The Road of a Hero (is built on broken dreams)

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The Road of a Hero (is built on broken dreams)

by The_Plot_Thickens

Summary

Midoriya Izuku wants more than anything to be a hero. (I don't think it would be wise with your quirk)
Too bad that the universe decides something different. (You can't be a hero, young man. I'm sorry)
But, our green haired protagonist is determined to turn this verdict around. (You can be anything you want, Izuku.)
Chapter 1: When Rome's In Ruins

Chapter Summary

In which the story begins and Katsuki is a little shit

Chapter Notes

Hello my lovelies~! (I know I sound like a witch, ignore it)
This is my first fic on this site, so here's the hoping it goes well!
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

People can be cruel.

That’s the warning Hisashi gives Izuku before Inko busses him off to daycare. Of course, Inko scolds her husband for even thinking of telling their four-year old such a thing. He shrugs and disappears back into their bedroom to catch a few more hours’ sleep.

Izuku hasn’t thought much of it. He is busy rocking from the balls of his feet to the tips of his toes, excitement radiating off of him. Inko casts a fond smile down at her son as his wide eyes scan the daycare center. She and Hisashi have been arguing discussing when to start him on daycare. Izuku is so, so sensitive ready. Granted, Izuku is starting a bit late into the year, but the teachers are very pleasant and understanding about the whole situation. Pressing a quick kiss to his forehead, Inko wraps her son in a hug and leaves him with the daycare workers.

“Be good Izu,” she says.

Izuku watches as his mom disappears through the doors. The daycare worker, Maiko, smiles at him. “Izuku-kun, we’re having circle time. Why don’t you join us?” Twenty or so kids are seated ‘criss-cross applesauce’ in a circle, staring at Izuku. The curly haired boy blushes at the attention. “Sit down, Izuku-kun,” Maiko instructs kindly. The boy obeys. “Now, Izuku-kun’s new, and I know you all know what it’s like to be new, so let’s make him feel welcome. Everyone say your name and a bit about you, starting with you.”

She points to a boy with long black hair and orange eyes. “I’m Tsubasa Ahkito….I’m four and I really like racecar games. Oh! And my quirk’s called…..” The boy’s face scrunches up like he’s just bitten a lemon. “P-pru-pre-h-hen-”

“Prehensile,” Maiko prompts with an encouraging look.

“Right!” He chirped. “Pre-hen-sile Hair!” The boy stumbles over the word a second time, but beams proudly. The teacher gives a nod and gestures for the next person to speak.

“My name’s Bakugou Katsuki. All you need to know about me is that my quirk’s Explosions and I’m going to be the number one hero, assholes!”
“Katsuki-kun.” Maiko’s tone is even, but stern.

‘Bakugou’ (or Kacchan, as Izuku has silently dubbed him) fumes. “….fine. I’m going to be the number one hero, extras.”

A sigh escapes Maiko’s lips, but they continue.

“Akane Ryuu….I….I like butterflies and kittens…..” The young girl trails off, her voice just above a whisper.

“What was that Ryuu?”

“I said I like kittens…..”

Maiko takes a deep breath, her smile becoming strained. “Let’s move on. Next?”

“I’m Kayano Shiori. I have two brothers and my favourite colours are blue and grey.”

Straightforward and to the point.

The next person clears their throat. “I’m-”

Izuku listens with rapt attention to his peers, especially on the subject of quirks. “Izuku-kun.” The boy’s head snaps up and he flushes at the laughter. “It’s your turn,” Maiko informs him.

“O-oh! Right. My name is Mi-idoriya Izuku. I really like heroes! Like All Might! And I really want to be one. My mom said my quirk’s dormant so…yeah……”

“The fuck? What kind of quirk is that?” Maiko pinches the bridge of her nose, trying keep her blood pressure down.

“Katsuki.”

“Fine! Sorry or whatever.”

Maiko sighs-she has a feeling this group will be the death of her-“Okay. Onya, why don’t you go next?”

Broccoli Head—yes, you—the hell?! I’m talking to you!”

“Katsuki! No swearing!” Maiko’s voice is clear from across the playground. Katsuki snorts as he approaches Izuku.

“Yes?”

“You said you liked All Might, right?”

Izuku blinks before his eyes positively light up. “He’s the best hero ever!”

“No sh-crap.” The blonde corrects himself, shooting Maiko a look. Her multi-coloured eyes are trained directly on him, and her arms are folded. She reminds him of his mother before she gets angry. “-He’s the number one hero!”
“But he’s really cool too! Did you see his debut video? I watch it every day.”

“Tch.”

Katsuki plops down beside Izuku. “Nerd. Everyone’s seen that video.” He glances down at the action figure in Izuku’s tiny fist and his red eyes go wide. “You got the limited edition Silver Age Shimura Tribute All Might Figure?! How?!”

The two boys babble animatedly about All Might for the remainder of their recess and Maiko smiles. Perhaps this group won’t be so bad.

The group is that bad.

Katsuki, if he wasn’t an annoyance before, has graduated into a full blown problem. He’s somehow managed to muster a following of other kids who look at him like he’s hung the moon. Of all of them, Izuku has to be the most starstruck. The green haired boy trails behind Katsuki like a puppy and, when he lashes out, continues to follow faithfully. No matter how hard she tries to discourage this, or to get Katsuki to calm down, it never lasts. At the ripe age of 25, she considers retiring from the daycare business. Maybe she’ll take a less stressful job, like stock broking.

“Kacchan, could we please stop? My head-”

“Shut up! We’re playing heroes and villains! You interrupted me! I’m supposed to capture you, Deku!”

Maiko purses her lips and intervenes. “Katsuki, that’s not nice. Apologize.” The two glare at each other before Katsuki relents and mutters some half-hearted apology before storming off. “Izuku-kun, do you have another headache?” A nod. “Do you want me to call your mother?” Another nod.

Twenty minutes later, Midoriya Inko’s there to pick her son up. “Another one?” Maiko nods and Inko sighs. “Thank you Maiko-kun.”

“It’s alright, Inko-chan. I hope Izuku-kun feels better.” The mother approaches her son, who’s sleeping peacefully on the futon in the nurse’s. “Izu? Honey, it’s time to wake up. We’re going to the doctor, okay?” The boy’s eyes are heavy with sleep, so Inko lifts him from the futon, cradling him close to her, thanks Maiko again, and leaves. She prays whatever’s been causing so many headaches isn’t too important.

“It seems Izuku here’s finally gotten his quirk,” Dr. Tsubasa explains, glancing over the charts in his hands. The older man leans back in his chair, ghost of a smile on his lips. “Really, it’s about time. It was beginning to become concerning.”

Through the dull ache in his head, Izuku perks up, swinging his legs over the bench and humming. He has a quirk! He wonders what it will be….what if it’s like All Might’s? That would be awesome!
“But….my quirk’s so weak…I’ve never really had headaches before. Why is this happening?” Inko wrings her hands, but can’t ignore the relief flooding her. Her baby’s got his quirk! Nothing’s wrong with Izuku after all. “Yes, well, we do need to run a few more tests, but it’s likely his quirk is a mutation from yours, and not your husband’s.” He turns to the younger Midoriya. “So, Izuku, any other symptoms? Any...strange things?”

“Well….” The boy trails off. “It’s...kinda hard to describe.” Looking vaguely intrigued, the doctor leans in a motions for him to continue. Izuku looks to his mother and she nods for him to tell the doctor what he knows. “There’s a big library in my head.”

There’s a beat.

Then another.

And another.

After an awkward pause, the doctor clears his throat. “I beg your pardon?”

“A library,” he repeats. “There are...books on people.”

“Could you...elaborate?”

“Like….on the people I know...there are books. Most of them are really short and a lot of the pages are blank.”

Dr. Tsubasa leans back in his chair and hums contemplatively. “What do the books say?”

“A lot of things!” Izuku’s eyes shine. “Like their quirks, and their height, and what they like and don’t like.”

“Are there any other rooms?”

Izuku pauses. “Well....there are other doors, but they’re locked. One of the doors says ‘Lab’, and another says ‘Control Room’.”

“I see. Are the books only on people?”

” “No...I have a Quirk Theory Section and some Science sections, but the Science books are mostly blank.” The doctor jots this down before leaving Inko with her son to name his new quirk while he updates the boy’s file.

Name: Midoriya Izuku

Sex: Male

Birthday: July 15th

Quirk: Mind Palace

Quirk Description: user is able to retain information in ‘books’. Other rooms available. Extent of quirk unknown.
That night, Izuku eagerly awaits going to daycare the next day. He can't wait to show off his quirk!

While Inko cooks, Izuku hangs around her, constantly tugging on her sleeve. "Mom! Mom! Do you think the other kids will think my quirk's cool?"

Inko smiles down at her son. "The coolest."

He breaks off into a fit of excited giggles and laughter. "I'm going to be a hero!"

"Yes, sweetie. The cutest."

Izuku stops and pouts. "Mom!"

"Only joking, sweetie. Only joking."

No she isn't.

The next day, Izuku bounds up to Katsuki at recess, excitement lighting up his eyes like fire. "Kacchan! Kacchan! I finally got my quirk! Now I can be a hero too!"

The other boy huffs. "It doesn’t matter if you can’t protect yourself shitty-"

"Katsuki."

"-crappy nerd….” Katsuki bites out with a glare.

Green eyes are gleaming with pride. “But don’t you want to know what it is?”

“Tch. Whatever.” Despite his words, the blonde’s eyes gleam.

“It’s called Mind Palace!”

“Show me,” he demands.

Izuku hesitates. “Well...i-it doesn’t really work like that, Kacchan. It-”

“What kind of fucking quirk is that? You can’t be a hero with that shit!”

“Katsuki!” The boy whirls around.

“Quiet hag!”

Maiko’s glare is sharp enough to stab him from across the playground. She takes a step in the pair’s
direction before Ahkito tumbles off the jungle gym and falls, wailing. Glancing between the two situations, she sighs and goes to help Ahkito.

“W-well Kacchan...not all quirks are offensive, you know? Sir Nighteye is a hero, and his quirk’s precognition.”

Katsuki snorts. “Whatever. That just means you’ll always be my sidekick, loser, because I’m always going to be the best.”

“B-but-”

“Quit stuttering. I wanna play heroes. I’ll be All Might and you can be the villain I’m beating.” He points to one of the extras.

“Kacchan, what about me?” The blonde glances back at the boy with wet eyes and curly green hair. “I wanna be a hero too.”

“We don’t need another hero, idiot. All Might can do it all himself.”

“But-”

“Just be a civilian with that brown-haired bitch,” he huffs jerking a thumb at Kayano who glowers at him. “Your quirk’s too useless to be a hero’s or a villain’s.”

“But Kacchan! I wanna help!” Izuku protests, grabbing onto Katsuki’s sleeve. “Why can’t I be a hero with you?”

“Get the hell off me! God! You’ll just get in my way, Deku.” The blonde shoves the shorter boy away and storms off.

Watching from the sidelines as the other kids shriek and run in the game of ‘Heroes and Villains’, Izuku sniffles, big fat tears rolling down his plump freckled cheeks. Kayano, the other ‘civilian’, is a girl with chin length light brown hair and bangs held in place by a butterfly clip. She honestly looks rather plain, just like him.

They watch the other kids play for a few minutes in silence before Kayano speaks up. “You wanna do something else?” Her voice is soft and she doesn’t even glance towards him when she asks the question. Izuku scrubs at his cheeks before meeting his green eyes to her grey ones. “...yeah.”

While the rest of the children play at heroes and villains, Kayano and Midoriya spend the day at hopscotch.

(Izuku loses every time. His balance is awful.)

So that night, when Hisashi asks how his day went, Izuku can’t say it was all bad.

(Oh you poor fool, it will get much, much worse.)

Chapter End Notes

Kayano Shiori’s character was inspired by May the wind be at your back by Vera on Quotev.
I hope you guys liked the first chapter. I know it's off to a slow start, but I promise it will be good.
(At least I hope so-)
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 2: We are the Lions (Free of the Colosseums)

Chapter Summary

In which the plot begins moving and Izuku and Shiori are besties, while agreeing that Katsuki is a little shit.
And two moms hang out.

Chapter Notes

Chapter two! And what is this? Is it plot development? In my story?

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Age five brings about their final days at the daycare. Maiko will be lying if she says she won’t miss any of them, but there are some she won’t miss quite as much. Still, she’s watched these kids grow and explore the world around them with feverous curiosity, build bonds and stretch the limits of their quirks.

Except for Kayano Shiori.

Izuku’s friend is quiet, but an obedient child. She doesn’t cause any trouble (Bless her, really-) and is sweet. Shiori’s quirk is considered dormant, since she lacks the joint in her toe common in Quirkless individuals. Normally, Maiko would be a little more concerned about it, but Shiori never seems to mind. Izuku, on the other hand, loves to fire off theories on what her quirk could be, or, if it’s so passive, it’s hard to pick up on.

Shiori chases Izuku across the playground before they settle underneath a tree. Maiko’s lips break into a smile. Out of all the kids, those two have to be the cutest. She knows she’s not allowed to have favourites, but….

The two are close, and Shiori’s often Izuku’s one-person audience for his ramblings on varied subjects.

“Kaori!”

“Hmm?”

“Look at this!” Izuku motions for her to come closer.

She peeks over his shoulder at the book years above her reading level. “What’s the book about?”

“Quirk History,” he replies simply. “This page is about Crimson Riot. I’m working on adding it to my library. See his quirk?”

“….he hardens his hair?”

Izuku’s head bobs as his eyes gleam. “Yep! He’s from a few decades ago, but apparently he was
“...how do you fight someone with hardened hair?”

“Well….he was really proficient in hand-to-hand combat,” Izuku explains. “And he kinda used his hair like a rhino’s horn.”

“Proficient?” Shiori repeats.

“Really good.”

Shiori makes an ‘O’ shape with her mouth and nods. “Well-”

“Heeeyyy!” Ahkito swings above them in the tree by his hair. “Guys! Look up!”

Shiori huffs while Izuku practically lights up. “That’s so cool Ahkito-chan! Does it hurt?”

Ahkito shrugs. “Not really. It only hurts if I do it for too long.”

“Interesting. Is your hair strong? Is it hard to cut? That would make sense if you can swing by it. Is that why your hair’s really long? Because you can’t cut it? Is it unbreakable? Is your scalp really strong as well or is it just desensitized to pain? Do you-” Izuku’s mutterings continue as Ahkito hangs in the tree, staring at the freckled boy.

Shiori flicks him. “Izu.”

“Hmm? Oh!” Color creeps into his cheeks. “Sorry, it’s just...your quirk is amazing!”

“Thanks!” Ahkito’s snapped back to reality and is beaming again. “I really like it! You know, you’re smart, Midori! You’re like a super genius or something!”

“Th-”


Somewhere inside, Maiko stops picking up toys and goes stiff. Her multi-coloured eyes narrow and a hiss escapes her lips. “Katsuki .”

“H-hey, Kacchan, that’s not nice.” Izuku frowns. “Ahkito-kun’s smart!”

“Yeah. As a rock,” he sneers. “Besides, Deku couldn’t hold a candle to me.” Izuku steps between the two. The blonde's fists curl. “You still tryin’ to be a hero, nerd? With your useless quirk?”

“T-that’s not any of your business, Kacchan.”

“The hell? Of course it’s my damn business! I’m going to have to protect your stupid ass when I’m number one!” He stalks forward. “You can’t be a hero, got it? Only I can! You’re beneath me, nerd!” His palms start crackling.

Whimpering, Ahkito swings away while Izuku only backtracks until he’s pressed himself against the tree. “K-kacchan-” He starts, only to be cut short when he faceplants and starts screaming bloody
murder. Kayano quickly pulls her foot back in. “WHO THE FUCK DID THAT?!”

Izuku freezes before slowly making eye contact with Shiori. She raises a finger to her lips, telling him to be quiet. He nods in understanding before turning back to the scene before him. Maiko rushes over, very surprised to see Katsuki in such a state. “What happened?”

“He fell.” Shiori’s lying.

“No I did fucking not!” Katsuki snarls, gripping his nose.

Maiko chides him before literally dragging him to the nurse, kicking and screaming about how All Might never gets hurt, so he doesn’t need to go.

Izuku turns to his friend, frowning. “Kaori, that wasn’t nice.”

“What wasn’t nice? I have no clue what you’re talking about, Izu. I didn’t do anything.”

The rest of the day passes uneventfully, save for Katsuki’s extra profane language. “Kaori! Wait up!” Izuku jogs after his friend who’s waiting for the bus. “Mom said you were coming over today, remember?”

“Oh.”

Izuku smiles and leads Shiori to Inko waiting by the entrance. The older woman beams at them. “Did you two have a good day?”

“Mhm.”

“Yeah! Maiko-san showed us her quirk!”

“Oh? What did she do?”

“She brought Rin-san’s drawing to life.”

“That sounds fun.”

“It was of two puppies!” Izuku continues as Inko ushers the two into the car.

“Wow. Two? I thought she could only bring one drawing to life.”

“Well, yeah, but she made the two puppies smaller so she could handle it,” Izuku explains, tossing his bag on the car floor.

“They were cute-” Shiori begins before the ground quivers.

For a second, Inko feels like time stops as something blurs by their windshield before crashing into the car beside them. Not spending another second thinking, she flings her door open, dragging Izuku and Shiori out from the backseat.

“Mom! What’s going on?”

The ground cracks as waves move through it. They’re thrown to their feet. “You! Stop!” Yukine, of
the hero twins, Gemini, barks. Her eyes are hidden behind the curtain of bangs hanging in front of her face.

Despite the danger, Izuku can’t help but wonder why she chooses to inconvenience herself for the sake of a look. The villain rises to her feet, blood running down the right side of her face. She has fins for ears and scales dotting her face and arms. “Heroes…pathetic…leave,” she croaks, claws extending. The villain’s voice is gravelly and raspy, her forked tongue flicks over her chapped lips as she glares.

Izuku feels shivers run down his spine at the sight of her. “We will not give in until you are apprehended!” Hikaru, the other member of the hero duo, shouts confidently, albeit rather dramatically.

Inko rises to her feet, pulling the children behind some cars for cover. Izuku sneaks glances at the battle, green eyes tracking every movement of the heroes and villain. The little recorder inside his head gets to work and his green eyes faintly glow.

**Name: Ando Hikaru**

**Age:** 25.

**Hero name:** Solar Flare.

**Name:** Ando Yukine

**Age:** 25

**Hero name:** Selene.

**Notes:** The two make up the hero duo, Gemini. Solar Flare’s quirk is known as ‘Sun’ while Selene’s is known as ‘Midnight’. Both quirks are reasonably powerful on their own, but are considerably more powerful together.

**Weaknesses:** Solar Flare seems to favor his left side more, and leaves his right side open quite a bit, while Selene has the opposite problem. They’re both average in hand-to-hand, but they rely heavily on long distance attacks. Their quirks are not as effective in close quarters. Both don’t seem to get along very well, as seen in their interviews.

**Name:** Unknown.

**Age:** unknown.

**Villain alias:** Siren.

**Quirk:** seems to be a mutation and emitter type.

**Notes:** Siren has a voice amplification quirk, along with the appearance an underwater beast. **Weaknesses:** Upon examination, she seems to have gills. Perhaps she has a weakness to heat or fire? This hero matchup is unfortunate for her, considering Solar Flare’s quirk. Judging by her behaviour, she’s trying to wrap this up as quickly as possible. However-
Izuku’s jerked back by his mother as pieces of a car come flying their way. “Izuku!”

Siren lets loose a shriek and Gemini’s blown back. Their cover skids to the side and they fly a few yards back. Shiori lands on a ruined car door, cutting her chin. Izuku’s arms are littered with scrapes and bruises.

Despite the ringing in his ears, Izuku attempts to refocus on the fight. The heroes are playing more the part of actors than real heroes. While Siren is down, they don’t move to apprehend her, but instead laugh and taunt her.

Addition to the hero duo, Gemini’s, weaknesses: Inefficient. Causes much damage. Arrogant. More interested in the glory than doing real good.

Maiko races out from the daycare and picks up Shiori, shouting for Inko and Izuku to follow her. Hopping to her feet, Inko sweeps Izuku into her arms and they race into the daycare. Maiko leads them to a small room where other parents and their children are huddled. Maiko closes the door and tells everyone to keep their heads down.

The building shakes every few minutes, and the room is quiet, save for the deep breaths and strangled sobs of the children.

Then, the fighting outside stops. Silence hangs in the air. Maiko opens the door and pokes her head out, sweeping her gaze through the halls before beckoning them out. Slowly but surely, the group inches out of the tiny backroom. At the entrance of the daycare, the hero duo stands, proud as ever, while Siren is loaded into a police vehicle.

“Do not fear citizens! The villain has been apprehended and will bother you no further! Why? Because you have been saved by me! Solar Flare!”

Selene glares at her twin, swatting him in the head. “By Gemini. We both took her down. Even if I did most of the work.” The last part is whispered.

The group breaks out into cheers and some of them are directed to ambulances.

In the end, no one’s too badly injured. The most serious thing is a possible concussion from one of the parents, so the kids are treated for little things before flocking to the heroes in hushed awe.

Shiori gets a Ms. Joke bandage for her chin and Izuku gets covered in All Might bandages, much to his glee.

Gemini spends another hour in the parking lot, basking in the attention they’re receiving. They sign autographs, take pictures, the works.

Bystanders, who’d been drawn in by the battle, crowd the pair, cheering them on and exalting their efforts.

Gemini makes a point of taking many pictures with the kids, specifically Izuku and Shiori. Solar Flare and Selene hoist the two on their shoulders and smile brightly.
From the edge of the crowd, a young man glares at the duo.

He turns and leaves, a plan beginning to form in his mind. He will cure this society of its illness.

Yes you will, Akaguro Chizome.

After the excitement is over, Inko takes the children home, noting that Misaki will be by to pick her daughter up soon. As if cued, there’s a knock at the door. Inko opens the door and Kayano Misaki waves at her. “Hello Inko! I’m sorry I’m late.”

Inko shakes her head. “Oh, no, it’s quite alright! We were very busy.”

“Well, it’s getting late. I’ll take Shiori and we’ll get out of your hair. I’ve got to start thinking about what to make for dinner.”

“Come in!” Inko offers. “We’re just about to have dinner, and you’re not bothering me before you say it.”

Misaki snaps her mouth shut with a sheepish smile. “If you don’t mind-”

“I don’t,” Inko insists. “Please, come in!”

Knowing that Inko will probably hold her child until she eats with them, Misaki gives in. “What about Akira-san and your boys? Should I invite them over too?”

“Akira is taking Haru to a party and Joji’s staying with Hajime and Yuno, so they should all be fine.”

Surprise spreads across Inko’s face. Hajime, Akira’s brother, is an international businessman, and he’s hardly ever in Japan. “Yuno and Hajime are in town?”

“For a bit. He’s going back to Britain next week.”

“My, he certainly gets around.”

A laugh springs off of Misaki’s lips. “Yes. I’m surprised Yuno puts up with all his traveling. Here-let me help with that.” She takes the plates from Inko’s hands and begins setting the table. Her eyes catch on the bandages wrapping Inko’s arms. “You weren’t caught up in the villain attack at the daycare, were you?”

Inko sighs before shaking her head. “Unfortunately.”
Misaki pauses, knitting her eyebrows together in concern. “The kids weren’t hurt, right?”
“A little scraped up, but none the worse for wear.”
The other woman relaxes. “That’s good.”
Inko nods before changing the subject. “On a lighter note, guess who I ran into downtown today?”
“Who?”
“Bakugou Mitsuki. I haven’t seen her in awhile!”
“Doesn’t her kid go to the same daycare?”
“Seeing her at pickup doesn’t count,” Inko says, rolling her eyes. “We had coffee and caught up.”
“Right. She’s the friend you grew up with, right? The scary one?”
“Misaki!” Inko scolds. “Mitsuki is not scary!”
“Anyway. Guess what? Masaru landed a job as the lead clothing designer of that big boutique uptown.”
“Really?”

Shiori lays on the floor, staring at the walls. Posters and hero merchandise fill Izuku’s bedroom, from his Present Mic alarm clock, to his Best Jeanist curtains, to his All Might bedspread.
He’s such a dork.
“Hey, Izu?”
“Mm?”
“Do you ever think about the future? Like, besides being a hero.”
“Mm.”
“Are you listening?”
“Mm.”
Izuku’s surprised when an All Might pillow beans him in the head. “What? I’m listening!”
“What did I just say?”
“A-ah…..” His cheeks turn pink. “I-I’m sorry. I was reading about the periodic table and how it’s evolved since the dawn of quirks. Did you know-” She gives him a look. “Oh. Right. Sorry again. What were you saying?”
She flops down on the bed, laying on two Gemini plushies. “What do you want to be when you
grow up?"

“A hero. Like All Might!” He gives her a confused look. “You know this.”

“Yeah, but like…what else?"

“What? Do you….think I can’t be a hero?”

“No!” She says quickly, sitting up. “But like…..what else? What are you going to do when you become a hero?” (Not if, when, Izuku notes as a warm feeling blossoms in his chest.)

“Well…I wanna save people, and…I want to make sure everyone feels safe. I want bad guys to be afraid of me! I’ll be like POW!” Leaping to his feet, he swings at the air. “And they’ll run away.”

“I don’t think that’s how it works.”

“It does with All Might!”

She rolls her eyes before a look of mischief passes over her face. She pounces on him with a pillow. “All Might doesn’t lose at pillow fights!”

“Not fair!” He cries, shielding his face from the pillow assault Shiori brought down on him. “Detroit Smash!”

He pushes her grinning eagerly before he grabs a pillow and flies at her.

The two mothers come running at the sound of shrieks and their hearts melt at the adorable sight.

“Alright you two,” Misaki announces, picking them both up underneath their armpits like sacks of flour. “It’s dinner time! Let’s get washed up!”

She takes big steps, rocking the children from side to side. “No! We need to finish our pillow battle, Mom!” Izuku protests.

“Maybe after dinner, Izu,” Inko chuckles.

While Misaki helps the kids wash up. (Honestly, all that intelligence and Izuku still can’t remember to wash his hands-) Hisashi enters the apartment looking half-dead. A frown tugs at Inko’s lips, but she puts on a sympathetic look for her tired husband. “Hard day?”

He grunts in reply, kisses her on the forehead and wraps her in a hug, resting his head on her shoulder. The position is somewhat awkward due to their height difference, but Inko lets him rest for a minute, rubbing her hand over his back. “That bad?”

“Everything was absolute shit,” he grumbles, not moving.

Normally Inko would chide her husband for his language, but he has clearly had a bad day, so she lets him slide. “Why don’t you go sleep? Here-give me your coat. I’ll save your plate.”

Her husband nods numbly in response before zombie-ing his way into the bedroom, brushing past Misaki and the two children.

“Daddy?” Izuku says.

“Hey there, champ,” Hisashi slurs, rubbing at his eyes.
“You’re home! Guess what-”

“Hey, champ, why don’t you tell me about it later? Daddy’s really tired. He needs a nap.”

“But-”

“Izuku, let him sleep,” Inko orders, voice stern, but light.

Reluctantly, Izuku lets his father pass, and Hisashi stumbles into the room and closes the door behind him. “Alright-y. Go sit down,” Misaki instructs, goading the two children in the direction of the table. “Eat while it’s hot.”

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys enjoyed it!
I’m not sure how much I’m going to explain Maiko’s quirk in the story, so here it is:

**Quirk: Living Colour**

**Quirk description:** Maiko can change the colour of things and bring drawings to life. However, the drawings must be in colour and must be of living things. The bigger the thing, the shorter it will be ‘alive’. When the time’s up, the thing will return to the paper it came from.

**Maiko description:** Maiko has multi-coloured eyes that are always changing. Her hair color varies, but is usually red. She’s about 5’5"

Have a great day my lovelies!

https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 3: In poison places

Chapter Summary

The calm before the storm.
Alternatively:
Before shit hits the fan.

Chapter Notes

Sorry this chapter's a day late.
I'm not going to update every day after chapter five, because I only wanted to get the basics out. But there should be a new chapter at least once every week.
Anyway, enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The end of Izuku and Shiori’s days at the daycare comes with little fanfare as they are ushered into their elementary years.

Maiko remains at the daycare and is now dealing with Joji and a new group of children. Still, she can’t deny how much she loves them. (And this group doesn’t threaten to give her grey hairs before thirty)

It’s Misaki’s turn to pick up the first graders from elementary. The pair are waiting outside the entrance where pickup is being overseen by the teachers. Just as Misaki pulls up, Joji throws his door open and flies out of the car.

“Izu!” Joji scrambles up to the green haired boy to give him a hug. “Ri!:


Shiori huffs. “I am not trouble,” she pouts.

“Izu! Ri! Guess what happened today!” Joji’s skipping and squealing.

“What?” Izuku says as they walk towards the car.

“I got a boyfriend!”

Misaki chokes on nothing, Shiori trips and Izuku just stops. “What?!” Misaki’s trying to recover from her shock.

“Mhm! He’s really nice! His name is Natsu! He’s got pink hair and he can breathe fire! Just like me! Isn’t that cool?” To emphasize his point, a puff of fire leaves his lips before he quickly blows ice to cool the skin. “We’re a lot alike.”
“Joji...sweetie...darling, I love you, but...I don’t think....you’re too....You’re too young for a boyfriend.”

“But Shiori’s got a boyfriend!” He protests.

Misaki whips her head in Shiori’s direction. “Shiori!”

“I don’t!”

“Uh-huh!” Joji insists. “She’s got Izuku.”

Izuku’s just standing there, green eyes wide and lost. Misaki takes in a deep breath, exhaling through her nose. “Joji, sweetie....what does ‘boyfriend’ mean?”

“A friend who’s a boy!” The white haired four year old answers.

Relief floods through Misaki and she sighs. “Right. You can have as many of those as you want.”

Joji pumps his fist in the air. “I’m going to have a lot of boyfriends!”

Misaki laughs the entire way home.

Once they leave their backpacks in the apartment, Misaki gets a text from Inko saying that she’ll be late, because she and Hisashi are discussing something important with their family.

“Mom! Can we go to the park?” Shiori asks.

“Yeah! Please Aunt Saki?”

Misaki pretends to think about it. “Well...I’m not sure. The park’s reeaally far away and-”

“Please? We’ll be extra-extra good!” Izuku bargains.

She breaks into a smile. “Okay.”

The four walk the two blocks to the park and Misaki turns them loose. After locating a bench where she has a full view of the playground, Misaki seats herself and leans back. It’s a good day.

Then she hears the screech of tires followed by a scream and her world shatters.

Inko’s attempting to console a heartbroken Misaki while Hisashi and Akira speak in low voices. Police have taped off the area and a man is handcuffed and put into the back of a cruiser. In the street, police work to clear the area of bystanders. The sky’s becoming grey and the wind blows harshly.

In the center of this scene, a tiny body lays in the street, covered with a large white sheet. Blood spots the sheet and pools around the head area and into the cracks in the street.

Izuku stares forward in disbelief, and everything seems to drag on. Voices sound so far off. “Victim is------four-----Kayano ------,” he hears a detective say into his radio. “Deceased. Hit----car. Driver----distracted.”
Two ambulance workers lift the young child’s body into the ambulance and shut the doors. The two workers climb into the ambulance before the vehicle pulls away.

“.......dead….my baby…” Misaki whispers brokenly. Her breath is ragged and harsh and she’s clinging to Inko like a lifeline.

Akira appears much more reserved, but his haggard looks gives away his grief. Hisashi pats him on the back. “I’m sorry.”

The man remains silent, his grey eyes are trained forward and unmoving.

“Joji…..” Shiori takes in a shaky breath, and Izuku’s reminded that she’s there.

*It had all happened so quickly. Joji, Shiori and Izuku had been playing at the park when the ball rolled out into the street. Joji had gone to retrieve it, since the street was empty, when a car pulled into the street at a high speed.*

*Shiori’s blood had run cold and she felt her heart stop dead in her chest as Joji turned to see the incoming car.*

*The sound of her brother’s bones crunching and the sight of his blood on the street and windshield*….

Shiori squeezes her eyes shut. She will *never* forget it. The young girl’s body quivers as she sobs. Izuku hugs her tight until the police come armed with questions about the incident.

A younger officer, called Tsukauchi, tries to comfort the pair, promising justice for Shiori’s younger brother.

But on the day of the trial, justice doesn’t come.

Tsukauchi, the kind officer who has helped the Kayanos raise money for Joji’s funeral, tries to calm Akira down. “They found him not guilty.”

“He killed my son!” Akira slams his fist into the wall.

Misaki, numb, sits on a bench, glaring at her husband. “Akira. Just stop.” Her voice is cold and hopeless. “It doesn’t matter anyway. He’s gone.” The last part is quieter, and her eyes grow misty once again.

Akira whirls around. “That son of a bitch killed our son and you’re telling me to let it go?”

Joji’s death has been hard on the family. Akira and Misaki fight more, Shiori’s quieter and Haruko just….doesn’t react.

Inko knits her eyebrows together as Tsukauchi attempts to defuse the situation. “Come here,” she whispers, pulling Izuku, Haruko and Shiori towards her.
It had been unfair. The driver is the son of a wealthy businessman who could afford the best lawyer in the country. The lawyer had managed to convince the jury that Joji had run out into the street and that the driver didn’t have the time to react.

And she had the audacity to call it a tragedy.

Tsukauchi succeeds in calming the couple down, and sighs. He promises himself that when he’s a detective, he’ll stop things like this from happening.

Little does he know, this is only the beginning. All Izuku and Shiori can think is this:

_It’s not fair._

**Strike one**

The next year, Akira walks out and takes Haruko with him.

Shiori doesn’t see much of her brother or father after that and Misaki doesn’t like talking about it, so she doesn’t ask.

Not too long after, Hisashi and Inko split. Unlike the Kayanos, it’s not a messy divorce. The pair mutually agree that it’s for the best, and Hisashi makes sure to be present in Izuku’s life. He takes care to not miss anything too important and Izuku calls his father almost everyday to tell him about school.

But it’s not the same.

Kacchan becomes more of a bully than a friend and spreads the idea that Izuku’s quirkless. He uses the explanation that Izuku’s “quirk”, Mind Palace, is what the boy has made up so he can pretend to be normal.

Kids start avoiding him so they don’t get ‘un-quirked’. “Look out! He’s going to Un-Quirk you!” A girl squeals to her friend.

Izuku frowns, trying to talk to the boy, but he’s already fled with a shriek. Izuku sighs before he feels a tap on his shoulder. “Hey Izu.”

A smile spreads across his lips. “Hi Kaori.”

She glances around the playground at the kids pointing at him. She’d been part of the ‘un-quirk’ thing until a month ago. (She had ‘accidentally’ knocked Kacchan over with a strong wind while he was bothering them.) Since her quirk had manifested, people have stopped bothering her about being ‘quirkless’. Izuku had easily been more excited than her, shooting off possible uses for her quirk and beginning a new chapter in her book.

“You wanna hang on the jungle gym?”

“Sure.”
The world looks so different from upside down. Nicer, Izuku decides. His cheeks flush as he hangs like a bat from the jungle gym with the blood rushing to his head. “So, have you tried anything out with your quirk yet?”

“Not really. Mum can’t afford quirk training, but the quirkologist says I should get discounted training because of how much Mum makes and how late my quirk came in.”

“Just think about how cool it will be! You could be flying!”

Shiori pauses. “...yeah. I guess.”

A pregnant silence falls between the two second graders. “How’s your mom?”

“.....not good. I think, at least. The doctor said some things I didn’t understand, but....I think she’s getting worse. Mom doesn’t do much anymore, but, Bishop helps out sometimes.”

“I haven’t met him yet. He’s the retired pro-hero next door, right?”

“Yeah.”

“I read about his hero work. He’s really cool!”

“I mean, I don’t think he ever got a chance to get really big.”

“But now he’s your neighbour! You have a pro-hero as your neighbour! That’s awesome! Maybe we can get advice on how to be heroes!”

“I dunno. He’s kind grouchy. I don’t think he really likes people.”

“But we can try!” If-ah!” An explosion goes off by Izuku’s head. Startled, he falls toward the ground.

Shiori tenses before she reaches out and pulls.

Just before he hits the ground, a gust of wind sweeps underneath Izuku, softening his fall. “You’re so fucking useless, Deku. You need the second most pathetic person in our class to save you,” Bakugou mocks, scaling the jungle gym. He stands atop it, arrogance clear on his face. “I’m going to be a hero, and you’re always going to be some no-name quirkless freak.”

Shiori fights the temptation to blow Bakugou off the jungle gym as he continues his verbal assault, but she’s already received one warning for the month, so she just sits there.

And she feels helpless.

(What kind of a friend are you?)

“Are you okay?” She whispers when the blonde’s gone.

Izuku doesn’t look at her. “I’m fine.”

They don’t talk for awhile after that. Even though Shiori never teases him, she doesn’t speak up for
him like she should.

A bit ago, she wouldn’t have cared how much trouble she got in for stepping to someone who was being a dick. Now, with Misaki’s illness, she knows her mother can’t handle the stress. Everything’s wrong and she knows it. She should be able to help her mum around the house, she should be able to stand up for her friend, but...she couldn’t.

It hurt.

On the other hand, Shiori notices that people start to hang around her more. She skips rope with Mika and Izumi at recess sometimes. Izumi’s a bit bratty, but she’s not all bad. Mika just seems to follow after Izumi. They’re the closest thing to a friend she’s had since Izuku.

*Friends*, she thinks. *I don’t just have one anymore*.

They aren’t as good as Izuku, but now she has more people, more friends.

She’s not sure if that’s a good thing.

“Hey! Shiori! C’mere!” Izumi calls for the brown haired girl. Shiori sits in front of Izumi without a word. “Turn around. I wanna do your hair!”

Shiori’s hair’s grown down to her upper back in the last two years. Izumi decides to use her as her practice dummy for her hairstyling. The other girl wants to be a beautician when she gets older.

An explosion sounds from behind a corner. “I wonder what Katsuki-chan’s doing,” Mika whispers.

Izumi snorts. “Probably beating on that quirkless kid. Honestly, Midoriya’s soo weird! He’s always talking about quirks! He doesn’t even have one! But hey-” Izumi tugs on Shiori’s hair. “-least you aren’t friends anymore, right? You didn’t catch his Quirklessness.”

“It’s not contagious,” Shiori says under her breath.

Izumi narrows her eyes, pausing the braid she had been doing in Shiori’s hair. “What?”

“Nothing.”

Shouting and crying erupt from behind the corner. “Let’s go see what’s going on,” Izumi ‘suggests’. Both Shiori and Mika know better than to object, so they follow.

“You think you’re better than me, shitty nerd?”

The class eggs Bakugou on. Izuku’s eyes are wide with terror and confusion. For just a second, he locks eyes with Shiori and she freezes.

*Do something, dammit.*

*Why aren’t you doing anything?*

Izuku tears his gaze away, looking utterly betrayed and something inside her snaps.

The rest is a blur. One second she’s watching, the next second she’s looming over Bakugou, screaming while Izumi tries to hold her back.
“What are you doing? Stop!” She says.

“Let me go!” Shiori kicks and swings, fighting to get the bigger girl to release her.

Unfortunately, the teachers come, take one look at the scene, and drag Bakugou and Shiori apart.

Bakugou and Shiori are sent to the principal’s and Izuku to the nurse before he joins the two. The principal is a Japanese-American fellow with blue eyes and black hair shocked white in some areas. His face is drawn and harsh, and he towers above the desk he sits at.

“Now,” he begins, sweeping his gaze over the three. “Can somebody please tell me what happened?”

In the end, Shiori loses recess for the rest of the week and Bakugou gets a day’s suspension for bullying and quirk usage. The principal tells her that it won’t go on her record, since it’s her first incident. He does warn her that if this happens again, she will also be suspended.

But at the end of the day, she couldn’t find it in herself to regret it.

She waits in the lobby for her mom, or Bishop, to come pick her up. “T-thank you….”

Quickly turning, Shiori meets Izuku’s eyes. He’s a few feet away, shuffling his feet. The hall is silent for a bit before Shiori takes a deep breath. “I’m sorry.”

More silence.

It stretches longer and longer until Shiori’s about to leave.

“I forgive you.”

Izumi drops her like a stone, not that she minds. Mika sometimes talks with her when Izumi’s not around, but they aren’t exactly friends.

So, she’s back to square one.

But she’ll take one amazing friend over two good ones any day. Maybe her mum will be a little less mad at the situation.

The next year, a second Kayano is buried and Shiori goes into foster care.

Her first family is okay, but it isn’t long before she moves on to Ms. Yaomoto.

And *nothing* can describe the horror that is Yamiko Kyouka.

The hospital is sterile smelling and too white. It hurts her eyes. Inko’s outside shouting, presumably at Fukuda, her social worker. “What do you mean she won’t be prosecuted?! That girl slit her wrists to get away from that woman!”

“N-now, ma’am, if you cou-uld just calm down-”

“I see no reason to be calm!”
Fukuda swallows. “You s-see, we have no evidence-

“No evidence!” She scoffs.
“-And in light of this….event, we have to consider-

“Consider what?” She snaps.
“....that the scars are self-inflicted.”

If Inko wasn’t mad before, she is now. The short green haired woman all but explodes, going off on the social worker in a manner similar to a volcano.

Izuku’s sitting beside her bed, oddly silent. “It’s not fair,” he mutters.

“I know.”

_Strike two._

The rest of fifth grade is passed uneventfully, and sixth grade might have as well if Hatsume Mei hadn’t moved to their school. “Izu! Shiori!” She cries. “Look at this! My design for my new baby!” A paper with detailed notes for a sixth grader is shoved into Izuku’s hands. “Wow, Mei! This is amazing! Are you actually going to build this?”

“Yes! You’re looking at Hatsume Industries’ future CEO! We’re going to sell my babies around the world! You two are witnessing greatness in its infancy! And for a small payment of-” In the same breath, Mei begins her pitch to get them to buy into her company early. “Think of it as an investment!”

Izuku chuckles. “Mei-“

“Excuse me, is Hatsume Mei in this classroom?” One of the office attendants asks.

The class falls silent. “She is,” Takahashi-sensei responds. “Is something wrong?”

The attendant purses his lips. “I need her to come down to the office. Her parents are here.”

Mei doesn’t come in for the rest of the week.

When she does return, the kids bombard her with questions about where she was and what happened, but the usually perky girl doesn’t so much as respond to them.

It takes a few days before she talks to her friends. “Some guy….attacked my sister.” Mei’s usually boisterous voice is replaced with a voice hardly above a whisper. She doesn’t meet their eyes.

“Emiko-chan? Is she okay?” Izuku’s eyebrows knit together.

“She’s…in the hospital.”

“Did they catch the guy?”

Mei scowls and slams her fist down on the table. “No! They….they just said there was nothing that
they could do! They’re the police!”

“The police in Akumi don’t do jack.” Shiori shakes her head. “It’s wrong.”

“We need someone to uphold the law here.”

“Right, because heroes are so eager to deal with the crap part of town.”

“I mean, it doesn’t have to be a hero. Just someone, or someones—”

Shiori rolls her eyes. “Not a word.”

“Some people who are willing to do the right thing despite having nothing to gain,” Izuku finishes seriously. “And I’m saying it could be us.”

Mei and Shiori blink, glancing briefly at each other before staring at Izuku.

“What?”

*Strike three*

*Never send to know for whom the bell tolls, villains; it tolls for thee.*

Chapter End Notes

I'm not sure if the ending dialogue's kinda cheesy or cliché, but I'm fairly proud of this chapter.
We're almost to the action part!
Bye my lovelies!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 4: We are antivenom

Chapter Summary

Bishop is introduced and hell school begins.

Chapter Notes

I lied when I said the first five chapters were gonna be out everyday. This took longer. Chapter four! I'm sorry.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Vigilantism is illegal.”

“And you don’t have anyone to train you,” Mei would point out.

“I know, but someone’s gotta keep people safe,” Izuku would insist and the argument would continue.

Throughout sixth grade, the debate pops up whenever Izuku floats the idea across the table. It always ends in stalemate.

The year ends and Mei heads off to Somei Private Academy for their robotics program. “I can’t believe you got in!” Izuku exclaims as Mei flaunts her acceptance letter.

“I can! No one can resist the sheer genius of Hatsume Mei, future head of Hatsume Industries!”

Shiori sighs. “Can you please stop calling yourself that.”

Mei ignores her. “Where are you two heading?”

Izuku and Shiori aim for Ourdera Junior High (very unambitious, they know). Izuku wants an easy three years so he can plan for UA. Shiori, on the other hand, is living with a new family who sends her.

And, oh joy, guess who else follows?
None other than Bakugou Katsuki.

Shiori and Izuku flip through books in his room, whittling away their last few days of vacation. It's quiet, with a few comments or questions every once in awhile, but the two pre teens just soak in the time to do absolutely nothing.

“What class are you in?”

“1-A.”
“Oh.” Shiori pauses. “I’m in 1-B.”
“....which class Kacchan is in?”

“With your luck? 1-A.”

“Wow. Thanks,” he drawls, rolling his eyes. Izuku flops down on his bed and lets out a long suffering sigh.

Shiori smiles, glancing around while Izuku laments his future. The room hasn’t changed much overall in their years since elementary, but there are little subtleties that she can pick up. Most notably, there isn’t a decrease in All Might merch, but merchandise from a hero Shiori doesn’t recognize pokes out here and there in between the red and blue. The man is dressed in dull colours with a white scarf winding around his neck and yellow goggles over his eyes.

*Wonder who that is*, she thinks before reconnecting herself to the conversation.

“Hey, look on the bright side: maybe the teachers will actually give a shit and expel him.”

He rolls over. “Haha, you’re a riot.”

“I do try.”

They fall into a comfortable silence. Izuku yawns and sleepily drapes a blanket over his form.

“Hey...Kaori?”

“Yeah?”

“How much do you hate me?”

That can’t be good. “Not enough to say no immediately. What do you want?”

A nervous chuckle escapes his lips. “Well...you’re not going to like it.”

“I figured. What is it?”

“So...you know how Bishop was a pro?”

“Yes, and before you ask, I am not giving you his phone number so you can freak him out with your fanboying.”

Izuku bats her in the back of the head. “Shut up. I don’t do that.”

“Yes you do. Just tell me what you want.”

“I think we should ask Bishop to teach us how to fight.”

She blinks. “What?”

“Well, you know, with Akumi being so dangerous and all, I-I think, you know, Mei, you and me should...learn to fight.”

“Izuku….this is about vigilantes, isn’t it?”

“No! What makes you think that? I-I just think it would be a useful skill! Y-you know, because I’m about to go to school with Kacchan again, and I just-”
“Fine. I’ll ask. And for the record, you suck at lying.”

He stops rambling. “Really?”

“Yes.”

“But-”

“I don’t agree with you on everything, and I don’t have to. Just don’t get killed.”

A smile spreads across his lips. “You’re the best, Kaori.”

Shiori lets loose a sigh from a bone deep exhaustion that comes with being Midoriya Izuku’s friend. “I know.”

It’s been a year or two since Kayano Misaki passed and her daughter went into foster care. Jesus Garcia doesn’t expect the young girl to keep in contact with him. He had been sure she’d drop him after a few months, but she consistently calls or texts every few days, or at least once a week.

So it’s no surprise when around three o’clock one Friday, he gets a call from her. “Hi Bishop.”

“What’s up, kid?”

“My friends were wondering if you could teach us some fighting skills or techniques.”

“...what?”

“That’s what I said.”

“Kaori!” He hears in the background. “What’d he say?”

“Izuku-get off me-I’m trying to ask now.”

Ah, right. Midoriya Izuku.

While he has never met the green haired boy, he’s heard enough about him to feel like he’s known him for years. The boy’s an avid hero fan, and aspires to be one himself.

That being said, Shiori describes him as ‘dorky’ and ‘nerdy’ often, and it’s not surprising given his excitement that Bishop can practically feel through the phone. “Why don’t you all go to a dojo?”

“Because we’re all broke and can’t afford lessons.”

Right.

He forgot that part.

“I’m not a teacher.”

“First time for everything.”

He sighs. “I’ll….think about it.”

“Okay, but, just a heads up, Izuku might die if you say no.”

“Kaori!”

He barks a laugh. “Alright, I got somethin’ to do. Bye kid.”
“Bye Bishop.”

The man shakes his head and the preteen hangs up. He’s known the kid for years, and she never fails to surprise him.

“A teacher. Me.” He laughs again. “That’s gotta be the dumbest thing I’ve ever heard.”

No, a voice in his head says. Thinking you’d last a second out there as a pro is.

The apartment’s silent for a moment as he scowls.

It didn’t hurt to dream, he thinks before he heads out to meet with a few associates.

Yes it did.

The first day of school is upon them before they expect it. Mei’s off to Somei with claims that she of what she will build. Shiori and Izuku catch a train and walk to their new school. Students swarm the school gates, chatting eagerly with their friends.

“Good luck,” is Shiori’s departing phrase to Izuku before she leaves for 1-B.

Izu turns to his class door, and fires off a hasty prayer to whatever god was up there before he enters.

Bakugou is the first person he sees when he steps into the classroom. Izuku breathes deeply as he shuffles across the classroom. He drops his bag on his desk and tries to make himself as small as possible.

The class fills up and gradually becomes louder until the door slides open and a middle aged man of short stature enters, seemingly dead on his feet.

The chatter quiets and students take their seats. “Welcome to Ourdera Junior High, class 1-A. I am Hagiwara-sensei. We are glad to have you.” Hagiwara looks like he’s sleepwalking through his introduction speech.

As if cued, the teacher yawns and groggily blinks. “Let’s take attendance.” He glances over the rows of desks. He checks off their names. “You’re all here. Congratulations.”

So unprofessional, Izuku thinks with disdain.

“So, you kids can socialize or something until the first years’ orientation. I’ll be at my desk. No one bother me.”


Tomoko has a cheeky look on. “What if someone dies?”

Hagiwara-sensei narrows his eyes and leans forward, a scowl marring his expression. “Do you want a detention on the first day?”

Tomoko shrugs. “Don’t know. Would you give me one?”

“Don’t tempt me.”
Izuku leaves for his orientation with mixed feelings about his classmates and teacher.

“Deku!”

Well, not all of them.

He doesn’t turn around; he knows it’s Bakugou. Instead, he picks up his pace and loses himself in the crowd, where he knows Bakugou won’t dare make a scene. 1-A takes their seats in the front rows of the auditorium.

Shiori’s class, 1-B, is two or three rows behind him. He can see her sitting on the end of the sixth row, fuming.

He’ll ask about that later.

The principal gets up in front, welcomes the first years, makes a few pathetic attempts at a joke and plays an informational video about the school, its history, electives and extracurriculars. When the video ends, the principal begins speaking once more. “Now, like all middle schools, we require all our students to take self defense. If you already take classes, you’ll need a parent and your sensei to sign off on it. Now, onto sports.”

After the mind numbing orientation, lunch is a welcome distraction.

Izuku rubs the sleep out of his eyes (It’s an effect of extreme boredom brought on by listening to someone he really doesn’t give a shit about.) and zombies his way to the cafeteria.

At one of the tables in the back, he finds Shiori in a similar state. Her head’s against the table and she shows no signs of moving. With a chuckle, he slides into the empty seat beside her. “So, how’s your day going?”

She groans, not adjusting her position. “I’m going to kill all my classmates and myself.”

“Ah. Well,” he clears his throat, but he’s still smiling. “That sounds pretty serious. You might want to get that checked out.”

“I hate you.”

“Love you too.”

She shoots him a glare. “Why are you so cheerful?” She huffs, sitting up.

“Who says I’m cheerful? I could be planning to blow up the school for all you know.” He grins cheekily, feigning innocence. “I’m just quiet.”

“No you’re not.”

“No one else agrees with you.”

“I miss the days when you were shy and didn’t like talking.”

“You and Kacchan.”

She cringes. “Please don’t lump me in with that Pomeranian.”

“Why? I think you two would get along great—”

“So, Deku and fucking Pocahontas came to Ourdera, huh?”
Dear God why.

Izuku swallows before slowly turning to meet Bakugou’s ruby orbs. His lips are pulled back in a cruel smirk and his posture exudes confidence. “Man, guess they let anyone in, huh?”

The two don’t reply. Scowling, Bakugou sets off an explosion in front of Izuku’s face. Surprised, he falls back in his seat. Bakugou reaches out and yanks the front of his gakuran, pulling him forward. “Not going to stick up for your quirkless boyfriend?”

“Put him down Bakugou.” Her frame trembles with rage, and her fists are balled so tightly they’re pure white.

Bakugou scoffs and drops him. “Pathetic.” The people who’d been watching the interaction turn away and the teachers just look on.

“You okay?”

Izuku straightens his clothes. “Yep.”

“Sure?”

He pauses for a moment. “I’m tired and I want to die, but that’s normal.”

She snorts and the tense mood fades from the air. “So, did you hear about the self defense classes?” He asks.

“I did.”

“Are you excited?”

“Not really.”

“I am.” He pulls out his lunch. “Bishop get back to you yet?”

“Nope.”

“....are you sure?”

“Sure as when you asked me this morning.” She stops. “Do you really want this?”

“Yes.”

And she leaves it at that.

In the end, Bishop agrees to train the three. Hatsune only learns the basics before she sits around tinkering at their sessions. She likes the slow pace and the free slot in her afternoons.

For Shiori and Izuku, though, it’s pure hell.

“Muscles I didn’t even know I had hurt. How do my ribs hurt. How?” Izuku’s panting like a Saint Bernard on a hot day.

Shiori doesn’t reply-she can’t really, because she’s not doing much better. Bishop grins at the sight. “You kids ready for round two?”
Absolutely not, Izuku thinks. “Sure!” His mouth chirps, like it has a mind of its own.

Traitor.

Izuku gets in a fighting stance and faces Bishop. “Come at me kid.” Not a minute later, he’s slammed against the mat once more. “You’re too obvious when you swing and your footing is a mess. Now, again.”

For the next hour and half, the ratty mat and Izuku become very familiar with each other. It knows all his secrets and he wants to take it to meet his parents.

You wanted this, his mind supplies helpfully.

“Wooh! Go Izuku!” Mei cheers.

“Kid, you gotta put some meat on your bones or somethin’. You’re too light.” Bishop’s face fills his vision. He offers him a hand and pulls Izuku up. “Alright, you did good today. And you-” He turns to Shiori. “Work on your punches. They’re still a bit sloppy.”

She nods and begins packing up her stuff. Izuku drains his water bottle and swipes Mei’s just to sate his thirst. It isn’t as bad as it was when they started. (Shiori and Mei had had to carry him home.)

They thank Bishop and leave. “Hey...Zuku, I was thinking. With you wanting to be a, you know what, you’re going to need gear, right?” Izuku already knows what direction Mei’s steering the conversation.

“I mean, it’d be nice, but-”

“Perfect! You can test out my babies on your patrols!”

“.....test.”

“Yep!”

Mei is known, despite being a genius, for the spectacular failures of her ‘babies’. “...Pass?”

“Uh-uh! You don’t get to skip out on my-I mean, our, greatness, Izu! I’m going to deck you out with all the latest Hatsume Industries’ tech!”

Izuku gulps, vaguely feeling like an inmate on death row.

---

His phone pings and Izuku gropes around in the dark in search of it. Upon finding his phone, it slips from his hands. With a groan, he silently contemplates if it’s worth getting up for.

After about ten minutes of back and forth in his head, Izuku sits up and fumbles for his phone. He finds it again and unlocks the home screen, squinting at the bright light.

1 Notification

Article: New vigilante Stendhal exposes villain hideout; Heroes being outdone?
Izuku hums and scrolls through the article. He knows Stendhal is fairly new on the vigilante scene, and is virtually a ghost, save for the few notes he leaves for the pros and police. Stendhal has a strong credence and believes (correctly so) that the hero system is corrupt and must be rebuilt. At the end, there’s a rare, albeit blurry, security camera photo of Stendhal leaping between buildings. There’s nothing identifying about the picture, but it’s not often that people actually see Stendhal. Not even the pros have caught more than a glimpse of him, and to his victims, he’s a blur of knives and scarves.

Izuku sends the picture to his printer and tapes it to his wall before heading back to bed.

In the distance, Akaguro watches with distaste as yet another pro-hero lets a civilian die as a result of their useless bravado. The hero swears before quickly calling it in, fabricating some lie.

Akaguro’s lip curls in utter disgust as he leaps down from the building. The pro-hero whirls around to meet the business end of his katana. He goes to jump back, but Akaguro moves with him. A fight ensues before the weaker is killed.

The police arrive to find two corpses; one a civilian’s, and the other a hero’s.

“All for a better and more just world,” the vigilante whispers before he disappears into the night.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys enjoyed it!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 5: We're the beginning of the end

Chapter Summary

Izuku's first patrol and the forming of a new vigilante team.
Alternatively:
Why Bishop is going to die early.

Chapter Notes

So, here's chapter five! We are finally to the action part!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Izuku is a fast learner. Whether or not this is a side effect of his quirk is the subject of many pages in his analysis journals. Once he’s confident he knows the basics of fighting, he starts planning. Mei invites herself over to present him with her inventions that ‘probably won’t, but has a small chance of possibly, maybe failing’. Inko gets used to the young Hatsume’s presence around their apartment, and often makes an extra portion to accommodate the girl at their meals.

Izuku finishes his analysis on Endeavour while Mei talks. “Izu, I’m just saying, if you let me finish the armour-”

“Mei, no.”

“I swear it won’t Iron Man you!”

“....Iron Man me?”

She rolls her eyes. “You know! That Iron Man movie from the twenty-first century with Robert Downey Jr.? A guy tries a prototype Iron Man suit and it snaps his spine in half?”

“....how...nice.”

“Don’t worry! There’s only a twenty-eight percent chance of it actually happening.”

“I don’t like those numbers.”

“That pessimism is going to get you nowhere.”

He closes his notebook. “I’d prefer that to having my spine snapped.”

Inko opens the door and peeks her head in. “Mei-kun, Izu, dinner will be ready in a few minutes. M’kay?”

“Alright Mom,” Izuku replies.

With a smile, she closes the door and moves through the apartment to the kitchen. She’s just about to
chop the green onions when a knock comes at the door. It’s a bit surprising, since she isn’t expecting anyone to drop by, and she’s cautious when she approaches the door.

No one can be too careful in Akumi, after all.

Shiori’s waiting there. This catches her off guard, since Izuku’s friend usually calls before coming over, but she lets her into the apartment.

“Hi Inko-san.”

“Hello Shiori—what happened to your arm?” Inko gestures to Shiori’s left arm that hangs in a sling with a frown.

“Ritsu pushed me down the stairs.”

Inko goes into Mama Bear mode. “Shiori—”

“It’s fine. He freaked out afterwards so his wife drove me to the hospital. I think they’re sending me back anyway. Something about being too much too handle. You mind if I stay for dinner?”

Inko blinks. “Oh, yes! Yes! Of course! Always room for you! Come, we’re just about to have dinner.”

