Creatures Like Us
by HeySpaceCaddett

Summary

Richie Tozier is loud, messy, and obnoxious. It's truly a miracle he has any friends at all, or at least that's how Stanley Uris sees him. Richie goes against absolutely everything Stan believes in, so it's just his luck when Richie is transferred to his first period class. As the school year drags on, Stan is forced to admit that maybe they're not as different as he thought they were.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
Richie Tozier was not the easiest person to be friends with. His mouth spewed crude jokes and poorly crafted comebacks before his brain had time to catch up and process his words, he always talked two notches louder than everyone else, and his impulse control was nearly non-existent. It was a wonder Richie Tozier had any friends at all.

Richie was very talented in many ways, but his true gift was pissing people off, and he did so a lot. Sometimes it was because he lacked a filter and didn't even realize he said something wrong until it was too late to take it back. Sometimes it was because he felt like he needed to. He never really let himself get close to other people the way that he wanted to. He knew he was loud and obnoxious and he knew that one day or another, he'd end up saying the wrong things and end up losing the people he had grown close to. Why grow close to people when you were just going to piss them off and they'd leave anyway? What's the point on working to make friendships when they're all going to leave anyway? Because who would ever want to be friends with a trashmouth such as Richie Tozier? But Richie didn't need friends. He got enough out of the reactions of others.

He carefully placed lewd jokes in just the right places to try to scare people. He enjoyed watching people squirm uncomfortably around him. It almost made him feel powerful, almost like he could do anything. Almost.

----

If you were to ask Stanley Uris if he was lonely, he probably wouldn't have much to say at it. The thought had never truly crossed his mind. When Stan thought of loneliness, he saw sad kids alone on swing sets or the one who was never invited anywhere with their friends. That wasn't Stan. Stan never had many friends, but he never considered himself lonely. He ate lunch in his 5th period teacher's room, simply because it was quiet in the room and it much less of a hassle to stay there than try to navigate the overfull hallways after lunch was dismissed. It gave him time to read in peace. He liked the quiet. He liked being alone.

It wasn't until second semester started that Stanley started to rethink his definition of "lonely". He sat in the back corner of his 1st period. A perfect seat where he was out of the view of the other students and he could see the teacher's desk perfectly. He sat directly next to a small window that overlooked part of the courtyard. There's wasn't much to see outside, but sometimes, if he was lucky, a crow would bounce by, looking for a snack. Stan would do his best to draw it in his notebook before it left his view.

----

Stan's eyes fluttered open, a headache starting to pound in his head. He sat up slowly, rubbing sleep from his eyes before he turned to turn off the alarm with a groan.

7:13 a.m.

Stan started at the time for a long while before it hit him how late he was. He was supposed to be up nearly 45 minutes ago. Fuck.
He sprung out of bed, quickly turning to his closet to grab a light blue polo shirt and a pair of perfectly clean khakis and slipped into them hastily. He paused in front of the mirror hanging on his wall. His polo looked… wrong. Stan didn’t know why it was wrong but it was. He took it off, carefully folding it and returning it to its spot before taking out a nearly identical polo and putting it on. He carefully tucked the polo into his pants and smoothed it down 7 times to make sure it was perfect.

7:26 a.m.

He was going to be late. He had never been late to a class. He’d always feel guilty if he wasn’t at least 10 minutes early to his first period. Anxiety started to rise into him and he put on his shoes and grabbed his bag. He was half way out the door when he stopped.

My bed.

He’d made his bed everyday for as long as he had remembered, but in the rush of the morning, it was left alone. He paused in the doorway. He didn’t have time for this. He would miss the first bell if he didn’t leave right now. But he couldn’t leave his bed like that. That was against The Rules. He always made his bed.

After a solid minute of debating, he quickly ran back up the stairs leading to his room. He took his time making his bed, more so than he usually did in the mornings, until it was perfect. Once he was satisfied with his work, he left.

7:39 a.m.

He began sprinting towards school and cursed himself for not learning to drive yet. He didn’t usually mind the 10 or so minute walk to school, but today it felt torturous. He rounded the hall into his first period class 3 minutes late and out of breath.

Mrs. Rush paused his talking and looked at Stan has he rushed in. Stan was sure she was going to reprimand him for being late, but to his mild surprise, she smiled at him and turned back to the class.

He made his way to the back right corner of the classroom as he had done everyday for the past 4 months, but stopped. A tall, lanky boy with glasses that seem three sizes too big for his face and a mop of black curls that looked like that haven’t been washed for weeks, was sitting in his spot. His hair alone was reason enough to hate him. The boy looked up at Stanley and flashed him a huge, shit-eating grin. Stanley glared at him, setting his bag neatly against the desk.

“This one’s mine.”

“Oh is it? Here I thought there wasn’t a set seating arrangement.” Stan tensed at his comment.

“No, I sit here. I’ve sat here since the first day. It’s my spot and I want it back,” Stan stated flatly. He didn’t have time for this anymore.
The other stayed silent for a second and Stan sighed in relief when he went to move. His relief was quickly stripped away when instead of leaving his seat, the boy moved back to plop his dirty, untied sneakers up on the desk. Stan grimaced.

“I don’t see a name on it,” his grin somehow widened at the clear annoyance on Stan’s face.

“It’s my seat,” he repeated, a bit of heat in his steady voice. “Get out.”

This seemed only to encourage the black-haired boy who slowly moved his feet down from the desk with two loud clunks as they landed on the title beneath him. He turned in his seat to face Stan completely and leaned into his personal space. Stan could smell cigarette smoke and febreeze wafting from him.

“Make me.”

Stan sighed loudly in protest, anger nearly bubbling over. He didn’t understand. That’s his seat. He couldn’t sit anywhere else. It was perfect the way it was last week when he sat alone. It was perfect. He was fine. It was his spot. He couldn’t find another seat. That was his seat. He needed to sit in his seat. That was The Rule. Everyday he sat in the same seat and it was fine the way it was. It didn’t need to change. It wasn’t supposed to change.

He took a breath, trying to contain the anxiety that had started to build in his chest at the thought of some stranger ruining his routine and the order of things.

“That’s my seat.” He couldn’t seem to find any other words. “That’s my seat. I need to sit there.”

The boy looked at him differently this time. His comically enlarged eyes slowly traveled to Stan’s hands. Stan hadn’t even realized they started shaking until then. He quickly clenched them, hard enough he could feel his perfectly manicured nails digging into his pale skin.

“Please,” the word pressed out through clenched teeth.

With that one word, the boy broke back out into a grin, rising from the chair. He grabbed his bag haphazardly and swung it over his shoulder.

“All I needed was a little politeness. A little ‘please’ gets you a long way, you know.” The boy was laughing by the time he removed himself from the seat and spoke with an odd voice that Stan could only describe as vaguely Irish. “Well, come on then, you be missin’ de whole class, me friend.

Stan glared up at him and moved into the seat. The boy took the empty seat directly next to him. Stan quickly got out his wet-wipes and carefully drug it across the desk’s surface, making sure to hit every spot. Once he was satisfied, he folded the wipe neatly and threw it away. He carefully took out his notebook, a pencil, an erasure, a blue and a black pen and arranged them neatly on the desk in front of him. He didn’t realize he was being watched until he was finished at looked up to the teacher. The boy, that annoying boy, was just staring at him, grinning. What was his problem? What did he want?

“Can I help you?” he asked in a very monotone voice without even turning to look at the other. He scribbled down a few notes into his notebook.

“It’s like a whole little show you put on,” his voice shifted into a something resembling an over enthusiastic game show host. “The ‘Clean Freak Extraaaaaaordinaire show’, guest starring your truly. Welcome back folks, this week on the Clean-”
“Do you have an off button?” Stan spat, cutting his off mid sentence, still looking to the teacher up front. The boy gasped loudly and dramatically put his hand over his heart.

“What? Are you saying you don’t like my jokes?” his voice swelled with fake offense and he flopped into the back of his seat, hand laid gently over his forehead. “Whatever will I do without your validation? My, oh my, whatever shall I do?” His voice shifted to a butchered southern accent on the last sentence.

Stan gripped his pencil tight. He just needed to get through this class and he’d be free. He looked to the clock. *Only 27 minutes more. Only 27 minutes with this loud trashmouth and then I’m free.*

The rest of the class felt like an eternity. Stan tired his best to ignore him as best he could and take notes. He looked out the window in time to see a small Black-capped Chickadee outside. It wasn’t like chickadees were unusual around here, but still there usually wasn’t many birds on campus. Stan pulled out a small journal from his bag. In his small, neat handwriting, Stan jotted down the date, time, location, and type of bird. He tried to do a small stretch of it, but he wasn’t really much of an artist.

He felt the other lean over his shoulder, watching him as he tried to draw.

“It looks like a black and white pom-pom on sticks.” Stan took a deep breath and continued to draw despite the seemingly unending remarks coming from his left.

When the bell rang, Stan had already packed his bag and had it slung over his shoulders. He raced out of the room before the other could say anything more to him.
He woke up (thank God) on time the next morning. Going through his usual morning routine, he was leaving the house at exactly 7:15 a.m.

He was relieved to see he was the first one in class that morning and quickly took his spot in the back. He spend 3 minutes perfecting the objects on his desk before taking out a book and beginning to read until class started. He didn’t get very far into the book before there was a loud drop next to his desk, causing him to jump.

“Sorry, dear bud, I didn’t mean to startle ya.” He was wearing the same shirt as yesterday and it didn’t seem like he even tried to brush his hair this morning. He didn’t even seem to bother brushing his teeth this morning. Stan’s nose scrunched involuntarily at the thought. “Calm down, friend, don’t be too excited to see me! We only went a few hours apart! I know it’s hard to keep your hands off me, but really, there’s no need to get so flustered.”

“Dick,” Stan cursed beneath his breath, trying very hard to pay attention to the lesson. He didn’t think the other could heard him until he heard him chuckle softly.

“Only if you ask nicely,” faux sweetness dripped from his tongue. Stan felt blood rushing to his face. He looked down at his notes, trying not to let the other get the satisfaction of seeing him react. He always blushed whenever anything sexual was mentioned. He couldn’t see the other, but he had no doubt he was wearing that same shit-eating grin of his.

He leaned into Stan’s space, trying to make him look at him. Stan ignored him and stared out the window. The boy reached out a hand in front of Stan’s desk, just enough so his fingers were in his view. “The name’s Richie.”

Stan glanced at the outstretched hand. Richie must be delusional if he thinks he was going to shake his hand. Stan scoffed.

“Richie? You really are a Dick.” Stan retorted flatly.

“OH!” Richie leaned back away from Stan, smiling wickedly. “The local birdboy, Stanny, gets off a good one!” He laughed louder than he probably should have, causing many students to look his way and Stan to sink lower into his seat. Richie didn’t seem to notice.

Stan paused for a long moment, waiting until the attention of the other students fell away from them. “How do you even know my name?”

“Well, Stan the Man, I may have glasses, but I’m not blind,” he said, gesturing vaguely to the
paper Stan had in front of him, his name neatly written on the top of it.

“If you knew my name, why did you ask?” Stan hissed.

“Well, EXCUSE ME for trying to be polite,” Richie leaned back in his chair so the front two feet lifted from the ground and put his hands up in surrender. “You should try it, you know. Being polite. It’ll get you a loooooong way in life.” He shook his head disapprovingly. Stan clenched his fist, his nails digging into his palms again.

