Summary

This is initially set right after Virgil "ducks out".

Notes

See the end of the work for notes
Chapter 1

Virgil was exhausted. Not just that, he was absolutely burnt out. It had taken much longer to fully reconnect to Thomas’ mind palace than he had let on in the last video. He is the protector from both internal and external threats. Every part of him hurt. Especially his stomach. He hadn’t eaten since before he had decided to duck out, and that had been early yesterday.

Thankfully Patton called up the stairs at that moment. “Virgil? Kiddo? I made dinner and thought you might like to join us. If not, I’ll leave you a plate in the fridge.”

Virgil thankfully dragged himself off the floor. He didn’t bother to grab his hoodie he had tossed off sometime during the long night. He was too diddly darn tired to be bothered with more than a tee shirt and boxers. He couldn’t even keep his eyes open as he dragged himself toward the kitchen.

Roman’s voice excitedly floated down the hallway. The sound of pots and pans clanging against the stove hit him along with the mouthwatering scent of the casserole Patton was finishing.

He was pulling on oven mitts as Virgil came around the corner and plopped down at the table and buried his face into his arms. Logan was reading a Star Trek book and responding to Roman’s latest grand idea, mostly to makes sure he wouldn’t get anyone hurt. Virgil felt himself float into a partially asleep state. He noticed when a complete silence fell over the table, something that is rare when Roman gets excited. The oven door squeaking sounded amplified and caused a ticklish itch to set in behind his back.

Suddenly, a loud crash jerked Virgil from his sleepy state, and before he could process what was wrong, he found himself hovering at the ceiling. His palms tingled as he took in the room to find the source of the danger. All three of the others were frozen with their mouths hanging open as they processed the image of Virgil’s wings that were keeping him out of harm’s way. Virgil finally saw the broken pan at Patton’s feet and drifted down to the table.

“S- Sorry guys. Didn’t mean to jump like that. I don’t do well with loud sounds.” Everyone was still staring at him. “Patton? Are you okay? Did some of the food get on my feathers?” Virgil brought forward a brilliant white wing to look over.

By now, Patton’s hands are loosely covering his mouth, and it looks like he’s trying to say something. “Did you drink a red bull?” All three of the others look over at him in confusion. “You know, because ‘Red Bull gives you wings.’”

“What? No. Patton, what are you talking about? And why are you guys staring at me?” Patton grabbed towels to start cleaning up the mess. Logan.exe was still frozen. Roman shakes his hands and bounces in his chair chanting “you have wings you have wings you have wings…”

“Guys! What is going on! Do you… Do you guys not have wings?!?!?” Virgil goes pale and his heart feels like it’s beating in his throat. Patton finishes cleaning and slowly walks to Virgil with his hands slightly in front of him, as if he were approaching a scared animal.

“Kiddo, we don’t have wings like that. It was rather shocking to have you suddenly shoot to the roof when I accidentally dropped the dish. How come you’ve never told us about them?”

Virgil shifted his stance, “I thought all of you had your own, and just kept them tucked like I do. You’ve always treated me like the villain, so it’s no like we really talked a whole lot.”

“Wha- How- Why are you the only one who possesses wings of this nature? How do they even work? I know we live in what is essentially a transdimensional universe pocket that functions as Thomas’s mind, but we still tend to have some semblance of the laws of physics. What could have possibly triggered you to need WINGS of all things…” Logan spewed question after question.

“Okay, the only reason that I think they work is because we are basically magic and don’t technically have physical forms for physics to affect. As to WHY I have them, it’s basically in my job description? You know that technically my name is “Anxiety”, but I function as Thomas’s fight, flight, and freeze reaction and vigilance. Do you guys actually know how I can keep track of everything going on internally and eternally? I fly above the whole mindpalace so that I can see everything and try to prevent anything bad from hurting anyone. I have always tried to watch over
everyone, not just Thomas. though, can we eat before I answer all your questions? Last meal I had was before I, ya know...”