She follows Inko down the hall. “I could set the table—”

“Oh no! No! Your arm’s hurt,” the older woman fusses. “Izuku and Mei-kun are in his room. I’ll call you when dinner’s done.”

“But—”

Inko leaves no room for argument and lightly pushes her in the direction of Izuku’s room. “Go on. I’ve got it under control.”

“I—”

“Go on.” There’s a little more force in Inko’s voice this time and Shiori knows better than to argue with her, so she obeys.

After knocking on the door, Shiori’s greeted by Mei and Izuku who’re arguing about...armour?

“Oh! Hey Kaori!” Midoriya flashes her a smile. He doesn’t even ask what she’s doing there or what happened to her arm.

He knows better than that.

“Hey.”

And so does Mei apparently. “Shiori, tell Izuku I’m a genius inventor.”

“I’m not convincing him to test out your ‘babies’, Mei.” She sits on the bed beside Izuku.

“Traitors! The both of you!” She declares, throwing her hand over her heart.

“Kids! Dinner’s ready!”

“Coming Mom!”
Within minutes, the three kids are seated at the table. “Dinner! Dinner! Dinner!” Mei chants before Shiori smacks her in the head with her good hand.

“Ow! What was that for?”

“Quit it.”

Inko laughs goodnaturedly and dishes out bowls of katsudon. “Eat up!”

Dinner is passed with joking jabs at one another and overviews of their day. “So Mei, how’s Somei?”

“Great! Everyone’s from some super rich, prestigious family and I’m just that kid who got in on a scholarship, but I am ruling the robotics department with an iron fist!” To emphasize her point, she slams her fist against the table. “An iron fist!”

“That’s...nice. Have you made any friends there?”

Mei shrugs. “There’s this guy-”

“Ooh-,” Izuku jokes. “Go on.”

Mei rolls her eyes, reaches over and smacks Izuku in the back of the head. “Quiet. Anyway, he’s the class rep or something and he’s super pushy. He’s always telling us what to do, and he’s sooo dramatic.”

“Mm. What’s his name?”

“Oh, he’s Ingenium’s little brother, Iida Tenya.”

“Does he want to be a hero too?” Inko politely inquires as she helps herself to more rice.

“He said something about applying for UA in a few years, so I guess?”

“I wonder if he’s going to try for the recommendation spots. His brother is a pro-hero, so he would have more experience and training than most. If-” Izuku slips into yet another ramble.

The three females just sigh and continue their conversation without the boy. “Have you heard from Haru-kun or your father recently?”

Shiori shakes her head. “Not since I got to this family.”

“Oh.” She leaves it at that. They all glance back to Izuku, who’s still mumbling. “Should we stop him now?”

“I’ll do it!” Mei volunteers. She takes a deep breath and shouts, “IZUKU!”

The boy’s head snaps up and he nearly falls out of his chair. “Yes! W-what! I’m lis-stening!” He continues to stammer out apologies until he notices that the others are laughing.

His face reddens and he buries his face in his hands. “End me.”

Shiori shakes her head. “Not worth the prison sentence.”

“Please? You’re my very best friend,” he pleads.
“Nope.”

Inko lightly smacks her son’s hand with a spoon. “None of that, Izuku.”

He rubs his hand. “Sorry Mom.”


“Okay Mom.” Izuku goes to his room and sets his alarm for a few hours when he knows Inko will be asleep.

After all, tonight’s just the beginning.

Izuku has planned a vague patrol route, trying to keep his first night as a vigilante light. He needs to be wary of whatever few underground heroes might patrol at night, like Eraserhead.

A scream rips through the air before quickly being hushed. Izuku’s drawn to an alley. In the darkness, he can make out the silhouettes of two people. A teen boy’s pinned against the brick wall by a woman who holds a claw to his throat. The boy’s eyes are wide with terror and he’s whimpering, begging the woman to let him go.

She tightens her grip and pushes him against the wall even harder. “Where’sss the money?” She hisses, sliding over the ‘s’.

“I-I don’t have it yet! Please! I-I’ll get it to you tomorrow?”

She cackles. “You don’t have it now. What makesss you think you’ll have it tomorrow?”

“I-I’ll figure something out! Just, let me go. My brother’s waiting for me, I can’t-”

The woman throws him to the ground, hissing. She stalks forward, and now Izuku can see her more clearly.

His heart stops; he knows her.

Siren.

Deep breath, Izuku.

And he throws himself into the fight

Izuku has the element of surprise, but he knows it won’t last long. He goes for Siren’s knees and she stumbles forward. With a hiss of fury, she whirls around, claws extended and swipes at Izuku. Her nails tear his hoodie and draw blood.

Biting his tongue, Izuku socks her in the stomach as hard as he can before swinging up and hitting the bottom of her jaw. “Run!” He tells the other boy.

The teen freezes.

Dammit!

Siren tackles him and digs her claws into his side.

Izuku screams. Through the blinding pain, he rolls to the side and kicks her off. Siren crashes into
some bins, bringing loads of trash down onto her. Shakily, Izuku rises to his feet and approaches the villainess.

“Whooo are youu?” Siren spits, blood seeping through the cracks in her skin.

Clutching his bloody side, Izuku stares down at the villainess. “I’m a hero.”

He slams her head against the pavement and she goes limp. Izuku leans against the wall as the adrenaline drains from his system.

“Y-you….”

Right. The teen.

Izuku turns and meets eyes with the boy. He’s shaking like a leaf, and his eyes are wet with tears.

“Are you okay?”

“I think that much is obvious. Do you need someone to walk you home?”

The boy takes a breath, then another, and then another before replying. “N-no. I can make it.”

“Are you sure? I-Agh!” He winces at the pain that shoots through his body.

The boy rushes forward. “Shit, are you okay? What the hell am I saying, of course you’re not okay. You need an ambulance-”

“No! No hospitals,” Izuku bites out. “‘M fine. See? Fine.”

A conflicted look passes over the boy’s face before he sighs in defeat. “I-If you’re sure. Thank you for saving me.”

“No problem. What’s your name?”

“I’m Natsu.” Izuku nods. “...who are you?”

“Me?” Shit. Did he even think of a vigilante name? He’s not going with Smol Might .....there was a book they were reading in class- “I’m Perseus, and I will be a hero.”

Welp.

He’s had worse.

“Report this to the police.”

Before Natsu can say anything, Izuku scales the building (as best as he can) and disappears. As soon as he’s gone, Natsu whips out his phone and dials his older brother. “Miko! You are not going to believe what just happened.”

“Are you okay?”

“Yes!.....But I do kinda maybe sorta need you to call the police.”

The boy on the other line sighs in frustration. “We talked about this Natsu!”

“Heh heh....”
A little ways away, Izuku drops down in an empty alley with a pained hiss. He pulls out his phone before pausing.

He can’t call his mom, because she’d kill him. The hospital’s already out. Bishop looks like a good choice.

And then he remembers that he doesn’t have the former pro’s number.

….shit.

Mei would probably be up at this hour, but she doesn’t have Bishop’s number.

But Shiori does.

(Of course, she’s not any less likely to kill him.)

Giving in, he calls her. It’s picked up on the first ring.

“What did you do.” Her tone is accusing and she doesn’t sound tired at all.

Despite his situation, he feels offended. “Do I have to do something for me to call you?”


“…..I need you to call Bishop.”

“...why?”

“I’m bleeding in an alley.”

“What.”

“I...might’ve gotten in a little scuffle with a villain. Don’t worry! I’m pretty much fine!”

Izuku hears Shiori let off a string of curses he didn’t even know she knew under her breath. “Where are you. I’m texting Bishop right now.”

“No, don’t worry, I can-”

“Shut the hell up, Midoriya. I’m calling Mei and we’re getting you to Bishop’s apartment. Send me your location.”

He does, and ten minutes later, he hears approaching footsteps. At this point, his head has begun to feel fuzzy and his arm and side has gone numb.

“Izu! Izu! Are you awake?” He feels a light slapping at his cheeks. “Mm....Yeah. ‘M awake.”

“Oh God, um, okay. Shiori, get his legs. I got his arms.” Izuku’s lifted from the ground, though one of his legs hangs.

Right, he thinks distantly, her arm’s broken.

“How far is Bishop’s apartment?”

“A few blocks. He said he needed to get someone.”

“What if someone sees us?”
“Let’s balance him between us. Looks less suspicious.”

They hold Izuku upright between them and carry him to Bishop’s flat. Mei’s glancing over her shoulder all the while, paranoia eating at her already frayed nerves.

Of all the things she expects to happen at three in the morning, getting a call that says one of her very best friends has been hurt is not one of them.

Chewing her lip, they press forward.

“Izuku, stay awake,” Shiori tells him.

“’M awake! ’M fine!” He insists, though his speech is slurred.

“We’re almost there.”

They approach the familiar apartment building. “Stairs, c’mon Izu,” Mei says as the two girls attempt to hoist Izuku (who’s basically a dead weight at this point) up the stairs.

Each flight is hard to manage, but thankfully, Bishop meets them halfway. He carries Izuku up the stairs bride-style and flies into his apartment. Shiori and Mei follow hot on his heels.

The kitchen island is covered with various basic medical supplies. Bandages, cotton pads, rubbing alcohol and tweezers sit in a box in front of a woman with a wide, wrinkled face. The lady is stout and her lips are pulled down into a scowl. Her skin is a dark brown and her hair is practically white.

“Is the boy here, Jesus?”

“Yeah.”

She feels around for Izuku. “Where is he?”

“We’re laying him on the couch.”

She tuts. “That bad, mm?”

Bishop doesn’t answer. He doesn’t have to. The woman stands and makes her way to the couch at a painstakingly slow speed.

“He’s hurt!” Mei blurs out angrily.

“Quiet, child. I’m goin’ as fast as I can.” She sits on the couch beside Izuku and places a hand on his chest. “Shirt?”

Bishop complies, helping Izuku take off his hoodie and shirt. His abdomen is littered with scratches and blood. Red, angry skin peers back at them and surrounds the cuts and holes that look vaguely like puncture wounds line his side. The woman’s hand lays on Izuku’s worst injury; his sides.

Izuku seizes, pain evident on his face. “Hold still,” the woman orders before she continues.

The room is silent, but Shiori and Mei watch with a mix of horror and fascination as the wound knits itself back together.

Izuku is fighting a scream, but it’s clear he’s in agony.

“Almost done.”
A minute later, she takes her hand off, and the cut on his side is entirely healed, while the slashes on his arm are partially healed. “I don’t think he can handle more,” she announces.

“Thank you,” Bishop says, bowing.

The woman huffs. “We’re even. Someone’s gonna have to clean that arm, though.”

“Of course—”

“I can do it,” Shiori volunteers.

“Do you know how to?”

“I...know the basics.”

“She knows enough,” Bishop interjects.

The woman leans back and yawns. “Alright.”

“So...who are you?” Mei pipes up.

“Doesn’t matter.” Bishop shoots her a side glare that the blind woman can feel. “But call me Mama.”

“Mama.....?”

“You.” ‘Mama’ swings her cane around and points it in Shiori’s general direction. “You’ve got an injury too, don’tcha?”

“How-”

“’T’s my quirk. Come here.”

Obediently (though she can’t deny that she hesitates) Shiori shuffles forward and allows ‘Mama’ to put her gnarled hand on her broken arm.

And all she feels next is pain.

She collapses on the floor, gasping and shaking while Mama mutters an apology. “Terrible side effect. Sorry ‘bout that.”

“I-it’s okay.” Shiori can’t stop shaking so she forces herself to breathe.

“You’d better get to cleanin’ the boy’s arm. Would be a shame if it go infected.”

She nods and Bishop moves Izuku to the kitchen. Bishop and Mama talk for a bit before Bishop disappears into his room with a huff and Mama settles down to watch the TV with Mei, who’s just a bit uncomfortable.

Shiori dabs at the bloody cuts with cotton pads soaked in rubbing alcohol. The two sit in silence, save for Izuku’s occasional hiss or complaint. She doesn’t look at him.

“I’m sorry.”

There’s a pause, but she doesn’t halt her task. “No you’re not. You’d do it again in a heartbeat.”
“But I am sorry.”

“Sorry you got hurt. Not that you did it.”

“Kaori-”

“Not right now, Izuku.”

He snaps his mouth shut and doesn’t speak until Bishop reemerges from his room, still angry. “Does your mother know?” is the first thing he says.

Izuku bites his lip and shakes his head. “No.”

Bishop opens his mouth and closes it a few times, like he’s trying to decide how to say what he wants to say in the best possible way.

“What the fuck were you thinking.”

Nailed it.

“I…I wanted to help.”

“Kid, look at me.” Izuku meekly raises his gaze to meet Bishop’s scarred face. “This is what happens when you run in half-assed. And I’m lucky.”

“I-”

“No, I’m not done. You went out there without protection, backup, and as a fucking kid! You are twelve! Do you have a death wish??”

A lump forms in Izuku’s throat. “I’m just sick of it, okay? The heroes avoid this part of the city like the plague, the police won’t do shit-” Izuku cursing? That gets Bishop’s attention. “-and people are getting mugged in broad daylight! I don’t care if I get hurt! I’m at least doing something! Because NO ONE ELSE CARES!”

The apartment falls silent, except for the mutterings of the TV. Everyone’s staring at him, and Izuku’s angrily scrubbing at his cheeks. “I’m just…so tired. Everyone’s always scared, but no one does anything about it.…”

Bishop crosses the room without a word and wraps Izuku in a hug. “God, kid. You’re going to kill me early,” he mutters as Izuku buries his head in his chest and sobs.

He lets Izuku cry for a few minutes before pulling away. “You’re serious, actually serious about this vigilante thing?”

Izuku just nods, sniffling.

Bishop sighs and rubs his eyes. “Okay, look. You’re too young to do this by yourself.”

“But-”

“I’m not done. You need someone to back you up.”

Izuku stares up at the former hero. “Y-you’re going to-”

Bishop can still find it in himself to laugh. “Oh hell no. Shiori is.”
Shiori nearly drops the bottle of rubbing alcohol. “What.”

“You need someone you can trust to back you up, and Shiori’s been training the same as you.”

“What about me?” Mei’s frowning at the idea of being left out of something she cares about. “I want to help too.”

“Tech support,” Bishop assigns.

“This is stupid,” Mama mutters, turning her attention back to the TV.

“Welcome to my world,” Bishop huffs before they begin to plan.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys enjoyed the chapter!
Mama’s not going to be in it much, but she’s essentially the team’s Recovery Girl.
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 6: So tonight, the foxes hunt the hounds (and it's all over now)

Chapter Summary

Bishop loves his problem children, but they're a problem.
Aizawa is introduced.
Tsukauchi returns and Iida makes an appearance as the class rep.
Oh, and Cerberus becomes a thing, but you know.

Chapter Notes

Hi guys. Not much to say, but I'm working on creating an update schedule. There's a very good chance I won't stick to it perfectly, but it'll give you a vague idea of when I'll be updating. Love ya!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Izuku’s forgotten what it feels like to not be sore. “That’s what you get,” Shiori says when he complains.

The two have increased their combat training, and Izuku’s taken a brief break from vigilante-ing while the three decide on what to do.

Bishop comes harder at them than ever with dirty tricks and underhanded tactics. At the end of every session, Shiori and Izuku stagger home, sore and bruised.

As for Mei, she attacks her studies at Somei with a newfound fervor that’s akin to madness. This scares many of her friends off. She gives them the middle finger and buries herself in her work.

She creates so many things the teacher has to put a limit on how many projects she can do a week.

But it’s not fair.

She can’t help but think she’s not doing enough. Shiori and Izu will be out there actually fighting the bad guys, while she just listens in, far away, surrounded by her computers.

Pathetic.

Do more. It’s not enough.

What if they die because of your mistake?

Not good enough. Start over.

She bites the thought back and works even harder. She drinks more coffee than water and begins pulling all-nighters.

The days blur together.
She doesn’t go to lunch much anymore. She needs to work, not to eat.

She needs to be useful.

(And she needs to ignore that damned voice in the back of her head telling her this can’t be healthy.)

“Excuse me, may I accompany you to lunch?”

Hatsume’s head snaps up and is met with the tall class rep—what’s his name? Oh, right—Iida Tenya. The boy looks...awkward at best, but it’s clear he’s making an effort.

*Oh God, he better not have a crush on me.*

“No,” she says shortly. The manic energy returns to her eyes. “I’m making babies during the lunch period!”

To his credit, the blue haired boy doesn’t outright leave, but he starts. His face goes scarlet and he starts sputtering.

Smirking, Mei leans her head against her hand and watches his reaction before he manages to compose himself. “I-I beg your pardon? You’re what?” The poor teen looks positively scandalized.

“Babies! Take a look!” She holds up her phone, ignoring his protests about how phones are not allowed to be out on school grounds.

He pauses and scrolls through the elaborate designs and varied inventions saved on her phone. “These are....very impressive.” He sounds sincere and astonished.

“You bet! I’m going to be the CEO of Hatsume Industries!”

He blinks. “I...wasn’t aware that was a company. You say it quite often. Does your family run it?”

Mei shakes her head. “Nope! It’s my future baby-distributing business.”

“...do you refer to all of your...inventions as ‘babies’?”

“You bet! They’re all made with love!” She sing-songs.

“I see. Well, may I then accompany you to the workshop?”

*Elites*, she thinks bitterly as she forces a bright smile. “Sure!”

So, that’s how the two found themselves heading towards Workshop 1. Iida speaks animatedly (not unlike Mei), waving his hands and chopping the air. Mei stops at her table and pulls out the comm system she’s been working on for the team (they’ve decided on Cerberus since Izuku had to go and set the whole ‘Greek’ trend for them).

Iida’s polite, but it’s very clear that he’s out of his depth. The class representative hovers around her table and watches her work with a silent respect and awe about him.

Not that Mei minds.

“If I may interrupt your work for a moment, Hatsume-san—”

Mei doesn’t really pay him any mind. “What’s up?” She hums.

Her hands fly across the table, connecting parts and little loose ends to the comm system. “This
should close the circuit—"

“Hatsume.”
“Yes! Yes! Listening!”

“Must you skip lunch to work? Surely there are more suitable times.”

“Genius never stops!” She brightly declares. “So I’ll never stop. There’s a need and Hatsume Mei’s going to meet it!”

He examines her for a second before he resigns himself. “I see then.” Iida walks towards the door, pausing only momentarily. “Excuse me if I am overstepping, but I believe that you are useful and worth more than you think.” Before she can reply, he leaves.

Mei puts the comm circuit down and glares at the shut door. She’s now alone in the workshop and free to fume.

Stupid class rep.
Always assuming things.
She knows that!
(She just doesn’t believe it.)

---

It was bound to happen eventually.

After all the running around, intense training, planning and avoiding Kacchan, he’s sick. He’d tried to play it off when he woke up feeling like Death warmed over, but his mom takes one look at him and sends him right back to his room.

He sighs and rolls over. Still not comfortable.

He adjusts his position again, but still can’t find a way to fall back asleep.

So he moves.
And he moves again.
Two hours later, his pose is something like a pretzel, but he’s finally comfortable.

Of course, Shiori chooses then to start a conversation in the new group chat they’d created for Cerberus.

-Kayano Shiori is online-

Kayano Shiori: we should use code names.

-Hatsume Mei is online-
Hatsume Mei: yah
Hatsume Mei: hold on i got this

Hatsume Mei has changed Kayano Shiori’s name to Tornado

Hatsume Mei: ur welcome
Tornado: MEI NO
Hatsume Mei: MEI YES

Tornado has changed Hatsume Mei’s name to Frankenstein

Frankenstein: Fair
Frankenstein: but still
Frankenstein: rude
Tornado: F u
Frankenstein: LANGUAGE
Tornado: i literally typed 2 letters.
Frankenstein: but i take offense at those 2 letters

-Midoriya Izuku is online-
Midoriya Izuku: Guys, wtf.
Tornado: oh, look who decided to join.
Frankenstein: feelin better??
Midoriya Izuku: No.
Tornado: cool
Tornado: okay, but seriously, we should use code names for, you know

-Frankenstein has changed Midoriya Izuku’s name to Green Bean-
Green Bean: ……

Green Bean: remind me why we’re friends.

Frankenstein: bc im your best option

Green Bean: No, Shiori is.

Frankenstein: ouch

Tornado has changed Frankenstein’s name to 2nd Best

2nd Best: i dont get it

Tornado: it’s because you’re his 2nd choice

2nd Best: y u so mean to me???

2nd Best: is it bc im beautiful?

Tornado: no

2nd Best: is it bc im a genius??

Tornado: no

2nd Best: then what????

Tornado: I DON’T LIKE YOU!

2nd Best: lies u love me

Tornado: i do not.

Green Bean: ANYWAY

2nd Best: Right. so ur percy

Green Bean: Perseus

2nd Best: WHATEVER

Green Bean: Well, we’re Cerberus.

Tornado: what kind of name is that

Green Bean: Cerberus was the guard dog of the Underworld and he had three heads.

Tornado: but doesn’t that sound more like….bad? underworld, crime, am i crazy?

2nd Best: yes

Tornado: again, f u
2nd Best: that's gay

Tornado: I hate you

Green Bean: We're not changing it

Tornado: Who made you the boss?

Green Bean: I'm the one who started this!

Tornado: And who had to come and haul your busted ass to bishop's?

Green Bean:....you and Mei.....

Tornado: Right. mei, what do you want to call it?

2nd Best: HATSUME INDUSTRIES

Tornado:.....we're going with Cerberus

Green Bean: So what are we gonna call you two?

Tornado: No. uh uh. 1st, we're gonna change your vigilante name.

Green Bean: What's wrong with Perseus?

Tornado: Simple

Tornado: It's stupid

Green Bean: So what am I gonna do?? THERE ARE ALREADY ARTICLES

2nd Best: who cares

Tornado: You literally did one thing.

Tornado: You stopped a mugging. Congrats mr. bigshot who can't take care of himself.

2nd Best: and ur name wasn't mentioned

Tornado: So we're changing it.

Tornado: Because it's stupid.

Green Bean: You two are mean.

Tornado: Shut it

2nd Best: i try i try

Tornado: What about Rabbit?

Tornado: bc all of your 'hero costumes' look like they have bunny ears.
Green Bean: They do not!!!!

2nd Best: yes they do

Green Bean: This is harassment. I’m calling the police.

Tornado: good luck with that

2nd Best: arent we here bc they dont do their job??????

Green Bean: Shut up

2nd Best: mei 1 izuku 0

Green Bean: Fine. Rabbit.

Tornado: heh. it makes you sound like eminem

Green Bean: Who?

Tornado: a rapper? late twentieth to early twenty 1st century???

Green Bean:....I have no clue who that is.

Tornado: of course. you can list all the first gen heroes, but no music artists.

2nd Best: OR INVENTORS!!!!

Green Bean: I do too! I know Tom Addison!

2nd Best:.....its thomas edison

Green Bean: YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN!

Tornado: Izu, even i knew that

Green Bean: You guys are mean. Let’s get back to the main subject.

Tornado: fine

2nd Best: im daedalus!!!!

Tornado: i thought we were going with animals??

2nd Best: DAEDALUS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Tornado: fine!

Green Bean: What abut you, Kaori?

Green Bean: *about

Tornado: did the great midoriya izuku just make a spelling error?
2nd Best; oh my god

Green Bean: I hate you guys.

2nd Best: luv u 2 ❤❤❤❤❤

-Green Bean has changed Green Bean’s name to TooSickToDealWithThis-

Tornado: mm. sounds like a personal problem.

TooSickToDealWithThis: Okay, what about you, Kaori?

Tornado: i wanna be a snake

Tornado: or a bird

Tornado: or something not stupid

2nd Best: badger

Tornado: no

2nd Best: woodpecker

Tornado: no

2nd Best: OOH! I GOT A GOOD ONE!!!!

TooSickToDealWithThis: What is it?

2nd Best:....pussy cat ;)

-Tornado has removed 2nd Best from Cerberus

TooSickToDealWithThis: Kaori.

Tornado: im going to be cobra

Tornado: and don’t add her back

TooSickToDealWithThis: We need her.

Tornado: no

TooSickToDealWithThis: I’m going to add her back

Tornado has removed TooSickToDealWithThis from Cerberus

Tornado: peace and quiet at last

Tornado:....

Tornado: fuck i need them
TooSickToDealWithThis: I have to go. Delete the conversation.

2nd Best: moms calling gtg

-TooSickToDealWithThis is offline-

-2nd Best is offline-

-Tornado has deleted Cerberus-

-Tornado is offline-

Two months later, their Summer break has started, Izuku turns thirteen, and all hell promptly breaks loose.

“Izu!!! My baby’s a man now!”

“Mom!” Izuku whines as he’s crushed by a sobbing hug from the older Midoriya.

Shiori and Mei share more than a few laughs at his expense.

The day is passed with presents, katsudon, laughter, joy, tears and bright coloured paper. Izuku’s cheeks hurt from smiling by the end of it, but he considers it a day well spent.

Later that week, they start their first patrol. All news of ‘Perseus’ has since died and has been written off as ‘a one-time vigilante’.

“Let’s make a statement!” Mei declares brazenly.

The other two exchange a glance before shrugging. “Why not?”

Bishop sighs, feeling at early symptoms of a migraine stirring.

Mama looks over from the couch. “What’s wrong?”

“Have you ever got the feeling that your kids are out there disappointing God?”

“Ah. You’ve adopted them, so you’re a parent now. Welcome to hell.”

He gives her an unimpressed look as he goes to empty his aspirin bottle. “I’m not their dad. I didn’t adopt them. I’m not worried.”

She snorts but doesn’t say anything.
Bishop keeps his phone close all night, just in case.

(But it’s not because he’s worried.)

(He’s not.)

Aizawa is ready to go home.

He’s ready to throw himself at his bed and sleep til morning.

He’s ready to kiss his husband and complain about his day.

He’s only got five more minutes left on his shift, and he’s just finished stopping a mugging. It’s been a good day.

His phone rings.

It was a good day.

With an annoyed sigh, he answers it. “Eraserhead speaking.”

“This is Detective Tsukauchi. You’re needed at the scene of an assault.”

“I’ll be there as soon as I can.” He hangs up, shoots his husband a quick text telling him that he might be thirty minutes late and flies into the night.

“Eraserhead. Thank you for coming quickly.” Tsukauchi nods quickly at the underground pro before gesturing for him to follow. “We have a bit of a situation.”

“Vigilantes?”

“It seems so.”

Eraserhead resigns himself to the knowledge that he will likely be getting less sleep for the foreseeable future. “Any bodies?”

“Not dead ones.” Tsukauchi steps over the yellow tape. “We’ve got three low level thugs. No serious or life threatening injuries.”

“But there are injuries,” the erasure hero says pointedly.

Tsukauchi nods with a yawn. “Mm. Yes. The worst was a broken arm.”

“Any description on the vigilantes?” Eraserhead inquires, glancing at the villains being loaded into the back of police cars.

“Small.”

There’s a beat before the hero replies. “That’s it?”

“Essentially. The fight wasn’t long either. They interrupted three men assaulting two teens. The villains attacked and it was over.”
“Tell me we have footage. Descriptions? Anything?”

“No pictures, the teens think the vigilantes were talking to a third party.”

“Comms? Are we sure these aren’t new heroes?”

Tsukauchi shakes his head. “They gave their names. No heroes are registered as Rabbit or Cobra.”

“I see.”

“We do have one lead on Rabbit. A year ago, a vigilante calling themselves Perseus stopped an attempted murder.”

“Perseus?” Eraserhead mulls over the name. “Not familiar.”

“It was a one time thing, so we didn’t pursue any leads. One of the victims says that Rabbit said he wasn’t Perseus anymore.”

“Alright. Meet you down at the station?”

“Sure.” Tsukauchi gets into a patrol car and leaves.

Aizawa rubs at his tired eyes and texts Hizashi that he’s going to be a lot later than expected.

This is going to be the beginning of a massive headache.

Tsukauchi finds an email on his computer marked ‘from Cerberus’.

Hello Detective Tsukauchi,

After many years of what can only be described as inactivity from the police in Akumi, we have decided to take matters into our own hands. We understand that you have been brought in specifically on a favour, so we hold you accountable for none of this. We know that you are a good man, Tsukauchi Naomasa. However, for the others, we must serve justice in their place. We still keep Akumi safe, be it on the side of the law, or against it. We look forward to working with you, Detective.

See you soon,

Daedalus, member of Cerberus.

Tsukauchi stares at the email for a bit before starting a new file.

Cerberus.
Not much to say, but things are moving along nicely. That, and we don't have many titles left from the song Young Volcanoes. Too bad. Anyway, have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 7: When the days grow cold and the cards all fold

Chapter Summary

Cerberus gets a little action and Izuku discovers something about himself. And Bishop loses about ten years of his life to his kids.

Chapter Notes

All the words in italics and Times New Roman are Izuku's notes in the Mind Palace.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Inko loves her son with all her heart.

She loves his friends.

She loves how he turns tomato red and stumbles over his words when he gets embarrassed.

She loves how determined he is to become a hero.

She does not, however, love that he keeps things from her.

Izuku isn’t nearly as discreet as he thinks. She knows this from all the times he came home with poorly concealed bruises.

But she doesn’t press.

Because she knows her son.

And her boy, when backed into a corner, gets desperate.

And a desperate Midoriya Izuku is a disaster waiting to happen.

“Hey there kiddo!” Hisashi’s voice is once again present in the apartment.

Inko smiles at the sight of him and Izuku rushes over. “Are you ready?”

“I should be asking you the same thing, President Bush,” he jokes, rustling Izuku’s wild green hair. “What’s this movie you’re so excited about?”

“Into the Spider-verse! They’re playing popular hero movies from the twenty-first century, and I need to see this!”

“Then we better get going! Bye Inko!”

“Bye Mom!”
The door closes and Inko’s alone in the now silent apartment.

Time to do some digging.

Some moms feel badly about going through their child’s things. They think that their child has a right to their own privacy and will come to them if the need arises.

Inko is not one of those mothers.

While she won’t press Izuku, she likes to know what’s going on before he decides to let things get bad. Izuku’s the kind of person that prefers to suffer in silence than to talk.

She knows her son’s computer is password protected, so she begins with his closet. Various hoodies and All Might merch is crammed in there, but what catches her attention is a tiny metal box shoved into the back corner and buried under loose clothing.

‘Gotcha’.

She opens the box and is as startled as she is pleased.

Without a word, she closes the box and returns everything to its original place.

This is the kind of secret she can handle.

That night, Izuku doesn’t question why his mother makes katsudon without him asking or why she seems to be in a particularly good mood.

He fears for what that means.

“Mom, did something happen?”

“What? Oh no sweetie,” she assures him, flashing too bright, too proud a smile. “I’ve just realized how much you’ve grown up. You really take after me in more ways than I expected.”

“Like what?”

“Oh, just things. Honestly, you don’t need to worry about it, dear.”

Izuku loses much sleep that night. And the night after that.

His mom knows something, and he doesn’t know what.

The second term swings in and several things go bad at once. Hatsume Emiko moves out and falls in with the wrong crowd, Shiori’s sent to a youth shelter and Bakugou’s out for Izuku’s head.

But the last one’s a given, really. He only mentions it because Kacchan’s more aggressive than usual.

The teachers can’t be bothered to intervene, Mei’s off at Somei, and Shiori’s dealing with her own problems.

So he doesn’t bring it up.

But, now that he’s here, behind the school, outnumbered three to one, he wishes he’d said something, or at least taken his mother up on her offer to drive him home.
Hindsight really is 20/20. It’s not that he can’t fight them (though he’d really rather not), but he knows that none of his bullies have any reservations about using their quirks on him. Even worse, his back’s pressed against the brick wall and they’re closing in.

Kacchan’s eyes gleam with a murderous hate that Izuku can’t begin to understand. “Heh. No teachers to save your quirkless ass, Deku.” As if they did anything either way. “Any last words?”

Izuku gulps, unable to cease the tremors shaking his frame. “I-I-

“You hear this?” Hikaya, better known to Kacchan as ‘Fingers’, mocks. “I-I-” He repeats, mirroring Izuku’s terrified expression. “God, what a fucking loser.”

“He ain’t such a big shot now that his girlfriends aren’t here.”

Hikaya snickers. “Hey, remember when-”

“SHUT THE FUCK UP YOU SHIT BAGS!” Kacchan roars, glaring at the two extras standing behind him. “No one gives a fuck about what you remember.”

“Hey, I’m just saying-Gak!” Hikaya chokes as someone lands a hit to his throat. “What the hell?” His voice is raspy.

Bakugou whirls around to meet the new threat, palms crackling, but Kayano’s already dragging Izuku away as fast as she can. “C’mon Izu!”

Bakugou’s blood pressure skyrockets. “You two fuckers get back here! I’m not done yet!”

Izuku stumbles. “Shiori slow down!”

“They’re gaining!” Is all she says.

They turn down a street into one of the alleys they know well. The alley has a wooden fence in the middle of it, separating the apartment complex on the other side from the shops. Kayano (with the use of her quirk, Izuku suspects,) clears it with ease.

He, on the other hand, is considerably less graceful. His feet scramble for a foothold and he can hear the shouts of his classmates behind him. “Shiori!”

A gust of wind wells up beneath him and flings him over the fence. They keep running for a few more blocks before they’re confident that the three boys are gone.

The pair catch their breath outside the corner store, keeping a wary eye out. The sun beats down on them and sweat beads glisten on their foreheads.

“T-thanks.”

“No problem.” They head to ‘homebase’, which is essentially the basement of an abandoned factory building.

It’s in the largely deserted manufacturing district. Tall empty buildings loom over the cracked streets. Boards cover the windows and graffiti stains the walls. “Mei’s inside?”

She just nods and they slip into the building through the gap under the boards.

The stairs to the upper floors have long since collapsed, so Cerberus operates out of the first floor and the basement.
Mei’s set up a few computers and a police monitor (that was totally obtained legally) down there. Mei’s tinkering with something that looks suspiciously like a bomb. “You guys are late.”

“Ran into some trouble. Sorry,” Shiori huffs, tossing her bag to the floor.

Mei puts her tools down for a second and frowns. “What-”

“Anything interesting happen?” Izuku cuts in and forces a bright smile.

The interruption is out of character and Mei examines him with suspicion, but doesn’t press. “There’s an elusive human trafficker that the police have no leads on.”

“Wait. Human trafficker?” Shiori leans in. “We’ve only been at this a couple months. That’s a pretty big fish to fry.”

“But the police won’t do anything,” Izuku argues. “That’s why we’re here.”

“I don’t know, Izuku. Since we’ve started up the police have been getting really interested in Akumi.....” Mei trails off.

“No, they’ve been interested in stopping us. We need to help. Mei, what if Emiko-chan was kidnapped and going to be sold in a different country? What would you do?”

The pink haired girl is quiet a long time. “It’s not the same, Izuku.”

“But-”

The police monitor crackles before a voice comes through. “Officer Sansa to Detective Tsukauchi. We’ve got a hostage situation on 240 Tallow Street. We think twelve people are inside. We need back up.”

“Aren’t any pros on the scene, Officer Sansa?”

“Only Endeavor, sir. Backdraft is on his way.”

“Roger that. Be there as soon as possible.”

The three teens make eye contact. “So…?” Mei’s voice trails off.

“Broad daylight. Pros on the scene? No. We’ll be caught in a second.”

“We could go observe,” Izuku suggests, though he’s itching to record the fight. “See how the pros handle things. It’s uncommon for heroes to be in this part of town.”

Mei nods. “Okay, so let’s go!” She pulls out two hoodies. “You two can wear my newest babies to the hostage situation!”

“What.”

Turns out, Mei’s ‘babies’ are hoodies that are supposed to deflect attention and subtly blend in with one’s background.

That being said, it’s at least eighty degrees and Endeavor flames aren’t making it any cooler. Still, no one really pays the junior high kids any mind as they drift towards the front of the crowd. Several police officers are blocking the scene off, keeping the crowd at bay. The heroes are positioned
outside the building while the villain makes his demands and threats.

“This is stupid,” Shiori mutters. “They’re wasting time.”

Izuku doesn’t tear his gaze away from the situation unfolding before him. “I’m sure they’re just planning to get everyone out safely.”

Endeavor draws the villain out and attacks them with a burst of flame. The villain’s screams are audible and the horror of the moment is amplified when the building begins to catch fire.

Izuku takes a step forward only for Shiori to yank him back. “What are you doing?”

“We...we have to help them!” He cries, struggling. “Kaori, they’ll die in there!”

“You’re not fireproof, Izuku!” She hisses as the three make their way towards the back of the crowd. “You’ll die too!”

“We can’t leave them in there! There must be something!”

Mei clears her throat and the two look to her, on the verge of an argument. “The hoodies are fireproof. I’ve...got some gloves, and, if you can cover your faces....” She holds two pairs of grey gloves in one hand and Izuku and Shiori’s comms in the other. “I’ll direct you.”

Izuku looks at Shiori. “We can help.”

She doesn’t challenge him and takes her comm and gloves.

“Is anyone on this floor?” Izuku shouts as the flames devour the building around them.

A little girl is hanging onto Shiori’s neck with her head buried in her chest. “Papa! Where’s Papa?”

“Was your papa on the same floor?” She asks.

The young girl sniffs and nods.

“Well fuck. Okay, Daedalus. I need a layout of the building,” Shiori says into the comm. “I can’t see anything.”

Izuku doesn’t get the chance to scold Shiori on her language before Mei replies. “On it. There should’ve been a doorway in front of you. Do you see anything?”

The pair of vigilantes scan the burning room. Izuku notices a small space that looks like it leads into the next room. “I see something!”

The young girl begins to cough and sputter, tears leaving streaks on her soot covered face. “I’ve gotta get the kid help. I’ll be right back.”

Shiori sprints off to the lower floors where the heroes are trying to evacuate the civilians. Izuku focuses on the burning pile partially blocking the doorway. He steels himself before closing the gap between himself and the door. He pulls as much of the flaming debris away from the door as he can before he slips through the space. Just as expected, a man is slumped by the window, his chest rising and falling in unsteady, shallow breaths. Izuku rushes over and loops his arm under the unconscious man’s, hauling him to his feet. Izuku stumbles under the man’s deadweight. “Sir? Sir, are you awake?”

The man doesn’t answer.
“Shi-I mean Cobra! I need help! Now!”

“Little busy. How bad?”

“Oh, let’s see here, if you don’t come, I’ll probably die, the girl’s father will die and Daedalus will kill you for letting one of her babies burn,” he snarks.

“You could’ve just said it was bad.”

Two minutes later, Shiori flies into the room with a hero duo hot on her heels. Izuku’s relief is short lived when he realizes that she didn’t bring the heroes to help.

The heroes are chasing her.

“Stop! You will stand down!” Kouta Daizō of Water Horse stares down the pair as his wife puts the fires out around them.

“This man is hurt. He needs medical attention!”

The two exchange a glance. “Give him to us,” Daizō orders.

Izuku lets Kouta Mitsu take the civilian from him. She carries the man with much more ease in comparison to Izuku. The building creaks. “Rabbit, we gotta go. Now.” Shiori’s tone is final, despite how they’re backed into a corner.

“You-“

“Daizō,” Mitsu says. “He’s not breathing.”

That’s all it takes. The Water Horse Duo give the pair of vigilantes one last conflicted look before sprinting off.

“Daedalus, we’re on the third floor in the room overlooking the alley.”

“Let me pull up the plans….there should be a staircase leading to the roof. Do you see it?”

Izuku scans the room, but only see burning piles of debris. “Collapsed.”

Mei swears. “You’re going to have to go through the windows.”

“I’m sorry, what.”

It doesn’t register in Izuku’s mind, even as Shiori drags him towards the window and jumps.

Izuku’s heart finally starts beating when they make it back to homebase. “Oh my God. Oh my God. We just did that.”

Izuku gives Shiori a look, and quirks his lips up into a smirk. “How did my babies work? Did you feel hot? Any burns? Were they too heavy? They didn’t get damaged did they? What-” Mei rattles off questions as she looks them over.

“The hoodies were fine,” Izuku says with a cough.

“Yeah. The gloves didn’t work out too well.” Removing her gloves, Shiori’s hands are covered with red, angry skin and blisters.

After taking off his own gloves, Izuku finds his hands in a similar state. He hadn’t notice the stinging
in his hands earlier, and dismisses it as a side effect of the adrenaline.

Mei pales, eyes wide with horror. “Oh my God, guys, I’m so sorry, I-I didn’t mean for them to—”

“You’re fine. It was a test run,” Shiori interrupts easily. “No harm done.”

“Think Mama’ll patch us up?”

“If she doesn’t kill us first.”

Mama doesn’t, in fact, kill them first.

She does, however, whack them on the head with her cane and shout at them for twenty minutes at least.

Bishop just stands behind her giving them his best Disappointed Dad™ look.

Mama heals them (with no small amount of pain on their part) and tells them that, while it will not scar, the skin on their hands will be sensitive for a bit. She also warns them against any physically exerting activity, since their lungs are in bad shape from inhaling the smoke.

They spend the rest of the day at Bishop’s, with Mei staring at the tattered gloves and muttering under her breath.

When it gets late, Bishop kicks them out and tries, to no avail, to reclaim his TV set from Mama. She whacks him with her cane when he points out that she can’t actually see the shows and tells him to, “Let an old woman do what she wants.”

The second Izuku opens the door, his mother is on him in an instant. Midoriya Inko wears a smile that’s spoiled by the calculating look in her eyes.

“Izuku,” she says evenly. “We need to talk.”

And suddenly the events of the day don’t see as terrifying as facing his mother.

She sits him down at the dinner table and lets him start eating before she speaks, “I know about your vigilante activities.”

He inhales his rice and begins choking. Inko just smiles and waits while her only son chokes to death on his food. “That little hostage situation downtown was you and your friends, right?” The smile set on his mother’s lips is pleasant enough, but there’s something amiss.

“I-I, no.”

“Oh, come on, Izuku. I know all about it. You’re ‘Rabbit’, right?”

He takes a deep breath, hand shaking as he sets his chopsticks down. “How did you know?”

“I’m your mother, Izuku. I know everything.” Inko takes a moment to relish the pure look of terror on her son’s face before laughing. “Kidding! I found your costume in your closet.”
“Oh.” The younger Midoriya’s cheek redden. “I guess I’m not good at hiding stuff.”

“Don’t worry about it, sweetie. Shiori and Mei are the other members of Cerberus, aren’t they?”
“....would you believe me if I said no?”

“No, not really.”

“....are you...mad?”
She sighs, tucking a strand of green hair behind her ear. “No, sweetie. I’m not.”

“....are you going to make me stop?”

There’s a pause before Inko shakes her head. “No, I’m not.” Izuku does a double take and his mother laughs. “Sweetie, have you ever heard of Viper?”

“N-no...were they a hero?”
She shakes her head once more. “No, she was a vigilante. I’m honestly not surprised you don’t know about her. She was around long before you were born. Maybe, hmm, twenty some years ago.”
“Why does she matter?”
“Oh, well, you see, she operated here in Akumi, but was only active for six years or so. Then, she stopped.”

“Was Viper arrested?”

Inko shrugs. “No one knows. But, my point is that Viper did a lot of good for the people of this city, and I know you want to do the same. So, because of that, I will let you continue.”

Relief flooded through Izuku. “Mom-”
“I’m not finished.”

His heart drops again.
“I do have a few conditions. First, you tell me if you or anyone else gets hurt-”

Izuku cuts in before he can stop himself. “Mama takes care of that.” His eyes widen with shock and he slaps a hand over his mouth.
Inko pauses, eyebrow arched. “Mama?” She repeats. “Who is that?”

“...She’s....Bishop’s friend.”

Inko’s lips thin. “I’ll talk to him about that.” Izuku says a quick prayer for his mentor. “Second, if the job gets too big, you tell the police.”

“I’ll get arrested!”

“There’s an anonymous tip line.”
He sinks back into his seat in defeat. “Is that all?”

“No. Third, you tell me what nights you’re going out and what route you’re taking.”

This time, Izuku just nods. That’s doable.

“Fourth, if your grades slip, you’re done.”

“But-”
“No negotiations. And finally, Izuku—” Her green orbs soften and she reaches across the table, placing her hand over his. “Please come home to me. This will be dangerous.”

Only this time does Izuku meet his mother’s eyes with determination and certainty. “I will, Mom.”

With a small, sad smile, she leans over and plants a kiss on her only son’s forehead. “Now, go to bed. Little vigilantes need their rest.”

He starts down the hallway, a goodnight on his lips before his mother calls out to him again. “Oh, and Izuku?”

He turns around. “Yeah?”

“Just as a little project, I want you to research Viper. I think there are some useful things you might find.”

She’s got on that smile again—that mysterious, pleased smile she wears when she knows something that he doesn’t.

Thinking nothing of it, he nods once more and heads straight to bed.

Well, almost straight to bed.

“You told your mom what?!” Shiori is, for lack of a better word, pissed.

“IZUU!!! This was supposed to be a secret!” Mei is more upset than angry.

The greenette lets loose a nervous laugh. The bright light from his phone casts shadows over his face and throughout his room. “…Sorry…”

“Is she mad? Is she going to report us?”

He sighs. “No, I just….she’s okay with it?”

Shiori makes an annoyed noise. “You had one job, Izuku. One.”

The boy rolls over, pulling his blanket closer around him. “I know…”

“You couldn’t handle the one thing you had to do.”

“I know!”

“So now what.”

“I mean..if Inko-san is okay with it, we could still continue?”

Izuku nods, glancing at the others through the video call and takes a moment to observe his friends.

Mei, who doesn’t sleep anymore, looks the same as she does in the day, if a little comfier. Bruise coloured bags hang under her eyes, but the manic energy isn’t missing from, despite the late hour. Her hair’s pulled back into a ponytail with pink locks falling out of it and spilling down her shoulders. She’s wearing a loose black t shirt that reads ‘Crazy = Genius’ and grey shorts. Her desk is a mess of design sketches, wadded up paper balls, nuts, bolts and tools. The lamp in the background provides the perfect amount of light for him to be able to see her clearly.

Shiori, on the other hand, is near invisible in the darkness. He knows it’s past ‘lights out’ time in the
shelter, so there aren’t any lights to illuminate the dark room. From the vague outline he can see of her, she’s in a dark coloured tank top and shorts. Her hair’s loose and tousled and her grey eyes are squinted. The corners of her lips are quirked down into an annoyed scowl. His eyes catch on a almost entirely faded scar to the left of her chin. It’s a light one that begins near her chin and drags up until it’s the same height as her bottom lip; from the fight at the daycare between Siren and Gemini.

“Okay, my phone’s dying. And Sakura keeps kicking my bed. I’m going to sleep. Night.” Shiori goes offline.

Izuku’s the next one off. With a yawn, he sets his phone on his nightstand and falls asleep.

Izuku doesn’t dream. He hasn’t since his quirk manifested. The familiar surroundings of the library appear and a bright grin works its way onto his face. He loves this place. It’s safe; far away from bullies, pain and worries.

“Now, what to study today…."

He extends his hand and a well used book floats towards him and flies open. The book is the same green as his hair and has gold coloured binding. In gold lettering on the front is written, *Mind Palace.*

It isn’t a how-to guide, (though he wishes it were, because that would make life so much easier), it’s a collection of notes on his quirk and what he knows so far.

Despite being an avid lover of quirks, he has barely scratched the surface of his own. Izuku spent years trying to open the Chemistry Lab or the Control Room, to no avail. There are no keys, or hints, or, anything really. He has to figure everything out by himself.

But what’s new?

Izuku strolls through his library, head buried in his book. He has no fear of tripping or bumping into anything, as the library is constantly rearranging itself around him. Thoughts swim from his head onto the page, appearing in neat print. Not many things are added to the green book, so he sends it back to the shelf and calls for another.

A red and black book comes to him, titled ‘*Endeavor.* ’

Oh boy, does he have some *choice* things to add.

*Arrogant.*

*Poor attitude towards others.*

*No regard for others’ safety.*

*Reckless.*
Poor excuse for a hero.

Has control over flames, but often does not exercise it.

Little good judgement.

His concentration is so intense, that very few things could break it.

But one thing does.

The Control Room, whose door had always been locked, is open, with the door ever so slightly ajar.

Izuku makes a squeal of excitement and dashes for the door before it has a chance to close. With bated breath, he pushes the door open to reveal a room that looks right out of a Star Trek episode. It has a large screen at the front and control boards everywhere. Each is sectioned off and labeled with various names such as ‘Senses’, ‘Body Functions’, ‘Muscles’ and so on.

Izuku sits down in one of the seats and brushes his hands over the controls. The systems whirr to life.

“Hello Midoriya Izuku,” a voice says.

Izuku leaps back, startled. “What-”

“I am your aid.”

Izuku picks himself up off the floor. “I have an aid?” He frowns. “Where were you before?”

“I have always been here.” A pixelated green mass appears in front of him and Izuku scoots a bit farther back.

“So...what should I call you?”

“I have no name.”

“Tomo.”

“Yes, sir?”

“I...what about Tomo? It means wisdom and knowledge.”

“I have no opinion on the matter, sir. You may call me what you wish.”

“Do you...always look like that?”

“I can change.”

The pixels rearrange themselves into a very-

“What the hell are you doing?!” He screeches.

“What?” Kayano Shiori’s...ghost? Says. “I thought you would be more comfortable with a familiar face.”

“N-not Kaori’s! Change into something else!”

A distant thud sounds in the library. “It seems you’re waking up. I’ll try to open the Chemistry Lab
“Call me Izuku,” the boy replies as his surroundings fade away.

“Yes. Izuku. Have a good morning!”

Izuku wakes up with a smile on his face and reaches for his phone. He can’t wait to tell Mei and Shiori.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys liked this chapter. It’s a little longer than usual, but that’s okay.
Endeavor sucks butt.
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Have a great week!!!
Chapter 8: And the saints we see

Chapter Summary

A peek at Shiori's life, a new vigilante, a killer and talk about high school.

Chapter Notes

I probably won't do this often, but a lot of this chapter is from Shiori's third person perspective. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The third year of junior high begins to creep up on them as their second year draws to a close.
“Two more months til break,” Shiori says, sounding relieved.
“And then we’ll be back as third years!” Mei cheers.
Shiori groans and wraps herself in the blanket. Mei glares at her and makes a grab for it.
“So, we need to talk about high school,” Izuku announces despite the dispute beginning over the blanket.
The day is cold and Shiori’s currently fighting Mei for the blanket. “Duh.”
“Do we want to go to the same place?”
After winning the blanket, Shiori plots down on the couch with a triumphant smirk. Mei rolls her eyes and cuddles near her. “I’m going to UA for their support department! Best in the country, and the perfect way to make connections for my future baby-selling business.”
“I don’t know where I want to go.”
They don’t bother asking where Izuku wants to go; he’s been talking about attending UA for years.
The plan he’s made for himself is as follows: Go to UA, attend the hero course, graduate and intern at Sir Nighteye’s Agency. Beyond that, he doesn’t have much else planned.
“Kaori, you should try for the Hero Course!”
Every time that UA came up, Izuku suggests it, and every time, without fail, Shiori shoots him down immediately. At this point, he says it as more of a joke than a real option.
“You think I could make it?”
Izuku’s head snaps up so quickly he gets whiplash. Mei chuckles and pops a candy into her mouth. “Wh-yeah! Your quirk is really well suited for heroics! There are so many possibilities, so many applications that you haven’t explored yet! Like, can you create wind in addition to manipulating it? Can you fly? Would you be able to use your quirk underwater? Is your lung capacity any different because of your quirk? Does-”
“Izu.”
Reality settles back in. “Oh. Right. Sorry.”
“But you really should!” Mei cuts in excitedly. “Think about it! All three of us at the top hero academy in Japan!!!!”
“Whoop-dee-do.”
Izuku raises an eyebrow. “Don’t you want to become a licensed hero? Then we could do what we’re doing now, but, you know, legally!”
“Lower your voice. But, honestly, I don’t care what side of the law I’m on. I just want to help clean up this part of the city.” Mei elbows Shiori in the ribs.

“Someone’s starting to sound like our resident brainiac!”

Shiori frowns. “.....I thought you were the resident brainiac.”

“Nope!” She replies, popping the ‘p’. “I’m the resident genius!”

Her antics prompt a chuckle from the other two. “Well, whatever it is, I’ve gotta start saving up for the entrance exam fee and tuition.”

“It’s not covered?”

Shiori snorts. “Nope. They can hardly remember to cover building repairs, forget about school tuition. I think Hanako-san’s just waiting for us all to age out and leave.”

He frowns. “What’re you going to do?”

“I guess I’m going to get a job.” “Izuku begins to object.“Ourdera doesn’t care.”

“I don’t think UA allows its Hero Course members to have a job.”

“Oops,” she deadpans.

He rolls his eyes and swipes the blanket from her. “But, of course, this is assuming we even get in.”

“Of course we’ll get in! We’re Cerberus!”

The exclamation earns her a smack to the head. “Keep your voice down!”

Izuku laughs. “Yeah, but...” He hesitates. “I heard the physical exam is, well, physical and, my quirk....isn’t really suited for that.”

“Then get creative.”

Izuku snorts. “I’m supposed to say that.”

“Yea! You’ll figure it out, resident brainiac!”

Mei is fixed with a dry look from Izuku. “That’s a stupid nickname.”

“No, it fits pretty well,” she replies.

“No it doesn’t.”

“Fine,” Shiori cuts in. “We could always go back to Green Bean.”

He shudders. “No. Never mind.”

The brown-haired girl clicks her tongue. “Thought so.”

Mei chuckles and scrolls on her phone, and discreetly nudges Shiori, flashing the headline at her. ‘Vigilante ‘Sweep’ strikes again: villains left disoriented—what’s their quirk?’

Shiori bites her lip and nods.

“What?”

The two glance at Izuku and flash him a smile. “Nothing.”

The greenette’s eyes narrow with suspicion. “Lies.” His tone is half-heartedly joking.

Mei and Shiori exchange a look and a mischievous look quirks her face. “Fine! Izuku, you wanna hear about periods? Let’s talk about all the bloody details!”

Izuku’s face goes pink in a matter of seconds. “W-what n-no.”

Izuku snorts. “I’m supposed to say that.”

“Yea! You’ll figure it out, resident brainiac!”

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Izuku’s face goes pink in a matter of seconds. “W-what n-no.”

Mei playfully lunges at him and knocks him down, giggling in a manic way. “What? Too scared?”

“I-I—”

An unamused snort draw the trio’s attention. “What are you kids doing?”

“Education!” Exclaims Mei, holding Izuku in a ‘hug’ that looks more like a chokehold.

Bishop rolls his eyes. “No, I mean here. What are you kids doing here? I didn’t let you in.”

“Mama gave us the key,” Shiori says. “To emphasize her point, she waves the silver key around. “Said we basically live here, so we might as well have the key.”

Bishop rolls his eyes and mutters something under his breath. “Could you at least call before you come over?”

Mei shrugs, grinning cheekily. “I don’t know....Dad.” She says the last word slowly and deliberately, maintaining direct eye contact.

The entire room promptly loses their shit.

Bishop does a double take and nearly trips over a chair, Izuku stares wide eyed at the both of them and Shiori cackles like a demon.

“Oh...my...God Mei!”
Bishop, in the end, kicks them out (again). Unfortunately for him, he doesn’t think to take the key from Shiori, so they’ll be back. They always are.

The sun is low in the sky; its rays filter through the spaces in between the buildings. Not much of the sky can be seen, but, Shiori think, it must be beautiful from the small glimpses they can get of it. It’s chilly, so they walk briskly. Izuku goes home to his mom, Mei goes back to her family, and, well, Shiori?

Back to the shelter.

The second she walks in, it feels colder than it does outside. Shiori, despite her tolerance of extreme temperatures (an inherited trait of her mother’s quirk), can’t suppress the shiver that runs down her spine.

Distant shouting can be heard from the front door, and Shiori can only guess who it is. “You motherfucker! It’s mine!”

“Suck my ass, Ryota!”

Probably fighting with Mikazuki, Shiori reasons.

Ryota Akane and Mikazuki Sakura make it no secret that they absolutely hate each other.

She groans, trudging down the hall and passes the common area. Camie and Ximena are cuddling on the couch while Akio and Hiroshi sit opposite them watching a ballet special on the TV.

All Shiori can think about is getting a nap, but that’s probably not happening, she thinks, after walking into “her” room.

“Could you two calm the hell down?!” One of the older girls, Iwaya Hibiki, hisses, eyes promising murder.

“Shut the hell up!” Mikazuki shoots something at her; a dart from her finger.

It bounces off the metal frame of the bed and boomerangs towards Shiori. She manages to duck in the knick of time and the dart returns to Mikazuki, who’s red in the face.

“Hey! Watch were you point that thing!”

“Fuck off, Kayano. I don’t give a shit,” Mikazuki snaps.

Hibiki hops down from her perch on the top bunk. If it was possible, smoke would be coming out of her ears. She opens her mouth to say something—probably very insulting—but Fujikawa Hanako flies into the room in a rage.

All it takes is one look around the room before she grabs Shiori and Mikazuki’s arms, and drags Hibiki and Ryota behind her using her quirk.

Fujikawa throws open the back door and tosses all four of them out. “Don’t you four even think about coming back until you stop being brats!” The ‘caretaker’ of the shelter screeches this at the top of her lungs before slamming the door in their faces.

They know what she means: don’t bother coming back today.

And even if that’s not what she means, they’d rather not. Fujikawa needs a day (at least) to cool off, and they’re more than happy to give it to her. Mikazuki leaves first, because she’s got a boyfriend who she stays with often. Hibiki looks annoyed at the inconvenience. “Fuck. It’s cold out.” Hibiki stalks toward a dumpster in the alley and pushes it. Behind it is a black backpack, a little worn, but none the worse for wear. The only decorations on the bag are some of those iron-patches with sarcastic sayings or cheesy graphics. Hibiki opens it and swears. “That bitch! She took my cigarettes!” Grumbling to herself, she reaches into her jacket and fishes around for a stray cigarette and a lighter. When she succeeds in finding both, she lights one end of the cig up and takes a long drag of it. Sighing, she exhales a puff of smoke. Hibiki grabs two more cigarette from her pocket and holds them out to Ryota and Shiori. “You guys want one?”

Ryota accepts the cig and Hibiki lights it up for her. Shiori wrinkles her nose and declines. “No thanks. I wanna live a little longer.”

In response, Hibiki snorts. “Good luck.” After another puff, Hibiki addresses them again. “You two alright with sleeping tonight?”

Akane and Shiori shrug. “I’ll find somewhere,” they say.

Hibiki gives a nod, shoulders her backpack and takes her leave, only pausing for a brief moment to
wave back at them. Akane sighs and leans against the wall, the smoke from her cigarette drifting up into the sky and over the building. Her brown eyes are stormy and dark, while her lips are drawn into a thin, white line.

“Dammit,” Shiori whispers when she realizes her bag isn’t with her. She’s not about to get her stuff stolen for a second time. She climbs on the dumpster that sits under the window for the boys’ dorm and throws trash at the window. Tahashi answers it. “What?”

“Toss my bag down.”

“I don’t have it.”

“It’s in the girls’ dorm on the floor.”

