Be My Boyfriend (I'll Pay You)

by Volo

Summary

There are many reasons not to become an actor. Hell, you could write several fucking essays on why being an actor is shitty. But having to talk to the guy in front of you crashes the feculent fucking horseshit scale. Seriously, he’s a 413 on the asscactus scale from one to five.

“So did I get this right?” you say. Or maybe shout a little. “Because it’s by far not easy to pick the few things that are actually important out of the brain damaging fecal matter you just spouted at me. You want me to pretend to be your boyfriend.”

Notes

Writing is an addiction and I love it.
See the end of the work for more notes.
There’s this dashing young man who makes the best movies ever

There are many reasons not to become an actor. Hell, you could write several fucking essays on why being an actor is shitty. But having to talk to the guy in front of you crashes the feculent fucking horseshit scale. Seriously, he’s a 413 on the assactus scale from one to five.

“So did I get this right?” you say. Or maybe shout a little. “Because it’s by far not easy to pick the few things that are actually important out of the brain damaging fecal matter you just spouted at me. You want me to pretend to be your boyfriend.”

The dickmongering dumbass, also known as Dave Strider, shitty –and you do mean really shitty here, shitty enough that all of its shit would cover the surface of Saturn - movie maker, lifts an eyebrow at you.

“Yeah.”

Two can play this monosyllabic game. “Why?” And then, because fuck the monosyllabic game, you add “You shitdicking fuckup.”

“Wow, dude. Not to doubt your acting abilities, but you sound like you wouldn’t be able to pretend you heart eyes me if you tried. Which hurts my feelings pretty badly, by the way.”

“Fuck you! I’ll smother you in my love, asshat!”

He smirks.

Sounds like you just agreed to the dumbest idea you’ve ever heard. Or maybe the dumbest idea you’ve heard all day. Gamzee’s plan to grow weed in his hair wasn’t all that great either. Though you’re not sure anybody would’ve even noticed.

“The question remains. Why would you hire an actor to play your boyfriend? I’ve had my lonely days, but at least I never sunk that low. And I’m not sure if you’ve noticed, but society isn’t all that full of love for gay guys.”

“Yo, imagine it like that. There’s this dashing – obviously- young man who, like, makes the best movies ever. They’re seriously great, dude. All kinds of mind-blowing. Even the sexual kind. But maybe they could kind of be seen as homophobic in some ways. Now imagine that our dashing young hero comes out as gay.”

“You think nobody will believe you?”

“How, oh how could you figure out we’re talking about me?”

“I’ve seen some of your movies, cock nipple, or at least parts of them because I had to eventually leave to throw up, and they were fucking awful. And yes, homophobic, too. So don’t you fucking dare tell me you’re gay.”

“See, that’s what I’m talking about.”

“Go look for a real boyfriend, you fucking shitstain.”

“I’m rich, I can do what I want.”

You’re seriously considering breaking his stupid shades. “That’s it, I’m out.”
True to your word as always, you stand up and head for the door. He stays at his desk, but he calls after you.

“Yo, but it’ll make you more famous. And I’ll pay you. A lot of money. Come on!”

You ignore him because you already knew that and you don’t care. Not much. Money can’t replace ethical standards and all that. And when you decided that you wanted to become an actor, you already knew it would probably involve not being able to eat two meals every day.

“Come on, tell me what you want. Don’t you have a relative who is going to die and needs someone to pay their medical bills or shit? Aunt Maddie is probably staring at the wall of the hospital wondering how her two baby sons will be able to eat every day when she’s gone and-”

He stops ranting when he notices that you’ve stopped and are staring at him.

“Oh shit, you do? Holy shit, I’m sorry. Is their name Aunt Maddie?”

You ball your fists and stare at him sitting in his pretentious fucking hipster-y office in his stupid red shirt. “You complete asshole!”

The waste of space raises his hands. “Dude, I’m sorry.”

“You should be.” And then, because you’re desperate, you say “Would you really pay them? The bills?”

You may hate your brother, but you love him. Spending your whole life ranting at a person and having them return the favor can make you become attached to them. And even if every time you meet him you can’t leave fast enough, seeing Kankri all pale and actually silent – who would’ve thought that was possible – may have made you a bit nostalgic. Not that your childhood wasn’t fucking awful.

“Sure, man. Whatever you want. Twenty virgins, ritual sacrifice, paid medical bills, whatever. You get it.”

Even with all the brainblistering horseshit, that sentence reminds you too much of a line in one of your romantic novels, so you roll your eyes especially hard.

“Fine. But don’t blame me when I have to throw up all over you.”

“Wow, baby, I can feel the love.” Strider raises his shades to wink at you, obviously in a joking way, and yet that’s far more attractive than you’re comfortable admitting. You don’t roll your eyes though because that would be unimaginative the second time. Or the tenth time in this conversation.

“So what is our next move?” you ask.

“I haven’t thought that far.”

“Of course. Why did I expect any better of you? Well, we should think of a story first that we can tell people. You’re lucky that I’m the best romance expert there is. I’ll blow their head off with my romance.” You casually return to your chair.

“I’m sure you will.”

“I will. Okay, a good story needs time and has to be well thought-out.”

“Take all the time you need.”
You’re starting to feel like the footfucking dumbass might be internally laughing at you and glare at
him. With bared teeth. That only makes one corner of his mouth rise.

“You are the most insufferable person in this galaxy.”

“You mean there’s a guy in the next galaxy who’s even worse? I’m offended.”

“Every time you open your mouth you become more insufferable. I think my intestines are slowly
bleeding out because they can’t take it anymore. And that’s impressive because I’ve met a lot of
awful people.”

“That might be because you automatically hate everybody you see. I bet you’ll say the same thing to
the next person who bumps into you on the street. Do I mean nothing to you? How can you betray
me like that?”

“Nope, you’re special in your douchebaggery. Don’t fucking worry, shitsmoker.”

“Aw, thanks, honey. But seriously, cheer up a bit. This’ll be dope as hell.”

“Says the guy who doesn’t have more than one facial expression. Do you ever do anything else than
pretend you don’t have emotions?” That makes you wonder what he looks like during sex. Or when
he comes.

“Sometimes I bleat like a goat.” Thank god and everybody else out there, that was just the image you
needed. You may not actually embarrass yourself by getting a boner.

“I have no idea why anybody would ever think I’d actually be in a relationship with you. I could do
so much better. The trashcans outside looked pretty seductively at me when I walked by.”

“I’m down for a threesome.”

Your brain is screaming at you ‘Don’t talk about sex with him!’ You agree with that plan even if
there’s a small traitorous part in you that does want to have a nice long conversation about sex with
him, possibly with practical examples. That part is probably your dick.

“I’m not. One of us has to be sensible. I’ll think of a good story to tell people and write it to you,
okay?”

Strider should be surprised about the sudden end of the conversation, but the fucker doesn’t miss a
beat.

“Whatever makes you happy, dude. Just make sure it doesn’t involve any sunsets or butterflies.”

You flip him off and leave.

Before this you’d already known Dave Strider, everybody does. He makes money by making the
worst movies in existence. You hated the guy. Every time you saw a picture of him, you wanted to
spit on it. Then today you got a call. It was the douchewaffle himself because he is too cool for a
secretary. He said he had a job for you and asked if you could come by his office. You could
because you don’t have nearly as much work as you’d like or as you’d need. And then the guy
actually asked you to play his boyfriend for a few months.

The whole thing was incredibly surreal and a bit like that one book you’ve read. Where they fall in
love. There’s also a lot of sex.
When you get home, you sit down with a piece of paper and wonder where on earth you’d meet Dave fucking Strider and fall in love with him. The guy is in every magazine right now. He’s the celebrity crush of hordes of teenage girls and probably middle aged women, too. And everybody in between. And older. And men.

It would probably help if you’d ever been in a relationship and knew how they started, but you’ve seen enough romcoms. It can’t be that hard.
Romance is the only thing in this world that will never die

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] —
CG: OKAY, LISTEN HERE, FUCKHEAD.
TG: what's up honey butterflies baby
TG: sweetie pie
TG: muffin hat
TG: cotton eye joe
CG: I'M JUST GOING TO IGNORE YOU.
CG: I WONT EVEN ANSWER YOUR ASININE HORSESHIT.
CG: I'M A MATURE ADULT.
TG: mature yeah sure
CG: OF COURSE YOU WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT THAT IS.
CG: YOU WOULDN'T RECOGNISE IT IF IT GAVE YOU A LAP DANCE.
TG: is that an offer baby brownie bunny
CG: STILL IGNORING YOU.
CG: LOOK AT ME AND HOW I DON’T EVEN HEAR WHAT YOU ARE SAYING.
TG: im proud of you
TG: looks like therapy is finally working
TG: at what step of the twelve step program are you
TG: the one where you only murder a person every five days
CG: YOU’RE NEXT.
TG: boo boo twinkle what did we learn last session
TG: no more death threats
CG: I WILL MATURELY GO BACK TO BEING MATURE AND TELL YOU MY PLAN.
TG: shoot
TG: not literally though your anonymous assholes group believes in you
TG: you can change
TG: there is a nonviolent version of you somewhere in your soul
CG: FIRST WE GO ON A FEW PRETEND DATES TO MAKE SURE PEOPLE SEE US.
CG: THEN YOU POST A PICTURE OF US KISSING SOMEWHERE ON ONE OF YOUR UGLY BLOGS AND WRITE SOMETHING SHITTY THAT I DON’T EVEN WANT TO IMAGINE RIGHT NOW. THAT'S HOW YOU COME OUT.
CG: DON’T FUCKING TELL ME THAT YOU DON’T WANT TO KISS ME BECAUSE TRUST ME, I HAD TO BARF A LITTLE AT THE PROSPECT, TOO.
CG: AT THAT POINT PEOPLE WILL HAVE TAKEN PICTURES OF US DOING THINGS TOGETHER AND NOT THINK WE’RE JUST FAKING.
CG: PEOPLE WILL START ASKING US QUESTIONS ABOUT EACH OTHER AND OUR RELATIONSHIP,
CG: THAT WORD IN COMBINATION WITH YOU MAKES ME SHUDDER WITH REPULSION, BY THE WAY.
CG: THAT MEANS WE NEED TO KNOW A FEW THINGS ABOUT EACH OTHER. WHICH MAKES ME QUESTION WHY I EVER AGREED TO THIS. HOW DUMB CAN A HUMAN BEING BE.
CG: THE STORY WE TELL PEOPLE IS THAT ONE NICE SUNNY DAY YOU WALKED INTO THE FUCKING HIPSTER COFFEE SHOP WHERE I WORK TO GET A FUCKING IRONIC COFFEE.
CG: OR SOMETHING EVEN MORE IRONIC. I DON’T CARE.
TG: wait
TG: fluff bumps
TG: do you really work at a coffee shop
CG: YES, FUCKCRUMPET, OTHERWISE THE STORY WOULD BE IDIOTIC AND TOO
OBVIOUSLY FAKE.
TG: hows that working out for you
TG: with your urge to violently murder everybody you meet
TG: i bet you spend most of the time staring longingly at every knife you see
CG: SHUT UP, COFFEE SHOPS ARE GREAT. THEY APPEAR IN ALMOST EVERY
SINGLE BOOK I READ.
TG: dude do you read like really cheesy romance shit
CG: HOW DARE YOU WRITHING FUCKTARD INSULT A HIGHER ARTFORM THAN
ANY OF THE COMPLETE BRAIN-DAMAGING ASSSHIT YOU MAKE WILL EVER BE.
CG: I LITERALLY CAN NOT BELIEVE THAT I JUST HAD TO WITNESS THIS.
TG: dude
CG: EXCUSE ME WHILE I GO BLEACH OUT MY EYES.
TG: you closet romantic
CG: I AM NOT A CLOSET ROMANTIC BECAUSE IN ORDER TO BE A CLOSET
ROMANTIC I WOULD HAVE TO BE ASHAMED OF BEING A ROMANTIC, WHICH I AM
NOT. AT ALL.
CG: ROMANCE IS THE ONLY THING IN THIS WORLD THAT WILL NEVER DIE.
CG: SO GO FUCK AN IRONIC SWEATER OR SOMETHING.
TG: the only thing in this world that will never die
CG: THAT IS WHAT I SAID.
CG: YOU CAN’T MAKE ME QUESTION MY WORDS BY REPEATING THEM.
CG: I KNOW WHAT I’M TALKING ABOUT.
TG: you know what youre talking about
CG: I KNOW YOU’RE SECRETLY LAUGHING AT ME. I CAN’T BELIEVE YOU’RE
MAKING FUN OF ME FOR BEING, AS YOU CALL IT, A *CLOSET ROMANTIC*.
WHICH I AM NOT BY THE WAY, WHEN YOU’RE TOO AFRAID TO COME OUT AS
GAY.
TG: dude im totally coming out as gay
TG: did you forget our plan
CG: IF YOU WEREN’T TOTALLY SHITTING YOUR PANTS, YOU WOULDN’T HAVE
TO PAY ME FOR PRETENDING TO BE YOUR BOYFRIEND.
CG: YOU ONLY DO THAT BECAUSE YOU THINK IT WILL MAKE THE WHOLE THING
LESS CONTROVERSIAL AND NOT EVERYBODY WILL TALK ABOUT IT.
CG: WHICH IS BULLSHIT.
TG: man whatever
TG: you cant expect me to just happily accept hate from all sides
CG: IF YOU HADN’T BEHAVED SO SHITTY, YOU WOULDN’T HAVE TO DEAL WITH
THIS RIGHT NOW.
CG: YOU COULD HAVE JUST STOPPED AT SOME POINT WHEN YOU WERE MAKING
MOVIES AND THOUGHT ‘HA HA, I AM SO FUNNY, BUT WAIT, ISN’T EVERYTHING
I’M DOING HERE ABSOLUTELY SHITTY’.
CG: BUT YOU KNOW WHAT. I DON’T WANT TO TALK ABOUT THIS ANYMORE. I
JUST WANT TO GET THIS OVER WITH.
CG: SO JUST TELL ME.
CG: WILL YOU STICK TO MY PLAN, DOUCHESHIT.
TG: sure whatever
TG: when do you wanna go on a date
TG: right now
CG: BUT I NEED TO PREPARE.
TG: what
CG: I NEED TO LOOK GOOD WHEN SOMEBODY TAKES A PHOTO OF ME.
TG: man
TG: idc
TG: you look great sexy cake
CG: I REGRET EVERY SINGLE ONE OF MY LIFE CHOICES.
CG: I’LL JUST COME BY YOUR OFFICE WHEN I’M READY.
TG: cant wait honeybabe
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --
Don’t you want to introduce me to your family

It’s what some people would call ideal date weather. The sun is shining and birds are singing and all that awful shit. Unfortunately everybody seems to think that. The café you’re sitting in is full of idiots who are fucking obnoxiously in love. And obnoxiously loud. You may love everything romantic in fiction, but the second you meet people who are actually in love, you want to gouge your eyes out. Or their eyes, you’re not picky.

“Dude, I thought you were worried about photographs. Don’t look like you’re about to blow up the whole street. That’s the ‘I’ll poison all of you as slowly as possible’ look. And it’s not your usual ‘I’d kill you if it wasn’t illegal’ look. Honey princess.”

“If you don’t stop it with the stupid names, you won’t see the moon rise tonight. And everybody here is so annoying, we should have gone somewhere else.”

“Baby cookie, you wanted to come here. That’s what I get when I let you decide. Shaking my head.”

“Instead of saying it, you could actually do it, asswasp. Or does that mean showing too many emotions?”

Strider lifts his shades to wink at you. Again. He keeps on doing that.

“Your shades are ugly as fuck and you know it. And that is – yes, you can believe it – actually good, I’d even go as far as saying it’s for the better for all of humanity, because everybody who meets you immediately sees what a douchefucking asscouch you are.”

“No way, man, sweetie bee, those are original Ben Stiller shades. They’re epic. Epic, dude. Only the most worthy Alpha hero can remotely understand how epic they are. And before that he has to go through a lot of manpain. Maybe his wife is killed.”

“How do you ever pull your head out your ass long enough to make those pathetic excuses for movies? Actually, I have an even better question. How do you even manage to act like a sane and sensible person long enough to be able to leave the house?”

“Shit, hold that thought.”

The poopmunch ungracefully slides off his chair and fucking crawls under the table.

“Strider, what the fuck? What the seriously fucking fuck? Seriously!”

You stop wondering if he’s going to start some highly inappropriate touching down there when a girl sits down in his now vacant chair. You recognize her and sigh loudly.

“Good morning, Karkat, how nice to meet you here. And how unexpected that you’re with my cousin. I had no idea that you two knew each other.” She tilts her head and smiles.

You slap your palm to your forehead. “Strider is your cousin? I can’t tell who I pity more.”

“Neither can I.”

“Yo, Rosie, nice shoes.” Strider hits his head on the table as he tries to casually stand up. You don’t even try to hide your laughter. In fact, you may laugh louder than normally. He gets up and stands
next to the table because Rose took his chair and the café is full.

“Thanks, yours are... nice, too. They are a unique combination of ironically expensive and intentionally worn down.”

“You know me, I’m a unique kind of guy, Rose.”

At this point you can’t take it anymore and cut in. “Yeah, yeah, you both are fucking unique. Everybody here is unique. I think every single person on this planet might be unique. Except Dolly, the cloned sheep.”

“Poor Dolly.” You consider strangling Rose before she starts psychoanalyzing the fucking sheep.

“Rose, did you want something or are you just here to torture us?” you say.

“I can do both simultaneously. Quod erat demonstrandum, actually. Kanaya sent me to tell Dave that she offers to make your clothes for the wedding. Personally, I would find it more entertaining if you dressed yourself for it, but my fiancée doesn’t seem to agree.”

“I have a lot of style, thank you very much.”

You realize that you got the invitation to the same wedding a few days ago in the mail and have an idea that sounds both hilarious and terrifying. “Strider, you’ll have to look halfway normal if you want me to go there as your date.”

Rose raises her eyebrows as Strider stops every movement for a few seconds and stares at you (at least you think he’s staring at you, it’s hard to tell with his stupid shades). “That will be an absolute nightmare.” he says. His cousin doesn’t try to hide her grin.

“Oh, but baby, don’t you want to introduce me to your family?” you ask. You realize that you don’t even care about protecting yourself anymore. Getting back at him is more important.

“Don’t worry, Karkat.” Rose says. “I will introduce you to all of them personally if my cousin doesn’t do it.”

Strider groans. “We’ll come to your wedding, can you leave now?”

“I suppose I can since I do still have some things to do. It was interesting meeting you two again.” She stands up and kisses Strider on both cheeks. “I am absolutely looking forward to seeing you both at the wedding.”

You look at her back as she walks down the street and somehow manages to make even that look sarcastic. There’s a wooden thump when Strider slams his head on the table.

“Don’t hurt yourself.” You try to sounds as insincere as possible.

“Thanks. Dude, do you have any idea what you just willingly agreed to? No, of course you don’t. They never do until it’s too late. Like a family moving into that one house that the old wise guy says is haunted and not safe. That’s just a silly myth, Betty, do you really want to cast a shadow over our new beginning? Come on, Betty! What’re we gonna tell the kids? Next you’ll want to actually tell them they’re adopted.”

“Shut up. You are the dorkiest fucksquatting idiot I know, seriously. I am in awe every time I see you. And don’t go ‘Aw, baby honey bun, I love you, too.’ I will hit you. Do you think I am kidding because I am not!?”
He chuckles. You didn’t think people actually did that in real life, but that’s the best word to describe it. “You are a fucking delight, man.”

“Fuck you. Fuck you and fuck all the ways you are inferior to me.”

The rest of the ‘date’ consists mostly of you two insulting each other and going on rants that eventually and inevitably go off-topic.

“His wife screams and he comes running into the room, desperately trying to save her, but has to watch the zombies take her away.” You roll your eyes because you have no idea what the hell he is talking about even though you just zoned out for a few seconds. He doesn’t stop talking and probably won’t if you don’t stop. “His sisters’ awesome plan of revenge is foiled when she sees that guy, that super-hot zombie guy.”

“Do I look like I even remotely care? I have trouble imagining that, but you probably wouldn’t know since everybody you meet always looks like this. You just don’t have any comparisons.”

“It’s tragic. I was completely disturbed in my natural social development.” Nodding dramatically, the dickhead looks at his (probably ironically expensive) watch. “Didn’t you want this to just go half an hour?”

“Is it half an hour yet?”

“Not even close anymore.”

You grab his arm and twist it to look at the clock, too. He’s right. For once. Almost one hour went by while you talked to him. You didn’t even notice. You’re starting to question your sanity and health.

“Then it’s definitely more than time for me to go and talk to normal people.”

“Do normal people even exist in your mental universe where everybody is shitty?”

“No, but some people are sane in comparison to you.”

“Babe, why you gotta hurt me so much?”

“I am going to ignore you now and leave.”

“Maturely.”

“Exactly,” you reply.

“Should we maybe hug or something?”

“Why on earth would we do that?”

“For the grand scheme.”

Shrugging, you say “Fine. I just need to remember that you’re paying me money for this.”

“You’re like a hug hooker.”

“And that’s it, no hug for you today. You suck.” You quickly turn around and leave before he can do something to stop you. Before you can get really far though, Strider catches up with you and starts walking next to you.
Knowing you won’t get rid of him by ignoring him, you ask “What the fuck are you doing now?”

“Making sure you get home safe of course. I’m like a fucking knight of chivalry, haven’t you noticed?”

“More like a knight of time I spend talking to you that I could be spending doing more pleasant things. Like literally anything else.”

“That doesn’t even make sense.”

"Oh, excuse me. Since when are you the expert on things that make sense? Did I at some point get transported into a different universe where you have the right to point out how other people don’t make sense? Because I don’t know if I’d want to live in that universe. And look, there we are. That’s a bus stop. I’ve never been that happy to see a bus stop in my life. Will you leave me alone now?”

“What, at least I’m trying to seem like we could be dating. Or considering to. You always look at me like you want to kill me.”

“Wait, are you firing me?”

“What? Of course not.”

“Look, I can do this, I’m a good actor. Look!” You give Strider your best ‘I’m in love’ smile.

“A bit creepy, but okay. I totally believe you. Never doubted it. Just maybe be a little bit nicer. Not to other people, that’s hilarious. I mean to me. If we’re going to do this, we should fucking ace it. People will call us the greatest fucking love of this century.”

“You do know we have to break up at some point, right?”

“But we’re the greatest love of this century.”

You huff and gesture for him to just go away. He surprisingly does and you watch him leave until he turns around a corner a few seconds later. Staring at your arriving bus, you think that the date wasn’t that bad. Maybe this whole thing won’t be so difficult.
It was love at first sight

Chapter Notes

I think I may write sex in a later chapter. Maybe. There will at least be sloppy makeouts.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

-- turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] —
TG: yo
TG: baby
TG: love puddle
TG: honey cuddle muffin
TG: chickadoodle doo doo
CG: STOP. STOP EVERY MOVEMENT YOU ARE CURRENTLY MAKING AND EVERY THOUGHT YOU ARE THINKING. IN FACT, I THINK YOU SHOULD JUST STOP EXISTING.
CG: DID SOME CRUEL DEITY SEND YOU TO MAKE MY LIFE AS FUCKING AWFUL AS POSSIBLE?
CG: WHAT THE HELL DO YOU WANT?
TG: whatre you talkin about
TG: so much awesomeness just has to make your life better
TG: im strongly sensing some lies here
TG: are you lying to me karkat
TG: would you really do that
CG: STRIDER, YOU AND YOUR INSIPID HORSESHIT HAVE ALREADY EXHAUSTED ALL OF THE PATIENCE I HAD FOR YOU TODAY.
CG: WELL DONE.
CG: YOU GET AN A IN BEING A SHITTING FUCK ON A MOUNTAIN OF INCREDIBLE DOUCHERY.
TG: i just automatically ace everything i do
CG: I REPEAT.
CG: WHAT THE HELL DO YOU WANT?
CG: LOOK AT THAT, I LITERALLY REPEATED EXACTLY THE SAME WORDS.
TG: lemme tell you a story
TG: are you ready kids
TG: i was just sittin around
TG: mixing some beats and being generally awesome
TG: as in literally inspiring awe in everyone who saw me
CG: ARE YOU TRYING TO DRIVE ME TO SUICIDE?
TG: and then i thought
TG: dude itd be better if everybody already knew were together before the wedding
TG: do you wanna have people come up to us and
TG: like
TG: be all nosy
CG: YOU ARE SUCH A COWARD. I CANNOT BELIEVE IT.
CG: THAT IS ALSO THE WORST FUCKING STORY I HAVE EVER HEARD. AND I HAVE KNOWN YOU FOR TWO WHOLE DAYS NOW.
CG: WHICH IS TOO MUCH.
TG: yeah i got that
TG: cmon you wanna get this over with
TG: thats pretty obvious
CG: YOU KNOW WHAT. YOU ARE ACTUALLY RIGHT.
TG: whoa
CG: AS MUCH AS IT PAINS ME TO ADMIT THAT.
CG: BUT THAT DOES NOT CHANGE THE FACT THAT YOU ARE A COWARD.
TG: stop the dirty talk already hot pants
CG: I HATE YOU SO MUCH. THERE ARE NO WORDS IN ANY LANGUAGE ON THIS EARTH THAT COULD DESCRIBE HOW MUCH I HATE YOU, THAT’S HOW DEEP AND FUCKING UNIQUE MY HATRED FOR YOUR ENTIRE BEING IS.
CG: I WISH YOU DIDN’T EXIST AND NOT JUST BECAUSE YOU WASTE PERFECTLY FINE FOOD, WATER AND OXYGEN, BUT BECAUSE YOU HURT EVERYBODY AROUND YOU BY EVEN THINKING. THAT IS HOW AWFUL YOU ARE.
TG: whenever you feel down son just remember that im paying you money for doing this
CG: IT IS LIKE YOU ACTUALLY KNOW THAT NOBODY CAN STAND BEING IN YOUR PRESENCE.
CG: BUT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO ACTUALLY BE THAT SELF-AWARE.
TG: im like a never ending surprise package
TG: like christmas every fucking day
TG: there are christmas trees everywhere
TG: every night you hear jingle bells whenever you try to fall asleep
TG: youre not sure if its only in your head but you havent slept in ten days
TG: at least you think its ten days
TG: you dont know what time it is anymore
TG: maybe time is just a social contract meant to limit our possibilities
CG: DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT?
TG: nope
TG: but i could scroll up
CG: DON’T BOTHER.
CG: IF YOU WANT TO TELL THE WORLD ABOUT OUR LOVING RELATIONSHIP EARLIER THAN PLANNED, THEN WE NEED A CRASH COURSE IN EACH OTHER’S INTERESTS AND LIFE STORIES AND SHIT LIKE THAT.
TG: lets fucking do this then
TG: were doin it man
TG: were makin this hapen
CG: DO NOT QUOTE THAT AWFUL COMIC THING.
CG: YOU CAN’T EVEN CALL THAT SHIT COMIC. AND THAT IT WAS MADE INTO A MOVIE IS AN ATROCITY.
TG: dude
TG: you know sbahj
CG: UNFORTUNATELY.
CG: LET US CHANGE THE SUBJECT BEFORE MY BRAIN COMMENTS SUICIDE.
TG: so
TG: favorite color movie book
CG: NO, NOT LIKE THAT, YOU IDIOT.
CG: THOSE ARE NOT IMPORTANT.
TG: huh
CG: NOT THAT IMPORTANT. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.
TG: jesus christ
TG: i have a bro whos a w e s o m e
TG: too awesome to describe
TG: hes not really my brother but i call him bro cause were just that chill
TG: he has a sis
TG: rose is her daughter
TG: thats it
CG: NO, THAT IS NOT IT.
TG: were at that stage of dating where familys not really involved yet
CG: FINE. I WOULD REALLY RATHER NOT HEAR TOO MUCH ABOUT THAT FUCKED UP SHIT YOU CALL FAMILY.
CG: WHEN AND WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO MAKE MOVIES?
CG: (READ: REALLY SHITTY THINGS THAT CAN`T ACTUALLY BE CALLED MOVIES.)
TG: hey its my turn
TG: tell me about your family
CG: BLA BLA NOT INVOLVED YET.
TG: the most important things
CG: MY PARENTS ARE DEAD.
CG: I HAVE A BROTHER. HE HAS CANCER.
TG: man i wasnt prepared for that much tragedy
CG: SHUT UP. I AM SERIOUS.
TG: not talkin
TG: you see that zipper
TG: im gonna cut off my lips and replace them with it
CG: YOU KEEP ON DISTURBING ME.
CG: AND SOMEHOW YOU MANAGE TO BE ALWAYS BE MORE DISTURBING THAN THE LAST TIME.
CG: IT IS A MIRACLE.
CG: YOU`RE A FUCKING MIRACLE.
TG: when i was younger i used to always play around with my camera
TG: dont know
TG: it just fascinated me
TG: and then i put the shit i made on the internet
TG: and then i kinda became one of the most known film makers
TG: you can bitch all you want
TG: i like doing what im doing
CG: I WOULD NOT CALL JUSTIFIED CRITICISM `BITCHING`.
TG: of course not
TG: idk just tell me something important about your life
CG: I DON`T KNOW IF IT WILL COME UP.
CG: BUT YOU SHOULD PROBABLY KNOW.
CG: IF THE WHOLE FUCKING AWFUL PUBLIC DECIDES TO MAKE OUR RELATIONSHIP THEIR PROBLEM, THEY WILL TRY TO FIND OUT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ABOUT ME.
CG: I USED TO BE ANOREXIC.
CG: DO NOT TALK TO ANYBODY ABOUT THAT UNLESS THEY BRING IT UP FIRST.
TG: no why would i even do that
TG: uh
TG: is there anything i need to watch out for
TG: is eating in public a problem for you or
TG: i mean because of the wedding
CG: NO. YOU DON`T HAVE TO PROTECT ME FROM ANYTHING.
CG: JUST IGNORE IT. I CAN HANDLE EVERYTHING. DON`T YOU FUCKING DARE
EVEN MAKE AN EFFORT.
CG: WHY DID YOU PICK ME TO PLAY YOUR BOYFRIEND?
CG: WHERE DID YOU EVEN GET MY NUMBER?
TG: i went with lalonde to that weird play you were in
TG: she forced me to go
CG: I THINK I KNOW WHAT YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT. THAT REALLY WAS A HORRIBLE AND SCARRINGLY STUPID PLAY.
TG: and after it there was that discussion round thing with the actors
TG: she forced me to watch that too
CG: AND I RANTED ABOUT HOW BAD THE PLAY WAS THE WHOLE TIME.
CG: THAT MAY HAVE BEEN A LITTLE BIT RUDE, CONSIDERING I DIDN’T EVEN HAVE ANYTHING CLOSE TO A MAJOR ROLE, BUT THE THING WAS AWFUL. YOU WERE THERE, YOU SAW IT. YOU MUST KNOW WHAT I’M TALKING ABOUT.
CG: EVERYTHING I SAID WAS COMPLETELY VALID.
TG: yeah
TG: you couldnt fucking stop talking
TG: or rather yelling
TG: it was love at first sight
CG: THAT IS NOT FUNNY. DO NOT RUIN SUCH A GREAT CONCEPT BY MAKING FUN OF IT.
TG: right you have that weird romance thing
TG: fine i thought the media would love you if you were my boo boo
CG: BUT YOU COULD HAVE A MODEL.
TG: now youre just fishing for compliments
CG: NO, THAT IS ABSOLUTELY NOT WHAT I WANT.
CG: WHY WOULD I EVEN WANT COMPLIMENTS FROM THE MOST REPULSIVE HUMAN BEING I HAVE EVER SEEN? I AM MERELY POINTING OUT THAT YOU ARE AN IDIOT IF BEING IRONIC IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN CHOOSING SOMEBODY YOU ARE ATTRACTED TO WHEN IT COMES TO CHOOSING YOU PARTNER.
TG: still fishing for compliments
TG: shits like youre throwin hooks and fishnets around you waving your hands like youre possessed and yelling something nobody can make out
TG: they just occasionally hear the word fish
TG: im not gonna tell you youre hot
CG: DO YOU JUST IGNORE WHAT I WRITE? IS OUR CONVERSATION REALLY THAT UNIMPORTANT?
CG: OR IS YOUR BRAIN THAT UNDERDEVELOPED THAT YOU CAN’T UNDERSTAND WHAT I’M WRITING?
CG: I AM SURE THAT IS IT.
TG: i choose to believe that means: its your turn dave impress me with your hot questioning technique
TG: anything for you bunny
TG: ex girlfriends boyfriends
CG: NO.
TG: ok
TG: what does that mean
CG: I HAVE NEVER HAD A GIRL- OR BOYFRIEND, YOU UTTER MORON. THAT WAS NOT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND.
CG: I WOULD REPEAT WHAT I WROTE ABOVE, BUT I CAN SEE THAT IT WOULD BE A WASTE OF TIME.
CG: LIKE YOUR EXISTENCE.
TG: harsh babe
CG: HOBBIES?
TG: ill movies, fly beats, sick web comics
TG: and im an amateur photographer
TG: i collect dead things
CG: WHAT THE HELL.
CG: YOU SICK, SICK PERSON.
TG: i know im the illest
TG: finally youve seen the light
TG: my turn
TG: hm
TG: we are boyfriends right
CG: NOT REALLY.
TG: so
TG: i should know about your kinks
CG: THAT’S IT, THE CONVERSATION IS FINISHED.
CG: DONE.
CG: THAT’S WHAT IT IS.
CG: DONE.
CG: WE NEED TO MAKE THAT STUPID PHOTO SO I’LL VISIT YOU IN YOUR OFFICE SOME TIME TOMORROW.
CG: BUT IF YOU MAKE ANY KIND OF SEXUAL REMARK, I’M GONE.
TG: and what would i do without you
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --

Chapter End Notes

I tried to find some kind of equivalent to Karkat's mutant blood color. There were a lot of possibilities, but in the end I chose something that's easier to write about than some rare mental illness or something that I don't know anything about. And I may have never been anorexic, but I do have experience with another eating disorder. I know it's not a perfect equivalent though, especially because he's better now. But it made things difficult when he was younger and his self-esteem was low.
First kisses are something magical

Chapter Notes

This took a long time to write, but at least it's longer than the other chapters.

If you really think about it, there’s a certain beauty to a dark grey hallway full of light grey doors that all look the same. To the way it seems like it could go on forever. Yeah. You have time to really think about it because you’ve been standing in this hallway for ten minutes, just staring into the distance and internally debating. Or maybe internally yelling at yourself is a better description.

You whisper to yourself “Fuck, come on. Don’t be such an overly romantic idiot. It’s not a big deal.”

Suddenly the door in front of you is opened and you try your best not to flinch. Strider smirks at you. He really needs to stop doing that.

“Yo, darlin’, that’s exactly ten minutes now; what the fuck are you doing?”

“What is ten minutes, fuckass? Talking in riddles only demonstrates your inability to properly communicate and thus shows how much you lack intelligence.”

“You’ve been standing here for ten minutes; don’t think I don’t know that. I heard your footsteps.”

“That was someone else.” You promptly respond.

“Did you fly here?”

“This is my first kiss.” It’s out before you can stop it and you stare at him with wide eyes.

After a second, he says “Huh.” You’re overcome with the urge to abscond the fuck out of here.

“You know what, fuckface, if -“

“That a problem for you?” He interrupts you. Rude. You wouldn’t even have bothered stopping your current rant, but when you hear what he just asked you, you just have to educate him on the fine art of romance.

“First kisses are something magical, one of the most important steps of a person’s life. You can’t take them back, you ignorant shitmonkey. A first kiss leaves an imprint on your life, it shapes you into a new person. I can’t believe you had the audacity to ask me such a question. Your very existence is like an insult to every person who’s ever loved somebody.”

You can’t see his eyes, but the way he moves his head strongly implies he’s rolling his eyes.

That only makes you more angry. You yell at him “You didn’t seriously just do that. I know I shouldn’t even be surprised an uncultured shitcouch like you doesn’t have the mental –“ You’re interrupted for the second time today by a fucking door opening.

“Fuck you”, you say.
A guy who you’ve never seen before is standing in front of you. Brown hair, glasses, your average desk worker, if you had to describe him. You’re surprised there are completely normal people working for Strider. The Glasses Guy frowns. “I heard yelling, is everything okay? It... sounded like somebody was going to be killed soon?”

Strider takes a step forward and says “We’re all cool here. Cool is in fact our main setting and coincidentally the only setting possible. My boyfriend’s just sometimes a bit loud and yes, I’m winking.”

Could you get away with throwing him out of the window? Maybe if you killed the witness, too. You could say they both slipped. Nobody knew you were here.

The guy opens his mouth and closes it again. He repeats that process, this time staring at you and you’re tempted to flip him off.

Sighing, Strider grabs your arm and drags you into his office. Before he closes the door, you can hear the guy say “But I heard -”

“You complete and utter imbecile. You fucking brainless waste of time. You shitweasel! Do not ever say anything like that again! Do you understand that or do I need to translate it into idiot language?”

“You mean that wasn’t in idiot language?” Strider sounds annoyed, but he can fucking tell that to his mother and see if she cares.

“Fuck you. I am so done with you; I could have never guessed that it’s possible to be that done, but I’ve seen the very top of the bullshit mountain and I have survived to tell children about the time in my life when I had to talk to Dave fucking Strider. And those children will shiver in fear.”

He crosses his arms and there’s definitely a slight frown on his face. He says “I think they’ll laugh at you because you were still a blushing virgin.”

That’s it! That is fucking it. “I’m going to show you who’s a blushing virgin, you pimplesqueezing douchesack on a mountain of horseshit. Give me your fucking camera!”

Raising his eyebrows, he grabs a camera off some shelf and hands it to you. It looks expensive. And complicated. You stare at it and pretend you’re not desperately searching for the on-button.

You can hear a clock ticking.

“Something wrong, honey?” Without looking up, you already know he’s smirking again.

“Screw you. With a cactus of shit. Give me your phone!”

“Are you always this bossy? And yes, that was a dirty joke.”

“I’m gonna throw the fucking camera at you.”

Strider just shrugs. “I have more.” He finally gives you his phone. It’s one of those old phones that you can flip open and close.

You give him his camera back and open the phone’s camera. It’s absolutely shitty. “I hate you so much,” you mutter.

For exactly four seconds, both of you just stand there. Tentatively, you take a few steps forward until you’re standing right in front of him. You frown as you look at him. This is absolutely not how
you’d imagined your first kiss when you were younger and lying in bed trying to fall asleep. Or masturbating.

For some reason, rain always played an important role.

But you were in too deep now and too proud to back out at this point. And nobody would believe you were in a relationship without a picture of you two kissing.

“Shades,” you say and hear that your voice is a lot quieter than before.

“No fucking way, man. The shades are the thing the fans love most; they’re like the Holy Grail for all of my fans.”

“What the fuck?! Do you seriously believe that?”

“I can’t just post a picture of myself without the shades. They’re almost their own person at this point. I made a Tumblr blog for them, dude. Does that mean nothing to you?”

You’re about to just grab the stupid shades when you see him lick his lip for just a fraction of a second. You step closer to him and his hands immediately fly to his shades to stop you from taking them.

He’s nervous. You’re not sure if he’s nervous because this is his coming out or because he just doesn’t want to kiss a stranger who does nothing but yell at him. Probably both. You wouldn’t want to kiss yourself either if you were him. Or anyone else. This is the first time you’ve seen a real feeling on his face and it mirrors your own so much that you can’t help but feel bad for the asshole. Fuck him.

“Fine, leave the fucking shades on. But this will be the least romantic kiss that has ever been shared by two beings in any existing universe.”

He nods and somehow manages to make even that look ironic.

“So.” he says and takes a step forward. He is right in front of you. Right in front of you. You’re questioning every single choice you’ve ever made in your entire life.

Quickly, before you even really realize what he’s doing, he leans forward and gives you a quick peck on the lips.

You say “Hngh?”

He takes a step back. The clock ticks twice and you don’t know how to react.

“Why did you do that?” you finally yell. He didn’t even take the picture.

“You know, to get used to it?”

You take a deep breath. And another one after that. “Okay. Fine.” You can’t even remember the feeling of his lips and suddenly you feel cold. Like you just got a shock. You feel much more aware of your surroundings and yet really fucking disappointed. Fuck this shit, you shouldn’t feel disappointed. You tell yourself you’re not disappointed. “Let’s just do this now.”

“Wait, did I hurt your feelings now because you wanted to-” Glaring, you interrupt him. “Don’t think you can be an asshole, I’m gonna show you whose feelings are hurt.”

You know you are going to regret this, but you can’t bring yourself to care right now. You’ve had
too many mood swings to handle in the last five minutes. You’re in too deep anyway and it doesn’t matter anymore. Your first kiss is wasted anyway now. You decide kisses are overrated anyway. What’s better than proving a point to this asshole?

So you grab him by the shirt and kiss him again. Only this time it’s a lot less chaste. You put both arms around his shoulders and, after a second, bite his bottom lip. He makes a sound that you’re not sure you want to interpret.

Determined to prove that kissing is no problem to you, you press your body to his and scratch his shoulders slightly with your fingernails and he actually opens his mouth, but remains mostly passive. Your noses are kind of in the way, but you don’t care. His lips are warm and soft and a little bit dry and you realize your eyes are closed. Abruptly, you pull away.

Your heart is beating far too fast and the regret comes instantly. “There,” you manage to say.

His face is as stoical as ever, but at least he clears his throat before he speaks. “Wow honey cake, you could have just told me you want a piece of this.”

“No! That’s not what this was. You were annoying.” You hope you don’t sound too confused. “More annoying than bratty little children – or maybe hell spawn is a better description – on a bus that’s so full that you have to stand. Yes. And in the morning, too. Imagine a crying child kicking the legs of the hard working people that had to get up early because they have to actually work. Unlike you. You just sit around, pretend you’re cool and make the worst movies in existence. And that child is you.”

“Sure, tell yourself that. Whatever makes you happy. Or whatever weak version of happy you can actually manage to be. Like, dude, I could go to the next – shit, I don’t even know what it’s called, Depressed People Anonymous, yeah, let’s go with that – so, to the next DPA meeting and the people there would be more happy than you. In fact, they’d probably throw you out because your presence is so depressing. Then they’d ask me why I came to their meeting and eventually the press would find out and the next headline tomorrow would be something like ‘Famous Movie Producer Dave Strider Drug Addicted? Is He A Danger To Our Kids?’ To which I’d have to respond that I’m not drug addicted, how’d they even get that idea, but I might be a danger to their children because they see me and just instantly wanna be like me and let’s be honest. I’m hard to pull off.”

This is getting ridiculous. You ask him “Did you take the picture?”

“You have the phone.”

You glance at the phone in your hand. He smirks and says “Looks like you were distracted.”

Holding the phone up into a selfie position, you step closer to Strider and FAKE kiss him before he can annoy you even more. Your eyes close automatically. You try not to be too annoyed by that. The clock ticks once. Strider’s lips move slightly and open a bit. You take another picture. When he moves away, you can feel his breath on your face for a short moment.

Your eyes are wide open and you can’t stand to look at his fucking emotionless face after you two just had your third fucking kiss in a row. This is not normal and you should have never agreed to this job.

So you abscond. You thrust the phone at him and say “Great. Now we’re done. Great. Bye,” and just get the hell out of the office.
I feel like this is kinda weird and I'm sorry.
When's the wedding

Chapter Notes

This is my first time writing Sollux, I'm sorry if I mischaracterized him at some point. His typing quirk is so horrible to write, oh my god!

I changed my name because I managed to think of something a lot better so don't be confused...

-- turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] —
TG: were still doing this right?
CG: YES. WHY DO YOU THINK WE’RE NOT DOING THIS ANYMORE QUESTION MARK.
TG: idk because you stormed out like id just tried to grope you
TG: actually you probably wouldn't've stormed out if i had groped you
TG: i mean
TG: you would've yelled at me like you get money for every additional person who hears you
TG: and because you generally don't seem very happy bout this whole thing
CG: IT'S PROBABLY A NEW CONCEPT FOR YOU, BUT SOME OF US HAVE ACTUAL APPOINTMENTS SOMETIMES.
CG: WE DON’T JUST SIT AROUND AND OCCASIONALLY TAKE A SHIT AND THEN CALL THAT A MOVIE. I CAN'T BELIEVE ANYBODY ACTUALLY PAYS TO SEE THOSE FAILURES.
TG: hey ill have you know taking a shit is a lot of work
TG: i cant believe you dont know that
CG: I AM REALLY NOT SURPRISED YOU JUST SAID THAT. YOU OBVIOUSLY DON’T KNOW REAL WORK.
CG: SOME PEOPLE HAVE TO ACT LIKE HOOKERS TO PAY FOR THEIR SHIT.
TG: wait
TG: oh fuck
TG: thats why youre so grumpy
CG: WELL, I'M SORRY IF MR. I-GET-MONEY-THROWN-AFTER-ME-EVEN-THOUGH-I-DON’T-ACTUALLY-WORK CAN’T UNDERSTAND THAT SOME OF US HAVE TO ASK OURSELVES IF THEY’D RATHER HAVE MONEY OR DIGNITY.
TG: just think of it like an acting job
TG: its not like im your sugar daddy
TG: is it really that bad
CG: IT IS GROTESQUE.
CG: TO TRY TO MAKE EVERYBODY THINK YOU ARE IN LOVE WITH SOMEBODY WHEN YOU’RE NOT. IT’S NOT ACTING WHEN THEY DON’T KNOW YOU’RE ACTING, IT'S LYING. AND I DON’T KNOW. IT SEEMS SO PREPOSTEROUS TO LIE TO EVERYBODY ABOUT SUCH DEEP THINGS LIKE LOVE.
CG: DON’T GET ME WRONG, I WANT TO CONTINUE THIS “THING”, AS YOU SO ELOQUENTLY CALL IT. I NEED MONEY AND YOU HAVE YOUR OWN SHITTY REASONS WHY YOU WANT THIS. BUT.
CG: I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO KISS YOU AGAIN.
TG: yeah we can totally do that
TG: in fact there wouldnt even be lip on lip action if some pervert held us at gunpoint and tried to force us to kiss
TG: thats how much i respect your consent
TG: im like
CG: I DON'T CARE.
TG: the knight of kisses where both parties are totally into it
TG: its me
CG: I'M LOGGING OFF NOW.
TG: wait
TG: dont you wanna see the picture
TG: our #selfie
CG: NO. I HAVE TO GO TO WORK NOW.
CG: JUST UPLOAD IT SOMEWHERE.
CG: UNLESS IT'S THE ABSOLUTELY WORST PICTURE YOU'VE EVER SEEN.
CG: NOT THAT YOU'D RECOGNIZE REAL SHITTINESS BECAUSE YOU ARE PRACTICALLY MADE OF IT.
TG: some of your insults seem more like a halfhearted afterthought
TG: and nah
TG: its not that bad
TG: id believe us
TG: everybody will be like
TG: aww look at them #otp
TG: this could be us but you playin
CG: IT'S NOT A GOOD SIGN IF THEY SAY THAT.
CG: I REALLY HAVE TO GO NOW.
TG: yeah me too
TG: to work
TG: and before you go bla bla you dont ever work shitlord
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --
TG: wow i was in the middle of a sentence
TG: #rude
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --
CG: STOP WITH THE FUCKING HASHTAGS.
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --

-- twinArmageddons [TA] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --
TA: KK.
TA: you dont have two alway2 tell me everything about your love life but 2iince when are you engaged to dave striider??
TA: KK. are you there?
CG: YEAH, I JUST GOT BACK FROM WORK AND
CG: I'M.
CG: NO.
TA: everybody'2 freaking out? there ii2 a picture of you two kii22ing on every 2ite on the internet.
TA: ii had no idea you even knew the guy.
TA: at lea2t invite me two the wedding.
CG: WHAT DID HE DO??
CG: WHAT DID THAT USELESS BRAINDEAD WRITHING PILE OF SHITFUCK DO TO
MAKE EVERYBODY THINK WE’RE ENGAGED?
CG: TELL ME NOW BEFORE I HAVE A HEART ATTACK.
TA: wow.
TA: ii 2ee iiit now.
TA: you are definiiitely iiin love.
TA: when2 the weddiing?
CG: LISTEN TO ME, ASSHOLE.
CG: I AM SERIOUS.
CG: I AM SO SERIOUS THAT I’M NOT EVEN RANTING ABOUT HOW SERIOUS I AM RIGHT NOW.
TA: 2o apparently he po2ted a pic of you two ki22ing on twitter.
TA: wiith the caption “you wi2h you coulda put a riing on that lad, well fuck, that2 my right now”.
TA: wiithout the typiing quiirk2
CG: MOTHERFUCKER.
CG: THAT COMPLETE IDIOT, HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO FUCK UP THAT GLORIOUSLY?
TA: what, diid he take your viirgiiniity wiithout cuddliing you enough after iit?
TA: diid he not a2k for your father2 permii22iion before propo2iing?
CG: STOP THIS BULLSHIT OR I WILL COME AND STRANGLE YOU.
CG: AND NOBODY WILL MISS YOU AND I WON’T HAVE TO GO TO JAIL BECAUSE NOBODY CARES.
TA: okay, iim 2eriiou2. do you need help? ii dont know how ii could help you here, but you 2ound liike you need help.
CG: I PROBABLY DO ALL THE FUCKING TIME.
CG: I’M
CG: HIS BOYFRIEND.
CG: I’M STRIDER’S BOYFRIEND.
CG: BUT WE’RE NOT GETTING MARRIED. IT’S JUST
CG: NOT THAT SERIOUS. BUT I DON’T NEED YOUR HELP, OKAY?
CG: I NEED TO TALK TO HIM. TALK SOME KIND OF SENSE INTO HIS EGOTISTICAL USELESS BRAIN FROM THE SIZE OF A PIMPLE, HOLY SHIT.
TA: ii cant BEELIIEVE youre datiing DAVE 2TRIIDER.
CG: NEITHER CAN I. DO I NOT HAVE SOME KIND OF STANDART? APPARENTLY NOT, IT’S LIKE I’M AN ABSOLUTELY FUCKING DEEPER PILE OF SHIT.
CG: LET’S TALK LATER, I HAVE TO YELL AT THE DOUCHECOUCH NOW.
TA: yeah ok
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering twinArmageddons [TA] --

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --
CG: STRIDER, WHAT IS GOING ON IN THAT MICROSCOPICALLY SMALL WORTHLESS VOMIT-INDUCING BRAIN OF YOURS?
CG: YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN EVERYBODY WOULD THINK WE’RE A LOT MORE SERIOUS THAN WE PLANNED.
CG: HAVE YOU NEVER CONSUMED ANY KIND OF MEDIA IN YOUR LIFE?
CG: THIS IS HOW IT WORKS, YOU PILE OF SHIT. EVERYBODY OVERREACTS.
CG: ARE YOU IGNORING ME?
CG: I SWEAR TO GOD, STRIDER. I SWEAR TO GOD, I WILL RUIN YOUR LIFE IF YOU KEEP ON IGNORING ME.
CG: I COULD. I KNOW YOU’RE JUST ROLLING YOUR EYES BECAUSE YOU DON’T TAKE ANYTHING EVER SERIOUSLY, BUT I COULD DEFINITELY FIND A WAY TO

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering twinArmageddons [TA] --
RUIN YOUR LIFE.
CG: THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT. BECAUSE YOU NEVER THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK OR WRITE SOMETHING. AS MUCH AS I OFTEN SAY THINGS THAT I REGRET AFTERWARDS, YOU JUST MANAGED TO FUCK UP WORSE THAN PAST KARKAT EVER COULD. AND WHY? BECAUSE THE MEDIA IS LIKE A DESPERATE FUCKING STALKER, ONLY WORSE, AND IF WE FUCK UP, EVEN IN A SMALL WAY, THEY WON’T BELIEVE US ANYMORE.
CG: SO EITHER WE PRETEND WE’RE FUCKING ENGAGED OR WE JUST BLOW UP THIS WHOLE THING AND TRUST ME, I REALLY WANT TO JUST QUIT.
CG: AND YOU, BEING THE BRAINLESS FUCKCHAIR YOU ARE, MANAGE TO BE THE REASON FOR THAT.
CG: I WILL CALL YOU IF YOU DON’T ANSWER ME IN THE NEXT TEN SECONDS.
CG: YOU BASTARD OF SOME ABANDONED VOMIT IN AN ALLEY.
CG: THAT’S IT.
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --
Does that mean I have to buy you a ring

Chapter Notes

I'm a slow writer, I know, I'm sorry!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It takes an hour to get through to Strider because the unforeseeable shitwaffle didn’t give you his phone number, but you are nothing if not stubborn. You search for some way to contact him on the internet and eventually actually manage to talk to some girl who apparently works for Strider, though as what is still a mystery. After some yelling on your part, the girl finally realizes who you are – Strider’s fucking boyfriend apparently, god fucking help you - and asks you to wait for a moment, please.

Before she connects you to Strider, you hear her yell "Holy shit, it's him, it's the picture guy! The fiancé! At least I hope so because I just connected him straight to DS!" Somebody in the background says something and thankfully that's when you don't have to hear more of this shit and get to listen to some horrifying waiting music instead.

"Yo."

"What kind of shitty greeting is that? And what do all those people that apparently work for you even do? And did she seriously just call you DS?" You take a calming breath.

"Well Karkat, some people don’t use insults instead of names for the people who employ them."

"Not when they don’t deserve that. Do you have any idea how much you fucked up? You had to do one thing. One thing!" You hold up your index finger for emphasis even though Strider can’t see you.

"Yeah, I read your pesterlog, AKA the grey wall of insults."

"Then how is it possible that the thought to answer me did not once creep across the wasteland that is your brain?"

"I wanted to, but then you wrote you’d wait ten seconds and logged off two seconds later,” Strider answers. “Talk about impatience, dude. I did answer you, but you didn’t see it anymore.”

"Fuck the fuck off!" You sit down on your couch as indignantly as possible.

"I can’t believe you’d talk to your fiancé like this. Is the spark really already gone?" He sighs dramatically.

"We are not anywhere near married and if you want me to play along with that engagement shit, you’ll have to offer me something big. Big, you hear me, Strider?"

"I’m a little bit distracted by the dick joke that’s just waiting to come to life here."

"I am this close to hanging up on you."
“How close?”

“I’m holding up my right hand and there’s only a small space between the tip of my thumb and index finger,” you say, keeping your right hand in your lap. “How small? Well, I don’t know, but I feel like there’s a joke about your dick just waiting to come to life here.”

You hear Strider laugh over the phone. “Okay, that was beautiful. I’m just, like, wiping away a small tear here. Because I can’t take the beauty.” That is definitely not pride you’re feeling, nope. You are not proud because you managed to make the repressed asshole laugh. It’s annoyance. Annoyance always makes you feel sort of glow-y and better than other people.

“You should be fucking weeping,” you respond.

“I’m weeping internally.”

You notice there’s a small smile on your face and quickly get your facial expression back under control. “I hope you’re weeping because you made everybody think we’re engaged. What the hell were you thinking?”

“Wait; just hold up for a second before you go on another patented Vantas Rant, capital V and R. I swear I had no idea anybody would take it this way. It was just a harmless Beyoncé reference, god, what world do we live in where you can’t even quote the queen without somebody overreacting?”

“The same world you’ve lived in for what, fifty years now? You should be used to this,” you tell him, slapping your hand repeatedly against your forehead. “And you’re a celebrity. There is actually nothing surprising about this. Not even that you’re a baby incapable of doing anything without help apparently.”

“Will you stop insulting me for this and instead insult me for something else if I sincerely apologize?”

“Are you even capable of sincerely doing anything?”

“I’m sorry, dude,” he says and it actually sounds genuine. You hear him try to continue, so you interrupt him before he blows it.

“Fucking fine. But now we have to actually go with this.”

“Does that mean I have to buy you a ring? A nice expensive little huge fucking diamond?”

“Don’t you fucking dare.” You wave your hands around wildly. “No. That means you owe me. And there is something I want you to do and don’t think I’ll endure this shit if you don’t agree,” you threaten Strider. “I wrote a short story and I want you to film it. Or, actually I want to film it using your camera and set and all the other awesome shit you so unfairly have. You won’t get to do much because, as everybody knows, you can’t produce something with even a lick of quality.”

“And you want to star in it?”

“No, I want to film it. Maybe I actually have more talents than just acting, you asswad,” you rant at Strider. “Maybe I want to direct movies. Like you, except I’d actually put effort into what I’d be doing. You will pay the actors. You have far too much money anyway. And then you’ll promote it and make sure it becomes popular.”

“Oh god,” he says, like the absolute asshole he is. “What’s that short story about?”

“It’s a love story,” you answer and quickly add “Don’t you fucking dare laugh. It’s really deep.
You’ll fucking see, shitstench, and you’ll cry your eyes out because you could never create anything this deep.”

“Maybe you’re just not looking at SBAHJ from the right perspective. And I’ll produce the shit out of your deep love story. It’ll be fucking epic, man. Future generations won’t remember it because it’ll be so epic that all of humanity has to stop eating and just watch it until they all die. It. Will. Be. Tragic.”

“Devastating,” you reply and there’s that fucking smile again.

“Horrifying.”

You startle when your doorbell rings. “Hold up, there’s somebody at the door.”

“I heard. Who is it?”

“I don’t know, I have to open the door first, you idiot.” You shake your head.

“Wait, you can’t tell who it is before you open the door? Do you not have a hole thingy to look through? What if it’s a paparazzo?”

“Can they even ring the doorbell? I mean, is it even legal? Not that I don’t have doubt they are intelligent enough.” you say, flinging the door open to prove him wrong and blinking when there’s really a guy holding a camera up outside.

You yell at the ass who actually has the audacity to take pictures of you “What on this fucked up earth do you think you’re doing, you repulsive legume hiding behind a camera?” When you try to appear as threatening as you can and slowly move closer to him, he actually takes some steps back. You show your teeth and pray it actually looks as intimidating as you’re imagining it. “Yes, now get the fuck out of here before I kick your ass out of this universe.”

The shitstain holds up his hands, grins and tells you “Sorry dude, just doing my job.” The camera clicks one more time and then he’s rushing down the stairs while you hear laughter coming from somewhere near your right ear. Strider is laughing loudly, he’s practically guffawing. Probably for the first time in his life.

You glare at the phone. “Stop laughing, you complete douchebag. That was absolutely not funny. Is your brain really that underdeveloped that you have to start laughing at random times?”

“No, it’s just” you can hear that he has trouble refraining from laughing, “that was great. Did he actually leave? I knew picking you to play this absurd parody of a B-grade romcom was a good idea.”

“Was that supposed to be an insult? I’m pretty sure you’re trying to insult me.” You slam the door shut.

He sighs and is quiet for a moment. “I find you refreshing, okay; that’s not insulting. Not even half of what you think I do to piss you off is actually me trying to piss you off. Not even a fifth.”

“That sounded like an insult, too.”

“Sigh.”

“Don’t you literally say the word ‘sigh’ at me, Strider. Don’t do that.”
He asks “How many others are there?”

“I literally have no idea what you’re babbling on about right now. Or ninety percent of the time.”

“Paparazzi.”

You rush to the one tiny window you have and look at the street below your building. Three cars are driving down the street probably looking for a parking spot because the normally mostly empty street is full with cars. You spot four people with cameras and while you’re still staring in horror, another one gets out of a car.

“They’re coming,” Strider says.

“Fuck.”

“Crawling out of their holes and, sniffing for blood, making their way towards the next wounded animal leaving behind a trail of destruction, slime and some sordid smell.”

“Fuck.”

