

## Nightmares Can Only Lead To Comfort

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## Nightmares Can Only Lead To Comfort

by [Kira\\_Sema](#)

### Summary

Ben could only look down at Albedo with concern in his eyes. He felt bad about ruining Albedo's chances of going back to normal, and promised himself that if they saw each other again he'd help him. He felt bad that he was partially the reason that Albedo was like this now.

This story is a canon divergence of the episode: "Night of the Living Nightmare".

Crossposted to FF.Net

### Notes

My first fic on this site, but I'm not new to writing. I used to write a lot over on FF with the same username (Kira Sema), but I haven't posted in years. My first fic in years, and it turns out to be a Ben x Albedo one. I've been reading A LOT of Albedo redemption fics and

wanted to try my own. Having a hyperfixation on a fictional character can't be healthy, but it gets me writing. Albedo deserved a redemption arc and actual happiness and I will unalive on this hill.

I. Regret. Nothing.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

# Chapter 1

Ben awoke to a loud crash in his room. Out of reflex he had a hand on the Ultimatrix and was ready to transform. Before he could though he heard a familiar pained groan. He got out of bed and looked to see Albedo laying on the ground with something that looked to be stuck to his face. His hands were gripping to his face trying to pry the thing off.

“Get it off!” Albedo screamed while flaring his hands in the air.

Ben kneeled down on the floor, minding the spilled smoothie, and put a hand on Albedo's shoulder and tried to shake it.

"Come on Albedo, wake up."

Albedo turned his body towards Ben's and grabbed his arms.

"Please help me!"

Ben could only look down at Albedo with concern in his eyes. He felt bad about ruining Albedo's chances of going back to normal, and promised himself that if they saw each other again he'd help him. He felt bad that he was partially the reason that Albedo was like this now.

"I don't want to die, please help me!"

"I promise I will help you Albedo, whatever you're seeing is not real. I'm here to help now."

Ben didn't want to have to call Gwen or Kevin, but he had no idea how to get this thing off Albedo's face. Ben ungripped Albedo's arm off one of his so he could call his cousin. Albedo yelled in pain more.

"Ben? It's the middle of the night, what's going on?" Gwen's sleepy voice asked.

"Albedo's on my bedroom floor."

"WHAT?"

"He has this thing stuck to his face and it sounds like he's in pain. I need your help, Kevin's too probably if it can be ripped off."

"My parents don't like me going out at night on a school night."

"Please Gwen, he needs our help. You could probably figure something out more than Kevin and I. I know you can hear how much he's in pain right now."

"Okay, I'll call Kevin and have him pick me up. But you're answering to my mom when she asks why I was out this late without warning."

"Thanks Cuz."

Once the line was dead Ben put his phone back in his pocket and stared at Albedo. He still sounded like he was in so much pain.

Now it was just a waiting game for Gwen and Kevin to show up.

"I'm sorry you got like this. I know you probably can't hear me right now, but I'm sorry that I didn't step in when I should've with Azmuth. I may not be able to get you back to being a Galvan, but I promise I'll help you better."

Ben put his hand on Albedo's chest, and Albedo's hand grabbed onto Ben's. Ben squeezed Albedo's hand. A moment passed and he could feel his hand being squeezed back.

"Albedo can you hear me? Squeeze my hand if you can."

Nothing. Maybe Albedo could feel Ben's touch and that's why he squeezed back, but any outside noise wasn't getting in. Ben tested this theory by squeezing Albedo's hand and getting a squeeze in response.

Ben had another idea that he didn't know would work or not. He put a hand on Albedo's shoulder and bent his face towards where Albedo's forehead would be. He leaned down and kissed the top of where Albedo's forehead would be if it weren't for whatever is trapped on him.

For a moment Albedo stopped screaming in pain. Maybe Albedo could feel it after all even though there was something trapped on his face?

"Help... me..."

Ben pulled back and squeezed Albedo's hand again. Before Ben could say anything else he heard tapping on his bedroom window. Ben got up and made his way towards the window without tripping over his dirty clothes. He opened the window to see Gwen and Kevin outside standing on one of Gwen's mana platforms. Gwen was in her school uniform, like usual, but Kevin was just in a gray tank top and sweat pants. Ben saw that Gwen had her laptop in one of her hands.

"You could've came in through the door."

"This was more fun."

Gwen and Kevin made their way inside Ben's messy room. Ben went back on his knees and grabbed Albedo's hand.

"Can you figure out what's attached to him?" Ben said while looking up at Gwen with pleading eyes.

Gwen sat on the bed and opened up her laptop. She went through Plumber files to see what this was on Albedo's head. Kevin made his way past Ben's messy floor and sat next to Gwen on the bed watching her type.

"It says on here that what Albedo has attached to him is called a Cassiopeian Dream Eater. It feeds off chemicals produced by the brain during stress and traps the host in a nightmare," Gwen explained reading the article she found from the Plumber's files.

"It was definitely meant for you," Kevin said while crossing his arms.

"But Albedo underestimated how messy your room would be and got caught up in it himself," Gwen said.

"Can we pull it off?" Ben asked without looking at them.

"Not without ripping his face off," Kevin said matter of factly.

"A Galvan doctor maybe? Dunno how Albedo will feel about that, but we may not have a choice," Ben suggested.

"I was way ahead of you and called before we got here and a Plumber's transport is on the way," Gwen said.

"Yeah we'll get that parasite off your boyfriend," Kevin joked.

"He's not my-" Ben started to say while turning around and facing Kevin.

Kevin leaned back on the bed and went into a laugh.

"Yeah sure, not with the way you're holding his hand and blushing because I made a joke."

"Kevin, knock it off," Gwen scolded.

"You practically begged us to come over and help him."

Ben glared at Kevin but didn't make a move to let go of Albedo's hand.

"Hey do whatever you want man, we won't judge," Kevin said raising his hands to emphasize his point.

"Although you probably should talk to Julie if how you're reacting is any indication," Gwen said, folding her hands and pointing her fingers at Ben.

Ben sighed and turned to face his cousin and his best friend. He still kept a grip on Albedo's hand. He *really* didn't want to have this conversation with them right now but he knew he had to in order to set things straight.

"She's okay with it actually. We agreed that despite how much we care for each other, we have different priorities in our relationships with other people. We still love each other and are still dating, but we can see other people," Ben started to explain, "Don't tell her I told you this because she wanted to keep it a secret, but she met a lovely gentleman at one of her tennis matches. He's a photographer and he was smitten by Julie the moment he saw her. He asked her out, and he gives her the time she deserves. He knows about me being with her too, and is fine with it as well. He may have a crush on me since he seemed flirty when I met him, but he could've just been a huge fan."

Gwen and Kevin were shocked at Ben's statement. They knew he and Julie weren't always on the same page, but they didn't think he could be so mature about their relationship considering everything he's done.

"Don't keep your mouths open for too long, you'll get flies in them."

"That's actually quite mature of you, but why not just break up entirely if you guys want different things?" Gwen asked, still shocked at her cousin's statement.

"We still click together. I can't explain it, but we do give each other something we need. We just have other needs that we can't get and decided to see if polyamory would work," Ben explained further, "I haven't tried seeing anyone seriously besides stuff for the public to keep the image that I'm an 'over confident teenage celeb that loves having the attention of every woman in Bellwood.'"

Before they could continue talking, they heard a plane drop down on the street. Ben reluctantly let go of Albedo's hand and made his way towards the window. He opened his window and Gwen

used her mana to have them walk outside, she had Albedo on a platform.

They made it down to the ground and a Plumber came out with a female Galvan on his shoulder.

"I was called here for a transport?"

Gwen levitated Albedo in front of them.

"Oh dear, this doesn't look good," She said with concern in her voice, "This poor boy, unfortunately I didn't know what we were dealing with here so I don't have the proper medical equipment. I'd have to take him back to Galvan Prime with me in order for me to get the Dream Eater off."

A few more Plumbers came out of the ship and moved Albedo to a gurney. The entire time Albedo's hands were trying to reach for something.

"Hey, would it be okay if I came too?" Ben asked, watching the other Plumbers take Albedo onto the ship.

"Ben, what are you doing?" Gwen asked.