“I’m not allowed in there.”

Shiori rolls her eyes. “That never stopped you.”

She receives a grunt in response before Tahashi disappears from the window and returns a few minutes later. He unceremoniously drops the bag and closes it a bit harder than necessarily the window before she can thank him. (Not that she had been planning to either way.)

“Don’t get murdered,” is all she says to Ryota, pulling a baseball cap from her bag.

It’s become a sort of morbid joke between the shelter kids and it’s one of their greetings. Of these, they have many. Where normal people would say ‘Good morning’, they would say, ‘Oh God, are you still alive?’ They don’t deny it’s weird, but it’s been going on too long to question it.

Ryota snorts in amusement, flips her hand up in a quick goodnight motion while dropping her cigarette, stomps on it and leaves.

With a small smile, Shiori sets out down the alley, humming quietly.

For a bit she entertains the idea of asking to stay at Bishop’s, but drops it pretty soon after. It’s not that she doesn’t trust Bishop—she does, much more than any adult in her life, save for Midoriya Inko—but she would rather not intrude. Being a nuisance to someone she wants to stick around isn’t something she plans on doing. Enough people in her life have left as it is, so she doesn’t plan on scaring off who she has left.

Sleeping in the park isn’t a terrible idea, but if you don’t have a group, it’s basically asking to get mugged, so that’s out.

She could sleep on a heating vent at the train station, or a normal vent, but all the good spots are reserved for the veterans, because unlike the general population, they respect their soldiers.

So, the train station is probably out too.

The Shiori remembers her spot. It’s been awhile since she’s had to use it, because Hanako had been in better mood than usual before today’s incident. Shiori’s spot is near the ‘ghost’ part of town, where most of the buildings are condemned and only ‘undesirables’ dare to roam. It’s under an overpass with a blocked off road. Not the best protection from the elements, but she’ll survive. And if she doesn’t…… oh well.

She decides to try and see if her spot’s still available. If it isn’t, Dagobah Beach is just a hop, skip and a jump away. No one really bothers with that place but the beachcombers anyway.

The sound of rustling stops her in her tracks. The person’s breathing is near silent, but she can feel their presence, and thanks her quirk. Stiffly, she picks up the pace, making quicker strides to get out of the park before she gets mugged for money she doesn’t have.

The person moves quickly behind her, but keeps their distance. Her fists tighten at her sides, ready for a fight. Shiori has no qualms about fighting off this possible attacker with her quirk; whatever laws disagree be damned.

She tenses when the person jumps, from a tree, presumably, and she leaps back, putting as much space in between her and the other person. It’s now that she gets a good look at him and relaxes, but
only a bit.
“Eraserhead.”
The rough looking man seems surprised that he’s been recognized. “What’re you doing out this late, kid?”
“Walking.”
Her sarcasm isn’t appreciated by the pro. “Shouldn’t you be heading home? I’m sure your parents are worried.”
He either thinks I’m a criminal or that I’m ‘working’ and looking for some customers.
Shiori bites the inside of her cheek, forcing the thought down. “Just taking a shortcut.” The last thing she needs is a pro-hero on her ass.
The underground hero looks her over for a moment before gruffly nodding. “Be careful. Bad things happen in this part of town.”
She nods and continues on her way.
At least there are some pros out there who care.

Jesus sips the whiskey in his glass and sighs, allowing himself to relax. The atmosphere of the bar is hazy and loud, which wouldn’t normally be his scene if his friend hadn’t asked him here.

Chizome, seated next to him, watches him with those predatory eyes, still and deadly. For once, he’s without his weapons—or, the visible ones, at least—and the man looks something closer to normal. He’s wearing a black medical mask to cover up his lack of a nose. (Which is pretty fucking disgusting, if you ask Jesus. Who cuts off their nose?)
“So, your crusading days are over? No more Batman?” Chizome stares at him with a blank face.
Jesus sighs. He’s wasted here. “No more Stendhal?”
The bar is sleazy, so he keeps his voice down—not that any of the other patrons are sober enough to process what he’s saying. Chizome’s grip tightens on his drink—which he still hasn’t touched, Jesus notes—and a fierce scowl contorts his face. “There is still a sickness in society that needs to be culled.”
Jesus raises an eyebrow, but he isn’t at all surprised. “Culled? Death is a bit extreme, don’t you think?” He knows it’s not—not for Chizome. Jesus had read the headlines about the Pro Hero Granite’s unfortunate death; how he had died in the line of duty after attempting to save a civilian. The story was, and still is, utter bullshit. Jesus has seen the obvious flaws in the story and the cover up, but doesn’t know much about it until his friend comes to his apartment covered in blood and confesses.
Not that he minds. He knows that Granite has done a lot worse than be reckless enough to kill a civilian, and while he doesn’t outright say Granite deserved it, that doesn’t mean he’s not thinking it.
“So, are you going to start working under a new alias?”
“Stain.”
Now Jesus is a bit surprised. “That’s a bit...plain for you.”
“Stain.” Chizome’s tone is gruffer and more stern this time. “I have chosen to damn myself for the sake of this society’s future.”
“Yeah, I got that.”
Chizome tilts his head and a smirk quirks his lips. A rare look of mischief glints in his eyes. “So about those kids of yours-”
“Not my kids,” Jesus interrupts, shooting him a dark glare.
The killer chuckles. “Right. Those kids that aren’t yours, who basically live out of your apartment, who you worry about and see every day, are the change I want to see. They are more heroic than most of today’s.... ‘heroes’.” The teasing lilt in his voice dies out by the end. ‘Heroes’ comes off his tongue as sharp as his knives.
Jesus is too tired for this, and takes another shot. “Yeah, they definitely aren’t mine.”
“Mm.”
“But-” He downs the rest of his glass. “-I am proud of them. They’ll be great heroes whether or not they get a license.”

Akaguro Chizome stands, straightening his mask and jacket. “Well, if they ever need help, don’t hesitate to call me.” He pays for the drink that he didn’t touch and leaves.

Jesus watches his younger friend leave and sighs. He needs a cigarette. Belatedly, he reminds himself that he quit that years ago, and he’s been clean since his injury. “Good God, I’m getting old,” he chuckles, with a bit of bitterness in his voice. Against his better judgement, he orders another shot. Tomorrow’s hangover is going to bite him in the ass either way.

Kayano’s phone pings, stirring her from her sleep.

-Unknown is online-

Unknown: Cobra, I hope you’ll think about my offer.
Unknown: Don’t text the answer. Meet me at the abandoned overpass in the construction district on Friday at 1 AM.

-Unknown is offline-

Me: okay.
Me: i’ll call daedalus
Me: but don’t expect any trust. this is a possibility.

-Unknown is online-

Unknown: Alright.
Unknown: Also, your grammar could use some work.
Me: Do you actually want to meet or not?
Unknown: Yes. I do.

Her fingers hesitate over the buttons for just a moment.
Me: Why didn’t you contact Cerberus as a whole?
She doesn’t receive an answer that night, nor that morning when she wakes up. So, with a sigh, she calls Mei up and starts making plans for Friday.

Izuku knows something’s up.

Granted, it takes him awhile to catch on, but he knows that Mei and Shiori are planning something. So, instead of trying to work around Mei, he just asks Shiori outright. And, as expected, she answers honestly.

“We weren’t hiding it from you. You never specifically asked.”

Of course, he’s still a bit mad. “We’re a team! You can’t go behind my back about this!”

“I was checking something out. I wasn’t ‘doing’ anything. Nobody set anything in stone.”

“That’s not the point!”

“Guys! Stop yelling!” Mei shouts.

“Now you’re yelling too!”

“Yeah, just to get you to stop!”

“I thought I could trust you guys!”

Shiori is fifty shades of done with their antics. “Look, if it makes you feel better, you can come. I’m not stopping you. We only kept it between us because Sweep contacted me personally. We just….didn’t think you needed to know.”

“He could be dangerous!”

The suggestion sparks Shiori’s temper. “He’s a vigilante,” she bites. “Like us.”

“Yeah, but who’s to say he’s got morals like we do? He could kill you! How do you even know it’s him that contacted you?”

Shiori sighs. “Because I know who he actually is, okay? We met in foster care a while back and I ran into him on patrol and recognized him. It’s him.”

“Why-why didn’t you guys tell me?” His voice cracks, and honestly, Izuku isn’t proud of it. Tears start welling up in his eyes and he’s fighting the burning in his throat, desperately trying not to cry. Shiori’s hand falls on his shoulder. “We wanted to be sure before we pulled it all together. That, and, well….you might not like him.”

Izuku sniffs and dries his eyes. “Why?”

Shiori takes a deep breath. “Because Shinsou Hitoshi can control minds.”
At that statement, Izuku's blood runs cold.

Chapter End Notes

My poor babies.
I have a few questions about Eraserhead's quirk:
Can he erase more than one person's quirk at a time? That might make sense, since in USJ, he took on a whole crowd. Also, how does his capture weapon float when he uses his quirk? Is it a side effect of his quirk that he has some minor levitation or something else? Why do his eyes turn red? If he wanted to disguise his quirk usage, couldn't he wear coloured contact lenses to hide it? If he could, it might give off less of a hint, though his hair floating is pretty big. Why doesn't Aizawa cut his hair? He always talks about efficiency, and if his hair was really short, then it would be a lot harder to tell if his quirk was active or not. Also, if Aizawa were to come across Siren, if he tried to use Erasure on her, would it work? She can amplify sound and breathe underwater. Her appearance and breathing underwater are mutations, but her sound amplification is not, so would he be able to stop part of her quirk? And what about Hagakure? It seems like she can bend light, so would her being invisible just be a side effect of her quirk always being "on"? If he erased her quirk, would she be able to see herself? I have similar questions for Shoji and Tokoyami; would Tokoyami no longer be able to use Dark Shadow, even though Dark Shadow is sentient? And would Shoji's arms just stop creating other body parts? It probably wouldn't make his arms go away, but would he still be able to create another hand or something?
Anyway, those are my weird questions that came up when I was plotting the story.
Have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 9: Are all made of gold

Chapter Summary

Breaking news: a bunch of kids with two (possibly three) overprotective dads do dangerous things and save people. (And do a better job than the police.)

Chapter Notes

The sentences in bold are Izuku 'talking' inside his Mind Palace, using his quirk. During the mission, the words in italics are the conversation being carried out over the comms.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Shinsou Hitoshi doesn’t remember when he first became a vigilante. It’s more of a gradual process; he doesn’t plan it out and make some debut like Cerberus does. At first, he’d just step into things to stop them, and after a bit he ‘officially’ becomes a vigilante. When he goes to UA, he’s going to learn to be an underground hero, and that means keeping to the shadows. So, in a way, his vigilante work is just practice for being an underground hero.

Vigilantism is illegal in all forms, quirk or not, but vigilantism involving quirks tends to carry a heftier prison sentence. That, of course, doesn’t stop him. He’ll quit (or at least slow down on) his vigilante work if- when he gets into UA’s Hero Course.

But he can’t deny it; his fighting abilities are lackluster at best, and he relies too heavily on his quirk. None of the dojos around him teach the fighting style he wants to learn.

Then he remembers Kayano Shiori.

He doesn’t really know her, but they lived in the same youth home for a bit. The rumor is that she and her friends are trained by a former pro hero. If he can get training like that, then he could stop relying on his quirk.

The downside is, Kayano Shiori isn’t really a ‘warm and friendly’ person—not that he’s any different—but that makes approaching her as a stranger harder, and she doesn’t seem all that keen on accepting new friends.

So he does the totally normal—not at all creepy thing and follows her.

Long story short, he finds out that they’ve got more in common than being the products of a shitty system. It gives them common ground, so he contacts her. In hindsight, it might’ve made more sense to ask the entire team—at least, he assumes the freckled boy and the pink haired girl Shiori trains with are the other members of Cerberus—but he’d rather talk to as few people as possible. His quirk makes people uneasy at best, and Kayano Shiori, for as little as she knows him, never seemed put off by it in the slightest.
That doesn’t mean he hadn’t expected Kayano to shut him down or outright deny everything. In fact, it’s a little more than shocking when she suggests they meet up. It’s his idea for the time and place. Unfortunately, slipping out from underneath his foster dads’ watchful gaze is a little tricky. They’re his first parents to actually give a damn about him, and while he appreciates it, it does get in the way of being Sweep.

After he does manage to sneak away, he waits at the set rendezvous, nervous. It’s not long before Kaya- Cobra emerges from the shadows.

“So, you wanted to work together.”

“Yeah, that’s the general gist of it.”

He can see her silvery eyes inspecting him from underneath her hood. During the silence, he takes in her ‘costume’. Both Rabbit and Cobra’s outfits are similar, but the colour scheme differs. Cobra has a charcoal coloured hoodie on with a black mask that hides the bottom half of her face and her neck. Her hands are covered by thin black gloves, the pants are a similar colour and for shoes she wears well made boots.

How did she afford those? They look-

“Sweep? Sweep, did you hear anything I said?”

Reality smacks him in the head by way of Kayano Shiori’s hand connecting with his cheek.

“Hello?”

“Sorry. I’m listening.”

“Right.” She’s quiet again for a moment. “You need to come back to our base.”

He nods and stands, but Shiori stops him. “Don’t take this personally, but-”

Of course.

“I know.” He bats her hand away, scowl on his face.

She frowns. “I didn’t mean-”

“I know, so can we go already?” Hitoshi’s tone has a sharp edge and his patience is wearing thin.

“Fine. Keep up.” Without warning, Kayano darts across the abandoned construction site, scales and building and leaps from roof to roof.

Hitoshi’s attempts to match Kayano’s pace are pathetic at best. He’s winded after the first one, and after successfully leaping across two buildings, he nearly falls into an alley. After that, Kayano pulls him along with her quirk, that forces him to keep up with her. They end up in the abandoned manufacturing district. Hitoshi does admit that the building they chose is a good candidate for homebase.

Cobra slips through a partially boarded up door and Shinsou follows her through. She leads him to the basement where the other two members of Cerberus are. The pink haired girl and freckled boy are seated at a table on the far end, watching him carefully. “Mask off,” Kayano orders, sitting down and pulling her hood and mask down.

“Fine.” Hitoshi’s skull mask comes down.

The pink haired girl gives him a ghost of a smile while the freckled boy’s lips flicker between a smile
and a nervous frown. “Only use codenames. Never know who’s listening.”

Hitoshi nods. “I’m Sweep.”

“Daedalus. I run tech support for Cerberus.”

“R-rabbit. I w-work with Ka-I mean, Cobra on patrols.” The greenette boy with glasses is clearly nervous. He shifts from side to side and casts uncertain glances at Shinsou.

“Do you have a problem with me?”

Rabbit’s head shoots up. “W-what?”

“She told me about my quirk, didn’t she?” Shinsou accuses. “You think I’m a villain.”

“N-no! Your quirk is extremely useful for heroics-!”

“Bullshit.”

“I-”

“Hitoshi.” Kayano’s voice is clipped and cold. He can’t help but notice she’s wearing that expression she wears around everyone else that clearly reads, ‘Back off’. ‘Quit it.’

He takes a moment to breathe deeply. Rabbit speaks again. “I-I didn’t mean to offend you.”

Hitoshi raises his eyes to meet Rabbit’s green ones and mutters, “S fine.”

“Ooh! I made you a hoodie!” Daedalus leaps up from her chair and darts into a backroom. She reappears a few moments later with a dark purple hoodie with a white cat symbol in the middle. “Cobra said you liked cats.” The pride is hard to miss in her voice as she presents it to him.

“...Thanks?”

“The hoodie is fireproof, waterproof and insulated,” Kayano clarifies.

He nods and accepts it with a quiet thank-you.

The rest of the night passes smoothly, if a bit awkwardly. In the early hours, the four part ways.

It’s not too long until they find themselves working together. Sweep catches a rumor about a quirk trafficking ring operating out of an old ‘restaurant’ after hours and the vigilantes begin planning. Shiori walks by everyday to scope the place out, noting exits and entrances. Hitoshi gathers any info he can get without setting off red flags. Izuku and Mei get to work with the actual plan of entrance, the backups and the rescue. (This may or may not involve Mei hacking into the city’s building database.)

On the last night before the ring moves, they prepare to strike.

“What’s this?” Sweep says, picking up the earpiece.

“A comm. We need to keep you in the loop with Daedalus.”

He nods and begins putting it in. “Can you hear me?”
“Yep!” Daedalus chirps.

“The police are on speed dial in case this goes sideways,” Cobra informs him.

Rabbit cuts in. “But it shouldn’t.”

“Okay guys, there should be a grate above you.”

And of course, there is, an estimated five feet up, or so. Rabbit stacks a few trash cans and boxes together and they climb up to the grate. Cobra pulls out a swiss army knife and undoes the screws. The grate slides out of place and she catches it without a sound.

“Climb into the vent system.”
“Move faster! Isn’t your name Rabbit?” Sweep hisses.

“I-I’m trying!”
“I swear to God, if I have to come back there, I will kick both of your asses.”

“Do you guys remember the way?”

“Straight until a four way split, then go left, then right, two more lefts, then go straight and there should be another grate above the boiler room,” Rabbit replies.

“Okay. I’ll check the security cameras. Back in a few.”

“She hacked them?”

“Is that really the most surprising thing she’s done so far?” Cobra mutters.

They reach the second grate, and drop down into the dark room. “Alright, the villains are mostly on the second floor.”

“There’s one on the first too,” Cobra pipes up. “I can feel him breathing by the front door.”

“...right. Anyone else on the first floor? There aren’t security cameras there.”

“None breathing at least.”

“So there are about twelve villains in total-”

Sweep blinks. He’s never handled anything this big. “Twelve?”

“Maybe thirteen.”

“Thirteen…”

Cobra nudges him. “Rabbit, what do you think?”

Rabbit closes his eyes and pauses for a moment.

He’s in the control room, standing at the balcony. “Tomo, boost senses fifty two percent.” Tomo obeys. “Yes sir.” The room whirrs to life.

He opens his eyes and can see around him perfectly, despite the darkness. He can hear the steady
breathing by the door of a villain, just like Cobra had mentioned.

“What the hell?” Sweep whispers.

Rabbit turns to Sweep. “What?”

“Your eyes are glowing,” Sweep says matter-of-factly.

“That’s normal.”

Cobra creeps by the door. “Rush him in ten.”

“This needs to be done quickly and quietly,” Rabbit says.

“Let me handle this.”

Despite their whispery protests, Sweep calmly marches out and strolls across the cement floor.

“Hey, I heard this is the place to score, right?”

“What the-” The bulky man goes still and his eyes glass over.

Rabbit gulps, but Cobra elbows him and shoots him a look.

“How many captives do you have?”

The man answers without hesitation. “Twenty.”

“How many men do you have in this building?”

“Fourteen.”

Sweep groans, dragging a gloved hand over his face. “Including you?”

“No.”

Cobra scowls, bringing a finger to her comm. “Daedalus-”

“I said about! So I was off a bit, sue me!”

The vigilante group lets out a collective groan. “Go up and tell your leader to come down here.”

The man stiffly walks upstairs. “Cobra, up to the second floor, but make sure they don’t see you until I give the signal,” Rabbit orders.

Cobra nods and disappears up an abandoned elevator shaft with not so much as a sound. That leaves Rabbit and Sweep alone—which, admittedly, is not the best matchup.

“Just….go wait by the stairs or something.”

Rabbit hesitates, but sprints toward the stairs and crouches down, ready to pounce.

It’s not long before the leader comes down with his brainwashed minion. “Shijuko, there’s nothing down here. What the hell is wrong with you?”

‘Shijuko’ doesn’t answer. “Heya, big boss. Comin’ my way?”

The ‘boss’ stops at the bottom of the stairs and turns to Shijuko. “You son of a-”
Rabbit leaps onto the boss’ back, wraps his arms around his neck and squeezes as hard as he can. The boss starts sputtering and swinging around, trying to throw the vigilante off his back. Sweep picks up a pipe and shouts for Rabbit to get off. Letting go, Rabbit tumbles across the floor and Sweep brings the lead pipe down on the boss’ head as hard as possible. The man crumbles like a house of cards, slumped to the ground unconscious.

Sweep sort of smiles at Rabbit, pipe still in hand. “We make a pretty good team, huh?”

Rabbit returns the uneasy smile. “...Yeah.”

“This is Cobra. I need help on the second floor.”

“Sweep, Rabbit, Cobra is currently holding off the villains upstairs, but she needs help. The captives also need someone to get them to safety.”

“Did anyone call the cops yet?”

“Nothing’s showing up on the police scanner, so…probably not?”

“Probably not,” Sweep repeats in disbelief. “We’re gonna die.”

When they approach the second level, villains are swarming Cobra, who’s practically backed into a corner. A few villains are downed, one of them is bleeding from the head while another is bleeding profusely from her chest with a knife jutting out of her ribcage. Her knee is twisted at a funny angle and her breath is hoarse. She’s conscious enough to look severely pissed, so they decide she’s fine.

Sweep directs the attention of many of the villains and takes charge of their minds the instant they reply. Rabbit feels a shiver go down his spine at the uncanny control Sweep exercises over the villains’ minds.

“Rabbit, get them out of here,” Cobra shouts, driving her fist into a villain’s gut.

“Fight them,” Sweep orders and the villains under his control charge toward the others.

While Sweep fights to maintain his hold despite the physical contact made with those under his control.

Rabbit scampers over toward the locked cage and slices the lock off. “Follow me. We’re going to get you to safety.”

He leads them down the stairs and into the alley. “Daedalus, call the cops. The rescue is a success.”

“Gotcha. Dialing now. Get Sweep and Cobra out before they get there.”

He nods. “Cobra, Sweep, clear out. We’ve gotta go.”

“Give us a minute.”

A tug on his sleeve draws Rabbit’s attention to a young boy with grey hair and black eyes. “M-mr.-”

“Rabbit,” he offers.

“Mr. Rabbit, y-you’re my hero.” The boy says it with stars in his eyes and he looks at Rabbit like he’s personally hung the moon.

“Thanks.” Cobra and Sweep exit the building and they all disappear into the night, without a trace.
The police arrive a few minutes later and find the present scene: scared, but safe quirk trafficking victims and unconscious villains.

Tsukauchi sighs. "Nothing?"

Officer Sansa shakes his head as criminals are loaded into ambulances and police cruisers.

Aizawa groans as his phone begins ringing. “Don’t answer it,” Hizashi mumbles, tightening his grip.

The ravenette sighs. “I’ve got to. It’s work.”

“It can wait.”

“No, it can’t.” He loosens the blonde’s arms from around his waist and answers the phone. “Hello?”

“Eraserhead, it’s Detective Tsukauchi.”

“What happened?”

“Cerberus is working with Sweep.”

Another tired groan slips past his lips as he starts getting dressed in the dark. “What did they do?”

“They’re moving onto bigger targets. This was a quirk trafficking ring we’ve been after for the last six months.”

“Shame that the vigilantes are doing a better job than the police,” Aizawa bites.

“I think that’s their point,” Tsukauchi answers dryly.

“Any casualties?”

“No. Sweep was involved, so most of the criminals were brainwashed.”

“They’re fine, right?”

“We were able to get them out of the trance.”

Aizawa pauses. “I hear a ‘but’ coming.”

Tsukauchi’s long suffering sigh hisses through the phone. “One is currently in a coma, another has a severe concussion and another has a punctured lung, broken ribs and trauma to her left knee. One of the quirk trafficking victims claims the injuries happened when one of the criminals with a knife throwing quirk attacked Cobra. They dodged and that’s when the punctured lung happened. The victim couldn’t see much else, but they know a fight ensued between Rabbit, Sweep, Cobra and the villains. They’re not sure, but they think at least one of the vigilantes was wounded.”

“Please tell me we have some DNA on them.”

“Not yet.”

He sighs. “I can be there in fifteen minutes.”

“Alright. See you then.”

Aizawa hangs up and feels a familiar weight lean onto his shoulders. “Shouta,” Hizashi whines.

“I’ve gotta work,” he replies, pressing a quick kiss to his husband’s cheek before pushing Hizashi off
of him. “I’ll be back in the morning.”

“You always say that.”

“I haven’t lied yet.”

“You better be back before I have to go to work.”

“I’ll try.”

Aizawa exits their bedroom and passes his foster son’s room. The pale light of a screen peeks out from underneath the door. He sighs for what must be the fifth time since waking up at this ungodly hour and knocks.

“Come in.”

Shinsou’s curled up in his chair at the desk, staring at his computer in the dark. “You should be asleep,” Aizawa says.

“I could say the same to you.”

Cheeky brat.

“I have to work.”

“I’m working too.”

Aizawa huffs. “What’re you looking at?”

Shinsou allows Aizawa to look over his shoulder. “I’m chatting in Cerberus and Sweep forums. Word is that they teamed up.” He turns to his foster father. “You wouldn’t happen to know anything about that would ya, Catman?”

Aizawa waves him off with an eyeroll. “Go to bed.”

“Hey, wait-uh, Aizawa.”

The lack of sass in Shinsou’s voice catches his attention. “What?”

“Would you mind if I got some of their stuff?”

“Their ‘stuff’?”

Shinsou awkwardly rubs the nape of his neck. “Like, merchandise. It’s just… I basically grew up in Akumi, and the police never did anything, and now there are these people finally getting rid of all the-”

“Fine.”

Shinsou lights up but quickly covers up his surprise and excitement. “Cool. Uh, thanks.”

Aizawa smirks. “It’s fine, kid. You can ask for things you want. That’s what we’re here for.”

Shinsou doesn’t think he hears the “That’s a first” muttered under his breath, but he does. With a frown, he makes a note to talk to Shinsou’s social worker about his past homes.

Aizawa swats Shinsou lightly in the back of the head. “Now go to sleep. Hizashi will kill me if you turn into an insomniac like me.”

“Just go to sleep before I ground you.”

“Whatever you say, Dad.” Shinsou smirks at the tired erasure hero.

Aizawa smacks him in the head a little harder this time. “Cheeky brat.”
Shinsou snorts and shuts his computer off before climbing into bed. “Oh, one more thing.”

“What?”

“Do you mind if I bring some friends over tomorrow?”

“Sure. Just don’t wreck the place.” He pauses. “And they better not be loud.”

“Gotch’a.”

With a smile (though he’ll deny it til the day he dies) Aizawa heads to work.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys enjoyed the chapter.
We’re gonna get some fun vigilante gang stuff in the next chapter.
Oh! And I’m thinking of doing a side piece for this story; just a series of oneshots
surrounding the characters in this story, be they fluffy or angsty. What do you guys
think?
Anyway, have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 10: When your dreams all fail

Chapter Summary

Vigilante gang hangs out at Dadzawa’s, Bishop throws Hitoshi into a river, we get a look at the Hatsume family and Shiori saves two kids.

Chapter Notes

I really enjoyed writing this chapter, so I hope you'll enjoy reading it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The next day is, thankfully, a slow day. Bandages wrap Shiori’s left wrist that has been slashed in the rescue earlier by the villain with the knife throwing quirk. All three of the field vigilantes are exhausted, while Mei’s energy has yet to dip. Shiori sketches quietly in her notebook while Mei rambles loudly, Hitoshi plays with a cat and Izuku naps.

“Did you guys see the headlines?” Mei waves her phone around. “Cerberus and Sweep’s big team up is front page news. Front page!”

“Keep it down. My foster dad’s trying to sleep.”

“Not anymore.” They turn and see Aizawa zombie-walk out of the bedroom, hair knotted and messy. “You said they wouldn’t be loud.”

“Technically, you said that. And they’re not all loud.” He points toward the pink haired girl. “Just Mei.”

Aizawa grumbles something and makes his way into the kitchen. “Of course I can’t get any peace and quiet on my day off.”

“Didn’t know ya took days off.”

“Zashi made me.”

“Ooh, you’re whipped .”

Aizawa shoots a red-eyed glare Hitoshi’s way. “Shut it, brat.” He starts rummaging through the fridge. “I can and will kick you out.”

“But you won’t.”

“Oh, don’t tempt me.” He pulls the milk out.

Hitoshi chuckles. “So, do you think Cerberus and Sweep are gonna stick together?” He keeps a joking, yet careful eye on Aizawa to gauge his reaction.
Aizawa just scowls and turns away. Silently, Hitoshi nods to his friends. Shiori plays along. It’s a known fact among the group that Hitoshi’s foster parents are the pro heroes Present Mic and Eraserhead. “Maybe. I mean, they did break up a quirk trafficking ring together, right?”

Mei decides to test the waters. “Yeah! They’re heroes!”

Aizawa whirls around and cuts in, “If they want to be heroes, they should go through the proper channels to acquire a license. Without a license, they’re going to get themselves killed or someone else.”

“Oh, someone’s salty~,” Hitoshi teases. “Did you not catch them with their hands in the cookie jar?”

Aizawa glares at his foster son who’s comfortably reclining on the couch. He regards him with suspicion. “Did you tell your friends?”

“How?” Hitoshi says, batting his eyelashes innocently.

With a huff, the hero storms out, unknowingly leaving the four people he’s been trying to catch for the past year in his living room.

“He seems grumpy.”

Hitoshi shrugs. “He’s always like that.”

“Are you sure you’re not biologically related?” Mei teases.

He throws a pillow at her face and she tumbles off the couch, giggling.

Izuku turns to Shiori. “Hey, Kaori?”

Shiori puts her sketchbook down. "Yeah~"

Shinsou bursts out laughing. “You call her Kaori? That’s-Ow!”

Shiori beans him in the face with a pillow. “I’ve been avenged!” Mei cheers, flopping down on Hitoshi’s lap as he recovers from the attack.

“No, he was just getting on my nerves. Avenge yourself.”

“Betrayal!”

“Shut up.”

“So-” Hitoshi locks eyes with Izuku, trying to make conversation while Mei and Shiori bicker.

“What’s your quirk?” Izuku hesitates for a second, making Hitoshi scowl. “I’m not gonna use my quirk on you, if that’s what you think.”

“N-no, it’s just that……” He sighs. “It’s called Mind Palace. I can record observations and information about anyone, control my body’s functions and alter things.”


“Oh, well…..surprise?”

Mei go off at him, ranting about how he should mention these things, why didn’t he tell her (not
everyone else, just her) and Shiori and Hitoshi just watch and laugh.

“What’s the Lab?” Hitoshi asks.

“He’s got a library, a control room and a lab. The control room an increase or decrease his body’s abilities or senses like sight or hearing, the library’s for recording information, and I guess the lab’s for altering stuff? I don’t know.” Shiori shrugs.

They begin speaking in low voices. “What is his problem with me?”

“He doesn’t have a problem with you,” she replies. “He’s just got a bad experience with mind control quirks.”

He scowls. “But-”

“So what do you mean ‘alter things’? Like DNA? Could you grow two more arms?”

Izuku shakes his head. “I don’t really know. I’ve only been doing small stuff like mess with my eye colour.” To prove his point, his eye colour switches from green to red and from red to blue. “See?”

“So could you increase your strength or something?”

“Okay, so-”

Hitoshi can’t deny that it’s impressive, but that does little to assuage his resentment towards Izuku. His quirk isn’t flashy like Izuku’s or Shiori’s. Even Mei is arguably cooler than him. They don’t need someone else to show their quirks like he does. (And like hell if someone’s going to volunteer to be brainwashed.) Kids at school avoid him like the plague and refuse to speak to him so he doesn’t place them under his control. Really, he wouldn’t do that, he knows better. Public quirk usage, especially when it comes to mind or body control quirks, is strictly forbidden. Even if it wasn’t, he’d never use it. As a little kid with a newly manifested quirk, he never really intended to use it, but it activated when he least expected it. His birth parents used to muzzle him and gave him a notebook to write in. They wouldn’t speak to him, ever. In fact, they hardly acknowledged his existence. It isn’t until he goes to the neighbour to ask for food that he’s taken from the home.

So, forgive him for not being so understanding about Izuku’s wariness around him, but he thinks he’s entitled to be a little pissed off about it.

Coffee, one of Aizawa and Hizashi’s many cats, leaps onto his lap. She purrs as he runs a hand over her patchy fur. “Aw! Cute kitty-!” Mei reaches out to pet her only for Coffee to snap at her hand. “Hey!”

“She hates being called kitty.”

Emi curls around Izuku’s shoulders and rests there. She’s Hitoshi’s favourite cat, so he shoots her a glare of utter betrayal. “Traitor,” he mutters.

“What did you say?” Izuku blinks at him, innocent.

“Nothing.”

Shiori snorts. She’s playing with the orange tabby, Kei. The older cat seems quite smitten with her. Mei’s failed to attract any of the other cats in the apartment, of course, and she’s (loudly) lamenting
“No one loves mehhhhhhh!” She wraps her arms around Hitoshi’s neck, scaring off Coffee in the process. “Love me Hitoshi!”

“Get off of me!”

“Aizawa.”

The tired man sighs. “What happened, Tsukauchi?”

“I thought I’d give you an update on the case.” There’s some noise in the back and Tsukauchi lets a rare, annoyed curse slip out.

“Having a hard time?”

Tsukauchi huffs. “We wouldn’t be if the officers would do their jobs. The only people who are actually doing the work are the ones coming in from Musutafu, and we’re thinly spread as it is. Look, I know it’s your day off, but-”

“Sure. I’ll be by in ten minutes. ‘Rest and relaxation’ was getting boring.”

Aizawa hears the man chuckle, wincing at the extreme exhaustion in his voice. “Treasure it. I’d kill for some of that right now. I might actually ring one of these officers’ necks.”

The erasure hero snorts, draping his capture weapon over his shoulders. “Don’t bother. The prison sentence isn’t worth it.”

There’s another pause and Aizawa can hear arguing in the background before Tsukauchi hurriedly says, “Something came up.” and ends the call.

Aizawa exits his bedroom and passes by the living room, where Hitoshi’s fighting with….Mei? Is that her name? Hitoshi has mentioned his friends’ names to him and Hizashi, but he hadn’t been listening.

In any case, it seems like the pink haired female is winning.


The greenette drops his head and sighs.

Aizawa freezes, remembering what he looks like. Hitoshi smirks at his foster dad. “Looks like the cat’s out of the bag.” He holds Coffee up, waving her back at forth.

“You told them beforehand.”

Hitoshi gasps. “Me? Tell the only friends I’ve ever had in my life a secret? What is this foolishness?”

“Brat,” Aizawa grouches.

“Old man,” Hitoshi fires back.

Aizawa grinds his teeth together and glances at Hitoshi’s three friends (Damn, he really needs to
learn their names-). “Not a word of this to anyone. Not even your parents.”

Pink-Haired Girl Who’s Name He Doesn’t Know shrugs. “My parents don’t care anyway.”

“Not a problem.”

Izuku looks sheepish. “My mom knows everything. Sorry.”

He sighs, pinching the bridge of his nose. Hitoshi shakes his head. “Wow, Dadzawa. I thought you’d be a lot more careful about keeping your identity a secret.”

“You’re sleeping outside tonight, Shinsou.”

“Aw, come on Dadzawa-”

“Stop calling me that!”

“Dadzawa, Dadzawa, Dadzawa-”

“GET OUT!”

In the end, Hitoshi gets him and his friends kicked out, but they all know that Aizawa doesn’t really mean it. “Your foster dad’s a lot nicer than Hanako,” Shiori notes.

He snorts. “Doesn’t take much to top that bitch.”

“Amen to that.”

“I’ve gotta go study for our finals, guys! See ya!” Mei hugs everyone at least once and presses a kiss against Shinsou’s cheek before darting off, cackling like a maniac.

“HEY!”

“Didn’t know you two were….involved.” Shiori smirks at Hitoshi’s red face. “Do you need the talk about being safe?”

“Wh-I...we are not-”

Izuku turns his head away, face beet red. “K-kaori, can you not-”

“I’m just making sure.”

Hitoshi reaches over and smacks Shiori in the head, glaring at her. She shoves him away, chuckling. The three find their way to a park and skip rocks at the river. Shiori sits on the bridge, idly watching the two boys (somewhat competitively) toss rocks over the glassy surface of the water.

“Jesus Christ, I can’t get away from you kids.” Bishop continues to grumble to himself, but approaches the trio. “Where’s Mei?”

“Being a good student and studying.”

“I’ve seen your grades, Shiori. You should be doing the same.”

The girl shrugs and leans over the edge of the small bridge. “I’ll be fine.”

“You want to graduate junior high, don’t you?”
“Hey Bishop!” Izuku waves at him, eager. “What are you doing here?”

“Well, I was trying to relax like a normal person and take a walk, but-” Shiori coughs into her first and rolls her eyes. He glares at her from the corner of his eyes. “-I guess that’s not happening.” He buries his hands in his coat and shudders. “It’s fucking cold out here. How are you only wearing a jacket, kid?”

Shiori sighs. “Well-”

“It’s part of her quirk!” Izuku cuts in, rushing over to the bridge. “It’s from her mother’s side, because her quirk was Temperature Control, and it carried over to her children’s. You see, Shiori was the only one to get any of her father’s quirk, which, as you know, was Flight. He came from a line of air quirks, and combined with her mother’s temperature quirk, Shiori got-”

Bishop holds up a hand. “I get it, kid. It was a rhetorical question.”

Izuku sputters, tripping over his words. “O-oh! Sorry, it’s just-”

“I know, you find quirks very interesting.”

“Oh, sorry to ruin the moment here, but, who the hell are you?”

Bishop glances over at Hitoshi and groans. “Oh God, there’s another one of you?”

“Yep.”

“Sorry, I’m a little confused as to who you are.”

“He’s our trainer,” Shiori says. She sweeps her arm toward Bishop. “He’s a retired pro hero. Bishop was his hero name.”

“This guy taught you how to jump buildings?” Staring at them in disbelief, Hitoshi’s mouth hangs open. “He’s...old-looking and-”

“I can and will kick your young ass across the river.” Bishop gives him a look, daring him to say anything as a smug expression blankets his face. “This old-looking guy taught these brats everything they know.” His hands find their place on Izuku and Shiori’s shoulders. “They-especially this one-” He claps Izuku hard on the shoulder and the boy stumbles. “-probably would’ve gotten themselves killed by now if they didn’t learn to fight.”

“So, wait, you teach people how to fight.”

“No, I taught brats who refused to leave me alone to fight.”

“So, you could teach me-” Hitoshi points to himself. “-right?”

Bishop frowns. Shiori nudges him and he leans down low enough for her to whisper something in his ear. He scrunches his face up into a frown. “Another one?”

She nods.

“Really?”

Shiori digs her elbow into Bishop’s ribs, shooting him a look.

Bishop rolls his eyes and takes a few strides to meet Hitoshi where he stands by the river. “Fine, but one condition.” He places his hand on Hitoshi’s shoulder.
“Sure.”

“Pay more attention.”
With a sharp, sudden movement, Bishop yanks Hitoshi forward sweeps his legs out from underneath him and throws him into the river. Smirking, Bishop brushes himself off. “Lesson one: Always be ready. I’m an asshole and have absolutely no problem with body flipping you if you aren’t paying attention.”

Hitoshi pulls himself out of the river, scowling. Cool water drips from his face and soaks his clothes. Despite how absolutely freezing he is, his cheeks burn. Shiori and Izuku laugh at him from the safety of the bridge. “Yeah, yeah, laugh it up. I’m probably going to die of hypothermia, now.” This causes them to laugh harder until they start crying. Sociopaths.

“Hey, kid, so-”

Hitoshi’s quirk activates. “Jump in the river,” he orders.

Robotically, Bishop walks towards the river and hops in. The shock from the cold water snaps him out of it. “You little brat!”

Hitoshi smirks at him. Out of the corner of his eye, he can see Izuku shrink away, but Shiori grabs onto his arm and mouths something that looks suspiciously like ‘it’s fine’.

He tries to ignore it.

All of sudden, Hitoshi’s immersed in the freezing water. Bishop chuckles above him, smirking down at Hitoshi as he stands. “Come at me, kid.”

Smiling, Hitoshi gets in a low crouch and lunges at the taller man.

The next day Hitoshi and Bishop are sick. Go figure.

The Hatsumes are a family of pink hair, similar looks, and high IQs to match. The matriarch of the Hatsume clan is Niko, a short, hefty woman with a hard jawline and pale pink hair that falls over her shoulder to her mid back. Her head sits upon broad shoulders and a wide, strong frame. Her eyes are a bold blue and her smile shines bright and confident. The father, Riku, is much taller, standing about a head above the average Japanese male. His top half is almost comically bigger than his bottom half and his hands are worn and gnarled from years of hard work. Despite his burly shape and somewhat rough appearance, he’s what most people would consider rugged and good looking.

Emiko is her father’s daughter, having inherited his dark pink hair and height. She’s on the leaner side, but little peeks of her mother can be seen; her blue eyes, the lighter streaks of pink in her hair, her figure (her temper). Mei remembers when they were younger and closer how she used to envy her sister’s model-like looks. Emiko would laugh and give her little tips on makeup or, whatever. It was nice.

“Don’t worry, Mei. You’re going to be beautiful when you’re older, I just know it.”
“Really?” She’d say. “How do you know?”

Emiko would laugh and reply, “Because you’re my sister!”

And they would ‘fight’, giggling and wrestling. But it’s not like that anymore.

Despite the mess Emiko’s become, Mei misses the moments they had when they were actually sisters. The jealousy hasn’t gone away, and the negative feelings between them have only increased. “I HATE YOU!”

A door slams shut. Mei can hear someone, probably her mother, pounding on the door. “OPEN THIS DOOR EMIKO!”

“GO AWAY!”
“YOU BETTER NOT BE SMOKING IN THERE!”
“FUCK OFF!”
“DON’T TALK TO ME THAT WAY!”

Mei sighs and shuts her desk light off. That’s probably enough studying for now. Besides, she won’t get much done with the current screaming match going on.

She throws herself onto her bed and rolls over to stare at the ceiling. Various blueprints and designs are plastered over the ceiling and walls along with certificates of excellence and awards. Pictures of a smiling family haunt her. In one photo, Mei and Emiko are hoisting a first place trophy for science above their heads. Their parents are sharing a proud grin beside their daughters, with Riku’s arm draped over Niko’s shoulders as he leans down so that he can be seen in the photo.

Mei smiles at the photo, distant and nearly forgotten.

Something crashes outside and the screaming grows louder.

Completely forgotten.

Rolling to one side, Mei reaches for her phone and texts Shiori. Izuku never answers his texts, if ever, and Hitoshi…..might be a little mad at her for earlier.

She snickers at the memory.

Me: hey

Shiori: hi

Me: what’s up??

Shiori: to be honest

Shiori: little busy rn.

Mei hesitates. She doesn’t want to intrude.

Me: w/ what?

Shiori: helping someone out. do you have Tsukauchi’s #?
Me: that bad?
Shiori: yeah. i need it now.
Mei sighs.
Me: yea sure give me a sec
Me: 226-682-1588
Shiori: thanks, i owe you big.
Me: u know it
Shiori: i'll catch you up on this later.
Shiori: bye

Shiori is offline

For just a minute after Shiori signs off, Mei wonders if they’re really friends, or if their relationship is just one of convenience to Shiori; a means to an end.

(You know that’s not true.)

She smiles.

(If Shiori didn’t like you, she’d have let you know already.)

(I know.)

Mei goes to sleep soon after.

Shiori shifts her footing on the fire escape, lingering outside of a bedroom window. The rusted metal groans in protest, and she prays it doesn’t give under her weight. Her costume has been thrown on in a hurry, but she’s got a good reason. She’d spent the last hour alternating between texting Mei and debating on whether or not to call in Hitoshi or Izuku. After deciding against it, she waits until the lights go off in the living room before tapping on the window and switches on the voice distorter.

Six year old Kimoto Inami unlocks the latch her window and pushes it open. With a little awed gasp, she stares up in wonder at the vigilante before her. “Y-you’re-”

“One of your friends told me,” Cobra replies. “A hero helps those in need.”

“R-really?” Inami’s finger brush against the bruise on her chin. All she can think of is all the times she’s tried to tell someone-anyone, and all the times she’s been dismissed. Is this really happening? Is she really going to be safe? “H-how do you know?”

“One of your friends told me,” Cobra replies. “A hero helps those in need.”
“You’re a hero?”

“No, but I’m not going to let you suffer. Get your brother, Inami-kun. We’re going to meet one of my friends.”

With a nod, Inami darts across the room with silent footsteps, leaving the vigilante at the window. She creeps through the hall, the quiet snores of her father reminding her of the danger. Makoto, her younger brother’s room is just down the hall from her.

Tiptoeing to the door, she pushes it open and whispers, “Makoto, wake up.”

Her brother stirs immediately, sitting up with a start. “Wh-what-”

She flies across the room, covering his mouth. The two wait in silence, tense, and listening for their father, but he remains asleep.

She sighs in relief. “We’ve got to go.”

“But-”

“Our hero came.”

The two Kimotos climb out onto the fire escape, which creaks under their weight. Cobra closes the window and holds a finger to their lips. “We need to be very quiet. You two need to trust me, alright?”

Inami nods while Makoto hesitates. She takes his hand and squeezes it, giving him a reassuring smile. Inami feels she can trust the vigilante before her more than anyone else in their lives. “Climb on.”

Makoto crawls up onto Cobra’s back and hooks his skinny arms around their neck. Cobra extends their hand to Inami, who accepts it and holds on with an iron grip.

After measuring up the distance, Cobra leaps off of the fire escape. They plummet for a second, and Inami cries out, startled. She’s sure they’re going to die this was a mistake why would she do this-

And then?

Weightlessness.

She, Makoto and Cobra hover feet above the ground. Cobra’s lost in concentration, maneuvering them so that they rise to the next building top. The vigilante sprints across the roof and jumps to the next one, carrying them. They stumble a few times, but never drop Inami or her brother.

Within a few minutes, they’re on a rooftop overlooking the police station. Makoto sits beside Inami, dozing off on her shoulder.

“The police station.” Cobra points toward the large building across the street.

“They’ve never done anything,” Inami whispers, tugging on the vigilante’s hoodie.

Cobra turns to Inami with soft, kind eyes. “I know. But it will be different now. I promise. Detective Tsukauchi will take care of you.”

Two police officers burst onto the rooftop just as Cobra takes a flying leap off the edge, charging at full speed.
“Wait-!” The man in the grey trench coat cries. “Cobra!”

But the vigilante has already jumped. He rushes over to the edge, but there’s no one in sight.

He sighs and redirects his attention towards the children. “You’re Kimoto Inami and Makoto, aren’t you? I’ve heard a lot about you.” A smile spreads across his lips and for the first time in awhile, Inami feels truly safe.

“I’m Detective Tsukauchi. Why don’t we head down to the station to talk?”

It’s three in the morning. Shiori yawns and shoots Mei a quick text as she stuff her vigilante outfit into her bag.

**Me: thanks for the help. i’ll fill you in on what happened tomorrow.**

**Mei: k**

And then, Shiori heads to the shelter with a rare smile on her face.

For the first time in awhile, she’s actually happy.

That night, she sleeps well.

**Chapter End Notes**

Next chapter we're going to cover Makoto and Inami's father, and we're going back to Bakugou. Ooh boy, I'm looking forward to that.

Sorry this took a little longer than usual. I was planning the events for this chapter and next. Tsukauchi's 'number' is a result of me hitting the keypad, so it's not real.

At least, I don't think it is.

We're going to have another canon character introduced. Any guesses as to who?

Leave a comment!

Have a great week!

https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 11: And the ones we hail are the worst of all

Chapter Summary

Kimoto Ken is a bastard.
Let Shiori sleep 2k19.
Katsuki is an unlikely hero.
Momo makes new friends.

Chapter Notes

Here comes Momo! We'll be seeing more of her.
Bakugou's going to come more into this story since I'll be focusing more Cerberus' school life.
Also, Yamada's making his official appearance in the next chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

In hindsight, it’s probably not the best idea to decide to go on a walk. In Akumi. At night.

Inami and Makoto are safe, Shiori knows that, but she should’ve figured their son-of-a-bitch father would come looking for them (even though it’s been a day). But she’s been in such a good mood that she hadn’t been realistic.

And now she’s paying the price.

“Where. Are. They.”

Crash
…Ow.

She could’ve stayed at the shelter and studied like she needed to, but no.

She’s here, getting her ass kicked.

Lovely.

Ken has a tight grip on the front of her shirt, hoisting her several feet in the air. “I’ve seen you with them all the time. I know you know where they are.”

Of all the nights to forget her pepper spray. She could’ve sprayed him in the eyes and kicked him in the balls. Actually, fuck that, she should’ve brought a bat. She’d go to town on this motherfucker. Might go down for battery, but who gives an everloving fuck.

Ken throws her to the side. “Answer me you little bitch. I know-”

The bitter taste of blood burns her tongue and she realizes that she’s bitten her cheek. “I don’t know where your fucking kids are. It would help if you weren’t a shitbag father-”
He strikes her in the face, eyes wild before he takes a breath. Eerily calm, two black orbs meet her eyes. He leans down and tilts her chin up, making her look at him. “Look, we both know that you did something with my kids. Now, I just want my kids back. You wouldn’t like me when I’m angry, so I think you should start talking. Now.”

She doesn’t say anything, glaring defiantly back at him. Ken sighs and drops her head. “So it’s like that, huh? Alright.” He cracks his knuckles and stretches upward. “I can be the bad guy.” He winds up.

A white scarf wraps around Ken’s outstretched arm. Confused, Ken whips around to meet the blood red eyes of Eraserhead. “Who the hell are you?”

The hero’s lips twist and he snarls. Jerking the cloth forward causes Ken to stumble and Eraserhead leaps off the fire escape and kicks him in the head. Ken, however, is not an inexperienced fighter, despite the fact that he often had children as his opponents.

Quick to his feet, Ken delivers a swift uppercut to Eraserhead’s jaw and the hero blinks as his teeth slam together.

Ken smiles and his quirk activates. Spikes fly out of his skin and Shiori dives behind a dumpster, narrowly avoiding being impaled.

Eraserhead dodges in between the spikes, but one catches him in the shoulder and he’s pinned to the wall. Pain explodes in his shoulder, immobilizing his right arm. He hisses as he tries to rip the spike out of the wall. Ken approaches calmly, the tips of his fingers sharpening into spikes. “Are you one of those vigilantes? No, that stuff looks official. Underground hero maybe?” He tuts. “It’s a shame, really. But, this place needs less people who can’t mind their damn business.”

Ken swipes his spiked finger across Eraserhead’s cheek, a thin line of blood beading against his pale skin. “I guess we-” His eyes fly open wide and he starts gasping, clawing at his throat. The man collapses to his knees, choking and breathless.

Eraserhead’s eyes dart to Shiori, who’s bracing herself against the wall. Blood coats the front of her face, running down from her nose and over her lips. Her eyes are narrowed in a glare and glint a shining silver.

He activates his quirk. “Don’t!” and Ken can breathe again. He lays on the ground, chest rising and falling unevenly.

“W-what….wh-ho?” Rising shakily to his feet, Ken’s temper boils over as he sees Shiori. “YOU BITCH!” Spikes grow on his skin and he ejects them.

Shiori’s hands shoot out and she tenses. The spikes freeze mid-air, quivering in place. Eraserhead tears the projectile from his shoulder and pounces on Ken. His scarves loop around Ken’s arms and the fire escape above. Aizawa pulls on them, hard. Ken shoots off the ground and struggles, swearing and trying to cut the material. He ties the ends of his capture weapon to the bottom of the fire escape and takes a moment to let the adrenaline drain from his system.

He notices the spikes are still suspended in air. “You can let them go, kid.”

She nods, drops her arms, and the spikes fall, clattering against the pavement in the alley. She paces back and forth, massaging her temples and mutters, “I just wanted to take a walk. Like a nice, normal person. I just wanted to take a walk, I just wanted to-”

Eraserhead, clutching his shoulder, calls it in. “Kid, we’re going to the police station. Are you hurt?”

Being exhausted and having her bullshit tank filled to the top, she gives him a deadpan glare and gestures to the front of her face. “I’m fine.”
He huffs, wincing as pain stabs him once again. “Do you know this guy?”

“He’s the asshole.”

“Yes, but do you know him?”

“No, you don’t get it. That guy is the resident asshole of this block. Everyone knows him.”

The hero inhales through his nose and presses his hands together. “Do you know his name.”

“Kimoto Ken.”

Aizawa sighs. Kimoto Ken. The guy he’s been looking for since Tsukauchi called him at the ass-crack of dawn, telling him that Cobra had oh-so casually left two abused children in the detective’s care.

They wait around until a cop car shows up and Tsukauchi steps out. Despite the situation, Tsukauchi gives Aizawa a wry smile. “Rough day?”

Aizawa chuck his goggles at him with his good arm, which isn’t his throwing arm, so he misses by a mile. “Like you can talk,” he snarks.

Tsukauchi snorts and tips his hat. “So, where’s our criminal?”

Aizawa points up and Ken lets loose a new (and very creative, he must say) string of profanities and slurs. The weary detective sighs. “Wonderful.”

Aizawa loosens the restraints and Ken plummets, smashing against the ground. Tsukauchi snaps the quirk-suppressant cuffs on his wrists. “Kimoto Ken, you are under arrest for child abuse, child battery, assault and battery of a professional hero as well as unlicensed quirk usage and quirk battery.” The officers haul the man to his feet and throw him in the back of the car while reading him his rights. Then, Shiori, Eraserhead and the police head to the station. This is going to be fun.

How did it get this bad?

He had been the greatest-no, he is the greatest. People have always given him his way all his life. In school, he’s top of his class, the very best. No one can beat him, and no one even tries! His rule is uncontested. Once out of school, he marries the prettiest woman,a girl from the States named Lucy Vanderwall, and they become a trophy couple. They have two children and a dog; they’re the American dream family if such a foolish idea still exists.

He enlists as a soldier and rises to the top of the ranks, only to be humiliated and discharged with dishonor. Those damned higher-ups, they were lucky to have him! He had been their best! They didn’t deserve him.

So, he becomes a police officer; a boy in blue. It’s degrading. The people in Akumi are pathetic and the villains aren’t worth his time. He and Lucy fight, they argue, they throw things, and then they divorce, leaving him with her two worthless children. Looking around, he can’t find where it went wrong-what did he do?!

Ken begins to look for answers at the bottom of a bottle, but finds nothing but hazy nights, mood
swings and pretty strangers that leave by the morning.
None of them are Lucy, though.

Why is everything like this?

He is the center of attention—the radiant star that the universe revolves around.

How did he fall so far?

Why aren’t they watching?

Why can’t they see me?

Why don’t they know how special I am?

I deserve so much better.

Her.

He bears his teeth when he sees that little brat the hero saved in the station. She doesn’t even look at him; like he’s not worth her time. How dare she?! He lunges at her, catching the two officers tasked with holding him off guard. He gets a few good hits in before he’s pulled off and taken to a cell.

This is his kids’ fault—no, it’s that brat’s fault, she’s gotta have something to do with this, or, better yet, it’s Lucy’s fault. She left and everything went to pieces. If she had stayed, he and the kids would’ve been fine! The bitch!

So Ken sits in his cell for the rest of the night, thinking about just whose fault it is that he’s been brought so low, blaming everyone in sight, but himself.

Kayano drums her fingers against the table and takes a sip of the tea an officer had brought her after Ken had attacked her in the station.

It tastes awful.

Lovely.

“Today just keeps getting better and better,” she mutters.

She’s been sitting in the interview room for what, twenty minutes? Maybe it’s been half an hour. Either way, it’s three in the morning and she’s supposed to be up at school in five hours.

That’s probably not happening, though. She might just skip school today and go job hunting—she needs to save up for UA either way—but, oh, shit. Ourdera is taking them to this fancy thing with other elite schools. The teachers will be pissed if she misses it, but, then again, will they really? They don’t actually care, and, with her face looking like this, it’d probably be better to hang around Akumi-

The door opens and in walks Detective Tsukauchi, wearing a polite smile. “I’m Detective Tsukauchi. I’m sorry about earlier. Kimoto Ken has been properly restrained so that he won’t harm anyone else.”
I’ll believe it if I don’t see him out on the streets tomorrow, and if I do, I will personally shove my foot so far up his-

She nods.

Tsukauchi seats himself across from her. “His children, Kimoto Inami and Kimoto Makoto were brought in late last night and reported multiple counts of abuse.”

She takes another sip of the shit-tea and nods again. “Sounds about right.”

“So you knew about the abuse?”

“Yes.”

Shiori carefully files the little nod of his head as he writes down ‘truth’ where he thinks she can’t see it.

“Did you ever report anything?”

“Yes.”

His head bobs the same way, but he frowns. “I never saw reports of abuse in his file.”

She rolls her eyes. “That’s because no one in this precinct does their damn job.”

“Oh.”

‘True.’

“Do you know Inami and Makoto personally?”

“They’re like little siblings to me.”

‘True.’

Does he really think I can’t see him?

“Do you want to press charges against Mr. Kimoto for his attack on you?”

“Yes.”

He nods and slides a paper across the table. “I’ll need you to sign this.”

“Got a pen?”

Paperwork, lovely. Just another reason to not become a real hero.

A professional hero, she corrects herself with a smile as she recalls Inami’s words to her brother.

Our hero came.

“Something good happen?”

She glances up and notices Tsukauchi’s been watching her. “I’m helping put this son of a bitch behind bars.”

He chuckles and she slides the paper back across the table. “That you will.”
“I’ll have to testify, won’t I?”

“Afraid so.” He pauses. “Is that a problem?”

“No. But he is an officer here.”

Tsukauchi frowns and sighs. “Yes, this precinct is hard to work with. Now, I have a few more questions.”

She chugs the rest of the tea with a grimace. “Sure.”

Tsukauchi sends the kid home. It's five in the morning, and they're all exhausted. Aizawa, having been healed by a medic, strolls in. "You look like hell," Tsukauchi teases.

"Feel like it too," the rough man mumbles, making a beeline for the coffee machine.

"You're going to get addicted to that stuff."

"Already am."

Tsukauchi yawns. "Poor kid."

Aizawa glances up. "You know her?"

Tsukauchi nods and Aizawa frowns. "You know her in a 'she's-here-really-often-because-she's-trouble' kinda way?"

The detective leans forward in his chair. "Why....?"

"Because she's my son's friend and I don't need that foolishness around my son."

"Oh, you're 'son', huh? Thinking of adopting Hitoshi?"

"Shut up, Tsukauchi and answer the question."

Tsukauchi shakes his head. "I handled her brother's case seven or eight years ago. That case was why I became a detective."

"What happened?"

The detective lets out a bone tired sigh. "A kid was killed, and his killer got away with murder."

Aizawa stares at him for a long time before saying, "You look like you can use a drink."

"What about Hizashi?"

"He's used to me being late. C'mon, let's go. I know a good place."

A two hour interview, and an early-morning trip to Mama’s leaves Shiori cranky, sore and sleep deprived.

“You look dead,” says Izuku when he meets Shiori at the train station. “Did you get enough-”

“If the next words out of your mouth are ‘sleep’ I’m going to kill you.”
He snaps his mouth shut with a sheepish smile. “Ah. Right.”

They board their train and Izuku starts animatedly chatting about every little thing. Shiori doesn’t engage in the conversation so much as she does listen to it and give her input every so often before falling asleep.

