The cool, sterile scent of antiseptic still faintly clung to Izuku's clothes, a ghost of the hospital room that had been his temporary sanctuary. Now, in the familiar, comforting clutter of his own bedroom, the scent felt alien—a stark reminder of the bizarre events that had unfolded. He stood before the full-length mirror on the back of his closet door, his reflection staring back. It was just him, Izuku Midoriya, in his All Might pajamas, his unruly green hair a familiar halo. Yet, he felt profoundly different.

His eyes, usually wide with childlike wonder or nervous anxiety, were now shadowed with an unsettling new depth. He lifted a hand, turning it over, examining his palm. No dark, segmented plates. No glowing red eyes. Just the ordinary lines of his skin. The video—the "Bug Kid" footage—replayed in his mind with terrifying clarity. It was him. It had to be. But how? And why?

Kagutsuchi's words echoed in the quiet room, a chilling whisper that sent shivers down his spine: "What you manifested yesterday… that wasn't just some simple power. It was an awakening. And awakenings, my boy, always come with a price."

A price. The word resonated with cold dread. What could it be? The searing heat and chilling cold he'd felt? The terrifying loss of control? Or something more insidious, something that preyed on his deepest desires? He remembered the feeling of something other, something ancient and powerful, taking over his body. It was exhilarating, yes, but also deeply unsettling. It hadn't felt like his power. It felt borrowed, or worse, like he was merely a vessel.

He looked back at his reflection, a flicker of the armored figure superimposed over his own image. He had saved Kacchan. He had. The thought should have filled him with unbridled joy, a triumphant roar of vindication. But it didn't. Instead, a hollow ache settled in his chest.

Today at school had been… a nightmare, in a different way. The whispers, the stares, the sudden, saccharine smiles from classmates who, just days ago, wouldn't have given him the time of day. "Midoriya! You have a Quirk!" "That armor was so cool!" "You saved Bakugo!" The words, meant as praise, felt like a betrayal.

He remembered the sting of Bakugo's explosions, the casual cruelty of Tsubasa tearing his hero analysis notebook, the teacher's indifferent gaze as he was bullied. He remembered the quiet, suffocating invisibility, the feeling of being less than human in a world of vibrant powers. And now, suddenly, because of a power he didn't understand, a power that felt alien to him, they were all doing a complete one-eighty.

"Isn't that what you always craved? To be noticed? To be seen?" Kagutsuchi's voice, smooth as silk, insidious as poison, slithered into his thoughts.

Yes. He had craved it. Desperately. To be seen, to be acknowledged, to be someone. But not like this. Not when it felt so conditional, so shallow. Their sudden admiration felt cheap, unearned, a flimsy mask over years of neglect and ridicule. It wasn't him they were seeing; it was the "Bug Kid," the spectacle, the boy who suddenly wasn't Quirkless.

He clenched his fists, his nails digging into his palms. The anger, a quiet, simmering resentment, surprised him. He had always been so quick to forgive, to understand. But this… this felt different. It felt like a mockery of everything he had endured, everything he had dreamed of. He had wanted to be a hero who saved people with a smile, who inspired hope, who was always in control. But what kind of hero was he, if his very existence was now predicated on a power he couldn't command, and on the fickle, superficial attention of those who had once scorned him?

He turned away from the mirror, the reflection of his troubled face still lingering. The room felt cold, despite the warmth of his pajamas. The world had changed for him, undeniably. But the question that now haunted him, more than any other, was whether he had changed for the better. And what, exactly, was the price he was yet to pay?

The next morning, the sun seemed to mock him with its cheerful brightness. Izuku, his backpack slung over his shoulder, stepped out of his apartment building, expecting the usual quiet descent to the street. Instead, a small gaggle of neighbors waited, clustered near the entrance, their faces alight with almost theatrical enthusiasm.

Mrs. Tanaka, a plump woman who usually offered him only a perfunctory nod, beamed, her eyes crinkling at the corners. "Izuku-kun! Oh, my dear boy! We saw the news! You were so brave! A true hero!" She clapped her hands together, a sound overly loud in the morning quiet.

Mr. Sato, the gruff mailman who often grumbled about Izuku's hero analysis scribbles, actually smiled. "Kid, you got guts! Didn't think you had it in ya, but you showed 'em all! That Quirk of yours is somethin' else!" He even gave a thumbs-up, his usual scowl replaced by an uncharacteristic grin.

A young mother, pushing a stroller, stopped him. "My daughter, she saw you on TV! She keeps saying she wants to be like the 'Bug Kid'! You're an inspiration, Izuku-kun!" Her voice was filled with genuine awe, but it only made the pit in Izuku's stomach grow deeper.

He mumbled polite thanks, his cheeks burning, his gaze fixed on the scuffed toes of his sneakers. These were the same people who had given him pitying glances, who had averted their eyes when he walked by, who had treated him like a fragile, unfortunate thing. The same people who had never once acknowledged his existence beyond a polite, almost dismissive, courtesy. Now, they were showering him with praise, their words ringing hollow in his ears.

It felt like a performance, a sudden, collective amnesia of his Quirkless past. Their smiles, though seemingly sincere, felt like a thin veneer over years of indifference. They weren't praising him, Izuku Midoriya, the boy who had always tried his best, who had always dreamed. They were praising the "Bug Kid," the sudden anomaly, the spectacle.

He managed to navigate the gauntlet of well-wishers, his "thank yous" growing fainter with each step. As he finally escaped the apartment building's immediate vicinity and turned onto the familiar street, the weight of their sudden admiration felt heavier than any scorn. It was a suffocating kind of attention, one that felt entirely unearned and profoundly unsettling. The world had indeed shifted, but the new view was far from what he had ever truly wanted.

High above the bustling city, on a nondescript rooftop overlooking the sprawling urban landscape, Kagutsuchi stood, his hands still casually tucked into the pockets of his coat. The wind, a gentle whisper against the concrete, ruffled his dark hair. His gaze was fixed on a distant point below, a tiny figure making his way through the morning streets – Izuku Midoriya.

Beside him, a new figure materialized from the shimmering air, a ripple of distortion that quickly solidified into a lean, almost wiry man. He wore a simple, dark hoodie pulled low over his head, obscuring most of his face, but a faint, almost sickly green glow emanated from beneath the fabric. He stretched, a series of audible clicks and pops emanating from his joints, as if shaking off a long slumber.

"Is that him?" the figure's voice was a low, gravelly rasp, tinged with a faint, almost imperceptible whine. He gestured with a long, slender finger towards the street below.

Kagutsuchi nodded, a faint smile playing on his lips. "Indeed. Our little 'Bug Kid,' as the masses have so eloquently dubbed him." He stretched his own arms above his head, a languid, almost cat-like movement. "Try not to make it too dramatic this time, eh? The last one was… quite the spectacle."

The hooded figure stiffened, a low growl rumbling in his chest. "Hey! It's not my fault the guy's room was a pigsty! You try living in a place like that for weeks on end. I desperately needed a shower." He paused, a faint, almost nostalgic sigh escaping him. "And besides, the previous Agito was basically an otaku gooner. You can't expect me to not make a statement after that." The green glow beneath his hood intensified for a moment, a subtle flicker of irritation.

Kagutsuchi merely chuckled, a dry, knowing sound. "Just remember the objective, my friend. We're not here for personal hygiene or artistic expression. The boy needs… guidance. And a gentle nudge in the right direction." His dark eyes, still fixed on Izuku's retreating figure, narrowed slightly. "The game has just begun, and our new player needs to learn the rules."

The classroom hummed with the usual morning chatter, but for Izuku, it felt different. He slid into his seat, the familiar squeak of the chair against the linoleum grating on his ears. He didn't want to be here. Not because of the bullying, not anymore. This was a new kind of discomfort, a heavy cloak of unwanted attention. The teacher, Mr. Takeda, walked in, his usual weary expression barely shifting as he began the day's lecture. He still seemed to glaze over Izuku, a habit ingrained from years of ignoring the Quirkless boy. But Izuku could feel it, the subtle shift in the air, the way his classmates occasionally glanced his way, their whispers now laced with awe instead of disdain. It was more grating than the insults.

