World Walker

by Sandtalon

Summary

Izuku has seen himself live as a hero, villain, vigilante, civilian, adventurer. He's seen worlds rise and fall through snapshots, analyzing each glance in neat notebooks. Now his story has started, and only one thing is certain: He hasn't saved them yet.

Also known as the fic where Izuku is aware of the future just enough to have anxiety.

Spoilers for specific arcs posted in the beginning notes of each chapter. (first posted fanfic, lmk what you think!)
Notes

Eri and Shinsou are mentioned by name, but that's about it for spoilers.

Trigger warning for past major character death. Iida will still appear in this story, alive. He hasn't died yet. (I'm NOT killing the main cast. probably.) Another version of Iida (like an echo???) is implied to have died. If it will trigger you, skip until the first break.

Opening world/scene is a reference to We Can All Be Heroes by Amandyalmonds

See the end of the work for more notes.
Dark Side of the Morning

Izuku is in a graveyard when it hits him. A mental wave of something rolls through his head before trickling down his shoulders and leaving his body buzzing.

He’s been to this graveyard a hundred times - ever since he found the well-kept stone, he’s made it a point to visit often- so why does this feel different?

It’s like up until this moment, he’s been viewing his life with a thin film over his brain. For the first time, he’s well and truly aware.

It can only mean that today’s the day. Today’s the day Kacchan tells him to - well. Maybe he’ll be better in this timeline. It’s the day he almost dies (in this world) for the first time. Today’s the day everything hinges on. Today, his story has started.

He walks to the edge of the graveyard, fall sunlight filtering through the fiery leaves. He could leave from the gravesite, but something about that seems rude. If there’s any grave that deserves some good rule-abiding respect, it’s that of the student buried seven feet under him.

At the edge of the graveyard, Izuku turns, bows to the friend he hasn’t met yet, and lets himself fall back. The ground rushes up, and he’s falling through a thousand starlight echoes. Galaxies and nebulas knit themselves together as he passes. The stars are larger and closer than in any other sky. Izuku doesn’t bother admiring what he’s seen every day.

Another world approaches, one more city-sized orb containing his entire universe. Flashes of monochrome moments flit across, pieces to his puzzle - when he left, it had been an empty, blank surface.

Izuku swings around to hit it feet-first, tumbling through to fall on the carpet in his room with a soft thump. Light filters through his window; morning.

Whoops.

He stumbles through his morning routine, pushing the long gray bandages from his bed back to the desk, carefully. It’s difficult not to smudge the ink writing. Still, it’s a lot of effort to re-draw any of the restrictive seals if he messes them up.

He slips on the wide bracelets right after, feeling them snap around his wrists tightly. Whispers in his ears and the dull pressure on the back of his mind fade away. Izuku breathes a sigh of relief before moving through the rest of his routine.

As he gets ready for school and wishes his mom goodbye, Izuku is careful to act as he would on any other day. He wants to tell her- he really does, but they both know the hard facts. One divergence ahead of time, one slip up, and it will all turn to dust. He’s watched this day in countless other worlds, watched countless other Izukus- quirked or not- and it always starts here. She’ll understand.

Assuming that today is actually the day. Anxiety hits partway through the walk, making it suddenly hard to believe. Ah, doubt. His old friend.
He gets sidetracked by the hero fight on the way to school. Mount Lady makes her debut, and he’s muttering up a storm when the man besides him turns.

“So, a fan, are ya? Guess you’re aiming to be a hero, huh?”

Izuku beams. “Y-yes sir!”

“Good luck!”

“I’ll do my best!”

The stranger’s words lift him up on his way to school.

*Maybe my story will be better,* he thinks.

*Maybe my story will be kinder,* he hopes as Matsuzaka Sensei lectures them on their futures.

“…but then, I suppose you’re all aiming to be heroes, aren’t you?” Matsuzaka Sensei throws the papers up in the air, letting the class cheer uproariously.

*Maybe my story will be less lonely,* he almost-whispers, not really believing it, as Kacchan’s hands slam down on his desk. The resulting silence is just one more way to flaunt control over the classroom.

“Sensei! Don’t lump me in with these extras,” Kacchan calls out, and Izuku knows its hopeless.

The class rebels again- “Hey Bakugo, chill out!”

“I’ll be a hero, just you watch!”

“Shut up, you *extras!*” Kacchan’s palms crackle slightly. “I’m heading straight to the top, to surpass even All Might - you losers stay on the sidelines where you belong!”

“Oh, that’s right,” Shuya adds. He has a light mutation quirk that leaves him with ram horns. “You were going to UA right?”

Izuku breathes in through his nose and out through his mouth. As long as the attention isn’t on him, he’ll be fine. He places one hand subtly on his desk, trying to commit the feeling of its wooden surface to memory. It grounds him, just enough.

He’s bullied in this timeline too, of course. Who better to pick on that the kid with a light teleportation quirk who couldn’t even see punches before they hit? Who couldn’t even run because he’ll come right back?

*Teleportation my ass.* The wood is light and cool under his fingers. He’s seen this day so many times in so many worlds, for once he has a step up on the universe.

One thing he didn’t see coming was the teacher’s flippant announcement-

“-isn’t Midoriya applying for UA as well?”

Izuku wished he could sink into the floor - hell, he could, but not in class. *Just my luck.*

“Haah?” Kacchan’s head snaps around.

Matsuzaka Sensei chooses this moment to regain control over the classroom, but the damage is
already done. Izuku is doomed. He wraps his other hand around the cold metal desk leg, anchoring himself.

Class wraps up, and Izuku grabs his stuff, hurriedly stuffing everything into his backpack. World analysis notebook first, textbook, then folders. He’s almost done - the hero journal needs to go in last for analysis - when it’s ripped out of his grasp. Kacchan stands before him, something ugly stamped into his expression as he thumbs through the pages.

“I don’t believe it.” Kacchan’s followers snicker behind him as their leader holds it up like a trophy. “You still daydreaming, nerd?”

“Give it back, Kacchan.” Izuku hates how his voice trembles. Just another reminder of how broken their friendship is.

“Give it back,” Kacchan mocks, his voice whiny and not at all Izuku’s. “Think you can be a hero like that? You’re nothing. Runaway crybaby who can’t control his own damn quirk.” Izuku tries to make himself small, hunching his shoulders and clenching his hands. He could go now. He could leave, easily. But Kacchan has his notebook, and if he leaves, he’ll never get it back.

Kacchan’s minions snicker, and one of them – Tsubasa - reaches over to grab Izuku’s arm. He hates it. Hates how it means he can’t leave, hates how it anchors him but sends his point of view out of his body, fog covering his senses.

He hates that he’s thankful Kacchan’s never the one to grab him.

Kacchan says something again, and Izuku can barely blink back. Kacchan says something again, yelling this time. Oh. He wants a response. Explosions pop through the fog, and Izuku watches distantly as his notebook sails out the window. Izuku practically collapses when Tsubasa lets him go.

His hearing clears a bit, letting words register themselves in his mind. Kacchan steps closer, grinding notebook paper under his heel as he leans close. “Don’t get in my way, Deku. I’ll be the only one to apply to UA.”

Kacchan straightens, signaling his group and leaving. “Oh, and Deku. If you really want to get into UA, here’s an idea….”

He really did it. Kacchan really said that. Why did he think it would be different here? The echoing words: “Take a swan-dive off the roof and wish for a better quirk in the next life” had hit him like a train, even if he saw it coming.

He’ll never be ready for that.

A part of him had hoped it would be different here. A part of him knew it wouldn’t. He packs up his stuff and retrieves his notebook from the water cistern. It’s burned and damp, but still legible. This is his only copy that’s on waterproof paper sprayed with fire resistant coating, so the writing isn’t as smudged as it would be.

At least his quirk can predict notebook damage.

There are other things Izuku needs to focus on, so he holds his head high and marches on.

Phantom explosions echo in his ears all the way.
This is it. Izuku stares at the overpass ahead of him. This is where it starts. He takes a step forward to- *Is this really ok*, the little voice in his head murmurs, stopping him cold. *Is it ok to bend reality for this? You haven’t done anything, just gone where you know he’ll be. You’re manipulating this. Life isn’t a card-game, you know. Is it ok if All Might doesn’t find you by chance - not really?*

Izuku thinks. He thinks about the futures he’s explored and the friends he’s found there. He thinks about Kacchan, and how in this world, there’s still a chance that he’ll smile - actually *smile* - again. He thinks about Uraraka, and Iida, and Todoroki and Kirishima and Tsu and wonders if they live in this world too. And he thinks about Shinsou, hurting and more deserving of One For All.

Then he thinks of All Might with sunken eyes, and Iida lying drenched with blood in an alleyway - it always happened, it will happen here too - and Eri, afraid - He hasn’t saved them yet.

He walks into the shadows of the underpass.

Izuku is careful to walk past the manhole, slowing his pace. It’s all for nothing if he’s too far away. The voice returns, *life isn’t a card-game*, but he squashes it down. *I need to save them.*

He’s almost out of the underpass- *did I walk here too quickly? Is today not the day?* -When the manhole cover explodes and *holy sssshit that was loud.*

Izuku doesn’t need to turn to see the slime oozing towards him, but he does any way. The first thing he feels should not be relief. Relief that turns to fear in a second.

“Oh, my. A perfect-sized vessel just for me. Hope you don’t mind if I help myself.”

“N-No thanks!” Izuku yells back, and scrambles away. It won’t make a difference, he knows, but flight or fight instinct has plopped itself down in his brain to watch the show. He can’t have himself completely abducted, anyway - *can’t save them that way*, an awful part of him chirps. The slime is surrounding him in an instant, forcing itself down.

Its gross and sticky and honestly smells like snot. Izuku fumbles at his bracelets, but the slime gets in his way, making his fingers slip. He can’t get them off. There’s a wet chuckle from all around him, and hot breath blasts past his right ear.

“Must have a good quirk if you’re that feisty. Try to make this easy for both of us.”

Izuku can’t reply, but he settles for a mostly-muffled scream.

*What if I played my cards wrong*, he thinks as he slips under, clawing at the edge of consciousness to stay up. The little voice contributes one final whisper: *What if All Might doesn’t come?*

A gust of wind blows the villain away.

*EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE,* comes a shout that can only be one universally famous hero. *WHY? BECAUSE I AM HERE!*

_Oh thank God_, Izuku thinks, and passes out.

He wakes up and finds All Might patting his face frantically.

“Kid - hey, kid! Ah, You’re awake!”

Izuku blinks up groggily at the number one hero of This World, here to save Him. Huh. The iconic,
blinding smile broadens when All Might sees Izuku awake.

“Ah! My- uh- um-” Izuku casts about. What is he supposed to do? He knew that he would get abducted by the slime villain. He knew that All Might would somehow end up training him. But hell if he knew what happened in between.

Besides, this is All Might - All Might!! From his World, and Izuku may be just the tiniest bit starstruck.

He casts about and finds his notebook - a signature - only to find it already signed??!!! What kind of hero-level preparedness??!

“Glad to see you well, my boy! That criminal slipped through my grasp at first, but I’ve got him now!” All Might is crouching down, preparing to take off, and Izuku hasn’t said a word to him.

“I must fly! Evil never sleeps after all.”

“Wait - I have a question-” All Might can’t leave, this can’t be it.

He hasn’t saved them yet.

Seconds before All Might launches himself into the sky, Izuku makes a very stupid decision.
I Tell Partial Truths to my Childhood Idol

Chapter Summary

Izuku makes a bad decision, talks, cries, makes another bad decision, cries some more. It's gonna be a long day.

Chapter Notes

have a uhhhhhhhhhh *looks at smudged writing on palm* short chap?

Anyway, the void whispers no spoilers today. See end chapter notes for me yelling randomly.

Yagi Toshinori has had a long day. He’s stopped a bank heist and purse-snatcher already and put in a brief appearance at UA to meet the other teachers. Overall, it’s almost three hours now.

Now to drop off this criminal and go home. He should get some new groceries too.

This all goes out the window when the green-haired kid latches onto him. It’s like the universe has decided to throw him a curve-ball. Suddenly he’s soaring above the city with blood crawling up his throat and a kid on his leg.

Shit.

When Toshinori lands, he makes sure to deliver a resounding lecture on safety. It doesn’t seem to stick - the kid looks like he’s listened to the same lecture every day.

He’s got bags under his eyes now that Toshinori looks, messy green hair and a scar from right ear to eye. He stammers and stutters, giving thanks and a question that Toshinori doesn’t have time for. He’ll hear it anyway, because All Might loves the people, and so does Yagi Toshinori.

“Can I be a hero with a useless quirk?”

It catches him off-guard. He hesitates, and that’s just enough for his time to be up.

The transformation-steam obscures his vision and when it clears, the kid is still there.

It must be at least a little startling to see your hero shrink right in front of you, but the kid barely reacts. Instead, he takes a step forward, holds Toshinori’s eyes, and repeats his question.

“Can I be a hero with a useless quirk?”

Toshinori stares back. “You’re not - this isn’t a shock?”

The kid blinks. Something passes over his face - desperation, fear, then it settles on guarded.
“I already knew; my quirk’s weird like that. Can I be a Hero, All Might?”

Toshinori is still reeling- another person who knows his secret, another person who may be targeted because of him - but the kid asks like the world weighs on his answer. All Might will always answer to the people.

“My boy,” he says. “What’s your quirk?”

Izuku is stuck now. He could tell All Might his quirk, and risk breaking free of the plotted timeline early, or he could play it safe and tell him later. Izuku pictures that: Hey All Might! Funny story: I’ve been lying about my quirk! All Might’s disappointed face flashes through his mind and he knows he could never do that.

He draws a breath instead. “My quirk is called World Travel. I can visit and watch different dimensions. It takes a bit of time to get there, though. Chronologically, they’re usually a bit ahead, so I can guess some future events from the patterns there. I-I can’t see fine details, just major events, and those always change. I can’t bring anyone with me, either.” It’s oversimplified, but it does the job.

All Might’s face freezes. “Different… dimensions?”

“I know it’s a lot. Think of it like when you step into a room with a lot of mirrors? Like, uh… a bunch of echoes?”

All Might still looks pale, but makes a visible effort to get back on track. “So this conversation…”

“This is new to me. Useless quirk, right?” He says it like a joke. It’s not a joke.

The little voice in his head decides this is a perfect time to speak up. Liar, liar pants on fire, couldn’t save them all then, can’t save any now. He knows you staged this. You’ve tossed your chance, played your cards wrong.

All Might looks at him with sunken eyes full of regret, and there’s some deeper hurt but Izuku doesn’t know this All Might well enough to tell.

“No, I don’t think you can be a hero with that quirk. If you can’t see the details to use it in a fight, then I’m afraid not.”

Izuku feels everything crash and burn around him. This was his chance.

All Might lifts his shirt and shows off a twisted mass of scar tissue. “A villain did this to me five years ago.”

“Five years? Then- the fight with Toxic chainsaw?”

“You know your stuff. But no, Toxic Chainsaw was too much of a low-life to do this kind of damage. This was a fight I asked the media not to show.” He let go of the shirt, and Izuku watches it flutter down- So that’s why.

“This is the truth of heroes, kid. A hero must always be ready to risk their own life. Without a way to fight, you’ll just end up being another casualty when you debut. If you could even clear up the fine details, then perhaps. But as you explained it, no, I don’t think you can be a hero.”
Izuku stands shell-shocked as All Might goes on. He had gone through so much for this conversation, just to be told by his only hope that it’s hopeless.

“You could take up police work. A precognition quirk of any kind is especially suited to the detective life.”

Izuku would cry, but he’s too empty. For once, the tears don’t come.

*You can’t be a hero.*

All Might exits down the stairs at some point.

*You can’t be a hero.*

*You can’t save them.*

He finds himself almost dragging his feet home. What if he missed something? What if he forgot some detail and would never see All Might again except through his phone and the TV screen. He hasn’t saved them yet. What if he never does.

The sounds of a hero fight drag him out of it, and Izuku wanders over listlessly.

“Why aren’t the heroes doing anything,” he mutters to himself. “Why are they just-”

Explosions.

Kacchan’s explosions.

Izuku pushes through the crowd. Heroes are gathered around, but none of them are doing anything besides containing the fires. They’re avoiding a writhing mass of slime, a figure caught inside. That’s- that’s the slime villain, the same one that All Might- no. Izuku’s train of thought stutters to a halt as he realizes. All Might’s pockets were empty when they had talked on the roof. It’s his fault.

*Life isn’t a card game, but if it is, I sure played my hand wrong.* Because now Kacchan- unbeatable, future hero Kacchan- is struggling and when Izuku locks eyes for an instant-

He’s running before he knows what’s happening. Crying too, but that’s nothing new. He searches frantically – where’s the villain’s weakness, everyone has at least one - and finds it.

His backpack goes sailing into the villain’s eyes while Izuku claws at the slime. It’s disgusting and sends all of his instincts slamming down on the flight button, but he reaches through the panic and oozing green slime to Kacchan. It gets in his fingernails and sticks to his arms, but Kacchan looked so desperate that Izuku keeps trying.

The slime villain laughs. It sounds garbled, and he’s vaguely aware of Kacchan cursing at them both. Izuku doesn’t listen, just focuses on fighting through the tears. He won’t let Kacchan die this time. They need him.

Then All Might is there.

A single smash blows the slime villain to pieces. Izuku can only watch on the sidelines, stunned, as a single hit from All Might changes the weather itself. The heroes swarm the scene, police just behind with flashing lights and yellow tape.

Izuku is largely ignored once they find out about his quirk. He’s grateful. The ground is nice and solid, an anchor to Here that he can focus on, so he sits and waits to go home. He answers questions,
is lectured again, then he can leave.

Theoretically, anyway. Kacchan is in his face right after the heroes aren’t.

“I didn’t need your help, Deku.”

“Never said you did.” Izuku should care. He really should. But it’s been too long and disappointing
of a day for that. All he feels now is strangely empty.

“Then what was with that fucking stupid look in your eyes, huh?”

“You looked like you could use a hand. So I offered mine.”

Kacchan struggles for a moment, and Izuku watches distantly as his face contorts into the most
interesting shapes. “Fuck you!”

He stomps off, leaving Izuku to breathe in through his nose and out through his mouth until the
hammering in his chest subsides to a more manageable level.

His bag is covered with a thin layer of slime, and the police have confiscated it. Izuku’s just barely
able to hide his analysis notebooks under his jacket before the bag is taken away. Supposedly he
should get his stuff back by tonight.

With that, he’s left to walk home. Looks like he can’t be a hero, but maybe as a vigilante-

“I AM HERE-“ aaaaand there he is. Today is just filled with chance meetings. All Might skids around
the corner in muscle form, speed walking to Izuku at a terrifying pace.

“I thought.. the press…”

“Escaping the press is no matter to the Number One hero,” All Might declares, before spewing blood
and transforming.

When the steam clears, All Might stands before him, grave and shrunken.

“Kid,” he says, and Izuku braces for another lecture. “I owe you an apology.”

Izuku blinks, but his brain won’t let the words come, so he stays silent.

“I told you today that heroes must always be willing to risk their lives. But I did not listen to my own
advice. I stood by as an innocent suffered. Of all the heroes gathered today, it was you who moved
forward.”

“I didn’t mean to,” Izuku says. It sounds like an excuse because it is. “My feet just...”

“Moved on their own?” All Might smiles, and even though it’s different from the smile in his true
form, it somehow means more than any symbol could.

“My boy, there are often stories of heroes in their youth who moved before they knew what they
were doing. You have the makings of a true hero.”

Izuku’s going to cry at this rate.

“You may know that my quirk is a much-debated topic.”

“Yes.” Izuku finds his voice again. “I know.”
He knows more than that, but right now, this moment means everything.

“The truth is, it’s a power stockpiling quirk, one that can be passed down from one person to the next.”

Izuku feels tears building up, blurring the man, the legend in front of him.

“My boy….”

The wind blows past All Might, lifting his shirt just enough for the scar to show.

“*You can be a hero!*”

Izuku can’t stop the tears when they come.

Chapter End Notes

is this a cliff hanger? does this count?? Any way, yesterday i walked around barefoot in 32 degree weather because my flip flops broke, so fuck climate change for this polar vortex. Am science, can confirm: polar shit is global warming.

Also shout out to my friend K for beta reading this chapter and stopping me from writing a "ass of slime" instead of "mass of slime." Not all heroes wear capes.

Should I update earlier on the bad cliff hanger days? i............. don't know, tell me thoughts in the comments.
"You can be a hero."

Those words he had always wanted to hear- directed at him, not at an echo or copy or different self-blazed their way into Izuku like the sun itself. He went home happy, grinning from ear to ear.

"Mom! I’m home!"

"Welcome back,” she says from the kitchen, and it hits him like a truck that because he’s in it for good now, so is she. She needs to know. Anxiety rolls through him, leaving him tenser than usual.

"Mom... something happened."

"Sweetie?” She hurries out of the kitchen, a dish towel in one hand, and kneels in front of him. After checking him for injuries, and finding none, she places her hands on his shoulders. “Are you ok?”

He nods, and she relaxes. “Would you like to talk about it?”

“I - I used my quirk. Today. To... to do what some of the other timelines did. But I don’t know how much I can tell you-not in the physically can’t way, but in the logically shouldn’t way- because if you know, that might mess up the future, so if I do explain, it can’t be everything. But I want you to know.”

“Sweetie-“

“I’m gonna tell you, because I think that’s something I regret. When I don’t.”

Arms wrap around him. He looks up, and his mom smiles through watery eyes. They always were a family of criers, after all.

“Has it started? Your story?”
“Today- this morning, and the hard part was getting it to go right but, Mom- Kacchan, he- he almost died, too.”

Inko’s mouth snaps shut into a thin line at that last word. The hug switches from reassurance to protective.

“Too?”

_Oops._

“I’m okay, Mom. All Might showed up-both times actually-”

“Both?!” She looks like she might pass out.

“It’s not that bad, in fact it’s great!”

“Sweetie, I’m gonna need you to explain in a bit more detail,” Inko says faintly, before ushering him to the table for dinner and a long talk.

Izuku keeps out All Might’s injuries, and focuses on the training and new quirk. His mom sees through any attempts to brush off the day’s danger, but after a bit of fussing she turns to the matter at hand.

“I told him I needed to think about it. There are a couple other people who could have his quirk too, but… there are so many people I haven’t saved yet. Even If I don’t… the training will help. I think I might accept. Maybe.”

“Does this happen out there, as well?” She waves her hand in a vague movement, and Izuku nods. His mom has never quite known how to refer to Izuku’s quirk, understandably. She tries, and that’s all he could ever ask for.

“I’m usually trained by him. Sometimes it’s other heroes, but usually him. I don’t know how long he’ll teach me, or if I’ll succeed, but I need to try, mom. I need to.” He’s fairly certain she’ll say yes - she does in other worlds, anyway.

“Izuku, you know this is dangerous.”

“Yes.” _Oh, he knows._ “I know.”

“So you understand why I’m against it.”

_What._

“I support your dream to be a hero, you know that.”

_No._

“And I want you to be happy, I do-”

_Please, no._

“But All Might training you crosses a line. He hasn’t contacted me at all, and it sounds like he just chose you off the streets. I’m sorry, honey.”

“Mom, it’s the only chance I have,” he whispers, staring across the table desperately.
Inko picks at her food, not meeting his eyes. “Oh, my baby…. I know you want to be a hero, but isn’t there another way?”

“I don’t need to be a hero, Mom.” That gets her attention. “I just need to save them.”

“Sweetie, it hasn’t happened yet.”

“But it will! It always does!” Oh, he’s crying now. “It will happen and I haven’t saved them yet.”

Inko Midoriya knows those five words. They were the first thing she heard after her little boy stumbled into darkness in the living room. She knows those words from when he came out, crying and in shock, with a neat bandage over his right cheek and a letter in his hand. She knows those words as a mantra since that first portal. And she knows a lost argument when she hears it.

“He should have contacted me first, before asking,” she whispers, and Izuku sees tears in her eyes.

“Yeah, he should’ve.”

They both cry through the curry and sit together on the couch, watching an All Might film until the tears run their course.

Inko shifts. “Do the other three know it’s begun?”

“Not yet.” The I’ll tell them tonight goes unsaid, but they both feel it. Now, though, it’s time for movies, popcorn and blankets.

That night, Izuku slips on a hat and hoodie, tucks an envelope into its pocket, stands in the center of his room, and falls backwards. The ground rushes up to meet his head but right before hitting the floor, he opens a portal and plunges through. The shock is like dropping into water headfirst- both pleasantly warm and icy cold- and he free-falls down in the Null.

The Null is filled with galaxies and nebulae contracting, expanding, destroying and creating. Worlds are suspended in the stars - huge planetary orbs the size of cities flashing with bits and pieces of lives. His life, to be exact. But not His at the same time.

Off in the distance, one world shines brighter than the rest. The world Nonnac has always stood out. Supposedly it was made first, but whoever found out is long dead. Now it’s just a star for navigation.

He sees a world with clouds circling the outside like Saturn’s rings and directs his path there. At the last second, he swings around to hit the planetary body with both feet and hands first. A circle opens, and Izuku falls through.

Mustafu is dark. A neat circle opens just above an empty street, the purest form of starlight inside, and Izuku tumbles out. He looks around and adjusts the hat over his recognizable messy green hair before he sets out. This world already has an Izuku, and it’s not him.

He hadn’t planned to end up on the street. The bracelets around his wrists sit heavy, reminding him he could have better aim if he weren’t so afraid. He heads towards a certain small café; a place where
world-travelers can meet safely.

The Lonely Owl is always open, its owner always ready to send Izuku back if he’s too tired to walk on his own. Hisen runs the same café on every world, existing in each simultaneously. It’s like the rest stop/gas station hybrid of the Null, though with a decidedly more refined and welcoming interior.

The Lonely Owl is filled with golden light. Glass bottles containing little stars and moons and sometimes sunsets line the walls, and a fish tank stretches from floor to ceiling on one side. It’s filled with goldfish- one from each world.

In the back, a young man with a subtle snow leopard-mutant quirk shuffles through paperwork. Hisen, behind the counter, is older with salt and pepper hair and an impeccably groomed beard. The tattoos on his arms move as he continues to restock the cabinets.

Izuku tosses the envelope on the counter before heading to the back.

“You’ll never guess what happened today,” he says, flopping into a chair. “Where’s Taka?”

“On her way.” Clouddancer looks up from his paperwork to study Izuku’s expression. “It this a hot chocolate day or an ice cream day?”

“…. Both. Like a root beer float but better.”

Hisen rolls up his sleeves. “A la mode?”

“I’ll get it.” Cloud ruffles Izuku’s hair fondly before stretching and gathering up the papers.

“Let an old man have his cooking.” The two bicker a bit, and Izuku moves to the barstools.

Izuku met Cloud first, when he first discovered his quirk. Cloud taught him to travel safely, to select destinations from the Null. (Izuku is responsible for a faint scar that traces over Clouds’ jaw. It’s a reminder of that first time world traveling, something best left forgotten.)

From what Izuku can gather, Cloud and Taka’s home worlds’ genetics are different - pieces of both parents’ quirks are usually passed down together, leading to mismatched patchworks of quirks.

“She’ll be here soon,” Hisen informs them, before turning to pass over the hot chocolate a la mode. There’s a mint sprig on the vanilla ice cream. He takes the envelope, opening it neatly. As he skims, his eyebrows raise slightly. “Miss Inko seems worried.”

“Ah, well….…” He trails off as light blue dust swirls out of the ground, allowing Taka to enter. She ruffles Izuku’s hair carefully on the way to the bar. Her arms are wrapped with protective seals, and her gloves have always been a little… sharp.

“Sorry I’m late.”

“It’s fine, we weren’t waiting long.” Cloud puts away the last of his paperwork and suddenly all the attention is on Izuku.

It’s not bad- he’s with friends and found family. The decision he’ll have to make sits heavily in his chest, but for now he can’t even keep the smile back when he starts.

“I met All Might today....”
SO!!! ORIGINL CHARACTERS!!!!
Honestly? the chance that in all the multiverse/null/void, there's only one person with the
quirk to travel? Thats like a 0.0000001% chance. I can say that these will be the only
three original characters. Human ones, anyway.

Basic facts on each bc I know some people like to know that stuff (skip if you don't care
bc I'll get to most of this later anyway):

Hisen's pretty well described above. He used to be an informant, so he's familiar with
most of the underground. He likes tea and makes really good snickerdoodles. Right now
his purpose in the story is as a "hestia/home/hearth" role (I drew him here bc his
expression is super hard to explain)

Taka's got whitish short hair and lots of scarring over her shoulders. She likes exercise
and the ocean, and not being caught in Cloud's pranks. She's the only who's collecting
goldfish. I'll get to drawing her later.

Cloud is,,, honestly a big mood. His quirks are Starcloud and Sight. He's got greyish
hair and wears this giant moutaineering coat thats almost a blanket. He was a rescue
hero but isn't anymore because,,,,, p l o t. Anyway, he likes to prank Taka, smoothies,
and also dancing. He's the hardest to draw but I'll do my best!

Chap title is inspired by No Hopers, Jokers & Rogues
Toshinori sits down on a large piece of concrete used to mark the beach’s entrance. He shouldn’t be nervous - Midoriya was certainly a nice boy, with the makings of a hero practically bursting at the seams. Even should Midoriya refuse, he still has an appointment with Sir Nighteye tomorrow about this very subject. Life will go on.

That’s what he tells himself as his remaining half of a stomach twists with nerves.

“All Might!”

Toshinori spits blood and jumps up to see the boy who had seemingly popped into existence.

“Midoriya, my boy. I’m Yagi Toshinori out of costume - Are you well?”

Midoriya offers him a smile like the sun. It will be a wonder if Toshinori can make it through mentorship without being blinded at this rate.

“Yep! I’ve made up my mind!”

“Oh.” Toshinori quickly strives to cover up his fraying nerves. “And?”

“I want to say yes, but...” Toshinori feels dread fall, another dead weight on his shoulders.

“There’s a chance that me having this power will hurt someone else.”

“Midoriya?” Toshinori stands dumbfounded. This certainly wasn’t the reason he was expecting.

“I’ve seen a lot of worlds, All Might. And a lot of the time, there’s a power that myself, or three other people have.”

*Oh. Shit.*

“And every time they have that power, it saves their life at some point.” Toshinori knows what’s coming before Midoriya says it.

“I think that power is One for All.”
“Midoriya… I chose you.”

“I know. But I want you to meet the other three. Tell me what you think, and if they’re not what you’re looking for, then I’ll accept.” The boy fumbles in his pockets for a moment, before drawing out a small piece of folded paper. He holds it out like a peace offering.

“Are you sure?” Toshinori takes the yellow post-it, glancing down at three unfamiliar names.

“I’m sure.” Midoriya shakes himself and smiles up. “I wish I could accept now.”

“Well.” Toshinori carefully tucks the already-crinkled paper into his own pocket. “Would you be willing to train for that day?”

The smile he gets in response is determined, and all the answer he needs.

Toshinori pulls out the post it, looking over the thee names and short descriptions. According to Midoriya, he’ll be meeting one of them with Nighteye. It’s a surprise that the boy knows the hero at all.

Then again, the entire list is unexpected, so Toshinori decides to wait. Perhaps tomorrow’s meeting will be a good start.

He doubts, deep in the back of his mind, that any of the others will be the one. He can’t help but think that he was right the first time. Midoriya is a true hero in the making.

He’ll still check, if nothing else because Midoriya seemed so sure when passing over the note.

A mental image of Midoriya passes through his mind, unphased at All Might’s transformation. “It’s my quirk,” he’d said. Foresight.

All Might thinks of a man who was once his partner and tucks the note away. Foresight quirks tend to ruin those who don’t listen.

Izuku pushes a rusty refrigerator and almost falls on his face. All Might is nearby, ready to step in if need be, but for the most part it’s just him, the beach, and mountain upon mountain of trash.

The beach was probably beautiful once. Emphasis on once. Now it’s cluttered beyond belief. Izuku’s only seen it on worlds once he’s started. Nothing could have prepared him for the daunting landscape of refuse covering the entire beach. It might even be larger here.

Either way, Izuku cracks his back and sets himself to the task. He has to be stronger.

There’s also a small detail All Might mentioned of his limbs popping off.

The refrigerator tips over and this time Izuku really does fall. The sand tastes disgusting; he’s not looking forward to picking the cigarette butts out of the beach once this is over.
The days fall into a steady rhythm: wake up, school, beach, home, travel and sleep.

Kacchan notices him switching into training clothes before he leaves but doesn’t say much. Izuku braces for the coming storm.

Inko, however, is happy to help. She adjusts their meals according to his plan and they eagerly discuss his progress nightly. She also contributes a couple weights to the cause, and Izuku may have cried. Maybe.

Everyone at the Lonely Owl is ecstatic, although they do recommend he cuts down on time world traveling to catch up on sleep. Hisen passes over some gloves for use on the beach, Cloud tells him its under-sand-able to get exhausted, and Taka offers tips on lifting heavy objects safely.

Overall the plan is a manageable hell. Izuku’s even able to squeeze in some extra work outs on other worlds - the time difference lets him pour a full two hours workout into 30 minutes - before Cloud catches him (admittedly half-dead) and sends him home to sleep.

All Might even left a few hours of “relax time” on the weekends, which Izuku supposes is for hanging out with friends. There’s just one small problem in that he doesn’t… have… friends. Kacchan could count, but Izuku’s hesitant to seek him out.

That’s how he ends up in front of Aeon Shopping Mall on Sunday. It’s fun browsing, and he can eat a quick lunch in the food court later. He should pick up a first-aid kit for the beach too.

He didn’t account for the absolutely packed food court. Izuku wanders the crowd, gripping his tray of salad and udon with white knuckles. His brain helpfully contributes the statistics for villain attacks in crowded areas. There are almost no seats. He scans the sea of people for an empty chair, and there - two are empty right across from a familiar face.

Familiar in that he’s never seen it before, but those horns and that horse-mutation quirk are recognizable from enough worlds. She’s always from abroad, usually America, and always in class 1-B.

If only he could remember her name.

Well, either way he needs a place to sit, and the only two spots are across from her.

She’s listening to music as she digs into a absolutely huge bowl of miso ramen. Izuku has to tap the table before she notices.

“Oh!” She tugs out her headphones. “Hello.”

Izuku points to the seat and shrugs, trying to communicate through expression that he just needs to eat, and then he’ll leave.

She gives him a quick “Go ahead,” and Izuku slides in.

They go back to their own food, and Izuku pulls out his own headphones. He’s very aware that she probably doesn’t want to talk to him, which is just fine. Relatable, honestly.

She taps the table this time, catching his attention. Guess he was wrong.

“What music?”
Oh. He flashes her a quick grin before passing over one of his earbuds rather than responding. He can’t say something stupid if he doesn’t talk.

She listens for a solid fifteen seconds before yanking the earbuds out and staring at him.

“I- what is this name in Japanese? In English, we call it Rickrolling.”

Izuku sputters before replying in English. “I know, sorry, I didn’t think you’d be offended—“

She cuts him off with a laugh before offering her own music.

Africa by Toto.

Her grin is a touch wilder than he’s expecting. “Same hat!”

Izuku grins back shakily, replying in the same language. “Same hat.”

“Your English is really good! It’s almost British dialect but not quite. I can barely hear an accent.”

“Oh, well, I’ve studied a bit? Your Japanese is good, too!”

She follows his switch back to Japanese. “Thank you! I’m trying to study because of high school exams. In Japan, they are super, super, SUPER difficult.”

“Yeah, I’m training for the same thing.”

“I don’t know that word.” She wrinkles her nose, repeating it. “Training.”

“Oh! It’s like practice for sports. I practice fighting, I want to be stronger, so I train. Am training. Have trained.”

Just as he’s speaking, Izuku becomes aware that someone has been standing behind the seat. For a while. The horned girl looks up and waves nervously. Izuku is too busy staring at the new but familiar gravity-defying purple hair. It’s a lighter shade here, and there’s a faint scar that traces over the bridge of his nose.

“Hello,” his seatmate starts. “It’s nice to meet you.”

The stranger blinks slowly before responding. “This seat is open.” It’s not a question. If anything, he sounds completely dead inside.

The girl nods her head to the seat. “Go ahead. Oh! My name is Pony. What’s yours?”

Izuku and the new arrival exchange mirrored deer-in-the-headlights looks.

“Midoriya.”

“Shinsou.” He goes back to his hamburger at top speed. If it’s to get away from an unwanted conversation, then Izuku doesn’t blame him.

All Might mentioned that he’d met Mirio Togata last week and would try to get in contact with Shinsou next. Izuku can’t exactly hint that he both knows, and has cried in front of, the actual literal living Symbol of Peace, so it looks like he’ll have to keep quiet.

That’s fine. Izuku has been holding his tongue for most of his life. One more secret won’t make a difference.
On a different note, Izuku’s never seen Shinsou and Pony interact on… any… world. They seem like the kind of people who’d get along like oil and water. Then again.. maybe not.

Pony picks at her noodles. “Midoriya-san, what are you…uh.. tr-hmmm.?”

“Training?”

“Yes! What are you training about? What sport?”

Izuku rubs his neck. “Ah- entrance exams. I want to go to UA, but honestly its all up in the air if I can make it.”

“No way. Me too! And you, Shinsou?”

“So, what if I am.”

Pony cheers. “Same hat!”

“Same hat!”

Shinsou swallows before grudgingly joining in. “Same hat.”

Pony slams the table with both hands, rattling their bowls. “You know the meme! Almost nobody here knows memes. Do you speak English?”

“My father is an English teacher. I know a little. Many memes.”

Izuku startles a bit at this information but wrestles the surprise back. It might just be a coincidence.

They keep talking, alternating from one language to the next. Pony’s Japanese is a bit better that Shinsou’s English, so they tend to stay in that language.

Shinsou doesn’t speak much, but it’s something.

They talk for a bit before Pony ends up dragging them around the mall. Izuku’s not sure how it happens, but he’s finally around people his age who aren’t actively trying to humiliate or hurt him, so that’s a plus. Even when Pony teases him about his “very very fluffy” hair, it’s good natured.

They’re playing claw games when Shinsou shifts. “I should go pick up what I came for.”

Pony’s eyes widen comically. “Oh, yeah! Me too. I want to buy the small study papers and gloves! How about you, Midoriya?”

“Oh, I’m working with a lot of metal, so I should probably have a first aid kit, in case anything happens and my supervisor isn’t there. It’s probably something I should have gotten earlier, but all of the stress and busy schedule really weighed me down, I guess. Maybe he gave me these afternoons to prep? I should start doing exercises then as well just in case. That would-“

“I didn’t understand- a bit slower?”

Izuku stumbles out an apology and explanation before they agree to head to the second floor. Pony trots ahead, leaving Izuku and Shinsou to catch up.

It’s here that Izuku sees a perfect opportunity.

“Hey, Shinsou, I know this is coming out of left field, but I’d like to be friends. Pony never gave each of us a chance to decide, but I’m asking now. Please be my friend.”
Shinsou blinks at him slowly and doesn’t respond. His expression is wary- like he expects someone to stab him to the back in the next moment. Izuku can relate.

“I don’t have many because of my quirk, and I don’t know what your situation is Here, or your strategy for UA, but let’s meet there, okay? Let’s make hero course together.”

His expression must communicate how much it means to him, because Shinsou nods steadily.

“I’ll see you there.” He sounds noncommittal, disinterested, but Izuku will take it. Maybe they’ll be good friends someday.

They all end up exploring the mall for another half hour. At the end Pony insists on getting everyone’s LINE codes, so Izuku walks home messaging the weird little group chat.

“SAME HAT”

Uniunicorn: today was really great!! We should all meet again before the exams!!
Uniunicorn: I have time next weekend if you would like to meet!!!

That sounds great!!

I have this time off from training then too.

Uniunicorn: Awesome!!

Uniunicorn: what about @Tired Cat ???
Uniunicorn: are you okay???
Uniunicorn: imma spam youuu <3
Uniunicorn: @Tired Cat am concerned
Uniunicorn: yo

Tired Cat: yea ill join. Srry, I was biking.

That’s ok!!

Izuku makes his way home with a smile on his face. He has friends. Maybe. Possibly.

Pony was probably just bored and wanted to hang out, and Shinsou may have just been humoring them, but it’s still more than he’s ever had.

Mom’s great, but she’s a parent. Hisen is more of a grandfather to him to count. Taka and Cloud are closer to his age, but they’re still not quite family but too close for friends.

But this? This is friendship.
That night, All Might is jumping from building to building, on his way to Tsukauchi’s office when grey fabric shoots out of an alleyway, wrapping around his leg. It doesn’t adjust his course much—just enough to be noticeable. Still, it’s a challenge, and All Might has time. Better to arrest whatever criminal awaits than let them run around the city wreaking havoc.

All it takes is for him to grab the cloth and tug, before he’s landing forcefully at its source.

An empty alleyway. The cloth leads upwards, to the roof, where a somewhat familiar figure stares down. All Might had just been reading about him, of all coincidences. He doubts he would have known the hero’s name otherwise.

“All Might was given a list of teachers by Nezdu that morning. On second glance, the fabric unwinding from his leg looks suspiciously like said teacher’s scarf of all things.

“I’m surprised you know me’” a voice mutters. The shape drops down from the roof, finally moving into the lamp light of a broken laundromat, though still a fair distance away. “I have questions.”

All Might smiles as confidently as he can. “Ah, about UA? I expected Nezdu to announce it much later.”

Eraserhead doesn’t react, only continuing to stare down All Might with dead eyes. “Announce what.”

“All Might fumbles for a moment, caught off guard. “Nezdu mentioned he had plans… it appears he hasn’t told you yet.”

All Might feels sweat slide down the back of his neck. Well. This is awkward.

Eraserhead, however, doesn’t seem to care. He sighs, mutters something that sounds suspiciously like “damn that rat,” and waves the conversation away.

“I don’t care,” he announces, as if they can change topics that easily. “You had the police department look up a Shinsou Hitoshi today.”

All Might does a double take. “I - what?”

“Shinsou Hitoshi. Why did you look him up.” Eraserhead’s doesn’t say it like a question.

“I- That’s confidential.”