Chapter End Notes

I don't have a plan for their little short film right now, so if someone wants to see something or has a good idea, I'm definitely open for ideas. I don't desperately NEED ideas (I don't want to seem lazy), but, you know, it would make this thing a bit more interactive. (I have a plan now, so I'm not really open for ideas anymore)

Thank you all so much, everybody who comments and gives kudos!! I swear I have the best readers!!!
I only have eyes for you

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] —
CG: HOLY SHIT.
CG: EVERYBODY IS FUCKING INSANE. I JUST SPENT THE LAST THREE HOURS ON THE INTERNET AND I NEVER WANT TO SPEND ANOTHER SECOND ONLINE.
TG: its never a good idea to look yourself up when youre famous
TG: trust me you dont even want to know what happens when you google i want to fuck dave strider
CG: I DON’T DOUBT THAT.
CG: LISTEN TO THIS ASININE HORSESHIT ARTICLE: “IS THEIR BLOSSOMING NEW LOVE AND THUS THE WEDDING DOOMED FROM THE START? LOOK AT OUR GALLERY TO SEE WHAT HOTTIE DAVE STRIDER WAS SEEN WITH RECENTLY!”
TG: aw you know youre the only one for me
TG: i dont even know who the fuck theyre talking bout
TG: i met some people who will star in the next movie
TG: my sister
TG: made an ironic vine with some other celebrities
CG: IT’S APPARENTLY A PORN STAR NAMED JOE ASSTRONUT.
TG: huh
TG: wait joe miller
CG: WHAT THE FUCK, STRIDER?
TG: a joe miller asked me for an autograph
TG: on his chest
TG: and then we talked a bit
TG: i was polite okay
CG: WOW, MAYBE YOU SHOULDN’T FLIRT WITH THE FIRST FUCKFACE YOU SEE WHEN YOU ARE TRYING TO CONVINCE PEOPLE THAT WE ARE IN LOVE. JUST A THOUGHT. IT’S NOT LIKE I’M AN EXPERT ON RELATIONSHIPS. I BET A LOT OF PEOPLE IN HAPPY RELATIONSHIPS HUMP THE NEXT HOT PERSON THEY SEE.
TG: glad we agree
TG: because that is absolutely what i did and will continue to do
CG: UGH, JUST BE A LITTLE BIT MORE CAREFUL FROM NOW ON, OKAY?
TG: aw you dont have to be jealous i only have eyes for you
CG: “FOLLOW US ON TWITTER TO GET THE NEWEST NEWS ON #DAVEKAT.”
CG: WE HAVE A FUCKING SHIPPING NAME. AND A HASHTAG. AND THAT HASHTAG IS OUR SHIPPING NAME.
TG: of course we do whatd you expect
TG: i bet theres already fanfiction
TG: and cosplay
CG: OH MY FUCKFACE, THAT SENTENCE IS UTTERLY APPALLING. READING THE WORD ‘CUTIE’ HONESTLY MAKES ME WANT TO KILL SOMETHING. I FEEL LIKE MY EYES ARE GOING TO PUKE, THEN TURN INTO TOXIC ACID AND SLOWLY BURN THROUGH MY HEAD.
TG: you just dont have enough self esteem
TG: maybe you are cute maybe you should embrace your cuteness
CG: SHUT YOUR USELESS GARBAGE CAN. THIS IS NOT A JOKING MATTER. EVERYBODY IS FUCKING INSANE.
CG: “KARKAT IS 24 YEARS OLD AND WORKS AS AN ACTOR. CHILDHOOD FRIENDS SAY THIS MIGHT BE HIS FIRST RELATIONSHIP.” OH MY GOD, PLEASE SHOOT ME OR SOMEBODY OR ME *AND* SOMEBODY.
CG: WHAT CHILDHOOD FRIEND IS THAT ASSHOLE EVEN SUPPOSED TO BE?
CG: THEY JUST INVENTED THAT.
TG: yeah the tabloids are pretty insane
TG: but you knew this would happen didnt you
TG: it was p obvious
CG: OF COURSE I DID. BUT YOU CAN’T BLAME ME IF I UNDERESTIMATED THE SHITTINESS OF THE MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC. IS IT REALLY A FUCKING CRIME TO THINK THAT THE GENERAL PUBLIC WOULD ACT LIKE DECENT HUMAN BEINGS?
CG: LOOK AT THIS GARBAGE: “KARKAT VANTAS A MURDERER!?!? WHO IS THIS GUY EVERYBODY’S CELEBRITY CRUSH IS DATING? FIVE YEARS AGO, THERE WAS A MURDER IN KARKAT’S HOME AND HE WAS INTERROGATED BY THE POLICE FOR HOURS.”
CG: I DID NOT KILL HER, YOU PIECE OF SHIT REPORTER. AND HOW MUCH WAS MY FUCKING FAULT IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS SO WHY DON’T YOU SHOVE YOUR NOSE UP YOUR ASS.
CG: WHY DON’T WE TALK ABOUT EVERY MISTAKE YOU’VE EVER MADE? YES, I THINK THAT IS A GOOD IDEA.
TG: i dont think its very healthy for you to read those articles
CG: I DON’T THINK IT’S VERY HEALTHY FOR YOU TO TELL ME WHAT TO DO.
CG: OH GOD. “HAS STRIDER ALREADY USED HIS HOT NEW BOYFRIEND AS INSPIRATION IN HIS LATEST HIT SBAHJ THE MOVIE?”
CG: OH HELL TO THE FUCKING FUCK NO. I CAN’T THINK OF A WORSE NIGHTMARE. DO YOU THINK I AM EXAGGERATING BECAUSE THAT IS DEFINITELY NOT WHAT I AM DOING.
TG: itd be a fucking honor that you obviously dont deserve
CG: HOW CAN YOU BE SO BLIND TO YOUR OWN MISTAKES?
CG: ONE DAY YOU WILL NOTICE AND YOU WILL REGRET EVERY MOVIE YOU’VE EVER MADE.
CG: “DID DAVE GET INSPIRATION TO PROPOSE WHEN HIS COUSIN ROSE LALONDE SENT HIM HER WEDDING INVITATION?”
CG: OH, AND LOOK AT THIS SHIT, EVERYBODY’S WONDERING HOW YOU PROPOSED.
TG: epically
CG: LOOK AT THIS COMMENT: “OH MY GOOOOD, SOMEBODY PLS NEEDS TO TELL ME *RIGHT NOW* THAT THIS IS JUST A JOKE!!! NOOO, MY HUSBAND IS MARRYING SOMEBODY ELSE, SEND HELP!! I’M FUCKING CRYING.”
CG: HOW CAN SOMEBODY BE SO DELUSIONAL.
TG: oh man that poor person i just cant help it that im hot shit
CG: AGAIN: HOW CAN SOMEBODY BE SO DELUSIONAL.
CG: THIS IS EVEN MORE DELUSIONAL: “I DON’T SEE WHY EVERYBODY IS SAYING THEY’RE TOGETHER. THEY SEEM LIKE GOOD FRIENDS TO ME. WE DON’T ALWAYS HAVE TO JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS! STRIDER ISN’T EVEN A HOMO.”
TG: yeah idk about you but i always fuck my friends
TG: that just strengthens the bond you know
TG: the bro bond
TG: brond
CG: WHOA, SOMEBODY HERE ACTUALLY HAS COMMON SENSE. “WHY DO YOU
ALL THINK THEY’RE ENGAGED? IT WAS JUST A REFERENCE?"
TG: yeah some people dont instantly go insane
TG: incredible i know
TG: some of my fans are actually really awesome
TG: scratch that
TG: all of them are
TG: do you have any idea how many answered with more beyonce references
TG: ive never been more proud
TG: i shed a small tear
TG: rose wrote me a message with one too
TG: the conversation then quickly devolved into her trying to psychoanalyze me and my freudian slips but yeah some of my fans are really cool
CG: THE COMMENT IS NOT FINISHED YET: “WE ALL KNOW DAVE, THEY’VE PROBABLY JUST BEGUN DATING. HE’S PROBABLY AWKWARD AS HELL.”
TG: wow misinterpretation of my personality much
CG: YEAH, YOU ARE SMOOTH AS FUCK.
TG: do i detect sarcasm here
TG: you wouldnt dare
CG: ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT, STRIDER? ARE YOU ABSOLUTELY SURE ABOUT THAT?
CG: THERE ARE SOME ABSOLUTE MORONS HERE.
CG: LIKE THIS NINCOMPOOP: “WOW, I ALWAYS KNEW STRIDER WAS A COCKSUCKER. FUCKING FAG, HAHA. JUST LOOK AT HIS MOVIES, HE TRIED TO HIDE IT THE WHOLE TIME AND IT WAS SO FUCKING PATHETIC.”
CG: OH AL-FUCKING-RIGHT, I’LL KICK THIS SHITSTENCH’S ASS. HE’LL LOOK AT MY INCREDIBLE ARGUMENTS AND WEEP.
TG: wait what
TG: are you arguing with an internet troll
TG: seriously
TG: answer me so i know youre not arguing with an internet troll
TG: you are arguing with an internet troll
TG: cmon its not worth it
TG: look most people reacted positively
TG: a lot of people talk about how courageous it is and shit even though its not and now youre seriously arguing with one person who posted this somewhere to get negative reactions
CG: I AM FUCKING CRUSHING THEM.
TG: theyre laughing their ass off
CG: YOU’RE JUST SAYING THAT BECAUSE YOU’RE NOT READING OUR CONVERSATION.
TG: fine do your thing
TG: whatever makes you feel good
TG: having an all caps conversation with somebody probably makes you feel really good
TG: do you feel good karkat
CG: YOU CAN’T DISTRACT ME. DON’T EVEN TRY.
TG: look a puppy
TG: suit yourself
TG: my manager told me to tell you to just not answer when people ask you questions
TG: or say no comment
TG: my advice is that you make sure your yelling doesnt include anything that seems important enough to be quoted in a magazine
CG: I KNOW WHAT TO DO; I’M NOT A BABY.
CG: YOU SHOULD SEE THIS. I AM DEFINITELY WINNING THIS ARGUMENT. THEY
WILL SEE I AM RIGHT ANY MOMENT NOW. THE TRUTH IS BURNING BRIGHT TONIGHT.
CG: I JUST NEED AN HOUR MORE.
TG: wow
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] ---
The love must be oozing off you two

You use the backdoor of your apartment building to get to work, but there's paparazzi over there too.

They just stand there shouting questions at you (“Is he good in bed?” “What do you know about his next movie?” “Can you give us a statement on the political treatment of homosexuals?” “What’s the next movie you’ll star in?” “Are you really a murderer?” “Does he have a big dick?”). You take a deep breath and show them your middle finger while you walk to your car. They follow you and when you start driving, there’s a queue of at least ten cars following you. You’re tempted to start a car chase right there in the city, but you still value your life a little bit.

Work is hell.

Work is hell in general, but today it’s especially awkward. As if the paparazzi watching your every move weren’t bad enough already, your customers often recognize who you are. It always happens the same way: The customer walks up to you, greets you, freezes, frowns and after a few seconds their eyes widen while you stare back at them in defeat.

The reactions after that vary. Some people aren’t sure it’s you and pull their phones out to “subtly” compare you to the blurry selfie you’ve seen a million times now. It’s admittedly not a bad selfie considering you weren’t even making sure both of you would be in the picture. A bit crooked, but you can see both of your heads and shoulders. You look surprisingly relaxed in it. Your eyes are closed and both of you look like you’re just casually sharing a short kiss.

Others who recognize you start gushing about you or Strider or both of you together and sometimes ask for an autograph you reluctantly give to them.

A few react extremely awfully. They start spouting homophobic horseshit and vulgarities and of course you can’t help yourself. You have to shout at them and then everybody’s staring at the two of you having a shouting match like they’ve never seen two people exchange death threats before. It only stops when your coworkers force the useless pustules to leave and tell you to go make another coffee to distract you.

After a few hours, everything becomes a blur. The customers all start looking the same and you don’t have enough energy to be as annoyed by the stares as you pretend to be. You make coffee after coffee while people actually shamelessly take pictures of you. You’re ready to kill somebody by the time your break finally arrives.

Of course that’s when Dave Strider strides into the coffee shop. It’s like the entire shop collectively holds their breath when he arrives in front of you.

“Yo.”

“Oh god, what the hell, Strider?” you whisper.

“What, can’t I visit my fiancé at his workplace? I brought you food.” He holds up a brown bag.

“Ah yes, a nondescript bag colored like shit. Seems trustworthy.”

Strider opens the bag and starts pulling things out while the people in the shop don’t even try to pretend they’re not staring. “We got a sandwich, apple juice, some Chinese noodle chicken stuff I warmed up, a salad I bought from McDonald’s and an apple.” You stare at him. He shrugs and adds “I didn’t know what you’d like.”
You look at all the food he brought you. “An apple?” you whisper.

“What kind of boyfriend would I be if I didn’t at least give you the possibility to eat healthy? And apples are part of apple juice so they have to be great.”

“Sometimes it’s best to just not think too hard about the horseshit that comes pouring out of your mouth.” You sigh. “You do realize we sell food here, right?”

“Not food this great, man. I made that sandwich with my own hands. It’s the most epic sandwich you’ve ever seen. Shit’s like if Superman and his less known little brother Sandwichman had a love child. Wait, shit, that’s incest.”

You pretend you found that funny so all the useless assholes in the shop will finally stop watching you like they’ve never seen a couple awkwardly stand around and whisper-shout insults at each other. Well, one part of the couple does that. The other remains as passive as always. The love must be oozing off you two. Nobody would ever believe the two of you if Strider hadn’t brought you food. You have to admit his plan is good.

“Alright, I get it. You made me a sandwich and have some repressed feelings about your brother. Thanks, I guess!”

He snorts and lowers his voice. “I know you hate me so I won't steal your whole break. I have to work, too. And you don’t have to go on a rant now; I know you don’t believe that.” You nod. Strider adds, “So do I get a hug?”

Very slowly, you step forward until your chests are touching and hug him hesitantly. When he squeezes you closer, you realize this is the first hug you’ve gotten in years. You’re not very touchy-feely with your friends. His hands move to your shoulders and stay there for two seconds. He pats you on the back and then ruffles your hair.

You yell at him. “Hey! Are you seriously incapable of not being an asshole for more than a second?”

“Sorry, it was just so tempting. Did you actually win that argument with the troll by the way?”

“They didn’t admit they were wrong, but they stopped answering me after some time. Everybody knows what that means. They just weren’t strong enough to admit all the ways they fucked up. But thankfully I’m generous enough to forgive them.”

Strider nods and that’s when a girl approaches you both. She has long blue hair, glasses and is wearing a shirt with the word “hipster” written on it. You’re annoyed by her before she’s even opened her mouth.

“Uh, I’m sorry for interrupting, but I just wanted to tell you both that I think it’s great that you are who you are and don’t let anybody stop you! Uh, and I think you’re really cute together!”

“You’re adorable enough for two. Potentially even for three, if you know what I mean.” He lifts his shades to exaggeratedly wink at her and you hit his arm.

“Strider!” you hiss. The girl looks like she’s going to faint. “Is flirting with a random girl something a good boyfriend does?”

“Relax, she knows I’m into guys. I’m just being friendly.”

“In what world does being friendly mean flirting? How socially awkward are you? But you know
what, this conversation is over. I need to get back to work.” That is a lie, but you have better things
to do than reenact some soap opera in front of at least forty people watching you as if you were their
new favorite TV show. This situation is unbearably awkward. You give Strider and the girl a fake
smile and go back to work.

You hear Strider say to the girl, “He has to work all the fucking time. Shit it's like capitalism is my
worst enemy. Like, you wanna spend some quality time with Shouty over there and some old guy in
a suit jumps out of some dark corner like an end boss in a game and knocks you out.” They leave the
shop together, the girl staring at Strider like she’s having a spiritual experience and him rambling
about some shit. Probably trying to “subtly” convince her you two are totally in love despite what
she just saw.
We must be soul mates

-- carcinogeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechgodhead [TG] —
CG: OKAY, ASSHOLE, I HAVE A GREAT IDEA.
CG: BEHOLD: WE TELL EACH OTHER ONE THING ABOUT OURSELVES EVERY DAY. WE NEED TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER AND THAT IS THE BEST WAY TO DO IT, AS MUCH AS IT PAINS ME TO WRITE THIS. TRUST ME, THIS IS AS BRAIN-DAMAGINGLY AWFUL FOR ME AS IT IS FOR YOU.
CG: BUT YOU ARE THE ONE WHO DECIDED THE EASIEST WAY FOR YOU TO GET A PARTNER IS TO PAY THEM. SO DEAL WITH THIS.
CG: ANSWER ME SO I KNOW YOU UNDERSTOOD THIS VERY EASY TO UNDERSTAND IDEA.
TG: yes sir
CG: WOW, ARE YOU SO MENTALLY YOUNG YOU HAVE TO MAKE EVERYTHING ABOUT SEXUAL INTERCOURSE?
TG: wow okay im pretty sure there are enough situations where yes sir is absolutely not sexual
TG: like you know youre the captain and im the commodore
TG: in an absolutely not sexy way
TG: like
TG: im pretty sure youre the only one here making things dirty
TG: also did you just say sexual intercourse?
CG: A COMMODORE OUTRANKS A CAPTAIN. I CAN’T BELIEVE YOU HAVE THE AUDACITY TO CRITICIZE MY WORD CHOICE WHEN YOUR ENTIRE METAPHOR IS WRONG.
TG: then im the rear admiral
TG: the literal butt of the joke
CG: A REAR ADMIRAL OUTRANKS A COMMODORE.
TG: there you go now i know youre the only person in the world who gives a fuck about nautical terminology
TG: off to a good start here
CG: A GOOD START WHERE YOU’VE ALREADY EMBARRASSED YOURSELF. YOU ARE RIGHT, THIS IS A GOOD START.
CG: THAT STILL DOESN’T COUNT. IT’S USELESS INFORMATION.
CG: THANKFULLY I AM HERE TO SAVE YOU:
CG: I QUIT MY JOB. I JUST GOT A LOT OF OFFERS FOR MOVIES BECAUSE OF THIS HORSESHIT SO I QUIT THE COFFEE SHOP JOB. I HATED IT.
CG: I BET THERE’S A PLACE IN HELL WHERE YOU HAVE TO WORK IN A COFFEE SHOP.
TG: with an endless string of hipster chicks with empty voids for eyes
CG: NOW YOU’RE JUST DESCRIBING A NORMAL COFFEE SHOP.
TG: ohh burn
TG: i got a babe who throws shade like its nothing
TG: sassy
CG: I CAN’T BELIEVE HOW EMBARRASSING YOU ARE.
CG: I THINK I’M GOING TO BECOME RELIGIOUS JUST SO I CAN ASK ANY DEITY WHO’D BE WILLING TO PLEASE STOP YOU.
CG: I DON’T CARE IN WHAT WAY.
TG: im 25 years old
CG: WHAT
TG: i thought was supposed to tell you something about me
CG: SOMETHING I DIDN’T ALREADY KNOW.
CG: THAT IS SOMETHING ANYONE CAN LOOK UP ON YOUR WIKIPEDIA PAGE.
TG: you read my wikipedia page
CG: OF COURSE. I AM A GOOD ACTOR AND GOOD ACTORS ALWAYS PREPARE
FOR THEIR ROLES.
CG: I LOOKED AT ALL YOUR FAN SITES TOO. BECAUSE I AM JUST THAT GOOD.
AND I HATE MYSELF JUST THAT MUCH.
TG: youre a closet fan
TG: admit it
TG: i bet you cry over gifs of me
TG: stay up all night writing reader x dave strider fanfiction
TG: have a hella jeff plushie
CG: AUBLATHEROGHEQOQT0I
CG: HAS THE LAST BIT OF REMAINING INTELLIGENCE YOU HAD DECIDED TO
FINALLY TRICKLE OUT OF YOUR BRAIN AND DOWN YOUR BODY TO START A
NEW, BETTER LIFE IN A TRASH CAN? I CANNOT BELIEVE YOU WOULD EVEN
THINK THAT.
CG: YOU FUCKING PETULANT ANTEATER. WHY DO YOU KEEP ON TRYING TO
PISS ME THE FUCK OFF?
CG: I READ THESE THINGS TO HELP YOU, IN CASE YOU WERE TOO BUSY
STICKING YOUR NOSE UP YOUR ASSHOLE TO NOTICE.
CG: YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH TIME I SPENT READING USELESS SHIT
ABOUT YOU. WHY? BECAUSE *YOU* NEED ME TO BE GOOD AT THIS. I COULD
QUIT AT ANY POINT OR SELL THE STORY ABOUT HOW DAVE STRIDER HIRED
SOME GUY TO PLAY HIS BOYFRIEND TO THE MEDIA. BUT INSTEAD OF DOING
THAT I PUT IN EXTRA WORK.
CG: AND I FOUND OUT A LOT OF IMPORTANT THINGS, LIKE YOU’RE APPARENTLY
ALBINO.
CG: AND APPARENTLY EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT. EXCEPT YOUR FUCKING
FIANCÉ.
CG: THAT IS ME.
CG: BUT YOU DON’T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING MORE COMPLICATED THAN
FONDLING YOUR DICK.
TG: fine im sorry
TG: dont be so pissed off all the time
TG: youre working hard for this job and i appreciate it
TG: i know its shitty when there are paparazzi stalking you everywhere you go
TG: are we chill now
TG: or well people who lowkey want to piss each other off but are like totally chill at the same time
TG: me at least
TG: are you ever totally chill about anything
TG: and then theres also the problem of our sexual tension
TG: hey are you giving me the silent treatment
CG: NO, I AM FACEPALMING. IT IS LITERALLY PAINFUL TO WATCH YOU TRY AND
BE IRONIC AND FUNNY.
TG: dont hurt yourself
TG: what would i do without my sugar honey babe
CG: YOUR ABILITY TO RAMBLE ON AND ON ABOUT SHIT AND MAKE SURE THE
ENTIRE CONVERSATION GOES TO SHIT BAFFLES ME EVERY TIME WE TALK.
CG: I WANTED YOU TO TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF.
CG: SOMETHING NOBODY ELSE KNOWS.
TG: wait
TG: you didn't do that either
TG: a lot of people know you quit your job
TG: it's not exactly a state secret
TG: karkat
TG: is it
TG: possible
TG: that people hate talking about personal shit
TG: maybe
TG: gasp
TG: even you
CG: STOP TRYING TO DISTRACT ME.
CG: YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT WHEN YOU JACK OFF. JUST TELL ME SOMETHING.
TG: going a little overboard with how many times you mention sex today
CG: ABSOLUTELY NOT.
CG: I AM LITERALLY WASTING PRECIOUS MOMENTS OF EXISTENCE SITTING HERE WAITING FOR YOU TO TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF.
CG: WHAT HAS MY LIFE BECOME?
TG: shit bro i have no idea what to tell you
CG: ...
TG: being a little passive aggressive there
TG: you should become bffsies with lalonde
TG: ah
TG: shit
TG: i could tell you about my weird recurring dreams
CG: ODD CHOICE. BUT GO ON.
CG: ANYTHING TO GET THIS OVER WITH.
TG: exactly how i feel
TG: we must be soul mates
CG: DO I HAVE TO REPEAT MY TRAIL OF PILES OF SHIT?
TG: thats what those were
TG: symbols for how you feel about me i presume
TG: well i have weird dreams every night
TG: lalonde would love me for them
TG: but i think she kinda has similar dreams
TG: they're not the same thing every time
TG: but they always feature the same people and shit
TG: i dont remember the people when i wake up though
TG: rose is there sometimes
TG: and sometimes like people with horns or some shit
TG: and i think sometimes i can travel in time
TG: and a lot of times somebody dies
TG: me or another version of me or rose or a horn creature thing or another human i care about in the dream but cant remember when i wake up
TG: and theres like blood and rainbows and colors for some reason
TG: because if theres something you want from your dreams its for them to be as bloody and colorful as possible
TG: at the same time of course
CG: I
CG: HAVE SIMILAR DREAMS.
TG: wait you do
CG: WITH HORNS AND SHIT, YES.
TG: do you keep on dying or seeing somebody die too
CG: YES.
CG: OH GOD.
CG: MY FRIENDS ARE THERE AND THEY ALL KILL EACH OTHER SOMETIMES.
CG: THEY ALL HAVE H Horns. I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK I HAD SOME WEIRD FUCKED UP THING FOR HORNS.
TG: yeah
TG: so
TG: that's weird
CG: NO SHIT, STRIDER.
CG: YOU DON'T NEED TO TELL ME IT’S WEIRD THAT I KEEP ON DREAMING ABOUT MY DEAD FRIENDS LYING IN PUDDLES OF PAINT.
CG: OR CHESS FIGURINES OR PEOPLE I’VE NEVER MET BEFORE.
CG: BUT THAT PROBABLY EXIST.
TG: yeah
TG: well this conversation became really serious
TG: cue some awkward joke to lighten the mood
CG: KNOCK KNOCK.
TG: whos there
CG: I DON’T KNOW, I CAN’T THINK OF A KNOCK KNOCK JOKE.
TG: i dont know i cant think of a knock knock joke who
CG: I RAN RIGHT INTO THAT ONE.
TG: yes
TG: yes you did
TG: knock knock
CG: FORGET IT.
TG: dave
CG: UGH. YOU ARE A CHILD.
CG: I HAVE TO PRETEND I’M IN LOVE WITH A CHILD.
CG: DAVE WHO?
TG: dave strider
CG: I HATE YOU.
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering tumtechGodhead [TG] --
Kanaya comes to your apartment. Of course she does. She’s always bugging and fussing and meddling. She pretends she’s not just there to question you about your sudden engagement, but you see right through her.

“I want to congratulate you on your engagement. Dave is a great young man,” she says, smiling at you from her position on your kitchen chair.

“Right,” you answer. She can interpret that however she wants to.

“Yes, and Rose is very fond of him. But I can’t help but wonder when you met him.”

Good question. You have no idea. “Like, three months ago,” you lie. She nods and you can practically see her think about a good way to tell you that maybe you shouldn’t marry somebody you’ve known for three months. You add, “But we just clicked the moment we met. I can see into his soul and he sees into mine. You know, we just fit together like two puzzle pieces.” Oh god.

Kanaya doesn’t seem very convinced, so you start rambling. “Like, we write every single day and he told me about his nightmares and I told him about mine, I know he regrets some of the shit in his movies and he was scared to come out because he thought nobody would believe him. He cares about my health and always brings me apples when he brings me food to work. Did you know he has a weird thing for apple juice? Because I do. He was my first kiss. And we’re also going to produce my short film together. You know, the one I told you about, that’s really important to me.” And now the death blow. “And we have fantastic sex.”

Poor Kanaya actually startles. “Oh, well, that is... certainly good for a relationship.” She continues, “I am just concerned about the fact that you didn’t tell anybody you were dating for three whole months. And you still seem tense about this subject. Please don’t feel like you have to hide anything from me. I’d always support you, you know that, right?”

“Then why are you bothering me about this?”

Kanaya drops the subject after that. You know that lately she’s been trying to fuss less because sometimes it becomes stressful to her. So, you watch rom-coms together instead. She attempts to talk about The Murder Thing once, but you remind her you do not ever, under any circumstances, talk about that. Kanaya is one of your closest friends, but that is completely off limits.

Gamzee thankfully doesn’t bug you about your “relationship”. You’re not sure he even knows about it or knows who Dave Strider is. Considering how high the guy is all the time, it’s a surprise he remembers his own name. When he knocks on your door some time after Kanaya has left, it’s to offer you weed and pass out on your bed mumbling about miracles.

Then there’s Sollux, your third good friend. He witnessed your breakdown after he told you about Strider’s tweet. That’s when you told him you weren’t engaged, but that’s not the official story anymore. You know Sollux hates it when people want to talk about his private life and almost never asks others about theirs, but you’re also pretty sure he is very confused, even more than Kanaya, and probably worried. So it’s not a big surprise when he asks you if he can come over to play video games (or “own your noob ass”, as he puts it).
You’re playing some crappy ego-shooter against each other when he asks you, “KK, are you engaged now or not?”

“Yeah, well. Yes. Some people are good at proposing and some do it via dumb tweets.”

Sollux frowns. “You know, for an actor you’re a shitty liar.” He kills your character with one well-placed shot.

“Kanaya believed me! And you fucking piece of undigested vomit, that was totally unfair, I wasn’t even ready.”

“Bullshit. Kanaya’s probably just too classy for your crap. Or Lalonde told her something. And it’s not my fault you’re absolute shit at this game.”

“Restart this horseshit. I’ll fucking wreck you! Just watch me. I’ll kick your ass into a different dimension.” You sit up straighter and Sollux snorts hard.

“Right, because I didn’t win the last how many games, asshole? That’s right, all of them. All of the games.”

“I get it, you fucking superfluous nipple. You’re just bragging to hide the fact that you hate yourself and have every right to because your life is a fucking trash can!”

“I’m not the one who’s lying about his relationship here.” Sollux kills your character again. You let out a scream. “Look,” he continues, “it’s cool if you don’t want to talk about it. It’s not like I want to actually have a heart-to-heart with you about your joke of a life.”

You rub your tired eyes while Sollux restarts the game again. “You’re right. Our relationship is not like we pretend it is. But that’s all I’m going to tell you.”

Sollux shrugs. You play silently for a few minutes, but finally you give up and say, “Sometimes it’s really weird. Like, he’s really different when we’re in public and when we’re talking on pesterchum or in private. And it’s just messing with my head!” You’re an idiot who has never been able to stop himself from talking when something bugs you. At least Sollux already knows something is up.

Sollux pries his eyes away from the screen long enough to shoot you a glance. He asks, “But he doesn’t, you know, hurt you or anything like that?”

“Oh god, no! No! I know that sounds like something somebody who’s being abused would say, but no! He just--fuck. I guess it doesn’t matter. You already don’t believe me. He pays me to pretend to be his boyfriend. He’s behaved enough like the asshole he truly is in the past to give people reason to not believe him when he comes out. That’s why he needs some poor guy to act like he actually likes him.”

Sollux raises his eyebrows. “Wow. That’s pathetic.”

“Then what would you have done in his situation?” you demand. “I can’t believe you’d call other people pathetic. Have you ever seen yourself in the mirror?”

“People in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones”, Sollux answers with a meaningful look at you. “And you do realize it’s a horrible plan, right? Knowing you, there’s no way this is going to end well. Even if your habit of pathetically falling in love with the first person who gives you attention doesn’t ruin this, you’re going to end up hurt in some way. Do you seriously think nobody will find out?”
“I am a fucking grown man. Do you seriously think I can’t look out for myself? Shut the fuck up.” Your character dies again. You throw your controller at Sollux. “You’re cheating. There’s no way in hell Sollux Captor isn’t a putrid cheating motherfucker.”

“As if I had to.” He laughs at you. Then he says, “So you’re basically a hooker now?”

“I am going to kill you!”

Chapter End Notes

Okay, I'm kind of making this universe up as I go. The story is set post-game and all the alpha and beta trolls and kids were transported to earth, but to different times and places. That’s why Karkat only knows some of the trolls and kids. Dave and Rose have their beta guardians, but grow up to be a lot like their alpha selves.
I am going to rescue you from those mean monsters and carry you away to my castle

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --
CG: FFFJKGIRDEWTAEAREZAUEK
CG: ARRGRHHREOIREAEAOIHOTEHTAIOPHTOITLHAETR
TG: yes honey
CG: HOW
CG: *HOW THE FUCK*
CG: DO YOU MANAGE TO TOLERATE THESE
CG: UNDERDEVELOPED MISERABLE JOKES OF NATURE
CG: THESE VULTURES WHICH FEAST ON HUMILIATION AND PARANOIA
CG: THESE PSYCHOTIC LEECHES WHO SUCK THE LIFE OUT OF EVERYTHING GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL.
TG: the paparazzi
CG: WHO THE FUCK ELSE COULD I POSSIBLY BE TALKING ABOUT?
TG: your family
TG: friends
TG: toes
TG: its not like youre the kind of person who never exaggerates
TG: or has the manner of somebody optimistic and sexually satisfied
CG: OH, I AM FUCKING LAUGHING. DON’T FUCKING TELL ME YOU ARE SEXUALLY SATISFIED. THERE’S NO WAY YOU ARE GETTING YOUR DISGUSTING MALFORMED *THING* NEAR ANYBODY WITHOUT RUINING OUR APPALLING LITTLE LOVE STORY.
CG: YOU’RE DOING IT AGAIN.
CG: YOU ALWAYS DO YOUR BEST TO DERAILED THE CONVERSATION. I WAS TALKING ABOUT MY NEVER-ENDING SUFFERING CAUSED BY THESE
TG: yeah i get it
CG: DERISORY DIABOLIC BABIES FROM HELL
CG: THESE
TG: whatd they do
CG: EXIST.
CG: THEY DON’T HAVE TO DO SOMETHING TO BE HORRIBLE PARASITES. SATAN HIMSELF WOULD TELL THESE EVIL CELERY STICKS TO CALM THE FUCK DOWN.
TG: aren’t all celery sticks evil
CG: WE DON’T HAVE TIME FOR YOU TO START PHILOSOPHIZING.
TG: no
TG: what time consuming thing exactly is it were doing
CG: WE NEVER HAVE TIME FOR YOU TO START PHILOSOPHIZING.
CG: YOU’RE ALREADY RAMBLY AND NONSENSICAL ENOUGH.
CG: BUT FINE, I’LL TELL YOU SOME OF THE THINGS THEY DID TO MAKE MY MISERABLE EXISTENCE EVEN WORSE IN THE LAST *TWO* DAYS.
TG: i know how paparazzi are
CG: YOU WILL SHUT UP AND LISTEN TO ME COMPLAIN EITHER WAY. IT IS YOUR FAULT I AM IN THIS SITUATION AND I CAN’T FUCKING BEAR THIS SHIT ANYMORE.
CG: AT FIRST IT WAS TOLERABLE, BUT NOW IT’S JUST FUCKING HELL.
CG: DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I’M JUST NORMALLY DRIVING IN MY CAR? THEY CUT ME OFF ON PURPOSE OR BLOCK ME. JUST OUT OF NOWHERE. I
HAVE NO IDEA WHAT KIND OF PSYCHOPATH YOU HAVE TO BE TO ACTUALLY DO THAT. I'M GOING TO BE IN A CAR CRASH AT SOME POINT IN THE NEXT WEEK. I CAN JUST FUCKING FEEL IT ALREADY.

CG: I DID SOME RESEARCH ON THE INTERNET AND APPARENTLY THEY DO BULLSHIT LIKE THAT ALL THE TIME. AND THEY’VE CAUSED CAR CRASHES ALREADY. BUT THAT IS NOT A FUCKING SURPRISE.

CG: WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH PICTURES OF ME JUST SITTING IN A CAR ANYWAY?

CG: THERE’S JUST SOMETHING WRONG ABOUT A HUMAN BEING WHOSE NEXT MEAL APPARENTLY DEPENDS ON THEM STALKING SOMEBODY AND FUCKING HARASSING THEM.

CG: THEY’RE BASICALLY CAMPING OUTSIDE OF MY APARTMENT. IT’S SICK. AND NOT IN YOUR “HAHA, THAT IS SO SICK, MAN” WAY.

CG: THEY ALWAYS TRY TO GET A PICTURE OF ME THROUGH THE WINDOWS. AND I LIVE ON THE FOURTH FLOOR.

CG: SO I THOUGHT THEY WOULDN’T BE ABLE TO SEE ME THROUGH THE WINDOWS. BUT APPARENTLY SOME REPULSIVE ASSHOLE WAS ABLE TO TAKE A PICTURE FROM ANOTHER BUILDING AND NOW THERE’S A PICTURE OF ME ALMOST COMPLETELY NAKED CIRCULATING ON THE INTERNET.

TG: im sorry

CG: THAT’S NOT EVEN THE HALF OF IT.

CG: I WENT TO A PUBLIC BATHROOM YESTERDAY AND SOMEBODY HID IN A BATHROOM STALL AND WAITED FOR ME TO COME OUT. WHAT THE FUCK.

CG: AND THEY TRY TO GET THE WORST PICTURES POSSIBLE. IF THOSE WERE MOSTLY KIND OF FLATTERING PICTURES, IT WOULD BE A LITTLE BIT MORE BEARABLE, BUT THE ONES PEOPLE PAY A LOT OF MONEY TO SEE ARE APPARENTLY THE HORRIBLE ONES.

CG: THEY USE BRIGHT LIGHTS TO MAKE ME SQUINT OR MAKE ME TRIP OR WHATEVER AND THEY SCREAM HORRIBLE AWFUL SHIT AT ME TO GET ME TO REACT.

CG: AND THERE’S NOTHING I CAN DO. SCREAMING AT THEM IS JUST WHAT THEY WANT. I CAN’T EVEN SHOVE THEM OUT OF THE WAY BECAUSE I’D IMMEDIATELY BE LABELED AS FUCKING AGGRESSIVE BY EVERYBODY. AND I’VE READ ABOUT CASES WHERE CELEBRITIES KICKED OR SHOVED THE PAPARAZZI AND THEY WERE SUED.

CG: AS IF THE PAPARAZZI WEREN’T BAD ENOUGH, NORMAL PEOPLE SOMETIMES BEHAVE LIKE THAT TOO. IT IS SO FUCKING CREEPY. I’VE NEVER HAD MUCH HOPE FOR HUMANITY, BUT NOW IT’S COMPLETELY GONE.

CG: AND I’VE ALREADY HAD SO MANY HORRIBLE PICTURES OF ME TAKEN.

CG: BUT PEOPLE WILL EVEN CRITICIZE ME IF I LOOK FAIRLY GOOD IN A PICTURE. FOR THE WAY I AM DRESSED OR WHAT I’M DOING OR HOW I DON’T LOOK VERY HAPPY OR JUST THE GENERAL WAY I LOOK OR SOME OTHER HORSESHIT.

TG: please tell me you dont look at pictures of you or comments on those pictures

TG: those are always bullshit

TG: oh my god

TG: please stop caring so much

TG: there are bad pictures of everybody somewhere on the internet

TG: even me

TG: THE dave strider

TG: incredible i know

TG: you should see the ironic selfies of my thirteen year old self

TG: actually no those are pretty hilarious the more i think about them
TG: you really should see them
TG: but like the morale of the story is
TG: you dont look horrible at all even though some assholes may say that
TG: in fact
TG: why do you think everybody wants a picture of you
TG: they all want a piece of that ass
TG: theyre thirsty for quality vantass booty
TG: ah
TG: vantass
TG: how didnt I see it before
TG: shit
TG: im fucking disappointed in myself
CG: OH MY GOD. PLEASE SHUT UP.
CG: I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE THE ONLY PERSON I KNOW WHO COULD
UNDERSTAND THIS, BUT OF COURSE YOU’RE JUST MAKING JOKES AGAIN AFTER
A HALF-HEARTED ATTEMPT OF CHEERING ME UP.
CG: THANKS FOR THAT THOUGH.
TG: im not even halfway done
TG: at being your knight in ironically porny armor
TG: one option is flipping them off because it makes the photos unusable for some magazines
TG: but mostly they just blur it out
TG: and people think its rude
TG: or you could try wearing the same clothes every single day
TG: till make the pictures seem like theyre always from the same day
CG: AND MAKE ME SMELL LIKE A TRASHCAN. YES, THAT IS A GOOD PLAN. NOTE
THE SARCASM.
TG: nope
TG: never wouldve gotten the sarcasm if you hadn't pointed it out
TG: youd have to buy several pieces of the same shirt
CG: IT MAY HAVE ESCAPED YOUR NOTICE, BUT NOT EVERYBODY IS RICH.
TG: ill pay for it
CG: DO YOU THINK I HAVE OFFICIALLY TURNED INTO A PROSTITUTE NOW.
TG: im pretty sure i would have noticed if wed had sex
TG: and you keep on reminding me this is my fault
TG: so i can pay for the expenses necessary to keep you relatively sane
TG: and even if you wont let me pay for the shirt ill definitely pay for the bodyguard
CG: AH YES. THE BODYGUARD. BECAUSE WE HAVE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT A
BODYGUARD.
TG: theres no way you can keep on going like this without a bodyguard
TG: i have one too
TG: they just chill around and keep the more insane paparazzi and fans away from you
TG: everybody with this much media attention has at least one
TG: but if you dont want one fine
TG: it was just a suggestion
CG: YOU DIDN’T WORD IT LIKE A SUGGESTION. BUT FINE. I PROBABLY DO NEED
A BODYGUARD.
CG: BUT I WILL BUY THOSE FUCKING SHIRTS MYSELF, EVEN IF IT’S THE LAST
THING I DO. I STILL HAVE SOME DIGNITY LEFT.
TG: then theres one last thing you could do
TG: if you wanna get away from them right now you could borrow my disguise stuff
TG: wigs and sunglasses and clothes and a fake moustache and awesome shit like that
CG: HOW EFFECTIVE AND NOT IRONICALLY SHITTY ARE THOSE THINGS
REALLY? BE HONEST WITH ME HERE.
TG: sadly very
TG: it pains me to admit this
TG: but sometimes function is more important than irony
TG: i know im surprised too
CG: I’LL COME TO YOUR OFFICE THEN.
CG: WE’LL SEE HOW GOOD THEY ACTUALLY ARE.
TG: i have them at home
TG: i cant go there right now but ill tell you how to get into the apartment
TG: its on the highest floor of this building with lots of apartments so just ring the bell to jims
TG: apartment and ask him to let you in
TG: ill call him
TG: say my boyfriend needs to get into my apartment to put on sexy lingerie for when i come home
TG: then you can go to the highest floor
TG: the key is under the doormat
CG: OH MY GOD. HOW HAS NOBODY BROKEN IN THERE YET?
TG: cmon i gotta do it for the sake of irony
TG: and nobody suspects it there because its so obvious
TG: my address is
CG: I KNOW YOUR ADDRESS.
TG: wow
TG: that totally doesnt sound like something a stalker would say
CG: IT’S COMMON KNOWLEDGE.
CG: “OH, DAVE STRIDER IS SO HUMBLE HE LIVES IN AN APARTMENT LIKE US
MORTALS INSTEAD OF A MANSION.”
CG: IT’S INCREDIBLE HOW EVERYBODY’S ALL OVER YOU AND EVERYTHING
YOU DO. AND SO FUCKING JEALOUS OF *ME*.
CG: THOUGH THEY SHOULD PITY ME INSTEAD.
CG: NOT THAT I WANT PITY FROM ANYONE. IT SHOULD JUST BE THE NORMAL
REACTION SOMEBODY SHOULD HAVE WHEN THEY FIND OUT SOMEBODY’S
DATING DAVE STRIDER.
TG: please im your fucking hero
TG: im saving you from the paparazzi
TG: im all like
TG: dont despair fair maiden
TG: i am going to rescue you from those mean monsters and carry you away to my castle
TG: and then tasteful fade to black
TG: but everybody knows were totally doing the horizontal tango
CG: GOOD LORD. I DON’T LOOK AT MY PHONE FOR ONE SECOND BECAUSE I’M
DRIVING AND YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT SEX AGAIN.
CG: I’M AT THE FUCKING HOUSE. HAVE YOU CALLED THIS JIM ALREADY?
TG: one min
CG: WHO IS THAT GUY ANYWAY?
TG: done
TG: hes one of my neighbors
TG: hes pretty chill
TG: but he wants to meet you now
CG: WHAT?
CG: I DON’T WANT TO MEET HIM.
CG: WAIT
CG: IS THAT HIM?
TG: no
CG: VERY FUNNY, STRIDER. IT WAS INDEED JIM.
CG: YOUR “PRETTY CHILL NEIGHBOR”.
CG: YOU KNOW, THE GUY WHO LOOKS LIKE HE’S MODELING FOR SOME
GLAMOUR MAGAZINE AT ANY GIVEN POINT.
CG: I JUST TALKED TO HIM.
CG: AND I’M PRETTY SURE HE’S INTO YOU.
CG: A LOT.
CG: HE TOTALLY LOOKED ME UP AND DOWN AND TALKED ABOUT HOW HE
STUDIED AT OXFORD. I’VE NEVER SEEN SOMEBODY BE LIKE THIS OUTSIDE OF
ROM-COMS.
TG: no way man
TG: jims totally chill
CG: STRIDER, THAT GUY WAS ABSOLUTELY NOT “CHILL”.
CG: HE WAS PRETTY MUCH THE DEFINITION OF JEALOUS. HE TRIED TO HIDE IT,
BUT EVERY THING HE DID BASICALLY SCREAMED “I HAVE NO IDEA WHY HE’D
CHOOSE YOU OVER ME.”
TG: are you sure thats not just your self esteem issues speaking
CG: I DO NOT HAVE SELF-ESTEEM ISSUES.
TG: nah youre the hottest and you know it
CG: FINE, IF YOU DON’T BELIEVE ME ABOUT JIM, ASK HIM OUT WHEN THIS IS ALL
OVER. YOU’LL SEE HIS REACTION.
TG: sure i could do that
TG: theres just one tiny problem
TG: im not really into him
CG: THEN DON’T. I DON’T CARE. IT’S DEFINITELY NOT MY JOB TO HOOK YOU UP.
CG: I’M TELLING YOU HE’S INTO YOU THOUGH. AND I’M A ROMANCE EXPERT.
CG: I DON’T THINK JIM WILL LET ME INTO THE BUILDING IN THE FUTURE.
TG: ill give you a key then
CG: OH
CG: OKAY.
CG: IF YOU’RE DUMB ENOUGH TO JUST GIVE STRANGERS THE POSSIBILITY OF
GETTING INTO YOUR APARTMENT WHENEVER THEY WANT, SURE. GO AHEAD.
TG: youre not a stranger youre my honey baby darling
CG: NOT IN REALITY.
TG: really
TG: i hadnt noticed
TG: whats the worst you could do
CG: WHAT’S THE BEST I COULD DO ANYWAY? IF THIS GOES ANYTHING LIKE I
WANT IT TO GO, I DON’T HAVE TO GO TO YOUR APARTMENT WHEN YOU’RE NOT
THERE. OR WHEN YOU’RE THERE.
TG: okay so no key
TG: i thought it might make this seem more real but youre apparently the romance expert here
TG: and the acting expert
CG: YES I AM.
CG: AND I HAVE FINALLY ARRIVED AT THE HIGHEST FLOOR. WHY THE FUCK
DOES THE ELEVATOR NOT WORK?
CG: I CAN’T FUCKING BREATHE.
TG: the elevator works
TG: some troll just keeps on putting an out of order sign up
CG: AND YOU KNEW THIS AND DIDN’T TELL ME?
CG: YOU FUCKING ASSPIMPLE.
TG: id say i forgot but even if i hadnt forgotten i wouldnt have told you
TG: and what's the big deal I take the stairs every single time too
CG: I DON'T BELIEVE YOU.
CG: MAYBE YOU DO TAKE THE STAIRS NINETY PERCENT OF THE TIME, BUT
THERE'S NO WAY YOU DO IT EVERY SINGLE TIME.
TG: fine more like ninety nine percent of the time
TG: but that's like totally the exact number
TG: 99.0000000000000000000000000000000000000
TG: i counted it
CG: I'M IN THE APARTMENT.
CG: GOOD LORD.
CG: WHAT THE FUCK.
CG: THAT IS REALLY ALL THERE IS TO SAY ON THE MATTER.
TG: but knowing you you will say a lot of other things
CG: APPARENTLY YOU LIKE TO COLLECT WEIRD DEAD THINGS PRESERVED IN
VARIOUS WAYS.
CG: I ADMIT I CAN'T HELP BUT BE IMPRESSED BY YOUR HUGE COLLECTION OF
DEAD THINGS, EVEN THOUGH THIS PROBABLY MEANS YOU'RE A PSYCHOPATH.
TG: i know right they're the sickest
CG: NOW WHERE ARE THOSE WIGS YOU PROMISED ME?
TG: probably in the fridge
CG: OF COURSE. WHERE ELSE WOULD THEY BE?
CG: IT WAS PREPOSTEROUS OF ME TO ASSUME ANYTHING OTHER THAN WIGS
COULD BE IN THE FRIDGE.
CG: YES. THERE IS NO ACTUAL FOOD IN THIS FRIDGE. I SHOULDN'T EVEN BE
SURPRISED.
CG: IF I WAS YOUR REAL BOYFRIEND I'D MAKE SURE YOU HAVE REAL FOOD
HERE.
CG: BUT THANKFULLY I'M A SANE PERSON.
TG: food is overrated
TG: i survive with apple juice and love alone
CG: I'M SURE YOU DO.
CG: I TOOK SOME OF THE WIGS AND THE FAKE MOUSTACHE BECAUSE IT LOOKS
SURPRISINGLY REAL.
TG: i love it
TG: i named it bob
CG: I ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON LIKE THIS.
CG: THANK FUCK. TIME TO FINALLY GO BACK TO LIVING LIKE A NORMAL
PERSON. I THINK I'LL VISIT KANAYA NOW. IT'S GETTING INCREASINGLY
DIFFICULT TO JUST MEET MY FRIENDS.
TG: so i don't have to tell you something about me today
CG: YOU ARE MOMENTARILY EXCUSED.
TG: yes sir
CG: WE'RE NOT HAVING THIS CONVERSATION AGAIN.
TG: because you lost
TG: sir
CG: JUST PLEASE PROMISE ME YOU'LL HIDE THE KEY SOMEWHERE ELSE.
CG: NOT UNDER THE DOORMAT.
TG: fine
TG: ill find somewhere even more ironic
CG: YOU ARE HOPELESS.
CG: I'LL COME TO YOUR OFFICE TOMORROW SO WE CAN START SHOOTING MY
SHORT FILM.
TG: you really think i never have anything to do and can be spontaneous like that
TG: im an international celebrity
CG: DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO DO TOMORROW?
TG: nah you can come
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] ---
You will always make me fall for you in every universe

Chapter Notes

Quick warning: I changed the rating.
also... I forgot how young they are on the meteor. Just pretend they're 18 in this. It's a fanfiction; I can change things from canon after all.

The dream starts like most of them do.

You’re wandering through an endless dark corridor in absolute silence. That’s what you have been doing for a while now. Every time you round a corner there’s another cold corridor that looks exactly like the one before. There’s somewhere you’re trying to get, but you can’t remember where it is or where you even are in the first place. You start walking faster and faster, but when you reach the next corner, you’re left staring at yet another one of those long corridors.

You start walking down said corridor. Out of the corner of your eye, you see a sudden movement behind you and you whip around. You press yourself against the wall behind you and raise your sickles, ready to make sure nobody sees your blood. The idiot standing in front of you raises his hands and says, “Whoa, easy there, Karkitty. You trolls are always so fucking paranoid.”

“Dave, what the bulgelicking fuck? What is happening in that damaged thinkpan of yours to think that it’s funny to sneak up on other people?” You relax and step away from the wall.

“I wasn’t sneaking up on anybody, I’m not the murder clown. I was looking for you. All like ‘oh swoon, Mister Vantas, save me from this eternal boredom’.”

You roll your eyes, but step closer to him and give him a short kiss. Then you freeze. Oh shit, you just kissed him as if it was the most natural thing in the world and he doesn’t even like you in that way. Dave says, “Oh hell yes, make-out time,” leans forward, and presses you against the wall. He gives you a long kiss before his mouth moves to your neck and starts pressing light kisses there. Right. You’ve been dating for almost half a sweep now. You kiss regularly. How could you ever forget that?

You ignore the weird feeling in your stomach and pull Dave closer. His hands wander under your sweater and to your back. You kiss him again, this time much deeper. He kisses back hungrily; a thousand kisses still haven’t made him bored of your mouth. You make tiny movements into each other, just barely grinding.

Dave pulls back and says into your ear, “Oh shit Karkles, looks like you just woke the dragon. The dragon being my dick.”

“Wow, that was pathetically easy.”

“What, I’m just a teenage boy. Standing in front of his hot teenage alien boyfriend asking him to fuck me.”

You say, “What, do you think I’m that easy?” but it doesn’t sound very convincing. There’s nothing actually speaking against spending some time with your matesprit. It’s one of the few things you can
do on this meteor. Dave just smirks, waggles his eyebrows and takes your hand, pulling you down the corridor to his room.

It takes far too long, like every time you try to get somewhere on this fucking meteor, and you spend most of the time ranting about meteors, but you finally get there. “Welcome to casa de Strider.” Dave plops down on his human ‘bed’.

“I’ve been here before, you fucking dork.” You sit down next to him and look at him lying on his back.

“So,” Dave says, and he reaches up to his face and lifts his shades to wink at you. “Are you from Tennessee?”

“What?”

“Cause you’re the only ten I see.” He can’t stop the grin tugging at the corners of his mouth.

“What’s a Tennessee?” you ask with a frown.

“Okay, how about this then: I lost my underwear, can I see yours?”

“You’re stupid,” you answer, but lean down to kiss him anyway. Dave actually giggles into your mouth. You bite his bottom lip slightly, just a short contact with your teeth, to get him to shut up. He sits up and stops kissing you long enough to start straddling you and basically sit down in your lap, holy shit.

You close your eyes when he starts kissing your neck again, first only giving you featherlight presses with his closed lips and then finally moving on to open-mouthed kisses and even sucking on some spots for one or two seconds.

He murmurs, “You know, I kinda wanna give you a hickey.” Wow, that should not turn you on as much as it does.

“Go for it then, asshole.” Your voice sounds almost breathless. He makes a humming sound and starts sucking on a sensitive spot below your left ear. It’s just on the edge of painful. At the same time, his hands move down to open your pants. You sit completely still, focused on the feeling of his mouth. After a while his mouth moves away again and he blows hot air on the tender skin. You exhale sharply as you feel the sensation trickle down to your bulge.

Then he kisses you so hard it almost hurts. You love it. You two may be flushed, but you have found out that you, being the desperate mutant fool you are, like it when your quadrants sometimes bleed into each other. You growl into his mouth and he grips you tighter. Your tongues move against each other in a way that reminds you too much of the actual act of fucking to bear for long.

You pull away and say, “Okay, just. We should...” You hesitate for a second, then grab the hem of his shirt and pull it off him while he just watches you with one corner of his mouth quirked up, then you do the same thing to your own sweater. He takes off his shades and places them on the bedside table. You look at each other.

Dave says, “We’re doing this, man. We’re making this happen.” You groan.

“Dave, you ruined the fucking mood.”

“Did I really?” He waggles his eyebrows.
“Stop doing that all the time. Come on, no Sweet Bro and Hella Jeff quotes in bed. It’s bad enough you made me read it.”

“You totally loved it. And the rom-coms you make me watch all the time are much worse.”

“Don’t lie, you enjoy them ironically.”

“Yeah, they give me a chance to cuddle with my absolutely adorable and unbearably hot boymate friends spirt who manages to be turned on by the tame sex scenes. And the sappy totally cliché scenes too.” Dave leans closer to you until you can almost feel his breath on your face. He flutters his eyelashes. “Oh Mister Vantas, my life was colorless and bleak before you walked into it like a little shouty whirlwind.”

You frown. “That’s not funny. Don’t make fun of that.”

“Shh, just admit you’re into it.” His hands creep to the waistband of your trousers. He continues, “Oh baby, you complete me.”

“Dave”, you whine.

“Aw come on, just give in. I see the way you look when they say one of those cheesy-ass lines.” He starts pulling down your jeans and underwear and you wiggle out of them. Dave presses a short kiss to your lips. He says, “My honey, I’d write a poem for you if a poem could ever be good enough for you.” He reaches down with one hand and oh shit. He wraps his hand around your bulge. Your hips thrust forward all on their own while you let out a sound that sounds like a breathless sigh.

Dave continues talking into your ear, voice lower than before and more breathless. “Oh Kitty, you will always make me fall for you in every universe. You’re what I’m fighting for. You – shit, that was a hot sound, make it again.” You glare at him or at least try to. He shrugs with one shoulder and says into your ear, “You make me want to be a better person.” He’s staring at your face. You suppress a moan. Those lines he’s saying are doing things to you, going to your heart and bulge alike, not that you’d ever admit it. With how closely he’s watching you he probably doesn’t need you to tell him anyway.

You reach down to touch his alien bulge, but realize he’s still wearing pants. He mumbles something you don’t catch and quickly gets up to clumsily pull down the pants of his god tier outfit and his underwear, then sits back down on your legs. It feels really different now that you’re both naked. You touch his human ‘dick’ and he lets out an actual moan. You start moving your hand like he showed you the first time you did this and Dave lets out a string of curses.

His strokes get less lazy and more determined. You move your hips faster and pant into his neck. The pressure inside you is growing with every move his hand makes makes and it’s so good. He’s so good. You say his name without any real reason and then suddenly you’re falling forward. You try to catch yourself with your hands, but the next second you realize you aren’t actually falling. You’re sitting alone in your bed. In your apartment in the middle of the night. And you just had a sex dream about Dave Strider.

You try to slow down your breathing. Wow, you’re almost painfully hard. Fuck this.

The worst part is, that wasn’t the first time. You’ve had very similar dreams before, but every time you’d woken up you hadn’t been able to remember much more than the fact that it was a sex dream. But now that you’ve met Strider in real life, the memory of the details doesn’t completely leave you like it normally does and the realization it’s always been him hits you like a fucking train full of shit. Great.
At least it’s better than waking up feeling guilty for the deaths of people you don't even know.

You sigh loudly at the shitfest that is your life and pull off your underwear to deal with this problem. At first you try to avoid thinking of anything specific as you stroke yourself, but the thought of Strider with his hand on your dick is hard to push down. The only thing you’re able to remember is that you were on a bed with Dave Strider and he was right there in front of you getting you off, and now those things are burned into your brain. Eventually you just give up and imagine it’s his hand instead of yours. You are truly pathetic.

It results in the movements of your hips getting more desperate. Your breathing sounds loud in the dark room. He’d talk to you, there’s no way he wouldn’t talk when the guy can’t shut up to save his life. You imagine him mumbling into your ear, something about you being hot with a thousand metaphors. After what feels like an embarrassingly short amount of time, you come all over your hand, whimpering quietly.

You stare at your hand and you picture how it’s going to be next time you meet. He will be as stoic as usual, talking innocently about some bullshit like he always does, and you won’t be able to even look at his shades. God. You are fucked and not in the good way.
The sexual tension is so thick you can cut it with a knife

-- turmtchGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] —
TG: yo
TG: dude
TG: dude
TG: dude
TG: karkat
TG: dude
TG: babe
CG: OH MY GOD.
CG: YOU ARE WORSE THAN A TWO-YEAR-OLD.
CG: I'M BUSY.
TG: doing what
CG: IGNORING YOU.
TG: but dude
TG: i totally found the best book for you
TG: i saw it and immediately thought of you
TG: hold on to your panties cause this is the best shit ever
CG: LEAVE MY UNDERWEAR ALONE.
TG: all right
TG: so heres the summary
TG: or rather what i gathered from the actual summary and the comments
TG: its about this chick who is totally unpopular or at least thats what she thinks
TG: actually everybody is all over her and shes really rude to them but okay
TG: the author doesnt really realise it
TG: and shes average looking
TG: i mean of course all of those other chicks are jealous and her three love interests are into her like theyve been stranded in the desert for weeks and shes sweet sweet apple juice
TG: but she looks so average they could use her for the before look in makeover chick flicks
CG: YOU CAN’T SURVIVE MUCH LONGER THAN THREE DAYS WITHOUT SOMETHING TO DRINK.
CG: IN THE DESERT IT’S PROBABLY CLOSER TO ONE OR TWO DAYS.
TG: well i cant go longer than a day without apple juice desert or no desert
TG: oh and shes a virgin of course
TG: knows nothing about sex
TG: literally nothing
TG: so the plot kind of goes like this
TG: she moves somewhere meets the three guys
TG: who all look like models
TG: ones apparently a celebrity ones this nerd but a really hot nerd cause who likes ugly nerds and ones the bad boy
TG: she fucks all three
TG: and is really angsty while she does it
TG: they only sort of mind that she fucked the other two
TG: and apparently she also learns life is ineffable or whatever
TG: so admit it you totally wanna read this book
CG: OF COURSE I WILL ADMIT IT. THERE IS NO REASON WHY I WOULDN’T WANT TO READ IT.
CG: OR ANYBODY FOR THAT MATTER.
CG: YOU JUST DESCRIBED IT IN THE WORST WAY POSSIBLE AND ALSO GAVE ME A TON OF SPOILERS, BUT IT STILL SOUNDS NICE.
CG: BUT I DON’T SEE WHY YOU WOULD RECOMMEND ME A BOOK.
CG: I KNOW YOU ARE TRYING TO MAKE FUN OF ME IN SOME WAY, BUT YOU CAN STOP FUCKING ME BECAUSE I CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH YOUR BULLSHIT.
CG: *FUCKING WITH ME
TG: dude what
CG: ONE WORD, STRIDER.
CG: ONE WORD AND OUR WORKING RELATIONSHIP IS OVER.
TG: do you have any idea how hard that is for me
TG: this is like christmas and my birthday came early
TG: so many jokes here
TG: so many jokes about things being hard too
CG: YOU ARE CURRENTLY RAPIDLY APPROACHING THE VERY EDGE OF THE “SHIT KARKAT VANTAS WILL PATIENTLY DEAL WITH” KINGDOM.
CG: BECAUSE I AM A MERCIFUL KING, I WILL NOW CHANGE THE SUBJECT TO GIVE YOU THE CHANCE TO REDEEM YOURSELF.
CG: THAT SOUNDS LIKE A PERFECTLY FINE BOOK.
TG: youll love it
TG: insert dirty metaphor here
CG: KEEP YOUR DIRTY METAPHORS TO YOURSELF.
CG: NOBODY HERE WANTS TO SEE THAT SHIT.
TG: are you sure about that
TG: you wouldnt lie to me would you
TG: so heres the link
CG: I SWEAR TO GOD, IF THAT IS A RICKROLL OR SOME EQUALLY DISGUSTING HORSESHIT.
TG: shit youre right that wouldve been sick
CG: “SICK” INDEED.
CG: AND NOT IN THE POSITIVE WAY.
CG: OKAY, I CLICKED ON IT AND THE BOOK DOES LOOK NICE, BUT I’M NOT GOING TO BUY IT. SIMPLY BECAUSE YOU LIKE IT AND YOUR TASTE IS SHIT, NO MATTER IF YOU’RE BEING IRONIC OR NOT.
TG: fine then ill buy it
CG: YOU ARE SO FUCKING HOPELESS.
TG: sure but i will soon be proud owner of the cheesiest book in existence
CG: I CANNOT BELIEVE YOU HAVE THE AUDACITY TO CRITICIZE ANYTHING WHEN THE MONSTROSITIES YOU CREATE AND CALL FILMS ARE AN INSULT TO ANYBODY WITH MORE THAN TWO BRAIN CELLS.
TG: you just cant appreciate such a high form of art
CG: HA. HA. HA.
CG: HA.
CG: I PITY THOSE POOR SOULS WHO ACTUALLY PAY *REAL* MONEY TO CONSUME WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY THE WORST PIECE OF ENTERTAINMENT EVER CREATED.
CG: AND I PITY THOSE WHO ACTUALLY THINK YOU ARE SINCERE ABOUT ANYTHING YOU DO EVEN MORE.
CG: AND OF COURSE THERE ARE THOSE AT THE ABSOLUTE TOP OF BULLSHIT MOUNTAIN WHO THINK YOU ARE SINCERE AND LOVE YOUR “MOVIES”. IT DOESN’T MAKE SENSE TO PITY THEM. THEY ARE LOST SOULS.
TG: wait didnt you have that whole pity thing
TG: bla bla pity is the most important basis for a relationship
TG: on your blog
CG: YOU READ MY BLOG
TG: and to think you accused me of not preparing for this
TG: i totally googled you
TG: and found your advice blog for quote everything romance
CG: OH GREAT, HERE WE GO. SOMEBODY WHO JUST CAN’T APPRECIATE THE
INTRICATE ART WHICH IS ROMANCE SHOWING THEIR LOW INTELLIGENCE
QUOTIENT BY MAKING FUN OF A PERSON WHO IS HELPING OTHER PEOPLE WITH
THEIR KNOWLEDGE ON THE SUBJECT.
TG: i totally loved it
CG: THAT WAS THE WORST THING YOU COULD’VE SAID TO ME.
TG: but dude
TG: i thought i was supposed to be the hipster with the weird blog
CG: YOU HAVE A COUPLE OF PRETTY WEIRD BLOGS TOO, IF THAT MAKES YOU
FEEL BETTER.
TG: yeah thanks man
CG: NO FUCKING PROBLEM.
CG: SO, I LOOKED UP A COUPLE OF GOOD FIRST DATE QUESTIONS.
TG: or maybe we could possibly talk about the murder thing i keep on hearing about?
CG: NOT IN FUCKING HELL. WE HAVE MORE CHANCES OF ACTUALLY GETTING
MARRIED THAN ME TELLING YOU ONE FUCKING WORD ABOUT THAT.
CG: IT’S NOT IMPORTANT ANYWAY.
CG: IT’S ALL IN THE PAST NOW. I’M OVER IT.
TG: okay yeah thats a no
TG: hit me with your first date questions
CG: WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS?
TG: thats a first date question
TG: am i applying for a job or trying to get laid
CG: CURRENTLY NEITHER.
TG: god i dont know pretty much where i am right now
TG: you
CG: DEFINITELY NOT IN A FAKE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU ANYMORE.
CG: I WANT TO BE A SUCCESSFUL ACTOR AND MAYBE DIRECTOR.
CG: AND I WANT TO CHOOSE WHICH MOVIES I PARTICIPATE IN. UNTIL A FEW
DAYS AGO I HAD TO TAKE EVERYTHING THEY GAVE ME.
TG: but now youre famous
TG: so thats all gonna happen
CG: IT LOOKS LIKE ONE THING IN MY LIFE IS ACTUALLY GOING WELL.
CG: LET’S SEE HOW LONG IT LASTS.
CG: I’LL ASK YOU THE OTHER QUESTIONS OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS.
TG: yeah
TG: so i guess
TG: the conversation is over
CG: WHY DO I GET THE FEELING YOU’RE BORED?
TG: im not bored im just chillin around
TG: im chillin so hard its cooler than your freezer in here
TG: this shit is dropping below the fucking kelvin scale
TG: thats how physics defying my swag is
TG: hey before i was so bored i started looking for books for you i went through the davekat tag on
twitter and tumblr
CG: OH NO.
TG: no its not that bad actually
TG: its mostly people gushing about how cute we are
TG: duh
TG: were the cutest bitches
TG: comma between cutest and bitches
TG: no you know what forget the comma
TG: some people used #relationshipgoals
CG: INCREDIBLE.
CG: TO THINK THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CALL *ME* OBLIVIOUS.
TG: what are you talking about were obviously in love
TG: the sexual tension is so thick you can cut it with a knife
TG: our chemistry is
TG: shit i cant think of a good breaking bad joke
CG: NEVER SEEN IT.
TG: what the fuck
CG: JUST GO BACK TO TELLING ME ABOUT THE HASHTAG.
CG: OR LEAVE, I DON’T MIND EITHER. BECAUSE I’M STILL BUSY, STRIDER.
CG: SOME PEOPLE OCCASIONALLY ARE.
TG: art
TG: and ironic art
TG: its the best
TG: i told you i have the best fans
TG: also some kinky stuff but im not gonna tell you cause youd have a stroke
TG: theres some people complaining because were still real people and they treat us like public property or something
CG: THAT IS A GOOD POINT.
TG: what you mean celebrities are not collectively owned by the general public
TG: sort of like
TG: pop culture communism
CG: WHAT THE FUCK.
TG: well
TG: i think my original point was
TG: we should post something
TG: the masses need food karkat
TG: something like
TG: tfw your bf is cute as hell and everybodys jelly
TG: and then some emoji
CG: JELLY?
TG: jealous
CG: WOW.
CG: IF YOU POST THAT, I SWEAR TO GOD, I WILL LEAVE YOU TO WALLOW MISERABLY IN YOUR BOREDOM UNTIL IT SEEPS INTO YOUR VERY BONES LIKE YOU FUCKING DESERVE.
TG: whoops too late
CG: HAVE FUN, ASSFACE.
-- carcinoGenetisist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] ---
TG: no come back
TG: can we at least still be friends
TG: whatever i cheated on you with your sister anyway
TG: im just gonna go write a rap about being left alone by your fake boyfriend in a serious time of need
TG: maybe i can make your name the beat
TG: kar kar kar kar kar kar kat
TG: that doesn't look good written down but it's awesome trust me
TG: I'm sure at least Rose will appreciate it
You’re in a happy, committed relationship

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“So what’s your short film about, anyway?”