Richie noticed his fists. To Stan’s small surprise, he put the feet of his chair down and looked up to the teacher for the first time in two days. He obviously wasn’t paying attention, the worksheet they had been working on all day completely blank. He didn’t even have a pencil out. Stan didn’t question it, he just looked down to his own work, thankful of the quietness.

After about five minutes, Stan looked sideways at Richie, not moving his head. It was weird how quiet it was. As he looked over, Richie started getting up from his seat and made his way to the front of the class to turn in the worksheet. Stan couldn’t believe it. He was barely halfway done with his own. There was no way trashmouth finished it that fast. He must be cheating. He must be.

Richie sat down again, smirking towards Stan, raising his eyebrows. Stan rolled his eyes and returned his attention to his worksheet.

He didn’t finish the worksheet by the time the bell dismissed class.

-----

Stan walked into his 5th period class less than two minutes after lunch started. He took his usual seat towards the back. He took out a small, neatly packed and wrinkle free brown paper bag and set in on his desk. He took out the contents one by one, setting them carefully on the desk. Before eating, he organized the carrots he took with him in order of length. After he finished his sandwich, he threw the plastic baggie away and took out the worksheet from 1st period. He slowly began working over the problems in his head as he made his way through his carrots, starting with the shortest ones.

“Well I’ll be damned!” The familiar loud voice shook him from his thoughts. He looked towards the doorway where none other than Richie fucking Toizer stood, looking dumbstruck. “Stanny eating all by himself. How sad.” Richie made a fake frown and pretended to wipe away tears.

“What do you want Richie?”

“Now Staniel. What did we talk about politeness?” Stan glared at him.

“That’s not my name.”

Richie shrugged and flopped down in the desk beside Stan. Stan sighed loudly and rolled his eyes.

“You’re doing it wrong.”

Stan turned towards Richie for the first time since he sat down. “What?”

“Stan, oh ,Stan, maybe if you were to pay a liiittle more attention during 1st, you’d know how to actually do your work.”

Stan shot him the evilest look he could muster. He stared at him as Richie started back with a smirk. After a second, Stan sighed.
“What? What am I doing wrong?”

Richie’s smirk broke out into his prized shit-eating grin. He stood up and leaned over Stand desk. It was the first time Stan really saw how tall the boy was. He felt indescribably small for some reason as Richie hovered over him, looking intently on the worksheet. Richie grabbed one of the neatly laid carrots on his desk. Stan tensed up. Not only was someone eating his food, but he took the carrot out of the middle of the row, leaving a empty gap in its place, slightly displacing the two carrots that were on either side of the one he took.

Stan quickly began fixing the row of carrots, making sure each had the same distance between them and they were all exactly parallel to each other. Richie didn’t seem to see.

“You’re using the wrong equations. Look here,” he pointed to a problem he skipped. For once, his voice didn’t seem like it was bombing in his ears. Maybe that was just Stan’s imagination. “If you…” he turned the paper slightly towards him and grabbed Stans pencil. He wrote down a different formula that Stan could barely decipher through his terrible chicken scratch handwriting. Seemingly pleased with himself, Richie turned the paper back so it was facing Stan and dropped the pencil lazily on the desk. “Now try it.”

Stan started at him cautiously. Why has he helping him? What did he want? Richie stared back at him, but for once he wasn’t smirking. He seemed… happy? Maybe? Content? There wasn’t really a word that completely fit. The only word that came close was “soft”. That was the first time Stan would ever refer to anything about Richie as “soft”.

Stan looked down at the paper, working out the problem. After a few minutes, he circled his answer and turned to Richie. Richie broke into his shit-eating grin.

“Now you’re getting it, Stanny!”

Stan just rolled his eyes and started working on the next problem. Richie grabbed a chair from the desk next to Stan’s and pulled it up so he was nearly shoulder to shoulder with Stan. Stan was hyper aware of the closeness, but Richie didn’t even seem to notice. He just went on to explaining the next problem. Stan felt a great need to move away from Richie, but he doesn’t. At least Richie was trying to do something nice.

Chapter End Notes

Please leave a comment of what you think! I'm also super open to suggestions for what to happen next. Comments give me life please and thank you
Richie Toizer's Not All Bad

Chapter Notes

Sorry this update is late oops. Also I didn't proofread this, so I'm sorry if there's errors :

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Richie Tozier waltzed into class at promptly 7:53; a time which he called “fashionably late” and Mrs. Rush called “irresponsible” and “disrupting class” and “worthy of another after-school detention”. Not that he minded, of course, it’s not like going home was the highlight of his day anyway. He smiled brightly at Mrs. Rush before shooting her finger guns and promising to see her there.

He was in a good mood, not there was any reason to be happy today. He just felt alive in a way he hasn’t for a while. Okay, yeah, maybe it was that mania whatever the doc mentioned, but who cares? He feels good, why does it matter why?

He flopped unceremoniously in his seat next to his favorite Jew and got out a chewed pencil and a notebook with it’s cover ripped. Stan glanced up at him, but didn’t move to greet him or even smile in his direction. Richie just stared at him, his shit-eating grin plastered on his features, until Stan decided to do something about it.

After what seemed like an hour but in reality had probably been closer to five minutes, Stan reluctantly turned to face him. “Can I help you?”

Richie leaned back in his chair, eyes never leaving the other. Stan face was stoic, and this for some reason egged Richie on more.

“Do you always eat in a classroom?”

His questioned seemed to shock him. Aw, look at him. So precious when he’s all flustered. He laid his elbows against his desk and his chin upon his hands, grinning.

“I mean, it’s better than the cafrierita. It’s too loud out there,” Stan retorted casually with a small shrug of his shoulders. Richie snorted at this.

“Oh come on, Stanny, a little noise has never hurt anyone!” he proclaimed in a voice two notches too loud for the quiet classroom setting. A dozen pair of eyes quickly landed on him, but he didn’t seem mind. He never minded attention. It made him feel alive, like he was a part of something, like he mattered in some obscure way. Stan, however, anxiously glanced around the room and shrunk into his seat slightly. “You have to get out of your own head, Stanley the Manly. Live a little! Put yourself out there! Hang out with your friends instead of hiding in some lame classroom all your life!”

He knew he said the wrong thing as soon as it left his mouth. He watched Stan’s face pale as he stared down at the paper in front of him.

Oh, wow. Nice going Trashmouth. Now look what you’ve done. Why can’t you just learn to shut
your mouth? Find a filter? When will you learn no one fucking cares about your dumbass advice. Look! You’ve fucked up another friendship! Look at you! Look at what you’ve done! You’ve made him feel like shit. You’re a piece of shit. Can’t get jack shit right. Can’t be nice for three fucking seconds before letting your mouth run away.

No. Stop that. That’s not helping. Remember what the doc said. Redirect your thoughts. You were trying to help! You’re not a piece of shit! You’re a good person! You’re a good friend! You’re annoying but in the best way possible! You’re just not right for everyone, you know! Some people might hate your guts, but hey at least you have some friends, right? They tolerate you! You’re not alone! You’re cool! You’re---

“It’s fine. I just don’t get along with people that well,” Stan’s voice was impossibly small and Richie wanted nothing more to yell at him and tell him he was okay and that everything was his fault and it’s okay to eat alone if you’re into that kind of thing. No, Richie, don’t yell at him about that shit. We just talked about this. Jesus, just tell him you’re sorry. Or that you could be his friend. No wait, don’t say that, that’s pathetic. You’re pathetic. Stop it, just say something nice to him! You can do that at least, right? You don’t have to be an asshole all the time! Trashmouth can take a break! How long has it been since I’ve talked? God just say something. Literally anything. Come on, Trashmouth, you can’t shut up when no one wants to hear you, but you get tongue tied when you should actually say something? Fuck up! Fuck up! Fuck up!

“Who gives a shit about friends.”

Wow. Okay, maybe not “literally anything”. Even when you try to say something supportive, you still say something negative. What’s wrong with you?

Richie was rushed from his thoughts by Stan snorting lightly, grinning. Grinning. Okay, you haven’t fucked up. You’ve done something good. You’re good! Look at you! Making friends!

“I guess you’re right. I mean, I’ve never had close friends.” He said, looking looking down at his paper.

Richie opened his mouth to say he’s never had close friends either but stopped himself. That’s a lie. You have Eddie and Bill and Mike and Ben and Bev. They’re your friends. I mean, yeah, they probably just tolerate you and will drop you like a dime when given the chance, but they’re still your friends! You can trust them! They haven’t left you yet!

“Well I mean, you got me.”

“You’re not my friend.” Stan said, a bit too quickly.

Well, duh, of course you’re not friends. He’s obviously annoyed with you. Why would you even think that? You spent one lunch together and now you think you’re best buds? Come on, Richie, be realistic. You annoy him. You annoy everyone! Stop assuming you know what other people are thinking! That’s selfish! You’re selfish!

Richie put a hand over his heart and clenched his shirt dramatically. “Stanny, my friend, you wound me. How could you say such a thing? After all we went through?” He pretended to faint, his back pressed against the back of his chair, his hand flung over his forehead, eyes closed. There we go. Make it a joke. You’re good at that. Talking and making bad jokes. Those are good talents
Much to Richie’s surprise, this again caused Stan to snort. He opened one eye to look at the other who was shaking his head and copying notes from the whiteboard up front. Richie smiled. *You’re doing good! Making friends! Being nice! Keep it up!*

“If you want, you can hang out with me and my gang during lunch. We’re in the field so it’s not loud and it’s easy to sneak off campus.” The words spilled from Richie’s mouth before he could really comprehend their meaning. *This is too straightforward. You’re scaring him off again. Moderation! Take things in moderation, Richie! Don’t go all at once! You’ll ruin this if you go all at once! You’re ruining this!*

Richie stared at Stan, waiting for a response, for him to laugh in his face or look disgusted at the thought or just flat out say “no” and continue with his works. It felt like forever before Stan responded.

“I doubt your friends will want to hang out with me.” *Okay, that’s not the response I was expecting, but not bad! I can work with this!*

“Oh, don’t be that way,” Richie leaned in towards Stan, smiling again. “Who wouldn’t want to hang out with the local Bird Boy?” Stan stared at him for a few moments, not quite knowing how to respond.

“Who do you hang out with?*

“Why, o the lamest kids on all of campus, of course! Big Bill Denbrough, Mike Hanlon, Ben Hanscom, Eddie Kaspbrak and the one and only Beverly Marsh. All the freaks and corneys. Lobster clawed boys and bearded ladies. The true losers of Derry High.”

Richie wore a lopsided grin as he described his friends and evaluated Stan expression. He wasn’t good at reading people at all, and had no idea what was going through his head. *Maybe if you described them in, I don’t know, literally any other way, you could had convinced him. No one wants to be associated with losers! Why did you say that! Why? Why!*

Slowly, Stan nodded twice, turning to face Richie.

“I’ll join you today,” he concluded, instantly causing Richie’s face to light up. He then quickly added “But only because I have a substitute for fifth and the door will be locked.”

“Deal.”

*You did it! You made it through a whole interaction without being an asshole! You’re a good person! Making friends! Being nice! See, you can be nice! You aren’t always terrible! You can be good if you try! Keep it up! Don’t fucking this up! Don’t ruin another person with your dumbass self!*

Chapter End Notes

Please comment and tell me how you like this so far and if you have any suggestions for the piece. Thank you so much for reading!
It wasn’t until Stan carefully put his notebooks back into his backpack as the lunch bell rung that he realized they never agreed on a place to meet. Sure, the field wasn’t huge, but what if it started raining and they went somewhere else? And then Stan would be left wondering around campus looking for them all lunch, looking like a lame, lost puppy. What if they didn’t even sit in the field? What if Richie was just joking with him again? Stan wouldn’t put it past him.