"Cover for me, tell my parents the truth, I don't care, but I'm not leaving him alone on Galvan Prime. Who knows how Azmuth will scold him this time. Despite everything, he doesn't deserve that. Not anymore," Ben stated.

"You can come if you wish," The Galvan doctor said, "Azmuth may not like you on the planet-

"I mean no disrespect towards you when I say this, but quite frankly I don't give a shit what he likes. Albedo wouldn't be suffering if Azmuth let him go back to being a Galvan."

"Wait, did you say Albedo?"

"Yeah."

"I knew him when I was a young Galvan. We weren't friends persay but he reminded me of the First Thinker. We're made to be smart, but Albedo was almost at Azmuth's level. All he could talk about was being his apprentice someday, and he was so happy when he was able to be," She explained, "Well when he wasn't gloating about it to those that challenged him for the position. What a sweet young boy, and he's stuck as a human."

The Galvan doctor jumped from the shoulder of the Plumber that was carrying her and Ben opened his hands to catch her.

"While we ride could you tell me how this happened and why Azmuth left him as such?" She asked looking up at Ben, "On Galvan Prime all we knew was that Albedo quit and went off world. I couldn't imagine that this is what became of him."

"I don't think that's my story to tell, he may tell you when he wakes up. That is if he's not pissed that he's back on Galvan Prime without his original body."

Ben made his way to the ship with the Galvan doctor in his hands.

"Do you two require anything else?" The Plumber who was carrying the Galvan doctor asked.

"No, that was all. Thank you for coming to get him," Gwen said.

"No problem Miss Tennyson. Have a good night, you too Mr. Levin."

The Plumber made his way back to the ship and it flew away.

## Chapter 2

### Chapter Notes

Had to tweak this chapter a bit for something later on, so that's why it took a few days for this to get uploaded. I was writing ahead and had to go back to this chapter to make things consistent. I hope y'all enjoy my Galvan OC, cause I'm having fun with her along with these dorks.

Thanks for the Kudos and the comment! I appreciate that there are people kudoing this. <3

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"I'm sorry with everything being crazy tonight, I forgot to ask you for your name," Ben said making his way onto the ship.

"Oh, my name's Charly."

They made their way to the back of the ship until they got to where the Plumbers placed the gurney that held Albedo. Ben sat down on the chair nearest to Albedo. Charly hopped out of Ben's hand and went on part of the gurney that wasn't being occupied by Albedo.

"I know you can't tell me how he got like this, but could you tell me how he got a Dream Eater attached to him?"

"He snuck into my room, tripped on a smoothie I had on the floor, and I guess it ended up on him."

"Wait, why was he trying to put it on you?"

"That's..." Ben said, sighing, "That's a long story that might also fall into things he should tell you."

"Are you two not friends? You seem to care a lot about him."

Ben didn't respond. Despite the fact that he could explain everything, he felt it was disrespectful to Albedo if he told his story to Charly without Albedo knowing or even being awake for it. Before Ben could say anything further, Albedo screamed out in pain.

"Get away from me!"

Ben grabbed onto Albedo's hand and started squeezing it for reassurance that someone outside of his nightmares was trying to help him. He didn't know what Albedo was seeing because of that Dream Eater, but he knew it had to be bad for Albedo to be screaming like that.

He knew his negative twin would never admit defeat, even if he was in a losing fight. He knew Albedo was a fighter, despite being a dramatic little shit sometimes. He most certainly wouldn't be crying around someone he hated and blamed for everything that happened to him. It wasn't fair that Azmuth kept him like this, and if he really knew what was going on with the machine Albedo made, he wouldn't have ruined everything. Maybe Albedo would've told him had he actually taken him up on that offer to go out for chili fries? Or did Albedo throw an invite out as a joke? Maybe if



he wasn't so pissed about Albedo's show he might've been able to help him turn back to normal.

Ben knew if he kept thinking about the 'What ifs?' he wouldn't be able to help Albedo now. He knew that if he kept spiraling down over what he should've done, he'd feel more guilty over what happened. He can't change what he did, well technically he could if he had Paradox go back in time but that probably would change other parts of history if that happened. Ben was going to do whatever it took to help Albedo now, even if it was the last thing he ever does.

Charly looked at Ben. She sort of remembers seeing Ben as a kid visiting Galvan Prime when something was up with the Omnitrix, but she never met him. She did hear complaining from Albedo after Ben left though. She heard stories from Azmuth and those on Galvan Prime about the current actions of the Omnitrix bearer. She expected showboating and cockiness, but all she sees in front of her is a teenager seemingly blaming himself over a Galvan trapped in a human body. She didn't expect to have Ben come with them, or even be trying to help Albedo. Despite the fact that she knows, and she's pretty sure Ben does too, that anything they say on the outside won't be heard by Albedo.

The nightmares took control of someone, and she's never seen any reaction other than screaming from its victims, but maybe Albedo was the exception? She did see that when Ben squeezed Albedo's hand, sometimes he received a squeeze back. Was Albedo able to feel it or is that a reaction from the Dream Eater? She knew it would be awhile before the Dream Eater took a permanent effect on Albedo's brain. But what type of effect would it have after it came off? Albedo had an intellectual mind as a Galvan, did that translate well when he became a human?

This was the most pain she'd ever heard Albedo being in. She knew Albedo never saw her, or any of the other Galvans, as his friends, but they'd hang out a lot growing up. She knew of the Galvan as a stubborn piece of work who didn't even cry when he got injured while doing research for Azmuth. She thought he worked too hard, but Albedo never saw it that way. Albedo sucked it up and went back straight to work, even Azmuth was concerned but Albedo would shrug him off and go back to helping out the First Thinker.

When he suddenly quit and went off world, she wondered what happened to him, but Azmuth refused to speak of his assistant. The claim was that he banned the mention of him, because he was disappointed on how things turned out. Most Galvans who knew Albedo were mostly confused and wanted answers to what *actually* happened, but they never got them.

Things were silent until they heard a Plumber come towards the back to announce that they were almost near Galvan Prime and needed to provide identification before landing on the planet per Azmuth himself. Ben got up and made his way towards the front of the ship. He pushed a button that turned on their intercom.

"Azmuth it's me, if your security system even thinks of attacking this ship I promise you I will *not* hold back," Ben threatened.

The Plumbers piloting the plane gulped in fear at the threat. They were used to Ben being somewhat silly when it came to being a hero based on reports, but they've never heard him threaten Azmuth like that.

A hologram of Azmuth came on top of the planet, but this was a live feed as opposed to a recorded message.

"Why are you here?"

"Just let us in Azmuth, we need to treat a patient from Earth and this ship doesn't have the

resources on hand."

"We're not a hospital!"

"This is an alien issue that required help from a Galvan."

Azmuth knew that there was a Galvan sent out for a Plumber's transport... Charly couldn't have been sent to Ben of all people could she?

"Fine, bring them in but I'm helping."

Ben rolled his eyes because he knew that wasn't going to go well once Azmuth realized who he was treating.

"Get my medical wing prepared," Charly said, popping out of Ben's hair.

Ben didn't even realize she was there the entire time because of her size.

"Charly?" Azmuth asked, realizing his suspicion was correct.

Ben tilted his head to try and see her without accidentally making her fall, but all Ben ended up doing was exactly that. He caught her in his hand and put her on his shoulder.

"The one and only."

"Alright, I shall make the necessary preparations," Azmuth said, "Can you tell me who requires our medical attention?"

"No. You'll find that out when we come, and if you try and back out of it or refuse to treat them I will not hesitate to revisit that conversation we were having before I left," Charly threatened, "We are going to need a human sized table to work on and those scalpels I use for Cassiopeian Dream Eaters."

Azmuth's hologram went off and the spaceship made its way onto Galvan Prime. Charly gave directions to the Plumbers on where the spaceship could be landed to get as close to the building as they could without drawing too much attention to themselves. Despite being smart, Galvans were really nosy when they wanted to be. They always had to know everything that was going on, and that included Plumber ships coming to their planet.

When they landed, they made their way back to where Albedo's gurney was placed.

"Is there a way to cover Albedo so the locals don't see him like this?" Ben asked.

"We have blankets we can throw on top of him so no one else sees him like this Mr. Tennyson," One of the Plumbers said.

"Thank you, I'd appreciate that. And please call me 'Ben'."

