The thin gray line

by A_ToastToTheOutcasts

Summary

The beauty of the era of quirks wasn't the amazing abilities; it was that nobody sane would even entertain the thought that Kuroko, the most wanted vigilante in all of Japan, was Quirkless.

Notes

Hey guys! Idk how to write author's notes so I'll just make it a list:

- I do not own My Hero academia, if I did, Dad Might would've been canon like after the fifth episode.

- this's an un-beta'd work, so if you see any grammar inaccuracies please tell me.

- leave comments on what you think!
The final bell rang, signaling the end of the school day. Everyone started packing their things, eager to leave and go home. A young teen remained in his seat, curly green hair blocking his face from view as he furiously scribbled in a journal. If you asked anyone in his class, they'd say that Midoriya Izuku was a freak, a kid with delusions of heroism, and somebody that you shouldn't talk to out of fear of what the resident class bully would do to you if he thought that a "Deku" like Midoriya actually had friends.

Midoriya was so enveloped in his writing that he never noticed the door to the classroom opening, or the three figures stepping in. He'd just finished touching up his notes on Mt. Lady when a hand slammed heavily onto his desk, making him startle and drop his pencil. The sound of the piece of wood clattering to the floor way blocked out by the guffaws of the two lackeys behind a rather terrifying blond boy, whose teeth were bared in a smirk.

"So, Deku," the blond drawled menacingly, looking down on him, "heard that you wanna apply to UA, eh?"

Midoriya started to fiddle with his hands nervously, trying to avoid eye contact. "y-yes, I was, Kacchan." He managed to squeak out.

Lackey 1 nudges lackey 2, "Hear that, man?" He says, "the little nerd still calls Bakugou Kacchan."

As the lackeys laughed, Midoriya leaned down to grab his pencil, making certain that he didn't make eye contact with the volatile blond. He flinched when Bakugou's sneaker smashed his pencil to splinters, falling out of his chair in surprise.

"Listen here you quirkless trash!" Bakugou hissed, grinding the remains of the pencil under his foot as he took a step forward. "UA's the place where the best of the best are made, so, naturally, I'm the first one from this shitty school that's gonna get in! And I don't need a fucking Deku like you getting in my way and fucking that up!" He whipped his head around to the lackeys, glaring holes into both of them. "And you two can shut the hell up!"

Midoriya scrambled backwards, desperate to avoid the other male's advancing form, not entirely sure that Bakugou wouldn't just step on him if he was underfoot. "I-I'm not trying to get in your way, Kacchan." His back was now against the wall, he could feel sweat slide down the back of his neck. "I just thought that there wouldn't be any harm in trying, right?"

"No harm?" Bakugou asked, his teeth bared in a snarl. Midoriya shrunk in on himself as a foot slammed right next to his head. "No harm?! You probably haven't got this shit thought your fucking head, dumbass, but you're fucking QUIRKLESS. You know what that means, right?" He didn't even wait for Midoriya to respond. "It means you're trash! Lower than trash! The only thing you'd ever be useful for is as a punching bag you fucking shit stain!" Bakugou removed his foot from the wall and walked over to Midoriya's desk. "And just what the fuck is this?" He spat mockingly, holding up the hero journal, still on Mt. Lady's page.

Midoriya leaped up, saying "That's mine, Kacchan! Please, give it back!" He reached for the notebook, only to recoil his hand from the heat of a small explosion. He watched in horror as Bakugou carelessly dropped the notebook, charred pages falling apart on impact with the floor, scattering amongst the pencil splinters.
"A journal on quirks? What would you use that for?" The blond snorted, turning and starting to walk away. He looked over his shoulder, "here's some advice; you want a quirk? Leap off the roof, and pray you'll have one in your next life!" He let out a cruel laugh, his two henchmen joining in before leaving the class, the door slamming shut with a tone of finality.

Midoriya stood in the exact same spot, looking at the remains of his journal. When he finally moved to pick up whatever was left, the paper crumbled to ash underneath his feather-like touch. He didn't know exactly what he was feeling as he stared at the ashes of a journal he had worked so hard on, it was like pain, yet not. His chest felt like it was hollow, was that normal? He didn't even know, or care. He took a deep breath, then sighed, scooping up the remains of his journal (didn't want to upset the janitors). The broken shards of his pencil were picked up as well, both are thrown into the trash bin as he walked by on his way out the door. Walking down the familiar tunnel that led home, he hoped that the day wouldn't end on a worse note.

The day ended on a worse note, it ended on a really worse note. The worst thing about it was that it'd actually started to get better before that. He'd actually managed to meet All Might, his personal idol since early childhood. Sure, he'd almost been suffocated by a sludge monster in the process, but that could be easily overlooked considering the fact that oh my god, he actually got to meet All Might. He'd actually thought that things would've gotten better, but they didn't. He was standing on a rooftop with All Might, after recovering from the initial shock of seeing the man, the legend's true form, he had asked his question. "Could someone quirkless like me become a hero?"

All his life, he'd held onto the hope that someday, somehow, he'd become a hero. He ignored the jeers and cruel taunts, the pitying looks his teachers gave him, his own mother's worried expression as he jotted down notes about heroes, but this? This was the straw that broke the camel's back. His idol, the man whom he'd aspired to be like all of his life, thought that he couldn't be a hero. The numbness from earlier was back, only a million times worse, it felt like he was a hollow shell walking. His backpack felt unbearably heavy, each step was a fight against gravity as he mindlessly walked home. His steps halted at the sound of a scuffle across the street, a crowd had already gathered, watching the fight with avid interest and occasional calls of encouragement to the heroes.

Heroes.

Izuku stopped and stared. He'd almost started to run through the possible heroes at the scene, but shook his head once he realized just what line of thought he almost went down. Watching heroes fight? After what happened today? No thank you. He turned his back and continued walking, until he heard explosions and an awfully familiar roar of rage. Without another thought, he turned around and ran to the scene as fast as he could.

It's over, the slime monster that had had Kacchan in its suffocating grip was detained by the heroes after All Might had taken the villain down with a single punch. Normally, Midoriya would be freaking out and taking notes excitedly, but this wasn't the case this time.

The main difference? The two aggravated heroes staring down at him as he was being examined by the paramedics. He tried his best to avoid their disapproving gazes and instead focuses on the paramedic that was carefully wrapping a bandage on his arm. Huh, he didn't even notice has bleeding, that's adrenaline for you.

Eventually the heroes decided to speak to him, and when they did, it was with patronizing words and reprimands. Izuku couldn't help but clench his fists as they treated him like he was a toddler made of glass.

"Jeez, there's a limit to how rash you can be!" The pro-hero, Deathgoro, said irritably, making
Izuku shrink into himself even further than he was before.

"There was absolutely no reason for you to put yourself in danger!" Kamui Wood continued, crossing his arms like a parent expecting an apology.

Ok, no, this was not going to continue. He was not going to apologize for trying to help the closest thing he had to a friend (and wow, didn't that say something about his social life), no way. Izuku took a deep breath, grabbed his charred backpack, which had somehow been found in the mess that was the battlefield, and stood up. He looked the two confused pro-heroes in the eye before starting to walk away from both them and Kacchan, who was now glaring at him like he was an ever persistent stain on his shoe.

Kamui Wood stopped him from leaving by putting a hand on his shoulder. "Hey, kid, where do you think you're-" Izuku shrugs off the heroes hand and continues walking, only to be stopped once more by Deathgoro, who had jogged ahead to stand in front of him.

"Hey, you can't leave yet, you still have to fill out a police report of the incident." The hero said gruffly. "You're a minor, so the press won't be able to interview you without your parent's permission, so that's one thing out of the way, but you can't leave until you've filled out your side of the events."

"No offense, sir." Izuku said, practically craning his neck to look the easily six foot hero in the eyes. "But you saw what I did, there's no need for me to fill the report since they're going to take your word over mine." He smiled mockingly, "after all, I'm just the 'young civilian that rashly ran into the fray and needlessly put themselves in danger.'" Maybe it was the stress from the day, or the post adrenaline shock, but Izuku was done, and he just wanted to go home.

The hero frowned. "Look, I know we sounded rude, but we were just concerned. That criminal had a quirk even we couldn't fight against, and you just ran up and tried to fight them."

"That's the problem," Izuku interjected, letting the irritation and emotional exhaustion from the day dictate his words. "You were standing around, waiting for a hero with a better quirk to handle the situation to show up. Guess what? One did show, but at the last possible moment; meanwhile Kacchan, my classmate, was being suffocated by that slime, and you all just stood there and watched as he fought for air."

"Calm down, kid." Kamui tried to placate. "We weren't equipped for the situation, so we waited for backup, that's standard protocol."

"Did you ever consider attacking its eyes, the only part of its body that wasn't slime?" Izuku asked, "I threw a book bag at it and that was enough to buy Kacchan a few breaths of air, so why didn't you just go for its eyes? Is that part of 'protocol' too? Claiming you can't do anything when your usual way of handling it isn't an option?" He sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose. "Look, I've had a very rough day, sans slime monster, and I really want to go home. So am I going to have to make like a bat out of hell, or are you going to let me pass?"

The heroes seemed at a loss for words, so Izuku simply sidestepped them and continued on his way home. Halfway to his house he realized just what he had said to two prominent pro-heroes and groaned, face palming so hard both his hand and face stung from the impact. Izuku made sure to take the more obscure path home, not really wanting to be around people at the moment. His mind went over the day's events, starting from Kacchan's cruel words and ending with the heroes trying to scold him.

That's a laugh, considering all they did was stand around.
Izuku paused, wondering just where that thought had come from, but hesitantly acknowledged the truth of the statement. Heroes were supposed to be a positive influence on society, discouraging villainy and inspiring hope in the general population, yet when a civilian truly needed the help, all they did was stand back because their quirk 'wasn't suited for the situation'. Izuku was Quirkless and he had still managed to buy Kacchan some precious lungfuls of air with a book bag, of all things. Is that really the people he wanted to be around? People that relied so heavily on their quirks to help people that they didn't know what to do when using their quirk wasn't an option?

Becoming a police officer, like All Might told him to, wouldn't be any better; all they seemed to do was sit around and let the heroes do all the work, he honestly couldn't recall a single instance where the police had handled a villain situation all on their own. So if couldn't be a police officer and he couldn't be a hero, what could he be?

All Might had finally led the reporters off of his trail. Why reporters weren't considered a threat to heroes, he'd never know. He sighed as he replayed the fight in his head. The blond, Katsuki Bakugou according to his medical papers, had been held hostage by the villain he'd accidentally let lose earlier that day, the very same villain that'd almost suffocated that young Quirkless boy in the tunnel.

Midoriya Izuku, that was an entire other headache. The young man was spirited, he'd give him that, but he just wasn't suited for the hero business. At least, that's what All Might had thought before he saw a familiar head of green hair rush the slime villain to help Bakugou. The boy had spurred him to action, that in itself was commendable, and he'd almost thought about making the boy his successor; but that thought was discarded when the boy had almost been blown to bits by young Bakugou's quirk. He may be in need of a successor, but he didn't want to encourage such reckless behavior. He'd rather the boy be disappointed than dead.

Yet, as he overheard the boy's words to Kamui and Deathgoro, he couldn't help a shrivel of dread that something was going to happen because of his actions.

It was nearing sunset when Izuku arrived home. Staring at the door, familiar age old scratches casting shadows across the wood. He sighed before reaching for the handle, opening it with a loud call of "Mom, I'm home!"

If he didn't know any better, he'd say his mom's quirk was super speed, because in exactly point five seconds, his mother was in front of him cupping his face and bringing him close for worried scrutiny. Her hair was disheveled, like she'd ran her hands through it many times in worry, and her hands were shaky as she ran her thumbs across his cheeks. "Izuku, are you ok? I saw on the news that you were involved in a fight against a villain!" She fretted, moving from his face to his bandaged arm. The dull throbbing in his arm was replaced by a stab of guilt much more sharp, was this what he wanted to put her through so he could be a hero? Constant worrying and anxiety? His mother deserved so much more.

Izuku smiled at his mom, letting her check both of his arms before she lead him to the living room and sat them both on the couch. "I'm fine, mom. It's just a few scratches." He rubbed the back of his head nervously, "I....also wanted to tell you something."

His mother didn't falter for a second. "You can tell me anything Izuku, dear. What is it?" She asked, placing a firm hand on his own, offering warmth and understanding.

"I..." He took a deep breath, readying himself. "I don't think I want to be a hero anymore, mom." He closed his eyes, not quite sure if he wanted to see his mother's reaction. Would it be relieved?
Would she be happy he wasn't chasing an unattainable dream anymore?

His mother's hand stiffened, before she moved to pull him into a firm hug. "Izuku, what happened? I thought being a hero was your dream." She asked, her voice slightly muffled into his hair.

"I guess I had a reality check today, mom." He admitted, voice shaking slightly. "I'm still going to apply for Yuei. I just won't apply for the heroics department." Saying the word 'heroics' was like swallowing a barb at the moment for him.

His mom tightened her hug around him, then broke the embrace to hold him at arms length, looking at him directly. "I'll support you no matter what, Izuku, just make sure you're happy." She told him. "Now let's grab dinner, I made Katsudon, your favorite! We can eat it in front of the tv tonight."

Izuku smiled at his mother's attempt to cheer him up. "Thanks, mom. I think I'd really like that."

That's how the evening was spent, eating chicken katsudon and watching overly dramatic shows on the tv, often making commentary on just how unrealistic they were. Izuku chose to ignore the concerned sidelong glances his mother gave him and the hand occasionally squeezing his own, offering silent comfort.

It was well into the night by the time his mother reluctantly went to bed, sending one last worried look at him before closing her bedroom door. Izuku sighed, picking up the dishes on the coffee table and quietly placing them in the sink. His steps were deliberately soft as to not disturb his mother as he made his way further down to hallway to his room.

He opened the door only to be greeted by the numerous All Might posters he's placed on his walls. Turning on the light, he steps in and shuts the door. Dropping his bag unceremoniously on the floor, he plops onto his bed, staring at the ceiling blankly as his mind tried to make sense of the insanity of the day's events.

After five minutes of looking at the ceiling he decided that that was going nowhere and sat up. Groaning slightly as he forced himself to stand and walk over to the computer to type in his passcode, he snorts at the sick humor as he types in the name of his ex-idol. Izuku squinted at the glaring light of the computer screen and his face twisted into a grimace as he was greeted by his screen's background, yet another picture of All Might. Was he really this obsessed? He quickly opens up his web browser and went to work.

*Important people that are Quirkless.*

No results....

*Can a quirk manifest later than the age of four?*

Nope, but there are a few adds for some 'revolutionary' treatments that supposedly give people quirks, he'll pass. He hesitated slightly before typing again.

*Can a hero be Quirkless?*

Wow, had that one yielded a lot of results. Scrolling through, it revealed that they're all mostly just some internet blogger or another ranting and raving, saying pretty much what Kacchan says to him on a daily basis; "People without quirks are useless." This, and "they don't have a reason to live." That. Huh, they might actually have a point on that one. He was just about to log off of his computer, when one blog title caught his eye.
Intrigued, the green haired boy clicked the link and started to read. He had to admit, the writer had a lot of good points for both sides, but what had intrigued him the most was the comments section at the end of the post. Everyone seemed to have an opinion on this, some for it, some against it, and some in between.

Gaiara wrote: You make a compelling argument for both sides, but you're looking too deep into this. Vigilantes are criminals, they go against the law, which was created to protect the people. If everyone started running around doing whatever the hell they wanted, civil life as we know it would cease to be.

Disruptive-Wealth wrote: While Gaiara has a point with people doing whatever they want resulting in anarchy. I choose to see it a bit differently. Vigilantes are stuck with two choices, let an immoral act be committed, or break the law to fix it. Vigilantes typically have a strong sense of morals and decide to choose the lesser of the two evils, in this case the former of the two options. Most of them recognize what they're doing is wrong and own up to their actions when arrested. In most cases where a hero can't act out of threat of legal repercussions, which isn't as rare as you might think, a vigilante would step in to serve justice. They don't choose between right and wrong, per say, but they're choosing between two wrongs and acknowledge that that doesn't necessarily make a right.

Izuku paused at that, reading and re-reading that little paragraph of text until it was practically committed to memory. His mind was a whirlwind of thoughts, just how many vigilantes were out there? What made a vigilante a vigilante? Did they rely on their quirks, or avoid that out of risk of identification?

He opened a new tab and entered in his questions. The results were few, a government list stating maybe five vigilantes in the last few years overall, but the incidents they involved themselves in were numerous; stopping hostage situations, stealing back stolen artifacts, taking action against people that acted with legal impunity, the list kept going. With every vigilante there was a fan page of sorts, where people would clamor and chat about the vigilante's latest or previous acts.

A vigilante saved my little brother when the heroes were waiting for a hostage negotiator. The culprit had a gun to my brother's head and the guy knocked it away like it was nothing! The law may be against vigilantes, but in some cases they're just as good or even better than the heroes.

Just as good, or even better than the heroes; that one sentence resonated within Izuku, repeating over and over as he clicked a link leading to the final vigilante on the government's list; Kuroko, the Black Fox. Izuku let out a contemplative hum as he read over the vigilantes information, not processing half of it in favor for the other thoughts running rampant him his head. What had made him pause was the final paragraph to the page.

To this day, the true identity of Kuroko has never been discovered. The last reported incident involving this vigilante was four years ago, a villain was holding the wife and child of a prominent politician hostage. Kuroko paralyzed the villain from the waist down with a single brutal blow to the neck. No reports of Kuroko were filed after this incident. It is believed that Kuroko died from his injuries, as the villain had an electricity quirk and according to the hostages had electrocuted Kuroko for several minutes.

The comments section of the Kuroko's page was extensive. Some arguing that he was the most dangerous kind of criminal, and some saying that if he was a hero, he'd easily surpass All Might.

Izuku's thoughts grounded to a halt when he came to a revelation. His face broke into a grin as he
spun away from the computer, giddy with excitement. He was thankful that his room didn't carry noise well, because the sound of tearing paper would have most certainly woken his mother up. The posters of All Might that had once hung on his walls proudly now laid in tatters on the floor, torn so thoroughly they'd be better suited for confetti purposes rather than posters. Izuku laid on his bed, covering his face in mirth. One thought running through his head as he unabashedly giggled into his hands.

*If I can't be a hero, what's stopping me from being a vigilante?*
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

No one said the road to vigilantism was easy, but things may get easier when Izuku runs into an unexpected helping hand.

Chapter Notes

This ones a bit shorter, but I hope it'll tide you all over for a bit while I work on the plot. Once again, My Hero Academia does not belong to me.

Enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Izuku barely got any sleep that night, too occupied with researching how to put together work out plans and proper nutrition plans for a kid his age. When he finally did manage to go to sleep, it was well after midnight and at his desk. When he came to, his head was resting on the keyboard actually somewhat comfortably. With a groan, he detached himself from the computer and looked at the clock. Six thirty a.m, he still had time to get ready for school. Thank goodness for small mercies.

He groggily walked over to his closet, mindful of the pile of scrap paper on the floor that used to be numerous posters. He quickly picked his school uniform out of the many, many, piles of hero memorabilia. Ugh, he'd have to change his wardrobe soon.

After getting changed, Izuku stepped out of his room. Shoes still in hand, he quietly made his way to the kitchen, only to see his mother making an array of breakfast items. Great, she was nervous cooking. He let her put down the hot pan of egg whites before walking in and sitting down, making his presence known.

Inko seemed to startle before smiling at him a bit too brightly. "Good morning, Izuku." She greeted, turning her back to him as she stirred the egg whites. "I know it's a bit early for breakfast, but.....uh"

Izuku smiled reassuringly as she fumbled for an explanation, "it's ok mom, you don't have to be worried about me."

Inko stiffened, then turned around. "You know me too well, Izuku." She sniffed, tears in her eyes. "But I'm a mother. Your mother, I worry, it's what mothers do." She turns back to the eggs.
"Yesterday morning you left the house absolutely bursting with excitement, but when you come home, after a villain attack no less, you looked so heartbroken," her shoulders shaking as bad as her voice. "And meanwhile, I don't know what to do! You've always been so happy, even when Kacchan stopped being your friend. And yes I did notice that." She added before he could even speak up.

"Nothing ever seemed to keep you down for long, but yesterday, your eyes looked like something had been damaged beyond repair. I'm your mother, Izuku, I'm supposed to help you when you're hurt, but all I could do last night was watch a soap opera with you and try to make you smile!"

Izuku was at a loss for words, his mouth opening and closing like a fish on the chopping block. Yet when her voice started cracking, he dropped his shoes as he stood up and rushed over to his mother, wrapping his smaller arms around her larger body. "I'm sorry mom, I'm sorry I've made you worry. It's fine mom, like I said, I just had a reality check. A few heroes told me off and I guess it finally got through to me. I'm still Izuku, I'm just...." He fumbled for something to say that wasn't 'your son who's decided to become a vigilante, isn't that great, mom?' Yeah, that wouldn't go over well. "....a bit more mature."
Inko broke his hug by whipping around to wrap him in her own. If there was a small wet spot growing on his shoulder, Izuku wouldn't comment on it, instead opting to pat his mother's back as she sniffled.

And if the eggs were a little burnt? He could've been the worst villain in Japan and he still wouldn't find it in himself to care.

The next few weeks had Izuku falling into a sort of schedule; he'd wake up early, usually right as the sun was rising, and work on schoolwork. After that he'd eat breakfast, something with a lot of protein, then head to school, where he'd make a sport out of avoiding Kacchan for the day. After school was training, but some would rather call it suicide, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, he'd exercise one muscle group in particular: abs, lower body, or upper body. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday were the days where he'd work on his cardio. It was embarrassing, but his endurance was pretty abysmal, and don't get him started on his speed. It was well into the first month of his conditioning that the schedule he'd somehow made for himself was interrupted by a muffled scream in an alleyway he'd happened to walk by on his way home.

He looked around, trying to see if anyone else had heard it; but if anyone else did, they were ignoring it pretty well as they kept on with their regular routine. Careful not to be seen, Izuku peered down the alleyway.

A large, imposing man had his back to Izuku as he advanced towards something he couldn't see. The back of his shirt had a symbol of sorts, a dragon snarling with a snake in its mouth; a gang member.

"Do I gotta say it twice, ya punk?" The huge man spat, "hand over yer wallet, and I won't cut you up nice for the police to find."

The assailant had a knife, Izuku filed that away as he started making plans to accommodate for the new development.

"D-don't, please!" A voice, shaking with fear pleaded with the hulking man in front of him. "I'll give you all I have, just don't hurt me!"
Izuku took a quick look around the alleyway, taking note of a long pole lying off to the side of the assaulter. The pole wouldn't be a good weapon for a man that sized but it would at least keep him at a distance where he wouldn't be able to use his blade. He was about to step in when a large hand grabbed his shoulder. He whipped around and apprehensively took in the newcomer.

He was a middle aged man, that much Izuku could tell. Mixed descent, Japanese with... maybe Native American? His eyes were squinted, tan skin scrunching up as gunmetal gray irises took in the same scene Izuku had been prepared to jump in to. The stranger's most notable feature overall was the large scar running from the bottom of his right eye to below his T-shirt collar. The skin looked like it had aged much faster than the skin around it, a burn scar.

"Stay back." The man told him, stepping away from Izuku to walk into the alleyway, the young boy mindlessly noted that the stranger's Japanese had an American accent.

The thug stopped harassing the unseen victim, sensing the stranger's presence behind him. "And what the hell is this?" He asked, turning around to face the man. "A fuckin' mixed bastard actin' like he's a hero?" While the thug laughed, the victim, a young boy only a little older than Izuku darted under the criminal's arm and made a mad dash for the sidewalk. The man stepping to the side to let him run past.

"Shit! Now ya done it ha half n' half bitch." He snarled.

"The only bastard in this alleyway is the one robbing schoolchildren with a knife."

The stranger remained calm, "The only bastard in this alleyway is the one robbing schoolchildren with a knife."

If it weren't for his years of watching hero fights, Izuku was certain that he wouldn't have seen the stranger move. A forearm redirected the criminal's knife while his leg came up to kick the man in the solar plexus, using both his weight and momentum against him. The knife clattered to the ground as the thug fell wheezing, both hands clutching at his chest as he struggled to regain his breath. The stranger grabbed the man's head and kneed him viciously, the would-be robber dropped like a sack of potatoes, nose bent at an unnatural angle and leaking a steady stream of blood.

The stranger, not so much as breathing hard, nonchalantly took out his phone and dialed the police as he kicked the knife to the side. Izuku shrunk in on himself when the man turned around and focused on him. He took two steps back, ready to bolt, when the stranger started to walk towards him. What had made him stay was the question the man asked.

"Why were you about to attack this man?" He gestured to the unconscious attacker.

"because it would've been the right thing to do." He finally managed to say.

"Even when the heroes would've told you to call the police?" The stranger inquires, tilting his head slightly as the sound of sirens started to come from the distance.

That had made him hesitate, would he have still tried to step in? Deep down, the answer wasn't that hard to find. "The man had a knife, and he would've heard me if I called the police. It takes about five minutes for the local police station to respond, by that time both me and the other student would've been critically injured, or even killed."

"Do you always mumble, boy?" The stranger asked, a thin line of amusement in his tone as he
stood there casually, like he didn't just take down a man easily twice his size.

Izuku immediately clapped a hand over his mouth, cursing his traitorous tongue as he felt his face heat up I'm embarrassment.

The man in front of him shook his head, his dark ponytail catching in the sunlight. "You have a good heart, child. If I may ask, what is your name?"

"M-Midoriya Izuku." He stuttered out without even realizing it. Was the stranger using his quirk on him?

"Midoriya Izuku..." The man muttered, "You have determination, young Midoriya." He looked over his shoulder when the sirens started coming closer. "We might want to continue this conversation elsewhere."

"Why? Won't the police have questions? We should-"

"That's precisely the issue." The man interrupts, calmly walking past, saying over his shoulder "The thing is, what I did just now was, by definition of the law, vigilante activity."

Izuku stiffened at the words 'vigilante activity', but somehow found himself following the mysterious man. For the second time that day, he cursed his traitorous body. They ended up in an empty parking lot, the streetlights casting shadows all over the place. He briefly wondered if he should send his mom a text.

"You should send your parents a message," the stranger said suddenly. "I have a feeling you'll be here a while."

Trying not to be too creeped out by that last sentence, Izuku took out his phone and shot his mom a text.

*Hey mom, stopping by the library for some textbooks, I'll call when I'm on my way home.*

The reply was near instant. Super speed, he swears.

*Ok! Be safe, Izuku :)*

Whoever told his mom about Emojis needed to stop. He pocketed his phone and stared apprehensively at the stranger, who was standing in the exact same spot as before. It was like he turned to stone while Izuku wasn't looking.

"My name is Nagaki Kuroda." The man, Nagaki, introduced. "I'm assuming you have questions, young Midoriya."

Izuku was snapped out of his reverie at the mention of his name.

"A few, yes." He stated cautiously, keeping an eye out for any sudden movements.

Nagaki sighed, closing his eyes briefly. "You do not have to be cautious around me. If I had wanted to hurt you I would have done it in the alley, with no conscious witnesses."
Great, now Izuku felt awkward and rude.

Nagaki held his hands in a gesture that said fire away.

And fire away Izuku did, "What's your quirk? You moved like you knew how he was going to move before he did."

Nagaki raised an eyebrow. "How do you know I'm not a new pro-hero?" He asked.

"While it's true pro-heroes do have impressive, even impossible, reflexes, your fighting style was too aggressive." He began, "Usually, a hero would focus on subduing the criminal with minimal injuries to both parties, but you dispatched him with brutal efficiency. Not to mention you didn't say any hero name when you reported him." He realized he was probably rambling, but he couldn't care, he wanted answers.

The scarred man gave him a contemplative look. "You really know your stuff, don't you?" He asked. "Well, you're right, I'm not a pro. My quirk doesn't really have a name, but I've dubbed it the 'spider sense'."

"'Spider sense'?"

"You youngsters never read the old comics, do you." Nagaki commented dryly. "There used to be a character named Spider Man, long story short, he could tell when he was in danger before the danger happened. Basically, I have a reflex quirk."

Izuku's mind started to race, going over possible implications and just how a quirk like that worked. It took no small amount of effort to halt those thoughts and ask his next question: "Why are you telling me this? Aren't you concerned I'll go to the police with this?"

Nagaki smiled, the scar tissue on the right side of his face making it seem more like a smirk. "You won't, because you don't have any faith in their efficiency, do you?" He took Izuku's silence as an answer in and of itself. "Quite frankly, I've seen your kind before; the ones that want to do something but can't, at least not legally. You may have the physical strength with enough conditioning, but you'll be useless on the streets if you don't know how to fight. That's where I come in."

"You seem awfully calm about training a potential vigilante, if that's even what I want to be." Izuku said warily, feeling the anxiety slowly turn to adrenaline as he started to comprehend the implications of the offer. This man knew his plans, and that made him extremely dangerous.

"Don't try to be slick with me, kid. I used to be a vigilante myself, how do you think I got this?" He held a hand to his face, gesturing to the burn scars marring his face. "I had to go to China to get this treated without any questions, then had to recover in America. Lucky my sibling knew a private pilot."

Burn scars.

_Electrical_ burn scars.

It may have been a long shot, but the pieces fell into place scarily easily. Any information on Kuroko said at one point or another that he had almost never gotten an injury, like he'd known where the attack would land before it hit. Kurko had been electrified for at least four minutes, that was bound to leave burns, if he'd even survived the experience. The hospitals would’ve been notified by the police to look for any new arrivals with severe electrical burns, the logical choice would be to go
to another country for treatment without risk of discovery.

Nagaki, the Kuroko, smiled. "So, you figured it out, huh?" He spread his arms. "I'm the infamous Kuroko, the vigilante that haunted the streets of Japan four years ago."

"Why are you telling me this?" Izuku demanded, inwardly freaking out at his tone towards a man that once was on Japan's most wanted list.

He sighed, placing his hands in the pockets of his jacket. "That villain that had the politicians family hostage, he tried to electrocute the kid right in front of his mother, the only way to stop it was becoming the conduit. The electricity fried my nerve endings, doctors said I had pain asymbolia; whenever my body experiences pain, my brain doesn't process it, I'm numb." He gave Izuku a meaningful look. "Japan still has a long way to go for the people to be safe, the cops in pretty much every other country have increased their efficiency, yet Japan lays in standstill. Heroes have to wait for clearance before doing anything, and all that is is fighting yet another villain amongst the mass of them waiting in the dark. A vigilante, however, has a bit more free reign. The police took credit for it, but when I was on the streets, criminals didn't so much as peep without covering their mouths in fear that I heard. Japan is in need of another Kuroko."

"And what? Your planning on making me the next Kuroko?" Izuku asked, borderline hysterical. The expectant pause went on for a bit before he brought a hand to his forehead, "Oh my god."

"Your morals seem well founded," Nagaki started, holding a finger up for every reason, "you're young, the police won't suspect you or anyone your age at the beginning, which is when you'd be more sloppy; and I've been keeping an eye out for potential candidates, you stood out the most." He shot Izuku a smirk, "It definitely helps that you were already planning to be a vigilante."

"I've been meaning to ask, how did you know that?"

Nagaki answered that with a fair amount of ease, "You show all the signs that I did. You want to help people, but you're lacking the proper training to do so. Believe it or not, but fighting is more than brute strength and muscle. I can help you, if you accept it." He held his hand out, waiting for his answer.

Izuku stared at the hand being offered to him, his thoughts were running in every possible direction. Could he trust this man? The man who claimed to be Kuroko of all people, what were the odds of him even meeting Kuroko anyways? Very small, impossibly small.

Then again, he'd thought the same thing about All Might.

If Nagaki was the real deal, then Izuku would be trained by the most infamous vigilante in all of Japan. What had sealed the deal were Nagaki's next words.

"If I train you, your parents wouldn't have to worry as much as they would if you went off on your own."

Well damn, how could he argue against that?

Nagaki's hand was calloused, yet firm when Izuku took it in his own.

"Deal."
Chapter End Notes

Heyo! If you have any suggestions for the fix, I'd be glad to hear them! You can send them to my tumblr account. It's @mean-and-serene. You're comments are fueling me on this, it's making me so happy.
Izuku actually did end up going to the library like he told his mom. Yuuei's exams were nothing to scoff at, even if he was one of the top students in his class. The entire walk there was spent in a state of disbelief as he replayed what had happened after he'd took Nagaki's hand. The man had smiled, then told him to go to the library and pick up textbooks, like he'd told his mom he would.

"If you're gonna get in to Yuuei, you're gonna have to know your stuff. Plus, it wouldn't hurt to read up on some of the laws, the best vigilantes know which laws to break and which to bend. I'll contact you later."

"How did you know I told my mom I was going to the library?"

"Logic, school kids usually resort to the old library excuse when they need to lie to their parents. Wanna not feel guilty? Just go to the library, Midoriya."

So that's what he does, he grabs a few textbooks, mathematics, science, typical core subjects; and if the librarian rose her eyebrows at the law book he had? Not much of an issue. He was carrying his stack of books out of the library, planning to call his mom, when a blue blur had run into him, knocking him to the floor and sending the books flying.

"I apologize, fellow student!" The blur, who turned out to be a student his age, had stopped and began to gather Izuku's fallen books. "The library is about to close for today, and I wanted to acquire some textbooks before that happened."

"It's fine, really, I was just caught a bit off guard." Izuku said, getting on his knees to help the blue haired boy gather the books. Thankfully, none of them had been damaged.

"My irresponsibility led to you being hurt and possibly damaging the books you had with you." The boy bowed deeply. "Allow me to help you home as an apology!"

"D-didn't you need a few textbooks before the library closed?" Izuku stuttered, watching helplessly as the teenager took half of the books to carry himself.

"This is more important, I inconvenienced you, this is my way of making it up to you." The boy puffs out his chest, "my brother always tells me to make sure I make it up to people if I did something wrong to them."

"Knocking over my books isn't exactly 'wrong'." Izuku commented dryly.
"Still, I feel bad about it." The boy held a hand out, effortlessly hefting the stack of books to one arm to do so. "Iida Tenya, third year junior high."

Izuku took the offered hand, "Izuku Midoriya, also third year junior high."

Iida perked up at that, his eyes practically shining behind his glasses. "Really? What high school do you plan to attend?" He asked animatedly, following Izuku as he began to walk home.

"Uh," Izuku hesitated a little, "the General Department of Yuuei."

"Aha! I, myself, plan to apply for Yuuei; though I'm applying for the Heroics Department." Iida gave him a curious look, "Is your quirk not suited for heroics?" He asked.

"I don't have a quirk." Izuku immediately stated.

The silence between them was tense, before Iida began apologizing profusely. "My apologies, Midoriya, I did not mean to come off as insensitive."

Izuku hurried to reassure the boy before he began bowing again. "It's fine," he waved the apology off, "the ratio of people with quirks to the Quirkless are eight to one, it was a safe bet to assume I had one." He sighed, "let's just drop that subject."

Iida nodded and they continued their walk. Eventually, the awkwardness of the previous subject faded and they found themselves having an animated conversation on academic subjects. Izuku barely even noticed when he'd made it to his apartment. "Ah, we're already here."

Iida handed him his books, a small smile on his face. "Thank you, Midoriya, for allowing me to assist you and for the interesting conversation."

Izuku shook his head, hefting the new books onto the pile already in his arms. "If anything, I have to apologize for making you miss the library today."

"Nonsense, I enjoyed our conversation, Midoriya." He took out a piece of paper and a pen, he handed Izuku the piece after scribbling on it for a few seconds. "My number, in case you want to study for the exams together. We may not be applying for the same departments, but both have to take an exam for the basic academics."

Izuku blinked owlishly, taking the paper and looking at the number. "Thanks..." He manages to say. "Does...this make us friends?" He immediately regretted asking that. God, why couldn't he have been born mute.

Iida took it in stride, nodding enthusiastically, "if you want to be yes, I would have many things to learn from being your friend."

"Thanks, I guess I'll see you around?"

"Yes! Have a good night, Midoriya!" And with that, the boy took off, literally, Izuku was coughing the dust out of his lungs for a solid minute.

Pocketing the piece of paper, Izuku climbed the stairs and walked in to is house. "Mom! I'm home!" He closed the door behind him with his foot, "sorry I didn't call, I got a bit held up at the library."

Into peeked her head in from the kitchen, "Izuku!" She said cheerfully, "I'm just glad you're home, do you need any help with those books?"
"No, I'm fine" he grunted as he set them down on the coffee table and walked into the kitchen, "I think I made a friend, actually."

Inko's eyes lit up, "That's great, honey! Dinner's on the counter." She gestured to the bowl of fried rice, steam wafting enticingly from the meal.

He pulled out a stool and sat down, picking up his chopsticks, "Thanks for the meal, mom." It was only after he said those words that he realized just how hungry he was. He readily dug into the rice, barely taking time to enjoy the flavor before swallowing and taking another bite.

"If you keep eating like that, I might have to make you a bigger lunch." His mother joked, taking a seat across from him and digging in to her own bowl. Before she'd even finished half, she suddenly perked up, dropping her chopsticks and digging around her pockets, "Oh! I almost forgot! You got a letter today, Izuku."

He swallowed his current mouthful, "A letter?"

She eventually let out a sound of triumph, holding out a small white envelope, sealed with a small fox sticker. "It was put under the doorway while you were at the library, I didn't open it out of respect for your privacy."

A small stone settled amongst the rice in his stomach, "Thanks, mom." He said, taking the envelope and placing it in his pocket.

Nagaki knew where he lived, which means he knows about his mom. He seemed like a nice man, but the possibility of betrayal was still very, very real. If Izuku decided to go back on this whole vigilantism thing, there's no saying what he could do to him, or worse, his mom. His chopsticks started to shake ever so slightly before he set them down, his meal finished.

If his mother detected any of his anxiety, she didn't show it, instead opting to tell him about her day. Izuku nodded at all the right times and occasionally put in his own two cents, but he was mainly focused on the envelope in his pocket that felt like it weighed much more than it should have.

"I'm gonna go to my room to study, love you mom." He said, walking back over to the living room and picking up the textbooks.

"Don't stay up too late." His mother cautioned. "Goodnight, Izuku."

"Goodnight mom." He called back, walking to his room and shutting the door behind him. He carefully placed the textbooks on his desk before fishing the letter out of his pocket. The fox sticker holding the envelope closed seemed to be smiling mockingly at him, he took a bit more pleasure than he should have ripping the envelope open. A small latter fell onto the floor, standing out against his dark carpet. Crunching down, he picked it up and began to read.

Midoriya,

I realize that it was probably rude of me to leave this while you were at the library, but let me get a few things straight: I've been keeping tabs on a lot of candidates, that includes their addresses. I know I can't just say 'don't worry' because, frankly, you're a teenager. God knows what's running through your head right now.

Anyways, there's an abandoned warehouse near the junkyard on the beach, meet me there tomorrow after school and we'll begin your training. Come alone.

Also, just because I'm training you doesn't mean you can skip out on studying. If your mother notices any falling grades she'll get suspicious, and suspicion is the last thing you want. Keep your
nose in the books, kid.

-Nagaki Kuroda

Izuku folded the note and placed it right next to his computer. Meeting a dangerous former vigilante in an abandoned warehouse near the junkyard on the beach, he can do that. Exhausted from the day's events, he promptly changed into his pajamas and flopped onto bed, falling asleep not five minutes after placing his head on the pillow.

Something was up with Deku, what it was, Bakugou didn't know, and that pissed him the fuck off. First the fucking nerd starts ignoring him, then he does to avoiding his presence completely. It's started to become rare that he even saw that shade of shitty green hair out of class; the fucking nerd thought he could run from Bakugou, boy is he in for the beating of his shitty Quirkless life. That is, if Bakugou could even catch the fuckmunch. Who did this fucker even think he was, anyways? At least before he had the balls to take his beatings, now he's running away with his tail between his legs!

Bakugou, despite his caustic personality, is actually rather smart. It didn't go unnoticed that Deku's behavior shifted after the slime villain, the same day he told the useless bitch to stop trying to be a hero. Maybe his words finally got through, after nearly ten years of abuse, both verbal and physical. About fucking time. Ever since his quirk manifested, Bakugou knew he was destined for greatness, his classmates said it, his teachers said it, his parents said it, even strangers said it! He knew he was great, and when Deku's quirk never showed, it was just more proof that he was just better than everyone else. Deku was always meant to be useless, and Bakugou was meant to be the best.

So why did Deku avoiding him irk him so much? The damn nuisance didn't even write in his stupid hero journals anymore, just payed attention in class and took notes like a normal student. Maybe that was it, maybe the Quirkless freak was trying to fit in by making himself invisible. Tough shit, Deku, because Bakugou saw through that bullshit.

So naturally, when Deku started walking in the wrong direction after school (he was practically neighbors with the shitstain, it wasn't like he knew the route to Deku's house by heart from when they were smaller), he decided to follow. Yet somehow within five minutes of following the fucker, he'd lost him in the crowd.

He let out a rather loud curse, his palms crackling with small explosions.

Izuku was thankful that he took the crowded streets to the beach, it'd been easier to throw Kacchan off of his trail with people constantly moving like an ever changing puzzle. He took a deep breath to calm himself as he looked at the warehouse. It seemed innocent enough, it stood easily three stories high, large windows near the roof to let natural light filter in. Quite honestly, for an abandoned warehouse it seemed fairly well kept. Izuku ran a hand over the dull blue walls, faded and peeling in some places, as he made his way to the entrance. The doors, rusted brown and heavy, creaked and groaned as he pushed them open. Wincing slightly when the door slammed shut, echoing loudly in the empty space.

Except...it wasn't empty, it was dimly lit, but Izuku could see a few padded floor mats and obstacles places randomly around the warehouse floor. He nearly jumped out of his skin when a shadowed figure dropped right in front of him, landing near silently in a crouch.

"I was wondering when you'd show." Nagaki grinned, standing up from his position and
gesturing around him, "Welcome to my humble training ground, Midoriya. You ready to get started?"

Izuku nodded enthusiastically, "Yes, sir!"

Nagaki turned to look at him, a stray beam of light hitting his face and acting shadows across his eyes. "None of this 'sir' crap. You can call me Nagaki, or Kuroda when you start feeling more familiar with me, but not sir, got it?"

"Y-yes, si-I mean, Nagaki." Izuku stuttered out, feeling his ears heat up.

Nagaki looked at him for a moment before nodding to himself, "Good," the man walked past Izuku, stepping outside. "Follow me."

"Where are we going, exactly?"

"The first step to your training."

"A soup kitchen?" Izuku can't help but stare at his mentor incredulously. "The first step to my training is a soup kitchen?"

"You'll see." Nagaki replied sagely, taking a step forward to knock on the door. An elderly woman, white hair in a neat bun and under a hair net, opened the door.

"My goodness, my eyes are playing tricks on me. Is that you Kuroda?" The old woman asked, stepping forward to try and get a better look at his face.

Kuroda let a warm, crooked smile adorn his face as Izuku watched on, "It is, Mrs. Fujioko." He assured her, "You haven't aged a day since I left for America."

Mrs. Fujioko tutted, "You let your Japanese get rusty, I thought I taught you better than that, young man." Izuku watched with wide eyes as the woman pinched the dangerous former vigilante's cheeks with her wrinkled hands. "And where did you get such a dreadful scar? Why, I get an ache in my bones just looking at it!"

Kuroda simply let her manhandle his face. "Let's just say that the Americans have some pretty crazed villains." He joked.

Mrs. Fujioko turned to squint at Izuku, who straightened his back on instinct. "And who is this, Kuro?"

"This is Izuku Midoriya, we both decided to help out in the kitchen today." Kuroda stated, watching somewhat amusedly as Mrs. Fujioko hobbled a bit closer to the young green haired boy.

Izuku leaned down when the elderly woman gestured for him to do so, and nearly squeaked in surprise when the woman pinched his cheeks.

"What a nice young lad," the lady said serenely, "I never see young ones your age helping around the kitchen, it's nice to see such a fine boy helping around." She leaned closer to whisper conspiratorially, "I'm not as young as I used to be, you know. These knees just don't seem to work the way they used to."

"I-it's nice to meet you, Mrs. Fujioko." Izuku greeted, bowing deeply in respect. "I hope I can be of help to you and your kitchen."
"Oh-ho! He's polite, too!"

Kuroda cleared his throat, "Let's continue this inside, shall we?" He held the door open for both Izuku and Mrs. Fujioko as they walked in. The elder woman talking animatedly with Izuku about the soup kitchen.

"Most of the people that come here can't afford a meal," Mrs. Fujioko informed him, "so I make sure they all get at least one square meal a day." She procured hair nets from somewhere on her person and handed them to both Kuroda and Izuku, "Put these on, dears, people don't like hair in their food."

Nagaki went along with it flawlessly, bunching his hair up to place under the hair net and following Mrs. Fujioko into the kitchen. He peeked his head out, "well, are you coming? The missus doesn't like to be kept waiting. For an old lady, she can wield a cane pretty darn well."

Izuku puts on his hair net and hurried after them.

The kitchen was relatively busy, several volunteers moving to and fro. Some where chopping vegetables, other were stirring broth, and some were handing the soup out to the hungry recipients. Izuku found Nagaki already helping the others distribute the soup, he quickly spotted Izuku wand waved him over.

"Not to be rude," Izuku began, grabbing the ladle that Nagaki handed him, "but why are we in a soup kitchen for my first lesson?"

Nagaki gives a homeless woman a ladle brimming with steaming soup before giving Izuku a side glance. "Look at the people you're helping." he instructed, serving yet another civilian.

They honestly don't look like much, ragged clothes and thin layers of dirt and grime on their faces. Yet Izuku's thoughts on their appearance faded in favor of seeing their expressions. There were smiles so wide they looked like they'd break if they stretched the skin of their mouth any further, some had tears in their eyes as they thanked the volunteers profusely. The chatter in the cafeteria was light and cheery, fueled by full bellies and high spirits. The lighting may have been dim, but that failed to put a damper on the mood, these people were happy.

"A vigilante does not act because of personal desire," Nagaki muttered to him, "a vigilante acts for the good of others. Only by helping others achieve happiness can you find it for yourself."

They worked at the soup kitchen until sunset. Izuku had managed to talk to a few of the children that had showed up for a bowl of soup, and had somehow ended up helping them with their homework. There were giggles all around as he explained the math problems to them in funny ways, the parents of the children watching with eyes full of mirth. Izuku couldn't help the sigh of relief as he and Nagaki walked out of the kitchen, waving goodbye to Mrs. Fujioko.

"That was...fun." Izuku said as they walked down the sidewalk, "I never volunteered at a soup kitchen before."

Nagaki looked at him, "Well get used to it, cause we're volunteering there every weekend."

"What about weekdays?"

The man grinned crookedly, "Those are for training." He lightly punched Izuku's shoulder when the boy's head shot up to look at him, "What, you thought all your training would be community service?"
Izuku shook his head, "No! I just kinda......" They stood there, looking at the beach as waves lapped gently at the shores. ".....this is really happening, isn't it."

Nagaki sighed, "There's no shame in dropping out, kid. This's intense stuff, you'd be on the other side of the law, people would be after you. I can't promise that you'll be safe," he locked eyes with Izuku, a fire in his own, "but I can promise that I'll train you to the best of my ability should you decide to go through with this."

Izuku looked into the man's eyes, there was no deception, only truth. Swallowing the fear in his throat, he nodded. "I'm sure, this is what I want to do."

"Then get ready, kid, 'cause I'm no pushover; and by the time I'm done with you, you won't be either."

The world spun as Izuku hit the padded floor with a grunt, thankfully managing to protect his head.

"Nine months of training, and you barely know how to fall right." Nagaki taunted, standing over Izuku with crossed arms. "I've been shamed, I can never show my face in Mrs. Fujioko's kitchen again."

"Keep laughing, Kuroda." Izuku panted, dragging himself up and getting into a fighting stance. "One of these days I will land a hit on you."

"Oh yeah," Kuroda dodged Izuku's first punch, "hit the guy with the reflex quirk," he catches the next fist with his own outstretched palm "that sounds possible."

Izuku smirked, "More possible than you might think." He faked a punch, and while his mentor went to block it, he twisted his wrist, breaking the older man's hold. He dropped low to sweep his foot across the ground to catch Kuroda's legs, making him trip and hit the ground with a solid "oof!" Izuku stood up and dusted his hands, "How's that?"

Kuroda didn't respond at first, then his shoulders started shaking. Eventually, the man's entire body was riddles with laughter. He took Izuku's offered hand and stood up. "Not bad, Kidoriya, not bad."

"Again with that stupid nickname!" Izuku groaned, "how many times have I told you to quit it with the nicknames?"

"When you stop reacting so much to them." Kuroda quipped, tossing Izuku a water bottle and a towel. "It's too easy, you're too easy."

"And to think I was ever intimidated by you." Izuku remarked, catching both the bottle and the towel.

"It was actually kind of endearing." The man lamented, placing a hand on his head and sighing dramatically, "Where did that ball of nervous energy go? What have I made?"

"You made a teenager, that's what." The male in question replied, drying the back of his neck with the towel and taking a sip of the water bottle.

"Sarcastic. I made you sarcastic."

"Is there a difference?"
Kuroda ruffled the boy's hair, eliciting a squawk of protest from him. "Get going, squirt, your entrance exams are tomorrow. Don't stay up studying like you did that one time."

"One time," Izuku stated, "one time I pull an all nighter, and you never let me forget it."

"Because somebody besides your mom has to look out for you, squirt." Kuroda made a shooing motion, "Go, be free, do whatever it is kids your age do."

"Ok ok, I'm leaving." Izuku grabbed his things, a backpack with a change of clothes, and opened the warehouse door. Looking back one more time, he said "See you later, Kuroda!" The man didn't respond, only held a hand up in farewell before Izuku darted away and let the door shut.

Izuku ran all the way home, weaving in and out of the crowd with a skill honed over the past few months. In no time at all, he found himself at his house. His mother greeted him from the couch when he came in, he said his hellos and told her he'd be going to his room. Sighing as he sat down at his desk, Izuku took out his phone and sent a text to Iida.

*Sent 8:30 p.m.*

*Are you ready for the exams?*

*Received 8:31 p.m.*

*We have studied extensively, Midoriya. Reviewing with you has been a great help for my academics. I believe we will do fine!*

Iida had been an...interesting study partner. Often reading from his (extensively written) notecards and reciting facts word for word from the textbook. If anything, the blue haired boy's exaggerated hand movements had helped Izuku remember the more obscure pieces of information.

*Sent 8:33 p.m.*

*Yeah, you're right. See you tomorrow, Iida, I'm going to try and get some rest.*

*Received 8:34 p.m.*

*SLEEP well, Midoriya!*

He set the phone down on his desktop, quickly changing into his sleep clothes and crawling under the covers. As he laid down, his mind went over just about everything that's happened since he'd met Kuroda.

The man had started off intimidating, giving off a lone wolf vibe with his scar and build. Yet
after that first day at the soup kitchen, Izuku couldn't see him in that light again. A lone wolf wouldn't let an old lady pinch his cheeks, wouldn't help little kids read words they couldn't pronounce, wouldn't mentor a teenager who wanted to make a difference.

The man had made Izuku strong, the constant training had really paid off. He wasn't the scrawny kid he was a year ago, his form had filled out fairly nicely. He wasn't bulky, all of his muscle being lean, but it was easier to hide his newfound muscle under articles of clothing. Kuroda had said that that was a good thing, it made people underestimate you.

Izuku's eyes started to droop, making the thought of sleep seem a lot more appealing. Closing his eyes, he let himself be taken by sleep, dreaming of the day to come.
Izuku groaned at his alarm clock's incessant, shrill beeping. He rolled over, pressing the snooze button with more force than necessary before getting up and stretching. His back protested the movement, but he easily ignored the slight burn in his muscles in favor of walking over to his closet and getting dressed.

After fitting his long sleeved shirt over his head, he heard his phone give off a ping on his desk. Shuffling over, he picked up the device and checked the message displayed on the home screen.

**Received 6:39 am**
*After exams, come to the warehouse, I'll have a gift for you. -Kuroda*

Izuku blinked, caught somewhat off guard by the message, then swiped the screen and typed in his passcode. Izuku replied,

**Sent 6:41 am**
*Got it, and you don't have to sign the text with your name, your contact info tells me it's you.*

The response was near instant,

**Received 6:42 am**
*Bah, you teenagers and your technology, I'll have you know-*

Izuku huffed in amusement, placing the phone down to let his mentor rant about the age of flip phones in favor of finishing getting fully clothed. A quick look in the mirror confirmed that his clothes looked decent enough, long pants with a grey overcoat for the chilly weather. His hair, on the other hand, was a whole other level.

