Not So Shitty After All

by Amajzy

Summary

Due to a miscalculation on Izuku’s part, Katsuki is now stuck watching both Eri and Kouta for him while he goes off to training. He ends up realizing a lot more about the nerd than he'd originally bargained for.

Notes

DISCLAIMER: The majority of this was written before the cultural festival arc, so Eri’s characterization might be a little (a lot) off! >_<

See the end of the work for more notes.

Kacchan hadn’t made Izuku feel this nervous in a long, long time.

He’d even go as far as to say the last time he’d been this on edge had been during their first year at Yuuei, right when the blond had invited - and that word was used very generously here - Izuku outside because, according to him “It’s about your Quirk.”

The nerves had shot up and tingled down the poor boy’s spine the second those four words had been uttered, and sure, Kacchan said a lot of abrupt and hurtful things, mainly because the teen simply had no filter on him- didn’t care much to have one, from what Izuku could tell. So yes, Kacchan was
known to be rather abrasive in his way of wording things, but *that*? That had been different. It had been different because, for the first time in more than a decade, Izuku had been able to read his childhood best friend, to an extent.

A little while after their ‘breakup’, for lack of better word, Kacchan had started closing himself off. It was probably somewhere during middle school, after he’d realized that Izuku could still read him as easily as he could read his own name. Obviously, the blond hadn’t taken lightly to that particular revelation and had called Izuku out on it, a hefty amount of explosions ringing between each of his shouts. The day after, Izuku hadn’t been able to read him anymore. No matter how hard he tried, no matter what he focused on, it was like looking at an entirely different person.

But when he’d called for Izuku to follow him out onto the courtyard, his body language had done a complete one-eighty. His posture was stiff, his eyes zeroed in on nothing—something Izuku happened to catch even when the blond avoided eye-contact at all costs. His voice had been gruffer than usual, trying not to crack, and that was when Izuku had known Kacchan had been dealing with more than was apparent on the surface. That was when he’d decided to follow.

Now, however, Izuku’s nerves were going haywire for an entirely different reason.

“Kacchan, I—I, uh… I need a favor.”

“Hah?”

They were second-years now, and Izuku wouldn’t lie when he said that he’d been working on his confidence. He wouldn’t lie either when he said that Kacchan had been working on being less aggressive. Both of them had conceded to the fact that they each had traits not very befitting of a hero, and both had agreed that change was necessary if they still wanted to achieve their goals, albeit a bit reluctantly on Kacchan’s part.

Still, characteristic changes like that didn’t just happen overnight, nor did they happen in the span of a single year; especially when taking into account how busy their lives turned out to be. So Kacchan’s cold scowl and hostile posture was something that came just as natural as Izuku jolting while his hands scrambled for something to hold on to. He settled with nervously twiddling his thumbs.

“I…” Izuku ducked his head; avoided eye contact at all costs. “I, uhm, n-need you to… watch Eri and Kouta for me, please?”

It was as if the universe was laughing at his expense, because right as Izuku dropped the bomb (bad analogy, *bad* analogy!), the air around them grew colder, and a gust of wind brushed between the two of them.

Really, this was a bad idea in every sense of the word, and if he’d had a choice, then Izuku would’ve never allowed things to get this far.

“Deku,” Kacchan’s voice was calmer than he’d ever heard it, and internally, Izuku felt like an anxious bunny waiting to be killed by a predator. As of right now, Kacchan was the predator.

“I-it’s just for a few hours! And I promise I-”

“Deku.”

“Yes?” He chipped, still keeping his head down because wow, how long had he owned those red shoes of his? It was amazing they hadn’t withered away yet, like Izuku’s own self-esteem in that very moment because *man*, he felt weak. Kacchan and him had actually been working on more than
just their unfortunate traits, they’d been working on rebuilding their shattered friendship. Izuku knew that they could probably never go back to the way they used to be - that would just be wishful thinking, and in the hero world, Izuku had learnt that staying realistic was what kept most heroes alive these days - but they’d been getting better. Kacchan tried not to lash out at the mere mention of Izuku’s name, tried to listen to what he had to say, and was actually willing to work with him from time to time. In turn, Izuku called the blond out on his faults, listened to him the same way Kacchan listened to Izuku, and tried to stay rational even in the most dire of situations. So really, his jittery, uncontrollable nerves were very uncalled fo-

“What the fuck?”

Yes, okay, that reaction was warranted. Izuku had expected it actually, because really, there was no other way Kacchan would react and Izuku tried really, really hard not to flinch. He really did!

“Stop rambling and explain, goddammit.”