Stan wasn’t dumb. He knew he was an easy target for bullying. He was sensitive to a lot of things and it wasn’t too hard to get under his skin if you knew how. He was one of the only Jewish kids in school, at the very least the only one who willing wore his kippah to school. If it was up to him, he wouldn’t be wearing it at school at all. He knows how terrible and sacrilegious that sounds, but it only made him a bigger freak. A bigger target. He convinced himself that if he wasn’t so scared his father would find out he took it off, he would, but even he knew deep down he was too much of a coward to do it even if he knew he wouldn’t be caught. Because God would know. And God would punish him. The thought spent shivers down his spin. He wouldn’t describe his father as one who preached fire and brimstone, but wasn’t afraid to remind him and all the patrons of his synagogue what happens to sinners.

Stan tightened his grip on the straps of his backpacks and tapped rhythmically with his pointer fingers. 1, 2, 3, 4... 1, 2, 3, 4... 1, 2, 3, 4... 1, 2, 3, 4... He let himself relax. He always got worked up when he thought of what would happen if he were to admit his sins.

He took slow, calculated steps, trying not to step on the seems between the tiles or the small cracks in the pavement as he made his way towards to the back of the school where the field was located.

He opened the large double doors and felt a rush of cool wind against his face. He didn’t mind much, he always did prefer the cold. He rounded the next corner until he could see the field in full. Surely enough, near the opposite corner to where he stood, sat a small group of kids in a circle, laughing. He stepped on the grass, cringing slightly at how soft it was against his soles compared to the concrete. As he got closer, he would see them in full. He recognized a few of them from seeing them around school, but he had never truly interacted with any of them before. Of course, he heard stories, but he tried his best to stay away from gossip and not believe what others say so easily. He stopped, not really wanting to interrupt them. They all seemed so happy and blissful together. This must be what real friends are like. He saw the red headed girl who he recognized as Beverly Marsh throw something at the smallest boy who was nearly leaning on Richie. He shrieked, jumping away from the ammo, and cursed at her. The rest doubled over laughing. Stan couldn’t help but to think the boy looked like a fairy in many ways. He stood there watching them laugh until the red headed boy looked up to see him. He stopped laughing, but his smile remained.

“H-Hey. Can we h-help you?”
Stan didn’t quite know who to respond. Did Richie not tell them? He shouldn’t be here. This was a bad idea to start with. Luckily, a bombing voice yelled his name before he was required to answer.

“STANNY!” Richie leaped up from his spot on the grass and made his way over to him in two strides. He snaked his arm around his shoulders, make Stan tense slightly. Either Richie didn’t notice or he didn’t care. “Why, I can’t believe you made it!” Richie spat out in a voice that Stan couldn’t quite place. Something in between a valley girl with a sore throat and a old southern man.

“Welcome,” he gestured widely to the small circle of people, “to my humble group. Guys, this is Stanley the Manly, my new boy toy,” he winked awkwardly at Stan with the last comment.

His comment was met by loud groans from the others sitting on the grass and a soft “Beep beep, Richie” from someone. Richie sat back down in his previous spot, leaving Stan standing alone. Stan smiled awkwardly, not knowing what to do his hands. He clasped them in front of him after twitching with them for a moment.

Beverly was the first to greet him after Richie. She smiled widely and introduced herself and the boy next to her, Ben Hanscom, and held out a hand for him to shake. Stan hesitated and decided to wave politely and smile at her and Ben instead of taking her hand. He was relieved when her hand lowered back to her side, but she didn’t seem offended by his refusal. Next was Mike Hanlon. He, of course, recognized him easily. He was the only kid at Derry High with darker skin. He smiled kindly and almost seemed to radiate kindness out of him. The red haired boy that noticed him at first was next. Then it was the fairy boys turn. Stan hated calling him that, even if just in his head, but he truly didn’t mean it as an insult. If anything, it was a compliment but something quickly told him that the boy would not see it that way. His name was Eddie. He didn’t smile like the others or wave, he just said his name and returned to his seat next to Richie. Richie didn’t seem to care, instead opting to put his arm around Eddie.

“Well, come on then, don’t be shy!” Richie called in his too-loud voice, patting the ground next to him.

Stan carefully removed his light jacket as Mike and Richie moved to create a spot to sit between them. He spread his jacket out on the grass carefully, smoothing out the wrinkles meticulously. He was dimly aware of six pairs of eyes watching him as he worked.

“T-The grass isn’t wet. You d-don’t have to lay that down if you don’t w-want to.”

“T-The grass isn’t wet. You d-don’t have to lay that down if you don’t w-want to.”

“I know,” Stan replied quickly, not looking up from his work. Once he was satisfied with the jacket, he carefully sat upon it, his legs crossed over each other. He looked around the circle. As quickly as it has stopped, their antics resumed once more. Richie tugged lightly on Eddie’s hair, making his face flush with red and his voice to get high pitched and squeaky. Stan could help but think they were almost cute together.

That’s a sin. You can’t think about those things, Stan. You aren’t a sinner.

The thought quickly pulled himself out of his head, but he still smiled while the others laughed and Richie grabbed something of Eddie’s and hoisted it high into the air, out of the smaller teen’s reach.

The rest of the lunch hour passed by swiftly. Mostly, it consisted of Richie doing something stupid and the others either laughing or saying “beep beep, Richie”. It took him almost 20 minutes to understand that they said that when he took things too far. He thought it was kind of funny. He didn’t interact much with the others apart from smiling and softly laughing along with them, but even so he felt included. These kids seemed to have some kind of air about them that made him feel welcomed. Between small smiles and sideways glanced from Mike and the course of
harmonizing laughter being shared among them, he almost felt a part of the group. Almost.

Beverly leaned back so she was looking up to the sky, watching the clouds pass by above her. She looked peaceful. They all did, in a way. Of course, Richie was still being Richie and teasing Eddie while Mike and Ben smiled politely and laughed softly at his antics. Bill was laughing loudly, watching the two. His laugh has a kind of ring to it that made Stan feel calm. He watched the six of them. He assumed he would feel like an outsider looking in in this situation, but instead he smiled at the sight of the others. He almost felt like a normal teenager, something he’s never felt before in his life. *I guess this is what it’s like to have friends.*

The bell rang sooner than Stan thought it would. Bill audibly groaned at the sound and Beverly snickered at him, her eyes closed, basking in the afternoon sun. With reluctance, they all rose from their positions. Stan folded his jacket carefully, not wanting to put it back on after being on the ground. The others started making their way from the field to their next classes. Stan turned to leave when he someone called his name.

“Hey, Stanny! Same time tomorrow?” Richie’s voice cut through the group as they all started to disperse. At his voice, the others stopped walking at looked at Stan expectantly. Stan looked toward the others, but none seemed to object to his suggestion. He saw Ben and Beverly holding hands, staring at him, awaiting an answer.

“I-- um. I mean, sure. If you want that. I don’t want to intrude or anything--” Stan stumbled but was cut off by a loud “WHOOP” of victory coming from Richie.

“FUCK yes! Here,” Richie groped around in his pocket searching for something. He pulled out a amazingly crumpled slip of paper and handed it over. “Call me,” he said with a wink.

Stan unwrapped the paper to see seven digits messily scrawled across the paper. He couldn’t tell if the fourth number was a four or a nine. However before he even had the chance to ask or even respond to the gesture, Richie was sprinting away toward the others where he quickly draped his arm across Eddie’s shoulders. Stan stood there for a moment. Finally, he carefully folded the piece of paper, trying his best to smooth out the wrinkles, and put it into the front pocket of his bag before leaving for his next class.

*Chapter End Notes*

*I’m a slut for Reddie so lowkey I really wanted Eddie and Richie to have a special relationship. They’re best friends and Eddie is very jealous and protective (I mean they both are, but especially Eddie). Does Eddie have a crush on Richie? Who knows. Probably. But their best friends and will do anything for each other.

Also I want Mike and Stan to be close? What do y’all think of that. I’m on the fence about having them be super close. Mike Hanlon is an ANGEL and deserves to have the recognition he deserves.*
I'm thinking of posting every Wednesday and Sunday? I think that's a good pacing for this. I have everything planned out for this fic, but I'm cautious of saying the exact amount of chapters because I think I'm going to change somethings. As of right now I have about 20 planned out.

Richie was, as usual, late for detention. In freshman year, he would be reprimanded and given another detention for his constant tardiness, but they quickly learned this had no effect on him.

“Heya, teach, sorry I’m late. I hope I didn’t miss anything too exciting,” Richie spoke into the otherwise silent classroom as he slumped down into a seat in the back row, smiling up to Mrs. Rush. She didn’t say anything, just glared slightly from over her glasses and returned her attention to the book in her lap.

Richie hated detention. Okay, “hate” is a strong word. He didn’t mind detention, he strongly disliked that he needed to keep quiet. He was never good at sitting still or keeping his mouth shut. He began bouncing his leg and tapping a rhythm on the desk with his fingernails. He looked up to the clock. Wow, okay, only five minutes have passed. That nice. Only 50 more. Goody.

Richie sighed and stretched his long limbs before looking around the classroom. It was nearly empty. The only students in there were a few freshmen he vaguely recognized and Greta Keene who was filing her nails. What is this, some slice of life Molly Ringwald piece of shit movie? Where the bitchy girls are always filing their nail or whatever? Come on, it’s the '90s, no one gives a shit about your perfect fingernails. The thought made him laugh.

Greta turned her head to look at Richie, scowling. He put on his best, most charming smile he could muster and winked. She almost looked offended at the gesture, making Richie laugh again.

“Richie, quiet,” the words were spat out by Mrs. Rush who looked more tired than annoyed at Richie. Richie raised his hands in defeat, still smiling. He could see Greta in the corner of his eyes, smirking smugly, like she had somehow won.

Wish a soft sigh, Richie pulled out a notebook. Now, Richie was definitely not an artist and all of his pictures look like shit in the end, but he still enjoyed doodling. It was a nice way to pass the time, at least. He stared at the blank piece of paper for a few minutes, trying to decide what to draw. Usually he tried to draw the Losers, but he could never get their faces right. He picked up his pencil and slowly began drawing a new face. It started with an outline of a face and what would eventually become a Kippah on the back of the head. Stan would be a nice model to draw. His features were crisp and easily recognizable. He couldn’t deny the fact that he was attractive. He focused on trying to make him perfect. He probably wasted half of his pink erasure trying to make sure everything was in the right place. He’d never really drawn curly hair before, but how hard could it be?
It turns out, very hard. He kept easing and starting over. He could feel himself starting to get annoyed with the process, until Mrs. Rush’s voice rang through the silent room.

“Okay, detentions over. You’re free to go.”

Most of the kids had already packed up their things and were waiting for her signal. They rushed out as soon as she spoke, their conversations starting up.

Had he really worked for 50 minutes on one picture? He could never focus on anything for too long, easily getting bored and turning to something new that would catch his attention. He looked at his drawing. It was good. Like, really good. Like, better than anything else he’d drawn. After a moment, he threw the notebook haphazardly into his bag, slung it around his shoulders, and left the classroom.

His house was long about a 15 minute walk from campus, so he usually walked to and from school unless it was raining or snowing and he convinced Mike to pick him up. He tried to walk as slow as possible, not really wanting to go home. He knew what he’d see when he’d walk in.