*It’s going to be a long day*....

By the time his alarm (it’s an All Might alarm, but don’t tell anyone-) blares, Katsuki is already up for the day.

“GET UP BRAT!”

*It’s going to be a long day*....

“SHUT UP HAG! I AM UP!” Katsuki fires back, chucking a shoe a the door.

“Can we please have a quiet morning?” Masaru’s pleas go unheard as the two blondes bicker until Katsuki slams the door behind him and storms to the train station.

Perfect way to start his day.

“Hey Bakugou!” Fingers (What is that extra’s name?) waves at him.

“Shut up.”

“Oof, someone’s grouchy today. You forget we’re going to that-”

“I don’t care.”

“But-”

Katsuki whirls around and glares at Fingers. “I. Don’t. Care,” he bites out.

“Sheesh, fine.” Legs rolls his eyes and gives that cheesy smile. “But you know, it could be our chance to score some rich, hot chicks.”

“ Forget hot, I’ll just take a rich one,” Fingers says. “I’m broke.”

“You extras fucking disgust me.”

They board the train and Fingers immediately wrinkles his nose like something stinks. “Ugh. It’s *those* two again.”

Those two could refer to any number of people, but coming from anyone in his year, Katsuki know it’s Deku and….what’s that girl’s name? Oh, right. Pocahontas. Colours of the wind and all that shit.

“Let’s move to a different car. I don’t want to be seen with them.” Legs is already halfway to the next car.

“I’m not movin’,” Katsuki grumbles, plopping down in a seat. He drops his bag to the floor. “You extras do what you want.”

Legs and Fingers exchange and uneasy look before they join him. Pocahontas, or Sleeping Beauty in
this case, wakes from her deep sleep to crack open an eye and glare at them.

“What’s wrong?” Deku asks.

“I smelled bullshit.”

He matches her glare, smoke curling off his fingers, daring her to try something. He’d blow her off the train before she even thought about it.

Unfortunately, she never challenges him, which would’ve been just what he needed to not be a total pisspot today.

Oh well. It’s not his fault.

They all get to school, and, once off the train, walk as far away as they can from each other. The girl and Deku don’t want to be confronted, and Katsuki’s not in the mood to do any confronting.

Yet.

Once they get to class, the teacher has them sit down, and talks with eagerness Katsuki’s never seen before.

Oh right. The trip.

“This is a great opportunity! We’re the first school in this district to go to Somei, Yuko, and Nagoya Private Academy’s Culture Festival. You’ve must be on your. Best. behaviour.” The teacher punctuates each word with a sharp glare. Class 2-A’s known for their rowdiness, after all.

Katsuki scoffs and leans back in his chair only for the teacher to snap at him. He snaps right back, but the reaction is unexpected. The teachers never dare to step to him.

It’s this stupid party’s fault.

Within the next hour, kids are herded onto buses. They’re supposed to be organized by class, but the students ignore the rules and the teachers are too excited to say otherwise.

Deku’s sitting with that girl again. She’s half asleep and he’s rambling about heroes. The idiot. You can’t be a hero without a quirk.

He does have a quirk.

No, he definitely made it up. He had to. He’s got nothing that proves he’s got a quirk.

Katsuki sneers. Stupid, delusional Deku.

(Idiot.)

Who the fuck said that. Say it to my face.

He glances around, but sees no one. “Whatever.” Katsuki slides back down in his seat. Fingers is talking about some new video game and Legs is smoking out the window. He doesn’t listen to what the extras have to say, because it doesn’t really matter. They’re both idiots either way.

(So are you.)

Seriously, who’s saying that?
Bakugou growls and whirls around. “Hey, Bakugou, you okay? You look kinda...pissed.”

Legs smacks Fingers in the arm. “He’s always pissed.”

Fingers snickers like he’s clever. “You’re right.”

His anger now has two subjects to direct it at. “Eh? You two fuckers got a death wish?!”

“N-No!” Fingers backs up to make himself as small as possible.

Legs points a quivering finger in Deku’s direction. “H-hey, Bakugou! Look! That loser’s taking out his stupid notebook!”

“Y-yeah! He still thinks he can be a hero.”

“I heard he thinks he can get into UA. UA! Can you believe it?”

Bakugou’s temper explodes. “DEKU!”

Deku flinches, instinctively moving closer to Shiori. “Y-yes Kacchan?”

“Aw, he still calls you Kacchan-”

“SHUT THE FUCK UP FINGERS. NO ONE ASKED YOU.” The boy in question pipes down.

Katsuki redirects his glare toward Deku. “Heard you thinkin’ you can still make it into UA, nerd?”

“Well...I mean, it’s just a thought, Kacchan! I-it’s my dream school-”

“Fuck off. You’re nothing, and the school’s going to see that. Only I’m going there, got it?” He catches the warning glare his teacher’s giving him.

‘Best. Behaviour,’ she mouths before facing the front again.

With a grunt, he throws himself back down in his seat. “This isn’t over nerd.”

“Back off,” comes a very cranky sounding voice.

*There it is! A fight!

He grins ferally, standing up in his seat again. “You wanna Pocahontas?!”

“No, I want you to back off so I can take a fucking nap. You’re loud.”

“Ooh~! She-”

“SHUT UP FINGERS BEFORE I SHOVE YOUR HAND SO FAR UP YOUR-”

“We’re here!” Their homeroom teacher announces it so forcefully she could’ve broken something. She impales him with a glare that reads ‘I don’t care what you do, but behave’. “Now, everyone, single file off the bus. Don’t get lost and be respectful of everything and everyone. We are guests.”

Translation: fuck this up and I will probably kill you.

He bares his teeth but doesn’t say anything.

They get off the bus and he wanders around, only lingering at the things worth his attention, which isn’t much.

“Hey, look at her! She’s pretty cute!” Fingers points at a taller girl-taller than him at least- with long black hair and....oh damn she is actually pretty.
He starts going up to her and flirting. The girl, who’s from Nagoya Private Academy if her uniform is anything to go by, is clearly uncomfortable with Fingers’ attempted advances.

“Leave her alone, you fucker.”

“But dude, it’s not fair to come out looking like that-”

The girl frowns and backs up and Bakugou explodes (for what, the fifth time since he’s got up? Maybe he needs some anger management.) at him. “BACK THE FUCK OFF YOU PERVERT! IF SHE DOESN’T LIKE YOU, YOU NEED TO FUCKING RESPECT THAT AND BACK THE HELL UP!”

He storms off and Legs follows, prompting Fingers, who does hesitate for a moment, to chase after his ‘friends’.

Momo doesn’t like festivals. She has friends, but none of them are people she’s especially close with, save for Kiki, who’s out sick. It promises to be boring, until a boy she doesn’t recognize comes up and starts rather aggressively hitting on her.

At first, she tries to decline, but he’s either ignoring her, or he can’t take a hint. Her obvious discomfort grows by the second, but the boy continues to get friendlier and friendlier.

She’s saved by a hot-tempered, foul-mouthed blonde (what an unlikely hero).

Momo sighs in relief and tugs at her uniform. She’ll have to order a bigger size. Puberty has been harsh and unforgiving.

“You okay?” She turns around, but sees nothing. “Down here.”

After looking down slightly, she meet eyes with a shorter girl with long brown hair and bangs.

“You’re short,” she says before realizing it. Momo puts her hands over her mouth. “I-I apologize! I didn’t mean to be so rude!”

“I’m not short. You’re just awkwardly tall,” the (definitely short-ish) girl bites.

“I am very sorry.” Momo clasps her hands together and bows, feeling her embarrassment rise to her cheeks. Stupidstupidstupidstupid-

“So are you okay?”

Momo’s head shoots up. “W-what?”

“Are. You. Okay.”

“R-right! I-I mean no. I mean-” She takes a deep breath to compose herself. This is mortifying. You are a Yaoyorozu. Show some dignity. “Yes. I am fine.”

“Shiori!”

Both girls turn, “Mei?”

“I knew you would be here!” ‘Mei’ bounds over and jumps. “Catch me!”

“WaitMeiInholdingramen-‘Shiori’ drops the steaming cup of ramen she’s holding, but to her credit actually catches Mei without stumbling or falling. “Dammit, Mei. We talked about this.”

“I wasn’t listening~!” The pink haired girl sing-songs. “And who are you!” She looks her up and
down. “Are you Shiori’s girlfriend?”

Shiori drops Mei. Momo’s face goes red again. Just who are these kids-

‘Mei’ looks like she’s from Somei, and Shiori’s obviously from that invited school—which was it? Something….Junior High? And how do they know each other?

“Oh! I do know you! You’re Yaoyorozu Momo! From Nagoya Private Academy! I’ve heard all about you! I’m Hatsume Mei!” The girl sticks her hand out, a big smile on her lips. “I’m an inventor! And the future CEO of Hastume Industries!”

“That’s...ambitious.” Momo shakes the girl’s hand to be polite. “A-and you are?”

“I’m—”

“This is Shiori! Kayano Shiori! Best friend to the future CEO of—”

Shiori clamps a hand over Mei’s mouth. “Kayano Shiori.”

“You’re from that school, right?”

“Ourdera Junior High, yeah.”

“So, how do you two know each other?”

“Oh, well, we went to the same elementary! In junior high, I went to Somei!” She declares proudly, puffing her chest out a bit. “Oh, right, and she and Izu went to Ourdera.”

“Kaori! You won’t believe it! They have a hero stand!” Izuku calls out before rushing down to it.

“That was him.” Shiori throws a thumb back at the plain boy. “He wants to go to UA.”

“Really?” Momo raises an eyebrow. “I do too!”

“Heroics?”

“Yes, I want to be a hero.”

“I want to go to Support! I’m going to create Support gear for you-” Mei points to Momo “-him” She points at Izuku, who’s currently debating with a Yuko student on some hero trivia. “-and you!” She points to Shiori.

“Oh? You want to be a hero as well?”

“Yeah.”

“What’s your quirk?”

Momo blinks. “Oh, um, I can convert my lipids into matter. For example-” A Russian nesting doll forms out of her hand. “I can do that.” She hands Shiori the doll while Mei looks dumbfounded and, for the first time since Momo’s met her, is silent.

Of course, that doesn’t last long. “THAT’S AMAZING! IF YOU DON’T BECOME A HERO, COME WORK FOR ME AND WE CAN MAKE BEAUTIFUL BABIES TOGETHER!” Mei shakes her back and forth as she excitedly rattles off ideas and possibilities.

Momo takes a step back, face practically on fire. Whyisshesobadatsocializing- “B-babies?!”
“Inventions. That’s what she calls them,” Shiori clarifies, jabbing Mei with her elbow.

“Oh. I apologize then for my overreaction.”

“Don’t worry. Everyone does it.” Shiori narrows her eyes to give Mei a pointed look. “Because no one refers to inventions as babies.”

Mei sighs and rolls her eyes. “I’m unappreciated in my time. But you—” She smiles at Momo. “You’re really special! I can’t wait to cash in on the fact that I knew the great and powerful Yaoyorozu Momo when she was a junior high kid!”

Momo blushes. “That’s very kind of you.”

“Do you want to explore the festival with us?”

Before she knows it, Mei’s dragging Momo from booth to booth, amassing such a great collection of gadgets and parts that she has to get (read: have Momo make) a cart to carry it all. Shiori trails behind, looking disinterested in most of it and keeping conversation with Yaoyorozu as Mei goes on a shopping binge. She disappears every so often to locate the plain looking boy with freckles—Midoriya Izuku.

He’s adorable, Momo thinks with a tiny grin as he proudly sports his newly won All Might merch. Izuku is kind and so thoughtful, if a bit sheepish and nerdy. But, all in all, he has a good heart.

Momo came to the festival that day, expecting to have a terrible time.

But in the end?

She left with three new phone numbers with friends to match.

Not such a bad day.

Not such a bad day at all.

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact: Shiori's original name was Kayano Miyuki, then changed to Kayano Mitsuki. In addition to that, I got her last name from Kayano Kaede, from Assassination Classroom.

Have a great week!

https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 12: All her life she has seen all the meaner side of me

Chapter Summary

Izuku continues his search for Viper (and Shark), Shiori hangs out with friends, we get to see a bit of Mei in action and Hitoshi.....you'll see.
Also RIP Bishop 2019.
You had a good run, buddy.

Chapter Notes

During the riot, words in italics are speaking over the comm system.
Warnings for violence, police brutality and police abuse.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Izuku refreshes his search bar again. His brain is numb after having stared at the computer screen for so long.

Is there anything about them?

Viper, He types and hits 'refresh'.
And again.

Viper Vigilante
And again.

Akumi Vigilante
And again.

Akumi Vigilante Viper
Ugh.
Most of the links are about Cerberus or Sweep.

He sighs and leans back in his chair, rubbing his eyes. His phone pings.

litty committeeeeeee

Ah. Mei’s changed the group chat name again.

GreatandPowerfulMei: how did u guys do on finals???

Koari: we don’t speak of those evil things.
GreatandPowerfulMei: did u pass?

Kaori: yes

GreatandPowerfulMei: i thought u would b happy about that

GreatandPowerfulMei: so why u mad

Kaori: when i got my grade, the teacher called me after class.

GreatandPowerfulMei: y???

Kaori: they thought i cheated so i had to take the whole thing again.

GreatandPowerfulMei: HAHAHAHAHAHA THEY WEREN’T READY
AYYYYYYEEEEE KNOCK EM DEAD SHIORI
Kaori: i hate you

Theywerentready: ..... 

Theywerentready: really?

Bunny-boi: I’m proud of you, Kaori! You really studied hard for finals.

GreatandPowerfulMei: what place in the class were u guys?

Bunny-boi: I narrowly lost second place to Kaito. Kacchan got first, like always.

Theywerentready: i got ninth.

GreatandPowerfulMei: SHIORI!!!!
GreatandPowerfulMei: YOU DIDN’T TELL US YOU WERE IN THE TOP HALF!
Theywerentready: there are only two halves to be in, Mei.

GreatandPowerfulMei: BUT THIS IS THE HIGHEST YOU’VE EVER SCORED!

Theywerentready: you say it like i don’t know that.

No. 9: this is acceptable

GreatandPowerfulMei: hows the hunt for the not-real vigilante goin?
Bunny-boi: They are real!

Bunny-boi: ....I just haven’t found them yet.

No. 9: you want me to ask Bishop? he might know.

Bunny-boi: No, it’s fine. I’m sure I’ll find something.

No. 9: why are you doing this again?

Bunny-boi: Mom wanted me to look into it? It’s kind of weird.

No. 9: dude

Bunny-boi: What?

No. 9: what if inko’s viper?

Bunny-boi: Shiori

Bunny-boi: We’re talking about my mother.

GreatandPowerfulMei: .......

No. 9: .......

Bunny-boi: ..... 

Bunny-boi: You might be right.

GreatandPowerfulMei: izu

No. 9: Izuku

GreatandPowerfulMei: we are always right

No. 9: we? when did this become a ‘we’ thing?

GreatandPowerfulMei: ur right! we need to get married first!

No. 9 has removed GreatandPowerfulMei from the group chat

Bunny-boi: Again, Kaori?

No. 9: don’t make me remove you too

Bunny-boi has added GreatandPowerfulMei to the group chat
No. 9: i hate you izuku.

GreatandPowerfulMei: ur a meanie shiori

No. 9: i can live with that.

GreatandPowerfulMei: i want a divorce

No. 9: fine with me.

GreatandPowerfulMei: ur a meanie

No. 9: you already said that.

GreatandPowerfulMei: well ur a 2x meanie

Izuku glances over at his computer and pauses. He’d left a post about Viper on a vigilante thread, but, like his searches, there's nothing.

His phone pings;

Eraserhead’s bby boi is online

Eraserhead’s bby boi: Alright which one of u fuckers changed my name

No. 9: take a guess

Eraserhead’s bby boi: Mei

GreatandPowerfulMei: y me?????

Eraserhead's bby boi: When is it not you

GreatandPowerfulMei has changed Eraserhead’s boi’s name to Gucci Eyebags

Gucci Eyebags: Mei catch me outside

GreatandPowerfulMei: bitch, i will wreck u

GreatandPowerfulMei: come for meeaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa

Gucci Eyebags: So what are you guys talking about

No. 9: finals and izuku’s mystery vigilante.

Gucci Eyebags: Fourth in my class

GreatandPowerfulMei: 1st!
Bunny-boi: I got third.

No. 9: alright, you fucking geniuses don’t have to brag.

Gucci Eyebags: What you failed?

No. 9: NO I DID NOT FAIL

Gucci Eyebags: Then what’s the problem

No. 9: i dont wanna talk about it.

GreatestPowerfulMei: just scroll up. u’ll see.

Gucci Eyebags: This is literally one of the funniest things I’ve ever seen

No. 9: i will kill you

Gucci Eyebags: Please do

GreatestPowerfulMei: ooh! me 2!!!!!!!!!

Bunny-boi: What is wrong with you guys? Don’t you want to live?

Gucci Eyebags: Not really

GreatestPowerfulMei: nope

No. 9: eh, i could go either way.

Bunny-boi:......Should I be concerned?

No. 9: we’re us. what made you think you SHOULDN’T be concerned?

Bunny-boi: Touché.

Gucci Eyebags: So I wanna hear about your nonexistent vigilante

Bunny-boi: THEY’RE NOT NONEXISTENT!

Gucci Eyebags: But you can’t find them

No. 9: we’ve already had this argument. ur late.

Gucci Eyebags: Gimme the name Ill ask one of my foster dads if they know them

Izuku pauses.

He knows he’s been rude, mostly unintentionally, to Shinsou. He doesn’t mean it, but it’s clear that he’s rubbed the indigo-haired boy the wrong way. They aren’t exactly ‘friendly’, not like Shinsou, Mei and Kaori are, but they work together. Things have steadily been getting better, and, like all quirks, Izuku’s become fascinated with Shinsou’s. It’s got so much potential for heroics and it’s clear that’s the direction Shinsou wants to use it in. So, for now, he can use that against the way his skin crawls when he sees Shinsou use his quirk.
Once, offhandedly, Shinsou mentions how he thinks he can do more with his quirk, but has never had an opportunity to test it. Izuku’s been considering volunteering, just to see how far Shinsou could reach.

After all, it wouldn’t do for the two of them to have tension between them.

He’s got to make it right.

Not all mind control quirks are the same.

( Just like not all self righteous brats with flashy quirks are heroes .)

What?

( Nothing. )

Bunny-boi: You would do that?

Gucci Eyebags: Im about to not if you dont hurry up

Bunny-boi: My mom said one was called Viper and the other was Shark.

Gucci Eyebags: Brb

No. 9: i’m going to visit Jun. bye.

No. 9 is offline

GreatandPowerfulMei: BOOO! U HAD 2 STAY TO HEAR ABOUT THE VIGILANTES

Bunny-boi: Mei, she’s not here.

GreatandPowerfulMei: I HATE YOU SHIORIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII

No. 9 is online

No. 9: oh, and fuck you , mei.

No. 9 is offline

GreatandPowerfulMei: nuuuuuuuuuuuu! shiori come back so we can fite

Bunny-boi: Mei, chill.

GreatandPowerfulMei: make me

Gucci Eyebags: Im back
Bunny-boi: Did they know anything?

Gucci Eyebags: Well, Yamada didn’t know anything but Aizawa kinda rolled his eyes and did that thing he does when he’s annoyed

GreatandPowerfulMei: he did the thing?

Gucci Eyebags: He did the thing

Gucci Eyebags: Anyway he said they were a female vigilante duo from like 15 years ago or something

Gucci Eyebags: Apparently they operated out of akumi for like 5 years being going ghost

Gucci Eyebags: They were never caught

Gucci Eyebags: He said shark had short blonde hair and viper either had green or black hair

GreatandPowerfulMei: im tellin u izu

GreatandPowerfulMei: ITS UR MOM

GreatandPowerfulMei: MIDORIYA INKO KICKIN ASS AND TAKIN NAMES

Gucci Eyebags: Explanation now

Bunny-boi: There is nothing to explain. Mei is being insane.

Gucci Eyebags: Makes sense

GreatandPowerfulMei: BLASPHEMY!
Bunny-boi: I’ll keep looking.

GreatandPowerfulMei: YOUR MOTHER IS A VIGILANTE
Bunny-boi: I’m going to ignore her.

Gucci Eyebags: I always do

GreatandPowerfulMei: i hate u guys!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! so mean!!!!!

Gucci Eyebags: Bye bunny boi

GreatandPowerfulMei: BAIII

Bunny-boi is offline

Izuku places his phone on his desk and checks the vigilante thread again.

Absolutely nothing.

He feels like slamming his head against the table.

Great.
He sighs and begins to work on the final paper due this year. *It's almost Summer*, he reminds himself. When Summer comes, Cerberus and Sweep are going to increase their patrols without the burden of schoolwork eating up their time. That's something to look forward to.

He hears the door open. “Oh, you don’t have to do that—” Inko says with a smile in her voice.

“No, it’s fine. I was available, so I might as well help, right?”

His mother laughs. Izuku sneaks a peak of who his mother’s talking to. Bishop is (somehow) carrying ten shopping bags while his mother only holds five. “Really, I could’ve made a few trips.”

“Ms. Midoriya—”

“Inko, please. We’re not strangers.”

He places all the bags on the table. Izuku enters the kitchen. “Hey Mum!”

“Oh! Izuku! Did you finish your paper?”

“Almost.”

She smiles at him. “Well, take a break! I’m going to make dinner! And your friend Bishop—” She lightly smacks him in the arm. “Is going to stay.”

Bishop looks confused. “I am?”

“He is?”

“Oh, of course! I’ve been meaning to talk to him!”

With a little hum, she turns on her heel and goes to start cooking.

Izuku and Bishop exchange a quick look.

Izuku’s never seen a grown man look so terrified of his five foot three mother.

But then again, Midoriya Inko is a force to be reckoned with.

Inko shoos Bishop out of the kitchen when he offers to help cook. He ends up watching some hero show in the living room with Izuku. Bishop taps his finger the entire time, glancing around every few seconds like he's looking for an out.

“Are you...afraid?”

“Kid, it feels like I’m staring Death in the face.” He pauses before shrugging. “Eh, forty years was a pretty good run.”

Izuku frowns. *What is it with everyone and dying?*

Bishop snorts. “Kid, I’m joking.”

“Oh.”

“You really need to get out more. You’ve been hanging out with Shiori too much.”

“She’s my best friend!”
“That’s the problem.”

Izuku throws a pillow at him. “Kaori would be mad at you.”

“I’m pretty sure she’s always pissed at me, kid. Where is she?”

“Visiting Jun.”

He frowns. “Oh.”

Izuku doesn’t question it. “Dinner’s ready you two!”

“So, ‘Bishop’ was your hero name?”

Bishop nods and takes a sip of tea. “It’s more of a nickname now.”

“So, how’s training going? With Shiori, Izuku and Mei?”

“Well, there’s actually a fourth one now. But the kids are doing great.”

“Oh, right! Shinsou Hitoshi. Izuku’s mentioned him.”

Izuku braces himself. He knows something’s about to happen.

Inko smiles at Bishop. “So, Bishop, when did you start teaching my son to become a vigilante?”

Bishop spits his tea out.

Izuku stares at his mother’s smiling face and feels a chill run down his spine.

Oh shit.

Loud music blasts out of a boombox. The abandoned subway tunnels really are the best for meetups. Miles is working on his latest piece ‘Expectations’ and everyone sort of gravitated towards him. Hibiki, Tahashi, Akio and Petey are there, and—oh, wait. Minazuki’s here to. She cuddling with her boyfriend in the corner.

Gross.

Hibiki’s watching Miles work, Akio’s in a dance-off with someone and is actually winning, Petey running on a high and Tahashi’s trying to talk up some girl.

Glad to see nothing’s changed.

Junchi is sitting by Petey, laughing and talking. The male’s about nineteen with a skinny frame and blonde peach fuzz on his head. He’s paler than the last time she saw him and his eyes are red and puffy.

“Hey Yano.”

“You’re not high are you?”

He chuckles. “Nice to see you too.”
“Haha. Very funny.” She takes a seat beside him. “Morales is really gettin’ into it.”

Jun hums in agreement. Miles’ piece is full of bright colours. It’s got an outline of him on it and ‘expectations’ sprayed above it.

“What happened this time?”

“His father’s getting on his ass about that fancy academy he goes to.”

“Ah.”

“So, survive your finals this year?” Jun gives her a playful jab to the side. “You passed?”

“Yeah.”

“What place?”

“Ninth.”

His eyes widen a bit. “Wow, guess you’re pretty smart now!” He flicks her forehead, smirking. “There is a brain in there! I was beginning to wonder—”

She stabs him harder than necessary with the point of her elbow right in between his ribs. He wheezes. “Shut up.”

“Geez, you’re mean.”

“Been called worse.”

Jun yawns and stretches out. “You hear about the robbery on 25th?”

“Tell me ‘bout it.”

“Our vigilantes stopped ‘em dead in their tracks before the ‘heroes’ could even pull on their thigh-high boots.”

“What heroes do you know that wear thigh-high boots?”

“Doesn’t matter. Some people are starting a petition to get Cerberus and Sweep legalized so they can help out more.”

“Don’t actually think it’s gonna work, do you?”

“Hey, might as well try.” He pulls his jacket off. “I’m a fan.”

He’s wearing an indigo t-shirt with darker sleeves. On the front it says ‘Our Heroes’ and the back it reads ‘Sweep, Rabbit, Daedalus, Cobra’ in silver.

“There’s merch for them?”

“Hell yeah. Where have you been living? Under a rock?” He gestures around to the others. Many people at the party have some vigilante merchandise on.

‘Hope for Akumi’

‘We support our vigilantes’
‘Our heroes wear masks, not capes’

‘Vigilante Justice’

‘Fast like Rabbit, Smart like Daedalus, Deadly like Cobra’

‘We stan Sweep’

*Oh, Hitoshi would love that last one.*

“Must’ve been.”

Even Hibiki, who’s adamantly refused to get into trends, has on a Cobra t-shirt.

“So, what’s up with you?”

She shrugs. “I’ve been looking for a job.”

“I heard Djinn’s is hiring.”

“I’ll check it out.”

“Hey! The cops are outside!”

*Well shit.*

*Not about to get arrested today!*

But, when they get outside, they only see a body being moved on a stretcher, and a crowd cursing at the cops.

Kayano and Jun shoulder their way towards the front. “What happened? What happened?”

“He shot her! He shot her! Arrest him!” The crowd chants.

The ‘he’ in question is an officer talking with others. The police are trying to keep the crowds back.

Hibiki stands at the front, the very picture of righteous fury. “Cer-ber-us! Cer-ber-us!” She begins shouting, and the crowd joins.

“Cer-ber-us! Sweep! Cer-ber-us! Sweep!”

Within minutes, the entire mass of people at the scene is calling on the young vigilantes to bring justice where it has not been given.

“We should probably go,” Kayano whispers.

An officer punches a civilian. Another civilian hits back.

Then, all hell breaks loose.

“What the hell are you wearing.”

Hitoshi looks away from the fridge. “What do you mean?”

Aizawa gestures to his clothing. “*That.*”
“Oh.” Hitoshi glances down at his Sweep sweatshirt. “You said I could get their merch.”

“I don’t remember this conversation.”

“It-“

“I don’t care.”

Yamada chuckles. “Aw, c’mon babe. Hitoshi likes it.”

Aizawa shoots him a red eyed glare. “Just don’t get too carried away.”

Hitoshi smirks, opening a soda. "Oh-“

Both Yamada and Aizawa’s phones ring at the same time.

“Hello?”

Not a minute later, the two pros are out the door and Hitoshi’s delivered with a strict order to stay inside.

**Emergency GC**

Shiori: problem downtown. protest turned into a fight. help needed. already there.

Izuku: Got it. I’ll let Bishop and Mom know.

Mei: ill step up. give me 2 minutes. do u need ur costume?

Shiori: no. it’s in my bag.

He texts his reply.

Me: On my way

Me: Just a warning

Me: Present Mic + Aizawa are gonna be there

Shiori: at least.

Shiori: be careful, guys.

Hitoshi hurries to his room, throws on his Sweep outfit and leaves through the window, scurrying down the fire escape and landing in the alley.

This is going to be a long night.

Mei sprints towards the HQ, hoodie low. The streets are quiet.

*Good .*

She slips into the abandoned building and makes a beeline for the basement. Flicking on the lights, the muggy smell of homebase hits her nose. She throws herself into her chair, slides her headset on and fires up the police monitor and computers.
Mei pulls up several streaming recordings of the chaos, as well as security footage. Rewinding it a few minutes, she can see an officer gun down a teen girl. Not too long after, the fight breaks out. A few clicks of her mouse later, she’s got a file for evidence being sent directly to Tsukauchi’s email.

Then, she calls up the detective.

“Detective Tsukauchi,” she says through the voice distorter.

“Daedalus. I don’t even want to know how you got my number.”

“It’s better that way. There’s a situation downtown.”

“We’re aware. A civilian attacked an officer.”

“Mm…think again. Check your email.”

There’s a few minutes of silence before the detective sighs. “Is it too much to ask for you to stay away from this whole mess?”

“This is our home, Detective Tsukauchi,” she replies. “We will defend it.”

And with that, the call ends.

“Daedalus, we’ve got a good handle on the situation, but the cops have guns. It’s getting bad.”

Izu. She hears a few shots pop in the background. Tense, she begins dialing all the possible ambulances and heroes in the area. “Pros are gonna flood the area, so once it’s done, get out.”

“Gotcha-Look out!”

A mini explosion sets off a high frequency squeal in her ear. She drops the headset for a second, watching the soundless security footage play out before her for a second. The officer who shot the girl chases Cobra into an alley, out of her sight. The last thing she can see is the gun in his hand.

Her heart stops.

No!

Dammit!

“Cobra, reinforcements on their way. Hold on.”

Nothing.

She waits.

Nothing.

Shiori?

Do something!
You can’t let her die.

She’s about to call Tsukauchi after a few seconds of radio silence. Then, “Daedalus-” That’s Shiori’s voice. Oh thank God. “-Someone’s here.”

“Where are you?”
"Back alley on 34th behind Fuji’s Antiques."

She pulls up the security footage and freezes. “Cobra,” she says through clenched teeth. “Get out of there.”

“I mean you no harm-” Stain begins, stepping over the body of the officer who started this mess.
“But he has done wrong, and must be punished for it.”
Cobra hesitates. “I know you….You’re around Bishop-”
“Cobra-!”
“You have done no wrong. Do not expect to taste my blade.” He flicks the katana towards her to prove his point. “Bishop was right about his kids.”
Before she can protest, the villain (or is he a vigilante) springs into the air and disappears over the top of the building.
“Cobra!” Sweep peels into the alley, looking winded.

“Fine. Let’s go.” She zips by him.

Sweep looks between her and the now-gone Stain and groans. “I just got here!”

“You should pay more attention!” She hisses, knocking an officer back.

“Shut up!” Sweep fires, dodging a swing.

Cobra helps an injured Hibiki crawl away from the fight. She doesn’t even care that Hibiki’s phone’s out and filming. Pulling her into a store, they’re in a slightly quieter scene and Cobra can assess the problem better.

“You’re b-bleedin’,” Hibiki manages through gritted teeth.

“Yeah, and so are you. Now hold still, because this will hurt.” She pops Hibiki’s shoulder back into place and looks her over. The girl doesn’t so much as yelp, which Cobra’s gotta give her kudos for.
“What else?”

“Nothin’ bad. Damn this hurts.”

“I know. Stay here, but if any civilian comes by, help them in.”

“Damn police.”

“The heroes will be here soon,” Cobra says, but she’s not thrilled about it.

Hibiki stares at her with bitter eyes. “There are no heroes.”

“There are some. But not many. Be the change Akumi needs to see and we might find more.” Cobra shuts her mouth. She’s wasting time. “I’ve gotta go.”

Sprinting out of the store cover, she’s greeted with the sight of Sweep taking a bullet to the stomach. He crumples into the street, blood leaking through his costume.

Someone screams.
She doesn’t know if it’s her or Sweep, but it catches Rabbit’s attention. Rabbit knocks the officer out (a little extra hard) and stares at her. “Get him out of here! The heroes are here! We need to get to Mama!”

Of course, they’re not lucky enough to get a clean getaway.

They balance Sweep between them and start a four-legged race to get away. Eraserhead lands in front of them. “Stop.”

Nononononononono- Izuku thinks, heart slamming against his ribs.

Cobra stays relatively calm, but her urgency is clear. “He’s hurt, let us through.”

“We have medics on the scene. They can help him.”

Cobra grits her teeth. “We don’t have time for this!”

Eraserhead’s scarf shoots out and wraps around Cobra’s ankle. He yanks on it and she hits the ground. Sweep cries out in extreme pain and Izuku staggers at the new weight.

Then, someone throws something at Eraserhead.

“Go!” Jun calls. “Run!”

Cobra hops to her feet, salutes him and grabs one of Sweep’s arms.

Akio, Tahashi and Hibiki join in distracting the hero. Eraserhead makes quick work of the civilians, but by the time he’s done with them, the vigilantes are already gone.

And, when he turns around, so are the civilians.

Swearing under his breath, he exits the alley and goes to help contain the situation.

Heroes are crawling over the area. Hitoshi, Shiori and Izuku are tucked in a little space between buildings, barely noticeable to whoever doesn’t know it’s there.

“Daedalus-”

“...how bad is it?”

Shiori hesitates. “I-it’s…they got him in the stomach.”
The line is silent for a moment. “God, guys, I am so sorry-” She’s about to cry. “Hey, hey, not your fault. But we need the quickest route to Bishop’s, now.”

Izuku sighs. “He’s not at home.”

“Dammit!” She kicks the wall. “Where is he?”

“At my apartment.”

“Goddamnit-” Her nerves and patience are fraying.

God, please, not another one. Don’t let him die.

“Mama still might be at Bishop’s. She’s got the key,” Izuku points out.
“Who….the hell….is Mama?” Sweep says, wincing as he speaks.

“We’re gonna get you healed and back to your apartment before your foster parents get home.” is all Shiori says. “I’ll cause a distraction. You get him to Bishop’s apartment, now.”

Shiori knows Akumi as well as she knows her reflection. It’s familiar, and she notices each little part that no one else does.

That being said, being chased by Endeavor isn’t easy.

Despite his gigantic size, the man is agile. He keeps on her tail with some difficulty, but not enough to lose her. She might actually be struggling if Mei wasn’t directing her.

“Take a left here,” Mei says.

She grabs onto a pole and swings around, turning down a narrow alley.

Too narrow for Endeavor to get through.

He growls and swears before sprinting around. He’ll be there when she gets out.

Or, he would’ve been if she hadn’t gone down the sewer.

I’m going to stink for a week….

Izuku takes every back route and alleyway to get to Bishop’s, even though he wants to get there as fast as possible. Hitoshi’s blood is soaking through his clothes and staining Izuku’s, but he can’t focus on this now.

He’s got to be brave.

He’s got to focus.

He’s got to keep Hitoshi alive.

He’s got to be what he’s always wanted to be:

A hero.

(You already are.)

Chapter End Notes

Cliffhanger!
(I guess)
Will Hitoshi get to Mama in time?
Will he get back before his foster dads?
How will Momo react to such a dangerous situation in her friends' city?
Find out next time!
Quirk Query:
Tsukauchi Naomasa
Does his quirk mark the 'real' truth or what the person believes to be true as a truth?
Like, if he were to ask an atheist, "Is there a God?" and they say 'No', but he asks a
religious person and they say 'Yes', would both register as true because that is what the
person believes or would he be able to know the truth? Is there a way to pass his quirk
by 'believing' something to be true? Is his quirk 100% accurate? How does his quirk
register 'half truths'? Does it tell him that something's being left out?
I'm going to get Momo, Hisashi (Midoriya) and the Bakugous in the next chapter. The
next one will be kinda slow compared to the others, because I feel like the characters
would need a breather. There's basically been a plot point/big event every chapter and
my babies need a rest.
The next one will be paced slower, focus on resting, recovering, reflecting and worry.
There will also be more of the heroes chasing Cerberus and Sweep and their
perspective.
Heck, we might even get All Might in here.
Anyway, that's all from me.
Shoutout to my friend who helped me figure out how to end this chapter and have a
great week to all of you!
The Road of a Hero fun fact #2: Originally, Todoroki Shouto was part of 'Cerberus' and
they were called 'The Keepers', and then 'The Furies' before I dropped the idea and
added Shinsou Hitoshi in as a separate vigilante that works with Cerberus.
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 13: They took away the prophet's dreams for a profit on the streets

Chapter Summary

Aftermath of the brawl in Akumi.
Hurt kids, vigilante Inko, and a lot of other stuff.

Chapter Notes

No warnings. Kinda angst, I guess? Most of the chapter's mood is just supposed to be somber, so...enjoy?

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Riot breaks out in Akumi’s streets—Police to blame?

Police brutality sparks violence in Akumi

Akumi outrage, 9 dead, 34 injured

Death toll rises to 9 in the aftermath of the brawl in Akumi

Officer who started the violence is critical—Hero Killer Stain claims responsibility

Vigilantes spotted in the midst of Akumi’s crisis

Vigilante Sweep shot

Cerberus intervenes in Akumi’s Riot

Cerberus, Sweep and Stain nowhere to be found

Sweep dead?

Akumi police department under investigation

Musutafu Police Chief releases a statement

Detective Tsukauchi comments on the Akumi Crisis

Heroes called into Akumi to handle the situation

Riots and protests break out in response to police brutality—Akumi in crisis

Momo scrolls down the articles on her phone in silence. She can hear the news from the living room. Without a sound, she enters the room and sits on the couch between her parents. Her father loops his arm around her shoulders and pulls her close. She leans into his chest and holds her breath as clips from the riot play on the large screen. Gunshots screech in the grainy phone recordings, people
stumble through the streets, bloody and terrified. Anger. Fear. Death.

It’s all there.

She watches Sweep take a bullet to the stomach and collapse in a gasping pile. Cobra is swift to get him up while Rabbit takes care of the offending officer.

It’s all wrong.

She clings to her father, white-knuckled grasp. Quietly, he strokes her head to comfort her, his eyes not leaving the news.

“The death toll rises to eleven as two civilians have succumbed to their injuries caused by the violence. At this time, it is not known whether or not the vigilante known as Sweep survived the gunshot wound he sustained. All hospitals are advised to report all males between the ages of nineteen to twenty-eight, around one-hundred seventy centimeters admitted for gunshot wounds.”

“You have friends there, don’t you?” Her mother’s voice is soft and sympathetic.

Momo sits up bolt right, and her father just manages to not slam heads with her. She pulls her phone out and calls everyone—Shiori, Mei, Izuku—but no one answers.

Then, she goes to the group chat.

Texting Hell

Me: I saw the news.

Me: Are you guys okay?

Me: Please answer.

Me: Guys, seriously, you’re scaring me.

Me: Were any of you in downtown Akumi?

Nothing.

She tries the other group chat.

Girl Squad

Me: Guys.

Me: Please.

Me: Is everyone okay?

Contact: Hatsume Mei

Me: Mei?

Me: Are you safe?

Contact: Midoriya Izuku
Me: Izuku, are you alright?

Contact: Kayano Shiori

Me: Shiori, what happened?

Me: Why is no one responding?

No one answers.

A sob escapes from her lips. 
*They’re fine.*

*They’re fine.*

*They’re fine.*

*They have to be.*

“Darling-” Her mother wraps her in a hug. “I’m sure they’re fine. Don’t worry.”

“I’ll get the cook to make your favourite dinner. Maybe you can invite them over sometime this week?” Her father tries for a comforting smile.

She sniffs and nods.

The Yaoyorozu patriarch leaves to tell the cook the new menu for dinner.

She chews on her thumb while her mother switches the channel to something else.

*Please be okay.*

Aizawa and Yamada stumble into their apartment, dead tired. The two pros had been the first ones on the scene, and are only just getting home, late in the afternoon of the next day.

Hitoshi’s nowhere in sight, but he should be out of school by now.

Aizawa stifles a yawn as he searches the living room that Hitoshi basically inhabits.

He’s not there.

Odd.

He searches the kitchen for his *son*.

He better not have left the apartment. He had been very clear that-

Yamada pops his head into the room. “Hey, Shouta, I think Hitoshi’s sick.”

Shouta glances up tiredly. “What?”

“He’s in his room.” Aizawa follows the blonde toward the boy’s room.

Hitoshi’s curled up in a fetal position in bed. His breathing is rough and sweat beads his forehead.
Aizawa presses his hand against Hitoshi’s forehead. The boy cracks open an eye and stares at him. Try as he might, Hitoshi can’t hide the fact that he’s been crying. His eyes are red and puffy and there are remnants of tear streaks on his cheeks.

“You look worse than I feel, kid.” Hitoshi snorts and bats his hand away. “I’m going to assume you didn’t go to school, right?”

“No,” the indigo haired boy mumbles into his pillow. “Sorry.”

“No, it was the logical thing to do. Sorry we’re home so late.”

“’S fine….”

“I’ll make soup,” Yamada offers and exits the room.

“Sleep, kid. We all need it. Zashi’ll call you when dinner’s done.”

“After that we’re going to bed,” Yamada calls.

Hitoshi snorts. “It’s four-thirty.”

“Really? Man, it’s really late. Should be in bed already.” Aizawa yanks the covers over Hitoshi’s head and stands. “Seriously, Problem Child. Get some rest.”

He turns to leave, but Hitoshi grabs his hand. “Aizawa-wait.”

“What?”

“What happened at the riot? Was anyone hurt?”

Aizawa sighs and sinks back into the mattress. “Your friends live in Akumi, right?”

“....yeah.”

“I guess you haven’t seen the news-Ten people were killed and more were injured.”

Hitoshi becomes paler than he already is. “Killed?”

Aizawa shakes his head. “It was bad, kid. A mess. The police force in Akumi is finally under investigation, though.”

“Does that mean you’re going to keep trying to catch the vigilantes?” There’s a hopeful note in his voice.

Aizawa side-glances his foster son and sighs. “Look, Hitoshi, I know you really look up to them, but what they’re doing is illegal, no matter how much good they’re doing. They don’t have licenses. Now, since they haven’t done anything too bad yet, we should be able to get them off easier, but I have to bring them in.”

Hitoshi’s face falls.

“-But, for now, we’ll be focusing on corruption inside Akumi’s police force.”

Hitoshi almost smiles. “And the heroes will pick up your slack while you do that.”

He sighs. “Hitoshi, they aren’t heroes.”
“Tell that to everyone in Akumi.”

Aizawa rolls his eyes and pushes his foster son. “Stop annoying me and go to sleep.”

“Yes sir.”

“I swear to God, Problem Child-”

Hitoshi chuckles and snuggles up in his bed. With a hint of a smile, Aizawa leaves the room and promptly passes out on the couch until Yamada calls for dinner.

They can’t actually wake Hitoshi up for dinner; the boy’s oddly exhausted. They dismiss it as him sleeping off whatever he’s got, eat and then collapse into bed.

Hitoshi can still feel phantom agony from where Mama healed him. The others had watched him with sad, understanding expressions. He’s scared as hell-they all are as soon as the officer pulled the trigger.

For a moment, he thinks he’s going to die.

The world spins around him.

The pain in his stomach becomes number and his consciousness wanes.

He and Izuku arrive at Bishop’s apartment and, to both of their surprises, Mama is there, along with Bishop and Inko. Bishop asks how bad it is.

Izuku can’t respond.

His mother holds him while he cries and Hitoshi is brought towards Mama.

Hesitantly, she stretches out her hand and places it on the wound.

And then his world explodes in a new pain a thousand times worse than before.

His consciousness fades totally and he passes out. When he comes to, he’s in his room and his foster parents are coming in. It’s the late afternoon. Assuming Shiori or Izuku have just dumped him at home, he sits up.

Bad choice.

Every organ he has feels like it turns upside down when he does that and nausea rolls over him.

He sprints to the bathroom, crying and throws up until he can’t anymore.

His dads come in and assume he’s sick, which isn’t too far from the truth. But they’d kill him if they really knew what happened. Aizawa finally leaves and Hitoshi gives in to the pull of sleep.

He doesn’t notice that someone has washed ‘Sweep’s’ black dye from his hair.
“Tsukauchi.”

The wearied detective smiles at his friend. He has a rare day off despite the media storm that’s going on in Akumi. Originally, the Akumi police chief is going to arrange a cover-up-something Tsukauchi can do little to fight. But, not too soon after the riot, everyone and their brother are watching the video of Officer Tamaguchi starting the whole mess. Backed against the wall and with no out, the Akumi force is now under investigation.

Something, Naomasa supposes, he can thank the vigilantes for.

Not a sentence he says everyday.

Toshinori chuckles. “You seem to be in need of a drink.”

“Coffee only. It’s before five.” He gives the blonde a pointed look. “You’re not supposed to drink during the day.”

“Coffee then.”

Naomasa nods. “Coffee.”

Toshinori orders two cups of coffee and sits down. “How are you?”

Tsukauchi yawns. “We got a rare day off. Of course, Akumi’s still a mess.”

The blonde frowns. “It’s quite an unfortunate situation.”

“That’s one way to describe it.”

Toshinori shakes his head. “Any leads on the four vigilantes?”

Naomasa leans back in his seat with a sigh. “Nothing, Toshi. We have no leads. Hell, we don’t even know the genders of any of Ceberus’ members.”

“Ah, I’m sure something will come up. In the meantime, having those vigilantes run around isn’t all bad. Worse things could happen.”

“I suppose. But I wish people would go through the legal channels. Or train to become pro-officers.”

“Well, pro-officers are still very new.”

Naomasa rolls his eyes and drains his cup. “I know.” He wishes someone would’ve started the program sooner-where people can train as small-time heroes that work for police departments. It takes less time to become a pro-officer than a pro-hero, but it’s not as flashy a job. Pro-officers are similar to underground heroes, in a way. There are a fair amount of pro-officers, but Naomasa wishes there were more.

Specifically in Akumi.

God knows they need them.

“I noticed ‘All Might’ stopped a train today,” Naomasa notes.

Toshinori absentmindedly tucks his bandaged hand into his pocket. “Ah, yes. Very fortunate.”

“After a whole morning of stopping major incidents, you’d think he’d be tired.” Naomasa’s tone is becoming sharper. “But, he did run off pretty quickly after saving the train passengers.”
Toshinori rubs the nape of his neck with his hand, becoming a bit nervous. “Er—yes! I’m sure he’s very tired.”

“You ran out of time again, didn’t you?” Naomasa whispers, narrowing his eyes.

Toshinori sighs. “Down to the minute,” he says with a confirming nod.

Naomasa shakes his head. “Dammit Toshi, you’re not supposed to do that.”

“I’m sorry, but there are so many people that need help!”

“There are other heroes in Musutafu!” Naomasa sighs. “I hope your successor isn’t as reckless as you are.”

“I said I was sorry, Naomasa.”

“If you were sorry, you wouldn’t keep doing it.”

Toshinori sighs once more. “My friend, please.”

Naomasa relents. “Fine. Have you spoken with Gran Torino recently?”

The towering blonde shivers. “Ah—”

Shiori and Izuku return to the quiet apartment having dropped Hitoshi off. Mei’s managed to get to Bishop’s in all the chaos. The chatter of the TV is the only sound in the apartment.

11 dead.

What a mess.

Inko, Mei and Mama are on the couch, while Bishop waits by the door. He relaxes only slightly once they’re in and bolts the door behind them. Crime is running rampant through the streets and violent protests demanding justice are raging.

“Heroes are still tryin’ to contain the situation,” Bishop mutters. “It’s hell out there.”

Mei’s staring at her phone. Her parents are out of town for the day, but her sister had been planning a night out with her friends.

She still hasn’t gotten through to her.

“It might be a bit late for the ‘risks of vigilantism’ lecture,” Inko says with a sigh. She loops her arms around Mei, Shiori and Izuku.

They lean into the short woman. Whether or not any of them cries, no one will say.

“Oh babies,” she says softly, smiling. “I know it gets hard. But I’ll be here to help.”

Izuku begins to lift his head. “...what?”

“Oh, Izuku, you’re my little genius, but sometimes you can be rather dense.” She allows herself a sly smile. “I’m Viper.”

Izuku lets out an unnaturally shrill screech.
Shiori shoots him a side-smirk. “Told ya so.”

“Also called it.”

The four share a shaky, somewhat watery laugh.

Inko takes Izuku and Mei back to the Midoriya’s. Hatsume Niko and Riku had sent Inko a text asking if Mei and Emiko could stay the night until they got back to Akumi. Apparently, Akumi has been blocked off for the day and they are being held up. She, of course, accepts, and Emiko texts Mei that she’s at the hospital.

After dropping Izuku and Mei off, Inko goes to the hospital to retrieve Emiko.
(It’s nothing short of chaos there.)

“I’ll walk you home, kid.”

Shiori nods and she and Bishop leave the apartment.

They don’t talk much—neither of them are great conversationalists.

But, he does say a little.

“I’m really sorry, kid.”

She glances over at him. “For what?”

“For making you help Izuku out with this whole Cerberus mess. The kid wants to help people; be a hero. That’s good for him, but I know being a hero isn’t really what you want.”

They reach the shelter steps. Shiori lingers at the door for a moment longer than necessary. “It wasn’t. But, now, I wouldn’t mind.” She opens the door and closes it, disappearing inside the dim building.

Despite the situation, Bishop can’t help but smile. The smile carries him all the way home, despite the violence and pain flowing in the streets.

*Those three*, he decides to himself when he opens the door to find ‘Mama’ Marjorie chatting with ‘Stain’ Akaguro Chizome, *will be greater heroes than us all.*

“So, look who’s not dead,” he jokes with a smile.

Chizome glances at him and curves his thin lips into a grin. “Jesus Garcia. It’s been some time.”

“So it has. I’ve got a lot to catch you up on.”

“It seems you do.”

Katsuki can’t understand why his mother is freaking the fuck out until she finally gets Auntie Inko on the phone. He hasn’t been by that shitty apartment in years, but Mitsuki makes sure to visit at least twice a month. He’s definitely not concerned about that fucking Deku. Not at all.

But he’s safe or whatever, so there’s that.
Inko tells Mitsuki that she’s got two Hatsume sisters at her apartment along with her and Izuku. Hisashi is apparently also coming over because (a) someone ransacked his apartment and (b) Inko needs help. That bastard’s lucky the marriage ended on such good terms.

Mitsuki talks over dinner about heading over to Akumi tomorrow to check on everyone. Masaru doesn’t think it’s the best idea since Akumi isn’t totally safe right now.

But when is it ever?

Long story short, his mom is going to Akumi tomorrow, and Katsuki’s coming whether he likes it or not.

He’s not worried about shitty Deku or Pocahontas or Pinky.

He’s not.

He’s just a little bit worried about Auntie Inko, though.

That’s the only reason he’s going.

Right.

Because that’s what a hero would do.

Momo finally gets a reply. It’s from Shiori.

Contact: Kayano Shiori

Shiori: we’re fine.

Shiori: mei and her sister are at izuku’s house.

Shiori: i’m safe.

Shiori: sorry to worry you.

Momo lets go of the breath she doesn’t know she’s holding.

Me: were any of you hurt?

Shiori: a little, but we’re fine.

Shiori: nothing worth going to the hospital.

Me: I’m glad. I was really scared.

What she means is that she had been looking for her friends’ names on the victim list, terrified that
she’d be attending their funerals.

Me: Where are you now?

Shiori: at the shelter. we’re doin a headcount and locking the entire building up. there’ve been break-ins and dangerous riots.

Shiori: ppl are angry.

Me: I saw on the news.

Shiori: i’m glad the fucking police are finally gettin investigated.

Shiori: i hope they all rot in hell.

Those are basically Momo’s thoughts in less eloquent, more crass language, but she gets where Shiori’s coming from.

She’s furious that this happened at all, not to mention in her friends’ hometown, but she can’t imagine that this sort of thing has been going on for years and is only being investigated after such a devastating incident.

Me: When this is all over, my parents want you three to come over.

Shiori: it’d be nice to be in a city that’s not a total shitstorm right now.

Shiori: but it’s too soon to tell.

Me: It’s fine.

Shiori: i gotta go. talk later.

Shiori is offline

Thunder rolls in the distance and Momo jumps. “Shit!” She hisses before freezing.

Fourteen years of an upper class upbringing spoiled by just a few months of being friends with Shiori, Mei and Izuku.

Her parents would be thrilled.

She giggles at the thought for a second. They’ve really rubbed off on her more than she expected them to, in more ways than just her language. It’s been a change—a good one, definitely.

She hopes they stay friends for a long time.

Friends such as them are hard to come by and harder to keep.

She pauses.

Speaking of friends….I wonder how Shouto’s doing.
The Todoroki household has been quiet for the last twelve hours or so. Something Fuyumi and Shouto are grateful for.

Endeavor has been out trying to clean up the clusterfuck that is currently Akumi.

Lots of things went bad fast, and people are dying is all Shouto knows and cares about it. All the deaths and injuries aside, Shouto’s glad for the situation. The more often Endeavor’s out of the house the better. He’s been out for over half a day, so he’s guaranteed to be too tired to train when he returns.

He and Fuyumi make a night out of it-she cooks their favourite dinner and they watch a movie on the couch-yes, the good one that they’re never allowed to sit on. The movie’s terrible, but for once, he sinks into his sister’s shoulder and pulls a blanket over them. For just awhile, they both feel more like kids.

Endeavor returns, and, true to Shouto’s prediction, collapses into bed. When he rises from the dead, he heads back out to Akumi and doesn’t return until very late the next night.

Touya even visits when hears the bastard’s out of the house. He keeps his face covered and doesn’t stay much longer than it takes to say, “Hello, and yes, I am alive,” before leaving.

But Shouto’s glad to see his older brother.

All in all, the past few days haven’t been so bad, and that’s rare.

So rare, that Shouto’s learned to treasure them.

Because he never knows when they’ll come again and if they’ll ever stay.

Hitoshi stares at himself in the fogged mirror, fresh from the shower. Aizawa and Yamada are getting in their last hour of sleep before they have to go back out there. His hand wanders down his body, grazing the faint scar on his right side. Mama had said it might fade, and it might not. The injury had been that bad.

But it was nothing compared to the pain.

He’s tense and unsteady.
He feels like crying.
He’s pathetic.

In that moment, terror had seized his frame and held him still as he watched the officer’s finger flex on the trigger.

The world had been still, filled with white noise.
It hadn’t been in slow motion, but everything felt...disconnected.

Like it had nothing to do with him.

Like the current of Life had rerouted itself around him and continued, leaving him in Death’s wake.

He, for just a second, truly believes he is going to die.

That the officer’s face would be the last thing he ever sees.

Aizawa and Yamada would grieve, hell, Shiori, Izuku and Mei probably would too.

And Akumi would lose one of its heroes.

*But can I go back out there?*

He leans on the sink and splashes water in his face.

*I’ve got to.*

*I don’t want to die.*

*Get a grip, Hitoshi!*

His phone pings and he rummages through the pile of his clothes to find it.

[@vigilantes_Akumi posted:]

“Does anyone know where Sweep is?”

914 comments

“I hope he’s okay.”

“i hope that police bastard dies”

“does anyone know anything??”

“they should try that police guy for murder!”

A ghost of a smile flits across his lips.

*I can and will keep doing this.*

*(Even if it kills you?)*

*Let them try.*

He calls Mei. “Hi-”

“OhmyGod,Toshiareyouokay-”

“I’m fine, but, uh, Mei, I need Daedalus to send a message to everyone.”

There’s a pause before he hears the familiar ‘clack’ of computer keys. “Sure what is it?”

“I mean to everyone—all the civilians in Akumi, the heroes, the police-” He grits his teeth at the last
Tsukauchi was having a good (ish) day off until his phone beeps. He glances at it and nearly drops his coffee.

@Sweep_official
I live bitches.

Underneath is a picture of Sweep in his vigilante costume giving a thumbs-up.

The internet is going crazy, half with relief, and the rest with fangirl obsession.

Tsukauchi groans. He can feel a dull throb of a headache beginning to brew.

“Naomasa?”

“I've got to go to work.” Without another word, Tsukauchi heads for the station.

It's going to be a very long week.

Chapter End Notes

Hi guys! Hope you enjoyed the chapter.
I'm hoping to get more personal with the characters, their motives and their own stories, but I'm proud with how this chapter turned out. It was supposed to be like, three pages shorter, so oops?
Anyway, it's early!
If you're following I'm Just a Man, I'm not a Hero, I'm almost done the second chapter! It was supposed to be out a week ago, but I really wasn't happy with it so I started over. So, for the next chapter, I need your input. I have two things I can do:
- Hitoshi's adoption
- Dinner at the Yaoyorozu's and the shenanigans that ensue.
Hitoshi's adoption is going to happen before we get to the canon story, but I don't think there's space for both in the next chapter, so, what do you think? Let me know!

The Road of a Hero fun fact #3: Originally, Izuku was quirkless in this au, but once I thought of this quirk, I couldn't get it out of my mind. It's going to be explored more when they start training for the UA exams, and I can't wait.
The Road of a Hero fun fact #3 part 2: Izuku's quirk's name came from Sherlock Holmes BBC. It's one of my favourite shows.
Have a great week my lovelies!
Chapter 14: But she's stronger than you know

Chapter Summary

Hisashi hangs out with his family, Bishop's headache doesn't end with his kids and Mei, Shiori and Izuku all go to Momo's house.

Chapter Notes

Hi guys!
This chapter isn't super plot heavy, but it's fun, soooooooooo.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Okay, President Bush, we both know you’re smart, but can you-” Hisashi whips out a gun. “Think fast!”

He fires at Izuku.

Izuku dives to one side and manages to not get sprayed by the water gun. “Nice try, Dad!”

Hisashi chases Izuku around the apartment. The freckled teen squeals and leaps over the couch to avoid his father’s watery wrath.

The last week has been tense. It takes the Hatsumes two days to get into Akumi, but the first thing they do pick-up their daughter. The reunion includes many red eyes and sniffles, but in the end, no one’s any worse for wear.

The officer responsible for the riot has died, and the one who shot Sweep is found dead under suspicious circumstances.

(Suspicious circumstances that have absolutely nothing to do with the fact that Bishop knows very questionable people and will do literally anything to protect his kids.)

All that being said, it’s nice to have things back to normal.

“I’m gonna get you, President Bush!”

Well, almost normal.

Hisashi’s apartment building has a gas leak of all things, so he’s not cleared to go back. He’s been staying with them for the week, which, isn’t the worst thing, she supposes.

Inko walks in the front door and sighs with a smile on her lips. “Hisashi, you are a child.”

“I know!” Her son’s father calls as he tackles Izuku. “Gotcha!”

Both Inko and Hisashi have been on good terms since the divorce; almost better terms than when
they were married. They agree they’ve always been better off as friends, and so far, that set up has been great.

On nights where Inko would rather not leave Izuku home alone, he stays at Hisashi’s. Hisashi comes over every week and Izuku loves it.

Holding up her hand, Inko pulls the water gun towards her. “Alright you two, that’s enough.”