Before they opened the hatch to leave the ship, the Plumbers placed a blanket over Albedo so no one could see the Dream Eater on his face. Even though this was all planned, it looked like someone covering a dead body over just someone trapped in a nightmare. It made Ben feel weird, since without seeing Albedo's face it looked like *he* was on the gurney. It could've been him laying on this gurney screaming out in pain. He could've been dead if no one realized... Albedo could've been dead if he didn't do this to himself in Ben's room.

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They made their way into the medical building towards the room they'd be working in. They saw Azmuth on the table near a box of scalpels. The Plumbers assisting brought Albedo over to the table and set him down, they made a motion to remove the blanket before leaving but Ben secretly motioned for them not to yet. He wanted them to leave before Azmuth knew it was Albedo underneath the blanket. Ben knew that Azmuth would demand Albedo be taken straight back to jail if the Plumbers stayed.

Once they were done settling Albedo on the medical table, they offered to stay to help take Ben home. Ben appreciated the gesture, but promised he'd ask for a transport when he was done on Galvan Prime and that they were free to leave. He didn't know when Albedo would be okay to leave, and wasn't going to leave the Galvan turned white haired teen there alone with Azmuth. The Plumbers said their goodbyes and left.

"Let's see what we're working with-" Azmuth started to say as he pulled back the blanket to see Albedo lying there, "What is *he* doing here?"

"He needed help," Ben said.

Azmuth was about to leave before Charly glared at him.

"You're not leaving," Charly threatened.

"Albedo did this to himself," Azmuth said trying to walk away.

"I have no doubt he did," Charly said before grabbing Azmuth's arm, "but even *he* doesn't deserve to be in this much pain Azmuth."

"You have no idea what happened!" Azmuth said getting closer to Charly, "You're out of line."

"Because *you* refused to tell any of us what happened to him." Charly countered, "We already had this argument before. I refuse to let you walk out and leave him like this."

A shriek interrupted their augmenting.

"Please... someone... help me!" Albedo screamed while flailing his hands in the air.

Ben ignored the two arguing Galvans and grabbed one of Albedo's hands and started squeezing it. For a moment Azmuth looked at Albedo with a hint of concern in his eyes, but he pushed that little bit of concern out of his mind. He figured that concern was because Albedo sounded like Ben, not because he still cared about his old assistant. That would be ridiculous. This was someone who he worked with for years that betrayed him because he didn't feel that Ben Tennyson was deserving of the Omnitrix. Albedo just wanted it for himself.

Azmuth looked at Ben and saw that he was squeezing Albedo's hands. Albedo was still crying in pain, but it wasn't as loud. Albedo's arms stopped flailing when Ben carefully put both hands on his chest. Ben looked at Azmuth and Ben's look of concern went to a glare when their eyes met.

"Let's get to work," Azmuth said sighing, "this may be harder than last time."

Azmuth and Charly each grabbed a scalpel.

"Could you hold Albedo's head up so we could get underneath where the tentacles are?" Charly asked.

Ben slid the stool he was sitting on closer to the top of Albedo's head. He let go of one of Albedo's

hands, and used his free hand to lift Albedo's head up so the two Galvans could work.

"This is worse than I thought it was when I first saw him," Charly said, examining the back of Albedo's head. "I didn't realize the tentacles were that deep inside his head."

Charly and Azmuth dug the scalpels where the back of Albedo's head would be.

"What makes these scalpels different from earth's?" Ben asked while watching them work.

"They are filled with tiny active specs of chemicals that should trick the Dream Eater to try and wrap wrap one of its tentacles around it," Azmuth explained.

"And when that happens, we need you to grab that jar over there and trap it inside," Charly finished.

Ben nodded.

A few minutes passed with Azmuth and Charly each tapping on the Dream Eater with their scalpels. They were tapping all around Albedo's get to try and trick it into wrapping a tentacle around one of the scalpels. Ben was getting impatient because it felt like this wasn't going to work, but he kept elevating Albedo's head with one of his hands so the two Galvans could work.

For what felt like forever, a tentacle finally started going on one of the scalpels.

"Ben grab the jar that's behind you!" Charly exclaimed.

Ben let go of the hand that was holding Albedo's hand and reached it back to the jar they were going to use to capture the Dream Eater. As it wrapped around the scalpel, Ben placed Albedo's head back on the table in order to have both hands free. He used the jar to capture the Dream Eater that was wrapping itself around one of the scalpels. Once it was secure in the jar, Ben grabbed the lid and closed it.

## Chapter End Notes

AND WE GOT THE DREAM EATER OFF, YAY! Now the Dream Eater can stop being more of a main character than Albedo. There's no canon reason for how it came off of Albedo, and I don't know if what Azmuth and Charly did makes any sense or is even possible but we're going with it. Despite how I'm writing Azmuth, I don't hate his character. But when it came to Albedo? Yeah Azumth could've done better and I will unalive on this hill.

Forewarning a lot of the "backstory" I have for Albedo is a mixture of my own headcanons, as well as headcanons I've gotten from other works such as "A Reflection" by Wolfal\_E\_Hinsley and "A Chance At Redemption" by Badass\_Gemini. If they sound too familiar it might've been from one of those stories. (I know in later chapters I have taken some of the headcanons from the stories, but also from canon too.)

If anyone can guess where I got the name Charly from, y'all can get virtual chili fries or smoothies. There was a reason I named her Charly, and I'm really curious if anyone is going to figure out my reason for the name. I'll reveal the reason for her name next

chapter.

Dunno when Chapter 3 will be up, I want to edit these chapters to where I'm happy with it and make sure things are going the way that is consistent to how future chapters are going. You know, instead of instantly uploading when I'm done with where I feel the chapter should end like I used to.

## Chapter 3

### Chapter Summary

The Dream Eater is off and Albedo wakes up... kinda.

### Chapter Notes

Alright so I promised y'all I'd say where the name "Charly" came from. I took it from Charlotte Fullerton, story editor for Ben 10 Omniverse, widow of Dwayne McDuffie. A lot of the Galavns in Omniverse take their names from crew members for the show, and I figured I'd try to keep that going with this. (Despite this taking place before Omniverse, but I digress.)

Fun fact, and I didn't know this till I was going through Albedo stuff cause of him being my hyperfixation, Charlotte Fullerton actually helped write the Albedo comic CN Packs put out, and worked on some of Albedo episodes in Omniverse. (So the name fits really well lol. I just did it cause I liked the name.)

I finally got off my butt and edited this chapter so it's ready to post! :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Ben tightened the jar and placed it on the table behind him. The Dream Eater was finally off Albedo and Ben sighed in relief. Albedo's screams finally stopped, and Ben could only hope that Albedo wasn't still seeing nightmares flash in his head. Albedo's eyes were still closed, and after a moment they could hear him start groaning as if he was waking up. Before anyone could say anything Albedo pushed himself up on the table to sit up and shook his head.

"Albedo?" Ben asked in concern.

Albedo pushed himself as far back as he could, but while he was twisting and turning his body all he did was make himself fall to the floor. In Albedo's panicked state, all he could do was crawl backwards until his back hit the wall. Once there was solid matter behind him, and Albedo couldn't push himself further back, he pushed his knees up to his chest and lowered his head. Ben went on his knees and slowly crawled over to Albedo to not startle him. As this was going on Charly and Azmuth went to stand on the stool to be able to see what was going on easier.

"Albedo, you're okay," Ben said, reaching out a hand.

Albedo covered his face.

"Leave me alone!" Albedo yelled, "Go away!"

Albedo started crying out in fear. Despite his eyes being open, all he could see was Ben's alien transformations ganging up on him. Albedo scrunched his knees tighter and put his hands near his face to block whoever was coming at him.

“Albedo, it’s just me,” Ben said calmly.

“No, stay back!” Albedo cried out.

Ben positioned himself in front of Albedo and put a hand on his knee to try and calm him down.

“Albedo, it’s me Ben,” Ben said softly, “I’m not going to hurt you. Whatever you think you’re seeing isn’t real.”

Albedo slowly moved his hands away from his face to look at the voice that spoke. Through the tears going down his face, all he could see was a blurry figure. Ben could see the panicked look in the white haired teen’s red eyes. Ben looked at him with green eyes full of concern.