If he was lucky, Wentworth wouldn’t be home from work yet. If he wasn’t lucky, he’d probably be screamed at for being home late again. He wouldn’t tell him he had detention, that would only make it worse. He’d say he dicked around with the Losers for an hour and lost track of him. Then his father would curse his friends and curse him and ban him to his room for the rest of the night.

Wentworth was almost definitely home. If he thought that he might having a fighting chance of beating him there, he wouldn’t be walking so slow. But it was a futile effort. There was no way to avoid him. He straightened up his postured as he turned onto his road and saw his father’s car in the driveway. A small part of him always hoped he wouldn’t see the beaten down Sudan, but it was always there when he came home. He approached his house, Went undoubtedly seeing him walk up through the window. He stopped on the front step and took a deep breath before opening the door.

“Where have you been?”

Richie hadn’t even stepped completely into the house before he heard his father's voice. Wentworth was so different than Richie. His voice was soft, steady, calm, yet had the same effect on Richie as if he was screaming at him. Richie closed the door behind him before answering, trying his best not to look at his father.

“I’m sorry, pop,” Richie said in the quietest voice he could muster. This was the only time he could be quiet. He had to be. Went didn’t like it when he was loud. It annoyed him.

“That didn’t answer my question,” Went hissed, his time with more heat behind his words.

“I was helping Bill with some math stuff, we lost track of time, I didn’t---”

“Don’t lie to me, Richard.”

“Wha-- I’m not lying, dad. I swear. We just lost track of time, that’s all.”

“I got a phone call today.”

Richie felt his blood run cold. Of course the school would call my parents after a while. Of course they’d tell them what I was doing after school. Why wouldn’t they? Stupid stupid stupid stupid stupid!
“Dad, I--”

He was cut off by a loud **SMACK** and a sharp pain on his cheek. He lifted his hand instantly to the spot that was now surely turning red, his eyes wide. He looked up slowly at his father. Went’s nostrils were flaring more and more with every breath, his mouth twisted in on itself, like he was trying his best to keep his emotions under control.

His wasn’t the first time Went hit someone. It was almost a common occurrence for Went to come home to Maggie, drunk and passed out across the couch and yell at her, pulling her up by her shirt (if she was lucky) or by her hair until she was standing up and facing him. Richie was never in the room at the time, he’d always run away to his room or sneak out the back door. In his room, he could hear his screaming and Maggie’s crying and begging. Then he’d heard something shatter and something hitting something and then Maggie would be silent apart from loud whimpers as she tried to keep herself quiet. Went doesn’t like it when people get loud. It annoys him.

This wasn’t the first him he hit Richie either. It had happened once before, years ago, when Went found out he was sneaking cigarettes. He showed up to school with a black eye and claimed it was Bowers. Luckily, no one checked with Bowers to confirm the story. It wasn’t like it was an unlikely story, Henry Bowers always did have some type of hatred for Richie and his friends.

Richie stood as still as possible, looking up at his father with a surprised expression on his face. He couldn’t move if he wanted to. Maybe, just maybe, if he stayed still enough and silent enough, Went would just… go away.

Richie wasn’t so lucky. The next time Wentworth spoke, his voice was impossibly calm and barely louder than a whisper.

“I thought I raised you better than to lie to me.” Those words were all it took for the tears in Richie’s eyes overflow and begin the streak down his face. He tried his best not to make a sound. Holding his breath as if that would somehow make him stop crying. “You know what happens when you lie to me, don’t you?”

Richie opened his mouth and begged words to come out. *I’m sorry, dad, I’m sorry. It won’t happen again. Punish me, I deserve. Please. Just get it over with.* Yet all he could do was stare up at him, mouth open, tears running down his face.

**SMACK!**

“I asked you a question, you piece of shit! You answer when you’re spoken to!” Went voice was beginning to rise, and out of everything that was happening, that’s what scared Richie the most.

“Yes, yes sir, yes I know. I’m punished, I know sir. Yes.” Richie sputtered quickly, the words forcing themselves from his mouth as fast as the could. Went seemed pleased by his response.

“And do you know how you’re punished?” His voice again was barely above a whisper but held threats within it.

Richie flicked his eyes past his father, seeing a figure in the entrance to the hallway behind him. Maggie stood, leaning up against the wall. Richie couldn’t help but feel like she looked so small in that moment. So scared. She looked at him with big, sad, apologetic eyes. Richie tried to be mad at her. How could just stand there and watch his happen to him? But he couldn’t bring himself to hate her. Her getting involved would just make it worse. She looked at him with pain in her eyes. Richie looked quickly back as his father, who stood fuming, merely inches away from Richie. Richie slowly shook his head. Without ever breaking eyes contact, Went reached for his belt. Richie could
hear the metal clanking as it was undone, but didn’t dare to look. He stood, staring at his father. This was the man who held him as a child when he had a nightmare. This was the man who held his hand on the first day of kindergarten when he was scared of leaving. No. This isn’t a man. This is a monster.

From the corner of his eye, he saw the belt rise. His eyes flicked over to it without his permission while Went wrapped it around his hand. Securing it.

Richie screwed his eyes tight and braced himself for what was to come.

Chapter End Notes

Please tell me how you're liking this so far!!
Since it was Wednesday, Stan made his way directly to Temple after school. His father was the Rabbi, and attending every single event that went on at the synagogue was just a part of when it meant to be the Rabbi’s son.

Despite being brought up in a very, very Jewish household, being subjected to the word of the Torah since the day he was born and brought along to every sermon, Stan couldn’t help but question his religion. Of course, he’d never in a million years tell his parents that. He knew what his father would say. He’d stay it was natural to doubt at time, but God will always bring you back. You have to trust in Him to bring you back. Stan wasn’t so hopeful he would return to when he fully believed everything the Torah had to say. Stan didn’t know if he wanted to. Stan knew all about Hell, and fire, and brimstone. That was Stan’s biggest fear, being stuck in hell for eternity.

Stan never truly felt normal. He always felt out of place at synagogue, like he didn’t belong there somehow. Like he was lying just by sitting the the rows with everyone surrounding him, with his father in front. He could never pinpoint a reason why he felt guilty being there or why he felt like he couldn’t breathe at the mention of Hell.

He tries his best not to let it bother him, but of course, it does. Stan has never been good at shutting down his thoughts and keep them from running amuck. He closes his eyes and tries his hardest to focus on his feet planted to the ground. He rests his hands on his knees, trying to keep his movements as slow and steady as possible. He beginnings tapping his index finger in unison. 1, 2, 3, 4… 1, 2, 3, 4… 1, 2, 3, 4… 1, 2, 3, 4…

That’s it. Deep breaths. No need to get all anxious. Everything’s chill. It’s okay. I’m okay.

It isn’t until service is over and the Uris’ car pulls out of the synagogue parking lot that Stan feels like he can finally breathe again. He leans his head gently again the gently shaking car window while Donald and Andrea Uris speak softly in the front seats. Outside, he watches as trees, houses, and people pass by. He’s always liked nature, something about the colors and beauty made him feel a strange sort of calm. It felt like forever before the car pulled into the long driveway of the Uris’ house, though the ride itself isn't more than 10 minutes.

He neatly untied his shoes, tucked in the shoes laces, and placed them side by side next to the front door before heading up to his room. He sat down at his desk and started his essay for his English class. It didn’t take long before Stan found himself staring blankly at the screen, finding himself unable to focus on the task. With a deep sigh, he ran his hand through his hair. He figured it could wait, the essay itself wasn’t due until Monday, though he always did like to make a habit of finishing all homework early so he wouldn’t end up stressing about the deadline.

He leaned over and pulled his backpack up to his lap. He grabbed the small, crumpled, folded note from within the front pocket. Seven digits were scrawled in a handwriting he could only describe as chicken scratch.

Should I call? Did he mean call him tonight when he gave me his number? Or maybe I should wait a few days? What if he doesn’t answer? What if his parents answer? What if they’re mad he gave me their number?
Stan never been given someone’s number before. He never had many friends, and even when he did, not many of them owned a landline. He started tapping his knees as he debated. With a deep breath, he gathered his courage, folded the note again and went downstairs.

The only phone in the house was planted on the wall the separated the kitchen from the family room. Thankfully, his parents weren’t out there. Not that they’d disapprove of him using the phone or anything, he just didn’t know they would get excited and ask to meet his new friends. He loved his parents, he did, but they always seemed to make a big deal out of small things. He picked up the receiver and entered the numbers and nervously listened to the dial tone. After the fourth ring, he was worried no one would pick up, but someone did right as the thought crossed his mind.

“Who is this?”

Stan blinked. It definitely wasn’t Richie who answered, but a man with a remarkably low voice. Even through the receiver he could tell the man was irritated.

“Hello?”

“H-Hi, uh, is this is Tozier house?”

There was a small pause before the man answered again.

“Why?”

“Oh, uh, I was just wondering if Richie was home?” Stan could hear the phone shifting on the other end.

“He doesn’t much want to talk right now. Sorry,” though his tone didn’t sound like he was sorry. He seemed angry almost.

“Okay sorry.”

Stan quickly hung up the phone and let out a breath.

Okay that didn’t go as planned, but it could have been worse.

He glanced to the clock on the opposite wall and saw it was nearly eight o’clock. He went upstairs and hopped in the shower and started getting ready to go to bed. He crawled into his neatly made bed at exactly 9:30 and found it hard to fall asleep. Once, he did, he only dreamed of who the voice on the other line was.

Chapter End Notes

Yikes, sorry this was short and also two days late. I’m trying really hard to keep up with a schedule so I can get updates out in time. Please leave a comment if you like this so far, I thrive off of compliments and validation and they will defiantly help my find the motivation to keep writing this. Thank you to everyone who’s reading!! I hope you like it!!
Richie was not looking forward to going to school. He awoke with a loud groan to the steady beep of his alarm. He wanted nothing more than to just roll back over and ignore his responsibilities. Of course, that wasn't an option. He couldn't risk anything like that with Went.

He was always weary of his parents, but the word “fear” never quite felt like the right word until now.

He lazily hit the top button of the clock, nearly knocking it off before the alarm stopped. He rubbed his eyes with his palms and winced a slight bit before groping for his glasses on his bedside table. He ran his hand through his hair, slid his glasses on, and sat up.

He drug his feet as he got ready. As he entered the bathroom, he finally let himself take a good look at himself. There was no doubt he had a black eye, he hoped to God(which he never truly believed in despite his a perfect church attendance for the first 12 years of his life) that it wasn't as noticeable as he thought it was. He took off his shirt to look at his chest and stomach. It was a good thing it wouldn't be showing, as people would definitely ask question. Purple, red, and yellow lines were scattered across his ribs and fuck, they hurt like a son of a bitch. He sighed and ran a nervous hand through his hair.

Once he got out of the shower, he shuffled through the medicine cabinet, looking for his mother makeup. She owned a lot, but never seemed to wear any. He sighed in relief when he found the foundation and concealer. He's only worn makeup once at a sleepover when Bev practically begged him to let her practice on him. Still, he knew the basics.

His foundation looked two shades too dark, but he still figured it was better than nothing. He tried his hardest to make the makeup as even as possible, but he was never that good at these type of things. It ended up looking… odd, but if you looked at it from afar, it was much less noticeable than the dark bruise surrounding his eye.

He made sure he left the house at least ten minutes earlier than usual, not wanting to risk being
late. He couldn’t get another after school detention, he didn’t want to do anything to provoke his father.

He walked into class five minutes before the tardy bell rung. Mrs. Rush almost looked shocked to see him so early, but he tried not to notice.