Hisashi swings Izuku upward, chuckling. “Aw, come on, Inko! Join in!” A flicker of fire dances on the end of his tongue.

“Don’t burn the building down, Hisashi, or else none of us will have anywhere to stay.”

He shakes his head. “No fun.”

With a roll of her eyes, Inko points at him. “No brain.”

Hisashi gasps and feigns offence. Dropping Izuku on the couch he ‘storms’ over. “I take offense at those words!”

Inko ignores him as she begins dinner. “Good.”

“Apolo-”

“I will do no such thing.”

“How dare you?”

Inko huffs. “Hisashi, did you ever grow up?”

“No!” Izuku answers from his stretched out position on the couch.

Hisashi gasps again. Picking up a pillow, he swings it at his son. “Treachery!”

Izuku just giggles as his father whales on him with the pillow.

A tiny smile quirks Inko’s lips at the scene.

Adorable.

The phone rings. She pauses what she’s doing and goes to see who it is.

Caller ID:

Akatani Miko

With a frown, Inko ignores the caller.

She and her mother haven’t been on good terms since the divorce. After it happens, all she hears from her is ‘why didn’t you work harder on your marriage’, ‘Hisashi is a good man, you should’ve kept trying’, and blah, blah, blah.

It’s late, so she works a bit of her magic and whips up a dinner in less than an hour. “Time to eat!”

Izuku is the first at the table. Not too soon after everyone’s seated, the tiny boy starts wolfing down food like he’s never seen it before. “Someone’s hungry~,” Hisashi teases before he leans back in his chair. “So, tell me about life, Izu! Any girlfriends?”
Izuku chokes on the food he’s inhaling. He spends the next few minutes trying not to cough up a lung and die while his mother pats him on the back and hands him a glass of water. She shoots Hisashi The Look.

He raises an eyebrow. “...any boyfriends?” Izuku stares at him. “Which I am totally fine with!” He adds hastily.

Izuku just sighs and drops his head onto the table, embarrassment colouring his cheeks so dark that his freckles aren’t visible.

“Dad,” he says weakly, “please just…. stop.”

“Son,” Hisashi replies, serious. “It’s okay.”

“What is?”

“I don’t care if you’re gay.”

Izuku’s head shoots up. “DAD!”

“Hey, I’m just saying there are some pretty fine guys out there-”

Inko forces herself to stop laughing at Izuku’s reaction to, well, everything. “Hisashi, stop teasing him.”

Hisashi raises his hands in surrender. “Sorry, Izu. But seriously, I’ll love you no matter what.”

Inko smiles at her son. “Me too.”

Daring to lift his head, Izuku returns the smile to both of his parents. “Thanks.”

There’s a moment of blessed silence before Hisashi speaks.

“Unless you’re a cannibal, because I’m pretty sure I can’t love a-”


Hisashi’s heart drops in his chest and he feels all amusement leave him.

He’s going to die.

Bishop walks into his apartment, sore and tired. Marjorie (Mama) is on his couch watching his damned-

Wait.

That’s not his TV.

“There was a sale at the electronics store,” Marjorie says, answering his unspoken question.
He frowns. “No there wasn’t….”

She shrugs and turns her discolored eyes back to the brand new, very expensive looking TV.

There’s a clang in the kitchen. Bishop pokes his head in and snorts at the sight. Akaguro Chizome the freakin’ Hero Killer with a body count a mile long is cooking dinner, wearing an apron. The place where his nose used to be is still wrapped in bandages (which is fucking disgusting—who cuts off their own nose?!) and his hair is tied back into a ponytail.

Chizome’s skill with a knife shouldn’t come as a surprise, but Bishop finds himself the tiniest bit unnerved as the man dices the vegetables with perfect precision.

“You’re out of paprika, mirin and beer.”

Bishop blinks. “How am I out of be—” Out of the corner of his eye, he can see Marjorie down the rest of her bottle and quickly shove it under a pillow. He sighs. “Right. I’ll get some beer.” He grabs his keys again. “You want anything?”

Chizome doesn’t move his eyes from the slice of vegetables he’s murdering with a knife. “Pork. And wine.”

Bishop shoots his friend a cheeky smile. “Had a long day, huh?”

“Pork,” Chizome repeats slowly, setting the knife down. “And wine.” He turns that malicious aura on Bishop for a moment. Despite being friends for years, Bishop’s heart begins to beat a little faster.

“Okay, okay, sheesh.” The former hero turns on his heel and starts toward the door.

“And more beer!”

“I’m gettin’ it!”

“Don’t you yell at me! I’m blind, but I will still whoop your ass!”

Chizome growls and bares his teeth. “Could you two be quiet?! I’m trying to make you idiots dinner!”

“Don’t get me started Mr. Long-Sword!”

Chizome slams his hands down on the counter, trembling with barely suppressed anger and annoyance. “IT. IS. A. KATANA!”

Bishop groans. “Why the fuck are you two even in my apartment?!”

“Why don’t you ever lock your door?!”

“I do!”

Chizome throws his hands up. “Then lock it better! A baby could break in if they wanted to! Your security is pathetic!”

“Shut up!”

Mama shakes a cane at Bishop. “Keep yellin’ and I’ll crack yer head!”

“You couldn’t hit me if you wanted to! You’re blind as a bat! Take a swing at me; you’ll miss!”

“You wanna try your luck, bitch?!” She begins to stand, glowering in Bishop’s general direction.
“I’ll send ya cryin’ home to your mama in Puerto Rico!”

Bishop steps back into the apartment. “COME AT ME!”

“BE QUIET!”
Bishop huffs. “I’m going to get meat and alcohol! Lots of alcohol!” He slams the door behind him.

Weird as it may be, he’s glad to see his two friends in good health.

No matter how annoying they are.

When he gets back, the three share a (begrudgingly) quiet dinner.

And, hey, for a dude who probably can’t smell very well, Chizome is a great cook.

“You’re not afraid of falling are you?” Rini whispers quietly.

Shiori shrugs as she balances on the edge. “Not really.”

“Do a flip!” Sakura calls.

“No, do a somersault!” Tahashi says.

“Uncultured swine, Imma fuckin’ swan dive.”

A cheer goes up and people laugh.

It’s early April, and the shelter kids that go to school are enjoying a brief spring vacation. Hanako is out for one blessed evening, and her replacement never showed up, so they’ve got free reign of the place. They’re on the roof, looking out at the few stars they can see. Hibiki and Petey brought sodas and some other stuff that Shiori’s not gonna even think about touching.

Outside of the shelter kids, there’s Junko, Sakura’s boyfriend and a few others hanging out on the roof with them. Someone has managed to get their hands on a brand new boombox (stolen, probably). They’re playing it loud and proud for all the neighbours to hear and complain to the cops (who aren’t going to come) about.

It’s a good night.

Her phone alerts her to someone texting her.

Momo: Are you guys still coming over for dinner tomorrow evening?”

Me: yes

She smiles. It’s been awhile since she’s just got to hang out with anybody, short of an city-wide disaster or vigilante business.

This is gonna be fun!
This is not fun.

First of all, Momo sends A WHOLE FUCKING CAR to pick up Izuku, Shiori and Mei.

1. Car.

The kids at the shelter crack jokes and comments as she leaves. ‘Ooh, Shiori’s a sugarbaby!’ ‘Hey, Kayano, tell me where I can get friends like those!’ ‘Don’t mess the car up, it’s probably worth more than your life!’

Okay, the last one is probably true.
But still.
Rude.

The driver stops by Izuku’s apartment and Mei’s house next before turning around and driving out of Akumi and towards the nicer prefectures.

The scenery gradually changes from dingy apartment buildings and littered on concrete to well manicured lawns, parks and nice houses.

After a half an hour drive, they pass the gates of this big ass house on a hill. There’s at least a five minute drive from the gates to the driveway.

That in itself isn’t so bad.

But being trapped in a car with a pumped Mei and an equally excited Izuku isn’t how Shiori would like to spend any part of her evening.

They pull up to the house and the driver gets out and opens the car door for them. They step out and-

God.

The house is HUGE. They all knew the house would be big, because the Yaoyorozus are famous. Walking in, they all feel underdressed. (No, Izuku, your ‘Tuxedo’ shirt is not considered ‘dressy casual’-)

“Ms. Hatsume Mei, Mr. Midoriya Izuku and Ms. Kayano Shiori have arrived, Miss!” The chauffeur announces, closing the door behind them. He stands erect like a soldier in a spotless black uniform.

Mei leans over to Shiori. “Let’s take everything and run.”

Shiori responds with a well deserved jab to the ribs.

“You’re here!” Momo skips up to them like an excited little girl. “I’m glad you all could make it!”

Izuku breaks out of the trance first. “Wow, Momo! Your house is really pretty!” Izuku says, and he means every bit of it.

She giggles, cheeks reddening just a touch. “Thank you very much, Izukun.”
Mei barges him out of the way. “Momo! I noticed the security mechanism at your gate! I wanna know everything about it and how it works! It looks really expensive! Is it a 11hn-model? Those are really high quality! Are-”

“Well, you do know what you’re talking about, young lady. It is indeed.” Yaoyorozu Aiki, the matriarch of the family, says.

She doesn’t bear much of a resemblance to her daughter, aside from the black hair and long lashes. Both her appearance and demeanor strike Shiori as regal; cool, professional, yet every bit as elegant as she is intimidating.

A smile spreads across her thin coloured lips. Aiki is done up; like she’s always looking her best, no matter the situation. “I assume you three are my daughter’s friends? Very nice to meet you all.” She makes a point to shake each of their hands in her firm grasp. “I’m her mother, Yaoyorozu Aiki.”

“You run Yaoyorozu Tech!” Mei gasps, looking awed.

Aiki nods and waves her hand. It’s clear she’s pleased by the recognition. “Among other things. We’re simply thrilled to have you all here, you know. I’ve been looking forward to meeting the infamous Hatsume Mei, Midoriya Izuku and Kayano Shiori.” She quirks her smile a bit. “I do hope you haven’t been getting my daughter into too much trouble.”

_Don’t answer that._

Shiori keeps a polite smile; the best she can manage, because she’s not good at socializing with adults, especially adults whose pink cardigan probably costs more than her life.

“Mother!” Momo whines.

Aiki pats her daughter’s head. “Oh, sweetie, I’m just teasing! I’m sure that your friends are very well behaved.” A mischievous light shines in her dark eyes.

Cheap shot.

“Now, I’ve got a few deals to work on before dinner. Why don’t you show them around the estate?” Aiki begins up the stairs. “Just don’t go _too_ far-we want you to be back in time for dinner.” She disappears over the balcony.

Momo brightens. “Follow me! I want to show you all our library! We just added it to the house last summer!”

The library is twice the size of the entire shelter. Maybe more. Every wall is covered with shelves and shelves of books. There’s a second level to the room, and ladders lean against the bookcases. The room is tastefully furnished and at the opposite end from the door, there are two windows on either side of a fireplace. Each window stretches from the floor to the ceiling and has long crimson drapes hanging from them.

“We added it after my father ran out of room for books in our summer home. He was tired of having to go there to read, so he just added this on to the house,” Mom explains as her friends ogle at the sight.

“So big!”

Mei pauses, smirks and opens her mouth to sa-
Shiori smacks her in the back of the head. “Don’t even.”

The initial awe fades after about five minutes, and they start roaming the library. It’s not Shiori’s ideal way to spend an evening, but whatever.

At least it’s quiet.

Mei screams at the top of her lungs as the ladder wobbles. “Izu! Izu! Get ME DOWN!”

Izuku freaks out at the base of the ladder; they’re on the second floor of the library, somewhere towards the very back. They’re not up high enough for the fall to kill Mei, but it’s definitely going to hurt.

“H-hold on Mei, I’ll-”

The ladder tips over and Mei SCREAMS.

As she falls, she pulls several books and vases off the shelves. “Tell my babies I love them, Izuuuuuuuuuuuu!”

She stops just before the ground, and everything else with her. There’s no crash or thud or broken vase shards.

Phew!

Mei notices Shiori’s glare.

Oops.

Everything settles back into place, a light breeze rustling Mei’s locks. The books and vases find their place on the shelves, the ladder stands upright, and Mei is put upright on the ground.

“Seriously. You can’t go one night without knocking something over?”

Mei giggles and bounds over to Shiori. “You saved meeeeeee!” She jumps and Shiori side steps at the last second.

Mei gets a mouthful of carpet.

Momo pokes her head around the corner. “I heard a noise. Did something happen?”

“No, Mei just tripped,” Shiori lies. “Right, Izuku?”

“......sure.”

Izuku has weird friends. Maybe he should listen to Bishop and find new ones.

He watches with a smile as Shiori and Mei bicker, as Momo looks on, bemused. Honestly, he wouldn’t trade them for the world.

“I thought you loved me!”
“Love is such a strong word,” Shiori deadpans. “I tolerate you.”

Mei rolls her eyes. “I feel so appreciated.”

“Are they always like this?” Momo says.

Izuku shrugs. “Sometimes. Well, scratch that. Mei’s always like that. Shiori’s usually in a better mood.”

She smiles. “At least they seem to get along well.”

“Sure. Whatever you think.” Izuku nods slowly.

Dinner isn’t any less grand than Izuku expected. The table is in a long room, and it reaches about half the length. After he takes a seat, everyone feels so far away. He’s used to late dinners with his mother, bumping elbows as they eat.

Each person has a set of silverware, a placemat, a plate and a glass. The chandelier casts iridescent lights around the room and the curtains are drawn back.

Yaoyorozu Aiki and Fumio sit on the right side of the table, next to each other. Momo is beside them, and Mei, Izuku and Shiori face the family on the opposite side.

Izuku notices that Momo is the spitting image of her father. Black hair, black eyes, a nice smile, tall; Momo looks like the younger, female version of her father.

“So how did you three meet Momo?” He pats her on the head with a smirk and she bats his hand away, cheeks red. “Nothing scandalous, I do hope.”

“We met at the cultural festival,” Izuku replies.

Aiki turns to Momo with hints of surprise. “I thought you were going to spend the festival with Kimiko?”

“Oh, well, she wasn’t there. She was sick,” Momo explains. “So, I made new friends.”

“Very good dear,” her mother praises before directing her attention to Mei. “Hatsume-kun, I hear you are interested in robotics and engineering?”

Mei bobs her head excitedly. “I want to start a company to distribute my babies world-wide!”

Aiki doesn’t bat an eye. “Oh, you want to sell your inventions?”

“Of course I do! I put quite a bit of effort into making them!”

The pair go off into their own conversation and delve into Mei’s plans for the future.

“So, Izuku, what interests you?” Fumio inquires.

“Oh! I like heroes, analysis, criminology; that sort of thing.” Izuku takes a bite of the food and it’s heavenly. “Thf ith weally good!”
Shiori elbows him.

Right. He needs to chew his food first.

After swallowing, he beams at Yaoyorozu Fumio. “This is really good,” he repeats, much clearer.

Fumio smiles. “Yes, yes, we have an excellent chef. One of the best.” His tone is so casual it suggests that everyone has a personal cook ready to whip up every meal for them.

Or maybe everyone does and he’s just behind the times or something.

Dinner passes in small talk, with the occasional loud outburst from Mei.

“Momo and I will go check on dessert,” Aiki announces, standing and motioning for her daughter to follow her. “Come along, dear.”

The youngest Yaoyorozu follows her mother out of the dining room.

The air suddenly becomes heavier. “So, what do you all think of my daughter?”

There’s a beat.

Shiori narrows her eyes. “You think we’re in it for money, don’t you?”

Fumio leans back in his seat, examining them. “Well, I won’t say that, but there’s certainly a benefit to having a Yaoyorozu friend, wouldn’t you say?”

….And this is why none of them liked rich adults.

“Momo’s a great person,” Izuku replies, trying to be respectful. “She’s smart and nice and we’re glad she’s our friend. We didn’t choose to be friends with her just because she’s a Yaoyorozu. She can make good friends all on her own, because she’s that amazing. We don’t care if she’s rich or famous. We don’t care about knowing the Yaoyorozu Momo. We want to just know Momo.” By this point he’s standing and his voice has raised a bit. “I don’t see why we have to prove that we are worthy of your daughter’s friendship. That is a choice she makes by herself. She’s awesome, kind, generous, intelligent and so many other things beside ‘a Yaoyorozu’, and frankly, sir, if you can’t see that, it’s a shame.”

Fumio hasn’t moved this entire time. He’s sat in his chair, hands folded, listening with rapt attention to Izuku’s little speech. “Well then, I suppose that clears that up.” He removes his glasses and cleans them. “I have all I need to know. Apologies if I came across as rude. I simply want the best for my daughter, as we all do, I’m sure.”

“Of course,” Shiori says, biting her tongue to keep from spitting out something….less polite.

“I’m glad you three understand. I look forward to seeing more of you. The three of you should be good friends to Momo.”

A heavy silence lays between the Yaoyorozu sitting on one side of the table and the three kids from Akumi on the other.

Momo and her mother return, oblivious to the tension and dessert is served. Aiki glances at her husband with a raised eyebrow at the expressions of Momo’s friends, but she doesn’t say anything. She just picks up the conversation she was having with Mei where it was, and if Mei is a bit less enthusiastic and short, then she doesn’t comment.
Not too long after, the three leave. They each (even Shiori) give Momo a hug and wave goodbye.

The car ride is tense, but not surprised.

After all, they’ve always known the world is against them and radically unfair.

But they’ll be damned if they don’t fight to the bitter end.

Mei stares at the card Aiki had given her.

‘When you do get started, if you ever need any help, call me,’ she had said.

She’d given Mei her business card.

*Yaoyorozu Aiki*

*Head of Yaoyorozu TECH*

777-429-1595

‘I’m excited to see how far you’ll go’.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys enjoyed the chapter!
The Road of a Hero fun fact #4- Originally, Shinsou and Shiori met in General Education and weren’t as big as they are in this story.
Fun fact #4b- Another vigilante group name for Cerberus was 'The Wolves of Akumi'.
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 15: A heart of steel starts to grow

Chapter Summary

Shiori and Bishop bond (I guess), Shiori takes on a questionable new mentor, Izuku finds his confidence and everyone has a relatively good day. But a storm's brewing on the horizon.

Chapter Notes

Not much to say tonight. I'm probably going to include some best friend head canons between Shiori and Izuku, because let's be honest, they've been friends forever. Also, sorry that this is a few days late. School is currently trying to kill me, sooooooooooo...I'm sorry??

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Shiori hits the floor and sighs. This is what, the eighth time? Probably more. She lost count after five. Bishop looms over her, smirking, and somewhat sweaty. “C’mon kid.”

“I’m gettin’ up.” All of her muscles scream in protest as she pushes herself to her knees. Man, she’s sore.

“I’m almost impressed, kid. You’re gettin’ better.” Bishop extends a hand. She accepts it and he helps her up. “Course, if you can’t beat an old grump like me, you’re screwed.”

Cue the eyeroll. “Thanks for the vote of confidence.”

He tosses her a water bottle. “Always happy to help. So, just you today?”

“Yes.” She gulsps down the bottle in two mouthfuls. “Shinsou is hanging with Aizawa and Yamada, Izuku’s out with Inko—I think they’re having a ‘bonding’ day or something—and Mei’s spending the day with her sister.”

“Oh. Sounds like everyone’s having fun with their family.”

“Yes.”

“...Haruko didn’t call?”

Shiori huffs, turning her back to him as she digs through her bag. “When does he ever? It’s his last year of high school. He’s got better things to worry about.”

“I’m gonna guess that your old man didn’t call either.”

This time, she actually laughs. “Hell no. Can’t say I’m sorry ‘bout that, though.”

Bishop snorts, patting her head. “That’s it, kid. Stick it to him if he even thinks of messin’ with you.”
“Don’t need to tell me twice.”

“Aim for the balls.”

“Oh believe me, I will.”

He nods in approval. “I have taught you well, young grasshopper.”

Shiori glances up at him. “I am not callin’ you sensei. You are way too immature for that.”

After swatting at her, Bishop grumbles, “That’s enough practice for today.” Bishop starts up the steps of the basement. “I still have two parasites in my apartment if you want to hang out.”

“You mean Akaguro and Mama?”

“I mean what I said.”

She whistles. “Someone’s bitter.”

“Kid, I am inviting you to my apartment. Don’t make me take the offer back.”

She rolls her eyes. “I still have the key. You couldn’t keep me from raidin’ your fridge if you wanted to.”

“Wouldn’t stop ya, kid.” Bishop flicks her forehead. “You’re a stick. I could pick you up with one arm.”

“You-” She’s cut off by Bishop slinging her over his shoulder with one arm.

“I’m sorry what were you saying?” He asks innocently.

Shiori fixes him with a glare. “I can and will suck the air out of your lungs.”

“Right. Who’s gonna make sure you kids don’t die?”

“.......”

“Thought so,” Bishop hums. He opens his door and drops her unceremoniously on the floor. “Make yourself at home and get something to eat.”

Shiori opens the fridge. “There’s nothing in here.”

“What do you mean there’s nothing. I went shopping three days ago.”

Mama slinks out of the room while Bishop makes his way to the fridge.

Just like Shiori said, it’s empty.

“MARJORIE!”

Mama plays the clueless old woman.

He sighs. Having friends is starting to get expensive.

But the cheaper option of being lonely isn’t something he’ll be choosing anytime soon.
Akaguro makes them ramen for lunch. Bishop spends most of the time fighting with Mama over eating everything in the fridge. Akaguro and Kayano sit at the island with their ramen, a stool apart.

Shiori can’t deny that Akaguro isn’t that bad of a cook. He’s better than Bishop to say the least.

“Cobra.”

Shiori glances up toward the man she doesn’t often speak to; Akaguro. He’s hunched over his steaming bowl of ramen, chopsticks in hand, dressed in a red t-shirt and black sweats. It’s almost amusing to think that this man is the famous Hero Killer. “Not my name, but yeah?”

Akaguro tilts his head to one side. “What do you think of the current hero society?”

She puts her chopsticks down. “Are you serious?”

“Yes, I’d like to hear the opinions of the younger generation.”

“I am literally a vigilante.”

“Which makes your opinion all the more important.”

*My opinion, huh?*

“Fine. It sucks. A lot. There are a lot of heroes out there who don’t actually care.” Akaguro opens his mouth to speak. “But-there are some good ones.”

“Good ones,” Akaguro repeats doubtfully. “I think you mean singular-”

“Besides All Might,” she interrupts. “I know there are a lot of assholes, like Endeawhore.”

The Hero Killer frowns. “I’m sorry, who is that?”

“Endeavour,” she clarifies.

“Ah. I see.”

“Ingenuim isn’t that bad, I guess. He sometimes used to patrol Akumi before vigilantes started protecting it. He’s nice. I guess I wouldn’t call him a ‘false’ hero. He’s not all bad. And Eraserhead. Actually, most of the underground heroes are good. Present Mic isn’t really fake either.”

“I see.”

Shiori leans in. “I’m not saying murdering people is the best way to fix society, but if you happen to meet Endeavour in a dark alley-”

Akaguro nods in silent understanding. “Very well.”

“Thanks.”

“Don’t mention it.”

“I won’t. That’d make me an accomplice to murder.”

The killer adjusts himself so that he faces the teen. “Kayano, you have a great potential to become a scourge of the current hero society alongside me. People like us must damn ourselves to save the souls of others.”
“Not following, Red.”

He sighs. “Perhaps not yet. But, maybe you will soon.”

Shiori shakes her head and finishes her ramen.

Izuku is having a good day. His mom had just gotten a bonus, so she took the day off and suggested that they go have some fun. They watch a movie and then go to the food court to get something to eat.

It’s going great.

And the two of the Bakugous show up.

Izuku has nothing against the Bakugous-absolutely nothing. But, he’s been putting hard work into avoiding Kacchan and it’s annoying to see all his effort so quickly spoiled. His bully glares at him while their moms greet each other affectionately.

He prays that the Bakugous will pass through, but when Mitsuki pulls up a chair, Izuku concedes defeat. Scowling, Kacchan sits opposite him, red eyes trained on him and arms folded. Izuku takes a deep breath to calm himself.

Pull it together. Mom wants a good day today and she’s going to get it. Just ignore him and he’ll ignore you.

“Inko, there is this store I have to show you-you’ll love it,” Mitsuki gushes.

“Oh, but what about the boys?” Inko asks.

Mitsuki waves her hand dismissively. “Let them go to the comic store. It’ll only be a minute.”

It most certainly will not.

His mother turns to him. “Izuku—”

“It’s fine, Mom,” he forces out. “Really. Go have fun.”

She smiles softly and squeezes his hand. “Alright.”

“I wish I had a kid as sweet as you do, Inko. All this brat wants to do is fight, yell and set off explosions.”

“Fuck off, hag.”

“Show some damn respect for your elders!”

Inko and Izuku both sigh (for very different reasons) as the two Bakugous bicker. When they finally stop (after drawing many annoyed glares from other patrons), Mitsuki turns back to Inko with a smile that suggests nothing ever happened and takes her to the store she mentioned, leaving the teens together.

It’s interesting how many places besides Kacchan that his eyes can find. Izuku makes himself as small as possible under the feeling of Kacchan’s gaze. Fear spreads throughout his body and vibrates beneath his skin, causing his hands to shake.
“Shitty nerd, what the fuck is your problem?” Kacchan bites.

“I-I-”

The blonde snorts and turns away. “Damn idiot.”

Izuku steels himself. He’s dealt with worse than Kacchan! He’s motherfucking Midoriya Izuku, the vigilante Rabbit who kicks villain ass for fun!

….okay, maybe that’s a stretch, but still.

“T-That’s really not a nice thing to say.”

“I’m not an idiot, Kacchan.” Izuku’s voice is in a low mutter to begin.

“What was that?” The blonde’s tone is scathing and harsh. Izuku swallows the lump in his throat.

“I’m not an idiot, K-Kacchan,” the greenette repeats, a little more confident, though his fear finds him when he uses his nickname for the blonde. “T-that’s really not a nice thing to say.”

“And why the fuck should I care.” He snorts. “What a wuss, Deku.”

“I’m not a wuss, Kacchan,” Izuku continues, gradually gaining strength. “And I’m not going to let you step all over me anymore! I’m not your useless Deku.”

Izuku forces himself to look at Kacchan. If the blonde wasn’t scowling before, he definitely is now.

“Watch who you’re talking to, Deku.”

“I’m not any less of a person than you. I’m not going to take this anym-more.” Without another word, Izuku walks away as Bakugou’s jaw hangs open. His heart hammers against his chest, forcing him to stop to catch his breath. He wanders the mall for the next hour before his mom texts him and asks him where he is.

Me: Just checking out the hero merch store, Mom.

My mother, the badass: ok honey. Don’t take too long. Mitsuki and i will be done soon

Me: Ok. Love you.

My mother, the badass: luv you too

He smiles at his phone and leans against the wall to draw in a slow breath. He’s calm. Calm.

The next minute he calls Kaori in a frenzy.

“I can’t believe I said that to Kacchan!” He covers his beet-red face. “My mouth just moved on its own!”

“What do you mean you can’t believe it-you finally told that Pomeranian off! You should be glad.”

“What if he gets mad? Kacchan’s gonna kill me.”

“That’s a real shame. I’ll be there for the funeral.”

“Kaori,” he whines.

“Okay, fine. But seriously, nice. You grew a pair.”
He blinks. “I’m a boy.”

Dead. Silence.

“Kaori!”

“If I’m being totally honest, I was sure you were a girl when I met you.”

He puffs out his cheeks. “I hate you.”

“I hate me too, so we’re cool.”

They share laugh over the phone. Izuku begins to pace the hallway near the bathroom. It’s empty enough to give him some privacy “Do I really look like a girl?”

“Not now. You got some muscle from kicking ass.”

“You make it sound like I’m skinny.”

Kaori snorts and probably rolls her eyes while she’s at it. “I mean, you are.”

“Said the pot to the kettle.”

“...what?” The confusion in her voice is clear.

“No, it’s-it’s a...thing that…” He sighs. “You know what? Nevermind.”

“Talking to you makes me feel like an idiot.”

A sly smile creeps onto his lips. “I mean-”

“Don’t even go there, Izuku. I can and will mop the floor with that atrocity you call hair.”

“Oh, ‘atrocite’ . Did you get that from your word of the day?”

“.....shut up.”

“How’s math studies going?”

“Well, studyin’ isn’t how I like to spend my break, but...I think it’s goin’ good. I...kinda feel smart?”

“Do you get it?”

“Mostly. I’m going to try to get better grades in our third year.”

“For UA?”

“No, idiot. For me. I wanna do better. That, and, I liked the expression on the teacher’s face when I aced the final. Son of a bitch thinks I’m dumb.”

He chuckles. “That’s great, Kaori. I can help out if you need it.”

“I mean, if you wanna open yourself up to bein’ called at two in the mornin’ by a beyond frustrated me, sure. I’ll letcha know or something.”

“You make it sound so bad.”

“...I forget that you’ve never studied with me.”
“You’re so dramatic.”

“Thank you. I try.” There’s a pause. “Look, I gotta go. Red wants to teach me how to use a switchblade.”

“Do you think Akaguro-san will be concerned when he learns that you already know?”

“That was one time, Izuku. And I wasn’t even that serious.”

“Of course you weren’t. Pretty sure Fujikawa doesn’t agree with you.”

He can practically see her cringe at the memory. The ensuing punishment had been so ridiculous that it’s become an inside joke between the two of them. “Yeah, believe me, I know. Later.”

“Bye.”

Izuku smiles, tucks his phone in his pocket and then goes to meet up with his mother.

All and all, Izuku counts it as a good day.

(The calm comes before the storm.)

Hitoshi frowns. He and his foster dads had been at a fair for the day, but when the weather starts acting up, they’re forced to leave. Lightning cracks in the distance. Rain pelts them as they hurry towards the car. Aizawa hisses like a wet cat—something Yamada doesn’t fail to point out. Hitoshi and Yamada share a laugh at the underground hero’s expense as the car starts up and they drive up. Hitoshi stares out the window.

Wow….that looks like a bad storm.

Mei leans into her sister and smiles. Movie marathons are the best ways to spend weekends—no room for arguments. It’s one of the few things the Hatsume siblings agree upon anymore. Her sister’s hair is tied up in what used to be a neat bun that’s not a messy clump clinging to her scalp. They’re wrapped in a gear-patterned blanket with a bowl of popcorn balanced between them. Emiko’s out cold, head lolled back and mouth wide open, snoring.

Thunder booms. Mei jumps and tumbles to the floor. Emiko wakes up instantly. “What-what-”

Mei crawls to the window and peeks out to see the sky an ominous grey. “Looks like a bad storm.”

The older Hatsume sighs and curls back up on the couch. “It’ll probably be fine.”

Mei purses her lips and stares out at the sky a moment longer before returning to the couch. “Yeah. Probably.”

“So, are these….vigilantes going to be a problem?” The man rasps, furiously clawing at his neck in annoyance.
A man in a cheap suit takes a long draw of his cigarette. “I dunno a lot about ‘em. It’s hard to tell. But, I can tell ya, just one of these-” He slides a bullet across the bar. “Will keep ‘em outta yer hair for good.”

The man with blood trails on his neck picks up the bullet and inspects it. The being behind the counter leans in and whispers something in his ear. The bloody man smiles. “Then, we have a deal.”

The cigarette-smoking man nods and extends his hand. “Glad to be of service, Shigaraki Tomura.”

Chapter End Notes

Love you guys and I hope you enjoyed the chapter! Fun fact #5: Originally, Hisashi was a deadbeat dad, but I thought Hisashi has enough terrible parent fics, so he's a good dad in this one. Fun fact #5: Originally, Hisashi had an addiction to pills in the early versions of this au. This canon was based on the line "You lost your dad, girl I know how that feels. I lost my mom, tryin' to deal with that still. I guess we connect on our hatred for pills" from Got You on my Mind by NF. Have a great week. https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 16: Do you wanna feel a little beautiful baby? (Interlude)

Chapter Summary

A brief interlude; a lull in the action; a respite.
Or,
Shit prepares to hit the fan.

Training begins for our heroes and the League of Villains come into discussion.

Chapter Notes

Words in bold are the conversation between Tomo and Izuku. Italics are words in the link. You'll understand once you read it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

If forty percent of Cerberus’ missions come from the totally-not-stolen police monitor, ten percent just by luck, another ten from Hitoshi hanging around places he shouldn’t be, then the other forty belongs to Shiori, whose ear is forever pressed to the ground. Even if it isn’t, Shiori lives in the heart of sin city; people talk. All she has to do is listen.

So, when she hears about this new ‘League of Villains’ or something that’s recruiting, she decides it’s probably worth mentioning.

“League of Villains?” Hitoshi repeats. “That’s cliche as hell.”

“Yeah, we got that, Hitoshi,” Shiori interrupts.

“Are they yakuza?” Izuku asks.

She shakes her head. “Didn’t really sound like it.”

“Why don’t they sound like it?” Mei says. “Crime, in an organized group: yakuza!” The pink haired girl counts the reasons on her fingers. “What else do you need?”

“Okay, well they sound like they’re not focused on makin’ money.”

“But they sound like a crime family.”

“Yeah, one that has the potential to do a lot of damage.”

“So, what? Do we think this is too big?” Hitoshi asks. “We’re gonna leave it to the cops?”

“We don’t know how big it is,” Shiori replies. “We don’t even know if it’ll stick around.”

“We haven’t really taken on a whole crime organization,” Mei adds. “Let’s be honest: we’ve only really beat up small time villains.”

“We took that human trafficking ring thing,” Izuku says.
Shiori nods toward him. “A small one. And we had to change our patrol routes because we had their goons followin’ us.”

“Let’s vote,” Hitoshi says. “All in favour of leaving it to the authorities?”

Mei, Shiori and Hitoshi raise their hands. Izuku’s stays down. “It doesn’t mean we won’t help,” Shiori interjects quickly before an argument can be started. “But we’re not that strong yet.”

Izuku has a small frown on his face. “We’re still going to stake them out, right?”

“Hell yeah.” A smile spreads across Shiori’s face. “This is our town.”

“D’ya know if your dad got any further on the case?” Mei says.

Hitoshi groans and leans back in his chair. “He’s increasing his patrols.”

The rest of the vigilantes share his sentiment. Eraserhead, despite the good pro-hero he is, is a major pain in their ass. He’s been at their heels ever since he took their case. “So, what? Take a break?” Mei asks. “Give him a few weeks of nothing?”

“Right, because we’ve been soooo great about stayin’ out of trouble,” Shiori says, sarcasm dripping from her tone. “We’re goin’ to jail.”

Hitoshi shrugs. “It was fun, you guys. We had a good run.”

“Do you think they’ll let us have adjacent cells?” Mei hums and rocks back in forth in her chair. “I hope they’ve got a workshop.”

“Guys, you’re doing it again,” Izuku complains.

Shiori blinks. “What’re we doing?”

“That thing where you guys act super morbid while still being cheerful.”

They roll their eyes at Izuku. “Okay,” Hitoshi says slowly. “Let’s talk about something else; UA.”

“I’m going to the Support Course,” Mei announces proudly, waving a gauntlet around.

“I’m going to the Support Course,” Mei announces proudly, waving a gauntlet around.

“Yeah, we got that. Put that down before one of us gets fried.” Hitoshi ducks just in the nick of time to avoid being beaned in the head.

They all laugh and fall into a temporary comfortable silence. “I think Kaori has the best shot at getting into the Hero Course.”

Hitoshi raises an eyebrow. “Why?”

With a tiny frown, Izuku sighs. “She’s got the most physical quirk of all of us. Apparently they use robots for the Hero Course’s physical exam. Your quirk only works on humans, Hitoshi, and mine isn’t the strongest on its own.”

The violet haired boy takes a deep breath. “Okay, worst case scenario, you and me get put in Gen Ed and have to work our way up to the Hero Course at the Sports Festival. We can do that, right?”

Izuku tilts his head to one side. “What?”
“They don’t really make this public, but if you’re put in Gen Ed and you do really well—and I mean final stages well—during the Sports Festival, they’ll consider moving you to the Hero Course.”

Stunned silence overtakes the room. Shiori can see Izuku’s smile beginning to grow and his brain is running a mile a minute.

“Hold on. That means someone in the Hero Course would get booted, right? There’s only forty spots,” she points out.

Hitoshi shrugs. “It depends on the year. When Aizawa moved up, they didn’t kick anyone out.”

“But, if you both got put in Gen Ed, doesn’t that mean you two would have to fight each other for the spot?”

Izuku’s rapid fire thoughts screech to a halt. Hitoshi whirls around. The boys eye each other. Both of them have wanted to be heroes for years—much longer than Shiori. It isn’t fair that one of them would have to let go of the dream for the other to live his while she practically has a guaranteed spot.

“It was just an observation,” Shiori interjects quickly, feeling the tension between the two. “Might not even happen. Besides, I think you could take elective classes for the Hero Course.”

“Yeah,” Hitoshi agrees, not taking his eyes off Izuku. “Aizawa teaches it.”

“I thought your dad expelled 1-A this year.”

“He did. Usually Blood King teaches it, but since Aizawa expelled everyone, Nezu stuck him on the Hero Elective for the next five years.”

“Bet he loves that.” Shiori chuckles.

“Does he ever.”

“So, when are you guys gonna start preparing for your entrance exam?” Mei pipes up. “Since we’re almost third years, UA entrance exams are a year away.”

“I mean, what would we do?” Shiori asks. “Public quirk usage is illegal, but the exams are based on quirks.”

“I know a place,” Izuku says. “Dagobah Beach. We could clear it for strength training.”

“The dump?” Mei says, incredulous. “I go there for spare parts.”

He nods. “No one else goes around there because of all the trash, so we’d have privacy.”

(It’s actually Inko who had suggested the idea in the first place. Without her, Izuku never would’ve even considered it. It all starts when the topic of quirk training comes up a few days before at dinner and Inko offhandedly mentions the place. She says that it used to be beautiful, but currents started depositing trash on the beach and people started to do it too. Her logic behind the suggestion is that not only would they be helping the environment, they’d be exercising and would have a space away from prying eyes to train their quirks.)

“I’m down,” Shiori replies.

“Don’t see a probably with it.”

“As long as no one messes up my future babies, we’re good!” Mei gives him a double thumbs up and a wide smile. “Wait! Guys! Idea. Like, whole lightbulb right here.” She mimics an explosion.
“What if you guys got Bishop and Aizawa to train you for the exam?”

“.... Aizawa ?”

“I mean, he’s gotten through the exam and he oversees it, so he might be able to give you guys some pointers?”

The two aspiring heroes turn to Hitoshi. “Would Aizawa agree to that?”

Hitoshi stretches and yawns. “Dunno. I’ll have to ask.”

And so the year of hell begins.

Because Aizawa says yes.

“Why are we up this early?” Hitoshi rubs at his eyes. “The sun isn’t even up.”

“I know you weren’t sleeping, so stop complaining,” Aizawa orders, flicking Hitoshi.

“Then give me some of your coffee.” Hitoshi makes a grab for the hero’s steaming cup of lifeblood. Aizawa dodges him and bats his hand away.

“Try that again and I will make your training living hell.”

His foster son fixes him with a dry look. “Didn’t you promise to do that when I asked?”

“....shut up and give me fifty pushups.”

While Hitoshi suffers, Aizawa and Bishop begin discussing what would be the best plan for the trio’s physical training. “The kids know basic combat,” Bishop explains. “Shiori and Izuku are ahead of Hitoshi, so he needs more work on the basics.”

“Right. Hitoshi! When you’re done with the pushups, ten laps around the beach.”

“THE ENTIRE BEACH?!”

Ignoring his foster son’s outburst, Aizawa tells Shiori and Izuku to begin clearing a section of the beach. Obediently, they put their gloves on and start moving the trash, though Shiori’s clearly in a sour mood.

Aizawa and Bishop stand side-by-side and watch their kids do their various tasks. “So, you used to be a pro,” Aizawa says to the older man.

Bishop sighs. “Yeah.”

“Was Bishop your hero name?”

He nods. “It just kinda stuck after I retired.” The former pro’s gnarled hand ghosts over the scar running up his face and he frowns. Suddenly, it doesn’t seem like Bishop is standing by Aizawa. It feels like he’s somewhere else, far, far away, long, long ago. “I don’t want these kids gettin’ into anythin’ they’re not ready for, but they’re stubborn, y’know?”

Aizawa snorts. “Oh believe me, I know . I teach at UA.”

With a low whistle, Bishop replies, “Do not envy you.”
“Doubt anyone does-Hitoshi! Pick up the pace!”

He gets some indignant cry in return. Hitoshi proceeds to trip, faceplant in the sand and not get up. Aizawa sighs and goes to help him.

Bishop claps his hands. “Okay, shrimps. We’re gonna work on your combat now,” he announces to Shiori and Izuku.

The former immediately drops the very big engine that she is holding.

On Izuku’s foot.

Bishop has never heard a higher pitched scream.

After he regains his hearing, they review the basic stances and then Shiori and Izuku spar.

She’s got him pinned in minutes. Bishop squats down to Izuku’s level. “Kid, I’ve seen you do better against someone bigger than her. You need to be fiercer-pretend it’s not Shiori you’re fighting.”

The boy sighs and sits up, brushing the sand off his clothes. “I know, but, she’s my best friend—”

“Who has absolutely no problem kicking your ass,” Bishop adds. Shiori snickers and he smacks her arm, earning him a quick glare that’s a little more venomous than usual. “Let’s go again.”

Izuku gets thrown into the sand multiple more times after that. It’s not entirely his fault. Shiori is good at mixing up her moves. She hardly uses the same opening twice. The holes in her attacks are too quick for him to react to (which makes her vigilante name all the more fitting, though, if he notices she’s attacking more aggressively than usual today.) At one point, she oversteps a lunge and he goes for her side, embracing the chance he has. She twists around and grabs onto his arm, yanking him down. As he falls, Izuku slams his feet into the back of her knees and she collapses. The surprise on her face is clear. Seizing the opportunity, he tackles her and gets her arms behind her head, using his weight to his advantage, he effectively immobilizes her.

“Izuku wins,” Bishop announces and the boy climbs off Shiori. “Shiori, don’t let your surprise slow your reaction time. In a real fight, you’d be dead. But, this is practice, so scale back the killing intent.” She grumbles something and tries to get all the sand off of her. Bishop sighs and turns to Izuku. “That was a clever move, kid, but it took you too many tries to analyze the situation. You need to learn how to analyze a present situation instead of trying to form a plan on what your opponent has done. It’s not bad to make a plan on past behaviour, but you won’t always have time. You need to shrink your plannin’ time and still come out a winner. But you’re getting faster. Keep on that. And make your punches and jabs sharper and harder. Don’t be afraid to fight dirty. Shiori, nice job trying to keep Izuku on his toes. Don’t take such a big step when you lunge next time, or your opponent will take advantage of it. And remember to use your legs more. They hold more power, but they are more risky. Your balance is improving, so keep doing those exercises I showed you. Not a bad match, though. All in all, I’d say you kids are doing well.”

Hitoshi comes over, panting. “My foster father hates me,” he breathes before falling flat on his face.

“Thank you for acknowledging all my hard work,” Aizawa says sarcastically. “I want to see where all of you are with your quirks. Since Hitoshi is currently being overdramatic, you—” He points to Izuku.”—are going first.”

The boy gulps and moves toward an empty spot on the beach. The pro-hero stands a little ways off. “Now, tell me your quirk.”

“It’s called Mind Palace,” Izuku answers. “I can store information, control body functions and alter
“DNA?”

“Yeah.” The roots of his hair turn white and the colour spreads to the tips of his curls. His eyes change from forest green to a crystal blue and his freckles fade. “See?”

Aizawa nods. “What about the body functions?”

“I can increase things like my adrenaline, muscle capacity, eyesight, stamina and lung capacity. The more I exercise it, the higher I can increase it,” he explains. “My eyes glow when I use it, but overuse causes serious migraines and nosebleeds.”

Okay. Annoying, but nothing too serious. “Anything else?”

“Oh,” Izuku shrugs nonchalantly. “Extreme overuse makes me bleed from my eyes.”

Aizawa freezes. “From your eyes?”

The boy with currently white hair nods like it’s the most normal thing in the world. “Yeah. It kinda stings and makes it hard to see, but it’s not that bad.”

“He’s not gonna listen,” Bishop interrupts. “Seriously, kid’s got a crazy high pain tolerance. Doesn’t help that he can shut off his pain receptors. You ain’t gonna convince him.”

Aizawa pauses, inhales sharply, massages his eyes and reaches into his pocket for an aspirin. “Okay. Migraines, nosebleeds, and…. eye bleeds.” That’s a picture he won’t get out of his mind for a long time. “If I see any of that, I’ll erase your quirk immediately and you will stop training for the rest of the week. Are we clear?”

“Yes Eraserhead-sensei.”

“Now, can you explain your ‘mind palace’?”

“It’s like a mental manifestation of someone’s mind. In mine, I can call up memories there, study, make actual mental notes that pop up later and talk to Tomo.”

“Who’s Tomo?”

“They’re like…my conscience, I guess? I don’t really know to be honest. They just kinda showed up one day. I can assign them tasks so I can be focusing on a situation while also using my quirk.”

“Do you know if you can create links between minds?”

Izuku blinks. “What?”

“You said you have a manifestation of your mind, but, hypothetically, that means other people have a mind palace that they can’t access the way you can, right?”

“…Yeah.”

“So, do you think it’s possible that you could have a telepathic link with someone?”

It dawns on Izuku that he’s never tried this. He’s filled with eagerness at the idea. Telepathy! This could be so useful in the field! Instead of trying to shout things out, he could just think them and-
"In the field?" Aizawa repeats.

Shit. He said that out loud.

“Oh, you know,” Izuku replies, rubbing his neck as his mind scrambles for a believable lie. (Whyareyounotworkingnowbrain- ) “Like, as a hero? When I’m in the field it’d be helpful.”

The erasure hero examines him for a moment before letting it go. “It could be. But first we need to know if you can even do it.”

“Kaori, can you come here?” Shiori walks toward him with a scowl on her face. Izuku’s eyes glow green. “Tomo.”

“Yes, Izuku?”

“Can you try and establish a link between me and Kaori?”

There’s a moment of nothing. Izuku’s scared that it won’t work. Then, Tomo replies. “Yes, of course Izuku. It’s hypothetical, but it should be possible. You currently have the capacity for three links mental links. You would like to save Kayano Shiori as your first one?”

“Yes.”

“Alright. Attempting mental link. Please make physical contact with the first linker to begin process.”

Izuku steps forward and wraps his friend in a tight hug. “Uh...Izuku?” He can feel her stiffen under his touch.

“I need to make physical contact with you to try to establish the link.”

“Okay…..but, you couldn’t just give me a high-five or something less...physical?”

“No.” He squeezes tighter. “I like this better. Also, you kinda look like you need a hug today.”

She pauses before the tension bleeds from her shoulders. “Yeah, I guess I kinda do.”

“Link successfully established. What would you like to name this link, Izuku?”

“It worked!”

“Link named: It worked.”

“No!” He suddenly releases Shiori. “I mean-rename link one Kaori.”

“Link one renamed Kaori.”

“Did it work?” Shiori asks while she picks herself up off the ground.

“I...think so?”

“Send something through the link,” Aizawa says.

Izuku faces Shiori and focuses. “Open link.” They stare at each other for a second. Then, softly in the back of her mind, a voice speaks.
“Hi, Kaori. It’s Izuku. Can you hear me?”

It’s quiet and somewhat unclear, but it’s unmistakably Izuku.

It’s funny to watch his best friend jump twenty (literal) feet in the air. Aizawa sighs. “Okay, so we know that you can make telepathic links apparently. Kayano, how did it sound?”

“Unclear, but I can hear it,” she answers, once she gathers her wits.

“Midoriya, I want you to work on improving the connection and testing the range of the link. We’re going to be building up your body as well so you can have a greater muscle capacity.” Aizawa stops and smirks. “Think you can handle all that?”

Izuku beams at Aizawa and pumps his fist in the air. “I can do it! Plus Ultra!”

(Oh, you sweet child, you have no idea the horrors that await you in training-)

“Good. Now, I want you to practice increasing your capacity and bringing it back down.” The teacher turns his attention to Shiori. “You go next.” She nods. “Quirk?”

“Air Control,” she answers, crossing her arms. “I can control the air around me, create new air, absorb winds, that sort of thing.”

“Anything else?”

“Right. It’s not really a ‘quirk’-” She rubs at her neck. “-but I have a temperature resistance from my mom. It doesn’t work really well against really high or low temperatures, but it gives me some protection, I guess.”

“Can you control the temperature of the air around you?”

The blank look on Shiori’s face is enough of an answer. Aizawa sighs and pinches the bridge of his nose. “We’re going to try that later. For now, try and keep these objects in the air.” He picks three random objects from the trash heap and throws them at Shiori. They stop mid-air and hover. “Good, keep it there. Now-” He claps. “Get to work, brats.”

As they use their quirks, Izuku still finds a way to talk, despite the fact that he’s raising his stamina and muscle capacity and sprinting back and forth across the beach before powering down. “Kaori.”

“Y’know how we’re practicing our quirks and stuff?”

One of the objects finally falls. She didn’t think it was going to be this hard, but there she is, struggling to keep two objects suspended. “Dammit ....Yeah, what about it?”

He perks up and almost shouts, “That means we can finally see if you can fly!”

Her concentration snaps at the outburst. The other two objects hit the ground. Shiori turns slowly to meet her friend’s eyes. “I swear to god Izuku-”

The greenette fires his muscle capacity up all the way and bolts across the beach.

While the two best friends….work their quirks, Bishop absolutely wipes the floor spars with Hitoshi.

“Back leg needs to move a little further back, kid,” Bishop instructs as Hitoshi weaves around a
punch. “Your stance is too tight. Spread out more and sit lower in the stance. I shouldn’t be able to knock you over easily.” Bishop’s foot connects with Hitoshi’s chest. The boy stumbles back and falls. The former pro rushes forward and strikes for Hitoshi’s neck, only to stop just short of that. “If this was a knife, you’d be dead.”

“C’mon, you didn’t even use your quirk,” Hitoshi whines.

“It’s a shame I know yours or else you would’ve gotten me earlier in the fight.” He extends a hand to help Hitoshi up, which he accepts. “But you can’t always rely on cheap shots to get people to respond to you. You’ll need some sort of strategy with that.”

“What even is your quirk? I have literally never seen you use it.”

“Well, kid, that’s because of a little something called ‘quirk laws’. That generally means I would go to jail for a very long time if I were to use my quirk without a license and I’m not about to let Chizome and Marjorie wreak havoc on my apartment while I’m gone.”

“I’m pretty sure they do that either way,” Hitoshi snorts. “But seriously, I wanna see the Great Bishop’s quirk.”

Bishop looks back at him. “No.”

“Oh, c’mon! I let you wipe the beach with me! I think there’s more sand in my hair than on the ground!”

“You let me wipe the beach with you, huh?”

“Please?”

Bishop shakes his head and cards his hand through Hitoshi’s sandy hair. “Maybe later, kid. But not now. We have to get back to you letting me beat you up.”

The younger male bats the hand out of his hair and glares. He drops into a stance and pounces on Bishop in a manner similar to a cat. A wicked smile curves Bishop’s lips and he dodges, grabs Hitoshi’s foot and flips him.

In the end, all three kids go home dead tired, but the happiest they’ve been in a long time.

Chapter End Notes

I made a playlist for this story:
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezkibzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbwQ_Lgg
If you have any song suggestions, let me know!

Fun fact #6- Bishop original character design is pretty similar to the Bishop you know. He's got bad eyesight in one eye due to his injury (which will eventually be elaborated on) and wears reading glasses. Originally, I developed him because I wanted to have another father-like figure for the group that had seen the worst of what it's like to be a hero. I was going to use Eraserhead, but then I considered someone similar to Toshinori—someone who's older and was forced into limited hero work because of an injury, or in Bishop's case, retirement at a young age. He knows better than most heroes how dangerous it is, but he also knows what it's like to chase a dream and get what you want, only to have it cut short. He doesn't want his kids' dreams getting cut short, but he also
doesn't want them hurt like he was. Because of this, he's pretty protective and will go to war for them. I created Bishop because I wanted someone with a more bitter, cynical view of people and the world. Bishop was disgusted with his treatment after he had to retire. He's slow to trust people because of it and now toes the line of morally grey. Having Akaguro as a friend says a lot about Bishop morally—he agrees with a lot of what Akaguro preaches. There's a lot wrong and he believes at this point, only something drastic will fix it. That's why he wants his kids to be the real deal—to be the change society wants to see.

Fun fact #6b- Bishop is Catholic. His quirk name will be revealed, but his religion is part of the reason for his hero name. Ever since his injury, though, his devotion to his religion has waned. Later in the story, shots of younger Bishop (Jesus Garcia) will be introduced. He starts off very morally correct and 'righteous' only to fall into increasingly darker, morally grey areas as he sees the real world.

Fun fact #6c- Bishop’s theme song/the song he was based off of is Dying in LA by Panic! at the Disco. It describes his disillusionment with hero society and the world. "The sun was in your eyes" generally describes how he felt when he first came to Japan to attend UA.

Fun fact #6d- Sorta random, but I felt it was worth mentioning because I haven't been able to figure out how to work this into the story: Marjorie Thomas is a disgraced doctor. She tried to heal someone with her quirk to heal someone, but the heal process caused circulatory shock and the patient died. She hesitates when it comes to using her quirk often, or has counter thoughts to it, but she wants to help people and doesn't want any Bishop's kids to be hurt. However, if the injury is too severe, she will refuse to heal it because she's scared she'll send them into shock or kill them.

Okay, that was a lot of fun facts, but I realized I never mentioned them and I didn't want to forget. Anyway, hope you guys have a great week!

If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
The months pass quickly between training and vigilante work. It’s not long before they’re all in their third year, which is a blessing and a curse all in itself. A blessing, because Shiori and Izuku are almost out of Ourdera. A curse? Literally everything else.

“You’re all third years now, so it’s time to start thinking seriously about your future,” Hagiwara-sensei announces. “Normally, I would hand these interest forms out, but-” He tosses all the papers up into the air and smiles. “I know you all want to be heroes!”

The class bursts into cheers as people display their quirks. Hagiwara is quick to calm his class down. “Yes, yes, you all have wonderful quirks, but no public quirk usage!”

“Aw, sensei!” The class complains, but the quirk usage stops.

Bakugou kicks up out of his chair and lands on his desk. “Hey, sensei! Don’t lump me in with these extras!”

The room once again erupts in outrage. “SHUT THE FUCK UP! I’m leaving this shitty school and going straight for the top! I got the top score on the UA mock exam and I’ll nail the real one!”

Izuku stiffens at the mention of UA.

“Don’t they have like, a ten percent acceptance rate?”

“Do you think he can do it?”

“I bet he’s going to be a cool hero!”

While everyone else chatters around him, Izuku focuses on Hagiwara-sensei.

*Please don’t say it, please don’t say it, please don’t-

“Oh. Isn’t Midoriya also applying to UA?”

…..*fuck you* Hagiwara-sensei.
“Deku? I mean, sure, he’s smart, but it’s UA. He’d never make it.”

“Seriously? Isn’t he quirkless?”

“He might as well be.”

“Hey, idiot, you can’t study your way into UA!”
A hand slams down on Izuku’s desk. Bakugou leans in close, nearly putting him nose to nose with Izuku. “The hell? Where do you get off puttin’ yourself on my level?”
“I’m not.” Izuku forces the words out, trying to stop his hands from shaking. “UA is my dream school and you can’t stop me from applying.”

“Like hell you are, Deku!” Bakugou swings down, ready to put Izuku in his place.

Izuku looks up and, for a moment, all he can see is every villain he’s gone up against in the past two years; every injury, every drop of blood, every moment of paralyzing fear, every ache he’s felt from working until he collapsed.

And when Izuku sees Kacchan again, he realizes that he’s not as scary as any of those things.

What happens next surprises everyone. Izuku flies out of his seat and grabs Bakugou’s hand. He twists it so that Bakugou is forced to the ground in one fluid motion. The room is dead silent.

“Bakugou Katsuki,” Izuku says with a deadly calm, though his heart is gunning in his chest. “I am not your Deku. I am not afraid of you. I am not quirkless. But you know what I am? I am going to UA. Not you, or anyone in this godforsaken school is going to stop me.” He lets go of the blonde’s arm and Bakugou falls. He looks at Izuku with wild, fearful infuriated eyes. “Alright?”

Bakugou snarls, gets off the floor and pushes past Izuku. The greenette sighs and sits down.
“I…..let’s go over our career paths…” Hagiwara, who’s still stunned, announces. “The...the first going to the guidance counselor is Midoriya.” The teacher gestures toward the door. Izuku nods, gathers his things and leaves.

It’s good that he’s first, because he needs a minute. Now that he’s alone, he allows his hands to tremble and his breath to become uneven. “I can’t believe I did that,” he says to the empty hall. The tips of his ears and cheeks burn pink. “I can’t believe I did that I can’t believe I did that I can’t believe-”

“Oh god. What did you do now?”
Izuku looks up to see Kaori standing with a girl from her class-Nageki Yuno? Maybe. Izuku can vaguely remember Kaori mentioning being on good terms with someone like that. “O-oh. Nothing. Just, maybe, sorta, kinda signed my death warrant.”

She blinks. “Oh. Pissed Bakabitch off, huh?”

Nageki snorts, a genuine smile spreading across her lips. “Nice one.” She lightly punches Kaori in the arm.

“Cute laugh,” Izuku thinks before snapping out of it. “So...I should probably go. To the guidance counselor. Bye.” Stiffly, he walks away.

**WHAT WAS THAT??**

Shiori isn’t looking forward to career counseling, but apparently, this isn’t something she can skip out on, so whoop-de-fucking-doo! Her teacher sends them to 3-B’s counselor in pairs, but she’s with
Yuno, so the chances of her murdering her partner are less likely.

Yuno is one of the few classmates she’s friends with. They don’t interact much outside of school, but they text and occasionally go to events together (they are both art nerds, so they usually go to art museums or something).

Nageki Yuno is a taller female, standing around 5’5 or 5’6, with shoulder length dark brown hair and amber eyes. Shiori thinks Yuno’s pretty, (and her opinions are obviously shared after what she’s seen with Izuku.) She’s pretty well liked by their peers and teachers, and gets fairly good grades. (But standing next to Shiori, Yuno looks perfect.)

All that aside, it’s nice to be out of the classroom. They reach the counselor’s office. Yuno, being the oh-so wonderful friend she is, lets her go first. Shiori takes a deep breath and opens the door.

The counselor frowns at the sight of her. “Kayano, have a seat.”

She should’ve stayed in the classroom.

“Well Midoriya, your grades are perfect,” the counselor says.

“Thank you, ma’am,” Izuku replies slowly.

The counselor shuffles through Izuku’s paperwork and frowns. “....I see you have the Hero Course at UA listed as your first and only option.”

“Yeah. It’s my dream school.”

“I….I see.” Her lips tighten. “Midoriya, with your quirk.”

“I know it’s a long shot-”

“A very long shot,” she stresses.

