**call me, beep me**

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org) at [http://archiveofourown.org/works/7841764](http://archiveofourown.org/works/7841764).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>General Audiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archive Warning:</td>
<td>Choose Not To Use Archive Warnings, No Archive Warnings Apply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category:</td>
<td>M/M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fandom:</td>
<td>Voltron: Legendary Defender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship:</td>
<td>Keith/Lance (Voltron), Hunk &amp; Lance (Voltron), Keith &amp; Pidge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character:</td>
<td>Keith (Voltron), Lance (Voltron), Hunk (Voltron), Pidge (Voltron), Shiro (Voltron)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Tags:</td>
<td>Alternate Universe - Modern Setting, Wrong Number AU, Texting, Minor - Shallura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stats:</td>
<td>Published: 2016-08-29 Completed: 2016-10-17 Chapters: 10/10 Words: 85591</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**call me, beep me**

by [orphan_account](http://archiveofourown.org/users/orphan_account)

**Summary**

(00:31) Do you think she gave me the wrong number on purpose?
(00:31) Or was it a genuine mistake?
(00:32) Like maybe she writes funny and I misread it?
(00:32) Some of the numbers do look a little dodgy...
(00:33) Cause, you know, her threes *could* very easily be poorly formed eights?
And maybe she writes her sevens like her ones?
(00:45) What
(00:46) The
(00:46) *Fuck???
(00:47) Oh good, you *are* awake!

where lance messages the wrong number and things kind of snowball from there

**Notes**

do you ever start something just to write *something* and get rid of your writers block but then it turns into something you've become pretty fond of? yeah, that's what this is

key:
- lance
- *keith*
pidge
hunk

See the end of the work for more notes.
Chapter 1

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

01/08/2016

(13:08) Hey Nyma, it's the cutie from the coffee shop on Saturday ;)

(13:09) Thought I'd check if you were still up for doing something this week?

(13:11) ...Who is this?

(13:12) Cutie from the coffee shop? Brown hair? Chocolate eyes? Smile to die for? I bought you a drink and you wrote your number on a napkin?

(13:15) Think you've got the wrong number...

(13:15) So this isn't Nyma?


(13:18) Aha wow my bad.

(13:19) Sorry, must've typed in a digit wrong. Fat thumbs and all that.

(13:19) Sorry for bothering you!

(13:45) Hey Nyma, it's the cutie from the coffee shop on Saturday ;)

(13:45) Thought I'd check if you were still up for doing something this week?

(13:47) ...It's the same person from before and you've still got the wrong number.

(13:48) Ughhhhhhh damn it


(13:50) Sorry again!

(13:52) Dw.

02/08/2016

(00:31) Do you think she gave me the wrong number on purpose?

(00:31) Or was it a genuine mistake?

(00:32) Like maybe she writes funny and I misread it?
(00:32) Some of the numbers do look a little dodgy...

(00:33) Cause, you know, her threes could very easily be poorly formed eights? And maybe she writes her sevens like her ones?

(00:45) What

(00:46) The

(00:46) Fuck???

(00:47) Oh good, you are awake!

(00:47) So what do you think? Wrong number on purpose or a genuine accident?

(00:49) I wasn't awake. I was fast asleep until you woke me up.

(00:50) My bad, my bad.

(00:51) What do you think though?

(00:52) Don't you have friends to bother with this crap?

(00:54) Obviously.

(00:55) But Hunk is sleeping and I'm not really in the mood to get smothered in retaliation for waking him up. Again.

(00:55) And since you can't smother me, I thought I'd pick your brain.

(00:56) So, once again, what do you think?

(00:57) If I answer do you promise to let me go back to sleep and leave me alone?

(00:58) Scouts honour!

(00:59) She probably gave you the wrong number on purpose.

(01:00) Hm. Alright. Thanks!

(01:00) Sorry for waking you. G'night.

(01:03) Night.

04/08/2016

(11:03) Have you seen my cat?

(11:05) Have I what????

(11:10) Shit.

(11:10) Sorry.
(11:11) Was meant to message my neighbour, but my chat with you is still at the top of my messages and I just automatically clicked it.

(11:12) ...We haven't spoken for like two days and I'm still at the top of your messages archive?

(11:13) Don't take this the wrong way but...

(11:13) ...Do you have friends?

(11:15) How am I supposed to not take that the wrong way?

(11:15) There is literally no other way to take that

(11:18) True.

(11:19) But do you?

(11:20) Bye.

(11:21) Wait wait wait waittttt!!!!!

(11:22) What's happening with your cat? I'm highly invested now.

(11:30) Aw don't ignore me now!!!

(11:31) Alright I'm sorry for asking if you have any friends.

(11:32) But, in all fairness, you did pretty much ask me the same thing the other night.

(11:35) I did not.

(11:36) "(00:52) Don't you have friends to bother with this crap?"

(11:37) ...

(11:37) Point.

(11:40) I'm glad you're starting to see things my way.

(11:40) So...what's up with the cat?

(11:42) He's not my cat really. He's my brothers, but I'm supposed to be looking after him while he's at uni.

(11:43) You lost the cat didn't you?

(11:44) Not intentionally, but, yes. I lost him.

(11:46) H O W ?

(11:47) Cats are like the easiest pets in the world do look after. Next to, I dunno, a pet earthworm?

(11:49) Pet earthworm?

(11:49) I went through a Phase.

(11:50) Anyway, how'd you lose it?
Like I said, it wasn't intentional. But, ah, well, I think I left my bedroom window open last night and he probably climbed out of it?

Probably?

Definitely.

Don't worry about it so much, cats are always leaping out of things.

But Muffin is a house cat. He's never really been outside before. What if he got hit by a car? Or attacked by a dog? Or kidnapped?!

Hello?

Did you know there are precisely six hundred and forty-four tiles on the ceiling of the detention hall?

Do you know how I know that?

No, but I suspect you're going to tell me...

Because I've just spent an hour in detention without even so much as a book to keep me company.

Do you want to know why I spent my lunch break in detention?

Please refer to the previous answer.

Because your cat is named Muffin.

Yeah, I'm not following.

Long story short, I was in the middle of a lesson and when you said your cat is called Muffin I laughed so hard I fell off my chair.

Teacher noticed I had my phone in my hands and the rest is history.

Serves you right for laughing at Muffin.

WHO NAMES THEIR CAT MUFFIN?

ARE YOU SECRETLY AN 80-YEAR-OLD WOMAN???

I didn't name him - my brother did.

And Muffin is a perfectly acceptable name for a cat.

Muffin probably ran away because he hates being called Muffin.

He's probably with a new family who have given him the name he deserves.

What would you name him then o' great cat whisperer?
Cat whisperer? I like it.

What's he look like?

Just your average black cat. Been getting a little chubby lately, I guess.

Gomez.

Gomez?!!

How is Gomez any better than Muffin???

You know, like Gomez from The Addams Family?

Perfect name for a black cat in my humble, and totally correct, opinion.

"Humble"

Thank you for agreeing.

Anyway. Did you end up finding Muffin/Gomez?

No...

Slightly worried because he hasn't been acting normally these past few weeks.

We think he might be ill.

My neighbour's gonna help me put up posters when she gets home from school though.

Ah, good luck!

Keep me updated.

I don't know how I'll be able to sleep at night if I don't know Muffin/Gomez is safe.

...Right.

Update: Muffin is safe.

We found him in the park with a group of cats. Mildly worried he might be part of a gang. This big one with one eye tried to claw my face off when I went to grab Muffin.

This is the greatest news I've heard all day.

Give Muffin/Gomez a kiss for me, will you?

No.

Party pooper.

What am I saved as in your phone?
What?

It's a simple question Muffin's Terrible Uncle.

That's what you're saved as in my phone FYI.

I found him didn't I??

And...I haven't saved your number yet.

Wow.

I'm hurt.

And here I was thinking we had something special - a bond if you will - all the while I'm still just a +44 in your phone book.

don't typically save numbers of people I'm not going to speak to more than once.

We've spoken more than once already.

I guess...

Is this going to be continuing then?

Do you mind?

Not really. You're...entertaining?

Damn right I am.

So, about that name...

Cat Whisperer.

I was going to suggest 'Muffin's Favourite Uncle He's Never Met' but, you're right, Cat Whisperer sounds better.

Muffin would hate you.

He hates everyone except my brother. He's only just started warming up to me.

Maybe because his name is Muffin.

I would definitely make it my mission to hate everyone extra hard if my name were Muffin. But that's just me.

Anyway, all cats love me. I'm like their God or something.

Living up to your Cat Whisperer name, I see.

<( :: tapping fingers :: )>

Now we've got names sorted, I gotta ask...

...What?
You aren't like...twelve are you?

Cause earlier you said you were waiting for your neighbour to finish school to help you put up posters, implying you weren't at school. So either you're too young to go to school (yikes) or too old to be at school (also yikes???)

Oh.

I'm 17.

I, uh, I don't go to school though. I dropped out after it stopped being mandatory.

What about you? Are you like...twelve?

Oh, cool.

Ahaha, no I'm 17 as well.

I'm still in school though. Boarding school actually.

It is nothing like the Enid Blyton books before you ask. I feel like I've been sold a lie.

Yeah, I know. My brother went to one for a few years.

I've heard all the horror stories.

Eh, it's not that bad.

Supposed to be good preparation for university or something.

Or something.

Yeah.

So what do you do, if you're not at school?

Gonna go ahead and guess babysitting a cat isn't your full-time job?

Since, you know, you're so terrible at it.

Excuse you, you're talking to a professional cat sitter.

But I do some work with my dad when I'm not looking after Muffin.

Sounds fun.

I guess.

Speaking of dad, he wants me up early tomorrow so...

Night.

Goodnight MTU.

Make sure you give Muffin/Gomez a kiss from me.

No.
05/08/2016

(09:46) Lance, you know I love you, right?

(09:47) I am very aware of this fact, yes.

(09:47) You know you're my best friend? And there's very, very little I wouldn't do for you???

(09:48) Hunk? I'm worried. Are you dying?

(09:48) Oh God, am I dying? If I'm dying I don't want to know. Let me live the rest of my days in blissful ignorance.

(09:49) No. But you will be if your phone vibrating keeps me up all night again :)


(09:52) Who were you even messaging?? I'm your best friend and I sleep in the bed next to you.

(09:53) Jealous?

(09:55) Hahahaha, you wish. Just trying to work out who's captured your attention.

(09:56) You didn't sign up to one of those 'adult messaging' services again, did you?

(09:56) Because I already told you I'm not fixing your phone again when you get another virus.

(09:58) That was ONE time and it was an ACCIDENT.

(09:58) And we promised we'd never speak of it again.

(09:59) You broke a promise Hunk. A promise .

(10:00) Stop trying to distract me. Who were you texting?

(10:01) Ooooh, that girl from the coffee shop?

(10:02) Yeah actually.

(10:03) Omg, really?

(10:03) Cause like, no offence, but I was so sure she gave you a fake number.

(10:05) WOW.

(10:06) I said no offence.

(10:10) Stop giving me the silent treatment.

(10:11) I'm literally sitting two feet away from you.

(10:12) I CAN SEE YOU READING THIS.
I'll help you with your Physics homework if you stop.

Love you <3

I finally got Overwatch.

Wanna come over?

I'm already outside your door.

How is Muffin/Gomez?

Missing again?

Ha ha. No. He's fine.

Well, not fine.

What did you do to him????

What did you do to my nephew??????

Nothing!

I told you, he's been acting strange lately.

He won't eat his food and he just keeps rolling around and moaning. It's actually quite disturbing. Like he's possessed or something.

We're taking him to the vet on Monday.

Ugh, my poor nephew. Rub his belly. Cradle him in your arms.

And keep me updated. I don't know what I'd do if something happened to Muffin/Gomez.

I can't tell if you're serious or not.

Deadly.

Muffin/Gomez is like a family member to me now. I'm very concerned for his safety.

Also.

I'm bored.

Hunk is doing this after class robotics project or something.

On a Friday night when we could be hitting the town like the teenagers we're supposed to be.

Robotics sounds cool though.

Oh yeah, it's really cool. Hunk is like some sort of genius.
I'm wiping away tears of pride just thinking about him. You know he built a robot to pick up our dirty laundry???

Sounds like he's using his abilities for the right things.

I know right? It even folds our shirts. Fuckin amazing. Nobel Prize winning material right there.

But yeah, he's working on something else right now, so he's busy with that and I'm...

Bored?

SOOO BORED.

Are you sure you're not twelve?

Almost 90 per cent sure, yes.

What're you doing?

I'm at my neighbours. She finally got Overwatch so I'm watching her play.

Oh, am I disturbing?

AYY Hunk is back! Gonna try and convince him to sneak out with me.

Have fun with your game!

So.

Pidge?

Who were you texting?

I'm texting you?

No. Earlier. When I was playing the game, your phone kept vibrating.

And you had this weird grin on your face.

Very creepy can I just say.

I wasn't grinning.

I took pictures if you don't believe me.

Yeah, you were that distracted.

I can't believe this violation of privacy.

I'm supposed to be a guest in your home!

You haven't been a guest for about five years, but alright.
(21:42) So who is it?

(21:44) Can't decide whether to be proud you've apparently got a new friend, or insanely jealous.

(21:44) I'm gonna go with tentatively proud.

(21:44) So spill. Who is it?

(21:45) Why is the idea of me having friends so surprising to you?

(21:45) I have plenty of friends.

(21:47) You have me and Shiro.

(21:47) And neither of us count considering we've been neighbours since I was born and Shiro is your brother.

(21:49) ...

(21:49) I'm friends with Matt.

(21:50) My brother doesn't count either.

(21:51) Are you gonna tell me who you were talking to or am I gonna have to hack into your phone?

(21:54) Can you do that????

(21:55) I dunno.

(21:56) Probably?

(21:56) Are you giving me permission to try?

(22:03) Fuck no.

(22:04) Telling your mum to stop letting you watch Mr Robot though.

(22:04) And I'm not talking to anyone. I don't even know him.

(22:04) Or her?

(22:05) Them?

(22:06) Oh, is this like an internet friend or something?

(22:07) Not really. He (she? they?) text the wrong number and then I accidentally messaged him (her? them?) about Muffin and, yeah.

(22:07) No big deal.

(22:08) Yes big deal.

(22:08) You're still talking to them aren't you?
(22:09) Very big deal.

06/08/2016

(00:05) Hi.

(00:07) Can I ask a question?

(00:09) asjadhdgijwncikjlobl

(00:10) qwhjvkokhlovxhvsmeyuys

(00:10) vnysyhxjkgk heuydhbfvntohwycgd

(00:12) Alright then.

(00:13) Drunk?

(11:28) So.

(11:29) I found out I text in my sleep. Not very well apparently, but still.

(11:29) Thanks for that.

(11:30) Is that what that was?

(11:34) Yeah. Very offended you assumed I was drunk by the way.

(11:34) I'm a model citizen and was in bed and sleeping before midnight on a Friday night thank you very much.

(11:36) I'm supposed to believe that?

(11:37) I mean, you could at least pretend to.

(11:37) What'd you want to ask anyway?

(11:38) Are you a boy or a girl?

(11:40) Hello to you too, Professor Oak.

(11:41) Sorry, couldn't think of a way to ask that didn't sound ridiculous.

(11:41) So you went with a Pokémon phrase?

(11:42) I'm impressed. Might change your name in my contacts to Prof. Oak.

(11:42) Guy, though.

(11:45) Cool.
(11:45) Same.
(11:46) Cool.

(11:56) He's a he.
(12:00) I thought you said this isn't a big deal.
(12:01) It's not. I'm just informing you.
(12:03) If it's not a big deal you wouldn't go out of your way to find out and then make sure to tell me, would you?
(12:03) Checkmate, Kogane.
(12:05) Remind me again why we're friends?
(12:06) Because we've been living next to each other for 14 years and I'm the only person besides Shiro who doesn't annoy the crap out of you.
(12:06) And this new guy apparently.
(12:08) Thanks.
(12:10) Going into town in a bit, you wanna come?
(12:12) Yeah, I need some new parts for this computer I'm building. Gimme 20 mins.

(14:08) How's Muffin/Gomez?
(14:08) Hope you're taking good care of my nephew.
(14:09) If anything happens to him, I'm holding you personally responsible.
(14:14) How old is Muffin/Gomez?

(14:30) Why are you groaning?
(14:31) Why are you texting me? We're in the same room.
(14:31) You're so rarely silent, I'm making the most of it.
(14:32) I gotta start auditioning for a new best friend.
(14:32) Requirements: must not mock me.
(14:33) That's it? I didn't know your standards were so low, bud.
(14:34) And yet you can't seem to meet them. Strange isn't it?
(14:35) Hilarious. Why're you groaning though?
(14:35) Coffee shop girl stop texting you back?
(14:37) Mmm. About that.
(14:37) She did give me the wrong number.
(14:38) I KNEW IT.
(14:38) Ugh, don't stress about her, dude. She just used you for a free drink, totally not worth your tears.
(14:39) I'm not crying Hunk, what the fuck???
(14:40) Well, it wouldn't be the first time.
(14:41) doNT THROW YOUR DIRTY BOXERS AT ME
(14:41) Wait, just realised. If coffee shop girl gave you the wrong number, who have you been messaging?
(14:42) The person behind the number she gave me?
(14:42) He's pretty chill.
(14:44) You're talking to a stranger?
(14:45) Everyone starts off as a stranger if you think about it.
(14:46) Don't get all philosophical on me. You know what I mean.
(14:46) I can see you sticking your tongue out at me.
(14:47) dONT FART
(14:47) JESUS LANCE HOW OLD ARE YOU??
(14:47) And what the fuck did you eat?? I can't breathe.
(14:55) You're so dramatic.
(14:55) You didn't need to kick me out of the room.
(14:56) I most definitely did.
(14:56) Go away and air off.
(14:57) Seriously man, I'm worried about your diet. People aren't supposed to smell like that.
(14:58) Yeah, yeah.
(14:58) I'm gonna grab some food from the vending machine. Star Wars marathon when I get back?
(15:00) It's like you know the way to my heart <3
Sorry, was out with a friend all day.


This is so overdramatic I'm howling. How is Luke still upright??

Where's the blood???

Star Trek?

I'm blocking you immediately.

??????

Oh, wait. Star Wars.

Sorry. They're all the same to me.

nO THEY ARE NOT???

What the fuck? What the fuck? wHAT THE FUCK?

Alright, Hunk is glaring at me so I'll tone it down. But like

They're most definitely not the same.

And Star Wars is superior in every single way.

I'll take your word for it.

Have...have you never watched Star Wars before?

Holy shit, am I talking to a virgin?

What.

We definitely don't know each other well enough to be talking about stuff like that. What.

What???

Oh, nah I mean like, a Star Wars virgin.

Not...you know. That kind of virgin.

Oh.

Right.

Shit.

This isn't awkward at all.

I'll just...gloss over it.

You gotta watch Star Wars, man.

It's life changing.
Also

Young Harrison Ford and Carrie Fisher???

10/10 would recommend.

I'll add it to my list.

Nice.

Anyway, we're about to start The Phantom Menace (yeah we're watching in a weird order) and Hunk looks like he's gonna kick me out of the room again if my phone keeps vibrating. So

Talk later?

Kick you out again?

Yeah sure.

Bye.

Give Muffin/Gomez a kiss from me xo

No.

Do you want to watch the Star Wars movies with me?

What?

Now?

There are seven movies, you know that right?

Oh. Never mind.

That wasn't a no.

I'd never say no to a Star Wars marathon.

Just letting you know what you're getting into.

Back door's open, let yourself in.

Bring popcorn.

07/08/2016

I don't understand Kylo Ren.

Huh?

Vadar left the Dark Side, so what is he trying to finish?
Holy

Fucking

Shit

Did you actually marathon the entire Star Wars series?????

Is this real life??

I did.

Me and my neighbour.

I haven't moved from this bean bag in almost fifteen hours. I think it's actually attached to me.

D U D E

When I told you to watch it, I didn't think you'd do it right away.

This is the greatest thing I've ever heard ever.

Even better than when I found out Han Solo is getting his own movie.

A solo movie.

And you're already making puns???

I think I'm in love.

Uh.

That was a joke.

But like, I'm impressed.

Just told Hunk and he's super impressed as well.

Called you 'a God among men'

Did you enjoy it?

Yeah, it was really good.

Dunno why I took so long to watch.

But yeah, haven't moved in almost a day, so I'm gonna...gonna try and unstick myself from this bean bag and get some sleep.

Night.

GOODNIGHT YOUNG PADAWAN

Give Muffin/Gomez a kiss from me.

Are you going to keep saying that until I say yes?
(17:44) Most definitely.

(17:44) Are you going to do it?

(17:46) No.

(21:00) Not that I'm complaining, but where'd the sudden Star Wars interest come from by the way?

(21:06) No reason.

(21:06) Just wanted to see what all the hype was about.

Chapter End Notes

i'm very fond of hunk & lance and pidge & keith friendships, very very fond
08/08/2016

(06:21) Happy Anniversary xo

(06:30) What?

(06:31) It's been exactly a week since we first started talking.

(06:31) Our 'week-a-versary' if you will.

(06:32) I will not.

(06:35) You're the life and soul of parties, aren't you?

(06:37) Why are you awake by the way???

(06:40) Taking Muffin to the vet.

(06:40) I think he can sense it.

(06:41) I've spent the last fifteen minutes trying to coax him out from underneath the couch.

(06:41) Not even sure how he fit.

(06:42) That's my boy.

(06:45) Please don't encourage this rebellious streak.

(06:45) It's causinfdfdgkjhgfj

(06:50) ???

(06:55) Not gonna lie, I'm worried.

(07:03) He attacked me???

(07:04) Muffin/Gomez would never.

(07:05) He did! He kinda like lashed out a paw from underneath the couch and when I dropped my
phone he grabbed it and sat on it??

(07:05) Is this normal cat behaviour?

(07:08) For a cat repressing years of anger from being called Muffin?

(07:08) Yeah.

(07:15) Your cat is a demon.

(07:19) Why good morning to you too dear brother.

(07:19) I'm fine and university is great. Thank you for asking.

(07:20) How about you?

(07:21) Trying to convince your cat to get out from underneath the couch and into his carrier.

(07:22) He's attacked me three times and won't stop hissing.

(07:22) A demon.

(07:25) Wait why are you trying to get him into his carrier?

(07:25) What did you do to him???

(07:30) Why are you assuming I did something to him, when I've already told you I'm the victim here?

(07:34) Keith.

(07:35) You love your cat more than me, I can't believe this.

(07:35) Untrue, I love you both equally.

(07:36) Now, why are you putting him in his carrier? He hates his carrier.

(07:40) Yeah. I can see that.

(07:41) He's ill, or something. We're taking him to the vet.

(07:41) And before you ask, no I didn't do anything.

(07:45) I wasn't going to ask.

(07:48) You were.

(07:49) Also, I've been informed Muffin is a terrible name for a cat.

(07:49) You should've called him Gomez.

(07:54) What? Muffin is a great name for a cat. Who said otherwise?

(07:55) And where'd you even get Gomez from?
(07:57) Addams Family apparently.

(07:58) Success! Muffin is in the carrier and we're only twenty minutes late for our appointment.

(07:58) I'll let you know what happens.

(08:01) Tell Muffin I love him.

(08:01) No.

(09:45) Muffin/Gomez update?

(09:48) Still in the waiting room.

(09:48) He hasn't stopped hissing.

(09:49) Thinks he's traumatised this little kid's goldfish.

(09:50) Oh wait. We're going in now.

(09:51) Give Muffin/Gomez a good luck kiss from me.

(09:51) No.

(10:43) Remember when you graduated top of your class with perfect grades and got accepted into the best university in the country like it was nothing and we all pretty much knew you were a genius?

(10:50) I wouldn't put it like that.

(10:50) But I vaguely recall something similar.

(10:50) Why?

(10:53) I'm taking away your 'genius' title.

(10:53) You don't deserve it.

(10:54) Mum agrees. She hasn't stopped laughing.

(10:56) I'm so confused??

(10:57) Is Muffin alright?

**ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM 'SHIRO'**

**END CALL: 24:07**

(12:05) Muffin is pregnant.
Uh.

What?

Muffin isn't a he. Muffin is a she.

And she is pregnant.

Heavily so.

How far along is she?

Around six weeks?

How did you not realise your cat was six weeks pregnant?

It's not very subtle.

I thought I was just overfeeding him.

Her*

I have so many questions but

If I get caught with my phone one more time, I'm 99% sure my teacher will have an aneurysm.

Shit.

Did you get caught?

Guessing that's a yes.

Congratulations, you're going to be an aunt.

What?

What have I missed?

Muffin is a girl.

A pregnant girl.

Oh. Oh. Wow.

Firstly, I'm not sure that's how the whole aunt/uncle thing works.

At best I'd be...god mother??

Secondly, I've got to get back to class...

Thirdly, wow.

See you later.
(13:30) When are you coming home?

CALLING 'SHIRO'

CALLED FAILED TO CONNECT

(13:45) Nvm.

(19:23) Since Muffin is a girl, I'm changing the name.

(19:24) She's Morticia now.

(19:24) Hey, by the way.

(19:29) Who is Morticia?

(19:29) Hey, I'm guessing you got caught with your phone?

(19:30) Yeah. I thought I was being so stealthy as well.

(19:31) Morticia is Gomez' wife???

(19:31) You've never watched the Addams Family either???

(19:33) Nope.

(19:33) Should I?

(19:34) YES

(19:35) I'd offer to Rabbit it with you tonight but I could literally suffocate under the amount of homework I have.

(19:38) Am I distracting you?

(19:40) Yep.

(19:40) Good distraction though.

(19:41) How's Muffin/Morticia?

(19:45) My mum is pampering her like she's some sort of Queen.

(19:45) And my dad bought her a special cat bed because "she needs to be comfortable".

(19:46) She hissed at me and tried to claw my eye out when I tried to put her in it.

(19:47) What did you do to that poor cat??
(19:48) Nothing!
(19:48) I mean, I stepped on her tail once about five years ago?
(19:50) You villain!
(19:51) Accidentally.
(19:51) That's what you want me to believe.
(19:54) That's the truth?
(19:55) Muffin says otherwise.
(20:00) What do you watch?
(20:04) Huh?
(20:05) You've never watched Star Wars till recently, and you've never watched Addams Family.
(20:06) So what do you watch?
(20:06) Why?
(20:07) I'm curious.
(20:07) And trying to procrastinate writing this essay on Stalin's Russia.
(20:08) I'm not sure I should be enabling you.
(20:09) It's either you or I spend the next hour trying to build a tower made out of Pokémon cards.
(20:10) Why do you have Pokémon cards?
(20:11) Why don't you???
(20:15) ...
(20:15) I like bad movies.
(20:16) Like....... 
(20:17) Have you heard of Rubber?
(20:20) Nope, what's it about?
(20:21) A sentient tyre that rolls around the desert using its mind to explode the heads of animals.
(20:22) And people.
(20:30) "In the late 1990s, somewhere in a California desert, a tyre named Robert suddenly comes to life."
(20:31) Wow, alright you weren't kidding about liking bad movies.
(20:31) What else?
(20:32) Mars Attacks?

(20:33) The weird alien Tim Burton one??

(20:33) I've been meaning to watch that one.

(20:35) You should. It's an underrated example of cinematic excellence.

(20:37) I'm gonna hold you to that.

(20:39) Also, you should watch Spaceballs.

(20:39) You'll like that.

(20:50) How's the essay going?

(21:45) Sorry, sorry, I got in the Zone™ and kinda turned my phone off.

(21:49) Did you finish it?


(21:50) Probs gonna shower and try and sleep now.

(21:51) Send Muffin/Morticia my love xo

(21:56) No.

(22:00) Night.

(23:10) Keith? Is everything alright?

(23:10) Sorry I missed your call. I was studying and then I forgot to turn my phone back on...

(23:11) Are you alright?

(23:20) I'm fine.

(23:20) Just...

(23:20) Mum misses you.

(23:21) Muffin too.

(23:30) I miss you guys too.

(23:31) I'm gonna sleep now.

(23:32) Night.

(23:34) Night, Keith.

(23:36) Hey, Pidge.
(23:40) Hey, Shiro

(23:41) To what do I owe this honour?

(23:41) Is Matt passed out in a bathtub again? Because if he is you promised me I'd get pictures this time.

(23:43) Your dedication to the blackmail life is impressive.


(23:44) "Today"

(23:45) I'll ignore that.

(23:46) How's Keith doing?

(23:50) Good?

(23:50) We marathoned the entire Star Wars franchise the other day and I've never felt prouder.

(23:51) And a little bitter.

(23:51) I've been trying to get him into it for years and his new friend mentions it once and he ends up watching it all in one go??

(23:52) Rude.

(23:55) New friend?

(23:56) Yup.

(23:57) And who is this mystery friend?

(23:58) Not sure. You might be better off talking to Keith.

(23:58) I'm gonna sleep now.

(23:59) Tell Matt if he sends me any more drunken selfies I'm deleting him off Snapchat.

(23:59) Will do.

(23:59) Night, Pidge.

09/08/2016

(13:56) Have you created a nest?

(14:02) A what?
(14:04) For Muffin/Morticia.

(14:04) Cats need a warm and safe place to give birth.

(14:06) How do you know this please?

(14:07) WikiHow.

(14:07) Currently noting down everything on the ‘How to Get a Badonkadonk’ article with Hunk.

(14:08) Step one: wear jeans that make your butt pop.

(14:08) What counts as butt popping jeans?

(14:10) Aren’t you supposed to be in class?

(14:11) Update: Hunk is doing squats.

(14:11) And nah. Free period.

(14:12) What about you? Cat-sitting duty?

(14:16) Nope. With my dad.

(14:17) Doing…

(14:20) Work.

(14:21) That’s all I get??

(14:22) You want more? Random stranger?

(14:23) Well. It’d be nice.

(14:24) And I think we’ve gone beyond being random strangers.

(14:24) We've bonded over Muffin/Morticia and your terrible taste in movies.

(14:24) Speaking of Muffin/Morticia

(14:24) Are you keeping the kittens?

(14:30) Is it really terrible taste if I know they're all terrible?

(14:31) Not sure.

(14:31) Why?

(14:33) Yes, it's still terrible. I read the synopsis for Spaceballs and I am Disgusted™

(14:33) How could anyone do that to the Star Wars universe?

(14:33) Can I have one?

(14:34) A kitten?

(14:38) Yeah.
(14:39) Are you even allowed pets?
(14:40) I don't see why not.

(14:43) Maybe find out first.
(14:43) You're right. I hate it, but you're right.

(17:04) Where are you????
(17:10) AHHHHHHH!!!!
(17:11) Hunk?
(17:12) AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!
(17:13) I'm gonna!!!!
(17:13) AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!
(17:15) Hunk????????? I'm worried.
(17:15) Stop worrying me.
(17:20) I just had a meeting with Iverson.
(17:21) Ew.
(17:22) Yeah. Ew. But, remember that programme I signed up to be part of?
(17:24) The mentor programme?
(17:27) YEAH.
(17:27) I GOT IN.
(17:27) I GOT IN????!!!!
(17:30) AY!!!!!!!! I TOLD YOU YOU WOULD
(17:31) Did I not tell you, you would?
(17:31) What were my exact words?
(17:32) Lance, no.
(17:32) What were my exact words?
(17:34) "Hunk, stop being an idiot, you know you're going to get onto the programme because you're amazing and they'd be fucking idiots not to take you."
(17:35) Or something like that.
(17:37) Psychic Lance strikes again.
I'm super proud of you though.

Wiping away tears as well speak.

<3 <3

This calls for a celebration.

We are *not* sneaking out.

It's a school night. We have French first thing tomorrow.

Are you 17 or 70? Live a little.

Anyway, I wasn't thinking about sneaking out.

Saving that for Friday.

I was thinking more...movie marathon?

Sounds good. What'd you have in mind?

I've gotta couple films on my list.

Cool. I'll grab snacks?

It's a date xo

---

Did you know cats can give birth to up to eight kittens in each litter?

...I did not.

Why do you know this?

I Googled.

Why?

I was thinking, I might like a kitten.

When Muffin gives birth, I want one.


No, Muffin hates *me*. I quite like cats otherwise.

So can I have one?

Why not.

So that's two down. A possible six left to go.

Two? Who else wants one?

Ohhhhhhhhhhh.
(19:35) Your new friend?

(19:40) I wouldn't say friend.

(19:40) More like...an acquaintance.

(19:42) When was the last time you two spoke?

(19:43) Earlier today.

(19:43) And other than him and me, who was the last person you messaged?

(19:50) ...Shiro.

(19:52) Do I need to say any more?

(19:53) Start being nicer to me if you want a kitten.

(19:55) I'll just ask Shiro for one.

(20:12) By the way, I got onto that programme I applied for.

(20:12) The mentoring scheme at that school.

(20:14) At the Garrison.

(20:14) You can say the name.

(20:16) I know, I know.

(20:16) Just...I know it's a sensitive topic, so...

(20:16) Yeah.

(20:20) It's really not.

(20:21) I'm happy for you! Congrats!!

(20:21) Told you they'd accept you.

(20:24) THANK YOU!

(20:26) When does it start?

(20:27) In a couple weeks. I still have to get paired up with a tutor.

(20:27) I think I actually have to go and visit the school sometime next week.

(20:27) Wanna come?

(20:30) Hm.

(20:31) Or you don't actually have to come to the school with me, but it's like an hour long train journey

(20:31) You could come and keep me company?
I'll think about it.

Congrats again!

10/08/2016

Dude.

Mars Attacks might be the best film I've ever watched.

Where has it been all my life?

Oh, you watched it?

Yeah. Very, very nice.

How's Muffin/Morticia?

Being pampered like the queen she is?

She's sleeping on her back with her legs in the air making weird wheezing sounds.

It's...something.

Did you find out if you're allowed pets?

Alright, so

Technically, we're not.

But...

But I want one anyway.

The girl in the room across the hall has a goldfish, why can't I have a cat?

Cats and goldfishes tend to require different levels of care.

I can't believe the person who thought his pregnant cat was just getting a little chubby is trying to lecture me on caring for animals.

Are you ever gonna let me live that down? It's not even my cat!

Never.

Also, I'm good with pets.

I have a dog and two guinea pigs at home.

And I've never completely overlooked any pressing medical concerns for them before, sooooo

Can I have one?
I'll think about it.

Ok, Hunk just chucked his pillow at me.

aND ANOTHER ONE. WOW.

G'night, have to go and defend my honour.

Give Muffin/Morticia a belly rub for me xo

I'm rooting for Hunk.

And, no.

Update: I successfully defended my title as ultimate pillow fight champion.

Really?

Of course.

Alright, Hunk saw me typing over my shoulder and said if I don't tell the truth he won't help me with my Physics h/w.

He won.

Hunks words: "I destroyed you, man."

He cheated though.

How?

Tickling is off limits. And yet...

You're ticklish?

Where?

And give another person more ammo???

I think NOT.

Alright, gotta go. French teacher's giving me the evil eye.

How do you say: 'Yes, I understand the question' in French???

Vous avez un joli cul.

<3

I love your new friend.
YOU

DEMON

I TRUSTED YOU

Out of detention, I see?

I can't believe the levels of deceit and treachery you've just put me through.

And Hunk won't stop laughing.

Say he loves you.

I'm glad to be of service.

You won't be saying that when I get my revenge.

Revenge?

Oh yeah. I never back down from a challenge.

You are going Down.

We'll see.

We will.

WE.

WILL.

We're having that pasta thing you like for dinner.

Mum said to invite you over.

Tell her I love her and I'll be over in ten minutes.

Hunk would like a kitten as well.

Excuse me?

When Muffin/Morticia gives birth.

I'd like a kitten.

And so would Hunk.

We're gonna train them to steal food from the kitchens and bring it to us after lights out.

I don't think you can train cats.
(18:50) Are you forgetting you're talking to the Cat Whisperer?
(18:50) So yeah, one for me and one for Hunk?
(18:53) I guess?
(18:54) Thank you!
(18:55) Hunk says thank you too.
(18:55) Blew you a kiss as well.
(18:55) Did you catch it?
(18:57) We both know the answer to that.
(18:58) I'll just tell him you did.
(18:58) Of course you will.
(18:59) I've been meaning to ask...
(19:01) Yeah?
(19:03) Is Hunk his real name?
(19:03) Or like...a nickname?
(19:05) Real name.
(19:08) It was supposed to be Hank or something but his dad has messy handwriting and, long story short, his name is Hunk on his birth certificate.
(19:08) No way.
(19:10) Way.
(19:11) I don't believe you.
(19:12) Believe it.
(19:15) Hi, Naruto.
(19:15) Don't make a Naru-
(19:16) Fuck you.
(19:16) Also, Hunk says I have to tell the truth and stop telling people HARMLESS lies about him.
(19:17) His real name isn't Hunk.
(19:17) Yet.
(19:20) Yet?
(19:21) I have plan, involving Bourbon, Hunk's dad, and a copy of Hunk's birth certificate.
I don’t even want to know.

So Hunk is a nickname?

Yep.

Why?

It fits him.

'hunk; noun - "a large, strong, sexually attractive man"

Statement still stands.

Huh.

Do you have one?

A large, strong, sexually attractive man?

... A nickname.

Some people call me The Tailor.

Why.

I'm very good at knitting.

I can't tell if you're joking or not?

Why would I joke about knitting?

Hunk is literally wearing the socks I made him last Christmas right now.

I can make you a pair if you don't believe me.

I believe you.

I just wasn't expecting it.

Hm.

What about you?

I can't knit.

Nooo

Do you have a nickname?

Nope.

Just a name.
And that is...

Are we sharing names?

Is that what we're doing?

I dunno.

Unless you'd prefer I keep thinking of you as 'Muffin's Terrible Uncle'?

Keith.

Muffin's Terrible Uncle Keith.

I like it.

Thanks.

And your name...

Lance.

Cool.

Cooooool.

Did you enjoy dinner?

What?

Pidge you just left my house.

Why're you asking me this now?

Didn't want to interrupt.

Interrupt what??

(°çi°)

Nothing, nothing.

You just seemed pretty preoccupied with your phone.

Oh.

Don’t.

You had that weird grin on your face again.

I'm tired of your lies.

I have photo evidence.

[IMAGE RECEIVED]
I have more if you’d like to see.

That’s enough, thanks.

He’s funny.

I can see that.

Does ‘he’ have a name yet?

Lance.

Keith and Lance

Sitting in a tree—

I’m turning off my phone now.

I’m kidding!

I like that you’re branching out and making new friends.

Again, we’re not friends.

Just acquaintances.

Keep telling yourself that.

11/08/2016

Keith?

Are you awake?

You’re probably sleeping, right?

What’s your favourite colour?

Mine is blue.

Like, ocean blue.

Or sky blue.

Both are great.

Why were you up at 3am?

And red.

Why?
(07:23) Couldn’t sleep.

(07:23) Cool.

(07:24) Thanks.

(07:26) Have

(07:26) Have you slept?

(07:27) A little.

(07:30) Are you alright?

(07:31) I’m fine.

(07:31) Have a good day.

(07:33) You too.

(08:21) What do you do when you think something is wrong with someone, but you don’t know them well enough to ask?

(08:23) Lance?

(08:23) Why do you care? I thought you weren’t friends?

(08:25) Do you enjoy being pedantic?

(08:26) Love it.

(08:26) And just ask him. If he doesn’t want to tell you, he won’t.

(08:27) And if he does, he will.

(08:27) Simple.

(08:29) I wouldn’t say ‘simple’ but alright.

(08:30) Thanks.

(13:07) Dude, you alright?

(13:21) I’m fine!

(13:23) Where are you? They’re serving pizza for lunch.

(13:24) In our room.

(13:24) Got a headache, might skip the rest of the day.

(13:30) Iverson’s gonna be pissed.
When is he not?

Gonna turn my phone off now.

Ok. Feel better <3

Can cats get morning sickness?

Muffin has puked four times today.

I don’t know whether it’s normal or if I should be worried?

Are you busy?

I know we don’t really know each other.

But, like...

Never mind.

Night, Lance.

12/08/2016

Have you started making a nest?

Oh my God.

What? It’s an important question.

And you’re not the first person to ask.

I haven’t made her a nest yet.

I’ll see if Pidge will help on the weekend.

Thank you.

Muffin deserves the best.

I’ve lost count of how many times she’s bit and hissed at me over the last three days.

....

Like I said, she deserves the best.

Also.

I’m probably coming home for a weekend in a few weeks?

Really?
(09:57) Yeah.
(09:57) Sounds good.
(09:58) :)

(20:46) Where are you?
(20:47) Back of the garden.
(20:48) Oooh.
(20:48) Bike?
(20:54) Yep.
(20:55) Want company?
(20:59) Sure.

(21:11) How is Muffin?
(21:15) Fnbien
(21:16) English?
(21:17) Shge fnien
(21:20) Are you drunk?
(21:25) Sorry, sorry.
(21:25) Had gloves on.
(21:26) Muffin’s fine. I think?
(21:26) She’s just kind of rolling around and whining.
(21:26) But she’s stopped puking. So.
(21:27) You dropped the ‘Morticia’.
(21:28) Finally admitting Muffin is a perfectly acceptable name for a cat?
(21:29) Oh thank God.
(21:30) I’ve been worried sick, you know?
(21:31) Are you always this dramatic?
And NEVER. It was getting long typing Morticia every time.

Just know she’s Morticia where it counts.

In my heart.

Why the gloves?

Are you cold blooded or something cause it’s so hot I haven’t worn clothes to bed in about three nights.

Hunk keeps mumbling something about being scarred for life.

Protective gloves.

I’m working on my bike.

Your bike???

As in, a bicycle right?

No, as in…

A motorbike.

Holy

Shit?

And you can ride it?

That’s the aim.

?

I’m still building it.

D U D E.

That’s fucking awesome, what the hell.

How close are you?

Hopefully I’ll be finished within a couple weeks.

Been working on it for a while.

And you’ve done it all yourself?

My dad helps sometimes.

And Pidge.

Pidge?

My neighbour.
She’s here right now.

She says I have to tell you she said hi.

Hi Pidge.

Alright, Hunk just finished getting dressed.

We’re gonna sneak out and see where the night takes us.

Have fun with your bike.

Give Muffin a kiss and a belly rub from me.

No.

Have fun.

(23:57) (ʖʕʖ)

Do not.

(23:58) (ʖʕʖ) (ʕʖʔ)

13/08/2016

I tore my jumper climbing back over the fence.

I’m bleeding.

But Hunk face-planted into a flowerbed, so, I got off easy.

Thank you for this riveting update.

Oh.

Didn’t think you’d be awake.

Or did I wake you? Again?

No, I’m awake.

Pidge left pretty late.

Oh cool.

I just wanted to say sorry for the other day.

It’s fine.

You’re good now though, right?

I think so.
(02:06) Cool.
(02:07) Cool.
(02:09) What’d you do tonight?
(02:10) Nothing special. Just hit the town, met some girls.
(02:10) Got some numbers.
(02:13) Fake numbers?
(02:13) …
(02:13) Don’t worry.
(02:15) That’s a yes.
(02:18) No comment your honour.
(02:19) Uh-huh.
(02:19) I’m gonna try and sleep, I think.
(02:19) Night, Lance.
(02:20) G’night, Keith.
(02:20) Kiss Muffin etc etc.
(02:21) No, etc etc.

(14:03) Why was your phone vibrating until like 2am?
(14:06) I’m sure I don’t know what you mean.
(14:07) Don't play coy with me McClain.
(14:07) 2am is Pillowtalk Hour™.
(14:09) That's definitely not a thing.
(14:10) Definitely is.
(14:13) Nope, I don't think so.
(14:14) Stop avoiding the question.
(14:14) Who had your attention at pillowtalk o'clock?
(14:15) Stop calling it that.
(14:15) And Keith.
(14:17) Who?
Muffin's Terrible Uncle.

Oh.

When did he get a name?

I imagine not long after his birth.

Do you enjoy being purposely difficult?

I think we both know the answer to that.

Since you need to have everything spelt out for you:

When did you find out his name?

Couple days ago.

Hmmm.

Why are you hmm-ing please?

HMMMMMMMM.

Hunk.

Stop.

HMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM.

I hate you.

HMMMMMMM <3 HMMMMMMMMMMM.

Is this supposed to be a horror?

You gotta give me more context than that, man.

Addams Family.

Is it supposed to be a horror?

Wait, wait, wait.

Wait.

I'm waiting?

Are you watching it?

Like right now?

Yeah.

I don't get it. Is it supposed to be scary?
(23:24) How far into it are you?
(23:25) 15 minutes.
(23:26) I wanna watch it.
(23:26) Rabbit?
(23:28) Huh?
(23:28) Oh, that video chat thing?
(23:30) Yeah, if you don't mind?
(23:31) Sure.
(23:32) Nice, nice.
(23:33) K, gimme five mins.
(23:35) Alright.
(23:35) You still haven't told me if it's supposed to be a horror or not.
(23:45) READY!
(23:45) It's a comedy.
(23:46) They're just very dedicated to the #aesthetic.
(23:47) Huh?
(23:47) And that was ten minutes.
(23:50) Alright, thank you Father Time.
(23:50) You ready?
(23:51) Yeah.

14/08/2016
(01:34) Verdict?????
(01:36) Really, really good.
(01:37) I'm cheering.
(01:38) But really quietly because if I wake Hunk up I'll never hear the end of it.
(01:38) Glad you liked it.
(01:39) Next time you can pick the film.
(01:46) Next time?
Ah.
I mean.
If you want.

Sharknado.

??

Next time we should watch Sharknado.

Is this another one of your terrible movies?

...Maybe.

I'm looking forward to it.

Now

I'm gonna sleep.

Night Keith.

Give Muffin a kiss from me.

Night Lance.

You didn't say no.

No.

There we go.

vos avons un joli cul = your ass looks good (thank u zazenvert for correcting mi terrible french xo)

thank you for all the lovely comments and kudos' im dying i tell u, dying

let me know if this way of formatting the different texts is easy for you guys to read? or if you're getting confused i can think of smthn else idk, lemme know xo
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

aka the 'getting to know each other through ridiculous questions' chapter

Chapter Notes

key:
lance
keith
pidge
hunk
shiro

See the end of the chapter for more notes

(15/08/2016)

(15:26) Keith.
(15:26) Emergency.
(15:26) Need your help immediately.
(15:38) What?
(15:40) Are you alright?
(15:41) Please don't tell me you were in an actual emergency and messaged me instead of someone who could actually help.
(15:45) Oh my God.
(15:46) You did, didn't you?
(15:47) Wow, I tell you it's an emergency and you take 12 minutes to respond?
(15:47) Where is your sense of urgency???
(15:48) I could've been dying!
(15:50) I was working.
(15:51) What a shame you weren't.
(15:53) Cruel.
Anyway, back to the emergency.

"Emergency"

Who would win?

The Hulk or A group of bees equivalent to the mass of the Hulk?

I

What?

I thought you said this was an emergency?

It is an emergency.

I'm in the middle of a debate with some of the other people on our floor.

About the Hulk...

...vs...bees?

Yes.

Problem?

Several.

Mostly...

WHY?

We were watching the Avengers in the common room

And you know the part where Hulk goes apeshit and Iron Man has to come and try and get him back?

And they have the fight where they destroy like half a city and probably kill countless people lmao.

I'm familiar with it.

Yeah well someone was saying how it was a cop out and how Iron Man wouldn't be able to beat Hulk without the Hulkbuster armor

True.

Yeah, true.

But then someone else asked who would be able to beat Hulk without any extra add-ons. Just like in a straight up fist-match.

And the usual names got thrown into the mix; Thor, Superman, Goku etc etc

And then someone said "bees"

Bees?
And then everyone started getting really into it because it's bees, right?

Right.

And then someone, I think it was Hunk, pulled out a calculator and worked out the average mass of a bee and figured out how many bees there would need to be to match the Hulk's mass.

And here we are.

So who would win? The Hulk or the bees?

What was your answer?

The bees obviously.

Surround him and sting him en masse.

R.I.P Hulk.

What did Hunk say?

He's Team Hulk.

The fool.

He's right.

???????

No he's not???

What the fuck Keith, no.

Just no. I wouldn't have asked for your opinion if I'd known it was going to be horribly wrong.

The bee stings would only make him angrier.

And an angry Hulk is a strong Hulk.

After the initial discomfort passes, he'd just swat them away.

No, no, noo, you're missing the big picture.

Hulk gets bigger when he gets angrier, so if his mass increases, so does the amount of bees.

He gets angrier? The bee stings intensify, and there's only so much one person can take.

Nope.

You're assuming that just because the bees have the same mass as the Hulk, that they're as strong as him as well.

But Hulk is much stronger than his mass. So, yeah.
(16:45) Shit.

(16:45) Was that a 'you're right' shit or a 'your theory is shit' shit?

(16:50) A 'you're right' shit.

(16:51) Debate is over.

(16:51) Hunk says thank you for winning it for Team Hulk.

(16:52) You're welcome.

(16:54) Alright, we're gonna finish the movie now.

(16:55) ...

(16:55) You paused it for nearly two hours??

(16:55) Yes, of course. The debate needed our full attention.

(16:55) Bye!

(16:57) Bye.

(16:58) Who would win in a fight; the Hulk or A group of bees equivalent to the mass of the Hulk?

(17:04) Stupid question.

(17:04) Hulk, of course.

(17:05) Thank you :)

(20:34) Ugh.

(20:37) Most people start a conversation with a greeting.

(20:37) Ugh.

(20:37) Hi Lance.

(20:39) UGH.

(20:41) What are you procrastinating today?

(20:44) Physics homework.

(20:44) Does it need to be so difficult? I really don’t think so.

(20:44) Unnecessary.

(20:44) Cruel.

(20:45) Just plain rude.
(20:47) Your dramatic streak is definitely something else.

(20:47) You’ll get used to it.

(20:48) Doubtful

(20:48) Well.

(20:49) You’re replying aren’t you?

(20:49) Sounds like someone’s already getting used to me.

(20:52) …

(20:52) Go and do your homework.

(20:54) Or

(20:54) Or…

(20:54) I could not do that.

(20:55) I could stop replying.

(20:55) You wouldn’t do that.

(21:00) Wait.

(21:00) You wouldn’t, right?


(21:14) I cannot believe.

(21:14) You’re worse than Hunk.

(21:16) I’ll reply when you finish your homework.

(21:17) Rude.

(21:17) This why Muffin doesn’t like you.

(21:18) She clearly sensed your latent cruelness and tried to warn the world.

(21:31) Ugh.

(22:49) IMAGE SENT.

(22:49) See, the homework is done.

(22:49) Hope you’re happy.

(22:49) IMAGE RECEIVED.

(22:51) Congratulations.
Was that so hard?

Yes.

I mean, I’m not bad at it. Just Physics really isn’t my jam.

What is then?

Huh?

What lesson is your ‘jam’?

Oh!

I really love English.

Lit or Language?

Both.

Probably lean a little more towards lit, though.

Chemistry and Biology too.

You hate Physics, but you like the other two?

Yup.

Alright.

Also Drama.

No surprise there.

Ha ha.

What about you?

I don’t go to school.

Yeah, yeah. I remember.

But before.

What’d you like?

I didn’t really like anything.

Alright, what were you good at?

Everything.

Your modesty humbles me.

Sorry, that came out really wrong.
I mean like, I guess I’m naturally the ‘studious’ type.

Naturally smart?

I don’t really like putting it like that.

But.

Whatever.

I never really liked school itself though.

Like the way lessons were taught and how it kind of sucks any of the fun from it.

Yeah, I feel that.

Had some really shitty teachers as well.

Ooooh man, don’t get me started on shitty teachers.

There’s this one guy here who I swear has it out for me and Hunk.

