Misperception

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Misperception

by orkestrations

Summary

Logan and Roman are 17. Virgil and Patton are both in their early twenties. It's well known online that the four of them are close friends. Someone does the math.
Their answer is wrong.
And the four of them are going to pay the price for that.

Notes

Not many warnings for this one, although there are implied accusations of abuse.
This is the GIHV, as such, pronouns are as follows: Logan, xe/xir; Virgil, they/them; Roman, they/them; September, she/her; Patton, he/him

See the end of the work for more notes

Someone drove by outside, their bass cranked up so much that Logan could feel it throbbing deep in xir bones. Xe cringed, baring xir teeth, and refocused xir attention on xir laptop screen as the loud car passed, the pounding beat fading into the distance. One half of the screen was taken up by Discord, opened to the GenReb server where Zia, Renee, and Hollyn were chatting in the general channel. The other half of the screen was dedicated to essay-writing, which was hardly being helped by all the people driving by with cranked-up bass or loud motors.

It only took xir a few moments to refocus on xir writing, the brief distraction thankfully not disrupting xir too badly. It helped that the topic was one that xe had an intense interest in.
One might think xe was writing an essay for English class. Technically, there was one due that
Friday, but xe had already finished it.

No, the essay was for GenReb. Maybe Logan wasn’t the most creative person on the planet (that award would probably end up going to Roman someday) but sometimes, xe just had to write. Xe would overflow with words, so many they stopped coming out of xir mouth and the only way to get them out was to write them down.

It was one of those nights. Xe had barely made it through dinner, fingers and brain itching at the need to write it all out. And so there they were, 900 words into a rant-slash-essay that xe’d probably ask Virgil to help proofread.

A couple hundred words later and xe reached a spot where xe could finally take a break. One last save (you could never be too careful) and then xe opened tumblr.

21 inbox notifications.

Thrown off for a moment by the sheer number of notifications, xe switched to Discord and opened the group chat for the four of them.

**Mob Psycho 100:** I have 21 asks. I believe this is a situation for gay fear.png

*Wait, why is that my nickname now?*

**ROMAN**

**scar was right:** don’t open them. just leave tungle for today.

roman and i both agreed on it. it fits.

we’ll stream mp100 with you sometime if you want

Logan was… slightly confused. Virgil was telling xir… not to go on tumblr? For a moment, xe was tempted to check it anyways before common sense took over.

**Mob Psycho 100:** I may take you up on that. Why shouldn’t I go on Tumblr? Is there Bad Discourse?

**scar was right:** you sure could say that

people are just being fucky today

but it’s Bad fucky. let me handle it and you and roman can wait until it blows over.

**Mob Psycho 100:** Does it involve all four of us? Shouldn’t Roman and I help if it does? What sort of things could people find to tear apart about us?

**scar was right:** what aren’t they finding lol

it’s Nasty just avoid it

Wait, Virgil had written ‘let me handle it’. Did that mean Patton wasn’t around?

**Mob Psycho 100:** Where’s Patton in all this?

**scar was right:** visiting one of his sisters. he left his phone at home. don’t ask me how he did it.
Logically, Logan should trust Virgil when they said that the discourse was getting nasty. Xe should stay out of it, let Virgil handle it because they said they would, and let it blow over.

Except. Xe was naturally curious.

And curiosity, as they say, killed the cat.

Xe pulled up xir browser again and opened xir inbox. It took a moment to load and then, holy shit. Xe should have listened to Virgil.

*Mob Psycho 100: What The Fuck*

**scar was right:** ??? not the first time he’s done that it’s not worth that much reaction

Oh. Virgil hadn’t quite followed Logan’s leap of logic.

But, honestly, the contents of xir inbox justified the reaction. And, as xe checked xir dash and scrolled, the sheer explosion of bullshit and conclusions jumped to was astonishing. Where had it come from? Had xe missed it, simmering under the surface of things? Had xe been so distracted by GenReb and xir classmates and everything going on that xe had missed it? Sure, xe hadn’t been on tumblr as much as normal, but xe shouldn’t have missed it.

**scar was right:** ??? Logan???

*oh no*

did you do the thing

you did the thing didn’t you.

log off. log off tumblr. you don’t have to deal with this shit, just let me handle it.

Logan’s chest squeezed, and it took xir a moment to recognize it.

Rage. Burning, screaming rage.

*Mob Psycho 100: You shouldn’t have to! Why are people being like this?*

**scar was right:** some people are just motherfuckers. i can deal with it.

*Mob Psycho 100: No! I’m not going to let you do that on your own.*

**scar was right:** could you just… listen to me? it’s disturbing shit and you’re a kid. let me handle this. i have more than enough experience dealing with shitheads.

