern. But I gotta be honest. If I wasn’t training his dumb ass, he’d be out there doing his own thing. Better I oversee it, right?”
“Guess you’d be right. Just concerned. Hope he wins, right? If he doesn’t take home #1 after all of this…” Koichi scratched his head. He knew he might be coming off as a bit rude but he smiled.
“Popstep and I’ll be cheering for him all the way!”
“If this damned kid don’t take the win home, I’ll smack him up myself.” She gave a toothy grin as she nodded. “Come over for dinner sometime, eh? We hardly see Pop anymore.”
“Yeah… her career as an idol really took off. She still hasn’t found the time to learn to sing though.” Koichi shrugged, not noticing the laughter from Charity as he zipped off back home.

“Bakugo. ...This ain’t a win, Van. Gotta hope you don’t fight him. He’s got your grit from what you tell me, and a brutal quirk.”
“...I’ll set him silly. His explosions ain’t shit and I’ll just muscle right on through. You underestimating me, eh? Even you?”
“Never underestimating you, son. Trying not to overestimate you. Anyway. Izuku.”
“He ain’t shit. His big moves are telegraphed. In fighting, he can’t rely on that otherwise he’ll get busted up. Clean his clock.”
“Mineta?”
“Can’t let him hit me once. Dance, move. He’s a coward. One good hit oughta get him pissing
himself. Then I’ll knock his lights out.”
“Ok, ok. Last one. We not got enough information on Class 1-B or the others. So. Momo Yaoyorozu. Know you got eyes on h-”
“She’s good. But she keeps gaps in her guard when she makes shit. She’s also not that good at handlin’ rush down. All I gotta do is pressure her hoity toity ass, and then I’ll knock her flat out. We done?”

It hurt like a bitch. Every single time, it made his muscles tense and tighten. Not like he had any control over it, or any other option. If he didn’t do this, and he had to fight Kaminari? He’d be regretting it for sure. The taser jabbed into his thigh again as he nearly threw it across the room. His body lurched forward without any input from himself. Vomit splashed into the bucket in front of him as he panted. Vision was a bit blurry, but he didn’t care. One more jab. He nearly passed out but held firm. Then he got up and moved to the boxing ring. His mother was standing there, gloves on. The final hurdle of his training. Throwing himself into the ring, he got ready.

Truth be told, Vanfell didn’t remember much of the brawl with his mother. It had blurred together. She’d rocked him with some hits, he’d hit her back. She was fast but he’d just about managed to be faster. Her moves that had once been arcane and unreadable to him had become counterable, predictable. He was fighting better, faster, and harder than he had done before. Charity grinned. Poor kid had passed out in her arms. Vanfell woke up tucked into bed as his mother was sat in a chair, newspaper in hand. She cocked her head and grinned.

“Ey, sport. You get all of tomorrow off. Then it’s the big day, aight?”
“...I’m not going to lose, mom.” His fist clenched tight. He’d make the splash. All those quirkless people out there screaming for him. All those people looking down on him… he’d get the job done. Come hell or high water.
TWO WEEKS LATER

Morning of the day came. Vanfell had asked his parents to let him take public transport, despite the fact they’d be there anyway. Charity was getting a V.I.P slot due to her past. Somehow his ma had secured tickets for Koichi, Popstep, and Gerald as well. It seemed her influence was pretty widely spread. So he waved them off as he left his house. His boxing tape was tied tight around his hand. He was lucky to get it. Had to fill out some paperwork. Damn pencil pushers. Argued that he needed it, so his hands didn’t break. Made sure to point out his lack of a quirk, and U.A had capitulated pretty damn fast. Someone would have gotten smacked if they hadn’t. His uniform rustled in the breeze as he stepped onto the train. No sign of Jirou, or her. They must have been taken to U.A by their parents. Whatever, not like he cared anyway. Today they weren’t his friends. Today they were his enemies.

“V-van!?”

“...” Vanfell twitched. Of all the people had to see today? It was Izuku? Fucking kidding me!? “Yo. You like… ready for the tournament?” Izuku moved over to stand next to Vanfell gripping one of the ceiling handles as he tilted his head.

“Well… it’s going to be difficult. Everyone will being giving it their all. Most of the parties involved, with the exception of you, have decent to expert control over their quirks thus far. You make up for it by having an insane offence as well as clearly being intelligent in regard to quirks. As a result, it’ll be fairly complicated for me to have a decent run, though anything may happen on the day...of cou-”

“Bloody hell, you run your mouth at a mile a minute.” Vanfell couldn’t help himself as he sighed, and smiled. He supposed that... Izuku was in the same boat. If he couldn’t use his quirk too well, no point being a dick to him. It did strike him as odd that Izuku had next to no control over his quirk, but he moved on.

“O-oh! I’m sorry, ah! I didn’t mean to annoy you, if that’s what happened.”

“Take a lot more than that to annoy me, champ. God, I’m so ready. We’re gonna go knock some heads together, eh? Kinda hope we get a fight with each other!”

“Yeah! This event is important, so I’m really hoping to do well. Make my mom proud and everything... wait, wha?!?” Izuku threw his hands up in front of him as he awkwardly started to ramble really fast. “A fight with you!? You’d be an insanely difficult matchup! The speed and strength and...”

“Eh, man. You don’t quit though. I watched you in the battle test. Plus, I ‘eard you’re the champ who tried to save All Might. If you think I’d kick your ass that easy, nah. I’m gonna have to work for it.” Vanfell winked at the kid. Talk about confidence issues?

“Oh? People really need to calm down the rumours...” Izuku nodded firmly at Vanfell though as he gripped one hand tightly closed. “Right. I’m going to give it my all!”

“Good. Underdogs like us, eh? Oughta stick together. Best of luck, champ... cause we’re here!”

“This security check is taking forever...” The female reporter whined. Every minute she was stuck outside the school, was a minute in which she wasn’t grabbing a story. Her camera man sighed as he wagged a finger.

“C’mon. No helping it. They gotta be on guard after that attack. Plus, a ton of people want the event cancelled this year, y’know?”

“Controversy means higher ratings for us! And at the center of it all... Class 1-A!!”

TODAY’S THE DAY OF THE U.A SPORTS FESTIVAL!
“Y’know, given that they always put their experience to good strategic use, and go all out for their last chance… it’s the third years who usually take centre stage. All eyes on those first years this time. Got a quirkless kid, apparently.” Death-Arms rubbed his head. He was accompanying Kamui Woods and Mt. Lady.

“I would have liked to perform some scouting of our own.”

“Whaddya gonna do. They asked us to take security detail.”

“Looks like they called in pro heroes from all over the country.” Mt. Lady mused to herself as she chewed down on food that she had purchased. It really was quite a big deal…

The 1-A prep room had busy since the early morning. Vanfell and Izuku had thought they’d be two of the earlier, if not earliest, students there. However, they’d been proven wrong by the presence of Iida and Yaoyorozu. Iida was running laps around the room, while Yaoyorozu seemed to be looking over a large tome. Vanfell and Izuku had kept their distance opting to chat together. Both of the students knew they were underdogs and as a result a fast forming bond was growing. Izuku did find Vanfell a bit overwhelming, and Vanfell found Izuku a bit timid but… it didn’t matter in the end.

Soon, the other students all started to funnel in. Ochako was soon joining the conversation with Izuku and Vanfell, slipping in as if she’d be there the entire time. Shoji and Koda conversed in the background, while the rest of the students went about their own conversations and preparation. This strained, if tranquil, peace was interrupted rather bluntly.

“Is everyone good and ready?! The event’s about to begin!” Iida barked. He was somewhat ignored.

“Wish I coulda worn my costume…” Mina sighed, rubbing her forehead.

“They’re not allowed, in the interest of fairness.” Ojiro pointed out before Mina fumed.

“But Aoyama has his belt, and Vanfell has that tape!?”

“Hey, you wanna tell a quirkless kid he can’t have some damned tape you go right ahead. Might not work out for ya though, horn-head.” Vanfell teased back before Mina and him fell into a good natured squabble.

“Midoriya.” A voice came across the room. Izuku stopped his breathing exercises as he turned to see who had said his name.

“Todoroki… what is it?” The green haired student noticed his classmate had a serious look on his face, and a singular hand resting in a pocket. Bakugou also span to pay close attention with Vanfell looking form the corner of his eye.

“Objectively speaking… I’m stronger than you. More capable.”

“All Might has his eye on you, doesn’t he. Now, I’m not about to pry into why that is, but… I will beat you.”

“…?!”

“Ooh! A declaration of war from the strongest in the class?!” Kaminari crooned. Kirishima found the whole thing a bit over the top as he slapped a hand on the shoulder of his classmate.

“Cmon, man, why pick a fight now?! We’re about to go on.”

“I really don’t care. I’m not pretending to be anyone’s friend, here.”

“Good. No one here is pretending to like you, either.” Vanfell snorted as he rolled his eyes. “Go ahead and suck yourself off some more, champ.” Izuku looked down at the floor, clenching his fists.

“Todoroki. I’m not sure why you felt the need… to tell me you’ll beat me. You’re clearly stronger, and I can’t measure up to most of the others here in skill. Objectively speaking, even.”

“Shit, Izuku come on. Don’t like this prick wind you up.”

“But!! Everyone, even the kids from the other courses are aiming for the top. And I’m…well, let me say this. I’m not gonna fall behind. I’m going for it too. With everything I’ve got!”

“…Right.” Todoroki looked at him, and then turned. He walked away as the students all felt
awkward. Vanfell made a clear point of smacking his shoulder into Todoroki as they passed in the room. His eyes glinted with a fuming temper as he curled his lip. Sure, he wanted to win as well. Shit talking someone like that right before the match? It wasn’t sporting. Save it for the match. Whatever.

“The first year stage. The students are coming out!” And so the students began to emerge out into the stadium from their training room. It was time. Charity, Gerald, Koichi, and Popstep shuffled in the stands. A man with a scarf akin to organs lit a cigarette and nudged his dirty skinned female companion next to him. Back home, Inko sat, her hands folded, prepared and worried.

“I need you to tell the world… I am here!”

“Got it, All Might.” And with that, the first year students emerged, onto the field! It was overwhelming to tell the truth. The stadium was full. Which was a fairly large capacity, given the size and amount of voices the students could hear. After all, the minute the students had stepped onto the field the crowd had gone wild. They shuffled their way towards the middle as a familiar voice rang out across the stadium. Much to the chagrin of Vanfell, it was PRESENT! MIC!

“IT’S U.A.’S SPORTS FESTIVAL! THE ONE TIME EACH YEAR… WHEN OUR FLEDGLING HEROES COMPETE IN A RUTHLESS GRAND BATTLE.” His voice had no concept of softness. He was brash, loud, and obnoxious. It made him the perfect one to be on the mic! “FIRST UP… YOU KNOW WHO I’M TALKIN’ ABOUT!! THE MIRACULOUS RISING STARS WHO BRUSHED OFF A VILLAIN ATTACK WITH THEIR STEELY WILLPOWER! HOME TO U.A.’S FIRST QUIRKLASS AND EUROPEAN STUDENT! THE FIRST YEARS… OF THE HERO COURSE!!”

“IT’S CLASS 1-A!!” The crowd roared as the students stepped out to where they could be seen. Most of the students were either calm, or stressed. Kirishima rubbed his head slightly as he coughed. “They’re really giving us too much credit… but we won’t let it shake us, right, Bakugou?” “Nope. Just gets me pumped up.” Of course, not every student was behaving themselves. Vanfell had bolted ahead. His arms swayed up and down as he made himself the target of attention. For those heroes who had done their research, they gathered he was the quirkless one.

“RIGHT HERE! #1 RIGHT HERE!” He showboated. Charity rolled her eyes in the crowd, as Koichi and Gerald broke out into laughter. Vanfell was acting just like Popstep and Charity had back in the day and the two men just couldn’t help themselves. The man with the odd scarf tilted his head, and exhaled. His female companion seemed agitated, shuffling in her seat. Iida was instantly dragging Vanfell back to his peers.

“Behave yourself! Such actions are unbecoming, and represent us all, Vanfell!” “Ah, cool it. Just cause you ain’t a big enough deal for Mic to talk ‘bout you, don’t get your engines clogged…”


“We’re just here to make the others look good.” “Hard to get motivated.” The general studies students were rather downtrodden. They were even more put off by the fact that they were in general studies… while a quirkless kid was in the hero course. The purple haired student from earlier sighed, and looked over at Vanfell and 1-A before shrugging.

“Whooaa…. what a crowd.” Izuku swallowed, stressed. Iida, fresh from dealing with Vanfell, nodded.
“And we’re expected to put on the best performance we can in front of so many spectators. I suppose this is merely one more required skill if we wish to become heroes.”
“Now for the athlete’s oath!” A lot of whooping and hollering started in the crowd. Popstep jammed her hand over Koichi’s eyes. A wolf whistle could be heard from Present Mic, who clearly thought he was away from the mic, and Charity leaned forward in her seat. Midnight, the R-Rated Hero was here!
“Ooh, the first year this time is R-Rated Hero, Midnight. Lucky kids…”
“What about the principal?”
“He’s always assigned to the third year stage.”
“R-Rated? Should she really be in a High School?” Tokoyami was a little confused. Mineta went to make a remark, before Midnight slapped her whip down. It rang out grabbing everyone’s attention as she cleared her throat.

“Pipe down! Your student representative is… from Class 1-A, Katsuki Bakugou!!”
“Whaaa?! It’s Kacchan?!”
“Quirkless discrimination is real, what the fuck is this?!”
“Must be because he placed first in the entrance exam.”
“The hero course entrance exam, you mean.” An exasperated general studies girl sighed. Vanfell shrugged at her. Bakugo had stepped up to the microphone. His eyes looked out across the crowd all of the pro heroes amassed there.

“The athlete’s oath…” Everyone held their breath. It was so quiet in the stand that you could hear a pin drop. No one was entirely sure what exactly Bakugou was going to say. His hands were in his pockets which struck some of the students as if he didn’t care. “Make no mistake about it. I’m gonna take first place.” The reaction was instant.

“DON’T GET COCKY, CLASS A!” The metal student from Class B had already started screeching. Iida and Yaoyorozu sighed in unison and replied in unison.
“Do you really have to show such contempt for the dignity of this event?!”

“God damn, you really think you’re hot shit, don’t ya? Bloody twat.” Bakugo didn’t seem that bothered by all of the comments coming his way. His thumb swished across his throat as he shrugged.
“You’ll all make great stepping stones, I’d say.”
“Over-confident jerk! I’ll be the one to crush him!” The metal student roared, as Vanfell hissed.
“Get right in line, bud.” But Izuku was deep in thought as he watched Kacchan step down from the microphone.

“Confidence…? No. The old Kacchan…he definitely would’ve… been smiling as he said that. He’s pushing himself. Telling himself he can’t lose.” Bakugou passed Izuku, bumping his shoulder intentionally as he did. It was the only the fact that Jirou had managed to calm him down that Vanfell hadn’t flown across the ground to deck the explosion student. “But taking the rest of Class A down with him is the Kacchan I know…”

“Now without any delay, let’s get the first event started!” Midnight seemed to find the whole thing entertaining. She adjusted her glasses, as Uraraka groaned.
“Everything at U.A.’s always without delay.”
“These are the qualifiers! It’s in this stage that so many are sent home crying every year!!” A screen behind Midnight started to turn on. The R-Rated Hero actually however realized that it was going a little slower than she had hoped. So. “And the fateful first even this year is…”
“She’s actually stalling like crazy…” Jirou mused. But then the screen crackled to life and she gestured at it wildly.
“This!”
“An obstacle course…!” Izuku mused. This elicited a reaction from the Zephyr camp in the stands. Charity rubbed her face as she gritted her teeth.

“Not ideal. He can’t just punch his way through this. Might be a problem.”
“Wouldn’t say so! I’m sure he’ll do just fine!” Popstep nodded.

“It’s a race between every member of all eleven classes! The course is a four-kilometer lap around the stadium itself! “Our school preaches freedom in all things! Heh heh heh… So! As long as you don’t go off the course, anything is fair game! Racers, to your positions!” The students all moved as close to the line as they could get. Vanfell rolled his neck as he bounced up and down. He’d have to hope his conditioning and general competence was enough to get him through. This wasn’t an ideal start, but if he focused he’d pull it off. Ochako tapped her shoes and clothes. Her gaze was determined as she got to the start line. Iida prepared his engines. He’d be sure to do the Ingenium name proud. Izuku inhaled. He knew what he had to do. What All Might had told him.

“I need you to tell the world… I am here! Realistically speaking, I still can’t regulate it…to a reasonable extent. That’s why I have to overcome it.”

The starting line lights dinged down.

“STARTTTTTTTTTTT!” Midnight slammed her whip down as the lights finished their countdown. It was show time! There was an immediate issue however. The students in order to get onto the course had to take one of the same gates they had entered through. Those had worked fine when it was a simple sum of twenty students who had been passing through. However, now it was 220 students trying to force their way out. Izuku found himself instantly crushed in a throng of sweaty and desperate students trying to get going.

“The starting gate’s toooo narrow!!”

“Ah. The starting gate itself is…”

“The first filter.” Todoroki exhaled. He slid forward, ice emanating from beneath him. This had two effects. The first was that it made him move faster and thus able to break through the throng of people that had been blocking him. The second was that he froze several people behind him. Students fell over, crashing to the floor, and others had to roll.

“Yowch! I’m all frozen!! Can’t move!”

“So cold!!”

“That bastard!” Several students were already potentially seeing their dreams cut short. It wasn’t ideal.

“MUMMY MAN!! ARE YOU READY FOR OUR LIVE COVERAGE, AND COMMENTARY?” Mic boomed out. Aizawa shuffled, bandaged up as ever groaning.

“Not voluntarily.”

“Too easy, Todoroki!!” The ice user turned his head, hearing a voice. His eyes caught the sight of Bakugou launching himself into the air with his explosions. “AIN’T LETTING YOU GET AHEAD THAT EASY, HALF ‘N’ HALF!” Bakugou wasn’t the only one airborne. Yaoyorozu had made a long pole from her hand in order to vault herself clean over the ice. Tokoyami had been
able to depend on Dark Shadow to lift him up and over. Ashido had used her acid to dissolve the ice beneath her. Ojiro had employed a swift slap of his tail. Vanfell, ever hot blooded, had opted to use the shoulders of those students in front of him as a way forward. Despite their howls of pains, he had a good natured smile on his face… thanking them as he went! Izuku and Mineta just took long steps and kept jumping on occasion to keep themselves clear of the ice. Ochako wasn’t using any special move yet, but was keeping herself clear. The purple haired general studies student was being carried by what seemed to be a horde of students… odd.

“I expected it from our class, but… more made it past than I thought would.” Todoroki grunted as he kept running ahead of them. Mineta had launched himself into the air, and reached one hand to his head.

“Good thinking, staying two steps behind Todoroki! Now it’s my turn! How about a taste of my killer.” Just as he went to throw it, a huge metal arm smashed into him mid air. He was sent rolling and spinning into the ground with a thud.

“Mineta!” Izuku yelped. What had caused this?!

“...Multiple targets acquired.” A huge robot blocked their path. Vanfell paused, exhaled, and looked at the sky.

“Fuck me.”

“The faux villains from the entrance exam!?”

“EVERY OBSTACLE COURSE NEEDS OBSTACLES!! STARTING WITH…” Even Todoroki came to a halt as a swarm of the zero-pointer arrived to block the route. “THE FIRST BARRIER. ROBO INFERNO!!”

“It’s the zero pointers from the exam!!”

“Seriously? The hero course kids fought those?!”

“Too many, there’s no way past!”

“So these are the faux villains they used for everyone’s test?” Todoroki grunted.

“Where’d they find the money for these?” Yaoyorozu questioned. Her and Todoroki were recommendation students. They had made it to U.A, but had taken a different test. The other students were starting to plan a way through. Izuku and Vanfell were both finding themselves quickly out of options. Izuku knew he couldn’t afford to blow his arm out. Vanfell knew that he had no way to do anything to something like this. Damn it! But while this was happening, Todoroki had dropped low to the ground.

“Kinda wish they’d prepared something a little more threatening.” He held one hand to the ground, as the robots lurched forward toward the amassed students. “Especially because dear old Dad is watching.” His hand slid upwards from the ground. In an instant, the entire horde of robots was frozen. Todoroki broke forward into a run. Vanfell twitched and also shot forward. The other students however were awestruck by the display.

“He stopped ‘em!! We can get through that gap!” Todoroki turned his head back. It seemed Vanfell was the only other student who had figured it out. There was no time to throw any ice at him, otherwise he’d be caught in his own plan.

“Bad idea. I froze them in pretty unstable position. So they’d fall.” Thus before any of the students beside Todoroki and Vanfell could make it through the gap, the robots shifted, churned and collapsed. With a huge crash the gap closed.

“1-A’S TODOROKI! BUSTING THROUGH, AND SABOTAGING THE OTHERS IN ONE MOVE!! THIS GUY’S COLD!!” Present Mic howled out. Aizawa leaned into his mic.

“Don’t ignore that Vanfell was the only other student who realized what Todoroki was doing. He’s not far behind him.” And it was true. Vanfell had managed to scramble through the gap, as he darted
right next to Todoroki.

“Dickhead. Don’t get complacent!” He roared.

“AMAZING! HE’S WAY AHEAD OF THE PACK!! ALMOST FEELS… UNFAIR!!” Mic’s commentary didn’t make matters any easier for Izuku. He should have realized what Todoroki was doing, just like Vanfell had. The quirkless student was outthinking him! There were more robots stirring now. Todoroki hadn’t frozen them all, it seemed. At home, Inko was in hysterics. The woman was pressed to her seat in terror as she looked at the size and power of the robots that stood before Izuku. Tears swelled in her eyes as she felt terror in her veins.

“Izuku, you can’t fight those things! Please run to safety!”

“Quickly now…! Gotta find a way past while dealing with these robots.” “Think, think…”

“FOR THOSE OF YOU TUNING IN AT HOME! THE FIRST EVENT IS THE OBSTACLE COURSE RACE!! IT’S A LAP AROUND THIS STADIUM, MADE JUST FOR TODAY!!”

“Hey.”

“ACCORDING TO THE RULES, ANYTHING’S FAIR GAME AS LONG AS OUR CONTESTANTS STAY IN BOUNDS. IT’S A HARSH GAME OF CHICKEN! AND ALL THE ACTION IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE CAMERA ROBOTS AT EACH LOCATION!”

“You really don’t need me here, do you?”

Back at the main event, the students were working their way through the horde of robots. It was slow going, considering the type of robots they were fighting. There was an immediate concern however. It seemed that when the robots collapsed, something terrible had happened.

“H-hey, there’re kids pinned under there!!”

“They gotta be dead! I didn’t know we could be killed during this thing?!” Some students had paused, gathering around the robots. There was a banging from below however, and the metal plating was smashed away. A red haired figure broke up from under it, roaring.

“DEAD? AS IF!”

“I-A’S KIRISHIMA WAS CRUSHED!” Mic yelled, as he watched with great glee. The teacher and hero really enjoyed this event.

“That bastard Todoroki! Timing their fall like that! I’d be dead if I wasn’t me…” His entire body was hardening, even his hair. Right next to him, there was another robot suffering from banging… and them metal plating exploded away. The metal student from earlier smashed clean through.

“Class A’s just full of jerks, huh…! I’d be dead if I wasn’t me!!” His skin seemed to be coated in iron, or steel, as he fumed.

“The dude from Class B!!”

“CLASS B’S TETSUTETSU WAS ALSO FLATTENED!! OUCH!!” Kirishima saw the quirk that this student had and sprawled away, wiping a MANLY tear form his face.

“You copycat!!”

“Lucky. They can just smash through without worrying about being crushed.” Kaminari groaned. He had no way to deal with these robots beyond going yay mode. Jirou was also stuck, unable to push forward for the time being.

“Let’s team up for now so we can carve a path through!” One of the B class students yelled. Bakugo was also making his move. He couldn’t let that damned Todoroki and the quirkless reject get ahead of him. His explosions flung him into the air, as he sailed clean over the zero pointer.

“DOWN LOW DIDN’T WORK FOR 1-A’S BAKUGO, SO HE TOOK THE HIGH ROAD!! CLEVER!!”
“With your personality, I was sure you’d bust your way through. But you avoided a fight!”
“Allow me to follow in your wake.” Two students had sailed up behind Bakugou. Sero and Tokoyami followed the student in his footsteps. A girl with vines for hair also scaled the same zero pointer, before sliding down it carefully and quickly.

“THE CURRENT LEADERS OF THE PACK ARE OVERWHELMINGLY FROM CLASS A!”
“But Class B and even the others aren’t bad. It’s just…” All Might sat in his booth watching the students. It seemed they were really giving it their all. He hadn’t expected Vanfell to be jostling for first place right now. But everyone was performing to their maximum. Iida smashed a robot away with his leg. Kaminari made sure to only use the necessary level of voltage. Jirou managed to slip her jacks into a crack, a crevice, and blew the robots out from the inside. Several of the robots smashed to the ground, as Ochako released her quirk. Ojiro slammed through several of them with his tail as he kept moving forward. No way he’d let Vanfell beat him!

“Class A knows there’s no time to hesitate.” Aizawa remarked, able to get a word in edgewise for once. “They’ve been exposed to the outside world, up close and personal. They’ve had that fear planted in them. And they’ve endured it. Overcome it. Each has grown from that experience… and forgotten how to hesitate.” Izuku was scrambling. His eyes fell on something on the floor, as he ducked beneath an attack from one of the smaller robots.

“It’s an armor plate from one that Todoroki knocked down!” He managed to scoop it up. It was pretty heavy, but he could make use of it. “This contest’s only just begun. I can’t rely on One for All yet!” Which made the fact that a robot was still chasing him was an issue. Izuku gathered that U.A must have made these robots pretty tenacious. “Which means… it can’t… break that quickly!” With a heave of the armor plate, Izuku cleaved the robot in half. His mother fainted at home, falling flat on her back. Izuku puffed and panted as he scrambled up. Keep moving! A zero pointer exploded in front of him. Someone with that much raw power!? It was Yaoyorozu, a cannon resting in front of her. Her uniform was left open, her chest and stomach exposed.

“Piece of cake!” She was concerned however. She’d allowed a quirkless student to get ahead of her. Such a situation was not ideal! She broke forward into a run, intending to catch up and make up for lost time.

“A path’s opened up!”
“She beat a zero pointer so easily…!” Up in the teachers booth, Snipe was leaning back in his seat as he nodded.
“Better off dodging them fellas in the exam. But they’re just slow hunks of metal if ya try taking ‘em down. Long as you got a weak point that is.” All Might didn’t respond, watching Izuku closely.

“He knows how crazy this is, but he keeps busting through by the skin of your teeth is fine! Just keep going!”

“WHAT’S THIS?! IT SEEMS WE’VE GOT A BRAWL FOR THE FRONT RUNNERS! VANFELL ZEPHYR IS MAKING SWINGS AT TODOROKI!?” Present Mic howled in excitement. Charity groaned and sat up.

“The hell is my idiot kid playing at!”
“Honey, he’s just trying to hold onto his lead…” Gerald patted her on the back, as the cameras flicked to the aforementioned fight. Vanfell was neck and neck with Todoroki. Both running side by side, their gazes locked on each other. Neither was speaking, opting to focus on their breathing, but the tension was palpable. A left hook sailed from Vanfell, before bouncing off an icewall. Leaping forward Vanfell swung a leg for the head of his classmate. Todoroki ducked under it, moved forward and tried to freeze Van in midair. The quirkless student managed to place a palm on the oncoming ice and splay his fingers. This threw him just high enough into the air to dodge, as he landed into a roll. Keeping up his momentum, he threw a jab that connected with Todoroki’s chest. In return he
received an ice-enhanced hook to his chin that made him hiss. Both of them shoved each other away as they got back to the race at hand. It seemed everyone was getting close to the second barrier…

“So the first barrier was a piece of cake?! How about the second?!
Fall and you’re out! Gonna have to crawl across, if ya want to make it!!” Mic’s voice sung out in the ever so dulcet tones that he was loved for. In front of the students stood a large selection of stone pillars. They were all connected by tightropes. There was another side. It was clear that all you had to do was make it across without falling…but the fall was insane! Bar Todoroki and Vanfell the majority of the students were stood in front of it, trying to calculate a way to make it across. Todoroki was using his ice to ensure that he couldn’t slip off. Vanfell on the other hand was just zooming across the tightrope as fast as he could, practically sprinting across it. It looked quite silly. Tsuyu was one of the students to react quickly.

“Just a giant tightrope.” She mused as she crawled forward on it. It would seem that her quirk was perfectly suited for this sort of thing, and she’d be able to pull ahead as a result. Other students were still unsure of what to do. A rather nefarious female voice wafted out of the crowd.

“Hee hee hee, here we go. My chance to make a splash!” Ochako and Mina tensed, as a girl with pink hair stepped forward. It seemed she was covered in metal gear? Goggles, and what looked to be like special boots and a backpack!? “Time for my support items to get the spotlight! Take a look, all you national support companies! At The Wire Arrow and Hover Soles!!”

“She’s in the support course!!” Ochako yelped as Mina’s face fell. She pointed at the newcomer.

“Wait. She’s allowed to have those things??” After all, the hero course was barred from equipment. Vanfell and Aoyama were the only ones who had been allowed to bring anything in, due to their equipment being essential. The pink haired girl snickered as she turned her head.

“You guys in the hero course also have practical battle training, right? In the interest of fairness, so long as they’re items and costumes we developed ourselves…using equipment’s just fine! You might even say…” As this girl rambled on, two thick metal arrows shot out of the gear on her chest, and lodged into a far away pillar. “For us support course students, this is the great opportunity to show off our inventiveness and craftsmanship to the industry, hee hee hee!!” She leapt into the air. It seemed she was going to fall, and fail!? “So eyes on me all you corporations out there!!” She laughed as she clicked a button on her suit. “Check out my adorable…” The thin wires pulled her towards the pillar, as she slammed herself to an air cushioned landing with aplomb. “Babies!”

“Wow! Let’s chase her down!”

“So annoying! How’s that fair?!”

“Cool…”

“The truth is, we’ve got all types trying to make it big here today, Eraserhead.”

“Why’d those idiots stop moving…”

“Meanwhile, the leaders of the pack move on undaunted!!” It did seemed to be that way. Todoroki and Vanfell had moved on separate ropes and had been too concerned with attacking each other. However it seemed the dynamic was about to change. Both Todoroki and Vanfell looked up and behind them.

“Not so fast!!” Bakugou hissed as he roared through the sky. His palm aimed itself at Vanfell. An explosion ripped out. The quirkless student skidded to a halt and lept backwards, narrowly dodging it. He huffed as he wiped his brow. Time to let Bakugou and Todoroki duke it out. Top ten
ought to get him through anyway, so no time for pointless risks. Behind this group was Iida.
“It’s very likely my brother is also watching.” He put his arms out to balance himself as he jetted in a rather gangly fashion. “I mustn’t show him an unsightly performance!!”

“LOOKS UNSIGHTLY TO ME!!” The crowd was rather active, as they watched the unfolding events. A lot of them were focused on Todoroki, though quite a lot of them had things to say about Vanfell.
“Kid in the lead just can’t be stopped.”
“His quirks awesome, but it’s not just that…”
“He’s incredibly perceptive, and athletic.”
“Yeah, but that quirkless kid ain’t bad himself. He figured out what the lead was doing…”
“Got lucky. Look at him now, anyway. Once the real competitors got close, he skidded back.”
“Such bullshit a quirkless kid is even in U.A. Political correctness gone mad…”
“Yeah, bit of a joke I gotta say. Surprised he hasn’t collapsed yet, most of them are pretty weak.”
“We sure he ain’t on steroids, or something?”
“Who cares. You know the kid in front? Flame Hero Endeavor, that’s his son.”
“Ah! Makes sense! Kid’s got the blood of the number two hero out there, after All Might. Figure pros’ll be scrambling to get him as their sidekick.” One woman with green hair and an odd mask did seem to sway and laugh at this sight.
“That quirkless kid… oh… reminds me of him~”

“THE LEADS KEEP BREAKING AHEAD, WHILE THE REST OF THE PACK IS BUNCHED UP! OUR RACERS DON’T KNOW HOW MANY WILL GET TO MOVE ON, SO ALL THEY CAN DO IS AIM FOR FIRST PLACE!” Present Mic bellowed, as Todoroki came to a halt. It seemed whatever was in front of him was a surprise. “OUR LEADER HAS REACHED THE FINAL BARRIER!! THAT IS TO SAY…” And it was soon made obvious what that was. “THIS MINEFIELD!! IT’S A DEADLY EXPLOSIVE CARPET! A QUICK GLANCE IS ENOUGH TO REVEAL THE MINE’S LOCATIONS!! SO KEEP BOTH EYES OPEN AND WATCH YOUR STEP!!” Mic guffawed as Todoroki continued to stand there, gritting his teeth. He’d need to be careful to handle this one… “I SHOULD MENTION! OUR MINES DON’T PACK A DEADLY PUNCH, BUT...THEY’RE LOUD AND FLASHY ENOUGH THAT YOU MIGHT NEED A CHANGE OF UNDERWEAR WHEN IT’S ALL OVER!”

“Depending on the person of course.” Izuku was still on the rope section. His metal guard was tied to him as he pulled himself across.
“They’ve already made it that far…? Quickly! Gotta keep moving!!” The student huffed and panted. Vanfell didn’t get much chance to worry about it. He had to deal with a new challenger. Something had changed in Ochako, as she swiped a hand at Vanfell. The two students had ended up neck and neck. Vanfell hadn’t intended to try and get rid of her, but it seemed she wasn’t playing any games. Charity tensed in her seat as Gerald hissed.
“If she lands a single finger on him, it’ll be over! Cmon champ…” Vanfell managed to tense and sway himself clean of her attempted attack. His left fist shot out in response, crunching into Ochako’s face as he sighed.
“Stay down cut-” But he swore as she didn’t collapse. Her eyes were still open!? Another finger whizzed by his face, as Ochako huffed.
“Don’t you count me out Vanfell!” She barked. Vanfell hadn’t seen such fire in her eyes, ever. That had been way too close for comfort. Ochako wasn’t letting up either. The two engaged in a brutal dance of bobbing and weaving. He didn’t want to admit it, but Ochako was giving him a hard time!
“I get it. This puts whoever’s leading at a disadvantage. It’s all a big show.” Todoroki huffed as he moved forward. He was having to go carefully. But the fact that the mines were temporary meant that the front-runners were clearing the path for those behind them.

“Haha. This crap...CAN’T SLOW ME DOWN!!” There was a loud exploding noise as Bakugou hurtled himself pasted Todoroki. The angry child glared at the student with sheer focused rage all over his face. “You. That declaration of war...was to the wrong person.”

“WE HAVE A NEW LEADER!! GET EXCITED, MASS MEDIAAAAAAA! YOU GUYS LOVE THIS SORT OF TURN AROUND!!!!!!!” Present Mic slammed the desk, yet again. It seemed he was like a child who having way too much fun with his job. Bakugou had sailed in front of Todoroki. Behind those two, Iida fell flat on his face as he simply tried to outspeed the mines. It didn't worked, but the student was still making good ground despite this. The girl with vines for hair was making swift progress as well. Vanfell and Ochako were continuing their dance, and Todoroki was now attempting to fight Bakugou, gripping his wrist lacing some ice over the limb. “CAN THEY HOLD ONTO THEIR LEAD!!??!” This was the situation Izuku found himself faced with. The gap from #1 was way too wide. There was no way he could catch up to the leaders, without breaking his legs. That wasn’t an option...think. Then it dawned on him. Izuku knew what to do. The crowd weren’t paying any attention to him.

“I can…” “Taking a page from your book, Kacchan!” “Still Catch up!” In an instant, there was a huge explosion. Near every student, beside Vanfell and Ochako, reacted, looking behind them. What they would see was Izuku sailing through the air clinging tight to his metal robot piece.

“A GIANT EXPLOSION FROM BEHIND?! WHAT CAUSE SUCH A BLAST?!” Present Mic howled in excitement. Bakugo and Todoroki looked behind themselves in confusion, not quite sure what the hell had just happened. “AN ACCIDENT? OR WAS IT INTENTIONAL!!?” All Might threw his hands up as he rose from his seat. There was no way, could it be!? “AND CLASS A’S MIDORYIAAAAAAA RIDES THE WAVE IN HOT PURSUIT!!”

A Few Seconds Earlier

“They’re the type that blow when stepped on! They’re only strong enough to toss us around a bit, but...! If you’re thrown off course, you could cause a chain reaction and lose a lot of time! Better to slow down and avoid them if it means not taking damage. Not like the leaping types can afford to get careless either. There are more mines to dodge up front, and trying to slow down others is a guaranteed time loss.” Izuku noted this fact in particular because he had noticed that Vanfell and Ochako were brawling it out. They were fighting with such passion that they were managing to avoid the mines, but it was clearly starting to slow them down. But he shook his head. There was no time to focus on that fact. “Just focus!! Which spots are the people back here avoiding? It’s the entrance that they’ll be most on guard. There are plenty of mines left! Great! Just stay frosty!!” “Anti Personnel mines should only be 14-15CM down. I can dig ‘em up with this.” Izuku started to rapidly smash his robotic plate against the ground, scraping and lifting. Jirou ran past him, sweat slicking her brow, in confusion.

“What’re you doing Midoriya…!”

“Bakugo and Todoroki are in the lead!! They’re about to cross the finish line... Taking a page from your book Kacchan!!” There was a huge collection of mines in front of Izuku. It was time to put the plan to action. His body lurched forward. He jumped into the air and pressed tight against his metal plate. It smashed down on the mines!

GREAT BLASTING TURBO SPEED!!
The sheer force of the mines was enough to fling Izuku high into the sky. The wind wracked his body as he hurtled forward clinging to the plate like his life depended on it. Those unfortunate enough to be behind him when he activated this gambit were sent sprawling and flying backwards. Jirou was sent sprawling forward, just about managing not to fall on her face. The entire race reacted, all shocked and taken by surprise.

“HE’S PASSED THEM!!” Mic was on the edge of his seat, unable to understand just what the hell was happening! Izuku had sailed past the two leads in an instant? The student however realized a slight issue in his plan. The landing! He hadn’t thought that far ahead! There was the sound of yet more explosions. Bakugo had reared up and flung himself into the air to chase after his peer. “DEKUUUUUUUUU! GET THE HELL BACK HERE!!” He bellowed as he reached for him. Todoroki realized that there was no point in brawling with Bakugo right now. He formed an ice path beneath himself. Of course it would end up helping the others, but he had no time to worry about them! Both Bakugo and Todoroki rushed for Izuku.

“OUR FORMER LEADERS HAVE CALLED A CEASEFIRE TO CHASE DOWN MIDORYIA! WHEN A COMMON ENEMY PEOPLE STOP FIGHTING!! WELL, ACTUALLY, THEY’RE STILL FIGHTING JUST NOT EACH OTHER!!”

“What are you even trying to say…?”

Izuku however was running into problems. His body was drifting away from the plate despite the white-knuckle grip he had on the rope.

“I’m stalling…! Of course. It’s coming away from me!” His body was now parallel to the plate in mid-air. It was behind him, his head facing directly down at the ground. “If I lose time on this landing, passing them again will be impossible!!” The two students, Todoroki and Bakugo were now right on top of Izuku. “Crap! No! Don’t let go! While I’m still ahead, this is my one chance!! So hold on tight!!” If passing them against is impossible…” Izuku flipped his body. Now the plate was behind him. His arms strained as he tugged it forward. It sailed in front of him and down slamming into the ground. “THEN I GOTTA STAY IN THE LEAD!” There was a series of clicks. Todoroki realized what had happened just a moment too late. A huge explosion rippled out. Bakugo and Todoroki were disorientated as a result, covering their faces unable to react. Izuku was sent sprawling forward breaking into a roll. He stumbled to his feet and broke into a full on sprint for the finish line.

“AND MIDORIYA BLOWS OFF THE COMPETITION WITH NO TIME TO LOSE!! YOUR CLASS IS SOMETHING ELSE, ERASERHEAD!! WHAT’RE YOU TEACHING THOSE KIDS?”

“This isn’t my doing. They’ve been spurring each other on all on their own.”

“WELL, WHO COULD HAVE PREDICTED SUCH AN INCREDIBLE TURN OF EVENTS SO EARLY ON??”

“You ignoring me?”

“THE ONE WHO MADE IT BACK TO THE STADIUM FIRST IS...NONE OTHER THAN IZUKU MIDORIYA.!!” The crowd exploded in cheering and rabid reaction as the green haired student staggered in. Death-Arms, outside, viewed a panel...and swore that was the kid from a year ago. Inko at home fell from her chair in a burst of joyous tears as she watched her son come clean through the line. Shigaraki, nestled in his basement, scritched at his neck. The man with the organ scarf merely lifted an eyebrow and snorted. Izuku on the other hand let his eyes shoot straight up to
the box All Might was sitting in. Despite the distance between the two...they both could feel the grin coming from a mile away! All Might exhaled from his booth.

“The Spirit of a Savior Hero that lies in your core...don’t cry. DON’T CRY!! This sports festival is a competition that tests the exact opposite of that, your willingness to take down the enemy...heroes nowadays depend on popular opinion so much. So many selfishly seek to beat everyone else. But not you. That’s why I chose you, and I thought that lack of selfishness would be your one weakness. Way to prove me wrong! But you gotta stop crying all the time!” All Might clapped his hands together.

“What do you think?”

“Doubtless, Midoriya's stock is about to rise. But it is hard to say what’s still in store for him, since he didn’t show his quirk. And unlike Vanfell, he actually has one. So to not show it robs him of a unique selling point, so to speak.”

“Say a hero agency were to take Izuku, or Vanfell, on. How would they market them? I’m curious to know your opinions.”

“Well, for Izuku. He isn’t much to look at. You’d focus on his skills, and unique almost artistic sensibilities. When the resources you need just aren’t there…”

“With Vanfell, you paint it as a rag to riches story. The heart-throbbing tale of a boy striving to reach his dream...but the opinions on quirkless people might make this marketing inherently a waste of time.”

“The Business Course!! Some things never change!!” All might snorted. The business course had nothing to gain by directly partaking in the sports festival. As a result, they instead honed their skills as salespeople, and run business simulations. Down on the field, more racers came through the line. Bakugo and Todoroki had come through by now. Baku's face was morphed into one of rage as he panted. Todoroki was silent.

“RACERS CROSS THE FINISH LINE ONE AFTER THE OTHER. WE’LL GO OVER THE STANDINGS LATER, SO CATCH YOUR BREATH FOR NOW!!”

The race was still going on for some people however. Vanfell’s teeth were gritted together tightly. Ochako just wasn’t giving up. The damned girl was really starting to slow their pace down. Izuku had just pulled off the mother of all gambits, and he just didn’t have the time to waste on this girl. He was also a tad intimidated, not much, by the fact that she was taking so many of his punches. It wasn’t like he was holding back, no. She was just straight up refusing to stay down. What the hell was the girl on!?

“Come on! Just stay.” He sidestepped her latest swipe. His fist smashed into her cheek with full force yet again, as he strained. He put his back into this one, sending Ochako sprawling forward. The girl landed with a huff flat on her face. But her fingers reached forward. She wasn’t going to stay down at all. If Vanfell thought he was the only one trying, the only one striving to be the best, then he had another thing coming. That plan of Izuku’s had one benefit for her. The explosion had unearthed one of the mines. Her fingers tapped it, as it drifted into the air. She forced herself back to her feet, running for the finish line. Vanfell rolled his eyes as he went to yell at her.

“I’d look where you’re going, Vanfell!” She barked as she didn’t even look back. Vanfell’s eye twitched. A mine was right in front of his face!?

“Shit!” His arms threw up in front of his face, managing to shield most of the impact. He could taste iron in his mouth as he shook his head. He was a bit hazy, but he couldn’t let her get ahead. Both of them dashed into the tunnel as Van tackled Ochako to the ground. Her face lit up from beneath him, as she slapped a hand across his face. Vanfell found himself floating, smacking against the roof of the tunnel, as Ochako scrambled back up and skidded out onto the field.

“Release!” She exhaled, as Vanfell clattered to the ground. The quirkless student winced as he
managed to shamble his way through to finish coming in just behind Ochako. He coughed, spluttered, and wiped his mouth. What the fuck!? Izuku had watched the whole thing really tensely. He had thought Vanfell would for sure be able to handle Ochako! But it seemed she had managed to get the upper hand on him. The girl rushed over to Izuku and beamed.

“Deku…! That was awesome!” Iida had also finished and was in despair. “To lose a race of all things, with my quirk...it’s clear I still have progress to make!”

“Uraraka, Ida.”

“First place though! Man, I’m jealous!”

“Aw, nah...I got lucky. B-but you looked really good against Vanfell! The way you managed to catch him out with your quirk at the last minute, was super cool!” Uraka went into a red blush as she tried to explain it away. Izuku didn’t pay too much attention as he shifted into his thoughts. “It’s just that every one of my chance strategies happened to work. They say it’s awesome, but it was just my luck. A lucky break, that’s all. The test of skill starts now.”

“You shut yer damn trap Izuku. Ochako just got lucky, that’s all.” Vanfell grunted as Ochako spun on her heel and jabbed a finger at his face. “Lucky??”

“G-guys!” Other students started to trickle in. Yaoyorozu came in, looking fairly exhausted. Vanfell deduced that after the cannon incident, she’d tired herself out. Not that much of a surprise. Maybe she should have been smarter. Someone was also attached...to her.

“Tch..how could this happen…!”

“Two birds, one stone! I’m a freaking genius!” Mineta grinned. Vanfell, despite his issues with Yaoyorozu at the moment, zoomed across the field to smack Mineta clean off the girl, tackling him to the ground. The two squabbled, while Yaoyorozu held her hand to her face. “You’re the absolute worst!!” And with that, the race had concluded.

“So it’s finally over. Let’s check the results!” Midnight beamed as she jabbed her whip at a large LED Screen.

RESULTS
2. Class A: Shoto Todoroki
3. Class A: Katsuki Bakugou
4. Class B: Ibara Shiozaki
5. Class B: Juzo Honenuki
6. Class A: Tenya Ida
7. Class A: Fumikage Tokoyami
8. Class A: Hanta Sero
9. Class A: Ochako Uraraka
10. Class A: Vanfell Zephyr
11. Class A: Eijiro Kirishima
12. Class B: TetsuTetsu TetsuTetsu
13. Class A: Mashirao Ojiro
14. Class A: Tsuyu Asui
15. Class A: Mezo Shoji
16. Class B: Yosetsu Awase
17. Class A: Momo Yaoyorozu
18. Class A: Minoru Mineta
19. Class A: Mina Ashido
20. Class A: Koji Koda
21. Class A: Kyoka Jiro
22. Class B: Sen Kaibara
“Damn idiot got sloppy. He had that girl on lock down, but he just didn’t think hard enough. I’m telling ya he acts like that further on, he’s done.” Charity grumbled. What she didn’t notice was a green-haired lady with an odd mask leaning over and shaking her head.

“No, no! I don’t think his chances have floated away! Still in it to win it, ha, ha, ha.” Charity found herself laughing at this lame pun despite herself. What the hell?

“The top 42 from this qualifying round will move!! But, for those who placed lower~ Don’t worry! We have another way for you to show your stuff.” Midnight explained in an excited tone. She then swayed her head and stomped one heeled boot. “And now the main selection really begins!! The press corp’s going to be jumping out of their seats, so give it all you’ve got! Now, onto the second even!! I already know what it is, of course…” She licked her lips, watching the students shuffle around. “Dying in suspense?! Next up is... this!”
CAVALRY BATTLE

“Cavalry battle…!”
“Cavalry Battle…!
“So we’re teaming up, but how exactly?” Tsuyu asked as she tapped the base of her chin. Midnight grinned as she nodded.

“Participants will, on their own, form teams of two to four members each and get into a horse-and-rider formation! The rules are fundamentally the same as those of an ordinary cavalry battle. Snag your opponents headbands while guarding your own. But with one exception.” Midnight winked.
“Each of you has been assigned a point value based on your ranking in the last event!”
“We’ll earn points like in the entrance exam. Aight.” Vanfell nodded.
“So the point value of each team depends on its members!” Kaminari nodded grinning at Vanfell.
Midnight howled, and cracked the whip in frustration.
“I’M ABOUT TO EXPLAIN! SO SHUT UP ALREADY! Anyway...yes!! And your individual point values start at five, at the bottom. So the student who took 42nd place is worth five points, 41st is worth ten...get it? But..our first place participant.” Izuku felt a terrible feeling creep up his spin, almost instinctively. “Is worth ten million points!!” Shinsou swayed his head to look at him. Mei also looked at Izuku. His face had fallen into utter despair as his classmates all surrounded him. It was like they were demons, out to get his soul! “The higher ranked students are the ones to aim for...this survival game is a chance for a comeback! It’s anyone’s game!”

“There’s more suffering ahead for those at the top. As you must have heard countless times since enrolling at U.A., this is… PLUS ULTRA!” Midnight’s voice was thick with barely contained sadism as she let her gaze fall on Izuku. “After taking first place in the qualifiers, Izuku Midoriya...has got ten million points!” Every student was glaring at him. Vanfell oddly enough didn’t seem to care though. If anything he had skirted his way to stand in front of Izuku, protecting and shielding him from view. Izuku was finding his mind rushing again.

“But the eyes on me now are different than before. It was just dumb luck that I temporarily grabbed first place. But even so...there’s a lot of pressure” Izuku looked up at All Might, and exhaled. Midnight went back to explaining the event.

“The match will last 15 minutes. Each team’s points are determined by its members. The rider will wear a headband displaying the total number of points. Until the match ends, you’ll all compete to grab each other’s points and maintain the ones you have!” Monoma nodded to the dark kid from 1-B, before Midnight continued on. “Any headbands you grab must be worn around the neck, or higher! But the more headbands you’ve got, the harder they’ll become to manage! Most importantly, even if your headband is taken...and even if your horse formation is broken...it’s not over ‘till it’s over. Most importantly, even if your headband is taken...and even if your horse formation is broken...it’s not over till it’s over!”

“That means...with 42 contestants, there’ll be 10 to 12 teams on the field the whole time…?” Yaoyorozu mused. Vanfell grunted and rolled his eyes.
“What a pain in my arse…”
“So there’s no need to panic if your points are temporarily stolen, yeah?”
“But you can’t really tell if you’re not paying attention to the minute by minute breakdown, Mina.”
“Quirks are allowed, sorry Vanfell!” She teased the boy, who shrugged. He took in good nature as the crowd also seemed to laugh. “However… it’s still a cavalry battle! Maliciously attacking another team with the intent of making them fall will get you a read card! And that means you’re out of the game! You’ve got 15 minutes! Time to form your teams!” And with that, the students broke off. Izuku was deep in thought. He realized in his case, points didn’t really matter. So in theory he could select whomever he wanted.

“This U.A sports festival… guess it’s bout preparing em to be heroes. A simulation of the dog-eat-dog society of heroes they’ll soon be a part of.” Death Arms yawned from the break room, watching the festival unfold. “Yes. If your particular agency just can’t cut it, you won’t even have food on the table. That qualifier match match. It’s just like how we’ve got to drag others down in order to make sure we get a piece of the action, yes? Kamui Woods explained, as he recalled how Mt. Lady had stolen his spotlight earlier in the year. “Yeah, it’s pretty awful. Like that cigarette. Stop smoking.” Mt. Lady stated, waving a hand in front of her nose. “You’re one to talk…”!

“On the other hand, there are tons of cases where we’ve gotta cooperate with business rivals.” Death Arms remarked again, as he took another long smoke. “Ah. That’s the point of this cavalry battle! I get it! Victory for yourself means victory for the team. But that takes compatibility and understanding of each other’s quirks… or lack of quirk. Say, Death Arms. Weren’t you the one who yapped about that one quirkless kid? Bet ya you’re eating your words now, right?” Mt. Lady teased as she tilted her head. “Hey! You shut your yap right now. He ain’t that big of a deal, anyway. Bum just about made it through the obstacle course…” Death Arms grumbled, and looked away. “All the skills that pros obviously need… these kids need to start learning them now…”

Back on the field, it seemed Bakugo was a centre of attention. Most of the class did not like him as a person. Ratherm they realized his sheer drive and ability with his quirk was a likely ticket straight to the next round. Mina, Sero, Shoji, and Aoyama were just some of the groups desperately pleading to him to pick them, to team up with them. “…! I don’t even know what your stinking quirks are!” Bakugo barked out in response to the overwhelming amount of people trying to team up with him. “Forget Class B! He’s too self-absorbed to even notice us!!” Mina groaned. All Might watched on. “Despite his personality, he took third. That’s 200 points. Not surprising he’s popular either, given how all purpose his quirk is…” “That Todoroki’s already wrangled up a team for himself! So team up with me Bakugou!” “Ah, weird hair.” “The name is Kirishima! Remember it!! Beside, my hair ain’t much spiker than yours!” The red-haired boy shook his head and then focused. “I know you wanna be a rider, right? So your front horse better be someone who can handle your explosions. Yeah? Who might that be?! “Someone not afraid to die.” “Nope!! It’s me, with my “hardening!!” Kirishima grinned, making a determined fist. “This horse won’t break! You wanna take Midoriya down, right?!“ Bakugo grinned and sneered. Elsewhere, other students were busy planning their teams.

“Shoji… Shoji!” The octopus student turned around and looked down to see a sobbing Mineta.
Internally he groaned. “I tried to team up with some girls, but…! Please be on my team! Vanfell already said no! I’m too small to be part of the horse, and no one’ll agree to be horse to my rider! But with your size, and those tentacles you’ll be able to hide my entire body right?!”

“…” Shoji’s face lit up slightly, behind his mask. It seemed like a rather broken combination. One of his arms sprouted a mouth and nodded. “Great idea, Mineta.”

Izuku was still in thought. He had gathered that everyone was sticking to their own class. Mostly because they didn’t know anything about the other class’s quirks. He noticed that Vanfell was being scouted. The orange haired girl from 1-B seemed to be talking to him, but Vanfell shook his head and walked off. Izuku supposed everyone knew what Vanfell was capable of…but his mind shot back to the fact that he needed to figure something out, and fast! Because as it was, everyone was avoiding him like the plague!

“Yup. They must figure that the best strategy isn’t to hold onto my points the whole time…but to instead try stealing them at the very end…!” Izuku whined. Ojiro slinked away from the boy as he gulped. “Unlike Todoroki and Kacchan, I haven’t shown off my quirk enough for them to trust me…and I’m not like Vanfell!”

“Izuku! Team up with m-Whoa.” Ochako laughed as Midoriya seemed to burst into a insanely huge burst of tears. It made her think for a moment he had two quirks.

“Uraraka!! Y-you mean?! Everyone’s probably gonna come after me for my ten million-”

“Yeah, but you’ll win if you can just run away.”

“I think you’re overestimating me, Uraraka—”

“That’s fine! Who cares! Teaming up with a friend just seems right!” She gave a beaming smile to Izuku as she clenched her fists. This’d work! Izuku’s face took on a strange, and rather ugly look.

“What’s wrong?! You got all ugly!!” She yelped as Izuku exhaled.

“You’re just so Uraraka I can’t bear to look at you Uraraka.” Off to the side, Vanfell sighed. His hand went through his hair as he shrugged. He’d intended to offer to help Izuku out. No one in 1-A really wanted him. Him and Yaoyorozu had their personal issues. Jirou and Kaminari had already found their teams. But Izuku had Uraraka. Not going to work. He had another option in mind though…

“You’re that general studies class kid.” Vanfell stated. Shinsou went to talk before Van pressed a finger to his lips. “Ain’t gonna brainwash me champ. Looking at your team over there…” He jabbed a finger at Ojiro and the tubby kid from 1-B who looked fairly dazed and out of it. “Figure you had to make em your ally with yer quirk however it works. Figure that’s why you couldn’t pass that entrance exam we had. I don’t like you. Let’s clear that up. But you deserve a position on the fighting stage to rep your class. So I’ll be your leg. None of this mind-control shit. Capice?” Shinsou didn’t say anything as Vanfell removed his finger. There was a moment of thought before he shrugged.

“Fine.” Vanfell tensed…and then was fine. He gave a solid nod to Shinsou, and shook his hand. It wasn’t ideal, but it would make do. Now to focus and let Shinsou guide them through to the next stage. Back over with Izuku he was starting to figure out his plan.

“I actually wanted to team up with you too, so thanks! Now that we’ve got your quirk, Uraraka, we just need him…I’ve got the perfect plan!”

“Hmm?”

“We three’ll form the horse, with Ida in the lead! Ida, Uraraka can make us weightless which means excellent maneuverability! We’ll want our rider to be someone physically strong…still haven’t decided. Vanfell would have worked, but he has a team…anyway! The plan is just to run away the whole time.”

“…I’d expect no less Midoriya. But I’m sorry. I refuse.” Iida took a step back and shook his head.

“Ever since the entrance exam…I’ve been losing to you. It’s precisely because you’re a wonderful
friend that I cannot follow you now. Untempered as I am. Bakugo and Todoroki aren’t the only ones who see you as a rival. So I, too...challenge you.” His back turned to Izuku as he moved over to Todoroki, Yaoyorozu, and Kaminari. Ochako swung her head back and forth in shock.

“Iida...” Izuku tensed, and exhaled.

“It’s already begun!! They’re all enemies. Right. I’m on top now...so this is no time for loyalty between friends!!”

“Heh heh heh...yes, you’re in first place. You sure do stand out!”

“!"

“TEAM UP WITH ME, MR. FIRST PLACE!” Mei Hatsume had jabbed her face right in front of Izuku’s who gave out a little yelp of fear.

“Whoa! Too close. Who’re you?” He asked, trying to calm himself down.

“I’m Mei Hatsume, from the support course! Ochako recognized her as the strange girl from the obstacle course. “I don’t know you, but I could be useful to someone in your position.”

“Ah, you don’t mind words!!” Ochako pointed out.

“Joining with you means I’ll inevitably be right in the spotlight!! And then inevitably, my super cute babies...will be seen by the industry big shots. They’ll have to take notice of me and my babies!!”

“H-hold on now...babies? Industry? What’re you...”

“But wait- there’s more. This could also be advantageous for you.” Mei had completely ignored Ochako who came to the conclusion that the pink-haired girl was not interested in her. “In the support course, we develop equipment to make heroes quirks easier to use! I’ve got plenty of my babies here, and I’m sure you’ll find one or two that suit you!” She exclaimed, dumping a ton of gear in front of Izuku. She scrambled around in the mess and plucked up what looked to be a backpack.

“Perhaps this one’s to your liking? It’s modeled on a certain hero’s backpack, with a few additions of my own...”

“Could it? Buster Hero Air Jet’s Pack!? I love that guy. His agency used to be in my neighborhood...”

“Is this right? By the way by quirk is...”

“Looks like they’re fast friends...”

“Losing Ida was bad, but with this girl...!” “Just one more now!!” Izuku looked over the crowd. It seemed that everyone had already decided? The loss of Vanfell had hurt him, but there wasn’t much he could do about that. The formation was lacking some power...but one person could change that!

“Your 15 minutes are up. Time to get started.” Midnight stated with her trademark drawl. The teams were completed, and ready. Now it was just the pre-battle chit chat as everyone got ready and prepared.

“Everyone here’s so focused on Class A...why? And it’s like Tetsutetsu said. Those Class A kids are so damn cocky. It’s weird. What makes them so different? That whole villain attack? Having a quirkless student? Class A thinks it’s so great. Well, let’s show ‘em why we in Class B hung back and placed low in preliminaries...” Monoma exhaled.

“HEY WAKE UP, ERASER! THEY’VE HAD THEIR TIME TO FORM TEAMS AND STRATEGIZE. AND NOW ALL 12 TEAMS ARE LINED AND READY TO MOVE!!”

Aizawa roused himself from a temporary slumber as he rubbed his cheek.

“...Interesting. The teams they’ve come up with.”

“LET’S GET A BATTLE CRY!!” The crowd roared out in return. Charity rubbed her face, as she gazed down at Van’s team. Not the best...but low profile. It might work out. “HERE COMES THE
STARTING SIGNAL! BLOOD BEGETS BLOOD IN THE U.A GRAND MATCH!!” Izuku’s team was complete. Uraraka and Hatsume made up the backline. He was the rider, the jetpacked strapped to his back. In front?

Tokoyami!
“Uraraka!”
“Yep!”
“Hatsume!”
“Heh Heh Hehe…”
“Tokoyami!”
“Yeah…”
“LET’S DO THIS!”
“Ok Shinsou.” Vanfell grinned. “Counting on ya. I’ll keep the zombies in line.”
“...Heh. Course.”

A few minutes earlier

“The reason I’ve chosen you all, is because our formation will be by far the most stable.” Todoroki explained. “Kaminari. You guard the left and keep enemies away with your electricity. Yaoyorozu. You take the right. Provide an insulator, shield us, and supplement our movement. Iida, you take the lead. We’ll make use of your mobility and physicality for defence.”
“And you’ll hold them off with your ice and fire, Todoroki?” Iida asked, adjusting his glasses.
“No. In battle...I refuse to use my left side.” His face turned upwards, looking into the stands. His eyes fell on a tall, muscular man. Flames coiled around his form, with a beard and mustache being highlights. It was his dear old dad, the no.2 Hero Endeavor.

“Right!”
“THREE!”
“Our target…” Bakugo grunted. His team was composed of himself, Kirishima, Mina, and Sero.
“TWO!”
“Can only be…” Todoroki declared.
“ONE!” Izuku exhaled, preparing for battle. “START!” And instantly nearly every single team made a beeline straight towards his team! Tetsu’s garish metal face and explosive voice zoomed out.

“THIS IS REALLY A FIGHT FOR THE TEN MILLION, AND EVERYONE KNOWS IT!!”
“Hah hah hah! We’re coming for you, Midoriya!” Tooru laughed from above her twam of Jirou, Koda, and Aoyama. Tokoyami’s dark shadow stood in front of them, as the bird-like student assessed the situation. “Incoming attacks right off the bat. There are two teams. The fate of those who are pursued...make your choice, Midoriya!”

“Run away, of course!” His plan was simple. But it seemed to hit a road bump already. The front rider for Tetsu’s team was Juzo. His face was akin to a sharks, but the far more concerning matter was his quirk. His foot pressed into the ground...and suddenly team Midoriya was sinking!

“Tch…!”
“We’re sinking! Guess that’s his quirk. Uraraka, Hatsume!” Izuku was quick on his feet however.
“Turn away for a sec!” Both girls turned their faces to the side, as Izuku jammed a button. The jetpack kicked into life, propelling the team clean into the air, and out of the jam. Tetsu howled in rage.
“THEY’RE FLYING? MUST BE THAT SUPPORT GIRL! GET ‘EM!!” He bellowed, his team
spinning.
“Jiro!” Tooru yelped. The Ear-Jack girl nodded.

“Got it.” Her headphone jacks shot for the flying team. But instantly, Dark Shadow shot forward and smacked them away. “Damn bird!”

“Well done, Dark Shadow. Be sure to cover our blind spots.”

“Gotcha!”

“Wow, that was awesome! Just the defensive power we were lacking…” Izuku noted how Dark Shadow kept scanning and checking for threats and grinned. “But now we’re covered at midrange from every direction!! Good going, Tokoyami!”

“You’re the one who chose me.”

“We’re landing!” Ochako yelped. It was a bit of a rough landing, thanks to the huge boots on her feet. She knew what they did thanks to the obstacle course, but still it was rough!

“How do you like my babies?! Cute, aren’t they?! That’s how I made them!!”

“Uraraka made everyone weightless except herself, so all we’re carrying is her, plus our clothes and equipment!” “They’re making us totally mobile! Your babies are great. Hatsume!!”

“Only cuz I floated you…” Ochako pouted, feeling a bit underappreciated. Tooru hissed.

“We’ll go after them too! Time for revenge, Jiro!”

“Hey, wait! Hagakure!! Our headbands gone!!”

“Whaa?!"

“But when? How?!"

“Just call me an opportunist…” Monoma smirked smugly as he span the headband around his finger before tossing it around his neck.

“WELL, BARELY TWO MINUTES HAVE PASSED, BUT THE BATTLEFIELD IS ALREADY CHAOTIC!! WITH EVERYONE SCRAMBLING FOR HEADBANDS, IT’S NOT JUST THE TEN MILLION OUT THERE! THOSE OTHER HIGH RANKERS ARE WORTH A SHOT AS WELL!”

“Shinsou, we’re going left!” Vanfell barked. Shinsou made sure the message was relayed to the mind-controlled students. The duo managed to just barely dodge a beast like student from 1-B, as Vanfell gritted his teeth. “Good, good! Keep it up!”

“Right. Stick to the edges. Your points...combined with mine. Enough to get us through.”

“Ah hah hah! Scramble, he says…? No, this is...a ONE SIDED MASSACRE!!” A voice emanated from somewhere Izuku couldn’t quite place. His eyes turned to see Shoji lunging for them. Tetsu was right behind their flank as well!

“Huh?! Shoji’s alone?! But this is a cavalry battle!!"

“We must keep our distance! Fighting multiple foes is a bad idea!” Tokoyami barked. The group tried to move forward...but there was a “squish” nose...and it seemed Ochako was unable to move. A grape was pinning one of the boots to the ground?!

“Huh, I’m stuck?!”

“That’s Mineta’s!! But where is he…?” Izuku realized that was the voice he had heard earlier. He turned to see Mineta hidden in the folded arms of Shoji. Safe and covered!

“In here Midoriya…"

“Whoa!! Is that legal?!"

“Sure is!” Midnight chimed in, watching with pure glee. A bit concerning glee. A tongue shot out from inside the folded arms, narrowly missing Izuku’s headband, and forcing Tetsu to jet back.

“Wah?!”
“Whoa?”
“Good job dodging, Midoriya…!”
“Asui too!! How many you got in there Shoji?!”
“Call me Tsuyu.”

“TEAM MINETA USES ITS MEMBER’S VARYING SIZES TO FORM LESS OF A HORSE AND MORE OF A TANK!” Ochako panicked, and forced the boots to activate. One boot was ripped apart, and Mei howled in anguish.
“AHH! My baby got ripped apart!! Noooo!”
“Sorry!! But we did manage to get away!” Ochako yelped. But Izuku turned to see someone flying right toward them in mid-air.

“GETTING PRETTY FULL OF YOURSELF, HUH, YOU BASTARD!”
“Kacchan?!” It seemed Bakugou was flying in the air seperate of his team, propelled by his explosions. “Tokoyami!” Dark Shadow instantly snapped forward, and managed to block the attack just in time. It recoiled in a lot of anguish, but the offence had been blunted.
“What the hell…?” Bakugou started to fall, before a strand of tape yoinked him back down to his unit.
“OHHHHH!! IS LEAVING YOUR UNIT REALLY ALLOWED?!”
“It is here, on a technicality! As long as your feet don’t touch the ground!” Midnight explained with a thumbs up.
“Those Class A kids sure are something else…!” Death Arms grinned. “It’s even fun to watch, given all their flashy moves! Guess that’s just the level they’re at after fighting real villains!”

“BOTH THE DOGGEDLY PURSUED FIRST PLACE TEAM, AND ITS DETERMINED PURSUERS FROM CLASS A ARE NOTHING TO SNEEZE AT! LET’S TAKE A LOOK AT THE CURRENT POINT SPREAD… HOW ARE YOUR TEAMS DOING AFTER SEVEN MINUTES OF PLAY?”
“...Wait what?”
“No fucking way! Not good, damn it, not good!”
“Charity, dear calm down...there's still time.”

“OOH?! NOW WAIT JUST A SECOND! BESIDES MIDORIYA, CLASS A’S NOT LOOKING SO HOT! WHAT HAPPENED TO BAKUGO?” Mic exclaimed in shock. It seemed beside Midoriya and Todoroki, every single 1-A team had no points! Even Shinsou and Vanfell found their headbands were missing.
“Damn! It’s that orange haired girl! We need to get ‘em back! Without being dragged into the main conflict! Cmon Shinso, we gotta think!”
“Right, right...shouldn’t be too hard. I know what to do…” Bakugo during this time also felt his band get pulled away from him.
“Too simple really. Class A.”

“GIVE THAT BACK! I’LL FREAKING KILL YOU!!” Bakugou screamed.
“He got us!”
“When Midnight announced the first first event, it didn’t take a genius to realize they wouldn’t be thinning our numbers that much in a preliminary. It wasn’t much of a stretch to imagine they’d be letting a good number of us advance to the next event. Forty or so seemed reasonable. It was the perfect chance to hang back and observe our soon-to-be rivals quirks and tendencies. So it’s only fair that we ended up placing more modestly.”

“The whole class was in on it…?” Kirishima was stunned.
“Well, not everyone. But that wouldn’t have been a bad idea. Instead of aiming for some fleeting first place, like a horse going for dangling carrot. Ah, but you’re already a celebrity aren’t you?” Monoma
drawled at Bakugou. “The victim of that sludge incident. I’ll have to ask you sometime. How does it feel to get attacked by villains on an annual basis?” Bakugou’s face shifted into one of even more rage than normal.

“Kirishima…plan’s changed. Before we go for Deku…I’M GOTTA MURDER EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM!!”

“*Class B. They threw the qualifiers and planned for the long game. Even before the sports festival I had impression that they’re stronger than they seem. They want to end Class A’s supremacy. But from what that I can guess that they’re not necessarily dead set on targeting me…! Guys. I think it won’t be too hard to evade*” Izuku paused.

“*LOOKS LIKE THE MATCH IS HALF OVER ALREADY!!*”

Izuku exhaled. Todoroki and his team were stood in front of Izuku. “Or maybe it won’t be quite that easy.”

“We’re…coming for you.”

“*CLASS B IS ON THE RISE, BUT IN THE END…WHO WILL WEAR THE TEN-MILLION-POINT CROWN?!*”

“Don’t add insult to injury, Monoma! No sense in making enemies.” Kendou barked. Monoma snorted a little bit.

“You’re right. That’s not very hero-like. Plus you hear a lot about begrudged heroes getting payback from villains.”

“Ohh. Ohh. Ohh…”

“Calm down Bakugo. If you don’t keep you cool, we’ll never get our points back!”

“Keep moving Kirishima. I’m as cool as ice!”

“Looks like this won’t end without a fight…they’re really gunning for you, Midoriya.”

“We’re halfway through. So we gotta keep moving! But there’re…”

“Forward, Ida.”

“Okay!” Iida started to lunge forward.

“Yaoyorozu. Prepare our defence. The insulator too.”

“Right!” The girl started to prepare a long stick from her arm, as Todo swung his head down to Kaminari.

“Kaminari. You…”

“Yeah, yeha, I got it! Just stay alert!”

“Shinsou! Change of plans! We’re moving forward, and we’re doing it right fucking now! Listen to me, and we can win something! Grit your teeth, I’ve got you covered!” Vanfell roared. If he knew Yaoyorozu, Todoroki, and Kaminari’s quirks well enough, which he did, he had a pretty big ideal what was coming. His purple-haired ally grunted, and spurred the team forward.

“Multiple teams incoming!” Izuku yelled, as everyone seemed to be closing in on his team and Todoroki’s team.

“BUCKLE UP SHINSOU! I TRAINED FOR THIS!” Vanfell roared as they charged forward.

“GET READY TO REAPPLY YOUR QUIRK!” Kaminari twitched. They were all close enough now. His eyes widened as he let loose. His team hid under the insulation shield.

INDISCRIMINATE SHOCK! 1.3 MILLION VOLTS
The electricity exploded out from Kaminari. The sheer force of it seemed to lock every single team down as they shuddered. Dark Shadow howled in pain as it tried to cover team Izuku. Shoji and co fell apart. Jirou howled out Kaminari’s name. Kendou felt her entire body tensing. But Todoroki twitched. His eyes flickered to the side. What the hell!?

“THA-A-ATS DA-AMNED WEA-AK KAMINARI!” Vanfell howled. Todoroki hadn’t anticipated anyone being able to still move through the voltage. Shinsou, and the two now non-brainwashed students were wracked in pain.

“D-do it, Zepyhr!” Vanfell gritted his teeth. His entire body was dancing and sparking. But there was a collective cheer from the crowd as the quirkless student’s hand managed to rip a headband straight clean from Todoroki’s neck. He flipped the bird at Yaoyorozu. But he hadn’t factored in how to get the hell away. Shinsou had.

“I- E-EXPECTED BET-TER FROM THE HERO COU-URSE!”

“The hell!” Todoroki barked back, almost instinctively. The fact that he had lost the headband had thrown him off kilter. Shinsou gritted his teeth. Instantly Todoroki froze, his mind not his own. Vanfell felt vomit gurgling in his throat, but he winked.

“Nice, nice, nice. Now, get us the hell out of dodge! Reapply, now!” Shinsou moved fast. Soon, the two other legs were mindwashed again, and the team was skittering away. Shinsou wrapped Todoroki’s headband around his neck. Van twitched. Todoroki had been jarred free. If he didn’t know any better. There was a metal rod in his hand. He’d seen this technique before. “MAKE EM JUMP SHINSOU!”

“Right!” In an instant, the entire team took to the air. Unlike the unlucky zapped team, team Vanfell and Shinsou managed to avoid the freezing trap. Their landing was shaky! But they had held together! The crowd, and the commentary booth went insane.

“SUCH AN INSANE PLAY FROM TODOROKI AND KAMINARI!? BUT, TEAM SHINSOU JUST SOMEHOW MANAGED TO PUSH FORWARD ANYWAY!? ERASERHEAD, BREAK IT DOWN FOR US!”