He failed. “I-It’s my fault, really-”

Kacchan rolled his eyes, crossed his arms over his chest and Izuku’s puppy crush really wasn’t helping him right now. Right, yeah, that was another development that had left Izuku more than a little shaken. “No shit.”

“It’s just that Aizawa-sensei asked me to watch them and I said yes because why not, but I forgot that I was training with All Might today and obviously I can’t take them, you know why. And then Uraraka asked me to help her with this new technique she’s trying out and she said it pretty much required my strength and I said yes because I wasn’t thinking and then-”

“Shit, Deku, breathe.”

Izuku stopped, taking a moment to regain all of the air he had lost during his so-called ‘explanation’ and deciding that he needed to work on that too. It wouldn’t really help his case if he got winded this easily simply by rambling a little bit. He glanced up beneath his lashes, cheeks flushed and expression sheepish. “S-sorry.”

Kacchan waved him off, scowl deepening as he avoided eye contact for reasons unbeknownst to Izuku. “Yeah, yeah, screw that. Why the fuck would you think it was a good idea to ask me to watch some brats instead of- fuck if I know, literally anyone else?!?”

Well, that was easy. His reasoning wasn’t exactly the most logical, but it was easy to answer. “Because I trust you,” he blurted, cheeks darkening an obvious amount and all of a sudden, Izuku felt absolutely mortified. Kacchan didn’t have a filter because he simply didn’t care. Izuku, apparently, didn’t have one because he simply couldn’t stop talking once he started.

God, he needed to do something about that motormouth of his.

Kacchan reeled back, his face a tad pink- which made Izuku a bit confused because they were just now nearing the beginnings of spring and it shouldn’t be hot enough for his face to flush like that. They were in that time period where the sun showed up whenever it felt like it, then proceeded to disappear just as quickly, and today definitely wasn’t one of those sunny days. Izuku didn’t mind, he liked winter as much as he liked spring, though he admittedly favored the flowers blooming and birds chirping over abrupt snowball fights any day.

Izuku knew for a fact that Kacchan hadn’t caught a cold or anything like that- had been fine just a moment ago, actually. Then again, the two of them had just finished another one of their ‘friendly
battles’ (Izuku did not like admitting that Kacchan had won once again) so maybe the color in his face was just a result of their brawl. “Deku, do you ever think before you say shit?”

“I- n-not really, no,” he admitted.

Silence fell over the pair once again, and this time, Izuku had it in him to glance up and gauge the blond’s expression.

His jaw was clenched, red eyes hardened and a bit distant, and his arms were still folded protectively over his chest. Izuku wouldn’t lie, the way Kacchan’s muscles flexed and sweat dripped down his damp top was perturbedly distracting, and it wasn’t doing much to help his case either. Still, he grimaced, already knowing how this was going to end.

“Fine.” Kacchan spat.

He blinked, green eyes flicking up and going wide with surprise. “What?”

“I said fine, dumbass, how many times do you need me to repeat it?”

Well, that was unexpected.

“So…” Izuku really shouldn’t be pushing his luck or Kacchan’s buttons right now, but he just couldn’t…really…fathom it? He’d been preparing to take the rejection but….Kacchan said yes? “That means you’ll do it?”

With a heavy sigh and gritted teeth, Kacchan turned his gaze heavenwards, the veins in his arms pulsing with familiar irritation. “Deku, I swear to fucking god, ask me one more time and I’m igniting your ass.”

The threat wasn’t empty. “I- yes, yes, okay, Kacchan thank you, I-!”

“Start crying and I’m blowing you up regardless,” he deadpanned.

“O-of course!”

It took Katsuki a whole thirty minutes before he’d decided that he was going to beat Deku’s ass into the ground the next time he saw him, and, come on, that deserved at least a little credit.

It wasn't so much that he couldn't handle kids - of course he fucking could, he could do anything, mind you - it was just that they were being a bit more difficult than Katsuki would've been willing to deal with. Hell, he didn't even know why he was willing to do this in the first place!

The older one, the girl, she was fine. She didn't speak much, didn't make much of a fuss, and kept her distance. Katsuki knew about her situation, Deku had given him a brief rundown of it when dropping the kids off. It hadn't been necessary. Katsuki had learned most of the details back during their first year, mainly because the remainder of his classmates had this aggravating habit of not shutting the fuck up.

It got on his nerves.

