Where Angels Fear to Tread
by TiredTaro

Summary

Cherub, they called him when his first set of wings came in and his cheeks were still soft and round.
Angel, they called him when the second set of wings came in and his frame became lean.
Strange, they called him when the third set of wings came in and he lost the pigment in his eyes.
Freakshow, they called him when the fourth set of wings came in and he started learning people's names before they told them to him.

Midoriya Izuku just wants to help people. And maybe stop having to hide the more uncanny parts of his quirk. But heroes are supposed to put people at ease, not make them uneasy so he had to work twice as hard to get where he wants to go. Especially considering that his default mentor is barely any older than he is.
new ideas
2 am brain: Write an angel Izuku right now.
Me: Okay.
Midoriya Izuku knew that he was a strange child.

Most ten-year-olds didn't choose to hang around the hospital their mother worked at or know the name of someone by touching their hands or wear contacts to hide the paleness of their eyes. Most ten-year-olds didn't have a quirk that left them emaciated or tuck their mutations away inside their clothing to help them look more like the average kid. Most ten-year-olds couldn't tell just by being around someone if they were going to die in the next twenty-four hours.

Izuku could though, which made him a stranger in his own age bracket just as much as he was outside of it.

"Hey!" The shout startled the boy from his writing, the pen he had been holding slipping from his grip as Midoriya turned to look down the hall to his right. There was a familiar woman at the end and he felt the tension relax at the sight of Kawado's waving hand rather than someone who would try to drag him to their loved one's room.

Kawado Zenchi was his mother's coworker and one of the few doctors that didn't shy away from him regardless of whether Izuku wore the clothes and makeup that made him look healthier and plainer. The woman was taller and leaner than his mother was and her body was built like an athlete, her hair tied up into the usual bun regardless of the fact that it was short enough to get away with not putting it up at all if she didn't want to. Midoriya was quick to close the book he had been reading to give her his full attention, the wings that were allowed out of his baggy hoodie giving a small rustle as he stood to meet her.

"Kawado! I thought you had off today!" The woman had shrugged her coat on over soft pink scrubs to match her hair and eyes and as she got closer he could see the faded print of ladybugs scattered across the fabric. It was an unusually subdued print for her to wear, considering that she preferred to mix and match patterns that made his head hurt most days. But, as someone who more mostly black and white it was easy for Izuku to find himself overwhelmed by patterns.

"I was supposed to, they called me in to help keep an eye on the kid's ward so that your mom could go help the surgeons."

"Sorry,"

"Hey, never apologize for saving someone kid, especially when I can just catch the reruns of my show later anyways." She ruffled his hair like it was the most natural thing in the world and Izuku tried not to let his face catch flame at the contact. If her half-hidden snort was anything to go off of though, he failed.

Archangel was the name that they had chosen for his quirk when the third set of wings began to poke through the skin of his lower back, even before his body had started to thin out - something that his mother was still fighting against even though every quirk specialist they saw told the Midoriyas that it was likely that Izuku would always be thin for his age - and the longer that his quirk had to develop the better the name choice seemed to be. It had started with one set of wings, and then another, and then another and another. Three spaced out along his spinal cord and two wings each the size of his hand that lay curled around his neck at any given time, and Midoriya's quirk should have stopped there.

Surprisingly only to those who didn't know the Midoriya Luck (or lack thereof) it did not. Nor did
it stop with blood that ran so hot he constantly felt like he had a fever or eyes that while functioning perfectly clearly had slowly lost all pigment until they were a ghostly white. Not even when his body refused to hold onto more than a hundred pounds when it would have been healthier and easier to take a hit if Izuku were somewhere near a hundred and thirty.

No, his quirk ended on paper with the fact that holding someone's hand gave him the insight into their name. Nothing big but enough that most people tended to shy away from his touch in case he could glean more than he was telling them from the action.

And off paper, his quirk ended with the heavy feeling of dread when he entered the same room as someone who was running out of time.

"More importantly, where are your other wings? you know that binding them is doing more harm than good bud," Izuku cringed at the scolding.

"I never said I was binding them! What if I just had them tucked against me?" His loose wings fluttered again, the hypothetical argument was pointless given that both members knew full and well that his wings didn't lie flat against his body when wrapped around unless he had used the vet tape to do so.

"Uh huh, please go take them out of your binder, you're going to mess up your joints that way."

"People will stare." He whispered and the doctor sighed, crouching down so that she was on eye level with the boy. There were traces of emotions in her face that Izuku couldn't quite make out but she didn't let any of them slip into her words as she spoke.

"People will stare anyway because of your choice in shoes," Kawado said gently, the tease enough to put him at ease just a little bit with the situation even if all things considered that was a bit uncalled for. Izuku liked these shoes, red and clunky they may be.

"Fine,"

"Find me in the kid's ward when you're done!" The door swung closed behind him when he shuffled into the bathroom and the boy was quick to stake claim to the bigger of the two stalls before shedding his hoodie and a loose t-shirt with relative ease. The tight tank top that he had been wearing beneath them was a tad more challenging to convince his wings to slide back through the slits of but he managed to after a few minutes of wiggling around ungracefully and then there was just the vet tape.

It was probably the best present that his mother had ever given him practicality wise, the fact that it was designed for wings rather than skin making it so much more comfortable against his feathers even when he had the wings in strange positions to hide them against his body.

It wasn't that Izuku hated his wings. He actually found them to be rather pretty on the days that he could just stay home in a tank top with slits out the wazoo in the back so that all three sets were allowed space to breathe and flap and occasionally knock over photographs when he yawned and his wings stretched out as his arms did. The set on his neck was the smallest by far, but it was also the only one that was pure white, and given the size the wings were more soft down feathers than those meant for flight.

The three along his back were a different story though, the set that began between his shoulder blades and raised high above him - the ones that he let out to breathe the most often given that they were the hardest to conceal - as well as the ones that started at his mid-back and the ones that started just a touch above his waist, was closer to a cream than a pure white with light grey
speckles along with the tips of his feathers like a snowy owl.

No, he liked the way that they looked, and how even when he let them rest against his back they made him look bigger and more intimidating and how easy it was to reach the tops of trees with not one or even two but three sets of wings to push you upwards - even if he wasn't good at staying off the ground for very long without the wings bumping into each other and throwing him off balance.

What Midoriya hated was how he went from just having a thin-looking face to being a walking skeleton now that there wasn't a buffer around his chest and waist to help at least his top half look more defined.

The hoodie wasn't an option to put back on given that there was only one set of slits in it's back and he planned on keeping it that way, so Midoriya set it aside along with the rerolled vet tape to reuse the next time he had to leave the house and didn't want to be ogled at. The process of getting dressed took more effort than the process of getting undressed, it always had been for the boy. So if he didn't hear the door to the bathroom open or the quiet whistling that had been accompanying it stop as he fumbled then that wasn't because he was an idiot, regardless of what would later be said about the meeting.

Midoriya had just managed to get the first set of wings through when there was a knock on the door that startled him, the jump causing him to

"You alright?" The voice was familiar, but Midoriya just chalked it up to it being one of the doctors he didn't know very well, and given that his head was currently stuck in his tanktop like a cat in a ball of yarn he didn't have enough evidence to suggest otherwise.

"Uh, y-yeah! Just having, uhm, just having issues with my quirk!" that was a safe answer and one that was personal enough that most people would leave him alone about it. He waited for the man on the other side to respond but the footsteps just reversed back towards the hand sinks. Later, he would get flack for assuming that the man left when he never heard the door open or close again.

It took entirely too long to coax all three sets of wings through the tank top and then again through the t-shirt, and when he finally unlatched the door, it was all he could do to try and shake the tiredness from his arms. Looking back on the meeting later he would not tell his friends that he dropped his hoodie and vet wrap in shock, and he might even go so far as to leave out the way that his face flushed bright red, the green contacts and curls leaving his head looking like a Christmas ornament gone wrong.

"You know, they make shirts for winged quirks. I know a few brands actually if you need some recommendations." Unfortunately the other member of the meeting had a tendency to skew the story in the opposite direction. He would talk about how Midoriya's face flushed as red as his wings and how the kid had insisted on hearing about his villain fights. One time Izuku had to jump in to clarify that no he did not pass out thank you very much.

"You're Hawks," The hero bent down to pick up the ball of vet tape as it rolled over, but quickly went back to lounging against the sinks. Izuku knew that the man in front of him was barely an adult still, his debut just a few days after his eighteenth birthday a week ago. The news was still buzzing with the way that he interacted with the people he saved.

"Wow, didn't expect to start getting recognized so soon," It was hard to tell if the young hero's questioning look was over being recognized or the wrap that he was now holding in his hands. As a hero who relied on his wings, Izuku wasn't certain that he would like to hear about binding wings down just to keep everyone's eyes off of him.
"I like to analyze fights." Midoriya was quickly collecting himself and pulling out his notebook, thankful that he had brought the same one. "You haven't had many yet but you take the villains down faster than anyone I've seen."

"Oh, careful All Might'll hear you." Hawks laughed, looking pointedly at Izuku's shirt and the flush came back at double the force when the boy realized that his shirt had 'All Might's Biggest Fan' written proudly across the chest.