“No, it’s not. There was no paperwork filed, no investigation linked. Nothing that would warrant the number one hero looking up the file of a random citizen.” Eraserhead’s scarf pulls All Might forwards, into the alleyway. The underground hero stares him down mercilessly. “Why did you call a favor for a meaningless file.”

All Might blinks, slowly. “The name was recommended to me as a promising future hero, though I can’t say where from.”
Eraserhead frowns further, exasperated. “So you looked him up in the police database?”

“I remember seeing a case settled. His name was mentioned.”

Eraserhead moves back. “He’s been adopted. Keep your nose out of it, and let the kid have a normal life.”

“I didn’t mean to-“

“You know what will happen if the media catches wind of your interest. Back off and let the kid make his own choices. Better yet, wait until he’s accepted into high school before offering an internship.”

Eraserhead leans forward, and even though All Might is much taller, there’s something in the underground hero that makes him feel like the lesser hero. “I do not need to remind you that as pro heroes, we are bound by more laws than any other employee in Japan. ‘Looking up a minor without just cause’ breaks several.”

Apparently deciding that was enough, Eraserhead abruptly leaves, scaling the alleyway with his scarves. It’s abrupt to say the least. All Might lets his shoulders drop.

This was not the first meeting he’d wanted to have with his future colleague.

Chapter End Notes

See, All Might? this is why Nighteye was in charge of investigation and recruitment. I headcannon All Might to be the kinda person to try and do what's right but kinda trip over their own feet. Like uhhhhhhhhhhhhhh......... He's like a puppy who wants to good but ends up falling down the stairs bc he ran too fast.

Also Pony was surprisingly easy to write while I was living in Japan but now its really hard?? h uh. I did her dialogue by translating it in and out of both languages... Hopefully it shows the way words start trying to microwave themselves past the second year of speaking.
Void Cafe

Chapter Summary

no spoilers yall.

Inko deserves better than I could ever give her. (This chapter is entirely to get Mamadoriya on the same page. No way am I letting her stay 100% in the dark *cough* cannon *cough*)

Chapter Notes

today I got mad at traffic and did the Had To Do It To Em pose at a car and it s c r e a c h e d to a stop so that was the inspiration for some of the wording in this chapter. Easily the funniest thing I've seen today; my friend and i were screaming when we crossed the street.

Theres a lotta oc worldbuilding here, so just hang in there!!! the bonus scene takes up like a third of the chapter to make up for that.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Any good mother would want her son safe. Midoriya Inko has known this because it’s what has governed her life since she first laid eyes on her baby. She’s watched him disappear somewhere she can’t follow every night since he was four years old.

And now, she watches him train for a future he can’t tell her. Whatever it is, it’s bad enough to haunt him every day.

Izuku is off at school, and Inko sits alone at home. Her job as a translator has Wednesdays off, so she has time. Today, she needs it.

She packs her purse with an extra set of tissues and sets off on a mission.

Inko has walked past this café many times since she found it a month ago. Some would call it over baring or overprotective, but it’s always been a foremost question in her mind. The Lonely Owl here looks quite a bit like what Izuku used to draw with crayons in his first years. It matches his descriptions from Elementary and Junior high. She’s never entered, never asked, but today she needs to know.

A little bell jingles when she enters, and the first thing Inko notes is how the warmth and sunlight filtering in on dust moats seems to slide right into her soul. A man with salt-and-pepper hair is puttering behind a bar- Izuku never mentioned a bar- and when he turns her way, Inko recognizes
him from his *mustache*, of all things.

Izuku drew it in his quirk notebook. The grandfather that her son never had; he’s taller than she expected.

“Excuse me,” Midoria Inko starts, “I believe it’s high time we met face to face.”

Hisen nods in return. “Indeed it is.”

He beckons her over to a table, and they keep up a light chatter as he sets the kettle on. Inko has been pen pals with Hisen for years, so maybe that’s why talking with him feels nostalgic somehow. Maybe it’s just the café’s ambiance. If All Might is a symbol, Hisen and the café are an anchor.

“Izuku always talked about this place so much. I feel like I know it already.”

“He has an eye for these things, doesn’t he?” Hisen slides a cup of tea towards her and pulls up a stool on the other side. It’s a floral blend, achingly familiar but the memory is just out of reach.

“Forgive my bluntness, Mrs. Midoriya, but why today?”

“If he hasn’t told you, then I shouldn’t say.” It’s not her secret to share, and Midoriya Inko would never break her son’s trust.

“About his story, or All Might?” Hisen shakes his head. “I’m referring to your decision. Why meet today? I only came to this world a couple weeks ago.”

She fidgets with the cup before replying, gathering her thoughts. “You never told me, so I assumed it was none of my business.”

“Technically, I’m the one who doesn’t belong. This world is yours and Izuku’s and if I could leave, I would.” Hisen smiles ruefully. “My quirk says this place and I are tied together; both need to exist on every world. It doesn’t care about the details.”

“… It’s a bit much to ask, though.”

“Not really. It’s his and your world, not ours. If you’d like us gone, I’ll move to Hokkaido. Out of the way.”

“I’d rather you didn’t,” Inko finds herself saying. “It’s easier to know he’s safe when I can come check on him. That first time he went missing….”

“Stop by any time, Mrs. Midoriya. We’ve done our best to keep an eye out for him since then.” He looks at the bar and chuckles.

“So many little changes. We’ve switched to a café over the last decade, and upstairs hs a greenhouse now. Your son has a way of brightening up this old place. He’s gotten Taka to come out of her shell, and Cloud’s like a whole different person since then.”

“I wish I could have been there.”

“You were, but I know what you mean. I should have an old photo album around here… Aha!”

The book is old and worn, and Inko turns the pages carefully. There are two people who appear in it as well as her son, both the age of college students. Its clear from the laughing faces and silly poses that gravitate closer over time that these three are close. Sure, the older boy is probably a troublemaker and the girl seems a bit rough around the edges, but it’s a close group, nonetheless.
There’s an occasional terrible selfie with all four people in it, and Inko singles one out. Izuku had taken the picture, his fluffy hair taking up one half of the frame, with the others all gathered around. Inko asks for a copy.

Eventually one, then the other stranger holds shiny new hero licenses for the camera.

There’s a blank spot next to it, waiting for the youngest.

Inko looks at the pictures, and hears the stories, and slowly a little puzzle in her heart knits itself together.

Hisen trails off from pointing out a picture of three teenagers covered in flour. “Oh, I nearly forgot. Would you like to meet the others?”

Inko nods, and Hisen glances across the café. “He’s on his way.”

Across the room, mist collects, then solidifies by the staircase. Stars morph into the innermost folds of the mass before a young man steps out. Inko recognizes him from the jacket he wears.

“Gooooood morning!” He looks up at Hisen through grey bangs, grinning cheekily. “You called, old man?”

The cheek vanishes when he sees Inko and practically falls over backwards.

“Oh! You must be uh- a customer! Nice to meet you!” He brushes off his coat a bit before bowing low- way too low for a fellow customer.

“And you must be Clouddancer. Izuku’s told me all about you.” She might as well have given him a winning lottery ticket by the way he bounces up.

“Thank you! All good things I hope,” Clouddancer says merrily before adding, “Call me Cloud, everyone here does, after all.”

Hisen chuckles. “Rapscallion.”

Clouddancer- no, Cloud – skips over, settling in on a comfy chair nearby. “I’m sorry about teaching Izuku to pick locks.”

“You did what?”

Hisen heads to the back. “You got yourself into this mess,” he says to Cloud’s panicked expression.

Inko fixes the young man with her best ‘mother’s disapproval’ look as Cloud tries and fails to explain himself.

He has a point, though. Izuku should have as many skills as possible as a hero.

Eventually Inko lets up and steers the topic to English, only to find that Cloud has a slight southern accent. They chat for a bit that way, before the café owner slides another tea over to Cloud and takes a seat.

“Clouddancer, Mrs. Midoriya,” he says in quiet British English, “I believe it’s time to address the elephant in the room.”

Inko clasps her hands in her lap and steels herself. “Yes. Yes, it is. I came here today expecting to find one of you if I was lucky, and that luck has held.”
Cloud and Hisen wait, letting her sort through her thoughts and lay them out in Japanese. “I would never go behind my son’s back, because if he isn’t telling me something, there must be a reason. But a mother worries, and if nothing else, I know it will only get more dangerous from here on out.”

Inko looks up at two people who sheltered, cared for, and watched her son grow when she could not.

“I want a promise. That if he ever gets in over his head, and needs you, that you’ll be there. And I want you to tell me as well.”

Hisen dips his head briefly. “I promise.”

Cloud grins crookedly. “It’s what we would do any way.”

Inko sighs before continuing. “I mean it, no funny business. He tends to work himself into the ground, and I’d like to see him taking care of himself for once.”

Judging from their expressions, Cloud and Hisen are all too aware of this.

“Thank you.” Inko says the words before she knows it. “For looking after my son where I can’t follow. And… Thank you for saving him.”

“Thank you for allowing me to watch after him,” Hisen replies. “I wasn’t too sure at first.”

Inko’s expression darkens and for a moment she’s back watching her four-year-old son in the living room, shaking hand clutching a letter and whispering, I haven’t saved them yet, but then she’s back.

She offers a small smile and takes a sip, trying to calm her nerves. It’s a grounding flavor- familiar in the way an old forgotten book or distant memory are. If only she could just grab it before it slips away.

She takes another sip, and it hits her like a sack of bricks.

“That’s my mother’s tea,” she whispers.

Hisen’s eyes widen. “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to-“

“No, no, its fine, but… how?”

“It’s a constant. One of the little details that stays the same no matter what- that blend always was the favorite of Midoriya Inko. If it’s a bother….”

“No, but will you tell me what’s in it? I could never find it after she passed.”

“Mrs. Midoriya,” Hisen informers her seriously, “it’s hand-blended, and I have a full tin you can take. I’ll add the recipe on the outside.”

Inko stares at the cup. I’ll need this over the next year, won’t I.

**BONUS:**

Toshinori hums as he walks back to his apartment, briefcase in hand. He’s used up all his time today-
the bank robbers made sure of that, not to mention an interview.

Ahead of him, a large group of children, just out of daycare, march home together. It’s a fine day, and just for a moment, Toshinori feels like the average businessman, making his way home from work. To think, this is where he could’ve been, had things gone differently.

The children are halfway across the street when everything goes wrong. A squealing of tires, a sickening crunch, and a child’s scream ring out within seconds.

He’s too slow.

Ahead, the car has stopped, bent in from impact as a middle school student braces against it’s hood. The children are fine, thank heavens, but Toshinori rushes over to make sure.

His civilian form will have to do.

The teenager seems fine as well. Toshinori notices the odd texture of his arms, and while the driver checks the student over, Toshinori herds the children off the street, fielding their questions and making sure none of them were hurt.

The student glances under the car, exchanging contact information with the driver. In the end, they both agree not to sue, and that’s that.

After the driver leaves on foot (”I have a meeting, I’m so sorry”), Toshinori congratulates the student. “That was quite the save, young man.”

“Yeah, my feet just moved without me thinking. Kinda funny, huh?” The student crouches down to the children’s eyelevel. “Do you have someone you can call to pick you up? It's dangerous to walk home after something like this.”

One of the kids pouts, eyes wide. “Why?”

“Well, sometimes after we get really scared and surprised, we need to rest. If you get hurt, you gotta rest, right?”

“Uh huh?” a little girl frowns. “But we didn’t get hurt.”

“Sometimes, when somebody’s hurt, we can’t see it. So, we should be careful after scary things happen!”

“Will you rest?” one of the kids asks, clutching his backpack.

The student beams. “Yep!”

The children end up calling a couple parents, and Toshinori and the older student both wait until the rides come and go. The student is about to leave, offering Toshinori thanks, though its unfounded.

He wasn’t the hero here.

“Toshinori Yagi. If he does sue, call this number. You were in the right and I’d be happy to support any legal action,” Toshinori says, holding out his business card.

“Kirishima Eijirou- wait.” The student reads, then re-reads the business card, before looking up. “You’re the secretary of…. All Might?”

Toshinori nods, but his mind is elsewhere. Where has he heard that name…. oh. OH. SHIT. Young
Midoriya’s list.

Chapter End Notes

Middle-schooler: does something vaguely heroic
All Might: hellow would you be interested in,...., h e r o i n g and possibly a quirk depending on your situation in society????????????????????

Also I finally drew Taka but can't add images like a f o o l so here she is.

if yall know how to put images in the notes I will owe you like two peanut butter packets cause that's all I can give
Chapter Summary

Spoilers: mentions of the stain arc, but I think that's it.

Izuku is not good with words in this one

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the late update yall. lowkey thought yesterday was Friday, but here it is!!!

The world visited in this chapter is the same graveyard as before!! Check out We Can All Be Heroes by Amandyalmonds

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Two weeks later, Izuku is jogging to the beach. It’s not exactly required exercise, but he needs all the strength he can get. He needs this. So, he jogs.

It keeps him out of his head, just a bit.

As the beach approaches, Izuku needs to squint a little. It could be a trick of the sun and silhouettes of trash, or that could be someone standing next to Toshinori-san. They’re shorter, but that doesn’t mean much when the Symbol of Peace practically towers over everyone else.

It is a person. A student his age, in running shorts and a tank top with black hair tied back in a ponytail. Izuku doesn’t recognize them.

All Might waves him over. “Young Midoriya! I’d like you to meet someone. Though, you may already know him.”

The stranger bows immediately, hiding their face. “Thank you for recommending me for this!” They look up, grinning with sharp teeth. “All Might said you refused his quirk- that’s super manly!”

Izuku feels like the sun is shining in his heart. Oh, fuck yes, it’s him.

“Thanks, Kirishima-san!”

He’s going to be a great symbol of peace.

Kirishima’s eyes widen. “You know my name - Wait! We’re scar buddies!” He points to a small scar over one eye excitedly. Izuku reaches up, brushing his hand under his right eye.

Izuku’s grin drops minutely. He wasn’t expecting to be reminded of this so early in the morning. “Yeah, I guess so.”

All Might clears his throat, something like guilt written across his face. “Midoriya, I’m sorry about- “

“It’s fine.” Izuku smiles up at the number one hero. “This world needs the best future it can get. I’m
glad, actually.”

All Might nods, still looking hesitant.

“I’m truly, honesty happy, All Might. Cross my heart.” Izuku leaves out that with One for All, Kirishima has a better chance at surviving. A better chance at saving them.

With a sigh, All Might launches into a description of the beach-cleaning. It’s… suspicious, the sudden change. Before Izuku knows it, he’s tugging at a pile of metal twisted beyond recognition. The shifting sand is bad footing, but Izuku’s had time to adjust. Kirishima stumbles over to help.

“Y’know, when All Might offered to train me, I almost said no.”

Izuku pauses, glancing over. Kirishima keeps working, maneuvering metal so it’s less likely to stab them both if it falls. He looks different, with black hair. Less energized, almost nervous. His hands are already covered in grime and metal shavings. Despite it all, there’s a glint in his eye, a determination Izuku recognizes.

“Why?”

“Why not?” Kirishima meets Izuku’s eyes, still frowning. “I’m not set to be the flashiest hero, you know. The Symbol of Peace….” He kicks at a piece of rubbish. “There are stronger, gentler people. Better.” Kirishima shakes his head and goes back to tugging at the pile. “Of course I almost said no.”

Izuku hesitates, before taking off one of his gloves and tossing it over. Kirishima lets out a squawk as it hits him.

“Dude, what was that for?”

“You’ll get hurt without equipment.” Izuku joins him at the pile. “Did he tell you about why I recommended you?”

Kirishima looks over curiously. “Only that when he offered, you suggested me and a couple others. Speaking of, how did you know about me? We’ve literally never met. That’s kinda….”

“Stalkery?”

“I mean I wasn’t gonna say it like that but uh. Yeah.” Come to think of it, Kirishima has been subtly watching Izuku like one might watch an angry goose or driverless car: with a sensible amount of caution and a touch of fear.

“Sorry, I should have thought about that.”

Kirishima squints, clearly not trusting him, and Izuku doesn’t blame him. He’d be scared if someone suddenly knew his name without explanation. Izuku tries to think of a good way to phrase this, tugging at the metal again. Kirishima joins him cautiously.

This time it shifts, almost tumbling, and Izuku rushes to help catch it. A bed-spring almost catches his hand without the glove, but together they push it back.

Oh. So that’s why All Might was in a hurry. Making them work together right off the bat in case of any hard feelings. “Toshinori-san,” Izuku yells. “you’re gonna make a great teacher!”

Across the beach, their mentor hides his smile behind a bloody handkerchief. Izuku steadies the pile, returning to the topic at hand. “My quirk shows me alternate futures. I just
told All Might the people he tends to pick?”

Beside him, Kirishima lets out a hollow laugh and starts tugging the pile towards the dumpster. “Nice joke. Seriously. How’d you know ’bout me?”

Izuku grunts, trying to match his steps and avoid tripping. “This is why it’s so hard to tell people,” he mutters, before adding “It’s the truth. You can think I’m crazy if you want, it’s fine.” The dumpster is close by, a small blessing.

“Then what’s your quirk? Mine’s called hardening.”

Izuku hesitates before answering. “World travel.”

“Like you can teleport around the world? Because that’s awesome.”

Izuku keeps his eyes on the pile. “No, like…. Dimensions. Timelines. Whatever you want to call it. That kind of world.”

“You’re serious?” He can’t see Kirishima over the pile, can’t gauge his reaction.

Izuku hopes his voice doesn’t shake too much. “Yep.”

“That… oh no. “… is so manly!” Kirishima practically explodes. It’s completely unexpected—especially when Izuku was expecting a comment on how it’s not suited for hero work. “So that’s how you knew!”

Wow, Izuku is suddenly a little concerned for Kirishima’s scores on the exam if it took him this long. “Wait, does that mean you can take passengers? Not to be pushy but like, that is SO cool.”

Izuku blinks, all thoughts grinding to a halt. Usually when he tells people about his quirk, they call him a liar, or creepy, or look at him with pity. This is…. Weird. Not bad, but different.

“Dude? Sorry, I probably overstepped, sorry- “

“No-“ Izuku’s voice comes out a squeak, and he swallows before continuing. “No, it’s just- you don’t think I’m lying?”

“Should I?” Kirishima frowns, and stops, halting their progress. “Because you don’t seem like the lying type.”

*If he even knew*-

“It totally sounded like a joke at first, not gonna lie, but now I know you’re serious-”

“Just checking,” Izuku says lightly, covering up his internal sigh of relief. “I haven’t taken anybody with me in years. The kickback is pretty bad sometimes.”

“Oh, that sucks. You okay? I didn’t mean to be invasive.”

“You’re fine.”

With that, Kirishima moves on, and Izuku is left with his head buzzing.

He’s forgotten something. Something about the only time he took someone with him. Somehow, he’d buried it deep down and forgotten, but he could feel it. He’ll worry about that later.
Best not to think about it.

They manage to lift the pile over the dumpster edge, though Izuku catches his hand on one of the edges. Still, it’s one piece less on the beach.

Kirishima speaks up, looking straight ahead. “If I hold my hardening for too long, I can’t breathe.”

Izuku looks over in surprise.

“I used to hate hardening my chest and head, because part of me was worried it wouldn’t turn off.” He grins, and though his teeth are sharp, the smile is honest. “People told me to get over it, but I had to work on it at my own pace. Still can’t for too long. So, I think it’s really manly that you know your limits.”

Izuku smiles back, feeling something in his chest loosen just a bit.

“Thanks.” Izuku bumps shoulders with Kirishima, feeling just a bit brave. “I meant it, earlier. I recommended you because in every world, Kirishima Eijirō becomes a super manly hero. With or without All Might’s help.”

Kirishima smiles, but Izuku knows he isn’t taking it to heart. “Thanks, bro.”

Izuku catches his arm. This is important. “I’m dead serious.” Kirishima’s smile falls, but he doesn’t interrupt when Izuku keeps going. “The hero I’ve met has made top 50 every time. He’s saved countless lives and without him, most if not all of his class wouldn’t have made it to being heroes.”

Kirishima’s eyes widen.

“I don’t know you, Kirishima. But I know a hero who is one of the best out there. He took the world by storm.”

Kirishima looks like he wants to smile and frown at the same time and oh no those are tears- “Bro, we literally just met, and you’ve got us both crying.”

Izuku reaches up to touch his cheek, surprised when he finds it wet. “Sorry.”

Kirishima laughs quietly, then loudly, until Izuku ends up giggling as well. Across the sand, All Might smiles in relief at the two new friends as they approach the mountains of trash.

A glove hits Izuku in the face. “Hey!”

Kirishima grins back, hardening his hands to tackle a bunch of twisted metal. “You’ll get hurt without equipment.”

“Our Midoriya, are you really all right with this?”

Kirishima had to leave early, so it’s just Izuku and All Might at the beach now.

“Of course.” Izuku puts down the microwave oven he’s carrying and hops up to sit on the ledge next to All Might.
The hero sighs. "It seems unfair."

“I’ve always wanted to be a hero, All Might. Ultimately, heroes save people. And if more people will be saved because of Kirishima… then that’s what I think should happen.”

All Might frowns. He looks more haggard in his shrunken form, like the world rests on his shoulders. Izuku wonders for a moment if it really does. “I offered it to you first, my boy. Its only right if you resent me for taking that away.”

Izuku huffs. “I asked you to find him. I gave you a list.” Izuku throws his hands up in the air. “Will it be harder for me to be a hero? Sure! But I have a quirk and people who support me. Even without that, I’d find a way. Always have, always will. I’ll be fine. I’m glad you picked Kirishima.”

All Might doesn’t look convinced, so Izuku tries again. “Look, if you think Kirishima is the better candidate, then that’s that. It doesn’t matter if I have the quirk or not; I just want to save people.”

All Might’s eyes are wide, something between pride and satisfaction in his expression. “My boy,” he says, “you will make a fantastic hero.”

Izuku smiles back. “Can I keep training here, though?”

“Can you-“ All Might throws back is head and laughs, the sound booming out over hills of trash. “I’d be honored, my boy!”

Izuku laughs too, happy and content. The future will be fine.

The week rolls around, and it’s time for Izuku to run his weekly errands. There are chores he needs to do, worlds he needs to check up on.

The null is filled with the shining, empty, blood of starlight, but Izuku hurtles through the nebulas without a second thought.

He knows he shouldn’t be world traveling this much. Kirishima has only known him a week, but apparently, he looks “like a zombie who could fall over any moment.” All Might’s exercise plan counts on him getting a full night’s sleep, but Izuku can’t cut this out of his routine.

Granted, he and Kirishima only ever met to work out, but still. Izuku pushes through his worries as he enters a new world feet-first.

He stops by a flower shop, hiding his face and distinct hair when he purchases two flowers (he doesn’t have money for more) from a clerk whose nametag reads ‘Yagi.’ He’s thinner here, more worn and exhausted.

Izuku wishes he could do something about that, but his mouth goes numb if he even thinks about talking. He leaves with a sinking pit in his stomach and walks with his head down.

A red poppy and a purple hyacinth. Remembrance and a request for forgiveness.

The graveyard is bathed in orange light, skyscrapers cutting into clouds like jagged dominos, ready to fall.
They did fall, somewhere else. He won’t let it happen at home. Izuku places his flowers on the grave, brushing dirt off the well-kept stone. *I’m coming, Iida.*

He doesn’t hear the wheelchair, so the voice startles him.

“I was right, somebody else had been leaving flowers. Where you a friend?”

Izuku flinches and turns to see Ingenium watching him patiently. Of all the people he could talk to here, this person would be his last choice.

“Not yet,” Izuku replies, trying and failing to hide his panic. He shouldn’t be seen here. Before he can make any other mistakes, Izuku drops into the Null.

“Wait-“ the hero is gone. Izuku drifts directionless in the null for a bit, curled up in a ball. He didn’t want to talk to Ingenium, didn’t want to have the conversation they would have had. He’ll be okay.

It still doesn’t excuse running from his problems. Today’s just a day for regret, huh?

Its only as he’s hurtling through the evolving stars that he realizes just how weird his response to the question was.

Izuku takes advantage of the null’s silence to scream into the void for a bit. Well. It’s time to awkwardly regret everything for the next few minutes.

Izuku throws himself into training with renewed vigor. Kirishima takes it in stride, probably assuming he’s usually like this. Neither he nor All Might are familiar enough with Izuku’s workout habits to pick up on the sheer desperation with which he trains, but that’s fine.

The last thing he wants is them worrying.

Kirishima and Izuku end up meeting at the beach regularly. With two of them there, All Might feels more comfortable leaving occasionally to take care of hero work. It means that Kirishima can blast music from a speaker they found, without worrying about missing instructions.

It’s one such day when Kirishima is trying to dislodge a refrigerator. He’s repeatedly slammed into it, quirk active on his arm and shoulder, but the stubborn thing won’t budge. Izuku pulls at the far side.

“Maybe it you lift it a bit, I can move it?”

“I don’t know, sounds a bit dangerous.” Kirishima’s voice is strained on the other side. “You might get crushed.”

“It’s on a piece of metal, so it should just slide forwards.”

“… If you’re sure.”

“3….2….1-“ It lifts, and Izuku pulls forward, hoping to inch it towards him. Instead, the edge of the metal it rests on catches in the sand, toppling towards him in almost slow motion.

Izuku more sees than feels the impact, and squeezes his eyes shut, ready to become a pancake as the
ground rushes towards him.

Kirishima’s shout is cut off, and Izuku opens his eyes to find himself in the null.

*Oh. Well, better than being a pancake.* Izuku lets himself fall towards the nearest world, entering feet first.

*The neon lights of a city rise to meet him, but he’s gone seconds later, reentering a portal before anyone notices from the streets below.*

Izuku flies through the stars as quickly as he can. Kirishima must be worried. He’s pleasantly surprised when he can pick out Dagoba beach on his home world, and swings around, entering feet first again. One leg lands in a paint bucket, and he promptly loses track of which way is up or down.

Eijirou is panicking. He just crushed Midoriya with an *entire fridge*, and the damn thing isn’t budging. Midoriya hasn’t said anything, hasn’t even made a sound since it happened, and Kirishima isn’t sure how long it’s been.

Too long, is the answer. He’s probably suffocating right now, because Eijirou didn’t think twice about trusting Midoriya’s judgement. He should have questioned it. He’s known the guy for about a month, and it’s already perfectly clear that his new friend has a self-sacrificing streak a mile wide.

He tries to lift the fridge again, hardening as much of his body as he dares. It budges, and Eijirou desperately shoves a tire under the edge, keeping it propped up.

He hits the ground, preparing for the worst and…. Nothing’s there.

Eijirou straightens up, glancing around. *What-*

In the corner of his eye, the sky above one of the trash piles flickers. A perfect circle, filled with countless pinpricks of light opens, and Midoriya slides out, hitting the trash heap with a squawk. Kirishima’s running as Midoriya loses his footing and tumbles down, making a painful halfway-descent before finally crashing onto a pile of cardboard and paper bags.

Eijirou hardens his hands and feet, scrambling up to his friend with less caution than he would normally use. He arrives to find Midoriya sprawled over the plastic bags and cardboard, dazed and scratched but otherwise apparently fine.

Midoriya pushes his green bangs out of his face and grins, wincing. “I lived, bitch.”

“Dude, are you okay?”

Midoriya struggles up, hissing when he moves too fast. “Not a pancake, so probably, yeah.”

“Dude. No.” He steadies his friend as they make their way down. “Anything broken? Numb?”

“Just some bruises. Mom’s probably gonna kill me for this, though.” He rolled his wrist experimentally. “I left before going splat, so no harm done, you know?”

“Was… that your quirk?”
“Yeah, sorry I took so long. I would be faster, just-” Midoriya shakes his hand, showing off the thick bracelets he always wore. “Suppressors. Sorry, that probably worried you.”

“No, bro you’re fine, just- suppressors? Like ‘quirk suppressors’ suppressors?”

They sit down on a couple of car seats. “Aren’t those restricted by the government and like... addictive?”

Midoriya fiddles with one, screwing up his face. It makes a soft click, before loosening just enough to slide off. The skin underneath is paler than the rest of his arm. Come to think of it, Eijirou has never seen Midoriya without them.

“They’re not restricted on about a third of worlds I’ve gone to. Addictive on less than five percent. I kinda need them, anyway.”

“Still…”

Midoriya levels Eijirou a look and explains. “My quirk has two aspects. I can travel but... sometimes it’s like the other versions of me want to be seen. They take my hearing and sight, and I just see what’s happening there.” Izuku plays with the bracelet, and Eijirou’s eyes keep getting drawn to the discolored ring on his wrist. “They keep me safe, Kirishima. I’m a liability without it.”

Eijirou hums, letting that sink in. Midoriya’s been using his quirk with suppressors all this time. Even ignoring whether that was legal (it’s probably definitely not), that leaves a ton of questions.

“I don’t think UA is gonna be cool with that.”

“You’re probably right....” Midoriya hesitates, before clipping the bracelet back on. Eijirou has to stop himself from protesting. “I’ll start going without at the exam. Probably need to get used to my own quirk, anyway.”

“You sure, Bro? I hear suddenly stopping a habit is rough, might wanna start now.”

“They aren’t addictive, you know.” Midoriya clacks the suppressors together as they make their way to the road. “Suppressors work in tons of different ways- ours cuts off the quirk factor in the brain completely, but it also impacts the frontal lobe and eye fields after a year of use. These dampen the quirk factor only, but extended use can build up a resistance. There’s no withdrawal.”

“... You sure?”

“Positive.”

Chapter End Notes

So!!! sorry again for the late chapter!! Hope yall like this one :P

Edit: fixed a spelling mistake and reworded a thing for clarity.


Let's Try: [Yeet the robot]

Chapter Summary

Present mic at some point: you gotta yeet the robots!!! get points!!!
Shinsou: sure, lemme just uh *yeets himself at the robot*

Elsewhere-
Iida: Imma make friends
Iida: yells at strangers, teachers

They're doing their best

Chapter Notes

Spoilers: skip the bits of italic text when Izuku's on public transport for sports festival spoilers

If you ever work as an English teacher in Japan, you will come to hate the Sunshine textbooks. My favorite part is where you ask "may I have one French fries please?" and listen to a class of children repeat the phrase to you until it just sounds like a cursed grammatically incorrect chant. This chapter title is a play on that textbook's CD, in honor of Present Mic.

He definitely knows (and hates) sunshine.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

They’ve done it. It took right up until the morning of the exams, but they’ve cleaned the entire beach. There’s not a single speck of trash to be seen along the coast. Together, they did it. For the first time, Izuku feels confident in who he is; in where he is in life.

Izuku and Kirishima stand on top of the dumpster pile and scream their victory to the rising sun.

All Might watches from below and laughs.

There isn’t much time, so All Might gives them the quickest of pep talks- one Izuku can’t really hear past the blood roaring in his ears- before everything grinds to a halt, and announces that Kirishima is ready to accept One for All.

“NOW EAT THIS!”

“… huh?”

Kirishima’s face has Izuku struggling to hide his laughter.

Apparently, hair tastes absolutely disgusting.
It’s time. Izuku sits on his bed, ready for the train ride to UA for testing. He came back for a shower and his stuff, but there’s one thing he’s been putting off.

Quirk suppressors.

He’s only ever taken them off for a couple minutes at a time since he was five. Izuku unhooks the left one, deactivating it and then unlocking the safety. The buzz in the back of his head gets louder.

Frowning, Izuku puts in his earbuds, blasting music at maximum volume to ground him. The right cuff comes off and the buzzing increases, and his grip on Here weakens, wavers, and then stabilizes.

Izuku pushes through the static in his mind, stuffing the cuffs into his backpack. A hug goodbye to mom, and he’s out the door.

He’s at the station and halfway through a playlist by the time he notices something’s different. He’s not sure what, but it’s there.

Izuku rubs at his wrists, familiar pressure and weight of the suppressors gone. He’s used to the little nudges in the back of his mind. Little updates or murmurs of what other Izukus (assuming they even use that name) are doing. It’s al little louder now, but he can deal with that.

The pain is new.

It starts out on the train to UA’s exam with an ache in his hand. It’s barely noticeable, but once he knows this isn’t from Here.

He slides out his phone and scolls through his group chats to distract his mind. The world travel squad has wished him luck, and he lets his eyes glance over the messages before opening a hero news app. Pretending to scroll through makes him look busy, and with earbuds in, nobody will think twice if he doesn’t respond to them.

It’s easy to find the door he keeps shut in his head, open it, and trace the pain back to another world.

Its probably nothing big-

Gasping, hissing through clenched teeth, Midoriya raises his arm and braces it, he needs Todoroki to listen, to hear him but he can’t, not like this, never like this. There’s so much hurt in his eyes across the sports festival ring so Midoriya grits his teeth and funnels One For All into already-broken fingers –

This isn’t right, he shouldn’t be watching this close, shouldn’t be fighting Todoroki like this, they’re supposed to be friends-

-Todoroki fires off another blast of ice and Midoriya almost looses conciosness with the blast when he releases the power but he’s not done yet, not yet -

Izuku cuts off the connection, lurching back in his seat so his head hits the window.

That’s also new. He was watching through that Izuku’s eyes. He had felt the desperation and fought in tandem him, so why hadn’t it happened here? He obviously hadn’t yelled or the other people on
the bus would notice, and the pain was gone now, so why would his quirk change—oh. There was only one reason his quirk would be worse and that’s—

A woman standing nearby is watching him mutter.

“Whoops I must’ve uh, zoned out there, sorry.” He slips out when he talks, deflecting future questions. “Would you like my seat?”

“It’s no problem, dear. Are you sure you’re alright?”

“It’s fine, really.”

Izuku’s stop is thankfully next, and he ducks into the station’s crowd. He can worry about quirk problems after the exam.

The feeling hits him again as he steps past the gates. This time it wraps around his ribs, a swift, brief fuzzy numbness, then nothing. It’s not strong, by any means—more like a phantom brush of static—but its unexpected. Unexpected enough to make him trip over his feet.

Welp, this is it. Izuku confidently watches the ground get closer. Guess I’ll just die then.

Except he finds himself floating in the air as next to him oh god that’s her is this really how we meet I thought it was the practical test and also wow that is not how I expected being weightless to feel—

“Sorry for not asking before using my quirk on you,” Uraraka chirps, unaware of his internal screaming. “I figured it’s probably pretty bad luck to trip on the first day!”

Izuku is still trying to form words.

“Well, I should get going! Good luck! Let’s do our best!” She darts into the crowd.

Izuku beams. My friends exist! On my home world! I talked to Uraraka! (He didn’t actually say anything, but that’s a minor detail.)

He aces the written exam. Hell. Yeah.

Izuku manages to score a decent seat for the practical explanation. The quirk suppressors are back on in case he misses any instructions, but he’s been doing pretty well so far.

He spotted Kaccan on the way in, but he ignored Izuku the whole time, heading to a different part of the auditorium. Izuku shifts in his seat, trying to focus on the here and now.

“Bro!”

Izuku feels a tap on his shoulder and looks up to see Kirishima of all people. He’s got a friend-somebody with pink hair and skin, and a mischievous grin.

“What’s up? These seats are free, go ahead.”
“Thanks! This is Mina-“

“Hi!” She grabs the first seat, and Kirishima is forced to take the aisle.

“-from my school! Super glad I saw you, bro because it. is. Packed in here-“

“HEY THERE LISTENERS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Izuku ducks instinctively at the feedback. “There’s no reason for them to give him a microphone. Why did UA do that. Is it to deafen us before the exam?”

Kirishima grins. “Guess that’s plus ultra, huh.”

“CAN I GET A YEEEEEEAAAAAHHHHHHH?" Mic pauses.

Mina pumps her fist and starts to reply before Kirishima and Izuku frantically motion for her to stop. They meet each other’s eyes and the silent pact between two people with crushing anxiety is confirmed.

“WELL THAT’S COOL, MY EXAMINEE LISTENERS!!” Present Mic proceeds to scream the rest of their instructions.

There’s no reason for the volume beyond that it’s Present Mic.

An examinee raises his hand partway through. “Sir! The examination lists four robots, not three! Please explain this discrepancy at once! The best hero school in the country should have nothing less than stellar instructions! If it is a mistake, then I’d like it corrected. And You!”

He whirls around to point at Izuku, who squeaks. “You’ve been muttering this whole time! If you’re not going to take this seriously, then please go home!”

Izuku shrinks into his seat and barely catches Present Mic’s explanation- something about a zero point robot. Kirishima shoots Iida a glare, while Mina just snickers.

“Friendship ended with Mina, Kirishima’s my only friend now.” He doesn’t register what he says until afterwards. Are they friends? Does he have friends? And they might be in the same class???

Huh.

Yeah, he’s still not used to that idea.

Mina and Kirishima are in different testing blocks, so he’s alone for the bus ride over. Shinsou is in his block, apparently. He has no idea how often that happens, but its nice to have someone he knows around.

Once they’re off the bus, Izuku unclips the quirk suppressors. A wave of static pushes at the back of his mind but he fights it back with careful breaths and a mental push.

Izuku stores the cuffs in a little pouch by his belt in case he needs them later. (It’s not a fanny pack, no matter what Cloud calls it.) He runs through his warmup streaches quickly and looks around, checking if anyone else he knows is in this block.

Uraraka’s here too. He hasn’t said thanks yet, and now’s as good a time as ever.

An iron grip lands on his shoulder, twisting Izuku around till he’s facing… Iida Tenya. Well. Here’s hoping this world’s Iida will be easy to talk to. He’s either the best of friends or a controlling
president depending on the world.

Iida looks him dead in the eyes. “If you’re planning to distract that girl, I suggest you rethink that. She’s obviously focusing.”

This isn’t the best start, but maybe its not too late-

“Like I said earlier, if you’re here to be a detriment to our fellow examinees, you should go home now.” Iida pushes up his glasses. “To prevent others from succeeding is a malicious goal. Please reconsider.”

Izuku can only stare. He had hoped to find a friend in Iida. There’s a nervous breakdown already ready to start, but Izuku pushes it back with the help of some adrenaline. He’ll deal with that later.

He starts running forward before the starting announcement is made. There are three things he knows about this particular exam: Robots, Bakugo is rarely in his group, Uraraka usually is, and that nobody is ready for the beginning.

“AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANNNDD START!!!!” Present Mic’s screech heralds the large doors opening. Examinees hesitate, but Izuku is already moving. He sees a familiar face and catches Shinsou’s arm on the way to pull him through the gates.

No way the grape-rat is getting into UA. That spot is Shinsou’s.

“C’MON, EXAMINEES! REAL LIFE DOESN’T GIVE YOU A COUNT DOWN- GOGOGOGOGO GOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!!!”

A one-pointer shows up ahead of them, and Shinsou sprints towards it. Izuku doesn’t wait to see what happens- they’ll end up getting in each other’s way if they’re together.

He weaves through an alley and a side street, and finds another one pointer. It beeps as it locks on to him.

Izuku dodges the first attack, rolling. Thank you, Taka, for insisting he spend a full two weeks learning how to fall properly.

It swings again and he dodges. There must be something he can do to take it out. His quirk can only let him run away- using it risks reappearing outside of the testing grounds or worse- once the test is finished.

For now, he’s stuck in the Here and Now.

The robot warms up to shoot- probably a laser- when a sparkling beam of light decimates it. An examinee whisks by, speaking in a thick French accent and practically sweating glitter.

“Nice teamwork~ but I do not believe we will see each other again. Adieu~”

Izuku can’t wait around to figure out if that really was Aoyama, but he snags a piece of metal from the robot. It’s small, but pointy. He’ll get a lecture later but right now? Anything to help him take them down will help.

There’s an examinee stuck under some debris he pauses to help, and another suffering from quirk exhaustion, so by the time he gets to use the metal, there’s no telling how much time has passed.

Except that it does absolutely nothing against the three pointer. He’s running for his life, hoping to
get it to bash into a wall or something, when a thin grey scarf shoots out of nowhere and wraps around it.

*Aizawa’s capture weapon?*

Spinning around, Izuku sees Shinsou slingshot himself at the robot, taking out its head in the process. It looks incredibly badass, and Izuku makes a mental note to ask later.

They meet eyes for a second before all hell breaks loose.

They run towards it.

Chapter End Notes

Also sorry for the late update. its like,,,,, 15 minutes after midnight?? wow. Next week I might be a day late because ive got a deadline for an Antarctica thing, but it should be fine. Probably. Climate change is real, y'all
The Void Says Fuck You In Particular

Chapter Summary

wow. twice my usual length because so much oc shit and world building. oh no. a tragedy. oh dear that's terrible.

Chapter Notes

Spoilers for Eri's ark after the examn happens, and also a lil bit for the training camp at the very end. Nothing significant happens, just some hints.

Grasshopper is my take on Izuku with a jumping quirk. Its original.

The other world briefly mentioned is from See(Too Much) by LadyGreenFrisbee. What happens when someone in the void watches you back? I promise that's not the last time we're going there.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The examinees are screaming. One kid rockets around the corner, shoving past them with wide, fearful eyes.

Izuku and Shinsou make their way into the plaza and look up at the behemoth of a zero-pointer trampling the street. It’s taller than all the buildings.

Uraraka is trapped in its path.

She can’t die here. She can’t die at all, let alone at the starting line. They haven’t talked, haven’t become friends, haven’t collapsed together after a day of training.

Shinsou looks ready to retreat, but when Izuku dashes forwards, he hears footsteps pounding behind him.

The robot is making its way forward, brushing into buildings and sending rubble cascading down. Izuku doesn’t even want to think about how much that must cost. As he runs, it seems to tower over the fake city. One step could squash an examinee like a bug.

Shit.

He calls out to Uraraka as he skids past. “Please use your quirk on me!” She doesn’t hesitate. A high five with her free arm, and gravity disappears.

Izuku kicks off the ground, launching himself towards the zero pointer. He doesn’t have a plan as he scrambles up its side. He doesn’t even know what’s happening below him.

He thinks of Uraraka and Shinsou below him, how he can’t let them die, not when he’s just started to think he might save everyone; he hasn’t saved them yet.
He thinks of that when he grabs the robot’s metal plating and lets go of Here. He can’t really fall with Uraraka’s quirk, but the Null is always at the back of his mind, and without his suppressors it’s making itself known.