“Why do you think I gave you the script?” You roll your eyes at Dave who’s sitting behind his office desk with his feet on top of it, the wall behind him covered in shitty SBAHJ art.

He waves it aside. “I’ll read it, but just give me an idea.”

“Fine. So, it’s set in a high school.” He interrupts you before you can say more.

“What, did you write it in high school?”

You glare at him, already unhappy with the direction the conversation is taking. “Yes, as a matter of fact I did. Now, as I said. It’s set in a high school. The protagonist, Taylor, is this fat shy teenage girl who is constantly bullied by this other girl, Lizzie, and her friends. One day Lizzie doesn’t come to school and Taylor’s nosy friend Amanda who thinks everything’s her business and wants to fix everybody convinces her to help her investigate why. You know, if you read the script, you’d get all of this through nice indirect characterization, but instead I have to tell you. It turns out Lizzie’s dead.”

He raises his eyebrows and you interrupt yourself to say, “Ha, yeah, bet you didn’t expect me to kill off the bully in the first act. So they ask her parents and they reluctantly tell them it looks like suicide. They doubt it was, though, because Lizzie always seemed happy and had everything a high school girl could possibly ask for. You know: looks, popularity, money, boyfriends. Amanda wants to investigate who killed her, but Taylor refuses to help because she really hated Lizzie. Amanda didn’t hate her because Lizzie didn’t really bully her. Amanda’s too snarky for that. She even listened to her most of the time when Amanda saw her bullying Taylor and asked her to stop. Taylor still has more than enough reasons to hate Lizzie, but when Amanda tells Taylor she has found proof it might have been Oliver, she’s suddenly really invested and wants to help prove it was him. She says she’s always hated him, though it’s implied she has a crush on him.”

“So that’s where we actually get to the romcom part. I assume it wasn’t him because that’d be a weird choice for a love interest?”

“No spoilers until I’m done. Okay, so suddenly Taylor is determined to prove it was him and wacky shenanigans happen. They break into the school and shit like that, have to run from the police and Taylor has to overcome her shyness. Oliver teases her all the time – but he doesn’t bully her; it’s not like that – and eventually she ends up yelling at him and they fight but he smiles and it becomes obvious that’s what he wanted. Like, he wanted her to come out of her shell because she’s so shy.”

“That’s, like, the opposite of what you do.”

“What the fuck is that supposed to mean?”

“Nothing, shit, forget I said anything.”

“Please, like I don’t know what you’ve been thinking the whole time. You think I’m a shit writer who succumbs to all the clichés. And, of course, the protagonist is an author insert. Or if not the protagonist, it has to be somebody else.”
Dave sits up in his chair, takes his feet off the table and frowns deeper than you’ve ever seen him do before. “No, I swear I don’t think you’re a shit writer. I always had faith in your mad skills, dude. But yeah, I wouldn’t have been able to write a serious story without an author insert back in 1621 when I was just a hopeful youngster trying to find his way in this cruel world. Did you know I went to NY - AKA the Big Apple - because I thought they made apple juice there? I was crushed when I found out they didn’t, fucking crushed, man.”

“Yes, I read that on your numerous fucking fan sites. I thought it was only another weird urban legend and I’m still not sure it isn’t. And stop trying to distract me. There’s no fucking author insert because I’m better than that. Though I’m not surprised you aren’t.”

“Hey, an author insert can be done well.”

“Anything can be ‘done well’ and yet you choose not to.”

“Babe, why you gotta be so mean?” He presses his hands against his chest like you’re causing him actual pain.

“Have you never seen your own movies?”

“They’re art.”

“If a pile of shit is art too, then yes.”

“I’m so hipster that I’m gonna agree with you on that.” He lifts one corner of his mouth like he can’t help but laugh at his one weird fucking joke.

You say, “Anyway, it turns out it couldn’t have been Oliver.”

“I can’t follow any of those names.”

You must look really shocked at that because the cactuspenis holds up his hands and says, “Just kidding.”

“Wow. Your critics aren’t exaggerating when they say you have absolutely no sense of humor. Taylor goes to apologize to Oliver and he says he wants to help them and he’s really flirty. You know, if you read the script you’d find it really adorable but instead I’m just telling you and you have no chance of feeling anything.”

“Jesus Christ, are you aiming for a record? Most revealed insecurities within, like, five conversations? It’s great, shut the fuck up.”

“You shut the fuck up.”

With a perfect poker face, he sticks his tongue out at you. You’re too baffled to say anything for a second. “I’m not even going to comment on that,” you manage. “There are only so many synonyms for childish and I am sure by now you already regret the horrifying thing that just happened.”

“My cousin would find it fascinating how much you love to blow things out of proportion.”

“Oh, was that a threat? You’re gonna call Lalonde in? Ha. Blow me.”

“A bit out of the blue, but sure.” He stands up.

You groan. “I ran headfirst into that one.”
“Are you implying that was not a serious suggestion? Because that would really hurt my feelings. Why you gotta be such a tease when I’m just a humble man looking for a guy to blow?”

He sits back down and you open your mouth to reply, but nothing comes out. A sudden flash of memories you never actually lived are playing out in front of you. Dave’s head between your legs. Your hands in his hair, not really wanting to just push him down on your bulge, but too aroused to care much. You can nearly feel the warmth of his mouth, his tongue moving, his hands on your thighs. You remember and simultaneously don’t remember thrusting into that incredible feeling, desperate to finally reach that sweet edge and come. The vision couldn’t have lasted longer than a few seconds, but when it’s over you have to fight the urge to buck your hips.

“So, was it Amanda?”


“Did Amanda kill Lizzie?”

“Who?”

He raises his eyebrows. “Shit, did I shock you too much with my innocent comment about blowjobs?”

“No, it’s – No. It wasn’t Amanda.” You attempt to concentrate on the topic again (and pray your dick will realize this is really not a good time to be hard). “In the end they find out it actually was suicide. This is the part where it’s more than just a romcom. There’s social criticism here. Okay, so with a few clues Taylor manages to find a hidden letter from Lizzie and it kind of goes like this: First she writes that she’s thankful to whoever found the letter because she was scared nobody would ever find it and nobody would ever know the truth. She’s sorry if she’d ever hurt the reader of the letter just because she was in pain herself, though she knows an apology is probably not enough, and the reader has the right to judge her as negatively as they want. When she was eleven, she realized that she liked girls.”

Dave interrupts you. “I knew it.”

“Fucking stop interrupting the suicide note or you’ll never really get into the feeling you’re supposed to get into. Also there’s no way you knew that. Next you’ll tell me you knew she liked Amanda.”

“But Amanda means 'lovable' or someone 'who must be loved.'Something like that, doesn’t it?”

You stare at him. “You know Latin?”

“Ironically. Though I wasn’t sure it was a sign because the other names don’t really have a meaning, right?”

“No, making sure all the names mean something and have six letters is too hard. But there was more foreshadowing you of course didn’t see because you wouldn’t read the script.”

“What. Why six letters?”

That is a very good question you don’t know the answer for. “It just sounds better. I don’t know.” You shrug. “Okay, so, scared of being discovered by her friends or her incredibly conservative parents, she immediately got her first boyfriend. After a while he bored her so much that she dumped him and got the next one. She knew how cruel she was being, but couldn’t really bring herself to stop. She enjoyed the attention too much. It was too late when she realized how empty she actually felt, how she couldn’t trust anybody, how she felt like nobody actually liked her. Stop frowning, it’s
a good story.”

Dave runs a hand through his hair and sighs. “I didn’t say anything.”

“You didn’t have to say anything.”

“It’s… No, you know what, maybe you should finish the story first.”

“No, fucking tell me.”

It looks like Dave would grimace now if he wasn’t too cool to even properly frown. “It doesn’t really have to do with the plot. Just…” He gesticulates and you sigh in defeat.

“She writes that she had to tell her parents she liked Amanda when the school called to tell them they found out she did some blackmail shit to make sure the two of them would have detention together a couple of times. Her parents were absolutely horrified and kept on begging her to reconsider her decision. She writes that she tried, very hard, kissed thousands of boring guys, but of course did not succeed because it’s not a fucking decision. Being at home got unbearable, being with her friends just made her feel fake, being with whatever boyfriend she had at the moment made her just feel empty. Eventually, she felt like everybody would be better off without her, especially after she saw Taylor crying one day after she made fun of her. All of this is foreshadowed earlier of course, which you’d know if you read the script.” His frown has been getting more and more prominent and you have to admit it makes you really nervous. At least your boner is gone.

“Yeah, god, I’ll read it when you’re done, okay?”

You want to tell him to stop frowning again, but you continue talking, faster than before. “Well, she writes that she wants to die, but can’t really stand the idea of nobody knowing why. She wants to come out after her death, but knows her parents would do everything to prevent that, so she will hide this letter. At the end of the letter she apologizes to everybody she ever made feel like shit and to the people who genuinely liked her for maybe making them sad with her death. Taylor sits there for a while and eventually gets up and drives to the house of Lizzie’s parents. She tells them everything she found out and they ask her not to tell anybody because they want everybody to remember Lizzie like the nice good girl she was and shit like that. Taylor tells them their daughter was the fucking devil and she’ll never forgive her, but she should still get her last wish. She says she hopes they feel at least a bit guilty and stuff like that and the parents start crying and there’s music in the background from this point to the end. Taylor leaves and that’s when Oliver calls her. He’s shyer than normal and talks some nonsense, but eventually asks if she wants to go have some cake with him because he knows she likes cake. She agrees and it’s adorable and that’s how the whole thing ends.” You take a deep breath.

Dave nods.

“The ending is supposed to be a bit open and leave some questions unanswered, though not the important ones,” you say.

“Mh-hm.”

“The viewer is supposed to feel conflicted because they can see the parents love their daughter but also fucked her up.”

“Yeah.”

“Fucking say something.”
He sucks in a breath between his teeth. “It's just... Are you... Don’t you think this is too personal?”

“What? No?”

“It seems like... I don’t know. I kind of got the feeling it deals with things you had to deal with when you were younger. Like, you projected them onto the characters in the story and that’s totally fine, but I’m just worried you’ll be hurt by criticism. Or no, not worried, just sort of concerned. That’s not better. But, like, if you think you can handle it, let’s do this shit, SBAHJ quote and all.”

You open your mouth, close it again, then say, “I hate SBAHJ.”

“Yeah, I know.”

“Why the fuck do you think I projected my problems on the characters?”

“Oh god, do you want the long answer for that?”

“Yes, asshole.” You can’t believe how nonchalant he seems to be about this situation, even if he’s always nonchalant about every situation.

He thinks for three, four seconds. “Are you gay?”

“What? Bisexual.”

“I thought so.”

“Do you want a fucking cookie?”

“Look, it deals with being in the closet, coming out, having a conservative family and just a general environment that doesn’t want to accept you the way you are.” He is talking really fast again. “Of course these are all just assumptions, but I went through some of the same shit and I thought about it all the time like a dumb fucking broken angsty hipster record. I’m not surprised you developed coping mechanisms. God, I sound like a fucking therapist. And – I can’t think of a way to make this sound like something that won’t get you all defensive, but you probably need to know – it sounds like you wished somebody would tell your family off. And they’d listen. And I also got the feeling sometimes you’re scared you hurt people when you do your yell-y thing, what with all the apologizing in the letter, or maybe you wish some asshole would apologize to you, god, I don’t know. I’m just a simple guy who’s totally ruining this whole thing right now. Oh god, and then there’s the whole suicide thing and the fucking suicide note that you can quote perfectly and the body image struggle, considering you had anorexia and all. But, like I said, I think it’s still a cute story and we should do this if you don’t mind people maybe asking you about this. Or maybe I’m completely wrong and in that case please don’t hit me.”

You see Dave grimace in a weird way and in a distant corner of your mind you think how fascinated you’d be by that if you weren’t so shocked. Or maybe shocked isn’t the right word because you’re really not sure what you’re feeling. You hesitate for a few seconds, then say, “Okay.”

“Okay?”

“What do you want me to say, jackass? You were kind of an asshole about this, but I fucking get you were just trying to be helpful. And I fucking get why you’re thinking what you’re thinking, even if it’s not true.” At least some of it isn’t. You think. “So: okay, I heard what you said and thought about it, but now that I have the means, nothing is going to stop me from finally being able to direct my own story.”
“Okay.”

“Yeah.”

“I’m gonna read the script then and call my actor friends to ask them for a tiny favor,” he says, nodding.

“They have to fit the role though.” You hand him the script.

“I’ll get the right people for you.” Dave leans back in his chair and you watch him as he reads. Silence descends upon you two and you watch him closely, eventually spacing out after a while. You’re brought back when you hear him snort.

“What the fuck?”

He looks up. “It’s funny. God, relax, okay? And stop watching me, I’m turning into a blushing five-year-old before the first date.”

“Do five-year-olds go on dates?”

“Yeah, go to the next kindergarten and you’ll see the little bastards already have more game than me, even though that is literally impossible.”

“Of course it is.”

He smirks, nods at you and continues reading. You’re more subtle about your staring this time. After a few more minutes he puts the script down. You ask him, “Who are you going to call?”

He names you a few actors you’ve seen in movies in the cinemas before and who sound surprisingly well cast for the roles he proposes. You stare at him. “And you’re actually friends with all these people?”

“More or less. I occasionally interact with them, but they’ll help us because they want a piece of this ass.”

“You’re casting people for my film who all want to fuck you?” You can’t help how scandalized you sound.

“I’m sure they do, but I meant they want a piece of my popularity. I can’t help that I’m so famous, it’s like a curse.”

“Yeah, the stench of misery that permanently surrounds you is almost unbearable.”

“Woe is me.”

You shake your head and with his promise to send the script to his friends and give you the numbers of those who agree to help, you leave the office.

The next days are spent talking to some of your favorite actors (and some actors who you don’t love that much) and arranging everything with all of the people who are involved, the number of which seems to grow every day. Dave organizes locations to shoot in for you and a crew to work with. You’re able to actually start shooting surprisingly soon, much sooner than you probably would be without Dave’s help. Shooting goes fine, for the most part. If things go wrong, you have to yell at people, but a lot things go incredibly right. Sometimes you have to delay shooting scenes because the people who work with you have other more important things to work on too. But seeing the scenes
you envisioned in your head come to life better than you ever expected and working with all these people who are just as motivated and involved in the story as you is worth dealing with the thousands of little problems that arise.

Dave lets you do your thing without interrupting like he said he would and doesn’t even show up until the sixth day, only keeping contact through Pesterchum. When he does visit the set, he shows up while you’re in the middle of shooting a scene. Sarah sees him and immediately breaks character to greet him far too enthusiastically. Seriously, that’s not professional behavior and as far as she knows he has a boyfriend. Why is she throwing herself at him like that? Dave makes a couple of jokes with her, but when you tell everybody there’s apparently going to be a little break, he says, “Hey, maybe I should go talk to my boyfriend before he gets too jealous.”

She answers with an “Oh.”

Dave walks over to you and you tell him, “That was so unprofessional of her.”

“Yeah, she’s a ridiculously enthusiastic person.”

“Yeah, ridiculously enthusiastic about you.”

“What? No, come on, she’s not into me, that’s just…” He gestures with one hand.

“Why do you never see that?”

“Because it’s never there. Anyway, how’s living your lifelong dream of being a director playing out for you?”

“That wasn’t my lifelong dream,” you answer, frankly a bit caught off-guard by that statement.

“But. Oh. You’re right, you never said that. Then why do I think that?”

You sigh. “I used to want to be an actor, but I guess recently I’ve gotten more and more into the idea of directing movies rather than play in them.”

“Yeah, I can see you doing that.”

Your heart clenches at his words. You realize his statement made you happier than it should. “I’m good at it.” You think about it, then say, “It’s fun. I can show emotions in so many different ways, through the actors and the colors and the lighting and the camera angle. As an actor you are so limited compared to this. Not to mention, all the hours and days spent reading in-depth analysis of every movie I’ve ever seen and thinking how much better I could do are finally paying off.”

“So I’m guessing there’s nothing you need help with? Here I was, all ready to come in, help you with whatever you may need like the fucking noble knight I am, sweep you off your feet until you swoon at how gallant I am and what do you do? Tell me you actually aren’t a damsel that has to be saved.”

You shrug. “If you really want to do something, you can bring me coffee.”

“Oh, ouch.” But his shoulders are moving and it takes you a second to figure out he’s laughing without moving his face. “So, wanna take a selfie?” He holds up his phone.

“I hate selfies.”

“You can’t possibly be serious. What kind of person unironically hates selfies? I wanted to post it on
“Where millions of people can see it? Absolutely not,” you tell him.

“How else can we become the new power couple?”

“We won’t, hopefully.”

He keeps on creeping closer to you, waggling his eyebrows. “What if I say please in a really high voice, will you still say no?”

“Fine, but if it’s a bad picture, we won’t upload it.”

“You.” Dave says it in a monotonous voice, but one corner of his mouth is quirked up. He leans into your personal space until the sides of your faces touch. You hold your breath without thinking about it, almost waiting for another fantasy to hit. Nothing comes and you exhale again as subtly as you can when somebody is pressing their face against yours. Dave asks you, “Like this?” You only hum your agreement and look at the camera on his phone. He takes a few pictures and then immediately moves away.

He looks at his phone and then shows you a picture. “What do you think? Are we slaying this or what?”

The picture is okay. It shows your faces next to each other, almost nothing of the wall behind you. Dave’s face has the same expression it always has while you look a bit skeptical. “Do you really think so?”

“It’s cute,” Dave says.

“I can’t tell if you’re being ironic or not.”

“Can’t a guy find his own selfie unironically cute?”

“Fine, let’s use this one. I have to continue shooting now anyway.”

“So if I mention in the caption that we are indeed already married and have ten kids by now, how many people will get it?”

“None. Because they don’t know the whole engagement thing was just a joke,” you answer.

“I still can’t believe they overreacted like that. Oh, I know what I’m gonna write: ‘I put the D in Davekat.’”

“That makes no sense.”

“Make a better suggestion then.”

You think for a moment. “Didn’t get laid last night.” I hope you realize that wasn’t a serious suggestion. ‘When will we finally be free from this nauseating human disease called selfies?’ Or: ‘Hashtag smoke weed everyday.’ No, don’t use that one. Maybe: ‘Looks like Hella Dave finally found his Sweet Brofriend.’ Oh god, I hate myself.”

“Holy shit. You are a genius. Sweet Brofriend. Holy shit.” He starts typing on his phone.

“Oh god. Use it and let me do the film in peace. Guys, are you ready to try this again? Matthew, what the fuck are you doing, why are you painting on yourself? Is that supposed to be the American
flag? You’re British, Matthew. And you have to act right now.”

Dave stays to watch for an hour that day. From then on he shows up almost every day for at least a few minutes and sits around while you deal with the idiots you work with. Mostly he says things like “I think you should totally draw one of those thin moustaches on his face for this scene to give the film that totally cool hipster vibe” or “Let’s just inexplicably CGI a dragon into the background here, I totally have the money” or “say this line like you’re about to shit your pants” or of course “I vote instead of the ‘blah blah about murder’, Taylor and Amanda just say what they really want and suggest a threesome. Screw that, they should just enter the room and start making out. No, no, I got it. Kids, let’s make this a porno.”

But some of his suggestions are actually serious and occasionally even incredibly helpful. The discussions you have with him are more civil than you’d have expected and you’re not sure if it’s because you’re constantly surrounded by people who think you’re a couple or if you’re actually getting closer. Or maybe your head’s just messed up because you just keep on having fucking sex dreams about him!

It keeps happening and it keeps driving you insane. Not to mention, makes you horny. You’d prefer chatting with him on Pesterchum every day to actually seeing him in flesh and blood with his stupid shades and lips and hair and everything. You don’t really have a crush on him, but you do wish he’d blow you. And you like making him laugh because it cracks his stupid coolkid façade. But that doesn’t automatically mean you have a crush. You just find it hard to breathe normally when you’re close to him, though thankfully that doesn’t happen often. Apparently you both dislike touching people you haven’t known for long and a fake relationship isn’t going to change the way you feel about touching. You just occasionally put a hand on the other’s arm when not touching would be too awkward.

At least you’re always surrounded by people. Until, one day, you’re not. Everybody else has already gone home and you’re still sitting in a corner thinking about a scene when you hear Dave call out. “Hello? Is everybody gone already? Am I really all on my own in this cold harsh world? Sad emoji.”

You say, “I’m here.”

“Happy emoji. So I’m guessing you have time to talk about something right now.”

“He sits down on the floor next to you. “Already?”

“It’s been a few weeks now, hasn’t it?”

“You hesitate. “Nobody takes such a short relationship seriously. I thought you were the one who wanted to end this.”

“I never said that. I wanted to talk about the message you show at the end of the film,” Dave says.

“Oh. What about it?”

“Well. Of course it’s important that prejudices hurt real people and bullying is bad and all that, but don’t you think the film makes that pretty clear already? The viewer’s probably going to feel patronized. It’s hammer-level subtlety.”

“I can’t just not write anything at the end. People don’t get basic shit if you don’t repeatedly scream it
“at them.”

“What if we change it a bit?”

You take out a pen and a paper. You’ve found out that when working on a film, you always need to keep something to write with nearby. “Give me a good idea.”

Dave tips his head back and looks at the ceiling. You shoot him a short glance but are distracted by the way his bangs fall away from his face. And then you remember his bangs falling like that too while he was kneeling on the floor in front of you, looking up at you, his mouth on your dick. No, that’s not right, on your bulge, your…?

Okay, how about we tell them about an organization, or maybe several, they could give money to if they want to help.

You have to concentrate on your breathing for a moment before you can answer him. “…Yeah. Why not?” You must’ve really fucked up in a past life to be punished like this in your present one. You start formulating a sentence in your head. “What organization though?”

“I don’t know. Man, I should really know a few charities, I’m rich after all. Should I –” He looks at you and stops in the middle of the sentence.

You realize you’ve been sucking on the pen again and take it out of your mouth. “What?”

He runs his hand through his hair and sighs. “Should I google some?”

“I don’t know, that doesn’t sound very professional. We need a more serious source for this decision. I guess I’ll just see if I can find something these next few days.”

He nods in agreement. Silence settles around and after a while you feel relaxation creep into your limbs. You stare at the equipment standing around in the silent room.

Spontaneously, you groan and throw your head back. “We’re never going to be done with this thing. It keeps on getting longer and it’s already too long for a short film. Not to mention we keep on running into absolutely idiotic problems that I have to spend hours on. I was so motivated in the beginning and I still am - if less - but at this point I’m sure at least some of those fuckers think we’re never going to finish this. I have two scenes that should have been finished by yesterday. Guess what. They aren’t.”

Dave stays silent until you almost think he’s not going to answer. “I can’t say I have the same problem with SBAHJ, but I get how you feel. Like, you’ve been working on this film every day for a while now, but you feel like you haven’t made any real progress. I guess people get that when they work on big projects. If it makes you feel any better, Sarah told me yesterday how much she loves working with you, how you inspire her like nobody else with your rants about the characters and stuff like that.”

“Then why is she throwing herself at you?”

“Dude, no, we’re just friends.” Dave makes a ‘what’-gesture with his hands.

“Yes, you know why? You’re in a happy, committed relationship. With a guy. Because you’re gay. But she wishes you weren’t.”

“She totally adores you, she’s not jealous.” He shakes his head.
You won’t be convinced that easily. “Of course she adores me, but she can still be jealous.” He shrugs and changes the subject to some organizational issues. Working with him is easier than you’d have thought. He does what he promises to do and communicates with you. Not to mention he leaves the decisions and biggest part of the work to you.

It takes a lot of work with a lot of different people and several nervous breakdowns in the middle of the night, but eventually the short film is actually done. Completely finished. You call Dave to ask if he wants to watch the result in one piece together with the rest of the crew and celebrate. He asks if he should bring anything to drink and you tell him Matthew already brought enough alcohol to put a whole town into a coma. A very small town, maybe, but a town nonetheless.

You all sit down in your tiny excuse for a living room, almost all the lights out, and shush each other. The film is good, if you do say so yourself. It's honestly good and by the end you feel a bit like crying. The credits start rolling and Dave, who’s sitting next to you, your knees just barely touching, turns to you and says, “Holy shit, it’s actually done.”

You look at him. “It is. Holy shit indeed.” You realize you’re grinning like an idiot.

And then everything goes to shit.

Dave smiles at you, actually smiles an honest smile like a normal person does, complete with dimples and teeth and all. Your stomach flutters at that, your heart hurts and you actually do have a crush on Dave Strider.

You stare at him while his smile fades again, desperately trying to remember what you were even talking about and how you can make him smile again. Matthew yells “Party time!” and you flinch.

People all around you start jumping up from where they were sitting, cheering and calling for booze and laughing, unaware of the tragedy that has just occurred. You join them, all the time making sure to avoid Dave. There’s no way you can stop yourself from thinking about this, what it means for your fake relationship, how you’re going to behave now. You can’t possibly continue like before, can you?

Chapter End Notes

This chapter took a long time to write, I know. I'm sorry. But at least it's pretty long compared to the others. (Not happy with the short film, but this is the best it's gonna get) Thank you for all the support and feedback. It means a lot to me!!
You’re there when we’re having sex

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering twinArmageddons [TA] —
CG: OH GOD.
CG: I AM DEAD.
CG: I HAVE DIED AND GONE TO HELL.
CG: I HAVE A CRUSH ON DAVE STRIDER.
TA: yeah.
TA: wait. thii2 a 2urprii2e?
CG: IS IT NOT?
TA: ii thought it wa2 ju2t thii2 thing we both obviou2ly knew about but weren’t mentioning.
CG: NO, IT’S A FUCKING SURPRISE.
CG: WHAT?
CG: BUT I’VE ONLY DEVELOPED A CRUSH ON HIM RECENTLY.
TA: no.
CG: SOLLUX, THIS ISN’T UP FOR FUCKING DEBATE.
TA: yeah, it2 not up for debate becau2e it2 a fact.
TA: you liked the guy before you even met him.
TA: you’re not normally ob22e22ed wiith celebriitiie2.
CG: I WAS “OBSESSED” WITH DAVE BECAUSE EVERYTHING HE DID WAS BAD
AND HE BECAME FAMOUS ANYWAY.
CG: WHEN THERE ARE SO MANY INCREDIBLY TALENTED AND CREATIVE PEOPLE
WHO DESERVE PRAISE MORE THAN HE DOES.
CG: I CAN MAKE THINGS IRONICALLY BAD, TOO.
TA: ii know all of thii2. youve been telliing me thii2 for year2 now.
TA: fucking year2 man.
TA: along wiith ranting about hii2 2tupid shades and liip2.
TA: 2iince when do you call hiim dave anyway?
CG: OH. I AM *SORRY*. I FORGOT I NEED TO EXPLAIN EVERY TINY THING I DO TO
YOU. BY THE WAY, I TOOK A SHIT JUST TEN MINUTES AGO WHILE I WAS
WAITING FOR YOU TO GO ON PESTERCHUM.
CG: WHY?
CG: MAYBE YOU SHOULD TAKE AN ONLINE BIOLOGY COURSE. MAYBE IT’S
SMARTER TO *NOT* CALL SOMEBODY BY THEIR LAST NAME WHILE YOU’RE
PRETENDING TO BE IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM. MAYBE WE GOT REALLY
CLOSE THESE LAST FEW DAYS AND NOW IT JUST MAKES SENSE TO CALL HIM
DAVE. MAYBE YOU JUST CAN’T HAVE SEX DREAMS ABOUT SOMEONE AND
ONLY CALL THEM BY THEIR LAST NAME. LIFE IS FULL OF REASONS FOR SHIT,
THOUGH I’M SURE THE BIOLOGY COURSE CAN EXPLAIN THAT TO YOU BETTER
THAN I EVER COULD.
TA: what?
TA: 2ex dream2?
TA: dude
CG: OH SHIT, FORGET I SAID THAT.
TA: thii2 conver2atiion ii2 over.
TA: ii need two go vomiit or 2omethiing.
CG: WAIT!
CG: I NEED TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO NOW.
TA: do it without me.
CG: I CAN’T BE CLOSE TO HIM NOW WITHOUT FREAKING OUT. AND THAT’S
OBVIOUSLY NOT GOING TO BE GOOD FOR OUR FAKE RELATIONSHIP.
CG: BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, I WOULD BE STUPID TO JUST BREAK UP WITH HIM. WE WOULD STOP SEEING EACH OTHER WITHOUT ANY BASIS FOR A REAL RELATIONSHIP.
CG: I’D HAVE TO ASK HIM OUT. BUT I DON’T THINK I CAN DO THAT.
CG: ROMANCE REQUIRES MORE SUBLTLETY. NOT TO MENTION HE IS FAMOUS AND ANYBODY WOULD BE COME-IN-THEIR-PANTS LEVELS OF HAPPY TO BE ABLE TO AT LEAST TOUCH HIM. INCLUDING ME. FUCK.
CG: I, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE NEVER EVEN HAD A RELATIONSHIP. I’VE NEVER GOTTEN PAST THE FIRST FEW DATES.
CG: I’M A FUCKING FAILURE AT RELATIONSHIPS. I PUSH EVERYBODY AWAY.
TA: 2top with the fucking 2elf-loathing.
CG: THESE ARE JUST FACTS. THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH SELF-LOATHING.
CG: NO, ACTUALLY, YOU ARE RIGHT. I SELF-SABOTAGE BECAUSE I HATE MYSELF.
TA: KK, iive been lii2eniing two thii2 bull2hiit from you for ten year2 now.
TA: thi2 ii2 TZ all over agaiin
TA: you are able two maintain friiend2hiip2 2o ii dont 2ee why you 2houldnt bee able two have a healthy romantiic relation2hiip.
TA: at thi2 point thi2 pointle22 2elf-hate ii2 really more pathetiic than iiit ha2 any riight two bee.
CG: I STILL CAN’T ASK DAVE STRIDER OUT.
CG: THERE IS NO WAY HE LIKES ME.
TA: why not?
TA: fuck, you did it.
TA: you dragged me iinto one of your dumb relatiion2hiip talk2.
CG: WHEN YOU LIKE SOMEBODY, YOU SHOW IT, DON’T YOU?
CG: OF COURSE DAVE HARDLY SHOWS ANY EMOTIONS, BUT HE WOULD IF IT WERE SOMETHING IMPORTANT, RIGHT? HE SHOULD.
CG: THE GUY IS FUCKING HARD TO READ.
CG: MAYBE HE HASN’T DONE ANYTHING BECAUSE WE’RE STILL IN A FAKE RELATIONSHIP AND IF I SAID NO, WE’D HAVE TO IMMEDIATELY BREAK UP.
CG: I HAVE THE SAME PROBLEM.
CG: I CAN’T ASK HIM OUT WHILE WE’RE IN THIS RELATIONSHIP.
CG: SOLLUX, I HAVE TO END THE RELATIONSHIP.
TA: do iit.
TA: but are you actually gonna a2k hiim out or are you ju2t runniing away?
TA: al2o how the fuck do you alway2 manage two make me lii2en two your love drama bull2hiit?
CG: NO, LOOK. IF WE CONTINUE THE RELATIONSHIP, I’M GOING TO MESS UP. YOU CAN’T BE INTO SOMEONE AND PRETEND TO BE IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM WHILE ALSO PRETENDING YOU AREN’T ACTUALLY INTO THEM.
CG: IT’S BETTER FOR BOTH OF US IF I BREAK US UP.
TA: right.
CG: I KNOW WHAT YOU’RE FUCKING THINKING.
CG: I WILL ASK HIM OUT WHEN THE RELATIONSHIP IS OVER AND WE'RE NOT SO DEPENDENT ON EACH OTHER ANYMORE, OKAY?
CG: THERE YOU FUCKING GO, ASSHOLE.
TA: you are fucking welcome, a22hole.
CG: YEAH.
CG: OH SWEET FUCK, DAVE WANTS TO TALK TO ME ABOUT THE SHORT FILM.
TA: i fucking did two.
TA: before you turned into the protagonii2t of a 2hiitty romcom again.
CG: SOLLUX, WHAT DO I DO?
CG: HOW DO I BEHAVE SO HE WON’T SUSPECT ANYTHING?
TA: lord.
-- twinArmageddons [TA] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --

-- turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --
TG: holy shit they love you
TG: fucking love you
CG: WHAT, WHO LOVES ME
CG: OH.
CG: IT’S A GOOD STORY.
CG: I’D LOVE IT TOO IN THEIR POSITION.
TG: this is insane
TG: everybodys going apeshit
TG: the social media sites are blowing up worse than if my dick pics had been leaked
CG: DO YOU REALLY HAVE DICK PICS OR WAS THAT ANOTHER STUPID METAPHOR?
CG: NO, ACTUALLY
CG: DON’T ANSWER THAT.
TG: you wanna see them
CG: I AM SO GLAD THAT WASN’T A SERIOUS SUGGESTION BECAUSE THAT’S THE WORST IDEA YOU’VE EVER HAD.
CG: INCLUDING THE TIME YOU DECIDED TO COME OUT BY PAYING SOME GUY TO PRETEND TO BE YOUR BOYFRIEND.
CG: OR THE TIME YOU ACCIDENTALLY MADE EVERYBODY THINK YOU WERE ENGAGED TO THAT POOR, INNOCENT GUY.
TG: that wasn’t really my fault
TG: they just overreacted
CG: YEAH FINE.
CG: BUT
CG: YOUR MOVIES.
CG: THAT’S REALLY ALL THERE IS TO SAY ON THE MATTER.
TG: you just cant appreciate real art
TG: thats really all there is to say on the matter
TG: but lucky for you your fans can
TG: everybody loves your short film
TG: tons of people have called me to tell me how touched they were
TG: and only the important people get to call me
TG: the plebs must be blown away
CG: ONE DAY YOU ARE GOING TO MEET SOMEBODY WHO DOESN’T GET YOUR HUMOR AND THINKS YOU’RE A MASSIVE ASSHOLE.
CG: PEOPLE ALREADY DO ALL THE TIME OF COURSE, BUT WHAT’LL BE SPECIAL ABOUT THIS PERSON IS THEY WILL TRY TO TEACH YOU MANNERS AND IT’S GOING TO BE PAINFUL.
TG: i feel like i should make a sex joke here
CG: WHAT IS IT WITH YOU AND MAKING NORMAL CONVERSATIONS SEXUAL?
TG: yeah idk i do it with my cousin too
TG: surprisingly it occasionally makes our conversations awkward
TG: even though i bet shes kinkier than i could ever be
CG: DAVE
CG: NO.
TG: ohhhh
TG: you called me by my name
TG: not strider or fuckshit idiotboner or asslamp dumbdumb or totally hot suave man of my dreams
which is obviously what im still aiming for
CG: DUMBDUMB.
CG: I’M GONNA USE THAT NOW.
TG: suit yourself
CG: OKAY, I NEED TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING SERIOUS FOR A MOMENT.
TG: me too actually
CG: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?
TG: i just remembered we totally have to do an interview tomorrow
CG: TOMORROW.
CG: THAT’S KIND OF SOON, DAVE.
TG: i know dude i know
CG: I WANTED TO SAY
CG: MAYBE WE SHOULD END THE RELATIONSHIP SOON?
TG: oh
TG: sure if you want to
TG: didnt you tell me like yesterday how it was definitely too soon to end the relationship though
CG: WE DON’T HAVE TO DO IT RIGHT NOW.
CG: MAYBE WE CAN WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE WEDDING.
CG: AND SAY IT MADE US REALIZE WE WANTED DIFFERENT THINGS FROM LIFE,
BUT WE’RE STILL GOING TO REMAIN FRIENDS.
TG: nobody remains friends after a breakup
TG: especially celebrities
CG: WE ABSOLUTELY DO NOT HAVE TO PRETEND TO REMAIN FRIENDS IF YOU
DON’T WANT TO.
TG: no we should do that
TG: were gonna be the broiest of bros the world has ever seen
TG: let them marvel at our epic bromance
TG: still going strong just a few days after we maybe possibly fucked
TG: because we were still together then
TG: this is where the true secret of bromance lies
TG: know somebodys cock know their soul
TG: - epic poet significant cultural figure and toucher of hearts dave strider
CG: OH NO.
TG: yeah idk what im talking about either
TG: so were still doing the interview though right
CG: WE NEED A STRATEGY.
TG: i dont know man i never really have a strategy when i do interviews
CG: BUT YOU STILL MANAGE TO BE UNIVERSALLY LOVED.
CG: WHY IS LIFE SO UNFAIR.
TG: interviews arent that hard
TG: just stay cool and make a lot of jokes
CG: SHOULD WE HINT TO OUR BREAK-UP?
TG: but the poor shippers
TG: i dont wanna disappoint them
TG: like
TG: i saw a video about us on youtube today
TG: with some japanese song in the background
TG: it was kawaii
TG: duh
CG: DUH.
CG: THEY’RE GONNA END UP DISAPPOINTED ANYWAY.
CG: THOUGH WE’D GET LESS MEDIA ATTENTION IF WE SAY EVERYTHING IS FINE.
CG: OUR RELATIONSHIP IS GOING GREAT.
CG: IT IS IN FACT GOING SO GREAT EVERYBODY EXPOSED TO OUR TRUE FUCKING LOVE FOR LONGER THAN THREE MINUTES GETS THE OVERWHELMING URGE TO THROW UP.
TG: our relationship is going so great theres some cheesy 90s track playing in the background every time we look into each others eyes
TG: i admit it becomes annoying after a while but its totally worth it for the romance
TG: it can make the sex a bit awkward though
TG: why am i telling you this you totally know this youre there when were having sex
TG: theoretically
TG: hey
TG: we could totally draw fake hickeys on each other
CG: YOU
CG: WHAT IS IT WITH YOU AND HICKEYS?
TG: oh no have i suggested something like it before
CG: OH SHIT
TG: oh shit
TG: what is it
CG: YOU HAVEN’T.
CG: NEVER MIND.
CG: I MUST HAVE THOUGHT OF SOMEBODY ELSE.
TG: how many people do you meet that suggest drawing fake hickeys on you
CG: FORGET IT, IT WAS FUCKING STUPID.
CG: SHOULD WE EVEN STILL CONTINUE WITH THE FIRST DATE QUESTIONS?
CG: I KNOW WE DIDN’T REALLY DO THEM DURING THE SHOOTING, BUT SINCE WE ARE ABOUT TO END THIS ANYWAY, WHAT’S THE POINT?
TG: were definitely way past first date stage
TG: theoretically were also way past first base
CG: THAT’S THE POINT. THIS IS SHIT WE’D KNOW ABOUT IF WE WERE ACTUALLY DATING EACH OTHER.
CG: WE SHOULD GO OUT WITH A BANG.
CG: OR MAYBE “A PARTICULARLY LOUD FART” IS A BETTER EXPRESSION HERE.
CG: WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT SOMETHING REALLY SERIOUS.
TG: your brother?
CG: KANKRI?
CG: HE’S AN ASSHOLE.
CG: HE HAS CANCER.
CG: THE NAME WAS A BAD OMEN I GUESS.
CG: NOT JUST KANKRI, VANTAS TOO.
CG: I THINK THERE’S A FUCKING CANCER DRUG WITH THE NAME.
CG: I-FUCKING-RONICALLY MY MOTHER MARRIED INTO THE VANTAS FAMILY AND ALMOST IMMEDIATELY GOT CANCER.
TG: my mother died in a car crash
TG: well she wasnt really my mother
TG: she was my aunt
TG: but she lived with us
TG: and i always saw her as my mother
TG: i dont even know who my real mother is
TG: im not even sure bro knows
TG: hes gay
TG: hes my father but hes gay and my mother just sort of doesnt exist and i dont know how that works
TG: anyway roxys dead
CG: I'M SORRY.
TG: me too
TG: karkat
TG: i think
TG: this conversation got more serious than either of us can handle
CG: WE ARE POWERLESS IN THE FACE OF THIS MUCH SERIOUSNESS.
CG: QUICK, A JOKE.
CG: NOT ANOTHER KNOCK-KNOCK JOKE THOUGH.
TG: i dont know one single knock knock joke dude
TG: shame on me
TG: i am a disgrace to every single comedian out there
CG: YES.
CG: EXACTLY.
CG: IT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN SAYING FOR DECADES.
TG: ah yes finally a safe haven in this conversation
TG: the opportunity to rant about my movies never fails to cheer you up
CG: HAPPY EMOJI.
TG: oh my god thats my line
TG: you totally stole my line
CG: SUE ME.
TG: dont challenge me like that i have the money
TG: and the charm
CG: AS IF YOU EVER WOULD.
TG: gasp
TG: are you doubting my manly manliness
CG: I'M DOUBTING YOUR TREACHEROUSNESS.
CG: AND ALSO THE FACT THAT THE LAW IS ON YOUR SIDE HERE.
CG: BUT YOUR MANLY MANLINESS TOO, SURE.
TG: i am so offended i might have to stop talking to you
CG: YOU'RE BORED AGAIN, AREN'T YOU?
CG: YOU'RE NEVER THE ONE TO END OUR GROSS-ASS, EMBARRASSING CHATS, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY'D MAKE OTHER PEOPLE WANT TO GOUGE THEIR EYES OUT WITH A RUSTY SPOON.
TG: i wasnt gonna
TG: but now youve woken the dragon
CG: YOUR DICK?
TG: what
CG: OH MY GOD
CG: WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME TODAY?
CG: I NEED TO LOOK UP WAYS TO JUST STOP SLEEPING.
TG: stop sleeping altogether huh
TG: not sure if thats the way to go in any situation
CG: TRUST ME ON THIS.
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] ---
It’s like something straight out of a fairytale

Jennifer is blonde and looks like she’d still smile her fake smile if the world was ending. She also squeals a lot. You hate her from the moment you walk into Dave’s office and she sees you.

“This must be our little darling Karkat! You look just as cute as you do in the pictures! Call me Jennifer,” she says. You still haven’t found out her last name or if she even has one. You hope it’s something stupid like Pighead or Bottoms.

Now you’re all sitting at Dave’s desk, your hands under the table because they’re shaking. Jennifer exclaims, “Shall we start, gentlemen?” She claps her hands twice.

Dave who’s sitting next to you gives her on of his pseudo smirks where he raises only one corner of his mouth. “Hit us.”

“Hopefully not literally.” She laughs. Nobody else does. Jennifer turns on her recorder. “So, let’s start with obviously the most important thing. Your relationship surprised a lot of people. I’m sure your fans are just dying to hear more about how you met and how this precious relationship developed!”

Dave shrugs and looks at you. You nod and say, in your practiced Happy Tone, “We met in the coffee shop I used to work at. I didn’t really like him at first, but we talked and I realized he wasn’t as much of a douche as he seemed.”

Dave shakes his head. “For me it was definitely love at first sight. Like, I set eyes on that plush rump and boom. Bound to this guy for eternity. How could I not've been?” He gestures at you and smirks at Jennifer. She giggles. You kick him under the table and he adds, “Okay, it wasn’t just the way he looks. It’s his aura that drew me in. You know, that red hue is just so appealing.” He runs his hand through his hair and nods at nobody in particular. Years of experience with him you don’t actually have tell you he’s nervous as hell. “Not to mention his ability to rant five times as much as other people, especially about romance. It must be true love because I’m known for my short and concise way of talking and opposites attract. Also, how many people do you know that talk about romcoms like they’re actual science. You know, up there with quantum mechanics and explosions and the Eiffel tower growing six inches in summer. The actual Eiffel tower, that wasn’t a euphemism. Anyway, shit’s precious.”

You try not to scowl at anybody, hit your head against the desk, or kiss him, and continue talking. “He asked me if I’d like to hang out with him. I thought he was just trying to make friends and I was confused why he’d decided he wanted some random barista as a friend. But I realized that wasn’t it when we met for the first time and he kept on flirting with me.” You refrain from adding clumsily, mind you.

“And my suave coolkid charms won him over in no time. Not to mention, my money and influence.”

Jennifer starts applauding like that is an appropriate reaction in any way. “You two are so in love! I understand why you wanted to hide your relationship from the world at first, but I am so glad you don’t anymore! Your pictures are the best thing to happen to the internet since cute kittens. You’re the cutest celebrity couple, no matter if engaged, married or just together! Tell us something about the proposal?”

You answer, “That’s actually a pretty stupid story. He asked me to drive to a lookout one evening. When we arrived there, it was so romantic with the lights of the city and the moon and all, I
spontaneously asked him to marry me. He told me he’d planned the whole trip so he could ask me the same thing. And then he insisted on getting down on one knee and all. Because he’s an idiot like that.”

You glance at Dave who’s never heard this story before and see he’s almost smiling. He adds, “Kinda romcom-ish, but fucking adorable.”

You ignore the light feeling in your stomach. “He couldn’t give me a ring because nobody knew about our relationship, but he gave me one of those temporary SBAHJ tattoos for children.”

“No, I did that because it’s great. Also, hotter than a maid outfit could ever be, even if he poses on the literal sun with it. Not that he needs it.”

You tell yourself you will not imagine anything sexual, no hand between your thighs nor his head and you will most definitely not think about his teeth on your skin, god fucking dammit, he didn’t even say anything that arousing.

Jennifer is grinning like she just tried out the entire Kama Sutra, and squeals, “Oh my god, how romantic! This story is way better than I could’ve ever imagined!” She fans herself. You resist the urge to do the same thing. “Okay, the reporter wishing she had a relationship like this aside, can you believe there are actually people who don’t think your relationship is real just because things went a bit faster than usual? How do you feel about people like that?”

There’s a short silence while both of you just stare at her. Finally, you answer, “We roll our eyes. That’s all we do. We roll them until they hurt and then some more.”

She laughs. “Oh Karkat, you are just too funny! And now famous too, after your short film took the internet and our hearts by storm. I’m sure you’re just dying to tell our readers about it!”

“It’s a story about a girl investigating the mysterious death of her bully and finding love along the way. It’s definitely worth checking out, no matter if you like romcoms or for some ignorant reason don’t. I know enough people who could learn a ton of shit from the short film. The crew and I worked hard on it so you can bet we put a lot of thought into everything. Even if you’re one of those people who thinks romcoms are beneath them, you should at least give it a try.” You think you did a good job cutting the insults out of your answer.

Jennifer nods, smiling like she’s just heard the best speech of her life. “I definitely loved it! It made me cry so hard! But I feel like there’s an elephant in the room you must be dying to address!” You frown at her before glancing at Dave who just shrugs. “I’m talking about what Christopher Osborn said about the film the other day and the hashtag #bothoverrated that’s been trending ever since. He told the press your film is only this popular because you had Dave’s support and a famous cast. He called both of you overrated and said Dave wouldn’t be this famous anymore if he hadn’t come out!”

Dave makes a dismissive sound. “Yeah, I heard about that, but if I cared about every guy who said something about us in the press I’d cry myself to sleep every night instead of drinking champagne made from unicorn hair while laying naked on a pile of money. It’s--”

You cut him off. “Look, I only have a vague idea who Christopher Osborn is, so he can come back and complain once he’s accomplished something other than whining about other people or about how under different circumstances he’d be on Mallorca right now partying with people who are twice as attractive as he is. Or maybe once he’s realized you shouldn’t take everything at face value. Because yeah, I admit Dave’s works are sometimes incredibly grossly brainsqueezingly stupid and often arouse the desire to vomit your own eyeballs, but I doubt that Oswald guy has any idea how ingenious some of the symbolism is. And sure, the initial conditions for my film were very fortunate,
but does that Christian Osmark really think the audience is completely incapable of deciding whether a film is good or not? If it was bad, the punishment would have been immediate. Enough people were going shithive maggots searching for a chance to criticize it with its obvious so called ‘gay agenda.’" Okay, that rant maybe got a bit longer than this situation called for, but at least it had stayed less obscene than it'd have normally been.

Jennifer giggles. “You are too precious!”

You look at Dave, hoping he gets your what the fuck is wrong with her look. He snorts quietly, shrugs, then says to Jennifer, “I have nothing against people criticizing us, because if Karkat keeps up like this he’s going to be actual competition for me soon. If Chrischris Ospenis doesn’t come up with better criticism, and he won’t because there’s nothing there, I might just have to hire a hitman. Just after I got him used to my weird kinks, too.”

She laughs. “You’re both so funny! What a great couple you two are, it’s like something straight out of a fairytale! Last question: Any new projects on the horizon, for either of you? Or maybe even a project together?”

Dave answers first. “I doubt my honey cookie is down for that. His loss, of course. I’m working on a couple of things right now, Sweet Bro body pillows and a SBAHJ dating sim and of course the Hella Jeff formed skyscraper in NY, but the next really big thing is going to be a surprise. Gonna drop that shit on my fans so hard they’ll think the next world war has started. Or they’re in some dubstep club. Maybe the war has started because of dubstep, who knows.”

Jennifer doubles over because she’s laughing so hard. You sigh, wait for her to calm down a bit, then say, “I might make a feature length film, but I don’t have concrete plans right now that I could tell you.”

“Allright, that’s it! Thank you for the interview, it was a pleasure getting to meet you! I hope we get to do this again!” She stops her recorder. “Mark will be here soon, he’s our photographer! Until then, you’ll need to excuse me for a bit, this lady has to check her makeup! I know, annoying, but it’s a girl thing.” She laughs and finally leaves the room.

You slump in your seat. “I have a headache.”

“I know dude. Do you want a coffee?”

You say, “What’s that?” without thinking about it.


You blink. “I… I have no idea where that came from. I know what coffee is. I just had a weird déjá vu.” You rub your eyes. “I thought we talked about this before, but no.”

“You have those too? I guess it makes sense since you have dreams too.”

“Yeah. About people dying. And things like that.” You blink, then very casually look away from him.

“Rose says she’s perpetually haunted by unsettling shit when she falls asleep too, but then again that might just be normal for Rose, weird fake flashbacks or not. And Dirk’s implied something like this too, but he’s at least as fucked up as Rose. Other than them I don't know anybody else who has anything on that level.”

“What does Rose dream about?”
“I don’t know.” Dave leans on the table with his right elbow and rests his head in his hand. “She asked me once if I knew somebody named John, but I feel like I have a better chance of winning the lottery than remembering who that is.”

The name makes you stomach sink like you’ve forgotten something really important. “The name sounds familiar.”

“It does?”

“This is so weird.” The more you think about this, the more you feel like you’re going to throw up. You stare out the window where you can see nothing other than grey sky. “Vriska.”

“Gesundheit.”

“That’s a name.”

“Who is it?” Dave leans forward. You look at him.

“I have no idea. Fuck me.” His eyebrows rise just the tiniest bit and your eyes widen. “Not literally of course. That was a curse. Like, this is shitty, fuck me with a cactus.”

“Kinky.” He laughs at the expression on your face. “Okay, not kinky.”

You rub your face. Silence descends. You stare at the table until you get flashes of people with horns on their heads. Your head is starting to really hurt now. You take a deep breath to suppress the feeling like you’re going to throw up any moment now. Dave startles you when he starts speaking again. “The question I always ask myself is are we just nutjobs or is this actually a thing. Am I going to start running around naked yelling about purple clouds or green monsters?”

You hesitate. “I remember you. Somehow I did before I even knew you, I just didn’t realize it. At least I know I didn’t make you up in my head.”

“I remember you too. And Rose.”

“I think I remember Sollux bleeding. And Kanaya. But if I think I remember all of my friends bleeding to death, it might just be some of my fucked up deepest fears melting my brain into a liquid shit thing.” You massage your temples.

“Yeah, I thought that too. But then I saw you and I instantly remembered that I knew you. It was fucking weird man.” He shakes his head.

“Wait. Wait, wait, wait. You remembered me before we even talked. That’s why you decided to choose me as your fake boyfriend!” It’s not a question and Dave seems to recognize that.

“I’d never had such a violent déjà vu before, but I couldn’t just go up to you and say, ‘Yo, I think I remember you from a past life or whatever.’ I had to do something and I was searching for somebody to play the role anyway.”

“You probably wouldn’t have believed you anyway. It all sounds really weird. Do you think there are a lot of people out there who get weird memories?”

“I have no idea. I’ve never had anything with a stranger.”

You stay silent for a while, thinking. “Dave. John had black hair.”

“I don’t know.” Dave sounds more helpless than you’re used to.
“How many Johns with black hair do you think are out there?” you ask him.

“A lot. Do you remember a girl with black hair? I remember a girl with black hair. Actually, I think there might have been several girls with black hair.”

“I feel like there were a shit ton of girls with black hair.” You frown. “Hey Dave.”

“Yo.”

“After this whole thing AKA the dumbest acting job I’ve ever had is over, we’ll still talk right? I want to search for the people I remember. I’m sure you do too. And there aren’t a lot of people who won’t think we’re insane when we tell them all this stuff. I kind of need your help.”

“Dude. Of course we won’t just stop talking. Being in a fake relationship welds people together like near death experiences can’t.”

“Even if something stupid happens?” You have to make sure.

“Why are you so neurotic about our deep and passionate broship? What could possibly derail our true manlove?”

“Ugh. I don’t know.” You asking him out. “Since when do we have a deep and passionate broship anyway?”

“Shh, don’t question the broship.”

Jennifer bursts into the room. “Gentlemen, this is Mark! He’s going to make you look as good as he does.” A bald man who’s at least fifty years old with tattoos follows her into the room. He nods at you. Jennifer claps her hands. “Mark, where do you want them?”

He shrugs. “Window.”

“Excellent!” You both walk over to the window. Jennifer exclaims, “How about we do a kissing pic?”

You say, “Whoa, okay, hold the fuck up.”

Dave adds, “Exactly. That’s, like, weird. For the camera.”

“We only kiss out of love.”

“Yeah, we only kiss when the feelings really hit us.”

“We’re just that romantic.”

Jennifer sighs. “That is so cute. The picture would’ve been cute too, but fine. How do you wanna pose, gentlemen?”

“Okay, so I make a superman pose and Karkat does one of those gymnastic squats. Or swoons. Maybe he swoons while he does the squat.”

“We could both stand on different sides of the window.”

“Karkat, dude, we gotta be a united front here.”

“Right, so we both make the superman pose?”
Mark sighs. “Just fuck it out or stop fighting.”

He takes a picture when you both look at him and chuckles at your apparently hilarious expressions.

Jennifer smiles at the three of you. “You are all very funny, boys, but I think our two little lovebirds should just half-hug each other.”

“On the picture or in general?” asks Dave.

Jennifer giggles once again. “Both.”

You open your mouth to refuse her idea, but hesitate. It doesn’t make sense to refuse, neither to Jennifer who thinks you’re in love nor to Dave who probably doesn’t see a reason why you shouldn’t hug for this. After all, you’re bros, forged by the fires of a fake relationship. That is definitely what happened. Dave looks at you and you shrug. He steps closer to you until he’s brushing your right side. You almost flinch away. Slowly, you put an arm around his waist. You feel him put his arm around your shoulders and you concentrate on your breathing.

His voice sounds loud in your ear when he speaks. “Like this?”

Jennifer answers, “A little closer.” Mark nods and she grins at him.

You both press against each other. You’re reminded of the last time you had a hug. It was with Dave in the Coffee Shop of Hell. You really need to hug your friends more because you’re enjoying his warmth against your body far too much. He bows his head until your foreheads are touching and you can’t suppress a shiver.

“That’s perfect, boys! Mark?”

“Lighting.” He begins moving around in the room, correcting the lighting, apparently, and leaving you to stand there and hold the pose.


After what has to have been at least two minutes during which you have to feel Dave breathe and endure the resulting swarm of angry bees in your stomach, Mark says, “Okay. Look at the camera.”

You smile at the camera, remember you rarely smile, stop smiling, then smile again. What the fuck is appropriate in this situation? Dave wouldn’t find you smiling weird, he knows you can act. You settle on not smiling but looking happy.

Mark takes pictures for what feels like an hour but is probably five minutes. Finally he nods and shows Jennifer the pictures who of course squeals and probably comes in her skirt. You and Dave step away from each other. Jennifer bubbles something about models and hair and fans, which Mark apparently takes as his cue to leave with the camera without another word to anybody.

Jennifer grins at you. “Oh, he’s a bit grumpy, but it’s part of his appeal. He’s more mysteriously hot that way, not that he needs it. Gentlemen, it was absolutely great to meet you! I really hope we can repeat this in the future!” She walks up to Dave and hugs him. He freezes, then pats her on the back. After way more time than is normal for this business related interaction, she lets go and attacks you with a hug too. Only after that does she finally leave.

You turn to Dave and say, “Does she want to fuck the camera guy or what the fuck?”

“Do you think he’s mysteriously hot?” He’s almost smiling again.
“He’s way too old for me. Her too, by the way.”

“Did he have a wedding ring?”

“No idea. Did she?”

“No. But maybe that is just the way she is, you know, all compliments and shit. Maybe she thinks everybody she meets is mysteriously hot. Doesn’t matter anyway because I’d rather shove an egg up my ass while it’s still in the chicken than have to talk to either of them again.”