He lowered his head, trying to disappear behind the open pages of his textbook, pretending to be engrossed in the quadratic equations. Even with his head ducked, he could still feel Bakugo's eyes on him, a burning intensity that pierced through the noise of the classroom. It was a familiar sensation, but now it felt less like a threat and more like a bewildered, simmering rage.

Suddenly, a new feeling assaulted him, crawling up his skin like a thousand tiny insects. It started as a faint prickle, then intensified, a strange, almost electrical current buzzing beneath his uniform. A sharp, piercing headache seized him, a familiar, yet far more intense, throb behind his eyes. He squeezed his eyes shut, pressing his temples with trembling fingers, trying to ride out the wave of pain and the unsettling sensation.

Because his head was down, and the class was dutifully listening to Mr. Takeda's droning lecture, no one seemed to notice his silent struggle. The buzzing sensation intensified, a low thrumming in his very bones, before, just as suddenly as it began, it subsided. The headache receded, leaving behind a dull ache and a lingering, phantom itch on his skin.

Izuku slowly lifted his head, taking a shaky breath. He looked around the classroom, at the oblivious faces of his classmates, at the teacher still writing on the board. What was that? That feeling, that crawling sensation, the sudden, intense headache. It wasn't like the usual stress-induced migraines. This felt… different. Connected, somehow, to the power he couldn't control. He clenched his jaw, a new kind of fear mingling with his confusion. What was happening to him?

The final bell shrieked, a welcome sound that usually meant freedom, but today, Izuku felt a familiar dread settle in. He meticulously packed his notebooks and pens, trying to stretch out the process, hoping the classroom would empty. He could feel the lingering stares, the hushed conversations, the new, uncomfortable weight of being "the Bug Kid."

Just as he zipped up his bag, a shadow fell over his desk. He looked up, his heart sinking. Standing over him were Tsubasa, his bat-like wings twitching, and his two cronies, Kenma and Niwatori. Their usual sycophantic smiles were gone, replaced by sneers and a familiar, hostile glint in their eyes.

"Well, well, well, if it isn't Deku," Tsubasa drawled, his voice dripping with mock sweetness. "Thought you were hot shit now, huh? Saving Bakugo, getting all the attention." He nudged Kenma, who snorted.

"Yeah, with that lame-ass Quirk of yours," Kenma added, his drill-nose twitching in disgust. "A bug? Seriously? Fitting, I guess, since you've always been an insect we could stomp on."

Niwatori clucked, flapping his small, feathered arms. "Look at him, trying to act all high and mighty now! Just a fluke, probably!"

Izuku flinched at the insults, but a strange, almost perverse sense of relief washed over him. This was familiar. This was normal. This felt… oddly refreshing, a stark contrast to the saccharine praise that felt so fake. He didn't like it, not really, but it was a known quantity, a pain he understood.

He tried to push past them, his shoulder brushing against Tsubasa's arm. "Excuse me," he mumbled, his voice tight. "I need to go."

But Tsubasa merely shifted, blocking his path. Kenma and Niwatori moved to flank him, forming a tight semicircle. "Whoa, whoa, where's the rush, Deku?" Tsubasa sneered, his grin widening. "You're not going anywhere until you show us."

Izuku blinked. "Show you what?" he asked, genuinely confused.

"What, are you deaf now, too, bug boy?" Kenma scoffed, nudging him roughly. "The armor! That weird bug armor! Transform!"

"Yeah, come on, Deku! Let's see it!" Niwatori chirped, a cruel eagerness in his eyes.

Izuku's face paled. "I… I can't," he stammered, shaking his head. "I don't know how to control it. It just… happens."

Tsubasa laughed, a harsh, grating sound. "Right, 'can't control it.' Or maybe it was just a cheap costume, huh? A little trick to get attention? Or a fluke that'll never happen again!"

Their jeers filled the emptying classroom, echoing off the walls. Izuku just wanted to leave. He wanted to escape the suffocating attention, both positive and negative. But as their familiar insults washed over him, a strange thought surfaced. At least this was real. At least this didn't feel like a lie. It was a bitter comfort, but a comfort nonetheless.

The afternoon sun cast long, weary shadows as Izuku walked home, his backpack feeling heavier than usual. The usual route, once a mundane path, now felt charged with an unseen presence. He tried to focus on the cracked pavement, on the distant sounds of the city, but the sensation was undeniable. It was that feeling again, the one that had seized him in class, but amplified, colder, more ominous.

It wasn't the stares of the curious, or the lingering gazes of the admiring. This was different. This was a prickling awareness, as if unseen eyes were boring into the back of his neck, not with curiosity, but with a predatory chill. It felt like something was following him, a silent, unseen shadow clinging to his every step.

Meanwhile, in the comfortable interior of a sleek, black car, Toshinori Yagi sat in the passenger seat, a rare indulgence. Detective Naomasa Tsukauchi, ever the picture of calm competence, was behind the wheel, navigating the afternoon traffic with practiced ease.

"You know, Yagi-san," Naomasa said, a faint smile playing on his lips, "you're even more paranoid than usual today. Asking for a ride, just to avoid… what, exactly? A rogue fan? A particularly persistent reporter?"

Toshinori chuckled, a dry, raspy sound. "Perhaps. Or perhaps I simply enjoy the company of a good, honest man, Naomasa. Besides," he added, gesturing vaguely with a bony hand, "my own vehicle is… seldom driven these days. It collects dust."

Naomasa merely hummed, a knowing glint in his eyes. He took a sip from his thermos, then lowered it, his expression turning serious. "Speaking of dust, and legacies, Yagi-san… have you found him yet?"

Toshinori's gaze drifted out the window, watching the city lights begin to flicker on. The question hung in the air, heavy with unspoken meaning. "Him?" he repeated, a subtle shift in his posture.

"The one," Naomasa clarified, his voice quiet. "The one who will succeed you. The one who will carry the torch."

Toshinori sighed, a long, weary exhalation that seemed to deflate some of the air from his already gaunt frame. "The decision… it still simmers, Naomasa," he admitted, his voice barely above a whisper. "The boy… young Midoriya… he has a spirit unlike any I've seen. A true hero's heart." He paused, his brow furrowing slightly. "But then, Mirai called me last night. Said he wanted to meet. Said he's been mentoring a promising youth. Another candidate, perhaps."

The car moved through the darkening streets, the city lights reflecting in Toshinori's tired eyes. The weight of his legacy, and the immense responsibility of choosing its next bearer, pressed down on him.

Izuku began to march at a much brisker pace, his strides lengthening. Every few steps, he turned his head, a quick, furtive glance over his shoulder. No one. Just empty street. But the feeling didn't dissipate. Someone was indeed following him, he was sure of it. He wanted to break into a full sprint, to flee, but he was torn. Perhaps he was just overthinking it, his nerves frayed from the past few days.

Then he noticed something else, something that chilled him to the bone. The street, usually bustling with after-school stragglers, delivery bikes, or even a stray cat, was barren. Eerily so. No one walking by, no cars, no distant chatter. The silence was profound, unnatural, and only added to his rising paranoia.

He swallowed hard, the dry click in his throat loud in the oppressive quiet. His decision was made. He bolted. Not towards his apartment, but in the opposite direction, towards the familiar, reassuring glow of the police station a few blocks away. If he could just make it there, he'd be safe.

He pumped his legs, his lungs burning, the wind whipping past his ears. He was almost at the corner, almost there, when he slammed into something solid. A soft oof escaped him as he stumbled back, his backpack digging into his shoulders.

Shaking his head to clear the sudden dizziness, Izuku looked up. His eyes widened, fixed on the dark attire before him. A figure, tall and slender, stood cloaked in shadows, their head covered by a deep hood that obscured their face entirely.

A voice, unnatural and devoid of human warmth, echoed from beneath the hood, sending a fresh wave of terror through Izuku. "Are you… Izuku Midoriya?"

Izuku, paralyzed by fear, could only manage an approximation of a nod, his throat too tight to speak.

The cloaked figure tilted their head slightly, a gesture that was unsettlingly precise. Then, the voice, flat and chilling, spoke again.

"For the sake of the world… you must die."

