**THE EPILOGUE: BUT BETTER**

by **labyrinthineRetribution**

**Summary**

The epilogues were just...real bad. This is me blatantly ignoring canon and substituting my own.

**Notes**

this is all completely for me, the fact others might like it is just a bonus.
Chapter 1

Rose opens her eyes and looks at you, but she says nothing. Just looks.

JOHN: i’m not scared, if that’s what you’re worried about.

JOHN: you already said we’re going to defeat him. so, nothing to fret over, right?

ROSE: Yes. You...

Something flickers through her eyes, almost too quick to catch. When she smiles at you, it’s warm and sincere.

ROSE: You’re going to do great.

Rose slides her arms around you. After a while, she releases you from the embrace and gets up to fetch her bottle of pills. She pauses at the bedroom door to look at you one more time.

ROSE: Goodbye, John.

She closes the door behind her.

> LOOK AT THE LETTER.

Your run your thumbs along the edge of the paper. Is this really it? One hug from Rose and you’re off to face your destiny? The instructions in the letter are clear, but you aren’t sure precisely what to do next. Inertia and indecision keep your feet planted firmly on the carpet.

Then, as if directly answering your quandary, your phone buzzes in your pocket. It’s a text from Roxy.

> READ TEXT.

It sounds important. You get up to go without even thinking about it. You exit through the sliding glass door and leave it open behind you.

> BE THE ASCENDING GOD.

You are now the dying god, more commonly known as Rose. Pain echos through your fragile body like an empty scream, swelling to an anguished cry to rival the Outer Gods themselves once it reaches your skull. Your vision swims in and out of focus, flashes of light behind your eyes clash with flashes of visions behind your brain. Not to be a drama queen or anything, but this is some bullshit. You stumble over to the bathroom and-

Yep. That’s vomit. Just, all over your shirt. Excellent, this is exactly the way you wanted to die, your wife finding your day old corpse covered in dried soup and pre-digested pain medication.

Oh fuck, Kanaya. You wonder if you have time to leave a note.

It’s getting hard to breathe. You should really just chillax and die with some form of dignity. You’d think you’d be accustomed to the sweet embrace of death at this point, but obviously your nervous system decided absolutely fuck you over one last time for good measure. You crumple next to the toilet and shut your eyes. Your world goes dark. And just like that, they’re open again.
> SEER: SUDDENLY UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING.

No, these aren’t your eyes. But you suddenly understand everything.

ROSE: Oh, what in the fresh *fuck*.

>GET OFF YOUR DYING ASS AND MAKE SOME CALLS.

Oh, this is some bullshit. It’s kind of hard to make out specifics in between the bright ass flashing and the throbbing headache threatening to spill what’s left of your lunch, but if what you think is happening is happening, it better not be. You force yourself to stand, and, oh yeah, that shit ain’t gonna last. Somehow you make it back to your kitchenette and swipe your phone off the counter before your ass is lovingly reunited with the floor.

ROSE: John.

ROSE: John, I am completely aware that the last time we spoke, by my count at least nine minutes ago, I sent you on a final quest and you saw me off to what we both assumed would be my deathbed.

ROSE: Well, that was a crock of shit.

ROSE: Please disregard literally every word out of my mouth.

ROSE: It’s all *bullshit*.

ROSE: The whole Final Battle, the idea of your Ultimate Self?

ROSE: It is all complete and utter fucking rubbish.

ROSE: And I know exactly who’s been pulling the strings on this particular operation, a pun which I am sure will become clear to you many years into the future, perhaps whilst making a midnight snack. You’ll smack your forehead so hard it knocks you glasses from your skull and onto the floor, breaking them. And I know exactly who to blame for this particular hypothetical scenario I just pulled from my ass.

ROSE: John, are you reading this?

ROSE: Not only is this some top tier material you are missing out on, now is not a particularly good time to pull some coy, plot-driven, exposition cock-block.

ROSE: John, please.

ROSE: I need something from, but I have to make absolutely certain that you are getting this.

ROSE: John?

John, unfortunately, was getting absolutely none of this, as his phone was in his back pocket, completely spaced out thanks to years of habit he had built up in ignoring his friends messages. That completely thickheaded dunderfuck. What the hell was he up to again?

>MEET ROXY AND CALLIOPE FOR A NICE DAY OUT BEFORE MAKING A DECISION THAT COULD NOT ONLY RIP THE FABRIC OF SPACE-TIME, BET SET THE WHOLE DAMN THING ABLAZE.

...
ROXY: john u ok?

JOHN: ...

ROXY: looked like you were gonna pass out there for a second

Suddenly, Calliope bolts upright.

CALLIOPE: of coUrse! what was i thinking.

CALLIOPE: this decision is far too important to be made on an empty stomach.

She fetches the picnic basket, which naturally has been sitting there on the tablecloth since the moment you arrived.

CALLIOPE: here, before yoU choose which path yoU’re going to take, yoU shoUld decide what yoU’d like to eat!

CALLIOPE: i have packed a wide variety of provisions. easily enoUgh to satisfy even the most ravenoUs picnic-goer’s appetite.

CALLIOPE: behold, an array of savory delights for the carnally inclined.

CALLIOPE: or perhaps something for yoUr sweet tooth, if a lUst for treats is what stokes yoUr desire?

Calliope produces two dishes from the basket and begins gingerly unwrapping them. The unwrapping is so ginger, in fact, that there’s something almost dramatic about it. Like the opening theme to that boring sci-fi movie with the monolith and the bone-throwing monkeys should be playing as she peels away the cheesecloth.

On one plate is a pile of meat: rare, almost bleeding cuts from animals you can’t identify. The other plate holds a generous heap of colorful, exotic-looking candy. You scoot to the side and peek into the basket to see if there’s anything else. There’s a book in there, but no more food. This is all there is.

> CONTEMPLATE YOUR LUNCH.

You put a finger to your lips and focus on the food with great intensity. You stop fretting about choices, and heartbreak, and eternity, and Lord English. Your entire world narrows to a single point of light as you are utterly consumed by the overbearing decision about which of these absurd meals to have for lunch.

> MEAT OR CANDY?

You considered the offered goods for much longer than you would like to admit. Each option has its own considerable upsides as well as downsides. To make a choice would open up a world of possibilities, for not only you, but for everyone around you. Who are you, to bestow upon yourself the honor of picking meat OR candy? Both are worthy contenders, moreover, both deserve better than your inadequate digestive system. Seriously, you have no clue what’s going on down there, and at this point, you’re a little afraid to find out.

Oh shit. Roxy and Calliope are staring now. How long have you been here? Have they just been watching you slowly descend into madness over a lunch option? Who the hell only brings raw meat
or hard candy on a picnic? There isn’t even anything to drink. What type of a picnic doesn’t even have lemonade? A piss-poor excuse for one, that could hardly even be considered a proper picnic!