His mother had often joked that the legendary "Midoriya bed-head" was a trait passed down to every green haired member of the family, right now it seemed his genetics held true; his hair stuck up in every direction, tufts of green bouncing back up after he pressed them down experimentally. Grabbing his brush with a sigh, Izuku set out to try and tame his rebellious head of hair.

"bed-head?" His mother had asked once Izuku'd finally set foot in the kitchen. Izuku, his hair
looking only slightly better than when he'd woken up, simply nodded as he sat down at the counter. "My poor baby." She said, passing him a plate of toast and eggs. "You'd better eat quick, didn't you promise your friend you'd walk to Yuuei with him?"

He perked up at that, picking up his fork and eating his breakfast in record time. With his toast hanging in his mouth, Izuku made his way to the door, "You're right! Love you mom!" He paused, remembering something before adding, "oh, and Kuroda sensei told me he had a gift for me, so I'll be a bit late coming home."

"Go take the exam Izuku," she told him, giving him a warm look. "Just be home by dinner, I'm making katsudon, don't be late!"

M "Got it, bye mom!" He rushed out the door, going down the stairs two at a time. He saw a familiar head of blue hair waiting at the bottom of the staircase and called out. "Iida! Sorry for holding you up!"

Iida, who'd been on his phone (probably going over notes if Izuku knew him as well as he thought he did), looked up and raised a hand in greeting. "Good morning, Midoriya! You didn't hold us up by too much, we'll still make it to Yuuei with time to spare."

Izuku sighed, "That's good, thanks Iida." He tuned out the other boy's long winded 'you're welcome' as they walked down the street. Eventually, their conversation turned to the exams. "The pamphlet they handed out said that we'd be fighting robots for our practical exam." Iida explained to Izuku, "each one has a certain amount of points assigned to them, the more difficult the robot, the higher the point value."

Izuku nodded, "What about the kids whose quirks aren't build for offense?" He asked, "I mean, Ereaserhead is a pro hero, and his quirk isn't made for fighting giant robots."

Iida paused at that, seeming to mull over what Izuku said. "I don't know," he admitted, "but I'm sure a great academy like Yuuei has a course of action for such a scenario!"

*Way to bound back, Iida. Izuku thought, It might take a while, but I know you'll become a good hero, a true hero.*

Eventually, they both stood in front of the entrance gate to Yuuei. The building stood tall and proud, near blinding in the morning sun. The courtyard in front of the building was littered with other students, all chatting enthusiastically about one thing or another. Some were demonstrating their quirks to other students, who let sounds of amazement; while others were simply walked inside the building, ignoring the other student's flashy presentations of their quirks.

"Well, we're here." Izuku stated, neither of them moved, they only stared. For Izuku, he felt anxiety, both for the test and different reasons. Here he was, a vigilante in training, about to apply to one of the most prestigious hero academies in Japan, no, the world. Yeah, Kuroda had always teased him about the irony of it, but the implications were starting to sink in. If he made it in, he'd be amongst heroes in training, heroes that would have to one day try and stop him. Nervously, he looked at Iida, who had started walking in to the courtyard ahead of them. Would he eventually have to fight the only friend he had? Bear harsh words and take blows from the very same person that had given him encouragement and kindness before? As he took a step in, all he could think was:

*Any friends I make here, one day might try to hurt me.*

His thoughts were broken when his foot caught on an uneven tile. He let out a yell of surprise as his center of gravity shifted and he started to fall. Instinctively, he tucked his chin and held his hands
out, ready to catch himself. Yet the impact never came, Izuku opened his eyes and stared. The ground was right in front of his face, a centimeter closer and his nose would graze the asphalt, yet he never hit it. A quick look at his body confirmed that nothing was touching the ground, he was effectively floating in mid-air.

"Oh my goodness, are you okay?" A young, feminine voice asked from above him. Izuku carefully flipped himself over so he could be face to face with his savior. A girl his age, with chestnut hair shaped in a bob-cut, stood above him. Her wide eyes held concern as she leaned over him, and her scarf threatened to make him sneeze as it dangled in front of his face.

"Oh, you know," he managed to say, trying to seem relaxed an not freaked out that he was now floating a foot off of the ground what. "Just hanging around."

The girl giggled, a sweet sound not unlike like bell chimes, and helped him get into a standing position. Touching her fingertips together, his feet touched sweet sweet earth once more. "You're funny, a lot of people freak out when they start floating out of nowhere."

"Nope, no freaking out here." Izuku affirmed, "Thank you, miss...?"

The girl grinned, "You're so polite! My name's Uraraka Ochako!" She chirped, holding out a hand that Izuku gladly took. "It'd be bad luck to fall on the first day, right?"

He smiled, "Let's just say my elders keep my manners sharp," Not a lie, Mrs. Fujioko could be terrifying if he ever forgot his manners. "And yes, it would be bad luck to fall, wouldn't it? My name's Izuku Midoriya."

"Pleased to meet y-"

The kind girl, Ochako, was cut off by a yell of rage that came from across the courtyard. "Deku! What the fuck are you doing here?"

Izuku sighed while Ochako whipped around to see who yelled. True to form, Bakugou Katsuki, resident hothead, was storming over to Izuku's location; anyone that stood in the way quickly made themselves scarce.

"You might want to leave," Izuku nervously suggested Ochako, "he can be really threatening when he wants to be."

Instead of running, the girl stayed in place. If it wasn't for something in her eyes hardening, Izuku might've thought she didn't hear him.

Bakugou stopped about two feet away from Izuku, shoulders raised and hands crackling threateningly. "I thought I finally got it through to you that you couldn't do this hero shit!" He hissed, eyes narrowed and locked onto the green haired boy. "What the fuck is this, then?"

"Kacchan," Izuku began, holding his hands open in what he hoped would be a non-threatening gesture. "I'm not applying for the heroics division, I'm applying for the general department." Over the irate Bakugou's shoulder, Izuku could see a few teachers getting ready to intervene.

"Izuku, who is this?" Ochako asked Izuku, eerily calm. A spike of adrenaline shot through him when he realized that was the same tone the women at the soup kitchen would take when a child was in big, big trouble.

"Oooookaay, that's enough." Izuku cut the tension, walking past Bakugou and tugging Ochako along with him to avoid confrontation, "Kacchan's an old classmate, Ochako, that's all."
The girl's disposition shifted back to its previous sunny personality. "Okay, Izuku!" He quickly took the lead, making him stumble as she dragged him along excitedly. "Let's go inside!"

Meanwhile, Bakugou stood there, in shock of what just happened. Deku just...walked by him? Like he didn't even matter?

"That BITCH is dead." He snarled, whipping around on his heel to try and follow after them. He's stopped when he turned around and was face to face with a teacher.

"Woah there, kid." The teacher said, "You need to tone down that temper, Yuuei won't accept anyone who attacks other students."

Bakugou flared up, then managed to reign in his rage. "Whatever." He muttered, walking past the teacher and in through the doors.

The applicants were divided into which department they were applying for. The Heroics group was boisterous, at least a few people were yelling at all times. The support group was more subdued, but you could see a few of them doing odd things (Izuku thought he saw a student balancing like, ten pencils vertically on his face).

The general department was acting like any other classroom Izuku's attended before, which did a wonder on his nerves. The kids were relatively nice, saying hellos and introducing themselves, but they didn't say much to him after that. Most of the students in the general department had come in groups from the same school, Izuku was the odd one out. He spotted Ochako, who was talking to another girl that had her hair tied into a bow, she immediately perked up and waved enthusiastically back.

The schools intercom spoke up, "general department applicants, please step in to class 2-A for your entrance exams." An enthusiastic voice told them. Present Mic, if Izuku wasn't mistaken. Like a herd of cattle, the group of general department kids shuffled into the hallway and found class 2-A. Everyone filed in, students taking seats next to friends and starting to talk before the exam began. Izuku was one of the last few people in, most of the seats were already occupied, except for at the very front. Moving quickly, Izuku took the seat before it could be taken by anyone else. He turned his head when he heard and amused huff.

In the seat next to him, a boy with light blue hair even messier than his (and that was an accomplishment) leaned his head against his hand, looking at Izuku with a neutral expression.

Clearing his throat nervously, Izuku held a hand out. "I'm Izuku Midoriya, nice to meet you."

The boy eyed his hand warily, then sighed, lifting his own up to finish the gesture. "Shinshou Hitoshi."

"Nice to meet you, Hitoshi!" Izuku said, smiling. At the lack of reaction from the other boy, his smile faded.

Before he could say anything else, the examiner walked into the class. His hair was scruffy, and he seemed to have several layers of what looked like bandages wrapped around his neck like a scarf. He looked over the class with tired, red eyes. The students fell into silence as the man walked to the desk, exams in his hand.

"Welcome," the man said, "to the Yuuei general department entrance exams." He handed stacks of the exams to the first student in each row, having the students take one and pass it down until everyone had an exam sheet. "You've all taken exams before, so I'm not gonna bother telling you all
the rules." The man sits down at the desk, leaning back in the chair. "If you cheat, your exam is invalid. You have two hours, begin."

Izuku sighed as the cool autumn air hit his face when he stepped out of Yuuei's main building. The exam had been rough, but he thought he did fairly well, enough to pass at least. The other students were chattering about the exam as he walked by, some said it was impossible, others said it was easy, same old duality. His phone bussed in his pocket and he took it out.

Received 10:30 a.m.
Hello, Midoriya! I am texting you in the short break we have between the exam and practicals to tell you that I will most likely be late, so do not feel obligated to wait for me.

Izuku quickly sent a reply of 'okay, be safe, Iida.' Before pocketing his phone and breaking into a jog. The air felt crisp as he moved through the streets, the wind keeping his skin cool and sweat free. He made a turn at the soup kitchen and sprinted the rest of the way to the warehouse. Laughing in between breaths, Izuku stared at the beach, now clear of litter. He and Kuroda had commented on it, how someone seemed to be cleaning up the beach when they weren't there, but simply shrugged and left it at that. It wasn't like anyone was being hurt by the mysterious litter cleaner. Taking one more breath to calm his heart, Izuku opened the familiar rusted doors.

Kuroda was standing in the center of the warehouse, a trunk laying at his feet. "I feel like I should say something ominous." He joked, "Set the mood, y'know?"

Izuku's smile was forced down as he sat across from his mentor. "What's in there?" He gestured to the trunk now in front of him.

Kuroda's smile faded, his face taking a more serious look. "Do you know the origin of the name 'Kuroko'?" He asked.

"You, uh, you never told me." Izuku admitted, wrinkling his brow in confusion.

Kuroda sat down with a grunt. "In both of my families homelands, a fox held special meaning. In Japan, a fox is seen as messengers of Inari, sly, cunning, and tricky; while in America, the foxes were seen as messengers of all the gods."

"When the Europeans invaded America, it is said that a black fox appeared and whittled their numbers; eating supplies, crippling horses, even killing men that strayed too far from their camps. The black fox was believed by my mother's ancestors to be the gods incarnate, becoming their own weapon of vengeance against the crimes done against their people."

Izuku sat silently, listening to every word.

Kuroda held a hand to his scar, "When I received these scars, it was in defense of a life, and innocent life that had done no wrong. These are not scars, they are reminders that I must do everything in my power to help people, even at my own expense." He leveled his gaze at Izuku, "that is what it means to become the Kuroko, the black fox." He pushed the trunk to Izuku, who stopped it with his hand. "Open it."

Cautiously, Izuku unlatched the handles, lifting the lid, he looked inside. They were clothes, black clothes with padding expertly sewn in. Lifting the articles of clothing up, he found they fit his body perfectly. At the very bottom of the trunk was a black mask, worn and pale with age, delicate white brushstrokes depicting a long snout and laughing eyes. "This is-"
"I made the armor." Kuroda cut his sentence off, coughing awkwardly into his hand. "Sew Kevlar into the fabric, it'll do for small timers, purse snatchers and the like. Kevlar does well to absorb impact, it'll also provide some protection from knives."

Kuroda rubbed the back of his neck, "As for the fabric, well, chaffing can be a bitch, so I took that little issue out of the equation. It'll take some time to get anything better at the moment, so don't go running around fighting super villains just yet. As for the mask," he smiled, "figured it'll help get your street cred up, nothing'll scare the baddies like a rumor saying the old black fox is back."

Izuku was at a loss for words, holding the carefully handmade outfit in one hand and holding the mask in the other. "I-I don't know what to say."

"A 'thank you' usually suffices." Kuroda snarked, falling back into his usual carefree personality.

"I-Thank you." Izuku said, feeling his shoulders shake slightly.

"Woah woah woah woah woah," Kuroda rushed forward, giving Izuku a concerned look. "Why are you crying?"

"I-I" Izuku sniffled, "I'm just so happy!"

Kuroda stood back to give him a funny look, "You're.....happy?" He asked, not entirely convinced. At Izuku's nod, he brought the boy in for a side hug. "Kiddo, we really have to get the crybaby out of your system."

The boy let out a wet laugh before placing the armor and the mask back in the trunk. Wiping his face with his sleeve, he asked, "What do we do now?"

Kuroda tapped his chin, contemplating. "Your mom said you could be out until when, exactly?"

"Until dinner, which is at 8."

"Perfect, why don't we goof around until sunset? Tonight'll be your first night patrol."

So that was how the rest of daylight was spent, doing odd things on a whim. Balance a yoga ball on your head? Done. Push-up contest? Done ("You've got a long way to go before you can beat me, Izuku!"). Pretty much anything they could do with exercise equipment had been done by the end of the day.

When the sun started to set, Kuroda turned to Izuku. "You ready?"

Izuku opened up the trunk and took out the armor once more, "As ready as I'll ever be."

The night was dark, the occasional streetlight and ad signs providing the only source of light. The yowl of a cat could be heard over the sound of a car alarm, the feline responsible darting away from the trash can it was on and into the shadows. A young woman walked down the sidewalk, nervously glancing over her shoulder as she draws her jacket closer to her body. She couldn't see the figure hiding in the alleyway she was about to walk by, but someone else could.

A lone figure stands on the roof, watching the scene behind the mask of a grinning fox, when the man in the alley made his move, so did Kuroko.

He'd have to finish the fight fast, though. His mom was still expecting him to be home at eight.
Tsukauchi Naomasa wasn't having a good night; first, he spent all of the previous night going over police reports, then his boss told him he had to do the midnight patrol through the city, which meant that he couldn't look after his friend, a certain blond haired idiot that didn't know how to take care of himself; and finally: he did not have enough goddamn coffee for this.

The streets were eerily quiet as he rode down them in his police cruiser, not so much as a cat to be seen. Seemed like not even the animals wanted to be out in the chilly weather, The detective didn't really blame them; a warm bed and a hot drink was sounding awfully good to him as he tapped chilled fingers against the cold surface of the steering wheel.

He perked up when the radio went off, "detective Naomasa, there's been an attempted 211, head to White Lotus bank."

"Understood, en-route." He spoke into his own radio, stepping on the gas as he flicked his police lights on.

The scene was almost comical when he pulled up; five would-be robbers were tied to a parking meter. His coworkers had already sealed the scene off, yellow caution tape glinting off of the red and blue lights. There was a hero standing to the side, talking to the police officers and looking a bit confused.

His captain looked up when he stepped out of the car, "Naomasa, you're here, good." The chief said, "what do you think of this?" The older man gestured to the scene.

"I'll have to ask what exactly you mean, sir." Naomasa said carefully, "This looks like work of a small time hero, someone that just debuted probably."

The chief nodded, "And that's what it would be, normally; but these guys are telling us a different story, and we need you to figure out if it's true."

The detective glanced at the criminals; they seemed resigned to their fate, not even struggling against the rope that tied them. "I'll see what I can do."
The chief pat his back, "Good man, Naomasa."

He made his way to the suspects, who barely acknowledged his revenue once he stood in front of them. The detective kneeled down and made eye contact with who he deduced to be the head thug "I am detective Naomasa, I'm here to ask you a few questions." He stated.

The suspect, a balding man with a bright ginger goatee, sneered at him. "We already answered you damn questions, investigator."

He didn't so much as blink, "Yes, but you never answered them with me. My quirk let's me tell if you're lying, and apparently what you've said doesn't make a lot of sense. Answer the questions willingly, and your sentence won't have a charge of refusing to cooperate with a police officer added to the list."

The thug let out a string of curses under his breath, but eventually talked. "We was near the next bank we was gonna hit," he jerked his head to the bank, "when this...this blur just shows up outta nowhere and starts kickin' our asses.

They weren't lying, Naomasa pressed a bit harder. "Can you remember your attacker? Any defining features?"

"Last damn thing I can remember is a fox mask, a black fox mask." The thug spat out.

Naomasa nodded and stood back up, walking over to his commanding officer. "They're not lying."

The older man sighed, running a hand over his face. "I was actually hoping that wouldn't be the case. You remember four years ago, someone with the same mask started running around?"

"What are you trying to say?"

The man sighed, suddenly looking years older than he was. "It seems Kuroko isn't as dead as we thought he was."

"Ah!" Izuku hissed as Kuroda bandaged yet another wound. The sun had barely risen, thin streams of light pouring in to the high windows and catching on floating dust particles.

"You see, this is why you dodge when the bad guy pulls out a knife." Kuroda lectured him, spraying anesthetic on a particularly deep cut Izuku sustained on his arm. He continued to rant as he disinfected the wound, "I know that I told you it would offer only some protection against knives, so what do you do? You go and have your first fight as a vigilante with a knife wielding mugger!" After placing a final bandage on the cut, he leaned back, finally finished treating all of Izuku's injuries. "You're a horrible listener, kid."

"Wonder where I got it from." Izuku commented dryly, yelping in surprise when Kuroda's hand came to cuff him over the head. "What was that for?" He asked, rubbing the sore spot tentatively.

"This's different, Izuku." His mentor told him sternly, standing up to put his medical equipment away. "This is the real world, life and death, got it? Every decision you make is going to have a consequence on the streets. This's the world of heroes and villains, and neither side exactly likes the people in between: vigilantes." He placed the medical kit down on the shelf with more force than necessary, his jaw was clenched and his hands were shaking. "You're in real danger when you're out there, kid. If you die, I'll spend the rest of my life blaming myself for not teaching you enough to protect yourself."
Izuku bowed his head. "I'm sorry, but Kuroda," his head shot up, eyes alight with accomplishment, "I actually did something! I stopped those robbers that've been robbing banks for the past week!"

"Yeah, it's all over the news, kid." Kuroda told him, tossing a newspaper in his direction, which Izuku caught reflexively. "And don't think I don't know that you snuck out after you got home to do it." He gave Izuku a disapproving look, "You may be a vigilante now, but even Kuroko needs sleep, kid."

Izuku felt his throat burn in shame, "I'm sorry, Kuroda." He apologized again, gripping the newspaper tightly in his hands. "I heard about the robberies and I worked out where they'd hit last night, I couldn't just sit around and let them rob another bank!"

"You worked out where they'd hit?" His mentor asked, a little bit disbelieving. At Izuku's steadily heating up face, he grinned. "Good work on that, kid; but it probably wasn't the best idea to mix with them so soon."

"What?" Izuku looked up from the headline, which showcased the five men he'd tied to a parking meter last night. "Why?"

The man walked over and handed Izuku a water bottle, which the green haired boy took gratefully. "Because you let them get a look at your mask." Kuroda explained, "The police force still isn't sure if Kuroko died four years ago. Odds are they'll play it safe and open up my old case files to see if you fit the M.O. of the previous Kuroko; if you don't, they'll write you off as a copycat."

Izuku chugged down half of the water bottle before coming up for air. "Exactly which one am I, anyways?" He asked, standing up and putting his shirt back on. "Copycat or the actual Kuroko?"

That made the man pause. After a few moments of contemplation, he shrugged. "I mean, you're my student, so I guess you'd be considered the 'real thing'; but that's only if they ever find out that you're my student, which is never going to happen. So they'll most likely write you off as a copycat, which is better in the long run. They won't actively try to find you until later on, when you move on to the bigger fish."

Izuku grabbed his bag, which was lying on the shelf next to the medical kit. "Got it, Sensei." He said, mock saluting the former vigilante before darting out of reach of the man's incoming hand.

"Get out of here, you brat. I've got a life outside of making sure you're not killed, you know." He grumbled.

Izuku laughed as he made his way to the door. "Can do. See you later, Kuroda!" The boy opened the warehouse door and disappeared into the morning.

Kuroda sighed, shaking his head. "That kid." He muttered. The man frowned, looking at the bloodied pieces of cotton adorning the floor. Leaning down with a grunt, he picked up the clumps of red from the floor, careful to keep them from smudging on the floor. After throwing the used cotton away, the scarred man stared at his phone, sitting innocently on the desk next to the shelf the medical kits resided in.

It was risky, but he would be able to convince her to make a suit one more time.....then Izuku's chances of getting through a fight unscathed would rise drastically.

He picked up the phone. Dialing a number burned into his memory, he waited as it rang.

"Hey, It's me." He said gruffly into the phone, "I need to call in a favor."
Iida Tenya was not an easy person to be friends with, he’d been told this multiple times throughout his life, so it was nothing new to him. Yet when he ran into Izuku Midoriya (literally), the boy simply smiled and asked if they could be friends. It was safe to say that Iida had never met anyone quite like him.

In the past it had been confusing for the blue haired boy, how everyone seemed to lack his level of enthusiasm for academics, but Izuku matched him step for step; occasionally making him question something he’d never thought to question. The freckled boy occasionally went off on a subject, mumbling all his observations and questions aloud; and Iida had to admit, while it was creepy, the green haired boy was incredibly insightful. The way his eyes positively lit up when he talked about something he was passionate about let Iida know he wasn’t the only one. So what if he was Quirkless? That didn't damper Izuku's determination one bit, if anything it fed the fire in the boy. Iida aimed to have as much motivating as he did one day.

So when the day of the Yuuei entrance exams came, he took a breath, and tried to imitate some of the determination he’d seen in the friend standing next to him.

The written part of the exam was almost laughingly easy, all the days he’d spent studying with Izuku paying off. So when they let the students have a brief interlude to get ready for practicals, Iida sent a text to him, explaining that he’d be late and to not wait for him. He’d pocketed his phone before he could get a reply.

The pamphlet he'd read had been correct, they were fighting robots in a battle royal-esque fashion. When the proctor, Present Mic, had told them to begin, he'd shot off, using his momentum to jump on the robots and crush them with the sheer force of it. He kept tabs on the other contenders as the exam went on, keeping track of their locations as to not hurt any of them accidentally. He'd just finished off a three point robot when the ground began to shake, a massive mechanical hand appeared, crushing the building it latched on to. Present Mic's words came to mind.

*Remember, this robot doesn't have any points assigned to it, so there's no reason to fight it!*

He’d been about to run away, like all of the other hero-hopefuls; but his feet dug into the ground when he heard a shout of pain. Whipping around, he could see a girl trapped under the rubble the robot knocked over; she tugged frantically at her leg, trying to free it, with no success. He could hear what all the others were saying as they ran by.

"It won't kill her, it's probably programmed not to."

"This's an exam, she's in no real danger."

"I need to get out of here."

Suddenly, Iida recalled a conversation he'd had with Izuku only a week ago.

"What do you think makes a hero?" Izuku had asked, taking a bite out of the sandwich his mother had made. They were sitting in his room, taking a break from studying.

"It's about helping people, of course!" Iida had replied immediately, taking a bite of his own meal.

*His friend swallowed, before turning to him, a sad smile on his face. "Even when you have to put yourself in life-or-death danger to do it?"*

He hadn't had an answer to that back then, but now he did. Powering up his quirk, he shot down
Iida picked the girl up and darted away in the nick of time, a piece of rubble landing where they stood previously with an echoing boom. He turned sharply into an alleyway, setting the girl down to catch her breath and to catch his own. His calves were burning like he'd run ten miles in the span of those few moments, he looked to the girl, who was staring at him with amazement in her wide brown eyes. "Are you okay?" He asked in between breaths.

She nodded, "I'm fine, thanks to you."

His heart was still beating rapidly when Present Mic's voice was heard throughout the arena. "Times up, kiddos!"

He sighed, pushing himself up from the wall he'd been leaning on. He held a hand out to the girl. "Here, I'll help you get to the nurse."

She grinned, then tapped her arm; he wasn't as surprised as he probably should've been when she started floating, her feet half a foot off the ground. "Ok! I'm Uraraka Ochako!" She greeted, holding a hand out as she bobbed up and down slightly.

Iida took her smaller hand in his own, "Iida Tenya."

The hour after the exam was a blur for him in all honesty, he'd tugged Ochako to the nurse like a child would carry a balloon. After making sure that she was ok in the capable hands of Recovery Girl, Iida made his way home. His house was rather large, the benefit of having a family in the hero business. The design was simple, but structurally sound, the white walls were near painful to look at when the sun shined on them though. He didn't have to wait even five seconds after knocking before the door opened. His brother, Tensei, opened the door with a grin on his face.

"Hey little brother! How was the exam?" He asked, ushering him in excitedly. "Tell us all about it!" His brother sat him down on the couch as he took a seat across from him, leaning in with avid interest.

So Iida retold the events of the exam, sometimes pausing to think about how to word it. His brother listened to every word, a smile growing on his face as he continued the retelling.

"That, girl, why did you help her, Tenya? What was your motivation?" He'd asked.

Iida hesitated, "Because.....that's what a hero would do.....right brother?" He asked, looking into his brother's eyes.

His brother smiled, "Yeah, Tenya, that's what a hero would do."

Izu looked at the streets from his perch on the rooftop, watching as the oblivious civilians passed right under his feet. He smiled behind the mask as a little girl walked home with her mother, a superhero plush gripped tight in her little hands. Standing up, Izuku stretched with a grunt, then leaped to the other rooftop. The wind whistled by him as he dashed from rooftop to rooftop, silently scanning the streets for any sign of criminal activity. True to form, a shriek came from the alleyway below him.

He crouched low, peeking from the edge of the roof. A gang of men surrounded two women, all grinning lecherously. One pulled a knife out and another chorus of shrieks rose up. Izuku reached to
his back to pull out three wooden poles, quickly twisting them together, a five foot Bo staff now rested in his hands.

*Remember, Kuroda had told him as he handed the weapon to Izuku, a Bo staff is great for both offense and defense, just make sure you have enough space to swing.*

The alley was definitely wide enough to swing in. Not waiting a moment longer, Kuroko jumped from the roof, he kicked off of the opposite wall and crashed into the first thug with his Bo. There were shouts of confusion as the gang tried and failed to see their assailant in the dim lighting.

Kuroko quickly made an exit for the women via whacking a thug over the head, making him drop like a stone. "Run! Go to the nearest building and call for help!" He'd barked, bringing up his weapon to block a punch from a thug. The women wasted no time, stepping over the unconscious thug and running out of the alley.

"Do you have any idea who you're messing with?" One of the thugs threatened, "we're the big dogs 'round here!" He swung his fist in a sloppy left hook.

Izuku ducked, feeling his hair ruffle from the swing. "I guess this counts as animal abuse, then." He quipped, leaping up from his crouch to deliver a devastating uppercut to the thug's jaw. He looked to the remaining henchmen, "anyone else?" He asked, leaning against his Bo casually.

The remaining thugs looked at their fallen leader, then to the casually vigilante, and practically scrambled past him to leave. After making sure they were gone, Izuku took out a notepad and a pen. Writing carefully, he tore off the note and placed it on the face of the head thug. Anyone that saw it would read: *four others got away, all have gang tattoos on their left arms, middle aged. Look in a bar near the area, they're probably nursing their wounds.*

Stepping out of the alley, Kuroko saw the women from before staring at him from the entrance to a convenience store. "Are you all right?" He called out to them, they startled a little bit at being addressed, but nodded silently. "Stay safe, ladies!" He gave them a two finger salute before running back into the alley, climbing the fire escape to get back to the roofs.

Running back home, he felt his stomach growl. This vigilante stuff was hard work.

The bar was relatively quiet, a few patrons nursing a mug of alcohol at their respective tables. Behind the bar cleaning a glass was a man shrouded in black mist; the man wore an elegant dress shirt with a striped tie, five metal plates going from his collarbone to below his eyes. The silence in the bar was broken, much like the glass that went flying into the wall, halfway disintegrated by the time it hit.

Sighing, Kurogiri shot a withering look to the person who threw it; A gaunt looking man with disembodied hands grabbing almost every part on his body started scratching frantically at his neck, hysterically wide eyes hidden by the hand covering his face. The man's mutterings were unintelligible as blood started to coat his fingertips.

"Shiragaki, that's the fifth glass this week." Kurogiri stated, placing the glass he was cleaning down to sweep up the mix of broken glass and dust from the floor.

"Another player's in the game...." The man, Shiragaki, muttered. "Another player's in the game and I don't know which side they're on...." The scratching grew more frantic, flakes of skin falling to the floor.

Kurogiri peered at the newspaper laying on the table, "So, Kuroko's back, huh?" He let out a
puff of air, "that doesn't bode well for our plans." He threw away the glass and dust he'd gathered and went back to the bar, picking the glass back up and wiping it with his rag. "Four years ago he had the lesser villains too scared to act."

"Not good. Not good. Not good." Shiragaki started rambling, "Black foxes are tricky, too tricky to keep alive."
Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

Bnha does not belong to me.

I have a question for you all, what would you prefer: fast updates and short chapters or slower updates and longer chapters? Tell me in the comments!

Naomasa groaned, letting the case file in his hands land on the coffee table as he leaned back into the couch. Toshinori Yagi picked the file up, eyeing it with interest. "What's this?"

"The latest vigilante activity." The detective muttered, staring at the ceiling, "All of it is Kuroko's copycat. Every. Single. One."

"Kuroko? That's a name I haven't heard in a long time." Toshinori commented, opening the file and skimming through. "These are rather extensive." He noted as he continued to read. "When did they first show up?"

"A week ago, he's showed up a week ago. The guy's taking care of the problems before we can get to them, half of the time he's the one telling people to call the cops." Naomasa sat back up, pinching the bridge of his nose. "The media is going nuts, asking questions even you heroes don't have answers to; public opinion of the police of falling fast and we can't do anything about it."

"Have you tried setting a trap for this 'copycat'?" Toshinori asked, closing the file and placing it back down on the coffee table.

"And how would we go about doing that, exactly? We can't predict when a crime will occur, and the only thing we know about him is that he always shows up at night!" The detective sighed. "I'm sorry, Toshi, it's been a stressful few weeks."

The blond waved the apology away, "Not to worry, old friend, everyone has their share of tough times." He stated sagely. "The file said he usually stepped in when the crime was in unpopulated places, maybe you could have some 'criminals' wander around the area and have backup ready to intervene?"

Naomasa froze, "That.....actually might work!" The detective cried, "Toshi, you're a genius!" He stood up and started pacing around the coffee table as he went over prospective plans.

"I live to serve." Toshinori commented dryly, letting his friend work out a plan as he became enveloped in his own thoughts. The last they'd seen of Kuroko had been years ago, when he'd been electrocuted by a villain. Five years, the same amount of time since he'd fought against All for One and received a handicap on his quirk. The vigilante had been helpful back then, often giving information on the organized crime units for All Might to pass on to the police. In another life he might have even considered the Black Fox a friend, someone he could trust; but circumstance was a cruel mistress, Kuroko was on the wrong side of the law, and it was All Might's duty to apprehend all wrongdoers regardless of his personal opinion. He stared at the file, laying innocently on the table,

It seems like even the Kuroko has found a successor to his legacy; and I've yet to find mine.
The knot that was Izuku’s stomach wouldn’t come undone as he sat in his room, anxiously waiting for his letter from UA. Iida kept telling him that if he did fine, then Izuku would have done fine as well, due to going over the same subjects together; but the inner ball of anxiety that was Izuku Midoria’s brain would not be silenced by logical thought.

‘I failed, didn’t I, that’s why it’s taking so long for the letter to get here. They failed me then sent it late on purpose to make me get my hopes up.’ Was the current train wreck of thought crashing through the teenager’s head as he read online newsfeed in a vain attempt to distract himself. On another note, it seemed like his Vigilante persona was all the talk on the news now. Everyone wanted to know one thing and one thing only: who was Kuroko? They’d probably be a bit disappointed to realize the infamous Black Fox was sitting in his room, trying not to freak out as it got later into the night and there was still no letter from Yuruie.

He nearly leaped out of his skin when his phone vibrated loudly on the desk, picking it up, Izuku read the text.

Recieved 7:45 pm.
Hello, Izuku! It’s Uraraka Ochako from the exams, Iida gave me your number once he realized I knew you. I hope you don’t mind!

Sent 7:46 pm.
Hello, Ochako! Have you gotten your letter yet?

Received 7:48 pm.
Yep! I got in! How about you??

Sent 7:49 pm.
I haven’t gotten mine yet, I’m hopeful though.

Received 7:50 pm.
You’ll get in, in sure of it!

Sent 7:51 pm.
If only I could have your confidence, Ochako. Gtg, I think my mom just got the letter.

Received 7:51 pm.
Ok! Good luck ;D

Izuku had just set the phone down when his mother burst into the room, letter clutched in hand.
"Izuku," she panted, breathlessly handing the letter over, "your letter came!"

He stared at the envelope resting innocently in his hands, oddly reminded of when Kuroda had left a letter after their first meeting ten months ago. Carefully, Izuku opened the envelope, letting the casing fall to the floor as he opened the letter and started reading.

Inko stood in suspense, watching her son for any giveaway signs of the letters contents. When his shoulders started shaking, she brung him into a hug. "Oh, Izuku," she whispered, "I'm so sorry you didn't get in."

Izuku sniffled, "It's not that!" He cried, breaking from the hug so show her the letter, "I got in, mom! I got in!" He let out a wet laugh as his mother took the letter and scanned through it herself. She laughed, tossing the letter aside in favor of enveloping her son in a crushing embrace. Izuku couldn't help the grin splitting his face, even when his face was pressed against his mother's shoulder. "I got in!"

The rest of the night was spent celebrating his success, laughter was abundant as the sheer glee of passing. Izuku fell asleep later that night, his dreams filled with the possibilities of the future.

The next morning, Izuku ran like a man possessed to the warehouse, the euphoria from the night before lingering in his veins and fueling him more than adrenaline ever could. He nearly slid past the door when he skidded to a stop, stepping in, he grinned when he saw the familiar outline of Kuroda standing with his back to Izuku.

"Good morning, Kuroda." Izuku greeted, nearly bouncing on his feet.

His mentor and friend turned around. "Woah kid," he said, walking over and placing a hand on Izuku's shoulder, effectively stopping him from rocking on his heels. "You look like you mixed an energy drink with some coffee, what happened?"

"I got in to Yuuei!" Izuku exclaimed, unable to contain the excitement anymore, it was practically buzzing in his bones. "I passed the exam and-"

Kuroda placed a hand on Izuku's mouth, muffling the rambling. "Congrats, kid." He congratulated, "we can celebrate later, I have something to tell you. Maximum-security-level importance."

Izuku shut his mouth, confusion adorning his features, "What is it?"

"The league of villains, ever heard of them?" Kuroda asked, turning away from Izuku and walking to the desk in the far corner of the warehouse.

"No...." Izuku said cautiously, walking after his mentor. "Should I have?"

"If you haven't, it means they've been doing their job right, which isn't good for us." He opened a drawer and pulled out a folder. "Basically, they're a group of overpowered villains that typically operate under the radar; but whenever they go on the radar, there's almost always a death count." He turned around and handed the folder to Izuku, who took it out of reflex. "That's the information I gathered on a few of their more prominent members, it includes known abilities and possible weaknesses. Knowing you, this information will be in good hands."

"Not that I'm unthankful," Izuku began, "but, uh, why exactly are you giving this to me?"

"You're gaining rising interest with the media, the League of Villains is bound to notice you, if
they haven't already." Kuroda explained, "When I was around, it became a hell of a lot harder for them to organize any attacks, so their opinion of me isn't exactly good. You took the mantle of Kuroko, that means you inherited all the things that come with it, grudges included."

Izuku gulped, gazing at the folder. "Oh."

His mentor sighed, "I'm sorry, I put a damper on the mood with my melodramatic tendencies." He suddenly grinned his familiar crooked grin, "I know! We should go to the arcade to celebrate you getting into Yuuei! I'll even let you pick the game we compete on, though I'll obviously win."

The teen smiled, feeling the weight previously on his shoulders lift ever so slightly. "Wait a minute," he said, "who said you were gonna win? We haven't even picked a game!"

"I'm just that good, kid." Kuroda stated.

"Oh? Do I sense a challenge in those words?" Izuku asked, raising a single eyebrow.

"You bet you do, squirt."

"That's it, you're on."

They had raced each other to the arcade, both trying to trip the other up on the way. True to his word, Kuroda had let Izuku pick the game they'd compete on: Pacman. He'd never admit it to the man, but Kuroda was scarily good at the older games; his hands were a blur half of the time as he maneuvered the characters.

They played around until noon, then went back to the warehouse to train.

"Never let yourself get rusty," Kuroda had told him, "the moment your skills dull, your enemies' will sharpen."

Practice went well into the afternoon, some of the spars lasting a good thirty minutes. Around two, Kuroda dismissed Izuku. Being worn out from both the arcade and training, the teenager easily agreed, going home with the folder in hand. Once certain that the boy had left, Kuroda donned a hoodie and walked outside to his car; he had some business to attend to.

The red light district of Japan wasn't a place for the weak of heart; gunshots would ring out like the toll of a grandfather clock marking the hour. People yelled and hollered at one another from across the streets, hurling insults and slurs like food in a food fight. The sidewalks were littered with trash, homeless civilians often finding refuge in the stray boxes they find next to dumpsters. Kuroda paid these scenes no mind as he steadily drove down the street, resisting the urge to honk at the bums who wouldn't get out of the way.

Jaywalkers, they were the absolute worst sometimes.

Making a left, pulled up to a bar, the bouncer at the front was as intimidating as they came; all bulging muscles and pent up aggression. The sign hanging above the mountain of a man read: The Seamstress' Stitch. Parking the car, Kuroda stepped out. He handed the bouncer a roll of bills. "If anyone tries to damage the car, damage them." He instructed him. The man gave an eery grin, pocketing the money and stepping aside to allow Kuroda access to the bar.

The overwhelming scent of alcohol hit him like a wave, making his nose curl somewhat in disgust. Navigating through the sea of people ranging from somewhat buzzed to completely wasted, he somehow found the bar. Taking a seat, he held up a single finger. "One cup of your weakest stuff."
The bartender, a young man with horns sprouting from his head, smiled. "Not a fan of alcohol, or a lightweight?" He asked, passing a glass filled with amber liquid.

"Mix of both." Kuroda admitted, sipping the drink and grimacing slightly. "Gets the job done though." He exchanged banter with the bartender for a while, until someone sat down in the seat next to him.

"Never thought I'd see the day you were witty." The newcomer, a woman with pitch black hair wearing a red dress, comments. "Always thought you were the strong and silent type."

"Things change, Seamstress." He said, decidedly not looking at her. "You got what I asked you for?"

She smiled, red lips pulling back to expose annoyingly perfect teeth. "What kind of provider would I be if I didn't?" Kuroda felt a case hit his leg. "It's got all the features you asked for." She informed him, "Feel thankful, it wasn't easy getting some of that stuff."

"I'll be thankful once it proves its use." He stood up, grabbing the case as he did so. "Until we meet again."

She rolled her eyes, "You and your dramatics, I'll see you around."

And with that, he left the bar. He nodded to the bouncer when he saw that his car wasn't damaged and hopped in. Turning on the ignition, Kuroda pulled out and drove into the night the case resting in the passengers seat.

Izuku woke up before his alarm. Eyes shooting open, he practically hopped out of bed, eager to get ready for his first day of high school. His teeth were brushed at a speed that would've made his gums bleed if they weren't already accustomed to such treatment; the brush taken to his hair was merciless as it untangled any knots that appeared over the span of the night. Stepping out of the bathroom, Izuku made his way over to his closet and picked out his uniform. He thanked whatever deity was out there that the jacket and pants hid his form so well, nobody would ever suspect that Izuku Midoriya, resident nerd, would have muscles. From the mirror, he caught a glance at the file Kuroda had given him the day before, sitting on his desk.

Walking over, he sat down at the desk, mentally preparing himself. Inside this folder was vital information on people that he will one day have to fight, people that will try to hurt him and others; he'll be damned if he didn't break these people and their quirks down like any other hero he did in the past. Opening the file, he began to read.

Shiragaki Tomura, leader of the League of Villains

**Quirk:** disintegration

**Defining features:** disembodied hands all over his body, always has one covering his face.
Gray hair, gaunt and thin.

**Watch out for:** He acts childish, but he can figure out a weak spot in your defenses just by watching you fight. Spontaneity works best against someone like him, who relies on a plan of action. If you throw off his plans, you have a small window of time to attack, as he's too busy calculating a new plan to notice.
Izuku took a brief moment to shudder at the description, someone who could destroy with a single touch, on the side of the villains? He was about to turn to the next page when his mother knocked on the door.

"Izuku? It's almost time for you to go, you don't want to be late on your first day of school!"

"Coming, mom!" He replied hurriedly, closing the folder quickly and storing it in his desk. He'd have to finish reading it later.

Breakfast was a fast affair, Izuku scarfing down the meal she'd made and darting through the door with a quick shout of "Love you, mom!" The streets were fairly empty this early in the morning, people waking up and eating their breakfasts rather than being outside. Ultimately this made it easier to get to school for him, as there was no one to maneuver around and avoid as he ran. He slowed down to a walk as the gates of Yuuei came into sight, a handful of students sharing his sentiment and arriving early.

Izuku yelled in surprise when someone hugged him from behind, "Izuku!" A cheery, female voice practically yelled in his ear. Once released from the hug, he turned around to see Ochako; donned in the girls Yuuei uniform and vibrating in excitement. "You got in! That's so great! I knew you could do it"

He could feel his face getting red at the compliment, "Y-yeah, sorry for not telling you yesterday, I...uh...well my family was celebrating with some close family friends." Him asking his mom tonight to invite Kuroda to dinner tomorrow meant that he was a family friend now, right?

The explanation seemed to pass in Ochako's book, because her smile brightened. "Ah, it's ok! My parents did the same thing with me!" She pressed her hand together. "Isn't it great? We got into the school of our choice, and we did it all together!"

"Together?"

"That is correct, Midoriya." Iida said, walking up from behind Ochako. "We were walking to school together when Ochako saw you walking in front of us and ran ahead." He explained.

"Oh," he looked to the other students, who were walking into the school building. "We should probably head in, it wouldn't be good to be late on the first day, right?" His two friends agreed, walking side by side with him as they stepped past the gate and entered the academy. They parted ways in the hallway, Ochako giving him a hug and Iida wishing him luck in the general department. Standing in front of his classroom, Izuku took a deep breath before grabbing the handle and opening the door.

The classroom was eerily quiet, the light filtering in from outside the only source of illumination. Izuku's eyes immediately locked on to the only other student in the room, it was the boy from the exam, Shinshou Hitoshi. The blue haired boy's face was buried into the crook of his arm as he slept, his back rising and falling in accordance to the deep, even breaths Izuku could hear from he doorway. Quietly, Izuku closed the door behind him. Easing into a seat, he silently took out a notebook and a pencil, electing to brainstorm a plan of action against the so called 'League of Villains'. His pencil scratched the paper furiously as he jotted down idea after idea.

Izuku's head shot up when he heard a yawn from the sleeping boy, who raised his head and rubbed his eyes groggily. It took him a moment to notice Izuku, yet when he did his only reaction
was a slight widening of sleep deprived eyes. "Oh," the boy murmured, "it's you, from the exams. Midoriya, right?"

Izuku nodded, "And you're Shinshou."

The boy snorted rather unceremoniously, "Surprised you even bothered to remember my name," he commented, lifting his feet to rest on the desk. "considering I just wrote you off before the exam."

"I'm used to the cold shoulder." He replied easily, closing the notebook and pocketing his pencil. "People don't really want to talk to the Quirkless kid, not if they want to be cool."

That seemed to get the other boy's attention. "You're Quirkless?" Shinshou asked, sitting up and looking at Izuku like has was some sort of rare specimen. At Izuku's nod of confirmation, he leaned back. "With my quirk I almost wish I was Quirkless, anything would be better than being written off as a villain."

Izuku felt his curiosity spark, "What's your quirk? It can't be that bad, can it?" He asked, leaning forward on his desk.

Shinshou seemed to regard him for a moment. "It's brainwashing," he eventually said, subconsciously leaning away from Izuku. "I can control anyone that verbally replies to me, and they'd forget about it after I break my hold on them." He gave the green haired boy a sidelong glance, expecting revulsion or even fear. What he didn't expect was the burst of excitement that arose from him.

"Really?" Izuku asked, eyes alight. "That's amazing, Shinshou!" Geek side taking over, he started to ramble. "Think about it! With your quirk you could subdue a villain without even fighting them, preventing any collateral damage! If you could control a crowd like that, then evacuations would go a lot smoother than they would normally; and-"

"Do you always go off on someone's quirk like this, or am I just special?" The wavy haired boy questioned, giving Izuku a strange look. Izuku felt himself go red.

"N-no, it's just...I, uh, usually say all that inside my head." He muttered, looking at his hands in embarrassment. He was a vigilante, he took down criminals with a swing of a Bo staff, but social interaction? That was and will always be his weakness. "Sorry about that."

Shinshou blinked, caught off guard by the sudden apology. "Nah, it's fine." He smirked. "Besides, if you really talk this much, then it'll be easier to brainwash you." The blue haired boy had honestly been expecting a reaction to that, but all he got was a tentative smile.

"Throughout this whole conversation, you haven't tried to brainwash me once, I think I'll be safe." Izuku said, "Besides, birds of a feather flock together, right?"

Shinshou had to let out a chuckle at that. "The Quirkless kid and the kid with the villain quirk, what a team we make." Any other chance at conversation was ended when the bell rang and the other students started filing in; but throughout the school day, they'd share a look and a smile.

Maybe this wasn't going to be so bad after all.
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Hey guys! I've been getting some questions on whether or not All Might will choose a successor in this fic; I'm not quite sure in all honesty, and even if I was sure I wouldn't know who to pick! So leave a comment on who you'd think would be the successor and the character with the most votes will be the successor if it does become part of the story. My updates might be getting a bit slower due to summer camp, but I will try to update at least once a week. Thanks!

My hero academia does not belong to me

The first half of the day seemed to pass quickly, time seeming to fly in the classroom. Though that might have been just for Izuku, who spent the time alternately taking notes and inwardly freaking out at the amount of heroes teaching them. Seriously, how did they even have time to teach, not to mention do all the paperwork involved, and still have time to do heroic things? Forget the League of Villains' motives, this was the real mystery here. He let out a relieved sigh as the bell rang, releasing everyone to Lunch. Their English teacher, Present Mic, told them their homework as they filed out of the room, eager to eat.

"That guy's a piece of work." Shinshou commented, suddenly appearing next to Izuku as they walked to the cafeteria. "Can't deny that he's a good hero, though." Izuku nodded, mentally noting to include earplugs in his vigilante arsenal; it wouldn't do to run into Present Mic on the streets and be unprepared. Actually, he'd need to add several things to his arsenal, considering all of the teachers in Yuuei were heroes; this situation just got better by the goddamn minute, didn't it.

The cafeteria was massive; thirty tables being taken up by hungry, chattering students and still with more tables to be filled. Shinshou and Izuku both went to the lunch line, gabbing trays and looking at the menu. He really shouldn't have been surprised that the cooking hero, Lunch Rush, was working at Yuuei as well; but today just seemed to be full of surprises for poor Izuku. He let out a groan as he sat down at an empty table, pushing his lunch tray to the side in favor of resting his forehead on the table.

"You seem to be having fun." Shinshou commented, picking up his chopsticks and beginning to eat his plate of noodles. "What, you already brain dead? Hate to break it to you, Midoriya, but we still have the other half of the day to finish; and the rest of the school year after that."

Izuku turned his head to face his new....what does he call Shinshou anyways? A friend? An acquaintance? "Leave me be," he groaned, "I most of my life admiring these heroes, and here I am getting taught by them. My brain needs some time to comprehend." The blue haired boy shrugged and went back to his meal.

A tray hit the seat in front on him with a loud smack, making his head shoot up; it was only Shinshou's hand grabbing the front of his shirt that kept him from falling to the floor. "Hey, Izuku!" Ochako beamed, Iida taking a seat next to her. "Who's this?" She asked, looking at Shinshou curiously.
Izuku cleared his throat, "Ochako, Iida, this is Shinshou, my classmate." He introduced, "Shinshou, these are my friends Iida and Ochako." The brunette waved cheerfully to the blue haired boy, who awkwardly waved back.

"It is relieving to see that you have made friends in your own class, Midoriya." Iida said, taking a sip of his drink. "Ochako was particularly concerned about that." The girl in question blushed pink.

"I-it's only because you're so nice!" She exclaimed, "people might try to take advantage of that!"

Shinshou nodded, "She's got a point." He said, "You," he pointed at Izuku with his chopsticks, "are much too nice. People are gonna walk all over you if you aren't be careful." Izuku opened his mouth, ready to argue when a familiar pair of hands slammed down on the tabletop. "Like now."

"Deku," Bakugou snarled, leaning over his hands and into the boy's personal space. "What the fuck are you doing?"

Midoriya stiffened, hunching his shoulders as he sank into his chair. "I-I was-

"Eating lunch with us," Shinshou cut in, giving the blond a bored look. "Until you interrupted us. The better question is why are you here." Iida and Ochako nodded in agreement.

"Yeah, he wasn't doing anything to you and you just started yelling at him, Bakugou!" She stated, giving him a disapproving frown. "That's not very polite, you know."

"I agree with Shinshou and Ochako on this matter," Iida said, fixing the hothead with a stern gaze. "You're behavior is entirely inappropriate as a fellow member of class 1-A."

"Inappropriate?" Bakugou asked. Irritated, he flipped Izuku's lunch tray, the contents flying across the cafeteria floor. "I'll show you inappropriate, you-"

"Hey, Kacchan." The monotone voice of Shinshou said.

"What, you-" Bakugou seemed to slump, his fire in his eyes going out like a candle.

"Go to your table, when you snap out of it, you won't bother Midoriya at lunch ever again." The blue haired teen stated, watching almost smugly as the blond complied, his gait stiff and unnatural.

Izuku let out an awed tone, "That's the first time I've seen you use your Quirk!" His hands practically flew to his pockets, pulling out a notebook and pencil. "Do you always have to have them reply instantly to you, or can it be delayed? The uses for that would be-

Shinshou held a hand up, his eyes wide. "You're not....scared?" He sounded genuinely confused.

"Why would I be?" Izuku questioned, head bent and scribbling notes frantically.

Iida nodded, factually stating, "Midoriya's correct, you used your Quirk to defend him from an aggressor. You wouldn't be found at fault in school court as you used it in defense."

Ochako turned to Izuku, trying to change the topic. "How do you know Bakugou, anyways?"

"Ditto." Shinshou stated, eager to have the attention on his quirk diverted to Izuku.
The green haired boy swallowed thickly. "That was Kachan, we used to be childhood friends."

Shinshou raised his thin eyebrows. "That must've been one helluva fallout, then; because that guy looked like he was ready to hurt you." The other two at the table nodded in agreement.

"Enough of that," Ochako stated, picking up half of a sandwich from her tray and handing it to him. "You need to eat, Izuku, it's not healthy to skip meals!" He nodded, taking a bite of the food while Iida ranted about proper nutrition and Shinshou continued to eat. All in all, it was a pretty good lunch period.

After lunch, the students were given a free period. Iida and Ochako went to their classroom, talking about doing some of their homework so they wouldn't have to do as much at home; and Shinshou had told him he wanted to take a nap, so Izuku was effectively alone for the next thirty minutes or so. Stepping outside, he took a deep breath of air, welcoming the chill it brought with it, and began to walk. His steps slowed to a halt when he saw a large tree, the branches hanging low and an indent perfect for sitting in; the tree was practically begging him to climb it. One issue though, he's never climbed a tree before.

"Plus Ultra, right?" He muttered to himself, stepping forward and grabbing the first branch. He let out a sound of triumph as he sat himself down in the nook between two branches, the leaves parting to let slivers of warm sunlight hit his body. As he sat in the tree, watching students pass under him without so much as looking up, his thoughts started to wander.

Fighting the League of Villains on the streets and hiding under the heroes' noses in the day. He couldn't help but snort at the craziness of it all. What a life I live.

"Excuse me? Young man?" A voice spoke up, "what are you doing in this tree?" Izuku startled, losing his balance and beginning to fall. He immediately maneuvered himself so he'd fall on his feet, crouching low as his knees absorbed the impact. Standing up, he dusted his pants off and looked to the person who spoke; only for his jaw to go slack. Standing right in front of him was the number one hero, the one that told him to give up on being a hero, All Might. Izuku couldn't see the man's eyes in this form, but he was almost certain they widened in recognition.