Mostly me.

And through no fault of my own.

No fault of your own?

Mhm.

You sneak out like every week.

He doesn’t know that though, does he?

He’s had it out for me since day one.

Literally, I walked through the doors and he made a big speech about me only even getting into the school because apparently some other kid decided not to turn up so they had a space available.

Sounds like a dick.

Yeah. I’ll get my revenge though.

Aiming for that top spot during the next exam season. Can’t wait to rub his face in it.

I was expecting something more prank-like for your revenge.

Oh yeah, of course.

Pranks are definitely coming up.

Me and Hunk are brainstorming.

Any ideas are greatly appreciated.

I’ll let you know if I come up with anything.
(23:58) <3

(23:58) How’s Muffin by the way?

(23:58) Haven’t got an update in a while.

(23:59) What have you done to my niece???


(16/08/2016)

(00:03) Nothing!

(00:03) Why does everyone always assume I’ve done something to her?

(00:04) I’m not hearing an update…

(00:06) …

(00:06) She’s fine.

(00:06) Still pregnant.

(00:06) Still moody.

(00:06) Still doing that weird wheezing thing.

(00:09) Give her a tummy rub.

(00:10) No.

(00:10) The last time I tried to touch her she hissed at me.

(00:11) Allegedly.

(00:11) I’m sorry but I just can’t imagine Muffin being that mean.

(00:13) You’ve never even met her!

(00:13) One time she ate one of my socks and spat it out on my bed.

(00:13) On my pillow, like she knew exactly what she was doing.

(00:15) Muffin would never.

(00:15) Stop trying to slander her good name.

(00:16) Can’t believe you’re believing a cat over me.

(00:19) :)

(00:20) Hunk is glaring at me.
(00:20) Think he wants to sleep.
(00:21) Why don’t you just put your phone on silent?
(00:23) I need it for my alarm in the morning.
(00:23) Wow.
(00:23) He’s stooped to chucking pillows.
(00:24) And dirty socks.
(00:25) Go to bed Lance.
(00:26) Alright, but only because I want Hunk to take a look at my Physics homework quickly in the morning.
(00:26) Night, Keith.
(00:27) Tell Muffin I love her.
(00:29) Alright.
(00:31) What.
(00:31) Really??????
(00:35) No.
(00:35) Night, Lance.
(00:36) -_- 

(08:34) IMAGE SENT.
(08:34) What the hell is happening?
(08:34) IMAGE RECEIVED.
(08:36) Oh my God.
(08:36) Is that Muffin?
(08:38) It is.
(08:38) Why is she on my lap?
(08:38) What is happening, Shiro?
(08:38) sHE’S PURRING???
(08:40) That means she’s happy!
(08:40) She’s finally warming to you.
Never thought I’d see the day.

Scratch her behind her ear, she likes that.

How do I get her off?

Keith, no. This is a bonding moment.

Cradle her in your arms.

No.

She’s pregnant! Be nice to her.

I’m always nice to her.

She’s just not nice to me.

You stepped on her tail that one time.

I was like...12.

And apparently Muffin knows how to hold a grudge.

So do I.

Against my brother who ran away to university and left me to look after his demon cat who hates me.

I’m sure I don’t know what you’re talking about.

Gonna go into my lecture now. Talk to you later?

Later.

Oh God.

Where are you?

At the store.

Are you alright?

I just got an email from the Garrison.

Asking if I can come down on Friday for an ‘introductory meeting’ with my mentor.

That’s...good?

Right?

IT’S TERRIFYING.

I Googled the guy who’s going to be mentoring me and
(16:27) He’s really fucking smart???

(16:30) I dunno if you’ve forgotten, but so are you?

(16:30) It’s why you got accepted onto the programme in the first place.

(16:34) No but

(16:34) I mean like

(16:34) He’s won awards???

(16:36) So have you...

(16:36) I’m not understanding the panic.

(16:37) I don’t want to embarrass myself.

(16:40) Pidge???

(16:40) How would you embarrass yourself?

(16:43) I dunno.

(16:43) Like, Shiro went there.

(16:43) Matt went there...

(16:50) I was supposed to go there.

(16:51) Yeah.

(16:51) And...

(16:51) If I do well on the mentoring programme then I’ll probably end up going there for sixth form as well.

(16:52) And if I don’t

(16:53) And if you don’t, then you don’t.

(16:53) It’s not the end of the world.

(16:55) Mmm. I guess.

(16:57) I’m on my way home now.

(16:57) Mario Kart?

(16:57) I might even let you win this time.

(16:59) Ha.

(16:59) You’re on.
Did you know cats can be in labour for up to six hours?

And sometimes they eat the afterbirth????

Told Hunk and he told me to stop being gross.

But apparently it’s good for them? Like really nutritious or something.

This is some quality trivia information right here Keith and you’re missing it.

Sorry, sorry.

Was hanging with Pidge.

Why do you know any of that, please?

Muffin’s due date is coming up right?

I’m prepping myself for The Big Day.

You’re not even going to be there.

Moral support. She’ll be able to sense it, I’m sure.

How is she?

Pretty good.

Not much has changed.

She sat on my lap today though.

That was weird.

Does she…

Does she not normally do that?

Nope.

The last time she sat on my lap, she hacked up a furball on my new jeans.

Wow.

Gross.

So furball’s are gross but eating the afterbirth isn’t?

Exactly.

What were you and Pidge doing?

Mario Kart.

Pidge won before you ask.
She cheated though.

How???

We agreed no Rainbow Road.

And yet...

Wait.

Are you one of those people who think it’s too hard?

Yes, because it is.

People who can’t handle Rainbow Road are weak and natural selection will come for them.

It’s difficult.

It’s really not, as long as you know what you’re doing.

And you do?

Of course. Can’t grow up with four siblings and not become a Rainbow Road master.

What’s your fave track?

Mario Circuit probably.

Aka the easiest track ever.

Who do you play as?

What is this? 21 questions?

If you want.

Huh?

Let’s play 21 questions.

Question one: who do you play as?

Mario or Toad.

Boriiiiing.

Who do you use?

Peach.

Of course.

Of course.

Question two: pineapple on pizza, yes or no?

Yes? Pineapple pizza is delicious.

(22:33) I’m not sure this friendship can continue.

(22:34) It’s nice?????

(22:35) It’s DISGUSTING.

(22:35) Fruits don’t belong on pizza.

(22:35) That’s just a fact of life.

(22:37) I hate to be the one to break this to you, but pizza is like already 50% fruit.

(22:37) Or have you forgotten about the existence of tomatoes?

(22:39) Oh.

(22:39) OH.

(22:40) You’re one of Them.

(22:44) ‘Them’?

(22:46) People who incorrectly believe tomatoes count as a fruit.

(22:48) Incorrectly??

(22:48) Tomatoes being a fruit is like...a fact of life.

(22:50) They grow from the ground.

(22:50) They’re VEGETABLES.

(22:51) So do pineapples?

(22:53) What?

(22:56) Pineapples grow from the ground.

(22:56) So, if that’s your criteria for what’s a vegetable and what’s not...

(22:56) Then pineapples are vegetables and are, by your definition, allowed on pizza.

(22:58) Wait I’m still stuck on ‘pineapples grow from the ground’

(22:58) What???

(22:58) Pineapples come from trees don’t they?

(23:01) A pineapple tree?

(23:02) Yeah…

(23:02) No?

(23:04) IMAGE SENT.
(23:04) Definitely no.

(23:04) IMAGE RECEIVED.

(23:06) WHAT THE FUCK?

(23:06) WHAT?

(23:06) What is this???

(23:06) Photoshop?

(23:08) No...

(23:08) That’s how they grow...

(23:11) I’m so uncomfortable right now.

(23:11) Just showed Hunk.

(23:11) He doesn’t believe you either.

(23:14) Doesn’t believe me?

(23:14) That’s literally photographic evidence?

(23:14) Check for yourselves??

(23:18) There’s clearly a conspiracy going on here.

(23:18) Pineapples just don’t grow from the ground.

(23:19) Except they do?

(23:20) Allegedly.

(23:20) Until I see one with my own two eyes, I’m sticking with pineapple trees.

(23:20) And

(23:21) In the event I do find out they grow from the ground.

(23:21) “In the event”

(23:22) They still don’t belong on pizza.

(23:24) You just haven’t had the right pizza.

(23:24) There’s no ‘right’ pineapple pizza.

(23:27) Nope, there is.

(23:27) There’s a restaurant near my house that does the best pizza.

(23:27) One slice and you’ll be taking back all your pineapple pizza slander.

(23:31) Doubt it.
It’d have to be really, really, really good.

It is.

Hm.

Alright.

You’ll have to take me one day then.

Haha, yeah sure.

Cool, it’s a date.

I

Uh.

What.

It’s just a saying, Keith.

Don’t spontaneously combust on me now.

Muffin needs her terrible uncle.

Right. Yeah, of course.

Cool.

I’m gonna try and sleep now.

Night, Keith.

Give Muffin a belly rub for me xo

Night, Lance.

No.

17/08/2016

Where’re you?

Physics lab? You coming?

Oh, nah. Was just wondering.

In the library doing this English essay.

...The essay that’s due tomorrow?
(12:16) No comment.

(12:18) You know, maybe you’d have more time to do your essays if you weren’t up flirting all night with a certain someone.

(12:20) ???

(12:20) Huh?

(12:23) Ah, going for the ‘I have no idea what you’re talking about’ route, I see.

(12:23) Tedious, but I’ll allow it.

(12:25) No, I mean I honestly have no idea what you’re talking about?

(12:26) Five letters.

(12:26) Rhymes with teeth.

(12:31) What??

(12:31) I don’t flirt with Keith???

(12:33) The denial stage?

(12:33) Honestly Lance, I thought you were better than this.

(12:37) There’s no denial.

(12:37) We’re just friends.

(12:41) For now.

(12:41) For now?

(12:50) For now???

(12:55) You’re ridiculous and I hate you.

(12:55) Love you too <3

(16:01) So.

(16:01) Friday.

(16:01) Can you come?

(16:01) If you can’t, don’t worry. My mum already said she would come with but, yeah.

(16:04) I’ll come.

(16:04) I don’t actually have to come to the school, do I?

(16:04) I can just hang at a cafe or something and wait for you to finish?
(16:06) Yep!

(16:06) Thank you, Keith.

(16:09) NP!

(17:46) Congrats on getting onto the Garrison's mentoring programme, Pidge!

(17:46) You're going to do great.

(17:48) Thanks, Shiro.

(17:48) I have my introductory meeting on Friday.

(17:48) Keith is coming with me.

(17:50) Keith?

(17:50) My Keith??

(17:51) Yep.

(17:51) (Do you even know any other Keith's?)

(17:55) And how did you manage that one?

(17:56) Still not entirely sure.

(17:56) I'm pretty nervous, so he's coming as moral support.

(17:59) You don't need to be nervous, Pidge.

(18:00) Yeah, yeah. Keith already gave me a surprisingly good pep talk.

(18:01) We're still talking about my Keith, right?

(18:03) Things change when you're at university for most of the year.

(18:04) Evidently.

(18:04) It's good to hear though.

(18:06) Yep.

(18:06) I hear you're coming home for a visit soon?

(18:10) That's the plan. Once exams and deadlines settle down a bit.

(18:10) Nice, nice.

(18:10) And, I've heard some other...things, as well.

(18:10) °ʖ°
Pidge?

Congratulations!

Pidge???

I can’t wait to meet her!

I hear she’s lovely...

And British?

Very British apparently.

Oh my God.

I’m going to kill your brother.

Please don’t. My birthday is coming up and Matt always comes through with the best gifts.

Alright, but after your birthday I can’t promise anything.

Sounds good to me.

Thought you should know I successfully stopped us from having to do a pop quiz in Biology today.

How?

Very innocently asked our teacher if tomatoes are vegetables or fruits.

And sparked a classwide debate.

It...it actually got very intense.

Friendships were destroyed. Tears were shed. A ruler was thrown.

Teacher was tearing her hair out by the end.

Anyway, the word ‘tomato’ is banned from the classroom and we got out of a pop quiz.

So I’m counting that as a win.

Amazing.

What did your teacher say, by the way?

Fruit or vegetable?

You know what? I forget.

What a coincidence.
I know right?

Guess we’ll never know.

Anyway. Question three?

Huh?

21 questions? We only got through two questions last night.

You want to keep going?

Why not?

Cool.

Are we taking turns with the questions or?

You ask one. I asked both yesterday.

Alright.

Keith?

I’m trying to think of a good one.

Keith, it’s just 21 questions.

Ask anything.

When did you learn to knit?

You remember that?

Mhm.

I learned really young.

I think I was about seven or eight?

You as a seven-year-old with a pair of very pointy needles?

Ha ha. Yeah, there were a few injuries.

Not as many as you’d think though.

Anyway, I had chickenpox and my parents were working and couldn’t take any time off to look after me.

So I spent like two weeks with my grandparents and they’re both like the most intense knitters I’ve ever met.

Two weeks with them and I picked up the basics pretty easily, but I didn’t really do anything much after the two weeks.

And then my grandma died and my grandad came to live with us.
And it was really hard at first? He was sad. We were sad. Everyone was sad. And he didn’t really leave his room or interact with anyone.

One day I walk past his room and he’s sitting in his chair working on this blanket he’d started with my grandma before...you know.

So I walked in, picked up some needles and started helping him with it. I’d do that most days after school and he’d eventually stop keeping to himself and he’d leave his room and smile again, and yeah, I never really stopped after that.

It was good for bonding with him and it’s actually really relaxing?

That’s.

That’s really sweet?

And not what I expected at all.

Why’d you sound surprised?

I’m a sweet guy!

Uh-huh.

Rude.

What were you expecting?

I dunno.

You started knitting to try and impress a girl?

What?

What would give you that impression?

Wait, just told Hunk.

He’s laughing so hard he fell off his bed.

And he said that’s apparently definitely something I’d do???

What vibes am I giving off??????

Taking up a hobby to impress a girl kind of vibes apparently.

Wow. Alright.

FYI, that isn’t something I’ve done before.

Allegedly.

Rude.

Question four?

Isn’t it your turn?
I asked two yesterday.

Just being fair.

Alright.

Uh.

Don’t take a million years to think of one again.

I’m not.

How long have you known Hunk?

Feels like forever.

But it’s only been about five years?

Four years and eight months.

Our anniversary is coming up oooh.

How’d you meet?

Same high school. Sat next to each other in the same class and the rest is history.

Nice.

What about you?

Your best friend is your neighbour, right?

Yeah.

How long have you known each other?

About 13 years?

So, most of her life?

We moved in next door like a year and a bit after she was born?

She’s got a brother the same age as mine, so they always hung out together, and I kind of stuck with Pidge?

Ah, childhood friends. Nice, nice.

Are you close?

I think so.

Next to my brother, Pidge is probably the person closest to me.

Even when she beats you at Mario Kart?
Yes.

Admirable.

My turn for question five?

Yep.

Would you rather have hiccups for the rest of your life or always feel like you have to sneeze but not be able to?

Lance, what the fuck?

I think I’d rather have hiccups?

Cause that ‘I need to sneeze but can’t’ feeling is so irritating?

But I think I’d get used to the hiccups??

I can see you’ve given this a lot of thought.

Which is worrying.

Answer the question, Keith.

Probably hiccups.

For the same reasons as you.

Nice, you’re not a total lost cause.

Was I previously a lost cause?

Two words: pineapple pizza.

It’s nice.

On second thoughts, maybe you are a lost cause.

You’re charming.

I’ve been told.

And now I’m yawning what the heck, it’s not even twelve.

I’m getting old.

You’re 17.

Old….

Gonna try and sleep now.

G’night Keith.

Send Muffin my love.
(23:05) If I actually do it, will you never ask again?

(23:07) No.

(23:07) My love for Muffin is eternal.

(23:10) …

(23:10) Night, Lance.

18/08/2016

(08:24) Did I hear you waking up at like 6am today?

(08:24) I mean, you're not in the room, so unless we have ghosts…

(08:26) Yeah, yeah, I'm in the library.

(08:26) Finishing this essay.

(08:27) *strokes chin*

(08:27) The essay you were working on yesterday?

(08:27) The English essay?

(08:30) Where are you heading with this?

(08:34) I think you know exactly where I'm heading with this.

(08:36) You're the Worst.

(08:36) It'd be much easier if you admit you're flirting.

(08:38) Never.

(08:40) I give you a week at the most.

(08:43) ???

(08:44) Until you admit you're flirting.

(08:45) The WORST.

(08:49) Yeah, yeah.

(08:49) I'm going down to the dining hall now, want me to bring you some breakfast?

(08:53) Please <3
Favourite sport?

That's question six by the way.

We're still going with this?

Yep, till we get to 21.

Our school's football team are having a friendly against this other school.

So we're watching.

Hunk's into it, but I don't see the appeal.

Why does the match last for so long?

90 minutes is just a cruel and unnecessary punishment for us and the players.

Someone just scored.

Shit. It was the other team who scored.

I stood up and cheered.

Everyone is glaring at me.

HUNK JUST SLID OVER TO THE OTHER END OF THE BENCH???

HE'S PRETENDING HE DOESN'T KNOW ME???

Traitor.

Are you even there?

There's still another 50 minutes left of this, I need a distraction :(

Yeah, yeah, I'm here.

Was dealing with a customer.

I don't mind football?

My dad and my brother are really into it so I've been dragged along to a lot of matches.

But it's not my favourite.

What is your fave?

Update: the other team scored again. Jesus, we're so bad.

Does karate count?

Um, yeah? I'd say so?

Karate then.

Like...watching it?
(15:30) Or doing it?

(15:31) Doing it.

(15:31) I stopped going to lessons a while back, so I'm probably a little rusty.

(15:31) I only really get to practice when my brother's back from uni, these days.

(15:34) Holy shit, man.

(15:34) That's really cool?

(15:35) What belt are you on?

(15:36) Brown.

(15:40) A quick Google search tells me that's really fucking impressive????

(15:43) It's alright.

(15:46) Oh, you choose now to be all modest.

(15:46) Update: we just scored our first goal.

(15:46) I cheered for the right team this time.

(15:49) Has Hunk moved back next to you yet?

(15:51) No.

(15:51) He says he can't trust me not to embarrass him again.

(15:54) Wise move.

(15:56) So now you're ganging up on me with him?

(15:56) Beginning to second guess this friendship.

(16:02) Don't worry, I'm sure Pidge would happily have you on her team.

(16:04) Nice.

(16:09) THE GAME IS OVER!!!!

(16:09) We lost.

(16:09) 2-1 isn't that bad.

(16:14) No, I stopped mentioning the goals the other team scored after the first two.

(16:14) Final score was 8-1.

(16:16) Oh.

(16:16) That's...something.

(16:16) Right???
(16:17) I'd call it embarrassing but I'd probably be just as crap so...

(16:20) You're not sporty at all?

(16:21) Nah.

(16:21) I'm kinda lanky, so the P.E teachers used to always try and recruit me for the basketball and volleyball teams back in high school.

(16:21) But they weren't really my thing.

(16:23) None at all?

(16:25) I don't mind table tennis?

(16:25) But not like competitively or anything.

(16:25) Just messing around with friends.

(16:27) That's fair.

(16:28) Mhm!

(16:28) Probably gonna disappear for a while now.

(16:28) Gotta pack for tomorrow.

(16:30) What's tomorrow?

(16:34) I'm going home for the weekend!!!

(16:34) Haven't been home in like two months, so I'm pretty excited??

(16:34) Hunk keeps saying I'm acting like it's Christmas?

(16:34) Which is probably a fair description.

(16:36) Ahhh.

(16:36) Cool.

(16:36) I'll leave you to it.

(16:36) Uh.

(16:37) Message me when you're done?

(16:37) If you want.

(16:40) Will do xo

(22:54) We're still good for tomorrow, right?

(22:57) Yes, Pidge.
(22:57) You've asked me this four times today.

(22:57) My answer hasn't changed.

(22:59) I'm just making sure.

(23:00) And I'm really nervous.

(23:01) Don't be.

(23:01) Wow, thank you Keith!!!

(23:01) You've cured me of all nerves!!!!!

(23:01) If only I'd known someone saying 'don't be nervous' was the cure to all my anxiety!!!!!!!!

(23:04) You're nervous so I'm not going to take any of that personally.

(23:05) Thank you.

(23:05) Sorry, also.

(23:07) Shut up, you don't have to apologise.

(23:07) Just got to bed and relax.

(23:07) I'll see you tomorrow.

(23:11) Alright, alright, alright.

(23:11) Night.

(23:11) And thank you, again.

(23:13) Night, Pidge.

19/08/2016

(00:34) That took much longer than expected what.

(00:34) I kept getting distracted by everything.

(00:34) Found my favourite hoodie wedged between my mattress and bed frame?

(00:34) How did it even get there?

(00:50) And you're sleeping, aren't you?

(00:51) Night, Keith!
(09:15) Don't forget to tell your parents I said hey.

(09:15) Also, if your mum wants to give you some of her carrot cake to bring back, I would totally not be opposed to that.

(09:15) Totally.

(09:17) I'll see what I can do.

(09:17) Also, good luck with your meeting today.

(09:17) Go nurture the minds of the future, or whatever the slogan for the programme is.

(09:17) And try not to miss me too much.

(09:19) I've been crying nonstop since you left.

(09:19) You'll survive xo

(09:34) It took you seven hours to pack for one weekend?

(09:34) How much are you bringing?

(09:36) I may or may not have accidentally taken a nap halfway through.

(09:36) Also found my 3DS I thought was long gone and maybe spent three hours playing Pokémon.

(09:36) Maybe.

(09:38) "Maybe"

(09:40) The thing to focus on here is that the packing got done.

(09:43) After seven hours.

(09:45) ...I suppojhfdfkgjfmfh

(09:45) Uh??

(09:45) Lance?

(09:50) Um?

(09:58) Sorry, sorry.

(09:58) I nearly missed my train.

(09:58) Just had to sprint across two platforms with a suitcase.

(09:59) I've never been on the receiving end of so many glares before.

(10:04) Train?
(10:04) Don't you have class?

(10:07) Yeah but

(10:07) I'm skipping.

(10:07) Trains are cheaper now than after I finish my lessons.

(10:08) You skipped last Friday as well, right?

(10:10) Yup.

(10:11) I don't make a habit out of it.

(10:11) Just

(10:11) I don't get to go home very often.

(10:14) And you miss it?

(10:14) Yeah.

(10:16) Question seven: what's your favourite thing about home?

(10:18) My room, I think.

(10:20) How come?

(10:23) It's my space?

(10:23) I mean, I used to share with my older brother but he's moved out now, so, yeah.

(10:23) It's my room? Like, it's full of all my stuff, all my photos, all my posters, all my toys and books and just...memories?

(10:24) I'm not really sure how to explain, but yeah. My room.

(10:25) No, that makes sense.

(10:26) What about you?

(10:31) Probably...

(10:31) Probably, my brother?

(10:33) Are you two close?

(10:34) Yeah.

(10:34) I don't really get to see him as much anymore though.

(10:36) Doesn't mean you're not close still.

(10:36) You don't really lose those kinds of bonds.
(10:38) Mm. I guess.
(10:38) Are you close with your siblings?
(10:38) There's five of you, right?
(10:46) Yup, five of us.
(10:46) There's a pretty big age difference between me and all my siblings, so...
(10:47) We're close, but not as close as we could be I guess?
(10:48) What's the differences?
(10:51) Older two (brother and sister) are mid/late twenties now. My sister has two kids already.
(10:51) And the youngest two (twins) just turned five.
(10:51) So. Yeah.
(10:52) Ah, I get it.
(10:54) I have a lot of cousins my age, so it's not like I was every lonely or anything?
(10:54) But yeah, it's a little weird when your siblings are all a decade older or younger than you.
(10:54) How old is your bro?
(10:54) 21.
(10:58) See, that's not too bad.
(10:58) Lucky!!!!!
(11:06) Question eight: what are you doing today?
(11:21) I don't think that's how 21 questions is supposed to work.
(11:23) It is the way I play.
(11:25) You're just making it up as you go along.
(11:27) Problem?
(11:30) Pidge has this meeting thing, and she's nervous so I'm here for moral support.
(11:30) Right now?
(11:34) She's in her meeting. I'm in a café down the street waiting for her.
(11:39) Nice, nice.
(11:40) I'm about to go under a tunnel so I'll probs lose reception.
(11:40) I'll message you when I get home?
(11:40) Not at midnight this time.
Cool.

(I6:34) I know I said it like forty times on the way home.

(I6:34) But thank you for coming with me.

(I6:37) I really didn't do anything.

(I6:37) I'm glad it went well though.

(I6:41) So well.

(I6:41) I'm not sure why I was so nervous.

(I6:41) My mentor is great and really friendly.

(I6:41) Aaand Matt is calling me.

(I6:41) You still coming over later tonight?

(I6:45) Yeah, yeah. I gotta help dad with something, but I'll come after.

(18:32) IMAGE SENT.

(18:32) IMAGE RECEIVED.

(18:45) Oh

(18:45) Wow.

(18:45) Is this your room?

(18:48) Yup.

(18:49) Were you by any chance a 'Space Kid'

(18:51) Damn. What gave me away?

(18:54) Just a hunch.

(18:54) And definitely not the three NASA posters on your walls.

(18:54) Not the glow in the dark stars either.

(18:56) There're four posters actually.

(18:56) One's behind me.

(18:59) Even better.

(19:05) You can't tell me you weren't a Space Kid.

(19:05) Or were you a Dinosaur Kid?
I didn't know this was a thing??

Did you spend your childhood rewatching Jurassic Park over and over?

No...

I think I've watched it maybe twice?

That is...

Very sad.

You gotta watch it at least once a year if only to appreciate that one Jeff Goldblum scene.

You know

The One.

I'm annoyed that I know exactly what you're talking about.

But yeah, I was never into space or dinosaurs like that.

What were you into?

I dunno.

I went through a Big Foot phase.

I

You what?

Big Foot?

Yeah, I was really into like Big Foot lore and I spent a whole summer just watching documentaries about it.

I'm laughing so hard right now? What the hell, Keith??

Big Foot????

How does that even happen?

The Loch Ness monster too.

????

Please tell me you're joking.

I'm not. It's actually really interesting and there have been a lot of unconfirmed sightings.

I can't believe you're a conspiracy theorist.

Next you're gonna tell me the moon landing was faked.

Well...
KEITH DO NOT!!!

Another time then.

How's home?

Nice.

So nice.

Mum hugged me for like five minutes and then made me more food than I've eaten in a month??

Are any of your siblings home?

Just the twins.

They're currently clinging to my legs while I walk around the room.

It'd be cute if they weren't deceptively heavy.

oH ALSO

My dog tackled me to the floor.

I don't think the guinea pigs really cared.

What's your dog's name?

You mocked Muffin so much, I'm expecting great things.

Andy Warhowl.

I don't know what I was expecting.

My mum is embarrassed to tell anyone his real name, so she just pretends his name is 'Andy', but the 'Warhowl' is very important.

Who named him?

It was a collective effort between me and my older brother and sister.

It was either that or Bark Obama.

I think we made the right choice.

It's definitely better than Muffin.

Everything is better than Muffin.

Speaking of, how is my favourite feline?

Heavily pregnant.

She's just been rolling around everywhere these past couple of days.

Dad thinks she'll probably give birth sometime during the next week or so.
Ah, I'm excited for her.

Give her a kiss from me.

I'm gonna put the twins to bed. Or, try to.

They're very sneaky.

Good luck.

Mum asked if you have a girlfriend.

Or a boyfriend - she added after like a second.

Whahfdnjgd??

What???

At dinner, your phone kept vibrating.

And you kept grinning at it whenever you picked up.

She said it's sweet.

Oh God.

I can never come over again.

If I ever see your mum again I might spontaneously combust on the spot.

Wait.

What did you tell her?

I said 'I don't know'

Why would you say that???

Why didn't you just say no?

You do realise she's gonna tell my mum.

And my mum will tell dad.

Oh God.

He's gonna try and have The Talk with me again.

Look what you've done Pidge.

LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

I didn't do anything.
(23:30) If you stopped smiling at your phone for 30 seconds, she wouldn't have even noticed.

(23:31)...

(23:31) Do I really smile at it?

(23:34) You even laughed a few times.

(23:34) What was so funny?

(23:36) His dog.

(23:36) His dog is called Andy Warhowl.

(23:40) Wow.

(23:40) I

(23:40) It was either that or Bark Obama.

(23:40) You've got a crush on someone who thinks puns are acceptable pet names.

(23:40) Unbelievable.

(23:43) I don't have a crush???

(23:44) Then what do you want to call it?

(23:45) Nothing? We're just friends.

(23:48) So we're calling it 'denial'?

(23:48) Gotcha.

(23:49)...

(23:49) Bye.

20/18/2016

(00:57) IMAGE SENT.

(00:57) I dug this out specifically for you.

(00:57) IMAGE RECEIVED.

(01:20) And you're probably sleeping.
(10:43) Why were you not sleeping?

(10:43) And wow.

(10:43) Is that the blanket?

(10:44) It's, uh

(10:44) It's TERRIBLE.

(10:44) You can say it.

(10:44) My granddad's part is obviously the better half.

(10:44) And mine is the part that looks like it's been through a blender.

(10:45) It's not that bad?

(10:45) It is. But I was young, so what can you expect?

(10:45) I remember feeling really guilty that I ruined the last project he'd started with my grandma.

(10:46) But he was really insistent that I didn't.

(10:46) So yeah, I kept it even though only half of it works and the other half is full of holes.

(10:46) Now, I'm gonna go run some errands with my dad.

(10:47) Message you later?

(10:49) Sounds good.

(10:55) I'm willing to concede you might be right.

(10:58) I'm usually right about most things, so you're gonna have to be more specific.

(10:59) About last night.

(11:00) And that whole 'crush' thing.

(11:01) What.

(11:01) Keith Kogane is willingly admitting his feelings about someone who isn't a close relation?

(11:01) Has the world stopped spinning?

(11:02) Are pigs flying?

(11:03) You're not funny, you know?

(11:03) I'm hilarious and you know it.

(11:05) I know no such thing.
(11:05) But yeah.

(11:05) I may have developed a tiny, tiny, tiny, tiny, crush.

(11:06) Maybe.

(11:08) "Maybe"?

(11:08) Maybe.

(15:09) You owe me, man.

(15:16) Um? For why?

(15:16) Iverson asked where you were yesterday.

(15:17) Oh, shit.

(15:17) I didn't think he'd notice I was gone?

(15:17) Dick.

(15:18) What'd you say?

(15:20) Told him you had food poisoning.

(15:20) Not 100% sure he believed me, but he didn't press it, so?

(15:21) You're a lifesaver, Hunk <3 <3

(15:23) Yeah, yeah. How's home?

(15:23) Any sign of your mum's carrot cake?

(15:27) IMAGE SENT.

(15:27) IMAGE RECEIVED.

(15:29) IS THAT WHAT I THINK IT IS?

(15:31) Carrot cake baking in the oven?

(15:31) Yes x

(15:33) Tell your mum I love her please.

(15:36) She said she knows.

(15:36) <3

(22:00) Muffin update: we thought she went into labour today.

(22:00) Turns out she just needed to poo.
On the rug outside my bedroom.

Her hatred for you is getting comical.

I thought we were finally getting along with each other and she turns around and does this?

Cruel and unusual punishment.

Aside from that clearly traumatic ordeal.

You're being sarcastic, but it was.

I nearly stepped in it.

How was your day?

Also, I just realised we've abandoned 21 questions.

Nothing special.

Helped my dad in the shop.

And worked on my bike a little.

Yeah I noticed. Not necessarily a bad thing, though.

Oh yeah, your bike.

How's it going?

Nearly finished, I think?

I've got one part coming from abroad left to fit and I think it'll be done?

And then you can ride it?

Like, you have a license and everything?

I do.

Why? Want a ride?

I mean.

If you're offering.

I think I am.

Yeah. I'm offering.

Cool.

That is

That is very cool.

Very cool.
(22:35) Cool.

(22:35) Cool.

(22:37) Hunk, please remember that I'm your best friend and you love me.

(22:37) And, as such, you should keep the gloating to a minimum.

(22:40) When do I EVER gloat?

(22:40) Do you honestly want me to list every 'I told you so' speech you've ever given me, because I think I'd probably die of old age before I finished.

(22:42) Fair point.

(22:42) Wassup?

(22:45) Remember when you said you'd give me a week before I admit I'm flirting with Keith?

(22:45) I recall something along those lines.

(22:45) Why?

(22:46) Well...

(22:47) I'm grinning so much right now.

(22:47) But I won't gloat.

(22:48) Thank you.

(22:48) Over text.

(22:48) Soon as you get back tomorrow, all bets are off.

(22:48) Might even try and learn a new 'I told you so' dance.

(22:50) I'm filled with so much regret right now.

(22:37) I think I asked him out.

(22:37) What the fuck what do I do?


(22:40) Uh.

(22:43) Jesus fuck.

(22:43) Shit.

(22:43) Ignore it all Shiro.
I said nothing.

See, it's a little hard to ignore it when the words are staring me right in the eye.

But, if you don't want to talk about it with me, that's fine.

Thank you.

Just know I'm rooting for you!

GOODBYE.

Please kill me.

Put me out of this misery.

No.

What kind of best friend are you?

The best kind.

21/08/2016

Are you awake?

Or...

I am.

Cool.

Sharknado?

Huh?

Do you wanna watch Sharknado?

What, now?

Yeah, unless you're too tired?

I dunno. I can't sleep and I remembered we watched The Addams Family last week

So

Nevermind.
No, no, no, it's fine.

I can't sleep either. So

So this is fine.

Rabbit?

Yeah. Lemme know when you're ready.

Also, I'm expecting great things from this.

Ready.

Prepare to be wowed.

I'm so

Confused?

I don't know if I'm supposed to hate it or ironically love it?

I love it.

Yeah, I can see that.

I think...I think I liked it?

I'm not sure.

It'll grow on you.

Wait till you watch the sequels.

There are sequels???

Three.

And they're all excellent.

We'll see about that.

Implying we're going to be watching them?

I'd like to think so.

Cool.

Cool. Cool.

I have to leave stupidly early for my train back to school in the morning.

So I'm gonna try and sleep now.

G'night Keith.
Chapter End Notes

i found out pineapples grow from the ground because of this chapter and i screamed, who let this happen

i was a dinosaur kid fyi

thank you guys for all the lovely comments and kudos’, im printing them all out and sticking them to my walls ngl
22/08/2016

(11:24) Hi Pidge, this is Hunk from the Garrison. It was nice meeting you on Friday, I hope I answered any questions you might have about the programme and I'm really looking forward to working with you over the next year!

(11:24) I maybe (definitely) snuck a peek at your application pack and I gotta say, I am so, so impressed.

(11:25) Are you sure you're only 14?

(11:25) I know it's supposed to be a mentor programme, but I really think we'll both be able to teach each other and I'm super excited for our end of term project. Do you have any ideas? I know you like robotics and I've already got some things in mind...

(11:26) Anyway, I'm getting ahead of myself. I just wanted to know if you were free this week for a session? The programme works best if we can try and keep up the weekly meetings, but if this week isn't good for you (or any week) just let me know!

(11:45) Hi Hunk.

(11:45) It was great meeting you on Friday as well, thanks for putting me at ease!

(11:45) This week is fine for me - how does Thursday sound?

(11:51) Thursday's perfect! Is there anything you wanted to go over in particular?

(11:53) I wanted to take a look at the String Theory chapter in the textbook, if you don't mind?

(11:57) Ahah oh wow, starting with the big stuff, huh?

(11:57) That's cool with me.

(11:57) I'll bring my A-game.

(11:58) And maybe some snacks.
See you, Thursday!

See you, then.

What do you want for your birthday?

And you're not allowed to say 'nothing'.

I know you want something.

And if you don't tell me, I'll end up guessing and do you really want a repeat of last year?

Implying I didn't enjoy the chocolate scented soaps and shampoos you got me last year?

Have you used them yet?

Of course not. Why would I want to smell like chocolate? But they do make very nice paperweights, so...

So you should probably tell me what you want this year.

But then I won't get to watch you squirm for two weeks before you end up panicking and begging Matt for help.

And that's like...at least 90% of the present for me.

Has anyone ever told you you're evil?

Just did a search of our chat, and you've told me precisely 642 times.

Good.

Because you are.

And Matt was absolutely useless last year. The chocolate shampoo was his idea.

No, he told you to get me chocolates.

And you said chocolate was too generic and wanted to think outside the box.

... I don't think I said it like that...

You definitely did.

Are you really not going to tell me what you want?

Nope :)

Good luck.
Is Matt with you?

'Hello brother I haven't seen in almost two months, how are things?'

Things are fine, Keith! Thanks for asking! How are things with you?

That joke wasn't funny the first time you did it and it's not funny now.

Ouch?

What happened to my adorable baby brother please?

I was never adorable, shut up.

I have an album full of childhood photos that say otherwise.

Do I really need to bring them out when I visit? I know Pidge would love to see them :)

...I was maybe a little adorable.

I'll take it.

And yes, Matt is sitting next to me.

He says 'hi'.

Hi.

Ask him what he's getting Pidge for her birthday.

But don't tell him I asked.

Do it casually, like the thought just occurred to you.

Then tell me what he says so I can buy it first.

I asked him.

And what did he say?

"You know I can see everything on your phone screen, right?"

God damn it.

Why are you sitting so close to him!!!!!!??

We're studying?

And I didn't know I'd need to use subterfuge on my best friend.

Maybe give me a little warning next time.

Ugh.

Just ask him what I should get her.
He's on the phone to Pidge now.

What?

Get him off the phone.

Right now.

Shiro?

Shiro??

We got kicked out of the library.

I...

What?

How?

Whatever Pidge said made him laugh.

Loudly.

Really loudly.

Also, he said he can't tell you what to get Pidge for her birthday.

And that decision is apparently completely unrelated to his recent phonecall with Pidge.

Allegedly.

Goddamn it.

WHY?

I'm sure I don't know what you're talking about (°¬°)

When you hate your present I don't want to hear a word of complaint.

(°¬°)

Help.

Emergency.

What would you buy a fifteen-year-old for her birthday?

That doesn't really sound like an emergency.

You've forgotten the Hulk vs. Bees conversation so quickly??

Point taken.
Though that was urgent.

Even though you were zero help for Team Bees.

Yeah, well, so is this.

So start throwing up some ideas.

I dunno...15 year old girls aren't really my area of expertise.

Make-up?

Nope.

Shoes?

Are you just going to go through the list of stereotypical things girls are supposed to like?

Because I can tell you right now, everything on that list is a no.

Alright, back to the drawing board.

When's her birthday?

September 6th.

What?

You've got ages...

Why're you panicking?

Two weeks isn't "ages".

Not for Pidge.

She's really hard to buy for and I probably should've start looking around like two months ago.

Pidge?

As in your best friend Pidge?

No, that other Pidge in my life I've forgotten to mention.

Ha ha.

I'm just saying, Pidge is your best friend isn’t she? You know her better than most people, thinking of a present should be easy.

You're overthinking it.

What did you get her last year?

Chocolate scented bath products.

Um.
Why?
(17:35) I panicked.

Why didn't you just get her normal chocolate?
(17:36) It's been established that I panicked.

Wow, alright, maybe two weeks isn't long enough for you.
(17:38) That's what I've been trying to explain.

So help.

What does she like?

Computers.

Like...computer games?

No. Just computers.

She likes taking them apart and rebuilding them.

Or rebuilding her own from scratch.

Wow??

Really?

Yeah, she built mine for me.

That's really awesome?? What the hell.

Buy her some parts she needs?

That doesn't really feel like a present...

And I'd probably buy the wrong part.

K, lemme ask Hunk.

Hunk?

Yeah, he's like really into building things as well.

Not computers, but he's always pulling things apart.

He might have some ideas.

What would you want for your birthday?

Also, where are you??

Either you're planning on getting me something really, really amazing and you need to start
saving now

(18:11) Or you've forgotten when my birthday is.

(18:11) Because it is FIVE MONTHS away, Lance.

(18:11) So which one is it? Let me know if I need to start looking for a new best friend or not.

(18:11) And I'm in the library, near the back - come keep me company?

(18:12) Neither.

(18:12) And aren't all my bday gifts for you really amazing?

(18:13) True.

(18:13) So what's up? And are you coming? I've been rereading the same passage for the last twenty minutes, I need a study buddy.

(18:16) I'm coming, gimme fifteen mins.

(18:16) And, it's Pidge's birthday and Keith can't think of a present for her.

(18:16) So I said I'd ask you because I think you have similar interests?

(18:16) She likes computers.

(18:17) Not games, like, building computers.

(18:19) What????????

(18:19) Pidge????

(18:19) How do you...

(18:19) Pidge???

(18:21) Not gonna lie, I'm not sure where the confusions coming from here?

(18:21) Keith's best friend is called Pidge.

(18:23) Right.

(18:23) That wouldn't be a very common name would it?

(18:23) I don't think so? I think it might be a nickname?

(18:24) I dunno, I never asked.

(18:24) Anyway, ideas?

(18:24) Got any?

(18:26) How old is she?

(18:26) Turning 15.
(18:26) Hm.

(18:27) And she’s Keith’s best friend?

(18:28) Hunk, has all this revision short circuited your brain? What aren’t you understanding?

(18:29) No, no, just wanted to...confirm we were talking about the same Pidge.

(18:29) Do you know any other Pidge’s?

(18:29) Maybe.

(18:29) I don't know who I know anymore.

(18:30) Right...

(18:30) Ideas? Yes or no?

(18:32) There’s this new exhibition coming to the Science Museum in a couple weeks.

(18:32) Looks awesome.

(18:33) oH YEAH!!

(18:33) That robots exhibit you were talking about the other day?

(18:33) That did look pretty cool.

(18:33) Hunk, you’re a genius.

(18:34) Yeah, yeah.

(18:35) Robotics exhibition at the Science Museum.

(18:35) You’re welcome xo

(18:37) That’s

(18:37) That’s actually a really good idea.

(18:38) Once again, you’re welcome xo

(18:38) Hunk thought of it didn’t he?

(18:39) Your lack of faith in my ability to pick a good present is saddening.

(18:39) Thank you Hunk.

(18:40) RUDE.

(18:40) Speaking of Hunk, we’re supposed to be revising, so...

(18:40) Later?

(18:42) Later.
(18:57) Please tell Matt I’ve got a really good present for Pidge.

(18:57) No thanks to either of you.

(19:01) You’re bluffing

(19:01) Nope :)

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

REJECT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

(19:02) I’m not picking up to talk to Matt.

(19:02) It’s not Matt, it’s me.

(19:03) Really?

(19:03) Matt’s not even here.

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

END CALL: 00:36

(19:04) Give Shiro back his phone, Matt.

(19:05) No, he’s busy getting ready for his date.

(19:05) And tell me what you got Pidge

(19:05) Getting her the best present every year is MY job.

(19:05) How dare you try and steal my crown

(19:06) His

(19:06) Date?

(19:06) Did I say date?

(19:06) I meant

(19:07) Study session

(19:07) Yeah, that’s exactly what I meant

(19:07) He’s getting ready for his study session
(19:07) …

(19:08) I’m just gonna

(19:08) Go…

(19:08) And delete this conversation from Shiro’s phone


(19:09) Explain.

(19:10) Man??

(19:14) Unbelievable.

(19:15) Why is your brother like this?

(19:16) My theory is he was abducted by aliens a few years back.

(19:16) You didn’t even wait to hear why I’m complaining about him.

(19:18) Do I need to?

(19:18) True.

(19:18) Also, I’ve got your birthday present.

(19:18) Thank me in advance if you’d like.

(19:23) What is it?

(19:23) Presents don’t work like that, Pidge.

(19:24) Gimme a clue.

(19:24) Nope.

(19:25) One tiny, insignificant clue.

(19:27) It has a vowel in its name.

(19:30) I hate you.

(19:31) :)

(22:46) Thanks for helping with Pidge’s present earlier.


(22:47) I’ll be honest, it was Hunk’s idea anyway.

(22:47) He’s really into that sort of stuff.
They’d probably get along with each other really well.

Yeah, probably.

How’s Muffin?

I feel like I’ve been neglecting my favourite niece.

Wouldn’t your actual nieces be a little offended if they heard you say that?

One niece, one nephew.

And the last time I saw my niece, she threw up all over me and then giGGLED?

So

She knows where she stands with me right now.

You sound like an amazing uncle.

Muffin is fine.

Dad says if she hasn’t gone into labour by the end of the week, we might have to take her to the vet.

Oh wow, so soon.

Feels like just yesterday you thought Muffin was a chubby male cat.

That wasn’t my fault.

Blame my brother.

Your brother wasn’t the one who thought he was just ‘overfeeding him’

Are you ever going to let that go?

You’ll have to pry it from my cold, dead hands.

Is that a challenge?

Is that a threat?

Touché.

Dad needs me up early in the morning, so I’m probably gonna try and sleep now.

Cool, cool.

Night, Keith.

Let Muffin know I love her and my unborn grand nieces and nephews.

Grand nieces and nephews?

I’m like, 50% sure that’s how it works.
If you say so…

Night, Lance.

23/08/2016

Muffin looks like she’s eaten a small child.

She’s pregnant, Pidge.

Don’t shame her.

I’m just saying, she looks like she’s about to burst.

Should she be running around?

What???

That’s like, the exact opposite of what she should be doing right now.

See, I thought so.

But…

I just assumed it was normal.

...What was normal?

Muffin waddling down the road.

Pidge?!???

I’ll admit I dropped the ball here.

You should probably go and get her.

She’s moving really slowly so she hasn’t gone far.

You get her.

No, I’m nearly at school.

If anything happens to her I’m telling Shiro it was your fault.

You wouldn’t.

I would.

And you’re not getting a kitten.

Pretty sure I could convince Lance and Hunk to take more than one.
What.

What did you just say?

What???

(08:53) If anything happens to Muffin, I’ll give your kitten to Lance.

(08:53) No.

(08:54) After Lance.

(08:55) Hunk…?

(08:55) Lance’s best friend?

(08:55) He also wants a kitten.

(08:55) They’re gonna train them of something. I’m not too sure on the details.

(08:57) Hunk is Lance’s best friend?

(08:57) Hunk?????

(08:57) That’s his name?

(08:58) Yeah, I already had the real name/fake name conversation with Lance.

(08:58) It’s a nickname.

(08:59) Hm.

(08:59) I see.

(08:59) School’s starting, I’ll see you later.

(09:00) Good luck Muffin hunting.

(09:11) Found her under a car.

(09:11) She bit me.

(09:11) Hope you’re happy.

(11:43) Hi Hunk.

(11:43) Sorry for messaging you out of the blue and feel free to ignore this if you have no idea what I’m talking about...

(11:43) But...do you have a friend called Lance?

(11:44) A best friend called Lance, to be a little more specific.

(11:52) I do...
(11:52) I’m guessing you have a best friend called Keith?

(11:53) I do.

(11:55) Oh wow, so

(11:55) Your Keith is Lance’s Keith?

(11:56) Yup.

(11:56) And your Lance is Keith’s Lance?

(11:56) I guess so.

(11:56) This is…

(11:57) Unexpected?

(11:59) Very.

(11:59) Do we tell them?

(12:00) We could…

(12:00) I’m sensing an ‘or’ there…

(12:00) Orrrrrrr

(12:00) We could have some fun with them?

(12:03) Pidge, I like the way you think.

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘LANCE’

MISSED CALL FROM ‘LANCE’

(18:41) Uh.

(18:41) Lance?

(19:13) Yeah?

(19:13) Did you want something…

(19:15) No….

(19:16) Then

(19:16) Why did you call me?

(19:18) Call you???

(19:18) I didn’t
Oh, shit.

Sorry, sorry. I was sitting on my phone.

You butt dialled me?

I did.

And you didn’t pick up.

Rude.

I was...surprised.

Surprised?

We don’t call each other.

We text.

So, when I saw you calling I was surprised.

Oh.

I could call you?

I’m

Wha

I’m sorry? What?

Nevermind.

Just

Forget I said anything.

We’re having a games night so, I’m gonna go now.

See ya.

I fucked up.

At least, I think I fucked up.

I did, didn’t I?

I need more context than that, Keith.

He asked if he could call me.

Who?

You know exactly who.
Stop being difficult.

Difficult is my middle name.

I can see that.

He asked if he could call me and…

And I panicked.

Panicked how?

I pretty much just said ‘what?’

And he ducked out pretty quickly after that.

Smooth. Very smooth.

Definitely can’t see how’d he’d be able to get the wrong impression with you just saying ‘what’.

Definitely.

I know you’re about 99% sarcasm, but could you tone it down this once?

I don’t know what to do.

And I don’t like not knowing what to do.

Stop making me feel sorry for you.

No.

Just message him again and say you do want him to call you.

Problem solved.

You do want him to call you, right?

I think?

Yeah, I think so.

Then go for it.

And stop worrying so much.

I haven’t seen you lose on Rainbow Road in three years…

Are you alright man?

Do you think maybe I can come on too strong sometimes?

Uh.
Where’s this coming from?

Just thinking.

Am I ‘too much’?

What? No, not at all man.

I mean, you have a naturally vibrant (?) personality and that’s not something everyone can deal with. But that just means you’ve just gotta find the right people, that’s all.

What if I never find the right people?

You have me.

True.

<3

Was kinda hoping Keith might be one of those people as well.

I mean, not necessarily in a romantic way but like, I thought at least as a friend?

Oh.

Something happened?

We can get out of here if you want, man?

Nah, it’s fine. You haven't had your turn yet.

I’m probs gonna go back to the room though.

You sure you don’t want me to come with?

Yeah, yeah. Stay and play.

Defend my honour, blah blah blah.

Alright man. Lemme know if you change your mind and I’ll be there.

<3

You could.

?  

You could call me.

If you wanted.

You wouldn’t mind?

Why would I mind?
(21:24) That was...

(21:24) Really quick?

(21:24) Nice.


(21:25) It wasn’t awkward?

(21:26) It was really awkward.

(21:26) Definitely in the top ten most awkward conversations I’ve ever had in my life.

(21:27) But it was still nice.

(21:27) Your voice is different from what I expected.

(21:29) What were you expecting?

(21:29) Not sure.

(21:29) Just...different?

(21:29) Good different though.

(21:30) I think I understand.

(21:30) Because, same.

(21:30) You sounded happy?

(21:31) I didn’t sound like I was nervous as shit?

(21:31) Could you not hear me pacing my room?

(21:31) Hunk came in like as soon as you picked up and gave me the weirdest look.

(21:32) You were nervous?

(21:32) Why?

(21:37) Sometimes I come on too strong.

(21:37) And I push people away.

(21:37) And I thought maybe when I asked if I could call you, I’d done that?

(21:38) Oh.
I don’t think you come on too strong.

Thanks, Keith.

Can we change the topic? This is too much realtalk for one night.

Once you read the dictionary, every other book is just a remix.

Keith, what??

I was changing the topic, like you asked.

That’s ridiculous.

You’re ridiculous.

Thanks.

Np.

I’m nearly finished my bike.

For real??

Yeah. Thought I’d finish today, but the parts I ordered didn’t fit, so I had to send them back.

When the new ones come, that’ll be it.

Don’t forget the ride you promised me.

I wanna ride into the sunset with my hair blowing in the wind.

Ha.

I’ll see what I can do.

Nice.

Where’d you learn how to build one?

Mostly the internet.

You taught yourself to build a bike???

Keith what the heck?

Is that weird?

No, it’s really cool.

Super impressive.

I’m jealous. You took up building a bike as a hobby, and I did knitting.

Knitting is cool.

In its own way.
(21:58) You say that now, but when it’s Christmas Day and you’re unwrapping a pair of lumpy socks from yours truly, you won’t be.