As you weigh your options, what originally seemed like exotic but perfectly harmless choices begin to twist in your mind. The candy, initially appearing as the lighter and sweeter of the two options, seems to rot in front of your very eyes. The bright outer shell grows dull and sticky, and, holy shit, are those flies? You tear your eyes away from the confections, but the protein fairs no better this late in the game. It is garney and grey. Blood oozes from all sides as it shrivels up and decays. Is this what a panic attack feels like? Who the hell could make a decision like this. WHO THE HELL COULD EVEN THINK WITH THAT GOD AWFUL MUSIC PLAYING?

ROXY: er john

ROXY: EARTH 2 JOHNNY BOY CAN U HEAR ME

ROXY: damn

ROXY: dude is fuckin OUT of it

ROXY: our main man is down 4 the count

ROXY: such a shame 2 such a promisin boxin career fuckin le SIGN

ROXY: ok all jokes aside should we like

ROXY: call someone??

ROXY: im no brain scientist but his seems

ROXY: broken :/

CALLIOPE: im not sUre!

CALLIOPE: do humans do this sort of thing qUite often?

ROXY: uhhh not that i know of

ROXY: maybe i could just

ROXY: sorta

> REACH FOR JOHN.

JOHN’S PDA: IF THERE’S SOMETHING STRANGE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WHO YOU GONNA CALL? (GHOSTBUSTERS)
IF THERE’S SOMETHING WEIRD AND IT DON’T LOOK GOOD WHO YOU GONNA CALL? (GHOSTBUSTERS)

ROXY: HOPY SHIT!!

CALLIOPE: goodness!

JOHN: oh fuck!

>ANSWER PDA.
JOHN: uh, hello?

ROSE: John, what exactly are you doing right now?

JOHN: ROSE?? Oh geez, are you ok?

JOHN: you didn’t look too hot the last time we spoke, i just-

ROSE: John, I am going to ask a series of favors from you now.

ROSE: The first thing I need you to do is listen to my voice. Yes, that’s it, really soak it up. Do you have it in your head now? Please listen closely, as the next step is absolutely crucial to everything following it

ROSE: I need you to imagine my face in combination with my voice. Can you tell what sentiment I’m trying to convey, John? Can you decipher that I am absolutely not in the fucking mood right now?

JOHN: you seem a little upset.

ROSE: Astute observations, as always Egbert.

ROSE: You remain as sharp as a tack. Maybe a little bent at the end, though.

JOHN: wait, what's happening with YOU though!

JOHN: i thought your problems disorder was like, really serious! life threatening, even!

ROSE: Problems Disorder?

ROSE: Good Lord, as much as I would love to be the instigator of you verbal ruination, let me reiterate that we do not have the fucking time, a detail that I have outlined to you in a series of messages that you have so lovingly ignored. Listen to my words carefully, John. This may be the most important thing you do.

JOHN: but i still haven’t made my choice!

ROSE: Then let me make this simple.

ROSE: Your choice does not matter. It never has and it never will. If anything, both choices have already been made for you in their own little pockets of existence.

ROSE: But right now, I am calling the shots, and no one else.

ROSE: The shit is fucked, John. It’s gone completely fucking sideways in ways that haven’t even begun. I’ve seen it, and I intended to stop it, whether he likes it or not.

JOHN: wait, am i supposed to know who ‘he’ is?

ROSE: At this moment, no.

ROSE: Meet me at Dirk’s ASAP. I’m planning a reunion of sorts.

ROSE: Also, please get something real to eat. Candy and meat at this time of day is just abhorrent. You’ll ruin your appetite.
You fail miserably at your attempt to understand what the hell just happened. Is Rose even in her right mind? What happened to all the earth shattering plot stuff?

ROXY: ...
ROXY: uh
ROXY: is everything ok dude?
ROXY: you kind spaced out there for a sec
ROXY: you good?
JOHN: hm?
JOHN: uh, yeah... i GUESS.
JOHN: i mean, there’s something serious going on with rose. Well, at least i think there is...
JOHN: she sounded pretty pissed to be completely honest with you!
ROXY: oh noooooo :
ROXY: i KNEW there was something up UGH
ROXY: well what did she say???
JOHN: well, she... hm.
JOHN: she uh...
JOHN: i think i have to go
ROXY: wait what??
CALLIOPE: well, before yoU go love, could yoU at least reconsider oUr offer?
JOHN: ...
JOHN: i... don’t think it really matters?
JOHN: i’m not that hungry!

> RIDE LIKE THE WIND.

And just like that, you’re off like a prize winning track horse in the most important race of his life. The breeze is in your face and the wind rushes past your ears as you leave the Carapace Kingdom far behind you, and with it, Calliope and Roxy’s stunned faces. You feel… freer? Grounded? Some combination of the two? Like you could pick any path, and with that path is a specific direction. You know what you need to do. Well, at least you do for the next half hour. And that starts with helping Rose, you guess.

Speaking of, you hope that flighty broad is ok…
Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

>THROW YOURSELF OUT THE WINDOW.

Ok, you aren’t going to do that. Weird train of thought there. What you are going to do is climb out onto the balcony and throw yourself off it. Like, a safe, consual toss, because you can fly. Granted, exerting effort to fly as of this moment is in fact a terrible fucking idea, as the only thing keeping you from collapsing is sheer willpower coupled with a healthy amount of fury. It's the kind that makes your skin prickle and your head throb, but that may also be your organs shutting down. The blindness isn't helping much either.

Your senses have completely succumbed to the visions at this point. The flash right behind your eyes like a powerpoint of someone's shitty Hawaii vacation put on 8x speed. Nobody cares about the gift shop, Carol. You unsteadily make your way towards the Consort Kingdom, every organ threatening critical failure if you don’t sit your ass done and resume dying the easy way. Well fuck that noise, your ungrateful vitals and innards are just going to have to wait like the rest of us.

The kingdom comes into view before you—or rather, it would have if you could fucking see anything. Dirk lived on the outskirts of town—partly because of his discomfort with big ass crowds of people due to years of isolation—but mostly because the neighbors complained about the loud metal clanking and unpredictable explosions that seemed to emit from his abode at set intervals. One of the aforementioned explosions seemed to be going on when you landed on his yard. His complex trembles slightly before you, as if anticipating the hellfire you’re about to rain down on this shit show.

> ASCEND.

You open the front door, taking note of its unusually unlocked status, and mount the steps leading to his actual front door. Jesus, who builds a house like this? It’d just be simpler to live in an actual apartment complex if you had to go through all this.

> ENTER THE SHITTY APARTMENT.

You firmly grab the doorknob and turn, slowly creaking open the entrance and step inside.

It’s a goddamn warzone, and you don’t think Timmy shimmied his ass out in time.

One the best of days, Dirk might be what one described as ‘a hoarder’. On the not-so-best of days, he might be more accurately described as ‘a psychiatrist’s waking nightmare’. The floor is covered wall-to-wall in various tools, scrap metals, machinery—basically anything that clangs if you kick it. The innards of assorted puppet projects are strewn about, as if some sort of puppet snuff film had recently taken place on these hallowed grounds. The insurmountable stench of futility wafts throughout the space and mixes with the piles of microwavable food containers and various radioactive substances. You are unable to tell if the stains on the floor are coffee or blood, but at this point, they may just be one in the same.