"Ah, you're the lad from the slime incident almost a year ago!" The hero exclaimed, "Midoriya Izuku, wasn't it?" All might let out a gaudy bought of laughter. "It's good to see you again, my boy!"

Izuku scrambled for words like a toddler looking for blocks to build a tower. "T-thank you, All Might." He finally managed to say, closing his still gaping mouth with a click. "It's an honor to see you again." He bowed low, keeping his head stubbornly facing the ground, away from the No. 1's gaze.

Meanwhile, Toshinori stood awkwardly; how exactly was he supposed to interact with a student that he'd told should 'think realistically and stop trying to be a hero'? "How have you been, my boy?" Safe, I hope. He added in his mind, watching the boy as he tried to reply.

"I've been doing well, sir." Izuku said, curling his toes in anxiety. "I, uh, really have to go now; class is about to start and I don't want to be late. Goodbye, All Might!" He then made like a bat out of hell, darting inside the school building as fast as he could.

The irony was almost too much, the number one hero making small talk with the student of the number one vigilante; hopefully, he won't have to do that again any time soon, or ever, preferably.

Back outside, the blond hero sighed. "At least he's not trying to be a hero anymore." He said to himself, turning around and making his way to class 1-A. "He's safer this way,"
"Anything I should be aware of before I head out?" Izuku asked Kuroda, sliding on his knee pads. "You know, super villains out for my head, secret crime rings I need to bust; that sort of stuff."

The older man leaned against the wall, his arms crossed. "I don't know about secret crime rings, but The League of Villains is going to make a move soon." He admitted grimly, "Within the next few weeks, most likely."

Izuku paused, his Bo's three pieces held in his hand. "Any details?" He asked, "location? time? targets?" Kuroda shook his head.

"All I know is that they're spreading the word, gathering some small fry fishes for canon fodder." He admitted, "though my gut's telling me it'll be at Yuuei."

His blood briefly turned to ice, "It's in the next few weeks, right?" He almost demanded.

"That's what my sources tell me." Kuroda said, walking over to tie Izuku's mask on. "And by the way, I've got the new suit;" he finished the knot and stepped away. "but I'll have to test it's durability first, no way in hell am I letting you go out in armor I'm not one hundred percent confident in."

"And when will that be?" Izuku questioned, checking to make sure all of his weapons and utilities were in place and secure.

"At least a week, but definitely before the Leagues' attack." Kuroda stated, crossing his arms. "Be safe out there, kid."

"I will!" Izuku replied, making his way to the back door. "You know me, king of safety,"

"I do know you, prince of idiocy," he deadpanned, "this is why I worry in the first place."

Izuku laughed, taking a mock bow before leaving through the back door and letting it bang shut behind him. Alone in the warehouse, Kuroda sighed and rubbed a hand over his scar.

"Just be careful, I don't want you to end up like me."

Tonight's patrol was going almost boringly slow. Kuroda's sources were right, there wasn't hide nor hair of any small time villains as he ran over the rooftops. Taking a break, he sat on the ledge of a convenience store and rubbed his arms. "Might have to ask Kuroda for a coat, too." He muttered, feeling the warmth of his breath create precipitation inside his mask.

His head whipped to the left as he heard something, a few beer cans smashing against a wall. Curious, Izuku stood up, following to noise to a back alley with almost no lighting. The visibility was poor, but he could make out two debunked figured about to get into a fight with one another.

Sighing, Izuku dropped into the alley, catching both of the inebriated men's attention. "I'm only gonna say this once," he stated, walking over to the men while twirling his Bo. "Break up the fight and call someone to take you home."

Warning bells started going off in his head when the two men, who should have been drunk off their asses, stood up straight. What set off the alarm in his head was one of them pulling out a radio while the other took out a taser and leveled it at his chest.

"Japan police department!" The one with the weapon yelled, "drop your weapon and put your hands behind your head!" The other officer started talking into his radio, calling for backup.
Izuku held his hands up, the Bo staff dropping to the concrete floor with a clatter. "You've got me." He said in a faux deep voice, "Don't shoot." Unseen by the officers, his elbow was putting pressure on his utility belt, right on his smokescreens.

The officer holding the taser took his eyes off of Izuku, looking at the officer that came up to tell him that backup was on the way. Taking the opening, Izuku jabbed his side, rupturing the casing on the smokescreen and covering the alley in a fog so thick the officer's couldn't see a foot in front of them. Izuku quickly dropped to the ground, hearing the thwip! of the taser flying above him. Rolling to the side, he grabbed his Bo and bolted out of the alley, leaving the confused officers to their shouting.

Making a quick left, Izuku leaped onto a dumpster, using it to propel his jump to the roof of the building it was up against. His hands caught the edge of the roof, and he lifted himself up with a practiced ease. Police sirens screamed in his ears as he ran, legs working furiously to put as much distance between him and the ambush site as possible. He skid to a stop when a shadowed figure leapt onto the roof in front of him. From the light below them, Izuku could make out wooden arms and a helmet; Kamui Woods stood before Kuroko, his fingers branching outwards like tendrils of spiderwebs.

"Never thought I'd get the chance to subdue the Kuroko," the hero commented, "even if it is just his copycat." The man lunged, swinging his branch-like arms in a wide arc. Izuku leaped up, using the branches as a springboard to fly over the wooden hero's head.

"The feeling's the same," Izuku said in the fake deep voice, dodging yet another branch. "I never thought I'd be fighting a tree." The hero let out a growl, and Izuku let out a laugh as he leaped to another roof and ran; Kamui following him doggedly. "Then again," he continued, leading the hero into a familiar part of the city. "this life if full of surprises, isn't it?"

"Enough playing around." Kamui growled, "you're nothing more than a copycat, the real Kuroko is dead, electrocuted four years ago."

Izuku didn't reply, instead he ran though plans of action in his head. Kamui Wood's always fought at a distance, using the branch extensions from his arms to fight rather than using his actual body; yet if Izuku tried to bring the fight to Kamui, the branches would trap him and he'd be caught. The vigilante suddenly remembered a note he'd written down about the hero chasing after him; Kamui's quirk: Lumber, let him control the wood on his body, but that didn't necessarily mean that it was part of him. Experimentally, he swung his Bo at an incoming branch, cracking it with the force of the hit. A quick glance to the wooden hero showed no pain, only annoyance as he leaped from rooftop to rooftop. Whenever something looking suspiciously like wood came into his sight, he swung his staff and broke it,making Kamui use precious time and energy to regenerate the broken material.

A quick look to the streets confirmed that Izuku was where he wanted to be and he smirked, reaching the end of that roof. With a whoop of exhilaration, he dropped from the rooftops and into the alleys. Izuku started sprinting the moment he hit the floor, weaving in and out of the passageways like second nature; he could hear the hero's breaths becoming labored, his stamina draining from both chasing Izuku and regenerating the wood that he kept breaking. Turning into the next alley, he held himself against the wall, readying his Bo; when the steps of the hero came closer and closer, Izuku waited till the last possible second to swing the staff. His timing worked perfectly, Kamui ran into the alley right as he swung, making a vicious CRACK! as the wood of the hero's helmet collided with the steel Bo. Izuku caught the hero as he went down, thoroughly unconscious. He laid the man down gently, and was about to leave for home when the radio on Kamui's belt went off.
"Kamui Woods, what is your status, we've lost visual." A level voice spoke from the speaker.

"Uh," Izuku said, looking at the unconscious hero laying sprawled on the floor. "He's a little bit busy being knocked out at the moment, can I take a message?"

The reply was delayed, probably working out just who was speaking to him. "Is it safe to assume that I'm speaking to the copycat?" The voice asked cautiously.

Oh great, the police were calling him a copycat; Kuroda had told him that was the more likely possibility, but it still stung a little. "I take offense to that." Izuku huffed, "I'm Kuroko," he paused, thinking up a reasonable lie. "I was the previous Kuroko's student before he died, I'm just picking up where he left off." Yeah, that should work. Half truths, a man's best friend.

"I am Naomasa Tsukauchi, lead detective on your case." The voice, Naomasa, introduced.

"We're you expecting me to tell you my name?" Izuku asked the radio, "Nice try, anyways, I gotta make myself scarce." He paused, debating wether or not he should say the next thing in his head. "And by the way, tell the heroes to be on guard, villains aren't prowling around as much, they're gathering for something; I'll tell you when I know what." He'd have to wrap this up fast, he could hear the sirens closing in. "Now, as much as I would like to stay and chat to you face to face, I have some work to do. See ya." He dropped the walkie-talkie and began to make his way home. He let out a curse when he saw the time, eight thirty, he was late.

"Izuku! Oh thank goodness you're all right!" His mother fretted when he stepped through the doorway. "What happened? Was there a villain attack?"

Izuku laughed nervously, "Yeah, I got a little bruised, that's all. I'm ok, mom, I'm sorry I made you worry."

She smiled sweetly, holding his shoulders. "Oh, honey, I'm just glad you're ok." She practically dragged him to the dinner table, grabbing some leftovers and placing them into the microwave.

"Hey, mom?" He asked once she'd placed the re-heated dinner in front of him. "Uh, can Kuroda come over for dinner tomorrow?"

"Of course," Inko said, watching as Izuku dug into his dinner with a fervor. "do you know any of his favorite dishes?" She asked.

He swallowed the last bite of his dinner. "Uh, I'll ask him." Izuku said, standing up to place the finished dinner plate into the sink. "I have to do some homework, I love you mom!" He rushed to his room, closing the door as he ran past it. Izuku dropped his school bag on the floor and pulled out his phone.

Sent 8:46 pm
Hey, I asked my mom if you could have dinner with us because I didn't tell a girl I'm friends with I got in to Yuuei the day after, and I said we were celebrating with a family friend and my mom said yes. So, what's your favorite dish?

Received 8:49 pm
.......You're a mess, kid.

Sent 8:50 pm
I am aware of this, yes.

Sent 8:50 pm.
So are you going to make me a liar or not? Because I'd prefer the latter.

Received 8:52 pm.
My favorite dish is Negima Yakitori. See you tomorrow night, kid.

Received 8:54 pm.
And there was a report on the police's attempt to catch Kuroko, way to be subtle, kid. Nice touch with knocking out a pro hero, I'm so proud.

Izuku winced, reminded of his promise to be careful. Well, that promise had been broken like a pocky stick. Pocketing the phone, he picked his backpack back up and took out his homework. He could worry about dinner with his mentor later, he had English homework to do.

The school day passed in a blur, most of the kids talking about the failed police ambush the night before. Rumors were flying more than birds during migration; and Izuku had found himself wanting to slam his face on the desk more than once when he overheard some of the gossip.

The rumor saying that Kuroko had a black fox tail was by far the most far-fetched, but it still wasn't the end of the day and the rumors were still passing around; becoming even more ridiculous and outlandish with every person that retold them. If Shinshou noticed his distress, he didn't call him out on it, which was something he was eternally grateful for. Instead, his light blue haired friend (he was still hesitating to call him that) would simply look at the perpetrators and they'd shut up, unwilling to be 'brainwashed by the future villain'.

"I still find it unfair that they call you that." Izuku voiced his opinion to Shinshou as they picked up their lunch. "They're judging you based on your quirk, they're not even giving you a chance." It didn't go unnoticed by the freckled teen that when they walked to their table, murmurs seemed to follow in their wake.

"I could say the same about you," Shinshou replied, yawning as they sat down at the table. "Some of them are so high and mighty about having a quirk they won't even talk to you; that seems pretty unfair to me." He took a bite of his lunch, then said though his mouthful, "let's just agree that people are unfair and move on from it."

When Iida and Ochako showed up at the table, they talked about the morning's events for both classes. Shinshou and Izuku listened eagerly as the two from the heroics department retold their adventures. "You should've seen it, Iida was acting like an actual villain!" Ochako exclaimed, "It was so convincing! He was all like 'I won't allow you to secure the bomb!' Then he starts laughing maniacally!"

Iida blushed, pushing up his glasses as he cleared his throat. "Bakugou was a terrible partner." He stated, "He ran headfirst to the enemy, who'd split up. If it was a real encounter with a villain he would have to communicate more."

Izuku smiled sheepishly, "Yeah, that sounds like Kacchan alright." He said, staring into his soup. "He'd more the type to explode first and ask questions later."
"Literally."

"Enough about school!" Ochako stated, "Have you guys heard about the incident with Kuroko?"

Izuku let out a pitiful sound. "That's all I have heard about today!" He complained, "why are people so interested in a vigilante?"

Iida nodded, "I have to agree with Midoriya." He stated, "A vigilante is still a criminal, it wouldn't be good for anyone in the heroics department to be caught supporting Kuroko."

The rest of lunch was spent in an awkward silence. Midoriya's thoughts were running a mile a minute: he had people that supported what he was doing? Not his goal, but it felt kind of.....nice. Meanwhile, Iida's words had made his opinion on vigilantes clear. He didn't want to think about how his first friend in Yueei would react if he ever found out his secret.

He was snapped out of his reverie by Shinshou, "-iya. Earth to Midoriya." who was waving a hand in front of his face. "Oh good, you're back among the living. Lunch is over, let's get back to class." Izuku said nothing, only nodding dumbly and walking with Shinshou to put away his tray.

"Ok, how about this: 'Hello, Mrs. Midoriya, thank you for inviting me into your home.'?"
Kuroda looked to his student, who shook his head.

"You sound like a tax collector." Izuku commented, sitting on the desk as Kuroda paced back and forth in front of him. "Calm down, just act natural."

The man let out a nervous laugh, "Oh yeah," he said, "act natural. Because absolutely everything is natural about this situation!" He started listing the issues. "Me, a middle aged Japanese-Native American who just so happens to be the former number one vigilante, is about to go have dinner with his student, a fifteen year old high schooler attending the best hero academy in Japan, and his mother, whom he's never met face to face until tonight." Kuroda threw his hands up into the air. "I'm doomed."

Izuku bit his lip. "Well when you say it like that, it seems impossible." He hopped off of the desktop, walking towards Kuroda to place his hands on the older man's shoulders. "Think about it from my mom's perspective. She, a single mother, is about to meet the man kind enough to teach her only son, who's Quirkless, how to defend himself." He pat Kuroda's shoulder before stepping back. "I think that would be a bit easier to pull off when see it from that viewpoint."

Kuroda sighed, placing a hand on Izuku's head and ruffling the already messy hair. "Thanks kid, I'm still a bit worried on how she'll react to this." He gestured to the right side of his face. "It's not exactly a pretty sight. More than one mother's pulled their kid to the other side of the street when they saw me."

"Those are other moms, this is my mom;" the teenager said in absolute confidence, "and she'd never judge someone's personality by their appearance."

"Well, that's a relief; because have you seen what I'm wearing?" He gestured to his outfit, a blue polo with a matching black belt and dark brown pants. "Because I look like a complete mook."

"Nah," Izuku denied, flicking his hand. "Not a complete mook, probably fifty percent mook, maybe forty-five, but only if you're lucky."

Kuroda rolled his eyes, "Okay, smart-ass," he said, wrapping an arm over the teen's shoulders and starting to walk. "Let's get to your house, your mom's probably waiting."
"Definitely waiting." Izuku stated. The two left the warehouse, letting the doors shut behind them.

The walk was brief, both being eager to get to dinner. Yet as they stood in front of Izuku’s front door, Kuroda hesitated. "Are you sure you want to do this?" He asked, looking to Izuku. "We could always say I got sick."

Izuku crossed his arms, "Kuroda, you are knocking on that door or so help me, I will drag you in." He gave his mentor a sincere look, "You helped me become strong, and became someone that I can rely on; at least let me give something in return, please."

His mentor looked to him, then the door; he sighed, lifting a hand to firmly knock three times on the wood. Izuku's mother opened the door, taking in the sight of the two of them. Izuku, still in his school uniform, and Kuroda who suddenly straightened his back to improve his posture. "You must be Nagaki," she stated, holding a hand out to him; not even staring at his scar. "I simply can't thank you enough for helping my Izuku." She stepped aside, opening up the doorway. "Please, come in, make yourself at home."

"Thank you, Mrs. Midoriya." Kuroda said politely, stepping in and looking around. "You have a very nice home, Izuku." He commented, turning to face his student. "Very spacious."

"So, Nagaki," Inko began, herding the two males to the dinner table. He and Kuroda sat down next to each other, stomachs growling at the sight of so much food. "Izuku told me that you lived in America the last few years?"

Kuroda hesitated slight, until the teenager beside his nudged him from under the table. "That's correct, ma'am." He began hesitantly, "America had the best recovery hospitals for the accident that gave me, well, this." He gestured to his scar.

"Oh my goodness," Inko began, covering her mouth as her face went slightly red. "I didn't mean to bring up such bad memories for you." She apologized.

Kuroda waved the apology off. "It's quite alright, Mrs. Midoriya, you didn't know." The air grew tense and heavy, nearly suffocating as they all sat there, not knowing what to do.

Izuku cleared his throat awkwardly. "Let's dig in, shall we?" He suggested, picking up some of the Yakitori sitting on the plate in front of him. The two adults agreed and dug in.

Kuroda's face positively lit up once he had his first mouthful of the chicken. "This tastes amazing, Mrs. Midoriya!" He exclaimed after he had swallowed the mouthful of food. "What did you use for the recipe?"

Inko's green eyes lit up. "Well," she began, "the secret lies in what you do with the soy sauce-" the rest of the dinner was spent with the two adults talking avidly about cooking recipes. Izuku watched the interaction, a growing smile on his face as he saw his mentor and friend opening up more to his mother. By the me of dinner, all three of them had full bellies and happy smiles. When Izuku's mother went to get a plastic container for Kuroda, he turned to Izuku,

"Hey, kid," he began, coughing awkwardly into his fist, "I just wanted to say thank you."

"For what?"

Kuroda looked at the plastic container Inko had just placed in front of him; the the insides steaming up from the residual heat of the meal. "For Everything."
Hey guys! Sorry for the late update, but I got to summer camp and realized I had no wifi. I'm uploading this from my phone.

P.S. Updates will now be weekly and on Sundays, this'll give me a chance to up the length of each chapter and improve their quality.

Bnha does not belong to me, enjoy!

Izuku heard the crowd before he saw it, the sound of questions being yelled could be heard a street block away. Curious, Izuku peeked from the side of a building to assess the situation; and what a situation it was, reporters from all sorts of news companies were gathered in front of Yuuei dragging unsuspecting students into impromptu interviews. He watched as Iida was dragged into one such interview, but ignored once he went off on a long, scarily articulate speech. Taking a deep breath to steady himself, he turned the corner and walked to the gate.

The reporters spotted him on his way in and swarmed him, practically fighting each other to ask their questions; Izuku couldn't move, there were so many.

"What do you think of having All Might teaching at Yuuei?"

"What is All Might like as a teacher?"

"Aren't you one of the boys involved in the slime incident a year ago?"

Izuku held his hand up, trying to get them to quiet down. The clamor abated slightly, but some were now murmuring to other reporters about the last question. In his peripheral, he could see other students taking advantage of the newspeople focusing on him to sneak in without getting interviewed. Good for them, they beat the system. "I have no opinion on All Might teaching at Yuuei." Izuku began, pausing for emphasis and to give the other students more time to get on campus. "As for what he's like as a teacher, I wouldn't know that."

A female reporter piped up above the general talk. "Why not?" She questioned, the cameramen turning to focus on Izuku's face, microphones being shoved into his face for his answer.

Izuku allowed the brief stab of annoyance outweigh his anxiety. "Because I'm not in the heroics department." He stated curtly, channeling some of his alter-ego's confidence. "Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to get to class." The crowd parted as he walked past, back straight and eyes level.

Someone grabbed the back on his arm. "We still have que-" the man had started to say, before Izuku whipped around, freeing his arm; he was about to put the man in a wrist-lock, but a teacher appeared out of nowhere. Izuku briefly noted that it was his exam proctor, Aizawa.

The scruffy man gave the reporter an annoyed look, saying, "It's against the law to use force to keep someone in an interview, even more so when the person being interviewed is a minor." The reporters flinched back at the pro-hero's words as I'd scalded by boiling water. Aizawa gave a glance
to Izuku then turned around, walking back onto the campus. "Come on, brat, we don't have all day."

The teenage boy wasted no time following after the teacher, jumping in surprise when he heard a resounding bang behind him. Looking back, Izuku saw the gateway was now sealed by several layers of metal barricades. "So this's Yuuei's level of security," he murmured, "unreal."

Unseen by the young vigilante, a gray haired man in a black hoodie stood across the street outside the school. "My my, how interesting," he commented, raising a hand to scratch at the scabbing skin on his neck. "What an unexpected pawn."

The school day's regular events were interrupted by class elections, which were an entire ordeal on their own. Everyone in the class wanted to be the president or co-president, and nothing else. Izuku sat back in his chair, observing the chaos that was his class with an air of morbid fascination. He caught Shinshou sneaking to the back of the class, quietly sliding into the chair next to him.

"I feel like we're in a nature documentary." The insomniac said, "This's crazy, our classmates are crazy."

Izuku nodded, watching as the insanity died down somewhat when the teacher told them to behave. Somehow, the class had eventually managed to pick the roles of student council with no injuries and/or casualties. The teacher, worn out from the student's antics, looked ready to cry in relief as they released the students to lunch.

They'd sat at their table, greeting Iida and ochako when they arrived, and talked about the class elections. Ochako was retelling her class's events when an alarm went off throughout the school, making several students cover their ears at the sheer volume. Over the blaring siren, a voice could be heard. "Security level three has been breached. Students, please promptly evacuate."

"Level three? What's that?" Ochako asked, looking around in confusion.

An older student was quick to answer, "it means that somebody's infiltrated the campus! This hasn't happened in years!"

The moment those words were heard, an all encompassing panic encased the students. Everybody was rushing for the main exit of the cafeteria, pushing and shoving to get themselves out faster than anybody else.

Curious, Izuku looked out the cafeteria window, trying to see if he could spot the intruder. He didn't find them, but what he did find made his stomach roll and his heart skip a beat. The gates, once sealed by numerous reinforced steel barriers, had a gaping hole in them; dust laying in a massive pile around the previously impenetrable barrier. Dust. "Shiragaki Tomura...." He whispered fearfully, so enveloped in his own thoughts he didn't even notice Iida taking control of the situation. His breathing started to become uneven, he couldn't get air, he couldn't breathe. He nearly judo flipped the owner of the hand that touched his shoulder, instead opting to pin them against the window, eyes full blown with terror.

Shinshou blinked at Izuku, wide eyed and his eyebrows raised as the freckled teen released him. "Midoriya?" He asked, concern lacing his voice. "What's wrong? Tell me what's wrong."

He struggled to get the words out, his throat locking up at the most inopportune times. "Can't-I can't breathe!" He wheezed, chest rising and falling at a rapid pace. "I can't-" a sudden wave of calm washed over Izuku, glazing his eyes over and clouding his thoughts somewhat.
"I'm sorry, Midoriya," Shinshou apologized, "but this was the only way I could have calmed you down. Now, take deep breaths, count four seconds before each breath." As Izuku followed the commands, the other boy started to guide him out of the cafeteria and into the hallway. "I'm taking you to the nurse." He informed, ignoring the looks other students gave them as they walked by.

Recovery girl looked up from her work when he and Izuku walked in, Shinshou releasing his control over the teen next to him. In his state of oxygen deprived delirium, Izuku almost mistook the nurse for Mrs. Fujioko. "Goodness, child," the Fujioko lookalike said, standing up from her desk to check on Izuku. "What happened to him?" She asked Shinshou, going into medical-mode.

He took a step away from Izuku and the nurse, letting her continue her examination as he hesitantly said, "Pretty sure it was a panic attack, Recovery Girl; he said he couldn't breathe and his heart rate was really high."

Izuku didn't protest when the old lady guided him to a set of chairs, where he gratefully took a seat. "You did the right thing bringing him here, sweetheart." He told Shinshou, who now looked ready to run out of the nurse's office. Recovery girl turned to Izuku, whose foot was tapping furiously on the office floor. "You poor thing," she sympathized, going over to the mini fridge under her desk and pulling out a can of fizzy juice. "Here, this should help with the exhaustion." She stated, handing him the cold drink. "Can you tell me what triggered the anxiety for you, dearie?"

Well, Izuku certainly couldn't tell them that they had the leader of the League of Villains, which they didn't even know existed, at their doorstep just minutes before. "The cafeteria was in a panic," He lied smoothly, "I...don't really like it when people crowd me, it brings up memories I'd rather forget."

Recovery Girl nodded sympathetically, "Well regardless, you have a wonderful friend here, Midoriya." She turned to Shinshou, but he was gone, the office door swinging slightly before shutting. "Don't worry," she told Izuku, "I'm sure he just needed to get to class."

"Yeah," Izuku said, remembering the guilty look on his friend's face. "He just needed to get to class."

He ended up being dismissed early, deemed by Recovery Girl to be too upset from his panic attack to continue the school day. Awkwardly, Izuku walked into class and handed his note to the teacher; he read it then nodded, saying, "You're dismissed, Midoriya, grab your things quickly."

He nodded, hurriedly walking past his classmates and grabbing his book bag. He spotted Shinshou, who was looking at him from the corner of his eyes. The teenager honestly wished that he could say something, anything, to his friend; but he didn't have much time and it certainly wasn't the place. How would his other classmates react to him saying 'it's ok that you brainwashed me'. So he just picked up his bag and got out of the room as fast as he could.

He didn't go home, instead, he made his way to the Warehouse. Kuroda had said before that he was planning to move furniture in, make the place a bit more comfortable for the two of them. Sure enough, the man was pushing a couch into place when he walked in. "You're early," he stated, finishing moving the couch with a final grunt. "Did something happen?"

"Shiragaki Tomura was at my school today."

Kuroda's head whipped around to look at izuku. "What?!" He snapped, forgetting the furniture in favor of rushing over to the teenager, checking frantically for wounds. "We're you hurt?"
He shook his head, eyed wide. "I'm fine, Kuroda. He just disintegrated the gate keeping some crazed reporters out" He bit his lip, debating on whether or not to voice what was on his mind. "Kuroda, I-I think we should tell the hero association what we know about the league of villains."

His mentor froze. "Ok, now I know you got hit on the head." He said slowly, "because we can't tell them this. They'd just ignore us." He turned to the next piece of furniture, a coffee table, and picked it up; moving close to the couch.

Izuku clenched his fist, the image of the gate at Yuuei, once seemingly impenetrable, laying in its own dust playing in his head. "People are going to get hurt if we don't!" Izuku raised his voice, echoing in the warehouse. "They have no idea that the League still exists! How can they prepare for a threat they're not aware of?"

"They'll have to deal, Izuku," Kuroda stated, an underlying steel in the words. "That's what they do. Drop it."

"Not until you tell me the real reason you're against me telling them."

"Drop it, kid." Kuroda growled.

Izuku dug his heels in. "No, Kuroda, I won't. Not until you tell me why!"

Kuroda whirled around, standing at his full height. "Because the moment you start leaking information to the heroes, the League will send its best to kill you!" His mentor roared, marching towards Izuku. "You're not ready to handle their best! Not now, maybe not ever."

Izuku held his ground, even when Kuroda loomed right in front of him, he didn't give a single inch. "What are you trying to say." His tone was quiet, but just as strong as Kuroda's.

The man sighed, "I'm sorry, Izuku, but they have Quirks; Quirks that make them faster, stronger-"  

Izuku interrupted him. "I knew it." he spat, "You said that I had the potential to be Kuroko, you trained me for it! But it always comes back to having a Quirk or not, doesn't it?"

Kuroda reeled back as if struck, his eyes widened once his words sunk in. "Kid, you know I didn't mean it like that," He tried to explain, "you're a perfect Kuroko; but these guys are way over the level you can handle. The moment they try their best to hurt you, you're done."

"Whatever, I'm leaving." Izuku stated, walking past Kuroda's still form and grabbing his bag. "I'm going to tell them, you can't stop me." Izuku was about to open the door when his mentor spoke up.

"I know I can't." He said, walking to the back of the warehouse and disappearing for a second; only to reappear a minute later, a large black case in his hands. "That's why I want to at least give you this before you go." He placed the case on the floor and took a step back. Curiosity winning over his anger, Izuku went to the case and opened it. "This is-"

"It is," Kuroda confirmed, "I know you're angry with me, but if you're going against the League, you need all the protection you can get."

Inside the case laid a new set of armor; the chest piece having solid black steel plating arranged to bend and shift to his body's movements, hardened leather shoulder pads resting at the end of each arm hole. The pants has the same steel plating as the chest piece in the front, with knee pads build in and hardened leather protecting the back of his thighs and calves. The boots were military-grade,
tipped with metal and evenly weighted; the last item in the trunk was a black motorcycle helmet, the glass of the lenses reflecting back at him.

"The helmet has a voice modifier built in," Kuroda stated as Izuku simply stared at the contents of the case, dumbstruck. "It has police radio installed, too; so you can avoid any ambushes, also helps to let you know if there's any hostage situations nearby." He started to scratch the back of his neck. "I haven't tested it to my standards, but if you're doing this, I want you safe."

Izuku felt his throat close up, "How did you get this stuff?" He managed to ask, mentally congratulating himself for not letting his voice shake.

"I may have called in a favor or two that a few of my old acquaintances owed me," Kuroda admitted, "but it's worth it if you don't get hurt." He stepped forward and patted Izuku's back when the teenager's shoulders began to shake. "You okay kid?" He asked, "if you're still upset about what I said earlier, I was just concer-"

"I'm ok, Kuroda," Izuku cut in, sniffling as he rubbed his nose. "I just kind of realized how much you've done for me these past few months."

"Obviously not enough," Kuroda said, shaking the teenager under his arm. "Because you've still got that crybaby streak in you."

Izuku escaped from Kuroda's hold, "Ha ha." He said, wiping away the last of his tears. "I'm sorry for getting mad at you, I didn't mean it."

"I know you didn't, you had a rough day no doubt, considering what happened at school." He walked over to the couch, plopping down with a grunt. "Now, are you gonna just stand there and wipe your tears, or are you gonna play blackjack?" He asked, grinning as he took out a deck of cards from his pocket.

Izuku may not be strong enough to take on the League when they attacked; but as he sat on the dusty couch and played western card games with Kuroda, he felt like he could take on the world and come out on top.

Yet another long day at the office done, Naomasa groaned as he finished the last report of the day, leaning back in his chair to rub his eyes. A considerable chunk of the small scale villains had fallen off of the grid, and the police department was running like a chicken with their head cut off to find them. He looked up when his assistant came by, dropping a pile of mail on his desk. Thanking the woman, he leaned forward to look at the files. A few minutes of reading later, the detective was clocking out and walking out of the building; trying not to walk faster than normal as he grasped the plain white letter with a fox sticker in his hand.

The alleyway was dimly lit, Naomasa observed as he stepped into it cautiously. What was he doing? Here he was, a renowned detective (well, renowned within the departments in the force), about to meet the vigilante he'd tried to ambush and capture. He didn't even want to think about how many laws he's breaking by following the letter's instructions, no doubt at least ten. He reflexively reached for his gun when a shadow dropped from the roof. His costume was different, but there was no denying the way he held himself, or the Bo strapped to his back.

Kuroko said the first word, "You came." His voice was deep, muffled by the motorcycle helmet he had. "I had tarter to think that you wouldn't show."
The detective leaned against the wall, keeping his eyes on the vigilante before him. "I was thinking that myself;" He admitted, "but a vigilante politely writing a note to me? That's a bit suspicious."

Kuroko leaned against the opposite wall, crossing his legs casually. "I don't have any nefarious purpose for you, if that's what you're wondering." He said, lifting a file of documents into the detective's view. "I'm here to give you some information."

Despite himself, Naomasa felt a stab of curiosity. "What kind of information could you have that we don't?" He inquired, keeping his tone neutral.

"You're aware of the breach in security at Yuuei, correct?" The Kuroko slid the file across the floor, the papers stopping under Naomasa's foot. "This's information on the culprit behind the breach and his organization."

The detective leaned down to pick up the file. When he straightened back up, the vigilante was gone, a wisp of smoke in the wind. He sighed, honestly not knowing what he had been thinking. When he got home, he sat down at his work desk and opened the file; on top of the documents sat a little yellow post-it.

Detective Naomasa,

This man and his group are planning to launch an attack at Yuuei in the next few weeks, it is reasonable to assume that students will be in danger if the heroes are not alerted to the danger.

-Kuroko

Naomasa pinched his nose and reached for the phone. Toshinori, the blonde idiot, would want to hear of this for sure.

A loud vibration made Izuku groan and turn away from the offending noise, burrowing deeper into his pillow. He groggily lifts himself up when the vibrating continued to go off, he drowsily feels around for his phone.

Received 6:45 am.
Hey kid, I hope you're awake.

Received 6:47 am.
Get up, Izuku, this's serious.

Received 6:49 am.
IZUKU, GET YOUR SLEEPY ASS OUT OF BED RIGHT NOW. WE HAVE A PROBLEM.

He snapped out of his daze pretty quickly after reading those texts. His brow furrowing, he typed,

Sent 6:50 am.
I'm up, I'm up. What's the problem?
Received 6:52 am.
The problem is the League of Villains, my sources told me they're attacking Yuuei today at the USJ; they didn't know the motives of the attack. Can you make it there?

Sent 6:53 am.
Oh shit. I can make it there, but I'll have to play sick.

Received 6:56 am.
Do it. Do whatever you have to do to get to the USJ. Good luck, kid.

The teenager set the phone down and went to work; doing jumping jacks until he had an acceptable amount of sweat on his forehead and racing his hands through his hair to make it even more unkempt. By the time his mother came in, curious as to why Izuku wasn't getting up, he was under the covers, eyes half lidded and a the sheen of sweat on his forehead.

"Mom?" He asked tiredly, cracking an eye open to look at her. "I'm not feeling so good." He added a few decent coughs for good measure.

Inko walked to the bed and placed a hand on his forehead. "Oh, honey," She murmured, "you're burning up? Do you want to stay home from school?"

He smiled sleepily, leaning into his mother's soft touch. "Yeah, mom, my head is pounding."

His mother bought the act hook, line, and sinker. She’d rushed around, making sure that he was comfortable before heading out to work. "Remember," she called from the door, "the pain medicine is on the kitchen counter, and don't forget to drink water!"

Izuku laid on the couch, firmly wrapped in at least four blankets. "Love you, mom." He said as she left, closing the door behind her. He listened as her footsteps grew further and further away, then kicked off the blanket and took out his phone.

Sent 7:25 am.
Mom's gone, now what?

Received 7:26 am.
Look outside.

Izuku did as he was told, and when he did he let out a laugh of disbelief. In the street below his apartment was Kuroda, sitting all too smugly on a motorcycle.

"Well?" He called up, "grab your suit and hop on! We don't have much time!"

Izuku wasted no time bolting back into his house and grabbing the case containing his new suit, he practically vaulted over the stairs and hopped on the bike behind Kuroda. Revving his engine, the two vigilantes sped to the hero academy; leaving a cloud of dust in their wake.
Chapter 9

The road was a blur beneath them as Kuroda broke pretty much every speed limit in Japan, Izuku clinging to his mentor's back for dear life as the wind pulled and tugged at his hair and clothes. They reached Yuuei property in record time, Kuroda stopping at the iron gate in front of them.

"What do we do now?" Izuku asked, peering over the older man's shoulder to look at the obstacle looming in front of them.

Kuroda parked the vehicle and hopped off, the teenager following his example. "First off, you're getting into your suit," he told Izuku, who nodded. "As for how we get in," he lifted the leather seat to reveal a small compartment underneath; he reached his hand in and pulled out a small device. "This'll release a small EMP within a twenty foot radius." He explained, turning away respectfully when Izuku started to change. "I place it on the gate and the electric currents will stop, and we'll ride in. The gate's usually used for garbage disposal, so there're no cameras."

"I don't even want to know how you found that out." Izuku stated, now fully donned in his gear, his helmet resting in his hands. "Let's go, I don't want anyone to get hurt because we were late." He put on his helmet and took his seat on the bike.

Kuroda placed the device on the gate. "Got it, got it, geez you're bossy." He hopped onto the motorcycle and ignored the smack on his back from Izuku as the gate let out a beep and opened, showing a straight road ahead. They tore down the road, the teenager letting out a whoop of excitement from his helmet.

Shinshou stared at his desk, tapping his pencil's eraser tapping on its surface. He'd brainwashed the only friend he had yesterday, and today, said friend's desk was empty; a glaring reminder of what Shinshou did. He no doubt broke the other teenagers trust in him, whatever friendship that has been forming was gone for sure, dust in the wind.

The insomniac remembered Midoriya's face after he'd brainwashed Bakugou, instead of any fear he'd been expecting, the green haired boy was akin to an excited puppy; jumping at the bit to ask him about his quirk. Midoriya was always either too nervous to speak properly or having an air of quiet confidence, there was no middle ground. Yet, when he was in the nurse's office, he hadn't been either of the two; he'd honestly panicked when Midoriya pinned him to the window, his friend's eyes wide with a primal fear as his body betrayed him.

He hadn't even thought about whether or not he should have done it, he just did it, no secondary thought put into it whatsoever. That honestly scared him; ever since kindergarten, when his quirk manifested, he had control over his emotions, not wanting to brainwash anyone out of anger; but yesterday, his concern for his friend outweighed his ten+ years of self control. He ignored the whispers in favor of being with much better company: his thoughts. All the while, he sent glances to the only empty seat in the class. *I'm sorry, Midoriya,* he thought, trying to focus on the lesson his teacher was talking about. *I just wish you could know how sorry I am.*

"What's the plan when we get there?" Izuku yelled above the wind, "And how long until we
"I'll tell you the plan when we don't have to yell at each other." Kuroda replied. They rode along the road for a few minutes, then turned to the left onto a clear dirt path. The engine spluttered and died as he turned the bike off and dismounted. He motioned for Izuku to crouch with him as he crawled near a bush. They both peeked out, watching as a bus pulled up from the opposite direction they came in. The door opened, and one of the most inconspicuous heroes to date, Eraserhead, stepped out.

"The plan is this:" His mentor began, watching as students started filing out of the bus and into the facility. "In a few minutes, the League is going to start their attack; it's reasonable to assume their warp gate is going to scatter everyone, so you'll have to put him out of action first." He turned to face his student, "How are you going to do that?"

Izuku didn't even hesitate, confidently whispering, "The file said that Kurogiri has metal plates around where his neck should be, it's reasonable to assume that since the plates never fall through his body that not all of him is gaseous."

Kuroda gave him a hard pat on the back, grinning. "I knew you'd figure it out." His face returned to its previous seriousness. "They're going to have a lot of cannon fodder, do you have the gear for large crowds?"

He nodded, taking three small green vials out of one of his many pockets to show them to his mentor. "Tear gas." He stated, pocketing the containers once more. "The helmet will filter it out for me, others? Not so much."

"And what about opponents that a Bo won't work against?" Kuroda inquired.

Izuku rolled his eyes, muttering something that sounded suspiciously like 'mother hen' before pulling two daggers from his belt. "They're more for close combat, but I'm hoping I won't have of resort to these." He said, placing the weapons back in their sheaths.

"Murphy's law, kid;" Kuroda muttered, "whatever can go wrong, will go wrong."

"And do so in a spectacular manner."

"Shut it, Izuku. They've got someone around here interfering with the wireless communications;" the next part had Kuroda's face pinching like he'd swallowed a lemon. "I'll find them while you fight. As much as I hate to admit it, I wouldn't be much help. I may not feel pain, but that's a double edged sword, I could get stabbed in the back and not even notice."

"Got it, Kuroda." Izuku looked back to the USJ. "Has enough time passed?" He asked, standing up and stretching his limbs out.

Kuroda did so as well, letting out a groan as he twisted the cricks out of his back. "Yep, let's give 'em hell, kid."

"I plan to do nothing less."

Ochako thought she was handling this situation fairly well, all things considered. A man made of black mist just warped her classmates away and told them they'd be tortured and killed, and she wasn't even panicking. Go her.
Thirteen stood between the remaining students that hadn't been warped to the other areas in the USJ and the villain, stance defensive but ready to attack if needed. "Iida, I need you to run for help." The muffled voice of the hero instructed, never turning around in favor of keeping an eye on their aggressor.

Ochako saw Iida startle from the corner of her eye. Eye wide with disbelief, he exclaimed, "I can't leave you or my classmates behind! That's not what a hero is supposed to do!"

Thirteen was about to reply when a banging sound came from the door behind Kurogiri. The entrance opened with a groan of protest, but the complaints were ignored by the figure that stepped in.

"Sorry I'm late," the man said as he dusted off his hands, deep voice slightly muffled by the black helmet on his head. "Traffic was terrible."

Kurogiri whipped around, narrowing his eyes at the darkly dressed vigilante. "It's you," he stated disdainfully, "the copycat."

Ochako and the others stood there, tensely watching the two darkly clad men have a standoff; the sound of Aizawa fighting the crowd of villains below them filling the air. The helmeted man made the first move, taking a staff from his belt and rushing Kurogiri. The villain's mist began to move faster, gathering at the running man's feet. He leaped, narrowly avoiding the warp gate opened below him. Faster than Kurogiri could recall his mist, the man swung the staff, sending the villain flying with the ear ringing sound of metal on metal; he landed, standing with his staff pointed threateningly at the recovering villain.

"Tell Shiragaki that this attack is over," he growled, Ochako couldn't help the shot of fear that ran down her spine at the tone. "Heroes are on their way as we speak. Even you wouldn't stand a change against at least fifteen pro heroes, Kurogiri."

The villain looked at the helmeted man, then to Thirteen, her classmates and her. He sighed, slowly disappearing into his own mist. "You'll live to regret this, Kuroko." The man said before fully stepping through his gate and closing it, leaving no indication that he'd been there.

"No, I won't." The man, Kuroko, quipped; whirling around on his heel to face Ochako and the others, assessing them as he casually twirled his weapon. "So," he stated, like he didn't just fight (and win) against a villain. "Am I late?"

Izuku was nervous, and no, it was not because he was about to start an all out war with the League of Villains; it was because he was standing right before his friends wearing his vigilante outfit.

I'm so dead, they're going to see right through me like glass. Kept repeating in his head during the entire fight with Kurogiri. He forced the anxiety to the side when he faced the students, trying to give off an almost carefree aura.

He'd tell you who wasn't carefree at the moment: Thirteen. The space-themed hero was threatening as he stood there, watching Izuku with distrust.

"Kuroko." Thirteen stated, "why are you here? How did you know they'd attack, unless you were part of them?"
"Exactly who do you think just defended you all from Kurogiri?" Izuku inquired, "I'm not here to fight you or the students, Thirteen; I'm here to help." He almost felt offended when the pro-hero gave him a disbelieving look. "What's the old saying? 'The enemy of my enemy is my friend'?"

They stayed like that for a moment, no one daring to make a move. The stalemate is broken when Ochako, almost shaking in her fear, spoke up, "Thirteen, shouldn't we try and rescue our classmates? If Kuroko is offering to help fight, that means we can focus on that, right?" The other classmates nodded in agreement, even Iida, though it was only grudgingly that he admitted the brunettes point.

Izuku couldn't help the wave of relief that hit him when Thirteen seemed to consider her words. Eventually saying, "I will keep an eye on you, but if you move to hurt the students, I will stop you."

The vigilante nodded, saying "Got it, go find the other students, I'll help Eraserhead." At that, he rushed forward and leaped down into the crowd of villains, letting out a whoop. /Let the battle begin/

Tsuyu and Mineta were the first to be rescued; they'd been warped to the shipwreck zone, where villains had lurked in the water to finish them off. Thankfully, Tsuyu had remained calm and gotten herself and Mineta onto the ship, away from danger for that moment. It was a simple matter of teamwork between Iida an Ochako to fly over and levitate them, having Iida carry them back with ease due to their lightened weight.

Thirteen checked them over, cautious of any injuries. "Are you alright?" He asked, stepping back to look at the two; Mineta was in tears, blubbering about how scary it was, Tsuyu on the other hand didn't look phased at all.

"We're ok, Thirteen, just a little shaken." the frog girl said, "we should probably get the others before they get hurt."

Thirteen turned to face the square, where his coworker and Kuroko were fighting a small army of villains. He didn't quite know how to feel about the vigilante, but at the moment he was an ally, albeit a hesitant one. "You're right, Tsuyu, we should."

The wind was muffled as Izuku fell, eyes darting to and fro to take in the situation below. Aizaw-Eraserhead's Quirk was best suited for villains with non mutant-type Quirks; but his weapons, cloths made of carbon nano-fiber and alloyed with steel wire, helped him even the odds with the opponents whose Quirks he couldn't erase. Even with all of that, a hero like Eraserhead is built for short fights, sneak attacks usually, he'd tire easily with this amount of villains. Izuky angled himself sharply, changing his trajectory to slam feet-first into a large minion about to try and attack the darkly clad hero, who was occupied dealing with other villains.

Eraserhead didn't look his way, expertly maneuvering his cloths to trip up two incoming opponents. "Considering you got past Thirteen, I'd say you're here to help; that, or I'm going I have to fight you."

Izuku reached into his pocket while kicking away another challenger, pulling out a single vial, he tossed it into the crowd of villains. "I'd like to think I'm helping." He said as the glass container broke
and tear gas billowed out, making a good number of the villains fall to the floor, clutching their eyes or throat. "I'd keep away from these if I were you, the gas lingers for at least two minutes."

The villains stayed back, hesitant after the display of Izuku's tear gas to come any closer. The two took the chance to meet at the middle, backs facing each other as they kept watchful eyes on their opponents. "How are my students." Eraserhead muttered, barely loud enough for Izuku to hear.

"They're fine, I sent Thirteen and the students who weren't warped to find the others." He replied back, twirling his Bo casually. The man would probably deny it if Izuku said he'd relaxed at that, relieved that the children were safe. "I may be a vigilante, Eraserhead, but putting children in the line of fire is far beyond the line."

Oh the irony.

"I hope you have a plan, Kuroko, because these guys aren't going to hesitate for much longer."

A familiar voice suddenly came in over his radio, static muffling the voice slightly. "Hey kid, I got the guy interfering with the signals. Send the call."

He grinned underneath his helmet, stating happily, "Not to worry, Eraserhead, I'm about to call in the cavalry."

The villains rush them.

The feeling that something was off was not a comfortable sensation, it felt like something within your very being was sending you an alarm for something you don't know yet. As All Might sat in the teacher's lounge with Principal Nedzu, that feeling nagged at him, making him curl and uncurl his toes as he tried to not appear rude to his superior.

"Are you alright, Toshinori?" Nedzu inquired, pouring yet another cup of tea for himself. "You seem a little distracted, is something the matter?"

The blond started, coughing slightly as he hurriedly replied, "N-nothing is the matter, Principal Nedzu." He chewed his lip, "It's just.....something doesn't feel right."

The principal tilted his head, humming in agreement. "It's true, the news that we received last night about the League of Villains was disturbing, to say the least; but it is because of that that I had your fellow teachers prepare for such situations. Everyone is ready to come when called, and I have substitutes on standby for the students."

Don't even get Toshinori started about last night. He'd received a grim phone call from his friend, who told him he needed to contact his fellow co-workers and get to the police department ASAP. It was near midnight by the time that everyone had gathered, faces serious as Naomasa placed a file on the conference table. The next two hours were spent with questions, planning, and headaches all around. By the time he'd gotten home it was three, and he had to be at work by seven. "I know, sir, but-"

He was interrupted when the Principal's phone went off in his pocket. Picking it out of his pocket, the man answered it, "Hello! This is Princi-" he hadn't even finished introducing himself when his eyes widened and his posture stiffened, "....let me put you on speaker." He stated, tapping his screen. The sound of fighting in the background was unmistakable as a deep voice spoke.
"I don't see why you'd need to do that, but ok." A grunt was heard from the voice's owner, the sound of a bone breaking following soon after. "The USJ is being attacked by the League of Villains, current major threats are Shiragaki Tomura, Kurogiri, and an unidentified enemy."

"What about the students?" Toshinori couldn't help but ask, leaning closer to the phone.

"Students have been scattered across the building, Thirteen is working with the students to rescue one another. They're as safe as they're going to get in this situation."

"And Eraserhead?"

"He just flipped a two hundred pound villain using his cloths, I'd say he's doing just fine. He's tiring though, and so am I. Hurry." The phone cut off, the static being the only sound within the room for a moment.

Nedzu pocketed his phone, "That was Kuroko, or apparently, his student." The small man whipped around, his steps falling heavy. "Gather everyone, we're needed at the USJ."

"No no no" Shiragaki muttered to himself, watching Kuroko and Eraserhead fight the horde of henchmen as his hands started twitching towards his neck. "Black foxes are bad, black foxes don't play by the rules, black foxes cheat. The gaunt man's head jerked towards the hulking mass next to him. "Noumu, kill him." Shiragaki ordered, pointing a spindly finger at the small helmeted form in the center of the crowd.

Something was off the moment the herd of villains began to back away, he could hear the heavy footfall of someone advancing quickly towards him. It was the unidentified threat, 'noumu' apparently, was currently charging towards Izuku. The creature's eyes were bulbous and lacked eyelids, no skull whatsoever protected the thing's brain.

"Look out!" Eraserhead yelled, sending a piece of cloth to try and slow the monstrosity's advance. Noumu batted the cloth aside like it was nothing, continuing to charge.

Thinking quickly, Izuku took a running start towards the creature; once he was close enough, he dug his pole into the ground and vaulted over the charging opponent. Strapping his Bo to his back and taking out his daggers as he said, "Well, looks like the monster came out to play." He dropped into his stance, weight evenly balanced as he held a dagger in each hand. Addressing Eraserhead, he said, "Go to the students, I'll keep them busy until help arrives."

The pro nodded, "Don't think this makes us buddy buddy, Kuroko. The next time we meet, I will try my best to apprehend you."

"I expect nothing less." Izuku said the the retreating form of the hero. He focused on Noumu, who was standing there like a puppet waiting to be manipulated.

"careful with this guy, Izuku." Kuroda stated from his radio, "we have no idea what he's capable of."

Izuku turned off his speaker to confirm, "Understood, Kuroda," Noumu whipped around, eyes locking into his small form with a maniacal light. "I don't think he's gonna be careful with me, though."

The beast charged once more, nearly a blur in the vigilantes eyesight; it was only the reflexes
instilled in him by Kuroda's merciless training that he managed to dodge, ducking between the beasts legs and dragging the edge of his blades across its legs. He watched in a mix of horror and fascination as the deep lacerations he'd made into blackened skin faded away, a thin stream of blood being the only indication that it had even been injured.

"Hyper regenerative abilities," he muttered to himself, "that's going to be an issue."

Kuroda spoke through his helmet again, "Kid, I can see the heroes coming, wrap this up quick."

"Not sure if I'll be able to." He replied, watching as Noumu rotated in his direction.

"Behind you!"

Izuku whipped around, dropping a dagger in favor of grabbing Shiragaki's outstretched hand by the wrist. "Well well, two on one is a bit unfair, isn't it?" He asked.

"Cheaters don't get to live." The gray haired man hissed, "Noumu."

He cursed as he heard the hulking beast's steps coming closer. Leaping away from Shiragaki to put distance between him and his two opponents. His curse became a cry of pain when a large black hand grabbed his forearm, feeling bones creak under the force behind the grip. His second dagger toppled from his hand, falling with a dull clatter to the floor.

"Shit, Izuku!" he could hear Kuroda let out a string of curses, "The heroes will be there in two minutes, try to hold on for an opening when they arrive." he could hear his sensei gritting his teeth together. "Hang on, kid."

Shiragaki ambled towards Izuku, Kurogiri materializing beside him from a warp gate. The vigilante tugged almost frantically against the imprisoning hold on his arm, but with no success. "So, Kuroko." Shiragaki stated, seemingly more composed. "We came here to kill All Might, but I guess we can settle for you."

The teenager's heart stopped, kill All Might? "Oh? And how would you manage that?" He inquired, keeping the tremble of pain from his voice.

Kurogiri was the one to answer this time, talking as casually as one would about the weather, not killing the number one pro-hero. "Our methods are not important, what matters is that we know how."

"Dead men tell no tales." Izuku countered, mentally counting down the time he had until he could escape.

Shiragaki looked like he was about to say something, but it was interrupted by the sound of crackling ice. The villains feet were encased in ice, except for Noumu, whose entire right side was frozen solid. The grip on Izuku's arm slackened, he didn't hesitate to pull him arm free. He looked around for the owner of the ice. He saw a crowd of students off to the side, a thin trail of ice leading to one student with red and white hair split down the middle. He would have thanked them, but Kuroda came in over his com.

"Kid, get out of there, heroes are coming any second."

Izuku nodded to himself, stepping away from the Noumu and reaching for a flash bang. He kept eye contact with the boy who'd saved him as he tossed it, whirling around and breaking into a sprint as it went off with a blinding burst of light; grabbing his daggers as he ran by. "I'm gonna need an
"got you covered." was the only warning as a section of the USJ's walls were detonated, the explosion going off twenty feet from Izuku. "Get out here, kid, we gotta haul ass and get out of here." He didn't hesitate to follow orders, dashing out and hopping onto Kuroda's awaiting motorcycle.