“Todoroki waited until the teams were stopped by Kaminari’s shock before freezing them in place. I wouldn’t expect any less...he must have recalled how many competitors managed to dodge his ice during the obstacle course. However. Vanfell has shown an obsession with quirk analysis. His training must have prepared him for that level of voltage...barely. He coupled his endurance with whatever his rider can do, in order to get a hold of the headband. Due to them not being as damaged by the shock, they were able to avoid the ice follow up.”

“AND THERE YOU HAVE IT FOLKS!”

“That’s my bloody son! Knock that birthmark faced brat out!” Charity howled, cheering from the bleachers. Popstep was cheering in full force by now as well.

“2 4 6 8, WHO DO WE APPRECIATE? VANFELL! VANFELL!”

“No way that damned quirkless kid could handle that much voltage!? He must be on some drugs, or something.”

“Hmm...just like you used to be, ol Aizawa.” The green haired woman with the mask nodded, laughing.

“Todoroki! What’s the plan!?” Yaoyorozu barked in panic. The student shook his head, as his team still lurched forward. He ripped the headband from Kendou, and another nearby 1-B team, but grunting.

“Nothing’s changed. Go for the Ten Million Point headband.”

“The Pack’s on the fritz!” Izuku yelped. Kaminari’s shock must have thrown it out of whack. Mei was not taking it well.
“My baby! Guess there’s room for improvement!”
“They’re too strong! We’ll never get away!” Ochako yelled. The situation was falling apart fast.
“I’ll create a diversion!” Dark Shadow snapped forward. Todoroki rose his arm in self-defence.

“Yaoyorozu!” His female ally formed a quick barrier out of her arm, blocking Dark Shadow. Tokoyami tutted.
“Her creation quirk! What a pain!” Izuku yelped, gritting his teeth.
“No. Kaminari’s the real problem. His sunlight attack would have wrecked my armor…” Izuku heard these words from Tokoyami and flashed right back to the conversation he had had during the team building. Tokoyami had far more defensive utility during the day light. Dark Shadow was suffering.
“So you have less offensive power now, but they don’t know that, right?”
“Probably. The only one I ever told about my weakness is Kuchida, back at USJ. But he doesn’t talk much.”
“As long as they don’t know...we can fake them out! We’ll be fine! And the ten million points will stay with us.”

BOOM “Oh, that’s neat.” Bakugou was sent sprawling back from his own quirk. Monoma sighed, content. “Nice quirk you’ve got.” He had just used explosion against Bakugou.
“That’s my…!”
“He has your power too, Bakugo!” Kirishima growled. He’d been fine, but Baku had taken a head hit. Monoma made sure to slap Kirishima right before Baku tried to fire back.
“YOU BASTARD!” And lo and behold...the explosion did little to deter Monoma. His skin was hard, just like that of Kirishima’s.
“But I’m better at it.”
“Wha-?! My quirk?! Am I looking in a mirror?”
“Nah. This jerk’s...just a copycat!”
“Ding Ding! Well, any idiot could figure out that much.” Monoma smirked. After all, his quirk let him use other's quirks for five minutes. Before Baku’s team could react a thick spray of glue sprouted in front of them. “Ah, it’s you Bondo!”
“You can get away now, Monoma. With that many points, you’ll be in the top four for sure!”
“Damn! It’s all hard! I can’t move!” Kirishima roared. Mina was instantly starting to melt it, as there was panic in her voice.
“Hold up! My quirk should melt this away!”
“Hurry up! We’re at zero points!!”
“Aw, don’t be mad.” Monoma waved a hand at them, with a little explosion. “You brought this on yourself, after all. Hey...what was that pledge you made earlier? Seems kinda embarrassing now...well, whatever. Thanks for the points.”
“First place...but not just first place, no. I’m taking the first to end all firsts!”
was already displeased that a quirkless runt had managed to trick his son. Now, he was being kept at bay.
“Letting them exploit him. Fool.”
“He keeps his distance and stays to my left. He’s sharp. That way, the most direct route to freezing them would also hit Iida. If I let them goad me into acting recklessly. My own ice could be my downfall. And Tokoyami is blocking Kaminari electricity’s…This guy!”
“Everyone. In the minute or so that remains...well. What I’m about to do will render me useless. Then it’s up to you guys.”
“Iida?”
“Be sure to grab it.” Iida stated, as he leaned forward. His engines started to rev as he bellowed.
“GRAB IT, TODOROKI!” Izuku tensed. They were about to make a move. Just dodge and rea-

"OVERTORGUE! RECIPRO BURST!"

There wasn’t any time to react. In an instant, Todoroki and co had sailed past the team with such blistering speed that they barely had time to process what had happened. Izuku didn’t even realize the headband was now in Todoroki’s hands. Ten Million Points, gone, just like that.

“WHA?! WHAT HAPPENED?! THAT WAS TOO FAST FOR THE NAKED EYE!!”
“Iida, what was that just now?”
“WHY DIDN’T IIDA SHOW US THAT SUPER SPEED IN THE QUALIFIERS?!”
“I elevated my torque and R.P.M to an explosive degree. The kickback stalls my engines temporarily.” The huge cloud of smoke that had kicked up behind the team clearly showed that to everyone watching. “It’s a secret technique that I haven’t shown anyone yet.”

“A SKIRMISH NEAR THE OUT-OF-BOUNDS ONLINE! WHO WILL EMERGE VICTORIOUS?”
“As I said early Midoriya. I’m challenging you!!”
“WHAT A REVERSAL!! TODOROKI’S GOT THE TEN MILLION!” The crowd screamed in tandem with Present Mic. Midoriya had no other option left open to him.
“CHARGE THEM!”
“AND MIDORIYA’S STRAIGHT DOWN TO ZERO!”
“I can’t attack as long as Kaminari’s there! Going after someone else’s points, like Vanfell, is our best bet!” All Might shifted in his seat, swallowing.
“No good! Can’t you see the difference in points?! This is our only option!” Izuku shot back. Ochako gritted her teeth. She hadn’t fought tooth and nail to make it this far. She hadn’t beaten Vanfell in this race to hear a bunch of guys complaining, and not doing.
“HERE WE GO!” She shoved the team forward, her voice filled with steel. “WE’RE GETTING IT BACK DEKU!! NO DOUBT!!”
“Uraraka!” “I have to become a hero so I can make things better for Mom and Dad.” Those words rippled through Izuku’s mind. “That’s right. This isn’t just for me. They put their faith in me...All their hopes!!” Izuku grunted. His face morphed into one of determination. There was now no other option open to him. “Right now I’m carrying them all!!” One for All rippled through his left hand as he shot forward. Todoroki shuddered. His own left arm, his fire side came up...in defence.

“WITH JUST ONE MINUTE LEFT, TODOROKI’S GOT FOUR HEADBANDS! HE SNTACHED BREAK OUT STAR MIDORYIA’S HEADBAND, AND WITH IT FIRST
PLACE! TEAM SHINSO HOWEVER ARE HOLDING STEADY IN FOURTH PLACE, HAVING STOLEN A HEADBAND, THANKS TO SOME INGENIOUS TEAMWORK FROM TEAM SHINSOOOO! HAVE WE FOUND OUR TOP FOUR TEAMS FOR THIS EVENT?!

“Second place, huh. Seems too good to be true. Let’s focus on keeping what we’ve got.”
“Wish the crowd would shut up.”
“Wait just one STINKIN’ MINUTE!”

“Persistent, aren’t you. That sort of tenacity is...” Monoma hadn’t quite anticipated what was happening. His eyes caught Bakugou swirling through the air, separated from his team again. He was coming way too close...

“GET BACK HERE BAKUGOOOOOO!!” Kirishima groaned.

“Tsuburaba! Guard!”

“Got it!” The front rider for Monoma’s team exhaled. In an instant a solid air wall slammed in front of Bakugo. The student slapped against it, as Monoma’s team breathed a sigh of relief. “Ha ha! How d’ya like that? It’s an invisible wall!” But it didn’t stop Bakugo. His fist smashed through it, ripping away a two headbands. Monoma hissed.

“He got two of them!”

“TEAM BAKUGO’S STOLEN TWO, PUTTING THEM IN THIRD PLACE!! A LATE SHAKE UP IN THE RANKINGS. THAT’S THE SPIRIT OF YOUTH FOR YA!!”

“Damn.” Monoma huffed, as Bakugo was reeled back to his team by Sero. “It’s fine! We’re in fourth, and Kendo’s not going anywhere frozen like that...right! Just have to guard this one with our lives...”

“Give us some warning before you jump!!”

“But now we’re guaranteed to move on!”
“I AIN’T DONE YET!” Bakugou screamed, while slamming his fists into the head of Kiri. “I’M NOT SETTLING FOR SOME HALF-ASSESSED FIRST PLACE!!”

“Monoma...class B’s strategy was good and rational. Unfortunately for them...” Aizawa watched carefully.

“I COULDN’T BRACE MYSELF GOING AT IT ALONE. SO MOVE!!” Bakugou howled as his team started to lurch forward. “WE’RE TAKING OUR POINTS BACK! AND THEN THE TEN MILLION! SOY SAUCE FACE! TAPE, NOW!”

“My name’s Sero!” He aimed the rape directly to the side of Monoma. The 1-B student snorted and rolled his eyes.

“You missed.”

“Raccoon eyes! Melt a path for us with that liquid!”

“It’s Mina! Mina Ashido!” But the girl did as instructed. A path sizzled its way into the floor. All Might watched from his booth, as the plan went ahead.

“Bakugo! Needless to say it’s beyond obvious. The difference between those aiming for the top...” The explosive student splayed his arms behind him and let loose. The entire team zoomed across Mina’s path, with Sero’s tape as the anchor. “And everyone else.” Bakugou sailed right up next to Monoma.

“His overwhelming tenacity...they couldn't see or match it.” Aizawa sighed. A huge explosion sent Monoma sprawling as Bakugou reclaimed his points.

“BAKUGO!! ABSOLUTELY MERCILESS!!” Mic howled, as the crowd joined him. “WHAT A PERFECTIONIST! ANYTHING WORTH DOING IS WORTH DOING RIGHT!! WE’RE NEARING THE END OF THE GAME!”
“Next up! Deku and Todoroki!!
“TIME REMAINING?! TWENTY SECONDSSSSS!”

Izuku didn’t have a single option left. It was his first time using OFA against someone else. He couldn’t risk hitting and breaking Todoroki. He just needed to slice the air...and quell that flame! So he swung. The air wave generated was enough to shatter Todoroki’s defence, sending him sprawling back.

My left...what was I thinking?

“It hurt! But my hand’s not broken. All Might said visualization is the key. That’s why for the past two weeks, I’ve been trying to recapture that sensation from back then!” Izuku screamed as he reached for the bands. “He flipped them around to hide the point values...but my ten million was the last one he took! It should be on top!!” And his team sailed forward, granting them their headband bounty!

“I got it! I really got it!”

“SEVENTEEN SECONDS REMAIN! AND WE HAVE ANOTHER FIERCE RECOVERY!”

But it didn’t seem to be the situation.

“Wait. It’s the wrong one!” Mei Hatsume yelled. Izuku’s face dropped. It was only 70 points!? No!

“Come to your senses Todoroki! That was very close!” Yaoyorozu chided.

“TIME’S ALMOST UP! LET’S COUNT DOWN. HEY EVERYBODY SAY!” And now, it was the final seconds of the match.

“Damn! Shinsou! We need to get some points, stat! Bakugo’s fucking recovery dropped us to fifth! Shoot for Tetsu!” Shinsou didn’t even reply. Him and Vanfell steered the group right toward the last 1-B team still able to move in the field. “I’ll tank a hit, you get em!” Vanfell hissed.

“TRYING TO MATCH US, EH? NO WAY” Tetsu threw a brutal haymaker. Vanfell took it on the chin, his vision snapping black. He passed out for a singular moment. His eyes forced themselves back open to see a brainwashed 1-B. Shinsou and him both managed to rapidly snatch every headband from Tetsu...rocketing up to 2nd place, tied with Bakugou!

Chaos had erupted in the centre. In the final scramble everyone had busted into Todoroki’s ring. But there wasn’t any time left. No one managed to grab another headband, despite their desperate efforts...

“TIMES UP!!!” Mic exclaimed. Izuku slammed to the floor in despair. They wouldn’t be moving on... “LET’S SEE WHO THE TOP FOUR TEAMS ARE RIGHT NOW!! IN FIRST PLACE, TEAM TODOROKI!”

“Damn...”

“IN JOINT SECOND PLACE, TEAM BAKUGO AND TEAM TETSU...HUH?! WHOA, TEAM SHINSO?!” Shinsou and his team had dismounted. Vanfell promptly threw up all over the floor, while the other two students were let free of their mind-control. They had no clue what they were doing there...while Bakugo was off in his own corner screaming.

“WHO SAW THAT TURNAROUND COMING? WHO EVEN SAW IT HAPPEN?!” But Izuku wasn’t even listening. He didn’t even feel Mei pulling the backpack off him as he wiped a tear from his face. It was all he could do not to burst into a sobbing fit on the spot.

“Um...I’m so sorry...really.”

“Deku.” Ochako grinned with a beaming face as her and Hatsume pointed at Tokoyami.

“Todoroki was clearly shaken by your first attack. I did my best to nab the ten million, but I came up short.”

“?!?”

“But I got another. I managed to get the one on his head when he dropped his guard.” Dark Shadow
held it in its mouth with a big thumbs up. “Midoriya. That last ditch effort of yours left Todoroki
open.” 625 POINTS!
“IN FOURTH, TEAM MIDORIYA!! THESE TEAMS WILL PROCEED TO THE FINAL
EVENT!!” Mic howled, as Izuku fell to the ground in a burst of joyous tears. Todoroki was stood
off to the side, looking as his left arm in annoyance.

“I can never use it to attack. I was determined about that. But when push came to shove…”
“No...how could I let that...it’s just what my old man expected…”

“WE’LL PROCEED TO THE AFTERNOON PORTION AFTER A ONE HOUR LUNCH
BREAK! SEE YOU THEN!! HEY. ERASERHEAD. WANNA GRAB SOME FOOD?”
“I’m taking a nap.”
“WHAAA?”

Tetsu groaned as his face fell. The 1-B student wasn’t sure what the hell had happened. One minute
he had been smashing that quirkless bastard in his face. The next his foe was gone, and they had zero
points. His face tensed as he looked at Ibara, aghast.
“What the hell happened to us? How’d we end up with zero points…?”
“I daresay this is divine retribution for the unfair manner in which we stole that dwarf’s points…”
The vine-haired girl felt a wash of guilt swim over her body. Her vine slipping past Shoji’s defence
to pluck the headband away from Mineta. Everyone who hadn’t made it on were venting their
frustration, and even those who had were as well.
“This sucks. But congrats all the same, Mina.” Tsuyu huffed. Mina rubbed her neck frustrated as
well.
“Bakugou only picked me as a counter strategy against Todoroki’s ice. This win doesn’t say much
about my strength.”
“Appreciate you not brainwashing me. I figure you saw some sense in what I ‘ad to say right?”
“Only reason you weren’t brainwashed...is we’re equals. You’ve got no quirk. Brainwashing
someone like that...don’t sit right with me…” He drawled, shrugging. “On your own now.” He
sauntered away, as Vanfell coughed.
“Gck. Damn bastard! Heh...maybe he ain’t so far up his own arse after all…” He smiled despite
himself as he mentally prepared himself for what came next.
“No fair Iida! Hiding that super-secret move from us!” Ochako yelled swinging her arms like Iida
typically did. He laughed as he wagged his hand back and forth.
“It isn’t a matter of “fair.” I simply went beyond the prescribed usage!”
“I really just wanted to measure up to Midoryia.”
“Men. Always measuring their… Hey, wait. Where’s Midoriya? Deku?” Ochako yelped as her head
swung back and forward. “Where are you?”

Izuku was in one of the tunnels, near the exit of the stadium. He rested his back against one of the
walls. In front of him resting on another wall was Todoroki. Neither of them said anything for a little
while. Izuku was nervous. Todoroki seemed to have a sharp and firm gaze locked on him. The
green-haired student cleared his throat. No time like the present to clear the air.
“You wanted to talk? About what…?”

Endeavor stomped down the stairs. To have Todoroki nearly lose...due to his refusal to use his left
side. It had come up near the end, or he believed it did. It had been too hazy to tell, and far too quick. The fact that a quirkless child had nearly managed to overcome his son didn’t sit well with him either. If anything it just built a fury in his chest that threatened to break loose at any moment.

“Hey!” Endeavor paused, and turned. There he was. All Might stood before the No.2 Hero with a wide grin. “It’s been a while. Wanna grab some tea? Endeavor?”

“All Might…”
“Um. You wanted to talk? The dining hall will be packed if we don’t hurry. Um…” Izuku swallowed. Todoroki still hadn’t said anything to him. He was nothing like Kacchan. Izuku found this to be a much colder sort of intimidation. He went to say something but was stopped. This time it seemed Todoroki was actually ready to talk.

“You overpowered me. So much so that I broke my own pledge.” Todoroki sighed. Izuku realized something had been off. It would have been to the advantage of Todoroki to use his left side, but he hadn’t. What was that about? “Iida, Kaminari, Yaoyorozu, Tokoyami, Uraraka…none of them felt it. In that last instant, I was the only one feeling that pressure. I experienced All Might’s true power up close. Remember?” Todoroki stated, bluntly. Both students recalled the USJ incident, and the way that the Noumu had been dispatched. Izuku’s voice was shaky as his heart pounded inside his chest. This wasn’t good…

“So…what’re you saying?”

“I felt the same pressure coming from you.” The student held one hand in his face, as Izuku tensed even more. Not good, not good! He knew?! “So…are you All Might’s illegitimate child or something?” The sentence hung in the air for a moment, as Izuku paused. He was taken off guard.

“I see…that’s what he thinks!” His hands started to swing up and down, as he shook his head left to right, as he spluttered. “Nah. I, well…I mean I’m denying that, but…obviously if I really were his kid, I’d try to deny it, so I realize I don’t sound very convincing here…but no, that’s not it…” His muttering was out in full force, yet again. Endearing! “So…let me ask you, then…why would you think that I…”

“ ‘No, that’s not it.’ Interesting way to to phrase it. There’s definitely something you’re hiding. I’m sure of it. You know, my father is Endeavor.”

“ ‘The second greatest hero all of time. So, if you’re somehow connected to the man above him, well. All the more reason for me to crush you.’

“It’s been soooooo long! Last time we talked was ten years ago, right?! I spotted you, and figured I should say hello!” All Might beamed out at his fellow hero. Endeavor didn’t seem all that impressed as he turned away. His voice had a deep and heavy timbre, laced with pure derision and spite.

“Oh yeah? If that’s the case, then get out of my sight. To think I’d have tea with you. Ridiculous. I need to take a leak, so get lost!” Endeavor growled. He tried to step down the stairs and away from this pointless conversation. However the man found his path blocked by All Might leaping in front of him his arms spread wide.

“Why such a party pooper?!” All Might bellowed, as Endeavor hissed in frustration. His fingers curled into tight fists, but he simply glared at All Might. The Number 1 looked back. “Your son, little Shoto. He pulled off an impressive victory, all without using his left side.”

“Do you have a point…?”

“Actually, I want to ask you for some tips about training the next generation.”

“...? You think I’d tell you anything? Always with that damn happy go lucky attitude. Pisses me off.” Endeavor grunted. He walked past All Might making sure to smack his shoulder into the man. “Sorry then…”

“Know this much. I’ll mold him into a hero who surpasses you. It’s the only reason…I created that child.” Endeavor growled, his voice taking on an ever darker tone. All Might found himself shaking and not quite sure if he understood what he had just heard.

“Huh?”
“Sure. He’s a rebellious little brat now. But he’ll surpass you. I’ll make him surpass you!” Endeavor hissed, his eye tensing up as he stormed away…

“My father… He’s a powerful bastard, only concerned with becoming stronger. Sure, he’s gone all out to make a name for himself as a hero. However, he’s always seen that living legend, All Might...as a roadblock, and an eyesore. He had no chance of beating All Might on his own. So another plan was made.”

“What’s this about, Todoroki? Why are you telling me this…?” Izuku swallowed, slowly growing more unnerved.

“Quirk marriages. You’ve heard of them, yes?”

“…!” Izuku twitched. Was Todoroki suggesting that the number two hero…?

“They started becoming a problem in the second or third generation after quirks appeared. Strong individuals would choose a partner and force them into marriage, for the sole purpose of passing on a strengthened version of their own quirk.” While Todoroki rattled on, growing more and more worked up, the dining hall was in full force. Vanfell was off in one corner, scarfing down a ton of food. Him and Kaminari had had a brief chat. The electric student had been shocked at the training Vanfell had done to counter him. Turned out that his muscles hadn’t cramped like everyone else’s when the shock came out, letting him get a hold of the headband. But then he drifted away over to Mineta. Who had spied something quite interesting...cheerleaders. A plan started to be birthed in his mind. “Those earlier generations were lacking in ethics. With his wealth and fame, my father made my mother’s family agree to the marriage. All to get his hands on her quirk. Raising me as a hero who could exceed All Might, just to fulfill his own ambitions. I hate it! Being no more than a tool for that human garbage.” Todoroki lifted a shaky hand to his face. His body seemed to be hunching over as his voice started to take on a hiss. “As I remember it, mom was always crying. “I can’t stand to see that left side of yours…” She said. Before throwing boiling water in my face.”

“…” Izuku shuddered. That mark on his face...was a burn mark!?

“In short not using my left side in our fight was my form of revenge on him. Never using my rotten father’s quirk. No. By reaching the top without using it...he’ll be denied everything.” Bakugo tensed. He had been resting on a wall. He had heard everything… Izuku swallowed, retreating into his thoughts.

“We live in totally different worlds. It’s chilling. We’re both aiming for the top, but we’re still so different.”

“Your connection with All Might...keep it to yourself if you want. Either way, I’ll rise above you with just my right side. Sorry for the waste of time.”

“With a backstory like that, he’d be the protagonist if this were a comic book. How do I respond to that?” Todoroki started to shuffle away as Izuku stepped forward.

“I’ve always had help. No matter the situation...I…” Izuku paused as he held his hand and flashed back to all his memories. “I’ve only come this far because other people helped me. All Might...I want to be like him. To do that, I have to be the strong. It might sound like a lame motivation, compared to yours. But I’m not going to lose. All those who have helped me...that’s how I’ll replay them.” Izuku’s face straightened as he clenched his fist. “Let me return your declaration of my war with my own.”

“I’M GONNA BEAT YOU!”
And so it was back to the tournament. The lunch break was over. Most of the students had made good use of it. Vanfell was refreshed as he moved back to the tournament grounds. His face was set, as his thumbs rubbed the boxing tape. He wasn’t sure what was coming up next, but he’d match it head on. He’d made it to the top 16. All that mattered now was that he made it to the #1 spot. He nodded, grinned, and ran a hand through his hair. Show time!

“BEFORE WE GET TO THE FINAL EVENT, I’VE GOT GOOD NEWS FOR ALL THOSE OUT THE RUNNING! THIS IS STILL A SPORTS FESTIVAL, SO WE’VE PREPARED A RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS! WE’VE EVEN SHIPPED IN CHEERLEADERS FROM AMERICA TO GET YOU PUMPED UP…” And it was true. There was a division of them jumping up and down, waving pom poms, generally having a good time. But Mic paused and coughed. “HMM? WHAT’S THIS?”

“CLASS A? WHY?!” Mic howled. The girls from 1-A were all lined up as cheerleaders. Their faces had set into something akin to despair as they realized what was happening. They were in front of the crowd, all dressed up in the revealing outfits. Vanfell coughed a bit as he had to rub his face. He wasn’t sure if they were meant to be in these outfits but he didn’t mind… Yaoyorozu was the first out of the group to learn her cool as she raised an arm into the air and howled out.

“MINETA! KAMINARI!! YOU TRICKED US?!” After all, she remembered the conversation at lunch. The two boys had told her and Jirou that they all the girls had to be part of the cheer squad. As Class Rep there was no way that she could not do so. It would have let the class down...but now?!

Her body hunched over into a sad slump as she groaned. “How’d I let myself get fooled by Mineta’s stupid prank…” Ochako patted her on the back as Jirou looked away. Her face was flushed red as she gritted her teeth.

“Those idiots…”

“Still time before the main event. No sense in sitting around...why not just go with it?! Could be fun!!”

“You’re enjoying this, Toru…” Tsuyu nodded. Vanfell jogged over and glanced at Yaoyorozu.

“Get me some of that get up. I figure I oughta do my bit, and ‘elp out and all.” He grinned. The girl sighed, tilted her head...and then laughed a bit. She couldn’t help it. In a few moments, Vanfell jogged back out onto the field in the same get up at the girls. Mineta found himself repulsed. His entire plan had been scuppered by the male eyesore taking front and centre. Popstep and Koichi in the stands couldn’t hold back their laughter, as Charity and Gerald groaned. The green haired woman in the stands also snorted, as Vanfell waved the pom-poms back and forth. The crowd had to give him credit where credit was due...he knew what he was doing!

“HOPE EVERYONE ENJOYS THIS LITTLE RECREATIONAL COMPETITION! ONCE IT’S OVER, WE’RE ONTO THE FINAL EVENT! BETWEEN THE 16 MEMBERS OF THE FOUR WINNING TEAMS...WE’LL HAVE A FORMAL TOURNAMENT!! A SERIES OF ONE ON ONE BATTLES!!” Mic screamed out. Vanfell tensed, as did Izuku. Head on fights...eh. Vanfell grinned. His time to shine.

“A tournament, huh? So we’ll be up in that ring I see on tv every year!” Kirishima grinned. He was clearly excited about the tournament. His quirk would lend itself to this sort of thing. Mina tilted her head.
“Was it a tournament last year too?”
“The format’s always different, but most years involve some kind of head-to-head competition.”
“The matchups will be decided by drawing lots. Once that’s all settled we’ll move on to the festivities and then the tournament itself! It’s up to each of you 16 finalists whether or not you participate in the fun. I expect some of you would rather a breather and save your strength. Now, let’s start with the first place team…”

“Um...excuse me. I’d like to drop out.” Ojiro had lifted his arm. The group shifted awkwardly. Vanfell scratched at his head. There was a hint of guilt in his stomach. He had a feeling he knew what this was about…

“Ojiro! Why?!”
“This is your chance to get noticed by the pros!!”
“The cavalry battle...I have no memories of anything that happened up until the tail end. It’s probably his quirk that did it.” Ojiro gestured at Shinsou. Izuku looked at him. He was confused though. Wasn’t Vanfell also with Shinsou? He didn’t seem to be having any problems… “I know this is a great opportunity. And I know how stupid it must seem to throw it away…”

“Ojiro…” Izuku started as he went to try and convince him otherwise.

“But this final tournament. Everyone else here made it on their own strength. Yet, I’m standing here, and I don’t even know how or why. I just can’t take it.”
“You’re thinking about it too hard! Just show what you’re made of in the tournament!”
“By that logic, I shouldn’t really be here either!!”
“Cmon, Ojiro. Figure it can’t be that big of a deal…” Tooru, Mina, and Vanfell had all been quick to zip forward with cues trying to convince Ojiro to stay.
“No...I’m talking about my pride here...I don’t think it’s right. And why the heck are you guys dressed like that anyway? Vanfell to?” Ojiro groaned, holding his head in his hands. Vanfell grunted as he knew what was coming next. The short tubby kid from 1-B stepped forward, Nirengeki Shoda.

“I can’t remember anything either. I wanna withdraw too! This is a contest of skill. To let someone who didn’t do anything to advance, doesn’t it defeat the whole point of the sports festival? Isn’t it even against the rules?”
“These guys!! So manly!!”
“WE HAVE A STRANGE TURN OF EVENTS…” Even when calm, Present Mic was still extremely loud. Aizawa rustled slightly and shook his head.
“What will the coordinator, Midnight decide?” The woman in question stood still. Her eyes glared down at the students. Her hand tilted her whip as she gave out a soft sadistic sigh.
“How naive and green~” Then her whip snapped in front of her as she cackled with glee. “I like it! Shoda and Ojiro have officially withdrawn!”

“I’ll win it for you, Ojiro.” Vanfell gritted his teeth as he patted the student on the shoulder. His get up somewhat lessened the moment...but he did feel bad. Ojiro had been a stepping stone...but he had no other choice.

“Replacing those two members will be members of team Kendo, which took fifth…”
“If it’s gonna be like that, shouldn’t it be them instead? I mean we were immobilized practically the whole time.” Kendou interrupted Midnight. “But they were giving it their all to keep what they had until the very end. Team TetsuTetsu, I mean.” The metal student looked at her in shock, as did Ibara.
“Don’t worry. We’re not colluding or anything. This just feels right.”
“Y...YOU GUYS!!” Tetsu jowled in teary joy and respect. His team quickly figured out who would be facing who, and that was that.

“So be it. TetsuTetsu and Shiozaki bring up back up to 16 competitors!! And here are the matchups!” Midnight flayed her whip to point at the screen.
"If I win my first match...my second’s against Todoroki..." Izuku mused. But he didn’t get too far ahead of himself. Had to win his first match. "Shinsou. That’s gotta be..."

"Izuku Midoriya. That’s you, yeah?" The student had come from behind, taking Izuku by surprise. He had a sharp look on his face. He went to reply, but he felt fur in his mouth. Ojiro had blocked it with his tail.

"Mmf..."

"Midoriya!! That guy. Don’t answer him." Shinsou just smirked and shuffled away. Todoroki looked up at the list...it seemed he’d be facing Izuku sooner than expected. He hoped he brought his best...but he’d still take him down.

"Uraraka?" Bakugou grunted as he looked at the list. He figured once he won that fight he’d be fighting either Kirishima or Tetsu. The girl yelped as she stood behind him. This was not a good match up for her! Mei and Iida were having a conversation. Vanfell grunted as he moved off to change his clothes. He was stopped by a hand resting on his shoulder. Yaoyorozu had a serious look on her face, as she went to talk to him. His hand ripped hers away, as he shook her head.

"Ain’t here to chat. Here to knock you on yer ass, and win. Go focus. You’ll need to.” His voice had shifted cold. No time for distractions. Needed to get focused. Just because it was her didn’t mean anything... The festivities went ahead. Somy silly games for the class to enjoy, and it did mean the pro heroes were still watching. Sure it wouldn’t curry you as much favour as the actual tournament would but no one was going to complain about a second chance. Those in the tournament took different routes. Some students tried to psych themselves up. Izuku and Vanfell both went down this route, hiding deep within their own thoughts. Others tried to relax. Ochako and Yaoyorozu did their cheerleading...but Yaoyorozu was concerned. Vanfell would be a difficult fight and the fact that their friendship was strained meant he’d be going all out. She swallowed. No matter. With careful planning and execution he would be easy enough to deal with. She knew how he fought, and the habits he had...

“Ok. That’s about it.”

"THANKS CEMENTOSS! HEY GUYS. ARE YOU READY?!" Mic screamed, bringing the crowd back to hype. Cementoss had made an arena for the games. There was a large pipe full of cement that he had used for the purpose. He made a seat for himself, and lifted himself up into it, as Mic screamed out again. "YOU’VE BEEN THROUGH HELL TO GET HERE!! BUT NOW IT’S TIME FOR THE ONE ON ONE TOURNAMENT!!" Izuku could hear Present Mic all the way from the tunnels. His heart was pounding as he tried to focus and prepare himself for this fight. It was going to be a tough one, but he could pull this off. ‘YOU’VE ONLY GOT YOURSELF TO RELY ON!! EVEN IF YOU’RE NOT A HERO, THIS SAYING HOLDS TRUE!! YOU KNOW
“Hey” All Might’s voice rang out. He was stood in the tunnel with Izuku as he stuck one thumb up. “It took a while, but it seems you’re finally getting the hang of using One for All.”
“All Might...not really. I’m...still uneasy about it. Like with that microwave visualization thing...I’m just trying to recall when I launched it at that villain, but...it still feels dangerous, as if I could fall apart if I lose focus for a second. And well, it’s like you saw.” All Might coughed, hoping the boy was done. He wasn’t. “Given the level my body’s at, even when I control it, it only gives a small increase in power.” All Might nodded slowly.

“Hmm. Ok. Remember when I talked about giving it a percent between zero, and a hundred? As you stand now, your body is capable of around… 5 percent.”

“Five!! When you put it like that, I just got lucky with everything.” Izuku replied. His face was downtrodden, and mopey. It shifted to one of surprise pain as All Might smacked the student on the head, while karate chopping him in the throat.

“That’s because you’re always trying your hardest, my dear prince of nonsense! You’ll never be a hero looking so mopey!! Now, listen. Especially when you’re feeling worried or scared…” All Might bulged into his muscle form as he jabbed a thumb up at Izuku and gave his trademark smile. “That’s when you gotta smile!! You’ve come this far, so show some bravado, even if it’s fake! Don’t forget, I’m expecting big things from you!” Izuku nodded, gritted his teeth, and did his best to fix a smile on his face. And so, he stepped out. Once more unto the breach.

“I give up,” huh?” Shinsou drawled, as he watched Izuku. The green haired student jolted. Shinsou knew he couldn't be heard from down here. His gaze remained focused on Izuku. “Get it, Izuku Midoriya? This battle is going to test your strength of will. If you’ve got any kind of vision for your future, there’s no sense in worrying about how you got there.”

“I give up,” huh?” Shinso drawled, as he watched Izuku. The green haired student jolted. Shinso knew he couldn't be heard from down here. His gaze remained focused on Izuku. “Get it, Izuku Midoriya? This battle is going to test your strength of will. If you’ve got any kind of vision for your future, there’s no sense in worrying about how you got there.”

“NOW LET’S GET THIS THING, STARTED!!” Mic howled out in excitement. He was like a child in a candy story.

“Like that monkey, babbling about his stupid pride.” Shinso hissed. Izuku didn’t know why this bothered him so much. He knew that he shouldn’t let this sort of thing get to him. If he replied, it was over right? So he shook his head and tried to ignore it.

“READYYYYYYYYY!! START!!”
"What kind of dumbass throws away a chance like this?" Shinsou drawled. Izuku couldn’t handle someone disrespecting a peer of his any further. His body snapped forward dashing into action, as he forgot the important rule.

"WHAT’D YOU SAY?!" And in an instant, the student froze. It was as if he could no longer control his body as he stood, rooted in place. Shinsou exhaled.

“It’s my win.”

“Dammit, Midoriya! I warned you!!” Ojiro yelped from the stands, as Vanfell ran a hand through his hair. Them’s the runs, he supposed. All Might watched in confusion from the tunnel, as Present Mic tilted his head in confusion.

“YO, YO, WHAT’S THE MATTER? BATTLE JUST STARTED, SO SHOW US SOME SPIRIT. IT SEEMS MERE SECONDS INTO THE MATCH, MIDORIYA IS FROZEN IN PLACE?! LOOKING PERPLEXED, HE’S NOT EVEN TWITCHING?! COULD THIS BE SHINSO’S QUIRK?!”

“Deku…?!" Ochako couldn’t believe what she was seeing. All Might was worried as well. Shinsou, on the other hand seemed to be stood dead still with a slight smirk creasing the corner of his lips.

“WE WERE BARELY AWARE THIS GUY EVEN EXISTED BUT NOW...HE SURE IS ONE TO KEEP AN EYE ON!” Mic bawled out. Aizawa shuffled in his seat as he rubbed his face. In his bandaged hands were two pieces of paper.

“Like I said, the entrance exam was completely irrational.”

“Hmm? What’s that?”

“Here are the simple specs on these two. I’ve got them here here because we knew this would be a quirk versus quirk battle. Shinso failed the practical part of the exam, so he couldn’t get into the hero course. He got into general studies, and that’s all he could have hoped for. His quirk is extraordinarily powerful, but…”

“You counting Vanfell out or something!? He got into the hero course without even having a quirk to work with!” Present Mic yapped back, making sure that his mic was off. Professionalism was a trait he did somehow carry.

“Vanfell is a complete outlier. Compared to the rest of his class, he lacks versatility. His situation is not applicable to the majority of individuals striving to become a hero. Given the format of the practical exam...Shinsou’s quirk couldn’t help him out.” The two continued this private conversation, as the battle continued on. Or, whatever this “battle” had become.

“You. Must be nice to have everything handed to you, Izuku Midoriya. Now turn around, and leave the ring.” His voice was cold and curt. There was little Izuku could do. He gave a blank stare before turning around on his heel. The student started to shuffle away from Shinsou, heading out of the ring.

“WHOA! MIDORIYA’S FOLLOWING ORDERS LIKE A GOOD LITTLE BOY!!” Mic couldn’t believe it! No way this was happening!?!

“From the results of the strength tests, Midoriya really ought not to be in the hero course. However, Shinsou still has worse stats in any situation where he can’t use his quirk. In any ordinary battle, Midoriya would come out on top. But, now that he’s brain washed, it’s a different story. This’ll be over quick.” From his position in the tunnels, there was a faint string of panicked no’s rolling out of All Might’s mouth. Midoriya had to stop himself, no way he could go out like this. The #1 hero wiped sweat from his brow as he felt his heart sinking. Izuku was struggling the worst of all. His mind was his own, but his body was trapped.

“My body. It won’t listen. My head is so fuzzy...no. Damn! Stop!” Despite his pleading thoughts, his
body continued to move further and further, closer and closer to the line. He felt sick as he recalled what Ojiro had told him.

“A mind-control quirk? How can I hope to win?”
“My loss might be your gain. My memories cut out from the instant I replied to him. That’s the trick, I think.” Izuku gulped and shuddered.

“So it’s all over if I slip up, and say a word to him…”
“Not quite. Doesn’t seem all that powerful. Remember how I said I didn’t remember anything up till when Kaminari shocked us, and the end? I got zapped, and bumped into Tetsutetsu. That’s when I snapped free. I was suddenly aware of what was going on… weird that Vanfell didn’t seem to have to deal with any of it.” Ojiro shrugged. This fact confused Izuku for a moment. Shinsou hadn’t mind-controlled Vanfell? He wasn’t sure why the student wouldn’t use his quirk on his peer… but he didn’t have time to worry about it.

“So, it broke via physical contact.”
“Seems that way. Then again, I don’t know how strong the contact needs to be. Plus, in a one on one match, you can’t expect any outside help. Anyway, that’s all I can tell you.” Ojiro nodded and lifted himself from his seat.

“No, that’s awesome! Thanks.” Izuku yelped. He noticed Ojiro getting quiet, and more serious. The tail student stepped forward and sighed.

“Forgive me if I’m out of line, but… win this one for me!”

But it seemed that the chance of victory was dwindling rapidly for Izuku. There wasn’t much he could do, it seemed. His thoughts screamed at him as his shoe crunched ever close to that line, to his dreams fading, to his failure.

“Not like this! Over in a flash…everyone! Everyone’s done so much for me! I can’t lose here.” One minute Izuku was able to see All Might desperately wagging and jabbing a finger in the opposite direction. He was trying his best. Then something odd happened. Izuku seemed to drift away from the battle entirely. In front of him in the tunnel, was a mixture of faces and darkness. They seemed to shift and swirl. Izuku felt the hairs on his neck stand up as if someone was stood behind him. A gentle female voice would flutter into his ears.

“Don’t let Toshinori down…~” Izuku felt some sort of weird energy washing over him. The collective experiences of all those who came before him flickered, and then sputtered out of his head.

“What is this?!”

“I can mov-” Izuku’s finger twitched. Physical contact. Someone had given him a chance, and he had to grab it! Run with it! Save his dream, and make All Might proud!
“This quirk of mine is like a dream. Right. You lose.” But Shinsou tensed. Something was wrong. Izuku had stopped… and his finger was glowing. Before his eyes, he watched as an immense power exploded from his fingers. His hair was blown back, as he threw up an arm to protect himself from the dust cloud Izuku had produced. All Might tensed, not entirely sure what had just happened… but finding himself pleased. Izuku coughed, spluttered, and just about stopped himself from throwing up his lunch. Pain swam through his fingers...

“WHAT’S THIS?” Mic couldn’t believe his eyes as he threw himself back into high-pitched, high
tempo, and HIGH VOLUME, commentary. “MIDORIYA! HE STOPPED?!?” Indeed, Izuku had stopped. He glared over his shoulder at Shinsou. His finger twitched… as Aizawa stiffened in his seat. The only logical course of action he could think of, was that Izuku had blown it out to shake off the brain-washing.

“Wow, to go that far!?”
“Damn! Izuku got guts, I gotta give the bloody lad that!”

“How? You shouldn’t have control. What did you do?” Shinsou hissed. It was an obvious ploy that Izuku refused to fall for. His hand covered his mouth, as he shook his head.

“The finger was all me. But something, that woman, woke me up! What was that? Who were those people in my head? In that one moment, my head was clear!” Izuku remembered how All Might had explained One for All, akin to the Olympic torch. “Were those people...is this a sign that I’m linked by this power to the past? Did they save me?! Is that even possible?! Just thinking about it won’t give me answers. Save that! What I need to think about now…” Shinsou wasn’t taking it well. His face had curled itself into a bitter scowl, as his own thoughts started to go toxic.

“He’s not answering me. So he figured it out? No, he probably knew from the start. Bet that damn monkey let him in on it. Just need to get him to open his mouth again.” “Nothing to say for yourself?” Shinsou grunted. Izuku still didn’t reply as he watched him closely. “Bit jealous. Just moving that finger? You must be the real deal!”

“That’s how I used to think too…” Izuku lurched forward as he glared at Shinsou.

“Thanks to my quirks nature, I couldn’t enter the golden gates. But you don’t get that, you’re naturally blessed.” Shinsou took a step forward. A hint of anguish was sliding into his voice.

“I do get it. But right...you’re right. I am blessed.”

“YOU PEOPLE... BORN WITH YOUR AWESOME QUIRKS! GETTING TO FOLLOW ALL YOUR DREAMS!” Shinsou was screaming now, his emotions running out of control. Life wasn’t fair, not in the damndest slightest.

“I’m blessed. By all the people in my life!” Izuku reached Shinsou. One arm jabbed into the stomach of the general studies student. The other shot up and clasped him by the shoulder. “And that’s exactly why…” There was a sickening crack as Shinsou threw a brutal punch across Izuku’s face. But Vanfell tensed in the stands. He knew that punch hadn’t done much. Shinsou wasn’t that fit... Izuku could handle that.

“JUST SPEAK ALREADY!” But Izuku held firm. He knew what he had to do here.

“That’s why I’m...” He started to push Shinsou toward the ring, dust kicking up. The general studies student knew this was almost the end of the line.

“Trying to push me out?! Nah, I’ll give you the damn honor instead!” He howled. He managed to make Izuku stumble, before smashing him in the face. His other hand shot out to choke Izuku... but it was grabbed. His shoulder was regrabbed, as Bakugou watched in the stands. No way...

“RAHHHHH!” Izuku howled as he lifted Shinsou up into a throw. “I’M NOT GONNA LOSE!!” With a meaty thud, Shinsou was slammed down on his back... and out of the ring. Midnight threw her arm out, as Izuku stood there in mild shock and disbelief.

“Shinsou is out of the ring! Midoriya moves on to the second round!!” These words rang out... a taunt to Shinsou. He laid on his back, gazing up at the sky. Water started to well around his eyes. All he could remember. All he heard...

“You can brainwash people?! Cool. Not seen a quirk like that before.”
“Super jealous!”
“You could, like, do all sorts of trouble with that.”
“And without getting your hands dirty. Just don’t use it on us, kay!”
“Ha.. ha. Everyone… says that.” He supposed he’d also expect bad things from someone with his quirk. They’d end up a criminal, a villain. After all, he was used to that. Everyone implied that about him. Just how the world worked…

“He also got you with that shoulder toss, right, Bakugou?” Kaminari teased as he slapped him on the arm.
“Shaddup, dunce face.” Kaminari’s face became a rather strange look of despair as Bakugou growled. That jerk Izuku had been using a baiting tactic… Aizawa watched from his position in the booth.
“Concentrating his quirk in just the finger. Like in the strength test… and using the throw from the battle training. He’s learnt from those experiences. Or rather, they forced him to adapt.”
“GOODNESS GRACIOUS! WE’RE OFF TO AN UNEVENTFUL START! WELL, PUT YOUR HANDS TOGETHER FOR OUR FIERCE COMPETITORS!” The crowd clapped away, while Izuku and Shinsou stewed on their thoughts. Izuku lifted his bruised face slightly and rubbed it.
“Shinsou. Why do you want to be a hero?”
“...We don’t get to choose what we naturally admire.” He grunted, turning his head away and walking away. Izuku noted that these feelings were akin to how he had felt prior to receiving One for All. What was he supposed to say to that? There wasn’t anything he could say. He supposed the existence of Vanfell only served to make Shinso feel worse.
“You were awesome out there, Shinsou!”
“Nearly had him, nearly got him!”
“You had us on the edge of our seats!”
“You’re the shining star of us general studies guys!”
“Ya did just as good as that guy who got third in the obstacle course!”
“Ah, you fecking nearly had ‘im Shinsou, nearly had ‘im.”

Shinsou looked at everyone cheering him. It seemed he had received support even from within the hero course. He gritted his teeth. Elsewhere, the pros were having a chat about the boy. Many of them seemed to agree with the thought that Aizawa had held earlier.

“That quirk would great against villains. Wish I had it.”
“The hell is U.A. doing? This kid is in general studies, while some quirkless kid is in the hero course? What a load of phooey…”
“Well, I suppose they can only admit so many. That is just how it is.”
“There’s only so much you can do, with such a large gap in the battle experiences.” There was a minor scuffle between Charity and the pro who had dissed on Vanfell. It was broken when the masked green haired woman made a point about making sure not to judge Vanfell before his first fight.

“Ya hear that! Shinsou?”
“You’re awesome!!”

“... They’ll consider transfers to the hero course, depending on the results here. Remember that.”
Shinsou grunted to Izuku. “Maybe I failed this time, but I won’t give up. I’ll make them see I’ve got what it takes to make the hero course, and I’ll become a greater hero than all of you.”
“Right!” Izuku replied, because stiffening up. He had been had! But why? The fight was over…
“People who respond to me tend to stiffen like that. It’d be easy to ruin it all for you now. So just promise me, you won’t lose in a sorry way out there.”
“Right…”

Recovery Girl placed her lips on the broken fingers of Izuku. They would start to heal within time. She coiled bandages around them. It meant Izuku would have full access to them for the next fight. He just had to be careful, and pace himself. Breaking himself piece by piece would give him a solid way forward. All Might stood in the room, leaning against a table as he watched Izuku. There was a pang of pain in his chest as he thought about all the pain Izuku would have to go through to reach the top.

“I couldn’t smile at all.” Izuku sighed as he looked up to his mentor. All Might rubbed the back of his neck.

“Well. It must have been a tough fight for you, what with everything Shinsou said.”

“But that doesn’t mean it’s okay for me to lose. When you’re aiming for the top, that’s just… how it is, right?” Recovery Girl tutted as she slapped All Might in the back and shook her head.

“This poor child. You’re always pushing him with such strange methods.”

“It’s all very neccessar- YOWCH!” Izuku laughed softly to himself before remembering something important.

“Oh. Right. All Might, uh… I had a vision.”

“Hmm?”

“There were eight… or nine of them. Not sure exactly how many. When my mind was lulled from the brainwashing, this vision appeared and snapped me out of it. In that moment, I was able to just barely move a fingertip. One of them had your hairstyle, and one of them mentioned you by name. Could it have been the souls, of those who’ve inherited One for All?” There was a pregnant pause.

“All Might then shuddered, confused.

“What the? Sounds scary.”

“What!? I was sure you’d know!!” Izuku spluttered, not enjoying the answer he was given.

“Yeah, I saw them once. When I was young. It’s a clear sign that you’re getting used to One for All. They’re the traces of the quirk’s past bears.” All Might folded his arms as he rubbed one of them.

“But. Whatever they might be, they can’t directly interfere or influence you. Nor can you affect them. In other words, that vision wasn’t what undid the brainwashing. Rather, your own strong will allowed you to see those faces. Far as Shinsou’s brainwashing, you just overcame it! For an instant! You managed to move that fingertip all on your own!” Izuku sat there, with another pregnant pause.

“He rubbed his face, shaking his head.

“Yeah… I’m not really convinced.” All Might scowled and jabbed a finger at him.

“Well, don’t dwell on it! Shouldn’t you be worrying about your next opponent?!”

“Right! Anyway, thank you both!” Izuku yelped as he zoomed out of the room. Recovery Girl shook her head and turned to look at All Might.

“So you were there too.”

“That’s not a bad thing…”

Elsewhere in the hallways there was another encounter about to enfold. Todoroki was en-route to his first fight. His opponent was Sero. Though he wasn’t cocky he felt that this fight would be a win for him. The sheer gap in power, even without using that side, was immense. His feet padded against the floor, before he came to a halt and curled his lip into a sneer.

“Out of my way.” He hissed, at a muscular figure resting against a wall. Endeavor stood there, his arms folded. Flame wreathed his form as he shook his head.
“You disgrace me, Shouto. It would have been simple for you crush the obstacle course and the cavalry battle had you used your left side. Instead, you allowed a quirkless runt to get one over on you.” Todoroki ignored him as he brushed past his father. “Grow up. Stop rebelling like some petulant child. Remember, your duty is to surpass All Might.” Todoroki gritted his teeth. “Understand? You are different than your brothers. You’re my greatest creation!” Todoroki paused. This remark had been a step too far. “Is that all you have to say to me?” He turned his head to look over his shoulder at the man he hated. “I’ll win this with mom’s power alone. I’ll never use your power in battle.” His face swung forward again as he started to stomp off. Endeavor just snorted. “That may suffice while you’re a school kid. But you’ll reach your limit soon enough.”

Izuku had returned back to the spectator stands. He had hoped that he would be able to see Todoroki fight, and it looked like he had made it just in time. He waved at Ochako who told him what a good job he’d done, and Iida welcomed him by patting a saved seat. Izuku noticed that Vanfell was seemingly more agitated than usual, and that Yaoyorozu also seemed more intense than usual.

THE WAIT IS OVER!! MOVING ON, HERE COME OUR NEXT COMPETITORS. THE CREAM OF THE CROP!! YET THIS GUY IS SOMEHOW STILL AS PLAIN AS THEY COME! HANTA SERO OF THE HERO COURSE!! The tape quirk user winced. He was a little hurt by the remark from his english teacher but he supposed he wasn’t wrong. VERSUS...THE BEST OF THE BEST! STRONGEST OF THE STRONG! SHOUTO TODOROKI, ALSO OF THE HERO COURSE!!” Todoroki was focused. His visage was grim and there was little in the way of discernible emotion beyond that of determination.

“START!”

“Y’know, I don’t really feel much like winning.” Sero yawned. He stretched and scratched his head. His arms then shot forward. Each shot a strand of sticky tape, that wrapped around Todoroki. One took his legs, the other his upper torso. It was an attempt to restrain his movement, while setting him up for the next move. “But I don’t much feel like losing either!!” Sato barked. He cut the tape loose for the upper half of the body, before tugging tightly on the lower half. Todoroki started to skid to the side as Sero grinned.

“HE’S TRYING TO PUSH HIM OUT WITH A SURPRISE ATTACK! IT’S PROBABLY THE BEST STRATEGY FOR HIM! SERO’S GOING ALL OUT!” Mic’s commentary was just as vivid as ever. Todoroki glared at Sero. There was a sharp hiss as he exhaled.

“Sorry ‘bout this.” There was a singular moment. And then a wall of ice so large that it went above and beyond the roof of the stadium exploded into existence. Aizawa and Present Mic couldn’t believe their eyes. There was so much ice that it had nearly clipped Izuku and Iida in their seats. Todoroki broke free of the tape, as he steadied himself. Sero, the poor student, found himself trapped in the whole display. He wheezed a little bit as his body was unable to move.

“That’s a bit overkill, no?” He wheezed. Midnight wasn’t even exempt from this situation. Half of her body was frozen much to her clear agitation.

“...Sero, can you move?” She asked. The student had an incredulous look painted across his semi-frozen face.

“You serious? Ow, ow, ow...”

“Sero is immobilized!” The crowd felt bad for the poor student. It was clear that he had never really had a chance. There were several people telling him it was a good try, and it wasn’t. Sero had done the best he could have done in the situation he had found himself in.

“Sorry. I overdid it.” Todoroki sighed as he stepped up to his classmate. Some heat coiled around his left head as he looked away from Sero. “I was just annoyed.” Izuku watched from the stands.
Lost amid the cheers that arose from the audience I saw Todoroki defrost his own frozen self with his left hand. And to me, something about him seemed really sad.

“I

“SHOUTO TODOROKI MOVES ON TO THE SECOND ROUND!!”
There was a delay before the next time. The arena had to be thawed out as a result of the sheer display of force that Todoroki had used. Endeavor had found himself forced in assisting, much to his chagrin. Eventually, it was cleared. The next match was due to start. Present Mic cleared his throat, leaping right back into the commentary with usual vigor and vim.

“THE ARENA IS THAWED OUT! TIME FOR THE NEXT MATCH. CLASS B’S ASSASSIN, EVERYTHING… SOMETHING OR OTHER HAS IT’S THORNS, RIGHT? IT’S IBARA SHIOZAKI! VERSUS, THE SPARKING, KILLING BOY! DENKI KAMINARI!” Vanfell rolled his eyes. Something about this fight told him that Kaminari’s time in the tournament was about to come to a rather idiotic end.

“Pardon my objection, but what exactly did you mean by ‘Assassin?’ I have merely come this far seeking victory…” The thorn haired girl had turned around to complain. Present Mic scrambled and spluttered.

“S-sorry about that!” His trademark shouting was a bit dimmed, as the girl continued to lecture him about the appropriate use of proper names. Kaminari snorted a little.

“Class B has all types, huh.” “She has such pretty round, acorn eyes. But her strength isn’t a joker either. Must I really blast her with a full discharge? A lady so pretty, so cute? I know! I’ll have to ask her out once this all over!! Yes!”

“S-START!”

“Wanna grab a bite to eat when we’re done here?” Ibara turned at this odd remark from Kaminari. She did seem a bit confused. “I’ll be happy to console you, if you want.”

“Hm?”

“Because this match will probably be over in an instant!” Kaminari howled. Vanfell smirked. There it was. His indiscriminate full force forward. If you asked the quirkless student, it was a stupid strategy. Jirou and Vanfell then saw the outcome of the battle. Despite his stress building up due to his approaching battle, he broke into laughter alongside his friend.

“But it’s already over!” Present Mic exclaimed. Kaminari was lifted in a roll of vines, in whey mode. “In case you didn’t hear me, it’s already over!” It seemed Ibara had shielded herself with her own hair. As a result, the discharge had been absorbed by the plants, thus leaving Kaminari defenceless. He had be restrained and hoisted over the line for good measure. Outside the security team of Mt. Lady and Kamui Woods discussed the fight.

“She’s a promising one! Another plant user, just like you!”

“Yes. I wish I could’ve seen her up close. Back to work.”

“Shiozaki advances to the second round!!”

“Yes. I have not wasted the opportunity bestowed upon me…” She clasped her hands together, as if she were praying. Up in the stands there was much discussion about the results of the match.

“Her ability to unleash them is something else. She can build walls, bind enemies… Kaminari’s quirk was no use against her. She countered him well. He could have stood a chance had he maneuvered better, but. He panicked and short circuited after one attack.” Ochako shook her head, wondering
what the murmuring was. She wasn’t too surprised to see it was Izuku. “I thought Kaminari’s quirk would be stronger, but Shiozaki got fourth in the entrance exam. She’s the real deal. Those vine moves are similar to Kamui Wood’s binding attacks. Binding types are always strong. You almost never see someone break out. It’s nigh on impossible to dodge all the vine attacks. Your only counter is to rip them apart with brute strength. Ah, but to prevent that they tend to go for the hands first.” His pen scribbled and scratched. Ochako leaned over slightly and smiled.

“Your match just ended, but you’re already thinking ahead, strategy-wise?”

“Huh?! Nah! I’m just well, you could call this a hobby of mine…” Izuku yelped as he covered his mouth with one hand. He was clearly feeling a tad awkward about the situation. “We finally have a chance to see the quirks of those people outside our own class in action. Oh! Right, I’ve also got everything you’d need to know about Class A in here.” He turned the notebook to a certain page and then showed it to Ochako. “Even your ‘zero gravity’ Uraraka.”

“…” Her face was shocked for a moment, before she gave an awkward smile. “Deku. I thought you were amazing since the day we met but… this sports festival has brought you to a whole other level.” There was a silence between the two of them. Before Vanfell barged over. He was on his way to the prep room, but he paused. Nudging Izuku on the shoulder, he gave a shit-eating grin.

“You got me in that little book, eh? Figure ya don’t. Must be cause I ain’t got a qu-”

“OH yes! Vanfell, you’re in here. I’ve got all sorts of notes on the way you fight, common techniques, your unique brand of quirk analysis, oh and I’ve noticed that you’re boxing with a non do-” Before Izuku could finish, Vanfell grunted and tackled the boy to shut him up. The two sprawled on the floor for a bit, before Vanfell scuttled off. Izuku groaned and was confused beyond belief as to what just happened...

“MOVING ON, WHO’S NEXT IN THE BATTLE FOR THE TOP? THE FIRST ROUND’S JUST ABOUT HALF OVER!! NEXT UP IS TENYA IIDA OF THE HERO COURSE! VERUS… COVERED HEAD-TO-TOE IN SUPPORT ITEMS… MEI HATSUME OF THE SUPPORT COURSE!” No one was quite sure how this match would go. No one was quite sure what half of the gear was either. It also seemed somewhat strange that Iida was equipped with support items?!” Midnight scratched her head.

“Aren’t those forbidden for hero students? You have to put in a special request for those things before hand.” She tutted, wagging her whip at the boy. Iida yelped throwing his hands up making his boxy gestures.

“Oh! I forgot! I didn’t think it’d be a problem, given that Aoyama wears that belt of his and Vanfell has his boxing tape…”

“Right. They applied for exceptions!”

“I’m terribly sorry then! Except, I was touched by my opponent’s sense of sportsmanship. Though she is a member of the support course, she came to me and said ‘If we’re to be seen as equals, then we should fight on equal footing.’” She gave me these items to use! Her earnest spirit, I could never look down on it! That was my thinking!” Iida bellowed out. It was a genuine statement.

“Oh, so naive!!”

“If both parties are fine with it, I think we can allow this… right?” Aizawa muttered. Present Mic shrugged. It was good enough for him. Something about this seemed off to Izuku. Was Hatsume really the sort of person to offer that? The support class girl giggled to herself as she pulled a microphone close to her mouth.

“START!” Instantly Iida snapped forward, surging for Mei. He was extremely fast, just as she hoped. “What incredible speed, Iida!” Mic twitched. Hatsume’s voice was booming across the whole field.
It seemed that she had something boosting her voice. Iida was confused as well.
“A microphone?”

“Your legs feel even lighter than usual, do they not?! That’s what you can expect with my custom leg parts, which keep up with their user’s speed!” Hatsume explained. That explained the function of the odd braces that Iida had on his legs. Just as he got close enough to attack her, two sharp bars shot out from her side. Iida tripped, as Hatsume dodged his attack with ease. “But dodging is no problem for me with my hydraulic attachment bars!” The girl searched the stands for the support company. When she located where she thought they were, her quirk kicked in. Her eyes functioned akin to a telescope as she zoomed in. She could see quite happily that indeed they were eating it up! Iida span on his heel effortlessly. The device on his back seemed to have helped with the movement.
“What’s she doing…?”

“What deft maneuvering, Iida! My auto balancer makes those sorts of movements possible!” Aizawa and Mic groaned. It seemed Hatsume was a natural born saleswoman. Their game of tag with a sales pitch tacked on continued for another ten minutes. At that point, Mei stepped over the line. “Phew. I believe they’ve seen it all now. There’s nothing left to show!”
“Hatsume is out of the ring! Iida moves on to the second round!!”
“YOU DECEIVED MEEEE!”
“Sorry… for using you like that.”
“I really dislike you!”

“Iida is just way too serious. It wasn’t hard for her to get him to play her game… at least she’s honest about her underhanded methods to get what she wants.” Izuku mumbled. He paused as he saw Ochako rise up next to him. She shuffled past him with what seemed to be a cloud over her face.
“Right… I’d better get to the prep room.” The next fight started in the meantime, as Tokoyami and Mina took to the field!

Iida sighed as he pushed the door to the contestant prep room two open. He was feeling somewhat down after his fight with Hatsume, in which he had been exploited. He noticed there was a figure in the prep room.
“Good work out there, Iida.”
“Oh, Urara-is that you?!” He yelped as he looked at her face. It was the grave and serious one from prior with furrowed eyebrows. “Why the furrowed brows?!”
“Brows?” Ochako asked. She shook her head and gave a tight awkward laugh. “Ah. I’m just a little nervous. Guess it must show on my face.” Iida nodded, holding his hand to his face.
“Right. Your opponent is Bakugou.”
“Yeah. I’m really scared. But. But seeing you out there, Iida, I…”
“?” Iida was surprised and curious. Before he could get an answer however the door slammed open.
“Uraraka!” It was Izuku.
“Deku! Wait! Shouldn’t you be watching the other matches?”
“Another two matches already ended. They were kind of short...now Kirishima and some Class B guy are duking it out. Tokoyami just overwhelmed Mina. He’s crazy in a one on one!”
“...But what about Vanfell?”

Earlier.

Vanfell rubbed his knuckles. It was almost time for his fight. Truth be told, the student couldn’t really believe that he had made it this far. There was a bit of a twist in his gut. Shinsou had helped him get here, and now he was gone. He wasn’t just fighting for himself anymore. Exhale, inhale. Focus. Yaoyorozu was the easiest of his hypothetical opponents but that didn’t mean it’d be an easy fight.
Not in the slightest. Much as he hated to admit it, she had a quirk and he didn’t. Inherently that put him at a major disadvantage. He would never say it to anyone, but he knew all his training only equalized the situation. If he was going to have shot at winning, he was going to have to push past every single limit he had. His jaw set itself tight. It was going to be hard. He had to admit that, well. His heart still skipped a beat when he thought of Yaoyorozu, despite everything that had occured between the two of them. He shook his head, pushed the chair out from behind him. Here we go. He headed for the field. As he moved through the hallways, he was stopped.

“Vanfell, hold up!”
“...Jirou?” He turned his head to look at her. He had expected Kaminari to come and stop him, not Jirou. “You need something?”
“Good luck out there. Yaoyorozu is going to be tough... but I think you can do it. Just cut her some slack, kay?”
“...The hell do you mean by that?” His jaw tightened as he rubbed one arm. “Yeah, yeah. I get it. I lost my rag at USJ, her reaction is fair right?”
“...Something like that. Just, go out there and do your best.” Jirou gave him an awkward thumbs up as she turned and jogged away. Vanfell huffed, exhaled, and ran a hand up through his hair. Fucking showtime.

Yaoyorozu was prepared and focused. The recommendation student had also been waiting in one of the prep rooms. Her fight was with Vanfell. The situation didn’t concern her too heavily. This wasn’t to say that she didn’t take him seriously. He had proved himself to be a powerful fight, and not a liability as she had once thought. His combat at USJ, and the incident after, had also proved that he had a fire that blazed inside him. However, he was still quirkless. His costume wasn’t permitted for this tournament either. As a result he would have next to no options when it came to the actual fight. So long as she conducted herself calmly, effectively, and intelligently there was little chance he could win. His temper would prove to be his undoing. It saddened the student that she hadn’t realized just how foul he could get. If she had known before hand, she might have avoided him entirely. Such rage was not healthy to be around. Simply because he was quirkless and just scraping by he felt as if he was owed something by the world. It was rather sad. Alas. She made her way towards the battle ground as well. No one had come to talk to her prior, but this didn’t concern her. Distractions would lead to a loss of focus, which in turn would make her sloppy. All she had to do was execute accordingly, and then she would be moving forward. And with that, the two fighters stepped out onto the field.

“UP NEXT! THE QUIRKLESS UNDERDOG, WHO I’M NOT ASHAMED TO SAY HAS STOLEN MY HEART! VANFELL ZEPHYR OF THE HERO COURSE!” Mic couldn’t help it. The jab to his ribs by Aizawa and something about professionalism wouldn’t even stop him! Vanfell just rolled his eyes. Why the hell was he being called the underdog. If his plan worked, and he was right about a few things, then Yaoyorozu would be the underdog. It was just a matter of execution, nothing more. “VERSUS... A DAZZLING RECOMMENDATION STUDENT AND INTELLIGENT POWERHOUSE! MOMO YAOYOROZU!” Mic couldn’t contain his excitement. This was one of the fights he had been waiting for. And from what he could see up in his booth, it looked it was going to be a real showstopper.

“Don’t cry when you find out this is where your dreams of first place end, Yaoyorozu. You just got unlucky to be against a force of nature.” Vanfell’s posture was stiff. His words were bitter, and his
fists were clenched tight.
“...You would do well to focus on yourself, rather than waste time lobbing poisoned words my way!” Yaoyorozu noted that this was the first time he’d called her by the more formal name. It seemed that their friendship had truly been strained by what had happened at USJ. The stands shuffled. General consensus was leaning towards Yaoyorozu being the winner. It was known she was a recommendation student, intelligent, and with a jackknife of a quirk. The man with the strange scarf, and the dirt covered girl were the odd ones out. They opted to throw their support to Vanfell, on little more than a “gut” feeling. Charity, alongside her retinue, were obviously in full support of Vanfell. 1-A found themselves divided. Those who knew Vanfell better than the others thought he had a decent chance. Others who had only seen him during the battle training were caught on the fact that he had had to be saved by his opponent, and relied far too heavily on his costume.

“STARTTTTT!” And with that, the battle commenced. Vanfell was quick to react. If he was right, then he couldn’t waste much time. His feet skidded as he threw himself forward. His eyes focused on Yaoyorozu. It seemed the girl hadn’t wasted anytime either. In her left hand her usual weapon of choice, a staff, formed. Covering her right arm was a traditional medieval metal shield. That would be difficult to break through, but it didn’t look like she had anything else made. Nor would she have time to. Vanfell had closed the distance surprisingly fast. The crowd found themselves surprised.

“The hell?! Kid is already on top of her!” But Yaoyorozu wasn’t concerned. She knew how Vanfell fought. She had analyzed his combat patterns from the battle trial at the start of the year. His method of fighting that he had used at USJ was also still fresh in her mind. Though she was balancing multiple variables in her head, she could predict and react. Her eyes caught his right arm rising. Her staff swung down, slamming into his arm. His attack was sent wide as his body was briefly pinned. As he yanked the arm free, she wasted no time in slamming her shield into his face. Vanfell gritted his teeth as he reeled back. Her next course of action was to produce the bolas, during the downtime. However, much to her surprise, Vanfell didn’t leave any. This time he had clamped his hands together. He swung them downwards, trying to smash her clean in the torso. Her shield swung up and blocked it. Fists crunched into metal but the quirkless student didn’t even seem to flinch or feel it. His only reaction to her staff slamming into his ribs was a frustrated hiss. Vanfell skidded backwards for a moment. He knew that Yaoyorozu would be hoping that he let her have a breather. But he didn’t. His body coiled tight and then sprung forward. His left fist went for her face. Even if it didn’t connect, or it was countered, his right fist was shooting for her ribs. The classic 1-2 combination, bread and butter fighting. Her staff was quick to twirl up and bat his left fist away. Her shield managed to cover her ribs in time. One leg shot up and slammed into the chest of her opponent. Vanfell was driven back for a moment. Her eyes narrowed.

“Don’t waste my time! If you’re not going to fight properly, you run the risk of disgracing the name of U.A, like that Hatsume girl!”

“Course. All you’re concerned about is perception. We’re a top crust school, eh? Gotta act like we’re all fucking top crust right? Give me a minute, I’ll lift my pinky as I kick your shit in.” Vanfell hissed back. He couldn’t waste a second. If he let up this assault, she’d be able to get ground. Even if it wasn’t smart and even if it was hopeless, he couldn’t quit. He hadn’t got this far to give up, crawl into a ball, and accept his loss. So Vanfell threw himself back into close quarters. The barrage continued on. Vanfell had still not landed a single blow. Such a fact was not lost on the crowd.

“This is why we keep quirkless people outta hero society. They ain’t able to keep up. Sad.”

“This kid got a plan beside just taking a beating? God, is he hoping she gets tired from beating on him?”

“I can’t believe it! He’s using the same plan that he used on me!? Sure it’s manly but it ain’t going to
work without that suit!” Kirishima groaned, rubbing his face with his hands. Present Mic was also feeling the pain.

“VANFELL HASN’T LANDED A SINGLE BLOW! HAS YAOYOROZU GOT AN IMPREGNABLE DEFENCE?” Those who sided with Vanfell didn’t seem quite as concerned. Charity just rubbed at her jaw while Koichi sighed. He was reminded of that time that old man Knuckle had done the exact thing. He was sure that Vanfell would find an opening and end it in one hit, just like the crazy old man had. It seemed down in the arena, the fight was still going. Another swirling kick slammed Vanfell across the face. He spat. Nearly lost a tooth. Felt like it anyway. Who knew Yaoyorozu had such healthy legs?

“Do you intend to keep this charade up any further? You are an inspirational individual, but you aren’t owed by the world!” Yaoyorozu slammed her staff down on Vanfell’s head as he charged at her. His legs gave out, as his body slammed against the floor. A dust cloud kicked up slightly as he wheezed.

“Ain’t owed? Course, rich gal like you ain’t gonna know how bad it is.” Vanfell forced himself back to his feet. The crowd thought at the least that he would revise his tactics after taking a hit like that. Instead he was back at it, throwing out a different variety of moves. Izuku twitched slightly as he tilted his head. Was he the only one understanding what was happening here? He was pulled from his thoughts but a wistful sigh from Iida.

“I had thought I’d miscalculated about Vanfell, since our battle trial. However, it would seem he has only one solution to every fight. And in this case, our Class President simply has him outmatched!” “You ever consider for a moment that he might actually have a plan? Didn’t see you having one to deal with Hatsume.” Jirou interjected quickly. Her teeth were gritted though. It did seem Vanfell was struggling. But before Iida could interject, Izuku had zipped forward.

“People aren’t quite reading this battle properly. It’s hard to tell, but if you know the way Vanfell fights… he isn’t going all out. When you compare this to the tape of him during battle trial training, he’s slower. Sloppier too. His punches aren’t as perfect technique-wise as they usually are.” Izuku rubbed his chin. “There’s a reason why he’s constantly keeping the pressure up as well. Everyone presumed that the lack of costumes would hinder only Vanfell. But Yaoyorozu is affected just as much. Our uniform doesn’t expose much skin, and if she unzipped her jacket it’d get in the way of her fighting. Not to mention that Vanfell isn’t giving her any time to create anything else. The only breathing space she had was right at the start of the match! Sure, he isn’t landing any hits but it isn’t like Yaoyorozu is actually keeping him down. I just don’t know why he isn’t going all out… unless…”

“Do you know what it’s like?! To have all this bullshit in your way to just have a CHANCE?!” Vanfell howled out at Yaoyorozu. His plan was nearly ready to be completed. Just needed to vent and get her off guard. He continued to remain right on top of her. His body was tiring, muscles aching. Constant pressure wasn’t how he usually fought and it was dragging on. Time was running out as well. Needed to finish it, but he couldn’t just yet. “All the legal barriers?! Are you even aware, fuck, ‘bout quirkless ghettos?! Course you ain’t, course you ain’t!” His fists slammed down on her shielded arm. Her eyes had widened slightly though she didn’t lose her composure. Even if she was shocked by what he said, it didn’t mean it was truthful. Steeling herself, Yaoyorozu rebutted with a swift combination. Her staff swept at his legs, causing him to fall. Her shield then swung upwards akin to an uppercut smashing clean into his falling chin. Vanfell grunted as he forced himself to stay upright. Sweat splashed on the floor as she exhaled.
“We all have to do our best to get here, Zephyr! Your situation might be regrettable, but I don’t believe it gives you the right to act like you did! At the USJ…” Her voice tensed, with a hint of a quiver in it. “You acted akin to the villains we were fighting for our lives against!” Vanfell tried his best not to take that remark poorly. He didn’t let it get to him anyway. He had everything he needed to win now.

“I’d focus on trying to stay awake if I were you. It’s game over.” Shaking his head, Vanfell popped up onto the balls of his feet. Though he had no way of knowing that Izuku could tell that he had been holding back, it was indeed the situation. It had been a gamble. Had Yaoyorozu paid more attention to it, instead of her outrage at him making U.A look bad, she might have been able to counter it. Now when he sprung forward, everyone in the stadium sat up. It was clear as day that he was moving fluider, quicker, and that he was properly focused now. Yaoyorozu’s eyes widened. Her shield went up to block the double slam that he tended to lead with. Her mind raced to the next follow up that she deemed most likely. Swiping for his ribs with her staff, Vanfell just rotated on his heel. Her staff hit nothing but air. Then her stomach erupted in pain as Vanfell smashed a fist clean into it.

“MY MY?! HAS VANFELL BEEN HOLDING OUT ON US THE ENTIRE FIGHT?” Present Mic’s commentary ripped back out. He had been fairly laid-back during most of the fight. Now he was awakened again, ready to rock and roll. Vanfell continued his assault. His blows started to rain down as the dynamic shifted. No longer was Yaoyorozu dictating the pace. No longer was she just beating down an unskilled fighter. Now she was on a desperate defence, doing her very best to just stay in the fight.

“What on earth!? You were holding back this entire time?” Yaoyorozu spluttered. Her shield managed to block an attack. Vanfell slammed the staff wide with his elbow blocking her follow up attack. His fist then smashed into her shoulder, sending the recommendation student sprawling back.

“Might say that. I saw how you fight at USJ, and the Battle Trial. As well as the cavalry battle.” Vanfell swayed. His feet were dancing as his body ducked, dodged, and weaved away from her staff strikes. “Quirk you have is pretty powerful. If you have time, and skin that is. At USJ everything you made beyond the stick needed time. Sure you were pressured, but not as bad here.”

