Between Two Worlds

by avatar_dragon_rider

Summary

So this idea came to me when I was rewatching Big Hero 6. When Hiro is hanging onto that cable thing during the final battle with Callaghan, something slices across his arm, which gets Baymax's attention. Well, what if Hiro had been injured by the thing that sliced his arm? Just a random BH6 oneshot full of angst and tears and feels...because me. Threw some Hirogo in there because why the heck not?
At the time, Hiro hadn't paid any attention to the piece of debris that had sliced across his arm. When it happened, he gave it a quick once-over before noticing Baymax flying towards him.

*Forget the mask, take out the bots! They'll get sucked up into the portal!*

He remembered feeling his left arm throb, a dull ache coming from where the debris had hit. He had ignored it, not wanting to alert Baymax and draw the robot's attention to his discomfort. He silently endured, shoving the light feelings of pain to the back of his mind.

*Our programming prevents us from injuring a human being. But we'll take that.*

He remembered the portal falling, everyone running, Baymax's declaration that Abigail Callaghan was still alive somewhere in that portal. The dull ache in his arm had gotten more insistent, now accompanied by a warm wetness that surrounded the aching area. Still, it went ignored.

*She's alive in there. Someone has to help.*

The same words Tadashi had spoken to Hiro before rushing into the burning building to save Callaghan. The last words Tadashi had spoken to Hiro.

*No, I'm not gonna leave you here! I'll think of something--!*

Hiro had blindly refused to leave Baymax in that strange place with no way out, the last memory he had of his brother. It was Tadashi all over again. But Abigail's life had been on the line, and Hiro couldn't sacrifice her.

*I'm satisfied with my care.*

He remembered watching Baymax get further and further away, ever oblivious to his patient's steadily worsening injury. Tears slid down Hiro's cheeks in rivers as the shuttle was blasted out of the portal, coming to rest safely away from the explosion.

Now, however, things would take a turn for the worse.

Hiro and his friends watched the aftermath of the battle from the rooftop of the local newspaper building. Callaghan was arrested and shoved into a police car as Abigail was safely loaded into an ambulance to be taken to the hospital.

Hiro was the first to turn around, heading back for the way they'd come, the others following him.

"I can't believe we actually pulled that off," Honey Lemon said with a small smile on her face. "I have to say, it was kind of fun."

"I thoroughly enjoyed spinning the flaming signs," Fred reminisced with a lazy smirk.

"It was certainly an interesting experience," GoGo agreed, staying largely out of the conversation.

"Well I'm just glad no one got hurt," Wasabi said, looking utterly relieved that the whole masked-man ordeal was over.

As if on cue, Hiro stumbled and brought a hand to his head, wincing at the sudden dizziness that overcame him. He felt the hot red liquid run down his arm, and was suddenly regretting not telling
Baymax he’d been hurt.

"Hiro?" Honey asked, looking concerned as she bent down a bit to rest a hand on Hiro's shoulder.

Hiro mumbled softly in response, but even he couldn't decipher what he'd said. In his semi-coherent state, it could have been anything. Black spots danced in his vision before his skinny legs gave out beneath him and he collapsed into GoGo's arms.

"Hiro!" GoGo exclaimed at the same time as Wasabi. She slowly sank to her knees, keeping Hiro's small form as still as possible. His head rested on GoGo's shoulder, her arms around his chest and middle to keep him from moving.

Hiro looked up at her, his eyes already looking glossy from the unconsciousness that threatened to drag him down. "Go..."

"Shh," GoGo cut him off, shifting his weight in her lap so she could use one arm to remove her helmet. "Just relax, Hiro." GoGo held the boy steady while Wasabi and Honey started pulling off Hiro's armor, looking for the source of the problem. Honey had removed his helmet first, and GoGo used her free arm to move his black bangs out of his eyes. "Just relax. Honey, what's wrong with him?"

The tall blonde had suddenly gone stiff after removing Hiro's chest plate, leaving him in a loose T-shirt that had most likely come from Tadashi. When GoGo saw what had made Honey go rigid, the goth girl's face paled.