He’s been fighting it back all day. Letting go is a release.

The Null expands, taking over.

He twists, letting the galaxies embrace him and the zero pointer. With one hand he holds onto Here, and with the other he drifts in the Null. He’s never done this before. He’s never made a portal this big, transported something this large. The portal stretches, tearing at reality as well as his mind, until the robot is swallowed.

He would scream if he had the energy.

The robot drifts away into the Null and the portal begins to shrink. Izuku fights the abyssal void as it tries to drag him away. The test isn’t over yet. A cityscape and inky darkness mesh together between his hands as Izuku struggles to piece his sight together.

He can already tell the backlash from this is going to be massive.

Izuku claws through star-soaked reality, dragging himself bit by bit away from the Null. Static blooms in his skull as Izuku reenters the city, falling back into the testing ground for real. The beginning of quirk shock is clutching at his mind, and his mouth and chest are already numb. It’s all right, though.

Izuku doesn’t know much.

But as he falls, he knows that at least he saved two of them.

*And for now, Izuku thinks, that’s enough.*

Uraraka watches the zero pointer get closer. Each step causes the pieces of cement she’s trapped under to shift, slipping closer and closer. There’s rebar in there. She could easily lose a leg if it settles wrong.

With a family in the construction business, Uraraka knows how dangerous rubble can be.

The examinee from earlier rushes up, saying something about her quirk - it’s too loud to really hear - but Uraraka slaps his hand anyway, and he’s backing away immediately.

Guess he just wanted more points.

A head of purple hair appears beside her. The examinee sets his shoulder to the cement and pushes. It’s not much - he’s thin as a stick - but it lifts enough for Uraraka to twist around. She slaps the largest piece, one step closer to her limit.

The student stumbles before shoving it away and freeing her. Behind him, a green blur shoots into the air.
They watch as a perfect oval of starlight expands, and the zero pointer, fueled by inertia, moves forward into it. A second later, there’s nothing where the gigantic robot once stood, just a shrinking oval that thins into nothing.

Finally its gone, leaving only a figure plummeting towards earth.

He’ll crash.

Uraraka scrambles up onto the piece of cement she floated, and waves to purple-hair. “Push this!”

Grey scarves rise around him. “I’ll do you one better.”

Scarves wrap around the cement and sling it forward. It’s fast enough for her to reach out and slap the falling boy across the face with all five fingers. She feels her quirk activate, and the examinee below uses his scarf to bring them down to earth.

When she loses her lunch, the purple boy pats her back awkwardly, but they’re both more worried about the examinee lying on the ground. He looks how she feels but worse.

“TEN SECONDS LEFT LISTENERS! GET YOUR LAST POINTS NOW!!”

The green haired examinee grits his teeth and rolls over onto his stomach. He’s got dull black liquid pouring out of his mouth like sludge, and he’s trembling too hard to move, let alone stand.

“She startles at his voice. It’e rough, like something else is trying to speak instead. The examinee moves again. He’s trying to push himself forward, Uraraka realizes.

The examinee next to her moves over to his friend. “It’s over, Midoriya.”

Shinsou sits down next to Midoriya. He’s obviously unused to giving comfort, but he tries, and that’s more than Uraraka can do right now.

“AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANNNNND STOP! EXAM IS OVER, PLEASE RETURN TO THE CHANGING ROOMS AND REPORT TO YOUR ASSIGNED MEETING AREA.”

Midoriya presses his face to the ground and cries. Shinsou pats his back awkwardly.

They sit like that until an old woman- one an examinee calls Recovery Girl- kisses Midoriya on the shoulder. The trembling stops and sludge slows, but when he stands the look in his eyes is dead.

Recovery Girl heals Uraraka next, but there are other things on her mind.

Just one point.

Uraraka has plenty of points, enough to share.

She also knows a hero when she sees one.
Kirishima has many regrets. He does not, however, regret sprinting forwards when an examinee with a broken leg barely dodges the monolithic zero pointer in time. Kirishima hardens his legs for support and tries to remember the last time he did something that mattered. There’s nothing. His brain helpfully supplies that he almost crushed a friend to death on the beach and he bites it back.

He needs to be a hero. He needs to make a difference. He needs to do something that matters.

He pours it all into his arm, pulls back, and screams.

There’s a huge boom. The zero pointer is crumpled, a crater in its upper half. For a moment Kirishima thinks All Might set off a punch behind him. Until the pain hits.

Haragakure is trying to help another student. He’s broken his leg from a 3 pointer and hasn’t got a single point, but they’ll both be dead if the zero pointer keeps moving.

Way ahead of her, an examinee runs straight at the zero pointer and settles into a ready stance, as if he can take it in a boxing match.

She notices something is wrong with his legs as he rears back, and screams desperately.

She thinks it’s a punch.

They more feel the shockwave than see it. The raining pieces of metal tell her all she needs to know.

She hopes he makes it in.

Izuku failed.

Failed.

0 villain points.

Nothing can top that- He doesn’t see the exam often, but from what he does know, he usually gets at least 40. At least. But instead he’s sitting here, homework on the table and weight in hand. It won’t change anything now, but maybe he can turn to vigilantism? He knows where to be and when, so it’s not like he’s stopped from interfering entirely.

Unless he can’t interfere.

He’s seen the worlds where he doesn’t exist. Where Midoriya Izuku was never born or pursued another career path.

Where Iida dies and Class 1A scatters.
Where the villains win.

Where Eri is still trapped.

She’s probably trapped right now.

And that thought scares him more than the rest, because she’s Here. He doesn’t know where, he doesn’t know why, but he knows that there’s a little girl being tortured right now and he can’t do anything. He can’t even talk about it. Izuku is staring at the weights when his mom knocks on his door before opening it.

“Sweetie? We’re heading out to dinner in 15 minutes.”

“Going out?”

“You need to relax, and I need a break. Sound good?”

Twenty minutes later and they’re in the car. It’s getting to a part of town that Izuku hasn’t seen much—less because of the winding roads and more because he’s never had a reason to go.

His control on Here starts to slip, and Izuku is too emotionally exhausted to stop it. Slowly the streetlights and road signs fade out, and some other world sweeps over his senses.

Buildings make good vantage points for disasters.

Grasshopper’s known this since two years ago after middle school. It had been a building fire that time, and the heroes had almost left civilians behind. He shakes his head, batting away memories of smoke-stained walls and Bakugo cussing him out. Some origin story, huh?

Grasshopper doesn’t want this to happen. The heroes have been amassing resources for this bust for years, but they’ve got it wrong. They’re prepared to deal with angry gang members trafficking drugs for profit.

They won’t be expecting scared victims of human trafficking smuggling their own friends and found family into Japan’s borders.

And now the forces are about to clash right in front of him. On one side of the docks, he can see the heroes. From the bright costumes of All Might, Miriko, Hawks, and Midnight. Behind them, more underground heroes stood in the darkness. The estimated size of the cargo had accounted for the drug trade in most of northern Japan, so it’s garnered plenty of interest.

In short, as many of the big names as they could get.

On the other side, a small crowd gathers. They look rough, with torn shirts and few jackets between the lot. The strongest of them are out front. Mutation quirks have always been discriminated against in Japan. Less so in other countries, so they likely don’t know how bad this setup is for peacekeeping.

They stand together, refusing to flinch against the wind, and they stare at the heroes with something between hope and fear. Grasshopper is well versed in the light he sees in their eyes.

Desperation.

Grasshopper bites his lip, watching it all. The wind stings at his eyes and cuts through the cheap
fabric of his homemade costume, but he forces himself to stay still.

He can’t afford to attract attention yet.

A single member of the foreigners steps forward. He raises his hands in a universal peace symbol, but it just makes the heroes tenser.

They’ve all been lied to before.

“Please,” The man says in broken Japanese. “We want to talk.”

Miriko’s voice rings out across the space. “So you say, villain. What about?”

Grasshopper notices movement amongst the underground heroes. This isn’t a peace talk. This is an ambush.

The man continues to speak, pleading for mercy, but the heroes are too cautious. Grasshopper reaches up to tap his headset. “Heya stale meme, where are you?”

Dabi isn’t long to respond. “Fuck you bug boy, I’m right by the ship. They’re still unloading.”

“Some undergrounds are heading your way. They don’t know I’m here.”

“Well, Shit. Go take the spotlight, grass guy. I’ll clean up here.”

“Thanks, T-pose vigilante.”

“Ant: the shortest fleabag.”

“S’mores-guy.”

The man is still trying to explain in halting words that they are the victims, but Miriko isn’t taking it. They’ve all heard villains’ monologue before. After a while, it becomes hard to differ between honest speech and manipulation.

“Bunny hop vigilante.”

“Toasted wheat cereal.”

“You know what? I’ll take it.”

Too many heroes are lied to these days. Miriko moves first, clearing the stretch of open ground easily with her quirk. Grasshopper winces as the heroes move in tandem, a well-trained force.

An army. The victims won’t last long like this.

“Glad one of us has some self-worth. Going in.”

“Let me know if Hawks gives you trouble. Fucker owes me one.”

He needs to be smart about this. Grasshopper hesitates a moment longer before he jumps. The wind whistles in his ears and the city lights blur before he makes impact, hitting the ground right between Miriko and the smuggler leader.

Miriko doesn’t hesitate, kicking out with a vengeance. She might not even know who he is.

Grashopper blocks, just barely, but his arm explodes in pain. He kicks out with an attack of his own
and she dodges, leaping up.

Grashopper runs, scooping up the leader- he’s too light to be healthy, unless it’s a quirk- and speeds through the crowd. He keeps his leaps long and low to the ground. Miriko won’t hesitate if they’re airborne.

He’d be mincemeat.

Something hits him in the back, and Grasshopper crashes to the ground.

Everything hurts.

The smuggler’s leader is yelling something, and Miriko responds, but he can’t concentrate over the blooming warmth in his back.

He can’t feel his legs.

He can’t feel his LEGS.

He’d heard of people losing their quirk in this part of town. A terrible thought hits, and Grasshopper pushes it back.

No.

He can’t panic.

The fighting is dying down. Grasshopper parses through the noises, trying to push himself up. The ground is warmer, wetter than it should be under his hands, color is leeching out of his vision.

“-he’s a vigilante for crying out loud! He’s never committed a crime beyond public quirk usage!”

“Not like I could tell!” Miriko’s scathing voice cuts off Midnight. “He shouldn’t even be playing hero.”

“He’s a kid!”

“Well excuse me for assuming a costumed, unregistered opponent was a villain. Better cuff him now with the rest.”

“No…” Grasshopper needs to say something. Needs to make them stop.

“There’s still villains left. Let’s go.”

They can’t. They can’t arrest the victims. “No!”

Grasshopper flinches away when a weight descends on his shoulder. He looks up to find Best Jeanist watching him cautiously.

“You’ve lost a lot of blood. Don’t move.”

“No, wait-“ Grasshopper makes the mistake of trying to prop himself upward, and pain shoots through his spine. He still can’t feel his legs.

Midnight speaks up. “Kid, sit this out. Let us do our jobs.”

“NO!” Grasshopper screams it out, hoping the heroes will hear. “Did you even check what their
cargo was? Did you even look into their past records?”

Best Jeanist tries to calm him, but the words don’t reach. Grasshopper has been told to sit down and shut up his whole life. Not today.

“We’re all together!” Grasshopper fights through the pain, not caring if his hood has slipped back, displaying recognizable fluffy hair for the world to see. “The legislation, the broken hero system-“

He screams the truth out hoping someone out there will understand that words matter.

“They affect all of us, but we try to help people. And sometimes it hurts every one of us!”

Across the front lines, All Might glances to one of his colleagues.

“We just want to live and go home! So please- can we please-“ His voice breaks, revealing the teenager under the mask.

“Can we please just talk this out?”

Miriko moves, and Grasshopper tracks her with the corner of his eye. He catches Best Jeanist swearing before something hits him like a truck, and he’s out.

Grasshopper collapses unconscious.

Hood off, green hair for all to see.

Paralyzed waist down.

Crying.

Izuku jolts awake, and watches streetlights pass, settling back into his seat. He takes a moment to remember where he is before letting his eyes slip shut again. He really wants his quirk suppressors, but they’re at home.

Exhaustion from constantly fighting his quirk and disappointment from events he can’t quite remember takes over before long, and the world blinks back out of existence.

Izuku stares out the hospital window, notebook on the bedside table. His quirk presses at the back of his eyes, but he squashes it down, turning instead to neatly write what it had shown him just minutes before.

Omnisence isn’t a hero’s’ quirk, but he can still save people. Izuku finishes one list of names and starts on locations.

He’s dozing by the time they pull up in front of a warmly lit café. Izuku makes it out of the car before his breath catches in his throat. There, above the awning, is a familiar faded wood sign. Golden light spills out onto the front steps.

Mom steps up behind him.
“Mom...” He can feel the tears already. “How?”

“Just a hunch,” she murmurs, before the door opens.

Hisen is standing there, in Izuku’s world, real and welcoming as always.

Inside, Taka is sitting on the back staircase, and Cloud is asleep by the fireplace. Its so achingly familiar but so real that Izuku doesn’t feel the tears when they fall. He’s never been able to share this part of himself with his mother before; never had everyone together in one place, but now they’re here. Together.

“I came by around a week ago, and we talked.” His mother says it gently, but something in her voice makes Izuku nervous. “Specifically, we talked about the future. Izuku, nothing has happened yet. Part of me doesn’t want to believe it will, but Mr. Hisen suggested we be proactive.”

Hisen clears his throat. “We thought you would feel better about the future if you and your mother had a safehouse. Since villains physically can’t enter the café, we considered this as an option. There are some changes to the doorways so your friends and Mrs. Midoriya can visit. We also added to the upstairs.”

Izuku’s crying in full force now. Mom brings him into a hug. It’s going to be okay. If nothing else, the villains won’t get his mother. She’ll be safe.

It doesn’t solve everything, but it’s a step.

When she releases him, Taka reaches over to ruffle his hair carefully. “Welcome back, green bean.”

Dinner is fantastic. Hisen has always been a skilled baker, so when he opens the oven to a complete salmon bake, covered in goat cheese and herbs, the smell the smell alone has Inko’s eyes growing twice in size. There’s homemade rosemary bread, salad, and apple pie to finish it off. The high-protein meal even fit with Izuku’s meal-plan perfectly.

Cloud barely wakes up to stumble to the table, and collapses first thing. He’s out like a light almost immediately, leaning on Taka’s shoulder. Inko keeps shooting him worried glances.

“Is he ok?”

“He’s fine. This happens sometimes when, uh…” Taka frowns. “Well. We stretched our limits a bit to change the place up.”

Now that Izuku thinks about it, the restrictive spells on Taka’s arms are slightly singed, and black sand is dusted through her hair. Cloud is completely knocked out on her shoulder.

Izuku frowns at them across the table. “How did you do it? Upstairs is massive.”

Taka puts down her chopsticks. “Hisen added a few new rooms and I slapped on some protections. Also, Cloud cleared up the Null so I could make a lil’ new dimension. Your room is a free-floating space.”

Oh, that’s the coolest. “Wait, that would mean that it can be moved. Can I travel from there to Here? Or maybe it would act as a kind of bubble from the null? What about windows, do they-“

“Why not explore,” Hisen interrupts the two. “I’ll clean up here and Cloud can get some rest.”

Inko rises from her seat. “I’ll help. You two go have fun.”
Hisen has re-vamped the entire upstairs. Not only does Izuku and his mom both have guest rooms at the far end of the hall, but there’s also a small training room through the upstairs hall by the stairs.

Taka swings the door open for him to check it out. There’s a spot for taking off shoes, but the rest is one huge white mat. The back wall has a rack of swords, staffs and knives; wooden, padded, and real.

“You know enough parkour and free running, but I’d be honored to teach you martial arts.”

“You don’t mind?”

Taka raises an eyebrow. “I offered. UA doesn’t teach a specific style-which is good, don’t get me wrong- but you need technique to back up that raw strength. C’mon, your room’s this way.”

Taka pauses midway through the hall and tosses him a key. “The lock’s got magic from Spritesworn. Nobody’s able to unlock it but you unless they think you’re in mortal danger. You can get the conditions changed at the nymph’s fountain.”

“Sweet” The lock fits easily, and Izuku slips it into his pocket carefully before stepping in.

Izuku’s room is massive- twice as large as his room at home. It’s western cabin-style, with high wooden beams made from entire tree trunks. The doorframe has a familiar mechanism next to it. There’s a bed, desk and empty closet waiting for him, while the window looks out past a tree onto Dogobah beach. The sand has become a little cluttered, but he can fix that.

“Are the windows real?”

“Yeah, but it’s funky. Ever watched Howel’s Moving Castle?”

Izuku freezes, whirling around to where Taka leans against the door. “No way.”

She grins. “Yes way. Whenever you open the door it’ll match up with a doorway. The switch is on the side, and it’s same as the movie for memory’s sake. Black is the null, yellow is here, blue doesn’t exist, and red is in the forest.”

There’s so much to process. Izuku opens the window, letting the sea air come in. The sun’s gone down, and city lights glimmer off distant waves. He can almost see stars in the sky.

“How?”

“Cloud trades on too many worlds and Hisen works miracles. I just made a space for it.”

“So I can world travel in?”

“Yep. We can add another portal if you want.” Taka leans into the room, snagging a roll of white tape from a shelf. “Blue’s still open.”

She taps the disk inside the door frame before tossing him the tape. “Use that around a doorway of your choice and you’ve got a portal. Let us know once it’s done and we’ll tie the gates together-oof.” She rocks back a bit when Izuku thuds into her with a hug.

“Heya, green bean.” She cards her claws through his hair. “What’s up?”

“Just... thanks.”
She ruffles his hair a bit harder in reply.

“You’re gonna save them, kiddo. We’re gonna train you up and those villains will have another thing coming. Doesn’t matter if you’re a hero or vigilante or heck, even a citizen. One exam has no right to change that.”

“I’m not strong enough. If one exam is this hard, how will I fight actual villains?”

“I know.” Taka steps back, hand still on his head. “It’s okay to be weak. Humans grow. They change. Even if it’s harder, if the stakes are higher, you’ll be stronger each time.”

Izuku shakes his head. There’s so much he hasn’t done, so much he needs to do. “I should have saved them. Eri is probably in danger right now.”

“But you’re on your way.” Taka sounds old and exhausted for a twenty-year-old as she straightens up. “Eri will be saved.”

“She isn’t always.” And that— that’s what really scares him.

Taka hesitantly reaches out, messing up his hair again. “Heroes save people, green bean. No matter the odds. Sometimes that means helping each other, and you’re not alone.”

Izuku looks down, and Taka sighs. “I know I’m not the best at this, but hear me out. You’ve got a lot of people supporting you. Don’t fight a war on your own when you have a whole army.”

She’s doing her best. The words don’t clear it all up, but some of the fog lifts. Not much, but enough.

When they make their way downstairs, Cloud is up and blearily making his way through a plate of salmon. Inko and Hisen are washing dishes and chatting like old friends. It’s weird to see them all together, but not in a bad way. Izuku could get used to this.

The mental peace he feels doesn’t last forever. Later that night, the mind-numbing shock sets in all over again.

He’s always assumed that he’d get at least one villain point. The zero he knows will be on his acceptance refusal haunts his dreams. It’s there the next day, and the day after, until he’s lost track of time.

The mental list of people he hasn’t saved bounces around in his head. He starts catching glimpses of a burning forest in other worlds, though mainly he’s revisiting a round building that’s in his notes.

More people he hasn’t saved, more people relying on him when he couldn’t even make it to the starting line. He doesn’t know why it’s important, or what happens, but too many worlds are burning with blue flames. It will happen.

Whispers in the back of his mind grow louder, louder, until there’s no room left to think.

Until one night at some hellish hour, his phone lights up with a text. From a friend(?)

Chapter End Notes
hahaha im dying, so sorry for another cliffhanger I promise they're not all like this.

Edit: fixed a spelling thing. Second edit: reworded some stuff for clarity and capitalized the movie title

Taka: how do I comfort this small lost child?
Shinsou: uhhhhh no idea
Taka: *messes up his hair*
Shinsou: *pats back*
Shinsou has A Cat, Apparently

Chapter Summary

Shinsou has a cat named Noisy/ShutUp and I love him

Chapter Notes

I think we're spoiler free. kendo? kendou? help I see her name spelled both ways. She shows up, but no plot is mentioned.

Late update=long update. enjoy, y'all. Also I would fight All Might for Urusai bc hes partially based on my own cat.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Shinsou can’t sleep. It’s not unusual, but it is a problem. He’s done all the breathing exercises he knows and read through a good portion of the book by his bed for nights like this. It’s done absolutely nothing.

The family cat, Urusai, is also sleeping on his back, so there’s a limit to how much he can move. He was still able to wriggle a bit until his arms were free of the covers, so now he can swipe his phone from the desk with a bit of effort.

It doesn’t help that Urusai is a full 20 pounds of tabby.

The doctors always say the screen brightness is harmful or whatever, but it’s not advice he’ll follow tonight. Did UA know how bad that test was for his mental health, or was it just a coincidentally stress-inducing nightmare that decided his very future? Oh wait, that’s Japan’s education system in general since before quirks. Oops.

He opens his chat app which has all of five names. His loud dad, tired dad, a friend from the system, and… Pony and Midoriya.

He knows they’ll be asleep, but it’s worth a try. Midoriya had the kind of look implying that he could use a few hours himself. Of everyone (besides his tired dad, who never sleeps but is out doing a night shift right now) Midoriya might be his best chance.

He taps Midoriyas icon- that smile literally lights up the screen- and opens the chat.

MESSAGING “fall into the void”

Hey I know its late o’clock but what did you think about the exam?
Shinsou winces a moment after he sends it, remembering Midorya broken on the ground, dragging himself forward for a single point. The exam is probably not what he wants to think about. With a moment’s hesitation, Shinsou sends a picture of Urusai. Maybe that’ll make up for it.

A reply comes in just as he finishes checking Neko Atsume.

[picture attached]

fall into the void: !!!!!
fall into the void: What’s its name?????
fall into the void: I didn’t know you had a cat??????

Urusai

fall into the void: oh im sorry if im keeping you up!!! Goodnight!!!!

Shinsou is really winning tonight. Two social blunders back to back? He’s really overachieving.

No wait
That’s his name
His name is Urusai

fall into the void: you named your cat…. Shut up?
fall into the void: is he really loud?

Nah he came like that

fall into the void: that’s amazing
fall into the void: also abt the exam???
fall into the void: I guess im just reall nervous
fall into the void: like,,, I got a practical examscore of 0
fall into the void: grand total of nothing

you’ve got the written
fall into the void: might as well not count, its just there to provide like a quarter of the total grade
don’t sell yourself short

He probably shouldn’t have said that. Last week he had woken up from a nap to hear his loud dad
screaming about how “some green haired kid blew the zero pointer away! He just jumped up and then BAM.” The windows had rattled a bit. “Do you think he’s gonna be in your class, Ai?!?!?!"

It wasn’t direct confirmation, because even the teachers didn’t know yet, but Shinsou had picked up that Midoriya at least had a chance.

His phone dings in his hand.

fall into the void: yea but like….. 0 points
fall into the void: how many did you get? If you don’t want to tell that’s fine!!!

I think around 15?

Not enough.

fall into the void: You’ll get in. Gen Ed or 1-A.
fall into the void: trust me on this one

And that… that’s strange, how Midoriya can say it with such conviction. Shinsou tucks away that thought in his mind to look at later.

Abruptly, Midoriya sends something that has Shinsou sitting up as much as he can. Urusai grumbles, curling up on his back.

fall into the void: Besides, Eraserhead is training you, right?

Who?

fall into the void: ….. red eyes when he uses his erasure quirk??? Hair floats??? Underground hero????

fall into the void: Same moves as the ones you used??? Id know that capture scarf anywhere, and it was On Your Shoulders

Don’t know him

fall into the void: are you kidding me
fall into the void: you tell me you don’t know him??? Ive got like 10 pages that say otherwise bc that fighting style is the Same

Pages????

Are you a stalker??

fall into the void: No!!! I just like doing hero analysis
fall into the void: like fights and stuff.
The conversation with Shinsou at Hell Hour is, strangely, enough to get Izuku moving again. He’s been continuing the plan from All Might out of habit, but it’s time to change things up a bit. There’s a huge chunk of time open now that the beach is clear, and Izuku knows exactly what he’s going to do with it.

He needs form as well as muscle.

That weekend, he switches the sign on in his room, opening the door to the Lonely Owl.

When Izuku pads downstairs and looks for signs of life he notices Cloud on the sofa and lets out a wordless, monotone yell.

It doesn’t startle the ex-hero, and Cloud joins in, harmonizing without looking up. It’s about a full minute of yelling before Izuku runs out of air and Cloud bursts out laughing.

“I win!”

“I started first. What’s that?”

Cloud beckons him over. “You’ll never guess what I figured out.”

“The wifi?”

“Yes! Well- no, I still can’t get it to work on every world, but I did one better.”
Izuku frowns as he leans over the couch. “What’d you do?”

“This.” Cloud holds up his phone like it’s the most expensive diamond on earth. “I got them linked.”

“You- wait. I thought phones from different worlds couldn’t connect?”

Cloud grins crookedly and unlocks it. A second later, another phone starts ringing in the kitchen. A click, and Hisen’s voice filters through.

“It still works.”

Cloud whoops, and Izuku hurriedly pulls out his phone. When Cloud’s number comes up, it’s twenty digits long, but it works.

Within seconds a group chat is up and Cloud has assigned nicknames all around.

**FUCK YES FINALLY A GROUP CHAT**

Backpack4Life: HELLL YEAHHHHHHHHHH

TheGoodNeighbor: Cloud, language.

*TheGoodNeighbor has changed the group name to Cookies are in the Kitchen*

*TheGoodNeighbor changed their name to KinttingMan*

KnittingMan: I hope that wasn’t rude of me?

Going to the kitchen and also wheres Taka

OurSourceOfIncome: I’ll be down

OurSourceOfIncome: hey cloud homeslice breadslice friendo love you like a brother but what is my username

Cloud plops down on the couch and yells upstairs rather than texting a response. “Look me in the eye and tell me I’m wrong!”

Izuku slips under the bar to the kitchen as Taka’s sarcastic thunders back. “Who has time for that!? I work so you all can buy food on whatever weird-ass world you’re at, and this is how you repay me?”

“Language, there are children present.” Hisen doesn’t sound hopeful anything will change. There are trays of cookies everywhere. The café owner nods to Izuku as footsteps pound down the stairs. Armed with an oatmeal cookie, Izuku returns to see Cloud blow out his cheeks and cross his eyes at Taka.

“You’re incorrigible.”

“I’m a gift, is what I am.”

Izuku bypasses their squabble, heading to grab his backpack. “Got time?”
Cloud takes another sip of coffee from the couch. “Y’all working out?”

He twists around so only Izuku can see the awful face he’s making, pushing up his nose and blowing out his cheeks with wide eyes. Izuku covers up a snort when Taka shoots him a confused look.

Izuku keeps a straight face. “Yeah, Cloud. Join us.”

“Nah, just a thought but uhhh.” In one quick movement, Cloud slings himself over the couch and slaps a sticky note to Taka’s forehead, vaulting away. “You might wanna work on reflexes first.”

He crouches on the top of the stairs grinning like a cryptid gremlin as Taka slowly peels it off, reading the writing. Izuku tries to read, but the kanji is too different. Something about names and roads?

“Hey Cloud.” There’s something very dangerous in Takas voice as she crumples the note.

“Yep!” Cloud chirps, looking pleased with himself. He bolts as Taka sprints after him.

“You fucker, that wasn’t even a good joke!”

Izuku scrambles up the stairs after them, just in time to see Cloud slam a supply room door in Taka’s face, cackling. “Watch your language, there are children present!”

Izuku huffs, joining Taka at the door. “Kacchan’s said worse when we were five. What was on the note?”

“It won’t matter if he’s dead.” Taka tries the handle and pushes her shoulder against the door, edging it open.

“What- NO. OH MY GOD HOW ARE YOU THIS STRONG- IZUKU PLEASE HELP.”

There’s a scrambling sound before the door slides back marginally.

“Better tell me what you wrote, or I’ll help her,” Izuku says mildly, crossing his arms.

“FINE, I wrote- I wrote-” Cloud breaks off and Izuku can hear his wheezing laughter from the other side of the door. “What do you call a laughing motorcycle?”

Izuku shoots a confused look at Taka, who looks like she’s in physical pain.

“A Yamahahaha,” she deadpans.

Wordlessly, Izuku puts his shoulder to the door and starts pushing as well.

Cloud shrieks something unintelligible about unfair advantages before the resistance vanishes. The door slams open to an empty room. In the same instant Taka pivots, catching Cloud’s jacket as he portals in behind her. Izuku stumbles into the room, but turns and tackles them both quickly, sending them all off balance. Ah, yes. Revenge.

They all hit the floor in a heap.

“That is the worst pun,” Izuku announces. He stands up, accidentally kicking Taka and giving Cloud an elbow to the stomach in the process.

“It was,” Taka agrees, trying to detach her hand from the wood flooring. The tips of her gloves are impaled in it by almost an inch. “He should work out with us to apologize, don’t you think?”
“Absolutely.”

“Unfortunately for you, I have paperwork to do.”

Taka, now free of the floor, grimaces. “Next time, then.”

They make their way to the in-house gym, and Cloud makes a show of waving farewell. Izuku signs one of the ruder words he knows, turning away from the indignant squawk that follows.

Izuku questions Taka as they run through a warmup. “Are we continuing from earlier?”

“Well, you’ve got a pretty good grasp on parkour and free running, but heroes and vigilantes need combat skills.” It’s interesting that she keeps heroes an option. “Besides, UA doesn’t teach a particular style so I can teach a modge podge from off world – you’ll be a bit more unpredictable that way. Sound good?”

He nods, and her face splits into a fanged grin. “Let’s get moving then. We’re gonna work on form and basic attack patterns before sparring with quirks or support items. For now, show me your ready stance.”

Izuku blinks, and then settles into the stance he’s seen his other selves do. It’s all similar, save for a few outliers and one whose stance was just holding a gun, so he mimics as best he can.

Taka adjusts his form, lowering one hand and moving his feet in with a nudge. When he gives her a nod, she places one hand on his shoulder, and the other on his back, changing his posture to be more upright.

“This world tends to lean back too far in battle. It throws your weight off, so we’ll use Central’s hero standard. It’s close enough to what you have now.” She tucks his elbow in slightly and grins, settling into a practiced mirror of his own form in front of him.

“We’ll hold this for five minutes at the start of each workout. The best way to ingrain it is practice. So. Wanna hear the latest on SInKLock?”

Izuku’s arms are already stiff. “I thought they resolved it?”

“Nah, it’s falling. I’m betting Hisen a black hole the world will collapse in the next few days. He’s giving it a month.”

“What’s Hisen gonna do with a black hole?”

“Hell if I know. Maybe stick it in a jar to use later?”

“Huh.” Izuku thinks about the walls and walls of jars lining the Lonely Owl, and the years of bets Taka has lost. That’s not comforting. “Neat.”

“Izuku?” Mom knocks on the open door, and Izuku looks up. “I know you’re taking it easy this break, but I just got news about Suki Daro-san down the street. She’s looking into the beach you cleaned.”

“Dogobah?” Izuku sets away his Analysis Of My Future notebook carefully. “How’d she know it was me?”
“She doesn’t. I’ve been keeping an eye on the press around it, and it showed up in the newspaper.”

Izuku frowns. “Can I see?”

Looking over the article, it’s straight and to the point: Suki Daro is employed to the city’s care and management of parks. She’s looking for artists or students to care for the park now that it’s been cleaned.

“It sounds like she’s just hopping onto the work we did.”

“I know.” Mom reads over his shoulder. “I thought you would want to know. That last part is worrying.”

“‘Whoever cleaned the beach, you have the community’s thanks?’ What about it?”

“I don’t think they’re planning to keep it clean. If only the community were a little more involved, we could take care of it easily.”

Izuku looks out his window, which now shows Dogobah beach. He could do something about this. That evening, he asks mom for some help managing the prefectural website.

As the week passes, Izuku texts Taka, inquiring about the portal on his doorway. If he’s going to fix the beach problem, then he’s going all in.

Pony texts their chat later that week, apologizing early for missing their weekly meeting at the mall. Apparently one of her moms is taking her on a trip, so they’ll be in the countryside up until UA’s entrance ceremony (if she gets in).

On the other hand, Shinsou has slipped into radio silence, only sending short replies when prompted. It’s probably due to the news oh HeroWatch of a crime ring fall- Izuku’s willing to bet Eraserhead and present Mic were involved.

With a lack of other things to do, Izuku throws himself back into training. On one sunny day, the public art permit he’d submitted is approved. Izuku heads down to the beach that morning, armed with supplies and a notebook full of designs. The wood is harder to carry than expected, but he manages.

It’s messier than he remembered- All Might had mentioned the currents caused trash buildup, but this?

Izuku looks out over scattered plastic bags and styrofoam and breathes in deeply. It smells cleaner, sharp and salty and everything a beach should be. It’s not a garbage dump anymore. He might as well clean it up, first. Izuku grabs his gloves and gets to work.

He’s a fair ways down the beach when someone shouts his name.

“Midoriya!” Kirishima waves, picking his way across the beach. “I guess great minds think alike, huh?”

“Yeah, it’s just habit by now.”

“True.” Kirishima tosses his bag over to Izuku’s stuff before pausing. “Is all that yours?”

“Hm? Oh. Yeah. Mom said something that got me thinking and I just kinda… yeah. I’m gonna make
some art. Got a permit today.”

“Wait. Like, out of all this? Do you need any help?”

Izuku blinks owlishly, still bent over a mess of fishing line. “If you want to, then please save my life.”

“Yeah!” Kirishima grabs a trash bag and races down the beach. “Let’s clean! This! Up!”

They don’t end up finishing the beach that day, but by the next it’s looking respectable. Izuku lays out a new notebook, covered in ideas, and the two brainstorm until they have a pretty good idea of what they want to make. Izuku is adamant on one part, though, and Kirishima would paint the whole thing red if he could, but it works.

People start to notice. A local artist with purple hair introduces herself as Mura Hatsume and gives a few pointers. She even brings down a few cans of extra house paint and shows them how to make their work last longer in the elements.

Izuku notices her resemblance to another Hatsume and doesn’t comment. Maybe they aren’t related, and it’s not really his business.

Another student with red hair and the absolute coolest quirk becomes a regular. Kendo mentioned it will help her with service hours, which isn’t a bad idea. Izuku knows he’s seen her in sports festivals, but physically can’t mention it. Kendo doesn’t mention she’d applied to UA, and the topic never comes up. It’s possibly one of the most frustrating and minor things Izuku has had to keep quiet about.

Other people help, too. Cloud shows up with more supplies he should reasonably be able to carry, and the local vigilante Pop Step helps paint the higher parts on one afternoon. Community members stop by to help from time to time, and Mom keeps them well-supplied with lunches. She mentions it at night, how happy she is that they’re doing this, and Izuku beams. It’s really just carrying on what All Might mentioned about heroes doing community service.

When as the acceptance date edges closer, it’s almost done. The sculpture spans around a quarter of the beach, made so rainwater and runoff from the sidewalk below will be filtered down into the ground through tubes, channels, and small waterwheels they installed. Doors they’d found in dumps and scrapyards sit behind it, repainted in blues and greens. It’s colorful, splattered paint due to Kirishima’s enthusiasm and insistence that all colors are beautiful, particularly red.

“Dude.” Kirishima collapses on the ground. “I can’t believe we did it.”

Izuku plops down. “Me neither.”

“Not gonna lie.” Kendo sits down beside them. “I thought you guys were crazy, but we all got it done. How’d you come up with this?”

“I just thought, if people saw the beach as a little more valuable, they’d help clean it. Maybe visit more, who knows.”

“Also cool.”

“Hey, wait.” Kirishima sits up, squinting down the beach at a doorframe three feet off the ground. “Are we missing a door?”

“Oh. Yeah, let me grab it. Might take a moment.” Izuku doesn’t want to stand up just to world travel.
Maybe if he rolls over, it’ll just let him in.

“Take your time.” Kirishima is used to him traveling by now. Kendo, though… Izuku doesn’t remember if he’s told her. Oh. He’s already moving by the time this realization hits, and the null opens up under him.

Kendo’s surprised shout is cut off as Izuku is dunked into starlight. Guilt twists around his ribcage as Izuku falls past a nearby film noir world. He should have explained first, and now they’ll never be friends. That was so rude of him, to just disappear, and now he’s made Kirishima explain-

Stop. Breathe. Does he even breathe in the null? This train of thought isn’t productive.

Izuku forces himself to focus on the worlds around him, until—there. A beautiful deep blue-green world. It has what he needs. Izuku twists, directing his path down to that world’s Dagobah beach. A sunset-lit circle opens, and Izuku falls through the portal feet-first.

He hits a mountain of junk clumsily, and freezes, listening for movement. His hair isn’t covered, and he has no idea if this world’s Izuku wants to be seen, or even should be alive.

There’s no sound but seagulls and waves. Izuku relaxes and slips down the trash pile as quietly as he can. He knows what he wants, and sneaks between the hills of trash until he finds the right one. There, partway up, is an ancient, worn door.

It’s old, with dark blue-grey chipped paint and a circular ship’s window in the center. The handle is a vertical bar of worn brass. Something about it strikes him as having a lot of character, so he’s been hoping to add it since he started thinking about doorways.

Something moves behind him. Izuku doesn’t hesitate, grabbing the door and throwing himself into the null before a green-haired teenager scrambles over a nearby hill of trash.

Izuku manages not to drop the door in the null. It’s clumsy to hold, so he sacrifices speed for comfort. He’s making Kirishima and Kendo wait, and the guilt comes back in force.

Izuku falls toward his home world and drops through a portal onto the sand. The door throws him off, pitching Izuku forward into a faceplant.

“Dude!”

“Oh crap.” Kendo practically trips as she runs over. “Are you okay?”

“I’m good, and sorry for the wait.” Izuku picks himself up sheepishly. “Sorry, I should have told you what I was about to do, that was really rude of me and thank you for waiting. I hope I didn’t take too long—“

“You’re good, bro.” Kirishima hefts the door up. “This is great! Should we paint it first?”

“Maybe? Do we wash it? I found it on this beach but. Uh.” Izuku steals a glance at Kendo, who is now staring at the door with huge eyes. “Not this beach.”

“That.” Kendo points to the door, face completely straight. “That’s from another dimension.”

“Yeah.”

Kendo watches Kirishima carry the door down the beach to a public hose. “Okay. Okay, this might as well happen. Probably should get used to it now…. okay.”
Izuku frowns as Kendo covers her eyes and takes a deep breath. “Are you all right?”

“Yeah. Let’s go clean the door from another dimension.”

Kendo continues to space out as they wash and attach the door. Izuku tries not to let the guilt in his stomach crush him. Maybe time will help her get used to it? They end up attaching it like a normal door. At one point Kirishima goes to find a better screwdriver and Kendo checks that the water wheel works. Izuku takes advantage of the distraction to line the doorframe with white tape. He won’t use the portal, but it’s a good escape point to have.

Maybe he’s being paranoid, but there’s a good chance the villains will go after him personally. He can be paranoid.

When the final door is shut and locked in place, the three take a moment to marvel at what they’d done. All in all, it’s impressive for a couple middle schoolers and the occasional community helper.

Kirishima inhales loudly before kicking off his crocs with a whoop and running to the shore. “We did it!”

Kendo breaks out of her trance, running after him. “Kirishima, I swear if you get sick so help me-there’s trash in there!”

Izuku struggles with his shoes, running to follow. “If there’s trash we should clean it up, I’ll grab some bags!”

“Yeah!”

“But we do it with shoes!”

“No!”

The letter sits at his desk, bright red seal still intact with the UA logo imprinted. Izuku’s been watching it from his bed for a good five minutes now, trying to scavenge any thought process long enough to open it.

It’s not that the letter is physically stopping or holds any threat- except that it does. These are the last few moments Izuku has without knowing where he goes to high school. As agonizing as every second is, it’s a second where he might get into UA. Depending on the contents of the letter, these might be the last few seconds before he breaks.

So he sits.

Unable to open it, unable not to. Something in his head is stopping him. Its almost like the door he keeps closed, sight into millions of worlds stretching beyond it. This door is just much harder to open.

There’s a knock at the door. “Sweetie? You’ve been in there a while now. Is everything okay?”

“You can come in, mom.”
The door opens with a creak, and feet shuffling on carpet, but Izuku can’t look away from the letter. The bed dips when she sits next to him.

“Well. It certainly is something, isn’t it?”

Izuku lets himself fall over until he’s leaning on her shoulder, and she brings him into a hug. They sit like that until Izuku can’t stand the waiting any longer.

“Hey mom?”

“Mhm?”

“Can I ask a really stupid question.”

“There are no stupid questions, sweetie.”

“Could you…. Put the letter in my hands? I don’t think- I can’t pick it up.”

The letter is taken from his tunnel vision. He blinks up at Mom as she leans down to plant a kiss on his forehead.

“Want me to be here while you open it?”

“I think I’m good from here… Thanks.”

The door creaks again and Izuku tears open the seal before he can second guess himself. A disk falls out onto the bed, lighting up into a hologram.

“I AM HERE! AS A PROJECTION!”

Izuku scrambles back, and the hologram sputters for a bit as the bed tilts. He really can’t deal with loud noises right now. Luckily, he finds a volume dial on the side, and the noise quiets drastically.

“YOU SCORED EXCELLENTLY on the written exam, young Midoriya, but as we all know, zero points is a failing grade on the practical- what? Get along with it? Ah, okay, sorry.”

All Might regains his bravado. “But! LOOK!”

A screen behind him shows Uraraka.

“Um, excuse me? There was another test taker- I think his name was Midoriya?” She pantomimes his fluffy hair. Badly. “Kinda plain looking with green hair? He saved me, but didn’t get any points for it, so I was wondering if I could give him some of mine?”

