Broken birds of a feather flock together

by afincf_tirwer

Summary

Deceit misses being part of a family. Logan is a wreck. Roman doesn't think they care. Virgil cannot believe what he's hearing. Patton is trying to stop his family from falling apart.

Notes

I will add more tags as I figure out the direction of the story. I may have ships, I may not.
Chapter One

Chapter Notes

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“You were wrong you know.” Deceit stiffened, he could picture Logan in his mind’s eye, arms folded, slight furrow between his brow and challenging look in his eyes. He turned from his heating rock and looked the other side in the eyes, drawing his hands together and grinning.

“Logan, what a wonderful surprise, I didn’t expect you to visit me after what happened last time.” Logan simply raised an eyebrow and Deceit subsided, leaning back against the wall with his hands up in mock surrender. “You got me Logic I’ll behave, no need to get so worked up.”

“You know what you did by leaving me out of the equation.” Deceit widened his eyes in faux shock, preening internally as Logan took a step closer, moving further into his room, under his spell.

“Why, I’m surprised Logan. You think your presence could have changed everything? I wouldn’t expect such arrogance from logic of all things!”

“Falsehood, you are well aware that my often superior mental capacities have led to my ego growing too large at times. Additionally, you are aware that in some ways your intellect rivals my own, yet you enjoy playing games with us, perhaps in an attempt to drive a wedge between us?” Logan watched as a brief glimpse of anger skittered across Deceit’s face and he catalogued it mentally, resolving to examine it further later.

“You think that Thomas continually putting others before his own happiness is for the best?”

“Of course not. You are well-aware that I have no particular reason to side with the others outside of some misguided sense of loyalty. You were aware of this as you ‘benched’, Deceit smirked at the finger quotes Logan made, “me, so to speak. Your goal, like ours, is to protect Thomas and ensure his wellbeing and success before all others, so the question I have formed is thus: why, if your goals and hopes are so closely-aligned with our own, do you choose to act, in many ways, against us?”

Deceit smiled, spreading his arms out wide even as he sought a way out of the conversation. “You,
the boy genius himself, don’t have an answer to your question? Call Thomas and tell him I love him, I do believe the world is coming to an end!” Deceit gasped out, draping an arm over his head and chest, a move similar to Roman’s mannerisms, another fact Logan filed away for further analysis.

“Please do not treat me in such a ridiculous fashion. You are not a child and you are obviously aware that I am not in possession of all the facts at all times. Furthermore-“ before Logan could finish his sentence he heard Patton calling his name and he was suddenly pulled into the dining room as Patton began to serve him pasta.

“Thought you could skip out on good ol’ family togetherness did you Logan?” Patton grinned, bright and sunny and Logan’s thoughts were drawn to Deceit and the heat rock he kept in his room. Perhaps Patton’s habit of literally exuding heat may assist in keeping Deceit warm. He was so caught up in his plans that the entire dinner passed in a blur before Logan found himself outside Deceit’s room once more.

“May I come in?” Deceit stretched from where he was basking in his heated rock and allowed the door to creak open, revealing Logan on the other side. Deceit’s heart twisted slightly when he smelt the rich scent of Patton’s cooking, clinging to the other side.

“Whatever can I do for you Logan? Perhaps you wish to study me? I do have some fascinating-“ here Deceit flicked out his tongue to create a hissing noise “-features that I’m sure the boy wonder could appreciate.”

“Actually. I was wondering if I could stay here for a while.” Logan watched, with a great deal of satisfaction when Deceit’s head snapped up and he seemed surprised, as if he’d expected any answer but this one.

“You are in possession of your own room, aren’t you?”

“Yes that is true. However, as you know, I am constantly telling Thomas to separate his work and play areas. If I do not do the same, I fear for my own work ethic. Not only that, but my leisure time is typically filled with recreational reading and while I have learnt to enjoy the other’s company, neither Patton nor Roman are good reading partners.”

“What about dear Virgil? I don’t believe that he of all people would be too loud.”

“You wouldn’t expect it but I find that Virgil often enjoys listening to his music loudly and this is
one of those times. If my presence bothers you, I would like for you to tell me and I will ‘chill out’ somewhere else.”

Deceit rolled the idea around in his head for a while, leaving Logan in his doorway, holding his books under his arms. He glanced over at the other side, studying Logan closely for any signs of manipulation. Eventually he rolled over and his eyes slid shut, even as he gestured for Logan to find a seat. He basked in the heat of his rock, wishing the warmth would be absorbed more deeply into his skin.

While anyone watching Logan would believe him to be totally immersed in his book, Logan was, in reality, studying Deceit closely, examining the other side in order to reveal more about him. He noticed Deceit pull a blanket closer around his shoulders and shiver slightly, despite him being directly under a heat lamp. Logan frowned, as far as he was aware, Thomas’ sides did not tend to get cold, it was impossible to feel cold when you did not exist in a physical sense. So that made Deceit’s actions even more intriguing. Logan was aware of his weaknesses and he knew that his pursuit of knowledge was one of his main weaknesses yet, to his frustration, despite identifying the flaw, he was unable to resolve it. He shook any thoughts of Deceit out of his mind as he returned to his book, quickly becoming absorbed in the gain of knowledge that was easily attainable.

After a few hours Deceit stretched and rose from his rock, cursing internally as he realised he still felt cold, as if the rock had done nothing. It had become harder and harder to stay warm. He smiled at Logan, hiding his thoughts behind his expected persona. “As fun as this has been, I’m afraid I have my own secret plots to work on now, and you can’t be here to blab all my little secrets around.” Logan stood, gathering his belongings but before he left he paused.

“You have a standing invitation to my own room.” Deceit stared openly at Logan, and he saw naked vulnerability painted over his face.

“You would share your space with me?”

“Of course. It is only fair, if you allow me access to your room it would be unfair for me to deny you the same courtesy.” When Deceit didn’t answer Logan allowed himself a brief smile. “I realise our definitions of ‘fairness’ tend to differ, however if you were to visit my room, you would be welcome to discuss it with me. On top of that, do not believe I have forgotten how you dodged my question earlier, at some point I would like to return to that.”

Before Deceit could answer Logan had already left his room, and he lay back down on his rock, lost in his own thoughts, confused. Logan was the last person who should be extending him a hand. Logan was the bane of Deceit’s existence, offering his clear and rationalised views that contradicted Deceit’s own lessons. Not only that but Logan was a literal personification of logic but what he had just offered seemed remarkably similar to frie- Deceit pulled away from the thought quickly,
unwilling to get his hopes up. Logan was out to get something from him and Deceit was determined to find out what.
Chapter Two

Chapter Summary

Logan realises that something more is going on with Roman than you would see at first, Roman hopes for and thinks he's lost a new dream and Deceit sees an opportunity and stifles his heart.

Chapter Notes

I am having a grand time here! If you spot any typos please tell me, thank and enjoy!

“What are you doing?” Virgil came swanning into Logan’s room without knocking but Logan was used to having his room invaded by the others regularly and didn’t even look up from his desk. Virgil crept closer and saw Logan’s desk was covered in notes on poetry and how it could be adapted to spoken dialogue.

“I’m studying the topic for Thomas’ next video, Roman seems to believe that the entirety of the dialogue should be written in iambic pentameter and for now he will not be swayed, hence my research.”

“Why are you even indulging him, you know this is another one of his creative whims he will abandon when he thinks of the next ‘greatest idea ever’.” Virgil’s tone was dismissive and Logan realised, with no small amount of guilt, that he often sounded the same way when he spoke to the others. He made a mental note to add that to his ever-growing list of flaws.

“While it is true that Roman tends to become distracted easily and that this idea is not logically sound, I am aware that while we may not implement this in every part of the video, it is still worth considering.”

“Whatever you say Logic. Patton wanted me to tell you that we’re having ‘family movie night’ if you want to join us.” Virgil glanced over at Logan and was surprised to see conflict on the other side’s face.

“I’m afraid I have a prior engagement tonight, perhaps another night.” Virgil raised one eyebrow but at Logan’s head shake he shrugged and went downstairs to tell Patton.
“Gosh darn it all, that’s what Roman told me! Well I guess it’s just you and me kiddo, what are we watching tonight?” Virgil was still wondering what could be holding up both Roman and Logan at the same time. He wondered about ducking out of the movie night as well but Patton was looking so hopeful and had seemed so disappointed when he was told that the other two couldn’t make it that Virgil settled onto the sofa and curled up as Patton stuck on a Disney movie.

Meanwhile Roman slipped into Logan’s room quietly, hoping that no-one had seen him, his eyes rimmed slightly red but he plastered a bright smile on his face when Logan glanced up from his book. The look of open affection on the other side’s face made something in Roman’s chest clench tightly and he knew what that feeling was. He knew what it meant and something inside him broke when he realised that he had a new dream, one that would never come to fruition.

“Roman?” Logan rose from his sofa and took Roman’s hand in his own, guiding him to sit down. “Are you feeling alright?” Roman snapped out of his thoughts and shook his head slightly, knowing that it was not the time to reflect upon his own issues.

“I’m peachy keen my logical bean,” before Logan could speak again, likely to dispute the flimsy nature of his excuse Roman continued to speak, “where did we get up to last time?” Logan’s eyes narrowed behind his glasses but at Roman’s pleading look made him hesitate and he picked up the book instead, turning to the bookmarked page.

“It is odd how, when you have a secret belief of your own which you do not wish to acknowledge, the voicing of it by someone else will rouse you to a fury of denial.” Roman curled up, unknowingly mirroring Virgil as he listened to Logan read his book aloud as he followed along on the page. Eventually his eyes grew heavy and his eyes slipped shut, falling asleep to the soothing hum of Logan’s voice.

Logan startled slightly when he felt Roman’s head slump onto his shoulder and he glanced down and noticed with surprise and alarm that Roman’s eyes had dark shadows beneath them. He began to study the other side more closely and noticed the stains of ink on Roman’s hands and one high up on his neck. Logan’s mind began to whirr as he recalled that Roman was the most meticulous in his physical appearance than any other side, always ensuring he presented his best face to the world. If he was neglecting his physical appearance then what about his mental state? Logan carefully reached an arm out to the side to retrieve a blanket and pillows as he made Roman as comfortable as possible while he moved to his work desk.

He pulled down a red and gold notebook and began to write, the soft scratch of pen on paper filling the room and Logan became completely absorbed in his task, not noticing as the hours ticked by. He was startled out of his thoughts by Roman being to fidget in his sleep and he turned away from his writing in concern as Roman’s wriggling soon turned into thrashing. He moved from his desk immediately mind racing as he began to run through the ways to wake someone from a nightmare with the least amount of distress possible. He knew that Virgil would likely simply yell for the person...
to wake up but he feared the effect of loud, sudden noises on Roman’s psyche. Patton would likely gather the person up into a hug but Logan knew that constricting the other side’s ability to express himself, either creatively or physically often led to injuries and then crippling guilt. Logan was unable to decide what would be the most logical and effective way to wake Roman up without causing harm to either himself or Roman and he stood there, deliberating even as Roman thrashed.

All of a sudden Roman let out a truly distressing whine, long, high and loud, a noise that Logan would never have conceived Roman to even have the capability of making and this was the catalyst for Logan to react. He reached out, lightning fast and grasped Roman’s wrists firmly, forcing him to lie still before leaning in to speak directly in Roman’s ear.

“This is a fabrication of your mind, you are aware, at least subconsciously that it is merely a figment of your imagination. I need you to wake up Roman. Wake up!”

Roman startled out of his sleep violently, hands being yanked out of Logan’s grip as he shot up straight, eyes wide and panicked. His gaze landed on Logan and he pulled the other side into him, gripping his arms tightly enough to bruise. Logan opened his mouth to protest but the desperation in Roman’s face caused him to pause and he only reacted when Roman roughly untucked his polo in order to shove a hand up his shirt. He felt the other side’s hand on his chest and he realised what Roman was seeking, his heartbeat, proof he was still alive.

“Here.” Logan moved Roman’s hand from his chest carefully, guiding it up to press two of his fingers against his throat, “you can feel it more strongly.” Logan watched as the panic began to fade from Roman’s eyes and his breath began to even out. “Would you like to join Patton and Virgil in their movie night?” At Roman’s nod the two walked down and Roman visibly relaxed once he was in Patton’s presence, being fussed over and a mug of hot chocolate being shoved in his hands, and another Disney film being put on. Logan watched carefully and the tension seemed to seep out of Roman’s shoulders and he turned to leave when he saw that Roman was being cared for.

“Where are you going mister?” Logan paused when he heard Patton’s voice and his head tilted to the side as he answered.

“I thought I would return to my own room. Roman does not appear to need my assistance any longer and I have a few things of my own to attend to-” Logan was cut off as Virgil grabbed his arm and yanked him down abruptly.

“If you go now Patton’ll whine that you missed out on family bonding. Just stay and enjoy the movie.” Logan twitched as he thought about the work he had yet to finish, the experiments he was still conducting and the tasks he had set himself. Then he looked at the hopeful faces glancing at him, Patton’s bright sunniness that would dim if he walked away, Virgil’s fear that he’d done something to drive Logan away and Roman’s vulnerability, so rarely seen and he released a breath.
“Very well. I suppose this activity could be seen as assisting with one’s mental health.”