But even if it did, their habits of running their mouths every other damn second gave Katsuki the time to prepare. It had only been about a year since the kid’s rescue, and Katsuki wasn't stupid, he knew the shit she's been through couldn't be processed in such short notice, especially not with her
age. The kid - *Eri* - closing herself off like this was only a given, and Katsuki would try - *try*, because that's what heroes did and Katsuki wasn't one to fucking wimp out at dealing with a mildly mentally fragile brat - to keep his usual assertiveness to a low. He'd try, just so the kid wouldn't get any weird ideas or feel like she had to run the hell away. Deku had informed him that as of right now, the only people she truly trusted were him, that Tintin looking reject, Aizawa and Recovery Girl, so Katsuki blowing up would more than likely scare her off.

But as much as he tried, that fucking *other* one was making it just a tad bit difficult.

Kouta- that brat was only a year younger than the other one, but *god*, was he a problem. His attitude was just the *worst*, and subliminally, Katsuki recalled the fucker being the one that had punched Deku in the nuts upon their first meeting. He'd laughed his ass off at it when he was just witnessing, - mainly because *what the hell Deku, you so weak you get done in by a kid?* - but Katsuki *swore* that the brat would promptly be making a trip into the nearest lake if he tried that with him. He'd make an exception for Eri, but Kouta? That asshole was on thin ice.

“Why the hell are we stuck with you all of a sudden?”

Very, very thin ice.

Katsuki gritted his teeth. “Trust me, I don't *fucking* like this either, kid.” *God*, that was humiliating. Katsuki swore on his entire fucking existence, Deku wasn't living to see tomorrow after this.

Kouta glared at him, and briefly, Katsuki wondered how such a little brat could harbor so much hate in his small body. He lost interest fairly quickly, turning his attention to the thankfully uncrowded park Deku had asked him to bring the kids to; said something bout the scent of flowers calming Eri’s nerves and how Kouta liked practicing with his Quirk around damp grass or whatever the fuck that meant. The entire time the nerd spent rattling off insignificant facts, Katsuki had been wondering if he’d lost his goddamn mind somewhere in between their sparring match (e.a. Deku’s beatdown) and now. He hadn’t zoned off completely, of course. Wasn’t some irresponsible fuck like Pikachu or that shit-stain of a grape, but his mind *had* been occupied for much longer than Katsuki would’ve liked admitting to.

Stupid fucking Deku springing his goddamn shitty *requests* on him like this.

Kouta scowled, arms crossed over his chest in a way Katsuki was sure meant to be intimidating, but was laughable, at best. He tried his hardest not to scoff. Fucking kids and their attitudes these days. “Then why *are* you? Where’s Deku?”

Yeah, okay, there went his patience. “Fuck if I know, brat. I’m not his fucking-” something tugged at the edge of his black t-shirt, snapping Katsuki out of his yelling-spree long enough for him to have the *horrifying* realization that fuck, he’d been well on his way to sounding *exactly* like his mother just then. Is that what kids did? Turn you into old fucking hags who did nothing but bitch and complain at you?

If so, then it was at that moment that the blond hero in training promptly decided on never having kids in the entirety of his goddamn *life*. Future Bakugou generation be damned.

(Besides, Katsuki doubted there’d ever be another Bakugou kid as great as him, so it wouldn’t really make much of a difference.)

He glanced down, sharp red eyes landing on Eri’s shaky figure and for once, Katsuki was so, *so* glad that he’d reeled his instincts in and hadn’t lashed out immediately at the unexpected touch, because
fuck, the kid looked ‘bout ready to shit her pants. It was almost enough for him to toy with the thought of going back to find the assholes that had pushed this kid this far and beat them so black and blue their grandkids would still feel the pain lingering down broken spines and crushed nuts. Chances were he actually would’ve considered it if Deku and Tintin hadn’t already dealt with the job.

Those villains better consider themselves lucky for it.

He tried not to snap too much as he uttered a sharp “What?” though he knew his tone was still just a tad bit hostile. Eh, at least he’d tried.

Eri jerked back, shaky hand immediately pulling off his shirt and cradling it close to her chest. She stared up at him with wide, almost terrified eyes, and briefly, the image of a certain green-haired boy appeared before his eyes. He was younger in this image, shaking, eyes filled with unshed tears that would no-doubt be falling shortly, and clutching his arm close to his chest much like Eri was doing right now, only she wasn’t injured. The boy, however, very clearly was.

The memory faded just as quickly as it came, and Katsuki almost flinched at the force of it, an incoming flood invading his mind that he definitely didn’t fucking want. Katsuki had shut that shit down a long time ago, and for a reason, too. He wasn’t who he used to be, damn it. Katsuki made a mental note of watching his temper more carefully from now on. Clearly, Eri was a lot more jittery than Deku had let on. Katsuki scoffed, either he didn’t want to discredit the young girl like that, or he really was just a deku. Probably the latter.