"Wait, why are you here? I didn't hear of any fights yet today," The smile didn't dip from Hawks' face but it didn't seem to hold the same warmth as it did a moment ago.

"Oh just checking in on some of the kids I helped yesterday in th-"

"The fight against Mole Hill! I actually wanted to ask you how you knew where to target your feathers-you would have lost a lot more than the twenty-three you sent out if you were only guessing where the structure was weakest. Was your vision improved enough to see cracks in it or did you have a feather inside the molehill that you were using to create weak points to hit while you were fitting?" Midoriya began flipping back through pages of his notebook again, patting down his pockets for a pen before realizing that he had never picked it up in the waiting room.

"Don't have a pen?" The teen asked after a moment of silence and the boy cringed, laughing awkwardly at his own misstep.

"Oh, uh, no," Izuku was quick to retreat back into his shell at the Pro's shock. Even when it was being forced out of his expression, Midoriya could see enough of it on Hawk's face to remind him that he couldn't just explode on people because he was excited.

"Huh, that's a shame," Hawks moved towards the door, pausing when he got there to look back at Izuku curiously. "Well?"

"What?" Izuku asked, realizing that the Pro never gave him his vet tape back, but that he couldn't see it anymore either. Hawks' pants were too baggy by nature so he couldn't tell if it was in them or thrown out. The thought made him anxious, he and his mother weren't hurting for money exactly but the amount that he needed to keep his wings down was hard to come by without paying through the nose for it.

"Are you coming with?"

"You wouldn't mind?" Izuku hated how young he sounded at that moment. He didn't want Hawks to feel bad if he said no, or like he had to let the kid come with him when he was trying to do something more important. Still, the hero's expression didn't change, he just shrugged, keeping that same sly smile.

"Well, I don't need a pen so if I look for one on my own it'd be kind of pointless don't you think?"

"Thank you!"

"Don't thank me, ducky, I haven't even done anything yet." Ducky. Midoriya would have to ask him about it later if there as time, right now he had more questions about the Mole Hill fight and the hero who fought in the fight was actually willing to listen to him.
"You gotta learn to fly if you wanna get into UA Duck," Hawks' voice isn't unkind but it is tired. The young pro leaned on an air vent, head rested against a fist as he watches the child dancing from the edge of the building to another air unit and then back again.

"I'm not a duck," Midoriya grumbles halfheartedly, still peering over the edge of the two-story building. The goal is simple, to get from this building to the one across the street without hitting the ground. If Keigo had chosen a three-story across from a two-story he wouldn't be so full of anxiety but it was a level two-story to a level two-story. Even with the most favorable winds, Izuku was going to have to use his appendages if he wanted to land on the roof.

"You're right, ducks can fly," there's a break in his words as he yawns and Midoriya waits for the unspoken second half of the statement patiently while Keigo rubs at his face. The thermos that Midoriya had offered him upon meeting up for the morning had been empty practically since the moment that it changed hands. "you're a chicken,"

"Hey!"

"Come on, wings open, you're gonna want to catch as much wind as possible when you jump." the blond throws his arms behind his head as he walks towards the ledge with Izuku. Midoriya know that Keigo is considered short by a fair number of heroes and reporters in the community but he still seems to tower over him.

"I'm scared of heights?" Izuku tries and Hawks just gives him a look on par with the one that his mother gives him when he gets caught staying up too late writing.

"I'm right here, bud you don't have to worry. After all, What kind of hero would I be if I let you fall?" the tone is blase but Midoriya feels warmth at the words anyways. It's not the most traditional form of comfort but it's close enough that Izuku can see it for what it is and turns his attention back to the street below.

"A bad one."

"That's right, a bad one. So trust me a little, would you?" Izuku wants to argue and try to just run down Keigo's time. After all, Hawks is a full-time hero, he's only been around for just over a half of a year and the blond's already hit the top five hundred. Sure, Hawks may be nowhere near All Might's level of popularity yet but the eighteen-year-old is already garnering fans for how often and how hard he works and the calm, self-assurance of all his actions.

Midoriya felt bad the first time that Keigo insisted on helping him with training. Showing up at the apartment an hour and a half before school started so that he could help Izuku learn better wing etiquette for places like classrooms and train rides. And then it was insisting on seeing Midoriya's schedule to make sure that the kid wasn't overworking himself over dinner on Hawks' way home for the day. By the time that Christmas came around the boy's mother had threatened Hawks with chicken-less dinners for a month if he didn't show up.

"Hey, focus, we still need to go catch some breakfast before I send you off to learn something, Duck,"

"All right, all right," Midoriya opens up the three sets of wings along his back just enough to feel the wind brushing past the majority of the feathers. He couldn't see anyone below him but he didn't
want to startle anyone with how large his silhouette became when they were extended. His primary wings alone were each nearly the length of his torso and coming down to rest over top of not just the secondary but also his tertiary - a word that Hawks had taught him - wings.

It had been strange the day that Keigo sat down with him after dinner to try and decide what bird Izuku shared his wing shape with. It had taken nearly an hour of searching before they decided that each set was likely evolved for a different style of flight.

The primaries were the largest, large and rounded in the stereotypically angelic way, the bird encyclopedia they had found at the local library had said that these were called 'elliptical wings' and that they were better for taking off and maneuvering through obstacles, but that they were slow and needed a lot of flapping for sustained flight. It was hard to find a bird to double-check the shape with since it was more common on bats, but eventually Izuku found a picture of a robin and Keigo was quick to confirm that they were the same.

The secondaries were the longest of his three functioning sets, and the feathers were spaced out in the same way that Passive Soaring Wings were on bald eagles. Midoriya felt a bit silly when he learned that these were the wings that would work best for hovering and gliding rather than the ellipsicals that he had been using instead-but in his defense he had never had somewhere to help him understand the finer parts of his wing shapes before. His mother always getting a bit lost considering that they were all the same shades of white and that the secondary and tertiaries were so similar in structure.

The tertiaries were called High-speed wings - Keigo had been most excited when they decided that that's what they were because that was what he said his wings were like - and they did pretty much exactly what their name said. Izuku had felt a bit nervous about how well those wings would work underneath the giant ellipsicals in between his shoulder blades but his mother and - friend? Mentor? He wasn't quite sure what Keigo was to him considering that he hadn't even told Izuku his name officially yet - Hawks had both assured him that he hadn't even told Izuku his name officially yet - Hawks had both assured him that with practice and care it was likely each set could support his weight on its own. Only after using the fact that ducks also have high-speed wings as a point to cement Izuku's nickname forever though.

They had started with training on the primaries a few weeks ago. Taking off of the ground and pushing himself up onto the tops of the garbage piles on daigo beach or practicing flying between them once he was in the air.

Today they were supposed to start with passive soaring and it was not going well

"Yo-you know I don't think mom would like this," Midoriya is aware of the fact that he has wings. He is painfully aware of it now that Hawks has banned the vet tape that he had been using to bind the appendages away for hours at a time. Unfortunately, he is also aware that his mother does not have wings, that his father is somewhere doing gods know what, and that the internet only brought up videos of actual birds learning to fly which was a little bit different given that they only had one set of wings to worry about.

"Izuku, I wouldn't ask you to do anything that I didn't think you could do. I'm going to be right beside you the entire time bud, You just have to trust yourself."

"Right beside me?" It's supposed to sound like a statement but Midoriya can't help the fear creeping in towards the end and Hawks just nods. He doesn't know how the man can tell the difference between a time that's okay to pick on him for needing something repeated and when Midoriya couldn't handle it but somehow he does.

"Our wings'll touch the whole way over, I promise." Izuku nods and sticks his hands in the pocket
of his hoodie so he doesn't feel tempted to mess with his hair. He can't take his eyes off the ground, just now starting to fill with people as the day begins in earnest.

"Okay, s-so I jump and then tuck in the first and third ones," It's easy to close and open the wings. It really is. There's no need to repeat the plan other than to remind himself not to freeze up when he leaves the ground.

"Yep, it's just like closing your eyes bud. The ocean's close enough that the wind should lift you right over." Izuku nods and lines his feet up on the edge of the building. Keigo is right next to him, wingtips brushing his just like he promised they would. Red and White feathers rustling as Hawks counts down quietly from five.

On zero Izuku steps off the building and there's a sickening half-second that stretches on too long in his head where he doesn't open his wings enough. In that half-second he is falling and he is going to die and everyone will stop staring at him because when you die wings aren't as strange a thing anymore.

And then the second set of wings stretches out and the other two fold in and the wind races underneath his feathers and Midoriya opens his eyes. There are people on the street below them, but he can only hear Hawks shouting encouragement at his side, the building coming up under him before Izuku has time to be afraid of the wind dying out and plummeting to his death on a nice man's newspaper stand.

The landing isn't smooth, Izuku's brain decided to just snap his wings in too fast and send him rolling on the rooftop, scraping his knees and the tops of his wings against the concrete but not enough to draw blood. His eyes water on impact and he resists the urge to rub at them and risk getting something in his contacts but Keigo just laughs.

"Did you see that Izuku? You did so well! I'm sure you could have kept on soaring for miles!"

"I didn't stick the landing though," the boy points out quietly and Hawks waves his hand in the air as if to shoo the thought away, smile never dimming as he offers his hand to the boy. Midoriya takes it.