He wasn’t at all surprised to see Stan already in his seat, sketching what he assumed was a bird. He slowly lowered himself into his chair, knowing that if he didn’t he would visibly wince and the last thing he needed was someone asking question. Thankfully, Stan’s seat on to his right and his bruise covered his left so it was easier to keep him from noticing.

“I called last night?”

“Oh. You did?”

Stan turned in his chair to look at Richie, looking confused.

“Oh. Yeah. I wasn't feeling well. There's a bug going around I guess.”

Wow. Nice come back.

Stan stared at him for a long moment before Richie broke eye contact and looked down at his desk.

Fuck. He doesn't believe you. Fucking idiot, that's the best you can do? Sick?

He mentally kicked himself before shaking the thought from his mind. He tried to focus on the lesson going on before him. Stan’s eyes kept sneaking over to him. Richie could tell he was trying to be subtle about it, but he wasn't good at it.

After about five minutes, Stan spoke.
“What about now?” His voice was low, like he was scared to ask. Richie finally looked over again towards him. He looked worried.

Good God, you’re making him worry. That was the one thing you weren’t supposed to do. You fucked it up. You’re making him sad. You’re the one who’s making him like this.

“W-What?”

“Are you feeling better now?” Richie blinked.

“Yeah, yeah,” he let his face dissolve a suggestive smile. “Why?” He leaned in closer and lowered his voice. “Did you wanna play doctor?”

Stan nearly choked on air, causing Richie break out in laugh.

“B-Beep beep, asshole,” he hissed back, only causing Richie’s laughter to deepen.

“Damn Staniel, I thought we only had one stuttering loser in our group.”

“Shut up, Trashmouth,” though really his words came too timid to be an insult.

----

He entered the field five minutes after the lunch bell rang and walked toward their usual spot. So far, it was only Eddie, Mike, Ben, and Stan sitting in the grass. Stan sat criss-cross on his cardigan again, Eddie was on his knees, both seemed very interested in what Mike had to say. Right before he sat down, the three burst into laughter, Mike finishing his story.

“Aw man, y’all are cracking jokes without me? Blasphemy,” he raised a hand toward his heart in fake distress. Eddie snorted.

“I doubt you even know what that word means.”
“Aw, dear Spaghetti, how dare you doubt me?”

“Spaghetti?” Stan piped. Eddie groaned while Richie cracked a smirk.

“Well, he doesn’t like Eds, and sucha cutie needs a cute nickname. Eddie Spaghetti is the only possible other name that can fit. Sorry, I don’t make the rules.”

“Shut the fuck up,” Eddie spat, attempting to throw a handful of grass at him which ended up being pulled in the opposite direction by the breeze.

“Oh come on, Eds, you know you love me.”

“Nope. No I do not. Never in a million years.”

“Methinks the lady doth protest too much,” Richie returned with a wink.

“Beep beep,” Mike cut in, obviously not wanting to see their banter continue. “Come sit.” He shuffled closer to Stan, making more room for him.

*Okay, Toizer. Just play it cool. You’re chill.*

“YOU GUYS WILL NEVER GUESS WHO JUST TALKED TO ME,” a familiar voice shouted from halfway across the field. Richie turned to Bev, who was not sprinting towards them, with a smile.

“Ah, my sunshine, what news have we today.” Richie’s been trying really hard on his British accent lately. He thought it wasn’t too bad, but apparently he was just about the only one who held that opinion.

“Greta. Fucking. Bowie,” she puffed once she reached them, slightly out of breath. She flopped down on the other side of Stan. When she saw that Richie didn’t sit down with her, she grabbed his arm and pulled him down next to her.
He didn’t try to pull away because, God that would be suspicious, but he still went down slower than he usually did. He turned his face away from her as he held his breath and winced as he reached the ground. He hoped Bev wouldn’t notice, but of course, she did. Bev notices everything. She stared at him for a long time. There was no doubt she saw the terrible excuse for a cover up.

“So. What’s up, Toizer?” She questioned, not breaking eye contact.

“Wait no,” Eddie interrupted, “you can’t just tell us that Queen Bitch Greta willingly talked to you and just change the subject. What happened?” Bev continued to stare at Richie, most likely thinking of her next move. Finally she turned to the rest of them.

“We gotta wait for Ben and Bill before I spill. Hey, Rich, can a bum a smoke? I left my pack at home.” Richie could see she was lying, but he was thankful she wasn’t bringing it up in front of everyone.

“Yeah, sure.” He slowly stood up and followed Beverly until they were confident they wouldn’t be heard by the others.

“Spill it,” her hands laid on her hips as she nearly glared at Richie

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” God, Richie really wasn’t a good lair. Still, he flashes a smile in her direction.

“Cut the bullshit,” her expression went soft as she continued, her eyes filled with worry. “I know people would wear make up over their eye like that. Trust me.”

Richie didn’t know what to say. What are you supposed to say to that? ‘Oh yeah, this old thing? Nah I lied and got the shit beaten out of me. It’s not big deal. Want to catch a movie later.’ Richie didn’t want to tell her the truth. He couldn’t. He knew he shouldn’t, but still he couldn’t help but feel embarrassed and guilty about what happen. So, instead, he opted to continue to stare back at her without a word.

“What is your dad?” she whispered as if she was scared someone would hear. She knew him home life wasn’t perfect, she was even saw Maggie snoring on the couch once, cuddling an empty bottle of Jack. Richie looked down at his shoes.
He expected her to say something. Anything. Curse his dad or ask what happened or even change the subject, but she stayed silent. She grabbed out her cigarette pack from her back pocket and handed one to Richie before pulling out a purple lighter and striking it.

They smoked for a long while, watching the other Losers from afar. Ben was just walking up to the circle, a cafeteria food tray in hand. Bill was already sitting down and reaching to grab one of the homemade cookies Mike brought to school. They couldn’t hear actual words, but their excited mumbles and laughter was enough to make Richie smile. Bev leaned down and put out her cigarette on the toe of her converses.

“Can you meet me after school? We need to go to the store.”

Richie hesitated. If they were quick enough, he’d be able to get home with time to spare, and he wouldn’t be lying about where he went. Still, he was nervous.

“Why?”

“Well, sorry to break it to you, Tozier, but your makeup skills need work.” She glanced over to him with a smirk. “Plus, that is so not your shade.”

Despite himself, Richie found his lips curling up at the ends at her teasing. All the Losers dealt with these types of things differently. Bev didn’t give bullshit. She was direct and honest, even if the truth wasn’t nice. Yet she never pushed the subject, opting to wait until the other wanted to talk about it, something none of the others could do apart from Mike. They were too worried about their friends and would continue to push to find out what was wrong with them. But not Bev. Richie really admired her. Sure, he’d tease the others a lot, but he didn’t have the guts to do what she did so easily. He really admired her for that.

“Sure. I mean, maybe. I don’t know. I think I shouldn’t be staying out too much.” He knew he wasn’t acting much like his usual self. His voice was smaller and didn’t have the same bounce that it always used to. It’s just hard to be energetic and happy when you’re scared. Okay, yeah, he was at school, which, for the most part, is a safe place. Sure, there was Bowers and his goonies, but there wasn’t a real reason to be scared.

“Okay.” Her voice was soft yet casual. She shrugged. She didn’t seem sad or upset in anyway, which Richie thanked God for. He hated when people felt sorry for him. Pity was possibly worse than what harmed him in the first place. He hates feeling small and useless. Bev got that; she always got that. Richie didn’t know too much about her home life, apart from the fact she asked to stay the night at the Losers’ houses often, stayed out late, and dreaded going home. Her words “trust me” flashed through his mind. Maybe she was in the same position. “Let’s skip then. English is basically study hall at this point, I won’t be missing anything. Plus--”
“No.” He really didn’t mean to sound as panicked as he did, but he couldn’t. *I can’t get detention again. I can’t skip, I can’t be late for any class.* He looked at the cigarette in his hand, nearly down to the filter. *I shouldn’t even be smoking. What if I get caught?* He threw the cigarette to the ground and stomped it out. “I’ll be there after school. We gotta make it quick, though.”

Bev just smiled brightly at him and started walking back to the group.

“Perfect! Meet me at your locker. We won’t be more than fifteen minutes. Twenty, tops.”

Chapter End Notes

Okay so I see most people post their tumblr on their fics? I'm p active on tumblr, but I don't post my writing on there. Maybe I'll start doing that. If you have ideas for one shots or something, send them to me on there and I'll try to do them Justice.

ALSO IT'S OCTOBER TOMORROW AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS? HALLOWEEN ONESHOTS BINCH. I'm going to write one for Reddie where Richie dresses up as Beast Boy and Eddie is gb!Raven and they're cute.

anyway, go yell at me @HeySpaceCadett
Richie found himself leaning up against Beverly’s locker just as the last bell rung and students started flooding the halls. Bev approached him from behind and lightly shoved his shoulder to get his attention.

“You ready?” she asked with a smile in her voice.

“As ready as I’ll ever be,” he scoffed back.

The store itself isn’t much more than a five minute walks, but Richie still wanted to leave as quickly as possible. Bev shoved her books on the top shelf lazily and grabbed her hoodie off the locker’s hook and they were off.

As they turned off campus and headed down the street, they were mostly alone, not many kids walked this way home. Richie took a sideway glance at Beverly to find her looking at him.

“What? Do I have something on my face or am I that goddamn attractive?” he teased with a wink in her direction.

“Do you want to talk about it?” She asked, her voice low, but didn’t have any sadness or pity or even worry in it, just pure curiosity. bHe could tell she was worried, of course she would be, but she knew that he’d probably shut down and not tell her anything if she showed it.

Richie looked down and kicked a pebble with his shoe before looking behind him to double check that they were out of ear shot from any onlookers.
“Ah, you know, Went’s an asshole sometimes,” he shrugged.

“Yeah..?” she looked at him expectantly. “Does he often this much of an asshole?”

Richie shook his head.

“No, no this is uh, no this is the first time-- I mean there was this one time but that was year ago. Usually he just uh,” he cleared his throat and looked down at his feet again, “usually he just takes it out on ma, you know?” He crossed his arms across his bod. Bev stared at him for a while and hummed in understanding.

“So, why this time? What did you do?”

Richie would usually make some kind of joke, faking hurt at her accusation, but he didn’t much feel in the mood of acting. He kicked a pebble.

“School called. Apparently after x amount of detentions they call home to see if the parents can help keep their delinquent children in line.” He laughed, because he should have guessed he find out eventually, but there was no real humor in the sound. Suddenly, Richie felt like he was going to cry, tears beginning to sting in his eyes.


come on, not now. I can blubber all I want when I get home, but not know. Not in public. Not in front of Bev. God, man up. Grow a pair. You’re better than this.

“What else did he do? Apart from your eye, I mean.”

“He, uh, he likes his belt you know. Super fucking expensive belt. Who the fuck pays over a hundred bucks for one stupid belt? But, I guess it’s multi functional,” he scoffed at the idea. “But still.”

Bev nodded and hummed lowly.

“Do you think anything’s broken?”
“Nah, just bruised up pretty good. It’ll be okay.”

“Richie,” she stopped walking, grabbing his arm and turning him towards her. “It's not okay.” Richie looked at her for a second before responding.

“I.. I know. I don’t think it’ll happen again, though. I just,” he swallowed and broke eye contact, opting to look at his shoes again, “gotta be careful, ya know?"

“Are you sure? I mean, if you’re in danger or something, you could--” she was quickly cut off by Richie scoffing and turning to walk away.