The words, cold and absolute, hung in the air, a death sentence whispered on the wind. Izuku's mind, already reeling from the day's events and the oppressive sense of being watched, shattered into a thousand fragments of pure terror. He didn't wait to collapse or for his legs to give out. He simply turned and ran, a desperate, unthinking flight for his life from the unnerving presence. The cloaked figure, a looming silhouette against the fading light, took a slow, deliberate step closer.

Inside the car, Toshinori, still deep in conversation with Naomasa about his successor, felt a sudden, inexplicable prickle of unease. His gaze, almost instinctively, darted out the window. A block ahead, he saw him – a familiar mop of green hair, a small figure running frantically down the street. Midoriya. But something was wrong. Terribly wrong. The boy's posture, the way his shoulders were hunched, the sheer, unadulterated terror radiating from him even at this distance, sent a jolt through Toshinori's weary frame. His eyes narrowed, focusing on the dark, cloaked figure standing over the boy.

"Naomasa!" Toshinori's voice, though still a rasp, held a sudden, urgent command that cut through the detective's calm demeanor. "There! Midoriya! Something's happening!" He pointed a trembling finger.

Naomasa, startled by the sudden shift in Toshinori's tone, followed his gaze. His eyes, trained to observe, quickly took in the scene: the running, terrified boy, the ominous figure, the deserted street. A grim realization dawned on him. "He's heading for Dagobah Beach," Naomasa murmured, his hand already on the gear shift. "That's a good five minutes at this speed."

Without another word, Naomasa slammed his foot on the accelerator. The car surged forward, tires squealing faintly as it picked up speed, a dark blur against the fading light, racing towards the unfolding drama.

Izuku continued to run, his muscles screaming in protest, his heart a frantic drum against his ribs. His eyes darted around, desperate for an escape route. The police station was too far now. Then, his gaze landed on it: the sprawling junkyard of Dagobah Municipal Beach, a chaotic mountain of discarded appliances, rusted vehicles, and forgotten dreams, looming in the distance. It was a labyrinth, a place where he could hide, where he could get lost.

He bolted towards the towering piles of trash, his legs pumping with renewed, desperate energy. He could still feel it, the oppressive, chilling presence hot on his heels, a phantom weight that pressed down on him, even though he dared to glance over his shoulder from time to time and saw nothing but the empty street. The junkyard, with its endless nooks and crannies, its shadows and its secrets, was his only hope. He plunged into its depths, disappearing among the discarded relics of a forgotten world, a small, terrified figure seeking refuge from an unseen predator.

He frantically searched for a hiding place, his eyes scanning the chaotic landscape of metal and debris. His gaze snagged on an old, rusted refrigerator, its door ajar, lying on its side. It was just big enough for him to squeeze into, a desperate, last-ditch effort. He scrambled towards it, pushing aside a stack of old tires, and wriggled inside, pulling the heavy, dented door shut behind him with a clang.

Inside the cramped, dark space, the air was stale and metallic. Izuku pressed himself against the cold, grimy back wall, his knees drawn up to his chest. He was praying, a silent, desperate plea for invisibility. He forced himself to lower his breathing, to keep absolutely still, listening. Every creak of metal, every distant rustle of plastic, sounded amplified in the oppressive silence. Minutes stretched into an eternity, each second an agonizing crawl. He could hear nothing but the frantic thumping of his own heart against his ribs. Had he lost him? Was he safe?

Then, with a groan of tortured metal, the refrigerator door hinges shrieked. A sliver of light appeared, then widened, revealing the terrifying silhouette of the cloaked figure. The figure stood there, unmoving, its head tilted slightly, as if observing a trapped insect. With a casual, almost dismissive flick of its wrist, the figure ripped the entire refrigerator door from its hinges, sending the now useless barrier tumbling away with a deafening crash that echoed through the junkyard.

Izuku, his eyes wide with unspeakable horror, stared up at the figure, his breath catching in his throat. There was no escape.

"Don't make this harder on yourself, Izuku Midoriya," the flat, chilling voice echoed, devoid of any emotion, yet carrying an undeniable weight of finality. "Just accept your fate."

"He will do no such thing!" a booming voice ripped through the air, cutting through the chilling silence.

With a blur of motion, a massive, muscular figure, radiating an aura of immense power, charged into the scene. It was Toshinori, now in his full Muscle Form, his suit and tie straining against his suddenly expanded physique, a heroic smile blazing on his face. He moved with a speed that defied belief, a whirlwind of force. Before the cloaked figure could react, All Might delivered a devastating punch, a direct hit that sent the assailant sprawling backward into a heap of rusted metal and discarded appliances. The impact created a small crater in the junk, sending debris flying.

Toshinori, his form still radiating power, looked down at Izuku, his signature smile softening with concern. "Young Midoriya! Are you alright?"

Izuku, still trembling, scrambled out of the refrigerator, his eyes wide with relief and awe. "All Might!" he gasped, his voice choked with emotion, the name a desperate prayer of thanks. He hurried to get behind his hero, clutching at the back of Toshinori's straining suit jacket.

A low, grating sound, like metal grinding against bone, echoed from the pile of rubble. Toshinori's smile tightened, his eyes narrowing as he looked ahead. From the wreckage, a dark, elongated form began to stir. The tattered remnants of the cloak of darkness ripped away as the figure slowly pulled itself free, revealing its true, horrifying visage.

Izuku, peering from behind All Might, could only stare in unspeakable horror, a choked gasp escaping his lips. What emerged was a gothic, skeletal body with impossibly elongated limbs, its form unnaturally thin and angular. Its head was a faceless mask, resembling a funeral tablet, smooth and devoid of features. The entire body was jet black, but deep purple etchings glowed faintly along its skeletal frame, pulsating with an eerie, internal light. What made it even more unsettling was the way it moved – not with fluid grace, but with a jerky, disjointed motion, like a puppet being controlled by invisible, frantic strings, twitching and jerking as it slowly, deliberately, rose to its full, towering height.

The figure slowly adjusted and righted itself, its elongated limbs twitching as if testing their new form. It turned its faceless mask towards Toshinori and Izuku, tilting its head in a silent, unnerving gesture. No words were spoken, yet the air crackled with a chilling, predatory stillness.

Toshinori blinked, and in that infinitesimal fraction of a second, the skeletal figure was no longer across the junkyard. It was directly in front of him, its funeral tablet mask filling his entire line of sight, an impossible, terrifying proximity. Before he could react, a skeletal hand, moving with shocking speed, swatted him away. All Might, the Symbol of Peace, was sent careening sideways with a force that made the surrounding metal shriek, landing in a crumpled heap further into the junkyard.

Izuku, completely caught off guard, could only stare in abject horror at where Toshinori had landed, a silent scream trapped in his throat. His hero, just moments ago so invincible, was now a distant, unmoving form. He slowly, fearfully, looked back up at the skeletal figure, which now stood perfectly still, its glowing purple etchings pulsing with a malevolent light. As Izuku watched, the figure's forearms began to extend, not growing longer, but sprouting jagged, bone-like growths that rapidly solidified into the shape of serrated blades, glinting wickedly in the dim light.

Just as the blades fully formed, a sharp CRACK echoed through the junkyard. A bullet, fired with precision, struck the center of the monster's faceless mask. The figure recoiled slightly, a faint, almost imperceptible tremor running through its body. It slowly turned its head towards the source of the shot.

Standing at the edge of the junkyard, pistol trained forward, was Detective Naomasa Tsukauchi, his face grim but resolute. "Midoriya! Run!" he bellowed, his voice cutting through the oppressive silence, a desperate command for the terrified boy.

Before the creature could even think of ignoring Naomasa, a force once again lunged at it. Toshinori, his suit now torn and tarnished, his heroic smile a grimace of determination, was back on his feet, charging with a furious roar. He slammed another powerful punch into the skeletal being, sending it sprawling some distance away from Midoriya, further into the chaotic landscape of broken appliances.

"Midoriya! To safety! Now!" Toshinori's voice boomed, his gaze fixed on the boy, a silent plea for him to heed the warning.

Izuku, his legs trembling, managed a shaky nod. He didn't need to be told twice. He turned and bolted, scrambling over the uneven terrain of the junkyard, his eyes wide with terror, not daring to look back.