“Ngh…” Yaoyorozu hissed. She was veering close to the line. Her constant retreat was causing her to almost tip over the precipice of defeat! Her mind was running wild with doubt as well. Just how could she not have noticed his plan from the start? She had fought alongside him before…

“So, I figured that the only time you’d have available for this fight was before I could close the gap. Enough to make the staff and shield, sure. Nothing else. Without your costume, it’s hard to make much to bolster your efforts. Next step was just to download your fight pattern. I was letting you hit me, to figure out your patterns. Now?” He ducked under her staff and slammed his fist into her stomach. She groaned in audible pain, as Vanfell then shoved her away. “It’s my win.”

“I can’t believe how hard he’s hitting her!? Can’t he ease up a bit!!” Kaminari yelled. Mineta waved his arms in dismay hissing.

“What kind of jerk beats a lady up like that!? He has to be a real sick dude!” Bakugou interjected in a rare defence of Vanfell. “It’s respect. He knows she’s a damned threat, so he’s not holding anything back. Morons.”

“…You won’t win! I shan’t go out in such a fashion!” Yaoyorozu knew she only had one chance.

“IN A SHOCKING MOVE, YAOYOROZU HAS DISCARDED HER SHIELD!? WITH HER
SEEMINGLY ON THE ROPES, CAN SHE PULL IT BACK?!

"...Course. You really must think I’m an idiot. Still got all those biases, rattling in that pretty little rich head of yours.” Vanfell rolled his eyes. He watched as Yaoyorozu started to spin the staff in a circular fashion in front of her. No way to throw a punch without breaking a limb. Sweat was all across her brow. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw her leg buckle. She was on her final reserves. So his leg shot out. If he was right thinking on the spot like this wasn’t her strong point. It connected. Yaoyorozu was taken off guard. The staff block broke as she had to steady herself. Her eyes went wide as she saw Vanfell’s right fist streaming into a blazing uppercut. Vanfell put everything he had into this punch as it collided. Yaoyorozu slammed to the ground, knocked on her back. Straining, she tried to get back up. But her entire world felt dizzy and painful. Much better to just...sleep.

"Yaoyorozu can no longer fight! Vanfell progresses to the second round!” Midnight declared. It was an oddly quiet finale. Those who had supported the underdog were cheering. A select few pros were among this number, but overall it was other students and those related to Vanfell. Discontent over the fact that a quirkless student had won was far more common. It was a popular theory among the crowd that this girl was simply below par, as opposed to Vanfell being anything special. Vanfell took one look at Yaoyorozu and then jogged out of the arena. He supposed she’d search him out sometime later. For now? Rest and clearing his head. Izuku swallowed slightly as he watched the quirkless student go. That had been an insane display from him. Calculated and measured until the very end. It was intimidating to say the least. All he could remember was how All Might said you needed powers to be a hero. But, Vanfell seemed to be dedicated to smashing those words to pieces.

"Wow… sounds like we have to be careful and not underestimate Vanfell then.” Ochako remarked. She found it kind of cute how animated Izuku had been in retelling the fight to her. It made her nerves feel a little bit better despite what was coming her way. She still felt stressed as she rested an arm on the table. “So… I’m up soon.”

"But I can’t imagine Bakugou would give it his explosive all against a female opponent…” Iida started. He knew that Vanfell had gone all out, but that was a different case. When one didn’t have a quirk to work with one had to go all out. But Izuku shook his head quick to interrupt.

"No, he will. Everyone is competing here with the dream of becoming number one. No one is holding back. Kacchan least of all. But you’ve helped me so much already, Uraraka.” Izuku rummaged in the back of his pocket. “So I thought I might return the favour.” The girl was confused as to what he meant. Then she saw Izuku present his notebook front and centre as he cleared his throat. “You need a counter-strategy for Kacchan. One that uses your quirk. I came up with this on the fly, but it might work!” Iida beamed at Izuku.

"How fortunate for you, Urarakara!” But the girl didn’t seem that excited by the prospect. Her head drifted forward slightly, her eyes looking down at the floor.

"Thanks, Deku. But… that’s okay.” Her fingers tapped together. Izuku was confused, giving a slight huh.

"You’re amazing, Deku. You do amazing things all the time. During the cavalry battle, I thought the easiest strategy would be to team up with friends. But when I really look at it, I was just actually putting my faith in you.” She stood up palms on the table. Her face was clouded over. ‘That’s why Iida said ‘I challenge you,’ and all that. Kinda left me feeling embarrassed about myself.”

"Uraraka…”

"That’s why… thanks, but no thanks! Everyone here is fighting for their futures! Doesn’t that make
us all rivals? So.” She turned with a strong firm smile on her face, one of her thumbs jammed up. “I’ll see you in the finals!”

The fight between Kirishima and Tetsutetsu had been relatively uneventful. Both of them had been evenly matched, their fight ending in a double KO. Midnight declared that this fight would be handled by an arm wrestling match after the fact. The pros somehow seemed more receptive to this fight, than the display prior. Many of them mentioned how good it would be to have some hot blooded sidekicks, a real morale booster. Uraraka had been just about to head out on the field. She walked forward and paused. It was a lanky figure, messy brown hair, and a cocksure grin.

“Vanfell? Did you, uh, need something? I’m about to go and fight Bakugou… so I can’t really talk much.” She swallowed. Vanfell just walked over to the girl, and put one hand on her shoulder. “You go out there, and you knock him dead. You managed to do it to me, so I don’t see why you can’t do it to someone less powerful, right? I’ll be rooting for ya, Uraraka.” He nodded. One last smile for her sake as he jogged off, heading back up to the stands. She swallowed. It was time. “In some ways I’m most worried about this next one.”

“Honestly, I don’t wanna watch.”

“For your best, Uraraka…”

“For the last matchup of the final round…” Bakugou stomped up the steps. He arrived at the top. A glare settled across his face. It was time to start his ascent to the number one position. “A CELEBRITY SINCE HIS MIDDLE SCHOOL DAYS WITH A FACE ONLY A MOTHER COULD LOVE, IT’S KATSUKI BAKUGOU OF THE HERO COURSE! VERSUS!” Ochako had now arrived on the field. Her face was set. Eyes were glinting with fiery determination as she exhaled. She wasn’t going to let anyone down. “MY PERSONAL PICK!! OCHAKO URARAKA, ALSO OF THE HERO COURSE!”

“You’re the floaty one, right, Round-face? If you’re gonna quit, do it now. Crying uncle later won’t cut it.” Bakugou snarled. Ochako was taken aback by being called Round-face. The fact that she was also facing Bakugou was intimidating enough. The stands were abuzz with conversation. Vanfell was gripping his sleeve tightly. He wanted nothing more than to see the blonde prick get his ass bounced. But he had his doubts. Sure, he believed in Ochako. But, it wouldn’t be easy. Bakugou was an absolute beast in combat. Couple that with his explosions and there wasn’t much that came to mind for Ochako strategy wise.

“You said earlier you thought of a counter strategy for her against Bakugou. What was it?” Iida asked. He too was concerned for his friend. Bakugou was one of the least pleasant members of the class. His only competition was Vanfell.

“Oh! Nothing special, really.” Izuku nodded. “Kacchan is strong. He’s got virtually no weaknesses in close quarters, and his quirk is stronger the more mobile he is. He can maneuver in midair, but if she can just get him floating she’ll win. That’s why…”

The fight began. The first thing that Ochako did was drop her body low to the floor. Her right hand was leading as she barrelled herself towards Bakugou. His statement was still fresh in her mind as she shook her head.

“Backing down isn’t an option!” Bakugou didn’t seem to react beyond fixing his glare on her. Izuku, excited, leaned forward clenching his fist.

“Even just by accidentally touching him, she can send him floating, so he’ll want to keep his distance! And if I know Kacchan… he won’t dodge! He’ll confront her, and lead with a right hook.” It seemed the analysis was correct. Bakugou pulled his right arm back, as Ochako nodded.
“There it is! I’ll dodge this and…” But as she went to move, Vanfell sucked air through his teeth. Bakugou’s explosion rippled forth and smashed into Ochako head on. Dust was thrown up as she threw her arms up. It hurt a lot more than she had expected. The crowd hissed and booed.

“Cmon, going all out against a girl!?”

“No good! I knew it was coming, but I couldn’t react!” Ochako gritted her teeth from within the dust cloud as she exhaled in pain. Bakugou moved forward shaking his head.

“Now die.” There was a nose and movement in the dust cloud. His face dropped into that of anger. He swore he swore a person move and he lunged forward. “Don’t underest—” But he realized, perhaps a moment too late, that he had been had. Ochako leapt out behind him as his hand slapped an empty gym uniform to the floor.

“She threw her jacket over and sent it floating all on the fly!” Mic screamed out. Vanfell didn’t feel as confident. Nor did Izuku. Both students tensed up. Much as they wanted it to play out well for Ochako…

“Just gotta make him float now!” The girl splayed her fingers wide as she desperately reached forward. The fight was about to be over. All she had to do was make contact, and she had won! Another loud explosion exploded out loud and proud. Bakugou twisted his body just in time, throwing up more dust and debris. Ochako was sent rolling and sprawling away from the force.

“URARAKA WASTES NO TIME. SHE’S CHARGING AGAIN!!” And she threw herself right back at Bakugou.

“Too slow!” The blonde haired student yelled out. Anyone explosion was sent at Ochako, sending her sprawling back. But it didn’t seem that anything would keep her down or stop her at this point. A guttural howl escaped from her lips.

“RAHHHHHH!” Her desperate lunge was once again rebutted. It seemed that every single approach, no matter if it was from a smokescreen or not, was ineffective.

“Ochako…”

“Blech. So Bakugo’s that type of guy…”

“NOT DONE YET!” She yelled out. Another motion, another explosion. Present Mic found his voice start to waver in enthusiasm. Even the pro’s were starting to get a bit unhappy with the situation.

“Don’t matter how good she is at dodging. She’s just desperate now.”

“What an idiot.” Monoma rolled his eyes and exhaled. One pro leaned forward. He was sitting behind Cementoss and yelled down.

“Yo. Shouldn’t you like call this quits? It’s getting kinda painful.” He got no answer from the cement hero. In the meantime Ochako made another charge. With little to no effort, Bakugou send her sprawling away again. This was the final straw for one pro who stood up. His voice carried, perhaps enhanced in someway by his quirk.

“I can’t watch this! Hey!! That’s not how someone who wants to be a hero acts! If you’re so much stronger than her, just get her out of the ring, and end it! Stop toying with the poor girl!”

“Yeah, he’s right!”
“Boooooo!”

“A GROUP IN THE CROWD HAS STARTED BOOING! BUT TO BE HONEST, I AGREE-ACK! AN ELBOW!” Mic yelped as he found his microphone stolen. Aizawa clutched it in one hand.

“Is the one who say he’s toying with her a pro? How many years of active duty?”

“!”

“If that is all you can take away from this, then you can leave. No point in watching. Head home, and start looking at new jobs.”

“Aizawa-sensei!?” Izuku was confused as he cocked his head. He’d never seen the man like this before.

“She’s made it this far, and he knows her strength. His caution shows he’s taking her seriously. It’s exactly because he wants to win so badly, that there’s no room for carelessness or holding back.” Bakugou exhaled as he heard all of this. This fight wasn’t over.

“Not yet. She’s…” In front of him stood Ochako. She was on shaky legs and her face was cast over. One hand rubbed against it as the sweat dripped and splashed against the floor.

“Almost… ready.” Her voice was tired and shaky. “Thanks, Bakugou. Thank you for not dropping your guard.” Ochako lifted her fingers and planted them together in the release position.

“Huh?” The student was confused. Monoma reclined in his seat as he pointed a finger at the sky.

“Maybe Bakugou didn’t notice because of his proximity, but the pros in the stands. Those who were booing, ought to be ashamed for not noticing. By making sure she charged low everytime, she made sure Bakugo’s attacks and attention was focused on the ground. All in order to set up her weapons.” In the sky floated all of the debris that had been kicked up. Little rocks hovered above, clearly all being held in place by Ochako’s quirk. Monoma smirked. “He never realized.”

“I’M GONNA WIN!” Ochako screamed out as her plan stepped into action. It all rained down, a barrage designed to take Bakugou completely off guard. Everyone in the crowd lost their minds as they took to their feet. Vanfell and Izuku were both clutching tightly to the railing as they watched this.

“IT’S A METEOR STORM! KEEP IT UP!” Mic howled as any attempt to keep bias out of his commentary was gone. Izuku couldn’t believe it.

“Such an extreme self-sacrificing strategy… Uraraka!!” The girl wasted no time in throwing herself forward. The meteor storm was falling. Now was her chance.

“This has to be enough. Even if he intercepts or dodges, I’ll find my opening! In that moment, I’ll close the gap. I’ll win! I can win. I’ll win just like Deku did!” But she was sent skidding back by an explosion. Bakugou had reacted near instantly. His explosion had managed to destroy about half of the attack. The other half had slammed into him. Ochako froze. There had been no way that he had been able to handle half of the attack in one go?! But it didn’t matter. Her legs pushed her back up. She gritted her teeth as she desperately reached forward.

“Must have been all that hanging out with Deku, huh? I knew you had some kind of plan!” He hissed. She was coming for him. His hand shot forward. Ochako braced for impact. Bakugo then felt the entire hand clamp up in pain. Damn it! She’d made him forget about his limit. His explosion was weaker than usual as his arm tensed in pain. One hand slapped him on the chest. Ochako couldn’t believe it. She’d managed to get the touch!? Vanfell was standing back straight as he roared out.

“YEAAH! TAKE THE BLOODY TOSSEER OUT, C’MON!” Ochako lept back. All she had to do was wait for him to use an explosion. Bakugou was already starting to float. His only option open to him was to use an explosion. His other arm angled itself, let loose…and he flew clean out of the ring. Her quirk had thrown everything out of whack. Sailing clean over the ring, Bakugou slammed against one of the walls. He crumpled in a heap, as three devastating words rung out.

“BAKUGOU. IS. OUT.”
Midnight declared. Her whip swung high in the air as the crowd erupted into a multitude of screaming, cheers, and sheer disbelief. Izuku and Van actually hugged each other, they were so excited in regards to the result. Ochako slammed to the ground. Her face bounced slightly as she nearly passed out. Her weight capacity had been reached…… but she’d won. Blissful silence washed over her as she finally gave out.

Needless to say, Bakugou did not take the loss all that well. Instantly he started incoherently screaming, and howling. Froth was around his mouth as he tried to spring back into the ring. Cementoss and Midnight managed to work together quick enough to restrain him. Then metal chains, and a bit gag, were put in place to restrain the student. This rather embarrassing display was broadcast to all… Shigaraki included. He was let free after a while. Present Mic and Aizawa had a discuss about professionalism in broadcasting, and Ochako was wheeled off to Recovery Girl.

“THE FIRST ROUND IS NOW OVER!! WE’LL MOVE ON TO THE SECOND AFTER A QUICK BREAK.”
Izuku was on route to see Ochako. He needed to congratulate her on a win that he thought she wouldn’t be able to pull off. Vanfell and Iida had asked him to send their regards as well, so as to avoid crowding the girl. He also had to head to the prep room. His match against Todoroki was upcoming, and he needed to get his head together. So he moved through the hallways, only to come across Bakugou.

“Whoah, Kacchan!”

“Yeah, what do you want?! Looking to fucking die, scum?!” While the student had calmed down after his loss, his temper was at an all time high. It pissed him off to lose like that. It had taken everything he had not to erupt into painful tears, frothing anger, such a whirlwind of negativity. He’d been told his entire life, that he was so great. So how the hell could he lose to her? It wasn’t meant to play out like this. She was meant to be the stepping stone, not the other way around. Now he had to deal with Deku being in his face. Shitty brat needed to get the fuck out of the way!

“No, I mean, I’m up next, so I’m headed to the prep room…” Izuku sputtered out slightly. He knew better than to apologize to Kacchan for his loss. And to be blunt, he didn’t want to. Ochako had deserved it, and she had been the one he wanted to win anyway.

“All of that? Uraraka came up with everything, just to beat you. So the fact you lost? That was all the work of Uraraka.” With that Izuku turned his back to Kacchan and walked away. Bakugou hissed as his fingers clenched tighter than they ever had before. He stomped his way back to the stands. Most people were quiet. They didn’t want to bother wasting time by setting him off again. Vanfell had to fight the urge not to wind him up. It was a beautiful feeling to see that guy fail. Sure he was talented. Vanfell wasn’t going to deny that at all. He was likely the best student in the class. But man did he need to work on his personality. And that was coming from Vanfell. The quirkless student knew he was no angel himself. He ought to go and see Yaoyorozu sometime and clear everything up.

“Uraraka!” Izuku yelped as he walked into the prep room. It seemed she was sat there resting up from her fight. Her phone was out on the desk. She’d clearly just called her parents… and was looking pretty happy. She gave a wide beaming smile at Izuku as she waved him over. She had two bandages on her face as she sighed.

“Deku! I… I did it!” Her voice was so happy and surprised. The girl had never thought that she’d be able to pull it off. Bakugou had seemed like an insurmountable object but she done it! “O-Only gets easier, right?” Izuku stammered slightly. He was glad too as he returned her smile. It did hurt him to see how far she had been required to go to have a chance, but at the same time he was proud of her.

“Heh. I wouldn’t go that far Izuku. But you better keep an eye out for me! I’ll be seeing you in the finals, after all!” The two laughed and smiled. From there they heard that Kirishima had triumphed over Tetsu in the arm wrestling. It seemed Ochako’s next opponent had been found. Ochako apologized to Izuku rather rapidly and awkwardly. It seemed she had wasted all of his prep time, as the next match was being pushed forward. Mic must have realized that they were getting off pace.
Izuku bolted through the hallways trying to make there on time. He just about managed to stop himself from fainting when he came grinding to a halt. A large figure stood in front of him.

“Hey.”
“?! End-”
“There you are.” The flame hero looked down at Izuku. His gaze was difficult to dissect, in regards to what emotions he was feeling at the current moment. Izuku swallowed. The man was so intimidating up close.
“Endeavor... why’re you back here?”
“I saw what you did out there. Such an amazing quirk. Creating all that force with just a flick of your finger!” The man explained. He jabbed a finger of his own at Izuku. “In terms of power, it would seem on par with All Might’s quirk.”

“Well, of course you’re n-” Endeavor had paused in order to reply. “Right. Of course I’m not. And Todoroki, isn’t you!” Endeavor couldn’t quite believe what he was hearing. And Izuku couldn’t quite believe he had said it.

“Whoa, whoa. Steady Uraraka, no rush, eh?” Vanfell grunted. He had one arm of the now exhausted girl draped over his shoulder. When she had taken a while to return to the stands, he had gone off to check on her. She seemed to have been exhausted as a result of the healing. He wasn’t sure why her eyes were all swollen up either but he didn’t comment.
“Thanks, Vanfell. I really don’t want to miss Izuku’s match…” He eased her into her seat, as Iida and Tokoyami’s eyes widened. Iida spluttered and coughed.
“Ura...were you blinded? Did this knave Vanfell do such a thing to you?! Hurry up and see Recovery Girl, while I take him to task.”
“I did already. This is from...something else.”
“Something else?! You’re not having the best of days.” Iida groaned. Vanfell fell into his seat next to Tokoyami. The two of them somewhat glared at each other. Tensions were running high.
“Yeah...anyway. How is Deku gonna deal with the ice?”

“A Bit Earlier

“All Might’s got his eye on you, huh?” “You ready?” Izuku and Todoroki were now both out on the field. The crowd were excited for this one. Both competitors were special, and it was set to be a spectacle. All Might and Endeavor shifted in the audience, eyes falling on their respective fighters. All Might felt concern, while Endeavor only expected results. Mic hopped onto the mic again, ready to MC. “BOTH OF THESE COMPETITORS HAVE WON TOP MARKS IN THIS FESTIVAL SO FAR!! BUT THERE’S ONLY ROOM FOR ONE OF THESE GREATS IN THE RING! IT’S… TODOROKI!! VERSUS! MIDORIYA! START!”
This match was going to be an important one. Across the board it seemed all sorts of people were focused in on this one. In a basement, Shigaraki sat his desk. Two monitors were running while an empty noodles cup balanced on the edge of the desk. Garbage bags were piled up in his room as two streams displayed the sports festival to him. He had found it quite interesting how Bakugou had lost his temper like that. Not to mention all the rage that he had been fighting with. Maybe he’d have a chat with Giran once The Broker got back from the festival, about scouting that kid. Turning a pro in the works into a villain? It would devastate hero society. One monitor speaker crackled though interrupting his thoughts.

“Observe and learn. Because Tomura Shigaraki, those two maybe someday become obstacles in your path.”

“Oh? What a load of crap…” Was his response as he scratched at his neck, old habits dying hard. Inko was in hysterics in her home. Izuku’s injuries had already made her feel bad enough. Now he was going up against the kid that had nearly frozen the entire stadium!? There was no way the woman could feel happy or confident. Her ached with concern for her child. The U.A faculty, Thirteen and All Might in particular felt the weight of this battle.

“These are the ones who tried to save you back then…”

“Right. I can’t quite put my finger on it, but. They’re connected, in some way.” All Might nodded. Endeavor was also keenly focused on this fight. It would serve to determine if Todoroki was finally growing up, or if he was going to continue to be an immature child. And thus, the battle began.

Izuku knew what the game plan was. Todoroki was going to open with an ice attack. It was bread and butter, and when your quirk was that powerful there wasn’t any sense in doing otherwise. It would also been foolish if he let Todoroki just fire away freely. But Todoroki also felt the same way about Izuku. He wouldn’t allow the green-haired student to have a chance. The one thing running through both of their minds come the start of the fight was simple. Attack! And Todoroki didn’t disappoint. As soon as the fight started a wall of ice started to charge towards Izuku. He knew how fast this stuff moved.

“Gotta make it in time!!” He placed one finger next to this thumb. One for All channelled into it. The ice was nearly on top of him. “SMASHHHH!” He howled out. Just in time the attack rang out. His ice was smashed away. Todoroki would have gone flying out of the ring from the sheer amount of force, had he not thrown up a pillar of ice behind him. He gritted his teeth as he glared at Izuku. The pros in the stands complained about the wind thrown up from this exchange being extremely cold. Charity told them to simply wear layers.

“I expected as much….” “He’s determined to counter. Even if he has to destroy himself.”

“WHOAA!! HE SMASHED THROUGH!” All Might watched keenly. He wasn’t surprised at the fact that Izuku was using 100 percent of his power at the moment. His student had no way of knowing how strong the attack would be and there was no other real defence against the ice. Another exchange took place. Ice surged towards Izuku, who promptly blew another finger out. Blood splashed and mingled with shattered ice as the finger turned an ugly purple. Todoroki was smacked against his defensive pillar, tutting. Izuku huffed, grinding his teeth to reduce the pain.

“From what I’ve seen, Todoroki always ends a fight in a flash. I haven’t learned much from watching him. I’ll have to learn while fighting him. I’ll just observe, and look for an opening… The ice behind him, is likely his counter-strategy to stop himself from getting blown away. In that case, using my fingers is the right choice. He might be able to handle a 100 percent arm-sacrificing smash. Observe. Calculate. Find an opening. I still have...six shots left!” Izuku was hunched over slightly. His hand was throbbing as his eyes focused on Todoroki with blazing intensity. His
opponent shook his head, taken aback for a moment.

“You’re…” And then he was silent. His foot pressed against the ground, another surge of ice dancing across the floor to meet Izuku. Another smash, another broken finger, another defence. It seemed the tempo for the fight had been found.

“Gah. They already started!”

“Hey! Nice job getting to the second round, Kirishima.” Kaminari beamed, waving at the red-headed student who had just entered the stand.

“Thanks. I’m up against you next, Uraraka!”

“Oh. Well, I’m gonna win!” She chimed back, doing her best to put a fighting face on. Kirishima laughed.

“Well, ya managed to beat Bakugou! Figure you gotta be tough.”

“I’ll kill you…” Bakugou hissed, as Kirishima dismissively waved a hand at him.

“Blah. I’d like to see you try. But man, you and that Todoroki. You can fire off so many of those crazy-strong attacks. Almost as much as you want…” Sero had a brief flicker of PTSD, before Bakugou growled.

“As many we want? Don’t be an idiot.”

“Hu?”

“Strain your muscles, you’ll tear them. Run too much, you’ll be out of breath. Our quirks are still physical abilities. This guy must have some kind of limit…” Bakugou felt this fact taunting him. It was his own damned limit that had cost him his fight against Round-face. His costume was designed to help with that sort of thing, but it didn’t matter here.

“Yeah. Suppose you’re right. So up against Insta-Kill Man, Midoriya’s triyng to…?”

“So you’re trying to stretch the match out? Not happening. I’ll end this quickly.” Todoroki grunted.

Yet another shot of ice threw itself at Izuku. He was quick to smash it, but that was the entire hand gone. All five digits, mangled and bleeding.

“TODOROKI, UNDAUNTED BY MIDORIYA’S POWER, MOVES IN TO CLOSE THE GAP!” The student wasn’t wasting anytime. He had been keeping count and also knew that the hand was no longer useable. As a result there would be a brief period of downtime before Izuku could prepare another take. He scaled a small incline of ice, leaping from it. It was blown out from underneath him, as Izuku shifted to his other hand. As a result, Todoroki was forced to land earlier than planned. Izuku was just able to leap back, narrowly dodging the attempt at CQC from his foe.

Todoroki wasn’t going to let up though. He knew Izuku hadn’t stuck that landing, and watched he bounced into the air. A shot of ice blasted forward. It managed to connect with the leg of the student.

“Oh no! He’s too close.” If he didn’t break free now, it was game over. His spare hand gripped tight. Another huge explosion of air blasted forth. Several proes in the stadium lost their hats. Midnight and her stand was knocked over the heroine swearing up a storm. Todoroki just about managed to stay on his feet, as pillars of ice stopped him from being blown clean out of the right. Eventually the debris and wind died down as he grunted.

“Now, that’s a lot stronger than your earlier attacks. Is this telling me to stay back?”

“Ugh…” Izuku’s entire arm was totalled. One hand, and one arm blown out. Blood dripped to the floor as his arm had taken on a bruised, purple tint. “He’s way more than just his quirk. He’s got excellent judgement, execution, mobility, everything about him. Is strong!!” Todoroki was stood, back straight.

“Only defending and dodging? It’s taking a toll on you.” Todoroki was advancing on Izuku slowly,
but the green haired student noticed something strange. Todoroki was shivering?!
“Man. He’s already stronger than most pros…”
“As expected ya know. He’s the son of the No. 2 hero.” The pro chatter rankled Todoroki as he shook his head. Is that how it was? Damn.

“Sorry for all this. I do appreciate it, though, Midoriya. Thanks to you…” Todoroki glanced over to his side. Endeavor glared back at him looking quite unimpressed with the situation. “He doesn’t look too happy.” Izuku was jerked back to what Todoroki had told him prior to the fight. “With both hands destroyed, you can’t fight anymore. Let’s end this.”

“TODOROKI CONTINUES HIS RELENTLESS ASSAULT!! COULD THIS NEXT ICE ATTACK WIN IT ALL?” Present Mic yelled as another wall zoomed toward Izuku.

“WHO SAYS I’M DONE?!” Howled the student. Todoroki tensed. Then he was thrown back as Izuku somehow let loose with another shot of power. All Might, Bakugou, Vanfell, and Ochako all tensed, rather shaken. Todoroki just barely managed to throw up an ice pillar to save himself as he growled.

“You…” With broken fingers…” “Why go that far?” His usually cool and composed voice, had a hint of a shake in it. Izuku, now hunched over again, glared.

“You’re shivering, Todoroki.” His hand tensed. “Quirks are still just physical abilities. You must have a limit to how much of that cold you can bear. But then, you could always use your left side to thaw yourself out, right?” Izuku continued on. Todoroki exhaled, tensing. His left side had ice climbing up his side as he wasn’t sure what was happening. “Everyone is giving it their all! To win, to achieve their goals, to make it to the top! And you want to win with half your power?! I still haven’t put a scratch on you! GIVE ME EVERYTHING YOU GOT! COME AT ME!” Endeavor twitched. He remembered how Izuku had told him that Todoroki wasn’t Endeavor. This kid.

“What are you planning?”“That’s fine. You’re not…” A flicker of his mother’s face flashed across his mind. He couldn’t remember what came after it, and Todoroki couldn’t remember when he forgot. “…Everything I’ve got? Did my bastard father pay you off or something?” Todoroki hissed, real anger in his voice now. This whole situation was starting to piss him off. “You’re pissing me off!” He lunged forward dashing into close quarters. “He won’t be able to deal with me at close range.” Izuku noticed and he too moved forward. His dash seemed to be faster than Todoroki’s. This fact wasn’t lost on the other students. Bakugou rubbed his chin.

“He’s slowed down. Maybe because of the frost covering his body. That’s different to my power’s limit. Akin to magic points in a video game. The scale of that attack against soy sauce face was probably the most he could muster…” Back down in the fight, it was getting intense. Todoroki had lifted his left leg which had turned out to be a mistake. His slower speed had lead to Izuku being to close the gap and get in close. There was no time to react.

“Imagine it. The microwave, don’t explode. Don’t explode. Don’t!!” Izuku channeled One for All into his arm. Broke as it was, he could still use it. It collided with the stomach of Todoroki as he watched the student bounce away. There was recoil as Izuku reared back hissing in pain. It had been akin to a fire in his arm at first. Now it was akin to a fire with several metal nails being rammed into the bone and skin.

“What a hit! Things are really heating up!!”

“How? His foot stomped down again. It connected with Izuku’s leg, but this time Izuku just wrenched himself free.
“It’s not just you that’s slowing down. Your ice is weaker too.”
“Should I stop the match, Midnight?” Cementoss tapped the earpiece to talk to the coordinator.
“Seems like Midoriya’s going all out because he knows he can be healed no matter what. And he’s not even feeling any of the pain he’s in, because his adrenaline is pumping. But all those injuries, a single healing session won’t be enough for a full recovery. Even if he wins here, he’ll be in no shape for the next match!!” Midnight didn’t answer. Her face was strained, unsure of what to do. Aizawa watched with interest.

“Learn to control your quirk, because just trying isn’t going to cut it. That control is starting to manifest, even if it means weaker attacks. He isn’t just blindly going wild out there. In order to win, this is the best strategy for him at this point. Even so. Even knowing he can be healed, putting himself through all that pain. It takes a hell of a lot of guts. What is it that motivates you Midoriya?”

By now Izuku was unable to make a fist. The pain, and the sheer damage to the flesh, was starting to rack up. But that wouldn’t make Todoroki slow down. Sure his opponent was tiring and weaker, but he wasn’t going to give up. So there wasn’t any other choice. “I wanna be like him.” Izuku lifted his thumb into his mouth, clamping his teeth down. Ice rushed at him. Quick. Todoroki’s face was shocked as the crowd also gasped. “For that I gotta be number one. I gotta be the strongest.” And with that he managed to flick his thumb. It shattered the ice and threw Todoroki backwards yet again. Shards of the ice sprinkled down in the air, like glittering crystals. “Might seem like a lame motivation compared to yours.”

“Why are you going this far?” Todoroki huffed as he managed to stop himself from falling out of the ring again. The wounded Izuku charged forward again intent on not letting anything stop him. “Just trying to live up to expectations! A smiling, dependable, cool hero. THAT’S WHAT I WANNA BE!” His word rang out. Todoroki tensed. A memory boiled its way into his mind. Sat in front of the tv as a child...his mother and her voice.

“Shoto...”

“That’s why I’m giving it everything!” Izuku slapped Todoroki away. Pain continued to dance throughout his frame but he forced himself to ignore it. “Your experiences. Your determination. I can’t even begin to imagine what all that’s like. But.” He paused, his face hung low. Knees shook slightly. “If you become number one, without giving it everything you got? Then I don’t really think you care about denying him everything!” Another memory burnt itself back to the forefront. A fist slamming into his stomach, vomit splashing on the wooden floor of the dojo. His father’s damned voice.

“Get up. You won’t even be able to defeat third-rate villains, let alone All Might if you get knocked down by a hit like that.” The way his mother had stepped in, trying to stop the bastard.

“Stop it please! He’s only five years old!” The dreadful noise of the slap smashing into her.

“Yes! He’s already five! So get out of my way!” Todoroki felt his control slipping away. His teeth tightened as his jaw set. “SHUT UP...” The frost coating his body started to melt away... but the memories kept flowing back. The way his mother had held him on the sleeping mate, pressed him...
close to her.

“I hate him mommy I...I don’t wanna be like daddy. Someone who bullies my mommy. I don’t wanna be like that.” Her soft and gentle voice, trying to make him feel like everything was alright.

“...But you want to be a hero right? That's fine. You're not...” He couldn’t react to Izuku. Another punch slammed into his body.

“If you have a future you’re striving for! That’s why I have to win!” Todoroki was thrown back, as All Might tensed in his seat. This fight was not playing out like he thought it would.

“Midoriya, kid. Don’t tell me that you’re... he won’t use his left side because of that conflict with his father.”

“I HAVE TO SURPASS YOU!!” Todoroki felt the impact of the punch wash over him. It knocked him every further back into his thoughts. Little fingers pressed against a window pane. His siblings out in the garden, playing with a ball. How he had wanted to join them. Before he had arrived, gripped him. Pulled him away from it, pulled him away from his childhood.

“Don’t look at them Shoto. Your siblings belong to a different world than you.” He flew through the air. Another memory. Perhaps the worst one. Wandering to the kitchen one evening. His mother had been on the phone. Talking to her mother. Her voice was shaky, pained, filled with despair and dread.

“Mom...I know it is isn’t right. But I can’t do it anymore. The children they’re like him more and more every day. And little Shoto. His left side. Sometimes I look at him and hate what I see.” The kettle had been rattling on the stove. Rattling like her voice. “I can’t raise him anymore. I shouldn’t raise him.”

“M-mommy...?” How she had turned to see him. Her eyes wild, scared, like a cornered animal. Then the pain. Burning fluid. It blazed and felt as if it would never end. When it all went away, she was gone. No longer present.

“Where’s mommy?”

“She hurt you, so I had her put away. What a fool. During this pivotal time in your development no less.”

I’ll show him.

“It’s all your fault!”

“I’ll show my father...” Todoroki hissed. He forced himself to stand. Izuku was stood before him.

“YOUR POWER...” His voice was full of pain. Todoroki couldn’t fathom why. Izuku could. But this wasn’t about him. This was about Todoroki. About the shackles that he had put on him by his father. All the pain pent up inside him.

“IS YOUR OWN!!”

“Yes, quirks are naturally passed from parent to child. However, they aren’t the only thing that
matters. It’s not only blood ties. Instead, one must recognize and appreciate oneself! That’s what I mean when I say it!” All Might’s voice on the tv. How they had sat together, and her words to him.

“But you want to be a hero right?”
“When I say, “I am here!”
“That’s fine. You’re not...bound by his blood. You decide…”

“When did I forget that?”

“Who you want to become.”

It all happened so fast. In one moment he hadn’t been coated in flames. The next there was a blazing inferno covering his body. Hot fire flickered and danced in front of Izuku. It dwarfed Todoroki and it dwarfed his opponent.

“What’S THIS?” Mic couldn’t believe what he was seeing. Iida, Ochako, and Vanfell all yelped in the stands. Ochako found the heat a little bit much to bear. Iida was simply surprised that Todoroki had been willing to use it and...Vanfell didn’t want all the product in his hair to go up in flames. He’d have to wash it all out after this fight, if Todoroki won.

“Don’t tell me you’re trying to save Todoroki?!” All Might couldn’t believe what he was watching.

“I thought you wanted to win? Dammit. So why’re you trying to inspire me? Which one of us isn’t taking this seriously now?” Todoroki barked back to Izuku. Up in the stands, Endeavor’s face had morphed into a hellish look of ecstasy.

“But I WANNA BE A HERO TOO!”

And thus Todoroki stood before Izuku. His sides were both active. One side coated in ice, and the other blazing with intense flame. It seemed that Izuku had gotten through to him, but at what cost?

“SHOTOOOOOOOOOOOO!” Endeavor’s face had cocked back looking right up to the sky. His own flames blossomed, crescendoed into a beautiful intensity. It seemed he was in an immense state of pleasure. He started to stomp forward. The spectacle had driven him to ecstasy. At least. “So you’ve finally accepted it! Yes! Excellent!! It all starts now for you!! With my blood pumping through your veins, you will surpass me...you will fulfill my ambitions!!” His voice had an uncontained frenzy in it. He was clearing riding whatever misguided high that he had found. But Todoroki didn’t answer him. His son didn’t even seem to react to whatever the man had to say. The reaction from everyone involved was a tad awkward to say the least. Even Mic was restrained and calm. For once.

“A sudden pep talk, from Mr. Endeavor eh? What a...caring parent. Unexpected though, since they aren’t on good terms.” Down in the arena, Todoroki wiped his face. All Izuku could find himself doing was grinning. He couldn’t believe it. The full power of Todoroki.

“Incredible…"

“Shotaro, what’re you smiling about? With those wounds and in this situation you must be crazy. It’s not my problem what happens to you now.” It seemed that it was the end game. Todoroki’s ice and fire both flared up to what seemed to be maximum power. With the two elements working together it seemed his drawbacks were gone. Izuku wasn’t to be outdone. His clothing ripped away as he forced One for All’s full power into his legs and arms. There was no time to hold back anything. In the stands Vanfell went stiff. Such power from just first years…
“Midnight!” Cementoss had shot out from his seat. “If he takes this any further, his body’s done for!” A wall of cement started to shoot up. They needed to stop the fight. His female counterpart ripped her bodysuit out, her gas sliding free. But it didn’t look like they’d get a chance to stop. Izuku felt his legs break as he threw himself forward. All he had to do was get in close, and give it everything. He could still win this one, even with Todoroki going all out! Todoroki was moving forward. His fireside was going full force. His hand reached forward. Izuku had given him this opportunity. He was grateful.

“Midoriya. Thank you.” And so the two quirks met, just as five pillars of cement tried to intercept them. Both attacks collided. The full force of OFA charged into the fray against the full power of Todoroki’s fire. When it met the cold air... it culminated in an explosion that even intimidated Bakugou. Five pillars quickly became thousands of pieces of rubble. The sheer knock back was insane as well. Shoji had to grab Mineta to prevent him from flying away. Vanfell fell backwards landing on the laps of Yaoyorozu and Jirou with an awkward squawk.

“THE HELL IS HAPPENING?!” He bellowed as he clutched tightly to their legs. He feared a little for his life. Endeavor watched. Even he was surprised by just how much force had been put out. A huge dust cloud covered the arena. As a result no one was able to discern what had happened yet. Cementoss coughed from his position on the floor.

“I don’t believe that bigger is better, but gee. That was something else.” Present Mic had been knocked out in the booth, legs in the air. Somehow, his voice was still loud enough to be heard through the mic.

“What the?! What’s with your class Eraserhead?!”

“All that chilled air was heated in an instant, making it expand.”

“What a blast though. And what heat! Can’t see a thing. Has the match been decided?” Midnight rubbed the back of the head. The poor woman had been thrown back by the force as well. But now the dust was clearing. Her eyes caught on a pair of shoes. Both All Might and Endeavor tensed in their seats...and then it was revealed. Izuku was pressed up against the wall. No one could tell if he been knocked out, but he was out of bounds for sure. Then he wobbled and fell on the ground. Both out of bounds, and knocked out.

“Midoriya is out of bounds... Todoroki moves onto the third round!!” Todoroki hadn’t been in much better condition. His ice pillars were the only things that had saved him. His entire uniform was ripped down one side as he stood, unable to understand for a moment. The crowd had quite a bit to say as well. The man with his scarf, and the dirt covered girl were both... unimpressed. It had been visually stunning, yes. But the two of them found each fighter sloppy. There wasn’t much technical prowess displayed in this fight. Ah well. Charity rubbed her head and sighed.

“That Midoriya. He got straight up blown away…”

“Was he just provoking Todoroki without a plan to back it up?” Gerald grunted.

“Either way, that was still some impressive power.”

“Kid has moxie for sure.”

“Put on a good show up through the cavalry battle, anyway.”

And so the battle ended. Todoroki had made for the exit. His mind was on fire with a variety of thoughts. Unfortunately for him he found his path blocked. In front of him stood his father, Endeavor. A cocky grin and folded arms. An attitude of smug superiority.

“…”

“So you’re not going to tell me, to get out of your way this time?” Endeavor smirked. His arms
splayed wide. “Without control over your flames, going all out is dangerous. But you have finally discarded your childish rebellion. You are ready to replace me. To surpass me, even!” A hand shot forward, almost as if they were making a business deal. “Work at my side after you graduate! I will guide you down the path to supremacy!” But there was a barbed reply that took Endeavor by surprise.

“I haven’t put aside anything. As if I could be turned that easy.” Todoroki glanced at the hand of his fireside. “It’s just. In that moment, in the instant… I forgot all about you.” Endeavor tensed, his face morphing slightly into bitter surprise. “If that is good, bad, or something else well. That’s something I’ll have to think about.”

To say that Recovery Girl was unimpressed was an understatement. All Might could feel the disappointment and agitation of the woman from a mile away. So he didn’t say anything. His eyes hovered on Izuku. His student was awake now, but in clear pain. His arms were in a sling due to the heavy damage.

“His right arm is shattered. It won’t be simple to set back to normal. I have to remove the bone splinters from his joints first. Healing will come after. This boy admires you so much he’s willing to destroy himself. You lit that fire. You moved him to this.” Her voice was firm, and clearly accusatory. “I don’t like it. Not in the slightest. You’re overdoing it. You and this boy. So you best not praise him for it.” All Might felt the pain of guilt wash over him. How was he so bad at this? His mentor had done everything so much better. He wished she was here now to help him. He swore he heard the faint whisper of her voice, before he leapt clean out of his skin.

“DE-”
“MIDORI-”
“KU”
“YA!” Four voices rang out as All Might spurted blood from his mouth. Ochako, Tsuyu, Iida, and Mineta had all arrived to the rest room. Clearly they wanted to check up on their friend.

“Guys…but the next match…” Izuku croaked out. All Might rubbed his neck and groaned.

“That scared the heck out of me…”
“Hello, nice to meet you?” Ochako asked. She had never seen the man before. He gave an awkward response as Iida stepped forward.

“The arena was mostly destroyed, so there’s a break while it’s being repaired.”

“We came cuz we were worried.”

“That was scary as hell, Midoriya. No pro’s gonna want to hire you.” Mineta remarked before being slapped by Tsuyu’s tongue.

“Can’t say I like your rubbing salt in the wound style.”

“You know I’m right though.” Recovery Girl leapt out of her seat and wagged her stick at the four.

“Pipe down! It’s fine to worry but he’s about to have surgery.”

“SURGERY!”

“I’m sorry…” Izuku gasped out. All Might turned his head down to the boy. Izuku felt the words he’d be told come back to him. How he was supposed to tell the world that he had arrived. “I couldn’t do it. Maybe if I’d just shut up. But I had to say what I did to Todoroki.”

“…You were trying to bring it out of him.”

“Right. Todoroki it was just…too sad. I thought perhaps I should mind my own business. But, I had to. Because at that point I couldn’t take it anymore. It was so frustrating. I forgot why I was there. I lost myself.”

“…”

“I’m sorry.” By now, Recovery Girl had managed to get rid of the other students. All Might sighed and gently rustled Izuku’s hair.
“An unfortunate outcome, indeed. And calling you a fool, it won’t change it. However. Giving help that’s not asked for. Is part of what makes a top hero.”

Izuku Midoriya...finished in the top eight. - V

SMOOOOOCH!

“You should be healed enough to walk now.”
“Thank you…”
“As for that, that’s what you get for overusing your ability.” Recovery pointed at the right hand of Izuku. There were scars running over it now as she sighed. “Let that damaged right hand of yours serve as a reminder.” All Might had entered the room now that the surgery was over. He looked at Izuku and felt that pain of guilt wash over him like an ocean wave again. “And I refuse to heal this sort of injury from now on. Enough with this self-destruction. You best find another way for the boy to manage.” And with that the two left Recovery behind. Izuku was unsteady on his feet, wobbling and swaying. He nearly fell over a few times, All Might making sure to catch him. They could hear Mic doing his thing up top. Izuku supposed that another match must have been going on as they wandered back.

“Tch…”
“Another way, huh…” All Might rubbed his chin. It wasn’t going to be easy. He’d never had this problem, and thus his master had never needed to help him in this regard. So when it came to Izuku, he wasn’t very sure on what to do.
“Almight.”
“Hmm?”
“You originally became a teacher at U.A to find a successor, right? Everyone’s fighting with all they’ve got here. Their unrelenting spirits. I can feel how strong they all are. So I’m thinking that…” His voice was soft and wavering. Confidence was absent entirely. All Might came to a halt.

“That maybe, I ought to find someone else to replace me? Is that it?”
“Right…”
“...It’s true. The students here are all exemplary heroes in the making. “One for All” is a lattice of power. If someone with a preexisting quirk, like Todoroki, were to inherit it. He would become an undeniable superhero, with super strength on top of his fire and ice powers.”
“Well then…”
“But. I too was born quirkless.” All Might had just effectively dropped a bombshell on Izuku. “And being quirkless back in my day was also rare. Not as rare as it is now of course. My master, that is my predecessor, possessed a quirk. They believed in me and took me under their wing.” All Might nodded. Izuku couldn’t quite believe it as he looked at his teacher.

“Why didn’t you ever tell me this?”
“You never asked. Even though I was expecting it.” All Might gave a thumbs up.
“So, All Might you were quirkless too?!”
“Yep! At fir-”
“So why give it to me!? If you were looking for a quirkless candidate…” Izuku swallowed. There was only one other option. Someone more deserving than him for sure. “Why didn’t you give it to Vanfell?” All Might paused. He hadn’t seen this question coming. But he supposed it was one he ought to have. Vanfell was an oddity. Amazing, but still an oddity. “And what about, how you said you can’t be a hero without powers? He seems to be doing just fine…” Izuku’s gaze dropped. All Might sighed. It pained him to see Izuku’s confidence so low.

“Midoriya, kid. Let me preface what I’m about to say. Vanfell Zephyr is a one in a million student. His talent, his drive, his dedication, all of it. It’s unprecedented. Bluntly speaking it’s amazing. The fact that he was able to pass the entrance exam staggers belief. Everything he has done thus far is indeed impressive. You might well think he would make for a good bearer of One for All. However.” He lifted a finger and then rubbed the back of the head. “Don’t take this the wrong way. He was kind of like me back in the day. Chip on his shoulder. The way he carries himself, I have my doubts over his motivations. He may want to tell you he’s doing this for others. To be the first quirkless hero, that beacon of light for people like you once were. The reality of it, Midoriya...is I think he’s trying to just spit in the face of the world. Prove that he can do it, out of spite. Someone like that...just isn’t suited for One for All. I doubt he’d even accept it. Might just see it as a handout.” Izuku swallowed. He wasn’t sure how to take that. All through his time at U.A so far he had looked at Vanfell with a strange sort of reverence. Not like how he looked at Bakugou, but something similar. To hear the way All Might broke it down, even giving some tidbits on himself? It changed the perspective quite a bit. Izuku rubbed the back of his head. “But you? You just reminded me a lot of myself, but. Then you went and exceeded my expectations more times than I can count. In my heart of hearts, I believe...there’s something special in you, and you alone.”

“I’m sorry…” Izuku sighed. He rushed forward and gave All Might a firm hug. All Might made a song and dance about how his ribs were ever so delicate before pushing Izuku back. He rustled his hair and shook his head.

“The tournament isn’t over, kid. Shouldn’t you get back and watch the rest? I’m pretty interested to see how Mr. Zephyr fights, now that ya mentioned him.”

“Right!” Izuku had shuffled back out to view the tournament. He hadn’t yet gone all the way back up to where the rest of his class were sitting, but rather he was resting on a railing. Vanfell was about to fight Tokoyami...as the final match of the second round. He guessed that meant he’d missed Ochako and Iida’s matches. Which was a shame.

“Midoriya!” Iida walked up next to his friend with a happy smile. “I’m glad to see your surgery was a success!”

“Right. Thanks. But how you’d win against Shiozaki’s thorns anyway?!!”

“Well. I was aware my mobility wouldn’t count for much. So I tossed her from the ring with reciproburst as soon as the match began. Anywho, you can view the matches you missed on video later. So now I’m in the final four. Once Vanfell and Tokoyami conclude their battle, we’ll know the entire line up.” Iida cleared his throat as he gazed upon Izuku. “Your match against Todoroki, was quite informative for me.” Izuku let his head tilt down slightly.

“Say, how did Uraraka beat Kirishima? I can’t imagine it was difficult, but.”

“He called earlier.”

“Oh okay.”

“But he was busy with work. Even after coming this far, I still can’t say I’m number one yet.” Iida looked ahead out on the field.

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“Well. I was aware my mobility wouldn’t count for much. So I tossed her from the ring with reciproburst as soon as the match began. Anywho, you can view the matches you missed on video later. So now I’m in the final four. Once Vanfell and Tokoyami conclude their battle, we’ll know the entire line up.” Iida cleared his throat as he gazed upon Izuku. “Your match against Todoroki, was quite informative for me.” Izuku let his head tilt down slightly.

“Right...hey. Do you know if your brother, Ingenium, has been watching you this whole time, Iida?”

“He called earlier.”

“Oh okay.”

“But he was busy with work. Even after coming this far, I still can’t say I’m number one yet.” Iida looked ahead out on the field.

“Say, how did Uraraka beat Kirishima? I can’t imagine it was difficult, but.”

“Oh, quite simple. Kirishima is nowhere near as fast as Bakugou. Given he has to fight in close quarters, it was a simple matter of her landing one touch on him. Midnight declared him unfit to battle from there.”
“HEY, HEY, HEY! TIME FOR THE FINAL BATTLE OF THE SECOND ROUND! ARE YOU READY!?” Mic howled out. Izuku and Iida tensed. Their eyes watched the field. Vanfell emerged from his side of the ring, and Tokoyami the other. It was time for another battle that was sure to be...interesting. “THE QUIRKLESS ZEPHYR BLOWING RIGHT THROUGH HIS OPPONENTS! FROM THE HERO COURSE, IT'S VANFELL! VERSUS! THE STUDENT WHO EMBRACES THE DARKNESS! TOKOYAMI, ALSO FROM THE HERO COURSE! READY!? STARTTTTT!”
If Vanfell was honest with himself, this fight scared him. Yaoyorozu hadn’t been an easy fight. And she had been barely able to use her quirk. His fingers traced over his knuckles as he swallowed. Izuku and Todoroki would be able to blow Tokoyami away in an instant. All the raw power those two had at their disposal? Course this guy wouldn’t be a challenge. But for him. It was almost insurmountable. Tokoyami had everything. Offence, defence, mobility. In nearly every measure that mattered Tokoyami had him beat. That being said there were two secret weapons on the side of the quirkless student. Tokoyami didn’t want it as much as he did. He didn’t care what the bird would say, or what anyone would say. He was resolute in the fact that he wanted the win the most. And Tokoyami had a quirk. A quirk meant a weakness, something to be analyzed, exposed, and exploited. Sure Vanfell had no quirk...but it wasn’t easy to find an inherent weakness to a rock hard physical foundation. He exhaled again. His mother, his father, they’d all done so much to get him here. Ochako was expecting him in the finals. There was no way he was going to go out here. Fingers clenched themselves tight together as he shook his head and jogged out into the stadium. It was show time.

“Dark Shadow and I would like to wish you luck, Vanfell. It is a brave soul who ventures to face some dark power with out a q-”

“Shut your mouth. I don’t want your luck, I don’t need it. I’m going to send your ass back to the bird seed in front of all these pros. You’ll regret looking down on me.” Vanfell snapped back. Tokoyami was taken aback by the sudden harshness from his classmate. Mic sounded the fight off. There was no time for hesitation. Vanfell forced himself into a stand long jump. If he tried to run at Tokoyami, it’d be an obvious opener. This way, he had a plan at least. His knees tucked tight against his chest.

If he was right, Tokoyami would presume he was just trying to speed up his movement. Dark Shadow shot clean up at Vanfell as a result. It screamed in pain when Vanfell suddenly extended his legs. Boots slammed into Dark Shadow, as Van landed right within striking distance of Tokoyami. His left arm shot out in a perfect jab. Tokoyami staggered back, and Dark Shadow was quick. It slashed at Vanfell who threw his arms up in an an X to defend himself. Dancing backwards, Vanfell wiped his mouth. He had got first blood, so to speak.

“I don’t really see a way for Vanfell to win this.” Kaminari muttered. He didn’t want to admit it, but he also felt that his friend was outclassed. Tokoyami had been able to withstand his electricity. Compared to that, Vanfell had to be a breeze.

“Yeah. Tokoyami is just crazy. Defence, offence. He has no options to break through and get past Dark Shadow.” Jirou sighed. She wanted him to win but it didn’t look possible. Vanfell wouldn’t surrender. He moved forward again. Springing into the air he was banking on Dark Shadow attacking him. His elbow jabbed out to knock it away, but the Shadow moved too quickly. Adjusting it’s path just in time it managed to dart above the elbow. It smashed Vanfell in his face, sending him crashing back down to earth. Landing on his side, Vanfell winced. The student was not going to stop here. Izuku watched him closely. Vanfell snapped forward. His body was tucked low. It was clear he was aiming to force Dark Shadow to go low. This would let him take the attack head on, while leaving Tokoyami vulnerable. It was a good plan in theory. In execution it fell apart. Dark Shadow indeed went low. It slapped Vanfell hard across his torso. Somehow the quirkless student had managed to force his body to stay upright. Tokoyami was open! His fist sailed for the beaked face of his opponent, only to be blocked by Dark Shadow yet again. This damned thing was insane! There was a brutal howl of pain as Dark Shadow smashed its weight down on the arm of Vanfell. It was a miracle it didn’t break as he was forced to skitter away.
“There is no shame in admitting defeat, Vanfell. A valiant effort has been made here. The macabre intensity of the darkness is simply too much for you to handle.”

“Shut yer damn beak.” Vanfell hissed. There was always a way forward. There was always something that could be done. Even if it meant breaking yourself. Izuku understood this. All he had to do was force himself forward. Force those in his way to bend beneath him. All those years of training weren’t going to be for nothing. Light on his feet despite the pain, Vanfell bellowed. Another attack!

“AND IT SEEMS THAT DARK SHADOW JUST CONTINUES TO BEGUILE AND BEFUDDLE OUR UNDERDOG! IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR VANFELL?”

“Oh no...Vanfell. I really wanted him to win.” Ochako sighed as she dropped her head. Sure he would be a fearsome opponent to face in the semi-finals, but he’d been helpful to her. Plus she could tell he almost wanted it as much as she did. Her head turned to Izuku as she pouted. “Is there anyway he can? If anyone can figure it out, it’s you, Deku!” The student yelped, having returned to the stands. He wobbled and nearly fell from his seat. Ojiro’s tail propped him up as he swallowed.

“It is going to be incredibly difficult for him… Even if we can say he can get past Dark Shadow, Tokoyami won’t just stand there. His fighting style just seems to be countered by Tokoyami’s quirk. Dark Shadow can reach, block, and prevent Vanfell from dictating the flow of the fight. There isn’t an inherent weakness that Vanfell can exploit either. Off the top of my head...I really don’t think there’s a way for him to win.”

“ANOTHER DEVASTATING BLOW! VANFELL IS BEING TOYED WITH BY TOKOYAMIIII!” Vanfell’s arms threw themselves in the air as the wind left his chest. Dark Shadow had just headbutted his chest with so much force, he felt as if the rib cage would collapse. He skidded backwards. Damn it, no. His feet were just about to go over the line. All of this for nothing, eh? His mother, his father. Koichi, Popstep. Jirou. Kaminari. Time to let them all down, right? But one pro lifted their head. The woman with the green hair, and strange mask tensed.

“No way!?” She yelped. Her peers realized what had happened as well. A thin streak of blood stained the floor of the arena. Vanfell was hunched over. His arm had been forced to grip the ground to stop him from going out. Such intensity had lead to the skin being ripped away...but he was still in it. Gritting his teeth he lifted his head. Sweat was at home across his brow now as he glared at Tokoyami. He was akin to a wounded animal. There was a fire in his eyes that the bird had never seen before. All Might looked down on the fight from his booth. It seemed that young Vanfell was refusing to lose. Was it to be that beacon? Or was it the far more petty spitting in the face of the world. Huffing, panting, Vanfell stood tall. Blood dripped from his damaged fingers. This fight had been hard. Every single attack from Tokoyami had been worse than anything he had taken so far. It was a miracle that he was still standing. His knees shook. His muscles were starting to cramp up. His head was being pounded by the brutal tattoo of a headache. But none of that was an excuse to lose here. Roaring he threw his arms back. He arched upwards head aimed at the sky. It was guttural as spittle flew from his mouth. Dropping back into his usual fighting form, he knew he’d only get one more punch in. If he missed it, it’d be over. Sure he was able to get himself back into fighting form, but his body was running out of gas and fast. Tokoyami had battered and bruised him. Such a powerful quirk. Such an unfair match up. But who gave a god damn about that sort of shit?! He broke into a full blown sprint, barrelling towards Tokoyami.

“Such resolve. He must have become inspired by Izuku. Dark Shadow!” The bird flew towards Vanfell. But what Tokoyami hadn’t realized was Vanfell had a plan.

“Yer bird is only good, if it can see me!” His fingers unclenched. Flicking them open and wide, his collected blood splashed on the eyes of Dark Shadow. It was desperation from Van, and everyone could tell. Several pro’s were rather impressed. Many others thought it was a piss-take. A quirkless student continuing to degrade himself. How could he put people at ease, if he was depending on
using his own blood as a weapon? It didn’t matter though. Dark Shadow couldn’t see. His fingers closed again. Right for the face!

“Dark Shadow! Up, to your right. Strike!” Tokoyami hissed. The Shadow raised up. Vanfell had expected this. So just in time he hopped to the side. Instead of a full on attack, all that Dark Shadow’s claws raked across was his cheek. Three thin cuts opened as more of his blood splashed to the floor. But now, Tokoyami was open.

“AAAAAAAAAAHAAAAAAAAAAHAAAAHAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHH!” Vanfell howled as fist met with face. Straining his entire body he pushed forward and down. With a thud Tokoyami smashed into the ground. Such force had been used that he bounced slightly. Bile blew out of the mouth of the Bird, before he felt a foot slam down on his chest. Dark Shadow was feebly trying to pull Vanfell off him, but it seemed the fight was over. Hunched over, and exhausted, Vanfell waited to hear the words he so needed to.

“Tokoyami can no longer fight! Vanfell moves onto the third round!” Both students seemed to deflate. Vanfell just about collapsed, falling to a sitting pose. Recovery Girl was going to have a field day with him for sure. Tokoyami picked himself up, congratulated Vanfell, and turned to leave. “Hey. Tokoyami. If it had been even a little bit cloudy. Overcast, even. You’d have beat me. Don’t take this too hard. You’re...stronger. I just got lucky.” Vanfell huffed. Tokoyami watched him closely and nodded. With that, the fight was over.

“VANFELL’S FIGHTING SPIRIT AND INVENTIVE TECHNIQUES PROPEL HIM TO THE THIRD ROUND! AND WITH THAT, WE HAVE OUR FINAL FOUR!”

There was little time to waste. Vanfell staggered his way to Recovery Girl as soon as the match was over. He was told that the cut from Tokoyami had landed in such a precise fashion, that it would likely scar. He was chastised for his own destructive fighting style, before being smooched. He staggered his way back to the prep room. Ochako was his next fight. Should be easy but he’d do well not to underestimate her. Ochako too had left the stands. Much as she wished to watch Iida face off against Todoroki, she had to prepare. Vanfell couldn’t be any harder than Bakugou. That didn’t mean she could underestimate him. Too much was on the line for her to do that. But he was in theory a simple opponent. All she needed to do was touch him once. His lack of a quirk meant that if she could reach him, and touch him? It was her win. It was similar to the fight she had with Kirishima. That said, Vanfell was likely far faster than the redhead. A better fighter as well. No matter. She exhaled as she focused. She could do it! To the finals!

“BOTH OF THESE COMPETITORS COME FROM RENOWNED HERO FAMILIES. IT’S A FIGHT BETWEEN ELITES. TENYA IIDA! VS. SHOTO TODOROKI!” The two students stood in front of each other. Questions of legacy were on Iida’s mind. It was difficult to tell what Todoroki was thinking. “START!” The fight opened. Todoroki opted for his usual bread and butter. A surge of ice moved towards Iida. Iida however was quick to react. His engines flared up as he leapt forward.

“It’s his standing long jump!” Izuku noted. Iida grunted. “I have no way to directly handle his ice like Midoriya did. If he is employing his fire now, that gives him yet another option. In that case!” Todoroki had thrown up ice in front of him. His intention was to impale Iida as he landed. But Iida wouldn’t be taken out so easily.

RECIPRO BURST!!
Iida managed to blast himself to the side of the ice. Todoroki had no way to react to such an attack. "I have ten seconds until my engines stall! So before then." Iida lifted one leg into the air. Smashing it downwards it smashed clean into the back of Todoroki. He hit the ground hard with a growl of pain. The pros were impressed. Such a fast kick and a really solid hit. Endeavor was more concerned with the lack of fire, and the haunting words Todoroki had mentioned. But, his son was quick to get back up. Ice flung itself at Iida who took to the air. His hand grabbed Todoroki by the uniform. "I can make it!" He started to charge forward. With just eight seconds left, his plan was simple. Toss Todoroki out of the ring. But he came to a staggered halt. His exhaust pipe was blocked? "When did you?!

“When you kicked me.” Todoroki’s voice was ice cold. Iida was soon ice cold, as ice encased his body. “With all the wide ranges attacks I’ve been using, you must not have realized I can be more delicate.” Iida groaned from within his icy prison as Todoroki stood up, wobbling slightly. “I thought I was ready for it. I couldn’t dodge that reciproc burst though. Nicely done.”

“IIDA IS UNABLE TO CONTINUE! TODOROKI MOVES ON WITHOUT USING HIS FIRE POWERS!” Endeavor growled. The idiot was still confused… And Izuku felt a pang of pain in his heart as he watched his friend get utterly outplayed.

“Tch. Brother.” Iida sighed. He wondered how Ingenium was doing…

“This is the Hosu Police Station, Requesting Immediate Back up!” Ingenium laid out on the asphalt. Blood was splattered all over the ground. The pro hero wasn’t moving either. A tall figure in a suit hunched over him. A robotic hand traced through the blood, as the figure sighed.

“Hero this. Hero that. It’s all about you lot, isn’t it?” The voice sounded bitter as a boot kicked the prone Ingenium in the ribs. “Let this serve as a warning to the rest of you. Slink back into the shadows. Know your place...don’t look down on those who aren’t like you anymore.”

“There’s a Hero Killer on the Loose!”

The final round of the semi-finals was about to begin. Vanfell was sat alone in the prep room. Before he had come down, he had asked for no one to visit him. He wanted absolute focus. Ochako wasn’t a bigger threat than anyone he had fought before, in terms of raw power. However she had the equivalent of a kill switch. One touch, intentional or accidental, and his dream was over. This fight was going to be all about control. He had watched the way she fought vs Bakugou. Given that Vanfell considered himself on par with the physical abilities of Bakugou, he wasn’t too concerned. While he did lack explosions, he had a huge reach advantage. Ochako was only around 5’1. He was 6’0. So long as he was careful, she’d have a nearly impossible time approaching. Not to mention that well. He didn’t throw up debris or smoke screens while fighting. So as long as he was focused, composed, and accurate? This fight was his.

Ochako had too asked to be left alone. Izuku had protested, but she had made it clear she wanted to depend on herself for this fight. She’d done it for Bakugou, and Kirishima...She was sure that she could do it. He didn’t have a quirk for a start. This wasn’t her looking down on him, or anything. It just meant she knew everything that he could do. Plus she was sure he had to be exhausted after that fight with Tokoyami. The way he had been thrown away, and the way he’d been forced to win should have tired him out right? Sure, she was still feeling tired from the Bakugou fight. However, Kirishima had been a breather of a fight. If anything she ought to be more rested than he was. If she could handle all the power Bakugou had been throwing out there wasn’t any reason that she couldn’t handle Vanfell. Her parents were counting on her, and there was no way in hell that she was going to let them down. Steeling herself, Ochako was ready for battle.
“AND HERE WE GO! THE FINAL ROUND OF THE SEMI-FINALS! THE WINNER OF THIS MATCH WILL FACE Todoroki IN THE FINALS! AND IT’S BOTH OF MY FAVOURITES!”

“...Try to be professional, for once in your life.” Aizawa groaned.

“THE QUIRKLESS CHAMPION BLAZING AN UNPRECEDENTED TRAIL, VANFELL ZEPHYR OF THE HERO COURSE! VERSUS! THE STEELY AND FIRED UP OCHAKO URARAKA, ALSO OF THE HERO COURSE!”

“Good luck, eh? Nah. I shouldn’t lie. This is the end of the road for you, Uraraka.” Vanfell watched her from across the battlefield. She huffed at him and clenched her fists tight.

“Don’t underestimate me. I’ve got too much at stake to lose!”

“START!”

Everyone knew how this match would open. Or at least, they thought they did. Based on the two fighters and what they had done in their previous matches, the crowd expected both of them to rush forward. But oddly, only Ochako blazed forward. This time she didn’t bother to stay too low to the ground. She knew there wouldn’t be any debris kicked up by this fight. Vanfell had no way to do so. Her jacket trick might be worth a shot, but she was banking on just getting the touch fairly quickly. Vanfell just watched her, unmoving. Then when she thought she was almost there her face exploded in pain. The sheer amount of force put out nearly topped her. But her hand still swung up, swiping at where she presumed the arm would be. It was gone already?! Vanfell darted to the side, and made sure the gap between them returned to what it had been before. His jab had done as much as he had expected. For once he was calm in a fight. Getting fired up here was a sure fire way to lose this bout.

“A BRUTAL OPENER. URARAKA FINDS HER OPENING GAMBIT SWIFTLY BATTED AWAY!” Vanfell rolled his eyes as he kept his focus on the girl. She was coming in again. And. How cute. Her right hand was lurching forward, but in reality the main attack was coming from her left. It read like baby’s first feint. Vanfell pivoted on his heel. Ochako zoomed past him and received a brutal blow to her ribs. The wind sailed out of her as Vanfell then followed up with an uppercut to her jaw.

“Ngh…” She tried to swipe at him. After all, he’d committed to the attacks. But he was already gone and moving away from her. His reaction times were insane! Not to mention how hard he was hitting. Sure, it wasn’t as hard as Bakugou...but for a quirkless guy.

“You done playing around? Supposed to warm up before the fight, Uraraka.” Vanfell wagged a finger at her, his voice deadpan. If he was to be ice-cold, he needed her to be getting worked up.

“I won’t lose! I can’t lose!” Her voice was agitated, he could tell. Good. He didn’t like playing the heel, but what could you do? She threw herself at him again. Another sidestep. Of course he knew she would have learnt. So he jumped backwards as she swiped at thin air. If he wasn’t as good as he was, she might have just got him. Instead Vanfell just smashed a fist into her stomach. Ochako felt like she was about to vomit as she hunched over. Still, she swung both her hands at Vanfell. His follow up uppercut had to be abandoned as he hissed.

“Impressive. You’ve got some fire left in you. I’ll have to put it out!” Their pitched battle continued as the crowd debated.

“Sure, Uraraka was able to beat Bakugou. But she did it all with her quirk, right? Vanfell was able to beat Tokoyami all by himself!” Kaminari waved an arm up and down in support of his friend.
Bakugou growled. "You trying to suggest I’m an easier opponent than that bird brain!?"

"Given he’s went further in the tournament than you…” Jirou idly played with one of her ear-jacks as she teased Bakugou. The explosive student continued to yell. Izuku swallowed. Iida wasn’t here, but he found himself sat next to Yaoyorozu. He couldn’t help but start muttering regardless.

"Vanfell is good, for sure. But the issue for him is that one mistake ends the fight. All Uraraka needs to do is get a singular attack to land. Even if it’s just accidental, I wager that would be enough. Right now he’s controlling the battle, there’s no question about it. But he could get tired as things progress. If that’s the case, then Ochako will be able to maybe push it through at the last second. Of course, that isn’t it to say…”

“I wouldn’t underestimate Vanfell, Izuku.” Yaoyorozu turned to look at him. She had an impossible to read look on her face. There was a mixture of anger, pride, a tinge of red around her cheeks, as she lifted a finger. “The student might be exhausted, but Uraraka barely scraped by against Bakugou. Your bias for her leads you to miss two factors. The first being the lack of debris, and the second being a lack of smokescreens. If he is allowed to just be in his element, Vanfell will not lose to her. His control is too perfect, as is his focus.”

"...Right.” Izuku swallowed. He watched Uraraka take another brutal jab to her face. She was still holding her own but he wasn’t sure how much more she could take. The pros, for the first time, admitted some grudging respect for Vanfell.

“Kid is actually in control of this fight for once. He knows the way she fights. Ain’t going to let her get him.”

“Yeah. She’s utterly countered by his fighting style. Wish he’d been like this before, instead of that weird insistence of taking everything on his chin…”

“URARAKA HAS STILL YET TO PUT A SCRATCH ON VANFELL...OH I CAN’T HANDLE THIS TENSION!”

So the fight continued. If Vanfell hadn’t calmed himself before the fight, he would be getting annoyed around now. His fist cracked into the face of Uraraka again. She winced in pain as she slammed to the ground. The problem with this fight was he could never follow up. It was out of respect, mind you. If he attempted to do anything further, he’d be forgetting just how touch she was. Taking Bakugou head on the way she did had been impressive and had proved just how intense she was. So this whole game of countering and dancing around her was being done solely out of fear of her abilities. In many way, Uraraka was a more difficult fight than Tokoyami.


“Just gotta think... He has to have some kind of weakness. I won’t lose here, not now, not after how far I’ve come!” She rose up again. He was like some sort of demon. The way he bobbed around whenever she wasn’t attacked him. That cold look on his face. Then those reaction times, the sheer power behind every punch. But that didn’t matter. She span forward. Her jacket was launched at Vanfell. “He’ll expect me to use my quirk on it! And to wheel around to the side to try and catch him out. So if I run right at him, he won’t expect it. He’s so obsessed with countering everything, this ought to throw him off?” Uraraka lunged forward. Charging for him. Charging for her dreams. For her parents.

“Uraraka!” Izuku yelled from the stands, as he realized what she was doing. Yaoyorozu was also surprised. Both students watched closely. If they followed her line of logic they could see what she
was trying to do. This fight Vanfell had done little but counter and then dart away. She was banking on him countering the coat, but dodging a perceived attack from behind. If that was the case he’d dodge forward. Right into her touch. It hinged on her analyzing how much he knew about her quirk. Uraraka was hoping Vanfell thought she launched herself behind him, using the jacket as a feint! “Unfortunate. It’s over.” Vanfell with one arm just swatted the jacket out of his line of sight. “Intelligent play. It’s what I would have done. Which is why it won’t work.” Uraraka felt her stomach fall, and then she fell. It was the strongest punch yet. Her chin crashed into the ground and all the air left her. Her hand weakly pawed in front of her as Vanfell made sure to step back.

“No. That...was the best I could do. But it wasn’t enough!” Somehow she found a way back to her feet. For the first time in the fight Vanfell tensed. He felt something akin to worry and concern for his victory. She was lurching towards him as he cocked a fist back. “But still! I can still win!” Uraraka was coming right for him. Had to defend! But then she stopped. Her legs buckled, they gave out. The girl fell to the floor again, though without prompting from Vanfell’s fist.

“Hah...my body. It won’t…” Vanfell heard Uraraka muttering to herself. Midnight watched from her position. It was looking like the fight was over. She moved over to Ochako as Vanfell silently stood there. Mic was in hysterics, babbling down the mic. It wasn't very clear what he was saying. “Not yet.” Midnight lifted a hand to stop Vanfell from advancing. Uraraka was down but it was clear she was still awake. Midnight squatted and did a quick examination. “…Dad!” Uraraka whined. She had to get back up. Not like this. Not here. Not to him. But her body wouldn’t move. The devastating words followed soon after.

“Uraraka is unable to continue. Vanfell moves onto the final round!!”

“LOOKS LIKE OUR FINAL, pass the hankie, MATCH IS DECIDED! VANFELL VS TODOROKI!!” Mic howled. It seemed he was crying in between sentences. Man had really been rooting for Uraraka, despite his love for an underdog. Vanfell had since left the battleground. There was no time to waste. Before his fight he had to do something. His mother and father were feeling confident. He’d overcome everything else so far. Todoroki would be running on empty and also seemed hesitant to avoid using his flames. If Vanfell executed he ought to be able to win. The pro’s awkwardly felt like this had been the first good fight for Vanfell, while the student body muttered among themselves.

“Poor Uraraka…” Tsuyu sighed.
“I was sure Uraraka would pull it off.” Sero groaned and rubbed the back of his head.
“Guess Vanfell is just that much of a beast.”

“Damn, why didn’t I fight her like that? Gah!” Kirishima groaned as he rubbed his cheek. Kendou playfully patted Monoma on the head, laughing.
“Good thing you ain’t got a grudge on this guy. No quirk for you to steal!” Monoma just rolled his eyes.

“Nah. I’d be able to figure something out. He fights like an oaf.”
“Damn it! Today really is Class A’s day!” Tetsu howled out. The Pro’s nattered on about how there had been so many hard hitting battles out of the first years this tournament. Picking who they wanted for the draft was going to be a field day. Izuku furrowed his brow.
“So it’s those two? How’s this gonna go?”
“Observe and learn now. We’ll get our own back later.” Yaoyorozu remarked. Her phone then buzzed. It seemed she had received a text. Politely, she excused herself and left Izuku.