(21:59) I’m getting a Christmas present?

(22:01) I knit all my friends presents for Christmas.

(22:01) And

(22:01) I’d like to think we’re friends.

(22:01) No?

(22:06) Yeah. I’d say so.

(22:06) Nice.

(22:06) Cooooool.

(22:07) Now I’ve heard your voice, I can actually imagine you saying that.

(22:07) That was good right?

(22:07) Us talking on the phone?

(22:08) Like, we can do it again sometime?

(22:08) Maybe it won’t be so awkward?

(22:12) That would be

(22:12) Cool with me.

(22:13) Same.

(22:14) Nice.

(22:14) NICE.

24/08/2016

(10:03) You’re going to have to talk to me sometime.

(10:04) Nope.

(10:04) I apologised, didn’t I?

(10:05) Oh is that what you were trying to do???

(10:05) It was pretty hard to hear over your fifth encore of the chorus to Usher’s ‘U Got It Bad’.

(10:07) Don’t exaggerate.
It was only like my third encore.

Because that makes it soooo much better?

It’s not like I’m wrong.

You do have it bad for him.

Seriously Lance, I should’ve filmed you last night. You were just grinning at your phone and laughing.

Think you even squealed once or twice.

Liar.

Lance McClain doesn’t squeal.

It was very close to a squeal then.

Sort of like a weird hybrid of a sigh and a laugh.

It’d be cute if I wasn’t trying to sleep.

Why can’t you two flirt during the day?

I’m going back to ignoring you now.

</3

Shiro?

Keith?

Muffin is in labour.

Thought you’d like to know.

She’s giving birth in the kitchen.

Mum is screaming.

It’s honestly not as messy as I thought it’d be.

Oh my God.

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

END CALL: 16:25
(15:33) Are you on your way home yet?

(15:34) Yup, just left.

(15:34) Why?

(15:35) Come over.


(15:36) Holy shit??? For real???

(15:36) How MANY???

(15:40) [IMAGE SENT]

(15:40) 5.

(15:40) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(15:42) AH!!!

(15:45) [IMAGE SENT]

(15:45) [IMAGE SENT]

(15:45) [IMAGE SENT]

(15:45) Congratulations, you’re a grand uncle.

(15:46) Or is that great uncle?

(15:46) Not sure how it works exactly.

(15:48) I’m screaming.

(15:48) I’m about to get my phone taken for screaming in class, just know these are the most beautiful creatures I’ve ev

(15:48) ...Lance?

(15:56) I can’t believe this.

(17:04) I’m back and ready to resume screaming.

(17:04) THIS IS THE HAPPIEST DAY OF MY LIFE.

(17:04) Can’t even let the fact I spent an hour in detention get me down.

(17:05) They’re so adorable?

(17:05) Showed Hunk and he literally melted. Congratulations, you broke Hunk.
Keith, you’re gonna kill me.

I’m making the one where they’re all sleeping together my wallpaper.

How’s Muffin?

She’s fine, I think?

A little tired, but otherwise she’s more or less the same.

Even hissed at me when I tried to move her to her bed earlier.

That’s my girl.

Stop encouraging her.

Never.

Have you started thinking of names?

Because, I just want you to know...now that we’re friends

I can’t let you get away with naming any of the kittens something as terrible as Muffin.

1. Muffin is a great name.

2. It’s better than Andy Warhowl.

3. Don’t you want to name your kitten?

1. No it’s not.

2. No it’s not. Nothing is better than Andy Warhowl.

3. CAN I REALLY???

Which one’s gonna be mine???

Whichever one you want?

Apparently they have to stay with Muffin for six to eight weeks.

So, you don’t have to decide right away.

Cool.

Guess you’ll have to send me pics of the kittens every day so I can make an Informed Decision.

Every day?

Without fail.
And, you know, if you wanted to include yourself in one of those pics
I wouldn't be totally opposed.

Are

Are you asking me for a selfie?

No, I'm asking you for pictures of your new kittens.
If a selfie somehow finds its way into the mix, I won't complain.

You are asking.

Maybe.

Are you not curious about what I look like?
Clue: exceedingly handsome, constant staring has been known to cause damage to retinas.

Modest too.

It's one of my better qualities x

This means you're curious about what I look like?

Why?

Why?? Because we've been talking everyday for like nearly 4 weeks
Of course I'm curious.
So, selfie. Yes or no?
I don't take selfies...

What? Why not???

Do you use Snapchat? Instagram?
Wait

What's your Facebook profile picture?
If you tell me it's a car I'm terminating this friendship immediately.

I don't have Snapchat or Instagram.

And no, it's not a car.

Oh thank God.
It's a bike.

KEITH???
That's only like marginally better than a car.
MARGINALLY.

I don't use it that much.

Yeah, I can see that.

Fine, no selfies. I'll settle for pics of your cats and my imagination.

Wait. What are you imagining I look like?

I have a few Theories.

Capital T? I'm interested.

Also, Pidge is round to check out the kittens so I might reply slow.

Gonna go down the stereotypical route and say you're buff?

Like...Johnny Bravo buff?

I just spat out my Coke.

Why??? Would you think??? That????

You've got a bike.

And that means I'm overly muscled??

The correct terminology is 'buff'

And, yeah.

I'm not.

Pidge is laughing.

Howling might be the correct term here, actually.

Alright, alright.

Beard?

Is your whole imaginary impression of me based on bad biker stereotypes?

I also picture you in ridiculous amounts of leather. So yes.

I'm not ‘buff’, I don’t have a beard and I don’t wear ridiculous amounts of leather.

Piercings? Tattoos?

I'm 17. Where would I get a tattoo?

You didn’t say no to the piercing…

No piercing.

Wait, that’s a lie.
(18:44) You have a piercing?? Where??

(18:50) No?? 

(18:50) I went through a Phase and got my ear pierced a few years back.

(18:50) I don’t wear it anymore, but the holes still there so

(18:50) In theory, I could.

(18:53) Oh. Wow.

(18:53) Nice.

(18:53) Really nice.

(18:56) Any other impressively wrong guesses about my appearance?

(18:58) Long hair?

(19:04) Yeah.

(19:06) Wait, really?

(19:12) Well, it’s long-ish.

(19:12) Comes down to my shoulders.

(19:14) Ahhhhh

(19:14) That is

(19:14) That is something.

(19:14) UHGH.

(19:15) Hunk promised some kids in our Physics class we’d do a study session tonight.

(19:15) And apparently hiding under my bed isn’t as effective as I thought it’d be.

(19:18) Go and study, Lance.

(19:20) ( ¯\_\_\_\; )

(19:20) FINE.

(19:21) Give the kittens a kiss from me.

(19:23) No.

(19:26) They’re kittens, Keith. They need love and affection.

(19:27) Stop stalling.

(19:28) You’re no fun.
Hey Hunk, just checking we’re still ok for tomorrow?

Also, Keith spent almost the entire time I was at his on his phone.

Pretty sure he was blushing.

Tomorrow’s still great for me.

They’re ridiculous.

Lance kept mumbling ‘he has a piercing’ over and over again.

Was pretty sure he was about two seconds away from combusting.

They’re idiots.

Both of them.

True.

But it's also a little cute.

In their own way.

Debateable.

Chapter End Notes

i like to imagine their brief phone conversation was just like a full minute of silence and heavy breathing while they both awkwardly wait for the other to say something

THIS is the robot exhibition Keith buys tickets for Pidge's bday, it's not open yet but i'm really excited to go to it and i think Pidge would enjoy

also: keith has a motorbike as his facebook profile pic is my new fave headcanon

you may also have noticed there's now a definitive number of chapters for this fic now - 10!!!! that's subject to change, but i don't think it will!

thank you for all the lovely comments like i reread them and just sigh happily to myself you guys are so sweet and kind ily xoxoxo
25/08/2016

(10:12) You know how Muffin hates me?

(10:16) I'm familiar with the ongoing Keith vs. Muffin feud, yes.

(10:16) For the record, I'm Team Muffin.

(10:17) Where's your sense of loyalty????

(10:17) With Muffin.

(10:19) Ouch.

(10:19) Anyway, turns out the hatred doesn't run in the family.

(10:19) [IMAGE SENT]

(10:19) [IMAGE SENT]

(10:19) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(10:19) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(10:23) I'm having a heart attack???

(10:23) This is????

(10:23) The cutest thing?????

(10:24) I've EVER seen???

(10:24) And I have five year old twins siblings.

(10:24) And they're REALLY cute.

(10:25) Right?
How did this even happen? I thought cats hated you?

Muffin hates me.

Other cats tolerate me.

And this one really likes me??

She's been sitting in my lap for like twenty minutes, I'm scared to move.

She's nuZZLING MY THIGH AND PURRING??

[IMAGE SENT]

[IMAGE RECEIVED]

Alright so

As cute as that is

And it is really, really cute, don't get me wrong.

Definitely a strong 11/10 on the cuteness scale.

Where is this going...

I can't help but notice something in the corner of the pic.

Bottom left-hand corner to be precise.

What?

Is that

A thigh I spy?????

No.

A thigh wearing what looooks like alien print boxer shorts?

With the words 'I believe' written across them?

Because that's what it looks like to me.

You need an eye test.

Nope, I've got 20/20 vision.

Keith, why are you wearing them?

Why do you even own them???

I need answers.

... 

They were a gift.
Allegedly.

You definitely went out and bought them yourself.

100%.

I didn't???

I got them for my birthday???

You don't need to lie to me, Keith.

I'll accept you and your horrible fashion taste.

I'm not sending you any more kitten pics.

What? No????!!!!???

You can't cut me off like that.

And yet...here I am...doing just that...

Cruel.

Here I am, risking my ass texting you in class

And this is how you repay me??

You don't have to text me.

Yeah

But I like texting you.

Oh.

[IMAGE SENT]

One of her sisters came to join.

[IMAGE RECEIVED]

MY HEART????

Very adorable.

I can feel a bond forming between us.

Poor cat.

She doesn't know what she's in for.

Has anyone ever told you you're hilarious?

Plenty of people.

They all lied.
(11:13) You're worse than Pidge.
(11:15) And yet you keep talking to me.
(11:15) Suspicious.
(11:17) Maybe I like talking to you.
(11:17) Only maybe?
(11:18) I've gotta go help my dad now.
(11:18) Hmhm. Alright, have fun.
(11:18) Give the kittens a kiss from me.
(11:19) I'll compromise and pet them instead.
(11:21) Not really a compromise.
(11:21) But I'll take it.

(16:23) What do you want more than anything in the world?
(16:28) ...
(16:28) Something else.
(16:28) A reservation at Osteria Francescana.
(16:30) Uh. What's that?
(16:31) It looks amazing I'm dying just thinking about it.
(16:34) Hm. Sounds expensive.
(16:34) Very expensive.
(16:34) Pick something I can afford.
(16:35) So
(16:35) What do I want most in the world but it can't be an internship at Google (aka the thing I do want most in the world) and it has to be something you can afford??
(16:36) Exactamundo my friend!
(16:37) Uh-huh.
(16:37) A roommate who doesn't keep me up all night texting his boyfriend?
(16:38) Not funny.

(16:39) You asked me what I want!

(16:39) And that's what I want.

(16:40) Well, your roommate doesn't have a boyfriend, so that's a moot point.

(16:40) Pick something else.

(16:42) Or

(16:42) You just tell me what this is about?

(16:43) Trying to see what it'd take to bribe you into taking the physics exam for me so I don’t fail miserably.

(16:43) So

(16:43) What would it take???

(16:44) Because I’m not above doing your laundry for the rest of the year.

(16:44) Hint. Hint.

(16:46) The physics exam we both have at the exact same time?

(16:46) Making it impossible for me to do both???

(16:47) You could find a way, I’m sure.

(16:49) As touching as your faith in me to either invent time travel or a cloning machine is, I think you’re gonna have to do this one yourself.

(16:51) Ughhhhhhh.

(16:51) I was afraid you’d say that.

(16:51) Maybe I could fake a heart attack or something.

(16:53) Please don’t do that…again.

(16:53) You’re right.

(16:53) The nurses would never believe me a third time.

(16:55) They didn’t believe you the first time but

(16:55) tHANK YOu.

(16:55) But there’s a very detailed wikiHow article on how to fake your own death.

(16:56) You’re going to fake your own death just to get out of a physics exam???

(16:57) Too much?

(16:58) Just a little.
(16:59) Ugh.

(16:59) Why did I even take physics???

(17:01) Because you’re good at it?

(17:03) The evidence says otherwise.

(17:03) The evidence being that ‘D’ I got on the mock exam.

(17:05) You had a bad exam, people have bad exams all the time.

(17:05) You just need to concentrate.

(17:07) That’s easy for you to say.

(17:07) I read like one paragraph and I’m like ‘hmm, I wonder what baby echidnas are called, I better find out.’

(17:07) Puggles, fyi.

(17:07) They’re called pUGGLES.

(17:08) What the hell.

(17:08) Also they’re really adorable, my new favourite animal.

(17:10) Puggles? Seriously??

(17:10) Wait wait, getting off topic.

(17:10) Go sit in that area of the library with the bean bags, turn off your phone and just revise.

(17:10) Start with a topic you like to help get you in the mood and go from there.

(17:11) I’ve got that mentoring thing now, but I’ll come find you after and we can do flashcards?

(17:14)Alright, yeah, that sounds like a plan.

(17:14) I’m gonna turn my phone off now.

(17:14) GOOD LUCK WITH THE MENTORING!!

(17:14) xoxoxo

(18:34) I have another terrible movie that is actually pretty great for you to watch.

(18:34) Tremors.

(18:34) Can’t tell if it’s supposed to be serious or not, but there are giant killer worms underground so I’m Sold.

(18:47) Also, Kevin Bacon is in it.

(18:47) He’s a little strange but it works???
(20:02) Lance?

(21:43) Why am I not surprised you enjoyed a film about giant killer worms??

(21:43) Also, sorry for late reply.

(21:43) Turned my phone off to revise.

(21:46) Because underground killer worms are amazing?

(21:46) How’d that go?

(21:48) Debatable.

(21:48) And...pretty good???

(21:48) Kept getting distracted at first (sidenote: baby echidnas are called puggles) but then I got into the Zone™ and it was a little better. Hunk came over after a while and we did flashcards.

(21:49) So I might not fail my physics exam now.

(21:49) Hopefully.

(21:51) When is it?

(21:51) Next week.

(21:51) Next week is exam week. Also known as Hell Week.

(21:51) Not sure I’ll survive.

(21:51) And I’ve been banned from faking a heart attack again or my own death.

(21:52) Which is just rude imo.

(21:54) I

(21:54) Faking a heart attack....again?

(21:55) Or my own death.

(21:55) You've gotta keep up, Keith.

(21:58) Do I even want to know the story behind this?

(21:58) I mean, it’s a very funny story.

(21:58) But it’s also a very long story, so

(21:58) Maybe not.

(21:58) Just know it involved a fourteen-year-old Lance who had not revised for his Maths test and leave it at that.

(22:05) Oh God.

(22:07) Yeah, they called my parents and everything. Not Pretty.
Though it is a funny story to tell at family gatherings and stuff. My dad’s always like ‘hey remember that time Lance pretended to have a heart attack? THAT was wild wasn’t it?’

Your life is very...dramatic, isn’t it?

Is it? I haven’t noticed.

Very. How does Hunk survive?

See that’s a very common misconception.

What is?

Hunk is just as dramatic as me. He’s just better at hiding it.

He’s got his poker face down so well.

Never play cards with Hunk, you WILL lose.

100%.

I dunno, I’m pretty good at most card games.

You’ve never seen my poker face.

Show me then?

Is that another roundabout way of asking me for a selfie?

No???

…

Maybe?

…

ALRIGHT YES.

Why’re you so curious?

I’m a visual person.

And you’re not curious about what I look like?

You already told me what you look like.

“exceedingly handsome, constant staring has been known to cause damage to retinas”

And you believe that?

Not even a tiny bit.

Why you gotta hurt me like this, Keith??

Cause, like
I’d send you a selfie, but if I’m not getting one back I’d feel a little weird.  

But like, not to pressure you into sending one cause (honestly!!!) I’m cool with the whole ‘faceless’ thing.  

But, I’m not gonna act like I’m not curious, you know?  

But I can tone down the whole ‘curious’ thing, if you want?  

If it’s making you uncomfy or something.  

No, you’re good.  

Just  

Lemme think about it.  

Wait  

What?  

Really?  

I’m not not-curious about what you look like, I guess.  

Very roundabout way of saying you wanna know what I look like, right there.  

No comment.  

That in itself is a comment.  

NO COMMENT.  

This is...  

Are you...  

Embarrassed?  

Are you blushing?  

I bet you’re blushing.  

How many times do I have to say ‘no comment’ tonight?  

Ahahahaha, alright, alright, I’ll stop.  

Gonna sleep now anyway.  

G’night, Keith.  

Night, Lance.  

Also, feel free to ignore but  

You make me blush sometimes, so I guess we’re even.
I said you could ignore it.

I

Night.

Having a crush is weird.

How do I stop this?

Immediately.

One of these days, you’ll check you’re sending your messages to the right person before you hit send.

Hopefully.

I request death.

Or we could talk about it?

Since when did we keep secrets, Keith?

When did you start dating someone?

Waht

What?

I’m

How did you know???

How do you think?

Begins with ‘M’ and rhymes with ‘hat’?

Why didn’t you tell me?

Why don’t you want to tell me about your crush?

I asked first.

If I answer, will you answer?

I’ll consider it.

Keith...

YES.

I just wanted to make sure it was serious before I introduced her to anyone.
You introduced her to Matt.

Not by choice.

He thought she was our pizza delivery person and opened the door to her in just a towel.

26/08/2016

Damage control had to be done.

Hm.

And is it serious?

I’d like to think so, yes.

That’s

Nice. Really nice.

Thought you’d be single forever, with only Muffin for company. I was beginning to worry.

Muffin would be great company if I decided to commit to the single life forever, how dare you suggest otherwise.

Now...

I know I said you had to tell me if I told you, but you don’t. Not if you don’t want to.

Keith?

I don’t even know what he looks like.

?

My crush

Also, can we get a new name for it, because a small part of my soul dies every time I type it out.

You...don’t know what he looks like?

No.

He messaged the wrong number and got through to me and

And we just kept talking?

I can see you typing and if you’re gearing up to give me a lesson on ‘stranger danger’ I’ll turn off my phone.
‘Stranger danger’ lecture has been erased.

Thank you.

Seriously though, Keith…

You have to be careful with people you talk to online.

I know that.

You trust he is who he says he is?

Yeah.

And you haven’t made any plans to meet up or anything?

No

We might never. I don’t even know where he lives.

He might live on the other side of the country.

Which

Would kind of suck.

Because I think I’d like to meet him one day?

Which is ridiculous because I don’t even know what he looks like and he doesn’t know what I look like and

And?

Nothing, nothing.

Just

I like talking to him.

And, I don’t want to do anything that would make him want to stop talking to me.

Like

Sending him a selfie.

Why would that make him stop talking to you??

Why do you think?

Can I get all ‘big bro’ on you for a minute?

Definitely not.

Gonna do it anyway.
If you sent this boy a picture and he suddenly stopped talking to you, then you’d know right away he’s not the type of person you want in your life anyway.

‘This boy’, Shiro you sound like a middle aged man.

And please stop.

He’s clearly not worth it if he passes up the chance to talk to you.

PLEASE STOPPPP

This is not the conversation I thought I’d be having tonight.

I appreciate the pep talk but...please....stop.

One last thing?

And then you’ll never mention any of this ever again?

I’ll try.

Fine. One last thing.

You’re a good judge of character, Keith. If you like talking to him, it’s because something’s telling you he’s a good person. And, deep down, I think you know that.

Don’t ruin a good thing because you’re scared of trusting your instincts.

Aaaand, I’m done.

That wasn’t too bad, was it?

The worst thing I’ve ever had to go through in my entire life.

Worse than Dad’s Talk about the birds and the bees?

Alright. Maybe it's the second worst thing I've ever had to go through in my entire life.

Thanks, Shiro.

Anytime.

Do you have a selfie stick?

It’s 1am, so I’m just gonna go ahead and assume that this is a dream.

A very boring dream, but still a dream.

So, no dream Keith, I don’t have a selfie stick.

Damn it.

Huh.
(07:45) So that wasn’t a dream.

(07:56) *It was not.*

(07:56) Do I get to know why you suddenly needed a selfie stick at 1am

(07:56) Or?

(07:58) To take a selfie?

(07:59) No, no, I got that.

(07:59) I want to know why the stick is necessary.

(07:59) Also, you’re the most selfie averse person I’ve ever met.

(08:00) Your Facebook profile picture is a bike.

(08:00) Even my DAD has a selfie as his Facebook picture.

(08:01) Pretty sure my granddad does too.

(08:03) Yeah, yeah, I’ve already had this from Lance.

(08:05) Am I right in thinking this selfie stick thing has something to do with Lance?

(08:06) I’m gonna

(08:06) Send him a pic.

(08:06) Of me.

(08:11) I want you to know I almost got hit by a car because I just stopped walking and literally gasped out loud.

(08:11) It’s not that big a deal.

(08:14) It really is.

(08:14) Wait, when are you sending it?

(08:15) Whenever I take it?

(08:17) Can you wait till I get home tonight?

(08:17) ...Why?

(08:21) This is a Big Moment.

(08:21) The day Keith Kogane finally takes a selfie and enters the 21st century.

(08:21) Needs to be documented.

(08:24) You’re officially banned from the house.
(08:24) Your mum will let me in.

(08:24) She loves me.

(08:26) I hate that you’re right.

(08:27) See you later.

(08:30) Operation Oblivious might have to start sooner than expected.

(08:41) Is that really the name we decided on?

(08:44) Operation Get Our Oblivious Best Friends Together was a bit long, so I shortened it.

(08:46) Fair enough.

(08:46) What’s up? New development?

(08:49) I have it on good authority that a selfie might be sent tonight.

(08:51) Holy shit.

(08:51) Yeah, okay. Operation Oblivious needs to be brought forward.

(08:54) Are you free this weekend? Not tomorrow, Sunday?

(08:57) No can do.

(08:57) Got exams all next week, so we’re probably gonna spend the weekend in the library.

(08:57) Could do next weekend though?

(08:59) Next weekend sounds good.

(08:59) We just need a venue…

(09:02) I’ve got a few places in mind, lemme think about it.

(09:04) Nice, let me know.

(09:05) Will do.

(09:05) Also, really great session yesterday! Let me know what you want to work on next week.

(12:42) If you had a time machine, where’s the first place you’d go?

(12:46) I’m getting weirdly used to your oddly specific questions.

(12:46) Can’t tell if that’s a good thing or not.

(12:48) Definitely a good thing.
And where would you go?

*When

And 1969.

What happened in 1969?

Lots of things.

But also

The Moon Landing. Allegedly.

Not this again.

I’m just saying, evidence of an actual landing is sketchy at best.

It’s the exact opposite of that but...whatever helps you sleep at night.

I’ll convince you one day.

I’m looking forward to it.

You? Where/when would you go?

Back to the day they decided to make students do exams.

And convince them otherwise.

And how would you do that?

I have a very convincing speech planned.

I’m sure you do.

Revision not going well?

Nah, it’s fine. Taking a break now.

How many exams do you have?

TOO MANY.

Five specifically.

Which is exactly five exams too many.

All next week?

Yeah, which is actually pretty good. Getting them all out of the way at once.

Makes it hard to revise for them all at once though.

One minute I’m trying to memorise the periodic table and the next I’m trying to remember which tense is the right one for this French essay.
Sometimes I just wanna say screw it and just see what happens.

But I gotta get my revenge.

Ah, on that one teacher? The one who's a dick?

yEAH HIM.

dunno, like

don’t like being underestimated.

Quickest way to get onto my Nemesis List is to underestimate me.

I’ll make sure never to do it then.

Smart.

But like, I’m also really stubborn? So if you tell me I can’t do something I’ll work like 100 times harder just to throw it on your face like HA

Complete with an ‘I Told You So’ dance to top it all off.

Please don’t tell me you’ve got an ‘I Told You So’ dance ready for your teacher.

I think we both know the answer to that.

It’s a very good dance routine - like Beyoncé level kind of good - I can see if I can get Hunk to film it for you if you want?

I can’t even tell if you’re joking right now.

But I'm leaning towards...you're not joking, are you?

:)  

But nah, in order for the greatest ‘I Told You Dance’ ever to actually happen, I do need to get the grades.

Think you'll get them?

A lil touch and go at the moment.

Really, physics is the only one making me nervous, cause that could go either way. Everything else I should get the grades I want.

But physics is.....

I could help?

Uh?

What?

Help you revise?

Yeah, I got that.
I meant what as in

How????

I can offer you an incentive?

Um?

I’m intrigued, but very confused.

You want to know what I look like?

I don’t want to sound really eager right now but

Yeah, man.

I do.

How much revision do you have left for today?

Got about ten pages of notes to get through.

And how likely is it you’ll get through them?

Gonna be honest and say about 60%.

I really hate this topic.

Alright so

Get through the ten pages and

I’ll send you a selfie.

I’m????

For real??????

Wait, are you bribing me with a selfie??????

Is it working?

It’s embarrassing how well it’s working.

So, you’re actually gonna send one?

If you do your revision, yeah.

I could lie and say I’ve done it? How will you know?

Hm.

I guess I won’t.

I’m trusting you.

Ahppprrrrrrrrrrhh why did that make my heart skip a beat???
(14:19) Your guess is as good as mine.

(14:19) Right.

(14:19) Gonna turn my phone off now.

(14:20) Get your best selfie face ready.

(14:20) I’m ready to be wowed.

(14:23) *Keep your expectations low.*

(14:23) Too late.

(14:23) ahhhhHHH OK

(14:24) Phone is going off now.

(14:24) Talk to you in a couple hours?

(14:25) *Bye, Lance.*

(15:41) So

(15:31) I told him I’d send him a selfie.

(15:31) If he does his revision.

(15:31) There’s no turning back now is there?

(15:33) *Putting conditions on sending a selfie?*

(15:33) Having a crush on someone isn’t supposed to be this much effort, Keith.

(15:36) And yet here I am.

(15:36) Sweating buckets because I dON’T KNOW HOW TO TAKE A SELFIE???

(15:40) *I SAID WAIT UNTIL I GET HOME!!!*

(15:40) You will not deprive me of this, Keith. YOU WILL NOT.

(15:40) Also, how do you not know how to take a selfie. Just hold the phone in front of your face and take the picture.

(15:41) Except don’t do it till I’m there, because I need to witness this once in a lifetime event.

(15:36) No, I understand how it’s supposed to work.

(15:36) But all the pics are coming out terrible???

(15:37) [IMAGE SENT]

(15:37) Do I really look like this?
(15:37) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(15:40) ...Why would you take it from that angle??

(15:40) It doesn’t even look like you wow.

(15:41) What angle am I supposed to take it from?

(15:43) A flattering one, perhaps?

(15:43) Also, thank you for the blackmail material.

(15:46) No, you have to delete that right now.

(15:47) Sure.

(15:47) You haven’t deleted it have you?

(15:47) Of course not.

(15:47) Also, I’m ten minutes away. Want anything from the store?

(15:50) No thanks, I’m good.

(15:50) Also, delete the pic.

(15:54) Also, no.

(19:20) IT TOOK ME FIVE HOURS.

(19:20) BUT I AM BACK

(19:20) AND READY TO RECEIVE THE SELFIE OF MY DREAMS.

(19:26) Of your dreams?

(19:27) Is that too much?

(19:27) Of my daydreams then.

(19:30) Not sure if that’s any better.

(19:31) It definitely is.

(19:31) Now

(19:31) About that selfie.

(19:31) Wait no, I’m sounding too eager aren’t I?

(19:33) Just a bit.

(19:33) K. Small talk first.

(19:34) How was your day?
(19:35) Uh

(19:35) Really?

(19:37) Yeah, why not? What’d you do?

(19:37) What do you do, by the way?

(19:37) Like, you mentioned working with your dad before, but doing what?

(19:40) Oh.

(19:40) My parents own a hardware store, so I help out around there.

(19:40) Technically, it’s supposed to be an apprenticeship but my dad only really makes me come in when he needs the extra help.

(19:41) So you work in retail?

(19:41) Sadly.

(19:42) Along with the daily kitten pics (which you’ve been slacking horribly with can I just add), I’m now gonna need daily retail horror story tales from you.

(19:43) A guy came in yesterday and tried to return a used paint roller with lots of hair stuck to it??

(19:43) Tried to ask him what happened but he wouldn’t even make eye contact with me.

(19:43) It was pretty creepy.

(19:45) Customers are like some of the weirdest people on the planet??

(19:45) I work weekends at this café when I’m home for the holidays and this woman tried to return a cake because she’d apparently bought the wrong one.

(19:45) And I opened the box to check it was still good to resell

(19:45) And there was a giant chunk missing? Like someone just reached in a grabbed a handful of cake??

(19:45) They didn’t even slice it. They’d literally just grabbed a fistful of red velvet.

(19:46) I just looked at her and she looked at me for like thirty seconds before she took the cake and just ran??????

(19:48) 80% of customers are aliens, I’m almost certain.

(19:48) See that’s a conspiracy theory I can get behind.

(19:48) Not a conspiracy theory if it’s 100% fact.

(19:48) (Like the moon landing being fake)

(19:50) You’re right, you’re right.

(19:50) (The moon landing was not faked)
How'd the revision go?

Can’t even lie, it went really well.

Got past this section I’ve been struggling with for weeks so

Thanks for the incentive. It really worked.

And speaking of the incentive…

*wink wink* *nudge nudge* *finger guns*

I was hoping you'd forget.

NEVER.

Right.

So, just remember I don’t take selfies.

This isn’t something I do regularly.

Alright?

Keith.

It’s not rocket science.

It’s a selfie.

Thank you Pidge 2.0.

You’re nervous.

That wasn’t a question, was it?

Nope.

Maybe I’m a little nervous.

What if I go first?

??

I’ll send you a pic first.

Break the ice and all that.

That would...

Yeah?

Yeah.

Gimme a sec.
(20:17) *jazz hands*

(20:30) Keith?

(20:30) You know I was joking about that whole ‘constant staring could cause damages to retinas’ thing.

(20:31) So like

(20:31) A response would be really good some time about now.

(20:40) Or
(20:19) I can’t do this.
(20:19) Pidge I can’t
(20:19) He’s??????????
(20:19) I’m out, I can’t
(20:19) Nope
(20:19) nooPE.
(20:20) Context please?
(20:21) He sent me a selfie first.
(20:21) And
(20:21) Yeah.
(20:22) How does that make literally no sense but I understand exactly what you’re trying to say anyway?
(20:22) I’m guessing he’s cute?
(20:23) That would be putting it lightly.
(20:23) And I think he just took the picture???
(20:24) How do you take a picture that good in literally less than minute??
(20:24) WE SPENT TWO HOURS TAKING PICTURES AND ENDED UP WITH ONLY TWO SEMI-DECENT ONES?????
(20:24) And he just
(20:25) ‘Gimme a sec’ and goes and takes something Tyra Banks would be proud of??
(20:25) It’s not fair and I can’t do this.
(20:25) This is so cute it’s making me want to puke.
(20:26) Wait, you did respond right?
(20:28) ...
(20:28) Not as of yet.
(20:31) I just want you to know that my opinion of you has dropped by at least 20 points.
And you were on minus points before this whole thing started.

RESPOND TO HIM KEITH.

And say what?

Something? Anything? Exactly what you said to me but maybe tone it down a little?

I don’t think I can?

If you don’t reply to him in the next two minutes I’m coming over and doing it myself.

You wouldn’t.

We both know I would.

...

I’m replying.

It’s like pulling teeth with you, I swear.

Uh.

Oh you are alive, I was getting worried for a second.

Sorry, I had to help my mum with the dishes.

Right.

Holy shit, are you really gonna make me ask?

Cause, like, my self-esteem is prettttty high but this is just...too much...even for me...

I really don’t know what to say.

Again, not doing wonders for the self-esteem right now.

I mean that in a good way.

Yeah?

In a really good way.

Oh.

On a scale of one to ten - how good?

10.

Damn.

Yeah. When you said you’d send one I was

I was not expecting that.
At all.

And you mean all this in a good way, yes?

I’m really crap at expressing myself

Especially for something like this

It’s not a situation I’ve ever really been in before and I know I’m doing it all wrong

But yeah, in a really, really good way.

Hm.

I’ll take it.

Now it’s your turn to uphold your end of the bargain.

Ugh.

Right, yeah, yeah.

Just, remember what I said about not doing this often

Or ever before today.

And you remember what I said about this not being rocket science.

…

Fine.
(21:06) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(21:07) I know I gave you the silent treatment for like 20 minutes but if you do the same I think I might actually dissolve.

(21:07) Oh my God.

(21:07) I need a moment.

(21:08) I? ???

(21:10) This isn’t you.

(21:10) What?
I can’t

Noooooooooo.

Whose picture did you steal?

V rude since I actually sent you one of me.

I

Didn’t??

This is me?

That’s what I look like…

Holy fucking shit, dude.

How much photoshop was involved in this?

None?????

Instagram filters?

I don’t even have the Instagram app installed.

Wow.

Alright so

Has anyone ever told you, you’re really attractive?

Like, yeah.

Just

I fell out of bed when I opened the selfie.

I’m texting you from the floor right now.

Hunk is giving me a Look.

Stop exaggerating.

I’m not????

I’m on the floor.

See.

[IMAGE SENT]

[IMAGE RECEIVED]

On the floor.

I
You sent me another selfie????

Yeah…

You don’t have to send another one.

In fact, I’d rather you didn’t.

If I fall out of bed one more time I’m gonna start to bruise.

This is a good reaction, yeah?

Generally, if someone tells you you’re really attractive that’s considered to be a good reaction.

Just checking.

Wait.

Hold the phone.

Upon closer inspection of the selfie I notice you have…a mullet?

And therefore take back all my praise.

It’s 2016 WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH A MULLET?

It grows that way itself?

LIES.

I bet you have posters of Billy Ray Cyrus on your walls, don’t you?

Better than all your NASA posters.

1. Nothing is better than my NASA posters. They’re NASA posters, Keith. N A S A.

2. You didn’t deny the Billy Ray Cyrus posters.

I don’t have posters of Billy Ray Cyrus on my walls.

Ric Flair?

Are you just gonna name famous people you know with mullets?

Those are the only two I know.

Thank God.

I could just Google some.

I’d rather you didn’t.

Hulk Hogan.
(21:58) Don’t compare me to him??
(21:59) David Bowie?
(22:00) Actually, I'll take that one.
(22:01) Mel Gibson?
(22:04) Stop.
(22:06) I’m only stopping because going through all these images is literally burning my eyes.
(22:06) Congratulations on being the only human (besides Bowie) to ever pull off a mullet.
(22:10) Thank you.
(22:10) Still, it's a terrible haircut and you should definitely cut it.
(22:11) No.
(22:12) It’ll increase your attractiveness levels by like at least five points.
(22:14) And what am I at now?
(22:15) I can’t disclose that information, I’m afraid.
(22:15) It’s top secret.
(22:16) Hm.
(22:16) Will there be more selfies in the future, by the way?
(22:16) Or was this a one time deal?
(22:18) Maybe.
(22:18) Maybe a one time deal or maybe more in the future?
(22:19) Maybe more in the future.
(22:19) That’d be fine, right?
(22:21) That would be more than fine, Keith.
(22:23) You aren’t shy about giving compliments, are you?
(22:23) Nope.
(22:23) Does it make you uncomfortable?
(22:24) Because I'll stop if it does.
(22:25) No.
(22:25) Just not used to it.
What?

I bet you’re the type of person who gets complimented allllll the time and you just never notice.

You just think people are being nice.

Or polite.

Definitely not.

Agree to disagree?

You’re definitely wrong but

Fine.

I’m definitely not.

I’m gonna sleep in a minute, I think.

Sleeping this early on a Friday night?

Who are you and what have you done with Lance?

Hilarious.

Spending the weekend revising and we're starting at the crack of dawn

10am.

That's not the crack of dawn.

It's literally two hours from midday.

Anytime before midday on a weekend is like the crack of dawn to me.

I need my beauty sleep, Keith.

Yeah, I can see that.

Wait, I need clarification on something.

Was that you calling me ugly

Or

Was it you complimenting me?

Because you see how that could go both ways right?

Goodnight Lance.

Noooooo

Don't do this to me Keith. Just answer the question.
(22:56) :) 

(22:56) Wow. 

(22:57) W O W. 

(22:58) Don't do this to me, Keith. 

(23:05) See, this is why Muffin hates you. 

(23:06) I can't believe you. 

(23:06) -_- 

(23:07) Night, Keith. 


27/08/2016

(00:34) That was definitely a compliment.

Chapter End Notes

*clenches fist* i luv these precious boys so much, i do, i do
27/08/2016

(06:04) [IMAGE SENT]

(06:04) Sleeping kittens for you to cry over.

(06:04) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(06:05) I think motherhood has calmed Muffin down a little?

(06:05) She's only hissed at me ten times since the kittens came.

(06:05) And I don't even remember the last time she tried to bite me???

(06:14) I take that back.

(06:14) She just tried to take a chunk out of my arm.

(06:14) I don't deserve this.

(06:14) Would my brother be mad if Muffin just...disappeared??

(06:15) DON'T YOU DARE HURT MUFFIN!!!!

(06:15) Also.

(06:15) Thank you for waking me up, I definitely wanted to be woken at 6am because my phone

(06:16) WON'T

(06:16) STOP

(06:16) VIBRATING.

(06:17) You're welcome.

(06:17) Very cute pic of the kittens though.
(06:17) Can confirm I'm crying silently into my pillow.

(06:18) Why're you awake, please? It's Saturday aka the Day of Rest.

(06:19) Pretty sure that's supposed to be Sunday.

(06:20) Nooope, it's definitely Saturday.

(06:20) I'm positive.

(06:23) Right.

(06:23) But back to the pressing question here...why're you awake?

(06:26) Dad needs some extra help with the store, we're getting a big stock delivery this morning.

(06:26) Wow, so because you have to suffer so do I??

(06:26) I thought we were friends???

(06:28) I didn't mean to wake you up.

(06:28) And you could easily just go back to sleep.

(06:30) INTENT MEANS NOTHING, KEITH.

(06:30) NOTHING!!!!

(06:31) And I really can't. Once I'm up, I'm up.

(06:31) Very tired and cranky, but still up.

(06:34) You're not a morning person, are you?

(06:35) Not if I don't get enough sleep, nope.

(06:35) You are though?

(06:37) I guess.

(06:37) I'm used to early mornings and it's kind of nice.

(06:38) What could be nice about waking up befORE THE SUN???

(06:39) The sun's up, Lance.

(06:40) Barely.

(06:41) So, Morning Lance is tired, cranky and over-dramatic. Interesting.

(06:41) And it's peaceful.

(06:43) Peaceful?

(06:44) Yeah. Quieter, less noise and people to deal with. It's nice.

(06:45) So I'm not a morning person and you're not a people person?
I'm a 'certain kinds of people' person.

And what's the criteria for becoming that kind of person?

It's different for everyone.

Alright

What would the criteria for becoming that kind of person be for me then?

You've been typing for a while now...

Still typing......

Did you sit on your phone?

I think you're already that kind of person.

I can't believe you were typing for ten minutes to write eight words.

Shut up.

Ten minutes just to say you think we're friends.

Amazing.

I'm so close to blocking you.

Do you threaten to block all your friends??

Yes.

I feel extremely privileged then.

Shoe size?

What?

What's your shoe size?

..Why?

Hunk isn't gonna be up for another two hours and I'm not hungry enough for breakfast yet, so

I'm knitting.

Okay, but why do you need my shoe size?

Do you want your socks to fit you or not???

You're knitting me socks?

That's the plan. Unless you want something else?
(07:24) Gloves?

(07:26) Gloves???

(07:27) Yep.

(07:28) It's August. Why do you need gloves in August?

(07:29) It's nearly September. I'm getting ready for winter.

(07:30) You sound like an animal preparing for hibernation.

(07:30) But you're right, it is nearly September...

(07:31) Why does this feel vaguely ominous?

(07:31) AKA NEARLY OCTOBER

(07:32) Not really?

(07:32) AKA NEARLY HALLOWEEN!!!!!

(07:33) There's still two months left.

(07:34) And I need to start preparing. I have a reputation to maintain, you know?

(07:34) Also, how'd you like this colour wool for the gloves? Red's your favourite, right?

(07:34) [IMAGE SENT]

(07:34) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(07:34) The red looks good.

(07:35) And...'reputation'?

(07:37) I don't mean to alarm you, but you're talking to the undisputed King of Halloween.

(07:37) Please try not to get too starstruck.

(07:40) I think I'll manage.

(07:40) Why doesn't it surprise me that you're really into Halloween?

(07:41) Because it's the best holiday and I have only the best tastes????

(07:41) You're not into it?

(07:45) Not really. Me and Pidge went trick-or-treating for a bit last year, but we didn't dress up or anything.

(07:45) Think maybe we're a bit too old for it.

(07:48) wHAT?

(07:48) How could you think that? Nobody is ever too old for Halloween, nOBODY.
(07:50) I am.

(07:50) One Halloween with me will change that.

(07:50) What are your thoughts on group themed costumes?

(07:50) Because I always do group costumes.

(07:51) Last year I took my niece and nephew out and we went as The Smurfs.

(07:51) Took a week to get the blue out of my nieces hair and my sister yelled at me for like twenty minutes.

(07:51) But we got more sweets than they could eat and I solidified my title as Favourite Uncle, so it was worth it imo.

(07:52) When I go home next, remind me to find the picture to show you.

(07:53) I can't wait to see it.

(07:53) Sarcasm?

(07:53) Nope.

(07:54) Cool.

(07:54) This year the twins are a little older, so I'm working on sweet talking my parents into letting me and Hunk take them out.

(07:54) You should come with!! Experience Halloween the way it's supposed to be done. Bring Pidge too.

(07:57) Will you make me dress up?

(07:59) Most definitely.

(08:04) I'll pass.

(08:06) K E I T H.

(08:06) Wait, nvm.

(08:06) I have two months to convince you.

(08:07) I'd really like to see you try.

(08:09) Is that a challenge??

(08:09) Because Lance McClain never backs down from a challenge.

(08:12) It's a challenge.

(08:12) IT'S ON.

(08:12) Fair warning me and Hunk can't decide between Star Wars themed or Spongebob this year.

(08:13) Spongebob...
The twins are really, really into Spongebob right now. Trying to shove them in the direction of Steven Universe but it's not working.

So Spongebob Halloween costumes could be a reality.

You'd make a great Squidward.

1) That's supposed to be an insult, but Squidward is the only character on that show with any sense, so thanks.

2) I'm not dressing up.

We'll see :)

Will we?

YUP.

Right.

Dad's giving me looks for being on my phone so I'm gonna go and actually do some work now.

Blah.

Fine, I'll just carry on knitting till Hunk gets up.

Good luck with the revision.

Try not to get distracted.

I mean, I'll try...no promises though.

Might end up turning off my phone.

That's probably best.

Implying you don't enjoy our wonderful conversations????

Stop fishing for compliments.

Have a good day, yeah?

You too, Keith.

What do you have planned for Pidge's birthday?

Nice try, Matt.

And by nice try, I mean that was terrible.

No, it's not Matt. It's me.

Again, nice try.
I'd call you for proof, but I'm on a bus right now and it's pretty noisy.

What a coincidence.

Your lack of faith in me is kind of hurtful, Keith.

Prove you're not Matt.

Would Matt really go through all this effort just to find out what you're getting Pidge?

Wait, nvm, I can answer that myself.

How's your crush :)

Alright, it is you.

And don't call it that.

What should I call it then?

Anything but that.

Fine.

How is 'The Epic Romance of Keith and Mystery Boy' going?

Why are you like this?

Just go back to calling it a crush.

:) 

Do I ever get to learn his name?

Do I ever get to learn your girlfriend's name?

Do mum and dad know, by the way? Or...

Allura.

And no, they don't, which is part of the reason why I messaged you...

Lance.

'The Epic Romance of Keith and Lance' has a nice ring to it, don't you think?

The exact opposite in fact.

I thought you messaged me about Pidge?

Bit of both.

Matt wants to come home for Pidge's birthday and I thought maybe...

Maybe I'd bring Allura to meet you guys?

Oh.
(14:47) So it's that's serious?
(14:59) I think so.
(14:59) You'll like her.
(15:00) Anyway, I thought we could all do something for Pidge's birthday, but I didn't know what you had planned?
(15:02) Nothing on her actual birthday.
(15:02) I got us tickets for this exhibit at the Science Museum on the weekend, though.
(15:07) Wow, that's actually a really good present????
(15:09) Why do you sound so surprised?
(15:10) Your gift-giving track record isn't the best...
(15:10) When is everyone going to let me live down the chocolate shampoo?
(15:11) Probably never.
(15:11) But how does taking Pidge out for dinner sound? Just us?
(15:13) And Allura...?
(15:13) Yeah, Allura too.
(15:14) Sounds good.
(15:14) Pidge'll like it. Is it supposed to be a surprise?
(15:16) Yes!!! I had to talk Matt out of mailing himself in a giant cardboard box but it's still a surprise.
(15:16) Think we're gonna get the first train in on the 6th and then surprise her before she goes to school?
(15:17) Cool. How long are you guys gonna be staying for?
(15:18) The whole week I think?
(15:18) Really???
(15:20) Yeah, till Sunday I think.
(15:20) Why? You missed me?
(15:21)...
(15:21) It'll be good to have you back.
(15:21) Even for a little while.
(15:24) Yeah, I've missed you guys as well.
How's things?

The usual. Muffin's still an evil, evil cat and I don't know what you see in her.

The kittens are cute, though.

I can't wait to meet them.

What are we doing with them, by the way?

Or are we keeping them all?

Which, for the record, I would be 100% here for.

I've maybe, definitely, already promised three of them to other people.

So that's Pidge?

Yeah.

Lance?

...

Yeah.

And who's the third?

One of Lance's friends.

Hm.

What?

Nothing, nothing.

Just.

How are you getting the kittens to him?

Huh?

You can't stick them in the post. They'll die.

I know you can't put kittens in the post, Shiro.

So how were you planning on getting them to him?

I didn't think that far ahead.

You'll have to meet each other, you know?

Are you prepping another internet safety lecture?

Do I need to?
No.

He might not even live near enough for them to even take the kittens.

And if he does?

Then I don't have to think about it for a while anyway because the kittens need to stay with Muffin for a little longer.

So.

Out of sight, out of mind?

Exactly.

Keith.

I know you're giving me your Disappointed Look right now and I just want you to know, I'm ignoring it.

Remember when we were younger and you used to actually listen to me?

I miss those days.

Stop acting all nostalgic, you're not an old man.

Back in my day kids used to respect their elders...

BYE.

They grow up so fast...

My brain feels like mush.

If I have to look at another textbook again I think I might die.

At my funeral, please mention my kind and caring soul and don't forget my dashing good looks.

What dashing good looks?

Ha ha.

Don't make me scroll up.

You complimented me.

Allegedly.

Just admit it Keith.

You think I'm gorgeous...

Are you
You want to kiss me...
I can't believe you're doing this.
You want to hug me...
Miss Congeniality, really???
You want to loooove me...
You want to huuuuuug me...
You want to smoooooch me.
Are you done?
For now.
I'm always up for quoting Miss Congeniality whenever I can, though.
Noted.
How'd revision go?
Blehhhhhhhhhhhh.
Fine, I guess.
V draining though.
I can't wait till this is all over.
How was your day? Distract me with kitten pics and retail horror stories so I can forget about Hell Week.
Muffin is on the warpath and I risked my life to get these for you.

Are they play fighting with each other???
Also holy shit, what did you do to Muffin? She looks like she's about five seconds away from mauling you.
She tried.
And I maybe
Stepped on her tail again?
Accidentally.
"Accidentally".
It was an accident?? Why does she leave it hanging around everywhere?
It's her tail, Keith. She can't help it.
Why are you on her side? She's hissing at me. HISSING.
Stop spreading lies about her.
Lies?
When you meet her, you'll see.
When I meet her you'll see that she's a perfectly nice cat and you're the problem.
When you realise you're wrong, I want your apology handwritten.
So I can get it framed.
When you realise you're wrong, I want the same.
That won't happen though.
I guess we'll just have to see.
I guess.
I'm gonna be really boring now and probably go to sleep?
Someone (no names, coughkeithcough) woke me up at the crack of dawn today
The sun was already up?!??!
And I'm pretty tired. And I've got a whole day of revision tomorrow to look forward to, so
Night?
Please give each kitten a kiss for me.
Do you actually want me to kiss the kittens or are you just saying that now?
I actually want you to kiss them.
Goodnight, Lance.
Night, Keith.
28/08/2016

(07:02) Are you sleepwalking again?
(07:02) Or have you been kidnapped???
(07:02) Because it's 7am on a Sunday and...you're...not...in bed?????
(07:19) Lance?
(07:19) Can you please respond I'm like, at least 60% worried.
(07:23) LANCE.
(07:30) Your best friend is missing and you're only 60% worried?
(07:30) I'm hurt.
(07:34) You'll live.
(07:34) And where are you, this is creepy.
(07:34) I usually have to drag you out of bed on weekends.
(07:36) I went for a walk.
(07:37) Alright, I'm back to being worried again.
(07:39) I go for walks????
(07:40) You don't.
(07:40) And you definitely don't go for walks at 7am.
(07:43) Maybe I started today.
(07:44) Why?
(07:46) It's peaceful.
(07:46) I'm coming back to the room now anyway, you can stop worrying.
(07:48) Still mildly concerned, but okay.

(08:12) Maybe you're right about mornings not being the worst thing in the world.
(08:12) Think I'm gonna turn my phone off again today so I don't get distracted.
(08:12) Please feel free to send me all the kitten pics you want xoxo
(08:13) And
(08:13) Have a good day.
Have a good day, Lance.

(13:25) Are you home rn?

(13:28) Yeah.

(13:29) Yessssss!

(13:29) I'm locked out, so I'm coming over.

(13:31) Cool, cool, I'll see you in a bit.

IT'S SO SUNNY OUTSIDE

AND I'M STUCK IN THE LIBRARY REVISING?

Why are the windows in here so big? It's like a cruel and unusual punishment.

Tried to block the view with a tower of books but they fell down really loudly and I maybe have been given my second 'warning' of my academic career.

Apparently, I don't want to know what'll happen if I get a third warning, which sounds vaguely threatening??

Are they allowed to threaten students?? I don't think so.

I feel like you've probably deserved it somehow.

I have nOT.

The spaghetti incident was a genuine accident and making a tower of books is mostly harmless.

Spaghetti incident?

I don't want to get into it because Hunk always shudders whenever I mention it, but let's just say there's a reason there's a strict food ban in the library that may or may not have been implemented after my first week here.

You started a food fight in the library didn't you?

It wasn't a fight, it was more of a light tussle that escalated - through no fault of my own!!!! - into a full-scale fight.

But that wasn't my fault, I was the victim if you think about it.
(16:14) How?

(16:15) Spaghetti stains are v hard to get out in the wash.

(16:17) What're you up to today? You better be out in the sun enjoying it for me.

(16:19) Playing PS4 with Pidge.

(16:20) A waste of a perfectly good day!!!!!

(16:23) Thanks, Dad.

(16:24) What are you guys playing?

(16:28) Street Fighter.

(16:28) Before you ask, yes I'm winning.

(16:28) Pidge told me to tell you that I cheat, but I don't.

(16:28) Button mashing is a perfectly valid way of playing.

(16:29) For once, I've gotta agree with you there.