A huge gash had sliced through Hiro's upper left arm, deep enough that it wouldn't have been as much of a problem on someone with thicker arms, but Hiro's skinny frame made the others wonder how he'd held on so long without passing out. Bruises ringed the bleeding slice, turning the injury an awful greenish-black color.

GoGo immediately took charge. "Honey, call an ambulance. Have them meet us here at the news tower. Wasabi, get Hiro's armor off, but be gentle. Fred, get me down into that alley. I'll hotwire that car down there so we have a place to store our gear."

Wasabi gently took the half-conscious Hiro, moving him off of GoGo's lap to continue removing the boy's armor. He used a section of Hiro's sleeve to bandage the wound, trying to keep the blood from flowing as hard. Hiro groaned and shifted, still fighting to stay conscious. Honey whipped out her cell phone and dialed the emergency number, frantically telling the person on the other end about Hiro's condition. Fred picked up GoGo and leapt off the building, jumping between the close walls to the ground. He set GoGo down then super-jumped back up to the top of the news tower to get the rest of the team, while GoGo set to work on hotwiring the car.

GoGo was already completely de-armored by the time the others reached the ground. They had just enough time to get their armor off and into the car before the ambulance showed up. GoGo gently took Hiro's now-unconscious body from Honey--who had been holding him while Fred took off his super suit--and jogged over to the ambulance, reluctantly handing the boy over to them. Once Hiro was safely inside the ambulance, the others all piled into the car and followed the ambulance to the hospital.
Funny thing, dying. Almost like it happens in stages. First comes the pain, then the delusion, the fight for consciousness, and eventual blackness that never seems to end. It wasn’t exactly terrifying, just...strange.

Hiro hardly registered falling back into GoGo’s arms. By then, his vision was swimming with black spots, and he really just wanted to close his eyes and fall asleep. It was GoGo’s voice, her commanding tone as she spoke to the others, that kept him awake. Maybe it was just the delusion brought on by heavy bloodloss and pain, but her voice calmed him, even if she sounded demanding.

He felt his armor being pulled, leaving him in the loose clothes he wore underneath. He shivered from the feeling of cold that spread across his body, awakening the pain in his arm and kicking the notch up to eleven. He could hear Baymax’s voice in the back of his head, *On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your pain?* Yep, definitely an eleven.

Baymax...

That was the last thing in Hiro’s mind before everything went dark and silent.

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As quickly as it went dark, it lit up again. White, blinding white replaced the black, and Hiro had to cover his eyes with his arm so his eyes could adjust. When they did, he lowered his arm and looked around.

It looked like a large, white room. The odd thing was, there were no walls. No ceiling supports. At least, not that Hiro could see. There didn't seem to be a ceiling either. Just an endless expanse of white. Hiro turned in a circle, looking around. He was alone.

Or so he thought.

"Hiro?"

Hiro froze mid-circle. That voice...no, it couldn't be. That...that wasn't possible. Unless...

"Tadashi?" Hiro said as he slowly turned around, looking up at his brother's smug face, the elder's arms crossed like they always were when he was about to play the big brother card on Hiro.

Instead of reprimanding him, like Hiro had expected, Tadashi broke into a grin and opened his arms. Hiro ran into them immediately, wrapping his own little arms tightly around his brother's middle. Tadahsi dropped down to his knees so he was more on Hiro’s height level and wrapped his little brother into a tight embrace. When Hiro's body started to shake with fought-back sobs, Tadashi hugged him tighter, and the boy stopped.

Hiro was the first to pull back. "Why are you here? What is this place?"

Tadashi stood back up, looking around at the massive, endless expanse of white that surrounded them. "I guess you could say this is the place between worlds."

"What worlds?" Hiro asked, confused.

Tadashi looked his brother in the eye. "The worlds of the living and the dead."
Hiro took a step back. "Wait, so...you're saying I'm dead?"