You hear shuffling from behind you and turn to lock eyes with your ectobiological father, who was nearly at the same level of looking like a shambling pile of shit as you, short of the puke encrusted top you now sported. He looked tired, hollow. He looked melancholic, bitter.
> LET DIRK EXPLAIN HIMSELF.

TT: DIRK: Ah. Rose.

TT: DIRK: I was wondering when-

And that’s all she wrote before Dirk was dealing with a completely different problem, otherwise known as the giant beam of light emerging from Rose’s wand ripping its way through his torso.

Chapter End Notes

bit of a shorter chapter but who cares am i right
Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

yall want some dubious davekat? here fuckin take it

See the end of the chapter for more notes

DAVE: hey fucknuts check this out

It was a typical mid-morning in the Troll Kingdom. The flowers were blooming and birds were screaming at the top of their little lungs to attract their respective mates. The streets were bustling with activity, trolls scuttling to work or school or whatever trolls did in their spare time. The sun was relentlessly cheery, almost deliriously so. This shit was downright picturesque, you could not bullshit the level of serenity going on.

It was also a very typical morning in the Strider/Vantas/somewhat-Harley household. The curtains were drawn, the lights were out. The only noise emitted from the TV in the form of shitty daytime programming; you know: your soap operas, your law shows, your talk shows consisting of ladies sipping tea and talking mad shit about their exes. Karkat was hunkering down in his room, hunched over his desk, in the dark, annotating several copies of the same book for future reference. He lets out a grunt of indignation and wipes his brow. The little fan in his room ain’t doing shit.

DAVE: dude you in there

DAVE: wait what the fuck am i talking about of course youre in there

DAVE: itd be more surprising if you weren’t in there

DAVE: like HOLY SHIT STOP THE PRESSES

DAVE: local jackass stops jacking off to his own sadness for five fucking minutes and actually walks to the thai place down the street instead of ordering delivery

DAVE: back to you janet

DAVE: oh shit scratch that janets ass up in a pile of her own blood from this mind blowing development

DAVE: an innocent reporter is sleeping with the fishes and its all your fault dude

DAVE: wait

DAVE: goddammit shed be an anchorman not a reporter

DAVE: anchorwoman?

DAVE: what are the logistics on this shit

KARKAT: WHAT IN THE EVERLOVING *FUCK* ARE YOU MUMBLING ABOUT?
KARKAT: YOU KNOW I CAN’T HEAR YOU RIGHT?
KARKAT: YOU ARE QUITE LITERALLY TALKING TO A GODDAMN DOOR.

DAVE: haha oh right
DAVE: then open this door bro
DAVE: lets metaphorically close this gap and literally open it so i can get up in your business

KARKAT: WHAT??

DAVE: OPEN THE MOTHERFUCKING DOOR SO WE CAN GET THIS SHIT ROLLING
KARKAT: OH.

> Open the motherfucking door so we can get this shit rolling.

The Oedipal door is opened and the proverbial ball of excrement is set right on a course to fuck the most shit up.

DAVE: you know jane right
KARKAT: I KNOW OF HER.
DAVE: so youve heard the bullshit

Karkat crosses his arms and raises an eyebrow.

KARKAT: DAVE, IF YOU REALLY HAVE AN EXPECTATION OF ME TO KEEP TABS ON *JANE FUCKING CROCKER* OF ALL PEOPLE, ONE OF US CLEARLY NEEDS TO SHAPE OUR SHIT UP AND GET A LIFE.

DAVE: dude how the fuck am i supposed to know what youre aware of
DAVE: you spend like ninety percent of your time in your dark ass room like some sort of
DAVE: idk
DAVE: fuckin sad little hermit
DAVE: holy shit youre a fucking hermit crab
DAVE: ive connected the dots dude
KARKAT: YOU DIDN’T CONNECT SHIT!

DAVE: im right and i should say it
DAVE: anyway where the fuck was i
DAVE: oh right you dont leave your room except to steal food at three in the goddamned morning and as a natural consequence you are missing out on the best possible thing that could have happened in this universe or any other

Dave can barely contain his smirk as he holds up his phone for Karkat to read and looks expectantly
at his face. It takes a few moments for Karkat to understand what he’s reading, but once it sets in, his face is downright apoplectic.

KARKAT: DAVE, PLEASE TELL ME THIS IS A JOKE.
KARKAT: BECAUSE NEWSFLASH DICKWAD, THIS SHIT ISN’T FUNNY.
KARKAT: JESUS CHRIST, I THINK I NEED TO SIT DOWN?
KARKAT: WHAT DOES A STROKE FEEL LIKE?? IS THIS A STROKE? BECAUSE I FEEL LIKE THAT’S THE ONLY WAY MY BRAIN COULD *EVER* CONCEIVABLY RATIONALIZE WHAT’S ON THAT FUCKING SCREEN.

DAVE: oh hell yes

DAVE: this is happening

DAVE: jake english is running for president

That’s right folks you heard it here first. Illuminated on Dave’s screen is what could only be described as a colorblind man’s approximation of a campaign poster drawn using only a trackpad. It was beyond shitty. The ass, oh how it twitched and gyrated upon a neon background of bright fucking fuschia. This is the sort of thing that should never be allowed to see the light of day. Not because it’s terrible and may cause permanent trauma to women and young children, and rest assured that it would; but because it was fucking brilliant. This is what the people want, apparently. A whole effulgent clusterfuck of colors in the general shape of coherent content. Sure, there might be something there, buried under layer upon layer of raw, unfiltered shit, but by the time you get to it, it means nothing. Decency and democracy cannot stand for what’s been unleashed.

DAVE: ok im exaggerating a little bit i just wanted to see the fucking look on your face and god was that shit worth it

DAVE: but just to be 100 percent clear here i am fucking with you

DAVE: god could you even imagine the aftermath of some shit like that its down right preposterous not to mention redundant

DAVE: i made this poster in like ten minutes using a goddamn trackpad

DAVE: but for real tho jane did just call me earlier and monopolize my time for several minutes which obviously means shes desperate bc dirk is mia as FUCK and jake is

DAVE: well jake is jake

DAVE: but im pretty goddamn certain that conversation took actual years off my life and according to my excellent deduction skills and jane basically spelling the whole thing out for me on a fucking childrens alphabet laptop shes ‘considering’ getting grandpa english involved in politics which is code for “i need my boy toy to do my bidding”

DAVE: so we both understand that jane has her gnarled fingers all over this shit right

DAVE: also im lumping dirk in as well because

DAVE: well lately the dudes just been straight shady as fuck but then again sometimes hes just like that
DAVE: like its always either him or crocker its kind of comical at this point

DAVE: like im actually feeling lightheaded and i cant tell if its from the laughing or the tears

DAVE: ngl i probably broke a fucking rib think i can sue?

KARKAT: DAVE. WHY IN THE JUNGLEHUMPING ALMIGHTY SHIT WOULD YOU SPEND TIME ON SOMETHING AS MINDBOGGLING ASININE AS THIS?

DAVE: oh this?