“Yeah, yeah, Bev, I know. Don’t worry about it. If it happens again, I’ll find you, okay?”

Bev started walking with him, but didn’t seem satisfied with his answer.

“Fine. Come on, let’s get this done,” she sighed as they approached the pharmacy.

They were greeted by the ring of the bell above the front door as they walked in. Bev grabbed Richie’s hand and dragged him over to the makeup until they were face to face with a large display of fondations.

“Okay, let’s see…” She ran her finger across the bottles, looking at each of them closely, and pulled out a few. “Okay, give me your hand.”


“I need to make actually check to make sure their your shade,” she sighed, as if this was the most obvious thing in the world.

Richie rolled his eyes in response and shot out his arm towards her. She grabbed him gently by the wrist and turned it over before rising one bottle to his skin to compare the colors. After about five
minutes of Bev picking out bottles, checking, and putting them back, Richie was bored out of his mind.

“Come on, Bevvie, is this really necessary? It doesn’t make that big of difference.”

“Oh, yeah, I does make that big of difference. If the colors not just right, it won’t look right.” She switched out in favor for a different bottle and tested it against his arm. “Plus, we want a full coverage one so it really covers up any bruises. We should also--”

“BEVVIE!” shouted a overly chipper voice that sounded too high pitched to be natural. Bev visibly tensed as she turned around and crossed her arms.

“What do you need, Greta,” Bev sighed, obviously annoyed by the other’s presence.

“Haha, oh you,” Greta returned, waving her hand in dismissal. “What’s up? I didn’t think I’d see you here! How are you?”

“Make up.”

“...Right.” Greta never let her smile falter as she continued. “So, I was just thinking that maybe you should come to my party this weekend.” She turned to Richie, putting on a disgustingly flirtatious smile. “Wouldn’t that be fun, Rich?”

“Don’t call me that.”

“Only if you promise to show up! You can bring your other little friends, too, I’m sure they could use some social interaction. Anyway, you know my address, be there Friday at 9. See you!” She winked at Richie, smiled at Bev, and took her leave before either of the two could respond.

“Uh.. Bev? Quick question, what the fuck just happened?” He questioned, both of them staring at Greta as she left.

“We were invited to a party. By Greta Bowie. At her house. With our friends.” It was more of a
question than anything, like she couldn’t believe Greta’s words.

“Huh…” He turned to Bev, still very confused. “What’s her angle?”

“God, who knows. Whatever it is, it can’t be good.” She tested another bottle against his arm.

“So are we going?”

“What?”

“To the party,” he clarified. “Are we actually going?” Bev scoffed at him.

“God I hope not, but I guess we should still ask the others. There’s no way she’s doing this out of her overwhelming kindness. Here.” Bev held out a bottle to Richie.

They were rung up, Richie pulled out a few crumpled up dollar bills, and they started home.

They walked in a comfortable silence for a while. Richie started humming a tune as they passed by the park on the way home. Richie stopped humming as he saw someone sitting on a bench, staring up into the trees.

“Aw man,” Richie said with a smile before leaving Bev to sneak up behind the bench, careful not to make any noise. Bev saw what he was doing and followed him a few feet behind. He leaned down until his mouth was inches from the person’s ear. “Whatcha looking at?”

Stan jumped with a small yip as he swung around to see how was behind him fast enough to give him whiplash. Richie doubled over laughing.

“What the heck, asshole! You scared me!” Stan growled, glaring at Richie who was laughing so hard he was nearly crying. “It’s not funny!”

“It’s a little funny,” Bev smiled at him as she caught up with them. Stan just grumbled in response and crossed his arms.
Richie spotted a book and notebook sitting in Stan’s lap and decided to climb over the back of the bench until she was sitting next to the other.

“Couldn’t you just walk around the front of the bench and sit down like a normal person?”

“No can do, Staniel. Not my style.”

Bev sat on the other side of Richie and leaned forward to talk to Stan, ignoring Richie.

“What were you doing out here all alone?”

Stan quickly looked back up to the tree, racking his eyes over it carefully. He soon gave up and sighed.

“I was watching a Eastern Bluebird make a nest,” he hissed, annoyed.

“Aw fuck, I can’t believe you scared it off with your surprisingly girly squeak.”

“Beep beep. You’re the one who was laughing hard enough to be heard a mile away.”

“Yeah okay, that’s fair.”

“So,” Bev interjected after watching the two for a while. “I should be getting home.” She got up from the bench. “So I’ll leave you to it.”

Richie glared at her. He knew she wasn’t about to go home, she was leaving them alone on purpose. She smiled innocently back.

“Bye, guys. See you tomorrow!” She waved behind her as she walked away.
“Bye, Beverly!” Stan shouted after her.

Richie leaned back on the bench and rested his head on his intertwined hands as Stan picked up his books.

“Hey, Richie?”

Richie turned his head to look at him.

“Yeah?”

“It’s uh, it’s getting late. I should be going I didn’t tell my parents I was stay out after school and I don’t want them to worry.”

Richie smiled and jumped up from the bench. He turned to Stan and reached a hand towards him to help him stand up. Stan ignored the offer and stood up, hugging his books to his chest.

“Yeah, me neither.”

“Is it okay if I walk you home?” Stan asked in a low voice, looking at his feet. Richie felt himself smile genuinely for the first time all day.

“Sure thing, Stanny. Let’s go.”

Chapter End Notes

Tell me what your favorite part of this is so far or a line you liked. I really like hearing from you guys :)

Anyway go yell at me on tumblr @Heyspacecadett
Despite the early hour, the sun had already start to set. The joys of winter, I guess. Stan let Richie lead them back towards his house in a not totally uncomfortable silence. Stan found himself glancing over to Richie every once and awhile. It wasn’t like him to be so quiet. He seemed lost in thought almost. He tried not to think too much of it, but it wasn’t easy for him. Richie’s eyes flicked to him and make eye contact. His stoic face broke out into a grin.

“What’s up, Stanny? Do I have something on my face or am I just that goddamn attractive?” He laughed, his voice seeming to boom compared the the preceding silence.

Stan felt heat rush to his cheeks at being caught staring. He quickly tore his gaze away and looked ahead of him.

“Definitely not the latter,” he scoffed back, ignoring the subtle pink in his face.

“Aw come on, babe,” Richie hopped a few steps in front on Stanley and turned so he was walking backwards. He raised his arms to his sides dramatically and tilted his head slightly, his grin growing impossibly bigger. “You know you love. Come on, who wouldn’t?” He winked before chuckling.

Stan rolled his eyes and shook his head. He parted his gaze to look anywhere but the fool in front of him, but found himself stealing glances at him. He wasn’t unattractive. Sure, he was an asshole and loud and messy and annoying and absolutely everything Stan stood against, but it worked in an odd way.

His black curls were tossed by the wind, in fact Stan doubted he even brushed them this morning. They sprung out in all directions, but there was some resemblance of order within the chaos. Something only Richie Toizer could pull off. A small black curl hung down in the middle of his face, obscuring his overly large glasses. It was kind of cute, in an odd, dorky way. His impossibly pale skin contrasted nicely with his mop of curls. As Stan looked closer for the first time since meeting him, he could see light freckles cascading down his nose and cheeks. His entire look was almost alluring in a strange way in the golden light of the fading sun. Or, at least, it would be if the
sharp features and somewhat memorizing style didn’t belong to an asshole. Still, Stan found himself memorized by the soft shadows lining his face.

Richie started to slow his walking, his face twisted with a mildly concerned expression.

“You okay?”

Stan jumped slightly at his words, bringing him out of his thoughts. He quickly looked towards the ground and shook his head quickly.


“I just lost you there for a second. Does poor little Stanny got somethin’ on his mind?” Richie returned to his spot to the left of Stan. He smirked and wiggled his eyebrows at him.

“Beep beep, asshole.” Stan grumbled, wanting nothing more than to have the conversation over.

Richie slowed, eyes the houses as they walked past. He stopped in front of a small building. The fence was broken and the paint on the house was chipped. The lawn was all but dead with no flowers or any type of decor to be seen. The driveway was empty with weeds sprouting from the multitude of cracks littering it. Stan couldn’t help himself from grimacing a little at the sight. This is where he lived?

Sure, it wasn’t like he was expecting a palace of any sort, but if it wasn’t for the overfull mailbox, he would have assumed it was abandoned, like that one house on Neibolt.

“Welp, Stanster, I’ll see you bright and early, gov’na!” His voice dissolved into his british impression by the end of his sentence. Stan looked between the rusted door and Richie.

“Don’t call me that,” he deadpanned with the most unamused expression he could muster. Richie laughed and patted Stan on the back before opening the gate of the fence and walking towards the door.
“Whatever you said, Staniel,” he called before waving behind him and disappearing into the front door.

Stan found himself standing in the middle of the street for a while after seeing Richie’s form disappearing into the house. He was shaken from his thought as a old sudan began its way down the street a little too fast for the speed limit. Stan quickly turned and started making his way towards his house.

He rubbed his eyes. What the fuck was that? What is he doing? He tried hard to think of anything but boyish features but his mind kept wandering back to Richie. He stopped walking in the middle of the sidewalk, his head starting to hurt. This was wrong. He knew this was wrong. It wasn’t possible. Boys are meant to be with girls, that Heavenly Father’s plan. He bit his lip hard as he started walking again, trying to distract his brain from the ideas of sin. He didn’t realize how hard he was biting until he felt the metallic taste of blood against his tongue.

He couldn’t go home. Not now. He couldn’t go and see his Rabbi father with his watchful eyes. His parents loved him, that wasn’t a question, but what would happen if they found out he was having such terrible thoughts. He shivered at the idea of camps or worse. He found himself walking past where he needed to turn to go home. He decided to go to the only house he felt comfortable in town. He’d only been there once, but still the atmosphere itself was calming. He quickened his pace.

----

He knocked on the wooden door, shifting on the balls of his feet nervously as he awaited a response. He could hear indistinguishable talking coming from inside and footsteps. The door swung open and Stan saw a middle aged man with dark skin looking down at him.

“H-hi, Mr. Hanlon. Can I, uh, can I talk with Mike?” He stumbled. He didn’t even know why he was here really or what he would stay to Mike when he saw him.

The man must have sensed his nervous energy because he smiled kindly down at him. He shifted to the side and opened the door wider, gesturing Stan to come in.

“Of course. He’s in his room upstairs.”

Stan nodded and smiled a soft, sheepish smile back at him. He took off his shoes and tucked in the
laces before making his way upstairs. He could hear soft music coming from inside Mike’s closed door. He paused in front of the door, trying to identify the song, but couldn’t. Hesitantly, he knocked softly on the door.

“Come in!” Mike’s voice called from inside.

Stan opened the door slowly, peeking his head inside before opening it completely. He stood awkwardly in the doorway. He knew he would find comfort in his friend, but still, he didn’t know what to say now he was here.

“Stan!” Mike smiled up at him, reaching over to his bedside table to turn off the radio that was playing. He face dropped into a look of concern when Stan didn’t reply. “Is everything okay?” He asked hesitantly. He shifted on his bed, before making his way to the door to lead Stan in. He closed the door gently behind them as he ushered Stan to sit on his bed. He took a seat in the desk chair opposite to Stan. “What happened?”

“Richie Tozier is an asshole.” He spat bluntly. He knew he couldn’t really blame this on Richie, but that doesn’t mean wasn’t going to try to. Mike nodded.

“What did he do this time?” His voice was soft and accusing. It made Stan feel safe. Stan still couldn’t shake the defensive tone in his voice.