"Most birds don't on the first try, you flew and that's all that matters!" The boy must have his want to try again written all over his features because before he can even open his mouth to voice his want for a second try Hawks is speaking again. "How about after classes I pick you up and we go to the beach? the wind'll be stronger there and it'll give me a chance to talk to your mom about something before we go."

"Am I in trouble?" His voice is small, the anxiety creeping back in with thoughts of Hawks being tired of teaching him and looking to his mother to break the news to the boy. Or maybe Keigo found out that Midoriya knows his name and wanted to ask Inko if she could talk to him about respecting other people's privacy like so many of his teachers used to.

"No, Ducky, you're fine. I just had an idea I wanted to run by her." The anxiety doesn't die off completely but it subsides as the Pro reaches over to ruffle his hair.

"What idea?" Izuku asks, and the smile that takes over Keigo's face is the first warning sign that the man is plotting something. A smile too sly to be innocent and too cat like to have any right looking like it belonged on his features.

"It's a surprise." There's the second.
"Oh no-" The words have barely left him when Hawks flashes the boy a look so overly dramatic in its depiction of shock that Izuku couldn't stop the smile that forms if he wanted to. The adrenaline of flying over a semi-busy street in the morning light through has made him loopy already and he can feel the laughter building as Hawks nudged him towards the side of the building again, this time one that leans over an alleyway.

"What is that for?" And the over dramatization following it is the third. He's up to something, even as he carefully steers the conversation away from the mystery idea that he needs to run past Izuku's mother.

"Last time you said it was a surprise you brought over thirty pounds of chicken." Izuku is the first one to step onto the fire escape, only pausing to make sure that Hawks is following as he remembers the look on his mother's face when Keigo showed up at the apartment with a box just full of chicken and nothing else.

"You have a high metabolism! You need to put some weight on those hollow bones!" Keigo's teasing pulls a laugh from Midoriya that sounds the way that stepping off of the building felt. Half falling and half rising as a hand reaches up to bangs subconsciously to try and pull them into his eyes. Keigo doesn't comment on the self-soothing habit as he leads Midoriya down the fire escape on the side of the building - complaining all the way because they could just jump if they wanted to. It's not what Izuku thought training with a Pro Hero would be like, but his quirk isn't what he thought it would be like either so maybe that was just how his life was meant to be.
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Shouto makes an entrance! Inko adopts another kid! Hawks admits that he has a family!

Chapter Notes

I'm just doing time skips for now so that we can cover all the important scenes without dragging the chapters out too much (I actually collapsed the first two into one chapter since they had similar vibes to me). Not that I don't love a good exposition but I really wanna get to UA scenes. I have...big plans for bird boy and flock once he hits high school.

It’s selfish to ask. Hawks has spent his entire life not being selfish so he knows that there’s no other way to classify what he’s asking Inko to do. To take a full day off of work to go to a party that’s most certainly going to try and make her out to be some secret girlfriend or family member or gods know what else. But it’s Christmas and he just doesn’t want to go to another party alone. And sure, it’s nothing more than a PR Stunt, a chance for the journalists that the Hero Commission approves of to take photos of Pro Heroes and their families mingling to humanize them. But doesn’t that just make it worse considering that he doesn’t have a family there to mingle with.

And Izuku would enjoy it if nothing else.

Even after over a year of training and talking and the kid giving Keigo as many ideas for improvement as he got, Izuku still got the same starry-eyed look whenever the chance to meet another Pro came up.

And that was just another point in favor of why Hawks absolutely should not invite them to the party. It was going to be full of heroes and their families, sure, but that also meant that it was going to be full of hero commission pawns. Any number of which could look at this kid, this twelve-year-old with wings that were too big for his body and a metabolism that was all but killing him considering how many calories he should be eating that he just wasn’t, and try to make a tool out of him too.

Not that they would get far with Inko. She wouldn’t accept money, he knew first hand. And while he hadn’t seen her threatened there was something in the way that she carried herself around the hospital that first time he had asked to take Izuku that screamed not to underestimate her. Keigo hadn’t seen that silent warning since, not even a watered-down version, but after years of reading body language, he knew better than to forget about it.

“Hawks?”

“Sorry, It’s nothing bad I just was trying to figure out how to phrase it so you didn’t feel like you had to say yes,” It’s selfish. Hawks knows that it is. But even so, “I was just wondering if you and
Izuku is twelve the first time Hawks brings them to a party big enough to have press clamoring to get inside and it isn’t until he gets there that he understands why Keigo didn’t want to drag them into it earlier.

“You ready Duck?” Keigo’s voice is light and teasing even if Midoriya can see the smallest pinch of worry in his brow. It had taken a while to start seeing the cracks in the Pro’s nonchalant armor, but Izuku had time to learn when he wasn’t fine-tuning his flying skills. It was never more obvious than a simple change in body posture, a lifting of the shoulders where they used to be slack, or the briefest ruffle of feathers but it was enough.

“You ready!” The walk from the limo to the party entrance is the worst part, he had warned, but Izuku still isn’t ready for the flashing of lights as they exit the vehicle. The pro first, then his mother, then the boy, who’s wings are tucked as tight as possible against his body, the layering disguises his second and third set beneath as merely more feathers of the first and while Hawks disapproved of Izuku using the method very often, he had given the boy the go-ahead to do it during that precious twenty-second time that the unfiltered media could see him. Anything that they could get on a hero was free game for them to turn into a story and that included a boy who by all means wouldn’t have been training underneath a hero’s wing except for a strange turn of fate.

Izuku had thanked Kawado for sending him to take the vet tape off dozens of times for the effect that it had on his life.

He can hear the shouting of questions and it’s hard for him to focus on anything other than the bodies in front of him as he clammers from the car and walks unsteadily along the path laid out and marked with ropes. Hawks is talking to a few reporters ahead of him and his mother, a hand behind his back ushering the two Midoriyas into the building while he diverts some of the attention off of the mother and son.

Izuku wants to ask if he’s okay with taking the press head-on but Inko doesn’t even hesitate to grab her son’s wrist and pull him ahead. Her grip feels a little tighter than necessary but he can hardly ask her about it when she’s already greeting the man at the door and showing the special badges that Hawks had given her earlier when he debriefed them on what to expect.

Keigo is still talking behind him when Izuku hears the door click behind them. The sudden silence of the lobby compared to the chaos of outside is jarring and Inko’s grip loosens immediately. Her face still looks oddly pinched, but her voice comes out as smooth as it can considering that she’s clearly overwhelmed.

“Are you okay, Zuku?”

“I’m fine mom. All I did was walk behind you.” But he lets her fuss over him as they pull away from the door and towards the only hallway that was lit. There’s a door at the end of it with security guards that Izuku can hear the faintest of music emanating from but he doesn’t push to move towards it considering that Hawks is still held up outside.

By the time that the door opens again and the red-winged man is waltzing through Izuku had wondered if perhaps they should have just left ahead of him though. The hero sags from relief for just a moment when the lobby door closes behind him, but the easy smile that Izuku recognizes from earlier is back before he or his mother can comment on it.

“Sorry, there were a lot of questions tonight. Most of them were spurred on by the terrific shoe
choice we went with.” Hawks is looking pointedly at Izuku’s red sneakers and the teen can’t help himself.

“There is no way that the reporters asked you about why I was wearing red sneakers, Hawks,” Izuku is quick to follow the Pro as he walks back towards the ballroom. After all, Hawks is also wearing sneakers, though his are black like the boots of his hero costume and his suit is the same tan as the man’s oversized jacket and work pants. Izuku quietly thought that it might have been nice for him to switch color schemes for a night, to really feel off the clock and relax like he does when he shows up in tweety bird pajama pants and an oversized endeavor t-shirt to see if Izuku wants to sell turnips at his animal crossing island. The green-haired boy knows better than to say this aloud though. There’s a reason that he still hasn’t given them his name, even if Izuku knows it from the first high five they shared.

“Hm, maybe you’re right I forget already.” Inko doesn’t say anything, but when Izuku turns to look at her she seems more relaxed than before. He knew that his mother was a private person but seeing her tense up so badly has him nervous and uneasy himself. His mother was a worrier and an introvert but he’d never known her to react the way she did to attention.

But then Hawks is at the door flashing his hero ID and his mother is pulling out the special badges that were made for them and Midoriya is falling through the entrance of the ballroom like Alice into Wonderland.

The room is full of noises, clinking glasses and laughter, and low tone conversations. There’s a live band playing in one of the corners and there’s a tree towards the front that towers over even the tallest of heroes in the room.

He feels out of place amongst the pros and their families. He’s half their height and dressed in a simple dark green suit rather than something expensive-looking or tailor-made like even those closest to his age seem to be.

Although looking out across the ballroom, it’s hard for Izuku to find anyone that actually appears to be his age. There are the pros, most of whom he recognizes right off the bat. Like Backdraft, a rescue specialist that’s been around for as long as Midoriya can remember, dressed in a red suit that matches the taps where his wrists should be. Or the blood hero Vlad King who’s dressed in a simple three-piece suit.

And then there are the hero’s spouses. Most of whom look like they could have been anyone off of the street if it weren’t for the fancy dresses and suits that they wore. There’s a woman who’s linked her arm with the dragon hero Ryukyu that has an interesting flowering quirk if the crown weaved into her hair is any tip-off to what it is but even then it’s overshadowed by the woman’s dress.