“You’re darn tooting! Here!” Patton pressed a warm mug in his hands and Logan settled into his seat, consciously relaxing his shoulders to convey the illusion of contentedness even as he worried about his tasks. He was aware that there was no physical object making a sound but he could hear the steady tick, tick, tick within his chest. I will work late tonight, he promised himself, pretending to focus on the film to avoid concern from the others. I will not fall behind. I cannot.

Deceit’s mind was whirring a mile a minute as he pondered what he had just witnessed and how it could be used to further his own agenda and how it could help him in discovering what Logan was up to. He’d been on his way to speak with Logan when he’d heard Roman’s nightmare and he’d moved closer to the shadows as Logan guided the shaken prince downstairs for family bonding. Deceit sneered at the thought, pulling away from the tiny voice that wondered if it would be so bad. He shook himself roughly, slinking back to his room, trying to ignore the niggling voice at the back of his head, Virgil did it. Why can’t I?
Chapter Three

Chapter Notes

Deceit you actual butt, quit it.

Still having a grand old time, hope y’all enjoy!

Logan sat at his desk with only the weak light of his lamp to illuminate his work. Patton was well-aware of the other sides’ habits to overwork themselves and had recently imposed ‘sleep hours’ on them all. Logan attempted to protest, arguing that none of them were actually required to sleep Patton simply tapped him on the nose with a wooden spoon and his soft brown eyes were so hopeful that Logan couldn’t bring himself to argue any further. However, his giving in meant that if one of the others spotted his light on he would earn himself a lecture and more big sad Patton eyes. He paused for a moment, rubbing at his eyes and taking a drink of water to try and ease the aching in his head. He heard a soft knock at the door and he made an acknowledging noise so the door creaked open to reveal Deceit on the other side.

“You don’t look like you’re having the best time here.” Deceit watched as Logan brushed a few of his notebooks into a drawer before locking it. He noted it down internally, thinking he would return to the idea later.

“I am merely attempting to catch up on my work schedule, there were some uncontrollable obstacles that hindered my work day, meaning this is the only time that I may catch up.”

“So you find your family to hinder you? You think that if you had skipped out on your family movie night you would have completed the tasks you set out for yourself?” Logan scowled as he watched Deceit lounge on his sofa, making himself comfortable even as he began to weave his lies.

“You know full well I did not say that. Though I have offered you use of my room, I would ask that you not disrespect my offer by implying things you know full well not to be true.” Deceit merely smirked in response, the smile caused something in Logan’s stomach to twist and his brow furrowed. “You are pleased by something? Do you think what I said is incorrect? You are the one who deals in half-truths and naked lies.”

“And you wouldn’t know anything about that would you Logan? You have nothing to hide from any of the others do you? As you said, I deal in lies, I breathe them in, absorb them into my skin,” Deceit’s tone turned into a childlike sing song, mocking Logan outright, “I know what you’re hiding.”
Before Logan could react Deceit grabbed his wrist and pulled him closer so they were nearly touching. His eyes were sharp and focused as he rolled up the sleeves on Logan’s jumper, eyes dancing in delight as Logan struggled to get away, to hide from the truth.

“My my Logan, trying to escape the truth? Whatever would dear old Patton think?” He pulled the sleeve up fully and grinned, dark bruises painted the pale skin on Logan’s arms, bruises that were strikingly similar to handprints and from the commotion he had heard the earlier, he knew exactly who had caused the bruises. Logan had stopped struggling, head bowed in defeat and Deceit leaned in for the kill. “You, the boy genius himself, knows exactly how long it takes for bruises to form—”

“Contradicting popular belief bruises can take over 24 hours to form, though the extensive purple colour can occasionally form in a few hours.”

“-knew you could get through that movie night without anyone noticing. Nobody would notice if the most diligent side chose to retire early, nobody would even think to question it. You’re protecting him. Why?”

“You know why. You are fully aware that people cannot be held accountable for their actions while in a subconscious state and you are knowingly attempting to upset me. Why?” Deceit pulled away and Logan noticed the anger on his face as he stormed out of the room and to his surprise, crashed directly into Roman. He wondered if this was fate as Roman recovered his bearing and burst into action, limbs tensing in preparation for a fight.

“What were you doing in Logan’s room?” The tone was sharp and challenging and Deceit smiled, a nasty, sneaky, manipulative smile as he blinked innocently up at Roman.

“Why, I was simply talking to him. We were having a lovely conversation if you must know.” He feigned nonchalance as he examined his gloves, peering at Roman and taking delight in his confusion. “You should ask him about his secrets.”

“Logan doesn’t conceal things from us! If you weren’t aware, Logan trusts us, we’re family.” Roman didn’t notice how Deceit’s nonchalant demeanor faltered for a moment before he recovered himself.

“Oh Roman,” the faux sympathetic tone set his teeth on edge as Deceit prowled closer, “have you retained nothing I tried to teach you?” Roman tried to recoil but Deceit gripped the back of his neck and leaned in to whisper in his ear, “takes a liar, to know a liar.”
Roman shook him off, his face a mask of fury as he barged into Logan’s room, not bothering to knock, caught up in his anger and Deceit slipped in after him, content to watch the show. “Logan, Deceit seems to think you are hiding something—” Roman’s voice cut off abruptly as he spotted the dark purple bruises that littered Logan’s pale arms. His eyes flicked up to meet dark blue and he saw the truth in them, remembered what he had done in his panic, remembered how he’d, what he’d-

The noise that escaped his throat was broken and raw and he turned away, unable to meet Logan’s eyes, unable to stay for a moment longer. He raced out the door even as Logan’s voice called out for him to stop, for him to wait. He could hear footsteps chasing him and he whipped into his room, catching a glimpse of Logan, reaching out a hand, trying to explain, even as Roman’s door slammed shut and vanished.

Logan stopped in shock, staring at the place where Roman’s door had once been, unable to process what had just happened. He didn’t move, standing in silence as he began to run through the events, attempting to make sense of it all. Roman had come in suddenly and spotted the bruises, he had seen something in Logan’s eyes that confirmed his fears and ran. But why had Roman burst in, no one had come into Logan’s room suddenly since Patton had caused him to drop one of his test tubes, ruining an experiment and causing a noxious cloud that had lingered for weeks. So why had Roman- Logan’s blood ran cold and he walked back to his room, short measured steps and he saw Deceit slipping away and his temper rose to the surface rapidly. Deceit had never seen Logan’s face turn that red before and he took several steps back as Logan advanced.

“You knew exactly why I kept those bruises from Roman—”

“You knew why? The bruises are to protect from scratches, no? It’s not a logical decision after all. It was rather deceitful however, you can’t blame Roman for reacting badly.”

“How could I blame Roman for something that is clearly your fault?” Before Deceit could respond Logan turned around, back stiff and rigid as he walked away only glancing back to spit out. “Don’t come back to my room again. Virgil was right, there really is no use reaching out.”

Deceit stood in the hallway for a long time, silent and unable to move. His gaze was focused on Logan’s door, painted white and covered in a glossy coat to “protect it from water damage, however unlikely that may be”. Logan had-, he had- Deceit took a shuddery breath, feeling colder once again, knowing that he couldn’t go back to Logan’s room left something in him feeling empty.

Meanwhile Patton was sitting with Logan at the dining table, serving a large portion of lasagne to Logan, chattering about how he needed to keep his strength up if he wanted to continue learning new things every day. Logan let it wash over him, the words of encouragement as his thoughts...
moved back to Roman and Deceit. The look of horror in Roman’s eyes, the look of hurt in Deceit’s eyes, he couldn’t focus on Patton and the meal. He didn’t see how Patton’s voice shook when he tried to keep the flow of conversation going. He didn’t notice how Patton kept glancing over at Virgil and Roman’s empty seats. His usual focused, meticulous and analytical brain was focused on a single thing, not seeing the pain that flickered across Patton’s face as his next attempt at conversation was brushed off.

“Thank you for the meal Patton, I don’t know what we’d do without you.” Patton tried for a smile, managing to conjure something that resembled a weak version of his normally bright grin but Logan was too preoccupied to notice.

Would they even notice? Patton shook the thought away as quickly as it had come but he couldn’t help it when his mind wandered back to the past two days, how their family activities were becoming more sporadic, how they all seemed to be retreating into themselves again. Is there even a family left that’s worth fighting for? Patton’s hand curled into a tight fist and let a few tears fall, staining his cheeks as he tried to dispel the thoughts that haunted him. If there’s no family left, what use is the heart? Was the final nail in the coffin and Patton abandoned the empty, lifeless kitchen for his empty lifeless room but at least there he could cry in peace.
Roman hadn’t come out of his room for days. Unless Thomas explicitly called for him at least twice, he remained holed up in his room, door no longer visible. Virgil noticed how it was affecting Patton, his normally sunny grin was fading, and he stopped trying to draw the others out of their rooms. He seemed content to sit in the kitchen, by himself, hands wrapped around a warm mug, gaze far away and it was starting to scare Virgil.

Not only was Patton acting strange, Logan had gone completely off the rails himself, his door was permanently locked, a light on at all hours and he barely left his room not even when Virgil stood outside knocking for hours. Deceit was creeping around even more carefully than usual, avoiding Logan at all costs and to make it all worse, Logan was acting like Roman. While it was true that Roman did get on Virgil’s nerves, he didn’t mind the other side’s behaviour, but to have the physical embodiment of logic behaving like Roman on his darkest days...it was concerning and unnerving. So unnerving that Virgil decided to get involved. Even if getting involved made his stomach flip unpleasantly.

He hammered on Logan’s door, loudly and deliberately off-beat, he could picture Logan’s face, trying to focus on his work, turning to look at the door, looking back at his work, muscles twitching and- the door snapped open and Logan loomed in the doorway, face taut with frustration. Virgil congratulated himself internally and grabbed Logan’s wrist before he could protest and dragged him down the stairs. Before they entered the kitchen Virgil motioned for Logan to be quiet and though the other side scowled at him, he subsidised.

“Look.” Virgil murmured, voice impossibly soft as he pointed at Patton who was sitting at the table with a blanket wrapped around his shoulders, mug in his hands and gazing at a fixed point far away. “He’s been like this for five days Logan. Because of you and Roman and you need to—” Before Virgil could finish Logan had walked straight into the kitchen and tapped Patton on the shoulder.
“Logan! You came out of your room, that’s just great, I’ll get cooking, we need to have a celebratory dinner!” Before Patton could move Logan placed his hands on the other side’s shoulders and dark blue met light brown. Patton’s head cocked to the side in confusion and Logan sighed forcefully.

“I must apologise to you,” when Patton tried to speak, likely to protest, say that there was nothing to apologise for, Logan cut him off. “Please let me finish. Virgil made me aware of the fact that my continual absence over the past few days has led to severe distress for you and I should have been more attentive of your needs. With that said, I am deeply sorry for any and all distress I have caused and I will strive to avoid causing unnecessary pain in the future.” Patton’s eyes were shining with tears and he tackled Logan in a tight hug the moment he had finished speaking.

“I forgive you Logan! I know you guys have your own issues to handle and sometimes you just get caught up in other things and forget about my family dinners. I just wish…” Patton trailed off and he sighed before continuing. “I just wish you would come talk to me from time to time. It seems you forget that I’m Thomas’ heart, I want to help you all but I can’t do that if you don’t let me.”

Virgil’s gaze flickered to the floor and a pang of guilt shot through him when he realised how often he brushed off Patton’s concerns but he left the others to talk and he stood where Roman’s door used to be and began to yell.

“Roman! I swear to god if you don’t come out of you room right now I’m going to hunt you down and kill you!” When he got no response he growled and kicked the wall but before he could try again, a silky smooth voice interrupted him.

“Is the wonderful prince not returning your calls? How that must hurt you, whatever shall you do?” Virgil turned and looked at Deceit’s smug face and saw red, shoving the other side against a wall roughly enough that Deceit’s breath was knocked out in a huff. He didn’t stop smiling however, “oh Virgil, did I touch on something uncomfortable?”

“Shut up. I know you have something to do with Logan and Roman’s weird behaviour, what did you do?” His voice lowered to a hiss and Deceit’s eyes narrowed and a scowl set firmly on his face.

“Isn’t that the kind of question friends ask each other Virgil? Last time I checked, we’re not friends because after all, I’m literally known as Deceit. It’s not like that’s a name your friends gave me.”

“It’s not like I forgot your name!”
“Seems like it sometimes Virge. Forgotten my name, forgotten me.”

“Quit it Ethan. Even if I did leave, I never forgot you. You pushed me away, just like you push everyone away!”

“Oh but that isn’t true and you know it! You left me! You went prancing off into the sunlight and gave up on me! Left me! Just like everyone else does!”