Not a second later, the entrance of the USJ burst open, all of the teachers rushing in to take stock of the situation. All of the students were in a group, relatively unharmed, while a lone figure laid trapped in ice. In the midst of the confusion, they failed to hear the sound of a motorcycle driving away.

Shiragaki let out a howl, flipping over a table in his rage. Kurogiri was back behind his bar counter, buttoning his dress shirt. "How could this have happened?" He grabbed the table, watching as it fell apart to dust under his touch. "The pawns were replicable, but we lost Noumu, Sensei's not going to be pleased." His hands reached up to his head, pulling at his hair as he worried his lip."Sensei will be disappointed, and it will because of that, that CHEATER Kuroko!"

Kurogiri nearly sighed in relief when the tv spluttered on, a scratchy voice speaking up from the screen. "Shiragaki."

The man in question whips towards the screen, eyes frantically wide. "Sensei, there was a cheater at the USJ." He said, "We lost Noumu, and All Might didn't even show until the last minute, and with several other heroes."

"It's alright, Shiragaki." The voice of Sensei stated calmly, "I was expecting Kuroko showing his face there."

The gaunt man froze, tilting his head. "Sensei?"

"You need to know how to plan around such nuisances." Sensei explained patiently, "Until this Kuroko is caught, it would be safe to assume that any and all plans you have possibly will be interfered with by him."

"What should I do, Sensei?" Shiragaki asked, staring at the tv like a fascinated child.

"Whatever you please," the disembodied voice replied, "but I believe that capturing him would be in your best interests."

"Of course, Sensei." Shiragaki turned to Kurogiri, who was now completely back in his bartender clothes. "Start gathering information on Kuroko, we have a certain fox to trap."

Kurogiri bowed, "As you command, Shiragaki."

By the time Kuroda and Izuku managed to get to the warehouse, the teenager was dead on his feet, all adrenaline leaving his body. He didn't even resist when his mentor picked him up bridal style and took him inside their hideout. "Ok kid." He groaned, setting Izuku gently onto the couch. "You're going to have to get changed yourself, because I am not going to do that."
"Fine." the green haired boy muttered, rising from his position to stand and grab his clothes. "Are you hurt, Kuroda?" He asked, taking off his armor and shoving a shirt over his head.

His mentor snorts, "Am I okay? The better question is are you ok, that Noumu guy had a death grip on you, you were almost disintegrated!"

Izuku was now in full civilian clothes, and plopped back down on the couch. "But I wasn't, 'almost' was the key word of that sentence." He got cuffed lightly over the head. "Hey!"

"Hey yourself," Kuroda shot back, picking up Izuku again with little effort. "we need to get you home, before your mom gets home and freaks."

Izuku let out a pitiful sound as he stood back up, "Fine." He drawled, shuffling his way to Kuroda's motorcycle; he's stopped by a heavy hand on his shoulder. "What now?"

"I don't trust you not to take a surprise nap while I'm driving and fall off." Kuroda walked in front of him and bent down. "Hop on."

Izuku looked from Kuroda to himself. "You cannot be serious." He deadpanned.

"I am, now get on before I carry you bridal style again."

"Ok ok." The teenager relented, climbing on to his mentor's back, keeping his legs close to his mentor's midsection as he wrapped his arms around the man's neck.

"Jeez kid," Kuroda commented, standing up and beginning the walk to Izuku's home. "You're starting to get heavy."

"It's muscle." Izuku replied sleepily, barely managing to keep his eyes open.

"How much did you eat today, anyways?" He asked, waiting at a crosswalk and decidedly ignoring the adoring looks old ladies were sending them. "You should be tired, but not this tired."

"A banana."

Kuroda froze, asking incredulously, "A banana? You took on the league of villains with only a piece of fruit fueling you?" He sounded mad.

"I was too nervous to eat anything else." Izuku admitted almost shyly, shrinking from his mentor's gaze. "Sorry, Kuroda."

"Don't apologize," he said, jostling his cargo slightly as he went up the stairs to said cargo's apartment. "just take care of yourself, that'd be more than enough." He opened the door with one hand. "You didn't even lock the door? Forget vigilante training, you need some common sense classes." He turned his head to look at his student, who's eyes were closed as his breathing evened. He sighed, then placed the boy on the couch, reaching for the blankets thrown across the floor and placing them over the teen.

He stood back and looked over the sleeping boy. A boy, that's all he was, a boy that could judo flip a man five times his weight. Good God, what has he done. He transformed a young teenager into a highly dangerous vigilante, on the run from people on all sides. Heroes, police, Villains; hell, even other vigilantes will be after Izuku, all because of the name he had passed down to the boy.

He reached a hand down to brush stray locks of hair away from Izuku's face, the small frame of the boy relaxing into his touch. This, this was what made it worth it. The day he met the kid, he'd
seen something about to break in Izuku's eyes, something that was vital to life: willpower. He didn't know what happened to Izuku that day, but he looked hurt, and angry, and about to lose hope; Kuroda couldn't leave the kid like that in good conscience, so he'd taken the green haired teen under his wing, teaching him everything that he knew; that light was mended and rekindled, but Kuroda couldn't decide if it was worth the cost: his innocence. He'd yet to take a life, but the time was coming where Izuku wouldn't have a choice.

He prayed he'd be there to pick up the pieces when it did.

Izuku was jolted awake by the door opening, his mother walking in with a happy cry of, "Izuku! I'm home!"

"Welcome home, mom." He greeted from the couch, blushing when his stomach growled loudly.

"Looks like you slept through lunch." Inko observed amusedly, walking into the kitchen. "I'll start making dinner."

He moved to get up, but winced as pain raced up his left arm. The appendage was swollen and an angry red, bruises splotching all over his forearm. "I'm gonna get changed, mom." He called, racing down the hall and to his room. He shed his shirt, biting his lip as the piece of clothing brushed against his arm, and put on a baggy long sleeved pajama shirt. Izuku inspected the swollen arm in the mirror, he'd have a hell of a time hiding this, that's for sure.

At that moment, his mother called down the hall. "Izuku! You have a visitor!"

Who would visit him, of all people? It was probably Iida, carrying the homework he's no doubt missed, or maybe it's Ochako, checking up on him. Nevertheless, he was curious, so we walked to the living room. What he saw was not what he expected.

Shinshou Hitoshi sat on his couch, looking uncomfortable as his mother tried to get him to make small talk. The blue haired boy perked up when he saw Izuku in the doorway, his back straightening immediately. "Midoriya," Shinshou said, standing up from the couch. "Can we talk outside?"

Izuku nodded, opening the door and holding it open for his classmate/maybe-friend. The door clicked behind them, the soft sound almost sounding like a gong with the silence between them. "So," Izuku started, leaning back on his heels. "What was it you wa-"

Shinshou interrupted him, blurting, "I'm sorry for brainwashing you yesterday." Before the other teen could even finish his sentence.

Izuku blinked, genuinely befuddled. "What do you mean?"

The insomniac looked at him like he was crazy. "What do I mean?" He asked, "I mean that I brainwashed you yesterday!"

"But you did it with good intentions." The freckled boy interjected, "I'm not mad, Shinshou. If anything, I should be thankful, you calmed me down before I could hurt myself."

"Y-you're not mad?"

"Only that you would think I'd be." Izuku's replied, his eyes softening as he said the next part. "besides, you used your quirk to help someone, that's hero material right there."
Shinshou was at a loss, the boy in front of him, the first friend he's had in years, wasn't mad at him for using his quirk on him. Instead, he was thanking him. The insomniac was snapped out of his thoughts by Izuku waving a hand in his face. "What was the question?" He asked.

"I asked if you wanted to stay for dinner." Izuku said, starting to ramble, "I mean, you can say no, I'd understand that; but my mom always makes more good than I can eat when I get sick and-"

Now it was Shinshou's turn to interrupt, "I'd like that, thank you. Besides, I have your homework anyways, might as well get some food out of it."

The smile that lit up Izuku's features looked like it could power the sun, he opened the door.
"Then what are we waiting for?"

As he spent dinner with the Midoriyas, Shinshou came to realize something; Midoriya just wasn't the type of kid to get mad; The kid didn't have a violent bone in his body, at least, that he knows of. The night was spent with laughter, homework, and awkward stories-courtesy of Mrs. Midoriya. By the time he got home, he had his completed homework in one hand, a container of leftovers in the other and a small smile on his face.

"See you tomorrow, Shinshou!" Midoriya had said as the bus home rolled up, handing him the container of food.

Yeah, Shinshou thought, stepping into his house. See you tomorrow, Izuku.
Well, looks like Izuku was right about it being hell to hide his injury; he groaned as he woke up, his left arm throbbing angrily. Through a half lidded eye, Izuku snuck a look at his arm. It was even more swollen than it was the night before, and the bruises now took the form of a giant handprint, sporting undertones of blue and yellow as his body tried to heal. Thankfully, his arm wasn't swollen enough for his sleeves to show any noticeable difference; small mercies for the vigilante today, apparently. Quickly, Izuku grabbed his things, ate breakfast, and ran out the door, determined to keep his mom unsuspecting of his injuries.

The morning was bright, sunshine filtering through the treetops to cast colorful shadows on the sidewalks Izuku walked down. Waiting at the crosswalk, he could help but overhear the conversation between two college students next to him.

"I'm telling you," one teen began, "Kuroko's a hero, maybe not an official one, but in all the ways that count."

"Except that he's breaking the law," the other argued, "when he's caught, he'll be treated like any other villain. He should have just stopped entirely, he had everyone thinking he was dead, he could have easily lived out his life without anyone being the wiser."

The light turned green, signaling for the pedestrians to walk; Izuku wasted no time hurrying away from the two young adults and their debate. Looking around, his vigilante self seemed to be all over; the newspapers shouted his name on almost every front page, a news anchor was doing a section on him as he walked by the tv station. Everyone now knew of his presence, and were asking one question: "Who is the Kuroko?"

He walked past the gates of Yuuei, noting the repaired barriers hiding within them. The halls were abuzz with chatter, mostly being gossip of the day before at the USJ. No one knew the fine details, but they knew enough to know that Villains attacked and the infamous Black Fox appeared. The talking became muffled as he closed the door to 1-C behind him, sighing in relief as his ears were given a reprieve.

He perked up when he heard his name, "Midoriya." Shinshou sat at his desk, slightly lifting a hand in greeting, an even more slight smile on his face. "Hear about yesterday with class 1-A?" He asked as Izuku sat down next to him, letting his bag plop onto the ground with a thud.

"More like who hasn't heard it," Izuku groaned, carefully placing his left arm on the desk in a comfortable position. "The news was covering it a little when I was eating breakfast, was anyone hurt?" He tried to seem interested as His friend told him what he already knew.

"No, but there's rumors going around that Kuroko showed up." Shinshou explained as other
students filed in, "Some of the 1-A students were saying that he showed up to help, even working with Aizawa to fight the villains."

He would have continued, but their conversation was interrupted by a classmate stepping up to Izuku. "Hello," she greeted, cocoa skin pulled into a smile as she held her book bag on one shoulder. "we haven't been introduced yet, I'm Kahiro Amaya."

"Midoriya Izuku." he said, sending a confused sidelong glance to Shinshou, who only shrugged.

"I noticed you weren't in class yesterday," Kahiro said, placing her bookbag down to swivel her chair and face him. "Are you okay?"

That was unexpected, all Izuku could manage to say was, "O-oh," he swallowed the rising lump in his throat, "I'm fine, Kahiro, I just caught a stomach bug that was going around my neighborhood."

"That's good," She sighed, relieved. "hearing all of this villain attack stuff had me worried for you."

"Me?" Izuku asked.

"Him?" Shinshou also asked.

"Well yeah," she said, like it was the most obvious thing in the world. "Us class 1-C students have to stick together, y'know?"

Any chance at further conversation was ended when the teacher stepped in, barking with authority. "Sit down, sit down. Just because class 1-A got some excitement yesterday doesn't mean you can slack off!"

Bakugou was seething with rage, and while this wasn't anything new, the cause of it certainly was. He'd been there at the USJ, he'd fought against real life villains, stuff that would scare the living shit out of the spineless cowards in the lower classes. He and Kirishima had been standing amongst a pile of incapacitated villains when Thirteen and a few of his other classmates showed up. Both he and everyone else in his class had seen Kuroko fight the fugly bastard Noumu, get caught by said fugly bastard, then escape right under the heroes noses when the half 'n half bitch decided to help the vigilante escape the villain's grip.

Not once, that fucking vigilante hadn't used his quirk once in the fight against the big villains, and he'd held his own against them. What the hell was the point of having a quirk if you didn't even use it? You might as well be Quirkless!

Quirkless, like that fucking useless Deku. Who did that shit stain think he was? Getting into Yuuei with him, making friends with students in the heroics department; when will that fuckmunch realize that he can't be a hero? Yeah, he said that he was applying for the general department, but it was possible for general department students to get into the heroics department if they were deemed qualified. The fucker took the easy way in, and was making himself all cozy with 1-A students so when-- if --he got into the heroics department he'd already have a niche to fit into.

Bakugou felt his blood boil when he spotted the idiot himself, chatting away with the gravity bitch and engine for legs as he walked down the hall to lunch. What set him off was the sight of that brainwashing fucker cracking what seemed to be a joke and Deku laughing.
Fuming, he stomped over, catching the attention of all the students in the hall. Fine, let them watch, that'll teach someone as useless as Deku to try and move up in the ranks.

He grabbed the nerd's left arm, growling, "Hey, Deku, what ar-" his sentence if caustic words was cut off as he felt a hand wrap around his arm and the world became a blur, jarring itself back into place when he slammed into the floor with a loud bang. Immediately, his eyes locked onto the shaking form of Deku, who was holding the arm he'd grabbed, biting his lip and shaking in pain.

Stunned from the impact, all he could say was, "What the fuck?"

Deku froze, noticing juse who he had flipped to the ground. The nerd's friends were quick to react, Engine head stepping between him and the green haired idiot while the brown haired bitch and the blue bastard guided Deku out of the silent crowded hallway, the Quirkless idiot still holding his arm like Bakugou had broken it.

"What on earth is going on here?" A teacher, Cementoss, asked, stepping closer and offering a hand to Bakugou, who ignored it in favor of standing up by himself.

Iida was quick to give his side of the story "Bakugou tried to lay a hand on my friend, Cementoss," he adjusted his glasses, shooting a disdainful look towards the blond. "My friend reacted rather harshly and flipped him. He's with my other friends, in classroom 1-A most likely."

The cement based pro hero turned to face Bakugou, "Is this true?" He asked, crossing his bulky arms expectantly.

Bakugou swore under his breath, looking away as he said, "So what if it is?"

"For one, you and me are going to the principal's office." Cementoss said, turning around and making a gesture for the volatile teen to follow him. "As for you're friend, Iida, make sure it doesn't happen again, and he won't be in any trouble."

The spectacled boy bowed to the back of the teacher as Bakugou stalked after the teacher, slouched and muttering under his breath. He quickly made his way to his classroom, anxious about the freckled teen.

---

Great, absolutely fantastic, Izuku sat in a chair that Ochako pulled out for him, staring at his feet while two of his three friends looked at him expectantly. His arm was on fire, practically screaming its protest at the pressure Kacchan had put on it, he bit his lip to contain a hiss as he adjusted the appendage. Ochako and Shinshou both looked up from him as Iida stepped in, quietly closing the door behind him.

"Midoriya's not in trouble, but Bakugou got taken to the principal by Cementoss." Iida explained, taking his place right next to the two standing teenagers. "What was that, Midoriya?"

"Yeah," Shinshou agreed, crossing his arms. "The moment he laid a hand on you, you freaked on him."

"Not that he didn't deserve it," Ochako added, "but you were holding your arm like he hurt you."

"U-uh," Izuku struggled for a believable explanation, "I was training with my martial arts instructor and we got too into the fight."
"What did they do to your arm?" Iida questioned, stepping forward to try and touch his left arm. Izuku quickly yanked the appendage away from the taller boy's reach. "I wouldn't do that!"

Izuku yelped, "It really hurts, especially when someone touches it." He explained, holding his arm close. "I'm fine guys, it'll heal in a few days." Hopefully.

His friends didn't seem to buy it, the furrow in all of their brows deepening. "You should go to the nurse of it hurts that much!" Ochako said.

"That's true," Iida agreed, "Recovery Girl is stationed in the nurse's office, she'd be able to heal you quickly."

Oh man, having a hero look at the obvious hand shaped bruise on his arm, that's just a recipe for disaster; especially if said hero was the nurse to the school of heroes that saw him get injured, that'd practically be a neon tag saying: "I'M KUROKO" slapped onto him. "I-it's fine, really." He tried to pacify, waving his good arm's hand dismissively. "It's just some bruising, Kacchan grabbed it and it surprised me, that's all."

"Show us, then."

Izuku blinked, "What?"

Shinshou leaned forward, slightly in the freckled teen's personal space. "Show us. If it's just a bruise, you wouldn't have a problem with that, right?"

"I-I'd have to take off my shirt." Izuku stuttered, "What would the teachers think if they walked in and saw that?"

"Then you'll show Recovery Girl." Iida stated factually, already going to open the door while Shinshou and Ochako manhandled Izuku, being mindful of his arm.

"G-guys!" He squawked, drawing the attention of some older students as his friends dragged him through the halls. "This is really unnecessary!"

"It is if you're not taking care of yourself." Ochako stated simply, getting many sounds of agreement from the two males helping her carry Izuku. Knocking gently on the nurses door with her foot before kicking it open.

Recovery Girl looked up from her desk, seemingly unfazed by three students literally carrying another in against his will. "Hello, dearies," she greeted kindly, swiveling off of her chair as Izuku's traitorous friends forced him into a chair. "May I ask why you're carrying young Midoriya into my office?"

"He hurt his arm, claimed it was just some bruising." Shinshou stated like he was a spy relating information. "But when someone grabbed it, he flipped them, then wouldn't let go of it."

Recovery Girl looked up from her desk, seemingly unfazed by three students literally carrying another in against his will. "Hello, dearies," she greeted kindly, swiveling off of her chair as Izuku's traitorous friends forced him into a chair. "May I ask why you're carrying young Midoriya into my office?"

"He hurt his arm, claimed it was just some bruising." Shinshou stated like he was a spy relating information. "But when someone grabbed it, he flipped them, then wouldn't let go of it."

She gingerly took Izuku's arm into re hand, a slight hiss still escaping him when she out pressure on his forearm. "Oh dear," she said, letting go of his arm and shooing the three other teens out of the room. "You can go to lunch now, I'll make sure Midoriya is healed." Once they were gone, the elderly lady turned to Izuku, her gaze fierce.

"Just how does one fracture both their radius and ulna and claim it's 'just bruising'?" She asked, "F-fracture?" Oh man, Kuroda would kill him if he found out.
Recovery girl nodded, "Take your shirt off," she instructed, going over to her desk and pulling out some bandages and a sling. "I need to see the damage myself."

Hesitantly, Izuku unbuttoned his jacket, sliding the shirt off carefully as to not aggravate his fractured arm. He could say one thing, it definitely looked worse than it did that morning. The skin was a furious red, throbbing in protest of Kacchan grabbing it. The skin was all kinds of discolored, blacks and blues and yellows mixing with the pale and red on his arm to make a near nauseating mosaic of color on his arm.

If it bothered Recovery Girl, she didn't show it, but she did click her tongue with worry as she gently held his forearm in her weathered hands. "What did you do to get this?" She asked calmly, her face set in stone as she examined the bruises.

"I was training with my Sensei." Izuku quickly lied, "He has a size modifying quirk, he wanted me to know how to defend myself from people with mutant type quirks." Not a lie, Izuku could still remember the sore spots he'd obtained with that particular month of training.

The elderly woman didn't seem all that convinced but, thankfully, let it slide, for now. "Your Sensei should be more careful with you," she commented, "but good news: now that I've seen the extent of it, I can say that I can fully heal your arm."

"Thank you, ma'am." Izuku said, watching is fascination as she pressed a kiss to his forearm. The bruises faded at a record speed, and the swelling went away entirely in the span of two seconds. The sensation of his bones resetting and healing was a strange sensation, but before he could marvel at his completely healed arm, a wave of fatigue hit him like a bus.

Recovery Girl smiled knowingly as the freckled teen yawned. "Yes, my healing tends to have that effect on people." She handed him a bag of fruit slices, bright red and fresh. "Eat this, you'll feel better once you get your energy back."

Izuku took the bag eagerly and began to devour the fruit, managing a quick, "Thank you." Before he swallowed yet another slice of apple.

Recovery Girl shook her head, commenting, "Ah, the eagerness of youth. You'd best get to class." She advised as Izuku put his shirt and jacket back on. "Oh, and Midoriya," she said right as he was about to leave, "if you get injured like that from training again, I'll have to take legal action against your mentor. Training is much different from what leads to a fractured arm."

Izuku quickly nodded, trying to ignore the way his heart began to beat frigid. "Understood, Ma'am, thank you!" With that, he bolted through the door, letting it swing quietly shut.

Aizawa sat on one of the couches in the teacher's lounge, nursing a cup of tea along with his plethora of bruises. The fight yesterday had been hard, that much was certain, but the scruffy man's thoughts were elsewhere. More specifically, his thoughts were on a certain vigilante that had shown up near the beginning of the attack. He'd honestly felt a stab of defeat when he saw the black figure dropping from the stairs, fighting a crowd of villains to protect his students he could handle, but a vigilante on top of that? But then Kuroko had drop-kicked a villain that had somehow escaped his notice, and the outlook started to look up a bit.

He was broken from his reverie when the door opened and the large form of All Might stepped in. "Hello, Aizawa," the hero greeted, poofing into his scrawnier form as he took a seat across from
him. "Is the tea any good?"

Aizawa simply nodded, placing the cup down in favor of leveling his gaze with the blond before him. "What did you think of the USJ incident yesterday?" He inquired.

All Might let out a sigh, wiping away the small trail of blood that dribbled from his mouth. "It was unexpected," he began, "If Principal Nedzu never received the call from Kuroko, we might not have made it in time." The implication of what that could have meant weighed heavy in the air. "What did you think of him, Aizawa?"

"His fighting method is almost exactly like the first Kuroko; fast, brutally efficient, and never with his Quirk." he commented, leaning back in his seat and letting out an annoyed sigh. "It seems like his claim of being the previous student holds some truth to it. I've never seen reflexes quite as fast as the old Black Fox's, and this new guy matched his reaction time almost exactly."

"He seemed to be concerned for the students," All Might pointed out, "the students with Thirteen from the start said that he fought Kurogiri to defend them."

Aizawa nodded, "We don't know why though," he said, frowning slightly. "we don't know any of his motives, and that makes him dangerous. What I don't get is the timing of his appearance, it's been five years since his mentor died, why start making his presence known now?"

Toshinori nodded, "That's something only he knows, we'll just have to ask him when he's caught." He pushed off of the couch with a grunt, standing up and transforming into his muscular form. "I must go, my next class is starting soon."

Aizawa didn't reply, merely waving his goodbye as the massive man left the room, leaving him in solitude once again. He sighed, picking up his tea, which was now cold. 'We'll just have to ask him when he's caught', All Might had said, but that's only if he gets caught, Aizawa found himself mentally adding.

Damn, vigilantes never make it easy.

Izuku rushed to his class, silently marveling at the lack of pain from his healed arm as he opened the door to his classroom. He let the door close behind him as he stepped forward to look around, confused. Nobody was in the classroom, the empty seats giving an eerie quiet to the room. He startled as his phone went off in his pocket, taking it out, he read the message. It was from Shinshou.

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**Received 12:45 pm.**

_We're at the gym, apparently we have PE class._

Sent 12:47 pm.

Got it, on my way.

---

He pocketed the phone and exited the room, looking around for some sort of map to lead him to the gym. It took a bit of trial and error, but he did eventually find it. Standing in front of the double doors, he took a breath before opening them and stepping in.
Turns out he needed that breath, because standing in front of his classmates stood All Might. The hero had been explaining something before perking up to the sound of the door closing. With a never fading grin, he turned to Izuku. "Ah, you're here, come and join your class." He said, gesturing to the teenager's classmates. Silently, Izuku walked to Shinshou, who stood at the back of the crowd of admiring All Might fans; Kahiros stood next to him, waving enthusiastically.

"What took you so long?" She asked, hazel eyes lit with curiosity. "Shinshou told me you were at the nurse."

"I was." He replied quietly, trying to tune into what All Might was saying.

"-and that's why I've decided that we'll play a game popular in the United States: Dodgeball!"

Oh no, Kuroda's told Izuku about so many things he saw in the west, but his eyes always gained a particular shine when he started talking about dodgeball. The way he described it, it was a game that revolved around two things: catching and throwing. Dodging was an option too, but Kuroda simply said that that was the path of a coward. Ironic, considering Kuroda spent an entire month teaching how to avoid hits. The entire time All Might was explaining the rules, Izuku was having flashbacks of his mentor animatedly explaining the game in his own terminology. He didn't even notice when All Might dismissed them to get changed until Shinshou grabbed his arm and dragged him, Kahiros giggling as she went to join her group.

The locker room was abuzz with chatter, boys boasting that they were the ones that would win as they undressed. Entering in his locker number, Izuku took out his gym clothes and began to change as well. He was about to put on his shirt when he noticed the silence in the room. He looked up to see all of the boys staring at him. Blinking, he asked, "What?"

"Dude," one student said, "how are you so ripped?" A lot of the other students nodded, continuing to look at Izuku with a mix of fascination and envy.

He looked down on himself, looking at his unclad torso. The last year of training had certainly changed his physique, baby fat fading as lean muscle took its place, but was it really that impressive? "Uh," he began, hurrying to put on his shirt as he explained. "my martial arts instructor's pretty strict."

"'Pretty strict?'" Shinshou asked, easing an eyebrow skeptically. "you look like you were forced to bench-press a car."

Any other embarrassing comments about Izuku were muffled as the boy darted out of the locker room and back into the gym. Kahiros stood with the group of fully changed students, talking with some of the other classmates that have never bothered to talk to either him or Shinshou. She lit up when she spotted him, waving him over.

Shinshou came up behind him, nudging him forward. "Come on," he said, calmly walking to the girl they'd met only that day. "She's not gonna leave us alone anyways, may as well go along with it."

All Might waited for everyone to gather, then began to speak. "I will now pick two team captains! Who would like to volunteer?" Immediately, almost every hand in the room shot up. Amongst the sea of raised hands, the hero picked a buff student, who swaggered confidently to the front; and Kahiros, who let out an excited noise before practically zipping next to the other captain. "Now, begin picking your teams!"

Kahiros was the first one to speak, "I want Midoriya to be on my team!"
The buff boy scoffed as Izuku made his way through the crowd. "A stick as your first choice?" He asked condescendingly, "this's be all too easy."

Oh it was on.

Getting the teams picked out was fairly easy, the arrogant captain picking the mutant type quirk holders while Kahiro picked Shinshou and seemingly weak classmates. One would look at the team and immediately comment on the uneven distribution. All Might didn't comment on it, only saying, "Perfect! Now, go to the end of your respective sides and wait for me to give the signal." Once everyone was in place, he added one last thing, "Also! Usage of your Quirk is allowed within reason! Begin!"

Izuku stood back, watching as his teammates scrambled to get the rubber balls stationed on the middle of the floor. The mutant type Quirk holders were slower, but it went without saying that some of them would be throwing faster. Izuku dodged one such ball with a sidestep, the sphere making an audible smack against the wall behind him. His teammates were taking All Might's words to heart, he could see one flinging the ball with a lizard like tail and another leaping out of the way, going at least ten feet into the air. Despite the usage of their Quirks, the mutant type team eventually wore down his team's numbers to only two people: Kahiro and him. A quick volley of balls knocks that number down to one, Izuku now stood alone in front of a group of victorious teenagers, each one grinning as they grabbed a ball and wound up for a throw.

"Come on, Midoriya!" Kahiro called from the side, "Show them what for! You can't just let them win!"

He had looked away at that moment, and that was when the team threw. What happened next was pure instinctual reaction, he leaped into the air, curling his body into a ball as seven dodgeballs whizzed past him, bouncing harmlessly around him. When he landed, he could see the dumbstruck expressions of the other team while his own cheered.

All Might was watching the scene unfold with a grin. "That's the spirit, Midoriya!"

Izuku felt a familiar burn begin in his stomach, adrenaline pumping through him as he grabbed two rubber balls. He tossed one up, the other team watching it with their eyes as it began its descent; Izuku worked out which one was going to catch it and threw the remaining projectile, getting the boy out before he could catch the ball. Seeing something coming through his peripheral, Izuku dropped flat to the floor, the ball flying harmlessly past him. The cheers were beginning to become near deafening as Izuku quickly whittled the other team down to one player as well.

The opposite team captain looked pissed, but Izuku has seen actual villains near insanity, this was nothing. The boy had a malicious grin on his face as he wound up the throw. When he let it fly, Izuku anticlimactically teacher his hand out and caught it without fumbling, the smack of the ball against his hand echoing throughout the gym. The silence didn't last long, because not two moments later his team was rushing him with yells of victory.

He managed to make his way past the crowd and to the boy he'd just got out. "Good game." He said, holding a hand out to the other student.

The boy stared at the hand, then took it with a grin. "You're good, Midoriya." He complimented, "Name's Tsuyo Eiji. You've gotta teach me some of those moves, man."

All Might watched the interaction, a true smile on his face. Winning may be important to some, but camaraderie was the real prize, as cheesy as that sounded.
The class was still chattering about the dodgeball match into the last class of the day, a lot of Izuku's classmates coming up to congratulate him and comment on his skill, much to his embarrassment and Shinshou's amusement. Kahiro moved from in front of the two to beside them after PE, talking animatedly about pretty much any subject that came to her mind.

The teacher called for silence, "Quiet down, quiet down, I have some information for you all." That shut them all up real quick, the clamor vanishing as fast as it could. "Good. Now as you all know, if you work hard enough, you have a possibility of being moved to the heroics department." He grew irritated when the chatter started up again, he smack his hand against the table. "Quiet! Anyways, the sports festival is coming up in the next month, if you do well then there's a large chance you'd be moved to the heroics department." This time, he let the students talk amongst themselves, adding, "You have a month to prepare, good luck."

The sports festival, Izuku completely forgot about that. A large tournament where the up and coming heroic and general department show off their abilities to prospective agencies. When he was smaller, that was like Christmas had come early, getting to see all of those amazing quirks of the up and coming heroes. Now? Hoho, no way in hell was he gonna compete, he was doing just fine in the general department, thank you very much.

"Oi, Midoriya," Shinshou said, turning in his seat to face him.

Izuku looked to his friend, "Hm?"

"I was wondering if you could, uh," the insomniac seemed almost embarrassed, bringing up a hand to rub against the back of his neck. "I was wondering if you could help me train for the festival. I can't rely on my quirk all the time, y'know?"

Kahiro joined in, "Yeah! You could teach me all of those moves you pulled in gym today!" She started imitating him with exaggerated moves and sounds.

"Me too!" Another student piped up.

"Me three!" Soon, a crowd had gathered around Izuku's desk, everyone asking for his help.

Overwhelmed, Izuku held his hands up in a silent plea for quiet. Once the noise died down, he spoke, "I can't help all of you individually," he heard a groan from several of his classmates before he continued, "but I can design training plans. I wouldn't be helping you one on one, but it'd give you an outline of what you should do to train."

"How long would we have to wait?" Kahiro asked, leaning forward expectantly with wide eyes.

Izuku tapped his chin, humming thoughtfully. "Well," he began, "I'd have to have an understanding of your quirks and how they work, not to mention your current physical level of fitness, if I had those I could design about three plans a day."

"I have everybody's number," Kahiro piped in helpfully, "I can text you all their info if you give me yours."

Without much thought, Izuku took out his phone and handed it to the girl. "Knock yourself out." He honestly wouldn't have been surprised if she actually did so.

The bell rang just as she handed it back, saying, "Thanks, Midoriya!" Then bolting out of the
"I hope you know what you're getting into." Shinshou stated, waiting by the doorway for Izuku. "Don't push yourself to help them, they didn't even acknowledge us until today."

"I know that," Izuku said, "but isn't it better to help where you can?"

"You're going to get taken advantage of one day."

"Hush, I'm doing yours first, don't be jealous." Izuku stated, walking with his friend to the entrance of the school. "I'll hand you both a printed copy and a PDF in case you lose that, see you!" He didn't see Shinshou waving goodbye as he turned around and began his walk to Kuroda and his' hideout.

A deep unease was stirring in Izuku as he stared at the warehouse doors, something was off, the air had an underlying tension to it. It was only after he opened the door that his instinct was proved correct as a knife flew through the air in his direction. Thinking quickly, Izuku grabbed a nearby wooden board and held it out, the blade digging into the wood with a thunk.

"Well well, is this the reason you've decided to show your ugly mug in Japan again, Kuroda?" A rasping voice inquired. Izuku looked to his attacker, a lean man with bandages wrapped around the upper half of his face. The man was leaning his chair back, Kuroda sitting stiffly across from him. His mentor's face was stony, but Izuku could see the underlying fury. "No, this is my student." He explained curtly, "I don't appreciate you endangering my pupil's life, Stain."

Stain let out a gravelly laugh, "With you teaching him? He probably moved without thinking, you were always about dodging blows instead of taking some." He turned to Izuku, "Am I right?"

This was a test, Izuku was sure of it; Stain's posture was expectant, he wanted to see his reaction. "Kuroda has been an excellent teacher and I don't doubt what he's taught me;" he said, trying to keep his body relaxed. "But I think I'll have to agree with him about throwing sharp objects at me without warning."

Kuroda sent Izuku an approving look as Stain let out a surprised laugh. "Looks like you taught him more than how to fight, he's picked up your sass as well."

"You've outstayed your welcome, Stain." Izuku's mentor said, "It's time for you to leave." He stood up from the table to try and loom over the man, but Stain wasn't very effected.

Stain stood up, "Fine, fine, I know when I'm not welcome." He said, walking towards the exit.

"I can say with confidence that when you were gone I didn't miss the attitude." Stain commented, pausing as he walked by Izuku. "I'd be more careful, Kuroko, the League of Villains isn't something you should challenge half assed." He was gone before Izuku could react, displaced air creating a slight breeze.

The teenager stood there awkwardly, unsure of what to say. "Uh,"

"That was another vigilante," Kuroda explained, sitting back down in the chair with a sigh. "The
Izuku's eyes widened in horror, his stomach threatening to commit mutiny. "Hero-killer, Stain?" The man threw a knife at him the moment he stepped into the hideout, for some reason he couldn't find any reason to doubt Kuroda's knowledge.

He nodded, raising a hand to cover his eyes. "He's new, not as new as you, but he's been making himself known by killing small time heroes. Have you noticed that the police haven't been hounding you lately?" At Izuku's hesitant nod Kuroda continued, "That's because he's been picking up his pace. The news hasn't sent out any warnings to the public just yet, but the police are scrambling to catch him before he attacks one of the bigger heroes."

"Why was he here though?" Izuku couldn't help but ask, taking the seat where Stain had been sitting.

"He was training to become a vigilante when I was Kuroko," Kuroda explained, "I didn't know what he planned to do, so I gave him a few pointers to refine his technique. He stuck around after that."

"Ah."

"Enough about my somewhat over-complicated past," Kuroda leaned forward, "what's up, kid?"

Izuku startled, unexpecting of the sudden change of subject. "W-well, the sports festival is coming up in a month, and I kinda promised I'd make training schedules for all of my classmates."

"You're a mess, Izuku." Kuroda stated, his lips lifting into a crooked grin.

He rolled his eyes. "So you've told me, several times."

"You thinking about competing?" Kuroda asked, getting up and grabbing two bottles of water, handing one to Izuku as he sat back down.

"No," the teen said, taking a sip from the bottle. "Too much of a risk of being recognized."

"Not if you learn a new fighting style." Kuroda said.

Izuku stared at his mentor, "Are you saying what I think you're saying?" He asked with wide eyes.

"Yep." Kuroda stated, popping the 'p' as he leaned back in his chair. "This'd be an ideal learning experience, test your skills against the up and coming heroes."

"But what about getting moved to the heroics department?" Izuku questioned, his mind whirring at the possible pros and cons. "I can't be both a vigilante and a hero. Not to mention I don't even want to be one."

"Then bring that up with the principal," Kuroda advised, "I'm sure they'd keep you in the general department if you requested it."

That.....actually wasn't a bad idea. "That could work, thanks Kuroda."

The man took a faux bow. "I live to serve."

"Hamburgers, maybe." Izuku dodged the incoming water bottle by ducking his head.
"Get out of here, kid, your mom wanted you home early."

He nodded and got out of the chair, it was only as he was opening the door that he realized the implications of what Kuroda said. "How do you know that?"

"You mom put her number into my phone when I wasn't looking." He stated, not even looking in Izuku's direction. "She's about to text you in....." There's a vibration in Izuku's pocket, "Right now."

"You're a smartass,"

"And you're about to be late. Get going."

Izuku tried to hide his amused smile as he turned and left; Kuroda's laugh trailing after him.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter: a certain half redhead makes his appearance.
Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

Hey guys! I have some bad news....I have to go on hiatus for the next three weeks, the summer camp I'm going to doesn't allow phones at all. I hope you all can understand. Updates will resume on August 14th, I promise

P.s. Go check out the Vigilante!Izuku tag on tumblr! People have drawn some really amazing fan art!

Todoroki Shouto was not someone who paid attention to what others said, it was a necessary skill considering his father's position. Yet as he walked down the halls of Yuuei, his ears couldn't help but tune in to some of what the students were saying.

"Oh man, Midoriya made me this training regimen, it's been two days and I'm already sore as hell."

"Yeah, same. My quirk already feels stronger with what his regimen told me to do."

That was only some of the talk he heard while making his way to class 1-A, everyone seemed to be talking about someone named Midoriya and the regimen he designed for someone. The person himself was inconsequential, but the talk of the training plans he's made for students to both strengthen their body and their quirk might be worth looking into. Sitting at his desk, Todoroki firmly decides to find this 'Midoriya' and see if his training lived up to the rumors.

It didn't take very long, simple detective work helping him narrow down the possibilities of where this Midoriya would be. All of the people with regimens were in class 1-C, which meant that there was a strong probability that the person in question was in 1-C as well. When his class was let out for lunch, Todoroki took a more roundabout way to the cafeteria, one that coincidentally does down the hallway with class 1-C in it. Sure enough, a crowd of students filed out of the room, a group with a green haired student in the middle catching his attention.

"You see, your quirk is a prehensile tail, that makes it an extra limb of sorts." The owner of the green hair said to a girl walking next to him, a reptilian tail swishing back and forth. "Usually when someone is trying to get used to a limb, like in muscle therapy, they start slow; basic movements to build up muscle memory. Going on that line of reasoning, the best kind of training for precision and accuracy would be to try and do ordinary tasks with it instead of your arms, get to learn the muscles in the tail and what they do. After you do that you can work on the actual strength part of your training."

Todoroki was struck with surprise at the extensive explanation, barely registering that the girl had walked away and four students taking her place. Two of them he recognized, Iida and Ochako is he wasn't mistaken, while the other two were unknown. The four of them were all talking animatedly.

"These regimens are insane Midoriya!" The unknown female, cocoa skinned and bright eyed, exclaimed as she threw her arms into the air for emphasis. "You really know your stuff about Quirks."
The green haired boy, Midoriya apparently, seemed to become a bit flustered at the praise. "Y-yeah, I used to write down everything about Quirks other people had and my speculations. It's a lot easier now that I have you guys to personally explain how your Quirk works."

"Midoriya." Todoroki stated, watching disinterestedly as the four turned their heads to look at him

"Oh, Todoroki!" Ochako greeted, raising a hand in hello. "May I ask why you're here?"

"I heard the gossip about Midoriya's training plans." He explained simply, turning his head to look at said teen. "I would like you to make one for me as well."

Midoriya blinked in surprise, "Make one for you?"

Taking it as a refusal, Todoroki began to compromise. "I'd be willing to pay, of cour-

"Of course I'd make one for you," Midoriya interrupted, "you don't have to pay me, no one does."

"You're not being paid?" He couldn't help but ask, the notion of it being too outrageous to comprehend. The fellow student was designing training regimens, extensive ones if what he's heard was correct, and not gaining a thing from it? The notion was outlandish.

Yet Midoriya surprised him by saying, "No, why would I ask for money? Everyone deserves the chance to do their best at the sports festival, asking for money just seems like extortion to me."

"Extortion is how companies make money, Midoriya." The male unknown, a blue haired boy with bags under his eyes, commented. "Or was that the Yakuza? Either way, if I was in your shoes, I'd definitely be asking for something in return."

Midoriya turned to the boy that Todoroki assumed was his friend. "Well I'm not like that." He said firmly, the friend holding his hands up in surrender. Turning back to Todoroki, Midoriya spoke, "I can make you a training regimen, it might take a few days since I have so many people asking, but you'll definitely have at least three weeks to train with it."

"Midoriya! We're gonna miss lunch!" Ochako exclaimed, looking at her watch. "We have to hurry!"

The green haired teen gave him an apologetic look, "I'm sorry, but we should get going; Ochako and Iida have my number, contact me through them!" He managed to say as both Ochako and the blue haired teen started to drag him towards the cafeteria, muttering about him eating a decent meal.

Todoroki stood in the hallway alone, dumbstruck at the encounter. Was Midoriya even real? No one was like that unless they had something up their sleeve, was he just trying to get into Todoroki's good graces? No, he hadn't shown any recognition when he'd first seen him. Todoroki was a complete stranger to him, and yet he offered to do so much for no charge?

As Todoroki went to lunch himself, his thoughts were occupied by green hair, equally green bright eyes, and freckles pulled into a smile.

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Patrol that night was uneventful, the occasional drunkard trying to pick a fight was hardly a challenge for someone like Izuku. The streets were silent as he passed over them from the rooftops,
unseen by any security camera or passerby. He let out a slight hiss as his muscles burned, Kuroda really picked up the pace with the new fighting style, and he was sporting more than a few bruises and sore muscles from it. His plight of soreness was forgotten as he stopped on the rim of the roof he was presently on, a lone figure standing on the rooftop he'd been about to leap onto.

"Hello, Kuroko," The stranger greeted, taking off his hat to reveal a rather plain looking man, Naomasa. "I had a feeling you'd show up here eventually."

That put Izuku on edge, was this another ambush from the police? No, he would've noticed more police cars in the vicinity. "Why are you here?" He asked warily, shifting his stance in order to run if need be.

"Just to talk," the detective was quick to pacify, holding his hands up in the universal sign of surrender. "I swear, there's no other motive."

Hesitantly, Izuku hopped from his roof to Naomasa's, no doubt appearing like a nervous wild animal. "What would someone like you want to talk about with someone like me?"

"Call it curiosity, call it a horrible decision; but I'm here, and I have questions."

Izuku carefully sat down on the edge of the roof, tapping his foot almost silently on the concrete below him. "You can ask, but whether or not I answer depends on the question." He said, keeping his eyes fixed on the detective.

The man slowly walked to the edge of the roof, sitting five feet away from Izuku, still in lunging distance. "It's not anything big, just little stuff." He raised his head to look at the city before them, the bright lights and bustle of the streets below them illuminating the sky. "You had rather extensive information on the League of Villains, why did you wait until a few days ago to give it? You obviously had no issue with it, considering that you're the one that handed it over willingly and not in an interrogation."

Izuku snorted, "The original Kuroko had been gathering info on them before he died, he was paranoid about the league coming after me, so he told me only to give it to the authorities if it was absolutely necessary."

"And the endangerment of children was the trigger?" Naomasa couldn't help but ask, mentally filing away every answer the vigilante gave him, no matter how nonchalant or vague.

"You sound surprised." Izuku dryly commented, "Believe it or not, but just because I'm on the other side of the law doesn't necessarily mean I'm a bad person. Everyone has a line that they don't cross no matter what, some just have that line further than others."

The detective nodded hesitantly, "That's one way to look at it."

"And what's your way, detective?" The vigilante asked, turning his helmet to face the man next to him, the light glinting off of his visor. "How does someone like you view the world?"

"Personally?" Naomasa let out a huff, "The world's a pretty messed up place, there are amazing people and things, but with every good there must be bad."

"Are you the good, and I the bad, detective?"

Naomasa hesitated to answer that. The answer should have been simple, he was the good and Kuroko was the bad; the vigilante was going against the law, and Naomasa was the one that had to enforce it. Yet, Kuroko hadn't done anything explicitly harmful to others, even the people he
apprehended or fought had at worst a few broken bones. No one was ever killed, no matter who they were, what they did or were going to do. The helmeted figure next to him gave vital information and even alerted the heroes to the attack at the USJ thirty minutes before the police were called. When he looked to the vigilante to give his answer, the man was gone; a small note sitting in his place.

Detective Naomasa,

*I'm sorry that I had to leave so rudely, but meet here again next Saturday and we'll have a proper conversation.*

- Kuroko

Sighing, Naomasa pocketed the note and stood up. That had gone better than imagined, he thought as he opened the door to the stairwell and made his way to his car, Kuroko had certainly given him some food for thought.

Meanwhile, Izuku watched the man leave, the phone in his hand illuminating his helmet as he read the text.

*Received 9:30 pm.*
*It's Todoroki, Ochako gave me your number.*

Could he have texted at a more inopportune moment? He'd thought it was his mom and made like a bat out of hell. Izuku sighed and took off a glove, texting a reply.

*Sent 9:34 pm.*
*Hi Todoroki, just text me some of the info on your quirk and physical fitness level and I'll make a regimen in the next few days.*

*Received 9:36 pm.*
*Actually, I was wondering if you could come to my house, it's be easier for me to show you my quirk than explain it over the phone.*

Izuku hesitated, staring at the screen, was this a trick? Did Todoroki find out his identity? No, can't think of that right now. Izuku took a calming breath, trying to assuage his anxiety.

*Sent 9:39 pm.*
*Sure, when would be a good time?*

*Received 9:40 pm.*
*Tomorrow would be ideal.*

Sent 9:41 pm.
Tomorrow it is, see you then!
He pocketed the phone and ran, his stomach growling in anticipation of dinner.

"Your form is off," Kuroda stated as he poked at Izuku's shoulder, making him stumble. "Keep going at this pace and you'll never be ready for the festival."

"Like this?" Izuku said, taking the previous stance, but with his foot angled a bit sharper to the right. This time he fell over when his mentor shoved him. "Hey!"

"Your stance is supposed to be offensive, that means your balance must be perfectly even on both sides to switch at any given moment," Kuroda instructed, helping Izuku up with a hand. "I've been teaching you more of a defensive style for your vigilante activities, but at the festival you don't have to worry about someone stabbing you in the back, literally." He took the stance Izuku was trying to get right. "Your feet must face where your head is facing, it doesn't slow down your reaction time and makes it harder for your opponent to see a kick coming." He corrects Izuku's stance, "now, let's go over it again."

The rest of the training session is spent going through position after position, repeating them so much the movements were burned into his memory. Kuroda tossed him a water bottle, which he caught with ease. "Thanks."

"Don't thank me yet, kid," Kuroda said, taking a seat at the table with his own bottle of water. "Thank me when you defend yourself properly with this stuff."

"Ever the perfectionist," Izuku commented, taking a seat next to his mentor and taking another sip of his water. "Hey Kuroda, I have a question."

"Oh boy."

"It's not that bad!" He started, "Just......what do you know about the last name Todoroki?"

Kuroda froze, shooting Izuku a wary look, "Why do you ask?" His tone was guarded, cautious; it was like Izuku had asked a much more personal question.

"Uh, well," Izuku scrambled to put words together, "I agreed to go to Todoroki Shouto's house so he can explain his quirk so I can make a training regimen for him."

Kuroda brought a hand up to pinch the bridge of his nose, "Jeez kid, you just can't keep yourself out of trouble, can you?" He sighed, "Todoroki is the last name of the number two hero, Endeavor. Shouto? That kid's his son." The words sounded like he'd been sucking on a lemon the entire time he said them.

Izuku sat there awkwardly, "I uh, I take it you don't have a very high opinion of him?"

"The guy may be number two, but he's no hero, not where it matters." Kuroda practically spat, "He may 'protect' civilians, but let's just say his protection isn't extended to his family."

Izuku felt his stomach twist at the implication, Todoroki's scar flashing in his mind's eye. "How do you know this?" He shakily asked.

Kuroda didn't even look at him when he explained, "I tailed him for a little bit, especially after I
talked with his wife, who's in a mental health hospital. He doesn't even view his kid as a human, just a tool to overthrow All Might's position as number one. He's petty as hell, only doing the hero gig for fame and glory, he's the real kind of 'hero' Stain should go after." He leaned back in his chair, kicking his feet back on the table. "You can go to his house, but be careful, that guy isn't someone you can handle just yet."

Izuku stared at his water bottle, mind whirring at the information he'd just been told. "Got it."

"Also, ask your principal about using non-lethal weapons in the festival, I have a gift I want to give you for it."

The next day came at a snail's pace, Izuku laying awake in his bed thinking about what his mentor had told him. He knew that not all heroes were heroes for the sake of it, but was Endeavor really like that? He wasn't sure if he wanted to find out. He'd been awake for two hours before his alarm went off, it's shrill beeping snapping him out of his thoughts and into his morning routine. If his mother noticed his drowsiness, she didn't comment on it as he ate his breakfast and made his way to the door. The walk to school was uneventful until he stopped at a crosswalk and saw the newscast on the enlarge TV across from him.

"And just what Quirk do you think Kuroko has?" A woman with bleached blond hair asked a middle aged man sitting in the chair across from her. From the titles being displayed under him, Izuku discovered the man was a Quirk specialist.

"Kuroko is an enigma," the man began, pushing up his glasses with a sweaty palm. "He never uses his Quirk, not even when his life is in danger, from that I get that his Quirk is something unique, something that could easily be tracked to his true identity. What kind of Quirk would that be? Taking his name into account, it is most likely something related to foxes or fox mythology, such as illusions or the ability to manipulate people."

Izuku scoffed under his breath, grateful when the light changed to let him walk across the street and away from the so called 'Quirk specialist' voicing his speculations on a vigilante's nonexistent Quirk. It was almost hilarious, everyone thought that Kuroko had a Quirk, because in their minds it's impossible for someone like him to NOT have one. It would have him on the floor laughing if the implications weren't so heavy. People thought so lowly of Quirkless people that they can't even fathom that someone so prominent in society, albeit as a vigilante, was one himself. He barely even registered the gates of Yuuei as he stepped onto the campus of heroes in training.

Shinshou and Kahiro looked up from their homework as Izuku stepped into class 1-C, wearily placing his book bag on the ground and sitting down, resting his forehead on the desktop.

"Tough night?" Kahiro asked conversationally, leaning over Shinshou to poke at Izuku's arm. "You look like you slept on rocks."

Shinshou gently pushed the girl back into her seat and off of him, he looked at Izuku as well. "I don't want to say I told you so for accepting all of those other students to make regimes for, but I told you so."

"Har har," Izuku mumbled, sitting up to pull out four regimens from his backpack, each at least four pages long. "I tried to sleep, sleep just didn't come."

The insomniac beside him gave an understanding nod, "Yeah. Sucks, doesn't it?"
"Unbelievably."

The three of them stayed silent, enjoying the quiet that would inevitably be shattered by other students coming in, four of them passing by Izuku's desk and grabbing their respective regimens, each one thanking him as they walked away with the papers in hand. The class passed in a state of sleep deprived delirium as Shinshou took notes beside him, Kahiro occasionally copying him. By the time lunch came around, Izuku was in some semblance of awake and had noted being handed to him by both Kahiro and Shinshou.

"Here, you were too out of it to take them yourself." Is all his blue haired friend said as he shoved the papers into his hand. "Get some proper sleep tonight, it's annoying to see you like this."

That was Shinshou-speak for 'I'm worried for you'. "Thanks," Izuku said, placing the notes in his backpack before standing up with a groan as his back cracked in some places. "I have to talk to the principal about something, meet you in the cafeteria?"

"Sure, don't even think about trying to skip." Shinshou stated, walking out with a nonchalant wave behind him, Kahiro going with him; but not before she gave Izuku a somewhat painful punch to his arm. Shaking his head, Izuku made his way to the principal's office, which was surprisingly harder than he would have imagined it to be. The hallways were expansive, and he'd had to look at more than one directory posted on the walls to find himself at the somewhat imposing doors of Principal Nedzu's office.

Hesitantly, Izuku knocked on the door, the sound echoing slightly in the hallway. He stood there for a moment, awkward in the silence that followed, until a bright and cheery voice called, "Come in!"