Albedo, desperate for someone to help him out of his nightmare, launched himself into Ben's chest, and gripped his shirt with one of his hands. Ben could feel wetness on his shirt, but he ignored it. He put his arms around Albedo and started rubbing his back. Albedo’s sobs got louder the more Ben was comforting him. All Azmuth and Charly could do was stare at them from where they were standing on the stool. Charly had a worried look on her face, while Azmuth seemed stoic.

“You’re okay Al,” Ben whispered, “you're okay.”

Albedo’s head was in the crook of Ben’s neck. Ben bent his face down and kissed Albedo’s forehead.

“I promise you nothing will hurt you ever again,” Ben said while rubbing his chin on top of Albedo’s head, “Not if I have anything to say about it.”

Albedo’s sobbing lessened the longer they were on the floor. Ben was whispering words of comfort into Albedo’s ear, so softly that not even the two Galvans watching could hear him. It seemed to be working as Albedo started calming down and slowed down his breathing. Albedo gripped onto Ben’s shirt even more and closed his eyes. Ben kept whispering words of comfort to Albedo until he was sure that the red eyed teen was asleep.

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When Ben was certain that Albedo was fast asleep again, Ben took his head off of Albedo’s and looked at his face to see the stream of tears that ran down his eyes. Despite all the crying, his white haired clone looked way better now than he did when Ben found him earlier. Albedo wasn’t screaming in agony anymore, and looked comfortable. He almost looked peaceful.

“Can we put him somewhere more comfortable?” Ben asked without looking at the two Galvans he knew that were watching them intensely, “I really don’t think he’s gonna enjoy waking up on the hard floor, or even waking up to me holding him.”

“How about a jail cell?” Azmuth suggested.

“Azmuth!” Charly yelled while glaring at Azmuth.

“I agreed to take the Dream Eater off him, I didn’t agree to let him go free.”

“He’s going free whether you like it or not Azmuth,” Ben said, turning his head upwards and glaring at Azmuth still standing on the stool, “I will fight you on this, nothing you’ve done so far has worked. I’m helping Albedo regardless if you like it or not, and he will not go back to a jail cell.”

Azmuth and Ben stared at each other daring the other to respond. Charly looked between the two and was shocked at the animosity between them. Wasn't this the same kid that everyone talked about who used to come to Galvan Prime and accidentally mess up Azmuth's experiments? Wasn't this the kid that, when he wasn't being bratty, looked up to Azmuth with stars in his eyes? What changed from the innocent kid who wanted to learn more about the Omnitrix to someone willing to fight the creator of said device?

Charly hopped off the stool and made her way towards the door.

"Grab Albedo and follow me," Charly said without looking at Ben.

"Charly, I forbid you from doing anything more."

"I refuse to leave Albedo like this, he's still my patient regardless of what you say Azmuth," Charly said turning to Azmuth and glaring.

"I will strip you of your medical qualifications," Azmuth threatened, "you will never be able to work on Galvan Prime again."

"And I will tell every single person about it. Who do you think will win this battle *First Thinker*?" Charly challenged, "Despite your smarts, you were on thin ice with everyone who knew Albedo. The mass public couldn't care less, but Albedo was our peer. We may not have been friends with him, but we knew how badly he wanted to work under you. We knew him quitting had to be something *you* did to him or something with an experiment gone wrong."

"You're out of line."

"So be it, Ben follow me," Charly said, turning her head and walking out of the medical wing.

Ben picked Albedo up bridal style from the floor and followed Charly out the automatic doors. As they walked, Albedo shifted himself and put his arms around Ben's neck and ungripped his shirt. In Albedo's tired state, he believed that it was Fridge, or maybe Swamps, could've been Hugh but the hands were way smaller than the Vaxasaurian's, that were carrying him after he fell asleep on the hard ground again. He knew they wouldn't care if he was 'weak', he'd just blame it on being tired if they brought it up. He knew they wouldn't, and didn't speak of anything 'out of character' Albedo did. Albedo rubbed his head against Ben's shoulder and smiled. Ben followed Charly to a room down the hall that looked like an Earth hospital room.

"We've had these rooms made years ago when Azmuth told us the Omnitrix was on a human. Figured if you or any of the Plumbers from Earth ever needed our help, this would make you guys feel comfortable."

"Thank you Charly, I'm sorry for whatever Azmuth is going to do."

"It's okay. Azmuth is stubborn but I don't think he'll actually go through with his threat. He knows that people have been wary of him since Albedo left, despite the amount of praise and respect he gets. Some of us just left it alone so we didn't cause drama."

Ben went towards the bed, and pulled down the covers. He maneuvered Albedo into the bed and carefully loosen the arms that were wrapped around his neck. When Albedo was settled in the bed, Ben tucked the covers on Albedo's sleeping form. He grabbed the chair that was in the room and put it next to the bed. Charly connected devices to Albedo to monitor his heart rate, and put an IV



in him so he can get fluids. She wasn't sure how long he'd be unconscious for and didn't want him to die because of lack of human nutrients. Although based on what she was seeing so far, he wasn't taking proper care of himself in this form any way. She looked over to Ben sitting on the chair as she was working.

"I could have someone bring in another bed from one of the other rooms if you wish, we certainly have the equipment to bring one in here if you'd like to be more comfortable."

"Do you have any rooms that have two beds, or are they all single beds?"

"Single beds I'm afraid. We didn't anticipate multiple people in the same room, so we only put one bed in each room. These rooms were designed to be a temporary place for humans to rest before they were transported somewhere else."

"It's fine, I'm comfortable in the chair here."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm sure."

"There's not much else I can do right now. It's just a matter of waiting till he wakes up. You can use the call button to let me know when he wakes up."

"Thank you again."

Charly hopped down from the bed and left the room. Despite this building mainly being catered towards Galvan patients, they sure knew how to make a room fit for a human. Ben grazed his fingers across Albedo's face and wiped off the dried tear tracks that were on his face. He shifted his hand higher to move the bangs that were covering Albedo's eyes out of his face. Albedo unconsciously leaned into Ben's touch. Ben kept his hand on Albedo's hair for a bit, and ruffled his hair. Albedo seemed to lean into the touch more.

Ben pulled his hand back away from Albedo's head and heard him whimper out as if it was physically hurting him that Ben pulled back. Ben grabbed one of Albedo's hands and squeezed it and the small whimper stopped. Without moving his hand, Ben scooted his chair closer to the bed in order to be more comfortable. He placed an arm on Albedo's chest and could feel it rise and fall from his breathing. Ben set his head down, and laid on top of his non Omnitrix arm. He tilted his head up to look at Albedo's sleeping form.

Ben moved his other hand closer to his face to lean on, which also brought up Albedo's arm as well. The white haired teen still stayed asleep, despite Ben inadvertently moving his arm. Ben snuggled into the arm he was laying on. His breathing started to slow down the longer he laid on Albedo's chest feeling his chest rise and fall. While looking at Albedo's sleeping face, Ben's eyes started to close. As he drifted off into slumber, he gripped his hand tighter on Albedo's.

## Chapter End Notes

That scene in the beginning almost didn't happen. I actually had it planned when I was writing this out, but the way this chapter originally happened almost didn't let me include it. (Basically this chapter originally started with Ben asking to take Albedo

somewhere more comfortable, but I found a way to make the idea work.)

The idea was this, in exact words: "Albedo waking up straight from the Dream Eater and crying his eyes out and being terrified. He ends up in Ben's arms and Ben starts giving him words of comfort and rubs his chin on his head. Then says that Albedo is okay and tries to make him feel better and know that whatever he saw wasn't real."

I wrote ahead so this idea wouldn't have worked later on, but I also had to re-edit future chapters because of this which still works and makes it better. I just wanted to get that out since it almost didn't make it in, and I'm really happy I was able to make it work.

I know I'm writing Azmuth to be kind of rude and more of a dick than usual, he'll come around at some point. Azmuth still feels betrayed by Albedo's actions and isn't taking out in the proper way, so he's lashing out at Ben and Charly for trying to help him. He does feel bad, but is too stubborn to show it and admit he was wrong.

Dunno when next update will be, probably whenever I edit Chapter 4 in a way that sounds good lol. It's pretty much done, but I want to make sure it's at a point where I like it. (Which is why this update took a bit to post, I was changing things to sound better.)