"Dying, yes." Tadashi gestured to the side, and a TV screen-like vision appeared. The images shown were from the Callaghan battle and the aftermath. Hiro's arm being sliced; him falling back into GoGo's arms; being loaded into the ambulance; a scene--that must be happening now--of Hiro laying on an operating table, multiple doctors bustling around him with various equipment. At one point, one of them brought in a defibrillator, but the vision cut out before Hiro could see if they used it.

"So that's it then," Hiro said softly. He sighed, staring at his feet. "I knew I should have said something to Baymax when I had the chance. I just...I didn't know it was that bad. I was too wrapped up in stopping Callaghan...I-I didn't...I lost Baymax...it's my fault--"

"No." Tadashi knelt down again and put his hands on Hiro's shoulders, drawing the younger boy's attention away from his own feet. "Hiro, listen to me. You are not at fault here, understand? Yes, you were selfish at first, until you realized Callaghan's motives. You sacrificed yourself and Baymax to bring Abigail home, and you got her back safely. I'm not angry at you for letting Baymax save you, not at all. And I am so proud of you for doing the right thing."

Hiro sighed, looking down again. "But it got me killed in the end."

Tadashi smirked. "Not exactly."

"What do you mean?" Hiro looked up at his brother, confused. "You just said I was dying. Those doctors brought in the defibrillator. The vision cut out before we could see what happened."

"Exactly."

"Dash...what are you saying?"

"I'm saying you have a choice." Tadashi stood up, Hiro's eyes following him. "Yes, your heart's stopped. The doctors are trying to bring you back. But you don't have to. You can go back and continue your life, or you can come with me, into the afterlife."

Hiro looked back at the vision screen, frozen with the image of the doctors shocking Hiro back to life. He looked down at his feet, thinking over his options. Going with Tadashi meant he could meet his parents, spend his afterlife with his brother. But going back meant he could...do anything, really. He could rebuild Baymax. He could keep crimefighting with his friends. He could go to school at the Nerd Lab.

He looked up at Tadashi. "I think you know my answer."

Tadashi smiled. "I had a feeling you were gonna say that."

Hiro smiled a little, and was once again enveloped in a hug by his older brother. They held each other close, neither one wanting to let go. Hiro's shoulders shook as he tried not to dissolve into tears. "Will you wait for me?"

Tadashi pushed Hiro back and looked him in the eyes. "Of course."

Hiro smiled, a lone tear rolling down his cheek. Tadashi smiled back at him, then everything went black.
Chapter 3

No one had been allowed in the operating room with Hiro. They hadn't even been allowed to watch through the window. It was family only, and Aunt Cass was still oblivious to the danger her nephew was in.

After they'd reached the hospital, the gang had been confined to the waiting room. Fred sat down and started reading the magazines, keeping himself occupied. Wasabi picked at his fingernails, alternating between sitting down in a chair and leaning against the wall. Honey Lemon kept asking about Hiro every few minutes, and the lady behind the desk eventually started up a conversation with Honey about chemicals. GoGo kept looking at the clock, biting her thumbnail as she paced the waiting room. Her eyes kept falling to Honey's cell phone, frequently thinking about calling Aunt Cass and telling her what happened. She had to keep reminding herself that Cass would be told after Hiro's surgery.

An hour had passed. Hour and a half. Almost two hours. Still no word from the doctors.

Now everyone was getting worried. Honey asked if she should call Cass, but GoGo snatched the phone before the blonde could reach it.

"We wait until after Hiro comes out of surgery," she insisted. "I don't want to tell Cass something bad happened to Hiro when we don't even know if he'll make it out." It stung her throat to say those words, but it was the truth. GoGo Tomago was never a softie when it came to anything. She didn't even cry at Tadashi's funeral when everyone else had been drowning in tears. No, she was the support. The one who stayed strong for the ones who couldn't. But this...this tested her. Tadashi had been her best friend ever since she'd started college. But Hiro...Hiro was more. He meant more to her than that. She refused to admit it, but that little genius had managed to steal her heart. She couldn't watch him die. Not after all they'd been through together.