“Yeah, same.”
Their love is still obvious to anyone observing them

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] —
CG: DAVE
CG: DAVE ARE YOU AWAKE
CG: OKAY OKAY SO DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE YOUR BODY ISN'T REALLY YOUR BODY
CG: LIKE YOU WANT TO SCRATCH YOUR SKIN OPEN BECAUSE ITS TOO TIGHT AND FEELS WEIRD
CG: AND YOU WANT TO THROW UP
CG: AND TEAR YOUR HAIR OUT
CG: DAVE IF YOU'RE AWAKE YOU DEFINITELY NEED TO GET YOUR ASS TO YOUR PHONE AND ANSWER ME
TG: dude
TG: its like the middle of the night
TG: complete with bats and vampires and prostitutes or whatever
TG: vampire prostitutes too
TG: idk im too tired for this shit
TG: whoa what happened to your punctuation
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FACE
CG: NO THAT WAS STUPID
TG: lmao
TG: okay wait what do you mean
TG: whats wrong with your body
TG: oh shit oh shit youre totally panicking arent you
TG: oh no
TG: how panicky are you is it like oh shit theres a small spider in the corner of the room doing a happy dance or is it more like oh shit a spider just ate my entire family even though i totally need them to fight against the zombie invasion also theres a meteor rapidly approaching and its totally the size of jupiter no it is in fact jupiter karkat say something
TG: are we talking about jupiter levels of panic here
TG: mr president karkat refused to tell me what planet his panic is like should we try to destroy it with lasers anyway
TG: what if aliens are on it
CG: HOW DO YOU ALWAYS GET SO RAMBLY WHEN YOU'RE STRESSED?
CG: IT IS AGAINST EVERY RULE CONCERNING BASIC SURVIVAL.
CG: "FIGHT OR FLIGHT OR TALK HORSESHT"
TG: ah punctuation the sweet drop of ambrosia for the starved we are saved
TG: seriously though whats happening
CG: IT'S FINE!
CG: I'M BETTER NOW.
CG: HA.
CG: LOOK. HERE WE ARE. LITERALLY IN THE DUMBEST SITUATION SINCE SOME GUY INVENTED SBAHJ. JUST BECAUSE MY PAST SELF THOUGHT IT'D BE SMART TO SHIT HIS UNDERWEAR IN THE DUMBEST OVERREACTION KNOWN TO MANKIND LIKE THE MORON HE IS.
CG: AND THEN OF COURSE YOU OVERREACTION TOO.
CG: I JUST WOKE UP FROM A DREAM AND I FELT REALLY WEIRD.
CG: LIKE
CG: SOMETHING IS REALLY WRONG WITH MY BODY.
CG: SOMETHING IS MISSING.
CG: MY HEAD FELT *WRONG*.
CG: DO YOU KNOW THE FEELING?
TG: not really
TG: maybe its because you were a troll
CG: A WHAT
TG: you know with the horns
TG: i dont really remember much
TG: but you had horns
TG: and i remember your species was called trolls
CG: OH GOD
CG: I HAD HОРNS
CG: I’M GOING TO THROW UP
TG: do you have something against horns or
TG: are you actually throwing up now
TG: oh no you are aren’t you
TG: should i do something
TG: call somebody
TG: mr president karkat just threw up you said you loved my movies but do you love them enough to do something about this grade a danger situation
TG: this is a critical situation for all of our citizens especially me
TG: im a celebrity come on
CG: I JUST FUCKING THREW UP, YES.
CG: NO, BECAUSE MY BODY IS SO WRONG.
CG: I HATE THIS. THIS IS WEIRD.
CG: LET’S ABSOLUTELY STOP TALKING ABOUT THIS BEFORE MY HATRED FOR THIS ENTIRE CONVERSATION IMPOLES AND AND THE CORONER HAS TO PUT "CHOPPED TO TINY PIECES OF EMBARRASSMENT" AS THE CAUSE OF OUR DEATH.
CG: THAT IS DEFINITELY THE SENSIBLE COURSE OF ACTION HERE.
TG: if you want
TG: okay so
TG: are you ready for the wedding
TG: when is it anyway
CG: TOMORROW?
CG: DON’T TELL ME YOU DIDN’T KNOW THAT.
CG: I AM SO GLAD I’M NOT TALKING TO A GUY WHO DOESN’T KNOW HE NEEDS TO ATTEND HIS COUSIN’S WEDDING TOMORROW.
TG: oh
TG: shit
TG: so do i need to give them a gift or what
CG: ARE YOU FUCKING JOKING AROUND BECAUSE I SWEAR TO GOD STRIDER
CG: I AM NOT GOING ON A LAST-MINUTE GIFT HUNT WITH YOU!
CG: I HAVEN’T HAD A FULL NIGHT OF SLEEP IN WEEKS AND I’M NOT GOING TO KANAYA’S WEDDING WITH ONE HOUR OF SLEEP.
TG: yeah i made them a rap and bought some stuff but the raps obviously the best part
CG: I CAN SEE IT ALREADY.
CG: THEM WALTZING IN CLASSY LONG DRESSES AND WITH SHARED INTIMATE SMILES AND ALL THAT SHIT TO
CG: DAVE STRIDER RAPPING.
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file
"rap_for_rosemary_aka_probably太少_many_innuendos_whoops.mp3" --
CG: OH
CG: WHAT KIND OF TITLE IS THAT.
TG: a very honest one
TG: are you listening to it right now
TG: im going to take your nonexisting answer as a yes
TG: okay so whenever youre done just write to me again
TG: ill just chill here and wait
TG: like a desperate ex lover
TG: no its okay if you want to date the whore but i think you should know im better than her in every way
TG: have you seen her ass in those jeans
TG: and more importantly have you seen my own assletini
TG: its like mirror mirror on the wall who got the hottest behind of all
TG: shits like a magnet
TG: attracting eyes everywhere i go its almost embarrassing
TG: not for me for the other people
TG: but why am i telling you any of this theres no way you havent noticed my posterior and its polarizing qualities
TG: no idea if polarizing is a fitting word here
TG: i did it for the alliteration
TG: im sorry mother two words with the same first letter just get my fun stick going like nothing else can
TG: be glad its not ponies
TG: sorry dirk not sorry
CG: OH NO.
CG: DON’T ELABORATE ON THAT.
TG: everybody fucking rejoice mamas back in the house
TG: oh thats a good start to a rap
CG: IS IT COMMON IN THE RAPPING SCENE TO REFER TO YOUR OWN PERSON AS MAMA?
TG: absolutely
TG: its like
TG: bitches wanna fuck this mama but this mama aint bout low quality
CG: THAT DOESN’T RHYME.
CG: YOUR SO CALLED “RAP FOR ROSEMARY AKA OH NO DO I SUBCONSCIOUSLY WANNA FUCK MY COUSIN” ALWAYS RHYMES.
TG: but im gay
CG: DR. FREUD DOESN’T CARE.
TG: so what did you think anyway
CG: ABOUT YOUR RAP?
CG: IT’S NOT LIKE I LISTEN TO A LOT OF RAP SONGS.
CG: IT’S VERY RAP-Y.
CG: I THINK.
TG: not really
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "descend.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "this_is_pretty_gay.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "im_not_as_hood_as_i_pretend_in_this.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "this_is_pretty_gay_even_gayer_remix.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "descend_remix.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "gonna_make_sweet_love_to_your_mother.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "oblivion.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "stay_in_school.mp3" --
CG: HOLY HORSESHIT.
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "verisimilitude_aka_fuck_you_bitch.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "pretty_depressing.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "pretty_depressing_less_depressing_remix.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "in_dubio_pro_duriore.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "69_candles.mp3" --
CG: MR PRESIDENT.
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "don’t-ever_send_this_to_rose.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "pandemonium.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "the_equivalent_of_a_middle_aged_man_twerking_at_a_barbecue_with_his_boss.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "schadenfreude.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "lol.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "lol_remix.mp3" --
-- turntechGodhead [TG] sent carcinoGeneticist [CG] the file "on_y_va_aka_i_need_to_get_laid.mp3" --
TG: okay thats it
CG: WHAT HAVE I DONE
TG: its just not possible i let you live your life having never heard a good rap
CG: THOSE ARE ALL YOURS THOUGH.
TG: ive never been this offended
CG: SHOULDN’T I ALSO LISTEN TO CLASSICS?
TG: sure but you wont
CG: BUT I’LL LISTEN TO YOUR SONGS?
TG: i can already see it in my minds eye
TG: one hot summer afternoon karkat vantas is sitting in his bedroom reading his favorite totally steamy romance novel
TG: but sex scenes are only good when you dont know them so well you could quote them word for word
TG: so bored karkat vantas looks around in his room and suddenly boom
TG: a meteor happens and wipes out the entire human race
TG: thats totally not where i was going with this i wanted to write how you suddenly remember the stuff i sent you and are so bored you start listening to it but
TG: creativity happened
CG: WHY DO I GET THE FEELING THIS IS PRETTY MUCH HOW YOU WRITE SBAHJ?
TG: because it is
CG: NO SURPRISE HERE.
CG: JUST SADNESS.
CG: A NEVER ENDING SWIRLING VORTEX OF SADNESS.
CG: SUCKING YOUR SKIN OFF YOUR BODY.
CG: WHY YOUR BODY AND NOT MY BODY YOU ASK? YOU SHOULDN’T. THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUS.
CG: THE OFFENDER OF GOOD TASTE GETS PUNISHED.
CG: OH LOOK, IT’S 3 IN THE MORNING.
CG: WHAT A FUNNY OBSERVATION.
TG: hilarious
TG: you should have your own standup comedy show
CG: I REALLY SHOULD.
CG: OKAY, I REALLY NEED TO GO TO SLEEP NOW.
CG: YOU TOO.
TG: yes mom
CG: BITCHES WANNA FUCK THIS MAMA, BUT THIS MAMA AIN’T ABOUT LOW QUALITY.
TG: its what ive been preaching this whole time
CG: GOOD NIGHT.
TG: l)
TG: the moon
CG: GO TO SLEEP.
CG: O
CG: THE FULL MOON.
TG: ()
TG: ass
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] ---
TG: oh if thats how were gonna play it
TG: first you wake me up
TG: and then you wont even fuck me
TG: where is this relationship going
TG: fuck you i cheated on you with your sister anyway
TG: shit i made that joke before
TG: weak
TG: so weak
TG: i have failed the comedy gods
TG: i need to be brought to justice
TG: wheres tz when you need her
TG: probably licking some poor unsuspecting guy
TG: or hanging puppets or some shit
TG: licking puppets while shes hanging them
TG: weird girl but i fucking love her more than my dick
TG: though definitely not as much as my bf loves my dick you know from positive experiences
TG: thats you btw
TG: youre my bf
TG: tfw fake bf
TG: hey i just got an email with the result of our little interview
TG: its fucking incredible
TG: you gotta read this shit
TG: the heavens open angels come out singing i fucking knew she wasnt as blindly stupidly enthusiastic as she pretended to be
TG: she thinks im hot but sometimes trying too hard to be funny
TG: fuck you im hilarious
TG: i hope mark is happily married
TG: to somebody else
TG: with seven kids
TG: and a big house
TG: white picket fence friendly neighbours none of them furries big whirlpool
TG: then again can photographers possibly earn that much
TG: maybe he inherited money from his parents
TG: no no his wife is rich hes her boytoy
TG: ha
TG: take that jennifer
TG: journalism doesn't pay that well
TG: okay just to warn you she did find you funny and cute those are both words she uses totally justified btw but also pretty rude totally unjustified
TG: well i mean
TG: you did glare at her but thats just your normal facial expression
TG: and she totally noticed we secretly hated them
TG: #noregrets though
TG: but she loves us together
TG: my favourite part is
TG: even though they are facing a lot of challenges as one of the few gay hollywood couples their love is still obvious to anyone observing them
TG: see even jessi knows you totally have a secret crush on me
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] —
CG: “JESSI” DOESN’T KNOW I’M A GOOD ACTOR
TG: oh god it speaks
CG: IT DOES EVEN MORE THAN "SPEAK".
CG: LIKE WONDER WHY YOU APPEAR TO NOT CARE ABOUT SLEEP EVEN THOUGH IT’S YOUR COUSIN’S WEDDING TOMORROW.
CG: OR WHY YOU EVER THOUGHT AN INTERVIEW WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA WHEN YOU ARE IN A *FAKE* RELATIONSHIP. IT CAN’T STRESS THE *FAKE* ENOUGH HERE.
TG: little karkles cant fall asleep can he
CG: FUCK SLEEP.
TG: thats the spirit
TG: the interview wasnt my idea
TG: i was told about it too late
TG: and its not like i can go oh shit guys what a nice idea we just cant really do that because me and my boyfriend arent actually in love
TG: but that wasnt even a problem she believed us
TG: not just that at this point shed take a bullet for our relationship thats how convinced of our deeper than the sea love she is were her dream relationship hashtag relationship goals heart
TG: all of those people would be pretty sad emoji if we broke up
TG: can either of us bear the guilt of breaking those poor peoples hearts
CG: *ALL OF THOSE PEOPLE WILL BE PRETTY SAD EMOJI WHEN WE BREAK UP.*
CG: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO, GET MARRIED AND STAY TOGETHER UNTIL WE DIE BECAUSE SOME COWFACES ARE MORE INVESTED IN CELEBRITY RELATIONSHIPS THAN THEY HAVE ANY RIGHT TO BE NOR IS SENSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN OR ANYBODY ELSE’S HEALTH?
TG: thats dedication
TG: the virtue this fine country was built on
TG: i say
TG: marrying rich is close enough to the american dream
TG: having a slamming ass is enough work
CG: I HAVE MET A LOT OF PEOPLE IN MY TIME ON THIS EARTH AND I CAN SAFELY SAY YOUR OBSESSION WITH REMARKS ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE’S BODIES IS NOT NORMAL.
TG: hey its not like i go around like have you seen helen shes gotten so fat must be all the wine
TG: i hate people like that
TG: but dude i dont wanna be the guy who walks up to chicks in the park and waves his penis in their face either so i guess you need tell me when i start acting like one
TG: just slap me or something
CG: I NEED TO SLAP YOU WHEN YOU START WAVING YOUR PENIS IN MY FACE?
CG: TRUST ME, I WOULD HAVE DONE IT ANYWAY, BUT THANKS FOR THE PERMISSION.
TG: I mean
TG: tell me when i annoy you with
TG: the totally unsexy barely smutty but still very not safe for work bullshit i sometimes say
CG: I KNOW.
CG: IT'S FINE, IT'S NOT LIKE IT MEANS ANYTHING TO YOU.
CG: YOU JUST VOMIT UP THE DUMMEST MOST MEANINGLESS HOLLOW BRAIN MATTER AND THREE SECONDS LATER YOUR BRAIN'S USING ALL ITS POWER ON THE NEXT CHANCE FOR VERBAL DIARRHEA.
CG: I COULDN'T CARE LESS IF YOU PAID ME.
CG: WHICH YOU KIND OF DO.
TG: not really
TG: dont think that
CG: WERE YOU CONCENTRATING ON FONDLING YOUR DICK THE LAST TWO MINUTES DURING WHICH I EXPLAINED IN DETAIL HOW MUCH I DON'T CARE?
CG: AND ABOUT THE INTERVIEW
CG: AT THIS POINT ANY PRESS IS GOOD PRESS.
CG: I'M HONESTLY GLAD SHE FOUND ME RUDE. IT'S BETTER THAN IF SHE'D JUST LAUGHED AT ME LIKE AN ASSHOLE. IS THERE ANYTHING WORSE THAN SOME PATRONIZING TOYFUCKER TREATING YOU LIKE YOU'RE AN ADORABLE PUPPY WHEN YOU'D RATHER INDULGE IN A GOOD OLD CIRCLE JERK OF HATE?
CG: BECAUSE I FUCKING HATED HER SO MUCH IT IS STILL A DUMB MIRACLE TO ME SHE DIDN'T BURST INTO FLAMES FROM IT. I HATED HER BEFORE YOU HATED HER.
CG: A PERSON WHO TREATS EVERYBODY AROUND HER LIKE SOME SICK DANCING BEAR FOR HER OWN AMUSEMENT DESERVES THE SHARP END OF THAT SHIT-CRUSTED SWORD HERSELF.
CG: I AGREE WITH YOU ABOUT MARK. I MIGHT FIND SOMEBODY FOR HIM TO MARRY IF HE IS IN FACT SINGLE. I AM SURE THERE ARE ENOUGH PEOPLE WHO ARE INTO
CG: BALDNESS, TATTOOS AND SOCIAL INEPTITUDE.
CG: NOT TO MENTION, I HIGHLY DOUBT "JENNIFER"S LEVEL OF SERIOUS JOURNALISM. WHAT KIND OF SERIOUS JOURNALIST WOULD WRITE ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEE'S HOTNESS? *NONE* IS THE BLINDLY OBVIOUS ANSWER HERE.
CG: AND DON'T THINK SHE DOESN'T KNOW IT. I HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF BECOMING PRESIDENT AND ORDERING SOMEBODY TO FLOOD HER HOUSE WITH HORSE EXCREMENT THAN SHE HAS OF FINDING A FUCK TO GIVE ABOUT SERIOUS JOURNALISM IN SOME FORGOTTEN, SPIDER-INFESTED CORNER OF HER BRAIN.
CG: AND THEN SHE WOULD HAVE TO DUST THE FUCK OFF TOO, SO THAT'S DEFINITELY TOO MUCH WORK WHEN SHE COULD JUST DO A HAPPY DANCE IN THE "I DON'T GIVE A FUCK CLUB".
CG: THANKFULLY I'M THERE TOO, MAKING FUN OF HER DANCE.
TG: ah yes didnt that feel good
TG: your own personal circle jerk
TG: verbal masturbation for the particularly hateful
TG: now youre all kinds of fresh and relaxed for the rosemary wedding
CG: I WOULD BE IF I COULD SLEEP.
TG: oh shit
TG: almost 4 am already
CG: I CAN READ THE CLOCK TOO.
CG: AND I CAN STRESS MYSELF ALONE TOO.
TG: man dont stress about not being able to sleep
TG: thats counterproductive
CG: SO IS TALKING TO YOU RIGHT NOW.
CG: WOULD YOU RATHER I STRESS ABOUT STRESSING?
CG: AT LEAST THE CIRCLE OF STUPIDITY WOULD BE COMPLETE.
TG: focus on your breathing
TG: imagine your limbs getting all heavy
TG: like somebody tied stones to them
TG: okay i guess that could be stressful too
TG: who would do that is it a kinky thing or are you being kidnapped and thrown into the sea
TG: okay so you tied stones to your own limbs
TG: for the art
TG: its abstract you dont need to understand it
TG: or maybe its just kinky
TG: its both
TG: artists tend to be pretty kinky
TG: hey have you seen some of the fanart for davekat
TG: id be worried if i wasnt so proud
TG: where are you stop me before i start talking about sex too much
TG: you fell asleep didnt you
TG: this is like the story of my life
TG: im talking about kinky shit while my boyfriend falls asleep
TG: snore once for no im still listening and mildly interested twice for just fucking go to sleep dave
TG: let morpheus or whoever the guy responsible here is finally take your mind away
TG: what are you doing you cant snore three times
TG: four
TG: five
TG: this is anarchy
TG: that sounds like a cool name for a rap
TG: anyway night
TG: l)

-- turnedtechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] ---
You’re my boyfriend, you should be on my side

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

You end up being late to the wedding. Of course you do. When you arrive at Dave’s apartment to drive to the wedding together he’s still asleep, and then once he’s dressed in a red suit and you’re finally on the road, the both of you fight about the best route until you end up having no idea where you are. None of this would have been a problem since you'd woken Dave up early enough, but while Dave asks some passerby where you were, you realize you’ve forgotten your gifts. That is particularly bitter because now you can't even blame Dave alone for the delay.

So you have to drive back, but eventually you actually end up in the building where the ceremony is held. You have to sneak into the room while everybody is listening attentively to the officiant speaking. Dave whispers into your ears, “Shit.” His breath tickles the side of your face for the fraction of a second. You shiver.

You and Dave sit down quietly in the last row of seats. A few people shoot you looks, but you’re distracted by Rose and Kanaya at the front with their matching white-lilac dresses, the light from the big windows behind them making Rose’s hair light up. Kanaya notices you and can’t seem to decide whether to smile or frown. She looks back at Rose and her expression turns into a soft smile.

It seems you at least came in time for the vows. Rose hesitates and when she speaks you have trouble understanding her even though the entire room is quiet. “You know I sometimes scoff at the idea of fate, the idea that everything that happens is predetermined and the universe or some power arranges things and there is nothing we can do about it. However, you make me wonder if that is not presumptuous of me because I often feel like the universe aligned itself several times over to make sure we would end up together. You even make me wonder if I should be more humble lest the universe takes you away again. The words ‘better half’ sound so clichéd they have almost lost their meaning, not to mention their implications of unhealthy dependency, but it’s true that I can’t imagine what I would be like if you were suddenly taken away again. You have been my companion for years now, through everything that happened, and I promise to do the same for you, support you with all my strength and love you even through universes falling and rising.”

Kanaya smiles a touched smile. She moves in to hug Rose.

Dave whispers in your ear, “Dude, are you crying? Sobbing over this blatant display of gayness?”

You sniff. “I just have something in my eye, you horsenipple.”

“In both eyes at the same time?” He smirks. You glare at him. “Aw, don’t cry,” He reaches up and rubs your arm. Your heart clenches, “I have a handkerchief with my initials if you need one. Or one embroidered with Sweet Bro’s face?”

“Ew. Give me the one with your initials.”

His hand falls away and he gives you the handkerchief. You have to use it several times during the rest of the ceremony. You actually don’t cry often – romcoms don’t count - but it’s all very touching. Rose has traded her usual sarcastic and slightly amused look for an unusually excited demeanor and Kanaya can’t stop smiling at her.

Once the ceremony is over and you’re all gathered somewhere where, hopefully, there will be food
soon. You and Dave both try to get to Rose and Kanaya. You soon realize it’s hopeless, there are just too many people. You step back and that’s when you notice a guy coming up to you. He looks creepily like Dave, only with an even more ironic hairstyle and even uglier anime shades. You look for Dave, but he’s currently being licked by Terezi.

The guy stops in front of you. He raises an eyebrow. “Karkat.”

“Pointy shades guy.”

“Call me Bro. Or Brotinator, whatever goes with the flow.”

“Oh no, you’re his brother aren’t you? Dirk? The ponies guy.” Wow, you think of the weirdest shit in the dumbest situations.

“I suppose I could also be called the ponies guy. Or the cool guy who’s totally a master of all the dope things. Or oh no, it’s that asshole again.” Dirk is more like Dave than you’d have expected, considering how unusual that combination of stoic expression and bullshit attitude is. He manages to sound bored and slightly amused at the same time without any inflection in his voice.

“I can see the last one.” You aren’t sure why you dislike this guy so much, but you feel the overwhelming urge to punch him. And not in the usual I-can’t-believe-other-humans-are-this-annoying way but in the fuck-this-guy-in-particular way.

He doesn’t react. He’s probably used to people calling him an asshole. “So, I hear you make movies.”

“Well, yeah, I made one short film.”

“Well shit, I had no idea that one short film got so popular you’ll never have to work again for the rest of your life.”

“It was a real miracle,” you bite back.

“Well, if you can rely on miracles for the rest of your life, then I guess I’ll quit the porn biz and go search for the next unicorn with you. No, that’s a lie. I’d never quit the porn biz, even if it didn’t bring in sickwicked loot. I’d find another way to rake in some dope dough though, marry rich or some shit. I got enough junk in the trunk after all,” he winks at you (or maybe he just got something in his eye, you can’t tell with the shades), “and I can play dumb well enough.”

“What a load of pointless horseshit just to tell me you think I’m just with Dave because I don’t really have a plan in life and just want to marry rich,” you snap. "If I actually cared enough to fight with you over that I’d show you what a brainscarringly stupid topic it is without the need for barely subtle hints, but I don't."

He doesn’t even waver. “I was going to see how long it took you to get the hint.”

“And you honestly sat down and decided to do it in such a weirdly flirtatious and insulting way? ‘Junk in the trunk’? Two lonely brain cells rubbed together and came to the conclusion that’d the best course of action? God. That is really all there is to say on that matter. What can a normal person do other than pray? You are worse than Dave. And fuck you. My intentions are as pure as they could possibly be.”

“That’s not a good sign.”

“Relationships don’t have to be sexual, you waste of DNA.” What are you even doing? “And
whether ours is or not is none of your 'biz’, as you like to call it.” You could have continued this rant for a few minutes, but you’re distracted when a tongue licks right into your earshell. “Oh my god, Terezi!”

She cackles. “Hey, cherry pie.”

When you turn around to introduce her to Dirk, because you still have some shred of politeness left in you, the guy just waves it aside.

“Time for some good old family bonding,” he says, and leaves.

You shrug. It’s not like he’d been a particularly enjoyable conversation partner. To Terezi you say, “I haven’t seen you in ages.” You look her over and she still seems like the same quirky, slightly sociopathic girl you had a crush on when you were younger and she was just two years older but so much cooler than you.

“I’ve never seen you, check your privilege, Mr. Karkat Cherryass. Why would you hurt a disabled girl like this?”

Just like that Dave appears out of nowhere and quips, “Karkat, respect the weaker members of our society. Really now.”

“Oh god, you sound like fucking Kankri. Including the ignorantly condescending view on the ones he’s trying to defend. It’s a sad day when your boyfriend starts sounding like your least favorite family member, even if it’s just ironic.”

Terezi chimes in with, “Of course he’s your least favorite family member. He’s your only remaining family member. Kankri is therefore by default your favorite family member.”

“Yeah, also respect your elders, punk.”

“Dave, you fucking dolt. You’re my boyfriend, you should be on my side.” You had no idea he even knew Terezi. “Go talk to your brother or choose the right side.”

“Sorry babe, there are no sides when it comes to justice, right TZ?”

“Only the right side or death.”

“Exactly.” He turns to you. “And I’m sorry you had to talk to Bro. Dude can be more intense than one of his shitty porn movies and that’s saying something.”

You frown. “He’s definitely a bigger asshole than some porn stars have and obnoxiously so. I was burdened with the infinite curse that is Kankri Vantas, but even I wouldn’t have wanted to grow up with that pimple on humanity’s ass.”

“Yeah, I know. At least I had Roxy and Rose.” He just shrugs. You’re not sure if this amount of sibling rivalry is normal, but it’s not like you’re much different with Kankri. “What did he say to you?”

“He thinks I’m with you for the money.”

“Wow, you two dorks have it bad,” Terezi interrupts. She cackles at you. “You can’t even concentrate on your former crush after you haven’t seen her for years.”

“Oh man, crush?” Dave looks at you.
“Hey, don’t look at me like that. She said former crush. That was a long time ago, before she’d even moved to NY, long before she ever left the continent for the first time. And, what does crush mean anyway? If some pimply idiot in the throes of puberty kind of wants to kiss his hatefriend, that’s barely a crush. Is it even a crush when you just argue a lot with the person? Do crushes even fucking matter when they’re not requited?”


That’s it. You’re discovered.

You abscond.

Walking backwards, you start rambling. “Right, as if you know anything about how normal conversations go. Look at this guy, thinks he can lecture others on anything non-sequitorial. Anyway, I am going to look for cake now. Or other food. One of those tiny appetizers rich people love so much. And definitely champagne. You can’t expect a guy to sit through meeting old friends and new assholes without something to ease the pain. Otherwise he will turn insane and start babbling incoherently.” That’s when you finally turn around the corner and can stop talking. Thankfully neither Terezi nor Dave follow you. There is no food, but you eventually get the chance to get to Rose and Kanaya and hug them.

Later, after the buffet which you spent hiding next to Kanaya, you’re sitting next to the window on some fancy chair internally complaining about the heat and your scratchy suit and the fact that you could barely talk to Kanaya because everybody else tried to as well, when Terezi plops down next to you. “You’ve greatly offended His Honourable Tyranny by running away while we were catching up, so now you’re sentenced to a thorough conversation with the prosecuting attorney.”

“That’s you?”

“Of course it is. Can’t trust anybody else to do the job of attorney this well.” Her grin shows off her white teeth.

Wow, you’d forgotten how nice talking to Terezi is. Back when she’d just moved to New York and you were still stuck in Hell, you’d often talked to her on the phone, but once she left the country, the phone calls got fewer and fewer. You can’t even remember the last time you talked to her now, even though a few years ago you used to talk to her daily. Sometimes when you see cherry ice cream in a supermarket you think about calling her, but you always forget by the time you get home. You ask, “Will this conversation include feelings?”

“Possibly.”

“Please, anything but that.”

Terezi cackles and leans in to sniff at you. “You think talking about them reveals them, but you forget I can just smell them off you. For example, you’re not actually in a relationship with our resident coolkid.”

“Motherfucker!”

She laughs. “If you were, he wouldn’t have thought you were still into me and then reacted that jealously. And when you were actually together, you both smelled different.”

You say, “What?” And then, “On the meteor?”
“Yep.”

You stare at Terezi. “You were there? You remember that?”

“I remember everything. Rose probably does too. And your brother. Everybody else probably has some memories and flashbacks, but I doubt any more than you.”

“Tell me what happened!” you demand. “Why do I dream about people dying and wake up feeling guilty? Terezi, tell me right now!”

“The prosecuting attorney gets the feeling the suspect is a bit impatient.”

“Cut the bullshit.” You lean forward, hands in fists.

Terezi snorts and sniffs you again. “Close your eyes.”

“Don’t lick me, I swear to god.”

“Yes, of course not.” She cackles.

You throw her a suspicious look, but close your eyes. Her cackling gets louder and louder until you feel her tongue on your cheek.

“You did that just to piss me off!”

“I did that because you taste delicious. Now close your eyes again.”

“Was that really necessary? Everybody expected it and was already bored before you even did anything and you did it anyway just because I told you not to.”

She clicks her tongue, still grinning like a maniac. “Karkat ‘Nubby’ Vantas, don’t complain. Close your eyes so we can focus on the important things here.”

“Can’t you do whatever voodoo shit you have apparently planned without that?”

“No voodoo shit.” Terezi shakes her head, grins. “Just good old hypnosis.”

“What? Oh, forget that shit. There’s no way I let you put my body into some trance state just so you can lick it as much as you want.”

“All I hear is complaining. Just fucking look me in the eyes then.”

You turn around on the bench until you’re facing Terezi. She holds your eye contact. “Don’t you need to blink? Come on. Blink. That’s really creepy, even for you.”

She cackles under her breath. “Dragons are unstoppable. Now listen. Your name is Karkat Vantas and you are a troll. You have embarrassing nubby little horns and very hard grey skin. You are six sweeps old and you want to play this new game Sgrub with your troll friends. Your friends are Aradia Megido, Tavros Nitram, Sollux Captor, Nepeta Leijon, Kanaya Maryam, Terezi Pyrope, Vriska Serket, Equius Zahhak, Gamzee Makara, Eridan Ampora and Feferi Peixes. They all have different blood colors, which determine their social status. Yours is candy red and you are a mutant. You try to hide that fact because you could be killed any moment because of it.”

You blink, eyes still focused on Terezi’s even though you feel the desperate urge to look away. A headache is getting stronger and stronger in your head, making your eyes sting.
She doesn’t stop talking. “The game you want to play ends up destroying your planet. You and your friends are transported to a completely different universe where you beat the game, but the new universe you create is destroyed as well. You believe that is your fault.” Images of a black dog-person appear in your head. You suck in fast breaths through your nose, but don’t get enough air. “Half of your friends are murdered. Tavros Nitram, bronze blood, is impaled on a lance by Vriska Serket. Nepeta Leijon, olive blood, is bludgeoned to death by Gamzee Makara. Equius Zahhak, indigo blood, is asphyxiated by Gamzee Makara as well.”

Your phone beeps with an incoming message. You feel a sharp pain in your legs and realize you’re pushing your nails into your flesh. You can’t relax your grip.

“Terezi!” you call out, trying to get her to stop.

She shakes her head, not looking away. “Eridan Ampora, violet blood, is sawed in half by Kanaya Maryam. Feferi Peixes, fuchsia blood, is killed with a wand by Eridan Ampora.”

Your vision goes white with pain from your throbbing head. You blindly jump up and try to take a deep breath. Your phone beeps repeatedly and somebody says your name.

You force out, “Just leave me alone for a while, okay? Please.” and stumble out of the room. You see the sign to the toilets and manage to cross the hallway and get through the door and into one of the stalls. The second you see the toilet bowl, you throw up into it.

The feeling of the food going through your mouth again and the smell make you want to never eat anything again. When you’re done, you lean against the wall and press your hands against your eyes. That doesn’t stop the tears. You remember holding Sollux’s lifeless body. You remember your father, no, your lusus, your guardian. You’re not human. Now you know why you feel the urge to cry whenever you see a crab. You remember watching John grow up. Now you don’t even know if John is alive.

Your phone keeps on beeping and you think it might have been doing it for a while. You just didn’t realize it. You groan. How can you focus on another inane conversation now when the pictures of Nepeta’s twisted and beaten up body in your mind make you want to throw up again? Especially when almost all of the deaths are your fault. Because you’re a fuckup of a leader. Just the worst there is. You can’t even prevent deaths in this universe.

You sob into your hands. “Oh god, oh god, oh god. They should have culled me when they had the chance.”

You have to cry so hard you can’t even think.

After a while you don’t have any tears left. Your face feels sticky. Your hands are so wet from your tears you have to use the sleeve of your suit to wipe them away.

You take a deep breath, staring at the blue wall of the toilet. The color reminds you of Vriska.

Your phone beeps again.

You groan and contemplate throwing it against the wall. After it beeps twice again, you find the strength in you to look at it. Unsurprisingly, it’s Dave who has been messaging you. Normal people only write one or two messages when there’s no answer, but Dave writes a whole novel instead.

You open the conversation.
Chapter End Notes

Can you believe this fic is one year old?? I'm so proud! Thank you so much for your support!!
We're #relationship goals

-- turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] —
TG: okay not that you shouldn't do whatever you want to do be free like a bird feel the wind of freedom on your skin and all of that but
TG: for the sake of our fake relationship
TG: should you really flirt with tz this much
TG: i mean i get it you liked her and now you see her again and all the feelings swallow you whole or whatever, in a totally sexual way of course
TG: why else would you have talked about crushes
TG: and i totally ship you of course but
TG: people are going to wonder
TG: i mean were #relationship goals the kind dreams are made of
TG: both good looking hilarious and famous and now you're openly flirting with this old friend of yours
TG: that seems like something that might make people suspicious
TG: unless you want that, maybe foreshadow your relationship with tz
TG: jesus
TG: i get eye contact can be romantic but
TG: who even holds eye contact this long
TG: is this like some kind of foreplay
TG: show the potential partner your stamina
TG: whoever blinks last also comes last
TG: if you blink a lot you're also able to come often but in unusually short intervals which barely leaves the partner time to get in the mood
TG: until there's this mountain of come and
TG: they drown
TG: no i don't regret even a tiny part of this little monologue why are you asking
TG: oh shit you just stood up
TG: what's going on what are you doing
TG: you just left the room the plot is fucking thickening
TG: did she reject you
TG: she's wiping her eyes somebody do something this is getting out of control
TG: she totally rejected you
TG: this is why you wanted us to break up isn't it
TG: you were hoping to meet her here at the wedding and start something again
TG: it's fine you can tell me
TG: i know how great tz is
TG: okay that's probably not what you need to hear right now
TG: if it makes you feel any better i don't know if you two would have been such a great couple
TG: dude where are you though do i need to come and give you my sbahj handkerchief
TG: it's totally clean
CG: AAQWOIEHAOHORHOSISHOSIHEOEWHW
CG: DO YOU HONESTLY THINK I GIVE ONE SINGLE FUCK
CG: ABOUT ONE SINGLE FUCKING THING YOU JUST SAID?
CG: ABOUT ANYTHING FOR THAT MATTER?
CG: DO YOU HONESTLY BELIEVE THERE'S ONE TINY CELL IN ME THAT HAS THE ENERGY TO MUSTER UP AN EVEN TINIER SHIT TO GIVE WHEN I'M JUST POSING AS A HUMAN?
CG: LIKE A FUCKING DISGUISE.
CG: I WILL NEVER SEE THE MAYOR AGAIN
TG: the mayor of ny?
TG: dude i can totally hook you up with him im a celebrity and hes a totally chill dude
TG: no idea why youd want to see him but i can do it
CG: SHUT
CG: THE FUCK
CG: UP
CG: I CAN’T DEAL WITH YOU
TG: aw shit you were hit pretty hard by the thing with tz werent you
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] ---
TG: okay then
TG: i was trying to help but i guess talking to the guy whos paying you to be his boyfriend about your unrequited crush isnt something youre in the mood to do
TG: im not gonna fucking force you

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering gallowsCalibrator [GC] ---
CG: WHAT THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU??
CG: YOU CAN’T JUST
CG: COME INTO MY LIFE AFTER YEARS OF BARELY SPEAKING AND THROW ME INTO THIS SITUATION
GC: 4S YOU S33, I C4N DO TH4T P3RF3CTLY W3LL
CG: YOU’RE THE WORST.
CG: TALKING TO YOU HAS ALWAYS BEEN LIKE BEING PULLED SOMEWHERE BY THE HAIR. EVEN WHEN I WANT TO MOVE IN THE DIRECTION I THINK YOU’RE MOVING, I END UP HURTING.
CG: YOU ARE THE BIGGEST ASSHOLE. IT'S YOU!
GC: NOOO K4RK4T, DONT B3 M4D NOW
GC: WOULD YOU H4V3 PR3F3R3D M3 NOT T3LL1NG YOU
CG: WHY DIDN’T YOU TELL ME EARLIER??
GC: 1TS B3TT3R TO L3T P3OPL3 R3M3MB3R ON TH31
GC: SO TH3 QU3ST1ON YOU SHOULD B3 4SK1NG 1S WHY D1D 1 T3LL YOU 4NYW4Y
GC: WH4T DO YOU R3M3MB3R
GC: 1T 1S 3NT1R3LY POSS1BL3 TH4T YOU ONLY H4V3 A FR4CTUR3D OR F4K3 V3RS1ON OF TH3 R34L 3V3NTS 1N YOUR H34D NOW
CG: YOU KNOW WHAT, JUST FUCKING FUCK YOU!
CG: FUCK YOU SO MUCH YOU’LL HOPEFULLY GET SORE.
CG: I WON’T TALK ABOUT MY MEMORIES WITH YOU, DICKSHIT!
CG: IF YOU WANT TO HAVE A SADISTIC TEARFEST DO IT WITH SOMEBODY ELSE!
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering gallowsCalibrator [GC] ---
GC: >][
GC: 1M SORRY
GC: 1M JUST SO T1R3D OF L1V1NG ON 4 STR4NG3 PL4N3T WH3R3 NOBODY H4S 4NY W4Y OF WH4T W3 W3NT THROUGH
GC: 1M SORRY
GC: 1M JUST SO T1R3D OF L1V1NG ON 4 STR4NG3 PL4N3T WH3R3 NOBODY H4S 4NY W4Y OF WH4T W3 W3NT THROUGH
GC: 1 THOUGHT YOU W3R3 G0ING TO R3M3MB3R3N ON YOUR OWN
GC: OUT OF 3V3RYBODY WHO 1S 4L1V3 YOU H4D TH3 B3ST CH4NC3
GC: BUT 1TS B33N Y34RS 4ND YOU H4DNT R3M3MB3R3D 4NYTH1NG
GC: 1COULDN'T L3T YOU D13 NOT KNOW1NG TH3 TRUTH
GC: T4LK TO M3 K4RK4T, T3LL M3 1 D13N T COMPL3T3LY FUCK UP YOUR
M3MOR13S FOR3V3R
You can’t move. You can’t do anything other than stare at the blue wall in front of you. In an attempt to feel something other than a black pit of despair in your chest again, you press your fingernails into the skin of your neck. It’s not working.

Gamzee. Gamzee killed you. But Gamzee loved you. Gamzee loves you. You can’t fucking think! Your head feels like somebody’s stabbing you from the inside.

You close your eyes. You can’t stand the weird, fucking wrong, color of your hands.

Eridan. Oh god, you can’t make Eridan happy in any universe. You failed him, over and over again.

You used to have claws. They’d actually manage to hurt you right now instead of barely breaking the skin. You are so weak.

Feferi. Oh no, Feferi. She deserved so much more than what she got. Not just another meaningless death the universe saw fit for her because she didn’t have a role to play anymore.

Is this universe supposed to be your prize for winning the game? You think you’d have preferred no prize at all.

Nepeta. Sweetest, dearest Nepeta. You still remember kissing her. She was so much greater than any of you had expected before the game, ruthless during fights and sweet whenever she was interacting with people. Even with you.

You take a deep breath and suddenly you can’t breathe. There’s water in your lungs, you’re disoriented, you’re going to die. You retch, your other hand coming up to your throat. There’s nothing there. It’s fine. You snap for air, the feeling of it filling your chest almost burning you.


“What?” You don’t realize you’ve said it out loud until you hear the echo in the empty room. How could you not remember the unbearable pain of your whole body literally burning to death in a matter of seconds? You shiver, your hands curling into fists. You close your eyes. Don’t think about it.

You know that was real, you could not make that feeling up. Then why do you remember other deaths? Deaths, plural. You remember desperately kicking, trying to swim to the top, the light shining through the surface mocking you. But also staring down at the sword in your chest, wondering why you’re not feeling the pain before it overwhelms you, almost as painful as the betrayal. When you concentrate your hurting head even more, you can remember a thousand deaths.

There is no way you died that often in the Alpha timeline.

Once that thought crashes into your head like a 10,000 ton freight train into a china shop, everything freezes. There is no way you died that often in the Alpha timeline. Yet you remember each and every time.

“No! No, no, no, no, no. What?” You jump to your feet. Of course! That’s why you know what
kissing Nepeta feels like even though you were with Terezi. With Dave? But Dave died? Terezi died. Terezi rejected you.

“Shut up!” you yell at yourself. Why are you so stupid, of course all of that happened. It just didn’t happen in the Alpha timeline.

“Karkat? Dude, are you in here?” Dave’s voice comes in from just outside the door.

Dave!

Your first impulse is to run to him and hug him and never let him go again. You loved Dave, you love Dave, Dave is here! Your matesprit! You promised Dave you’d never leave him.

The same thing you promised so many other people. Nepeta, how could you ever forget Nepeta? Jade? Oh god.

Your second impulse is to throw something at Dave, get him to leave you alone without you even having to talk to him.

Dave pokes his head into the room. “Dude! You’ve been gone for two hours. You look like somebody murdered your childhood pet.”

Your voice is so gravelly you almost can’t speak. “Fuck you.” You’re not sure if he understood a word you just said. How can you even talk to this Dave when he has no idea what you went through together? You fought to make this universe together and he has no idea.

“What’s that smell, did you throw up?” He comes closer. You hiss at him. It doesn’t sound at all like it used to when you were a troll. You suppress a sob. “Is that a yes? A fuck you? An ‘I am currently turning into a vampire so you should run’? I am actually trying to help, you know.”

“Oh god, please. You should fucking be able to tell when you aren’t wanted. But you’ve never been good at that.”

His eyebrows rise and then furrow. “Okay then. If that’s how you treat your boyfriend—“

“We aren’t fucking dating! You keep on saying that like an obnoxious asshole,” you yell at him. Why won’t he just leave?

Dave raises his voice too. “If that’s how you fucking treat your boyfriend, I’m glad we’re just faking the relationship!”

You heart clenches at that. You are so stupid to be hurt over this when there are real issues, real deaths you’re responsible for. When you forgot everybody you ever made a promise to. Not to mention you shouldn’t complain about Dave saying that. You deserve it.

He’ll probably end up dying anyway. You can’t fucking protect anybody and people you love always die.

“Then why the fuck are you even here? I don’t fucking want you here and there’s no doubt you don’t want to be here either. Do us both a favor and just leave. Please.” You’re going to cry. Jade used to press kisses to your nose when you were about to cry.

He takes a step back. “But. Dude. You really look kind of close to death. Like you and Death are going to tie the knot soon, emo themed wedding and all. I’ll leave you alone but…? At least, I don’t know, take a deep breath, wash your face, drink something, whatever it is sensible people do.”
You don’t move for a few seconds. There’s no way you have the energy to do any of those things.

“So just go, okay?” You bury your face in your arms.

Silence descends. You listen for his footsteps, but he doesn’t move for at least another minute. You breathe into the arm of your suit until you finally hear him leave. Of course he leaves. He has every reason to give up on you in this situation. You are already such a bad friend, you should be glad there’s nothing more between the two of you.

Even though you want to cry, you don’t have the energy to do it anymore. You doubt your body has any liquid left in it anyway.

Your breathing sounds loud in the empty room. Despite everything, Dave’s visit distracted you enough to calm you down a bit. Abruptly you take out your phone. You open the memo app on it and start typing, much faster than normally out of fear of forgetting again.


You stop typing. You know an Equius! You didn’t really talk much back when you went to the same school, but you know him. You exhale. You write (call!) behind his name.

Jade Harley. John Egbert.

You stare at the blinking cursor. There were other assholes. You can see their faces, you can almost hear their voices, but everything is so messed up in your head. Too many deaths. Too much grief - so much that the individual deaths are starting to become meaningless again.

You lean back against the wall and start sobbing.

The door opens. You hear Dave say, “Oh shit, code red, so fucking red. Dude, Karkat, please don’t cry. Mr. President, do something. I use that joke too often. No, stop babbling. Do you want a hug? Rose says hugs are good and shit, in her fancy trying-so-hard-to-seem-smarter-than-you words. I brought you a glass of water, just so you know. We definitely don’t have to hug. This can immediately become hug-ibition zone. You know, because of prohibition. Yeah, not my best one. Please say something.”

You blink at him through your tears. He’s holding a glass of water and is tugging at his hair with the other hand, his face in a worried grimace. “Fuck.” You throw your arms around him.

“Oh, okay, hugging time.” His arms slowly tighten around you. You bury your face in his shoulder and cry, your sobs unrestrained and loud. “This has got to be the worst situation I’ve ever been in. Not the hug, you crying? I really wish you weren’t doing that. You probably wish the same. I don’t know if backrubs are appropriate in this situation. Or talking. Should I stop talking? I’m not good at that. Okay, okay, backrubs, dude. We’re doing this. We’re making it happen.” He pats your back a few times, then slowly starts rubbing it. It actually helps against the sobs bubbling up in your chest. “Everything’s going to be okay?”

“You have no idea.” You wonder what Nepeta would think if she walked into the room right now. You remember kissing her like it happened in this life. You mumble. “Dave. Please, get off me.” You don’t move. After two seconds he lets you go. You shiver. “I’m not a cheater.”

“Whoa, wait. A cheater? As in, somebody who cheats on their partner? What the fuck did I miss?”

“I’m… It’s complicated. I’m sorry. I just,” you sigh, “I don’t have the energy to explain right now.”
"I brought you water." He gestures to the glass of water he apparently put down on the table while you were busy crying.

"Thanks." You stare at the glass for a while until you actually manage to move and take it. The water is more refreshing than you expected.

He rubs the back of his neck.

You glance at him and then at the floor again.

You both startle when the door opens. Rose stops in the door frame.

Dave groans. "Rose, I know it’s your big day and all, but not now?"

"I am not entirely sure you realize this is the women’s toilet. That does make me curious as to what it is that led to this situation." You sigh loudly at her words. She glances at you. "I also wonder if there is something I can do to help make this situation any less awful maybe?"

Dave shakes his head frantically. "Nope, no, nothing to do here. Go meddle somewhere else, somewhere where flighty broads and their horseshit are actually wanted maybe. And please don’t try to guilt-trip me now because it’s your wedding day; what day it is doesn’t change your broad-ness and you know it. There is nothing to fuss about and psychoanalyze here, we are peachy fucking keen. That peach is getting so fucked it’s running out of condoms and it’s still keen. Just like us." He pats your arm.

"You are running out of condoms? I would help you out but I’m afraid I rarely carry any with me, despite the large amounts of booty I am receiving."

"Oh god! Nothing to fucking see here, just go. We are happy and our relationship is going so strong it just won the sports championship. You know, the important one."

"Ah, yes. I too am an expert on the sports. Such an expert on them in fact that it makes me wonder about your relationship. Just minutes ago you were yelling about not even being in a real relationship and now your relationship is winning championships? Truly head-spinningly incredible progress."

Silence.

You ask, "You heard that?"

"Do not worry, I was the only one. I just happened to feel the need to empty my bladder and overheard. I ended up using the men’s toilet instead."

There’s silence again.

She continues, "Curiously, I had already started to believe your act when Karkat was apparently so shaken he could not find a better way to deal with his feelings than to loudly direct his anger at everyone available." That sentence was way too long for your exhausted mind. You think she may have pointed out that you were pretty harsh on Dave, which you have to admit is right. "I am glad he has calmed down enough to not do that anymore, at least not more than usual. If you two want one of the brides' permission to leave the wedding to talk, you have it."

Dave sounds calmer now. "Yeah. Okay. Please don’t tell anyone?" You wonder if his sister’s presence always has this effect on him.

"Of course not. But we will need to talk about this, dear brother." She smiles a tense smile and turns
around to leave, her wedding gown swishing behind her.

Dave turns to you. He sighs. “Let’s go up to the roof?”

“Yeah, okay.”

Chapter End Notes

This was originally supposed to be a much funnier scene, but this whole chapter turned out really sad instead.

By the way, don't let the ships mentioned in this irritate you. I think Hussie said everything was possible in paradox space, so I figured no ship would be too absurd. Davekat is still the main focus after all.
There has to have been something

-- tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --
TT: Why is it that I saw you and your “fiancé” leaving the building with several bottles containing alcohol?
CG: MOTHERFUCKING JESUS FUCKING HIS OWN MOTHER.
TT: Wow.
CG: GIVE ME A FUCKING BREAK FOR ONCE IN THIS FUCKED UP CARBON COPY OF A HUMAN LIFE.
CG: A LITTLE RELAXATION IS DEFINITELY NOT TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR.
CG: AFTER REMEMBERING THIS MUCH SCARRING HORSESHT I'LL GIVE EVEN THE BIGGEST BULGEHUMPER SOME TIME.
CG: YOU REMEMBER EVERYTHING TOO, DON'T YOU?
TT: Yes, as a seer it is hard not to know things.
TT: I also know you need to find a better way than getting drunk to deal with it.
CG: I'M GOING TO BLOCK YOU.
TT: Karkat. I have spent so many hours of my lives, both in this universe and on the meteor, convincing myself that just a little bit of alcohol was hardly going to hurt anybody. I told myself I had everything under control, but I had to learn the hard way that alcohol as a relief from your problems ends up hurting you.
CG: OH SHIT, YOU'RE DOING THE RECOVERING-ALCOHOLIC-THING.
CG: HOW CAN I FUCKING ARGUE WITH THAT?
TT: I merely want you to be careful.
TT: I know we aren’t the best of friends and advice from not-friends is rarely wanted, but I wouldn’t want you to make the same mistakes I made.
CG: YEAH, YEAH, AND NOW I HAVE TO APPRECIATE YOUR UNWANTED HELP.
CG: FUCKING THANK YOU.
CG: YOUNG PEOPLE GET SMASHED ALL THE TIME WITHOUT HAVING A DRINKING PROBLEM.
CG: CAN'T I BE SOME YOUNG HUMAN IDIOT WHO WANTS TO CHILL WITH HIS FRIEND AND DRINK A BIT?
TT: Not if it’s to forget your problems.
TT: Look.
TT: You can drink, but you should also find a way to deal with the repercussions of having memories of what was basically a war.
CG: OH GOD, YOU WANT ME TO GO TO THERAPY, DON'T YOU?
CG: EVEN WORSE, *YOU* WANT TO THERAPIZE ME.
TT: You will have PTSD; I am almost sure.
TT: Even if you don’t want to listen to me now, you will once you have trouble sleeping.
TT: Even more, I mean.
CG: WERE YOU ALWAYS SUCH AN ASSHOLE?
TT: Occasionally.
CG: WAIT, DO YOU STILL HAVE YOUR POWERS?
TT: It’s possible the seers kept most of their powers.
TT: I don
CG: NOBODY EVER KNOWS ANYTHING. NOBODY KNEW ANYTHING DURING THE GAME EITHER.
TT: Some of us were just good at pretending.
TT: The game works in mysterious, downright nonsensical ways.
TT: Fuck it.
TT: Well, you won’t activate powers you didn’t activate during the game. And with a completely
different lifestyle that won’t require you to go through life-and-death situations, maybe no powers
will ever show.
CG: I HAVE MY DOUBTS YOU’RE NOT JUST MAKING ALL OF THIS UP.
TT: Maybe I am. Maybe we all just belong in a psychiatric hospital.
TT: Sometimes I wonder.
CG: I AM NOT INTO THIS TRAIN OF THOUGHT AT ALL.
CG: I AM SO NOT INTO IT IT MAKES MY DICK RETRACT INTO MY BODY.
CG: BUT WHAT’S MOST IMPORTANT NOW IS
CG: WILL DAVE EVER REMEMBER MORE?
TT: It always depends on a lot of factors. Class, aspect, the people you meet, situations that might
trigger memories, your will to remember traumatic experiences…
TT: At least these are some of the factors I believe are relevant. There is not much chance to study
this subject since rarely anybody is in this situation.
TT: Obviously.
CG: USE YOUR SEER-Y POWERS.
TT: Ah, yes. My seer-y powers.
TT: *magic noises*
TT: To be honest, I doubt he will remember, but I didn’t expect you to remember anything either.
TT: I know he has dreams, though.
TT: I experience the same thing. Dreams of moments during which I was filled with emotion, so to
speak.
TT: Deaths, sex, things like that.
TT: Guessing whether I’ll be wet from tears or from something else when I wake up is always a fun
game.
CG: THIS IS A HORRIBLE CONVERSATION.
TT: Horrible conversations are often the most important ones.
TT: I expect you have dreams like that too?
CG: ARE YOU ASKING ME IF I HAVE SEX DREAMS?
TT: I admit, it was a clumsy attempt to try and broach a completely different subject.
TT: But I am hesitant to even change the topic like that since it is probably inappropriate in this
situation.
CG: PLEASE DISTRACT ME.
TT: Well.
TT: I know now that your relationship with my brother in this universe was fake up until this point,
but while I was never completely certain what kind of relationship you had during the game, there
has to have been something.
TT: It is a very late question, but I can’t help but wonder about the two of you.
CG: I TAKE IT BACK; DON’T CHANGE THE TOPIC.
TT: So this is an uncomfortable subject for you?
CG: IT IS ABSOLUTELY FUCKING IMPOSSIBLE.
CG: THAT’S WHAT IT IS.
CG: I DON’T KNOW WHAT RELATIONSHIP WE HAD IN THE ALPHA TIMELINE.
CG: EVERYTHING IS ALL MIXED UP IN MY HEAD.
TT: What?
TT: You remember more than the alpha timeline?
CG: I THINK I MAY REMEMBER EVERYTHING.
CG: EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED.
CG: IN ALL TIMELINES.
CG: OR MAYBE NOT ALL OF THEM.
CG: I DON’T FUCKING KNOW.
CG: MY HEAD HURTS.
CG: WHAT I DO KNOW IS THAT THERE WERE TIMELINES IN WHICH WE WEREN’T EVEN REMOTELY CLOSE.
CG: AND I REMEMBER TIMELINES IN WHICH I WAS IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PEOPLE.
CG: AT SOME POINT IN PARADOX SPACE I HAD A CRUSH ON YOU.
CG: IF YOU THINK THAT IS ABSOLUTELY PATHETIC AND BEING EMBARRASSED ABOUT ADMITTING IT IS EVEN MORE PATHETIC, YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.
TT: Oh no.
CG: AHAHAHAHA.
TT: I am assuming that’s hysterical laughter.
CG: DON’T WORRY, I LIKED YOUR WIFE IN SOME TIMELINE TOO.
TT: At least you have good taste.
CG: I WOULDN’T SAY THAT.
CG: THOUGH
CG: I JUST REMEMBERED SHE HAD A CHAINSAW AND WAS A REAL BADASS.
TT: Oh yes.
CG: HOW COULD I EVEN FORGET THAT?
TT: I see how this is a complicated situation for you.
CG: I DON’T EVEN KNOW MOST OF THEM IN THIS TIMELINE.
CG: ARE THEY EVEN ALIVE?
CG: ROSE, DID YOU NOT SEARCH FOR ANYBODY?
TT: Day and night for years.
TT: Jade is dead. She lived in Australia and died of old age. I can send you everything I found about her.
TT: She won quite a lot of surfing contests.
TT: Vriska is dead, too, but she died in a motorcycle accident at the age of 20. She was named Tara by her parents, though. We only found her because she was missing for a few days and we saw her picture in a newspaper.
TT: You know everybody else we found, assuming you remember Equius.
CG: FEFERI IS DEAD.
TT: We didn’t find her.
CG: I WAS FRIENDS WITH HER.
CG: SHE WAS AN EXCHANGE STUDENT AND SHE WASN’T CALLED FEFERI.
TT: It is possible, considering everybody is being born at different times all around the world with sometimes different names, that those are the only people we will ever find.
TT: Those of us who get to meet the ones they had special relationships with are very lucky.
CG: I AM SO FUCKING GLAD THAT WORKED OUT FOR YOU AND PLEASE, BY ALL MEANS, FORGET ABOUT EVERYBODY ELSE’S PROBLEMS, BUT FOR ME THAT IS BASICALLY EVERYBODY.
CG: NO RELATIONSHIP HAS MEANING ANYMORE SINCE ALL OF THEM HAVE MEANING.
CG: HOW COULD I POSSIBLY QUALIFY ONE RELATIONSHIP I HAD AS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE OTHERS?
CG: I AM CURRENTLY IN LOVE WITH SO MANY PEOPLE.
CG: LOVE ISN’T EVEN THE RIGHT WORD FOR MOST RELATIONSHIPS, BUT CG: YOU CAN’T EVEN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND.
CG: I OWE ALL OF THEM FAITHFULNESS, EVEN IF OUR TIMELINES WERE DOOMED TO FAIL.
CG: THERE IS NO WAY I AM DOING ANY OF THEM JUSTICE BY JUST THROWING THEM INTO THIS BIG “PEOPLE I LOVED” POT, BUT I CAN’T EVEN BEGIN TO NAME
ALL OF THEM.
CG: I LOVE DOZENS OF DEAD PEOPLE I WILL NEVER SEE AGAIN.
TT: I am sorry.
CG: YES, ME FUCKING TOO.
TT: I had no idea that was what happened when you triggered memories. I just had a feeling it was not a good idea.
TT: It’s hard to explain seer powers.
CG: I CAN’T TRY TO MAKE DAVE REMEMBER, CAN I?
TT: The psychological implications of remembering all of the things all of the versions of you experienced throughout Paradox Space are vast, to say the least.
TT: I’m assuming you know that best.
TT: I didn’t tell Kanaya everything, just enough to explain why I wake up in the night crying. She of course understood since she experiences similar problems.
TT: But it is hard not to share your experiences with the ones you originally experienced them with when they don’t know what you are talking about.
TT: How are you feeling?
CG: DON’T FUCKING GIVE ME YOUR PSYCHOTHERAPY BULLSHIT. YOU AREN’T EVEN A REAL PSYCHOLOGIST. YOU’RE AN AUTHOR.
CG: AND SOME OF THE SHIT YOU WRITE GREATLY IMPLIES YOU NEED A REAL FUCKING PSYCHOLOGIST.
TT: Again with the lashing out.
CG: LASHING OUT WOULD BE SAYING I HOPE YOU SUFFOCATE ON YOUR WIFE’S DICK.
CG: I AM HAVING A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION.
TT: Like you were having a friendly conversation with Dave in the bathroom just a few minutes ago?
TT: Would you like me to quote some of the things you said?
CG: I KNOW YOU ARE EXPECTING ME TO BE STUBBORN AND EMPHASIZE HOW I DID NOTHING WRONG LIKE A BABY BEFORE HIS FIRST WRIGGLING DAY, SITTING IN HIS OWN SHIT AND LOOKING FORWARD TO HIS BRIGHT FUTURE OF BEING A PARTICULARLY PAINFUL PIMPLE IN THE ASS OF EVERYBODY HE MEETS, BUT ALAS, I WON’T.
CG: I WAS PROBABLY EVEN MORE OF AN INFECTIOUS TUMOR TO THE CONVERSATION THAN USUAL.
CG: SEE.
TT: I see.
CG: YOU ARE JUDGING ME AND YOU ARE RIGHT.
CG: I KNOW THAT DAVE HAS WADED THROUGH ENOUGH HORSESHIT TO LAST HIM HUNDREDS OF LIFETIMES.
CG: I SHOULD BE GLAD HE DOESN’T REMEMBER.
CG: OH GOD
CG: ROSE
CG: HIS BROTHER
TT: Ah, I know what you are talking about.
CG: HE HAS HURT HIM IN THE PAST.
CG: HE DIDN’T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT, BUT I DON’T HAVE MY HEAD UP MY ASS. I SEE THINGS.
CG: DID HE DO SOMETHING IN THIS TIMELINE?
CG: I WILL FUCK HIM UP.
CG: I WILL MAKE HIM DEEPLY REGRET EVERY CHOICE HE HAS MADE IN THE INSIGNIFICANT WASTELAND HE CALLS LIFE.
TT: I am proud, but that will not be necessary.
TT: It was better in this life.
TT: I am not sure what changed, if it was the lacking presence of our good old bud Cal or maybe if it was Dirk’s memories. Mom probably helped, too.
TT: Dirk is not exactly the example of a Perfect Parent™. But it’s much better.
CG: THAT IS STILL ENOUGH FOR ME TO KICK HIS ASS INTO THE NEXT UNIVERSE.
TT: I have to wonder, are you simultaneously talking to me and Dave or are you just sitting there next to each other staring at your phones?
CG: BASICALLY.
TT: Basically you’re just sitting there in silence?
TT: Awkward silence possibly?
CG: IT IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS HOW AWKWARD IT IS.
TT: So, very.
TT: I will talk to Terezi, she seems a bit freaked out.
TT: Can you come talk to me tomorrow?
CG: I WANT A REAL THERAPIST.
TT: I don’t know a lot of therapists who will believe you.
TT: Of course I know you don’t particularly want to talk to me about your problems, but I promise I will try my best.
CG: FINE. IF IT MAKES YOU HAPPY. BUT YOU NEED TO HELP ME LOOK FOR EVERYBODY ELSE AND MAKE SURE THE ONES WE ALREADY KNOW GET CLOSER.
CG: SO IF THIS WHOLE POSSE FALLS APART AGAIN, I’M BLAMING YOU.
TT: That doesn’t sound like a good plan. Or like your threat is very true.
TT: You are a self-blamer, it’s what you do.
TT: But you should really talk to Dave now. He’s just messaged me. I don’t think he is ecstatic with the current situation.
CG: FINE.
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering tentacleTherapist [TT] --
Gotta support the babe

“By the way, I brought an umbrella.”