# Chapter 4

## Chapter Summary

Albedo actually wakes up this time.

## Chapter Notes

It's been a bit, sorry about that. I had the chapter written out, went through it a few times, and reworked things to make it sound better. I think it's as good as it's going to get. Y'all ever start a fic and you're really happy about it and then lose motivation on it because of other fics you're doing? Yeah that's kind of what's happening here. I'm still having a hyperfixaiton on our Galvan trapped in a human body, but it's being directed at the wrong fics. Anyway, before I ramble on too much here's the next chapter!  
Thanks for all the kudos and comments! :D

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Albedo's mind started bringing him back into consciousness. He kept his eyes closed as he tried to figure out what happened. He felt a warmness on his chest, and something gripping onto his hand. There was a beeping going on in the background, and soft snores coming from below him. His mind was on high alert. The last thing he remembered was trying to put the Cassiopeian Dream Eater on Tennyson at Mister Smoothy... no wait that wasn't right.

He was in Tennyson's room, trying to put the Dream Eater on him. He was majorly unprepared for how messy the teenager's room was and slipped on a smoothie. Everything was a rush of images after that point. He remembers being Tennyson and getting chased by people in Tennyson's life, being told he didn't deserve the Ultimatrix, and even being chased by himself. Even Gwendolyn and Levin were pleading with him to give up the Ultimatrix due to 'not deserving it'. He remembers being himself again and going into a fetal position against the wall at Mister Smoothy while Tennyson's aliens were ganging up on him... no wait, that wasn't right either.

The last thing Albedo remembered was seeing a shadow that was oddly familiar. It reached out a hand to him, and gave him words of comfort. He latched onto the shadow, being grateful that someone was saving him from the hell that he was seeing. There was a voice telling him that everything was going to be okay, and that no one would hurt him again. He remembers the warmth radiating from the shadow. He remembers how there was a warmth on his head and around his body.

Albedo groggily opened his eyes and looked around. He realized he was in some type of hospital room. There was a familiarity to this room, but he couldn't place it. He tried to lift his right arm, but it was being weighed down by something. His eyes glazed over to where his hand was being weighed down. He noticed someone was laying on him. He blinked to get the tiredness out of his eyes, and realized it was Tennyson laying on his chest. The brown haired teenager was using his arm as a pillow, and gripping the blanket with his hand. Ben's other hand was holding onto Albedo's in a tight grip. Albedo noticed that Ben was still in the same outfit from when he snuck

into the brown haired teen's room, his usual black top being paired with gray sweatpants. Albedo used his free hand to flick Ben's head to try and wake him up.

"If you don't get off me this instant Tennyson, I'm shoving you off."

All Albedo got in response was Ben groaning. Albedo tried ruffling his hair to wake him up, but that only made Ben lean into Albedo's touch more. Albedo moved to try and shake Ben's shoulder, but doing that yielded the same results. Albedo pulled the hand that was free away. Albedo tried to push himself out of bed but to no avail. The blanket being draped across him wasn't doing him any favors when Ben was weighing it down. He tried to pry his fingers out of Ben's, but Ben only squeezed harder.

"This can't be real, I still have to be trapped in there. That's the only explanation for why Tennyson is acting this way."

Albedo tried to transform into an alien to get out of this situation, but no matter how hard he thought he was still stuck as a negative version of Ben Tennyson. That *thing* being trapped on him must have sucked out his brain chemicals. It must've messed up more of his DNA so he can't transform anymore. Before Albedo could try to find another way to escape, he heard the door to the room open. He didn't see anyone from the angle he was laying at. It was only when he saw a tiny thing walking on his leg, and toward the top of his chest did he realize it was a Galvan.

"Well looks like Ben fell asleep before he could tell me you were awake, how are you doing?"

"Who are you?"

"You don't recognize me?"

"From where you're standing I can't see all of you, how am I supposed to recognize you?"

Charly moved backwards and climbed on Ben's head so Albedo could see her better. Ben continued to snore and made no movement or indication that he even felt the Galvan on his head. Albedo turned his head away from her. He did recognize the Galvan standing in front of him, but he didn't want to admit it.

"You do recognize me don't you?"

"Of course I do," Albedo said, turning his head to face her again, "Why are you even here?"

"Do you not recognize the room?"

Albedo looked around and he knew this room was familiar.

"I'm back on Galvan Prime aren't I?"

"Yes. Gwen Tennyson called for a transport, and specifically asked for a Galvan doctor. We brought you here soon afterwards. Imagine my surprise when I realized I was picking up my old colleague. Ben's been worried about you. He even fought Azmuth to get him to help get that creature off you."

Charly sat down in Ben's hair and made herself as comfortable as she could on a human's head.

"This is all a trick just to imprison me again."

“Albedo, we may not have been friends but do you really think I would do that to you?”

“You have no idea what happened.”

“Funny, Azumth said the same exact thing. He refused to tell anyone what happened to you, and a lot of our old peers are still salty at him for it. We demanded for him to explain, and he still won’t. I asked Ben to, but he refused out of respect for you.”

“Why would Tennyson have *any* respect towards me?”

Charly didn’t know how to respond.

“Could you tell me what happened that got you in this form?”

Albedo sighed. He vaguely remembered Charly from when he was a younger Galvan, but for most of his life, he was mostly with Azmuth and didn’t have time for any type of friends. He didn’t want to be friends with anyone, his research and studies were more important. Despite that, a few of his peers tried to talk to him when they saw him and were nice to him. He wouldn’t call them friends, but they were someone to talk to when Azmuth was too busy for him. He also hung out with them from time to time when Azmuth and him would take breaks in their experiments.

“Okay, here’s how I got in this accursed form.”

---

Charly was in shock at everything Albedo told her. How could Azmuth force Albedo to stay with human DNA like that? Despite everything Albedo had done, that was pure torture. Azmuth knew as well as anyone how long Galvans lived, he also knew how little in comparison human life was.

“*Azumth is an asshole,*” Charly said in their native tongue.

“*You’re lucky I still remember our language despite living as human for a few years and speaking only English,*” Albedo said, “*I agree.*”

“*How could he do that to you? It’s no wonder that Ben was so insistent on giving you help.*”

“*He never was before.*”

“*That Dream Eater makes its victims see their worst nightmares. Based on your reactions, you weren’t an exception to that rule. I don’t know what you saw in there, but the entire time you were trapped in the Dream Eater you were crying out in pain. I may not know your full history with Ben, but I doubt he’s the type of person to have wanted you to suffer in there. He was concerned the whole time you were trapped in there, and tried to comfort you the entire time.*”

“*He shouldn’t have screwed everything up!*”

“*Didn’t you say your friend Hugh was the reason Ben stepped in? Hugh just wanted you guys to stay together, I can’t say I really blame him.*”

“*Hugh meant no harm, Tennyson shouldn’t have stuck his nose in where it didn’t belong.*”

Charly sighed, he was as stubborn as ever.

“*If Ben hadn’t stuck his nose where it didn’t belong this time-*” Charly said before she felt herself

sliding off Ben's head.

Albedo lifted his left hand and caught Charly as Ben was lifting his head off Albedo's chest.

*"Have a good nap Sleeping Beauty?"* Albedo asked with a smirk knowing Tennyson couldn't understand what he was saying.

*"I didn't know you were a fan of Disney movies,"* Ben replied in perfect pronunciation of the Galvanic language.

Albedo's eyes widened that Ben knew their language.

*"Don't look so shocked, you don't spend years having Azmuth as a mentor without picking a few things up."*

From Albedo's palm, he could hear Charly laughing.

*"Also I hated people talking about me behind my back on this planet. One day I started using Gray Matter to learn the Galvanic language so I could understand them. Azmuth was shocked, but also slightly amused I did that."*

"Okay now that we settled the fact you're not *entirely* useless, let go of my hand before I cut it off!" Albedo said switching back to English while trying to pry his sweaty hand off of Ben's.

"Oh!" Ben said with a blush coming on his face, "Sorry about that," he said shyly laughing.

He released his hand from Albedo's and sat back in the chair. Now that Ben wasn't trapping him down on the bed, Albedo pushed himself up into a sitting position.

"Human sweat is disgusting!" Albedo exclaimed while flapping his hand trying to get feeling back in it from how long Ben was gripping it. "Should've cut your hand off the moment I woke up."