Iida had been gone to answer a phone call. He had managed to catch most of the fight, though he had been stood away from Izuku. It wasn’t to be impolite to his friend, but rather he had wanted to
be able to take his call as quickly as possible. Uraraka had put up an impressive fight, but Vanfell had conducted himself surprisingly well. But then his phone had gone off. Instead of the call being from Ingenium it had been from…

“Mother!” “Hello. I lost, mother. I apologize if I’ve dissapointed you…”

“No! This isn’t about that. Oh, Tenya… Stay calm and listen to me. It’s Tensei…” Iida paused. His mother didn’t sound like she usually did. Tensei had been mentioned as well. His mind raced to the conclusion as his mother confirmed it.

“Your brother...a villain got him.”

“Idios. Don’t even know it was me. Pathetic.” The same suit wearing figure that had crippled Ingenium was now leaning against a wall. He had an average build. Slick, gel coated, blonde hair rustled in the wind. A loose blue tie also bounced whenever the wind caught itself beneath it. One arm held a cigarette to his mouth. The other...was metalic. Small leds twirled and danced. Grey metal attached to his right shoulder. The police had arrived now. Rushing into the alley. “Look at them. Scurrying in. Set up an investigation. Do all the legwork to find out it was me. Then? A hero will sail in and finish me off. How stupid.” The man turned and walked down an alley, flicking his cigarette away.

“We meet at last. Hero killer...Kowaremashita!” Instantly Kowaremashita span on his heel. His gun came up as a misty figure stood before him. He didn’t pull the trigger as he shook his head. His voice was sharp and deep, bitter like the darkest coffee.

“You sure you don’t have me wrong? Mixed up with that lunatic, Stain?”

“Oh, please. If I wanted Stain, I’d have gone to him...relax. We’re on the same side. You’re already quite infamous. I really wanted to meet you. May I have a moment of your time?” It seemed this mist was a person...and Kowaremashita went with him.

Izuku hadn’t wasted any time. He had heard that Ochako was done with her treatment in the Nurse’s office and he wanted to catch her before anyone else did. So he scrambled through the hallways and promptly found her leaning against a wall. Ochako turned her face to him and did her best to give a beaming smile. Izuku stopped now next to her as she sighed. She rubbed the back of her head and shrugged.

“Guess I lost.”

“...”

“I just got carried away at the end. When I thought I could actually win.”

“Are you...hurt?” Izuku asked carefully. He wasn’t sure what to say, but it was a concern. Vanfell clearly hadn’t been holding back, as evidenced by the big plaster on the face of his friend.

“I’m alright. Well, I’m healing bit by bit, so my stamina doesn’t get drained. Just these little scrapes left.” She paused and then growled. She waved a fist up and down as she shook her head. “But darn it! Vanfell is just way too strong! I wasn’t able to put a scratch on him. I just gotta try harder next time!”

“...Are you okay?”

“Yeah! Somehow, I am!” Her phone was clenched in one hand. Izuku didn’t notice, due to being fixated on her, but it was buzzing and ringing. “I mean, you’re always looking ahead to the next challenge, Deku. I lost, but I don’t want to lose again.”

“You! I’ll...leave you to it. Just glad you’re ok.” Izuku nodded as he rubbed his head and shuffled off. Ochako made sure to smile, before flipping her phone open.
“Sorry I missed your call before...dad.”
“Not at all. I know you must be busy. Mom and I saw the whole on TV! So close!! But you were great out there, honey!”

“Nahh...it wasn’t close. And I wasn’t great.” Ochako felt her voice hitch slightly. It felt like she was starting with a headache, and she wasn’t sure why. “I panicked at the end. My last ditch move left me with nothing. I totally lost.”

“That right? I dunno about all that technical stuff. But just because you lost, doesn’t mean you’re done right? There’s always next year!”

“It only matters if you can win though. You have to show how you deal with all different types. Scouts won’t want me now I lost to someone quirkless..”

“Why are you rushing, though?”

“I mean.” Her voice wavered now. She was choking up. “I have to...for you...and mom...”

“...Ochako. You don’t gotta go crazy over us.” He heard her hiccup. Now the tears were flowing properly as she rubbed her eyes while listening to her dad. “Either way, I know my kind little Ochako, is gonna be a great hero someday.” Izuku could hear her crying from behind him… It was rough.

“...Right. I understand where you were coming from, now. What I said to you in that battle, and the way I condu-”

“Nah. Lemme ‘splain first. I figured you did what you did, cause I put it in my head. You’re rich, course you’re gonna look down on me. Quirkless kid? We’re just some minority, but you ain’t going to have the perspective. That’s how i saw it. How could a rich gal know bout the quirkless ghettos? Or all the laws pressing down on us. Yeah, course I shouldn’t think that way. But it got me real bitter man, real twisted. Sure you might not know, but you ain’t special in that regard. USJ, I should have kept it together s’well. Look. Way I acted was out of line. Way I judged you, was out of line. My bad.” Vanfell looked away. It was hard for him to admit all of this to her, but it had been stuck in his head since he yelled at her during the fight. Everyone here was treating him like a threat, least now they were. She looked at him her eyes closed. It seemed she was deep in thought, pensive. Eventually she opened them and nodded.

“It is fine. I accept your apology. I owe you one as well. I.” Her voice tensed as her face scrutinized. “Judged you unfairly, based on a single incident. USJ scared me to my core, but it isn’t proper to believe you know a person after just one occasion. Prior to that you, you had been a good friend and ally. I threw that away foolishly.” Her hand rested on her chest. “Honesty is appreciated. I strive not to fall into the stereotypes that those with money are prone to fall into. However, I will admit that I am woefully uneducated about the plight that quirkless people face. If you are willing, after the tournament, I would like if you could teach me. So as to prevent this miscommunication from happening again.” Yaoyorozu exhaled. Vanfell gave a solid nod and pushed his chair back.

“Course, course. Be sure to cheer for me when I win. Gotta go though.” He gave a solid thumbs up
to Yaoyorozu. She went to comment, but her face flushed red. Hands fanned her face as Vanfell pecked her on the cheek before running off.

“Y-you knave!”

“Your power is your own!!” Todoroki was ruminating. His final battle was about to start. He hadn’t expected to be facing off against Vanfell. In some ways, he supposed it was poetic. The student with no power, against the student with all the power. His mind drifted back to what Midoriya had sound. How his power was his own. “Before my fight with him, I never. I never thought about it. Mother I…” But his thoughts were interrupted by the door slamming open. His eyes turned to see Vanfell stood in the doornframe.

“Todoroki.” Todoroki looked at the student and then swivelled his head away. Vanfell grunted. The hell was this guy doing? “I understand you want to prepare, but what the hell are you ignoring your final opponent?” Todoroki still didn’t say anything. Vanfell, despite his prior good vibes, felt an intense wave of frustration. His fists smashed down on the desk. “LOOK ME IN MY FACE!” “...Midoriya basically told me the same thing. He smashed through what was holding back.” It was clear Todoroki still wasn’t paying attention to Vanfell. His thoughts were on what his mother had told him. Vanfell rolled his eyes and gritted his teeth.

“Who gives a shit? I don’t know what your problem is, Todoroki. I don’t really care either. You have your shit to deal with. Everyone does. Doesn’t make you special in any damn way. Let’s just be clear.” His gaze was focused on him. “You stopped using your fire. Don’t give a shit why. But if you don’t use it on me, I’m gonna presume you’re looking down on me. Don’t you dare hold back on account of me being quirkless. You bring everything you have.” Vanfell hissed as he shook his head. “And I’ll still knock you on your pretty boy ass. No pitying me.” With that he stomped out of the room, and left Todoroki to his own devices.

“AT LAST WE’VE ARRIVED!! THE BEST OF THE BEST AMONG U.A’S FIRST-YEARS WILL BE DECIDED. IT’S THE FINAL MATCH...VANFELL VERSUS TODOROKI!!”

It was time. Vanfell knew that the minute that the announcer started the match, Todoroki would try and end this fight with a huge attack. There was no way he could counter that sort of shit. Without his suit his only option was to get in close. If he could get right up close, and just pour on the pressure. Sure he couldn’t remove the ice. But if he was smart that wouldn’t matter. He swallowed. Todoroki watched his opponent. Vanfell was a dangerous one for sure. Any quirkless student who had managed to drag himself this far was clearly not normal. It was like his very existence was defined by this. Something that Todoroki found they likely had in common. Both students waited for the starting remark.

“STARTTTTT!”

And in an instant, the huge wall of ice exploded forward. There was dust clouds thrown up as Todoroki put his back into it. That ought to have ended the fight instantly. Even Present Mic thought as such.

“THE GAUNTLET HAS BEEN THROWN DOWN!! LOOKS LIKE TODOROKI WANTS TO AVOID CLOSE COMBAT WITH VANFELL. DO WE ALREADY HAVE OUR WINNER SOON?”

“He timed that attack carefully.” “It’s totally different than when he fought Sero…” While staying
on guard.” Izuku was impressed. Any minute now, he was sure that the fight was about to be called.

But to the shock of every single person in the stadium, a figure landed in front of Todoroki. The sight of the figure shocked them even more. Vanfell had landed, and his legs had wobbled. The back of his uniform was impaled on a spike of ice. His standing long jump had just managed to sail him ahead in time. He’d reacted just a second before Todoroki. But the pain in his back confirmed it hadn’t been enough. Blood trickled down from a variety of ice induced cuts. It was bad. Already injured. It was going to be difficult to beat this guy. But that ice limited the area in which they could fight. If Todoroki wasn’t careful, any further attacks would start helping Vanfell more than they hindered him.

“How the hell!?”
“Just what the hell kinda drugs is this quirkless kid taking?!”
“GET HIM! THAT’S MY SON!” Vanfell panted. It had already taken so much out of him just to dodge. But he didn’t hesitate. Todoroki lunged his hand forward. Vanfell threw himself diagonally forward.

“Quirk like that? His attacks aren’t going to be precise!” It was a narrow nodge. The chilled air whizzed past him. One hand shot out as a jab smashed into Todoroki’s jaw. Vanfell had put full force into it. There was no time to be holding back. It was 100% of whatever energy he was able to tap into now.

“He dodged the ice, and then hit him?! Wow!” Izuku couldn’t believe what he was watching. Despite his bleeding back and his prior matches, Vanfell was still giving it every single last iota he had in him.

“You looking down on me, Todoroki!? Use that damned fire side, you entitled brat!” He hissed.

“VANFELL AVOIDS THE ICE, AND MANAGES TO LAND A SOLID BLOW! HOW THRILLING!”

Todoroki refused to waste any time. He moved forward again. Another section of ice blasted at Vanfell. This one clipped his leg, slowed him down. Another blast nearly slammed him in the face as a result. A desperate roll to the side spared him. Todoroki was now just throwing the ice out non-stop. A blast head on! Vanfell threw himself just over it. He lost his shoe in the process, as he rolled up in front of Todoroki. A desperate punch was thrown. Aimed even. Right at the left side of Todoroki. Todoroki managed to sway to the side, grabbing Vanfell’s arm. But no fire flared up. Endeavor was gripping the railing in agony.

“Use it.” He hissed. If his son lost to a quirkless student, due to his own stubborn antics he would be disgusted. Todoroki made a pillar of ice that lifted Vanfell up and away temporarily. The quirkless student caught his breath for a moment, even as his blood started to stain the ice red.

“...The hell. I ain’t good enough for you to use that? Fucking asshole! You had everything given to you!” He roared.

“...The hell. I ain’t good enough for you to use that? Fucking asshole! You had everything given to you!” He roared.

“He timed all those dodges. Just so he could get himself caught by Todoroki’s left hand. He’s testing him. His battle prowess gets stronger each fight.”

“OHO!”

“Todoroki’s moving pretty well too, but.” Vanfell had sprung forward, just about managing to clear another wave of ice and smashed a right hook into the face of his opponent. Vanfell spat on the floor as he watched his foe get knocked away from him. “His attacks are lacking, and slow. He can’t seem to find his drive, ever since his fight against Midoriya.”
“YOU’LL REGRET NOT TAKING ME SERIOUSLY. I’M GOING TO WIN, AND PROVE EVERYONE WRONG. BUT THERE ISN’T A POINT IF YOU DON’T GO ALL OUT. WHAT DOES IT MATTER IF I BEAT YOU, IF IZUKU DID IT BETTER? IF YOU’RE NOT TRYING TO WIN, GET THE F*CK OUT OF MY RING!” Vanfell threw himself forward. His gambit had been realized. “WHY’RE YOU EVEN HERE, YOU BASTARD?!” No one had quite seen Vanfell quite like this. Except for Yaoyorozu. She knew what was in his head right now. And it made her sad. All of this raging against the machine to prove himself, and Todoroki wasn’t even going all out.

“Why am I here...? Because I want to be a hero. I'm sorry Vanfell. Since I fought Midoriya, I just don't know.” Todoroki watched as Vanfell flew towards him. As a result of the way Vanfell had dodged, Todoroki had trapped himself. Which wasn’t lost in the commentary booth.

“VANFELL HAS GOT TODOROKI CORNERED? I CAN’T BELIEVE THIS. NO ONE COULD PREDICT THIS ENDING!”

“Don’t lose. Come on!!” Izuku had lurched forward. His shouting was loud enough that it could be heard by the fighters. Todoroki’s face tensed as Vanfell growled.

“Damned Izuku. That’s it. Yeah. That’s it. If you’re gonna fight me. Fight to win! Come at me with everything you’ve got!” And Vanfell landed close enough to Todoroki. Even with his doubt, Todoroki instantly went to defend himself. Ice flared up on his right side. The angle Vanfell was at would make the jab difficult. Even if a jab landed, he could stop him. But several pro’s raised from their seats.

“No way!?"
“Is this why he’s been so sloppy!?"
“W-wait!” Izuku couldn’t believe it. He had been right. Vanfell shifted his entire body. It was time for the secret to be brought out.

“USE THAT DAMNED FIRE SIDE! I'M USING MY REAL TECHNIQUE NOW, SO MATCH IT, YOU SHITTY BASTARD!” Vanfell’s voice was hoarse, strained, and raw. His back dripped blood as he shifted into a southpaw style of boxing. Todoroki’s eyes narrowed. He could still defend against this. But then Vanfell’s fist collided. Vanfell had tears in his eyes, as he put every single last bit of his essence into it.

“SOUTHPAW FULL IMPACT JAB!” The crowd would hear a sickening crunching of bones. Vanfell felt the bile rushing to his throat as every bone in his arm shattered. He’d put way too much force into it, but it was needed. Todoroki’s arm also broke. Not so easy to use the ice now. Vanfell made sure to sweep his legs as well. Todoroki was airborne. His only option for defence now was the fireside. Vanfell’s other hand grabbed Todoroki by the face and rocketed him to the ground. If he didn’t use it... Todoroki’s eye flared for a moment. The fire was there, about to be used. Damn right!

“VANFELL HAS REVEALED HIS TRUE DOMINANT HAND, AND SEEMINGLY BLOWN HIS LIMB OUT AT THE SAME TIME? BUT TODOROKI SEEMS TO HAVE A BROKEN ARM AS WELL, AND THERE’S NO SIGN OF HIS HEAT! IN THE END HE...”

“He snuffed out his flames.” Vanfell looked down at the floor. Todoroki laid there unconscious, his face still covered by Vanfell’s hand. “Huh...get back up.” He hissed as he lifted Todoroki by his uniform. Even despite his own injuries Vanfell was still able to move, barely. “STOP MESSING AROUND. NOT LIKE THIS. I REFUSE TO WI-” There was a thud as Vanfell and Todoroki
collapsed to the ground. Midnight had intervened, her quirk disabling the angry quirkless student. “Todoroki was disabled! So...!”

“VANFELL IS THE WINNER!!”

The audience wasn’t quite sure what just happened. But Present Mic was happy to fill them in on it. “AND THAT CONCLUDES OUR CONTEST! THE FIRST YEAR WINNER OF U.A’S SPORTS FESTIVAL IS...VANFELL ZEPHYR OF CLASS A!!”

And so the fight had concluded. As had the tournament. There was a general jovial tone to the stadium. No one was still quite sure what the outcome meant but they had enjoyed all the fights. Even if the outcomes had been strange, everyone had delivered amazing fights.

“Now. Let’s move onto the awards ceremony!” The students all laughed a little, or were taken aback by how surly Vanfell seemed to be. He looked as if he wanted to be anywhere else, trapped up on the awards stand. Clearly he wasn’t pleased with how he had won.

“He’s been all aloof like that since he woke up.” In first place was obviously Vanfell. His back was covered in bandages and his uniform had been repaired. Todoroki was stood, silent, head low. Third place seemed to only be Ochako. Midnight tapped her chin and pouted.

“In third place, we have both Ochako and Iida, but. Iida was forced to leave early due to a family emergency. We all hope you understand.”

“What a shame. He was so pumped as well.” Izuku was troubled. He remembered how Iida had come to tell him and Ochako that Ingenium had been attacked by a villain.

“I hope he’s all right...”

“Now for the medals! Presenting this year is, well. You know who!!” Midnight giggled with genuine excitement in her voice. A large figure sailed over the side of the stadium. In an instant, everyone knew who it was.

“I AM...” The figure landed after doing several somersaults in mid air. “HERE WITH THE MEDALS.”

“He’s everyone’s hero! All Might!” All Might gave Midnight an awkward, and somewhat peeved look. She clapped her hands together, looking like a schoolgirl. “Ahhh. Cut you off. Sorry.”

“The first years this year are something else. Even All Might came to watch!”. All Might plucked the third place medal. He draped it over Ochako’s neck. “Congratulations, Uraraka, kid! You’re a tough one!” Ochako swallowed tightly as she shook her head.

“O-oh. N-ot really.” She was taken by surprise when All Might held her in a hug and patted her on the back.

“But depending on your quirk alone, won’t be enough to overcome a bad match up. Hone your innate strength, and it’ll open a world of opportunity.” She wiped fresh tears from her face as All Might on. The second place medal.

“Todoroki, kid. Congratulations.” He draped it over his neck and nodded. “You held back. In your final match, you didn’t use your left side. Any reason for you?”

“It was my match against Midoriya. I think I’ve lost my way. I know you have an interest in him. I can see why now. I’ve always wished to become a hero like you. But...it’s not like I can just forget and get over things.” He sighed. “That won’t be enough. There’s still something I have to settle
“That’s a new look I’m seeing on your face. So say no more. Whatever you must settle, I’m sure you can do it.” All Might held Todoroki in a hug as well. He took the first place medal and moved over to Vanfell. All Might couldn’t believe it. Part of him knew that if Todoroki had gone all out, Vanfell wouldn’t be here. But he draped it over the student’s neck.

“You somehow managed to overcome your lack of a quirk to end up in first place. To say I’m impressed in an understatement. But you ought to take care not to destroy yourself so much.” Vanfell was indeed in a sling for his injuries. When All Might went to hug him, Vanfell shook his head.

“Save it. Never related to you. How the hell could I? Just do your thing so I can go home.” All Might was taken aback. He swallowed, nodded, and turned to look back at the stadium.

“Well! These are your winners!! But hold on, everyone! Everyone here today has the potential to be standing up here!! As you all witnessed! Competition! Encouragement! Pushing each other to climb higher and higher!!” The sprouts of today will grow into the heroes of tomorrow! In that Spirit, let’s have one final cheer!”

So friendships were born of worthy competition - I

“Everyone say it with me!! One, two, and…”
“Plu-
“Plus, Huh?”
“Plu”
“THANKS FOR THE HARD WORK!”
“We’re supposed to say “Plus Ultra” All Might!!” Midnight howled as she smacked his back with her whip.
“Oh right. It’s just they really did work so hard and…”

Well. That might be a bit of a stretch but. We all realized just how important that day was. And then… - v

The students were granted the next two days off school. They needed the time to rest and recover. Scouting reports and such from the pros would be waiting for them when they got back. Beyond that they were told to simply enjoy their time off.

We’d start to gain attention from this point on. And start to really change - I&V

Iida rushed to the hospital. He pushed the doors open, and howled out. His voice pained, anguish dancing inside it’s timbre.
“Brother!”
“Tenya, keep it down. And wear a mask.” His mother tried to calm him, but it wasn’t possible. The Doctor turned to Iida, and rubbed their eyes.
The anesthesia just wore off. He opened his eyes, but I’m afraid he’s still out of it. Had we been two minutes off, it would’ve been too late.

“Tenya. Mother.” Ingenium wheezed through his mask, his voice clearly sending shivers down the spines of his family. “My amazing little brother. I know you...look up to me so... I’m sorry...Tenya. Your big brother...I lost.”

The next day Todoroki caused a ruckus in his house. His older sister Fuyumi found him intending to leave quite early. When she asked him why exactly, she was rather surprised by his answer. Her glasses nearly fell off as she spluttered.

“Huh? The h-hospital? Why so sudden? Can you really go without telling father, Shoto?”

“Yeah.” Shoto replied as he shoved his shoes on. Fuyumi swayed her hands, all confused and flustered.

“Why now? Why go see her now, after all this?”

“...” Todoroki remembered how she had said she hating looking at him. He knew that his very existence drove her away. That was the reason he never went to her. His mother had been his and his father’s prisoner this whole time. So with everything he got, with his whole spirit, he knew he’d say “I want to be a hero” again. He’d tell her that. There was so much he had to say. He stood in the doorframe of her hospital room. Watched the way she sat on the stool and looked out of the window.

“Even if she's not asking for it. I'll save her.” “Mom.” “That's my starting line.” She gazed back at Todoroki as the light caught in her hair. “That's how I'm feeling now.”

Meanwhile, Ochako was on her way home. She wasn't sure what she would have for lunch today. Something cheap. That sounded good to her. Likely mochi. Her hand put the key into her flat. Her parents had rented one for her, closer to U.A. To save on travel fare, so on and so forth. But strangely she found the door already unlocked. Was a villain inside?! Then she jolted her back straight. Her parents?!

“OCHAKO!!” They were running on all fours right at her, as her eyes leapt out of their sockers.

“Eek! Mom?! Dad!?” She was so surprised. “Wha, why’re you here?!?” Both of them had warm easy going smiles.

“To see you.”

“Your old man just had to come see his little champion.”

“We’re here to celebrate with you.”

“Huh?! What about work?! You came by bullet train?! Huh?!?” She stood up and sighed, wiping her eyes. “You guys…” She was just about to cry.

At the Midoriya household, it was lunch time. Izuku was getting used to eating with one arm. His broken one was still held in a sling.

“Seven times!! Isn’t that something.” His mom sighed.

“Yeah…”

“I fainted seven whole times since the cavalry battle! And the last two times were from dehydration!”

“You’ve even got me beat in that department…”

“That’s right! I know you told me your quirk suddenly manifested, but why does it have to be such a risky power?” Izuku flashed back to his whole spiel about it being a miracle of modern science, and so on and so forth. It kind of made him smile. “Of course, I support you, but that doesn’t mean I won’t worry.”
“Yeah...” “I’m worrying everyone who looks out for me... I need another way. My own way. So that no one has to worry about me.” Izuku sighed looking at his injured hands. Inko leapt forward and smiled.

“Wanna see the videos?! They’re in HD. HD!”

“S-sure. I’ll take a look later, alone...”

“When I find it. That’ll be the starting point. When I can say “I am here!”

The Zephyr household was quiet Charity and Gerald had celebrated the night of the tournament, and then left Vanfell to his own devices. Both of them knew he was frustrated. He hadn’t really won this damned thing properly. Whatever. Shuffling out of his room he shoved a hoodie on, jammed some earbuds in and hit the streets. Summer was coming, so the night was warm and hazy. A good way to lose his mind and just relax. But as he strolled, a tall lanky figure bumped into him.

“Ah, geez. Sorry bout that.” Vanfell rubbed the back of his head. The girl he’d bumped into was seemingly covered in dirt. She had bangs over her eyes. She was kind of cute, though with an odd aura. Van couldn’t place it.

“Nah, nah. Don’t sweat it. It happens. Oh! Are you the guy who won the tourney. Great moves out there. You really know your way around other people's quirks!”

“...Could say that. You like, a fan or something. Want an autograph?” The girl raised her hands and shook her head.

“No, no! Just meeting you is enough. I have the feeling...you’re going to be really one to watch!” And with that...Gomi went on her way.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the delay, it's a big arc! To tired to write all my explanations in notes right now, so if you have questions, leave a comment!
Two days after the Sports Festival, we were all rested up. It was raining. - I&V

Izuku was on the train. It was packed as ever. He supposed Ochako was further up, nearer the front. He’d just try to catch her when school started. For now he was just looking at his phone, pressed between the throngs of people. He made sure to like a post about All Might, and one about how impressive Vanfell’s run at the sports tournament had been. Honestly, he was kind of overwhelmed truth be told. There were just as many posts about him despite dropping out in the second round.

“Young man…”
“…”
“Young man!”
“You’re Midoriya from the hero course, right?” A guy yelled out. The train’s passengers seemed to all stop to look at the student. The man who had yelled his name continued to talk. “Nice going at the sports festival! Close one, huh?”
“Eh…?”
“You made it into the top eight, right? Pretty cool.”
“You’re smaller than I imagined.”
“Uh…” Izuku started to sweat. He was getting a lot of compliments from a lot of people, and he wasn’t sure how to take it. Huffing he really just needed the train to get to U.A, so he could get away from it all.
“It reminded me of the good old days. Y’know. That whole do or die feel.” Izuku groaned as he could only wonder what the other students were having to deal with.

Vanfell liked rain. The way it splashed on your skin and reminded you that you were alive. It had settled on him by now that he had won the sports tournament. His phone had been flooded with messages. All of his family were sending him love, support, and cheers. Yaoyorozu had sent him her regards as well. That message had made his chest real tight. She was a real dynamite gal. Good they were talking again. His fingers rubbed the boxing tape that he had on. His arm had taken a while to heal, and Recovery Girl had yelled at him for such arrogant behaviour. But at least now, he could box in his dominant form. His hair was slick and damp as he got on his train.

“Hey! Are you Vanfell Zephyr!? Can I get an autograph? Like, you’re a legend, man!” Vanfell coughed and cocked an eyebrow. Fans were something that he wasn’t used to yet. He scribbled something akin to his name and waved his hand to dismiss the woman. Another person, a young boy tugged on his uniform trousers.
“You’re like, so cool, Mr. Zephyr! That fight with the ice-guy was sooo awesome!”
“Heh, yeah. I guess it was, eh? Don’t lose your mom, squirt.” He rustled the hair of the kid, before another man stepped right into his personal space. Vanfell cocked an eyebrow. He always forgot how short Japanese men were. He was 6’0”, and only a teenager. Yet this adult was having to look up to him.
“So. How does it feel to win, cause they didn’t drug test you? Eh. Assholes like you make the whole thing feel like a sham.”
“The hell did you just say to me?”
“Y’know, he has a point. How are we supposed to think a quirkless kid can beat the son of the number two hero? Piece of shit.”
“U.A oughta expel you, and put that mind-control kid in the hero course. You’re just some no-good punk.” It seemed the mood on the train had turned sour. It was lucky for everyone involved that the train had arrived at U.A. If Van had, had to stay on that train any longer well. Fists might have started to fly.
“I’m wiped out, and it’s only morning.” Izuku groaned inwardly. His umbrella was protecting him from the rain as he slowly strolled through the U.A defensive barrier. Sighing to himself, he paused. There were heavy splashes behind him as he jolted upright.

“This is no time for an idle stroll!” It was Iida storming past him. “We’ll be late! Good morning, Midoriya!”

“A p-poncho and rain boots!!” Izuku gaped. “Late? But, we’ve got five minutes before the first bell.” “THE STUDENTS OF U.A. MAKE A POINT TO ARRIVE TEN MINUTES EARLY!” Iida hollered. Izuku was taken aback by this attitude. He also paused for a moment when he saw Vanfell walking by not wearing any rain clothes. Did he want to catch a cold?!

Iida and Izuku arrived inside about the same time. Both of them began to tidy away their rain clothes. Iida carefully folded his jacket into his locker as he cleared his throat.

“You need not worry about my brother. I apologize, if he or I caused you any undue concern.” Iida seemed to be taking it better than Izuku thought was possible. But it wasn’t lost on him that Iida’s face seemed to drop when he thought he was out of sight. By now, the rest of the class had funneled in. Much to his chagrin, Vanfell found all of the water on him now frozen. Todoroki seemed to have taken some sort of issue with having a soaking classmate sat in the same room as him.

“I had all these people talking to me on the way here!!”
“Same here! So many stares, it was like, so embarrassing!!” Tooru yelled as she waved her hands up and down.
“Me too!”
“All these grade-schoolers told me I made a good effort.” Sero groaned with a disappointed look on his face.
“Good effort.” Tsuyu replied. Her arms were criss-crossed as he rested her head on the desk. It seemed that despite their upbeat vibe, Class 1-A were still exhausted when it came down to it. Though they did seem glad to be back in each other’s company at least.

“One little event, and suddenly the world’s got its eye on us.”
“That’s U.A. for ya…” The chatter died almost instantly as Aizawa arrived. Their teacher seemed to instill a certain sense of dread and professionalism within the class.

“Morning.”
“Good morning!!” The class all chimed in. Tsuyu smiled as she held her finger to her chin, as she tended to do.
“Good to see your bandages off, Aizawa-sensei.”
“The old lady gave me excessive treatment. But never mind that. Today, we’ve got hero informatics class. And a special one at that.” Aizawa rubbed his eyes. Scars were clearly visible. That didn’t really scare the class. Rather the mention of a special class sent tremors through the class.

“Stuff about hero law and junk… I suck at that…” Kirishima groaned as his head smacked against the desk. Kaminari groaned as he gripped his fingers into a fist.

“A special one? Don’t tell me it’s a pop quiz! Give us a break…”

“You’ll be coming up with your hero aliases.” The class erupted in joyous yelling. Arms swung in the air as everyone cheered. It was time for them to shine and pick their alias, forever! Unless they changed their mind in the future. Paperwork could be a beautiful thing sometimes. Aizawa cut the chatter short, shushing the class. “But first. In regards to the pro draft picks I mentioned the other day. It’s based on who the pros think will be ready to join the hero workforce after another two, or three years of experience. In a sense you could say it’s a way for them to show interest in your futures. Of course, there’s ample time for their interest to wane before you graduate. And any and all offers can be arbitrarily revoked. It tends to happen quite often.” Mineta slammed a fist on his desk in impotent rage.

“Stupid adults and their whims!”
“So if we’re picked now, that just means there’ll be higher hurdles in the years to come!” Tooru whined. Aizawa bluntly nodded.
“Yes. Now. Here’re the complete draft pick numbers.” He turned his back on the class and scrawled out the numbers. What ended up being presented was surprising to quite a lot of people.

CLASS A DRAFT PICK TOTALS
Todoroki: 4,123
Bakugo: 3,456
Tokoyami: 360
Iida: 301
Kaminari: 272
Yaoyorozu: 108
Uraraka: 68
Kirishima: 20
Sero: 14
Vanfell: 1

No one was surprised to see Todoroki at the top. Nor was there much surprise that Bakugou was able to still be that desired, even after bombing out in the fight against Uraraka. What took people off guard, Vanfell included, was that the winner of the tournament had only one singular pick to his name.
“You write this down wrong, sir? Not trying to be rude, but I can’t be coming in first and only one pro wants me…”
“It’s correct. You can draw whatever conclusions from that amongst yourselves. Regardless, there tends to be more of a spread. It seems this year, Todoroki and Bakugou stole the spotlight.”
“Gah! They’re in a whole other league!”
“These pros have no eyes for talent…”
“I can’t believe the number one finisher, got one vote. Did all the pros team up to make a joke?”
“Shitty quirkless runts aren’t popular. In other news, water is fucking wet.” Bakugou growled as he shrugged. Vanfell hissed but didn’t say anything. He had a fairly big idea as to why he had been snubbed.

“Well done as always, Todoroki.” Yaoyorozu sighed. She wished she had received more. But those who lose to quirkless students didn’t deserve prestige perhaps.
“It’s mostly just my father’s influence… my condolences, Vanfell.” Todoroki looked to the one who had defeated him. Vanfell just shrugged, trying to play it off.
“It is quite surprising. I would have expected you to receive more picks…” Yaoyorozu sighed and gently rubbed his shoulder.
“You and me both. Don’t sweat it. I’ll just impress this one pro so bad, they’ll want me every year.” Ochako and Iida were both pleased with their results. But Izuku looked at the board in disappointment. He felt Mineta shoving at his shoulders and chastising him.
“You ain’t up there! Knew you scared them.”
“Mm…”
“With that settled. Regardless if you were picked or not… you will all have a chance to work alongside the pros.” Aizawa grunted. He remembered the USJ incident for a fleeting moment, rubbing his face. “It’s true that you have already experienced more than the average student. But seeing the pros in action, and taking part yourselves, will still be worthwhile training.”
“Figure that must be where our hero names come in, eh?” Vanfell rubbed his head. Ochako nodded at him with a wide and beaming smile.
“It’s getting real fun!”

“They’re only tentative, but you still want to pick something appropriate.”

“OR ELSE YOU’LL KNOW TRUE HELL!” A female voice the students all recognized burst into the classroom. “The name you choose now, may end up being what the world calls you. It’s happened to so many pros out there-!” The 18+ heroine sauntered into the room, running her hands through her hair. She’d just finished tea with All Might.

“Midnight!” Vanfell couldn’t help it. She was his favourite female hero. Yaoyorozu felt… jealous of the way he had reacted, but she wasn’t exactly sure why. So she simply fixed him with a glare, and a muttered statement about appropriate classroom manners.

“Yes. True enough. Midnight here will be in charge of assessing the sensibility of the names you pick. I’m no good at that.” Aizawa remembered how he hadn’t even come up with his own hero name. He had Present Mic to thank, or blame, for that. “What future do you see for yourself? The name you choose will bring you ever closer to cementing a certain image. Because names are capable of reflecting one’s true character.” Aizawa then promptly zipped himself up inside his sleeping bag. Izuku pondered. Just like with All Might… The whiteboards were passed out quickly, and the class fell into a frenzied whirling of thought.

Fifteen minutes passed. Though not everyone had an idea by this point, Midnight was keen to keep a healthy pace. So she stepped in front of the board and fanned her whip.

“Let’s finish up. Whoever is ready can start-~” She drawled. The class was taken by surprise as they felt dread creep up their spine.

“It’s like, a formal presentation?!” One student protested. It seemed Yuga Aoyama was the first student ready and willing to put himself out there. Sero felt that this kid had some guts to be willing to do it. The blonde student exhaled gently as he clasped their whiteboard.

“Here I go…~” He seemed to twinkle a little bit before displaying it to the entire class. In pristine hand writing, his name was visible for all to see. “Shining Hero: I Cannot Stop Twinkling.”

“It’s a whole sentence!”

“It’ll be easier to say if you remove the ‘I’ and contract ‘Cannot’ into ‘Can’t.’ Midnight gave some advice.

“I see, mademoiselle!~” Midnight blinked at his response. Was that English or French? The hell, kid? Mina was the next student to zoom up to the front of the class.

“Okay, I’m next! Call me, Alien Queen! Ridley Hero!” She exclaimed. It seemed she thought it was quite a good name.

“From the sequel!? Is it because her blood was super acidic?! That’s terrible!!” Midnight tutted as she waved Mina back to her desk.

“The weird ones were the first to volunteer, so… the rest all feel they have to come up with some good!” Izuku groaned to himself. It was so hard to just come up with a name that would fit.

“Can I go next, please? Ribbit.” Tsuyu had lifted her hand, as Midnight nodded. Her board read: Rainy Season Hero: Froppy. “I’ve had this thought out since elementary school. Call me Froppy.”

“So cute! It makes you sound like you’d be easy to get to know! The rest of you, take note. This is such a lovable name!” Midnight exclaimed. It seemed the class was in debt to Froppy! She had turned the mood around. Kirishima was next to take the stand. His whiteboard slammed down on the desk.

“This is me!” It read: Sturdy Hero: Red Riot. “Red Riot!” He exclaimed with energetic pride. Midnight tilted her head, a little surprised.

“Red Riot! Could this be a homage to the Chivalrous Hero, Crimson Riot?!”

“Right! I know he’s from back in the day, but he’s the sorta hero I wanna be.”

“Heh heh. Just keep in mind, bearing the name of your personal hero comes with a lot of pressure~”

“I’m ready for that!!”
“That’s pretty cool, Kirishima.” Izuku looked down at his whiteboard, and grumbled. “Before I met him I came up with a whole list of homage names. Mighty, All Man, All Might Jr., Mighty Boy. But… but now that I hold his power, and he’s assisting me… I can’t use any of those. The gap between us is just still way too much.”

“I can’t think of anything.” Kaminari was chewing on the cap of the marker in frustration as he shook his head. Jirou was quick to rapidly tap him on the shoulder, with seemingly helpful advice.

“Hey. How about ‘Jamming-Yayyy’?”

“Oh. Like a homage to Hemingway, who wrote *A Farewell to Arms*? That’s really clever.” Kaminari was impressed. He hadn’t taken Jirou for the sort of girl to read that literature. She was someone to keep an eye on, maybe, despite her rather tomboyish figure.

“Nooooope. It’s like, well. You’re strong but. ppffft.” She had to cover her mouth to stop herself from giggling as she shook her head. “You’re always going “yayyy!”” She scampered up to the front, revealing her choice to be Hearing Hero: Earphone Jack. Kaminari whined in the background, as another slew of students revealed their names. Shoji, Tentacole! Sero, Cellophane! Ojiro, Tailman! Mina, Pinky! Kaminari, Chargebolt! Tooru, Invisible Girl!

You’re all doing great. Let’s keep em coming!” Midnight cheered as Aizawa snoozed in the background. Vanfell shuffled up to the front of the class now. Brushing icicles leftover in his hair away, he cleared his throat.

“Down to Earth Hero: Everyman. Cause I like, appeal to everyone out there.” He’d thought about it for a while. There had been a moment where he wanted to call himself the man without fear… but he figured it would have been rather garish. Midnight nodded and smirked.

“A surprisingly soft name, for such a burly man!” Let’s keep them going, please~” Yaoyorozu swiftly followed after Vanfell.

“I hope to do justice to this name.” Everything Hero: Creati.

“How creative!!”

“Shoto.” Shoto.

“Just your name?! Really?!”

“Yeah.”

“Tsukuyomi.

“God of the Night!”

“Grape Juice!”

“It pops! It’s kitch!!”

“…” Petting Hero: Anima.

“Yes!”

“King Explosion Murder.”

“No. Do it again.” Bakugou and Midnight squabbled at the front of the class, while Ochako got out of her sheet. She inhaled and stood in front of the class, after Bakugou was forced back to his seat by a few lashings of the whip.

“This is what I came up with…” Uravity. She was a little embarrassed by the name. Vanfell though leaned forward and gave her a thumbs up. It was a good name, for sure.

“How punny!” Midnight laughed. She liked it though and made sure Ochako was aware of that fact. The teacher then took a look over the classroom and sighed, content. “This was a lot smoother than I thought it would be. All that we have left is Bakugou’s revision, and Iida, and then Midoriya.” The last two students she had mentioned seemed to look troubled compared to the rest of the class. Izuku was struggling coming up with a name, though not to the same extent as Iida. Iida had his head hung,
as memories forced themselves back to the forefront.

“Tenya. Yesterday… I wasn’t quite sure how to tell you this, but. I’ve lost all feeling in my legs.” Ingenium had wheezed it out from his bed. The damage done to him had been dire. Iida couldn’t handle the news at the time. He’d gripped the railing of the bed in shock. Perhaps it was his brother teasing him again?

“What?!! No way!”

“...My life as a hero. As Ingenium. It’s over, I think.” He croaked.

“No! You still have so many people to lead and inspire, brother! I refuse to accept it!” Iida had bellowed, doing his best not to cry.

“I don’t like it either. So. If you’re willing… my name. Inherit my mantle.” Iida hadn’t been able to stay in the room after that line. He had staggered out, past a man with messy brown hair, and an All Might hoodie. He did vaguely remember the man entering Ingenium’s room. Koichi, was his name, maybe? Not that it really mattered to Iida. His mind swirled...

And his marker almost did write down Ingenium. But tensed, gritted his teeth, and stopped himself from crying. He wiped out what he had wrote and replaced it. He wasn’t ready. Not just yet.

“Tenya.”

“You too, huh? Just your name…” Midnight wasn’t sure about this new fad starting up in the class but she supposed it wasn’t a bad name. She turned her gaze to see Midoriya seemingly ready and done to debut his name.

“It’s gotta… be this.” His mark scribbled on the board as he moved to the front of the class. His bandaged fingers gripped the board as he turned it around to show the class. The class for the most part was surprised. Ochako felt herself fanning her face for a moment as she wondered why exactly he had chosen that name. Why were her cheeks all red?

“Huh. You sure about that, Midoriya, mate?” Vanfell asked, rubbing his eye. Was he reading it right?

“Yes. I always hated it. But then, somebody helped me see it in a new light. It kinda took me by surprise, but. It made me happy.” “I’m no longer the useless Deku who can’t do anything right. I’m the Deku who gives it his all!”

DEKU.

His hero name was surprising to most of the class, but they all accepted it. Bakugou though did find it somewhat stupid. To use that shitty name because somebody had lied to him about him being useful? What a crock of shit. Ochako smiled and moved her hair to hide the blush that was rushing through her cheeks. But she twitched a little as heard Vanfell whisper in her ear.

“You a little warm there, eh? Or is it the bo-” He yelped as she poked him in his eye to get him to leave her alone. Vanfell fell on his back as he squawked and clutched his eye. Jirou and Kaminari dragged him back to his seat and chastised him for disrupting the class, while Yaoyorozu shook her head and put a hand to her mouth. How vulgar!

All Might was relaxing in the staff room. His tea with Midnight had been good. For now, he was trying to get to grips with the grading software for his class. Truth be told, he usually asked Midnight to punch everything in for him. She was very helpful in that sense, but she was busy right now. So while he grappled with the computer he pondered. Izuku hadn’t received any picks, which was a shame. Even Vanfell had got one, though All Might felt that was quite unfair. He knew the entire reason the student had only received one pick. Society still had a bitter attitude towards quirkless people. This even translated itself into hero society. All Might still wasn’t sure how a quirkless student had managed to overcome all the legal barriers, all the “legal liabilities” legislation. But he was interrupted from his thoughts by Cementoss tapping away at his own keyboard.

“The first-year’s pro picks are coming in. There’s one who picked Midoriya…”

“Oh! Who is it?” All Might swung his head to look at the monitor and just about wet himself. His
face went wide in shock as he coughed and spluttered. “But that’s-!!”

“Lord Explosion Murder!!”
“No. Stop. Still not good.”

There was a brief break after the naming exercise. The main issue at hand for everyone was who they were going to intern with. Mineta had leapt forward and jabbed a thumb at himself rather wildly.
“I’m going for Mt. Lady!!” He hollered. Tsuyu was unimpressed as she shuffled away from him. Her deadpan tone was still as present as ever.
“You’re thinking lewd thoughts again, Mineta.”
“AM NOT!”
“Mate, you gotta focus for once. Keep your spirit under control.” Vanfell wagged a finger at Mineta, before turning back to Kaminari, Jirou, and Yaoyorozu. They were conversing about their possible choices.
“You got pretty far in the tourney, Ashido. Kinda weird that you didn’t get drafted.” Ojiro mused. Ochako, stood next to him, nodded. She wanted to touch his tail, but she didn’t know if that would be weird? But she swayed her head to look behind her.
“Have you decided yet, Deku?” She somewhat regretted asking.

“First, I’ll need to research these forty potential heroes, and then divide them up based on their specialities. From there I’ll look at the number of resolved incidents for each since his or her debut, up until the present and determine which has the attributes that would be most informative for me as I am now. Such an important decision must be made carefully and without haste. I’ll also have to observe how each spends their time when not engaged in heroic operations. Yes, I’ll be busy indeed.” His murmuring was full force forward as usual. Ochako, Mina, Mineta, and Ojiro all laughed inwardly but also watched on in awe. Ochako couldn’t help but feel like it was a performance at this point. It had all happened as a result of what Aizawa had told them just after Midnight had finished their class…

“Your internships start in a week, for this all-important decision, I’ll be handing out personalized lists to those who were drafted. You may choose from among those who scouted you.” Vanfell rolled his eyes. Looked like he wasn’t going to have much damn choice anymore, was he? “For those who were not drafted, this list I just passed out contains forty agencies all over the country willing to take on interns. You will select one from that list.” Aizawa rubbed his face and continued. “Each has a different specialty and region.” The students remembered Thirteen being more of a rescue hero. “Give your choice some real thought.”

“I’m going for major crimes in the big city!!”
“I’d like a place where I can deal with floods.” Tsuyu ribbited and wondered if they had that.
“Submit your choices by this coming weekend.” Aizawa stepped away from the podium as the class stared.
“We only have two days to pick??”

Todoroki looked at his offers. Or rather, the front page of his 90 page packet. It seemed he was all the rage when it came to who wanted him. A lot of the names didn’t stand out. One agency did, however. His dear old dad wanted him to work alongside him, eh…?

“Huh? Battle Hero Gunhead’s agency??” Izuku looked at Ochako, quite surprised. He had still been considering who to pick when she’d come over to tell him. “Isn’t he a rough and tumble brawler?! You’re choosing him, Uraraka??”
“Yeah. I mean, he drafted me!!” Ochako struck an almost karate like pose. One fist was put in front of her, the other resting at her hip.
“I was sure you’d like a hero like Thirteen-sensei…”
“In the end, my fight against Vanfell got me thinking.” She swished the fist at her hip forward, while
the other fist swished back to her hip. “Getting stronger opens all kinds of possibilities! And just
doing the same old way every time is kind of limiting. Or something.”
“I see…” Izuku was impressed. He hadn’t expected this from Ochako. But it did make sense. She
had lost due to Vanfell just being that much better at close quarters combat than her.
“Oh, this is off topic, but a while I ago I noticed… you’ve been trembling.” Uraraka was concerned.
Izuku quickly shook his head and lifted a hand to explain.
“Ah, I’m practicing air chair.” He remarked. Ochako was surprised to see he was doing his best not
to sit in the chair, while being at his desk.
“Air chair!”
“During class too?! That’s crazy.”
“Air chair? That’s pretty old school.”
“What’re you saying? Air chairing is a great way to train without moving, cause it works your
muscles when they’re contracted!”

Vanfell rested his head on the desk. He’d already handed in his form to Aizawa, by virtue of only
having one pro decide to draft him. It made him feel rather garbage but he supposed at least it was
someone. He wasn’t sure why Aizawa had a weird face when he turned the sheet in, but whatever.
He was just about to drift off to sleep, when Jirou, Kaminari, and Yaoyorozu clattered over.

“Well. Looks like I ought to go with Death-Arms. My issue in the tournament was a lack of combat
experience. I think he’d be a pretty good choice for it.”
“Mhm. It sounds like an excellent choice. Uwabami, the snake hero, will be my choice. She
conducts herself so properly, and confidently.” Yaoyorozu didn’t want to admit that was something
she needed to work on, but it was the unfortunate truth at the moment.
“Gahhh! All the choices I had were so boring, and straight laced. Where at the fun heroes and the hot
chicks! I had to choose some lady called Ms. Joke. Only one that looked any good!” Kaminari
groaned. Vanfell grunted as he sat up at his desk, rubbing his head.
“You serious, Kaminari? Really picking based on if they’re fun?!” Jirou rolled her eyes. It was kind
of inspiring just how stupid he could be sometimes. Yaoyorozu was surprised as she tilted her head.
“It does seem somewhat foolish to choose based on that sort of thing. It doesn’t seem to be an area
that you need to improve on, confidence that is. Surely such an important choice merits more time
and thought?”
“Nah. I’m good, trust me! She’s real easy on the eyes, and I bet she’s got a real good sense of
humour. Just turned my sheet in.” Kaminari grinned before turning to find Vanfell looming behind
him. He swallowed, blinking. “All good, Van?”
“...It looks like we’ll be interning together. Ms. Joke was the only one who drafted me.” His voice
was tight as Jirou snorted.
“Of course! It just had to work out like that. Vanfell and Kaminari, having an adventure together…”
She snickered, as Yaoyorozu rubbed her cheek.
“Oh dear… it seems this might be a chaotic week for the two of you. Just do your best, I suppose.
Try to focus as well, Kaminari.”
“What do you mean try to focus!? I’m always focused! ...Just not on what I ought to be focused on,
sometimes.”
“This is going to be hell. You better behave yourself, or so help me.” Vanfell shook his head and
jogged off. Elsewhere, Iida seemed to have chosen his agency as well…

After School

“I-I-I AM HERE… IN A PECULIAR POSE!!” All Might had arrived just in front of the 1-A
classroom. His front was bent over as he kept bouncing up and down on his heels. Izuku jolted and
nearly fell over. It wasn’t like All Might to be like this.
“W-what is it? Why so jumpy?”
“This way, kid.” All Might walked down the hallway as Izuku followed. He was sweating bullets, and Izuku still wasn’t sure why. Was it something he’d done with One for All? Was All Might’s time running out even faster? So many potential issues, and Izuku wasn’t sure which one it could be. Then All Might spoke. “Someone has drafted you!”
“Huh. Huh?! Seriously?!” Izuku yelped as he waved his hands in front of himself, bandages flapping as a result. All Might swallowed, and turned his head back to look at Izuku.
“His name is… Gran Torino! He was once an instructor at U.A, though just for one year… and he was my homeroom teacher.” The duo continued to walk through the halls. “He knows about the situation with One for All. This may be the reason why he’s reached out to you.”
“To me? Such amazing guy?! So that means there’s someone else in the loop you didn’t mention. Izuku was really excited, to tell the truth.
“Gran Torino is a good friend from the last generation. However he retired so long that I forgot about him.” All Might swallowed as his legs started to quiver. “Did he draft you because he didn’t think my guidance was enough? But for him to make this scouting pick using his old name…”
“All Might’s literally shaking in his boots!!” Izuku was now suddenly feeling apprehensive as he watched his teacher start to shake all over.
“Anyhow, training you is fundamentally my duty, but he went to all this trouble, so I guess I can let him take a cr-cr-crack at it.”
“How terrifying is this guy?!” Izuku was now really quite concerned about what was to come next. “Oh. And don’t forget your costume! It’s been repaired.” Izuku nodded. There was some good news!

“Internships, huh?” Snipe remarked as he breezed into the staff room. He holstered his pistol as he looked down at Aizawa, who was sat in front of him.
“I wonder how many of them made rational choices…” Aizawa muttered as he flicked through the lists. He felt bad for Vanfell and Kaminari. Ms. Joke…
“It’s darn important, y’know. Make ‘em really think on it. Some of my third years made some choices they regret now.” Snipe remembered the air-headed Girl with the big waves quirk. Her first year internship choice had been well. Dire.
“Right…” Aizawa muttered back, before pausing. There was something odd about Iida’s offer. Manual? Not to look down on the hero, but he wasn’t that big of a name. Aizawa was sure that Iida had better options… but Hosu. Could it be?

The weekend flew by. Not many of the students did anything interesting over the weekend. Inko was constantly concerned about her son, nearly not letting him go. But she had decided it was the best option. Vanfell had planned to have a nice weekend. Until Kaminari said he was staying over. As was Jirou. And Charity had taken no issue with this. So his weekend had got turned all upside down. He was disappointed that… that one girl hadn’t stayed over. But what could you do? Jirou had freaked out when she found out Vanfell played electric violin. The two had jammed out for a bit. Kaminari had been taken by surprise. But then Jirou had felt left out when they started talking about the girls they liked. Though she had to say she did feel included when they got to Yaoyorozu.

And so it was time for the internships to start. The students were all present at the train station. Vanfell, Jirou, and Kaminari would all be heading to Kamino Ward together. Ms. Joke and Death Arms lived and operated in the same region. Aizawa had collected all the students together. Their costumes were in their cases, and many of them also had suitcases. It wasn’t required to sleep at the internship, but some students had no other choice. Some students would want to stay over as well. Aizawa looked them over, and exhaled.
“You’ve got your costumes, right? Wearing them out in public is strictly prohibited, but don’t drop them.”
“Yeahhhh!” Mina yelled out in excitement. Internships had everyone excited. Aizawa rolled his eyes
at her and shook his head.
“And don’t slur your ‘yeah’, Ashido. All of you. Be on your best behavior! Now go.” Aizawa
grunted, as the students started to funnel their ways toward the appropriate mode of transport.
“This is gonna be fun!”
“You headed to Kyushu? It’s the other way.”
“…”
“Come on spark plug. Don’t lose your mind yet. I got a whole week to suffer, and so do you.”
Vanfell grunted. He dragged Kaminari along while the electric student complained. Jirou smirked a
little bit, walking next to them.
“Aw. You two look kinda cute. Couple goals.” She teased as Vanfell flipped her off. Kaminari
managed to break free and jogged far ahead of the group. Both Vanfell and Jirou had to run after
him, to make sure they didn’t lose him. Elsewhere, Izuku and Ochako were conversing about their
internships. But the two of them stopped when they saw Iida. He was more serious than usual, and
just a little downcast. Their conversation ended as they turned to him.
“Iida!”

We all heard about what happened to Ingenium on the news, after the sports festival. About how his
attacker is still out there like a ghost in the wind. He had already murdered 17 heroes, and put 23
more out of commission. A quirkless cop. Kowaremashita, the Hero Killer. Iida never told us
anything. - I

“If it ever gets to be too much and you need to talk, just say something.” Izuku swallowed. It wasn’t
like Iida to be like this.
“We’re your friends.” Ochako nodded, feeling something akin to a pit in her stomach.

At that moment… - I

“Sure.” Iida stated before striding off.

I wish I’d said more than that to him. Because I would eventually come to regret that day. - I

Vanfell, Jirou, and Kaminari, all got on their train. Off to Kamino. Something about the place made
him feel off. It was like Koichi had talked about the place beforehand. As if it had some sort of dark
memory attached to it. But whatever that was, Vanfell couldn’t remember. And he’d later come to
regret it… the connection just wouldn’t fire in his brain.

And to make matters worse, rumours of a copycat were fluttering in the air. An insane zealot,
stalking his old haunting grounds in Kamino. A ghost from the past returning with a bloody
vengeance, to enact his toll on Hero Society. The Blood Stained Crusader, Stain! If only I had been
able to remember who he was before I headed to Kamino. - V
Izuku had been on the bullet train for forty-five minutes. He was curious, and apprehensive, as to who his mentor really was. How they were really like. He hopped off the bullet train and started to walk through the street. He had the location on his phone as he hummed.

“A hero who scares the pants off All Might. Gran Torino. I’ve never heard of him, but but he’s gotta be one awesome guy!” Izuku arrived at the building. “Gotta be one awesome…” And the building was a mess. There were creepers all over it, and it seemed like the whole place hadn’t been tended to for years. Maybe he had the wrong building? He swallowed as he stepped forward, putting one hand on the door. Moment of truth. It was pushed open as he cleared his throat. “I’ve come from U.A. High School. My name is Izuku Midoriya. Pleasure to meet… ah!” Izuku swallowed, blinked. There was… an old man. Laid out on the floor, face down in blood!? Izuku shook his head, and then noticed there was a row of organs!?

“AHHHHHHHHHHH! HE’S DEAD!” Izuku howled out as he nearly fell over.
“I’M ALIVE!” The man with messy white hair lifted his head from the floor, with a wide grin. He had a black mask on his face as Izuku gave a sigh of relief.
“He’s alive!!”
“To slip and fall, while carrying my ketchup-covered sausage links. How clumsy of me!” The man had a somewhat senile tinge to his voice as he shuffled forward with a walking stick. “And who are you?!”
“I’m Izuku Midoriya. I’ve come from U.A.!” Izuku yelped out. His face was pale. Just who was this guy, what was his deal?!
“What?!”
“I’m Izuku Midoriya!”
“And who are you?!” The man blinked for a moment. Izuku wasn’t sure what was going on as he rubbed his head.
“Crap. He’s All Might’s teacher, so I knew he’d be old, but really?” Izuku hopped on one foot, as he had to watch the man plop to the floor. It seemed the old man was content to sit in a pile of ketchup.
“I’d like to eat lunch.”
“Lunch!”
“Toshinori!” The old man seemed to think he had realized who was in the house with him. But it wasn’t exactly the situation as Izuku started to realize the whole situation was starting to fall apart.
“That isn’t my name! E-excuse me. I have to make a phone call.” “At any rate, I’d better tell All Might this guy is off his rocker.” Izuku moved over to the phone as the old man, who was presumed to be Gran Torino, rummaged around inside Izuku’s briefcase.
“Fire off an attack! Show me your One for All! I’d like to know to what degree you can control it!” Gran Torino hummed. Izuku paused, putting the phone right back in place. His head tilted slightly as he furrowed his brow.
“What’s with him? This sudden change…” “Uh, well, you see…”
“Nice costume. Put ‘er on and come at me!” Torino had a happy skip to his voice as he dangled the jump suit in front of his face before stuffing it back into the case. Then he paused and looked at Izuku. Suddenly, he seemed as if he wasn’t sure of where he was. His head tilted, the sparse white hair flopping to one side.
“Who are you again?!” Izuku groaned as his fists curled tightly together.
“Tch. I need to…” He exhaled, the frustration clear in his voice. “I need to get this power under control. As soon as possible. Because All Might, he doesn’t have too much time left.” Izuku turned his back as he filled with regret. This was going to slow him down, and set him back. “It’s why, I
don’t have time to mess around with you, sir!” Gran Torino watched the student as he walked away. Izuku set his jaw tight as he did his best not to get emotional. He was about to step out of the doorframe. But suddenly there was a lot of banging, and smashes. Gran Torino had propelled himself into the air, bounced off the floor, bounced off the wall, and now rested right atop the frame that Izuku was passing under. All before Izuku even had a chance to realize what had happened. “Then I’ll tell you once more.” Torino leered down at Izuku with a grin and seemingly boundless energy. “Come at me, you neophyte.”

U.A. was seeing a lot of visitors recently. The break room was busier than it had ever been. All Might was sat across from his friend Tsukauchi. The police officer loosened his tie slightly as rested his elbows on his legs. “A DNA analysis on Nomu?” All Might was confused. He sipped some of the tea Midnight had made. She’d gone out of her way to make a fresh batch for him. Oddly, there had been a heart and a whip traced in the foam. All Might wondered what they had meant, but he didn’t have time to dwell on it.

“Don’t worry. I’m not asking for your help with the investigation. Really this is leaking information, but I figured you ought to know.” The officer rubbed his brow as he placed the tea cup down. He didn’t have the heart to tell Midnight her tea was bad. “We’re on the ringleader’s trail. We’ve been trying all sorts of tests since then. It isn’t just that he can’t speak. He doesn’t respond to anything. There isn’t a single thought in his head. So we ran a DNA test, to figure out what we could about his origins.” Tsukauchi pulled a picture out of the back of his trouser pockets. “Turns out, he was just some petty criminal. Criminal assault, extortion, a whole rap sheet. But we also learned that he’s got the DNA of at least three completely different people in him.” “Huh?!” All Might coughed and a bit of tea spilled out of the corner of his mouth. Wiping it with his sleeve, he leaned forward. “Is he even still human?”

“It seems his entire body’s been altered by drugs and chemicals. In simple terms, he’s been bioengineered to tolerate multiple quirks.” Tsukauchi braved the tea again wincing as he swallowed some. “His extraordinarily low brain activity is a result of that burden. Well, the real issue stems from the fact that the different DNA… somehow lead to multiple quirks.” All Might grunted and hissed. “Taking in additional DNA alone wouldn’t result in extra quirks. That is, unless there was some other transference factor at play. One for All has made you quite familiar with that concept.” The #1 hero already knew what was coming.

“**It could be a quirk that bestows quirks.**”

Back in Gran Torino’s rather dire looking apartment, Izuku was finding himself confused, lost, and not entirely sure what was happening. Gran Torino was resting atop the door frame as he leered down at Izuku. “The way you used it at the Sports Festival... That justice obsessed fool All Might sure is a novice when it comes to teaching.” His voice had changed now. It was spry though tempered with age and experience. “Shall we begin, my ward?”

*The same phrasing, same way of playing dumb. For sure, this guy is…*

“He can’t seem to watch over you properly, so I guess I gotta do it.”

*“All Might’s Teacher!“*

“So put on your costume!” Izuku nodded at this demand as he dove for his costume. The briefcase was already open. Gran Torino had been digging through it, clearly. Izuku noticed a new piece of paper. His fingers scooped it up, as he looked it over. It seemed be the user manual!

*“Mr. Midoriya, while repairing your costume, we humbly took the liberty of slightly editing the materials, and design. We hope understand. Regardless, this version is way, way, cooler!”* Izuku
It didn’t seem like there was too many changes… It wasn’t so much a jumpsuit anymore. There was a metal mask that he let hang around his neck. The bunny hood was still present, though in this case he didn’t put it on. There was some gloves, and in general it seemed it had been made stronger.

“Guess the support company world is full of people like Hatsume. Either way. Looks like this is my test drive for my Mom-made suit, Beta version!” He clenched his fists, and spread his legs. “Okay! I’m ready.” Izuku paused though as he swallowed. “I-Is this really okay though?” His hands splayed out in an apologetic stance. “To tell the truth, I’m still not amazing with this power. Perhaps a wide-open space would be better? Because, if I get careless and accidentally use 100 percent… Gran Torino, you’ll be completely…”

“Geez.” Gran Torino shrugged and exhaled. “You sure talk a lot.” In one moment Gran Torino had been stood in front of Izuku. “I’m getting impatient.” The next Izuku his voice from behind him. Izuku tried to twist to react, but the boot of Torino slammed him hard. “Fire off an attack! Show me your One for All!”

“We’re actually fighting?! I thought you just wanted a demonstration!” Izuku staggered forward from the impact, as he heard a loud crunch. Gran Torino had launched off his back and smashed his own microwave!

“Seems you couldn’t perceive my true power before.” He laughed a little bit, leering at Izuku again. “To choose this little wet blanket as the ninth successor? All Might is a novice among novices.”

“Tch.” Izuku tutted. He was moving to make another attack. But then Gran Torino was already gone. The old man’s cape trailed behind him as he sprung from the microwave, bounced down from the ceiling, sprung from the floor, and smashed his boot into Izuku’s back again.

“Way too fast! What kind of quirk is this?!” Izuku gritted his teeth. Gran Torino had leapt away from Izuku again. He was bouncing around the entire room. It was hard, no, it was impossible for Izuku to tell where Torino was. “No. Forget that! With nowhere to hide, this is no time to leisurely analyze his abilities. I’ve got to stop his movements somehow!” Izuku started to channel One for All in his arm as he gritted his teeth. “Gotta will it not to break.” Torino was still bouncing away as Izuku shook his head. “So. He’s hit me in the back two times now!” Gran Torino was aiming to make it a hat trick, shooting for the back of his young foe. Izuku started to turn as Gran Torino lifted an eyebrow.

“Ah! Trying to analyze and predict?” He snorted. Izuku was now laid on his back. His fist was aimed at Torino. One for All blazed inside as he swung his arm upwards at his mentor. “SMASH!” It was about to connect, when Torino skirted to the side. He gripped the arm Izuku had tried to smash him with disarming the attack.

“So stiff. And your awareness is a mess.” Torino slammed Izuku’s head onto the floor. The smash had gone off, leaving a dent in the ceiling. Izuku groaned from beneath the hand of Torino as he sighed.

“But I was sure I had you…!”

“No. Because I saw the way you fought in the cavalry battle, and the tournament. I was sure you’d already figured it out, based on that. The respect you have you All Might.” Torino lifted the hand away and poked Izuku in his head face softly. “That sense of responsibility… they’re shackles. Holding you back.”

“Shackles?”

“I have to get stronger quickly, you say. It’s true. Time isn’t on your side, nor on your enemies. And they won’t want for you to get stronger.” Gran Torino had stepped away now as he picked up his walking stick. “You’re thinking of One for All as something unique.”

“…” Izuku wasn’t sure how to handle that remark. “So what should I do?”

“You gotta find that answer for yourself. I’m heading out to buy some grub.” Izuku watched as Torino pushed the door open, and started to hobble out. “Oh, and clean up this place for me, why
don’t you?”
“What!?” Izuku coughed and shook his head. “My respect...”

Kamino Ward was a hot spot for crime. Vanfell knew as much. Koichi had told him that Kamino had been the old haunt of the Vigilantes, back when they used to be a big thing. He rubbed his hair as he leaned back on the train. Kaminari and Jirou were in the seats across from him, squabbling. They were cute together. He’d never tell them that, of course, but it was true. It was also where someone akin to the “Hero Killer” was working. Apparently both of them were sharing the term, but the media were more focused on the quirkless police officer who had went nuts. Vanfell wished now that he had been able to go to Hosu, smack that idiot up himself. But eh, well. His only internship option was this “Ms. Joke” lady so he had to take it. He presumed she was an odd one, based on her name. Soon their train arrived in Kamino. Vanfell had waved Jirou off, as she headed to meet with Death-Arms.

“Well! Just us two now, eh, Van?” Kaminari nudged Vanfell with his elbow, as the quirkless student rolled his eyes.
“I am so very lucky, aren’t I. Quick march.” Vanfell broke into a jog as Kaminari started running after him. The two of them were an interesting dynamic. It wasn’t far from their train station as the two jogged. In between panting and huffing, Kaminari tried to speak.
“Y’know, you got your thing for Yaoyorozu, right?”
“I swear to god, Kaminari. If you’ve let the rest of the class know, I’ll cut your fucking balls off.”
“No, no! I need them, for a start. Well, I gotta tell ya. Been talking to Jirou. I figure she has a thing for you. Figure you’ve got more chance with her, than Little Miss Uptown Girl.” Vanfell had to stop jogging for a moment as he looked at Kaminari.
“You think Jirou… has a thing for me.” If there was a camera, Vanfell would have looked into it. He swore he could hear comedic music playing as he shook his head. “I get the feeling you’re more hopeless with women than you think you are.” Vanfell replied. Kaminari wasn’t sure how to respond to that. Both of them continued their journey. Jirou pressed hands to her flustered red face as she stumbled her way towards Death-Arms. She’d managed to hear the whole conversation. Gah, Kaminari!

Vanfell and Kaminari had managed to find their way to the “Joke Agency.” Their first impressions were… lacking. The building had a terribly garish colour scheme in an attempt to look modern. Green, orange, and yellow all looked they had been dumped on the rectangular building. There was a picture of a laughing face, that they both supposed looked… ok. There wasn’t much in the way of a fancy entrance agency like some heroes. There was something akin to a little walkway though. Kaminari went first. As he moved under what he presumed to be a metal detector, a bucket of water dumped on him. Vanfell paused, and snickered. The first joke had been had, he supposed. Though he wasn’t sure why he was laughing so uncontrollably. So was Kaminari. For some reason.

“Wow! You two must be my interns. Well, Kaminari. Don’t be a WET towel! And Vanfell, don’t FELL over laughing.” A woman with an orange bandanna had strutted out of the building. She had a beaming smile on her face, as her dark green eyes glinted with energy. Her seafoam green hair bounced as she continued to bounce on over. Vanfell, in between laughter, deduced this had to be Ms. Joke. She had a black sleeveless top on, coupled with some rather garish green and orange pinstripe shorts. Her waistband was covered with a few smiley-face pins, and her hands were covered in orange combat gloves. Both hands had metal plates around her wrists as she shook her head. Oddly enough she had a blue aura about her… that faded away. Both students stopped laughing at that point.

“The hell? Must have been her damned quirk.” Vanfell had managed not to fall over, as Kaminari
scrambled to his feet. He prostrated himself in front of Ms. Joke bowing low.
“I didn’t mean to make such a fool of myself on the first day of internships, please forgive me!” He spluttered, as Ms. Joke couldn’t help but laugh.
“Well. You two are just as about as fun as I hoped! Kaminari is already SPARKING out, and Vanfell… your name is hard to make a pun for, kid.” She patted Kaminari on his back and helped straighten himself out. Vanfell paddled over as he tilted his head.
“So you’re the one who took pity on me?” His eyes narrowed as he shook his head. “What a…” “Joke?” The heroine finished his sentence. Vanfell rolled his eyes as he folded his arms. Why did he have to end up with this sort of hero? Not serious in the slightest. If she was like this, odds were he wouldn’t be able to learn much from her. “Come on. Inside. We’ll drop your bags in your dorms, and then get down to it!” She wagged a finger at the two of them and then ran inside her building. Kaminari looked at Vanfell and then darted forward. Vanfell lugged his backpack over his shoulder, groaned, and sauntered forward.

It was… modern inside the agency. It had the same ugly colour scheme which seemed to extend to the uniforms of her employees. The layout wasn’t that bad though. A horde of desk bound employees sat in cubicles. It seemed that Ms. Joke, while being fun loving, was also able to be quite serious when she had to be. The rest of the room however, was very vibrant and wild. Heroes seemed to have their offices how they wanted. One man had an entire swing and slide set up in the back, along with a paddling pool. Kaminari had started to saunter towards it. Vanfell could tell his friend wanted to use it. Ms. Joke looked over her shoulder and giggled slightly.

“Not yet, Kaminari. I’m sure Mr. Ryota would let you use his pool. But later, okay? We gotta discuss what you’re gonna do here.” She paused and pointed a finger up a spiral staircase. “My office is up there. Your dorms are right here!” She tapped her finger on a door and nodded. “Don’t waste my time! I’ve got a whole list of jokes to be working on this afternoon and all!” She winked and jogged up the stairs. Kaminari and Vanfell pushed the door to the dorms open.

The dorms were actually pretty nice. There weren’t any other interns present. Given there was only about four beds in the room, Kaminari presumed Ms. Joke had to be a fairly pick host. The colour scheme was green and orange but it actually worked this time. Kaminari tossed his bag on a bed and stretched.

“So, what do you think ‘bout this Van? She seems real cute. And experienced! Surprised to see her taking this gig so seriously.”

“Whatsoever. Let’s just get our stuff together, and go see her alright?” His bag was placed on the bed carefully. His fingers rubbed his knuckle as he gritted his teeth. He walked out of the room. Kaminari tilted his head. Vanfell was really off today. It wasn’t like him to be this antsy and… edgy. Kaminari made sure to run after Van. Best not to let him go by himself.

Vanfell made it to the top of the stairs. One hand pushed the door to Joke’s office open. Her office was rather kooky. Figures of many different heroes were resting on shelves, or strung across the ceiling via string. Her chair was a swivel one, and it seemed to spin quite fast. A large desk took up the middle of the room as her boots rested on it. Vanfell was unimpressed, when Kaminari arrived.

“If you could wait outside a minute, Vanfell? Don’t BLOW me off, kay?” Kaminari awkwardly stood there. He saw the way Vanfell’s jaw was getting tight as he raised his hands.

“Woah, woah! With all due respect, sensei. Does he have to wait outside?! Seem’s a bi-”

“Yep! Don’t go sparking off at me now, Kaminari. I could retract my offer if you like.” She teased, wagging a finger. Kaminari just about fell over himself trying to explain why that didn’t need to happen. Ms. Joke laughed as she shook her head. “Don’t blow a fuse!” Vanfell rolled his eyes and stomped outside. His already foul temper was getting worse.
Kaminari and Ms. Joke didn’t have too much to discuss. The woman just wanted to tell him why she’d scouted him. As it turned out, she found his shorting out antics hilarious. Hilarious enough for her to offer him an internship. Kaminari took this in his stride as best as he could. It did feel a tad demeaning, but what could you do? He was dismissed. Vanfell didn’t say a word to his friend as he stepped into the room. He sat down. His knuckles were still white. Having had to wait to talk to her? Who did she think she was? Handing him an internship and then acting like she was better than him. It was because he was quirkless, and he knew it. Society as a whole saw him as a second class citizen. Someone to be shunned, to be pushed away. He was a dreadful reminder stuck right in their faces, and they hated it. All their “liability” laws, and that junk? Ms. Joke was likely planning to use them to boot him out on his ass right now.

“Soo. You got to stop frowning for a first.” She pointed a finger at Vanfell. His eyebrow twitched slightly. “And you gotta stop thinking you’re better than everyone.” Her voice was serious this time despite her relaxed position.

“...Right. I’ll keep myself polite as I can.” His face twitched, small muscle tics. “But what are you on about? Thinking I’m better than everyone? I’m looked down on by everyone. You understand that?”

“Nope! Well, not nope. So much as, hmm.” Ms. Joke thought for a moment and then wagged a finger. “You can still look down on other people, while they look down on you. It’s written all over you, kid.”

“...Well I am, ain’t I. It’s a joke.” He twitched as the pro hero snickered in front of him. “I win the tournament, no quirk. One person drafts me. But I won it. Took first place, and I get this as my reward. The hell kind of system is that?!”

“An unfair one, for sure! It’s a fellaire!” Her voice was laced with another laugh as she cleared her throat. “Doesn’t change anything about you. Way I see it, you’re just like he was. He never learnt though. Kinda a shame.”

“Who the hell are you talking about?” Vanfell grunted as he leaned forward. His elbows rested on his legs as hands rubbed his face.

“Aizawa. He came first in his first year! All grim and brooding, blah blah blah. Then he only got one non-mandatory draft pick!” She fell back into her chair laughing for a moment. “He could have been a huge name, y’know kid? He didn’t want to be, but I know you do. Why do you think I picked you?”

“...To waste my time with some bullshit speech?”

“If you want to keep being like that, I can boot ya out!” Her smile never wavered as she leaned forward and lifted one boot and slammed it on her table. “I picked you, to nix this issue in the bud. I figure you want to stand out more than he did, but with this sour attitude? Ain’t going to work.”