The skeletal figure, a being of unnatural grace despite its jerky movements, rose once more from the pile of twisted metal. Its purple etchings pulsed brighter, and the serrated blades on its forearms gleamed. Toshinori, his breath coming in ragged gasps, launched another charging punch, a desperate, all-or-nothing strike. But this time, the creature moved with a terrifying, almost imperceptible speed. It expertly weaved around All Might's colossal fist, a fluid, impossible sidestep that left the Symbol of Peace swinging at empty air.

Toshinori's eyes widened in shock. Before he could even register the missed blow, a searing, burning hot pain erupted at his side. The skeletal figure's blade, moving with chilling precision, had nicked him. A thin line of crimson bloomed on his suit, stark against the dark fabric, the first visible wound on the invincible hero. The terrifying entity had barely exerted itself, yet it had already drawn blood from the Symbol of Peace.

Toshinori gritted his teeth, the pain a sharp reminder of the impossible odds. This wasn't a villain he could simply overpower. Every punch he threw, every heroic roar he let loose, seemed to be met with an almost mocking ease. The skeletal figure, with its jerky, puppet-like movements, was a whirlwind of black and glowing purple. It didn't block or parry in a conventional sense; it simply moved, shifting its impossibly long limbs with a speed that defied human perception, always just out of reach, always finding the smallest opening.

All Might lunged again, a powerful "Detroit Smash" aimed at the creature's chest, but the entity simply tilted its faceless mask, and its body seemed to fold in on itself, becoming a narrow, almost two-dimensional sliver that the punch sailed harmlessly past. As Toshinori overextended, the creature snapped back, its serrated forearm blade slashing across his bicep. Another line of crimson appeared, deeper this time, staining the pristine white of his shirt beneath the suit.

"Toshinori!" Naomasa's voice, strained with alarm, echoed from the edge of the junkyard. He fired another shot, but the bullet merely ricocheted off the creature's mask with a faint ping, leaving no mark.

The Symbol of Peace stumbled back, his breath coming harder, the golden aura that typically shimmered around him flickering. He was pushing himself, far beyond his usual time limit, fueled only by the desperate need to protect young Midoriya. But the creature showed no signs of tiring, no hint of slowing its relentless, unnatural assault. Its movements were precise, economical, each twitch and jerk designed to inflict maximum damage while expending minimal effort. It was a predator toying with its prey, and All Might, for the first time in a long time, felt like the prey. He knew, with a chilling certainty, that he couldn't keep this up much longer. The fight was far from over, but the tide was already turning, swiftly and brutally, against the Symbol of Peace.

The skeletal figure, its head still tilted at that unnerving angle, then spoke, its voice a flat, emotionless drone that seemed to vibrate directly in Toshinori's bones. "Stop fighting, hero. If you wish to live, cease this futile resistance."

Toshinori scoffed, a ragged, defiant sound. Blood dripped from his bicep, but his heroic smile, though strained, remained. "If you think for one second I'll just give up and let you murder a child, then you obviously don't know who you're dealing with, monster!"

The creature's faceless mask seemed to regard him for a moment, an unnerving stillness. Then, its voice, calm and utterly devoid of surprise, replied, "Oh, but I do. I know precisely who I am dealing with, Toshinori Yagi. The Symbol of Peace. The man who pretends to be his own PR manager for Might Tower, despite the fact that his true form is a shadow of its former glory. The man who suffered a catastrophic, near-fatal injury after his battle with All For One, leaving him with a rapidly diminishing time limit in his muscle form." The skeletal head tilted further, a mocking, almost playful gesture. "Am I missing anything?"

Both Toshinori and Naomasa could only stare, their expressions a mixture of shock and utter disbelief. The creature's calm recitation of Toshinori's most closely guarded secrets was a blow more potent than any physical attack. The silence that followed was heavy, broken only by the distant sirens of approaching emergency vehicles – a sound that felt both too far away and utterly useless against this impossible foe.

The skeletal figure then turned its faceless mask slightly towards Naomasa, then back to Toshinori. "I have no quarrel with either of you. My objective is solely the boy. If you cease your interference, I will not raise my blades against you."

"Why?!" Naomasa demanded, his voice hoarse, his pistol still aimed, though he knew, with a sinking heart, how ineffective it was. "Why him?!"

The creature's head tilted again, a shrug of its impossible shoulders. "You do not need to know."

Without another word, Toshinori roared, a sound of pure, unadulterated fury and desperation. He lunged back into the fray, ignoring the throbbing pain in his side and arm, ignoring the chilling revelation, ignoring everything but the primal need to protect. He aimed a powerful "Texas Smash," a whirlwind of wind pressure, at the creature, hoping to create some distance.

The skeletal figure, however, moved with a fluid, almost dance-like evasion, sidestepping the attack with effortless grace. It was no longer simply weaving; it was flowing, a dark current against All Might's brute force. Toshinori's punches, once capable of leveling buildings, now seemed to glance off the air around the creature, or were met with a skeletal limb that deflected them with surprising ease. The glowing purple etchings on the creature's body flared with each movement, a silent, mocking display of its power.

All Might was fighting with everything he had, every ounce of his remaining strength and resolve. His muscles screamed in protest, his vision blurring at the edges, but he pushed through the pain, a true hero refusing to yield. Yet, it was clear this was a battle of attrition he could not win. The creature was faster, more agile, and seemingly impervious to his most powerful blows. It moved with an alien logic, an unpredictable rhythm that All Might, for all his experience, could not anticipate.

Meanwhile, Izuku, having scrambled to a corner of the junkyard behind a towering stack of crushed cars, could only stare in wide-eyed horror at the unfolding spectacle. His hero, the invincible All Might, was fighting for his life, bleeding, struggling against a nightmare made real. The weight of everything that had happened lately – his inexplicable 'Quirk' awakening, the sudden, unsettling change in how people treated him, and now this, the Symbol of Peace being pushed to his absolute limits to protect him – made him feel more overwhelmed than ever before.

A sharp, piercing headache, familiar yet far more intense than anything he'd felt, returned with a vengeance. It wasn't just a throb; it was a blinding, all-consuming agony that clawed at his mind. His vision blurred, the vibrant colors of the junkyard bleeding into a hazy, indistinct mess. The sounds of the desperate battle, the metallic shrieks, All Might's grunts of effort, Naomasa's distant shouts – all began to fade, replaced by a low, resonant hum that vibrated deep within his skull.

He straightened to his full height, his body no longer hunched in terror. His expression, usually a mask of anxiety or awe, was now one of eerie calm, almost profound concentration. His eyes, though still unfocused, held a strange, nascent power, and the air around him seemed to shimmer, imperceptibly, with an unseen energy. The world around him continued to fade, but for Izuku, in that moment, only the hum remained.

Then, with a sudden, decisive motion, Izuku lifted his right arm, then his left, sweeping them out wide in a precise, almost practiced arc, as if conducting an invisible symphony. He held them there for a moment, palms facing forward, before bringing them sharply inward, crossing them over his chest. A deep, guttural sound, a strained exhale, escaped his lips. As he did, a metallic whirring filled the air, and from seemingly nowhere, a sleek, black belt with a golden, insectoid buckle materialized around his waist, glowing with an internal, amber light.

He took a final, deep breath, his eyes snapping open, now blazing with an intense, crimson glow that mirrored the red eyes of the armor he was about to don. "Henshin!" he roared, the word tearing from his throat with a power he didn't know he possessed. He slammed both hands, palms flat, into the glowing buckle at his side.

The world exploded in a blinding flash of black and gold. The air around Izuku distorted, swirling violently. His body elongated, muscles rippling and expanding beneath his clothes, which tore away in shreds. Dark, segmented plates of armor, like the carapace of some ancient, formidable insect, rapidly formed over his skin. The black was deep, almost absorbing the light, textured with intricate, almost organic-looking patterns. Golden lines, resembling veins of molten metal, traced along the contours of the armor, particularly around his chest and waist, and flared into sharp, predatory horns that swept back from his head. His eyes, now fully transformed, were a piercing, malevolent crimson, glowing with an inner intensity. His hands morphed into wicked, clawed gauntlets, and his feet into powerful, digitigrade talons.

In mere seconds, the scrawny, terrified boy was gone, replaced by a towering, formidable figure: the Insectoid Warrior in Dark Armor, standing perfectly still amidst the chaos of the junkyard, its presence radiating a silent, primal power.