Honey was about to retort, but was cut off by someone clearing their throat behind her. Everyone's head snapped up to the doctor that stood behind Honey Lemon. She stepped aside and looked at him anxiously.

"You're the people that came in with..." He paused, looking down at his clipboard. "Hiro Hamada?"

Honey nodded and GoGo walked closer. "Is he okay?"

"He's going to be fine." There was a collective sigh of relief from the group, then the doctor continued. "He lost a lot of blood, and we had to bring in a defibrillator during surgery, but he will live and he won't lose his arm. He'll have to stay here at the hospital for a while, though."

"Can we see him?" Honey asked softly.

The doctor nodded. "Follow me." He turned and walked down the hallway, followed by the gang.

Hiro's hospital room was no different than any other hospital room GoGo had been in. Same curtains, same bed, same wall paint. There was just one bed, making the room seem impossibly small. It made her feel oddly claustrophobic.

Hiro lay on the bed, wearing nose nubbins to help him breathe. A pint of blood hung from the IV pole above his head, along with the IV. The oxygen tank sat by the bed, the thin tube connecting it to
Hiro. The boy's eyes were closed, his skin pale from bloodloss. A thick, white bandage was wrapped around his upper arm, concealing the horrible bruised slice everyone knew was there.

GoGo was the first to Hiro's bed, sitting in the chair that was placed by it. Honey walked around to the other side and sat on the edge of the bed, resting her hand on Hiro's left forearm. Wasabi and Fred stood at the foot of the bed, looking at Hiro laying in the hospital bed. He seemed so frail, laying there unconscious and injured.

The doctor checked Hiro's pulse and adjusted the blood bag before leaving the room, closing the door behind him and leaving the teens in peace.

GoGo sighed, gently gripping Hiro's hand. "He's been through too much since Tadashi died."

Honey nodded, her eyes pooling with tears behind her huge glasses. She reached out and brushed some of Hiro's dark hair away from his forehead. "I called Cass on the way up here," she said softly. "She's on her way."

"Good." GoGo glanced at the boys, both sitting in the chairs by the window. Fred just looked away when GoGo met his gaze, while Wasabi simply sighed.

Everyone's attention suddenly snapped to Hiro as he groaned softly, turning his head to the right. "Hiro?" GoGo asked as Hiro's eyes slowly opened.

"GoGo?" he whispered, and Honey nearly sobbed with relief. Fred and Wasabi came over to Hiro's bed.

GoGo couldn't help but smile. "Hey Hiro."

Hiro smiled slightly through his half-lidded eyes. "Hey." He looked at everyone in turn before looking back at GoGo. "So what happened?"

"Well..." GoGo glanced at Honey Lemon, "we were hoping you could tell us."

"You just collapsed after the battle," Fred said, trying to jog Hiro's memory.

"Oh..." Hiro looked down at his arm. "I--"

"Hiro?!" came Cass's voice from just outside the door. Everyone's head turned toward the door as Cass came running in, her purse hanging from her elbow and generally looking like she just ran through traffic to get there--which she might have. "Hiro!"

Hiro smiled slightly. "Hey Aunt Cass."

Honey moved off the bed and let Cass take her place, the older woman hugging her nephew tightly but gently. "Are you okay? Tell me you're okay."

Hiro hugged his aunt with his non-injured arm. "I'm okay."

Cass pulled back and smiled at Hiro. "Oh good. I was so worried when you didn't come home tonight, then when Honey called me and said you were hurt, I..." Cass trailed off, looking away from Hiro as tears filled her eyes.

"It's okay, Aunt Cass," Hiro said softly, squeezing his aunt's hand. "I'm not going anywhere."