With a grunt of effort, Izuku swung the door open, peeking in to see his principal sitting his desk. "Hello, Principal Nedzu." He greeted, coming into the room to take a seat across from the small rodent-like man.

"Ah, Midoriya! It's good to see you!" The man said happily, intertwining his fingers as they rested on the desk. "What can I do for you?"

The teen was slightly thrown by the cheerful question, stuttering out, "W-well, it's about the sports festival." He took a breath, "I, I'm not sure that I want to go into the heroics division, if I qualify for it in the festival."

The principal tilted his head, the happy-go-lucky air around him slightly fading, "Why is that?"

"Well, the thing is I'm Quirkless," that sentence alone made his mouth dry. Just because he was Quirkless didn't mean he couldn't do something! Yet, he needed to play on that stereotype for this to work, no matter how painful it was to do so. "A lot of people with Quirks that are good for heroics are in the general department with me, and I don't want to take the spot they rightfully deserve." Shinshou flashes in his head, as do several of his classmates, most of whom he'd only just began to know better. "So I'd like to ask you to keep me in the general department, no matter how well I might do."

Principal Nedzu rubbed his chin thoughtfully, "It's a strange request," the man admitted, "but I'm sure that I can manage that. Though I have to ask if there's any other reason for your reluctance to go into the heroics department."

"No other reason," Izuku assured, "I just want my classmates to have a chance they didn't get in
the entrance exam." He suddenly remembered Kuroda's request, "Oh, and are non-lethal weapons allowed in the festival? My self defense instructor’s been teaching me how to use some of them."

"Another odd request, but yes, non-lethal weapons are allowed so long as they're blunted."

Izuku perked up, "Thank you, Principal Nedzu." He stood and bowed respectfully before leaving the room.

Nedzu kept smiling until the door closed, then frowned ever so slightly. A student devaluing themselves because a lack of ability in one area was troubling. Especially in Midoriya's case, being the first Quirkless student that Yuuei has accepted. Even if he only got into the General Department, it was a huge achievement considering his handicap in such a biased system. Sighing, Nedzu clicked a button on the the phone next to him. "I'd like for all the teachers to come to the conference room for a meeting after school, if you'd please."

They'd have to do something about this.

Izuku looks from the adress on his phone to the house in front of him; he was on the right street, that much he knew, but was this really Todoroki's house? It seemed too....big. Then again, his father was the number two hero, that had to have some serious monetary benefits. His speculation of wether or not he was at the right house was interrupted when a semi-familiar head of white and red hair opened the door and stepped out, standing somewhat stiffly. "Good, you made it." He said, stepping aside to hold the door open.

"Thank you," Izuku said as he stepped into the house, looking around at the expansive space, the mudroom alone was bigger than his mom's apartment! "You have a very nice house, Todoroki."

If the boy beside him disapproved of his observation, he didn't voice it, simply walking ahead and saying, "Come on, my room's over here."

The fellow student's room was simple in design, almost like Izuku's own; a small bed in the far corner of the room, a desk pressed to the opposite wall of the bed, a state of the art computer emitting a soft glow from its screen. He couldn't help but note how the dulled colors of the walls seemed to suck any vibrancy from the room.

Todoroki sat down on his bed and gestured to the chair tucked neatly into the desk, "Let's get started."

"R-right, Izuku stammered, hurriedly taking the chair and sitting in it. Taking out his notebook and a pencil, he began his questions. "First off, can I get a general overview of your Quirk? It helps me get a good idea of where to start."

The half redhead nodded understandingly, his expression eerily unchanging and he factually stated, "My Quirk is called 'Half cold half hot', my right side produces ice while my left produced fire." He held up his frosted over right hand to Izuku for inspection. "I'd like to only strengthen my Ice side."

Izuku took the hand into his own, turning it to look at the ice forming on it. He watched fascinated at the ice that melted against his body heat merely refroze the moment he pulled his hand away. "Why'd you want to do that?" He couldn't help but ask, "You're half fire as well, wouldn't it
be counterproductive to only train one side of your Quirk?"

Todoroki's face seemed to sour ever so slightly, his lips drawn into a discrete grimace as he said, "The fire belongs to my father, I do not require him to achieve my goal."

Kuroda's bitter voice rang in Izuku's ears, 'He didn't extend said 'protection' to his family'.

"I'm sorry if this is rude," Izuku began cautiously, "but did you get your scar from your fire?" He nearly winced when the boy in front of him narrowed two different colored eyes.

"......No," he raised a hand to touch the burned skin, "this is from my mother." He continued as Izuku listened, ice forming in the freckled teen's gut. "She grew afraid of me, because I had my father's Quirk. She grew tired of seeing my face, so she threw boiling water on it when I was five."

The silence that followed that admission was suffocating, Izuku felt like he was in one of Kuroda's chokeholds as they sat there not saying a thing. Hesitantly, Izuku broke the quiet, "You don't have your father's Quirk."

Todoroki looked at him like he was insane. "For someone that apparently likes to study Quirks, you just said something really stupid."

"Not necessarily." Izuku started, gaining confidence as a theory formed in his head. "You're Quirk isn't two separate Quirks, it's a blend of them. You don't have your father's fire, the same as you don't have your mother's ice. Does your father control the fire you produce from your body?"

"No..."

"Then it's not his, the flames are from you, same as the ice. Would you revoke your left arm?"

This time, the teen was a bit more confident in his answer. "No, that'd be ridiculous."

"Yet it'd be just as silly to revoke the other half of your Quirk. That'd be like training only one arm to fight, there's only so far you can go. If you haven't been using your fire side, then it's reasonable to assume your control isn't that good, correct?" He didn't even wait for the teen in front of him to confirm, he was on a roll. "Then no matter how good you get with your ice side, you'll always have dead weight because you never trained your fire side."

Todoroki was staring at him with wide eyes, and Izuku decided to put the last nail in the (hopefully) proverbial coffin. "The moment you accept your fire, it'll no longer be Endeavor's, it'll be yours."

"I......never thought about it like that." He admitted, "It....might take some time, but I will at least try to see it as you do."

"That's all I can do." Izuku said, relaxing marginally as his words seemed to have some effect on the troubled teen before him. "Only you can make that choice." He stood up and dusted his pants, "I think I have enough information to go off of, I'll have your regimen done by next week at the latest."

Izuku's stopped by a voice calling out as he opened the door,

"Hey, Midoriya,"

He turned around, looking at the teen still sitting on the bed. "Yea?"

"......Thank you."
He couldn't help the grin that came across his face, lighting up his face as he replied, "It's no problem, Todoroki, I'm happy to help. I'll let myself out." He left the doorway, letting it close with a soft click.

The stoic teen stared at the door where Izuku had been a moment ago, his mind swimming with revelations. Maybe......it was time to take his Quirk as his own.

Izuku quietly made his way through the house, somehow managing to navigate it by memory as he walked down the wide hallway. He nearly leaped when he heard a low and gravely voice speak from the living room he was walking past.

"Who are you and what are you doing in my house." The number two hero, Endeavor, was sitting on the couch, waiting expectantly for an answer.

"U-um, I'm Todoroki's classmate, he wanted to do homework together." He managed to say, mentally flinching at the shakiness of his voice.

"That boy has no need for help with his work." Endeavor stated coldly, crossing his arms. "Now leave, and don't come back."

He could feel his knuckles curling into fists on each side. "That boy has a name," Izuku found himself blurting out, "and I'm sure he'd want you to use it."

Oh my god, what was he doing. Kuroda's going to kill him for this, but the anger in his being showed satisfaction as Endeavor rose to the challenge.

Fire sparked along the man's chin, threatening even though it was only embers. "Watch your tone, boy." He growled, standing up, trying to make himself seem threatening.

An eerie calm fell over Izuku at the sight of the familiar feeling of an imminent threat, his body choosing to fight over flee. "I won't, not when you can't even be a hero to your family." The man's eyes flared, good, he hit a nerve. "How do you think the public would react to the real story of how Todoroki got his scar? 'Mother had a sudden psychotic break' my ass; you drove her to that point, and a five year old paid the price. The news would have a field day, child services would be on you in an instant, you'd lose all of your precious prestige with one phone call to a news company." He looked Endeavor dead in the eye, a challenging glint making the man hesitate before the teen. "If I were you, I'd leave him alone, stop pressuring him to be something you can't be; or that call might just be made. You're not him, and thankfully, he's not you. Have a good night, Endeavor, I can't say that it was nice meeting you." He walked to the exit, making sure his footsteps made loud thunks across the wooden floor.

"Oh, and Todoroki!" He called down the hallway, making eye contact with the wide eyed teen looking from his room and giving him a large grin, saying pleasantly, "I'll see you at school." The door shut with a bang, vibrations making some paintings nearby shake from the force.

Todoroki stared at the door with disbelief, blinking owlishly as his father stormed up to him, eyes burning as bright as his fire. "Who was that, Shouto?" He asked dangerously, yet for some reason, Todoroki didn't feel very threatened.

".....A friend, father." He answered as nonchalantly as he could when fighting a smile back. "If you excuse me, I have some homework to finish up. Or would you rather I fell behind in my studies?" This time he couldn't help the somewhat smug look on his face as his father fumed and turned his heel to stalk away lividly. He closed the door to his room behind him, sliding against it and running a single hand through his hair. Midori-......Izuku had just stood up to his father, threatened
his father! He should have been upset at the fellow teen for using his past as leverage, but the end result was so worth it he couldn't even find it in himself to be even mad. A strange bubbling feeling came up from his chest, and for the first time in years, he laughed.

That night, Todoroki dreamed of fire, dancing to lyrics unknown and lighting up the back of his eyes.

This time, the fire didn't burn
Naomasa sat at his couch, tapping his finger against his thigh as he checked his watch again. All that he could think was 'He's late' and silently worrying; was he caught up in another villain incident? He'd already gone through his daily limit, Naomasa was going lot kill that man, if his own stupidity didn't get to him first. He nearly shot up from his seat when the door knocked, opening it, the detective was greeted by the somewhat downtrodden face of his best friend.

"You're late, what happened?" Naomasa asked, standing aside for the blond to step in and take a seat across from the couch with a grunt.

"Staff meeting." Was all the hero replied with, taking a skeletal hand to his head to rub one of his temples. "A very bad staff meeting."

Naomasa went back to his seat on the couch, leaning forward. "About what, if I may ask?"

"This year, the first Quirkless student made it into Yuuei." Yagi started, his tone practically dripping with internal resentment. "Today, that student, Midoriya Izuku, came to Principal Nedzu and asked to not be moved into the heroics department if he qualified for it through his performance in the sports festival; he said it was so 'his classmates could have a better chance'."

"And you think it's something else."

"You know the slime incident last year?" Yagi asked, when his friend nodded, the hero continued. "Midoriya Izuku was a victim of the villain. I saved him, and after I did he asked me if it was possible for someone Quirkless, like him, to become a hero." His face twisted into a grimace of guilt, "I said it wasn't, and he'd be safer if he started thinking realistically."

"So you shot down his dream, and now you think he doesn't want to be in the heroics department because of it." Naomasa simplified, sighing as his friend flinched at his bluntness. "Haven't you been looking for a successor for a while, Yagi?"

"I thought about making him my successor," Yagi admitted, "but he nearly blew himself up trying to help another classmate that got captured. He's bullheaded when it comes to helping people, he'd be safer if he wasn't given One for All."

"Reminds me of a certain person I know." The detective commented dryly. "Try and talk to him, see if it's that's the real reason for him denying the heroics department, you're leaping to conclusions." Naomasa got up to grab a file on the counter. "I actually invited you here to ask you
something.” He placed the file down and passed it to the hero, who opened it.

"Kuroko?” Yagi asked, flipping through the almost painfully thin file, it only contained a list of incidents where the vigilante had appeared, the failed attempt to ambush him, and the incident at the USJ. "Besides the USJ, he seems to be trying to stay low profile, sticking to handling minor crime."

"I talked with him a few days ago." Naomasa admitted, watching as his friend dropped the file on the table and shot him a look. "He had to leave for something, but he left a note asking for me to meet up with him tonight at the same spot."

"And you want me to come with you." Yagi stated, pinching his nose.

"That would be preferable, yes."

"You do realize that this is illegal, correct? Your job is to capture him, and you're talking to him with no backup instead." The hero leaned back in his seat and sighed. "Say that I did go with you, he's not going to be happy that you didn't come alone."

"But you're the one that knew the previous Kuroko the best," Naomasa explained, "you're the one that could tell if this Kuroko is really the last one's pupil."

"You're still thinking he might be a copycat?" Yagi asked, somewhat surprised.

"I want to look into all possibilities." Naomasa corrected, "If he really is the previous one's student, that means he's in a certain age group, maybe late twenties or early thirties; that would narrow down suspects considerably."

The number one hero ran through the pros and cons. Pros: ask Kuroko face to face some questions he's had, Cons:......he'll probably think of them when they're staring blatantly at his face. Eventually, he sighed in defeat. "Fine, when do we go?"

The detective grinned, "fifteen minutes."

"Dammit, Naomasa."

Izuku took a calming breath, feeling his stomach tense and relax in a nauseating cycle of rebellion as he suited up, often fumbling to get his limbs through the sleeves. His hands were shaking so badly he took a good minute to put on a single glove, fingers constantly jittering out of place as he tried to slip then into their respective spaces. The nausea abated somewhat after his body registered the comforting weight his suit provided; whoever Kuroda had make this suit knew what they were doing, both in practicality and comfort. Nothing chaffed, nothing poked or prodded as he moved, he was pretty sure even some heroes would bend over backwards for this kind of quality.

As quiet as he could manage, Izuku pried open his window and stepped out onto the ledge. The fire escape as an easy leap from the ledge, he grabbed it with almost no difficulty and started his ascent to the roof. The night wasn't as bright as it usually was, some people still waiting for the moon to rise higher in the sky before exiting their houses, most likely going to clubs and the like. Taking a running start, Izuku sprang from his apartment roof, his foot landing lightly on the next as his journey to the meeting spot began. His anxiety faded as the adrenaline took over, making everything fade away except the rooftops before him and the beating of his own heart. He slowed down as he came close to the meeting spot, scouting for any sign of extra police in the area. He wanted to trust Naomasa, he really did, but there's no room for error now, not with the League being unnervingly
quiet.

His fists involuntarily clenched when he saw not one, but two figures sitting on the ledge of the rooftop he'd met the detective on a few days ago. His jaw clenched when he made out a familiar mane of messy blond hair. Of all the people Naomasa could have brung, it had to be All Might? Really? By now, Izuku was pretty sure that whatever deity was out there had a vendetta against him, an ongoing, eternal vendetta. Sighing through his teeth, Izuku checked his voice modifier, making certain that it was on before leaping to the opposite side of the roof the two were sitting on.

"You know, usually when someone wants a proper conversation, they don't bring tag-alongs." He snarked, letting his anxiety be transformed into pure sass. "Especially when it's a vigilante you want to talk to."

Naomasa stood up and bowed slightly, "I apologize, Kuroko, but it's a precaution."

"Against what, detective?" Izuku couldn't help but ask, "I thought I made it clear that I have no interest in attacking the police force."

The detective seemed to be uncomfortable now, 'good' the teen thought vindictively, 'he should be'.

"Allow me to introduce my friend," Naomasa stated, ham handedly changing the subject. "This is Toshinori Yagi." All Might raised a hand in greeting.

"Yo."

'Yo'. Izuku, a vigilante, just got greeted by the number one hero with a 'yo'. His life could not get any weirder if he started fighting crime on a damn unicycle.

"Nice to meet you, Toshinori." Izuku greeted, still standing a safe distance from the two. "Though I wish it could be in better circumstances."

"The same can be said to you, Kuroko." Toshinori replied politely. "I knew your mentor, he was a good man. On the wrong side of the law, yes, but a good man all the same."

"O-oh," great, now All Might had made it awkward. "Thank you, Toshinori." How was he supposed to talk about his supposedly dead mentor to these guys without messing up in some fantastic way or another?

"So, Kuroko," Naomasa piped in, "where was it that we left off last time?"

Thankfully, Izuku managed to answer without pausing for too long. "I believe we were talking about your view on morals in the world."

"Ah yes, I wanted to ask before;" The detective began, "I told you my view of the world, what about yours?"

Izuku would've had to be an idiot to miss the sudden change of posture from All Might, his back going from slightly slouched to upright as the blond subconsciously leaned in with interest. He began his sentence slowly, like he was putting each word together with pliers. "My mentor used to teach me that there's no such thing as plain black and white, everything is in shades of gray; a vigilante like him walked a very thin shade of gray, a shade of gray that divides the lighter shades from the darker shades." He nearly snorted with amusement when he recalled some of Kuroda's more eccentric teaching methods and metaphors. "He was always reminding me of that line, how neither sides liked us, and that we had to be careful not to be knocked into one area or the other."
For the first time besides his greeting and condolences, All Might spoke. "Would it really be so bad to become a hero?" The blond asked, his bright blue eyes practically boring into Kuroko's shaded visor.

Izuku gulped at the intensity of the hero's gaze, not quite able to keep the quake out of his voice as he replied. "It would be better than becoming a villain, yes." he reached a gloved hand to rub the back of his neck, his memories of the slime villain and his first meeting with Kuroda prevalent in his mind. "Yet I also remember an incident about a year ago, a villain with a slime quirk had a middle school student with an explosion Quirk as a hostage." He continued, even as All Might tensed. "The heroes stood and watched as the student fought against his captor, when someone from the crowd rushed in and bought the boy some time, thankfully." He sighed shakily, the memories seeming as fresh as the day they happened. "It took a bit of research, but I found out that that boy was Quirkless. How is it that someone viewed as disabled in this society was braver that the heroes? I wanted to be a hero, once; but I came to realize that Heroes wouldn't always be on time, or be able to help. So that's where I come in, I'm just trying to help people when the heroes can't, trust me when I say that."

Wow, he'd actually managed to say all of that without a stutter. Izuku was too busy mentally congratulating himself to notice the looks the two men shot towards each other.

Naomasa stood up and walked over to Kuroko, "That's all I needed to hear, but sadly, I still have to do my job the next time we cross paths. Until then," he held a hand out, "stay safe, Kuroko."

Izuku stared openly at the extended appendage, hesitantly reaching his own smaller hand to give it a firm shake. "You as well, Detective." He nearly leaped out of his skin when his phone, which was in his back pocket, gave out a beep.

Naomasa stood back with a semi-amused smile as Izuku scrambled to get his phone out of his pocket. "Our meetings have to stop ending like this." He commented as the vigilante read the new text.

It was from Kuroda,

Received 9:31 pm
**Hey Kid, come in for the night. Your mom left your apartment and I don't know when she'll come back or if she'll check your room.**

Izuku quickly re pocketed his phone and bowed, "it was nice to meet you, Toshinori." He bid farewell, "But I'm afraid I have to go. Stay safe!" With that, Izuku whipped around and leapt to the next roof, breaking into a sprint as soon as he hit the ground.

Yagi waited until the vigilante was a small silhouette in the distance before speaking to his friend. "He's the real deal, Naomasa."

The detective sighed, sitting back down next to the blond. "I was afraid of that. One Kuroko was bad enough, but his protege? He's gonna be even bigger, I can feel it."

"But something didn't sit right with me."

Naomasa perked up, turning to fully face Yagi. "What would that be?"

"The way he talked about his mentor," All Might's eyes gained a distant quality, "no one talks about their deceased mentor in such a casual way."
Naomasa stiffened, "What do you mean?"

"It's a hunch," All Might said, "but I think that the original Kuroko is still alive."

They stood there in silence, letting the implications of what Yagi just said sink in. Naomasa sighed,

"Dammit."

"Can you believe that the month just flew by?" Izuku asked Shinshou as they made their way to school, both of them skillfully avoiding the crowded streets with weeks of practice. "It feels like the festival was just announced yesterday."

"Maybe to you," Shinshou replied, "with your training regimen, this couldn't come fast enough, I thought my muscles would never stop aching."

"But it did work," Izuku stated, noticing how his friend's uniform wasn't as baggy as it was before, the fabric catching on newfound muscle mass. "You're definitely stronger than you were last month."

"Yet at what cost?" Shinshou deadpanned. "We're here."

Izuku and Shinshou halted in front of the entrance, observing the other students as they all talk animatedly about the festival. "Where are we supposed to go?" He couldn't help but ask, feeling the first trickle of trepidation start to run down his spine.

Thankfully, Shinshou seemed to have a pretty good idea. "First they take attendance, then they load us into a bus to take us to the arena." He cuffed Izuku lightly over the head, making the green haired boy yelp in surprise and stumble somewhat. "Stop working yourself up over nothing."

"R-right."

"Isn't that Kahiro?" Shinshou asked, pointing to a short and very angry girl stomping her way to them.

"I can't believe that-" is what the two males can make out before she lets out a growl of frustration, taking a hand to her hair and pulling. It was then that she noticed the two, "Hey guys." She greets, taking her hands from her hair to greet her two friends. "What's up?"

"Your stress level, apparently." Shinshou commented, his eyebrows raised.

Kahiro hit his arm as they all started to walk into the building. "Hey! I'll have you know that my stress levels are perfectly fine!" Her cheeks flared red when both Izuku and Shinshou shot her skeptical looks. "Okay, maybe they're not fine. Some kid started talking smack to me and some of it got to me, that's all."

"Who was it?" Shinshou asked, his posture tensing slightly.

"That copycat kid in 1-B, Neito Monoma."

Shinshou let out a disgusted noise, "Ugh, him. He's all talk, Midoriya could take him in a one on one fight with both hands tied behind his back."
Izuku was about to contradict that, but then realized that it was most likely true. He shut his mouth with a click.

"What did he say?" Shinshou questioned, holding the door open for both Kahirowa and Midoriya to walk through. "This kind of stuff doesn't usually get to you."

Kahirowa clenched her fists, "He started talking about my dad's position in the government, he said that the only reason I got in was because he rigged it for me."

"Well that's stupid of him," Izuku stated, earning both Shinshou and Kahirowa's attention. "You took the exam just like everyone else, right? They have all sorts of heroes look over the feeds to evaluate who gets in; that means that you got in on your own merits, not your dad's."

"I know that!" She groaned, "I just get.....touchy when he's mentioned."

Shinshou raised an eyebrow, "Why's that, if you mind us asking?"

Kahirowa sighed, "Sorry guys, but I don't really want to talk about it." She opened the door to class and stepped in. Shinshou and Midoriya let the door close before speaking to one another.

"Let's make an agreement, when we see Neito in the festival, we take him down, hard." Shinshou stated nonchalantly, as if he was talking about the weather.

Izuku nodded silently, stepping into the classroom to set down his stuff and get ready for the first challenge. He took out his phone, checking for any messages. There was only one:

Received 7:45 am.
I'm watching the games with your mom, be sure to use the new weapons I gave you. Good luck kid, don't fuck up the other competitor's faces too badly.

Izuku shook his head and placed the phone in his backpack, lining up with his classmates to leave the room and enter the buses.

The first thing that Izuku noted was the sheer size of the sports festival arena, it easily towered over them, casting a shadow easily the size of his apartment complex over the students as they entered. He could hear the clamor of the crowds above them as they all changed into their gym uniforms and prepared for the first challenge. Izuku had just finished putting on his clothes when someone stepped in front of him; he didn't pay them any mind until they opened their mouth to say,

"Well well, look here, a Quirkless nobody trying to compete against the heroics class." The boy sneered.

Izuku's first instinct was to walk away, but he saw Shinshou behind the boy motioning something. 'That's Neito.' His friend mouthed, bringing a finger to twirl next to his temple.

Ok, that changed things. "May I help you? Or are you just here to make yourself seem as big as your ego?" He quipped, straightening his back to square his shoulders with Neito's own.
Neito stiffened as snickers ran through the changing room. "Why you little-

"You're the one that approached me, Neito. But I'm sorry to inform you that I don't have a Quirk you can copy." He gave the blond haired boy a grin that was more akin to bearing his teeth. "I really hope we can have a one on one fight today. good luck, Copycat." With that, Izuku sidestepped the fuming boy and walked out of the room, shouts of 'oooh's and 'burn!' Could be heard from the locker room as Shinshou reopened the door to follow him.

"Nice." Was the only thing he said to Izuku.

"We're taking him down," Izuku stated calmly, "and I have just the idea for it."
"Welcome to the annual Yuuei sports festival!" Present Mic greeted the excited spectators, receiving a roar of approval from the crowd. "Where our little hero eggs aim for each other's throats—and the top! Our grand annual melee!"

"And let me guess, you all want to see the miscreants who fended off a mass villain assault with wills of steel!" The noise this time was near deafening, even to the classes behind the entrance doors. "The department of heroics, freshman class 1-A!"

"They're overhyping them." Shinshou observed as the class walked out, Ochako waving to him and Izuku while Iida gave a polite nod. "They seem to forget that it was Kuroko that kept 1-A alive and relatively unharmed for so long."

"W-well," Izuku began, "It'd be bad if a hero institution gave credit to a vigilante, right?"

"Maybe, if you're thinking about publicity." He nudged Izuku, "They're calling us, we should go."

He nodded and followed his friend, seeing Kahiro take place at his back. Izuku squinted at the lights shining on them. The crowd was still cheering, though not as loudly as when class 1-A was announced. His head turned to and fro like an owl, trying to take in all of the things before him at once. He didn't even notice the 18+ hero, Midnight, coming to the front to continue the announcements. He spotted a camera pointed at him and waved tentatively, mouthing a hello to his mom and Kuroda.

At the entrance, three heroes were lounging around. "We came with intention of scouting," Kamui Wood said to no one in particular,

"but looks like the security is pretty thick." Deathgoro finished, sighing. "Oh well."

Mt. Lady munched on a snack, "Looks like they're attracting heroes from all over the country." She said in between chews, "This year is crazy."

"You're telling me," Deathgoro agreed, "did you see class 1-A? I'm pretty sure the blond kid from the slime villain attack is in that class."

Kamui nodded, "And that other kid, the Quirkless one, he's in class 1-C." He shook his head,
"I'm honestly a little surprised he even got in."

"Well, you do seem to have a thing for underestimating people, like you did with Kuroko." Mt. Lady pointed out with a snicker.

Kamui stiffened, "Hey!"

"She has a point," Deathgoro pointed out, "You underestimated him, left behind the police support you had and got knocked out."

The wooden hero growled and retired his focus to the screen. "Whatever. The next time I see Kuroko, things will go differently."

Behind him, Mt. Lady and Deathgoro gave a shrug.

"Now, player rep! Bakugou Katsuki of 1-A!" Midnight called, stepping aside as the blond made his way through the crowd and stepped up to the mic.

Izuku noted the way Kaachan held himself. He was confident, no doubt about that, but the slight squaring of his shoulders as he made eye contact with him was clear as day. He held eye contact with him for a solid second before Katsuki opened his mouth. "I'm gonna place first."

That's Kaachan for you. Izuku couldn't help but think as the students around him broke into an uproar of protest. Kuroda would have smacked him silly then sat him down for some lessons in humility if he had been the one to make such a blunt comment.

Katsuki wasn't even phased by the negative reaction of the crowd, "You'll all make great stepping stones, I'm sure." The abrasive blond added as an ending comment, making his way back into the crowd of angered students.

"He has a death wish, stating his victory like that." Shinshou said, watching Katsuki with crossed arms. "Does he want everyone to go after him?"

"He's deliberately cornering himself so he can test his strength against the best in Yuuei." Izuku explained, "Kaachan's been like that ever since we were kids."

"Well, he certainly has the personality to have people gang up on him." Kahi commented, leaning an arm against Izuku. "He's more abrasive than sandpaper."

"Sounds about right." Shinshou agreed, lifting a hand to high-five Kahi.

"Shhh!" Izuku hushed his friends, "Midnight's about to announce the preliminary!"

"Now, I'm sure you're all chomping at the bit to know what the preliminaries are this year." Midnight began, strolling over to a blank screen. "Well, this year it's-" the screen lit up, big black letters blaring against the white.

"An obstacle course?" Izuku stated, instinctively turning as the sound of shifting metal filled the stadium.

"That's right!" Midnight yelled, "four kilometers long and riddled with surprises! You see-"

Izuku nudged Shinshou as Midnight went into detail of the course. "Shinshou, I need you to
brainwash Neito at the start of the course and get him to copy Todoroki’s Quirk."

His friend didn’t even question the request, simply nodding and disappearing into the crowd. Kahiro shot him a questioning look.

"We need to be at least the 45th student to finish in order to go on." He explained, "If we just so happen to get revenge on Neito in the process..." He shrugged, "Oh well."

"You rock, Midoriya." She said, giving him a brief hug that left him somewhat disoriented from sudden lack of airflow. "Let's crush this."

Shinshou appeared by Izuku's side, a somewhat vacant faced Neito trailing him. "Got it."

Izuku was about to congratulate the blue haired boy when Midnight called out. "Begin!" And everything devolved into mayhem.

The next minute or two were pure chaos. The gate was narrow, forcibly restricting the students and slowing them down. Shinshou cleared a path for all of them by brainwashing opponents and having them get out of the way, then releasing his hold on them. The three, plus Neito, skid to a halt at the sight of the frozen robots piled into an impasse.

"Now what, Midoriya?" Shinshou asked, nearly slipping as one student fell in an attempt to climb the mountain of metal and bumped into him.

"Now we use Todoroki's Quirk." He replied, "Have Neito take us up with the ice, then leave him there for ten minutes."

"Sounds like something I can do." Shinshou smirked, he turned to the still brainwashed blond. "Get me, Kahiro, and Midoriya past the robots, then stand still for ten minutes. You're free to go after that."

Neito didn't respond, only nodding eerily and summoning ice from the right side of his body. The wind rustled their hair as they steadily climbed the robots. Izuku wasn't quite sure how to describe their ascent, but the best way would be a glacial escalator of some sort.

"Man, you really think everything through don't you, Midoriya." Kahiro commented, watching as students tried to grab onto their icy platform and fail. "The world could end tomorrow and you'd have a backup plan."

"It always pays to be prepared." Izuku replied, stepping off of the platform once they reached the top. "We're here."

"That's great an all, but how do we get down?" Shinshou asked, peering down at the steep drop filled with crags and dangerous pieces of metal jutting out. "You know, without getting skewered."

"Yeah," Kahiro agreed, shivering. "I don't know about you, but I'm getting some serious frostbite over here."

He couldn't help the mischievous grin taking place on his face. "We slide."

It took his friends a moment, but understanding dawned on their faces as Izuku ripped a broken piece of metal from of the ground that vaguely resembled a sled. Soon, all the of them were zipping down the steep slope of ice and metal, barely avoiding jutting pieces and steep drops.

"How do we stop?" Kahiro yelled nervously over the wind as they quickly reached the end of
the slope and to the next challenge: an extensive maze of routes tied to rocky platforms.

"Uh," Izuku hesitated, then spotted a stray piece of metal sticking out like a flagpole. "Grab onto me!" He yelled, ripping his sleeve off and into a long strip fabric. He could feel his friends maneuvering over to him and grabbing his other arm as he shaped the strip of cloth into a loop and braced himself. No amount of preparation would have made the way his arm pulled in its socket any more comfortable as the loop caught on the piece of metal and made them all come to an abrupt stop. He let out a hiss as they all stood up, twisting his arm in circles to try and get it back into some form of working order.

"You okay?" Kahirom asked worriedly, sending his arm a concerned look.

"It's fine," Izuku assured, straightening up and jogging to the start of the tightrope. "Let's get going."

"You sure, Midoriya?" Shinshou questioned, "that stop was pretty harsh."

"We don't have time to discuss the state of my arm!" Izuku stated, pointing to the top of the robots they'd just sledged down from. Sure enough, there were some students peeking over. Most of them from class 1-A, he noted. "That bought us a few seconds of being ahead, we have to keep it up or we're done." He turned around and tested the tightness of the rope, the length of rope swayed back and forth under the pressure of his foot.

"Uh, I guess it's a bad time to mention I'm afraid of heights?" Kahirom said, looking over Izuku's shoulder and shivering at the sheer height of the drop. "I don't know how I'm going to get across without having a nervous breakdown in the process."

"Like this." Izuku wrapped his hands around the rope, then let his body fall. His legs wrapped around the length of rope in the last minute, his position almost sloth-like. "Shuffle across like this and don't look down. You should be fine, I'll help you up when you make it over." At that, he began to put one hand after another, steadily making his way across. He saw the two ropes next to him suddenly tighten from the weight of his friends, and they all made their way steadily across. True to his word, he helped Kahirom up every time they made it to a new outcropping. He could see class 1-A students blasting past them, even someone from the support department, but he focused on his friend instead. They were on the last length, and it was the longest one yet. He could hear Kahirom's almost labored breaths as she tried to keep her composure. At this rate, she'd panic and fall.

"Did you know that I'm afraid of spiders?" Izuku suddenly stated.

"What?" Kahirom said, completely thrown by the randomness of the statement.

"Yeah, can't even look at one without breaking into a sweat." He said, grunting as he shifted his weight and swung to the top of the rope, stepping onto the other side of the ravine. "We all have fears, you're facing yours right now. That's better than what I can do." Kahirom looked to Izuku, who as now offering a hand to her. "Come on, I'll help you up."

She grinned, taking his hand and only letting out a slight squawk of fright as he pulled her to safety. Shinshou joined them on the other side a few seconds after her.

"Come on, Todoroki and Bakugou are still in the lead." He stated, breaking into a brisk jog and Izuku and Kahirom tailed after him.

"Hey, Midoriya." Kahirom said, slightly breathless as they all jogged side by side. "Thank you, for helping me I mean."
"You don't have to thank me, Kahirom," He replied, his eyes locking onto the small forms of Todoroki and Bakugou ahead of them. "Anyone would have done it for a friend." He skid to a halt, as did his friends when they spotted the third and final obstacle.

"A mine field?" Shinshou asked disbelievingly, staring at the slight rises within the ground ahead of them and the way the other students were trying to avoid them. "Are they trying to kill us?"

"This seems extreme, even for Yuuei." Kahirom agreed.

"No time for criticism." Izuku stated, "We need a way to get ahead. They're buried pretty shallow, if we had a piece of metal to dig them up we could detonate them al at once.....but where would we get the metal?" He looked around for any stray pieces and felt his heart sink as he found none.

Kahirom shuffled her feet. "Uh, I might be able to help with that." He lifted her arm, "My Quirk, it's called 'Metal Coat'." Her skin started to take on a metallic sheen, morphing and shedding until a large slab of metal rested in her hands. "I can make metals out of the minerals in my body, would two more of these be good?"

Izuku and Shinshou openly stared at their friend in amazement. "Yeah," Izuku said, a grin starting to overtake his surprised expression. "That would be more than good."

Near the finish line, Todoroki and Bakugou involuntarily looked back at the sound of a large explosion from the beginning of the minefield. Present Mic came in over the speakers.

"What's this? A large explosion has just taken place at the start of the minefield!" He leaned forward his announcer stand. "Wait! There seems to be something coming through the smoke!"

Sure enough, the rising smoke cleared as three yelling forms quite literally flew out. Each on a slab of metal. One was gripping his so hard his knuckles were white, another was screaming a long line of obscenities as she saw how high she was; and the final one, who was leading the other two in their projectile flight, was letting out what seemed to be a mix of laughter and screams of terror.

"Unbelievable! Class 1-C’s Shinshou Hotoshi, Kahirom Amaya, and Midoriya Izuku have purposefully detonated the mines to fly past the competition!" The announcement was met with a tsunami of cheers. Heroes were turning to one another, each internally committing those three names to memory as they went back to watching the competition.

"Deku?!" Bakugou yelled, watching with disbelief as Izuku and his three friends zoomed past them. "Don't you dare think you can get past me! You fucking asshat!"

Todoroki simply sped up his pace. Midoriya might be a (somewhat) friend, but this was still a competition, a competition he had no intentions of loosing.

"Uh, guys!" Kahirom yelled, craning her head to look at the two advancing students. "They're starting to overtake us!"

"Not for long," Izuku muttered to himself, yelling to his friends. "Hang on guys!" He leaned his weight forward, making his platform do a full somersault and land on another set of mines. Todoroki and Bakugou covered their faces as the explosion sent dust flying into their faces, while Izuku and his friends received a speed boost.

"Holy shit!" Kahirom screeched as she shot past the finish line, skidding to a stop and rolling off of her piece of metal. Shinshou following second and Izuku third. The trio laid there, staring at the sky as the crowd around them exploded into cheers.
"Midoriya," Shinshou said, still staring above him. "You are one crazy son of a bitch."

Izuku continued to lay there, his limbs stretched out like a starfish as he felt a breathless laugh escape his lips. "Tell me something I don't know."

"Yes! That's the way to use your head, Izuku!" Kuroda cheered, comfortably sitting on the Midoriya household's couch.

Inko took a deep, calming breath, a hand on her chest. "Oh thank goodness he's all right." She turned to Kuroda, "Did you teach him to be this reckless?"

He was quick to dismiss the worried look on his student's mother. "Of course not. I spent the first few months teaching him how to avoid trouble." An affectionate tone entered his voice, "It just finds him all on its own."

Inko nodded, letting out a sound of agreement. "Yes, that's true. Have I ever told you about how he would try to jump off of his bed to see if his Quirk was flying?"

"No, but now you have."

She smiled as nostalgia washed gently over her, watching her son stand up on the screen and hug his friends. All three of them had smiles, but her son's was the brightest of them all in her opinion. "Oh, I have so many stories to tell you." She sighed, picking up the steaming teapot from the coffee table and pouring herself a cup. "More tea, Kuroda?"

"Yes please." Kuroda gratefully took the cup offered to him. Taking a sip, he asked, "Just out of curiosity, what were your first thoughts when you learned that Izuku was under my tutelage?"

Inko kept her eyes on the television as she replied. "My first thoughts? Well, I was concerned." A small smile appeared on her face, "Being Izuku's mother seems to be synonymous with 'worry'. I thought that you could have been someone dangerous."

Oh, if only you knew.

Inko took a sip of her tea, then continued. "My next thought was that I'd have to give his mentor a stern talking to for not notifying me that they were going to teach my son martial arts." She shot a sidelong glance to a now semi-embarrassed Kuroda. "Yet after I met his mentor, I thought 'he seems okay, but I'll keep an eye out for trouble'; and now? I think that there's no one I would trust more to care for Izuku where I can't."

Her response was greeted with silence, Kuroda was staring into his tea like it held the answers to the universe. "Thank you, Mrs. Midoriya, for putting that much faith in me. It's been a privilege to teach your son. He's-

A sudden, familiar sensation washed over his body, like he was being dunked in cold water and brought back to the surface. Shit, Spider Sense. "Get down!" He yelled, tackling Inko to the ground not a second before the door exploded inwards, sending splinters flying in all directions.

Kuroda could see three figures entering the house, each one with their Quirks activated. He cursed, turning back to Inko. "You have to get out of here, I'll handle them."

"But-"
"No buts!" He snapped, standing up to face the intruders. "Get out of here and call the police!"

He saw Inko rush into the kitchen in the corner of his eye as he kept his sights on the three attackers.

"So, what are three ugly ass thugs doing in such a nice home as this?" He asked, falling into a fighting stance. "Cause I sure as hell don't remember inviting you guys to the party."

"The league sends its regards." One thug said as he grinned viciously, his two lackeys baring their teeth in matching grins. "And a message from the boss: 'Game over, Kuroko'."

"Shit." Kuroda stated, then swooped low and swept a teacup on coffee table flying towards the thugs. The men let out screeches as the scalding liquid made contact with their skin. They didn't have time to react before Kuroda was upon them, grabbing two of the thug's heads and bashing them together. He leapt over the two unconscious men to fight the third, who had his Quirk out.

The thug grinned as he swung at Kuroda with his arms, where the outside of his forearm should have been was replaced with an almost battle axe-like blade. "I wonder how it'll feel to cut into your flesh. I'm sure you'd bleed a helluva lot before you croaked."

"A lot of people have tried to kill me," Kuroda admitted, his ears perking at the sound of Inko's frightened voice on the phone. "None have succeeded." At that, he grabbed a nearby chair and brought it above his head just as the thug swung his arm in an arc. The blade sliced into the wood with a solid thunk. Kuroda smirked as he pulled the chair, throwing the thug off balance enough for Kuroda to strike. It was almost pitiful how easily the man crumpled when both of his kneecaps were broken with sickening cracks. He turned to Inko, who was standing at the kitchen entrance and openly staring at the three fallen men.

"We have to get out of here." Kuroda instructed her, taking off his jacket and placing it on her shoulders as a makeshift shock blanket. "We don't have a lot of time."

"What's going on, Kuroda?" Inko asked, her breathing starting to become erratic.

"I have a pretty good idea." He said. He whipped around when his spider-sense went off, and his stomach filled with dread when he saw the two thugs he thought he'd knocked out back up. They both had mutant type Quirks, one's hands were swords, and the other had knives for fingers. What was with these guys and blade type Quirks? They were both rushing towards Inko and him, there would be no time to react; no time to get both himself and Inko out of the way. Making a split second decision, Kuroda shoved Inko to the side, then felt a peculiar sensation spread across his left arm. Not painful, Kuroda hadn't experienced pain since he was electrified five years ago, this was like a limb that's been asleep for hours, tingly and uncomfortable. Looking back, he saw the thug with sword arms' blade sticking out of his arm. A kick to his midsection sent him to the floor, his body going into shock as blood started to rush out of the wound on his arm. Damn, they must've nicked an artery.

The last thing Kuroda could register before the shock took over his consciousness was Inko's scream.

"Congratulations to our preliminary winners!" Present Mic called over the speakers, "And might I say, what a win it was!" That statement was met with roaring applause. "Now onto the second event! One moment-" there was a brief discussion off mic, then the hero came back on. "I'm sorry to announce, but our third place contestant, Midoriya Izuku, has to leave due to family emergency."
Izuku felt his stomach drop to his feet, chills creeping across his skin. What kind of family emergency? Was mom okay? Was Kuroda okay? Hands clenching and unclenching anxiously as he walked to the exit, not feeling the worried gaze of his friends and even some other students. He could hear his heart in his chest by the time he made it to the exit, the steady beat doing nothing to calm him. That steady beat grew to a crescendo when he saw a familiar dark haired man in a trench coat.

What was detective Naomasa doing here? Did he get found out?

No. Stop and evaluate. No policemen were with the detective, whose posture seemed tense. What caught Izuku's attention was the man's expression, his mouth was set into a grim line and his eyes shone with something Izuku couldn't quite recognize.

"Hello, Midoriya." The man greeted politely, tipping his head. "I am Tsukauchi Naomasa."

"What happened to my mom?" Izuku demanded. He was probably being rude, but the adrenaline starting to make its way through his system was telling him to screw formalities, and start getting answers instead.

If Naomasa was offended, he did show it, instead opting to place a hand on Izuku's shoulder in some vague attempt at comfort. "I can't tell you exactly what happened, but your mother is in the hospital along with a man named Nagaki Kuroda, they were victims in a villain assault."

The hospital? That wasn't right, Kuroda was.....Kuroda! He wouldn't-couldn't get hurt! Not with his reflex Quirk! Unless..... Izuku's heart felt dead in his chest. Kuroda wouldn't get hurt in a fight unless he was protecting someone else.

"I have to go." He stated, gently removing the detective's hand from his shoulder and walking in the general direction of the exit. "I have to see them." He nearly breaks the man's arm when he grabs Izuku again to stop him.

"Midoriya," Naomasa stated, "the hospital is twenty minutes away on foot, at least let me drive you there."

Izuku was on the brink of refusing, but his eyes locked onto the genuinely pained expression on the detective, whom he'd always seen as calm and composed as Kuroko. Then again, the detective didn't know that the teen in front of him was one and the same. His shoulders sink. "Fine." He took his arm back from Naomasa's grip. "But stop manhandling me, I am perfectly capable of walking to a car."

The detective nodded, "My apologies." He started to walk down the hall. "Follow me, Midoriya."

The car ride was silent, uncomfortably so. Izuku stared out the window, watching the familiar scenery blur past as the car drove on. He heard Naomasa clear his throat, he turned to look at the dark haired man.

The detective looked vaguely uncomfortable. "I'm sorry about the timing, but I'm afraid that I have to ask you a few questions that pertain to what happened at your apartment."

Izuku smiled bitterly. "Not like I'm going anywhere," he leaned back in his seat. "Ask away."

"Do you know of any reason that villains would attack your home?"
Oh boy. "I can't think of any specific reason, no." They didn't know who he was, they must've just wanted to send a message.....right?

"How do you and your mother know Nagaki Kuroda, the man that was with her when the attack occurred?"

This one was easy. "He's my self defense instructor, also a family friend." The car pulled into the hospital and Izuku unbuckled himself. "I'm going to assume the other questions can be held on a later date?" He asked, opening the door to step out.

"If that's what you want, yes." Naomasa replied, stepping out of the car as well. "Given the circumstances, you'll have to have a chaperone until your guardian shows up." He explained, walking through the door with Izuku at his side.

"They're in a hospital room." Izuku stated, his demeanor becoming more annoyed than anything else.

"Oh."

Izuku didn't even bother with a reply, simply nodding and walking to the waiting room's chairs to take a seat. He'd always hated hospitals, the floors burned his eyes with their starkness and his nose scrunched slightly at the scent of disinfectant. The television was on, it was showing the Sports Festival. They moved onto the second event in his absence, some sort of competition to grab the flags hanging on one another's head. He noted with some amusement the panicked squawks Kahiro made as people practically ganged up on her and her group. His attention was taken from the TV as the hospital door opened once more and a familiar shade of dark blue came up to the reception desk.

"Iida?" He asked incredulously, standing up from his seat to walk over. His friend whipped around from his conversation with the woman behind the desk.

"Midoriya!" Iida said, somewhat surprised at seeing Izuku there. "Was this the family emergency you had to take absence for?"

Izuku nodded, his shoulders sagging somewhat. "Yeah, they're still in surgery."

The bespectacled boy nodded solemnly, "I also was called away from the festival for a family emergency." He placed a hand awkwardly on Izuku's shoulder. "If you need someone to talk to, take comfort in knowing that I am willing to listen."

Izuku smiled weakly, "Thank you, Iida."

A doctor and what Izuku assumed to be Iida's mother stepped out of the doors to call him in. The green haired teen gave his friend a half-hearted wave as he left before sitting down again. The detective was staring at him now, Izuku noted the phone in the man's hand. This was going to be a long wait, he could tell.

Izuku startled awake when he felt a hand jostle his shoulder lightly. His eyes locked onto the nurse who'd shaken him awake, then to the window behind her. The sun had disappeared, leaving the streetlights to fill the darkness it left behind. How long had he been asleep?

"Midoriya Izuku?" The nurse had asked, at his nod she continued. "Come with me, I can fill you in on your mother's condition once we're in a more, ah, private setting." She waited for him to stand up, then guided him to the hall beyond the waiting room.
"How's my mom?" Izuku borderline demanded, "How's Kuroda?"

The nurse kept her composure, something she must've gained from countless encounters with emotionally charges relatives of patients. "Your mother sustained head trauma from making collision with the both the wall and the floor. Her physical injuries were easily treated, but she's currently in a coma." The nurse seemed a bit more uncomfortable as she explained his mentor's condition. "Nagaki Kuroda sustained severe lacerations to his left arm, forcing us to amputate if we wanted to save his life."

Izuku felt a stone nestle into his stomach. "Amputation?"

"You can't see your mother quite yet, but Nagaki is coming out of anesthesia soon." The nurse supplied, "would you like to see him?" At Izuku's nod, the nurse continued. "He's in room 145, it's right down the hall."

Even All Might himself couldn't have stopped Izuku from tearing down the hallway, skidding to a stop when he saw Kuroda's room number. He hesitated at the doorknob, was he ready to see what was behind this? Any thought about that was thrown from his mind when he heard Kuroda from inside the room.

"Mrs, Midoriya!"

Izuku burst into the room. Kuroda laid in the single bed within the room, his eyes were blown wide with panic as he looked around frantically for Izuku's mother. His mentor's eyes eventually locked onto Izuku. "Izuku, I'm so sorry I-" he didn't have a chance to finish before the teen had rushed forward to hug his mentor, carefully avoiding his injuries.

"You did your best, Kuroda." Izuku consoled, feeling his words begin to choke on their way out. "You did your best."

Kuroda remained silent, and his next question made Izuku freeze.

"Izuku, why can't I feel my arm?"

Chapter End Notes

I know Kahiros Quirk is a bit of a Deus ex Machina, but to be fair this show seems to be full of them anyways.

Also! don't be shy to send asks or messages to my Tumblr! It's Mean-and-serene

Thanks for reading!
Naomasa sighed, glancing at the small teenage boy curled up on the hospital chair across the room. He honestly didn't know what to expect when he was told to pick up the victim's son, but Izuku Midoriya certainly wasn't it. The kid looked harmless on the surface, but his eyes hid fire and steel when he walked up to him from the stadium and bluntly demanded his mother's condition. He had no idea what to do with someone like this, he wasn't screaming, he wasn't in grief. He was cold, almost calculating as they rode in the car to the hospital. His questions were answered with clipped tones and even more brief words; and as far as he could tell, the kid hadn't been lying.

He dragged a hand down his face, groaning. Fighting back a yawn, the detective scrolled through his conversation with Yagi.

Received 11:45 am.
How is he?

Sent 11:47 am.
I can't tell, he's not giving anything away without a fight, that's for sure. He looked like he was ready to sprint to the hospital when I broke the news to him.

Received 11:49 am.
Don't doubt the power of adrenaline, my friend.

Received 11:50 am.
Have they given you an update on their condition?

Sent 11:53 am.
No. From what I last heard Mrs. Midoriya was semi-stable and Nagaki Kuroda is in the ER. I saw what he looked like when they found him, the cut went straight to his bone, all the muscles were severed. They'll have to amputate his arm, it's either that or be crippled the rest of his life.
Received 11:56 am.
Does Midoriya-boy know who it was that attacked them? Does he know how much danger he is in at the moment?

Sent 11:59 am.
How am I supposed to tell him that the League of Villains might be targeting him? He's upset enough as it is. He won't even sit near me, he's just watching the sports festival with a blank expression. It's starting to worry me.

Received 12:01 pm.
That's to be expected, given what happened. Has social services contacted you with the name of his next legal guardian yet? He can't live in the hospital until his mother wakes up.

Sent 12:03 pm.
He doesn't have another legal guardian, given the circumstances, it's most likely a hero will be assigned to guard him until they're sure he's safe.

Received 12:05 pm.
That's good, I can send you a list of heroes that'll be good for that situation. Stay safe, Naomasa.

Sent 12:06 pm.
Thank you, Yagi; and I should be saying that to you.

The detective sighed again, rubbing his chin with a calloused hand. If Midoriya went into the standard foster care system until his mother recovered, there'd be no guarantee that he would be safe if the League attacked him. Not to mention how much danger it would put the fostering family in. Hopefully Yagi would send the potential hero list to him soon, this kind of stuff took time, time that he really didn't have when it came to the teenager sitting across the room.

"Excuse me?" A voice asked, Naomasa's head whipped from his phone to the middle aged nurse standing in front of him. She gestured to Midoriya. "Are you here with the young boy over there?"

He nodded, "Yes, his parent was injured in a villain attack."

She shook her head, thin strands of loose brown hair falling from her bun. "How terrible," she said, "Villains really don't know which lines shouldn't be crossed. Anyways, I was sent from the back to tell you that it's most likely the surgery for Nagaki Kuroda will take a few more hours."

He smiled, baggy eyes crinkling and worry worn skin stretching to accommodate the expression. "Thank you, Ma'am." He said. His smile dropped once the nurse went back through the doors. "What are we supposed to do with you, Midoriya?" He asked himself, looking back to the teenage boy, whose eyes were closed as he rested against the chair. "What do we do?"
All things considered, Kuroda took the news of his lost arm remarkably well. No sudden shock, no screams. Just calm acceptance.

"I mean, yeah, it sucks." He told Izuku, who was sitting in the chair next to the bed. "And my shirts are going to look ridiculous, but it was either this or your mom. My arm isn't as important as that, Izuku." He reached out a hand—his only hand—to rest it on the teenager's fluff of green hair. "You were at the sports festival, kicking ass might I add, you couldn't have been in two places at once."

Izuku, whose eyes had been filling with tears since he walked in nodded silently, the first droplets falling to the floor. "K-Kuroda, I-" His mentor removed his hand, and for a second Izuku feared that Kuroda was mad, before a familiar weight settled on his shoulders and he was drawn into a one armed embrace.

"No one is going to blame you." He said into Izuku's hair as the boy's shoulders shook. "You're an innocent in this, you're not going to be in trouble."

Izuku caught how the last words hitched on the deep voice of his mentor, like he didn't quite believe it. "Who attacked you?" He managed to say through the sniffles as he wiped his eyes and looked into his friend's own. "Who did this, Kuroda?"