The skeletal figure, just as it was about to deliver a decisive blow that would surely knock Toshinori out, stiffened. Its jerky movements paused, and its faceless mask tilted, as if sensing a profound shift in the very fabric of the air. With contemptuous ease, it brushed Toshinori away once more, sending the Symbol of Peace sprawling into another pile of refuse, his form flickering precariously. The skeletal being's attention was no longer on the bleeding hero. It had a more urgent target now.

The now armored Izuku, radiating a silent, formidable aura, walked calmly past a stunned Naomasa. The detective, pistol still held uselessly, could only stare, his mind struggling to comprehend the impossible transformation before him. Izuku's crimson eyes were fixed on the skeletal figure, an eerie calm replacing the terror that had consumed him moments before.

The creature, its purple etchings flaring, let out a low, guttural growl that vibrated through the junkyard. The sound was not of anger, but of recognition, of ancient, primal knowledge. "Agito."

The confrontation was immediate, explosive. The skeletal figure, its faceless mask now fixed on the transformed Izuku, lunged with a terrifying burst of speed, its serrated forearm blades extended, aiming for a killing blow. But the newly armored Izuku met the charge head-on. There was no hesitation, no fear in his movements. His own clawed gauntlets, gleaming with a dark, metallic sheen, met the skeletal blades with a resounding CLANG! that echoed through the junkyard, sending sparks flying.

Where Toshinori had struggled, Izuku moved with a blinding, almost intuitive speed. He was a dark, golden-etched blur, weaving through the creature's jerky, unpredictable attacks with an agility that matched, and at times surpassed, the skeletal being. The two figures became a whirlwind of motion, a chaotic dance of destruction that carved a clear path through the mountains of trash and twisted metal. Discarded refrigerators were cleaved in half, rusted cars were sent tumbling, and piles of debris were scattered like confetti with each strike and counter-strike.

The skeletal creature, its purple etchings glowing with an intensified malevolence, fought with a chilling, lethal intent. Its movements, once toying and dismissive against All Might, were now sharp, precise, aimed at vital points. It unleashed a flurry of slashes, its elongated limbs extending and retracting with impossible speed, each strike designed to tear and rend. But Izuku, in his dark armor, met every attack with an equal, unyielding force. He blocked with his forearms, the golden lines on his armor flaring as he absorbed impacts that would have shattered concrete. He retaliated with powerful, sweeping kicks that sent shockwaves through the ground, and swift, brutal punches that landed with sickening thuds against the creature's unyielding frame.

A high-pitched shriek of metal on metal filled the air as Izuku parried a double-bladed strike, twisting his body and delivering a devastating backhand that sent the skeletal figure skidding across a field of broken glass. The creature righted itself immediately, its head tilting, a silent acknowledgment of the power it now faced. The purple etchings on its body pulsed furiously, and it let out another guttural growl, a sound of frustrated rage.

Toshinori, pushing himself up, watched the impossible duel. He could feel his own strength rapidly diminishing, the golden aura around him flickering like a dying flame. This was a level of combat he hadn't seen since his prime, and even then, this creature's unnatural movements and relentless precision were unlike anything he'd ever faced. He saw the boy, fighting with a ferocity and skill that belied his previous timid nature, a true warrior born from desperation.

The skeletal figure, its movements becoming more desperate, let out a frustrated, high-pitched shriek that grated on the ears. It launched itself at Izuku, a final, all-out assault, its blades a shimmering blur. Izuku met it head-on, his crimson eyes burning with resolve. He parried the first strike, then the second, a rapid succession of blocks that sent sparks raining down. He then seized the creature's elongated arm, twisting with immense strength, and with a guttural roar, he threw the skeletal being high into the air, sending it spinning towards the center of the junkyard.

As the creature arced through the twilight sky, its purple etchings glowing like malevolent stars, Izuku's golden belt buckle began to pulse with an intense, blinding light. Energy coalesced around his right leg, forming a swirling vortex of golden light. He leaped, launching himself into the air, his body rotating, his leg extended, aimed squarely at the falling skeletal figure. The golden energy around his foot solidified, forming a razor-sharp, glowing blade.

The two collided in mid-air, a silent, devastating impact that seemed to suck the very air from the junkyard. Izuku, the Insectoid Warrior, landed gracefully on his feet amidst the scattered debris, his armored form unblemished, the golden lines on his suit still faintly glowing. The skeletal creature, however, did not. It simply fell, a broken puppet whose strings had been severed, landing in a heap of twisted metal and shattered electronics.

The terrifying entity, once an intimidating horror, lay on its side before slowly, agonizingly, rolling over onto its back. The place where Izuku's kick had connected, the center of its faceless mask, now crackled with an intense, golden light, radiating outward in intricate patterns across its black, skeletal form. Then, with a sudden, violent shudder, a shockwave of black and golden light erupted, not outwards – but inwards, like a collapsing black hole.

For a split second, time itself seemed to slow, the sounds of the junkyard fading to a distant hum. The creature didn't explode. Instead, it convulsed, a violent, internal tremor, as if something deep within its core had been disturbed, reversed. Its jet-black body began to crack along its bright purple etchings, the lines spreading like fracturing obsidian. But instead of bleeding or crumbling like rock, something far more disturbing was happening. Black, veiny tendrils, slick and writhing like worms in water, sprouted from the widening cracks, twisting and coiling against its disintegrating form.

A low, guttural sound rumbled from its core – not a cry of pain or a roar of defeat, but an exhausted sigh, a sound of something ancient finally released from a long, arduous existence. The creature's body began to peel away in flakes of black ash, like burnt paper, but in reverse. It unraveled upwards, dissolving into nothingness as if being rewritten, or perhaps, unmade. Its faceless mask, the last thing to disappear, hovered in the air for a single, blank moment, staring at nothing. Then, without a sound, it broke straight down the middle and vanished into the swirling mist that now hung heavy over the junkyard.

The mist, thick and swirling with residual energy, slowly began to dissipate, revealing the ravaged landscape of Dagobah Municipal Beach. The air, once charged with the raw power of battle, now felt strangely still, almost hollow. The only sounds were the distant, growing wail of sirens and the ragged breaths of Toshinori Yagi.

The Insectoid Warrior stood motionless for a moment, its crimson eyes still burning, its golden lines faintly pulsing. Then, with a soft click and a faint whirring sound, the golden buckle on its waist dimmed. The dark, segmented plates of armor began to recede, retracting back into Izuku's body with a shimmering, almost liquid motion. The predatory horns softened, then vanished, and the powerful gauntlets and talons reverted to his normal, trembling hands and feet. His tattered school uniform, miraculously, seemed to reform around him, though it was still stained with the grime of the junkyard.

Izuku swayed, his eyes wide and unfocused, the eerie calm replaced by profound exhaustion. The intense headache, which had been the catalyst for his transformation, now receded into a dull, throbbing ache, leaving him disoriented and weak. He took a shaky step forward, then another, before his legs finally gave out. He crumpled to the ground, barely conscious, his body screaming in protest from the sudden exertion and the lingering aftershocks of the power that had surged through him.

Toshinori, despite his own injuries and rapidly fading muscle form, pushed himself to his feet, ignoring the sharp pain in his side and arm. His heroic smile was gone, replaced by a look of profound awe and concern. He stumbled towards the boy, his large frame casting a shadow over the small, unmoving figure.

"Young Midoriya!" Toshinori gasped, his voice raspy, his muscle form flickering more rapidly now, revealing glimpses of his emaciated true self. He knelt beside Izuku, gently rolling him onto his back. Izuku's eyes were half-lidded, unfocused, a faint sheen of sweat on his brow.

Naomasa, having finally shaken off his stupor, rushed over, his pistol holstered, his detective's instincts kicking in. He dropped to one knee, checking Izuku's pulse, his brow furrowed with a mixture of confusion and professional concern. "What… what just happened, Yagi-san?" he murmured, his gaze sweeping from the disappearing mist to the unconscious boy. "And what was that thing?"

Toshinori could only shake his head, his own mind reeling. "I… I don't know, Naomasa. But young Midoriya… he saved us. He truly did." He looked at the boy, a new understanding dawning in his eyes, a flicker of something akin to destiny.