“...but I don’t know how it will turn out until I do it.” His eyes gleam with determination. “So I’m going to do it.

“At least apply for General Education,” the counselor begs weakly.

He nods. “Okay. I’ll apply for General Education.”

Izuku doesn’t apply for General Education.

“Now, Kayano, you are aware that UA is a top tier high school, aren’t you?”

“Yes.”

The man massages his eyes and sighs. “Kayano, look at this.” He opens a folder and holds out her report cards. “If I’m being honest with you, I don’t think you can do it. You’re an average student at best. Though last year’s final semester was certainly a surprise-” She hardens her glare. “-I don’t think you’ll ever be able to do that well again. You should be less ambitious. You might be able to pass the Hero Course’s physical exam, but you will definitely fail the written exam. And if you’re thinking about General Education, don’t. Their written exam is even more rigorous than the Hero Course. Honestly, I just don’t see you getting into UA. You’re not good enough for that. With
people like Bakugou, maybe even Midoriya, they’re special. They’ve got what it takes and they will be successful. You are not. Looking at what I see now, I can’t see you ever being anything. Choose a local high school and try and figure things out, but don’t apply for UA. You’ll only waste time and money. You can’t make it.”

By the end of his ‘well meaning’ lecture, Kayano’s fists are balled so tightly they’re pure white. Unadulterated rage boils her blood until only anger runs through her veins. She wants to punch this son of a bitch in his face—

No.

She’s kept her calm in worse situations.

A junior high guidance counselor?

She can handle this.

Because she can be better than he’s being.

“I’m going to apply,” she says sternly. “And I’m going to get into UA, whether it be through the Hero Course, General Education, Support or Business. And when I do, I am going to come back and staple my acceptance letter to your door.”

The counselor frowns at her. “Kayano, I’m sorry, but I don’t believe you have much of a future.”

She stands and bows. “Thank you for your guidance, Senyo-sensei.”

“Wait—”

The girl is already gone.

(But best believe she’ll be back.)

He sighs. “Next!” Nageki Yuno walks in. “Ah, Nageki. Take a seat. Let’s talk about your plans for the future….”

Izuku returns to his homeroom and the next person goes to the counselor. The last period of the day is a study hall and the teacher leaves once the bell rings. Izuku goes to pack his things when he’s cornered by Kac-Bakugou and his cronies. “Hold up, Deku.”

“Not now, Bakugou. I need to go.” Izuku reaches for his Hero Analysis Notebook when it’s snatched from him.

“Eh? What’s this?” Bakugou carelessly flips through the pages and sneers. “Still think you can be a hero?”

“Yes,” Izuku answers evenly. “I told you that I was going to UA’s Hero Course. I thought it was implied that I know I can be a hero.”

(Despite what he says, Izuku is still unsure. Him? A hero? Against a person like Bakugou? Even he can admit it’s laughable.)

Bakugou slams his hand down on a desk, making Izuku jump. The blonde cackles at his nerves. “You go actin’ all tough, but you’re shaking like a leaf, Deku. Now listen up—” He gets in close. “I’m the only one from this piss-poor school that’s going to UA. Got it?” He backs up and blows up Izuku’s notebook, hurling it out the window.

Distantly amidst the shock, Izuku considers jumping after it as he watches Bakugou berate him. “You can’t be a hero. You’re just a fuckin’ pathetic waste of space. But I know how you can finally be useful.” A wicked contorts Bakugou’s face.”Take a swan dive off the roof and pray for a real
quirk in your next life.”

Izuku’s heart drops in his chest. His eyes become glassy. “Tch, let’s go.” Bakugou turns to leave. Both of Bakugou’s cronies widen their eyes, but keep their mouths shut. They know better to mess with Bakugou. It’s easier to torment people with him then to be tormented by him.

Alone in the classroom, Izuku cries.

Swan dive off the roof, huh?

The bounce in Izuku’s step is absent today.

Pray you’ll get a quirk in your next life!
I’m not quirkless.

Before he realizes it, tears are running down his face. Glassy eyes meet the ground. Izuku tries to dry his tears in the solitude of a tunnel. He texts Kaori.

She doesn’t respond.

He sighs.

Today really fucking sucks.

Without his permission, darker thoughts enter his head and refuse to go away.

You can’t do it.

You’ll never be able to.

You can’t.

You can’t.

You can-

He knows!

He knows, alright? It’s unlikely his dreams will ever come true. He knows he’s got no shot. It’s stupid that he thinks he can do it. Everyone else knows he’ll never accomplish anything heroic, but…..

if he isn’t a hero, than who is he?

Just Midoriya Izuku.

There’s nothing special about that.

There’s nothing special about him.

Even Rabbit’s special, but that doesn’t carry over to Izuku. Midoriya Izuku is Rabbit, but Rabbit is not Midoriya Izuku. Rabbit knows what to do in dangerous situations. Rabbit saves people. Rabbit is a hero. Rabbit is surrounded by great people whose real identities are just as special as their vigilante personas.
Mei will become a famous inventor and rake in millions in profits. Hitoshi and Kaori are going to be great heroes, saving hundreds of lives and protecting the world by fighting villains.

But him?
He’s nobody.

He’ll forever be in the shadows of their foretold greatness; an afterthought of their childhood; a footnote in the story of their lives.

He is just Midoriya Izuku.

And Midoriya Izuku can’t even prove to his peers that he has a quirk.

He’s still gathering his composure when he hears the manhole cover rattle. It’s blown up and the shards embed themselves into the top of the tunnel. A mass of sludge oozes out of the hole, glancing around quickly. Its two red eyes land on Izuku’s trembling form. “A medium sized invisibility shield! You don’t mind if I borrow your body for a bit, do ya kid?”

The scrawny boy begins scrambling away as the sludge laughs. It grabs hold of the kid and immobilizes him. “Haha, just let go kid. It’ll only hurt for like, a minute. But thanks! You’re my hero!”

Izuku can’t answer. His throat is filled with sludge and his limbs are stiff. He can’t breathe…!

“Texas Smash!”
The oppressive force around him is blown away and Izuku is flung back into the tunnel.

“Izuku, oxygen levels are dangerously low…..”
“Kid-” A blonde blur says.

Izuku doesn’t hear the rest as his brain temporarily shuts down.

Today really does suck.

“Kid. Kid. Kid.”
Fuzzy shapes move through his vision as Izuku begins to wake up. “Tomo, systems check,” he mutters under his breath.

“All body systems seem to be unharmed, Izuku. However, you do have a bruise on the back of your head.”

Izuku sits up and winces. “Yep. Found it.” Then he remembers the blonde blurry figure. “Ah-” He stops cold. “ALL MIGHT?!?”
The hero beams at him, hands on his hips and laughs. “Ahahaha! It is I!”

“What-when-how-”
“I apologize for involving you in my hero work, Young Midoriya!” He says.

“You know my name-wait! C-can I have an autograph?” Izuku scrambles for his notebook.

“Already done!” The giant booms.

Maybe today isn’t so bad after all.
“T-thank you!”

“No problem, my boy! But now, I must go!” All Might taps his fingers against the two soda bottles. “This one needs to be taken to the police.” The giant gets ready to shoot off into the sky.

“Wait! I have a question!” Izuku’s voice is loud enough to give All Might pause.

“Really, my boy, I must go-”

“Can I be a hero with a weak quirk?” It comes as a surprise how forcefully Izuku interrupts his hero, but he needs to know.

All Might stands still as a sentry for a moment, lost to the world. “A weak quirk, you say?” He repeats, voice softer than his usual boisterous boom.

Izuku doesn’t care. He needs him to say it. He needs All Might to tell him the one thing that so very few people have told him, because if he hears it from the Symbol of Peace, then nothing will be able to stop him from doing it. He can-

“No.” Without another word, All Might blasts into the sky.

Oh.

No, huh?

Izuku stares at the ground, heart and dreams shattered before his feet. A bitter smile finds its way onto his face.

He should’ve seen this coming.

Why did he expect the answer to be different?

A dark cloud looms over the young boy as he makes his way home. Explosions break him from his thoughts.

There, in the street for all to see, is Bakugou in the hold of the Sludge Villain. He’s held up like a pitiful victim; a mockery to everything Izuku knows Bakugou believes.

Izuku sees him.

And then turns away.

Of course he couldn’t walk away, he thinks as he rushes past the boundaries toward Kacchan. Forget being a good hero—how can he call himself a good person if he turns his back on someone who needs help?

There’s not much he can do, he realizes as he hurls his backpack at the villain’s eye.

But, with what little he can do,

With his weaknesses,

His failure,
His insecurity
And his fear,

He does more than any pro-hero at the scene.

Izuku grabs onto Kacchan’s hand and rips him forward as he throws another object at the Sludge Villain’s eye. The villain screams and mistakenly releases Kacchan, who falls forward onto Izuku.

Without any civilian to worry about, the heroes rush in. All Might blasts the villain into the sky, Backdraft puts out the fires and the other heroes usher the bystanders away. Kacchan is taken to the hospital, and in the midst of all the chaos, Izuku slips away.

‘Can I be a hero with a weak quirk?’

‘No’, All Might had said.

He tightens his fists and looks at the rosy sky.

Watch me do it, All Might.

Or I’ll die trying.

Momo is a bit surprised when Shiori asks if she can come over, but is happy (and really nervous). Shiori shows up very soon after texting her, given how far Akumi is. She invites her friend inside, who’s still in her school uniform, with her school bag. “Momo,” she says. “I need you to tutor me.”

“What.”

Shiori clenches her fist. “I need you to tutor me for the UA exams.”

Momo is quiet for a moment before she nods. “Alright. I’ll help.”

“Thanks. I need to get ahead in school.”

So, Senyo-sensei, Ourdera, look back on me and laugh while you still can,

because soon you’ll be craning your necks to see me in the distance.

Click.

Scrape.

Crash.

Mei slaves tirelessly over her inventions, tinkering, adjusting, revising them; making them absolutely perfect. She can hear the whispers of the kids at Somei who think she’s weird or crazy. They talk behind their hands about how she never does anything with anyone and only spends time in the workshop.

Right.

Because that’s where genius is made.
And all of her work, her sacrifice, her blood and tears—

Those are going to take her to and past UA’s front gates with her middle finger held high to all those gawking behind her.

It’s only a matter of time.

And no one stops the flow of time.

“Don’t talk to that kid. He’s got a villain’s quirk.”

Hitoshi grits his teeth and blocks out the white noise of his peers’ chatter.

“I heard he brainwashed Juno over in 2-C. That’s why Juno got expelled.”

“No way—why is Shinsou still here?”

“He’s got the perfect quirk to get away with murder!”

“Ugh! I don’t wanna be near him.”

“A villain in the making.”

“Look at him, he’s going to snap.”

“Move! I don’t want to sit next to him!”

He presses his nails into his palms so hard that blood begins to peek out against the stark white of his hands. Rage burns within him. Who gives them the right—

Wait.

No one does.

*Inhale, exhale.*

*Breathe and dig deep.*

*Then turn around and prove them wrong.*

The tension bleeds from his muscles and the burning fire of anger is snuffed out.

A villain’s quirk?

No, the quirk of the future greatest hero.

He doesn’t need to listen to them. He doesn’t have to give them power over who he is or how he feels. They can shout at him and mock him all they want, because when he gets up and leaves them in his dust, they won’t be screaming at him anymore.

They’ll be screaming *after* him.

And Shinsou Hitoshi will never, ever look back at the people who never gave him the time of day.

He just needs to breathe and bear this burden a little longer.
Fun fact #7- There's a reason behind why Shiori hates smoking. I forget if I mention this later, but I'm just gonna dump it here. Part of her quirk is that she can feel the air around her, which is why it's hard to sneak up on her and she usually knows where people are. But, there is a 'drawback' to this. Pollution in the air bothers her. It doesn't make her sick, but it's like a constant itching under her skin. Smoking does the same thing to her. It's part of the reason she doesn't like living in the city. As you'll see in later chapters, she talks a lot about moving out to the country. While the drawback doesn't physically harm her, it's annoying, though regular pollution she's learned to get used to from years of living in Akumi. Despite that, she doesn't like being around people who smoke.

Fun fact #7b- Shiori likes open air, so she spends a lot of time on roofs or on fire escapes, because that's about as good as it gets in Akumi. If she can't get that, she'll stay in a room with the window open, though she'll always close it before she goes to bed. If she can't open a window, she'll let the fan go full throttle. The last one often helps her sleep.

Hope you guys have a great week!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 18: Just blow out the candles (Oh little boy, haven't you learned?)

Chapter Summary

The storm arrives and overshadows the happy lives of our heroes.

Chapter Notes

All I have to say is that I’m sorry, and that I am on an update roll!
But mostly I’m sorry, because if you don't hate me after this chapter, you definitely will after the next one.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Go!” Shiori and Izuku dive at each other. She sweeps his feet out from under him, but he springs back on his hands and rights himself.

“You’re copying my moves,” she huffs as she jabs at him.
Izuku dodges. “I learn from the best.” He swings and hits her in the stomach, sending her tumbling to the ground, but she rolls away before he can pin her.

To their left, Hitoshi does fifty push-ups before he begins jogging around the beach. Mei sits further back on the beach and occasionally approaches the training area for spare parts. A good amount of the trash has been cleared away, so Hitoshi, Izuku and Shiori make a pile of all the things that Mei might use for her inventions.

Shiori finally manages to pin Izuku by flipping him and then putting him in a headlock. “Shiori wins. Good effort on both sides, though. The match lasted nine minutes and twenty eight seconds. Izuku, that stomach strike was good, but be a little more direct. That punch was sloppy. Shiori, when you sweep someone’s legs, you need to go for the knees, not the shins. You can’t always rely on brute force. You two are definitely improving, though. Izuku, I want you and Hitoshi to spar next. Shiori, go see what Aizawa’s got for you.”

Hitoshi and Izuku line up while Shiori tries to alter the air’s temperature. Mei tinkers with her invention until it begins whirring to life. They all think the same thing.

Eight more months.

After training, Shiori goes back to the shelter, takes an ice cold shower and then hops on a train to Momo’s. She drowns out the chatter of the train with music until she reaches her stop.

“Hey Shiori.” Her tall friend gives her a shy smile at her.

“Hey. How’s UA prep with your cousin going?”
Momo sighs and tucks a strand of hair behind her ear. “Well, but I wish it wasn’t so time consuming.
What about on your end?’

“Oh, you know, just casually kicking each other into the sand for fun,” she deadpans.

Momo giggles, eyes unusually bright and the two girls make their way up to her room. “So, do you want to go over math today?” Yaoyorozu hops onto her bed and opens a textbook.

Shiori drops her bag on the floor beside her. “Sure.”

The pair spend a few hours like this. Momo will explain a concept to her and give examples before Shiori tries it for herself. After a few attempts, the latter’s answers become consistently correct and it takes her less time to do them.

“Be right back. I need to use the bathroom.”

Momo nods. “Alright. We can go over the Quadratic Formula next.”

After Shiori leaves, Momo notices a different notebook sticking out of Shiori’s bag. It’s not like her school notes and it’s unmarked. Curiosity gets the better of her and Momo opens the book. Inside are pencil sketches of various things—trains, people, parks, landscapes. Some of the drawings are smudged or have been hastily erased, but they’re good. Momo flips through the pages with quiet awe.

She didn’t know Shiori could draw.

When she hears the bathroom door open, she quickly closes the book and drops it back into Shiori’s backpack.

Shiori reappears and doesn’t comment on anything odd. “So, Quadratic Formula?”

Momo nods and tries to not look suspicious. “Right! Now, it looks hard at first, but once you memorize it, it’s not that bad…..” The older girl then proceeds to explain the Algebra problem.

Around four, they wrap up and Shiori says her goodbyes. Just before she’s out the door, she pauses like she’s forgotten something. “Oh, Momo?”

“Yes?”

Shiori leans in with hints of a smile. “If you want to look through my sketchbook, you can just ask.” And without another word, Shiori leaves and Momo’s mouth hangs open.

After Shiori’s gone, Momo groans and buries her head in her pillow, screaming.

She’s a mess.

Shiori gets back on the train and heads to downtown Akumi. The walk from the train station to Djinn’s isn’t bad; maybe twenty minutes at most.

Shiori opens the door to the cafe and a bell rings, announcing her arrival. Djinn’s is pretty well filled for the late afternoon.

“Can I help you?” A woman with blue skin and long black hair quite literally appears next to her.

Shiori jumps a bit; it’s hard to sneak up on her, after all. “I-I heard Djinn’s was hiring.”

The lady crosses her arms and looks Shiori up and down. “How old?”
“Fourteen. I’ve got my papers.”

She hums and floats around Shiori, wispy tail never touching the ground. “Not sure, kid. You look kinda young. Got any experience?”

“I help cook at the shelter three blocks from here and clean a lot.”

“Wait—the shelter? For kids?” She narrows her eyes suspiciously.

“Yeah, what about it.”

Realization dawns in her eyes. “That’s where I know you from!” She exclaims, pointing at Shiori. “You’re that kid who’s always drawing something or sitting on the rooftop.” The woman rests her hands on her hips with a thoughtful expression. “Look, I’m really sorry, but I don’t really want to hire kids—”

“Wait,” Shiori cuts in more forcefully than she expects to. “You don’t have to file anything or even acknowledge that I work here. You can pay me less than anyone else here for double the work, but I really need the money.”

The cafe’s owner circles Shiori again, examining her. “Need it for what?”

“Tryin’ to get an apartment and pay for high school.”

She raises an eyebrow. “They don’t cover high school where you live?”

“It’s Akumi child care,” Shiori deadpans. “Of course they don’t.” They stare at each other in silence for a moment before the woman extends her blue hand with a bright smile. “Name’s A’isha. Welcome to Djinn’s Cafe, kid. You can start next week.”

Shiori shakes it. “What do you want me to do?”

“Well, we’ve got a temporary waiter for another three weeks, so you’ll have to wait for that, but—” A’isha points to the front window. “I need some good-looking pictures to draw customers in. You’ll be doing that. M’kay?”

With a smile, Shiori nods. “Right.”

Hitoshi and his foster dad head home and Hitoshi takes a nice hot shower that never would’ve been allowed under Fujikawa’s rule. His hand ghosts the light scar on his stomach. It’s been almost half a year since he got it, but every time he touches it, a shiver runs up his spine and he can feel phantom pains on the scar.

But he’s alive, and he wouldn’t trade this life for whatever life he’d be reborn in if he had died that day.

Hitoshi twists the nozzle and the water stops. He steps out of the shower and dries himself off in the steamy room. Right. He forgot to turn the fan on.

After changing into a fresh pair of clothes, Hitoshi attempts to drag a comb through his hair before giving up and exiting the bathroom.

Both of his foster parents are sitting at the kitchen table, hands folded and looking at him expectantly. The small falls from his face.
Shit.

He should’ve seen this coming.

Yamada has his hair down and he looks uncharacteristically serious. “Hitoshi, we need to talk to you.”

“Uh-about what?” He asks nervously.

“Sit down, please,” Yamada requests, though his voice is firm.

Hitoshi sits at the table, legs bouncing up and down. “What we wanted to tell you—” Aizawa begins.

“Please don’t send me back.”

He has it good here, and there is so much that he’s willing to do to not lose it. Both adults look at him before they stare at each other. “Hitoshi—”

“I will do anything, just please don’t send me back there.” Tears burn his eyes but he refuses to cry.

“Hitoshi,” Aizawa says firmly. “We aren’t sending you back.”

“You aren’t?”

“No,” Yamada interjects. “We want to adopt you.”

Hitoshi doesn’t cry.

He doesn’t.

His eyes are just really, really sweaty.

Hizashi smiles at him. “If you’ll have us as your parents, we’d like you to be part of this family, Hitoshi.”

“You don’t have to decide right away,” Shouta adds. “It’s okay if you want to—”

“Y-yes,” Hitoshi interrupts, sniffing after not-crying. “I-I want to….thank you. Thank you so much.”

The boy breaks down again and Hizashi moves his seat next to him and hugs him. “Welcome to the family, kiddo,” he whispers quietly.

Hitoshi is home.

The next day, Yamada goes all out for Hitoshi’s spur-of-the-moment adoption party. He invites all of Hitoshi’s three friends, plus Bishop, Inko, Mama and Akaguro. Akaguro bows out, citing ‘other obligations’, but everyone else shows.

It’s a fun night for everyone. The party’s energy dips as it gets later. Shiori and Hitoshi, far more used to be up later than most of the adults, sit out on the fire escape, talking about the few experiences they shared before becoming vigilantes.

“Remember Mr. Yoshi?”

Hitoshi shivers. Mr. Yoshi had been the foster parent he and Shiori had met under, and god, that man was something else. “I’d rather not.” The man had been nothing short of corporal for the tiniest mistakes.
“Sooo, you don’t remember when we tie-dyed all his shirts and duct taped his precious radio to the ceiling?”

Hitoshi laughs. Okay, that’s a good memory. Yoshi sends them back right after that incident and they go to different foster families. Hitoshi doesn’t see Shiori again until he winds up under Fujikawa Hanako’s care at the shelter. They get into trouble together every once in awhile, but it’s more because they’re both near the bottom of Hanako’s list of favourites and less because they’re partners in crime.

Then again, Hitoshi wishes they were. He and Shiori might’ve been able to raise hell at the shelter if they had joined forces.

“So, you going to change your name?” Shiori asks, playing with her hoodie string. “Aizawa-Yamada Hitoshi is pretty catchy.” There’s a rare teasing lilt to her voice. Shiori is much more lighthearted tonight, which means she’s in a good mood.

Huh. Never thought he’d see the day.

With a sigh, Hitoshi leans back and looks at the sky. The breeze flowing through the alley between the apartment and the building beside it is cool on his skin from the warm June air. It’s nice out here. He can see why Shiori spends so much time out here and on roofs. “Maybe, but probably not. I get my parents were major assholes who never should have had kids and all, but I’ve always been Shinsou Hitoshi, y’know? Like, Aizawa and Yamada are great and I’m really, really lucky that I’m ending up with them, but I’ve always been Shinsou. That’s me.”

“Regrettably,” she adds, leaning on the fire escapes railing. She tilts her head and looks at him with her storm grey eyes. He doesn’t know why, but he’s always found that colour pretty. “But I get what you mean, Hitoshi.”

“Would you change your name if you had the chance?”

Her face sours a bit with playfulness and exasperation. “Shinsou, do you have any idea how long it took me to learn how to write my name in kanji?”

He chuckles and they talk for the rest of the night, long after the Midoriyas, Mama, Bishop and Mei leave.

Aizawa pokes his head out of the window. “Problem children. It’s midnight.”

“Oh, we were giving you and Yamada some private time,” Hitoshi jokes with a smirk.

“It isn’t too late to reverse the adoption, Hitoshi,” Aizawa half-threatens.

Yamada appears next to his husband, wrapping his arms around his waist. “Ah, don’t be so sour, Shouta. He’s joking.”

“Whose side are you on?”

“Hitoshi’s.” “Mine.” Hitoshi and Hizashi reply at the same time.

Aizawa grumbles something, untangles Hizashi from him and stalks off. “Let him sulk.” Hizashi smiles at Shiori. “You’re welcome to stay the night, little listener, since it’s so late. We can call your parents and see if they’re okay with it.”

Hitoshi and Shiori make eye contact and burst out laughing. The teens laugh until they’re wheezing and their eyes are glassy. “Oh-Oh my god, that is great,” Hitoshi breathes, holding his sides. “Fujikawa would be thrilled!”
“Yeah, Hanako would love that.” Shiori mimes a phone. “Oh, sorry Fujikawa-san. I’m not coming back tonight, but I’ll be there tomorrow!’ She would throw a whole party.” The girl pauses to catch her breath, and the smile on her face fades a bit as she calms down. “Nah, I better head back.”

“You sure she hasn’t locked you out?”

“Doesn’t matter. I got the back window propped open.” Shiori stands up. “I’ll let her know you got adopted.”

Hitoshi starts laughing again. “Send me a picture of her reaction. I’ll make it my wallpaper.”

“Gotcha. G’night.” Before Yamada can stop her, Shiori hops off the fire escape and into the alley, cushioning her landing with a strong gust of air.

Hizashi turns to his son, so beyond confused by the pairs’ behaviour. “What just happened.”

Hitoshi just smiles and climbs in the window. “G’night, Dad.”

“Wait, Hitoshi, seriously, what just-”

Mei hangs a picture of her and her besties in the sacred spot above her workspace where her family picture used to hang. In the picture, they’re at the park when it’s drizzling. Bishop has gotten them all ice cream. The photo is taken the moment Mei jumps on Izuku’s back and Izuku staggers, looking back at her with a smile. Hitoshi has cat whiskers painted on his face from the carnival they had gone to earlier. The whiskers are beginning to run, but he’s smiling. Hitoshi and Shiori throw up peace signs with one hand while holding their ice cream in the other. It’s a nice picture; a good memory.

And now Hitoshi’s getting adopted? Even better!

Life is really looking up.

It’s a lazy Saturday afternoon just beginning to bleed into evening as the sky becomes darker and brings out lighter hues on the pink and orange clouds.

Hitoshi is in his room, being his usual hermit self, scrolling through hero chat forums and getting into fights with anonymous internet users. Izuku and Shiori are hanging out on a roof, having their weekly ‘Safe-space’ Saturdays. There isn’t much to talk about this week, since nothing’s happened, so it’s really two teens just talking about nothing and drinking smoothies. Everyone’s taking it relatively easy, because, hey, they’re kids and they deserve to chill every once in awhile. The universe finally decides to give them a break, and they’re taking full advantage of it.

Then Mei texts the group chat reserved only for emergencies.

Welp. Break’s over.

The last time they spoke in this specific group chat was the riot, so all three kids rush to homebase. Mei had been pretty vague in the text, only saying that it’s urgent, so they get there so fast they would put Ingenium to shame.

“What happened?” Izuku pants, thoroughly out of breath. “Are you okay?”
Mei spins around in her seat. “Eraserhead is being ambushed behind Sweeney’s Barbershop. He’s outnumbered and protecting one civilian.”

Hitoshi’s heart drops in his stomach and shatters so loudly he’s sure it’s audible. “What?” He chokes.

“Do the police know yet?” Shiori cuts in.

“I don’t know why, but I can’t get through. I’ve been calling since I texted you guys. Even if I could get through to them, the place is on the outskirts in a really remote area. They wouldn’t get there soon enough.”

By the time she finishes talking, all three vigilantes have their gear on. “Bullet proof vests, guys. They have guns.”

As if this situation couldn’t get worse.

After putting the vests underneath their hoodies, the three vigilantes disappear into the fading light.

Mei prays to a god she doesn’t quite believe in that they’ll come back safe.

They’re going to.

They have to.

….right?

Swallowing the lump in her throat, Mei keeps trying to get through to the police. Tsukauchi isn’t even answering his cellphone.

*Why isn’t this working?*

Tsukauchi rubs at his temples, begging his oncoming headache to go away. First, he leaves his cellphone in his office, and now *this*. Honestly, today has just been a nightmare, but it can’t be a nightmare because he hasn’t slept in days, so this must be reality.

“Wait, what do you mean someone took down the entire communications system?” He says slowly, pinching the bridge of his nose.

Officer Sansa opens his mouth to speak, but is interrupted by a loud spark followed by the sprinklers going off. The cat-officer scrambles for cover. Water drips down off of Tsukauchi’s hat. “*Great.*”

Hopefully no one is in imminent danger, because this is going to take awhile to fix.

The hairs on Bishop’s arms stand on end. Something’s wrong. He walks to the window, but sees nothing other than a beautiful sky. Everything looks fine, but the feeling doesn’t go away.

None of his kids answer their phones.

Bishop dials Chizome, who thankfully answers on the first ring. “Hey, I need you to sweep the city. I think something happened.”

The man doesn’t question him. “Very well.” Chizome hangs up.
Bishop looks back to the serene evening sky. Not a single cloud is out of place.

Something is very, very wrong.

Weaving in between attacks, Aizawa clutches the little boy clinging to him close to his chest. The hero breathes deeply, trying to keep up the current pace he’s holding. Aizawa can’t do this forever and there are too damn many. He’s got to get the kid out of here.

“When are those brats going to show up, I wonder,” the man in the cheaply tailored suit muses. Rings of smoke curl off of his cigarette. “They should be here soon.” He blows a cloud of smoke out and drops the cigarette, putting the glowing embers out beneath his shoe. “Ya better hope they get here soon, Eraserhead. Yer startin’ to look tired.”

As if perfectly timed, Cobra drops down on the man’s head, knocking him down to the ground. Sweep appears beside Aizawa. “The police aren’t answering and these guys are scrambling radios. You take the kid and get out of here.”

Aizawa looks at the young vigilante. In Sweep’s black eyes, he can see obvious terror. This kid is risking his life to fight off villains while he’s shaking in his boots.

That is something Aizawa has to respect.

“You take the kid,” Aizawa says instead. “I’ll back your friends up.”

Sweep is about to argue (or at least, Shouta thinks he’s going to argue. It’s hard to tell with most of his face covered.) but seemingly decides against it. Aizawa hands off the kid and Sweep disappears.

Free to move without having a civilian to worry about, his capture weapon and hair begin to float and he pulls his yellow goggles on. Stepping up to do what he never thought he would, Aizawa stands with the vigilantes of Cerberus, ready to fight.

“*The comms are being scrambled*,” Cobra says in the mental link. “*Can you create a four way link between you, me and Sweep?*”

“I can try,” Izuku replies. “*But we’ll need to limit what we say. I can only hold this for so long before my quirk exhaustion kicks in.*”

“*Tomo, merge me, link 1 and link 3 together.*”

“*Yes Izuku.*”

“*What the fuck is this?*” Sweep says. “*I was running and I almost tripped and dropped the kid.*”

“*Mental group chat. Our comms are down, so we’re using this. Limit what you say.*”

Izuku dodges a punch and knees the villain in the stomach. “*Sweep, since you’re out of range, let us know if Daedalus gets through to police before you get back.*”

“*Will do.*”

Despite how the fight is going, Izuku can’t help but feel uneasy. Something’s about to happen, and
whatever it is,

It isn’t good.

Chapter End Notes

Playlist:
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyrEm395Bni138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg

Fun fact #8-The original title for this story was 'The Tides of Change'. While it was nice sounding, I didn't like it as much for the story.
Fun fact #8-In the early versions of this AU, Izuku was a lot more in the morally grey area, but I didn't like the direction it was heading, so I created an OC, Asuki Miria to counter his goodness. Miria was more of a laidback, bitter, very sarcastic and biting character with a grim outlook on life and a lot of negative feelings about the world. In writing and dialogue, she was much more carefree/devil may care attitude than Shiori is, because she had basically given up on life. After writing them together, I realized she wasn't the fit I was looking for, so I looked through some OCs that I hadn't used but liked. Kayano Shiori stuck out to me, and when I wrote her into the story, it clicked. She's been part of it since, and Miria became Hibiki, an older figure in Shiori's life that shows what she doesn't want to become. In comparison to Izuku, though, Shiori has darker morals than he does. If we were to make a scale between All Might and Stain, Izuku would be leaning towards All Might while Shiori would be closer to Stain's ideology. While she doesn't entirely agree with it, she's been raised in a morally grey area and thinks that sometimes the best way to handle something is through the dirt/the dirty way to do things. If it makes people upset, but works in the end, then she doesn't care. Izuku, on the other hand, wants so badly to do the right thing no matter how hard it is. He wants not only the result but the process to make people happy.
Will Shiori fully drift to Stain's side and adapt his killing beliefs? Maybe, maybe not.
The point of their friendship is to show the two sides of beliefs when it comes to helping people.
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 19: You don't play with fire unless you wanna get burned

Chapter Summary

You all are going to hate me.
----------------------
A near fatal brush with the villains leaves our heroes reeling. Hitoshi and Yamada try and come to grips with the current reality.
In the aftermath, Mei and Shiori have a meaningful conversation on the roof.

Chapter Notes

The words in bold are spoken in the mental link.
Warning: blood, injuries
No spoilers! Onward, brave reader!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aizawa’s pressed back-to-back with Rabbit. Normally, the hero would take advantage of the opportunity and arrest the vigilante, but given the situation, he’ll give them a pass. Cobra jackknife kicks one of the villains before rolling under the other coming for them and punches him in the-ouch. Hopefully that guy didn’t want kids. Aizawa almost winces in sympathy with the villain, because he knows that hurt. Rabbit is equally brutal in their attacks, throwing throat punches and elbow strikes to the backs of villains too slow to turn around. Both vigilantes fight aggressively and are unafraid to fight dirty.

The man in the cheaply tailored suit manages to drag his ass off the ground, his temple’s bleeding. “Just what I expected. From Akumi’s sewers comes the gutter rats to save the day,” he mocks. “No place where they belong and never where they’re supposed to be.”

“If you don’t back up, Imma put my foot somewhere it’s not supposed to be,” Cobra bites. Through the voice distorter, Aizawa can hear clear anger and disgust.

The man chuckles. “Oh, I don’t doubt that, Cobra, but uh, you see, I have a deal with some...associates of mine.”

Cobra whirs around to fight another criminal. It seems like a second wave has descended on the alleyway. For every one they take down, two more appear in their place.

Crack.

Aizawa spins around and watches in muted horror as Cobra goes down, having been struck in the head with a crowbar. Once they’ve hit the ground they’re struck again. The criminal winds up for another overhead swing, but Rabbit strikes them squarely in the chest, knocking them back.

Cobra lays limply on the ground, blood matting their black hair.
Rabbit screams in rage and throws themselves at the crowd of villains. Aizawa follows them. They can’t help Cobra if these criminals are still around after all.

Someone slashes Rabbit across the face with their claws. The vigilante hisses before whirling around to punch them in the nose.

This fight is getting to be too much. He hopes the police get here soon.

Sweep curses under his breath as he stumbles and nearly drops the kid. The black spray-on hair dye Mei created is beginning to run down his face because of how much he’s sweating. He swears again. If he goes back to the fight with the colour his hair is right now, Aizawa will recognize him in a second.

The police station comes into view. A figure is staked out on the roof in front of it. “Daedalus?”

Mei whirls around. “Sweep?”

“What are you doing here?” He hisses, setting the child down.

“I don’t know why, but I can’t get through to the police.” She sounds distressed.

“What do you mean you can’t get through?”

She throws her hands up. “I don’t know! I just can’t get through!”

Hitoshi stares at the police station they’re facing before turning to the boy. “Hey, kid, I need you to deliver a message for me, and say it exactly like this, okay? Say-”

The police station is quiet when Makai walks in. The lady at the front is peacefully typing on her computer. When she sees him, she leans down over her desk and smiles. “Hey there, what do you need?”

Makai repeats the message Sweep (he’s so cool!) had told him and makes sure to specifically ask for Detective Tsukauchi.

The woman pales and frantically calls another officer who rushes to find Tsukauchi. The lady has him sit on one of the benches until the situation is handled and someone can interview him.

He falls asleep before someone comes to get him.

“Shit. Fuck. Shit-fuck.” Tsukauchi is not having a good day. An officer rushes in and tells him that they have a situation on the abandoned outskirts of town, involving Eraserhead, Sweep and Cerberus.

“This is Detective Tsukauchi! We have an ambush attack behind Sweeney’s Barbershop in Akumi! I need a SWAT team, a pro-hero, ambulances! Dammit!” He trips over a bucket, but continues shouting into Sansa’s cellphone. “Someone get me the chief!”

Sansa pulls up a car and Tsukauchi hops in the passenger side and Sansa guns it. The tires screech against the pavement and they speed away.
They need to get there fast.

Chizome quickly bounds over the tops of buildings, scanning the alleyways for Bishop’s kids. He had been planning an attack on a false hero when his friend called, but it is more important to save the lives of to-be true heroes than to eliminate the life of a false one.

(Besides, he can always kill that girl later. If Bishop’s kids die, nothing can be done to bring them back.) He skids to a stop when he hears shouting. *Are they really this far out?*

His heart drops at the sound of two gunshots. He tightens his grip on the hilt of the katana and rushes in that direction.

Shiori sluggishly pushes herself to her feet, wobbling a little as she stood. God, when did her head start hurting so much? Sharp pains stab at her behind her eyes. She can see Rabbit and Eraserhead fighting off the villains. There are too many for them to handle single-handedly. “Move!” She shouts and sends a large gust past them.

If Aizawa makes the connection, then they’ll deal with that later.

The criminals are knocked back at the concussive, uncontrolled force of the wind. Eraserhead whips his head around. Behind his goggles, she can see him staring at her wide-eyed.

Giran sighs, lazily scratching his stubble. “Well, I didn’t wanna have to use these little babies, but—” He pulls something out. “What can ya do, right?”

Eraserhead moves faster than Shiori can see what happens. He dives in front of Rabbit, who’s frozen.

Then she hears the gunshots and sees Aizawa crumple to the ground.

“Well, that’s the hero. Let’s get the brats.”


Chizome drops down and buries his sword in a villain’s chest. The woman gasps for breath and collapses. “Children,” he says in a low voice, killer eyes trained on the villains before him. “Stay behind me and tend to Eraserhead.”

None of them argue. Malice rolls off of Chizome in waves, that even chills the kids who know he’d never hurt them.

Akaguro launches himself at the crowd, swords at the ready.

Shiori ignores the pounding in her head and tries to find where the bullet hit. Eraserhead grasps at his chest.

Shitshitshitshitshitshitshitshit- 

Okay, okay. Mama taught her basic emergency first aid after Hitoshi got shot. She can do this. She just needs to find the entry wound.

Eraserhead coughs up blood. “Rabbit. It’s in his lung,” she says shakily.
Izuku freezes. “What do we do?”


“M-my hand?”

“Unless you got tape or something!” She snaps.

Izuku hesitantly puts pressure on the wound, trying to cover the bullet wound. Shiori checks the back for an exit wound. Meanwhile, Chizome butchers any of the villains who dare to challenge him.

Finally, police sirens scream in the distance. Giran steps through a portal and leaves the rest of the villains to himself.

“Shiori, what do we do? We can’t be here when the cops arrive!”

“We’ll have to cut it close. Can you talk to Mei and Hitoshi?”

“They’re too far away.”

“Children,” Chizome says, interrupting the mental conversation. “Go. I will handle this.”

“But Eraserhead-” Izuku begins.

“Rabbit.” Chizome’s eyes seem to look through Izuku. His voice is soft, yet firm. “I will take care of this. Now go. You children will not be able to run if the police arrive.”

“Aizawa-”

Shiori grabs onto his sleeve and gives him a light tug. “Rabbit. We gotta go.”

Reluctantly, Izuku agrees with her. They scale the fire escape and disappear over the rooftops.

Chizome ties a bandage over the wound and leaves a tiny hole. It’s not good, but it should hold until the ambulance arrives. “Do not die, Eraserhead,” Akaguro orders. “Those children see you as a true hero. Do not fail them as many others have.”

The police car screeches to a halt a block from the area; the roads are in bad shape, too much to continue in the car. Tsukauchi and Sansa get out of the car. Backup is still a few minutes behind. They take out their guns and flashlights and advance on foot towards the dying sound of commotion.

“Eraserhead, do you copy?” Tsukauchi says into his radio.

He doesn’t hear anything but a static response.

The detective picks up his pace. He arrives in the alleyway behind the barbershop to see a figure disappear over the rooftops. It’s carnage. Villains are everywhere. Some are dead, others are unconscious or mildly wounded. At the center of it all is Aizawa Shouta, laying in a pool of his blood. Tsukauchi rushes to his side and feels for a pulse. Thankfully, it’s there, fainter than usual, but there.

The ambulance arrives and takes Eraserhead and the wounded villains away. Tsukauchi rides along as the paramedics try to stabilize the hero. “What happened?”
“Villain….ambush. Kid….alright?” Aizawa forces out with slow, laboured breaths. His eyelids are lower than usual.

“Makai is fine. He said Sweep brought him to the police station. Who did this?”

“Cobra….called…Giran.” His head rolls to the side a little.

“Aizawa, Aizawa-”

“Move!” One of the EMT pushes him aside. She puts a hand on Aizawa’s forehead and her eyes turn white for a moment. “Poison! We have poison!”

As if cued, the hero seizes up and being convulsing.

Tsukauchi thinks they can’t get to the hospital soon enough.

Shiori slips and stumbles into Izuku, who staggers at the weight. He pulls her away from the edge of the roof. “Shiori, Shiori,” he says quietly, but desperately. “What’s wrong?”

“Fuck, my head.”

“Shiori, you’re bleeding?”

“Yeah, no shit.” She wipes the blood that’s dripping down her nose on her sleeve. “Your eyes-”

“Let’s get to Bishop’s. You’re bleeding too.”

Hitoshi isn’t there when they arrive at Bishop’s. Mei tells them he got a call from Yamada, who had been at his radio show, that Aizawa is critical. Hitoshi doesn’t stick around long after that.

Bishop is on them the second they climb through the window. (Well, Shiori falls through the window, but you get the idea.)

Izuku’s pretty sure they give him a heart attack with how they look; costumes torn and slashed, covered in blood. Probably not what Bishop wants to see eight o’clock at night.

“We-”

He wraps them in a hug. “I was so worried.”

Silence hangs in the apartment for a moment before a gravelly voice speaks. “If you don’t mind, I would like to get off your fire escape before someone spots me,” Chizome drawls.

They move back and the Hero Killer slides in through the window, shutting it behind him. He drops the bloody knives and swords on the ground and (for once) Bishop doesn’t complain about bloodstains on his carpet. “Chizome, are you okay?”

“I am fine.” The man waves a hand at his friend dismissively. He turns to the kids. “How is Eraserhead?”

Mei lowers her head a bit. “Hitoshi left-he said it was bad.”
“He was shot in the lung with some special bullet Giran pulled out of his ass,” Shiori says. “How is that not bad?”

“Were you kids hurt?” Bishop asks urgently.
“We weren’t shot,” Izuku supplies helpfully.

He narrows his eyes. “I said hurt.”

“Well…..”

Mama fixes up the majority of Izuku’s cuts, leaving the three claw marks on his cheek partially healed. The middle is the most defined while the other two are much fainter. He’s got a gash on his shoulder. His lip is split with tiny cuts peeking over the edges of his lip. She places a bandage over them and tells him to take it easy for awhile. On the back of Shiori’s head is a large gash along with a cut on her forehead that bleeds down over her face. From the second strike of the crowbar, she has a dark bruise on her upper back. Mama hesitates in front of her. “Ah don’t know,” she mutters, combing her gnarled hand through Shiori’s hair.

“Marjorie-”

“It’s a serious wound ta the head, Jesus. Ah don’t wanna risk it.”

“Marjorie-” He says a little harsher. “Heal the damn wound.”

She takes a deep breath and raises a shaky hand to Shiori’s head.

Shiori screams in pure agony and Mama removes her hand almost immediately. The gash on her head is little more than a bruise now, but the cut is still unhealed. The mark on her back is now gone.

Mama glares in Bishop’s direction and quickly leaves the room. He sighs and turns away. “I’ll be back.” He slams the door on the way out.

Akaguro shakes his head. “Pay them no mind, children. You all should be getting home.”

He changes into his civilian clothes, wraps his nose and then escorts all the children back to their families. Mei slips in without much notice. Izuku is wrapped in his sobbing mother’s arms. Shiori climbs in the back window.

Chizome sighs and heads down the dark, empty streets. He passes a familiar face.

“You,” Endeavour booms. “What are you doing out now?”

“Just taking a walk.”

“Then be on your way!”

Chizome examines the fake as he walks away for a moment, before deciding not to kill him; not now. After all, he’s not alone in an alley with Endeawhore, and that’s what he promised.

Hitoshi sits by his dad of a few days’ bedside. He hadn’t really been listening to the doctor; something about being shot in the lung with a bullet laced with poison and some unidentified quirk suppressant. They’re not sure if he’ll get his quirk back, but he’s alive and stable enough.

Hizashi rests a hand on his son’s shoulder. The man tries for a smile and attempts to be positive, but
his red, bloodshot eyes and the quivering of his lips betray him.

“Hey, kiddo. He’ll be okay. It’s Shouta. He’s too stubborn to….to…” Hizashi clears his throat to hide the breaks in his voice. “Anyway, you should get some sleep. Shouta would hate for you to get all worked up over nothing. It’s not logical, right?”

He doesn’t answer. He’s trying too hard not to cry.

Why couldn’t Aizawa just let Izuku take the bullet? Izuku would’ve been fine! They all made sure to wear bulletproof vests, but why couldn’t Aizawa do that?

No, don’t think about it, he tells himself. Just focus on Aizawa getting better.

So the two sit quietly in Aizawa’s hospital room. Occasionally, Tsukauchi drops in to check on Aizawa’s condition. During these little visits Tsukauchi and Yamada quietly discuss the situation; apparently the Hero Killer had shown up at some point after the vigilantes began to tend to Shouta’s gunshot wound. The police are still trying to determine whether or not Cobra or Rabbit killed anyone.

He doesn’t listen much; it makes him sick to his stomach, because he should’ve been there and he wasn’t.

Hitoshi falls asleep at his father’s side, not noticing the rain beginning to fall outside. All that matters to him is what’s happening in that little hospital room.

Shiori thanks the early morning rain. She and Mei are sitting on the Hatsume family’s workshop listening to the police monitor. The rain washes away a lot of the blood samples and DNA evidence, including those thought to belong to the vigilantes.

Mei shuts the monitor off. “So, any word from Toshi?”

Shiori shakes her head. “Hasn’t answered his phone.”

“God.” She lays down on the roof, ignoring the water peppering her face. “This is a mess.”

“That’s an understatement.”

“Not really up for sarcasm, Shiori,” she mutters.

“Sorry.” Shiori pauses before disappearing through the window. She comes back a few minutes later with two orange cream sodas. “Girl talk.”

“You hate girl talk,” Mei says skeptically, accepting the soda. ”And why do you know where my secret stash is?”

“Believe me, you don’t hide things as well as you think,” Shiori replies, popping the cap off and taking a sip.

“So…girl talk.”

“Girl talk,” Shiori agrees, nodding.
Silence hangs in the air for a moment.

“What the hell are we going to talk about?”
“I don’t know,” Shiori says. “Why do you think I know what girl talk is?”

“You said ‘girl talk’!”

“I assumed you knew what it meant! I have no clue!”

“Then why have girl talk to begin with?”

“I don’t know! It seemed like a good idea!”

They laugh. “Shiori, you need help.”

“Yeah, so do you, so we’re good.”

Shiori shakes her head and sighs. “So, Mei, there is something I want to talk to you about.”

“Ask away, mi amiga!” Mei fingerguns at Shiori. “I have all the answers!”

“What’s been up with you lately?”

….all the answers except that.

“What do you mean?” Mei asks nervously. “I’m fffiiiiiiinnee.”

“Uh, yeah, no offense, but no you’re not,” Shiori says in a more serious tone. “You don’t have to talk about it if you don’t want to. I get it if it’s personal and you don’t feel like telling anyone, but, uh, I want you to know I’ll listen if you want to. Really. Anytime.”

Mei stares up at the grey-blue sky for awhile, not saying anything. Raindrops rolls down her cheeks and she lets out a shaky breath. “Hey, Mei, are you-”

She wraps Shiori in a hug. Mei knows Shiori isn’t one for hugs, but, god, does she really need one right now. The girl stiffens for a moment, caught off-guard by the sudden contact, but to Mei’s surprise, Shiori hugs back.

Mei doesn’t cry that much. The reason Shiori’s jacket is so wet is because of it’s raining.

“You know, it’s okay to be upset, right? But, uh, I might finish your soda while you’re crying.”

Mei snorts, despite her tears. Okay, yeah, she’ll admit it. She’s crying.

But she’s got a great shoulder to cry on, so screw it.

“Shiori,” she says, her head buried in Shiori’s neck. “I love you.”

The girl hesitates for a moment before sighing. “Yeah, yeah, you too, Mei.”

“You too.”

Chapter End Notes

Hope you guys enjoyed the chapter!

Playlist:
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgtj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?
I noticed I've kinda been neglecting the friendship of Shiori and Mei. By no means is she as close with Mei as she is with Hitoshi or Izuku, but Mei is still one of her best friends, and the only other girl in the group. Who else is she going to vent to about girl stuff?
Okay, well, Shiori doesn't do that, but you know what I mean. They've got each others' backs.
That does not extend to Shiori being willing to test Mei's 'babies', because there is no power on earth that could do that.
Fun fact #9- Between having Todoroki as a vigilante and Shinsou, there was a short time where Bakugou was part of the vigilante team. After thinking it through, I scrapped the idea.
Fun fact #9b- In this story, Shiori originally died at Kamino Ward.
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 20: I know I took the path that you would never want for me (I know I let you down, didn't I?)

Chapter Summary

Aizawa wakes up, Chizome helps pay for Izuku and Shiori's 1st year with literal blood money and the kids train.
Also, Aizawa gets blackmailed into getting another cat, so there's that.

Chapter Notes

If everything goes the way I planned (it won't, but let's say it does) then we've got like 5 more chapters until I get to the point of the entrance exam! It's at most five, so we're almost there!
The next chapter is basically only going to be from Inko's perspective, because she deserves some credit. After that, we're going to get Yagi in here officially. After that....you'll see.
I've got the chapter titles and most of the chapters planned up until like, 40 (USJ ish), so we'll be here for awhile.
Anyway, enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Two days later, Shouta gets tackled by his sobbing husband the second he even thinks of waking up, who accidentally kicks Hitoshi, who falls over. The nurse comes in, bringing some God-awful food with her and tells Hizashi to be more careful before she leaves. Then the doctor and Tsukauchi come in and ask that his husband and son exit the room.

“How bad is it?” Aizawa asks.

The woman sighs and scans his paper. “Well, the bullet entered your right lung, and it likely would’ve collapsed if the vigilantes hadn’t done anything. The bullet had a poison in it, but we extracted it successfully. We still don’t know what it is, so we are sending it in for testing. In addition to the poison, it had a powerful quirk suppressant.”
“Quirk suppressant,” Aizawa repeats.

“Oh, yes. We’ve never seen anything this powerful. Your quirk may not return for a few days, a week even. You’re lucky, sir. If you had been a smaller man, you might not have your quirk for a few weeks.”

“Oh, okay.” Aizawa rubs his eyes. “When can I leave?”
The woman starts. “I’m sorry?”

“When can I leave the hospital?”
She blinks. “Sir, I don’t think you understand—you almost died.”
“I-”

“He’s just a little cranky from waking up,” Tsukauchi quickly interrupts, flashing the doctor a smile. Aizawa glares at him.

“Oh, well, that’s understandable. He’s on a lot of medication right now, so he’ll probably feel groggy.”

“Do you mind giving us the room? We need to go over some details; statements and all that.”

“Of course.” She nods and leaves, the clicking of her heel sounding as she disappears down the corridor.

Tsukauchi sighs. “You couldn’t be a little nicer?” He asks.

“I just wanted to know when I can leave.”

“You’re a real ray of sunshine, aren’t you?” Tsukauchi mutters. He pulls up a chair to Aizawa’s hospital bed. “So, let’s start from the beginning.”

“I was making my usual patrol when I heard a scream-”

They spend the next hour going over what happened in the alley. “You said you felt a breeze when Cobra used their quirk?”

“Maybe. Something went by me fast enough to make some wind, but I didn’t see it.”

“I’ll check the area for males and females between the ages of eighteen to twenty-three with quirks that match your description,” the detective says with a nod.

“I have a feeling Cobra and Rabbit are on the younger side.”

“Why is that?”

“The Hero Killer addressed them as ‘children’. He also acted like he knew them or was at least familiar with them.”

“God, this case gets more complicated by the minute. How young do you think they are?”

“I think we’re dealing with teenage vigilantes, Tsukauchi. Sweep, Cerberus; all of them.”

“What makes you think so?”

“I work with hormonal teenagers five days a week, I know. It’s the way they talk, how they carry themselves, who they help, the statements they’ve made against the police of Akumi. I think they’ve all lived in Akumi all their lives and snapped.” Aizawa sits up. “But they don’t kill anyone; I think they’re still kids.”

“Wow.” Tsukauchi leans back in his seat. “Do you have any descriptions on them?”

“No. Rabbit and Cobra are still short. Sweep is taller. I don’t know any of Cerberus’ genders.”

“Well, we at least know Sweep is a male.”

“Yeah.”

They sit in silence for a few minutes. Aizawa feels exhausted, but he searches his brain for any other
information on the vigilantes. He thinks Rabbit’s eyes glowed—what colour? God, his head hurt. “Get some rest, Aizawa. I’ll be back tomorrow.” The detective tips his hat and leaves.

Aizawa lays down and stares at the ceiling. If the vigilantes hadn’t been there last night, then he wouldn’t be here, right now. He wouldn’t have gotten to say goodbye to his family and that little boy might be dead.

On the other hand, it seems like ‘Giran’ had set the trap specifically for the vigilantes. If they hadn’t decided to become ‘Cerberus and Sweep’, then it might not have happened.

But they’ve done a lot of good as vigilantes. Crime in Akumi has gone down thirty-seven percent and the murder rate is down thirty-one percent for the first time in decades. He can’t blame the people of Akumi loving their illegal protectors. Even Hitoshi loves them, and he hasn’t lived in the city for awhile.

Shouta sighs. He really does need to sleep.

When most people find out Chizome is the Hero Killer, they run in fear. They don’t make it very far, of course, because one should never turn their backs on a serial killer with a set of throwing knives and great aim, but he’s used to people fleeing him. Bishop’s friendship is a welcome surprise, but despite his name, he’s no saint, and neither is Marjorie. When Bishop brings his kids (or the children that hang around him, a grown man, that he insists aren’t his-) by and they see Chizome, he searches their faces for some form of fear, disgust.

But he can’t find it.

The first time they officially meet him is soon after the whole riot fiasco. Covered in blood, he had just crawled in the window after killing the officer who shot Sweep. The four kids stare at him for a moment before resuming their activities around the apartment like nothing had ever happened.

The children are the change he wishes to see in heroics; striking out by themselves against evil, not for money or praise or fame, but because it is right. He is proud of them.

Chizome sits on the rooftop, waiting for Kayano. The second the door opens, he hurtles a knife at it.

Kayano dodges and the knife embeds itself in the door beside her head. “Hello to you too,” she says dryly.

“Your reflexes are improving.”

“Gee. I wonder if it has anything to do with you throwing pointy objects at my head every time you see me.”

“Perhaps.”

She huffs and sits on the rooftop. “Bishop said you wanted to talk.”

“I did.”

“So, talk. I think Mei’s tryin’ to rope me into another girl talk, so I’ve got like twenty minutes.”

“Girl talk.”

“Don’t ask.”
“Very well, Kayano, have you been practicing with the switchblade I gave to you?”

“Yep. Cut my finger, but now I get to do this—” Kayano sticks up her bandaged middle finger. “—Every time I said I hurt my finger.”

“....you worry me at times.”

“Haha. Very funny.”

“How goes work at the cafe?”

“Well, I haven’t ruined the front window with my art skills yet.”

“I see.”

She pauses. “Why did you call me up here?”

“I would like to talk about your plans for the future.”

Kayano frowns and tilts her head to one side. “UA. I thought you knew that.”

“Have you considered my offer any more?”

The girl falls silent at his words. “No.”
He nods once, though disappointed. “I hope that you accept, but do not feel pressured to do so.”

“Right.”

“So you plan to attend UA this coming year.”

“Yeah.”

“Then here, I believe this is enough for the first year.” He hands her an envelope. “And then some.”

She stares at him. “I can’t take this.”

“Why not?”

“I can’t afford to pay you back,” she replies, twisting away. Her eyes storm with an emotion familiar to Chizome.

Shame.

“You don’t have to. It’s not my money,” he says easily, handing her the envelope before going back to cleaning his knife.

Kayano stares at the envelope, then at Chizome, then back at the envelope. “Do I even want to know where you got this?”

“Not unless you wish to be an accessory in several murders.”

“Right. Thought so.” She tucks it in the inner pocket of her jacket. “...thank you.”

“Do not mention it. I offered some to Midoriya Inko. I know they often have financial struggles.”

“You met Inko?”
He puts his knife down, shivering ever so slightly. “I did.” Midoriya Inko is a good woman, he is sure of that, but she can be quite...unnerving at times.

Kayano tilts her head to the side. “Are you scared of her?”

“No,” he answers a little too quickly.

She gets a look on her face, like she’s just heard the funniest thing in the world.

Most people wouldn’t laugh at a serial killer holding a knife while they sit on the ledge of a rooftop.

Evidently, Kayano Shiori is not most people.

(Though, let’s be honest, you all have known that since the story’s beginning.)

Aizawa (finally) gets out of the hospital, but it required to take a two week break from hero work. He puts all his frustration into his training regimen for the kids.

Train.

All they do anymore is train.

Everything hurts, but God is it worth it.

Hitoshi can now hold his own against Aizawa (not Bishop, definitely not Bishop) for a good two minutes before the Erasure hero hands his ass to him. He’s starting to catch up to Izuku and Shiori and he loves this feeling.

The violet-haired boy is working hard and it shows. He’s starting to put on muscle and has generally become a more solid person.

(And no, he does not squeal excitedly when he finds out his clothes are too small and he needs new ones due to all the training he’s been doing. He doesn’t.)

Shiori can keep up to fifteen objects in the air for ten minutes and can stop small objects being thrown at her. (Izuku suggests that she attempt to stop a bullet with her quirk, or keep the bullet in the chamber by twisting the air around it. Aizawa stops them before they can try.) She’s notably faster and harder to catch. (Seriously, her vigilante name really fits)

Izuku can go several hours without getting headaches or eye bleeds (which Aizawa still insists are disgusting and concerning-) while using his quirk. He’s attempting to see what else he can change about his appearance, or just how much he can record about something before he runs out of room.

Mei’s contraptions are...becoming increasingly worrying, but she’s making progress. (Bishop stops her when she presents her ‘death’ beam-‘Watch where you point that thing, kid!’) She has her three friends act as guinea pigs for her inventions. They can’t avoid her because somehow, the only vigilante that doesn’t spend time in the field is better at stealth then they are. Mei literally comes out of nowhere to ambush them with some new gadget she wants them to try that probably won’t result in the loss of a limb.

The four kids work harder than ever before.

‘Seven more months....’
“You’ve gotten better,” Aizawa says as he and Hitoshi walk to the car. “I used to have to carry you to the car after training.”

“And here I was thinking you didn’t care.”

Aizawa huffs. “Sassy child.”

“Sleep deprived adult.”

He unlocks the car and climbs in. “I will leave you.”

“Sure you will. You know, I have Yamada on speed dial, and wouldn’t it be a shame for him to find out you’re not taking it as easy as he thought?” Hitoshi waves his cellphone around for emphasis. “I wonder how he’ll react.”

Aizawa makes a grab for the phone, but his son dodges in time, still smirking. “What do you want.”

“Another cat.”

“Hitoshi, we have six.”

“So we can have seven.”

Aizawa glares at him. “This is blackmail.”

“Don’t pretend you don’t want one too, Dadzawa.”

“I don’t know why I put up with you,” Aizawa growls, giving in. “This is the last one.”