Charly jumped off from Albedo's palm and went over to the buttons on the bed to raise the head of the bed so Albedo didn't have to hold himself up. Once it was in a good spot, she let go of the button and went to stand on Albedo's leg.

"Hey Charly, could you give us some time by ourselves?" Ben asked, looking down at Charly and then back up at Albedo.

---

Ben was reminded about the conversation that woke him up. He heard Albedo explain about the last few years of him being trapped in Ben's DNA. Ben opened his eyes for a second to see Albedo looking up towards the top of his head and talking. Ben immediately shut them again, and pretended that he was still asleep in order to listen to Albedo talk. He assumed that Albedo didn't realize he woke up since he was still talking. Ben expected to hear bitterness coming out of Albedo's voice, but he heard excitement when Albedo started talking about how he did the Ben 10 Live show. Albedo's voice perked up more when talking about Hugh, Fridge, and Swamps.

*"You have friends on Earth?"*

*"They were more like people I worked with, but we got close during all those shows we did together. Dare I say I actually had fun with them, maybe even more fun than doing experiments with Azumth. We never had anywhere to stay so we slept in big and dark alleyways so people wouldn't see us. Hugh was always comfortable to sleep on. It was nice having them around."*

“What happened to them?”

“I had to leave them because I didn’t want them caught up in my illegal activities. The Ben 10 Live was canceled after that last show, but we still roamed around together. One night when they were all asleep I left. I never got the chance to say goodbye to them and thank them for all they did for me when we were together.”

---

“Could you stop staring at me like that Tennyson?”

Ben was shook out of his thoughts and looked down away from Albedo.

“I think that’s my cue to leave you two boys alone,” Charly said hopping off the bed and heading towards the door, “Don’t try to escape on me with him, I need to make sure there’s no lasting effects of the Dream Eater.”

“I can’t transform anymore,” Albedo admitted before Charly left.

“What?” Ben asked, looking at Albedo.

“Your screw up at the theater let me transform with a thought, after the Dream Eater came off I no longer have the ability to transform at all and I’m forever stuck in this hideous form.”

“To be honest, I don’t know if I can fix that Albedo. No matter how much I want to, sometimes there are permanent effects from having the Dream Eater trapped on you. Usually the effects are memory loss, brain damage, or other very specific problems to the person that was affected. Despite how you feel right now, this was probably the best outcome out of what we’ve seen.”

Albedo glared at Charly.

“Don’t glare at me like that, I’m just speaking the truth. Now if there’s nothing else I’ll take my leave. Push the button if something else happens,” Charly said, “Albedo you are *not* to leave this room.”

“You can’t keep me prisoner here!” Albedo yelled.

“I wasn’t, but if you’re in here Azmuth won’t try to ship you back to prison. The Plumbers know you’re here, but under Ben’s authority aren’t allowed to come get you unless he requests it.”

The boys didn’t respond to Charly. Ben didn’t actually tell anyone not to come and get Albedo, but he wasn’t going to tell Albedo that. Charly was trying to protect him too. She left the room when neither of them responded.

“Your authority huh?” Albedo asked, raising an eyebrow.

“Yes.” *Eye twitch*

“I knew she was lying.”

“Damn eye twitch giving me away,” Ben said, rubbing his eye.

“Which part was she lying about?”

“Wouldn’t you like to know? She’s just trying to protect you man. Just accept it.”

“I don’t have to accept anything.”

“Why are you so goddamn stubborn?” Ben asked while standing up.

Ben turned around and was about to leave the room. He almost didn't want to deal with Albedo's stubbornness.

“You’d think with whatever you saw in those nightmares you’d be grateful to still be alive dammit!” Ben said turning back around and staring at Albedo.

Ben made his way closer to the bed and bent down to lean towards Albedo's face. He grabbed Albedo’s shoulders and stared into his red eyes. The two looked at each other without saying a word. Ben grabbed Albedo’s chin and leaned his face closer to Albedo’s. Before Albedo could even think of pushing Ben away, he felt Ben’s lips on top of his. Albedo’s eyes went wide eyed in response. Albedo had no time to respond further, since as quickly as Ben’s lips were on his, Ben was pulling himself away. Without saying anything, Ben made his way towards the door. He stopped before it could open. His back was towards Albedo when he spoke up.

“Despite everything that happened between us, I actually give a shit about you and want to help,” Ben said with a brittle laugh and turning towards Albedo, “But maybe that’s just the hero in me talking cause lately I've felt like shit for never properly helping you when I should’ve.” He turned towards the door and spoke again, “I don’t know why I care about you so much, but I do.”

Albedo sat there in shock at what happened. All he could do was put a hand to his mouth where Ben’s lips were. Without any response, Ben left the room.

## Chapter End Notes

So that happened. I actually had an alternative scene on how Ben kissed Albedo, but how I originally wrote it kinda gave me a weird vibe so I changed it to what y'all are seeing now. (It wasn't bad per say, but it made me uncomfortable reading it back, and if it made me uncomfortable it probably would've made someone else uncomfy. That's not what I'm here to do.)

I have to give credit where it's due, the whole "Galvans have their own language" thing I'm pretty sure I got from "A Reflection" and maybe other fics with Albedo in them? I know A Reflection has a few scenes where Albedo speaks in Galvanic language and Ben understands what Albedo is saying. I run with that idea in other fics I'm working on, but this one just happened to go up first. (I think I ran with that in my Ben 10 AU before I read A Reflection fully, but I was also reading other Albedo fics and I don't think it's my own idea. Even though it would make sense in canon that not everyone in the universe speaks English, that's just what the audience hears.)

Anyway, Kira is rambling too much. The next chapter is written, but it's probably gonna go through a lot of edits before it's ready to post. (This actually went through a lot of edits before posting since I wanted things to sound better.) Chapter 6 is like half written? I might try to get that fully done before Chapter 5 gets posted.



# Chapter 5

## Chapter Summary

Albedo contemplates a lot.

## Chapter Notes

A little warning this chapter is mainly Albedo's thoughts and very heavy. (Not like trigger warning heavy, just a lot of thoughts that are intentionally jumbled up cause it's supposed to be Albedo jumping from thought to thought about his life as a Galvan and after becoming human.) I tried to break it up so it's not just a wall of text or really long paragraphs that are hard to read.

Sorry this took so long, I was working on other Albedo fics (one that was posted already which is subtle Ben x Albedo if you want to see it that way, with others a WIP.), as well as a Albedo edit which is close to being done. I just got burnt out by it since it's a big project, but it's almost there and I'm really proud of it.

I don't want to ramble too much here's the next chapter! I think this is the longest chapter so far, so I hope that makes up for the long wait.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

*“What the fuck just happened?”*

Albedo put his knees to his chest and leaned himself to the head of the bed. What reason did Tennyson have to kiss him like that? Was he still trapped in the Dream Eater? Was this a simulation? This couldn't be real. Tennyson couldn't have feelings for someone like him. Why did Albedo care that he did? Every action he's taken over the course of being trapped in this accursed form has been to get back into his original Galvan body. He was *never* supposed to get wrapped up with a human teenager or even wrapped up in human feelings.

He refused to go back to sleep, mainly cause of fear of what he may see. Would he have another nightmare like the ones he had when he was trapped in the Dream Eater? Would he have other nightmares that he's been having lately? Would he wake up in an entirely new location? Would he be back in prison, despite what Benjamin said? He didn't want to think how he would feel if he woke back up in a jail cell, and knew that everything Ben did was a lie.

He cursed to himself, it was cause of the DNA he was feeling like this that had to be it. If he was a Galvan again, he wouldn't be having any type of emotions towards the teenager he had the unfortunate pleasure of looking like. Why did Albedo want Ben to come back inside the room and hold him like the shadow he saw in his nightmare? Could what he saw be considered a nightmare if the shadow radiated warmth? Albedo was smart, he knew that it was Tennyson that comforted him, but he was always the type to be in denial of the truth. He didn't want to admit that Ben holding him like he did was the safest he'd felt in a long time. He didn't want to admit that Ben *actually* meant something to him. Albedo could feel tears running down his face.

“Stupid human emotions,” he said while quickly trying to wipe the stream of tears rolling down his face.