All Might pauses the video, smiling, but Izuku’s heart freezes. That would… no. Uraraka had to have a reason to try for the best of the best. The idea that she would throw it all away for him…. He knows instantly: if she doesn’t get in, he’s marching over and insisting they reconsider.

“But-“All Might presses the remote again. He really does live for the drama, pausing a video a giving Izuku a heart attack just for suspense.

Present Mic puts a hand on Uraraka’s shoulder. “Not to worry, listener!”

Izuku blinks at the projection, stunned, as Present Mic and later All Might explain a second system to the exam. It stinks of Aizawa’s logical ruses, but this is so large scale… whoever is in charge has to be terrifying.

He catches something All Might Says- 86 rescue points, zero villain points. A scoreboard flashes up, and All Might mentions something about his ranking, but the ringing in Izuku’s ears drowns it out. He can’t fully hear anymore.

The projection ends, but not before All Might’s voice breaks through the fog: “Come, young Midoriya. This is YOUR Hero Academia.”

That word. “Your.” HE got into UA. Not just a copy, or an echo, or another him. HE did it.

He swings off the bed, throws open the door, and crashes into his mother’s open arms.

He did it.

Chapter End Notes

Yes, "suki daro." (I know its a horrible joke but if BNHA’s author can do that naming thing then so can I.) She was gonna be a nice old lady who wanted help making art, but somehow that changed???

On a side note: i'm gonna try to reply to comments, but stuff is happening (fuck capitalism) so from here on out I may not have as much time. I'm super sorry- It makes me really happy and genuinely excited to write more when I read what you think about World Walker! I'll still be able to read comments, but replying to them definitely won't happen as regularly. (this won't impact the update schedule, because I've written a good portion already. Don't worry abt that, I've hit 300 pages.)

Thank you so much for the positive words, kudos and feedback. It makes my day every time, and hopefully I'll be back on track to return to replying soon.

hugs to yall (/^o^)/
Spite and Sprites

Chapter Summary

chats and uhhhhhh fantasy!au. Tsu was a warlock who trapped her water spirit patron in a fountain.

Chapter Notes

spoiler free, I think. We hear Vlad King talk abt his students, but no specifics

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Kirishima texts him that he got in, and Izuku only cries a little. They can’t talk for long- Kirishima needs to talk with All Might about One for All, but they do call and yell a bit to each other. It turns into concerned yelling at each other for being reckless when Kirishima hears about the massive portal, and Izuku finds out his friend shattered an entire fucking arm.

UA better have a good health facility if this keeps up. Then again, the bigger problem is surviving the school nurse if the pattern continues. Recovery Girl doesn’t strike him as the type to go easy on lectures.

However, it does remind him of a couple other groups he needs to text.

“SAME HAT SQUAD”

HOLY FVUGHGUKJ I GOT IN

Uniunicorn: GREAT!!!! I DON’T UNDERSTAND BUT GREAT!!!

Uniunicorn: WHAT DOES “FVUGHGUKJ” MEAN?

You know keystomashing?

Uniunicorn: oh

Tired Cat: hey guys lets play a game

Tired Cat: its called the “Shinsou’s tired and yeah, he has no idea what keystomashing means in Japanese” game

Keystomashing

Uniunicorn:!!!!

Uniunicorn: I learned something new!!
But yeah!!!! Have you gotten your acceptance letter yet, guys???

You’re gonna get in, trust me.

Uniunicorn: YES!!! I GOT IN!!! IM CRYING !!! : )))

IM CRYING TOO

Uniunicorn: CRYING FRIENDS!!! @Tired Cat, JOIN US!!!

ONE OF US ONE OF US

Tired Cat: Tears? In my Valentino White Bag?

Tired Cat: jokes on you lot, I don’t have emotions

Tired Cat: only spite in this house

Tired Cat: spite and an acceptance letter

HOLYFF

Uniunicorn: YAY!!!

CALLED IT FOR BOTH OF YOU

WAIT AIT WAIT WAIT

Uniunicorn: waiting!

Tired Cat: woute

Okay that’s cursed but also what classes are you in??? I’m in 1A

Uniunicorn: 1-B! we’re neighbors!!!

Tired Cat: heh. Neigh-bors.

Uniunicorn: I don’t understand

Tired Cat: Neigh is horse noises.

Uniunicorn: ah. Excellent. This pleases us

Tired Cat: I know this joke. why? Why me? Also im 1a as well.

Uniunicorn: WE DID IT!!

Tired Cat: yep

Tired Cat: and what happened to the green one??

Tired Cat: Hey you dead?

nope! Just screaming into the void

im just super happy
we did it guys
ill see you all there!

Uniunicorn: YEAH!!!!
Tired Cat: yay

**Broken physics or broken bones??**

I GOT IN!!
I think everyone else did too!

Crypid: I FUKING CALLED IT

LiminalSpace: Congratulations, we’re very proud

Crypid: FUKING SUPERB YOU FUNKY LITTLE VOID BEAN

eldritch: CONGRATS GREEN BEAN

THANKS!!

Crypid: yer a hero, izuku

Im a wot

eldritch: kids these days with their vines and shit. Ticktoks and what have you

LiminalSpace: Taka I’m older by a century at least.

Crypid: wait what

wait by that much?

LiminalSpace: You told me I was “older than dirt,” Cloud.

eldritch: Time is an illusion so long as it has no benefit to the corporate masses. Also im older if we’re using Central World’s time

Crypid: but that’s going by when you arrive on a world

Crypid: Izuku and I are like 50 by Noir’s time if we’re saying that

huh

Then you’re like five days old by PressF

Crypid: shit
LiminalSpace: Izuku, did you get into 1-A? Also Cloud, you misspelled your username again

Crypid: double shit

Yesss!!

eldritch: yall gonna fuck shit up

I hope so

loll what if i show up and nothing happens

its just a normal year

Crypid: fuck that, show crusty and vapeman whos boss

eldritch: kick their teeth in

What abt the grape rat

Crypid: murdrrrr

eldritch: yeet him into the actual void, ppl cant breathe there without us

LiminalSpace: Please do not.

LiminalSpace: I will fish him out for the authorities if you do.

If he gets in im telling Nezdu

I have no choice in this but still

Crypid: u know, taka has blackmail

eldritch: yea I got dirt on the rat

LiminalSpace: I expected better of you.

If he gets in

then i wont stop u

Crypid: let us know if we can yeet the bitcj

Crypid: hmmm so many grape puns I can make, ive got, a bunch, you come into my house

Crypid: reverse uno card

eldritch: hey cloud, love you like the brother I never had but uh

Crypid: I know

hey quick question

Crypid: You love me too don’t lie about it
eldritch: the forbidden pun topic

LiminalSpace: Children, please.

It’s the last week of school. Izuku isn’t nostalgic— if anything, he’s excited to get away from the stares and offhand comments and finally start saving people. He’s excited enough to forget important detail: His teachers have been told.

When he finds himself in the teachers’ room with Kacchan, he’s expecting to be scolded.

“I didn’t do it,” Izuku begins, ready to deflect whatever the local asshats have decided to blame on him.

Kouchou-sensei doesn’t speak, only raises an eyebrow. “This is about your letters from UA, Midoriya. Bakugo.”

Kacchan snickers, which helps exactly nothing.

Izuku feels his face turning red and keeps his eyes on the ground. Kacchan swells beside him, grinning widely, though not very nicely. It only gets sharper when turned towards him, and Izuku feels it burning by the side of his face. It takes a lot of energy to stay where he is.

“I’d like to congratulate both of you on your acceptance. I hear you placed sixth, Midoriya. Quite impressive.” Izuku can see Kacchan out of the corner of his eye, the proud smile thinning into something much, much more dangerous.

“Bakugo, my congratulations on second place! I’d say you really took the metaphorical cake on this one, as expected. Well done. I look forward to seeing you both on the hero rankings. Do us proud.”

Izuku bows, too much of a coward to look at Kacchan’s face. He knows what he’ll find. The moment the teacher’s door is shut, Izuku sprints down the hallway. Footsteps pound behind him, but Izuku knows he’s faster.

He’s always been a coward. The perfect quirk for running away, and that’s all he’s ever done. It’s frustrating. He’s also angry and tired of running, so he picks a particular spot to slow down.

“Deku you worthless twerp.”

Kacchan catches up to him, grabbing Izuku’s uniform. The next thing he knows, Izukus back hits the wall and the wind is knocked out of him. Kacchan shoves palmful of crackling heat next to his face.

“What kind of shit did you pull, huh?”

His one mercy is that Kacchan still, even now, refuses to touch him. His uniform keeps him in place, but that’s all his childhood friend will do without backup. Explosions pop too close for comfort, reminding Izuku that Kacchan doesn’t have to grab him to make him afraid.

“It was supposed to be me,” Kacchan snarls, pain and anger lacing his words. “I was supposed to be
the first from this goddamn crappy school.”

Izuku looks down, letting the words wash through him. Some part of him had hoped things would change if they got in together.

“You’re not worth their time. All they’ll ever see is a useless, weak, dumbass liability. They’ll know you’re not fit to be a hero, so give it up now and save us both the trouble!”

*Not fit to be a hero.* Izuku has had a lot of people telling him what he can and can’t do because of his quirk his whole life. Hearing it now shouldn’t be different, any yet… it crosses a line.

“I will be a hero, Kacchan.” Izuku knows his voice is shaking when he cuts off Kacchan’s rant. He doesn’t care. “I’m not going to stop because you think I should.”

Kacchan spits at this, forcing Izuku to squirm as the explosions grow louder. He should really stop talking. The thing is, Kacchan won’t consider him any less no matter what he says. He’s only a liability, so maybe it’s time to make something clear.

Izuku takes Kacchan’s wrist, forcing the sparking hand away from his face. His old friend flinches at the contact, and Izuku bites back a surge of nausea at the reaction. He lets go hastily.

“I know you want to be the best. That’s fine. I just want to save people.”

Kacchan doesn’t respond. He’s staring at Izuku’s bare arms, and the pale skin where his suppressors once were. Izuku watches, puzzled, as the explosions sputter out and his childhood friend backs up, eyes wide like he’s seen a ghost. A second later Kacchan’s expression twists back into its usual scowl.

“They’ll find out you’re weak,” he snarls, palms crackling again. “You’ll never be one of us.”

“I don’t have to be,” Izuku says, letting go of Here.

He’s gone before Kacchan’s explosions hit the wall. The null is soft and cold and perfect to hide in for a while. He’ll find a world to visit, come back for his bags, and head to the beach. It’s time for a break.

He knows he’s weak. Useless. A coward with a coward’s quirk. A liability, Kacchan’s voice adds scornfully.

Why does it hurt so much to hear the truth?

After collecting his thoughts and hitting Noir - literally - Izuku sets out on some errands. He drops his backpack off in the room- it really does orbit this world like a little moon, which is *so cool* - and texts Kendo and Kirishima while he’s at it. He’s going to need their opinions on this next little task.

He packs some supplies and lets the null swallow him. Starlight trails past him as he falls through the darkness. It doesn’t particularly matter which four worlds he visits, so long as they have what he needs. At each one he stops just long enough to fill a glass jar with lake water - there’s no need for risking discovery. Supplies set, he lets the null take him again, and plummets through tangled nebulas.

Nonnac glints in the distance as Izuku navigates to the edge of his limits. He knows, logically, that there are more worlds beyond the invisible barrier. More worlds to discover with their own
individual stories. Maybe even another world traveler if he’s lucky. Despite this, his quirk has always stopped him, looping his path around until he’s headed straight back for Nonnac. He’ll wait, until his quirk lets him go.

A murky green-brown world catches Izuku’s eye, and he tucks his arms close to increase velocity. Spritesworn tends to be difficult to find, and he’d rather not have to make this trip twice.

A circle of sunlight opens as Izuku swings around, and he drops through into castle ruins. Izuku dusts himself off, regaining his bearings as he looks around. The worn grey stone is familiar, covered in creeping vines. Tree roots worm through cracked marble floors and walls, providing a ceiling of both dappled sunlight and broken stone. Izuku wanders through, less searching for his destination and more waiting for it to arrive.

He passes through halls and chambers, keeping to the central paths. Statues that look too similar to people he’s known guard the corners and doorways: Uraraka, with bow and knives; Iida, astride a crumbling horse; his mother, with a circlet of gold on her forehead and book in hand. He wanders past a cracked figure who looks suspiciously like All Might, in a suit of armor and crown. By the time he sees yet another statue of Eraserhead- a knight with broken wings, and a torn portrait of Todoroki, he’s fed up with twisting halls and courtyard paths. The door likes to take it’s time, but he doesn’t have all day.

Sure enough, an archway with long-gone doors leads into a smaller courtyard, draped in greenery with a large gurgling fountain in the middle. Around the four corners stand statues of forest spirits- they bear resemblance to Froppy, though more as a family. Her statue is perched on the fountain, looking down. Izuku keeps to the path as he approaches, halting just before the fountain. He plops down, takes out his phone, and opens the notes app. He’s hoping to annoy a specific occupant of this fountain into talking. Now to just sit and wait.

It’s his lucky day- after a minute the fountain swells into a wave that peeks over the fountain edge without spilling a drop. She looks a little like Auntie Mitsuki today, which is just weird.

The water sprite’s voice is like soda fizzing. “*It’s been a while, what was your name again?*”

“Nice try, Llyr. I come freely to propose a deal.”

“Oh?” The mound rises, forming the vague shape of spiky hair and shoulders. “*What do you want, little green human?*”

Izuku reaches into his bag, pulling out three of the glass jars and setting two on the fountain edge. He reads his next words from the phone notes. “I offer two samples of water from other worlds, in exchange for alterations of my specification to the key I was gifted.”

“You really are no fun. What’s the third for?”

“I’ll offer another water sample for a piece of metal of my specifications.”

Llyr reaches out, resting a hand over a jar. The limb is made entirely of water, and Izuku forces himself to sit still as she tries in vain to open it. Fae spirits from this world can’t take anything offered without completing the deal. So long as he worded it right, he’ll be fine. Probably.

“What metal?”

“A piece of inscribed clean copper. As part of the deal, I want the ability to affix its back permanently to rock and to change the words at my discretion.”
Llyr huffs, spraying out a fine mist in the process, and retreats. “I want five samples for that. Don’t test my limits, green human.”

“I have one more sample.” Izuku places the fourth jar on the fountains edge. “This one is from a world rich in magic different from your own, which raises it’s worth. I add it to the deal.”

Llyr passes a hand over it, before lifting herself fully out of the water. Izuku leans back as she towers above him. “You are testing me.”

“That was not my intention.”

“Intentions mean nothing.” The sprite drags herself forward until her head is inches away from Izuku’s eyes. “Intentions have given millions of souls to my domain, including that of your ancestor. Do not test my limits.”

Something clatters as it falls in front of Izuku, but he doesn’t look away. Llyr snorts- which sounds more like an unclogged drain- and splashes back into her fountain.

“You are lucky my warlock is gone, or I would have your head. Open these jars and the aforementioned deal is sealed.”

Izuku reaches for the first jar. “Taking my soul is not a part of this trade. By this condition, I seal the deal.”

“Fuck you. Tie a strand of hair around the key to change its laws. To speak of others, a lock of theirs.” Llyr sinks down, her voice becoming gargled. “Don’t come back expecting to leave alive.”

“My thanks is freely given, Llyr.”

The fountain doesn’t respond. Lids off, Izuku takes his key and metal with him. The moment he’s out, he drops into the null. That was… tense. But he has his soul and two kickass items, so who’s the real winner?

After a quick text to Kendo and Kirishima, Izuku makes his way to the beach. The space next to the public art is clear.

The metal is cool under his hands, and Izuku runs his fingers over the words. Other versions of him need to have this. The metal shimmers as he turns it, a reminder that it can be changed if Kirishima or Kendo want to add anything their text didn’t cover.

MADE FOR UNKNOWN HEROES: TO THOSE WHO REFORMED, AND THOSE WHO FACED IMPOSSIBLE ODDS; TO THOSE WHOSE NAMES ARE WASHED AWAY BY TIME; TO THE HEROES WHO NEVER MADE HEADLINES, THE QUIRKLESS, THE SURVIVORS, THE FIGHTERS.
The plaque affixes easily, sinking into the rock. Llyr does good work. Dealing with her is its own brand of trouble, but at least she’s honest about her goals.

Izuku sits down on the sand, admiring the beach. It’s different from any other world, that’s for sure. All considered, he’s as prepared for UA as well as possible. With these thoughts in his mind, he watches the sunset steadily creep up the horizon.

BONUS SCENE:

Aizawa sighs as he reaches for the next student file. The coffee machine is empty, one of the cruelties of working over afternoon hours.

Vlad King taps a full file on his desk, beaming. “Guys, I would take a bullet for my students as a hero, of course, but hear me out. You know when you just want to ensure their health and safety, and if someone told you that you could take a bullet to protect their mental health forever?”

Aizawa gently rests his head on his desk and prays for sleep as his coworker continues.

“I’d take a bullet for them. Maybe not in the arm, but I’d definitely give my left pinkie.”

“You say that every year,” Ectoplasm grumbles, while Lunch Ruch slips a 500 yen coin to Powerloader over the table.

“Yeah, but five minutes into reading these and I can already tell that Kendo will be team mom and Kurorio will quote HeroFeed Unsolved at least three times this year.”

“Don’t go easy on them,” Aizawa mutters, but Vlad King just smiles back.

“I won’t. Still would take a bullet for them, though.”

Chapter End Notes

YEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH
FANTASY AU! I've wanted to do this for ages tbh

(also yall are amazing in the comments im gonna cry holy shit)

Edit: I found out that Taka's chat name was, while the name of a famous author, also the name of an absolute scumbag. It's been changed to eldritch instead. (I should not have included the name without doing my research, and apologize for this slip-up. It will not happen again- This fic is supposed to be a story exploring the diverse worlds we can
create together, and the idea that it could have harmed someone is very upsetting to me. I am incredibly sorry for the mistake.)
Izuku can’t sleep, so he unwraps the seals from his arms and rolls off the bed headfirst, kicking the sheets on his way. He makes a portal and slips though before even hitting the ground.

It’s icy enough to chase away any remaining sleep. Izuku lets himself fall, spreading his arms to slow down. He’s only in his flannel pjs and a t-shirt, completely barefoot. That limits his options.

It’s a combination of no sleep and lack of general foreboding that has him traveling to a world he checked up on recently. It’s not named yet as far as he knows, but sometimes previous world travelers wanted names to be passed down. He should really investigate that. There’s a list he can check.

The world approaches, green and brown as if moss is growing over it. It’s still new compared to the others. Izuku hasn’t been often, but he always meets the same person each time.

A circle opens, and Izuku drops down, landing on the soft grass. A field stretches out around him, and stars dust the sky above him. They’re distant here, so cold in comparison with the null’s dazzling uncertainty. The null’s stars all bleed together; these are separate, defined.

Izuku lies down in the grass, watching as meteors start to travel across the sky. He doesn’t know how long he’s there before metal clinks across the field, and footsteps wade through the dew.

A lantern comes into view, lit by fireflies and illuminating a cloaked figure. Izuku relaxes when he sees red and white under the hood, looking back up to the sky. The other boy joins him shortly, putting down the lantern and a satchel before settling into the grass nearby. Light continues to streak through the night- the meteor shower is just getting started.

Todoroki- if he is Todoroki here, Izuku’s never really asked- breaks the silence first.

“Be ye wounded? Chased by whispered dreams?”

Izuku glancing over to Todoroki from the corner of his eyes. His friend’s cloak is red, embroidered with rich gold tread, and the lantern is skillfully hand-made. Starlight glints off his face, making it
“Not really,” Izuku says, returning to the sky. “I couldn’t sleep, is all.”

“Tis a large mood, as you say on these nights. Be gone by morn, or the watch will have a fresh head for their walls.”

“I will. Will you be all right?”

Todoroki grunts. “As well as can be. The northern wind howls and fools blow nonsense from their cheeks. Blood does not bear trust, though it may brew the oxen’s yoke. Best worry of the self before the stranger, particularly on these sacred grounds.”

“A stranger? Ouch.”

“Better names have been called.”

“True. You should take your own advice, by the way. I don’t know what’s happening but please take care of yourself.”

Todoroki stiffens.

“Did you catch these?” Izuku reaches up to tap the lantern glass, changing the subject.

“An old spell for seeking the lost. I could teach you?” Todoroki catches himself. “Assuming there is a wish to learn; knowledge without soil dies before harvest.”

“Sure. How do we start?”

Todoroki drops a chestnut into the hand Izuku offers. “Bring seed to heart, whisper an unborn secret, and toss it to the wind. The dancing light will bring it back to seek what has been lost.”

Izuku frowns, following the instructions. He doesn’t remember the secret he whispers, but when fireflies bring the chestnut back, his own voice is whispered in his ears.

“I want peaceful times like this to last forever.”

The fireflies gather, and Izuku places them in a jar Todoroki offers. When he holds it, it gently beckons him forward to the edge of the clearing. Izuku sets it down instead, and Todoroki frowns.

“Why do you not seek?”

“I’m enjoying right now.”

Todoroki startles, letting out a huff of laughter. “Truly, the heavens created you while drunk. Why must all my friends be so wise yet fools all the same?”

“Hey!”

Todoroki laughs again, and they settle back to watch the meteor shower. As light begins to creep over the horizon, Todoroki opens his lantern, letting the bugs out. Izuku follows suit, glancing over.

“Don’t you need that to get home?”

Todoroki shrugs, donning his cloak and pulling up the hood. “I have found what I seek. Beware- the watch will be out for blood shortly.”
Izuku nods, and Todoroki picks up the lantern. “…Safe light to ye.”

“Thanks, you too.” Izuku watches his friend leave before letting the null swallow him. He keeps the jar- some worlds have strict gift laws, and Izuku doesn’t know if this is one of them.

There’s still four hours until his alarm when Izuku returns to his room, and the stars outside are hidden behind city lights. He hopes Todoroki is okay.

Izuku stands before UA’s gates, hands clenched so tight they lose color. This is it. He really did it. He’s been to UA thousands of times, but never Here. When he steps forward, it feels like finally coming home for the first time. The feeling of wonder lasts a whole minute before Izuku reaches a shocking conclusion: He is very lost.

A couple of upperclassmen give him directions, and Izuku makes it to the classroom door with little other incident. It’s at least a floor higher than on other worlds, and there should be a staircase closer by that isn’t. It still feels like home.

The doors of 1A are big as ever. There’s something intimidating about it, even if he’s seen them before. This is his future, his story.

Izuku opens the door only to be greeted by Kacchan and Iida having a full-blown argument with each other. Shinsou is sitting in the back, subtly filming the whole thing.

“Take your feet off your desk, this is highly inappropriate! You’re being disrespectful to our teachers and all the students to attend such a prestigious school before us!”

“Eh? What’s it to you, four-eyes?”

“Four-eyes?!? I am Iida Tenya from Somei-“

“Somei? So you’re a damn elite!”

“Well I never-“

Izuku is so focused on melting into the wall he doesn’t notice Uraraka until she’s right next to him.

“Hey! You got in!”

“O-oh, Well-“ Izuku grins sheepishly and stutters. How does one talk? What even are words?

“I was supper worried when I heard you didn’t get any points- Present Mic said it’d be fine but I was still nervous, y’know?”

“T-thanks! I’m glad we’re in the same class!” He matches Uraraka’s smile as best he can, which is difficult when Kacchan is glaring daggers from behind her.

“If you’re here to play at making friends, go home.”

Izuku looks over Uraraka’s shoulder and there is a literal caterpillar on the ground. He blinks, and no, it’s Aizawa. Good to know that he’s here too. He looks more tired on this world, if that was even
Aizawa Sensei inch-worms his way into the classroom like some sort of goblin before standing up.

“I’m Aizawa, your homeroom teacher.” He holds up a UA gym uniform from seemingly thin air. “Put on these and meet me at training field A in five minutes.”

The whole class scrambles for the uniforms, and Izuku lets himself be carried along. He’s wearing an undershirt, so there’s no real need to be concerned about the changing room, anyway. The only other classmates who don’t seem too hurried are Shinsou and…. Oh, he knows who that is.

On the way to the training ground, Izuku catches sight of Todoroki and smiles. From what he knows, they’ll either end up best friends or trying to melt off each other’s faces. Who knows?

Todoroki fixes him with an ice-cold stare and walks by unaffected.

Well, that wasn’t the best start.

“Kinda frosty isn’t he,” Kirishima says, slinging an arm around Izuku’s shoulder. “I’m sure he’ll warm up to us eventually.”

“You have no idea how funny that is to me. Nice hair by the way.”

Kirishima brightens, reaching up to poke at the bright red hair. “Thanks! New school, new me, y’know?”

“If you have time to chit-chat, you have time to train.” Aizawa’s gruff announcement has them hurrying to the start line before Izuku can reply. Their teacher glares groggily from the pitch, before starting a familiar speech.

It’s the usual deal: prove their worth by quirk strength. An excuse for Aizawa to weed out students on the first day. Shinsou looks strangely passive about the entire charade, so Izuku can only assume he knows that it’s all a farce.

When Aizawa singles Kacchan out as the second highest in the practical, Izuku shoots Kirishima a look. His friend just shrugs back, which leaves Izuku with even more questions.

Kacchan blasts the ball out of bounds with his usual scream of defiance at nothing that matters, and Izuku winces when his childhood friend won’t stop cackling afterwards. This test is made perfectly for certain quirks.

Uraraka grins widely as Aizawa holds up the meter count. “This is gonna be great!”

“Sounds like a lot of fun,” Kirishima adds.

“Fun?” Aizawa’s glare could freeze coffee.

Izuku ducks his head as the teacher lays down the stakes. He needs to exceed expectations in order to stay. He’s never seen a world where he has a warp quirk for the test. Today’s about staying grounded and thinking on his feet.

There are a few ways he could use his quirk- the standing long jump, sprint, and ball throw are all options. There’s only one problem. Izuku lacks fine control on where or when he comes back from the null. It’s worth the practice, but his familiarity with an area helps him return, so any practice spots quickly become useless. The ball toss is probably a better-
“Quit muttering, Deku!” Aaand there’s Kacchan, right in his face. At least he doesn’t grab Izuku, which shouldn’t be surprising. Small mercies, though.

“Hey.” Shinsou comes jogging up.

“Think you can play it big with a fucking ass-wipe of a quirk? Well guess what—”

“Hey.”

“You may have weaseled your way into this fucking class—”

“Hey.”

“-Fuck off! Don’t think for a single. moment. that you belong in the same class as me—”

“Hey.”

“-What.” Kacchan whirls around to face Shinsou, who squints.

“Bitch.”

Kacchan’s eyes glaze over in what’s either Shinsou’s quirk or a pre-explosion. And honestly? Either one is fine right now. Izuku lets himself be led away by his friend(?) before the fall-out.

Once they’re away, Izuku lets out a little wheeze. “Thanks.”

Shinsou looks at him oddly. “I wasn’t lying. He is a little bitch.”

They can almost hear the snap when Kacchan comes back to his senses. “What the hell did you say about me, dead-eyes?”

Shinsou raises his voice slightly. “The truth.”

Izuku just wants to lie down and scream until the earth receives his soul at this point.

Aizawa’s voice cuts through the bickering. “This is class time. Settle your arguments out of class or consider a different school. We’re here to learn, not to be disruptive.”

Kacchan snarls anyway and lunges. A thin scarf shoots out and wraps around him, and Aizawa glares, his hair floating up.


The rest of the class passes somewhat peacefully despite any remaining tension. Bakugo glares at them both from afar, which interferes with Izuku’s concentration. Shinsou, however, barely notices-or acts like he doesn’t feel the enraged glare.

He knows his best chance to get a good score is the ball-toss. UA has plenty of spares, but he still feels guilty as he opens a portal and drops the ball in.

It’s the first time he’s done this without actually traveling though the portal, but his mouth stays dry, so it must be fine.

The machine beeps, and Aizawa holds it up:”???” flashes across the screen. The rankings have him tied with Uraraka. When izuku freezes, expecting a lecture or to be told he has to go again- it always happens, he’s ready for it- Aizawa simply waves him off the pitch and calls up Sato to go next. Izuku
hurries back to the class and tries to hide between Uraraka and Shinsou, who luckily don’t seem to think anything of it.

All in all, it’s pretty fun to watch his classmates quirks. Kacchan absolutely destroys most tests, and Todoroki won’t use his fire, but everyone else is having at least a little fun. At the bottom of the scoreboard, Shinsou is more resigned than he should be while Haragakure panics.

The tests end with no expulsions, though Mina looks like she may melt through the ground.

In sum, it’s been an unextraordinary, disappointing day. Todoroki won’t talk to him, Kacchan wanted to murder him, and only Uraraka seemed willing to make a lasting friendship. Even Shinsou seemed distant, which isn’t encouraging.

“Excuse me! Midoriya!” Iida powerwalks behind him, strides long and robotic, and Izuku braces for a chastising again. He still has hope that Iida will come around, but the future turbo hero is incredibly straight-laced. Izuku’s willing to put in a lot of effort for this friendship.

When Iida reaches Izuku, the taller student bows deeply. “Forgive me! At the exam, I assumed the worst, when you had already figured out the hidden meaning behind the points. My apologies!”

“Oh, I didn’t actually-“

“Still! My actions were unbefitting of a future classmate and I am deeply ashamed. Please accept my apologies.”

“…Alright, Iida.” Izuku gives his best smile. Maybe Iida isn’t so bad on this world after all. “Friends?”

Iida freezes and adjusts his glasses for a moment before offering his hand. “I would be honored.”

Izuku feels some of the weight on his shoulders lift. Today was only the first day – there’s always tomorrow.

Chapter End Notes

Finally No Cliffhangers! it only took like what, 10 chapters?
Izuku hasn’t visited the graveyard in a while. Mostly he’s just afraid of seeing Ingenium again- having to talk to the older brother of someone he never met but still feels an emotional debt to is… terrifying. There’s also just a lot to unpack there that Izuku is still working through. He still hasn’t sorted out his thoughts, but he still owes respect.

It feels wrong to not clean the grave. That night, Izuku packs up his incense and yen, and falls. The null is quiet, and when Izuku closes his eyes, he can almost imagine he’s floating, rather than falling.

He portals into a dead end by the flower shop and picks up his usual two flowers. He takes the long way to the graveyard, avoiding security cameras and crowded streets.

He can’t be seen here.

There’s somebody in front of the grave.

Izuku can’t see much, only that they’re tall and wearing a trench coat. His best bet is another stranger, so Izuku tugs his hood up and loiters near the trees. Time runs faster here, and Izuku has a whole afternoon. He can wait.

Eventually the figure glances at their phone and leaves.

Izuku adjusts his backpack and makes his way over, sweeping off the dirt and leaves off the stone. There’s nobody else who can- Izuku doesn’t know why Iida’s parents have stopped coming, and Ingenium can only reach the front. Nobody had been fully caring for it when he had first found it.

Maybe that’s why Izuku keeps coming back.

He lays the flowers down and places the incense, sitting down before glancing into his bag for the matches. It must have slipped down to the bottom. Izuku is checking the outer pocket when a hand reaches over his shoulder, offering a lighter.

Izuku takes it. He keeps his eyes on the incense, as the soft sound of the lighter clicking rests in the silence. Whoever is behind him moves, the sound of fabric settling back.

He’ll see who it is later. Right now is for the dead, not the living.
Izuku sits and thinks. He thinks about Iida in this world and wonders why he had to take revenge. He thinks about Class 1A, and how they scattered afterwards, if the old newspapers in a local library were to be believed. He thinks about his own class, and how nothing has happened yet.

Once it’s been long enough, once respects have been paid, Izuku speaks.

“I’m sorry if I’m intruding.” He doesn’t turn around. Part of him doesn’t want to have this conversation. Part of him knows he has to, once it’s started.

“You’re not.” Iida Tensei’s voice is hard to read.

They sit for a while longer before Ingenium breaks the silence. “I don’t know your name.”

“Midoriya.”

“Thank you. Midoriya. Do you mind if I ask something?”

Izuku doesn’t respond. He shouldn’t be here. He’s breaking so many laws of world travel, so many rules Taka and Cloud have faced quirk shock from breaking. He’s seen what happens when you interfere in another story. It’s never pretty.

“How did you know him?”

Izuku appreciates the way Ingenium keeps it open, question unsaid. It lets him ignore it if he needs to. He can’t, though. He’s already intruding so much. The least he can do is answer.

“It’s complicated. I… I saw it happen. But.” Izuku hears a sharp inhale behind him. “I- I’m sorry I shouldn’t- I shouldn’t put this on your shoulders. I’m sorry.”

He stuffs the incense box in his backpack and bows to the grave, placing his head on the ground. Iida deserves this, at least. “Sorry for intruding.”

It’s addressed to both Ingueniums.

“Midoriya, wait-“

Maybe it’s because he’s already intruded so much. Maybe it’s because Izuku hates world traveling directly from the grave. Maybe it’s because that little voice in his head will never let it go if he leaves now. Either way, he listens, finally looking Ingenium in the eye. The UA teachers expression is soft and full of weariness.

“Grief isn’t easy, and you’re obviously going through this alone. I can direct you to people who can help.”

“I’m sorry. I’ve taken enough of your time.”

He bows and is about to leave when Ingenium calls out to him one more time. “Midoriya!” the hero smiles, though there’s a sadness in Ingenium’s expression that tears Izuku’s heart apart. “Thanks again.”

Izuku barely manages a smile back before walking to the treelined, where the null rises to meet him. Izuku doesn’t remember getting home. He wakes up to an alarm and sounds of mom making breakfast, and it shouldn’t take this much effort to get out of bed.

Ingenium has figured out how to work through his grief. Izuku needs to do the same; he’s been
taking too long – that’s what he tells himself, anyway.

Iida disrupts Izuku’s plans for the day right off the bat with the news that a new hero has debuted—something Izuku missed while traveling over to the UA entrance. It’s also taken by the fact that Captain Celebrity has another son? He leaves the world for two seconds and all the news happens. Between a good discussion of the new hero’s debut with Iida and the class’s general rowdiness, Izuku is in good spirits by the time school starts.

After homeroom, Izuku grins when Kirishima absolutely crushes a wall sit contest. Kaminari didn’t stand a chance. Izuku catches Kirishima’s attention when it’s over.

“Kirishima! Mind if I join next time?”

Kirishama looks at Izuku like he just hung all the stars in the sky. “You’re on, bro! We’ve still got five minutes ‘till the bell.”

It’s not enough time. The door swings open to All Might’s proclamation: “I Am Here!!! To Teach!” but it’s ruined by the fact that Izuku and Kirishima are scrambling for their seats. The hero falters when taking the podium, but once everyone is in their seats, All Might regains his energy.

“Today we are doing… This!” The placard reads out BATTLE! in big letters. “Battle training. You submitted designs for costumes with your application, so suit up and meet me on training ground C!”

The class explodes into excited discussion as All Might presses a button. The back of the classroom slides open—Izuku was expecting it to be the left, but since that’s where windows are it makes sense—revealing cases with each student’s number. All Might finishes up his instructions with a seeping gesture, and the classroom springs to life.

Izuku lunges for his case and drags it to the locker room. It’s an old habit from Junior High, but there’s the added benefit that he’s able to get to the locker rooms first. He’s not exactly eager for anyone to see the scars on his back. He pulls on the jumpsuit of his costume before anyone else enters.

It’s like most of his costumes on other worlds, with a few changes. The trademark red shoes and green theme is a must, but he’s darkened the color slightly. He’s added a layer of armor—lightweight fabric Cloud had gifted him not found on this world.

Its tear-resistant, bullet proof, and fireproof. Possibly so he can dropkick Endeavor in the face.

Most of the others arrive and begin unpacking their costumes. Shinsou isn’t there at all, but Kaminari mentions he had wandered off to the bathrooms.

Izuku tugs on his gloves. They have a bit more structure, and their fit is tighter around his hands. He tries on the leg guards next. They’re a bit slimmer than the other Izukus usually go for—freerunning and parkour have taught him what he’s comfortable moving in.

The belt is a natural fit. He was worried about it slipping or being the wrong size, but they’ve got his measurements down perfectly.
There’s a note on a box stashed inside the case.

“Izuku Midoriya-

*We altered the mask you provided per your request. However, as this was a preexisting piece of equipment, it was examined by the head of our Support Course. The contents inside are unpatented but functional, and a scan was taken for further inspection. Should this affect its performance, please notify us.*

*You have been cleared to use it. Please consult our department with any issues that may arise.*

*We hope you find this costume to your satisfaction.*

-Support Course”

Izuku puts aside the note and opens the box. Inside is a mask made of untraceable pure black metal alloy. It fits snugly around his neck and folds out of itself to wrap around his head mechanically. Once done, it covers the bridge of his nose and ears, although it won’t do anything other than tone down noises above a certain decibel.

Take that, Present Mic and Jiro.

He experimentally brushes his neck and it shifts down smoothly, leaving his face clear and wrapping around the bottom of his jaw instead. Any punches to the jaw will be softened with this, but it will leave his face clear when he needs it.

He lets it slide back up and checks in the mirror. The support course has definitely taken artistic liberties. A glowing green design zig-zags across the whole mask, making it look more like a crazy smile.

It also covers most of his right cheek, so that’s good. The scar still pokes out, too close to the eye, but with the majority hidden he can stomach his reflection.

Izuku tugs up his hood and sets out. It’s more of a hoodie with two rabbit-ear looking pieces. They aren’t meant to stand up, but flap in the wind behind him. It’s homage to another Izuku who never got this dream.

They’re supposed to arrive in order, but the class ends up coming out whenever they finish with their own costume. Izuku is one of the first four out, and makes his way over to Shinsou. His friend wearing a purple and black jumpsuit. He’s standing awkwardly, as if trying to vanish into his capture weapon, but the mask makes his face too visible to properly hide. They exchange a quick greeting before waiting for the rest of the class.

Jiro is there as well, and Kaminari- which makes sense, with their simple gear. As more students make their way to the training ground, Izuku notices that all of their costumes are exact copies of the other worlds. The only one who’s different is Yaoyorozu, who’s wearing more of a sports bra and shorts costume than the less maneuverable gear she usually has.

Satou’s suit looks more reinforced here - he’s got padded gloves over his knuckles, which is new. In the back of the crowd, Haragakure’s costume flickers into vision in a flash of pink before fading out. It looked like a jumpsuit, but he couldn’t tell. She’s probably made changes as well.

“Wow, Deku! You must really like rabbits, huh?” Uraraka practically bounces into his field of vision.
“Uh, yeah. The ears are more for someone else though. Nice costume!”

“Thanks! I should have specified what I wanted a bit more- this is a bit too skin-tight for my taste, and I kind of wanted pockets.” Uraraka tugs down on her combat vest, which is still looser than some of the other world’s designs. “I’m aiming for a rescue hero job but they made it bullet proof.”

“That’s pretty useful, but yeah.”

“Damn, Midoriya!” Kaminari shoots him finger guns. “Going the creepy-cute route, huh?”

Izuku blinks in surprise and Sero whispers, “Oh my god he doesn’t realize.”

“Guys?”

Sero slings an arm around his shoulders. “Midoriya, love ya, but what kinda look were you going for?”

“I guess…. Friendly? The support course made it a little darker, though.”

Sato winces. “So, you have no idea?”

“No, what-“

“LET US BEGIN!” All Might cuts off the chatter, explaining the lesson. He does refer to a notecard partway through, and Shinsou rolls his eyes expressively.

The exercise is simple and expected: two villains, two heroes, recover the bomb, use capture tape, all before the time limit. Izuku finds, to his delight, his partner is Shinsou. This is the first time that has happened, but it’s good practice. Their opponents are… villain team Kacchan and Uraraka. Oh. Oh dear.

Hooray for being first, too. Nothing like getting his ass handed to him to set a good first impression.

All Might passes out floor plans and comms before ushering the class away to a viewing room. Shinsou scans the plans while adjusting his comm.

“So, your quirk lets you know about other people.” There’s a question in the way Shinsou cautiously tilts his head. “Pretty powerful.”

“Yeah. And Shinsou…. Out of every world I’ve visited, you have always had amazing drive to be a hero. Anyone who thinks differently is an idiot.” Izuku thinks back to all the hostage situations and ambushes he’s seen. “Your power is perfect for hero work.”

Shinsou blinks back, though the corners of his mouth twitch. “Thanks. Doesn’t mean much when you look ready to run, though.”

“We’re up against the two most terrifying people, do you expect me to be calm?” Izuku wheezes out a shaky laugh. “I’ve never seen this matchup before, but I know Kacchan’s coming right at me.”

Shinsou shrugs. “Then we’ll use that. I need info.”

“Oh! Kacchan sweats nitroglycerin, or something like it. He can ignite it with his palms. The gauntlets on his costume store up his sweat for him to detonate as a ranged blast. I’m not sure if it’s the same Here, but other versions have taken out a building with it with enough training. He always targets me first, leading with a right hook, but beyond that I’m not sure. Uraraka floats anything she touches with all five fingers, but its her drive to win you really need to look out for. In time, she’ll
probably stand a good chance against Kacchan. For now, she lacks fighting experience.”

Izuku startles as Shinsou chips in. “Your quirk, too.”

“I… I started muttering, didn’t I? S- sorry!!”

Shinsou waves his hand in a shooing motion. “It’s fine, now tell me about your quirk.”

“Oh! You know the basics, but it’s got a pretty big drawback: I can’t really control the time or location of my return portals. It usually takes a couple minutes, so I shouldn’t use it with the time limit. Beyond that, I can drop stuff into the void, but it causes strain because of a size limit so I’d rather not. It’s also kind of polluting, so. Yeah. Its mosly good for observing fighting styles. It pretty much just accesses to the void.”

Shinsou taps his mask. “Interesting. I get the feeling Bakugo doesn’t know your quirk as well as you know him.”

Izuku’s mouth pulls back into a smile, seeing where this is going. “You’re right, he doesn’t. I have a plan. Can you mimic voices?”

“Oh. Oh, hell yeah.” Shinsou grins, an uncanny parody of Aizawa. “This is gonna be a party.”