The sirens were now deafening, red and blue lights flashing through the junkyard. Uniformed officers and paramedics swarmed the scene, their shouts and urgent movements breaking the surreal stillness. The world, for a moment, had been transformed by an ancient, terrifying power and a nascent, heroic one. Now, it was returning to its ordinary, chaotic rhythm, but for Toshinori, Naomasa, and the unconscious Izuku, nothing would ever be the same.

The white ceiling was the first thing that registered, a faint, familiar tang in the air. Izuku stirred, a dull, persistent ache throbbing behind his eyes, a phantom echo of the blinding pain that had consumed him. His body felt heavy, as if he were submerged in deep water, every limb protesting the slightest movement. He blinked, his eyelids feeling impossibly heavy, and the harsh fluorescent light of the ceiling slowly swam into focus.

He was lying on his back, the crisp white sheets of a hospital bed pulled up to his chin. A soft, rhythmic beeping filled the quiet room, emanating from a monitor beside his bed. An IV drip, a clear tube running into his left arm, was a stark reminder that he wasn't in his own room. His mind, still sluggish, began to piece together fragmented images: the junkyard, the towering skeletal figure, the blinding flash of black and gold, All Might's strained face. A shiver ran down his spine, despite the warmth of the blankets. It hadn't been a dream.

Slowly, carefully, he turned his head on the pillow, his neck stiff. His eyes, still adjusting, swept across the pristine white walls, the closed door, the small bedside table with a half-empty glass of water. Then, his gaze landed on the single visitor's chair positioned beside his bed.

Slumped in the chair, his head bowed, was a gaunt figure. The man's usually vibrant blonde hair was dull, almost grey, and his shoulders were hunched, radiating an aura of profound weariness. His face, when Izuku's eyes finally focused on it, was pale and drawn, etched with deep lines of exhaustion. It was Toshinori Yagi, All Might in his emaciated form, and the expression on his face was one Izuku had never seen before – a grave, almost despairing look that seemed to carry the weight of the entire world.

A small, shaky gasp escaped Izuku's lips. "A-All Might...?" he whispered, his voice raspy from disuse, barely louder than the soft beeping of the monitor. He pushed himself up slightly, wincing as a dull ache spread through his shoulders. "What... what happened? Where... where are we?"

Toshinori's head snapped up at the sound of Izuku's voice. His tired eyes, rimmed with dark circles, widened slightly in surprise, then softened with a flicker of profound relief. He straightened slowly, his movements stiff, and ran a hand through his thinning hair.

"Young Midoriya," Toshinori said, his voice a low, gravelly whisper, devoid of its usual booming resonance. "You're awake. Thank goodness." He leaned forward, resting his elbows on his knees, his gaze fixed on Izuku. "We're at the hospital. You... you collapsed after the incident at Dagobah Beach."

The words "Dagobah Beach" brought a fresh wave of memories crashing down on Izuku. The skeletal figure, its terrifying speed, the serrated blades... He remembered the monster clearly, and the blinding pain, but the details of his own involvement remained a frustrating blur, like a dream just out of reach. A shiver ran down his spine, despite the warmth of the blankets. It hadn't been a dream.

Just then, the door clicked open again, and Detective Naomasa Tsukauchi stepped in, his expression calm and professional, though his eyes held a hint of lingering bewilderment. He nodded to Toshinori, then his gaze settled on Izuku.

"Ah, young Midoriya, you're awake," Naomasa said, his voice even. "Good. We were just about to check on you." He pulled up a chair beside Toshinori, taking out a small notepad and pen. "I imagine you have a few questions."

Izuku looked between the two men, his mind struggling to catch up. "The... the monster," he stammered, his voice still weak. "Is it... is it gone? Did... did you defeat it, All Might?" He trailed off, the memory of the terrifying creature feeling both incredibly real and utterly impossible, while his own involvement remained a frustrating blur.

Toshinori sighed, a heavy sound. "The creature is… gone, young man," he said, his voice flat, devoid of its usual booming resonance. He paused, his gaze now distant, a shadow of grim understanding in his eyes. "And, no, young Midoriya. I... I did not defeat it. You did."

Izuku blinked, his brow furrowing in confusion. "Me... I did?" he whispered, his voice laced with disbelief. He remembered All Might's pained face, his flickering form. The sheer, overwhelming power of the skeletal monster. How could he have possibly done that, when All Might had been struggling? The details of the fight were a blur, but he knew All Might had been pushed to his limits. "But... how?"

Naomasa cleared his throat. "Young Midoriya, my Quirk allows me to discern truth from lies. I need you to be completely honest with us. Do you recall anything about your transformation? How it felt? What you were thinking?"

Izuku jumped, the directness of the question combined with the detective's quirk made him feel exposed. He closed his eyes, trying to access the memory, but it remained elusive, fragmented. "I... I don't know," he whispered, his voice trembling, uncertain. "I remember... watching you, All Might, fighting that... that thing. And then... then my head started to hurt. I've been getting headaches for a while now, but... this felt worse. And then... everything just went black. The next thing I knew, I woke up here." He opened his eyes and met Naomasa's steady gaze, a deep confusion etched into his face. "I... I don't remember anything else."

Toshinori nodded slowly, his gaze heavy with a dawning, grim understanding. "Yes, young Midoriya. That corresponds to what I observed. It was as if something else was guiding your actions, your movements. And what's more, Naomasa," he added, turning his weary eyes to the detective, "the creature... it knew about my injury. About All For One. About My Time Limit."

Naomasa's pen stopped. His expression remained neutral, but his eyes widened almost imperceptibly. "This is... most disturbing. Very few people know these details. It suggests a level of intelligence and information gathering far beyond a typical villain." He scribbled furiously. "But it didn't reveal anything else. A clue or even a hint as to their identity or where they came from."

"Agito..." Izuku interjected, his voice a strained whisper, a sudden, chilling memory emerging from the edge of emptiness. "Everything else is still foggy, but... somehow, I... remember that."

Toshinori and Naomasa exchanged a look, the latter clearly remembering that the creature had said such a word. "Agito?" Toshinori murmured, a thoughtful frown on his face. "I've never heard of a villain or... or a phenomenon with that name."

"Neither have I," Naomasa confirmed. "It could be some sort of code name for something else entirely." He made another note. "And its target was only you, young Midoriya. It said so."

Izuku's mind reeled, sending another shiver down his spine. He looked down at his hands, then back at Toshinori. "All Might... what was that thing? And why did it try to kill me?"

Toshinori sighed and ran a hand through his hair. "We don't know, young man. Not yet. But it was immensely powerful. More powerful than almost any villain I've ever faced. And his knowledge of me... was deeply disturbing." He leaned forward, his voice dropping to a near whisper. "But what we tell you can only be the truth, young Midoriya. You didn't just beat it. You... ended it. Completely. It dissolved into nothingness." His gaze was heavy, burdened as he stared into green eyes that now flashed with a newfound horror.

Izuku's breath hitched, a strangled sound caught in his throat. His eyes, wide with a dawning, profound horror, fixed on Toshinori's face. "Ended it?" he whispered, the words barely audible, a chilling echo of the monster's own demise. The image of the creature dissolving, unraveling into nothingness, flashed in his mind, no longer a blurry, triumphant memory, but a stark, terrifying reality. He had done that. He had ended a life.

A cold dread, far deeper than any fear the monster itself had inspired, settled in his stomach. His hands, which had just moments ago felt so ordinary, now seemed alien, stained with an invisible, unbearable weight. He stared at his trembling fingers, then clenched them into fists, pressing them against the pristine white sheets as if to push away the truth.

"A-All Might," he stammered, his voice rising, laced with a raw, desperate plea. "No! I... I didn't mean to! I don't even remember! It just... it just happened! I... I wouldn't... I would never...!" His words dissolved into a choked sob, tears welling in his eyes, blurring the concerned faces of Toshinori and Naomasa.

The "Bug Kid" video, the sudden admiration from his classmates, the whispers of awe – all of it, which had felt so hollow before, now felt utterly repulsive, tainted by this horrifying revelation. This wasn't heroism. This wasn't saving people with a smile. This was... something else. Something dark and final.

Toshinori reached out, his gaunt hand gently resting on Izuku's arm. "Young Midoriya," he said, his voice soft, yet firm. "I know this is difficult. Believe me, I understand the weight of such an act. It is not something to be taken lightly. But what you did... you stopped a threat that was beyond our capabilities. You protected us."