You look up from your phone at Dave, who’s sitting next to you. “The sun is shining. It’s actually flesh-burningly hot.”

“That’s why I brought it.” He shakes the umbrella at you. “To protect your sensitive skin. You know, as an actor your body is your temple or whatever.”

“I’m not an actor anymore. That was fucking silly anyway.” You sigh and gesture at him to open the umbrella. You’re sweating an uncomfortable amount after all. “Where’d you even get the umbrella?”

You start taking your suit jacket off.

Dave ignores the question. “What do you mean, ‘that was silly?’” He moves closer to you and holds the umbrella up above your heads. “I saw some of the movies you were in and let me tell you, never has random dude number 413 in the background freaking out given me this many feels.”

“You watched all three shitty movies I had the questionable pleasure of being in even though I was barely more than a blur in the background?”

“Duh, gotta support the babe, the dazzling muffin pie, the candy kitten, the—right, I’ll shut up. Mr. Zipperlips right here.”

You can’t help but bury your face in your hands.

He continues, “Anyway, you’re a great actor.”

“I know, but I kind of hated it. Pretending you’re some other nookfondler gets exhausting after a while.” You look at him, forced to squint in the bright sun. The subject seems incredibly irrelevant to you right now, but your stomach hurts at the thought of bringing up what’s actually on your mind. “If we’re complimenting each other now, for what it’s worth, your films aren’t completely horrible.”

“Whoa, whoa, whoa, back up. Are you high? Are you dying? Are you high on dying? Is this the real life? Oh shit, I’m dead, aren’t I? Man, but I was so young. I still had my whole life to fuck up. What do you like the most, come on Karkat? Give me something to work with here.”

“Oh hell no. If I start talking about your movies for too long, I’ll start going into a detailed and very justified rant about homophobia and that’s never a fun experience. Suffice to say, your movies are still mind-blowing in the way a train running you over is mind-blowing, but there are some parts I don’t hate.”

“This is the best moment of my life.”

“Did you forget the part with the homophobia? Wait, more importantly, where’s the alcohol?”
“Here, dude. Whatever you need.” He takes a sip before he hands it to you.

“What even is this, some kind of liquor?” You inspect the bottle.

“Does it matter?”

“Not really.” You tip your head back, taking several gulps. “This is good. This may be the only good thing in life.”

Dave hums in a tone which neither agrees nor disagrees. He holds the umbrella out to you. “I can’t keep on holding it forever. I’m totally ripped, of course, but not that ripped.”

You shrug. “It’s not mine.”

“You benefit from it. Hey, when did I become your bitch?”

“Just put it down then.”

He does. Immediately you’re hit by heat. You lean back and watch the other roofs of the city, drowning in orange sunlight. Dave holds out his hand and you give him the bottle back. While he takes a swig you contemplate the best way to inform him of the hundreds of past lives you have in your head. You remember a life in which you ended up under the Alternian sun. It killed you, but it was the first time you ever really saw the sun. You’re also reminded of a time when Porrim told you all about the Alternian sun, in a different timeline. You were lying on a pile next to her, still giddy about your new moirail, when she brought the topic up. When you close your eyes, you can almost make yourself feel as if you’re there with her again.

You’re startled when Dave speaks again. “You know what’s funny?”

“What?”

“I’m not even gay.”

“What the fuck?” You gesticulate at him. “No seriously, what is this fuck?”

“I’m probably bi. Fuck if I know.” He shrugs. “You know, the people on Tumblr might be right. Cats are cute and sexuality is a really fucking complicated thing.”

“Why on earth am I here then? Not here, as in on this earth, even though that is a perfectly sensible question too. Why exactly am I in this situation which entails people thinking I am your fucking fiancé? I thought you wanted to come out as gay. You told me that. To my face. And you’ve used the word gay repeatedly over the last few weeks. To other people’s faces. Right? Did I fucking imagine that? Am I so sleep-deprived that I just made something up? Christ, aren’t your movies biphobic, too?”

Dave shrugs. “Yeah, they are. And homophobic and a real fucking mess.” He seems to be mumbling to himself now rather than talking to you. “Just like I used to be. And occasionally still am.”

“Oh no, if you’re pitying yourself and I’m pitying myself, who the fuck is gonna keep us sane?”

“Our good old friend alcohol here.” He waves the bottle around.

“Wow, even I see that’s a bad idea and I am the master of running blindly into the electric fence of bad ideas. I’m known for it.”

“You’re not the only one who’s known for being a stupid-ass fucker.”
You have to agree with him. “At least it got you famous.”


You look at him, squint. “You wish you weren’t famous?”

“Man, are you gonna psychotherapize me now?” He changes his voice to a nasal tone. “Dave, tell me all of your problems.’ ‘Mr. Vantas, when will the voices in my head stop?’ Didn’t you wanna talk about this thing, you know, the thing that made you cry and yell at people and throw up?”

“You are being awfully defensive.”

“No, dude, I just don’t wanna talk about my petty annoyances while you’re sitting there internally crying like a disappointed housewife during sex.”

“It—“ You stop the sentence before you end up telling him talking to him calmed you down, is anchoring you right now. It’d be unfair, to him, yourself, everybody. You don’t deserve to be anchored by one person while dozens of people you love are dead. Or alive. You only prefer him because you had a crush on him in this timeline, but it’s not fair.

Maybe it’s not him who anchors you anyway. Maybe it’s the alcohol.

You shake your head. “I don’t want to talk about this now. Please?”

“That’s easier for you, huh? Okay, fine, why not? Let’s talk about why I’m sometimes annoyed with everything. It’s just, you know, the general public is like a kinda racist middle-aged politician. Everybody’s trying to be hip and young and open, but they aren’t really. Does the metaphor make any sense at all? Jesus, how drunk am I?” He tilts his head, stares into space for a second. “…Nah, I feel clear. Anyway, as a pop culture phenomenon it’s like everybody accepts rumors about you without fact checking and everybody is willing to ridicule you the minute you do or are something that doesn’t fit in their view of the world.”

“Like being gay? Or bi?”

“Nobody believes you when you are bi. It’s like ‘wait, so you’re gay?’ Unless you’re actively dating somebody of your own gender, everybody assumes you’re straight. Not to forget everything gets way more complicated when you have no idea what you’re doing yourself. It should be easy to figure out who you’re attracted to, right? Like, bam, damn, I wanna fuck this. And this too. This not so much. This if it didn’t have such a nasty personality. Maybe you were just buried in internalized prejudice for a long time and couldn’t figure out any kind of attraction that’s not strictly straight. Do I wanna fuck this? Nah, couldn’t possibly. I’m cool, damn it. I’m manly. Only, what’s manliness anyway? Why are manly men expected to be afraid of being gay anyway if manliness means not being afraid of shit? Do people who worship weird-ass manliness ideals like they saved them from certain destruction ever even reflect on this shit? And what’s manlier than two dudes anyway? Why am I rambling about being gay if I’m not? Anyway, where I was originally going with the whole downsides of fame was actually something completely else.”

He takes a sip from the bottle. You take it from him to do the same before he actually gets drunker than you.

Dave continues, “What bothers me even more is the constant being watched and judged. If I don’t feel like leaving the house for a few days, that’s my decision. If I feel shitty, it’s nobody else’s business and if I’m going through shit, I don’t want everybody else judging me like I need to be at the peak of my condition all the fucking time and everything else is unacceptable.”
“If it makes you feel any better, I’m pretty sure nobody has any idea you’re struggling with anything at all.”

“See, now you’re comforting me even though I was supposed to comfort you,” Dave complains. “We’re not in Australia, mate.”

“What’s Australia?”

“Because everything’s the wrong way around in Australia. Wait.” Dave pauses. “Did you ask me what Australia is?”

“I know what Australia is.”

“But you didn’t a second ago.”

“I just sort of forgot. Okay, fine, let me tell you all about the heaping pile of sick bloody hoofbeastshit that could be called my life. Or lives, I guess.” You take a deep breath. “No time like the present to relay nightmare fuel.”

“Something gives me the feeling this is not a happy story. Just a vague vibe, you know.”

“I guess some parts are. There were times when I laughed until I had tears in my eyes. But motherfuck. So much tragedy. So much horseshit happening. And of course so many idiots fucking everything up like they were getting paid for it. Or it got them off. It’s fucking impossible to grasp. You already knew we probably lived through some sort of past life. I remember it now. But what do you remember?”

He thinks for a moment. “Horns, I guess. I don’t know. Death.”

“Horns and death seems like a good fucking summary of my life. So, basically, we had to play this game and it fucked us up and the universe too and turned everything into this chaos of vomit and fucking frogs. Seriously, fuck frogs.”

“Huh. Can you make me remember?”

“I don’t know,” you answer truthfully. “I don’t know if you’d want that. Knowing isn’t exactly calming nor does it induce happiness in any way. It does induce things, but they’re not fun things, that’s just a fact of life. Maybe it’s because I’m a blood player, I don’t know. Rose and Terezi seem to be just fine.” You think for a second. “What do you remember?”

“Jack shit. That’s what. Okay, sometimes while I’m just walking down the street—if you’re imagining it in your head, imagine me whistling and-slash-or being cool—suddenly a name pops into my head. Or I feel like there’s a monster hiding somewhere and let me tell you that’s the weirdest thing. Try explaining to the asshole who bumped into you that you stopped walking because you got the feeling there’s a monster somewhere.” His hands are balled into fists. “But when I think about it too much, I get a headache just like you.”

It can’t be possible that he just has no idea. Maybe if you gently try to trigger the memories, it’ll all work out. “Okay, I want to try something…” You contemplate him. “Maybe you should take off your shades.”

“Ohkay.” He promptly reaches up and places them on top of his head. You see his eyes are closed.

“I can’t do it if your eyes are closed. If you’re worried about me losing my horseshit because of your eyes, I already fucking know they are red.”
“Everybody does, dude. But nobody seems to realize I’m literally blinded by light. It’s gazing upon god’s true form all day, every day up in this without my shades. Just give me a second to get used to it.”

You sigh.

Dave asks, “So what, were we buds or what? Bros to the death?”

You fidget. You can’t get all of your kisses out of your mind. The nights spent talking about your insecurities. You holding him while he was dying. “Something like that.”

“Something like that?”

“Was there just an echo?”

“Was there just an echo?”

You groan. “Please don’t.”

“Please don’t say something that vague as though it’s a real answer. Are you telling me we weren’t friends? Could you honestly resist this hot ass?”

“There were different timelines,” you answer shortly. “In some we were, in others not.”

“There were different timelines?”

“Unfortunately, and I remembered all of them, you fucking parrot.”

He looks at you and that’s when you realize his eyes are open now. You’re reminded of the first times he showed you his eyes. You were always fascinated by their red color. Your mind always automatically translated the color to lowblood, but the color was always off in an alien way.

Only, you’ve looked into hundreds of eyes, of all different colors, crying or laughing or doing literally all kinds of things. You’ve held people while they were dying and stared into their eyes for the last time.

Dave says, “That seems heavy, dude.”

“Unbe-fucking-lievable. Alright, let’s try this. Look into my eyes.”

“You got it, babe.” He shifts his body so he’s facing you and focuses his eyes on yours. You take a deep breath when a jolt goes through you. This is nothing like the same thing with Terezi was. You suppress the urge to hit yourself to remind yourself that Terezi isn’t less important than Dave.

Great. “Okay. Okay. So, your name is Dave Strider.” You try to remember what he told you about himself during the game and what you saw. “Your friends want to play this game. You’re not so into it. You end up having to play it, but your copy is fucked up somehow so you have to use your brother’s copy.” Dave tenses up. His brows furrow. “Right. So you play this game and it transports you into a different world, only some screw-up of an asshole had given your world cancer. Anyway, you have to go on a suicide mission, but you somehow survive. That’s when you meet me. At least I think that is what happened in the alpha timeline. Does any of that ring a dong shouter?”

“A what?”

“A dong shouter,” you insist. Most of your friends wouldn’t see anything wrong with what you said, at least if they had their memories.
“Right. LMAO,” Dave spells out like the nerd he is. “This stuff vaguely gives me feelings, but it’s more like I’m watching a movie where all of this happened to other people and somebody is holding up a sign saying ‘be sad’ rather than something I actually feel? Is that the ‘dong shouter’ you’re looking for?”

You groan once again. You’re telling him about the most life-changing game of his and also your existence and he feels like he’s watching a movie. “Maybe you really can’t remember.” Maybe it’s his aspect. Or the memories of his abuse are blocking him. Or the memories of all of the deaths are blocking him. Maybe he died in the alpha timeline. You can’t distinguish enough between the memories to be certain whether that might be the case.

Dave frowns. “Tell me something. It’s not like having weird dreams and random flashes of emotions is fun for me.”

“I don’t know how I can explain it if you don’t really remember. Most of the time nothing made any sense. We just tried to survive.” You look away from him to grab the liquor and take a swig. Or a couple.

“You’re getting totally hammered, aren’t you?”

“I fucking hope so,” you reply bluntly.

“I feel like that’s a bad decision.”

“Cheers.”

“Man, you’re so bitter with life now.” Despite what he said, Dave takes a sip, too.

“I’ve always been disappointed with life. In this universe my self-hate literally made me sick. Do you even know how many people who suffer from anorexia actually survive? My life was shit. And that was before the fucking murder. It’s almost cute—back then I was so fucking shocked and I tried to fight the self-doubt, but I know better now. There’s no point in that, it’s too justified.”

“Aw, impossible.” Dave is slurring a bit. You wonder if you sound the same. “What murder though, I keep on hearing about a murder and I can’t believe you murdered someone?”

“I did though. Kanaya keeps on saying I didn’t do anything just because it wasn’t me, but it was my fault. Sure, Eridan killed, uh, Feferi, but he was drunk at the time, maybe even high, and he didn’t mean to hit so hard, he couldn’t tell what he was doing, and I wasn’t drunk and if I had just done something… Or at least stopped him from killing himself. He was my friend, I didn’t listen to him, I didn’t say the right words… But it’s moot now. If those were the only deaths I were responsible for, I’d rejoice to the fucking heavens.” You point at the sky for emphasis.

“So, deaths? Uncountable traumatic experiences dominated our day-to-day lives?”

“Everybody was sad and died.” Sadly, this is a completely accurate statement.

“Figures.”

“If you want me to tell you all of the details about every little death, you are definitely parked square in the no-luck zone. Even if it didn’t take days, I’d still not be in the mood for that kind of morbid sadistic version of masturbation. What you need to know is it was all very sad. Maybe we’d all be better off without the memories. Maybe this amnesia is here to protect us.”

“How did we end up in this situation anyway?”
“We created this universe.” You gesticulate. “I assume.” Maybe you’re drunker than you thought. “And then we got transported into it. And then some guy decided he’d come out as gay by paying some fucker to be his boyfriend and that’s how we ended up here. Please note that that guy isn’t even gay.”

“I have a preference for guys though.”

“Good for you.” You drink again.

“You said Rose and Terezi know? Who else does?”

You stare at the bottle. “I think Kankri knows.”

“Hm.” He drawls the hum out. Maybe Dave is drunker than you thought, too. “Who?”

“My brother. I think he knows. Not that I listen to the stream of self-righteous maggot pee coming out of his mouth, but, uh, some of the bullshit he said was even more out of place than his usual word vomit. Your brother was in the game, too. I don’t know if he remembers. Doubt it. Same goes for Sollux, Gamzee, Kanaya. Equius, even though you have no idea who he is. Some of the people are dead. But we just haven’t found most of them. Maybe we never will.” You lean against Dave and whine, “I don’t want to talk about this anymore, it’s too sad.”

“We’ll find them. I believe in us.” Dave reaches for the bottle and drinks. You let out a whine at his words. He says, “You’re an emotional drunk, huh?”

“I’m always fucking emotional. Right now, I’m tired. I’m a tired drunk.”

“You’re always tired.”

“That’s true,” you mumble. “But I’m not that drunk anyway. I feel clear. Look.” You point at yourself. Dave raises an eyebrow. You ask him, “What about you though? Have you not even, uh, succumbed the smallest bit to the power of booze?”

“You don’t want that anyway. I’m an awful drunk.”

“Awful how?”

“Awful as in I regret everything I say the next day.”

“Everybody does. Why are you getting drunk with me anyway? I’m the one who’s trying to suppress memories,” you ask.

“When you drink alone, you’re an alcoholic, but when you drink with somebody else, it’s, you know,” Dave hesitates, seeming to look for the right word, “a great picture of companionship. Not to mention, you always seem so lonely.” He puts his head on your shoulder. With the heat of the sun, it almost burns, but you don’t move to get rid of it. “Why do you always seem lonely?”

“You’re a touchy-feely drunk, aren’t you?”

“Hm, maybe. But, Karkat, I’m serious—“ He stops in the middle of the sentence.

“Yes?”

“Karkat.” He draws the name out. “Karkar. Katkat. You have a weird name.”

“Well, you have a stripper name.”
He looks at you, then bursts out laughing. You’re startled, but have to laugh with him. “Man, you’re so funny.”

“Was that ironic?”

“Aw, I could never be mean to you,” he deadpans. “You’re too precious.”

“Okay, that was ironic. You’re not that drunk.”

“Time to change that.” He steals the bottle from you before you get what he’s doing, even though it’s not the only bottle you took with you when you left the party. “Seriously though, sorry for being a douche sometimes.”

“Yeah. Sorry for the same thing.”

“So what do we do now that talking about stuff that fucked you up is not an option and making-out isn’t either?”

You’re reminded of a similar situation on the meteor, only without the alcohol. It seems like back then you were smarter. “I have a book.”

“What, where? In your cleavage?”

“In your ass,” you respond immediately. He laughs loudly at that. You stare at him. You add, “On my phone. It’s not exactly up to standards, and I mean any standards at all; I think you’d love it… I could read it to you?”

“Please tell me it’s the type of book housewives who are disappointed with their sex lives would read.”

“What’s your problem with housewives? And their sex lives? Leave them alone. They might have a more, like, adventurous sex life than you.”

“Shit, you’re right. I don’t think I’ve ever even met a housewife. It is pornographic though, right?”

“Yes,” you admit.

“Ha. I propose a drinking game.”

“Don’t you think we’re too drunk already?”

“You can never be too drunk for drinking games.”

“Famous last words.”

Dave giggles—fucking giggles. “Okay, then a light version of a drinking game. If you laugh, uh, three times, you have to take a sip.”

“But we stop when we get too drunk.” You pull out your phone. “Okay, here we go.”

You get through the first scene okay, if you slurring the words until they’re barely understandable counts as okay. It’s a comparatively harmless scene, with the protagonist watching her love interest work out. You wouldn’t have to laugh so often if Dave didn’t give his running commentary on the book. You’re in the middle of a sentence, suppressing a giggle, when your voice dies.

Dave, who is lying half on top of you, his head almost in your lap, looks up. “Hey, why am I not
hearing all about how hard his muscles are? This is not what I didn’t pay for. Tell me all about those flesh-colored rocks. Hot damn.”

“I just forgot everything,” you whisper. “How could I fucking forget everything? Am I really such a failure of a person that with a little bit of fun, the deaths of my friends just fucking… go away from my mind?”

He sits up more. “You can’t be a walking crying shrine to them 24/7. You gotta, like, live and have fun. That’s what they’d want you to do… At least I think so. Also, they aren’t really dead, right? They are in this universe, too. And we’ll find them.”

“Ugh. How is your argumentation still this good while you’re, uh, hammered?”

“How do you still form long words?”

“Like what?”


“What the fuck?” You think maybe he slurred so much you didn’t understand him right. Or he did call you smart.

“You’re really smart. You, like, make up the best rants. You always hate yourself, but I don’t get it. Why, when you’re so smart?” Something seems to come into his mind to make him frown, harder than you’ve ever seen him do before. “And why the fuck was I your first kiss?”

“You’re so dumb. Because I’m ugly and pushy and rude and all that shit. I made a list in my head of all the reasons. But that is such a dumb question. Are you trying to insult me?”

“Oh no, are you an aggressive drunk?”

“Not more than sober. I think.”

“Honestly though.” He vaguely waves a hand in your direction. “Left and right.”

“What?”

“I mean. You should be attracting people left and right. Yeah.”

“Fuck you,” you answer promptly.

He takes a moment to process what you said. “That’s mean.”

“I am mean. It’s no wonder nobody likes me.”

“You’re a delusional drunk,” Dave tells you like he just proved that scientifically.

“That was a complicated word, too.”

“Why are you a virgin?”

“Whoa, what? You don’t even fucking know that. Why are you a virgin? I bet you had tons of groupies.”

“Why past tense, I’m not dead?”
“You’re engaged now. To me,” you tell him, in case he forgot.

“Yeah, I know. They still wanna hit this. I’m faithful, though. Yeah. Like a rock. A faithful rock.”

“That rock is taking that ring very seriously.”

“As it should.”

You wipe the sweat off your face and squint at him. “What were we talking about?”

“About how great you are.” You shake your head at Dave’s words. He shrugs and suggests, “The book?”

You glance down at the book. A passage about the love interest petting the protagonist’s cat catches your eye. “You know what’s dumb?”

“Tons of things.”

“When I was younger, like, twelve or something… I wanted a cat because the chicks in these books always had cats.”

“You’re a cat yourself,” Dave replies completely uselessly.

“I’m not even going to comment on that.”

“So why do you not want one anymore?”

“I don’t know. I can’t be trusted with anyone’s life.”

“That goes right in bullshit zone. Up there with ‘let’s check out this haunted house’ and, like, ‘let me just take this quick selfie in front of the approaching train’. You should get a cat.” He nudges you. “Name it Gertrude.”

“What if it’s a boy?”

“Still.” Dave shrugs. “Gender doesn’t really have meaning anyway. There’s no reason for names to be… you know, to have gender.”

“You know what else is dumb? These books made me want to have my first kiss in the rain. Because that’s obviously important.”

“Not on an airport?”

“Airports are awful places.” You scrunch up your face. “Too many children.”

“Even as a child you hated children. That doesn’t even surprise me. That’s so adorable.” He’s smiling at you, like it really is sweet rather than antisocial. “So, skip to the sex scene?”

“Thought you’d never ask.” You do what he suggested. “’He trailed his hands down my stomach. I gasped.’” You start laughing.

“What?”

“I can’t read the next line.”

“You need to drink. And show me.”
You hand him the book and reach for the bottle, but are overcome with the urge to vomit. He reads out loud, "'I love your gasps.'" He pauses. "Why are you laughing?"

"Because this is stupid. And I'm drunk. I don't know," you say. "Why are you laughing?"

"I'm not laughing."

"You should be." You lean against him, still giggling. You nudge him with your elbow. "Laugh… Aw, look. You're laughing."

He snorts. "I'm maybe smiling. That's it. I'm cool."

"That's not…" You do gestures with your hands. "Those things… aren't exclusive. Mutually exclusive."

"Well. I'll drink to that." You both take a gulp.

"Okay. Okay." You squint at your hands. "Now we're getting too drunk."

"To do what?"

"To, like, make good decisions."

"Yeah, but… we can't do that sober either."

You both laugh.

"Yeah, okay." You look down at your phone. "I can't read this shit anymore."

"I'd tell you it's fine, but…"

"But?"

"But…" He draws out the word. "I forgot. No. Right. This is the most sexy action I've gotten in a long time."

"I think you mean in forever," you reply.

"Yeah, yeah, your mom's a virgin, too."

"Because you couldn't satisfy her?"

Dave guffaws. Loudly. It makes you laugh, too. You laugh so loudly you'd be surprised if nobody heard you. Once you've calmed down a bit, Dave responds with, "Hey. You're a virgin, too."

"You don't know that."

"I thought I was your first kiss."

"Prostitutes never kiss their…" You search for the right word. "Guys."

"Really?" Dave asks.

"I don't know." There's a pause in the conversation as you both consider the sentence. "You know how some people say they haven't had a good fuck in years or whatever? Yeah, I haven't had a good hug in years."
“Let’s change that immediately.”

“What, you want to hug?” Your voice sounds happier than you expected it to be.

“All aboard the cuddle train; we’re doing this; we’re making it happen. Yes. Reference fucking secured. On point.” He changes his position until he’s facing you. “So, I guess the hug I gave you earlier was, I don’t know… You were too fucked up to enjoy it?”

“I don’t remember it.” At your reply, his face falls. You’re quick to do damage control. “But I’m sure it was great.”

“I’m going to hug the shit out of you. Bring in the awards for best motherhugging hug. I even have a speech prepared.”

He’s swaying a bit on the spot. You grab his shoulders to steady him and then put your arms around him. He reciprocates and you end up pressed against each other. You put your head on his shoulder. He hums and rubs your back and you sigh, squeezing him. You feel yourself sweating from the sun and his body heat.

It feels good.

Dave pulls a bit back and says, “Anyway, I was thinking… I know the perfect solution.”

“For climate change?”

“World peace.”

“What is it?”

“We have sex with each other,” he says, like it’s simple. “You’re the best. It’d be great.”

“But…” You struggle to think of a good argument against it. But why should you? You like him. He’s perfect. He’s not flawless, but he’s perfect.

Dave interrupts your thoughts. “I keep on having these weird dreams.”

“Me too.”

“You dream about sex with yourself?” He doesn’t even sound like that’s the weirdest thing he’s ever thought about.

“Ah… Sometimes,” you admit. “I know why we can’t make love. We’re not even together.” That’s the moment when you notice your hand is in Dave’s hair. You’ve been playing with it for a while now.

“We’re not even married.”

“Is that important?” you ask.

“We’re…” He trails off, face scrunched up like he’s thinking. Or searching for the right word. Or maybe trying not to throw up. You can relate to the last reason.

“Hm?” you provide questioningly.

“Engaged.”
“That’s enough, right?”

“To do what?”

You pause. “Kiss?”

He thinks it over. “I think so.”

Dave leans in. You do the same, holding your breath, until your lips are touching. You open your mouth and somehow your tongue just does its own thing. There’s spit involved and teeth and after three seconds you realize this isn’t very hot. Dave makes a sound that sounds too confused for the situation. Then he pulls away.

He tells you, “This isn’t working.”

“Maybe we’re too drunk,” you offer. That reason automatically comes to you after years of repeatedly realizing your drunk choices are the worst.

“I know what it is.” Dave attempts to stand up, falls twice, then manages to stay upright with your help. “Come with me.”

“Okay.”
You literally turned your life into a whacky shenanigans-filled romcom

Chapter Notes

It's short, but the next chapter will be up by the end of the week.

-- tentacleTherapist [TT] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --
TT: I do not know what your state will be when you wake up—though from what I am seeing I'm guessing you will be very hungover—but I believe I may need to bring you up to date.
TT: Here it is.
TT: You're married.
TT: Yes, you literally turned your life into a whacky shenanigans-filled romcom.
TT: Not a good one, either.
TT: Congratulations.
TT: I'm sending you some details on your wedding for you to read through once you have moved through the five stages of grief and reached acceptance.
TT: Please note that "the five stages of grief" aren't completely supported by research.
TT: But that is beside the point.
TT: The tabloids are, for lack of more fitting phrase, going batshit crazy.
TT: You and my cousin were apparently photographed by dozens of paparazzi while were walking down the street, falling repeatedly, and convincing some government official that marrying two guys who were inebriated in the middle of the day would obviously be a well thought-out move from everybody's side.
TT: It probably helped that he already knew you two were engaged since you are so well-known.
TT: After that, the two of you apparently checked into a hotel not exactly known for its high quality standards.
TT: An employee reported to some tabloid with a not exactly perfect reputation that you apparently fell asleep immediately, so your modesty is still as intact as it was before.
TT: Judging from the public's reactions, getting drunk and then spontaneously married will become the new romantic trend.
TT: Also you will from now on be used as an example for what went wrong with millennials.
TT: Drunkenness is a legit reason to annul a marriage, by the way.
TT: In case you were wondering.
TT: I would not be surprised if you chose not to however, not because you are so in love, though that is a valid reason, but because it would destroy your little ruse.
TT: And that would have negative consequences for everybody involved.
TT: Ah, my wife wants to talk to you.
TT: Hello Karkat
TT: First Of All Congratulations
TT: How Are You
TT: My Wife Told Me All About Your Plan
TT: I Am Surprised
TT: I Had My Doubts At First But At The Wedding You Two Really Had Me Convinced
TT: You Really Are A Good Actor
TT: But Me Complimenting You Is Probably Not Very Helpful For You Right Now
TT: If You Need Me To Help You With Your Hangover I Am Here For You
TT: My Wife Is Telling Me She Doesn't Really Want Me To Spend The Morning After Our
Wedding Looking After A Friend
TT: But I Believe She May Be Underestimating The Effect Of The Things You Are Going Through
TT: However She Is For Lack Of A More Subtle Way Of Saying It Demanding My Attention Right
Now So Goodbye For Now
-- tentacleTherapist [TT] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --

-- twinArmageddons [TA] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --
TA: dude.
TA: BRO.
TA: you fucked up big tiime.
TA: you u2ed to not bee shiit at decii2iion making.
TA: diid your cru2h on hiim fuck up your brain or what?
TA: remember how ii 2aiid at lea2t iniitiite me to the weddiing after you got engaged?
TA: that didintt happen.
TA: BTW, TZ 2ay2 there2 2omethiing 2he ha2 to tell me?
TA: ii am ju2t 2iittiing here wonderiing how much worse she couldve fucked somethiing up than
you.
TA: anyway, me22age me when youre not hungover anymore, you idiioot.
-- twinArmageddons [TA] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --

-- gallowsCalibrator [GC] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --
GC: 1 C4NT B3L13V3 TH3 SH1T YOU TWO G3T UPP TO WH3N 1M NOT B4BYS1TT1NG
YOU
GC: FROM WH4T 1 H34R, YOU THOUGHT G3TT1NG M4RR13D WOULD GR34TLY
1MPROV3 TH3 QU4L1TY OF YOUR K1SS3S
GC: 1 AM L4UGH1NG SO MUCH
GC: 1M TEMPTED TO ST4RT 4 M3MO, JUST SO W3 C4N 4LL L4UGH 4T YOU
TOG3TH3R
GC: “C4NDY 4SSHOL3S GOT FUCK3D UP 4ND GOT TH3MS3LV3S 4 W3DD1NG
L1C3NS3 – TH3 MUS1C4L”
GC: MUS1C4L B3C4US3 4LL OF OUR L4UGHT3R W1LL SYNCHRON1Z3 INTO A
B34UT1FUL CHORUS OF SCH4D3NFR3UDE
GC: M4YB3 YOU W1LL B3 SO 3MB4RR4SS3D TH4T YOULL STOP B31NG M4D 4T M3
B3C4US3 1 N3V3R TOLD YOU
GC: 1 H4V3 D3C1D3 TO T3LL 3V3RYBODY TH3 MOST 1MPORT4NT STUFF
GC: 1M 4LR34DY LOOK11NG FOR 3V3RYBODY 3LS3, BUT TH3 MOR3 W3 DO, TH3
B3TT3R TH3 CH4NC3 OF B31NG SUCC3SSFUL 1 GU3SS
GC: 3V3N 1F TH3 M3 4LL D34D OR JUST NOT H3R3
-- gallowsCalibrator [GC] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --
You hum contentedly while Sollux pets you hair. “I’m glad we’ve finally settled into a quadrant.”

“Yeah, that evasive fuckery we were doing wasn’t cute.” His voice sounds off somehow. When he says, “We finally came to our senses though,” you realize he’s missing his lisp.

You look up to ask him what happened and see his eyes. Or rather, his empty eye sockets. They’re staring at you like windows to the fucking void.

You shoot up and jerk away to put distance between you and him and that’s when you wake up.

The first thing you notice is pain.

Your head is pounding, your stomach is trying to squeeze itself into a tiny ball of death and your skin feels like it’s stretched way too thin. You open your eyes the tiniest bit and they retaliate by stabbing your brain. At least that’s what it feels like.

You’re never drinking again.

You go back to sleep.

It is blissfully dreamless this time.

The next time you wake up, you still feel only pain, this time made worse by the fact that you’re sweating an unreasonable amount. You attempt to lie still and maybe also die, but you’re too awake this time. Opening your eyes is a chore, but you are strong enough. You feel like you deserve a medal for it. You grab for your phone to check the time but your hand hits a wall that’s not supposed to be there.

You’re not in your room.

Adrenaline shoots through your veins and you sit up abruptly. You quickly check to make sure you’re not tied up and about to be tortured and killed. You look at your hands and that’s when it happens.

You see the ring.

You freeze.

You throw yourself to the side and throw up on the floor.

You are definitely never drinking again.

Your head is starting to clear up as some memories of how you ended up here come back to you. You got married. To Dave Strider. Back then it seemed like a good idea. You were in love with him and you are supposed to marry the person you’re in love with. You believed enough in that that you went to a store to buy matching rings with Dave.

Your life is never that simple though.
You try to calm your breathing. Okay; this is okay. You can deal with this. Sure, you betrayed all of your past partners by latching onto the first person that offered you comfort. And okay, you brutally killed romance by having a meaningless wedding that’s going to be followed by a meaningless split-up and yes, you fucked both your and Dave’s immediate and possibly not-so-immediate future over with this dumb move and yeah, you’re in a shady-ass tiny hotel room in a probably dirty bed feeling like you’re going to die of pain all while haunted by the memories of your past, but you can handle this situation.

You focus on assessing the situation. The room you’re in is small, with only a bed and a table in it. The walls are painted a brown that looks like it was chosen because it would make vomit stains not so visible. There is a door that hopefully leads to a bathroom. At least you found a hotel with private bathrooms rather than communal ones in your drunken state.

Dave stirs besides you. He makes a sound that seems like he’s going to throw up soon, too.

You whip around to face him. He’s shadeless and he’s pressing his eyes closed. “Dave fucking Strider.” Your voice sounds like you haven’t used it in a few decades. “Wake up. We’re married! Whose stupid-ass idea was this?”

He croaks, "Water."

"Forget water, we're married!"

"I can't forget water," he complains.

"I don't fucking have water!" you yell at him.

"Then coffee."

"Did your brain decide to leak out of your head?"

He squints at you. "Wait. We're married?"

"We're married."

There's a pause. His eyes widen comically, then close. A couple of seconds go by. He groans. "That is just stupid."

"You're telling me?" You take a deep breath. "Why did you go along with this bullshit idea anyway?"

“Pretty sure it was mine,” Dave mumbles.

“Then why on earth, Dave?”

“I don’t know. My ability to make good decisions was impaired by the power of booze. You know how it is. It’s not like I held a gun to your head. You were so on board with this, you built the ship yourself.”

You bury your head in your hands. “How drunk and desperate do you have to be to get married to someone you don’t even like like that?”

“Oh?”

“Okay, okay. Check your phone. Maybe nobody knows,” you say without much hope.
"Nah, nope, that train has left the station. In fact, it's universes away from the station. I remember tons of paparazzi. I think we may have even posted something on Twitter."

"Obviously."

"Obviously. So like, this is obviously an emotionally stirring moment and all, but do you mind if I go and quickly take a piss and also maybe throw up?"

"Just fucking go ahead." You let yourself fall back down on the bed. “I give up."

Dave gets up to walk to the bathroom. You hear him mumble, "Fucking wacky shenanigans."

You check your phone. Rose’s is the first message you read. It annoys you enough that you ignore all of the other messages. After that, you are curious and dumb enough to decide to test the dangerous and traumatizing waters of the internet. You are trending everywhere. There isn't a news or social media site where you're not Topic Number One. It's like there's nothing else happening in the world. Fuck all the wars, some assholes just got married. Wow.

Dave yells from the bathroom, "I got serious sunburn."

You reply without looking up. "Me too."

"You got anything for that?"

"Do you think I would be sitting here suffering if I did? Where would I keep sun lotion, did you think I'd go 'yeah, wait a second' and pull some out of my ass?"

"I don't know what kinds of things you shove up your ass,” he shouts back at you from the bathroom. “Wouldn't be the strangest thing I've ever seen."

"Wouldn't be the strangest thing you've ever done either,” you answer, scrolling through your phone.

The public reactions seem to be mixed. They are less negative than you expected. You see a tweet that says "wish I was that spontaneous" with a couple of emojis. Some cockroaches of society call you the reason why same-sex marriage was a mistake, but that was to be expected.

Dave comes out of the bathroom. "You're damn right it isn't."

"What do we do now?"

"Sleep. I'm too hungover for this shit."

"Okay, but afterwards?" You wring your hands, touch the ring, stop wringing your hands. “We can't stay married, but we can't just annul the marriage and we can't get a divorce one day after we got married. Nobody would ever take us seriously again. I want to really get married one day, my future partner can't fucking think I don't take marriage as a serious commitment."

Dave frowns. After a pause, he says, "What's the amount of time after which they wouldn't think that then?"

“So, one week to realize we have relationship problems and four weeks of couple therapy.”

“You want to go to couple therapy?” Dave sounds horrified.

“Christ no.” You grimace at the thought. “We already have enough problems without some horsefucker telling us how we can trust each other again or some similar bullshit. But we need to at
least let enough time pass to seem like we made an attempt, right?”

“Five weeks then?”

“At least. You can go back to sleep. I need to wash my face.”

You make your way to the bathroom where they apparently managed to squeeze in both a shower and a load gaper. No sink though. There’s a mirror above the load gaper where mirrors obviously belong. You stare at the zombie that seems to be your reflection. You look like you were run over by a truck and then left to bleed out which gave you a horrible sunburn. A sexy truck apparently because upon closer inspection you see a fucking hickey on your neck. You put your arms around yourself. You had trusted Rose when she told you nothing really happened, but that hickey didn’t just magically appear out of nowhere. God, you really hope not much happened. You don’t want to have had sex while you were basically unconscious.

You return to Dave and ask, “Did we do anything?”

“You mean other than tie the knot? How much worse could we have fucked up?”

You shake your head. “I mean. Do you think… we had sex? Or something.”

“Oh. I don’t think so. No. We kissed a bit. It wasn’t very good though. I know we made out in front of the officiant too, but that’s all we did.”

“Why do I have a hickey?” you ask. Dave sighs like you do when you find out your child fucked up once again in the most predictable manner possible. “Hey! That is a legitimate question.”

“It is.”

“Then don’t sigh like that.”

He buries his head in his hands. “I wasn’t sighing because of you.”

“Why were you sighing?”

“Look, forget me sighing. I gave you that right after we got married because we wanted to post a pic on Twitter, remember?” He looks up at you again. “I checked, we didn’t post anything though.”

“I’m just saying. People don’t just sigh without reason and they especially don’t sigh in a certain manner that holds certain emotions without reason. There’s nobody else here except us, so forgive me if I thought that sigh was aimed at me.”

“You are one stubborn motherfucker. Look, I just sighed because in this situation a hickey is just the stupidest thing ever.”

“No, there was disappointment in your tone,” you insist.

“Yes, disappointment in myself because I am a stupid-ass sucker who can’t contain his thing for hickeys even when it’s the far more sensible thing to do, Christ, Karkat. Did you think I’d be disappointed because you were what, slutty enough to let your husband give you a hickey?”

Oh, alright. That makes sense. A lot of things from all kinds of timelines make sense now. Tons of exchanged hickeys. You had thought it was just a human thing, but in this quantity it probably wasn’t. You are a human now too, at least by appearance, even if you didn’t really feel like one, and your craving for hickeys is on a normal level, you think. But you obviously don’t have anything
against them.

“I see,” you answer, feeling weirdly embarrassed.

“Can I go to sleep now?”

“We can’t stay here forever.”

“No, we sleep a while and then we drive to our respective apartments.” Dave does sound like he desperately needs sleep.

“Yeah. Okay. Okay. Go to sleep.”

You leave the room to drink the tiniest bit of water from the shower head. It’s icky, but it’s the best option you have if you don’t want to face the paparazzi outside. However, your body hates you even more than you hate it and can’t even handle that. You throw up once again, this time in the load gaper. The toilet. Oh yeah, you remember should really do something about that pile of vomit next to your bed at some point. This situation is such a mess. You’re such a mess.

You’re definitely never drinking again.

Chapter End Notes

To be fair, the beginning wasn't completely my own idea, I was inspired by sburbanite.
May your marriage be full of joy

Chapter Notes

This chapter took some time to come out, I know, but this fic isn’t dead. I just have a lot of stuff to do right now, but that’ll get better. The next chapter may take some time too, but after that I’ll have tons of time to write.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] opened memo on board POST-APOCALYPTIC FRUITY RUMPUS ASSHOLES FACTORY —
CG: FIRST OFF, I’D LIKE TO START THIS MEMO BY MENTIONING THAT ALL OF YOU ARE USELESS ASSHOLES WHO FEAST ON THE FLESH OF THE WEAK.
GC: 1 C4NT B3L13V3 W3R3 B4CK TO THOS3 M3MOS 4G41N
GC: JUST WH3N YOU TH1NK YOU W1LL N3V3R H4V3 TO R34D ON3 OF 4 C4NDY 4SSHOL3S S3LFH4T1NG R4NTS 4G41NTH3 UN1V3RS3 PULLS YOU B4CK IN
GC: BY TH3 W4Y, HOWS YOUR HUSB4ND
CG: FOR ONE BLISSFUL SECOND, I HAD NO IDEA WHAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT.
CG: THEN REALITY CRASHED INTO ME LIKE A PARTICULARLY VENGEFUL BULL.
GC: 3V3RYBODY CONGR4T4L4T3 TH1S BR4ND N3W 4DD1T1ON TO TH3 1NST1TUT1ON OF M4RR14G
TA: congrat2.
GA: I Will Go Along With The Joke For A While
GA: May Your Marriage Be Full Of Joy
GC: 4NY HON3MOON PL4NS?
GA: I Had No Idea Board Post Apocalyptic Fruity Rumpus Assholes Factory Existed
GA: I Did Not Even Know It Was Possible To Make Memos Like These
CG: I JUST CREATED IT.
CG: BECAUSE I HATE MYSELF AND I WANT ALL OF YOU TO SUFFER ALONG WITH ME.
GA: Oh
GA: May I Inquire Who Is On This Board
CG: YOU, ME, BEEFUCKER, EVERYONE’S LEAST FAVORITE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY AND CLOWNFACE.
CG: FOR NOW.
CG: ONE OF YOU USELESS PEOPLE NEEDS TO GIVE ME EQUIIUS’ CHUMHANDLE.
GA: I Doubt One Of Us Has It
TA: who’2 equiiu2?
TA: and if ii’m beefucker, you’re 2triiderfucker.
GC: 1 S33 YOU PURPOS3LY 3XCLUD1NG K4NKR1 B3C4US3 YOU 4R3 4 R3 4 B4D BROTH3R
GC: 4R3 YOU 4 B4D BROTH3R, K4RK4T?
CG: I WOULD RATHER BE A BAD BROTHER THAN HAVE HIM SPAMMING OUR MEMO.
TA: you’d rather do that yourself.
CG: AT LEAST THE THINGS I SAY HAVE A POINT.
CG: PLUS, HE’S TOO SICK.
GA: I Would Like Somebody To Answer A Question
GA: Unless You Are All Too Preoccupied With Insulting Each Other And People That Are Not Even Present
CG: IF THE QUESTION IS ABOUT MY APPARENT “MARRIAGE”, I DON’T WANT TO HEAR IT.
GA: No Terezi Told Me You Would Contact Me And I Assume This Is What She Meant But She Also Said There Is Something Important That You Would Feel The Need To Discuss
GA: So What Is It
CG: RIGHT.
CG: WE ALL LIVED A PAST LIFE IN WHICH WE
CG: KNEW EACH OTHER.
CG: I WAS TOLD I COULDN’T GO INTO DETAIL BECAUSE KNOWING MIGHT DAMAGE YOUR TINY BRAINS EVEN MORE THAN THEY ALREADY ARE.
CG: BUT THAT’S THE GIST OF IT AND YOU SHOULD ALL FUCKING KNOW.
CG: AND I DON’T GIVE ONE MINIATURE Sized SHIT ABOUT WHETHER YOU BELIEVE ME OR NOT OR IF ANY OF YOU WILL LET THAT AFFECT YOUR LIFE IN ANY WAY, BUT I SWEAR TO WHATEVER MALICIOUS DEITY IS OUT THERE THAT I WILL MAKE SURE WE STAY IN FUCKING CONTACT UNTIL WE FINALLY DIE.
GA: Oh
GA: That Is Quite A Lot To Take In
TA: ii’d alm0t 2ay iit 2tretchi2 my 2u2pen2iion of dii2belief two much.
CG: THIS ISN’T A FUCKING WORK OF FICTION, ASSHOLE.
CG: DON’T YOU HAVE WEIRD DREAMS?
GA: I Do
GA: A Few Nights Ago I Dreamt That I Tried To Kill Gamzee
TA: where ii2 he anyway?
CG: MAYBE HE HASN’T CHECKED HIS PHONE YET.
CG: DAVE SOMETIMES DOESN’T CHECK HIS PHONE FOR HOURS EITHER.
GC: ON TH3 TOP1C OF D4V3
GC: WHY 4R3 YOU TWO 1D1OTS ST1LL D4NC1NG 4ROUND 4CH OTHER??
GC: 4ND TH3Y S4Y 1M TH3 BL1ND ON3
GC: I T4LK3D TO H1M TOD4Y 4ND H3 ASK3D M3 WHY I 3V3N THOUGHT YOU W3R3 TOG3TH3R
CG: WHAT THE HELL, TEREZI?
CG: YOU MIGHT WANT TO STOP WITH THE ABSOLUTE BULLSHIT AND CONCENTRATE ON THE FAR MORE IMPORTANT TOPIC AT HAND.
CG: WHICH IS OUR FUCKING REBIRTH IN A NEW UNIVERSE WE’RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE GODS OF AND SUBSEQUENT LOSS OF OVER HALF OF OUR FRIENDS.
TA: that 2ound2 pretty dramatic.
CG: YOUR MOM SOUNDS PRETTY DRAMATIC WHEN I FUCK HER, DOUCHEFUCK.
GC: TH4T SOUNDS L1K3 4 JOK3 D4V3 WOULD 3NJOY
CG: THIS CONVERSATION HAS GONE SO OFF-TOPIC, IF THIS CONVERSATION WAS IN AUSTRALIA, THE ORIGINAL FAR MORE IMPORTANT TOPIC WOULD BE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FUCKING UNIVERSE, SLOWLY SUFFOCATING TO DEATH BECAUSE THERE IS NO FUCKING AIR IN SPACE.
TA: nobody cares about your 2tupid a22 romance problem2, we’re ju2t tiired of you runniing around with an even wor2e mood than normal.
TA: and makiing 2hiit up.
CG: FIRST OF ALL, I WILL ONLY SAY THIS ONCE SO GET THE EARWAX OUT OF
YOUR EARS AND STOP FONDLING WHATEVER GENITALIA YOU MAY POSSESS.
CG: MY POTENTIAL ROMANTIC ENTANGLEMENTS ARE NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS
UNLESS I MAKE THEM YOUR BUSINESS AND IT SEEMS I'D HAVE TO LOSE MY
REMAINING BRAIN CELLS TO DO THAT. HOWEVER, SINCE YOU WON'T STOP
UNTIL YOU HAVE SOME KIND OF ANSWER, FUCK YOU.
CG: IT ISN'T LIKE THAT BETWEEN US.
CG: I DO NOT KNOW WHY ANY OF YOU THINK WE ARE IN LOVE OR WHATEVER.
CG: WE WERE *ACTING*.
CG: YOU KNOW, LIKE HOW EVERYBODY YOU MEET PRETENDS YOU AREN'T
UNBEARABLE.
CG: THAT'S CALLED ACTING TOO.
CG: SURE, I HAVE A FLUSH THING FOR HIM, BUT
CG: HE'S NOT THE ONLY PERSON I HAVE A THING FOR ANYWAY.
CG: AND HE'S NOT ANY MORE INTO ME NOW THAN HE HAS BEEN THE WHOLE
TIME.
CG: WHICH IS *NOT*.
CG: OR
CG: BARELY.
CG: I DON'T KNOW.
GA: Karkat I Ask This In The Most Respectful Manner Possible
GA: Are You On Drugs
TA: that'2 a good que2tiion.
CG: *WOW*
CG: FUCK YOU TOO.
GC: H3S R1GHT ABOUT TH3 WHOL3 P4ST L1V3S SP13L
GC: OF COURS3 NOT ABOUT TH3 OTH3R TH1NG BUT ABOUT TH3 F1RST TH1NG, H3
1S R1GHT
GC: I C4N 4SSUR3 YOU TH4T H3 D1D NOT M4K3 TH4T UP
CG: YES, YOU BUNCH OF HOLES IN A CONDOM, AND FEEL FREE TO ASK ROSE
FOR CONFIRMATION, TOO.
CG: SHE WAS THERE TOO AND REMEMBERS IT.
GA: Oh
GA: Well
GA: She Has Said Things That Go Along With That Theory
TA: why ii2n’t 2he a part of thii2 memo then?
CG: THIS MEMO IS JUST FOR THE TROLLS NOW.
CG: FORMER TROLLS.
CG: ROSE MESSAGED ME AND TOLD ME REPEATEDLY THAT I CANNOT TELL
ANYONE MUCH BECAUSE IT COULD BE DANGEROUS OR WHATEVER—*AFTER* I
HAD ALREADY TOLD DAVE, BUT I GUESS SHE JUST HAD MORE IMPORTANT
THINGS THAN HER BROTHER ON HER MIND—BUT WHAT I JUST SAID ONLY
MAKES SENSE IF I TELL YOU WE WERE ALL A CERTAIN SPECIES OF ALIENS
CALLED TROLLS.
TA: nope, none of what you ju2t 2aiid made any 2en2e.
TA: ii2 iit ju2t me or doe2 whatever he 2ay2 get more and more convoluted?
GA: You Should Not Blame Rose For You Telling Dave
GA: He Did Not End Up Getting Hurt Anyway Did He
CG: I DIDN'T GET HURT MYSELF.
CG: I THOUGHT IT COULDN'T BE THAT HARMFUL.
GA: Is That Why She Did Not Tell Me Then
CG: APPARENTLY THERE IS ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY OF SERIOUS LONG TERM
DAMAGE IF SOMEBODY DOES NOT REMEMBER ON THEIR OWN.
CG: I’M FINE THOUGH.
TA: that’2 debatable.
GA: To Be Honest I Believe Karkat May Be Telling The Truth
CG: FUCKING THANK YOU.
CG: OKAY, HERE’S THE PLAN, WHETHER YOU AGREE OR NOT.
CG: I’M GOING TO ESTABLISH PERMANENT CONTACT WITH THE HUMANS.
CG: ALSO I’M GOING TO LOOK FOR THOSE WE HAVEN’T FOUND YET.
CG: IN FACT, I’M GOING TO START RIGHT NOW.
CG: THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE I WENT TO SCHOOL WITH WHO MAY KNOW HOW TO CONTACT EQUIUS.
TA: yeah, ii 2tiill have no iidea who that ii2.
CG: I’M GOING TO TALK TO THOSE PEOPLE.
TC: wHaT iS uUuP BrOtHeRs AnD sIsTeRs?
TC: KaRkAt, I hEaRd YoUr mArRiEd NoW.
TC: bRoOo, ThAt Is ThE mOtHeRfUcKiNg WiCkEdEsT sHiT!
GA: Are You High Again
TC: YeS bRoThEr.
TC: SoUnDeD lIkE a BuNcH oF mOtHeRfUcKiNg MiRaClEs To Me.
CG: WHATEVER.
CG: I HAVE TO GET GOING NOW.
GC: R3D1R3CT YoUr QU3ST1ON 4T M3
GC: 1 PROM1S3 1 DONT B1T3 TH4T OFT3N
TA: ii can’t belieue you’re going to ju2t leave u2 after droppiing that 2hiit on u2.
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] stopped responding to memo --

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --
CG: JDSHASDOIDHSOAHOSABAFJHA
TG: oh hey theres the guy that made an honest man out of me
CG: ALKSFJAOOWAIIFOAOkhapsdgoUJ
TG: almost switched into lower caps for a second there
CG: SAHGOREIAHGOAEIO
TG: yeah i agree
CG: I JUST WENT OUT FOR A *SHORT* FUCKING TRIP.
CG: AND I SWEAR IT WAS LIKE A FUCKING TRIP TO HELL.
TG: a short trip to hell at least?
CG: IF I THOUGHT THE FUCKING PAPARAZZI WERE BAD BEFORE, WE’VE NOW ENTERED THE SEVENTH CIRCLE OF SOME PSYCHOPATH’S TORTURE CHAMBER.
TG: oh shit
TG: i feel you
TG: i havent even left my house in the last few days
CG: NOT TO MENTION THE PURE FUCKING AMOUNT OF *HOMOPHOBIA*, IT IS THE MOST APPALLING THING MY PURE SENSES HAVE EVER HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO BE ASSAULTED WITH.
CG: SINCE WHEN DO I CARE ABOUT ANYONE’S OPINION ON SAME-SEX MARRIAGE?
CG: SINCE NEVER; THAT’S SINCE WHEN.
CG: JUST IMAGINE
CG: I’M JUST INNOCENTLY WALKING DOWN THE STREET, MY SKIN ITCHING BECAUSE OF THE FUCKING SUNBURN I GOT, WHEN SOME CHICK WITH NO SENSE
FOR A CLASSY AMOUNT OF MAKEUP PULLS ME ASIDE AND TELLS ME IT’S A FUCKING SLIPPERY SLOPE AND NEXT THEY WILL ALLOW HUMANS TO MARRY DOGS.
CG: WHAT THE SHIT!?
TG: WHATS THE CLASSY AMOUNT OF MAKEUP
CG: I HAVE NO IDEA, BUT THAT WOMAN DIDN’T EITHER.
TG: OKAY NEVERMIND
TG: YOU SOUND LIKE YOU NEED A BREAK
TG: YOU ALWAYS DO BUT RIGHT NOW EVEN MORE THAN EVER
CG: I AGREE WITH YOU ONE HUNDRED PERCENT.
CG: YOU KNOW WHAT’S EVEN WORSE?
TG: NO BUT I’M PRETTY SURE YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME
CG: NOTHING HAS CHANGED.
CG: THE WORLD IS STILL EXACTLY THE SAME; ONLY I FEEL DIFFERENT NOW.
CG: YESTERDAY SOMEBODY BUMPED INTO ME AND SAID SORRY AND I ONLY THOUGHT “DON’T WORRY, HUMAN, I AM A BENEVOLENT GOD.”
CG: I ALMOST SAID THAT.
CG: I MAY SOMETIMES SAY WEIRD THINGS, BUT THAT WOULD’VE BEEN THE WORST.
TG: PRETTY SURE I’VE SAID WEIRDER THINGS
CG: THE WEIRD SHIT YOU DO AT LEAST GOT YOU RICH.
TG: YEAH AND ALMOST OBNOXIOUSLY FAMOUS
TG: AND IF I WASN’T FAMOUS I WOULDN’T EVEN HAVE PR PEOPLE WHO WANT TO KILL ME FOR A DRUNKEN MARRIAGE
TG: AND THEN WHERE WOULD WE BE
TG: THEY CHEWED ME OUT LIKE A BUNCH OF PARTICULARLY VIOLENT DOGS WOULD CHEW A CHEW TOY
TG: FOR HOURS
TG: MAYBE I SHOULD’VE ESTABLISHED A REPUTATION FOR FIRING PEOPLE WHEN THEY PISS ME OFF
CG: YOU’RE TOO NICE FOR THAT.
CG: YOU’RE ACTUALLY A REGULAR SWEETHEART BEHIND YOUR SHADES.
TG: I DON’T THINK I’VE EVER BEEN THIS INSULTED
TG: I HAVE A HEART OF ICE
TG: PROTECTED BY A DIAMOND SAFE
CG: IS THE SAFE MADE OUT OF DIAMONDS BECAUSE YOU’RE RICH OR BECAUSE YOUR HEART IS AS VALUABLE AS A DIAMOND OR BECAUSE DIAMONDS ARE KNOWN FOR BEING HARD?
TG: I TAKE OPTION D
TG: “ALL OF THE ABOVE”
CG: OF COURSE YOU’D TAKE SOMETHING THAT WASN’T EVEN OFFERED AS AN OPTION.
CG: YOU’RE A TRUE HIPSTER.
TG: THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX IS A POSITIVE TRAIT
CG: OH MY GOD.
TG: ANYWAY
TG: REMEMBER HOW I SAID I HADN’T LEFT THE HOUSE IN A COUPLE OF DAYS
TG: WALKING AROUND IN THIS CITY IS KIND OF SHITDICKS AWFUL RIGHT NOW FOR US SO
TG: WE SHOULD MAKE SOME KIND OF TRIP
TG: SOMEWHERE WHERE THERE AREN’T A LOT OF PEOPLE
CG: YOU KNOW WHAT
CG: I HAVE THIS OLD FRIEND FROM HIGH SCHOOL.
TG: ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME YOU'RE GOING TO MEET THIS SO CALLED OLD FRIEND TO REKINDLE YOUR LOST ROMANCE
CG: WHAT
CG: NO.
CG: HE'S MORE OF AN *ACQUAINTANCE* ANYWAY.
CG: I ORIGINALLY WANTED TO WRITE TO HIM, BUT HE LIVES IN THE MIDDLE OF BUTTFUCK NOWHERE SO I GUESS WE COULD JUST VISIT HIM INSTEAD.
TG: so you can rekindle your lost romance
CG: THAT'S NOT MY INTENTION.
CG: DON’T JOKE ABOUT LOST ROMANCES.
TG: shit
TG: sorry?
TG: shit
TG: you cant see but im totally flagellating myself now
CG: IT’S FINE.
CG: I JUST KEEP ON HAVING NIGHTMARES.
CG: IT’S FINE.
TG: repetition definitely makes things sound more believable
TG: repetition definitely makes things sound more believable
TG: what kind of nightmares
CG: YOU DON’T HAVE TO THERAPIZE ME, ROSE ALREADY DOES.
TG: so you dont want to talk about it?
CG: JUST
CG: LOTS OF DEATH.
CG: SAME AS BEFORE.
CG: ONLY THIS TIME IT'S EVEN MORE INTENSE.
CG: SOMETIMES WHEN I WAKE UP, I HAVE TO WASH MY HANDS BECAUSE I STILL FEEL LIKE I HAVE BLOOD ON THEM.
CG: MOST OF THE TIME, I JUST CRY WHEN I WAKE UP THOUGH.
CG: OR YELL.
CG: I'M PRETTY SURE MY NEIGHBOURS THINK I'VE GONE MAD.
TG: mine think ive always been mad
CG: THEY’D BE RIGHT.
TG: dont worry about them
TG: who gives a shit about neighbours
CG: NOW I ALMOST FEEL BAD FOR YOUR NEIGHBOURS.
TG: guess im not secretly a sweetheart then?
CG: YOU ARE.
TG: damn
TG: seriously though
TG: that all sounds pretty horrible
TG: maybe you need someone with you when you wake up
TG: you could ask somebody to move in with you
CG: I GUESS I COULD ASK TEREZI.
CG: BUT SHE’LL LICK EVERYTHING.
TG: it doesnt have to be terezi
CG: NO, I THINK I’LL ASK HER.
TG: alright
TG: how bout that trip now
CG: YES, HOW CAN WE PULL THIS OFF?
CG: YOU CAN HARDLY PICK ME UP AT MY HOUSE.
CG: IN YOUR OBNOXIOUS RED PORSCHE WITH A FUCKING SBAHJ PICTURE ON IT.
TG: dont knock dieter
CG: YOU NAMED YOUR PORSCHE DIETER.
TG: was that a question
CG: A HORRIFIED STATEMENT.
CG: HOW ABOUT WE MEET WHERE WE SHOT THE LAST SCENE IN OUR FILM?
CG: AND TRY NOT TO ATTRACT TOO MUCH ATTENTION ON THE WAY THERE.
TG: yeah that should work
TG: alright
TG: see you soon
TG: honey
TG: sweetie doll
TG: my moon in an otherwise black night sky
TG: were married did you forget
CG: HOW COULD I FORGET?
TG: you have to give me an obnoxious pet name
CG: I DON’T THINK I HAVE TO DO ANYTHING.
TG: awwww
CG: THAT ONE DOUCHE WHO GAVE ME THE RING.
TG: thats the spirit
CG: GOODBYE.
TG: ciao

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pester ing turntechGodhead [TG] --

Chapter End Notes

Typing quirks are horrible and formatting pesterlogs is horrible too. I have so much respect for Hussie.
I’m not surprised my buddy, I mean husband, wanted to hug you

“I just had the best idea ever, move over Einstein or whatever. It’s Dave Strider who’s a genius now,” Dave says in lieu of hello when he enters your car.

“Hello, Dave.” You start the car.

“Yeah, yeah, hello, snugglypuff. Anyway, you know how I have super important big name celebrity BFFs in the film business?”

“If this is going in the direction of a porno, I want nothing to do with it.” You squint suspiciously at him.

“Eyes on the road. And I can’t believe that’s the first thing that came to your mind.”

“Last time I made a film, you suggested several times that we should absolutely just make it into a porno.”

“Ha, yeah, that was the best idea ever too.”

“Exactly my point.”

“Okay, so this is the second-best idea,” he concedes.

“You mean it’s worse than the porno idea?”