(16:29) What's the point in learning all the right combos when button mashing gets you the same results like 90% of the time???

(16:34) THANK YOU, LANCE.

(16:34) Pidge called you a disgrace but I don't take it to heart.

(16:34) She's just mad she's losing.

(16:35) I won't xo

(16:35) K, break over and back to the books.

(16:35) Try not to miss me too much.

(16:37) I'm sure I'll manage.

(16:45) Operation Oblivious is cancelled.

(16:45) They're both button mashers, they don't deserve happiness.

(16:46) Did Keith just beat you?

(16:47) No comment.

(20:54) What do you think about the name 'Rover' for one of the cats?

(20:58) I think...I didn't think it could get any worse than Muffin but here you are
(20:58) Making it worse.

(20:58) Do you know nothing about naming animals???

(21:02) I didn't name Muffin, remember?

(21:02) And Rover's not my idea either.

(21:02) It's Pidge's. She wants to name her kitten 'Rover'.

(20:03) Rover is a dog’s name.

(20:03) DOGS ARE CALLED ROVER NOT CATS.

(20:06) That's what I said.

(20:06) But she just mumbled something about names being a social construct anyway and carried on playing with the cat so...

(20:06) I think she's officially called Rover now?

(20:08) I am shocked and appalled and disgusted.

(20:08) Wait.

(20:08) What are the other cats called?

(20:10) They don't have names yet.

(20:10) I was waiting for my brother to get back from uni to do it.

(20:11) The brother who picked the name Muffin?

(20:11) Not on my watch.

(20:14) What've you got then?

(20:14) Nothing yet, but when I do think of something you can bet your ass it'll be a million times better than Rover.

(20:14) ROVER.

(20:14) What the hell kind of name is Rover for a cat? It'll be bullied in the playground.

(20:16) Well, Pidge is set on it, so I guess it's staying.

(20:18) Unbelievable.

(20:18) How'd Street Fighter go?

(20:21) I started to lose count of how many times I won and then she turned off the PS4 at the plug so

(20:21) About the same as usual.

(20:22) How'd revision go?
Nice.

And pretty good??

Hunk blew a fuse, he like passed out on my bed as soon as we got back to the room.

Shouldn't you be...worried?

Nah, he'll be fine.

Also, I dunno, it's reassuring knowing I'm not the only one panicking??

Like we're in it together or something, you know?

Yeah, I get it I think.

What exam(s) do you have tomorrow?

Just French.

At like 10am. Rude. How am I supposed to remember when tense to use when I can barely keep my eyes open?????

But I'm not that nervous for it.

How come?

French is the language of looove and I am its cupid.

We only started talking because a girl gave you the wrong number, remember?

... 

First of all, how dare you bring that back up.

Second of all, we don't actually know she gave me the wrong number on purpose, sooooo

New topic, please.

My brother's coming home next week.

Ugh. Muffin Man, right?

Doesn't he come home often?

I'm telling him you call him that.

Not really. He's at uni most of the year, and then he's got a job up there so he stays for some of the holidays as well these days.

Haven't seen him in a few months.

Ahhhhh so you’re excited?

You guys are close, right?

Pretty close.
(20:50) He’s bringing his girlfriend though. To meet everyone.
(20:54) And that’s not good?
(20:55) No, it’s good. It’s great.
(20:55) Seems happy and everything.
(20:55) So what’s the problem?
(20:56) Not really a problem. More like me being selfish.
(20:58) You haven’t seen him in a while so you wanted to spend time with him, just you two, right?
(21:00) Something like that.
(21:01) No shame in that, man.
(21:02) I’m not ashamed. I’m Annoyed.
(21:02) At myself.
(21:04) Why? For having feelings?
(21:04) You’re allowed feelings, Keith.
(21:20) Sooo.
(21:20) You haven’t responded in a while so, I dunno, maybe you’re just busy or maybe you’re being all broody.
(21:21) I think it’s probably the last thing. But yeah, just tell me to shut the fuck up if you want but you don’t have to feel guilty about how you feel.
(21:22) Like, your feelings are valid. You’re allowed to say you miss your bro and wanted to just chill with him alone. Doesn’t make you selfish.
(21:45) I’m gonna sleep now, and Hunk still hasn’t woken up?? He hasn’t moved an inch since he fell asleep???
(21:45) I dunno if I should try and move him or just accept we’re spooning tonight????
(21:46) Actually, Hunk is a v nice big spoon so I’m gonna make the most of this.
(21:46) Night, Keith.
(21:47) Don’t think too hard.

(22:17) Are you alright?
(22:17) You seemed... quiet when I left.
(22:17) Quieter than usual anyway.

(22:19) I’m fine.

(22:19) Did you know Shiro has a girlfriend?

(22:21) Ohhh, he told you?

(22:21) She’s British apparently? Matt’s exact words were ‘I’m like 80% sure she’s part of the royal family somehow. Maybe a distant cousin??’

(22:22) Then he put on a really bad accent which I guess was supposed to be an impression so I hung up the phone.


(22:26) You knew?

(22:30) Yeah?

(22:30) Everyone knows Matt can’t keep a secret to save his life.

(22:30) He told me Santa wasn’t real when I was three. THREE.

(22:33) Why didn’t you tell me?

(22:25) It wasn’t my secret to tell?

(22:25) Also, I figured Shiro would tell you eventually.

(22:30) Yeah. Eventually.

---

29/08/2016

(00:19) Thanks, Lance.

(00:20) Night, and good luck with your exam.

(08:53) When you come home, can we just hang out?

(08:53) Just me and you?

(08:53) Just for a little bit?

(09:21) You don’t even have to ask that, Keith.

(09:21) Of course we can.
Mm. Sometimes it feels like I do.

It feels like we’re drifting and I don’t want to drift apart.

I’m literally walking into a lecture right now, but I can call you when it’s finished?

Yeah, yeah, whatever.

Bonjour.

Comment votre examen aller?

NOOOPE.

No French allowed.

This is a French Free Zone for the foreseeable future.

Also, do you actually speak French or what??

Nah, I used an online translator.

The exam went well though, yeah?

Cheater.

Yeah, it was fine. A lot easier than I thought it was gonna be.

Onto the next one!

Which is?

English. Lit and Lang.

I’m probs gonna be pretty crappy with replies this week, just a heads up.

Yeah, I figured.

Don’t worry about it, I just wanted

To say thanks.

For last night.

Sorry I disappeared.

Don’t even mention it. My shoulder is always available for crying on.

Did you talk to your bro?

Not yet, he’s supposed to call me later so

We’ll see.

Mmm, hope everything works out well for you guys.
I'm gonna go back to revising, please pray for me.

Stop being so dramatic.

NEVER.

Sorry about last night.

You don’t have to apologise.

You’re good.

Sorry I didn’t tell you about Shiro.

It wasn’t like an intentional secret or anything, I really thought Shiro would’ve told you sooner.

Yeah, me too.

We're good?

We’re good.

:D

Are you and Shiro good…?

Who knows.

Have you ever thought about how moustaches are just eyebrows for your mouth?

A ‘mouthbrow’ if you will.

I’m taking it that you’re done revising for the night?

If I read any more of this book I think I might just shut down. Literally ask me any page from The Great Gatsby and I could recite it to you in half a second.

THAT’S how many times I’ve read it.

Hunk says that should be my new party trick, get people to yell out random page numbers and just say the first few lines.

You ready for the exam?

No exam talk please ;_;

I just wanna relax and drift off to sleep.

Distract me.

With what?
Anything! What’d you do today? How are the kittens? How’s the mullet?

Worked. No weird customers - or none weirder than usual.

Good.

Caught one mid-yawn.

My heart is melting UGH. It should be illegal to be that cute?????

And the mullet is fine?

Maybe getting a little long? My mum keeps not so subtly trying to tell me I need a haircut.

Every time I walk past her she pretends to snip it off. I might hide all the scissors in the house.

I agree 100% with Mother Keith.

Shave it all off and enter the 21st century.

Are you ever gonna get bored of that joke?

Nope, don’t think I will.

I wouldn’t expect any less.

Did you talk to your bro?

No.

He didn’t call.

You could call him?

He said he’d call.

Hm.

Alright, alright.

I’m breaking out. Look what Hell Week is doing to me.

What am I supposed to be looking at here?
My face??? And the spots????

You don’t have a single spot, what the hell?

I do?

Like, on my cheeks? There’s TWO.

I literally had to zoom in as far as I could go to even see them a tiny bit.

THEY’RE STILL THERE.

Your face is fine, Lance.

Ah.

Thanks.

I didn’t mean it like that.

Too late, I’ve already interpreted it like that.

And, you defo did.

…

Maybe a little.

Success!!! Another compliment from Keith.

I shall treasure it forever.

Go to sleep, Lance.

Fine, but only because I’m literally struggling to keep my eyes open right now.

What the hell? Why didn’t you just go to sleep earlier?

I dunno how many times you’re gonna make me say I like to talking to you, but…

I like talking to you.

Don’t start blushing now.

I’m not blushing.

Allegedly.

I’m not???

[IMAGE SENT]

See?

[IMAGE RECEIVED]

Ahdhgnddfudgnhklcjgghsascgf
(22:15) You gotta
(22:15) You’ve gotta give me a warning before you do things like that, Keith.

(22:16) Do things like what?

(22:16) LIKE THAT.

(22:17) I’m so confused?


(22:17) Playing innocent, I see.

(22:18) I honestly have no idea what you’re talking about.

(22:18) You’re not fooling anyone.

(22:19) ??????

(22:19) Go to sleep Lance, you’re not making any sense.

(22:20) YOU’RE NOT MAKING ANY SENSE.

(22:20) ...

(22:20) Sleep.

(22:21) Night, Keith.

(22:23) Good night.

---

30/08/2016

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

MISSED INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

(01:20) Keith, I’m so sorry I called so late.

(01:20) Busy day and it slipped my mind.

(01:21) Just

(01:21) I’ll call you tomorrow, alright?

(10:03) It’s 10am and I’ve already had the customer from hell.
Why don’t people understand expiry dates are on their vouchers for a reason????

They’re not there for fun??????

Oh God.

He’s back and asking to speak to The Manager.

Sure you dick, lemme just get my DAD for you.

That went as exactly as you’d think it would go. Hell Customer kept lying about me and my dad was just like ‘hmmm, now that really doesn’t sound like my son ’ and the guy just kind of looked like he swallowed something really gross before backing away.

UGHFHHGH. HE’S BACK.

And he’s buying it at full price. What a surprise.

Wouldn’t even look me in the eye when I was scanning his stuff. Dick.

I hope your exam’s going well, by the way.

Where did the phrase ‘the customer is always right’ even come from???

The customer is never right.

Literally never.

Some guy in London apparently.

Ah, another reason to hate the British.

Colonise the world and then ruin the retail industry for the rest of us.

I’ll add it to the list.

How was the exam?

Decent.

Very nearly didn’t finish, so my last question was bit rushed but I think I kicked ass early enough in the paper to make up for that???

Two down, three to go!!

What’s tomorrow?

Biology.

Probs my strongest one, so I’m not too worried, but still gonna spend the rest of the day revising.

Cool.

Have fun.
(14:25) I’ll be doing the exact opposite of that, but thanks.
(14:25) Try not to miss me too much.
(14:26) Ha.
(14:28) Cruel.

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’
REJECT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

(16:00) Keith?
(16:01) Are you busy?
(16:45) Keith?

(17:09) Can you do me a favour?
(17:10) Yeah, sure. What?
(17:11) Can you stop ignoring your brother?
(17:11) I’m not ignoring him.
(17:11) I’m busy.
(17:14) Yeah, okay.
(17:14) Except every time you ignore him, he complains to Matt and then Matt calls me and I can hear Shiro panicking in the background and
(17:14) It’s not fun.
(17:15) Sorry.
(17:15) Didn’t mean to get you involved.
(17:18) Just talk to him Keith.
(17:19) Yeah, yeah.

(17:23) Hi.
(17:24) Hey.
(17:24) Can I call you?
Can we just talk like this?

Sure, sure. Is everything alright?

I feel like it’s not, and I’m missing something.

Everything’s fine at home? Mum and dad are okay? You’re okay?

Everything’s fine, Shiro.

I dunno.

Just talk to me Keith. Say what’s on your mind.

I don’t know how to say it.

You’re hardly ever home anymore and that’s fine but

I dunno.

I didn’t think we’d drift this far apart.

That’s all.

It’s dumb.

That’s not dumb, what the hell Keith?

It is.

People drift, people move away, that’s how life works. I get it.

I just didn’t think it’d happen with us.

And

If it’s happening with you, it’ll happen with Pidge and it’ll happen with

Yeah.

I’m not good with this kind of stuff, sorry.

Are you sure I can’t call you?

Don’t really wanna talk right now.

That’s fine. Fine.

Just

Nobody’s leaving you Keith. We can be half away across the galaxy from each other and you’re still going to be my little brother.

I know that.

Do you really?
(17:54) Yeah.

(17:55) *Maybe I won’t bring Allura to meet you guys this time.*

(17:56) No.

(17:56) Don’t do that. I want to meet her, really.

(17:56) *It’s not a big deal, we can postpone that till later.*

(17:57) It is.

(17:57) I do want to meet her. Just

(17:57) Can we still just hang out - just me and you? For a bit?

(18:00) 100%.

(18:01) Thank you.

(18:01) Really.

(18:01) I’m gonna sleep now, I think.

(18:01) Thanks for understanding.

(18:04) *You don’t have to thank me for that, Keith.*

(18:05) I know, I know.

(20:06) Revision has been abandoned in favour of playing Pokémon Go.

(20:25) *There’s a Dragonite in the staff room.*

(20:25) I can’t believe I’m about to risk my life for a computer graphic but here we go

(20:41) Update: we got caught.

(20:41) Detention tomorrow night for two hours.

(20:41) Caught the Dragonite though, so who’s the real winners here????

(20:41) Me and Hunk, that’s right.

(21:25) Keith?

(22:53) I guess you probably slept early tonight.

(22:54) Night!

(23:01) *Hey Pidge.*

(23:01) Might be a little weird, but
(23:02) Is Keith alright?

(23:02) Lance mentioned he’s been a little off lately and now he’s moping because he hasn’t responded all night.

(23:02) So yeah, everything’s good right?

(23:07) I think so?

(23:08) I tried going over earlier, but his mum says he went to bed really early tonight.

(23:08) I’ll check on him tomorrow.

(23:10) Cool, cool.

(23:10) Also, I have a potential venue for Operation Oblivious.

(23:11) A bunch of us are going to this fair on Saturday to celebrate end of exams. It’s not too far from you guys so…….

(23:14) Ahhhhh, nice.

(23:14) I’ll see what I can do.

(23:16) We’re still on for Thursday? Or are we taking a break this week?

(23:18) You mind if we take a break? These exams are slowly killing me and I’m not sure I can take any extra work atm.

(23:20) Yeah that’s fine! I figured it’d be something like that.

(23:20) See you on Saturday?

(23:21) Let’s hope so!

---

31/08/2016

(11:12) So...

(11:12) How are things?

(11:25) Aren’t you supposed to be learning?

(11:26) Don’t avoid the question.

(11:30) Did Shiro message you?

(11:32) No, I’m just a great friend who knows when something’s up.

(11:32) So wassup?
Nothing, things are sorted.

Kind of.

Or at least, it’s getting there.

Hm. You spoke to Shiro?

Yeah, yeah.

It’s fine. Don’t worry about it, Pidge.

But

Thanks for worrying.

Feel like it’s my job to worry about you.

I should start charging you.

In fact, I’m starting now.

Come with me somewhere on Saturday as payment for my troubles?

...Where?

And isn’t it supposed to be really hot this weekend?

Pretty hot.

You hate hot weather. All you do is complain about the sun and sweat.

I’ve turned over a new leaf, I’m a summer child now.

Right.

Will you come or not?

Where???

There’s this fair happening and I want to go.

You...want to go to a funfair on the hottest day of the year?

You?

Is that so strange??????

Yes.

Ha ha.

There’s this ride I want to check out. Saw some videos online and I can’t figure out how it works without killing everyone????

Ah, so you just want to be a nerd and check out a ride?
(12:12) If you want to put it like that, then sure.

(12:13) You gonna come or not?

(12:15) Yeah, yeah I’ll come.

(12:16) THANK YOU!!!!

(12:17) You owe me though.

(12:18) Suddenly I can’t read.

(12:18) Operation Oblivious is good to go on Saturday.

(14:06) Nice!!!

(14:06) We can sort out times later.

(14:06) I can’t believe this is happening. We should record it.

(14:08) Oh, definitely.

(14:24) Don’t wanna toot my own horn too early, but I think I aced that exam.

(14:24) Nah, I’m gonna toot it.

(14:25) I definitely aced that exam.

(14:30) Ah.

(14:30) I dunno if I’m overstepping or whatever, but I hope you’re good, man.

(14:30) And you can talk to me if you want.

(14:31) Or not. Whatever.

(14:35) Alright, gotta go for a two-hour detention with Hunk for ‘breaking and entering’.

(14:35) BYE!

(14:37) 100% do not recommend developing feelings for someone.

(14:40) WHY ARE YOU TEXTING ME?

(14:40) I was gonna send you a note but I thought Iverson might notice a paper plane flying across the classroom so...

(14:43) And what happens when he notices us on our phones? You’re not very subtle, you know?

(14:44) Excuse you, I’m plenty subtle.
You’re the one who’s not subtle, you make it so obvious you’re texting.

DON’T PUT YOUR BAG IN FRONT OF YOU.

That just makes it more obvious.

Just pretend you’re typing on your calculator or something, he won’t notice.

If my phone gets confiscated I’m blaming you.

That’s a risk I’m willing to take.

Wassup, why’re you all moody over Keith?

I didn’t say it was about Keith…

If you want my help you gotta be honest.

Okay, so it’s about Keith.

He hasn’t replied since yesterday and he was little off then as well and I dunno

I think he’s going through some Stuff but he didn’t really give me much to go on.

Sometimes I forget how adorable you are.

????

Rude. I’m adorable 24/7 how could you possibly forget?

And ??? Huh???

I mean like, you’re a good friend. A really good friend.

Not that I forgot that. I mean

It’s usually directed at me, you know? So I’m used to it.

But like, seeing it directed at someone else?

I’m like ‘oh yeah, Lance is a pretty awesome friend isn’t he??’

Hunk you’re making me bLUSH.

Yeah...holy shit, you’re really red dude.

That was a pretty big compliment??????

Eh. It’s true though.

When you care about people you’re like...I dunno how to explain it

But you’re something else.

Makes me glad to have you as a friend, and I’m pretty sure Keith is glad as well.

Stop making me blush please, Iverson keeps giving me weird looks.
He just came over and asked me if I need to use the toilet.

LOOK WHAT YOU’VE DONE HUNK.

Also, ew. Never need to be that close to Iverson again. He had broccoli in his teeth.

Lunch was three hours ago??????

HA.

I’m just saying, if you are how you normally are, I’m sure Keith appreciates you just being there.

He probably just needs some time to himself.

Just give him time.

When did you get so wise, Hunk?

I’ve always been this wise.

Last month you tried to convince me to wrap myself in bubble wrap and throw myself down a flight of stairs.

IT WOULD’VE WORKED.

MY CALCULATIONS WERE PERFECT. YOU WOULDN’T HAVE FELT A THING!!!!!!

Allegedly.

Do you wanna play ‘How Many Animal Noises Can Lance Make Before Iverson Goes Crazy’?

Always.

Start with the horse, that’s my favourite.

Yes, I am sending you almost illegally cute cat pics as a way of apologising for the radio silence today.
They’re growing so fast????

(21:40) Is that normal? They were tiny like yesterday???

(21:41) They’re still pretty tiny?

(21:42) Nah, they’re definitely bigger.

(21:42) Cause you see them all the time, you can’t tell. But I can.

(21:43) Also, you don’t have to apologise for that. It’s cool.

(21:44) Hm.

(21:44) I’m glad your exam went well.

(21:45) So well?

(21:45) I literally walked out of the exam smiling. That never happens.

(21:46) Finished super early as well.


(21:46) And then Physics is gonna kick my ass on Friday.

(21:47) How was your day? Are things...better?

(21:50) A little.

(21:51) Do you wanna talk about it, or…

(21:52) Can we talk about something else?

(21:53) Me and Hunk have this game where we make the most ridiculous noises and watch our teacher just slowly lose it.

(21:53) Today was animal noises.

(21:54) He was literally running around the classroom, looking in cupboards and opening drawers looking for animals??????

(21:54) Kept saying ‘can you not hear that?’ and me and Hunk were dying but we had to put the straightest faces on and just be like ‘hear what???’

(21:55) Wish we filmed it, cause I was nearly in tears by the end of it.

(21:55) I think he caught on towards the end cause he was looking at me a little suspiciously, but then again he always looks at me suspiciously so who knows?

(21:56) You never have a dull day, do you?

(21:56) Nope, not really.

(21:57) How was your day? Any customers from hell?

(21:59) Didn’t go into work today. Just worked on my bike for a bit.
Did the new parts come?

Yep.

So it’s finished?

You can ride it?

Well…

It starts?

And seems like it’s working properly, but my dad wants to check it over himself before I can take it out.

Holy shit.

You know what that means right?

No…

You owe me a ride.

Ah, right. That.

You were serious about that, right?

Or did I read this really, really wrong…

How are you reading it?

Mm.

We’re friends, right?

Yeah.

And

And that’s it?

I

What?

Nothing, nothing, I think I’m reading this very, very wrong.

I’m gonna sleep now.

Got an exam’s ass to kick tomorrow.

Night.

…

Night, Lance.
If I send you something, do you promise to delete it straight away and never bring it up again?

Did you mean to send this to Pidge?

No, I meant to send it to you this time.

Oh.

:) Yeah, of course.

Thanks.

Did I mess up?

[SCREENSHOT SENT]

[SCREENSHOT RECEIVED]

Ahhhhhhhhhh.

That’s a yes?

And delete it.

Deleted.

I don’t think you gave him the answer he was looking for.

Hm.

He likes me?

I’d say so.

As a friend…

I’d bet he probably likes you a little more than that, Keith.

Yeah, I thought maybe…

But then, I thought it was just wishful thinking so…

This is so needlessly complicated.

I don’t like it.

But you like him?

We’ve established that, Shiro. Keep up.

Well, maybe tell him that.
01/09/2016

(16:03) Hey.

(16:10) Hi!

(16:11) How was your exam?

(16:13) It was good, thanks.

(16:15) Nice.

(16:30) Are you...alright?

(16:31) I’m fine!

(16:32) You’re not a very good liar are you?

(16:33) I’m not lying, I’m fine.

(16:33) Just tired.

(16:34) Right.

(16:34) I’ll leave you then.

(16:35) We can talk later?

(16:36) Yeah.

(16:38) I think I fucked up.

(16:40) Can you hear that noise through the walls?

(16:40) That’s the sound of me groaning.

(16:41) Your bedside manner is amazing.

(16:42) …

(16:42) Lemme finish my homework and I’ll come over.

(16:50) You in the library?
Yep.
Come back to the room?
I think I fucked up.
Lance.......
Gimme five mins.

So, Operation Oblivious has hit a slight snag.
Both targets are more oblivious than we’d previously accounted for.
YOU’RE TELLING ME.
I’ve never met two denser people in my life, and I haven’t even met Keith yet.
This is a lot more tiring than I thought it would be.
I’m never playing Cupid again.
Who’s gonna crack first or are we gonna have to cancel Saturday?
Nah, Lance’ll say something.
He’s been writing a message all evening. Think he’s on his 20th draft of it now.
Wait wait wait waitttttt.
I think he’s sending it now?
Yeah he just screamed and chucked his phone across the room. He definitely sent it.
What did it say?
No idea, he wouldn’t let me read it???
Fingers crossed it’ll work?
Yeah, yeah.
Keith is at my door???
His face is really red and he’s just waving his phone around.
I can’t believe this.
Please tell him to reply soon. I think Lance might actually explode if he doesn’t reply in the next two minutes.
I’m trying.
Alright, done.
That was a Trip.
Hope they know I’m never gonna forget what they’ve put us through and I’ll definitely be bringing it up at their wedding.

Same.

So

I’m gonna just talk and get this out now before it ends up ruining everything because I wasn’t kidding when I said I consider you a friend and that I really like talking to you, and I don’t want that to stop, but

I also like you.

Like, like you. You know???

And I thought maybe that was mutual but maybe it’s not - and that’s fine - but yeah, I wanted to say something cause talking to you is really the best part of my day and

Not talking to you today really fucking sucked.

K, now I’m just gonna go...and scream.

It’s mutual.

I’m really shit at this kind of stuff, but it’s mutual.

And...same.

Alright, alright.

So

What happens now?

I don’t know.

Hm.

Let’s just

Keep going like normal? Go with the flow? Whatever happens, happens?

That’d be really great.

I’m new to this and sometimes it’s a little overwhelming.

New to what?

Feelings.

Romantic feelings.
Ah.

I feel special.

I think you are.

kEITH

You say you’re new to things like this and then you say things like that so casually???? Is this what dating you is gonna be like???

Don’t think my heart will be able to handle it.

Are

Are we dating?

Is that what this is???

Hm. No, I don’t think so. Not yet anyway?

But, like…

I think I’d like to. One day. I’d like, go on a date with you.

Same.

So, one day we’ll go on a date and see where it goes from there. But right now

Right now we’re just…

Getting to know each other?

Yeah. Sounds good.

Just so you know, though…

When we do go on that date, I’m gonna date you so hard.

Prepare to get your socks knocked off. I’m pulling out all the stops.

I wouldn’t accept anything less.

02/09/2016

LAST EXAM!!

LAST EXAAAAAM!!

Wish me luck, we’re about to go in.
(10:04) Good luck.

(10:04) Kiss for good luck????

(10:05) Are you going to be like this all the time, now that we’ve…told each other how we feel?

(10:05) Most definitely.

(10:06) Good luck, Lance.

(10:08) You’re no fun.

(12:20) [IMAGE SENT]

(12:20) These are the faces of two guys who have just been through the exam of Hell and have emerged victorious.

(12:20) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(12:21) Yes, those are tears in the corners of my eyes. I’m THAT happy.

(12:21) That's Hunk by the way, just in case you hadn't guessed.

(12:25) Um.

(12:25) That's a really big smile.

(12:25) You look really happy.

(12:26) I AM.

(12:26) Don't think I did as well as I did in Biology, but I defo did decently.

(12:27) aND NOW I'M FREE??????

(12:27) Free to sleep for about ten hours straight which is exactly what I'm gonna do now.

(12:28) Are you free later tonight?

(12:31) I think so? I don't have anything planned anyway.

(12:33) Nice.

(12:33) Are you in the mood for a terrible movie marathon? We can Rabbit?

(12:35) I'm always in the mood for a terrible movie marathon.

(12:36) Cool.

(12:36) I'm gonna nap for a bit but when I wake up, we can do it?

(12:36) I heard about this one called 'Sharktopus' and it looks absolutely awful.

(12:37) I think you're gonna love it.
You had me at 'Sharktopus'.

Cool.

I'll message you whenever I wake up.

Have a good day, babe!

I

Wha

Ahhh, are you not into pet names?

I'm blushing?????

So you are into them?

Sweetie.

Pumpkin.

Please stop, my dad is staring at me weirdly.

Darling.

Angel.

Honey Bun.

lANCE

Angel Face.

Dove.

I'M TURNING MY PHONE OFF.

Cutie Patootie.

Stud Muffin.

Sugar Lips.

BYE.

Chapter End Notes

*big sean voice* BOIIIII

this was a wild chap

(ty for all the kudos/comments/bookmarks you guys fuel me i tell u, u fuel me)
Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

key:
lance
 keith
 pidge
 hunk
 shiro

See the end of the chapter for more notes

03/09/2016

(11:49) Are you guys ready? We’re leaving in a bit, I think.

(11:52) Lance is still sleeping.

(11:53) What?

(11:54) He’s still sleeping.

(11:54) Stayed up all night watching something with Keith.

(11:56) Oohhh, that explains why he looks like death.

(11:56) Yeah. Sharktopus or something.

(11:58) I don’t even want to know.

(12:03) K, he’s up.

(12:04) What did you do…

(12:05) Lance is very ticklish.

(12:05) VERY TICKLISH.

(12:06) And now he’s also out for revenge so I’m gonna run.

(12:07) I’ll message you when we get there?

(12:08) Cool, see you later.

(12:08) And good luck?

(12:09) Thanfdgkdghkdsda

(12:10) Amazing.
(13:43) Do you want to swap best friends?

(13:45) What did Hunk do?

(13:46) I can’t divulge exact details because you might use it against me one day and I can’t have that.

(13:46) Just know my revenge will be swift and painful.

(13:48) Isn’t that supposed to be ‘swift and painless’?

(13:49) No comment, your honour.

(13:49) So, Sharktopus was fun.

(13:50) Only 80% as terrible as I thought it’d be.

(13:53) It was amazing and you loved every second of it.

(13:55) It was decent and I didn’t hate every second of it.

(13:55) Next time I’m choosing the movie, though.

(13:56) Think you’ll love Pacific Rim.

(13:57) I’m offended you don’t think I’ve already watched it before.

(13:59) Cool. Hope you’re ready to watch it again.

(13:59) With added Lance Commentary™.

(14:00) I’m looking forward to it.

(14:00) By the way, I’m out with Pidge today, so I might not reply quickly.

(14:00) Also, really low battery.

(14:02) Yeah, yeah, same. Going out with Hunk.

(14:02) Have a good day, babe.

(14:03) We’re not doing this again.

(14:03) Pidge’ll never let me live it down if she sees.

(14:03) Snookums.

(14:04) My phone’s about to die.

(14:05) LIKELY STORY.

(14:06) It is. I forgot to charge it last night because someone, not naming any names, distracted me and I fell asleep without plugging it in.

(14:06) Why’re you acting like you don’t enjoy my company, hmm?
By the time they’ve paid for their tickets, had their hands stamped by a sullen looking member of staff, and actually stepped across the threshold to enter the fairground, Hunk is beginning to suspect that he and Pidge may have overlooked a few tiny, tiny, details in the planning of this whole thing.

A few tiny - almost inconsequential, really - things like, not accounting for the sheer size of the fairground, which stretches across acres of countryside with no immediate end in sight. Or things like the thousands and thousands of people who have all flocked to the fair on the hottest day of the year so far, creating an almost gridlock effect of families and groups of sweaty kids shuffling between rides, games and burger vans, with barely an inch of personal space between them.

And, as if the size of the place and the number of people squashed within its temporary fences (a health hazard, surely?) wasn’t enough to make Hunk realise that finding Pidge and Keith amongst all this madness might be slightly more difficult than previously assumed, Hunk quickly discovers that there’s one more thing they’d neglected to consider. And that is, of course, Lance himself.

“We need to think about this strategically,” Lance says seriously, completely oblivious to Hunk’s inner turmoil as he stares critically at the blown-up fairground map printed on the noticeboard in front of them, brows furrowed and lips set into a thoughtful frown. “Spinny rides after lunch are a no-go obviously—” He pauses for a second or two, glancing over his shoulder to shoot Hunk a look that seems to scream ‘you’re welcome’ before he turns his attention back to the map.

Hunk blanches, already picturing their first hour in the fair spent running between rides with mildly terrifying (if not painfully accurate) names like THE DEVASTATOR or VORTEX and he feels his stomach do a premature little flip in protest. “Or,” he says hopefully as he inches a little closer
towards Lance. “Or, we could just not do the spinny rides at all, maybe?”

Lance glances over his shoulder again and shoots him a Look; a look that very clearly says ‘Hunk, you poor naive soul, if you don’t think I’m going on every ride in this fair at least two times before we leave, then you don’t know me as well as I thought you did’.

“Fine,” Hunk sighs, recognising the defeat as he watches Lance pluck a handheld version of the map out of the arms of a passing member of staff before eagerly spreading it open in front of himself. “I’m just saying, we don’t need to rush. We can take our time and—” He pauses, lips twitching upwards into a soft grin as he feels his phone vibrate in his pocket. “Let’s make sure we really see everything.”

“Uh, duh,” Lance scoffs, waving the map dramatically in front of Hunk’s face a few times. “That’s the point? I do want to see and do everything. At least twice. Maybe three times if we’re lucky.”

“No,” Hunk says, shuffling a tiny bit closer to Lance so he can drop his voice down to a conspiratorial whisper. “I mean really see everything. You never know who—” He pauses and nudges Lance twice for good measure. “You never know who might be hanging around.”

“Are you feeling alright?” Lance asks, looking genuinely concerned as he peers over at him. “The heat’s not getting to you? Didn’t eat anything weird last night? Post-exam stress finally hitting you?”

“I’m fine,” Hunk snorts, swiping away Lance’s hand before he can press it against his forehead, presumably to try and check his temperature. “Just— Try and take your time, alright?”

All in all, Hunk’s pretty proud of his not-so-subtle speech to try and get Lance to slow it down a little, but he feels his pride quickly ebbing away when, not even half a second later, Lance is yanking on his arm and dragging him through the crowd, yelling something about a ride named HURL (what kind of name is that for a ride, anyway?) being just around the corner, and it becomes painfully clear to him that Lance hasn’t heard a word he’s said.

Hunk sighs again, relaxing into Lance’s impressively strong grip on him (note to self: don’t come between Lance and terrifyingly named funfair rides) as he tries not to think about how the day really hasn’t gotten off to the best start. Wondering if Pidge is having slightly better luck than he is, Hunk tugs out his phone from his pocket and groans quietly when he spots a preview of Pidge’s message flashing across his screen.

(15:16) I may have a slight problem.

(15:24) You and me both, buddy.

Thinking about it, Pidge decides that maybe it’s a little impressive that it only takes twenty minutes for them to completely lose all sight of each other amongst the busy crowd. Incredibly annoying, yes, but also still oddly impressive.

Mostly because, one minute they’re standing next to each other, quietly grumbling about the busy and noisy crowd that surrounds them from every direction, then the next minute Pidge finds herself standing alone next to a cotton candy machine, wondering where the hell Keith has managed to
disappear off to in the time it took her to literally *blink*.

So yeah, pretty impressive. Annoying, but impressive all the same.

Pidge pulls her bottom lip between her teeth and chews nervously as she stands on her tiptoes to try and get a better view of the crowd, searching for Keith’s familiar frown amongst all the grinning and laughing faces. They’ve been separated for less than five minutes so, in *theory*, it’s not like Keith could have gotten very far, but the crowd moves quickly and Pidge knows it’s only too likely that he could’ve been swept up in it and ended up halfway across the fair by now.

If ten years of weekend camping trips with her parents and Matt have taught her anything about coping in emergencies, it’s that when you’re lost you’re supposed to stay in one spot and wait for someone to circle back and find you. But, considering Keith hasn’t made his way back to the cotton candy machine yet after being AWOL for eight minutes and counting and she’s not in any danger of falling into a river or being eaten by a bear (‘Dad, there aren’t any bears out here’  ‘YOU NEVER KNOW!!’), Pidge decides that maybe venturing a little further into the fair to search for him herself won’t be the worst thing she could do right now.

She tugs out her phone as she shuffles away from the cotton candy machine - the owner looks like he’s about two seconds away from worriedly asking her if she needs some help finding her parents - and types in a quick message to Hunk, letting him know that things probably aren’t going to go as smoothly as they’d hoped.

“Honestly ,” she huffs under her breath as she begins to make her way through the crowd, sidestepping frantic looking parents trying to wrangle their young children together and excited kids shrieking and shouting as they run between rides. “You try and do something nice for someone and they just disappear.”

And it doesn’t help that Keith’s phone is dead. Which, honestly, is just *typical*. The one day of their entire lives where she needs him to have his phone in working condition and he doesn’t even have the decency to charge it overnight? Rude. Just plain *rude*, Keith.

She frowns as she turns a corner, still craning her neck in every direction looking Keith among the crowd. Maybe this is a sign from the universe that Keith and Lance should never meet? Maybe she should just call it a day and spend the rest of the afternoon riding the teacups and hope Keith turns up eventually. He’s a resourceful kid, she’s pretty sure he’ll survive.

Probably.

She’s doing her best to squeeze past a group of kids huddled around a (probably rigged) fairground game when her phone vibrates. For a second or two she allows herself the brief delusion that Keith somehow managed to find somewhere to charge his phone, and he’s messaging her his location, but Hunk’s name quickly flashes across her screen and she has to accept that maybe things just aren’t going to be that simple.

Scratch that. Things *definitely* aren’t going to be that simple, if Hunk’s reply to her own, mildly panicked, message is anything to go by. Things are going to be the very opposite of simple.

She groans loudly (and stubbornly ignores the strange looks she gets from the people passing her in the crowd) as she punches in a quick reply to Hunk, stuffs her phone back into her pocket, and begins making her way towards the teacups.

She knows a sign from the universe when she sees one.
Hunk is acting strangely.

And it’s not his usual ‘I don’t like spinny rides’ type of strange - which Lance still doesn’t really understand because he’s pretty sure it’s a proven fact that spinny rides are the best funfair rides - because that’s a kind of strange Lance has become accustomed to over the years. No, he’s acting really strange.

He can mumble ‘I’m fine’ as many times as he likes, but they’ve been friends - best friends, actually - for long enough for Lance to know when something is up, and something is definitely up.

“VORTEX is about two minutes away,” Lance says innocently as they wander through the fair, watching carefully for Hunk’s reaction. “Wanna go see how long the queue is?”

“Yeah, yeah, sure,” Hunk hums absentmindedly, frowning down at his phone as his thumbs move across the screen at lightning speed. “Sounds great.”

If Lance hadn’t already suspected that something was up with Hunk, this would’ve been the final nail in the coffin. Because they’ve just come off their third spinny ride and if previous experience has taught him anything, it’s that Hunk should be a shade of green to put a traffic light to shame, and the very idea of lining up for yet another ‘death trap’ (Hunk’s words while in the queue for HURL) should have him yanking Lance by the collar to drag him off to some other slower, less spinny ride. Preferably one designed for small children.

“You want to go on VORTEX?” Lance asks, staring critically at Hunk as he tries to figure out whether his best friend has been abducted by aliens and replaced with a super realistic robot when he wasn’t looking. “Even though we’ve done three spinny rides already and just ate?”

Hunk barely spares him a glance, still frowning at his phone as he taps the screen hurriedly. “Yeah, sounds awesome. Let’s go.”

The abducted-by-aliens-and-replaced-with-a-robot theory is starting to seem more and plausible with
each passing second. Maybe Keith is onto something with all his conspiracy theories.

“Alright, time out,” Lance says loudly, stopping in his tracks to tug Hunk to a standstill. “What’s up?”

“Up?” Hunk looks up from his phone and offers Lance an extremely unconvincing grin. “Nothing’s up.”

“You haven’t complained about a ride since we got off HURL. And that was our first ride.”

Hunk rolls his eyes and makes a dismissive noise, like Lance is the one who’s acting strange here. “Maybe I’ve just had a change of heart. These rides aren’t that bad really.”

“THE DEVASTATOR had twelve loop-the-loops and a corkscrew section and you didn’t scream once.” Which, honestly, is a little impressive considering Lance was screaming his lungs out by the fifth loop-the-loop. He squints over at Hunk and shuffles a little bit closer. “Who are you and what have you done with Hunk?”

“Stop being melodramatic,” Hunk laughs, but it’s not his usual laugh - the laugh that makes Lance’s lips twitch upwards involuntarily because it’s that infectious - it’s a forced laugh, and does nothing to hide the lingering worry Lance can see hiding in his eyes. “I’m fine.”

Lance purses his lips into a thin line. “You’re not.”

“I am,” Hunk says stubbornly, snapping his fingers and making a gun sound - except it doesn’t really sound like a gun, it sounds more like fireworks, but that’s not an argument Lance is willing to get into (again). “Honestly, I’m fine. I just—”

Lance raises a brow. “You just?”

Hunk bites his bottom lip and purposely avoids Lance’s gaze. “Maybe I am feeling a little queasy?”

Lance crosses his arms over his chest and frowns. “You’re sure? That’s it? Nothing else is wrong?”

“Yeah, just— That last ride took a lot out of me.”

Hunk’s phone vibrates in his hands and Lance watches as he slides it open and begins texting rapidly again.

Queasy, my ass.

“Who’re you texting?” Lance asks carefully, inching a little closer towards him to try and read his screen. Hunk easily dodges out of the way, turning around slightly so the screen is covered by glare from the sun. “Oh,” Lance’s grin turns sly as he tries (and fails) to snatch the phone out of Hunk’s hands. “Is it a girl?” He rolls his tongue on the word ‘girl’ and laughs when Hunk, predictably, turns red. “What’s her name, the one you were talking to outside the Geography block the other day? Shana? Sharon?”

“Shay,” Hunk helpfully supplies, desperately trying to fight down his sudden blush. “Her name’s Shay.”

“Right, right,” Lance grins over at Hunk. “Shay. Is that who you’ve been texting all day? Ah—” He pauses, a sudden thought springing into his mind. “Is she here?”

Hunk frowns. “What?”
“Shay. Is she here? Like—” Lance gestures to the crowd. “Is she around here somewhere and you want to go and meet her and do, I dunno, cliché romantic stuff like ride the Ferris wheel or win her a giant toy or something?’

“Uh— Yeah,” Hunk starts nodding enthusiastically. Maybe a little too enthusiastically, but hey, who is Lance to judge. “That is exactly what’s going on right now. One hundred per cent. Damn it, Lance, you got me.”

“Well, you weren’t very subtle.”

Hunk laughs - and Lance is happy to see that it’s his real laugh this time, the kind of laugh that has Lance grinning too - and shakes his head at him. “I’ll keep that in mind for the next time. So,” he pauses to scratch at the back of his neck nervously. “So, you don’t mind if I disappear for a bit? Just a bit? I just want to go and say hi and, uh, check she’s alright.”

Lance frowns. “Why wouldn’t she be alright?”

“It’s a big fair, she might— She might be overwhelmed?” Hunk says slowly, though it comes out sounding more like a question than anything else. “You never know.”

“Uh huh,” Lance hums. He can’t get rid of the niggling feeling that Hunk is still hiding something from him, but he knows when to leave something alone. Hunk will tell him in his own time. “It’s fine, go and be romantic.”

“It’s not like that —”

“Yeah, yeah, whatever,” Lance shoves Hunk gently in the sides, shooing him away. “Just go, man. I’m gonna take a break from the rides and try some of the games.”

“Lance,” Hunk says seriously, gaze flitting over to the row of gaming booths, all bursting with giant stuffed toys as practically impossible to get prizes. “You know those are all rigged, right?”

“Ahhh,” Lance says with a smirk, already walking backwards towards a shooting game booth he saw a few minutes ago. “Maybe to the untrained hand, but for an expert like me? Piece of cake.”

“You’re going to lose all your money.”

“Your faith in me is so touching.”

“They’re going to bleed you dry.”

“What’s that?” Lance says, pretending to cup his hand over his ears. “I can’t hear you. Did you say ‘good luck my dearest best friend, maybe try and win me a toy while you’re at it?’”

“I said the exact opposite of that.”

“Hm, nope. Don’t think so. You definitely said what I heard,” Lance shrugs. “Come and find me when you’re done with Shay. But don’t take too long, there’s a sky drop ride I really want to try.”

Hunk groans as he swivels around, turning in the opposite direction Lance is going. “This is you getting your revenge for this morning, isn’t it?”

“Hunk, I’d never be that cruel,” Lance laughs, offering Hunk as brief wave as he turns on his heels and begins making a beeline for the shooting game booth. “Good luck with everything.” He hears Hunk mumble something that sounds like ‘it’s not like that’, but by the time he turns around, he’s
disappeared into the crowd and Lance is alone.

“Alright, McClain,” Lance mumbles to himself as he approaches the booth and locks eyes with shady looking guy who’s running it. “Time to put your money where your mouth is.”

(15:57) Where’re you now?

(15:58) Teacups.

(15:59) Still?

(16:02) It’s a very relaxing ride…

(16:02) Right…

(16:02) Lance is about to lose all his money playing one of those games.

(16:03) The very obviously rigged ones?

(16:04) …

(16:04) He says he’s an expert.

(16:04) anyway

(16:05) I’ll come and sit with you for a bit.

(16:06) What? Hunk, no??

(16:06) It’s fine.

(16:07) Keith’ll eventually walk past the teacups and I’ll grab him then.

(16:08) But you’re alone and lost.

(16:08) I’m not lost, Keith is lost. I’m having the time of my life on the teacups.

(16:08) Also, I’m thinking about investing in one of those baby leash things for the next time we go out.

(16:09) I somehow don’t think Keith will agree to wearing one of those.

(16:10) It’s for his own good, he’ll get used to it.

(16:10) But seriously, you don’t have to come and wait with me.

(16:10) We should probably accept Operation Oblivious is a dud.

(16:13) Pidge, we’re friends right?

(16:13) I’m not gonna let you wait on your own for maybe hours when we’re literally in the same
(16:14) It’s fine.

(16:15) Really?

(16:17) Yeah, I need a break from the rides anyway.

(16:17) LANCE MADE ME RIDE HURL TWICE.

(16:17) TWICE.

(16:18) Think that’s his revenge for the whole tickling thing this morning.

(16:19) How cruel.

(16:20) I know right???

(16:20) K, I’m coming up to the teacups.

(16:20) Start waving or something so I can see you.

---

Well, Keith thinks as he doubles back on himself for what has to be the umpteenth time this past hour. This is terrible.

His mother is going to kill him. His father is going to kill him. Pidge’s parents are going to kill him. Matt is going to kill him. Shiro is going to be disappointed in him. Basically, there’s no way that this is going to have a happy ending for him.

He’s lost Pidge, his phone is dead, the crowd is too noisy and oddly sticky, it’s really hot, and the smell of burgers and hot-dogs simmering in grease mixed with the sickly sweet stench of cotton candy is starting to get to him. So, yeah. Not his best day out. Definitely on par with that one trip to Costco when he was nine which ended with him sitting in the pet food aisle for twenty minutes waiting for Shiro to come and find him.

He’s not even entirely sure how it happened. One moment Pidge was by his side, quietly muttering something about the size of the crowd and the amount of small children with sticky hands and faces running around, and the next thing he knows he’s being pushed and shoved by a group of overzealous kids trying to get to a ride and Pidge is nowhere to be seen.

He’s not panicking yet, because it has only been an hour or so and he knows Pidge is smart enough to stay safe and out of trouble, but he can’t help that irritating feeling of worry that’s beginning to creep up on him. The fair is bigger and busier than they’d expected and that he hasn’t found Pidge already isn’t doing much to help quell his unease about their predicament.

He scowls as he turns another corner and realises he’s at yet another dead end, with no Pidge in sight, his irritation mounting with each passing second. He doesn’t want to be here, navigating a noisy and boisterous crowd without Pidge by his side to make things that slightest bit more bearable. He wants to be at home in his shed, working on his bike and maybe reading silly messages from Lance while he does it.
The thought of Lance has him pausing in his tracks, fingers brushing against the sides of his phone in his pocket. He’s never really given much thought to how seamlessly Lance has squeezed himself into his life, slotting himself neatly between Pidge and Shiro like he’s always belonged there. It’s become second nature for him to have his phone lighting up at all hours of the day to see Lance’s name flashing across the screen and it hasn’t really hit him how off he feels without his phone vibrating periodically throughout the day. It’s not an unpleasant feeling exactly, but it’s not one he’s used to.

“All right,” he mumbles to himself as he does a quick u-turn and begins making his way back through the crowd in the opposite direction, eyes still searching for any sign of Pidge among the crowd. “New plan.” Because clearly wandering around aimlessly and squinting at any person with brown hair and glasses who just happens to be around Pidge’s height isn’t going to work, he decides he’ll make his way back to the entrance and hope the fair has some sort of announcement system in place for lost kids.

Maybe something like: ‘WILL PIDGE HOLT PLEASE MAKE HER WAY TO THE ENTRANCE BEFORE HER NEIGHBOUR HAS AN ANEURYSM? THANK YOU.’

Or, if all else fails and he can’t find Pidge, he could always just run away to live in an abandoned shack in the desert. It’s always good to have a back-up plan.

(17:21) Thanks for waiting with me.
(17:23) Seriously, Pidge. Don’t worry about it.
(17:23) Sorry I couldn’t wait longer, but I’m slightly worried Lance may have spent his life savings on one of those games.
(17:26) Have you found him yet?
(17:26) Not yet, but he can’t have gone far. Those games are really, really addictive and he is... very, very competitive.
(17:27) Found Keith yet?
(17:30) Nope.
(17:30) Gonna give it another twenty minutes and then just wait by the entrance.
(17:30) This really didn’t go like we planned, did it?
(17:32) Not at all.
(17:32) Not gonna lie, I don’t think matchmaking is the right career path for us.
(17:34) Yeah, I might have to stick with astrophysics.
(17:35) Right? Just plain dull.
I think I see Keith. Yeah, it’s him. Why is he walking so fast? Ugh. I’m gonna have to run after him, aren’t I? Nice. I think I see Lance as well. Yep. That’s him. He’s waving a giant stuffed lion in the air? He actually won one? Omg. I can’t believe this.

“Another go.”
“Listen, kid,” the man behind the booth stares at him warily. “Maybe enough is enough?”

“Another go,” Lance insists, shaking his wallet wildly in front of his face. “I can do it.
“You’ve been saying that for the last forty-five minutes.”

“And I can do it,” Lance sniffs stubbornly, opening his wallet to fish out a fiver and slam it on the counter. “So take my money already and let me do it.”

For a moment or two Lance is sure he’s going to refuse him and tell him to get lost, but the man only hesitates briefly before sighing and sliding the note across the counter. “This is your last turn.”

“Yeah, yeah,” Lance mumbles, snatching the plastic pellet gun up once again. “One more turn is all I need.”

It’s a fairly simple fairground game; shoot at least three of the five targets only using five pellets or less and win one of the ridiculously oversized stuffed lions hanging overhead. It’s the kind of game years of spending hours after school hanging out in dusty old arcades has prepared Lance for so, by all rights, he shouldn’t be losing so pathetically.

And yet here he is. Losing. Unable to knock down the last target no matter how hard he hits it.

A small, logical, voice in the back of his mind tells him that the game is almost definitely rigged and that he should just cut his losses and accept the consolation prize the owner of the booth has been trying to push on him for the last twenty minutes. But his pride (and maybe a little bit of ego) won’t let him back down.

And besides, Hunk still hasn’t returned from whatever he’s doing with Shay (Lance makes a mental note to discuss that in greater detail when they get back later), so it’s not like he’s in any real rush. Though the owner of the booth does look like he’s serious about this being Lance’s last turn - which is probably a good thing, because Lance is suddenly painfully aware that his wallet feels noticeably
lighter than it did not even an hour ago.

“Come on, kid.”

Lance resists the urge to stick his tongue out at him and turns his attention to the target board in front of him. He’s done this enough times to know which are the two easiest targets to shoot down and knocks them both down in quick succession, lips curving upwards when the owner’s eyes widen in surprise.

“Alright, you got two. Three pellets left, one target, think you can do it?”

Lance scowls, narrowing his eyes as he pulls the trigger and watches as the pellet shoots out of the gun, hits the target square in the middle, before ping ing backwards and dropping to the floor while the target barely moves even a fraction.

“It’s rigged,” Lance snaps, glaring at the owner of the booth. “I hit it. You saw me hit it.”

The guy shrugs. “I didn’t see anything, kid. But hey, you’ve still got two more shots left. Maybe this time, you’ll get lucky.”

Jerk, Lance thinks, turning his attention back to the targets. Maybe if he hits one of them twice really, really quickly, it’ll be enough to make it fall down an—

He frowns, head snapping upright almost painfully, brows furrowing in the middle as he scans the crowd around him. He can’t be sure of course, but he thinks he just caught sight of something - of someone - in his periphery that looks oddly familiar.