Chapter End Notes

I tried to draw the costume but tumblrs not uploading it so the link will be posted if/when that happens

(Edit to mention that I have a world in mind for who his costume is referencing but talking to ppl takes energy so it might not be confirmed in story. srry 'bout that yall)
“I’m taking Deku down, so don’t get in my way.” Katsuki gets two steps to the door before he realizes something’s wrong with gravity. “What the fuck?”

Round-cheeks huffs, crossing her arms. “We’re talking this out. I’m not some ‘extra’ you can push around- people worked real hard to get here, you know.”

“You bitch, let me go-“

“We will talk this out like civilized group partners. I’m willing to play defense, but I will not sacrifice my education for whatever you’re doing now.”

“Fuck that- I’m going to fight, and you do whatever the hell you want!”

Round-cheeks stares him down. “I agree you should go, but let’s make one thing clear. I can work better with a familiar space, and you might damage the bomb. That is why we’re splitting up like this. Not because of whatever argument you have with Deku.”

Katsuki doesn’t have a chance to reply before she puts her hands together, announcing “release.” He avoids crashing with a couple explosions, and round-cheeks doesn’t blink. Looks like she’s got at least some guts.

“Don’t get in my way,” Katsuki snarls, partially exploding the door on the way out. There’s too much boxes and shit for her to fight in that room, anyway. It doesn’t really matters if she moves, though. Katsuki’s going to win this alone, without any partner dragging him down.

This exercise might as well have been made for him.

As the buzzer goes off, Deku’s voice echoes through the building. “H-hey, Kacchan! Remember that pond in middle school? The one with all the fish?”

Katsuki’s head snaps towards the north entrance. That shitty nerd knew better to mention the pond. Reminding him of when he was weak, when his palms wouldn’t ignite. Damn him. Damn him to hell.

Katsuki hates Deku. He hates how the nerd thinks he can be a hero with a useless quirk. What, is his gonna run at the first sign of trouble? Disappear right when everyone needs him? Katsuki was five when he first heard the word “liability.” Right away, it fit the nerd perfectly.

How could you trust someone who couldn’t control their own damn quirk? Who fucking thought it
was a good idea to teleport into a motherfucking villain battle and forgot about the whole damn thing?

Nobody would want a sidekick that dragged them down. Katsuki would be number one, without the nerd.

And now Deku just has to mention that day.

It takes a simple blast for him to reverse direction, and two more to reach the stairs. Deku’s voice echoes through again, mildly surprised. It’s moved.

“I honestly thought Kacchan would have caught up to me by now. You were right, Shinsou! Maybe he is slower than I thought.”

“DEEEKUUUUUUU!!!!!” Damn nerd, thinking he was better. Katsuki jumped the railing, letting his explosions break the fall and accompany his voice. “I'M GOING TO KICK YOUR WHINEY SNOT-ASSED BUTT, SO SHUT THE FUCK UP.”

“Oh, Kacchan! Ready for a rematch?” The little freak is right around the corner. Katsuki rages, letting sweat build up in his right hand as he leaps forward, explosions rocketing him forward.

“REMATCH MY ASS-“ And there is nothing.

Katsuki can’t move, can’t react. Around the corner, the purple extra strolls leisurely.


Voice changers??

*The damn extra caught me with a voice changer??*

He barely notices Mind-fuck wrapping something white around his wrist. The purple-haired bastard has the audacity to smirk at him. “You’ve been captured. *Wait outside the building until the exercise ends.* Sorry, but I don’t trust you around Midoriya.”

*No.*

Katsuki’s legs move on their own, leading him to the exit.

*No, no, No, NO NO!!* This was supposed to be his chance to prove he was the best! Taken out by a couple mere steppingstones.

“Let me get that door for you, blasty boi.”

Kacchan seethes against the fog surrounding his mind. Mind-fuck better watch himself.

Izuku takes off the moment the bell rings to hide. There’s a chance Kacchan will realize something’s wrong- he’s got a powerful analytical mind as well as pretty sharp reflexes. The plan stands a higher chance of succeeding if Izuku is removed from play until they know where he is.

They’re also counting on Uraraka to stay with the bomb. Statistically, Kacchan’s partners on all other
worlds do just that.

He finds a good spot on the second floor. There’s a tarp nearby and a stack of lumber that’s just far enough away from the wall to fit a small person.

“I’m in position.” It’s a pleasant surprise that the mask doesn’t muffle his voice at all.

The ear piece buzzes to life, and a copy of Izuku’s voice hisses through. “Same.” Across the building, Izuku can hear his own voice, followed by Kacchan yelling.

“He’s on the first floor. Good luck.”

Time to move. “You too.”

Izu runs, bypassing the second floor and running to scout the third and fourth. Kacchan’s explosions had started fairly high up, near the back of the building. He’s in luck. A doorway is half-blocked on the third with a broken door.

Kacchan probably blasted the top half of the doorway earlier, but for her to use it for a visual and as a barrier is... tactically advanced. Izuku slips a mirror from his belt, checking the room. Uraraka stands in the middle, holding two huge boxes like they’re nothing. The bomb is behind her, floating close to the ceiling. She startles at an announcement.

“Bakugo has been captured!”

It’s better for him to attack now, when she thinks he’s downstairs.

He backs up and reaches for his earpiece. “Third floor, near the back. Going in.”

“Good luck. I’m headed up.”

Izuku backs up further down the hallway. He’s made higher hurdles than this in parkour training. Taking a breath, he sprints, keeping as low as he can so the box keeps him out of sight the first few steps.

He slides over the barricade, landing in a run so the boxes she’s holding hide him somewhat.

She’s faster than he expected, and Uraraka shoves the first box in his direction. “Nice try!”

Izuku dodges, trying to attack from behind with a punch.

Uraraka’s expression flashes from shock to determination lightning quick. She jumps to the side, pushing his shoulder with all five fingers as he passes. The combined force of his punch and extra shove send him into the wall, knocking his breath away.

He gathers his bearings- weightlessness is doing a number on his balance- when the other box crashes into him at full force.

Izuku shoves it back instinctively, still trying to collect himself.

“Sorry, Deku!” Uraraka’s shout is all the warning he gets before the box is back, catching his shoulder and slamming him into the wall a third time. This time, Izuku pushes against the wall, and down on the box. He overestimates and shoots up into the ceiling. Uraraka grabs the first box, and Izuku takes the few seconds to find his footing upside-down.

He’s too disoriented to open portals. The boxes are here to stay.
On the ground, Uraraka looks up in surprise, steadying the box. “Thought I had you there.”

“Almost did.” Izuku smiles down. “Your quirk is super strong!”

“Thanks - let’s both do our best today!” Uraraka throws the box at him without warning. Izuku kicks off a rafter, the box slamming into where he just was. He checks his position.

The bomb is on the other side of the room now. Whoops.

Uraraka catches the glance. “Release!”

Izuku kicks off the nearest rafter to angle his decent, jumping off a wall and tucking into a roll on the landing. He’s closer to it now- until Uraraka tackles him, using the force to push him out of the doors opening, back into the hall. The shock back into weightlessness is disorienting.

Izuku manages to grab the sooty door frame, winded. From here he can see the stairs, where steps are hurriedly approaching.

Uraraka grunts, and Izuku throws himself flat outside of the door frame. A box hits the wall across from him, hard. That would’ve hurt.

He underestimated Uraraka.

Shinsou peeks out of the stairwell, and Izuku hurriedly points to his own mask. His partner nods back, taking a deep breath and adjusting his mask.

“Hey, Uraraka! Are you okay?”

“Yeah, why-“

Shinsou rounds the corner first. “Just concerned,” he replies, still using the mask. Izuku wraps a piece of capture tape over her wrist, and the clarity snaps back into her eyes.

“Oh, darn it. I really thought I was winning.”

“Hero team wins!”

They’re interrupted when an explosion shakes the building outside. All Might’s voice crackles through the speakers immediately.

“Bakugo, the exercise has ended. Please return to the observation room.”

Izuku finds his way into the viewing room first. Shinsou strolls in next, soon followed by a disheartened Uraraka. Kacchan is still simmering as he follows, and Izuku edges back so both Shinsou and Uraraka are between them. Something tells him now’s not the time to be around his childhood friend.

Their classmates, however, greet them with cheers and compliments. Kirishima shoots him a pitying glance, though whether for the noise or being hit with boxes repeatedly, Izuku isn’t sure.

All Might regains control, and gestures to the screens playing loops of the exercise. “Now, who was the star player?”

Yaoyorozu raises her hand. “I’d say Uraraka was the star of this match.”

“Not Midoriya?” Tsuyu points at one of the screens. “He fought pretty well, kero.”
“I believe Yaoyorozu has it right,” All Might announces. “Why might that be?”

“Well, Bakugo failed because he was set on a personal grudge. He showed fine control with his quirk, especially using its maneuverability – but he allowed personal emotions to direct him. Shinsou and Midoriya used this to their advantage, and it cost him the match. However, Shinsou wasted time making sure Bakugo was outside of the building. He could have supported Midoriya earlier if not for that.”

Shinsou shrugs. “Sorry, blasty.”

It’s only Yaoyorozu’s further commentary that keeps Shinsou from being reduced to ashes on the spot.

“Meanwhile, Midoriya got distracted by the bomb during his match with Uraraka. He could have won earlier if not for showing his hand. He also didn’t use his quirk on the boxes.”

It stings, but she’s right.

“Uraraka utilized the weapons at her disposal well, and was able to hold her position, even keeping her opponent on the defensive for most of the fight.”

Uraraka beams.

All Might fidgets slightly, seemingly caught off-guard by the wealth of information. “Yes, well… young Iida? Do you have something to add?”

“Sir!” Iida lowers his hand, oblivious to All Might’s surprise. “I believe it is important to note the forward-thinking of Shinsou and Midoriya! Their plan was well-considered, and teamwork flawlessly executed. Additionally, we cannot overlook the importance of Uraraka’s planning. She prepared for the fight and set up her surroundings to give her an edge!”

All Might clears his throat. “Yes… I’d add that young Uraraka would do well to back up her skillset with hand to hand, as would young Shinsou, but uh, very good. Next, Team C as villains, Team E as Heroes!”

Team C (Iida and Kirishima) and Team E (Sero and Ojiro) file out to prepare.

“That was such a crazy round!” Sato announces while they wait. “I’m super pumped up now.”

“Yeah, nice dodging!”

Izuku squirms back, unsure how to deal with compliments. Uraraka, however, is practically beaming.

“It was super fun! I’ve never used my quirk like that but it was really good to let loose!”

“Wait, wait, wait.” Kaminari waved his hands. “Are you saying that was your first time fighting? For real, with those moves you pulled? What about you, Shinsou?”

“None of your business –”

“Yep! How about you, Deku?” Uraraka’s voice cut over Kaminari’s hushed “Holy shit.”

Izuku blinks. “I’ve trained a little, but this was my first practice fight.”

Kacchan lets out a few expletives at this and stomps off to glare at the reader boards, but Izuku can’t
really care after having all eyes on him. It’s a little taxing. “Um, Uraraka? ‘Deku’ isn’t my name, though…”

“It’s not?”

“No, it’s kinda my childhood nickname…”

“Well I like it,” Uraraka declares, pumping a fist. “It gives me kind of ‘you can do it’ vibes!”

*You can do it.*

“Oh.” Izuku freezes for a second, thinking this over. “Well, feel free to use it, then.”

“Thanks, Deku!”

Kaminari slings an arm over Shinsou’s shoulder. “Hey, your quirk was pretty useful there. I bet you’re popular with the ladies!”

“You have no idea how funny that concept is to me.”

“It was *cool*, take the *compliment!! take my love and support!!*” Kaminari raises his voice. “Everyone who thinks Shinsou is cool say AYE!”

The class choruses out a scattered “Aye” before All Might regains control and starts the next match. Shinsou looks around, bewildered, and Izuku meets his eyes with a tired smile. He deserves to be seen for who he is.

Izuku doesn’t catch the rest of the matches. The moment he sits down, his aching side and arms take second seat to a throbbing mental discomfort. He has just enough time to close his eyes and fake falling asleep before the door in his mind opens.

*Midoriya sits at the dusty window. Rain splatters across it, trailing down in fits and spurts, stuttering and rushing all at once. The neon lights from outside are caught in each drop, a thousand perfect copies beyond the glass.*

*A door opens behind him, steps echoing across the abandoned arcade. Midoriya doesn’t bother looking up to see Hitoshi’s face. He knows what he’ll find.*

“We lost another scout. They’re closing in.”

*He leans forward, pressing his forehead against the cool window. Condensations sticks to his hair.*

“Who.”

“Veni. They found her just outside the city limits.”

“Damn.” She was good, too. They’re getting stronger.

“The squad’s been talking.” Hitoshi slides into view, mask still showing nothing of his face. *Midoriya hasn’t seen his eyes in over a year now. “They think we should move on to the next target.”*
“We can’t. Stain sent some of his followers ahead.”

Hitoshi’s breath hisses out of the mask. “What?”

“We’re surrounded. Got the news from Momo’s squad just now.”

“Then…. Shit. I’ll tell them- No we can do this. A quick strike, just to get through.”

“They’re expecting it. Ever since they got Tenya, they’ve been one step ahead.”

He closes his eyes, pressing further into the window. He can hear Hitoshi’s static breathing beside him. “Sometimes I wish we could go back and drag him away from Hosu. If internships hadn’t happened, none of them would have died.”

Hitoshi ignores the last part. “He’d never sell us out.”

“He’s human; it’s been years. They have torture and truth quirks. Even by resisting, any one of us would give stuff away.”

They sit quietly a while longer before Hitoshi breaks the silence.

“We should at least try to regroup tonight. Even if it’s gonna fail…”

“Then we march forwards to the stars.”

“…. To the stars.”

“Midoriya? Midoriya, wake up! Class just ended.”

What-

Izuku blinks up to Uraraka shaking him, Iida hovering just behind. Everyone else is filing out of the room. He checks, and no, nobody’s looking at him weirdly, so it’s safe to assume he’s not in trouble. They probably think he took a nap. Good.

“You should get more sleep, Midoriya,” Iida adds as they leave. “UA is a remarkable education opportunity we should not waste.”

“Sorry, Iida. I know I shouldn’t avoid this opportunity.”

Uraraka snorts. “Oh my god.”


“A void. Responsibility.” Uraraka cracks up, and Izuku fidgets, trying to erase the earlier world from his mind. Internships hadn’t happened yet. He’s fine, Iida’s alive, everyone is happy and good friends.

“Oh.” Iida frowns. “I will have to study wordplay tonight.”
Aizawa is too tired for this shit. He’s stuck grading the assignment from yesterday and waiting for All Might to finish up whatever exercise he had planned - and no, he doesn’t trust the new teacher as far as he can throw him - wait, that’s too much. He doesn’t trust All Might as far as he can throw the UA building. Fuck teaching; he needs a nap. Actually, yeah. He deserves a nap. This is self-care or whatever Hizashi was talking about yesterday.

Aizawa is reaching for his sleeping bag when footsteps pound down the hallway outside. The UA staff door slams open, revealing Vlad King. He’s carrying student files under one arm and has the biggest grin.

“I was right!”

Aizawa promptly buries his face in his sleeping bag. School has just ended, and it’s still too early for this.

“I would give my whole left hand for my students. They’re all little shits and Monoma might kill someone one day but I love each and every one of them.”

“Ughh.”

“Too loud?” Hizashi- bless that man for lowering his voice- leans over from his desk. “I’m getting coffee, want a mug?”

“You’re an angel.”

“N-no problem, Ai.”

Aizawa further presses his face into the desk to hide the blush. Is this revenge for calling him an angel? This is revenge.

“Aizawa-san!” No. Not this headache. All Might deflates into – what, Small Might? – and thankfully that lowers his voice. Small mercies. “I finished the exercise and was wondering if you had any, uh, advise?”

Fuck, something happened.

Aizawa holds out a hand expectantly, not taking his face off the desk. “Files.”

All Might passes over a folder, and Aizawa logs into UA’s database, accessing the match video feed. He watches fist with exasperation, then anger, as Aoyama twists an ankle, Todoroki freezes a building with occupants he knows aren’t wearing shoes, and Kirishima shatters an entire fucking arm for the sake of an ambush.

“All Might,” Aizawa says slowly, trying desperately to word this so it will fit into his junior teacher’s thick skull. “Did you at any point think that the match should be stopped?”

“Well, yes, actually-“

“When?” Aizawa listens, pinching the bridge of his nose as All Might lists off several moments the students had already crossed a line.

“That gut instinct that it’s too far. Listen to it.”

“Aizawa-san, are you all right-“
“We are teachers here, All Might. Not heroes.” So help him, if he can just make this one point clear-
“A hero saves civilians, and makes judgments in battle that students cannot because they don’t know
their limits. Students who are still in their first week of school have no idea where those limits lie.
Maybe this exercise would have suited the second or third years, but first years need to learn
restraint.”

“I apologize, I should have considered that.” All Might lowers his head, and Aizawa wonders if he
should have worded it better. Still, this is the safety of his students they’re talking about.

“Apologize to their parents if it happens again. Let’s go through and see where to change the rules
for class 1B.”

“You think it should still be used?”

Aizawa grunts. “It needs work. Write in a consequence for injury to their classmates and have Vlad
King look it over when you’re done. I like the assumption it’s random, but the reality falls short.”

“Aizawa-san?”

“I’m telling you to rig the system for teams and students. Talk with Vlad king about who does and
doesn’t get along.”

Hizashi slides a mug of coffee onto Aizawa’s desk. “Is this today’s exercise?”

“Yes, Aizawa-san was just giving me advise!”

“Oof.” Hizashi leans over to look at the screen, which is currently replaying Kirishima shattering
both a wall and his arm to ambush Sero. “This year is gonna be wild.”

Chapter End Notes

*throws chapter at yall*

Edit 1 & 2: spelling
Broken Mirror

Chapter Notes

SO SORRY FOR THE LATE UPDATE I FORGOT TIME EXISTED

spoilers: mentions of Nighteye and Kamino arc, I think that's it...

The world he visits is See(Too Much) by LadyGreenFrisbee and I super recommend reading it!!!! It's a quirk!izuku fic that approaches some ideas from a whole new angle!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Izuku and Cloud wander through a park in a new world. He hasn’t seen much of it, but the world aches like something happened. Something was lost, something gained that might not have been worth the price. Beside him, Cloud pulls his jacket tight.

“Something’s off about this place.”

Izuku hums, picking up a piece of discarded newspaper. Anyone else might not look twice, but any words, any news here is important.

“It’s written in slightly different kanji, but everything looks good. None of the usual warnings.”

“Which city are we in?”

“This is from Naruhata, but I recognize the city layout from home. It could just be the wrong paper.”

“Shit. I don’t like this.” Cloud spins, pretending to look at the city skylines. Izuku knows he sees endlessly more than simple buildings. “It’s like the world is copying everything we do. If something goes wrong, don’t hesitate to jump home.”

Every world has a feel. Something shown in the corner of the passerby’s eyes and the way sunlight hits the street. Some worlds burst and burn, others whisper in the reflections off windows or drip laughter from powerlines.

This one is a hospital, a held secret, the feeling of being watched. Occasionally the world shifts, crackling, as something under the air begins to splinter and is repaired slowly. It doesn’t bode well that the civilians around them don’t seem to notice. Something deeper is going on here.

“I’m gonna see if my quirk works better out of the city. Perspective and all that. Don’t get attacked while I’m gone.”

“What about you?”

Cloud grunts. His eyes are half-lidded, but there’s something eerie about the way light spins into them. It’s hard to focus on when he uses his second quirk. Cloud blinks and the effect is gone.

“I… am a space cryptid whose quirk is literally god’s farts and 20/20 vision. What are they gonna do, ambush me?”
Izuku shrugs. “Maybe. I feel watched.”

“Same.” Cloud’s quirk reactivates, and he looks up at the sky. “From what I can tell, this world is a shattered mirror. Like every move we make is reflected, a little different in each piece.”

“Poetic. Probably a quirk, then. If they haven’t done anything yet, we should be fine to explore.”

Cloud brings his attention back to earth. “One hour, back here?”

“Yell into the void for backup.”

Cloud nods, still looking at something Izuku can’t see. “Oh, and just a heads up – if you’re looking for your counterpart, he’s right over there.” Izuku freezes, following Cloud’s subtle nod to a figure on a nearby bench.

“What-“

“Later.” Cloud salutes and dissolves into starlit darkness, officially abandoning him like a good role model. *Yay for ex-heroes retaining a sense of responsibility.*

Izuku sighs, slowly making his way to the bench and sitting a good five feet away from the other him. He’s learned to be cautious of these meetings. Strangers don’t always take kindly to people they meet, and a surprising number of people don’t recognize their own reflection.

The kid who’s not quite Izuku seems frail, swamped in a baggy hoodie and sweatpants. When the breeze picks up Izuku thinks for a moment it might blow right through him. The thinner teen’s eyes were closed, but he subtly glances over when Izuku takes a seat.

It doesn’t take a genius to figure out this counterpart has a visual-based quirk.

His eyes are completely overtaken by the blue fractured pieces spinning inside them. The effect is like one of those kaleidoscope toys he played with as a kid, or… a broken mirror.

*Huh.*

Izuku sits, and wonders what he should say. He ends up watching the park, trying not to flinch as the world around him shudders, further fracturing and repairing into smaller pieces.

“I’m sorry for the bother,” other-him says, startling Izuku slightly. You know what? He’s going to call this other him Midoriya. It’s a little easier that way. “You were probably going to explore.”

“It’s fine.” There’s a million questions he has, but Izuku shoves them back. “This may seem silly, but do you know what city this is?”

“Mustafu.”

“Huh.” Izuku leans back, on the bench, letting the breeze dance in his hair. “Thanks. I haven’t been here before, so I’m a little lost.”

“I figured.”

Izuku lifts his head up at this, and the other him- no, Midoriya- shrugs lazily. “You teleported right in front of me.”

Izuku grumbles. “It’s not like we chose to show up in front of you. Cloud usually picks places where people… aren’t… around….” Oh. *Oh, shit.* Pieces begin to knit themselves together in Izuku’s mind.
The fractured world, the feeling of being watched, and the swirling fractals in his counterpart’s eyes.

“You were waiting for me.”

“And you were looking for me.”

There’s an awkward silence where Izuku searches frantically for something to say. “How? I normally can’t even talk to other versions of myself-“

“Same, but I’ve never had the chance.” Midoriya laughs quietly at this. “I’ve never gotten to talk to an alternate future before.”

“So this is strange for both of us.”

“Yep. I hope I’m not keeping you from anything.”

“Not really. We wanted to check out if this world was safe to visit.”

“Well, compared with what I’ve seen of your world, they look about the same.”

Izuku fiddles with his jacket sleeves. “Huh. It’s really weird having someone see my life for a change.”

“Touché. I only get little bits and pieces- you blank out just as I look in.”

Wait.

What?

“Was… was the first time in a car?”

Midoriya kicks his legs against the park bench. “Yeah? What about you?”

“You were in the hospital watching the rain. I don’t see you do much.”

The two sit in silence for a moment before Midoriya snaps his fingers.

“It’s a two-way connection! We were watching each other at the same time.”

“I feel like an idiot,” Izuku groans, smacking his forehead. “Of course, someone would have a counterpart quirk to mine. It’s common enough with-“

“Don’t say it,” Midoriya cuts in, staring up at the sky. “Nobody knows about that yet.”

 “… We are talking about the same ability, right?”

“The only quirk it can be? I get that dimensions are cool and all but come on. In ability to change the future, there’s only two, and we get one of them way more often.” Midoriya’s bright blue eyes spin.

“So we are talking about the same one.”

“Probably.”

Izuku pauses to consider this, and Midoriya snorts. “I’m guessing you’re not too far ahead.”

“I’ve just finished my first week at school, actually. Where are you in time?”
“Just met the big guy a few days ago.”

“Oh. Was he…”

“He’s fine. No offence, but I’m not completely sure who you are, so that’s not on the table for me to talk about.”

“I understand.” Izuku leans back, thinking of his world. It’s not like anyone from there can travel besides the Lonely Owl crowd, and they probably already know. The world splinters again and Izuku flinches. “Mind if I ramble?”

“Sure?”

“I don’t know if my quirk will let us meet again, but you should know that your world is kind of shattering.”

“Oh?” Midoriya frowns, and the world splinters again, worse this time.

“It did it again just then.”

Midoriya smirks, and it shatters further. “I haven’t noticed that.”

“… You’re doing it, aren’t you?”

Midoriya shrugs, and they leave it at that.

They sit in silence for a while longer, and the wind turns sharper. Izuku thinks back on the conversation. All the alternate futures he could have given his world and all the decisions he’s made to shape the timeline were in the best of intentions. Asking All Might to look again was one of these, but… was it the right decision? Izuku is so lost in thought that he doesn’t notice when Midoriya gets up, stretching.

“I’ve got to go, but it was fun talking. Stop by sometime?”

“If I can,” Izuku calls back, waving as his counterpart disappears down the park path.

He sits for a while longer, thinking. This conversation brought up so many old worries that he’s pushed off for too long. All Might’s future as the Number One, mainly. There’s something bothering him, and he’s not sure what it is.

Izuku hops into into the void and is promptly hit in the face with social anxiety. Izuku takes advantage of the nulls silence to cover his face and yell unintelligibly about how he’s such an idiot, oh my god. That was the first time in forever that he’s gotten to talk with a counterpart, the first time ever that he met someone with a similar quirk and he said "hey your world is shattering" like some kind of edgy teen drama from the 80s, how rude could he get-

“Bad day?” Cloud drifts upside-down beside him. “Because that sounds like a bad day.”

“Humans. Conversations. Why can’t I just-“ Izuku waves his hands, trying to explain. “Ugh. Why is talking so hard?”
“It just be like that sometimes. Other worlds have slightly different rules.”

“They’re too confusing.”

“They’d say that about our world too.” Cloud holds out a hand. “Let’s go home and get some ice cream.”

Izuku takes it, letting Cloud direct their fall through the null. “You’re paying.”

“Bold of you to assume I make much usable money in this line of work. There’s a tub of cookie dough in the freezer that’s much cheaper than ice cream and by far a superior comfort food.”

“Cheapskate.”

“Talking about yourself, Mr. I’m-allowed-to-take-snacks-from-other-worlds-if-they-don’t-use-currency?”

“That was one time.”

He knows, logically, that things are still starting. Izuku catches a glimpse of another world where All Might is fighting All for One and barely surviving, let alone winning. He’s not sure what it means or if it will even happen, but the implications scare him regardless. He adds a new page to his notebook and hopes it won’t happen here.

It rests in the back of his mind like a steadily growing weight.

Izuku’s taking a break from sparring with Taka when the words come to him. He’s gotten pretty good at hand-to-hand, but she’s still a league ahead. The day he beats her or gets her to step out of the ring they’ll talk weapons, and he already knows he wants a knife. Or a sword, that would be cool.

“Do you think All Might would be stronger if I hadn’t met him, or introduced Kirishima?”

She doesn’t reply immediately, and somehow that’s both worse and better. Instead, she fiddles with the lid of her water bottle before speaking up.

“We can’t know that.”

Izuku fidgets. They go another round before Izuku eats the mat. Taka is careful, avoiding his bad shoulder from Uraraka’s boxes. They take another break.

“Theoretically then. If... He hadn’t passed on One for All. And there- there’d be more time before...”

“He would have been at the same strength as now.” Izuku whips his head around at this, but Taka keeps messing with the stickers on her water bottle, either unaware or not showing it. Black dust begins to creep out from under her wrists over the seals, spreading slowly like roots.

“In your world, his power is a stockpile that’s copied and repeated. It will fade on it’s own time; passing it on doesn’t dampen the power.”
“So it’s not…” Something inside Izuku starts to loosen. It’s not gone all the way, but he can breathe now. It’s progress.

“It’s not on you when he falls, green-bean. We’ve talked about this. He made his choice, and you’ve seen it on other worlds: All Might knows what he’s doing. The informed choices of others are not your fault.”

They continue to spar, but Izuku is distracted. A thousand nothings bounce around inside his head. But it is on me. I’m the only one who knows- who really knows, not like Sir Nighteye who only caught a glimpse- I’m the only me who can fix this.

Chapter End Notes

Srry for the heavy OC chapter! that wasn't supposed to happen lol

thinking abt hopping to a bi-weekly schedule to keep up chapter quality - they're starting to get a little choppy. pls lnk thoughts in the comments!!!
Calm Before the Storm

Chapter Notes

Spoilers! Wow! So many!!! Holy SHIT!! okay lets break this down:

we've got kamino stuff and All Might's,,, secret? Basically just skip over Izukus convo with All Might to the next break. I'll put a summary at the end for that. Also, Eri is mentioned by name but not much else in the last little bit, nothing plot-relevant.

I think,,, that's it. Srry is the characterization is off, ive been watching moominvalley so it may sound funky.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Izuku drops from a portal into class. He’s been practicing with speed, and it shows: he can now teleport within a couple minutes. The class is buzzing with nervous gossip and Uraraka rushes up to his desk.

“Hey, Deku! Guess with your teleportation quirk, you didn’t need to go by the gates, huh?”

“The gates?”

“Yeah!” Uraraka hops up on Kacchan’s desk, swinging her legs. “They tried to ask me about All Might. Guess this is the hero life, huh?”

“My dad calls the media vultures.” Shinsou makes his way to his own desk, can of coffee in hand. “Maybe he’s right.”

It’s at this moment that the classroom door opens, sending students scrambling to their seats. Aizawa stalks in, posture stiff. “I apologize on behalf of UA for the vultures outside. It will be dealt with shortly.”

Izuku shoots a glance at Shinsou, who’s pretty much chugging his coffee and avoiding all eye contact. Huh. The rest of the class doesn’t seem to have picked up on any possible father-son connection, and Izuku smiles serenely as he screams internally.

“On another note -“

The tension in the room is palpable-

“-It’s time to choose class presidents. I don’t care why or how you choose them, so long as it’s done by the end of the period.” Aizawa climbs into his sleeping bag, ignoring the twenty raised hands and uproar that followed his announcement.

Izuku covers his ears when people begin to talk over one another.

“I’ll work on no pop quizzes!

“Free pizza after school!”
“Office supply fund for underprivileged students!”

“I will make this class truly shine!”

“You can count on me, guys!”

Iida, hand raised higher than anyone else, regains control through sheer strength of will and exceedingly loud voice. “Let us settle this with democracy!”

“Or we could just, y’know, fight to the death.” The class collectively quiets to stare at Shinsou, who shrugs. “Fine, don’t vote for me, I guess.”

There’s an awkward pause, and Sero claps his hands. “I like it.”

“Indee- What? No!” Iida looks like somebody spat on his brother’s name. “How- why would you say that?”

Sero shrugs, and Mina starts cackling.

“Um.” Oh, shit. All eyes are on Izuku now. “I like Iida’s idea. You can probably ask Aizawa Sensei to fight after class, though.”

“It does make the most sense,” Yaoyorozu says. “We should go around to tell our name, quirk, and why people should vote for us.”

There are various noises of agreement before Yaoyorozu stands up.

“I’ll go first. My name is Momo Yaoyorozu, but please call me Yaomomo. My quirk is Creation. As president I’ll try to include study groups, and if you have any requests for the class or improvements we need, please tell me or drop a note on my desk. I’ll do my best to communicate your needs to the faculty. Thank you.”

The class applauds, and one by one everyone announces their name and quirk. Iida delivers his from the podium, and Asui asks everyone to call her Tsu. Izuku tries to brainstorm a way to phrase his quirk without dying internally. After Shinsou’s turn, Izuku’s chair screeches noisily when he stands.

There are so many eyes on him.

“I’m Midoriya, uh, Izuku. If you know the concept of the void? My quirk’s kinda like that. I’ve never been a class president before, but I’ll do my best. Honestly so many of you could do a great job, I think whoever wins, we’ll be in good hands. Thank you.”

Izuku fidgets after sitting down, running his hands over his desk to stay anchored. It’s a grainy, plastic texture. Did he just say his name out of order? Did anyone think his quirk’s explanation was weird?

Shinsou hadn’t named his quirk either (“Hitoshi. Shinsou. Homeroom for naps.”), so it should be fine. He wasn’t the only one. Maybe he could have a little bit of time before they turn on him because of his quirk. Before they called him a liar.

Hopefully they’ll just think it’s simple teleportation.

Introductions end, and Iida and Tsuyu - shit – Asui - no, Froppy - wait- Tsu - pass out pieces of paper. Izuku writes Iida’s name and slips it in the box.

The votes are tallied:
Midoriya: 4
Yaoyorozu: 3
Jirou: 2
Ojiro: 2
Kirishima: 2
Asui: 2
Iida: 1
Shinsou: 1
Mina: 1
John Mulaney: 1
Aoyama: 1

“Whoever voted for me makes horrible life decisions,” Shinsou remarks. He’s drowned out by a commotion in the front.

“Please only vote for people in this class!” Iida points at ‘John Mulaney,’ ignoring Shinsou’s snicker. “Whoever this is cannot be our president.”

Izuku doesn’t pay attention, too busy sinking further into his seat. He does not want to be class president. He can barely take care of his own plants, how’s he supposed to take care of a class of danger-prone teenagers? Besides, the position should go to someone who’ll need it on their resume-Izuku doesn’t, so-

“Shut the fuck up, Deku! Just accept the stupid job and quit mumbling.”

Fine then. Momo gives him a sympathetic look when he stands beside her at the podium, and someone cheers in the back.

“Yeah!! Void president!!”

Wait, what? “You… You elected me for my quirk?”

There’s an awkward silence before Kirishima raises his hand. “I think you’d be a great leader. Your quirk has nothing to do with it.”

“You knew what you were doing during yesterday’s exercise, kero.”

“I agree about yesterday but like, you’ve gotta admit the void is good branding. Its flashy.”

Izuku winces at Hagakure’s remark. “The quirk doesn’t make the hero. I’ll do my best, and I’m okay with being called the void or whatever, but it has nothing to do with my leadership”

“As expected of class Prez!”

Izuku hopes some of them got the message.
At lunch Izuku drags Shinsou over to where Uraraka is sitting, and waves to Iida shortly after. Maybe it is forcing the future, but he wants his friends to be… his friends. Kirishima has been abducted by Mina, but he’ll catch up later.

“Hey, Midoriya,” Shinsou says. “So you’re really okay with being called the void.”

“I mean yeah? One of my friends makes really bad void jokes so I’m used to it.”

Shinsou smirks. “Good to know.”

“I’m not good at puns, but I’ll try and think of some,” Uraraka chipps in.

“Why do I feel like I might regret this?”

Shinsou rolls his eyes. “No idea. Hey Uraraka, guess what fills the void.”

“What?”

Shinsou points at Midoriya’s lunch, and Uraraka cracks up. Izuku feels personally offended.

“Oh my god I regret everything.”

“He’s not… technically wrong,” Iida offers apologetically. “Although I myself am not very good at wordplay.”

“Oh, no.” Shinsou smirks, looking eerily like a shonen hero character. “This is but 1% of my power.”

Izuku’s not responding to that abomination of the English language, so he settles for glaring across the table. Uraraka seems to pick up that something unforgivable was said and changes the topic.

“By the way, Iida! I keep thinking I’ve seen your quirk before.”

Iida’s shoulders slump slightly. “I was trying to hide it, but if you must know—there’s a sudden gleam in his glasses—‘I come from a long line of heroes! Do you know the hero Ingenium?’”

“Yeah!” Somehow Izuku makes it sound excited, and not like he’s seen that exact person killed multiple times. “He’s your brother, right?”

Iida frowns. “People don’t generally know.”

“O-oh.” Izuku wants to slam his head through the table, breaking it and knocking himself out instantly. “Sorry, I shouldn’t have said anything.”

Uraraka squints at him. “Are you a hero-stalker?”

Shinsou does a spit take and literally sprays out his water onto the table. Iida jumps at once into a lecture on sanitation and eating spaces, but Shinsou just wipes his mouth.

“Yeah, Midoriya keeps notes on ‘em. Hes got ten whole pages on a certain underground hero.”

“Not helping,” Izuku hisses, passing a napkin. Louder he adds, “It’s part of my quirk. Sorry about
that, I didn’t mean to pry or sound creepy, it’s just that I’ve… uh.”

Uraraka interrupts, saving him. “What even is your quirk, anyway? We didn’t see much of it at today’s practice.”

Or not saving him.

“O-oh. It’s uh…” He looks at Shinsou who blinks back drolly. Some help he is. Guess its time to bite the bullet. “It’s called World Travel. I can go to different dimensions. If I say something I shouldn’t know or make assumptions-”

Iida stils at this, regarding him like he’s a new person. Uraraka practically explodes. “Wait! So have you met all of us before? What was I like?”

“Yeah, sorry if that makes things awkward. And you’re a bit taller here? Or shorter? I don’t know, I’m sorry. I think you’re physically a bit stronger here, though… definitely a little more terrifying,” Izuku adds under his breath.

Uraraka glances down at her hands doubtfully.

“And Iida, you look taller, and your voice is clearer? Like it wasn’t hard to hear earlier, but it’s much more pronounced? Oh, and Shinsou-“

His friend’s mouth splits into a trademarked Aizawa smile.

“You uh… You’re a bit more okay with talking to people? You’re more chaotic for sure.”

It's at precisely this moment that alarms begin to blare. Izuku doesn’t hesitate, years of anxiety for moments like this helping him dive under the table. He grabs the person closest to him- Uraraka- and pulls her under as well. He opens a portal with one hand, ready to pull everyone through if there’s a villain.

Transporting that many people might kill him, but they’d survive. One for the price of many are still fair odds.

“Um…. Deku?” Uraraka rests a gentle hand on his shoulder. “I think we’re safe, but thanks.”

Izuku blinks, taking in the cafeteria. People are running around, trying to get to the nearest exit. There’s no villain, no structural damage. Just panicking students.

Shinsou is also under the table, eyes wide and alarmed, focusing from detail to detail lightning-fast. Iida has gotten up and is directing students confidently. Beside him, Uraraka doesn’t look too ruffled, but Izuku can’t really tell.

Iida continues yelling something, and ushers them to the nearest exit, but Izuku can’t hear much. The cotton in his head is too thick.

He’s never seen this before, never been warned about it. He’s been to a lot of worlds, but this is new.

They’re pressed into a stampede of students, thick enough that if someone falls, they’ll be trampled. Izuku finds himself near the window, and presses against it like his life depends on it. The cool glass grounds him.

A hand grabs his arm.

Izuku panics before he catches sight of a familiar face. Shinsou looks unbelievably stressed with all
the people and noise.

Oh. It’s not Crusty-fuck. Izuku can’t hear, but he follows his friend’s pointing to outside where the press is crowding over the lawn.

A blur of motion catches his eye, and Izuku watches as Iida spins through the air to the exit sign and screams…. Something. Whatever it is, the students disperse and Izuku is able to crumple into a stressed little puddle. Beside him, Shinsou does roughly the same.

I hate crowds, Izuku signs, not sure if anyone will be able to understand.

Same, Shinsou adds, his mouth thin with displeasure.

They sit and breathe, and slowly the cotton in Izuku’s head filters away just enough. Uraraka and Iida sit nearby, keeping worried classmates away.

They’re okay. Everyone’s safe.

When they get back to the classroom, Izuku stands at the podium with shaky knees and sweaty palms. He’s still too out of it to really be doing this, but it’s important.

“Uh, everyone?” The class quiets, and Izuku continues. “I’d like to make an announcement as class president. My first and last, I guess. I, uh… I hereby pass the title of Class President over to Iida.”

In the back, Iida’s face morphs from comically surprised to ethereally blessed.

“He acted and led well today, and I think we’ll need that when everything goes south, so…. Iida, lead us well. You’ll do the better job of keeping us safe.”

The class cheers, dissolving into a chant of “emergency exit Iida,” and Izuku collapses into his chair.

Shinsou pokes him with his pencil eraser. “Hey. Midoriya.”

“Yeah?”

“You said ‘when everything goes south.’ That’s uh, not really the best for anxiety.”

Izu knows exactly what Shinsou is asking, but he really, really doesn’t want to answer if he doesn’t have to. He signs instead, because talking is for people who have emotional energy, and he no longer fits in that category.

What are you asking?

Will everything go to shit? Shinsou signs the ‘will’ with larger movements.

Izu makes a finger spelled character “u” and moves it in a spiral to the right. Sorry.

Shinsou frowns for a moment, and sits back, gestures small and muted as their classmates quiet down. You should tell the teachers.

Cant. Quirk doesn’t let me.

Shinsou raises an eyebrow, and Izuku shrugs. He can’t really say more than that without sounding like some cryptic doom herald, so this will have to do.

He turns around to watch as Aizawa carries on with the lesson, but Shinsou’s eyes burn into the back
of his head. It’s making it hard to focus on the lecture.

Wait.

No, that’s something else.

There’s a world pressing at the back of his mind to be seen and Izuku does not want to miss this lecture. It’s on the creation of sidekick policies! Arguably one of the coolest and most overlooked moments in history!

Izuku grits his teeth, focusing on the slides. He can do this. He can force the world back if he just tries hard enough-

There is nothing but silence.

Silence in the streets, where people walk together. Strangers and loved ones alike are bonded by the loss descending on all of them.

Silence in the alleys where even the lost and criminal wait together. No crime is committed when too much damage to society has been done.


Midoriya stands in the deserted rubble. All Might had known his time would end. They’d discussed it after the sports festival, and he’d mentally prepared for the passing of his father and hero. They both had.

He hadn’t been ready.

There is nothing but silence as the world morns.

Izuku stares resolutely at the blackboard. He refuses to cry in class. Class continues as though nothing has changed. To them, it hasn’t.

Two worlds with similar stories in under 24 hours. That’s too rare to be coincidence.

“Dude.”

Izuku glances back at Shinsou’s hissed whisper. Shinsou signs subtly, so Aizawa doesn’t catch it.

Are you crying?

Sorry, Izuku replies for the second time today. Sidekicks, you know? Some never get their own agency and that’s super sad.

Shinsou rolls his eyes and settles back. Aizawa glances over, subtly raising an eyebrow when he sees Izuku wiping his eyes.
When class is out, Izuku bolts. He’s really not in the mood to joke around with his friends. They’ll just assume he has work to do, anyway. Izuku hurries up to the teachers lounge, hoping and worrying in equal measures he’ll run into a specific teacher.