“Nothing. Absolutely nothing. He just…” He started tapping the tips of his fingers to his thumbs in a rhythmic pattern, trying to calm himself. He screwed his eyes shut. “He was just standing there and so then I started thinking and my brain just, you know, wouldn’t stop thinking. And then Richie asked if I was okay, and of course I was okay, I’m always okay. There was still this voice, in the back of my head just talking about his stupid hair and gold light and stuff and I just didn’t stop thinking. He went inside and I still didn’t stop thinking because, God, I’m so stupid what even and I thinking? I-- I can’t do this.” The words avalanches from his mouth. He didn’t even know if his word were making sense, they hardly made sense to him, but the awkward string of consciousness made him what somewhat better. Mike blinked back at him, obviously not expecting that answer and unsure how to respond.

“...Okay…” Mike shifted in his chair, thinking for a second. “So, you’re mad at Richie because you think of him?” He asked slowly, not at all understanding what Stan was talking about.

“No! He just…” Stan brought a clasped hand to his head, trying to think of the right words to express his confusion and hurt. “I’m just…” He hit his head twice with the fist, willing himself to just tell Mike the truth. To stop being so afraid. Maybe Mike could help, if he knew. Stan hit
himself once more before a strong grip clasped around his wrist and slowly brought it down. Stan opened his eyes to see Mike sitting next to him on the bed, staring at him with concern. It only made Stan feel worse. He looked up to Mike and felt tears beginning to sting his eyes. “Mike… I’m… I’m going to hell.” His voice came out barely as a whisper, but that’s all it took to make it real. Like saying it out loud secured his fate. Now someone other than him knew, he couldn’t pretend like that aching wasn’t there. He felt hot tears stream down his face and he tore his gaze away from Mike’s and focused on where his hand laid on his wrist.

Mike didn’t waste a second before wrapping strong arms around him. “It okay. I promise. You’re okay, it’s okay…” he whispered softly into Stan’s ear and traced his forefinger in small, comforting patterns on Stan’s back. Stan clutched a fistful of Mike shirt and drew back from the hug.

“It’s not okay! It’s- It’s,” he hiccuped. He hated being like this, so weak, but something about Mike’s presence made it okay. “It’s wrong. I- I can’t… I can’t…” He tried to find the right words but none came. “I can’t.”

Mike removed the hand tracing circles in his back to wipe the other’s tear-stained cheeks with the pad of his thumb.

“It is okay.” His voice came out more firm than before, but not in an aggressive way, but more in a way that told Stan he wasn’t changing his mind; that Mike meant it. Stan sniffed.

“Is it? I’ve been told-- I mean-- I don’t think…” Stan couldn’t even will any words to come out. He shook his head and finally looked back up at Mike who was smiling sadly down at him.

“Yeah. It is.” He pulled him back into an embrace. “It is to me.”

They stayed like that for a while before Mike’s father’s voice came from right outside the door.

“Hey, Mike? Is your friend staying the night? I awful dark outside.”

Mike looked down questioningly at Stan who quickly shook his head. In his frazzled state, he had totally forgotten about not telling his father he’d be late.

“No, no. I should be getting home.” He said, loud enough for Mr. Hanlon to hear on the other side
of the door.

“Okay. Would you like a ride? I know it’s not a short walk and I’d hate to have you walkin’ around in the dark.”

Stan stood up from Mikes bed and opened the door.

“Yeah, I’d like that. Thank you.” He turned to Mike, a ghost of a smile on his face. “I’ll see you tomorrow?”

Mike smiled brightly in return. “Sure thing.”

----

Stan waved to Mr. Hanlon’s car as he approached his doorstep. He took a deep breath before stepping inside.

“Where have you been?”

Stan hadn’t even fully entered the house before he heard his father’s stern voice.

“I’m sorry, dad,” Stan answered, looking down to the ground in guilt. He closed the door softly behind him and started untying his shoes.

“That didn’t answer my question,” Donald spoke, this time his voice much less harsh, instead filling with concern.

“I went over to Mike’s after school for a little while, I lost track of time.” He looked up to his father, still feeling extremely guilty. His father sighed before a small smile came across his lips.

“You should have called,” he sighed, his voice coming out soft and reassuring. “We were worried about you.”
“I know, dad, I’m sorry. It won’t happen again. I promise.”

“Come on, you’re mother is almost finished with dinner.”

Stan sighed in relief of not being punished as he followed his father into the kitchen and hugging his mother hello.

Chapter End Notes

me? projecting my own Hell-fueled Gay Crisis on my favorite boy? More likely than you think!

ANYWAY go yell at me on tumblr @HeySpaceCadett or in the comments. It give me life and motivation to keep writing <3
The school week went by quickly and it was soon Friday. The seven of them sat in their usual circle in the field, planning out their weekends. It’s no big surprise none of the Losers wanted to go to Greta’s party. Eddie screeched just at the idea of being in her house while Bill and Stan both made gagging noises. Ben tried to be polite about declining to offer, but it was no secret he’d probably rather die than go to her party. Mike seemed the least fazed, being on the football team comes with being invited to parties, not that he ever agrees to go. In the end, the decide to ignore Greta’s party and throw a small one themselves.

“But there will be drinks, right?” Richie asked as they started planning out the day.

“Drinks? Are you kidding me? We’re like, barely 17. Do you know what happens when someone gets alcohol poisoning? It goes through their whole body, basically rots for from the inside out.” Eddie crossed his arms defiantly, glaring as Richie for even suggesting it.

“Oh, c-come on, E-Eddie. It’ll be fun. P-Plus, you don’t need to d-drink if you don’t want to.” Bill smiled at Eddie who didn’t looked impressed.

“Fine, but if one of you dies, I’m not feeling bad about it. I’m just saying.” Eddie threw his arms in the air in defeat.

“Okay, first of all,” Bev broke in, “no one is going to die. Alcohol poisoning only happens if your blood-alcohol level is super high, and none of us are going to get shitfaced.” She turned from looking at Eddie to facing Richie. “Secondly, where would we even get any?”

“Easy,” Richie shrugged. “I’ll get it.”
“How are you planning on doing that?” Ben questioned in a voice that seemed more genuinely curious than accusatory.

Richie scoffed. “Don’t worry about that, friend. I have my ways.” He winked at Ben who rolled his eyes with a small smile on his face in return. “What’s a party without a drunk truth or dare?”

“This isn’t even a real party, Rich. If anything, it’s more of a small get-together.” Mike pointed out. Richie gasped and clutched imaginary perls.

“How DARE you? I throw together a nice, elegant party and THIS is how you repay me? I am shocked, Mike. Shocked.” He shook his head. “I thought better of you, Mikey. I really did.”

A chorus of groans rang through the group at Richie’s melodramatic antics.

“Okay. Bill supplies the venue, I’ll supply the drinks, the rest of you are up for snacks and whatever games you want to play, got it?” Richie went around the circle pointing at everyone as they nodded their heads.

“I don’t know, Richie,” Eddie cutted in, “I’m not sure it’s such a good idea for me to go. I mean, I hung out with you guys last weekend, I’m not sure my mom will let me hang two weeks in a row.” His brows pulled together and he mulled over the idea in his head.

“Pff,” Richie scoffed, waving his hand in dismissal, “just sneak out. It won’t be the first time.” Richie smiled down at Eddie. “And it won’t be your last.” He punctuated his statement with a wink.

“I… I don’t even know what that’s supposed to mean,” Eddie sighed, shaking his head. “But fine. I’ll see what I can do, but if I’m not there by 8, don’t wait up.”

“You got it, Spaghetti!”

“Please do me a favor and never talk to me again.”

Richie opened his mouth to spit a comeback, but was cut off by the lunch dismissal bell ringing.
“S-Saved by the bell,” Bill laughed. Richie ignored him.

“Alright team, we’re all set. Good game. See y’all tomorrow.” He saluted to them before sliding his bag around one shoulder and heading towards the school building.

----

Richie plopped down his bag next to the doorway as soon as he entered the house. The plan was to get in, get his shit, and get to Bill as soon as possible. He walked in the living room with soft feet, making sure Maggie was sleeping soundly on the couch. He saw her, arm lying at what must have been an uncomfortable angle, hanging off the edge of the couch, a mostly empty bottle of something tipped on its side. She snored loudly. Richie sighed. It didn’t matter how much noise he made, she would sleep through it. He could probably invite half the school over and throw a party and she wouldn’t stir.

He quickly made his way to the musty kitchen and headed straight for the cabinet kitty-cornering the furthest most corner. He knew Maggie hid her stash there. She wasn’t very good at hiding it. Something told him she wouldn’t care even if she did find out he knew her secret hiding place.

He grabbed three medium sized bottles without really looking at the labels, grabbed his bag and made his way upstairs. He dumped the contents of his backpack onto the bed before stuffing it with boxers, socks, a pair of sweatpants, and a mostly clean Freese’s shirt. He hiked it onto his shoulder and rushed out of the house without looking back.

----

He was the first of the other six Losers to make it to Bill’s, which wasn’t uncommon on their movie nights.

“Richie!” A young boy exclaimed as he answered the door. He flung his arms around Richie’s legs, almost making him lose his balance.

“Woooah there, buddy! You’re getting too big! You’re gonna end up knockin’ me down one of these days,” Richie winked at the boy who smiled brightly back to him. “How you doin’, Georgie?”
Georgie finally let Richie’s legs go and lead him into the main living room.

“Good! We made cookies!” He cheered. He was by far the cutest thing Richie has ever seen.

“Cookies?” Richie responded with the same amount of enthusiasm. “Really? What kind?”

“Chocolate chips, duh.”

“Ah, good choice my dear, truly the best cookie around. 4.5 stars out of 10.” Richie said in a posh voice, trying to reach something akin to the Queen of England. Georgie giggled loudly at his impression.

“Do you want one?” Georgie asked, bouncing on his feet slightly.

“I would love one!”

“Good!” Georgie raced into the kitchen, disappearing behind the separation wall.

Richie smiled to himself as he set his bag down behind the sofa. Bill entered the room with a smile.

“I th-thought I h-heard yelling down here.” He joked, plopping onto the couch. Richie quickly followed suit.

“I could be yelling other things if you really wanted me to,” Richie winked.

“Richie!,” Bill tried to say in a scolding voice, but his smile gave him away. “T-Th-There are children present.” Richie smashed his mouth shut, miming zipping his lips and locking it.

Georgie returned to the living room with two warm cookies in hand. He handed on to Richie and watched him intensely, waiting for him to take a bite. Richie examined the cookie carefully.
“Let’s see… The form is at least four stars.” He turned it in his hand to look at all sides. “It’s still warm, but not hot, a perfect temperature, as it were.” He poked the on the chocolate chips that was on top. His finger came off with a dollop of chocolate. “And the chips, oh the chips, are melted to… perfection.” He looked at Georgie with a faux-serious face. “But none of that means nothing if the taste is off. Time… For the moment…… of truth.” Richie took a generous bite, taking in nearly half the cookie at once. He chewed slowly, a making sure to look very concentrated on the task at hand. He closed his eyes after a second. “Mmmm! Mm. mm. Mmm.” He smiled, swallowing. “My dear boy, this may have been the best chocolate chips cookie-- NAY-- the best COOKIE I’ve had in all my years. I thank you.” He bowed as much as he could while sitting on the couch, careful not to drop the rest of his cookie.

Georgie laughed and smiled so wide Richie saw it must have hurt.

“Really? You think so?” Georgie said, excitement dripping from his tongue.