Taking a deep breath, Katsuki tried again, his voice less gruff and more neutral as he spoke this time. It still wasn’t as reassuring as Deku’s sweet-ass sugary chirping, but it got the job done. “What is it, kid?”

Eri fumbled with her hands, another habit that made a mop of green flash before Katsuki’s narrowed eyes, though this time the memory was much fresher, much more recent. It was the memory of how nervous the nerd had been yesterday night.

“I…” Katsuki snapped out of it, made sure to keep an eye on Kouta too just in case as he waited for Eri to properly articulate and string a sentence together. He was on edge right now, and Kouta trying anything unexpected while Katsuki was in this foul of a mood wasn’t something he wanted to see go down.

(Shitty Deku popping up like that and throwing Katsuki off even when he wasn’t fucking present. Katsuki ought to kill him, he really should.)

Eri pointed somewhere across the field, and when Katsuki looked, he spotted a bed of government-planted flowers resting elegantly atop a slope, grass greener than Deku’s - nope. - surrounding the colorful plants. Flourishes of color popped out between all of that green, and Katsuki seriously had to wonder how a bunch of plants bloomed so beautifully while it was still very much winter down here in Japan (start of spring be damned, it was cold as shit so it was still winter in Katsuki’s book). He settled on the notion that it was probably the work of some extra’s Quirk. “I...want to go sit....by the flowers.”

Katsuki snorted. “Fine, whatever, knock yourself out.”

She was gone much quicker than Katsuki would’ve ever imagined. Huh, not as weak as he’d thought, after all.
Glancing up at the sky, Katsuki strained to keep his blood temperature to a natural, knowing for a fact that what followed next could only end horribly. Because with Eri gone, that only left him with…

“You know, I really don’t fucking like you.”

Katsuki’s eyes snapped open, and he didn’t happen to give a single fuck as he turned and sneered at a pair of equally as dissatisfied black eyes. “Tough luck, kid. You’re stuck with me until the fucking nerd shows his self-sacrificing ass again.”

“Who?”

“Who else? Deku.”

Kouta bristled. “Don’t talk about him like that.”

Katsuki quirked a brow, a teasing, almost cruel smirk playing at his lip. What’s this? The nerd got his own little fanclub? “And why the fuck not?”

“Because he saved me!”

Rolling his eyes, Katsuki turned away, sparks of irritation igniting in his gut at those words. He scanned the park, focusing on the flowerbed across the hill to make sure Eri was still safe and sound among her flowers. She seemed content there, sitting between artificially grown lilies, sunflowers and forged lavenders. Katsuki didn’t possibly get what sort of calming effect a bunch of weeds could have on a person, but the old hag seemed to like them too, and Katsuki had learned long ago to respect anything that could subdue his hurricane of a mother.

(It was one of the reasons Katsuki didn’t lash out at his dad as much as he did at his mom, because anyone that could stand to marry and have a kid with that harpy was a person that deserved praise in Katsuki’s book. That, and the fact that his dad gave off an easy aura of calm and tranquility was enough to keep Katsuki quiet at the worst of his days. Not that he’d ever admit that out loud. Hell no.)

“News flash, kid, that’s what heroes do,” he snapped, arms crossing over his chest as he stared out front. “Anyone else could’ve gone out to that mountain and saved your ass, and you’d be following them like you do with the nerd. It wouldn’t have made a difference.”

Kouta stomped his feet, twisting his small body in disbelief as he peered up. His face was red, contorted into an expression of pure anger, and Katsuki almost laughed at the mini-tantrum. Almost. He wasn’t a complete asshole, jeez. “It would, because he broke his body to save me!”

Katsuki’s brow twitched, lips curling. Okay, maybe he was that much of an asshole, but the brat triggered it. Deku couldn’t be that great, and this kid needed a reality check ASAP. “He breaks his body if he so much as jumps in the wrong direction while using that destructive Quirk of his. It ain’t anything new, kid. Get over yourself.”

A memory hit him then. Images of a bridge and a pond when he was just four, maybe five. Deku was there.

It was shortly followed by the incident with that sludge fucker. The gratingly powerless feeling of being suffocated washing over him once again, enough for Katsuki to actually take a deep breath outside of his unwarranted trip down memory lane. Deku had been there then, too.