Albedo buried his hands into his knees, and wrapped his covered arms around them. He covered his eyes with the sleeves of his jacket so no one could see the tears running down his face if someone were to come inside the room. No matter how much he tried to stop them, the tears kept coming down. He stopped trying to force them to stop. What was the point? No one was here to see him be *weak*.

He just wanted to go back to his Galvan body, but was that truly the case anymore? He's lived so long as a human, it's hard to even imagine being a Galvan full time anymore. For that short time he was in his Galvan form he was uncomfortable. His mind was clearer than it ever was, but the sudden change back to human messed everything up and threw his emotions for a loop. He knew the incident wasn't Ben's fault. He knew Hugh had a hand in convincing Ben and his friends to intervene but Albedo couldn't find it in him to blame the Vaxasurian for anything that transpired. Hugh just wanted Albedo to stay, as well as the group staying together. Albedo really couldn't blame Hugh for it, despite the fact that Hugh tried to take the blame for it.

It was hard leaving them, but he knew the Plumbers would be after Albedo if they saw him again. He got lucky that Ben let him go after their last battle, he was lucky that he wasn't turned back into the Plumbers. He didn't want Hugh, Swamps, and Fridge to get caught up in his mess ups. Maybe he'd try to find them again if he's allowed to go back to Earth. He really did miss having friends who saw him for him. They didn't see him as Azmuth's assistant, or Ben's 'evil twin'. They saw him for whatever he was now, and maybe that was enough for him.

Maybe that's just his, now, teenage human brain speaking. By Galvan standards he really wasn't that old. He was older than the oldest living human, but compared to someone like Azmuth he was a young Galvan. Azmuth was over 1700 years old, while he was barely 200 years old. His human brain couldn't adjust for the maturity level that Galvans had at a young age. Shit, his own age could probably be closer to a human baby since the age gap is so big between him and the First Thinker. After the tadpole stage, you're an 'adult' by Galvan standards and can take care of yourself.

Over the course of his life, he never got close to people. He thought experimenting and using his Galvan brain to the best of his ability was what everyone on Galvan Prime should strive for. He thought that working for the beloved First Thinker was the end goal of a Galvan's life. He was aghast at how Azmuth treated his quit. Azmuth told Tennyson and his friends that he fired him, yet those who knew him on Galvan Prime were told that he quit. What Azmuth continued to fail to do was understand the real motivation behind everything the young Galvan did. Albedo refused to let the entire universe's problems fall on a human child's shoulders.

If the Omnitrix went to Max Tennyson as intended, Albedo would have had no problems with that. He knew Max was a Plumber with years of experience behind him. He knew what he would've gotten himself into over his adolescent grandson. Everything Albedo did was a piss poor attempt at getting Azmuth to realize that the universe's fate shouldn't have been trusted to a child who was forced to grow up way too fast in order to protect other people, including the ones that he loved.

Everything got out of control way too quickly. His human emotions started messing his Galvan intellect up. He was doing things he never would have if he stayed a Galvan. He stopped thinking things through and impulsively did things. It could have been because of Ben's DNA, but it could have just been human DNA in general. He was smarter than that, he should've known things wouldn't have gone properly without actually planning things through. Maybe if he'd just explained everything to Tennyson and his friends when they met up at the Forever Knight's castle, things wouldn't have gone so awry.

Although that may not have worked since both Benjamin and Gwendolyn didn't recognize him by name when he introduced himself. He remembered that the girl thought he was a DNAlien, which he should've found more offensive than he did since those creatures are disgusting and an insult to the universe. If he could go back in time, he'd find a way to make Azmuth understand his motivations without fucking up his own DNA.

If he could go back in time, he'd 100% still become Azmuth's assistant. Despite everything that happened, he still has fond memories of working for the First Thinker. If he could do it over again, he'd actually be friends with his fellow colleagues. He knew what it was like to have friends, and regretted not trying to when he was younger. It wasn't lonely since he'd hang with them, but he still kept them at a distance. He thought that they were less intellectual than him, and didn't want his Galvan mind to be poisoned with their defected brains. He had to do everything he could to not halt his process of becoming the next First Thinker.

He once dreamed that he'd become the Second Thinker because his intellect was on par with Azmuth's. Galvan Prime respected the work he did, but Azmuth was always the one everyone wanted. He strived to be like that at one time, and wanted everyone to see him like they saw Azmuth. He failed to take into account that Azmuth spent hundreds of years earning the title he did, he failed to realize that nothing he could do would be as remarkable as the First Thinker's achievements.

It took him until messing up his own DNA that he'd never be seen as *just* Albedo. He'd always be seen as the black sheep of the Galvan race who 'betrayed' them. He'd always be seen as an 'evil' Ben Tennyson, even though he's his own person. The only people who ever saw him as *just* Albedo would probably never speak to him again from how he abandoned them the way he did. Did Tennyson see him for himself, or was Ben only taking pity on him because Albedo looked like him?

How did everything get messed up so bad? Albedo knew the answer to that, it just took him getting himself trapped in a backfired plan he had to realize it. It took him seeing his own demons play out to realize that *he* was the one to screw his entire life up. His whole life was dedicated to becoming Azmuth's assistant, but what was it all for? At one point he even saw Azmuth like the father he never had. When Azmuth casted him aside and threw him in prison, it was worse than turning into Ben Tennyson. That betrayal along with the new pesky emotions he had turned his feelings into hatred and wanting revenge on everyone and everything.

Although now that he thought about it, that wasn't always the case, especially when he started working with Hugh, Fridge and Swamps. He remembered how Hugh would lift him on his shoulder when Albedo's feet were sore and he'd slow down. He remembered Fridge using his powers to cool them all off when they'd be in a town with excessive heat. He remembered them going inside a park late at night and Swamps using his vines to swing from different trees. He remembered Hugh pushing Albedo to swing from the vines to get some of his anger out. He never admitted it to them, but that was one of the best days of his entire human existence. He knew it was a huge risk to continue to do the Ben 10 Live show, especially when the commercials he posed for came out. He knew that at some point Tennyson and his friends would see it and everything he worked so hard for would be ruined.

The goal of the show was to gain money to buy the parts he needed for the DNA altering machine. They all knew that going in what the goal was, and yet Albedo couldn't help himself by getting close to everyone. He wanted to go back to being a Galvan, but he also had regrets about what that would mean for Hugh, Swamps, and Fridge. At some point he started to see them as his friends, and wasn't so stoic all the time around them. The money they earned was split between them, although the three aliens would give money to Albedo when he needed it. He'd be touched every

time they'd help him, but he never let it show. Looking back, he wished he did. He wished he told them how much he appreciated them as his friends.

He had no plans on what he was going to do when he got his Galvan body back again besides getting off Earth, but he would've kept his word about not going after Ben anymore. The only reason he immediately fought the teenager was the sudden shift to a Galvan brain to a human's in such a short time. He thought he had succeeded and yet he failed again. He *always* failed at everything he did. He failed with making friends as a Galvan, despite Charly insisting that their peers saw him that way. He failed at becoming the Second Thinker with being Azmuth's assistant. He failed at turning himself back into a Galvan and not stuck looking like Ben Tennyson. *He failed.*

He was stuck in a body that he didn't want to admit that he's grown to. He's stuck with a voice that isn't his. Despite him being a Galvan for a short bit talking to Ben and his friends, he barely remembered what he sounded like. All he can hear is Ben Tennyson's voice as the voice in his head. Anyone else would have reacted the same way, wouldn't they? At least that's something Albedo wants to believe. Maybe he should've stopped while he was ahead, but he never was. He always thought he was a step ahead with getting his original body back, but it always backfired on him.

Albedo squeezed himself tighter as the tears continued to roll down his face. He could feel a weight on the bed, and felt someone push him closer to him. He felt arms around him and his head being pushed into a soft cloth.

"I'm so sorry," He heard a familiar voice say.

Albedo didn't know why hearing those words and feeling Ben's arms around him made his crying turn into sobbing, but it did. He was so wrapped up in his thoughts he didn't hear Ben come back inside the room. Was Ben apologizing for what happened between them? Did Albedo accidentally say what he was thinking out loud? He remembered multiple occasions while going across the country with Hugh, Swamps and Fridge where he'd speak his thoughts out loud if he thought no one was around. The three aliens would ask him about it. If he spoke out loud, was Ben apologizing for everything Albedo has gone through the last year?