“That’s a fucking lie! I came back! You know I did but you sneered at me! Didn’t let me in anymore, wouldn’t talk to me! How is that my fault? You left me behind and-”

“We were supposed to stick together!” Virgil was cut off by Ethan’s scream and he stepped back, eyes wary. Shockingly, Ethan’s eyes seemed to be filled with tears, even as he continued to snarl at Virgil, “we were supposed to be a team, what did Roman call us? ‘The Dark Sides? Edgy but we were a family! You and me were happy together. Then you met him! Suddenly you wanted to come out of the shadows, you wanted to help them, even if they turn you away at every single opportunity for each other.” Virgil felt a lump stick in his throat and his heart began to beat faster in his chest.

“Don’t.”

“Don’t what Virge? Don’t tell you the truth? Don’t say what you’ve always been thinking?”

“Please! Don’t!”

“Why not? You want to lie to yourself Virgil? You want to tell yourself that you’re valued? That they care about you?” Ethan saw the words forming on Virgil’s lips once more, saw the plea in his eyes, saw the soft vulnerability on his face and stamped down firmly on his guilt before delivering the killing blow. “You don’t want me to say that I would have been a better fit for that shiny happy family than you ever were?” Ethan watched as Virgil’s face crumpled and he fled to his room, locking himself away, retreating into himself in a way he hadn’t done for months. So much progress destroyed by a few bitter, angry words. Ethan managed to hold back his own emotions until he was in his own room and he began to tear the place apart.

Stupid- his books came flying off the shelves- thoughtless- a glass went crashing into a wall- cruel-

Ethan crumpled to his floor not noticing when the broken glass dug into his skin as his heart thumped in his chest and he gasped for breath. Meanwhile Virgil lay on his bed, shaking as tears slipped silently down his cheeks and his mind whirred and replayed what Ethan had said over and over
again, “You don’t want me to say that I would have been a better fit for that shiny happy family than you ever will?” He choked out a sob and the two didn’t move for hours, curled up in the dark, alone and hurting.

Meanwhile, Logan was sat at the kitchen table with Patton, his hands wrapped around a warm mug of tea and a blanket tucked around his shoulders as he spoke, gesturing slightly as he tried to summerise the events the past few days.

“I attempted to extend a hand to Deceit,” Logan watched how Patton’s face twitched slightly but his smile didn’t waver, even if his hands curled around his cup more firmly. “I understand your wariness but I believe that his motivations are not so simple as we first perceive them.”

“Maybe not but I still don’t trust him, everything he says is mixed up with double meanings and I just can’t trust him yet. Plus, you wouldn’t be talking to me about this if it’d gone well.”

“You are perceptive as ever.” Logan rolled up his sleeves the reveal the bruises that still adorned his skin and Patton’s face fell into a frown as he trailed a gentle finger down Logan’s arms, the warmth sinking into Logan’s skin.

“I’d guess this is Roman’s fault.” Logan’s head snapped up from where he was watching Patton’s movements and he got a sad laugh in response, “oh Logan, Roman’s been having nightmares for years, and what is that you told me about fight or flight? That it’s deeply ingrained in the human mind and Roman certainly isn’t the type to flee. I’ve tried to talk to him but-” Patton cut himself off with a sigh and a shadow of worry passed over his face, causing frown lines to form on his forehead, “he thinks he’s admitting a weakness.” Logan reached out instinctively and smoothed a finger over Patton’s forehead in an attempt to literally brush away his worries, despite the illogical nature of such an action.

“Patton,” light brown eyes flicked up to meet his and Logan frowned, concerned, “how often are you burdened by similar things as Thomas’ heart?”

“Oh Logan you don’t have to worry about me, I’m a happy guy and—”

“Falsehood. I’d ask you not to try to deceive me.” Patton tried for a weak smile before continuing.

“When you experience strong emotions I’m often affected, Roman’s been affecting me for a while, I—I’ve never quite known how to deal with it but I can’t bother you like that-” Logan gripped Patton’s
hands tightly, eyes hard and determined.

“You will not have to suffer through it alone. I will do my best to alleviate any stress caused to you. We worry about you Patton, you do not have to support us alone and have none for yourself.” As Logan spoke he stood up and Patton tackled him in a hug, eyes shining with unshed tears.

“Thank you Logan,” he took a step back and everything seemed to happen at once. Patton choked on his breath and crumpled to the floor, hand pressed over his chest and Logan dropped to his knees at once, ignoring the painful thud in favour of trying to examine Patton. “Lo, Lo I’m fine, it’s-” Patton heaved in a breath, “it’s Virgil.” A cold fist closed around Logan’s chest as his was visibly torn between staying with Patton or going to Virgil.

A warm hand clasped around his and Patton’s eyes were firm and unyielding. “I’ll be fine, go check on him.” Logan examined Patton’s expression and realised this was Patton relying on him and he gave a short stiff nod before taking the stairs up to their bedrooms two at a time, his heart beating in time with his feet hitting the ground. He could hear the clock in his head, tick tick tick, can’t be late and Logan reached Virgil’s door out of breath and terrified as to what he’d find on the other side. He pushed at the door and it creaked open, and Logan waited for his eyes to adjust to the gloom before his heart twisted at the sight before him. He rushed in, heart thumping with a mixture of anger and terror, illogical emotions but he pushed that out of his mind to focus on Virgil and the door swung shut behind him.

Chapter End Notes

YES I THINK DECEIT SHOULD BE CALLED ETHAN RELATING TO ETHOS. While Deceit doesn't care about seeming moral, he cares about convincing people that he's right and how does he do that? By drawing heavily on respected sources and defending his viewpoint very easily so yeah, I think he's a great fit for Ethos and thereby Ethan.
Chapter five

Chapter Summary

Logan learns how to talk to Virgil, Roman is tormented and Ethan realises a few uncomfortable truths of his own.

Chapter Notes

HIYA!! Hope everyone is having as much fun as I am writing this, as always, please point out if I need to add any tags or correct any mistakes. Thank! And enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Virgil’s room was dark and almost silent. Almost silent because Logan could still hear the soft snuffles coming from Virgil’s bed even as he tried to hold them back. He approached carefully and gently touched the other side’s shoulder, causing him to snap up straight and his eyes widened when he saw Logan, immediately retreating into his hoodie, trying to hide his tear-streaked face. He took a soft shuddering breath turning away from Logan.

“I’m fine Logan, you can just head on downstairs and leave me alone.” Logan resisted the urge to roll his eyes, knowing that Virgil required more delicacy than he was typically known for.

“Please don’t insult my intelligence like that. I realise that I am not as well-versed in matters of the heart as Patton or Roman but I will do my best to alleviate any pain you might feel.”

“Oh because if I duck out again it might hurt Thomas?” Hard violet eyes met shocked blue and Virgil sneered at Logan’s confusion. “Don’t look so surprised, you’re logic after all, if anxiety isn’t around then what will happen to your precious life schedules and plans.”

“That isn’t why I came to speak to you, Patton told me that you were experiencing strong negative emotions and—"

“Spare me your arguments Logan. You’re logic first and foremost, like you actually care about anything except efficiency.” If Virgil had been looking at Logan he would have seen the hurt that clouded his eyes for a moment. He would have seen Logan ready to fire back another barb. He would have seen Logan compose himself, visibly remind himself to stay calm. But Virgil didn’t see the hurt and he was deaf to the slight quaver in Logan’s voice before he mastered his emotions once
more.

“Please don’t-” Logan took a breath, gathering his thoughts before speaking again, “you are clearly hurt. We are concerned about you,” when Virgil made to interrupt, a sharp glare from Logan quietened him and he was surprised to see the conviction in his eyes. “I’m aware that you often feel as if we are lying in order to preserve your feelings and soothe your fears. I am also aware that you have never been forthcoming with details about your time before you were fully accepted by us. However, I would like for you to give me some credit and ask yourself, am I one to become sentimental without reason?"

Virgil hesitated but before he could speak Logan continued, “furthermore, do you believe that Patton is capable of performing well enough to deceive you for this long? And lastly, do you truly think that Roman would behave in a way that damages his reputation as an upstanding prince?” When Virgil didn’t answer Logan sighed and pulled him into a hug and Virgil went stiff, mind whirring as he remembered how Logan tended to avoid physical contact. The hug was stiff and awkward as Logan attempted soothing noises, that sounded highly robotic, and yet; Virgil felt part of his mind calm and relax, despite the strangeness of the situation. Virgil gently distangled himself from the hug and he managed to offer up a more convincing smile, a soft one that Logan knew was typically only given to Patton.

“M doing better now Logan, you can go if you want.”

“I understand if you are uncomfortable answering but what caused you to believe that our only concern is for Thomas and not you?” Virgil’s muscles tightened immediately and he shook his head firmly, eyes fixated on the floor and Logan hesitated. On one hand, he was nearly certain that he knew who had hurt Virgil so badly. On the other hand, he knew that pushing for more would likely cause Virgil to retreat into himself. On the other other hand, if he didn’t speak up would that mean he was leaving Virgil vulnerable to more anxiety-? Wait. Logan backpedaled in his mind and realised how many hands he had considered meaning that-

“-gan, Logan!” Confused blue eyes met amused violet, “you got lost in your head again pocket protector. Careful or you’ll drift too far into fantasy.”

“Preposterous. Nevertheless, I am pleased you are feeling better.” Logan made to leave but a gentle hand on his wrist made him pause.

“Could you- could you not tell Patton about this?” When Logan’s brow furrowed in concern Virgil elaborated, “tell him I’m okay now, just don’t tell him why I was upset? He’s done so much to make me part of you, I don’t want to- I can’t seem ungrateful.” Logan nodded solomly and as he slipped out of the door he heard Virgil speak again, “and- uh, thanks teach.” And if the nickname made something warm and illogical curl in his belly, well, no one but Logan ever had to know.
Meanwhile Deceit made his way to where Roman was hiding and knocked on the wall where his door should be three times, before waiting in silence. Roman answered after a moment, letting Deceit into his room without a single word, as if this was a regular occurence, as if Deceit was a regular presence in his room. Deceit’s eyes flickered around the room quickly, taking in the mess and Roman’s own appearance. There were dark shadows beneath his eyes and his walls were covered in ideas, scraps of writing, scribbled out ideas and his entire room was a mess. Deceit leaned casually against a wall, smiling at the other side as he examined his hand.

“What would Patton think about you working yourself up into such a state? Look at this lack of self care Roman, I thought you promised to adhere to the ‘sleeping hours’ Patton installed, does your word mean that little to you?” When Roman simply grunted without answered, Deceit slipped closer, still pouring out his poison, “of course I’m sure you heard Virgil trying to get you to come downstairs, what is you call him? Panic at the everywhere? I’m certain you’ll be glad to know that he was deeply hurt by you ignoring him and of course there’s Logan.” Deceit saw Roman’s shoulders tense up and he leaned away from Deceit slightly, as if he could make him stop talking.

“Stop it.”

“Oh but you invited me here Roman! You know why I’m here, after all, do I not come to you when you’ve decided to lie to yourself? When you think deceit will get you out of trouble, get you something you want, so ask yourself Roman, what am I doing here? What are you trying to conceal from yourself, from the others?”

“I am not hiding anything-” he was cut off by Deceit’s raucous laughter, filling the room and causing Roman to feel nauseous.

“That’s so cute Princey, you think that you’ve managed to hide this from me.” Roman’s back went ramrod straight and Deceit spotted the slight tremble in his hands as he began to write on the board once more.

“I-”

“I’ve tiptoed through your dreams Roman, I know what you want, I know who you love.”

“If I loved someone I would approach them and tell them, I have little patience for dancing around the subject and so-”
“Ah but it’s no ordinary love is it Roman? It isn’t someone you can just approach with your feelings, not him, never him. After all,” here a nasty smile crept over Deceit’s face as he watched Roman swallow, “the literal embodiment of logic would never find a place for someone like you.” Deceit was forced to duck when a whiteboard duster came hurtling towards his face and it left a large dent in Roman’s wall.

“You are simply here to cause trouble and you plan to use deceitful means in order to upset me but I am a prince! I am in control of my emotions and secure in my place amongst my family.” Deceit simply sneered at him, tracing the dent in the floor with one pale finger.

“What did Logan read to you recently? ‘It is odd how, when you have a secret belief of your own which you do not wish to acknowledge, the voicing of it by someone else will rouse you to a fury of denial.’ I think that having it said out loud does distress you. After all,” Deceit eyed the dent in the wall, “if this isn’t a ‘fury of denial’ I could not say what else could equal this.”

“Get out!”

“Now now, is that any way to speak to a guest? Especially one who has just revealed such a profound truth? Tsk, and here I thought you had some semblance of honour.”

“OUT!” To his surprise, Deceit felt himself forced out of Roman’s room rapidly until he was facing a shut red door. He rolled his eyes, the drama of the creative side would never cease to amaze him, he turned to head back to his room only to come face to face with Virgil’s hard violet eyes.

“I know you’ve been trying to rip us apart and I swear if you keep trying to hurt my family I am going to make you pay.” Virgil’s tone was quiet and soft, almost gentle but the tight grip he had on Ethan’s wrist told a different story, causing slight unease, even as he arranged his face into casual indifference.

“Is it truly so bad if I reveal truths to people? Doesn’t your precious Patton tell us that honesty is the best policy? You would rather I leave people with their secrets?”