Kouta was still speaking, tiny fists clenched and balled into fists beside the rest of his small posture,
but Katsuki didn’t bother to listen. He gritted his teeth, wave after wave of irritation and familiar forced hatred crashing over him like a tsunami hitting dead-center.

_get over yourself._

Kouta wasn’t the only one who needed to.

Izuku still thought this was a bad idea.

Even when focusing on the task at hand, even when he was changing the trajectory of his legs to kick down a couple of massive trees simply by using the force of the wind, his mind was occupied, riddled with Kacchan, with Eri, with Kouta.

He felt guilty.

And why shouldn’t he? He’d made plans with them, promised the kids he’d be there to spend the day with them. Heck, Eri and Kouta weren’t even on speaking terms yet, they’d literally only met the day before and Izuku would be lying if he said he didn’t feel worried about how that was going down.

“Something on your mind?”

Izuku jumped. “Ah, no, I’m just…” he paused. “Nothing. It’s nothing.”

“The amount of power you put into that last kick was a bit…excessive, my boy.” Toshinori offered with a light-hearted shrug of his shoulders. “Don’t think I didn’t see you limping just now.”

“I…” Izuku looked away, brain scrambling for purchase as he tried to come up with a decent lie. It wasn’t that he didn’t want to tell All Might, it was just that he knew he’d try to cheer him up, and really, this one was purely on him. If it hadn’t been for his inability to plan correctly, then he wouldn’t have had to ask Kacchan to babysit in the first place. “I-I slipped up, that’s all.”

His mentor raised a brow, expression one of a father clearly knowing which lies his son told, but didn’t comment on it. Izuku grimaced.

“Fine,” he conceded with a sigh. He let go of his Full Cowl, allowing the electricity and sparks to fade away and seep back into his body. Izuku shivered, the feeling of his power outage forcefully being cancelled always one to shoot tremors down his spine. “I was supposed to be with Kouta and Eri today, but I...kind of forgot...about this…” He gestured towards the cracked trees behind him.

Toshinori hummed, moved to sit beside Izuku on a lone tree stump he’d just kicked down. “And where would the children be right now?”

Green curls shook as Izuku ducked his head and uttered, very lowly, very quietly. “Kacchan.”

His hero’s brows shot up so quick, Izuku felt the nagging urge to defend the blond. “I-I mean! They’re safe, they’re _definitely_ safe with Kacchan b-because I- Kacchan wouldn’t- he's-”

A large, warm hand on his shoulder stopped the frantic rambles, and even without All Might having said anything, Izuku relaxed at the touch. “It...seems like I gave off the wrong impression,” the man started, granting the boy a warm, gentle smile as he spoke.

It had the opposite effect. Izuku could already feel the speech coming, one about priorities and duties and having to put some things aside at times. It was a speech he’d been giving himself the entire time
he’d been locked in his dorm and curled up between his sheets, a speech he knew start to finish, and it made his heart sink even further.

Kouta….Kouta wouldn’t get along with Kacchan, that much was a given. He’d rebel at any chance he got, which in turn would set Kacchan off because as much as Izuku admired the blond, he sometimes lacked total control of his temper and that was something even Izuku had to own up to.

The two would clash, something which would probably force Eri back into her own makeshift corner and man, this had been a bad idea. Izuku trusted Kacchan. Izuku knew Kacchan was capable of watching them without anything overly concerning happening. It was a well-known fact that Kacchan didn’t half-ass anything, and from a totally objective standpoint, he’d made a pretty good choice.

But personality-wise? Izuku should’ve thought this through a lot more.

He was such a bad friend.

“You’re wrong, you know.”

“The fuck?” Katsuki whirled on the spot, stopping when he looked down and was met face to, uh, waist, with Eri’s nervous, yet oddly blank face. If Katsuki hadn’t known just what the kid had gone through, his first instinct would’ve been to call her freaky. Her stare was just a bit too….empty.

Most of the time, at least. The way she looked at him now was...different. Those dead fish eyes of hers were swirling with a whirlwind of emotions; things like contempt, nostalgia - which, what the hell - a bit of fear, but most of all, poorly suppressed irritation.

Great, Katsuki should’ve known this one was in on Deku’s little fanclub too. It was only natural for her to be. Internally, he groaned.

Still, he’d dealt with Kouta- the brat was currently huddled beneath a tree, the leaves casting an odd shadow over his small figure, his legs pulled up close to his chest while he stared down at the grass with a blatantly obvious pout on his lips. And Katsuki tried, he tried really hard to feel even a tiny bit of remorse for the kid, tried to do what any other person that wasn’t emotionally dead inside would’ve done and feel a bit guilty for snapping at the kid like that. He tried.