The man stiffened, then sighed. "You're getting good at this reading people thing, kid." He commented, "Remember when I said the League would be pursuing you in earnest after the USJ?"

Izuku felt adrenaline shoot through him at the memory of being trapped in the grip of Noumu, Shiragaki mere feet away from disintegrating him.

"They found us out, Izuku. They know you're Kuroko, and that I was your predecessor."

"How?" He choked out, looking at Kuroda with terror. "How did they find us?"

Kuroda grimaced, "They have connections everywhere, kid, they probably ran a medical search all over the globe for my injuries. Process of elimination singled me out, all they had to do was follow me to find you." He sent a look to his arm, now a stump wrapped thoroughly in bandages. "This was a call out. 'We know who you are, we know who you care about, what are you going to do about it?' They want you to be mad, to make mistakes, and they thought they could do that through your mother and me."

"Why didn't they just attack me? Why bring you into it?" Izuku blurted out, sheepishly looking down when Kuroda gave him a look.

"Well, getting you mad was one motive." He began, "The other...isn't as good. They could've not gone after you because they have plans for you."

"...Plans?" Izuku suddenly felt like his mouth was a desert, "What would they want with me?"

"You're the new Kuroko, you hold a lot of influence." Kuroda pointed out, "Your existence alone has the Internet in an uproar. You have several pages dedicated to either exalting or condemning you. You'd be a more public outlet for their schemes."

"And I can't say no if I want you or mom to stay alive." Izuku finished with a look of horror on
"Now you're thinking, Izuku." Kuroda agreed solemnly. "They'll use me and your mother as leverage over you. They want to attack? You can't stop them, because they'll hold our lives over your head." He leaned back in his bed. "They've got you pinned, for now."

Izuku's head had lowered as his mentor spoke, put looked back up when he registered Kuroda's last sentence. "For now?"

"Yes, for now. Some villains, ones with sturdier moral compasses, will condemn their actions, vigilantes especially." Kuroda's grimace grew more pronounced. "So much so, that a certain stain on society would help you."

"The Hero Killer?" Izuku breathed, somewhat disbelieving. "Why would he help? Isn't he too busy.....you know, killing people?"

That had made Kuroda huff a laugh out, "He's a crazy son of a bitch, but he's got some honor code, however skewed it is. Be ready, he'll probably show up on a patrol in the next week. He's dangerous, but he's also strong, he'd be a good temporary ally until Inko and I get back on our feet."

Good, he can manage a temporary ally, even if said ally threw a knife at him the first time they met. "How long will it be, until you're able to be let out?" Izuku couldn't help but ask.

Kuroda smiled a bit forcibly, "For me? Probably a month or a month and a half. Your mom?" His demeanor dimmed, "Most likely longer."

The teen had to admit that was probably true, even though it made his chest feel hollower than before. "Who am I going to be staying with?" He suddenly asked.

Kuroda paused, "I don't know Izuku, you might be put in the foster system until I can take care of myself." He seemed a bit sheepish as he said the next part. "I didn't tell you, but your mother was planning on assigning legal guardianship to me in case anything happened to her."

Izuku nodded, "So all I have to do is last for a month or two and you can take me in?"

"Now you've got it."

They were broken from their conversation when the door opened, detective Naomasa stepping in and nodding a greeting to the two. "Glad to see you're awake, Nagaki." He said, walking to stand at the side of the bed, across from Izuku. "Would you mind if I took Midoriya out into the hall to talk about his future living arrangements?"

Izuku could see that his friend was a bit on edge with the man's presence, his back going slightly more rigid than before and his eyes squinting slightly. Thankfully, his expression could also be attributed to the bright lights above them. "Of course, detective." He said, "You're probably not aware, but Mrs. Midoriya planned on making me his legal guardian before this. All we needed to do was sign the papers. Once I'm better I can take him in."

"You'll have to forgive me if I have to cross reference that." Naomasa coolly stated, holding the door open for Izuku to hesitantly step through. "For now, focus on your recovery. Another detective will come in later to ask some questions."
Izuku took a deep breath behind the detective's back as the man closed the door behind him. "Who am I going to be living with?" He asked, his hands only slightly shaking against his thighs.

Naomasa sighed, "Look, Midoriya," he began, "You have no reason to be nervous of me, we're looking into some heroes that might be able to take care of you; but until I can get a solid confirmation, you'll be living with me."

"Oh, okay." He shuffled from one foot to another, "What am I going to wear?" He asked.

"We'll have to stop by your house to grab some things." The older man answered, "Are you okay with that?"

Izuku bit his lip, then shrugged after a few seconds of contemplation. "I'll have to eventually, right?" He scrunched his nose, "Besides, I don't want to wear this gym uniform any longer than I have to. Frankly, I smell like gunpowder and bad decisions."

That had elicited a surprised bark of laughter from the dark haired man. "That's true." He said, making his way to the entrance of the hospital with Izuku. "Don't stink up my car too much, okay?"

Izuku felt himself loosen slightly at the playful tone in the detective's voice. "No promises." He deadpanned, opening the passenger side of the car and stepping in. He noticed his phone and school bag, which he had left behind in his hurry to get to the hospital, resting in the backseat of the vehicle. "You grabbed my stuff from school?"

"A coworker dropped it off while you were asleep," Naomasa explained, buckling up and starting the car. "Get your seatbelt on, Midoriya."

Izuku quickly leaned back and grabbed his phone from its resting place on the top of his backpack. "Ok." He said, buckling up as he turned his phone on. He resisted the urge to cringe as his screen glowed and displayed several notifications. They were from all of his friends.

Received 3:45 pm.
Omfg Midoriya we just heard what happened after the festival was over. Are you ok?!?

Received 3:47 pm.
Hey, Midoriya, you have Kahiro worked up in a frenzy, reply when you get these, yeah?

Every single message was about the same, asking if he was okay, begging for a response from him. A few taps on the screen and he made a group chat for everyone. Taking a breath, he sent out the first text.

Midoriya: Hey guys, I had my phone off, sorry for not replying sooner.

The reply was near instant, and from Kahiro. The others were quick to respond as well.
Kahiro: It's ok, Midoriya. How's your mom? How are *you*?

Iida: Yes, I would like to know both of these as well.

Uraraka: Me too.

Shinshou: Me three

Todoroki: give him time to type an answer, all of you.

Izuku failed to hide the grin forming on his face, the chatter between his friends easing some of his anxiety.

Midoriya: I'm fine, my mom's in a coma. They're saying it was a villain attack.

Todoroki: Do they know when she'll wake up?

Midoriya: They aren't sure.

"Midoriya," Nomasa said, snapping Izuku out of his focus on the group chat. "We're here." He parked the car and stepped out, patiently waiting for Izuku to hastily text a goodbye and get out as well. Usually, the sight of his apartment at night was a comfort, pale walls catching the moonlight, the gentle winds carrying the smells of food wafting from the stands two blocks away. Now, with the moon nowhere in sight and the bright yellow police tape covering what used to be his front door, the image wasn't nearly as comforting.

Naomasa held the tape up for Izuku to walk under, slowly tailing along as the teenager looked around at the scene before him. The signs of struggle were obvious, the furniture had been thrown to the side by swinging limbs. He felt a knot form in his stomach when his eyes fell on several head shaped indents on the wall, specks of red splattered all across the wall. He didn't acknowledge the enormous bloodstain on the carpet, he didn't want to. Instead, he stepped over the stains, over the little plastic markers showing where pieces of evidence had been found; it was delicate work, there seemed to be so many stains, so much evidence, too much pain. He let out the breath he hadn't even known he'd been holding as he finally made it across the minefield that was the living room and into
the hallway. He made his way to his room, the detective following at a respectful distance. The door swung almost silently open, but it sounded like screeching to Izuku. He flicked his lights on and got to work, striding to his closet and swinging it open to sort through his clothes. In almost no time, he had a decent stack of pants, shirts, and underwear in a duffel bag he had found. He froze when he saw a certain box sitting innocently in his closet. If the detective saw his armor, he’d be done for. How could he cover this up? He nearly leaped out of his skin when the man spoke up.

"What's that, Midoriya?" He was peering over Izuku’s shoulder, locking onto the box. "Old family photos?"

"No," Izuku said, kneeling down to gently pick up the box and trying to hide just how badly his hands shook. "Kuroda gave me a keepsake, he said it was from his culture."

Naomasa nodded understandingly, "Ah, I won't pry then. My apologies." He said, bowing slightly.

"It's fine," Izuku dismissed, picking up the duffel in one arm while the other held his boxed armor. "You couldn't have known."

The air became slightly uncomfortable, almost stifling as Naomasa adjusted his tie to distract himself from the tension. "We should probably get going." He said, turning away to head back out the door. "I'll be in the car."

Izuku waited until the detective's footsteps had faded away to let out his sigh. "That was way too close." He muttered, stuffing his computer and phone charger into his duffel before heading out to the car.

The ride to Naomasa’s house was relatively silent, Izuku texting his friends and the detective focusing on the road. The teenager let out a huff of laughter as Kahiro sent yet another meme into the chat, eliciting confusion from Iida, exasperation from Shinshou, copious amounts of ‘lol’s from Uraraka, and annoyance from Todoroki.

_Iida: I still do not understand, why is 'Dat Boi' an amphibian? Why is he riding a unicycle? Amphibious anatomy does not work in such a way, Kahiro._

_Kahiro: Oh shit waddup._

_Uraraka: Oh shit waddup._

_Shinshou: *sigh* Oh shit waddup._

_Todoroki: Midoriya. I hope you see just what I have to put up with by being in this chat._

He smiled, silently grateful for his friends and their attempts to cheer him up. Even if it was through memes. His phone vibrated, it was Iida, he’d set up a private chat for them.
Received 8:30pm.
My brother is in the hospital as well, he's going to be there for a while, they don't know if he can go back to being a hero.

Received 8:32 pm.
I am not claiming to know how you feel, I would never be so insensitive as to do so; but I'm going through something similar, and I feel it would be beneficial to both of us if we helped each other through it.

Izuku was stunned. Had he really forgotten to wonder just what kind of emergency Iida was at the hospital for? Guilt surged as he stared at the two texts. It didn't take very long for him to type an answer.

Sent 8:34 pm.
Of course, Iida! I'm so sorry I didn't ask you how you were doing, everything's just going so fast my head's still trying to catch up.

Received 8:35 pm.
It's understandable. My mother and father have taken a few days off, maybe you could come to my house tomorrow? You could explain why Kahro keeps sending "Dat Boi" into the chat.

Izuku couldn't help but snort a little, getting an odd look from the detective driving the car.

Sent 8:36 pm.
Sure. Gtg, pulling up to where I'm spending the night. Talk tomorrow?

Received 8:36 pm.
Yes. I wish you a good night, Midoriya.

"It's not much," Naomasa began as Izuku pocketed his phone and unbuckled his seatbelt. "But it'll do. Do you want the couch or the bed?"

Izuku opened the door and stepped out, carrying his duffel with him. "The couch is fine." He replied, staring up at the apartment complex. It was definitely better quality than his own apartment; the parking lot looked clean, the walls were painted a tanned brown with darker painted ridges to contrast, and to top it off there was an actual reception desk at the entrance.

The receptionist smiled at Naomasa as he and Izuku stepped in. "Good evening, Mr. Tsukauchi." She greeted, barely paying any attention to the teenager standing next to the detective. "Your friend stopped by, told me to give this to you when you came in." She pulled a file from under her desk and handed it to him.
"Thank you, Mrs. Fayu." Naomasa said, bowing slightly. "Have a good night." The detective walked past the desk and stepped into an elevator, Izuku hurrying to follow him.

Izuku hadn’t known how awkward an elevator ride could be until that moment. It sounded like a hilariously bad joke, a teenage vigilante and a detective standing in an elevator, listening to mind numbing elevator music. He startled somewhat when the doors opened with a loud ding, almost tripping as he followed Naomasa out into the hallway. He stopped at the second door to the right, the teenager took note of this as the detective took his keys out of his pocket and unlocked the door.

"Do you want anything to eat?" The detective asked, walking into the kitchen as Izuku stepped in and observed his surroundings. The carpet was a light beige, the walls were a dull blue, everything screamed practicality at him. From the couch to the coffeemaker.

"Not really." He said, that was when his stomach decided to growl. Loudly.

Naomasa raised an eyebrow as Izuku turned a shade of red almost complementary to his hair. "That so?" He asked dryly. "I think I'll make some food, just to be sure." He turned around to open a pantry door. "You can set your stuff up while I cook. The couch unfolds into a bed, by the way."

"Thank you." The teenager said, carrying his duffel bag into the living room to plop it on the floor as he let himself fall onto the couch. How was this his life? With a groan, he lifted himself from the plush cushions and retrieved his duffel bag. Taking out his computer, he opened the device and opened his Internet browser. His eyes were assaulted with bright headlines on the news website he typed in. All of them were about Kuroda his mom being attacked.

**Quirkless Yuuei sports festival competitor's family attacked! How the heroes were blindsided by this cowardly sneak attack.**

**Quirkless student's mother placed in coma by villains while heroes watched Yuuei sports festival.**

**Quirkless-**

**Quirkless-**

**QUIRKLESS-**

He shut his laptop with a loud smack, his hands trembling as he went to the bathroom to wash his face, maybe even clear his head a bit. The water felt cool against his hands and face, much better than before. He looked at his reflection. Wet dust and grime lingered on his face, his gym uniform was tattered, smelling vaguely of molten metal; and his eyes almost resembled Shinshou’s after a particularly bad night of insomnia. He let himself snort at that, he had to laugh at something. Anything.

"Midoriya?" Naomasa called from the kitchen. "I made sandwiches, come and get one."
"Coming!" Izuku replied, grabbing a small towel to dry his face before making his way to the kitchen. Sure enough, the detective was sitting at the counter, munching on what seemed to be a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

"Plates are next to the sink." The man said, swallowing his mouthful. "Grab a sandwich, you need to eat."

Izuku followed the instructions, grabbing a plate and putting a single sandwich on OT before sitting across from Naomasa. They ate in silence, the sound of chewing filling the air between them. When they finished, they placed the dishes in the sink. Izuku's eyes were drawn to the file Naomasa had been given at the receptions desk, which was laying on the coffee table.

The detective noticed what he was staring at, "Ah, that." He walked over and picked it up. "This is a list of prospective heroes to look after you until your mother is healed." He handed it to Izuku, who opened it to scan through. The teenager suppressed a shudder when he saw Endeavor on the list. Who in their right mind would think Endeavor was good at taking care of minors? "What about Kuroda?" He asked, closing the file in favor of pinning Naomasa with a stare. "He can take care of me once he's healed."

Naomasa's expression embed to sour. "There's no paperwork, Midoriya." The detective tried to explain. "And with your mother in a coma, there's no way to confirm whether or not it was agreed by both of them."

"I trust Kuroda, if he says my mom agreed then she agreed." Izuku argued, "Don't I get a say in this?" If he was in the care of a hero, how was he ever going to get a patrol in?

"You do get a say, Midoriya." Naomasa tried to pacify. "But when it comes down to it, there's no paperwork; and the government can't appoint him your godparent unless Mrs. Midoriya signs it herself."

Izuku let out a sound of frustration. "What's next, are you just going to hand me to the next Hero that wants a publicity stunt?" His tone became mocking, "'Oh, look at that. A hero took in that poor Quirkless child until his mother gets better, how heroic of them!'"

"I don't think I appreciate that tone, Midoriya." Naomasa said, his eyes hardening.

"It's not like you're going to be putting up with me for long anyways, detective." Izuku said, shoving the file onto the coffee table with a little more force than necessary. They sat there for a second in tense silence. Izuku cracked first and sighed, his shoulders slumping as the anger drained out of him. "Sorry." He muttered, "It's just...... been a long day."

"That's okay, Midoriya." The man said, placing a hand on Izuku's shoulder in what was supposed to be a comforting gesture. All the teen wanted to do was break the hand touching him. "Wash up, then try to get some sleep." He stood up, then went into what Izuku would assume to be his room. "See you in the morning."

The rest of the night was a bit of a blur. Izuku cleaned himself up, changed into his pajamas, and took out the bed in the couch. He listened to the traffic outside as he laid on the unfamiliar bed, staring at an unfamiliar ceiling. His eyes narrowed.

The League had both succeeded and failed when they attacked his family.
They wanted him mad, they got him mad. However, they failed because they didn't know just what lengths he would go to in order to take them down. That will be their undoing, Izuku swore it.

The smell of blood permeated the air, noxiously mixing with the smell of trash and vomit in the alleyway. A thug fell to the ground with a thud, desperately scrambling back as a shadowed figure loomed above him brandishing a large serrated knife.

"L-look man, I don't know nothing about the League! They don't tell me nothing!" The man pleaded, letting out a pitiful whimper as his back bumped against the wall.

"I don't care what you have to say, you pig." The figure rasped in a gravelly voice. "I'm simply waiting for your boss to show his hand-covered face to see just who's been killing his men." A quick flick of his wrist sent the knife flying into the thug's throat, embedding itself into the wall behind him. "This is just me spending my downtime. No hard feelings." He didn't even bother turning around. "It's about time you showed up, Shiragaki."

"I'm not pleased about you killing my pawns, Stain." The main said monotonously, his hands hanging in his pockets as he slouched. "You really know how to play the line between villain and vigilante, Hero-Killer. You're making it hard for us to team up, you know."

"Shut it, you dusty freak." Stain spat, whipping around to face the other man. "What the hell are you on anyways, thinking I'd team up with you?"

"We have a common enemy, the same boss fight ahead of us, if you will." Shiragaki continued, completely undaunted by the venom in the other man's voice. "The heroics industry is a virus that's infecting society, a virus that festers without society being aware of it. We both want the heroes gone. What do people say now? Ah yes, 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'. Shiragaki's hand whipped up to catch the knife thrown at him, the blade crumbling as the gaunt man stared at the cut on his palm. "How rude." He stated, "attacking the man proposing an alliance."

"I want nothing to do with a man who attacked a civilian for no reason." Stain hissed, "You had nothing to gain from it except the pain of others. I will have no business with pieces of scum like you."

Shiragaki's head tilted, almost owl like as red eyes stared from between the hand covering his face. "Why would you care about that?" He inquired, having the gall to be confused. "You kill people near daily."

"People that deserve it!" The Hero Killer growled. "People who become heroes for selfish reasons, they're the virus of society. I'm weeding out the weak and leaving the strong to take their place. Putting a civilian mother in a coma is different from that."

"You and I both know that the child of that mother isn't what he seems." Shiragaki said, reaching up to scratch his neck. "This was a warning to him. It serves him right, thinking he was the main character, when in reality he was no more important than a pawn." This time, the shaggy man had to duck to the side as Stain rushed him, blade drawn and ready to maim. "Ooh, pushed a button, have I?"

"You don't get to talk so callously about him!" Stain practically roared as he changed his direction and charged again. "Not after what you did to Nagaki."
Shiragaki easily avoided the attack, barely so much of a sweat on him. "Ah yes, the original." The man drawled. "Shame he didn't bleed out, it would've been a major point in little Midoriya's character arc, the point where nothing would have been the same. When the student would have no choice but to go on without the master." Stain let out an unintelligible sound of outrage as a black misting warp gate opened behind Shiragaki. "I see that you won't listen to reason, have fun playing for the losing side, Hero Killer." At that, the man was gone; the last few traces of dark vapor and the pile of dust on the alley floor being the only indication that he had ever been there.

The hero killer growled, bending down to pick up the knife still embedded in the thugs neck. "Damn him to hell." He muttered venomously. "I may kill people, but it's a necessary evil in a rotten world like this." He stood, wiping the blood off of the blade in his hands with the fabric of his shirt. "The least I could do for Nagaki, is to ensure his student doesn't have to do so as well." His footsteps echoed, turning the corner just as a horrified scream tore from where he had just been.

"Hope you're ready, kid. The war's just begun."
Chapter 15

Chapter Summary

This one's actually really long holy shit. As always, read and review!

Next update will be on October 9 unless stated otherwise, enjoy!

The next morning, Izuku woke up alone. Sitting up and stretching, he could see a small post it note on the table.

Midoriya, I called your school, they said they'd give you the next week off to get everything sorted with your next legal guardian. Sleep in, eat some breakfast, watch tv, do whatever teenagers do these days. Just don't get into trouble.
- Tsukauchi Naomasa

Well, getting into trouble was only when he got caught, right? With that reasoning in mind, Izuku rushed to the bed again and crouched low. With a bit of reaching (plus muttered curses about short arms) he managed to snag the handle of the box he'd placed underneath the mattress. He was about to open the container and suit up when his phone went off from its place on the desk. Curious, he walked over to unplug his phone and turn on the screen to see who'd messaged him. It was Iida.

Received 7:00 am.

Good morning, Midoriya. I have been told that you are to be out on a suspension until your temporary place of residence is decided. Would it be acceptable to you if we met up at the hospital after school? I can bring any schoolwork you'll miss and I'm sure Shinshou and Kahiro would be more than willing to help you if you do not understand it at first.

Ugh, he'd completely forgotten about homework. Yawning slightly, Izuku typed a reply.

Sent 7:02 am.
Ok, I'll be there. See you after school, Iida, I'm going to go over some science notes.

Received 7:04 am.
See you later, Midoriya.

Sighing, Izuku pocketed the phone. He couldn't keep track of time in the armor, it typically.... blurred for him in the rush of adrenaline that wearing the outfit brung. It would be safer if he waited until after school for a patrol.

So, what the heck was he supposed to do in the meantime?
Normally if he was home sick he would watch TV, but that probably wouldn't be an option, given that the media being all over what happened to his mother and Kuroda. Knowing them, they'd probably be throwing the word Quirkless into their sentences like dressing on a damn salad. His stomach growled at the thought of food, demanding like a petulant child. He made his way to the kitchen and grabbed a box of cereal sitting on top of the fridge. He grabbed a carton of milk from the fridge and set about making breakfast, if pouring cereal into a bowl even counted as 'making'. Putting both the cereal and the milk away, he sat down to eat. It was on the second bite of painfully tasteless cereal that an epiphany came to him, making him freeze mid-chew.

The media. The ravenous, desperate media, which would blow up something a vigilante said to epic proportions.

He scrambled from his chair, breakfast forgotten as he hastily tied his shoes and rushed out of the apartment, the door making a bang behind him. One thought was on his mind as he rushed past the desk attendant and onto the streets: where could he buy some walkie-talkies?

The actual process of buying the device went faster than Izuku expected, the cashier of the tech store he'd walked into didn't so much as blink when he asked about them. He took out his wallet and paid for the proper amount of money, taking the bag the employee had put his purchase in. After that, the real challenge was walking to the warehouse at a normal pace. Tearing down the street wouldn't help him so much as draw attention to himself, which was something he really didn't need at the moment. Especially with the scheme he had in mind. The familiar doors burst open as he rushed in, making a beeline to Kuroda's desk. Placing his bag down, Izuku opened the bottom left drawer, letting out a sound of triumph as he took a small box out. Removing the lid revealed two old style flip phones, fully charged and ready to make the sort of call he was planning. Taking one, he replaced the lid and put the box back where it belonged. Izuku recalled what Kuroda had told him when he was explained the use of burner phones.

"These can't be traced to you, so long as you don't leave prints or are seen talking on it. Use these only for emergencies."

Well, this certainly was an emergency. Grabbing duct tape as a last second addition, Izuku made his way out of his and Kuroda's warehouse. It took a good half an hour to set it up, but once those thirty minutes were up, he would be ready to let all hell break lose.

A crackling voice came in over the Walkie-talkie in his hands. He really was thankful for how long people were on hold for the radio. "Hello! This is radio station 104.8! Your place for hot news, what's your name, caller?"

He grinned, pressing the button and lowering his voice. "This is Kuroko, and you might want to broadcast this as far as you can, because I have some things to say."

Naomasa's day had been uneventful so far; taking a call here, writing a report there - the usual when a villain attack or major crime wasn't going on. Which was not very often, mind you. He let out a huff as he finished reading over yet another report from the police. Minor criminals have been slowing recently, and the last time that happened, the USJ was attacked. The police could not afford another attack of that caliber, not with their reputation barely holding together as it was. Leaning back in his chair, the detective started to go over the happenings of the day before.

It had been hectic, that was for certain, receiving a panicked police call from Midoriya Inko as fighting could be clearly heard in the background. He honestly wasn't sure if he could have driven
faster to the scene, yet no matter how fast Naomasa was he wouldn't have been fast enough to save them from what happened. Mrs. Midoriya had been laying eerily still on the floor, a few feet from the head-shaped craters in the wall and that didn't even begin to cover what he felt when he saw Nagaki Kuroda. From the evidence, the forensics team had been able to decipher that the man had held off their attackers while Midoriya made the call, and an educated guess told him that Midoriya wouldn't have been hurt before Nagaki was out of commission. There wasn't a doubt in Naomasa's head that the man had taken that gash to his arm protecting her.

The aftermath of it led to a new problem: Midoriya's son, Izuku. That was a whole other problem he didn't want to face until he'd had at least three cups of coffee and an Advil. The boy was willful and outspoken, which contradicted the testimonies neighbors and friends had given the police. Midoriya Izuku had grown up a shy, timid boy, often too scared to confront problems like bullies. Then just a year ago, his entire demeanor took a complete one-eighty; his voice grew louder, he was seen outside of his house more, he even started volunteering at a soup kitchen. Naomasa may not have a psychology degree, but even he knows that people don't just change out of the blue like that without outside influence. So far, the only traceable trigger would be the very man sitting in a hospital lacking an arm. A lot of people would just shrug at that, saying that it was a good thing he came out of his shell, that he just needed a bit of help to do so.

But Naomasa was not most people.

He had some extra information the neighbors didn't. The time when Izuku's personality changed happened to be right after All Might had, rather bluntly, given him a reality check. He made it a habit to take coincidences like that with a grain of salt. So, Midoriya's dreams were shot down right as Nagaki Kuroda made an appearance in his life. The timing was almost ridiculous, like they were living in a manga. He honestly didn't know what that would make him. The antagonist?

His musings were cut short when one of his co-workers barged into his office with wide eyes. "Sir!" The man said, standing at attention as Naomasa straightened in his seat. "Kuroko is talking on the radio as we speak!"

"What?" The detective asked, somewhat in disbelief as the co-worker held his phone up, the screen displaying the station number.

"You'd be surprised how helpful some people can be," a voice that Naomasa immediately recognized as the vigilante said. "sometimes I'll find food placed up on the rooftops with a note, they're usually from people I helped in the past; but that isn't the reason why I called in, dear listeners."

"I want a transcript of this broadcast, immediately." Naomasa ordered, standing from his desk and marching out into the hall, his coworker tailing behind him. "Did you trace where the call was coming from?"

"We have a general location, he must be using a burner phone."

"I want all available units to go to that area and set a perimeter, get eyes in the sky if you have to. We're not letting him get away." Naomasa practically barked orders left and right as the office scrambled around him in its own sense of methodical madness.

All the while, Kuroko continued to speak. "Believe it or not, when I'm not kicking ass in a tight ass black suit, I walk among you. I watch how you act, how you treat one another; and one thing that's caught my attention is how the media has been portraying the attack on the Midoriya family, which happened not even a full day ago." Naomasa slammed his car door shut and turned on his alarms. The vigilante continued. "Now, what I've noticed is how they bring up the victim's son and
his Quirk, or rather, his lack of one. I'm not sure about all of you, but to me, I find it just a little
despicable that they'd bring that up when his mother has been put into ICU. The boy's condition is
not the subject of the report, it's the villains that attacked his family; so why are they focusing on
former rather than the actual issue at hand?"

"Do you have a location?" Naomasa demanded into his com as he sped past the morning traffic.
Cars were smartly making room for him as he broke every speed limit he knew of.

"He's in central square." A voice piped up from the police radio. "All available units are en
route."

He grit his teeth as his grip on the steering wheel tightened, all their units wouldn't be worth shit
if the vigilante ran before they got there.

"What would that issue be?" Kuroko continued, seemingly unaware of the police force speeding
towards his location. "The villains attacked when ninety percent of the local hero population was
scouting out potential sidekicks at the Yuuei sports festival."

"Are you condemning the actions of the heroes, Kuroko?" A female voice cut in the broadcast.

The vigilante had the nerve to sound incredulous. "No, of course not. What I'm saying is that
these villains are attacking the ideas that the public believe to be true. That schools are safe from
villains, that the heroes will be there whenever anybody is in trouble. By destroying those ideas, they
destroy the faith in the hero community, which could potentially cause a rift between the public and
the heroes that make it their job to protect them."

"The villains that attacked both the USJ and the Midoriya household are after one thing: the destruction of the heroics industry. What better way to do that
than to tear down its foundation, the trust between the people and the heroes? Heroes are still here
only because the public wants them to be. The moment they start thinking otherwise, the entire
system starts to crumble. Do you know the steel structure of support for the heroes?"

Naomasa made a sharp turn into the park, seeing several other officers coming in from the
opposite side. He sprang out of his car and scanned the square, eyes straining for any sight of the
infamous black helmet. The radio could still be heard from his car.

"Oh dear, looks like the police have found where I'm calling. Imagine how they'll feel when they
realize I'm not even there." He heard the vigilante laugh as the detective's face grew steadily more
red. "Amazing what a few old American action movies can inspire. Do you mind cutting my line,
Miss? It's a bit hard to do so when you're speaking from a walkie-talkie."

The woman seemed to be caught off guard from the request. "O-of course." There was a click,
then silence.

Immediately, Naomasa whipped to his subordinates. "Look everywhere." He ordered, "I want no
rock unturned until we find that damn phone." They nodded and dispersed as the detective went to
his car and turned off the radio. Old American action movies, huh? He didn't know whether to laugh
or punch something, preferably a certain black fox.

It didn't take long for the phone to be found, the walkie-talkie duct taped to it had been a big
giveaway for the search teams. Naomasa took the phone from an officer's offering hands and ripped
the tape off. He held the walkie-talkie in his hands and felt his frustration rise even further when it
came alive within his hand.
Detective? I really hope that you have this, otherwise it's going to be a really awkward game of telephone." the vigilante's voice came in through the speaker. "Hello? Testing. Testing. One-two-three."

He sighed, then brought the device up to his mouth, firmly ignoring the police officers staring both at him and the walkie-talkie in his hand. "This is Detective Tsukauchi Naomasa speaking." He said.

"Oh good, you found it." the voice chirped, actually chirped. Was he dealing with a damn child? "Just wanted to tell you nice job on acting so fast, really. Kudos to you, Detective. If I was actually there, it would have been much harder to get away."

"What do you want, Kuroko?" he deadpanned into the receiver, his irritation now reaching dangerous levels. "Why did you pull this little stunt?"

"Well, I certainly would call it 'little'," the vigilante began, "I made sure they were broadcasting as far as they could. I'm fairly certain a good three quarters of the adult population heard me." He sounded entirely too proud of himself. "As for the why: I felt that you would want a little heads up to their plans, making a counter-move against a move that hasn't even been made yet is a good way to end the game quickly."

"This isn't a game, Kuroko." Naomasa stated coldly into the device. "Real people are in danger here."

There was silence for a moment, but when Kuroko spoke again his voice was icy, like the bite of a freezing wind. "Oh, I'm well aware of that little fact." He said, "The moment the League attacked the USJ they showed that they meant business. I've been slacking in my monitoring of them and now look what's happened. But I won't allow something like that again." Kuroko's voice grew cheerful, an eerie switch from what it had been a mere second ago. "So you can go suck on a lemon as sour as you are, Detective. Do your damn job, and I'll do mine." The line cut dead in his hands. Naomasa had a feeling it would not be spoken through again.

Meanwhile, on the rooftop of a parking garage, Izuku let out a huff of laughter. "Thank you, Liam Neeson, for the inspiration." He said to no one in particular as he tossed the walkie-talkie off the edge and into an open dumpster. "Well," he let out a groan as he stretched his back. "Time to visit Kuroda." And hopefully not get smacked on the head for what he just did. That man had a second sense for when Izuku got into mischief, and he never hesitated to either laugh or scold him. Sometimes he'd do both, but that was a fifty-fifty chance that Izuku really didn't want to take. Shouldering his bag, he began his trek to the hospital, smirking as he was passed by police cars rushing to comb the area for a certain vigilante. Gee, wonder where he could be.

It was decided. Kuroda was going to kill the brat. He tells the kid to keep his head low until reinforcements arrive and what does he do? He goes and calls out the League's plans, that's what. Where the hell did his survival instincts go while Kuroda was training him? Because he's going to find them and beat them back into his student's ridiculously green head with a single goddamn arm. Don't think he can do it? Try him.
"That idiot." He growled, pressing a button on his bed that turned the offending radio off. "What the hell was he thinking?"

"I'd imagine that he thought he was helping." A voice pitched in, the familiar exasperation making Kuroda turn to the door and grin. The newcomer was tall, intimidatingly so, to anyone but him. Black hair, only a shade lighter than his, was neatly trimmed into a fashionable shape, matching his suit as he leaned on the doorway.

Kuroda shot the man a smile. "Hey, big brother, long time no see. Where's my hug?" He fake pouted as his brother snorted, sitting down in the chair next to his bed.

"With your left arm." The man deadpanned.

Ouch, talk about a cold shoulder.

"And if I remember correctly, the reason I haven't seen you in the last four years is because you were on a recovery leave." He crossed his legs primly. "Imagine my surprise when I turn on the TV to see that a black fox came back to Japan."

Kuroda winced, "Oh yeah, about that, Kei, I have a perfectly good reason-"

"No," Kei cut in coldly, "you don't. Don't bother coming up with an excuse, you damn idiot, you were never good at them."

Okay! Sibling's being more abrasive than usual. He really messed up this time. "I take offense to that!" Kuroda protested, sending his brother a glare. "What I was going to say was-"

"What, you wanted to pay Mrs. Fujioko a visit?" Kei scoffed, "She may be our grandmother-in-law, Kuroda, but that does not forgive the fact that you undid a good five years worth of work hiding you from both villains and heroes alike." He gestured to his bandaged stump. "Now look at what's happened."

Kuroda huffed, "Ok, first of all, stop interrupting me. It's rude."

Kei was quick to reply. "I will interrupt if I think you're being stupid."

"Which is always."

"You're starting to catch on after about twenty years, little brother." Kei sighed, holding his forehead in his hands. "Do you know how much cover-up I had to do? Messing with medical records, forging a passport, faking insurance, you're lucky I didn't get arrested last time."

Kuroda couldn't help but scoff, "Nah, you're too good for that, Kei. The only time you'd get caught is when it's the end of the world."

"Glad to see my idiot brother has faith in me." Kei commented dryly. Try as he might though, Kuroda could spot the sight twitch of his lips.

Oh good, Kei wasn't completely pissed at him. Small mercies, he sure did love 'em.

Speaking of small mercies, he could hear familiar sneakers on the hospital floor coming closer and closer. Sure enough, the soon-to-be-dead teen popped his head in the doorway. "..... Hey Kuroda." He said cautiously, eyeing his brother with wariness. "Who's this?"

"Remember that brother I mentioned when we first met?" He nodded towards Kei, "This is him."
Kuroda watched in amusement as his student stood ramrod straight, bowing to his brother with a formal greeting. "Hello, Mr. Nagaki."

"Hello, young man." He replied, "I won't cut into your time with my brother, so I'll leave you two to it, but-" he took out a phone, obviously newly bought and expensive, and placed it on Kuroda's bedside table. "Use that if you need to call in a favor." He nodded to Izuku as he stepped out, heavy footsteps slowly fading from earshot.

"That's your brother?" Izuku asked, looking between him and the doorway where the man in question had been. "Talk about opposites."

"Nice try Izuku, I'm still going to kick you ass for that little stunt this morning." He took pleasure in the kid's wince, even more so when he started looking at his shoes rather than Kuroda's face. "You just love to stir shit up, don't you?" Izuku looked up. Apparently a year of training actually gave him some backbone. Who knew?

"I learned from the best." Izuku replied, drawing a laugh from Kuroda.

"Damn straight." He agreed, gesturing to the now empty seat beside him. "Let's hope your bedside manner is better than your impulse control, because I am really wanting some food right now."

"Don't you have a nurse for that?" Izuku asked, taking the seat and cocking an eyebrow.

He scoffed, waving his hand dismissively. "Nah, why call in the nurse when I have my own little student to follow my whims?" He grinned when he felt Izuku punch his good arm. It was light, the kid not wanting to hurt him, but at least he was acting a little more like himself. "Easy there kid, I just want some food! No need to hit me till I'm black and blue."

Izuku sighed, slumping in the chair, "Do you want me to go to the cafeteria, or get room service?"

"Jeez, talking like that you make it sound like I'm in a hotel instead of a hospital."

"Cafeteria it is."

"Don't forget noodles!" Kuroda called out after him, huffing a laugh when Izuku sent back an annoyed look before leaving. At least the day wouldn't be boring. Not with Kei and Izuku around.

The hours passed quickly now that he was with Kuroda, both of them deciding to watch b-rated movies and make sarcastic comments as they ate food. They had just finished their third movie when the hospital door opened and a boy with a familiar head of dark blue hair stepped in.

"Iida!" Izuku paused the movie, ignoring Kuroda's protest in favor of greeting his friend. "School's already over?"

The taller boy nodded, "Shinshou and Kahiro took notes for you in your classes." He informed. They stood there, not quite sure what to say until Kuroda cut in.

"Oh for goodness sake! You're I know better than to leave you both standing there without saying anything. Go be with your friend Izuku, I'll be fine."
"Are you sure?" Izuku asked as Iida's attention focused on the man in the bed.

Kuroda huffed, a small smile tugging at his mouth as he said, "Positive, you brat. Hang out with people your damn age for once in your life."

Well, Izuku didn't need much more prompting than that, with a wave goodbye he stepped out of the room with Iida. "So," he began, walking down the hallway with his friend. "What do you want to do?"

"It's not so much a question of me," Iida said, pausing at the entrance to the visitor's section. "But of 'us'." With that, he opened the door; and Izuku wasn't quite ready for what he saw.

His friends, all four of them, excluding Iida, were waiting for him. Uraraka was with Kahiro, holding balloons and other such things in their hands as they chattered to one another. Shinshou and Todoroki were sitting a respectful distance apart, occasionally making eye contact to roll their eyes at the antics of their female companions. All of them noticeably perked up when they saw Izuku.

Kahiro was the first to react, jumping from her seat and almost tackling them both to the floor as she pulled him into a crushing hug. "Oh my God, Izuku! We missed you at school! You totally missed when Bakugou-" she went on a tangent after that, but Izuku tuned it out in favor of greeting his other friends and answering their questions concerning his wellbeing. The other visitors watched from the corner of their eyes with either amusement or annoyance. Izuku didn't care, not with his friends smiling and joking around him. Uraraka and Kahiro practically dragged him out of the hospital by his arms as the others trailed behind, content to watch him splutter and continue growing an embarrassing shade of red.

Traitors.

Somehow, the group found themselves eating at an ice cream shop. Content to sit and eat their frozen treats, their silence was broken by Uraraka. "So, who was the guy you were visiting, Izuku?" She asked, placing her spoon down as she looked to him curiously.

"Yes, you seem to have a close relationship with him based on what I've observed." Iida, ever the helpful friend he was, contributed. "I have to admit I'm curious as well." Now everyone was focused on Izuku, intent to hear his answer.

"Well...." How could Izuku describe Kuroda? Besides the obvious 'sarcastic asshole that taught me how to be a vigilante'. "He started as my self defense instructor," Yes, good. Off to a good start. "After a few things," the memory of being carried home after the USJ flashed in his mind. He couldn't stop the words that finished his sentence. "Now it's like he's family."

Goddammit. He was supposed to reduce the amount of questions about his friend/teacher, not increase them. He mentally prepared himself for the barrage of questions, yet found himself surprised when no one asked any. They clearly wanted to, he could see it in Uraraka's furrowed eyebrows and Iida biting his lip. Surprisingly, it was Todorki that spoke next.

"If he's family, then he's family. It's not our place to ask about that if you're not comfortable with sharing it."

"That's true!" Uraraka agreed excitedly. "We can all make room for you if you need it, right
"Yeah." Shinshou stated in between spoonfuls of ice cream. "My place is a bit small, though.

"Yes, this would be a good plan of action for Midoriya." Iida stated wisely, "He would be around people that care for him and will protect him from any further attacks."

"I don't know. The last time Midoriya came to my house, my father almost set the living room on fire once he left." Todoroki mused, looking around curiously when everyone, besides Izuku, stared at him. "What?"

"Midoriya pissed off Endeavor?" Kahiro asked, a laugh beginning to bubble up in her throat from the mere thought. "I have got to hear how this went down."

"Don't." Izuku groaned, hiding his face behind his hands. Being a horrible example of a friend, Todoroki told them just how he had sassed Endeavor when the man had tried to run him out of Todoroki's house. Including actual quotes.

What did he do to deserve this? Well, the vigilante thing maybe, but even that wasn't equal karma to Kahiro falling off her seat from laughing so hard. Meanwhile everyone else was either mortified or impressed. He wasn't sure which was worse.

"I don't know whether to compliment you on your bravery or insult you on your stupidity." Shinshou stated neutrally, even with a snickering Kahiro beside him. "But besides all that, it's getting late. Do you need a ride where you're staying?"

Looking at the sky proved his friend's statement to be correct; the sun had just started to set on the horizon. Izuku didn't know when Naomasa came home from his job, but he didn't want to run into the detective while suiting up for a patrol. The day had been awkward enough, he'd rather not top it off by going to jail. "I'm fine." He said, "I'll just get a cab. Really, I'm ok guys."

They all seemed reluctant to let him go, but waved goodbye as he made his way down familiar streets to a bus stop. He counted the minutes anxiously until the vehicle lurched to a stop near the detective's apartment. Quickly thanking the driver, he stepped out and jogged to the entrance.

Thankfully the receptionist paid him no mind and he made it to the apartment without being stopped. The door swung open and he rushed to his armor. His heart was leaping into his throat as he changed, half expecting the detective to come in as he was half dressed. Fate was on his side for once however, and he managed to change completely, along with writing a note saying he'd be staying the night with a friend, without anyone coming into the room. He let out a sigh as he finally got onto the roof, the familiar sight of nighttime Japan soothing his frazzled nerves. With a leap, he landed on the next roof and broke into a sprint. He could hear the wind rushing past him as he performed flips and twists, eagerly embracing the freedom that came with his vigilante self. He paused when he heard a familiar voice call out, "Kuroko!"

It was Kahiro, standing on the roof next to him. What the hell was she doing here? Cautiously, Izuku leapt to her roof and stood, taking note of his friend's toned down demeanor. She didn't even look at his face as she started to speak. "Uh, you probably don't know me, but I'm Kahi..."

"Hello, Kahiro." He greeted, bowing his head slightly. "What are you doing on the rooftops so late? Good question, why exactly was his friend standing where Kuroko could easily spot her?"

She shuffled her feet, and that's when Izuku knew something was up. "Well...." She began, "it's been pretty much confirmed that you're the student of the original Kuroko, that he might still be alive,
and... I wanted to apologize to him."

_That_ gave Izuku pause, "Apologize for what? You were around eleven when he left, what could you be sorry for?"

Kahiro looked like she'd swallowed something vile. "Because..... I'm the reason your mentor got hurt four years ago!" She finished quickly.

".....I think you'll have to repeat that, Miss Kahiro." He said slowly, unsure of what was wrong with his friend. "Take a deep breath, relax, I won't be mad at what you say. I promise."

She fortunately seemed to relax and did as he said, taking a deep breath before repeating herself. "I-I'm the reason your mentor got hurt four years ago."

_What?!_

Kahiro continued, deciding not to stop once she was finally on a roll. "I was the politician's daughter, me and my mother were being held hostage by a villain and he came to save us. The villain struck at me and Kuroko-the old Kuroko- leapt in between us." She let out a shiver, "Good God, his screams are still in my head whenever I think of it. For a while, my mother and I were content to write it all off as an unfortunate kidnapping, a fate of chance. That didn't last long. A month later my mom found emails between my father and an undisclosed person. He orchestrated the whole thing in an attempt to take down Kuroko."

Izuku was thrown, but a lot of the pieces clicked with what he already knew about Kahiro. Her borderline hatred of her father being the most prevalent. It took him a moment to gather himself before replying. "That wasn't your fault, Kahiro." She looked up at him, making eye contact for the first time, not that she'd know with his visor on. "That's the fault of a man who was so greedy he put his family in danger, no one deserves a father like that." He sighed, taking a seat on the roof ledge. "Since you shared something with me, I'll share something with you. My dad was never around, he left before my mom gave birth. No note, no goodbye, just packed his things and left." He smiled to himself, "But crappy dads don't make you or me who we are. I became a vigilante, a damn good one at that; and you still have a few roads to choose from, all of the are bright, believe me. As for my mentor....." Well, she didn't have to know he was in a hospital, right? "He's doing fine, and I'll pass on your message to him." He wasn't prepared for Kahiro to suddenly hug him, if Kahiro was shaking a little or he felt a damp spot on his shoulders, he didn't comment,ms imply patting her back awkwardly unsure what to do. He had a patrol to finish, and as much as he wanted to be there for his friend, he needed to be there for his city.

Thankfully, she didn't take long to detach herself. She wiped at her damp eyes with a sniffle, "Sorry, it's just-there's so much going on with my life right now, I really needed to hear that from someone other than my mom."

"No problem," Izuku replied coolly, "do you know the way back to your home from here?"

"How would I have gotten here in the first place if I didn't?"

She had a point there. He shrugged, "You never know."

"No, you don't." She agreed, opening the door to the staircase. "Thank you, Kuroko." With that, she was gone, the door swinging shut behind her.

Izuku slumped with an exhausted sigh, that was...... He didn't even know how to put it into words. Kahiro was the kid Kuroda saved four years ago? Her dad set the whole thing up to take
Kuroda down? He shook his head, trying to clear his thoughts; and nearly fell off of the roof when he noticed a figure standing on the roof with him, who had certainly not been there when he and Kahiro were talking.

"If I was an enemy, you'd be dead, kid." The Hero-killer Stain said in amusement. "All that training from Nagaki couldn't knock some sense into your head? Can't say I'm surprised."

"Hello, Stain." Izuku said, taking a moment to recompose himself. "I'm sorry to say I didn't bring any detergent with me."

"Haha, kid. Real clever, I'm wounded." Stain replied, crossing his arms. "If you're just going to sass me, then I'll just leave."

That sobered Izuku up real quick. "Okay, I'm done. What is it that you want?" His eyes were locked on the blades attract he'd to various places on the other vigilante's body. Was it even possible to have that much extra weight and still move like he does? He's broken from his thoughts when the Hero-Killer replied.

"Shiragaki showed up last night," Izuku tried not to stiffen at the mention of that particular name. "Tried to get me to join his cause in taking down the hero industry."

"I'm assuming you said no."

"If I had said yes, you'd be on the floor bleeding out." Is the deadpan response. "Fortunately, I'm a person that actually has a moral compass, so I told him 'screw off' and went to find you."

"Not that I'm not grateful," Izuku started carefully, "but why?" He was pretty certain of the answer. He wasn't disappointed.

"Because I respect Nagaki, I wouldn't take a part in taking down his legacy. Besides, with the League after your ass? You're going to need at the help you can get."

Well, he couldn't exactly deny that. "I have one condition if we do form an alliance." He said carefully, eyeing Stain for his response. All he got was a 'go on' gesture. Ok then. "While we are allies, you won't kill or maim any heroes, even when I'm not there."

Surprisingly, Stain agreed. "Simple enough." At that, he grinned. "So, you ready to wreak some hell?"

Izuku looked out to the city, glowing and completely unaware of what was coming. "As ready as I'll ever be."
Chapter 16

Chapter Summary

Oh boy, this chapter was both a hassle and a lot of fun to write. Remember to read and review!

Shoutout to my beta reader :)

Next update will be on October 30. Enjoy!

Thankfully for Izuku's already strained nerves, Stain didn't stay for very long afterwards. Only long enough to plan a second meeting the next day to brainstorm for a plan of action against the league. Compared to that, the rest of the patrol was tame as he ran across the rooftops, checking alleys and dropping down to warn some civilians who were unknowingly walking right into a red-zone for muggings. Even after his few months of vigilante-ing, it still surprised Izuku just how many people could be so oblivious to their surroundings. With exhausted limbs, he made his way to the hideout, careful not to be seen by any bystanders as he opened the familiar door and stepped in. He let a sight out through his nostrils, taking off the helmet and letting the semi-cool air make contact with his face. The room was lit by stray beams of moonlight, making lights unnecessary as he found his box of spare clothes and began to change. After that, it was little effort for him to shuffle some tumbling mats around to make a very rudimentary makeshift bed. There was one problem though, as he laid on that mat and stared at the ceiling; there wasn't the sound of mumbled curses about bratty teens, no comforting hand he could feel even in a stake of half-awareness.

Kuroda wasn't there, and he wouldn't be there for at last a month. The best he can do is wait, wait and try to keep it together in the face of an enemy that outnumbered him by the hundreds. Good luck getting a good sleep tonight. He thought, closing his eyes and falling into a restless slumber.

In the end it was a dry mouth that woke him up, his tongue laying uncomfortably between his teeth. He let out a groan as he sat up, cracking his back before standing and shaking the sleepiness out of his limbs. "Is it bad that that was the best sleep I've had for a while?" He wondered aloud, looking down at his bed and then to the warehouse around him. He shook his head, packing his things quickly and setting off towards the city. No one so much as spared him a glance as he made his way through the streets, too caught up in their own lives to pay attention to a small teen among their rows of organized chaos. He nearly rammed into Detective Naomasa on his way into the apartment complex, the man quickly grabbing his shoulder to steady him.

"Izuku, you're home early. I thought you might be staying with your friend later." He stated, and Izuku prayed that the suspicion in his voice was a figment of his imagination. "I have to tell you that you can't do that again; you're still in danger from the people that attacked your mother. I'm supposed to keep you safe, Izuku."

The teen had been about to reply, but then noted the bags under the man's eyes, and how his
irises were slightly glazed. He could smell the coffee on the other man's breath and see the slightest hint of a five O'clock shadow on his chin. Izuku fought down the guilt he felt. He was trained to not assume anything, even if a lot of evidence was pointing to the detective losing sleep over his safety.

"I'm sorry, Tsukauchi." He said, looking away. "It's just..... been a bit rough."

The man sighed and took his hand off of the teen's shoulder. "That's okay, Izuku." He said wearily, "Just don't do it again, or I'll have to call in a search party." His face kept its stoic expression. He was dead serious.

Izuku gulped, "Yes, sir." He said, stepping past the man and into the building. "What time do you come back, again?" He asked innocently, his head sticking out of the opened door.

"Around nine pm." Naomasa replied easily, giving Izuku a nod before turning in the direction of the parking garage. "Have a good day, Midoriya."

"You too, detective." He replied under his breath, letting the entrance close behind him as he stepped in the elevators and headed up to the apartment. Oh boy, this was going to be a long day.

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In an underground bar, Shiragaki Tomura sat at a table, playing a handheld game while carefully keeping his pinkies off the controller. Kurogiri was behind the bar as usual, wiping a glass idly.

"Recruiting the Hero Killer didn't go as planned," Shiragaki admitted in the silence between the two.

Kurogiri looked up from his task. Almost having to squint at the man in the pale lighting of the bar. "Oh?" He inquired, "I take it he tried to kill you?"

"Several times." The pale man replied, tapping a foot impatiently against his stool as he mashed buttons. "Apparently even vigilantes have a sense of loyalty, we didn't anticipate the Hero Killer having a connection to the Kurokos."

"Ah, that was an oversight." Kurogiri admitted, placing the glass on the table counter with an audible thunk. "What do we do next, Shiragaki?"

The disheveled man stroked his chin, pondering. "Hmmmmm. Nothing changes. We will proceed as planned."

Kurogiri paused, "Are you sure that is wise?" He asked, "Working in the Hero Killer's territory while he is not on our side is a risk, one that could cost quite a few pawns."

"Pawns have to be sacrificed to win the game." Shiragaki countered, "The Hero Killer is arrogant, a surprise attack in his turf would hurt him more than attacking somewhere else." His head tilted, contemplating. "It would be reasonable to assume the apprentice will show there. His master is injured, he's angry; and if he's angry, then he'll be easier to deal with." His attention turned back to the handheld game, which had disintegrated in his lapse of focus to where his digits were. "Oh. Pity, I had almost killed the boss."

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It took about a week for it all to go to hell in a hand basket. A new record. His friends, including
Kahiro and Shinshou, as they had been moved to class 1-B, were entering their week long internships; and with Kuroda starting more vigorous physical therapy, Izuku was left with a lot of free time. Which is how he finds himself sitting on a ledge waiting for his ally to show up. No way in hell was he calling the Hero-Killer his partner. Not after what he'd done.