“You know not every secret needs to be told and that not everyone is always ready to reveal things. You aren’t trying to help anyone but yourself and you’re exploiting vulnerability to get your own way.”
“That’s funny. Roman didn’t appear too vulnerable when he threw that block of wood at my head-” Ethan was shocked into silence when Virgil shoved him roughly away and bolted through Roman’s door and he swallowed down the knot of hurt that formed from witnessing just how easily Virgil would push him aside for his new family.

Can you blame him? After all we’ve put him through, after everything you’ve done and said, can you really expect him to stay with you? Ethan pushed those thoughts out of his mind as he retreated back into his room, ruminating over what Roman had inadvertently revealed and he wondered how Logan would take the news, perhaps he’d be shocked enough to reveal why he’d extended a hand, even if Ethan had burnt that bridge to the ground through his own idiocy. He began to pile blankets onto himself, despite the fact he already had the heat turned up high and a soft jumper on as well. Even so, he shivered slightly, uncomfortable and cold, even with the heat surrounding him but he forced his mind away from the cold to- Logan? Ethan groaned as he recognised the slight flutter in his stomach when he thought of Logan. It was the exact feeling he got when he thought of Virgil’s lips curving up into his secret, soft smiles. He buried his head in his pillow, even as the butterflies grew worse. *I am so f*cked.* Flickered through his mind as his mind helpfully reminded him that there were two bridges he had burned to the ground and then scattered the ashes in order to leave no trace. *It’s hopeless,* was Ethan’s final thought before he fell into a restless sleep.

Chapter End Notes

Yes the quote is from the Murder of Roger Ackroyd by Agatha Christie.
Virgil slipped into Roman’s room quickly before the door disappeared again and he nearly recoiled at the huge wave of anxiety that hit him when he entered. Roman was standing at one of his whiteboards, hand trembling as he hesitated before putting idea to paper. His hair was disheveled and messy which was made worse when Roman ran a hand through his hair once more, muttering under his breath. Virgil noticed the dent in the wall, saw the tear tracks, saw the dark shadows under his eyes that rivaled the eyeshadow under his own eyes.

“Roman?” He watched as the other side’s head snapped around to meet his eyes, desperate green meeting steady violet but Roman drew himself up and plastered a grin on his face.

“Virgil! How wonderful of you to visit me! I assume you are here to bask in the glory of creativity so if you would sit down—”

“Actually, I’m here to ask you what’s wrong.” He saw the moment Roman’s walls came rocketing up, the moment he shut down, the moment he shut Virgil out.

“You think something’s wrong Charlie Frown? I must say you’re letting your own fears influence your mind, not everyone is as consistently dismal as you tend to be,” Roman let out a burst of raucous laughter, cruel and mocking but Virgil took a deep breath and moved past the hurt.

“You think something’s wrong Charlie Frown? I must say you’re letting your own fears influence your mind, not everyone is as consistently dismal as you tend to be,” Roman let out a burst of raucous laughter, cruel and mocking but Virgil took a deep breath and moved past the hurt.

“Are you trying to be a jerk right now or is it just reflex?” Virgil noticed how this caused Roman to pause, and a slight hint of guilt passed over his face before he covered it up with another smile. “You
aren’t okay, we aren’t blind Roman, you haven’t come out of your room in days, you’ve been avoiding us all, you’re spending more time with Deceit than anyone else and—”

“Didn’t we establish that just because you disagree with someone doesn’t mean they’re incorrect? Perhaps, unlike you, I like to keep an open mind about things and have a civil conversation.” Virgil raised one disbelieving eyebrow as he glanced over at the large dent in the wall.

“Sure Princey, I’m sure all civil debates end with someone throwing a block of wood at the wall.”

“Did you come here for any reason in particular Virgil? Or was it just to needle me?”

“I told you why I’m here, you’re not okay and—”

“How can you say that? Do I not look perfect as usual? I spent a lot of time on my appearance Jack Smellington and I won’t have it criticised by an eyeshadow loving—”

“ROMAN!” The room went silent at Virgil’s yell as he rarely decided to raise his voice, usually opting for snarky quips and sharp comments. Wide green eyes glanced down and Virgil took another breath before continuing. “I get why you think you need to bottle it up, you don’t think you can be vulnerable but you know we don’t care about that and you have to know we’ll listen if you need to talk.”

“Pfft,” Roman’s eyes flickered around the room, picking at a loose thread in his outfit, “why would I need to talk, I’m Prince Roman! I don’t have anything to work through.”

“Not even the reason Deceit came to your room? Not even the issue that Deceit’s using to work you up this much?”

“You know better than anyone how Deceit works, you tell me!” The words were spat out but Virgil saw the guilt in Roman’s eyes before he turned back to the whiteboard.

“You want me to tell you what I think?” At the silence from Roman, Virgil’s temper snapped and he decided that gentle wasn’t going to work. “Fine. I think you’re lying to yourself about something big enough that Deceit thinks he can leverage it against you. I think you’ve done something to Logan that only you blame yourself for. I think you’re being melodramatic and playing into toxic masculinity because you seem to think that admitting your pain is weakness. I think you need to get over yourself and talk to someone before you self-destruct holding onto your ridiculous pride!”
The final word hung in the air and Virgil watched as Roman’s face moved from tan to red to purple all in a few short moments before his complexion settled on red.

“My pride? You think I sequestered myself away in my room out of pride? You want to know the truth? You want to needle me until I have no choice but to answer you? FINE! I’m scared! I’m terrified and I cannot tell any of you about it because-” Roman’s voice broke and he shuddered, Virgil remained silent, unwilling to be the one who interrupted. “Because what would you think of me? You- Patton- Logan, you all need someone to protect you, to keep you all safe.” Roman subsided, head bowed down and defeated. “I can’t disappoint you. You’ll hate me even more!”

Virgil stood stock still, unsure of what to say or what to do. He’d never seen Roman this distressed before, the marker had fallen from his hand and both hands were tangled in his hair. *I wish Patton was here*, Virgil thought to himself, *he’d know what to say.* But Patton wasn’t here to rescue him and so he gently touched Roman’s arm and guided him to sitting down.

“We couldn’t hate you Roman.” He got a sharp scoff from Roman, still refusing to look the other side in the eyes but he continued, keeping his voice as soft as possible, knowing that the last thing Roman needed was an abrasive tone. “I swear this to you Roman, no one hates you.”

“You don’t know what happened to Logan, you don’t know what I did, I- I could never be worthy of him again.” Virgil didn’t speak, allowing the pause to stretch on and as expected, Roman continued. “I laid my hands on him Virgil. I left bruises! How can you- surely now you won’t assure me that you could never hurt me.”

“Did you do it on purpose?” At Roman’s blank stare Virgil repeated himself, slightly louder, “did you *mean* to hurt him Roman?”

“Of course not! I was waking up but that doesn’t excuse- I cannot use that to forgive myself! He wouldn’t- he *shouldn’t* forgive me, I betrayed his trust!” Virgil sat quietly for a moment wondering what else he could say to soothe Roman’s fears and then he remembered something, something he thought he’d never want to tell anyone, never want to talk about.

“I’m going to tell you a story,” when Roman looked over at him Virgil steeled his nerves, “and you’re going to listen and not say anything until I’m done.” Roman nodded and even through his haze he looked curious. “You know that I’m a little... jumpy sometimes. And you know that Patton often wakes me up in the morning. Well one morning, apparently I was having a bad dream and when Patton touched my shoulder, I- I punched him in the face.” Roman’s face dropped into an ‘O’ of surprise and a tendril of old guilt curled in his stomach and he ran a hand through his hair. “I know. He never told anyone. I never told anyone, I never talked about but I couldn’t believe that he
forgave me. I didn’t think I could ever be worthy of him again.”

“Virgil, I-“

“He forgave me Roman. He said it enough times that I believe it, what is it Logan often says?”

“Constant repetition allows the mind to retain information it has trouble processing.”

“Exactly. So I don’t care how often I need to say it. I’m going to say it until you believe me Roman: we could never hate you, we love you.” He watched as a vulnerable expression spread across Roman’s face, his features softening in a way that made him look very young. Virgil felt the familiar curl of panic at the amount of trust in Roman’s face but he swallowed it down as Roman crumpled onto his shoulder, tears falling down his face.

Virgil gathered Roman into his arms, holding the other side tightly in his arms, allowing him to cry, allowing him to sob, running a soothing hand down his back. He had never seen Roman this open before and he felt a surge of protectiveness over Roman and a wave of anger at Ethan as he expected this was his fault.

“Come on Roman,” he murmured softly, after a while, guiding him off the floor and carefully dressing him in a soft shirt before leading him towards the bed and tucking him in. He turned towards the door but Roman’s voice made him pause,

“You’re leaving? Can’t you stay?” The request was spoken so softly that Virgil caved at once and curled up, arms wrapped tightly around Roman, speaking soothingly until the other side fell asleep in his arms. Virgil couldn’t help but notice how right it felt to hold Roman like this but he shoved the wish for more down inside himself viciously, as he was used to doing. This is enough he thought to himself, stomping down on the little voice that wondered what would happen if he asked for more. This is enough he said again, before he began to slip into sleep himself, lulled to sleep by the reassuring sound of Roman’s deep, gentle breathing.

Roman woke up slowly the next morning from the best sleep he’d had in weeks. He stretched and yawned before stiffening when he felt another body beside him in bed. He turned carefully and saw Virgil lying beside him in bed (explaining the reason for his restful sleep), softly snoring, curled up into a ball, looking very cute. Wait what? Roman shook his head softly, shaking the thought out of his head, he didn’t need more confusion and he began to edge out of the bed, carefully easing his weight away but Virgil let out a needy whine and his hand shot out to grab at Roman’s wrist. Roman expected to see Virgil awake but he realised Virgil was still asleep and his subconscious wanted-oh. He felt heat rush to his cheeks as Virgil’s actions revealed something that he’d likely never have
revealed otherwise. He wondered if he should move but before he could move more than an inch, Virgil’s hand latched on more tightly.

“Virgil you must let me go.” He whispered into the other side’s ear, ignoring the way a shiver ran down Virgil’s spine, likely caused by his proximity.

“Noooo!” Was Virgil’s response, soft, high and undeniably adorable and Roman caged, allowing himself to be rugged back into the bed.

_I tried_, he reassured himself as he wrapped his arms around Virgil, burying his face in the other side’s hair and feeling butterflies begin in his stomach when Virgil snuggled closer, humming softly to himself. _I am so screwed_, flickered into Roman’s head but he ignored it in order to enjoy the comfortable warmth caused by the cuddling. Soon after he drifted back off to sleep, Virgil’s rhythmic humming, almost sounding like purring, soothing his mind back into a deep sleep.

Chapter End Notes

As you can see I literally do not know who I'm shipping with who right now. Ahaha pain.
Chapter seven

Chapter Summary

Ethan spots Logan in a compromising position and learns a few new things about himself that he wishes he didn’t.

Chapter Notes

Y’all seriously I’m having so much fun writing this fic and I’m ecstatic that so many of you seem to like it and I hope y’all enjoy this new chapter! Also SPOT THE PUN AND YOU GET!!!! Idk, a terrible poem of your choice? A cookie? Idk one of those two.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

As it was late at night and this meant that the other sides were likely busy sleeping or breaking Patton’s sleep hours, Ethan thought that the coast would be clear for him to sneak down into the kitchen to get some food. He crept down the stairs, hoping the lights would be off but instead he found Logan, sleeping on the sofa, covered in notes and other scraps of paper covering him like a blanket. Ethan paused, the corner lamp was on which illuminated the scene and Logan was curled up in a position that looked almost painful. His legs were tucked up to his chest with his face tucked into his knees and his spine was curved uncomfortably forward. Ethan paused on the stairs as Logan’s position was very similar to how he’d found Virgil once, curled up in the exact same way, surrounded by his own scraps of paper.

Virgil was snoring softly, curled up tightly, hood pulled up and obscuring his face, Ethan looked at him fondly, glad that Virgil trusted him enough to fall asleep in his room. He walked over and pushed Virgil’s hood back and brushed some of his hair out of his face, smiling at the lax, carefree expression on the other side’s face. Ethan then wondered if Virgil would wake up if he moved him, after all, his sofa wasn’t the most comfortable place to sleep and Virgil would definitely regret sleeping on it when his neck ached in the morning. Ethan carefully slipped his hands under Virgil and lifted him into a bridal carry. He went stiff when Virgil began to move but he merely tucked his face into the crook of Ethan’s neck.

“Never took you for a cuddle bug.” Ethan laughed softly to himself as he carefully carried the other side out of his bedroom. He was hoping not to run into any of the others as he didn’t feel like dodging accusations and luckily he made it to Virgil’s room without any issues. He tugged the other side’s jeans off and removed his hoodie, leaving him in more comfortable sleepwear and tucked Virgil into his bed. To his amusement, Virgil curled up into the exact same position without hesitation but the soft smile on his face warmed Ethan’s heart. He allowed himself one moment of weakness, he trailed his fingers lightly down Virgil’s cheek, indulging in something that he could
never have if Virgil was awake. Ethan swallowed down his melancholy feelings and smiled at the picture his friend made, on a split second decision he pulled out his camera and took a quick photo before creeping out of Virgil’s room and easing the door shut behind him.