Naomasa, his notepad forgotten, leaned forward, his expression grave. "Young Midoriya, what you manifested... it was a force of incredible power. Uncontrolled, yes, but undeniably potent. We don't fully understand its nature, or why it chose you. But the fact remains, you were protecting yourself, and All Might, from a lethal threat."

"But... but I... I didn't choose to do any of that!" Izuku stammered, his voice choked with fresh tears, the words tumbling out in a desperate rush. "I didn't ask for this! I wanted to save people, not... not erase them! What if... what if it happens again? What if I hurt someone innocent? What if I can't control it and... and I become a monster myself?" He clutched at his chest, as if trying to contain the rising panic, the terrifying thought of his own potential for destruction. "I don't want to be that kind of hero!"

Toshinori sighed, a deep, weary sound that seemed to carry the weight of his own past battles, his own difficult choices. He looked at the distraught boy, a profound sadness in his eyes. "This is why, young Midoriya, the path of a hero is not simple. It is fraught with difficult decisions, with consequences we may never fully comprehend. But your heart... your desire to save... that is still true. That is what we must hold onto."

He paused, then continued, his voice gaining a quiet resolve. "We will find out more about this 'Agito,' and about your power. We will help you understand it, and we will help you learn to control it. Because whether you remember it or not, young man, you possess a power that saved lives. And now, more than ever, we need to understand why."

Izuku slowly lifted his head, his face streaked with tears, his eyes red and swollen. He looked at Toshinori, then at Naomasa, a flicker of something beyond despair in his gaze – a desperate, fragile hope for answers, for understanding, for a way to reconcile the hero he dreamed of being with the terrifying reality of what he had become. The silence in the hospital room was heavy, filled with the unspoken questions that now haunted Midoriya Izuku, the boy who had unknowingly taken a life, and whose world had just been irrevocably shattered.

Just then, a soft, polite knock echoed through the quiet room. Thinking it could only be a nurse, Naomasa, still kneeling beside Izuku's bed, voiced for them to come in. "Come in," he called out, his tone still preoccupied.

The door clicked open, and a man walked in, one hand casually in his coat pocket while the other quietly closed the door behind him. He was tall, dressed in a simple, dark coat, and as he turned to face them, Izuku's eyes widened in immediate, horrified recognition. Kagutsuchi.

Toshinori, his gaunt frame still slumped in the chair, and Naomasa, rising swiftly to stand between the bed and the newcomer, were instantly on alert. Neither recognized the man, but his calm, almost leisurely entrance into a secure hospital room, combined with Izuku's sudden, terrified gasp, set off every alarm bell.

Naomasa's expression hardened, his detective's gaze sharp and unwavering. He took a protective step forward, his voice stern, cutting through the tense silence. "Who are you?" he demanded, his hand subtly moving towards his side, a silent promise of his holstered pistol.

Kagutsuchi merely tilted his head, his dark eyes sweeping over Naomasa with an unnerving, almost dismissive air. A faint, knowing smile touched his lips. "Nice coat," he replied, his voice calm, utterly unperturbed, as if he hadn't heard the question at all.

Kagutsuchi's gaze then landed on Izuku, still trembling slightly on the hospital bed. With a slow, deliberate nod of his head, his smile widening just a fraction, he addressed the boy directly, his voice a low, almost conversational murmur that seemed to fill the room. "So, Izuku Midoriya. Feeling like a hero already?"

The question, laced with a subtle, almost mocking amusement, struck Izuku like a physical blow. His breath hitched again, and his wide, tear-filled eyes, still raw from the revelation of the creature's demise, snapped to Kagutsuchi's face. The man's presence, already unsettling, now felt suffocating, as if he knew every tormented thought swirling in Izuku's mind. The words "a price" echoed with chilling clarity, a silent accusation.

Toshinori's eyes narrowed, his posture stiffening further in the chair, a low growl rumbling in his chest. Naomasa, now fully alert, shifted his weight, his hand tightening on his side, his gaze fixed on Kagutsuchi, trying to discern the man's intentions and identity. The air in the room crackled with a dangerous tension, a silent standoff between the unknown and the protectors.

"I asked you a question," Naomasa repeated, his voice sharper now, a clear warning. "Identify yourself. This is a restricted area."

Kagutsuchi's smile remained, a faint, almost imperceptible curve. He finally broke eye contact with Izuku, turning his dark gaze back to Naomasa. "Oh, my apologies. Where are my manners?" He made a slight, mocking bow, his hand still casually in his pocket. "You can just call me Kagutsuchi. Just Kagutsuchi. Everyone seems to be going with one name these days, don't you think? Less fuss, more mystique." He chuckled, a dry, knowing sound that held no warmth.

His eyes, however, immediately flicked back to Izuku, ignoring the detective's heightened tension. His head tilted again, a gesture that was both curious and subtly predatory. "And you, young Midoriya," Kagutsuchi continued, his voice dropping slightly, becoming a low, insidious murmur that seemed to bypass Naomasa entirely and speak directly to Izuku's troubled soul. "Has everything that's happened... been exactly to your tastes? All this sudden attention, this newfound 'power,' this... heroism?" The last word was drawn out, dripping with a subtle, almost contemptuous irony.

An outraged Toshinori, his gaunt face contorted in a grimace of fury, pushed himself up from his chair. His movements were stiff, but his presence, even in his weakened state, was formidable. He moved to stand directly beside Naomasa, his thin frame a protective barrier before Izuku's bed, his eyes blazing with a fierce, paternal protectiveness.

"His actions were not of his own volition!" Toshinori's voice, though still raspy, held a raw power that made the air vibrate. He glared at Kagutsuchi, his gaze piercing. "And you... you seem to know a great deal about what happened. Were you there that day? Perhaps even involved with that creature?" The question was a low, dangerous growl, a direct challenge that hung heavy in the tense silence of the hospital room.

Kagutsuchi scratched the underside of his chin, his dark eyes seeming to drift upward as if contemplating the ceiling, or perhaps a distant memory. He appeared to consider Toshinori's question for a long, drawn-out moment, a faint, almost amused smirk playing on his lips. Then, his gaze snapped back to Toshinori, direct and unwavering.

"Yeah," he said, the single word delivered bluntly, casually, as if discussing the weather. There was no defiance, no hesitation, just a simple, almost bored confirmation.

Toshinori's jaw tightened, a muscle twitching in his cheek. His eyes, already narrowed, now burned with an incandescent rage. "You dare?!" he roared, his voice momentarily regaining a fraction of its former booming power, making the glass in the room subtly vibrate. "What exactly did you do to him?! What is this power?!" He took a step forward, his gaunt frame trembling not from weakness, but from barely suppressed fury.

Naomasa, equally incensed by the casual admission, drew his pistol with a swift, practiced motion, the metallic click echoing loudly in the suddenly charged silence. He aimed it squarely at Kagutsuchi's chest, his face grim. "You're under arrest for questioning regarding the incident at Dagobah Beach, and for unauthorized entry into a restricted medical facility," he stated, his voice cold and unwavering. "Do not move."

Kagutsuchi then wagged a finger, a slow, deliberate motion that seemed to mock the drawn weapon. "Whoa, whoa, hang on! Hold the phone here. I didn't come here to fight." His demeanor remained unnervingly calm, even playfully casual, as if he were merely chiding a pair of overzealous children. "I mean, can you even imagine the front pages?" He made a sweeping motion with his free hand, as if conjuring headlines in the air. "'All Might Sends Hospital Beds Flying with Patients Still On Them!' I know that's gonna be an instant classic, so why don't we just settle down before doing anything stupid."

A palpably choking silence invaded the room, with all four occupants. Toshinori's face, already pale, flushed with a fresh wave of indignity, his jaw clenching so hard a vein throbbed in his temple. The sheer audacity, the casual dismissal of their authority and his own rage, was almost more infuriating than the admission itself. "You dare?!" he rasped, his voice barely a whisper of pure, unadulterated fury. His hand, shaking slightly, clenched into a fist at his side, a primal urge to strike warring with his weakened state and the presence of the detective.