-But then Kouta caught his eye and very obviously, very intentionally, flipped him the bird, and Katsuki decided that fuck it, no one would find the kid’s body if he murdered him and dumped him into the bottom of the ocean. No one other than Deku, maybe.

(Katsuki felt odd knowing that that chance thought had been enough to halt his worrying illegal thoughts of murder and covering up the evidence of his crimes. It’d never happened before.)

Point was, Katsuki had been able to deal with that little shit of a mistake - his parents should’ve used a condom, really - and if he’d been able to listen to that one without blowing shit up, then he could humor the girl for a bit too.

(On a side note, Deku better fucking come back stat , before Katsuki decided to do a shit-ton more than just ignite his ass. His patience was running thin.)

“You’re...wrong,” Eri repeated, something fierce lighting up in her barely alive gaze. “About Deku.”
Katsuki made a quick, mental list of all the data he had on Deku— which was, much to his chagrin, arguably a lot. He filed things Deku liked, things he disliked, his favorite heroes, his fears, excess blackmail material he still had on him; shit like that. Information like that would prove to be useful when thinking of shit to torture him with later on.

Rolling his eyes, Katsuki briefly debated on humoring the kid just to get her off his case, but that would mean admitting defeat and possibly having Kouta on his back later on (the little shit wasn’t very subtle when it came to listening in), so he just opted with the most obvious choice; brutal honesty.

“I’ve known the nerd since we were born, kid, there’s not much I could be wrong about.” Other than his quirk, his relationship with All Might, his weak nature or— yeah, Katsuki was stopping there. Just remembering all the times Deku had gotten one up over him was already making him pissed.

Eri’s lips turned downwards, a bit of an annoyed frown on her face. Deku had told him that they’d only managed to get her to smile a handful of times, like at the cultural festival during their previous year. Katsuki wondered if they’d ever gotten her to frown like this, too.

“I...heard you, before, when you said that Deku wasn’t anything special.”

Had he said that? Honestly, Kouta had been irritating him so much, Katsuki had just started rattling off things without really thinking.

Still, he wouldn’t budge. “So?”

“He is,” she insisted with a lot more fire than Katsuki had seen that day. “He saved me, too. Both Deku and Lemillion. They….they got me out of there, even at the cost of…” she trailed off, her voice wavering as her eyes, eyes that had started filling up with life turned dull again. They completely glazed over, fingers trembling just a bit as whatever she’d been saying had triggered unwanted memories.

Katsuki wasn’t stupid, he could recognize the tell-tale signs of PTSD anywhere; had seen it come up far too many times in the mirror not to. The thought of something so dark striking a child so young once again made his blood boil, because really, what kind of sick fuck would’ve pushed a kid this far?

Setting aside his personal (and morally correct) grudges, the blond allowed his hands to spark. It wasn’t loud or flashy enough to scare the girl or send her spiraling into an even deeper panic, but small and barely enough to draw her out of whatever hell she’d trapped herself in and focus her attention elsewhere. Katsuki wasn’t the best when it came to comforting or emotionally supporting others, that was more Deku’s thing, but he could at least distract her. Hopefully, that would be enough.

Katsuki pretended not to notice the panicked alarm in her eyes as she blinked and inhaled deeply, granting her whatever faux privacy she might or might not need in order to regain her composure. The fact that she’d been close to telling him off about his attitude towards Deku just seconds before didn’t matter in that moment, because again, he knew what the stress felt like, knew what kind of effects it could have on a person. It sucked balls.

“If-if it hadn’t…if it hadn’t been for them, then I probably wouldn’t be here now,” she continued, and Katsuki had to give credit where credit was due. The kid was brave.

“Deku has a habit of putting others before himself,” he muttered, a bit bitter as he remembered all the times the nerd had done the same for him. That day at the lake, the shit with the sludge fucker, the
training camp, their fight at Ground Beta-

Katsuki felt his blood pressure rising.

“I...I think that's exactly what makes him a hero,” Eri concluded, her red eyes - much, much more vibrant than his own - fierce as she stared at him.

And Katsuki, much to his utter fucking rage, couldn't disagree with her on that one. Even if Deku was stupidly self-sacrificing, bordering on suicidal, it was clear as day that the nerd's stubborn policies were what made him that good in the field; although lacking tact.

“He is.”

The second Izuku set a foot on the freshly mowed grass, he was tackled by twin bursts of energy crying out his hero name.

“Deku!”

“Ah!” he caught them just barely, his balance steady and not as off as it would have been a few months back. His weekly training with Kacchan had really helped his case. “Hey, you two!”