Ethan shook himself out of the memory, trying to focus on the present, even as his heart twisted from the loss of the easy intimacy he once shared. He moved closer to Logan and noted with some concern that unlike Virgil, who’s face smoothed out in his sleep, Logan’s brow was still furrowed, as if he was still planning and processing in his sleep. Logan shifted slightly and Ethan went stock still but Logan merely repositioned himself muttering under his breath.

“The Yerkes–Dodson law is an empirical relationship between arousal and performance, originally developed by psychologists Robert M. Yerkes and John Dillingham Dodson in 1908.” Ethan couldn’t stifle his laugh when he realised that Logan recited facts in his sleep. However, just like with Virgil, he couldn’t bring himself to just leave the other side sleeping somewhere that was likely very uncomfortable.

He lifted Logan with little effort, slightly concerned about how easy it was to pick him up, as if he weighed very little. He managed to make it up the stairs to Logan’s room without dropping him but ran into a problem when he made in the room as there was no bed. Ethan stood in the middle of Logan’s room, confused as to why there wasn’t a bed anywhere, in fact, the sofa that had been there the last time was also missing, meaning Ethan had nowhere to lay Logan back down. He could always leave Logan on the sofa but he worried about the effect on Logan’s back and he came to the unpleasant conclusion that he would have to request assistance from another one of the sides.

As Ethan left Logan’s room he realised that the only other side he could go to would be Patton as both Roman and Virgil were upset with him and tapped on Patton’s door firmly, gently repositioning Logan’s chin from where it was digging into his shoulder. Patton answered the door in his onesie and his face went from welcoming to hostile in record time as he realised Logan was in Deceit’s arms.

“Why do you have Logan?” Patton’s normally soft brown eyes, warm and welcoming were frosty with mistrust and Deceit stamped down on the foolish desire that perhaps Patton would look at him with the same warmth that was afforded to the others.

“Boy genius fell asleep on the sofa, wanted to take him to his room but there was-” Deceit paused, unsure of why Logan was missing a bed but certain that it wasn’t his place to reveal that to the others, “wasn’t a key to the door and I didn’t want to break in.” He thought he’d made the right decision as Patton’s face softened slightly and he opened his door easily, gesturing for Deceit to follow.

Patton’s room was warm, the kind of heat that sunk into your bones and kept you warm hours after
you left the room. Deceit was aware that for him the warmth would only last for a few minutes after he left but he decided to cherish the warmth while it remained. He laid Logan down on a bed with a sunflower patton and he laughed to himself at the image of the starched, meticulous side, surrounded by bright yellow flowers and fluffy animals. Yet strangely, despite the contrast, Logan looked like he belonged, surrounded by love and affection. *Love and affection you can never have.* Deceit stiffened, turning to leave but went deathly still in shock when Patton wrapped him up into a tight hug, seemingly sincere.

“Thank you for taking care of him, everyone knows we forget to do it a lot, and I’m glad you were there.” Deceit nodded, unsure of what to say before he bolted from the room in case he suddenly started to spill his guts, the last thing he wanted, especially to Patton.

He wandered back downstairs to fetch his snack but his gaze was drawn to the sofa once more, or more specifically, the abundance of notes that littered the sofa. He could practically sense Logan’s irritation the next morning when he found his notes scattered around the room and sighed, gathering up the notebooks, textbooks and scraps of paper, carrying them up to Logan’s room and placing them on his desk. He turned to leave when his gaze was drawn to the red and gold notebook sitting on Logan’s desk. The colour scheme screamed out “Roman” and he was intrigued about what new information he could gain. Ethan’s fingers crept out carefully, slowly until they were grazing the cover, fingers slinking to lift the cover before Ethan snatched his hand back as if he’d been burnt. He ached to know what was in this notebook, he’d seen it before when Logan had swept it in a drawer and locked it but he’d just made progress and this would send it crashing down all over again.

Ethan stamped down on the insidious curl of loneliness in his stomach, grabbed a pen and scribbled down a note for Logan, leaving it front and centre on his desk. His gaze strayed to the notebook again and again, his hands even wandered over to touch it but he resisted and walked out of Logan’s room, trying to push the thought of the notebook from his mind.

Ethan collapsed on his bed, confused and tired, munching on the snack he’d retrieved from the kitchen. He pulled his blankets around him, thinking over what he’d just experienced in the past hour or so. Firstly: Logan didn’t have anywhere to sleep in his room. Secondly: Patton had hugged him. And thirdly: he’d resisted the temptation to obtain knowledge for his own gain. Ethan dismissed his second point, Patton was touchy with everyone, handing out affection as if it would never run out, as if the well could never run dry. *Well maybe it doesn’t for someone like him.* Ethan shook away the malicious thought and returned to his thoughts, Logan clearly wasn’t sleeping. The fact that he hadn’t brought a blanket or a pillow to the sofa meant he wasn’t waiting on Roman’s creativity to craft him a new bed, he’d fallen asleep by accident. Not only that but the deepness of his sleep suggested he hadn’t slept in a while. Ethan supposed he’d decided not to betray Logan’s trust because it would be more profitable if he weaseled his way in once more. It certainly didn’t have anything to do with the fact that the memory of Logan walking away from him made his stomach curl with guilt.

Ethan kicked the blankets off him, annoyed at the heat of his room- wait. He was warm. He’d not been warm in weeks, he’d been slowly getting colder and colder. The fact that Patton was the reason
getting colder and colder. The fact that Patton’s affection had caused this made his stomach flip. The last time he’d felt warm was when he’d been with Logan and Virgil, two people he had- Nope! Ethan moved away from that thought, expelling it from his mind and trying to fall asleep. *Ignoring your feelings doesn’t make them go away* was his final thought, a thought that sounded just like- Ethan let out a frustrated groan before willing his mind blank and slipping into sleep.

Chapter End Notes

ETHAN HAS FEELINGS. AND A CONSCIENCE.
Chapter eight

Chapter Summary

Logan wakes up and jumps to a few embarrassing conclusions, Deceit is playing things close to his chest and Roman is struggling.

Chapter Notes

Y’all seriously I’m so glad there’s so much support for my lil idea??? Like it’s super motivating and thanks so much and I hope y’all enjoy this chapter too!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Logan woke up slowly, aware in the back of his mind that he had disposed of his bed a few weeks ago but he was currently in someone’s bed. He glanced over to his left and saw a large fluffy animal staring back at him and he shot up in panic, realising all at once that not only was he in Patton’s bed, he was not fully dressed and he could see his trousers hanging over one of Patton’s squishy armchairs. Logan looked over the the right and Patton was holding on to his arm, face peaceful and relaxed, open and vulnerable. Logan wracked his brain in a desperate attempt to remember what had happened the night before, remember how he ended up in Patton’s bed and what they had done.

He slipped out of the bed carefully, trying his best not to wake Patton up but before he could get to his trousers he heard Patton wake up and he could feel the flush rising up on his skin. He attempted to calm himself down before turning to face Patton and he steeled his emotions and his expression.

“Patton, I find myself unaware of how I came to your bedroom. Do you- do you remember what happened last night?”

“‘Course I do Lo, you got to my room and so I took you to bed.” Alarm bells started ringing in his brain but he wouldn’t assume that that’s what Patton meant and so he tried to clarify once more.

“‘Course I do Lo, you got to my room and so I took you to bed.” Alarm bells started ringing in his brain but he wouldn’t assume that that’s what Patton meant and so he tried to clarify once more.

“Are you saying we were,” Logan coughed, sure his blush was rising once more, gaze fixed on a point just behind Patton, “intimate last night?”

“Of course we were Logan, sharing a bed does that to people.” Logan resisted the urge to shout in frustration as he realised that he had no choice but to bluntly ask Patton what he needed to know.
“Patton, I’m afraid I have to be blunt, I- I am asking you if we,” Logan gathered up his nerves before continuing, “if we copulated last night.”

“Oh!” Patton’s own face was lit up in a blush at the question and he stammered over his answer. “No, you just ended up in my bed, we didn’t, I mean-”

“Well, thank you, for the clarification Patton, I have to- I have work to do.” Logan cut him off, grabbed his trousers and fled the room before Patton could say anymore but of course his luck wasn’t good that morning as he soon crashed into Virgil who looked at his disheveled state, his lack of trousers and the room he had just walked out of and raised an eyebrow, only causing Logan to flush harder.

“Do I have to ask what you got up to last night?”

“I didn’t- we didn’t, of course it wasn’t-” Logan was so red that Virgil was certain he might pass out soon from the blood rushing to his face but it was so rare to see Logan flustered that he pulled out his phone and snapped a quick photo before continuing on his way.

“Virgil!” Logan couldn’t believe the other side’s audacity but he remembered his half dressed state and he was hardly in a position to chase after him and so he slipped into his room, glad for the cool air that hit his cheeks.

He re-dressed himself, ready for a productive day before he spotted the note on his desk and his brow furrowed as he wondered why Deceit would want to speak to him. He exited his room and knocked politely on the door to the other side’s room, stepping in when Deceit called for him to enter. To his surprise the room was cooler than it had been last time he’d visited and he wondered if or how Deceit had managed to warm himself.

“You wished to see me?” It hurt Ethan to see Logan standing right by the door, mistrustful as ever, but he supposed it was enough that he actually came in the first place.

“Why walking right into the lion’s den Logan? I heard a fascinating idiom today, what was it again? Oh yes, curiosity killed the cat.”

“I did not walk into a lion’s den, this is your bedroom and to the best of my knowledge you do not actually house lion’s in here, though this information could be outdated. Furthermore, I am not a cat
and I did not come here out of curiosity, I came because you asked for me to visit you and it would have been impolite and out of societal norms to ignore that request.”

“Well reasoned as ever, however I doubt this next little fact is going to be as easy to deny.” He paused for a moment, building up the tension before he revealed what he’d learnt, “I found you fast asleep on the sofa last night, tried to take you to your room and imagine my surprise when I didn’t find a bed!” He watched in fascination when Logan flushed slightly before straightening up again.

“It is a known fact that we are not physically required to sleep therefore it isn’t an issue that I decided to get rid of my bed.”

“Oh but Logan,” Deceit stood up, slinking closer, invading Logan’s personal space to throw him off, “didn’t you promise Patton you would sleep?”

“I do sleep, I simply decided that a bed took up too much room and therefore came to the logical conclusion that I no longer required one.” Logan paused for a moment before his brain kicked into gear and he connected what Deceit had just told him. “Wait you were the one who carried me to Patton’s room?”

“Well I guess the boy wonder really does have an answer for everything, I’m so glad we had this talk Logan but I do have some scheming to do and so I must bid you adieu!”

Logan was unceremoniously shoved out of Deceit’s room before the door was slammed shut and he heard the click of the lock. He frowned at the door and headed downstairs, hoping to find Patton and speak to him. However, he didn’t get far before he collided with Roman who reached out as if to catch his attention before retracting his hand as if he was afraid to touch him.

“Ah Logan.” Roman was subdued and this caught Logan’s attention and he turned to give Logan his full focus but to his surprise Roman seemed slightly uncomfortable to be the focus of Logan’s attention but he seemed to steel himself and continued. “I came to- well. I must apologise for my behaviour over these past weeks.”

“I must ease your fears Roman, I do not see what there is to apologise for. You were not in the right state of mind, you were waking up from a nightmare, it makes perfect sense that you would lash out.”

“But I shouldn’t have- I was supposed to be able to-” Logan placed a firm hand on Roman’s shoulder, meeting the other’s eyes firmly, to better reinforce his point.
“I could never blame you for your actions that you perform when unconscious. I ask that you not
dwell on this further. After all, I promise I forgive you.” Roman nodded, he was unsure what else he
should say and he let Logan walk away. *You didn’t explain why you were so worked up.* Roman’s
face twisted into a scowl and he walked back towards his room, hands curled into fists. *He thinks
you’re flighty and foolish. Unable to even get out full sentences.* Roman barely noticed when his fist
 collided with the wall but nausea curled in stomach when he realised the large dent he had caused. *If
you’re capable of this kind of damage are you really safe to be around?* Roman choked on his fear
and fled up to his room once more, loathing curling itself around his heart and squeezing tight until
he could barely breathe.

*They don’t need you anymore.* The little voice whispered in his head, fueling his fear, tears began
slipping down his face, hands fisted in his hair, tugging at the strands till it hurt, until it ached like his
heart. *How can you protect them? You can’t articulate yourself, can’t face your emotions, not the
ones you have for Logan, for Virgil. How can they trust someone that’s broken?* Roman let out a
scream, long, loud and desperate before burying his face in his knees and sobbing, the tears slipping
down his face silently. He sat there for a long time, tears pouring silently down his face but no one
came. No one noticed his absence. *No one cares.*

Chapter End Notes

It was going so good? Like the angst was calming down, there was some funny stuff but
ROMAN!!!! No baby please!!!!!
Chapter nine

Chapter Summary

Logan learns a few new things and Patton gets some things off his chest

Chapter Notes

Y’ALL I’M SO SORRY THIS TOOK SO LONG!!! It's just the Easter holidays ended and A-level exams are coming up and kicking my butt. Imma try and update as often as I can but as you can see, there may be longer gaps between updates. I hope y'all like this chapter!!