Everyone stared with open mouths. “WHAT?!?” Two voices layered over each other, one of concern and one of irritation. Roman fumed while Patton finished his sentence, “so what I’m hearing is that you haven’t eaten since yesterday?!?!?” He quickly transferred the rest of the food onto the table and put everybody’s plates in front of them to start eating. Virgil slowly sat back down, but kept his eyes on Roman, who seemed very put out. “Spill it, Princey. Why you irked?” Roman dramatically threw himself into his chair with his arm over his face. “THIS WHOLE TIME YOU’VE BEEN ABLE TO FLY” he pathetically moved his arm and pouted, “do you know how much more efficient that would be when finding princes in distress?? You could fly above the grand forests and vast vales and guide me and my charming prince to safety..” Roman continued to mutter into his dinner plate.

Logan looked between Roman, Virgil, and Patton. “Roman, you seem to be saying that you aren’t upset that the wings aren’t logical but rather that you could have woo’d warriors better? Patton, you don’t seem to have any reaction to the fact that Virgil has rather large, bright white wings that we’ve never seemed to notice until now.” “Well Teach, they just seem to fit his Angelic personality so perfectly that I don’t even notice.” An unexpected sound poured over the dinner table. Laughter. Specifically, Logan’s throaty chortle. One after the other, everyone joined in to the giggle-fest.

In the days following the wing incident, Virgil took each of the other sides to the skies. Patton said he felt like Lois Lane and Roman wouldn’t stop singing, “I can show you the world”. Logan was the last to ask. He was silent to whole flight, and Virgil was worried about how he was feeling. When they made it back to the ground, Logan stared into nothing and slowly took his glasses off. He reached out and pulled Virgil into a surprisingly tight hug and brought his lips to Virgil’s ear before murmuring, “Thank you.”
The Trolly Problem: Part 1

Thomas had a problem. He couldn’t make up his mind about a question that was sent in an ask. It was the old trolley question. What would he do if he were standing at a switch that would control whether a trolley would end up killing five people if he didn’t move, or throw the switch and it would kill one person that he cared for. He had called all his sides together to try to reach a conclusion, but none of them could reach a proper decision. It’s been distracting him ever since.

“There’s not enough information to reach a proper conclusion! Why is the trolley headed toward the people.? Why are there people tied on the track? How far are you from the groups of people? Could you direct the trolley at the closest group and try to run and release them before it gets there?” Logan runs questions around and around without a proper answer. “If I had to choose, though, I would throw the switch. As Spock says, ‘The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, or the needs of the one.’”

“How could you say that,” Roman yelled, “I’d do everything in my power to save them all. I refuse to leave a man behind! But I’d rather loose one than five.” He paced to and fro in front of the couch in the common room. Logan was sitting stiffly on the edge of the couch, watching the other pace. He turned to Patton, who was quietly sitting in the corner with the rare serious expression resting on his face. “What about you? You’re in charge of the Morality, what would you do if you were at the switch?” Patton slowly looked up at the two of them, and heavily sighed. “I’d throw the switch to reduce the casualties.” Logan gave a grim smile and opened his mouth to continue speaking, but Patton kept talking. “HOWEVER I’d throw the switch only if I didn’t know the single person. If someone I love is the one in danger, I will gladly leave the switch the way it’s set.” Logan was so surprised, his eyebrows were hovering above the rim of his glasses. Roman had frozen in the middle of the suddenly silent room and simply stared at Patton with a sense of shocked betrayal.