Albedo tried to stop this *weakness* he was having. He shouldn't be crying over dumb human emotions he can't control, but he couldn't stop. He buried his head in Ben's shirt and let all his emotions out. Ben rubbed Albedo's back, and Albedo's sobs got louder. When was the last time he was able to let it all out? He felt something on top of his head.

"I'm here," he heard Ben whisper, "And I'm not going to fail you again."

Why was Albedo comforted by Ben's words? They were supposed to be enemies right? He was supposed to want to take the Ultimatrix from the boy and get his Galvan body back, not be here crying into his shirt. Could they even be considered enemies at this point? Would things have turned out as they did had Albedo explained everything properly without any tricks? Would he have stepped aside after the Ben 10 Live show if he *actually* explained about the device he got the materials for from the show's profits? He sabotaged himself, and Albedo was realizing that it was no one else's fault but his. Not Hugh's, not Ben's, just *his*.

Ben didn't speak further to let Albedo let his emotions out. Ben had no idea how long Albedo had been suffering, even before he turned himself human. He knew the Galvan who looked like him needed to let this out. He thought if he said anything Albedo would shut him out completely and go back to masking his emotions.

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After some time Albedo's sobs became quieter, Ben continued to rub his back and have his chin on top of the white hair teen's head. Once Albedo seemed like he got everything out of his system, Ben pulled back and looked at Albedo.

"I don't know the last time you ate, so I brought food when I came in."

"...Chili fries?" Albedo asked, pulling himself away from Ben's chest and looking up at him with pleading eyes.

"Sorry, I couldn't find any. It was hard finding human food here, but I found something you might enjoy."

Albedo wiped his face as he looked over to the bedside table near the bed. He saw something that resembled a salad in a bowl with the limited options Galvan Prime had.

"Yuck, I'd rather eat insects or larva."

"Ew, you have weird tastes."

"Says the human teenager who eats chili fries all the time."

"You eat them too!"

"Because of your stupid DNA." *Eye twitch*

"Look who's lying now."

Albedo rolled his eyes. He looked at the makeshift salad and stuck his tongue out at it. To the left of it he saw a bowl that was filled with dead insects. By Galvan standards, that would be way more than enough for a full meal. He hadn't had Galvan insects in such a long time. When he was stranded on Earth, he was excited when he knew there were insects for him to eat. Albedo was disappointed though when he ate them, they were okay when he needed something but they'd never beat out those on Galvan Prime. Insects from here were an incredible delicacy, so much so that they were a rare sight in Undertown.

Everyone who was an insectivore would buy them all out, sometimes for high prices depending on the seller. Last Albedo checked there was a black market sale for them, that was way above the money he was making from the Ben 10 Live show. He never had the money for normal priced ones after paying for machinery, and dumpster diving never gave him insects. No one in their right mind would throw out Galvan insects, that would be a crime against the universe.

Albedo pulled himself away from Ben so he could reach the bedside table. He picked up an insect and put it in his mouth. He grinned while chewing on it. If there was one thing he missed about Galvan Prime, it was the insects.

"Well since you're happy with insects," Ben said looking shocked at Albedo's reaction to the insects, "I guess I'll eat whatever's in this salad."

"You're not going to like it," Albedo said with his mouth full.

"I need food," Ben said, shrugging and grabbing the bowl of salad.

Ben grabbed what looked to be a fork and started eating the salad. Albedo was right, this was terrible but he needed something to eat. He doesn't know how long he's been with Albedo and it

was *hours* before everything that he ate last. He *was* asleep when this was all initially happening.

“Hey Tennyson?” Albedo started saying.

“Yeah?”

While Ben still had his mouth open, Albedo shoved a few tiny insects in his mouth. After Albedo removed his hand from Ben’s mouth, Ben leaned towards the bed side table and started coughing out insects on the table.

“Albedo what the fuck?” Ben asked, still coughing up the insects that were shoved in his mouth.

“You’ll live, it doesn’t taste that bad.”

“Galvanic insects are grosser than Earth’s!”

“You and I have two different definitions of the word ‘gross’.”

Ben looked down at the bowl of salad in his hands. He contemplated how to get pay back, and had to hold back a smirk when an idea came to him. He continued to eat his salad as if it was normal. Near his last bits of salad, Ben stared at Albedo still eating insects.

“What are you looking at Tennyson?”

Ben put down his bowl back on the bed side table. He scooted himself closer to Albedo to where their shoulders were touching. He placed a hand on the bed next to Albedo and another hand to Albedo’s chin. Ben turned Albedo’s face towards his and leaned forward while staring into Albedo’s red eyes.

“What are you-” Albedo started to ask before being interrupted by Ben’s lips.

Albedo’s mouth opened in shock with the teen’s lips touching his own. Ben used that as an opportunity to use his tongue to push pieces of salad that were in his mouth to Albedo’s. Before Albedo could even think of kissing back, Ben pulled his face back with a shit eating grin across his face.

Albedo licked the inside of his mouth when he felt something in there. He put a hand in his mouth and pulled out pieces of the salad Ben was eating. Albedo looked at the piece in confusion, and then looked at Ben. Ben’s shit eating grin turned into laughter. Ben leaned back to where he was laying on his back and continued to laugh.

“What the fuck Tennyson?” Albedo asked, getting the salad out of his mouth and placing the pieces on the table.

## Chapter End Notes

Fun fact: This chapter originally ended with Albedo kissing Ben with getting insects in his mouth, but I thought that was way too quick for Albedo to do when he's still trying to figure out human emotions and junk. So I reversed how that scene went down. Originally Ben shoved salad in Albedo's mouth with a fork over kissing him, then Albedo got revenge by a kiss. But now that's just an alternative scene over what

happened, since rereading how things go down that would be too quick for Albedo to do. (Maybe at the end of this story I'll post the alternative scenes I had since they are written down, idk I'll see how many I end up with whenever this is done.)

The comparison of ages between Azmuth and Albedo I got from the wiki based on statements from the crew/episodes. Other people ran with the idea of Albedo being way older, but I'm sticking with the whole he's barely 200. All the wiki says for his age is "Hundreds of years", and not a specific age, so we're lowballing it a bit since I've seen it highballed. I feel like lowballing it makes it seem he's a 'young Galvan' which explains why he acts like a teenager after the DNA switch because by Galvan standards he's young. I also got the Galvan being insectivores thing from the wiki. (And also from this other story called "Just Galvan Things" by limeta, gotta give credit to that even though I think I mainly used the Wiki for that tidbit.)

I don't know when the next chapter will be out. I know I say that in every chapter, but every other time I already had the next one written. Chapter 6 isn't fully written and I'm trying to figure out where to go with it because I'm focusing on Azmuth's POV for certain things (but not retelling the chapters, just stuff before and after.) And I have an Azmuth and Albedo scene written somewhere but may not be in the next chapter.

Yeah Kira is making this harder for herself, but it'll work. I didn't want to make y'all wait even longer because of Chapter 6 since that's not fair to y'all when the chapter was complete and edited to where it's good to be posted. Hopefully the update doesn't take a month, but we'll see. (Maybe I'll get my other fics done while y'all wait, who knows.)

Anyway, I'm rambling. Just want to say it was a coincidence that this ended similar to last chapter with Ben kissing Albedo. Least this time he stayed instead of leaving Albedo shell shocked lmao.

## End Notes

I just want to say that I haven't wrote proper dialogue in SO long so I apologize if it's hard to follow with who's talking, I try to indicate when it's more than 2 people speaking/hard to tell, but I'm used to my own way of writing where I know who's talking. I'm also not used to people doing actions/how they feel/etc either. For the past few years I've been writing my own stuff, but it's always been private so I always knew who was talking. I'm not used to other people seeing my work since it's usually not written to be a cohesive story.

Did I just make Ben polyamorous so I didn't have to have him break things off with Julie? Yep. Was the guy he mentioned Herve? Also yes. Am I shoving canon into the air and making my own? Damn straight. I did create a Galvan OC for this, and she will be somewhat relevant in future chapters.

I have about 4 more chapters written so far, although they could get longer/shorter depending what I do. I did make Chapter 3 longer than intended because of a scene I had in my head that I REALLY wanted to play out but it had to be at that moment.

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