And there’s even the occasional toddler or infant running amok with one or both of the parents following close behind or holding the child’s hand. But the more he looks the more he comes up empty with kids his age.

“Maybe I should have gone with the heels after all,” His mother’s hand fidgets as she speaks, quickly moving to play with the hem of her white coverup’s sleeve. Personally, Izuku thinks that she looks like she belongs there in her mint dress and makeup, even when she decided to wear green sneakers so that he wouldn’t be left out - and to avoid wearing heels she would confess to him when he felt bad for ruining her outfit - his mother looks like an actress in a movie about someone else’s life. But Hawks beats him to the punch.

“Aw, come on Miss Midoriya, you don’t look out of place. So what if you’re a little short, some
guys like that.” Hawks’ teasing earns a squawk from his mother as she gently hits the man’s arm. Izuku has to smother the snort that wants to shoot from him, still, the blonde hero is right.

If anyone of the three of them should feel out of place it shouldn’t be his mother with her delicately curled hair or carefully drawn on eyeliner, it should be Midoriya in a dark green suit that matches his hair but clashes with his shoes and wings that are bigger than he is and that he couldn’t convince Hawks to let him bind down. He’s half the height of most of the Pros in the room, even with his wings loosened up so that they can see all three sets, a few gazes already meeting his in the few moments that they’ve been there.

“You know, that was really sweet for about five minutes and then you kept talking.” She teases back with a good-natured huff, but his mother makes no move to hide the smile that touches her face or the fact that for the first time all night it’s one that reaches her eyes.

“You know, one of the most common criticisms I hear is that I talk too much,” Hawks says, sticking his hands into his pockets as he moves further into the room. The Midoriyas follow as Izuku speaks, eyes darting from pro to pro as he tries desperately to memorize anything new that he sees of them to write down later. He had wanted to bring his journal but had decided against it in case he couldn’t resist the urge to ask for an autograph and risk putting someone else on the spot at a party meant to be low stress.

“I don’t know, I think it’s part of your charm. It helps put the people you save at ease and boosts your popularity rating at the same time. Plus it ensures that you build up a reputation of caring about the people you’re saving not just about beating up the bad guys that are threatening them.”

“Wait a minute did I just hear someone encourage you to speak more? No way.” The voice is new but Izuku recognizes the Pro that it comes from the second that she moves into view.

“Ha ha, Miruko, I’ll have you know that some people like me.” There’s a devilish look in her eyes as she crouches down, a hand cupped around her mouth as she pretends to whisper.

“Psst, kid, blink twice if you’re here against your will.” Hawks sends a single feather out to nudge at her and Miruko laughs as it tries in vain to push her over. Izuku is left staring at another of the fastest rising heroes, her presence more of a surprise than perhaps it should be. The woman stands, holding a hand out towards his mother as the boy tries not to freak out because she’s right there and he’s a huge fan and has she ever thought about maybe tryi-

“I didn’t know that Hawks had a little brother, I don’t know how you do it. I’m Rumi Usagiyama, I’ve worked with your son a bit out in the field and he’s a great hero.” Izuku says nothing, as he watches his mentor flush bright red at the miscommunication. His mother doesn’t seem to mind though, just taking the bunny-themed hero’s hand in her own and shaking it.

“Rumi she’s no-

“He is, isn’t he? I’m so proud of him, even if I wish he’d eat more than just fried chicken.” Izuku has to suppress the snort at Hawk’s indignant squawk. His eyes - no contacts tonight his mind reminds him because it hates him - slid to Keigo without comment, just watching the man’s feathers ruffle and ears turn pink.

“That’s birdbrain for you. I hope he listens to you more than his superiors.” Miruko teases again, but it lacks any sort of punch. It’s the same tone that Hawks uses to talk to Izuku and his mother and he wonders quietly if the two have known each other for longer than they’re saying considering how close they are.
“Oh I don’t know about that,” Inko’s laugh is soft but sure, the noise putting Izuku at ease.

“I feel like this was a bad idea.” Hawks finally whispers, leaning down to throw an arm around Izuku’s shoulders. The teen can see the way that the man’s eyes glance between the women and almost feels a bit of pity for the hero. It’d been a long time since he’d seen someone be forcibly cared for but it wasn’t that different for the Pro than it had been for Kawado.

“It was. She’s going to have half the heroes here reporting back to you on your eating and sleeping habits before we leave.” Miruko laughs again and Izuku missed the joke this time but his mother seems significantly less uncomfortable than she did when they first walked in.

“At least now I know where you get it from.” Keigo sighs, breath tickling the smallest set of feathers that are wrapped around Izuku’s neck.

“Get what from?” The teen resists the brief urge to slap the pro in the face with them if for no other reason than he likes hugs and would like to continue receiving them on occasion from Hawks.

“Your stubborn streak.”

“My what? I’m not stubborn!”

“Uh huh, tell that to th- oh!” Izuku’s brow furrows in confusion, ready to ask why Hawks cut off in the middle of his own sentence but the reason is pretty clear when Midoriya looks over his shoulder.

He had always known on some level what someone who was six foot five would look like in comparison to him or his mother but seeing the number two hero walk into the ballroom, a kid no older than Izuku behind him put things in a shockingly clearer perspective.

Surprisingly though, s much as his attention should linger on the number two hero who demands that people look at him even as he ignores it, it slips easily to the boy that lingers in his shadow.

His hair is an odd split of red and white, his eyes just as uncoordinated with a single brown and another of piercing blue. Izuku knows for a fact that he can’t be older than him, he’s too small to be anything else, but the way that his shoulders stand at attention in a classic black suit seems to make him look older. There’s a scar over one eye, big enough that it takes up a quarter of the Todoroki’s face that Izuku can recognize as a burn. He has enough of his own from the little parts of elementary school that he remembers even if Katsuki made it a point to steer clear of him now.

A fire quirk like his father? It’s possible he didn’t know how to control it at first, Midoriya all but screams as a familiar face blocks his field of view. Eyes flying wide as he jumps back.

“See someone you like?” Hawk’s voice is too self-satisfied for Midoriya’s liking and he can’t help the flush that rises across his features at the pro’s eyebrow wiggle.

“N-no,"

“Hm, are you sure about that?” Keigo is back to standing at full height, arm looped around Midoriya’s shoulder and it shouldn’t feel like he’s being trapped, he trusts Hawks, but it does. His face burns and he can’t look at the hero who’s taken post behind him as he stutters out a response.

“I’m sure!” Izuku’s voice sounds squeaky even to him, and he hears the conversation his mother had been having pause but continues just as quickly.

“Alright, then there shouldn’t be a problem if we go to talk to them.” There’s red at the edges of his
vision as Hawks fluffs his wings out to cage Midoriya into moving forward with him.

“Wait a minute!”

“I’m borrowing your son!” Hawks calls halfheartedly over his shoulder and Izuku can see his mother tense just a little bit but she doesn’t stop them. Just keeping an eye on them as she continues to talk with the up and coming bunny hero. Honestly, what if he was really being kidnapped, mom. “Now then Duck, have you had the talk about how little heroes are made?”

“Hawks,” Izuku hisses, trying to duck around him and failing. Really, he should have known better but his brain was screaming about the fact that the boy was now looking at him and Izuku hadn’t even really brushed his hair very well before coming and now he was making a scene in front of the number two hero and his very strange son.

“He’s it hanging!” Hawks leans down to whisper to him one more time, “Go get ‘em tiger.” and with that Izuku is pushed unceremoniously towards the teenager who up close is a few inches taller than Midoriya. It’s not an uncommon fact but something about it only heightens the age in the boy’s posture.

“Hi,” Izuku stutters after a moment, Hawks is talking animatedly to his fellow Pro and the green-haired boy can’t help but feel a little guilty. The other teenager is silent, just staring at Midoriya in a way that makes Izuku feel like he isn’t even there. “Uhm, My name’s Izuku.” More silence. Hawks is glancing at him in between nonstop yammering but the teen is too busy trying to figure out if the cold look in his conversationalist partner’s eyes is one of disinterest or confusion. He’s usually okay at deciphering but there’s so few obvious tells in the boy.

“Your hair is really cool! Is it an effect of your quirk or do you dye it that way?” He tries and the Todoroki hesitantly raises a hand to tug on the strands. Izuku barely has time to realize that what he said might be offensive before the stoic face contorts into obvious confusion.

“Why would I dye my hair two colors?”

“Uhm, a fashion statement?” Izuku tries, a nervous chuckle leaving him and the boy in front of him - who never gave him a name back which was a bit rude since now he had to just keep assuming his last name was Todoroki - doesn’t quite laugh but his gaze seems a little less harsh.

It’s natural.” The silence that falls between them is only moderately awkward, but it’s enough for Izuku’s attention to shift to Endeavor who, even at a function designed to be casual and comfortable, is dressed in his hero suit with his hair aflame, radiates an annoyed vibe that makes Izuku want to run and hide.

“Is your dad always like that?” Midoriya asks suddenly and hates the way that it makes his companion’s face shut off. “I, uhm, not to be rude he just seems...harsh.”

There’s a moment again, calculating, where he can see the gears turning in the other teen’s head multicolored eyes as he decides what to do and finally, with more hesitation than Izuku had ever seen, he responds.