DAVE: this is just an incredibly sexy and not at all awkward segue into me tricking you talking about politics ive almost missed my quota for this week you know

DAVE: which is strange considering there is literally nothing else to talk about these days

DAVE: ive now moved into the ‘political conspiracy theories’ which has been a goddamn racket

DAVE: i now present to you my thesis ‘jake sold out and thats why no one sees him anymore’

DAVE: i have infographics and everything dude its borderline legit

DAVE: personally im thinking sex dungeon situation but i would love to hear your thoughts especially if your thoughts happen to be about how fucking right i am


DAVE: dude you dont get it

DAVE: thats not how politics work jesus

DAVE: the person running for president isnt *actually* president

DAVE: its like

DAVE: a logo for a company

DAVE: ok lets just say for example theres this innocent looking baking company with a nice old grandmotherly woman smiling down at you from the window like the vibe is cozy as SHIT

DAVE: then one day the bakery starts to expand

DAVE: first around the city, then they start popping up all over the country like a sugar filled zit

KARKAT: EW.

DAVE: stfu

DAVE: they start going international, expand the brand to more than just cookies and cakes, the quality goes downhill but its still the same right?

DAVE: assflash newshole: its the year 3000 and grandma is watching you big brother style via the big ass government mandated poster hanging up in your shitty dystopian bachelor pad

KARKAT: DAVE I AM AWARE OF HOW PROPAGANDA WORKS.
KARKAT: YOU *LITERALLY* JUST DESCRIBED THE BATTERWITCH RISE TO POWER ON YOUR OWN FUCKING PLANET!

DAVE: see now your gettin it

DAVE: jake is the grandma in this scenario btdubs

KARKAT: YEAH I FUCKING GOT THAT.

DAVE: ok cool

DAVE: the point is that i dont get why jane would need jake as much has she has accidentally led me to believe

DAVE: she isnt the type of person to let other people do her work for her

DAVE: well, save for the several THOUSAND underpaid carapacians and consorts she has working in what are basically sweatshops for her bullshit neo-conservatism proto-fascist-

KARKAT: DAVE!

DAVE: anyway, *we* both understand that jake is virtually incapable, mentally or emotionally, of running a fucking anime club, let alone an entire motherfucking planet, but i digress because once again, thats not the goal

KARKAT: OH MY LORD.

KARKAT: CONGRATU-FUCKING-LATIONS STRIDER. YOU’VE MANAGED TO ONCE AGAIN TO ROPE ME INTO ONE OF YOUR ELABORATE ‘WE SHOULD TELL JANE TO SUCK OUR BULGES AND SEIZE THE MEANS OF PRODUCTIONS’ RANTS.

KARKAT: LIKE, AHAHAHA WE GET IT! YOU HAVE AN ISSUE WITH THE SHIT INFESTED GOVERNMENT! SO DOES LIKE, EVERY SON OF A BITCH ON THE PLANET WHO ISN’T TOO BUSY GROPING THEIR VARIOUS EROGENOUS ZONES TO, AT THE VERY LEAST, GET A FUCKING GRIP ON THEIR MENTAL FACULTIES.

KARKAT: COULD YOU DO EVERYONE A FAVOR AND JUST SHUT THE FUCK UP ABOUT IT FOR A SINGLE GODDAMN SECOND!!!

Dave looks taken aback and shuts his mouth. Karkat looks exhausted but softens his expression.

KARKAT: OK, I’LL ADMIT, I TOOK IT A BIT TOO FAR THERE.

DAVE: you really think?

KARKAT: EAT SHIT, I’M BEING SINCERE HERE.

KARKAT: LIKE, I’M NOT *TRYING* TO BE PISSY HERE, IT’S JUST THAT RECENT DISCUSSIONS HAVE SOMEHOW ALWAYS BROUGHT US BACK TO THIS

KARKAT: AND I KNOW THIS MIGHT BE HARD FOR YOU TO GET, BUT I REALLY COULD NOT GIVE LESS OF A SHIT ABOUT YOUR ABSURD BEEF WITH JANE.

KARKAT: I MEAN DO *YOU* EVEN KNOW WHY YOU CARE SO MUCH?

At this inquiry, Dave stares at the floor and fiddles with the drawstring his sweatpants.
DAVE: i mean

DAVE: not TECHNICALLY

DAVE: my interest isnt purely because of jan’es influence

DAVE: its always been something i cared about on some level... i guess?

DAVE: i mean youre talking to the guy who controlled an entire planets stock market with the help of a possibly psychotic blind chick

KARKAT: I THOUGHT YOU DID THAT BECAUSE YOU ‘HAD TO’ BECAUSE OF ‘’TIME SHENANIGANS’’ OR WHATEVER CRACKHEADED EXCUSE SKAIA COOKED UP.

DAVE: well yeah duh

DAVE: but it was like kinda fun?? i guess?

DAVE: swindling some crocs outta their hard earned boons like some sorta fucked up modern day scrooge with much better taste in clothes

DAVE: idk man its just...something to do i guess

DAVE: i mean do you remember the last time we had something to focus on? like at all? weve just been dicking around here for the past few years and watching reruns of family matters

DAVE: guess john had the right idea after all

There are a tense few seconds where the room is silent. Karkat looks at Dave and goes to open his mouth. Before he can get out what was most likely a heartfelt speech about being best friends or some shit, the front door opens and a chipper voice can be heard.

JADE: hello boys!! guess who bought some powdered donuts :D!!

DAVE: was it you

JADE: it was meeeeee!

The sound of thumping gets louder very quickly as Jade bounds up the stairs, a burlap purse covered in space themed buttons slung over her shoulder with a pale pink pastry box nestled in her arms. She thrust the box into Karkat’s hands and looks expectantly at them. Her glasses glint as her eyes dart from Strider to Vantas, and she quickly picks up on the tension in the room. She narrows her eyes and faces Dave.

JADE: dave have you been drawing dicks on the refrigerator again?

DAVE: what? no

DAVE: god what a bold faced accusation

DAVE: in my own goddamned house

DAVE: grumble rumble these millennials
KARKAT: DID YOU JUST FUCKING SAY THE WORD ‘GRUMBLE’ OUT LOUD, YOU HORSE’S ASS?

DAVE: what of it

JADE: so should i take the dick thing as a yes or...

DAVE: no

KARKAT: YES, BUT THAT’S NOT THE REASON WE’RE STANDING HERE LIKE TWO BRAINDEAD FUCKWAGONS.

JADE: snort

JADE: well, awkward interludes notwithstanding, were still on for tonight right?

DAVE: ah

DAVE: right that thing

DAVE: that i apparently agreed to

DAVE: like i am all over that shizz you totally didnt throw me for a fuckin loop there or anything

DAVE: got it all covered like some special sauce on a warm and juicy weiner

JADE: dave!!!

DAVE: wow that absolutely did not come out the way i wanted to let me try again

KARKAT: JESUS CHRIST ON A TWO WHEELED DEVICE, HE FUCKING FORGOT JADE. STRIDER, IT’S MOVIE NIGHT YOU WORTHLESS CARPET STAIN.