Logan made it downstairs, replaying the oddities of Roman’s behaviour over in his head but Deceit’s avoision of his actions the previous night was strange and Roman’s actions were placed to the side for the moment to focus on Deceit strange behaviour. The rapid way Deceit avoided the question and expelled him from his room caught his attention, Deceit usually enjoyed holding secrets over people’s heads, taunting them with the knowledge they didn’t want revealed. In this case, he’d shied away from blackmail, extortion or teasing immediately, as if he also had something to hide. Logan replayed the interaction over in his head again and again, and with each run down more and more of Deceit’s behaviour stuck out as odd or out of character.

Logan was so caught up in his own thoughts that he collided heavily with Patton in the kitchen, causing the other to drop his plate of pancakes and Logan was startled out of his thoughts by the crash and Virgil’s snigger from the table. He knew that Virgil could likely see his ears burning and he ducked down immediately to avoid scrutiny. This turned out to be a mistake as all he accomplished was hitting his head against Patton’s with a dull thud. Virgil howled with laughter even as he choked out a question, holding his stomach in his mirth.

“You okay Patton?” He asked, managing to sober up briefly before glancing back over at Logan’s scowl and burning ears and dissolving into laughter once more.

“Patton, I offer my deepest and most sincere apologies, I did not mean to injure you, but I find I miscalculated and I will help clear up the mess, do you need any ice?” Virgil’s sniggers began to die down slightly as he noticed that Roman was not amongst them and a small shard of ice chilled in his chest.

“Don’t you worry about Lo, I’ll just whip up another batch of pancakes and-” Patton was cut off by
Virgil slipping out of the room and Patton’s eyes clouded for a moment, an action that was not unnoticed by Logan.

“Are you worried about him?”

“I-” Patton cut himself off and for a moment he looked so tired and worn that Logan felt a hand squeeze in his chest.

“I am-” Logan hesitated but the look on Patton’s face concerned him enough that he pressed on, despite his own discomfort. “I must confess to being concerned about you. I notice that you seem to be struggling with maintaining your facade-”

“I never-”

“Falsehood.” Patton subsided and Logan could see the tears in his eyes, “you and I are both aware that for the sake of Virgil and Roman you often bury down your own feelings in an attempt to be there for the both of them. I would ask if you would consider coming to me, should you- if you ever found yourself suffering.”

“Aww Logan I do come to you! Just a few weeks ago you went on up to talk to Virge for me and that went fine and dandy!”

“I am not talking about taking on your duties Patton, though I must assure you I would not be adverse to assisting where you needed. I am asking you if you would consider allowing me to support you in a more intimate way, the way you so often support the others.”

At this the tears in Patton’s eyes spilled over and he broke down into loud, ugly sobs, as if a dam had broken and there was nothing else to hold the tears back. Logan stood for a long moment, unsure of what to do but the distress on Patton’s face soon moved him into action. He carefully lifted the other side and carried him out of the kitchen to the sofa and wrapped a warm blanket around his shoulders. He allowed Patton to lean into his shoulder and cry on his shoulder, sobs beginning to die down as Logan ran a hand softly up and down his back, attempting to soothe him.

“Would you like me to give you a moment? I realise that Virgil and Roman often do not enjoy tactile affection in these times and-”
“You’re doing great right there Loganberry,” Patton sniffled out before he curled back into Logan’s chest and Logan wrapped his arms instinctively around him, cradling him close. They sat there for a long time, Patton still sniffling from time to time and Logan felt a worm of guilt crawl down his spine and curl in his stomach. He scowled, clearly Roman is influencing me with his whimsical descriptions, he thought to himself but that didn’t dispel the unease he felt as he was reminded how he had failed Patton. Eventually Patton seemed to calm and Logan took the opportunity to fetch a cool cloth and a warm cup of tea which Patton grasped at gratefully.

Logan’s movements was as gentle as he could make them, carefully soothing Patton’s sore eyes and wiping away the tear tracks that stained his cheeks. Patton’s heart warmed at the gentle affection and he leaned up to kiss Logan on the cheek, smiling up at the shock present in the cool, steady blue eyes.

“Thank you so much Logan.” Before Logan could reply Patton placed one finger over his lips and quietened the inevitable monologue that would follow, “I know you don’t enjoy displays of emotion and that it causes you discomfort so thank you. For staying.”

Logan’s eyes were clouded with thought and the coil of guilt was still sitting heavy in his stomach, weighing on his mind. “You are welcome. I- I may not enjoy displays of emotion and you are correct in saying that it often causes me discomfort but I want you to know that I would never turn you away, any of you away, should you need my support. Whether that be emotional or logical. You are all important to me and I don’t wish to- I don’t want you to believe-” Patton smiled, pressing close to Logan once more, warmth blossoming in his heart as he indulged in the physical affection.

“I understand Logan, and I promise I’ll try not to bottle things up anymore. I just feel-” Patton hesitated and Logan wrapped his arms more securely around him.

“It does not rest entirely on your shoulders. You may be the heart but Roman is the soul, I am the brain and Virgil is the gut. We may need you but you need us to and I will strive to provide that support when you need it.” Patton felt his eyes well up with tears once more and he leaned into Logan and the warmth of family and for the first time in a long time, the knot of fear in his heart loosened slightly as he felt the steady thump of Logan’s heart in his ear.
Virgil headed up the stairs quickly, trusting Logan to help clear up the mess as he walked towards Roman’s room. His gut was twisting into tight knots of anxiety and uncertainty as Roman had been avoiding them all recently and he knew that he’d gone to talk to Logan but then he hadn’t come down, he’d just retreated away again. Virgil swallowed as he walked faster but then he heard a crash from Ethan’s room and it was followed by a muffled scream. Virgil stopped dead in the hall, unsure of what to do, Ethan clearly needed him but Roman- Virgil began picking at the skin of his thumb, his nails biting uncomfortably into the skin, drawing blood before he made his decision. He knocked firmly on Ethan’s door and when he got no reply he simply pushed the door open and walked in.

He winced at the destruction in the room, everything breakable was ruined and books, clothes and blankets were scattered across the room. The lights were off and there was only the harsh glow of the heat rock to see by. Ethan was curled up in the corner, spine bent painfully and his shoulders were shaking, soft sobs and sniffles could be heard in the room and Virgil felt something twist in his chest. He stepped over the destruction quickly before placing a hand on Ethan’s shoulder, at once Virgil was forced to duck as a fist came flying at his face.

Virgil backed up quickly as Ethan continued to swing randomly, tears streaming down his face until Virgil hit the door and he looked up just as Ethan’s fist stopped inches before colliding with his cheek. Wide yellow eyes looked into Virgil’s shocked violet and Ethan began to tremble before he collapsed in Virgil’s arms, still crying. Virgil instinctively caught his- his friend? Guiding him towards the bed and sitting him down, laying Ethan’s head on his shoulder as he continued to cry, murmuring under his breath.

“I’m sorry-!” Ethan managed to gasp out before he dissolved back into tears and he curled into Virgil as the other side ran his hand down the others back, trying to soothe him.

“Breathe for me, in and out and in and out and breathe.” Virgil murmured over and over, holding
Ethan close, wondering when Ethan had last been held as he clung to Virgil as if he was trying to absorb him into his skin.

Slowly Ethan’s breath began to come more evenly and his rapid heartbeat began to calm in his chest but to his surprise and delight, Virgil didn’t let him go or push him away. The two remained tangled up with each other for a long moment and Ethan tried to commit the moment to memory, the feel of someone else’s arms around him, keeping him grounded, keeping him safe. When Virgil eventually let go Ethan felt a familiar flutter of panic in his chest but he squashed it down and smiled at Virgil, pulling up his walls, ignoring his feelings.

“Didn’t think you still cared Virgil, after all, you went prancing off with your new friends, no affection left behind for me.” Virgil’s eyes clouded over with an emotion Ethan couldn’t quite name but exhaustion might be close.

“I don’t want to do this today Ethan. I don’t want to have this same fight, the same anger, the same resentment dragged up again and again for us to scrutinise closely and argue about. Aren’t you sick of it? Do you really want to spit out insults until we shatter?”

“Gained some shiny wisdom from your brand new family have you?”

“Ethan-”

“No no, it makes sense, after all, Creativity, Logic and Morality, makes sense they have something smart to say.”

“What, you going to tell me Anxiety has no place in that? Nothing to add, not part of their family?”

“You weren’t! You were part of my family Virgil, we were a family and we were good together! We looked out for each other!”

“Things change!”

“You hate change!”

“Not all change! Ugh!” Virgil ran his hands roughly though his hair, tugging at the still purple strands, forehead furrowed in frustration and something in Ethan told him to brush away the worry
that stained his face but he stayed still and silent, watching the other side. “You don’t get to do this Ethan! You don’t get to act like you didn’t bring this on yourself, like you weren’t nasty and manipulative!”

“I didn’t mean to be!”

“But you did! Your intentions don’t matter Ethan, what matters is what you fucking did! You pushed Roman until he shattered. You took cheap shots that you knew would hurt. You tried to push us apart, break us up and shatter our family.”

“A family for you only!”

“Who said that?!” The words hung in the air, nearly ringing with finality and Ethan went silent, unsure of what to say, what to do.

“I just wanted you back.” The words were so quiet that Virgil nearly missed them but he felt something twist in his chest and he leaned into Ethan, feeling the other side cling to him as if he’d slip away.

“We still could’ve been a family you know. You never lost me, you just pushed me away.” Virgil slid an arm around Ethan as he spoke, “I never wanted to stop being friends, I just wanted to step out of the shadows.”

“And you left me behind in them!”

“But that was your choice! You are the most selfish part of Thomas, but you’re still essential to his function, we all are. You were the one who opted for trickery and lies to make your point.”

“Because it works!”

“Does it?” Virgil sighed, leaning into Ethan and smiling as the other side leaned into him as well, as they began to regain their closeness. “They listen to me now Eth, they would listen to you as well if you didn’t- if you weren’t so-”
“Deceitful? How do you know that? They think I’m bad for Thomas, they think all I do is lie! Patton’s morality, the heart, if he doesn’t approve they won’t ever.”

“What about Logan?” Ethan looked away quickly but Virgil still caught the blush the spread across his cheeks and he secured the reaction into his mind. “He reached out to you and then you pushed him away. Why?”

“I don’t know.”

“Of course you do. Everything you do is planned out Eth, I know you well enough to remember.”

“Well perhaps this time you may have to think that maybe you don’t know me as well as you think!” When Virgil didn’t say another word, simply glanced over him steadily with an expectant look in his eyes Ethan threw his hands up in disgust, looked away, kicked at his bed post but Virgil’s violet eyes didn’t look away.

“I know you. Why?”

“Because- because I wanted to keep him!” Ethan’s head slipped down onto Virgil’s shoulder once more as tears welled up in his eyes, even as he did his best to keep them at bay. “I lost you to Patton’s shiny happy family and I thought- I hoped if I pushed him away from them, if I kept you and him away from them then maybe, perhaps I could have a family, I could have someone around me...maybe I wouldn’t lose my family.”

Virgil’s heart clenched at the confession and he wrapped Ethan into a hug, and he felt Ethan’s arms wrap around him in turn, clutching at him as if the contact would end. He could feel warm tears falling on his skin and he secured his arms more tightly around the other side before speaking. “We’re still family Eth, you haven’t lost me okay? You still have to apologise to the others but I still love you, I’ll still be here.” Ethan felt the tight coil in his chest loosen a little at Virgil’s words and he buried his face into his friend’s neck, absorbing the warmth.

“Than- thank you Virgil-” he managed to get out before his throat tightened up and all he could do was cling to Virgil and soak in the physical affection he was sure he’d lost for good and the peace he felt in Virgil’s arms.

Roman felt his throat close up with anxiety and he tore through his room in a desperate panic, flipping over his desk, his chairs, his whiteboards, searching for his notebook, clutching it to his chest once he found it. He curled up in a corner of his room, tears pouring down his cheeks as he sat in his
destroyed room, alone, hurting without anyone else there to hold him, to soothe him, to calm him.

Why would they come? Foolish little prince, they have each other, why would they need you? Roman’s nails dug into his arms, raising red lines as he dragged his nails down his arms, the pain grounding him, even as his heart ached in his chest. Frustration welled in him as he tried in vain to stop crying—so weak, no control, poor little prince—and he grabbed the nearest object and hurled it. It collided with a wall, leaving another large dent and the snake of anxiety coiled tighter around his mind.

How could they trust you? Look at the destruction you wreak, what if you hurt them again? Stay away keep away, nobody wants broken pieces. What can you do with a shattered prince? What use is there for drained creativity? Roman let out a choked sob as he curled tighter around himself in the corner, alone in the dark with nothing to guide his way out.
Chapter Summary

Roman fights his demons and Virgil helps.