He felt his stomach churn at the thought. What would his friends think, seeing him working with a man who had killed actual pro heroes? The teen shook his head, clearing his thoughts of such things. It didn't matter, all they'd see was Kuroko, not their Quirkless friend in class 1-C. He actually felt thankful for that - no responsibility tied to his civilian self, no repercussions (and if his mind supplied a 'yet' to the end of that thought... well, only Izuku would know).

"Jeez, Kid." A rasping voice said, now familiar after so many patrols together. "We've really got to get you some survival skills, because yours just aren't cutting it."

He turned, not even wary of the man next to him. "Sorry, Stain. Just thinking."

"Should the rest of us mortals run for cover?" Stain deadpanned, "I can never tell what's running around in that skull of yours."

Izuku shrugged noncommittally. "Probably for the best." He replied, "I can't have you knowing everything, can I?"

The older man paused, thinking it over. "Probably for the best." Stain eventually agreed. Standing up with a grunt, he held a hand out to the younger vigilante. "Ready for patrol?"

Izuku grabbed the offered appendage and stood, stretching out like a cat. "Where to? We've already patrolled about a half of the city. If that can even be called 'patrolling'."

"Hey, they won't be committing any crimes for a while now." Stain argued, following Izuku's leap to another roof.

"Yeah, because they woke up in front of the police station with drugs in their hands!" The teen flung his hands up into the air in exasperation. "We're supposed to apprehend them, not frame them! How did you even find that much?"

"Everyone has their secrets." Stain said, crouching across the roof of an alley and watching a suspicious group interact. "Now shut up, it's time to get in gear."

The actual scuffle happened not a minute after they had arrived, and broke apart just as fast once they made their presence known. Well, more like Kuroko made his presence known, the police wouldn't react well to him appearing with the Hero-killer after all. With a grunt, Izuku jumped back onto the roof, using the nearby walls as stepping stones for his ascent. "You'd think that it'd be a bit more difficult, usually they at least try to fight back." He commented, watching the now small figures run off.

"Yeah yeah," Stain dismissed, already on the next building. "Keep up, kid."

"Hey!" Izuku called out, hurrying to catch up. "If anything, you're the one that needs to keep up!"

They continued on like that, bantering and bickering, while Izuku tried to ignore the pang he felt at every quip. He and Kuroda always had something smart to say to one another; it was how they showed that they cared. Doing the same thing with someone else just felt wrong. But he'd be damned before he let the Hero-killer get a one up on him. The teen was just that stubborn.
However, since vigilantes didn't have infinite stamina, they eventually found themselves sitting on a water tower in Stain's home-turf, Hosu. Izuku kicked his legs lazily over the edge, resting his arms against the railings as he watched the clouds float by aimlessly. The city was gently abuzz with mid-afternoon shoppers. The real noise wouldn't start until the later rush, when everyone was done with work and eager to spend their paychecks.

Their companionable silence was broken when Stain spoke. "There's a reason why I hunt mainly in Hosu." He said, looking out across the cityscape spread before them. "It's so peaceful, those fake-heroes would never expect to meet someone like me in a place like this."

"Some of them weren't fakes." Izuku stated, his tone dead serious and not open for debate. "They had families - loved ones - and you tore them away with one swing of a blade."

"I'm not denying that I have killed people, or that I'll kill people once this alliance is over." Stain said, ignoring the way Izuku flinched at the sheer bluntness of his statement. "But there's one thing that remains a constant in this world full of change: people can justify anything if they have the right idea in their heads."

They sat there in silence once more, this one more tense than the last. "Do you ever feel bad for killing them?" Izuku asked, clutching the railing ever so slightly. "They were humans - living people with hopes and dreams. Do you ever think about that?"

The Hero-Killer shrugged, "Sometimes." He admitted. "But it never lasts long, because what I'm doing is for the greater good of Japan. Weeding out the weak allows the strong to have room to grow."

Izuku was about to respond before a sharp sense of dread raced up his spine. He shot up and immediately began to scan the streets, eyes searching frantically for any sign of danger. "Something's going to happen." He told Stain, his focus unbreakable as he took inventory of his supplies. "I don't know what, but it's going be ba-" The water tower shook underneath them. The support struts groaned as something rammed itself into the metal again and again. Stain, thinking fast, grabbed Izuku and leaped, landing on a nearby office building. They both stared in a mix of horror and dread as a figure tore itself from the tower.

Izuku recognized what it was immediately, blankly-staring eyes with no lids, teeth permanently bared in a malicious grin, and its brain exposed for all to see. "Noumu." He whispered, a pang of phantom pain lancing through his arm.

"What is that?" Stain asked, unsheathing a blade and holding it at the ready, keeping his sights on the creature. "Because I don't think it's friendly."

"It's a Noumu." Izuku explained, taking out his dual knives as it screeched at them and prepared to pounce. "They're with the League."

The Hero-Killer spat. "Shit."

Izuku couldn't help but mentally agree as the Noumu let out an earth-shattering scream and flung itself at them.
with his father's bullshit, and complete his internship. That was all, and now this.

He turned to one of his father's sidekicks, who was currently helping a shaken woman to her feet. "Where are the civilians being evacuated?" He asked calmly, walking over and checking the woman for any injuries. None, they had arrived in the nick of time.

"There's a civilian center for this kind of situation." The sidekick replied, head constantly turning to keep an eye out for any nasty surprises. "It's three blocks from here."

Todoroki nodded, then offered his hand to the civilian he and the sidekick had saved not a moment ago. "Come with me, I'll get you to the center safely." He said. Todoroki faced the sidekick. "I'm going to help the civilians get somewhere safe." He stated. "You and my father can handle this."

The sidekick, he really should learn his name, looked around anxiously. "You're a minor," The man said, wringing his hands. "I'm not supposed to leave you unsupervised, Endeavor will kill me for sure!"

"Don't worry," Todoroki deadpanned, kneeling down to touch the street. "Killing his sidekicks would hardly make for good press." The sidekick didn't get a chance to respond before the sound of crackling ice filled the block. Todoroki's Quirk went to work in forming a tunnel, it's icy walls at least six feet tall and three feet thick. With that, the teen was gone, leading the civilian to the center.

Afterwards, he had quickly worked out an efficient little system: make a tunnel with his ice, lead civilians to safety, then melt the tunnels with his fire. Neat, easy, and he even got to practice with his fire side. Everyone won.

He watched as a small child reunited with their mother tearily. Todoroki felt somewhat uncomfortable with the sheer number of thanks coming from the mother's mouth as she clutched her child close. He was never good with family things, mothers especially.

He turned to one of the rescue heroes, who was standing at the entrance to the center. "How many are accounted for?" He asked, effectively ignoring the messy scene behind him.

"Almost everyone." The hero replied, waving a tablet in the air. "So far, there are no casualties."

"Thank you." Todoroki said, stepping out the door and ignoring the Hero's squawk of protest. He took off, freezing any creatures - Noumu, if he recalled correctly - that he came across before they could cause more harm. He skidded to a halt as he saw the familiar hero uniform of a certain navy-haired classmate.

"Iida?"

"Todoroki?" Iida inquired, the slightest hitch in his breath as he panted. "Your internship is in Hosu as well?"

Todoroki nodded, "Yeah." He looked around and quickly noticed the distinct lack of a pro hero in the area. "Did you leave your mentor?" He asked.

The air grew thicker. Todoroki knew simmering anger when he felt it, and his classmate was alarmingly close to boiling over. "I'm off on a personal mission." Was all he said, quickly turning and rushing down the street.

Todoroki stared down the street for a few seconds, debating whether or not to follow. Muttering a curse, he began jogging after Iida. The idiot was going to get himself in some serious trouble, he
Izuku leapt forward, bracing his arms as the flying Noumu ran across his blades, blood splashing onto the concrete roof below him. The creature let out a howl of pain. It tumbled across the rooftop before scrambling to stand up, the cut already closing up.

"Healing factor?" Stain stated, twirling his blade. "That's going to be a pain."

"Go for the head; if we damage the brain, the regenerative abilities might stop." Izuku advised, watching as the Noumu got up and lunged for them once more. Waiting until the perfect moment, Izuku rushed the incoming creature and with a grunt of effort brought his knife down. It sliced clean through the leathery membrane and dug into the concrete. Quickly, the teen threw his weight on the Noumu's other wing, thoroughly grounding it. "I honestly didn't know if that would work." He admitted. Izuku grunted as the creature thrashed under him like a rodeo bull, straining to free itself.

Stain smirked, "Of course you didn't. Nice job, kid." He strode forward, careful to avoid the sharp rows of uneven teeth snapping around his feet. "You'll want to look away for this." And without any other warning, the man stabbed his weapon down, directly into the creature's exposed cerebrum. The body seized, spasmed violently, and finally went still.

Nausea coursed through Izuku as he felt the last traces of life bleed out from under him. "Oh God." He moaned, rolling off of the body. The teen stared horrified. "Oh God."

"I told you to look away." Stain snorted, leaning down to yank Izuku's knife out of the creature's stiff wing. "Come on, there are more of these things in my city, and I don't appreciate it very much."

Izuku took one last glance at the dead body in front of him before shaking his head, trying to quell his growing nausea in favor of following the other vigilante. They traveled fast, Stain dispatching oncoming Noumus with careless ease. Meanwhile Izuku sought to disable the creatures rather than killing them. He could still see the first Noumu in his mind's eye. He could still remember its horrid struggles as it died. Unfortunately, it was kind of hard to disable something when it had hyper regenerative abilities.

"We have to figure out why they're here!" He called out to the Hero-Killer, "They're just going to keep coming back if we don't stop them at the source!"

His ally grunted, blocking the oncoming attack of yet another Noumu. "They wouldn't come back at all if you'd just shove your damn knives in their heads!" Stain yelled back, knocking the creature over and stabbing it right between its bulbous eyes. "These things aren't human, what's holding you back?"

"I don't know! I just..... It doesn't feel right!" He landed next to Stain, pointedly looking away from the still body his ally stood above. "It's a gut feeling."

Stain snorted, yanking his weapon out of the Noumu. "You and your gut feelings. Fine, Kid, you don't have to kill anything - 'anyone' - here, okay?"

Izuku had been about to thank him when a voice cut in. Jeez, people just love to interrupt his conversations, don't they. "Hero-Killer! I knew you'd show your face here!" Izuku's stomach sank like a rock. He closed his eyes and desperately wished it wasn't who he knew it was. Facing the inevitable, Izuku turned around. A figure stood four meters away from them, fully donned in armor with exhaust pipes sticking out of his calves. Iida Tenya stood before the Hero-Killer and Kuroko.
His rage was almost palpable. "Kuroko as well?" He clicked his tongue disdainfully, "I can't say I'm surprised."

Stain huffed, stepping forward and missing the way Kuroko tensed behind him. "Who the hell are you, kid? Another wannabe? Get lost."

Iida bristled, his fists clenching tightly at his sides. Izuku's anxiety worsened at the sight. "I am Ingenium. You're the villain that injured my brother and ended his hero career!"

Kuroko's head shot to Stain. He's the one that hurt Iida's brother? Oh God, what would Iida think of him for teaming up with this man? It turned out that he needn't wonder for very long. His friend was more than willing to let him know.

"My brother was a hero! He had done nothing wrong and you ended his career!" Iida - Ingenium, this wasn't his friend, not at the moment - turned his attention to Kuroko. "As for you! You say that you're just trying to help people when the heroes can't, and you team up with the man who's killing them? I've never felt more disgusted with someone who goes against their word."

Panic ran down Kuroko's spine when Stain unsheathed his weapon. "Hero-Killer," he stated, trying to keep the hurt from Ingenium's words out of his voice. "Remember our terms for this alliance."

He couldn't see it, but Kuroko knew that Stain had rolled his eyes. "Yeah yeah, 'No killing or maiming heroes, even when you're not around'. You really know how to make an alliance hard."

This wasn't the right thing to say, right in front of a hero-to-be, whose brother had recently had his career ended. Kuroko despairs at Stain's lack of tact. Then he spotted the way Ingenium was holding himself. He moved the moment his audio receptors picked up the sound of engine's revving. Kuroko blocked Ingenium's rush at Stain, his bo held out as a barrier while the hero strained to push him aside. Clearly all he really wanted was a chance at the Hero Killer.

"Why on earth are you helping him?" Ingenium stumbled away when Kuroko shifted the bo's angle and forced his momentum to the side. "He's killed people! Ruined families, ended careers!"

Izuku's throat closed off at the crack in his friends voice. Iida was hurting, and he wasn't able to help this time. Instead he was the cause of it. Izuku forced himself to speak anyways, he owed it to Iida. The aspiring hero was his first actual friend after Kaachan had forsaken him years ago. "The League is getting stronger, Ingenium." He said, keeping his voice steady with a will of steel. "I can't take them on alone - not after what happened at the sports festival. The heroes would rather arrest me than willingly accept my help. I don't have a lot of options at the moment. All I'm trying to do is make the right choice."

"You chose wrong." A voice said from behind him. Kuroko cursed and tried to turn, but found his lower body quite literally frozen to the ground. Stain was much worse off. His whole body, save his head, was completely encased in ice. Izuku felt fear run down his spine as Todoroki Shouto approached him.

"I never got to thank you for releasing me from the Noumu at the USJ." Kuroko said neutrally, trying to fight down the rising panic. "I didn't expect that this was how I would find myself able to."

Todoroki paid him no mind, looking over his shoulder to Iida. "It was stupid to run off alone, Ingenium. Are you alright?"

"Yes, we had yet to engage in a proper fight before you stepped in. However, it would be best
for you to leave now, Todoroki." It was obvious from Iida's tone that this was not a suggestion.

Both Kuroko and Todoroki froze, "I don't understand." Todoroki stated, Izuku couldn't help but agree. "You want to fight them, even when we have them properly restrained? What's gotten into you?"

"The Hero-Killer is responsible for my brother's end to his hero career." Iida's voice was urgent under his helmet. "I have to avenge him!"

Kuroko couldn't take it anymore. In a whirl of movement, he jammed his elbows into his sides, puncturing the smokescreen bags he had sewn in. The two other teens let out sounds of shock, their eyes assaulted with the rancid smoke. Kuroko hurriedly took out a pocket knife while he still had an opening.

Todoroki was a hero in training therefore he wouldn't try to kill anyone with his ice. That meant the ice would have to either be weak - enough for a knife like his to crack it - or thin, which he himself could have broken through easily. The way Izuku's legs had been frozen left a small airspace between his legs. If he could somehow breach it, then the ice could be broken. To his immense relief, it began to crack around the blade.

It was about time he used Kuroda's gift for the festival, wasn't it? He mused. Kuroko dropped his bo and reached into a small compartment on his lower back. He whipped out two metal rods the length of his forearm, shoving one on either side of the cracks his knife had made. With a hard pull, the ice split underneath the pressure, falling to pieces around him

"Sorry, Hero-Killer," Izuku called out as he rushed past the immobilized man, just as the smoke cleared and his friends could see his retreat onto another rooftop. "A fox can't afford to get caught."

Ingenium let out a roar of frustration as he lunged towards Kuroko, his vendetta against the Hero-Killer pushed aside in favor of taking his pent up aggression out on the vigilante that was fleeing before him. Izuku could hear the crackling of newly formed ice as Todoroki formed a slope and began to pursue. God dammit, he didn't have time for this, not with the Noumus still running around. Naturally, in his growing sense of both sheer terror of being found out and annoyance for being distracted from his main goal, Izuku resorted to his best weapon: sarcasm.

"You know, I was actually legitimately trying to help before you two stepped in." He stated in between breaths, hauling ass across the city while the two pursued him relentlessly. "Noumus are incredibly hard to fight, so thank you for distracting me in your own personal vendetta."

Shit, he probably shouldn't have said that. With a sudden burst of speed, Iida was in front of him; and Izuku skid to a halt with a curse and stumble. "And what could you have done?" Ingenium spat, stalking closer as Tozoroki came up from Kuroko's rear. Not good, not good at all. Izuku really did know how to get himself into a fine fucking mess. Iida continues, deaf to Izuku's internal shit-show of a thought process. "You needed Todoroki's help to escape the one at the USJ! Then you show your face here with the Hero-Killer and claim your trying to help? I took on my hero name because I have a legacy to fulfill, his legacy. Who are you to just.... walzt in here to criticize the heroes as you act on the wrong side of the law?!"

This was the most emotional Izuku has ever seen Iida. He messed up, bad. So naturally, when he opened his mouth he couldn't help but jam his foot in it. "Your brother's legacy? Bullshit. You were more than willing to rush into danger with the Hero-Killer, disregarding the civilians in Hosu to pursue revenge." He dodged an incoming punch from an enraged Iida. "I get it, someone you cared about got hurt, you're angry, you want to do something with yourself, anything to make yourself feel better. I can understand that, but you need to get a grip on yoursel-" He let out a cry of shock and
pain as Ingenium's leg whipped out of nowhere and slammed into his helmet; jarring his head as his visor cracked with the intense momentum behind the hit. He stumbled back, falling over on to the floor as a wave of oncoming dizziness hit him like a truck. The impact of his helmet on the floor shattered the remaining strength of his visor, pieces of reinforced glass falling to the concrete with several small clatters.

Distantly, he could feel Todoroki freezing his arms together behind his back. Shit, he definitely had a concussion. Ironically, Iida really packed a punch in his kicks. Must have been the engines. He struggled to keep his eyes open as he was lifted up, being practically carried from the rooftops to the streets. He could vaguely make out the figures of Endeavor and Detective Naomasa through the confusion in his own head. He probably should have panicked at the sight of the detective, but he couldn't bring himself to care, if he even could at this point; he wasn't sure. In all honesty he was more focused on not falling asleep, even as his eyelids grew heavier by the minute. He was on the floor now, resting on his stomach as the heroes talked above him, they sounded nervous, but what would heroes be nervous about? Oh yeah, Noumus. Those things were pretty scary, even to heroes.

Izuku blinked several times as the jumbled mess of his brain started to clear a little. In his brief moment of clarity he could see Stain, positioned right across from him and thoroughly detained. He probably should've felt bad about leaving the man behind in favor of running, but he didn't. Not after the revelation of Iida's brother. Speaking of his friend, he could see him out of his peripheral, being thoroughly scolded by a pro. Heh, a year ago he was in Iida's shoes. How the tables have turned since then.

His amusement was cut short as he made out an incoming figure from above, he muttered a curse as he recognized yet another Noumu flying towards them. Where was the League getting these things? With superhuman willpower, Izuku forced himself to flip over and get his feet under himself. Even as it brought a sense of overwhelming nausea, he ran, because that damn abomination was heading straight towards his friend; and he'd be damned before he let Iida down one more /fucking/ time today. He ignored the hands that tried to grab him, restrain him. Why? Because he was the goddamn Black Fox of Japan, that's why; and he was on a mission.

He gave a warning in the form of a shout, "Iida!" As the teen whipped around to look at Izuku, the vigilante threw his weight into a body slam that sent the teen sprawling. Adrenaline did some weird crap when you had too much of it, Izuku was pretty familiar with that little fact; but right before the Noumu had set its claws into his shoulder armor, Izuku could have sworn that he had made eye contact with Todoroki. The weirder part was, his friend's eyes widened, like he'd just realized something that'd been standing in front of him; but by the time Izuku could even process that it had happened, he was in the air, dangling like a limp doll in the crushing grip of yet another Noumu. He could hear the cries of the heroes ad the creature flew away with him, its prize; but that's okay, because Iida was safe, Todoroki was safe, Kuroda was safe, mom was safe. All because he had played himself right into the League's hands, and strangely, he couldn't find himself to care one bit. Exhaustion finally settled in, nestling deep into his bones as his eyelids drooped unwillingly and he fell into the void of unconsciousness.
Chapter 17

Chapter Summary

Oh boy, things are coming to an end soon folks, but don't worry, I'll probably make a side series with random tidbits in this AU. You can feel free to write drabbles, make fanart, and even continue it if you really want to, just be sure to tell me so I can read/see it as well!

Also, my life's getting pretty busy lately, I have like seven 40 minute magic shows to perform in one day, so the next chapter might be a little late. Sorry!

It had been pandemonium after Kuroko - Midoriya - had been taken. The heroes and policemen alike had tried to pursue, but they couldn't shoot without risking the vigilante's life. Neither did anyone in the area have a Quirk suited for high-speed chases over rooftops. Instead, they watched. They all watched as Todoroki's friend was picked up and taken to who-knows-where.

He'd nearly lost control of his fire he'd been so angry - angry at the heroes, at Kuroko, at himself.

His mind had been in utter chaos since the day before. The teen sat in his room, staring at the ceiling as if it would give him some sort of answer. After twenty minutes with no substantial results, he sighed and sat up.

When Kuroko had shoved Iida out of the way Todoroki had been in shock. The way he screamed the name made it sound like Kuroko knew Iida personally. However, that wasn't what caught him off guard the most. No, that had been how the vigilante's eyes were the exact same green as his friend's. But that was impossible - his friend was soft hearted, kind, passionate and Quirkless to boot. Midoriya wasn't the Black Fox, he couldn't be. That was what Todoroki had told himself over and over. Up until he had seen the news covering the disappearance, and likely kidnapping, of one Midoriya Izuku.

He'd been too exhausted to make sense of it at first. He was bruised and aching and sweaty. At that point in time, his thoughts had been more occupied with food, a damn shower, and sleep. Now that he was awake, though, he felt like slamming his head against the wall. Things had started to make a ridiculous amount of sense. The way Midoriya looked dead on his feet half the time, the way he'd flipped Bakugou over with a single arm - Todoroki was especially frustrated at himself when Midoriya's fractured arm came to mind. He had seen the vigilante a mere day before, had seen him get grabbed by a..... thing with strength that could match All-Might's and yet Todoroki still couldn't connect it to the large hand-shaped bruise around his friend's forearm. The teen hit his face with the palm of his hand. He, Todoroki Shouto, son of the number two hero in Japan, was a god damn idiot.

Ok, so his friend was Kuroko, the most notorious vigilante in Japan excluding the Hero-Killer, what now? Midoriya was in the hands of the League, he could deduce that much. Now he had to somehow find out where he'd been taken and rescue his friend. There was only one problem to his scheme: he couldn't do it alone. But who could he turn to? No one else knew Kuroko's identity. Unless Todoroki told them, they wouldn't-
This time, the teen actually did hit his head against the wall. Ignoring the slight throbbing, he took out his phone and opened the group chat.

*Todoroki*: Meet me at my house. There's something you all need to know.

It didn't take long for them to respond.

*Kahiro*: Uh, not that I'm not happy at this sudden invitation, but why the sudden invitation? What could be so important you couldn't tell us over the phone?

*Shinshou*: I agree, and not just because I have a cat sitting on my lap and I don't have the heart to move her

*Uraraka*: Sure? We don't have your adress tho

*Iida*: I'm sorry to tell you that I am unable to come, I'm with my brother.

He probably should have expected the confusion, so with a sigh, he sent another text.

*Todoroki*: It's about Midoriya.

*Kahiro*: ....

*Kahiro*: what's your adress

*Shinshou*: already out the door, Haru will have to forgive me later.
Uraraka: telling my dad I'll be gone for a bit

Iida: I will come a bit later, I have pressing matters at the moment.

Huffing at the sudden change of tune, Todoroki sent them his address. He could hear the front door opening, his sister calling up to him that she'd be gone until the afternoon. All he hoped was that she'd take a bit longer than usual, because he had a feeling that, pardon his french, shit was about to hit the proverbial fan.

It took about thirty minutes for everyone except Iida to arrive and seat themselves on his couch. The tension in the room was palpable, like a thin string ready to snap.

Kahiro fidgeted, scratching the back of her neck nervously as they all sat in silence. "So, Todoroki," she began, chewing her lip as he turned to her.

"Yes?" He had a feeling he already knew her question.

He was right. "Why did you all call us here? What is it about Midoriya that you want us to know?" She asked. His friends (because apparently they all followed the unwritten rule of 'a friend of Midoriya's is a friend of mine') leaned in, eager for an answer.

Now there was the question. How was he supposed to break this to them? It wasn't like telling someone a schoolyard secret, this was serious. This was something that could get Midoriya arrested, or worse, killed.

Instead, he avoided the question altogether. "How long until Iida arrives?" He asked, looking towards the clock. "He said he had business, but didn't specify."

Kahiro scowled, noticing how he'd refrained from answering. "At most? Fifteen more minutes," she replied, crossing her legs as she rudely propped one on the coffee table. "Are you gonna answer me or not?"

Uraraka shushed the other girl. "Kahiro, Todoroki's probably waiting for everyone to get here before he tells us." She pacified, giving Todoroki a stern glance, the type that demanded answers.

How did Todoroki find himself in this situation, anyways? Sitting in his living room, surrounded by anxious teens and about to tell them all a secret that will change everything? Oh yeah, because of one Midoriya Izuku. He was going to punch the freckled teen when he saw them again. When, not if. Todoroki refused to acknowledge that Midoriya could be gone for good, for both his and his friends' sake. Everyone practically leapt out of their skin when the doorbell rang, Uraraka going as far as to arm herself with one of the throw pillows his sister had bought to 'liven up the place'.

Todoroki sighed as he stood up. "That's probably Iida." He said, walking over to the front entrance. Sure enough, his blue haired classmate stood at the door, his back ramrod straight but the bags under his eyes giving away just how worn down his classmate was.
"Hello, Todoroki." He greeted stiffly, bowing low. "I would like to apologize for my behavior yesterday, it was immature and put you in the line of fire." Iida didn't look up until Todoroki started to speak.

"It's fine, are you going to come in or what? My sister will get mad if too many bugs get in the house, and I rather like where my limbs are at the moment." Not a lie, his sister was downright terrifying when she got mad, not that he'd ever admit it to her out loud.

Iida was thrown by the casual acceptance and dismissal of his apology, blinking in surprise before sheepishly stepping into Todoroki's house and allowing the aforementioned teen to close the door. Step one completed, now the hard part of actually telling them.

Their friends greeted them with a mix of casual waves and hellos as they appeared in the living room entrance. Todoroki sat down in his old seat while Iida stood until Kapiro yanked him onto the couch by the scruff of his shirt.

"Okay, I'll ask again now that everyone's here: why did you call us here? What do you know about Midoriya that we don't?"

He tried to form the sentence in his head, words darting out of his reach. After an arduous process, he'd finally found the right wording, but when he opened his mouth that all went out the window and what he said came out far more blunt than he'd ever intended. "Midoriya's the Black Fox."

Open mouth, insert foot. Forcefully.

They all sat in silence, the other occupants openly staring at him in both surprise and incomprehension. He didn't blame them, if anyone just outright stated something like that he'd up and leave.

Uraraka let out a nervous laugh, "I'm sorry, what?" She asked, looking to the others for reassurance that she wasn't the only one not understanding it. "Midoriya's Kuroko? What-"

"He's not Kuroko." Shinshou immediately stated, "He can't be."

"Lets say that he was, though." Kahiro piped in, her face scrunched in thought. "You have to admit it would explain a few things." She squirmed in her seat awkwardly as she posed her next question. "Uh, by any chance, have any of us seen his dad around?"

Todoroki blinked, "What does that have to do with this?" He asked, genuinely curious.

If it was possible, she became even more uncomfortable under the gaze of everyone. "Uh, well.... I may or may not have talked to Kuroko a few days ago." She rushed to continue before anyone could interrupt, "I won't say the exact details, but he said his dad hasn't been around since before he could remember."

"He invited me to dinner a few weeks after we first met, I didn't see any signs of three people living in his apartment." Shinshou contributed, rubbing his eyes wearily. "Damnit, I'm too tired to deal with this crap right now."

"We have to," Todoroki said, "because if I'm right, then Midoriya's being held captive by the League of Villains. Think about it, a Kuroko got grabbed by the Noumu at the USJ, and a day later Midoriya shows up to school with a fractured arm" He continued to list the clues he'd gathered so far, every single coincidence that had the slightest possibility of Midoriya being Kuroko; because that this point he needed to have his friends believe him. Midoriya was in trouble, and he needed all of
their support for his plan to even have the slightest chance of succeeding. After a solid two minutes of pure talking on Todoroki's part, they all sat in silence, unsure of how to continue.

Iida, who'd been eerily silent ever since he'd heard Todoroki's claim, stood. "Kuroko is a vigilante." He stated, his mouth set in a line and his eyes burning with rage. "If Midoriya really is the Black Fox, then he deserves whatever happens to him."

Kahiro shot up from her seat, "What the hell, Iida!?" She shouted, "Midoriya's our friend! How can you say that!?"

"Our friend?" Iida spat the word out like it was venom. "We are heroes in training, and he is a vigilante! We're supposed to apprehend people like him! Or did you forget what Kuroko really is behind all of that faux nobleness?"

Uraraka, who'd watched the confrontation with wide, worried eyes spoke up. "Iida, you were there when Kuroko arrived at the USJ." She said, standing up and placing herself firmly next to Kahiro. "He didn't even spare us a glance until we were safe from Kurogiri. Midoriya is still Midoriya, he just has some......" She flailed for an explanation, "Really different ways of spending his free time."

"Think about it, man." Shinshou said, leaning back in his seat and giving Iida a half lidded stare. "You've known him longer than all of us, does he really seem like a bad person?"

"Of course he's not a bad person!" Iida snapped, "but we are the next generation of heroes, we can't let personal ties get in the way of our jobs! He was with the Hero-Killer for God's sake!" His voice began to shake, and Todoroki could see the beginnings of tears in his eyes. "I can't just-- I can't just forget that." Just like that, his moment of weakness was over, and he stomped towards the door. "I won't tell anyone else," he said, standing at the door with his backs to them. "But you're all off on a fool's mission if you truly think that you can save him." With those last words, Iida slammed the door behind him, leaving the other four in silence.

Kahiro turned to Todoroki. "We'll help." She said, the two behind her nodding their agreement. "What do we have to do?"

"First, we have to find where they're keeping him," He began, "But I have no idea how we're going to do that."

Kahiro smiled, and Todoroki couldn't help but feel a bit concerned at the maniac glint in her eyes. "Oh, don't worry," she said, "I know someone who'll be more than willing to help."

Iida didn't know where he was going, pacing angrily through the streets. All he knew was that he had to get his mind off of Midoriya. He felt a pang in his chest as he imagined his friend, bright eyed and happy, behind that helmet. It didn't make sense, Midoriya had always been quiet, timid almost; him being Kuroko was two puzzle pieces that just wouldn't fit together, and yet.....

It wasn't long before he found himself in front of the hospital, his feet unconsciously leading him there while he was immersed in his own thoughts. Hardening his resolve, he walked in, signing the visitor sheet and practically making like a bat out of hell to his brother's room. He'd been reading a book as he came in, but quickly noted his page and turned to him. "Tenya!" He greeted, smiling brightly at first, but dropping into a concerned frown as he saw his little brother's clenched fists. "What's wrong?"
Great, he was worrying his older brother, Iida took a deep breath, forcing himself to relax. "Tensei," he began, "if a friend of yours, someone that you trusted almost implicitly, did something bad but for the right reasons, what would you do?"

His brother didn't reply immediately, just giving him a concerned look. "Did something happen?" He asked, leaning forward in his bed to get a better look at his younger brother.

"Nothing, just....." He struggled to find the right words. "A hypothetical question, I guess."

His brother quirked an eyebrow, not quite believing the lackluster explanation. "Well, hypothetically, if your friend did whatever it was while thinking it was the right decision, then try to understand why they thought it was the right thing. You won't get anywhere only seeing things from your perspective. Are you sure that nothing's wrong, Iida? You're starting to worry me."

Iida was silent. See things from Midoriya's perspective? His mind went back to their confrontation a mere day ago. Kuroko had practically been pleading with the Hero-Killer, trying to keep his ally from hurting either him or Todoroki; he'd even set conditions to their alliance, conditions that prevented the Hero-Killer from killing or hurting any heroes. Even so, Iida just couldn't forget how the man had hurt his brother, he refused to. Yet.... Midoriya really didn't have many options, did he? He was a vigilante, someone who operated on the wrong side of the law. He wasn't exactly public enemy #1, but Heroes would still arrest him instead of letting him team up with them; and there was no way in hell that Kuroko, someone who beat up bad guys on a near daily basis, would have anyone villainous willing to help him. That left only one option: another vigilante, even if it was a self perceived one.

The desperation in Kuroko's yell as he shoved Iida out of the way.... that kind of emotion couldn't come from anyone but someone like Midoriya; and people like Midoriya were good, too good for the kind of world everyone lived in. Iida was far from fully forgiving his friend, that sort of thing would take time, time he wouldn't have if Midoriya never came back. He'd made a mistake, walking out of that house. He hoped he could make up for it.

After a solid minute of silence, he finally spoke to his brother. "I'm fine, something came up, that's all." He bowed respectfully, "I'm sorry, but I have to go and help a friend."

His brother smiled warmly, and Iida's heart ached. "I won't hold you up then. See you later, Tenya."

With that, Iida walked out of the room, purpose in his step and a goal in mind.

Nagaki Kuroda was usually a patient man, and if you were the one to exhaust his patience, then you probably deserved what was coming to you; and right then, Kuroda had transcended the realm of patience and into the realm of royally pissed off.

"Oh sure, kid, go and get kidnapped by the goddamn League of Villains, why don't you." He muttered to himself as he slipped past yet another nurse walking down the hall. "It's not like your hospitalized mentor doesn't have access to a TV and couldn't see the report." He stomped down another set of stairs, wobbling only slightly on his new sense of balance. He froze when he saw just who was waiting at the bottom.

"Oh God Dammit."

"Hello, little brother." Nagaki Kei greeted, expectantly quirking an eyebrow. "Going
Kuroda went down the last few steps like a man going to the gallows. "You should know damn well, with that fancy computer of yours." He grumbled, pointedly looking away from Kei in favor of counting how many cement blocks were in the wall.

"Technically, even if it was a common computer, it'd still have access to the news," Kei pointed out, reaching a hand out to steady his brother only to retract it when the man slapped it away moodily. "You're not thinking straight, little brother."

Kuroda snapped, "I'm thinking just fine, Kei!" He shoved his way past his brother, stumbling when Kei grabbed his hospital gown. He froze, "If you don't get your damn hand off of me," He growled, fist clenching at his side. "It will not be pleasant for you." The world spun, and with a grunt of pain he was shoved against the wall in an armlock.

"Don't forget just who taught you how to fight." Kei reprimanded, voice calm as ever next to Kuroda's ear. "Now are you going to stop acting childish, or am I going to have to tell you what I know while you're restrained?"

Just like that, all of the tension is Kuroda's body was reluctantly released. The younger man let out a groan as the pressure lifted and he could move his arm again. "What the hell happened to treating the injured with respect?" He asked, rolling his shoulder as he made an exaggerated movement with his new stump.

"I'm glad to see that you're adjusting to you're new predicament," Kei commented dryly, "but do try to have a bit more tact about it. That's not why I'm here, though. This is about your student."

Kuroda's eyes narrowed, "The League has him, that's all I need to know." He said, instinctively ducking the cuff on the head Kei had been ready to deliver.

Kei continued, completely ignoring Kuroda's comment. "I always told you that what you don't know is what you need to know. You don't know what condition he's in, where he is or could be; I can help with that." He stood to the side, holding the door open for his brother. "I already checked you out. You're too predictable, little brother. Alone, you wouldn't be able to do anything, but with me things can shift in your favor."

"Kuroda sniffed, grumpily stepping out of the stairway. "Reminds me of a certain incident a few years ago."

"If by that you mean the first time I saved your sorry excuse of an ass," Kei deadpanned, "then yes, this does seem reminiscent."

"Hey! I'll have you know my ass is just fine, thank you." Kuroda proclaimed, "Now where can a guy get some damn clothes around here?" He blinked in surprise as a bag was thrust into his arm. "Wow, you really do think of everything."

Kei allowed a small smile, "I couldn't keep up with being your older brother if I didn't." He said airily, striding over and sitting on a nearby chair. "There's a bathroom down th hall. Get changed, I'll wait."

Kuroda couldn't quite describe the feeling of actual clothes after spending... What was it, a few days? It felt like months being cooped up in the hospital. Regardless, the feel of a slightly oversized T-shirt and jeans was heavenly. He stepped out of the bathroom and smiled for the first time since he heard the news of Izuku's kidnapping. "What are we waiting for?" He asked, walking past his
brother and down the hall.

"I was the one waiting for you, you know." Kei pointed own, catching up with Kuroda's long strides so they walked side by side.

"Eh, schematics." Kuroda dismissed. He halted abruptly as they exited the hospital, his eyes locking onto a group of teens making their way over. Not just any teens, teens that he recognized as Midoriya's friends. There was one though, one whose dark skin and frizzy hair was oddly... familiar. They noticed him, standing like a deer in the headlights, and sped up.

It didn't take long for them to stand face to face with him and his brother. The leader of the group, who Kuroda recognized as Todooki Shouto, spoke. "Excuse me, but are you Nagaki Kuroda, by any chance?" He asked, his mismatched eyes flicking to the empty shirt sleeve on his left side. They all shuffled anxiously as they waited for his answer, but relaxed a little when Kuroda cracked a grin.

"Yep, that'd be me, kiddos." He said, lowering his voice as he asked a question. "I'm assuming this is about Izuku?"

"You'd assume right," Todoroki replied coolly. "We also know about your... Past activities from a friend of ours."

Kuroda instantly focused on the girl, the one who'd been familiar since the moment he'd seen her. It clicked when she looked up and determinedly locked onto his eyes. "You saved me, five years ago." She said, clenching her hands on her pants. "After we knew that the new Kuroko was the original's student-" he was cut off by Kuroda's bark of laughter.

"So that's why you're so familiar! I couldn't place it until now!" He couldn't help the grin that overtook his face. "I'm glad to see you grew to be a good person, Kahiro." He noticed the way the other teens stared at him wide eyed, almost scared of him. "Oh come on! I'm an ex vigilante, not a mass murderer!"

"And as happy as I am to hear that, maybe it isn't the best to exclaim your past exploits, little brother." Ken said beside him, eyeing up the group before them. "You know his past, now what? Will you report him?"

"The opposite, actually." A girl with a light brown bowl cut said, tapping her fingers nervously against each other. "We want to help you get him back."

The last 24 hours have not been kind to the police force, Naomasa in particular. His fifth cup of coffee sat innocently on the table as he leaned over a collage of pictures and potential leads. The detective didn't even react when his friend shot him a concerned look as he sat down beside him.

"You need to sleep, Naomasa." Yagi stated, taking the coffee for himself and ignoring his friend's groan of protest. "You're going to run yourself into the ground at this rate."

"I deserve it." The man muttered, looking at a picture of a smiling teen with green hair. "I deserve it for letting him get taken."

Toshinori was silent, watching his friend with paints eyes. "The attack at Hosu was most likely a diversion." He stated, "The fact that they managed to snatch Kuroko as well was an unintended bonus for them."
"I know that!" Naomasa exclaimed, his friend startling at the sheer volume. "But Midoriya's missing now, and I can't find a single lead. No witnesses, no signs of struggle, no ransom note. Nothing."

"Maybe the answer lies elsewhere." Toshinori suggested.

The detective rested his hand on his head. "If it does, I have no idea where to start."

Toshinori looked at the exhausted form of his old friend and felt tired himself, because some things were starting to make more sense than they should and he didn't know how to react to that. Midoriya Izuku goes missing the very same day Kuroko does. Kuroko shows up - ten months after Toshinori had given the green haired teen a reality check - with a fighting style that never uses his quirk; if he even has one. Pieces that should have been from two entirely different puzzles were fitting seamlessly together.

It was still a theory, but a theory that was starting to have merit to it. He stood to throw away the coffee and took out his phone, he had to tell the principal of this development.

"How long do we keep him under?" Kurogiri asked, standing next to Shiragaki as they looked down at an unconscious figure in a gurney. "We can keep him under for about a week before his muscles begin atrophy."

"A week is more than enough time," Shiragaki rasped, idly tapping a finger against a spot right above the broken visor of Kuroko. "To think that it was this brat causing all of this trouble for my plans." He didn't even look to his companion, saying. "He's almost caused more trouble than he's worth, interfering the way he has. He's caused it all to change single-handedly. We're moving our plans ahead, send out our team tomorrow, I have a plan in mind for our little Black Fox."

Kurogiri bowed respectfully, "Right away, Shiragaki." He turned, striking out of the back room of his bar to pick up the phone and type in a number. "Change of plans," he said into the device, "You move out tomorrow." He hung up, staring at the old newspaper headline sitting on the bar. If someone wasn't privy to it, they'd pass the piece of paper off as a makeshift coaster for a beer; but Kurogiri new better. "I hope you're ready, Bakugou Katsuki," He said to no one in particular, "Shiragaki has a lot planned for both you and our current guest."

Nothing was making sense, his thoughts were in chaos. He kept catching slight glimpses of his surroundings, usually a bright light or a figure with lots of hands. It was scary, he couldn't move his body, he couldn't form a coherent thought. He had no control. Why was he here? Was he hurt? His shoulders ached, that was one thing he could understand: pain. Pain was all he could feel, in his legs, in his shoulders, in his heart. Why was it hurting? He could t understand it, he couldn't understand anything. There was one thing he knew instinctually though, he wasn't safe here. He needed to get out. How? He was alone. Alone alone alone.

Help....

Please....

Darkness.
Chapter 18: In which shit hits the fan

Chapter Summary

Hey guys! I just wanted to thank you for all of the understanding and support you gave me when I couldn't update. So here, a chapter that's 3,000 words over the usual length. Have fun!

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

In Bakugou Katsuki's expert opinion, he was not at fault for the kitchen being blown up. No, the blame fell to his bitch ass mom, who decided to turn on the TV at full volume. Bakugou had been washing the dishes (maybe or maybe not scrubbing with more force than necessary just to spite the old hag). That was when he heard it, the words that had made his hands ignite and shatter the glass in his hand.

Midoriya Izuku, age fifteen, has gone missing; kidnapped by the League of Villains.

Oh boy, people thought they'd seen him mad before? That moment trumped all of his other fits by a goddamn light year. The walls of apartments several blocks away shook under the combination of his explosions and incomprehensible screaming. More than one call was made to the police that night, the callers fearing that a villain was on the loose. This was something much, much worse however: Bakugou Katsuki on a warpath.

It was only after the authorities had left and his mother finally got off his damn back that he could think properly. Everything before that had been a haze of fury. A fog so thick he could have choked in it if he'd stayed submerged any longer. Why the hell did he care anyways? It was Deku, the useless shitbag who'd sought to spite him at every turn. First by getting into Yuuei, then by...... Something, he was sure of it, he just couldn't think of it right then, that was all. Point is, Deku might as well have been a universal constant – the ever-present source of irritation in his life. He's useless, but Katsuki didn't think he was so useless as to get caught by fucking villains. It showed how much the little shit always wanted to prove him wrong. Which was stupid, because he was - and always would be - right.

At school two days later, Katsuki noticed how three certain classmates kept sending glances to one another as the lessons went on. It pissed him off, and he ended up getting scolded for breaking his pencils more times than he cared to remember.

Those bastards knew something he didn't, and there were few things that could get him more pissed than that. Unfortunately the teachers were everywhere now, constantly watching their students like fucking hawks. All Katsuki could do was fume silently as he watched the three go about their day. He could smell the smoke from his palms as he skulked down the street, his thoughts elsewhere.

Why would villains even bother with Deku? He wasn't strong, he definitely didn't have a Quirk, and he was about as brave as a goddamn doormat. Not much to steal there, except maybe for his giant nerd brain. Could that be why they took him? He'd been so enveloped in his thoughts he almost walked straight into the guy in front of him.
"Watch where you're going, fucknut!" He growled, shoving past them and stomping away. He stopped short when a familiar black mist began to gather in front of him. "Oh hell no." His hands ignited small explosions - a warm up for the main event - when someone shoved him from behind. It was the bastard that had gotten in his way. The piece of shit was smiling like he'd won the goddamn lottery as Bakugou tumbled into the warp gate.

The sensation of warping wasn't pleasant - like being pulled in every direction while spinning rapidly. A wave of vertigo hit him like a train before the world finally righted itself and he hit the floor. Katsuki suppressed the urge to vomit; he wasn't a little bitch that couldn't handle a little dizziness.

Someone spoke from above him. "Well, that was easier than expected."

Oh that is it. First they have the balls to kidnap him, then they insult his combat abilities? A dead man was right in front him. Bakugou shot up from his place on the floor, his palms sparking furiously as he lunged for the voice's owner. He covered his grunt of pain with an angry roar as something grabbed him from behind and shoved him back onto the floor.

The voice spoke again, "Ah, there's the fight we'd anticipated." His hair was harshly tugged, forcing him to look up. He bristled at who he saw.

"You." He snarled, "You're the freak that showed up with that misty fuck at the USJ."

"Not exactly how I'd describe Kurogiri," The gaunt man stated, a tone of amusement sneaking in. "But yes, I am Shiragaki Tomura. The League has taken interest in you, Bakugou."

"And why the ever living fuck should I care?" The blond snapped. He growled as the pressure on his back increased. "You'd better watch it, ya shit stain; I'm not in the goddamn mood for this fuckery. You're all getting a goddamn explosion to the face when I get up, asshats."

"Why should you care, indeed?" Shiragaki mulled, "How about another teen we have in custody?" Cracked lips pulled into a smirk as Bakugou stiffened. "Our sources said that you knew each other when you were younger, but fell out of touch after your Quirk manifested and his didn't."

"Forget an explosion to the face," Bakugou stated, his rage growing to new heights. "When I'm through with all of you, there won't be a goddamn body left!"

Shiragaki leaned towards Bakugou, looking him square in the face. "How about this?" he said, "We let him go, but you have to do something for us in return. Nothing big, just a fight with someone from our ranks. If you win, both you and Midoriya Izuku go free; if you lose, only you are allowed to leave. It's easy enough to understand."

Bakugou was silent. A fight with a villain? Over Deku? Why the hell did this guy think that this'd work? His mind flashed to over a year ago, when he was struggling for breath around a suffocating slime. He'd die before he would ever admit aloud, but the damn idiot had saved him back then. Saved him and never asked for anything in return. No blackmail, not even a mention that it had ever happened. He owed the fucker one, and he hated being in debt.

"Deal."
Kuroda sighed as he flopped down onto the plush hotel bed, letting out a groan as the day's events came back in a rush.

Sometimes he forgot that his brother could actually get shit done when he needed to. He would get this aura around him that made anyone who could feel it hurry to give him what he wanted. That group of teens was no different. They had spilled their guts the moment Kei had fixed them with a stare and began to ask questions in his standard, no-nonsense tone. After he'd gotten everything he needed, he handed them his number, instructing them to call if anything else came up.

Speak of the devil; Kei came out of the bathroom, toweling his hair. Kuroda snorted at the pajamas his older brother was wearing. Kei shot him a withering look.

"It's completely normal for a grown man to have nightwear, Kuroda. Not everyone is a heathen that sleeps in their day clothes."

"Yeah, yeah." Kuroda dismissed, waving his hand carelessly through the air. "Did you tell the kids where we were meeting up?"

Kei sat down on his own bed. "Yes. I hope you don't mind that it's at yours and your student's warehouse."

Izuku... Kuroda's mood dimmed the moment he started to think about his student. From what Kei had gathered, he'd been concussed when he was taken and likely had at least one or two bone fractures. He'd wake up in the League's claws confused, alone, and scared. Izuku was still a sensitive kid, despite everything that Kuroda has taught him. The damn teen would start sniffling when a dog died in a movie, though Kuroda refused to admit that his eyes had teared up as well.

Kuroda wasn't Izuku's dad. Hell, the kid's first impression of him was taking down a thug right in front of him for Christ’s sake; but that didn't stop him from giving a damn about Izuku's wellbeing like a father should. When he found the knuckleheads that hurt his student... Well, there was a damn good reason he'd been feared by all of the crime rings in Japan. Maybe they needed a reminder. He was snapped out of his thoughts by a pillow smacking him on the face.

"You're thinking too much." Kei stated, a hint of a smile on his face when Kuroda let out a squawk of surprise and fell over. "Get some sleep, my stupid little brother. Midoriya will need you at your best if you're going to help him."

Kuroda nodded, a little dazed from the amount of force behind the pillow projectile. Had his brother always had such a good throwing arm? "Yeah... Thanks, Kei."

His brother had already settled himself under the covers, "Someone has to keep you on task." Kei snarked, "Goodnight, Kuroda." With that, he reached an arm over and turned the light off.

Kuroda stared at the ceiling, managing one last thought as the exhaustion of the day finally caught up with him and he fell asleep. Don't worry, kid. I'm coming for you, and I've got backup.

True to form, Kei had Kuroda and himself at the warehouse a good fifteen minutes before the group of teens were supposed to arrive. Kuroda paced around, randomly picking things up and inspecting
them like he hadn't seen them a thousand times before while Kei watched from his seat on the creaky old couch, thoroughly annoyed.

"If you always do this when you're stressed, I'm surprised you haven't worn a trail into the concrete." The older man stated. He sneezed as a few specks of dust made their way across his face. "When was the last time you properly cleaned this place?"

"Depends, how many years ago did I leave Japan?" Kuroda shot back, fiddling with a few of the practice bo staffs propped against a tumbling mat. "I've been training a vigilante, my priorities haven't exactly been up to your standards, Kei."

Kei sighed, "When are they ever?"

Before Kuroda could reply, the door creaked open and five young faces peeked in. He immediately abandoned what he was doing to focus on the group as they entered. "Okay, you're here. Good, that's good. Now we start to plan." He gestured to the other couch across from the one Kei currently seated on. "Sit down, kiddos."

The five of them looked all around as they sat, taking in all of the training equipment and practice weapons scattered all over the warehouse.

"Wow," The frizzy haired one, Kahiro, said in awe. "This is where you trained Midoriya?"

Kuroda couldn't help the way his chest puffed in pride, "Yep."

One of the blue haired kids, the one that looked like he needed a week of sleep, looked around approvingly. "Well, that's one mystery solved." He blinked when he noticed that everyone was staring at him in confusion. "The dodge ball match for PE, we saw Midoriya without his shirt. The guy's ripped."

"Not the point here." Todoroki cut in, fixing his mismatched eyes onto Kuroda's own gray ones. "We're here to plan a rescue, let's keep on task. Midoriya needs us to get him out of wherever he is as fast as we can manage."

Kei, who'd been checking his phone with a frankly concerning furrow of his brows, spoke up. "He's right," He said, pocketing the phone into his jacket. "One of your classmates was abducted about half an hour ago, witness accounts make it not unreasonable to assume the League is behind it."

"What?" Uraraka gasped, "Who?" The group shifted nervously around her, unsure of what to do.

"Bakugou Katsuki was last seen being shoved into a warp gate on his way home from school." Kei stated, leaning forward. "It was fast, unexpected, and smart. It's safe to assume they have something planned that involves both Midoriya and Bakugou, and it won't be good."

"Where will we know to start?" The bespectacled teen (Iida if Kuroda wasn't mistaken) asked. "While the warp gate could have a limited distance, we don't know what that is. They could be in another country by now."

Silence. Everyone stilled as the hopelessness started to take root in their hearts. They all looked to Kuroda as the man darted to the nearby desk and began to sort through its contents with fervor. The man let out a triumphant "aha!" as he picked up a small device and held it up. "When I was getting Izuku's suit designed, I had tracking chips sewn into almost every part of the suit." He explained,
walking back to the group to display his find. "As long as he's still in the suit, we'll know exactly where he is."

There was silence as the others processed just what Kuroda was saying. Suddenly, things weren't looking as bad. "Little brother," Kei began, "Just this once, I may have underestimated you.

Kuroda grinned, a little in triumph and a little in relief as he turned the device on. "You always do, big brother." He said as the machine started to give off shrill pings and a small red dot appeared on the screen. "You always do."

Izuku's waking was similar to getting knocked out, but in reverse. He went from complete oblivion to consciousness in the span of about two seconds. He shot up from his position, immediately registering the IV in his arm and the musty smell all around him. Where was he? His memories hit him like a truck: teaming up with the Hero-Killer, getting kicked by Iida, the Noumu that picked him u-

He could feel the goose bumps under his armor as his adrenaline spiked. He'd been kidnapped by the League. As carefully as he could manage with a shaking hand, he slid the IV out of the fleshy part of his arm. Ok, now that that's done, what next? Right, scope the place out. He was alone, thank goodness, but there was no telling how long that would last. He swung his legs down and stood shakily. Using the IV stand as support, he steadily made his way around his prison. From the look of the walls and the smell, he was in some sort of basement. He tried not to think about how the room was far too dusty to still be in regular use. His neck craned up as a shrill creak came from the ceiling. Izuku squinted as an influx of light filtered in and a compact ladder descended. Izuku immediately prepared for a fight when he saw the yellow eyes of Kurogiri looking down at him. The misty villain came down the ladder, giving Izuku a nonplussed look.