Someone that looks like Keith.

His stomach clenches in anticipation as he takes a step away from the booth, eyes rapidly scanning the crowd for any hint of the side profile he’d just seen bobbing and weaving between people.

“Keith!”

He feels his heart leap into his throat as he hears someone call out the name, and he takes another step towards the crowd. This can’t be a coincidence, can it? He’s here somewhere. Somewhere amongst the crowd. Just inches away from him, and all Lance has to do is call out his name an—

“Oi, kid,” the owner of the booth tugs his backwards, scowling at him. “I haven’t got all day. You either take the shots or you go.”

“But—” Lance glances back towards the crowd, trying to pick out someone - anyone - that looks even vaguely familiar, while he listens out for that voice again, hoping it’ll call out Keith’s name again.

“You’ve got thirty seconds.”

Lance exhales a breath in frustration, scanning the crowd one last time before he gives up and turns his attention back to the game. Thinking about it, it’s not like Keith is an uncommon name - there are probably hundreds of Keith’s running around the fair right now - and he didn’t really get a good look at the person that had caught his attention.

“Just wishful thinking,” he mumbles to himself, unable to completely squash the feeling of disappointment that’s begun to well up inside him.
“Ten seconds, kid.”

“Yeah, yeah, I heard you,” Lance sighs, holding the gun up to the target once again. This time, he squeezes twice in quick succession and watches as both pellets hit the target hard, forcing it to fall backwards and clatter noisily to the floor.

He turns to the owner of the booth and allows the biggest shit eating grin he can muster up to spread across his face before he points up at the giant blue lion stuffed toy hanging above his head. “That one please.”

All in all, Keith thinks he might just be the worst day of his entire life - and he’s had a few pretty bad days. The feeling of worry at the pit of his stomach has blossomed into full blown panic, and there's nothing he can do about it.

It's been more than two hours since he last saw Pidge and the crowd is finally beginning to thin out. Though, aside from being able to walk two steps without colliding with someone, the reduction in the number of people around him really isn't doing him much good.

He chews the inside of his cheek as he stares around the fairground, looking for any sign of Pidge amongst the madness. He doesn't understand how he's managed to see random strangers several times throughout the day, but he hasn't seen Pidge once. Idly, he wonders if this is the universe's way of punishing him for some heinous crime he's unknowingly committed.

Maybe for secret feeding Muffin his Brussels sprouts at dinner and then feigning ignorance when she spat them up over the living room rug two hours later. Or maybe it's for that one time he—

Keith freezes on the spot, eyes wide as his gaze zeroes in on someone who looks vaguely familiar.

It's not Pidge, it looks— It looks like Lance?

Keith frowns as he takes a step forwards. Obviously, he can't tell for sure from this distance, but there's something about the person standing a few metres away from that just oozes familiarity. Keith can spot a head of messy brown hair and even from this far away from each other, he can see his lips are stretched into an easy-going grin, tinged with just a hint of irritation, as he argues with a man standing behind one of those gaming booths.

Another step forwards.

Keith watches as the person who may or may not be Lance snatches a plastic gun from the owner of the booth and quickly presses the trigger, sending a flurry of pellets at the targets placed opposite. For a second, Keith thinks he's actually succeeded and won the game, but then Maybe Lance is yelling something at the booth owner, arms flailing dramatically in the air and he realises he's lost.

He takes another step forwards.

He's starting to come into view a little better now. Keith still can't make out his features properly to do positive ID and confirm that Maybe Lance is actually Lance, but he can't help the feeling of hope slowly bubbling inside him. Maybe Lance is still waving his arms around, poking and prodding the counter before diving into his pocket and taking out what looks like a wallet.

Keith inches forward a little more. Just a little closer and he'll be able to confirm if it's Lance or not
"Keith!"

Keith jerks away from Maybe Lance like he's been electrocuted and feels relief wash over him as he spots Pidge pushing her way through the crowd.

"Why do you walk so fast, God," Pidge mumbles as she approaches him, sighing as she wraps her arm around his forearm and squeezes tightly. "I've been looking for you all day," she murmurs, gently guiding him in the opposite direction of Maybe Lance.

"I've been looking for you as well," Keith says, poking Pidge gently on the forehead as they begin making their way through the crowd together. "Where'd you even go?"

"What're you looking at?" Pidge asks, frowning a little as she glances behind them, trying to see whatever it is that's caught Keith's attention.

Keith allows his gaze to linger on Maybe Lance for a second longer before he shakes his head and turns back to Pidge. "Nothing, nothing. Just— Just wishful thinking."

---

(18:05) Alright, I'm with Keith.

(18:05) Order has been restored!

(18:06) I think we're gonna grab something to eat and then leave, though.

(18:10) Ah, nice. I'm with Lance, too.

(18:10) Yeah, same.

(18:10) Lance wants to go on one last ride, then we're gonna make our way back I think.

(18:10) Make sure you two get home safe!

(18:13) You too.

---

"What're you gonna name it?" Hunk asks curiously, poking the head of the giant blue lion in Lance's arms gently as they make their way to the station. "Still can't believe you actually won it, by the way. Are you sure you didn't cheat?"

Lance hums, hoisting the lion a little higher into his arms as they make their way to the station. "He needs an awesome name, to reflect the awesomeness of his owner."

Hunk snorts. "Of course."

"And I didn't cheat," Lance sniffs, pretending to be offended by Hunk's insinuation. "The game was
rigged and I bested it because I'm *awesome*, that's all. *Anyway,*” he shoots Hunk a sly look and pokes him in the side with his free elbow. "How was *Shay*?"

Hunk blinks once or twice, looking genuinely confused. "Huh?"

"Don't play coy with me," Lance laughs as they turn a corner and begin climbing the stairs towards the platform for their train. "Gimme all the juicy gossip."

"I—" Hunk cocks his head to the side. "*What*?"

"With *Shay*? Come on, man," Lance whines, bopping Hunk with the head of the lion. "Don't make me fight for the info. I told you about Keith like straight away."

Hunk quirks a brow.

"*Almost* straight away," Lance amends. "Train's coming in five minutes, by the way," he adds, glancing up at the noticeboard in front of them. "So tell me. What'd you two do?"

"I really don't kno— Oh," Hunk laughs, and Lance gets the distinct feeling that he's missing something very, *very* important here. "*Shay* was, uh, she was fine."

"Uh *huh,*" Lance says slowly. "And that's all I get? She was fine? Nothing else?"

"Nothing else to say, man," Hunk says with a shrug, lips still twitching like he's just been told the funniest joke. "We, uh, we hung out for a bit and then I came back to find you. That's it."

"Yeah? And why don't I believe you?"

Hunk feigns a look of hurt, pressing his hands over his chest like Lance has physically wounded him. "Would I lie to you?"

Lance stares at him for a few seconds before he shakes his head. "I guess not," Lance mumbles, dragging his attention away from Hunk to glance up and down at the rest of the train platform. "Why didn't she come back with us?"

"Eh?"

Lance sighs still looking up and down the platform, looking for Shay's face amongst the crowd of people packed onto it. "How come she didn't come back on the train with us?"

"Oh—" Hunk pauses. "She— She had to do something with her friends, I think? I, uh, I didn't ask?"

"Hunk," Lance sighs sympathetically. "You've gotta take chances like that, you know? Be all like, 'Oh *Shay*, why don't you come back with us?* Next thing you know, you're canoodling—"

"*Canoodling*?" Hunk snorts.

"Canoodling," Lance repeats, a little firmer this time. "You could've been canoodling on the train home together an—"

For the second time in less than an hour, Lance feels his heart leap into his throat. "Hunk."

"Yeah, man?"

"*Keith.*"
"Are you..." Hunk squints down at him, looking vaguely concerned. "Are you just saying random words now? Are you having a stroke?"

"No," Lance grabs onto Hunk's sleeve with his free hand and tugs tightly before nodding towards the platform directly opposite theirs. "I mean, it's Keith."

"Holy shit," Hunk mumbles, and Lance can't help but whimper in agreement.

Because this time, Lance can tell for sure that Keith is standing opposite him. He's leaning against a pillar, arms crossed tightly over his chest as he listens to whatever a small girl standing next to him - Pidge, Lance thinks - is talking about.

"I'm gonna faint," Lance mumbles, leaning into Hunk a little. "He's— He's right there." And he looks really, really good, Lance thinks to himself. Maybe better than he looks in his selfies? It's at that moment Keith decides to laugh at something Pidge (at least, Lance is pretty sure it's Pidge) has said, and Lance melts.

Lance is very, very happy to note that Keith has one of those special smiles that lights up his whole face, crinkling his nose slightly as he ducks his head and tries to cover his mouth with a hand.

"Yeah," Lance sighs, "I'm gonna faint."

"Please don't," Hunk says, but Lance isn't listening.

Pidge is staring at him, head cocked to the side, eyes wide like she recognises him. Lance watches as her brows furrow slightly before a flash of recognition spasms across her face and she's suddenly tugging at Keith's sleeve and—

"Oh God."

Keith is staring at him.

Keith is staring at him.

They're staring at each other.

"Oh God," Lance whimpers as he watches Keith's eyes widen in realisation, mouth falling slack open in what Lance can only imagine is the same shock mixed with pleasant surprise Lance is currently feeling. "I have to go."

"What?" Hunk yelps. "What do you mean you have to go?"

"I have to go over there," Lance gestures wildly towards Keith and Pidge's platform. "Go and say something and see hi—"

Not only is Lance's voice drowned out by the train that comes hurtling into their platform, but it completely obstructs his view of Keith. Lance groans as he tries to peek through the flashes of window as the train pulls into the platform, trying to get a glimpse of Keith again.

"I'll be right back."

"Lance," Hunk groans in exasperation, effortlessly reaching out to tug Lance backwards by his collar. "Our train is here. You know, the train we need to get on. Right now."

"Wait, Hunk I—"
"Lance," Hunk groans, tugging Lance towards the nearest carriage door. "We have to go."

"No, but I—"

The doors ping open and Hunk is shoving Lance through them, mumbling something about getting back to school before it gets too late and they get another detention, before Lance can protest any longer. Which is just plain rude, if you ask Lance. Because here he is going through a mini crisis and finally getting to see the person he's been crushing on for the last month in person, and Hunk is more concerned about getting a detention than his happiness? Rude.

"We could've caught the next train," Lance grumbles, hurrying through the aisle to try and get one last glimpse out of the window before the train pulls out of the station.

"Next train is in an hour."

"We could've waited."

"We'd get back to the school at like, midnight."

"I'm still not seeing a problem there."

"Lance."

"I'm lovesick," Lance sniffs, throwing his stuffed lion into an empty seat before he slumps into the one next to it himself. "Leave me be."

"You're not lovesick," Hunk snorts as he slides into the empty seat opposite. "You're unlucky. Really unlucky."

"As my best friend, you're supposed to be comforting me," Lance mutters, kicking Hunk lightly in the shins. "Not making me feel worse."

"You're acting like you'll never see him again," Hunk shrugs. "He probably lives closer than you think. Just, I dunno, message him and ask if he wants to meet up."

"You, Hunk, my dearest friend," Lance says as he fishes his phone out of his pocket. "You are a genius, have I ever told you that before?"

"I think you might've mentioned it, once or twice," Hunk laughs, watching as Lance begins messaging Keith, fingers flying across the screen at almost inhuman speeds with copious overuse of the capslock button.

(19:05) KEITH WAS THAT YOU??

(19:05) TELL ME THAT WAS YOU AND

(19:06) AND I WASN’T JUST MAKING EYES AT A RANDOM STRANGER??

(19:06) KEITH

(19:07) KEIIITH

(19:07) OMG. CHARGE YOUR PHONE. WHAT THE HELL, MAN.
(19:07) That was you. I’m like 95% sure that was you.

(19:08) I just saw you?

(19:08) We just saw each other? I’m

(19:09) I need to lie down.

(19:09) Hunk said I need to stop being so melodramatic because I’m scaring other passengers but

(19:09) Like

(19:10) THAT WAS YOU???????

(19:10) HURRY UP AND GET HOME AND CHARGE YOUR PHONE I’M LITERALLY DYING HERE.

(19:11) Well, not literally, but you get the gist.

(19:11) Holy shit.

(19:12) That was you.

(20:34) I’m home, sorry.

(20:34) That was me.

(20:34) And

(20:34) That was you.

(20:34) You were holding a giant stuffed lion, I'm...

(20:35) We were in the same place.

(20:35) We were at the same fair.

(20:35) WE COULD’VE MET TODAY.

(20:35) I’M SCREAMING??? WE COULD’VE MET????? AND

(20:36) WE DIDN’T???

(20:36) You know what’s wild? I thought I saw you at the fair but I was sure it was just like, wishful thinking or something.

(20:37) But it was probably you? We probably walked right past each other?

(20:37) Also, like, wow

(20:37) Pictures don’t do you justice at all. I’m

(20:38) Yeah. Wowwowwow.

(20:40) Same for you.

(20:40) Pidge said I got really red and she hasn’t stopped laughing about it.
She sent me a voice note after we got home, and it’s literally just thirty seconds of her laughing.

I’m just lying here thinking about how we could’ve met today.

Like

We must live pretty close to each other?

Yeah. Pretty close.

Um.

Can I say something?

And you don’t have to answer right away or anything, like, I just wanna put it out there?

Go for it.

I really want to meet you. Like, I know that’s probably obvious and I’ve already said this before but I mean

Now that I know we don’t live a million miles from each other… it just seems... more real? You know?

Yeah, I think so.

So yeah, I want to meet you. Soon. We could just like, hang out or whatever? Cause knowing you’re literally a train ride away is just

Really, really unbelievable? Like, we could’ve met ages ago. Just accidentally. I bet we’ve passed each other in the street. What if we have mutual friends?????

But yeah, like I said, you don’t have to answer right away. I just

I just wanted you to know?

I want to meet you too.

You could come and see the kittens?

Wow, first date and you’re inviting me to your house? What kind of boy do you think I am, Keith?

I didn’t mean it like that wqhsdhfhgsfgwhaT??

I’M KIDDING.

Please don’t blow a fuse. At least not before we meet.

But yeah. Could I really?

Yeah. If you want?

I owe you a bike ride as well, so…

That would
(21:03) Probably be the best first date I’ve ever had?

(21:03) I mean, I haven’t had that many to compare it to, but yeah, it’d definitely be up there.


(21:05) When though?

(21:07) Uh.

(21:07) I’m busy the coming weekend for Pidge’s birthday stuff, but

(21:07) I can do the Saturday after?

(21:09) So the 17th?

(21:09) THAT’S AGES AWAY ;___;

(21:10) It’s two weeks.

(21:11) A G E S.

(21:13) You’ll live.


(21:14) I’ll probably finish your gloves by then, as well.

(21:16) You don’t have to do that.

(21:17) Too late.

(21:17) Also, do you like roses?

(21:18) If you get me flowers I’m not letting you into my house.

(21:18) I told you, I’m gonna pull out all the stops on our date.

(21:18) Prepare to be amazed.

(21:20) I’m already regretting everything.

(21:21) Liar.

(21:21) I’m really excited? Nervous as hell, but excited?

(21:23) Yeah. Same.

(21:24) Alright, change of topic before we both like...combust.

(21:24) I’m taller than you.

(21:25) You’re not?

(21:25) I definitely am. I could tell earlier.

(21:26) We were on completely opposite platforms...how the hell could you tell?
I told you, I’ve got excellent vision.

You’re not taller than me.

I mean, I am.

But, if you’re not ready to accept that, that’s perfectly fine.

I’m cancelling our date.

Cancelling because you don’t want proof I’m taller than you? Hm.

I see, I see.

You of course, don’t see because you’re so short. But that’s fine, I don’t mind being the eyes in this relationship.

CANCELLED.

I’ll even reach for things on the top shelf if you be nice to me.

Even if you are taller than me, at the most it’d be like one inch. THAT’S BARELY ANYTHING.

That sounds like something a short person would say.

Why

Why do I like you?

You have a thing for tall guys, clearly.

BYE.

BYE, SHORTY.

I think I preferred the pet names.

Apple of my eye.

My sun and stars.

Maybe not.

So, Operation Oblivious

A success or no?

Mmm.

We didn’t really do anything, did we?

In a roundabout way, I think we did?

They met each other, didn’t they?
They saw each other...

As we were all leaving...

From opposite sides of a train platform.

I don’t think that counts.

Yeah, maybe you’re right.

But it’s the thought that counts, right?

Definitely.

Thanks again, for coming to sit with me earlier.

I was maybe a little nervous waiting on my own for Keith to show up.

Maybe.

It’s fine, Pidge. That’s what friends are for.

We’re still on for our mentoring session next week, right? I feel bad we skipped this week :___:

Yep. See you on Thursday?

See you then!

Chapter End Notes

raise your hand if u want to fight me, it's ok i can take it

(tfw u spend so long writing in text format you forget how to write normally lmao)

fyi, vortex is a real ride and i hate it with all my heart and soul

ALSO omg before i forget like thank you guys so much for the love shown for this fic? it's honestly so overwhelming and it makes me tear up a little so yeah thank you for all the lovely comments on here, tumblr and twitter everytime i see anything i just weep for about 45 years :____:
Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

everything happens so much

Chapter Notes

key:
lance
keith
pidge
hunk
shiro

*mentions of anxiety in this chapter guys

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

05/09/2016

(11:04) It's just occurred to me that the kittens don't have names.

(11:04) So...what have you been calling them?

(11:06) Aren't you supposed to be in a lesson right now?

(11:08) Keith, I think we've been talking long enough for you to know the answer to that question yourself.

(11:09) When you get detention don't blame me.

(11:11) I'll definitely be blaming you.

(11:11) Also, 11:11, make a wish.

(11:14) Huh?

(11:18) Too late, you missed it.

(11:18) No wish for you.

(11:20) What did you wish for?

(11:21) If I tell you, it won't come true.

(11:21) That's just basic wishing knowledge, Keith.
Isn't that only for birthday cakes?

Pretty sure it's a general wish related rule.

But, back to the topic at hand: what have you been calling the kittens?

I'm not sure I want to tell you.

Can't be worse than Rover.

Or Muffin.

Are you sure about that?

Well now I'm not...

Red, Blue, Yellow, and Black. And then Rover's called Rover.

I'm equal parts appalled and disappointed.

But weirdly, not surprised.

I guess bad pet naming skills runs in the family. And with Pidge.

I don't want to hear that from someone who named his dog Andy Warhowl.

ANDY WARHOWL IS AN AMAZING NAME.

And they're not bad names. They make sense.

HOW?

Black has black fur.

Genius.

Shut up.

Blue has really blue eyes.

And Red has these red splotches all over.

And Yellow?

... 

I maybe wanted to complete the primary colours.

I don't know whether to laugh or cry.

Told Hunk and he just snorted water all over the desk AND NOW HE HAS DETENTION HAAHA.

Wait. So do I.

Damn it.
(11:56) Bye, Lance.

(15:23) Can you do me a huge, huge favour?
(15:25) I'm suddenly filled with a sense of dread.
(15:26) It's nothing bad, I promise!
(15:27) Go on...
(15:28) So, our train gets in really early tomorrow.
(15:28) Really...early.
(15:30) How early?
(15:31) 5am kind of early?
(15:33) Nope.
(15:34) You didn't even wait to hear what I'm asking?!
(15:35) You're going to ask me to wait up to let you in.
(15:37) When did you add clairvoyance to your list of talents?
(15:38) Last week.
(15:38) Where're your keys?
(15:40) I wish I knew.
(15:41) And why do you have to get the earliest train?
(15:43) Two reasons: Matt wants to surprise Pidge when she wakes up.
(15:43) And the 5am train is the cheapest.
(15:45) Glad to see you're living up to the broke student reputation.
(15:45) I do my best.
(15:45) I've only eaten super noodles all week.
(15:46) And Pringles.
(15:48) Sometimes, when I need to laugh, I remember that people think you're actually mature and responsible.
(15:49) Rude. I'm plenty mature and responsible when the moment calls for it.
(15:51) Allegedly.
(15:52) I'm ignoring that but only because I do need you to let us in tomorrow and I'm worried you haven't actually agreed to doing it.
(15:53) 

(15:54) KEITH.

(15:54) PLEASE.

(15:55) :

(15:57) Pidge is a terrible influence on you.

(15:58) True.

(15:58) I'll let you in.

(16:02) Thank you!

(16:02) Only because I don't want to make a bad impression on your girlfriend.

(16:04) So if Allura wasn't there you'd let me stand outside to freeze???

(16:05) Most definitely.

(16:07) Cruel.

(16:07) I'm glad you're excited to meet her, though.

(16:08) Don't make this weird.

(16:10) As your older brother, it's literally my job to make things weird.

(16:10) Please be nice to her.

(16:13) When am I ever not nice????

(16:14) Do you really want an answer to that question?

(16:15) Yes???? I'm plenty nice.

(16:17) Matt would disagree.

(16:18) That's because he's Matt and doesn't count.

(16:18) But I will be nice to your girlfriend. Because I'm a nice person who is just generally nice.

(16:19) Thank you :)

(16:20) Speaking of dating...

(16:20) We weren't speaking about dating...

(16:20) How's Lance?

(16:21) You need to work on your segue's.

(16:21) He's fine.

(16:22) Fine? That's all I get????
(16:23) He's very fine.

(16:24) ...

(16:24) Keith.

(16:30) :

(16:31) You are no fun at all.

(16:33) You know, I could just not wake up early tomorrow morning. Wouldn't that be a shame...

(16:34) Have I ever told you what a great little brother you are???

(16:35) That's what I thought.

(16:11) I think Matt is planning something for my birthday.

(16:13) Why?

(16:13) He's acting weird.

(16:14) When does he not?

(16:15) Point.

(16:15) But weirder than usual.

(16:17) You're probably imagining it.

(16:18) You know something don't you?

(16:20) What?

(16:21) Yep, you know something.

(16:22) I don't know anything.

(16:24) YOU DO!!!

(16:24) I can tell.

(16:26) How?

(16:27) I can just tell. I know you too well.

(16:27) And I know you know something.

(16:27) So spill.

(16:28) I keep telling you, I know nothing.

(16:30) Alright Jon Snow.
(16:30) Gimme a hint.

(16:32) No.

(16:34) AHA!

(16:35) I thought you didn't know anything?

(16:36) I don't.

(16:36) Me saying 'no' doesn't mean I know anything. I can't give you a hint because I don't know anything to hint towards.

(16:37) You are a terrible liar.

(16:38) Even if I did know something

(16:38) Which you do.

(16:38) Your birthday is in literally eight hours.

(16:38) Just wait to find out.

(16:40) Or, or

(16:40) You could just tell me now and put me out of this misery?

(16:42) Christmas must be a stressful time in your house, right?

(16:43) My mum locks away the presents until Christmas Day.

(16:45) Amazing.

(16:46) Are you going to tell me or not?

(16:47) Not.


(16:49) Thank you, I try my best.

(19:39) After careful deliberation, me and Hunk have come up with some replacement cat names.

(19:39) Red is now Heinz.

(19:40) Blue is now Papa Smurf.

(19:40) Yellow is now Big Bird.

(19:40) And Black is now Morticia Jr, obviously.

(19:42) Those are all terrible.

(19:43) They're magnificent.
(19:45) And Blue is a girl.

(19:46) Fine. Blue is now Smurfette. Happy?

(19:50) You're serious, aren't you?

(19:51) Deadly.

(19:52) You want to call a cat 'Big Bird'?

(19:53) You're the one who called her 'Yellow'. We were trying to stick with the theme.

(19:53) It was either Big Bird or Homer. I was gunning for Homer, but Hunk wasn't having it.

(19:53) Unbelievable.

(19:54) I'm not calling my cat 'Heinz'.

(19:56) It's better than 'Red'.

(19:57) No it's not??

(19:57) It is.

(19:59) It's really not.

(20:00) Keith, babe. I have four siblings and a niece and a nephew, I can do this all day.

(20:03) How do you do that so easily?

(20:04) Do what? Win arguments???

(20:05) No.

(20:05) And you didn't win.

(20:06) I mean, like..

(20:06) Don't laugh, but...

(20:07) You just called me babe.

(20:08) I've called you that a few times now.

(20:10) Yeah I know. That's the point.

(20:10) Doesn't it embarrass you?

(20:11) No?

(20:11) I dunno, it comes naturally to me I guess.

(20:11) If I like someone, I'm affectionate, you know?

(20:12) Does it embarrass you?

(20:13) Not...embarrass.
(20:13) Makes me feel something, but I'm not sure what.
(20:14) A good something or...?
(20:15) Yeah, a good something.
(20:16) Nice.
(20:16) Feels like a good something when I say it as well.
(20:17) Nice.
(20:18) My brother's coming home tomorrow.
(20:20) Nice subject change, very subtle.
(20:21) I don't know what you mean.
(20:22) SURE.
(20:23) You excited?
(20:25) Mmm.
(20:25) Yeah, overall.
(20:26) Got some stuff to talk about that I'm not really looking forward to, but yeah. More or less.
(20:27) Fair enough.
(20:27) Isn't it Pidge's birthday as well?
(20:28) Yep. That's why they're coming.
(20:28) Pidge's brother wants to surprise her.
(20:29) And...my brother's bringing his girlfriend.
(20:30) Oh yeah, you said.
(20:30) Is that...cool?
(20:34) Yeah, it's fine.
(20:35) You sure?
(20:36) Yeah, Lance.
(20:36) Thanks though.
(20:40) Np, np.
(20:40) Me and Hunk are going home this weekend.
(20:42) Don't forget you owe me Halloween pics.
(20:43) Oh yeah! I nearly forgot my 'Get Keith To Come Trick-or-Treating' evil plan.
(20:43) Thank you for the reminder.

(20:45) Damn.

(20:46) Why're you going? Homesick again?

(20:48) A little.

(20:48) But mostly cause Hunk is going home and it's boring without him.

(20:50) You guys are really close aren't you?

(20:53) Yupppp.

(20:53) Best bro for life and all that.

(20:54) I'm a little jealous.

(20:55) What? Why?

(20:55) It's the same as with you and Pidge.

(20:56) Or with you and your brother, right?

(20:58) No, I mean like

(20:58) Hunk gets to be that close to you.

(20:58) It must be nice.

(21:01) ASSHBFDGYBF KEITH.

(21:01) PLEASE

(21:02) GIVE ME WARNING BEFORE YOU SAY STUFF LIKE THAT.

(21:02) I'M

(21:02) I'm weak alright, my heart can only take so much.

(21:04) I wasn't trying to make you react like that.

(21:05) I know you weren't. That's what makes it even worse.

(21:05) But, if it makes you feel any better.

(21:05) I'm looking forward to maybe being that close with you one day.

(21:08) Gah.

(21:08) Keith.

(21:08) GAH.

(21:09) ...Did I break you?

(21:10) A little.

(21:13) Yeah.

(21:13) Same though.

(21:13) It’d be nice being that close with you.

(21:15) GAH.

06/09/2016

(00:00) Happy Birthday, Pidge.

(00:00) One year closer to losing all your teeth.

(00:04) Another year, another charming birthday message from you.

(00:04) It’s practically tradition now.

(00:04) Was I the first person to say it?

(00:07) Nope. I’ve been on the phone with Matt for about twenty minutes.

(00:07) Damn.

(00:07) He said to say ‘suck it, Keith’.

(00:09) Your brother is a child.

(00:10) Agreed.

(00:10) Now, imagine me wiggling my eyebrows while stroking a cat when I ask this:

(00:10) What’d you get me??????

(00:13) Hmm.

(00:13) Nah. I might make you sweat a little longer.

(00:15) KEITH NO!!

(00:15) IT’S MY BIRTHDAY.

(00:16) I’m suddenly feeling very sleepy…

(00:17) I can’t believe.

(00:17) Why did I befriend you? I should’ve made friends with my other neighbour instead.
Isn’t she like 80?
Mrs Nesbitt is 70 and she is a delight.
But, moving on…
Tell me.
Fine.
Check your email in like thirty seconds.
My email?
I’m forwarding you the confirmation email.
Confirmation email?
KEIIITITHH!!!! THIS IS
OH MY GOD.
KEITH??????
You’re welcome :)
I don’t know what to say wow.
This is amazing?????
10000% beats last year’s present.
When will you let me forget about that?
Literally never.
Seriously Keith, thank you so much.
<3
<3
Happy Birthday, Pidge!!!
Another year passed, another year wiser.
I hope this year will be as good for you as the last one was.
Thank you, Shiro!
So
What did Matt get me?
(00:48) My lips are sealed.

(00:49) UGH.

(05:06) Keith.

(05:06) Are you awake?

(05:10) Keith??

(05:15) I apologise in advance for what I’m about to do.

(05:15) Don’t hate me too much.

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

MISSED CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

MISSED CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

MISSED CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

MISSED CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

ACCEPT INCOMING CALL FROM ‘SHIRO’

END CALL: 00:15

(05:36) fUCK YOU.

(05:36) I SAID SORRY.

(05:37) Please open the door. We’re cold.

(05:37) And keep quiet, mum and dad are still asleep.

(05:38) So was I????

(05:38) How many times do I have to apologise?

(05:39) I’ll let you know when you’re good.

(05:40) Ugh.
(05:40) Are you coming down or not?

(05:42) I'm trying to find some pants.

(05:42) Unless you want me to open the door to you and your girlfriend in my boxers?

(05:43) Fair point.

(05:43) Also, Matt is coming in as well.

(05:43) WHY? He literally lives next door.

(05:44) Lost his keys and obviously he can't wake Pidge up yet.

(05:45) Obviously.

(05:45) I'm coming down now.

(05:46) I owe you.

(05:46) I know.

(07:19) I've never been more tired in my life.

(07:19) It actually hurts to keep my eyes open?

(07:23) What's this?

(07:23) Keith 'I'm-A-Morning-Person' McMullet complaining about the morning???

(07:23) Have I woken up in an alternate reality?

(07:24) McMullet?

(07:25) I dunno your last name, so I had to get creative.

(07:26) But

(07:26) McMullet?

(07:28) It has a nice ring to it if you ask me.

(07:28) Of course it does.

(07:29) But yeah, why're you so tired?

(07:29) What happened to you being a morning person?

(07:30) I am a morning person.

(07:30) When I don't have to wake up at 5am to let my brother in.

(07:31) He's here already???

(07:31) Why so early?
(07:33) Combination of cheap trains and wanting to surprise Pidge before she goes to school.

(07:33) But mostly cheap trains.

(07:34) Fair enough honestly.

(07:35) Why’d you just not go back to sleep?

(07:36) He was introducing me to his girlfriend.

(07:36) oH YEAH.

(07:37) How is she??????

(07:38) She seems nice.

(07:38) Pretty cool.

(07:38) It was kinda weird at first. Seeing my brother that into someone.

(07:39) Ew. They weren’t like eating each other’s faces or anything right? Cause gross. Nobody needs to see that.

(07:40) Nooo, no, no nothing like that.

(07:40) Just

(07:40) The way they were just being around each other?

(07:41) It was weird to see.

(07:42) Ah. I think I get what you mean.

(07:45) Mm.

(07:45) We’re gonna go surprise Pidge and sing Happy Birthday now.

(07:45) And then he’s introducing his girlfriend to our parents.

(07:45) Which should be...something.

(07:46) Oh wow. Please keep me updated.

(07:46) Also, tell Pidge I said Happy Birthday.

(07:47) I will.

(07:47) Have a good day, Lance.

(07:48) You too, babe.

(07:49) This is really not the best time to make me go red.

(07:50) ;)

(07:55) PIDGE IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY?
(07:55) WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING?
(07:56) HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!
(07:56) I'll be bringing cupcakes to our Thursday session to celebrate.
(07:57) Thank you, Hunk!!
(07:57) You really don’t have to do that, though.
(07:58) Too late, I’ve already put my mind to it.
(07:59) Also, I hope you like your present from Keith?
(08:00) AHAHAHA
(08:00) I KNEW HE DIDN’T COME UP WITH THAT ON HIS OWN.
(08:01) Thanks, Hunk.
(08:01) :)
(07:58) Have a great day.
(07:59) Thank you!!

(10:02) You’re probably in class right now, but I’m updating you anyway.
(10:02) If you get detention, don’t blame me.
(10:03) Saying don’t blame me isn’t going to stop me from blaming you.
(10:03) Also, we’re doing an experiment so I might reply late.
(10:05) That’s fine.
(10:05) Pidge’s birthday surprise went as well as you’d think.
(10:06) Party hats were involved. I got made to wear one.
(10:07) Also, silly string. So much silly string.
(10:07) I just finished getting it out of my hair.
(10:10) Wait, wait, you can’t tell me party hats were involved and not send photographic evidence.
(10:11) Funny, isn’t that what I just did?
(10:12) Mean.
(10:15) [IMAGE SENT]
(10:15) Happy?
Very, very, very happy, thank you.

But I very nearly burned my sleeve on the Bunsen Burner thanks to you.

K, I’m putting my phone away for a while before Hunk gives me a lecture on lab safety.

tOO LATE.

Don’t die, Lance.

So, my brother brought his girlfriend to meet my parents, right?

Right.

How’d that go?

Pretty good. They love her. BUT

Oh, there’s a but??

Sadly.

They were basically like ‘we’re really happy to meet you and it’s no problem having you here, but you know you guys can’t sleep in the same room, right?’

Oh my God.

Yeah. I guess my parents are kind of old fashioned like that?

Anyway, I’ve never seen my brother go so red so quickly before?? I wish I filmed it.

What’d his gf say?

I think she was embarrassed? But she took it well. She was all ‘of course, of course’, like it wasn’t a big deal and they’d never been planning on sleeping in the same room anyway.

AHhahahahahahahahahaha.

Don’t laugh too soon, this story doesn’t have a happy ending.

Oh?

Yeah, my mum was like ‘so of course you two can’t sleep in the same room’ and THEN SHE TURNED TO ME??

And goes ‘Keith, you don’t mind sharing with your brother for the week, do you?’

So long story short, my brother’s girlfriend is in his room and me and him are SHARING FOR THE WEEK.

I’m dying.

Same.
(17:31) No, I’m dying from laughter.

(17:32) Traitor.

(17:32) Oh, by the way.

(17:33) You know Black?

(17:34) Do you mean Morticia Jr?

(17:35) …

(17:35) Yes.

(17:36) Go on…

(17:38) My brother decided he’s going to keep her and he wants to name her ‘Cupcake’.

(17:40) Tell your brother I’ll fight him.

(17:40) No cake related names are allowed.

(17:43) He said what about ‘Cookie’?

(17:45) Tell him to meet me at the station, let’s go.

(17:45) 1v1.

(17:45) I’m sure I can take him.

(17:46) He’s laughing.

(17:47) I’m offended.

(17:49) No, laughing is good. He likes you.

(17:51) Approval from the big bro, nice.

(17:51) Now I just need it from your parents and I’m set.

(17:54) Set to what?

(17:55) Set to woo you.

(17:55) I mean I’m already like 75% of the way there.

(17:56) Are you?

(17:56) Oh, definitely.

(17:56) But a little parental acceptance never hurts.

(17:58) I can’t tell if you’re kidding or not.

(17:58) I’m mostly kidding.

(17:59) I think.
You think?
I mean.
It’d be nice to meet your family. One day.
Is that too much?
K, it’s definitely too much, pretend I never said anything.
Sorry, sorry.
We left for Pidge’s birthday dinner.
And I was between Pidge and Pidge’s brother in the car and, yeah.
They’re nosey.
Oh cool.
I definitely wasn’t panicking or anything.
Definitely.
Very convincing.
Thank you, I tried my best.
Are you out now?
Yeah, we’re at the restaurant now.
Pidge says hi.
Wait.
Now everyone is saying hi.
I’m gonna…
I’m gonna put my phone away before something bad happens.
Bad?
Helllooooooo stranger who has done the impossible and captured Keith’s attention.
It’s lovejjhdgkdhkfhjglyhkddzxgf
Something bad like that.
…
Who was that?
Pidge’s brother.
I had to poke him with my fork to get him to give my phone back.
I can’t believe you stabbed someone over me.

Should I be swooning or extremely worried?

I didn’t stab him.

I poked him with a blunt fork.

With barely enough force to leave a bruise.

Allegedly.

I’m gonna turn my phone off now. Our waitress is giving us weird looks and my brother’s girlfriend looks mildly terrified.

Or really excited? I can’t tell. Either way, this is a terrible first impression.

Even if it is really accurate.

Is this normal for you guys?

Sadly.

I’ll message you after?

Cool, have fun!

Definitely one of the best birthday’s I’ve ever had.

Thanks for everything.

I didn’t really plan anything, it was Matt and Shiro’s idea to go out.

Yeah, but thank you anyway.

I had fun.

Same.

Also, Matt told me to tell you he forgives you for stabbing him.

I didn’t stab him?? It was a poke.

A POKE!

I’m not here to judge, I’m just passing on the message.

So, what’d you think about Allura?

I like her.

Might be a little premature, but I’m ready to accept her as one of The Group.

The Group?
Yeah.


Allura fit in nicely at dinner.

I’m almost 100% sure it was her who chucked that spoonful of mashed potato at Shiro when he wasn’t paying attention.

Oh yeah, that was definitely her.

I saw her chuck it and she winked at me before pretending to look through her purse?

Amazing.

Definitely Group material.

Yeah, she’s nice.

My parents really like her as well.

And Shiro’s like, in love.

I don’t think it’s love. They haven’t been dating that long, have they?

Eh, maybe not. But it’s something.

Cute though, whatever it is.

I guess.

Not as cute as you and Lance though. Don’t worry, they haven’t stolen your crown.

Shut uuuuuuppppppppppp.

(°皿°)

No.

Hey.

Are you awake?

Yeah, just about.

Wassup? How was dinner?

Great. Ended in a small food fight.

So pretty standard.

Oh wow.

Did you do anything?
Binge watched Cutthroat Kitchen with Hunk.

I got weirdly into it?? It gets wild, man. Really wild.

I've never watched it before.

You should, you’d like it. I think.

I’ll give it a go.

Can I say something?

Go for it.

Alright, so, you know earlier?

When you said you’d like to meet my family one day?

Uh, huh.

And when I most definitely did not panic when you didn’t reply for a bit.

Right.

I didn’t answer.

Ahh, you don’t have to. It’s fine.

Just pretend I didn’t say anything.

No, I mean

I’d like that?

Oh.

Yeah. Like, I’d want them to like you.

You know?

Yeah.

Just FYI, parents always love me.

Literally two minutes after meeting Hunk’s parents and they were ready to adopt me.

I’m an honorary Garrett.

Good to know.

I can hear my brother saying goodnight to his girlfriend through the walls.

So I’m gonna sleep now, or pretend to, so he doesn’t try and read over my shoulder.

Cool, cool.

G’night Keith.
07/09/2016

(11:05) LANCEEEEEEEEEEE

(11:05) WHERE

(11:05) ARE

(11:05) YOU?????

(11:07) Just left English, why?

(11:07) Is there another Dragonite in the staff room?

(11:08) Because I already told you I’m not risking my ass again for anything less than a Mew.

(11:10) No. no. no. no.

(11:10) Better.

(11:13) Better than a Mew?

(11:13) RESULTS ARE OUT.

(11:14) Holy shit.

(11:14) Where’re you?

(11:16) Library.

(11:16) K, gimme two mins.

(11:45) Do you like riddles?

(11:47) Uh?

(11:47) I guess?

(11:48) Cool, try and solve this one.

(11:48) What has two thumbs, is extremely handsome, and just found out he aced all his exams?

(11:50) Hunk?

(11:50) KEITH.

(11:50) Wait, that does apply to Hunk as well BUT IT’S NOT THE ANSWER I WAS LOOKING
Congrats, Lance.
Thank you!!!!
I’m so happy what the hell?
I even aced Physics???
Hunk got top spot for Physics obv, but I got top five in the year??
This is like 90% thanks to you, you know?
Huh?
Can’t believe you’ve forgotten your selfie incentive so quickly.
Oh.
OH.
Yeah.
So, thanks for that.
That seems like a weird thing to thank me for.
And don’t you have an ‘I Told You So’ dance to do in front of that one shitty teacher?
I DO!
Oh wow, can’t believe I nearly forgot.
Gonna go call my mum first.
I’ll message you later?
Yeah, cool.
Congrats again, I’m really happy for you.
Thanks, babe <3

I take back any of my earlier support for Allura.
She can’t join The Group.
Also, I hate that you’ve got me calling us that.
What?
I’m 99.9% sure she ate my Cheerios this morning.
Keith...
(16:33) What?

(16:35) My secret Cheerios stash has been raided.

(16:37) You have a secret Cheerios stash…

(16:38) This isn’t the time for judging, Pidge.

(16:38) I’m going through a crisis.

(16:40) How do you know Shiro didn’t eat them?

(16:41) Because Shiro only likes the normal Cheerios like a heathen.

(16:41) I only have Honey Nut Cheerios in my stash.

(16:43) Of course.

(16:44) I’m ignoring your sarcasm and taking that as you agreeing with me.

(16:44) Please don’t.

(16:45) Too late.

(16:45) Anyway, she was eating something out of bowl this morning when I left and now my stash is half empty????

(16:46) Coincidence?

(16:46) I think not.

(16:47) Maybe you ate more than you think you did?

(16:47) If you’re going to be ridiculous I’m not going to ask for your help.

(16:48) I can’t believe you’re calling me ridiculous right now.

(16:48) Pot, kettle, or however that saying goes.

(16:50) Rude.

(16:51) They’re Cheerios, Keith.

(16:52) It’s the principle.

(16:54) Sometimes I forget you’re older than me.

(16:55) …

(16:55) Bye.

(17:04) Where are you?

(17:10) Showing Allura round town.
(17:10) Cool, cool.

(17:11) Has she ever mentioned anything about liking Cheerios?

(17:12) Honey Nut Cheerios to be exact.

(17:20) Keith?

(17:20) What?

(17:23) Don’t worry.

(17:28) Uh, huh...

(17:28) Are you doing anything tonight?

(17:30) Nope.

(17:30) Nice.

(17:30) Dad mentioned you finished your bike.

(17:33) Yeah, but he won’t let me ride it until he’s checked it over.

(17:35) Yeah, he said.

(17:35) I told him I’d look over it for you...if you want?

(17:36) We could do it tonight, just me and you?

(17:38) Wait, what.

(17:38) Really?

(17:40) Yeah, it’ll be fun.

(17:41) What about Allura?

(17:43) Mum said something about pulling the photo albums out after dinner for her to look through, so that’ll probably keep her entertained all night.

(17:44) Oh no.

(17:45) Don’t fight it, Keith. Photo album embarrassment is a rite of passage.

(17:45) But yeah. Me, you and the bike?

(17:45) It’ll be like old times?

(17:50) Sounds good.

(17:50) Sounds great actually.

(18:00) To celebrate our kick ass grades, I’m proposing a movie marathon night.
We have class at 8am tomorrow, Lance.

Alright.

A 'watching movies till 11pm' marathon?

Perfect.

Just got to the room and you’re not there?

I’m getting snacks.

...At the store down the road.

You snuck out???

We deserve only the finest popcorn.

You’re right, you’re right.

What do you wanna watch?

I don’t mind, you pick.

Indiana Jones or Lord of the Rings?

How dare you make me choose.

I’m evil, I know.

LOTR will take too long, so I’m going for Indiana Jones.

Also, young Harrison Ford.

Well that just goes without saying.

Obviously.

I’m on my way back now, I’ll be like ten mins.

Awesome, I’ll get the blankets ready.

(22:06) [IMAGE SENT]

Bike is officially roadworthy.

(22:06) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

Holy

Shit.

kEITH.

God.
Lance?

Alright so, you on a bike is definitely something.

Definitely.

Something?

SOMETHING.

A good something?

Literally the best something.

Oh God.

STOP.

I'm still with my brother.

He's asking why I'm so red.

I hope you're happy.

Ahahah same.

Hunk won't stop teasing me.

You've officially ruined any street cred I had.

Good.

Wait, Hunk just said I never had any street cred with him.

Exact words: 'You've always been a dork'.

Debatable. I have my moments.

No, I agree with Hunk.

You haven't even met me.

10 days.

AH.

Feels both really far away and like it's just around the corner.

So, since your bike is cool, that means the bike ride is definitely happening?

Yep.

If you want?

I really, really want.

Then yeah, the bike ride is definitely happening.
(22:36) Ahhhhhhh.

(22:37) I keep looking at the bike picture.

(22:37) You look really happy.

(22:38) *I am lately.*

(22:39) Hmmmm.

(22:40) *Are you gonna die if I tell you that you're definitely part of the reason for that?*

(22:42) Guaranteed.

(22:43) *Okay, I won't tell you.*

(22:44) Thank you, you’re so kind and considerate.

(22:44) How’s things with your bro?

(22:45) *Good, I think?*

(22:45) *Tonight was good anyway.*

(22:46) Did you guys talk?

(22:48) *Kind of?*

(22:48) *I think I avoided the topic a little, but it was more of a actions speak louder than words kind of thing.*

(22:49) *I just wanted to hang with him alone, like we used to.*

(22:49) *So that was good.*

(22:51) Ah, cool.

(22:51) I’m glad for you guys.

(22:52) *Same.*

(22:54) How’s his girlfriend?

(22:54) *She’s nice and everything, but...*

(22:55) But? Oh man, have you caught them in some dark corner of the house yet?

(22:56) *no??*

(22:56) *God, I think I’d die if I did??*

(22:57) Ahahahah you get used to it.

(22:57) I remember the first time I caught my brother with a girl, I fell down the stairs.

(22:58) They weren’t even being subtle about it?!
Or you’re just really melodramatic?

Maybe a bit of both.

Anyway, ‘she’s nice and everything, but…’

I’m pretty sure she raided my secret Cheerios stash.

…

Not gonna lie, those weren’t the words I thought I’d be reading next.

I’m serious.

Can’t tell if it’s a good thing or a bad thing that I know you genuinely are.

I’m gonna go with...adorably odd.

Thanks.

You’re welcome :)

Raiding your secret Cheerios stash though? What a heinous crime.

I can sense your sarcasm, but I’m choosing to ignore it.

Whatever helps you sleep at night, babe.

---

08/09/2016

Pros and cons of having my brother at home.

Pros: I missed him.

Cons: MUFFIN.

Those are two very short lists.

Pros: I really missed him.

Cons: MUFFIN. MUFFIN. MUFFIN.

That’s an improvement, I guess.

Why’re you bullying my niece again?

She just gave birth, Keith. She’s frail, be nice.

Because I’m fairly certain she’s a demon?

I woke up today and she was in my BED.
She’s warming up to you, don’t fight it.

No, no, no. She was only there because my brother’s there.

So she was waiting for him to wake up.

Cute!

nO NOT CUTE.

While she was waiting, she thought it’d be fun to eat one of my socks.

Again.

And spit it on my blankets.

Again.

I didn’t even know cats ate socks.

I thought that was a dog thing?

More proof Muffin is a demon???

Anyway, my brother wakes up and Muffin leaps into his arms and starts purring

So he’s just like ‘oh, don’t be mad at her, she didn’t mean anything by it’ and now he’s just walking around with her in his arms like she’s a baby?????

I’m sure he likes her better than me.

I can’t believe you’re jealous of a cat.

I’m not jealous.

I just don’t understand how nobody else sees how evil she is.

At least the kittens like me.

Only cause you haven’t stepped on their tails yet.

THAT WAS AN ACCIDENT.

According to you…

But speaking of the kittens, you’ve been slacking on the pictures lately.

How am I supposed to decide which one I want if I never get to see them?

[IMAGE SENT]

[IMAGE SENT]

[IMAGE SENT]

Happy?
(10:02) Very.

(10:02) They’re getting so big???

(10:02) When do you think we’ll be able to take them?

(10:07) A couple more weeks I think?

(10:08) Cool, so I guess it’s time to start sweet talking my mum into letting me have a kitten.

(10:09) You haven’t even asked yet?

(10:10) I’ll break the news to her this weekend.

(10:11) If I get the twins excited about having a new pet first, she won’t be able to say no.

(10:14) That’s...surprisingly devious.

(10:16) It’s how we got the guinea pigs.

(10:17) I’m weirdly impressed.

(10:18) *finger guns*

(10:18) My teacher’s giving me the evil eye, so I’m gonna put my phone away before I get caught.

(10:19) Message you later?

(10:20) Cool. Have a good day, Lance.

(16:25) So, long shot but

(16:25) I’ve got my mentoring thing in a bit, and Matt and Shiro are coming with me.

(16:26) They’re gonna go be all weird and nostalgic about the school or something.

(16:26) Also, Matt said something about needing to defend their table tennis title or something.

(16:26) Wanna come with?

(16:30) I’ll pass I think.

(16:30) You sure?

(16:33) Yeah, yeah.

(16:33) I’m good.

(16:34) Have fun.


(16:55) Have you guys left?

(16:57) Yeah, like 10 mins ago.
(16:57) Why?

(16:58) Is Allura with you?

(17:00) Nope, she stayed.

(17:04) …

(17:05) You left me alone with your girlfriend???????

(17:05) Shiro? Why??

(17:08) Calm down, Keith.

(17:08) I can’t calm down.

(17:08) Why would you do this to me?

(17:09) Is this revenge for me calling Muffin ugly at breakfast this morning?

(17:11) …

(17:11) No.

(17:13) IT IS.

(17:17) It’s not, it’s not.

(17:17) Allura wasn’t feeling too well, so she said she’d just stay home while we went.

(17:17) No big deal.

(17:18) Except mum and dad aren’t home.

(17:18) So it’s just the two of us.

(17:20) So?

(17:20) It’s not like you’ve never spoken to her before.

(17:23) Yeah, but there were other people around.

(17:23) What if she tries to talk to me?

(17:23) And asks me about the weather???

(17:26) I

(17:26) What?

(17:26) Why would she ask you about the weather?

(17:30) I DON’T KNOW SHIRO.

(17:30) Isn’t that the go-to awkward conversation starter?
(17:30) ‘So, nice weather we’re having, huh?’

(17:33) ...

(17:33) Allura isn’t going to ask you about the weather, Keith.

(17:34) She probably won’t even bother you.

(17:34) Stop panicking.

(17:36) I literally can’t.

(17:40) So, I’ve been left alone with my brother’s girlfriend.

(17:45) What? Really?

(17:45) Awkward.

(17:47) Right?

(17:47) My brother went with Pidge and her bro to visit their old school and she stayed behind.

(17:47) So it’s just us.

(17:48) I’ve never felt so awkward before.

(17:48) Oh no.

(17:48) She just knocked on my door. Lance, what do I do?

(17:50) Talk to her?

(17:52) About what?

(17:52) She just knocked again I’m dying.

(17:52) Anything?

(17:53) Oooh, ask her is she knows the Queen.

(17:53) ...Why?

(17:54) You said she’s British right?

(17:55) That doesn’t mean she knows the Queen...

(17:55) SHE MIGHT.

(18:01) Slightly worried you haven’t replied in six minutes.

(18:10) Keith?

(18:25) No, she doesn’t know the Queen.

(18:27) You actually asked her???
I panicked.

It was either that or ‘nice weather we’re having, huh?’

Alright, good choice.

That wasn’t nearly as bad as I thought it was gonna be.

We’re eating together?

Huh????

She wanted to ask if I wanted to order pizza, so now we’re eating pizza together.

Pineapple pizza…

We’re not getting into this again.

That means yes.

Disgusting.

No comment.

Did you find out if she ate your Cheerios?

She did.

But then we bonded over our mutual hatred for regular Cheerios so I forgive her.

Also, she’s telling me stories about my brother at uni.

This blackmail material is just beautiful.

Beautiful.

Mmm.