“Not always, sometimes he’s sleeping.” There’s no attempt at a smile with his features, but Izuku could have sworn that he saw one gleaming in Todoroki’s eyes.

“Was that a joke?” Izuku asks conspiratorially, eyes shining at the progress. The teen’s mouth opens to speak but is cut off before any sound can come out.

“Shouto,” Endeavor’s voice, even at what Izuku would assume is a conversational volume for the
man, is overpowering and the teen, Shouto, snaps to attention. “Come.”

And the boy does, closing the gap between them without a second’s delay. But he does meet 
Izuku’s gaze again and the green haired teen is convinced that he’s found his own person to gently 
bully into being taken care of. The though only cemented when Shouto hesitantly raises a hand and 
waves behind his father’s back. It’s not much, but it’s something.

“So did you get the kid’s phone number?”

Huh, that probably would have made things easier.

Midoriya is thirteen when Hawks celebrates his twenty first birthday at his house. The house is a 
mess of red and white feathers given that it's the middle of molting season for the both of the boys, 
Inko is puttering around somewhere in the kitchen but won't let him in to help and Izuku is 
covering for something given that anytime Keigo moves to go towards the hallway there's an 
immediate effort to distract him. If it had been any other day or any other family he might have 
been concerned. But as it stands, Keigo is just tired of trying to convince them that he doesn't need 
anything.

He supposes on some level it's fair considering that for Midoriya's twelfth birthday he might have 
gone a tad overboard. In his defense though, he had more money than he had ever expected in his 
life just sitting around. What else would he have done with it other than buy the kid the limited 
edition posters he wanted?

But come on, Christmas was just a few days ago. This level of plotting wasn't necessary when they 
could have just celebrated both events on the same day.

"Zuku? Can you come here and help?” The boy shoots to his feet before Hawks can say a word, 
clambering over his own wings. The proportions of the kid are still wrong, his body is too thin, his 
wings are too big and his bones aren't hollow like most avian quirks. Izuku eats more than even 
Keigo does and yet he can never seem to hold weight which disproved the theory he had suspected 
of a higher metabolism.

"Are you sure you don't need someone that can actually reach the top shelf?” He calls, still laying 
on the couch and playing with the game that Midoriya had gotten him as a gag gift. Really, if the 
developers had wanted to make a game about him all they had to do was ask and he would have 
said yes. Instead they had 'Eagle' with neon green wings. Their loss.

"You're not that much taller than me!"

"You stay right there! It's almost ready!” Inko calls over the indignant response, so stay he does. 
His memories of life before the hero commission are few and far between - likely the fault of 
regression according to the doctors he had seen - but he knows that it was never this warm in his 
house.

There's laughter from the kitchen and the faint sound of music that Inko works to and there's snow 
falling gently against the window. And most importantly no one is telling him to get up. He's 
allowed to lounge on the couch and watch television and play games without looking over his 
shoulder for when the next task is going to be thrown at him. It's hard to get these moments when 
it's not just taking advantage of Izuku's terrible sleeping pattern and Inko's work schedule keeping
her up at odd hours.

"Okay, Hawks close your eyes!" Hawks closes his eyes, but can’t help the over dramatic sigh that he lets slip.

"Fine, fine, eyes are closed, proceed with the celebration," There’s the sound of footsteps and murmured whispers from Izuku as they draw close enough that Keigo can see the flames on the backs of his eyelids from the candles.

“Open them!” Inko says quietly and Keigo doesn’t even try to repress the disbelieving laugh that he lets out. The cake is a replica of Endeavor’s butt which, sure he asked for but how was he to know Inko would go through with it. There's the tell tall shuttering of a camera next to him, Izuku given that Inko is holding the cake but the second that it’s

He blows out the candle - placed in a spot that he will not be telling Endeavor about the next time he sees him, and the cake is being cut as he makes his wish.

It’s a simple one, much more attainable than last year’s wish for free time or the year before that’s wish for a good debut. This wish is a quiet hope to be able to spend more time with the Midoriyas that isn’t in the dead of night.

The cake is delicious, and the blond hero says as much even before teasing Izuku about eating his crush’s father’s ass. The green-haired boy flushing as red as the feathers on Keigo’s back. Inko’s attention hones in faster than he expects. It’s a good half an hour before Izuku asks his Mom about the present, the teen’s face burning the entire time. Hawks is convinced that it’s mostly to distract his mother from asking about whether it’s someone at school or online for the thirteenth time but he doesn’t deflect back to the kid’s crush anyways.

Still Inko humors him, the devilish smile that Keigo has grown to associate with her still on the woman’s lips as she putters out of the room and back in just as quickly. Izuku is all but vibrating in his seat, wings constantly shifting, feathers rustling. The hero can’t help but wonder if he’d still have a habit like that if it hadn’t been beaten out of him.

“Here. It’s not much compared to what you can buy yourself but-”

“How many times do we have to talk about this. I don’t care about how much you spend on me. I don’t need you to spend anything on me at all.”

“Hawks, please just open the box.” Izuku all but whines and Keigo is quick to stick out his tongue at the boy, purposefully removing the white ribbon as red as the feathers on Keigo’s back. Inko’s attention hones in faster than he expects. It’s a good half an hour before Izuku asks his Mom about the present, the teen’s face burning the entire time. Hawks is convinced that it’s mostly to distract his mother from asking about whether it’s someone at school or online for the thirteenth time but he doesn’t deflect back to the kid’s crush anyways.

He expects a watch or a necklace of some sort given the box shape but when the small red lid pops off there’s a moment where everything is still and the world around him is silent.

"You're giving me a key?" He asks softly. Keigo can’t remember the last time that he had a key somewhere, choosing to fly into his apartment through the balcony when he had free time and before then he was never allowed out of the hero commission’s sight. There’s no need for a key when you’re being watched and someone is always there to open the door for you.

"You're sleeping in the guest room almost as often as you're going home," Inko says as if it’s second nature to offer her home up to someone that still hasn’t even told her his name.

"But there's more!"
"There's more?" He asks, and no, he’s not crying. Hawks doesn’t cry anymore. He hasn’t cried in years. But his vision is fuzzy so maybe there was something in the cake. Inko didn’t seem like the type of person to throw hallucinogenics in her deserts but it was always the quiet ones after all.

"Come on!" Izuku's hand is on his, tugging him towards the hallway. The kid's hand is startlingly warm, but he's used to it at this point. It makes Izuku near impossible to touch in summer months but the way that he radiates heat was perfect for training in the snow and slush of early January. It helped ease his worries about working his...mentee? kid? Those didn't feel quite right to explain what Izuku was to him.

"Look!" He doesn’t have time to dwell on what the strange warmth in his chest is as his hand is dropped and Izuku is throwing the door to the guest room open for him to see.

It’s almost too much to take in. The room had previously been done up in shades of mint and cool blues but the walls had been completely painted over with what he knew must look like white or grey to the Midoriyas but to his bird-like eyes was lit up with ultraviolet color he didn't even have the words to describe. The bedsheets and curtains were a much softer red, the walnut wood replaced with one that was stained to look like redwood as well.

"You gave it a makeover," Keigo says finally, trying to focus on not giving away too much in his face. There’s a desk in the corner with a framed photo on it that he can recognize as the three of them from the Christmas party. There’s a dresser that he can already imagine dumping his clothes into for after patrol sleepovers.

"A key's no good if you don't want to come here. Now you have your own room.” Hawks doesn’t say anything more, a hand drifting to touch the hand-painted feathers that matched his curtains. He had thought the house was colder lately, but he had been thinking that it was to save money, not to air out paint fumes.

It must have taken so much money, so much time.

“Thank you,” Keigo’s voice cracks again and he won’t cry. He won’t. But if he turns around then he’s sure he’ll slip.

“You know, the only bad part about this is that you’re gonna be able to mess with my notebooks so much easier now.” Izuku’s tone is warm, so much like Inko’s that it’s impossible not to know they’re related. But there’s something more in the way that he teases that Hawks doesn’t quite get yet. It’s not calculated coyness like his interactions with the public or brash like the Hero Commission Agents get whenever he talks back to them. It’s almost familial

“Only bad part? Duck we both shed. The worst part is going to be molting season.” Keigo tries to laugh, the result a little wet but still lighthearted, and if he wipes at his eyes a little before turning around to let them see him again then that’s for the pro alone to know.

“Don’t worry, I’m going to start making cat toys to donate to the local shelter.” Hawks doesn’t know if the teasing is a purposeful redirect or not but he’s thankful. His face hurts from the smile and his hand is wrapped so tightly around the key in his hand that he’s sure he’ll have an imprint when he finally puts it down. If there was a moment that he could bottle forever it would be this one.
Midoriya is fourteen when Keigo tells them his name officially. It's not a big production or even an emotional one in the moment. It's just a ploy to get out of being fussed at over drinking the last of the milk. Inko may not be angry often, but her disappointment hurts almost worse.

"Hawks did it," Izuku says without hesitation and there's a grumble beside him about betrayal as he finishes his homework.

"Hawks-"

"I'm not Hawks, I'm Keigo but I'll pass the message on to him." The blond man is twenty-two but in that moment he looks like a five-year-old trying to come up with a good comeback and failing, the ghost of a milk mustache on his lip.