KARKAT: MAYBE INSTEAD OF RELYING ON YOUR IMPECCABLE MEMORY, WHICH FROM MY OBSERVATIONS IS PRETTY DAMN PECCABLE, YOU COULD DROP YOUR EGO A FEW FUCKING STORIES AND USE THE PLANNER THAT I SPENT *MY* TIME SETTING UP FOR THIS EXACT FUCKING THING.

DAVE: ok first of all hot shot you put a calendar on the fridge with a fucking magnet

DAVE: secondly is peccable even a word

DAVE: cause that shit sounds fake as all get out

DAVE: maybe i could whip it out during scrabble and finally dethrone rose

JADE: ok i have no idea where this conversation went but!

JADE: its movie night, the theme is ‘movies that did not do their books justice’

JADE: i picked hitchhikers guide, stuart little, and percy jackson

JADE: karkat also picked some movies but im pretty sure their titles are longer than the movie itself :/

KARKAT: HEY!
JADE: im right and i should say it!

DAVE: ah ok cool i can work with that shit

Jade plucks a donut from the box and takes a satisfying chomp out of it, leaving a trail of powdered down the front of her shirt. The sound of terrible 90’s R&B filled the room, the sound seemingly originating from Dave’s hand.

DAVE: hold up a sec

DAVE: someones calling me

JADE: who is it?

DAVE: uh

DAVE: its dirk

>ANSWER PHONE.

Chapter End Notes

have i mentioned how much formatting pesterlogs sucks
Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

jane was done dirty but like. i can see her being a capitalist. i swear she gets better tho. eventually. enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

> ANSWER PHONE.

It was a decently pleasant mid-morning in the Human Kingdom. If one listened closely, you might even hear the faint screams of one Jane Crocker losing her fucking mind.

She feverishly paced across the floor, her sensible red pumps echoing around the halls of her, let’s call it what it is, giant suburban mansion. She had put up with some sizable bullshit in her life, but this little stunt just took the fucking cake and comically slammed it back into her face.

Not ten minutes ago did she receive a text from Dirk telling her to cancel everything, by which he did mean everything. After asking for any sort of clarification or reason, this basement dwelling weirdo had the audacity to block her. This was beyond insanity, this was a fucking insult to everything she had been working towards for the past few years, which, as a matter of fact, were all his fucking ideas. She needed some answers; but more importantly, she needed a goddamn drink.

Several minutes later, Jane sat at her desk, several drinks fuller and a hell of a lot more tired. Her glasses are on the desk, and she will be feeling the backhanded slap of a hangover later this afternoon. She notes that she is still totally annoyed, but stewing in her sadness wasn’t getting anything done. Yeah, who the hell needs that guy anyway? It’s not like she can’t function without him, as well as the fact that he was always breathing down her neck. Jeez, what is his deal? He could take a hike for all she cared. Just because he told her to do something doesn't mean she had to, right?

A comical amount of time passes as Jane makes up her mind. If he said to stop so abruptly, there has to be a reason, right? Then why wouldn’t he tell her? Is he ok? Does she care? Should she care? The pacing has picked up again, the ill-fitting footwear definitely causing some sort of blister that would be addressed at a later date.

Well, technically speaking, there was another Strider she could get in touch with. But that was just-no. She wasn’t going to put herself through that. Hell would have to freeze over first.

> PICK UP THE GODDAMN PHONE AND GET IT OVER WITH.

JANE: Uh, Dave?

JANE: Yoohoo, you there?

DAVE: begone ye foul confectionery temptress!

JANE: Um, excuse me?

DAVE: oh sorry
DAVE: i just have that exact phrase queued up and ready to go literally anytime when you start talking to me

DAVE: what do you want

JANE: Dave, please.

JANE: Could you at least attempt to be more amicable for once?

DAVE: what the fuck are you talking about

DAVE: im hells of amicable

DAVE: couldn't find a chiller and more reasonable motherfucker on the planet

JANE: Dave please!

JANE: I really don't have the time right now to go through all these mind games with you for the umpteenth time!

JANE: I get it, you don't like me. And I'm not asking you to.

JANE: But I really do need some help right now, and you're the only person I could think to ask, so cut the shit and help me!

DAVE: wow

DAVE: ok um just a heads up

DAVE: when asking for someones help its generally considered kinda shitty to threaten them but i guess ill go fuck myself

JANE: For your information mister, that was not a threat.

JANE: I was just trying to make a point!

DAVE: uh huh

DAVE: ok looping this convo back to something that isnt immeasurably fucking stupid on every level

DAVE: whaddya need

JANE: I was wondering if you could help me ascertain the whereabouts of a certain Dirk Strider.

DAVE: oh god what

DAVE: you know im not his fuckin keeper or whatever

DAVE: I could barely keep track of the guy if we were in the same goddamn room

JANE: But you're brothers! Well, sort of.

JANE: You must have some idea.

DAVE: do you know where john is?
JANE: Uh-

DAVE: yeah I fuckin thought so

DAVE: arent you supposed to be some sort of bullshit detective

DAVE: missing persons shit is right up your alley go have a goddamn blast

JANE: Dave, the days since I donned my last fedora have long since past.

JANE: Besides, I wouldn't say the situation would require that much hubbub.

JANE: It's more of...a personal issue.

DAVE: are you and dirk fucking

JANE: What!?! No!!!

DAVE: im sorry that sentence was just all kinds of fucking cryptic i think its now dating mothman

DAVE: you gotta give me more dude or else youre just gonna get more hot takes straight from the wordsmith himself

DAVE: i got some wild ass assumptions fresh and piping hot right from the goddamn oven and its first come first serve bitch

JANE:....

JANE: Do you ever think about the words that come out of your mouth, or is it just some sort of verbal piñata?

DAVE: that my dearest crocker would be telling

DAVE: also just a heads up

DAVE: maybe instead of coming to the guy who hasn't spoken to dirk in like four weeks to look for him

DAVE: maybe you could idk

DAVE: call jake

JANE: That is...hm.

JANE: Another situation I'm trying to handle.

JANE: The point is we aren't on direct speaking terms at present. But we will be!

JANE: It's not like he hates me it's just-

JANE: Ugh, why am I even telling you this?

DAVE: you tell me

DAVE: im just along for the ride

DAVE: speaking of which
DAVE: this whole 'my friends are dropping off the face of the earth' thing wouldn't have to do with

DAVE: oh i dont know some sort of bullshit election coming up

JANE: That would be none of your business sir!

DAVE: uh huh

DAVE: just so were on the same page im taking that as a solid hell fucking yes ok?

JANE: Grr, you are impossible.

DAVE: hey while were still dick deep in pillow talk her what in the fuck happened between you and english

JANE: Once again, you seemed to have found yourself parked squarely in the 'nobody asked you' zone.

DAVE: im just going to keep guessing and the first guess is did you two do it

JANE: I'm going to hang up Dave.