Vanfell sighed as he let his body slump in the chair. He didn’t like what she was saying but he had to admit she had a point.

“...Ain’t fair. Or easy. You don’t get that. Always had a quirk, always had a chance.” Ms. Joke watched him. She pulled her boot off the table, and lifted herself out of the seat. She moved around to him and rested a hand on his shoulder.

“Hey. Relax. We’ll figure it out. No chance to Vanfail!”

Meanwhile, at Ida’s Location in Hosu City…

“Usually, I’m just waiting around for a call to come in. But lately, y’know, Hosu’s been in a bit of a panic.”

“Due to the decreased number of patrolmen?” Iida asked. He was following behind the hero that he was interning under. Manual. The normal hero. Compared to the other options Iida had open to him,
Manual was the least impressive. His agency was small, though hardworking, and his quirk was nothing impressive. The man himself was also not the sort to help develop Iida. His personality was kind, plain, and simple. Rather ironically he had sent an offer to Iida, as he sensed a kindred spirit. He was wrong.

“That’s right. Sure is nice having Ingenium’s little brother with me though.” He hummed as the two walked on. But Iida didn’t respond. His own thoughts showed, that in a sense, Manual had no idea of the actual situation.

“The Hero Killer. A phantom that even modern law enforcement hasn’t been able to catch. One of their very own men… It may all be in vain, but I can’t help but want to pursue him.” Iida looked across the street, down an alley. There was a tightness in his throat and a pain across his head. “Because I can never forgive him.”

Kowaremashita rested one hand on the bar, his normal hand. In the robotic hand he held a small shot glass, filled with whiskey. His dead blue eyes watched the other two people in the room carefully. The man made out of mist, and the brat playing villain. They had brought him to their little establishment and ran some sort of sorry tale at him. The man downed his whiskey and placed the shot glass back on the counter.

“Figure it’s pretty simple. You’re the limp-dicks that attacked U.A, right? Stupid plan but whatever. You want me to join this little circle jerk, right?” Koware wasn’t impressed. Years of being on the force? You see this sort of stuff all the time. Little people who want to feel like they mean something. Hell, he knew that feeling all too well. Shigaraki hissed a bit but continued to be laid back.

“Yeah, right on point. When it comes to being evil, you’re the gold standard. How would the heroes react when the find out an officer worked for the villains?”

“...Whatever. You want to tell me what you’re actually trying to do? Or is this just like a pyramid scheme? All flash and no substance?”

“...We want to kill All Might at some point. But I also want to destroy everything I don’t like.” Shigaraki growled as he rumbled under the counter. He fished out a picture and presented it to Koware. “Like… this little brat, for instance.” Izuku was displayed as Koware rolled his eyes. “Everything!”

“...Impressive. You can’t even get me to care at all. Way I see this whole thing.” The police officer put his glass down and lifted his pistol from it’s holster. The SIG Sauer P226. Standard order for swat agents like him. Beautiful little device when it came to dealing with quirks. His metal arm carefully extended, the gears whirling inside as he shook his head.

“Huh?” Shigaraki twitched. His eye widened slightly as Kurogiri gritted his teeth. “Is a brat trying to get a man to stoop to his level. You want me for a punchline, a sound byte.” The metal thumb disengaged the safety. “Ought to shoot you on the spot.”

“Tomura Shigaraki knows little but the impulse to destroy. I thought inviting this man here might help him to grow...but it appears I was wrong.” Kurogiri swivelled to look at the monitor, glowing white. “Sensei. Should I intervene!!”

“No, this is fine!” The voice from before crackled out, silky smooth with the hint of malice running through it. “There isn’t any merit in simply telling someone an answer. He must be taught to reach such conclusions himself! It is our duty to help him mature! That’s what ‘education’ really means.”

The kitchen of Gran Torino’s house was still a mess. His microwave was broken from the impact of his landing. Dirty dishes were stacked high in the sink. The silverware was strewn all over the place. In theory, Izuku should have been cleaning the house as per the wishes of his host. Instead, the young student was standing in front of the microwave. One hand rubbed up against his cheek and chin as he muttered. It seemed he was deep in thought about a potential solution to his issue.

“My respect for All Might is shackling me. I should understand how to use it… And I’ve been thinking of One for All as more unique than it is. Is that the reason my movements are so stiff? What does “stiff” mean in the first place. I suppose the opposite would be “loose…” He came to a halt as
he recalled how Bakugou used his quirk in combat. It was effortlessly applied to his every movement. Then he caught upon the way that Vanfell never seemed to hesitate. Every motion the quirkless student made during combat seemed to be harmonious. If he combined these two ideas… he darted for his backpack. “That’s it!” His pen came out and his notebook was slammed open.

“I was thinking of it as some supersecret last-resort trump card.” The pen scribbled in long lines as his mind whirred ahead. “Right. A quirk is just an extension of our body! I have to… I have to use One for All more evenly!” “Can’t believe I never noticed after that time watching them up close!” Izuku was giddy now as he let his mind run a million miles ahead of itself. “Right! It makes sense! I was just blindly accepting it all and learning by rote, but…” What he was unaware of was that Gran Torino had never left. The elder was still stood just outside as he smirked.

“Kid knows how to think. His moves at the sports festival told me that much, at least. Heh. Maybe you did pick a good one after all, Toshinori… All Might.”

Vanfell and Kaminari had found that little time was wasted at the Joke Agency. They were herded out of the dorms. Swiftly told to change into their costumes and to meet her outside. It seemed they would be going on patrol for the rest of the afternoon, all of the evening, and a good chunk of the morning. Kamino Ward was known for its crime rates so that wasn’t all that surprising. As the two students struggled to keep with their tutor, they saw Jirou. She didn’t have much time to talk as she struggled to keep pace with Death-Arms. It seemed she was off to go and deal with a hostage situation downtown. They wished her luck as she went and returned to their business.

So! Rule one, of heroism! Always have a smile, joke, and friendly face for the public. We don’t want to SHOCK them, eh? Or BLOW them away, eh?” Her two jokes fell flat. Huffing, she turned her head away. “No sense of humour!”

“The only joke here is your dres-” Vanfell was jabbed in the mouth by Kaminari as he hissed. The electric student wagged his finger.

“Don’t address a lady like that! She deserves our utmost respect and attention.” Vanfell rolled his eyes and rubbed his cheek.

“She still ain’t going to bang ya, Kaminari. Move on, champ.” The two fell into good natured banter as Ms. Joke lead them through the city. It was notable that Kaminari seemed to be much easier with the public than Vanfell.

“No worries, ladies! With Chargebolt on the scene, I’ll keep you safe. That tingling spine ain’t nothing to do with my quirk either~” If there was a camera, Ms. Joke and Vanfell would have looked into it.

“Decent work, Kaminari. Though, I don’t think you’ll be getting any calls from that!” She laughed. “Your up next Vanfell, field the next group. Everyman should be your fan right?” She winked, happy with her pun as Vanfell grunted.

“You can count on me to keep you safe. Me and uh… iron and steel.” He lifted his two fists and waved them. The crowd looked at him as if he had just made a fool of himself in public. Which it rather seem he had. Kaminari winced and Ms. Joke shook her head. Just as she was about to step forward to give Vanfell some advice, another man pushed forward. He was wearing a hero costume as she tilted her head. One of her colleagues?

“The hell you doing, Emi?” The man had what appeared to be a flat head. Ms. Joke recognized him. Hammerhead. The Metal Plate hero, named after the well. Metal plate in his head. He had a rather aggressive square face… but he was a nice enough guy. But it seemed he was glaring at Vanfell. Despite being a bit shorter than him. Vanfell was starting to like being foreign.

“You cool, Hammerhead? Not got a migraine? Figure some aspirin would HAMMER that right away.” He rolled his eyes.

“The joke is almost as bad as the fact you’re entertaining this genetic reject. Like, what are you doing with this quirkless kid? He’s a mockery of our system, Emi. We keep these guys in the shadows for a reason. It’s embarrassing, seeing you debase yourself like this.” He shook his finger. “Not to mention
we got that quirkless cop killing heroes at the moment. But sure, hang with someone just like him.” Ms. Joke was about to intervene but Vanfell had stepped forward. He rapped his knuckle against the forehead of this new pro.

“Man. Shorter than a kid. Dumber too, right? God, your quirk takes up all that space in your head? Man, being quirkless is better than being this damn dense.” Vanfell shrugged as he tilted his head.

“Maybe you’re the one giving that Stain fella his talking points, eh? Being such an asshole and all.” Hammerhead lurched forward reaching for Vanfell. Kaminari was quick to skitter himself between the two.

"Woah, woah! Why don’t we all just calm down. No need to get all antsy, right?” His head dipped to the side as he whispered at Vanfell. “Dude, cool it. This guy’s a real pro!”

“Real pro at being a dipshit. All that headbutting he does? Must have killed his brain cells. Arseholes like you are why I’m gonna be a hero. Better than you as well. Mr… oh, #257? Don’t step to me.”

“You see this bullshit, Emi? You pick this kid up, this genetic reject. You give him a chance, let him actually hob-knob with the important people. Idiot runs his mouth like he’s not a charity case. Embarrassing. Remember kid, you’re a damn joke. Only reason you ain’t in the slums where you belong? You’re a foreigner as well. Get back to England. Oh wait, you couldn’t cut it there either.”

“You want to stop looking down on others, Hammer? Last time I checked, you’re not a child. Acting like you’re better than people is a sure fire way to take a fall and end up failing. Go cool off, come back, and then you can apologize to Vanfell. Just like he’ll apologize to you.”

“Like hel-” Vanfell was shut up by Kaminari jabbing an electrified finger in his spine. Hammerhead glared at Ms. Joke before storming off. The female pro hero let out a huff as she swivelled on her heel and shook her head at Vanfell.

“Look. He was totally out of line, and I’m not going to condone what he said. But at the same time Vanfell, you have to not let it get to you. And I hope you’re not serious about being a hero to prove people wrong. That’s a sure fire way to end up never achieving much. Make people look up to you, don’t look down on them.”

“...Yeah, yeah. Whatever. I’ll let pricks talk to me like that whenever I want.” He waved his hand at her hand as his head dropped low. She kept talking to him as they resumed walking. He wasn’t listening very much now. Course that hero was in the right, sure. He couldn’t cut it in England. If Japan treated quirkless people poorly, England was down right draconian. If you were quirkless? You were registered, monitored. Didn’t want to disturb the peace. Had to fall into a nice little regimental line. His ma had been able to avoid it by virtue of her popularity. Him not so much. There wasn’t even a chance for him to be a hero back home. Every single school had a no quirkless candidate rule. Sure, Japan was bad. Legal quirkless ghettos. Those dumb shit “liability laws” which made it nigh on impossible to apply to hero schools if you were quirkless. All the backwards attitudes that people held. But it wasn’t as bad as home. She wouldn’t get that though. It wasn’t so much “looking down” on them. Rather Vanfell wanted them to realize they were wrong. So what if he didn’t have a fucking quirk factor? Somehow that made him lesser? His fingers curled into tight fists as his teeth started to grind against each other. What a load of damned shit!

The other students were well underway with their internships. Most of them had ended up in Tokyo city. Best Jeanist had his agency in the city. It was stylish much like him. His workers were also all quite trendy and chic. Which made Bakugou stand out all the more. His spiky hair and aggressive costume was an oddity.

“To be honest, I’m not a fan of yours.” Best Jeanist remarked. His blonde hair and shirt covered most of his face. It made it hard to tell what the man was thinking at any given time. Bakugou grunted, cocking an eyebrow.

“Huh?”

“And I suspect the only reason you chose my agency...is because I’m one of the top five most popular heroes, yes?”
“But you decided to draft me…” He growled, starting to get frustrated. He’d already been made a fool of in that damned festival. Now his selected hero was getting all up tight with him?

“Yes! Because all I’ve had to work with lately are trite do-gooders. But you’re the first in a long time who, well.” Jeanist, the #4 hero, adjusted his hair and sighed. “Is a splash more aggressive. My job as a hero is reforming such people. Heroes and villains are just two sides of the same coin. It’s written all over that glare of yours. So, pray tell? What is it that really makes someone a hero?”

Fourth Kind, the chivalrous hero, adjusted his suit with one hand. The other three hands were gesticulating.

“Well. It is true. I do receive my pay from the state, which technically makes me a government employee. But given my status, I am nothing like your average government worker.” He explained. His interns weren’t listening. Kirishima and Tetsu were more surprised both of them were here. Fourth Kind blinked. “You listening? I was allowed to take on two students, so I want to inform you both what this work is actually like.”

“Basically, my job is getting a handle on crime, okay? When something bad happens, the police call me for help. Each district sends their requests in batches, okay? I write up nice reports describing how much help I was at catching bad guys and saving people. Once the speciality organization does it little examination, they put money into my bank account, okay? It’s mostly on commission.” The battle hero gunhead fired off information about his work to Ochako. She couldn’t help but find the way he talked super cute!

“What else?” The Snake Hero, Uwabami, tapped her chin as she thought. “Right. We’re also able to do side work. You might have heard how we are permitted to use part of our sanctioned public service hours for such things. It’s just one perk of being popular and in public demand.” She explained. Then she turned her face to a mirror, running lipstick over her lips. “Which is why I am about to shoot a commercial. Do come along and watch~”

“I was kind of hoping to experience something a little more hero like.” Kendou, from 1-B, remarked as politely as she could. But Yaoyorozu wasn’t having any of that. Her fist clenched as she shook her head.

“No! This is a path we will have to walk when we go pro. Not to mention that she opted to favor me, utterly undeserving though I am. I am resolute that this will be a great learning experience!!”

“Don’t strain yourself there…”

Night on the First Day…

“Mgrmph…” Gran Torino was asleep. It seemed the old man had quite the snoring habit. Izuku was a bit disappointed. All that happened today was he’d been observed. Nothing all that heroic.

“Gran Torino. I didn’t get any hits when I searched his name. A teacher at U.A for only one year. He’s pretty mysterious.” Izuku opened the doors to Torino’s establishment and snuck out. He checked to make sure no one was around. He had to get his quirk figured out...and he had to do it quick. “Gotta think of it more evenly. For Kacchan and the others, quirks are as natural as breathing. But I still think of mine in terms of “using” or “not using”...and unlike Vanfell, I’m super stiff.” Izuku rubbed his face as he muttered to him, walking down the street. His thoughts pondered some of Bakugou’s moves, and the moves that Vanfell had used. “If I could manage using 5 percent of my power...just as naturally as I breathe, then I might be able to pull those moves off! As Aizawa Sensei and Kirishima said, mastery of a quirk leads to endless possibilities!” “Basically, I have to get used to my quirk.” Izuku peered down an alleyway. It seemed that it was a pretty tight fit, which was what he needed for this. Inhaling he stepped into it, and swallowed. “Now comes instantaneous and intermittent use!” His eyes gazed left and then right as he nodded. “Even 5 percent should be enough for this gap. It'll be so cool if I can pull it off…”
So Izuku squatted low to the floor. Legs tensed as his arms went behind his back. Inhale. One for All started to fizz and crackle through his body. Move like Vanfell, quirk use like Bakugou. Combine the two.

“Imagine the microwave...not cracking the egg!” His thoughts were loud and clear. His legs fired as he flew upwards! He had not anticipated hitting a wall. Which as it so happened was the outcome of his little endeavor. There was a loud splatting noise as the student groaned in pain. “Well...that’s what happens.” Izuku flopped from the wall and landed in a heap of garbage bags. He supposed that at the least his fall had been broken. “Gotta brace my legs, and I need cushions for my arms. When I start the second jump, I need to power up my arms and legs. That instant boost might bring the danger of breaking my limbs. Seem’s there just isn’t enough time for the visualization. Alright. One more time...” His muttering spilled out of the alley. Two civilians heard it, noticed it, and scampered off. How scary! But Izuku knew he had to keep at it. Once more unto the breach.

“So, Jirou! Miss me much?~” Kaminari smirked as he ran a hand through his hair trying to look suave, while sounding charming. The two were sat together in the dorms of the Ms. Joke agency. Death-Arms didn’t actually have a means of housing Jirou due to his agency being smaller. As a result, he’d made a quick arrangement with the hero.

“Like a hole in the head.” She snapped back with an idle grin. She tilted her head slightly at Kaminari. “So...how’d it go? First day of internships and all.”

“Oh, you know. Pretty good. I’m a real babe magnet, y’know? Heh.”

“...Great. I meant the whole thing, not just your sad attempts to get laid.”

“Hey! They weren’t sad attempts!” Kaminari fumed as he waved a hand at her. “Eh. Went okay. Well...had to stop Vanfell getting in a fight. Some jerk tried to start beef cause Van’s quirkless.”

“...Oh.” Jirou swallowed and looked away. She had noticed that Vanfell had been brooding when she got here, and then he’d vanished. Best they didn’t dwell on these things as she swayed her face back to look at Kaminari. “So. I helped deal with a hostage situation.” The two had a conversation...

Sweat splashed onto the floor as Vanfell hunched over. His breathing was tired as he wiped his brow. The student was utterly drenched. In front of him the punching bag swayed. Ms. Joke had a solid gym and that was where the student was right now. His ma had taught him to vent his anger through training, so here he was. His shirt rested on the floor as he stood back up straight. Fists started to hammer the punching bag again when he heard a voice drift into the gym.

“Dang. Those are some nasty scars! I guess Todoroki isn’t a very ICE guy!” Ms. Joke cackled as Vanfell grunted, rolling his eyes.

“...He did what he had to do. Still lost. Ain’t mean a thing.” The student wasn’t really in the mood to answer these questions as he kept working away at the punching bag.

“Yeah. I suppose he did what he had to do. You could learn from that y’know. Doing what you need to do.”

“The hell is that supposed to mean? I already put everything into everything I do. You blind or something?”

“Sure, you put everything into a fight. But when it comes to being tactful? Respectful? Someone the people out there could look up to?” Ms. Joke shrugged and moved to stand next to the student.

“Could do with some work.”

“Why the hell should I bother? They look down on me being quirkless, but I’m already better than most of ‘em. Out here, no quirk. I beat kids shooting to get into U.A, who had quirks. Hell should I care what those irrelevant people think?” His punching had grown more aggressive now, slamming away at the bag.

“...You know Vanfell. Looking down on people like that, is a sure fire way for things to not go how you want them to. All you’re going to achieve is”

“Blah blah blah. Lecturing me, when you don’t even get it. Already stand out. Brit in Japan, right? Only reason I’m here is because my country thinks I’m an aberration to nature. Bottom of the social
rung. Figured that mild distaste and disgust is better than that. But, aye.” His final strike knocked the bag off the hook as he turned to glare at Ms. Joke. “Oughta respect a society that pisses on me, right?”

“The resemblance is uncanny.” Ms. Joke sighed, rubbed her head, and shrugged. “You can think how you like kid. I’m not going to tell you to suddenly love this place. All that you gotta think about? Are you really suited for the job of hero, if you’re doing it just to get your own back at society? I’ll let ya stew on that one yourself.”
Morning came just as it did every day. Gran Torino had shuffled his way downstairs to find a rather...haggard looking Izuku. The student had dirt and marks all over his face with large bags resting under his eyes. Torino tilted his head as he was taken back.

“What’s wrong with ya?!”

“I was doing some training last night and lost track of time…” Izuku rubbed his eyes and coughed. “After I figured out what you meant, I decided to apply it, Gran Torino. But...I’ve still got a long way to go.”

“Every real challenge begins that way.” Gran Torino smirked as he shrugged. “That’s just how it tends to be. You’d struggle to get that kind of thinking from All Might. Guy could just handle it fine from the start, so I taught him in a totally different way.” Gran Torino rolled his neck and moved closer to Izuku. “Only thing he had going for him was that body of his.”

“You’re talking about when All Might was in school!?” Izuku yelled. He couldn’t help letting that fanboy side of him slip through at Gran Torino’s words. The elder recalled those memories, from way back when. How him and All Might had gone at him, preparing, training. How she had…

“We didn’t do anything but spar till he was about to vomit.”

“So that’s why All Might was so scared of this guy!”

“I couldn’t half-ass his training. He was entrusted to me by a dear departed friend.” Gran Torino let his head sink slightly. She had been a special one for sure, that woman.

“All Might’s predecessor...so they’d already passed away at that point?” Izuku sighed and swallowed as he took a step back.

“Yeah…” Torino was about to elaborate when there was a loud buzz from his front door.

“Delivery from Amazon.” A tired force groaned as Izuku scrambled for the door, hands waving around his face.

“Oh, I’ll get that!”

“...So you haven’t told him Toshinori?” Gran Torino sighed. Of course Toshinori wouldn’t have told him about her. Not yet. He was always a bit dire at teaching and guiding others on a one to one level. Though not for lack of trying.

The package had been taken into the kitchen and placed on the floor. Izuku and Torino both found the sheer amount of cardboard and packaging wasted on the product to be absurd. Couldn’t quirks make this sort of thing easier!? Regardless the package was now unboxed…

“A microwave?” Izuku had expected something a little less...dull. But it seemed that Gran Torino was a surprisingly normal man at times.

“Somehow.” Torino patted the new microwave with a light smile. “Mine got broken yesterday, so I ordered this with next-day delivery.”

“Is he serious? Or just feigning ignorance!?” Izuku stammered, but the elderly man seemed to ignore him. Gran Torino started to shuffle towards the kitchen as he waggled his stick at Izuku.

“Okay, lad. Let’s have those frozen Taiyaki I bought yesterday. Heat ‘em up for me!!”

“Taiyaki...for breakfast?” Izuku just couldn’t wrap his head around the fact that this man was the one who had trained All Might. He was so eccentric and goofy?

“I just like sweet things, is all!” Gran Torino barked, as Izuku put the plate in the microwave. He thumbed it to defrost and then left it there. Gran Torino fidgeted and drummed the table. He was akin to a little child, waiting for his father to prepare his favourite treat. While the pastries cooked, Izuku focused on his thoughts.

“Making One for All as natural as breathing...thinking realistically, I have to catch up to the others. With the exception of Vanfell, they’ve had years to learn their quirks. I don’t have time on my side.
But to draw on more than 5 percent of my power? It'll take takes before my body is ready for that.”

Ding! The microwave finishing jolted Izuku out of his thoughts.

“Whoa! Now that’s what I’m talking about these modern times!” The taiyaki sat on the plate as Izuku muttered to himself. His time was limited, so what were the options open to him? Gran Torino rolled his eyes slightly as he grabbed one of the pastries.

“Why the long face? Just sit down and enjoy some piping hot…” He pressed one of them to his mouth. His teeth clamped down making a klaking noise. “Cold!!” He howled as he slammed the pastry down. Izuku yelled as he scrambled over to look at the plate.

“No way! I was I heated them on defrost mode!” Gran Torino wasn’t impressed. He had an inkling of what happened as he stomped over to the microwave.

“Dummy! Look…you crammed them on a plate that’s too big!! They aren’t able to spin if the plate’s too big!” He yanked the door open, and jabbed a finger for emphasis. “Only one part gets heated up! You ever use a microwave before?”

“Oh…the type I’ve got doesn’t rotate.” Izuku sighed as he shook his head apologizing. “Sorry about that…!” But he paused as his mind started to dart ahead. A few seconds passed as he lunged scooping one of the pastries up in his hands. “Ahhh! I’ve got it! Gr, Gran Torino!!” He waved one of the fish shaped foodstuff in the face of his mentor. “This taiyaki…it’s me!”

“No. It’s not. What’s wrong with you?!” Torino knew that the child was tired, sure, but to come out with that sort of stuff? Had he banged his head recently!?

“Ah, no! I mean, well, I just figured it out!” Izuku swallowed as he hunched over slightly. His mind was running at a mile a minute. “Up until now, I was obsessed with the idea of “using” my power. Only when I needed it, or where I needed it. Just like an on-off switch. So the second or third time I’d use it, my reaction would always be delayed!” Gran Torino tensed as he watched Izuku. Something was happening, and he wasn’t entirely sure what. “From the start, I should’ve been throwing all the switches on at once! That heat, which was only reaching a single part of me…” One for All started to surge again, coating his entire body. Hunched over, Izuku started to crackle and fizz as he exhaled. “I gotta picture it spreading around evenly!”

"You sure figured it out fast…” Torino smirked a little bit, watching his student.

“So my whole body’s continuously at my 5 percent limit!”

“So your visulation’s a Taiyaki in the microwave? You sure you’re fine with something that boring?”

“That’s the inspiration, I got from All Might!” Izuku stood up straight now, as green lightning seemed to crinkle and fritter away from his body. Gran Torino threw his walking stick behind him “Can you even move like that?”

“I’m...not sure…!”

“Why don’t we find out?”

“Sure thing!”

Izuku and Gran Torino were stood in front of each other now. The young student had put all of his energy into this new technique as he struggled to move. It was already difficult just to hold himself in place…

“So. You’ve flooded your whole body with One for All. But can you move without losing it?” His teacher watched him carefully. “Draw a clear line! Display that you’ve grown since the sports festival!” Izuku couldn’t respond. All the student did was grunt and huff as Gran Torino produced a timer from his pocket. “What shall we do, then? Let’s go with three minutes.”

“Three minutes…?” Izuku managed to force out a response. It was difficult to speak, but he could.

“Before the time is up,” Gran Torino’s quirk activated. He shot up and over Izuku’s head. Then he sprung from his bookcase to launch an attack from behind. “Try to land a single hit on me!!” Izuku turned, but it was too late. Torino slammed his boot into the student and sent him sprawling forward.

“Ack!” There was a hiss and crackle as the energy dissipated. “Crap! I lost it!!”
“Such a shame! If you’re not even able to react to this…” Torino was springing around again, battering and hammering Izuku from every angle at blazing speed. “How can you ever hope to save those who need you?! Anyone who wishes to be praised as the Symbol of Peace, had better be ready to overcome this much!!” The battering continued, brutal, with no sign of slowing down. Izuku knew he’d need a second to get the power flowing again.

“His attacks aren’t that damaging. But he’s still way too fast to track.” He was sent sprawling to the floor as he spied the sofa. “Just need some time…” And with a howl Izuku threw himself safely underneath. Gran Torino rolled his eyes and smirked.

“Planning to buy time under there!? How foolish! I saw you.” His body started to slam down towards the sofa as he shook his head. “You’ll get no extra time on my watch!” But he had to stop himself mid air.

“SMASH!” Izuku howled as he let a blast loose. The sofa flew up and forced Torino to swerve in mid-air. Izuku was laid on his back, energy zooming back through his body again. It seemed he’d found the time needed to get One for All back across his body.

“This is it!!”

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“This was just a trap, to stop me?” Torino watched the student blow him. “You got me.” Izuku threw himself into the air, the energy all over his body.

ONE FOR ALL FULL COWLING!!

The student was flying towards Gran Torino now. The hero had to move quickly. Just as the fist almost collided with him, Torino managed to spring back and bounce off a wall. The man snorted.

“Close one.” He taunted as he threw himself towards Izuku who had been forced to land on the floor. His opponent coiled and turned their body over. Just had to react.

“Ngh...here I go!!” He was turning ready to throw another attack. Gran Torino didn’t seem intimidated in the slightest as he continued to fly at Izuku.

“The instant you go for me, it’ll be the same end for you, brat!” The hero shot his hands forward...and grabbed thin air. Izuku had propelled himself into the air. Torino’s gaze flicked up as he grunted. Izuku rested his feet on the ceiling for a split second, before throwing himself down at Torino. Instantly like he’d tried to do in the alley!

“SMASH!” His fist shot down ready to hit Torino. But the hero was just able to skid to the side, the attack whiffing? Izuku couldn’t quite believe it. “He dodged it?!” Wincing, Izuku realized. He was falling. And as he did, Torino flung himself from another wall, and slammed firmly into Izuku. The green haired student was slammed into a wall, as he flopped to the ground. Torino landed as well as Izuku panted and huffed.

“That’s three minutes.” Gran Torino clicked the watch as Izuku slumped.

“Sh-shoot!” Izuku groaned as he rubbed his back, sitting up. “Just preserving that state, it’s difficult. Not there yet…”

“Nah.” Torino turned his back on Izuku as he went to saunter away. “Analyzing and predicting to determine my openings? That judgement...you seem the sort who’s always thinking ahead, kid. After just one sparring session, you’ve improved dramatically.” What Izuku wouldn’t be able to see was Torino rubbing a cut on his face. “Been awhile since anyone actually forced me to dodge. He might just have a breakthrough yet.” “Now, just get used to it! Let’s keep going! But before that...we haven’t eaten breakfast!”

“You don’t really understand me, kid.” Koware watched the two villains in front of him. Shigaraki was surprised to have a gun pointed at him. Kurogiri was tensing as Koware shook his head. “Portal
man. I doubt you’re faster than a bullet. Beside, some school-kids made you look amateur. Stay out of this, and let the kid stand for himself.”

“...You ranting at me now? I’ve misjudged you?” Shigaraki was already starting to get pissed off with this guy. Now he was really getting angry. His fingers scritched at his neck but there wasn’t much he could do with a gun pointed at him.

“You figure because we’re both angry, we want to rip society apart. Nah. Punk like you wants to tear it down. All I want to see is a matter addressed. See.” He waved the gun up and down. “It’s how we differ. I’ll get stuff done. You’ll just be a footnote, a kid throwing his toys out of his pram.”

“...Leave then. I’ve no use for you if you’re all going to do is be just like them.” Shigaraki hissed. Much as he wanted to throw himself at this bastard and dissolve him he wasn’t stupid. He’d been on the receiving end of bullets lately and it wasn’t something he wanted to repeat. Koware tilted his head slightly and shrugged. Kurogiri moved to make a portal as Koware sighed.

“Good kid. I got actual business to attend to. Smart of you not to take a bullet today.” His boots slapped against the ground as he stepped through the portal, and back out into the streets of Hosu. Shigaraki groaned as he leaned back into his seat. Guess it hadn’t all gone to plan.

“We got nothing out of today, Kurogiri! What a waste of my time…” Before the misty villain could respond, the door to their door pushed open. A voice crooned towards them punctuated by a long coil of smoke.

“Kurogiri is a bit of a novice when it comes to scouting. Guy that logical just doesn’t get how it’s done.” Giran arrived, with his trademark toothy grin.

“Giran. Did you come to just insult me, or do you actually have something for us?” Kurogiri didn’t seem to even rise to the insult, merely looking at The Broker. Shigaraki shifted in his seat. He’d never been the biggest fan of Giran.

“Maybe I do Kurogiri.” Giran puffed smoke as he waved a hand at the door. “Found an old friend from back in the day. Might actually get a result...and he isn’t a police officer. Rookie error on your part, really.” A figure padded in from behind Giran. An old glass mask covered his face. Or rather a half broken glass mask covered his mouth. A dirty grey strip of fabric constituted whatever covered his eyes. An old black jacket draped over his form. One sleeve was ripped fully away, replaced with bandages running up and down the arm. Spiked metal boots thudded against the ground, as a blood-red scarf tattered and billowed through the air. His hair was messy, with the laziest attempt at a ponytail resting at the back.

“...What is this exactly? You two are the ones who attacked those kids, aren’t you...” The voice was raspy, like broken glass being dragged across gravel.

“I’m thinking these gentlemen have a proposition you might be interested in. Stain. The Hero Killer. The original, I believe.” Shigaraki and Kurogiri watched the man for a moment. Stain didn’t seem to move or sway. His eyes were narrowed, focused on both of them. The tension was quite heavy for all parties involved. Except Giran who was just having a dandy time smoking his cigarette.

“Yes. The Hero Killer. Real deal this time. Not like that useless cop before you. I want to destroy society. Just like you. Tear it all down, break everything that pisses me off.” Shigaraki hissed as he ruffled his pocket again, fingerling the picture of Izuku out. Stain lifted an eyebrow. “We’re just the sa-” This made the Hero Killer lift his head. In an instance he was across the room. Kurogiri went to react but a cut had opened on his arm, and he wasn’t able to react. Shigaraki was knocked from his seat and pinned. Stain rested a boot on arm, pinning the villain. One of his knives was rammed into the shoulder of Shigaraki, and another pressed near his neck.

“We’re not the same in the slightest. That’s why you’re about to die.”

“Ha ha ha ha, ow! So powerful. Kurogiri! Quickly, get rid of him!”
“I can’t move. It’s probably the hero killer’s quirk…” The misty villain huffed. Giran was unscathed. The man vaguely debated pulling out his pistol to assist. It was only ever a pipe dream though, as he instead opted to merely watch. Free entertainment right? Stain growled now. His eyes had filled with a vivid blood red energy as he panted.

“The word ‘hero’ has lost its original meaning, in this corrupt society, plagued with shakers and shams. Criminals who aimlessly throw their weight around too. You’re all targets of my purge…” There was a brief maniacal laugh. The blade not yet buried in Shigaraki started to inch towards the hand on his face. His free hand shot over to the blade, grabbing it. Stain paused for a moment.

“Whoa, whoa, now hang on. Not this hand. Not this one.” His quirk started to dissolve the blade. His eye focused, narrowed, blazed with an utter miasma of hate and evil. “I’ll kill you.” His voice hissed as it took on an unhinged tone, running wild with malintent. “You sure run your mouth a lot...conviction, huh? Nah. I’ve got nothing so grand as convictions. But if I have to say what drives me...All Might.” There was a brutal chattering noise to his words now, as his voice grew more crazed. “That piece of trash. And the society that worships him. I wanna crush them all into dust. That’s my conviction.”

The blade fully shattered. Stain recoiled slightly. The Hero Killer sprung backwards as Shigaraki shot up from the floor, swiping a hand at him. Blood splattered to the floor as he scratched at his neck. “My wounds from last time had just healed. There’s no healer in this party, y’see. So how about you own up to what you’ve done?”

“You first…”

“Huh?”

“Our respective goals couldn’t be further apart. But. Destroy the status quo.” His gaze focused on Shigaraki as his lips pulled back, a sneering smirk painting itself on his face. It was hidden beneath his mask, but he couldn’t help himself. “It’s the one ambition we both hold dear.”

“Get lost! Just go home and die! I’m the type you despise the most, or whatever.” Shigaraki growled.

“I was just testing your sincerity. People show their true nature when they are upon death’s door. You are unusual. But that will. I can see the seed of some warped conviction. I do wonder what that seed will yield.” Stain spread his arms wide as he looked at Shigaraki head on. “I’ll deal with you properly once I’ve seen that through. It might not be too late…”

“Deal with me? Not sure I really this crazy guy as a member of our party…”

“Tomura Shigaraki. He’ll add some much needed firepower to our efforts. Our negoti”

“My negotiations, Kurogiri. Far as this old man sees, all you did was get cut up. Might want to work on that, eh?” Giran snorted. Whole situation had played out like he had expected. His guts had told him this kid would manage to pull something like this off. His boss wouldn’t have picked Shigaraki up otherwise. Toothy grinned he wagged a finger. “I will expect my fee.” Stain’s tongue had pressed out, as he ignored Giran and Shigaraki.

“So. We’re finished here! I’m heading back into the ward... I still have something I’ve got to take care of there…”

“...Fine. Kurogiri. We’ll see him off here… and then visit the cop.” Shigaraki hissed, as he watched Stain stalk out of the bar. Giran bowed and also strutted out.

Iida was with Manual. Their patrol of Hosu had ended and now they were in his offices. They were small and modest. Manual tossed his helmet onto a table. His hair was rather messy as a result.

“Well. Seems with the whole neighborhood on alert, the villains don’t want to come out.” There was an easy going laugh as he watched Iida. The young student was super intense! Nothing like Ingenium.

“I suppose you’re correct.” Iida pulled his glasses off. His mind wasn’t occupied with what Manual had to say. There was other important matters that he had to deal with. “Hero Killer Kowaremashita. I knew as soon as I started researching. At each of the seven locations he’s attacked thus far he’s killed or injured at least four heroes. What’s his objective? I don’t know if it’s an omen or not, but. Here in Hosu, my brother was the only victim to speak off. Tenya. I’m sorry. There’s still a chance
he’ll appear here once again. So come on! I’ll take you out myself?” And atop a water tower...a portal creaked open.

It was Five O’Clock on the third day of internships. Izuku was planted upside down against a wall. His sparring with Gran Torino had been progressing. To an extent at least. His bloody nose told him that much at least. So did the pain in his chest. Gran Torino was a beast of an opponent. But the old man seemed to be done for the moment.

“Keep fighting against these old tactics, and you’ll develop some bad habits.”
“Forget habits. I’m barely used to any of this! Let’s keep going!”
“Nah. That’s enough. Time for phase two. The actual internship!” Torino helped Izuku up, and brushed his face off. The student scurried into his hero costume and threw himself out of the door, to keep up with Torino. He wasn’t sure what the actual internship section would constitute! “Which means hunting down villains!”
“WHAT?! Already?!”
“Like I told you. Fighting only me’ll leave you ill prepared to deal with other types of foes. In this phase you’ll pit yourself against all different sports.”
“I understand what you’re saying…but I don’t think my heart is quite ready for this.” Izuku held his chest. He was concerned at how this would turn out. So many variables to consider…

“You’ve already fought villains, haven’t you. This won’t even come close to how bad that was.” Izuku was taken back by this, as Torino limped forward. “It’s a little far from here…population’s going down around here, so the crime rate is low. The reason there’re so many hero agencies in the big city is cuz they’ve got plenty of criminals to deal with. Denser the population, denser the trouble. Place like Shibuya, minor crimes are dime a dozen.”
“Shibuya?! No way. I’m gonna walk around that classy neighborhood in costume…?!” Yet another thing for Izuku to concern himself about. Torino hopped into the taxi he had called as he grunted.
“You only get to wear it because you’re with me, a hero! Just be glad you’re gonna get to strut your stuff in public!”
“So we’re going from Kofu to Shinuku by bullet train, then?”
“Yep.”
“...We’ll pass by Hosu City.” Izuku sighed as he leaned back in the seat. “I’m worried about Iida. Maybe I’ll get in touch with him later…”

**Meanwhile In Kamino**

Vanfell and Kaminari had been focused solely on getting a good relationship with the people of the city thus far. There had been little in the way of actual fights with villains, which vexed the quirkless student more so than anyone else. There was an itch that he needed to scratch, fists needed to fly. Else he was going to blow his top. There was a rumour that Stain would be here in the city. Maybe if he went and knocked his skull around he’d get some respect from that damned Hammerhead bigot. Regardless the two students wearing their costumes were lead through the streets by Ms. Joke.

“Allright. The big rule is to stay close to me, ok? No running off. I’m responsible for you, and I don’t want to end up in trouble. Or to have two injured kids on my hands.”
“Anything for you, mam~!” Kaminari grinned, snapping his fingers. He made a little crackle with them. It was clear he thought he still had a chance with Ms. Joke. This was clearly the best joke of them all.
“Ok.” Vanfell grunted. His fingers curled and stretched as he dropped his head. This was going to be a damn waste of time.
“When we engage villains, remember. Proportionate force, clear purpose, and focus! Let’s go get
“Kamino. Old haunting grounds.” Stain muttered as he made his way out of the bar. Shigaraki followed behind him, tilting his head.

“Old haunting grounds...eh. Stendhal?” He’d been told about the name once, by Giran. He was fond of it. Stain adjusted the remnants of his mask as he shrugged. Once upon a time, before that man had taught him the folly of his old ways.

“I will reform this town. In order to do so, more sacrifices are needed. The necessary task you mentioned earlier. Perhaps...” Kurogiri started to speak, as Stain cut him off with a lifted hand.

“Now. You’re someone I can actually get through to.” Shiggy hissed at this remark from the blade wielding man.

“Always picking me out, man...”

““Hero” is a title reserved for those who perform truly great feats!” Stain had splayed his arms wide now as he gazed over Kamino, licking his lips. “Too many are undeserving...just money worshippers playing hero!” His legs threw him forward as he scarf billowed behind in the wind, a macabre read streak. “Until this society awakens from its slumber and corrects itself, I will continue my work.”

Shigaraki watched him go, before rubbing at his neck.

“All that high-and-mighty blabber, but he’s not even past the small potatoes stage. Kind of precious how hard he’s trying.”

“I wouldn’t criticize him too much.” Giran remarked. Kurogiri and Shiggy hadn’t noticed him leaning against a wall.

“While I agree with Giran, I would be curious to know if we share the same reason for this conclusion...”

“I hear, that all the cities he’s been appearing in have all seen across the board drops in their crime rate. Ain’t much, but it’s something. People figure it’s cause the heroes are more aware. Something like that.” Giran shrugged, flicking a cigarette butt beneath his boot. “I figure they’re just concerned about their bottom line.”

“Well, isn’t that great! So much for ending heroism! Hero Killer? More like Hero Breeder!” Giran and Kurogiri both blinked. “At least indirectly!” Shigaraki growled as he rubbed his arms up and down. “I knew it. We’re just too different, deep down. Pisses me off. Kurogiri. Bring out the Nomu.”

“...”

“As if I’d let him get away with stabbing me like that. If he wants to go on a rampage. We’ll let him. Hah. Which of us can cause more destruction? Let’s see. I’ll shatter your pride and dignity, Stain!”

**Hosu City**

Kowaremashita flicked his cigarette out and crushed it beneath his boot. Hosu. Home to the ingrate earth-bending hero, Native. This was a reckoning that had been long in the making. His one biological hand rubbed up and down the metal arm as he sighed. Adjusting the collar of his suit, Koware stepped forward intent on finding his revenge.

“Look at him. Stomping around there like he matters. People like him piss me off Kurogiri.”

“...I can’t see why, Shigaraki. It would seem you two both hold an issue with the nature of this hero society.”

“Nah, nah, nah. You serious?!?” Shigaraki scratched and clawed his neck. “He wants to fix it! All I want to do is burn this shitty society to the ground, and kill that piece of trash All Might!” Shigaraki hissed as he shook his head. “He wants to try and fix this cesspool? I’ll ruin his plan! Get the rest of
the Nomu’s Kurogiri, now!” Kurogiri tutted but didn’t disobey. Three more nomu’s pulled themselves through his portal. One short and spindly, four eyes and gangly limbs. One with wings and a gas mask for a face, joined by a bulky noumu with no eyes...

The bullet train zipped forward. The sky had turned dark as night began to cover the country in it’s soft blanket that villains loved so very much. Izuku looked out the window, noting this fact. He wasn’t sure how he felt about this whole situation. Fighting villains was something he’d done before but that had been do or die. This was something else altogether. It was...work. Stuff that he’d be doing once he became All Might’s successor. His teacher was half asleep in the seat next to him. But he was awake, so Izuku had no issue in starting to talk to him.

“It is okay that we’re arriving at night?”
“Night’s perfect! There are sure to be more incidents now. It’ll be fun.” Torino groaned as he shuffled up in his seat.

“Not sure about fun, but I hear you…” Izuku pulled his phone out and unlocked it. Torino rolled his eyes slightly and groaned.

“On your phone, again?! I swear kids these days!” But Izuku wasn’t really listening. He was concerned that Iida hadn’t responded to his text message. It had been read, so Iida had to know Izuku was passing through Hosu, but there was no answer. This wasn’t anything like him...but maybe he was busy with his internship. Izuku slipped the phone back into his pocket as he glanced out of the window, looking over Hosu. Suddenly he was jerked forward as a large explosion was heard. Izuku nearly headbutted the seat in front of him, as the speaker crackled over.

“Passengers, please remain seated. We’re making an emergency stop…” Then there was another explosion as a beastial looking hero was thrown through the side of the train. He panted, clearly injured. Izuku and Gran Torino went stiff as the civilians took a panicked atmosphere.

“Who is this guy?!”
“A hero?!”
“Yikes!” And then a creature stepped into the breach. Four eyes on an exposed brain. Two long arms and a gaunt body. No shirt but dirty trousers. Izuku recognized it almost instantly.

“Nomu?!” In an instant Gran Torino had thrown himself forward.

“Stay there kid!!” The elderly hero slammed into the Nomu sending him flying away taking the Nomu with him. Izuku darted after him resting on the broken wall.

“Gran Torino! Gran Torino!” His head snapped to the right. It seemed Hosu was in a riot? Explosions and fire seemed to be raging in the city. Izuku’s mind instantly snapped to him. “What’s happening?! What the hell?! This is Hosu, isn’t it?! Iida!”

Vanfell rubbed his knuckle as he watched the villain fall in front of him. That quirk had been pathetic. The ability to make one arm into a hammer? Talk about weak. He heard Kaminari yelp behind him, and then a flash of yellow.

“You alright, Sparky? Didn’t wet yourself?”
“Cmon man! Just cause I ain’t a crazy guy like you, don’t mean you gotta call me out! This stuff is real y’know!?”

“Focus you two!” Ms. Joke smirked a little as she rubbed both of their heads. She dumped two more defeated villains outside the alley, as a police officer quickly skirted over. They were cuffed and dragged away. Vanfell paused.

“Y’know, I ain’t got no quirk. So can’t I just kick the hell out of who I want, right? Law only applies to those with quirks.”

“Nah, ain’t work like that.” Ms. Joke wagged her finger. “The hero system might not have people like you, but they aren’t a FELLIURE. You’re registered as having a quirk...that is ‘quirkless.’ So even just smacking someone? Breaching the law, kiddo.”
“Heh. You tried, Van. Shame that.” Kaminari draped a hand through his hair, before doing a trademark finger gun pose. “Guess you’re just like the re-” But before Kaminari could finish what he was saying, he fell flat on his face while Vanfell and Ms. Joke staggered. Explosions were rippling through Kamino Ward, and all three of them smelt the fire. Bolting out of the alleyway, their eyes caught on a disastrous scene. Vanfell and Kaminari recognized the Nomu’s as they screamed and rampaged. Ms. Joke said something, but Vanfell wasn’t paying attention. Something else had caught his eye. Hammerhead was running down an alley, and Vanfell swore he saw a red billowing scarf. ‘The Hero Killer Stain’, -time to prove that he was worth something. Smacking Kaminari on the shoulder he barked out.

“Cover me, Spark Plug!” He didn’t wait for a response before barreling off, down the alleyway. It was time…

Seriously...of all times, it has to happen now?” Manual grunted as he watched the situation unfolding. Civilians were starting to get rowdy and concerned. Scene control was the matter of business, start getting people safe and placated. “Tenya! To the scene!! Run!!” Manual barked. He shot off, running into Hosu. Iida followed behind him but paused. His eyes glanced down an alleyway and his nostrils flared. The smell of gunpowder, and boot prints.

“...Hmm. I figure the kid is having a temper tantrum. Whatever. Right now, you just gotta stay with me, Native.” Kowaremashita held a man against a wall with his metal by the face. There was blood splashing to the crowd, emanating from a bullet wound in the pro hero’s chest. The smoking gun rested in his other hand. The Pro looked akin to a native american, feathered cape, hat, and all. “Time to make amends, for what you did to my arm.”

“Damn it. You, of all people? Bastard, I’ll get you.” The hero growled, even if he wasn’t able to move due to the pain. People often forget just how fallible a hero was. One bullet was enough to put them down if they weren’t careful. Such a thing usually wasn’t a problem. Gun laws made it difficult for villains to get a hold of them, even Giran. Such a shame that Kowaremashita used to be a police officer. “Of course. The hero shows his true nature in his last moments. Media never caught this side of you.” Koware lifted the gun to the head of Native, ready to pull the trigger. Footsteps however made the man tense. A figure in the background jolted him to spin on his heel. His bullet rang out, the shot’s sound cloaked by the explosions. Iida found his helmet and glasses sent flying off his head as he clattered to the ground. “Interference? Blech.”

Ack!” Iida slumped on the floor, as he tried to catch his breath. That attack had thrown him clean out of sync but that blazing fire and anger still boiled deep inside him.

“I’d leave. While I don’t make a habit of harming children, I hold no moral issue with doing so. Step into the ring and I won’t give you any quarter.”

“That suit. Armed to the nine with weapons. You must be Hero Killer Kowaremashita!” Iida was raising from the floor now, as he glared at the man. His eyes were burning with shear hate and malice as he did. “I’ve been tracking you! Though, I didn’t expect us to cross paths so soon! I am…” But he was cut off. A blade was pressed in front of his eyes, as Koware let Native slump to the ground. His boot kicked the pro hero, while he focused on the student.

“Something in you is really pissed off, right? Way you’re looking right now, heh. Been there kid. Am there. But I’d shut up. Piss me off some more, and a kid is going to die tonight.”

“So nonchalant. So you don’t even consider me a threat?” Iida growled as he continued to lift himself up. Rage seeped into every motion, every little word he said. “Listen up. Criminal. I am the younger brother of a hero you attacked!” Spittle flew as Koware hissed, sucking air through his teeth. “Brother to the amazing hero, among heroes! And I’ve come to stop you in my brother’s stead!”

“My Name. Inherit my Mantle.”
Vanfell felt like he was in another reality as he stormed down the alley. Going after Stain had been a pipe-dream. Something that the bitter student had been clinging to in the chance that it might happen, but fully aware that it wouldn’t. Or rather, shouldn’t. Ms. Joke told him that pretty much what he was about to do was illegal. But it didn’t matter. If society wanted to ignore him for winning the sports tournament? Fine. He’d be sure to make them notice him. Stop one of the Hero Killers? Sure-fire ticket to victory. Skidding around the corner, Vanfell saw a garish scene right in front of him. Hammerhead was on the ground, his suit slick as it sat in a pool of blood. A long katana was pressed to his throat, as a tall figure in jacket and bandages hissed.

“A bigot only concerned with funding his life through heroics. A blight upon society who none shall miss.”

“F*ck yourself. I figured the Hero Killer wouldn’t look like a ninja turtles reject.”

“...Poor last words for a hero. I would have hoped that you showed me something near the end. Perish!” The blade was about to slash the throat of Hammerhead, when Vanfell lurched forward.

“HERO KILLER STAIN!” Vanfell screamed out. His voice was burning with the fervor of oppression and pain, making a dual helix of fire. “FACE ME!” The man pulled his katana away from Hammerhead for a moment, turning to face the quirkless student.

“Those who believe themselves to be stronger than they are, and failed to put action to words...are just as vile as those who yearn for monetary reward. Turn and leave, before your age is no longer a shield.”

“Knew it. I’m not a threat to you? Ok. Ok. Asshole.” Vanfell lifted his fists into boxing position, spat on the floor and stomped his feet down. “The Down to Earth Hero! Everyman! Will be the one to stop you, Hero Killer Stain!”

“That so?” Stain’s face had grown wild with bloodlust as he lifted his blade and dropped into fighting stance. “Time to die!”
“Everyone please remain calm! Please return to your seats! We need to stay calm and wait for heroes to-” The train conductor was desperately trying to reinstate order. It wasn’t exactly going all that well. His words also fell on deaf ears as Izuku got up, and jolted forward.

“Sorry, but I’ve got to go!”
“What!?”
“This one had a different body, but the same sort of exposed brain. Could they be siblings?! I’ve got to find Gran Torino!!”
“You! Get back here! It’s too dangerous!!”
“Please be all right!!” And with that Izuku zoomed forward, dashing towards the inner workings of Hosu city.

“How long has it been since I had an honest to goodness fight?” Gran Torino slammed into the Nomu again before springing to the side. Two civilians darted free as their home was ripped apart by the fight. “I can’t let you keep doing all this damned collateral damage! What are you anyway?” Gran Torino hissed as the creature continued to screech and rampage. One hand slapped forward, almost clipping him. “It’s fast. But not so fast that I can’t reach.” As he dodged, he prepared for a follow up. But one never came. Instead the creature skittered towards the two civilians, looming above them poised to end it’s life. “Huh!? Hold on! It’s attacking indiscriminately!” The husband went to shield his wife, ready to protect as Torino flew towards the beast as fast as he could. “Knock it off, you-” But he wasn’t going to reach them. Not in time. In an instant he felt blazing heat as he forced himself to stop and not slam into a sudden wave of flames. The creature screeched in pain as the red hot heat rolled over it. A distinct voice could be heard.

“I was actually here to hunt the hero killer. It seems you’re a victim of bad timing, pal.” The voice then directed itself to the airborne Gran Torino. “I’m afraid I don’t know you, old-timer. But leave this one to me.”
“Oh! You’re-!! Seriously?!?”
“Why are you here-?”
“Because I’m a hero.” A fiery mustache twinkled in the darkness...

The crowd was panicking, fleeing, and almost rioting despite the hero’s best intentions. Izuku was trying to push his way through the crowd. Desperation was running through him but a rather different sort. It was panic but not the type induced by fear for one’s own safety. Rather it was a concern for...

“They’re all running from the centre of the commotion! That guy looked quite like Nomu. If it’s just as powerful as the one back at USJ then not just Gran Torino, but the whole city is in trouble!! Including Iida! His internship is here!! Think! What’s the best course of action?! What’s my plan?!?”

“Tenya!” Manual howled out as Izuku passed by. There was chaos all over the streets. An entire group of heroes were engaging two Nomu’s. Manual sent a spray of water to save one hero who had been ragdolled by the larger, muscular Nomu. Another hero was thrown against a lamppost by the flying Nomu. Izuku swallowed as he watched the destruction grow worse, and the flames burn ever higher.

“No way! Two Nomu’s?! What’s going on here?!?”
“How could he run off at a time like this-?” Manual groaned, as he checked on his comrade.

“That guy calling for Iida is Normal Hero! He’s Iida’s mentor!!” Izuku swallowed. He was
knocked from his thoughts as a female pro shoved him back. She wiped sweat from her brow as she shook her head.

“Stand back and don’t get in the way! We heroes will put a stop to this! Listen to the police instructions, and get to safety!”

“W-hoa! S-sorry!” Izuku yelped, as he staggered back. But something said earlier was bothering him. “Iida ran off somewhere? The always super-serious Iida?! That’s too weird. In the midst of all this trouble...Hosu City. Nomu or things that look like it. Iida. Hero Killer. Hosu.” Izuku turned and stormed off blazing down the street. The battle with the Nomu’s raged on, the pro heroes lost as to what these beasts were trying to achieve.

“Ike-ke. Well done, my Nomu.” Shigaraki smirked from his position atop the water tower, watching as the fire raged. Giran on the phone had also confirmed that something similar was going down in Kamino. A bitter warm tingled in his chest.

“I take it you won’t be joining the fray?” Kurogiri remarked, as he watched the scene. It seemed Shigaraki had made a decent decision.

“I’m injured, idiot. That’s why I brought them.” Shigaraki had been lucky that his Sensei was so willing to help.

“Sensei. How many Nomu are ready to go?” He had asked this question as soon as he’d returned to the bar, after Stain had stomped out but before he had joined the Hero Killer.

“None on the level of the one who attacked U.A with you. But nine are fully operational at this point.”

“Send ’em my way.”

“Why?”

“Cuz I don’t like that hero killer or that cop. And I’m allowed to stomp out whatever I don’t like, right? Sensei!!” He’d snapped, already impatient. The man on the monitor had paused for a moment.

“You may have six. Use this opportunity to learn something…”

And so this was where Shigaraki stood in the present. His arms splayed wild as a maniacal laughter spilled forth from his lips.

“Come tomorrow morning, the world won’t remember either of you! Hero Killers!”

Iida had screamed. His leg had also screamed forward the engines firing on all cylinders. It was aimed for the chin of Koware in an attempt to knock him clean out. All that he hit however was the air, a slicing noise heard as his target simply stepped backwards in anticipation.

“The brother of Ingenium, eh? He was always a prick.” His metal arm slammed Iida clean in the face, before the knife rammed itself into his exposed thigh. The student howled in pain, as Koware’s other arm slammed him to the ground via his throat. His steel tipped boot stomped down on one of Iida’s arm as he sighed. “But at least he put up a fight. That being said, it’s not like either of you are strong. Or really matter. I’m important. My brothers are important.”

“Shut up, evildoer!” Iida groaned from his injured pose on the ground. “The damage you inflicted upon his spinal cord means he’ll likely be crippled for the rest of life! He’ll never be a hero again!”

There was a melodic pain born of anguish rippling through his words. Koware simply rolled his eyes. “My brother! He’s saved so many people. He’s a leader! He’s a great hero!” Memories of little Iida watching Ingenium at work flooded his mind, those precious days that he held so dear. “You have no good reason for crippling him!”

Dinner time. Iida remembered it well. He was young, not too old. Ingenium had been late. Said he’d
been out jogging with a friend. But no one minded too much. His mother was simply just too happy.
“Tensei! You’ve made your father and I so proud. You’re so young, yet you’re already independent. You command so many sidekicks! That isn’t a small thing I tell you!” Ingenium had given a bashful smile and shook his head.
“Nah. You say “command” but...it’s the opposite father. I’m in no position to accomplish much on my own yet, so they’re all there to support me. I’ve got to work hard to reciprocate given all they do for me. Though I can’t say I’ve got much sense for it all. Heroes have to bear the weight of that title. I’m just happy...if my work somehow helps people out.”

“He’s my hero...HE’S A GREAT HERO WHO INSPIRED MY DREAMS! I’LL KILL YOU FOR WHAT YOU DID!” Iida howled, trying to break free and move. Koware shook his head, crunching the boot down with more force.
“Blah. Blah. Blah. He saved so many people? Nah.” There was vicious bitterness, akin to black coffee, surfacing in Koware. “This is the trouble with this society. Celebrity worship. Heroes held up to be the be all and end all of our lives. No. The Police saved those people. We enabled him to do so. Made sure he was in the right place, right time, with the right to do what he does. But you wouldn’t see that. And to have no reason to cripple him? Just the same as the rest of this society. I was going to be his sidekick. If he cared so much about people, why did he reject me? Quirkless. Simple. He’s a bigot. Your worship blinds you.” Koware was knocked backwards, as Iida rose from the ground, freeing himself. “Anyway. You’re a shit hero. Can’t even focus on saving one of your own kind.”
One metal finger pointed at Native. “Even if he did cost me my arm, you oughta know better.” Iida lunged forward to slam a boot into Koware. But the metal arm shot out, and lifted the student up by the throat.
“Shut up, Shut up!” Iida howled as Koware shook his head snorting.
“Your death will just be another figure, in someone’s paperwork. Farewell.” Iida grappled in the grip, bucking, screaming, trying to get loose. Tensei...his words fluttered forward.

You look up to me that much Tenya? Guess that makes me a great hero or something!! Ha ha.”

“IT DOESN’T MATTER WHAT YOU SAY NOW. YOU’RE STILL THE CRIMINAL WHO HURT MY BROTHER!!” Iida screamed. Koware moved to crush his windpipe, when his eyes caught a flash of motion. Someone was...bouncing off the walls? By the time he was able to process and react to what was happening, the fist was already on his face. Glowing energy. A strength quirk!?
“SMASHHHHHHHHH!” Koware was sent backwards, Iida dropping from his gasp. Izuku hung in midair as he swallowed.
“Midoriya?”
“I’m here to save you, Iida!”

“Ack!” Kaminari ducked, skidding away from a long fleshy limb. This Nomu seemed a lot weaker than the one the news had talked about. But it was still crazy strong. Multiple heroes, Ms. Joke included were doing their best to bring it down. His electricity didn’t seem to be doing much, when he could manage to bring it to bear.
“Kaminari! Where’s Vanfell!!?” His mentor barked as she swung under an attack. Her arm slammed down on the Nomu. Her quirk was useless here, but her battle instincts kept her going. She had
Aizawa to thank for that, all those years ago. But there was the matter of a missing intern that was bothering her. Kaminari shook his head as he rolled away, dodging another attack.

“No clue! He must have run off to save some civilians, or something?!” The student’s mind was racing as to what could be happening. It seemed to settle on a far worse proposition. “Vanfell’s been kind strange recently... all edgy. That Hammerhead guy must have got to him... and only getting one internship offer. Kamino... the hero killer dude. No way...” Kaminari didn’t say anything as he broke into a madcap dash for where the trio had been working earlier. If he was right then things were about to get very bad, very quickly.

“Gar!” Vanfell gave out a guttural rumbling yell as he threw himself forward. It was a katana his opponent was using. So all he needed to do was close the gap and make it unwieldy for him to use it. Stain had been running his mouth. Vanfell highly doubted the killer was as trained as him, so if he could just close the distance, this fight would be off to a good start. His fist curled into a hook that would hopefully floor Stain. But The Hero Killer simply rolled backwards. Vanfell hit thin air. But he didn’t pause. His right leg jumped him forward as he threw a superman punch with his left fist. Stain wouldn’t be able to account for this. Most fighters would figure that Vanfell had lost his tempo, and wouldn’t keep trying to approach. But Vanfell was wrong. Stain now stood up, simply sidestepped Vanfell. The quirkless student felt a world of pain bloom, as a knife was jammed into his side. It punched through his costume and drew blood. His suit managed to hold it’s own vs the Katana raked up his chest, but his right cheek was cut open a thin flow of blood flowing out. Next, the spiked boot flew for his knee. The student skittered, turning to dodge. Only to have the other boot spike the back of his leg as Stain had somehow leapt behind him. Vanfell, now bleeding from three sources crashed to the floor. It took everything he had in him not to scream as the Katana buried itself in his right shoulder.

“As expected for a quirkless brat. You’re pathetic. A poser, who degrades hero society. Unable to put actions to words.” Stain lifted a finger, pointing at Hammerhead. “You two are kin, the blight on hero society.” By now the Pro Hero who had taken issue with Vanfell was fading in and out of consciousness. Vanfell grunted as he tried to wrench himself out of what Stain had done to him.

“Hngk. I’ll stop you.” Vanfell’s palms slapped the ground despite all the pain. “I’ll show you, just like I’ve shown everyone else! Nothing will stand in my way, especially not scum like you!” He bellowed, as Stain twisted the blade.

“So focused on yourself. An inferiority complex that you seek to validate through defiling the name of Hero. Fools like you must be purged, for a better society.”

“Minority complex?!” Vanfell gritted his teeth. It flashed across his mind like an unwanted reminder. All those people who had shoved him down when they found out he was quirkless. The bullying at the pre-school. The U.K had shunned him, and yet Japan had been no better. U.A looking down on him, trying to cut him out. Liability. Hammerhead, the man bleeding out before him. All of it, little knives dancing up and down his body, tearing cuts open.

Shut the hell up. SHUT THE HELL UP! IT DOESN’T MATTER HOW DAMNED STRONG YOU ARE! I’LL STILL FIND A WAY, STILL BREAK THROUGH! MY FIST WILL BE THE ONE TO BRING YOU DOWN LOW. THE FIST THAT EVERYMAN WILL CHEER FOR.”

“...Idiot. You don’t even realize you ought to be focusing on saving that hero first. Forget about yourself for a second, and try saving others. Because getting trapped by your own hate, and acting out of pure self-interest, makes you the furthest thing from a hero.” A sickly squelch was heard as Stain pulled his katana out of Vanfell. “That’s why you have to die.” His tongue licked the blood of the quirkless student off the blade. Vanfell found himself unable to move.

“I can’t move?! My body isn’t responding. Fuck!” Stain rested a boot on Vanfell’s head as he held his katana up.

“Consider yourself a simple offering to the betterment of society.” His blade started to shoot down as Vanfell howled.
I’ll stop you! This won’t stop me, not yet! NOT YET!” But Stain paused. He twitched a little too late. A flying figure tackled him off Vanfell. Then he was pumped full of an electric shock as Kaminari kicked himself off the chest of Stain.

“Yo! Keep the hell away from my bro!” Kaminari barked, arriving just in time. “Right on cue! I got you Van!”

Izuku had just managed to get there in time. The student was glad that he had opted to trust his instincts. He had thought it through. It was possible it was over-thinking, and he did lack proof. But Hosu was the same city where the Hero Killer had appeared. The Nomu’s, or Nomu look-alikes were rampaging around. As far as he had been concerned, he was the only one who saw the potential connection. Was the Hero Killer working with The League of Villains? Sure he was an ex-cop, but there was no reason to believe he wasn’t. The fact that Iida hadn’t been at the main incident also made it likely that he found the hero killer.

“Bingo.” His fist had managed to send Koware stumbling back. 5% wasn’t immensely powerful, but it was enough to rock someone. Iida looked up, taken aback. Midoriya was moving far faster than normal, and while he had less power to his blows his limbs weren’t broken. The student lifted himself to his feet.

“Midoriya?! But why?” He asked. As Koware fell back, regaining his bearings he realized something. This was the kid from Shigaraki’s photo. Getting in his way as well now.

“It was on TV! How 60 percent of the Hero Killer’s victims were discovered around blind corners, in deserted areas. So I’ve been checking the back alleys, near the Normal Hero Agency, close to the centre of all this trouble—” Full Cowling crackled around his legs. “Looking for you! Can you move!? Make for the main road and get some pros to come help us!” Iida was on shaky legs, as he swallowed.

“I can, but he has a firearm. My injuries mean I won’t be able to get clear without being shot...”

“They mentioned that...” Izuku swallowed. “So we need to disarm him.” Izuku’s eyes fell on Native for a second. “Another one! If it was just Iida, I might’ve been able to carry him and run, but...”

“Midoriya. Don’t interfere. This has nothing to do with you!”

“What’re you saying?”

“God. You kids are something else these days. Showing up to bail him out, eh? And this guy?” Koware waggled his gun at Native. “Saving him that cost me my arm, eh? Izuku Midoriya.” Izuku tensed, as Koware knew his name. “I will have to kill you, and it won’t be gentle. No sympathy for those who would ruin the lives of those below them.” There was a savage aura to him as he levelled his gun at Izuku. “So. What now?” Izuku shuddered and swallowed. He remembered what All Might had told him.

“Idealistic criminals have a different sort of fire in their eyes...this guy isn’t like the attackers from USJ! Those are the eyes of a killer!” He fished his phone out of his back pocket, tapping a few buttons. Then he shoved it away. Koware did notice this and narrowed his eyes. “Even with just a hunch and no proof, I should have persuaded some pros to come with me. Now I need to protect those two that are injured. Maybe buy some time or if possible, drive off the Hero Killer, all by myself?”

“No! Izuku, I told you to run! This is none of your business!” Iida yelled, trying to shove Izuku away. The speed based male was too shaky on his feet to fight at the moment, the injuries Koware inflicted causing him to fall on his face.

“What’s a hero supposed to do when you say crap like that? I’ve got a lot to say to you, but, that’ll have to come later! Because it’s like All Might said—” Izuku lifted his hands into a fighting pose as he did his best to smile. “Giving help that’s not asked for, is what makes a true hero.” Izuku glared at
Koware. His eyes simply rolled.

“You read that off a cereal box? You could have been smart, and ran away. Whatever. Hope you can deliver. These idiots couldn’t.” He yawned as he aimed his pistol. Izuku moved quickly, throwing himself forward. “Smart. Make me miss.” The bullet did indeed go wide.

“One for All. Full Cowling!” Koware twitched as Izuku got in close. His robot arm shot down to deck Izuku. The man was presuming that the boy would leap up for a punch. “One chance to get close!”

“Watch out! That arm, it’s like a jackhammer!” Iida howled, as he desperately tried to pick himself off the ground. But Izuku played Koware like a fiddle. He shot through the legs of the police officer. But his opponent was no slouch. He spun around, his knife aiming for where Izuku would have to be. And he hit nothing but air. There was a scowl.

“Gone? No.” His eyes lifted upwards, as he saw Izuku cock a fist back.

“Five Percent...Detroit...” His arm slammed forwards, smashing into Koware’s face. “SMASH!” The police officer seemed to fall backwards, coughing and spluttering. Izuku landed, as Iida grunted.

“Those movements! Just like Bakugo’s...and Vanfell!”

“It worked?! It worked! My Full Cowling! I can really fight!” Izuku had landed. But he hadn’t accounted for Koware being as durable as he was. The Police Officer had risen up. An uppercut smashed into Izuku’s jaw, sending him sprawling back. He was grabbed his chest tugged by his costume, a knee rammed into his face. His metal arm then lifted him in the air, flinging him into a wall. Izuku slid down it, before receiving a harsh kick to his stomach. Koware shook his head, as he watched the boy try and throw a telegraphed punch. Swaying to the side, another boot to Izuku’s stomach.

“God. If you heroes are going to be so damned important, I wish you’d live up to your expectations.” “T-the hell!?” Izuku coughed as he tried to shove Koware off. But right now he was pinned to the wall, with Iida still too shaky. Another fist slammed into Izuku’s face, sending him coughing to the floor.

“See, a quirkless asshole like me? No chance I can be a hero. Living in the ghettos, y’know all that shit. So I say to myself, let’s be a police officer. Give back to society, right? Ok, so they don’t notice me. S’ok.” Another brutal haymaker, sending Izuku flying into a trash-can. “I’m doing good, y’know. Swat Officer, making people happy and safe. Helping heroes do their job.”

“S-shut the hell up.” Izuku forced himself to his feet, as he spat on the floor. “You shouldn’t work for recognition, or yourself! It’s about what you do for others, being a pillar for them to depend on…” Izuku glared at Koware as the man advanced on him. Izuku managed to dart to the side, landing a blow to Koware’s ribs. Then a punch to his chest. And another. But the man seemed to ignore it, before slamming Izuku with a brutal headbutt.

“Cept this asshole, Native right. Two-bit Earthbending nuisance. Right? A nobody. I help him on a villain op, y’know. He screws the pooch. So I help him. Lose the damn arm in the process, whatever. He’ll tell them what happened right? Let the quirkless fella get some rep for a bit. Nah. Asshole.” Izuku howled as a rough kick smashed into his side as Koware seemed a man possessed. But he paused as he looked down at Izuku. “You at least tried to defend your friend. Not for glory. But for yourself. Not for rage. For yourself. I respect that. Stay down kid.” He turned away from Izuku and stomped towards Iida. “Way you got into my blind spot, was good. You’ll go far when you walk away from here.”

“Oh crap! No, don’t!” Izuku was scrambling up. His injuries were hurting him but if he didn’t get up here, Iida and Native were dead. This quirkless villain...was insane. Almost like Vanfell in so many ways. Irrelevant. But it didn’t look like he was going to be fast enough. He was almost up and on his feet when there was a crackling noise. Koware rolled to the side, narrowly dodging a barrage of fire and ice. Iida and Izuku craned their hands, utterly shocked.

“Geez. You kids don’t know what minding your own business means, eh?”
“Midoriya. Learn to write...more specific directions. I was almost too late.” Todoroki exhaled. Flame and ice danced around his body...the fight was far from over.

“Kaminari, you damn idiot! Get the hell out of here, this isn’t your burden!” Vanfell groaned. His body was still dead weight. Stain must have had a quirk that could do this sort of thing. The electric student shook his head as he watched Stain closely.

“Nah, you oughta look at yourself dude! Really need a hand.” He put himself up on the balls of his feet watching him closely. Now the villain rose, adjusting his jacket carefully. His eyes narrowed as Kaminari felt a wave of terror wash over him. Stain’s voice gravel and glass melded into one husk of a voice.

“A friend shows up and says “Stay away from my bro.” Not the best line...but it works.” Stain drawled as he lifted his katana to point it at Kaminari. “However, it’s my duty to kill these two. So if we’re forced to fight, then naturally. The weaker of us will be culled.” His face was a hellish visage, pure evil mixed with an unstoppable determination. “So. What now?” Kaminari swallowed as he flicked his eyes to look at Vanfell. The electric student gritted his teeth to look at Vanfell. One hand picked up a trash can lid, using it like a shield. His other hand gripped a pipe as he exhaled.

“You’re crazy man. Knees are knocking just looking at ya.” But Kaminari gazed behind him to look at Vanfell. “But if you think...I won’t try and stop you...” Come on Kaminari hold it together. He never did finish the sentence but it was clear that he was about to stand and deliver, come what may.

“So be it.” Stain remarked. This child was in the way of his current goal. Such a situation mention that he had to be eradicated, despite his bravery. The Hero Killer threw himself forward. One hand sent a knife flying at Kaminari’s thigh. The trash-can lid swung down, deflecting it. But this let Stain take an opening with his katana. It was about to bisect Kaminari. With a desperate heave and grunt, Kamanari parried at the last second. As he did so he sent a jolt of electricity through the pipe. Metal connected with metal, rewarding Stain with a sharp shock for his attack. Hissing the hero killer threw himself up and over Kaminari, landing behind him. The student threw himself forward, landing on his stomach. Scrambling he threw himself over, landing on his back. But the katana had already wedged itself in his right hand, forcing him to drop the trash-can lid. But Kaminari grinned. His other hand shot other, to hold the blade in position.

“Big mistake! Voltage, release!” His quirk let loose and travelled up the blade. Stain realized what had happened just a little too late. Another wild surge of electricity forced him into spasms, as Kaminari gritted his teeth. The electric student had noticed the injured pro hero. Somehow he had to get Vanfell, and that jerk out of here!? Kaminari continued to hold the blade in place, despite the pain. But a boot slammed into his cheek, opening two thin cuts. It was enough for him to lose focus, and for Stain to wrench the blade free. Kaminari went to leap up, and swing the pipe. But Stain’s long tongue washed over the drops of blood and in an instant, Kaminari was paralyzed, unable to move.

“You lack grace. But you do hold power.” Stain remarked as he strode past the paralyzed student. Kaminari was screaming internally. If Vanfell died because he’d been an idiot... “The technique with the sword was impressive. Too many fools out there are nothing but talk. You, however, are worth keeping alive. Unlike these others.” And with that Stain approached Vanfell and Hammerhead, his katana poised and ready.

“Hey! You touch my mates, and I’ll fry ya!” He barked. Vanfell was unable to move. Kaminari had put up a better fight than him. But he supposed this was the end of the road. He was scared, but it wasn’t unexpected. His eyes closed as he saw it coming. But suddenly Stain had darted away from him in a quick combat roll. Van and Kaminari’s eyes flickered to the entrance of the alley.