“Sure. Until you find another stray and decide you have to save it.”

“That was one time.”

“Multiply that number by three and you’ve got it,” Hitoshi says, sliding into the backseat. “I wonder how Cobra is going to like her new cat-sibling. She’s kinda territorial like that.”

“We are not naming another cat after vigilantes, Hitoshi.”

“Kei might not like her much. He’s always kinda grumpy,” the boy continues.

Aizawa tightens his grip on the steering wheel as he’s driving. “Hitoshi-”

“Daedalus and Rabbit will probably love them, though. Emi won’t mind-”

“Hitoshi-”

“But it’s kinda hard to tell with Coffee, y’know? She’s really picky about who she likes.”

“I swear to God, Problem Child, I’m going to kill you for this.”

“Problem Child! That’s a great cat name!”

“Hitoshi-!”

Hizashi isn’t exactly surprised when his husband and son come home with yet another cat, but he sighs and bears it. To make up for the sudden new addition to the family, he gets to name the cat.
“Hirochi”, he says. “‘Hiro for short.”

Shouta grumbles something about Hitoshi being a problem child and storms into their room, slamming the door behind him. Hitoshi just pulls this smug look and keeps playing with Hiro. Hizashi sighs. He has a weird family.

Dinner proceeds without Shouta, who elects to lock himself in their room and sulk for the rest of the evening. Hiro and Cobra are playing, with Cobra chasing Hiro around the apartment. Kei flicks his tail at the two from his lounging spot on the top of the TV stand.

Hitoshi and Hizashi do the dishes, letting music from Hizashi’s radio station fill the silence. “Hey, uh-Yamada?”

“What’s up, kiddo?” Hizashi whistles, smiling.

“So, I know how Aizawa feels about, y’know, the vigilantes in Akumi, but what do you think?”

“Well, it’s not legal-”

“No, I mean, all that stuff aside.”

Hizashi continues drying the dish Hitoshi has just cleaned. “Let me finish. I said it’s not legal. I didn’t say it wasn’t right. I’m not going to say all vigilantes are bad, but there are some good ones and I think the main ones in Akumi are going a pretty okay job right now. The first ‘heroes’ were vigilantes, y’know, and I think Cerberus and Sweep will eventually become heroes at some point.”

“Or they’re going to get caught,” Hitoshi mutters.

“Or that,” Hizashi agrees. “That doesn’t mean I want you going out and being a vigilante, though. It’s too dangerous. You need to train and become a hero first.”

Hitoshi pauses, his hands half submerged in the soapy water.

“Hitoshi?” Hizashi says, glancing over at his son. “Something wrong?”

“No, I was just thinking,” he says quietly.

“Penny for your thoughts?”

“What am I going to do with a penny?”

Yamada laughs. “It’s an English expression.”

“You know I suck at English.” Hitoshi playfully splashes Hizashi. “That’s the language of devils.”

When Hizashi goes to get ready for his radio show, Hitoshi frowns.

‘That doesn’t mean I want you going out and being a vigilante, though. It’s too dangerous.’

Sorry Yamada... he thinks as the man leaves the apartment. I’m going to be a huge letdown for you and Aizawa.

“Problem Child, your cat just puked on my slippers,” Aizawa calls from his and Yamada’s room.

“Coming!” Hitoshi replies. He dries his hands and goes to clean up the mess.
Emiko moved in with some friends a few days ago. Mei’s older sister and her parents agree it’s for the best, and dare she say it, but the Hatsume household has been so much quieter. It’s...nice actually. Her sister promises to visit Mei at least twice a week, so she’s not entirely gone, but Mei thinks she likes this new arrangement.

“Hey shortstop, whatcha workin’ on?” Her mother asks, plopping down on her bed.

“Flash grenades!” Mei declares proudly, holding one in each hand. “I tested one on myself and I still can’t see!”

Her mother laughs and slaps her knee. “That’s my girl!” Pride is clear in her voice. “Riku! Come see what our daughter did!”

“I’d rather not. Last time I did, she invention snapped my leg.”

“You’re the one who did that?!” Her mother cries, but she doesn’t sound upset. “See Riku? She’s got my brains!”

“And your crazy apparently.”

“Get ‘im, Mei-mei,” her mother orders.

Mei smiles and walks off in her dad’s general direction, bumping into a few things as she goes. “Dad, I would personally love to show you my new flash grenades-”

“Yeswhat-”

The entire Hatsume family is basically blind the next day.

Hatsume Riku sighs and makes Mei promise to use all of her inventions legally.

She promises, but her fingers are crossed behind her back.

He can’t see her lie anyway.

Izuku collapses onto the couch. “Mom……..”

Inko pokes her head into the living room. “Yes?”

“I think I’m dead.”

“Oh, well, that’s a shame. What colour flowers do you want me to leave at your grave?” She says easily. Izuku rolls over and falls off the couch. Inko laughs at her son. “I’m proud of how hard you’re working, Izuku.”

“Thanks,” he says, picking himself up off the floor. He is really, really sore.

“Just remember not to overwork yourself,” she calls, heading back into the kitchen.

Izuku’s glad she’s not around to see him wince. He’s never been good at lying, especially to his mother.
Shiori sighs, looking out over the city. The lights are all on, and the buildings are either highlighted by them or molded into shadowy shapes. She snaps a picture of it and puts her camera down. (It had been some gift from a Christmas drive for foster kids. Apparently some rich hero got involved and all of them got somewhat nicer gifts than the usual stuff.)

Today is Kayano Misaki’s birthday. She’d be...she’d be. Shiori pauses to think about how old her mother would be; it’s been awhile since she’s celebrated a birthday with her.

Let’s see...her mum is a year younger than Inko and Inko is thirty seven this year, so her mum would be thirty-six today.

Wow. It's been six years, maybe a little more.

Shiori feels like she should do something to honor her mum. Once she gets situated, she’ll visit the cemetery where Misaki and Joji are buried; maybe she’ll even spring for an offering (not that she’s the religious type.)

Misaki would not approve of Shiori’s activities nowadays. She laughs. Her mum would be totally beside herself, talking about how it’s too dangerous, how she should leave it to the pro-heroes, how she could-she stops.

How she could die.

Shiori leans back and stares at the starless night sky. She's looking for something, but it's not there and she doesn't know what she expected.

Her mother would be so disappointed.

Chapter End Notes

So 3/4 of our heroes will be disappointing their parents by being vigilantes, and the fourth is disappointing his mother by having .001 common sense and self preservation. We've got more Imagine Dragons titles coming, but we're going to stick with the lyrics to I Bet My Life for awhile. (I love that song.

Fun fact #10- In one draft of Shiori's family, Shiori's father was the good guy and her mother was a little more like Todoroki Rei (just not abused). She was a little...unstable. Fun fact #10b- Originally, Shiori and Shouto were going to be cousins with Rei and Misaki being sisters. (Because Rei's quirk is ice and Misaki can control temperatures. In the first draft of Shiori's family, there was this whole thing with Endeavor trying to choose a bride between the pair before settling on Rei. Misaki was really mad that her parents basically sold her sister off as a bride, so she dropped all contact with her family and left.)

Fun fact #10c/Minor spoiler?- You will see some of Kayano Haruko "Haru". He just started Uni. His quirk is Perfect Temperature; a mutated version of his mom's. Because of his quirk, Haru is always the perfect temperature.

Fun fact #10d- Haru has snow white hair (left over from the related to the Todoroki thing that I may or may not use) and grey eyes.

Fun fact #10e- (These are a lot, I know, but I like oversharing, so ignore me) One thing about Shiori is that she is very much her father's daughter. She got her quirk from his
side of the family and looks a lot like him. The only difference between them is that she got her mother's eyes. Joji and Haruko are both their mother's sons and looks like male copies of her, except that Joji has blue eyes like his father.

Fun fact #10f- Kayano Akira's quirk is Hover. He can hover/float a small height above the ground, but he can't fly.

Fun fact #10g- Kayano Hajime, Shiori's uncle, has a quirk called "Cloud", where he basically has all the characteristics of a cloud. His hair is a white puffy cloud (or grey if he's upset), he can create rain from his body and can turn into a cloud. He also floats everywhere he goes, but he can go higher than his brother. Basically everyone on Akira's side of the family has some sky/wind quirk.

Fun fact #10h- Shiori's quirk evolved from her grandfather and his quirk was called 'Gust'. He could amplify the wind and had some control over it, but if there wasn't a wind around/wasn't windy, he couldn't do much.

https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg

If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!

https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 21: So many sleepless nights where you were waiting up on me

Chapter Summary

We all love Midoriya Inko.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is mostly from Inko's perspective, and is pretty filler, so the chapter is shorter than usual.

The lights in the apartment are off, save for the one bright light above the table in the kitchen. Midoriya Inko sits in silence with a steaming cup of tea, weary, but diligently watching the clock. The slow tick of time is driving up Inko’s anxiety with every move of the clock’s hands. Izuku should’ve been home hours ago. She supports his choice of course (she’s always supported his desire to be a hero) but sometimes she just wishes it wasn’t so dangerous. It’s not like she could ban him from vigilante work when she did it for so long.

Inko chuckles, a soft smile on her lips. Those were the days; staying out all night, fighting evil with Mitsuki, doing good, feeling alive. She leans back in her chair, staring up at the ceiling. The rush of adrenaline is something she misses. Sometimes Inko thinks about going back to that life, but…no. The reason she left Viper behind is the same reason she can’t go back. Inko hangs her mask up as soon as she finds out she’s pregnant with Izuku and doesn’t look back until Izuku starts down the same path as she had all those years ago.

Has it really been fourteen years? It doesn’t feel like she was twenty-three that long ago. Inko sighs. Plenty has happened and while she can’t say it’s all been good, not much of it has been bad. She is still in contact with her childhood best friend, Mitsuki, has a wonderful relationship with her ex-husband, and is mother to the best son in the entire universe. (No, she is not biased.) No matter how much she misses the good ole days, she wouldn’t trade what she has for the world.

Inko glances at the clock.

1:05 am.

She sighs and takes another sip of her now-cold tea. It’s okay, she reasons. Maybe he just got caught up and lost track of time.

Inko takes a deep breath. She should do something, maybe read a book, just to get her mind off of waiting. Sleeping would be ideal, but Inko knows she wouldn’t get a minute of sleep until her son gets home.

I wonder what Izuku’s doing now....
“Shit! Is it supposed to do that?”

“Run!”

“Great. I’m going to die surrounded by idiots.”

“Less sarcasm, more running for your life!” The three vigilantes crash through a window, glass falling in shards around them, and land on the lower rooftop. They brush the glass pieces off of them and get ready to fight. The building overhead burst into flames, an explosion ripping through the air.

Izuku quietly curses the man with the detonation quirk. He’s going to be home later than expected.

“Look out!”

Another explosion. “Son of a-”

Inko yawns. It’s a calm night, which is a nice change of pace. She considers watching TV until her son gets home, but decides against it. She won’t be able to pay attention to the show if she wants to.

Her phone rings. Inko is quick to answer it. “Hello?”

“Hey, Inko. It’s Mitsuki.”

Inko deflates a little at her friend’s voice. Not Izuku, then. “Oh, yes. Hello Mitsuki.” “Well aren’t you happy to hear from me.”

“It’s one thirty in the morning. Why are you even up? What happened to ‘getting your beauty rest’?”

“I will have you know I am absolutely fucking gorgeous without it,” she snarks playfully.

“Of course, of course. But why are you up?”

“Ah, Masaru had a little accident-He’s fine!” Mitsuki says as Inko begins to ask. “Some idiot decided to run a red light, though.”

“Ah. Will he be okay?”

“Course he will. My husband’s not some lil’ bitch who can’t take a few hits.” The pride in her friend’s voice is clear. “He’s made of some tough shit!”

“Dear,” Inko hears Masaru say in the background. “Could you….please tone it down and keep it PG?”

“I am being quiet!”

Inko winces at Mitsuki’s volume, sympathizing with the poor man. “So, why are you calling?”

“Oh, right! I think we’re gonna have to reschedule for brunch tomorrow,” the blonde woman replies. “I’m thinking…Wednesday?”

“Of course, but…couldn’t this have waited until morning?”

“Ah, come on! You know me, Inko-get things done fast!”

“….right.”
“Anyway—Hey! Brat! Put that down!”

“Don’t tell me what to do, hag!”

Inko sighs as Mitsuki engages in a shouting match with her son. “Goodbye Mitsuki.” And she hangs up.

The apartment is quiet again. She rubs her eyes, the sting of exhaustion begging for her to close them. She has to be up for work in six hours; Inko really needs to sleep.

But she can’t.

Not until Izuku comes home.

“He’ll be home soon,” she tells herself, downing the rest of her tea. Inko rises from her chair and goes to wash her mug in the sink. “He’ll be home soon.”

“What time is it?” Rabbit asks Daedalus through the comms.

“Two in the morning.”

He sighs. His mom must be so worried.

The other two vigilantes drop down onto the roof where Rabbit is. “Where the hell are the heroes?!?” Sweep hisses.

“Of all the days for your dad to be out of town,” Cobra gripes.

Another explosion shakes the building.

“Couldn’t they send someone else?”

“Someone not focused on catching us, yes. That would be ideal,” Cobra says sarcastically.

“What did I say about sarcasm?”

“What did I say about wanting to live?”


“Well I’m sorry for trying to be positive when we’re about to die!” Sweep snaps.

“Eh. I made it farther than I thought. I could die now,” Cobra mutters, shrugging.

“No one is dying—look. We’re obviously out of our league here. Do we have any backup we can call?”

“The police are on their way,” Daedalus informs them.

“Oh, great. We’ve gotta dodge the cops and that guy,” Cobra says, throwing their hands up in the air.

“What about Chizome?”

“Also out of town.”
“Yamada?”

“You really think it wouldn’t be suspicious that three vigilantes who have never contacted him before suddenly have his number?”

“....Bishop?”

Sweep and Rabbit turn to Cobra. “....I’ll...give him a call.”

“You lil’ runts thought you could hide from me? I’m the best hitman there is! I’m gonna blow yer fuckin’ brains out!” The villain cackles.

Rabbit pauses and stares at him. “He sounds so much like Kacchan,” he says quietly.

“That’s what you noticed?!”

The villain presses his hand against the rooftop and it explodes. “Running again!” Sweep announces and the other two follow him.

“I’m just saying, they have similar quirks and personalities-”

“RABBIT!”

“...sorry.”

Sweep rolls his eyes. “Cobra, just do your thing and we’ll hold him off.”

They nod and take off.

“C’mon…c’mon, pick up.”

Bishop picks up on the second ring. “Hello?” He says sleepily.

“It’s...Cobra.”

“What happened?” Bishop asks, sounding very much awake now.

“It’s not…. that bad -” An explosion cuts off Cobra.

“Why is it never ‘that bad’ with you kids when you’re about to die?” Bishop grouses. “I’m on my way.”

“How do you-” Click.

Cobra sighs.

Rabbit and Sweep scream when they’re blown back by the force of the villain’s explosions. “Haha! I, King Murder will now kill you!”

“I’m just saying, he sounds a lot like Kacchan,” Rabbit whispers to Sweep. “That’s even one of his hero names!”

Sweep gives Rabbit his best WTF look.

King Murder raises his hand, ready to deliver the death blow, when he’s suddenly blown back by a blinding white light. “You kids are going to kill me early,” Bishop says, hovering above the rooftop. “I hope you know that.”
“Nice to see you too,” Sweep says dryly.

Bishop shoots the kid a glare just as King Murder starts to get up. “Watch it, kid.” Bishop flies at the villain, tackling him off the roof.

Sweep runs to the ledge and peers over. He hisses. “That’s gonna hurt.”

Izuku quickly pulls his phone out.

5 missed calls

25 missed text messages

….he’s gonna have a lot of explaining to do.

“Old timer….it’s been awhile since I’ve seen you around,” King Murder sneers, wiping the blood from his nose. “Thought you’d be gathering dust in some retirement home.”

Bishop flicks his wrists out, circles of white light orbiting around his hands. “Fuck you, asshole.”

“Oh ho ho, not so holy anymore, are you?” The retired pro leaps at the villain, a shield in front of him. Upon impact with the shield, King Murder flies back, slamming into the end of the alley.

“I’d kill you, but there are kids watching,” Bishop growls, stalking closer with glowing palms. “So, I’ll do this.”

King Murder sees a flash of blinding light and then…..

Darkness.

Bishop looks emotionlessly at the man blindly groping around in the alley

Ring.

Ring.

Ri-

“Izuku?”

Izuku smiles, chuckling softly. “Uh, hey Mom~”

“It’s three am, are you okay? Did any of you get hurt?”

“Not more than usual, no,” he says, voice a little higher. Shiori rolls her eyes as she bandages the arm he’s not holding his phone with.

“Shiori?”

She swipes his phone. “We had a bit of trouble, but we called Bishop. We’re fine,” she assures the mother.

“Thank you dear.”
Izuku shoots her a betrayed look when she hands him his phone back. “I’ll be home soon Mom.”

“Promise?”

“Yeah.”

“Good. I’m holding you to that.”

He chuckles. “See you soon.”

“I love you.”

"Love you too, Mom."

Inko looks at her phone with a smile. She’d spent all this time worrying about her son. Izuku is just fine.

Maybe she’ll go to bed now.

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact #11-In early versions of the story, Yorashi Inasa and Kayano Shiori were third cousins.
Fun fact #11b-Izuku getting OFA has been debated for most of the story.

https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgtj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FigerRv22xxbW_Q_I-gg
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 22: But I'm just a slave unto the night

Chapter Summary

Toshinori doesn't believe in vigilantes until he almost does.
Sometimes people forget that the vigilantes are just kids.

Chapter Notes

Okay, so this chapter is sorta filler/fluffy, but we're almost to the plot stuff, I swear! The next chapter will bring Momo back, and the chapter after that (24) will be the prep for the exam between Bakugou and Izuku. After that, we'll finally see how our vigilantes do against the infamous UA Heroics/Support Exam.
Also, sorry this is late. I had a vacation last week, and I couldn't access my Google Docs, so I didn't work on them. I'll try to get the next one out this coming weekend, but I've got theatre camp.
Anyway, enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Late night talks at hole-in-the-wall cafes aren’t an uncommon occurrence for Toshinori and Tsukauchi. Most of their conversations tend to be later, due to their respective hectic careers as detectives and pro-heroes.

This place, Djinn’s Cafe, is nice, Toshinori thinks, sipping his drink. He might come back sometime.

“So, how have you been? Not overdoing it, I hope?” Tsukauchi’s tone is joking, but the glint in his eyes is very serious.

Toshinori nervously laughs. “No, no, of course not! Uh-have you gotten any farther on the vigilantes case?”

Naomasa groans, burying his head in his hands. Obviously, Toshinori doesn’t need to specify which vigilantes he’s referring to. “No. Everyday there’s more. They cover their tracks well and there is no DNA evidence from them. The people of Akumi are pushing back more and more; especially the people living in Kamino Ward,” Tsukauchi explains. “The vigilantes seem to be doing more good than actual harm, but the chief is adamant we bring them in. It’s going to be a mess if we ever manage to.”

“You don’t think you will?”

“I almost hope we don’t. The chief’s talking about sending Endeavor of all people after them. Can you believe it?” Tsukauchi shakes his head, frowning.

“Why would that be a problem? Todoroki is a wonderful hero,” Toshinori replies, sipping his coffee. “He holds the Number Two spot for a reason.”
“If Endeavor gets on the case, we’ll be taking the kids away in body bags. I don’t want to be the one to tell their parents the news.”

The remark startles a spurt of blood out of Toshinori. “*Kids*?”

Tsukauchi nods. “We’ve got reason to believe the vigilantes are all teenagers or young adults.”

“You believe the members of Cerberus-Sweep are all *children*?” He struggles to keep his volume down, but his surprise is well displayed on his face. “Are you sure?”

Tsukuachi sighs. “Unfortunately.”

“That’s…” Toshinori trails off, unable to finish the sentence.

The detective nods again, shooting his friend a tired smile. “Yep.”

“But-”

“Yep.”

Toshinori drops his head. “What a shame.”

Tsukauchi hums in agreement, tapping his finger against the table. “With the Akumi investigation that’s still ongoing, we’re shorthanded, so the arrest probably isn’t going to happen anytime soon.” As he speaks, a conflicted expression passes over Naomasa’s face, like he isn’t so sure bringing the vigilantes in would benefit the crime-ridden city of Akumi.

But as citizens who illegally use their quirks to fight crime, they are villains, Toshinori reasons with a frown. Well meaning villains, but the law is final. He has built his entire career on that principle. While the law might not always be just, if one law is allowed to be broken, then what’s to stop anyone from breaking all the laws and claiming injustice? What Cerberus-Sweep are doing might seem good, but they’re opening the door for more people to do the same illegal activities to fix whatever perceived wrong they see with the world.

What they’re doing is eerily similar to the Hero Killer, Stain. Toshinori shudders to think about what would happen if they all met.

Just as he prepares for the kill blow, Stain sneezes. The sudden noise startles him and his victim, but Stain brushes it aside. It’s not uncommon for someone to be talking about him.

The waitress comes up to the table. “Refill?”

“Yes please,” Naomasa says. The young girl fills his cup with steaming coffee. “Thank you, Kayano.” His lips curve into a small smile.

‘Kayano’ nods, says, “You’re welcome, Detective.” And leaves.

Toshinori cocks an eyebrow and turns to his friend. “You know her?”

“I worked on Kayano’s case back when I was an officer. Oh, and a child abuse case more recently.”

“Child abuse?!” Toshinori repeats, a little too loudly.
This draws looks from many of Djinn’s Cafe’s customers. “It wasn’t directed toward her,” Tsukauchi clarifies quickly, motioning for Toshinori to talk quieter. “She was a witness...who also was there to file battery charges.”

“Battery-?!” Toshinori nearly flies to his feet before Tsukauchi grabs onto his tie and forcibly pulls him back into his seat.

“Keep your voice down,” the detective admonishes.

“Sorry.”

He sighs and leans back in his chair, finishing what must be his third cup of coffee. “Anyway, how’s your teacher prep going?”

The hero hesitates. “Ah...it’s... going .”

Naomasa laughs. “...that bad, huh?”

“It’s not going well,” Toshinori admists.

“Big surprise.”

“You wound me, Naomasa.”

The detective cracks a smile. “So, have you found a successor yet?”

“Well...” Toshinori sighs. “Sir Nighteye suggested his protege, Togata Mirio, but....”

“What?”

There’s a pause before the skeletal giant chuckles bitterly. “I suppose I’m just not ready to give up being All Might yet.” The soft tone of Toshinori’s voice gives Tsukauchi the sense that he’s somewhere far, far away. “Rather pathetic, isn’t it?”

“No, it’s understandable,” Tsukauchi says, leaning in a bit. His tone is noticeably less playful. “Did, uh, you ask Togata yet?”

“I’ve...spoken with him about it. He hasn’t gotten back to me yet.” The conversation between the pair dies down into more casual territory for awhile. Kayano comes back every once in awhile to give refills or take orders for small snack foods and sandwiches. After awhile, Tsukauchi’s phone rings and he’s called away for work.

Toshinori lingers at the cafe after his friend leaves. The place drains of customers as the hours grows later.

Togata Mirio is a good candidate. No doubt resides in Toshinori’s mind that he would take Number One Hero and carry the torch high, but...it just doesn’t feel right. He stares out the window, thinking about One For All, his successor and his mentor. Toshinori spares a smile at the thought. God, Nana would be beside herself with the fact that he hasn’t found a successor yet. She’d nag him to find someone so he could stop being a stubborn old fart and retire.

“Uh, sir? The cafe’s closing,” Kayano says.


“Are you done with your cup?” She asks.
“Yes.”

Kayano nods and takes the half finished cup of cold coffee away, leaving him with the cost of the meal. Toshinori tosses down a large bill and tip and rises from his seat. His bones creak in protest at the movement; a testament to his age. Stretching, Toshinori yawns and collects his things before exiting the cafe. Stepping out into the Summer night air is certainly a shift in atmosphere. The street is deserted, with no lights illuminating the quiet avenue. The aging hero takes in another deep breath, filling his damaged lungs with city air.

Maybe he’ll take a walk.

Shiori locks up the cafe, ending her first week as a waitress. Between training, school and this, she’s exhausted. For the first time in years, she’s ready to drop into bed and just sleep.

**Izuku: Ready for patrol?**

She groans at the thought of staying up for another few hours vigilante-ing, but replies ‘**yeah. gimme 10.**’ and hurries back to the shelter to grab her outfit.

They all meet up at homebase as usual and head out on a new route that takes them through the more densely populated part of Akumi. It’s definitely a risk, but the lesser known parts have been teeming with pro-heroes hellbent on arresting them. (Or in Endeavor’s case, putting them in a bodybag. The few encounters the vigilantes have had with the Number Two Hero have done little to improve their opinion of him.) About halfway through their patrol, they run into some small-time thugs harassing someone.

While Sweep and Rabbit handle the criminals, Shiori approaches the ‘victim’, who seems rather calm, if not a bit shocked. “Sir, are you alright?”

“Yes, yes, I am,” the man from the cafe says. “Thank you.”

“Just a tip—don’t go down Iichi Avenue at night or any alleyways.” She pauses as the last thug goes down with a pained cry. “Welcome to Akumi,” she adds dryly.

Rabbit pops up behind the man. “Do you need us to escort you home, sir?” He asks cheerfully.

“No, no, I don’t live around here. I’ll be fine, I assure you.”

“Alright then. The cops will be here soon. Have a nice night!” With that, the vigilantes take their leave.

Toshinori watches in stunned silence as the vigilantes scale the side of the building and disappear over the roof. **They’re** are Akumi’s most wanted?

Sirens wail in the distance, growing closer with each passing minute. Toshinori sighs. It’s going to be a long night for him after all. Maybe he’ll give Sir’s suggestion a little more thought in the time he has.

A cool breeze caresses his face like a soft hand. He inhales slowly, staring up at the blank night sky. His eyes are drawn to the rooftop the kind vigilantes disappeared over. People like them…Toshinori would like to meet more of them.
Maybe even teach some one day.

Several police cruisers pull up to the scene. The authorities seem resigned to the situation. A young female officers walks up to him. “Excuse me, sir? We need you to come down to the station,” she says.

“Alright.” He nods.

The young lady leads him to one of the cars while the unconscious villains are dealt with.

Izuku is exhausted by the end of patrol. “It’s one-thirty,” Hitoshi says. “Let’s head back.”

Springing across the rooftops, the trio cross Akumi to their base. The vigilantes climb in the window of their homebase and tumble to the floor, laughing tiredly. Kaori rips her mask off her face. “These things are suffocating,” she complains, wiping the sweat from her forehead. “It’s Summer.”

“If you can design something better, then fix it,” Mei fires back with a smile as she packs her things into her backpack.

Izuku smiles at Kaori, who’s laying on her back, staring at the ceiling. “Are you going to get up?” He asks.

She sighs, beginning to lift her head before dropping it again. “Nah, the floor’s lovin’ my ass.”

Hitoshi laughs and lays down beside her. “This floor is so cold,” he says, smiling. “It feels great.”

Mei follows their example and her eyes widen. “Oh my god. This is amazing.”

“You guys are insane,” Izuku snorts.

Mei extends her hand from her vertical position. “Join us, Izuku. Join the madness. Become one of us.”

“One of us. One of us,” Hitoshi, Kaori and Mei chant.

Izuku laughs and relents, laying beside his friends. They’re right-the floor’s temperature is cool. He smiles. “You guys are weird.”

“Birds of a feather fly together,” Hitoshi says.

“Oh that is so cheesy.” Kaori snorts and rolls her eyes.

“We all love each other!” Mei throws her arms over her three friends as best she can. “We’re going to be together forever!”

“You make it sound like we’re married,” Kaori points out.

Mei falls uncharacteristically silent. Turning his head, Izuku sees the scheming look in her eyes as the gears begin to move. “Mei NO,” he, Hitoshi and Kaori say.

“Mei YES!” She cheers.

They all break off into a fit of giggles and laughter.
“No offense, but you guys aren’t my type,” Kaori says.

“Don’t pretend my stunning looks aren’t making you blush,” Hitoshi teases, batting his eyelashes.

Her response is a swift kick to the shin, but they all laugh again anyway.

The four of them stay like that for a long time; talking and joking on the floor of their secret base.

Izuku feels like he’s young again, playing with Kacchan and dreaming of being a hero.

Except, now, he doesn’t have to dream. He already is.

Izuku closes his eyes a smile on his lips.

This is nice.

But he knows it won’t last forever. In a few months, they’ll be taking the UA exam and so much will change. Izuku’s certain it will be for the better, but what they all have right now isn’t something he wants to change anytime soon.

So for now, he’ll just be and rest in what is.

Because he knows it will be gone soon.

Kaori pulls her phone out and starts scrolling. “Hey guys.”

“What?”

“Did you know we’re not ‘Cerberus and Sweep’ anymore? They’ve hyphenated it. Cerberus-Sweep.”

“Wait seriously? Lemme see.” Hitoshi takes Shiori’s phone. “Oh they’re serious.”

“Welcome to the family, Toshi!” Mei chirps.

"There's a whole article on how serious we are and how well we conduct ourselves."


They all shrug. “Google it,” Izuku suggests.

Hitoshi does.

“OH MY GOD.”

“What is it-NO. NONONONONO.”

“Why are you guys-EW.”

Only Mei seems thrilled. Or, she’s cackling like the maniac she is, at least. “HAHA! CALLED IT, BITCHES! YOU’RE ALL MINE NOW!”

“Mei what the hell?!”
Fun fact #12-Inko is the same age as Mitsuki in this AU because I wanted Bishop to be older than most of the other characters. Bishop is currently 41 in this story.
Fun fact #12b- Jesus and his family moved to Japan for his father's job and so he could attend UA.
Fun fact #12c- Bishop's hero name does come from his religion, but specifically from his grandfather (who he was close with) saying he thought Jesus would be a church official someday.
Fun fact #12d- Bishop's family (including his sister) moved back home after his parents split, which was around the time Bishop graduated.
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xsbW_Q_Lgg
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 23: Remember when I told you that's the last you'll see of me?

Chapter Summary

Shiori has a good day.
It just doesn't end the way she expects.

Chapter Notes

Two chapters until the UA exam! The next one will be about Bakugou and Izuku and after that our heroes are gonna try and get into their dream school. How do you think they'll do?
Anyway, enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Uehara-sensei? Can we please take a break from homework? Maths is making my brain hurt,” Watanabe complains.

Uehara pauses, a small smile coming across his lips. “We could,” he says. “If Kayano can beat Akamine in a little...Maths competition.” The smile on her lips is what Shiori can only describe as purely sadistic.

‘Great’, she thinks as people begin laughing around her. Shiori puts her head down on the desk, ears red as she silently fumes. Akamine sits in front of her, smiling big and proud, and taking it all in.

“Kay-chan?” Watanabe repeats with a frown, a worried look in his eyes. “But Sensei, that’s not fair-”

“Quiet Watanabe.”

The kind boy looks stunned at Uehara’s sharp tone, and shrinks into his seat. “But-” he says again softly.

“Fine. You wanna go? Let’s fuckin’ go,” Shiori interrupts, slamming her palms down on her desk. The sudden movement of her standing pushes her chair back. She glares daggers at Akamine’s head.

“Language,” Uehara scolds, but Shiori knows the teacher is enjoying this; watching her make a fool of herself in front of the entire class. “Are you sure, Kayano? Akamine has the best Maths grade in the class.” The tone of her voice is outright mocking, holding the boy’s achievements above Shiori’s head.

She grits her teeth. “Yes.”

Uehara’s smile grows. “Very well. Akamine, do you mind?”

“No, Uehara-sensei,” he says proudly, jutting his chin out.
“Alright then. Stand up.”

The pair comply. Akamine appears relaxed; ready to defend his title as the best mathematician in 3-B. Shiori on the other hand is trying very hard not to wring Uehara’s neck.

“I’ll say a number, and you’ll say what it is squared. Whoever gets ten points first will win. If you get one wrong, you’ll lose a point. Sound good?”

“Yes sensei,” Akamine replies.

“....Kayano?”

“Yes.” The girl is nearly trembling with anger.

Uehara’s smile falters slightly, but she continues. “17-”

“289.” Akamine doesn’t skip a beat.

Shiori balls her fists tighter.

“Very good,” Uehara croons.

“39.”

“1521.”

“Right again, Akamine. 21.”

“441.”

“Good! Akamine now has three points. 49-”

“2401,” Shiori interrupts.

The look on Uehara’s face is priceless. She nearly does a double-take, blinking owlishly as her shock fades away. All of 3-B holds their breath. “Sensei?” Yuno says. “Are you alright?”

“...fine,” Uehara finally answers in a breathless voice. “It...that is co...correct. Kayano has...one point.” She shoots Akamine a look before pulling herself together. “24-”

“5-” Akamine begins.

“576,” Shiori breaks in.

Akamine sputters and glares at her. She looks on blankly, with hints of amusement in her expression. “...Correct. Kayano has two points. 15.”

“225,” Akamine says quickly.

Their teacher relaxes and appears as if the world has restored its order. “Wonderful. Akamine has four points. 19-”

The pair of them go back and forth until Shiori finally catches up with the boy when they tie 9-9. Uehara’s rattled expression gives off a feeling of something akin to nervousness and fear. At this point, Shiori doesn’t care if she wins. Well, she does, because it would be nice to knock Akamine down a peg, but honestly, she’s thrilled (and surprised) she made it this far. This moment is the culmination of hours of studying instead of doing something fun.
“S-so, this has been an exciting game!” Uehara says with failing cheer. The class is silent. “Ah...for the last one, I will choose an...exceptionally high number.” Her eyes dart to Akamine, almost pleading with the boy to win this, not so much because then she’ll have to deliver on her promise, but more to spare her the embarrassment.

The once arrogant boy doesn’t seem so confident anymore. His posture is rigid and he’s tense, waiting to snap at the problem like a hungry predator. At his sides, his hands tremble with anticipation. Imagine if she beat him—the humiliation would crush him.

But even if she didn’t—even if she lost—Shiori couldn’t be called stupid anymore. People would slow down on their cracks about her intelligence, because she almost beat the smartest kid in the class. Akamine would try and reclaim his dignity, but his pride is already wounded. Every time he and his friends talk about Maths, they’ll mention this and joke about it and make fun of him for ‘Almost losing to Kayano Shiori’.

So let’s do this.

“2950.”
Both students pause for a moment.

“8,702,200,” Akamine shouts, almost desperate.

Uehara stalls, her face falling for a moment. “....incorrect,” she says softly. “...Akamine loses a point. Kayano can steal.”

Being a bit slower, Shiori’s still doing the mental math on the huge number. Akamine is correct, isn’t he?

Wait.

2950 squared isn’t 8,702,200.

It’s 8,702,500.

That’s the answer!

...but is she sure?

If Akamine got it wrong, how could she get it right?

….fuck it. If she doesn’t get it right now, then she’ll probably lose to Akamine on the quickdraw.

“8,702, 500…?” The uncertainty in her voice is clear.

Dead silence hangs over the class.

“....that is correct,” Uehara says weakly, slumping to her chair in defeat. “Kayano…Kayano wins.”

“No homework?” Watanabe pipes up with hope.

“No homework.” The teacher’s voice is now little more than a mutter and she’s staring at her desk like the moon just fell out of the sky.

A hesitant, but earnest cheer goes up and Shiori honest to God smiles as she sits down.
“You’re in a good mood,” Momo notes as they sit on her bed and study.

“Yep,” Shiori replies, glancing over at her with some suspicion. “You seem kinda nervous though.”

“Oh….” Momo gives a tentative smile before moving her attention back to the textbook.

They work in complete silence for a time, occasionally speaking up to ask about/explain a problem.

While Shiori studies with great diligence, Momo internally panics, fidgeting and squirming, trying to get comfortable where she is.

“Hey, Mo, you all good?”

Momo turns around and nearly falls off the bed. “Yep! All good! Great in fact! Never been better!”

“…you’re being weird.”

“No I’m not….” She says hopeful that Shiori will drop it.

To her disappointment, Shiori closes her book and twists around, facing Momo. “Uh, yeah, you are. Wanna tell me what’s up with you?”

“Nothing! I promise!”

“You’re a terrible liar.”

“Shiori, I’m fine,” she insists, face red. “Seriously!”

“Can you just tell me what’s making act like this?”

_Goodbye friendship_, Momo thinks bitterly as her mouth begins to move on its own. _It was nice having you._

“Ilikeyou.”

Shiori’s face doesn’t budge. “What? I didn’t hear you.”

“Ilikeyou.”

“That wasn’t any slower.”

Momo takes a deep breath. “I think I like you-!” Shiori’s face goes blank and Momo’s heart _plummets_. Without another word, she darts from the room, tears glistening in her eyes.

Shiori stares ahead, wondering _what the everloving fuck_ just happened.

When her brain catches up to reality, she sighs and goes to find Momo. It’s the right and mature thing to do, despite how much easier it would be to awkwardly leave and try and process it later. Of course, if she did that, Momo would probably avoid her as much as possible and their friendship would dissolve.

Shiori cares about her friend a little too much to let that happen.

Now if only she could find her.

_Damn this huge house_, Shiori thinks after looking into yet another empty bedroom. “Momo? Momo, where are you?”
No answer.

“Can we talk?”

Nothing.

“Momo, we’re cool, but can we please talk about this?”

Silence.

Great.

Shiori checks her watch. 3:26 pm. She’s going to miss her train.

Even better.

After five more rooms, Shiori’s starting to get frustrated, because either Momo’s really good at hiding or this mansion is bigger than she thought. Normally she’d just feel for someone breathing, but she’s never done it in a house this big.

On the other hand, she’d rather not spend the rest of the day looking for Momo.

Halting mid-step, Shiori focuses on the pull over her quirk and feels it reach all throughout the house, filling all the nooks and crannies. There are several breathing things, but the first few she dismisses as pets.

*Inhale. Exhale.*

*Inhale. Exhale.*

The breaths pass in quick succession in between sobs.

There.

Shiori follows the familiar breathing pattern to a bathroom on the other side of the goddamn house.

The light in the bathroom is on, and Shiori can hear someone inside. Taking a deep breath, Shiori knocks on the door. “Momo?”

The sobbing stops ( or Momo at least tries to stop.)

“Momo?” Another knock. “Mo, I know you’re in there.”

Nothing.

“Mo, my quirk literally has to do everything with air. I can feel you breathing.”

“....”

“Can you please open up? We can talk about this.”

There’s a pause before Shiori hears shuffling and a muffled, “You can come in.”

Shiori takes a deep breath and opens the door, moving across the big ass bathroom who needs this much space to sit beside her friend.

“Sorry about all that,” Momo says.
“No, no, it’s fine,” Shiori pats her on the back. “I mean, it wasn’t that bad.”

“...You’re not mad at me?”

Shiori is tempted to laugh, but weighs the possibility of Momo taking it the wrong way against how harmless it actually would be. She decides against it. “No, we’re good.”

There’s a pause.

“So...are you gay or...?”

Shrugging, Momo seems to curl into herself a little more. “Yes. No. I don’t know. I mean...I think I still like boys, but girls are also really....?”

“Cute,” Shiori offers.

Momo glances over at her. “Uh, yeah. Like that, but...Gah, I don’t know. ” Her hand works her way through her hair carelessly tangling it.

Shiori leans back into the cabinet. “There’s nothing wrong with that.”

“What?”

“Not knowing. I mean, you’ve got time to figure it out,” Shiori explains. “And, I don’t really care if you’re straight, gay, bi, pan, whatever. You’re my friend.”

Momo smiles at her. “I...thanks.”

“Besides, I knew,” Shiori says.

The taller girl blinks. “What.”

“None of my friends are half as discreet as they think they are. You’re included.”

“...you didn’t say anything?”

“You would’ve told me if you wanted to. It wasn’t my business to say anything.”

She laughs. “Yeah, I guess.”

There’s a lull in the conversation, but neither are uncomfortable.

“...Shiori.”

“Mm?”

“Are you.....y’know?”

“What, you can’t say it?” Shiori cracks a smile.

Momo buries her head in her hands, ears bright pink. “Stop.”


“...which one are we talking about?”

“Are you asking if I’m interested in girls?”

“.....no?”

“Liar.”

Momo’s cheeks burn darker pink. “I hate you.”
“Mm, and here I was thinking we were having a moment.”

Momo rolls her eyes before her voice becomes a little quieter. “So, about what I said...y’know, when we were studying...”

“You said you liked me-”

“So, you’re sort of my first female crush.”

Shiori blinks.

“Ohh.” Her face goes blank, thinking back to an... unpleasant incident with her classmates a few years ago.

“...are you okay?”

“Yeah, yeah, fine, just...thinking. Honestly didn’t think I’d be anyone’s first crush. Uh, I don’t feel that way.”

Momo nods, sighing. “I know.”

“...we good?”

“Yeah, it’s okay. We’re still friends, right?”

Shiori laughs. “Of course we are. Where else am I gonna get a rich friend?”

Momo punches her in the arm. “Shut up.”

“I will do no such thing. If it makes you feel better, my first crush wasn’t any better.” Shiori smiles and then begins another subject.

“Who was your first crush?” Momo asks.

Shiori blinks. “No one,” she says quickly, like she just realized what she said. “I have never had a crush on anyone.”

“Noo, Shiori, you have to tell me!”

“Oh would you look at the time-” Shiori sprints out of the bathroom.

“Shiori!!!!”

Momo stands up and gives chase.

Even though she’s a little disappointed, she’s glad they’re still friends.

Now if she could just catch her-

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact #13-Kayano Shiori’s first crush is literally one of her least favourite memories.
Fun fact #13b-In this AU, Izuku’s ‘Lab’ can do a lot more than it seems. You'll see.
Fun fact #13c-The name of the city, Akumi, was developed by me hitting random keys on the keyboard (I suck at naming things) and deleting all the letters that didn't make sense, soooo tada?
Okay! Still kinda a filler chapter, but we're almost to the plot! What did you think? Who do you think Shiori's first crush was? What'll happen next?
Drop me a comment!
Have a great week!
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgtj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_L-gg
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 24: Remember when I broke you down to tears?

Chapter Summary

Bakugou hates Deku. Everyone knows this.
People get ready for the exam and Shiori moves into her apartment.

Chapter Notes

Last filler for awhile.
Sorry, this is like two days later. Please forgive me!
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Katsuki hates how much Deku cries. It’s all the greenette does; cry, keep his head down and grovel, stammering apologies for things he never did.

It’s annoying.

As the UA entrance exam nears, the nerd only becomes more determined. He thinks he’s so good. So righteous. So...pure.

Every time he beats Deku down, he knows he’ll get up sometime, but unlike anyone who has half a brain, Deku refuses to fight back. Of course, he still keeps standing up for all the losers that get in Katsuki’s way. And when he gets knocked down for being a dumbass? All he does is cry like a little baby.

Until recently, that is.

Deku Deku-esque ways have almost vanished when Katsuki threatens him. He can still see the clear fear in the greenette’s eyes, but now Deku tries to cover up how utterly terrified he is with big talk and a few fancy self-defense moves.

Pathetic.

Deku’s been looking down on him since they were kids. He never shows off his quirk, though he insists he has one. Katsuki dismisses it as the nerd’ wishful thinking, but a lingering thought suggests that maybe Deku doesn’t think he’s worth using his quirk around.

Oh, but of course, it’s fine to use his special quirk around his pals. Deku’s been running off after school, and it’s probably to hang out with his merry little band of freaks. For whatever reason, it’s eating at Katsuki. What, he isn’t even worth sticking around for anymore? By God, why can’t Deku fight back once?!

Every time he does something, Deku just stands up to him, shaking in his boots, telling Katsuki that he won’t fight him.
Like he’s not worth the effort.

Katsuki drives his fist at the wall at the thought.

When they were kids, Deku had been the only one who stands on his level. He doesn’t know how that practically quirkless nobody could ever measure up to him, but Katsuki knows Deku is a rival. The boy never shows off, never brags, as if he’s silently waiting to strike. Katsuki doesn’t like not knowing things and Deku is one of those few things he will never figure out. The fact that the nerd seems to already understand everything about him just makes it more infuriating. He is Bakugou motherfucking Katsuki, the prodigy child, the one who’s going to take Number 1 for sure.

So why is this mumbling extra getting to him?

“SHUT THE FUCK UP DEKU!” He roars.

Deku flinches, stuttering apologies as they enter the classroom. Katsuki scowls and stalks into the classroom, more annoyed now than ever. Deku thinks he’s the one who needs to plactated? To be calmed down like some little kid with Deku being the adult? *Motherfucker!* He thinks, kicking his chair back and shooting Deku a death glare.

The boy flinches under his gaze and shuffles to his seat, taking deep breaths and trying to ignore him.

*Idiot.*

The teacher comes in and spews some shit about exam season for high school, telling them to talk to him if they have any problems.

Like Katsuki would ever take advice from that bug-eyed mouse of a man. Hagiwara doesn’t have the balls to stand up to Katsuki, so how the hell is he supposed to give him advice? That’s another thing that pisses Katsuki off; Deku is the only one who’ll stand up to him. Even though he’s the weakest, wimpiest extra in the room, he’s the only one brave enough to stand in Katsuki’s way and say ‘no, you can’t do this’.

And every time he says it with that stupid nickname.

“*Are you okay, Kacchan?*” Deku asks with worry in his eyes as he offers his hand.

He hates that name. It implies that Deku knows him, that they’re friends. That they stand on equal ground.

Katsuki knows he can’t really call Deku quirkless anymore. Stupid, he is not, unlike the extras who hang on his every word. He’s seen the literal glow in his eyes some days, or how Deku keeps changing his hair colour at a whim. He’s not stupid enough to believe that’s dye.

But while Deku might not be quirkless, his quirk is as useless as they come. Being a hero isn’t about some fancy parlor tricks. It’s about being the best; the strongest, and protecting all of the losers below you.

That’s what Katsuki is going to do.

If that stupid Deku could just get out of his way, that’d be great, because the UA entrance exam is coming up.
There’s no way Deku will make it into the Hero Course even if he tries.

Now that Pocahantas girl (what was her name? She was at his daycare, he thinks.) might be a challenge, because her quirk has something to do with air, and that’s fucking everywhere.

But he’ll even beat her.

Because he’s the best.

He always is.

Shiori knows she should stop skipping school, but she’s been decent about it this year; only missing the days that are necessary. All in all, the days she’s missed are just about the same as someone who’s been out sick.

Not that Ourdera cares. She’s pretty sure they mark her as ‘there’ all the time to keep their attendance ratings up.

But today of all days, she’s got a really good reason.

Her new landlord opens the door of her apartment. (God that feels weird to say.)

“This is it,” he says unceremoniously.

“Oh, tha-”

“The furniture is from the guy who used to live here. Do whatcha want with ‘em.”

“What-”

The man leaves without another word, tossing a key at her. Shiori sighs and steps into the apartment, closing the door behind her.

This is where she lives now.

Most people would be tempted to call it home, after escaping Fujikawa and years of hell, but Shiori can’t find it in herself to.

It’s been years since she’s been home, and after all this time, she doesn’t know the way back. Not that she really cares anymore. Home is where you feel safe and comfortable, and Shiori’s never been able to stay in one place for long.

She wants to roam. To be free. To go from city to city, never knowing what tomorrow will bring. Izuku hypothesizes that it might be a side effect of her quirk, and he’s probably right. She wants to go to where the wind takes her, with nothing ever staying the same.

Maybe it’s due to the lack of permanence in her life, but Shiori’s used to change. Through all the transitions she’s gone through, she’s even begun to welcome it.

This, moving into a real apartment, is just another change.

But it isn’t home.
It’s just another temporary change.

A knock alerts Shiori to the presence of someone at the door. After glancing through the peephole, she opens it and is met with a woman cradling a baby. “Hello!” She says.

“...hi.” “I heard you just moved in today. We’re right next-door.” “Oh. That’s nice.” “I’m Hirano Ishii. This is my son, Joji.”

...Joji, huh?

Absentmindedly, Shiori waves at the baby. The tiny human babbles happily and gives her a gummy smile. “Oh! He likes you!” The woman holds her baby out to Shiori like she wants her to hold him.

“Are you sure?” Shiori says uncertainly, because she’s known this woman for all of two minutes and now she’s asking her to hold her baby?

Hirano just nods and Shiori takes Joji in her arms. The baby coos and beams at her. He’s kinda cu-

SON OF A BITCH! Shiori hisses as Joji tries to rip her hair out of her head.

“Oh Joji! No, don’t do that!” Hirano cries, taking her baby back. “I’m so sorry!”

“It’s fine,” Shiori says, rubbing at the sore spot on her head.

“Well, my husband’s coming home soon, so I better get going. Hope to see you around soon!”

“Sure.”

Welp. I have neighbours now.

Shiori shakes her head. She’s gotta focus. The UA entrance exams are in a month.

Chapter End Notes

NEXT CHAPTER IS THE EXAMS! FINALLLLYYY!
How do you think the entrance exams are going to go? Who will get into what part of UA? Will anyone be entirely rejected?
Fun fact #14-In one of the original drafts of this au, Shiori, Katsuki and Izuku were all childhood friends before he got his quirk. I scrapped it, because....have you seen how well Shiori and Katsuki get along?
Fun fact #14b-Shiori and Uraraka were roommates in this au at some point, because they both live alone, so I was like, why not? I'm still not sure if I'll use this. Technically, Shiori can't legally have an apartment, because she's supposed to live at the shelter and she doesn't have any parents/guardians to care for her. What do you think will happen?
Drop me a comment!
Have a great week!
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 25: This will be the day that I prove you wrong

Chapter Summary

The exam and the results.

Chapter Notes

Nothing to note really. Sorry this is late. I was trying to figure out how to do there perspectives of the exam.
Chapter title from the song Prove You Wrong by Mike Shinoda.
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Shiori slams her head against the desk. “My brain hurts.”

“The exam wasn’t that bad,” Izuku says.

“Shut the fuck up Mr. I-Remember-Everything-I-See.”

“There, there, Shiori.” Hitoshi reaches down from his spot in the row behind her, patting her on the head. “Being bitter will get you nowhere.”

She lifts her head to give him a dry look. “You wanna bet?”

“I-”

“Woah! Look at this crowd! Everybody say HEY!” Present Mic shouts.

No one says anything.

He shakes his head. “Tough crowd.” The hero begins to explain the breakdown of the physical exam.

A blue haired boy stands up. “Excuse me! I have a question!”

Shiori rolls her eyes at the tall boy.

“Great.”

“You said that there were three robots in the exam, but the director clearly states there are four! This sort of mistake is beneath UA!” He whirls around, glaring at Izuku. “And you! You’ve been mumbling this whole time! It’s very distracting! If you’re not going to take this seriously, then leave immediately.”

“Don’t,” is all Hitoshi says as Shiori begins to stand.

She growls and sits back down, but the air is noticeable thinner.
Izuku buries his head in his hands, ears bright pink. People snicker. “Alright, thank you examinee 7111!” Present Mic calls attention back to himself. “You’re right! There is a fourth robot, but it’s worth nothing and you should avoid it.”

The manner in which the hero speaks is so flippant is raises suspicion in the three aspiring heroes.

They all receive their testing grounds. “They must have separated applicants from the same school so no one can help each other out!” Izuku deduces.

“Brilliant, Holmes,” Shiori huffs. “See ya after the test.”

Hitoshi groans. “Great. I’m stuck with Baka-bitch.”

He receives a sympathetic pat on the shoulder from Izuku. “You’ll be fine.”


He blinks. “…thanks. You too. I gotta go. I’ll be late. Don’t break any bones.”

Izuku smiles and watches the boy go before he notices the nice brown haired girl from earlier. He tries to make his way to her, but is stopped by the glaring blue-haired boy. “What do you think you’re doing? That girl is obviously trying to concentrate.” The glare intensifies. “First you disturb the lecture and now you try to distract a fellow applicant?”

“I-I-”

“GO!” Present Mic’s voice booms over the speakers.

Most of the crowd stands still, hesitating, but Izuku shoots forward, having been conditioned through vigilante work to not hesitate.

The first robot rolls into view, so Izuku fires up his quirk, increasing his strength and durability. It takes longer than he wants to dismantle the two-pointer, but he manages it in the end.

He hopes the rest of the exam will go better than this.

Shiori draws several looks as she takes off her jacket. Yes, she’s aware she’s not dressed very practically for the exam, but in her defense, athletic clothes cost a lot of money, and that’s something she doesn’t have.

So, here she is in the chilly February air, clad in a blue tank-top, gloves and long green shorts.

Fashionable, she knows.

“GO!” Present Mic announces.

Gathering wind behind her, Shiori takes off like a bullet. She’s got this.

How hard can it be to take apart a few metalheads?
Hitoshi sprints forward, just behind Bakugou, the head of the pack. The explosive blonde instantly destroys all robots in view, leaving nothing for Hitoshi. He grits his teeth, annoyed. Several other applicants share his sentiment.

This is gonna be harder than he thought.

“Applicant 7223 seems to be doing well,” Nemuri notes. “Her quirk reminds me of Yoarashi Inasa’s.”

“It’s possible that they’re related,” Snipe concedes.

“Yeah, but wouldn’t she have taken the recommendation student exam? If they’re related, then she’s from a hero family.”

The mere thought of Kayano being related to the outspoken Yoarashi almost makes Shouta smile. Almost.

“Well, 7218 is doing well too,” Hizashi says. “Bakugou… Katsuki?”

“An explosion quirk is useful for destroying robots,” Shouta grumbles. “It doesn’t make him a hero.”

“Aw, someone’s bitter,” Nemuri coos.

“Shut up Nemuri.”

Momentarily, Shouta switches his attention to Hitoshi’s screen. From the looks of it, he’s doing about as well as expected of someone without a physical quirk. He narrows his eyes. Damn this biased exam.

“Three minutes remaining,” the rat says, smiling pleasantly. “I think now would be a good time to release the Zero-Pointer.”

Upon seeing the massive robot mentioned in the exam, all three vigilantes have roughly the same reaction.

Shit.

Izuku turns to run, but he hears someone cry out.

The nice girl that helped him earlier—Gravity Girl—is pinned under a pile of rubble, directly in the robot’s path.

Throwing caution and self preservation to the wind, Izuku charges forward, passing the blue-haired boy. “What are you doing?”

He ignores him. Izuku skids to a stop beside the girl, kicking up dust. “Are you hurt?”

“My... ankle,” she says.
“Can you use your quirk on the rubble?”

She shakes her head. “Can’t reach it.”

There’s no way he’ll get the concrete slabs off in time. Izuku bites his lip, eyes catching on a stray pipe. “Stay here.” He darts across the field and snatches it, sprinting back to Gravity Girl as quickly as he could manage.

The pipe is jammed under one of the concrete slabs and Izuku pushes down. As soon as the rubble is off of the girl, she crawls out.

Wasting no time, Izuku scoops her up in his arms and runs like the devil’s behind him.

(He’s had a lot of practice with that.)

Hitoshi swears, eyes wide. The Zero-Pointer clips the side of a building, not slowing as it turns it to rubble. Concrete rains down on the street. If he hadn’t had better situational awareness, Hitoshi would’ve been crushed.

Others weren’t so lucky. A blonde boy with a black lightning bolt in his hair goes down and Hitoshi fights every instinct to run as he goes to help him.

He runs with the boy on his back until the end of exam buzzer sounds.

“Th….thanks man,” the guy says.

He tries to ignore the pit in his stomach; he knows he failed. “No problem.”

“Name’s Kaminari.”

“…Shinsou. Do you have a concussion?”

“No, my quirk just short circuits my brain. I’ll be fine in a few minutes. Feelin a little woozy, though."

“Short circuits your brain,” Hitoshi repeats slowly. “…That doesn’t sound fine.”

“Yeah!” The boy sways, smiling dumbly with two thumbs up. “I’m GREAT!”

Hitoshi sighs. It’s obvious Kaminari can’t be left by himself, so he’s going to have to wait until one of his dads or another teacher comes.

Why does he always get into these situations?

The Zero-Pointer looms over the street, casting its massive shadow over the fleeing UA hopefuls.

Shiori stares up at it.

“There is a fourth robot, but it’s worth nothing and you should avoid it.”

People are trapped in the street. Even if the staff stops the robot now, if this was real life, they’d be dead.
And Shiori is nothing if she’s not a vigilante first. (Well, maybe spiteful and a cynic too, but you get the idea.)

She extends her fingers, wind curling around her arms like a spring. The air is tense; ready to snap forward. When the robot gets too close to one of the participants, Shiori releases the gale and the robot is blown back, falling on its back.

_Ow_, she thinks distantly, rubbing her bruised arms. The bruises are a strange shape; wrapping her arms in long thin lines of light purple.

God, her quirk can be annoying.

And with that, the exam is over.

There is little to explain about Mei’s exam.

Basically, she built the assigned device in the shortest amount of time in UA history.

And then almost blew the lab up.

But she passed.

(Probably.)

Nezu smiles gleefully as the exam ends and the teachers gather to discuss which students should be admitted. “Bakugou Katsuki,” he says.

The room stirs. “He did get the top score in the physical exam and had a high score on the written.”

“But his attitude,” Aizawa hisses. “He has an obvious disregard for others and is arrogant beyond all measure.”

“He’s still a child,” Kayama reminds him. “He can learn.”

Nezu nods. “There’s nothing on his record to suggest that Bakugou Katsuki is physically violent. We have no reason not to admit him. Let’s move on.”

They spend hours like this, and while Aizawa and Yamada are disappointed that Hitoshi didn’t get in for all the rescue points he accumulated, it makes sense. The meeting goes on until they reach the last two participants.

“So, Kayano Shiori and Midoriya Izuku,” Nezu says.

“Well, Young Kayano’s final score was 72, making her third in the exam.” All Might, or Yagi Toshinori in this form, tilts his head to one side. “Why would her admission be in question?”

“Is it an issue of record?” Ectoplasm inquires.

“No, no, nothing like that.” The rat waves his paw dismissively. “Her record is average.”

“It can’t be her written exam,” Cementoss says slowly. “Otherwise we wouldn’t be discussing her.”
“No, there was nothing wrong with either of her exams.”

Aizawa narrows his eyes. “Then what is it?”

“Well, as you may know, Midoriya Izuku is just under the 40th student admitted to the Hero Course. Any other year, he would’ve been placed into the Hero Course, but due to all the high scorers this year, it wasn’t so.”

Yamada sighs. “That’s tough luck, but he still qualifies for General Education.” “I don’t think Midoriya’s time would be well spent there,” Nezu simply states.

The whole room pauses. “....what are you suggesting?” Kayama asks.

“Did any of you know that Kayano and Midoriya have attended the same school since daycare?”

“What does that have to do with any of this?” Aizawa bites.

“I’d like Midoriya to be admitted to the Hero Course.”

Silence.

“...In Kayano’s place?” Nezu nods. “Of course, it will be entirely her choice.”

“And why would she do that?” Aizawa narrows his eyes into a glare.