The smile that lit up Aunt Cass's face was rivaled only by the one GoGo kept hidden in her heart.
Chapter 4

Hiro tossed and turned in his sleep. His trauma-riddled brain was trapped in multiple nightmares at once. One minute, he's watching his brother burn to death in the SFIT explosion. Then he's dangling from a cable above Callaghan's portal, hanging on for dear life as multiple saw blades hack at his arms until he just can't hang on anymore. He falls through the portal into a universe where Callaghan killed all his friends; Wasabi was crushed by two concrete slabs, GoGo was suffocated in a sphere of microbots, Fred had all of his limbs ripped off, and Honey Lemon was stabbed by a giant spike of microbots while hiding in a pink dome made from various chemicals. Baymax's armor was in pieces, his vinyl body ripped to shreds and showing the carbon-fiber skeleton beneath. Callaghan shoots a wall of microbots at Hiro, then everything goes black.

Hiro yelped as he shot upright in bed, clutching the bandage covering his throbbing injury. Sweat rolled down his forehead, his dark hair clinging to his skin. He looked around the dark hospital room, illuminated only by the moon showing through the thin curtains.

"Hiro!" GoGo said softly from the chair she'd been sitting in a few feet away. Aunt Cass was curled up in the one by the window, sound asleep with a blanket on her legs. The others had gone home a few hours ago; they tried to convince GoGo to come with them, but she'd refused to leave Hiro's side.

Hiro glanced over at GoGo as she came over and sat on the edge of the bed by Hiro. "What's wrong?" she whispered. "Are you okay?"

Hiro nodded. "I-I'm fine..." he whispered back. "J-Just a nightmare. Well, more like three nightmares rolled into one."

"Are you in pain?" GoGo asked, noticing the way Hiro cradled his injured arm. When Hiro seemed confused, GoGo nodded towards the aforementioned injury.

Hiro followed GoGo's gaze and nodded slightly. "Just a bit...it's not unbearable though. I think I can handle it." But GoGo was already looking through the tray of medicine that Hiro's nurse had left on the table, trying to find the pain relievers she knew the nurse had brought. "GoGo, it's fine, really...you don't have to do that..."

"Hush," GoGo scolded, locating the pain medication and pulling out a small pill. "You should know better not to argue with me." She walked over to the sink at the other end of the room and filled a small glass with water. When that was done, she brought the glass and small pill over and set both in Hiro's hands. After he'd taken the pill, she helped him drink the water, since his left arm was all but useless and his right was shakier than a leaf in the wind.

"You didn't have to do that..." Hiro mumbled.

GoGo lightly punched Hiro's shoulder. "You needed it, and you know it."

Hiro rubbed his shoulder, wincing slightly since the motion involved moving his bad arm. GoGo gently wrapped her arm around him, pulling the boy close to her. "Just relax," she said softly. "You're alright, it's okay."

"You know," Hiro looked up at her, "I didn't think you were the comforting type."

GoGo snickered softly. "Ever heard of the phrase 'don't judge a book by its cover,' genius?"
Hiro smiled and rested his head on Gogo's shoulder, closing his eyes. She adjusted herself on the bed, pulling Hiro into her lap. She wrapped her other arm around him and held him close.

Hiro sighed. "I'm sorry."

GoGo pulled back slightly to look at him. "Sorry for what?"

"For everything. You all could have died. Baymax is gone because of me. Tadashi is gone because I let him go in that stupid burning building!" Hiro's eyes started to brim with tears and his breathing quickened with barely controlled sobs.

"Hey, hey," GoGo pulled Hiro right back into the hug, holding him close as he let go of all the emotion he'd been holding onto. "It's gonna be alright, Hiro. I promise."

Hiro clung to GoGo, gripping the 18-year-old's biker jacket tightly in his fist. Right now, she was his anchor, the thing he clung to when reality was pushing him over the edge and he needed something to hang onto. He'd never say it out loud, but he'd fallen in love with GoGo, despite the four year age difference. But he knew better than to tell her unless he wanted a punch in the gut.

"Thanks, GoGo," Hiro said softly, relaxing in her arms.

GoGo smiled softly. "Of course, genius."

Hiro closed his eyes, nestling his face in the crook of GoGo's shoulder. Together they lay back in the bed, GoGo still with her arms around her little hero.

"Don't leave me..." Hiro whispered as sleep began to overtake him.

GoGo kissed the top of Hiro's head, gently rubbing his shoulder. "Never."

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