Naomasa's finger tightened on the trigger, his eyes narrowing to slits. His calm, professional demeanor fractured, replaced by a raw, dangerous anger. "This isn't a game, Kagutsuchi," he bit out, his voice low and dangerous, each word a hammer blow. "You're playing with forces you clearly don't understand, and a boy who is already traumatized. One wrong move, and I will put you down." The air in the room grew thick with the unspoken threat, the metallic scent of the drawn pistol mingling with the antiseptic.

Kagutsuchi blinked, his expression one of mild surprise, as if genuinely taken aback by their intensity. "Forces… I don't understand?" He trailed off with a soft chuckle, his shoulders shaking, as if he had just been told a particularly amusing joke. "I actually understand a great deal of what's happening. In fact, I will gladly tell you gentlemen everything, if you would just let me." He spread his hands out, a gesture of almost theatrical openness.

"Which is precisely what bringing you to the station for questioning is for," Naomasa countered, his voice still taut with suppressed fury, his pistol unwavering.

Kagutsuchi sighed, a faint, almost weary sound, as if dealing with tiresome children. "Sure," he replied, his hands still spread. "But, really, I should let you know that no cell can actually hold me. I'll just walk away and waste your people's time, Tsukauchi. And then we'd be back to square one, wouldn't we? Only this time, I'd be less inclined to be so... forthcoming." His smile returned, a subtle, chilling curve that promised consequences.

"Then talk!" Toshinori demanded, his voice a strained roar that scraped against his throat, fueled by a desperate need for answers. He didn't care about cells or wasted time; he cared about the boy, about the terrifying power that had manifested. A villain? None he'd ever heard of, and his face wasn't in any database Naomasa could recall. In fact, the more the two men tried to commit the newcomer's features to memory, the more unsettling he became. It was as if his very presence defied definition, his features subtly shifting, refusing to be pinned down. Something about him just felt inherently wrong, a discordant note in the fabric of reality.

Kagutsuchi's fingers went to his chin, a deliberate, almost theatrical gesture, as if carefully choosing his opening words. Naomasa, his pistol still aimed, but his arm subtly lowered a fraction, watched him with narrowed eyes, a flicker of grudging curiosity warring with his professional caution. Finally, Kagutsuchi's dark gaze, unsettlingly direct, swept over them all – Toshinori, Naomasa, and then, lingering on Izuku.

"Do you believe in God?" he asked, his voice a calm, almost academic query, utterly detached from the tense atmosphere.

Toshinori and Naomasa, along with Izuku, all blinked in unison, the question a bizarre non-sequitur that shattered the fragile tension. The two men exchanged bewildered glances before Naomasa, his voice sharp with irritation and disbelief, finally managed, "Excuse me?"

"I'm serious," Kagutsuchi shrugged, his hands briefly spreading wide before returning to his pockets. His expression remained unnervingly placid. "Do you gentlemen believe in God? Or in any higher power, for that matter?"

There was a moment of stunned, disbelieving silence. Toshinori's jaw dropped, then snapped shut, his eyes widening in utter exasperation. Naomasa's face, already a mask of frustration, tightened further, his patience visibly fraying. He let out a low, exasperated growl. "That's it," he muttered, his free hand, quick as a viper, fishing out a pair of gleaming handcuffs. "You're coming along, whether you like it or not."

Kagutsuchi merely chuckled, a soft, dry sound. He then pointed a finger at Naomasa. Without warning, the detective stiffened, his eyes widening in alarm, and he slid backward with a smooth, unnatural grace, as if pulled by an invisible string. He didn't stumble or fall; he simply glided across the polished floor, his pistol still aimed, until he came to an abrupt halt right next to Toshinori. He was unharmed, but utterly bewildered, his face a mask of shock.

Kagutsuchi then shifted his gaze to Toshinori, his faint smile returning. He raised his finger again, pointing it directly at the gaunt hero. A soft, golden light, almost imperceptible at first, began to emanate from Kagutsuchi's fingertip, flowing towards Toshinori. The light intensified, enveloping Toshinori's frail form. Both Izuku and Naomasa watched in stunned silence as, before their very eyes, Toshinori's emaciated body began to subtly, miraculously, shift. The sunken cheeks filled out, the sharp angles softened, and the deep lines of exhaustion smoothed away. His eyes, once tired and dull, now gleamed with a vibrant, youthful energy. The thin, almost translucent skin regained a healthy flush. Even his once-tattered suit seemed to mend itself, the fabric smoothing out, the colors deepening. In a matter of seconds, the Symbol of Peace, in his true form, was restored to his prime, his body radiating a powerful, healthy aura, his missing organs seemingly whole again.

Kagutsuchi then clapped his hands together, the sound sharp and echoing in the now silent room. "There you go!" he exclaimed with a theatrical flourish, his voice dripping with a fake cheer. "Much better, eh? Praise be!" He shot both arms up in the air, as if in joyous elation over the miracle he had just performed. "Okay, okay, now that that's out of the way, we should get down to business. Long story short, God exists! Shocker of the century, I know! Next revelation, when he created humanity, he gave all ya'll the capacity to evolve. But that evolution took a sudden wild turn when Quirks came into the picture. Caused quite a stir, let me tell 'ya. But, good news, no matter how 'Overpowered' you get, there's still a ceiling. It's the other guys we have to watch out for. Agitos! The true, next step of evolution!" He took a moment to smooth out his coat, his expression returning to his usual unnerving calm. "So? Does that about wrap it all up?"

Toshinori and Naomasa stared, their mouths agape, their minds struggling to process the impossible. The sudden, vibrant health radiating from Toshinori, the complete and utter reversal of his debilitating injury, defied every law of nature and medical science they knew. Naomasa's pistol, still aimed, trembled almost imperceptibly in his hand, not from fear, but from the sheer, overwhelming impossibility of what he had just witnessed. Izuku, too, could only blink, his own tears forgotten, replaced by a profound, almost religious awe as he looked at his hero, now whole again. The words "God exists" and "Agitos" echoed in the stunned silence, taking on a terrifying, undeniable weight in the face of such a blatant miracle.

Toshinori, now standing taller than he had in years, slowly raised a hand to his stomach, where the gaping wound had once been. He pressed down, tentatively at first, then harder, his fingers exploring the firm, unblemished skin. There was no pain, no phantom ache, no hollowness. He flexed his abdominal muscles, then took a deep, shuddering breath, filling his lungs completely for the first time in what felt like an eternity. The air felt cleaner, sharper, invigorating. His vision, once prone to blurring, was crystal clear. He looked at his hands, no longer skeletal, but strong, the veins prominent, the skin healthy. He clenched them into powerful fists, a forgotten strength surging through his limbs.

He took another step, then another, a tentative, almost disbelieving walk around the small space. He spun on his heel, testing his balance, his movements fluid and effortless. A broad, incredulous grin slowly spread across his face, a genuine, unburdened smile that hadn't graced his features in years. He looked down at his restored suit, then back at Kagutsuchi, then at Naomasa, and finally at Izuku, his eyes wide with a mixture of shock, elation, and profound bewilderment.

"My... my injury," Toshinori whispered, his voice now deep and resonant, the powerful timbre of All Might, unmarred by the rasp of his weakened form. He touched his side again, then his chest, a bewildered laugh bubbling up from deep within him. "It's... it's gone. Completely. My organs... they're... they're back!" He threw his head back, a booming, joyous laugh erupting from his chest, a sound that filled the room with pure, unadulterated relief and disbelief. It was the laugh of a man who had been given a second chance, a reprieve from a long, agonizing sentence.

Naomasa, still holding his pistol, watched Toshinori's transformation and subsequent reaction with a mixture of awe and professional dread. His jaw was still slack, but his eyes, though wide, were now fixed on Kagutsuchi with a new, terrifying understanding. This man wasn't just a villain; he was something entirely beyond their comprehension, capable of feats that shattered the very foundations of their reality. His pistol felt suddenly useless, a child's toy against such power.

Izuku, tears now streaming down his face again, but these were tears of overwhelming joy and wonder, watched his idol, his mentor, restored to his full glory. He had never seen Toshinori look so vibrant, so utterly healthy. It was a sight he had only dreamed of, a miracle he never believed possible. He could only stare, his heart pounding with a mixture of elation and a fresh wave of fear at the enigmatic man who had just performed the impossible.