I ended up talking about you a little, so I guess she has potential blackmail material to give to my brother now though?

Me????

What did you say?

Ahahaha. Nope.

I’m taking that to my grave.

Keiiiiittthhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.

;)

I’m hurt.

You’ll survive.
(18:55) Barely.
(18:55) At least tell me it was something good.
(18:56) :)
(18:57) You are the WORST.
(18:57) This crush is cancelled.
(18:58) *Cool. I guess you'll never know what I said then.*
(18:59) …
(18:59) THE WORST.

(20:32) Great session today, Pidge.
(20:32) I think you could probably go for those early entrance exams if you wanted?
(20:33) *Yeah, one of my teachers at school mentioned it…*
(20:33) Still giving it some thought.
(20:34) Thanks for the cupcakes!!
(20:35) You’re welcome.
(20:35) So, you know those guys you came with today…
(20:37) One of them was my brother - Matt.
(20:37) Yeah I figured. The family resemblance is pretty obvious.
(20:38) *Yeah, sometimes my mum says she’s sure we’re twins born six years apart.*
(20:39) And the other one was Keith’s brother.
(20:41) THAT’S KEITH’S BROTHER?
(20:42) Yep, Shiro.
(20:43) Oh wow.
(20:43) How come they came with you?
(20:44) They used to go to the Garrison for sixth form, like you and Lance.
(20:44) Think they wanted to look around and see some of their old teacher’s?
(20:45) Also table tennis, or something.
(20:46) Table...tennis?
Yeah, I wasn’t really paying attention.

Why didn’t Keith come?

Ah. I did invite him, but...

He has his reasons.

I see...

Sorry, it’s a little complicated.

It’s fine, don’t worry!!

I’m being nosey.

I’m gonna go find Lance now. The last I heard from him he was saying something about his ‘honour’ being on the line.

And when he says stuff like, things never end well.

Why do I feel like he’d get along really well with my brother…

GUESS WHO JUST HAD THE TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP OF HIS LIFE.

I thought you didn’t play competitively?

I don’t. But I can’t help if I’m just naturally the best person in the school at it.

You gotta work on your modesty.

Says you?????

Anyway, some guys who used to go here came back to visit or something and apparently they were like the table tennis champs when they were here a billion years ago.

But now I’m the champ, so I had to defend my title obviously.

Obviously.

Anyway, I kicked ass even without Hunk.

Where was Hunk?

He does this programme on Thursdays, nurturing the minds of other mini geniuses or something.

Oh.

So you won?

...No.

I thought you ‘kicked ass’?
I DID.
I only lost cause of a technicality.
Anyway, they were really cool?
AY SOMEONE GOT SOME PICS OF US PLAYING.
[IMAGE SENT]
You can literally see the concentration on my face.
[IMAGE RECEIVED]
What the ufcck?
I know right? I don’t think I’ve ever sweat so much before.
Tried to hug Hunk when I found him later and I practically slid off him. V gross.
No I mean
That’s my brother.
Huh?
In the picture. The guy you’re playing against.
That’s my brother.
HUH?
Shiro?
Yeah.
You go to the Garrison?
Yeah??? What the fuck?
For real? That’s your brother?
Yeah.
Wait
Pidge is on a mentoring programme there.
...So is Hunk…
He’s tutoring someone.
Holy shit.
Brb.
Same.
Lance goes to the Garrison.

He met Shiro today???

Oh boy.

You knew didn’t you?

I may have had my suspicions.

Pidge.

Alriiiight, yes I knew.

Hunk is mentoring me.

? ???

And that wasn’t something you thought you should mention?

Well

You get weird about the Garrison.

And you obviously like talking to Lance, and I didn’t want you to just...stop.

I don’t get weird about it.

You get a little weird.

And if you found out earlier that he went there, I know you would’ve just stopped talking to him.

Keith?

Keith???

Is Keith alright?

I think so?

Should he not be?

He’s mad at me.

I think.

...What happened?

Before I tell you, just know I had Keith’s best interests at heart, alright?

I don’t doubt that.
Thanks.

So, did you know you met Lance today?

Huh?

What?

Wait. That was Lance?

As in, table tennis Lance was Keith’s Lance?????

Unless you met another Lance today, then yep. That was Keith’s Lance.

He goes to the Garrison?

Yep.

And...and you knew and didn’t tell Keith?

That sounds about right, yeah.

Pidge...

I’m sorry ;_;

Can you just

Just check on Keith? He’s not replying to me anymore.

Of course.

It’ll be fine, Pidge.

Give him a little time.

Yeah, yeah.

Alright, after twenty minutes of sitting on Hunk and tickling, he spilled the beans.

He held out so long, I’m impressed.

Anyway, yeah. He’s Pidge’s mentor and they’ve both been dying watching up ‘dance around each other like idiots’

Hunk’s words not mine.

I can’t believe they know each other? Like

We actually have mutual friends?????

I met your brother?????

WE COULD’VE MET AGES AGO WHAT THE HELL
I feel cheated somehow.

Next time Pidge comes to the Garrison, you should come.

Or...not?

Keith?

Did you sleep early tonight?

Night, babe.

---

09/09/2016

Any news?

He wouldn’t talk to me.

Pretended to be asleep when I came upstairs last night.

And this morning he left really early with dad.

Uhgfhgfkhfgjkhfgj.

I’m really sorry, Shiro.

It’s fine.

Just give him time, and he’ll come around.

I hope so.

Hey, Hunk.

Weird question and feel free to say no, but

Could I have Lance’s number?

Not that I don’t trust you, but can I ask why?

Lance told you he knows we know each other?

Yeah…

Keith knows as well and...he didn’t take it super well.

I messed up and I’m trying to fix it and I think Lance might be able to help?
(10:23) Ahhhh, cool, cool. That’s fine, yeah.

(10:24) Thank you, Hunk!!! I owe you!!!

(10:30) Hi Lance, this is Pidge.

(10:30) Keith’s friend.

(10:30) Sorry for messaging you out of the blue, Hunk gave me your number, but it’s kind of an emergency.

(10:31) What? Emergency?

(10:31) Is Keith alright?

(10:33) He’s not hurt or anything, you don’t have to worry that much.

(10:34) Okay...so...what’s up?

(10:34) Does this have something to do with why he didn’t reply to me last night?

(10:36) Yeah.

(10:36) Um. It’s kind of tricky to talk about, because it’s not my problem to talk about with anyone, but

(10:36) Could you talk to him?

(10:37) I can’t talk to him if he doesn’t reply.

(10:38) Call him?

(10:40) Uhhhhhh.

(10:40) We don’t really talk on the phone.

(10:41) Can you try?

(10:42) Can’t you just tell me what’s wrong with him instead of making me play guessing games?

(10:45) I think if I tell you, it’ll make it worse.

(10:45) So be vague.

(10:47) Alright.

(10:47) You know he dropped out, right?

(10:50) Yeah, he mentioned that once or twice.

(10:51) But he probably didn’t mention that he was supposed to go to the Garrison?

(10:54) What.
Okay, no. Definitely didn’t mention that.

He doesn’t like talking about it.

Why’d he drop out?

Can you ask him that yourself?

Will he answer?

He might.

I hope he does.

I’ll give it a go, but like, I can’t promise anything.

I probably won’t be able to call till later tonight, though. Is that alright?

Yeah, that’s fine.

Thank you, Lance!!

Also, I’m really glad you two started talking.

Yeah?

Me too.

Where are you, man?

We gotta leave in like two minutes if we’re gonna catch the train.

I’m coming, I’m coming.

Start walking, I’ll catch up.

K.

If you miss the train I’m leaving without you, though.

No, you gotta hold the doors open so I can dramatically throw myself in.

Why????

It’s in the Best Friend Contract. Give it a read sometime.

Oh yeah? I must’ve missed that section.

Just hurry up, please.

Also, did Pidge message you?

Yeah, she did.

Is everything alright?
They miss the train.

Hunk blames Lance ('what's the point of having legs as long as those if you ever use them?'), while Lance blames Hunk ('I asked you to hold the doors for me, didn't I?'), but they eventually make it home - three hours later than expected, but still better than nothing.

By the time Lance has been hugged and kissed by his parents, scolded about his apparently terrible eating habits while he's at school, tackled by the twins, and dragged into an impromptu game of hide-and-seek with them despite it being way past their bedtime, and finally makes it upstairs to his room, he's tired.

As in, he thinks he could comfortably pass out on the floor for the next ten hours kind of tired.

He drops his bags to the floor within seconds of stepping across the threshold, hardly caring where everything lands, and practically throws himself into his bed, groaning happily as he sinks into his mattress, letting that familiar smell of home invade his senses entirely.

He feels his eyelids begin to flutter shut of their own accord and he thinks he's probably about five seconds away from falling into a dead sleep when he feels his phone vibrate impatiently in his pocket. He groans as he tugs it free, scowling at the sudden bright threatening to temporarily blind him as he quickly types in his passcode and glances at Hunk’s name flashing across the screen.

(23:01) Did you get home alright?
(23:02) Yeah, yeah. You?
(23:02) Nice. Same.
(23:03) Did you speak to Keith?
(23:04) ...I may have forgot.
(23:04) Shit.
(23:05) Lance...
(23:05) Doing it now!!
(23:06) Cool, let me know how it goes?
(23:07) I will.
Keith.

Lance sits upright in the bed, all previous signs of fatigue suspiciously absent as he begins fumbling with his phone. He pulls his bottom lip between his teeth and chews nervously as he stares at Keith's name on the screen, thumb hovering over the CALL button.

He can feel an anxious knot twisting almost painfully in his stomach as he hits the button and listens as it rings once, twice, three times, four times, fi—

"Hello?"

"Uh—" Lance starts, feeling the knot twist a little tighter as he sinks further into his blankets. "Keith?"

There's a pause - it lasts barely two seconds, but it feels like it stretches on for hours - and then a surprised and hesitant sounding, "Lance?"

"Yeah," he fiddles with the edge of his blankets, tracing the stitched pattern along the edges, trying not to think about the warm sensation spreading across his chest that's begun to outweigh the unpleasant knot. "It's me. Um— How're you?" He winces as the words come out of his mouth. Smooth, Lance. So very smooth.

There's another pause, long enough this time that Lance has to actually pull the phone back and glance at the screen to check he hasn't been hung up on. "Why're you calling me?"

"Rude," Lance snorts, laughing a little when he hears an obviously flustered Keith stammer out an apology half a second later. "You told me I could call you."

"I did?"

"After the first time we spoke on the phone," Lance says patiently, grinning at the memory of their first and only disastrous (and painfully awkward) phone call. "And you weren't replying to any of my messages, so..." He trails off, grin fading slightly. "Are you alright?"

He hears him swallow and then what sounds like blankets ruffling, followed by quick footsteps and a door opening and closing in quick succession.

"Keith?"

"Gimme—" He grunts, sounding a little winded. "Gimme a second, my brother was in the room."

"Ah," Lance settles back against his bed frame, listening as Keith makes his way through his house, presumably looking for somewhere quiet to talk.

"Alright," he says after a minute or so of nothing but heavy breathing, footsteps, and the sounds of doors opening and closing. "Hi."

Lance frowns. "Your voice sounds weird. It's all echoey."

"I'm in the bathroom. Don't laugh," he adds, when Lance can't turn his snort of amusement into a cough quick enough. "It's the only place someone won't just barge in." Lance hums, listening to the way the tiled walls in the bathroom distorts Keith's voice ever so slightly, making him sound louder than he actually is. "You didn't answer my question."

Lance hums, listening to the way the tiled walls in the bathroom distorts Keith's voice ever so
slightly, making him sound louder than he actually is. "You didn't answer my question."

"Ah— I'm fine." His voice drops a little and Lance feels that knot of anxiety threaten to rear its ugly head again.

"Keith?"

"Sorry," Keith mumbles. "I am fine, really."

"You don't sound fine."

Keith exhaled an obviously frustrated breath, and Lance finds himself imagining what he'd look right now. Is he pacing the bathroom, one hand running nervously through his hair while the other holds onto the phone? Or is he sat cross-legged with his back against the door, stubbornly glaring at a random spot on the wall.

"You go to the Garrison," Keith says suddenly, snapping Lance out of his thoughts.

"Yeah..." Lance says slowly, brows knitting in the middle as he remembers his brief conversation with Pidge earlier. "Is that...bad?"

"No," Keith says quickly, and this time Lance can hear the frustration in his tone. "Not bad, just—" He pauses again, puffing out another frustrated breath, like he's annoyed he can't articulate himself the way he wants. "It's complicated."

"I spoke to Pidge earlier," Lance says after a moments hesitation. "She, uh, she explained a little?"

He hears a shuffling coming from Keith's end and pictures him pacing around the bathroom. "What did she say?"

Lance bunched the blanket in his hand, squeezing tightly as a feeling of nervousness washes over him. "That you were meant to go to the Garrison."

"That's all?" Keith sounds surprised, like he'd expected more. "That's all she said?"

"She said— She said I had to ask you the rest because it wasn't her place to tell."

The sound of light footsteps quickly circling the room stops suddenly. "Really?"

"Yeah—" Lance pauses for a moment, still squeezing the blanket balled up in his fist. "You don't have to, though. It's fine if you do—"

"I do."

"You do?"

"Yeah," Keith sighs, and Lance thinks he can hear what sounds like him sliding against a wall before he hits the ground with a muted thud. "I was meant to go. I would've been in your year, I think?"

Lance hums in agreement. "But you didn't go?"

"Remember ages ago, I said I never really liked school?"

"Even though you were like, a natural genius, or whatever?"

Keith snorts into the speaker and Lance feels his lips tug upwards into a small grin. "That's one way
"Oh," Lance thinks back to yesterday and his afternoon spent playing table tennis with Matt and Shiro.

"Yeah," Keith sighs. "See he was a natural genius, and I think everyone else just assumed I'd follow in his footsteps?"

"That sucks."

"A little," Keith agrees, voice sounding a little smaller than before. "It wasn't ever really bad or anything, but it was always just like a 'Keith is going to do exactly what Shiro did and do just as well as him' kind of thing with everyone."

"And you didn't want to?"

"I didn't know what I wanted to do," Keith grits out. "I still don't." There's something in his tone of voice that makes Lance wince - an underlying pain, bubbling under the surface. "But I knew I didn't want to keep doing something I didn't enjoy just because everyone expected me to."

"So you dropped out?"

There's a beat of silence before Keith mutters out a quiet, "yeah."

"And— Uh," Lance swallows nervously. "How'd everyone take it? How'd Shiro take it?"

Keith laughs quietly. "Shiro is the biggest believer in 'do whatever the hell makes you happy' in the world. He was the one who ended up convincing our parents I wasn't 'throwing my life away' or something like that."

Lance grins, hearing the way Keith's tone of voice gains a happy sounding lilt to it. "And you don't regret it?"

"No," Keith says immediately, sounding surer than he has for the entirety of their conversation. "But—"

"But?" Lance presses when the pauses stretches on for a beat too long.

"Sometimes—" Keith begins. "Sometimes it's hard. Shiro went there. Matt went there. Pidge is almost definitely going to end up going there. And now—"

"And now I go there."

"Yeah," Keith sighs. "It's like I can't get away from it. Like something in the universe is telling me I should've gone, and I'm just being stubborn by refusing to go."

"Yeah well, fuck the universe," Lance says with a shrug, grinning a little when he hears Keith's surprised squawk. "You said you don't regret it, so act like you don't regret it. It's your life and Shiro's right, you've gotta do what makes you happy. Even if it isn't what everyone else thinks it should be."

"That's—" Keith pauses, and Lance is sure he can hear the smile tugging at his lips. "That's surprisingly wise."

"I'm a wise guy, babe, you've gotta get used to that."
"You thought pineapples came from a pineapple tree."

"...I'm wise most of the time."

Keith laughs. It sounds muffled, like he's using his hand to silence some of the noise, but it sends a feeling a warmth shooting through Lance's veins either way.

"If I did go to the Garrison," Keith says after a few moments, voice sounding weirdly contemplative. "We would've met sooner."

"True," Lance says thoughtfully, vision swimming with images of his years at the Garrison being spent with not just Hunk by his side, but Keith too. "But, you never know, we might not have even liked each other if we met that way. We might've been enemies or rivals or something. Things happen for a reason, you know?"

"Yeah," Keith hums. "And— And I'm glad we met this way."

Lance feels his grin turn soft. "Me too."

(00:15) Are you awake?

(00:16) I am...

(00:16) Keith, I'm sorry.

(00:17) I should've told you about Lance.

(00:19) It's fine, Pidge.

(00:19) Honestly, 100% fine.

(00:20) I'm sorry for freezing you out like that.

(00:21) So...we're good?

(00:23) 100%

(00:25) <3

Chapter End Notes

"we're not gonna miss the train"

arrested development narrators voice: they miss the train

*finger guns* tysm for all the kudos/comments/bookmarksmsgs on tumble/literally everything, you guys are amazing tysm <3333
Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

key:
  lance
  keith
  pidge
  hunk
  shiro

See the end of the chapter for more notes

10/09/2016

(09:32) [IMAGE SENT]

(09:32) As promised, a pic from last year’s Halloween for you to laugh at.

(09:32) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(09:37) I don’t even want to know how much blue paint you guys used to pull that off…

(09:38) TOO MUCH.

(09:38) Under my fingernails were blue for like two months.

(09:40) You guys look good, though.

(09:40) But your niece (?) looks really blue…in places I don’t think she’s supposed to?

(09:41) Why does it look like she dipped her hair in a tub of blue paint???

(09:43) Yeah, that’s my niece and nephew in the pic with us.

(09:43) aND BECAUSE SHE DID. LITERALLY.

(09:43) Told them to sit still for like two minutes while I opened the door for Hunk, came back and that was the final result.

(09:44) I still don’t think my sister’s forgiven me yet.

(09:45) That poor child.

(09:45) I feel sorry for any kid that has to call you ‘uncle’.

(09:46) Excuse you???

(09:46) I’m an amazing uncle. If there were uncle awards I would win gold.

(09:47) Doubt.
(09:48) Wow, alright. Do you want testimonials? I can get you testimonials.

(09:50) Wait. What?

(09:52) Gimme a sec.

(09:53) What?

(10:02) Alright so, my sister definitely doesn’t appreciate being woken up before 10am on a Saturday.

(10:02) Sounds like someone I know.

(10:03) Ahahaha, yeah.

(10:03) But she did let me talk to my niece real quick and I have 100% proof that I am, in fact, the world’s greatest uncle.

(10:04) Natalya, aged 6: ‘Uncle Lance is the best uncle because he lets us stay up late and he sneaks me extra dessert sometimes. He’s also extremely handsome and charming and anyone would be lucky to date him xo’

(10:05) Her words exactly.

(10:06) Exactly?

(10:06) I may have filled in the blanks a tiny, tiny bit.

(10:07) Uh. Huh.

(10:07) Is this the niece that puked on you the last time you saw her?

(10:09) …

(10:09) Maybe…

(10:10) I’m starting to understand why that happened.

(10:11) You sound exactly like my mum.

(10:11) ‘Lance, you can’t give a six-year-old four bowls of ice-cream before bed and not expect most of it to end up in your face!!!!!!’

(10:13) Your…face?

(10:14) It was…not pretty.

(10:14) Anyway, the point still stands that I’m an amazing uncle - ice-cream puke incident aside.

(10:15) So, suck it.

(10:16) I’ll believe it when I see it.

(10:18) Well.

(10:18) You could see it if you come out with us for Halloween?
Mum says the twins are old enough to go with us this year so me and Hunk are gonna need some extra hands…

I don’t think I’d be very helpful.

Nah, you’d be great.

Or, at the very least, you’d be hilariously bad and give me and Hunk something to laugh at.

That seems like the most likely option.

I just had a stroke of genius.

Oh no.

[IMAGE SENT]

K, so this is me and Hunk on Halloween a couple years ago.

[IMAGE RECEIVED]

I need you to know that this is doing the exact opposite of convincing me to come with you guys this year.

What...are you guys wearing???

You’ve never heard of the Teletubbies?????

kEITH.

What kind of childhood did you have?

No, I have.

I didn’t mean that literally. I meant ‘what are you guys wearing?’ as in ‘why are you dressed as Tinky-Winky?’

Please don’t pretend like I don’t make a fantastic Tinky-Winky.

I got so many compliments that night.

Loads of sweets also.

You still haven’t answered the question.

That was about two years ago, so the twins were 3

And my niece and nephew were 4 and 5 I think??

So yeah, Teletubbies were a really big Thing in my family for a while.

You decided to dress up as them for Halloween…

That’s Hunk dressed as Laa Laa, right?

Of course.
He’s a very patient friend, isn’t he?

Excuse you?? Dressing up as them was his idea in the first place.

Also, it just hit me that your knowledge of the Teletubbies is very impressive. You even spelt Laa Laa the right way.

And you don’t even have any tiny humans in your life…

Could it be...you’re a secret fan?

No?????

It’s okay, babe. Your secret is safe with me.

There is no secret??

;) ;)

... Did any of this have a point?

Oh yeah!

So

If you and Pidge come out with us this year, we could bring back the Teletubbies costumes!!

YOU COULD BE PO.

I’m not even going to dignify that with an answer.

That’s not a no…

No.

Ugh. No fun.

Sorry?

It’s alright.

You’re lucky you’re cute, I guess.

Uh.

Just accept the compliment, Keith.

I can’t tell if you’re messing with me sometimes.

When I tell you you’re cute?

Yeah.

Keith, have you looked in a mirror lately?
I’m eating breakfast. My mum is sitting right opposite me.

And now she’s asking why I’m red, I hope you’re happy.

Ecstatic.

What did you tell her?

That I choked on my cereal.

Genius.

You go red really easily, don’t you?

Apparently.

Never really realised that until recently.

Hmm.

This is vital information that could come in handy next week.

Please no.

‘Make Keith Blush’ is at the very top of my to-do list for Saturday.

I don’t think that’ll be very hard.

Shiro and Allura just came downstairs. They say hi.

Tell your brother I want a rematch, please.

Last time wasn’t fair, I didn’t have Hunk.

He just snorted into his coffee.

RUDE.

How mad would you be if I destroyed your brother at table tennis? I gotta know if it’ll hurt my chances with you or not.

It wouldn’t.

Then tell him he’s going DOWN.

Just name the time and place.

Now he’s laughing.

Allura’s cheering you on, though.

Allura confirmed for my favourite.

Wait, he said next time he’s back home he’ll rematch you.
(11:34) Nice. Gives me some time to learn some new tricks.

(11:35) *Still can’t believe my brother met you before I did.*

(11:35) *Is it weird that I asked him about you?*

(11:37) Nah, I defo would’ve done the same.

(11:37) *bUT*

(11:37) What did he say?

(11:38) Devilishly handsome? Charming? Wildly intelligent? The Greatest Table Tennis Player He’s Ever Seen?

(11:40) *He said you’re loud.*

(11:41) I mean, I guess…

(11:41) Is that all?

(11:42) *And that you seem nice.*

(11:42) *And a couple other things I’m not telling you.*

(11:45) UGH.

(11:45) :)

(11:47) I’d try and get it out of you, but the twins are using my bed as a trampoline so I think this is a sign I should try and get out of bed.

(11:48) *You’re still in bed????*

(11:50) *IT’S SATURDAY.*

(11:50) Don’t judge me.

(11:51) *I’m judging.*

(11:51) I think I’ll live.

(11:52) Twins have upgraded to trying to do backflips. I should intervene before someone gets hurtiojrdghkuthgdh

(11:53) *Lance…*

(11:56) Update: I was the one that got hurt.

(11:56) *Unbelievable.*

(11:56) Lucas landed on my head.

(11:56) I’d be annoyed but that was actually pretty impressive? Kid should start gymnastics or something.

(11:57) K, time to redirect this energy someplace where I won’t get any more injuries. Think my
parents are gonna get me to take them to the park or something.

(11:58) Nice.

(11:58) I’m leaving in a bit as well.

(11:59) Where’re you going?

(12:02) Robotics exhibit for Pidge’s birthday.

(12:04) oH YEAH!!

(12:04) Tell me how it is? Hunk wants to go sometime soon.

(12:05) Yeah, yeah.

(12:05) Have a nice day, Lance.

(12:07) You too, babe.

(12:30) Are you ready to go yet?

(12:34) Gimme ten mins.

(12:34) Started this new game last night and I’m soooo close to completing this level.

(12:36) Cool.

(12:36) Question: what would you say to dressing up as the Teletubbies for Halloween?

(12:40) I hope you’re happy you just made me lose the level when I was literally sECONDS AWAY FROM COMPLETING IT.

(12:40) ...Teletubbies?


(12:42) I’m coming to knock for you now.

(12:43) Is this a Lance Thing?

(12:43) It is, isn’t it?

(12:44) I said forget I asked!!!

(12:45) Yeah, it’s definitely a Lance Thing.

(12:46) No.

(12:46) Yes.

(12:46) No.

(12:46) I’m outside, by the way.
(12:47) Yes.

(12:47) Cool, I’m coming.

(12:48) No.

(13:16) Don’t get too excited, but we might be bringing back the Teletubbies this Halloween.

(13:19) How could I not get excited after hearing that?

(13:20) Also, why?

(13:23) I’m in the process of convincing Keith to come with us.

(13:23) And he’d bring Pidge with him, obviously.

(13:25) And how’s that going for you?

(13:26) So far, so terrible.

(13:26) But he won’t be able to resist my cunning charm for long.

(13:27) So start digging out the costumes.

(13:28) Would you be mad if I said I didn’t have any faith you’ll be able to convince him?

(13:29) YES.

(13:30) Then my lips are sealed xo

(13:30) Also, what’re you doing today?

(13:32) Taking the twins to the park and that’s about it I think, why?

(13:33) Mum said to ask if you want to come round for dinner.

(13:33) Said she misses her ‘other son’.

(13:33) Only if you haven’t got anything planned with your fam though.

(13:34) Also, tell everyone I said hi!!!!

(13:35) Lemme check with my mum, but I don’t think we’re doing anything.

(13:36) Cool, come over whenever you’re done with the twins.

(17:47) TODAY WAS THE BEST BIRTHDAY GIFT EVER.

(17:47) How am I supposed to top this for yours?

(17:48) Rude, Keith. You didn’t think about that did you?

(17:53) :)
(17:53) You've got nine months, I'm sure you'll think of something.
(17:53) Glad you had fun, though.

(17:56) So much fun.

(17:56) Best Friend of the Year Award goes to you.

(17:56) <3
(18:00) <3

(18:26) Did you know there's going to be a space exhibit at the Science Museum?
(18:35) What? For real?
(18:39) Yeah. Saw loads of promo for it when we were there today.
(18:39) Do you...maybe want to go?
(18:41) Yeah, man. 100%.
(18:43) With me, I mean?
(18:45) Well, yeah. I thought that was implied?
(18:47) It was, I just
(18:47) Just wanted to make sure we were on the same page.
(18:53) We definitely are.
(18:53) When does it open?
(18:55) In a couple months, I think?
(19:04) Awesome, it's a date.
(19:05) Can we plan a second date if we haven't even had the first one?
(19:08) Well, not gonna lie but
(19:08) The space exhibit doesn't open for a couple months, right?
(19:09) Yeah.
(19:11) So, if our first date goes well, the space thing might not even be our second date, you know?
(19:11) It might be our third, or fourth, or twentieth.
(19:14) Twentieth?
(19:15) I'm very optimistic.
(19:17) Hm.
(19:17) I hope Saturday goes well.
(19:20) Me too.
(19:20) I'm really nervous ahaha.
(19:20) If my hands are dripping with sweat when I try and hold your hand you gotta promise you won't comment on it.
(19:22) No guarantees.
(19:23) kEITH.
(19:25) :)
(19:25) So
(19:25) About Halloween...
(19:30) Yes...
(19:32) Pidge is up for it.
(19:32) Dressing up with you guys.
(19:35) So you'll come?????
(19:35) Wow, defo thought I'd have to persuade you a little more before you caved.
(19:35) I had a whole speech planned out.
(19:36) Well, now I want to hear the speech.
(19:40) Alright, maybe it was less of a speech and more just me sending you selfies of me looking extremely adorable and pouting at the camera until you agreed.
(19:40) I've got killer puppy dog eyes, you know?
(19:43) You could still send the selfies.
(19:43) I'm not 100% convinced yet.
(19:48) But I'm at Hunk's right now, getting my ass kicked at Monopoly.
(19:48) Remind me later?
(19:50) Cool, cool.
(19:50) Hey, Hunk.
(19:50) Is he beating you?
(19:52) He says hey.
(19:52) Nah, his granddad is destroying both of us so easily????
And I've been cheating since like the third round, so this is just embarrassing.

Very.

Hunk's the banker and even he's losing, so at least I'm not that bad.

Small victories.

Shiro and Allura want to watch a movie with me and they said I could pick.

Do I pick something good to spare Allura, or just go for my usual type?

Usual.

Also, pick something with like zero romance.

Why?

You want to get ten seconds into a kissing scene and you look to your left and see they're making googly-eyes at each other????????

Googly-eyes...

You know, that look people get where they're just like staring at each other like they can see the universe in their eyes?

That's surprisingly poetic.

I'm a romantic deep down.

Mansquito is on right now.

...Mansquito...

Do I even want to know?

I'm adding to our watch list for later.

Nooooo.

:) 

K, we're gonna start the movie now. I'll message you later?

Cool. Have fun watching your creepy hybrid sci-fi film.

I will.

Have fun losing at monopoly.

Low. Blow.
(23:06) Adorable puppy-dog selfies for you so you can decide you want to come out with us for Halloween.

(23:06) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(23:06) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(23:13) Wow.

(23:13) You weren't joking when you said your puppy-dog eyes were killer.

(23:13) Not fair.

(23:16) ;)

(23:16) So you'll come trick-or-treating with us?

(23:16) aND you'll dress up?

(23:16) As a Teletubby? Specifically, Po?

(23:19) Yeah, yeah.

(23:21) YESSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS!!!

(23:21) You're gonna love it, I swear.

(23:24) Mm. Debatable.

(23:26) Nope, not debatable.

(23:26) It's impossible to spend Halloween with me and not love it.

(23:26) Literally impossible.

(23:28) We'll see.

(23:28) WE WILL.

(23:28) How'd movie night go with Shiro and Allura?

(23:30) I've been banned from ever choosing a movie again.

(23:30) Shiro's exact words once the credits started rolling: 'Keith, what the actual hell?'

(23:31) And Allura just looked confused. She kept asking if it was supposed to be serious or not.

(23:34) Aw.

(23:34) Don't worry babe, you can watch all your crappy movies with me.

(23:36) Thanks.

(23:36) How'd Monopoly go?

(23:39) The board mysteriously got flipped just as I was about to get made bankrupt.
Through no fault of my own, can I just add.

Why don't I believe that?

I'm gonna sleep now. Me and Hunk have to leave pretty early to catch our train.

G'night, babe <3

Night, Lance <3

WOOHHDNSNDHCSHFGDFGFBNXCVNDSF

Um?

That's the first time you've done '<3' back to me.

I'm screenshotting this, printing it out, and putting it in a frame.

No, it's not?

Is it?

Yeah, definitely.

Oh.

Um.

Night <3

<3 <3

Did you guys make your train?

Yeah, just about.

Matt's been trying to catch his breath for the last 10 mins, though.

The woman opposite us looks like she's about five seconds away from calling an ambulance for him.

Ha.

Thanks for coming home this week. It was really, really good seeing you again.

And Allura.
Cheerios thief aside, she’s really nice. I like her.

So do mum and dad, by the way. Like, a lot.

It’s been like 20 mins and they’re still talking about her.

Yeah?

I knew they’d like her, but I was really worried you two wouldn’t get along, you know?

Wait, what? Really?

Mhm. This is the part where I admit I asked Allura to stay home with you that day on purpose.

So you’d talk to each other a little.

I KNEW IT.

You’re not sneaky at all.

It worked didn’t it?

…

Maybe.

That’s what I thought :)

She’s gonna add you on Facebook, is that alright?

Yeah, yeah.

Also, she mentioned what you told her about Lance.

Whatever she said, it’s a lie.

You can’t trust her. She’s a Cheerios thief.

Riiiiight.

Don’t.

Don’t what?

Don’t say ‘riiiight’ like you know I’m lying.

I do know you’re lying, though.

AT LEAST HUMOUR ME.

That’s no fun for me.

You’re horrible.

If it makes you feel any better, Allura is saying I have to stop teasing you.
(12:17) I'm liking her more and more.

(12:19) Even though you just called her an untrustworthy Cheerios thief?

(12:20) You have no proof of that.

(12:20) Keith...

(12:21) I can literally just scroll up...

(12:23) Photoshop, clearly.

(12:26) Oh yeah.

(12:26) Clearly.

(12:26) Seriously though, I'm really glad you're talking to Lance.

(12:27) He seems like a really good kid.

(12:31) ‘Really good kid’ there you go again acting like you're like 50 or something.

(12:31) You're 21, Shiro.

(12:35) Stop being difficult. You know what I'm trying to say.

(12:35) Just, I hope whatever you two end up deciding to do, it works out.

(12:37) Yeah, me too.

(14:23) Guess who convinced his parents to let him get a kitten...?

(14:26) They said yes?

(14:28) Well

(14:28) They said no a couple times but then I maybe subtly let slip to the twins that my good friend was going to give us one...

(14:29) And then I maybe accidentally showed them a picture or ten.

(14:29) And then maybe they started getting really excited about their new kitten and long story short...

(14:30) WE'RE ALLOWED ONE OF THE KITTENS!!!!!!

(14:33) I can't believe you used your brother and sister like that.

(14:34) It's a cutthroat world, Keith.

(14:34) Also, Hunk's parents are cool with him getting one as well.

(14:35) When do you think we can take them?

(14:38) A couple weeks, I think?
They're getting really big, really fast, but I think they still have to stay with Muffin for a little bit longer.

How is my feline niece, by the way?

Worse than usual.

Liar.

No, I'm serious.

Since Shiro left this morning she's just been sitting on the windowsill, hissing at everything that passes by.

She even hissed at my mum, and she's Muffin's favourite next to Shiro.

Don't be mean.

She misses her dad.

Impossible. Muffin is a demon and doesn't have feelings.

Other than 'Hate Keith' and 'Hungry'

And you call me melodramatic...

When you meet her, you'll understand.

Hmmm.

Did Allura like her?

...No comment.

Yeah, that's what I thought.

...Shut up.

Are you guys back at school yet?

Nope.

Still on the train.

I thought you were supposed to be leaving early?

Somebody overslept...

It was you, wasn't it?

I can neither confirm or deny that.

But I do have to do Hunk's laundry for a week in apology so...

Ha.
(15:23) Yeah, well
(15:23) Maybe I would've woken up on time if somebody (coughKeithcough) didn't keep me up all night.
(15:25) I didn't???
(15:25) We stopped talking pretty early last night?
(15:28) Mm.
(15:28) I couldn't really sleep, though.
(15:30) Why?
(15:35) Nooooope.
(15:35) You'll make fun of me.
(15:37) I won't.
(15:37) Probably.
(15:37) Maybe a little.
(15:37) But ONLY a little.
(15:40) I really appreciate your honesty.
(15:41) I'm not gonna make fun of you, Lance.
(15:43) Okay.
(15:43) So
(15:43) It's nothing big or anything, I was just
(15:43) Just really happy you did the '<3' back.
(15:44) I really like you, Keith.
(15:44) A lot.
(15:44) Also now I know how you feel when you get really red, hUNK WON'T STOP LAUGHING AT ME
(15:45) HE'S TAKING PICTURES
(15:45) I need a new best friend, do you know anyone who's looking???
(15:49) That's
(15:49) DON'T MAKE FUN OF ME.
(15:49) Really cute and I'm dying.
(15:49) Oh.
(15:50) Why would I make fun of you?
(15:51) I dunno.
(15:51) Like for being too eager or something?
(15:55) Lance?
(15:56) Yeah?
(15:57) You're not too eager.
(15:57) I really like you, too.
(15:58) And if we're starting a tally over who's not been able to sleep because of something the other said.
(15:58) I'd definitely win.
(16:00) AH.
(16:00) Really?
(16:03) Yeah.
(16:05) This is too much, my heart can't take it.
(16:05) Same.
(16:09) New topic:
(19:09) Did you know most ants are female????
(16:10) Lance...
(16:10) What the fuck?

(20:26) So
(20:26) I was thinking.
(20:28) Never a good sign...
(20:29) Hilarious.
(20:29) But yeah, I was thinking
(20:30) Since you know Lance goes to the Garrison and everything now...
(20:31) Why don't you come with me on Thursday?
(20:31) You and Lance can go be obnoxiously cute in some corner of the library or whatever
while me and Hunk work?

(20:33) Firstly: obnoxiously cute????

(20:34) Am I wrong?

(20:35) Extremely.

(20:35) Secondly: I don't think so.

(20:37) Whyyyy?

(20:37) Don't you want to meet?

(20:37) Are you nervous?

(20:38) Cause if you are, don't be. Hunk talks about him all the time and he sounds like more of a nerd than you.

(20:39) 'Nerd'...

(20:39) Coming from you????

(20:40) Yep.

(20:41) I'm not nervous.

(20:41) Well, I am, but

(20:42) We already have a meeting planned.

(20:45) wHAT???

(20:45) And when were you gonna tell me this?

(20:47) ...I'm telling you now?

(20:47) Only because I brought it up.

(20:48) I would've mentioned it eventually.

(20:48) Probably.

(20:50) Ugh.

(20:50) When are you meeting?

(20:50) Omg, is it a date?

(20:51) Saturday.

(20:52) And, yeah.

(20:56) SATURDAY?

(20:56) As in, six days from now????
Yeah.

I'm hurt and offended you waited so long to tell me.

Sorry?

What're you guys doing?

I...don't know yet?

We haven't really planned anything except I said I'd give him a ride on my bike?

Wait.

Am I supposed to plan something?

Is that what I'm supposed to do?

I mean, most of my dating knowledge comes from bad romcoms and Matt

So I'm not the most reliable source around...

But yeah, I'm definitely sure you're supposed to plan something.

Fuck.

Don't panic.

I can't.

I could ask Matt for some advice?

Don't you dare.

Ahahahaa.

He might be helpful?

You know he'll be the exact opposite.

And I Googled and everything is either super generic or expensive and I'm????

You Googled first date ideas?

Wow, I can't believe how romantic you are. Lance is soooo lucky to have you.

Shut up and help me think of something.

Why do I have to help?

Because this is your fault.

How is it my fault you're painfully unprepared?

Because you reminded me I'm painfully unprepared.
(21:34) That seems unfair...

(21:35) :)

(21:36) UGH.

(21:37) :)

(22:46) Hunk...

(22:46) What does Lance like?

(22:48) Um?

(22:48) What?

(22:50) What sorts of things does he like-like doing?

(22:53) Well, right now, he's really into sNORING REALLY LOUDLY.

(22:53) Sorry, I don't know why I'm being passive aggressive in a text to you. He can't hear me.

(22:54) Throw a pillow at him.

(22:56) I've thrown ALL my pillows at him already.

(22:56) Can't tell if he's just genuinely a loud snorer or if this is all a carefully crafted plan to steal all my pillows?

(22:56) Either way, he's succeeding.

(22:57) But yeah, off topic a little.

(22:58) Just a little.

(22:59) He likes...lots of things?

(22:59) You're gonna have to be more specific.

(23:01) Date...type...things?

(23:03) OH.

(23:03) Keith?

(23:05) I've been sworn to secrecy.

(23:05) (Yeah, he's panicking).

(23:06) Lance is a real easy please, to be honest?

(23:06) Keith doesn't need to panic.

(23:07) Lance would probably have the time of his life if they just sat in a coffee shop all afternoon
or something.

(23:09) K, one sec.

(23:10) Hunk says you don't have to panic.

(23:10) Whatever you pick will be fine.

(23:11) *That is the most useless advice I've ever heard in my life.*

(23:11) *I thought Hunk was supposed to be smart?*

(23:13) -_- 

(23:14) Update: he's still panicking.

(23:16) UGHHH.

12/09/2016

(10:00) GOODMORNING STARSHINE.

(10:00) THE EARTH SAYS HELLO.

(10:04) *Someone's in a good mood today.*

(10:05) Yeah, our first class got cancelled!

(10:05) Also, I had a really good sleep?

(10:05) Woke up with more pillows than I went to sleep with for some reason.

(10:05) So, a thought just occurred to me.

(10:05) *Is this going to be another 'dress up at the Teletubbies' type thought?*

(10:06) *Because if it is I'm blocking you right now.*

(10:07) It's not.

(10:07) Though we do have to start getting our costumes together.

(10:08) *Oh God.*

(10:10) But yeah

(10:10) Do I need to wear special clothes to ride your bike?
Leather jacket? Pants? Fingerless gloves????

Um?

Leather...pants?

Yes or no?

You definitely don't need leather pants.

K, what about the jacket?

Where are you getting these bad biker stereotypes from, please?

You can dress normally, it'll be fine.

Hmmm.

That seems like it's taking all the fun out of it...but fine.

What about a helmet?

I have an old one I don't use anymore you can wear.

Oooh, cool.

It's safe, right?

Like...there's no seatbelts or anything so how do you make sure I don't fly off?

1. I'm a good driver?

2. You have to hold on.

Hold on to what?

To me.

Oh.

Yeah, cool. That's fine.

Like...around your waist?

That's where most people hold, yeah.

Have you ridden with anyone before?

Only Shiro and Pidge.

But Pidge isn't allowed anymore.

Why?

Her mum thinks it's too dangerous.

And is it???
Lance.
Chill.

My parents wouldn't let me ride if they thought I'd hurt myself.
Or anyone else.

You're sure?

Are you...

Scared?

nO.

... Not scared.

Maybe a little anxious?

We don't have to ride it if you don't want to.

I do.

Just

I gotta psyche myself up a little first.

Also, I need you to promise that if I scream you won't mention it.

I can't do that.

Keith.

I promise that if you scream I won't mention it to anyone

Thank you.

Except to Pidge.

And Shiro probably.

And Pidge will probably tell Hunk so...

I'll deny it.

Also

CRUEL.

:)
start to question everything I know.

(16:06) As you should.

(16:06) But what did she do?

(16:08) **[VIDEO SENT]**

(16:08) **SHE'S TEACHING THE KITTENS HOW TO DRINK FROM THE BOWL.**

(16:09) **This is unfair.**

(16:09) **We have a mutual hatred. She's not allowed to be cute, even for a moment.**

(16:11) **This is the greatest thing you've ever sent me.**

(16:11) **I'm sorry, but it tops every selfie you've ever sent.**

(16:13) **You're 100% right.**

(16:14) **That's Smurfette, right?**

(16:15) ...

(16:15) **Blue.**

(16:17) **Noooonoooo, I thought we agreed we weren't naming the kittens after colours.**

(16:19) **We're not naming her Smurfette, either.**

(16:20) **Too late, she's Smurfette in my heart and soul.**

(16:20) **And she's adorable, I feel a connection.**

(16:20) **Can I have her?**

(16:22) **Uh, sure.**

(16:22) **I think Shiro wanted to keep Cupcake anyway.**

(16:23) **Morticia Jr.**

(16:25) **He spent the whole week he was here calling her Cupcake.**

(16:25) **I'm pretty sure that's all she answers to now.**

(16:27) **I'm so disappointed.**

(16:27) Just showed Hunk the video and I've literally never seen him smile so wide before.

(16:27) **Hunk's words exactly: 'This is the Muffin he swears is sent from Hell? I call lies'**

(16:29) **This isn't a fair representation of Muffin's true self.**

(16:29) **For one, you can't see her horns.**

(16:30) **Keith, the Muffin slander is just getting ridiculous now.**
At least try and make it believable.

I can't wait till you meet her and she pukes in your lap.

Won't happen.

Please don't forget, you're talking to the Cat Whisperer.

Oh yeah.

I forgot about that.

It feels like a really long time ago.

Yeah, I was thinking, it feels like we've been talking forever?

And not just for however long it's been?

Is that weird?

Nope.

It's the same for me?

It's like you just slotted into my life so easily?

Like you've always been there or something??

That's weird, right?

Keith.

Yeah...

This is Hunk.

Um. Hey, Hunk?

Is Lance, alright?

Pretty sure you broke him.

I????

I did what?

He's been lying on his bed with his face in a pillow for like nearly ten minutes now.

Also, he's really, really red.

Like, I'm worried for his blood pressure kind of red.

Omg.

And he keeps sayintigfjkhfgkhfjgiughjgijhfsdhsdhnus

Please ignore everything Hunk said.
(17:09) Hmmmm.
(17:09) Nope.
(17:09) What were you saying?
(17:10) Nothing!!!!!!
(17:11) Tell me?
(17:13) Remember when I asked what you said to Allura and you said you'd take it to your grave?
(17:15) I vaguely recall something similar happening...
(17:16) This is my payback :)
(17:18) ...
(17:18) Touché.

(22:21) Do you prefer being the big spoon or little spoon?
(22:23) What?
(22:24) Big spoon or little spoon, Keith? It's not rocket science.
(22:25) Um.
(22:25) Why?
(22:27) Hunk says I make a terrible little spoon and kicked me out his bed halfway through the latest Cutthroat Kitchen episode, which is just rude.
(22:27) But yeah, he says I'm too bony.
(22:28) Right.
(22:28) Uh. I don't really know?
(22:30) Are you not a big cuddler?
(22:32) Not really?
(22:32) Depends who the person is, I guess?
(22:32) You are?
(22:35) Ahaha, what gave me away?
(22:35) Seems like something you'd like.
(22:38) Mm yeah.
(22:38) I already told you I'm pretty affectionate with people I like, right?
Yeah.

So yeah, stuff like that is just second nature to me, I think?

Also, growing up in a small house with a big family, you end up having a different sense of personal space than most people.

Hunk is pretty used to it cause we've been friends for so long, but yeah, not everyone is...

Is this your way of asking me if I'd be cool with...hugging?

Damn. I thought I was being super subtle.

Not at all.

And, yeah, I think so?

What about...

...Other things?

Huh?

Like what?

Are you really making me spell it out for you?

Yeah.

I mean, like

If I lean in for a kiss, are you gonna shove me away or something?

Oh.

You want to kiss me?

I might...

Oh.

It's fine if you don't want to or anything

Just, yeah, a little heads up because that whole 'shoving me away' thing really does a number on my self-esteem.

...That's happened to you before?

No comment.

I don't think I'd shove you away if we do...

You know.

Kiss?

Yeah, that.
(23:05) Cool, cool, cool.
(23:06) Cool.
(23:07) Very cool.
(23:07) The coolest.

13/09/2016

(13:07) The greatest thing in the world just happened.
(13:07) I'm screaming.
(13:07) I'm about to get kicked out of the library but I'm screaming.
(13:10) Oh, is that you I can hear?
(13:10) I thought there was a cat stuck in the pipes again.
(13:10) I'm ignoring that.
(13:11) Anyway, I'm on Facebook.
(13:12) Aren't you supposed to be working on that paper for English?
(13:14) Hunk, how am I supposed to focus on Of Mice and Men when THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD JUST HAPPENED?
(13:15) Well, when you put it like that...
(13:15) Wassup?
(13:16) I'm on Facebook and guess who popped up in that 'People You May Know' section?
(13:16) SHIRO.
(13:16) AKA KEITH'S BROTHER SHIRO.
(13:17) Aka Kicked Your Ass At Table Tennis Shiro?
(13:18) We agreed not to mention that again.
(13:18) But yeah, him.
(13:18) So I clicked through to his profile, he's got some really weak privacy settings and gUESS WHO WAS THE FIRST PERSON IN HIS FRIENDS LIST??
(13:19) Keith?
(13:19) KEITH!!!!!
(13:19) HUNK HIS PROFILE PICTURE IS REALLY OF A BIKE.
(13:20) I THOUGHT HE WAS JOKING BUT IT REALLY IS.
(13:20) HE'S NOT EVEN RIDING IT. IT'S JUST OF A BIKE.
(13:21) I shouldn't find this adorable but I do?
(13:21) Like? What the hell is happening to me.
(13:23) Ah, young love.
(13:25) Something like that.
(13:25) Omg.
(13:26) Don't make a big deal out of that.
(13:26) BUT YOU JUST SAID
(13:27) I said it was 'something like that'.
(13:27) There's a difference.
(13:28) There's really not.
(13:29) Can you tease me about this later?
(13:29) Keith's privacy settings are annoying.
(13:30) I can't see anything except the bike photo.
(13:30) Where are all the embarrassing pre-puberty pics?
(13:31) So add him?
(13:33) Really?
(13:33) You think I should?
(13:34) I don't see why not.
(13:34) Do it.
(13:36) Alright.
(13:36) Friend request sent.
(13:36) And I screamed again sending it, so now I'm getting kicked out.
(13:37) Where're you?
(13:38) Lab. Working on a project.
(13:38) Come keep me company?

(13:40) On my way!!!!

(14:05) IS THE WORLD ENDING?

(14:10) What?

(14:10) HAVE YOU BEEN KIDNAPPED BY ALIENS AND BRAINWASHED?

(14:12) Again.

(14:12) What?

(14:14) SEPTEMBER 13TH 2016, 2PM

(14:14) THE DAY KEITH KOGANE FINALLY CHANGED HIS FACEBOOK PROFILE PICTURE TO AN ACTUAL PICTURE OF HIMSELF.

(14:15) I never thought this would happen.

(14:15) I'm a little shaken.

(14:17) Why

(14:17) Why are you like this?

(14:18) Because in the four years you've had Facebook, you've had three profile pictures.

(14:18) Two of them were of bikes.

(14:19) I still don't get what's wrong with that.

(14:19) And one was of a car.

(14:19) And now it's of your face.

(14:19) This is a very big leap for you.

(14:20) I don't understand the problem here.

(14:22) No problem.

(14:22) Just really big news.

(14:22) Told Matt and he sent me a voice note of him gasping.

(14:24) Good to know the dramatics run in the family.

(14:25) Yeah, yeah.

(14:25) Why'd you change it?

(14:27) Aren't you supposed to be in school?
Why're you on Facebook?

Honestly?

That's the most ridiculous question I've ever heard.

Now answer me!!!!

I just felt like something new.

Liar.

... I got a friend request from Lance.

I can't believe

You changed your profile picture

To impress your crush.

Shut uppppppppppppppp.

NEVER.

Gonna go ahead and just let you know I'm really, really disappointed in the lack of embarrassing pre-puberty pics on your Facebook.

Extremely disappointed even.

Yeah, sorry.

I don't really use Facebook that much.

I can see that.

You don't even have any embarrassing statuses I can laugh at.

You, on the other hand, have literally hundreds.

Oh God.

Some of my favourites: 'cant believe my mum just made me remove pokemon trainer from my job history on my CV ;('

I can't believe you're doing this to me.

'nicki minaj. next week. cant breathe. someone hold me.'

I don't even regret that one.

'team edward <3'
Can't believe you had a Twilight phase and you weren't even Team Jacob.

Please stop.

Wait, one more.

"if you were a basilisk, i wouldn't mind dying just to look into your eyes [harry potter pick up lines FTW!!!!!!!]

I can't believe how badly this backfired on me.

Also, that's still an amazing line and you know you'd be swooning if I used it on you.

Debatable.

Are you done embarrassing me yet?

Well...there's a photo album called 'my 14th birthdaiiii!!!! xoxo' that I really want to click on...

OH GOD NO.

That was the year of my Kanye glasses phase.

I'll save that for another time then :)

If you really liked me you'd never mention any of this again and give me the chance to delete everything.

I do really like you.

But no.

Ugh.

Wait.

Would Shiro have any pics of you on his Facebook?

I'm not answering that.

THAT MEANS YES!!!!!!

:)
(19:17) Please don't tell me you accepted the request.