“Well, if she hears that Midoriya is number one on the waitlist for the Hero Course and won’t be admitted to the General Education Department, I think it will be an obvious choice.” There’s a pause in the principal’s plan, a devious smile on his lips. “Especially if she has a guaranteed spot in said General Education.”

A week later, the results are mailed out.

There are two winners and two losers.

But one of the winners forfeits their wins and the loser suddenly hasn’t lost anymore.

Regardless, Shiori has a UA acceptance letter to staple to her dumbass guidance counselor's front door.

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact #15- Weird fun fact, but I see Shiori and Izuku being parkour gods, because they have to run from bullies.
Fun fact #15b- In the original draft of this au when Izuku stuck with Perseus, Shiroi called herself Them is and Shouto (when he was part of it) was Janus. Daedalus is the only original code name left.
Fun fact #15c- Another weird one, but I see Shiori and Hitoshi's being really flexible for some reason.
Fun fact #15d- Nezu is a much bigger character now than he was in the earlier drafts. Why do you guys think Nezu did what he did? Any ideas? Theories? Lemme hear
them!

Have a great week!
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?s=Z6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg
If you have a song suggestion, lemme know!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 26: I bet my life on you

Chapter Notes

Finally here! Sorry this took me a few extra days, I was on vacation. Anyway, after this, we're going to have another chapter before the school year begins. Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Shiori, Katsuki and Izuku all stand before the principal. “This is highly impressive; three students from Ourdera accepted to UA! Especially you two; Kayano and Midoriya! Despite your, er, challenges, you’ve made it into UA one way or another.”

Don’t punch him, Izuku mentally tells her.

Try and stop me.

Please don’t make me.

Fuck you.

“But, needless to say, congrats to all.”

“Shiori, really? Another copy?”

“Shut up and let me have this, Izuku,” Shiori says as she staples the fifth copy of her General Education acceptance letter to her guidance counselor’s door. “Bastard didn’t think I could get into UA. Joke’s on him.” Once the paper’s secure, she turns to Izuku. “Okay, we can go now.”

They walk down the hall. Said guidance counselor happens to pass them. He freezes a bit. “Senyo-sensei,” Shiori greets coolly.

“K-kayano-kun….Midoriya-kun...h-hello. How are you?”

“Great,” she replies shortly.

“W-well, I’ll let you two go now.” If Shiori notices how stiffly the teacher walks away, she says nothing about it.

Even if Shiori didn’t get into the Hero Course (which he doesn’t understand, she should’ve made it-) General Education at UA is still nothing to sneeze at. While the Hero Course is churning out pro-heroes left and right, the other courses are making business tycoons, inventors, engineers, architects, lawyers and world-renowned scientists.

That’s the place they got into.

“Hey Kaori, sorry to ask, but...what happened with the hero course?” Izuku says for the eighth time as they reach her classroom.
She pauses briefly. “I failed the written exam,” she replies, just a little too easily.

“Oh,” is all he can say. It’s a little strange, because while Kaori’s not the smartest person in the world, given how long she’s been studying, she should’ve passed. What happened?

“Anyway, I know you’ve got something with Inko, so don’t be late.” She pushes him in the direction of the front door.

“You could come,” Izuku offers.

“Nah. I’m gonna see if Hitoshi wants to hang. I’d invite Mei, but she’s being a little... manic right now.”

Izuku laughs. “She’s always like that.”

“She’s building a death ray to eradicate her enemies.”

He chokes. “She’s what.”

Shiori slips her backpack over her shoulders. “You heard me. Don’t get jumped.”

Izuku chuckles, rolling his eyes. “I won’t.”

He does, in fact, get jumped.

By Kacchan.

Behind the school.

He should really stop taking this route.

“I was supposed to be the only one from this shitty school to make it into UA; the first! You ruined my origin story, Deku.” Izuku’s pinned to the wall, staring at Kacchan and desperately trying not to look afraid. Despite his best efforts, his heart's still slamming against his chest, threatening to smash through his ribcage. “What cheat did you use to get in?!”

“I...I didn’t cheat, Kacchan,” Izuku says.

“Bullshit.”

“I was on the waitlist and someone gave up their spot,” Izuku continues.

“Who the hell would give up a spot in the Hero Course?!”

“I...I don’t know!”

Shiori sneezes.

Who’s talking about me now?

“You little shit!”
“I-I got in fair and square, Kacchan,” Izuku insists, pushing the blonde off of him. The bully stares at Izuku with a mixture of hatred and surprise. “And I’m going to UA and you can’t stop me!” With that, Izuku walks away (fighting the urge to make a hasty retreat) and doesn’t look back.

Bakugou sets off an explosion behind him.

Shouta hears a knock at the door and opens it, a little surprised to see only Kayano there. “Where’s the green Problem Child?”

“With Inko.”

He nods. “You’re here for Hitoshi?”

“I was wondering if he’s up to hang out or something.”

“He’s in the shower. You can wait in the living room until he’s done.”

“Thanks.”

Shouta side steps so Kayano can get by. “Yamada isn’t home.”

“Oh. Hero work?”

“Yeah.”

“So, still chasin’ Cerberus-Sweep?” Aizawa doesn't miss the sharp look in the girl's eye, out of place in her nonchalant demeanor.

The hero narrows his eyes into a half-hearted glare, because he's not about to start on the whole ‘they are not heroes’ lecture again. “Confidential.”

She smiles a bit, bobbing her head in understanding. “You haven’t found any leads.”

“Watch it, brat,” he snaps without any real heat.

She snorts, tapping her foot as she waits.

“So, you got into General Education.”

“Yep.”

He eyes her suspiciously. “Hero Course didn’t pan out?”

Kayano pauses, her foot resting silently against the ground. “No,” she says in a casual tone. “It didn’t.”

“Kid.”

“Hmm?”

“I’m on the admission board. I know you got accepted.”

The girl hesitates a moment before her neutral expression slides back into place. “Oh.”
“Why did you withdraw your Hero Course application?”

With a neutral face, she brushes her hair out of her face and replies, “Izuku was on the waitlist. He wouldn’t have gotten into UA if I didn’t. I’ve got General Education to fall back on. Hero Course was his one shot.”

Damn rat was right. For a minute, he’s quiet. “If he would’ve gone to General Education would you have given up your spot?”

“...yes.” She glances away as Hitoshi emerges from the shower, pulling his shirt on. “Oh hey.”

The boy nearly leaps out of his skin and falls backwards. Kayano moves to help him up. “Leave me in my shame,” Hitoshi mumbles.

“Tempting. But I’m bored. Do you wanna hang out?”

“Is that an offer or a statement.”

“Depends. Draggin’ you out of here would be a lot of work.”

Shouta’s son huffs and stands up. “Give me five.”

“Gotcha.”

Hitoshi disappears into his room. Shouta and the teen lapse into another silence. “Would you have done it if it was Hitoshi?”

There’s a pause, much longer than the first time, Shouta notes. “It’s not wrong if you say no,” he adds.

“No, it’s not that,” she says. “But...probably. I think I would.”

He nods. As if on cue, Hitoshi exits his room, wearing a dark hoodie with a cat paw on it. “Ready.”

“Cool. Let’s go.”

“Where are you two going?” Shouta calls.

“The hell if I know!” Shiori replies as the front door closes.

Dagobah is pretty empty this time of year; it’s chilly, so there are only a few people walking on the beach. The former dump has become a pretty popular spot (when it’s warm) ever since they cleaned it up.

Shiori picks up a small rock and skips it across the water. “So, how you doin’?”


“Hey, with any luck we’ll be classmates.” Six skips. “I win.”

“This isn’t a competition.”

“Bah, you’re just mad you lost.”

Hitoshi rolls his eyes, a sort of bitter smile on his lips. “Hey, uh, what you said to Dadzawa back
there…would you really give up a Hero Course spot for me?”

Shiori raises an eyebrow. “You heard that, huh?”

“Yeah.”

"Creep."
"How am I a creep?" He scoffs. "You were talking in my house about me."

“Then, yeah, I would. You’ve wanted to be a hero since forever, and you’ve gotta prove those
aholes who said you couldn’t do it wrong. I can get behind that.” She stops, grey eyes staring out
at the ocean before them. “Besides, being a hero hasn’t always been my dream. It started as Izuku’s.
It didn’t really grab me until we started the whole…y’know. Before that, I really didn’t know what to
do with my life. Honestly…I didn’t think I’d make it far enough to make choices like these.”

“Mood.” She gives him a semi-annoyed look and throws a rock at him. Hitoshi dodges, laughing.
“Missed me!” Another rock hits him solidly in the stomach, forcing the air from his lungs.

“I...hate...you,” he wheezed.

A strong gust of wind pushes him into the ocean. He gasps at the freezing sensation of the water.
Hitoshi sits up to see Shiori laughing her ass off. “Oh, it is on .”

“Bring it, Gucci Eyebags.”

In hindsight, it probably wasn’t the best idea to try and drown Hitoshi in the water during February,
Shiori thinks as she towels her hair off.

But, god, it was worth it.

“Oh, dear, you really should be a little more mindful of the weather. You could get sick,” Hirano
fusses, shoving another towel into Shiori’s arms. (Where is she getting these things?)

It’s unlikely she’d get sick from this little shenanigan, due to the temperature resistance she has, but
it’d be more work to explain it to Hirano. “Sorry. Me and my friend were just messing around. I’ll be
more careful next time.”

She nods. “I understand, dear. Y’know, it wasn’t so long ago that I was young.” Hirano winks.
“Right?”

“....no?”

“Oh! So rude!” The woman playfully huffs, lightly slapping Shiori’s shoulder. “I’ll have you know
I’m only thirty-one.”

“Really?” Shiori raises an eyebrow. "That old already?"

“Honestly.” Hirano shakes her head. A cry sounds from next door. “Oh. It seems Joji’s waking up.
I’ll see myself out. Have a good day, Shiori. And don’t get into trouble.” The last part is tacked on in
an almost scolding manner.

“I’ll try.”
The woman shakes her head and disappears through the door. Shiori huffs, hints of a smile on her lips.

She lucked out on neighbours. Well, at least one of them. The lady on the right of her door, Takemoto Sachie, isn’t the definition of pleasant, per se. Takemoto is snappy and a bit rude, but she’s not the worst neighbour to have, seeing as she minds her own business and is occasionally helpful with things like groceries and Joji, etc.

For the next hour, Shiori gets to work on dinner. Her radio begins playing quiet tunes as she retrieves the ingredients necessary for the meal.

“Not again!” Someone next door shouts.

She ignores it.

The fire alarm next door goes off.

She sighs and continues cooking, only pausing to turn the radio up.

Then the crying comes.

‘Okay, should probably do something about that,’ she thinks.

Option one: turn the radio up louder and go about your day.

Option two-

Something falls and someone swears.

Option two it is. Shiori shuts off the stove and pours a portion of the soup into a tupperware container. Talking to strangers isn’t something she ever does, but Shiori’s 90% sure that whoever’s breaking things in Takemoto’s apartment isn’t the old bat. It’s probably that girl Shiori’s seen around the complex for the past few days.

Here it goes.

Shiori knocks on the door. The girl checks the peephole (smart girl) before opening it. “I can hear you through the walls,” Shiori says, flat. “You’re being loud.”

She blinks. “O-oh, sorry-”

“I brought you ramen.” Shiori pushes the tupperware into the girl’s hands and goes back to her apartment before she can say a word.

Thirty minutes later, there’s a knock at her door.

It’s the girl again. “Thank you!” She says, offering the clean tupperware back.

“Don’t mention it.”

“I didn’t think there was anyone my age living here,” the girl from next door says before Shiori can close the door.

Okay, looks like we’re having a conversation.

“There usually isn’t.” She pauses. The girl smiles brightly at her; a real friendly type, Shiori’d guess.
She bears a striking resemblance to what Takemoto might’ve looked like in her golden days. “Are you Takemoto-san’s granddaughter or something?”

“Oh, no! I’m just staying with her until I find an apartment because of school.”

“What school are you going to?”

“UA!” She says proudly. “The Hero Course!”

Shiori pauses again. “I’m going to UA too,” she replies, voice soft. “General Education.”

“That’s cool!” Suddenly she falls into a bow. “My name’s Uraraka Ochako! Nice to meet you!”

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact #16- Artists that remind me some of the characters in this story:
Izuku: Mother Mother, The Script, Panic! at the Disco, Noah Kahan
Hitoshi: Alec Benjamin (I don’t know why, he just does), Get Scared, MCR, Hozier
Mei: Alan Walker, Cavetown, Jon Bellion, Fall Out Boy
Shiori: NF, Linkin Park, Tom Walker, The Neighborhood
Lemme know what other artists or songs remind you of your favourite illegal heroes!
By the way, I keep seeing all this stuff about My Hero Academia Illegals. Does anyone know where I could read that? It looks super cool and has nothing to do with the fact that I love Hobo Teacher.
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg
If you have a song suggestion, lemme know!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astrylelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 27: Wild Things

Chapter Summary

Our vigilantes get a break, Izuku realizes how awkward he is around girls, Shiori gets a roommate and Bishop gets grey hairs.
Yay.

Chapter Notes

What? This was supposed to be out almost two weeks ago?
What is this madness????
Anyway, I am so sorry about this. School started, and you know, I've never been to high school, much less a school as big as mine, so I've been busy. I will try to update every week at least, though!
Anyway, enjoy the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

A week before UA starts, Uraraka’s desperate to find an apartment. Offhandedly, Shiori suggests becoming her roommate.

It only snowballs from there.

“Thankyouthankyouthankyouthankyou!” Uraraka squeals, hugging Shiori tightly. Shiori is not thrilled about floating upside down in her apartment.

“Let-go of me!” She huffs, trying to push the other girl off, but Uraraka just squeezes tighter.

“You won’t regret it!”

A little late for that, Shiori thinks.

They don’t stop floating until Uraraka gets sick and releases her quirk. Then she sprints to the bathroom to empty her stomach contents into the toilet.

“Are you sure about this?” Uraraka asks nervously, placing another box into her new shared apartment. “I mean, if it’s too much trouble-”

“For the third time, yes I’m sure. Now hurry up.”
Izuku’s more than a little surprised to see another occupant in Shiori’s apartment. “It’s you!” Uraraka chirps. “The plain boy from the exam!”

He buries his face in his hands, cheeks pink while Shiori cracks up at his expense. “I….uh, yeah. It’s me,” he mumbles.

Uraraka sweeps her gaze between the two, questioning, but doesn’t say anything. “Did you get in?” She asks.

“Yeah,” he replies with only a bit of hesitation. “I’m in class 1-A.”

“Me too!” Quickly, Uraraka whips her phone out and shoves it toward him. “Give me your number so we can text!”

While Shiori continues to laugh at him, Izuku, flush faced, enters his number into the other girl’s phone.

He glances up once and catches Shiori’s eye long enough for her to give him The Look. “Ha. Real mature,” he mutters.

“What was that?” Uraraka innocently says.

“Nothing.”

The first day of UA is ushered in with much anticipation and fanfare. On the way out the door, Inko cries, hugs her son and peppers him with kisses. “My little boy’s grown up!”

“Mom-seriously-I gotta-I love you. Yes, I have my handkerchief-but I’m going to be late!”

Inko reluctantly lets him go, smiling proudly after him. “You’ll be a great hero,” she whispers softly. “I know it.”

Wide green eyes look up at his mother as he bounces excitedly in his seat. “Mom,” Izuku says. “Can I be a hero?”

Inko glances down at her son with a soft smile. “You can be anything you want, Izuku.”

A warm feeling carries the young greenette to the gates of his school, a smile on his lips.

Izuku stares up at UA; the massive building looms above him, casting a shadow. He sucks in a breath. To think he almost missed this….

“Move nerd!” Kacchan barges him out of the way, stalking towards the school.

Izuku smiles ear to ear. Nothing can spoil his mood today. “Good morning Kacchan! I hope you have a great day!”

“Shut the fuck up! And don’t tell me what to do, asshole!”

After so many years of fearing the blonde, this feels different. Izuku’s reminded of how Shiori compared Kacchan to a pomeranian; all bark and no bite.

He laughs.
But seriously, he should really get to class. It’s bad luck to be late on the first day.

After wandering UA’s halls for a few minutes, Izuku spots in front of his homeroom door. ‘1-A’ it reads in red paint. Momo is already standing there, watching the door with wary eyes.

She must be nervous, Izuku thinks as he waves. “Mochan!”

His voice seems to snap her from her daze. “Izukun,” she says. “Good morning!”

“I’m glad we’re in the same class.”

Izuku nods before facing the door. (Why the hell is it so tall-) “Ready?” Momo hesitates a moment before nodding and they open the door.

“Get your feet off the desk this minute! It is disrespectful to our senpai and to the makers of this desk!” The boy with blue hair scolded.

Kacchan rolls his eyes. “Fuck off. What elitist school shoved a stick up your ass?”

The blue haired boy bristles at the statement before pausing to compose himself. “I believe we have gotten off on the wrong foot.” He bows. “My name is Iida Tenya and I come from Somei Private Academy."

“Hah. So you are an elite.”

The pair resume their arguing.

“....I’m going home,” Izuku says quietly to Momo before spinning around on his heel.

She huffs in amusement and grabs onto his backpack. “Come on, Izukun.”

He whimpers as he is dragged back into the classroom from, what he assumes will be, hell. Uraraka enters not a minute later and spots him almost immediately. Flashing a smile, she waves at him and begins making her way towards him.

“If you’re here to socialize get out,” Aizawa’s voice says, but...Izuku doesn’t see him.

The hero stands, unzipping himself from his bright yellow sleeping bag. He looks like a caterpillar, Izuku thinks.

“It took you eight seconds to get quiet. You’re all irrational and don’t stand a chance here.” Draining a juice pouch, Aizawa then raises his gaze to the class. “Put these gym uniforms on and meet me outside on the field.” Without giving any specifics, the hero closes the door and leaves.

The entire class exchanges a look before a mad dash to the locker room begins.

Aizawa glares as his class walks out onto the field. “You took too long to be ready,” he says. “If you do this again, I will expel you.”

The class nervously laughs. He narrows his eyes. Oh. They think he’s joking. “We’re going to do a test,” he continues. “To test the upper limits of your quirks. Bakugou. You placed first in the exam. How far could you throw a softball in middle school?”
“67 meters.”

“Try it with your quirk.”

The boy snatches the softball from his outstretched hand and blows the ball to kingdom come. “DIE!” Aizawa doesn’t get paid enough for this.

Excited murmurs break out in the class. “This is going to be fun!” Someone says.

“You think this is fun?” The entire class falls silent. “Fine. Whoever comes in last is expelled.”

He takes a moment to savour the class’s terror. “A-aizawa-sensei? What about the orientation?” Uraraka asks.

“As a hero, you will have no time for useless things like that. Now let’s get going.” He claps his hands. “The test is beginning now.”

Izuku’s heart drops into his stomach. A physical test of his quirk? Mind Palace can barely be called an enhancer as it only boosts his natural functions so far. His library is not going to be helpful and the Chemistry Lab is a work in progress.

So, yeah, he’s probably screwed.

Izuku almost wishes that he didn’t know Aizawa so well. If he had never met his teacher, he wouldn’t know that when it comes to expulsion, Aizawa Shouta is entirely serious.

The test is exactly like the one Izuku did in junior high. He does toe-touches, sprints, situps, grip tests and, of course, the softball throw.

Ah the softball throw.

“Hurry up Midoriya,” Aizawa snaps.

Izuku snaps from his reverie, staring at the softball in his fist. Even if he manages to boost his strength to the highest setting (not a good idea) the score couldn’t hold a candle to the likes of Uraraka or Mochan.

He takes a deep breath. If UA falls through, he’ll figure something out. One way or another, Midoriya Izuku will be a hero.

Izuku increases his strength by eighty-one percent and throws the ball as far as he can. “Two-hundred ninety-one meters,” Aizawa drawls. “Step back.”

He complies, ignoring the death glares Kacchan is shooting him. When the test ends, Aizawa posts the scores.

**Midoriya Izuku-7th**

The tension bleeds from his shoulders.

Oh thank God.

“I was lying about the expulsion,” Aizawa says. “Use these scores as your starting point. If you disappoint me, I won’t hesitate to expel you.” The man spins around and walks away before any of
the students can stop him.

Izu’s jaw hits the ground.

Did Aizawa Shouta seriously just pass up an opportunity to expel someone?

The final bell rings and Izuku pulls his phone out.

Kaori: what are you guys doing?

Kaori: hitoshi’s at my apartment.

Kaori: screw you for getting into the hero course and not being here to help me kick him out.

Kaori: are you guys coming over later or are we going to go invade bishops apt???

Izuku: I haven’t seen Bishop in awhile. Let’s go see him.

[Kaori is typing]

Kaori: ok.

Kaori: meet u @ his place.

Kaori: i’m goin in thru the window.

Kaori: oh and hitoshi says hi.

Kaori: but in the whiny voice.

Kaori: Okay this is Hitoshi

Kaori: Shioris phone privileges have been revoked

Izuku: She’s okay though, right?

Kaori: When was she ever alright

Kaori: Anyway see you

Izuku: Okay.

Izuku: Try not to get killed out the way there.

Kaori: No promises lol

Kaori: Well pick mei up on the way

“Deku!” Uraraka chirps.

Izuku glances up, raising an eyebrow. “Deku?” He repeats. “You know my name.”

“Oh, well, I heard Bakugou call you that, and I thought it’s a cute nickname! It kinda sounds like ‘he
who can do it all’!”

His cheeks redden at that. “Oh...yeah. That’s-that’s what it means,” Izuku replies softly.

Uraraka laughs. “Do you wanna hang out?”

“Well I already kinda had plans with Shiori and our other friends....”

Her face falls at this. “Oh...that’s-”

“B-but there’s no reason you can’t come!” He adds, hands waving around in what should’ve been a placating manner.

“Are you sure? You don’t have to invite me if you don’t want to-”

“No it’s fine!” He almost shouts. Izuku whirls around to face Momo. “Would you like to come?!”

Momo blinks, a little startled by his strange behaviour. “I have an event with my mother later,” she says slowly. “But thank you for the offer. Maybe next time.”

“Get out so I can take my nap,” Aizawa orders, already climbing into his sleeping bag.

Izuku nods and quickly leaves the room, Uraraka and Yaoyorozu on his heels. The trio walk until the front gate where Momo is picked up by a family car. Aiki waves at them before the car drives off.

Uraraka and Izuku head to the train station, making small chat the entire way there. “No way,” Izuku says. “Green tea mochi is the best.”

“Strawberry!” Uraraka furiously shakes her head. “Can I even be friends with you, Deku?”

“Guess not,” he chuckles.

She gasps dramatically, pretending she’s about to faint. “Ah!”

After a moment, they both burst into laughter. The ride to Bishop’s apartment is spent basically the same way.

“So who’s this ‘Bishop’ guy again?” Uraraka asks.

“Oh, well, he used to be a pro, but then he got hurt and had to retire. He helped us prepare for the entrance exam.” Izuku pauses, stopping on the sidewalk. “Uraraka-kun, Bishop has….some scars.” His tone is careful and his words specifically chosen. “...it’s not as bad as it looks, but they can be a little....” Frightening, he wants to say, but after all this time, it’s hard to see the grumpy man in such a way. The scars may not be the prettiest thing, but they’re part of Bishop. “Anyway, just try not to stare.”

Uraraka nods seriously. “I won’t.”

Jesus thinks he’s finally gotten rid of those little hellions. It’s quiet for once in his apartment. Chizome’s out doing something very illegal, Marjorie’s at her bridge club and the runts are all doing school or something.

He kinda misses them.
With all this time on his hands, he’s had time to clean up his apartment.

It’s lonely.

For the first time in ages, his fridge is full.

So quiet too. No one’s actively destroying his apartment.

Jesus sighs. Okay, fine. He actually misses the kids’ company.

But, hey, he’s just some old has-been. Why would those little devils waste their time hanging out with him.

“We’re baacck bitch!” Shiori’s very familiar voice comes from...the window?!

Jesus drops his spatula, scrambling toward the window. “WHAT THE HELL, KID?!”

Shiori just laughs as she unceremoniously flops onto the floor. Purple Gremlin (Hitoshi) climbs in behind her. “You missed us,” Hitoshi says with a smirk.

Yes, and now he regrets doing so.

“Where’s Chizome?” Shiori asks, lifting her head from the floor. “I’m gonna show him my newfound ability to slit throats.”

“Why-” Bishop stares down at her and then shakes his head. “Nope. I don’t wanna know. I don’t wanna know.”

“So, old man, what’s up? What’ve you been doing without us to light up your life?” Hitoshi jokingly bats his eyelashes.

“I’ve been planning my early death,” he mutters, zombie-walking back to the stove. “So it’s been just fine, thank you.”

The kids laugh.

Just what sort of hell has he landed himself in?

Mei shoves Hitoshi out of the way. “Quit blockin’ the window, dammit!” She snaps, ducking under the window.

Hitoshi tumbles on top of Shiori. She pushes him off. Mei hops on his back. The wild haired boy lays on his face, sighing as loudly as Jesus’ ever heard. “I’m going to die like this.”

“Are you calling me fat?! Shiori! Help me kill this heathen!”

Okay. There are only three of them here. Jesus can handle that. Just as long as the accident prone, self sacrificial one doesn’t come.

There’s a knock at the door.

“Bishop! I brought a friend! Can we come in?” His heart drops.
Fun fact #17-Most of Shiori's dialogue is inspired by my wonderful cousin.
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg
If you have a song suggestion, lemme know!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astrryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 28: Find table spaces, say your social graces (Bow your head)

Chapter Summary

1-C goes to school.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is mostly about 1-C, because I need to introduce them a little before I cut to 1-A and their usual shit.
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Ochako.”

Ochako stirs, but she doesn’t really want to wake up now. The bed is so soft and the blanket burrito she has wrapped herself in is warm-

“Ochako.”

She pulls the blanket closer toward herself.

“Dammit Ochako, get up!”

Something pushes her off the bed and whisks the quilt away from her. Unceremoniously, she falls flat on her ass. Groggy, cranky, and a little embarrassed, Ochako whines, “Shiori! Why’d you do that?”

The girl, fully dressed in her UA uniform, levels her with a flat look. “We have school. And we’re going to be late.”

Ochako leaps to her feet. “WHY DIDN’T YOU WAKE ME UP EARLIER??!”

“Do you have any idea how it is to do that?!”

“LET’S GO! WE’RE GOING TO BE LATE!” Ochako scrambles to her feet and barges Shiori out of the way. “AIZAWA-SENSEI IS GOING TO KILL ME!”

“That’s a very likely possibility.”

“YOU’RE NOT HELPING!”

“Not trying to.”

Ochako races through the apartment, hastily getting ready for school. A brush is dragged once through her messy bedhead, a spoonful of cereal is eaten, books and folders are thrown into her backpack; Ochako hops around on one foot trying to get her shoes on.
She hears the front door open. “If you’re not here now, I’m leaving you!” Her roommate calls.

“SHIORI! WAIT!”

The door slams. Ochako throws it open and races after her. “SHIORI!”

Ochako stretches, yawning. “You wanna grab a coffee? We have a few minutes before the train comes.” Shiori points to Djinn’s Café, just a little ways up the street. “I work there, so I get free coffee and pastries.”

“Do we have time?” “If we run.”

The cafe is empty, it being early. A blue ghost-like lady hovers behind the counter, quietly humming to herself. Muted sunlight streams in through the beautifully decorated windows, making the whole cafe look fuzzy as things in the early morning often do. Fresh bread and other pastries are baking in the back. Ochako takes a moment to breathe it all in. “Hey kid.” The woman nods in greeting to Shiori, briefly flashing Ochako a smile. “Whatcha need?”

Shiori gets them two coffees that only take a minute or two to get out. “Thanks, A’isha,” she says. “See ya after school.”

“Yeah, yeah.”

They exit the shop, stepping out onto the chilly Akumi street. The steam rising from her coffee creates soft puffs above the cup. “That’s your boss? She seems nice.”

Shiori doesn’t look at her, opting instead to take a sip of the hot drink. “Yeah. She’s pretty great, I guess.”

The pair walk to the station at a brisk pace, coming to a stop on the platform moments before the train appears.

Out of the corner of her eye, Ochako notices a man leap in front of the train. Her body springs into action before her mind fully processes what is unfolding before her.

But she isn’t close enough.

Moments before impact, the man (mid-air, mind you) suddenly jerks back to the platform, landing on his butt. Everyone stares.

Ochako whirls around to face Shiori, who hasn’t taken her eyes off the train. “It’s too early for this shit,” she mutters, handing Ochako the cup she doesn’t remember dropping. “You spilled coffee on your uniform.”

If it was possible, Ochako’s jaw would be on the ground. Forget her potentially ruined uniform-what the heck just happened?

Snapping out of her reverie, she hurries onto the train.

When they get to UA, Shiori says goodbye and the two part ways. Ochako keeps her head high, ready to seize the day.
Shiori roams the halls, looking for the 1-C homeroom. Pausing in mid-step, Shiori glances up, half interested at the person inhabiting the vents. “Hey.”

The boy startles, losing his grip and falling.

Shiori simply steps back. He lands on his ass, the idiot. “How’d ya notice me?” He asks, standing and brushing himself off like nothing happened. “Like, ten people have walked past and didn’t see me!” Standing at his full height, Shiori notes that the strange boy is exactly as tall as she is. He has short black hair with bangs ending just above his red eyes that held an energetic spirit she’s not ready to deal with. “I could feel you breathing,” she says bluntly.

“That’s kinda creepy, but in a cool way!” Somehow this kid reminds her of Izuku when he gets going about quirks. “I’m Yoshida! Yoshida Riku!” Yoshida falls into a perfect ninety-degree bow. “At your service!”

Unimpressed, Shiori continues. “Don’t suppose you know where 1-C is?”

“Not a clue!”

Shiori groans. “Great.”

“You guys looking for 1-C? I can take you!” A tall girl with long black hair and ox-eyed brown orbs pops up behind Shiori. “I come here all the time!”

“So you’re not a first year?” Yoshida asks.

“No, I am! My parents are alumni of UA, though. I’m Namura Kiriko.” Namura extends a hand to them, eagerly shaking both of them at the same time. “Nice to meet you!”

“How did you not get into the Hero Course?” Yoshida says, shocked. “Your parents are both in the top twenty!”

The girl laughs and shrugs, her smile just a bit dimmer. “It’s nice, but I don’t want to be a hero. I want to be my own person!” Despite the dramatic ending pose she strikes, Shiori detects an uncertainty in Namura’s eyes as she carefully gauges their reaction.

“That’s really cool too!” Yoshida bubbles. (Geez, does this kid have an ‘off’ button?)

“What’s good for you.”

“I wish I could get into the Hero Course,” Yoshida continues as they begin following Namura. “My quirk’s like Mount Lady’s and I want to be like her! But, I think General Education can be really cool too!”

“Well, UA does-”

Automatically, Shiori’s brain tunes the conversation out due to her casual disregard of the world around her. In no way is it rude, in her opinion, to not engage in conversation you aren’t actively interested, because then it’s just going in one ear and out the other and that’s about the same thing as ignoring them.

Namura and Yoshida seem nice, which is a huge step up from her old classmates from Hell from Ourdera. Maybe it won’t be as bad as last year.
“Hey!” Namura waves a hand in front of her face, the other resting on her hip. “I never caught your name. Whadda wanna be called?”

“Kayano Shiori. Call me whatever you want. I don’t really care.”

A bright smile splits the girl’s face. “Alright!” She cheers, pumping a fist into the air. “Kay-chan it is!”

…..Shiori has regrets.

Namura lightly digs her in the arm. “Just joking. Imma wait until you do something embarrassing and make that your nickname.”

If the girl suddenly finds it hard to breathe, Shiori has nothing to do with that.

Coughing, Namura chats about what UA’s like and what she’s looking forward to. Yoshida weighs in often, easily causing the conversation to flow. The trio (really they’re more of a pair, because hell if Shiori’s listening) talk until they arrive in front of the doors marked ‘1-C’ in red paint. “This is it!” Namura says with grand gestures.

“WOW!” “...why is the door so big.”

With a smirk, Namura pushes the door open to reveal-

More classmates. Oh joy.

They split up to find their desks. Shiori’s seat ends up being in the second row, which happens to be one of her least favourite spots. The first is the front, mostly because everyone behind can see her, and no one can get away with anything when sitting in the front.

Midnight, the 18+ Hero, steps into the classroom, cracking her whip. “Alright, kiddies! Get to your desks!”

A mad scramble sweeps the room as students leap over other students and furniture to be the first to their seats.

Midnight smiles. “I am Kayama Nemuri, your homeroom teacher! Welcome to General Education!” The woman tosses her whip onto her desk, smirking all the while. “I know this course wasn’t everyone’s first choice, but now you’re here and that doesn’t mean I’ll let you slack! Besides, if you do well enough at the Sports Festival this year, you might get what you want!” She claps. “But enough of that! Roll call! Lemme know if I say your name wrong or if you have a preferred name other than your birth one! Namura Kiriko!”

“Namura Kiriko reporting for duty, ma’am!” The girl mock-salutes.

“Minobe Kenzou!”

A meek, polite seeming blonde boy raises his hand. “Present.”

“Akino Miriam!”

“Just call me Miriam,” a redhead curly haired girl says in a low mumble. Shiori idly wonders what quirk Akino has that forces her to wear a medical mask.

“Hirano Kiyoko!” “Here! But please call me Taka!”
“Got it! Kayano Shiori!”

“...here.”

“Oshiro Minosa!”

“Present.”

“Tsubasa Akhito!”

“Here, Midnight-sensei!” Shiori sneaks a glance over at the boy from her daycare. His hair is longer than it used to be-easily reaching his thighs. The ravenette’s hair is expertly twisted into one french braid. Akhito notices her and flashes a bright grin, waving.

She waves back.

“Yukino Ike!” A short girl with a bob-cut of white hair perks up. “I’m here!”

“Akabane Masaki!”

“Hey there, sensei!” The aforementioned boy is leaning back in his seat, arrogance radiating off of him.

Midnight fixes the boy with a wry look and moves on. “Shino Nagasaki!”

“Yes! I am here!”

“Hinazuki Amaya!”

“Presssent…” The girl’s breathy voice hardly carries over the class.

“Samuel Rule!”

“Here!” A British sounding boy shouts.

“Yvette Summers!”

“...I’m h-here.”

“Speak up!”

Yvette Summers, a towering African-American girl with tree branches for hair sits up in her seat a little more. “H-here!”

“Good! Yoshida Ik-”

“Actually, it’s Riku,” Yoshida cheerfully corrects. “But I’m here!”

“Noted! Tanaka Aoi!”

“Namaste!”

“Ito Miyuki!” “I am here.”

“Minami Daisuke!”

“Yo.” “Shimizu Hiroki!” “I am present.” Shiori’s not going to like him.
“Tomino Hideki!”
“...I, uh, I’m here.”
“Shinsou Hitoshi!”
No answer.
“...Shinsou Hitoshi?” Midnight frowns and puts her pencil down. “Shinsou!”

The quick succession of footsteps grows closer and closer to the classroom door moments before it is thrown open and a panting Hitoshi is revealed. “P-present.”

“You’re almost late, Shinsou-kun,” Midnight says, a sadistic light shining in her eyes. “Where were you?”

“I, uh, my dad’s car broke down and my other dad had already left, so…” He trails off. “Yeah.”

Shiori snorts and he glares at her.

“Sit down, Shinsou-kun. Try to be on time.”

He nods and shuffles toward his desk. Kayama-sensei cracks her whip. “Now! Let’s get to the fun stuff!”

Lunch rolls around slower than anyone in the class would like, but when it does arrive, 1-C flocks to the cafeteria. Hitoshi and Shiori walk together, half expecting to run into Izuku and Mei. They don’t, because apparently Mei’s working on some new project she’s lost her mind over and Izuku’s lunch period happened earlier because of some “battle training”.

“I wonder what that’s about,” Shiori says when they finally find an open table.

“He’ll be okay, right?” She shrugs. “He’ll be fine.”

Somewhere in the viewing room, 1-A watches in horror as the match ends, and Midoriya Izuku is hit by Bakugou Katsuki’s explosions flying through the outer wall of the building and plummeting into the fake river below.

Chapter End Notes

Fun fact #18:
1-C OCs and their quirks!
Namura Kiriko: quirk: Force Field; the ability to make force fields.

Minobe Kenzou: quirk: Light Curbing; can manipulate light and twist it (He can also see Hagakure Toru because of this)
Akino Miriam: quirk: Elemental Breath; can breathe fire, ice breath, sleeping gases and toxic gases (this quirk is very hard to control and is inconvenient, so she wears a surgical mask or sometimes a gas mask regularly and has a pass from PE or anything physically exerting)

Hirano Kiyoko "Taka" : quirk: Leg Augmentation; using her legs, can propel self with varied amounts of force or deliver attacks with extra force

Oshiro Minosa: quirk: Stretch; user can stretch any part of his body to a certain degree or size (like Mr. Fantastic) Note: this user is very vulnerable to cold

Tsubasa Ahkito: quirk: Prehensile Hair; user can grasp things with their hair and said hair is tougher than normal hair but feels the same. Very vulnerable to fire.

Yukino Ike: quirk: Blade Arms; this user's arms can become sharp blades of varying sizes, and can also limit this transformation to the user's fingers. These knives/blades are projectile, but fingers take 3 minutes to regenerate, while arms takes 15 minutes to fully regenerate. The projecting of an arm severely affects performance/stamina.

Akabane Masaki: quirk: Mirage; the user can create elaborate illusions that sometimes induce madness upon the victim due to it usually reflecting their fears because it interferes directly with the mind. Note: this works best on one person, and this user cannot see his own illusions. The more people it's used on, the thinner and less believable the illusion becomes.

Shino Nagasaki: quirk: Durability; the can absorb impact/pressure/force and has more built muscles due to the smaller chance of damaging them. This quirk is a mutation and cannot be 'turned off', does come with a high pain tolerance.

Hinazuki Amaya: quirk: Ghosting; this user is able to become a ghost. Possession of a person is achievable but only for 68 seconds. Is able to pass through objects and is (somewhat) intangible. Time limit on this quirk is currently at 41 hours.

Samuel Rule: quirk: Speed; the user is incredibly fast. Note: This specific user has trouble with stopping or slowing down from high speeds.

Yvette Summers: quirk: Groot; (since her quirk was new, she got to name it and she's a big fan of the Guardians of the Galaxy movies) the user has the ability of a "tree" like limb regeneration (she can "grow" it back, but no vital organs), tree branches, and being able to control trees. In addition to that, this user may also turn into a tree.

Yoshida (Ikki) Riku: quirk: Size; user may shrink or grow at will. Note: Growing rapidly will induce lightheadedness and possibly fainting and is usually accompanied with a bit of pain (Like a feeling of stretching too far. He can get to the size (height wise) of a bear.)

Tanaka Aoi: quirk: Linguist; user can speak any language as long as the user knows of it

Ito Miyuki: quirk: Photographic Memory; this user can take a 'picture' with their eyes. It is 'saved' and once the user places their hand on paper, the picture will reappear as a photograph. (Accuracy and quality of the photo is based on eyesight and memory). Her irises look like the shutter of a camera when quirk is in use.
Minami Daisuke: quirk: Techno Wizard; can hack and bypass any security system, and use any technology. Note: He didn’t get into the Hero Course because he missed the exam date. YEP.

Shimizu Hiroki: quirk: High IQ; user is highly intelligent. A favourite of Nedzu. This quirk is always on. Note: a side effect of this quirk is headaches.

Tomino Hideki: quirk: Notice-Me-Not; he can seem invisible/blend into the background.

Fun fact #18b- The first four characters used to be OCs with their own stories, but the stories never really came together. Namura Kiriko used to be Tanaka Mirai, an older student of Aizawa who was a mole in the LoV. Akino Miriam is the first draft name of another OC, Akatani Fumiko, and is Irish-Japanese.

https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg
If you have a song suggestion, lemme know!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg
If you have a song suggestion, lemme know!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
https://astryelle.tumblr.com/
Chapter 29: They're pious here

Chapter Summary

The rest of Cerberus-Sweep find out about Izuku's incident and they get angry. They're not the only ones out for blood.

Chapter Notes

Sorry this is late! It's a little shorter than usual, but I hope it's okay!
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

They find out that Izuku’s in the infirmary through a frantic call from Uraraka-Shiori’s roommate. The ensuing mad dash across UA’s campus leaves in their wake a mass of angry teachers and students.

Like they give a damn.

Hitoshi gets there last, just after Mei and Shiori. Uraraka and some blue-haired kid are already there, occupying the waiting room with obvious anxiety.

Please don’t let it be that bad.

Shiori zeroes in on Uraraka. “What happened.” It’s less of a question and more of a demand.

“It was during the battle trials,” she begins shakily. “Bakugou-” Uraraka explains what happened during one of the Hero Course classes that was supposed to go well.

“I’m going to kill him,” Shiori says, and Hitoshi knows she’s not joking. “I swear to fucking God, I’m-”

“This is not appropriate language!” Blue-haired boy cuts in. “Even if-”

“You’re not defending him,” Mei interrupts, glaring. “Are you?”

Normally within the friend group, Shiori’s the one who mediates conflicts, but since that’s obviously not the case right now, so it’s up to Hitoshi to stop this.

Or something. “Hey, this isn’t helping,” Hitoshi snaps abruptly enough to catch everyone’s attention. “Has anyone heard anything about Izuku yet?”

The room grows silent.

That’s...not a good sign.

Everyone settles down, sitting back in the waiting room’s chairs. A few minutes pass (it feels like
hours) before Recovery Girl emerges. The elderly woman sweeps her gaze over the room of worried friends and sighs. “You’re all here for Midoriya, I assume?” They nod. “Well, he’s relatively okay right now. I’m going to call his mother and inform her of the situation.” “Can we see him?” Mei asks.

Recovery Girl pauses. “Not now,” she says slowly. “He’s sleeping now. But I’m sure you’ll be able to see him tomorrow.”

It’s not long before they’re shooed from the infirmary waiting room. “He’s...gonna be okay, right?” Mei asks after a pause. “I mean, he’s probably had worse?”

Hitoshi doesn’t answer. “You guys keep going,” Shiori says, spinning around.

He raises an eyebrow. “Where are you going?”

“To go piss someone off for breaking in.”

The girl doesn’t clarify as she swiftly walks back to UA.

Izuku awakens to the sound of someone prying his window open. He starts, ready to fight, when he realizes it is his oldest friend sneaking into the infirmary while Recovery Girl is talking to someone on the phone in the other room.

Shiori slips in the half open window, falling soundlessly against the floor like a ninja. They meet eyes and he smiles. “Seriously?” He chuckles before coughing.

Shiori frowns. “I’m gonna-”

“-Don’t kill him,” Izuku interrupts. “There would be murder charges.”

“But if I move into the Hero Course and kill him while he’s trying this sort of bullshit again, it’s legal-defense of a third party.”

Izuku stares at his friend, who goes into detail about how to kill Kacchan and get away with it.

There’s a pause before the pair begin laughing. Recovery Girl opens the door suddenly, frowning at the sight of another person in the infirmary. “How did you get in here?” She asked, pointing her cane at Shiori.

“Window.”

The older woman stares at her in disbelief while Izuku cackles (at the cost of his poor ribs). “The window,” she repeats.

“Yup,” Shiori replies, popping the ‘p’.

“Okay...I’ll get to you later. Midoriya. Your mother is on her way.”

Shiori pales. “I’m gonna go now.”

“Why?” She raises an eyebrow.
“Because you have no fucking idea what a pissed Inko can do.” With that, Shiori slides back out the window.

Recovery Girl hurries over to the window, because they’re on the fourth floor and it’s basically a twenty-eight foot drop.

Shiori lands with a gush of wind beneath her feet and picks up the backpack she left in the grass. “Good luck!” She calls, waving as she leaves.

“I have strange friends,” Midoriya says like it’s an explanation for this behaviour.

Understatement, but she’ll deal with it later.

Her phone rings. “Yes?”

“Ah, Chiyo-kun,” Nezu’s cheery but strained voice answers. “Midoriya Inko is here. Is Midoriya-kun well enough to come to my office?”

“...yes. I’ll bring him as soon as I can.”

“Wonderful.” Nezu clears his throat. “Uh, if you encounter All Might and Aizawa-kun on your way here, would you mind bringing them as well?”

An odd request, but that can be done.

“Yes, I suppose I can.”

“Thank you.”

Thirty minutes later, everyone required is in the office. Izuku sits, unafraid, next to his steaming mother. “So, I understand correctly, children were thrown into a very real battle trial without any instruction or experience on their second day of school.”

Nezu coughs, scratching his neck. “Ah, yes, that does seem to be what we’re dealing with.”

“And Katsuki was allowed to do this much damage after the match ended? With no formal training of his quirk, he could’ve brought the building down on them.” Inko whirls around sharply. “And you—do you have any experience training?”

The Number One hero wilts in fear. “I—”

“Why was he left alone to teach my son and his class?” Inko demands, looking to her son’s mentor.

Aizawa-sensei doesn’t look happy, but his apologetic expression is genuine. “It was an oversight, Midoriya-san,” he says, bowing. “I am truly sorry and accept full responsibi—”

“Don’t. It’s not your fault. Entirely.” Inko glares at All Might. “It’s yours. If something like this ever happens to my son again because of your foolishness, I will not hesitate to take my son out of this school and contact a lawyer.”

Nezu frowns, but nods. “And you would be warranted to do so. You were also called here to discuss legal action against Bakugou Katsuki—”

“For using weapons you gave him and authorized him to use?” She cuts in before Izuku or Nezu can. “Absolutely not. I would like him to attend anger management classes, though. He clearly needs them.”
Nezu nods. “That can be arranged. If you give us a few months-”

“You have two weeks,” Inko announces with finality. She stands, motioning for Izuku to follow her. “Thank you for meeting me. Izuku, honey, let’s go.”

The door closes behind the Midoriyas and Yagi deflates, slumping forward in his seat.

Nezu sighs and leans back in his chair, thoughtfully mulling over their conversation. “Well, that was…” Yagi clears his throat. “…informative.”

“Midoriya Inko has every right to be angry,” Aizawa snaps. “Bakugou could’ve brought the building down on them all. You’re lucky Midoriya wasn’t seriously hurt-”

“Now, now.” Nezu waves his paw. “Fighting won’t do us any good. We should discuss how to handle Bakugou. Despite the Midoriyas’ decision to not take legal action, if this would happen again, other families may not be so forgiving. I believe expulsion is still on the table for quirk assault outside of Hero training.”

“Young Bakugou has great potential to be a hero-” Yagi begins protestingly.

“He could’ve killed his classmates,” Aizawa cuts in.

“It was an accident-”

“You and I have both watched the tapes. You know it isn’t-”

“He has a wonderful quirk and the drive to become a hero-”

“But certainly not the personality or character. He doesn’t care about others-”

“He can learn…”

“Basic human decency isn’t something you learn…”

“Alright, enough.” Nezu’s voice is final. “As I said, fighting won’t do us any good. I will remove the both of you from this decision if you cannot get along.”

Like children, both adults turn away from each other. Aizawa glares at the wall while Yagi sheepishly looks to the floor.

Very mature indeed.

“Now,” Nezu continues. “Seeing as Bakugou-kun’s record was previously spotless, I think we can pass on expelling him. For now.”

“What do you suggest?” Aizawa asks.

“Well, of course, anger management. Then heavy quirk counseling and probation until the counselor suggests it stop. That and I would like to keep quirk suppressing handcuffs on hand, in case of an outburst.”

“That…seems a bit extreme.”
Aizawa rolls his eyes. “What do you suggest, All Might?” He questions, tone harsh.

“Uh….I am not sure, but there must be a better way to handle this. It is his first offense—”

“I highly doubt that,” Nezu interrupts, typing away on his computer. “According to these deleted complaints on his file, Bakugou has quite an extensive record of bullying.”

“Did you just hack into his old junior high?” Aizawa leans forward.

“Maybe. It seems his teachers cleared his record often.”

The blonde hero raises an eyebrow. “They can do that?”

He shakes his head, frowning at the screen. “Not legally, no.” He pauses on a specific complaint, paling. “Oh dear.”

“What?”

“Well, I recommend we move that meeting with Bakugou’s parents up. There are important matters to discuss.”

Chapter End Notes

No fun fact this week! Sorry! I'm really busy trying to work out my new schedule.
https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgtj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_lgg
If you have a song suggestion, lemme know!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
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If you have a song suggestion, lemme know!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
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Chapter 30: Talk

Chapter Summary

Nezu and the Bakugous have a talk.
Ochako has a crisis.
These events are related.

Chapter Notes

Me, happy to finally get to canon so I don't have to make up pre-canon stuff: :)
Me, when I realize that all the plans for canon are much later: :( 

A little shorter than normal. I've got a doctor's appointment tomorrow and am going to have to catch up on a lot of tests, so....
Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Thank you for meeting us.” Nezu nods toward the elder Bakugous sitting on either side of their son.
“We have some very serious matters to discuss.” He taps a key on his computer and the final moments of the battle trial play out.

Both parents sit quietly, watching as Katsuki’s explosions send Izuku through the outer wall of the building. The footage cuts out as Izuku splashes down into the fake river below. “It was because of Uraraka-kun and Iida-kun’s quick thinking that he did not drown.”

“Is...is Izuku okay?” Bakugou Masaru asks.

“He will be,” Nezu replies nodding. “Of course, his mother was called in about taking legal action—”

“But—” Bakugou Mitsuki begins, ready to argue.

“-However, she declined to do so.”

The relief in the room is palpable, but they’re not through yet. “-but we do have some concerns about Bakugou-kun’s anger issues and unlicensed quirk usage.”

The youngest Bakugou is on his feet in an instant. “I don’t have anger issues!”

“Sit down!” His mother snaps, pushing him back into his seat.

“Don’t fuckin’ tell me what to do!”

Nezu patiently waits until the family stops arguing before clearing his throat. “Bakugou-kun, you’re a bright young man. I’m sure you realize how serious this is. You could easily be expelled from UA just because of your actions this afternoon.” He pauses a moment to let the boy squirm under his gaze. To his credit, Bakugou Katsuki looks nervous, though he tries to hide it. “But since he left, I
have received several calls and emails from Midoriya insisting that we not expel you, so we have chosen not to—but there must be consequences.”

“Of course, of course.” Bakugou Mitsuki nods fervently, nudging her son.

“Thank you for giving me a second chance,” the boy reluctantly mutters.

Nezu nods, drawing himself up. “Bakugou Katsuki, you will be suspended for the remainder of the week and put on probation for two months. You are not to approach Midoriya Izuku unless he approaches you. If there is a repeat of this incident with Midoriya, or any other student for that matter, you will immediately be expelled and are liable for criminal prosecution. You will also be required to take anger management classes and talk to a therapist that UA will provide. Am I clear?”

He only nods. “Yes sir.”

“Right then. That’s all for now. Thank you for coming in.” Nezu waves the family off and they quickly take their leave.

Sighing, he leans back in his chair.

Humans are so complicated.

Bishop stares in disbelief over the table at Midoriya Inko. “You…threatened UA, one of the most powerful places in Japan,” he says, incredulous.

“Oh-!” She waves a hand at him. “Don’t make it sound so ominous! I just said I would be taking legal action if anything ever happens again.”

“….You’re one scary lady,” he mutters, leaning back, a hand running over his buzzed head.

“What was that?” She raised an eyebrow.

“Nothing.”

“So, have you seen Akaguro-chan recently?” Bishop sighs and shakes his head. “Said somethin’ about havin’ to distance himself from the kids; doesn’t want to ruin their chances at becomin’ heroes.”

She nods. “He’s a good man.”

“Good is subjective. Most people wouldn’t find a serial killer ‘good’.”

“Perhaps so. But he’s handled our kids so well!”

Bishop spits his coffee out. “They aren’t ‘ours’! They have never been ‘ours’. I don’t have kids.”

“Mm.” Bobbing her head, a knowing smile curving her lips. “I’m sure.”

He scowls into his up. “I don’t.”

“I know.”

“I don’t!”
“I’m not disagreeing with you.”

Of course. Of course the one time Shiori can actually manage to fall asleep as a decent time something wakes her up.

The red digits of the alarm clock on the floor assault her eyes.

‘4:36 am’

Okay. That’s not as bad as she thought it was. She’d be getting up in, like, two hours either way. Shiori hops out of bed and plants her bare feet against the ice cold floor. “Ochako, did you-“ The bed opposite hers is empty, the blankets carelessly cast aside and the stuffed animals (Shiori does not judge, so you will not either-) have been shoved off the bed.

It’s odd, because Ochako is a really heavy sleeper (impossible to wake up) and once she’s out, she’s out for the night.

Quietly pushing the bedroom door open, Shiori creeps a few feet toward the source of the sound. The light from the kitchen spills over the corners and leaves shadows throughout the small apartment.

Ochako mutters to herself while she hurriedly tries to clean something up.

A sly smile quirks her lips and Shiori claps her hands together.

Ochako jumps five feet in the air, looking absolutely terrified. (Yes, Shiori is a terrible person, and she is unashamed to admit it.)

Shiori laughs while the other girl sputters. “S-shiori! Did I wake you up? S-sorry! I didn’t mean to!”

“God you sound like Izuku.” She shakes her head. “I’m a light sleeper. Everything wakes me up.”

“Oh. Sorry.”

‘s fine.” Glancing at the floor, Shiori notices the tiny glass pieces. “Well shit.”

Ochako sighs. “Yeah. I...uh, was going to make hot chocolate.”

“Ah.” There’s a pause. “If I clean this up, will you make me one?”

Ochako’s eyes fly open. “Y-you don’t have to! I dropped the glass-”

“Yeah. But I want hot chocolate and don’t feel like making it, so lemme clean it up.”

After some protests, Shiori digs the broom and pan out of the closet. While Ochako fills two mugs with the drink, Shiori clears the glass from the floor. “I think I got it all.”

She shoots her a tired smile as the mugs are set on the counter. “We’ll find out if one of us steps on anything.”

“Great.” Shiori chugs her hot chocolate. Once she’s polished it off, her attention turns to her roommate seated beside her. Ochako’s still holding onto that trying-to-be-happy-but-I’m-miserable smile, hunched over her cup with her shoulders drawn in and a weary look on her face.
“...something wrong?”

“Wha-? No! I’m...fine. Just really tired. Couldn’t sleep. You know.” Ochako rubs the heel of her hand into her and yawns. “Just need to go to bed earlier or something.”

“...you went to bed at, like, six.”

“Maybe I should try earlier.”

Shiori pauses before sighing. “So, do you want to talk about what’s keeping you up?”

No answer.

“...or we could just watch movies or something. I mean, we have a shitty TV, but it’s a distraction.”

“No, it’s.....just...the training exercise today.” Shiori winces.

“Deku was my teammate! And...I just left him to face Bakugou.” Ochako deflates. “How can I be a hero if I can’t even protect my friend? He could’ve been really hurt!”

“Yeah, but didn’t you and Blocky Squareface pull him from the river?”

“.....Block Squareface-You mean Iida?”

Shiori looks her dead in the eye. “I stand by what I said.”

She rolls her eyes before her expression sombering. Okay, humor is not going to be the way out of this. Screw it. Who doesn’t love deep, emotional 4am talks? “....Deku could’ve died. I heard the explosion and he just...went through the wall.” Ochako shudders. “And...he looked so….I don’t know. He wasn’t scared. I mean, his eyes were wide, and, yeah, he was flailing, but he looked accepting.”

“He knew he wasn’t going to die,” Shiori blurts out before she can help herself. Ochako gives her a strange look, so she backtracks. “Or, that’s what he believed. Listen, you’re going to find this out, but Midoriya Izuku is a reckless bastard. This isn’t even close to the worst he’s had.”

The other girl purses her lips into a thin line. “But still-”

“Look, Ochako. You did what you were supposed to do. Bakugou is an asshole. He’s responsible for his actions and if we’re lucky, will get expelled.”

“But-”

“Of course that’s not happening, because Izuku is the stupidest, most forgiving, idiot piece of sunshine in the world, and he is okay . If UA is worth their salt, they’ll make sure it won’t happen again.”

“But-” This time, Shiori takes note of the tears in Ochako’s eyes. “I was right there-! He told me to leave Bakugou to him! I left him!”

“You didn’t know what was going to happen. Bakugou took things too far. Once again, mega asshole who doesn’t deserve to be at UA . That aside, you couldn’t do anything to prevent it. Bakugou was going after Izuku no matter what. What you did was prevent anything worse from happening. Izuku might’ve...drowned without you. But he didn’t cause you were there. That’s worth something. You saw someone in trouble and you didn’t freeze. You helped him.”
A loud sniffling echoes in the kitchen. Ochako wipes feverishly at her eyes. “Goddammit,” she hisses.

“Oh, so you can curse.”

“Shut the fuck up, Kayano Shiori,” Ochako snaps, wrapping her in a hug.

Shiori stiffens under the other girl’s touch, but softens a minute later and awkwardly pats her on the back. “Yeah. Uh, you’re welcome. For…whatever I’m getting hugged for.”

“You’re a good friend.”

“….thank you?”

“I guess I….” Ochako pulls away, still sniffling and rubbing at her red rimmed eyes. “…I just need to be better! Plus Ultra!” Her fist pumps into the air as a determined look overtakes her face.

“Yeah, yeah, whatever, Miss Heroics. I’m going back to bed.”

Shiori starts toward the bedroom when Ochako grabs onto her arm.

She whirls around, light flashing in her eyes until she meets her roommate’s sheepish face. “Uh…you…I know it’s early, but you mentioned something about…..movies?”

There’s a moment that Shiori takes to recompose herself, drawing in a deep breath. “Yeah,” she says. “Movies. Sure. No using me as a pillow.”

“I promise!”

(But let the record show that Uraraka Ochako broke that promise.)

Chapter End Notes

Shiori really doesn’t like Bakugou, can you tell?
Also, I was getting back into Spider-Man Homecoming in preparation for Far From Home (whenever it comes on DVD so I can see it) and I was thinking about who in our vigilante gang would be who. This is what I got:
Ned Leeds- Hatsume Mei (Both have an affinity for science, specifically engineering and technology. Also, the nerdy, manic energy fits.)
Peter Parker- Midoriya Izuku (Hero complex, no self-preservation whatsoever, bites off more than they can chew.)
Michelle Jones- Kayano Shiori (the attitude, I say nothing more.)
Happy Hogan- Shinsou Hitoshi (Honestly, Shinsou's my second choice for MJ, but Shiori just fits better. These two are both completely done with Peter/Izuku and, of the 'group' knew him last.)
Tony Stark- Bishop (Tired dad meet rich dad and both bond over how much the world and fathers fucking suck)
Captain America- All Might (I know he's not in here but still-)
I have no clue who Aizawa would be. What do you guys think?

Edit: Happy 6 month anniversary!!!! Time flies!!!

https://open.spotify.com/user/1afkcbgctj9551qvezklbzyqy/playlist/2xWe1pnjKyEm395Bnli138?si=cZ6FjgerRv22xxbW_Q_Lgg
If you have a song suggestion, lemme know!
If you liked the chapter, leave a comment below and have a great week!
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