Kouta immediately started rattling off, practically bursting with excitement as he talked about what they could do for the remainder of the day and how much he didn't like spending the day with Kacchan (Izuku had to hold in a snort at that). Eri interjected only a handful of times, stating that she wanted to go and see Togata too, but her smile spoke volumes.

In the middle of their little reunion, Izuku looked up, intelligent green eyes searching for a familiar shock of ash-blond. He found him standing not too far away, right underneath one of the larger trees inhabiting the park, shadowing him off from the sun. Kacchan didn't look too pleased, but then again, he hardly ever did.

'Thank you,’ Izuku mouthed at him, and with a distinct roll of his eyes, the blond made his way over.

“I'm murdering you once the brats are gone,” he blurted casually, hands tucked in his pockets and face the epitome of cool indifference as he spoke.

“No you're not!” Both Kouta and, surprisingly Eri echoed, both of them fixing twin glares on the disinterested blond.

“I- it's not like that!” Izuku fretted, before Kacchan could go and do something over the top like go in on their blatant challenge. “K-Kacchan's just joking. He wouldn't really hurt me, he's a hero too, you know!” Nervously, Izuku glanced up at Kacchan, only to see him fixing him with a cool stare and a raised brow.

Kouta and Eri seemed both fine, as Izuku had expected, but he could clearly tell that they hadn't warmed up to the blond, not even a bit. Judging by Kacchan's irritated posture, he could guess the feeling to be mutual.

Kouta crossed his arms, glare set like stone. “Doesn't really seem like one to me,” he muttered, and Izuku swore he could see Kacchan's veins pulsing from the rising blood pressure.

“Got something to say to me you little-”
“Kacchan,” Izuku looked up at him, millions of unspoken words running through bottle greens, knowing that the other would understand because they hadn't known each other for that long for no reason. His hunch was proven to be right when Kacchan merely scoffed and looked away, leaving Izuku room to speak.

Crouching down to the children's eye level, he fixed his soft smile yet stern gaze on Kouta first. “Don't say that,” he reprimanded gently. “Kacchan is many things, but he's not bad. He's actually one of the top students in our class- well, other than me-”

Kacchan snorted. “You wish, nerd.”

Izuku grinned, he just couldn't let that one slide. “But what I mean to say,” he continued, focusing back on the kids, “-is that Kacchan's amazing in almost every aspect, and I'm willing to bet that he'll end up being one of the greatest heroes when we graduate.” And if the tip of said blond's ears seemed a little pink at that, Izuku didn't notice a thing. “So I don't want you saying such mean things about him, okay?”

Both kids nodded, one looking a little more put off than the other, but begrudgingly accepted his words nonetheless. Izuku couldn't help but smile at the pout on Kouta's lips.

Finally, Izuku glanced up at Kacchan, brows furrowed and eyes studying him as if debating something, the color in his cheeks gradually rising. He whispered something to Eri and Kouta, relieved when neither of them protested too heavily.

Kacchan raised his brow, arms still crossed. “What?”

“Uhm,” Izuku rose up to his full height, eyes cast downwards as he stuttered out his next sentence. “I-I was just- just wondering if you, uh… I'm taking the kids to the mall later and I, uhm, I was just w-wondering if you- if you maybe wanted to join us?”

Kacchan just stared at him, wordless. Izuku blanched.

“I-I mean, you don't have to, of course! You already helped me out a lot by watching them for me, and I really appreciate you for that but I just- it's- again, you really don't have to if you don't want to spend any more time with us than you already have. It's perfectly acceptable for you to want some time to yourself after all this, I just thought that maybe you'd like joining us, I- I certainly wouldn't-thats- oh god forget I said that, just, uhm-”

Kacchan rolled his eyes. “Deku.”

“Y-yeah?”

“I didn't even say no, for Christ's sake.”

“O-oh! Then, uhm, that's- that's great! Let's go then!”

He hurried to leave then, face too flushed and head too dizzy at the way he just indirectly asked his crush out on an almost-date. The kids, luckily, didn't make much light of his flushed cheeks and embarrassed posture, just happy to tag along and spend the day with him like was originally intended.

And if the blond trailing behind them was watching him with an almost fond smile, no one would know that either.
Katsuki had been lounging calmly in their living room when Deku walked in, still clad in his obnoxiously green costume, and wasted no time as he crawled into Katsuki's lap and buried his fingers in tuffs of ash-blonde hair, tugging as he brought his lips down over the other's a bit harsher than was normal.