His luck holds- Izuku rounds a corner at top speed and immediately crashes into All Might’s smaller form.

“Young Midoriya, are you quite all right?”

Izuku hops up, rubbing his nose. “Yeah, I was actually looking for you.”

“Well, lucky I was here.” All Might leads the way to the teachers room, and Izuku hurries to follow. “What might be the problem?”

“Well, I was, uh. I was traveling yesterday and met someone…”

“Oh?”

“We talked and I wanted to, uh. Say thanks”

“Oh. You’re welcome? Is everything all right, young Midoriya?”

“It’s fine, just… thanks. I realized yesterday that I never really said it earlier, so I’m saying it now. I would have been a vigilante or worse if you hadn’t been following the slime villain, so thank you for being there.”

“… Of course. It’s a heroes job to work for the people.”

“All- Mr. Yagi.” Izuku stops in the hallway, hoping his mentor will remember these words later if he can’t stop the future. “Thank you for being a hero.”

All Might pauses, and something akin to realization passes through his eyes. “You saw the future, didn’t you?”

“Sorry.”

“Don’t apologize for the future, it hasn’t happened yet.”

“It probably won’t happen.” He’d known things would go downhill, but… “I was a villain in that world, so the timeline is different.”

_Lies._

“If you can talk about it, I’d like to know.”

Izuku knows he can’t technically talk about it, but he should settle this.

When he nods All Might changes direction, moving to a room used for intern consultations. It’s an unsaid rule that meetings there contain delicate and often classified information. In short, it’s a good place for not being overheard.

Izuku trails after the hero, turning the events he saw over in his mind. He does not want to have this conversation, much less face the facts. He needs to, though. They probably both do.
“First off, are you all right,” All Might asks when they reach the room. He heads over to the tea, starting water to boil.

“I’m fine,” Izuku says automatically. “It probably won’t happen, anyway.”

He needs to stop lying like that.

All Might doesn’t buy it. “I worked closely with a prescience quirk in the past, and we’d often discuss the future. Your quirk is very different, but it sounds like whatever happened…”

“It was a lot,” Izuku says. “I can’t talk about much – my quirk doesn’t usually let me spill about the future before it happens.”

“You never mentioned that.”

“Sorry. It’s a weird quirk.”

All Might shrugs. “I’d recommend getting it on file. The teachers here are some of the best, but we can’t help if we don’t know.”

Izuku really does not want his quirk on paper. Mom has worked hard to keep it as ‘Teleportation’ ever since reading the first letter he’d brought home after traveling. Neither of them needs villains and sleeper agents in the government finding out he can access different dimensions.

“…I’ll think about it.”

The water heater turns off and All Might pours them both a mug of tea. It’s the cheap powdered kind. “My boy, would you like to talk about what you saw? It seems to have upset you, and time is a tricky matter.”

Izuku really, really, really doesn’t want to answer this one. He phrases and rephrases his answer until he has something the null will probably let him say. “… I saw a fight with a really bad… person. And it was- it didn’t end well.”

All Might grips his tea with white knuckles. “Did this person have a name?”

“I don’t think anybody knows it,” Izuku says, and he watches All Might’s face morph from realization, to grief, and finally to placid calm. The last one scares him. The last one means it’s going to happen, and he really doesn’t want that.

“You already know,” Izuku whispers, and the room seems suddenly too big, too empty, too quiet for this kind of conversation. “Of course, you knew. You’ve worked with Sir Nighteye.”

All Might doesn’t ask how he knows the name or their connection. He just nods. Izuku doesn’t want that response.

“We thought he was dead after the last battle.”

“All for One,” Izuku murmurs, the null doesn’t stop him from saying it. All Might startles so bad he coughs up blood. Izuku pushes the tissue box across the table hurriedly.

“You know about him?”

“You know about him?”

“We’ve talked.” Izuku waves off All Might’s concerned look. “Long story; I’m fine, and he looks like a-”
He breaks off, coughing and mentally curses the null. Come on, he can talk about All For One but not about how the man looks like a boiled potato? *What the fuck kind of logic is this?* All Might scoots the tea closer across the table.

“- he looks like *shit.*”

All Might looks positively scandalized at the English swear, but Izuku can talk again so he’ll take it. Besides, he’s heard his teacher use the exact same word over a papercut.

“I saw him fighting you, and it…”

“It didn’t end well.”

“No. it didn’t. Like I said, it probably won’t happen the exact same way, if at all.”

“I see. I’m sorry you had to witness such a future.” All Might sets his tea aside and sits up straight. “It’s time I was honest with you, my boy. It’s clear that the uncertainty of the matter has you very worried, so I’d like to explain simply. There are very few people aware of these facts, and on campus only Nezdu and Recovery Girl are aware.”

Izuku thinks he knows what’s coming. He hopes it’s something- anything else. Hearing it means it’s true here, too. All Might’s limited life span isn’t a constant, but it’s a possibility that’s all too real.

“This is the true story of One for All-“

*Oh thank god.*

Izuku wheezes in his relief, cutting off All Might’s speech.

“Are you all right, young Midoriya?”

“Yes- yeah, I’m fine I just… I thought you’d be saying something else, sorry. Let me just-“ he downs half the mug of tea, places both hands over his face, and tries not to cry in relief.

“Y-young Midoriya are you really all right?”

Izuku nods without moving his hands. “I just thought… õh ̜ ̨ ̸̠̚h̸̎ ̬ ̲ ̻ ̿ ̝ ̴̴̣̤̏̅ ̳ ̶ ̥ ̷ ̿  ̝ ̴ ̂ ̜ ̸̎ ̤ ̴ ̈́̂̇ ̴̏ ̳ ̶ ̥ ̷ ̿  .” He swallows back the null’s presence and forces the words out shakily. “Legendream has forever, you know? It’s just I thought something really bad would be true this time, and you aren’t talking about that, so-“

All Might’s been awfully quiet. Izuku looks up so see his teacher with an expression as if he’s at a funeral.

“All Might?”

“How much do you know, young Midoriya?”

Izuku frowns, counting off the facts. “I know about All for One, and I have some theories about the origins. Mainly that they were brothers, the quirk was forced, and that All for One wants it back, though I’m not sure why. They change world to world but I’ve met an original holder of One for All. The thing is, every time it’s so different that the events aren’t set in stone.”

“I’m afraid you’re correct on all points.”

Izuku hates being right. This also opens up a whole new list of problems. “Does Kirishima know?”
All Might shakes his head. “I’d like to give him some time to adjust to the quirk first. Additionally, I’d like to tell him myself once he’s ready.”

“I haven’t told him, but he’s ready now. You should tell him before the sports festival, at least.”

“Of course. He’ll need to know well before then. I’m rather concerned about what you thought I was going to say, though.”

“Oh.”

All Might sits as if nothing is wrong, and Izuku tries to find a way to phrase this properly. He can’t exactly go up to his favorite hero and say… all of this. There’s no real way to go up to your favorite hero and announce, ‘hey there’s a ton of worlds out there where you’re dying from your injuries and it might be true here too.’

Yeah, that’s not happening. Izuku’s not even sure he’d get that far, and he really isn’t a fan of coughing up sludge in front of the number one hero and his own personal idol.

“The thing is, I don’t know if it’s going to happen, and I don’t want to act like it’s real if it’s not.”

“It’s good that you know your limits, but this sounds close to denial. Would you like to talk to Hound Dog about it? He’s a gifted counselor, albeit quite bad at public speaking.”

Izuku shakes his head hurriedly. The fewer people who know about his quirk, the fewer people the League may target. It’s safer like this. There is one thing, though.

One question that will tell him if this worrying is all for nothing.

“I’ve got a question, and you may not like it and you really don’t have to answer, but I’m asking because I’d like to know so I can figure out the future more easily, and also because I’m a little worried-”

All Might laughs, holding up a hand to stop Izuku’s rambling. “It’s fine, my boy. I’m here so you can ask questions, after all.”

“Do you know how long you’re going to be an active hero?”

All Might freezes, staring at his tea which has long gone cold. Izuku doesn’t like that reaction. Maybe his mentor just hasn’t thought of retiring. The room is deadly quiet and Izuku loses track of how many seconds drag on before the hero clasps his hands with the finality of a judge.

“I suppose in some way I do owe you this much. The truth of the matter is…” *No, wait-* “I’m on borrowed time.”

No.

*NO.*

Izuku takes it like a punch to the gut. He knows he’s crying, but that doesn’t matter because it’s real, and he didn’t want it to be real but it is. All Might apologizes while Izuku cries, but it’s not his fault—it’s not the hero’s fault he’s in such poor health and he clearly hadn’t wanted to tell Izuku but he’d asked. It’s not All Might’s fault.

If anything, it’s Izuku’s.

He mentally adds All Might to the list of people he needs to save and chokes back the tears. All
Might comes over to awkwardly rub circles n his back, and fidgets nearby until his breathing is under control.

“I’m sorry,’ All Might says worriedly, and Izuku shakes his head.

“I asked. Who knows?”

“Nezdu, Recovery Girl. A close friend and some doctors. I haven’t told the staff, but Aizawa-san probably has some idea. I’ll tell Hound Dog today, so you can seek support from him without giving away information.”

“You don’t have to-“

“Young Midoriya. As a teacher I’m supposed to look out for the mental and physical health of my students. I failed at that today.”

Izuku snorts. “You sound like Aizawa Sensei.”

“Hm. Well. We may have talked recently.” All Might straightens up with all the confidence of someone who was lectured and doesn’t want to admit it. “He’s a very good teacher, you know. Has some very good points on lesson plans.”

Hitoshi is concerned for Midoriya. Normally he’d shove any problems to the back of his mind, go home and curl up in bed with cake and a cat, but something about today seemed off. He has known Midoriya for couple months and it’s already clear that his friend is a shit actor.

Midoriya looked pale today at lunch too, but the conversation in sign is more pressing.

“Hey, uh… Sensei?” Wow, that feels weird to say. Hitoshi hops up on a desk. He doesn’t care whose it is, honestly. It’s probably from that one stuck-up rich kid with fancy hair. Yeah, fuck that guy.

Eraserhead puts his papers away and waits. He’s the only person Hitoshi can ask questions to without feeling suffocated.

“Did you hear what Midoriya said today? When he made the announcement.”

“I heard it.”

Hitoshi kicks his feet against the desk, sorting out his thoughts. “I asked him what he meant by everything going to shit. He just kinda apologized.”

Eraserhead hunches his shoulders, burying his face in the capture weapon. “I can’t help unless he comes to me first. Japanese Board of Education passed that rule before quirks even existed.”

“He said his quirk doesn’t let him tell you.” Hitoshi absentmindedly rubs at the scar over his nose. “I’m worried.”

Five years ago he wouldn’t have admitted that.
“Interesting. Thank you for telling me,” Eraserhead says. “This counts as secondary reporting. I’ll talk to him tomorrow after the class trip, but there’s only so much the Board will let me say.”

“Thanks.”

He hasn’t saved them yet.

Eri, alone.

Iida and Ingenium, safe for now.

Todoroki, though he’s only got suspicions as to what’s wrong.

And now, All Might.

That’s a lot of people for someone who doesn’t even have a provisional license yet.

Izuku makes his way home with a list of names tumbling around in his head. They play on repeat right up until he opens the door, and Mom greets him with a hug and worried smile.

“You don’t have to talk about it,” she says, placing a salad in front of him. “Sometimes we just need time to think.”

“Thanks.”

Mom smiles back and disappears down the hallway. Being alone seems to make the apartment too loud in its silence, too big. He’s considering going looking for her when Mom pads back to the table, an old All Might blanket in her arms. She drops it over his shoulders without a word before returning to the kitchen to dish out her own meal.

Izuku tugs the comforting weight closer, feeling just a bit better.

“Tomorrow’s a new day,” Mom murmurs as she scoots her chair over and hugs him close. “I hear you’ve got a field trip?”

“Yeah. I think we’re working on rescue simulations tomorrow.”

“Already? They certainly move fast. You’ll have to tell me all about it.”

“Yeah.”

Tomorrow will be a new day.

Chapter End Notes

Here’s what you missed if you skipped the All Might convo: Izuku clarifies he's met OfA and AfO at least once for each but doesn't feel like its a big deal, All Might finds
out Izuku knows a Metric Shit Ton of secret history like quirk origins, and Izuku learns a thing and is like Shit I Havent Saved The Number One Hero Yet. Then he cries.

Hey!! if you got finals soon/how I hope you're drinking lots of water!!! eat a protein-filled breakfast if you can and look over notes before bed bc that's when they stick in your brain rly well!! Get enough sleep!!! Don't zone out on youtube or tumblr too much bc those suck time out of the day!! you can do it and I believe in you!!!channel lidas spirit and study like hell and then seek revenge against criminals!! Hydrate yourself!!

edit: reworded a minor detail

Please take care of yourself if its finals!! take care of yourself if its not finals!!
Izuku pushes open the door to Class 1A wearily. Recovery Girl finished healing his shoulder and he has very little intention of returning to her office anytime soon. Her lecture on training too soon with his shoulder was enough but coupled with the healing he’s exhausted. Adding in yesterday’s news leaves him barely awake enough to be at school. Izuku just wants to go home and faceplant into his bed.

He trudges over to his desk and buries his face in both arms. Maybe he can sleep before class. This would be easier if he could just nap in the null. There has to be a world made for napping out there. One with big blankets and pillows and maybe even hot chocolate.

Voices echo from inside the classroom- Kaminari briefly flirts with Uraraka and steps back when she expresses disinterest. Guess he’s more respectful here. Shinsou is talking with Hagakure about something, though it seems fairly one-sided.

Izuku buries his head under his arms further, trying not to think about how he was almost class president. He’s lying to them, for crying out loud. He’s letting them believe his quirk is teleportation. Sure, some of them know. Not everyone. Maybe he should just stop trying to hide it. Maybe he should tell them.

Kacchan arrives and Izuku stops breathing for a second when explosions rattle the desks. He needs to think of something else. Or sleep.

They’re supposed to go on a field trip of some sort today. As it is, he has barely enough time to snooze at his desk before they’re herded outside.

Iida takes to directing people onto the busses with a particular zest for life. “Alright, everybody - line up according to class names for maximum efficiency! Let us make the most of this learning experience!”

Izuku boards and drops into a seat next to Asui. He’s just in time to see Iida board last, take one look at the bus layout, and practically cry.

“It’s ok, prez,” Kirishima says from Izuku’s other side. “It’s uh, still a bus.”

With that, they’re off. Asui- no, Tsu puts a finger to her chin. “I tend to say what I think. Kirishima, your quirk reminds me of All Might.”

Kirishima freezes, but Izuku laughs. “His quirk is pretty different, though. Sure you don’t mean his personality?”
Kirishima groans. “Midoriya, all the respect, you’re my best bro, love ya forever…”

“But?” Izuku smiles innocently.

“But you know exactly what you’re doing.”

Izuku shrugs, and Ojiro looks up from his phone.

“Speaking of personality, I bet you’re the hard-working type, Midoriya.”

His sputtering is cut off by a laugh from across the aisle. Sero elbows Kaminari, who looks affronted.

“Your personality is like, Comic sans: Electric boogaloo.”

“Excuse you, I am Times New Roman, at least.”

“Yeah, if that’s true then I’m Papyrus. What’s your point?” Sero points to Kacchan. “Better than him at least.”

“What the fuck you just say ‘bout me, Soysauce?”

“Dude.” Kaminari gives a look. “It’s kinda telling that we’ve known you for less than a week and know your personality is like garbage marinated in sewage.”

Tsu ribbits softly. “Back to quirks, yours seems unusual, Midoriya.”

“It’s really not.” If they keep talking about this, Izuku might have to make a decision. He may have to tell them the truth and deal with the fall out. Maybe it’s better if he tells his classmates early on. They’ll have time to adjust to the idea of other dimensions before everything goes to shit. Besides, he should probably talk to Aizawa about it.

“Dude,” Kaminari says, “Warping quirks are super rare. No wonder you’re in 1A.”

Shinsou, on Kaminari’s other side, snorts. “Quirks mean jack shit unless they’re pretty like blasty’s.”

“IS THAT A COMPLIMENT OR DO YOU WANNA GO, MIND-FUCK-“

“He’s right, I barely made it in.” Izuku clasps his hands. Maybe if he says it now, it’ll be over with. Besides, maybe it’ll distract from the earlier All Might comment. “It’s not teleportation, anyway. I visit different timelines- or dimensions I guess, so the teleporting’s more like a side effect.”

There’s a moment of silence, and Izuku keeps his eyes glued to the floor of the bus.

Kacchan’s voice rings out and Izuku flinches back into his seat. “Are you still spouting that bullshit? We aren’t five, you know-“

“Bakugo, sit down.” Aizawa’s voice is mild from the front of the bus but it slices through the air like a knife in butter. “Dimension travel quirks exist, though extremely rarely.”

Izuku’s eyes snap up, laser focusing on the teacher, as Aizawa continues. Most of the class are staring at Aizawa as if he just claimed aliens are real, but Todoroki is looking at Izuku like he’s mothman and Mina seems ready to jump out of her seat.

“I’ve met and warped with one before. If used properly, they can be powerful tools for heroics and information gathering. On that note, all quirks are tools for whatever an individual chooses. I expect mutual respect in this class, understood?”
Everyone mumbles an affirmative before Shinsou flips off Kacchan and explosions redirect the bus’s attention.

Izuku’s mind is running a mile a minute. He’s never met others like him beyond the Lonely Owl crowd, but if Aizawa has traveled with someone, he must have trusted them. Was it someone else?

Mina slides across the bus to wedge herself between Izuku and Kirishima. She’s lucky- Iida and Aizawa are distracted by the commotion.

“Hey- hey Midoriya, you’re my absolute home-slice bread-slice bestie, right?”

Izuku stares at her, still caught off guard by the revelation that his teacher has traveled. “No?”

Kirishima chokes on his laughter, and Mina elbows him subtly. “Okay, but I got a real quick question: how likely am I to survive a zombie apocalypse? Like there’s gotta be a zombie apocalypse dimension like in the movies y’know?”

“Dude, you don’t have to tell her—”

“C’mon, Kiri! You can’t expect me to know there are dimensions and not ask.”

“I’ve only seen a couple zombie apocalypses.” The bus falls silent and Izuku keeps his head down, hoping his hair will hide his discomfort at the attention. “I- I mean, when someone with a quirk like mine finds a wor- a dimension that’s not safe, we kind of avoid it? So I haven’t been to many like that.”

“And?” Mina looks like she might explode.

“… I think I saw you blow up a house.”

Mina whoops and Izuku tries not to think about how Todoroki is staring at him like he’s an exciting lab specimen. Kirishima seems to pick up on his anxiety and redirects the conversation smoothly. He has the best friends.

Now that he has time to think, Izuku refocuses on Aizawa.

World travelers all but vanished around the time he was born- some dying world that most of them got caught up in. Whoever Aizawa knew probably vanished along with them. The teacher catches Izuku’s eye and raises an eyebrow, breaking him out of his thoughts. Right, it’s not his business. Still, the information worms its way back into his thoughts.

The other travelers probably don’t know who it was. They couldn’t even access his world from the time he got his quirk up until his story started. Before then? Eraserhead is a recent hero, only active for around a decade.

None of the information fits.

The thoughts buzz around in his head, only growing more confusing. When they’re getting off the bus, Izuku has a chance to ask.

“Aizawa Sensei? Um, which world- uh, dimension- did you visit? Who went with you?”

Aizawa’s expression remains impassive. “My old informant called it Lost Voice Lost Home.”

Izuku looks for Shinsou in the crowd reflexively – he was okay, he was safe, good. When he turns back, Aizawas mouth is a thin line. They both know what happened there. They both know the other
probably saw what happened afterwards. Neither of them want to talk about it.

“I assume you know better than to tell people things that aren’t in this future."

“I know, sir.”

“On that note, we need to adjust your file. It says you have a delayed teleportation quirk.”

Oh. Shit. “We, uh. We’ve been avoiding villain attention. Because of my quirk.”

“Do you have time to meet about this after school?”

”Yes?” Izuku does not want to have that conversation, but Aizawa takes his words as confirmation instead of hesitance and wanders off to the gates before them. He’ll worry about it later. Right now, he desperately needs some time to focus on anything else.

Izuku runs to find the others, and if he sticks closer to Shinsou for his own peace of mind, then so be it.

13 meets them at USJ, and discusses something with Aizawa, holding up three fingers. Izuku’s read the news- he knows what’s going on when All Might’s name is mentioned- but that’s fine. It’s probably better that the hero rest, anyway.

Before the class gets restless, the teachers lead them inside.

Shinsou pokes him as they head to the doors. “You look spooked.”

“Oh- it’s nothing. Just thinking about what Aizawa said-“

Something’s wrong.

Izuku breaks off his reply, staring up at the doors. He doesn’t know why, but something about this feels wrong. Shinsou nudges him again to keep walking. Izuku goes, but the nagging feeling only gets stronger with each step towards the building. What is he missing? What’s going on?

“Midoriya?”

Uraraka is saying something about 13 - they must be her favorite hero. Why can’t he focus on that? On the worried look Shinsou is directing at him? Why can’t he listen to Aizawa and 13’s conversation or any of his classmates? He pushes through, continuing into the building-

He shouldn’t be here. The thought hits Izuku the second he walks through the doors, slamming into him like a wave of dread. He shouldn’t be here, he shouldn’t be here, the class shouldn’t be here, Aizawa and 13 shouldn’t be here,

None of them should be here.

USJ looks strikingly similar to a place he’s seen in bits and pieces for two years now. It’s called The Round Building in his notes- an impression from the first time he noticed it in multiple worlds.

Everyone dies in this room on another world.

Everyone in the school dies because of this room sometimes.

There will be villains here. 99% chance of attack. Mineta was the most likely to die, but he’s not here now. Shinsou is. Shinsou might die today. They all could die today, and he hasn’t saved them yet.
The sound of doors shutting behind him echo around the building, and a high-pitched ringing muffles out 13’s announcement.

“Deku?” Uraraka’s voice cuts through the panic, and Izuku realizes he’s hyperventilating. Ah, there’s the adrenaline. Shinsou is on his other side, concerned as Uraraka reaches towards him. “Are you okay?”

“No.” None of this is okay.

He darts towards Aizawa, practically cashing into the teacher.

“Midoriya, what-“ It’s either the look on his face or some sixth sense that has Aizawa pulling on his goggles.

“13, evacuate the students.”

Izuku should protest. He should warn his teacher that in almost every world Eraserhead ends up crushed against the concrete, but he physically cannot talk.

It’s not that his mouth is numb this time. He just... Can’t. Talk.

Eraserhead launches himself down the steps, capture weapon unfurling itself. He’s halfway down before the space splits into a dark purple line and the first wave of villains steps out.

Izuku doesn’t say anything.

He’s used to being silenced by his quirk. He’s not used to his head emptying and the dull pressure of 

*fe a r* taking over like a slow, billowing cloud. It’s the first time this has ever happened. He should warn them- should tell Iida to run or Hagakure to escape- but he physically cannot.

And that scares him. He can’t talk, so he runs.

He runs after his classmates. His friends. Distantly, he’s aware that sounds are softer, and that his line of sight is slightly higher than it should be, like he’s watching himself through a VR headset.

They almost make it, too. Jiro is inches away from the door when a flickering portal opens. She’s not able to halt- not many are- and falls through. The portal shifts, twisting, until only a quarter of the class is left.

Beside him, Shouji’s hand morphs into a mouth. “One of yours?”

Izuku can only shake his head.

13 plants their feet on the ground and raises one arm. “You’ll never get away with this.”

The villain chuckles, about to reply, when Kirishima and Kacchan yell, throwing themselves forward to attack. The portal simply stretches, and both of them are gone.

*21 people to save today.*

Izuku’s breath stutters.

*19 left.*

13 opens one of the capsules on their hands. A vortex appears, sucking the mist into their hand.
“That’s the trouble with rescue heroes,” the villain mutters, and Izuku recognizes him. “You’re rusty in combat.”

A ragged purple portal opens, and 13 screams as they’re attacked with their own quirk.

Izuku has always had mixed feelings about this villain, but that changes now. Kirogiri can keep the villains in line or make things worse, depending on the world. Izuku decides he doesn’t like him here.

“I have a plan,” Yaoyorozu murmurs, “Iida, Midoriya. You have to get out.”

“We cannot leave you all-“

“Ohayou.” Izuku cuts off Iida, not really thinking about his words. “I don’t think they know our quirks.”

There’s around an 95% chance, if he remembers his notes right. He can’t say it anymore—whatever let him talk is gone.

“Get help, prez.” Ojiro moves into a fighting stance. Behind him, Sero nods.

“We’re counting on you!”

Iida nods as well, ready. Yaoyorozu whispers directions, while Kurogiri monologues something about hurting children and ethics. Izuku’s heard it before, and he can’t really bring himself to care when his classmates and teachers are being actively hurt.

Iida doesn’t like the plan; they can all see it. He’ll run, though. Because he always tries to save them.

“Go,” 13 gasps, and that’s what does it.

Izuku hasn’t saved them yet. So he runs at the villain. He can at least provide one last distraction. Beside him, Iida thunders forward. They meet Kurogiri together.

Kurogiri chuckles. “I think we all know how this will end.”

A misty portal opens, and Izuku shoves Iida away, entering it alone. One of his classmates speaks behind him.

“Yeah, mist-guy. We do.” He can see Sero and Uraraka attack before dark mist takes over. The portal closes, but that’s fine.

Izuku knows that trick, too.

When the portal opens over the flood zone, Izuku allows himself to let go of Here. He’s gone before Iida slams open the doors and races away.

Izuku makes himself as areo-dynamic as possible in the null. It feels like a snowstorm, stinging his face and forcing him to squint his eyes, but that’s okay. He just needs to be fast.

The closest world isn’t exactly one of Izuku’s favorites—some film noir version of Class 1A where quirks don’t exist—but it’s also the fastest.

He hits the monochrome world head-first, a perfect circle opening for him.
Satou was one of the best on the police force: he’s trustworthy and honest. The kind of officer you’d want to keep around, because nobody was better at keeping a team together naturally; he could look at a squad and name the flavor of cake each member had on their last birthday. The perfect guy for run-down detectives with not enough time and too many bills to have on the team.

He was checking his phone for the updates on the Yuuei Case when something out the window caught his eye.

High above the night skyline, a lone figure plummeted from the stars. It twisted gracefully like a dancer before disappearing again.

Satou returned to his phone. Sometimes life couldn’t be explained, but that’s for the best.

Izuku rockets through the null again. He slows as much as he can when approaching his target, trying to piece out images of UA from the patterns dancing across. There- He rockets towards what is definitely a classroom, and tumbles through, not bothering to reorient feet-first. It’s a mistake.

He hits a desk back-first before crashing to the ground, stunned. There are stars in his eyes, and everything hurts, but when the vision clears he is very much in UA.

There’s a student with a shock of blond hair and bright eyes saying something, but Izuku can’t quite hear. He still can’t talk much, either.

The student frowns before turning and saying something. It gives Izuku a chance to look around and realize that he just interrupted a third-year class.

His attention is snapped back when Present Mic taps his shoulder and signs.

Is sign better?


Present Mic freezes, and seconds later he’s shouting something. It’s all dull noise to Izuku, but the students hasten to obey. One with a speed quirk dashes out of the room, and the student whose desk Izuku had landed on picks him up. They’re probably taking him to Recovery Girl. Present Mic is on the phone, waving his hands animatedly.

He wants to say he can walk, that he doesn’t need to be carried. He also wants to lecture the student on not picking up people who don’t have a say in the matter. Still, considering anxiety and that he did crash land on his desk…

Izuku resigns himself to being carried. Along the way, the panic lifts just enough that he can form words again.

“W-will they get… there in t-t-time?” He has to concentrate to form the sounds. It’s an uncannily similar feeling to stuttering. Better to stick with short sentences.

The student flashes him a reassuring smile. “Sure thing! Can you hear me?”

Izuku nods before shifting. The student gets the hint and sets him down, chattering all the while and somehow also keeping a wary eye out in case Izuku falls again.
“I’m Togata Mirio! The teachers are on their way, and All Might has gone on ahead! Did you hear the announcement earlier?”

“N-no?”

Togata frowns briefly before his sunny smile returns. He provides a constant stream of information on the way, filling Izuku in- Iida arrived a minute after he did, and students have been ordered back to their classrooms.

They get to the nurse’s room only to find it empty. The placard showing where to find Recovery Girl has a hastily written ‘USJ’ on it, but the door’s open, so Mirio busies about finding a first aid kit. Izuku watches distantly.

“I… I’m going b-back.”

Togata’s smile falls. “It’s better to wait here. The heroes are already on the way and going back would just give another target to the villains.”

Izuku likes Togata- He’s pretty similar to All Might in some ways and explains his logic to Izuku rather than giving a simple ‘no.’ It makes his choice all the harder.

There’s a very specific way he needs to play his cards to make sure nobody dies today.

“Sor… ry.” Izuku dashes to the window and Togata moves with incredible reflexes. Still, he’s expecting Izuku to aim for the window itself. He doesn’t know Izukus quirk.

When Izuku trips and falls into the null right at Togatas feet, it takes the third year by surprise. A shout of alarm is cut off when the portal closes.

He rockets back to the film noir world, enters it-

A figure twisted through the sky again before disappearing.

*This time, Satou reached into his desk for the small flask of whiskey he keeps for such occasions. Conspiracies are superintendent Todoroki’s thing, not his.*

Izuku falls back though the null at lightspeed. The USJ is easier to find now that he’s traveled from there, and he tumbles out into the center of a warzone.

Someone- it might be Kaminari- is cackling. The sound dies out quickly, replaced with panicked yelling. Villains are knocked out everywhere, and two of his classmates are hiding near the water’s edge. It looks like Tsu and Shinsou- they need to leave.

Nearby in the central plaza, Eraserhead and a villain with hands covering him are fighting.

Any advantage, anything to get them out, is useful now. Izuku is reminded of his notes.

*Round Building constants:*

- Villains- all low-level thugs, besides Shiragaki, Kirogiri, Nomu, (or dad, or me)
- People scattered. Todoroki usually mountainside, Tsuyu in flood zone
- Tenko? Tomura? Is there
BONUS SCENE: SHIPWRECK ZONE

“I don’t like this, kero.” Tsu checks over the side of the boat. About 20 villains wait in the water below. “They’re too quiet.”

Hitoshi knows he looks like a drenched cat, but he directs that fury to the villain who dumped them in the water. It’s only thanks to Tsu that he’s not dead right now. “They haven’t attacked us yet.”

“It’s like they’re waiting for us to attack first. I don’t think they know our quirks.”

“… you’re right.” Watching the villains, Shinsou’s brain knits together the facts. “My quirk depends on surprise, and they’re letting us have the first move.”

“I have an idea. How many people can you take at once?”

Shinsou grins crazily. “I was born to fight god. Depends on how many you need.”

Shinsou leaps up on the railing of the boat, letting out an ear-splitting shriek. “WHICH ONE OF YOU FUCK-UGLY CHERUBS WANTS TO DIE FIRST TODAY?”

It works—villains shout back angrily, and he activates his quirk on them one by one.

“What the fuck.”

“Who do you think you are?”

“Me, I’LL FIGHT!”

“Huh, think you can take me?”
More villains fall under his control, and Shinsou screams his next question. “I AM WITHOUT GOD OR MASTER!!! NOBODY CAN TELL ME NOT TO SUMMON DARKENSS TODAY SO WHO SHALL I HUNT FIRST??”

“Woah, okay chill out-“

“Hey uh, kid. That’s kinda-“

“Wanna go, short-stack?”

Shinsou grins wildly, a headache blooming in his temples, but a good half of the villains are under his control. This can work. “BUCKLE UP BUTTERCUPS, BECAUSE MY BITCH SWITCH HAS BEEN FLIPPED! Restrain the other villains; attack them if you can’t.”

The water levels begin to drop while the rest of the villains turn on each other. It won’t last long – the villains will snap out of it soon- but all they need is a distraction.

Tsu has been busy finding two fire extinguishers from the ship. Handing one to Shinsou, she took his capture weapon wrapped in one hand and the other fire extinguisher in the other hand.

With that, at Shinsou’s nod in confirmation, she jumps out and begins swimming for shore. Shinsou, ready with his capture weapon tied to his waist and pin already pulled on the fire extinguisher, let himself be tugged along. The icy water was less of a shock when he’s ready for it.

When a villain comes after them, they get a face full of bubbles that clears once the students are already halfway to safety. Underwater fire extinguishers make excellent smokescreens.

Chapter End Notes

not sure if ive said this but im rlly thinking of changing schedule to updating every other week for quality’s sake. Maybe past like,,,,, uh chap 17(? ) chap 18?? I'll start doing that. not sure tho. lmk thoughts

Edit: fixed spelling and clarified that Shinsou flipped off Bakugo rather than the entire bus
I Tell A Villain His Grandma Was Cool

Chapter Notes

Spoilers: Nana is mentioned, and we hear a little about Shigaraki but they're pretty well known. It's all in the same bit before All Might crashes the party.

“Take him out.”

Izuku doesn’t think before sprinting. He doesn’t hesitate before jumping forward, willing himself to outpace the Nomu as it rushes towards his teacher.

It’s almost in slow motion as he wraps one hand around Eraserhead’s sleeve, only for the teacher to redirect him, shoving Izuku further away just before the Nomu arrives.

Eraserhead is still turning to face the monster when it attacks.

Blood splatters the concrete and the hero lies crumpled on the ground. The Nomus eye snaps to Izuku as he stumbles back.

Beyond them in the lake, Shinsou has turned white.

Izuku scrambles to his feet. He hopes Aizawa is okay, but there’s no getting to him right now.

The monster lunges again, and Izuku squeezes his eyes shut. He feels it hit, but when he opens his eyes, he’s surrounded by swirling galaxies and blazing starlight. The Null. He needs to get back.

It’s desperation that makes him reach back for his home world. He knows it won’t do anything, because he needs to enter another world to get back in.

It’s a shock when he makes contact.

Izuku manages to grab the world, and pulls himself in, barely managing to turn feet-first in time. He feels himself break back through into USJ, and there’s Eraserhead in front of him and Nomu behind him.

By the fountain, Shigaraki scoffs. “We’ve got ourselves a cheater. Maybe it’s time to wipe out some of All Might’s pride.”

The villain tilts his head, eyeing Izuku as though he’s an interesting bug to be squashed. “Yes, that will do. Nomu. Squash it.”

Izuku scrambles away, opening a portal and practically tripping in his haste to get away. As he falls, Izuku tightens his mental grip on Home. Time to try something new.

As he passes through, he grabs the edge. The portal closes with the Nomu right outside it, exposed brain and gaping mouth close enough to touch.

The null’s silence is deafening by comparison.
Izuku is floating in the space-not-space, one hand holding onto the giant orb of home. On closer look, the world is actually made up of incredibly thin, wrapped thread. He’s grabbed a couple strands, but they seem strong enough for his own weight.

It would be peaceful, if not for the pounding in Izuku’s head and adrenaline in his veins.

When he parts it into a small gap, inside is the USJ and- wow.

Something about seeing his world with most of the color leached and moving sluggishly makes him feel sick.

“Oh, gross,” Izuku mutters, then gasps, nearly letting go when his voice works.

The Nomu has turned slowly, twisting back to his portal before lumbering beyond. It must be moving quickly, but from out here it’s at barely even a fraction of the earlier speed.

Beyond it, Eraserhead moves subtly, and Izuku feels nauseous.

He swings around, watching the Null until his stomach settles. Then a simple twist, and he pushes both feet back into Home. This time, he parts the strings an inch to the side of where his last portal opened.

The result is him tumbling into the USJ landslide zone.

Todoroki whirls around. Every villain is frozen solid, frost encapsulating the entire zone. He relaxes slightly when Izuku almost slips on the ice.

“Todoroki-“

“They have a villain that can beat All Might. Or at least, they think he can.”

Izuku shakes his head as he catches up. “I know. They took out Aizawa Sensei and 13. I got to UA and backup is coming, but Kuro- fuck, you don’t know their names.”

Todoroki stares at Izuku as he waves the muttered comment away.

“Sorry. The hand-villain, bird-creature, and warp gate are our biggest threats. Can you get to the plaza?”

Todoroki nods. “Easy.”

“Good.” Izuku lets himself fall. “See you there.”

Grabbing onto the edge of his portal, he’s a bit more careful this time about checking where he reenters. He picks a gap between the strings that looks out directly above Shigaraki.

When he swings himself around, he almost- almost lands the kick. A dark portal- misty and definitely not his, opens up just before it connects. Shigaraki’s hand reaches out, and Izuku makes his own portal between them. He enters it, swings around, and reenters the world in order to reverse his momentum. Izuku lands awkwardly and tucks into a roll for distance.

His foot is agonizing to put weight on. Probably twisted in the last fall. Shit.

Shigaraki tuns, glowering.

“It’s the cheater.”
Izuku knows he can’t run. He knows he’s on a time limit. His mobility is probably limited to only portals now.

But he can talk.

“Yep. It’s me. I’m guessing you’re a boss?”

Shigaraki smirks. “Oh, wouldn’t you like to know.”

Izuku’s plan has one glaring hole in it: talking requires keeping up the conversation. He has no idea how to do just that. Shigaraki strikes lightning fast before Izuku can think up a reply.

He dodges the hand, hopping back again away from Aizawa and the pond. What does he know about Shigaraki?

The villain snarls and lunges again with inhuman speed.

“Shimura Tenko.”

Shigaraki stops. Guess that’s his name here, too.

“Five-point disintegration quirk.”

Izuku can feel his mouth going numb.

“Villain. Known Affiliations: League of Villains.”

What does he know about Shigaraki? Plenty.

“Tell me, can you really kill the Symbol of Peace?”

Shigaraki is frozen, eyes wide behind the hand he wears. Behind him, Kurogiri is also still, flickering warp-gate the only sign time hasn’t stopped all together.

It’s broken when Shigaraki practically wheezes. “You know too much, cheater.”

In a moment, the villain is beside him, reaching out. Breath hisses behind the hand on Shigaraki’s face, and the voice is too calm, too deadly. He’s made the villain angry. Izuku could have redirected a temper tantrum. He can’t do anything with cold rage.

“How do you know that name.”

Izuku tries to jump back, but Kurogiri’s portal opens in his path. Izuku stops inches before entering. Five fingers latch onto his shoulder from behind and… Nothing happens.

Shigaraki chuckles. “You really are so cool, Eraserhead.”

Izuku wrenches free of the grip as Kirogiri calls out.

“Nomu.”

The creature reappears over Eraserhead, slamming his head into the concrete again with a sickening crack. Izuku knows he needs to get his teacher out, but he can’t think of anything until All Might is here. All he has are his words, a possibly twisted ankle, and a travel quirk.

Shit.
Shigaraki turns back, noticing Izuku now several meters away.

“Damn small fries. Kirogiri, this one’s mine.” The villain settles into a ready stance. “That name will be buried with you, brat.”

“You still haven’t answered my question though,” Izuku leans on his good leg just a bit more. He’ll portal away if things go south. “I mean, even if you are strong, it’s kind of hard to imagine taking All Might down.”

Shigaraki regards him before scoffing. “Like you’d know anything. Your Symbol of Peace and hero worship. It makes me sick.”

He thinks back to All Might’s smiles. His hero saves others even knowing about the borrowed time. It makes sense now. Izuku lifts his lips up in what should be a grin, staring Shigaraki in the eyes. “I wouldn’t be so sure. I know you, don’t I?”

That catches Shigaraki. His stance lowers, and for just a second, Izuku thinks he might talk.

Then the villain spits. “You. Annoying little glitch. You don’t know me at all. What makes you think you’re so special?”

He needs to keep them talking. Beyond him, on the lakeshore, Tsuyu is creeping closer to Aizawa. The Nomu hasn’t noticed her yet. What can Izuku say to keep eyes on him?

“Interesting. Well. I’m not special, but I do know some things. I know how you got here. I know why many heroes became who they are. I’ve walked with them and cried with them.”

Faces flash through his mind. Conversations and tears. A monster, a fire. Men who were both, sometimes. Graveyards and offices, hospitals and laughter. A woman who held the world on her shoulders every day and never once asked for help.

“I’ve met your grandmother, Nana, and I know you have her son’s eyes.”

_I met you once, in a world where Nana never died._

He keeps the smile up, breathing through his teeth and the fear. “Imagine what else I know, Tenko.”

Shigaraki’s breath catches, and Izuku wonders if that was too much. The silence stretches on and on, and Izuku begins to count each second as a second closer to All Might’s arrival.

“Shigaraki,” Kurogiri says finally. “Now’s not the time—“

“Don’t tell me what to do,” Shigaraki hisses. “The cheater’s going to die anyway. Little heroes who just have to be right, just have to save everyone.” Shigaraki’s hands rise to scratch at his neck. “Even though they never have. I hate every last one of them.”

“But if you kill the heroes… You want society to fall?”

“Idiot.” Shigaraki lowers his bloody fingers. “Of course. Now die.” He pounces, but Izuku has less distance to cover. The null is everywhere.

Izuku drops down into a portal, twisting around to reenter across the plaza. The landing jars his leg. Shigaraki turns, and a misty portal swirls to life. Izuku greets the arriving figure with a solid punch. It doesn’t land.
Instead, a second portal opens, engulfing his arm. Five fingers grab his hood, turning it to dust before Izuku can jump away. The rabbit ears are gone. He pulls his arm out of the portal before it can close.

“I noticed something interesting,” Shigaraki comments, breath hot and rank on the side of Izuku’s face. “You could have warped your classmates out, but you haven’t. You haven’t even warped me.”

Izuku’s blood runs cold as Shigaraki leers at him, too close.

“Let me guess, you can’t teleport anyone else.”

The villain lunges again, hand outstretched. He’s too close this time. Either Izuku takes the hit, or he brings the villain into the null. Both are losses.

USJ’s doors slam open. There, framed in light, is All Might and Izuku feels the tell-tale sting of tears in his eyes. It’s going to be okay. All Might is here.

“EVERYTHING IS FINE NOW-”

Something’s wrong.