“I actually have to agree with Patton.” Virgil’s voice interrupted the heavy silence. Everyone jumped and looked toward the kitchen. Virgil had lounged himself across the half wall separating the rooms and had been listening to the argument while perched in the dark. His hoodie helped him blend into the shadows all except for the tips of his creamy wings that peeked out from the bottom. He jumped down and hesitantly shuffled over to the others. Roman slowly backed away while looking between Virgil and Patton as though he didn’t know who they were. Virgil cringed as Roman turned and dashed to his room. Logan turned to the other two, “he’s mostly likely gone to hunt a dragon-witch or save a village to clear his head.” Patton frowned. “I hope he’s okay. He's really struggling with this question. I guess he feels like he should always be able to save everyone since he’s a Prince.” “I do somewhat understand why the two of you would sacrifice so many for those you love.” Logan looked away and his face lightly flushed, “as illogical as it is, I’d do anything to keep all of you safe.” A huge smile broke across Patton’s face and he threw himself onto Logan’s side in an big awkward hug. Virgil was frozen in place as he felt like his face had turned into a bonfire. “I-I don’t really know how to respond.” Patton released the embarrassed trait, hopped up and headed to the kitchen, patting Virgil on the shoulder as he passed. “Don’t worry, Kiddo. You don’t have to know how to respond.” He gave the fatherly trait a small smile as the other reached the kitchen and began preparing a snack. He turned to Logan, not quite making eye contact, “th-thanks. I don’t th-think any of you h-have actually told me that before. I think I’m going to go keep an eye on Roman so that he doesn’t get hurt while he’s lost in thought.” Logan watched in awe as Virgil shrugged out of his hoodie and stretched out his massive wings and shot into the upper levels of the mind palace.

Wind rushed through Virgil’s hair as he soared in the peaceful silence and searched for Roman. He wasn’t all that surprised at how strongly the Princely trait was reacting to his and Patton’s responses. Roman had never had to choose between saving someone at the cost of many others. With the job of Vigilance, Virgil has always been able to predict the impact Thomas’s actions have on the people around him, and there have been times where he pushed Thomas to do something to help his friends or family, even though it may not have been the best for the other people. Roman always wanted
everyone to be happy.
A flash of white in a small clearing caught Virgil’s eye. Roman was sleeping by a small campfire a ways away from a village. Virgil drifted down, making sure to stay out of his line of sight. He scanned the area and saw the village with a road leading into the forest. Panic flared deep in his chest when he looked the other direction and saw a hideous creature racing down the road heading directly for all the people. He spotted a fork in the road and started flying toward the terrifying creature that could only be Roman’s famous dragon-witch. If he could just spook it enough it would veer onto the other road and never reach the village.
Virgil stopped short.
Roman was at the other end of the road. Asleep. Off-guard. Unaware.
The awful dragon-witch raced past the spot that Virgil had frozen at. A moment later he heard the first villager scream.
Virgil came stumbling into the commons, blindly trying to find his way through the haze of tears that clouded his vision. The rustle of his wings and his frantic breathing accompany his rapid footsteps as he paces back and forth, repeatedly running his hands through his hair. With a frustrated moan, Virgil dashes up to the hallway outside of their bedroom doors. As quick as he had been running, he stopped and looked back and forth between Logan and Patton’s rooms. He wrung his hands as he stood indecisively, trying to figure out which side would be more helpful. Luckily, that decision was taken out of his hands as Patton’s door swung open and both the fatherly trait himself, accompanied by Logan, came out and nearly ran into Virgil as he rushed forward, stumbling over both feet and words.

“I messed up! Roman is going to hate me even more than he already does. Things were just starting to go okay and now he’s never going want to look at me again. I don’t know what to do!” Patton rushed forward and grasped Virgil’s hands in his own. Logan was close behind him and he placed a grounding hand on Virgil’s shoulder while keeping a wary eye on his wings that were agitatedly sweeping along the walls of the hallway.

“Virgil, we need you to take a deep breath and tell us what you’re talking about.” Logan murmured while Patton rubbed his thumbs over Virgil’s hands in time with his exaggerated breathing.

Virgil closed his eyes and took a deep breath before explaining. “I was flying over Roman’s imagination realm trying to keep an eye on him. He was sleeping by a campfire close to a village. I was headed towards a fork in the road down a ways from where he was camped so I could keep an eye on him without him seeing me. I was just getting to a good spot that I could keep an eye on all of the roads when I saw a horrid creature barreling down the road towards the village. I started to fly towards it to try to scare it onto a different path to save the village, but I- I froze. If I had done that, that creature would have found Roman.” Virgil looked up with tears pooled in his eyes. “I let it attack the village, Pat.”

Patton gasps and his grip tightens around Virgil’s hands. His voice goes high in shock. “Virgil, kiddo, you didn’t do anything. It’s not your responsibility to save everybody.”