“One after another. So many interruptions today…”

“Kaminari, Vanfell! Why am I always cleaning up after you two!!?” Jirou yelled as she skidded into
the alley. Her soundblast had been just in time as she gritted her teeth. Not good...
“You really need to keep your nose out of my shit Todoroki, you half-breed brat. Daddy ain’t gonna run and save you.” Koware hissed. Course Endeavor’s son would have to get involved. Iida would feel bolstered by the arrival of a third string. The fight was about to turn into a brawl. His fingers traced the belt he had on. Two flashbangs, and a single fragmentation grenade. Situation was looking dicey.

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“Todoroki, you too?” Iida asked, leaning on a wall. Izuku was stunned.

“But how’d you…? And...your left!” The student was agape. Todoroki was using his flames. He’d sworn never to do that, and Izuku had thought the sports tournament to be a fluke induced by the high stress environment.

“How…” That’s my line.” The student let his quirk start to dissipate as he eyed Koware. “It took me a few seconds to figure it out. That group text to everyone with nothing but your location.” Todoroki slammed one boot on the ground as Koware jumped onto a nearby dumpster. “Because sending out a totally meaningless message isn’t your style.” Ice blasted out from his foot. Koware was safe on the island that was his dumpster, but Native was lifted up, and slid away from him. “I realized it meant “I’m in trouble. Help!” Don’t worry. In just a few more minutes, the pros’ll be here.” Izuku and Iida were also safely pulled closer to Todoroki thanks to his ice construct. Koware had to throw himself to the side, landing poorly to avoid the burst of fire. Narrowly avoiding landing on the ice, he spat on the floor glaring at Todoroki. “Just as the reports said. “But you won’t be killing these guys today, hero killer.”

“...You sure?” Koware growled. “The two friends you just saved, are injured. Native is dead weight. And I’ve got this.” His pistol was back in his hand as he aimed it at Todoroki. “Leave.”

“Todoroki! We need to disarm him. If he has that gun, we’re not going to be able to get in close. You’re gonna have to do it. Iida’s too injured, and my full cowling isn’t fast enough.” Izuku grunted, holding Iida up, one shoulder rested over his.

“Fine. Shouldn’t be a problem.” Todoroki’s hand shot forward. A wall of ice flew towards Koware, who whistled. A fragmentation grenade whizzed through the air, timed perfectly. Cooked. The ice was blown away. Todoroki tutted, but didn't hesitate. His follow up was a blazing firestorm. But there was a loud bang, and a flash of white. Three students howled as their vision and hearing was ripped away from them. Koware lifted his head. It had worked. Risky tossing the flashbang into the fire, but it had worked. The heat had ignited the weapon and made it go bang. Kid’s were idiots as well. He’d been bluffing. Gun was long since empty. But if Todoroki had known that, he wouldn’t have bothered with the flames. So no flashbang. Storming forward, his metal arm gripped Todoroki by the throat, smashing him into a wall.

“Each action he makes sets him up for multiple attack’s. He’s impressive.”

“You don’t deserve these two, Ingenium.” But the man tensed. No surprise that Todoroki wasn’t going to let him do this. A burst of fire made Koware tactical roll backwards. The police officer tossed a trash can at Todoroki, who redirected it with ice. Now, Koware lunged back in close. It seemed the son of Endeavor had already recovered. Izuku and Iida were still blind, as his fist swung for the face of Todoroki. Another burst of fire, and an ice-wall almost bisected the officer. Instead Koware managed to hop into the air, and shove himself backwards off the ice with his metal arm.

“Close one.” Todoroki huffed to himself, as he watched Koware. Just like Vanfell, this man was quirkless. But he made up for it with sheer battle instinct. “Each action he makes sets him up for multiple attack’s. He’s impressive.”

“Why…?” Iida groaned, hearing the fight. “Both of you just stop it. I’ve inherited my brothers. I have to do this. He’s mine to…”

“Inherited his name?” Todoroki swatted more fire at Koware, who was now starting to figure out the
pattern. There was one more flashbang if he needed it. “That’s strange.” Todoroki threw up an entire ice wall in front of him. No way Koware would be able to follow through on that. “Because the Ingenium I know, never made faces like that. Guess your family’s also got a dark side to it.” The student grunted. Izuku twitched, as his eyes narrowed. He could see again!? Just in time to hear an utterly guttural roar. Koware!? The ice wall shattered as the robotic hand could be seen reaching through.

“I’ve had it just about to here with your damn shit kids! I’m gonna end you all!”

“You’d like to think so.” Todoroki went to light his flames up. But Koware had managed to reach for his throat.

“You’re a damned idiot!” But before he could finish Todoroki off, Izuku had leapt forward. There wasn’t time to punch him. So he grabbed him by his suit, and dragged him against the floor. With a sharp huff he threw Koware in front of him. The Police Officer rolled and scrambled to his feet. Midoriya!”

“It wore off! Protect Iida and Native!” But Koware rose up, knife lunging for Izuku. Izuku was saved, as a sheet of ice made the officer fall back. Izuku stood next to Todoroki, as Iida collapsed again. His blood stained the floor as the two students thought about the best course of action.

“He’s quirkless. His pistol is empty, otherwise he’d shoot us right now. There’s only one grenade left on his belt.” Izuku panted, taking in harsh breaths. “But he’s able to keep up with us physically. Just like Vanfell. I wager he’s pretty well trained. We’ll have to combine our attacks, and see if we can keep the pressure on him. I doubt he’ll allow us to run, and if he’s this strong then he’ll be able to catch us.” Izuku spat on the floor, as Koware stepped forward. The LED’s on his arm had all gone pitch black as he shook his head.

“All I wanted to do was get rid of one hero. But none of you really get this. Make it all about yourselves, as you always do. I’m gonna need a smoke.” Koware was stomping forward.

“If he’s like Vanfell, we’ll need to hit him with everything we have. Take his attention Izuku, and I’ll freeze him.”

“Right!”

“The two of us...will keep them safe.” Todoroki remarked as Koware seemed to continue to storm toward them like there was nothing else in his world.

“No. All of you are done. Dead. Shut the hell up and accept that.” Iida laid on the floor. Todoroki fixed his gaze on his foe but his thoughts wandered.

“Ever since your brother got taken down. I’ve had my eye on you. Because all that built up resentment was written all over your face. I know that when I see it.” Izuku threw himself into the air, full cowling crackling. “And I know just how grudges like that can cloud a person’s vision. I was shocked how fast my mom went from crying and apologizing to smiling and offering forgiveness. I’ve been able to move on, eyes unclouded. Because she wanted me to be happy. To save people.”

Koware let out a beastial roar, one that sounded like the essence of rage. He was storming at the students now, nothing held back. “At any point before that, I never would’ve dreamed of choosing my father’s agency for my internship. It’s not that I forgave him. I doubt that I ever will. I just want to witness and experience for myself what makes him the number two hero out there.” A storm of flame was thrown, a blazing barrage. Force Koware to fight Izuku. “No matter how much of a scumbag he is. I had to see it for myself. The decision making and intuition that’s made people label him number two” Todoroki recalled how his father had instantly called to head to Hosu, the minute Koware had been spotted. “It was all so simple, all of it! So simple, yet I couldn’t see it! Your power is your own!! That simple, single thought!!” Iida watched this as he tried to stand, force himself to fight. How he should have focused on Native first. How Izuku and Todoroki were fighting for him. His own bitter words, the declaration to kill. His eyes worked. He saw Izuku grabbed out of the air. Koware slammed him into a wall, before smashing him into a railing. Izuku howled out in pain.

“He’s even stronger than before?!” Todoroki threw up ice, forcing Koware’s attention onto him.
Another demonic bellow of rage as the Officer galloped forward.
“Stop it. I can’t...take it.” Iida groaned from the floor. Todoroki saw Koware now.
“IF YOU WANNA STOP THIS...THEN STAND UP!” “Because I’ve got one thing to say to you Iida...” Koware slammed his entire body through the ice, metal fingers reaching right for Todoroki, ready to kill him. “NEVER FORGET WHO YOU WANT TO BECOME!!”

“I’m Ingenium. The Hero who’s going to take you down!!”

One after another...heh. Time might be up for someone.” Stain panted as he watched this girl arrive on the scene. Another student who wouldn’t mind their own business. There was an inherent level of respect held for her in this regard.

“Jirou...as well?” Vanfell laid in his own pool of blood, the guilt starting to merge with pain.
“How the crap did you find us!? And that was such a badass entry!”
“How? If there’s trouble, Vanfell is going to be in it. And you’re a dumbass who’d follow him right into it. Just had to focus my jacks, and heard you from a mile off.” She furrowed her brow. Moving forward carefully, she kept firing off constant soundwaves to force Stain back. He retreated further down the alley, as she now stood with all three injured individuals safely behind her. “Keep it together. I’ve got professional backup en route.” Her lips curled. Death-Arms had been alerted. The man had told her not to get involved with this fight. That it wasn’t her battle, and that she might lose her place at U.A if she interfered. ...But better to lose that, than to lose her friends. So she kept her body tensed and ready to fight. “You know, you’re not going to hurt anyone else today, Hero Killer Stain!”

“...” Stain didn’t say anything. His scarf billowed in the night wind as he watched this girl stand before him. She seemed to hold some level of conviction. And she’d called for back up. Supposedly.
“Jirou! Don’t like him slice you up! I think he can do something with your blood! He got me, and I couldn’t move!”
“It’s...paralysis. If he can swallow your blood.” Vanfell still tried to move as his body seemed dead in the water. Jirou swallowed.
“Guess that explains why he has all those blades. Here I was thinking it was just fashion! Ok. Just stay away from him.” But a blade flew through the the air. Jirou just about managed to dodge it, but her balance was off. Stain moved forward, now almost on top of her.
“You’ve got some good friends...Everyman!” Stain barked. Jirou felt a thin cut on her face. He’d clipped her. His knife swung toward her face, but her metal jacks just managed to parry them, sending the attack wide. It wasn’t the end of things however. Stain glanced upwards, as did Jirou.

"A katana?! Just as he threw the knife...crap!” Jirou’s attention was focused on this. Then she felt a hand grab her by her jacket. Stain was lifting his tongue to go for the cut. Her jacks managed to repel him with a swift blast of sound as she spat. “You ever hear of personal space?!” “His fighting style. Every attack...just leads to more options for him!” Stain swayed back, catching his katana mid-air. The blade slashed through the air, aiming for her neck. Her jacks were able to shoot forward and send it wide again as she skidded back.
“What the hell...Kaminari, Jirou. Just leave me! This isn’t your hill to die on. Beside, neither of you have the same issue as me. This is just damned pointless! I’m the one who has to win this. He’s mine to...”
“Don’t have the same issue?!” Jirou barked right back at Vanfell. She sent another two blasts of her quirk towards Stain watching as the villain leapt high into the air. “You serious? Perception? Get a grip. We’re all going through the exact same thing as you!” Vanfell went silent. Kaminari needed to get free. Something in his chest was tight, and he knew what it was. Didn’t want to admit it, but Jirou
reminded him of that old Disney song. A girl worth fighting for, right?
“Jirou…” His hand twitched slightly. Was he…come on! No time to waste! Jirou in the meantime had continued to keep blasting away at Stain. He was fast and she wasn’t hitting with too many of her attacks, but her objective was to play for time. She had to keep Vanfell, Kaminari, and Hammerhead safe.

“Keeping the same attack pattern, when facing an opponent faster than yourself…poor strategy indeed.”
“Whatever!” Jirou went to swing her jacks in a different pattern. But she felt pain erupt in her right arm. Two blades had been flung clean into her arm. Clothing didn’t do much to protect her as she hissed. Her blood streamed out of the wounds as the pain made her want to throw up. But she couldn’t. It had however distracted her long enough for Stain to get airborne. He was plunging down toward her with his katana, poised for her.

“You’re not bad either…” Jirou didn’t think she’d have time to react. So long as she’d managed to keep the others safe. Her eyes closed… but she heard a distinct crackle.

“LIGHTNING ROD HOMERUN!” Kaminari had timed it just right, flinging himself into the air. Both of his hands clasped the metal pipe from earlier. Charging his quirk through the metal, he swung it with wild force, smashing it into the face of the Hero Killer. Stain was sent ragdolling to the ground, spasming slightly as Kaminari landed right next to Jirou.

“Kaminari!”
“Pretty badass, right?”
“…You’re a dumbass. But you can move again!?” She wasn’t sure how this worked. But the injured hero in the corner coughed.

“No. That kid was the last of us to get hit. I can’t move yet.” Hammerhead groaned as he watched this unfold. Vanfell was strained, doing her utmost to force his body to respond, but it still refused.

“That kid must be O.” Stain grunted as he picked himself up. The Hero Killer threw himself at the two students. Kaminari had a genius idea! His trash can lid was lifted and tossed with surprising force. Stain merely deflected it as the student howled.

“Come on! That totally works in the movies!?”
“God, you’re hopeless.” Jirou rolled her eyes, with the faintest hint of a smile despite the life or death situation.

“…I’ve figured it out. He’s been tasting our blood. Then it paralyzes us.” Vanfell coughed from the floor, as she saw his own blood all over the floor. “Spark Plug broke free first, somehow. There’s three possible options. Could be that it ain’t so effective when used on multiple people. Doubt it though. Might be based on how much blood he got. Figure though, it’s blood type.” The other two options didn’t make much sense to him.

“Blood type? I’m B.” Hammerhead coughed as Vanfell nodded.

“And I’m A…”
“Blood type…hahh. That’s right.” Stain smirked. At least the quirkless kid had some level of intelligent. He was almost like that man from many years ago. But not quite as strong, able to make his ideals reality.

“Great, but I don’t think that helps us much. Kaminari, we need to make sure we get these two out of here.” Jirou barked, trying to figure out the variables.

“Dude is quick enough to react to your sound blasts, Jirou. Plus there’s too many people in the alley for me to cut loose. We haven’t got an opening. We’re going to have to fight him until backup gets here.” Kaminari swallowed tightly. His eyes looked at the blades in Jirou’s arm as he tightened his grip on the pipe. “Cause you’re bleeding, let me take front. Cover me, kay?”

“That’s stupidly dangerous. Not much choice at this point though I guess. Together we’ll make sure they get out of here safely!” Jirou swallowed. Her hand was now coated in blood but she wouldn’t fail here.
“Two on one, huh?” Stain inhaled as he watched them. His hand tossed his mask to the side, his face fully revealed now. For the first time the group realized the horrid reality. He had no nose. “At least you’re not naive.” Vanfell felt his face tighten, morphing into brutal despair. Jirou looked behind her for a moment. That look nearly made her heart break.

“Ever since your victory, I’ve been watching you, Van. Because all that pain you’re feeling...I’ve been there.” Kaminari gave out his best attempt at a battle roar as he threw himself forward at Stain. “I know how it feels to not be seen how you wanna be seen. Can really throw you off. People told me I oughta love my music more. How can you do that though? Dedicate yourself to something so removed from being a hero? They see me as a musician, you as worthless. Vanfell...I haven’t got the answers.” Jirou shot her jacks up into combat position. Putting her back into it now, her sound blasts exploded forth, proving the cover that Kaminari so desperately needed. “But we can’t let it consume us. And it doesn’t make us special. All of us are working through it, one step at a time. That’s why we have friends. Just got to open the door. Try to be who you want to be, and you’ll get there someday!” Vanfell couldn’t bear it. His two friends were putting everything on the line for him. They were saving him. Protecting him. He’d ran his mouth early…

“Gack!” Kaminari hissed. The Hero Killer was moving way too fast for him to even hit, let alone dodge. A fresh cut was opened on his leg as the ghastly visage of Stain grew ever darker. “Please. Run away. This isn’t your burden…”

“IT’S ALL OF OUR BURDENS, VAN!” Jirou howled now. “JUST STOP BEING AN ISLAND, AND GET UP!! Her voice screamed out. “Because I’ve only got a single thing to tell you…” Kaminari fell to the ground, Stain paralyzing him again. His voice was choked with pain and fear. “Damn it! Jirou, I’m sorry!”

“JUST TRY AND BE THE HERO YOU WANT TO BE!”

“The fist that everyman will cheer for. Every…”

“Do you know… of the Turbo Hero Ingenium?” Iida was replaying old memories in his mind. How he had told Izuku about his brother. Ingenium. The man who had inspired him to be a hero. Todoroki and his words, screaming in his ear. Never forget who you want to become. How he had declared that he would be the one to stop Koware. Calling himself a hero... “Me? A Hero? Having my friends protect me. Spill their blood for me!” His eyes caught on Native as tears started to splash against the concrete. How he had failed to think of the true role of a hero in the first place. “To remind him of his crime, I took on my brothers name. But...nothing has changed since the entrance exam.” And the most important memory of all, bubbled it’s way back to the cinema of his mind.

“You too, Tenya? A hero?”
“Yes. Brother. So cool.”
“A Robot?”
“Teach me how. For after I graduate! I want to know why you’re a hero.”
“To be popular.”
“How base!”
“I’m half-joking.”
“Only half!”
“Hmm. Well with grandpa and mom and dad being heroes. I’ve heard that everyone basically expected me to be one too. But it’s really kinda simple…”

“?”

“People who find a lost kid, and then make sure they get to a lost child centre? I figure those people are the coolest.”

“Then why not work at a lost child centre?”

“Don’t be so literal! You might really be a robot! Believe me, when I say that you’re way smarter than I was at your age, Tenya. Better reflexes too. Wait, hang on. This must mean...you look up to me that much Tenya? Guess that means I’m a great hero or something!!”

“You are right, Hero Killer.” Koware was storming through the desperate ice that Todo had been throwing up, trying to stall him. Even as his suit got torn open, his legs sliced, the man didn’t seem to slow down. “I’m not like them. I’m a novice. I can’t measure up to their standards!! Be that as it may…” Todoroki released another desperate attack. Koware seemed to just be like Vanfell, unafraid of what damage might come his way. Ice missed, but the flames seemed to roast over the man.

“Fire...like I give a shit.”

“Crap! I won’t be able to dodge at this range”

“Quirks aren’t the be all end all. Goodbye.” Koware was throwing a brutal fist right toward the throat of Todoroki.

“He’s a monster!”

“I HAVE TO STAND UP!”

“Kid hitting his second wind now?!?” Koware grunted, seeing Iida rise up.

“NEVER AGAIN!! NEVER AGAIN WILL THEY...OR MY BROTHER…

“Recipro…” His engines started to burst, started to crackle, fire, rev to life!

“LEAVE ME BEHIND IN THE DUST!”

“BURST!” Iida’s leg shot into the air. Koware was smashed in the jaw and sent back just enough for his attack to go wide. His biological hand made a swipe at Iida, who leapt into the air. His other leg swung forward, forcing the metal arm to parry, to block, to try and hold him back. Koware felt his knuckles buckle. His metal arm shuddered as several pins and panels snapped off. Wires hissed underneath as he jumped backwards, hunching over.

“Iida!”

“You good to fight?!” Todoroki bellowed. Sure Iida was standing and had just sent the foe flying back. But he injured nonetheless.

“This was not your battle. So, I apologize.”
“Not that again…”
“That’s why, I swear I won’t allow you two to lose any more blood here.” One of the metal panels slammed into the ground as Koware reared up. His skin was burnt now, as well as the injuries to his arm but he didn’t seem to care.

“God damn it. You have such gall. Bastard hero. Not even a good one, making it all about himself. You’re weak, and useless. Society won’t miss you in the slightest. Today is where the Ingenium line ends.”
“You’re nothing more than a ranting lunatic. Grow up. Iida. Don’t even think of listening to his so called reasoning.” Todoroki narrowed his eyes, glaring at Koware.
“No. He is right. I have no right to call myself a hero.” One fist clenched, Iida’s blood dripping to the floor as he lifted his head. “Still. He won’t break me. If I break, then Ingenium is really dead.”
“God. So self-righteous.” Koware lunged forward, as Todoroki gave out another full blast of fire. It was difficult to see where their foe had vanished to, but the injured Native groaned. The hero finally had some input.

“Idiot! The Hero Killer only wants me. You three kids need to get the hell out of here!”
“I don’t think he’ll let us.” Todoroki kept the flames up. Koware was forging forward, shoving a dumpster forward to force the flames to cook around him. His face was set in rage, the parts of it that weren’t drooping from his burns. “He underwent a clear shift a minute ago. His fire is blazing.”
“This guy’s robot arm is strong, sure. But he’s got no quirk. He relied on equipment earlier. Sure his training makes him strong, but the injuries will start to add up. I doubt he intends to fight multiple opponents at once. So he’s desperate to kill us before the pros show up. Intel did suggest he might flee, but that was wrong. He’s more serious than ever. This insane rage…”

“Damn. My reciprocating engine is broken. Did my last kick damage the radiator?!” Iida needed a solution quickly. “Todoroki! Can you regulate temperatures?”
“I’m not really used my left, but why?” The student barked, while keeping the flames up. The dumpster was getting closer, but it was starting to melt.
“Freeze my leg for me! Just don’t block the exhaust pipes!”
“It won’t matter!” Koware had jumped over the dumpster now. His knife was blazing toward Todoroki’s throat. But Iida leapt forward, his arm being stabbed instead. Koware snarled, producing another blade which he rammed into the same arm. He tossed Iida to the ground, before having to roll backwards. His attack was coming again, but delayed. Izuku was ready too. His body was in pain, but he could move.

“Two jumps. I’ll springboard from Todoroki’s ice, and then bounce off the wall! Can I do it?” Todoroki meanwhile wasted no time in cooling Iida’s engines. It was a sloppy job, but they were ready to go, puffing and firing up again. Koware let out a roar that would put most animals to shame as he charged forward, his short-circuiting arm ready to deliver the death blow. Iida couldn’t wasted any time. His teeth gripped the blade in his arm, and with a sickly splurt wrenched it free. Blood poured over the floor, but it didn’t matter.

“Thanks…Todoroki. I can fight! Who needs arms?!?” “RECIPIO! EXTEND!” Iida threw himself forward, spinning one leg up. Aiming right at Koware’s shoulder. Izuku threw himself forward, full cowling blazing through him, as his arm cocked back. Ready!
“Go guys…” Todoroki watched them as he finally let his quirk dissipate. Koware was still charging forward.

“My legs…”
“My fists…” There attacks hit home in unison. Koware’s ribs exploded in pain as Iida’s leg smashed into them with the full force of a brother avenging his kin. His already injured face was sent ablaze with new pain, as Izuku’s smash collided with the full force of a friend protecting his friends.
“ARE ALL I NEED!!”

“The fist that everyman will cheer for. Every...” Vanfell laid in the puddle of his own blood. Kaminari was paralyzed. Jirou was just barely holding Stain back. His memories pained him. He didn’t want to listen to them. Those days back in England, when in tears he’d tell his mother he just wanted to save people. That he wanted to make everyone feel safe and secure whenever he turned up. How she’d given him that hand he’d needed. But he hadn’t even managed to keep Hammerhead safe. So what if he was a bigot? Vanfell should make everyone feel safe. Don’t go and prove your better. ...He knew what he had to do.

“Look, Van. I believe in you, ok? So does your dad. We know you can be a great hero. You’d make so many people feel safe and happy. But are you sure it’s what you want to do? It’ll be hard. People are going to look down on you. Judge you.”

“It’s ok mom! They still deserve to feel safe and happy. I’ll be the hero that makes them feel that way, even if they don’t like me! Everyman, yeah!”

“...Heh. Alright champ. Time to get into the saddle!”

Jirou was running out of options. Kaminari was down and out. She’d be alternating her attack pattern but she was almost certain that Stain was about to figure it out. Come on...where was the backup!? “Sound Blasts.” Stain swayed under the next attack from Jirou. His katana came up, about to slice her in half.

“Damn! No way out, not this close!” She figured this might be the end. Not a bad way to go, defending your friends.

“I’m surprised you’ve never learnt. Depending on your quirk, it shackles you.” His blade pressed against her chest.

“He’s a monster...” She steeled herself for the pain, as her earjacks tried to shoot out to defend herself. But then there was the sound of boots stomping against the ground. Vanfell shot up, his paralysis over. Jirou was just close enough, he had to reach her. His sleeved arm managed to wedge itself against the blade. His other arm wedged itself against the blade, before he slammed his head into Stain. The Hero Killer recoiled, and jumped backwards. Vanfell panted as he wiped his brow.

“I WILL BE THE HERO I WANT TO BE!”

“Vanfell! Hell yeah! If I could move, I’d be fist pumping!” Kaminari yelled from the ground as he beamed at his friend. Just like in a damned action movie. Or a Shonen Manga!”

“The paralysis is over? His quirk isn’t that bad then.” Jirou let out the tense breath that she had been holding as she nodded at Vanfell. The quirkless student tightened his fists.

“You were dragged into my battle. But...it’s one I can’t fight alone. Kaminari. Jirou. Let’s knock this twat’s head off!” His voice bellowed out, as his trademark cocky grin came back to his face. Steeling himself he glared at Stain. “The Everyman will see the people safe!”

“Couldn’t have said it any better myself.” Jirou grinned as she lowered herself back into fighting position. Stain had steadied himself by now. His face was burning a sharp anger, and zealous hate as he narrowed his eyes.

“It’s no use pretending. One can’t change their true nature so easily. You’re a fake who prioritized
his own selfish desires. A cancer on this society warped by “heroes”. Someone needs to correct this system.”

“Dude, you listening to yourself!? Take a step back and maybe calm down a bit? Yikes…” Kaminari barked from his stationary position. Though the three were still scared of Stain, their morale had spiked with the return of Vanfell. Vanfell lifted a finger at Kaminari.

“He’s got me. I’m weak. I’m selfish. I let all of those things define me for way too long. But. Not as long as they’ve defined you, Hero Killer Stain! Today is where we finish your crusade, once and for all” Vanfell bellowed out his eyes now blazing with fire.

“...Pathetic.” Stain flung himself forward, flicking another knife at Jirou. Vanfell made sure to catch it in his suit’s sleeve. The fabric slowed it down enough for him to be able to do so without harm. “Jirou! Hit him!”

“On it!” A blast of sound slammed into Stain. He was rocked by it, but backflipped up onto a pillar. Two more blades were flicked at the students. Vanfell only managed to protect Jirou from one, as the other lodged into her stomach. She could bear it though as she gritted her teeth. Hammerhead huffed, and wheezed.

You’re idiots. Hero Killer only wants me and the quirkless kid...and why’re you sticking your neck out for me, anyway? I spit on your kind…”

“Figure we ain’t getting away anyway. Hero Killer seems a bit wound up. I’m saving you, because it’s the damn right thing to do. Heh. Funny that.” Vanfell bobbed on his feet as Jirou leaned forward.

“He’s changed. The Hero Killer is just as fired up as we are. His Quirk makes it hard for him to figure out how long we’ll be down. Plus, he has to get close. We’re his worst match up, multiple opponents.” Jirou nodded. Kaminari, still stuck chimed in.

“You thought we could scare him off, but he’s just madder now! His tenacity is insane!”

“S’ok. Let’s set him up, hit him hard, and knock him down!” Vanfell slammed his fists together. Stain wasted no time in launching another attack. He seemed content to allow Kaminari to live. So his ire fell on Vanfell and Jirou. Spinning down in a twirl, his katana swipe at Vanfell. The quirkless student skidded forward, lowering himself under the blade narrowly. Jirou had a knife flicked at her, but her sound was just able to deflect it, sending it wide at the last second. Vanfell’s left arm coiled into a hook, knocking Stain to the right. Jirou slammed another sound burst into him...but it hardly slowed Stain down. He flipped over them, landing behind Jirou. His blade managed to cut the back of her leg open, sending her to her knees. Vanfell tackled Stain, receiving a knife to the upper shoulder, and a brutal spiked kick. But Jirou was still alive, and Stain had to move back.

“Stop interfering! And you stay down too!” Stain’s blade swept for Vanfell again, jamming into his shoulder. The force Stain pushed into the blade forced Vanfell to one knee, as he gritted his teeth.

“Vanfell!” Jirou yelled. She tried to get her soundblast ready, but then she saw a look in his eye. Even as his flesh was being carved, she knew what he was doing. And so did Kaminari. His paralysis had worn off as he rushed at Stain with his metal pipe. This time he was going as close to whey mode as he could. Stain realized what was happening, moving to pull his blade free. Vanfell’s fingers gripped it, locking him in place as long as he possibly could.

“SET EM UP!” Vanfell made Stain vulnerable as he held the katana deep inside his wounded shoulder, locking down the mobility.

“HIT EM HARD!” Kaminari swung the pipe, straining, his teeth grinding. It slammed right into the jaw of Stain sending the Hero Killer swaying back on his heels.
“KNOCK. HIM. DOWN!” Jirou punctuated each word with a sound blast, each stronger than the last. Stain was pummeled, battered...and it seemed it was nearly over.
A Few Minutes Ago...at Gran Torino’s Location

“My blast was mostly for show, but. I’ve never seen anyone stay conscious after a hit like that.” Endeavor drawled, as he watched the Nomu. It’s skin was charred and blistered from his burn but still somehow intact. The creature seemed to be bulging. Gran Torino huffed.

“Watch out, you. This guy’s…” And then all the fire that Endeavor had pumped into the creature rippled out. It spewed into the air but one swipe of Endeavor’s meaty arm dissipated it.

“I see. Absorption and release, right? But it suffered some damage. His quirk is a joke!” “Strange…” Gran Torino hovered in the air, before realizing something. “No, Todoroki! This guy...he’s actually got...multiple quirks!” The nomu bulged, before throwing itself at Endeavor. It opened its mouth, a thick tapestry of flesh weeding it’s way out lunging at the #2 hero. Gran Torino didn’t have much time. “Did those two civilians make it out? Good!” Indeed they had as he gritted his teeth, and crouched.

“I see.” Endeavor wasn’t phased. He lifted one hand, ready to burn this creature back to hell. But the tapestry was broken and the creature slammed into a crater into the road. Gran Torino winced a little bit.

“Split the damn road. Been a while since I went all out.” “Blech. Well, you can sure move. Old man.” Endeavor then lifted his head, hearing another explosion. It seemed it came from the centre of Hosu as his lip curled into a sneer. “That’s where the rest of the heroes should be concentrated. We’ve only wasted two or three minutes, but another one already? Unacceptable. Let’s tie this guy up, get him into custody, and go back up the the others…” Endeavor grunted. His mind dwelled on a matter earlier. Shoto had ran off, stuck on his damn phone. He’d mentioned an alley, at 4-2-10 Ekou Street. So Endeavor turned his head to look at Gran Torino. “This punk. My sidekicks will handle him. But you, old man. I need you to head for a certain address. As for reinforcing the others...Endeavor alone...is more than enough.”

“He’s raging!” Todoroki could only watch as Izuku and Iida slammed their attacks into Koware. Izuku recoiled, clutching his arm. There was a sick throbbing pain as he hissed.

“?! I overdid it with the power?! It’s not broken though...right?” Koware had been falling backwards. But now his body seemed to force itself back to life as his eyes shot open. His robot arm swung at Iida, sparks flying everywhere. Spittle flew from the mouth of the raging police officer, as Iida ducked under the attack.

“I will defeat you, Koware! This time for sure! You, as a criminal!” “They stopped him dead in his tracks! This is my chance.” Todoroki flared his quirk up again.

“Keep him on the ropes!”

“AND ME, AS A HERO!!”

Iida put everyone into one last attack. It slammed Koware so hard that he was sent sprawling backwards, before a blazing typhoon of fire blazed over his form. An ice wall formed behind him, to give him nowhere to run. Iida’s engines spluttered, as Izuku watched ready to leap in. Todoroki swore he saw movement, a figure marching toward them.
“Get up! He’s still…” But Koware fell to the floor on his face, his body no longer moving. The three students looked at the man, bloody, burnt, his suit torn and his metal arm frizzing and sparking. Izuku swallowed.

“He’s...out cold, right?”

“Let’s get up and get out to the main road.” Todoroki moved over as he sighed. “See any sort of rope we can use to bind him?”

“We ought to take away all his weapons too, just as a precaution.” Izuku stumbled over, pating Koware down. Iida silent, managed to find the rope that they needed, binding him. Native, now moving again, hauling Izuku onto his back. The pro was shakey on his feet, but he had to do this much for these kids at least.

“Of course, we’d find rope in a trash-filled alleyway.” Todoroki grunted, while tugging Koware along.

“Todoroki. Allow me to drag him.” Iida reached for the rope, but had his request declined.

“The injuries to your arm are too severe.”

“Sorry kids. I’m supposed to be a pro, but all I did was get in the way. Kinda what happened back then with me and Koware...used to be a good guy once. Figure...all the quirkless stuff got to him.”

“Don’t worry about it. It would have happened to anyone in a one-on-one against that guy. He’s so strong...” Izuku tried his best not to dwell on the implications of why Koware had snapped and become the monster he was.

“Even in a three-on-one fight, we just about won solely because he screwed up. Our refusal to lose must have pissed him off. Iida’s speed was a bit too much for him to handle in combination with Midoriya’s movements.” Todoroki sighed. Izuku looked across the road and tilted his head. An old man seemed to be lost in alleyway...wait!? In an instant the old man flew across the road, slapping a boot into the foot of Izuku.

“WHY’RE YOU HERE?!”

“Gran Torino!!”

“I told you t’stay in your seat!!”

“Gran Torino!!”

“Well I don’t what happened here, but. Good to see you’re still alive.”

“Gran Torino...” The exhausted Izuku sighed as his mentor fumed. “I’m sorry.” By now the other pro heroes had arrived on the scene. The woman recognized Izuku from earlier and rubbed her face.

“Get these kids an ambulance. All of them are pretty beat up.”

“We got a backup request from Endeavor, but...”

“Hey...is that the hero killer?!”

“So he’s Endeavor’s...still over there fighting, then?” Todoroki asked. His father was playing one-man army again?

“Oh yeah, those Nomu siblings or whatever.” Native had made sure Izuku was resting on his back again as the female pro nodded.

“Yes. Those of us whose quirks couldn’t affect those villains came assist you guys.”

“...” Iida bowed his head low and sighed. His voice was full of remorse as he swallowed. “Both of you. You were wounded because of me. I am so terribly sorry...I was blind. I lost sight of everything.” Tears started to drip from his face. Izuku shook his head and exhaled.

“No. I apologize too. I couldn’t see at all that you were this upset about it. I’m supposed to be your friend.”

“Pull yourself together. You’re Class Vice President, aren’t you?”

“...Yes.” Iida wiped his eyes as he stood up and nodded.

In truth, the whole affair had only last five or ten minutes. But for us, the experience felt a whole lot longer. - I
“GET DOWN!!” Gran Torino had twitched. There was something moving in the air...as the winged Nomu flew down. It’s left eye was a burnt out husk. Clearly Endeavor had managed to inflict some damage to it, but it had got loose.
“A villain!? How could Endeavor let it go…?” The female hero yelled. Endeavor was catching up. The group could see his fiery outline, running up a building melting footholds into it. But he was too far away. One moment, Izuku was resting on Native’s back. The next moment the Nomu had pulled him in it’s clutches.
“Midoriya!” Gran Torino threw himself into the air. But the creature was moving too fast.
“Damn. If he gets too high...I can’t catch him with my quirk!” The old hero was desperately reaching for his student. In all of the commotion, one man sat unnoticed. Koware’s eye creaked open, as his metal arm ripped the rope away. His good hand shot to his boot, and wrenched the hidden pistol out.
“You damned heroes.” Lining up the shot, Koware pumped the trigger. The bullet ripped through the Nomu’s head, as it fell to the ground dead. Izuku was caught in the arms of Koware. “Can’t even finish this damn job yourself?” The student was pinned down as Koware growled. Just what was going to happen next?

It wasn’t as easy as the trio had thought. Stain was falling to the ground. But his sword in Vanfell was still leverage that he could depend on. Even as his body started to give out, his body twitched. It seemed he was fighting even as he faded away. Another knife swung for the throat of Vanfell, as the quirkless student swung his neck back. Forcing the katana out of his shoulder with a sickly squelch, he threw a harsh left hook.
“Stay down, bastard! Jirou!” His attack had launched Stain into point blank range. She didn’t waste any time as the sound blasts rocked him point blank. Kaminari made sure to knock the villain away with another strike of the pipe. All three students were exhausted now...but it was over. Vanfell collapsed to the ground, his injuries too severe. Jirou was just about keeping herself standing, leaning on a wall. Her blood was all over the floor, staining her clothes, and generally making a mess of things. Kaminari was shaky, but not too harmed. But this was a problem.

“We gotta move him. But you guys are way too injured. Damn…” But Hammerhead had lifted himself from the ground. His eyes narrowed as he went to help Vanfell. Kaminari lifted an eyebrow at this and shook his head. “Dude. Don’t like you hate him? Seriously?”
“...Kid has guts. I ain’t unable to admit when I was wrong. Quit your yapping. Get the girl.” Hammerhead muttered as he cradled Vanfell in his arms. The quirkless student didn’t say much, but nodded in respect at Hammerhead. Kaminari looked at Stain, as he moved over to Jirou.
“I’m fine, Kaminari. Just gotta cat-hey!? What are you doing!?” Jirou yelped, her cheeks flushing red. Kaminari had hauled her into a bridal carry as he shook his head.
“Nah! Time for Charge-Bolt to make his debut as a hero!~” Kaminari smirked. Jirou just hid behind her hands. Normally, she would have stabbed him with her ear-jacks...but she didn’t really mind.
“When you two love-birds are done yapping...we still gotta restrain Stain. Far as ol Hammerhead can see, there ain’t any rope. Figure that’d be too convenient.”
“Vanfell Zephyr! Denki Kaminari!” Both students paused as they knew that voice. Ms. Joke strode into the alley, and for once she wasn’t smiling. “Just what on earth are you doing!? Running off like this?” She barked. But her eyes quickly analyzed the situation, and she sighed. “Course. We’ll be having words about this. Get her out of here, Kaminari.” She waved a hand at the electric student, who carried Jirou of the alley. Vanfell could hear Death-Arms already starting to yell and howl at Jirou about what he had told her to do.

“I’ll provide the rope to bind the Hero Killer, mam.” Vanfell twitched as he recognized that voice. The girl with that ashen hair that he loved, walked in. Yaoyorozu went silent and paused for a
moment when she Vanfell. Swallowing, she quickly made sure Stain was tied and secured before moving over to him. There wasn’t any words shared for a moment. Hammerhead cleared his throat. “You two want to like. Talk. I’ll get out of the alley.” The hero carried Vanfell, and Yaoyorozu silently followed. Kendou was stood next to the snake-haired heroine outside of the alley as she smirked at Yaoyorozu.

“So…your boyfriend is the one who stopped this hero killer?” She teased, as Yaoyorozu went beet red. She swallowed and started sputtering. Vanfell in the meantime had propped himself up against the wall, and wiped his brow.

“Ya ain’t denying it. Heh. Ignore her. How you been doing?” He asked of his friend. Yaoyorozu turned to him and furrowed her brow. It was creased with her own issues. How all she had really achieved was little more than product placement and flaunting her body. But she just shook her head. “I’m alright. I…I’m more concerned about you. You’ve sustained serious injuries, and engaged in something outside of the law…” Her voice trailed off as she lifted one of his arms over her shoulder, to prop him up.

“Eh. I made a mistake. Figure I’ll have to account for it…but least that scum is off the street. Plus, you turning up? Little bit of sunshine, right?”

“Ah. I, yes. It is good to see one another. A friend in the right place will always make you feel better!” She was blissfully unaware of the wounded Vanfell’s attempt at flirting. The quirkless student just rolled his eyes and let himself lean against her for support. Kaminari still had Jirou held in his arms and all seemed to be dealt with. But there was a slashing of the rope. Stain twitched awake. A spare knife had been hidden. Kicking free he spiralled into the air above all the other heroes. Shooting at Vanfell, spittle flew from his mouth.

“Both this sham-filled society, and the criminals who wield their power in the name of petty mischief…” The knife was zooming straight towards his throat. Nobody seemed to be able to move in time. “Are the targets of my purge…all for the sake of a better society!” And just like that, Vanfell was about to come to an end...

“Told a man from the ghetto, to save the kid.” Koware stood up now, his face turned into a hellish mess. Anger was mixed with the injuries he had sustained. The way the blood and the burns mixed gave him an almost devil like visage. His gun was still smoking as non of the heroes wanted to move. Up on the water tower, Shigaraki was having a fit.

“Hey hey hey! What the hell does he think he’s doing?! Why’d he kill my Nomu? Why are those brats there? So many questions, but no answers. Why can’t things just go my way!?” The villain whined stomping his feet. Back down in the street, the pros were having also having a fit over what to do to next.

“He saved the kid…?!?”
“No idiot. The boy is a hostage. This is a police officer, and unrepentant killer we’re talking about.”
“Enough already! Assume battle positions!” The group was getting ready to take on the man stood before them, when a booming voice exploded out.

“Endeavor! You’re already finished!!”

“Endeavor! You’re already finished!!”

“More or less. I had to get a little rough! Wait…” The man glared at Koware. “Is that…?”

“Damn it! Get off me!” Izuku bucked under Koware’s grasp as the man lifted his head. Izuku was let go as Koware stepped forward, lifting his head.

“HERO KILLER!” The #2 hero collected the fire in his hand, about to launch an attack. Torino lifted a hand, shaking his head.

“Todoroki! Wait!!” Koware had moved forward now, tossing the gun down to one side. Izuku went to buck free and attack the man when he paused. The air had changed as a sick sense of dread fell
over the entire area.
“The Number 2! So what. All of you are more concerned with how you look, all the attention you want. Fake. None of you think about the people you save, or the pain in the rest of society. While the ghettos stand, while the police slave away, and while a monster like Endeavor plays at hero?” His voice was roaring now, as everyone present recoiled. Endeavor twitched at Koware’s words. Could he…?
“COME ON. STOP ME THEN, YOU HEROES. STOP THE MAN WHO SEES YOU FOR WHAT YOU ARE. BESIDE ALL MIGHT, ALL OF YOU ARE SURPLUS!” Koware took one more step forward, his boot stomping to the ground. No one was sure of what was coming next, except for Endeavor. He shook his head, growling.
“This guy, he. He’s out cold.” Koware had passed out standing up. Empty eyed he stood there, unable to move. The shocked students lifted themselves to their feet, as did the pros.

We learned later that one of Koware’s broken ribs had punctured a lung. He had thrown his gun but even so, in that instance. He was prepared to stand against us all. - I

Vanfell wasn’t scared to die. The Hero Killer was right. If he fell here, he would still have proven that he was wrong. An acceptable sacrifice. His arm shoved Yaoyorozu behind him as he threw his arms up in an X in front of him. Stand and deliver! But there was a loud metal crunching as Stain was smashed to the floor. The concrete actually broke from the impact as Hammerhead spat on the floor.

“Last time I checked, I didn’t like idiots who run their mouth. Purge yourself.” His metal plated head glinted as he turned back to Vanfell. “We’re even now. Impress me in the future.” Stain rested in the ground as Vanfell coughed, and spluttered. He guessed he must have really got through to this guy, eh? Yaoyorozu supported Vanfell again as the two moved over the nearby ambulance. He tried to pull himself up into it, but couldn’t quite muster the strength. He spat blood, and Yaoyorozu made sure he got up in it. She paused for a moment, muttered something to the paramedic and waved to her pro hero leader. The snake haired lady nodded, and she climbed in after Vanfell.

“Yaoyorozu…? You know, you ain’t gotta come with me, right?” Vanfell huffed from the ambulance bed. His wounds were already being attended to as he watched her. “Someone has to keep an eye on you, no? It seems you have a habit for finding trouble!”
“Fair enough. Yeah, that ain’t a bad way to put it. Girl like you gotta stay out of trouble, right?”
“You can’t just be so nonchalant all the time… Look at your injuries.” Her voice was serious, and Vanfell noted a tint of pain in her concern. “This very well could have been the end for you.”
“...Nah. I wouldn’t have died. Too stubborn. Beside, I’ve got things to do. Ain’t checking out anytime soon.”
“How can you be so sure!? So confident!? It’s not even confidence at this point. Arrogance. Don’t be like this, Vanfell. It doesn’t become you!” Vanfell looked at her. Yaoyorozu seemed pretty worked up as he gittered his teeth.

“Look…I’m not the one who loses, kay? I’m the one who does the winning. But it ain’t arrogance.” He looked to the side as he sighed. “Every fight I step into, I figure I’m about to lose. It liberates you. Makes you try your best. I figure you don’t have to think about that. Quirk of yours. Plus, you’re a beast at fighting when you’re really going all out.” Vanfell huffed. Yaoyorozu watched him quietly, and moved closer. Her hand took his.
“The compliment is appreciated, Vanfell. Just. Don’t be too harsh on yourself...perhaps I went too far. It is just a matter of concern for you, nothing more.” Her eyes darted away. His words were nice but she knew them not to be true. Silence fell over the ambulance.
That was one rough day. While Stain got stomped down by that Hammerhead, I had a feeling. His words would inspire many, and that day had not been the last time we’d see him… - V

And so the wrapping up began. The remaining Nomu in both cities had been captured, arrested, and processed. But up on the water tower in Hosu, Shigaraki hissed. The phone call he had received from Giran told him that Stain had been ruined as well. And his Nomu captured. His fingers dissolved his binoculars as he shook his head.

“Let’s go back.”

“Did you achieve the results…you were hoping for, Tomura Shigaraki?”

“Idiot. That all depends on tomorrow.”

A night passed. The six students who had found themselves involved in battle were all sent to the appropriate hospitals. A night passed. At Hosu the three students were awake and their injuries attended to. Izuku had several fractured bones and cuts. Todoroki had suffered bruises and lacerations, and Iida’s arm received particular care.

“Looking back now, what we did was incredible.” Izuku muttered. Todoroki nodded in agreement.

“And after that last ditch effort, I think it’s a miracle we’re still alive. With his weapons…that guy could have totally killed us.”

“Yeah. He definitely let us live.” Todoroki mused. “But you.” His gaze moved to Iida, the most injured of the trio. “Even with him coming at you with all that bloodlust, you still stood your ground. Impressive. I came to save you, but ended up needing your help. Sorry.” Iida shook his head.

“Not at all. It’s not like that. I…” But the door was slid open.

“Ooh, all the little wounded warriors awake!” Gran Torino stomped in. He was flanked by Mr. Manual and another figure. Torino moved over to Izuku and growled.

“I’m still gonna chew you out, but… before that you’ve got a visitor.” This was the other figure. It was a dog. In a suit. Quirks had made such a thing possible. “This is Mr. Kenji Tsuragame, Hosu’s chief of police.”

“Chief of police?!” Izuku barked.

“Please stay seated, woof.” The man seemed to have an easy going vibe to him though with an air of authority. “So you’re the U.A students…who put a stop to the hero killer, woof.”

“The chief’s here to see us? But why?” Todoroki didn’t like this one bit.

“As for the hero killer, he’s currently in treatment for his burns, broken bones, and a number of other serious, woof.” Iida and Todoroki looked away. “At the dawn of this extraordinary era, the police moved to prioritize leadership and to maintain the status quo…so they decided not to use quirks as weapons. The profession of “hero” rose as one that would fill that void, woof.” The chief glared at the students now, exhaling. “Authorizing the use of such might, these abilities that could so very easily kill was heavily criticized at first. But it gained public support. All because your predecessors acted morally, and compiled with the laws, woof. But those without those who inflicted harm without explicit instruction from the police and powers that be…even if they were to face someone like the hero killer. Such action would represent a stunning breach of the law, woof. Not to mention that technically, no hero would have the right to interfere. Heroes stop villains. This man was quirkless, and thus solely a police matter. You three, as well as pro hero mentors, Endeavor, Manual, Gran Torino. The six of you must be dealt with strictly and impartially.”

“Hold on a minute.” Todoroki had gotten out of his seat, despite Izuku and Iida reaching to stop him. “If Iida hadn’t acted, Native would’ve been killed. And if Midoriya hadn’t shown up both of them would be dead. Nobody even knew the hero killer was in town. Should we have let people die, all in the name of your “law”?!” The student was shouting now, as Izuku tried to calm him down to no avail. “Everything turned out fine, so just forget about the law this time! Isn’t a hero’s job to save people!”
“Clearly you’ve much to learn. Some education you’re getting, woof, from U.A and Endeavor.” The dog headed man shook his head.
"You mutt...

“Stop! This is serious!” Iida tried to reign Todoroki in, as Gran Torino shoved a hand forward.
“Hold on. Just listen to what he has to say.”
“All of that is what I’m obligated to tell you, as the police.” Now the chief rubbed his nose and nodded. “But, the real issue is whether or not deal with this issue publicly, woof.” The three students looked at him somewhat confused. “If we let this story out, you’ll be lauded by the public, but you won’t be able to avoid punishment. But, if we keep all this nasty business to ourselves, the hero killer’s burns will support the story that Endeavor was the key operative. He’ll receive the accolades, woof. Fortunately, the number of eye witnesses was small enough, that we can hugh up this whole matter before it causes problems, woof. But in that case, your defensive action and achievements will remain unknown to the general public.” He shoved a hand forward with a thumbs up. “What do you say?! I’m an understanding man. So when it comes to a promising group of young people, I’d rather not have to pursue charges over this admittedly massive indiscretion, woof!!”

“Either way, our negligence is to blame. We have to take responsibility…” Manual sighed, his head hung low. Iida bowed before his mentor.
“I’m so very sorry…”
“Yeah!” Manual smacked Iida on the back of his head and shook his head. “You caused big trouble your mentor! So don’t do it again!”
“...Thanks for everything.” The chief waved a hand as the three students bowed before him. “The world is an unfair place. You’ll receive none of the recommendations that you might have otherwise, but. At least as someone invested in keeping the peace, I can thank you!” He too bowed to them, as Todoroki muttered something about how he could have lead with that.

We’d had no idea we’d end up in that back-alley battle. And in the end the world would never find out what we had done. We couldn’t tell at the time, but the implications were already gnawing away at us. - I

Kamino Hospital was also home to three students. Vanfell had the worst injuries and was fairly bandaged up. His back had been damaged even further than when Todoroki had ripped it to shreds, and his shoulder was arguably permanently damaged. The Doctor had given him a stern dressing down. He didn’t care too much. Jirou had a lot of bandages. Her arm had been fully mummified, and her face had quite a few. Kaminari had come out with the least in the way of treatment needed. Of course, this meant that the student was the one acting like it hadn’t been a big deal.
“I don’t why you two look so sour, man! We put one of the two hero killers down! We’re like, total badasses.”
“Yeah. Total badass. Who broke the law.” Jirou deadpanned at Kaminari as she huffed, laying back on her bed. “Death-Arms yelled at me all the way here y’know?”
“Hey. Ms. Joke wasn’t all that nice once I got out of surgery either. She yelled that somehow I broke quirk law, while only having a pseudo quirk. That said, it is a first.” Vanfell shrugged, as he shook his head. “But we got lucky. That guy ought to have killed us all.”
“That so, eh? I figured you knocked him around pretty badly myself.” A man had entered the hospital room. Jirou sat up, her ear jacks shooting into battle position. Her nerves were tense after the scrap with Stain. “Woah, woah. Don’t jump the gun mam.” The man smirked as he tipped his head to her. “Just here for a chat.” It was an older figure. A scraggly beard, mustache, dark hair. He was
balding slightly, but he didn’t seem to care. He had a waist coat on underneath his suit, his tie immaculately done.

Wha? You wanna tell us who you are first, dude? We’re kinda trying to get better here…” Kaminari groaned, calming down. Vanfell gritted his teeth. He had a feeling he knew who this guy was.

“Tanema. Y’know they ain’t letting me smoke in here? Health and safety gone mad.”

“…It is like, a hospital. You know that right?” Jirou asked as she watched the man. Who the hell was he?

“Something like that.” He shut the door behind him as he tilted his head. “You kids look kind of beat up. How’d three upstanding citizens like you up end up here?”

“The hell are you playing at man? Coming in here and yapping at us, without telling us who you are?!” Vanfell snapped. This was starting to piss him off.

“I told ya. Tanema. Just a concerned citizen, that’s all. Been told getting stressed ain’t good for your health. Nor is breaking the law.”

“What.”

“Head of Kamino Police.” Tanema gave a droll smirk. “And no. I’m not telling you that. Fraid the law is.” The man leaned against one of the walls in the room and lifted his shoulders. “Our society is built on the fact that we all play by the rules. People start ignoring them we got a big ol bit of chaos on our hands. Even if ya thought you were doing the right thing, it’s not good. Can’t be having people going around, knocking heads together willy nilly. Even quirkless people. Sorry kid.” His teeth was bared in a grin as Vanfell shook his head.

“Whatever. You’re gonna punish us or something? Get on with it.”

“I oughta punish you. But see, it ain’t gonna look so good for the force if it comes out that a bunch of kids stopped one of the Hero Killers. Koware already is causing us enough heat as it is.”

“So what. You’re just going to…let it go?” Jirou asked, confused. This man was a headache to understand. How the hell was his Police Chief.

“Well, look. Who’s to say that you kids even had a fight with this guy? Those injuries? Ya got jumped by him. Ms. Joke and Hammerhead put up a valiant defence, and bam. You three are clear. Beside. Between you and me, nobody is crying to see that guy off the streets.” Tanema shrugged.

“Nobody really cares that it was some kids. Just the paperwork does.”

“…It isn’t good for the police that this guy used to be active under a different name, is it? Stendhal.” Vanfell hissed. Koichi had told him about that incident, a few years back. The quirkless student felt like he’d got one over on this officer. Tanema merely lifted an eyebrow and smirked.

“Stendhal? His activity stopped after some guy broke half his face. Something tells me you and that guy might be kinda the same. Consider me too nice for my own good, but you both did the right thing. And as far as I’m concerned, I’m old right? Eyesight didn’t quite catch what went down. Just don’t give me something that I can see.” Tanema pushed himself off the wall, and bowed his head to them. “Behave yourselves. And get better soon.” And with that, he breezed out of the room. The three students weren’t sure what the hell just happened…but they were off the hook. So long as they kept their mouths shut, and let this all fade away.

We weren’t allowed to consider it our win, at the end of the day. But in our hearts, the three of us knew we’d stopped Stain. Sure, it never went public…but that fact would stay with us for the rest of our lives. - V
There was a lot left to process. For a starter, the one reporter who had been obsessed with getting into U.A, had found a startling discovery. During the attack on Hosu there had been what appeared to be two figures stood atop a water tower. They weren’t quite able to figure out who these figures were. But it didn’t matter. The public had a lot of discourse on the whole thing. Several people were pleased to see Koware and Stain taken down and out. A few people felt a little disappointed but reasons that were hard to tell. Some just missed the spectacle of what had gone down, as odd as that might have seemed. But at the same time, the TV broadcast was reaching far and wide. Everyone was being told the stories about Koware and Stain.

“At present the identifies and addresses of these three are unknown. However based on their physical characteristics as well as footage of two men incidentally captured by NHA tv...some are speculating that this incident could be linked to the events of last month, when U.A High School was attacked by the so-called League of Villains.” This story had ran, attached to the information about Stain and Koware but never the main focus. “With the largest number of murders of any independent villain since the advent of All Might… Hero Killer Stain has certainly made his mark on the history books.” A lizard like man slipped on a bandana as he listened to this broadcast and gripped a blade. A Schoolgirl giggled, sighed, and strolled away from a bleeding, dying, man she’d left behind her in the street. “And Hero Killer Kowaremashita has revealed stunning resentment boiling within both our Police Force, and quirkless communities. More on their motives next…” And an ashy, burnt, looking man with dark hair cocked his head…

“...No matter where I turn. The Nomu are just an afterthought.” Shigaraki hissed from within his base. The newspaper clutched between his fingers started to dissolve and decay as he recalled how he had intended to make the world forget about those two. Yet it seemed all he had done was pushed them entirely into the spotlight. “Far from forgetting about them...now it’s like we’re the side show.” The rest of the internships were wrapping up. Bakugou and Best Jeanist continued to butt heads. Bakugou soon realized that the hero was far more focused with image than actually get anything done. All in all, this internship had ended up a failure for all parties involved. Kirishima and Tetsu wrapped things up with Fourth Kind. Kiri was glad that he’d passed on the S.O.S from Izuku, before dashing off to do more community service. Yaoyorozu and Kendou’s ad was done, much to the chagrin of Yaoyorozu. She was starting to feel like this whole hero thing was a waste of time, that she wasn’t suited to it. But beyond that it seemed that every student was having everything wrapping up decently.

“Long as you guys are okay. You and Iida...I got super worried when you sent out nothing but an address. Yeah...take it easy for now! You can tell me all about it later.” “Uravity, let’s do some basic training okay?” Gunhead coughed, looking at his intern. She got flustered as she splayed her fingers wide. “Oh, sure! See ya at school, sorry all that bad junk happened! Bye!” She hung the phone up as Gunhead laughed covering his mouth. “A love interest?” “N-no!! At least...I don’t think so…” Ochako huffed before darting over to join the rest of the trainees. Back in the Hosu Hospital, Izuku looked at his phone silent for a moment before exhaling excitedly. “I talked to a girl on the phone...awesome!” He carefully picked himself up and shuffled back into the room where Iida and Todoroki were sitting. His glee was still apparent and visible as he tilted his head. “Ah, Iida. Just got off the phone with Uraraka and…” “Iida just got his diagnosis.” Todoroki grunted. The room had a tense air about it, leaving Izuku confused. The Speedster student look ahead. “My left hand could have permanent damage.” Izuku went stiff. “Both of my arms received major injury. The left suffered worst than the right. Something called the brachial plexus nerve was severed. I have been told however, that I might regain most of the feeling, and use of my hands
fingers if I receive a nerve transplant. When I found the Hero Killer, my mind went blank. Manual should have been informed before I did anything else. I might hate him...but he wasn’t wrong. So. Until I am successful in becoming a true hero, my left hand will serve as a reminder.”

“...Oh.” Izuku sighed. “I should’ve followed through back then.No. Never mind that.” “Iida. Iida already gets it. Apologizing now would be insulting.” “I feel the same way.” Izuku clenched his scarred fist and placed it forward. “This hand will be my guide!” “Let’s get stronger. Together.” Todoroki saw this and then blinked, blunting out.

“I’m...sorry.”
“For...what?” Izuku was confused.
“Whenever I’m involved, it seems people’s hands get messed up. Or something...is it a curse?” Izuku and Iida blinked.
“Haha, what on earth are you talking about?!”
“Looks like even Todoroki knows how to make a joke!”
“No, I’m not joking. Just call me “The Hand Crusher.”

“THE HAND CRUSHER, PFFT…”

“That dam Izuku Midoriya! Thanks to him my teaching license was revoked for six months. A pay cut too.” Gran Torino grumbled down the phone line, fuming a little bit. “But I guess he didn’t have much choice. Just how it goes...but he acts before thinking, just like you Toshinori!”
“I’m sorry. Looks like I didn’t teach him well...” The #1 Hero was stammering down his phone in the teacher's lounge. Gran Torino didn’t stop barking at him in the slightest.
“Well, can’t say I actually care about the teaching license at this point.” All Might staggered out of the lounge. “Only had it to teach you in the first place. Keep that promise I made to your predecessor, Shimura.”
“It’s really appreciated. I’m only who I am today, because of you.”
“Got an odd way of showing it, forgetting about me.”

“No no no, it’s not like that at all! More like I reversed those precious memories.” All Might blustered, trying to bluff his way to safety.
“Hey! Listen, you know why I really called? The Hero Killers. I was only around one for a few minutes, but it was enough to get me shaken. And he’s not even the scary one, apparently.”
“You were frightened, Torino? But they’re in custody now, so what’s the issue?”
“What really stood out, is the overwhelming pressure of their fierce ideals.” All Might fell into a seat, listening to his former mentor. “Don’t misconstrue my words. I’m not praising them. But, your whole “Symbol of Peace” thing? The sense of duty? It was like that. In so many words, it’s charisma. The investigation will continue. And their ideals, opinions, they’ll get out there. The net, in the papers and magazines, on the tv. This age we live in, for better or worse is one of suppression. But mark my words, people are gonna be influenced by this.”

“So heroes will deal with them, just like this time…”
“Then there’s this league of villains. The media’s already making the connection, so this league’s gonna go from the gang who attacked U.A and got beaten at their own game to...an organization with something to say. Simply put, they’re the perfect magnet! The evil of an individual thug isn’t worth much, but when they are united by a single will, it’ll become a hundred times more dangerous. And if this is what they were planning from the start, then their leader is no slouch. Removing their obstacles, controlling the whole situation to their calculations…”
“I’ve had a bad feeling about this.” All Might gripped his trouser leg. He already knew what Gran Torino was about to say, but he didn’t want to hear it. He wanted to blot it out, sing, cover his ears.
“Yeah. Shimura was my friend and your predecessor. The last user of One for All and the man who killed Shimura. The man who opened that hole in your gut...I think we have to assume that “All for One” is back again.”
“...To think he somehow survived after those wounds. I don’t want to believe it.” All Might grunted. He wasn’t sure he did quite believe it.
“...That brave little kid’s admiration for you is no joke. You’d better find a chance to sit down and tell him everything. Tell him everything about you and One for All.”

Two days had passed. These two days had made Giran all warm and bubbly inside as he watched everything unfold. The two hero killer’s were being explored now. Their backgrounds, motives, ideology. It was all a little bit wonderful. He was meeting an old friend. Stepping down a row of stairs he pushed into an old haunt of his. Once upon a time this bar had been a bustling little black market. Now? It was where Gomi and Giran lived. It was decent enough. She had opted to sleep behind the bar, on the floor. Something about living rough had stopped her from using a bed. She was asleep right now, as Giran settled into a seat across from his friend. A rotund man with an eyepatch. Who he noted had helped himself to a drink. Giran gave a lazy smile as he stretched. His friend didn’t both with pleasantries, going straight into whining.

“Ain’t anybody willing to break the law these days. All this whining about not selling out their friends. Such a pain.”
“That’s because producing and dealing in support items and costumes without a license is considered a big time crime. Besides. Established support companies have been selling their goods to non heroes through back channels. Or so I heard.” Giran smirked a little bit. A double identity was ever so useful for business.
“God. I miss when All Might wasn’t a thing. I was young, and this country was so wild! Bout time for me to quite out, I think…”
“Hold on now.” Giran crooned. His pistol was lifted to the cigarette dangling in his mouth, lighting it. “This is just between me and you, but I’ve got the opportunity of a lifetime here. “Now, I’m tolling telling you, because your people have a reputation for quality.” Giran produced his phone from his suit, with it’s bunny case. “You seen this video? Stain is the man of the hour.”

“Hero Killer Stain. Real Name: Chizome Akaguro. Deeply impressed by All Might’s debut he sought to become a hero. Akaguro attended a private High School for hopeful heroes but soon despaired over “The fundamentally corrupt view of heroes within the education system.” He dropped out the summer after his freshman year. Through his late teen years, he made soapbox speeches about the need for a “Hero Revival,” but this ended when he concluded that “words alone are lacking in power.” In the ten years that followed Akaguro educated himself in the art of killing, all to fulfill his so-called duty. He’s for a “Hero revival.” According to Akaguro, “hero” should not be a title given to those seeking reward and recompense, but one earned through those tireless self-sacrifice. The heroes of this era are pretenders who misrepresent themselves. Only through a relentless purge can society be made aware of this truth.”

“This clip keeps getting put up and taken down.” Giran shrugged a little bit as he thumbed his way through his video files. “But it ain’t the only thing that we’re seeing pop up. That Police Officer, Kowaremashita. Got his own clip fluctuating around. Not quite as popular as our friend, Akaguro but…” The file was found as Giran lifted his phone up again showing it to his friend.

“Hero Killer Kowaremashita. Real Name: Kowaremashita. Strangely, the man erased any trace of other names. The leading theory is that his parents left him to the many “quirkless ghettos” that exist in Japan. Legislated as designated living areas for those deemed to be “less important” these areas are highly controversial. Kowaremashita grew up in one of these and was known to be an outstanding young man despite his surroundings. However his life seemed to take a harsh turn. Denied the ability to try and be a hero due to the equally controversial “liability laws” Kowaremashita had hoped to get recognition in the police force. He rapidly rose to become a swat officer, but found a bitter hate
growing inside him. Watching as all these “manufactured” personalities that he called Heroes got all the credit for the work of those below them. One day he snapped, and went rogue. His desire to expose to the world that Heroes were hiding behind a veil lead to a brutal murder spree. Pinpoint tactics and brutal tenacity were all the tools he attempted to use to tear society down and rebuild it.”

“Both these are real important, y’know?” Giran took a long drag on his cigarette as he smirked. “Because both sides get it. This whole thing, their styles? Gonna spread like a plague. Punks with a few priors, the real bad guys on the run, anyone who’s anyone. Myself, included of course.” Giran couldn’t help but grin as he leaned forward. “All that evil scattered evil around out there…” A giant rock like creature roused itself in the mountains, reaching up. A young boy gripped his mask, looking it over, and tilting it. A silver haired woman smirked as she flicked her tv off. “We’re all addicted to the same fever. We’re all drawn...to the organization they were with. The League of Villains.”

Vanfell had been discharged from the hospital. Jirou and Kaminari had both gone home and he was walking back from the train station. Back to school tomorrow. Was going to be a bit weird to get back into that headspace. Eh. He’d figure it out. Izuku had called to check on him and vice versa. Both students had made it clear that they were ok...and would have to live with their secrets. Both of them were pretty frustrated about that, but there wasn’t much they could do about it. So they took in their stride. Just as he turned a corner, Vanfell was bumped into. A girl his height had been jogging down the street, as he instinctively swore.

“Bloody hell. You wanna watch where you’re going?”
“Nah. I think I’m good, dude.” She looked at him. Just as tall as he was. This took Vanfell aback slightly. She seemed to be just a little bit older than him as well. One red eye, one blue. Long silver hair, sharp canines, and a warm smile. Figure that almost put Yaoyorozu’s to shame. “Maybe you oughta look where you’re going, eh? Hang on though.” She paused, as she looked him up and down. “Nah. I don’t know you. See ya!” She brushed past him as he wondered just what the hell had happened...while Gomi watched with a sly smirk from the rooftop.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoyed my take on the Stain Arc! Felt like adding a new OC, adding some stuff, and doing some world building! Any questions, feedback, etc, leave a comment! Plus Ultra!
Giran yawned. His fingers tapped at his cigarette, making sure the ash went in the tray. He used to be a little bit more haphazard back in his youth. Why did it matter where the ash went, was always how he viewed it. But he had learnt that perception carried quite a weight to it. If you didn't conduct yourself properly, well. People wouldn’t look at you how you liked them to. Might end up with a deal going south. That couldn’t be allowed to happen today. A big paycheck was coming his way if this day went well. Reclining back in his plush leather Giran gave himself a little grin. His desk was set. A chunky tape recorder was also there. It was interview season! The League of Villains was the hot topic and expansion was the name of the game. Kurogiri and Shigaraki were ever so busy… and ever so rich. Why not offer to help! There was a whole raft of new recruits waiting. Giran had sorted through the trash fairly quickly. Two-bit criminals who just thought this was a cheap buck operation. Not going to fly here. His arm lifted, checking the silver watch. About time for the first interview.

“Is this the location? Where those loyal to the ideals of Stain will be able to find kindred spirits?”
“Shuichi Iguchi. Right on time. Take a seat, this would indeed be such a place…” Giran crooned. This one had interested him. A Stain fanatic even when ranked amidst other Stain fanatics. Even going so far as to dress like him. That dirty sleeve top, bandages, the whole scarf get up. A headband right across his eyes… with pinkish purple hair. A huge sword held together with belts rested on his back as Giran lifted an eyebrow. “Impressive piece of equipment.”
“Enough! Chitchat is not why I am here. Direct me to those disciples of Stain, so we may better this rotten society!” The man, who had scaly green skin akin to an iguana, barked at Giran. The Broker just smirked and leaned back in his seat. Flicking the tape recorder on before shrugging.

“Entrance process. Can’t be letting any riff-raff join. So sit down or well. Shove off. Hehe.” There was an attempt to posture from the reptile. His stance straightened. A hand went to pull the blade from his back. Giran tilted his head in mock confusion. “Tch tch. Gonna be a real shame.”
“...?”
“Cleaning up the mess. I really don’t want to have to lose my first potential recruit. But when he’s not cooperating, well. Some things can’t be avoided. Cmon. Sit down.” Giran’s teeth glinted a little. Shuichi swallowed as he stepped forward and placed himself in the seat. The Broker offered the recruit a shot of whiskey. It was refused. So be it. “Spinner… is what you call yourself as a villain, correct?”
“Yes. Spinner disciple of the hero killer Stain! Through his teachings we will reclaim society. Those who are immoral shall be brought low, the foundation for a shining new world!” Giran simply rose an eyebrow at this. He downed his shot of whiskey and wiped his mouth, tilting his head.

“Kay. Seems like you’re pretty intense. You can dedicate yourself to a cause fully then? We’ve no room for - well. Wishy washy people, so to speak.”
“Do not imply that I lack moral fortitude! Stain never wavered in his cause, and nor will I. His disciple must be strong willed, dedicated, and above all else never hesitate in spreading his teachings! Do you understand, old man!?”
“...Old?” Giran snorted as he poked at his own cheek. “Call it experience. Suppose you’re in. Though I have to ask.” Wagging a finger at the lizard. “What’s your opinion on cocaine?”
“C-cocaine?! Wh-what sort of question is that!?”
“Well, you know. I throw all sorts of parties. Figure a lizard like you… might enjoy a little bit of fun no?”
“Absolutely not! One must not corrupt the mind or the body with such foul produce. Stain is the pinnacle of human condition… and we strive to be like him.”
“Aight. You’re in. Now shoo.” Giran flapped his hands at Spinner. The lizard blinked and… left. He supposed that The Broker would contact him when he was ready. Giran yawned as he pushed the
tape recorder to stop. Checking his watch there was another recruit coming in soon. Always a pleasure to see the new blood. Another shot of whiskey was primed, and this time a cigarette jammed into his mouth.

The door to Giran’s “office” was pushed open. The light crept in as Giran let the smoke coil around his head. It was always fun to see who came through the door. This time it was a rather tall man, slim. No exposed skin as far as The Broker could see. The man wore a dark orange shirt, the collar left turned up. There was an odd necktie which Giran found a tad garish. There was a dark yellow, double-breasted overcoat, buttons on the shoulder tabs. He had a walking stick… and a mask. As well as a top hat with a ribbon and feather. All in all, he seemed a bit extra.

“Last I checked, the circus is just down the road…”

“Oh! I figured the oddly grotesque looking man would fit right in as an attraction. Not often I tend to be misplaced on such things.”

“A sense of humour. Good.” Giran snorted a little bit pushing himself up in the seat. The Broker tapped some ash into the tray as he gestured at the seat. His new recruit sauntered over and placed themselves into the seat. Their cane rested across their lap as Giran started the recording. Tapping his glass he exhaled. “Well. The intelligence tells me you’re one Atsuhiro Sako. Otherwise known as Mr. Compress.”

“Ah. It would seem my performance has inspired so many that I have become well known! Truly the dream of any aspiring performer. Are you a fan?”

“No.” The man sucked on his cigarette for a little bit shrugging. “Least not of your circus stuff. Now, the illegal stuff.”

“You flatter me. Truly, I am just a mere man making the world his stage! And this organization that you’re associated with well. They offer to remove all the… restrictions. Ethics in magic are such a drag, you understand?”

“…” Giran put his cigarette out and crushed it. The man watched Mr. Compress for a little while. The silence didn’t feel awkward. The Broker felt this man was a slight gamble. His record was impressive, but he was eccentric. Eccentric wasn’t bad, per say. In his experience, it was a coin flip.

“Sure. You behave yourself with us. We’re loose on ethics but we still got our rules, you feel?” He watched as the magician before him nodded. Giran’s lip curled into a smile as he nodded. “Well. Welcome aboard.”

Of course, while the villains were at work the students were progressing along just the same. Internships had finally come to an end. The students would be returning to the usual schedule of their life, back at U.A. Usual being a rather loose definition as one day at U.A was never the same. Izuku was just wrapping things up with Gran Torino…

“It may have been short, but I really appreciate everything.”

“I don’t feel I did much for you… and all that happened while you were out training on the job.” Gran Torino muttered. His intern was stood in front of him, costume now neatly bundled in it’s briefcase. The old man yawned.

“No, really! Due to your inspiring talk, as well as all the sparring… I managed to hold my own against the hero killer!” This phrase seemed to wake Gran Torino up instantly. His walking stick swung forward. It slammed into Izuku’s leg. The student yelped as he fell backwards.

“Against a hero killer who was just toying with you, maybe! Well. If you’d let off a 100 percent smash at him, and missed. He’d likely… whatever. I guess all’s well that ends well.” But the man lifted his stick and poked it at Izuku’s arm. “But that arm! It’s fractured, right?!” He was fuming now
as he shook his head. “You went over your 5 percent at the last second, huh? You still get nervous and overdo it. When you’re careless, you lose control. Find a way to calm those nerves under pressure.” Izuku swallowed as his elderly mentor didn’t seem to be slowing down. The student knew that he had to do better… “If you really want to be the greatest hero, like All Might, then you’ve still got a lot to learn.”

“Right!” Izuku yelped. Gran Torino span around, starting to push his door open.
“Hmph. Goodbye, then.”
“Ah! Just one last thing, if you don’t mind? I hope this doesn’t come across as rude but I’ve meant to ask. There just didn’t seem to be a right time…”
“Spit it out! I’ve got taiyaki that needs eating.”
“You’re so strong. You’re the one who trained All Might, of all people.” Izuku swallowed. This thought had been gnawing at him for ages and he really needed to figure it out. “But, Gran Torino, y-you’re not famous. At all. I’m wondering, is there a reason for that?”
“Ah… that’s because I didn’t care about being a hero in the first place.”
“What!”