(19:18) Alright.

(19:18) I won't tell you then.

(19:19) UGHHHHHH.

(19:23) I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU USED TO HAVE BRACES.


14/09/2016

(13:02) Allura left one of her jumpers here.

(13:02) Mum wants to know if we should keep it or if you want us to mail it to you guys?

(13:05) Ah yeah, she was looking for that.

(13:05) Could you mail it, please?

(13:06) Yeah, yeah.

(13:06) How's uni?

(13:08) I think my bloodstream is 80% Red Bull at the moment.

(13:08) I'm running on an average of three hours sleep a night.

(13:08) And our boiler broke a couple days and our landlord won't fix it for another week.

(13:09) So, pretty much the same as usual.

(13:10) Good to hear.

(13:11) How's home?

(13:11) And Muffin and the kittens?

(13:14) Home's fine. Same as usual.

(13:14) Muffin is Satan in cat form, and the kittens are great.

(13:15) You know, animals can sense negativity.

(13:15) Maybe if you were a little nicer to her, she'd be nicer to you.

(13:16) Or maybe, your cat is just out to get me.
No...my theory sounds more plausible.

How's Lance?

I got like 100 notifications from him in the space of a minute last night.

If I had to suffer, so did you.

And he's fine.

Anything else...

I feel like you're fishing for something, here.

I maybe heard a rumour that you're meeting each other soon.

Does Pidge tell Matt literally everything?

I think so.

Gonna start making her sign non-disclosure agreements before I tell her anything.

But yeah.

We are.

On Saturday.

What're you doing?

Not sure yet.

My plan so far is to just go with the flow and hope he doesn't have a terrible time.

Also fit a ride on my bike in there somewhere.

Make sure you wear your helmets.

Yes, dad.

Do mum and dad know, by the way?

Know what?

That you're meeting him?

No.

Are you planning on telling them?

Not...yet.

You know how you waited a while to tell us about Allura?

Yeah.

It's like that.
I'm pretty sure he likes you, Keith.

He went through every photo album I have on Facebook and liked every single photo with you in it.

Even the really bad ones.

He likes you. A lot.

No, I mean

We've never met, so what if he likes Texting Keith

But not Real Keith?

They're the same person.

It's just you.

You know what I mean.

I really don't think you have to worry about that.

That's easy for you to say.

I just

Don't want this to stop.

If it makes you feel any better, from what I know about him, he doesn't seem like the type of person who'd just stop talking to you.

Remember what I said when you guys first started talking?

Yeah.

Don't ruin a good thing because I'm scared of trusting my instincts or something like that.

Exactly.

Also, stop worrying so much about these things.
You're young!!!!

Shiro, you're literally only four years older than me.

So young and tiny...

...

Bye.

[IMAGE SENT]

Your gloves are nearly finished.

[IMAGE RECEIVED]

I hope they fit.

I used my hand as a size template so they should?

But, we'll see.

I keep forgetting you knit.

And they look really good.

These are about to be the warmest cosiest gloves you've ever worn.

That's a Lance McClain guarantee, by the way.

Also, I started making you something else.

But that one's a surprise.

What?????

It means I can't tell you what it is.

...I know what surprise means.

I meant why????

The gloves are enough, seriously Lance.

It's a gift, Keith.

I didn't know we were doing gifts.

We're not.

I'm giving you a gift because I want to.

You don't have to give me anything back.

Right.
Yeah, of course.

I'm serious, Keith.

You don't have to get me anything.

I won't.

I just

What?

I'm worried.

Worried about that?

That I won't meet your expectations of a good date.

dunno if you've guessed or whatever but I've never done anything like this before and

I've spent like the whole week trying to think of something to do on Saturday and I can't think of anything

And, I dunno.

I just don't want it to be the worst date of your life or something.

Firstly, the worst date of my life happened when I was four and Jenny Huger was supposed to meet me in the sandpit for a handholding session but she just kicked the sand in my face and ran.

Is it bad I laughed?

No.

Secondly, please relax??????

I literally can't.

Okay, do you want to know my definition of a good date so we can do exactly that and you can stop worrying?

YES.

Alright, here is The Lance McClain Good Date Guide

Step one: you don't stand me up.

I think I can manage that.

Step two: we hang out, like friends and have a really good time doing whatever.

And that's the end of the guide, thank you for listening!

Lance...

Whaaaat?
(21:24) I'm being serious.

(21:26) So

(21:26) So if I just say I want to spend the whole day watching crappy movies in my room, you'd be fine with that?

(21:27) I mean, only if we could watch one or two good movies as well.

(21:27) But otherwise, yeah?

(21:27) That sounds really great?

(21:29) Does it really?

(21:30) Yeah.

(21:30) I just wanna hang with you. That's all.

(21:33) Oh.

(21:33) Okay.

(21:33) That takes some of the edge off, I think.

(21:34) I was thinking you'd be expecting like a candlelit dinner or something like that.

(21:35) For the first date?? That's ridiculous.

(21:35) Definitely the second one, though.

(21:37) Wait, what?

(21:39) I'm kidding, babe.

(21:39) Mostly.

(21:40) wHAT?

(21:42) ;)

Chapter End Notes

wow i cant believe they're finally gonna meet what the hecK how did this happen

in the interest of full transparency, lance's embarrassing facebook statuses are actually my embarrassing facebook statuses from my Youth and i am dying from shame rn

also, click the video keith sends to lance, it's so adorable (shoutout to hayli<3)

thank u for all the love guys!!!! im!!!! just!!!!! ah!!!!!!!! just thanks <33
Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

it's just fluff

Chapter Notes

key:
lance
keith
pidge
hunk
shiro

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

(16/09/2016)

(22:03) TOMORROW

(22:03) TOMORROW

(22:03) *Are you actually quoting Annie?*

(22:03) I LOVE YA

(22:04) TOMORROW

(22:04) *You are.*

(22:04) YOU'RE ALWAYS

(22:04) A DAY

(22:05) AWAY

(22:05) *Finished?*

(22:06) Would you like an encore?

(22:07) Please, no.

(22:09) Okay good, because the guys in the room next door to us just came to complain about the noise.

(22:09) I don't think they can handle anymore.
What a shame.
Mmhm. But yeah
Tomorrow...
Tomorrow.
On a scale of one to ten, how nervous are you?
11.
Aahahaha, same.
Maybe 12.
Maybe 20.
Good to know I'm not the only one who's nervous.
Definitely not.
Are we doing anything tomorrow, or just going with the flow?
Mostly going with the flow, I think?
Uh.
I do want to take you somewhere, though.
What?
Where???
Secret.
Keeeeeiiithhhhh.
:) 
Gimme a hint.

Nope.
My lips are sealed.
Wow. Rude.
I'm not good with secrets.
I'm sure you'll survive.
I literally won't.
I'll spend the whole night laying in bed thinking about it
And then I won't get any sleep, and I'll look like hell tomorrow.
Is that what you want, Keith?

IS IT?

I don't think you could 'look like hell'

But sure, I can work with that.

Can't tell if there's a subtle compliment in there or not...

Oh.

Not intentionally, but yeah.

Hm :)

Tell me where you're taking me.

Nope.

PLEASE.

Alright.

Really?

No.

You're the worst.

Has anyone ever told you that?

I've heard it once or twice.

Can I just have the tiniest hint?

No.

KEITTTTH.

Go to sleep, Lance.

How am I supposed to sleep

With this hanging over my head?

You close your eyes...

And sleep.

Pretty simple, I thought.

THE

WORST.

"Blue?" Lance asks, holding up a slightly creased shirt in front of his chest. "Or—" He drops the first
shirt and pulls out another, almost identical one from behind his back to hold in front of himself. "Or maybe the slightly darker blue?"

"Lance," Hunk sighs heavily, forearm draped over his tightly shut eyes as he fumbles blindly for his blanket with his free hand. "Is this really necessary?"

"You're right, you're right," Lance nods, subtly tugging the blanket just out of reach, forcing Hunk to sit upright in a pointless attempt to try and yank it back over his head. "I'm wasting my time with the blue. Maybe I should wear red instead. It is his favourite colour, and I'm pretty sure I have a shirt here somewhere..." He trails off, humming thoughtfully as he swirls around on the spot to resume sifting through the mountain of clothes piled high on top of his bed, searching for that one red shirt he's fairly certain he owns.

"Lance," Hunk tries again, irritation seeping slightly into his tone this time, and Lance doesn't need to glance behind him to know there's a pretty fierce glare being levelled in his direction right now. "Do you know what time it is?" Hunk asks, yawning a little as if to emphasise his point as he watches Lance continue to sort through the mess on his bed.

A twinge of guilt surges through him, and Lance makes a mental note to make this up to Hunk sometime soon. "Just gone seven?"

"On a Saturday," Hunk says with a sharp nod, still staring at Lance through slightly narrowed eyes. Though, if Lance is being completely honest, the whole 'I'm Very Annoyed With You Right Now, And You Should Fear Me!' shtick Hunk is going for doesn't really work when he's wearing his old Pikachu pyjamas and matching slippers, but Lance can appreciate the attempt for what it is so he fixes what he hopes is a repentant look on to his face and smiles weakly over at him. "Seven on a Saturday," Hunk continues, still glaring at Lance accusingly. "And you've decided to— What're you even doing?" He eyes the ever-growing pile of clothes on Lance's bed with a wary frown. "Spring cleaning?"

"No," Lance snorts, scrunching an old vest up into a ball so he can lob it towards the reject pile. Though, considering just how big the pile is slowly getting, Lance reasons that maybe having a spring clean sometime soon wouldn't be the worst idea he's ever had. He files the thought away for later - for a time when he's not preoccupied with more pressing issues - and turns his attention back to Hunk. "I'm looking for something to wear."

Hunk lets his gaze slide pointedly towards the mountain of clothes before he drags it back to meet Lance's own gaze, one eyebrow raised in a silent, 'huh?'

"Something nice," Lance clarifies, frowning a little as he picks up a pink t-shirt with the words 'My Parents Went To France And All I Got Was This Lousy T-Shirt' printed across the front in rainbow coloured letters. As far as he knows, his parents have never actually been to France, so he's not entirely sure just where the shirt has come from (or who he's accidentally stolen it from somehow), but it does help to reinforce the idea in his mind that he definitely needs to do a clean out soon.

"Something nice?" Hunk echoes. "Oh." His eyes widen slightly and his mildly pissed off look morphs into something a little more sly. "Today's Saturday."

"Didn't we already establish that?" Lance mumbles, holding up a pair of slightly stained (ketchup, he thinks) black jeans. He inspects them for a few seconds before sighing and tossing them towards the reject pile, adding a much-needed laundry day to his quickly growing list of things to do soon.

"Saturday is Keith Day," Hunk continues, putting particular emphasis on the word Keith. "You've got a date. You know," Hunk hums, dropping his chin into the palm of his hands as he leans
forwards and fixes Lance with a soft smile. "I've never seen you put this much effort into a date before."

Lance sticks his tongue out and does the best he can to ignore the warm sensation he can feel slowly crawling up his neck. "I always put this much effort into my dates," Lance sniffs, trying not to dwell too much on the fact that Hunk might - might - have a point there. "You clearly haven't been paying attention. And you call yourself my best friend?"

"Hmmmm," Hunk pretends to ponder the accusation for a second or two before he dramatically shrugs and shakes his head. "Nope. I definitely would've remembered you waking up at seven — Hey!" Hunk yelps, narrowly dodging the pillow Lance halfheartedly chucks in his direction. "I'm just saying," he says pointedly, tossing the pillow back towards Lance, laughing a little when it hits him square in the chest and sends him stumbling backwards a few steps. He gestures to the pile of clothes on Lance's bed. "You're putting a lot of effort in here."

And Lance can't really disagree with him there; not when it's seven am on a Saturday and he's wide awake (and has been for a good hour already - not that Hunk needs to know that; Hunk never needs to know that) with about three-quarters of his wardrobe tipped out on his bed so he can rifle through his clothes to try and find something to wear that makes him look at least semi-decent.

He groans loudly before shuffling across the room to flop dramatically on top of Hunk's bed, burying his face in the sheets as soon as his head touches the soft fabric. Hunk laughs, leaning backwards to pat him sympathetically. "I don't think I've ever seen you so into someone before."

Lance groans again, because, once again, Hunk is right. That's the problem with spending practically every waking moment with your best friend - there's no room for secrets between you.

"I don't want to mess this up," Lance mutters, pausing for a moment or two before flipping over onto his back so he's staring up at the ceiling. He figures he doesn't really need to add that the reason he's suddenly so worried about messing this - this being The Epic Romance of Keith and Lance - up, is because he spent most of the night running through worse case scenario after worse case scenario until the very thought of actually meeting Keith is enough to cause an anxious knot to flare up and start twisting almost painfully in his stomach. Because that's another weird perk to spending so much time with your best friend; after a while, they start to know you better than you know yourself, and if there's anyone who knows Lance, it's Hunk.

"You're not gonna mess up," Hunk sighs, shifting a little on the bed so he can lean backwards and prod Lance lightly in the side. "Stop thinking about whatever it is you're thinking."

"What if—" Lance begins, but Hunk cuts him off almost immediately with another prod to the side.

"No."

"But—"

Another prod. "No."

"But, just listen—"

Two prods this time. "Stop it," Hunk says, peering down at Lance sternly - or, as sternly as someone with terrible bed hair, dressed in a Pikachu shirt and matching slippers can manage. "You aren't going to mess up. Just relax."

"I'm trying," Lance whines, pouting up at Hunk. "I just—" He drops his gaze and fiddles absentmindedly with Hunk's blankets. "I really like him, man."
"Really?" Hunk laughs, shooting Lance an exasperatedly fond glance. "I never would've guessed. In fact, I was sure you hated him."

"Shut up," Lance grumbles, settling for jabbing Hunk in the thigh with his foot when he realises there's not a pillow in immediate reach for him to toss at him. "What if it's awkward?"

"Oh, it'll definitely be awkward," Hunk says cheerfully, earning himself another sharp jab courtesy of Lance's big toe. "But that's part of the whole 'first date' experience, right?"

"I guess," Lance says reluctantly, squinting a little as he thinks back on his (fairly limited) dating experience so far. Embarrassingly awkward hugs and stilted conversation do feature prominently in his memories, but— "I don't want it to be awkward," he says stubbornly, startling Hunk as he sits upright suddenly. "I want us to hit it off straight away and..." He trails off, gesturing randomly into the space between them. "You know."

"I really don't." But Hunk's lips are twitching upwards into a grin, and Lance knows Hunk knows exactly what he means.

"Don't make me say it."

"Say what?"

"It."

"Lance," Hunk says, not even bothering to hide his grin now. "I don't know what it is. I can't read your mind."

Except, he can - Lance is sure of this. Why else would he be grinning at him like that? "I want us to hit it off straight away and maybe go out—" He pauses as he hikes the collar of his pyjama shirt a little higher up his neck, trying to hide the red flush he can feel creeping up on him. "Like, not just as friends."

"As boyfriends?" Hunk helpfully supplies, still grinning when Lance lets out an odd little squeak before burying his face in his hands. "Why didn't you just say that?"

"Are you enjoying this?" Lance asks, scowling at Hunk through the gaps between his fingers.

"Very much," Hunk snorts, grin softening a little. "It's nice."

Despite himself - despite the feelings of nerves that have been bubbling unpleasantly in the pit of his stomach since waking - Lance can't stop the smile he feels tugging at the corners of his lips at the prospect of actually meeting Keith. "Yeah," he agrees, "it's nice. Now," he says dramatically before Hunk can tease him anymore, flinging himself out of the bed so he can pad towards his own half of the room. He roots around his pile of clothes for a few seconds before he stands upright and turns to face Hunk again. "Blue," he holds up the blue shirt from earlier and pretends like he doesn't hear the way Hunk loudly groans. "Or—" he drops the first shirt to hold up another. "Slightly darker blue?"

---

(11:58) So

(11:58) I just left.

(11:58) As in

(11:59) I'm on my way to the station right now.
(12:01) Oh wow.
(12:01) Cool.
(12:02) This is happening.
(12:04) Yep.
(12:04) My train comes in 10 mins, so I'll be at your station in like half an hour?
(12:06) Cool. Message me when you're 10 mins away and I'll leave to meet you.
(12:07) Cool.
(12:08) Coool.
(12:09) You're nervous.
(12:10) Yeah, well
(12:10) So are you.
(12:12) True.
(12:12) Excited, though.
(12:13) Same.
(12:13) Excited to watch you realise Muffin is as horrible as I say she is.
(12:14) I meant excited to see you but aLRIGHT.
(12:14) Yeah, that too.
(12:15) :)
(12:15) K, my train is here. I'll message you when I'm near.
(12:16) Cool.

Keith hasn't bitten his nails in nearly five years. He manages to kick the habit not long after his twelfth birthday after his mother makes him try a gross tasting solution that stains his taste buds for hours if his tongue so much as grazes one of his nails. It's a disgusting method that sees him gulping down glass of water after glass of water in an attempt to rid his mouth of the bitter taste whenever he absentmindedly sticks a finger in his mouth, but it works.

Until today.

He scowls at his reflection in the window in front of him, dropping his hand quickly from his mouth as he tries not to think about how he's managed to ruin five years of self-control by successfully chewing three out of five nails down to literal stubs in less than two minutes. Nervous, he thinks, stuffing both hands into the front pocket of his jumper to stop him from making a start on his other nails. Nervous is an understatement right now.

He doesn't know what to call the feeling he can sense creeping up on him, but he figures it's a lot more than nervousness. It just doesn't feel real; knowing that in a matter of minutes Lance is going to
walk out of the station doors and put an end to what feels like an eternity - but in reality, has been
less than two months - of surprisingly easily conversation and flirting and— And a friendship Keith
never expected to get out of a wrong number messaging him one afternoon.

His scowl softens slightly, that slightly-more-than-just-nerves feeling ebbing away a little to make
way for something he can only describe as an odd sense of calm. He can still feel the earlier unease
and beginnings of anxiety still hovering near his periphery, threatening to engulf him entirely if given
the chance, but it's like the thought of meeting Lance has forcibly squashed it down to make way for
something more pleasant.

"You really like him, huh?"

Keith flushes as his earlier phone conversation with Shiro rears itself in his mind again. Though, in
hindsight, calling Shiro to panic-ask him for some advice really wasn't one of his better ideas as it
ended in five minutes of Keith listening to Shiro and Matt fight over the phone - Shiro wins, but Matt
spends the rest of the conversation (un)helpfully yelling advice at him anyway, so it feels like Keith's
loss in the end.

"Ignore him," Shiro had said, voice sounding slightly strained (Keith is sure Shiro ends up having to
sit on top of Matt to stop him from reaching for the phone), when Matt starts yelling something about
choosing the right aftershave. "He hasn't had a date in months."

There's an indignant squawk at that and then a muffled sounding, "only because I was too busy
playing wingman for yo—" before Shiro hastily cuts him off.

"Just act natural," Shiro had told him. "He already likes you, it's not like you have to worry about
that."

And, okay yeah, Shiro is right there. He doesn't have to spend hours wondering if the feelings he has
for Lance are mutual because he knows they are, but there's a difference between knowing there's
chemistry between two people and actually having to act on it.

Over the phone, it's easy for Keith to make jokes and give Lance compliments and flirt back with
him, but in person? 'Acting natural' isn't really an option when he has no idea what 'natural' is for
them. Because Lance isn't Shiro or Pidge or even Matt, he's someone entirely new and Keith's not
sure what to expect with him.

His phone buzzes in his pocket suddenly and Keith feels his heart leap into his throat as he quickly
fumbles for it. He only realises just how sweaty his hands are when he nearly drops it twice as he
pulls it out to read the message from Lance that's currently flashing across his screen. He's here.
Keith quickly taps out a reply telling him where to meet him, before he stuffs his phone back into his
pocket and tries to focus on remembering how to breathe.

Holy shit, he's here.

He counts back from ten to try and steady himself. Tries to clear his mind and himself that this
really isn't a big deal. That they're just two friends going out for the day. Nice and simple. He does it
with Pidge all the time, and their outings never reduce him to a sweaty and anxious replica of
himself, so -logically - neither should this. He can do this. It's not hard.

Except it is.

It's very, very hard, and each passing second has Keith inching backwards, slowly making his way
towards his bike. Maybe if he's fast enough, he can hightail it home and pretend like he was never
here. He'll have to change his phone number of course and somehow convince Pidge never to go back to the Garrison again. And then live with the guilt of having messed up what feels like one of the most genuine friendships Keith has formed in years, but—

The doors to the station are thrown open and Keith watches as a large group of people begin to exit. It takes him less than ten seconds to spot Lance amongst the crowd.

He's taller than Keith remembered, towering over most of the crowd as he allows them to guide him down the small flight of stairs and into the car park area. Keith watches, too afraid to move, tucked safely out of sight behind a large car as Lance peers around for a few seconds before he leans against a wall and exhales a deep breath.

Even from their relative distance apart, Keith can spot the faint pink blush that stains his cheeks and he takes some solace in the fact that Lance is apparently just as nervous as he is.

*Good.* That makes things a little easier. Not by *much,* mind you, (the fight or flight response part of Keith is still very much in *flight* mode, right now) but by enough to convince Keith to take a step out from his impromptu hiding place and begin making his way towards Lance.

His heart *thuds* loudly and almost painfully in his chest as he gets closer, and he doesn't even want to *think* about how sweaty his palms are right now. The only thing he can focus on is Lance - Lance standing just a few metres away; *Lance*, the person he's spent the last two months messaging day in, day out, *Lance*, the person that's gotten closer to him than any other person since Pidge. Just — *Lance.*

He clears his throat as he approaches, willing his vocal chords not to fail him now. "Hi." He winces a little at the way his voice seems to *crack* slightly, stretching the word over two syllables. *Fuck you, vocal chords.*

Lance glances up from his phone, eyes widening just a fraction as his gaze briefly sweeps Keith up and down. Keith watches, ready to bolt at any moment, as Lance's lips curve upwards into a shy little smile before he pushes himself off the wall and takes a step forwards. "Hey."

"Uh—" Keith swallows. "Hi?*" *Smooth Keith, super smooth.*

Something between a snort and a laugh slips between Lance's lips as he takes another step forwards. "Are we just gonna keep going round in circles, or..."

"Right. No. Uh—" Keith swallows again, willing away the lump that's begun to form in his throat. "I'm just— Um. Do you want—" He turns around and gestures to the carpark, nodding towards the corner where he's parked his bike. "Do you want to get out of here?"

It happens so quickly, Keith wonders if he's imagining it, but he's fairly certain Lance's lips drop downwards into an almost disappointed pout before that shy smile is back again.

"Sure. Lead the way."

Keith hesitates for a moment, unable to shake the feeling that something is *off* with Lance, but before he can dwell on it much longer Lance is taking another step towards him, gently bumping their shoulders together.

"Which way to your bike?" Lance asks as they begin to make their way across the carpark, and either he's painfully unaware of their close proximity or he just doesn't *care* because they're walking close enough to each other that the backs of their palms brush against the other with each swing of the arm. For a moment or two, Keith entertains the idea of just reaching out and wrapping his fingers
around Lance's. It would be so easy, so simple, so natural - he'd barely even have to move.

"Just a little further," Keith mutters, trying to subtly widen his steps so there's a bigger gap between them. Annoyingly, Lance keeps up with ease, effortlessly adapting his strides to match Keith's whenever he tries to put some space between them.

"Oh cool," Lance hums, and Keith finds himself fighting back a twinge of irritation. How is this so easy for him? Why isn't he a stammering mess? Why hasn't he spent the last two minutes arguing with himself about whether he should just take the plunge and reach out to grab his hand? Why isn't this affecting him the same way it is Keith? "Did you really build it yourself?"

Keith blinks. "Huh?"

"The bike?" Lance says slowly, turning his head to glance at him. Their gazes meet for the briefest of seconds before Lance quickly turns away, the tips of his ears looking slightly pinker than before. "Like, I never really got what you meant by that."

"Meant by what?"

"You know," Lance gestures towards the area of the carpark where Keith had indicated his bike was. "How does it work? Do you build it from scratch or is there like, I dunno, a Build-A-Bike workshop somewhere, or what?"

Keith frowns. "Build— Build-A-Bike workshop?"

Lance turns to face him again, a bright grin plastered across his face stretching from cheek to cheek. "Like the Build-A-Bear workshop, but for bikes?"

At that, Keith snorts. He can feel some of his unease and nervousness peeling away from him, replaced by a sense of familiarity and he finds himself shooting Lance a grateful smile. Bikes are a good topic - a safe topic - something Keith can talk about for hours on end without fear of boring someone or slipping into awkward silences.

Keith wonders if it's all a coincidence, if Lance has just picked out the first thought in his mind and decided to run with it for easy conversation, or if there's something more behind it, if he's purposely picked the one topic he knew would set Keith at ease. He spares Lance a sideways glance and nearly stumbles over his own feet when he realises Lance is peeking over at him as well.

"Uh," Keith begins, hastily looking away because he really doesn't need to be focusing on just how nice Lance's smile is right now, or how it's the kind of smile that reaches his eyes and softens his whole expression. Nope, definitely not. "There's no Build-A-Bike workshop."

"That you know of," Keith agrees, smile widening a little when Lance lets out a quiet chuckle. "I get most of my parts from the internet. Different stores," he adds quickly, already sensing Lance's next question. "Some parts are harder to find than others, which is why it takes so long."

"Yeah," Lance says, hand still brushing stubbornly against Keith's. "I mean, like, how do you build it? Is there a manual, or a guide, or what?"

"There are rough guides on the internet, but a lot of it ends up being trial and error because you're building it from scratch. But you learn as you go. Ah," he pauses and comes to an abrupt halt. "This is, uh, this is it."
Lance whistles lowly, and Keith can't help the surge of pride that courses through his veins as he watches Lance openly ogle his bike.

"You made this?" Lance asks, eyes wide as he scootches a little closer towards the bike. "Like, from scratch? With your own two hands? You didn't just buy it like this at the store?"

Keith isn't the bragging type, but damn it, he's proud of his bike. It's the end result of months and months of hard work and scouring the internet for rare parts and haggling with asses on eBay and spending hours at the bottom of his garden tweaking and twisting until his jeans are permanently stained with grease marks and his fingers are left almost permanently calloused and blistered. So he decides he can allow himself the smug grin that tugs at his lips at Lance's awestruck questions. "Yep."

"Dude," Lance breathes, glancing away from the bike to stare at Keith. "That's amazing. What the hell? How long did it take?"

Keith's not sure if it's the praise in general or if it's because the praise is coming from Lance specifically, but he feels his cheeks grow warmer with each passing second. "A few months," he mutters, ducking his head to surreptitiously run a hand down his face to check if he feels as hot as he probably looks (he does). "Didn't take me as long as it took me to finish my first one, though."

"This isn't your first one?" Lance sounds incredulous like he's sure Keith is pulling his strings and someone is about to jump out from behind one of the parked cars near them with a camera crew in tow. "For real?"

Keith nods, not trusting his voice, as he steps closer to the bike. "This is the first one that's passed my dad's 'Keith Won't Die If He Rides It' test, though."

"Oh," Lance's excited grin drops from his face in an instance, replaced with something slightly more wary. "So— So, it's safe, yeah?"

"I'm still alive aren't I?" Keith asks, grabbing both helmets slung around the front of the bike before he settles himself on the seat. He can feel Lance's gaze on him as he tugs his helmet over his head. "Are you coming, or not?"

"And you're sure—"

"Lance," Keith says patiently, tipping his helmet slightly so he can meet his gaze. "It's safe. I swear."

Lance hesitates for a second or two before he nods and inches a little closer. "Fine, but if I die—"

Keith rolls his eyes. "You're not going to die, Lance."

"If I die," Lance continues, pointedly raising his voice over Keith's. "Just know that Hunk will avenge me."

"Avenge...you?"

Lance waves a flippant hand, like announcing that your best friend with avenge your (unlikely) and untimely death is the most natural thing in the world. "We have an agreement."

"...Do I want to know?"

Lance hums for a few seconds, like he's actually pondering the question, before he shoots Keith
another grin - and Keith is quickly learning that Lance's grins are *lethal* in the best kind of way. "It's a long story."

"Of course it is," Keith deadpans before nodding to the space on the bike behind him. "Are you getting on?"

"Ah," Lance visibly swallows - Keith watches the gentle bob of his Adam's apple before glancing away, cheeks hot. "Do I— Do I just—"

"Just hold on," Keith says, leaning forwards to toss Lance the spare helmet.

Lance nods, fiddling with the helmet in his hands before he takes a step forwards and swings a leg over the bike, settling the helmet between his thighs. "Like this?"

Keith's breath hitches in his throat as Lance's arm come up to his sides and rest gently against his waist. He's only holding on loosely, fingers barely brushing against the fabric of his jumper, but it sends Keith's heart racing.

"Uh—" He clears his throat, absentmindedly fiddling with the keys in his hands to try and distract himself from the heat he can feel spreading all over. "Tighter," he manages to rasp out. "You— You need to hold on tighter."

"-Right."

Keith holds his breath as Lance shuffles forwards in his seat, arms tightening around his waist as his chest presses up against Keith's back. "Is this—?"

"Yeah," Keith says quickly, suddenly very thankful they're not facing each other. "That's good."

"Cool," Lance says, and Keith tries not to think about the way his breath fans across the nape of his neck.

"Put your helmet on and we can go."

The arms around his waist disappear and Keith allows himself a deep exhale. A million and one things are running through his mind right now; Does he smell? Is he wearing enough deodorant? When was the last time he washed this jumper? Is he sweating too much? Is—

The hands are back around his waist again, squeezing a little confidently this time. A chin drops onto his shoulder and Keith finds himself saying a silent prayer of thanks for the helmets between them because he's not entirely sure he can handle Lance's breath fanning across his neck with every exhale. "Ready?"

"You'll be safe, right?"

Keith chuckles and responds by revving the engine. "Just hold on."

The thing is, Keith likes speed; he *loves* it, actually. He loves the adrenaline rush he gets when he's hurtling down a clear road, the wind lashing and curving around his body as he speeds along, but he's also a fairly considerate person. He understands the most people *don't* enjoy rocketing down a road at just about legal speeds, and he's learnt (after being yelled at by Shiro for about five minutes after one particularly speedy trip) to adjust his limits when he's riding with a passenger.

("It's just *polite,*" Shiro had said, skin visibly paler and clamminier than usual when he'd stumbled off the bike to rest against a nearby tree trunk. "You're riding a bike, not a rollercoaster."
"Kei—" Whatever Lance had been about to say is forgotten in favour of an ear-piercing shriek, as Keith (quite slowly in his opinion) begins making his way out of the carpark and onto the main road. His arms, already clinging pretty tightly to Keith's waist, wrap around even tighter still until he's holding onto Keith in an almost vice like grip, chest pressed infinitely close against Keith's back.

"Relax," Keith calls, voice louder than usual so Lance can hear it over the rumble of the engine. "It's fine."

"This—" Lance screeches, ducking his head into the crook of Keith's neck while his fingers fumble at the front of Keith's jumper for something to cling on to, "This is not fine! This is—" He cuts off again, shrieking dramatically when Keith turns a corner and begins to pick up the speed. "Keith," Lance whines, and Keith suddenly finds himself very aware of the fact that if they weren't wearing helmets, Lance would be breathing into his neck right now.

Oh.

He takes the speed down a notch - still going well below his usual speed levels - as they turn another corner, and begin slowly weaving between cars to get ahead of the traffic. "You alright?"

Lance lets out a shaky laugh, still clinging to Keith's waist like it's the only thing keeping him upright. "Pretty sure my heart stopped working about two turns ago. Also," he shifts a little in the seat, pressing himself closer against Keith's back. "I can't feel my legs."

"Yeah," Keith laughs, subconsciously leaning backwards into Lance's tight embrace. "That's normal. You get used to it."

He's a little quieter this time as they hurtle forwards. Keith can still feel the tension in his body by the way he holds on to him for dear life (though, Keith isn't complaining about that), but he doesn't shriek and shout as much as time. Keith hears the odd whimper or two slip out whenever he takes a particularly sharp corner or when the road gets a little bumpy, but otherwise, he's remarkably silent.

"Are you alright?" Keith calls over the engine, frowning a little when he realises he hasn't heard a peep out of Lance in at least thirty seconds. He glances down quickly, checking Lance's hands are still wrapped around his midsection and he hasn't accidentally been thrown off at some point.

"M' fine," Lance calls. "It's— It's good."

Keith hums. There's never much room for talking when you're riding a bike - the noise from the engine and the wind whipping around you constantly pretty much eradicates any chance of that - but Keith thinks he can hear a change in Lance's tone. He sounds less terrified and more like he's actually enjoying himself. He increases the speed by a fraction or two, testing the waters. He listens out carefully for another screech from Lance, but nothing comes. Instead, he thinks he can hear him laughing - he's letting out little whoops every couple of seconds, and it makes Keith laugh too.

"Man," Lance laughs, another whoop slipping from his lips. "This is— This is amazing?"

Something warm blooms in Keith's chest as he listens to Lance laugh behind him. He's enjoying himself, Keith thinks, turning onto a blissfully empty road. He's having fun.

They continue riding for ten more minutes. Keith specifically takes the scenic route to their destination, trying to prolong their close proximity - Lance's arms around his waist while he laughs...
and cheers in his ear - for as long as possible. Eventually, he comes to a stop, parking the bike outside a familiar row of stores.

"Um," Keith says quietly, glancing down to see Lance's arms still wrapped around him. "We're here."

Lance clings onto him for a beat longer than necessary before he drops his arms and quickly climbs off the bike.

"How was that?" Keith asks as he hops off himself, tugging his helmet away from his head and shaking his hair free. "Was it al—" His words get stuck in his throat as he takes in Lance's expression as he pulls his own helmet off his head.

His hair is a mess, sticking up in every direction possible, his face flushed, eyes wide and — And a smile so bright Keith thinks it wouldn't be out of place in the night sky.

His heart thuds almost painfully in his chest.

Lance's voice comes out sounding winded. "That was amazing."

Keith grins over at him, reaching out for his helmet so he can lock them both to the bike. "Fun?"

"The best," Lance breathes, too-bright grin still fixed across his face. "I mean, I was sure you were going to kill me at first, and then I'd have to spend the afterlife haunting you—"

"What?"

"But then I got used to it," Lance continues, either ignoring Keith's amused interruption or completely oblivious to it. "And it was like, whoooosh. You know?"

And, even though he's making exactly zero sense (what the hell is whoooosh anyway?), Keith finds himself nodding in agreement because he does know how it feels. He remembers his first time on a bike, remembers that sense of freedom that surged through him once he'd stumbled off it, legs like jelly, remembers how he'd been hooked from that moment onwards.

"Yeah," Keith grins. "I get it."

"So," Lance asks, peering around the street they're on. "What're we doing?"

"Remember I said I wanted to take you somewhere?" Keith asks, gesturing for Lance to follow him down the street. Lance catches up to him in seconds, pushing into his personal space so they're doing that thing where the backs of their hands brush effortlessly against each other. Once again Keith swallows down the urge to reach forwards and hold Lance's hand in his own. He clears his throat and turns his attention back on to actually remembering where they're supposed to be going. "Have you eaten?"

Lance shakes his head, a curious glint in his eyes. "I had breakfast a while ago, but I'm good to go again."

"Cool," Keith says, smirking as he signals for Lance to stop walking and enter the restaurant they're standing in front of. "You'll like this then."

As first dates go, Lance likes to think this is one of his better ones. It's not like he has much of a back catalogue to compare it to (can you really count the girlfriend you had when you were five-years-
old?), but it feels like it's going well.

It's a little awkward at first, though Lance reasons that's bound to be expected, and his subtle hints that he'd maybe like to try and hold Keith's hand go completely unnoticed - which, for the record, Lance is a little annoyed at because how many times he need to 'accidentally' brush Keith's hand with his own before he gets the message? But they get there eventually.

His heart is still racing from the bike ride, though he's not entirely sure he can blame that solely on the adrenaline rush. Not when he's spent the last fifteen minutes with his arms wrapped tightly around Keith's waist, their bodies pressed flush against each other while Keith rides. It's— It's definitely something. Lance flushes as he remembers the way Keith felt underneath his grip, all warm and soft and right, like holding him in his arms is the most natural thing in the world.

The difference in Keith's attitude is tangible after the ride as well. There's a confidence in his smile that wasn't there when they'd first met, and he actually meets his gaze for more than half a second before he glances away, cheeks gaining a suspicious pink dusting.

So yeah, as first dates go this one isn't that bad. They've managed to climb over the whole 'awkward first meeting' hurdle and are now moving onto bigger and better things. So why - why - is Keith ruining it all by taking him here?

"No," Lance says emphatically, folding his arms tightly across his chest as he glares at the menu placed in front of him. "No way."

Keith is doing a terrible job of hiding his smirk and Lance tries to ignore the fact that it's actually kind of cute, in an annoyingly irritating kind of way. "What's wrong, Lance?"

"Don't give me that innocent 'what's wrong, Lance'," Lance sniffs, grabbing a fork to brandish in Keith's direction. "You know exactly what's wrong."

Keith hums, propping one arm on the table to drop his chin into the palm of his hands. "Do I?"

And, ugh— Lance wants to scowl at him but there's a glint of amusement in Keith's eyes that makes Lance's heart flutter. Unfair, very unfair.

"I'm not eating it."

"Eating what?"

"It," Lance hisses stabbing at the menu where it reads 'Pineapple Pizza' with his fork. "I know what you're planning, and the answer is no."

Keith laughs openly at that, and at this close distance, Lance can really get a good look at him. He's hit with the sudden realisation that Keith has a nice smile - a ridiculously nice smile - and he can't help but think it's downright unfair how nice his smile is. He has the kind of smile that crinkles his eyes at the corners while his nose scrunches up, birthing two tiny dimples on either cheek as he folds in on himself a little.

His smile rests easily on his lips as he stares at Lance, head cocked innocently to the side as he takes him in. "You're the one who told me to take you here one day, remember?"

"Oh," Lance mutters, feeling his face heat up as he drops his gaze. "I didn't think you'd remember that." He glances back up at Keith and isn't particularly surprised to see his face looks as red as his own one feels.
"I—" Keith begins, avoiding looking up at Lance by staring determinedly at the menu in his hands. "I— Is that weird?"

Lance shakes his head, sliding forwards in his seat so he can bump his knee against Keith's to try and get his attention. It works and Lance suddenly finds himself staring directly into Keith's eyes. "No," Lance says slowly, a soft smile tugging at the corners of his lips. "It's— It's cute."

"Cute?" Keith repeats like he's testing the word on his tongue.

"Mhmm," Lance hums, enjoying watching the way Keith's blush deepens with each passing second. "Very."

"Um," Keith swallows, dropping his gaze again to stare at the menu. "I—"

"Am I embarrassing you?" Lance asks, leaning back into his seat with a grin. Keith looks like he's about five seconds away from sinking into his seat and melting.

"No," Keith says, stubbornly looking up again to meet Lance's eye. He juts his bottom lip out slightly into an almost pout and Lance nearly falls off his own chair because, no. Too adorable. Off limits. Out of bounds.

"Damn. I'm not trying hard enough then."

Keith quirks a brow, looking genuinely confused. "You want to embarrass me?"

"Remember," Lance shrugs, "Make Keith Blush' is my number one objective for today."

"Yeah, well," Keith snorts, confused look disappearing to make way for another one of those smiles that sets Lance's heart racing. "You've already done that."

"True," Lance agrees, watching out of the corner of his eye as he spots a waiter beginning to make his way towards their table. "But I didn't say how many times I wanted to do it."

Keith rolls his eyes, but he's spared from having to try and respond to Lance by the waiter that approaches their table with a notepad and a too bright smile stretched across their face. Lance barely listens as the waiter goes through the usual spiel ('How are you doing today? Can I get you any drinks? Are you ready to order? Blah, blah, blah?') for them, and instead focuses his attention of taking in all of Keith without having to worry about getting caught staring.

Lance watches as Keith's brows knit in the middle as he points something out for the waiter, bottom lip jutting out into that almost pout that sets his heart racing again. It's a strange feeling, being so enamoured with someone, but Lance thinks it's not wholly unpleasant. Strange, yes, but also weirdly nice. It's nice knowing that Keith's smile has this effect on him and, if he's not horribly - horribly - mistaken, he's pretty sure he's having the same effect on Keith. Lance has caught him sneaking a glance at him more than once, face flushing the second he realises Lance is on to him, and he's fairly certain the look of embarrassment that spasms across his face whenever he hastily looks away is probably the same look that's mirrored across Lance's.

Keith laughs politely at something the waiter says before glancing up to meet Lance's gaze again. "So, about that pizza..."

Lance grimaces. "Do I have to?"

"Yes."

"I—" Keith begins, avoiding looking up at Lance by staring determinedly at the menu in his hands. "I— Is that weird?"

Lance shakes his head, sliding forwards in his seat so he can bump his knee against Keith's to try and get his attention. It works and Lance suddenly finds himself staring directly into Keith's eyes. "No," Lance says slowly, a soft smile tugging at the corners of his lips. "It's— It's cute."

"Cute?" Keith repeats like he's testing the word on his tongue.

"Mhmm," Lance hums, enjoying watching the way Keith's blush deepens with each passing second. "Very."

"Um," Keith swallows, dropping his gaze again to stare at the menu. "I—"

"Am I embarrassing you?" Lance asks, leaning back into his seat with a grin. Keith looks like he's about five seconds away from sinking into his seat and melting.

"No," Keith says, stubbornly looking up again to meet Lance's eye. He juts his bottom lip out slightly into an almost pout and Lance nearly falls off his own chair because, no. Too adorable. Off limits. Out of bounds.

"Damn. I'm not trying hard enough then."

Keith quirks a brow, looking genuinely confused. "You want to embarrass me?"

"Remember," Lance shrugs, "Make Keith Blush' is my number one objective for today."

"Yeah, well," Keith snorts, confused look disappearing to make way for another one of those smiles that sets Lance's heart racing. "You've already done that."

"True," Lance agrees, watching out of the corner of his eye as he spots a waiter beginning to make his way towards their table. "But I didn't say how many times I wanted to do it."

Keith rolls his eyes, but he's spared from having to try and respond to Lance by the waiter that approaches their table with a notepad and a too bright smile stretched across their face. Lance barely listens as the waiter goes through the usual spiel ('How are you doing today? Can I get you any drinks? Are you ready to order? Blah, blah, blah?') for them, and instead focuses his attention of taking in all of Keith without having to worry about getting caught staring.

Lance watches as Keith's brows knit in the middle as he points something out for the waiter, bottom lip jutting out into that almost pout that sets his heart racing again. It's a strange feeling, being so enamoured with someone, but Lance thinks it's not wholly unpleasant. Strange, yes, but also weirdly nice. It's nice knowing that Keith's smile has this effect on him and, if he's not horribly - horribly - mistaken, he's pretty sure he's having the same effect on Keith. Lance has caught him sneaking a glance at him more than once, face flushing the second he realises Lance is on to him, and he's fairly certain the look of embarrassment that spasms across his face whenever he hastily looks away is probably the same look that's mirrored across Lance's.

Keith laughs politely at something the waiter says before glancing up to meet Lance's gaze again. "So, about that pizza..."

Lance grimaces. "Do I have to?"

"Yes."
"I don't even get a say in it?"

Keith shakes his head, looking almost irritatingly smug as he swipes Lance's menu away from him and hands it back to the waiter. "Two pineapple pizza's please." The waiter shoots them both a confused look, possibly perplexed by the wounded noise Lance makes, before he gives them a little nod and disappears back towards the kitchen to put their order through.

"I can't believe you want to ruin a perfectly good date by making me puke," Lance grumbles, slouching forwards in his seat to shoot Keith his best glare - though, it probably comes out a little halfhearted given the circumstances.

Keith mirrors Lance's movements and leans forwards, chin still resting lazily in his open palm. "You don't think you can hack it?"

"No," Lance sniffs, pretending to be offended by the assumption he might not be able to finish a meal. "I'll eat it, I just won't enjoy it."

"You will," Keith says confidently. "But, um," his gaze flits away for a fraction of a second before it's back again and Lance finds himself staring into dark blue eyes. "Just now—" He pauses again, like's struggling with the words. "Just now you said I'd ruin a perfectly good date—"

"I was kidding, Keith," Lance says quickly, wondering if he's imagining the hint of insecurity that flashes across Keith's eyes briefly. "It's not going to ru—"

"It's good?" Keith asks, pulling his bottom lip inwards to chew on nervously. "The date, I mean? You're— You're having a good time?"

Oh.

Lance swallows, scratching nervously at the back of his neck. "I mean- Yeah?" He sees the relief wash across Keith's face and feels himself relax. "It's fun, right?"

"Yeah," Keith agrees, lips curving upwards into a small smile. "I'm having fun. I was just— Just, worried?"

"Worried?"

Keith nods, and Lance wonders if he's imagining the way he seems to lean a little closer into his personal space - the gap between them *does* seem a little smaller than when they'd starting talking.

"That you'd be bored? Or that you weren't enjoying yourself or—" Keith pauses, voice sounding a little strangled as he trails off and stares down at the table.

Lance was right, the gap between them *is* smaller than before. It's so small now that their hands are brushing against each other in the middle, with Keith resting ever-so-slightly on top of Lance's.

"Sorry," Keith says quickly, jolting backwards to yank his hands away. "I—"

"Keith," Lance says firmly, reaching forwards to grab for Keith's hand and keep it firmly on the table. He hesitates for a second before he threads Keith's fingers between his own and gives him a light squeeze. "This is— This is good," he glances up at Keith and loosens his hold on him. "This is fine, right?"

Keith nods, swallowing thickly as he copies Lance's earlier move and gives his hand a quick squeeze. "Yeah."
"Cool."

"Yeah," Keith says again, still staring at their entwined hands. "Very cool."

Keith's hand fits nicely in his own, all warm and slightly calloused and Lance finds himself thinking he never wants to let go. Lance isn't sure how long they sit there with their hands clasped together on top of the table, both shyly laughing and glancing away every time they meet the other's gaze, but it's nice - really nice. So nice, he actually grumbles a little when their pizzas arrive and they're forced to let go to make room on the table for their food.

Lance watches warily as their waiter places two pizzas in front of them, two pineapple pizzas.

"I'm suddenly regretting everything," he says, eyeing the yellow slices that mar his otherwise perfectly deliciously looking pizza. "Can I just pick them off?"

Keith shoots him an unimpressed look, already reaching forwards to tug a slice towards himself.

"You have to eat it all."

"All?" Lance squeaks. "It's bigger than my head. It's bigger than two of my heads."

Keith shrugs, mouth too full of pizza to say anything. Lance watches as he chews a few times, a soft hum of pleasure rippling from the base of his throat as he devours his first slice in a matter of seconds. "S'good," he says, grinning widely at the semi-disgusted look Lance is wearing. "Eat."

"But pineapples," Lance whines, glaring at the offending fruit on his pizza as if it's responsible for everything wrong in the world, from the sinking of the Titanic to the bees disappearing. "And there's not even any ham to try and mask the taste, it's just— Pineapples."

Keith nudges Lance under the table with his knee, the unimpressed look from earlier making a reappearance. "It's nice."

"But—"

"Do you need me to feed you?"

It's an innocent question, meant to be teasingly taunting than anything else, but it makes Lance choke on his words all the same. "I— You— What?"

Keith raises a brow, seemingly oblivious to the effect his words are having on Lance. "If you can't eat it yourself, I can feed you, if you want?"

"Don't— Shut up," Lance splutters, reaching for a slice to stop from drawing attention to the deep red flush that's quickly creeping up the back of his neck and spreading across his face. Because now it's been said, he can't help but think it would be nice to have Keith feed him. Not pizza, of course, because that's just too messy and sloppy and not pineapple pizza anyway, because yuck, but maybe something a little more romantic.

Lance's vision flashes with images of him lying on top of a plush bed with Keith hovering over him, hand feeding him grapes and strawberries and— Yeah, nope. He shakes his head to end that train of thought as quickly as possible and refocuses his attention on the slice of pizza in his hands. "This better be nice."

"Just eat it, Lance," Keith says, sounding more amused than exasperated as he watches Lance take a tentative nibble. "Eat it properly."
Lance sticks his tongue out at him, enjoying the way Keith's eyes widen fractionally at that gesture before he takes the plunge and takes a real bite of the slice. He chews experimentally for a few seconds, getting used to the unfamiliar texture on his tongue.

"Well," Keith prompts, watching as Lance goes in for a second bite, and then a third, and then a fourth, and then there's only crust left. "You like it, right?"

Lance pulls a face, even as he reaches for his second slice, because damn it, it tastes delicious. Where has pineapple pizza been all his life? Why has he been so adamantly against it? Does Hunk know how good it tastes? He makes a mental note to write an ode to pineapple pizza and recite it to Hunk as soon as he gets back to school. "It's alright," Lance says, shrugging casually as he chews on his second slice. "Nothing to scream and shout about."

Keith snorts. "You're smiling."

Damn it.

"Am I not allowed to smile?" Lance asks, feeling the grin that's tugging at his lips as he reaches for his third slice.

"Well," Keith hums thoughtfully, cocking his head a little to side like he's really contemplating something. "Some warning would be nice."

"I— What?"

Keith flushes and ducks his head for a second or two before bringing it back up again to greet Lance with a soft smile. "Before you smile like that. You could warn me."

"Why?"

Keith quirks a brow again, like Lance is being purposely obtuse. He doesn't answer right away, instead reaching for another slice and taking two big bites out of it before he turns his attention back to Lance. "You have a really nice smile, Lance." He says it quietly, like he can't believe he's saying it out loud, and avoids all eye contact. "Like, really nice."

Lance bumps his knee against Keith's under the table twice until he looks up. "That," he says loudly, wagging his floppy pizza slice in Keith's face sternly. "That is really rich coming from you."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

Lance scoffs through a mouthful of pizza, shooting Keith his own version of a highly unimpressed look. "Don't give me that Mr 'My Smile Would Probably Put The Sun To Shame'."

"I—" Keith breaks off, hands reflexively coming up to hide his mouth as his lips split into another wide grin. "I've never heard that before."

"Yeah, well," Lance shrugs, reaching for another slice (he only has two left on his plate and he's not entirely opposed to stealing another from Keith's plate when he runs out). "It's the truth. You should come with a warning label, like: 'beware: smile is kind of blinding, consider wearing sunglasses when around him.'"

"Stop," Keith half groans, half laughs, dragging a hand down his face before he peeks up at Lance through the gaps between his fingers. "Please stop."

Lance grins, sliding his (now completely empty) plate to the side so he can lean across the table a
little better. "I forgot you're weird with compliments."

"I'm not weird," Keith insists, sounding weirdly offended. "I'm just—"

"You're not used to them?" Lance supplies, remembering the brief conversation they'd had about this a while back. "Well," Lance says once Keith nods reluctantly in agreement, voice falsely saccharine. "I'll try and tone it down if you want, but—"

"But what?" Keith asks, eyeing Lance warily.

"You're cute," Lance shrugs, ignoring the way his own heart begins pounding furiously in his chest at the vocal admission in favour of trying to school his expression into something effortlessly calm.

Keith opens and closes his mouth once or twice, fumbling for the right words. "You're— You're cute too."

A strangled noise falls from Lance's lips at the compliment. "I—"

"See," Keith says smugly, the tip of his nose still noticeably pinker than the rest of the face. "You can't take it either."

"No, no," Lance says quickly, never one to be outdone, "I can. I just— You just caught me off guard, is all."

"Right," Keith drawls, picking up one of the two slices left on his plate. "Why don't we agree to chill with the compliments for a bit, before—"

"Before one of us goes so red, we explode?"