DAVE: you wouldn't do it

DAVE: im irresistible

DAVE: its one of my many talents

DAVE: included but not limited to busting out deliriously biznasty rhymes at the drop of a beat and the ability to summon a goddamn flock of crows if I stand still for too long

DAVE: seriously im like the motherfucking grim reaper i guess

DAVE: all the spookiest sons of bitches zeroed in on me and went

DAVE: you wanna know what would be a real fucking riot

DAVE: following that douchebag around

JANE: Well, I've reached my threshold for useless bullshit today!

JANE: Thank you Dave, for doing what you do best.

JANE: Wasting my time.

DAVE: oh no prob

DAVE: but

DAVE: on a serious note

DAVE: if you really wanna talk to english about your secret government plans or about how nice his ass looks

DAVE: hes probably with gcatav

JANE: Who?
JANE: Oh, right. Is it strange I keep forgetting about him?

DAVE: no i get it

DAVE: its like he hasnt been mentioned for like three years

DAVE: dude completely slipped my mind but he was like

DAVE: there when we beat the game

DAVE: I think hes like jakes life coach?

DAVE: or his best friend or some shit same diff

JANE: Oh. Well, thank you.

JANE: See? Now that wasn't so hard, was it?

DAVE: i am actively coughing up blood as we speak

DAVE: anyway dont be a stranger i havent even mentioned how you should let your workers unionize

JANE: Goodbye Dave.

DAVE: viva la revolution

Wow. That was slightly more productive than she thought it would be, though by a very small margin. Time for Jane to swallow her pride and make a housecall.

Chapter End Notes

there is one thing i live for in this world and it is a petty dave.
if you like what you see so far tell your friends and your family and your pets and you neighbors and your neighbors pets
hope yall have a good day :P
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

sadstuck?? maybe?? does this count??

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

ROXY: ALRIGHT LITTLE DUDE ONE MO TIME!!

The stereo is blaring, the monitors are running, and the room crackles with electricity fueled by a thousand terrible ideas. Beanbag chairs and mutant cats lie haphazardly across the ground, awaiting the day some poor fool lets down their guard and fucks up their ankle. Posters new games, movies and scientific discoveries are plastered upon the wall, covering any and all available space. What may or may not be a hunk of plutonium is just, kind of on the desk? That can’t be safe. Jumbles of wire and coil criss cross along the floor and straight into a massive power grid on the wall. On the other end of them, lying peacefully on a velvet pillow on the middle of the floor is what looks to be a mechanical cat/rad as fuck skater kid. Half of its metal skeleton it exposed, its sharp coils jutting out at odd angles. Its little hat is placed carefully on its head at a jaunty angle. One eye is slowly blinking a neon purple, the other is currently not in the socket. A low buzzing sound emits from its titanium bowels.

The buzzing grows louder upon Roxy's request, morphing into a despondent mechanical screech. The tortured sound echos through the lab and quickly becomes what could only be described as a choir of demonic rabbits who have spontaneously found themselves the stars of a snuff film. The sound rattles cabinets and is soon accompanied by the smell of burning metal and a brilliant flash of light.

The robot lays dead. Its husk now strewn about the lab in flaming chunks of glory. It died as it lived. A dramatic bastard.

Roxy cautiously emerges from behind the heavy iron door she had built leading to a blast room for specifically just this occasion. Yeah, she can't die technically, but that's no reason to throw caution to the wind! Science demands respect, and by god Roxy was gonna give that bitch some respect.

She puts out a little fire that has started on one of her wizard dolls and looks wistfully at the wreckage.

ROXY: ah

ROXY: goddammit

CALLIOPE: roxy? are you down there? i've brought something for you!

The unmistakable click-clack of claws on concrete can be heard as Calliope makes her way down to the sub basement. Her little skeletal face is lit up with joy as she approaches Roxy with something clutched behind her back.

CALLIOPE: hello lovely ^U^
CALLIOPE: oh dear! now what happened down here?

ROXY: splosion

ROXY: haxy-bot v 4.13 has left us in a blaze of fuckin glory and busted ass metal

CALLIOPE: oh no!

ROXY: yeeeeeaaah

ROXY: i think it overheated?? Or somethin?

ROXY: i need to find a way to make its lil body capable of holding all that raw power yaknow

ROXY: poor dude was just too sexy for this cruel world :(

CALLIOPE: well that’s no good. But i’m sure if anyone could figure it out, it’s you! you are very clever with these kinds of things.

ROXY: dawwwwww

ROXY: im blushin here dude

CALLIOPE: well it’s true.

CALLIOPE: oh! and i’ve finally finished that ‘little something’ for you.

> Show Roxy the present.

Calliope extracts her hands from behind her back and holds up a large canvas. It’s a painting of a pink cat doing a kickflip. One of its little paws is doing a ‘radical’ gesture, the other one holding a ray gun. The sun in the far right corner is wearing sunglasses.

CALLIOPE: isn’t it just the cutest!

ROXY: OH MY GOOOOOOD!!!!

ROXY: I LOVE I LOVE IT

ROXY: <3333333333

ROXY: every single last fuckin heart

ROXY: we is outta hearts folks!!!!

ROXY: gimme gimme

Roxy quickly plucks the aforementioned masterpiece out of Calliope’s claws and looks around at the walls. Nearly all available space has been overtaken by other works of art from close friends, or shitty memorabilia from online.

ROXY: fuuuuuuuuck :(

ROXY: im outta space

ROXY: ok uhhhh
ROXY: i THINK i can lose the sonic ‘06 poster dirk made
ROXY: goddammit its such a quality piece of shit too
ROXY: aged like fine wine
CALLIOPE: well, yoU don’t have to hang it Up straight away.
CALLIOPE: i’m just thrilled yoU love it so!
ROXY: hmmmmmmm
ROXY: yeha i GUESS
ROXY: i mean
ROXY: not to imply that this isnt the sickest fuckin thing ive ever laid eyes on
ROXY: CUASE IT IS
ROXY: i think its just special bc you made it and i know you put like a shit ton of effort into it :D
plus the kitty is now my son ive legally adopted this boy
CALLIOPE: !!
CALLIOPE: oh goodness!
CALLIOPE: roxy i am simply and positively hUmbled from yoUr praise! yoU mUst cease or i might expire from pUre elation.
Roxy quickly places down her new favorite piece of decor and scoops up her skeletal partner into
her arms, planting a smooch atop her calvaria. The action earns a flustered squeal from the startled
cherub.
CALLIOPE: roxy!
ROXY: nope!!
ROXY: ur not gettin outta this one babe my hearts full of love and my arms filled with passion and
also a green alien skeleton just try and get out of this bitchin bear hug
One of Calliope’s flailing limbs crashes into a pile of fabric and scrap metal.
ROXY: ok damn youve made your point
ROXY: we better take this ordeal upstairs before we cause a goddamn chemical fire or somethin
ROXY: number 1 rule of science safety: no romancin during business hours im a professional for
petes sake
CALLIOPE: that soUnds like an excellent notion love.
CALLIOPE: oh, that reminds me, yoU’ve been down here for hoUrs yoU mUst be positively
famished.
CALLIOPE: we might as well finish off the rest of the food from that picnic this morning. ^U^
ROXY: yeah...