“That’s where you’re wrong, Pat. I’m Anxiety. My whole thing is supposed to be fight or flight, and instead I froze! I’m responsible for vigilance I should have at least tried to do something!” Logan’s low voice cut into Virgil’s panicked rambling. “Virgil, I don’t think you are aware that the concept of ‘fight or flight’ is actually a misnomer. In reality, there’s three primary responses to a dangerous scenario. There’s, of course, fight and flight, but there’s also the third option of freeze.” Virgil visibly relaxes as Logan continues his exposition. “It’s a completely normal response that anybody could experience.”

Virgil slumps forward and rests his head on Patton’s shoulder while he looks over at Logan. “I may not be responsible, but I swear Roman will feel like I am.”

Patton hums and threads his fingers through Virgil’s hair. “It certainly wouldn’t be right or fair to you if he were to do that. If he doesn’t understand that, we’ll just have to make him understand!”

“Or maybe he doesn’t have to know?” Virgil hopelessly mumble into Patton’s pale shirt. Logan pensively look over Virgil’s quivering form at Patton.

“Virgil-” Logan began.

“I know, I know. Lying is wrong, but I really don’t want to confront him about this!” Virgil’s wings flare out as his head shoots up in a panic. “Oh god! I left him there! I know he’ll have tried to fight that dragon witch to save what villagers he could, what if he gets hurt because I left, what if he’s lying on the cold ground somewhere, bleeding out, with no one around to help him. I have to go. I have to check on him.”
Logan and Patton stumble back as Virgil’s wings come down and send a massive gust of wind into them.

“Virgil wait!!” Patton shouts as he tries to grab Virgil. He lets his arm drop and he gazes grimly at Logan. “You know Roman isn’t going to take this well, right?”

“I know, Pat. I know.”

Chapter End Notes

Emotional Angst ahead.
Roman loses his sanity

Chapter Notes

WARNINGS: cursing, violence, angst. Let me know if there's something else that needs to be tagged.
This is a short chapter and I don't quite know where to go from here.

Virgil soars through the imagination realm searching for Roman’s white tunic. A dense pillar of smoke looms from where the village was. A slight lean corrects Virgil’s course as he hurtles towards the destruction.
With a strangled gasp, Virgil’s vision clears of smoke and he sees… nothing. The entire village was gone; completely leveled with the villagers still inside. Trepidation crawls away his throat as he frantically searches for any sign of Roman. As he glides close to the ground, he finally spots the sash of red across Roman’s back a short ways ahead. He softly lands once he’s an arm’s length away.
“Ro- Roman?”
“They’re all dead, Virgil. Every last person. Not even the children escaped.”
“Oh my God, I’m so sorry, Roman.”
“Why? You couldn’t have stopped the dragon-witch from doing this.” Roman’s voice choked with tears. “I grew up with every single one of them. They were my family.”
“This is all my fault. I just stood there and let that monster attack.”
Roman’s shoulders tensed at Virgil’s confession.
“Roman, I’m so sorry I should have done something but I flew back to the commons instead and, fuck-” Virgil reached out toward Roman’s arm. “Roman, please look at me!”
Roman yanks his sleeve from Virgil’s grasp and spins around, shoving him to the ground in the process.
“Don’t fucking touch me! This is your damn fault. You played me and betrayed me. Acted like you’re some sort of protector and then let an entire village DIE. Were you too scared, Anxiety?”
Virgil stares up at Roman with tears streaming down his face, not bothering moving from the mud that he had been shoved into. “No! Roman, it’s not like that, if you’ll just let me explain!”
Roman scoffs and turns his back to Virgil. “Fucking coward. I thought I was actually getting to know you. I thought you were worth getting to know. What are you, though? All I have seen today is a flashy FAKE. Why should you even have wings if you fail at everything you do.”

Virgil screams as Roman swings back around and pins Virgil to the muddy ground, point of his sword digging into Virgil’s white wing, staining it red.

End Notes

This is my first ever fic. I initially posted the first two chapters on Tumblr over a year ago and then two more fairly recently. I hope You guys enjoy! Let me know where you want to see the story head!!
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!