"I mean, I wouldn't put it like that," Keith laughs through a mouthful of pizza - and this, Lance decides, this is the moment where Lance realises he's maybe a little too far gone with this boy, because someone shouldn't look this attractive laughing with food in their mouth, and yet— "But sure," Keith continues once he's swallowed the mouthful. "Sound good?"

"Yeah," Lance smiles across the table at him. "Sounds great."

They spend another forty minutes in the restaurant - Lance learns Keith is a painfully slow eater - and with each passing second it stops feeling like it's the first time they've met, and starts to feel more like they've been friends for years and going out for pizza is the norm for them. Their conversation flows easily - they talk about everything from weird pizza recipes they've heard of (Keith is strangely passionate about mayonnaise based pizza) to brainstorming new names for the kittens ('I'm not letting Shiro call her Cupcake, Keith, I refuse!!!') - and the few silences they do have between topics aren't awkward in the slightest. Instead of fumbling around for something new to say, they're both seemingly content with simply basking in the other's presence, like old friends.

By the time they eventually leave, Lance feels confident enough to reach for Keith's hand when they stand up and begin making their way back to the bike. Keith stiffens slightly when Lance's fingers wrap around his own, but that only lasts for half a second before he relaxes into the touch, lips twitching upwards at the corners.

"What now?" Lance asks as they make their way down the street, both determinedly avoiding eye contact with the other. He doesn't want to be too premature, but this is easily the best date he's ever had, and he's not entirely sure how they're going to top it. They approach Keith's bike and, after a beat longer than necessary, let go of each other's hands.
"I was thinking," Keith says slowly, still not meeting Lance's gaze as he fumbles with the helmet lock. "I was thinking, you could come back to mine?"

"Oh," Lance squeaks, stumbling backwards when Keith tosses him his helmet. "Your...house?"

"Yeah. Um. To see the cats? We could, um, we could watch a movie or something, if you want?"

Lance nods, following Keith's lead as he settles himself back onto the bike and begins pulling the helmet back over his head. "Sounds good. Sounds great." He climbs onto the back of the bike, pulls his own helmet on, and then wraps his arms around Keith's waist again, maybe holding on a little tighter than is completely necessary.

There's a pause where neither of them say anything, then Keith brings his hand up to rest gently against Lance's resting against his stomach. He keeps his hand there for a good three seconds before he pulls it away and clears his throat.

"You ready?"

Lance squeezes him a little tighter, pulling himself forwards so he's pressed flush against Keith's back, chin resting on his shoulder. "Yeah, let's go, babe."

"Lance," Keith squawks, and Lance doesn't need to be able to see through his helmet to know his face is probably on fire right now. "Now is really not the time for— For that."

Lance laughs, wrapping his arms around Keith tighter still as the engine revs to life and he pulls out of their spot. *Definitely, the best date he's ever had.*

The ride back to his home is mostly uneventful. Lance only shrieks once or twice when Keith has to make an abrupt stop or, at one point, when he was *certain* Keith was about to hit a cat that was sat stubbornly in the middle of the road (he wasn't).

"So," Lance asks, detangling himself from the bike to follow Keith up the pathway to his home. "Are your parents home?"

Keith frowns, glancing behind him to spot Lance nervously scratching the back of his neck. *Is he nervous?* "They're out for the day," Keith says slowly, watching as obvious relief washes over Lance's features. "It's, um, it's just us."

"And Muffin," Lance adds with a devilish grin, his earlier confidence apparently back tenfold now that he knows he doesn't have to worry about awkward introductions with his parents. "Don't forget about Muffin."

Keith rolls his eyes, fumbling around in the pockets of his jeans for his house keys. "How could I forget?" He tugs his keys free from his pocket and moves to insert them into the keyhole, freezing when something in his periphery catches his eye. He narrows his eyes slightly as he watches the living room curtains at Pidge's house *twitch* suddenly.

"Come on," Keith says quickly, pushing open the door and gesturing for Lance to follow him inside. The curtains twitch again and Keith makes a mental note to have a long talk with Pidge about spying or, at the very least, getting better at it before trying it. Once Lance is inside, Keith levels one last glare towards the Holt household, mentally willing Pidge to keep away, before closing the door tightly behind him.

"Oh *man,*" Lance snorts, laughter bubbling from the base of his throat as he points at a row of
photographs lining the walls in the hallway. "Keith, you were a chubby baby."

Oh no. Keith lunges forwards, dramatically shoving Lance towards the living room and far, far away from the numerous baby and childhood photos that are strung up on the walls of their hallway.

"Wait," Lance whines, twisting and turning in Keith's grasp to try and get a better look at some of the photos. "Are you wearing a dress in that one?"

"It's a Christening gown," Keith snaps, giving Lance one final shove. "They're traditional." Lance laughs again but goes pliant in Keith's hands letting him guide him towards the living room where the number of embarrassing childhood photos greatly decreases. There are a few cringeworthy school photos on top of the mantelpiece and that one photo of him shrieking as he clings to Shiro's chest in a swimming pool from some holiday years ago, but it's mostly safe. And—

"Muffin?" Lance cooes, gaze zeroing in on what can only be described as a lump settled on the armchair in the far corner of the room. Lance turns to Keith and points to the lump. "That is Muffin, right?"

Keith eyes the lump for a few seconds, waiting until he can see it softly rising and falling, signalling that the lump is in fact, Muffin, and not just a pile of clothes dumped on the chair. "Yeah, that's her."

Lance's face lights up instantly as he creeps towards the other side of the room, snapping his fingers and making weird kissy noises as he goes. "Muffin," he says in a sing-song type of voice. "Muffin, come to uncle Lance."

"I should film this," Keith calls, throwing himself into the sofa to watch the inevitable carnage happen. "So you can never deny it."

"Keith, please," Lance scoffs, pausing in his quest to glance over at him and roll his eyes. "Are you forgetting who I am?"

"The Cat Whisperer?"

"Exactly," Lance grins at him before he turns back to Muffin, gently reaching out a hand to stroke over her back. Keith watches in eager anticipation, waiting for the moment Muffin will her crack open an eye, realise someone other than Shiro is attempting to touch her, and proceed to either a) hiss angrily or b) just flat out try and claw Lance's hand off.

"Muffin," Lance cooes again, crouching down a little until he's almost eye-level with her. "It's your favourite uncle."

Keith holds his breath as Muffin shudders suddenly, back arching as she stands upright and begins to survey her surroundings. Dark green eyes zero in on Lance and, for a second or two, Keith is certain she's contemplating just leaping into the air to claw at Lance's face. But then Lance runs a hand down her back and everything goes to hell.

Because Muffin doesn't hiss at him or try and bite his fingers or even lazily try and bat his arm away with a fat paw, instead— Instead, she _purrs_. Loudly. She _purrs_ and leans into Lance's touch, eyes closing in pleasure as she rubs herself against him as best she can.

"What. The. Fuck," Keith hisses, jumping to his feet and crossing the room in two quick strides. "What did you do?"

"Nothing," Lance shrugs, looking ridiculously pleased with himself. "Cats just love me."
Keith scowls, crouching down to Lance's level to get a better look at Muffin himself. Clearly there's something wrong here because Muffin doesn't just purr for strangers. She's been in the family for the last seven years and she's only just started to tolerate Keith's mother.

"Let me try," Keith mutters, gently swatting Lance's hand away so he can run a hand down Muffin's back an— "The hell?" Keith snaps, yanking his hand away when Muffin tries very earnestly to bite his thumb. "Don't laugh," he grunts, shooting Lance a half-hearted glare before he glances back down at Muffin who is glaring up at him.

"Did the mean man try and hurt you?" Lance says softly, reaching forwards to pull Muffin into his lap.

"I was trying to pet her," Keith insists, watching as Muffin gets comfortable in Lance's lap in a manner he's only ever seen her do with Shiro. "How was I trying to hurt her?"

"Clearly she can sense your evil intentions," Lance says, barely managing to smother his obvious laughter.

"You," Keith mutters, standing upright and dusting off his jeans. "You are just as bad as Shiro."

"Don't be jealous, Keith. It's not our fault you don't have the touch. Where're you going?" Lance adds, frowning a little as he watches Keith make his way towards the door.

"Gonna get a cat who doesn't hurt me," Keith tells him before disappearing through the door and entering the kitchen. He crouches as he reaches the designated Cat Area of the kitchen - a corner filled with unused toys, beds, and far too much string to be entirely safely - and feels his features soften as he stares at the kittens cuddled around each other in the bigger cat bed.

"How did you come from her?" Keith mumbles under his breath as he grabs the bed from either end and hoists it up into the air, taking care not to jostle the kittens too much as he makes his way back into the living room. When he reenters the room, the scene before him is a thousand times worse than before. Lance is lying across the floor, shirt riding up ever-so-slightly, showing off too much midriff and the briefest glimpse of boxer shorts for Keith to remember how to breathe properly, with Muffin nestled on top of him.

"Keith," Lance calls, lifting his neck a little to meet his gaze. "I think she has a crush on me."

"Impossible," Keith mutters, inching a little closer to him so he can place the kittens next to his head. "Muffin doesn't have feelings."

"Keith," Lance says, covering Muffin's ears with his hands as he sits upright suddenly. "She can hear you, you know?"

"Good," Keith sniffs, settling himself down on the floor next to Lance. He glares at Muffin, still remembering how she'd attempted to devour his thumb just minutes earlier. "I want her to hear."

Lance's expression softens even further as he catches sight of the tiny kitten in Keith's hands, squirming and meowing quietly as it peers around the room curiously. "Can I—"

Keith nods as Lance gently shooes Muffin off his lap before reaching out to grab Red. He makes a weird noise, something between a laugh and an 'awwww' when Red bops her nose against his chest, sniffing curiously at him. "She's adorable."
"They all are," Keith says, lifting the other kittens out of the bed so they can have a wander around the room.

"And her name is Heinz," Lance says stubbornly, lifting the kitten up so it's on eye level with him. "Not Red."

"No."

"Yes."

"Never."

"Too late," Lance says brightly, bopping Red (Heinz?) gently on the head with the tip of his nose. "You like the name Heinz don't you, girl?"

And then, too Keith's complete and utter dismay, Red (Heinz?) actually meows in apparent agreement.

Lance turns towards him and shoots him a smug grin. "See?"

"How are you doing that?" Keith asks incredulously, absentmindedly scratching behind the ears of one of the kittens.

"Cat Whisperer, remember?" Lance says, leaning backwards until he's resting against the front of the armchair. "Cats love me. It's just my thing."

And Keith would be lying if he didn't admit he's a tiny, tiny bit jealous at that. Especially when Muffin is sitting in front of him alternating between staring up at Lance fondly and hissing angrily at Keith every few seconds.

Keith isn't sure how long they sit there playing with the kittens and, in Lance's case, with Muffin, and he finds he doesn't mind. They spend the time sat pressed up against each other, backs leaning against the front of the armchair, as they watch the kittens play and fight in front of them. Lance develops a fast bond with Blue ('Smurfette' Lance corrects him every time he calls her Blue), and declares she's going to be the one he takes home, and spends the rest of the time taking pictures of them to send to Hunk.

To Keith's relief their conversation flows just as easily as it did at the restaurant and he's never left fumbling for something to say or left sitting in an awkward silence. It's nice. It feels natural, like he's hanging out with Shiro or Pidge and not someone who, quite rightfully, should be considered a complete stranger.

They're sitting so close to each other, Keith knows it wouldn't take much for him to just reach to his side and wrap Lance's hand around his own, so he does. Lance pauses playing with the kittens for a moment to glance down at their joined hands before dragging his gaze up to meet Keith's. For a second or two, Keith lets his irrational side take over and he's certain Lance is going to yank his hand away, but then Lance's grin widens and he's shuffling even closer towards Keith's side, so there's not even an inch of space between them, and Keith feels all his worries disappear in an instance.

"So," Lance hums quietly after a few minutes of sitting in a comfortable silence, watching the kittens toss a ball of string between them. "You said something about a movie, earlier?"

Keith nods, mentally running through the movies he'd downloaded onto his laptop a couple days ago specifically for this purpose. "I didn't know if you wanted to watch some—"
The doorbell rings, once, twice, three times, four times, five times, six—

"Are they just holding down the bell?" Lance asks, frowning a little as he cranes his neck behind him to try and glance out of the window.

"I think so," Keith says. He wants to ignore the bell, wants to remain here in this little bubble with Lance where they're holding hands and telling dumb jokes and just *enjoying* being in each other's company, but the ringing is getting insistent down. "I should get that."

Lance sighs and reluctantly relinquishes his hold on Keith's hand. "Yeah, you probably should."

"Uh, I'll be right back," Keith tells him, scrambling to his feet to race towards the front door. He has no idea who it could be. His parents aren't due back till late, and Shiro didn't mention anything about coming home for a while. *It could be a delivery man,* he reasons with himself as he unlocks the door, though his parents didn't mention anything about expecting any packages soon, and he hasn't ordered anything in a while.

Still frowning he throws open the door and immediately *scowls* at the person he finds standing in front of him. "Pidge."

"Hey, Keith," Pidge says brightly, apparently oblivious to the death stare Keith is sending her way - oblivious, or just *highly* uncaring. "What's up?"

Keith folds his arms tightly across his chest and raises a brow. "What're you doing here?"

Pidge makes a *psssh* sound, like she's offended Keith even has to ask, before she brandishes a bowl in his face. "My mum found one of your bowls in our cupboard and asked me to bring it back to you guys."

"Oh, uh—"

Pidge shoves the bowl into Keith's stomach with remarkable strength and takes a step forwards, effectively shoving Keith out of the way so she can step across the threshold into his home. "Yep, just doing my neighbourly duties."

"Right..." Keith says slowly, watching as Pidge shuffles a little further into house, peering in every direction like she's looking for something. "Thanks for the bowl, I'll let my mum know you br—"

"Keeeeeiiithhhhh," Lance's excited shriek echoes loudly around the otherwise silent house. "Keith! Smurfette is sleeping on me! Hurry up and come back so you can film this."

*Oh God.*

Pidge's expression turns devious as she swivels around to face Keith. "Oh Keith," Pidge says sweetly, in the most dramatic and downright *fake* stage whisper Keith has ever heard in his entire life. "I didn't know you had guests. Am I interrupting?"

"Yes," Keith hisses, taking a step backwards towards the door. "So if you could jus—"

"Keeiiithhhhh!" Lance calls again, sounding a little more desperate this time. "*Keith you're missing it.*"

Pidge takes a step backwards towards the living room. "I should probably go and say hi, don't want to be rude, you know?"
"No you shouldn't," Keith hisses, miming swiping a finger across his throat - an action Pidge gleefully ignores as she ducks into the living room cackling loudly. Keith follows after her, an apology already on the tip of his tongue. Something like 'I'm sorry my best friend is ridiculously nosey and doesn't know when to butt out, please don't hold this against me'.

"Keith, look at— Oh," Lance breaks off, brows furrowing slightly in the middle as Pidge and Keith both burst into the room. He's still sat where Keith left him, with Muffin curled up by his feet, and Blue (Smurfette?) lying gently across his chest. "Uh. Hi?"

"Hey," Pidge says brightly, striding further into the room until she's close enough to Lance to plop herself down on the ground next to him. "You must be Lance."

Keith groans quietly under his breath as he follows Pidge further into the room, not daring to sit as close to Lance as last time.

"Yeah," Lance says, looking oddly bemused at the whole situation. "And you must be Pidge, right? The kid that's been stealing my best friend away Thursday?"

"First of all," Pidge snorts, pushing her glasses further up her face when they begin to slide down her nose. "I resent the term 'kid'. And secondly, yeah, that's me. It's nice to meet you finally. Between Hunk and this one," she nods towards Keith sat behind her, apparently still completely oblivious to the glare Keith is shooting her back. "I feel like I've known you for ages."

"Oh," Lance wiggles his eyebrows a bit, glancing from Pidge to Keith and back to Pidge again. "Do they talk about me?"

"Ugh," Pidge rolls her eyes. "All the time. Keith doesn't s—"

"Did you need anything, Pidge?" Keith says loudly, pointedly cutting across whatever Pidge was about to say.

"Nope," Pidge shrugs, looking effortlessly at ease in the situation. "Just wanted to hang for a bit."

Keith decides that when today is over he's going to spend the next week marathoning all of Pidge's favourite shows, just so he can spoil them all for her.

"You guys don't mind, do you?"

"Yes," Keith hisses.

"Nah, you're cool," Lance shrugs, laughing openly at the look of horror that spasms across Keith's face. "You're Matt's little sister, right?"

"The one and only."

Lance leans forwards, voice adopting a conspiratorial tone. "Tell me his greatest weakness. I need to kick his ass at table tennis the next time I see him."

Keith watches in disbelief as the two of them quickly descend into a remarkably in-depth conversation about all of the possible weaknesses Lance could potentially exploit the next time he challenges Matt and Shiro at a game of table tennis.

Eventually, he stops silently protesting this sudden friendship (though he is still planning on spoiling Pidge's favourite shows for the next month at the very least) and watches as they interact. He's not sure what it is, but there's something about watching Lance laugh at something Pidge says, or seeing
Pidge dramatically explain some weird thing Matt did when they were kids, that makes him smile.

It's nice being able to watch your best friend and your— Keith frowns, gaze flitting over towards Lance. What is Lance to him? He realises, with a jolt, that he'd been about to refer to him in his mind as his boyfriend, but he's not entirely sure that's a label he can apply to Lance.

Something tugs at his heart and he realises, with another unpleasant little jolt, that it's a label he wants to be able to apply to Lance.

Oh.

"Keith?"

Keith glances up, yelping quietly when he notices Lance has moved from his spot by the armchair and is kneeling directly in front of him, frowning a little.

"Are you alright?"

Keith can feel a blush starting to creep up on him. He purposely looks away, gaze landing on a very smug looking Pidge. He shoots her another scowl before, reluctantly, turning back to stare at Lance. "I'm fine."

"You sure?" He looks genuinely concerned and like he's about five seconds away from reaching forwards to rest the back of his palm against Keith's forehead to check for his temperature. "You look kind of...weird."

"Weird?" Keith croaks out, suddenly feel more self-conscious than he's ever felt in his life. Because that's exactly what anyone wants to hear; that their crush thinks they look weird.

"Not in a bad way," Lance says hurriedly, apparently realising how his words have been interpreted. "I mean, you just got this look on your face just now. Like you sucked a lemon or something."

"That's just his thinking face," Pidge says gleefully, standing up to move to the area of the room they're in. "He gets like that when he's thinking real hard about something."

"Have I ever told you what an amazing friend you are?" Keith grumbles.

"Frequently."

"I lied."

"Rude."

Lance snorts at their little back and forth before he nudges Keith with his knee to get his attention. "You're sure you're good?"

"Yeah, I'm fine," Keith sighs. "I was just— Just thinking about something." Thinking about what's the best way to ask someone if they want to date you, to be specific.

"See," Pidge says with a grin, leaning forwards to rest her arm on top of Keith's head. "I know you so well. I bet I could even guess what you were thinking about."

And the thing is, Keith knows she probably could. "Won't your mum be wondering where you are now," Keith asks hurriedly, before Pidge can reveal some of her well-educated (and probably correct) guesses. "You disappeared to give us a bowl about an hour ago."
Pidge opens her mouth, maybe to argue with him, but quickly closes it and hums instead. Her gaze flits from Keith to Lance before settling on Keith again, a knowing smirk tugging at her lips. "You're right. Don't need her calling the police to report me missing - again."

"Again?" Lance asks, voice incredulous.

"Game of hide and seek gone too far," Pidge says with a shrug. "Keith is right, I should probably head home."

"Thank you," Keith mutters under his breath, only loud enough for Pidge to hear.

"It was nice meeting you, Lance," Pidge says as she allows Keith to not-so-subtly shove her towards the front door. "I guess we'll be seeing more of each other?"

"Yeah," Lance hums, that shy smile from before tugging at his cheeks again. "Hopefully."

Keith tries not to dwell too much on what 'hopefully' could mean as he essentially frog marches Pidge down the corridor and out of the house.

"So," Pidge says innocently once she's standing on the porch. "He seems nice. Very cu—"

"Don't," Keith groans, dragging a hand down his face. "Don't. Just go home, and stop trying to spy on us through your curtains."

"You saw that?" Pidge frowns, looking genuinely disappointed at getting caught. "I thought I was being so sneaky."

"You weren't," Keith deadpans, watching as Pidge hops down from the porch and moves to climb over the fence separating their two front gardens.

"Duly noted," Pidge calls, one leg slung over the fence. "I'll remember that for next time."

"Next time?"

"Good luck with, Lance," she yells, swinging her other leg over as she shoots Keith a wicked grin. "Don't do anything I wouldn't do."

"You're fifteen."

"Exactly!"

He waits until he sees Pidge disappear inside her own home before he closes the front door behind him and makes his way back to the living room.

"Sorry about that," Keith mutters as he reenters the room. Lance is still sitting crossed legged on the floor, with all five kittens nestled in his lap. He glances up as Keith approaches and, thankfully, he looks more amused than anything else. His lips are still curved upwards into an easy smile and he definitely doesn't look like he's reevaluating his decision to come here as a result of Keith's weird (but, ultimately well-meaning, Keith can grudgingly accept) best friend.

"I like Pidge," Lance says with a little shrug. "She seems nice. Also," he snickers quietly under his breath. "She gave me some great tips to kick Matt's ass next time he's here."

"That wasn't—" Keith pauses as he settles down next to Lance, resuming their earlier close proximity to each other. "That wasn't weird or anything?"
"Nah, Hunk probably would've done the same thing. Hell, I would've done the same thing if Hunk was on a date."

"Cool," Keith mumbles, wondering if it'd be alright to reach out and hold Lance's hand again, or if the moment has gone. "Did you— Did you still want to watch something?"

Lance nods enthusiastically. "That'd be great."

"Cool," Keith is starting to feel like a parrot. "Let me put the kittens back in the kitchen and we can go?"

Lance cocks his head to the side, brows furrowing into a slight frown. "Are we going somewhere?"

"Yeah. Uh- My room."

"Your room?"

Keith wonders if he's imagining the way Lance's voice suddenly gets a little squeakier on the word 'room'. "Yeah, I download everything onto my laptop, but I have don't have a cable so we can't watch things on the TV downstairs. Is that alright?"

Lance nods, looking suspiciously redder than before. "That is—" He swallows - Keith follows the way his Adam's apple bobs up and down - and starts again. "Yeah, that's great."

Keith's room is everything Lance had expected and then some.

It's not as cluttered as Lance's room back home - there are no giant teddy bears and other animals stuffed into corners, no terrible drawings and paintings from his primary school days stuck to his walls with glue (Lance's mother is still annoyed about that), no piles and piles of laundry stacked up high on his desk chair - but it's very much a Keith room. It's not tidy exactly, more like an organised mess with thick textbooks stacked up against the walls, and shoeboxes peeking out from underneath his bed.

There are a few photographs stuck to the sides of the one mirror in his room. There are a few of Keith and Shiro at various ages during their childhood, and one Lance thinks was probably taken either last Christmas or the one before with both Keith and Shiro grinning cheesily up at the camera, dressed in identical tacky Christmas jumpers. There's one with Keith and two older adults Lance assume are his parents - Keith looks a few year younger than he does now and he's standing squashed between them wearing a suit that looks like it's a few sizes too big for him (one of Shiro's old ones maybe?). There are a couple with Pidge as well. Lance gaze zooms in on what he thinks is probably the oldest photograph tacked onto the mirror. It's more faded than the others and curls in on the edges, and is of a tiny Keith and an even tinier Pidge splashing about in garden pool. Keith is grinning up at the camera, showing off two missing front teeth, while Pidge stands behind him looking like she's about five seconds away from bursting into tears.

"Pidge hates that one," Keith says with a quiet chuckle, finally spotting what Lance is staring at.

"Why'd she look so moody?"

"Her mum wouldn't let her have another ice cream or something like that."

Lance hums, gaze dancing over the rest of the photographs stuck to the mirror before he resumes his quick once over of Keith's room. He takes in the few posters on his wall - three of what he assumes are vintage motorbikes, and one tacked over his wardrobe door of what he thinks is a blown up
"The Loch Ness Horror?" Lance asks curiously, dropping his bag onto Keith's desk chair as he pointed at the poster. "Is that...a film?"

Keith nods eagerly, eyes lighting up just enough for Lance to notice. "It's really good."

"Your kind of 'really good' or actually really good?"

Keith snorts at that. "Actually good."

"Keith."

There's a pause before Keith huffs a breath and reluctantly mumbles, "I think it has something like a '2' on IMDB."

"Ah," Lance hums knowingly, taking a step to the side to bump his shoulder against Keith's. "So it's your kind of 'really good' then?"

"I guess," Keith laughs. He takes a couple of steps backwards and drops onto his bed, fumbling around under the sheets for a moment or two before he tugs out a laptop. "You want to watch it?"

Lance hesitates for a long moment before he follows Keith across the room and awkwardly drops onto the bed next to him. His sheets are soft and cozy, smelling entirely of Keith, and Lance feels that familiar thrumming of his heart again. "Could we maybe watch something a little better than a '2' on IMDB?"

"I mean, you're missing out on greatness," Keith says as his laptop whirs to life and he quickly types in his password. "But sure." He settles back against his head rest and Lance mimics his actions, acutely aware of how close they are now. It feels like a different kind of closeness when compared with how they were sat in the living room, it feels more intimate somehow. The bed is more than big enough for two people to fit comfortably side by side, yet they're sat squashed up as close as they can, everything from their hips to the tips of their toes brushing against the other. It would be so easy, Lance realises with startling clarity, so easy to just turn slightly on his side and have his legs tangled with Keith's, his hands resting gently on his waist. 

So easy.

"-watch?"

Lance blinks, realising pretty belatedly that has Keith has been talking to him. "Uh, sorry what was that?" His face feels warm and he can only pray his cheeks don't look as pink as they feel right now.

"What do you want to watch?" Keith asks again, nodding to the open folder of downloaded movies he's pulled up on the screen.

"Um," Lance focuses his attention on the laptop, feeling grateful for the sudden distraction. It means he doesn't have to think about how warm Keith feels by his side, or how nice he feels pressed up against him. "This one?" He jabs blindly at the screen. "This one's good."

Keith frowns over at him. "Lake Placid?"

"Yeah," Lance says, still far too distracted by the way Keith's left leg is ever-so-slightly slung over his own one in this position. "Sounds good."
"It's about an old lady who accidentally raises a gigantic crocodile in a lake."

"Oh. Uh, yeah," Lance shrugs, trying to fix a confident smile onto his face. "Sounds awesome."

Keith squints at him for a second or two before he shrugs and turn back to the laptop, tapping away at the keyboard a few times until the screen turns black and the title credits start running.

The movie starts and they both reflexively sink into the bedsheets. At first, it's not so bad. Lance allows himself to lose himself in the terrible actor and special effects, and even gets weirdly into the fairly basic plot, but you can only pretend to be interested in a subpar monster horror (which may or may not also be a comedy - Lance can't quite tell) with the person you're crushing on pressed up against you for so long before your mind starts to wander.

Keith is fully focused on the movie - and Lance is annoyed at how adorable he finds that fact - eyes wide as he follows the actors on a wild goose chase for a giant bloodthirsty crocodile in some forest somewhere like it's the most fascinating thing in the world.

This, Lance thinks wryly, jumping a little when Keith laughs at something that happens on the screen. This is the part where someone's supposed to make a move. If this were one of those crappy romcoms he not-so-secretly adores, this would be the part where the main character pretends to yawns and drapes an arm around the love interests shoulder, pulling them in conveniently close for sudden kiss.

Lance's fingers twitch against his thigh at the thought. Are things like that really cliché, or do they actually work? Would Keith just laugh at him or—

"Did you see that?" Keith says suddenly, snapping Lance out of his thoughts. He glances over at him and feels his lips split into an amused smirk when he spots the look of genuine interest splayed across Lance's face. "Why didn't they run?"

"Yeah," Lance nods enthusiastically, squinting down at the screen to try and figure out what he's missed. He does a quick count of the character on the screen and frowns. He's pretty sure there were five characters the last time he looked. Now there are only three. Did two of them die?

"This isn't realistic at all," Keith continues on, apparently not noticing Lance has very little idea of what's actually happening in the film.

"Oh yeah," Lance agrees. "The movie about a giant bloodthirsty crocodile isn't realistic."

"I know right?" Keith says, the only sign he's understood Lance's sarcasm being the way he elbows him gently in the ribs before turning his attention back to the screen.

Now, Lance thinks, watching carefully as Keith's eyes widen a little as giant crocodile waddles across the screen, chasing a screaming blonde. Now's the best time to make The Move. He doesn't pretend to yawn - he's not that cheesy, no matter what Hunk says - instead he pretends to stretch. He fake groans as he swings an arm forwards and then high up above his head quickly. From the corner of his eye he can see Keith peering at him curiously, but he ignores hit in favour of sticking his arm out to the right, bending backwards slightly until it's directly behind Keith's back. Once he's sufficiently (fake) stretched, Lance tries to surreptitiously wiggle back down into his former position, subtly leaving his arm still behind Keith's back, resting gently on his shoulder.

Success.

"Did you just— Did you use The Move on me?" Keith asks, sounding like he can't decide between being very, very amused or horrified at Lance's apparent cheesiness.
"No," Lance lies quickly, tugging his arm back to rest in his own lap. "I was— I was stretching. I had a cramp."

Keith quirks a brow, blatant disbelief evident on his face. "You just tried to do The Move on me."

"Stop calling in that!" Lance grumbles, bumping Keith with his shoulder. "And I didn't. I was stretching. Stretching, Keith."

"Uh-huh," Keith still doesn't look convinced, but he shrugs anyway. "That's a shame then."

"Yeah, a real sh— Wait, what?"

Keith flushes and purposely turns away from him, bottom lip jutting out stubbornly as he forces himself to stare at the laptop screen. "I just mean— Well. I wouldn't have minded if you did, you know..."

Oh.

Oh.

Lance clears his throat, this time not bothering with any of the theatrics as he stretches his arm out to drape across Keith's shoulders. "Is this...good?"

Keith stiffens under his touch for a brief second before he relaxes into him. "Really good."

"Cool, um," he pokes Keith gently in shoulder, taking his attention away from the film. "Can I—"

There's a pause and, for a second or two, Lance is sure Keith is going to jerk backwards and maybe kick him out of the bed. But then Keith nods - he nods - almost imperceptibly tilting his head upwards. Lance inches closer, trying to ignore the almost too loud thud thud of his heart, and gently presses his lips against Keith's.

As first kisses go, it's nothing to scream and shout about. It's chaste, a soft press of their lips, lasting barely for three seconds before they both pull away, cheeks flushed and breathing heavier than a moment ago.

"Is—" Keith begins, reaching upwards to ghost his fingers over his lips. "Was that good?"

Lance hums, dropping his arm from Keith's shoulder to wrap it loosely around Keith's waist instead, fingers toying with fabric of his jumper. "I think it's the type of thing we get better with practice."

"Oh," Keith tilts his head up a little more, something glinting in his eye as he shifts in his position to get a better hold of Lance's shirt. "Do you want to?"

"Do I want to what?"

"Practice?"

Lance barely has to nod in eager agreement before Keith is craning his neck upwards to capture Lance's lips in another kiss. This kiss is different from the first. It's still tentative and mildly hesitant - the byproduct of two boys still learning each other - but there's something about it that sets Lance's heart racing.

It's not perfect either; their noses bump insistently until Lance shifts backwards a little, inadvertently pulling Keith into his lap, and, once one of them opens their mouths for the first time, elevating it from a simple brush of the lips into something a little more, their teeth clack against each other more
than once. But Lance thinks that's the kind of thing that's to be expected with first kisses and besides, it's not like it deters them.

When Keith pulls back a little, Lance finds himself chasing his lips giving him barely a second to suck in a breath of air before their lips are pressed together again, lips sliding against the others in an odd sort of rhythm that seems to work for them. Keith's arms wind themselves around Lance's neck pulling himself further and further onto his lap, his fingers brushing and tugging lightly at the ends of his hair.

Eventually the second kiss turns into a third kiss, turns into a fourth kiss, turns into a Lance loses count of how many times they kiss. When they do finally pull apart Lance realises they've somehow managed to end up on their sides at some point. Keith is essentially lying underneath him, legs tangled with Lance's own, hair tousled, cheeks pink, and a shy smile tugging at his lips.

"Was that good?"

"Are you going to ask me that every time we kiss?"

"Maybe," Keith says, already leaning up again to brush his lips against Lance's again. This kiss is more reminiscent of their first one; closed-mouthed, soft and slow, but when Keith's hands reach up to cup his cheeks, deepening the kiss effortlessly, Lance feels it in his toes.

"Yeah," he breathes, pulling away from Keith marginally to bump their foreheads gently. Keith's eyes flutter open and Lance commits the slightly dazed look that dominates his features for a second or two before he before he meets Lance's gaze to memory. "It's good."

It's better than good, Lance thinks as their eyelids flutter shut once again and their lips find each other, already getting used to this dance they've got going on.

By the time Lance's alarm (Britney Spears - Toxic) blares impatiently letting them know he needs to get going so he can catch his train to get back to the Garrison, Keith has already decided that kissing Lance might just be his new favourite hobby.

There's something very relaxing about lying in bed with Lance squashed up by his side, trading lazy kisses in between conversations about anything and everything. He learns lots of little things about him as well. Like, Lance is way too ticklish, discovered when Lance's shirt accidentally hitches up a little and Keith finds his hands running along the strip of warm, bare skin on show. It's the lightest of touches, but Lance half laughs, half shrieks, curling in on himself as he stares at Keith accusingly, like he'd purposely tried to tickle him.

When they eventually agree they can't ignore the sound of Lance's alarm for any longer - though Lance does seem to enjoy singing loudly (and badly) along to chorus - Keith immediately misses the warmth of Lance's body next to his own and finds himself wondering when he's going to get the chance to experience it again. He's not a mindreader of course, but he thinks their date has gone pretty well, which would imply more dates in the future, but Keith is also very aware of the fact Lance hasn't mentioned any possibility of that happening.

Neither have you, a voice - an irritatingly rational voice - in his mind tells him as he guides Lance out of his bedroom and back downstairs.

Lance insists on hugging and kissing all the cats before he leaves, saying something that sounds a lot like 'since someone won't do it for me' before he easily swoops Muffin up in his arms and presses an exaggerated kiss against the top of her head. To Keith's dismay, Muffin doesn't immediately try to
tear his tongue out with a well aimed swipe of the paw, instead she seems to actually cuddle up to him a little more.

"You have cat treats on you, don't you?" Keith asks after Lance says his goodbyes to the kittens, promising Blue (Smurfette) he'll be back for her again. "That's why she likes you so much, right? Your pockets are laced with treats, or catnip or something."

"Are you accusing me of drugging your cat?" Lance asks, as he follows Keith down the pathway towards where he'd left his bike earlier that afternoon. "Keith, I'm offended."

Keith shrugs, unlocking the helmets and tossing the spare one to Lance before he climbs onto his bike. "It seems like the only logical conclusion."

"Yeah?" Lance snorts, easily following Keith's movements as he settles himself onto the back of the bike like it's the most natural thing in the world, and he hadn't been terrified of just the thought of riding on bike just a few hours earlier. "Sounds like someone's jealous to me," Lance hums as he wraps his arms around Keith's waist. "It's alright, babe. I'm not into Muffin like that, you've got no reason to be jealous."

"You—" Keith snorts, revving up the engine and enjoying Lance's squawk of surprise when the bike lurches forwards without any real warning. "Are an idiot."

"Well, you just spent an hour smooching an idiot, soooo," Lance laughs, and even through the helmet Keith thinks he can feel his breath on the nape of his neck - or is that just wishful thinking? "What does that say about you?"

Keith pretends to think on it for a second or two. "That I'm a very, very patient person?"

"Kei—"

Keith laughs as Lance's indignant response turns into a shout of surprise as Keith takes off down the road.

"Mean," Lance hollers over the sound of the engine, grip around Keith's waist tightening a little as if to emphasise his point.

They make it to the station with just under fifteen minutes to spare. It's less busier than earlier that afternoon, and Keith manages to find a spot to park his bike relatively near the entrance.

Lance is a little quieter when he hands Keith back the helmet and pats himself down, checking nothing has fallen out of his pockets somehow on the ride. Keith eyes him carefully, wondering if he's imagining the way he seems avoid eye-contact with him even once he's done checking he hasn't lost anything.

"Is everything alright?" Keith asks, brows knitting in the middle as he tries to remember if he'd done anything to change the mood this much since leaving his house. He did speed up a little on the drive down, but Lance hadn't screeched in protest so he'd assumed it had been alright. "Was I too fast?"

"No, no," Lance says quickly. He takes a deep breath and takes a step forwards so he's standing less than an arm's length away. "The ride was great. It was fine."

"Then—"

"I like you," Lance blurts out, fiddling nervously with the hem of his shirt. "I like you a lot. And— And I'm pretty sure you like me too."
Keith lets out a nervous laugh, not entirely sure where the conversation is going. "Really? What makes you say that?"

"Well for one," Lance grins over at him, inching forwards a little. "This hickey right here," he yanks down the collar of his shirt and presses a finger against his collarbone.

"I— I didn't mean—" Keith splutters, facing turning redder with each passing second. "I didn't mean to le—" He pauses, eyes narrowing as he peers closer over at Lance. "You don't have a hickey, Lance."

"And isn't that a damn shame?" Lance laughs, and Keith can't help but laugh too because maybe it is a shame.

"Did you have a point to that?"

"Yeah," Lance meets his gaze as his grin turns softer. "I really like you, Keith. And— And I want to do this—" He gestures between them, taking another step forwards until he's crowding himself into Keith's personal space. "So, do you, maybe, want to try?"

"Try what?" Keith croaks. His throat feels dry suddenly.

"Be my boyfriend?"

"I— What?"

Hurt flashes across Lance's face and he takes a step backwards. "I mean, you don't have to answer rig—"

Keith sticks an arm out and grabs Lance tightly by the hand, pulling him back into his circle of personal space again. "Sorry, that came out really wrong."

"You think?" Lance scoffs, though he doesn't look entirely convinced.

Keith clears his throat and tugs Lance closer towards him still. "Yes."

"Yes?"

"I like you, Lance. A lot." The tips of Lance's ears are red and Keith figures his own probably aren't faring much better. "I want— I want to try and do this," he gestures between them, mimicking the move Lance had done just moments earlier. "I want to. So, yeah."

"Cool," Lance breathes, giving Keith barely any warning before he dips his head and presses his lips against Keith's - hard, purposefully, and too, too quickly - and pulls away, a satisfied grin stretching from cheek to cheek. "Cool."

"Yeah," Keith manages to croak out, still reeling from the kiss. "Yeah."

"I think I have to go now," Lance murmurs, squinting up at the clock above the doors of the entrance of the station. "My train's due to get here in about two minutes."

Keith tries to keep the disappointed look off his face, but apparently he doesn't do a very good job of it because Lance chuckles quietly as dips his head again to press their lips together almost fleetingly before he pulls away. "I'll see you soon?"

"Yeah, soon."
Lance gives him once last glimpse of that blinding smile before he turns away and begins hightailing it up the stairs into the station. Keith watches him go and makes sure he's actually inside the station before he starts making his way back to his bike.

"Keith."

He frowns, whirling around to find Lance jogging down the stairs again, fumbling through his bag as he goes. "Lance?" Keith asks in confusion. "Your train? Aren't you about to mis—" He stumbles backwards as Lance tosses a badly wrapped package into his arms before he begins jogging back the way came.

"Your present!" Lance calls, taking the steps two at a time. "I forgot to give it to you back at your place! Just— Ah, let me know what you think!" And then he's gone, hurtling through the station doors, presumably bolting to his platform to catch his train.

Keith hefts the package between his hands as he settles him onto his bike, pausing for a fraction of a second before he tears the paper (newspaper, Keith realises with a snort) apart and tugs a pair of gloves and a pair of socks free from the confines. The gloves are bright red with black lining around the edges and there's even a little white 'K' on the inner wrists of each one. But it's not the gloves that have Keith sitting in the middle of a carpark fighting back a wide grin. It's the socks.

Keith laughs to himself as he tugs the thick wooly socks free from the packaging and holds them up in front of his face. They're completely red except for a dark black patch on both socks that Keith thinks is supposed to be chubby cat. He can just about make out the ears and the nose and a scowling face staring up at him. Still laughing, Keith fishes around in his pocket for his phone and quickly brings up his chat history with Lance to type out a new message.

(19:30) Is that supposed to be Muffin on the socks?

(19:30) aHHH YOU OPENED IT ALREADY?

(19:30) And yeah, it's an artists impression of my favourite niece.

(19:30) It's terrible isn't it?

(19:31) It looks nothing like her.

(19:31) I love it.

(19:31) The gloves too.

(19:32) :3c

(19:32) No.

(19:32) <3

(19:32) <3

(19:35) Laaaance.

(19:35) Where are you?
(19:36) You missed dinner, Iverson was on the warpath.

(19:40) I'm on the train.

(19:40) I'll be like thirty minutes!!

(19:40) Tell him I've got like...food poisoning or something.

(19:42) I told him you have diarrhoea.

(19:43) huNK?????

(19:44) I NEEDED SOMETHING REALISTIC THAT HE WOULDN'T QUESTION, SHUT UP.

(19:44) I'm not good when he puts me on the spot.

(19:47) I can't believe...

(19:48) Yeah, yeah, I'll make it up to you.

(19:48) But moving onto bigger and more important things...

(19:48) How was Keith?

(19:50) Oh

(19:50) WELL.

(19:51) I have a lot to tell you.

(19:53) In a good way or...

(19:56) :

(19:56) A really good way.

(19:57) Omg.

(19:57) You're going out aren't you? Like properly??

(19:57) Officially??

(20:00) :

(20:01) LANCE.

(20:01) :

(20:03) Wow, really?

(20:03) I'll tell you everything when I get back, but yeah

(20:03) ~Officially~

(20:04) AHHHHHHHHH.
(20:04) RIGHT??????

(20:05) Holy shit, you have a boyfriend.

(20:06) :)

(19:49) Was that your bike I just heard pulling in?

(19:49) Or are you guys being robbed by a biker gang?

(20:01) That was me.

(20:02) Phew.

(20:02) So...Lance...

(20:04) Are you really doing this?

(20:05) YES.

(20:05) HOW DID IT GO?

(20:07) Good.

(20:08) Keiiithhhhh.

(20:08) You've gotta give me more than that. I'm living my romantic life vicariously through you, you know?

(20:10) Really good.

(20:12) I swear to God it's like pulling teeth with you.

(20:13) We're going out.

(20:15) Like

(20:15) Like, you're going out to a restaurant sometime soon or...

(20:16) Going out as in, he's your boyfriend now?

(20:18) The second one.

(20:19) REALLY?

(20:20) Yeah.

(20:21) Omg.

(20:21) You know you have to change your Facebook relationship status now?

(20:23) ...

(20:23) No.
Eh. I'll do it for you.

You don't know my password.

That's what you think.

Also, you know that bowl I brought over?

Yeah...

Can you bring it back? It's not actually yours.

I just needed a reason to come over.

What the hell, Pidge????

:

So, I hear congratulations are in order?

What?

Matt just told us.

About you and Lance?

The fuck?

I literally told Pidge 10 minutes ago.

Are they joined at the brain or something???

I'm still trying to figure that out.

But yeah, congrats?

Thanks, Shiro.

:

You know...

Now you're seeing someone...the next time me and Allura are back in town...maybe...

We are not double dating. Shiro.

IT'D BE FUN.

No.

I'll ask Lance instead.

No don't, he might say yes.

That's exactly why I'm gonna ask him.
(20:55) Nope. You're banned from talking to my boyfriend without me there.

(20:55) Too late. I just sent him a Facebook message.

(20:58) NO.

(20:59) And he just responded.

(20:59) What did he say?

(21:00) A lot of emojis and then 'hell yeah, sounds great!!!!!' and then a lot of emojis again.

(21:02) Betrayed by my brother and my boyfriend on the same day.

(21:02) Amazing.

(21:03) Aww.

(21:04) Shiro, no.

(21:06) But it's cute!

(21:07) No.

(21:10) Just let me get one more 'aw' out and I'll never call you or Lance cute again.

(21:11) We both knows that's a lie.

(21:12) Okay, true.

(21:12) I'm gonna do it anyway, though.

(21:13) AWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWW.

(21:14) ...

(21:14) What does Allura see in you, please?

(21:18) She says it's my dashing good looks.

(21:18) And apparently I make a mean cup of coffee in the mornings.

(21:20) Yeah that sounds about right.

(21:20) The second one, not the first one.

(21:23) When did you get so mean?

(21:23) Somewhere between your second and third 'aw'

(21:25) ...


(22:01) Hi :)
(22:01) Hey :)

(22:02) According to Hunk, I haven't stopped smiling since I got home.

(22:02) So, yeah.

(22:02) That's on you.

(22:04) *I'm willing to accept the blame there.*

(22:05) *I had fun today.*

(22:05) A lot of fun.

(22:06) Same.

(22:06) :

(22:07) :

(22:07) Also, the socks fit.

(22:08) REALLY?

(22:09) Yeah.

(22:09) [IMAGE SENT]

(22:09) [IMAGE RECEIVED]

(22:10) You're wearing them right now?????

(22:11) Yeah. They're really warm.

(22:11) Also, they smell like you and Muffin keeps sniffing my toes suspiciously.

(22:12) Don't think she can decide if she's supposed to hate me or love me.

(22:15) Aw, what an angel.

(22:16) Demons are fallen angels so I guess that's true.

(22:18) Now I've met her, I'm not tolerating your Muffin slander any longer.

(22:19) You literally saw the way she hissed at me????

(22:20) She's traumatised clearly.

(22:20) From what?????

(22:21) From that time you stepped on her tail.

(22:23) *FIVE YEARS AGO.*

(22:24) I mean...it's your word against hers.
(22:25) I can't believe
(22:25) My boyfriend is siding with a cat instead of me.
(22:27) You called me your boyfriend.
(22:28) Lance.
(22:28) You are my boyfriend.
(22:29) I AM!!!!
(22:29) And you're mine.
(22:30) Yeah.
(22:32) Mhm.
(22:34) <3
(22:35) <3
(22:36) I'm never gonna get used to that.
(22:36) Used to what?
(22:38) You being my boyfriend.
(22:38) Holding your hand.
(22:38) Kissing you...
(22:30) Oh...
(22:30) Same.
(22:34) It was good, right?
(22:35) Yeah.
(22:35) Really good.
(22:36) We can do it again soon?
(22:36) I'd like that.
(22:37) Cool.
(22:37) Coooool.
(22:39) Keith?
(22:40) Yeah?
(22:41) I really like you.

(22:42) I really like you too.

(22:45) <3

(22:46) <3

Chapter End Notes

ahhhh, i can't believe this is the end? like, this just started as a way for me to try and get rid of my writers block and ballooned into this? i'm still a little shocked lmao

this has been such a fun fic to write and you guys' feedback has literally been the greatest thing in the world, like...what...i'm still a little overwhelmed from all the love here, on tumblr, and on twitter!!! just!!! thank you!!!!! for everything, for every encouraging word and compliment!!!!! you guys are the greatest

just thank you guys for sticking with me, i know text/chat fics aren't always the easiest things to follow and!!! just!! thank you!!!

aND THE ART OOOHHHH MAN. listen. every time i see something i promise you i scream, like, you guys are so talented and i'm just *lies down* i'm not worthy lmao anyway, so this could end up being a really long and sappy authors note so i'll end it here before i embarrass myself any further!!! just thank you guys so much, and i really hope you enjoyed reading it as much as i've enjoyed writing it!!! hopefully i'll be back soon with another fic *finger guns mysteriously*

- some more art!!!! because i can't add any more links to the end note :____:

*keith and lance ft kittens and smiling adorably pls help by thefrieslord on tumblr
*keith on his bike!!! i repeat, keith on his bike!!!!! by clumsycora-san on tumblr
*cute bboi’s texting each other by meujabutifugi on tumblr
*pidge, keith, lance and hunk!!! lookin!!! adorable!!!!! by potatical on tumblr
*lance after the bike ride!!!!! by lubibul-v on tumblr
*my bois...looking beautiful...help me by clumsysora-san on tumblr
*lance and keith playing with the kittens!!!!!!! by altimysart on tumblr
*cat whisperer and muffin's terrible uncle being cute!!!! by keithkoganie on twitter
*phone chucking + general cuteness!!!! by captaintimber on tumblr
*lance putting the moves on keith ft. muffin!!!!!!! by nutedrawsstuff on tumblr
*more teletubbies keith and lance!!!!! by prinzcake on tumblr
*more adorable phone chucking!!! by randumbdaze on tumblr
*lance and hunk!!! lance and hunk!!!!!!! by seriousplan on tumblr
*i really like you' i really like you too'!!!!! by fiaowls on tumblr
*an inktober keith!!!!! by kyumart on tumblr
*cosplay of their first selfies im screamin!!!!! by foxyjoy-art on tumblr
*lance and keith playing with the kittens some more!!!!!!!!!! by altimysart on tumblr

End Notes
there is some beautiful art for this fic and i need to share it so:

* this!!!!!! by morgensternmary on tumblr (ง้ ﾟ *,*)
* chapter 5 specific!!!!!! by sakura-petal91 on tumblr /ajax 
* more chapter 5 specific!!!!! by 4everbacon on twitter and tumirl (* imshow :*imshow *)
* chapter 6 specific!!!!! by 4everbacon on twitter ( ∨亃 ∨)
* more chapter 6 specific!!!!!! by chan_lewd on twitter ( ⭐ ⭐)
* some more chapter 5!!!! ah!!!! by lovapples on tumirl °˖✧◝(⁰▿⁰)◜˖°
* this!!!!!!!!!!!! by yaboybokuto on tumblr (^‿^v)
* chapter 6 specific!!!! by aqua-flowers on tumirl (◕‿◕✿)
* more chapter 6!!!!!!!! by morgensternmary on tumirl (¬¬)ﾉ
* this adorableness!!!! by tochennie on tumirl (≡(*′▽`)っ)
* chapter 7 train scene!!!! by akai--kami on tumirl (◞・�能)
* hunk and pidge!!!!!! by fohanna-the-derp on tumirl (¬¬)
* lance selfie!!!!!!!!!!!! by clumsycora-san on tumirl (☆▽☆)
* keith selfie!!!!!!!!!!!! by clumsycora-san on tumirl (・ʾ•̫•́ ʿ•̫•́)
* chapter 7 train scene omg!!!! by yaminerua on tumirl (◞・�能)
* if lost please return to pidge!! by artisticzeta on tumirl (≥▽≤*)
* so much adorable!!! by spacecrumble on tumirl (☆▽☆)
* the fair scene help!!!!!!! by its-just-a-fandom-thing on tumirl!! (・ʾ•̫•́)
* allura vs keith: the cheerios war!!!!!! by shalluraofficial on tumirl (≥▽≤*)
* The Meeting™ and The Phone Call™ im screamin by sakura-petal91 on tumirl (imshow :*imshow * imshow :*imshow *)
* cONFESSION SCENE!!! by kit-chats on tumirl (ajax)
* chapter 8 phone call!!!!!!! by hidcki on tumirl (¬¬)ﾉ
* chapter 7 train station!!!!!!!im!!!!!!! by morgensternmary on tumirl (imshow :*imshow :*imshow *)
* guys....it's keith dressed in his teletubbies costume gUYS!!!!! by zoelymoely-draws on tumirl (¬¬)
* adorable bb bois being adorable!!!! by sinnieminni on twitter (☆▽☆)
* more stunning selfies!!!! by whalechief on tumirl (ง้ ﾟ *,*)

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