ROXY: ive been meaning to talk to u bout that

The pair clomp up the stairs and set up camp in the kitchen. Calliope busies herself with little tasks; putting the kettle on the stove, pulling out the food from the fridge, cleaning off dishes, and other domestic shit of the like. Roxy takes a seat at the counter, her nervous eyes following her path throughout the cooking area.

CALLIOPE: what woUld yoU like to go over roxy?

ROXY: well i mean

ROXY: that whole mess with john and his hella vague mission thingy and just,,

ROXY: all of it!!

ROXY: what in tha *fuuuuuuuck* was any of that noise

Calliope pauses and purses her ‘lips’. The kettle begins its shrill cry from behind her, punctuating Roxy’s blunt statement. The stove is switched off and two mugs of green tea are placed on the table. Calliope’s claw drums the side of the delicate ceramic.

CALLIOPE: coUld yoU... elaborate?

ROXY: i just mean

ROXY: that kind of pressure on someone seems really unfair dontcha think

ROXY: like

ROXY: theres NO way he could understand the flippin magnitude of some shit like that

ROXY: even I could barely follow what was going on which is some BULL to the SHIT cause u already KNOW i got that multiverse shit on lock i can vibe w it

ROXY: but this??

ROXY: its just super mean if u step back and look at the full picture

ROXY: and trust me callie its an ugly ass picture

ROXY: asking our friend groups local recluse to suddenly drop everything and make some potentially universe shatterin choice

CALLIOPE: bUt roxy it isn’t as black and white as yoU’re making it oUt to be.

CALLIOPE: some people jUst have to make Unfair choices for the betterment of others, even if it might be a detriment to themselves.

CALLIOPE: yoU know there simply isn’t any other way-

Roxy pushes her mug away and looks at Calliope. The cherub refuses to meet her gaze, opting to look deep into the murky waters of her own cup as if it may offer some sort of answer or comfort. Roxy’s voice takes on a desperate tone, a pleading one.
ROXY: callie i love you and i c where youre coming from but thats the STUPIDEST SHIT IVE EVER HEARD

ROXY: i mean just *look* at the poor sap

ROXY: expecting the guy with chronic depression who cant be bothered to change his grease stained joggers to go grocery shopping twice a month to suddenly shape his shit up and make some weird arbitrary choice is just...

ROXY: i dont even know what it is :( 

ROXY: the whole thing just makes me sick 

CALLIOPE: roxy!

CALLIOPE: his choice is essential.

CALLIOPE: his actions, purposeful or not, inflUence not only oUr Universe, bUt coUntless others. 

CALLIOPE: we may not like it, bUt sometimes someone’s sUffering may be somewhat necessary if they are to assUre happiness in anyone else’s.

CALLIOPE: maybe their sacrifice might even be essential. 

CALLIOPE: a sort of key piece in some cosmic puzzle. 

Roxy snorts. 

ROXY: cosmic puzzle more like a fuckin cosmic JOKE

ROXY: you best be writin all that psuedophilisophical prose down with ur handy dandy notebook

ROXY: because the best fuckin use for it is as my future asswipe!

CALLIOPE: dont yoU think yoU’re being... a bit mUch?

ROXY: NO!!!!

ROXY: youre not *listening!* 

There are tears in Roxy’s eyes, though not spilling out yet. Just behind the lids, hot and real, the kind of righteous anger one feels when faced with something that opposes there very reason for living, for being. The anger one feels when the thing you hold close is about to be shattered in you very eyes. When the thing you worship most in this world has been compared to the weird film at the bottom of the trash bin.

ROXY: i lived completely isolated in postapocalyptic hellscape for the better part of my childhood n i know you did 2

ROXY: i fought tooth and fucking nail to get to where i am now

ROXY: IVE WATCHED SO MANY OF MY FRIENDS DIE

ROXY: AND NOW WERE HERE!

ROXY: ALIVE
ROXY: WERE FUCKED UP BUT WERE ALIVE

ROXY: JESUS EFFIN CHRIST CALLIE

ROXY: THIS PLACE IS THE LITTLE SCRAP OF PROOF THAT I HAVE THAT I DESERVE GOOD THINGS

ROXY: U STANDING HERE IN FRONT OF ME SHOWS ME THAT I *CAN* GET WHAT I WANT

ROXY: htat it was all worth it

ROXY: and the idea that some invisible omnipotent shitlord could just sneak up behind me and take that all away?

ROXY: thats the worst fucking thing in the world and i hav to wake up every day and face that it could happen and nothing i do could stop it

ROXY: callie

ROXY: i lov you so fucking much with every ounce of my being and nothing could change that

ROXY: no retcon no reset nothing

ROXY: but dont you see?

ROXY: johns already made his choice

ROXY: and that choice was 2 tell us to go FUC ourselves

ROXY: and i for one happen to agree with him

ROXY: he has better things to do then fight ur brother or go dredge up some rando clown or whatever the fuck the universe had set for him

ROXY: and i have better things to do than care about it

ROXY: like make sure ur ok

ROXY: that *were* ok

ROXY: i dont want you to think that you dont matter because some bullshit destiny says you dont

ROXY: bc you matter to *me*

ROXY: isnt that enough?

A mug shatters on the floor. Calliope is sobbing now, although the emotions responsible behind those tears are unclear. Roxy rushes over to her, she holds Callie’s shaking arms in her own, she rubs the small of her back, and in that moment realizes that the world could end tomorrow and it wouldn’t mean a damn thing, because the girl in her arms? That was her world.

Maybe they both knew it.
on god this was not supposed to be this angsty holy shit sorry for that but some things needed to be said
Is this exact chapter the entire reason I decided to write this thing? Maybe. Have I now been roped into writing an episodic Homestuck fic for the express purpose of making fun of Dirk? Most likely. This is my hell.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Let’s get back to business shall we?

ROSE: Morning sunshine.

Dirk, however, could not answer, this being more a rhetorical question for dramatic effect. He happens to be a little preoccupied at the moment, recovering from the shock of being dead.

ROSE: Now Dirk, I understand you’re more than a little preoccupied at the moment.

ROSE: With the whole ‘being dead’ thing and all.

ROSE: But if we could hurry this particular transaction a little faster this should be a lot more tolerable for the both of us.

Now Dirk is in a very difficult and rather confusing situation here. For one thing, the former gaping wound in his chest was, while full healed, still- for a lack of better words- hurt like a motherfucker. This made it very difficult to think properly. The other, much more concerning, and slightly terrifying issue was that Dirk’s shades were not nestled in their usual nook, namely the dead center of his face. They had been placed neatly upon the dusty windowsill facing the futon. The curtains had been drawn for what felt like and what was almost certainly the first time in months, the midmorning, almost sickeningly cheerful sunlight streaming directly into Dirk’s eyes, as well as glinting off the edge of his shades just so, as if to taunt him about his almost comical self inflicted sensitivity to light.

The last prevalent event on the agenda, though more or less so than the first one is hard to tell, is the fact that his hands had been handcuffed and looped around the arm of his futon. Now normally this wouldn’t be alarming but it is in combination with the fact that the room had apparently been thoroughly cleaned while he was out cold.