"Keigo, I'm not mad just please tell us when you decide to finish the milk so that I know to buy more on my way home." Izuku's mother's voice is soft and fond even as it sighs.

"Sorry, Mom." Izuku doesn't remember when the pro started calling his mother Mom as a joke but it doesn't sound teasing this time. No one mentions it but his mother hums a bit more than usual as she works and Keigo stays longer than he normally would on a weekend. Really, it was only a matter of time, wasn't it?

Izuku makes a note to ask him his feelings on family photos before the week is over.

HMMMMDSFASDFJADKLFSDJAF SOMEONE DREW FANART???

for some reason, my laptop won't let me post a version where the top of his head isn't cut off but IT'S ZUKU WITH HIS WINGS AND HIS EYES AND FJDSAKFOEWPasDFKASDFAS I'M SCREAMING

This was drawn by the wonderful and lovely Anonymous_Wraith!!!
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

let the entrance exam begin

Chapter Notes

Okay! So for people who have been following this story let me tell you now! the third chapter wasn't deleted! I just did some editing and collapsed the three chapters into two and added some more background interactions so that I could feel justified to hop right into the story!

“Okay so one more time, what’s the game plan” Hawks is fretting over the teen worse than his mom did, but Izuku keeps that remark to himself. It’s understandable, honestly Midoriya isn’t sure why he isn’t panicking more than he is. He’s standing on a rooftop across from his dream school, the hero who’s been training him for the past four years is checking him over for crumbs from his good luck poptart - even though that wasn’t even his tradition in the first place.

“Breathe, hold, release, repeat. If someone touches my wings, fling them open as fast as possible so they’re thrown off. If one set gets injured tuck them in and rely on the others until I can get someone to heal it.” Midoriya’s wings twitch behind him. He’d barely slept the night before, knowing that his back was a no go for obvious reasons and his stomach threatening to spill it’s own guts if he slept on it. The cool morning air was helping keep him awake, but he still regretted not grabbing some form of coffee on the way out the door.

“And?” Keigo prompts, hands crossed over his chest and the teen rolls his eyes in response. Really, he grew more and more like Inko every day.

“And don’t play hero too much.” Izuku doesn’t like that part of the plan. What good is getting into a hero school if he can’t help others get there too? But Hawks, and to a lesser extent his mother who is barely containing her own anxiety and worries, have been quick to remind him that reality doesn’t work that way every time. Izuku watches the other kids his age filtering into UA’s gates and wonders if he would be among them if Hawks hadn’t stolen his vet tape.

“Thank you. Being a good person and helping your competitors is nice, in the real world they’d be coworkers and you’d be super popular, but in there those kids and you are both competing for the same spot, although if you’d just let me give you a recommendation-”

“I want to earn my spot!” The cry draws a few looks from down below but most shrug it off. Hawks is standing far enough back on the roof to avoid being spotted, one of the few times that

“Recommendation students still have to take an exam.” Hawks points out, posture lazy but eyes sharp. He’s watching the kids filter in too but something about it is detached compared to how he looks at Izuku a moment later.
“It’s mostly for show though. I want to prove I deserve to be there.” And maybe that’s a bit harsh. He knows for a fact that some of the kids he’s seen at the Hero Commission Events that have been thrown applied for recommendations exam spot. Shouto Todoroki is one of them, and Izuku knows that he didn’t want to go at all, much less through an ‘easy’ acceptance route. Still, it was commonly accepted that with a pretty enough signature at the bottom of your application and a flashy enough quirk to just finish the exam it didn’t matter your skill level. Keigo sighs behind him.

“I know Duck. And you will. And if anyone in there comments on your eyes you throw dirt at theirs, got it?” The air loses it’s serious undercharge in a typical Keigo fashion. Izuku could count on few things in his life, never blindsiding him, his brother’s knack for comic relief being one of them.

“I’m not throwing dirt in someone’s eyes.” He laughs, and the pro relaxes minutely behind him, it’s all about the change in how he holds his wings, their height sinking just a few centimeters and his smile growing a tad warmer.

“Not a lot, just enough to blind them temporarily.” Keigo covers his eyes with his hands in an over exaggerated level of shock. “Ah! My eyes! Now that i am blinded i can see what an asshole I was being!”

“Are you sure you’re a hero?” the youngest Midoriya asks, but his smile never slips, hands sinking into his pant pockets as he speaks, itching to move even when there was nothing to do.

“Hm, let’s ask the most recent rankings board shall we? Oh, that’s right you’re talking to number three baby!”

“Oooo so that’s why mom was looking up exotic cake pans last night.” The pro next to him makes a sound that Izuku would swear is the verbal equivalent of a keyboard smash. The barest of flush hits the blond’s ears and Izuku wonders if he’d be able to sneak a picture before it fades away.

“She wouldn’t dare.” Hawks coughed as the younger boy tried in vain to snap some photos. It wasn’t clear the quality level of the photographs, and he couldn’t check now without alerting the other to his plan, but Izuku was looking forward to seeing the fruit of his sneak attack later.

“She might. You keep pushing her and one of these days Mom’s going to make a cake that’s just his di-”

“Oh look at the time!” Keigo tugs Izuku into a hug, hand coming up to ruffle the mess of green curls good naturedly. The boy didn’t want to let go, knowing that it was going to be days and days before he saw the busy man again outside of midnight run-ins at the fridge.

“Seriously Duck knock ‘em dead,” The hug is loose, free for Midoriya to pull away whenever he’s ready, even as the boy leans on Keigo wholeheartedly. “But maybe not literally. I feel like you’d lose points for that.”

“Remember to text mom so she isn’t worried about you!”

“You sound just like her!” Izuku stands there and watches his de facto brother take off. His red feathered form grows smaller and smaller before finally he can’t follow him anymore and only then does the boy drop down from the roof to the street below. His uniform constricts his neck given that his wings naturally rest there and he’s tucked his wings in so tightly that it’s just uncomfortable enough to distract him.
Although, training with Keigo has prepared him for distractions. It was strange to think about how quickly he redirect the conversation to something as off the wall as volleyball rules when he’s trying to teach Izuku how to hover without crashing to the ground.

_Breath, hold, release, repeat._

“Freak,” The whisper isn’t loud enough to make a scene but it’s more than enough to crush the good vibes that Midoriya had been riding up until he found his seat next to his blond classmate. Katsuki had never been overtly kind throughout middle school, but he had never gone out of his way to hurt him either. Just stayed within that strange grey space that most of the school resided in that felt a lot like they were afraid of him.

Izuku knew from pictures and the odd memory that they used to be close before quirks started to come in. That there was a time where Izuku had on set of wings and Bakugo thought that it was cool and then a second set came in and it was interesting and then the third led to the explosive blond ignoring him when he asked if he needed help on the homework, the fourth leading to warning pops in Katsuki’s hands if he so much as looked at him the wrong way.

“Hey Katsuki,” Midoriya greeted quietly, trying to reinflate that balloon he had been carrying in his chest but the blond boy scooted away from him ever so slightly and the plastic popped altogether.

Izuku wasn’t surprised, but that didn’t mean that it stopped hurting.

_Breath, hold, release, repeat._

Izuku had come far in the years that he’d practiced with Hawks. His leanness stopped being painfully sharp and started being misleading given the muscles packed into the small frame. His wings were still larger than the rest of his body weight doubled but when he moved on the ground he wasn’t as afraid of hitting someone with them, and he would go weeks without feeling like he had to bind them down for someone else’s comfort.

Still, that didn’t mean he knew what to do with robots. Keigo never outright said no to teaching him how to fight, but something in the uncanny stiffness of his brother’s shoulders and the way that he would grow distant at the suggestion made it hard for Izuku to press. He had suspicions of course, he and his mother both did, but Hawks never invited them into his past so they didn’t tread in it.

Not outright at least.

There’s a crash in the distance and Izuku shakes himself aware of the cry that follows it. A girl with bone shards sticking out of her back like hedgehog spines is trying to hold up a piece of rubble to keep from falling on her with one hand, and then use the other to still shoot an oncoming robot.

Izuku doesn’t know what to do with robots. He doesn’t know how to fight.

What he does know is how to put himself in between people and take a hit without crumpling to the ground.

His wings burn when the blast first hits them, his back to the robot so that Izuku can talk to the girl he’s trying to help.

“Go, I’ve got you covered!” The girl doesn’t thank him as she scrambles out from underneath the rubble she’d been trying to hold up. Izuku doesn’t hold it against her though, using her silent escape to grab one of her discarded bone quills and leap up for a better vantage point.
The makeshift knife in his hand cuts slightly but the pain isn’t as bad as flying on burnt wings which he really shouldn’t be doing if he wanted to keep using them as a shield, but there was no other way for him to get the height he needed for a nosedive so quickly and time was already short to begin with.

Everything begins to blur together in a rush of the same motions. Jump in front of robots when someone is in danger, use their quirk to take the robots out together or on his own, repeat. Midoriya’s wings are aching with pain worse than he’s ever experienced but the boy is trying to keep moving. He knows that he’s not getting very many points. Mostly taking out spare one pointers that people with nonphysical quirks are struggling with, and the odd two pointer when someone bites off more than they can chew.