"There's no need for that now, Kuroko. We're under orders not to hurt you."

Izuku carefully relaxed, still maintaining a respectful distance from the villain. "Forgive me if I don't quite trust you." He stated warily, his eyes constantly flicking to and fro to analyze and reassess his situation.

"Not at all, I was expecting it." Kurogiri clicked his tongue when he noticed Izuku's arm. "At least you had the sense not to rip your IV out."

"Seemed a bit counter productive," Izuku shot back, "After you went through all the effort of healing me."

Kurogiri politely nodded his head. "An unplanned occurrence, I assure you. Shiragaki wanted to disintegrate you on the spot once we came back."

Izuku ignored the shiver that went down his spine. "Then what stopped him? From what I've seen, you're more of a glorified babysitter than a co-leader. No offense." He said. Izuku startled slightly when the man let out a chuckle. It wasn't quite a full laugh, but close enough to one to tell Izuku the villain was amused.

"That was not on my part, no." Kurogiri admitted, "It's not so much of a 'what', more of a 'who'. He
has taken an interest in you, being such a renowned vigilante in spite being Quirkless."

He knew he probably should have a bit more tact, but shoving something that personal in his face made him throw any notion of tact right out the window. "It's not a disability, you know." Izuku stated, "Everyone seems to think it is, but it's not."

"My apologies," The villain said, clearly not apologetic in the slightest. "This man, Shiragaki's master, would like to speak to you."

Izuku chewed the inside of his cheek. "Not like I have a choice. I'm not in a position to say no."

"No," Kurogiri agreed, "you aren't. Follow me, please." At that, the man turned and began to climb back up the ladder. Izuku followed him with a dual sense of reluctance and dread roiling in his gut. When he emerged, the teen immediately began taking mental stock of the details in the unfamiliar room.

It was a bar, albeit a small one, but a bar nonetheless. That at least explained Kurogiri's attire. Various men and women alike, some of which he recognized from the USJ, looked up as they came in. Well, wasn't this just fun. First he gets kidnapped, now he's standing in a room with people that wouldn't hesitate to kill him given half the chance. Peachy. The misty villain paid no mind to their stares, gesturing for Izuku to follow. They made their way across the bar to what looked like an office door. The teen took a breath. He'd fought these people before and won, he could do it again if needed. That's what he told himself as he walked across the room, eyes boring into his back as he passed.

Kurogiri opened the door for him, stepping in and firmly shutting it with a click. It was dim, that was the first thing Izuku noticed. The main source of light came from a bare lightbulb overhead and the glow of several computer screens. Izuku stiffened as a voice, simultaneously smooth and gravelly, spoke from the speakers.

"Greetings, Midoriya Izuku, you may call me Sensei. I hope that Shiragaki has been treating you well."

The underlying question was not missed by the green haired teen. "Uh...." Just what the hell was he supposed to say? He wasn't exactly getting welcoming vibes from the silhouette on the screen, he'd have to be careful. "Well enough. I'm alive."

"And I am happy for that." The finure sure didn't sound happy, more vaguely amused than anything. Izuku wasn't sure which one was worse. "Sit down, I have some questions for you, I'm sure you have some yourself."

Slowly, Izuku sat down on the plush spinning chair that rested in front of the main screen. The cushions felt like concrete to him as he was stared down by the mysterious man on the other side of the computer. "It's not like I can run." He said, his voice shaking. Damnit, he can't show weakness here. Not now, not in front of a man he's willing to bet even Kuroda didn't know existed.

This man was on another level. Lifetimes ahead. His presence alone had Izuku on edge. Shit, get it together. Act like he's any other villain you've fought. Except this villain was about twenty times more intimidating. His jaw tightened and his hands curled into fists when the man, 'Sensei', let out a laugh.

"It is okay to be afraid, Midoriya." The figure said, voice crackling over the static of the speakers. He definitely had a voice modifier, maybe several. "Fear is universal. Villains, heroes and even
you - someone stuck in between the two - feel it."

Izuku remained silent, mentally taking note of anything he could gather from this man. From the general shape of the silhouette, he seemed to be bald. The lack of clothing folds on his arms would only come from expensive, tailored fabrics. (Either that or he was straight up naked. Gross.) Maybe some sort of crime ring leader? No, this guy was something ancient. Just who - or what - was he talking to?

"I can’t really afford to be afraid now, Sensei." Izuku stated, his breaths carefully measured to hopefully hide the anxiety buzzing under his skin. "How many days was I unconscious?"

"About three days." Kurogiri supplied from behind him, making him flinch ever so slightly. Oh jeez, he didn't even want to think about how pissed Kuroda was going to be when he got out. When, not if. He would get out of here, somehow. Even if he had to break a few bones to do so.

Sensei spoke up, interrupting Izuku's thoughts. "You've caught my attention, Midoriya. Not many manage to do that."

Izuku had a feeling he shouldn't be proud about that.

Sensei continued, "Do you know how, when Quirks first came about, they were feared? Even discriminated against?"

The teen hesitantly nodded, "In History class, yes."

"Ah, but why not hear it from a man who lived through it?" Sensei inquired.

"No one can live that long." Izuku said, a creeping suspicion settling in his stomach. "Not even with a Quirk. You'd have to be at least two hundred years old."

The man behind the screen ignored his oppositions. "Quirks manifest in many ways," He began, "It wouldn't be impossible for one to allow its user to take another's Quirk, permanently."

Izuku felt like he'd been dunked in ice water. A Quirk that let you steal another's? Forget intimidating, this man was outright terrifying and he wasn't even in the room. The older side of him, the one that used to gush over heroes constantly, immediately started asking questions. Would he have to be physically there to steal the quirk? Or did he just have to talk to them, like Shinshou's brainwashing? So many possibilities with a Quirk that shouldn't have even existed.

"You're a smart child, Midoriya. I'm sure you've already figured it out." Sensei stated, snapping Izuku out of his inner thoughts.

"It's not possible." Izuku said, maybe a little hysterically. "No one can live that long. No one can have a Quirk like that. It's unheard of."

"So is a notorious vigilante being Quirkless." Sensei retorted. His figure shifted, like he was leaning his chin on his hands. "Yet here I am and here you are. We make quite a pair: two living contradictions to the standards set by today's society."

Izuku's finger's twitched, spasmed really, when the man said that. What was this guy's endgame? If what he's saying was true, then 'Sensei' (Which was definitely a pseudonym) was over two hundred years old, at least. Not only that, he had a Quirk that took other's. In a society that had numerous jobs relying on Quirks? The sheer amount of damage someone could do with that was - frankly - horrifying beyond belief. Economies could topple within weeks, countries following soon after. If
Sensei decided to take a more active role..... Izuku hoped he'd never have to see that day come.

"My Quirk, All For One, has one more ability you would be interested to know, young Midoriya." He paused, making sure that Izuku was paying attention. "I can give the Quirks I take to other people."

What.

"Of course, unless they don't have a Quirk, the side effects are rather unpleasant. You've met the results of failed Quirk transfers, both at the USJ and recently, in Hosu."

Oh god, the Noumu. The way one in Hosu convulsed under him, desperate and in pain before the Hero-Killer's sword pierced it's brain and- If Izuku didn't still have his helmet on he would have clapped a hand over his mouth in a desperate attempt to hold back the bile in his throat. The Noumu were human, humans with Quirks that didn't belong to them forced into their brains. How many did Stain kill in Hosu?

How many people did he help Stain murder?

This man, this monster talked on, like he was speaking about the weather instead of human experimentation. "However, there have been some.... Interesting developments when I transfer a Quirk to someone who didn't have one originally." Izuku stiffened, and Sensei continued. "You see, a Quirk develops in a certain part of the brain. When a Quirk is introduced to a brain which has already been molded for a specific Quirk, the mental strain renders the subject in a vegetative state. Yet for a Quirkless person, their section of the brain hasn't been molded to a specific Quirk, mainly due to a lack of one. Every Quirkless person I've bestowed a Quirk to had their brain accept it and make it their own. Essentially, the end result is like they'd been born with the Quirk in the first place."

"Why are you telling me this?" Izuku questioned, anxiety boiling a hole through his insides. He already had an idea why, and it certainly didn't bode well for him.

Sensei sat back in his chair, a nearly inaudible creak coming from the speakers. "Because, I'm willing to make you an offer, Midoriya. You've proven your ability to make a difference, that stunt on the radio has civilians up in arms to protect the heroes. You've set back a lot of plans for at least a few months, but you can't hold them off forever. Here is the offer: Join the League and attain any Quirk of your choosing, or refuse and face the consequence."

Ever since he'd found out he was Quirkless, Izuku had wanted to have a Quirk. To be considered normal by the people around him, that was all he could ever wish for. For years he'd laid low, tried to remain in the background yet also trying to rise above everyone's scorn. Then a reality check and an ex-vigilante came crashing into his life to change everything.

He didn't lay low anymore, he faced the world with a smile on his face and a Bo in his hands. He made the background into the main stage, his obscurity becoming the focus of all Japan. He had friends now, friends who were looking for him, no doubt. He had a detective who was both a friend and a foe on his side, and most likely working himself to the bone to find him.

Above all, he had Kuroda. Kuroda, who in a year became a keystone to Izuku's life; and the man who would tear Japan - no, the world - apart to make sure that he was safe. All he had to do was hold out until then. They were doing their part, now he had to do his.
When he spoke, even Kurogiri was caught off guard by the confidence in his statement. "I've made it this far without a Quirk, what makes you think that I'd want one now? Call it bad luck, call it a crappy hand fate dealt me; but I am Midoria Izuku, I am Quirkless, and I wouldn't have it any other way."

"You're making a mistake, Midoriya." Sensei said, an edge in his voice.

Maybe he should have been scared of the underlying threat, but Izuku just smiled under his helmet. He would be fine, he just had to last long enough for Kuroda to find him. He could manage that. "No, I'm really not."

Sensei sighed, "Unfortunately, this was expected. Would you rather walk on your own two legs to your punishment, or will Kurogiri have to force you?"

Izuku stood, the chair making a loud groan at the sudden release of pressure. "I'll walk, thank you." With his chin held high, Kuroko turned from the chair and walked into the warp gate Kurogiri had waiting. The screens flickered off, the lack of their glow leaving the room in near darkness.

Kuroko squinted at the glaring light that assaulted his eyes once he stepped out of the warp gate. He ignored the wave of sudden nausea to look around and take in his surroundings.

He was in some sort of makeshift arena, metal and concrete strapped together haphazardly to make some sort of ring around the open field of concrete beneath him. Portable sports lights were set up just outside the walls, their incessant buzzing filling the open space. It was only a trained eye that could spot the several cameras set up around the borders of the arena.

That wasn't what caught him off guard, though. No, that would be the blonde standing at the other side, still in the familiar uniform of Yuuei.

K-Kaachan?!

Bakugou Katsuki stood a mere ten meters away, and Kuroko nearly flinched when the fellow teen's red eyes locked onto him.

"This is the fucker I'm supposed to fight?" He questioned, leaning forward and squinting a little. "Wait a minute... You're that other fucker from the USJ! Kuroko or some shit like that?" This time, Kuroko took a step back as Bakugou's hands started to crackle. "You piece of utter shit! You have the balls to call yourself a damn vigilante and you join these motherfuckers?!!"

Kuroko blinked in surprise, just what the hell was Kaachan saying? "Excuse me?"

Bakugou started forwards, "You fucking-" A loud voice came in over the speakers, effectively stopping the blond from actually advancing.

"Hello, citizens of Japan!" An entirely too chipper voice said, "We interrupt your regularly scheduled programming to show you a special little treat! Renowned Vigilante of Japan, Kuroko being pit against the hero in the making: Bakugo Kasuki!"

Izuku's head whipped to the closest speaker, "What?!!" He demanded, turning back to focus on Katsuki, who still looked ready to send a explosion to his face.

The announcer continued, ignoring Kuroko's outcry. "The terms of this fight are simple: this will be a fight to the death, all attacks are considered allowed, so long as you stay in the ring. Surrendering
"You're going down, Fucker." Katsuki growled, settling into his fighting stance.

"Three!"

"I don't want to fight you." Kuroko borderline pleaded with the teen. Being forced to fight Katsuki of all people. What new level of hell was this?

"Two!"

The blond didn't listen. "You don't have a choice, you fuckass."

"One!"

Kuroko fell into a defensive stance, pointedly ignoring the way his throat started to tighten in sheer fear. "It seems I don't."

"Zero! Begin!"

Katsuki rushed him.

---

Yuuei's teachers lounge was silent, several heroes having their eyes locked on the screen before them. Principal Nedzu stood at the very front of the small crowd, his uncharacteristic frown putting all of the heroes on edge. "My," the mouselike man said, "This is quite the problem."

"What are we going to do, director?" Midnight asked, flinching somewhat when their student set off a particularly big explosion on screen. "At this rate, one of them will be dead before we get there."

"I've already contacted police forces, they're trying their best to trace the broadcast." Nedzu replied. He turned to All Might, who was staring openly at the screen in a mix of dreadful realization and determination. "All Might, you've already shared your theory with me, but would you mind if I told the others?"

In the midst of the confused murmurs of his fellow colleagues, All Might nodded without ever looking away from the screen.

Nedzu nodded. "Ok then." The small man returned his focus to the group gathered before him. "Ladies and Gentlemen, we will have to dismiss the students early today. Seeing that we will be spending every minute trying to locate and rescue two missing Yuuei students: Bakugou Katsuki, and possibly Midoriya Izuku as well."
Kuroda breathed a curse, openly staring at the large TV screen behind the window of the shop he had been passing by. "Villains really don't know when to make things freaking convenient." He muttered, whipping out his phone and sending a text.

*Kei, get the kiddos up and gathered. We're moving a little ahead of schedule.*

*I've already sent a few vehicles to pick them up.*

*What about you??*

A black car pulled up from the curb, popping a door open to reveal his brother sitting in a touch of smug glory. "Hop in, little brother." Kei stated seriously. "We've got a bit of hell to raise."

Kuroda couldn't help the vindictive grin that stretched across his face as he shut the door behind him. "Way ahead of you, Kei."

"You tricked them." Kurogiri stated, watching the fight from one of the numerous screens while standing next to Shiragaki. "If Bakugou wins, he leaves with Mirodiya's dead body. If Midoriya wins, he has the other boy's death on his conscience."

"Either way, we win." Shiragaki muttered, fingers twitching to touch something as he watched the fight with maniac glint in his eyes. "The fox will either die or become easy to mold in our image. Both situations would be an acceptable endgame."

Kurogiri didn't reply, opting to watch the screens as Midoriya dodged yet another explosion from Bakugou. "He doesn't have the strength to kill his childhood friend." He observed, tilting his head ever so slightly. "Meanwhile Bakugou is going at him with lethal force in almost every attack. It won't be long until Kuroko makes a mistake."

There was a blur of black as Kuroko leapt out of the way of another lunge by Bakugou. The resulting explosion sending him flying a good distance away, only able to stop by hitting the arena wall with a loud clang. Groaning, Kuroko stood, shaking his head as the blond student rushed him again.

"You realize you're playing into their hand, right?" He asked, dodging yet another blow from the enraged teen. If the fight wasn't a death match, it would've reminded Kuroko of an el matador facing off against a bull. Except the 'bull' in this scenario was blond, explosive, and about ten times angrier.

Bakugou let out a howl of rage as the target of his ire escaped yet again. "Shut up, you fucking hypocrite." He snarled, "You parade around Japan like you own the place, claiming to be a vigilante, but you're just part of the league!"
Ok. Now Kuroko was just plain confused. "I'm sorry, what?!" He asked, "What are you talking about? I'm not part of the League!"

"Bullshit!" Bakugou screeched, tearing a flimsily piece of metal off of the wall. An explosion from the blond's hand shot the metal at Kuroko with eye blurring speed.

The vigilante let out a surprised cry as he just barely managed to dodge the projectile. The metal skimmed the armor lining his sides, cloth tearing as the metal plating was exposed. "I'm not part of the league!" He yelled again, warily eyeing the other teen for any other surprise attacks. "Where in the world would you get that idea?"

If it was possible, Bakugou got even angrier. "I don't need to tucking explain myself to some shit stain that can't even muster up the balls to hit me!" He yelled right back.

Kuroko let out a hiss of annoyance, "You want me to hit you? Fine." He said, holding his hands out for the cameras to see. "What are you waiting for?" He demanded.

Oh god what am I doing. Do I have a death wish?

Bakugou grinned maliciously, skin stretching to expose his canines. "Hope you're ready to die, fucker!"

You'll be fine, just remember what you wrote about him in your notebooks! He always goes in first with a righ-

Bakugou rushed him, and at that point everything became a blur of instinct, reflex, and sheer terror of the blond. Almost too fast for the eye to see, Kuroko reached his arms out to latch onto the other teen's incoming arm. With a yell, he flipped the blond over. He tried not to cringe in sympathy when Bakugou's back hit the floor with harsh impact. Moving quickly, Kuroko straddled the teen, firmly holding down the blond's hands with his body weight.

"It seems that we're not quite on the same page, mind clearing some stuff up?" He asked conversationally, deliberately ignoring the waves of fury radiating off of Bakugou. "Great. Let's start with this: why do you think I'm with the League?"

"Your damn boss, Shira-whatever made me a deal when you fuckers kidnapped me." Bakugou spat at him, straining and struggling with all of his strength. It was a good thing for Kuroko that his childhood friend had never bothered to learn grappling. "I fight one of his cronies. If I win, Me and a useless fucker I know go free. The whole dying if I lose is new, but it doesn't matter because I'm not dying here! Got it?!"

"Crystal." Kuroko stated dryly. Those bastards. Playing dirty, huh? Well, that was to be expected from a league filled with villains of all people. One thing threw him off though. Did Bakugou really care enough about him to fight a villain to the death? Apparently. That alone was mind boggling to him.

Focus, dammit, more urgent things to do here. Like somehow explaining things to Bakugou and preferably /not/ getting blown to pieces in the process. Kuroko's eyes flicked to the ceiling. Solid concrete, several support beams around the area, it wouldn't be unreasonable to assume they were underground. If Bakugou released a big enough explosion, it just might tell everyone where they are. Good thing he knew exactly how to get said explosion. He'd always been good at riling Katsuki up without trying, let's see what happens when he actually does.

He leaned in close, nearly nose to nose with Bakugou. Taking a breath, he steeled himself. "It looks
like they tricked us both, Kaachan."

The reaction wasn't immediate, the blond taking a second to actually process what he had said. When it finally clicked in his head? Oh boy. There was an inhuman scream, and Kuroko's world erupted in light and sound.

The heroes' search wasn't producing any results. No civilians had reported any overly suspicious activity in any of the districts, they didn't even have a general area to look in. For all they knew, the two they were looking for were in another country for crying out loud. So when intense tremors came from under the twelfth district at the same time the live feed of the death match cut off, they flocked like moths to a bonfire.

All Might worried the inside of his lip, tapping his foot on the car's floor impatiently as the scenery blurred past them. "If I used One for All, I would already be there." He muttered, mostly to himself rather than the principal.

"True, but we need you at your absolute best, All Might. There's no telling if a certain villain has his hands in this." Nedzu reasoned, swinging his almost comically short legs. "You already used about two hours of your limit today, we don't know how long this fight is going to last, or who it'll be with."

_Doesn't mean I have to like it._ All Might thought to himself. Both of them jostled slightly when the car came to a stop. "Is this where the tremors were reported?" He asked, peering through the window. It was barren, several abandoned construction sites and foreclosed buildings. All Might hadn't become number one by sheer luck though, he could see the benefits of a villain making a base in this type of area. "Not many people would come to this area, ideal for someone who doesn't want to be seen." Just as he said that two cars, not any model that Yuuei used, pulled in. He hated when the world proved him wrong.

The first car opened it's doors, two men stepping out and onto the concrete. Wait a minute, he knew one of those men. The lack of a left arm gave it away. "Nagaki Kuroda." He stated, puffing up into his muscled form and stepping out of the car. He held the door open for Principal Nedzu as the small man hopped out.

"Hello!" The cheerful little man called. It was only from years of knowing the man that All Might could see the way Nedzu's tail twitched ever so slightly, or how fur was a little more bristled than normal. The man beside him was ready to fight these men; and for both the sake of time and energy All Might sincerely hoped that it wouldn't come to that.

The second man, whose face was noticeably similar to Nagaki's, took a step forward. "You seem to have caught us at a bad time. We were just on our way to," He clicked his tongue, "how to put this? 'Bust a few heads' as my brother would say." The man nodded his head to Nagaki. He had a brother? Well, it's not like All Might should have been very surprised, considering he hadn't bothered to read the newly crippled man's file.

Nagaki Kuroda scowled, shooting a glare to his brother. "I'd go more for 'raising some hell' instead of busting some heads." He drawled, scowl settling into a vindictive smirk. "A headache, now that's
temporary. Causing a bit of havoc, that's what leaves an impression."

"Why are you here?" All Might asked, watching Principal Nedzu from the corner of his eye for any reaction. Nothing, besides a few twitches of the tail.

The two men looked at one another. "They're gonna find out anyways." Kuroda said, snorting when his brother gave a reluctant nod. The scarred man looked back to the two heroes. "We're here to save my apprentice." He smiled, "Nice to see you again, All Might."

Looks like All Might was in for all sorts of surprises today. "You're Kuroko, the original one." He stated. "I guess that means that young Midoriya is your student?"

Kuroda stiffened, his eyes hardening. "He's a good kid, I was the one that got him into this." He defended vehemently. "Now are you going to help us get him back, or are you gonna arrest me and waste time?"

Principal Nedzu spoke up. "Us?"

At that, Kuroda had the decency to look a little abashed. With a pop of a door, five Yuuei students, three of them in All Might's own class, stepped out. "I seem to have a bad habit of bringing teenagers to a fistfight." He said, rubbing the back of his head with a hand. "Hey, All Might, how do you feel about breaking down a wall?"

Okay, ow. That definitely wasn't a good choice for his health. He didn't seem to making many of those recently. Kuroko shook his head as he sat up. He'd been thrown a good thirty feet away from Katsuki, who was swearing up a storm in front of him. He could faintly make out what the blond was screaming past the sudden, agonizing pain from his arm. He looked down, casually observing the way his forearm was bent at an unnatural angle. Oh. That explained a lot. Bakugou has stomped closer, frothing at the mouth before he spotted Izuku's broken arm.

"You...utter fucknut!" The blond growled, dropping down to a knee to grab Kuroko by the shoulders. "You're telling me that someone as useless as you could be Kuroko? I should break your other arm, asshole."

"Please save it until we get out of here, Kaachan." Izuku managed to say, gritting his teeth as he stood. "You can break as many bones as you want after that." Preferably in the vicinity of a hospital. Damn, Izuku really needed some painkillers. That, or medical attention, preferably both. Most likely both.

Katsuki grumbled, unhappily holding a hand out for Izuku to take with his unbroken arm. "Whatever, dumbass. Let's get out of here."

"Neither of you are leaving here." A voice cut in, absolutely dripping in venom. Shiragaki stood ten feet away from them, Kurogiri next to him. "All that will be left is dust, and the whole world will see." He tilted his head to look past the two teens. "Noumu."

A strangled scream made it past Izuku's lips as a giant hand grabbed his broken arm from behind and forced him to the ground. His vision blurred as pained tears openly fell from his eyes. He gasped as he felt his broken bone shift, grinding in an agonizing manner. Katsuki was quickly picked up and pulled away from him, the blond fighting every step the creature took away from Izuku.

They had moved one of the cameras, one that hadn't gotten damaged by the explosion, in front of
him; but he couldn't really make sense of his surroundings outside of the pain exploding from his arm. Good God, Izuku could barely see a foot ahead of him at that moment, he was in so much agony.

"Let him go." Shiragaki ordered blankly, watching through the gaps of the hand on his face as Izuku collapsed motionlessly to the floor. He walked towards the prone form of the vigilante. "How will they all feel, when they see you disintegrate before their eyes?" The villain wondered to himself, kicking Izuku so the teen would roll over onto his back. "I think I'll kill you first, then take that helmet off. Let society get a good, long look at the vigilante that thought he could be a hero." With that, Shirakagi was on him, gaunt hands latching onto the reinforced cloth that covered his neck. "I wonder, what will it feel like to struggle for breath when your trachea is dust?"

A thin crackling started to fill the air, like someone setting foot on a thin sheet of ice. Izuku could feel flecks of his armor falling off at an alarming rate. He reached up feebly with his arm, clawing at Shiragaki's arm but with no success. He was tired, he was hurt, he was scared. He didn't want to die, yet as the seconds trickled by his chances of making it got smaller and smaller. He could see the way Shiragaki's cracked lips pulled into an insane grin, blood beading where his skin was pulled a little too tight.

He wasn't quite sure what happened next. The villain was on him, that much he knew, then suddenly he wasn't. There was a lot of dust though, and for a second he thought he had died, but then his hearing kicked in and he could start making sense of just what the hell happened. The wall had caved in. No, more like someone had burst through it. Turned out someone did, if the muscled form of All Might standing in the middle of the debris was any indication.

He wasn't having panic induced hallucinations, was he? It felt like it.

It was havoc after that, the Noumus that weren't occupied with the blond living stick of dynamite rushed the hero. Izuku struggled to rise, but the adrenaline was gone. His limbs were trembling too badly for them to be any use. Which was unfortunate, because Shiragaki was back, and much angrier than before. He kicked Izuku again, screeching, "/You!/" He picked the teen up in a surprising demonstration of strength. "Every single plan has gone wrong since /you/ showed up!" He shook the prone teen in his grip harshly. "You're nothing but a cheater! Cheater! Cheater! Cheater! Cheater! Cheater!" He shook harder with each below of the word.

Izuku closed his eyes, hoping to ignore the way his left arm flopped uselessly about. That was how he missed just what made Shiragaki let him go. All he knew was that the persistent shaking has stopped, and that someone had grabbed him before he could hit the floor. He let out a weak whimper as pressure was put on his arm.

"Shit." A familiar, hoarse voice cussed above him. "Sorry, kid. Cavalry came in a little late, yeah? Fuck, you're bleeding." A careful, single hand gently prodded around his neck. "We gotta get the helmet off, okay Izuku?" There was a count to three and his helmet was soft.

Izuku blinked, trying to comprehend just who was holding him. "Kuroda?" He asked, daring to hope.

Scarred skin pulled into a bright, relieved grin. "Got it in one, kid."

Izuku's eyesight started to blur, "Kuroda..." His voice wobbled as tears started to fall. The silent crainy turned to outright sobs when his mentor pulled him into an embrace, wrapping his body around Izuku's like it'd protect him from the world. "Kuroda..."

"I know, kid." The man soothed, rocking slowly and letting himself shed a few tears of his own. "I
am so, so sorry for not coming sooner. Kei wanted to be 'safe' and apparently coming in guns a'blazing wasn't within that criteria." The man shot a look to his brother, who had a foot firmly planted on Shiragaki's back. Kuroda let himself indulge in the vindictive pleasure that he felt when he saw Shiragaki's arms bending at unnatural angles. Served the villain right, if you asked him.

"Okay, we gotta get you up, Izuku. Can you stand?"

"I-I don't know." Izuku stammered, eyes steadily leaking tears. "I tried to move when he was on me but-" He devolved into a panic as he tried to talk through his sentence.

"You've been through enough, my boy." Another voice said. Izuku's head craned up to look at the form of All Might looming over him. "Let's get you to a hospital, young Midoriya."

Izuku didn't reply right away, simply staring at the number one hero in shock. He then remembered his helmet wasn't on and began to struggle in Kuroda's grip. "Kuroda, my helmet isn't on." He stated somewhat frantically. "All Might just saw me without my helmet on."

"It's ok, kid." Kuroda answered, slowly coaxing the teen to stand up. "We struck an agreement before we came in here. Kei's gonna sort out the legalities while you're getting treated. Leave it to us, okay? You've done your part, let us do ours."

"Oh." Izuku said simply, feeling the fainting spell coming on. "If it's ok with you, I may pass out now." With no further warning, Izuku slumped in Kuroda's grip. This time, however, he wasn't scared. The opposite actually, he couldn't be more safe.

Chapter End Notes

I have a Tumblr! It's Man-and-serene, come and talk to me about Bnha!
Chapter 19: That's all, folks

Chapter Summary

It's been a long ride my friends. I want you all to know that this started out as something to get rid of my writer's block, it's your comments that inspired me to take this further. Thank you all so much.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

There were many different situations All Might had been prepared for when he broke through that wall into the makeshift arena. He was considered the top pro hero - the best of the best - he couldn't have kept that title if he rushed into things blindly. He'd read the files on Shiragaki Tomura, he was well aware of the man's tendency to violence and murder in reaction to a wrench being thrown in his plans. Even armed with that knowledge, he was caught somewhat off guard by the sight of several Noumu and Shiragaki himself pinning down Kuroko.

Kuroda appeared at his side like a shadow as he eyed the bulky Noumu like pieces on a chessboard. "We'll handle, Shiragaki," he stated, his brother rushing forwards in a blur. The cripples man gave him one last little tidbit before rushing after his brother. "These guys were made to fight you, you can't hold back."

So that's how the fight began. The Noumu were considerably more resilient than anything he'd ever fought in the past, it took several hits (over his one hundred percent, no less) to down a single creature. Young Bakugou managed to escape his captor when All Might had flung a Noumu across the arena and into the one holding him hostage. By the time All Might had subdued the creatures, Shiragaki was curled up in pain and Nagaki had Kuroko in his arm. He couldn't help the little inhalation of shock when Nagaki removed the helmet and a shock of green hair became visible. So he had been right, young Midoriya had been the vigilante Kuroko.

Oh how he wished his hunch could've been wrong for once.

The teen was openly sobbing on Nagaki, and who could blame him? He'd been kidnapped, held against his will and fought Bakugou for his life. Frankly, All Might would have been more concerned if Midoriya hadn't shed a few tears. Silently, he made his way over, right as Nagaki inquired if Midoriya could stand.

He interrupted before Midoriya could push himself any further. "You've been through enough, my boy." He'd said, watching solemnly when the teen's head whipped up and stared at him in fear. "Let's get you to a hospital, young Midoriya."

Midoriya had started to struggle in Nagaki's arms, his one good hand frantically scrabbling for purchase to escape from his mentor's grip. "Kuroda, my helmet isn't on." He said in a state of shock. "All Might just saw me without my helmet on."

Nagaki had been quick to soothe the fears of his student. "It's ok, kid." He said, holding the teen even closer. "We struck an agreement before we came in here. Kei's gonna sort out the legalities while you're getting treated." Nagaki shot a glance to his brother, who nodded with his foot still
digging into the space between Shiragaki's shoulder blades. Leave it to us, okay? You've done your part, let us do ours."

All Might could physically see the tension drain out of Midoriya, shoulders slumping as Nagaki helped him stand. "Oh. If it's ok with you, I going to pass out now."
He murmured before going completely limp in his mentor's arms.

Nagaki snorted, "Don't let me stop ya, kid." He groaned as he shifted the weight on his shoulder, "Damn, physical therapy did not prepare me for this so soon."

That was where All Might stepped in, "If I may," he said, gaining the attention of the brothers. "I can carry young Midoriya and take him to the Yuuei nurse's office. Recovery Girl can treat him there."

The two looked at each other, having what could almost be described as a silent conversation before Nagaki returned his focus to all might. "Fine."

Gently, All Might took the teen from a reluctant Nagaki's arm, pointedly ignoring the way Midoriya's broken arm flopped uselessly as he adjusted his grip. The teen may have been a vigilante, hardened and trained to fight against both villains and heroes; but right then, as All Might carried Midoriya's featherlight form out of that accursed arena, the teen was fragile as glass.

Vaguely, he acknowledged that Bakugou was being talked to by Aizawa, and how the five teens that had come with Nagaki shot up at the familiar sight of green hair in All Might's arms. They hurried over to him, standing a respectful distance away as he continued to walk. Silently, they continued to follow him until he got to the car, where he explained that they should go home and get some rest. On the car ride to Yuuei, All Might couldn't help the nagging guilt that festered in him as he stared at the peaceful, scratched and bruised face of Midoriya Izuku.

How different, he wondered, would this have been if he had given Midoriya One for All after the slime incident a year ago? Would he have the same amount of confidence? His tendency for quick remarks and quips? No, the Midoriya he met a year ago had been drastically different from the one passed out in front of him. He didn't develop like that on his own, either, he had help from Nagaki.

He may have been a hero, and heroes have to demonstrate strict morals to the public; but first and foremost, All Might was human, and as a human he desperately hoped that Midoriya Izuku would get out of this with a happy ending. The kid'd been through enough as it was.

Midoriya slept on.

"Really," Recovery girl fretted, moving to and fro as she tended to Midoriya Izuku. "Making him fight after three days of being unconscious? Without feeding him, no less! It's a wonder he was able to stand, let alone fight." She sighed, shooting a look to the two men sitting beside the bedridden teen. "He's very lucky that he's alive, I hope you both know."

"We do, ma'am." Nagaki Kuroda said, glancing at All Might from his peripheral. "We are both very aware of that."

Recovery Girl continued unperturbed, "-And intentionally having Bakugou explode so close!" She focused her disapproving stare on Kuroda, who stiffened in his seat. "I certainly do hope you didn't teach him such reckless behavior, young man."

"No, ma'am. Izuku had that before I met him, ma'am." Kuroda said, firmly keeping his eyes off of Recovery Girl's own. "I couldn't train that out of him if I had all the time in the world."
Recovery Girl gave him an appraising hum as she checked the equipment hooked up to Izuku. "At least you have manners."

Kuroda nodded, "Thank you, Ma'am." Unknown to her, he let out a sigh of relief when she turned around to enter something into her computer. "Even Mrs. Fujioko isn't this terrifying when mad." He muttered, just loud enough for All Might to catch.

"Nagaki," the blond man said, continuing when Kuroda made a sound of acknowledgement. "How long have you known young Midoriya?"

Kuroda rubbed his neck, wincing slightly when a sore muscle made itself known. "He was watching someone get mugged, just about to step in himself when I intervened." He couldn't help but let a smile tug at his lips, "He had a spark, something that just screamed at me, at the world, to pay attention to him. That was about a year ago." He looked to All Might, gray eyes pleading with the hero. "He's a good kid, All Might. He doesn't deserve what the legal system will do to him. You can say that I corrupted him, led him down the wrong path. Put all of the blame on me if it means he won't have to suffer. Please."

All Might swallowed, his throat suddenly uncomfortably tight. "I'll try, Nagaki. I can't make any promises, but I'll try."

Kuroda smiled in relief, tension leaving his shoulders as he slumped in his seat. "Thank you; and please, call me Kuroda, Nagaki's too formal for my taste."

Both of them, plus Recovery Girl, looked up when the door opened and the other Nagaki entered. The man sent a glance to All Might before focusing on his brother. "Little brother," He said, the words oddly sounding more like an apology than an address. "I managed to sort some of this mess out, but part of the agreement was you being monitored by the heroes in a holding cell until they can get a statement from Midoriya."

Kuroda sighed, "I guess that was expected, they can't just forget that I was the original Kuroko." He stood, grunting with the effort. With an exaggerated flourish, he bowed jokingly. "Lead me away, dear brother mine." Casually, the man strode out. All Might was fairly certain he wasn't the only one who noticed the underlying anxiety in the man's movements.

If things had been different, he was certain that Nagaki Kuroda would have been an amazing hero. Maybe that was what hurt the most in this scenario: lost potential. Not all of it was lost, though. The teen on the nurse's bed was testament to that. All Might knew the statistics, in the few short months Midoriya had been running amuck as Kuroko petty crime had dropped significantly. The teen never tried to get in the way of the heroes by taking on bigger threats, maybe that little fact would give him a more lenient punishment.

At this point, it was all in the hands of principal Nedzu and how he decided to go about this. The man was soft towards children, not surprising given his position, but this was much more serious than a schoolyard offense; this was a direct violation of laws set in place to regulate Heroes. Even if he wanted to, the principal couldn't ignore that.

All Might dared a glance towards Midoriya. The teens face was peaceful, as if he hadn't suffered a broken forearm and a concussion hours before. He'd seen Midoriya around the campus, the teen almost always had someone with him, either talking animatedly about a subject or sitting next to one another in a pleasant quiet. His teachers commented on his academic ability, especially with his note taking.

All Might had wagered a look in that old notebook Midoriya had with him the day they met, it was
chock full with extensive notes on every Hero the boy had come across. With that level of meticulous care for detail, he wasn't surprised at all at Midoriya's drive to succeed.

Yet to think that drive would compel him to vigilantism... Maybe all of this was indirectly his fault. He knew that pondering 'what ifs' was pointless, but a nagging feeling in his gut was screaming guilt at him.

All Might always trusted his instincts, and this time they were telling him to fix this mess. After all, it's a hero's job to stick his nose in other people's business.

Darkness, warm, encompassing darkness. It was like he had been wrapped in a large blanket, comfortable and safe.

Except for the annoying beeping, which he could always hear no matter what he did. It was persistent, shrill, and amazingly infuriating. He wanted to sleep, dammit. Why could no one just let him sleep.

Vaguely, he could make out bits and pieces of conversations consisting of voices not his own. One was forcefully quiet, like its owner was used to being loud and had to be conscious of their volume. Another was old, there was no other way to put it. Old, yet kind as well. He imagined a nice old lady whenever he heard it. The third... he couldn't really describe that one. It was deep and soft, a hint of scratchiness that hinted at overuse. He could easily tell what the owner of that voice was feeling. They felt....like safety. Like his mom's hugs when he was sick. He wouldn't mind listening to it some more.

"....-riya,"

Oh, there's the nice old lady again, was he sleeping? He couldn't tell, everything was sluggish in this darkness, like it had been shoved into molasses.

"Mid...a"

Was that his name? Kind of odd, 'Mida', or was it 'riya'? No, it wasn't that. It was-

"Midoriya."

With a small grunt, Izuku opened his eyes. He hadn't been in this place often, thankfully; but the distinct smell of cleaning supplies and medicine and the small form of recovery girl at his bedside let him know exactly where he was. He opened his mouth, trying to say something, but Recovery Girl shushed him as he handed him a bottle of water.

"Drink, young man." She instructed - ordered, really - as Izuku hesitantly took the bottle with an unsteady hand. "Your body needs the fluids. There's only so much an IV can do."

Izuku had to admit, after the first sip his throat had felt much better. "Thank you." He said, voice still a bit scratchy. He spotted something yellow in his peripheral, and felt a sinking feeling settle in his gut as he turned.

All Might was sitting in one of the chairs, in his original form. Sunken blue eyes taking in Izuku's inevitable face of shock.

The teen tried not to curse, he really did.
"Fuck."

He ended up immediately regretting that decision when Recovery Girl's wrinkled hand swung around to smack him sternly on the back of his head.

"Young man!" She scolded as Izuku rubbed his head. "I will not have such profanity in my clinic!"

Villains couldn't even hope to be as scary to Izuku as an angry granny was. "Yes Ma'am." He replied meekly, sinking into his sheets at her stern glare. "Sorry." His face grew even more red when All Might's laugh reached his ears.

"I see that Nagaki has rubbed off on you in more ways than one, my boy." The man stated, covering his mouth with a gaunt hand as he coughed up blood. Izuku had honestly forgotten that All Might did that sometimes, it was more than a little concerning.

Instead, he asked, "You know Kuroda?" Genuinely surprised until he remembered just who was there with his mentor in the arena. "Never mind, don't answer that please. My head is killing me."

"You have been through a lot." All might admitted with a nod of his head. "Principal Nedzu is on his way here, we wanted to ask you a few questions about your....extracurriculars of the last few months.

Oh. Right. All Might has seen him without his helmet. Kuroda never really prepared him for this, partially because it wasn't supposed to happen at all. "Ah...yeah......that." He said, every bit as awkward as he felt.

"Yes, that." All Might parroted, shifting around in his chair. If Izuku hadn't spent most of his life idolizing him, he would almost say that All Might was as nervous as he was. Given Izuku's general disposition when out of the suit, that was a goddamn achievement. "When did you meet Nagaki Kuroda?"

Now, Izuku was caught at a crossroads: Tell All Might what he wants, basically selling out Kuroda; or refuse and probably (definitely) get locked up at a detention center somewhere. Izuku would have preferred to pull out his teeth. Thankfully before he could resort to actually doing that, the door opened and a familiar little man quickly stepped in.

"Hello, Midoriya!" Principal Nedzu greeted cheerfully, walking (waddling, Izuku's fatigued mind supplied) over and giving a bright smile to him. "I'm very happy that you're awake now."

Izuku had been expecting stern faces, maybe even an angry outburst or two. Obviously, he'd underestimated just how odd the principal was. "Thank you, principal Nedzu." He said hesitantly, shrinking back slightly when the principal's face became serious. Ah, here it was, the part where he got chewed out. Yay.

"We have a lot of questions Midoriya," the principal began, taking the seat next to All Might with a hop. "Mr. Nagaki has already been questioned, all we need is for you to answer some of the same ones we asked him."

Not trusting his voice, Izuku nodded.

Nedzu grinned, maybe a bit too cheerful for the situation. "Great! Let's get the basics out of the way, first: when did you meet Mr. Nagaki Kuroda?"

He didn't have a watch, but Izuku felt like hours had passed as he answered every question they asked. From how long he'd been training to how some parts of his suit worked. Regardless, he felt
exhausted by the time the two were done with their interrogation. All Might's face was carefully blank, not showing Izuku anything he could go on; but Principal Nedzu had a serious aura around him.

"I do hope that you know the severity of your actions during the last few months, Midoriya." He stated calmly, and Izuku would be damned if he denied that the normally cheery principal wasn't absolutely terrifying in that moment.

"I knew." He said shortly, "I knew that there would be consequences if I became Kuroko, but I wanted to help people and I didn't see another option at the time."

Nedzu quirked his head to the side and All Might's shoulders stiffened. "Why would you think that, Midoriya?" The principal asked, "You attend a school made for training you in how to help people."

He couldn't help the semi-bitter laugh that came out. "When you grow up Quirkless, a lot of people don't think you'll amount to anything, especially a hero." The next words came out a bit harder than the first. Stupid emotions. "I hoped for years that I'd do it, become a hero. A year ago I got both a reality check and a mentor, someone that looked at me and thought 'this kid could be something great'. Ever since then, my life's been better than it'd ever hoped to be." He looked up, forcing himself to make eye contact with the two adults sitting in front of him. "I've helped people. I've saved lives. I've broken the law to do it. I wish that I didn't have to, but I did; and I wouldn't take back a second of it."

The two adults - minus Recovery Girl, who'd stepped out at some point do to one thing or another - were silent. His face was still impassive, but Izuku could see the way All Might's eyes had widened at his monologue. Monologue, oh god. Izuku needed to lay off those comics Kuroda gave him, they were terrible influences.

All of them looked up when someone knocked on the door. With a sudden poof and a near inaudible cough of blood, All might transformed into his muscled form. "Come In." He called out, all three of them watching as the door opened. Izuku visibly slumped in relief at the sight of Nagaki Kei armed with a suit and an expression that he could easily recognize. That, good man, was the Nagaki stare, and the Nagaki stare left no room for compromise.

Izuku had never been so happy to see an authority figure.

"Mr. Nagaki!" Principal Nedzu chirped, gesturing to a third empty seat. "Please, sit down. We were just about to talk about possible repercussions for young Midoriya's actions.

Kei looked from Izuku to the two Heroes, "I was actually going to do the same. Please, state the charges that Midoriya is facing." He said, impassively taking a seat across from the two heroes.

Principal Nedzu didn't even hesitate in stating them. "Vigilantism, resisting arrest, battery, assault and property damage."

At every single felony listed, Izuku flinched a little bit more; but Kei didn't, his face was blank at every charge as it was listed. Izuku sincerely hoped that Kei had a good plan, 'cause Izuku was drawing a blank on what to do.

"The fun thing about laws," Kei began, intertwining his hands as he leaned forward. "Is that most of them can be settled with fines, hefty fines, but fines nonetheless. The other few have loopholes that can and usually are exploited the hell out of.

All Might interrupted, "What are you trying to say, Nagaki?"
Kei gave them a smile that wouldn't melt butter. "About a month or so after the founding of the Hero Foundation and a Pro Heroes, the definition of 'vigilantism' was redefined. Back then, it meant someone taking the law into their own hands; now, it means using your quirk for heroic deeds when you are not a hero." His eyes flicked to Izuku. "And since Midoriya is Quirkless, which can be confirmed by the pediatrician that diagnosed him at the age of four, he does not fall under that qualification. As I said before, the rest of his crimes can be settled by hefty fines, which I am more than willing to pay for along with any lawyers I might need if you decide to take this to court."

Everyone was in silent shock, and all for different reasons. Personally, Izuku was sighing in relief and being awestruck by Kei. Was there something in the gene-pool that could make someone inherently, for lack of a better term, badass? Because both Kuroda and Kei most definitely had it in Izuku's book.

After a solid few moments of quiet, principal Nedzu spoke up. "Your brother, the original Kuroko, doesn't fall under that same technicality." The little man pointed out, "And while legal action could be prevented from Midoriya, that doesn't mean that we would be unable to expel him for his actions as Kuroko."

"You'd be fully within your rights to do so." Kei agreed.

This was just going to be a roller coaster of emotions for Izuku, wasn't it?

All Might threw his two cents in, "But by doing so, we would be wasting his potential."

Principal Nedzu looked intrigued, "What do you mean, All Might?"

"What I'm saying is that Midoriya has great potential, potential that could be honed in the heroics department of Yuuei."

Izuku.exe has stopped working.

Even more surprising than the number one hero's suggestion was the principal actually considering it.

"Yes, that would be possible." The small man pondered thoughtfully, "How about this: Midoriya Izuku has all legal charges dropped if he serves a specific amount of community service and is moved to the heroics division of Yuuei?"

Kei let a small smile show on his face, "That would work nicely." he stated, "Also, on the Issue of my brother's charges of vigilantism; though it has been several years since he was on the streets, many of the people he had helped still remember what he did for them, not just regular civilians, but people in high places. You would find it very difficult to charge him, especially with the social backlash you would receive. One would almost say that it wouldn't be worth the effort."

"Noted." Principal Nedzu stated dryly.

Was Izuku still hearing correctly, or was he hallucinating? At this point, either one was a solid possibility as his brain tried (and failed) to comprehend just what happened a few seconds ago. He wasn't going to jail. Kei was going to make it hell for anyone to try and set up a case against Kuroda. What did he do to deserve Kei defending him. Honestly.

"I'm glad we settled that," Kei stated, leaning back in his chair. "Because my brother was adamant about seeing Izuku again and I gave him a five minute time limit before he could."

The door burst open and a familiar form rushed in. Izuku could barely register what was happening
before he was swept into a one armed bear hug, which thankfully didn't aggravate any of his injuries.

"Kid," Kuroda said from behind Izuku's head. "You are so fucking grounded. You damn trouble magnet."

Izuku couldn't help but laugh a bit at that, "I'm not very nice to my arms, either." He said, gesturing with his arm, which was in a cast. "What are you going to do about that?"

The reply was instant. "I will make a straight jacket out of your ridiculously large sweaters, you idiot."

"Kuroda, you gotta let go of me sometime."

"Now is not that time." He retorted, clutching his student a bit tighter.

Izuku sighed fondly. "Yeah, I didn't think so either."

"Kid, you have five seconds before I jump on that couch like a kid on Christmas."

Izuku groaned, turning over and snuggling into his blankets. "It's not big enough for that," he mumbled, "You'd step on me."

"And you'd deserve it." Kuroda shot back, tapping his bare foot impatiently against his apartment floor. "This is your first day back at school, at least /try/."

"Try at what?"

"Everything, and you're avoiding the subject. Get out of bed or I'll carry you to school in your pajamas."

With a complaining groan, Izuku threw off the blanket and stood up. Rubbing his eyes, he squinted up at Kuroda. "Happy?"

Kuroda snorted, "Very. Your uniform's laid out on the counter and your backpack's by the door. Grab a banana or something!" He called out as Izuku shuffled to the small kitchen.

"Oh haha." Izuku called back sleepily, "You fight some villains after eating only a banana and it becomes a joke." He grabbed the offending yellow fruit anyways.

"It sounds like one of the tabloid articles." Kuroda replied, "the thing is it isn't gossip, you actually fought a metric shit-ton of villains with only a banana in your stomach."

"Whatever." It was somewhat of an ordeal to get his uniform on while only half awake, but he managed. Sleepily, he grabbed his backpack and slung it over his shoulder. "Let's get going."

Kuroda snorted, "Hope you're awake enough to hold on." He said as they both walked down to his motorcycle. "Because if you fall, I'm not coming back to pick you up."

"It's stuff like that that made them hesitate to put me with you, you know." Izuku replied, hopping on to the mentioned device anyways.

"But they did!" Kuroda retorted childishly, revving up the motorcycle. "It's a good thing I can still drive this thing with one arm, otherwise you'd be late to your first day in the heroics department."
Izuku snorted, "Let's get going, mr. Kuroko." He drawled teasingly.

Kuroda grinned, "No need to tell me twice."

"Just don't break any traffic laws."

"You're no fun."

Like that, they were off. Bickering all the way.

Kuroda stopped at the entrance to school. "Here we are, we didn't even break any traffic laws."

"I know that must have been hard." Izuku replied, hopping off and readjusting his bag.

"Little shit."

"Bigger shit."

Kuroda laughed, "Have a good first day, Kei and I'll pick you up after school or visit your mom."

Izuku waved, "Got it." With a rev of an engine and a cloud of dust, his friend was off. When he turned around, he almost wished for Kuroda to come back.

His friends, all of them, were waiting at the main gate.

"Yo, Midoriya!" Kahiro called out, waving enthusiastically. "Get over here!"

Awkwardly, the green haired teen shuffled over to them. "Hey guys," he began, fiddling with his backpack under their gazes. "Kuroda told me that all of you know and I'm-"

"Don't apologize." Todoroki interrupted, surprising Izuku into silence. "You helped all of us at some point. You like helping people, let's just leave it at that."

"Still." He protested, "I put you all in danger a few days ago, I have to apologize for that. Plus, I-"

/kept this a secret from all of you./

"It's true, my trust for you is less than it was before," Iida said, and Izuku tried to not look crestfallen. "But that doesn't mean that you can't re-earn it. I believe you are a good person, so please prove that I wasn't wrong in giving you a second chance."

Izuku couldn't help the tears that stung his eyes, "Thank you, Iida." He said, his voice watery. "I don't deserve your forgiveness."

"Now that's bull if I've ever heard it." Kahiro stated, raising an eyebrow. "You're our friend, friends forgive each other when they screw up. Even if it was a royal screw up."

Shinshou came forward to awkwardly punch Izuku's shoulder. "Come on, we've got class in five minutes." He gave a small smirk, "You don't wanna be late for your first day as a hero in training, right?"

They all walked into school, laughing and joking around. Yuuei's large white walls were intimidating once, but now, Izuku couldn't feel any safer within them.

That had to have been one of the fastest school days in Izuku's life. The was so much to do, he was
left with his head spinning as the final bell rang and they were dismissed. He and his friends walked out together, talking about homework or planning to hang out later in the week. True to his word, Kuroda was outside the school, leaning against a black car like he was some sort of badass.

Izuku knew better.

He waved his friend goodbye as he hopped in the car, answering Kuroda - and Kei's, surprisingly, - questions of his school day. Izuku wasn't sure how his day could get any better until he stepped into the hospital and a nurse came towards them.

"Midoriya Izuku?" The young man had asked, clipboard in hand. At Izuku's confirmation the nurse smiled. "You have a patient that's been asking for you since she woke up.

Izuku has never run so fast through a hospital's halls. He skid to a halt outside his mom's room, hesitating before Kuroda caught up and pretty much shoved him through the door.

He hadn't visited his mom while she was in a coma, something he deeply regretted. He couldn't really excuse it outside of saying that his duties as a vigilante has stopped him. The truth was, he was scared of seeing his mom like that. So the sight of his mom looking up from her book and giving him a watery smile had him in tears. He didn't need much prompting to rush forward and hug his mother, breathing in her familiar scent mixed with the sterile hospital smell.

"Mom." He sniffled, "Hi, mom."

At least he wasn't the only one crying, he could feel the wetness on his shoulder. His mom always was a sensitive person. "Oh, Izuku." She whispered. "I'm so glad you're okay."

"I should be saying that to you." He replied, breaking the hug to take a seat in the chair conveniently placed next to the bed. "I've missed you, mom."

She reached a shaking hand out to caress his cheek, a touch he eagerly leaned into. "Oh Izuku," she said fondly, knowingly. "Just what sort of trouble have you gotten into while I was gone?"

A wet laugh, "You have no idea."

Chapter End Notes

Remember, my Tumblr is Mean-and-serene if you wanna talk!

After exam week I'm planning to open up a series of one-shots for this AU, feel free to comment Ideas!

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