Well, cleaned is a generous word for it. It was more like every available weapon and weapon-like object had been shoved to the far corners of the room, most likely to keep his grubby paws off them. Well ain’t this a bitch.

Rose had taken up residence in the dead center of the room, sitting in a well used leather chair directly between the path of Dirk’s view of the window, though it did little to help keep the constant stream of sunlight from nearly blinding him. She has a small frame, but her chosen position of the light coming from the back makes her seem much more imposing. Nearly every feature of her face is shrouded in dark, dramatic shadows. This was absolutely a deliberate part on her end to seem more badass. And goddammit, it was kind of working.
DIRK: I have to admit, I’m kind of impressed with the theatrics.

ROSE: Thank you.

ROSE: I try.

DIRK: Although, I would have recommended waiting until sunset for this particular showdown. Much more cinematic.

ROSE: Duly noted.

ROSE: I’ll have to write that down for the next time a close friend of mine tries to fuck up everything I’ve worked for in their own megalomaniacal quest for relevance.

DIRK: Is that what you think I’m doing?

ROSE: Is it not?

DIRK: Well, I’d say that was almost cartoonishly simplistic.

DIRK: Almost crude, in a sense.

DIRK: I’ll have to dock points.

ROSE: Oh dear.

ROSE: Whatever will you do with me?

DIRK: Now that we’ve gotten the exaggerated lack of sincerity out of the way, could you do me a solid and cut the shit?

DIRK: These handcuffs are starting to chafe, and not even in the fun way.

ROSE: Dirk, we both know you are a fairly intelligent individual.

ROSE: Or at the very least, you have convinced both me and yourself of this fact.

ROSE: So could you do me the solid and ask me something that you don’t already know the answer to?

ROSE: My patience is running itself extraordinarily fucking thin these days.

DIRK: You might want to get that checked out.

ROSE: Looks like someone is just brimming with good ideas today.

DIRK: Well then.

DIRK: If you’re not going to grant me my ineffable human right to comfortable wrists as well as to sit my ass down on *my* sofa instead of this lukewarm concrete-

ROSE: It’s a goddamn futon Dirk, but continue.

DIRK: -then riddle me this, Lalonde.

DIRK: Why do you think you have the power to change anything?
ROSE: I could ask you the same thing.

ROSE: Although, it'd be better phrased as 'Why do you think you have the right to change anything?'

ROSE: Actually, I do have a few more burning questions on the tip of my tongue that I would just love to get straightened out if you don’t mind.

ROSE: What makes Dirk Fucking Strider so special that he suddenly gets to decide to not only do a seizure induced swan dive right off the deep end, but suddenly has the authority to bring along anyone he wants with him?

ROSE: What made you think it was, in any sense or idea of the word, OK to bring an entire universe to a screeching halt because you got bored?

ROSE: Who in the palpable shit died and gave you the fucking authority to make choices for other autonomous beings, let alone an entire fucking universe?

ROSE: Are you proud of yourself? Did you wake up this morning in your soggy ground mattress of filth and stale doritos, trudge up to the mirror, look yourself dead in the eyes and go “You know, I haven’t made shit needlessly complicated and fucked up for myself in a while, time to compensate by dragging everyone I know and cherish into a manipulative cycle of simultaneous self inflicted masochism and sadism, because I’m unable to cope with existing if I’m not either being punished or rewarded for the most inane shit?”

As Dirk sits on tepid floor of his apartment, he’s more than a little perturbed by Rose’s abrupt ripping him a new asshole, mostly in part that he had no fucking clue that she knew any of this. Maybe a quick fleeting glance of what he had planned, but this? This is new. This is unexpected, and Dirk didn’t do unexpected. What was also unexpected is the bright glow emanating from her eyes, growing more and more intense and concerning with each furious word that flew from her lips.

The room falls silent. Those questions were not rhetorical.

DIRK: I could see why you find those specific concerns valid.

DIRK: But I don’t think you’re fully equipped to see the full picture.

ROSE: Let me stop you right there champ.

ROSE: I really want you to reflect on the utter fucking lunacy that just fell from the bullshit generator you call a mouth.

ROSE: You honestly believe I don’t have the capacity to handle the big picture? The whole shabang?

ROSE: Dirk, the only thing I can see is the 'Big Picture'.

DIRK: ...

DIRK: I feel like this is a trick question.

ROSE: Well let me lay down some sick metaphors for you, O Master of the Narrative.

ROSE: Let’s say our universe is a piece of paper with its entire history written upon its surface in ink. Or a book, a book would be better. Or like, a Word document. I really couldn’t give less of a
shit about providing fodder for your mental image. Simple enough for you?

ROSE: Well, let’s also say that you, functionally, serve as the white out, the backspace button, the editor of said universe, able to change what you perceive as incorrect, with little to no consequence. I feel like this is a suitable analogy, if a little pedestrian.

ROSE: While you, can change the narrative all you’d like to serve as a catalyst to your little hero or villain or morally ambiguous story, I serve a much more reserved role.

ROSE: Think of it as this. You are churning out the revised edition of the previously mentioned story, while I have already read the original copy. I know how this all ends. I have and currently am seeing everything that has been and will be and the way things are going now, you’ve led us on a crash course straight to the fucking garbage bin of any respectable publishing company. I see every pretentious semicolon and oxford comma you’ve placed and I feel it’s my duty to say this.

ROSE: You royally fucked up dude.

ROSE: You took a perfectly acceptable piece of work and took a heaving shit all over it because it didn’t fit your edgy sad boy life.

ROSE: Hey Dirk, guess what?

ROSE: It is not that deep.

ROSE: It’s just the simple fact that you are literally and metaphorically incapable of seeing the big picture.

ROSE: So you have a choice here.

ROSE: You can go back to ruining yours and everyone else’s lives because your living in the year 2007 and can’t handle domesticity, lest you burst into flames on your weekly trip to the corner store because that rotten husk you call a fucking body physically cannot handle the mundane existence of suburbia,

ROSE: Or you can buckle down, realize that you’ve fulfilled your purpose and peaked at 16 and look forward to a meaningless and most likely permanent existence of stagnation, and sit the fuck down, drink some water, and sign up for monthly therapy like a fucking adult you bastard.

ROSE: Everyone else has.

Something is off. It isn’t that Rose had grown more compassionate or had softened by the end of her well deserved speech. It was more the worrying feeling that she had been talking more at Dirk than to him, her gaze merely vaguely directed in the general area he was in than looking him in his sagging eyes, as such a speech should have warranted.

DIRK: You... have made some interesting points. But can this discussion be brought off topic for a moment?

ROSE: Certainly, we have all the time we need.

DIRK: Coolio. Just a quick thing, popped into my head just now actually.

DIRK: What in the fuck is wrong with your eyes?

ROSE: Why Dirk.
ROSE: Is that anyway to speak to a blind girl?

There is a knocking at the balcony doors. Rose gives a slow smile.

Chapter End Notes

I'm not sorry and I am tired

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