“There came a time when I needed to use my quirk freely and legally. It’s the only reason I picked up my license. If you want more information, you’re better off asking Toshi - asking All Might.” Torino muttered, before yawning. Leaning on his stick he wagged a hand at Izuku. “We’re done here. Stay strong.”
“O-oh. Okay! Thanks for everything.” The student turned after this and started to walk away. He was akin to a penguin, a degree of waddling involved. Gran Torino sighed as he watched him go.

“The Greatest Hero, huh… He doesn’t act or look like you at all, but. I still see you in him, Toshinori.” “Kid!” “My friend chose you and you chose this boy.” Izuku turned not very far away yet. “Who are you again?!”
“Seriously?! Like I’ve told you, I’m Midoriya…”
“So lets both help him make it, Toshinori.” “Ain’t what I meant.” “So that by the time you’re past your prime…”
“…?”
“This kid.”
“Oh!”
“His name…”

“It’s Deku!!”

“Will be hailed as the Symbol of Peace.”

Vanfell muttered to himself. The student had put his costume back in the briefcase. His hands were calloused. First time he had really noticed that. He was sat in the lobby of Ms. Joke’s agency. His elbows were rested on his knees. Kaminari had already left. The student had told Vanfell that him and Jirou would wait for him. So that wasn’t a worry. Only thing chewing at the back of his head was why exactly she wanted to talk to him. Was he in more trouble for the Stain incident? Had he just been a poor intern? None of the options that his mind was coming up were appealing to him. But he supposed that he wouldn’t know until she arrived.
“Heya kid!” She had arrived. Notably not in her hero costume. There was a warm smile on her face as she jogged over. “Up and at em. Ramen, my treat!” The woman hooked Vanfell by the arm. The
student squawked a little bit, scrambling to hold on to his costume’s briefcase. Just what the hell did she mean by ramen!?

“So! How do you think your internship went?” Ms. Joke asked as she took a long slurp from her ramen bowl. Vanfell had been pulled along to a local ramen cafe. The English student never really liked it much. He awkwardly slurped some into his mouth as he rustled his hair with the spare hand.

“Uh, well. Before the Hero Killer incident I guess I did good. Patrolling was important. Gotta learn to be less of a hard head.”

“Mhm! Well, you did great with patrolling! It was really good to see how you improved. It’s why I brought you out here today, y’know?”

“...What. Look, I don’t want to be rude but… what the hell are you on about?” Vanfell was even more concerned when Ms. Joke seemed to fall over laughing like a mad woman.

“Ah! Just like him. That’s what I’m here to tell you. Why I picked you up as an intern and all that jazz. When I saw the way you were fighting in the tournament, it was like a flashback.” She lifted a finger to hush Vanfell when he went to speak. Her hand wiped broth from her mouth as she chuckled. “You and Aizawa. Might as well be the same person.”

“Eraserhead? The hell is she talking about?” Vanfell wasn’t quite sure where this was going, or why it mattered. The student wanted to speak but he figured that Ms. Joke wasn’t planning on stopping anytime soon. So he quietly ate his ramen which was turning out to actually be kind of okay. Nothing beat a proper serving of british chips, but hey. When in Rome.

“But. You need to be the best of him, and not the worst. Keep the hardcore attitude when you fight. Be serious. But don’t be such a sour guy like him, okay? You oughta talk to him sometime. Now!” She patted Vanfell on the head. “See ya round, kid!” And with that Ms. Joke was gone. Vanfell wasn’t sure what had just happened. The student rolled his eyes as he got up and made his way to the train. That whole thing about Eraserhead though, sounded like something he ought to investigate. Their relationship… was complicated. He figured that he insulted the teacher in some sense, and he wasn’t fond of the man himself. He knew it was stupid but that quirk was a bit insulting. Eh. Whatever.

The next day came around. Everyone was en-route to continue their education. Ochako and Izuku had managed to meet up with each other on the train for once. They came past a stop as they chatted away quietly. Train was oddly empty today. They had even managed to get two seats, and somehow there was a spare. Both of them cocked their heads to look as Vanfell collapsed into the seat next to them.

For a moment he didn’t recognize them. If anything his eyes had started to droop down, as if he was about to fall asleep.

“Hi Vanfell!” Ochako chirped and the quirkless student just about fell out of his seat. Izuku managed to catch him by the shoulder, stopping him from smashing his face into the floor. Coughing, he leaned back into the seat.

“Eh. Morning to ya both. Didn’t know we all rode this train.”

“Ah, it would seem we all live fairly close! Is t-there any reason you look so exhausted, Van?” Izuku was a bit concerned. It seemed that his quirkless peer was almost passing out every other moment.

“Uh… yeah. When you kick the shit out of some katana wielding asshole you’re kinda exhausted.”

“WHAT?!” Izuku and Ochako seemed to yell out in unison. Nobody was able to hear the two due to the fact that the train was heaving but they were both stunned. Ochako leaned forward swinging her
fists up and down.
“You fought Stain!?"
“...You didn’t?” The quirkless student scratched his face and shrugged. “Yeah. I did. Don’t go
telling anyone though. Could land some people in trouble.” His head tilted slightly as he looked at
Izuku.
“Woah! That’s still like super cool... but scary, too. Oh, don’t worry I’ll keep it a secret! Deku won’t
tell anyone either, right?”
“Oh, of course not! I’m not looking to get anyone in trouble for doing the right thing.” Izuku was
about to keep going before Vanfell lifted a finger.
“...Yeah. Given you also had a run in with that cop. Koware, right?” Izuku tensed as he threw his
hands up in front of him shaking his head.
“N-no no! That was Endeavor. I was busy patrolin’.”
“Nah. Newspaper said the asshole had broken ribs. Endeavor is a professional. Unless Koware is a
bigger threat than I imagined, Endeavor would stay at a distance. Plus given you can’t regulate your
power yet, I don’t doubt you broke his ribs.” Shrugging Vanfell gave a grin. “I won’t tell.”
“Woah, Deku! You fought a villain too!? You and Van are both like really brave. All I did was get
some martial arts training!”
“N-no. I just had to jump in and do the right thing that was all! Don’t tell anyone about it either!”
The three broke into a mixture of squabbling and conversation as the train carried them to school.

And so the students of 1-A arrived. All of them returning from their internships ready to go back into
learning how to be a hero! Except there was instantly an occurrence of a humorous nature.
“Bwahahahaha! Really? You serious Bakugou?!?” Sero and Kirishima were bawling with laughter,
tears spilling from their face. It seemed that the explosive student still had the rather preppy hairstyle
that Best Jeanist had imprinted on him.
“Shut the hell up! It’s stuck like this, even after a damn good wash. Keep it up and I’ll kill the both of
you!”
“Look at it! It’s a perfect 2:8 hair ratio! Bwa haha!” Sero collapsed laughing. There was loud
exploding noises could be as the trio continued their shenanigans.

“Woah! So you got to take out some villains? I’m jealousssss!”
“Well. It was only evacuation procedures and logistical support. No real fighting.” Jirou muttered, as
Mina and Tsuyu listened on. Jirou fiddled with one of her earjacks as she sighed. Couldn’t really tell
them what had actually happened. Froppy tapped her chin, as she tended to do.
“Just training and patrol for mind. Though, one time, we did catch some foreign smugglers.”
“That sounds amazing!” Mina swirled on her heel to beam at her friend. “How was your internship?”
She blinked.
“It was very…” Ochako seemed to have an odd aura about her. Pupils entirely white it seemed she
was holding herself in a particular form and pose. “Instructive.”
“Ochako’s had some kind of awakening.”
“She was with the battle hero, right?” Jirou shook her head. It was intimidating, but she wished she
felt that confident. All she felt after Stain was an odd sort of... it was hard for to describe. Everything
was so up in the air. Lost in her thoughts, Ochako practiced one of her moves. Mineta and Kaminari
watched her.

“Such a transformation in just a single week, eh?”
“Transformation? Wrong, Kaminari.” Mineta interjected. His face clouded over for a moment, as his
teeth started to nibble away at his fingernails. It almost seemed like he was dealing with... PTSD?
“All women house demonic natures right inside their soul!”
“W-what happened with Mt. Lady?” Kaminari shook his head. Crazy as it was, somehow Mineta
had a worse time than him. And Kaminari had fought an actual crazed killer. It was crazy that he
couldn’t really tell anyone... but it was better that way. Besides. Ms. Joke had been real sweet
beyond that. “Y’know. In my case, got pretty spoiled. Loads of fun. If you wanna look for the most transformative, most traumatic experience. It’d be the one those three had!” Kaminari jabbed his finger at Todoroki, Izuku, and Iida.

“Right, right! The Hero Killer. One of them at least!” Sero barked, his face clamped in a vice grip from Bakugou.
“Just glad that you’re all alive.” Kirishima muttered, also held in place. Yaoyorozu placed a hand to her cheek as she sighed.
“I was so worried…”
“But Endeavor came and saved you, right? Just our number two for you!”
“Right. We were saved.” Todoroki stated, looking down at his desk. Izuku gave an awkward hand motion as he glanced at Vanfell. He hoped that the quirkless student wasn’t giving anything away. And he almost had to do a double-take. It seemed that Vanfell was asleep at his desk!? With a blanket draped over his form. Izuku presumed that Yaoyorozu must have given it to him. Come to think of it, those two had been closer than usual recently...

“I saw on the news that they seem to figure that both the hero killer’s are connected to the League of Villains. I hate to think what USJ might have been like if those guys had turned up…” Ojiro muttered.
“Oh no!” Tooru gasped as she put her gloved hands to her mouth before waving them frantically up and down. Suddenly beside Vanfell she shoved his shoulders, rousing the quirkless student. Awkwardly he wiped his mouth and glanced at Tooru. “Van, you’re not gonna go all crazy like that quirkless hero killer cop right!?” The classroom went tense. Nobody was quite sure how the quirkless student would take this.

“…” He lifted his arms out from under the blanket Yaoyorozu had given him and waved them. “Last I checked, got both arms. Nothing to worry about yet, Tooru.”
“Vanfell! You may not sleep in an esteemed classroom of U.A! Awaken at once and prepare for class!” Iida barked, before turning to Tooru. “And Tooru! One must not say such things. Vanfell and Koware might share being quirkless, but beyond that they are their own people. To compare them might lead to more people being inspired by Koware.” Iida paused, as he lifted his arm up. “And while Koware holds conviction, said conviction has lead him to a warped world view! So that no others like myself emerge and suffer my fate…” His arm swung down into a wild chop. “I will correct my course and walk the path of a true hero!” All of the class seemed to be moved and roused by this wild gesticulation from their vice-president. Vanfell on the other hand had fallen back asleep. Only to be swatted awake by Yaoyorozu.

“How uncouth!” Her face flushed red as she snatched the blanket away. Vanfell yelped and muttered. Scratching the back of his head, he was sure that she was smiling. Even if it was just a little bit? Maybe that was a good sign. But the two didn’t get much time to dwell on the situation as All Might arrived. Time for class!
“Himiko, right?” Giran mused as he tapped cigarette ash into the tray. This one was well, something else. His file on her was a little bit spotty. Hard to pinpoint much on her. Age, history, all of it was erratic. Which he supposed made sense, given her quirk. It was clear from the way she kept fidgeting in her seat that she was full of energy, though. They were always the ones you had to keep an eye on.

“Hey, are you old? You’re missing a tooth right here.” The blonde haired girl sat in front of him stuck a finger in her mouth, tapping the tooth that Giran was missing. Her buns swayed slightly, as her face seemed to bounce with a vivid, and violent, energy. Sharp teeth would glint under the light as she smiled during this. “Not to mention the hairline. Oh, Toga is fine too!”

“Not a day over twenty. It’s genetic.” There was a moment where he puffed on his cigarette just to watch her. Tapping his foot as he wondered if this one was worth it. She had a violent record, and seemed a little erratic. “So. Toga then. In your own words, what do you want to get out of this whole thing? A motivation, so to speak.”

“Hmm!” She seemed to puzzle it over for a moment. Her hand pulled a knife from behind her as she played with it in her hand. “Well, I think this world is unfair! You’ve got all the heroes who can do whatever they like. All those strong quirks…” There was a sudden cloud over her face. She went silent for a spell, as if an old memory was chewing at her.

“...Heh.” Giran let his finger flick the cigarette away behind him. His eyes narrowed a little bit before giving a smug grin. “See, I think I know what you’re on about. Now, the details are... Gruesome, so I’ll refrain. But a pencil? Last I checked, you ain’t that... John Wick guy? It’s one way to deal with bullying, I suppose. Quirk wasn’t strong enough right? Stationary had to intervene, heh.”

“...I don’t really like how you’re acting… Mr.” There was a twitch. Blink and you’d miss it, but a slight smile creased the face of this excited killer, blooming into a venomous scowl. Her hand went for the school-tie that she knew would be there. But her hand only caught air. Giran cupped her head with one hand, forcing her face into the table. Cold metal, his gun, would tap against her head as he sighed.

“Assholes like you are why I don’t wear a tie. Got the idea for this scarf back when I used to wear one. Some hopped up kid like you caught me, tried to gut me. Let’s say... well. I walked away, he didn’t. But, I’m in a lenient mood. So I’ll give you a chance.” There was a drawl to his voice as he pulled back in the chair. “You’re in. Don’t disappoint me, Himiko Toga.” The man waggled his gun at the door, never letting the smug lazy gleam leave his eyes. She watched him for a moment, gave a slight hissing twitch, and stomped out of the room. Almost akin to a tantrum. Business as usual, he supposed.

Gomi muttered to herself as she pushed the door to the bar open. This whole thing seemed like a waste of her time. “League of Villains”? Sounded like more trouble than it was worth. Street fighting was illegal, there was no doubt about it. But not enough to make the heroes to actually come down on her. Now Giran was trying to get her into the group that had attacked U.A? It seemed almost stupid to her, but she supposed he must have had an idea she wasn’t sure about yet. She rolled her eyes as she saw him laid back in his seat, smoking.
“King of your little empire, right? Well.” Her finger flicked the cigarette out of his mouth as she turned her seat around. Planting herself in it, she leaned forward. “Don’t need that cancer in my lungs, thank you.”

“Still as rude as ever, Gomi. Suppose all that fame has gone to your head, and you’ve no respect for dear old Giran anymore.” The man gave a dramatic sigh before shrugging his shoulders. “So. Interview time, see if you’re appropriate for this little get-together I’m putting together.”

“...It’s a terrorist organization. Least as far I’m concerned it is. Attacking kids and shit. You serious with me right now, Giran? Street fighting is dangerous, but it’s a lot more morally sound.”

“Last I checked street fighting doesn’t make a difference in the world. Y’know what your name means, yeah?” Giran tilted his head to the side. “Dear old dad must have been disappointed. Quirkless runt.”

“Pfft. Yeah, they were a bit upset. Bottom feeder proes, trying to escape mediocrity. Trying to go at me like that, buck-tooth?” She wagged a finger at The Broker, shaking her head. “Losing your touch, ain’t ya?”

“Heh. It’s for the purpose of the tape.” One crooked finger pointed at the device before the man leaned forward. “Guess we’ll let Vanfell be the only relevant quirkless fighter. After all, he does deserve it more than you, right?”

“That kid? He wants to be a hero, right. So let him be one as far as I’m concerned. Not like he’ll get anything done. Heroes are a broken institution.”

“Tch tch. You’re more talented. Brought up from nothing. Unbeaten. He’s had it all handed to him on a plate.” Giran crooned as he watched the woman in front of him. They came from the same slum. Though he would never verbalize it, the man held a soft spot for her. If she were to join this group, it was a chance for her to get the life he figured she deserved.

“Blech.” Gomi made a mocking noise as she swayed her head to the side. Her fingers tapped the side of the chair. There was a twitch at the side of her mouth, frustration boiling inside her stomach.

“These assholes. You’re telling me they want to change this society we live in right? Heroes man, fucking heroes.” She couldn’t help it now as she stood up, shoving the seat away. “Heroes changed it all, Giran. Made everyone dependant. Average citizen doesn’t worry about looking after himself. All Might will just save him, right? Or Kamui Woods. Or Miruko. All that garbage. Fine. I’m in.”

The teen grunted as she turned her back to Giran. Her hands jammed back into her pockets as she shoved herself out of the room. There was a wistful smile on Giran’s face as he clicked the tape recorder off. Another one down then.

Back at U.A

“I am here! And the reason for that is... your basic hero training! It has been too long, boys and girls! How is everyone?!” All Might beamed as he stood before the amassed students. Everyone had slipped into their costumes as they muttered among themselves. Vanfell was notably still half-asleep, one eye creaked open to try and pay attention to All Might.

“Ain’t much of an entrance.”

“Was hoping for a bit more after our long break.”

“Do you think he ran out of shticks?”

“Run out? Never. My supply of shticks in inexhaustible.” All Might muttered under his breath before shaking his head and lifting a single finger up. “As a direct follow-up to your internships, our activity today is a playful one. A rescue training race!!” All Might was about to continue before a hand shot up into the air.

“Shouldn’t our rescue training be conducted at USJ?!” Iida bellowed out while Izuku couldn’t help
but nerd out over the fact AM was wearing his golden age costume. It was super cool, and his personal favourite.

“That place is specialized in disaster rescues in particular. But were you listening, Iida? This is a race! In Field Gamma!” His arm swung backwards to show a whole mess of buildings, factories, metal pipes, and general urban gear. “It’s a dense spread of factories that wind together to create a complex network of maze like alleys! You’ll split into four groups of five, with each group going one at time.” All Might cleared his throat as he continued the explanation. “I’ll send out a distress signal from somewhere inside. You will all start at the border, and obviously, please keep the destruction of property to a minimum!” His finger wagged up and down, constantly pointing at Bakugou.

“Stop pointing at me.”

The first group was put together. Izuku, Ojiro, Sero, Mina, and Iida. Notably, Iida did not have his costume. The damage it sustained vs Koware meant that it had to be repaired. Beyond that every other student was fully kitted out and ready to go. It seemed that this particular selection of students had elicited quite a bit of discussion among the rest of the class.

“Iida isn’t still fully recovered, maybe he should have sat this one out.”

“It’s almost like all the mobile ones of the class are on this one team.”

“Right. If I had to say, I figure Midoriya is at a huge disadvantage.”

“To be honest, I’m not really impressed by his quirk yet.” Jirou muttered as she tilted her head. She was stood next to Yaoyorozu, who had Vanfell asleep on her shoulder.

“Mhm. He has to injure himself so as to accomplish anything…” She mused as the rest of the class kept chattering on.

“I think Sero’s taking first!”

“Yeah, but don’t underestimate Ojiro.”

“Ashido has the best reflexes! And have you seen her th-”

“Deku’ll come in last.”

“Even with his injury, I’ve got a good feeling about Iida…” Ochako looked up from her sitting position as she sighed. Much as she liked Izuku, she didn’t see a way for him to win.

START

The group sprung to action. Mina, Ojiro, and Iida all started moving forward. Iida, with his engines, was able to streak through the alleyways. There wasn’t much in the way of vertical mobility, but his speed was unmatched on the ground. Ojiro was able to use his tail to spring forward, swing from the pipes, and generally keep up against Iida. Mina opted for a more direct approach, melting through her obstacles. Her acid was also a great material to slide on, speeding her up. Not quite as fast as the other two, but she could just slice through her obstacles. But there was a clear leader. A piece of tape had shot upwards, and Sero had managed to get himself airborne. His tape kept shooting out, grabbing onto new pipes and holds for him to throw himself forward.

“See! In a cramped place like this, the air is the way to go!” Kirishima bellowed, grinning.

“That places Sero at an advantage. He can easily stay airborne.” Shoji folded his arms as the scene continued to unfold.

“Sorry. Seems this test… was made for …me?” Sero paused. Something was odd. In an instant he had been passed? But it wasn’t by anyone he had would have expected to pass him. Nor did the class expect this dark horse to have streaked ahead. Izuku, with full cowling coiled around him, grinned.

“And that training I did was made for this!” There was an odd confidence in his voice. But those watching the screens wouldn’t be able to tell that Izuku was struggling to keep it together. Sweat was all across his brow as he flung himself ahead of his peers.

“Whoa Midoriya?!”

“What’s with those moves?!” The students were all impressed. Bar Vanfell. Who was still asleep. It
Really was starting to concern Yaoyorozu as she divided her attention between screen and student. All Might was surprised by what he was watching as well. Young Midoriya seemed to have improved leaps and bounds. Was Gran Torino really that much better of a teacher than him!?

“Hm? Watching him makes me think of someone else.” Todoroki couldn’t quite place who but it was a thought stuck in the back of his head.

“Woah! Leaping around, just like…” Ochako had put two and two together. As had Bakugou who was displeased to say the least.

“Those’re my damn moves! While I was off wasting my time with that idiot…”

“How’d he change so much in just a week?”

“He did it again!”

No one within the actual race could believe it themselves. Mina and Ojiro were just taken aback, with Sero being actively annoyed. His one chance to shine and he was being upstaged again? Izuku’s entire mind was racing with the singular thought of staying calm. Focus. Don’t get nervous. Which when he thought about it was more likely to make him nervous. It was akin to saying “don’t feel sick” when one felt ill. It only made the situation worse. But what brought things back into focus was Sero catching up. Izuku had to make sure his training was put to use. His eyes flickered to the side… and the two kept their game of cat and mouse up! It was hard for Izuku not to fall. But…

“Finished!” All Might boomed with a grin. Izuku was doing his best not to throw up. There was a sash over his shoulder as he gripped the rail for support. Iida was exhausted, sat down on the floor. Mina was having something akin to a temper tantrum, though perhaps more adorable than a traditional tantrum. Sero was off hiding his face behind his helmet. To lose in a race of mobility to anyone who wasn’t Bakugo was devastating. “Izuku may have obtained first place, but! You’ve all developed new and better ways to use your quirks since the start of school. Ensure you keep up the good work, as you prepare for your final exams!”

“Right. Finals are soon.” Izuku muttered. The boy was trying to stand up properly, when All Might drifted past him. The hero leaned forward slightly, his voice quiet.

“Excellent. I hardly recognized you!” There was a thumbs up aimed at Izuku as the man halted slightly. His broad back drooped a little. “See me after class.”

“Huh?”

“It is time for an important discussion. About myself. And about about One for All.”

“...You mind lighting my cigarette for me? Lighter is in the drawer, so inconvenient.”

“Light it yourself.”

“Is that anyway to talk to the man offering you a chance to have an impact on society, Dabi?” Giran gave a little bit of a crooked smirk before pulling the cigarette out of his mouth. Placing it on the table, next to his pen, he clicked the tape recorder on. There wasn’t any need for a long silence with this one. Such a technique would be wasted on the man sat before him. Far as Giran was considered he was the real deal. Whoever did the skin-grafts ought to have been killed, mind you. Perhaps it was an aesthetic choice on the part of Dabi. Ugly rotting flesh contrasted with his youthful demeanor.

“Just get on with it. Streets are full of trash who need to be purged. Don’t go wasting my time.” The villain sat across from him didn’t seem too impressed by “The Broker”.

“I hardly intend to waste your time. I think you’re the most important person I’m interviewing today. Or, so the rumours go. Let’s just be clear.”

“I’m getting bored. Are you able to actually do what you say you can? Or are you just some old man, past his prime?”

“Perhaps. Well. You and him meeting will be more efficient than this. I’ll contact you. Off you go.” There was a wave of his hand as Dabi left the room rather quickly. A shorter interview perhaps. But
there wouldn’t have been anything conductive from anything longer than that.

The next recruit was late. Giran found himself agitated to an extent. Though not a stickler for punctuality, it was a rather irritating situation. There was a schedule to be kept and it was being strained at current. Another cigarette was lighted to soothe the agitation as he debated another round of whiskey. But there was an interruption to this reflection. A loud screeching noise outside, something akin to a motorcycle stopping. He supposed someone would enter sooner or later. The hand that had contemplated liquor now gently held his pistol. A hero or the police was unlikely, but one did have to hedge their bets. Much to his pleasure however, it turned out to be the rather late villain.

“Japanese drivers, man. Traffic was awful.” Her Japanese had an odd Italian twinge to it. Giran noted her apparel. Leather jacket, jeans, gloves, and a motorcycle helmet. The woman herself was fairly tall, and with an impressive form. Both attractive and functional. Puffing smoke at her, he didn’t reply to her statement. Her hands pulled the helmet away, confirming to him it was the one he’d waited for. Long silver hair, tanned skin, one red eye, one blue eye, and sharp canines. “You’re that Broker dude, right? Dude, do you get off on trying to look cryptic and self-important?”

“Victoria Moretti. I wonder. Do you quote, “get off” on being late to important meetings? A whole hour of traffic, eh? Must be gridlock out there.” His cigarette was put out as he flicked it into the bin across from the table. His eyes, behind glasses, looked her over. She refused to sit, it seemed. Though he doubted this was a case of her disrespecting him, so much as she was too hyper to sit down. Victoria seemed to fidget with every passing second. One moment she’d run a hand through her silver hair, the next she’d be folding her arms. Then it’d be a tapping foot. “...Need something to calm your nerves, hm?”

“Nah, man. I need you to stop acting like you know me.” There was a slight smirk on her face as she leaned forward. A finger wagged at Giran as she bared her canines in a grin. “Intel don’t mean all that much. Your whole industry is a load of shit, yup.” Tossing her helmet back and forth she snorted. “All I need is you to sign my paperwork, and get me in this group of misfits! Any good looking people?”

“...We have someone with dried blood in their sweater, if your taste is eclectic. And no, I need to know a couple of things about you. For a starter. Your quirk. Given you’re not Japanese… it’s difficult to procure information from a foreign database.”

“Gee. And here I thought the sun came out of your ass! Simple explanation. My hands touch something. I can give myself a blast, and fly around. If I touch you, I can send you flying too. Only my hands.” She did a mock jazz hands motion before flopping her head to the side. Her silver hair swayed like an illusion.

“...I see.” The tape whirled in the background, finally picking up material. He’d have to cut the dead silence that the previous hour had left. Seemed her quirk would do nicely. Leaning forward, Giran cleared his throat. “Last thing. Particular reason for operation in Japan as opposed to Italy?”

“Too much heat back home, man. Police kept getting up in my shit and I needed a place I wasn’t known. Then I heard bout this League of Villains thing. Sounded edgy enough to be fun!” “I suppose you’ll fit right in…”

“The time has come for an important discussion. About me and about One for All.” That sentence had been rooted in Izuku’s mind since it had been uttered. All the ruckus in the locker room seemed to pass him by, his thoughts a far more important issue for him to contend with. The other males were all getting dressed for normal class. Vanfell was still half-asleep as he pulled his trousers up. Anything he said was too incoherent for anyone to understand, beside that sort of respectful nod one gives in such a situation. Others were dealing with the woes of the training exercise.
“After being away for so long, I worked up a sweat.” Aoyama sighed, as a hankerchief brushed itself across his brow. How disgusting~

“Man. I need to improve my mobility….” Kirishima groaned. Bulldozing had worked up until the pipes had pinned him down.

“You’ll just need to accommodate for your lack of mobility, with improved reconnaissance.” Tokoyami grunted, fixing his tie in place. His run had gone fairly well. Though he supposed he had an easy line up to go against. Kaminari groaned.

“We’ll still struggle to keep up at this rate. I’m jealous of you and Sero.”

“Hey, Midoriya! I just made the discovery of the century. Get over here!!” Mineta seemed to be more excited than usual. His hand was shaking back and forth, as Midoriya tilted his head in confusion snapped out of his thoughts.

“Hm?”

“Look at this hole! It’s just like that shawshank movie. Those who came before use must’ve worked real hard to make it!” The other males looked on in a vague sense of disgust. Though there was a hint of deviancy in Kaminari’s eyes… he managed to restrain himself. “And, next door. You’re aware what is next door, right?! The girls locker room!”

“Mineta! Peeking is considered a major offence, and I must request you cease!” Iida was about to karate chop the student, it seemed. Vanfell was too tired to do his usual trick of handling Mineta.

“Yeah, well. Mineta Jr here is ready go full force forward!” The student was now pressed against the hole. It seemed he was starting to salivate. This saw more disgusted looks from his peers as they tried to just hurry themselves out of the room. “Yaoyorozu’s booborozus!! Ashido’s sexy silhouette! Hagakure’s floating underwear! Uraraka’s positively ooh la la body, and Asui’s surprisingly decent boo-” But he never got to finish. Two events occurred at the same time. Vanfell collapsed on the student, as Jirou’s earjack shot through the hole and clean into the eye of the depraved student. Mineta couldn’t seem to move from the pain, and the weight of Vanfell.

“Ah. Jirou’s earphone jack. It’s accuracy and stealth ensures a deadly combination. Plus the weight of Vanfell…” Izuku muttered. The girls in their locker room were none-too impressed. They fumed as they finished dressed. Much talk revolved around how the hole was going to be plugged up. It seemed that matter had been resolved...

Now Izuku was able to find his way to the break room. It seemed the room had become a second home for him during his time at U.A. All Might was fond of holding his conversations there. Izuku did notice that recently Midnight had been leaving the room shortly after All Might. Often with a smile on her face while All Might had scarlet cheeks. Izuku didn’t have much time to entertain that particular thought. Upon entering the break-room he had to pause. It felt almost… oppressive. The plain trappings did little to put him at ease when he saw his mentor. Gaunt faced, his elbows resting upon bony knees. His suit seemed to swamp his form when he wasn’t muscular. Izuku swallowed as he paused, finding himself awkwardly stood in the doorway.

“Take a seat.” All Might’s throat cleared as he watched Izuku. The student shuffled to the stool. Once he was sat down, the hero gave a tired sight. “You’ve dealt with a lot recently. I apologize for not being there to help.”

“It’s okay. You don’t need to apologize.” Izuku shook his head. “I’m just more curious about One for All…”

“I heard that the hero killer’s quirk required him to lick blood…” All Might let his own tongue snake out of his mouth, tapping a finger to it. Izuku found himself somewhat confused.

“…Right. His quirk means he can paralyze anyone whose blood he ingests. Why does it matter?”

“When I granted you my power… do you recall what I said?”
“Eat this.” Izuku’s face had somehow morphed into a near 1:1 recreation of All Might’s muscular form. His mentor blinked for a moment before shaking his head.

“No. Not that.” Rolling his eyes he shook his head. “Really doesn’t matter what you eat. As long as you get my DNA!” All Might was about to explain further. But Izuku seemed to rip himself from the stool and stood up, back dead straight.

“Uh, wait! Don’t tell me, anyone who ingests my DNA can get One for All?!”

“No.” All Might forgot just how high-strung his pupil was at times. Shaking a hand to calm his student down, the man went on with his explanation. “But I figured you’d be worried about that. Since I forgot to explain it fully. One for All can only be passed on, if its holder decides to pass it on. Though it can’t be stolen forcibly, it can be forced upon an unwilling recipient. In that sense, it’s a unique quirk with a unique origin story.”

“Because One for All was originally derived from a different quirk altogether.”

Izuku wasn’t quite sure what he was being told. All this information was making his head swim slightly as he tried to make sense of it all. All Might splayed a hand wide as he dug into his own memories. He’d learnt this second hand from his mentor, but it was all vivid, clear in his head.

“All for One. A quirk that allowed its user to steal other quirks. As well as grant quirks to others.”

“All for… meaning everything was for this guy to take?”

“This was back at the advent of the exceptional.” All Might’s head dropped slightly. It was like picking a scab off an old wound. All for One… that man had... He swore he felt a breeze across the back of his neck. Sweet and soft, coupled with a whisper. Perhaps it was his old age nipping at him.

“Before society had adapted to the changes. Back then, the norms of what it meant to be human suddenly collapsed. This caused law to become meaningless. Societal progress halted. It was catastrophic.”

“‘Without the advent of the extraordinary, humanity would be enjoying interstellar travel right now.’”

Some important guy once said that.” Izuku nodded. It was a quote that had been thrown around quite a lot in his history lessons.

“Correct. During that age of confusion and disorder, one man took the initiative and brought people together. You might have heard about this. He would rob people of their quirks, and through his overwhelming power spread the influence of his organization. He was responsible for manipulating so many into committing wicked acts, which was his intention. Not too much time passed before he ruled over Japan, a true lord of evil.”

“I… there are rumours on this sort of thing online. But I figured it was all made up. Textbooks don’t say anything about him.” Izuku swallowed. He knew it was a weak defence, but the chance that this was reality scared him. All Might shook his head. Standing up he went to the coffee machine and sighed.

“The textbooks don’t keep you informed on what the Yakuza are up to either, do they? When a person holds power, they instinctively seek a way to use it.”

“But, how does this all connect to One for All?” It was still difficult for Izuku to figure this whole thing out. All Might seemed to meander around a point, making matters more cryptic than he perhaps intended.

“I mentioned that All for One could grant quirks too. Through that ability he could instill trust in others, or at least get them to submit. In some cases however, such a load was too much. Many people couldn’t bear that power, and ended up as mere puppets. Not even able to speak.”
“Just like those Nomu…!”

“On the other hand, there was this one case. Where his granting of a quirk resulted in a mutation. A blending. The man had a quirkless younger brother. This brother was weak and fragile. But he held as strong sense of justice! The deeds of his big brother pained him, so he opposed the tyrant.” All Might twitched and rubbed his head. “But the elder brother granted his younger brother a power stocker quirk by force. We’re still not sure if it was out of kindness, or if it was to force his brother to submit.”

“Wait… hold on.”

“Yes. As it happened, he hadn’t actually been quirkless from the start. Though neither he nor anyone had known it. He held a totally useless quirk. One that let him pass his quirk itself to others!!” The man splayed his arms wide in front of Izuku. His fingers splayed out, twitching slightly. “But then, the power-stocker quirk and the transferring quirk were fused. That’s how One for All came to be.”

“…!!”

“An ironic tale, no? Justice is always spawned from evil.” His fingers swayed back and forth as Izuku rubbed his head.

“Hold on. I… I’m not really sure how it happened, but. This old story about the villain. Why’re you telling me now?”

“…” All Might blinked. The man thought he had made the point quite clear. But it seemed Midoriya wasn’t quite keeping up. It made sense, he supposed. “We’re talking about someone who steals quirks. He could obtain any kind. Including those that stop the aging process, which he did. This made him a near immortal symbol of evil. Given the man’s indefatigable strength and the state of society at the time… his defeated younger brother decided to pass the mission onto future generations. Though it was but a shadow of what it is today… this power he passed on grew and grew. All in the hope it could one day stop the older brother.” All Might’s head dropped as he gritted his teeth. “And it was my generation that finally brought the villain down… or so we hoped. He survived, and now he’s on the move again. The man behind this League of Villains. One for All is a power that’s inherited for the sole purpose of beating All for One! Which means that someday you will fight against that ultimate evil… perhaps.” His head came up to see Izuku sat there quietly. It seemed he was quite…intimidated. “I realize this got somewhat dark…”

“I’ll do my best!” Izuku lurched forward, clenching his hands into fists. “Whatever you say, All Might… I step up to the challenge! As long as you’re by my side, I can handle anything! That’s how I feel, anyway!” He had a confident grin.

All Might swallowed. “Tell him, All Might. You have to tell him!” His hand clenched his mouth, tilting down. “…” “…Probably when that day comes…” “Thanks…” “I won’t be here for you anymore.”

“Jin Bubaigawara. Am I talking to the real one, or is this a clone?”

“Hey man! Not funny! Oh, that’s hilarious!” The masked man sat in front of Giran seemed to snap from mood to mood. He wore a rather hodge-podge mask. He’d have to be given a proper costume. There wouldn’t be too much need an interview in this case. Just an observation. Beside. Giran and Jin knew each other prior to this meeting.

“Sorry, Jin. I felt like I had to… Embrace the joke, you know?” He drawled as he pulled his pills from his desk. “These can help you if you’d like.”

“Nah man. You know I don’t put that poison in my veins. …these guys. They’ll embrace it, right?” “Embrace what, exactly? It is a vague word, Jin… yeah. I’ll handle it.” It was a quick interview. Giran didn’t want to stress the man anymore than he needed. There was a pat on the back, and with that Jin was dismissed. It seemed his list had been finished for the day. A few others would have to be rustled up, but he figured for now he had the main core of this new organization down. Next step
was just getting Shigaraki onboard with them all. A busy few days he supposed.

“Uh… summer vacation is about to commence. Of course, it would be wholly irrational for all of you to take a whole month off.” Aizawa leafed through the papers in front of him. This had set the class into a nervous energy. No one was quite sure what he meant by that last statement. But knowing Aizawa it wasn’t going to be good.

“Don’t tell me…”

“You’ll be doing a summer training camp in the woods.”

“Yo! I freaking knew it. Nice!”

“Truth or dare!!”

“Bathhouses!”

“Fireworks!”

“Curry!”

“Guh?” Vanfell leaned forward in his seat creaking an eye open and yawning. “Since we’ll be out and about… guess our training will be different.”

“Quite so! It’ll be about making the right decisions, regardless of environment!” Yaoyorozu tapped her chin. It would be quite the experience. The class had descended into wild conversation and theory-crafting. Aizawa grunted.

“Let’s be clear though. Anyone who fails to pass their upcoming final exams…is in for summer school hell, right here.” With that he flopped behind the podium, and back into his sleeping back. Kirishima gave a pumped declaration to the class that they needed to do their best. Izuku couldn’t really focus on much though.

Even after that earth-shattering story, life had to go on as normal. What I had to do hadn’t changed at all. - I

Elsewhere

“The Hero Killers. I never imagined they’d be caught. But for the most part they performed as I had expected. Those who wish to rampage, those sympathetic to the cause. All kinds. That was the catalyst they needed to seek out the League of Villains. Now, it’s Tomura Shigaraki’s job to unify them!” It was a quiet room. There wasn’t much in the way of light, beside the pale fluorescent glow of a tv screen. Medical devices hummed, whirred, all hooked up to an individual in the middle of the room. A black suit, white collared shirt…and a face made out of scar tissue. Tubes plugged in to every facet of his being, seemingly life support. A stout man with glasses and mustache was also present in the room.

“Can the child do it, I wonder? I still hold the opinion that if you came to the forefront, this would proceed smoothly, master.”

“Heh. Well then. Hurry up and heal my body for me, Doctor.”

“It will take at least another five years to obtain hyper-regeneration! Such a quirk like that would all be for naught if your wounds have already healed by then.”

“It’s fine!” The figure in the seat leaned forward. His fingertips pressed to the screen. A static image of Tomura Shigaraki was presented upon it. “We’ll let him do all the heavy lifting! To prepare him to be the next me. I’m sure that boy will rise to the occasion. He was born twisted.”

Izuku, Ochako, Iida, all headed home on that fateful day with little know of what was to come. - V

Chapter End Notes

Here it is! Sorry for the delay, real life got crazy. Final Exam Arc shouldn’t be too far
behind. Hope the OC Villain interviews are fun!
And so, it was the final week of June. Only a singular week remained before the final exams. The students had filtered into class. Many of them felt relatively confident. Prepared and studied, as good students are want to do. Others… not so much.

“I DIDN’T STUDY AT ALL! BETWEEN THE SPORTS FESTIVAL AND THE INTERNSHIP, IT TOTALLY SLIPPED MY MIND!”

“Haha… haha… hah.”

“Indeed.” Tokoyami - ranked 14th in the class, Kaminari - ranked 20th in the class, and Mina - ranked 19th in the class were not coping well with the prospective exam.

“Midterms were… whatever. Wasn’t much to cover. ‘Course these finals are gonna be a lot harder but eh. Figure they can’t be that bad.” Vanfell - ranked 9th in the class was in conversation with Shoji - ranked 10th in the class. If you could call Vanfell talking to Shoji and just getting silent nods in response as conversation. Mineta - ranked 12th in the class who was off to one side seemed to have a smug expression on his face. Resting his face against his fist, the student gazed upon Kaminari and Mina.

“Shame there is going to be a practical exam too.” There was a pause as Kaminari and Mina glared at him. Then their anger spilled over.

“We thought you were one of us!”

“Guys like you are only likeable when you’re morons! There’s no place for whatever you actually are!”

“Such is life…”

“Ashido! Kaminari! Let’s just try our best! It’d be great if we can all go to the training camp! Right?!“ Izuku - ranked 4th in the class beamed out, his usual optimistic self.

“Yes!” Iida - ranked 2nd in the class gesticulated wildly in response. Todoroki - ranked 5th in the class, glanced dismissively at Kaminari.

“Haven’t you been attending class? It should not be possible to fail.”

“Words hurt y’know!” It did seem to have made the electric student convulse in actual pain. There wasn’t any chance for him to convulse further as an interruption rolled in.

“You two… if it’s academics you need assistance with, I could offer my help.”

“Momo, wow!”

“The practical exam, on the other hand, is a different matter…” Yaoyorozu - ranked 1st in the class, seemed to fall under a cloud at that remark. Todoroki was fairly confused but didn’t get a chance to inquire with the student. Jirou - ranked 7th, Sero - ranked 17th, and Ojiro - ranked 8th, had all leapt on top of the student.

“I’m not as bad off as them, but how about helping me too? Struggling a bit on quadratic functions.”
“Please help me too! You’re good with kanj, right Yaoyorozu?”

“Me… too?”

“Yes! Of course!!” Yaoyorozu had been taken a bit by surprise with all the people needing her assistance. Her face was a mixture of happiness and blush. She did find it odd however that Vanfell had not opted to ask for help. She was sure that he never wasted a chance to spend time with her… and he seemed to have vanished from the classroom.

“That’s what virtue looks like.”

“I’ve got virtue too. I’ll tutor you ‘till you’re dead.” Bakugou - ranked 3rd in the class snarled at Kirishima - ranked 15th in the class.

“Oh? I knew I could count on you.”

It was now lunch. The cafeteria was busy as usual. Conversation, within the hero course, seemed to be focused upon that of the upcoming exams. Izuku, Iida, Ochako, Tsuyu, and Tooru were all seated together. Todoroki was also present at the end of the table, but the student seemed more fixated on his meal than conversation.

“The academic test’ll just draw from what we were taught in class. That’s manageable. The practical, though? A lot scarier since we have no idea how it’ll go…” Izuku was concerned. Would full cowling be enough to help him through whatever came next? This thought had been bothering him all morning.

“I can’t imagine it will be composed of anything particularly strange…” Iida mused. Ochako - ranked 13th, cleared her throat with a hint of concern.

“So… about the academic subjects being manageable.”

“It’s probably just a comprehensive test on everything from the first semester.” A floating bowl indicated that Tooru - ranked 16th, was speaking.

“That’s all Aizawa-sensei has told us.” Tsuyu - ranked 6th seemed fairly calm. Ochako hummed.

“There was battle training, rescue training… and basic training, right?”

“So, in addition to our usual studies we’ve got to make sure we’re in tip-top physical shape.” Izuku would have gone further with that statement, but he felt like something was about to hit him in the head. When the blow never came, he turned around to see what he’d missed.

“Whoa. Not sure if you know, Mr. Copy, but hitting people in the head is pretty rude.” Vanfell was stood in front of Monoma. It seemed that the 1-B student had intended to hit Izuku in the head with his tray. Vanfell had it clasped in one hand shaking his head.

“Ah. Sorry. His big head was in the way. Hard to get around him. Say, why don’t you go back to your quest for relevance, everyman? Must be hard when you’re quirkless!”

“The guy who needs others to be relevant lecturing me? Cut me a break.” Vanfell rolled his eyes. He nodded his head at Izuku before strolling off, leaving Monoma to his own devices. Once the quirkless student was gone, Monoma let his head swivel forward. Iida, Izuku, and Todoroki were all present...
“I hear you guys ran into the hero killer.”

“!?”

“I suppose the sports festival wasn’t enough. You just keep getting attention with one stunt after another, huh, class A? But see, now it seems like that attention isn’t quite as good as it’s cracked up to be. It’s starting to get a little dangerous, right?!”

“?!?”

“Pretty scary! I’m just concerned that, one of these days, we’re all gonna end up in some of your antics! Scary…gah!” Monoma’s wild and vivid rant was brought to a sharp ending. Kendou had arrived as had a neck chop. The student had managed to grab her classmates tray as Monoma fell to his hands and knees.

“That is not funny. Didn’t you hear what happened to Iida?” She shook her head, before placing his tray on a nearby table. “Sorry, Class A. This guy, his heart’s just… well.”

“Kendo!” Iida was a little flushed at her mention of him, but didn’t dwell on it for too long. Izuku was more concerned with the whole spiel about Monoma’s heart…

“I overheard you guys. Seems you’re not sure about the practical exam. Well, between you and me, I hear it’ll be a battle against robots in the entrance exam.” Before Kendou could go on, the students paused. If they strained their ears, they were sure they could hear a british accent swearing up a storm at this information.

“H-huh!? Really? How did you figure that out?!” Izuku spluttered. Robots would be easy enough for full cowling to deal with, in theory but…

“Well, I’m friends with an older student, who told me. It’s a bit unfair, I know.”

“Not unfair at all! Preliminary information gathering is just one facet of the exam. Of course, why not just ask upperclassmen? Why didn't I think of that!?”

“…?!?” Kendou couldn’t quite take the muttering seriously. This student was a real chatterbox.

“Kendo, you fool. We finally had an intel advantage over them!! Here was our chance to show up the detestable class A…” Monoma groaned, before Kendou stooped down to pick him up by his shirt.

“Hush. They’re not detestable.” Monoma was dragged away. All that Izuku could dwell on was that Kendou really must have been the big sister to Class B.

“Robots? Seriously? Easy!!” Kaminari and Mina seemed quite happy with the news that had been delivered back to them. Lunch had since ended and all of the students had returned to their respective homerooms. Not everyone shared their enthusiasm on the matter however. Vanfell in particular seemed to be able to do little but gaze at the wall while Jirou tried to reassure him. It was a lost cause.

“You two really need to deal back your quirks when facing human opponents. But this way…” Shoji added a rare comment to the conversation.

“Yeah! Against robots we just let loose for an easy win!”
“Plus, we’re getting tutored for everything else!”

“Watch out summer training camp, cause here we come!!”

“I’ll likely have to face that ultimate evil at some point. To prepare for that, everything until then has to serve as valuable experience…” Izuku was lost in his thoughts again. But the jubilant classroom was soon brought to a more sour atmosphere.

“Human? Robot? I’ll just blast ‘em all. What’s the big deal, morons?”

“Who you’re calling a moron, moron?!” Kaminari barked, jabbing a finger at Bakugou. The explosive student seemed to be in a foul mood as usual.

“Shut your mouth. You’re the idiot who can’t even figure out how to dial back his own quirk! Hey!” The blonde span on his heel, and growled. “Deku!”

“!”

“Looks like you’re starting to manage that quirk of yours. Either way… stop pissing me off with all these stunts.”

“He means the other day, when Deku was moving around like Bakugo!”

“Oh, you’re right!”

“I’m not looking for some hollow victory, like at the sports festival! When it comes to our term grades… whether you like it or not, I’m gonna crush you into dust! I’ll make the gulf between us so wide, it’ll kill ya!” Bakugou barked, pointing a finger at Izuku. His head also swung to glare at Todoroki. “You too, Todoroki!” And with that, the student stormed out of the room slamming the door. It left an awkward feeling in the room.

“Haven’t seen Bakugou so serious in a while…”

“Is it uneasiness? Sheer hatred?”

“Dude’s just an arsehole. Nothing more.”

“…Bakugo. You’re going south faster than I thought.” Aizawa sighed as he watched the student tromp off.

And so exam preparation began. Those students who needed the help from Yaoyorozu were treated to her mansion… and hellish studying. While Yaoyorozu was an excellent teacher, and easy on the eyes, the material was still difficult for those who struggled. But the tea, company, and their drive to succeed would hopefully see them through. Elsewhere however…

“Yo. U.A is on the phone, ma. It’s about that thing you were talking to them about.” Vanfell barked as he tossed their home phone to Charity. The woman caught it and promptly started running her mouth rather fast. Vanfell wasn’t sure what the old bird was up to… but he wasn't too bothered.
Right now the student was more concerned with when Izuku would arrive. He’d called his peer over for a very important matter. Considering what was coming he had no doubt in his mind that he’d need all the help he could get. Then there was a knock at the door. Vanfell practically flew across the room wrenching the door open. Izuku shrunk back a little, spluttering. The green-haired student was in his casual clothes, a t-shirt with “t-shirt” written in kanji, and simple jeans.

“V-Van. Are you alright? I got concerned when I received your message. It seemed you had a matter of great importance, and I tried to figure out what it could be. But it evaded me, yet your current state indicates it must mean a lot to you…” The muttering didn’t stop. As a result, Izuku was still on the doorstep. Vanfell just nodded quickly, before tugging Izuku inside. He hurried the student to the couch before falling onto it.

“So. Right. Izuku.”

“Y-yes?”

“How do you ask a girl out?”
“...You’re sure about this, Giran?”

“When have I ever done you wrong, Gomi? If this doesn’t work out, I’m sure you’ll just cut loose anyway. Cigarette?” The Broker crooned to his young friend as he rooted in his pocket. She rolled her eyes and shook her hand back and forth.

“Not going to poison myself. Those two gonna behave?” Her finger jabbed forward as Dabi and Toga sauntered ahead of the two. If she was honest, Gomi found the two offputting. That schoolgirl outfit for the “serial killer” and the guy with the purple skin. All in all they seemed more akin to lunatics, than effective fighters for an organization.

“Is it our problem if they don’t? Don’t agitate them, we’ll be fine.” The two were interrupted by the screeching sound of a motorcycle, as Victoria skidded right up next to the group. The woman threw herself off the vehicle and then landed in a handstand.

“C’mon! Stop running your mouths. Let’s get inside, meet the big boss. Hopefully he doesn’t stink of nicotine, like el broker!”

Izuku. Shigaraki didn’t like the damn brat. He had interfered at USJ, and then there was his performance at the tournament. A photo was all he had to glare at, until the door to the bar was pushed open. Giran poked his head in, with a droll little smirk sketched across his smug face.

“We’ve been spreading the word about you, these past few days. All about how it feels like something big’s about to go down.”

“Well? Who are they?” Shigaraki hissed, crushing the picture in his hand. Nothing of it remained but dust. Hunched over the bar, he couldn’t help but notice the… people stood before him. Dabi seemed quite relaxed about the whole scenario. His hands rested in his pocket, as he leaned to the right ever so slightly.

“In person, you’re… real disgusting, dude.”

“Whoa! This hand-man is your friend, Mr. Stainy!? Right!?” Toga was unable to contain herself. Hands swayed up and down with manic energy, before they pointed at her mouth. “Lemme join too! Your League of Villains!”

“Damn. Here I thought it’d be a fun time, and we got a depressed neckbeard running the show? Man sweetie, we gotta get you a haircut!” Victoria shook her hand, jabbing a finger forward to point at Shigaraki. To say she was not impressed was an understatement. Giran and Gomi had opted to stay back by the door. Smoke coiled around the two. The quirkless girl huffed a little, her eyes narrowing. This whole thing was starting to look just a little bit dicey if she was honest with herself.

“...Kurogiri. Warm them away. It’s like all the type of people I hate, all showed up at once.” Shigaraki lifted a single finger, his voice a barely contained hiss of hatred. “A brat, a guy with no manners, and an idiot.” It seemed that Gomi had avoided the ire of Shigaraki, by virtue of inaction.

“Huh?”
“Come now. They’ve journeyed all this way just to see you. It would be polite to at least humour them with a chat, Tomura Shigaraki. What’s more…” Kurogiri sighed, as he did his best to course correct his colleague. “If they’re being brought to use by our influential broker friend here, we can be sure that, at the least, they are competent fighters.”

“Regardless, I’ll have my finders fee now, Kurogiri.” Giran yawned, as stepped into the room properly. “Now, as for introductions.” He slouched slightly, jabbing a thumb at Toga. “Let’s start with this high school creature. Media’s kept her face and name under lock and key, but she’s a person of interest in a spree of deaths via blood-letting.”

“I’m Toga! Himiko. Toga. Life is way too hard! I wanna make a world that’s easier to live in!” Tugging at her jumper sleeves, the girl seemed to pulse with a wild vivid energy. Her hands came up near her mouth at the peak of her excitement. “I wanna be Mr. Stainy! I wanna kill Mr. Stainy! So lemme join you Tomura!!”

“...I don’t get it? You some kind of freak?” It was hard to tell what Shigaraki was thinking. A pregnant pause was taking over the room.

“She’s a little eccentric, I’ll give you that. But you two both want the same thing in the end. Anyway… this lady has come a long way. Italy’s finest… or as close as you’ll get.” Giran had skidded forward, pushing Victoria forward.

“Victoria.” She paused for a moment, resting a hand on her hip. Her head tilted to the side as she glanced Shigaraki over. Then she rolled up the sleeves of her leather jacket up, and folded her arms. “Rule one of working with me. Hygiene. We’ve gotta get you some moisturizer.”

“Tch. You oug-”

“But I figure you’ve got the most potential of any asshole I’ve seen ‘round here!” She splayed her arms wide and then winked at Tomura. “Consider me in. So long as you have parking space for my motorcycle. More valuable than any of you little shits.”

“...Are you meant to be this annoying? Acting superior?”

“I wouldn’t go that far, Shigaraki. She’s just confident. But moving along.” Giran snapped his fingers, at Gomi. She rolled her eyes and moved over. The quirkless girl pulled Victoria back by her shoulder. Her italian counterpart went to hiss, but a glare from Gomi soon shut that down. “This is Gomi. She’s a bit of a tactical recruit. Quirkless, but I figure we need to catch that demographic.”

“You’re wasting my time with a quirkless brat? Some broker you are…” Shigaraki hissed. For once, there seemed to be a flicker of temper in Giran. His fingers went to tug his cigarette out, before Gomi shook her head.

“I am quirkless. I’ve also survived on the streets for my whole life, and beat plenty of people with quirks.” Then she bowed her head slightly to Shigaraki. “I understand your concern. But don’t give me reason to embarrass you in front of your childminder.” Her voice was rather polite, despite the actual meaning of the words.

“What the hell?” Shigaraki raised from his seat, lurching forward. “Who the hell do you think you’re talking to?”
“That’s enough of that.” Giran moved in front of Gomi, pushing her behind him. His other hand moved quickly to shove Dabi forward. Clearing his throat The Broker twirled his hand around, cigarette smoke swirling around. “This young man has no outstanding criminal record to speak of. But, he’s enthralled with Koware’s ideals.”

“Is this lot really so dedicated to the cause? I mean, they’re about to let these morons join up.”

“Hey, hey. At least these freaks can state their own names. If you’re a proper adult, why don’t you go ahead and try doing that?”

“I go by Dabi right now.”

“No good. Your real name.”

“You’ll be told it when you need to. Anyway…” Dabi glared as he hunched forward. His voice was little more than a crisp whisper. “The Hero Killer’s will…I plan to make it a reality.” It seemed this was a poor choice of words from Dabi. Shigaraki swayed on the spot, as his fingers curled into fists. His voice had blazed into a violent hissing, with spittle starting to fly.

“No need to answer something I didn’t ask. All people talk about these days is ‘Koware this’ and ‘Stain that…”’

“Don’t do it, Shigaraki…” Kurogiri knew that it was about to get bad. When his young master got like this…

“Bad, bad, bad... I’m in a bad mood.” He threw himself forward. His voice, the way he carried himself, his speed. All of it came together to induce a shudder over nearly everyone in the room. ‘Cause you guys are no good.” His hands shot forward, and those who were under threat also lurched forward. Victoria, Toga, Dabi, and Shigaraki all seemed posed to kill each other. A knife for Toga, flame for Dabi, and just plain hands for Victoria and Shigaraki. All of their attacks went wide, as Kurogiri snapped into actions. Several portals opened and redirected every attack. Giran merely puffed smoke from his mouth, a bored look on his face. Gomi simply rolled her eyes and stuffed her hands into her jean pockets.

“Please calm yourself, Tomura Shigaraki. If we are to act upon your wishes, expanding this organization is a requirement.” Kurogiri swirled his head around to whisper to the straining Tomura. “And oddly enough… our chance is now. While we have the spotlight. I advise acceptance, not rejection, Tomura Shigaraki. Acceptance of anything we can use. Of… whatever remains of his will.”

“Shut up.” Shigaraki hissed, as he ripped his hands out of the portals. Kurogiri started to dissipate his quirk, as Shigaraki span on his heel. He had a headache, and he couldn’t be bothered with this whole thing. He stormed to the exit.

“Hold on. Where are you off to?” Giran muttered.

“I said SHUT UP!” His final bitter statement was punctuated by the door slamming. There was a collective sigh from the room, Dabi and Toga relaxing. Victoria seemed to still be bouncing around the room, while Giran and Gomi just seemed a little bit perplexed.
“Hate to say, but our business partner there… he’s too young. Unseasoned.”

“I totally thought he was gonna, like, kill us!!”

“...That was odd.”

“Little shit trying to throw hands with me? Busted my ass to get here and -”

“You ever shut up?”

“We will have an answer for you within a day or two. Will that suffice?” Kurogiri did his best to cut through the bickering that had boiled up. “I expect even he knows what he must do. It’s because he knows, in fact, that he left without a word. First, All Might. Then those hero killers. He has been humbled twice now. He’ll figure it out, I’m sure. An answer to satisfy you four, as well as himself.”

AND NOW IT’S THE DAY OF THE...

PRACTICAL EXAM

“Let’s begin your practical exam.” 1-A had been rounded up. All of their costumes were primed and ready for what was to come. They’d defeated the written exam earlier that morning. There had been much grumbling, groaning, and pain but they figured they’d all done decently. But what was to come would be a lot more difficult. Their teachers were lined up in front of them, costumes and all. Aizawa yawned and rubbed his mouth. “It is, of course, possible to fail this exam. If you want to attend the training camp, then don’t mess this up.”

“Sure are a lot of teachers here…”

“Fix… six… eight of them?”

“Knowing you guys, you’ve probably asked around. You might figure that you’ve figured out how it’ll go.”

“It’s a robot rumble! Like the entrance exam!!”

“Fireworks! Curry! Truth or dare!!” Kaminari and Mina seemed to be revelling in what they presumed was going to be an easy win.

“Not quite!! Various circumstances have demanded a revision to the exam format!!” The principal sprung out of Aizawa’s scarf. Kaminari and Mina seemed to pause in their revelling, the metaphorical wind taken out of their metaphorical sails.

“The principal!”

“A revision…?” Yaoyorozu seemed to be taken off-guard by this change. Indeed, most of the class had hoped for robots. Vanfell on the other hand seemed to be utterly beaming with joy at this potential revision.
Earlier

The teachers had met prior to the exam. Such a meeting was commonplace, to discuss technique and the nature of the test. But this time around it was somewhat different. With the recent villain attacks and atmosphere there were new issues requiring focus.

“Worried about a villain revival…?”

“Of course, we hope to prevent a movement before it takes hold. But, as a school, we have to take all the necessary precautions. It isn’t unreasonable to imagine that counter-villain operations in our current society will intensify considerably.”

“That means battlin’ against robots ain’t all that practical.”

“To begin with, the robots were conceived of as a means to avoid claims and suspicions that people were being harmed to our entrance exams.”

“Is that all? Such a waste… why not just ignore the complaints?”

Present Day

“From now on, we’ll focus on battles against flesh-and-blood opponents. It is critical that our teaching stimulates practical experience as closely as possible. As such you students will be put into pairs, and fighting one of the teachers you see here!”

“Against a teacher…?!” Ochako was a little taken back. Her mind was already thinking about who she’d like to be paired with… as had most of the students. Izuku in particular had someone in mind who he didn't want to fight with. There were also thoughts about who they wanted to fight. Vanfell was chomping at the bit to tussle with Aizawa. His quirk wouldn’t be able to do anything to him.

“Your pairings and assigned teacher, have already been determined. Your techniques, your grades, your relationships with one another. All these factors, and many more, were considered. So, without further ado.”

“First, Todoroki is with Yaoyorozu. Against me.” Aizawa had an almost sadistic grin on his face, one that would have made Midnight proud. The two students mentioned were apprehensive. “Next, Vanfell is with Kirishima. Your opponent will be Cementoss.”

“Alright, Vanfell! Let’s blow this exam away and get to the training camp!!” Kirishima bellowed, leaping in front of the quirkless student. Vanfell had a vexed look on his face.

“Yeah. Sure.” "How the hell are we going to beat a guy who can make cement? Break my bloody fists before we get anywhere…”

“Then. Midoriya… is with Bakugou.” This prompted a panicked reaction from Izuku, and an aggressive response from Bakugou. Before they could say anything, a new figure stepped forth. Muscles bulged, as a voice all the students knew well boomed forth.

“Your opponent… will be me!” All Might grinned down at his two opponents, making a fist. His face seemed to gleam with joy and anticipation for the battle to come. “You’ll have to cooperate to win… so come at me, you two!!” It seemed that in a single instance, failure had been rendered the
"Broker. Are you sure this is an appropriate idea? To collect all of these recruits in one place, prior to their actual mission. They’ve attempted to kill each other before."

"Kurogiri. You know, logic like that? Real shackle. My gut tells me this is a good idea, y’know? So we’re gonna do it. Beside. They misbehave, dump ‘em in the ocean or something.” The Broker yawned, before flopping into the chair behind him. His feet lifted before resting on the table in front of him. A gathering had been called for a sort of boot-camp. These villains all had individual talent and prowess but teamwork needed to be worked in. A rather drab warehouse was to be the starting point for this event. Never invite them to your office was the maxim Giran lived by. Gomi was the only exception to the rule, as he knew she’d never try to kill him.

"Maaaan. This warehouse is so drab. I’d totally kill someone here!"

"Sweetie, you just may get away with it. Not really a big fan of this ‘Dabi’ guy that’s tagging along."

"I’ll blow that motorcycle up if you don’t shut up…”

"…This lack of discipline is appalling. How are we supposed to bring Stain’s ideals to life, when we can’t even be civil to one another!?"

"Yeah! We’re all allies here! Or enemies!"

"Twice. You’ve got to work on that whole double take thing. Mixed messages abound.” Gomi patted the man on the back, as Toga, Victoria, Dabi, and Spinner also trundled in. Giran had opted not to require the presence of Magne and Compress. Given their more stable nature and maturity The Broker figured it would be a waste of time.

"Please, please. We’re all friends, allies, companions… whatever you’d like to call it.” Giran yawned in front of them before nodding. “But, we need to just. Forge a stronger bond, so to speak.”

"In simple terms. Our esteemed broker intends to test your ability to walk in pairs. Each of you will be paired with another, and given a specific objective to complete.” This elected a less than stellar result from the amassed villains. It was an incoherent mess of squabbling and squawking. There was a tired sigh as The Broker lifted his gun. One shot fired.

"Are you all done? I’d like to get this ball rolling, so to speak… Spinner. You will be with Gomi.” Neither of the villains mentioned stated anything. The disciple of Stain merely looked the quirkless girl up and down, while she stared blankly ahead. “Your job is the removal of a small street gang.”

"Miss Victoria. You will be assigned to Dabi. The two of you need to overcome your differences. To this e -"

"The hell you talking about, mist-man? Working with that motorcycle fetishist… isn’t what I joined for.”

"Well thank you, Mr. Burn Ward Escapee. This don’t seem like such a good idea though, that much we can agree on.” Instantly the two villains had found an issue with this pairing.
“Enough. The Broker has decided the arrangement. This complaining is more reason for the two of you to work upon your teamwork. Your objective will be the robbery of a bank. Toga, Twice. You two will be assassinating a government worker…” And with that, the League of Villains had been given their objectives. Their growth was to begin here. Gomi and Spinner moved quickly and efficiently. There was still no conversation between the two, but this was better than the bickering of Dabi and Victoria. Toga and Twice seemed to be getting on better than the other pairings. The girl seemed to brim with energy, and Twice was merely happy to go along with it.

“...And away we go. The little seeds of evil, soon to bloom. Or something like that. Never been a fan of poetry.” Giran snorted and watched them leave.

“Ten stages have been prepared, and all of you will begin at the same time. The test guidelines will be made clear by your respective opponents. None of these areas are outside the school grounds, but let’s not waste anymore time. Get moving.” With that, Aizawa turned his back on the students. It was time for him to go to work. The rest of the teams were made clear. Kaminari and Mina would face the principal. Thirteen was the opponent of Aoyama and Uraraka, with Ectoplasm fighting against Tsuyu and Tokoyami. Present Mic was facing off against Jirou and Koda, while Midnight would bring the pain to Sero and Mineta. Tooru and Shoji would have to find a way to avoid being shot down by Snipe, with Iida and Ojiro having to bring Power Loader down.

All Might, Izuku, and Bakugou’s bus trundled along. In silence. With Izuku sat near All Might at the front of the bus, and Bakugou as far away from the two of them as possible. It bothered the #1 hero to see his pupils like this, even if he could gather their issues.

“...So. Why don’t you try a word game or something?” But his only response was stony and awkward silence. It reminded him of the whole reason the two had put together...

**Earlier**

“As for the teams. First, we have Ashido and Kaminari. For better or worse, they’re both single-minded, and action focused.” Aizawa shuffled some papers in his hand, leaning back in his seat. “Principal, please use your intelligence to put them in their place.”

“Okay!”

“Todoroki. An exceptional fighter in every way, though he seems to not enjoy putting all his power into single attacks. Then we have Yaoyorozu. She might be a genius, but she hesitates when making decisions in the moment. As such… I will erase their quirks, and exploit their flaws in close combat.”

“No objections!”

“Vanfell. He’s brute-forced every issue he’s faced so far. Kirishima isn’t much different. Thus, they’ll fight Cementoss. Your quirk will make them have to adapt or fail.”

“Understood.”

“Next is Midoriya and Bakugou. I’ll leave them to you, All Might. I’ve not teamed them up based on grades, or their abilities. It’s solely due to their bad relationship! We know you’re a fan of Midoriya’s, so guide him as you see fit.”

**Present Day**
The students had arrived at their various arenas. Izuku and Bakugou were stood outside a city complex. All Might stood in front of a gate, his gaze focused on his opponents. It seemed the two had refused to break the silence. If this was how they intended to cooperate he doubted they’d have much success.

“Now. This is where we’ll fight!”

“Um… ‘fight’? You really can’t think we can beat you…no matter what we do, that’d be impossible!”

“Pessimistic and impatient, I see! Allow me to fully explain.”

“The time limit is 30 minutes!” Principal Nedzu beamed as he gesticulated in front of his foes. His battlefield of choice was an industrial complex, piping and construction everywhere. “Your objective is to get these handcuffs on me, or have one of you escape from the stage!”

“Kinda like our battle training.”

“We can really just run away?” Mina was taken back by that prompt. The principal nodded with an upbeat smile. It seemed his students thought fleeing would be much easier than it would be.

“See, this is NOTHING like your past battle training.” Present Mic grinned, as he stretched a little bit, and then struck a pose. His battle was to be held in a forest, which for Koda was a spell of good luck. “Because see, this time? Your opponent is on another LEVEL!”

“Another level…? That’s not really how I see you.” Jirou mused to herself which seemed to offend the peacock haired pro.

“Dammit! HEY, GIRL, WATCH YOUR MOUTH!!”

“This test is meant to simulate true battle as closely as possible. So please, think of us as actual villains.” Thirteen had chosen to use the USJ as her battleground. Uraraka was concerned, but she was sure that she could overcome her idol. If Izuku was off fighting All Might… then surely she could handle Thirteen?

“If we do clash head on, and you win. That is accepted too.” Cementoss watched his two charges. A concrete filled city was his optimal battleground. Kirishima didn’t seem to be doing much in the way of intelligent thought. He was too busy bouncing around and cheering. Vanfell had retreated inside himself. All he had to do was figure out a way to beat this guy. He’d fought and would fight tougher than this.

“If you find yourselves overwhelmed by my power, retreat and calling for help might be your wisest option.” Aizawa murmured. A simple Japanese town replica had was where he chose to fight. “Todoroki. Yaoyorozu. You two of all people should understand that. Those four as well…”
“...”

“...” The two students couldn’t help but remember their escapades earlier. Izuku, Iida, Vanfell, Jirou, and Kaminari had all seen real battle before this. In their minds escape had not been an option. Perhaps in a sense this test was to change that view.

“It’s either fight to win. Or run to win.”

“Yes, Midoriya! Your decision making is being tested! But, given the rules and circumstances, you’re probably thinking running is the only option?!?” All Might guffawed before his two rather confused students. He reached inside a seemingly impossible pocket in his suit, to produce something akin to an armband. “That is why we had the support course students make use these!! ULTRA COMPRESSED WEIGHTS! Such a handicap weighs me down with a whole extra... 50% of my body weight! It’s a tried, true, and tested method of slowing our movement, and draining stamina!” All Might clasped them into place, muttering something to himself about how they were heavier than he thought. “By the by. There was a competition held to design them. That Hatsume girl’s design was picked.” This fact surprised Izuku, while at the same time not. Of course Mei would be the one to design such a thing.

“You trying to bring this fight down to our level or something? Insulting.” Bakugou effectively spat at his mentor who merely gave a laugh. All Might seemed to glower as he shrugged.

“We’ll see!”

“Hm... I’ll be working hard today, I suppose.” Recovery Girl settled down in her seat. Her tent had a full set of computer screens. She was able to keep an eye on every fight as it played out. She’d seen many of these exams in her time at U.A. Even All Might’s! But this was the year she found herself most interested in.

“So. The test takers, us, start in the center?” Tokoyami held his cloak to his mouth. Ectoplasm had chosen a multi-leveled fairly normal room. Tsuyu nodded, dropped to the ground in a squat.

“In order to escape, we’ve gotta pass through that one gate. Sensei is probably waiting to ambush near the gate...”
Heavy Lifting: Final Exams Arc Part 3

“Everyone in position? Let’s begin the final exam, for U.A High’s first years! Ready… GO!”

The exam had started. Thirty minutes on the clock for every student to pass, fail, or fall somewhere in between. Tokoyami and Tsuyu instantly found themselves surrounded by the many clones of Ectoplasm. There hadn’t even been a moment to think out a plan, or take a breath.

“What?!”

“I forgot to say. We teachers will be going all out too utterly crush you students.”

Todoroki and Yaoyorozu were already on the move. The two students would not know that Aizawa was already perched atop a lightpost spying on them, but they presumed his gaze fell upon them.

“Yaoyorozu! Try to keep making small objects. It doesn’t matter what. We’ll know if Aizawa-sensei is nearby if you’re suddenly unable to.” Todoroki was already giving out orders. The two ran through one of the many alleyways that lined their battlescape. It suited Aizawa, tight corners and low visibility. “This test is all about who can find the other first. Once we’ve got him in sight, I’ll draw him away. Then you make a run for the escape gate. We’ll stick together until then.”

“…” Yaoyorozu did not respond. Though she followed behind Todoroki, her thoughts were clouded. There was no point trying to muster a response in such a state…

“Grab her, Dark Shadow!!” Tokoyami hadn’t hesitated. His other half, so to speak, had already darted forward. It wrapped its mouth around Tsuyu’s waist. “Asui! Run!” And then rather promptly threw her into the air. That way the Ectoplasm clones would only have him to focus on, unless they wanted to split their attention. But Tokoyami promptly felt himself leave the ground, as a tongue wrapped around his stomach.

“Tokoyami!” Tsuyu had no intention of leaving him behind. Her padded hands and feet caught to the wall, and her tongue made sure to drag Tokoyami along with her. It seemed for the time being, the two had managed to evade Ectoplasm.

Communication skills. In this society… it’s overlooked. Yet, essential for heroes. It’s not about having a bond with one’s trusted sidekick. But rather, being able to cooperate well with anyone to a certain degree.” Recovery Girl mused to herself as she watched the particular display that had just unfolded. “Which means for these two…”

“Stop following me!” Spittle flew from Bakugou’s mouth as he barked at Izuku. For the time being the two were together. But it seemed beyond physical presence in the same area, the two could not have been further apart. “Obviously beating him down’s the best option!!”
“I-I really think we’re better off avoiding a battle no matter what…!”

“We’ll let him toy with us until the very end. Then, when he’s exhausted, I’ll finish him off!”

“Uhh…” There’s not doubt. Kacchan has somehow figured out that All Might’s on the ropes. But I can’t just admit that… Izuku lunged forward, trying to see if he could force Bakugou to see his point of view. “Hey. This is, well, All Might we’re talking about! There’s no way you can handle him Kacchan, even with that handi-” Izuku never got to finish his sentence. Bakugou span on his heel, punching him clean in the face. Izuku staggered back but managed to stop himself from falling over. Rubbing his face, the student glared at Bakugou.

“Shut up. You think you actually matter?” His face was contorted into a foul sneer as he hissed. “Well it’s pissing me off.”

“If… if we wanna pass this test, then you’ve gotta listen to what I’m saying, Kacchan!”

“YOU THINK I NEED YOUR SHITTY POWER TO PASS? FORGET IT!”

“STOP SHOUTING FOR ONCE. THIS IS WHY WE CAN’T EVER ACTUALLY TALK!”

While the two screamed at each other, their tempers flaring up, there was a sudden burst of pressure. The two managed to just about stay standing despite the sudden force buffeting them. The buildings around them were not so lucky. Windows shattered, roofs were ripped away, and concrete was blown loose.

“They really are the worst combo.” Recovery Girl sighed.

“Now. Get ready to have a really bad time!” All Might had arrived. And how!

“What do they see in you… how can one without a quirk stand in support of Stain!?”

“Last time I checked, Spinner, I didn’t join this League because of some guy with a melted face.” Gomi rubbed her face, carefully making sure her long metal claws didn’t scratch the skin.

“Show some respect! Stain will be the one to free our society from it’s shackles. His words will reach far, wide, and bring down the corrupt hero system which only values popularity!”

“When I see the reform legislation, I’ll believe you. All it’s done so far is get me stuck with an annoying fanboy. With a shitty sword. Is that a belt?”