“Only by a teeny tiny bacteria-sized bit. Anyway, what do you always say when you present an idea? Right, ‘Behold:’ I should totally hook you up with one of my big business buddies to make a movie. You could work together and it’d make it seem less like I’m the sugar daddy who’s the only reason you were successful. That’s such bull, I keep on hearing people say those blasphemous things.”

“Instead your buddy will be the reason I’m successful?”

“Son, you and I know how it is in the real world.” You shake your head at his words, reluctantly fond. He’s so full of shit. “Let’s not kid ourselves, connections are more important than how good you actually are. Movies with big names but with ‘The Room’ levels of quality—okay, maybe not that bad—are more successful than actual Oscar-worthy movies that nobody cares about. My plan at least would separate our names a bit, you know, make you independent. Because you are a strong independent little shouty guy who don’t need no hunky man.”

You frown at the street. You should’ve thought of that. And as if that wasn’t bad enough, Dave saying it just makes it hard to ignore that he is actually a really good friend. And all you ever do is yell at him, suppress your crush on him and of course be haunted by your past.

You throw him a look.

You apparently took too long to answer because he continues, “I know a couple of guys who make the cheesiest romcoms known to mankind. You’d eat that shit up, coprophilia and all. And you could work together with them. I honestly can’t believe you’re still hesitating when some fictional chick probably named Ashley is just waiting to fall in love in the quirkiest way.”

“You say I’m a strong independent man, but can’t make a movie on my own?”
He opens his mouth, closes it again, hesitates. “Buddy. Pal. You are perfectly talented and good at what you do and amazing and all kinds of positive adjectives, but, you’ve never made a whole full-length movie before. I just thought a bit of support couldn’t hurt. The last time you made something, you know, the short film, you seemed, not overworked but like something bigger would be a very big step.”

“Okay, okay, I get it. I am not nor have I ever at any point in my life been overwhelmed, but, I guess…” You take a deep breath, but come to find you aren’t even angry. You’ve had too many similar conversations with Dave and too many shared secret truths to really be bothered by him saying something like this. While you do sometimes still have trouble reading him despite the confusing memories you have, there is a certain closeness now that you hadn’t even registered. You hadn’t thought about it until now, but him deeply caring about you and genuinely wanting the best for you is something that years of experience with him have drilled into your brain. “It actually is a good idea. Because I want to work together with interesting, experienced directors, not because I can’t handle myself.”

“That’s not what I meant.”

“It’s all right, Jesus. Or, Jegus.”

“Jegus?”

You shake your head. “Never mind. Isn’t it time for you to make an inappropriate joke?”

“Right now? Why?” His voice goes into a faux-stressed tone. “What’s with this pressure?”

“No pressure, but we’ve exchanged ten lines or something and you haven’t made an inappropriate joke.”

“Well, thinking of an inappropriate joke on command is hard. You know what else is hard though?”

You raise your eyebrows and pretend you’re thinking about the question. “A lot of things, I assume. That diamond safe you mentioned containing your heart, for example.”

“You know it, babe.” He pulls his shades down and you assume he winks at you, not that you can look at him too much with you driving the car. “So who’s this guy we’re visiting?”

“He’s name is Equius. He lived with us on Alternia. He’s part of the ongoing ‘bring the whole shit crew back together, even though they’re all assholes’ plan.”

“Right, the one Rose told me about. She said it is a ‘team effort’ now, but I haven’t really seen anybody give a shit about it other than my honeyfluffball. That’s you, by the way.”

“Those lazy fuckers would rather sit around until they drown in their own urine before they do anything useful and it’ll stay that way unless they remember, but I’m going to do this with or without help,” you declare. “Some people did tell me I could ask them for specific support if I ever needed something. But it bothers me that neither Terezi nor Rose are too enthusiastic about this plan. Okay, so people can get fucked up if they’re told, worse than what happened to me, fine, but it’s not like I’m telling them everything. My plan is totally sensible, it’s not my fault they wouldn’t recognize sensible if it punched them in the crotch.”

He shrugs. “I’m all behind you. I have only a vague idea of what we’re doing, but I’m behind you anyway. I’m supporting this shit like an enthusiastic soccer mom supports her child even though he’s kind of shit at throwing the ball into the goal.”
“You don’t throw anything when you’re playing soccer.”

Dave gasps. “How dare you imply I don’t know everything there is to know about the sports. Of course you don’t throw the balls in soccer, that’s what the bat is for. It was a joke. Irony, ever heard of it?”

“No, Dave. I have in fact never heard of irony. Please explain it to me.”

“That’s when you say something you don’t actually mean, like what I just said.”

“Why would someone do something like that? What reason do people have for not being sincere other than somebody paying them to pretend to be married to them?” The moment you say it, you notice how the sunlight reflects off your ring. You’re still not really used to it, even though you’ve had it for a while now.

“No idea. I’m glad that you mentioned that though. I feel like we should give some kind of update on how the whole ‘promised to each other for the rest of our lives’ thing is going. At least a selfie.”

“What is it with you and selfies? Do you really need to fill the world with pictures of your face from the same fucking angle every time? It’s like you’re afraid of showing the left side of your face.”

“I make my fans’ day when I post pictures of myself.” He makes a gesture with his hands that you assume means ‘not my fault’.

“I can’t even tell if you’re being ironic. Can you just take a selfie while I’m driving? It should be enough with me in the background looking vaguely happy.”

“Okay.” He takes out his phone. “Smile. Or look vaguely happy or whatever floats your boat. I guess you gotta go with the flow.”

You smile at the street while he takes a picture of himself pointing at you and making a thumbs up. You ask, “Does it look as awkward as taking it felt?”

“What are you talking about, it’s awesome. Future generations will talk about this picture. It’ll be known as The Great Selfie Disaster. Why disaster you ask? Because once people see it, they’ll be reminded of how they’re not the ones dating either of us and they’ll just give up. The wise thing to do now would be to not post it, but I can’t deny anyone this glory. What should the caption be?”

“I don’t care. What you really should think about instead is your actual coming-out.”

“My actual coming-out?”

“Believe it or not, there are better ways of coming out than hiring some guy to play your boyfriend and hoping people figure you’re gay even though you actually aren’t. I know, shocking. Don’t you think it’s time to do it right? Make it official? There are definite advantages to actually directly coming out.”

He leans his head on the car window. “I guess you’re right. But… I don’t even really know if I’m not gay. It’s not like there are rainbows coming out of your ass when you’re gay, even if that’d be weirdly hilarious, some higher power should get on with making that happen. If I don’t know what I am, how can I tell people what I am? Shit’s more convoluted than complicated film plots could ever be and yes, even that complicated one you’re thinking of right now.”

“I always understand every film I watch, even yours, even though they’re devoid of logic. And if
you don’t know what you are, you can just say that.” You shrug. “Come out as somebody who
doesn’t know his sexuality.”

“Sure. Like a guy walking into a room, going ‘hey, guys, I have absolutely no idea what is going on’
and leaving. Sounds real helpful.”

“You’d be able to be completely honest. And I bet there are a lot of other people who feel the same
way. You’d be a good celebrity example as somebody who feels comfortable enough to admit he
doesn’t really know.”

“I’m not though.”

“Not comfortable enough? That might come with an official coming-out though. I’m not saying you
have to, but it’s a good idea.”

He’s quiet for a few seconds after that. “I guess there’s no harm in it. It’s not like somebody’s gonna
go, ‘your coming out burned my crops, how will I support my family now?’”

“So you’re going to do it?”

“Yeah.”

“Right now?”

“Right now?”

“Why not?” you ask back.

“Yeah, okay.”

He starts typing something on his phone. And keeps on typing and typing. You lean back, just
focusing on driving, enjoying the feeling of the sun shining through the window on your skin. You
feel more relaxed now than when you’re lying in your dark bedroom trying to make yourself fall
asleep. You’re thankfully not about to fall asleep though.

Eventually you can’t contain your curiosity anymore. “Are you writing a blog post or a book? Why
is it so long?”

“I’m writing the hot new romcom, just for you, babe. This story’s so romantic you’ll shit your pants.
You won’t believe how Generic Chick Number 413 falls in love this time.”

“I already am in disbelief.”

“It’s so unbelievable it leaves an echo in the space time continuum and makes you retroactively
surprised before you’ve even read it. That’s called Retroactive Bafflement Effect and it’s a free extra
that comes with my romcom.”

“Incredible.”

“Exactly. This shit is not credible,” Dave says, the focus of his attention still on his phone.

“You’ve been writing for a while now,” you inform him. “We’re almost there.”

“Is this your way of telling me you’re curious?”

“Maybe a bit.”
“I’ll be done once you’ve parked the car and then you can read it on your own. Trust me, I’m the king of time, I got the best timing.”

“Not exactly king, but okay.”

You park the car and it turns out he was right about the timing, not that you’re surprised. You read the draft and find it contains more rambling and jokes than actual content, but you’d expected that. All in all, it is not a bad post though. You offer a few improvements that he listens to.

He asks, “Anything else?”

“I’d leave it like this. You can upload.”

“Yeah, okay.” He doesn’t move.

“Are you too nervous?”

“I have nerves of diamond, too. Just read it over again, though.”

You shake your head. “It’s good. I’ve already read it a couple of times, it’s not going to magically transform into something shitty, like a SBAHJ script.”

“But it sounds weird.”

“No, it doesn’t. I promise I’d tell you. I’d rip it to pieces with the ferocity of ten thousand bears whose mother you’ve just insulted if I had to. Just don’t upload it if you’re not ready. I’m not going to pressure you into uploading. In fact, this is me aggressively telling you to not upload it if you’re not comfortable. Don’t you fucking dare.”

He’s quiet for a moment. “No, you’re right. We’re doing this, man. We’re making it happen. Specifically, I’m making it happen right this second. There, I uploaded it. Now I want to see nothing less than you doing a cheerleading routine for me, but only in the skimpiest cheerleader outfit we can find.”

“In your dreams.”

“How did you know what I dream about?”

“Intuition. Let’s go.” You get out of the car. “It’s over there.”

“An animal shelter?”

“I was surprised too when I found out. It’s funny how these things sometimes turn out.”

“Let’s go meet your old bud. Or our old bud?”

You really wish Dave didn’t keep on showing how much he doesn’t remember everything that happened. It’s still so real in your brain. All of the years of friendship between those two that didn’t actually happen. Because they didn’t happen in the alpha timeline, at least you don’t think so. And everybody who wasn’t in the alpha timeline doesn’t matter to the universe. It’s all a cosmic joke and the longer you think about it, the angrier you get.

So you try to avoid talking about it outside of Rose’s sessions.

“In some cases.”
“Hey, we should get a cat for you.”

“They’d throw me out of the apartment. Those uncultured asses of swines can’t appreciate pets.”
You open the door to the main building. There’s dogs barking in the distance, but there’s no living soul anywhere to be seen. The whole room smells like wet animals.

“They wouldn’t have to know. You said you’ve always wanted a cat. In the worst case, I could still buy you a house or something.”

“What the fuck? I can’t believe ‘I’ll buy you a house’ is your solution to anything.”

“Look at it like this: I convinced you to get a cat, so it’s my fault if you’re thrown out of your apartment. That’s why it’d be my responsibility to make sure you have somewhere to live and you know that responsible is my middle name. Dave Responsible Strider. Or if you don’t want me to buy a house I guess you could always just move in with me. I’m a big cat friend. Both cats and Kats. You know, Karkats.”

“Yes, I got that,” you answer distractedly.

“I just winked at you and you’re not even looking at me.”

“I was looking at that meowbeast over there. I mean cat.” You point at a small striped grey cat peering out of an opened door. It curiously takes a few steps forward in your direction.

Dave steps forward too and it hisses, but doesn’t step back. He slowly reaches out a hand and incredibly, surprisingly softly whispers, “Shh, don’t be scared.”

He crouches down with slow movements. The cat makes a small step forward and sniffs his hand. He carefully pets its small head with two fingers.

He looks back at you with an actual soft smile.

“It’s going to scratch you,” you tell him to cover up the unexplainable embarrassment you feel.

“No way.” The cat rubs its head against Dave’s hand as if it’s trying to support his words. “Oh my god, Karkat.”

“What?” The cat’s purring now and you can’t help but crouch down next to Dave.

“This cat is you.” He’s petting it with both hands now.

You feel yourself flush. “What?”

“It’s grumpy and hostile at first, but then you pet it and it loves you.”

“That doesn’t make any sense.”

“Shh, it does. My point is: You should get this cat. It’d be totally adorable. You and a cat? Undefeatable team of adorableness. All of your enemies are quivering already. More than usually.”

The little cat licks his hand. “See?”

“If it loves you so much, why don’t you get it?”

“I already have you.” Dave picks the cat up and it doesn’t even struggle, just rubs its head against his hands. He holds it out for you. “Besides, I’d just give it a stupid name and you can’t let that happen.”
You take the cat from him. “It probably already has a name.” It rubs its little head against your fingers when you pet it and purrs. You smile.

You look up at Dave and he’s smiling too.

A third voice says, “Actually, this one doesn’t have a name yet.”

You recognize that voice instantly. “Nepeta!”

“Um, hello? Yes, that’s me. I’m Nepeta!”

You hold the cat out for Dave to take and when he does, you run to Nepeta. You ignore her baffled face and almost knock her over with your hug.

It lasts about two seconds before she pats your back and starts squirming. It is one of the hardest things you’ve ever done, especially when she still feels the same she used to in your arms, but you step back. When you look at her face, she looks painfully human, but very much alive. Tears spring to your eyes faster than you could have said ‘I never cry’. You swallow. “Nepeta,” you whisper, unable to say anything of actual logical value.

You’d been prepared for a reunion, but you still feel like you are having a hard time breathing. You should’ve remembered her earlier, you’re such a failure for forgetting her at all. You still love her, of course you do. It’s fainter now because you’re the worst, but you could never not love this girl. This girl who thinks you’re a total stranger.

Nepeta rubs her neck. “Are you… okay?” She glances at Dave, then back at you.

“Are you?” you ask back.

“Yes?”

“I didn’t know you were alive!”

“I’m sorry… If we’ve ever met I don’t remember.”

You take a long look at her and then shake your head slowly. “Right, no. We’ve never met. I just…”

Dave steps in. “We heard about the great work you’re doing here at the animal shelter. I’m not surprised my buddy, I mean husband, wanted to hug you. He gets passionate about animals.” He puts one hand on your arm with the cat still in his arms.

Her face lights up. “Oh, well, I do too! And thank you!” Nepeta smiles at both of you. She seems happier than you’ve ever seen her before. “Do you want to take her home with you?”

“…Who?”

“The cat!”

Before you can say no, Dave speaks up. “Yes!”

“I can’t do that. It really isn’t allowed in my apartment.”

He holds the little cat up. “Look at her, she’s so cute!”

Nepeta pipes up, “She is!”
“See, even Ne... yeah, this chick agrees.”

“Nepeta thinks everything from a pile of shit shaped like a smiley to the fucking horrorterrors is cute. I can’t take a cat home with me, cute or not. That’s not why we’re here anyway. We, uh...” Great, why didn’t you think of a good excuse beforehand? You can hardly focus on the conversation, let alone come up with an excuse, with all the emotions making your entire body itch to do something. Cry, yell, tear the universe apart, hug her, you don’t know what, but you want to do something.

“Karkat here wants to visit his old buddy, you know, the guy with the almost Latin horse name.”

Damn, you should have thought of that. It was the truth after all.

“Equius? He should be back soon. I could make you tea in the meantime, if you want some?”

You both agree to drink tea and sit down in a small back room with her. There are at least three cats running around, which is exactly the kind of life you’ve always wanted Nepeta to have. Now that the initial shock has subsided, relief kicks in. Relief that she’s alive and you get to see her and hear her talk and she seems to have a good life and she even gets to be close to Equius.

You spend the following time trying to find out everything there is to know about her life, while ignoring how weird she now looks with human skin and brown hair and fucking freckles. And ignoring how that makes you feel. She met Equius a couple of years ago when he still didn’t really have an idea what he wanted from life. They became ‘best furriends’, as she puts it—you suppress the urge to correct her and say they’re moirails—and now they both own the shelter and work here. She tells you she couldn’t imagine anything else she’d rather do, even if it isn’t always easy. Dave offers to give money to the shelter, which she accepts all while bashfully thanking him over and over and telling him that he really doesn’t have to give them anything.

This prompts Dave to bring up the fucking cat again. “Don’t worry about it, it’s payment for Karkat’s new cat.”

“What cat, asshole?” You demonstratively stop petting the cat you met before who is now lying in your lap.

“Look at that face and tell me you can resist it.”

“I can absolutely resist your face.”

“I meant the cat’s face.”

“Right.” You look at the cat. She has her eyes closed and is purring loudly. She seems to notice that you’ve stopped petting and stops to look up at you in a reproachful manner.

Dave mentions, “You could give her a cutesy name and finally let the romcom protagonist captured in the fleshy prison known as your body be free. That’s everything you ever dreamed of as a child.”

“Not everything,” you mumble. But the idea has wormed its way into the part of your brain that can’t get rid of ideas until you’ve tried them. While it wasn’t ‘everything you ever dreamed of as a child’, it was one of those things you’d always wanted to try when you grew up. “She is a very sweet cat I guess...”

Nepeta chimes in. “She knows how to use a cat toilet and she likes cuddling a lot! As far as first cats go, she’s a dream.”

Dave nods with a fake pout on his face.
“Ugh, alright, fine. Curse you for being so convincing. I guess I will take her home with me. But if I’m thrown out of the apartment, it’s your fault.”

“I’ll deal.”

Nepeta gleefully claps her hands. “Great, we’re always happy when one of our babies finds a new home. You purrrobably don’t have anything to take care of a cat, but don’t worry. You can buy efurrrything you need from us.”

She stands up and starts walking around, collecting things like a feeding bowl and cat food and ridiculously colorful cat toys.

Dave asks you, “So what do you want to name her? Do you want to commemorate anyone with the name?”

You think about it. “But who? Everybody has some kind of sob story, including myself. Where would I even begin…? No, that’s not a good idea. Maybe I could name her after one of the protagonists of one of my favorite books…” You consider Juliet or Amelie as names. It seems you’re still attracted to six letter names.

“While that is a positively endearing idea—how do you keep on doing adorable things at this frequency—you could also name her Catlin. You know, instead of Caitlin or something. Because she’s a cat.”

“I got that. You really don’t have to explain every pun to me.” You shake your head at his teasing. Of course you’re not adorable, you’re shouty and angry, but does he really have to keep on saying that?

“And?”

You tilt your head back and consider it. You shrug. “I guess that’s not such a bad idea.”

“Ha. Really?”

“I’m as incredulous as you.”

Nepeta returns from some corner of the store, carrying way more than she should be able to carry. You both jump up to help her.

Dave comments, “Damn, do you work out?”

“Yeah, I often work out with Equius!” She looks at the clock. “He should be here any second meow!”

As if he was just waiting behind the door for a good prompt, Equius actually enters the room. You drop what you’re holding—thankfully bouncy balls and shit like that, do you even really need all of that for a cat?—and walk over to him to hug him firmly. He hesitates before putting a hand on your back. “Hello, Karkat?”

You’re tearing up again, of course. You couldn’t control your tears if your life depended on it, which it used to. But you can’t help it. You’ve promised Equius so much, shared so much with him, helped him so much. You’re just so glad he’s alive and there in front of you.

Equius speaks again. “It has been quite some time since we’ve last seen each other, but I have to say tears seem like a strong reaction.”
“You didn’t even yell ‘strong’,” you get out. “But I guess you didn’t do that in high school either…”

“That would have been strange…” Equius still sounds like he’d rather not be having body contact with a crying casual acquaintance.

You slowly let him go. “Tell me about your life now.”

You talk to Equius and Nepeta for hours. It makes you feel less and less like you’re going to cry and you start making jokes and get them to smile. It’s actually very nice.

One time when Equius and Nepeta are distracted, Dave leans over and mumbles, “How are you, you know, emotionally?”

You flash him a small smile in response.

But it’s also obvious that they wouldn’t believe you if you told them the truth now and that they still think of you as a pretty weird acquaintance. When the sky outside gets darker and darker they eventually start hinting how late it is and wondering if you don’t have a long drive home and that you should probably start the drive now. You don’t want to leave them; you’ve only just found them after all. But there’s only so long you can talk to people if they consider you an acquaintance and they’ve tired of you for now.

Eventually you give in. You ask them for their pesterchum names and resolve to visit them again and tell them everything once they trust you more. It turns out Nepeta doesn’t have a pesterchum, which could explain why nobody found it. So you make sure you have other means of contacting her and reluctantly leave with Dave and of course, Catlin.

It’s completely dark when you start the drive home. Dave yawns next to you and it’s weirdly adorable. You have to yawn too.

Dave asks, “You still having trouble sleeping? I can drive if you’re too tired.”

“It’s not that long a drive. Yeah, I’m kind of tired, but it’s gotten better.” You shrug. “I’m getting better at dealing with everything. I expected this whole meeting to go much worse than it did. Sure, I still have nightmares, but I don’t feel awful when I’m actually awake, which I guess is an improvement. Oh, I forgot to tell you that I asked Terezi to move in with me yesterday and she said she could, among some other very Terezi-y things which were as annoying as you could possibly imagine them being. She’ll only be able to live with me for a little while, but I think that should be enough. It’s not like I haven’t been having nightmares my whole life. I can deal.”

“This whole past lives thing really screwed us up, didn’t it? Fucked us right over like the best porn stars couldn’t do.”

“I’ve thought about that and I don’t know if we wouldn’t be fucked up if we were just normal people too, or as normal as we can get. At least me.” You search for the right words. “I mean, I just have so much self-hate, I’d be at least depressed even without paradox space flipping us off with more hate than I could muster in my best moments, and that’s a lot. It’s just… I grew up both on Earth and Alternia wanting to be different, that’s just a part of my personality I guess.”

“You mean because you were anorexic?”

“Yeah, and the blood thing that you know nothing about anymore. Maybe the constant worry about my blood transferred into this universe, but maybe I’m just that shithead who just can’t be content. I don’t know if that transfer theory is even possible at all or if I’m just doomed to being fucked up. I just hated seeing myself in the mirror and I hated other people looking at me. Anorexia actually has a
rather high death rate, the highest of mental illnesses apparently, and I knew that and sometimes I just accepted the possibility. You know, of dying. I didn’t actively want to kill myself, but I guess I just…” You stare unblinkingly at the street, voice emotionless. “Back then I accepted it as a possibility that wouldn’t bother me. But I don’t even know why I’m talking about this. It’s not like much worse things haven’t happened to me. It’s just so weird. I remember my past lives, but it’s like looking back on something that happened when you were, like, six years old. I don’t know how to feel. I fluctuate between dumb despair and almost emotionless acceptance. It’s so stupid. And I’m just so… disappointing.”

Dave makes a sound that sounds like disagreement, but doesn’t interrupt.

“So many of my past me’s have grown into all kinds of people, sometimes really strong people that could deal with every vomit-crusted knife paradox space threw at them. And here I am. Ordinary human Karkat who has tons of self-doubt, doesn’t even care about his life and cries easily. What even was the point of everything? You’d think one thing I’d gain is personality growth, but no.”

Dave is looking at you even though he probably can’t see much in the dark. “We’re not fictional characters, we don’t have to have character growth to be valid as people. This is real life, no matter how much we all wish we were in one of your wacky romcoms. And I can’t say I know much about how you were before, but maybe you’ve grown more than you think. Character growth’s stealthy like James Bond can’t even dream of being.”

You suppose that makes sense.

“And about the other thing… There’s no feelings police running around telling you to justify all of your emotions or you can’t feel them anymore, thousand dollar fine and all. Not everything you feel has to make sense and I guess maybe it’s better not to analyze everything to death. It’s difficult to deal with the alligator-filled river of shit you have to wade through. You couldn’t find one single person who’d say you had it easy and normally there’s always that one asshole who disagrees with everything.”

“That’s me.”

“I thought that too at first, but most of what you say actually makes sense, no offense. I’m talking about the kind of asshole who disagrees just to disagree, fuck logic right up the ass. My original point was though… My original point has long been forgotten, something only the elders speak of in hushed tones while the children ask with wide eyes, ‘What is an original point?’ I’m sure it was something close to ‘you’re pretty great’ though.”

You glance at him with an open mouth. “What is this, a genuine compliment? And without a long-winded metaphor too?”

“Yeah, and you better say a nice thank you before I take it back.”

You grin. “Thank you.”

“You should kiss me, you know, as thank you.”

You roll your eyes. “Very funny.”

“Yeah. Very funny. That’s me, I’m the funniest guy you’ll ever meet.”

“How’s Catlin?”

Dave looks at the backseat where Catlin is in a cat cage for the drive. “I don’t think she enjoys the
cat cage. Can’t blame her, I wouldn’t like being in the cage either.”

“You’re too big anyway.”

“And not kinky enough. With you I might feel different though.”

“Catlin seems to not feel the same.”

“I’m not sure, but I feel like that could be interpreted as bestiality joke.”

“Absolutely not! I’ve had this cat for, what, five hours and you’ve already made a bestiality joke? I can’t believe it.”

“All in all, just because of that, I’d call this trip a full success.”
Thank you guys so so much for over 1000 kudos. Over 1000!! This is so incredible! I never expected this fic to become this popular!
I'm so happy!!

-- turmtchGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] —
TG: hey so apparently no ones heard from you for a while
TG: which is unusual because its usually harder to ignore you than get a hold of you
TG: so what is up did you find a better group of friends
TG: are they actually funny
TG: in comparison to us
TG: who are all just pretending were funny while were actually dead inside
TG: have you checked our little memo lately
TG: everybodys wondering about you
TG: okay
TG: theyre not always showing it that obviously but thats my interpretation
TG: and every interpretation is valid
TG: death of the author and all
TG: if you were here youd tell me that doesnt make any sense
TG: now i gotta tell that to myself
TG: damn
TG: youre making me look like a hopeless stalker ex girlfriend here
TG: okay so im going to stop messaging you for now
TG: to not make my desperate crush too obvious
TG: yep
TG: okay its the next day now
TG: when will my husband return from war
TG: i just said that as a joke but i just realized you actually are my husband
TG: crazy shit
TG: im still not used to the idea
TG: somebody gotta write a book for this kind of shit
TG: fake marriage 101
TG: how to cope with accidentally tying the knot
TG: for dummies
TG: there are books for everything why not this
TG: this isnt more or less important than giving your dog the perfect do over
TG: that dogs not going to win any beauty contests linda no matter how much you love dressing him up
TG: no offense
TG: there are just some ugly ass dogs out there
TG: speaking of pets
TG: hows yours
TG: oh shit
TG: did she kill you
TG: is that why you haven't answered
TG: the kitty of death has claimed another victim
TG: wait
TG: the Kitty Of Death™ has claimed another victim
TG: much better
TG: did she get run over and now you're so traumatized you can't answer
TG: tz isn't answering either i just asked her what's up
TG: i guess she could be at work
TG: oh
TG: the Kitty Of Death™ has claimed two victims so far
TG: can she be stopped
TG: did terezi get run over
TG: oh no wait i just figured it out
TG: you and tz have finally hit it off
TG: that's why neither of you has answered
TG: you're too busy with steamy sexy superb sweetass sex
TG: well
TG: congratulations
TG: i knew it would happen eventually
TG: im proud of you young grasshopper
TG: you managed to hit that
TG: and don't worry im not mad that you started a relationship while married to me
TG: that'd be dumb anyway
TG: you're a free person
TG: what kind of husband would i be if i didn't want you to fuck the girl of your dreams
TG: if the chemistry is there you just gotta let the sparks fly
TG: wink
TG: if you know what i mean
TG: wink again
TG: yeah so don't let me disturb your sweet sweet love making or whatever
TG: just message me whenever
TG: if nobody hears from you for a while i guess i'll come by your apartment to make sure you're not dead
TG: that'd be quite the scandal
TG: id be the main suspect
TG: they might even start finding out about the other murders i've committed
TG: yeah bye for today
TG: okay so tz just wrote to me and apparently you're not getting it on like two nymphomaniac exhibitionist rabbits getting filmed by a perverse nature documentarist
TG: i take back everything i wrote
TG: or parts of it
TG: tz seemed to find the idea of the two of you together hilarious so i guess be offended or something
TG: but tz has no idea what you're up to either so what the hell
TG: she said you've been in your room for a long time now
TG: and only come out to do the bare necessities to survive
TG: im guessing you're not playing minecraft in there
TG: and i've had my fair share of long sessions of
TG: arm wrestling with myself
TG: unloading the gun
TG: slamming the ham
TG: playing peekaboo with my best foot
TG: taming the shrew
TG: making mayo
TG: whacking the one eyed weasel
TG: petting the snake
TG: shaking hands with little dave
TG: or i guess big dave
TG: yeah
TG: but this seems excessive
TG: not the list though that's probably excessive too
TG: what guy wants to hear about his husbands masturbation
TG: i meant the amount of time you're spending in solitary confinement
TG: i know tz has been trying to talk to you
TG: but i guess maybe i should head over and try to do it myself
TG: no pun intended
CG: WHAT THE FUCK.
TG: it speaks
CG: DO YOU HAVE NOTHING BETTER TO DO IN YOUR FREE TIME THAN WRITE
WHOLE NOVELS TO ME?
TG: you don't have to read all of that
CG: TOO LATE.
CG: YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO BE SO WORRIED.
CG: I AM STILL VERY MUCH ALIVE AND INTEND TO STAY THAT WAY.
CG: AND I'M NOT DATING TEREZI, FOR FUCK'S SAKE.
TG: but you want to
CG: RIGHT NOW, I DON'T WANT TO DATE ANYONE.
CG: I CAN'T JUST LET GO OF EVERYBODY ELSE I LOVED LIKE "OH SURE, THAT
WAS FUN AND ALL, BUT ACTUALLY FUCK YOU."
CG: AND EVEN IF I COULD DO THAT
CG: ME AND TEREZI DON'T ALWAYS WORK OUT.
CG: YOU DESCRIBED HER AS MY "DREAM GIRL", BUT IN THIS LIFE I'D GOTTEN
OVER HER BEFORE I GOT ALL OF THE MEMORIES.
CG: I CAN'T SAY I'M "OVER HER" NOW, BUT I CAN'T REALLY SAY ANYTHING
RIGHT NOW AT ALL ANYWAY.
TG: so what were you doin
TG: what were you making happen
CG: SOMEBODY WHO'S NEVER READ SBAHJ WOULD BE SO CONFUSED BY MOST
OF WHAT YOU SAY.
TG: who hasn't read sbahj these days
TG: im big business baby
CG: THAT YOU ARE.
CG: RECENTLY I'VE BEEN CONFUSING EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED MORE AND
MORE.
CG: NO, ACTUALLY
CG: I'VE NEVER REALLY KNOWN WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED IN WHAT
TIMELINE.
CG: I JUST KNEW THAT SOMETHING HAPPENED, NOT WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE
OR AFTERWARDS.
CG: THE CONNECTION WAS ALL FUCKED UP.
CG: AND THAT DIDN'T BOTHER ME AT FIRST BECAUSE I WAS STILL TRYING TO
WRAP THE PITUFL PILE OF MELTED PLASTIC KNOWN AS MY BRAIN AROUND
THE IDEA OF EVERYTHING.
CG: THEN I GOT CLEARER AND CLEARER MEMORIES.
CG: BUT IT WAS LIKE KNOWING ALL OF THE SCENES THAT HAPPEN IN YOUR FAVORITE MOVIES, BUT NOT KNOWING TO WHAT FILM AND IN WHAT ORDER THEY BELONG.
CG: I STARTED READING UP ON MEMORIES, SEEING IF IT’S POSSIBLE TO CLEAR THEM UP
CG: YOU KNOW, LIKE THAT EMDR EYE THING.
TG: i think i know what you’re talking about
CG: THEN I READ THAT MEMORIES CHANGE IN YOUR BRAIN EVERY TIME YOU REMEMBER THEM AGAIN
CG: AND I DIDN’T WANT THAT.
CG: SO I STARTED WRITING EVERYTHING DOWN.
CG: NOT IN ORDER, OF COURSE.
CG: AND NOT ALL OF IT MAKES SENSE.
CG: BUT AT LEAST IT’S WRITTEN DOWN SOMEWHERE.
CG: AND IT TOOK ME HOURS UPON HOURS OF SITTING THERE JUST SORT OF
CG: LOST IN MY MIND
CG: SO I LOST TRACK OF TIME A BIT.
TG: for several days
CG: IT WASN’T EASY AND TRYING TO MAKE ANY SENSE OF WHAT I’D WRITTEN DOWN AND BRINGING EVERYTHING INTO ORDER AND CONTEXT WAS A BITCH IN THE ASS TOO.
CG: BUT I FEEL BETTER NOW.
CG: I CAN ACTUALLY FOCUS NOW.
CG: I THINK THOSE DAYS WERE ACTUALLY SPENT AS WELL AS DAYS CAN POSSIBLY BE SPENT.
TG: that still sounds like you were jerking off
CG: ALL THOSE METAPHORS AND YOU STILL USED “JERKING OFF” THIS TIME?
TG: art can’t be forced
TG: are you feeling okay
TG: i know you said you feel better but better doesn’t necessarily equal okay
CG: I DON’T KNOW.
CG: SOMETIMES I’M OKAY.
CG: SOMETIMES I’M NOT.
CG: BUT THE TIMES WHEN I’M OKAY ARE MORE AND MORE FREQUENT NOW.
TG: are you done with your writing down your memories thing
CG: FOR NOW. I MIGHT LATER REMEMBER SOMETHING I HAVEN’T THOUGHT OF YET.
CG: DID ANYTHING IMPORTANT HAPPEN WHILE I WASN’T PAYING ATTENTION?
CG: DO WE STILL HAVE THE SAME PRESIDENT OR HAS HE BEEN REPLACED BY ALIENS?
TG: i wouldn’t know
TG: if they’re really good we won’t notice until it’s too late
CG: YOU HAVEN’T TOLD ME HOW EVERYBODY REACTED TO YOUR POST YET.
TG: well it varies
TG: obviously
TG: but it seems almost nobody just doesn’t care
TG: chances are if you throw a rock in a busy street it’ll hit someone who has a very strong opinion on me
TG: i am continually in awe at how much people give a shit
CG: I AM CONTINUALLY IN AWE AT HOW MUCH PEOPLE DON’T GIVE A SHIT.
CG: BUT IN THIS CASE I AGREE WITH YOU.
TG: my name is a trending hashtag once again
TG: its easy when all the gossip about you is neatly put together into one tag
TG: some people think what i said is a sign of how my generation is too liberal or whatever
TG: and they dont know what they want
TG: like yeah somebody not being sure about their sexuality definitely is a sign of a whole country getting fucked
TG: me not being sure where i want to stick my dick is going to cause a recession damn
TG: but we knew wed get those reactions
CG: FUCK THOSE PEOPLE.
TG: but a lot of people also find it inspirational apparently
CG: SEE, YOU HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PEOPLE.
CG: DON’T YOU FEEL GOOD NOW?
TG: oh yeah my body consists entirely of bliss
TG: though id feel even better if you blew me
CG: WHAT IS IT WITH YOU AND SEX JOKES?
CG: YOU REALLY NEED TO GET LAID.
TG: so do you
TG: hey doesnt that give you an idea
CG: REGARDLESS OF WHAT YOU SEEM TO THINK, IRONIC FLIRTING IS NOT THAT FUNNY.
CG: ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU KEEP ON RAMMING IT DOWN EVERYBODY’S THROATS LIKE YOU’RE TRYING TO CHOKE THEM TO DEATH ON BAD INNUENDOS.
TG: ok so i guess
TG: you want me to stop
TG: alright sure
TG: of course
TG: im stopping
TG: anyway
TG: all in all
TG: i guess most people like the blog post
TG: if i wasnt too cool for punctuation id have used a question mark there
TG: i dont know if most people or a lot of people
CG: YOU CAN NEVER BE TOO COOL FOR PUNCTUATION.
TG: spoken like a true nerd
CG: SOMETIMES YOU USE PUNCTUATION, TOO.
TG: a wise man once said
TG: you can never be too cool for punctuation
TG: - plato
TG: dignified pimp slayer and rap god
TG: he had a significant influence on the art of dropping ill beats and sick verses
CG: AM I A WISE MAN NOW?
TG: well all i can tell you is that its not you whos being quoted on various news shows
CG: WHAT DID THEY QUOTE FROM THE POST?
TG: all kinds of stuff
TG: they often quoted the beginning
TG: you know
TG: “guys lets be ironically serious for a second. lets talk about sexuality. yes i just said that stick away your annoyed groans and pitchforks lets all chill here. im here to officially tell you i have no idea all like baby lets do it socrates style. am i gay am i straight am i a biped who knows certainly not me”
CG: ACTUALLY, I KNOW THAT ONE.
CG: YOU ARE A BIPED.
TG: they sometimes left out the baby lets do it socrates style
TG: which is kind of sad
TG: here i was showing off my sophisticated knowledge of philosophy and they thought it was too dirty
TG: all those poor kids whod have googled socrates
TG: now they wont have a chance
CG: IT REALLY IS A MODERN TRAGEDY.
TG: sometimes they quoted different parts
TG: "lets be real im not straight. girls are great they really are i even know some personally but does that mean i wanna get all up and closely acquainted with their naughty parts? maybe. im really not sure. and im mostly telling you this so some poor sap somewhere can be happy he isnt alone in the world or whatever. yeah look at me im a role model bring out the kids daddy strider is gonna teach you morals”
TG: ok they often leave out the last part
CG: YOU AREN’T REALLY SOMEBODY WHO CAN BE QUOTED ON FAMILY FRIENDLY SHOWS.
TG: goal accomplished
TG: oh and they liked
TG: “it appears human sexuality is more varied than a rainbow which seems fitting since rainbows are the ultimate sign of gayness unless youre a little girl or a unicorn or a leprechaun i guess”
TG: which
TG: doesnt sound as smooth when i reread it
CG: SINCE WHEN ARE YOU ACTIVELY CRITICAL OF ANYTHING YOU MAKE? EVEN IF IT WERE BAD, JUST PRETEND THAT WAS ON PURPOSE.
CG: FOR THE IRONIES.
TG: you are a bottomless well of wisdom
TG: and i am so glad to be married to you
CG: UGH, DON’T REMIND ME.
TG: nope karkat we are married and its beautiful
TG: full of joy and laughter
CG: YES, THE LAUGHTER IS COMING FROM OUR FRIENDS LAUGHING *AT* US.
TG: at least they know we arent actually dating
TG: just imagine if we had to act for them too
CG: YOU’RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.
CG: WE MIGHT HAVE TO FOR MY BROTHER THOUGH.
CG: HE’S BEEN PESTERING ME FOR A WHILE NOW
CG: TELLING ME IT’S TRIGGERING IN ALL KINDS OF WAYS TO MARRY SOMEONE WITHOUT INFORMING YOUR OWN BROTHER.
CG: HE STILL HASN’T LEARNED WHAT TRIGGERING MEANS, BUT FUCK ME IF THAT’S GOING TO STOP HIM.
TG: ill take you up on that
TG: no ignore that
TG: he sounds like someone id love to meet
TG: and for what its worth
TG: you probably shouldve told him
CG: EVERY MINUTE SPENT NOT TALKING TO HIM IS A MINUTE WORTH HOUSES OF GOLD.
TG: ouch
TG: im not your bro and i still feel burned
TG: no actually i am your bro but your soul bro not your blood bro
TG: no
TG: im your marriage bro
CG: I DON'T THINK I CAN KEEP ON IGNORING HIM.
TG: wait is that the guy with the cancer
CG: YES.
TG: youre ignoring your brother who has cancer and whos complaining because you didnt tell him about your wedding
CG: HE’S MUCH BETTER ALREADY. HE’S NOT EXACTLY DYING, OKAY? FAR FROM IT.
CG: AND ALL HE EVER DOES IS COMPLAIN.
CG: LEARNING TO IGNORE HIM WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON OF MY ENTIRE LIFE.
CG: EITHER WAY
CG: WE’LL HAVE TO VISIT HIM.
CG: THERE’S ONLY SO MUCH ONE CAN IGNORE THEIR SICK BROTHER WHEN HE HAS COMPLAINTS THAT ACTUALLY MAKE SENSE.
TG: sure tell me a time and a place im in
TG: id follow you into death my beloved
TG: no actually ignore that too
TG: damn this is hard
CG: ARE YOU FREE RIGHT NOW?
TG: as free as a bird if birds werent bound by gravity and mortality
TG: can we meet up where we met up last time?
TG: lets do it
CG: LET’S MAKE IT HAPPEN.
TG: hell
TG: fucking
TG: yes
TG: a sbahj quote is a perfect end note for everything
TG: wedding speech tax returns eulogy battle cry job interview orgy fanfiction dissertation restaurant
bill rap you name it
-- turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --
You thought I was flirting with him, with my husband right next to me

Chapter Notes

Believe it or not, but this fic isn't dead. This chapter took some time to get finished, but it's here and we're all happy now.

You must be the luckiest guy in existence.

It turns out Jim, Dave’s Hot Jealous Neighbour, works at Kankri’s hospital as a doctor. And you’re even luckier because he’s never had a shift all of the times you visited alone, but of course he does the one time Dave is with you. He offers to take you to Kankri’s room as if that was actually necessary or standard procedure and then does so despite your extensive protests.

Everybody you pass in the hospital stops to stare at you and Dave. Is there really so little to do in a hospital that everybody who works there can just stand around and gape all day? The romantic doctor dramas you watch on TV are never like this. A bald man in nurse clothes even takes a picture. Of you walking down a fucking hallway. People these days really don’t seem to have any hobbies anymore. God, you just wish you could go somewhere without everybody freaking out. Or if that’s not possible, just stay at home with your cat.

Jim stops. “All right, here is Mr. Vantas’ room. He can stay at home most of the time now, but sometimes he still has to sleep here.” He smiles at Dave for a few awkwardly long seconds and then at you for definitely less than a second.

You glare at him. “I know. I’m his brother.”

“I didn’t know he had a brother… He seems lonely sometimes.”

Does this guy think he can just go around making accusations of you being a bad brother? “Oh yeah? Now you’re just desperately making shit up. I’d be surprised if anybody actually managed to listen to him long enough to filter any kind of statement about his emotional well-being out of the confused babble he throws up all the time.”

The desperate asshole stares at you for a while, speechless because of your good argument, or maybe because you didn’t have to breathe once during that mini-rant. Victorious, you march past him, throwing the door to Kankri’s hospital room open.

You are greeted by bland white. White walls, floor, bed, window, everything’s white with Kankri in the middle looking small in his white hospital gown.

“All right, here I am now, shithead. Say something sensible.”

Kankri drops the book he was holding. “Karkat!”

“Yes, and fucking Dave is here too. Do you have any idea how much money some people would pay for a minute of Dave Strider’s time? You better fucking enjoy.”

Despite your words, you sit down next to Kankri’s bed and pet his arm awkwardly.
Dave pipes up from behind you. “Sup, Mr. Vantas.” He’s standing uncharacteristically straight. Then he fucking reaches out to shake Kankri’s hand. You’ve never seen Dave this polite.

Kankri shakes Dave’s hand gingerly. “Hello, Dave. Karkat, I do realize that everybody can make mistakes, but I have told you enough times now that you should knock before entering a room. Not to mention the swearing and yelling, but I will get to that later. Knocking is necessary to give the occupants of a room time to prepare, lest you end up catching them doing something they’d rather not let you see or startling them. A lot of people can be thrown back into a stressful situation by loud sudden noises, I hope you don’t presume that everybody has lived the exact same experiences as you or has the same problems as you do. Humanity is a very diverse species and you should respect all of its members.”

You turn to see how Dave reacts. He disappoints you by pretending he’s politely listening.

One of his conversational partners trying to get the other to silently gossip via judgy looks doesn’t even faze Kankri. “It doesn’t matter if you believe you know all of a room’s occupants and their experiences, you should always knock when you enter a room. There may always be surprises and you can’t expect to know everything about a person. Especially you, Karkat. You should know that you are not the kind of person that makes people want to openly talk about their life. So you need to be extra mindful of possible experiences others may have had that you don’t know about. This especially pertains to the awful language you tend to use.”

You decide insulting his husband should be enough to get a reaction out of Dave. When you look at him, he raises an eyebrow at you and then frowns.

“I might be forced to give examples of the kind of language Karkat uses, so tell me if you are triggered by the following: homicide; suicide; feces; vomit; blood; other bodily fluids; blasphemy; violence or threats of violence; ableism; the apocalypse; overestimation of one’s abilities; bad hygiene; downplaying or insults pertaining one’s intelligence, abilities, appearance…”

You tune him out after that. Leaning closer to Dave, you mumble, “That’s how he always is. Don’t expect to be able to get his actual attention without stripping and doing Swan Lake right here in the hospital. Nobody can handle him, especially during the first few years of knowing him. I wouldn’t be able to ignore him if I hadn’t grown up with the fucker.”

As expected, Kankri has not stopped speaking, despite his audience openly talking about him.

Dave looks at you, at Kankri, and back at you. He tentatively opens his mouth. “Uh, sir. I mean Kankri. Bro.”

Kankri goes on a tangent about not interrupting people, especially not when they are speaking about an important social issue. He manages to throw in the accusation that Dave is trying to silence the voice of the oppressed. You, however, are staring at Dave, mouthing Sir? at him.

He shrugs at you. “I was trying to be polite.”

“Bro?”

“The trick to getting people to like you is appealing to the very core of their bro-ness, that’s basic psychology. PR 101 and everybody knows you’ve gotta rank in sweet, sweet PR points wherever you go, especially with people you’re basically related to now. Speaking of personal relations, don’t you want to hug your sick brother or something? You’ve been hugging it up with everyone we meet.”
“Really? That doesn’t sound like me at all.”

“I mean Nepeta, Equius. Me. I figured that’s a clear enough trend. Didn’t you say he’s in your memories, too?”

“Yeah. You’re right.” You consider your brother. “Actually, that might just shut him up.”

You walk right up to Kankri and throw your arms around him. He’s stunned into silence, which you use to victoriously pat his back.

You lean back to look into his face. “Real fucking talk for a second. You remember, don’t you?”

His eyes widen. “And now you do, too?”

“I fucking knew that you remembered. You always made weird comments and I thought that was just you being your usual incomprehensible self, but now some of them make sense!”

Kankri folds his hands on his blanket. “I suppose that wasn’t the wisest course of action. I didn’t think you would ever remember and, not daring to force you to remember, I used occasional allusions to our past life as a coping method. But one shouldn’t use other people like that. I apologize.”

“Really? That’s got to be the first time you’ve ever apologized.”

“It is not. But, Karkat, do not think you have nothing to apologize for. You have quite a lot to apologize for, for example this whole quite problematic marriage issue. Did you really think not telling your brother about your relationship would be the morally right course of action? I had to find out through the media and it took quite some time, seeing as I do not consume most mainstream media due to its problematic content.”

“Nobody I know has reached that tier of hipsterness yet; teach me your ways, daddy.” You and Kankri turn to look at Dave. “No offense.”

Kankri frowns. “The word ‘hipster’ is problematic.”

You groan loudly. “Have your brain cells really deteriorated this far since I last saw you?”

“For the last time, I do not have brain cancer. I realize that you have always been a forgetful child, but you should at least try to pay attention when people older than you are speaking.”

“Do you, you fucking useless, pompous, humanoid pop-up ad, actually think—” The door opening interrupts you. You whirl around. “What the fuck, we’re having a heartfelt family meeting.”

Jim, who of course is the one who interrupted you, raises his hands. “I just have to quickly check up on Mr. Vantas.”

“Right now? For-fucking-give me if that seems suspicious.”

He pulls his eyebrows together in the fakest fashion possible. “Excuse me? I don’t think I’m following.”

“Yeah, sure.”

Dave puts a hand on your arm. “Karkat is just cranky ‘cause he was having a moment with his brother and you interrupted.” You snort. “We don’t mind if you just quickly make sure his dear brother isn’t dying.”
Kankri launches into a maybe even justified tirade about death jokes. You’re too concentrated on glaring at Jim to listen.

“It doesn’t seem like he’s dying.” Jim flashes his dimples at Dave.

Dave doesn’t really smile back, but he chuckles. “Nah, you’re too good a doctor. Bacteria everywhere are quivering in terror.”

Jim fucking laughs. “You’re so funny.”

“You ain’t seen nothing yet.”

Jim isn’t even pretending to be checking on Kankri anymore, he’s just openly staring at Dave with fucking perfect posture like he’s expecting somebody to take a picture. “So I should stick around then?”

Leaning closer to Dave, you mumble, “What the fuck?”

Dave gives you a questioning look. You make wild gestures at the entire situation. He shrugs, so you roll your eyes and take him by the arm to pull him out of the room.

You say to Kankri, “We’ll be back in a minute.”

Dave starts to ask a question, but stops when he sees the people standing in front of the door, trying to look like they are supposed to be there. You walk down a couple of halls and pull Dave into a toilet. You lock the door behind you.

Dave asks, “Okay, what is going on? Dude, how serious is this on a scale from ‘I broke my fingernail’ to ‘my cat ate a baby and also the Earth is going to explode in a few seconds, scratch that, minutes.’ You know, because if you’re about to die in just a few seconds you barely have time to feel the weight of your insignificance and mortality.”

You say, in your reasonable tone, “Look, I just think you shouldn’t flirt with other people while we’re pretending to be in a relationship. That seems like a reasonable course of action.”

“Thank god I’m not doing that then… Are you talking about Jim?” Dave says in a tone like he can’t understand what you are even on about. “That wasn’t me flirting, it was me being nice.”

“Our relationship is already fishy enough without you ‘being nice’ and throwing yourself at random attractive doctors.”

“Thank god we cleared that up, because I was obviously just about to fling my panties at Jim.”

“I’m just saying, if you want to flirt with people we should pretend to break up first.”

“I really wasn’t flirting with anybody.”

“Okay, maybe you didn’t realize it. But Jim thought you were flirting with him. I’m just being reasonable here, there are already enough doubts about our relationship, and we don’t need to give them fuel.”

Dave gasps. “There are doubts about our perfect eternal love? How dare people?”

“Fine, mostly on weird internet conspiracy blogs. But that’s enough. If somebody finds out our relationship is fake… I don’t even know what would happen. A fake relationship is the kind of stunt that gives fans enough trust issues to decide you’re not worth being fawned over.”
“Everybody would do an acrobatic fucking pirouette off the metaphorical handle. Just one big mass pirouette. It’d be art.”

“Yeah, our careers would be fucked in the most perverted way. And I know you want to keep on making awful movies.”

“They’re the air I’m breathing. So obviously I’m not running around offering sex to people, I know we’ve got to be careful. I really was just being a good neighbour, look at me, all like, ‘Damn, those are nice petunias. Do you want me to clean up your dog’s shit for you?’”

You consider the possibility you might have overreacted. Out of stupid, dumb jealousy. Like you’ve done countless times before. “...He was flirting with you though...”

“Was he? Dude, I honestly didn’t notice. But I guess I’m just so used to everybody wanting this stud.” He gestures at his body. “At least I don’t have to tell him I’m not interested, that’s so awkward, but being married should get that across pretty clearly. Right?”

“If he thinks you’d cheat on me, he should watch his back. I am absolutely ready to fuck this guy up and out of this universe if he honestly tries something, just watch me. But even his tiny brain has got to understand that you would never cheat on anyone.”

“Five seconds ago you thought I was flirting with him, with my husband right next to me.”

“Yes, because I’m not your husband. Well, I am legally, unfortunately, but not really.”

“That’s quite hurtful.”

“Please.”

Dave grins at you and your heart does its usual flutter. You’ve only ever seen this Dave grin like that when he’s with you.

Wait.

Oh no.

He’s smiled and grinned and made various expressions of positive emotions with you before, more than with most other people and he’s been flirting with you and of course you’d noticed the flirting and the occasional unusual behavior, but fuck. You’d thought any deeper feelings he might have were just wishful thinking on your part.

Yeah.

You hadn’t really thought that, deep in your heart, but denial has always been a good way of dealing with things.

Because a Dave that likes you will just end up getting hurt. And this Dave does like you very, very much.

And you like him. More than you like everybody else who you should like. He is always here when you want to talk to somebody. He’s now the one you care about the most by far and that just can’t be, it can’t be. It’s not fair to anybody, especially Dave.

“So I’ll just keep on being neighbourly friendly with Jim and if he tries something you break his fingers?”
You frown at Dave, his stupid sunglasses and white hair and weirdly enticing lips. Then you nod and hope that was the appropriate reaction to whatever he said.

You feel like this is the moment where you’d leave the room. Because the conversation is over. But you can’t bring yourself to move. Have you been hurting Dave? Are you hurting Dave?

“Buddy?”

“Fucking shit burning in hell! You poor lost idiotic soul. We both are so fucked now. I shouldn’t even be allowed to interact with people, lest I form meaningful relationships, fuck my entire existence… I’m sorry.” The last part comes out considerably quieter.

“Dude, no. You were just worried about what our relationship might look like to the outside.”

But you weren’t. You were a jealous asshole because you want more from him because you like him so much that you sometimes hurt when he smiles at you.

Not that you should. It wouldn’t be fair to either him or anybody you’ve ever loved.

You can’t make anyone happy.

You need to stop this. This whole relationship thing, everything you have with Dave.

“Dude, are you having a nervous breakdown?”

“Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck! It’s like I won the fucking bad luck lottery, like karma picked some poor soul out of the billions of beings in all multiverses and decided it’s gonna fuck me over like nobody’s ever seen before. And fuck you over too because you had the very awful luck of being close to me.”

“Karkat, what the fuck is wrong, what just happened? I’d call the president, but I have no idea what to tell him.”

You yell, “Why the fuck would you call the president? Why are you like this? Why is everything this messed up?”

“It was a joke, you know, a reference to past jokes I’ve made about the president? Dude, I don’t—”

“What the freezing hell! You can’t expect me to remember every joke you’ve ever made when my life is in chaotic and destructive shambles. I’m so fucking sorry!” You can’t stop yelling. You want to hit something. Maybe if you hurt Dave he will learn to leave you alone.

What the fuck are you even thinking, you’d never hurt Dave.

“Oh no, no, okay, you don’t have to be sorry for not remembering every joke I make.” Dave reaches out a hand and places it lightly on your arm.

“That’s not why I’m sorry!” you shout. “I don’t see a fucking future where I’m not forced to give up on someone and hurt someone! God fuck, I’m just a disappointment waiting to happen and you’re right here and you’re so nice and fucking funny, how am I supposed to do this?”

Dave tugs on his hair. “I have no idea what you’re telling me here.”

You can’t breathe, his hand on your arm feels like it’s burning, you need to get out. You need to protect Dave from you. “Just… God. Can you please just go? Just fucking let me take the bus later or something, I don’t fucking know.” You take a deep breath. “Just let me be alone. Just go, just
fucking go!"

You throw the door open and stumble out. Dave says something, but you couldn’t repeat it for the life of you.

There’s a girl in front of you who’s holding a pen and a piece of paper, maybe asking for an autograph. You shove her aside. Dave says something and you think the girl answers.

You shake your head. Breathe in.

There are people surrounding you, talking to you, all with varying degrees of concern and sensationalism.