“BECAUSE I AM HERE!”

All Might isn’t smiling.

Yagi Toshinori should have known better. He should have left that purse snatching case and amateur villain to the local heroes. He should have come when Aizawa-san didn’t pick up the second call.

He has put twenty children in danger, all because he should have known better. And now, he is reaping his just reward.

His senior teachers are both down. 13 is shaking on the ground by the entrance, and Aizawa-san is crumpled in a puddle of blood.

Three other students are in the plaza. It takes only a glance to see that Shinsou is in shock, and Asui is trying to approach Aizawa-san. The other students seem to be fighting in different zones, though two are difficult to see and another is frozen solid. The plaza is most pressing.

One villain is close - too close – less than a meter away - from young Midoriya, and the boy looks terrified.

He needs to finish this. All Might can’t bring himself to smile as he fights through the pain in his side.

This is his fault.

All Might will always rush to save the day with a smile. It’s a promise he made to himself, to his mentor, long ago. This time, he’s failed before it even started. The children should not have gone thought this; his colleagues should not have broken themselves for this.

Yagi Toshinori should have stopped this.
All Might crouches, and leaps. He moves through the pain and pushes his limit because they deserved better than this. They needed him earlier, but he ignored the signs heroes are trained from early on and hard experience to never miss.

*This is all his fault.*

Izuku blinks, and All Might has knocked out several villains. A second later, the hero is by Tsu and Shinsou near the flood zone. Izuku can’t process how fast All Might is moving – in a moment all three students are at the plaza’s edge. All Might lowers Eraserhead gently onto the ground next to them.

“Everyone, head to the entrance! I entrust Aizawa-san to you. Heroes are on their way.”

Behind them, Shigaraki is trembling. Slightly bloody hands scratch under what Izuku suspects is a real hand frantically. The villain’s voice is hoarse. “Yes. Yes, yes, yes, yes!! The great All Might, come to save his students. He’s faster than anyone else, and with the disgusting justice of a government official…. but…”

Izuku can see the villain’s face-splitting grin through the fingers of his mask.

“…he’s slower than anticipated.” Shigaraki lowers his hands, frantic glee in his voice.

Izuku reaches up as if he can hope to stop the Symbol of Peace. “All Might, wait. That bird villain, I’m pretty sure it can regenerate-“

“Young Midoriya.” All Might still doesn’t smile. “It’s going to be all right.”

Across the plaza, Shigaraki shivers with joy, beckoning to his trump card. It’s time for a victor to be decided. “Nomu. Take him down.”

Then the titans clash.

Chapter End Notes

**izuku: *figures out more abt his quirk***

**izuku: ever have one of those days where you're like Well This Might As Well Happen?**

I will most likely be taking an extra week on the next little bit. I'm so sorry for leaving with a cliff hanger but it was the only stopping place. feel free to comment tho!!! I love hearing from yall so much <3
“Midoriya, let’s go.” Tsu places one hand on Midoriya’s shoulder. He’s shivering, she notices, but whether from shock or adrenaline isn’t clear. Either way, they’ve got places to be.

USJ is trembling with All Might’s fight, but that doesn’t matter. Getting her classmates to safety does. All Might will take care of the villains, but they can at least lighten his load by not being here.

Shinsou picks up Aizawa before she can. Tsu pretends not to notice her classmate crying when she ushers him on ahead. He seems to be out of the worst of the panic attack, but now she needs to get Midoriya moving.

“Midoriya, All Might will be fine. We’re just in the way here.”

At least that seems to catch his attention. Midoriya limps forward with a blank expression and follows her. His eyes are wide when he looks around, like a startled deer in front of an oncoming car.

That’s not good.

She can hardly fault him for keeping an eye on the fight behind him, but she keeps one hand tight around his wrist. Something tells her he’ll run back at the first chance.

He says something, and Tsu leans closer. “What?”

“I haven’t saved them yet.” Midoriya is starting to look like a cornered animal. She doesn’t know much about shock responses or how people act in emergencies, but this isn’t good. Tsu needs to get her classmates out before the danger comes to them.

“We’re saving Aizawa Sensei right now.” A tremor shakes the building. “Let’s get back to everyone else.”

He lets her lead the group into a forest section so they can sneak away. This is better. Out of sight, out of mind. One particularly large blast shakes them, and Tsu lets go of Midoriya to catch herself.

“Oh, this is not good. He’s gone. Shinsou stumbles, and Tsu hurries to help him carry Aizawa.

Midoriya probably teleported. Tsu needs to do what she can, and that doesn’t change. She continues ushering Shinsou to the stairs. Prioritizing. Triage- that’s the word for this, right? All Might is strong. He’ll keep Midoriya safe.

Shinsou and Aizawa need her more right now.
Izuku feels the grip on his wrist let go, and falls. It was the only thing grounding him at that point. The null is like an icy bucket of water to the face. It snaps Izuku out of the panic he’d gotten stuck in and forces him to concentrate on the present. He’ll panic later. Nobody’s been saved yet. Izuku grabs the edge of his portal and pivots to find a re-entry before it even finishes closing.

Between the threads, he sees Todoroki running to the plaza. Footsteps follow in the dirt - Hagakure is behind him and seems fine.

Jiro and Yaoyorozu have defeated all the villains in the mudslide zone. Kaminari is near them, expression frozen and brain fried from his own quirk.

Kacchan and Kirishima have defeated all villains in the inferno zone, and are on their way to the plaza.

Ojirou and Tokoyami make use of the rain cover to hide and ambush villains. Neither are injured.

Then he finds the plaza.

All Might and the nomu seem evenly matched from first glance, but as All Might attempts to restrain the creature, he catches a glimpse of All Might’s expression. The hero looks desperate. Angry. There is no smile of hope. In slow motion, the nomu is driven head-first into concrete.

Purple-black mist erupts from the world, making Izuku yelp and nearly let go. It kind of looks like a travel quirk, but much smaller. Izuku leans close, finding that it comes from two small gaps between the world’s surface thread. He sifts through the images again, until…

Oh.

Kurogiri’s opened a portal, allowing the nomu to attack All Might from below. Izuku’s seen that move before. He could have warned All Might.

He could have saved All Might but he didn’t.

Izuku doesn’t know how much time passes. Everything seems to have stopped, and the only sound he hears is the dull roar of blood in his ears and fluttering of his heart. This is bad, he rationalizes. Kurogiri has shifted the portal so that All Might is caught in the middle.

Izuku knows what happens when it closes, but there’s nothing he can do from here. He might be able to arrive as a distraction, but Kurogiri might close the portal faster on instinct, and Shigaraki would attack if the nomu didn’t get him first- wait.

He stops muttering, carefully finding the threads that surround one of Kurogiri’s portals. This is a bad idea. In fact, this is a terrible idea. Izuku takes a deep breath and pulls at the portal’s edge. Quirk shock doesn’t happen the same way in the null, but Izuku can feel his bones warping, lengthening just enough to feel but not enough to see.

" the fabric of reality shifts, just a little. Izuku pulls before it can close again. His head pounds as he opens it enough to pitch forwards, wedging his shoulders in to keep it from closing. His own portals can’t close if somethings stuck in
Izuku's back hits something warm, and he looks out at the USJ. He’s floor level, Shigaraki in front of him and Kurogiri seemingly hunched over in the background.

“You!” Shigaraki howls, “You- you cheater!”

Oh. He’s back to back with All Might. Well, this is interesting. Nomu is still barely in the portal, only arms and a head. Izuku tries not to think about how close it is.

“I can’t-” Kurogiri gives a strangled cough. “I can’t-”

“What?”

“Lungs?” Izuku all but screams in desperation.

All Might lets go, shakily reaching out over his shoulder. Izuku grabs the hand, braces his knees against the portal, and pulls over his head. His muscles scream in protest at the weight, but he can do it, he must, and it’s not like the null wants to be split in two like this. There’s nothing to it but pushing through the pain and hoping this is all over soon. It’s like the worst sit-up he’s ever done. The null shrieks in his mind and Izuku’s costume is splattered in sludge, but goddamn it, portals are his, and this one is no different.

“Kurogiri, what are you doing? Cut them in half!”

The mist villain gives a strangled cough. “I can’t-“

An explosion interrupts his words, and Izuku cries in relief as Kacchan slams into Kurogiri. Nitroglycerin-covered hands pin the armored collar to the ground, their owner leering at the shaking villain with bared teeth and narrowed eyes.

“It’s all in the metal shit you’ve got here, isn’t it?” Kacchan lets little explosions pop in warning. “No use protecting what’s not there. So, what is it? Head? Heart?”

Kacchan bares his teeth, and Izuku recognizes the look from schooldays past. “Lungs?”

*Kacchan, that’s not very nice,* Izuku wants to say. He settles for spitting some cosmic sludge at Shigaraki. The villain in question strolls towards Kacchan.

“So, a new pawn has arrived. They’re like termites.”

Kurogiri’s mist rises up before a larger explosion reasserts that Kacchan is still watching.

“You piss me off,” Kacchan announces, and Izuku would roll his eyes if he weren’t practically dying. “Get your whiny snot-nosed ass the fuck outta my damn field trip.”

All Might’s breath stutters when the Nomu tightens its grip. Izuku takes the chance to claim another
inch of the portal and Kurogiri’s misty armor becomes just a little more visible. Izuku refocuses as Shigaraki is finishing.

“...like lambs to the slaughter. And now, two children have somehow interrupted, so I may be just a bit more... pissed.” Shigaraki swipes at Kacchan.

“Fuck off!” Kacchan snarls back with an explosion. “I’m trying to do some fucking learning, not this crap.”

Shigaraki gets closer next time, and Kacchan dodges instinctively, letting Kurogiri go. Shigaraki doesn’t seem to care, pivoting and nearly catching Kacchan’s grenade. Izuku registers a red blur after it happens.

“BRO!”

Ice crackles in warning before Izuku’s line of sight is blocked by a massive wall of ice. All Might releases his hand, and ice cracks again as the teacher hastily leaves the portal. It shrinks as a result, and Izuku finds himself back to back with the nomu. That’s not comfy at all.

One of its eyes turns a complete 180 degrees to Izuku. He drops into the null on instinct, grabbing the world’s thread and swinging around to enter beside Todoroki.

Explosions crackle beyond the wall of ice. Nomu and All Might are gone. There’s a huge boom from one of the One for All holders. Todoroki and Izuku share a look before rushing to see.

Izuku rounds the corner a moment later due to his ankle. The moment he arrives, Kirishima flies through a misty portal directly at him. They collide and Izuku dives through the closing portal. He’s not afraid of them anymore, for better or worse.

Before it closes, Izuku locks eyes with Kirishima. “Please help Kacchan.” He’s gone before Kirishima can reply.

He lands right behind Kurogiri.

He can at least distract one of them. Izuku aims a punch at Kurogiri’s armor. In the same moment, the villain sees Izuku. His red sneakers are swallowed by an unexpected portal instantly. Instead of running, Izuku lets himself drop, opening one of his own inside it. By wedging both knees against it, he’s able to stop both portals from closing.

Kurogiri lurches back. “Stop,” he grunts. “You’ll tear us both apart.”

Izuku grins back through still-blackened teeth. “_revé, Kacchan_”

“What?”

Kurogiri tries to close the portal, but it won’t budge. Portals aren’t supposed to work like this, and they both feel the effects. The villain collapses while Izuku coughs up more sludge. Whoever cleans the costumes is going to have a field day with his.

Izuku watches the villain warily. He can hold out- he’s faced quirk shock for years over the tiniest names. He knows his limits, and when attacking is the better option. He doesn’t know Kurogiri’s limits. Worst case, the villain recovers and helps kill his classmates. Or Izuku ends up killing the villain. He’s really not okay with that.
Across the plaza, All Might is pushing his limits in a colossal show of power. The nomu takes each hit head-on. Few have any impact. Shigaraki is watching, too enraptured to notice his second-in-command shaking like a leaf, or the other students scrambling away. They’re new to fighting, and he’s a hardened villain. They won’t last five minutes in combat, and Todoroki seems to realize it. Between him and Kirishima, they’re dragging Kacchan away.

Izuku winces at the curses. He refocuses on All Might’s fight. The Symbol of Peace is struggling in combat with all the power he has left. It doesn’t take the nomu down. In fact, it seems to be doing very little.

Kirishima leans away from Kacchan. He’s down an arm. “Holy- Bro! Hold on, I can-“

Todoroki stops at the sound of his echoing voice, ice building around him and anchoring Kacchan’s boots to the ground. “How do we help?”

“You sure, bro?”

Kirishima gives him a thumbs-up, struggling to carry Kacchan away. The explosive student is doing everything he can to break free. Todoroki stays a moment longer, building up a wall of ice to keep Shigaraki away. He frowns, then re-ices it.

Beyond the wall, Shigaraki scrams in rage, pressing both palms against its cold surface. Todoroki strengthens the ice again, backing up. The frown is worrying. The frown means Shigaraki is still moving forward, no matter how thick the ice.

“Hours, if you can move.”

“Three minutes.” Todoroki refreeses the ice when a hand nearly pokes through. “Two minutes,” he corrects. “What about you?”

Izuku hums, the sound covering up a screaming void in his mind and the pain where his knees and back are wedged against the border of reality. “Oof, it’s killing me. It won’t end anytime soon. I’m feeling pretty bad.”

Kurogiri moves minimally, transitioning from blob-shaped to puddle shaped. This is the most ineffective fight ever. Izuku can’t move or the portal will snap shut, and it looks like Kurogiri can’t do much either. It sucks, and his opponent has more maneuverability.

He’s never trying this again. Still, taking out one villain will heighten everyone else’s odds of surviving. That’s all Izuku needs to know for this to be worth it.

Kurogiri looks like he’s melting. “Drop the portal. We’ll both die if this carries on too long.”

Todoroki glances over at this, another step nearer. His expression is still a mask of calm, but Izuku
catches a fleeting frown. Mild panic. Izuku hasn’t saved him yet.

Izuku coughs up more sludge. His stomach rolls and vision flickers. Nobody will die today.

Ochaco has no fighting experience. She doesn’t know how to track the big threats or tell them apart from the smaller ones. She’s never sparred beyond one class of training. Then again, growing up on construction sites makes people tough in different ways. So Ochaco squares up, pictures each villain as haywire equipment, and sends them crashing to the ground.

Sweat stings her eyes. Another villain charges with gross, multiplying hands. They’re desperate, though why is unclear. Ochaco taps the villain as she passes, hitting another on the shoulder when they get too close. Sero binds their legs, taping the two opponents together. Ochaco nearly hurls. She’s near her limit.

A huge boom echoes across the USJ. Everyone freezes, turning to watch the plaza. The floor rises up, a wave of concrete in the wake of All Might’s fight. One punch turns into twenty, then a hundred.

The bird-villain is flung through the ceiling rafters. A moment of silence descends on students and villains alike. Small pieces of debris fall, caught in sunlight that filters through momentarily like golden ichor to earth.

Down in the plaza, she catches sight of the hand villain ducking out of a huge mass of ice. Ochaco notes how Todoroki was being pushed back and tries not to feel sick at how far the villain had burrowed through her classmates defenses.

While the villain is distracted, Todoroki hurry to encase another villain in ice. He picks somebody up from the ground, slinging them over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes. Ochaco tries not to worry over who it was- their costume was too roughed up and covered in what looks like black paint to really tell.

Wait. It was green, under the mess.

Midoriya?

The USJ doors slam open. Iida’s voice carries across USJ, ringing out in desperation and relief. “I HAVE RETURNED WITH BACKUP!”

The students around her cheer, but Ochaco doesn’t let down her guard. She’s heard about fights and knows it’s not over until she’s safe. There are still villains about.

Shoto isn’t even three steps away when Midoriya shivers, scrambling to be let down. No sooner have his feet hit the ground than Midoriya coughs up at least a lungful of black goo, grins at Shoto like some feral void creature, and tugs him towards the stairs.
Midoriya pivots once they’re there, plopping down on the stairs to watch as Shigaraki stalks toward where Kurogiri lies. The warp villain is barely moving, and his misty cloak has retreated so Shoto can just make out shoes through it. Midoriya watches the approaching villain through wide eyes that glint weirdly in the harsh light.

"I..." he whispers, and though Shoto can’t make out the words, he can understand the sentiment. After what felt like so long fighting, such an easy end feels… unnatural.

The two villains disappear, to the cheers of Class 1A. Midoriya stares at the plaza blankly, as though unable to hear the pure relief around him.

Chapter End Notes

Hey lmk if yall want transcriptions of the glitch text. I'll start doing them if it gets too much worse but I still wanna know opinions. Here's toady's glitch text transcription:

"Come on already."

"Hey," .... "My portal now, go get your own."

"The power of a fucked up life," ... "Give me your hand."

"HAND"

Next bit of text:

"Exactly"

"It's a waiting game. Whoever drops first loses everything."

Next convo:

I’m good. Go help All Might- I think something’s going to happen.”

“IT’s just a stand-off. I’ll see you when it’s over.”

“Yeah, just... I’ll yell if anything happens.”

“How long until he gets through?”

“If I can’t?”

“One? Ten? Not sure.”

Final line:

“Is it over?”

Also thank you all for being so patient with me on this!!! I'll probs be taking extra time for the next bit, too. Chaos is still happening, its making me kinda late replying to comments, but I read them and love you all!!!

(also!! happy pride month, pls remember to drink water and treat yourself well. Don't feel like you have to come out for any reason other than for yourself, and if ur going to pride, look out for each other!! if anyone's in a country that doesn't allow pride, pls know I love you and recognize who you are. You are valid and worthy of love <3)

Edit: I forgot the chapter title asjlkkgf;lhg
Edit2: glitch text transcription!
Shockwaves

Chapter Summary

Spoilers: for Shigaraki identity spoilers skip from "Wanna hear a fun fact" to next break. I think that's it.

We're also beginning with Momo and Jirou bc there are only like. six girls in the class. Fuck the patriarchy. @author-san pls give me more female leads to work with. Give them lines. Let me see their personality. Give them weight in the plot. Help.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Jirou doesn’t know how long she’s been sitting on the curb before Momo joins her, looking worse for wear. “Hey.”

“Oh my god damn,” Jirou says hollowly. “That just happened.”

They watch as medics attend Kaminari, who’s slowly breaking out of shock. “This isn’t a dream, is it?”

“Don’t think so.”

“My goodness.”

“You think the teachers are okay?”

“I saw them go to the hospital,” Momo says quietly. They watch the class mill around. One by one, students are taken aside by officers, interviewed, and then sent to the bus. They’ll wait for dismissal Afterwards.

Jirou watches it all distantly, afraid and angry all at once. The day replays again and again until she fishes out her phone, desperate for any music to drown it out. Yaomomo seems to understand, creating a split earphone jack so they can both listen.

Uraraka flops down on Jirou’s other side before she starts the playlist. “They sent me over to say everyone’s gathering at the bus. Watch out though, somebody dropped an All Might pin and Bakugo’s been trying to get it. You guys okay?”

“Been better.”

Yaomomo nods. “As well as can be, but what happened to the class?”

“Mina and Kaminari tried to start up the bus. Midoriya went to the main building and Midnight was talking to Shinsou about something. Not sure beyond that. I don’t.“

“Oi! Round-face, what the fuck was that? Give me the damn pin already!”

Uraraka pats her pockets. “Hold on. Aha!” She holds up a middle finger to Bakugo. “Here you go!”
Jirou dodges the explosion by leaning against Yaomomo. Uraraka is long gone, racing off to the bus with Bakugo right behind.

“We have the weirdest class.” Jirou scoots back. “Sorry, by the way.”

Yaomomo shakes her head, standing up. “For what? Come on, we’d better get good seats before they’re taken.”

Izuku doesn’t remember getting to the nurse’s room. It’s like he blinks and he’s there. Recovery Girl seems to notice he’s aware and presses a cup of water into his hand.

“I’ve got other injuries to tend but give a shout if you need me.” She gestures to a clipboard by his cot. “Once you feel well enough, fill this out.”

It’s a form for quirk shock and drawbacks. Izuku pencils in what he knows of his quirk, emphasizing that usually it’s more of a nuisance than anything else. She’s gone by the time he’s done, so Izuku sets the clipboard aside and looks for his phone. He’s in the classroom. With no way to pass the time, Izuku counts the ceiling tiles and number of paper cups by the sink. Any way to distract himself from the panic resting behind his eyes is welcome.

Izuku is frowning at his bandaged ankle when a detective walks in. There’s a file tucked under his arm, but Izuku recognizes the brown coat and honest face. Izuku knows this person from many worlds. Someone whose knowledge is powerful enough to topple everything, but who never ever does anything to hurt All Might.

It’s one of those constants Izuku fears and trusts at the same time. He’s waiting for it to break.

The detective’s about to introduce himself when Izuku cuts him off.

“Detective Tsukauchi.” The detective blinks in surprise at his own name. “I have information for you.” Maybe he’ll stay up late staring at the ceiling and regretting being rude later. That’s fine. He needs to this meeting count, because he may not have another. Politeness can wait until after Izuku has said his piece.

The detective flashes his badge before pulling out a notepad and pen. “It’s nice to meet you. Are you Izuku Midoriya?”

“Yes.”

“Could you tell me about the attack?”

Izuku gives his story. He keeps it precise as he can, trying to slip in as much extra information as possible. His mouth starts going numb once the Nomu is discussed, so Izuku tries to be clever with his word choice. If he spills too much the null could knock him out for a day or two, and he can’t leave school. Not when more attacks might happen.

“It seemed to have multiple quirks, but that’s…. hard to believe.” A lie. Shit.

Tsukauchi writes something down. “Could you elaborate?”
“It had a shock absorption quirk and regeneration for sure, but also showed speed and strength beyond standard physical limits. I’m guessing it hasn’t done anything since arrest, because it only acts on orders.”

“You seem familiar with it.”

“A little.” *Fuck. Another lie.* Izuku’s going to sound like a traitor at this point. *Oh.* He has a brilliant idea. “Wanna hear a fun fact?”

“Sure?”

“My quirk lets me see a lot of different futures, and sometimes I can see patterns—actually, do you mind if I ramble a bit?”

Tsucauchi’s eyes widen in a look of understanding. He gestures to continue.

*Thank the heavens,* Izuku thinks. “It doesn’t like me talking about stuff so I can’t do much with what I know.”

“Oh?”

“Isn’t it funny, though. To have lots of quirks in one person… you’d have to kill or kidnap a lot. Civilians, too.”

The detective starts writing on his notepad as Izuku continues. “If I wanted to do that, I’d make a lot of monsters… Doing things by halves isn’t really a villainous style, huh?” His mouth is completely numb, and pressure builds softly under his chin. “I’d want to store them; somewhere big like a warehouse would work. More importantly, I’d have someone else lead them.”

Izuku can barely spit out the last words. “Like Shimura Tenko.”

Tsukauchi freezes in his notetaking.

“Shimura Tenko?”

The detective’s face is blank, a practiced front, but the edge to his voice gives away that he knows. He knows who that is. Izuku nods and the detective writes two more words before flipping to a new page.

What Izuku was going to say next: *Pretty good phycological warfare, huh?* Sit heavy in his mind.

He can’t take it anymore. The pressure in his throat wells up until he’s coughing, and sludge stains his teeth black. It’s less backlash than he was expecting, but he can’t talk anymore.

Guess that’s just the mood for today.

Tsukauchi hurries to find a paper cup. Water won’t do any good – Izuku’s more concerned with the black goo trying to fall out of his mouth than the stuff going in – but he appreciates the sentiment.

“Is this the backlash?”

Izuku nods, croaking out something that might sound like a yes. Tsukauchi seems to understand, so Izuku flashes him a quick grin through blackened teeth. The detective only frowns and looks towards the door.

“Recovery Girl, do you have a moment?”
Recovery Girl pushes open the door, bustling over. “I just fixed him up, how is he injured already? Honestly…”

Tsukauchi steps back so she can access the cot. She tutts and gives Izuku’s hand a kiss. The pressure in his throat lessens and breathing gets easier. Once the detective leaves, Izuku scrambles off the bed to the sink. Black goo pours down the drain. He really did not want to deal with this in front of a police officer and close friend of All Might.

Recovery Girl draws up a chair for Izuku to sit in. He’s reading the poster on washing hands – the implication that some people don’t is terrifying- when Tsukauchi steps back in. Izuku offers up another smile. It must look like terrifying with too-sharp teeth and black sludge running down his chin, but it counts.

See, he can be polite.

Tsukauchi coughs into his hand and addresses Recovery Girl. “If you don’t mind, I’d like to ask one more question.”

Recovery Girl shoots a look that has the detective flinching. The wheels on her chair squeak too loudly as she turns back to her desk.

“Right. Well.” Tsukauchi glances to the door longingly before addressing Izuku. “How much of all this do the villains know?”

Ah. Is that important? "I'm not allowed to talk about this, detective."

Tsukauchi has Izuku repeat it twice before getting the meaning straight. “Alright. Is there anything else you can tell me?”

Izu shakes his head, and Tsukauchi passed him a business card. “Thank you for your help. That’s my number, so please call if any other information turns up.”

Izu takes it, and the detective bows, apologizes for the inconvenience, and leaves hastily. It doesn’t take long to figure out why he’s in a hurry - Recovery Girl looks ready to commit some degree of crime. She glares at the door until it closes.

“I know he needed a report, but really now… no information is worth putting a child into quirk-shock for.”

Izu shakes his head. ‘It was my choice.”

He gets another lecture for that.

Tsukauchi is concerned to say the least. He had entered to interview the last student, expecting a quick story with no new leads. Maybe Toshinori’s first successor would give some hint as to why he had passed up inheriting the ultimate hero’s quirk, but nothing more.

The moment he had walked through the door, Midoriya had called him by name- without introduction- and practically led the interview himself. He’d given pages of information, including a
full analysis of Shigaraki’s quirk, and hinted at a traitor. At first Tsukauchi had connected the lies as a hint that the boy was being forced into the act, but in review that idea had been largely disproved.

The real kicker was that last bit. ‘Wanna hear a fun fact?’ Tsukauchi rubs a hand over his eyes. He’ll have to be careful with this information, and fact-check all of it, but for now….

Whatever future made a child smile like that—tired and broken with stained teeth so it was almost a grimace—is not a restful future.

Recovery girl almost doesn’t let Nezdu talk to Izuku. When she does it’s with a time limit and threat of knocking the principal out. Izuku is starting to suspect Recovery Girl was a combat hero rather than support.

“Ah, Midoriya! I hope you’re doing well?” The principal is either unaware of Recovery Girl’s glare or doesn’t care.

“Yes?”

“Excellent! Join me in a little walk.” The principal waves to Recovery Girl as they leave, his paws making a soft pitter-patter sound in the hallways. (Clever of him, to redirect away from Recovery Girl.) There should be no way to make paw-pads sound ominous, but somehow Nezdu manages. “I’d like to discuss your actions today.”

Izuku squints down at the principal, who smiles like some piece of clip art: fake without trying to hide it. “Specifically, your choice to engage two top villains.”

The principal shouldn’t know that. USJ’s cameras were hacked, the signal cut. Police reports are confidential until police interviews end, even to Nezdu. Parents probably won’t know details until this evening. Izuku stops, and the principal’s smile sharpens under a flickering hallway light.

“Good to know I was right. Midoriya, the school is responsible for your safety. Should you put yourself in danger like that again, Aizawa will try to expel you.”

“Try?”

“He needs my signature.” Nezdu’s eyes betray no emotion. “I’ve never refused. Why should I?”

“I would do it again,” Izuku says without hesitating. It’s the opposite of what he should be saying when everything about the principal screams danger.

“Oh?”

“They were going to kill Aizawa-sensei, and who knows how many of us. Nobody died today.”

“Is survival the only priority?”

“…”

Nezdu begins walking again, and Izuku must hurry or else be left with too many questions. “You’re prioritizing survival of your classmates and teachers, nothing else. What about the villains, and the
information they gathered on you through that fight?” Nezdu smiles, a plastic manufactured copy of what smiles should be. “What about who they’ll target next? What about your classmates, who may take your example to heart? What about your survival? Next time leave the fighting to your teachers, Midoriya. They are equipped to handle this.”

“You don’t care about them?”

“I never said that.” Nezdu’s smile wavers, though it’s so well placed, Izuku wonders if it’s an act. Inhuman features make it hard to read the principal’s expression. “The hero world doesn’t have mercy on those who rush in. I suspect you may be the type.”

Izuku’s finding it hard to track the conversation, but something about the principal’s views strike him as cold and detached. He can’t support that. “The universe may be cold and indifferent, but I don’t want to be. So, excuse me, sir, if I can’t watch my friends die.”

There’s a chill over the hallway before Nezdu nods. “You understand that if you had suffered any further injuries, the public would demand we expel you and fire your teachers?”

He hadn’t considered that. “Yes, sir.”

Nezdu smiles cheerily. ‘Good! Well, I must be off. Be sure to rest up over the weekend!”

With that he’s gone. Izuku leans against the wall and steadies his breathing. Why does talking to the principal take so much energy?

BONUS SCENE:

Shigaraki lies face down on the bar’s dirty floor, blood seeping between cracks in the floorboards and staining his cheek. “Those cheaters.”

Kurogiri staggers to the chairs, collapsing with little of his usual grace. He hasn’t the energy to stand now. After that green-haired kid’s plan leaving him practically torn in two by his own quirk, Kurogiri can’t do much of anything. It shames him to feel this strongly about a child’s murder, but he wouldn’t mind seeing that one ended.

The television crackles to life, words flickering into view on its screen.

“Welcome back.”

“It failed.” Shigaraki’s voice trembles. “It failed- failed! All Might wasn’t even there at the start- but you were right, Sensei. He has gotten slower.”

“And the Nomu?”

“Lost. Captured. I don’t care. It should have worked. Why didn’t it work- That fucking kid. We would have won if the students hadn’t gotten involved. One of them knew me, Sensei. He knew everything, he knew my old name, my quirk, everything. I want him dead. No- I want them all dead, but he goes first.”

“Kurogiri?”
“I would not object, myself.” It’s hard to keep a steady voice. Weakness is death when demons speak. Kurogiri perseveres. “He mentioned meeting Tomura’s grandmother. I don’t see how it’s possible, given the child had a warping quirk not unlike my own.”

“Interesting. Keep an eye on that one, for now. What of the other students?”

Kurogiri does not sigh in relief when the question is not for him. He’s survived by avoiding such shows of humanity. He will never fool whatever watches from the dusty screen. Shigaraki, however, is a different story.

“There was one you’d like, Sensei. He had a quirk like All Might’s.” Shigaraki peers upwards through dirty hair and his own blood at the screen. “I want them all dead.”

“Interesting. Send me his name after the Sports Festival. But don’t hunt them yet, Tomura. Let the heroes grow attached to the children first. That will make their loss sting more. The public will hate them for it. The heroes will doubt themselves and each other. And once everyone has turned their back, All Might will be at his weakest.”

Shigaraki presses his face into the floor, shaking with soundless laughter. The plan is inelegant and well-made all at once. Kurogiri pushes himself up painfully, searching for the first aid kit. He can’t have their figurehead bleed out on the floor.

How did he turn into a babysitter, anyway?

Chapter End Notes

I have achieved some kind of stability in my life!!! Kinda!!! we're back to weekly updates! Maybe! Also I promise we're getting to some of the fics yall asked WorldWalker!Izuku to see soon. There's two I'm super stoked for and got permission for like... months ago (oh fuck I hope the authors aren't mad) but!!! they were placed far ahead bc I wanted to get it right!!! so hopefully its okay.

But yes sidenote to whoever needs this- pls remember to stay safe during pride!!! support each other, especially members in minorities!!! be safe, use common sense and trust ur gut especially at big events. hydrate!! Remember that self love is a radical act and it's okay to take care of yourself!!!

Edit: hovertext over the glitch text! shoutout to auPHE for the suggestion
Chapter Summary

Spoilers: uhhhh none. watch me find one and have to edit this. Its gonna happen, I can feel it in my soul. srry for the long chapter notes btw

Chapter Notes

The last chapter didn't get a ton of feedback, so i'm upping the pace and combining the next two into one for today's update.

also, ive been stoked for this for like. forever. Leviathan by rest_in_rip is amazing and I love it so much. Go read it if you haven't bc its r e a l l y good. I got permission to reference it months ago but this was where I was writing so it's been a while

pls read the bottom notes, I need opinions regarding Kirishima and the void.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

When Izuku finally leaves its with the faint sensation of smoke tickling his throat and shaking hands. He finds Uraraka, Iida, and Shinsou waiting outside. Or at least, Uraraka and Iida are waiting and Shinsou is sleeping under a tree just inside the UA barrier. God, he loves his friends.

Maybe it’s the fact that they’re all alive, and here. Maybe it’s because the first danger is past; with nothing to do, no distractions present, everything comes crashing down. He’s been holding off, moving from one goal to the other, but now it’s okay to let the day sink in. It’s okay.

They’re okay.

They’re safe and he doesn’t need to save anyone right now.

Uraraka sees him first, waving excitedly. “Oh, it’s Deku!”

Iida looks over just as Izuku’s knees hit the ground. “Midoriya?”

Izuku can’t breathe, can’t respond. He’s out, they’re fine, nobody died, All Might is alive, Shinsou is right there, Aizawa Sensei was taken to the hospital, but he’ll be fine. They’re alive.

“Deku!”

Izuku runs his hands through his hair, trying to focus. He’s here, he’s fine. Somebody touches his shoulder and Izuku’s quirk activates on instinct. He drops through the pavement, just as they call his name.

The cold shock of the null hits him like diving into the Antarctic Ocean. It clears his mind just enough to lock eyes with Uraraka, and see Iida reaching out to him.
Izuku reaches back through the closing portal, taking his friends hand. Iida pulls, and with Uraraka’s help they’re able to heave Izuku out onto the sun-warmed concrete. The null snaps shut behind him.

Izuku lets himself flop down on the pavement, scraping his cheek on the gritty surface in the process. He ducks, curling into a ball. He loves his friends, but they shouldn’t have to see him like this. They’ve been through enough today.

Another pair of footsteps reverberate through the ground, but Izuku is disoriented enough that he can’t tell who from. He simultaneously doesn’t care and is hyperaware of how vulnerable he is. Izuku hates it.

Somebody crouches down in front of him, and Izuku curls into himself as much as he can.

Shinsou’s voice is quiet. “Hey. Midoriya. Do you want me to use my quirk on you?”

“Yes,” Izuku croaks, and everything goes blissfully still.

He hadn’t realized his lungs had been filling with phantom smoke until the pressure vanishes. It feels a bit like floating through the null, but without direction. He watches with clearer vision as Shinsou orders him to relax, then tells Uraraka and Iida to back off a bit. They wait for his breathing to slow before Shinsou says something unexpected.

“If you want to, walk over to the tree and make yourself comfortable.” If you want to. It’s incredibly cool that Shinsou can even order things that depend on the target’s opinion.

Izuku finds that, despite the apathy that comes with floating in non-existence, some part of him does want to not lie on the pavement by UA’s gates in a puddle of misery. The moment he realizes this, his body uncurls, following orders. His body accounts for the bad leg, which does not happen usually.

Huh. Uraraka says something, but Izuku can’t make it out, or Iida’s response. It’s as though he’s underwater.

“If you do, I will burn this entire school to the ground,” Shinsou says back. Iida’s reply is still muffled.

Shinsou lets Izuku settle down before crouching in front of him. “I’m going to wait five seconds and then release you.”

Izuku braces himself and snaps back to reality with a shuddering breath. He almost chokes, but the smoke he’s breathing doesn’t exist here – another Izuku must be dealing with fires right now.

“Do you want me to do it again?” Shinsou is hesitant, and Izuku shakes his head, running his hands through his hair. It’s not the same- he reaches out and grabs a hand – Iida’s - plopping it down on top of his head.

Iida stiffens at the sudden contact before slowly beginning to card his hands through the green curls. When Izuku leans into it, Uraraka settles on his other side and starts French-braiding the curls behind his ear. It gives him something to focus on beyond the beating of his heart and racing thoughts.

Shinsou lies down on the grass in front of them, phone out. “Incoming cat pictures.”

Izuku feels his backpack begin vibrating with Shinsou’s messages. After a moment, he fishes the phone out to find an ungodly number of pictures of Urusai, as well as what seems to be every cat Shinsou has ever seen. Each cat has at least one accompanying selfie with Shinsou staring blankly
into the camera and giving the cat bunny ears.

They sit together until Izuku feels grounded enough to talk.

“Thanks, guys - I, um. My mom used to brush my hair when I…”

“It’s okay,” Uraraka says when he trails off.

Iida hesitantly stops messing with Izuku’s hair to place a hand on his shoulder. It’s awkward and clearly not from someone used to comforting friends, but the effort matters more than he realizes.

“Are you feeling better?”


“Hell yeah, it happened,” Shinsou mumbles. “Today was shit. Too much drama for me.”

“You call a villain attack drama?”

Iida shakes his head. “I’m just glad it’s over.”

“Sorry for keeping you guys, by the way.”

“We were waiting for you.”

Shinsou gestures to the UA building. “I’m waiting for my dad. He’s uh. He’s pretty shaken up, and really wanted to drive.”

“Okay. Well… thanks for earlier.”

“Any time, problem child.”

Izuku sputters. “That’s- Aizawa Sensei’s I thought you only knew English through memes!”

“Anything’s a meme if you try hard enough.”

“Hey Deku, what’d he say? I’m not good at English yet.”

“Indeed, I too am not as far in my studies as I would like to be.”

Shinsou locks eyes with Izuku. “Nobody will ever believe you.”

Izuku gapes. “You – you just-“

“Deku, what’d he say?”

Izuku shakes his head. “Nothing,” he says, glaring at Shinsou. “Just a little betrayal because why not?”

Iida frowns. “I do not condone-“

“Betrayal is the hight of friendship,” Uraraka announces, and Shinsou snickers.

“Worth it.”

As the three bicker about “the true meaning of friendship” Izuku relaxes just a bit more. It’s gonna be
Mom practically crushes him as he walks through the door. “Oh, my baby, you’re safe now.”

“I know mom.” Izuku lets his backpack drop to the floor, too tired to carry it to his room. “I saved them.”

“It’s okay to save yourself, too.”

“Mom?”

She steps back, placing a hand on each of his shoulders. “I want you to be happy, honey. But I want you to be safe too. They told me you jumped in while All Might was taking care of it.”

“I’m sorry, I’ll be better. I promise.” The promise is also to himself. He hadn’t considered what she would have felt if he’d been injured worse.

“I know you want to do good, sweetie. I just don’t see why you’re hurting yourself like this.”

“I’m not hurting myself. Just… stretching my limits.”

Mom cups his face gently. “Sometimes, pushing yourself too far does more harm than good. You crossed that line today. When the school called about what happened, they said you were the most injured out of the class.”

“Exactly. Nobody else got hurt.”

“But you did. I know how much being with UA means to you, but I will pull you from the school if this keeps up.”

No.

“I need to know you’ll be safe with them.”

“Mom, I can handle it! Just let me be there.”

“Even so…” She hugs him close, just like when he’d come home from an adventure in middle school. The situation is uncannily similar, but now she has a say in whether he continues to go. “I can’t let you go back if you’ll get hurt like that again and again. Just promise me you’ll stay safe.”

“I can’t,” Izuku says, because it’s the truth and he’s already broken his word today. “I can’t know that, even if I’m not at UA.”

Mom is quiet for a long moment. “Can you promise you’ll try your very best to stay safe?”

“I… I can do that.”

“Good.”

As they grab dinner and prepare an All Might Movie marathon, Izuku realizes that this hurt her, too.
He can’t let her down. He has to save himself, for her sake.

Mom finds almost every blanket in the apartment and throws them over the couch while Izuku gets out the box set All Might Movie Collection 100. It’s practically routine by now. Whenever Izuku found an upsetting world or had a particularly rough day at school, this was their unspoken protocol.

They curl up on the couch, and as the opening theme plays, Mom begins combing her fingers through his hair. Izuku relaxes into the blankets, happy to be in the here and now.

By the time the credits roll on the second movie, Mom has fallen asleep and Izuku becomes aware that his phone has been buzzing steadily.

He checks to find over 100 notifications from the class. Everyone has checked in on the class group chat at least once, minus Todoroki. Yaoyorozu sent a quick note that she had called and he was fine, just busy training at home. Izuku nearly drops his phone in shock after reading that.

There are some rare, utopia worlds where Todoroki is quiet and aloof for whatever reason. Izuku had been hoping against hope that his silence here wasn’t because of the disappointment of a number 2 hero. He’d let himself assume so. Izuku buries himself in the blankets, trying not to think of murder plans and instead focus on the opening lines of All Might and the Mighty All-Powerful Destroyer. It doesn’t work.

Maybe he can pit the League against- no. Too many fatalities in that plan that aren’t his target. If he could get in close-range, he could just drop the scumbag into the void, but when?

Oh. Sports festival.

Wait, that would knock him out for the rest of the events and he’d have to wipe the cameras. It’d be worth it, though.

Izuku reads through the rest of the chat to distract himself. There’re a couple people on who are obviously trying to forget what happened and distract themselves.

**One week in and we’ve found villains**

ManlyMan: I didn’t mesn to shatter my arm!!! And it was wild in the inferno zone bc bakubro and I were a power team

XPLOSION KING: hell yeah we kicked fuckin ass and exploded their crappy faces off

Pika: u did what

Ribbit: hopping in to say that’s illegal

XPLOSION KING: well maybe they deserved it

Alien Queen-tabs: Woa hey there blasty that’s kinda controversial

XPLOSION KING: fuck u too then

Alien Queen-tabs: I came out here after being attacked and honestly im still feeling attacked right now

ManlyMan: Hey can we get back on topic?? I liked discussing smoothies???

Tired Cat: I thought insulting blasty boi was the topic
XPLOSION KING: ANYONE ELSE HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, MOTHERFUCKING FUCKS???

MESSAGING TIRED CAT

Tired Cat: could you ask blasty to unblock me, I gotta tell him something

Izuku knows for a fact he’s going to regret this, but he sends off the text anyway. Regret is for weaklings and Izuku has loads.