*Mob Psycho 100: Yeah, shitheads who abused you. I deal with shitheads too! I can handle it!*

Xe switched windows to xir browser and read the first ask in xir inbox. As much as the anger in xir chest wanted to answer it with sharp words and vitriol, xe had to take a step back. This had to be confronted with logic and calm and reason.

The first one was off anon, so xe answered it privately, a couple short sentences denying the claims and (hopefully) reassuring the concerned follower.

But, occasionally, xe caught sight of the sort of hate and poison that was being spit at Virgil and
Patton. If the accusations could somehow be linked to Patton in real life, he could lose his job, and that was only part of what was stoking the fire in Logan’s chest. People were accusing Virgil and Patton of abusing xir and Roman! People were suicide baiting Virgil, and probably Patton! Virgil’s entire career was built on the back of their online presence, and either malicious or seriously misled people were threatening that.

There was a handful of people coming out in support and defense of Patton and Virgil, but they seemed drowned out by how much hate was coming.

And suddenly, just like that, two hours had passed and Logan felt like shit. Xir stomach hurt, xir chest was tight, and there was something weak in xir veins. At some point, Virgil appeared to have logged off, and Roman had never logged on.

Just… the gall that people had, to throw completely unsubstantiated claims around like that.

Xe opened Discord to read the last messages that had been left in the group chat.

scar was right: don’t bring my abuse into this. abusers aren’t the only shithheads i’ve had to deal with.

looks like i can’t fucking stop you

i’ll send something when i can figure out how to put my thoughts into words


scar was right: don’t go on tumblr

and don’t decide you need to look anyway lol

you don’t want to know

Theatre Gay: Are you okay????

scar was right: i’m fine. don’t worry about me.

Theatre Gay: Okay?? Logan?? You there?

scar was right: xe’s too busy with the discourse from hell. i’m logging off now. get some sleep soon.

Theatre Gay: I will! Good night.

And, fifteen minutes later:

Theatre Gay: Well, I’m going to bed! Logan, text me when you go to bed!

Logan didn’t text them.

Logan didn’t go to bed that night.

Xir stomach burned and emotions clawed at xir chest and thoughts chased each other around xir head.

What had prompted that? How had it started? Who had started it? Why?
Even if xe had tried, and xe hadn’t, xe wouldn’t have been able to sleep.

“You’re looking a little not-peachy there, friend,” September said as she sat down in her desk next to Logan’s. “Stay up too late writing angry essays about transphobia in schools?”

“Yes.” No. “…Kind of.”

“Kind of?” she asked, blinking and pausing. She let it hang for a moment and then returned to pulling her stuff for class out of her bag. “What do you mean by that?”

“What I mean is that there was other stuff involved, but it’s not a big deal, so don’t worry about it,” xe replied. Xir tone seemed a little snappy to xir, and September’s reaction answered that, as she flinched slightly and drew back.

“Okay. Sorry about that. Won’t push any further,” she said, and Logan shook xir head.

“I… shouldn’t have snapped,” xe replied. The teacher called class to order before September could reply. That didn’t dissuade her, though. Xe felt her eyes in xir at various points during the class, although during the times they could talk with each other, she kept to her word and didn’t say a thing to xir about what kept xir up the night before.

The lack of sleep made xir feel strange all day. Sometimes, things were happening too fast. Xe felt almost hysterical, and then xe was falling asleep in class and getting written up for it. Xe’d had many late nights before, but never an all-nighter, and xe was miserable.

When xe mentioned that fact to Renee at lunch, she smiled and laughed.

“Well, at least you’re getting used to them now! Better than getting to college in two years and not being able to.”

“No!” Logan stood up, slamming xir hands on the table. “You know what? We shouldn’t be expected to ignore sleep—a vital requirement for health!—on a regular basis for the sake of school or a job.”

“Yeah, well, school or a job isn’t why you didn’t sleep last night,” Roman snapped, and everyone around the table whipped around to look at them. “So maybe stop complaining right now!”

“You idiot, I’m not complaining about that! I’m incensed at the fact that we’re expected to sacrifice our health for grades or work!” Logan fired back, glaring at them. The world seemed to swim before xir as xe spoke. “Everyone talks about all-nighters and hellacious finals and midterms like they’re normal!”

“Well… they kinda are,” Renee replied, fiddling with her spork.

“And they shouldn’t be!” Logan snapped.

“Hey, Logan, how about you take a deep breath?” Christine broke in, standing up from her spot next to Katy and Scarlett and walking over to xir. Xe complied, almost subconsciously. “There you go. Another?” She talked xir through it, calming xir down. The rest of the group at that table turned to other things, other conversations.