You cover your ears and start yelling.
Is our favorite celebrity couple actually breaking up

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] opened memo on board POST-APOCALYPTIC FRUITY RUMPUS ASSHOLES FACTORY --
TA: are you here two fiinally admiit you're having a breakdown?
TA: not one of the thou2and 2mall breakdown2 you've been haviing the pa2t week2, but a huge all encompa22iing breakdown.
CG: WHY IS IT THAT YOU ALWAYS COMPLAIN ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE TALKING, BUT CAN'T MANAGE TO SHUT YOUR FOODHOLE WHEN YOUR BETTERS HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO SAY?
CG: I DO WONDER THAT.
CG: IF THAT WASN'T SUBLTLE ENOUGH FOR YOU: SHUT THE FUCK UP.
GA: Hello Karkat Did You Know News Of Your Episode Is All Over Every Media Outlet I Can Find
GA: And Probably Others That I Have Not Seen Yet
GA: Im Sure You Know
TA: “rii2iing 2tar and dave 2triider2 hu2band karkat vanta2 ha2 mental breakdown iin ho2piital ii2 the fame fiinally getting two hiim? are the rumour2 of a divorce true?”
TA: “ye2terday the teen hea2rthro2 2tarted yelling at people for no apparent rea2on. he kept it up for almo2t half an hour de2piite everybody tryiing two get hiim two calm down. he only 2topped when one of hi2 frie2nd2 arrived two pick hiim up. meanwhile after calliing that frie2nd, hi2 hu2band dave was nowhere two be seen. ii2 our favori2te celebri2ty couple actually breakiing up??”
CG: I KNOW WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING, DICKFACE. DO YOU THINK I'M LIVING UNDER A SOUNDPROOF ROCK?
CG: YOU DID NOT HAVE TO TYPE OUT AN ENTIRE ARTICLE.
TA: that wa2 only a 2mall part of that artiicle. it goe2 on for twenty paragraph2.
TA: ii cant beliee people are calliing you a teen heartthrob.
TA: iiif ii never have two read tho2e word2 iin connection wiith you iit wiill 2tiill be two 2oon.
CG: I COULD ABSOLUTELY NOT GIVE LESS OF A SHIT ABOUT THE MEDIA RIGHT NOW. OR YOUR DELICATE FEELINGS.
TA: then maybe you 2houlve cho2en a diifferent job.
GA: Terezi Said That She Had To Pick You Up Because You Refused To Even Talk To Dave
GA: What Is Going On
TA: plea2e tell me thii2 ii2nt about your romance drama agaiin.
CG: YOU SAY THAT LIKE EVERYTHING I DO AND SAY ISN'T INCREDIBLY JUSTIFIED.
CG: BUT IS IS.
CG: MUCH LIKE THIS DECISION. I HAVE DECIDED TO STOP OUR FAKE RELATIONSHIP. AND NOT JUST THAT.
AC: :33 < wait!!
AC: :33 < what fake relationship? :oo
AC: :33 < *ac says paw2sing and looking up wondrously from her half-eaten kill*
CG: NO FUCKING ROLEPLAYING OR I'LL BLOCK YOU.
AC: :33 < aw come on karkat, i know you like RPing d33p in your heart, youve done it befur with me
AC: :33 < even if you did do it grumpily and insincerely
CG: WHAT IS THIS SLANDER?
AC: :33 < are you really in a fake relationship??
AC: :33 < you and dave s33med like such a meowvelous ship
CG: SKDLAFLAGEALR
CG: WELL
CG: WE. ARE. NOT. IN. A. FAKE. RELATIONSHIP. ANYMORE.
CG: SO NO.
CG: ACTUALLY, HE DOESN’T KNOW IT YET. BUT HE WILL.
GA: Is The Punchline Here That You Are Going To Be In A Real Relationship
CG: ABSOLUTELY NOT. I AM APPALLED BY THE FACT THAT YOU’D THINK SO.
TA: for the la2t fucking tiime, dave ii2 a2 iintere2ted iin you a2 you are in hiim.
TA: that2 iit. iim leaving thi2 conver2ation. ii could be playiing WoW riight now iin2tead of thi2.
CG: I KNOW THAT, YOU LOWLIFE SHITHEAD.
CG: IT IS COMPLETELY INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO ME, BUT I DO STILL LOGICALLY
KNOW THAT WHAT YOU JUST SAID IS THE TRUTH.
GA: Karkat You Didn't Say This The Last Time We Spoke
CG: I DIDN’T WANT TO.
CG: I STILL DON’T FUCKING WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT THIS
PREPOSTEROUS SHITSHOW, BUT THERE COMES A POINT IN EVERY
TROLL/HUMAN’S PSEUDO AFTERLIFE WHEN DENIAL JUST DOESN’T WORK
ANYMORE.
CG: IT IS VERY TELLING OF THE GENERAL STATE OF MY LIFE THAT I HAD A BIG
ROMANTIC REVELATION IN A HOSPITAL TOILET.
CG: I WAS NOT EXPECTING THIS, BUT ALL OF THIS TIME SPENT WITH DAVE HERE
ON HUMAN EARTH HAS IMPACTED HOW I FEEL ABOUT HIM. AND NOW I LIKE HIM
BETTER THAN I LIKE ANY OF MY OTHER PAST PARTNERS.
CG: WHEN I’M WITH HIM I JUST FORGET THEM.
CG: I AM DISGUSTINGLY IN LOVE WITH DAVE AND HIS FEELINGS SEEM TO BE
GOING IN THE SAME DIRECTION.
TA: iin love?
TA: how long have you even known the guy? youre 2o dramatiic.
GA: If That Is The Case Then Why Do You Say You Are Appalled At Somebody Thinking The
Two Of You Might Be In A Real Relationship
CG: SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE I’M TALKING TO A WALL.
CG: HAVEN’T I ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT I HAVE HAD MANY PARTNERS IN
PAST LIVES? I OBVIOUSLY CAN’T JUST START A RELATIONSHIP.
CG: DAVE WOULDN’T HAVE MY FULL ATTENTION AND IT WOULDN’T BE FAIR TO
HIM. AND IT’D BE LIKE TAKING A SHIT ON THE MEMORY OF EVERYBODY ELSE.
JUST BECAUSE I COINCIDENTALLY MET DAVE AND NOT THEM AND HAD A
STUPID ROMCOM-ESQUE STORY WITH HIM.
CG: I JUST CAN’T.
CG: IT’S FOR THE BETTER ANYWAY. DAVE DESERVES SOMEONE WITH LESS
BAGGAGE.
TA: try being le22 pathetically 2elfhatiing. ii hear that2 good for people.
TA: and why iis your romantiiic liife alway2 our main topic, nobody giive2 a 2hiit?
CG: WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT ROMANCE, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT
COMMON SENSE.
AC: :33 < i lick romance drama
TA: plea2e dont lick anythiing
AC: :33 < like
AC: :33 < its a cat pun! X33
TA: who are you anyway, the only thing ii know ii2 that KK deciided two add you two our board
liike “the2e people are called nepeta and equiu2, be good chiildren and 2ay hello, theyre our friiend2
CG: THEY’RE OUR PAST FRIENDS!
TA: tryiing two ob2e22iively recreate the pa2t i2 a 2ure 2ign of iin2aniity.
TA: you are tryiing two pu2h your ver2iion of how we 2hould be on u2 liike were not diifferent people now from whatever pa2t liive2 we apparently had.
CG: IF YOU WEREN’T SUCH AN OBNOXIOUS ASSHOLE THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEMS. ANY AND ALL FRIENDSHIP PROBLEMS ARE YOUR FAULT.
CG: ARE YOU HEARING ME?
CG: YOUR FAULT.
CG: YOU ARE JUST A GUY WITH NO REDEEMABLE OR LIKABLE QUALITIES.
GA: Let Us Not Overreact
TA: 2ure a22hole, blame me for all of your problem2 when all ii’m doiing ii2 helpiing you.
TA: youre haviing a mental breakdown and you need help.
TA: and you need two learn two let go of the pa2t.
TA: ii am not even 2ayiing thi2 two be an a22hole even though you totally de2erve two be surrounded by a22hole2 for the re2t of your liife.
CG: IF THERE IS ONE PERSON HERE WHO DESERVES THE ABSOLUTELY FUCKING MOST MISERABLE LIFE YOUR TINY LIMITED BRAIN CAN THINK OF, IT IS YOU. AND EVERYBODY WHO HAS EVER THOUGHT A POSITIVE THING ABOUT YOU.
CG: I HOPE YOU CHOOSE TO DEATH ON AIR THE NEXT TIME YOU’RE TAKING A HUGE SHIT, SO YOUR LOVED ONES FIND YOU IN SUCH AN UNDISGIFIED POSITION THAT THEY WILL NOT EVEN MOURN YOU OUT OF EMBARRASSMENT.
AC: :33 < are you guys usually like this? ive only b33n on this board fur a w33k or so but it wasnst like this :oo
GA: More Often Than Not Though It Seems To Be Particularly Bad Today
CG: AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT WILL BE THE ICING ON THE CAKE?
TA: oh 2ure, throw your tantrum!
TA: ii am ju2t 2iitiing here laughiing at your 2tubbornne22 and 2tupidity.
CG: EVEN YOUR DEAD GHOST WILL BE SO ASHAMED THAT HE WILL KILL HIMSELF. AGAIN.
CG: THAT’S THE HARSH TRUTH.
TA: hahaha.
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] banned twinArmageddons [TA] from responding to memo. --
CG: NOW IF YOU’LL EXCUSE ME
CG: I HAVE MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO BE DOING.
CG: OF COURSE ANYTHING WOULD BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THIS CONVERSATION, SO THAT ISN’T SAYING MUCH, BUT THIS IS ACTUALLY RELEVANT.
CG: I NEED TO WRITE TO DAVE AND TELL HIM WE NEED TO BREAK UP.
GA: I Feel Like Enough Time Of You Telling Us That Has Passed To Wonder Why You Are Not Already Doing It
CG: I’M ABOUT TO FUCKING DO IT! DON’T RUSH ME.
CG: HE’S BEEN PESTERING ME THE WHOLE TIME TOO, FUCKING WORRYING LIKE THE GOOD BOYFRIEND HE’D TOTALLY BE.
CG: FUCK ME.
CG: I CAN’T EVEN LOOK AT A PICTURE OF HIM WITHOUT WANTING TO
CG: I DO NOT EVEN FUCKING KNOW.
CG: LORD KNOWS WHAT I’D DO IF I HAD TO MEET HIM NOW.
GA: Surely You Can Be Reasonable Should The Situation Require It
CG: HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHO YOU’RE TALKING TO?
GA: I Feel Like Your Self Esteem Issues Have Gotten Worse
CG: I DO NOT HAVE SELF-ESTEEM ISSUES.
CG: I AM MERELY REALISTIC.
AC: :33 < well no matter if you have self esteem issues or not, i want to say
AC: :33 < i believe in you
AC: :33 < *ac meows, for the time being pretending cats are able to give thumbs up*
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] stopped responding to memo —

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] began pestering turntechGodhead [TG] —
TG: omg dude are you finally answering me
TG: #blessed
TG: ive been trying to get a hold of you for hours
TG: using all my wits and working all my channels like nobodys business
CG: I WAS TALKING TO MY FRIENDS.
CG: OR RATHER
CG: SOME PEOPLE I CONSIDER FRIENDS AND OTHERS WHO HAVE PISSED ME OFF.
TG: so youre
TG: just feeling particularly irritable
TG: ?
TG: and i didnt piss you off like whoa damn he done fucked up
CG: OH FUCKING HELL. OF COURSE YOU’D THINK THAT. WHY DID I THINK I
COULD JUST FREAK OUT WITHOUT MAKING THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE DO A
BRUTAL FUCKING SOMERSAULT OFF THE EDGE OF SANITY *AND* HURTING
YOU.
CG: DAVE, LISTEN CAREFULLY
CG: YOU DID ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WRONG.
TG: at no point in my life
TG: there was not a single moment in my entire frame of existence where i may have done
something that could be considered wrong in even one single philosophical system of morality
CG: YOU KNOW THAT’S NOT WHAT I MEANT.
CG: OKAY, LOOK,
CG: I WANT TO KEEP THIS AS SHORT AS POSSIBLE.
CG: WHICH, I KNOW, CONSIDERING THE KINDS OF PEOPLE WE ARE, SEEMS HARD,
BUT STILL.
CG: THIS IS NOT YOUR FAULT; IT’S MINE.
TG: youre starting to sound like one of those people who actually breaks up over text
TG: its not you its me
TG: youre great i just think we should maybe explore other options
TG: widen our horizons
CG: WELL, I SUPPOSE I AM BREAKING UP WITH YOU.
TG: oh
CG: WE WEREN’T REALLY DATING OF COURSE, BUT
CG: WE WILL STILL HAVE TO ACT LIKE WE’VE BROKEN UP.
CG: AND SOMETIMES IT DID FEEL LIKE WE WERE DATING.
CG: WE HAVE TO END THIS NOW.
TG: wait
TG: okay so
TG: you want to end our business relationship
CG: I BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE FOR THE BETTER IF WE STOPPED TALKING
ALTOGETHER.
TG: seriously what the fuck
TG: what the fuck happened??
CG: YOU CAN’T UNDERSTAND IT RIGHT NOW, BUT IT IS FOR THE BEST. TRUST ME.
TG: you cant honestly expect me to just want to stop having any kind of contact with you after all the time we spent talking
TG: i dont care how cliché it sounds ive told you things ive never told anybody else
TG: you cant be serious
TG: this is fucked up
TG: are you joking
TG: its not exactly funny
CG: I’M FUCKING SORRY, OKAY?
CG: I JUST WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY. SHIT.
CG: AND THAT MEANS THAT WE SHOULDN’T MEET AGAIN.
TG: that really doesn’t make any sense
TG: you keep on saying and doing weird shit and it seriously cant be healthy
TG: so what you just never want to meet again block me everywhere
TG: come on you can talk to me theres no way you actually want to just never talk again
CG: DAVE
TG: explain this to me
TG: im just over here like what the fuck is even happening like one of those blonde extras in horror films who are so confused they run into the direction of the monster please
CG: FUCKING FUCK
CG: HELL
CG: YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND HOW THIS FEELS. I HAVE ALL OF THESE PEOPLE I CAN’T JUST FORGET.
CG: IT’S FOR THE BETTER.
CG: IF WE KEEP ON TALKING, I WILL JUST HURT YOU.
TG: no
TG: cant we meet up one last time at least
CG: YOU JUST SAY THAT BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU’LL BE ABLE TO CONVINCE ME THAT WE SHOULDN’T BREAK UP.
TG: i dont even care about our fake relationship i want to convince you to not fucking go full on weird ass pseudo martyr and ghost me after all the shit that has happened jesus fuck
CG: I MEANT THAT, I DIDN’T MEAN “BREAK UP” AS IN FAKE BREAK UP, BUT BREAK UP OUR FRIENDSHIP.
CG: THAT’S WHAT I MEANT.
TG: you wouldnt actually just cease contact with me like this
TG: theres no way youre not actually willing to explain this to me
TG: okay so i did something to freak you out but we can talk about this
TG: fuck this
TG: i really sound like a desperate ex here
CG: SKLFASFDJOSD
CG: *YOU DID NOTHING WRONG*. STOP SAYING THAT.
CG: I STILL WANT TO KEEP THIS SHORT.
CG: SO I WILL BLOCK YOU NOW
CG: FUCK
TG: no karkat
TG: karkat dont
TG: wait
TG: please
TG: shit!
TG: i dont understand
TG: okay so well stop talking and all but at least explain??
CG: FUCK
TG: oh god you're still here
CG: FINE
CG: FUCKING FUCK ME UP THE ASS WITH A KATANA OR JUST
CG: SHOOT ME IN THE DICK
CG: I
TG: you'll meet me one more time?
CG: NO THAT ABSOLUTELY CAN'T HAPPEN
TG: i don't get it
CG: MAYBE
CG: IT'S JUST
CG: NOT A GOOD IDEA
CG: YOU WANT TO MEET UP TO CONVINCE ME WE SHOULDN'T DO THIS, SO WE
WON'T MEET.
TG: we could meet to officially announce the end of our relationship
TG: we should do that anyway shouldn't we
CG: WELL, I GUESS THAT'S A POSSIBLE WAY TO GO ABOUT A BREAKUP.
TG: yeah and then talk behind the curtain
TG: about our actual relationship
TG: that seems like a reasonable plan
CG: MAYBE
CG: WAIT A SECOND
TG: wait for what
TG: karkat
TG: did you secretly block me
TG: oh no did you
TG: you do realize that this isn't exactly fair to me right
TG: i don't even know what happened
TG: are you mad at me
TG: you said i did nothing wrong but i don't see any other reason why you'd want this
TG: did you find someone to date
TG: actually date
TG: and that person is a jealous asshole
TG: because trust me you should get out of a relationship where your partner wants you to stop
talking to your dear friends
TG: unless we weren't really friends
TG: is this why you want to quit all contact
TG: this really was a business relationship
TG: no way
TG: now i'm just getting paranoid look at this shit i'm going to regret this so much when i reread it
TG: karkat?
TG: oh no did you figure it out
TG: you know
TG: how i've been like
TG: not just really friendly here
TG: well unless you didn't know and that just freaked you out
TG: good going me
CG: *DAVE*
CG: SOMEBODY RANG THE DOORBELL, SO I DECIDED TO QUICKLY CHECK IT
OUT.
TG: oh good
CG: IT WASN'T GOOD AT ALL.
CG: OH NO. FUCK.
CG: SO THIS ASSHOLE WANTED TO INTERVIEW ME.
CG: I’M PRETTY SURE RINGING PEOPLE’S DOORBELLS LIKE THAT IS ALMOST
STALKING, BUT THAT ASIDE
CG: IT’S OVER.
TG: yeah i fucking got the message
CG: NO.
CG: WITH THE FAKE MARRIAGE.
CG: THE REAL STORY BROKE.
CG: IT’S ALL OUT.
CG: SOME FUCKING HORSENIPPLE THOUGHT IT’D BE FUNNY/SMART/COOL TO
TELL THE MEDIA WE’RE NOT REALLY TOGETHER. AND THAT FUCKUP SADLY
HAS PROOF.
CG: SOON THERE WON’T BE ONE SINGLE PERSON IN THIS COUNTRY WHO
DOESN’T KNOW THAT WE PUT ON THE MOST PREPOSTEROUS KIND OF CIRCUS
FOR EVERYBODY.
TG: what how
CG: SHITTING HELL.
TG: well shit
TG: my pr people are gonna kill me
TG: along with everybody else
CG: WE WON’T BE FUCKING ABLE TO LEAVE THE HOUSE.
CG: WE’LL BE STUCK IN OUR HOMES.
CG: THIS IS GOING TO BE FUCKING AWFUL.
TG: now we wont be able to meet anybody without them hating us before weve exchanged one
word
TG: and the funny thing is thats not even the worst thing somebody has told me today
TG: if that was too subtle for you im talking about you and your bullshit
CG: IT APPEARS SOMEBODY OVERHEARD OUR CONVERSATION IN THE
HOSPITAL.
CG: AND TOLD THE MEDIA JUST A FEW MINUTES AGO.
CG: APPARENTLY THERE IS ALSO A RECORDING. I FUCKING KNEW MY YELLING
WOULD ONE DAY FUCK ME UP. EVERYBODY HAS ALWAYS COMPLAINED ABOUT
IT AND NOW FINALLY REPERCUSSIONS HAVE HIT ME.
TG: your yellings not that bad
CG: YOU ARE LITERALLY THE FIRST PERSON TO SAY THAT.
CG: I GUESS WE CAN ANNUL THE MARRIAGE NOW?
CG: OR MAYBE NOT. I’M NOT SURE ABOUT THE LEGAL SIDE HERE.
TG: gotta get terezi up in this shit
CG: BUT I’M SURE WE CAN GET A DIVORCE.
CG: I THINK WE DON’T EVEN HAVE TO MEET TO DO THAT.
TG: what about us then
CG: I’VE
CG: MADE MY CHOICE.
CG: THIS IS IT.
TG: you wanted to meet up a minute ago
CG: I DON’T ANYMORE! JUST ACCEPT IT ALREADY.
CG: YOU AND ME ARE A BAD IDEA.
CG: I DID KNOW
CG: ABOUT YOUR “NOT JUST REALLY FRIENDLY” FEELINGS.
CG: IT’S
CG: THEY’RE THE REASON WE CAN’T DO THIS.
CG: MAYBE THAT CAN HELP EXPLAIN WHY I’M DOING THIS.
CG: WE CAN’T BE FRIENDS, I CAN’T DO THAT WITHOUT WANTING MORE, AND WE CAN’T BE TOGETHER BECAUSE YOU WOULD JUST END UP HURT.
TG: okay you know what i can get you not feeling the same thing and i can accept that, i totally do and i get why youd be uncomfortable but
TG: you dont have to quit our friendship because of that
TG: weve talked so much and you just up and go fuck this shit like we cant rationally talk about this like the rational adults we legally are
TG: we can see each other less okay and not tell each other like our deepest darkest secrets if thats what you want but thats universes away from just cutting off contact like our friendship is an unpleasant bug that needs to be squashed
CG: IT’S NOT LIKE THAT.
CG: DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT’S WHAT I MEANT? IT’S NOT.
CG: IT’S NOT THAT EASY.
TG: maybe if you think we cant get past this maybe we werent really friends to begin with
TG: so fine
TG: fuck you
-- turntechGodhead [TG] ceased pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] --

Chapter End Notes

welp, this story isn't really that happy anymore. buuuuut it will get better.
at least finally the plot progresses.
You go through your days as usual.

With the exception of you barely being able to leave the house, of course. You try a few times, but people are difficult, to say the least. You don’t know much of what the media has come up with about you, having resolved to keep away from pop culture, and it might even all be true. But whatever the fuck they’re saying, it has left a lasting negative impression on everyone you meet.

The first time you go out, there’s whispers following you everywhere. You glare at everybody, deciding you have nothing but disdain for people who can’t talk openly about someone. That is until some guy yells, “Yo, did he pay you to suck his dick too?”

You whirl around. “Who the fuck said that?” Everybody’s staring now, quiet. So you hold your head high and give your voice the most condescending tone you can muster. “Maybe I would dignify that ridiculous question with an answer if you weren’t enough of a pants-shitting coward to hide in the grey sensationalist mass of overworked Saturday morning customers.”

Nobody answers, so you turn around to pay for your food.

The cashier, a thirty year old white woman with dreadlocks, refuses to serve you.

After a four hour yelling match (it loses most of its drive after three hours), an unjustified amount of tears (not on your side) and the woman fucking getting fired (what the fuck), you vow to never leave the house again.

You almost text Dave about it.

Staying home turns out to be easier said than done. America fails you because it is not possible to order absolutely everything you want over the internet. Yet, hopefully. Your so-called friends also refuse to buy shit for you (“You shouldn’t feel the need to hide. Going out will be good for you.” Who cares?). So you leave occasionally, mostly to hoard shit you and Catlin need.

It always goes vaguely like it did the first time, usually with less people losing their job.

A couple of people yell at you, others congratulate you on the great trolling, an obscene amount of people tell you about their bad opinion of you, as if you actually care.

Other than that, you stay at home. You eat, drink, shit, sleep, stare at the wall, talk to your cat, yell at people. Online of course. Your days don’t contain a lot of variety.
It’s fine though.

You don’t feel bad.

You think you might feel bad if you allowed yourself to, but you manage to suppress your feelings under a fog of indifference. Kudos to yourself. It’s all quite hilarious actually.

You don’t see why nobody else thinks it’s hilarious how spectacularly everything went to shit. The irony of it.

But you don’t think about irony these days.

You think about other things. Like the wall opposite to your bed.

There’s a crack in it. You think maybe you should fix it. Or paint over it. Or something. Something should be done about it. You don’t do anything about it.

You’re glad that Dave doesn’t message you anymore. You’re really happy. You’re ecstatic. It is exactly what you want. You are so happy.

A week after everything, you get rid of the ring, as you should’ve done a lot sooner. You throw it into the river and not at all over-dramatically turn away, the wind blowing in your face.

Sometime after that, Dave appears on TV. He looks good. Tired as all hell, but still way too attractive. In an official press conference, he apologizes for deceiving people and makes surprisingly good statements on sexuality in the modern day western world.

“A lot of people claim to be okay with every sexuality, but they still use gay as an insult, act as if gay and straight are the only options and assume everybody to be straight until without a doubt proven otherwise. I’m not saying what I did should be considered the new standard for perfect morality, but I want to give those without pitchforks an opportunity to understand it. I felt pressure and in typical twenty-something boy manner made a lot of stupid-ass decisions.”

The worst part comes after that though. “I take full responsibility, okay? Karkat was just a poor struggling artist, trying to make a living and pursue his dream. It was all my idea and I roped him into it. You shouldn’t blame him.”

You yell at the TV, “What the fuck? I totally made a decision, you braindead ass. I’m responsible, too! Can you stop being like that? Nobody likes people who try to sacrifice themselves.”

You call your manager. She complains about you ignoring all of her calls and mails and letters and text messages and notes slipped through your door and ads in the newspaper and also her yelling at your door.

You ignore her complaining to tell her, “Look, I know I fucked this up. I only want you to do one thing before we stop working together. Tell everybody that it’s my fault too. Tell them I planned a lot of it.”

You hang up over her yelling that she can fix this and you don’t have to stop working together. Who would want to keep on working in the public eye after bullshit like that went down?

You turn on the TV the next day and your and Dave’s statements are of course on every fucking show that wasn’t recorded before the Davekatocalypse and its fallout. Yes, that’s the name people have given it. Embarrassingly, almost nobody can pronounce it.
It seems people feel like giving it a name gives them the right to dissect everything you do or have ever done.

You’re still the main topic everywhere the next day and the day after that.

You sell your TV.

Sometimes you think of something funny and almost get your phone out to text Dave, but you stop yourself. Dave certainly wouldn’t appreciate it. He hasn’t blocked you, but he’s made it clear that he’s done. And you’re done, too. Can’t forget that. It was you who initiated the being done. For good reason.

When you delete his number, you feel so much freer. Like one does when one’s phone falls down a high cliff. Free. Like one feels during that short second when one contemplates jumping after the phone.

You are pleased because now you have time to think about your memories. You go over your notes again. And again. You pin them on the walls, you color-code them, you spent hours staring at them. Days. Months maybe. You lose track of time. The crack stops bothering you, it’s completely covered by your notes. Like every part of your bedroom walls and ceiling. Eventually you have to start putting up notes in other rooms, too.

You use the internet to look for your old friends. Their names yield no results on any search engines, despite your double checking. And triple checking. There are sites on the internet telling people how to find someone who might have changed their names and the stalker-y nature of it makes your skin crawl. Nothing they suggest works at first.

But you keep on looking.

And you don’t stop.

You’re just glad Terezi moved out a bit ago due to her work. She was always bugging you to do things and not hole up in your room, close the curtains and try to find people who’re not alive anymore. Even though that the sensible course of action.

Now Rose is the one who tells you to work on your guilt and grief and just get over it already so you can date her cousin. She doesn’t say that directly, but you’re sure those are her intentions. Your regular therapy sessions increase once she finds out that you “broke up” your friendship with her cousin. She’s just using her position as a therapist to make you feel guilty. It doesn’t help that she looks like Dave.

So you stop seeing Rose. She’s not helping. You don’t need therapy anyway, you’re fine. Terezi protests, but what does she know? When she tries to visit you, you don’t even open the door. She’d just bug you.

You’ve found a good way to feel better, completely without her help. You’ve looked up ways to paint your skin grey (ending up on cosplay sites. What kind of person is willing to paint their whole body grey just for a cosplay?). The first time you do it, you finally get a sense of real familiarity when you look into the mirror. You renew the paint every day and when you look into the mirror now, you feel more normal. Like maybe not everything is fucked up.

You know others wouldn’t approve. But you can’t leave the house anyway. And hanging out with your friends is just getting annoying.

You rarely talk to them anymore, most of your conversations ending in fights. They want you to go
out, but you barely can, it ends in awkward staring and weird comments every time. It’s much better to stay in your room anyway, you have more time to mourn everybody.

But your friends are nothing if not determined to be as annoying as possible. But the more they try, the more you see that they’re bad friends. Why can’t they just leave you alone when you’re trying to grieve?

Eventually, mostly through accident, you develop a good way to feel like you’re properly grieving in the way you’re supposed to. You limit your food intake to a couple of bites every day and when you feel guilty, you comfort yourself with the pain in your stomach. It’s easy.

At least it’s easy until the world goes black one day. Your knees suddenly give in, you can’t control your body and you go down with a yell.

Yeah, you fainted like a particularly weak lady from the eighteenth century.

You wake up in the hospital with your friends yelling at each other. The air smells like detergent, your head hurts, you almost died and those idiots have nothing better to do than shriek like they’re watching a football match. You blink your eyes, mustering up the strength to frown at them. You rasp, “What the fuck?”

They stop.

“You asshole,” Terezi hisses at you. “We broke down your door to get you to finally go out with us and what the fuck do we see-slash-smell? You, lying on the floor like you’re fucking dead.”

“We thought you had killed yourself, you dick!” Sollux yells. Kanaya nods to that.

“We really believed you were just... gone.” Nepeta actually has tears in her eyes. Equius pats her head.

Sollux sighs. “I thought this whole not-eating thing wasn’t a problem anymore. You said you were fine. You can talk to us, okay? We don’t want you to fucking die.”

You clear your throat. “It’s not like that. I am. Fine. I’m fine, it’s just... The pain helps.”

Kanaya shakes her head. “Is that statement supposed to be reassuring?”

“You don’t fucking know what this is like so don’t think you can actually judge me!” You make rude gestures with your hands, which are still slightly flecked with grey. “If you want to be cocksni...”

Rose’s voice cuts through the conversation. “Karkat, you are obviously in a really bad place right now. I have tried to help you through this, but I have to admit failure so far. This can’t continue. Let your friends help you.”

You open your mouth to yell at her. But her words remind you of a night a few days ago. It had been dark and you’d lain in your bed, staring at the ceiling without actually being able to see it, and you’d thought how it’d be nice if you just went away like this. Just stopped existing.

It hadn’t been an unusual thought. But the urge to actually make yourself go away had been so strong.

You’d thought to yourself, “I need to tell my friends, this can’t go on.”
You hadn’t done anything after that.

But you would now.

You close your eyes, take a deep breath. “Fuck. You’re right. I don’t know what to do and I’m getting worse and worse. I feel trapped, but I don’t actually want to go out. And I have no idea how to interact with you guys.”

You open your eyes. Your friends are looking at you, silently.

Rose suggests, “How about stationary therapy?”

“But that’s...” You make a grimace. “I don’t know. You mean talk to strangers about my past lives? They’d think I’ve lost my grip on reality and they might be right.”

“They wouldn’t throw you out. Trust me, I have great connections. I have heard a lot of positive things about this one place. They have a high success rate.” Rose, of course, is now in her element. She’s already pulling out her phone.

Terezi says, “It can’t hurt to try, can it? Even the blind girl sees that.” Everybody expresses their agreement. Nepeta and Equius nod synchronously.

“What about Catlin though?”

“Who the fuck is Catlin? There’s no way you have a girl I know nothing about.” Sollux asks.

Nepeta jumps up. “Oh, we can take her! We have everything a kitty could possibly need.”

“Fine. Okay. All right.”

Kanaya tells you, “You’ll be fine. You’re strong.”

You roll your eyes, but yeah. You’re touched.

Chapter End Notes

sad emoji
I feel like I’m in a bad parody of a teen romcom

Chapter Notes

porn out of left field, whoa

See the end of the chapter for more notes

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] opened memo on board CIRCLE JERK OF MISERY ALL BY MYSELF --
CG: OKAY.
CG: A FUCKING DIARY I GUESS.
CG: IF MY THERAPIST WON’T LEAVE ME ALONE OTHERWISE.
CG: “YOU NEED A PLACE TO TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS, KARKAT.”
CG: A FUCKING DIARY.
CG: I FEEL LIKE I’M IN A BAD PARODY OF A TEEN ROMCOM.
CG: EMPHASIS ON *BAD* BECAUSE OTHERWISE IT MIGHT BE FUN.
CG: SO.
CG: DAY 1.
CG: DAY 1 OF SOME SORT OF RECOVERY TRAINWRECK.
CG: THIS IS GOING TO BE A DISASTER. MY THERAPIST HAS NO IDEA HOW I AM WHEN I’M ALLOWED TO TALK TO MYSELF FOR A PROLONGED AMOUNT OF TIME.
CG: I JUST YELL AROUND.
CG: AT LEAST IN THIS UNIVERSE NO TIME-FUCKERY IS POSSIBLE.
CG: IF I HAD TO READ “PAST CARCINOGENETICIST 200 HOURS AGO OPENED MEMO” ONE MORE TIME, I’D PUT A SICKLE INTO MY HEAD. SOMEHOW.
CG: RIGHT, DON’T SAY THAT TO YOUR THERAPIST. MY THERAPIST. WHICHEVER.
CG: HE’D JUST TALK ABOUT SUICIDAL TENDENCIES.
CG: AS IF WE DON’T TALK ABOUT SUICIDAL TENDENCIES ENOUGH.
CG: THIS IS GETTING BORING.
CG: I’M DONE.
CG: OKAY, FUCK.
CG: DAY 8.
CG: BACK AGAIN.
CG: HURRAY.
CG: WOW, I JUST REMEMBERED A BAD JOKE DAVE MADE.
CG: REALLY, IT WAS CRINGE WORTHY.
CG: SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF “EVERYBODY REJOICE, MAMA’S BACK IN THE HOUSE”.
CG: AND THEN IT GOT EVEN WORSE. I ASKED HIM ABOUT “MAMA” AS A NAME AND HE SAID SOMETHING LIKE “BITCHES WANNA FUCK THIS MAMA, BUT THIS MAMA AIN’T ABOUT LOW QUALITY.”
CG: THINKING OF THIS AGAIN IS SO EMBARRASSING.
CG: STORY OF MY LIFE.
CG: AND I REPEATED THAT AFTERWARDS.
CG: DAVE JUST HAS A WAY OF MAKING ME JOKE AROUND.
CG: WOW, THIS IS A STUPID TRAIN OF THOUGHT. AND TOTALLY IRRELEVANT.
CG: FUCK THIS.
DIARIES ARE STUPID.
DAY 10.
OH. MY. GOD.
COULD I GET MORE EMBARRASSING? I SHOULD BE FUCKING GLAD THAT NOBODY WILL READ THIS SHIT BECAUSE GODDAMN. THE FIRST THING I THINK OF WHILE WRITING IN MY DIARY IS DAVE?
AM I SERIOUS?
OR RATHER:
IS HE SERIOUS?
BECAUSE I’M STARTING TO HAVE SERIOUS DOUBTS THAT THIS GUY AND ME ARE THE SAME PERSON, DESPITE ALL IRREFUTABLE PROOF TO THE CONTRARY.
THERE ARE SO MANY IMPORTANT THINGS I COULD BE THINKING ABOUT, BUT INSTEAD LIKE A BRAIN-DAMAGED TEEN GIRL STEREOTYPE, I THINK ABOUT MY *CRUSH*.
AS IF CRUSH IS EVEN THE RIGHT WORD.
DO I EVEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE A CRUSH ON HIM AFTER I TURNED HIM DOWN?
I STILL CAN’T BELIEVE I TURNED HIM DOWN.
IT WAS FOR EVERYBODY’S GOOD, BUT STILL.
IT HURT HIM.
DAY 13.
AHHAAHAHAHAHAHA.
THIS STUPID FUCKER. JUST YELLED ABOUT ME ONLY TALKING ABOUT DAVE AND THEN PROCEEDED TO DO EXACTLY THAT.
IT’S OFFICIAL.
THIS IS THE WORST DIARY IN THE HISTORY OF DIARIES.
MY BRAIN WOULD HAVE TO DISSOLVE IN SHAME IF SOMEBODY READ THIS FUCKERY. BUT NOBODY WILL.
I GUESS SOLLUX COULD.
SOLLUX, IF YOU HACKED INTO MY COMPUTER AND YOU’RE READING THIS RIGHT NOW:
THIS IS YOUR OWN GODDAMN FAULT.
NOBODY FORCED YOU TO READ THROUGH THIS FUCKERY.
DELETE YOUR ACCOUNTS AND NEVER TALK TO ME AGAIN.
DAY 15.
WOW, PARANOID MUCH.
DAY 19.
WHAT THE FUCK IS THIS?
OKAY, FROM NOW ON I AM OFFICIALLY FORBIDDEN FROM REREADING OLD ENTRIES.
AND EVEN IF I DO, I WILL NOT COMMENT ON THEM.
ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT RIGHT THERE.
TIME TO ACTUALLY WRITE ABOUT SOMETHING IMPORTANT.
THERAPY MAYBE.
SO THERAPY HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR ABOUT A MONTH NOW? MAYBE LONGER. I HAVE BEEN HAVING TROUBLE KEEPING TRACK OF TIME. BUT I’M GETTING BETTER AT IT. THE DIARY HELPS WITH KEEPING TRACK OF THE DAYS.
I GUESS IT’S GOING WELL.
WHAT, A POSITIVE STATEMENT IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS CORPOREALIZATION OF THE FEELING YOU GET WHEN YOU UNEXPECTEDLY STEP INTO WATER WITH SOCKS ON?
YEP, THERE IT IS AND IT’S NOT GOING AWAY.
CG: I feel
CG: I suppose the best way to say it is less guilty now.
CG: We’ve been talking about what I could have done to prevent things from happening.
CG: Gregory has been telling me that nobody benefits from me eating myself up in guilt.
CG: Gregory’s my therapist.
CG: I don’t know why I just wrote that down. It’s not like I don’t know that already and who else will read this other than me.
CG: While we’re on this topic though
CG: I hate people who want me to call them by their first name.
CG: If I had a name like Gregory, I wouldn’t even want people to know.
CG: To be honest
CG: Maybe this is because trolls only had six letters for names. Everything else wasn’t even a thing. Literally nobody had a name with more or less letters.
CG: I’ve noticed Catlin has six letters too.
CG: I guess I can accept four letters too, but seven?
CG: Crazy stuff.
CG: I miss Catlin.
CG: Yeah.
CG: And everybody else.
CG: You know what’s stupid? I’m still stupidly hung up on Dave.
CG: Obviously, since I’ve been rambling about him so much on here.
CG: His current state is something I think about as much as I think about everything else that happened.
CG: And of course that makes me feel guilty again.
CG: You know what
CG: I hate talking about my feelings.
CG: Day 25.
CG: So.
CG: Gregory told me he thinks I’m not being honest with him, the dick.
CG: And we had a stupid fight.
CG: Only it wasn’t even a fucking fight, it was just me yelling at him. The douchebag’s too professional to get into a fight with a patient I guess.
CG: And eventually I thought *fuck you and the vagina you probably came out of*.
CG: I told him everything.
CG: About Sgrub and wacky shenanigans and Jack and Lord English and us being fucked over again and again in timelines.
CG: He didn’t really believe me.
CG: He was like “I appreciate your honesty.”
CG: I’ve never met anybody who managed to say that without sounding passive aggressive, but he did. It still managed to imply he thinks I’m bonkers though.
CG: But he said he’d work through it with me.
CG: Which I assume means “I’m glad I’m a mental health professional because you can’t let this guy out on the street unsupervised.”
CG: Day 28.
CG: I think Gregory is taking drugs. Something hard, like crystal
METH.
CG: HE JUST KEPT ON DOING HIS THERAPY THING, NOW WITH ADDITIONAL PAST LIVES TREATMENT.
CG: I DON’T HAVE ANY PROOF, BUT THIS HAS GOT TO BE LALONDE’S DOING.
CG: THAT GIRL’S A WITCH.
CG: I DON’T KNOW WHAT SHE DID OR HOW SHE DID IT, BUT NO NORMAL PERSON WOULD JUST ROLL WITH THIS.
CG: DAY 30.
CG: YUP, GREG’S STILL ACTING AS IF EVERYTHING’S NORMAL.
CG: DAY 33.
CG: OKAY, MY THERAPIST TOLD ME TO DO THIS, SO FUTURE SELF, IF YOU’RE READING THIS AGAINST GOOD REASON:
CG: THIS IS NOT AS EMBARRASSING AS YOU THINK.
CG: SO.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED IS NOT MY FAULT. IT IS THE CULMINATION OF UNFAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO ARADIA IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO TAVROS IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO SOLLUX IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO NEPETA IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO KANAYA IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO TEREZI IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO VRISKA IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO EQUUIS IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO GAMZEE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO ERIDAN IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO FEFERI IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO DAVE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO JOHN IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO ROSE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO JADE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO JAKE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO JANE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO ROXY IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO DIRK IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CARAPACES IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE LUSII IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: THIS IS A LONG FUCKING LIST.
CG: WOW, I THINK I ACTUALLY FEEL BETTER NOW.
CG: WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT.
CG: BUT FUCK IT, I’M NOT DOING THIS AGAIN.
CG: DAY 38.
CG: I’VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT WHAT MY OPTIONS ARE NOW AFTER THE SO-CALLED DAVEKATOCALYPSE.
CG: SORRY
CG: *#DAVEKATOCALYPSE
CG: WHAT IS A TERM WITHOUT A HASHTAG THESE DAYS?
CG: PEOPLE MIGHT BOYCOTT SHIT I MAKE. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, OTHER FAMOUS PEOPLE HAVE DONE WAY WORSE SHIT AND THEY’RE STILL SUCCESSFUL.
CG: I DON’T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO JUST NOT WORK.
CG: I DON’T THINK I COULD DO THAT EITHER, I’D END UP BORED OUT OF MY
GODDAMN MIND AT SOME POINT.
CG: MAYBE I SHOULDN’T HAVE CUT OFF MY MANAGER.
CG: OKAY, BEFORE SOME DICKPRINCE FUTURE SELF COMES AND SPREADS HIS BULLSHIT ALL OVER THIS DIARY,
CG: I’LL JUST SAY IT MYSELF.
CG: “YOU GODDAMN OBTUSE NIPPLELICKER. OF COURSE YOU SHOULDN’T HAVE. SHE WAS TRYING TO HELP AND YOU WERE TOO CAUGHT UP IN YOUR DIAPERS TO UNDERSTAND THAT.”
CG: SHE MIGHT STILL HELP ME.
CG: I WANT TO KEEP MAKING MOVIES. AND I WON’T LET ANYONE OR ANYTHING STOP ME.
CG: I’LL STILL BE ABLE TO AT LEAST STAY ALIVE EVEN IF I’M NOT VERY SUCCESSFUL. THAT’D BE OKAY.
CG: I JUST LIKE MAKING STORIES COME TO LIFE.
CG: WOW, THAT SOUNDS SO CLICHÉ.
CG: AND THAT TOO.
CG: IN WHAT STATE IS THE WORLD WHEN SAYING SOMETHING SOUNDS CLICHÉ IS A CLICHÉ IN ITSELF?
CG: A FUCKED UP ONE. THAT’S THE ONE.
CG: AND AN OVERSATURATED ONE.
CG: I WONDER HOW DAVE IS DOING.
CG: DAY 40.
CG: THAT GOT REALLY OFF-TOPIC.
CG: THERE ISN’T EVEN A TOPIC AND THAT WAS STILL OFF-TOPIC.
CG: OR IS THERE A TOPIC?
CG: THE TOPIC SEEMS TO BE GENERAL WHINING. AT LEAST THAT’S WHAT GREG THINKS I’M DOING.
CG: TALKING ABOUT MY FEELINGS. AND MY SADNESS. AND MY ANGER.
CG: BUT IT’S NOT AS MUCH FUN WHEN THERE’S NOBODY TO ANSWER.
CG: IS IT JUST ME OR DO I SOUND LIKE A LUNATIC?
CG: WHO AM I ASKING?
CG: GOD?
CG: AM I GOD? I THINK I MIGHT BE GOD.
CG: THIS IS REALLY CLOSE TO THE WORLD I CREATED.
CG: REMEMBER HOW THAT TURNED OUT?
CG: YEAH, THE APOCALYPSE.
CG: AN ACTUAL APOCALYPSE WHICH IS UNARGUABLY WAY WORSE THAN SOME STUPID SHIP ENDING COULD BE, NO MATTER HOW GOOD THE SHIP.
CG: I REALLY FUCKING HOPE SGRUB WON’T COME INTO THIS UNIVERSE.
CG: WHAT THE FUCK IS THIS ANYWAY? IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE OUR REWARD FOR BEATING THE GAME?
CG: WE GOT FUCKED OVER.
CG: BUT THEN AGAIN
CG: LOOK AT NEPETA AND EQUIUS. OR ROSE AND KANAYA.
CG: THE GAME COULD HAVE EASILY SEPARATED THEM. BUT THEY’RE TOGETHER AND THEY’RE HAPPY.
CG: AND I’M TOGETHER WITH QUITE A LOT OF THE PEOPLE I USED TO KNOW.
CG: MOSTLY THE ONES I WAS CLOSEST WITH IN MOST TIMELINES, ACTUALLY.
CG: EVEN WEIRDER, WE’RE ALL ROUGHLY THE SAME AGE.
CG: WE DIDN’T GET DIVIDED BY THE GAME.
CG: OR WHATEVER HIGHER POWER OUT THERE MIGHT BE CONTROLLING OUR STORY. THAT ASSHOLE.
CG: THIS IS FUCKED UP.
CG: IS THE GAME TELLING ME THAT I ONLY REALLY CARED ABOUT THOSE
PEOPLE AND THAT'S WHY I DON'T GET TO TALK TO ANYBODY ELSE ANYMORE?
CG: FUCK YOU THEN.
CG: DAY 45.
CG: LOOK AT HOW SELF-CENTERED THIS IS.
CG: “IS THE GAME TELLING ME THAT I ONLY REALLY CARED ABOUT THOSE
PEOPLE AND THAT'S WHY I DON'T GET TO TALK TO ANYBODY ELSE ANYMORE?”
CG: BECAUSE THE UNIVERSE REVOLVES AROUND ME OBVIOUSLY.
CG: “I'M THE PROTAGONIST OF THIS STORY. EVERYBODY ELSE JUST EXISTS IN
RELATION TO ME.”
CG: YES, I KNOW, I BROKE THE RULE.
CG: SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE TO BREAK STUPID RULES.
CG: IN FACT
CG: @ DAY 27:
CG: YOU FUCKING PUSSY. GET YOUR SHIT TOGETHER AND TRUST YOUR
FUCKING THERAPIST.
CG: HERE GOES NOTHING, DICK.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED IS NOT MY FAULT. IT IS THE CULMINATION OF
UNFAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO ARADIA IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO TAVROS IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO SOLLUX IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO NEPETA IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO KANAYA IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO TEREZI IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO VRISKA IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO EQUIUS IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO GAMZEE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO ERIDAN IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO FEFERI IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO DAVE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO JOHN IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO ROSE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO JADE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO JAKE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO JANE IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO ROXY IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO DIRK IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CARAPACES IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE LUSII IS NOT MY FAULT.
CG: WAS THAT SO HARD?
CG: DAY 49.
CG: OKAY.
CG: EVERYBODY IN THIS UNIVERSE IS FINE, AREN'T THEY?
CG: EVERYBODY I KNOW.
CG: LIFE IS NEVER ONLY FILLED WITH PEACHES AND OTHER VAGUELY ASS-
LOOKING THINGS, BUT FOR HOW SHITDICK HELLISH EARTH CAN BE, THEY'RE
DOING FINE.
CG: AND THE OTHERS? THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY?
CG: WELL, THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO NOW.
CG: MAYBE "GREG" IS RIGHT.
CG: FUCK HIM.
CG: “YOU NEED TO RELAX, KARKAT.”
CG: RELAXING IS AN ACTUAL THING THAT’S HAPPENING.
CG: I
CG: (GODDAMN.)
CG: AM MAKING IT HAPPEN.
CG: YES, I QUOTED SWEET BRO AND HELLA JEFF IN MY PRIVATE DIARY. WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT IT?
CG: DAY 56.
CG: I HATE THAT SOMEWHERE OUT THERE IS A PERSON WHO POSTS CELEBRITY CONSPIRACY THEORIES ON THE INTERNET AND HAD THE BEST DAY OF THEIR LIFE WHEN THE WHOLE FARCE BROKE.
CG: OR PROBABLY EVEN SEVERAL PEOPLE.
CG: CONSIDERING THAT THERE WAS A FUCKING HASHTAG FAR BEFORE THE NEWS EVEN BROKE.
CG: #FAKEKAT!
CG: IT’S SHIT, BUT IT’S STILL BETTER THAN #DAVEKATPOCALYPSE.
CG: WERE WE REALLY THAT BAD AT THE WHOLE ACTING THING?
CG: I WAS ALMOST CONVINCED MYSELF SOMETIMES.
CG: I THOUGHT TO MYSELF “I NEED TO TELL MY BOYFRIEND ABOUT THIS, HE’LL THINK IT’S IRONICALLY HILARIOUS” HORRIFYINGLY OFTEN.
CG: I GUESS OUR STORIES REALLY WEREN’T VERY CONVINCING SOMETIMES.
SOMEBODY INTENT ON FINDING OUT IF WE WERE LYING WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SEE THROUGH THEM.
CG: BUT WHO THE FUCK WASTES THEIR TIME FINDING OUT IF CELEBRITIES ARE LYING ABOUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP?
CG: OF COURSE THEY ARE.
CG: SOME OF THEM AT LEAST.
CG: THEY’RE JUST BETTER AT IT THAN WE WERE.
CG: DAY 64.
CG: I’M STARTING TO SEE WHICH ONE OF THE TIMELINES IS THE ACTUAL ALPHA TIMELINE.
CG: EVERYTHING IS COMING INTO PLACE.
CG: WE MIRACULOUSLY WON ALMOST ALL THE BATTLES. WE PLANNED A *BRAVE NEW WORLD*.
CG: AND WE CREATED IT AND WE ENTERED IT, BRIGHT-EYED, HOPEFUL, NAÏVE.
CG: AND HERE WE FUCKING ARE.
CG: THIS WORLD IS NOTHING LIKE THE WORLD WE ANTICIPATED.
CG: ME AND THE OTHER TROLLS WERE RIPPED OFF OF OUR ENTIRE CULTURE AND RACE.
CG: I STILL FREEZE WHEN I SEE RED BLOOD. IT’S FUCKING INSTINCTUAL, IT EVEN HAPPENED BACK WHEN I HAD NO IDEA OF ANYTHING. I THOUGHT I HAD HEMOPHOBIA WHEN I WAS YOUNGER.
CG: NOT TO MENTION QUADRANTS.
CG: I CAN’T TELL IF I’M HAPPY TO BE RID OF THEM OR MISS THEM DEARLY. THEY WERE A HUGE PART OF TROLL CULTURE AND A BIG PART OF THE THINGS I THOUGHT ABOUT ON A NORMAL BASIS.
CG: NOT TO MENTION MY ROMCOMS. I MISS MY FUCKING QUADRANT ROMCOMS. HUMAN 27 DRESSES IS TOO FUCKING SIMPLE AND PREDICTABLE. NOBODY EVEN BLEEDS. AND HUMAN 27 DRESSES IS ONE OF THOSE ROMCOMS I STILL LIKE.
CG: ON THE OTHER HAND
CG: I CAN NOW ADMIT THAT
CG: QUADRANTS WERE NARROW AND SOCIALLY MANDATORY. I FELT LIKE AN EVEN BIGGER PIECE OF SHIT WHEN I COULDN’T PLACE FEELINGS IN A QUADRANT.
CG: NOW NOBODY CARES ABOUT QUADRANTS AND I MISS THEM.
CG: DAY 72.
CG: I THINK MY FRIENDS ARE MUCH CLOSER NOW.
CG: THEY’RE ALL STARTING TO GROW ON EACH OTHER.
CG: THEY WRITE TO EACH OTHER OUTSIDE OF OUR MEMOS WITHOUT ME.
CG: AND I’M PRETTY SURE IT HAPPENED BECAUSE OF THEIR WORRY OVER ME.
CG: I SHOULD’VE FOUND A DIFFERENT WAY TO DO IT.
CG: OR MAYBE I SHOULDN’T HAVE TRIED TO FORCE IT. SOLLUX IS SADLY RIGHT FOR ONCE. THIS IS A NEW LIFE.
CG: IT WILL BE DIFFERENT THAN EVERY OTHER LIFE WE’VE HAD BEFORE.
CG: BUT IT’S HAPPENED NOW ANYWAY.
CG: I AM NOT COMPLAINING ABOUT THEIR FRIENDSHIP.
CG: DAY 80.
CG: SOMETIMES I HATE HOW “GREG” TALKS.
CG: SO CLINICAL.
CG: I TELL HIM ABOUT SHIT I DON’T EVEN UNDERSTAND AND I FEEL LIKE SHIT AND HE’S LIKE “SOUNDS LIKE A TYPICAL EFFECT OF PTSD.”
CG: IT’S UNNERVING.
CG: OR “YOUR BREAKDOWN WAS MULTICAUSAL. SEVERAL TRIGGERS CAUSED SUPPRESSED ISSUES TO COME TO THE SURFACE AND IMPAIRED YOUR ABILITY TO COPE.”
CG: IT’S BAD ENOUGH WHEN I HAVE TO HEAR THE WORD *TRIGGER* FROM KANKRI IN EVERY FUCKING CONVERSATION. IT REALLY IS BAD ENOUGH.
CG: BUT NOW I EVEN HEAR IT FROM “GREG”.
CG: ISN’T THERAPY SUPPOSED TO MAKE ME HAPPY OR SOMETHING?
CG: OKAY, BUT DESPITE THAT, “GREG” ISN’T REALLY A BAD THERAPIST.
CG: WE’VE BEEN GOING THROUGH EXPERIENCES SYSTEMATICALLY. TALKING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED, HOW I FEEL, WHAT I COULD’VE DONE.
CG: AND TALKING ABOUT PEOPLE. SORTING OUT HOW I FEEL ABOUT THEM. HOW DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF KARKAT VANTAS FEEL AND WHAT THAT MEANS FOR THE FINAL CULMINATION.
CG: WHICH IS ME.
CG: IT’S REALLY FUCKING WEIRD. BUT IT DID END UP HELPING.
CG: I’M HAVING LESS AND LESS NIGHTMARES NOW. AND I CAN THINK OF MY FRIENDS WITHOUT IT RUINING MY DAY.
CG: I DON’T FLINCH ANYMORE WHEN I HEAR REALLY LOUD SUDDEN NOISES. NOT FEELING TERROR FOR YOUR LIFE EVERY NOW AND THEN DEFINITELY IMPROVES IT.
CG: I’VE NOTICED THAT I CAN SEPARATE HOW I USED TO FEEL FROM THE WAY I NOW FEEL ABOUT THINGS MUCH BETTER.
CG: I’M LIKE MY OWN PERSON AGAIN.
CG: WITHOUT BEING ALL KARKATS SIMULTANEOUSLY.
CG: HELL, I EVEN CONFUSE TROLL AND HUMAN WORDS LESS.
CG: IT’S NOT PERFECT. IF EVERYTHING WAS PERFECT I DOUBT I’D WRITE ANYTHING HERE. BUT IT’S GETTING BETTER.
CG: GREG HAS HELPED ME DEVELOP THINGS TO DO WHEN I FEEL GUILTY OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
CG: *“GREG”*.
CG: I STILL THINK HIM ASKING ME TO CALL HIM GREG IS STUPID.
CG: DAY 90.
CG: I FUCKED UP.
CG: I’VE BEEN TELLING “GREG” ABOUT MY DREAMS.
CG: HOW THEY THROW ME RIGHT BACK INTO BATTLE AND I FORGET WHERE I AM WHEN I WAKE UP.
CG: AND A BIT AGO I TOLD HIM HOW I THINK THEY’RE GETTING LESS. AND BETTER.
CG: AND I SAID THAT RECENTLY THEY’VE CHANGED A BIT, TURNED INTO FUCKING SEX DREAMS. AS IF ANYBODY COULD USE THOSE IN THEIR LIFE.
CG: NAIVELY, I WAS LIKE “AND THEN THEY MAKE ME WANT TO FUCKING JERK OFF AS IF I HAVEN’T STOPPED DOING THAT”.
CG: LONG STUPID-ASS STORY SHORT.
CG: MY THERAPIST WANTS ME TO JERK OFF.
CG: THERAPEUTICALLY.
CG: I DON’T KNOW WHAT SCHOOL THIS GUY WENT TO, PROBABLY PERV MCOYEUR SCHOOL.
CG: AT LEAST HE IS “ALLOWING” ME TO DO IT IN PRIVATE. WITHOUT HIM.
CG: I GUESS IT’S NOT A BAD IDEA. I HAVEN’T MASTURBATED SINCE I REMEMBERED.
CG: OKAY, SEXY THOUGHTS.
CG: YOU KNOW WHAT’S WEIRD THOUGH.
CG: I’VE BEEN HAVING SEX DREAMS, BUT THEY DON’T FEATURE EVERYONE EQUALLY.
CG: THEY DO MOSTLY FEATURE DAVE.
CG: WHICH IS UNFAIR.
CG: TO HIM. YOU CAN’T TELL A GUY YOU KNOW IS INTO YOU THAT YOU CAN’T BE WITH HIM AND THEN JERK OFF TO THOUGHTS OF HIM. THAT’S NOT A MORALLY GOOD THING, IS IT?
CG: IF I WANTED TO MAKE LOVE WITH DAVE, I COULD.
CG: UH
CG: OR “HAVE SEX”.
CG: I SHOULDN’T THINK ABOUT LOVE SO MUCH.
CG: THEN AGAIN HE HATES ME NOW.
CG: OR AT LEAST WON’T WASTE HIS TIME WITH ME NOW THAT HE’S SEEN HOW COMPLICATED IT IS.
CG: DAY 96.
CG: YOU. GODDAMN. IDIOT. YOU WERE JUST ABOUT TO JERK OFF.
CG: AND GOT SIDETRACKED. WHAT THE FUCK.
CG: WATCH THIS.
CG: I’M DOING IT RIGHT NOW.
CG: I AM TOUCHING MY FUCKING DICK.
CG: SLOWLY, BUT STILL. THERE’S GOOD OLD SKIN-ON-SKIN CONTACT HERE.
CG: THIS IS BETTER THAN I REMEMBER.
CG: AND I’M THINKING ABOUT SEX RIGHT NOW.
CG: AND NOT JUST IN THE ABSTRACT.
CG: I’M IMAGINING *SOME NOT FURTHER SPECIFIED PERSON* KISSING ME.
CG: OKAY, THIS IS LAME.
CG: KISSING DOWN MY BODY
NECK
A SHORT KISS TO EACH NIPPLE
STOMACH
VERY LIGHT KISSES
AND SOMETIMES LITTLE BITES?
NOT SURE ABOUT THAT.
KISSING THE SENSITIVE INSIDE OF MY THIGHS
THEN
GETTING READY TO BLOW ME.
I’D FEEL THE ANTICIPATION BUILD IN MY BELLY
MOUTHING AT MY DICK
BUT NOT TAKING IT INTO THEIR MOUTH YET
MAKING ME BUCK UP
HOLDING ME BACK WITH A HAND
LOOKING UP AT ME
SAYING SOMETHING LIKE
FUCK
“YOU SEEM RATHER DESPERATE”
FUCK I LOVE DIRTY TALK BUT I’M SHIT AT IT
AND THEN
HE’D MAKE ME BEG FOR IT
BECAUSE MY MIND IS FUCKING DIRTY
I’D SAY
“PLEASE BLOW ME”
UH
HE’D SAY “WHY”
“I WANT IT SO MUCH”
AND HE’D FINALLY TAKE ME INTO HIS MOUTH
GO FAST
AH FUCK IT MY IMAGINARY PARTNER DOESN’T HAVE A FUCKING GAG REFLEX
GRAB HIS HAIR
FUCK UP INTO HIS MOUTH
HE’D LIKE THAT
FUCK I’D LIKE THAT
HE’D PULL BACK
WOULDN’T EVEN HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING
JUST SAY
“PLEASE”
“PLEASE DAVE”
HE’D GET BACK TO BLOWING ME
REALLY ENTHUSIASTICALLY
DAMN
GODDAMN
HOLDING OFF WITH YOUR MASTURBATION FOR A TIME REALLY GIVES YOU GOOD ORGASMS.
I’M GETTING REAL TIRED.
THIS WAS PRETTY GOOD.
DAY 97.
WHY, OH WHY, DID I WRITE ALL OF THAT DOWN?
AM I THAT INCAPABLE OF SHUTTING UP?
!!!!
CG: DID I REALLY WRITE “DAVE”?
CG: WELL, THIS IS THE FUCKING WORST CASE SCENARIO.
CG: IF THIS WAS A REAL PHYSICAL DIARY I’D BURN IT DOWN, BUT SINCE THIS IS ALL VIRTUAL I NEED TO BURN DOWN THE INTERNET.
CG: OR JUST THIS PC.
CG: MY DIRTY TALK IS ATROCIOUS.
CG: IT ALMOST HURTS TO READ THIS.
CG: DAY 104.
CG: I TALKED TO “GREG” ABOUT DAVE.
CG: I BET YOU 10 DOLLARS THAT I’LL BE ABLE TO READ EVERYTHING TOMORROW IN THE NEWSPAPER. AND THIS EVENING ON THE INTERNET.
CG: THIS IS OBVIOUSLY A WIN-WIN SITUATION.
CG: BECAUSE I’M BETTING WITH MYSELF.
CG: EVERYTHING SHOULD BE THIS EASY.
CG: ANYWAY
CG: WE WENT THROUGH EVERYTHING. THE WHOLE THING FROM BEGINNING TO END.
CG: HOW I THOUGHT HE ONLY PICKED ME FOR THE ROLE OF THE BOYFRIEND BECAUSE HE WASN’T INTERESTED. BECAUSE THAT WOULD MAKE IT EASIER THAN PRETENDING TO DATE SOMEONE YOU’RE ACTUALLY INTERESTED IN.
CG: AND HOW AS TIME WENT ON I UNDERSTOOD HIM BETTER AND BETTER.
CG: ONCE YOU KNOW HOW TO READ HIM IT’S IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO LIKE HIM.
CG: HOW I GREW FONDER AND FONDER OF HIM WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO STOP IT.
CG: IT WAS LIKE WATCHING A TRAIN SLOWLY CREEP CLOSER WHILE YOUR FEELINGS ARE TIED TO THE TRACKS.
CG: I TOLD GREG WHAT I SAID TO DAVE AND EXPLAINED WHY EXACTLY THAT WAS THE ONLY SENSIBLE THING LEFT TO DO.
CG: HE DIDN’T THINK SO. I DON’T KNOW WHAT HIGHER POWER HE THINKS GAVE HIM THE RIGHT TO JUDGE OTHER PEOPLE BASED ON FAULTY LOGIC, BUT HE DID.
CG: SO WE FOUGHT AGAIN, THIS TIME EVEN WITH HIM ARGUING BACK.
CG: I DIDN’T REALLY ADMIT IT, BUT I AM STARTING TO DOUBT IT.
CG: BUT IF IT WASN’T A SENSIBLE THING TO DO, I REALLY HURT DAVE FOR NO REASON.
CG: BUT
CG: MY LOGIC WAS FLAWLESS.
CG: I CAN’T BELIEVE I FEEL DIFFERENTLY NOW.
CG: IT WASN’T JUST AN OVERREACTION.
CG: IT WASN’T
CG: WAS IT?
CG: IT WASN’T.
CG: MAYBE IT WAS.
CG: @FUTURE SHITHEAD, WHAT’S YOUR FUCKING OPINION?
CG: DAY 109.
CG: SIT YOUR ASS DOWN, VERSION OF KARKAT WHO MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT BE READING THIS BECAUSE I’M ABOUT TO TELL YOU EXACTLY WHAT THE DEAL IS. I HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THIS LONG AND HARD AND THIS IS THE FINAL FUCKING VERDICT.
CG: A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE DEAD. *DEAD* BEING THE KEYWORD HERE.
CG: ME HURTING THEM IN SOME WAY OR ANOTHER IS SHIT AND I SHOULDN’T JUST FORGET IT, BUT THERE’S PEOPLE LIVING RIGHT NOW. AND THEY SHOULD
BE MY FOCUS.
CG: IT’S OBVIOUS WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT.
CG: SO HOW AM I GOING TO “FOCUS” ON THOSE PEOPLE, YOU’RE PROBABLY NOT ASKING YOURSELF?
CG: MOST OF THEM ARE FINE WITH ME JUST BEFRIENDING THEM. THEIR LIVES ARE GOOD. MAYBE I NEED TO GET GAMZEE OFF THE DRUGS THOUGH. AND ACTUAL GOOD HELP.
CG: AND DAVE?
CG: I TALKED TO “GREG”, SADLY.
CG: HE TOLD ME HE THINKS I’M READY FOR A NEW RELATIONSHIP. I PROBABLY WASN’T BACK WHEN I TOLD DAVE THAT WE NEEDED TO BREAK UP, BUT I CAN DEAL BETTER NOW.
CG: DO I LOOK LIKE SOMEONE WHO TAKES RELATIONSHIP ADVICE FROM SOMEBODY NAMED GREGORY? I HOPE NOT.
CG: DESPITE THAT, HE’S RIGHT. I’VE GOTTEN BETTER, I CAN HAVE SOMETHING WITH DAVE NOW.
CG: WE CAN HAVE SOMETHING GOOD.
CG: DAY 113.
CG: SO I JUST CAME HOME AND
CG: THIS IS FUCKING STUPID
-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] stopped responding to memo --

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] opened memo on board POST-APOCALYPTIC FRUITY RUMPUS ASSHOLES FACTORY --
CG: I FOUND DIVORCE PAPERS IN MY MAILBOX.
TA: well, they're not miine.
CG: VERY FUNNY, NIPPLEEATER.
CG: EVERYBODY IS HAVING EXTRAORDINARY AMOUNTS OF FUN WITH THAT JOKE.
GA: Are You Upset About That
CG: ABOUT SOLLUX MAKING BAD JOKES? IT’S THE “THEY’RE REALLY BAD”-PART THAT GETS ME, YES.
GA: I Meant The Divorce Papers Actually For The Most Part
CG: FUCK. IT’S NOT ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS, BUT
CG: I WANT HIM BACK.
TA: of cour2e you do.
AC: :33 < this ship is sailing like the titanic
AC: :33 < wait :oo
AC: :33 < a diffurent famous ship
AC: :33 < that didn’t sink
AC: :33 < this ship is flying like a helium balloon!
TA: diid you realize your love when you 2aw the diivorce paper2?
TA: becau2e that i2 too romcom-e2que.
CG: IT WAS A SLOW REALIZATION. CREPT UP ON ME LIKE POISON.
CG: SLOW-ACTING POISON.
CG: SHIT JESUS OF HELL!
CG: I HAVEN’T KEPT UP WITH HIS LIFE. IT’D BE FUCKING ABYSMALLY BAD IF HE’S DATING SOMEONE NOW.
TA: ii am haviing a déjà vu.
TA: and by déjà vu ii mean a fla2hback to haviing to talk about your relatiion2hiip for too many
whole conversation.

TA: ii knew thi2 would happen when you 2aid you were better.

CG: WHINING ABOUT ME TALKING ABOUT DAVE HAS GOTTEN REALLY OLD.

CG: I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT MY FEELINGS. I WAS SIMPLY MAKING AN OBSERVATION. NO RELATIONSHIP TALK HERE.

TA: and yet ii 2tiill hate iit.

TA: but iiif thi2 ii2 the la2t tiime, ii’ll indulge ju2t once more, diick.

CG: IF NOBODY HAS HAD THE GUTS TO TELL ME, HE’S OBVIOUSLY DATING SOMEONE.

CG: I SHOULD’VE KNOWN. IT DIDN’T WORK OUT IN SOME TIMELINES.

AC: :33 < no, he’s not dating anyone!!

GA: Why Don’t You Just Talk To Him Directly

CG: YOU CAN’T JUST GO TRY TO GET YOUR EX BACK WITHOUT ANY PREPARATION.

GA: I Either Must Have Missed Something Or You Did Not Date

GA: Question Mark

GA: Despite That Not Being A Question

CG: NO, BUT IT CERTAINLY FEELS LIKE IT.

CG: HOWEVER YOU WANT TO PHRASE IT, I NEED TO CAREFULLY EVALUATE WHAT I SAY TO HIM.