When Izuku revisits his memories later, he can’t distinguish what came first, the screaming or the shaking of the earth. He only knows that his memories take on a crystal clear lense the second that the zero pointer comes into play.

FANART?!??!?!?

this is another piece from ever-amazing Anonymous_Wraith of Izuku! And his nickname! And his wings! I just!!!! He's so cute!!!
Okay so I actually drew this one because I wanted you guys to see a better depiction of Izuku the way that I imagine him? (Granted I didn't know how to draw him being super super skinny like I've described him so I just went with normal proportions) So this is Izuku in his future hero costume!
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Izuku and Keigo talk and acceptance letters come out

“I failed,” Izuku says in the same tone that one would say that the sky is blue or the grass is green. The earth is held together by gravity, the clouds are made of water, and Izuku just failed his entrance exam and is avoiding going home to an empty apartment full of hero notes and study books that proved useless in the actual exam. Keigo gives an airy huff before throwing himself down to sit at Izuku’s side on the edge of the roof.

Izuku appreciates that he says nothing about the boy’s wings or wrapped up hands.

“You don’t know that.” Hawks tries gently, nudging the green-haired boy’s shoulder with his affectionately. There’s a small commotion below them on the ground, but from five stories up, all that Izuku can make out for sure is the familiar flashes of cameras going off and one particularly loud cry of ‘Hawks!’ The blond pro waves, but Izuku takes note of the bags under his eyes that he didn’t pick up on this morning and wonders how much extra work he’s forcing on Keigo in order for the man to get away with a break during patrol like this.

“It was robots. Each with different point values and the only one that I managed to take down on my own was the zero pointer.” Izuku can see the ocean over the tops of the buildings. Just a thin strip of Dagobah Beach where he still practices tight turns and dives, but it’s something to focus on rather than the fact that he has to rethink his future.

“Working together is important too, you said that you didn’t take any down alone, you still took some down, right?”

“Not enough.” The unspoken rest of the sentence is that he spent too much time helping others. Hawks doesn’t mention it even though Izuku can see the twitch of gloved hands and an open and close of his mouth that usually means he’s holding something back. It’s rare for Keigo to censor himself when he’s off the clock and the green-haired teen feels a streak of guilt at putting his companion in a position where he had to do so.

“Listen,” Izuku doesn’t respond, just leaning further into his hand. “being a hero is more than just smashing villains around. I’m sure there’s more to it than you think.”

There’s a beat of silence where he refuses to look away from the beach in the distance. Eyes tracing the crests of waves that he can barely see.

“You know, Candy-cane boy might like you more if you weren’t so pessimistic,” the effect is immediate, Izuku’s body shooting upright, cheeks puffing out ever so slightly as he tries to choose his words carefully to not give the smug blond any more ammunition to tease him with.

“Don’t call him that.” He settles on and Keigo just hums, a hand coming up to rest his head and all three brain cells that he had bouncing around in it.

“Well I don’t know his name-”
“That’s a lie, I’ve introduced him to you at parties before.”

“You wouldn’t have to keep introducing me if you would just ask for his number and start hanging out.” Midoriya’s face flushes against his will. The thought of asking Todoroki for his phone number was one that he had entertained before but never could bring up the nerve to do. “Wow I didn’t know your face could get that red.”

“I’m going to push you off of this roof.” The wings on Izuku’s neck come up just like his hands to hide his face and his back twitches with the urge to jump off and just flee the situation before Hawks has a chance to make it worse.

“If that would make you feel better, go for it, I’ve got wings.” The man’s eyes dart briefly to Izuku’s wings, the appendages bandaged even after Recovery Girl’s healing until the feathers grew back. It wouldn’t take long. The damage was minimal to the feathers themselves but it was likely that he wasn’t going to be flying for at least a couple of days if not a week. He looks away when Hawks tries to pointedly catch his eye, face rapidly cooling with the shift in conversation.

“They could have gotten hurt.” He knows that Hawks doesn’t like that answer from the rustling of feathers and almost but not quite depressed frown, but that’s all that there was to it in his head. Izuku can take a hit. Maybe not well. Maybe not a lot. But he can take a hit and keep running and that’s enough reasoning for him to jump in front of someone who might not be able to.

You know, if you would just teach me how to-” Hawks all but jumps to his feet to put distance between them. The green-haired boy regrets it the second that it started to leave his mouth, the disappointment in his stomach turning bitter with regret.

“You’re barely fourteen. You didn’t need to know how to fight.” The tone is cold and closed off. Izuku flinches just a bit, recognizing that Keigo is gone for the moment and that the faceplate of Hawks has taken his place. It’s small changes but it’s ones that let him know not to push his argument about self-defense for the umpteenth time.

There’s a tense silence between them for more than is comfortable, Izuku swinging his legs over the ledge and watching the people walk aimlessly below him. He wonders what it would be like to walk among them and not have the urge to hide his quirk from their eyes.

“You’re upset, I get that kid. But you don’t get to lash out at me because of it.” The voice is still detached but not quite cold and Izuku takes the verbal olive branch. After four years of asking he should know it’s a sore subject but it’s still hard some days.

“I’m sorry.” He says, pulling himself to his feet and stretching his arms above his head. The wings on his neck mimic the motion and Hawks snorts before giving a soft sigh and moving towards the door.

“I’m starving, let’s go eat some comfort food, maybe you’re just grouchy because you’re hungry.” His brother’s arms are locked behind his head as he walks, shoulders relaxed now that the fight has passed.

“I am a little hungry,” Izuku admits as he slowly follows. With Hawks paying for comfort food he doesn’t have to feel as bad for ordering a big meal and quieting his stomach for at least an hour or two.

“He’ll get himself killed if we let him in.” Aizawa isn’t the first to speak about the boy’s actions,
but it is the voice that pulls Nezu away from his own internal thought process.

“The whole point of being a hero is saving people!” All Might’s voice is anything but quiet, even in his deflated form. The giant of a man demanding presence even as he sat with his hands folded in his lap and eyes wide.

“What good is helping someone if you kill yourself in the process and can’t see their safety through? His wings were singed after the first blast and he kept jumping in front of robots without trying to come up with another plan.” Eraserhead’s eyes are closed now that the exam is over and the mouse almost feels bad for the man. He works two jobs, after all, and now the number one hero is jumping down his throat for a brutally honest observation.

“Then perhaps it’s our duty to teach him how to come up with another plan,” Nezu says simply and the conversation hits a wall on both ends, a quiet sigh of relief passing through the other members of staff who had neglected to speak for either side of the argument yet

“Hey! I’m just calling to-”

“Results will be sent out in the mail today Hawks. I’m sure Midoriya will get his soon.” Keigo should know better than to try and get the jump on things. But sitting back and waiting was never his style, he couldn’t afford for it to be. Even now, in a moth man t-shirt that Izuku had bought him - it’s for winged man solidarity Keigo! - and soft grey sweatpants he couldn’t sit still.

“Always right to the point, huh Nezu?” The mouse hums on the other end and Keigo wonders if perhaps he had woken the principal up. It was barely sunrise, after all. He should be showering and slipping out the door to minimize the risk of getting caught in another pr scandal. He shouldn’t even have come over last night if the missed calls from the hero commission were any sign of what awaited him.

“I find that it helps when dealing with busy parents to address the problem right away.” And there it is, the reason he stayed anyways. Because when the first person to call you a hero, the one that could have so easily been like you if Inko wasn’t the woman of grit that she was, falls asleep on your shoulder you stay put.

“I wouldn’t say I’m a parent to the kid I just care about him, that’s all.” Caring was okay to admit, it was safe. He could care about a lot of people but the Hero Commission couldn’t do anything against caring when it was one of the things that he was most known for in the public’s eyes. Love was too personal though.

He shoves the phone between his shoulder and ear as he moves towards the fridge and begins preparing a bowl of cereal. The blond hero knew that the Midoriyas wouldn’t care if he ate a smaller breakfast before they woke up as long as he did the dishes but he still felt like a child searching for snacks in the middle of the night.

“Right, well, I assure you, his letter will be sent out today like everyone else’s and his results should reach him within the week.” Nezu’s voice is too amused for Keigo’s liking and he frowns into the bowl of cereal before pouring his milk.

“Will, you at least tell me if it’s good?” This time the mouse does laugh and there’s the whistle of a teapot before he hears an answer. Keigo jabbing a spoon into his breakfast a bit harsher than necessary.
“Have a good day Hawks.” The phone clicks off before he can respond and he’s reminded again that sometimes there’s no choice but to wait.

“Well, that was pointless.”

“What was pointless?” Inko waits behind him in the doorway to the kitchen, eyebrow raised and lips twisted. It’s the same secret smile she gets whenever he wakes up after falling asleep on the couch and waking up in his bedroom. Not that she’ll tell him how she’s doing it.

“Mom! Sorry, I didn’t mean to wake you I was just trying to get an early morning call in before Duck woke up.” The phone is tucked away in his pajama pants and he turns his attention in earnest to the bowl of cereal. Inko hums as she patters past him, a hand patting his arm gently as she does so.

“A call about entrance results?” Hawks is glad that she doesn’t look up from the fridge because the image of a Pro almost choking on his frosted flakes at four in the morning would not be one that she forgot quickly. Her memory was almost longer than her boys’ was and that was saying everything in that household.