Chapter Notes

*choo choo* "What's that in the distance?" *CHOO CHOO* "IT'S THE ANGST TRAIN ALL ABOARD EVERYONE"

Y'all I'm simultaneously having the best and worst time with this fic! Thank y'all for reading, kudosing and commenting, keeping me motivated BIG time!!!

Virgil’s eyes slid open and he realised that he’d fallen asleep in Ethan’s room and his arms were still wrapped tightly around the other side. Ethan mumbled in his sleep as Virgil slipped out of his arms but Ethan’s arm shot out and his hand curled loosely around Virgil’s wrist, a clear request, even though he was still asleep. Virgil felt something warm bubble up in his stomach at the soft affection painted across Ethan’s face and he shook him awake gently, smiling at the bleary eyes, the vulnerability he hadn’t realised he’d missed.

“You gotta go now?” Ethan’s voice was softened by sleep, slightly slurred and Virgil brushed a gentle hand over his forehead.

“I’ll come hang out later today, you can sleep for a little longer, then I’m going to get you to apologising.” Ethan’s features scrunched up into a frown when he thought of apologising but then sleep overwhelmed his mind and he barely got out a nod before he drifted off again.

Virgil eased the door shut behind him and continued on his way to Roman’s door and knocked twice before waiting. When he didn’t get a reply, he knocked once more, knowing Roman was a deep sleeper, knowing he didn’t often get up after a late night brainstorming. He tried to stamp down on the cold snake of anxiety curling around his heart when he didn’t get a reply and he eased the door open to find blackness.

Panic rose like bile in his throat, Roman’s room had never looked this- this- dreary and lifeless. His room had always been plastered in notes, drawings, scripts and Roman’s messy scrawl. Posters of favourite shows, artists and heroes had decorated Roman’s walls, his room had always radiated positivity and light, sometimes more than Patton’s but right now it almost felt dead-
Virgil shoved the thought aside the second it surfaced and walked further into Roman’s room, there was still light but it seemed dulled. Roman had always preferred bright lights, reminiscent of the stage and theatre but right now it seemed like the light had gone out. The walls were painfully bare and Virgil’s eyes fell on a curled up lump, surrounded by crumpled paper and broken pens.

Guilt, thick, cloying and sickly rose from his stomach and tightened around his throat as he looked at the mess that Roman had become. His eyes were rimmed red and swollen, arms covered in long scratches and- Virgil glanced around the room once more and he kicked himself internally as he dropped to his knees and pulled Roman into his arms. To his surprise, Roman struggled and fought his way out of Virgil’s embrace, standing over him accusingly.

“I don’t want your fucking pity!” The words were spat harshly at the other side and Virgil stood up, eyes narrowed in confusion as he reached for Roman only for him to move away.

“Do you not want to be touched?” Virgil asked, moving away, surprised at the anger blazing in Roman’s eyes and unsure of how to react.

“I don’t need your pity and I don’t want it Virgil! You can go back downstairs, I am fine!” Virgil reacted to Roman’s anger and hostility with his own, deciding that being soft and listening to Roman would only let him spiral further down into his own mind.

“You are not fine, your arms are covered in scratches!”

“That’s a side effect of going out of your room from time to time, not that you would ever know about that!”

“Funny, we haven’t see you come out of your room in days. Hiding from something again?”

“You’d know all about that wouldn’t you Virge. Always hiding out to avoid your feelings, letting paranoia build, never being honest with yourself or anyone else, just like Deceit.”

“Yeah well right now it seems more like you’re the one imitating Deceit, not me.” Roman scowled, eyes fixed on the floor as he refused to meet Virgil’s. “Is it about Logan again?”

“Why would it be about Logan?” The hot flush creeping its way across Roman’s cheeks confirmed Virgil’s suspicions and he went in for the killing shot.
“Because you like him.” Roman went stock still for a long moment, pale with shock before he seemed to reanimate into denial.

“I do not have a crush on- on Logan. Mr Pocket Protector, four eyed nerd,” Roman laughed, the sound sharp and false even to his own ears, “I would more likely have a crush on you than him-” Roman went silent as he realised what he’d just said, the next secret that had just been revealed.

“On- on me?” Roman looked at the shock, the vulnerability painted across Virgil’s face. He remembered how Virgil had curled into him, soft, content and happy. He knew he couldn’t laugh this off, he knew it would make Virgil shatter before him.

“I don’t- I don’t have a crush on anyone.” Roman’s face slipped into something so heart-wrenching that Virgil reached out to pull Roman into a hug but he leapt away, the reaction instant and Virgil stared at him, surprise and hurt warring on his face.

“Okay Roman, I get it, you don’t want me touching you. Worried my paranoia is going to infect you?”

“No! That isn’t it I just-”

“I get it, it’s fine but I’m not leaving until you tell me-!” Virgil was cut off by Roman sweeping him into his arms and for one heart-stopping moment it looked like Roman was about to kiss him. Virgil held his breath, confused as Roman buried his face in his neck.

“- I’m just- I’m scared Virgil.” The confession was quiet and tickled at Virgil’s neck. He remained silent, waiting for Roman to continue, just as Patton always did for him. “I hurt Logan, I broke my room, I break walls, I’m so strong. What if- I could just- I know I could-” Roman pulled away and Virgil saw the fear in his eyes, the kind of fear that kept you up at night, the kind of fear that coiled around your heart, the kind of fear that stuck in your mind and festered. Virgil’s heart ached for Roman as he voiced his secret fear, “I could break you and I could never- would never recover because I and it-”

“It terrifies you.” Virgil wrapped his arms around Roman, holding him tightly, kicking himself for leaving Roman like this, leaving him alone to handle his fears. “We trust you Roman, we’re not afraid of you.”
“Maybe you should be! I’m dangerous, I’ve hurt Logan, what if I hurt you too-“

“We won’t let you Roman, please don’t hide from us, would you talk to Logan?”

“No!” The reply snapped out instantly, loud and sharp and panicked. “Don’t make me- I cannot-“

“He should know! Or Patton maybe he’s better at this than I am-“

“Virgil please! No one else! Just you. Please.” Virgil’s gut twisted in anxiety as he wondered what Patton would say when he found out he was lying. He wondered how bad the disappointment on Logan’s face would hurt when he found out Virgil kept knowledge from him. Then he wondered if his heart would shatter at the look on Roman’s face if he betrayed his trust and he gave in.

“It’s your secret to tell.” At Roman’s sigh of relief, Virgil continued speaking, “on one condition. You won’t let it get like-“ Virgil waves one hand at the destruction before him to punctuate his point “-this again. Please come to me Roman, my room is open for you, always.”

Roman opened his mouth, ready to refuse, ready to retreat back into himself, ready to laugh off the offer as he always did. You cannot go to Virgil with your problems, what if you burden him? Worry him? Or even...hurt him? Roman grit his teeth, he’d always had control over his mind, it wasn’t like him to allow his thoughts to rule him. He snarled back, sick of letting his fears fester in his mind and rule his body, if he was afraid of me he would not have offered. He wants to help me and I am going to let him, you will not hold sway over my mind anymore!

When Roman came back to himself he was surprised to find that the little voice in his head, slick and oily and cruel was...silent. He lit up in a bright smile, wrapping Virgil into a tight hug before answering.

“Thank you for your trust. I- we all know how you like your space and I- thank you!” Roman’s smile softened his appearance but Virgil couldn’t hold back the tight curl of guilt at the dark shadows under his eyes, the scratches still on his arms and the mess he had been when Virgil first arrived.

He hugged Roman back with just as much fervour, even as he felt sick at the prospect of concealing things from Patton and Logan, even as his guilt wound tighter in his throat, even as he remembered his promise to Ethan, he still hugged back with all his might. You’ll want to hold onto this while it lasts. After all, Virgil flinched at the slick, oily voice that piped up in his head, who has ever wanted to keep you around? Virgil fought to hold back tears, squashing down his hurt, his pain, his fear, and
focused on someone who was actually important, even as he felt like his heart was shattering in his chest.
Chapter twelve

Chapter Summary

Ethan approaches his path to a family and Patton is distracted.

Chapter Notes

I DID IT! IT NEARLY KILLED ME BUT I DID IT. Y’all I’m really sorry updates are now so sporadic and they’re likely going to get worse as we move deeper into exam season. Thank you so much for your patience and I really hope y’all like this new chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Virgil left Roman alone to clean up, guilt still curling in his stomach at the state he’d found the other side in. All he wanted to do was find Patton or Logan, relieve the heavy stone of the secret but he’d promised Roman he’d keep quiet. His eyes stung and his limbs were sluggish but he dragged himself to Ethan’s room, remembering his promise to go see the other side and refusing to leave him alone as he’d done before.

_You had no problem doing that before_, the same slick, oily voice returned, oozing it’s words over Virgil’s mind, _what will he do when you leave him behind once again? After all, that’s what you do, push away everyone who loves you_. Virgil’s stomach cramped with anxiety but he shoved it down and knocked on Ethan’s door and the bright smile, just like the ones Ethan used to give him, both eased and worsened his anxiety.

“You came back.” The words were soft and revealed that Ethan didn’t have his usual defenses up. Virgil offered him a smile of his own, flopping down easily on the other side’s bed, unsurprised when Ethan curled up next to him quickly.

“You’re hiding something.”
“E please-”

“You are, you have a secret!”

“Ethan, don’t-”

“I won’t.”

“Just drop it- what?” Virgil turned to look at Ethan, eyes wide with surprise, “you aren’t going to push me to tell you?” Ethan sighed, guilt flashing through his eyes at the open shock, reminding him how often he pushes and pushes until one of the other sides were forced to crack and spilled their secrets.

“You’ve made me realise a few things about what I do. I shouldn’t force people to tell me things or reveal things that I’m not supposed to know. I’m working on stopping that, I just- I mess up a lot.” Virgil’s bright smile, overtaking his whole face, made Ethan’s heart clench in his chest, remembering how long it’d been since he’d seen it and how often the frown on Virgil’s face was caused by him. He silently resolved to be worthy of the smile that Virgil had just given him, worthy of the one in his arms.

“You just have to apologise and show that you’re making a change, trying to be better. And it’s going to take a long time because you’ve not been trustworthy but Logan thinks you can be a part of us, I know he does.”

“Roman he won’t forgive me, I’ve tried to break him Virge!”

“That’s why you’re going to apologise. To everyone. Properly, show them that you’re trying to change, and they’ll give you a chance.”

“But I’ve never- they know that I lie and-”

“I’m going to be there Ethan, I’ll stand by you, promise.” Virgil hid his wince as the voice returned, cruel and sickening, you promise him do you? I suppose he’ll accept that, as trusting in you as ever. But you and I know what a promise from you is worth. “But Ethan?” When Ethan’s full attention was on him, Virgil gave his warning, “you’ll get one chance with them, one chance to prove that you want to change and that you aren’t plotting to pull us apart. If you start your old tricks again-”
“I know Virge. I- thank you for giving me a chance.” Virgil pulled his friend into a tight hug and Ethan curled into the warmth, greedy for the affection.

“You’re part of my family Ethan, I’d always give you a chance.”

Later Deceit walked down with Virgil to where the rest of the sides had gathered for a family movie night and everyone froze when Deceit walked in and Roman looked like he was ready to throw a punch at the slightest provocation. To Deceit’s surprise Patton was the first one to speak and his words were not as hostile as he first expected.

“You want to join us for a family movie night?” When Logan and Roman opened their mouths in unison, ready to protest, an uncharacteristically sharp look from Patton caused them both to settle and Patton’s head cocked to the side, looking at Deceit expectantly. No one but Patton noticed the grateful look Virgil shot him as Deceit picked at his nails, managing to disguise the nervousness as his typical arrogance.

“Well, Virgil, my dearest friend, thought that I have committed some grievous wrong against you-” At the slight jab from Virgil Deceit subsided and sighed, his expression softening into something a little more more vulnerable. “I’m sorry. I never should have tormented you in an attempt to force you apart. I realise how that likely hurt you and- well I am going to strive to do better.” Logan’s brows were furrowed, the usual expression he made when he encountered a particularly intriguing problem. Roman’s face was fixed on a scowl but his gaze was focused on Virgil’s close proximity to Deceit and when Virgil caught his eye, he flushed red, causing a bolt of hope to shoot up Roman’s spine. Everyone felt the tension in the room and everyone could see the desperate hope in Virgil’s violet eyes. Patton was the first to break the silence and his words invoked confusion in everyone present.

“My name is Patton! It’s nice to meet you, what’s your name?” He stuck out one hand, soft brown eyes open and warm. There was a long beat of silence before Deceit responded, taking Patton’s hand in his own and giving it a quick shake, almost desperate gratitude in his eyes.

“I’m glad to meet you as well, my name,” he paused for a moment, glancing over at Virgil before deciding, “my name is Dee.” Logan was the next one to respond, his hand was cool and smooth, handshake firm and economical.