GA: I Don’t Think He Took Your Break Up As We Are Calling It Apparently Very Well

GA: He Had To Do A Lot Of Interviews And Public Work To Lessen The Hit Of Your Lack Of Relationship Coming To The Surface And During Those He Was Obviously In A Poor Mood

GA: To The Point Of Him Snapping At Fans

GA: Well They Might Not Be Fans Anymore

CG: SHIT

GA: And He Started Hanging Out At My And Roses House A Lot

GA: And He Tried To Rap Battle Me

TA: ok, that’2 kiinda funny.

TA: tell me you won at lea2t once.

GA: I Won Most Of The Time

GC: 4R3 W3 T4LK1NG 4BOUT D4V3?

GC: TH3 GUY G3TS CL1NGY WH3N H3S H34RTBROK3N

GC: H3 FL3W 4FT3R M3 TO “H4NG OUT”

GC: 4ND WH1N3D TOO MUCH 4BOUT YOU

GC: 1T M4D3 M3 SOM3T1M3S CONT3MPL4T3 D34F3N1NG MYS3LF 4S W3LL

GC: SO JUST GO T4LK TO H1M 4LR34DY!!

GC: IF YOUR FR13NDS ROLL TH31R EY3S A4NY H4RD3R YOULL B3 R3SPONS1BL3 FOR A COUPL3 MOR3 BL1ND P3OPL3

GC: LOOK 1NT0 MY BL1ND EY3S 4ND T3LL M3 YOU 4R3 W1LL1NG TO B3 R3SPONS1BL3 FOR TH4T

CG: LAYING IT ON A BIT THICK WITH THE BLIND JOKES.

CG: I’M GOING TO MESSAGE HIM, DON’T SHIT YOUR FUCKING PANTIES.

CG: RIGHT NOW.

CG: JUST FUCKING WATCH ME.

AC: :33 < maybe you should call him instead!!

CG: SHIT, THE CAT GIRL IS RIGHT.

TA: nepeta ii2 better at relation2hiip advice than you

CG: THAT’S FUCKING SLANDER.

CG: SEE IF I HELP YOU THE NEXT TIME YOU’RE TRAPPED IN A HORRIBLE LOVE TRIANGLE.

CG: OR QUADRANGLE.
Chapter End Notes

I hope you didn't try to get off to this cause the porn part was barely 250 words long. And not very good.

I called the author an asshole in this so this is obviously the best chapter so far.
Be my boyfriend (I’ll pay you)

Chapter Notes

we're getting there

You chew on your lips and suppress the urge to yell at your phone to just fucking call faster somehow. Who thought having a dumb beeping sound would make people less impatient when they have to wait for someone to pick up?

You take a deep breath.

You jiggle your leg.

“Yo.”

Yo! You hadn’t thought you’d ever be happy about hearing someone say “yo”.


“Dude, Karkat, hey... It’s been months. You know, normally when people say ‘we need to talk’, they want to break up, but that train’s so far away from the station that stations in general have become an often-doubted myth to the passengers’ great-grandchildren.”

You smile at the phone like an idiot. “I really don’t want to break up. The opposite actually.” Your smile vanishes, replaced with a nervous frown. “Um, can you just let me finish for a second, no matter how stupid what I say is, I think that’d be best. Okay, so, I know you’re probably pissed off or something and I’m not surprised, it takes a while for you to open yourself up to people like you did with me and I betrayed that, didn’t I? But I really did that because I wanted to protect you and the situation’s different now; I think you and me together could be a great thing.”

You pause for a second, but Dave doesn’t say anything.

You babble on. “I was convinced that I’d hurt you because I was still hung up on everybody from my past and I couldn’t let my fuckup angst fuck with somebody I actually cared about as much as I did. As I do, actually. We haven’t talked in awhile, but I fucking miss you. Fuck. And I think you miss me too. And we don’t have to pine around like idiots. I’m able to deal with everything that happened in the past much better now, I can focus on you now and I’m... I won’t make you unhappy if I have anything to say about it. I’ll make you happy. I could. If you want me to.”

There’s silence on the other end of the line.

“Dave? You can talk now if you want to.”

You hold your breath.

There’s weird sounds coming out of the phone. Footsteps?

“Are you there? Dave? You didn’t just leave the phone lying somewhere and walk away, did you?”
You flinch when the doorbell rings. Since when is it so fucking loud?

“Shit, my doorbell just rang.”

You finally get an answer through the phone. “Yes, that’s me. Dave. Strider. Shaken, not stirred.”

He sounds out of breath. “Sorry, I sprinted up the stairs to your apartment, couldn’t answer.”

You rush to the door and throw it open. There he is. You look at the actual real-life Dave Strider for the first time in way too fucking long. He’s smiling.

“Hi.”

“Hello,” you answer.

“You... came here?”

“I was in the neighborhood. So... sup.”

“I don’t know, what’s up with you?”

“I think I just acquired a boyfriend.”

For once second your heart sinks. He’s dating someone. Then, realization. “Oh! Oh, that’s me. Right?” Dave nods, laughing silently. “Oh, okay. So we’re dating now?”

“Should I have asked first? Karkat Vantas, be my boyfriend? I’ll pay you. In love and kisses.”

You nod, hesitant. “You do realize we’re married, right?”

“Well, that’s preferable to us being married to someone else, isn’t it?”

“That it is.” You remember your original reason for freaking out a bit. “So you don’t want me to sign those divorce papers?”

“Only if you want to? I personally appreciate the irony of being drunk-married while not even dating, but you’re a Romantic, capital R. If you want to eventually maybe redo the wedding for real, I’m game too. We could wear flower crowns and play embarrassing games with relatives we barely like. It sounds better the longer I think about it.”

“I don’t know. I’m just... is this it? You’re not mad at me or anything? You’re just like ‘oh, Karkat, you vaguely apologized so let’s wear flower crowns while we get married’?”

Dave snorts. “You’re making me sound easy. I’ve had a blushing schoolgirl crush on you for a while now, you know that, right? And we’re friends. Sure, I was mad, but I want you in my life and I’m not gonna fuck that up because I had to make a point or something. And I’ve had time to calm down, look at other people and find them boring.”

“I always fought with you in the beginning.” Your voice sounds unusually meek. “Hell, even at the end. You’re telling me you developed a crush on me despite that?”

“I was a dick too sometimes, wasn’t I? You’re not nearly as intimidating as you seem to think. I told you, you’re like a cantankerous cat. Deep in your heart you just want cuddles and if they look closely enough, everybody can see it.”

“Oh?” That’s horrible.
“Okay, at first I mostly thought you were hilarious and a bit annoying, with your groundless yelling and absolutely best swear words I’ve ever heard and glaring and general Karkat-ness. But even back then when I didn’t really like you I still would have slept with you, and not just because of the sex dreams I had about you, and it only got better from there.”

“You’re not helping your point.”

“No? If it makes you feel any better, I’ve always thought you were cute. And we’re far away from how we were in the beginning. I trust you now and I know you’re not all ‘yelling as defense mechanism’. You’re, you know, caring about your friends, and about fictional characters, and analyzing things to death and not taking any bullshit and creativeness and actually more understanding for humor and irony than you pretend to have. It’s sweet and actually pretty heart-warming. Come on, I can’t just pass this shit up like ‘who cares if there’s this cute guy telling me how much he misses me, I’m an independent dude who don’t need no man’.”

“Wait.” You can’t help yourself. “You had sex dreams about me?”

“You’re literally the guy of my dreams.”

“Jesus. You’re secretly a romantic too, aren’t you? Am I blushing? I feel like I’m blushing. This is some next level bad schoolgirl romance shit. I have to tell you all the reasons why you’re great too now.”

Dave is smiling again. “Here we are at the climax of our romcom and you’re doubting the need for a big confession.”

“Is this the climax?”

“I don’t know about you, but I’m definitely about to climax.”

“Dave, no!” You have to laugh.

“Too early?

“Well, we should at least kiss before you make sex jokes, shouldn’t we?”

“That leads me to my second greatest idea.”

“What was your first?”

“Hiring you as fake boyfriend.”

“Wow.” Wow. “I have a lot of things to say to that.”

“Okay. The hiring idea in and of itself was shit, but without it I wouldn’t even know you.”

“You need to stop saying sweet things, I’m gonna die otherwise.” Your cheeks already hurt from smiling. You’re not that used to it, your muscles are totally out of form.

“Maybe that was my sinister plan all along.”

You snort. “If the me as fake boyfriend thing was your greatest idea, I tremble to imagine your second greatest idea.”

“I have five words for you. First. Kiss. In. The. Rain.”
You look out the window. It is raining. “Oh.”

“Yes. We’re doing it, man. We’re making it happen.”

“Why did you say first kiss?”

“Because it is? Isn’t it? Every other kiss was for practice or show. Or we were just way too
hammered to even get what we were doing. Maybe it’s not our first kiss, but it’s our first official kiss.
Come on, what’s a life worth if it has no cheesy romcom magic in it?”

You stare at him.

“What?”

“You’re really sweet.”

“Oh.”

“I think I’m ready for my big speech.”

“Really organic, Karkat. Haven’t you already made a big speech on the phone?”

You ignore that. “You always make me laugh and your presence relaxes me. Calms me down. I
don’t know. You’re just a big dork who cares about other people and I mean that in the most
affectionate way I can muster. Talking to you is just so easy, even if I don’t know what to say you’re
sure to find something to talk about. And it always cheers me up. I couldn’t stand not having you in
my life at all to make it dorkier and cooler at the same time.”

“Now my speech looks inadequate next to yours.”

“No, it doesn’t.”

“Race me down the stairs?”

“What?”

And he’s already taken off. You run after Dave, yelling, “We’re going to break all of our legs! All of
them.”

“I’m winning!”

He is. With a yell, you try to catch up, but fail. Dave jumps down the last two steps and lets out a
stupid victory yell. You come to a halt next to him, panting.

“You... cheated. I didn’t get time to prepare!”

“No, you lost because you complained even while every breath was precious.” He opens the door.

You step outside. Into the rain. “You asshole.”

“I love you too.”

“Yeah. Okay. I love you too.”

Dave turns around. “Oh. I didn’t... expect it to turn out that sincere.” You open your mouth to
express your indignation, but he holds up his hands. “But I do love you.”
You nod, smiling. Rain seeps through your sweater. Dave’s hair is sticking to his head, completely wet already.

You say, “This is the part where we kiss.”

“It’s literally perfect. I couldn’t have imagined it any cheesier if I tried. You pointing out that it’s that part might have taken away a bit of the romcom magic, but it’s still a pretty good moment.”

“Oh my god. You don’t ever stop talking.”

“Give my mouth something better to do.” He leers like a dork.

You step forward, until your chests are touching. He’s warm against the cold rain. You lean forward, your lips almost touch. You hold your breath.

“Hi,” Dave breathes.

You burst out giggling. “Dave.” You bury your face in his chest.

“What happened to my kiss?”

“It died a pitiful death.”

Despite your words, you surge forward, finally pressing your lips against his. Dave hums and you have to smile against his lips again. He places a hand on your face, you open your mouth and the dam breaks.

The kiss finally gets intense, deep. Forceful almost.

You wrap your arms around Dave, Dave pushes your bodies closer together, your heartbeat speeds up and you swear to every deity out there that you’re never ever gonna stop. You’re pressed so tightly against each other that it almost hurts. You hear yourself sigh into the kiss, your whole body suddenly hungry for more. You pull your hands through Dave’s hair, silky beneath your hands.

You reluctantly pull back, snap for air, Dave does the same, and you’re back to kissing again. Dave’s skin feels a bit cold under your fingers in the chilly rain, but his mouth is hot. The warmth spreads from your lips through your entire body. You let the kiss slow down, get tender. You really savor the feeling of Dave Strider being here, alive, in front of you right now.

This time when you pull back you take the time to look at him. He’s smiling, his hair sticking up where you ruffled it.

Despite yourself, you expect the guilt to settle in, but it doesn’t. You can smile at Dave without thinking about what happened. It’s fine.

You kiss Dave again. It’s so tender it’s barely a kiss, just a touch from your lips to his. You feel his warm breath on your face.

“Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purged.”

“What?” You lean back.

“Romeo and Juliet?”

“What the fuck?”
“I thought you might appreciate the cheesy quote.”

“You can quote Romeo and Juliet?”

“I had a bet with Rose a while back. I lost and had to do the play for her. In her living room. Several times. There were people invited. It was all very artful, but dude. Never make a bet with Rose.”

You become aware of how you must look. Two wet people standing in the rain in the middle of the street, pressed up against each other, dopily smiling. You step back just a bit, not enough to stop touching Dave. “I’ll keep it in mind. You’re right though. I do appreciate you quoting Romeo and Juliet at me.”

“Well, buckle in then, cause that’s all I’m gonna do from now on.”

“What?”

Dave spreads his arms and yells, “It is the east and Karkat is the sun.”

Two girls who were previously standing at the end of the street minding their own business look at you two like you’ve lost your mind. Wow, you can’t wait to see what the media says about this.

“Shh, Dave, be quiet.”

You shiver in your wet clothes. Kissing your love interest in the rain is not as comfortable as you’ve been led to believe. To shut him up, you lean against him once more, savoring his warmth, and kiss him again, a sweet, short press of lips against lips.

“Aw. Thus with a kiss I die.” Dave dramatically falls down on the pavement, arms flailing, fake-choking, and does the worst death impression you’ve ever seen.

You shake your head, but smile fondly. You feel good about your decision to talk to him, you really do. You can allow yourself to be happy.

Chapter End Notes

And that’s that. next chapter will most likely have sex. any top/bottom headcanons anybody wants to share? I’m not saying I’m taking votes but I’m taking votes.

I made a Davekat Against Humanity deck on cardcast if anybody is interested: https://www.cardcastgame.com/browse/deck/37ZPD
Epilogue: I love you

Chapter Notes

This is it. The actual end. Spoiler alert, the fanfic does not turn into anime :(  

Also, the poll ended up being KK bottom 10 – Dave 8, if I counted correctly. But even before I counted the votes I’d thought of a scene I liked and I decided I probably wanted to do it like this.  
But the trick to writing porn is just not doing it anyway. I had so much trouble and this semi-in-character narration style made it even harder.  

But shh, I still like this chapter, don’t let my note ruin it for you before you’ve even begun it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Your name is Dave Strider and goddamn hell yeah do you have an awesome relationship. With one hot piece of behind Karkat Vantas, grade-A boyfriend. And you have been having it for a while now.

The whole relationship thing was quite the unnecessarily complicated ordeal until it actually started, without payments or anything this time. From then on it’s just been smooth sailing, blue skies, clear waters and all. You conquer the seas like the hottest goddamn one-eyed pirate in the entire Pacific. And all other oceans, and also space. You’re space pirates too, that’s how skyrocketing your relationship is. Of course there’s the occasional disagreement, but you and Karkat are always able to come to a conclusion. So, smooth sailing.

So smooth in fact you feel the ship head directly into uncharted sex waters, dick ahoy, mate. And you’re thrilled about that; never let it be said that Dave ‘Sex God’ Strider wouldn’t mind striding right into Karkat Vantas’s sexy zone, but maybe there should be some talk about this.

-- turntechGodhead [TG] began pestering carcinoGeneticist [CG] —
TG: sweetcheeks
TG: sugar babe
TG: vip of my heart
TG: mip of my heart actually
TG: most important person
TG: darling treasure
CG: I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT STOP AFTER WE ACTUALLY GOT TOGETHER.
CG: THAT WAS PROBABLY STUPID OF ME.
TG: aw are you saying you dont like it
CG: IT’S VERY “YOU”.
TG: sure has that trademark strider smoothness
CG: IT CERTAINLY DOES NOT.
CG: WHAT TRADEMARK STRIDER SMOOTHNESS ARE YOU EVEN TALKING ABOUT?
CG: BUT I SUPPOSE I’M OKAY WITH IT.
TG: i knew it you love the nicknames
CG: OCCASIONALLY.
TG: so about that thing we have
TG: not the relationship thing itself
TG: our date thing this evening
CG: YES?
TG: at your house
TG: where well be having a dope ass candlelit dinner
CG: I KNOW WHAT YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT.
CG: BUT WHY ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT IT?
TG: why indeed
TG: youre the best at asking questions
CG: AND I FEEL LIKE YOU’RE AVOIDING THEM?
CG: DO YOU WANT TO CANCEL?
CG: WE CAN DO IT SOME OTHER TIME.
TG: see thats the thing
TG: is this do it as in do the dinner or do it as in do it it
TG: IT
TG: information technology
CG: ARE YOU ASKING ME IF WE ARE GOING TO HAVE SEX?
CG: THAT’S WHAT’S BOTHERING YOU?
CG: WAS IT THAT OBVIOUS THAT I’VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT?
CG: WE CERTAINLY DON’T HAVE TO.
TG: but we want to dont we
TG: this part of the we actually wants to
TG: cant speak for the other part though
CG: I’M NOT THE ONE WHO BROUGHT IT UP.
TG: so that is in fact a thing that is happening
TG: im definitely not opposed
TG: the opposite of opposed
TG: proposed
CG: GOOD
CG: GREAT.
CG: I’M GLAD.
CG: THIS IS AWKWARD.
TG: tell me about it
TG: sooo question
TG: and you cant tell me youre not secretly fussing about this, i know you too well
TG: how exactly is this going to work out
CG: THE EXACT MECHANICS?
CG: DAVE, DO YOU WANT ME TO GIVE YOU THE GAY TALK?
CG: WHEN TWO DADDIES LOVE EACH OTHER VERY MUCH,
CG: OR DON’T,
TG: you know thats not what i meant
TG: i think ive had an impact on your sense of humor
CG: SORRY. BUT THAT WAS THE BEST OPPORTUNITY FOR THIS JOKE.
TG: finish it then
TG: what happens with the daddies
CG: THE STORK COMES
CG: AND FUKS ONE OF THEM UP THE ASS.
TG: nice clean bestiality joke i love it
CG: I FEEL DIRTY NOW. THAT WAS SHIT.
CG: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MY PREVIOUSLY GREAT SENSE OF HUMOR?
TG: improved it
TG: and dirty is exactly the way your supposed to be feeling for this conversation so good going
CG: GREAT.
CG: SO WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING HERE? IS THAT YOU WANT TO TALK
ABOUT, WHO BOTTOMS? HOURS BEFORE ANYTHING IS MAYBE POSSIBLY SET TO
HAPPEN?
TG: when you say it like that it sounds weird
CG: IT PROBABLY DOES.
CG: BUT
CG: I ADMIT I'M KIND OF THANKFUL.
CG: I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THIS TOO.
TG: i knew it
TG: im the best boyfriend im so attuned to your feelings you better blow me every hour of the day
from now on
CG: THAT SEEMS UNPRACTICAL.
TG: nah ill just follow you everywhere #liveyourdreams
TG: maybe that will calm the rumors about us not dating
TG: you lie about a relationship once and suddenly everybody thinks youd lie about that same
relationship again
TG: wheres the plot twist in that if not in the relationship being real and also #perf
CG: PERVERTED?
TG: perfect
CG: AH.
CG: ;)
CG: WELL, WE WERE TALKING ABOUT SEX JUST A MINUTE AGO.
CG: WHAT'S YOUR PLAN THEN? DO YOU WANT TO BOTTOM OR TOP?
CG: FUCKING SIXTY-NINE?
CG: JUST FUCKING GIVE EACH OTHER HANDJOBS?
CG: FUCKING USE A FUCKING DOUBLE-ENDED DILDO??
TG: wellll
TG: do i like apple juice
CG: YOU FUCKING LOVE APPLE JUICE.
CG: BUT YOU CAN'T ANSWER "YES" TO A MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION.
TG: you can if you like all options
CG: ALL AT ONCE?
TG: hell yeah karkat never doubt your options if you really want something to happen you can make
it happen
TG: forget the laws of physics
TG: einstein what einstein the only stone i believe in is my rock hard dick
CG: DAVE
CG: ARE YOU HARD RIGHT NOW?
TG: no just joking
TG: oh shit oh shit do you want to sext
TG: nevermind what i said before i can get hard
CG: OH GOD, PLEASE DON'T
CG: I'M SET TO HAVE A MEETING WITH MY PR-MANAGER IN FIVE MINUTES.
CG: SERIOUSLY, I CAN'T DO THAT.
CG: DON'T MAKE A JOKE ABOUT IT "TAKING FIVE MINUTES."
TG: ok ok im not hard
TG: its all calm in bonerville
TG: birds are singing flowers are blooming
TG: on days like these
TG: dave definitely doesn’t think about the horizontal do
CG: SORRY.
CG: THIS TURNED INTO A STUPID MISUNDERSTANDING AND FUCKING GOT OUT
OF HAND WORSE THAN A FAMILY DINNER WHERE THE CHILDREN SUDDENLY
DECIDE TO MAKE OUT.
TG: this is still less awkward than i imagined this conversation would be
CG: YOU GOT THAT RIGHT.
CG: SHOULD WE FLIP A COIN THEN?
CG: UH
CG: FOR THE SEX THING.
TG: do normal people solve their sex problems with a coin flip
TG: if they do its too mainstream for me
CG: I THINK NORMAL PEOPLE JUST DO WHAT THEY FEEL LIKE?
CG: IT COMES NATURALLY TO THEM?
TG: they dont ever talk?
TG: well from what ive seen from some straight couples in comedy shows that is plausible
CG: YOU ARE FUCKING RIGHT, BUT THAT DOESN’T MAKE IT BETTER.
CG: YOU KNOW WHAT?
CG: ALL UNNECESSARY BULLSHIT ASIDE, ANSWER ME THIS, STRAIGHT AND TO
MY FACE.
CG: DO YOU THINK WE FAIL AT ROMANCE?
CG: OR IS THIS NORMAL?
TG: no we win at romance we are having a candlelit dinner later today
TG: if thats not winning i dont know what is
TG: so were awkward sometimes
TG: everybody is at first
TG: there’s something intimate about getting to know each other and getting closer and closer and
that sort of intimacy scares people
TG: of course your romcoms dont like to talk about that
CG: THAT WAS ACTUALLY RATHER WISE.
CG: THANKS.
CG: AND WITHOUT A LONG-WINDED METAPHOR TOO.
CG: YOU DIDN’T GET THAT FROM THE INTERNET, DID YOU?
TG: i read your blog about romance and everything lovey dovey and/or at least somewhat related to
it remember
TG: it dragged me screaming and kicking into thinking profound thoughts about relationships
TG: so that was all dave strider the original series
CG: IT APPEARS I ACTUALLY UNDERESTIMATED YOU HERE.
TG: happens to the best of us
TG: so which one do you feel like the most
TG: sex wise
TG: or whatever
CG: THAT IS A GOOD FUCKING QUESTION.
TG: isnt it
CG: WELL
CG: I SUPPOSE IF WE’RE GOING TO TRY A LOT OF THINGS, IT DOESN’T REALLY
MATTER.
CG: EXCEPT IT’S OUT FIRST TIME, WHICH MEANS IT DOES MATTER AT LEAST
SOMEWHA.
CG: AND NOBODY’S GOING TO CONVINCE ME OTHERWISE.
TG: wouldn’t dream of it
TG: but perhaps i would dream of telling you not to put too much metaphorical weight into this
CG: AS IN “WHOEVER BOTTOMS IS THE GIRL IN THE RELATIONSHIP”?  
CG: THAT IS ONE HELL OF A LOAD OF HORSESHIT PILED ON A LOAD OF CRAP  
SPRINKLED WITH JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF WHAT-THE-FUCK.  
CG: FUCK THAT SHIT RIGHT UP THE ASS.  
CG: WOW, PUN *NOT* INTENDED.  
CG: IT’S NOT LIKE THAT. I SIMPLY WANT IT TO BE GOOD.  
TG: itll be good even if its bad  
TG: thats how awesome we are  
TG: mostly good sex comes from experience doesnt it  
TG: and from knowing each other well  
CG: HAVE YOU EVER BOTTOMED?  
TG: no  
TG: ive never even had sex with a guy  
TG: mostly i had like stupid hookups with random chicks  
TG: they were great girls dont get me wrong five stars but thats not really what i like  
TG: so that was mostly a phase i wasnt doing that anymore when i met you  
TG: i was all fifties style looking for the right dude to go on tame milkshake dates with  
TG: more or less  
CG: WELL, I DO HAVE SOME MEMORIES OF BEING ON THE BOTTOM.  
CG: WE SHOULD DO THAT FIRST.  
CG: AND THEN WORK OUR WAY UP.  
TG: up?  
CG: WORK OUR WAY TO DIFFERENT POSITIONS AND CONSTELLATIONS.  
TG: i can do that  
TG: im a great worker  
CG: I’M SURE YOU ARE.  
TG: hell yeah so ill see you later for one session of cooking and fucking a la chef sex god  
CG: DO YOU EVEN KNOW HOW TO COOK?  
CG: I CAN DO BASICS, BUT NOTHING TOO FANCY.  
CG: I GET SO IMPATIENT.  
TG: thats hot  
CG: WHAT?  
CG: DAVE, ARE YOU REALLY INCAPABLE OF THINKING ABOUT ANYTHING  
OTHER THAN SEX NOW?  
TG: i probably could if i tried really hard  
TG: hey how do you feel about me coming early  
TG: coming by early  
TG: to your apartment  
TG: you know  
TG: showing up before our originally intended time  
TG: if you let me ill cook everything, isnt that one hell of a sweet gig  
CG: DO YOU KNOW HOW TO COOK THEN?  
TG: havent you heard what a unique chef extraordinaire i am  
CG: I AM NOT WILLING TO HAVE SEX BEFORE OUR DINNER, OKAY?  
CG: WE SHOULD AT LEAST PRETEND WE’RE NOT THE NEANDERTHALS WE KNOW  
WE ARE DEEP IN OUR HEARTS.  
TG: okay sure  
TG: so food before the wild fucking, got it  
CG: THAT’S NOT WHAT I MEANT.  
CG: NO, ACTUALLY THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT I MEANT. BUT I DIDN’T INTEND FOR  
IT TO BE EXPRESSED QUITE THAT CRASSLY.  
TG: for somebody who likes to vividly describe absurdly violent acts in your insults you sure can be
TG: prude i guess?
TG: but i dont meant that in an insulting way
TG: in a cute way
CG: THAT’S ONE OF THE WEIRDEST COMPLIMENTS I’VE EVER GOTTEN.
CG: AND I’M DATING YOU.
CG: I HAVE TO GO NOW.
CG: MY PR-WOMAN IS ALREADY ASKING ME WHY I’M STILL ON THE PHONE.
CG: KIND OF RUDE, I COULD BE DOING SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT HERE.
CG: MAYBE I JUST RECEIVED NEWS THAT MY GRANDFATHER IS DYING. SHE DOESN’T HAVE THE RIGHT TO JUDGE ME.
CG: BUT SEE YOU LATER!
TG: yeah exactly
TG: you will
TG: see all of me later
CG: NOBODY CAN EVER READ THIS CONVERSATION EXCEPT US.

-- carcinoGeneticist [CG] ceased pestering turntechGodhead [TG] --

You put down your phone instead of sending increasingly confusing metaphors for sex. Because you are a good boyfriend and a gentleman and there’s only so many ways a gentleman can unsubtly ask for sex without seeming desperate. No, really, there are.

A much better course of action would be to go shopping for food to more or less subtly seduce that hunk of meat. Seems like an appropriate time for some convenient introspection too.

You feel like there should be some kind of arrow and maybe the words “Dave: reflect on your journey” should appear somewhere. But, alas, this is not that kind of medium. You will reflect anyway.

And what a dope-ass journey it has been. From the mountains of “no way am I attracted to dudes” to the “this is the most incredible plan ever” path, through the deep forests of “oh shit” and up “break-up” river have you soldiered on until finally you got to throw Karkat into Mount Love™. Okay, maybe that’s not a good metaphor. You threw all romcom-ish shenanigans that hindered your once-in-a-like-lifetime romance into the volcano.

Or perhaps you should start even earlier? The confused childhood years of heteronormativity? Or that time you ended up on a gay porn site and panicked so much that you sent Rose ironic screencaps? And then thought you were gay (gasp), but couldn’t come out to her even when she explicitly talked about it? Nah, let’s not open that can of foul-smelling worms for no reason. That shit’s for very late night talks with your boyfriend. And maybe Rose if she’s particularly nice.

Instead you’ll focus on that one second when you saw your future husband and thought “wow, does that grouchy guy have a dirty-ass mouth, calm down maybe”. Yup, that’s the stuff modern romance is made out of. But it doesn’t matter, you fell in love with him anyway.

Somehow through teasing him and kissing him and pestering him and helping him and bickering with him, you started looking forward to your interactions. Who expected the weird shouty guy to turn out to be someone you could talk to for hours upon hours?

And what’s even better than romance? Exploring your sexuality, that’s what. On all the scales and ways to measure “better” except maybe, all of them. You panicked about your sexuality a bit like the teen cliché you are, deep in your heart. You talked to your heart’s #1 and were motivated by him to be totally open about it. At no point was positive personal development a part of your plan and it still
happened.

So what does a modern womanizer (manizer?) do? A modern heartbreaker decides Mission Acquire The Vantass (MATV) is a go and awkwardly flirts his heart out. More or less. And sees his advances go pitifully unnoticed like a boss. Except they turn out to be not that unnoticed and also suddenly your love decides to break your heart seemingly for no reason.

Of course you now understand his reasons better, but that didn’t help your poor tortured soul when you decided you were an independent guy who didn’t need no man and took up cooking. Nor did it help Rose or Kanaya or Terezi or your manager or anyone else when you pestered them at the most possibly inconvenient times to pretend you were fine. Even Rose, for once the victim in a story, got tired of it, even if she was proud of you for having come such a long way from ironically telling her you were gay when you were eight, you goddamn idiot.

Aside from bothering them you also tried to salvage the scraps of your reputation and wasn’t that a great time? You talked to the media a lot, all sad innocent farm boy just trying to find his way in the world, as much as your sick pokerface allowed at least. You considered other options such as becoming an accountant with a midlife crisis somewhere in Ohio maybe, but fuck that noise. You stood up proud and just kept on doing your thing.

You published “sbahj the movovie”, no caps, as a distraction, which, as expected, worked not at all. You knew that it would only generate more stupid attention, but you’re captured in a cage of irony when it comes to this shit. You will gladly be a fool if it gets that many people to watch your shitty, no-efforts-at-all-taken movies. It ended up being the most watched film in the history of cinema. Tens of thousands of levels of incredible right there, you are a fucking legend.

Plus, that broken heart? It was still a thing. Productivity is great for getting over someone.

Not that you’re a great advisor on how to get over someone, seeing as you’re now in a relationship with the someone in this case. And that would definitely make past Dave (from like a week after Karkat ended everything) protest, if he knew. For the most part of the last few months you were sure you wanted nothing to do with him. Karkat? What Karkat? Is that slang for feline roadkill?

Rose, bless her soul, updated you on his status whenever you more or less subtly asked. (You should probably all adapt a “what would Rose do” morality, she’s the real MVP of your story.) When she recounted how he'd cut her off you rang up all of his friends you knew like you were the best Jehovah’s Witness, bothering them to go talk to him, to not leave him alone, especially not then.

And Rose told you, like she probably wasn't supposed to tell you, like you were talking about your crushes in a 1990 teen movie (which was surprisingly accurate), that Karkat asked her to make sure you were fine.

Of course, you understood he cared about you, wanted you to be okay, and eventually you even wrapped your head around the idea that he did what he did to protect you. Dumb as it seemed, he had good intentions.

You didn’t forgive him then. It’s easy to hold grudges when you don’t talk to someone.

But then, shock of your fucking life (even worse than your gay panic? arguably), you were told Karkat was unconscious in the hospital. It didn’t even occur to you how romance-movie-esque it was when you rushed to the hospital, all flying cape and attractively tousled hair.

There you met Kanaya in the foyer and she patted your arm and was like “he’ll be in a good enough condition to leave soon.”
Okay then.

So what do you do when you just basically apparated to the hospital to see your kind-of-but-not-really-ex, presumably on his deathbed, but then the urgency has been taken out? You don’t even go to see him. You sit in some white hallway on a way too hard chair outside that guy’s room and reflect.

And think something along the lines of “this is a dumb-ass shit situation and I don’t care if he’s a fucking idiot, I just like him and I don’t want to regret anything later.”

You also get up and almost walk into his room, but stop yourself. Because he’s just not ready for you. You can’t force people to get over someone.

But, if the tooth fairy or somebody smiles down upon you in benevolence, he learns to deal with his loss better. And calls you. And the rest’s history. Dope history, the important kind like when you learn about kinks important leaders had.

So, there was a happy end after all and you started dating. And you can message each other all the time now without worrying about seeming too desperate (you barely stop, you just have a lot to say) and kiss whenever you meet. And meet whenever you want. It’s great.

Of course, even after the happy end people aren’t happy 24/7 (who would have thought that reality is still a thing?). You think happy end just means on average happier than before.

Sometimes Karkat calls you in the night to talk about a nightmare he had and you talk for hours. Until you yawn at five am and ask him if he’s now ready to tell you about the nightmare without getting upset and he says he doesn’t even remember it anymore. Then you watch the sunrise from your respective bedrooms and talk about how tired you are.

He still has therapy and sometimes you go with him when he asks, never let it be said you don’t support the bae, you talk about what the two of you can do when Karkat has problems coping, about your feelings and other similarly horrible things. It’s all very constructive and serious. It’s not snarky at all, it almost makes you miss Rose.

But you talk about things outside therapy too of course, ever the communicative couple. One time you asked him how he felt about you not remembering, if it made it hard to talk to you. He thought about it for a long time and told you sometimes he wished he could talk to you about it and you’d understand all of it. But he’s glad you didn’t have to go through what he had to go through.

Then he asked you how you felt. The thing is, after that day you got married, when you got hammered and he told you, you strained your ass sitting on it staring at the wall for hours. You did all kinds of mental gymnastics and internal reflection, trying to find your chakras or whatever and just fucking remember.

You’ve had dreams your entire life, is it too much to ask to finally understand them? And every time you wake up, there’s only one second where you remember the dream with clarity and then it all slips.

But then you saw Karkat and how he tore open his butt trying to deal with all of it. Karkat told you about some of the things that happened; death, hopelessness, loneliness. Now you don’t stop trying to grasp the edges of every memory that comes upon you, but you’re chill without. It’s okay if you never remember, it might be for the better.

Karkat told you he’s prepared for that. You’re going to be fine either way.
Okay, it already is fine. It’s finer than the money somebody might have to pay as punishment for a crime.

So is your relationship and that’s why you’re currently securing ingredients for your fancy dinner. You’re thinking baked salmon with crispy potatoes. And fruit salad for dessert. That’s fancy, right? Maybe fruit salad with grilled fruit, that should be new and exciting.

You take a quick pic of your loot and post it on several social media channels with the caption “dinner plans (with my real secret mistress rose lal #ohshit #plottwist #thatexplainssomuch #theygonfuck #fakekat”, complete with only one parenthesis.

No PR is bad PR after all. This is all part of a non-existent strategy where you pretend you’re too cool to be annoyed at people doubting your relationship. You get it, really, but there’s only so much you can do besides kissing Karkat in public. He gave your idea of sex in Times Square a hard pass. Your entire credibility is flushed down the Nile and there’s only so many ways you can exploit that for irony.

So lately, your fans and everybody else have been getting the full exposure to the Strider booty with the occasional Vantass, what with all of your PR labor and charity work and the interview you gave.

Right, you’d almost forgotten that hilarious trainwreck. Karkat glared at the interviewer the entire time. You’d think he just has resting asshole face, but he doesn’t have it with you. Anymore. For the most part. It’s no surprise he was stressed though, she asked the “tough questions”. Maybe you can win a Pulitzer for celebrity interviews.

Even if “how much did you pay Karkat” was relatively easy, not that your answer really bared your soul, what are you supposed to say to “how has the public reaction to your fake relationship influenced how you saw each other”? That’s some next level psychology shit.

Apparently “we’re only dating because people shipped us, we’re obviously sell-out whores” is not the right answer, who knew?

But one good thing was spit out by the media circus after the interview and that’s lots of people using #realkat. (Finally people believe Karkat’s boobs are real.) Quite a lot of people believed you after the interview. Now, going through the tag #realkat on all social media platforms produces lots of pictures of you looking vaguely happy with each other. It’s actually sappier than you wanted any hashtag about you to be, but you’ll be damned if it’s not your favorite hashtag on the internet. Sorry, #meminism and #kitties.

Not to mention the not-so-small portion of people who were convinced that over the course of your fake relationship you fell in real love. Imagine being that on point with your celebrity conspiracy theories. And damn, did those people freak the freak out when you got together. You’re pretty sure the words “true love” (TM) were used several times. They’re gonna be even more convinced of all of their theories from now on, yeah, that baby really is fake.

But that’s not your problem. You’re a guy with a very real boyfriend and that boyfriend is currently waiting for you in nothing but a sexy maid outfit. Well, most likely not, he’s probably wearing the same adorable sweater and jeans as always. Effortless sexiness is the best, take it from the master.

You’re right about his outfit of course, not that you really notice when you hug-cuddle him and he kisses you on your cheek. Damn, you’re gonna sue him for being too cute. You can afford good lawyers, even now. Catlin meows when she sees you. This whole apartment is gonna give you diabetes.
Karkat pulls back. “Did you really make an incest joke on social media?”

Always up to date with scandals surrounding you, that one. “With all their conspiracy theories they deserve it.”

“Don’t pretend you don’t love conspiracy theories.”

You shrug. “What’s not to love about the idea that I did 9/11?”

“The part where people died.”

“...Well, that’s a moodkiller.”

You stand in the kitchen, staring at each other. Karkat sighs. “It really was, damn...”

“I’m the best boyfriend though because I have a great way to get the mood going.”

“Are you planning to get somebody to pretend to date someone?”

You laugh. “Not this time. Even better than fake relationships?” You take a dramatic pause. “Fanfiction.”

“...I’m doubtful.”

“Fanfiction about you and me. Davekat. The best fanfiction out there.” You thrust out your arms to gesture at the two of you.

“Do you have experience?”

“I’ve read my fair share of fanfics about us, but I’m sure it will sound even better in your dulcet tones.”

“You want me to read to you fanfiction about us?”

You waggle your eyebrows. “Sexy fanfiction about us. Please? I’m making you salmon, doesn’t that get you in a reading mood?”

“Alright, okay.” He gets his phone out.

You don’t fistpump, you’re too cool for that, so you just start with the marinade.

You listen to him mutter about decency and maybe not acting as if real people were only fictional. "There is something wrong with these people if they use their free time to write Davekat porn. And who reads that anyway?"

"We do."

"For ironies apparently. Those people don’t. Listen to this: 'As spring blossoms, something else blossoms between Dave and Karkat. PWP, yaoi, ABO verse, college AU, watersports. Don’t like, don’t read.' What the fuck does that mean? This isn't the military, what are they using code words for?"

"I think that one's a bit too much for us."

"Yeah, I hate jetskiing."
"I can't tell if you're joking or not."

"I can't tell if they are joking or not." He shakes his head. "You have raised a monster of a fandom that can pull anything off if they just claim it's for irony."

"Yeah, isn't it great?"

"More or less." Karkat scrolls on his phone. "Hey, I think you'll like this fanfic. ‘Karkat's slender frame trembled as Dave's fingers inhaled life into him with every tender touch of rosy fingers.' Rosy fingers?"

"They're like rosebuds."

"Well, that explains everything."

"So you don't like my fingers?" You give him a sassy little finger wave.

"Not when they’re rosy. But it gets worse. ‘With every skilled stroke, his body fell apart by its fibers. He saw universes he could never have dreamt up without his beautiful lover as Dave’s hand worked the curve of his neck.’ Oh no, I think he's just giving him a massage."

“That is one intense massage.”

He raises his eyebrows. “This is where it gets steamy. ‘A blush rose to Karkat’s maiden cheeks as Dave dipped fingers into his waistband like he would into the fresh waters of a pond. He sighed, an exhale full of lust and promises. A smirk bloomed on Dave’s face.’ It just goes on like this for 10,250 words.”

“Skip to the actual fucking.”

“Really? It’s worth nothing without the actual build-up.”

“Aw, really? I feel like by that logic porn would only be good if there’s 80,000 words of slow burn before it. Sort of like a reward. But then any poor soul who just opens a story looking for a nice backdrop for their daily jerkoff will have a lot of trouble.”

Karkat shrugs. “They’ll just have to make do with character development.”

You laugh. “Not all of us can get off to that, Mister Literary Critic.”

“Don’t get sassy or I will literally read you my latest blog entry on Pride And Prejudice.”

You’re done with the marinade (you prepared the shit out of that marinade and it’s gonna rock) and turn around to look at Karkat. “Please, bring it. Everything you do and say delights me.”

“Shut the fuck up, that’s emotional bribery.”

“It’s called being supportive of your husband.” You stick out your tongue.

He snorts at your antics. “All right, fine. ‘Like ocean and sky, they moved together and the Earth moved with them.’”

“Are they, like, celestial beings?”

“Just regular you and me. I think.”
You get the salmon fillets out. “Well, we’re basically gods ourselves. Celebrities are gods, right?”

“Dave. Oh my god. All god tiers are at least somewhat famous here.”

“What?”

Karkat is staring at the wall with an open mouth. (A small part of you hopes a fly lands in it. But not really, he’d hate that.)

“Where’s my porn? Are you having a big revelation?”

“I don’t know, maybe I’m overanalyzing... On with the story...” He reads ahead. “It appears I bottom in this.”

“Seems to me like the fans want you to.”

He grimaces. “That’s almost a reason not to.”

“You hipster.”

“Please. If anyone’s a hipster, we know it’s you.” You nod proudly and he continues with the story. “‘Like flowers, their private parts breathed together and faced the sun.’”

“Damn.”

He reads on undeterred. “‘They shivered and shook and shuddered, sharing breath like bread at the communion. Their cries mixed in the air to create a beautiful and meaningful symphony.’”

You don’t say “and then a Tolkien eagle swooped down and ate them,” because he seems to really be getting into this.

“‘He rocked in bliss, stars exploding in the cosmos behind his eyes, when Dave brushed against his sweet spot. He screamed for Dave.’”

You turn around from your salmon. His voice dropped at the end there.

Karkat keeps his eyes on the phone. “They murmured praises and love confessions to each other. As their tongues battled for dominance, Karkat fell apart on the wonderful slide of their bodies.”

Well, this whole thing just changed mood for some reason. Karkat’s voice is lower now, rougher. And take it from you. If balanced in the air above his head, big black letters stated his mood, Karkat Vantas’ voice would still be more expressive than that.

And you, well, you’re a mere paper plane in the winds of sex voices. Your dick is definitely awoken now.

“‘Swept up in carnality, light touches of his soft flesh brought the sun into arm’s reach for him. He threw his head back like a stallion finally breathing freedom and held his lover close.’” Karkat clears his throat.

“Karkat.”

He looks up.

“So, on a scale from one to ten, how woozy did this sex scene of questionable quality make you?”
“What?”

“Let’s just do it right now, carpe diem. Or yolo, if you want to be less pretentious and even more douchey than carpe diem.”

“...You’re in the middle of cooking.”

“This puppy needs to go in the fridge for an hour now.”

“What? Oh my god, you planned this, didn’t you?”

You put the salmon in the fridge. “I wouldn’t say planned so much as vaguely hoped.”

“...Let’s not waste time then.”

Karkat puts his phone down and just walks right up to you, throws his arms around you and kisses you like you’re already in the middle of the action; no prisoners taken, just all-out good old tongue fucking. He tastes like the apple juice you bought him, which is the most awesome fucking thing ever. You somehow end up pressed against the counter and pull him close by the shoulders.

Your dick calls for you to just fucking search for some nice old friction already and who are you to deny the one-eyed pole of wisdom? You awkwardly move against Karkat and he abruptly pulls away.

“Let’s go.”

“Where?” you mutter against his lips.

“To the bedroom.” Karkat blinks. “Do you want to do it in the kitchen? For our first time?”

“No, of course. Bedrooms are great. I thought you wanted to, like, go out or something. I was confused. Let’s just go.”

“Okay.”

You look at each other for a second, then Karkat turns and you march into his bedroom one after the after like little ducklings. You’ve been in there before (trying to ignore the unusually inviting bed), but you still look around, enjoying how uniquely Karkat it is, with its awful romcom posters and programming books (that are far too hard for him at his beginner stage, no offense) and a fucking cute-ass crab plushie.

You turn your attention back to Karkat who, whoa, damn, is not wearing a sweater anymore. You guess this shit really is happening.

He crosses his arms over his chest at your look. “What?”

You step closer. “Hey now, no hiding such a feast for the eyes.”

“I’m not hiding anything.”

“You’re insecure.” You place a hand on his arm.

“I’m not. I just. I tried to go with the flow, but I took my sweater off too soon.”

Your head shake is probably your strongest ever. “Whoa, there’s no such thing as taking your sweater off too soon. In fact, I’m a big advocate for you just never wearing a sweater.”
“What do you have against sweaters?”

“You don’t really have anything against me wearing clothes?”

Karkat rolls his eyes, but you see it. You see the corner of his mouth going up. You see him. There’s no hiding from the keen Strider eyes. You can spot a mouse from high in the air and a willing friend to your dick from even further away.

That willing friend says, “Well. I’m against you wearing clothes too.”

“Good point. Give me a beat.”

“A beat.”

“For the strip show.” You roll your hips for emphasis (sexily, not dorkily).

Karkat rolls his eyes again (that’s how you can tell he’s aroused, no, really, maybe) and steps closer to you. He grabs the hem of your shirt and you throw your arms in the air (because you care) as he pulls it off. He kisses you, so slow that you only notice he’s working on your pants as he stops to pull them down.

He looks up from his kneeling position and your Strider instincts tell you he’s going to comment on you not wearing underwear, but he just licks his lips and says, “I’m going to suck it.”

“Holy shit.”

“Just so you know.”

“Do it,” you rasp out.

He shuffles closer, opens up that sweet, sweet mouth and then oh shit.

You’re engulfed in wet heat. You try your best not to just fuck forward, but come on. There’s only so much you can do, you have been dramatically weakened in your strength, fuck. Karkat has his eyes closed and at first he goes slow, working his way up and down as much as he can, using his tongue. You place your hands on his shoulders so you don’t pull him by his hair.

You talk at him, you can’t stop it. “Okay, okay, don’t stop, you’re fucking amazing.”

Karkat stops, looks up at you, takes a deep breath and just fucking goes to town, bobbing his head like there’s a prize he can win, can you believe, so fucking eager it should be illegal. Really, he looks obscene. You groan, your cool so far gone that maybe it was an illusion all along.

He lets up to breathe and you’re glad for the breathing pause too. “Holy fuck. Shit, this is definitely...”

Karkat stares up at you questioningly. How on earth is he so pretty, with his long lashes and wet mouth?

“Just keep on going, never mind me.”

He flashes you a quick smile and moves forward to suck on your tip. You whimper, high and totally cool. Summoning incredible strength, you push him off.

“Never mind.”
“What?”

“What?”

“Wouldn’t want this party to be over too soon.”

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“Oh?”

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“Oh indeed.” You have to take a step back or the way his lips form the word ‘oh’ is going to be a problem. “You’re too fucking good at this. Have you done this before?”

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“Well, technically I’m not exactly a virgin, with the memories and everything. But not in this life.”

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“Oh, the memories, right.” You take a big breath, then a second one. “So, what, how does that work? You have memories of thousands of times when you had sex with everybody you know? Wait, you’re not totally too traumatized for this, are you? It’s fine if you are.” Maybe not a very delicate approach, but it does the job.

“Oh, the memories, right.” You take a big breath, then a second one. “So, what, how does that work? You have memories of thousands of times when you had sex with everybody you know? Wait, you’re not totally too traumatized for this, are you? It’s fine if you are.” Maybe not a very delicate approach, but it does the job.

Karkat bites his lip, probably unsettled at the sudden mood change too. “It’s more like something that happened 500 years ago. It’s a distant memory. It’s not irrelevant, but it doesn’t make me feel like I’ve already seen everything. But I’ve had therapy, you know that. It used to be worse, I’m better now. Don’t worry about it, I’ll tell you when I have trouble, okay?”

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“Wait, so you remember dating me? Everything we’ve done?” Goddamn, what an inappropriate time to talk about this, more inappropriate than going to his PR-Manager meeting to fuck would’ve been.

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“It’s... I don’t know how I can explain this. Like, you don’t remember everything that happened when you were six years old. Just vague memories. It’s like that, it’s very hard to remember explicitly what happened. And it’s all overshadowed by the most memorable things that happened. You know, death and destruction and similarly unpleasant things.”

“It’s... I don’t know how I can explain this. Like, you don’t remember everything that happened when you were six years old. Just vague memories. It’s like that, it’s very hard to remember explicitly what happened. And it’s all overshadowed by the most memorable things that happened. You know, death and destruction and similarly unpleasant things.”

“Okay. I get it. You know I’ll be the most supportive boyfriend in this part of the country, no, universe, if you ever need me.” He nods. You nod. “Great. But for now, sex. It’s a sort of support too. This is the part where we do it. How do we do it?”

“Okay. I get it. You know I’ll be the most supportive boyfriend in this part of the country, no, universe, if you ever need me.” He nods. You nod. “Great. But for now, sex. It’s a sort of support too. This is the part where we do it. How do we do it?”

“Shall I bring back our The Gay Talk joke?”

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“No, but, like, the good old doggy style, semi-implied bestiality included, or, like, cowboy style, the animal innuendos don’t stop, or, hell, do we do a fucking piledriver or what?”

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“Okay...” He cocks his head, thinks. You hold your breath. “I want to try cowboy style.”

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“Jesus Christ.”

“He looks very pointedly at your dick, then his dick. “Is there absolutely nothing you’d rather be doing?”

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“Nope, just Karkat Vantas.”

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You recover enough to ask, “Prove it.”

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“That I’m Karkat?” says presumably Karkat.

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“That you’re not secretly a metaphor for a biblical figure.”

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“Good point.” You jump on the bed in a refined way, bounce a bit, watching him take off his pants. “Please tell me you have lube somewhere close by, I’m not gonna use apple juice.”

“Good point.” You jump on the bed in a refined way, bounce a bit, watching him take off his pants. “Please tell me you have lube somewhere close by, I’m not gonna use apple juice.”
“Ew, don’t make me shudder. For bad reasons at least.” He throws you the lube.

You coat your fingers generously like you’re trying to lead a goddamn camel through the eye of somebody’s ass. “Okay, Sir, all ready for your prostate biopsy, please turn around.”

“What the fuck is a prostate biopsy?”

“Do I look like I know even half of the things I talk about?” Except sports, you’re the goddamn sports master.

“Well, you won’t need to prepare me that much. I already fingered myself extensively earlier.”

If you weren’t sitting, you swear on your overly dramatic life that your knees would’ve given out. How could they not, with that picture appearing in HD in front of everything else? Karkat kneeling on his bed, reaching back, exploring, his teeth in his bottom lip? Moaning, fucking back on his fingers as much as he could? Fucking thinking of you? Imagining how your dick feels?

Well, if you hadn’t been hard before, that would have done the job.

Karkat lays down on the bed and spreads his legs, but you lean downwards to place a little kiss on his throat. He sighs and tells you, “That’s nice.”

He lays his head to the side and you pepper his neck with kisses, just light touches to his skin. Out of the corner of your eye you see him smile. You hum against his skin and slide your hand down his stomach. When you ghost fingertips over his dick, you feel him tremble slightly. He moves his hips and you finally slide in one finger.

You watch it, licking your lips. You’ve seen this in porn of course, but porn ain’t got shit on feeling Karkat.

Karkat makes a sound and you look up. “Uh, so how does this feel?”

“Just move it already.”

You do a fucking motion, going in and out. “Like this?”

Karkat hums, hands sliding over the bed. “That’s good... You know, you can add another finger. Or try even two.”

You exhale (telling your dick something along the lines of “down, boy, think of all the inspiring sayings about patience”) and do exactly that. First one and when he just kind of fucks his body down on your fingers with a little moan and doesn’t complain, you hesitantly add another one.

“Is this good?” It’s definitely hot for you, but you don’t know what it feels like for him. “What does it feel like?”

“It feels... I don’t know. Unusual. But full. And I, I can’t imagine not being full right now.” Karkat doesn’t stop moving as he talks and you don’t stop either, moving your hand faster. “It’s good... and intimate. I can’t explain this.” He groans. “ Mostly, I want something bigger.”

“Oh, you say breathlessly, refraining from making a big dick joke.

You pull out and he takes a deep breath and gets up.

He clears his throat. “We need a condom, don’t we?”
“I don’t know.” But you’re not gonna waste time contemplating. “Just go get one.”

Karkat fumbles to get a pack of condoms out of his bedside stand and get one on you. He adds some more lube while you’re wriggling around in bed, not wanting to wait any longer.

Finally he swings his leg over you. You make eye contact.

You nod, incredulous that this is indeed happening. In a matter of seconds, you are going to be fucking Karkat Vantas. “Okay, we’re doing this. We’re making it happen.”

“This shit again.”

You groan, but you just have to. No matter what time, what place, what circumstances, you have to defend it. “SBAHJ is a masterpiece of contemporary art.”

“Would you rather fight about contemporary art or have sex?”

“Let’s do it then.”

Karkat stares at you and nods determinedly. He reaches behind himself and slowly, slowly you feel him sinking down.

“Holy shit.”

“Dave,” Karkat gets out.

“Karkat?”

He stills. “Just, like... don’t move for a bit, okay? Shit, I need some getting used time.”

“Okay.” You don’t want this to be a pain in the ass for him after all.

Karkat starts moving up and down, in such a slow pace that it almost seems designed to test your strength. His leg muscles must be great. Your patience isn’t really though.

“Can I move now?” It sounds more like a whimper than you intend it to.

“I’m not ready.”

“You’re killing me...”

He groans. “Sorry, this isn’t easy.”

“Yeah, you don’t...” You grab the bed sheets. Just don’t move. “Seem to be enjoying yourself either.”

“I am!”

Of course, with his pants and flushed cheeks and open mouth and his goddamned hard cock. You can’t deny it, watching him might ruin porn for you. And feeling his ass around you is fucking incredible.

You put your hands on his hips. “Yeah, no, I know... Joking... Fuck, you’re really good at this, you look so good.”

You lock eyes and he smiles and that’s when he really starts riding you.
You groan. Above you, you hear an answering groan and little puffs of breath and sighs. He bites his lip and you just know he’s holding back. The guy’s always loud.

“Karkat,” you breathe, “Karkat... how does it feel?”

“... Just... Really full and good,” he nearly moans the word ‘good’. “I don’t... I fucking love it.” Should you be turned on by him sounding almost disoriented? “Just don’t stop.”

You couldn’t stop if you wanted to. But why would you ever want to, with Karkat’s voice showing exactly how affected he is? Breathless and wavering, whimpering and constantly getting higher and lower, quieter and louder. Even now that he’s not talking he’s given up on trying to be quiet and he’s just constantly making noise.

And you’re constantly sliding your hands over his hips, his legs, his torso, his dick. You seriously couldn’t stop touching him if your life depended it. (No, that’s not an exaggeration, really.) Without wanting to sound too poetic, you feel like more people should worship this man, he’s so fascinating to watch and adore.

He takes a deep breath. “Can you, fuck, say something like that again?”

“What?”

Karkat slows. “Say something. Like that. Again.”

“...Oh. How great you are?”

“Yes. Please.” He sucks in his bottom lip.

Well, who would have thought that little Karkat had a praise kink? ...Lots of people, probably.

“Well, you’re, uh, you’re fucking amazing.” Talking doesn’t exactly come easily for once in your goddamn life, but god help you, you’re gonna talk your boyfriend to orgasm and if it’s the last thing you do.

You blurt your next words fast, almost panicked sounding. “You’re, I fucking love watching you, you look so good like this and so obscene and fuck. I just love how well you can take my dick and how easily I can see that you love it, shit.”

And you really can read him without trying right now, he’s fucking himself on your dick in abrupt motions, just completely focused on the feeling, his eyes clamped shut and his hands gripping the bed like a lifesaver. He’s whimpering and harshly breathing through his mouth. You’re not faring any better (or worse), you’re so close and he really does feel amazing, working your dick. And how are you supposed to concentrate on anything when he honest to god moans every time you’re deep in him?

“You sound so great; I just love hearing you.” Probably not something Karkat hears a lot.

He moans, actually lets out an extended moan that sounds like it should probably belong in porn. Seems he really does enjoy this compliments thing. Wow, if that’s not the hottest goddamn thing.

You reach out to touch his dick, jerk it. “Hey, Karkat, look at me.”

He focuses his eyes on you. “Dave.”

You nod. “Karkat, fuck... You’re really beautiful.”
And that, that fucking does the trick. He whines and you feel him twitch in your hand and he’s coming.

You breathe, “Holy shit.”

Is somebody coming from you calling them beautiful always that hot?

You’re not quite there yet, but Karkat, bless him, doesn’t stop moving and it only takes you a few seconds longer. And fucking hallelujah, there it is. You let out a swear you don’t even really register.

You fuck through it until you’re absolutely done.

And that’s that. You did it. (You made it happen.) Bottoms up and all that, pun totally intended.

Karkat slumps down next to you with a loud groan.

Damn, you can just imagine all of the great sex you’re going to have.

Sixty-nining cause you've been wondering about that since you saw that stupid sign on his shirt. You can't believe he dares to leave the house with something that explicit. It'd be great, just you and Karkat getting lost in each other until it gets too much.

Getting fucked by him in the bathrooms right before you're set to win an Oscar. You hope you can convince him to do it because god damn, that's one hell of a great idea. He'd go fast and you'd both try to keep quiet so you'd have to muffle each other with lots of kissing. And the kissing would still barely muffle anything if you know yourself at all.

Karkat blowing you on the beach of the Pacific Ocean, all sweet and slow with the sun smiling down at such a beautiful scene. If you can afford a beach house, why not use it? Or even better, sex in the ocean. In all the oceans. And as celebration for having had sex in all the oceans you'd rent a boat and fuck right here on the river in New York City.

Having to lock Catlin into the kitchen ‘cause you certainly don't want her innocent cat eyes to see you getting tied to the bed. You’d tell Karkat to give you a blindfold too ‘cause if you’re doing trust exercises you might as well go big. And Karkat would constantly talk to you to make you feel comfortable while he kissed every bit of skin he can reach.

Renting an expensive hotel room in Paris on your anniversary and celebrating by daring Karkat to put a vibrator up his ass and not come for an hour. He’d be too stubborn to give up and you’d cheer him on.

Eventually moving in together and breaking in the apartment. You'd bend over the beautiful new mahogany table and let Karkat eat your ass out. Then in the course of you living there you'd have sex on every other even slightly horizontal surface too.

Cooking something nice and feeding it to Karkat. In a sexual way. Involving cream and strawberries.

Speaking of (thinking of) food. There’s still a salmon waiting for your treatment like its office job has given it horrible back pains and you’re the best fucking masseur with magical hands this side of the universe.

You smile at Karkat. “So... how about food and then a round two?” You just hope Karkat won’t insist on cleaning the dishes first, guy’s way too cleanly.

Karkat looks up with a smirk. “I thought you’d never ask.”
“Really?”

“No, but it sounded cool in the moment.”

“Hell yeah.” You fist bump him. “You wanna switch this time?”

“Absolutely.”

Salmon proves to be nowhere as good as having a dick up your ass, marinade or not, who’d have thought? (Everybody?) Salmon certainly doesn’t make you babble like that. (Not even dick jokes or gay jokes, just a litany of “That’s good, don’t stop, okay, holy shit, can you go deeper, oh my god...”)

Afterwards, when you both flop down, all energy suddenly leaving your bones, Karkat kisses your cheeks. You smile at him and that’s when you notice it.

“Hey, Karkat.”

“Yeah?”

“Look, the moon.” You point out the window.

He turns his head and smiles. “Is it usually that big?”

You valiantly fight the urge to make a dick joke. “I don’t know. Maybe only for nice final visuals.”

“What does that even mean?”

“A nice shot for the end of our romcom.”

He looks at you. “Is this the end?”

“Honey, this is just the beginning.”

“It better be.”

“Hey, Karkat.” You poke his cheek.

“Dave?”

“I love you.”

“I love you too.”

“Great.”

He smiles at you. “Yeah.”

“...I said it in the moonlight, that’s gotta tickle all your romance fancies.”

“I’m starting to think you’re the more romantic one of us.”

You cuddle closer to him. “Only for you.”

“Hmm. Well, I love you too.”

As you fall asleep with your head on his chest, your arms around him, comfort level somewhere up
in the clouds, you know.

You have a lot to look forward to.

Chapter End Notes

And that’s where we leave them.

Wow, this is the longest piece I’ve ever written, both time and word count wise. Two years and over 88,000 words, I feel so accomplished, especially if you consider English isn’t my first language.

And you guys have supported me so much, this has over 1000 kudos and it’s one of the fics with the most kudos in the Davekat tag right now, I think 15th place out of over 3000 Davekat fics up on AO3 at this moment. (shh, I need some way to measure success even if everything is relative and meaningless in this vast universe). And so many nice comments and people recommending this fic and everything and especially my betas!! Thank you all so much!!!

If any of you are interested in answering one last question, I’d really love to know what your favorite moment(s?) was!

btw, I don’t want to sound too dramatic, but I feel like this fic has really influenced me too. My writing’s gotten better. Hell, even the way I talk, I talk a lot more like Dave now. You should see me sending my friends 60 messages before they can answer. I can’t believe how much Homestuck has ended up influencing me.

If you think about it, this is the perfect HS ff, like, it’s way longer than originally planned, both time and words wise, there were long waits between chapters, it somehow turned way more complicated than anticipated by anyone halfway through etc. And there’s Davekat.

Davekat is life.

End Notes

Thanks for reading!

Works inspired by this one: Love in the time of Juggalos by sburbanite

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