Despite the blond kissing him back with just as much vigor - Katsuki was nobody's bitch, mind you - he couldn't help the jolt of surprise he felt at the fiery greeting. It seemed that even at twenty-five, Deku was still full of surprises.

When they broke apart for air, Katsuki returned the greeting in his own, unique way. “Didn't even bother to change out of your damn work clothes, nerd. You reek.”

Deku merely hummed, peppering light and innocent kisses along the column of the blond's throat in a way that was more tired than suggestive. “Missed you,” he murmured against his neck.

“Obviously,” Katsuki scoffed, skilled fingers running across his spine, smirking at the way the green haired nerd literally fucking melted into his touch. One half of the number one duo reduced to nothing more than a sluggish mess simply by his fingers, it was almost laughable, really. Would have been if the asshole wasn't able to do the exact same thing to Katsuki himself. “Rough day?”

“Mhm,” Deku moved to straddle him properly, thick and well-trained thighs that Katsuki had become very familiar with caging his own legs between them as Deku only nuzzled further into his neck.

“Wanna talk about it?”

“Yeah, but not right now.”

Katsuki only nodded, uncaring that Deku couldn't see him do so. He could probably feel it from his close proximity anyway- honestly the nerd could be such a fucking leech sometimes.

Not that he minded.

“Kacchan,” Deku lilted softly, hands wrapped around his husband's neck. He shifted his head, choosing to rest it on the blond's chest instead. “I wanna ask you something.”

Katsuki quirked a brow. “Yeah?”

“Yeah,” Deku sat upright, legs still straddling Katsuki's lap, but eyes focused - albeit a little unsure - as he stared at him. “I… You love me, right?”

Katsuki's eyes narrowed, the question off-putting in so many ways, just Deku questioning that shit pissed him off. “Would I be here if I didn't?”

“Yeah…” Deku chuckled to himself, the hesitance a lot more prominent now than it was moments before. “I guess you wouldn't. Uhm,” he looked away. “How would- h-how would you feel if, uh, if we- if I…”

Katsuki squeezed his waist lightly, edging his face just a little bit closer to catch his attention. “Nerd,” he started, “just spit it out, we don't have all damn day and I'm not gonna explode on you. Probably.”

“How would you feel about starting a family?” Deku blurted out in a single breath. His green eyes were wide and nervous, practically shining with nerves- an expression Katsuki hadn't seen on his
husband for a very long time. “As- as in, adoption. I already looked into a bunch of centres and there actually are quite a lot around this area, uhm, b-but that's only if you want to, of course! I fully understand if you're not ready, it's a big step and with our lifestyle and jobs it might be a little hard to manage at first but-”

“You wanna raise a kid,” Katsuki cut in, his voice carefully even.

“I- yes,” Deku ducked his head, resting it back on his husband's chest and listening to his slowly increasing heartbeat. “With you.”

“That's a big step,” he murmured, hand gently running through the other's hair.

“It is.”

“And you're sure you wanna do this?”

“Yes.”

“With me?”

Deku pinched his side, ignoring the hissed curse in favor of glaring up at him, green eyes lit with fire. “Who else? I married you, didn’t I?”

“Still don’t fucking know why, but- Shit! Deku, stop doing that!” He hissed after the second pinch.

Deku only responded by lying back down against the blond's chest, his arms tightening around his neck. “So? What do you think?” He pressed after a short while.

Katsuki glanced down at him, at the man he'd known for almost his entire life, at the stupidly righteous hero currently snuggled in his arms, at the one person Katsuki didn't mind opening up to, didn't mind spending the rest of his life with. Deku had been a constant in his life for as long as he could remember, doubted there was a time where he hadn't been part of his world. He figured the decision wasn't a hard one to make.

Nudging the man in his arms, Katsuki didn't hesitate to peck his lips when he looked up, one of his rare smiles at display as intense red eyes stared at the man he'd chosen to marry. “When do you want to start sorting this shit out then, nerd?”

Deku's face lit up like Christmas lights then, smiling so brightly Katsuki was pretty certain sunglasses were required to protect his eyes. He didn't protest as Deku jumped him, tackling him until he was pressed flat against the couch and peppering his face and lips with happy, excited kisses, mouth still running a mile a minute despite it as he jabbered off all the information he'd been gathering beforehand. Katsuki didn't cut him off this time, merely content with watching him rattle off, and he figured that yeah, starting a family with this dork couldn't be such a bad idea after all.

End Notes

This all started because Rune and I were gushing over Katsuki dealing with the kids a hell of a long time ago, and I just now managed to finish this, hope you liked it!
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!