Finally, xe had regained some sense of calm, despite the volume of the cafeteria.
“You seem very stressed right now,” Christine said. “Is it okay if I put a hand on your shoulder?” At Logan’s nod, she proceeded to do so. “I think you should call your parents and have them excuse from class the rest of the day so you can go home and sleep.”

Xe shook xir head. “They’re both at work right now. I could skip class but… I’m already at risk of major disciplinary action, and I don’t want another one on my record.”

“Okay.” Christine took a deep breath. “Guess you’ll just have to push through, huh? I’ll come find you after school and drive you home, then, if that’s okay with you. I don’t want you driving home like this.”

“Alright,” xe confirmed, nodding. “I… have detention this afternoon, though.”

“So do I,” Christine replied. “I’ll find you after it.”

And that afternoon, she did indeed find xir.

“If you want a ride home, my dad could give you one. He’ll probably be home by the time we get there,” Logan offered, and Christine shook her head.

“Nah, I’ll just take the bus. My sisters asked me to pick a couple books up from the library for them on my way home, anyways,” she said.

“If you’re sure, xe replied, and she nodded.

“Completely sure. Now toss your keys over,” she said as they were approaching xir car. Logan complied, handing her xir keys after unlocking the car.

It was strange, getting into the passenger’s seat instead of the driver’s. Christine was a good driver, though, taking a lot of care, although that could just be because she was driving someone else’s car.

Almost too soon, they were close to Logan’s house. “Where do you park?” she asked.

“ar the right of that black SUV,” xe replied, and she nodded and parked the car. Once turned off, they sat there in the quiet, the sounds of the settling car the only noises between them.

“Thanks,” Logan said, adjusting his jacket.

“It’s no problem,” Christine replied. “If there’s anything else I can do for you, don’t hesitate to ask, okay?”

Logan nodded. “Yeah. Okay.”

They both exited the car, and Christine rested her hand on Logan’s shoulder for a moment before they said their goodbye’s and she left for the bus stop.

Evan was sitting in his recliner, grading math tests, when Logan walked in. He greeted his kid with a smile.

“Hey! Who was that?” he asked.

“That was Christine,” Logan replied. The silence hung for several moments before Evan made a couple hand gestures.

“Yes, and who is Christine?” he asked.
“Who…? Oh!” xe shook xir head. “She’s a friend of… mine and Roman’s.”

“Ah,” Evan replied, nodding. “I hope she has her license.”

“Even if she doesn’t, she drives better than eighty percent of licensed drivers,” Logan replied. “I’m going to go to my room and do homework.”

“Wait. Before you do, would you let me know how you’re doing? Honestly. You look… less than great,” he said. Logan paused where xe had been turning to go to xir room and tilted xir head, thinking for a moment.

“I didn’t sleep last night.”

Evan blinked. “…Okay. Why didn’t you?”

Logan sighed.

“I didn’t sleep because… you know that some of my online friends are several years older than me. People started throwing around… these awful accusations, yesterday. I don’t even know where they came from! They’re not true! Why would people even say those things about V and Patton?” Xe sniffed and wiped xir eyes with the back of xir hand.

“Oh, Logan,” Evan breathed. He stood up and took a few steps over to Logan, and only hesitated for a moment before wrapping his arms around his kid. “I’m sorry that’s happening. V and Patton both sound like great people, from everything I’ve already heard about them.”

Logan nodded. “They are,” xe said.

“Go take a nap,” Evan said. “And then, when your mother gets home, we can talk about it some more. Maybe I’ll make pancakes for dinner, how does that sound? We’ll have pancakes and figure out what to do about it.”

Logan nodded into xir dad’s shoulder. “Pancakes sound good.”

“Alright. Go take a nap, kiddo, and we’ll figure everything out later,” Evan said, sending Logan off to xir room with a steady hand on xir back.

It was almost miraculous, the way the xe refused to look at xir tumblr notifications before curling up on under xir blankets, still fully clothed, and falling asleep. Things would be better when xir mom got home.

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**End Notes**

**WE'RE BACK BABES**

this au has an [ask blog](https://logically-analytical.tumblr.com) and you can find my Sanders Sides side blog to be [@logically-analytical](https://twitter.com/logically_analytical)

(yes, i'm using logan's url from this au. i can't believe no one already had it.)

Anyways, thank you for reading! sorry it took so long lol. hopefully the next installment won't take *six months*

with love,
kestrel daniel (they/them)
(please leave a comment letting me know what you thought! there's a bunch of reveals coming up eventually that i've been planning for ages so maybe take a crack at them because i'd like to hear what you think will happen!)

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!