“You caught me,” Keigo recovers just in time for her to stand up straight with arms full of eggs and vegetables. The bowl of cereal is demolished just in time to jump in and help with washing the ingredients for her pre-work omelet. “Izuku just seemed really pessimistic about it and I figured that I might be able to call and see what outcome we should be preparing for.”

The green-haired woman tilts her head slightly, not looking up from the bell peppers that she’s cutting away at as she speaks.

“Hm, I think it’s better for us to prepare for the positive one. I’ve only ever felt like a failure once with your brother, and I’ve learned from that mistake. If he falls then we’ll be here to catch him but until he does we need to trust that Izuku will soar.”

“For a nurse, you’re pretty poetic. Bet you have doctors throwing themselves at your feet, huh?” Inko blushes nearly as red as her son did and Keigo laughs when she bats at his arm playfully.

“Oh, what am I going to do with you?” Inko’s voice is too fond to land as exasperated, and Izuku finds them not long after, Keigo trying to figure out her type in order to set her up with someone.

“Midoriya Izuku. He’s enrolled in no clubs, he has no recommendations from teachers but no disciplinary record either. Top of his class but his peer shied away from him during Mic’s speech.” Nezu doesn’t look away from the screen as he speaks, a cup of quickly cooling tea in his paws. “His written exam has already been graded and it’s near perfect. He passed our zero pointer test with flying colors and in 15 minutes he wreaked up 73 rescue points and 8 attack points. The highest score we’ve seen in the past few years let alone this year’s applicants.”

“So you’re saying you’re going to accept him?”

“I’m saying that he has potential, and our job as teachers and heroes alike is to take potential and shape it.”

“Izuku? Honey, how’d it go?” The door opens slowly. Izuku’s face is carefully blank as he digests the rollercoaster of emotion he just was strapped into. The meager attack points and implications that he was much too reckless to train. The reveal of rescue points and the surge to first place. The girl that Izuku saved asking to give him some of her points, even if her choice of wording was a bit awkward. The replay of his fight-no that’s wrong. It’s just the one moment really that he keeps
coming back to.

The image of himself hovering midair, pipe held like a spear still burned on the back of his eyelids.

Izuku Midoriya is fourteen and he has no memories outside of his mother, his brother, and the odd coworker from his mother’s work of someone being unbothered by his quirk let alone impressed by it. But for a split second in the footage, he doesn’t see a monster or a freak. His wings are splayed and burned, his eyes catch the light in a way that makes them appear to be glowing and he’s covered in dirt from falling to the ground. Izuku sees himself, sharpened pipe in hand, land on the robot and spear through its eye and keeps pushing until the brain of the machine is hit and it begins to crumble to the ground and thinks that the boy in the footage is a hero.

“I was accepted.” He says quietly, and even through his mother’s suffocating hugs and the string of happy emojis and screaming voice notes Keigo sends when he texts him the news, Izuku can’t stop thinking about that moment.

MORE FANART:

Y'ALL I'M CRYING YOU GUYS DON'T HAVE TO MAKE ME ART BUT WHEN YOU DO I LITERALLY FEEL MY SERETONIN SKY ROCKET AND IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I COULD PERSONALLY FIGHT HORIKOSHI WHEN HE TRIES TO HURT THE NEXT BABY

![Image of wings](image)

this is another piece by Anonymous_Wraith (who is one of my favorite people on this site bjaksdflj;oiyadfasd) and it shows the different types of wings and how they're shaped a bit clearer for anyone having problems picturing the differences!
And this drawing is made by Kathaclysm and I SCREAMED when i saw it the first time! Look his wings! His freckles! I love him so much!
Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Soft Shouto content because it's my birthday and i said so

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Todoroki Shouto has learned one lesson above all in his life. Don’t draw attention to yourself. Drawing attention to yourself alerts Endeavor that you’re awake, it reminds him that you haven’t trained yet for the day, its a neon blinking sign that says ‘here is someone to take out your anger issues and inferiority complex on’ and never ends well.

Which is why he can’t stop asking himself what he’s doing as he sneaks out of the window of his bedroom apartment, in broad daylight when Endeavor could come home at any time from patrol. It goes against everything that he’s learned, every habit that he’s forced himself to adopt to maybe make it through a day without a new burn or bruise or cut he has to treat.

But his own confusion and fear don’t stop him from hitting the bushes and nearly closing the window. The bushes prickle his arms as he slips through them and quietly as if the crunching of a leaf would summon his father from across the city.

He doesn’t have to go far, Izuku refused to let their meeting place be too much of a walk from his house in case something ever happened. It’s barely a five-minute walk to the small hidden alcove in the park. It’s barely bigger than his bedroom, a pocket of grass wedged between trees towards the edge of the area. In the fall the leaves cover the ground in piles big enough to hide Izuku and all his wings, a lesson Shouto learned the hard way the first time autumn came. And in the spring there’s the sound of birds and the occasional cherry petal blossoms that get carried over on the wind. Shouto’s first snowman was made there in the winter and the majority of times that he’s been able to eat something that isn’t on his strictly monitored diet plan has been sitting on the grass having a picnic with his friend.

Shouto still doesn’t quite know if he’s a good friend or not for Izuku. He knows that he’s not skilled in conversations with kids his age considering and he can’t really go out to play games or have sleepovers or see movies. He didn’t invite Izuku back to his house, for obvious reasons, but still, the green-haired boy welcomed him into the hideaway and tried to text him as often as possible. Last year Izuku had even given him a birthday present.

Shouto wore the little red snowflake charm on a string around his neck every day, making sure to tuck it under his shirt before coming out of his room.

“Shou! I got in!” Shouto is barely through the treeline when Izuku greets him, the winged boy bouncing on the balls of his feet like it’s all he can do not to throw himself at his friend. Shouto doesn’t think he would mind if the boy did, but Izuku has always been cautious of minding Shouto’s personal space.

“I knew you would.” The warmth - pride maybe? - in the dual-colored boy only grows at the warm beam of Izuku’s smile. He knows from late-night conversations that Izuku is considered creepy by
a lot of his classmates but it’s hard for Shouto to see where they would get that idea from. The green-haired boy’s wings are constantly fluttering, fluffing up to fight a cool breeze or shifting against his back to make more room for others around him. His eyes lack color but not emotion, always bursting with excitement over something or other. There’s even a leaf sitting on the top of his head, the edges just barely orange and yellow along the edges and Shouto almost wants to reach out an-

“Shou? Are you okay?” Izuku is looking at him, eyes wide and body leaned towards him ever so slightly. Shouto has yet to speak with anyone who leans in to listen to the way that Izuku does.

“Sorry,” he says and the green-haired boy settles back on his ankles with an anxious smile.

“No, you’re okay! I know that I can get a bit carried away I ju-”

“Izuku, please continue,” Shouto says it in his best ‘Izuku’ voice. One that’s gentle but firm, the same way that Izuku talks when Shouto says he’s scared of his fire and that he wishes he could dye his hair to stop seeing him when he looks in the mirror. The green-haired boy’s smallest set of wings, the ones that rest on his neck, shift to wrap around his neck, and the bichromatic boy recognizes the sign of anxiety but doesn’t comment on it, just waits.

“I-I was saying that I was surprised they let me in at all because I didn’t manage to destroy any robots except for the zero pointers and even then it wasn’t really with my quirk as much with the tools that they left around-”

“But you used the tools.” Izuku stops just for a second in his rambling before shrugging, hands pulling the sleeves of his hoodie down further to hide in and his larger sets of wings - Shouto is so glad he didn’t tuck them away today - curling in ever so slightly around him.

“I mean I guess,” The boy doesn’t like how unsure his friend still sounds but he doesn’t know what to say to push the topic. Emotional support isn’t his strong suit like it is Izuku’s, even if he tries.

“Well, they made the right choice. If you hadn’t gotten in I would have dropped out and gone to Shiketsu.” Izuku’s eyes get wide again, and the fluffed up hair and feathers reminds Shouto briefly of an owl.

“There is no way your dad would have let you do that,” he wouldn’t let me come here either if he knew, the boy thinks to himself. Instead of saying as much though, he just shrugs.

“No, but Natsuo knows how to forge his signature.” Izuku laughs and the wings around his neck relax again. Shouto smiles at the sight of scrunched eyes and curled in wings, only more certain that Izuku is never someone he could consider frightening. the laughter dies down slowly, but surely and when it stops Izuku is silent for a moment, lost in thought.

“Do you think our classmates will like me?” Izuku says quietly, looking down at his hands in his lap and the warmth in Shoto’s chest turns cold and watery.

“The smart ones will.” The leaf that had been resting on Izuku’s head falls to the ground between them and he flushes as red as half of Shouto’s head. Shouto can’t help the mumbled laugh that comes from his chest as he picks up the leaf and slides it into his pocket.

Shouto doesn’t know if he is a good friend yet. But he is determined to be one this year, no matter what.
Wow when my motivation said "you'll write when you write it" really meant "you'll write one sentence a day and maybe have a chapter to post in a month" huh? Bit rude of them ngl. I'm really sorry about the delay on this one. My muse decided to go on vacation without telling me and i'm just starting to get back into writing again. Love you guys <3 thanks for reading!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!