“My name is Logan. I am pleased to meet your acquaintance Dee.” Ethan had to fight down his blush at the contact with Logan before he turned to look at Roman and everyone could see the conflict playing out across his face, his wariness warring with his warmth. Eventually the tension in his shoulders receded slightly, and to the surprise of everyone present he pulled Deceit into a hug. But what no one heard were Roman’s words.
“For the sake of Virgil and his faith in you, I am willing to give you a chance, willing to offer you the chance for redemption. However, if you ever cause harm to my family again, I will not be so ready to forgive nor to leave it unpunished.” Deceit took the warning in stride, Virgil’s eyes were full of pride and happiness at the step towards friendship between his two families and he wouldn’t be the one to disappoint him, not again. He gave Roman a firm nod and the conviction in the other side’s eyes allowed more tension to seep out of his shoulders and it was only with slightly forced cheer that he spoke.

“Well! Now the more serious issues have been dealt with, it is time to enjoy the film that Logan has chosen for us!”

“You’re right Roman, here we are standing like bumps on a log when we could be snuggled up together!”

Patton ensured they were all cuddled up on the same sofa, a large fluffy blanket covering each side before he began to movie. Roman was acutely aware of Virgil pressed up next to him and he was glad of the cover of darkness to conceal the fact that his cheeks were about as red as his sash. Logan was distracted, the steady tick tick tick in his chest moving his attention off the film and onto the different tasks he had yet to complete. Soon after this guilt curled in his stomach at his neglect of his more emotional duties to his family. His face betrayed nothing but guilt and anxiety churned in his stomach, flickering from his family to his work, trapping him between his duties.

Virgil could feel the cold weight of fear melt in his chest as he was sandwiched between his old family and his new one, a feeling that filled him with delight and hope. He laid his head on Ethan’s shoulder, relaxing in a way he rarely let himself do, soothed by the warmth of family surrounding him. Ethan was flushed with happiness and giddy with the joy of gaining a second chance to prove himself to the others and Patton was too wrapped up in the film chosen to notice the cavalcade of differing emotions swirling around him, missing the happiness, the guilt, the anxiety and hope that built around him, an emotional time bomb, inching ever closer to an explosion. But Patton didn’t notice, distracted by the film, distracted by Logan’s head on his shoulder, distracted from his duties. Only for a little while. But it was a little while that was crucial.

Chapter End Notes

WHY CAN’T IT BE HAPPY JEEZ ME.
Chapter thirteen

Chapter Summary

Roman acts on his feelings. Fluff ensues.

Chapter Notes

NEW CHAPTER WHOOT!!!! Still having a grand old time with this fic even as my exams barrel down on me. Thank you so much for your continual support, seriously it warms my heart in ten thousand ways. I hope y'all like this new chapter!!!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The next day found Roman running around his room, flipping over tables, digging through his drawers, searching for his latest, nearly finished project and fabric, needle and thread before sitting on his bed and beginning to sew. He perched on his bed, focused on his task that he didn’t notice when there was a firm knock on the door and simply called out a noise that could have been assent but may have simply been a request for the person to leave him in peace. Nonetheless Logan took the noise as assent and the door creaked open and at this Roman panicked, thinking Virgil may have entered the room, and so he shoved his project under a pillow before turning to face Logan.

Logan glanced around at Roman’s room, noticing, as Virgil had done, the lack of posters, colour and the strangest dull sense of hopelessness, though it had been slightly muffled by a spark of excitement and careful hope. Roman was dressed more casually than usual, a soft black t-shirt over long trousers and- wait- Logan’s sharp blue eyes caught the faded marks on Roman’s arms and he cast his mind back in order to remember if those marks had been there the last time he had seen Roman. No.

Chimed a voice in his mind and Logan was so caught up in his thoughts that when Roman tapped his shoulder he jumped up in shock. His worry at Roman’s room and appearance was eased slightly by Roman’s startled expression at his reaction before it gave way to laughter.

“Your expression is priceless Logan. You lecture me for “drifting too far into fantasy” and yet you become so focused upon your own inner thoughts that you forget where you are.” The words would have stung but Roman’s expression was so bright and open that Logan saw the words for what they were meant to be, a gentle poke at his character, meant with affection. That didn’t stop the slick oily voice in his mind however, everyone sees how you’re slipping Logan, maybe you won’t be needed soon, who needs logic when it slips away so easily? Logan attempted to shake away the voice and focus on what was happening before him, not in his mind.

“What new project are you working on? Something for Thomas’ next video or one of your own personal ambitions?” To his surprise, Roman’s cheeks flushed at the question and his eyes dropped
from Logan’s piercing blue.

“It-I-” Logan was surprised to see Roman struggling for words and eventually he simply pulled out his fabric and Logan saw he was crafting a bouquet of flowers out of purple and black silk. He reached out and picked up one of the finished buds, admiring the careful craftsmanship and the colour scheme finally registered.

“For Virgil I assume?” At Roman’s deepening blush Logan relinquished the flower and found, to his surprise, a part inside him that was uncommonly pleased that Roman was going to act on his feelings. Corrupted more and more every day was whispered to him but he shook it off and refocused on Roman. “I hope your suit goes satisfactorily and that Virgil accepts your offer for a courtship.” The overly formal speech at least brought a smile, albeit a nervous one, to Roman’s face as he sighed.

“I was going to offer him a bouquet of flowers from Patton’s garden, borrow a patch of dirt and grow the flowers myself but then-” Roman’s eyes took on a dreamy quality and Logan recognised that he was slipping off into fantasy, “I thought that flowers, real flowers, don’t last as long as I wish to hold Virgil for. I want him to know that I wish to love him forever and these flowers should last forever.”

Logan felt his chest tighten in a strange way after the speech, as if he wanted to tear up at the sentiment but he restrained himself and merely nodded at Roman. “I suspect that speech would be enough to convince him of your affections, pretty speeches, I am told, win hearts often.”

“He deserves more than a few pretty words Logan, he deserves everything I can give him and more.” The door to Roman’s room suddenly snapped shut and Logan caught a glimpse of shocked and disbelieving violet eyes before Virgil bolted away. Roman’s eyes clouded over with guilt and demoralisation. “He wouldn’t leave if he cared for me too-” His hand reached down to the finished bouquet but Logan caught his hand, fingers cool against his wrist.

“He is anxiety Roman. Do you expect a grand confession of affection? A loud proclamation of his regard for you? You know him well, his affection is subtle, shown quietly but sincerely. Despite him fleeing, you should know that does not mean his regard for you is so low.” Roman scoffed and Logan wondered when his self-esteem had dropped so low and how they- he hadn’t noticed.

“You shouldn’t attempt to deceive me into making a fool of myself Logan. Logically, fleeing from a confession typically means that it is undesired.” Logan let out a gusty sigh, the one that conveyed his frustration and annoyance at another’s denseness.
“I am not one to offer false hope. I observe patterns in life and absorb and analyse in order to come to a logical conclusion. Based on my observations on Virgil, he typically shies away from affection as he fears rejection, the same trap you are allowing yourself to fall into. I suggest you soothe his fears and—”

Logan was cut off when Roman pulled him into a tight hug. Despite the suddenness of the action Logan did not shy away and allowed the contact. If he was completely honest with himself, the sensation of Roman’s arms around him was not unwelcome and he wondered how one person could radiate so much warmth.

“You really do care don’t you?” Logan flushed slightly, adjusting his glasses as he coughed.

“You are aware that rhetorical questions don’t need an answer but yes. I find that my mind is eased when you are all feeling better. I suspect it is because warm feelings tend to correlate with calmer, less effusive displays of emotion and that is very pleasing.” Roman rolled his eyes at Logan’s answer but he picked up the bouquet gently, mouthing one last thank you at Logan before heading out to find Virgil.

He knocked firmly on Virgil’s door and when he didn’t get a response he only hesitated briefly before walking into the gloom. He found Virgil in the centre of his room, pacing back and forth, hands running through his hair, rapid and nearly painful as his hands gripped the purple strands. Roman edged closer, wondering why Virgil hadn’t noticed him yet until he spotted the headphones around his ears and he realised Virgil was murmuring something under his breath.

“ It is odd how, when you have a secret belief of your own which you do not wish to acknowledge, the voicing of it by someone else will rouse you to a fury of denial.” Roman recognised the quote, Deceit- Dee Roman reminded himself, had used it to mock him and Logan had read it to him once. He reached out and tapped Virgil on the shoulder gently and was slightly amused when Virgil hadn’t noticed him yet until he spotted the headphones around his ears and he realised Virgil was murmuring something under his breath.

“What are you doing here?!” The tone was loud and accusing, sharp and tinged with all of Virgil’s mistrust and insecurities and fears. Roman offered him the bouquet with a smile and saw the Virgil’s eyes softened slightly at the sight of the handmade flowers.

“I wanted to confess to you in a slightly more prepared manner, I had hoped to impress you with a home cooked meal and a romantic evening but alas, I have to settle for a sincere speech.” When Virgil didn’t interrupt or respond Roman pressed the bouquet into his hand and took a steadying breath. “I didn’t like you at first, you were anxiety, the antithesis of dreams and risk taking, I thought that we could never work together, never work well together. How could anyone expect us to work together? And then we did. You temper me, rein in my wilder instincts and set me on a safer path.
You keep us safe, remind us of deadlines and our own limitations. I find myself utterly drawn to you and-

“How?!” Virgil’s eyes seemed glossy with tears and Roman paused to let him speak, “how can you love someone like me?”

“How could I not? You care so wholly about Thomas, Logan, Patton and Dee and I can see your actions that prove that affection again and again. How could you think I wouldn’t love you? Wouldn’t care for you fully?”

“Because Logan! He’s smart and put together and- and- and- the opposite of me! A hot mess who can’t- who never-” Roman captured Virgil in a tight hug and the dam broke. Tears began to flow down Virgil’s cheeks and soaking into Roman’s shirt, the damp fabric clinging to his neck. Roman held Virgil for a long time until his sniffles died down and he wiped away the tears and offered a small smile.

“I do still like Logan Virgil but I find myself caring for you as well, in a different way to how I felt about Logan. I care for you both deeply and I find I want to spend my time with you so I offer you my heart.” Roman smiled at the shorter side, brushing some of his hair out of his eyes, “I’ll give you time to work out how you feel about me.”

Roman turned to leave, heading towards the door but he hadn’t made it very far before his wrist was caught by a cool, pale hand and then he was pulled into Virgil’s arms and his head had been tilted down to catch Virgil’s in a kiss. Oh! Thought Roman hazily as his hands instinctively moved to rest on Virgil’s hips, this is really nice. One of Virgil’s hands was cupping the back of his head and the other had slipped under his shirt to read at the small of his back. His lips were soft but chapped from all the times he chewed on them and Roman was floating on cloud nine million. When Virgil finally broke the kiss for air he flushed at the lovesick look Roman directed at him, soft and full of affection.

“I know how I feel about you,” Virgil muttered softly, cheeks burning hotter, “I’ve know how I feel about you for a long time and I never thought- I’d never hoped…” He trailed off and his eyes flickered to the ground, his default before he said something self-deprecating or sad. “I saw how you looked at Logan and I knew I could never measure up to logic. Who could? He’s smart and handsome and he’s not a hot mess. How could I ever hope to outshine Logan in your eyes? I didn’t think I could ever come equal to him.” Roman’s heart ached at Virgil’s words and he pulled him into another heart-stopping kiss, trying to convey his love, trying to convince Virgil how much he loved him.

“You don’t have to outshine Logan Virgil. I love you because of your personality, flaws and all, not despite. I don’t look past parts of you, I see every part of you and it all makes you Virgil. Why would I sacrifice that? I may still have feelings for Logan but that doesn’t mean you’re second best or I love
you any less. I think I love you both- can I- can I do that?” Virgil offered a small smile and a nod, concealing the coil of anxiety in his stomach and the cruel, oily voice that surfaced. Oh please, you’d say you were okay with it even if he admitted he’s cheating on you with Logan two weeks from now. You’d accept anything he offers because you know you don’t deserve anything more. Virgil winced at the words and felt them curl around his heart but in that moment, with Roman’s bright green eyes staring at him like he hung the moon and painted the stars, he almost thought that what Roman felt would last.

Roman picked Virgil up bridal style and carried him over to his bed before arranging the pillows into a comfy nest and tucking himself and Virgil into the bed tightly. He wrapped his arms securely around Virgil as he tucked his face into the crook of his boyfriend’s neck. Boyfriend Roman thought dreamily to himself, this beautiful creature is my boyfriend. Virgil felt the grip the voice had on his mind loosen as he felt the steady reassuring warmth of his boyfriend at his back and he allowed himself to relax into the embrace. Roman wriggled closer, tangling their legs together as he peppered Virgil’s neck with kisses and Virgil closed his eyes and let his mind quieten as he enjoyed the free affection from his boyfriend. Boyfriend he couldn’t help but repeat in his mind with glee, he’s brave and handsome and my boyfriend, was his last thought before he slipped into a dreamless sleep, soothed by Roman’s heartbeat and arms around him.

Chapter End Notes

GUYS I TRIED SO HARD FOR THE FLUFFY ENDING. I DON’T KNOW IF I SUCCEEDED >.<
ALSO ROMAN IS A PRECIOUS BEAN WHO NEEDS REASSURANCE SOMETIMES.

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