One week in and we’ve found villains

Shinsou wants to be let in guys

Alien Queen⊙: that makes it sound like hes a puppy omg

Pika: I mean,,, his username,,, cat,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,

Manly Man: also we probs shouldn’t block from the chat in case anything like usj happens again

Iida Tenya: this is very true! Let’s make sure the chat is a safe space for everyone in case of future emergencies!

Pika: wow way to jinx it lol

Oh big mood

Pika: ????

We’re all doomed, welcome to the party

Manly Man: same

Alien Queen⊙: same

Pika: wait don’t you like,,, know the future

exactly

XPLOSION KING: OH FOR FUCKS SAKES

*Tired Cat has been unblocked from the chat*

XPLOSION KING: WHAT.

Tired Cat: Bitch.

*Tired Cat has left the chat*

angrytea: guys please
ManlyMan: Woa hey lets calm down

XPLOSION KING: FINE

*X PLOSION KING has left the chat*

Let him rest

He probs just needs time

On another note tho

*Void Screaming has added Tired Cat to the chat*

If I have to suffer so do u

Tired Cat: lmao heck no see yall suckers later

Alien Queen ☽: ouch, my heart

Pika: nooooooooo

Tired Cat: my parental unit is yelling he saw a bug I legit gotta go

your,,,,,, hero,,,,,, dad????

Tired Cat: Midoriya if u don’t drop this i will burn ur shoelaces

DarkSoulChaosBringer: What a mad banquet of darkness

Alien Queen ☽: h. hero???? Dad??????? owo

ManlyMan: I never heard about this

ManlyMan: Hero dad?

angrytea: yeah, I’m curious

oh no

srry shinsou

Tired Cat: ughhhhhgh why

Iida Tenya: Indeed! Do you have family in the hero business as well, Shinsou-kun?

Friendly Neighborhood Office Supply Hero: spill them beans man

Tired Cat: doesn’t matter just let me perish

Tired Cat: Midoriya decided I had hero family after knowing me for two (2) (二日) entire days

Tired Cat: All I’m saying is my dad is scared of bugs and too awake to resemble me in the slightest

Tired Cat: not that it’s any of your business

Sorry
Tired Cat: its gucci
ManlyMan: that was us being nosy. Srry
Tired Cat: yall better stop apologizing this instant
Tired Cat: my dads a language nerd who broke the washing machine and cried about it yesterday
ManlyMan: that's so valid and manly
Friendly Neighborhood Office Supply Hero: adding crying over washing machines to the Manly Things List
Tired Cat: still.
Tired Cat: you think that he could take down criminals?
This is not what I was expecting tbh
Tired Cat: Excuse me, I have bugs to deal with
Angrytea: he has a point guys
Alien Queen__: ok but this is just making me curious
ManlyMan: mina pls theres no gossip, let it rest
Pika: I go get chips and find out shinsous dad cries over washing machines what

More people begin to sign in, until the conversation moves to bubble tea flavors. Izuku makes his excuses and closes the app. He has a movie to bingewatch with mom, and sleep to catch up on. Sometimes not being able to dream is pretty useful.

It’s getting to sleep that’s the problem. Lucky him.

He doesn’t even have time to pause the movie before his vision blurs, and the sound of All Might’s booming laughter disappears. Ah, Izuku thinks. This nonsense again.

Izuku watches wearily from the beanbag as his friend hurries about a worktable. The holographic screen blasts Bohemian Rhapsody even though it must be around midnight. Mrs. Okyoita is out doing something related to work- Izuku doesn’t really know what – but it’s excuse enough for Bit to be as loud as he desires until she comes back. His dad seems to have resigned himself to the fate of 200-year-old music, all day every day.

Izuku hums, squashing down worry and the corresponding scales covering his arms. “How about something less explosive?”

“It’s safe, and also badass.”

“You said the drone was safe, too.” Izuku isn’t going to argue about the badass part, but he’s more
concerned with not watching his friend do something obscenely life-threatening.

“Exactly.” Bit fiddles with the parts on his worktable, somehow avoiding sharp pieces of scrap scattered across the floor. “The point of jet pack is to explode. Continuously. Beautifully. Like a mistake that just keeps giving until I’m flying.”

“Let’s think this through- what about a way to fly that doesn’t involve fire?”

Bit straightens abruptly, glasses reflecting the scattered ceiling lights. “Wings,” he whispers prevalently, as though giving voice to a holy epiphany bestowed upon him. “I could make wings.”

Izuku startles. “Wings?!"

“Think about it! I could make them like a modified glider, so they’d only really be for descents, but wings, Mido! It’s too good not to make.”

He can’t really argue with that.

“Can you imagine what it’s like to fly with wings?” Bit rolls out new blueprint paper, frenzied drawing keeping him from noticing how Izuku curls up deeper in the beanbag.

The Leviathan twists through the sky, crashing into buildings as rain pours down in torrents. 32 people dead, their blood on his hands.

“I haven’t really thought about it.”

Izuku stares up at the ceiling, heart hammering in his chest and fighting for breath. Mom hasn’t woken up- he really doesn’t want to bother her with this. Whatever world that is, Izuku should really check that it’s okay. He should make sure nobody is hurt, and that his counterpart is all right. He’d seemed fine for the moment but… thirty-two entire people.

That’s a lot.

I should check that out. Just… not today. If he leaves now, mom will panic. Carefully, Izuku pauses the movie and fishes the Future Analysis notebook from his backpack. Better to visit it later, anyway.

He marks down what he remembers, prepared to go through the archives tomorrow. After a second, he makes a note to stop by the world tomorrow as well.

When Izuku unwraps null-restricting seals from his arms the next morning, phantom smoke fills his lungs. His quirk suppressors are on the desk - almost too far away. Izuku struggles to breathe as he fumbles to put them on. As the first suppressor is locked, clean air begins to filter through his lungs and the tickling sensation of white-hot flames around him is more noticeable.

Latching the other suppressor with trembling hands is its own struggle. When the lock snaps on, choking smoke fully vanishes from his throat. Izuku takes a deep breath, willing his hammering heart to calm down.
A world must be burning again.

Izuku would usually go looking for the source. Any information on his future is useful, but his barriers are down after that stunt with Kurogiri and his mind is buzzing from yesterday. So instead, he slips on his workout clothes, packs a bag with his usual travel gear just in case, and switches the dial on his door. When Izuku comes down the Lonely Owl stairs, Hisen takes one look at him and points to an armchair in the corner.

“You have been through hell,” he rumbles. “Punishing yourself will not make the pain lessen.”

“I’m fine- “

“You’re wearing quirk suppressors again.”

Izuku shoves his hands in his pockets grumpily. “So what.”

Hisen reaches for a mug and the matcha tin. “So, I think that if you need to let your mind rest, there are better ways to do it than punishing yourself for what you couldn’t do.”

“It’s not punishing myself; I need to be better.” He doesn’t need to listen to this.

“You will be better in time. Provided you let yourself recover first. Would you let Cloud or Taka work out with a broken leg?”

“No, but it’s not the same.”

“Is it? Just because you can’t see an injury doesn’t make it less real.”

Izuku glowers at the dark countertop for a moment before sitting at it. At least the stool is comfy. “But I’m not injured.”

“Maybe. Maybe not.” Hisen sets a large mug of warm matcha milk in front of him. “If you thought Taka might be injured from her job and not know, how would you feel about her exercising?”

“… but that isn’t my decision to make.”

“Agreed, but you see the logic. I won’t stop anyone from training if that’s what they really need. Is it?”

Izuku squints, knowing what Hisen is saying but not wanting to hear it. “Is it what?”

“Is it what you need?”

Izuku takes a long sip, avoiding Hisen’s eyes. “No,” he says after swallowing. “It's not.”

“So what do you need?”

“…. Sleep, but I can’t. Every time I’m about to, I- I- They… It’s like I’m there again.”

“And that’s a common struggle to face after these things. Besides falling sleep, what’s the next best thing to get similar results?”

Izuku hesitates, thinking of the armchair in the corner. “You knew it would come back to this.”

“I am ‘older than dirt,’ apparently. Wisdom with age and all.”
The rest of the afternoon, Izuku is curled up under several blankets, warm matcha milk on one side, and hero analysis on the other. He can’t really focus on much – everything seems to surround him like a weighted cloud, making focusing on even things he wants to do difficult.

He dozes off to the sound of a crackling fire and soft footsteps in the distance. It’s not the worst way to spend a Saturday. That night, he wakes to the sound of the fireplace while mom chats with Taka in the background. It’s good, to be safe.

BONUS: EARLIER THAT DAY

Inko opens the door cautiously, relaxing when she recognizes the tired face on the other side.

“Come on in, dear.”

“Thanks for letting me stop by on such short notice, Inko-san.” Taka slips off her combat boots, anxiously following Inko to the living room. “Cloud wanted to share the news, but he got caught up in work. He sent these in apology.”

Inko hums, accepting the fancy packet of koi-shaped mochi Taka presses into her hands before busying herself with the tea. Taka nervously settles onto the couch.

“I hope everyone’s well?”

“Yes ma’am.”

“You can drop the ma’am, I’m not that old.”

“Yes ma’am.” Taka wilts under the mother’s sharp eyes. “Inko-san.”

“Now, what’s so urgent that it can’t wait for a letter?” Better to get to the point now. “This has to do with that school trip, doesn’t it?”

“I’m afraid so. After the recent attack, there’s a good chance villains have noticed Izuku’s quirk. They’ve been chatty about something related to recruitment, but most of my old contacts are dead or under new identities so I don’t know what’s going on.”

Inko brushes aside the implications of that. “You think I should move.”

“In all honesty, yes. But I also know how hard letting go of home can be. If you refused, I couldn’t judge.”

“Have you talked to Izuku about this?”

“You’re his guardian.” Taka looks Inko in the eye momentarily. “Besides, he just went through a traumatic event, and this wouldn’t help.”

“I suppose so.” Inko lets her gaze wander across the room. All the photographs of Izuku and her together, the scuff mark from when he tried to climb on the windowsill, the uneven paint in the hall from spilled fabric dye. The small apartment is filled with memories. Inko catches Taka’s knowing look.

“It feels like leaving more than just a building behind, huh? As if the past has sunk into every inch.”
“That’s a good way of putting it. I’d rather not leave, but if it’s for my son… I’ll do anything.”

Taka blinks in surprise, and Inko chuckles at the look on her face. “I’ve been prepared to run since that first portal. In all honesty, I’m surprised it’s taken this long. I’ll have to talk it over with Izuku first, mind you, but for now it’s a very real possibility.”

It’s just then that Inko’s phone vibrates. She shoots an apologetic look at Taka, and the Traveler waves her on.

“Might be important.”

Inko glances down at the news notification- the UA sports festival is still on. “I’d like to visit the café today and discuss this with Hisen as well.”

“I can give you a lift.” Taka stands, helping clear the coffee table. “It’s eco-friendlier to teleport, anyway.”

Chapter End Notes

Ok. opinions. pls give them!!! Basically, I keep different docs with mini story outlines and uh. I lost kirishima's. It's not a big deal bc ive re-worked it today but long story short do yall mind having a bonus chapter on like. Saturday? It would be a tiny 7 page mini-arc with him. I might yell more about his character development more if that happens.

The other option is I turn this fic into a series with outtakes and upload the Mini Arc in it's own separate fic, and it never happens in this cannon.

So give me thoughts: Adventure With Kirishima Mini Arc, or I turn this into a series called Null And Void. Please for the love of all that is good give me opinions bc I'm lost.

I love all your comments so much, thank you all for reading this fic <3

Edit1: yea I removed the meme, catch me posting and then realizing it looks funky so I reword a whole convo
Edit2: wait chapter title
INTERLUDE: Kirishima

Chapter Notes

hey! no spoilers!

I checked it over and yea, this bit is just plot relevant enough that I decided to include it. @everyone who gave opinions and thoughts: it helped a ton to hear ideas and I've decided to make this a series. Grasshopper (from like. chapter 5? idk) is in the works as a multichapter fic and ill be adding that as well as some outtakes. thanks yall for helping me decide on that!!

anyway heres interlude, where Izuku makes bad decisions and Kirishima sees the void.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It looks like everyone is planning to meet on Saturday, but one by one members of the class cancel. By the end its only Kirishima and Izuku, so they meet at the beach to discuss at the recent downward spiral of life. The sand is still clean, though a few pieces of trash have washed up. They’re throwing the last of it away when Izukus phone rings and Clouds icon pops up.

Izuku answers as Kirishima flashes a thumbs up. “…Hello?”

“Ayyy it’s the void calling another smaller, greener void! You didn’t read texts so I’m here to yell that Zuelni’s fire fest is today.”

“Oh. Fuck.”

Kirishima looks over in concern, so Izuku flashes a reassuring grin.

“Hey, no judgement if you forgot; Taka’s running late too. Just figured since you were excited, I’d double check.”

“I totally forgot, when’s it over?”

“Starts in 10 minutes our time, takes 30 more. Over there it's five hours.”

“Oh. Kirishima and I just met up. I, uh.” Izuku squats, glaring at the sand under his feet. The festival came once a year, and he’d missed the last one. There are people he wants to annoy, specifically their king. “I don’t think I can make it.”

Kirishima joins him. “Something happened?”

Izuku shakes his head hurriedly. “It’s fine.”

“I’ve got an idea but you’re gonna hate it. That was Kirishima, right?”

“… yeah?”

“I got three tickets, and since Taka plans to sneak in… You’ve got a plus one.”

“Wait, what.”
“He’ll have to hang out with one of us and keep from breaking too many laws, but it’s an option. I can take a couple passengers so long as they’re light.”

“Isn’t it like – I don’t know, a little dangerous?”

“Zuelni has low martial arts capacity. You could probably win a fight against the vast majority by now, so I wouldn’t worry about that.”

“… I’ll ask, meet us at the beach.” Izuku says faintly, ending the call.

“Midoriya? You good?”

Izuku stares at the phone blankly. He stay quiet. He could let today be normal. Boring. Unadventurous. It would also be safe, and take the choice from someone who would want their opinion counted. “Hey, Kirishima? Remember when I told you about my quirk?”

“Yeah?”

“…Do you still want to see another world?” He’s never asked this before. Showing someone else such a huge part of his life – Kirishima was the first to ask. It’s only right that he gets to be the first to go. (Even mom said long ago she wouldn’t want to, as some things were best left to those who belonged. Izuku’s never faulted her for it.)

Kirishima’s eyes grow huge.

Ah, he should have prefaced that with an explanation. Shit. “Sorry- it’s just, my friend can take people to other worlds and there’s a really big festival happening in like ten minutes, and it’s only once a year and kind of wild because the country’s on the edge of rebellion and music is only legal for a day so they go all out, but you can totally say no and I’m cool with continuing to hang out here anyway-“

“Dude. Do you think I’ll say no?”

Izuku squirms. “I mean, maybe? It’s a little dangerous but the martial arts there are pretty weak, and I might be… um. A good number of people there are wanted by the government.”

Kirishima brushes all these crucial details aside in favor of the initial fact. “I’m not turning this down. Hell yeah, I’ll visit a whole different dimension. Let’s go!”

… Oh. Ok, then. “You’re sure? There’s no police there, and the king is an ass.”

Kirishima just grins in response, bouncing up and down. “Bro. I have never been more sure of anything in my life. I’d go to an apocalypse, a supermarket – I don’t know, even if its just a gas station.”

Izuku squints. He asked, but part of him still wants to think the belief is a trick. Funny how doubt always hits afterwards. Kirishima hauls him to his feet.

“It’s super manly of you to ask me, okay? I don’t have to think about it, I know this is a majorly cool opportunity. So let’s go.”

Izuku lets out a breath he hadn’t realized he was holding, and pulls Kirishima over to the mural. The blue door is still connected to his room, and Izuku climbs up and opens it without a second thought. Behind him, Kirishima makes a strangled gasp of surprise. Oh.
He never told anyone about this.

*Oops.* Izuku helps his friend up to the door, mind racing as to an explanation. Kirishima beats him to it.

“This was the reason for all that art?”

Izuku shrugs, closing the door. “Community service. One moment, I need to get something.” He twists the dial so the Lonely Owl is connected out of habit. Kirishima sticks his head out the window as Izuku tugs a cardboard box from under his bed and rummages through.

“Sorry. I’m totally steamrolling today’s plans and if you don’t want to go, I completely understand.”

“What- no, it’s fine, just…” Kirishima waves a hand through the window as if expecting it to disappear. “Do you just go through random doorways and end up here? The beach is like, way over there now.”

“Only certain doors.”

*Only certain- our class is going to riot when they find out.*

“Just wait until we get dorms. I can’t tell Aizawa about that, but maybe…” Izuku shrugs, finally locates the bag- it’s not a fanny pack- and stuffs some trinkets he may need inside. “Anyway. There’s weirder stuff out there. Good distraction if they ever bring up All Might’s quirk, though.” He opens the door to yell down the hallway. “Hey, Cloud! You ready?!”

Kirishima sticks his head out, inspecting the hallway as though it’s an illusion. “How did you-“

“It’s already started, let’s go!”

Kirishima steps out as if the floor will vanish under his feet. “Wait. Is this like that one really old movie with the moving house…? Oh, nice fanny pack.”

Midoriya squawks defensively. “It’s not a fanny pack!”

“Yeah it is.” Cloud drops down from the ceiling, scaring them both half to death. “Sorry- we’re late, by the way-” he stops midsentence, only just noticing Kirishima. “Hey, you came! Call me Cloud, it’s nice to meet you, Kirishima. Just checking, but will you be joining us?”

Kirishima brightens, not noticing the use of his name. Izuku is very concerned. “No way am I turning this down.”

“Great! Here’s void 101: Stay calm, enter worlds feet-first, and whatever you do, don’t let go of my hand. Sound good?”

Kirishima nods seriously, so Cloud holds out both hands. “Let’s get this party started. Yeet haw or whatever the kids say.”

Izuku takes Cloud’s right hand, and after a moment Kirishima follows. Black clouds filled with starlight envelop them and the Traveler pulls them back into the void. The lonely Owl disappears, melting into the woven surface of Home.

Izuku watches as Kirishima’s jaw drops, taking in the null. Starlight bleeds together with emptiness, and worlds are suspended in every direction. Cloud lets them float for a moment, likely so Kirishima can adjust. It looks normal to Izuku, so seeing shock written all over his friends face is a good
reminder of how far from reality this is to some people.

“What- Dude. No way this is real.”

Izuku gestures to the expanse beyond them. “Surprise.”

Cloud grins wildly, and Izuku abruptly remembers the second time he traveled. The retired hero is
the type to treat life like an amusement park. This may be a mistake.

“Hold on to your sanity, kids.” Cloud leans back, slowly beginning their head-first fall through the
abyss. “It’s chaos time!”

Kirishima bites back a scream as they pick up speed, hurtling through the void like a shooting star.
Cloud abruptly twists into a 360º loop just for the sake of being a horrible role model. Izuku really
shouldn’t be surprised at this point.

Beside him, Kirishima grits his teeth so hard his quirk partially activates. “Please tell me we’re not
gonna die.”

Izuku shrugs impassively. “Probably not.” Nothing is certain in life, especially when falling through
the void.

“Thank you. That is the opposite of comforting.”

Worlds flash by. Izuku takes the opportunity to point out a couple so Kirishima gets the proper tourist
experience. One catches his eye, covered in careful electric blue coding - he should stop by
IIOHAH. Another passes not long after, blue green and ominous. A monster that looks all too
familiar flickers over it and Izuku makes a second mental note of where it’s located. Not today,
though.

Zuelni is always burning, fiery red and angry. It’s the home of a tyrant fire king who puts on huge,
vibrant festivals once every year to appease its citizens. Traces of azure ice run under its surface, but
the most is red-hot with heat rolling off it in waves. Someday it will be half-ice, and Izuku hopes that
means what he thinks it does.

Izuku nudges Kirishima. “Feet first,” he says, and his friend nods nervously.

“Sure we won’t crash?”

“It’s Gucci.”

Cloud snorts. “Never thought I’d hear that from someone wearing a fanny pack. What are you,
twelve?”

“On a scale of one to ten, yes.”

That, at last, gets a laugh from them both. When the world opens to greet the three with billowing
dark starlight, Izuku pretends not to hear Kirishima yelp. They stumble into an alleyway, dancing
lanterns strung overhead while strange music drifts beyond. It reaches into Izuku’s soul and lifts him
up from the inside, easing the weight of the past week. He wants to join them. He wants to dance.

“Right. Before you two run off, take a look at where we are.” Cloud points down the alleyway.
“Hisen – another one of us - lives down there. Kirishima, I’m going to write on your hand if that’s
cool.”
“Sure?”

Cloud takes out a sharpie, scribbling out words in kanji so old and warped Izuku can barely make them out. He adds the café name below it in katakana. “Stick with one of us, but if you get lost, there’s a world traveler at this café who can contact us. We worked out some magic a while back - anyone you ask about it will point the way, even if they say they don’t know. Oh! Don’t give your full name, don’t mention you’re not from here, just say you’re an apprentice or something.”

“We’ll stick together, it’s fine.” Izuku rolls his eyes. “Besides, don’t you have work?”

“Hey, I’m the reason we have money to spend on this. Speaking of-“ a small bag is passed over, which Izuku takes care to hide immediately. “30 drac. Don’t let anyone swipe it. Don’t die. If you get arrested remember to leave by dawn and that I don’t have political weight here, so just break their noses and run.” With that, Cloud salutes after that spectacular pep talk and vanishes into black flickering mist because he clearly remembers how to take care of children. Why are all my role models so weird?

Kirishima turns around slowly, taking the stone streets and crooked houses. “This is another dimension.”

“Yes.” Izuku bounces on the balls of his feet nervously, sorting out half of the coins for Kirishima.

“I’m in another dimension.”

“Yes.” Is this going to break his friend’s mind? He hopes not. That would be rather bad for everyone, especially Kirishima.

“That’s... so manly.”

Cold breath whooshes past Izuku ear. “What a mad banquet of darkness.”

Shit. Kirishima startles, his eyes fixed on the wall beyond them. Izuku ducks, anticipating the clumsy punch where his head was and spinning to face his own shadow. It lengthens, darkening as a tengu with familiar features eases herself out of the wall, bird-like head tilted to one side. Her wings are folded neatly, but Izuku can tell they’re longer than last time. She’s faster, which is trouble.

“Oh! I didn’t recognize you, Toko!” Izuku smiles at his old friend with only half-false excitement, subtly checking her blood-red scarf for the rebellion crest. It’s not there yet, which means she still hasn’t been released from service. Two years ago she’d dropped hints of defecting. Either the king found out, or she’s undercover. Both mean trouble. It’s not the dance he was expecting tonight, but Izuku is familiar with Toko and her tricks.

“You brought a friend.” She accepts Izuku’s hug gingerly, as though expecting to be stabbed. It’s understandable given their history.

“Yes! Toko, this is Kiri. Kiri, Toko. Before either of you ask, I know the other looks familiar and those aren’t real names but I promise this is to keep things from being confusing and no, they aren’t the same person you’re thinking of, so can we please avoid talking about that for my own mental stability?”

“I’m Toko now?” The tengu grins, through it’s hard to tell with her beak. “About time you gave me a nickname, Izu. Come, the night won’t be young for long.”
Eijiro is pretty sure his brain might explode. First, Midoriya had asked if he wanted to go to another dimension, and then they’d literally gone on a roller-coaster ride without the roller-coaster through the void itself, which was the opposite of empty - and now they’re in an actual fairy tale.

They’d been greeted by one of Midoriya’s friends, who looks almost exactly like Tokoyami but with wings and much fancier clothes. She and Midoriya seem to dance around each other, both watching the other warily and laughing it off. Eijiro hasn’t had a moment alone to ask, but the two have shown him around tents and stalls selling magic - real, working magic where he’s able to buy an actual dragon tooth bracelet. They’ve tried loads of snacks, though there’s no way he’s eating the live salamander candy. Midoriya did, like an absolute legend.

Music hums through the streets constantly. They’ve passed multiple knights, sorcerers, and at least one shapeshifter. Eijiro’s even seen somebody who looks way too similar to Best Jeanist for it to be a coincidence, and Todoroki’s likeness painted onto some of the lanterns, which is kind of weird. The clothing is woven deep reds and golds, interspersed with blue detailing that turn the crowd into a fire blazing through glowing streets. When they inspect a weaver’s cart, the crafts are intricate and beautiful, like molten rocks and silver. The festival is lit by painted lights strung from uneven rooftops, bobbing as drumbeats shake the air.

The street is packed, and he has to be careful not to lose his friends. Several times they’ve nearly disbanded, only for Midoriya to drop out of a portal beside him. Toko always seems to find them after that. It’s like she has a Midoriya-radar.

It’s after one such occasion before Toko arrives that Midoriya leans close. “Listen, Toko’s an executioner. I’m on her list so she’s trying to tail us till dawn – there’s no death tonight by law, anyway.”

“Wait- she’s trying to kill you? Like actually un-live you? Dude-”

“Just tracking, and she’s not really trying that hard. She can’t try anything until the festival ends, anyway. You’re safe, don’t worry.”

Midoriya seems to be completely underestimating the situation, and given his friends track record with self-sacrificial habits, Eijiro isn’t confident tonight won’t end without a fight. He doesn’t regret coming at all, but this is... questionable.

“We have to leave by dawn, then.”

“Of course!” Midoriya smiles reassuringly, nodding to the feathered head hurrying towards them. “Always do – Toko, you found us! Great, let’s go find those little lava cakes.”

“I always find my friends,” Toko says easily, and this time Eijiro catches the way her hand drifts towards the empty sword scabbard by her hip. Midoriya leads the way, tracking them both with little glances and conversation. When they finally perchance lava cakes, Midoriya startles at a particularly loud beat and drops his. Eijiro tries to stay between the two, hoping it helps steady his friend’s nerves. The music drums through his veins with nervous energy.

Midoriya would have told him if they were meeting friends tonight.

He also didn’t mention being tracked by an executioner for an unnamed offence.
“What did you even do?” Eijiro hisses once Toko is distracted by a knife-throwing game. He doesn’t like her accuracy.

“The king’s an asshat and doesn’t like me telling people,” Midoriya says casually, ignoring the terrified looks he garners from everyone who hears. Toko returns, the silk scarf she won tied around her waist and obviously eavesdropping. Eijiro slips between them.

“…So what’s this king like?”

Toko hesitates, so Midoriya answers instead.

“What didn’t he do? There’s a spell on the city so nobody can say he’s an idiot without being reported. He arrests or kills anyone who disagrees with him and adds a new law every other day. The festival is a bribe to keep people from rebelling, not that it’ll work.”

Toko’s hand strays to the empty scabbard by her waist. “You’d be killed three times by now.”

“Dude, what?”

Toko shrugs. “I am executor of the court. Were it not tonight, Izu would be dead three times for that blasphemy alone.”

“No offence but killing people’s kinda unmanly, y’know?”

Toko stares at him as though he’s declared tacos have feelings while Midoriya laughs, too loud and too angry. His friend seems to have a habit of pissing off dangerous people.

Midoriya nudges Toko, ignoring the poisonous glare she shoots him. “He’s right, you know. Besides, city rules: nobody can be killed during the festival. Flames are safe because the king wants us to think so, and so are the people under them.”

“All fire is born of our king, may he live forever.” Toko does a strange salute with both hands, though her voice is sarcastic. “Truly, a great and powerful ruler.”

“So you don’t like him.”

“Do say otherwise is death,” Toko says carefully. “Come dawn, I shall hunt this one-“

Midoriya looks unbelievably smug.

“- again. He has evaded me for too many years and spoken more atrocities against our king than any other, save the blue prince and King Might’s false son. The Flame king’s son suspects Izu and the false son to be the same person.”

“He’s wrong.”

“More words on your grave.”

“You’ll never find me.”

“Mayhaps, but I shall seek regardless.”

Midoriya winks at her cheerily before getting distracted by a blacksmiths tent. Not for the first time, Eijiro questions his friends’ sense of self-preservation. He should have considered the dimension travel offer a bit longer.
The scabbard on Toko’s belt lacks a sword— it’s built for a long blade with a blunt end. As she follows his friend, Eijiro catches sight of the inscription.

Seek mercy beyond heaven, rather than earth. There is none left for thee.

The next time Eijiro loses track of the others, he waits in a side passage. Sure enough, darkness opens to his right, now-familiar dancing starlight resting beyond. Midoriya doesn’t fully leave the portal.

“She tried to poison my lava cake – what a waste of perfectly good pastries. I don’t like bored executioners, so tell you what. You feel okay with traveling alone?”

“Like, between dimensions?”

“No, just two blocks back. I’ll try to lose her and double back to meet you. Cloud’s performing at the square, and the café is straight down this street, three blocks to the side past that lizard vending cart. If you see them selling hot mochi, you’ve gone too far.”

“Okay,” Kirishima says, because this sounds vaguely dangerous and he’ll support his bro until the end.

“You- you’re sure you’re okay with this?”

“Dude, I’ve been keeping track in case I got lost.” Eijiro reaches into the portal for a fist bump. The action doesn’t seem too strange, though yesterday reaching into the void would have had him hesitating. “It’s only two blocks. Besides, I trust you’ll find me. Just stay safe, yeah?”

“…Oh.”

“You okay?”

“Just… surprised. Not in a bad way.” Midoriya returns the gesture before reaching into his fanny pack. (And it is a fanny pack, no matter what Midoriya says.) He passes over a little glass with paper folded inside around a chestnut. “Finding spell. Use the directions, it should work here. If not, just ask people about the café.”

“Thanks.” Eijiro slips the jar in his pocket, spotting Toko in the crowd. “Better hurry.”

“Good luck. The other two travelers here are named Taka and Hisen. If you’re not two blocks back we’ll come looking.”

Eijiro waves him on. “Sounds good; here she comes.”

The portal shuts abruptly. Eijiro watches the tengu stop, glance around, and wander off away from him as another portal opens. Midoriya takes off in a full sprint, weaving through the crowd like a fish through water.

Toko freezes, beak splitting into a grin. Slowly, black wings unfold from her back, extending as far
as they can in the narrow street. The vendors hold down their wares as mighty wingbeats generate
great bursts of wind, lifting her over the rooftops. Eijiro ducks back against the passage wall until
she’s long gone.

Two blocks back. That’s not too hard, right?

This universe hates him. It had started with one of the cossroads being a five-way, and ended with
getting caught up in a crowd of fire-breathers, which was unfairly cool and also incredibly
distracting. Eijiro watches the way people gesture when he asks about the café, but now he’s in the
backstreets, with nobody to ask.

It’s like a maze of cobblestone roads and off-center buildings. Each intersection has a single lantern,
and they all blend together. At day it would look quaint, but now the winding paths are just
confusing. He’s hesitant to use the glass spell, in case it’s needed more later. Anxiety is keeping that
from being an option for now.

Eijiro needs to always have a plan B. Right now is plan B, so that’s plan C. *I need to stop
catastrophizing. It's going to be okay.* The streets twist until he finds himself at the same intersection.
The single lantern has a badly drawn picture of Endeavor on it, glowering down with splattered red
flames around him. The familiarity mocks Eijiro. He’s so alone, maybe he’ll be stranded-

“You look lost.”

Kirishma whirls around trying to find the voice. Metal clangs to his right, but nobody’s down that
street.

“Up here.” Two stories up, lantern light illuminates a woman perched, cat-like, on the roof edge. Her
arms are wrapped in what look like bandages, and the gloves are hero-grade. Compared to everyone
he’s seen so far, she looks out of place. “You’re in the wrong world, kid. Did someone summon you
here?”

“No- I’m with a friend.”


Eijiro squints up, trying to make out the strangers face against the darkness. “You know Cloud?”

“Bad jokes? Also a Traveler? About my age? He’s an ass and I’d fight Captain Celebrity for him.
Was it his idea to bring a minor to a world in political upset?”

Does Traveler mean like dimension traveler? “I’m trying to find him. Or, do you know where the
Lonely Owl is?” *Wait-* he can’t see where she’s pointing like this-

“Yeah, I can take you there.”

Eijiro steps back as the woman drops out of nowhere beside him, immediately heading down a
twisting street. She’s easy to follow in the dark, with such a pale uniform and white hair. “Call me
Taka, by the way.”
“Kirishima. Thanks.” Eijiro hurries to catch up. Izuku mentioned Taka earlier, so he’ll trust her directions. For now. She shows him up a series of rooftops, until they’re hopping across the skyline. Even when crossing streets, roofs are so close together that quick hops aren’t a problem. One glance down has him convinced it’s a bad idea, regardless.

Taka is always one step ahead, pointing out details he’d missed. The lantern design always points to the castle, and bricks are laid so the middle row points to the sea. Music slowly returns in the distance. She hums along when a new, livelier song begins.

“The fire king’s first son made this one- it’s only allowed once a year, today. Best of the lot if you ask me.”

“Why not allow music all year?” Eijiro nearly slips, barely catching himself when Taka pushes him back from the roof edge. “Thanks.”

“Music belongs to the soul, not a distant ruler. People everywhere but especially those in power fear what they can’t control, such as songs of rebellion. So, only 62 songs allowed for 364 days.”

“That’s not many.”

Taka makes a face. “Yeah. Half are old ballads. They have to be approved, worthy of The Great Inferno, King Enji’s reign.” The words drip sarcasm. “What better for such a benevolent ruler who definitely has a happy populace.”

“That’s pretty unmanly.” Eijiro stops, watching the distant glow like cracks of golden ichor through city streets. It all had seemed so merry and lively. People had laughed while trading; knights and farmers had been treated equally and mingled easily. It didn’t seem like a country on the edge of rebellion. “Is the song that bad?”

“Eh. It’s not flattering. A while back the first prince saw his usefulness to the throne end. He had one last festival to reach the people, and a performance to do. The king cast him out, but all music is free today so the people play it, if just to remember they can.” Taka hums along to the tune. “Listen, they’re singing his words.”

“-Broken dreams, I watch through angels
As the road lies out before us.
Oh I look back to your faces, masks full of lies.
But my people stand together,
For the fire’s in our battle cries
Not as power of my father
But memory through-”

“More heart than the rest of them,” Taka says bitterly as he hops to the next roof. “Needs to work on the lyrics, though. He’d have a future in that if this were the right world. Come on, the café’s a few
blocks up.”

“Wait, you know where Izuku is, right?”

Taka blinks before gesturing to the glass jar he carries. “So do you. Come on, I saw him by the square.”

Izuku spins through the square, clapping in time to the lost prince’s tune. The people sing words of a rebellion they never commit to, while their feet pound the earth in time with drumbeats. He twists away as Toko shoulders through the watching crowd- she can’t interrupt a dance, can’t disrupt the rhythm by an unspoken law. The lyrics ache but the tune- oh, how he loves it. It’s bright and hopeful and speaks to his very core that come what may, right now is for the living. Izuku dances, and sings until his throat is raw.

He loves this, loves being alive for it. The moment the song ends Izuku drops through the pavement, staring out at the null in wonder. How good it is, to have survived for this.

He should find Kirishima.

Izuku sorts through the worlds surface, looking for the corner they’d agreed to meet at. He spots Toko running through the square- he’s teleporting more this time, and it’s caught her off guard. She won’t really try anyway. Toko is sympathetic to the rebellion from what he’s seen, and probably isn’t working for the king by choice. He moves on, sorting through the world’s images until he spots a familiar intersection.

Kirishima isn’t there.

Taka pulls Eijiro up short just before they enter the main street. Toko sweeps by, searching the crowd like a hawk. Midoriya must have escaped. Eijiro ducks as she passes, and Taka disappears back down the sidestreet. She passes, and a nearby Takoyaki cook eyes Eijiro suspiciously.

“You in trouble with the big guns?”

“Uh-“

Toko passes by just before the cook shoos them away. She picks up a pebble, throwing it high across the street. The bustling crowd is too loud to catch it’s fall, but Toko zeroes in immediately.

Taka grimaces at the reaction, pulling a rude gesture when she thinks Eijiro isn’t watching. It’s not exactly the manliest thing he’s seen all day.

“You could fight them face to face, you know.”

“Not worth it, and you’ll be hunted too.”
Behind them, Toko freezes. “I know that voice,” she hisses, whirling around and partially spreading her wings. Knights and citizens alike scramble out of the way. All of the ease he’d held around Midoriya is gone, leaving behind nothing but the concentration of a trained hunter.

Taka breaks into a run. “Time to go.”

“IT’S YOU!”

Eijiro chases after Taka. She bolts to the side passages, eventually stopping long enough for Eijiro to catch up. Behind them, Toko struggles to navigate her large wings in the narrow street. It must be too small for her to take off.

“TRAITOR!”

“Now’s a good time to mention I’m wanted by both political factions here.”

“What?” Eijiro yells as they weave through the streets. “What is with you guys and being wanted?!”

“Absurd- Cloud hasn’t done anything bad enough. Yet.”

“Not helpful!” He chances a glance back- a couple knights have joined the chase, and they’re outnumbered. “They should face us one on one- that’s the manly thing to do!”

“How rude.”

The tengu barks out orders behind them while Taka vaults over a vendor’s cart. Eijiro slides under a table. People part before them, re-entering the road in time to impair Toko’s hunting. It’s too practiced, too perfect to be a coincidence. Either they don’t favor the city guard, or just don’t care enough to help them. Some of the knights don’t join in either.

“Seriously-“ Eijiro dodges a large cart. “-why are they chasing us?”

“Nothing big.” Taka takes to an alley, cutting through the narrow passage to another large, crowded intersection. “The green bean and I got lost a long time ago. Crashed a couple parties, drew a mustache on the king while he was asleep, maybe set a guardhouse or two on fire. It’s all a blur, really.”

Eijiro follows, nearly tripping over a crate as they re-enter the festival. “How is that a blur?! You can’t just commit arson and forget about it!”

“Sure, you can!”

“No, you can’t!” Eijiro takes a right, changing up their pattern. Taka follows without question.

“Anything is forgettable after a day at my job. I’d ask Izuku but he’d been awake for two days straight.” Taka skids to a stop by a construction site to shove debris into the road. “Ha. Straight. Do those people still exist?”

She lifts a plank of wood like a javelin, squinting through the crowded streets. Just as the first city guard comes into view, she throws the makeshift weapon with uncanny accuracy. “Yeet!”

Eijiro a is tugged away before he can see the fallout. “Did you kill them?!”

“It’ll take more than that- dragonscale armor is a pain. This world has tough people, even if only around three can fight properly.”
Taka ducks into an alleyway, pulling them into a side tunnel. Eijiro hides the fireflies as shouting echoes on the main street. They hold their breath as it passes, and the street returns to its busy hum.

Footsteps slowly echo from inside the tunnel. Taka squints into the abyss, black dust crawling up her face and into her eyes. Eijiro is abruptly aware that he doesn’t know what her quirk is.

Something scrapes the stone walls softly.

“… Green bean? That you?”

He knows the voice that calls back. “Taka? Kirishima?”

Eijiro gasps, hurrying down the damp tunnel to hug his friend. “Bro, you got away!”

“’Course I did,” Midoriya says as he hugs back. There’s dust in his green hair and the bags under his eyes are deeper. “Can’t ‘die today. Sorry- it’s my fault you got lost and that was really dangerous of me to leave you when there are only a handful of world-travelers around so I completely understand if you’re mad—“

“Bro, no worries! Tonight was awesome- it’s just a lot of adventure, real fast, you know?” Eijiro glances back past Taka, where shouts of merriment and music drift through the streets. “I’m fine.”

“Ah, I should have warned you—“ Izuku breaks off, yawning. “Sorry.”

“Y’all. Let’s hit up the café ‘cause we need a break.” For the second time that day, a Traveler holds out their hand to Eijiro. “Feel comfortable with traveling back now?”

Eijiro and Izuku glance at each other, a mutual agreement that enough had happened passing between them. Starlight envelops the three as they take Taka’s offered hand.

Unlike Cloud’s chatter, Taka doesn’t talk as nebulas pass by. They fall quickly and dragging the two behind her. It’s a steadier journey, and light blue dust trails behind them like a comet’s trail as they approach a larger planet.

Eijiro still yells when the planetary dimension nearly crashes into them. He doesn’t know how he ends up in a café, just that he’s very done with visiting the void for a good long time.

The café owner is welcoming. He presses ginger tea and hot apple cider into their hands, and gives him the much needed silence to adjust to being back in a somewhat-modern setting. Eijiro looks out to see cars and streetlights. It’s their reality. Taka disappears upstairs while Midoriya fills in the owner on their day, providing a story that very much downplays how dangerous it was.

Eijiro catches none of it, too busy staring at the empty jar and realizing it was real. Midoriya talks like they just went to the gas station, instead of… that harrowing experience.

Midoriya offers a shortcut back to the beach, and they walk part of the way home together. Eijiro knows his friend could just disappear into the void and hop out at home, but it’s good to do things normally, too. They end up walking most of the way in comfortable silence.

“Sorry today got a little out of hand. I’m not usually hunted there, promise.”

“Dude, I got to go to a whole other dimension, it was so freaking manly. Thanks for having me.”

“Oh! Yeah, no prob. It was pretty fun.”

Eijiro shakes his head. “You need to stop underestimating your quirk.”
“Hey, I keep hearing you underselling hardening in class. Take your own advice.”

“Bro… that’s so manly.”

Midoriya snorts. “It’s true though. This is my street- um, one quick thing. Could you… not tell our class about this? I don’t want anyone getting jealous and it’s not like I can just take people every day, you know?”

“Yeah, sure. You plan to take the others?”

“Probably. Once I can. I can’t carry anyone and all the other people with this quirk are too busy.”

Eijiro hums, thinking back to how wildly different everything was in that other dimension. “They’d love it, but you might want to choose a more peaceful destination, y’know?”

“Oh. Huh. Yeah, probably.”

Eijiro is home playing video games when he sits up straight, finally connecting the dots.

“That king was Endeavor.”

Thank goodness the one here is a hero, rather than a tyrant.

Chapter End Notes

I love Toko with every fiber of my soul. She’s such a layered character, and so badass

Edit: two sentence changes

End Notes

I’ve already written 200 pages of this, tbh. It was started while I was working in Japan so there may be bits of culture in the first 15 chapters. If yall have "worlds" you want Izuku to visit, lmk!

pls be kind in the comments- thx!!

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