“…And so what if it is. My weapon is much more impressive then those pitiful claws!” Spinner almost seemed offended at the insult directed at his “sword.” It wasn’t one in the traditional sense of the word. It was an assortment of knives, daggers, and other sharp objects. Held together by a rather strained belt. It was seemingly the second most important thing in Spinner’s life, after Stain.

“These claws will pry those scales from your throat before you even know I’ve moved. But eh. You’re not so bad. Kind of like a radio host, just have to tune you out.”

The two moved on through the streets. They had been instructed to take out a small gang of thugs. It wasn’t the sort of thing Gomi did usually. Killing people was usually done in the ring and only when they didn’t know how to yield. She imagined that Spinner had killed before. That sort of zeal he had, she’d seen it before. But it wasn’t a perfect facade. Growing up on the street let her know when someone was putting on a brave face. It had cracks here and there. Nothing she’d press, for now at
least. Spinner on the other hand had little respect for the girl that he had to work with. In his mind, she was little more than a glorified athlete. Fighting for sport in underground tournaments? A waste of time and talent. Even more so, given her reputation for never losing. These were gripes he had, but in the grand scheme of things they were minor. His main issue laid with her lack of a quirk. Only those with true strength could make a change in society. Those who could put their dreams to work and press them into reality. How could a quirkless person do that?

“Stop here. We’ll catch our breath. I know the gang we’re dealing with. They’ll saunter through here and we’ll catch them off-guard.” Gomi nodded to herself, before slumping against the wall. But Spinner ignored her and marched forward. It was only the fact that she lurched to block his path that stopped him.

“I would move. Ambush… is no way to spread Stain’s ideals! We have to be in the open for all to see! Though Stain used ambush, we are messengers!”

“Stain this. Stain that.” She shook her head and shoved Spinner back. “We’ll die if we fight them head on. Too many of them. Stop being an idiot.”

“I idiot?! What gives you the right to call me an idiot!? You’ve no conviction to speak of! Even that bike woman has more than you, Gomi. Without conviction how can you do anything in this world?”

“I’ve got conviction.” Her eyes narrowed into slits as she stepped forward. Her bangs hid most of her eyes, but Spinner would be able to see enough. “Conviction to survive. Which trumps whatever you’re doing. Don’t be an idiot. I’d hate to see you die in the gutter. I actually would. But I won’t die to save you from that fate. Be smart. I’m staying here.” With that she slumped back against the wall and gave a bitter sigh. She rubbed her eyes and then stretched her legs out. Spinner paused. Then he too slumped against the wall and sat across from Gomi. The lizard did not speak for a period of time. But then he sighed looking away from his partner.

“I cannot spread his ideal, if I am dead. You were right… this time!”

“Course I was. You’ll figure it out eventually, belt boy.”

Victoria grunted. The woman felt a bit antsy about having a fire-quirk user on her motorcycle. If this blew up, she’d lose her prized possession. The thought of losing her life in the equation never occurred to her. It was a slow trek to the nearest bank. If she had been going by herself, the main road would have been a valid option. Japanese drivers were slower and none of the heroes or police knew who she was yet. But with this burn ward escapee, it was best to stick to the back roads. No way did she want to be mistaken for a kidnapper.

“...You want to hurry this up? Sooner I’m done with you, the better. This is busywork.”

“That sort of attitude don’t impress me, hun. Stop fidgeting too. I’ll toss you off this thing if you ruin the leather.” She was met with silence. It seemed he was the strong stoic type. Always found those sort of people boring. “So. You’re a fan of that… Koware guy, right? He’s your reason for being here or something.”

“Something like that. And you’re not here because you care. So stop.” Dabi seemed to deflect any question with a non-answer, and a blocking of any follow up. This didn’t bother Victoria. She didn’t actually give a shit about why he was here. But silence lead to boredom. Boredom was her enemy
and she would always do whatever she could to stave it off.

“If you say I don’t care, then that sounds like a you problem, hun. Who wouldn’t care about a walking corpse!” She snickered at her own joke before pulling the bike to a halt. She jumped down, stretched, and pulled her helmet off.

“Are we here? Sooner we burn these idiots, sooner we’re done with this.” Dabi had pulled himself down from the motorcycle and was now slouched in front of Victoria. She rolled her eyes and shook her head. She just walked forward, out of the alley.

Dabi had caught up with Victoria. She had been in the process of crossing the road when the traffic light had gone blue. So all the local cars zipped across and barred her from getting over to the bank. It wasn’t a big bank but there hadn’t been any size specified in their brief. So all they had to do was break in, get some cash, and leave.

“Let’s keep the arson to a minimum, pretty corpse. We’ll have some fun, then cut loose.”

“And what if my fun involves arson? You said we.” Dabi seemed to have wit when he chose. Victoria snorted at this and swatted a hand back and forth in the air.

“I’ll have fun. Your fun will be finishing this job and getting away from old crone Victoria. Stop whining.”

“Then stop talking. You’re giving me a headache. And I don’t have my painkillers.” The fire user moved forward, the traffic now stopped. Victoria rolled her eyes and followed along with him. Now the two were stood outside the bank. Dabi let a flame start to cradle in his palms, as Victoria zipped up her jacket. Her hair was then fashioned into a ponytail as she hopped up and down on the balls of her feet. And with that the two threw themselves forward, into the action.

“Hahh… hahh…” Izuku struggled to choke down a breath. Bakugou was silent as the dust swirled around the pair. It seemed All Might didn’t intend to hold back in the slightest.

“Who cares about making sure this place stays intact?”

“Wha-?”

“What the hell?!”

“If you act like this is just a test, you’re gonna have a baaaad time. I’m a villain, heroes. So, give me your best shot.” There wasn’t a chance to catch their breath. All Might was already lunging forward. Dust was thrown up from the mere action of moving, even with this handicap. It was raw intimidation that made Izuku freeze. His childhood idol was bearing down on him right here, and right now. But he couldn’t freeze now. Snapping out of it, his head swung to Bakugou.

“We can’t fight him head-on! Let’s move!”

“You’re not the boss of me!” Bakugou ignored him. He moved forward, right towards the charging bull that was All Might.

“Kacchan!”
“STUN GRENADE!!” The explosion flared forward. Just enough to blind All Might, enough to halt his charge. Bakugou leapt forward, aiming right for his teacher. “ALL MIGHT! I DON’T NEED TO SAY IT, BUT…” His words were cut off. All Might had grabbed him by the face. But such a minor obstacle wouldn’t surpass his will. “Ah waz espechtin dis.” Then a barrage of explosions needled All Might. Rippling forth and pounding at the #1 hero.

“Most people when having their faces grabbed, would instinctively try to break free! But this kid, is dead set on beating me…”

With a grunt, All Might tugged the gauntlet away from his face. Izuku had no time to react. He could only watch as Bakugou was slammed into the ground with immense force. “And nothing else! A weak barrage like that hurts. But only a little.” All Might turned from the fallen student. “Now then.” Skidding with ease, All Might now found himself in front of his successor. “There is also you, Midoriya, kid!”

“Whoa!!”

“You plan to leave your teammate and make a break for it?” His gaze never wavered. All Izuku could feel was that feeling of terror, that resolve… that Koware had given off.

"Why am I remembering him!?" His full cowling emerged as he threw himself backwards. Even if Bakugou was pinned down and unable to fight at current, Izuku couldn’t fight All Might head-on. It was a losing venture no matter what!

“I see. Well, that’s just unfortunate.”

“Gah!” But it seemed Bakugou hadn’t been as pinned down as first thought. He flew through the air.

“Move it!”

“Kaccha-”

BONK

“One wants to beat All Might. The other wants to run.” Recovery Girl mused as she watched this fight unfold. "The latter sees his idol as being unimaginably powerful. To Izuku Midoriya, All Might is equivalent to a god. Then there’s this one…” Her monitor showed the gritted teeth of Bakugo, whose fiery spirit refused to let him fall here. I don’t know too much about him. But looking at his grades, and the performance at the sports festival, he’s gifted with incredible talent. So why he’s so worked up?”

By now Izuku and Bakugou had picked themselves up. Got their bearings after an unfortunate collision in mid-air.

“Weren’t you listening!? You’ll never be able to win fighting him head-on!!”

“Shut up. I’ll win. That’s… what heroes do.” Bakugou had to ignore Izuku. He had to ignore that memory that was playing in his head. His feet stomped forward. The path was set and he would follow it, regardless of what anyone said.
“Okay, sure, but fighting here isn’t…” Izuku had to intervene. How could he let his… friend march into a fight that he couldn’t win? As a hero, he had to save him from himself!

“Get your hands off me…”

“In the meantime…” That voice told Izuku and Bakugou that they had wasted too much time. All Might had soared above them with something metal in his hands. Both of them knew they’d have no time to react, but tried to do so. “I’ve got a present for Mr. Let’s Run!” A guardrail pinned Izuku to the ground. All Might landed, and Bakugou tried to counter. But the hero was a blur. Before the student could even blink, a fist had rammed itself into his gut. Vomit flew out with no say from the student. And then he was thrown halfway down the road, bouncing all the way. Izuku could do little but watch as he was pinned beneath the guard-rail. He too had a memory forcing itself into his mind.

“Look! You seen this one? All Might’s totally the coolest!” How Kacchan had been watching a news report showing the #1 hero.

“It’s four vs one! No way he can win, right?! But see! There! Dodge, punch, feint, see!! He won! No matter how bad things look, he always wins in the end!!”

All Might stood in front of the injured Bakugou. He’d never admit it, but that punch had taken a lot out of him. A lesser person might not have been able to get back up. But even as his foe started to bear down on him, the student was dragging himself up, fighting to get back on his feet.

“I understand. This is down to Midoriya’s incredible growth, yes? But… when he begins at level one, and you’re at level fifty …it’s obvious you’ll be growing at different rates.” All Might sighed, and extended one arm. It was meant to be a test but he couldn’t abandon a student like this. Not in good faith. “Don’t just discard it all! Look, can’t you see? You’ve still got room to grow! But it isn’t a matter of power for you…”

Izuku strained himself. He had to get free of the damned guard-rail that was keeping him locked in place. Bakugou had said he was going to win, no matter what. So as he struggled, bucked against the metal trap, his mind flooded itself. “You’re a nasty guy… but it’s true. No matter what faces you, you’ll always try to win! It’s why… I look up to you!”

“Shut up, All Might! If you’re saying I have to rely on his help…” Bakugou had managed to stand. But he knew that he had nothing left. His body was refusing to move. It wouldn’t be possible to survive against All Might in this condition. It took everything he had left just to stand on his own two feet. “Then… I’d rather …lose.” Izuku heard this. OFA surged in. All Might was silent for a moment, before sighing.

“…Is that so? So long as you have no regrets.” His hand came back. It was a shame. But he knew that he had tried to reach the student. If he couldn’t, then so be it. But the punch wouldn’t arrive. At least, not from him.

“Asshole!” A fist slammed into Bakugou’s face, sending him rolling away from All Might. But it was Izuku’s, the student having wrenched himself out of the trap. His voice was filled with a desperate rage and sorrow. “You’d rather lose? That isn’t you at all!” He managed to catch his ‘friend’ under one arm and darted away.
“Let go off me.”

“Pipe down!” Izuku snapped. It wasn’t normal for him to be this forward, but he had no other choice at this point. “Whether we try to beat All Might, or get away from him, I honestly… can’t think of a single plan.”

“What?!"

“But, why not at least try using me before giving up? I don’t want to hear you say it’s fine if we lose!” His voice was running at a fever pitch of frustration as he continued his evasive actions. “The one who never gives up, ‘til he’s won. Is you, isn’t it?!” Izuku couldn’t help but remember how Kacchan had that scuffle with the fourth graders. How despite their size, he’d still managed to battle them away. And the words he had said. About how the strongest heroes… always won in the end.

"Allowing Midoriya to catch me off guard like that… I got sloppy! If they’re hiding from me like this, they must be trying to escape…”

All Might was on the move again. He hadn’t expected Izuku to assault his own teammate. Nor had he expected the weights to be so heavy. Darting past an alleyway, All Might heard movement. A little too late at that.

“Where’re you looking, dumbass!?” The student had exploded himself out of the alley, ready to attack.

“From behind?!” All Might couldn’t help but notice that Bakugou was trying not to cry. And that he had a missing… but then next explosion didn’t give him any chance to think it through. His hands came up to protect his face…

"This pisses me off! To think I’d have to… I’d have to… with you…?!"

“DEKU!” Bakugou howled out. All that pain, his rage, the anguish in one battle cry. “SHOOT!”

“Only gonna explain this once, you fucking nerd. Running and hiding isn’t going to do shit against that crazy speed of his. We’ll have to fight.” And Izuku knew that Kacchan was right. There was no doubt in his mind. That had lead to their current plan. A dangerous gambit but one that could see them seize victory.

“But, we’re no match against All Might in a fight!”

“Shut the fuck up, or I’ll shut you up myself!” Izuku had the missing gauntlet in his hand. One finger was starting to pull the pin. If this all went well… “I know from my previous barrage, that half-ass attacks won’t faze him. So it’s going to have to be full power, point-blank range.” The pin was out, the sweat ignited. “While he’s reeling from that attack… we’ll get some distance between us and him. It’s the only way…”

“I see.” There wasn’t any time for All Might to do anything beside say that simple sentence. In the blink of an eye a huge explosion had ripped forth. It was the largest explosion he had seen from
Bakugou’s quirk since the start of school. Amidst the explosion he was sure he could hear Izuku apologizing for what happened. And Izuku had to contend with a sudden pain in his shoulder, and a loud pop. The kickback from such an attack was immense, and having not used the quirk for years Izuku had no resistance.

*My shoulder…! This is what Kacchan has had to put up with!*”

“Let’s move, you idiot!” Bakugou had taken to the air. Izuku was quick to nod, splutter a response, and fall in behind him. It was a mess for the explosive student, that sentence playing over in his head on repeat. “I don’t wanna hear you say it’s fine if we lose!”

“Ow… they got me.” All Might grunted in pain as the smoke started to dissipate. Somehow they had managed to pull one over on him. There was no rush for him to stand up. His body was swimming with pain that he knew would pass soon enough. “A compromise between fighting, and fleeing. Not bad for on the spot improvisation.” I had already done some real damage to the area. So launching that attack in the same direction would minimize further destruction. I recall making that point in their first battle training. Right. All Might started to pull himself up properly, koffing all the while. They’re both intelligent lads to start with. But I was certain it’d all collapse when they were thrown together. His mind fell on Izuku. How his successor had to have felt envy, disgust, inferiority toward Bakugou. And how in turn Bakugou must have felt awe, conceit, and rejection. From what I know… they’ve both had to grapple with these sorts of feelings. Right now, I doubt they even know what to say to each other. To be able to put aside those issues so quickly… His coughing had brought up blood which glistened on his hand. A worrying sign but one he could not afford to focus on. Surely this is a great first step, towards cooperation in the future. “But still. Sensei’s gotta do his best!”
Battle continued to rage on for the other students. As Izuku and Bakugou attempted to brawl with All Might, Todoroki and Yaoyorozu were still in the early stages of war with Aizawa. The plan was progressing as intended. Small dolls continued to pop out and fall from Yaoyorozu frequently. It was enough however to make Todoroki pause. There was a quizzical look on his face followed by an awkward clearing of his throat.

“I know I said anything,’ but what are those?”

“They’re Russian Matryoshka dolls.” It was an unusually quick and curt reply from Yaoyorozu. The student rested several of the creations in her belt, with an attempt at a hidden sigh.

“Right.” Todoroki had also taken provisions against Aizawa. His cold side was constantly forming a low level of frost around his hand that if halted would indicate the presence of their teacher. “Just shout if your quirk starts to act up.”

“I’m not surprised, Todoroki.”

“About what?”

“That you could fashion a strategy to counter Aizawa-sensei, just like that. Always determining the best course of action with your judgement.” Another attempt at a hidden sigh. Todoroki picked up on it but did not how to deal with it. Emotion did not tend to be his forte.

“...It’s nothing special.”

“Nothing special…? Really?” Yaoyorozu couldn’t stop the waver in her voice. “We both got into U.A. through special recommendation. We both started at the same point. But… when it comes to practical hero skills. I’ve still got nothing worth mentioning.” Another pained sigh. “Your leadership got me through the cavalry battle. And you weren’t toyed with by a quirkles student either!”

“…” Todoroki had intended to reply to her. If he only he were Izuku. He’d have known what to say. But there was something wrong. “Yaoyorozu. Your matryoshkas.” The dolls were no longer being created. Yaoyorozu hadn’t mentally stopped their creation. Which could only mean one thing. “He’s here!!”

“I’m sorry, I…”

“Yes, you should have acted sooner.” Aizawa sighed. The teacher was suspended from an electric cable via his tape. Todoroki swiped his hands at the man intending to freeze him solid. But his quirk failed to activate. Aizawa landed in a squat the scarf billowing around him.

“We need to focus on escape, now that he’s stolen the initiative. Yaoyorozu, go!”

“Uh...oh!” She was taken by surprise. It seemed Yaoyorozu was having issues keeping focus. She darted away though trusting in Todoroki. He was the intelligent one here and his plan was their best shot. Aizawa gave another wistful sigh. The teacher darted forward moving so fast he was akin to a blur. His capture tape tied itself around Todoroki’s waist.

“That’s your plan, then? Fine.” And in one cold movement, Todoroki was hoisted into the air,
suspended from the same cable as Aizawa had been prior, wholly trapped. “By me.” His teacher made sure to tie the tape to the pole before shaking his head. “You’re the powerhouse of this team, so your capture had to be done first, no matter what.”

“Do you really think this will hold me? Flame, ice, either one will break these bindings.” Aizawa didn’t seem to care much for Todoroki’s response. The hero had scattered a handful of sharp, black, triangular entities onto the floor with a yawn.

“Use whichever you want, but watch your landing.”

“Caltrops… you a ninja? That’s a nasty counter-measure.”

“This isn’t like that time you faced Koware. I’m aware there’re two of you, and I know your quirks. You can bet I’m ready to counter whatever you do. You took on more than your fair share with this plan, though. Thinking of her is noble and all… but perhaps you should have listened to what she had to say?”

“Listened to her?” Todoroki was promptly left alone with his thoughts.

Yaoyorozu was not faring well. She had been running for what seemed like a while, at least to her. But she also knew that it was Aizawa-Sensei she was facing. He’d be able to catch up in no-time, and come from nowhere.

“How much farther is this exit gate? Maybe there’s a shorter route? Is Todoroki okay back there?! Is it worth the lost time to make a mobility item? Is this really okay?! Can I really flee like this?! He’d know what to do! Is this really okay?” Her breathing frantic, her running wild, and the desperation clear in her posture. “Where am I even running?! No... what am I doing?! My... head. I'm... is this really okay?!"

“Your loss of self-confidence since the sports festival is clear.”

“ What?!” Yaoyorozu knew that voice. If it was already behind her… then? “Does this mean Todoroki is already...?!” But that thought didn’t get much time to live. Aizawa was flying through the air, one of his bandages already wrapping tight around her arm. It tugged backwards, intending to knock her on her rear.

“Allow me to hit you where it hurts. It’ll be nice and slow.”

“I've got no chance against sensei...” But Yaoyorozu found a surprise. Her eye twitched as she realized her quirk wasn’t erased. Was this an oversight? Or perhaps. Regardless she didn’t waste the chance she had suddenly found. “Creation!!” A large round metal ring exploded from her wrist, ripping the bandage away. “I'm sorry Todoroki!!” And with her freedom she knew what had to be done.

“Hm! Running back...?” Aizawa grunted as he watched her run. Fleeing was no longer her plan, it seemed. “To consult with Todoroki. Comparing herself to Todoroki, she decided that he was a cut above. For better or worse, she’s seen him acting so straight-forward and determined... that she’s lost faith in her own ability to make decisions. Something like that. She is still a 15 year old at heart. To give her back that confidence... is my role as the “villain,” isn’t it?”

Todoroki dangled. He could have escaped whenever he wanted to. But the spiked ground beneath
him made it clear it wouldn’t be the best call. So instead his thoughts gnawed at him. What Aizawa-sensei had said. He realized that Yaoyorozu had been acting a bit off. As is she had been holding something back when they talked earlier.

“Todoroki…”

“Yaoyorozu.”

“Todoroki!” By now she had managed to make it back to her peer. Seeing the state he was in induced a fresh wave of panic in the girl. “I’m sorry, I… I should’ve…”

“Right. Sure.”

“But Aizawa-sensei is Coming!” And Yaoyorozu could hear him behind her. It was do or die time…but. “Do I save Todoroki?! Run?! What do I -”

“Yaoyorozu!! You had a plan, didn’t you?!” Todoroki cut through the thoughts, a hot knife to the butter. “Sorry, I should have checked if you were really okay with my plan. So, what have you got?!”

“But. If your strategy didn’t work, then…what hope does mine have?”

“It’s fine. Just do it! This is your time to really shine! You won class president, remember?” It was true. She hadn’t expected it, and yet she had found herself in the position. “I voted for you! Because I thought you were perfect for it!” This blew the girl away. Her mind reeled as she straightened up. It was difficult for her to think. Todoroki, of all people, had voted for her? It had never even been a possibility in her mind.

“You done?” Aizawa, ever the gentleman, interrupted. Falling from the sky to end their comeback.

“Pathetic, I’m pathetic!! But!” Yaoyorozu had something up her sleeve. Or rather, in her belt. Her hands scrambled to find the dolls she had hidden prior and flung them into the air. Their lids fell off as they flew. “Todoroki! Close your eyes!”

“What’s this…?” Aizawa swatted the cap off one of them. Only to see…

FLASH

“Tch…” A barrage of flashbangs erupted. Todoroki had managed to shut his eyes just in time, but Aizawa hadn’t been lucky enough. Yaoyorozu moved quickly. Todoroki was untied during this period of time, able to dodge the caltrops.

“I do, Todoroki! I’ve got one! I have a plan in mind, that’s sure… to lead us to victory against Aizawa-sensei!!”

“...Hey. Girl, you lost or something? This is Yakuza territory. So why don’t you get the hell out of here.”

“O-oh. I understand. My apologies aniki, I’m so sorry!” Gomi bowed her head before standing up. One arm was across her torso, the other rubbing her shoulder. It was all part of an act to look as nervous and lost as possible. The man in front of her rolled his eyes. Behind him were four other
men in similar suits. All pale and sickly green. One man wore a beaked mask that Gomi found to be shockingly ugly.

“Then what the hell you still doing here? We ain’t got enough turf for little girls to be hanging around in it. Get out of here.”

“A-ah. I would… but. My friend. He got stabbed by a j-junkie! Help me…please.” Her eyes glistened as she watched the goon closely. His face was cruel. But according to Giran, the Yakuza were meant to look after people. He’d made some cryptic remark about them losing their way, flying off. That had meant little to Gomi. All she could do was bank on that information. For a moment the man seemed to act like he was going to beat the shit out of her. Then his eyes rolled.

“Fine. I’ll use my quirk to dull his senses. Then you and him get the hell out of my sight.” Shaking his head he ventured into the alley, following Gomi. His friends followed behind him. But as they arrived in the clearing they saw no wounded friend. Rather all the man saw was a whirlwind of motion asomi reattached her claws and ripped his throat open. Then he saw nothing else, slamming to the ground on his face. One of the Yakuza lurched for her. His hand sprouted sharp spikes aimed right at her throat. But Spinner, who had rooted himself to a wall leapt forward. Landing in front of this goon his blade swung. At least five times, carving the shape of an S into the man. Who promptly fell to pieces, quite dead.

“Those who don’t believe in Stain will see their lives cut short!” Spittle flew from Spinner’s mouth as the other Yakuza blinked and jumped backwards.

“Would you shut the fuck up about Stain already!” Gomi howled. She didn’t waste much time however. Leaping forward she sprang atop a dumpster. One hand gripped a railing above her which she used to throw herself forward. One claw aimed for the man in front of her. Had he not been able to teleport short distances, his life would have ended. But he managed to blink behind her and thumped her in the back of the head. The other two Yakuza opted to focus on Spinner.

“Damn mutie. We oughta cut you shits down a long time ago…” The two figures who were approaching Spinner could not have better any different. The rather racist man was stocky. His eyes had a leaking sort of style to them. Always weeping. His companion was a silent woman, tall and slender… too slender. The uncanny valley seemed to touch every aspect of her face. Spinner opted not to rise to the comment about a mutie. While it made his innards burn he was not here for personal revenge. It wouldn’t be appropriate. Stain sought justice for all, not simply for himself. He would follow in that vein.

“In the name of Stain!” The lizard threw himself forward. Though his main tool was the large blade, several knives lined his belt. One was flicked at the woman while his blade slammed down against the arm of the male. To his dismay both attacks failed. A hard water layer had surrounded the arm of the man, causing the blade to bounce off with a clang. The woman on the other hand had simply made herself 2d against the wall dodging the knife entirely.

“Stupid fucking reptile.” This rather choice statement punctuated itself with a rather choice right hook. Spinner was sent sprawling backwards. Then his own knife was thrown back at him, lodging itself in his shoulder.

“…One must not falter.” He wrenched the blade free and flipped it in his hand. His gaze tightened as he attempted to induce the same aura that he knew Stain could use. “When culling the corrupt!” Silence was his only response. And not a silence induced by fear.
Gomi was annoyed. This asshole with the teleportation quirk was making her life difficult. It meant he could dodge her attacks fairly easily, and stay out of her line of sight. Which meant in turn it would be difficult for her to actually hit him. Claws slashed out again but only caught fabric. Her foe, a man who could only be described as gangly, teleported behind her again. His fist shot for her head, so she span and took it on her chin. It rattled her but then her claw swiped down. Her foe was able to react but opted not to teleport. Rather he opted for an attempted side-step. But her claw soon dug into his flesh ripping through his suit. Huffing, a wicked grin came across her face.

“Couldn’t teleport? Tch. Game over.”

“Shut the hell up. No respect for us anymore. The hell you trying to kill us for, anyway?” Her foe was clearly annoyed. A trash can lid became his makeshift weapon. So he lunged forward with it. Intending to smack her in the throat no doubt. Gomi moved to meet him. If she was right, his teleport was ready to go again. But she also knew that he knew his quirk had been figured out. So it was simple. Her claws raked forward, slicing his hand. He had failed to teleport. Her years of experience told her that he had hoped she’d fall for a simple trick. That he intended to teleport behind her, so she would turn. But she hadn’t. The lid dropped, and the man vanished. But he had gone below her. So a kick between her legs came. Pain came too as she staggered back. Two brutal punches to her face… before being gripped by hair. Dragged close. It was his mistake. His attempt to talk, to deride her, was turned into a sicky gurgle. His throat had been cut too, as Gomi kicked him away. Another body flopped to the floor. Spinner… needed her help. Time to move!

“Anyone who doesn’t want to die. Down on the floor. Now.”

“There we go! We’re only doing small-scale terrorism this time, hun. No mass murder.” Victoria grinned. It had almost been difficult to convince not to scorch all the civilians. Making it clear that less violence meant a weaker pro to potentially deal with had seemingly worked. So she left tall, dark, and crispy, to watch over the scared civilians. They had huddled to the ground, some even curled up fetal. It make her smile.

“...Y-you. You won’t get any of our money!” The teller seemed defiant. Victoria never understood that. For a starter, it was a small bank. Not a whole lot of money in the grand scheme of things. Plus it was all insured! No one would lose a single penny. But oh well. She could torment this straight-laced lady. That was always fun!

“Hun. Excuse the accent.” Her Japanese was still rusty. Tinted with a bit too much of her Italian accent. Couldn’t be helped. “You’ll give me access to all the safes in the bank, kay? Otherwise, necro-boy over there will kill ya!”

“I…a hero will arrive soon! You criminals will be dealt with and sent to jail. There won’t be any hope for you, two-bit crooks!”

“Two-bit?” Dabi snorted and lifted a hand. Fire crackled in his palm as he shook his head. “Don’t take kindly to insults.” But Victoria surprised him. The Italian villain wrapped the hair of the teller around her hand before smiling wide.

“Magic trick time! Watch me make your consciousness…” A loud slam and thud rang out through the bank as she smashed the face of the woman into the desk. “Disappear!” Snaking her hand free from the hair, Victoria hopped over. Files, documents, folders, were all tossed behind her. Soon a small key was found and slipped into her glove. Using her quirk, she placed a hand to the floor.
Force pushed her into the air throwing her over the desk. Winking at Dabi, she gestured at the back of the bank. “Gonna go ahead and open up those safes. Don’t miss me too much!”

He wouldn’t miss her. Dabi found the woman loud and overbearing. Her attitude was too energetic, lacking in the ability to be serious. It was as if it was all a game to her this work. Something that didn’t matter so long as you had fun. To him that couldn’t be further from the truth. Every job mattered. All toward a greater goal that had to be reached. To wake up society and show it how far it had fallen. But he wasn’t even able to find solace in her absence. A small child started to weep on the floor, crawling for their father. Dabi squatted down and placed his rather grim palm on the back of the boy.

“Hey. Stop moving. Got a death wish?”

“...That’s it! Leave him be!” It seemed the father of the child had an issue with Dabi. He had stood up. Dabi looked this brave hero, or idiot, over. Average in every sense of the word. Nothing to make him stand out, utterly normal.

“Huh? Suicidal tendencies run in the family or something?” By now the child had slipped from the grasp of Dabi and hid behind his father. This elicited a pained grunt from the villain who rolled his eyes before standing up. “Alright, Dad. Move. You can live. If you let me kill your brat. Gotta respect bravery.”

“What kind of father would I be if I did that!? I’ll never let him die so I live. How can any parent let harm like that come to their child!?”

“...Man. You’re really pissing me off, y’know that? Well. Both of you’ll burn then…” Something about that response had just ticked him off. Burning him up inside. What did two dead idiots matter to him? Victoria could shove it up her ass too. But there was no chance to kill them. Blonde hair snapped around their waists from nowhere, flinging them to safety outside of the bank.

“Enough of that!” A tall figure stood in the doorway. Her blonde hair fell to her hips as her magician costume glimmered. Shaking a finger at the villain she sighed. “Time to make you disappear!”

“...A hero. Just what I needed.” It seemed the job had just got a lot more bothersome.

“Stand down! I will personally see that you’re dazzled and stunned by none other than d-”

“Damn. Stop running your mouth.” Dabi had no time to let this idiot finish her sentence. Light was reflecting off the rhinestones on her jacket and getting in his eyes. This was the thing he found the most annoying about it all. One hand flung flames at her. It wasn’t much more than an idle lashing out. But her hair was quicker. It wrapped around one of the support beams for the building, throwing herself to safety. Then she did some complicated cartwheel backflip, and then she was kicking him in the chin. Enough to send him staggering backwards. His other hand swiped in front of him sending a wave of fire. Enough to get her to back-off, he hoped. But somehow she limboed under it while her hair tossed civilians to safety. Next Dabi took a punch to the face, enough to send spittle flying. If he could just cut loose then he knew the fight would be over. But her hair wrapped his neck and bounced his head off a wall. It was all going hazy.

“Hmm? I dare say you’re the one who ought to stop running! Running from your crime! And no-” But before the hero could finish she was knocked back. Victoria’s palm had rested on her stomach
for just a second but that was all the time the villain needed. Propping Dabi up she patted her saddlebag.

“Let’s blow this joint!”

“A plan you’ve had in mind?”

“Yes! I’ve been thinking about it from the start!!”

“Great. Just let me know already.”

“My lingering aftereffect…” Aizawa had fallen back to a rooftop. His eyes were still stinging after that barrage of flashbangs. “I can’t keep my quirk active for extended periods, and I need to rest more. Well. If she’s figured that out and wants to exploit it, more power to her!” It was time to move again. Springing from his perch his scarf whipped forward. It had been intended for Yaoyorozu.

“Yaoyorozu!” But Todoroki had been swift in backhanding it. His flames intended to blast Aizawa away. Said flames failed to manifest. “He erased it?!”

“Let’s both hide, Todoroki!” Yaoyorozu started to dart away. “Sensei’s eyes haven’t been as dependable lately.”

“Due to his injury at USJ? So we’re exploiting that?”

“Not quite! Anyway, we’ll need to escape his line of sight for a moment.” She knew that he was still right behind them. Her plan couldn’t work so long as he could see them. “With a little time, we’ll be taking this win!”

“Time…” Todoroki nodded and continued to run behind her. It was time to trust in his companion fully. “Hide from his vision? How do we pull that off without quirks?”

“Just do what I say! Keep trying to use your ice.”

“Still coming for you.” Aizawa had no intention of backing off. His pursuit was ruthless and unrelenting. But his erasure not so much.

“Don’t think we can’t use our quirks. There’ll be an opening if only for an instant!” As Yaoyorozu stated this, Aizawa’s eyes started to close. A blink. And in that moment. “When he blinks… before he opens his eyes again. It’s your chance!” Todoroki felt his hand grow cold. It was the single chance they’d get. “You can fire it off in that instant, right, Todoroki!? What you did at the sports festival…” And so it was time. Skidding a little bit Todoroki dragged his hand against the ground.

THAT GIANT ICE WALL!!

It formed in an instant. Though it was just a blink it was enough to block Aizawa off. The hero managed to avoid bouncing into it, lancing on a now frozen electric cable. He exhaled and rested for a moment.

“Todoroki’s largest attack. They were waiting for this. Yes. The enemy’s weakness is meant to be exploited.”
The two students remained on the other side of the ice-wall. It was large enough that Aizawa was able to be held back for a longer period of time. His fire flared up temporarily to regulate his body temperature as he moved his focus to Yaoyorozu.

“I used that moment to block him off. Now we can use our quirks again. You best explain the whole plan now.” What he saw was unexpected. Yaoyorozu’s costume was pulled open, effectively exposing herself. She didn’t seem to care but Todoroki turned away. He did notice what she was generating however. “Is that Aizawa-sensei’s weapon?!” It was a bit… awkward.

“Yes. I can’t replicate it precisely, as I don’t know the exact materials or the manufacturing method. But I’ve woven something special into this. It’s my own take. Given the residential setting, we’ll want to keep property damage low. His binding weapon is also quick, thus he’s difficult to pin down. So, I thought.” She gestured at a catapult she had made earlier. The makeshift scarf replica sat atop it. “This way, I figure we have a better chance than if we tried running away! It’ll be over in an instant… sound good?”

“Yeah! No issues here.”

“The exit gate is behind me. So. Instead of chasing them blindly, I’ll simply wait for their next move.” Aizawa rested in a squat. The ice wall was still in his way but they would have to return eventually. He was most interested in seeing this plan that Yaoyorozu had been so sure about. With the way her voice had picked up… it was likely going to be dangerous. The hero then noted something in the corner of his eye. Two figures, or what he presumed to be figures, moving under cloth. “Cloth huh?” True, I can’t erase that which I can’t see, but… Soon he was sailing through the air, landing in front of the figures. His scarf wrapped around both as he shook his head. “This puts you at a real disadvantage.” Tugging it tight the two figures collided. But then he realized. As the cloth fluttered away, they weren’t!

“Mannequins?!”

“This is all…” Yaoyorozu had hidden under the cloth, this was true. But it had only been the bottom half that was her. The upper half was a pair of mannequins so as to give the illusion of movement. Her catapult was with her too. Her hand swiped down activating the trigger in one clean motion. “I have to do!”

“A catapult?” Aizawa was fast. Though Yaoyorozu had launched the material at him he was already in the air. But it was still close to him. Not enough to tangle, but enough to tighten his movement.

“Todoroki!! Get down and blast your fire!!” A warm surge of flame ripped out from an alleyway. Todoroki had been lying in wait. His flame clearly missed Aizawa however.

“That won’t hit me. What are they thinking?” But the bandages fluttering around him started to shift. The heat…?

“Against you, Sensei I knew we couldn’t depend on our quirks! Ever hear of nitinol alloy? When heated, it temporarily returns to its original form.” Her creation snapped tight around Aizawa’s body. “It’s an alloy with shape memory!”

“…Not bad. Not bad at all.”

The battle had ended. Aizawa had been promptly handcuffed after falling to the floor. Both students
had expected something more from their teacher. But it seemed he had been fully defeated, as he sat there in silence.

“That worked out well.”

“Yes, but. Sensei was able to react to the bandages. But instead of dodging and restraining me… you threw yourself backwards.” Yaoyorozu, despite her plan working, still had that doubt chewing at the back of her mind. “But I feel as if you only took the hit so my plan would work.”

“I had to be on guard against Todoroki. I wasn’t sure of his position. It was likely he’d try to freeze me. Taking to the air was my optimal strategy. Beside, isn’t that how your plan was supposed to go?” The teacher swiftly shut down her own critique. It was important that she took ownership of this win.

“Yeah. All you needed some a little time like you said. Thanks.”

“…!” Yaoyorozu seemed to have a flushed face. Her hand had come to her mouth, her cheeks blazing red. There was even the hint of tears starting to fall. Todoroki, socially inept as ever, coughed and tilted his head.

“What’s the matter? If you’re going to throw up, press the pressure point on your inst-”

“I-it’s nothing, I swear!”

Thus the first victory was determined. Recovery Girl shuffled in her seat and yawned. Aizawa was getting soft in her estimations. But that didn’t mean. She leaned into the microphone and tapped it.

“This is an announcement.” The speakers in each battlefield started to blare her voice to all the remaining students. Vanfell, his brow slick with sweat, strained his head to listen. Mineta ranted with a hint of indignation about the fact that the victories were being announced. “Todoroki and Yaoyorozu!”

“Wake up Sero!! I can’t win this on my own!!” Mineta screeched. Midnight advanced slowly. She was enjoying the anguish her opponent was in, laughing softly to herself. She just couldn’t help but croon at Mineta.

“Whether you’re good at binding or not… it doesn’t matter if you can’t catch me.~”

“YEAHHHNNHHHHHHHHHHHNNHHHHHHHHHHHHH”

“S-So loud…!” Jirou staggered as the dulcet tones of Present Mic ripped through the forest. “Koda!! With your quirk, can’t you make… the birds! Birds attack him!? You can control animals right?!” Jirou knew it was an absurd suggestion. But she was desperate.

“Even if I wanted to give them an order.” Koda spoke in sign language and soft mutters, his hands waving back and forth. “They’re all fleeing from Present Mic’s voice!”
“Not even covering our eardrums is enough to keep them from bursting… forget being on another level! He’s at the mountain top! We can’t even get close.”

“Beautiful work, boys! You reluctantly cooperated to fight against the enemy… but!! For you two… that was merely a prerequisite for this exam! Get it?” Baku’s gauntlet lay shattered and crumpled. The student himself trapped beneath a boot...and Izuku dangled in one meaty hand. All Might had came back and how!
Heavy Lifting: Final Exams Arc Part 5

Less Than a Minute Earlier

Izuku was running. Bakugou was right behind him, though the other student opted to depend upon his explosions.

“C’mon! Just a bit more! We’re almost at the gate! Not sure why it looks so cute, but if just one of us can make it through there, we pass!” It was true. The gate looked rather odd, with a beaming rendition of the principal atop it.

“The buildings and pavements around here are also damaged. Means he sent that blast at us from somewhere near the gate!” Bakugou figured All Might would be nearby. This close however was an issue. “He’s not messing around…”

“Doesn’t seem All Might is in pursuit… maybe that really took him out…”

“As if a loser like you could take him down. What a load of shit. He’s not going to fall from that alone.” Bakugou snorted and shook his head at Izuku. “He comes at us again, he’ll taste my gauntlet.”

“Yes, yes. Let’s see it, then!” That oh so familiar voice rang out. In the blink of an eye All Might had arrived between the two students. Bakugou, in his defence, tried to launch an attack. But All Might was too fast. His fist swung up at a blazing speed, shattering the gauntlet. “Why so shocked?!”

“T-too fast!” Izuku couldn’t even hope to react in time to save his peer. All Might was just on another level, far above him.

“And this isn’t even my peak, given these weights. Now. Die, Hero scum!!”

And thus the pair found themselves in their current situation. Izuku dangled from one hand and Bakugou with a boot pressed into his back. The announcement that Todoroki and Yaoyorozu had passed rung out, rubbing salt into Izuku & Bakugou’s wounds.

“Now, that’s a surprise. Aizawa got beat? He must’ve gotten sloppy.” All Might shrugged and turned his attention back to the matter at hand. “Shall I bury you guys next?”

“That speed. It’s too much…!” Bakugou wasn’t even allowed to have his thoughts. All Might slammed his boot down smashing the student even harder into the dirt. “Stamina and power too! There’s no chance against that pure simple strength. It took fighting him for me to really understand. Now, I know why this man…stands as the tallest wall in the world!!”

“Crap…” Izuku was not ready to give up. OFA crackled through him as his free arm tried to pry All Might’s grip off. But it wasn’t possible, the strength gap too insurmountable.

“…Some look kid.” All Might threw his successor to the ground and shook his head. “Hoping to hit me with your strongest attack, and then get away through the gate? Seems to be the answer you two came up with. But now the dust has settled, it’s over!!”
“Cram it.” All Might twitched as Bakugou hissed. And then there was a huge explosion that forced him back. His arms covered his face again as Bakugou forced himself to stand. Pain was swimming through his shoulders...and he was starting to run low on sweat. A strained cough wracked his form.

But he couldn’t let that stop him. He snatched at the prone Izuku with one hand, wiping the spittle from his mouth.

“I’m gonna blow you away.”

“Huh!?"

“Hate to admit it. Power gap being what it is...this is our only chance at winning.” Bakugou lifted Izuku up.

“Wait! St-topp!”

“DIE!” But it was too late for that. Izuku was flung into the air and propelled by an explosion. The student had some issues with the wording that Kacchan had used but it seemed the plan might work. All Might had been knocked airborne by the power of the prior explosion. As such Izuku would have a few seconds in which he could move freely.

NEW HAMPSHIRE...SMASH!!

“Too naive, my little heroes!!” All Might had not been anywhere close to being unable to react. All he had needed to do was a simple punch. The sheer force from the smash enough to propel him through the air and send him slamming into Izuku. Pain that the student had not felt before burst through him. This was before he made contact with the ground. And bounced. And bounced. And bounced...it seemed for the time being he was out of commission.

“Those gauntlets let me go at full power with no risk.” All Might had thought that would have been the end of the fight. But as Bakugou’s voice rang out he found that wouldn’t be the case. “That was stupid of me.” His student hung in mid-air, his hands outstretched. Shoulders ached with pain but that wouldn’t stop him. Not now. “We had no hope of beating you without taking a few risks!” Another huge explosion smashed into All Might. It was a powerful one and by Izuku’s estimation had to be the most powerful one yet. “GO DEKU!!”

“That’s his ultimate blast from the sports festival, but it’s a one time deal..”

“Get outta here! I can handle him better than you and your shitty improvisations. SO MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL, YOU PIECE OF SHIT!” Another massive explosion to send All Might reeling. Bakugou couldn’t feel his arms. That didn’t matter. Meant he had to be doing it right.

“Ugh... my back’s still feeling that last one.” Izuku forced himself to stand. The gate was right in front of him. Victory so close. “With full cowling, one and a half leaps should clear this distance. Just...run! All Might won’t ignore me once I get close to the goal.” He was about ready to move for it. “It’s what Kacchan would do!” And so he went to move. His pain was so severe that he didn’t even notice All Might falling toward him. Nor did he notice Bakugou flying to intercept the hero. Izuku heard the smash though. The brutal sound of his peer being pinned to the ground by All Might...

“Sweet dreams, Bakugou, kid. Because that sort of self-destructive attack-” All Might’s lip twitched. “It’s a little bit too traumatic for your teacher to watch.” It seemed that at last Bakugou had been taken out. All Might started to rise ready to focus on Izuku. But then a hand gripped his arm and a
feeble explosion rippled out. “Huh?”

“Hurry. Go, you fucking nerd!!” Bakugou’s hand twitched before falling away. The student just couldn’t hold it in place. But he didn’t quit, didn’t falter, didn’t flicker out. “I’ll break. And crack. Even if it messes me up, I chose this path to victory.” His teeth sank deep in All Might’s hand. It was all he could do. “Cuz...I just can’t accept. That. Even this. Isn’t. Enough.”

“I WON’T!”

Izuku couldn’t help but cry. Kacchan was breaking himself. He had to move. Had to do something. Anything. His legs started to move on their own.

“Sorry, can’t let you do that Midoriya, kid!” All Might had figured Izuku was making for the exit. He blinked.

“It’s when you’re scared, when you’re nervous, especially…” Izuku despite all the pain rushing over him. Coursing through his body, his heart, his head. There was nothing more he could do. But fight. “That you gotta stand up and smile!!” One fist curled back as he flew right at his teacher, his mentor, the idol that drove him forward. “OUT OF MY WAY ALL MIGHT!”

SMASH!

All Might had not seen it coming. His grasp on Bakugou was shattered and he skidded off to the side. It was in his mind a miracle that he didn’t fall flat on his face. A spluttered cough was his contribution.

“He’s out cold.” Izuku didn’t have time to dwell on his gambit working. He quickly scooped Kacchan up into his arms and turned. “I’m sorry, Kacchan. Sorry I didn’t…”

“Koff...gah.” All Might had sat up now. There was no point chasing Izuku. His successor was moving too fast. Couple that with his time limit and that smash, there was no chance. But all of it had taken him by surprise. “I mean really. Another second or two of running...and you’d have possibly made it out the gate!” There was blood on his hand. Not a good thing at this stage. Perhaps it had been a mistake to use his time on this exam. If he had to spring to action in the future. But he didn’t dwell on the negative. “You weren’t holding back there.” “Right. It all started back then, with you saving him. And now…” Izuku threw himself through the gate, limp Bakugou in his arms. Victory chimed as All Might gave a tired smile. It was pure joy that he felt now. Her voice whispered a laugh if such a thing was possible. Her hands rested on his shoulders as the hero tilted his head back. “There is no wall too high to climb. That’s the kind of man you are!!”

Spinner was on the ground. It was cold, hard, and uncomfortable. In summary, it was a shit place to die. As shit as it was, it did seem to be the end of the road for him. Gomi was off fighting her own battle. He had been required to hold his own but had failed.

“Damn mutie!” His foe slammed a boot into his ribs. The woman rammed a knife into his thigh, yet physical pain mattered little to Spinner, however...

“Failure. Stain would have...triumphed. Pathetic. I can’t even manage to be an imitation of him.” Mental pain was the issue tearing him apart. Stain had been a light. Something to follow, something that had made sense. Even an empty idiot like him could follow it. “Fading. ...At least it isn’t the
slums.” His body braced for that final blow. Would it be a stomp to the windpipe? Mutants had to be disfigured when killed. It was a rule with these bigots. Maybe they’d rip his scales off. Watch him bleed out just because he looked different. If they found his tail, perhaps they’d choose to choke him with it; so many options.

The blow never came. He had waited for death. But it was not to be. Gomi had moved like a whirlwind. First she clawed the side of the 2-D woman open. Then as said woman fell to her side, her claws had raked her eyes open. That was the end of her. Hard-water span and went to hook her across the face. But her legs wrapped around his waist, with her claws she seared flesh and fabric from his back. His howls of pain bounced off the walls of the alley before his nose was broken by a headbutt. Gomi’s final move was to take Spinner’s small knife and jam it into the head of the Yakuza goon. She twisted the blade for good measure before disentangling from the now dead body. Gomi had to take a minute to breathe, inhale and recover. This had been more exhausting than she had expected. Perhaps she was out of practice, or maybe this was just the level she had to perform at.

“W-what the hell is with this girl!? That looked...effortless! And to think I derided her. But she lacks the conviction.” Spinner lifted himself from the floor. Silently he pulled his blade from the head of the deceased Yakuza thug and returned it to his belt. The only noise present in the alleyway was the ragged breathing of Gomi. It held for a few seconds. She was too tired to speak. Spinner wasn’t sure of the words. Finding them eluded him. Try as he might he had no clue. What could he even say to her?

“God. You’re pathetic. But you know that. Pretty sure you do right?” Gomi shook her head as she finally straightened herself out.

“Pathetic I may be. But I still hold the conviction that you lack! You are driven by nothing. To survive is just human nature! I strive to be more.”

“You’re an idiot. Conviction really helped you back there didn’t it? Pft, I didn’t know my new name was conviction. I count four kills for me, and what. One for you?”

“That doesn’t matter! Arbitrary counts mean nothing if you have no zeal! I strived to spread his word, even as I was dy-” Spinner was shut up by Gomi. The villain had opted to strike him. She’d hit him hard enough to strain her hand.

“Shut the fuck up. You’re pissing me off. You make no sense. Follow Stain, I don’t care. But don’t be mindless, find a way to be yourself or you’re going to end up dead. Hyping that shit up to be something he ain’t...whatever. I’m going back to Giran.” Gomi sighed as she walked away before pausing.

“Stay safe, Spinner.”

“Now see. Rhinestone that’s mistake one. Beating on Dabi without my permission? Mistake two. You’re riding your ass to the third mistake. Then I’d just about have to knock some sense into you.” Victoria had arrived in the nick of time. Dabi had been finding himself battered by this professional. He’d never voice as much to the Italian woman, but she’d bailed him out. Her bag was bulging with cash. Their objective had been achieved in that regard.
“Get-away. The bike?”

“Course. Once we get lil miss stripper magician out of the way. Maybe she’ll pull a rabbit out her.”

“And ta-da~” The pro hero had been glad that Victoria opted to run her mouth. Her hair had snagged an air vent on the ceiling and used it to whip herself behind the villains. Then she promptly had her boots introduce themselves to Victoria’s back. The villain stumbled forward, hissing and swearing. She didn’t let this throw her off pace as she tried to make a break for the exit. However the pro didn’t let up. Moving too fast for Dabi to intercept, another strand of hair wrapped around Victoria’s throat. Then the pro jumped into the air and slammed herself down. In turn Victoria found herself being choke-slammed to the floor with a loud howl. Fire peeled toward the hero, but a swift cartwheel rendered the attack mostly ineffective. Some hair was burnt away but not enough to matter.

“The urge to kill this bitch is rising.”

“Behave. Low-scale, remember?” Dabi had stepped over to the side of his partner. No effort had been made to help her get up however. She dragged herself to her feet, spat, and rolled her neck.

“Fine. Let’s knock this bitch on her ass!”

Victoria had tossed the bag to Dabi. Something in her had snapped and it was time for her to cut loose. One hand tapped the floor which threw herself into the air. Then she hit the ceiling to fly right at the pro. Hair came to entangle her but unlike before, Victoria was ready. Her other hand reached across her body and tapped the hair. Her quick activated causing her to slam into a wall...but at least she wasn’t tied down. Dabi took the chance to send a burst of flame at the pro while backing towards the exit. Hair went up in flames but it quickly tore itself free of the whole.

“A little fire is nothing to a magician! I daresay you villains are out of tricks!~ Prep-” She was interrupted by Victoria throwing a book in her face. Both villains were making for the exit, when the pro’s hair snapped above them. A vent was tugged down and spiralled towards the villains. Dabi brought his hands up and let his flame fly up. A hole big enough for the two to fit in was seared through the vent. And from there Victoria sprung forward. This hero was decent, but not top class. Dabi’s instinctive protection of her had given her the in she needed. One boot slammed the magician in the jaw. Victoria landed and then rammed her knee into the face of the pro. Who fell to the ground. Quite unconscious.

“Good work there Dabi. We’ll get the spirit of teamwork burning in you yet! But seriously, sit still. Your rocking the bike.”

“Teamwork? I saved myself. Not my fault you can’t drive your bike either.”

“Always with that distant attitude, eh? Figure you’re hiding something deep inside of ya! Like...wearing socks with sandals, some jacked up shit like that.”

“...I don’t wear socks.” Dabi just tuned her babbling out. His arms were hurting. Using all that fire back there had taken quite a bit out of him. “...Not like him. Never will be. Overthinking this again. Going to blow a blood vessel...”
“Endeavor. Do you still burn bright?”

“Thank you, Recovery Girl…”

“Are you even capable of holding back!? If you’d gone any harder then there’d be no way for them to recover! Particularly for Midoriya’s lower back!” Recovery Girl was on the warpath. All Might even whimpered as he stepped back from her wrath. Izuku and Bakugou were both laid on cots in her tent. Bakugou was fully unconscious, while Midoriya was simply injured. “Bakugou will be out for a while. In the meantime, I’ll have you two put in beds at the school. Todoroki and Yaoyorozu are both resting there too.”

“Um, Recovery Girl. May I stay here and watch?”

“You’re still reeling. If you’re not resting properly, you’ll-”

“Yes, but I’m fine! It’s just there isn’t much of a chance to sit back and watch everyone fight against pros.” Izuku knew it was a risky move to try and argue with Recovery Girl. She thought about it for a spell and then sighed.

“Hm. Fine, I won’t stop you. Just don’t overdo it. Though, you’ll have more chances for that than you think.”

“Ah, thank you very much! Observing this is kinda a hobby of mine…”

“What a kid. You’re really going to be something.” All Might smiled to himself as he picked Bakugou up out of his bed. The hero left the tent to take him to the school, for proper recovery. “And this guy too...Bakugou, kid! That’s because. You sure do smile when you’re up against a towering wall.”

“Um. I know this is called a test. But it seems like each fight is an intentionally specialized assignment, right?”

“Correct.”

“Most of the teams are obvious and easy to understand. But some of the assignments aren’t that clear to me. For example, Tokoyami and Asui. Ectoplasm Sensei’s quirk doesn’t seem the sort of perfect foil for them.” Izuku shuffled in his seat, paying close attention to that fight. Tokoyami was currently being cornered by a multitude of clones. Several on his left, right, and behind him.

“No. It is the perfect. For Fumikage Tokoyami, anyway.” One clone went to slam the student in his back. But Tsuyu’s tongue whipped out, diverting the attack just in time.

“Sorry! Dark Shadow, go!” Tokoyami blazed after his partner, while his quirk held the line behind them.

“There’s no end to them…” The two students took off. If they got bogged down here it’d be game over!
“His strength lies in how he keeps his opponents away from him. Those quick attacks, and his long range. But for those opponents who can get close? That’s his weakness.”

“I get it.” Izuku nodded at the words of the nurse, rubbing his chin. “Hence Ectoplasm. His numbers and elusive moves. I thought Tokoyami was invincible.”

“Then we have Tsuyu Asui. It’s less of a traditional assignment for this model student. As you just mentioned, her powerful partner has few weaknesses. It’s up to her to give him support, and cover for him. Her level headedness makes her the perfect pillar of emotional support.”

“Emotional support…! Of course. We only survived USJ due to Asui staying calm.”

“Tokoyami. I see it.” Tsuyu came to a halt, looking over the railing. Tokoyami stopped beside her and adjusted his cloak. “The exit. And his real body, most likely.”

“Well done. Sneaking past all of my clones, but the real challenge starts now.” Ectoplasm was not fazed. His mouth opened wide. A stream of his quirk spilled out. This time it was different however. Copious amounts, more than he had produced in the battle so far, streamed forth. In front of Tsuyu and Tokoyami was now one huge Ectoplasm!

GIANT BITE DETENTION!

“Dodge!”

“Eep!” The two students tried to make a move for it but it was a little too late. The maw closed down upon them as the teacher below bowed his head.

“This may reduce my numbers. However, as long as you’re in sight, this one is more than enough. It’ll only dissipate when I so choose. What will you do?”

“What a powerful quirk!”

“Hey, I’m powerful too.”

“Gnk!” The two students were trapped in the side of the clone. They had attempted to shuffle and squirm free. It turned out to be wholly impossible to do. Ectoplasm’s singular large clone was too powerful, too restrictive. There wasn’t much in the way of an immediate solution. Desperation started to surge through Tokoyami.

“Dark Shadow, go and pass through the gate yourself!”

“Sure thing!” His partner in crime surged forth. Aimed right for the gate! It was about to make it, but was swiftly kicked in the face by the stump of Ectoplasm.

“Gnk! Of course a pro would be able to stop such a straightforward assault.”
“But if he can reach that far, we may have a chance. Have Dark Shadow take this, Tokiyami.”

“Take what?”

“Please don’t... Watch this.” Tsuyu seemed to have a plan. But it also seemed to be one that was inducing physical pain in the girl. Her cheeks were bulging out and she seemed to be retching. “Sensei may notice. Plus...it’s really gross.”

Dark Shadow had refused to give up. It was still trying to find a way past Ectoplasm. But the teacher was too skilled, even with the weights on. Every attack was parried and every attempt to escape was shut down.

“Less than ten minutes remaining. Can you keep this up? I’m looking for heroes who rise up and break through in the face of adversity.” Ectoplasm stepped back. Dark Shadow pulled back for a moment. Fear more than likely deduced the pro hero. It then surged forward again for another attack.

“Oh don’t worry. We’ll be fine.” Tsuyu panted, drool dripping from the corner of her mouth. “Because Tokoyami and Dark Shadow are strong.” The aforementioned shadow smashed into Ectoplasm headon again. He had thought it was a simple rebuttal. The hero paused. “With our mobility limited, this is the only way to win. I’ve already swallowed my cuffs but I can regurgitate things in my stomach.”

“I see.” Ectoplasm had been defeated. The cuffs rested on his stump. The battle was over! Izuku couldn’t help himself while he watched, a smile of pure glee on his face.

“Right! Just getting those cuffs on is enough to pass! They managed to win by combining their dark shadow and frog abilities!”

“ASUI AND TOKOYAMI HAVE PASSED THE EXAM!”
“Seriously!? Kaminari, can’t you blast some lightning or something?!”

“I can’t go wasting shots when we don’t even know where he is! Or do you want a useless lump as a partner?!” It seemed that matters were not going well for Kaminari and Mina. Their battle in the city was hard. They didn’t even know where their opponent was and Principal Nezu was stringing them along. Just as they thought they had a moment to catch their breath there was a loud banging. A pile of rubble collapsed about to fall upon the two students. Luckily they managed to throw themselves forward and dodge it just in time.

“Bingo! I know exactly what to destroy to set off ideal chain reactions.” Nezu was enjoying himself, there was no doubt. The principal was sat in a wrecking ball machine. One operated the machine while the other held a cup of earl grey tea! “Why it’s so easy, I can pour tea while I’m at it! And you two don’t even realize it yet. I’m gradually blocking all paths to the exit!” His laughing grew more manic as he downed the tea. It was almost sadistic enough to put Midnight to shame.

“Brainy villains in action are a thrill to watch!”

“Will Kaminari and Ashido be okay? This isn’t good for them…”

“Nezu was toyed with by humans in all sorts of ways in the past. He lets it all out at times like this.”

“C’mon. Let’s hurry up and end this. I’m not a real fan of woodsly places like this.” Present Mic had planted himself directly in front of the gate. Why bother going anywhere else when they had to come here?

“Jirou and Koda’s matchup makes sense! Both of their quirks revolve around sound. So the trick is to figure out how to deal with a quirk that drowns them out…” Izuku nodded. Despite his exhaustion his mind was keen as ever.

“We took the long way around, so now we’re close. But, do we try to cuff him or just escape?” Jirou had taken the lead in this battle. Koda was too timid to do much else beyond follow and she seemed to know what to do. Not to mention she had real field experience that he lacked. “He’s likely stood right at the gate. So we’re gonna have to confront him.”

“YOU STILL OUT THEREEEEE?!”

“What the heck?!”

“I cant take this anymore!” It was only one volley from Present Mic but it was enough to nearly burst the eardrums of the two students. The pro didn’t even seem to be trying unlike the others. If anything, Present Mic looked utterly bored with the whole affair. His raw power was staggering!
“My ear drums can’t handle much more of this. What do we do?” Jirou rubbed her head in pain. Talk about a migraine. Koda didn’t say much though he surely felt the same way about the whole thing. Two rocks rested in front of the students. Jirou paused for a moment and then grasped upon an idea. “Koda, your quirk lets you order animals around, right? There are bugs here! Can you control bugs too?!” An ant had crawled up onto Jirou’s fist as she gently pushed it toward Koda. “Look. An ant.”

“aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa” Jirou had a deadpan look on her face. She went to pull the hand away. “YIKES!” This had a negative effect of making Koda run into the forest. “So you’re scared of bugs…”

“FORRRRRRRRRREALLL!?” Another brutal wave of sound from Present Mic exploded through the forest. It just about knocked Jirou off her feet.

“O-ouch! No good. For now, I’ve gotta…” One of her earphones jacked into her boot. “Counter-Balance!” A wave of her own sound went to try and weaken Present Mic’s attempt. But it was weak and did little to actually slow it down.

“What an itsty-bitsty sound…”

“You got a plan?!” Jirou shouted over the noise from Present Mic. Koda had since returned to her side but it seemed he was still unable to think of anything. The situation was getting bad. “We’ve not got much time! We’ve got to break this stalemate! If we don’t make a move, it’s all over!” “Koda!” Jirou could just about stand and talk if she covered her ears. It didn’t do too much but it meant it wasn’t game over yet. “Just tell me if you can control bugs or not!”

“I can…” There was a timid thumbs up as he grimaced in pain from the sound. Jirou nodded and jammed one of her jacks into a nearby rock. With a pulse of sound she blew it into small pieces, revealing the variety of bugs underneath. This promptly made Koda just about wet himself.

“Sorry!! I know they scare you, but!! Sensei’s just too strong!!”

“HEYYYY!!”

“I’ve got no other plan!” She staggered back, hands falling off her head. But she didn’t have time to focus on her own pain. It wasn’t important right now. “If you do this, we just might win. But there’s no time to hesitate, so do it now!! You want to be a hero, don’t you?!” She gave her best attempt at a smile despite the circumstances. “Then let’s pass this test!”

“…Jirou! Your ears!!” Koda hadn’t noticed it before. She was bleeding. The pain she must have been in. “All I’ve done is run and hide. Jirou!” His gaze fell upon the insects crawling in front of him. That wave of terror went to drown him once again. But his memory was his weapon. How proud his mommy had been about him getting into U.A. His hand, shaking with fright, moved toward the ground, as did he. “That’s right. I got into U.A. My dream school. At U.A. It’s always about moving forward. That’s what we tell ourselves…”

“PLUS ULTRA!”
“Please go forth little ones. It’s time to take down the source of all that big bad noise. Won’t you help me out…?” He was shaking with fear, even rattling, as he talked to the insects. All Jirou could do was stare her mouth hanging open.

“THAT’S A LOT OF TALKING!!”

“Time’s just about up.” Present Mic whistled to himself, yawning. Shame the students couldn’t overcome him but hey. He was just that good! His eyes flicked to look at the floor for a moment. Something seemed to be...digging up? And then it swarmed up his leg. Swarmed!? A whole host of insects started to climb up his leg. “Ooooh!! Sound Waves don’t travel as well underground! THIS IS WHY I HATE THE WOOOOOODSSS!” The hero promptly passed out. Koda and Jirou staggered through the gate...victory assured!

“Really gross, Koda.”

“Beaten by bugs? Pathetic.”

“Wow, slowly but surely they’re all passing.” Izuku was really enjoying it. As soon as he got his notebook, he’d be sure to scribble down how Present Mic had a weakness to insects. “Guess I should’ve known the awesome students of U.A would never surrender!”

“Nope. He looks like he’ll be surrendering.” Recovery Girl jabbed a finger at a monitor. It showed Vanfell slumped over. His face was tired and it seemed that a mess of concrete was about to trap him. The student wasn’t even trying to move.

“Vanfell!?”

It was over. Vanfell saw failure fall upon him in slow motion. Concrete was encasing him and this time there was no way out. His costume had long since run out of charge and there wasn’t a plausible way for him to get more. Nor could he, despite his strength, smash free from the concrete. That would simply result in broken knuckles in addition to the bruised spirit. His face clouded over as he spat on the floor before sighing.

“Kirishima. Least he’ll make it out. Did my best I guess. Sometimes it ain’t enough.” Game over, then. No going to summer camp. He wouldn’t be able to show his face to her either. Not after this disgrace. She’d even been the first to pass as he had expected. Yaoyorozu. He had tried to become more like her in this battle. Depend on his brain as opposed to brute forcing his way past every problem. Seemed that the two of them were just miles apart in terms of ability. “She’d have figured it out in a snap. Damn it! All that training for nothing?!”

Earlier

“…You’ve grown over-confident.” Cementoss sighed. These two students had been put against him for a simple reason. Aggression. Vanfell and Kirishima when presented with a problem opted to take the path of least resistance. Brute force was usually the method by which this was achieved. On occasion Vanfell added a modicum of thought, but thus far he had relied on his physical abilities. Kirishima seemed to think himself invincible and rammed his way through every problem. This test
would soon show them the folly of their ways.

A large cityscape had been chosen. It was arguable that Cementoss was the second most difficult encounter in these exams, after All Might. In an environment such as this one there was no limit to the resources he could call upon. His quirk also did not put much strain on the user. As a result it would be almost impossible to beat him in a head on assault. There was also the fact that out of his two opponents that only one could break the cement. Vanfell had impressive strength for a quirkless student. Almost on par with some quirk users, that was not in doubt. It would however not be enough to break the concrete. There was also no method for him to power his costume up. In theory he was dead-weight.

But something bothered Cementoss. These two students were the sort to charge into any issue head on. Yet several minutes had passed and there was no sign of them. When would the attack come through? It was likely Vanfell was putting an element of strategy into their plan. Then it came.

“And here we go!” Vanfell was charging right at Cementoss. A wall of concrete started to raise in front of him. But the student was fast. His hand grabbed onto the raising wall, and he vaulted himself over. Landing with a roll Vanfell kept barrelling right at Cementoss. Just as the gap was about to close the hero was able to trap him. A ball of concrete started to shift and form around him. His foe didn’t despair however as he began to vanish from sight. “Kirishima! Now!”

“RED-RIOT MANLY SURPRISE ATTACK!” Kirishima exploded out of a side-alley. His fist rammed itself into Cementoss’s face taking the hero by surprise. He was staggered but the concrete trap around Vanfell held. Oddly however, Kirishima didn’t seem to turn to help his friend. Rather a beeline to the exit gate seemed to be his priority.

“Sacrificing yourself, Vanfell? Surprising move!” There was a loud smashing noise. It shouldn’t have been possible. But Vanfell had blown a hole in his trap before crawling out. Rolling the student broke into a full-blown sprint, his leg muscles bulging.

“Wouldn’t go that far! Pulled the wool over your eyes, old-timer!”

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Even Earlier

“I’m pumped for this! Fighting a teacher, sure. It’ll be hard! But these sorts of tests are how we grow as men!”

“Uh huh. I’m more focused on passing than growing as a man, personally.”

“Vanfell! You can’t do one without doing both! Overcoming a challenge, like passing this test, will cause you to grow! Stop looking so bored!” Kirishima gave a toothy grin as he slammed his two hardened fists together. “We’ll just smash right through our barriers!”

“You bloody might. I try to punch cement and I’ll have a broken hand. In an objective sense, I’m dead weight.”

“Hey! Don’t be so hard on yourself, man. You’ve got your talents, just gotta figure out how to use em to win!”

“Ok.” Vanfell grimaced and rubbed his brow. It was going to be nearly impossible for him to pass this. “Cementoss is too tough for me to break through. Plus, his quirk doesn’t really have any
openings for me to work with… Ignoring the fact I’d break my hands on it.” But there was maybe a way. “Yaoyorozu. Maybe if I think like her…”

“Van! You ready? Gotta focus, nearly time for us to start! Got a plan?”

“Yup. I’m going to need you to beat the shit out of me, Kirishima.”

“Awesom- wait, what?! The student was confused. They were on the same team. Why the hell was he wanting a beating?

“If you hit me in the torso, I can charge my suit. This’ll give me one chance to break some concrete. I’ll charge Cementoss, you surprise attack him from an alley.”

“Huh!? This isn’t manly, Van! Can we really win like this!? It’s not the Crimson Riot way!”

“So off, and hit me. You want to pass and do the Riot proud? Then you’ll have to trust me. Cause if we to try to brute-force this asshole on this turf? Game over.”

“Gnk. You’re not wrong…fine! I’ll be manly while sneaking, just this once! Now for the beating!”

And that was how Vanfell and Kirishima had seemingly pulled off their win. Kirishima was nearly at the gate and Vanfell was in fast pursuit. But Cementoss had recovered quickly. It had been little more than a glancing blow, the surprise being more effective than the actual attack. His hands pressed to the ground and the trap engulfed Vanfell. It really did seem like the quirkless student had come up short.

“End of the line, Vanfell.” Cementoss sighed. It seemed that the quirkless student had ensured victory for Kirishima. He would mention that to the teachers in his report. But there was another burst of pain across his face. The cement trap around Vanfell was then promptly shattered.

“We never leave a man behind! It just ain’t manly! Let’s go Vanfell!” Kirishima had surged back at the last moment. His exam had been on the line but he’d decided to come back anyway. Vanfell grabbed the hand reaching out to him and pulled himself free.

“You’re one hard lad. Let’s go!” Both students broke into a full blown sprint. Cementoss was recovered. But every wall he put up was shattered by Kirishima. Vanfell was just letting himself be helped. He’d never admit it to anyone. He’d been ready to accept the loss. What was the point of victory if you couldn’t get it by yourself? That had been wrong. It was fine to depend on others. The two students made it through the gate. Vanfell collapsed forward before being caught in the arms of Kirishima. Victory from the jaws of defeat.

“VANFELL AND KIRISHIMA’S TEAM HAS PASSED THE EXAM!!”

There were a few remaining exams underway. Iida and Ojiro finished their exam against Powerloader. It had been a tight fight with Iida ultimately being trapped in a hole, but the two had managed to inch out a victory.
For one team however it appeared to be game over. Uraraka and Aoyama were not in a good position. They were clasping onto the railing near the exit. In theory it was a simple jog to the left and they’d be free. In practice however…

“And we were so close too!!” Uraraka whined as Thirteen advanced on their position.

“Close one there. You nearly escaped!” Blackhole was proving to be a formidable adversary. Without the ability to redirect the attack like Kurogiri there didn’t seem to be an immediate defence for the two students.

“They keep trying to vacuum us up as they get closer!”

“Personally, I dislike fighting, but I’ve got my own method of trapping prey!”

“Heh heh...now that’s one quirk that constantly sucks…” Aoyama seemed to not be taking the fight all too seriously. Much to Uraraka’s chagrin.

“You doing stand up or something!? We’re in a real bind here!”

“My costume…”

“Huh?!?”

“It transmits from my navel, so.” His knees lifted, as the two holes on them started to glow. Then a dazzling blast of his utterly amazing fantastic quirk shot out!~ “Bind? We are in no bind that I can see.”

However, it seemed his moment of utter radiance had fallen flat. Thirteen absorbed the beam as if it were nothing.

“I can also absorb light!” Aoyama turned his face to look at the hero in disgust, offended by their words. This was a mistake however. His mask fluttered off his face and into the black hole. Leading to it being promptly shattered, destroyed, and “Annihilated down to the atomic level!”

“Hmph!” Aoyama glared forward again, hair and cape fluttering from the suction. “This is no joke!~”

“What the heck Aoyama?!?”

“I am what I am.”

“Darn we’ll be caught! Think! In a pinch like this...think think! In this situation if I were Deku…”

Ochako was desperate. She needed to find a solution and fast. But how could she? What were her options? She was sure he’d know what to do, he always did. So think like him…

“Hey!”
“Shuddup a sec! I’m…”

“You were just thinking… ‘If I were Izuku Midoriya…’ weren’t you?” Aoyama had a knowing grin etched across his face. His hair flapped as he sighed wistfully. His voice laced itself with romance!
“Like him, don’t you?”

“HUH?!” This was enough to make Ochako’s cheeks flush red in an instant blush. It also saw her put her hands to her cheeks. Which meant- “Oh!” She wasn’t holding the railing anymore. Which also meant- “Huh?!” She was now flying towards Thirteen. The pro hero panicked, flicking their quirk off for a second. Ochako knew she had to do something, she knew she had to try. The student desperately tried to turn herself around in mid-air.

“ANOTHER ANNOUNCEMENT. SHOJI AND HAGAKURE’S TEAM HAS PASSED THE EXAM!”

“Shoji and Hagakure were fighting Snipe Sensei. I imagine it was a search and destroy mission. Like hide and seek.” Izuku was still enjoying the fights unfolding. Kirishima coming back for Vanfell had been amazing to see. But his attention was focused on the last few fights. Out of the corner of his eye he noted that Mineta had just passed. Mustn’t have been that entertaining, but he was proud nonetheless.

“The remaining teams are Kaminari and Ahsido, and Uraraka and Aoyama.” Recovery Girl shuffled her stick. Almost time for this whole thing to be over.

“I’d say they all have decent odds!”

“IT APPEARS THAT URARAKA AND AOYAMA’S TEAM…”

It wasn’t clear what had happened. Uraraka...had pulled it off. Thirteen was on the ground attached to her by handcuffs. That meant they had won the fight. She’d done it. Pushed over the mountain before her, shattered the barriers that U.A kept putting up. One way or another she’d make it to be a hero. She’d be sure to. She had to. For her parents, and for herself.

“I just instinctively whipped out what I learned from Mr. Gunhead! Don’t fight on the enemy’s field. Fight on your own terms!”

“HAS PASSED THE EXAM!”

“TIME IS UP! YOUR FINAL EXAM IS OVER!”

Some managed to grow, while others couldn’t push past their limits. - V
That was the bittersweet ending to the practical portion of our final exam, meanwhile. - I

That certain group had been training too. All ready to make their third move. - I & V

Chapter End Notes

Sorry for the delay! Real life got super hectic. Not too much new contact on the side of the students here, so I made sure to introduce y'all to the LoV in more detail! I hope you're all still enjoying, and sorry for the long wait! I'll try to be faster in the future.

End Notes

Welcome to my retelling of My Hero Academia! I hope you all enjoy. I'll be expanding on the narrative as a whole, and adjusting a few things that I personally took issue with. For those of you who read vigilantes, I'll also be mixing that into BNHA proper! Rest assured that the original character will not steal the scene either. Enjoy!

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!