“Of course! I wouldn’t lie to you, would I?”

Georgie bounded to him, wrapping him in a hug.

“Thank you, thank you, thank you!” He pulled back, still smiling. “I saved one for all six of you so don’t let them forget.” He said, a bit more serious, which was honestly just adorable.

“A-actually, G-G-Georgie, there’s seven of us tonight.”

“Seven? Who else is coming?”

“His name is St-Stan. You’ll like him, I promise.”

“A new friend? Can I answer the door for him? Please?”

Bill and Richie both laughed before Bill nodded to his younger brother and Gerogie ran off to the other room. Richie let his body fall until his head was on Bill’s shoulder.
“He’s so precious,” Richie whined. Bill chuckled softly.

“Yeah, he is. He really likes you.”

“Good. Because those was really a damn good cookie.” Richie smiled up to Bill who laughed.

Stan was the next on to arrive. A soft knock came from the front door and the two boys could hear Georgie racing to open the door. They both got up and walked towards the entry.

“Stan!” Georgie greeted, staring up at the curly haired boy he’d never met before. Stan stared back with wide eyes, a little confused.

“H-Hi?”

“Oh woah, do you have a stutter, too? Is that why you’re friends with Bill? He’s been trying real hard, you know, he has these sentences he says over and over to help him. Maybe they’d help you to. One about ghosts! How did you and Bill meet? Are you in the same grade?” Georgie’s mouth spewed words and a very dumbstricken Stanly fast enough that he didn’t even have time to answer his questions. Bill walked up and put his hand on Georgie’s shoulder, effectively quieting the boy.

“Stan, this is G-Georgie. My little brother.” Bill smiled apologetically to the other who smiled politely at Georgie.

“It’s nice to meet you, Georgie.” Stan shifted on his feet, obviously a little uncomfortable by the ambush. “I know Bill through school. He’s a grade above me.”

Bill guided his brother to the side so Stan could come in. He carefully took off his shoes and stored them neatly next to the door.

“Wait, I thought we were in the same class,” Richie spoke, one eyebrow raised. Stan looked at him, just now noticing his presence.

“We share a class, that doesn’t mean we’re the same grade.” He shrugged off his coat and folded it carefully in his arms. “Physics C isn’t just a Junior class.”
“Well, yeah, I knew that,” Richie lied. He always thought it was a Junior class. He scoffed. “I just thought you were our age.

“I am.” Stanley replied easily, apparently not bothering to explain himself. Bill started leading him to the living room.

“Holy shit, were you held back?” Richie said, a smile spreading. “You sly dog, I wouldn’t have pegged you for a bad apple.”

“L-Language!” Bill scolded, covering his little brother’s ear dramatically. Georgie giggled at the gesture, but didn’t comment on it. The three of them sat on the couch before Georgie left the room once again.

“I wasn’t held back,” he glared at Richie before pausing. “Okay, I was held back --but not because I did bad on the assignments are anything, I just was absent. A lot. I missed so much of the material, my teachers thought it best I just retake the year,” he shrugged. “It’s no big deal.”

“Why, Stanthony, I’m learning more and more about you each day! What else have you been keeping from us?” Richie wiggled his eyebrows, leaning into Stan’s space. Stan was quick to lean away from him.

“I’m not hiding anything.” He face was straight. Too straight. Suspiciously straight.

“Hmmm…… We’ll see, Uris……” Richie winked at him before sinking into the couch. “So are we going to get this party start or what?”

“We’re going to wait until the other l-losers get here and my p-parent to go to s-s-sleep, and then we’ll start.” Bill said confidently. Richie thought it was lame to wait, but he didn’t question Bill. Bill’s word was law. He huffed, leaning his head back until it mat the back on the couch.

“Fiiiiinnnneeee,” he huffed, earning a chuckle from Bill and a glare from Stan. “We’ll wait.”

Chapter End Notes
Please tell me what you think of this. I know it ends a bit oddly, but I needed to split it into two parts so, shrug. Tell me what your favorite part is or a line you like or yell at me down in the comments or @HeySpaceCadett on tumblr <3 <3 <3
The Loser's Party: Part Two

Chapter Notes

uHH s/o to TrashFangirl for being an actual angel ????????????? ur support means sm omg

See the end of the chapter for more notes

I wasn’t much after nine when all seven of them sat in a circle on the floor, Bill’s parents having retired for the night. The T.V. entertained itself with a movie they had long since forgot about. The three bottles Richie grabbed were open and poured into seven different sized glasses that each Loser was either handing or sitting by their side.

“Okay, Stan, t-truth or d-dare,” Bill smirked across the circle to Stan. Stan matched his smirk leaning towards him.

“Truth.”

“Lammeeeee,” Richie whined for the tenth time that night. Picking truth was lame and in his slightly drunken state, he wasn’t afraid to said it.

“I’ve seen what you guy do for dares. I might be lame, but at least i’m not licking the underside of your converse.” Stanley retorted, shaking his head.

“O-okay, okay. Stan. If you had to kiss one person at our school, who would it be?” Stan faced grew noticeably red, even in the dim lighting.

“No one. I’d rather puke than kiss anyone who goes to our school.”

“Come on, Stan, don’t tell me you wouldn’t want any of this,” Richie winked at Stan, gesturing to himself. Stan made gagging noises, causing the circle to erupt into laughter.

“Stan! T-That’s cheating. If there was no other choice and y-you needed to kiss one person, who would it be?” Richie would swear he saw Stan’s flicking towards him, but then again, it was dark. And he was a little drunk.
“I guess Beverly. Simply because she’s the only girl I trust at the god forsaken place.” Richie snorted. Mike shook his head with a small smile. Bev blew him a kiss. “Okay, my turn.” He sat up in his seat, crossing his legs beneath him. “Richie. Truth or dare?” Richie paused.

“Truth.”

“Pussy!” Bev called mockingly, having been called the same thing not three turns ago for picking truth. She picked up a pillow from beside her and threw it at Richie.

“You are what you eat, Bevvie,” Richie winked. Beverly and Bill both doubled over in laughter in response while the others laughed softly and shook their heads. It took them a few minutes to regained themselves, Bill now laying flat on the ground, looking up at the ceiling, apparently to comfortable in the position to sit back up. “Besides, Stan’s right. Y’all are a bit crazy when it comes to dares.” Richie raised his cup that was still half full and downed it before reaching to pour himself more.

“I told you.” Stan cackled. “Okay, Richie, if you were the opposite sex for one day, what the first thing you’d do?” Richie laughed before taking another drink. Mike eyed his drink wearily.

“That’s easy. I’d rub one out.” Richie shrugged, as if it was the most obvious thing in the world.

“That’s gross, Richie!” Beverly squeaked.

“Oh, come on, Bev, like you never wondered what it would be like to jack off.” Richie said flatly, staring her down. She paused for a second, thinking it over, until she relented and shrugged her shoulders. Richie finished the rest of his third drink before taking his turn.

“Okay, okay. Truth or dare?” Richie slurred, pointing at each of the Losers. Bev laughed.

“Rich, you gotta say who you’re asking.”

“All of you! Truth. Or. Dare.”
“Dare!” Mike piped from his left.

“Mmmmmmkay. What’s your favorite thing about me?”

Bill scoffed, his eyes still focused on the spinning ceiling fan above him.

“That’s not a dare.”

“Fine, asshole. I DARE YOU to tell me why you like me,” he pouted.

“Oh that’s easy,” Eddie spoke, expression blank. “I don’t.”

“EDDIE!” Bev scolded, with a quick smack to the small boy’s arm.

“Calm down, Bevvie, I was joking…” he frowned and rubbed his sore arm.

Richie frowned and examined his socks, his playful demeanor gone.

“Are you? Cause like. I’m like… you know… me. And me’s loud and annoying and shit so like I don’t know guys, I wouldn’t be friends with me.” He slurred before shrugging, still frowning at the ground. “Me’s annoying.”

This seemed to get all their attention, each coming to the understanding that he wasn’t joking. For the first time in his young life, Richie fully expressed his doubts without jokes. It only took three drinks. He was ready for them all to admit that he was right. He opened up the conversation and now they could tell him the truth. He wasn’t a good friend. He was ready for them all to agree or tell him off or maybe even reassure him otherwise, but instead, silence swept through the group. Somehow, the silence was worse.

Beverly was the first to move. He heard her rising from her seat but refused to look up at her. There was 1001 things that she might do passed through Richie's mind, but none of them included Beverly kneeling in front of him and embracing him.
Richie froze for a second, eyes wide. He slowly raised his arms and wrapped them tightly around her small frame, pressing his nose into the crook of her neck.

"Richie... Do you really feel like that?" she whispered to him, tightening her grasp in response. Richie paused before nodding into her and closing his eyes.

Suddenly another pair of arms reached across him, securing on his shoulder and Beverly's back. And then another pair came from the other side. And then another and another, until the seven of them were cuddled in a lump with Richie who was now crying curled in the center.

"We love you, Richie..." Eddie's voice came out softer than it had in a long time.

"God, we'd be lost without you," Bill breathed. Richie took note that he didn’t stutter.

"I'm so sorry if we ever made you feel like that," Mike smiled. Richie quickly shook his head.

"No, no, it's not that, I just--" he paused, trying to find the right words to express how he felt, "I just never felt like i was worth having friends like you guys." His shoulders started to shake as the words left his lips. The group around him squeezed in tighter, near suffocating him as he fisted Beverly's shirt.

Tears flowed freely through him, something he never would truly let himself do in front of them until now. All his fears he’s harbored since the day he was born washed through him and were clear out with his tears. These weren’t sad tears, but they weren’t exactly happy tears either. Tears of relief, maybe. Never before had Richie felt like this. Like he was not only loved and wanted by people. He smiled into Beverly’s hair.

“Thank you,” he breathed, nearly inaudible, but he trusted all the others to hear.

He couldn’t tell how long the stay like that. To be honest, it was a very uncomfortable position for all of them with elbows and shoulders sticking everywhere and necks and backs craned at odd angles. Richie only moved when he heard the VHS tape stutter as it ended and static filling the television. He sat up slowly, the others falling off of him as he did. He took off his glasses and wiped his eyes underneath them. He looked up with a smirk.

“Does this mean I get to pick the next movie?” There were small chuckled mixed with sniffs from
the group.

“If it’s like 2am,” Bill laughed.

“That’s not an answer, Billy.”

“Sure. Whatever you want, Rich,” Ben piped, looking around to the others who all gave silent nodded of approval. Richie gave a small smile at all of them before getting up and grabbing Big Trouble in Little China of the shelf. Eddie groaned.

“This is like the eighth time you’ve watched this.”

“That’s because it’s a masterpiece, Eds.” Honestly, Richie didn’t much feel like watching the movie. His head was started to hurt and he was quickly growing tired. Even so, he basked in the playful smiles pointed at him from around the room. He popped in the VHS before nesting into a couch corner. Stan took the spot next to him, sitting closer than he usually would. Richie decided not to question it, he was just happy he was there. The others took their places around the room as the movie opened.

It didn’t take longer for the Losers to fall asleep. The last thing he remembers before succumbing is Stan’s head falling onto his shoulder, his steady, hot breath on his arm. Richie smiled to himself as he drifted to sleep.

Chapter End Notes

I actually thought I uploaded this like last week but APPARENTLY I never actually hit "publish" so

anyway go yell at me in the comment or on tumblr @HeySpaceCadett

End Notes

Please give me a comment on what you thought! Feedback is always a great help.
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!