Warning: messy feelings

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything.

Summary: SemiAU. One day, Deku, Dabi, Overhaul, Shigaraki, and Stain, wake up transported to another universe where they have to work together.

A/N: siiigh.

Pairing: Dabi/Midoriya Izuku, Chisaki Kai/Midoriya Izuku, Shigaraki Tomura/Midoriya Izuku, Akaguro Chizome/Midoriya Izuku

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### Plot (?)

* Mha
  + The whole world went to shit. Collision of quirks that should not have collided and it resulted in the end of the world. Full on Hoshimaru lvl nuclear meltdown
  + Midoriya and some other managed to survive but they all just get really sick and die very painfully. Izu was one of the last to die in Jpn
* Island of Nightmares (Tutorial)
  + Spends about 5 years together. Timeless and grinding up to lvl 70 w/ maxed (lvl10) skills for classes (will raise to 90 later)
  + Ofc they all have heal/household chores/pain endurance up to lvl 5 or something
  + mental/physical debuff resist at like 90%. Being with each other makes them stronger
  + Three months in, they realize that there’s a status & all the game mechanics of it
  + Four months in, remembers everything and why they’re here
    - And ‘get together’
* Path of Exile
  + Once they leave the island and it’s a hotmess express everywhere in the desolate lands they travel to

### World Notes

* World
  + Four moons. One sun. idgaf
    - # of moons in the sky correlates to the seasons. 1 being winter, 4 being fall
    - Itherwise just like they remembered
    - Three days in a row of complete darkness. Btw 4th and 1st moons.
  + 3 days of night, 3 days of daylight = 1 week.
* Island of Nightmares (Tutorial Island)
  + An Eden of some sort.
  + Monsters of all sizes and shapes
  + But all the fruits are edible
* Island of Exiles (POE)
  + Unleashes a darkness into the world (but returns the sun eventually)
* Island of Tyrant
  + Learning how the rest of the ‘civil’ part of the world works. But is it really civil… ?
* Island of the Demon King
  + Joins guild. Kills the demon king. Decides that they don’t like this life.
  + “We fucking killed the biggest bad, I think we can live without slaves now.”
* Island of Pasture (implied post apocalyptic after everyone blew themselves up trying to get the demonland)
  + Dabi the Farmer
* Island of Eternal Slumber
  + 60 year love song
* Island of Peace
  + Peaceful kingdom. They watch until they realize that they are not aging. And it freaks the regular people as much as it does them
  + Ended up as the king’s guard for 30 unchanging years
* Island the Goddess Walks
  + Where the goddess admits that the last 100 years have been entertaining
  + And promises them a fate worse than death (essentially)
* Game Mechanics: Storage
  + Inventory is the shit that they can access in battle
    - they hold is max of 99 per item. Except weapons/armor. (1 each)
    - Time does not affect it. Cannot store live things inside of it (not even live plants, they all have to be plucked)
  + Party Inventory - shared shit they got
    - Everything in Inventory, except shared among the Party member
    - Chisaki’s max Appraisal maxed their storage out to infinity.
  + Space Storage: inventory but much more. Can only be accessible in <Towns>
    - Wasn’t available to them in tutorial because it wasn’t a town
* Game Mechanics: People Stuff
  + Party: smaller group of individuals that can pool all their resources and stuff together.
    - No permission needed to see each other’s stats & stuff, no appraisal necessary
    - Can (limited) share active skills (uses the MP of the skill owner, SO has to be conscious and within a certain distance (depending on INT stat), cannot be Class-specific skills). The highest lvl of that skill is spread to the party.
    - Limited telepath (party chat equivalent, bound by distance (depends on INT) )
      * So Dabi, Shigaraki, Chisaki have higher distance travel-ability (as mages with higher INT stat) than Deku and Stain
  + Guild: group usually in charge of a territory (usually the police/guard/enforcers of an area)
  + Village: a settlement of ppl without a Guild
  + Town: settlement of ppl with a single guild
  + City: 2+ guilds in a given area.
* Game Mechanics - Characters
  + Title:
    - Usually gives small boost in stat.
    - < Deku’s Beloved > : doubles all stats.
      * Usually <Beloved> stats gives % boost of each other’s stats to each other
  + Class:
    - 1 main class + 2 secondaries max
  + Skills maxed at lvl 10
    - Passive Skills - always active
    - Active Skills - uses MP to activate.
    - Class skills - requires a certain class grade
  + When HP hits zero, status: Dead.
    - However, these 5 will be <guts> at 1 hp to that moment/second, at cost of memories
  + Elements:
    - Fire, water, lightning, earth. Light <-> Dark.

### Notes on the Dumbasses:

* Were allowed to do whatever they wanted with the class/passives stuff (except Midoriya, since he has no mp)
* Midoriya Izuku “Deku”
  + Class: no class. his skills are passives.
    - Element: Null
  + Dumped everything into his atk.
    - “If i have to kill someone, I don’t want them to suffer”
* Chisaki Kai
  + Class: Alchemy; Elements: Earth -> Metal
    - Rather than heal, his shit can heal/regen etc
  + Skills: Appraisal (maxed), Create, Disassemble
  + Dumped everything into getting Alchemy (the closest thing he had to his quirk). Eventually makes guns and fiddles with them so the others can use it
* Shigaraki Tomura
  + Surprisingly good at cooking
  + Class: summoning Mage (Caster Type); Elements: Dark
  + Skills : Decay (time manipulation), monster tamer
  + Went for mage -balance
* Dabi
  + Designated fire & furnace
  + Class: fire Mage (manipulation type); Element: Fire
  + Skill:
* Stain
  + Hunter. Party Leader.
  + Class: Assassin; Element: Wind
  + Skills: bloodthirst, invincible pierce, poison/paralysis, stealth

### Day zero

In all honesty, the fact that they couldn't use their quirks was probably a blessing.They had stopped pointing and yelling and screaming, and surely they were all alive because their convenient quirks were all gone. Or so Midoriya would think until the monsters in the forest came crawling out.

Of them, the first thing was a snake the size of a tiger. It slithered out, seemingly endless, and it eyed them particularly. And then, it opened its mouth. In the back of his mind, he remembers that snakes could unhinge their jaws because they swallow their prey whole

Reality was a little more scary. He watched as the snake, sleek and black with bright yellow stripes, opened its mouth and sucked one of the men into its mouth. The corpse, because it was dead before they even got here, slipped into its mouth, clothes and all. Sliding in, several inches at a time, a shudder broke out across Deku.

Without thinking about it, he moved to stand in front of the others.

And then, from the water crawled out a bright red salamander. It would have been cute and unnoticeable if it had been small and harmless and they were at a tourist attraction. That was not the case at all, and instead, the salamander was easily bigger than an SUV.

Deku looked from the salamander to the snake and tried to figure something out. Whatever he chose, he needed to stick with it, and a plan beyond ‘save everyone’ would be really nice. As it was, he didn’t know how he was going to fight a snake in the front and a salamander at his back when he couldn’t call any of his quirks.

To his shock, however, Stain stood in front of the salamander. He never thought that he would ever feel relief at seeing the man, and he managed a little smile. The possibilities in his head opened up a little bit more.

Now, back to back with Stain the Hero-Killer, Deku understands that if they want to live, they were going to have to work together.

Shigaraki has yet to wake up, Chisaki was on the ground with a hand over his bruised and possibly broken ribs, and Dabi looked increasingly more and more frustrated as he flinging his hand out. In an instant, Midoriya understood that he’s trying to call his flames out, but it wasn’t working.

Without any weapons, five quirkless men found themselves stranded on an island that viewed them as a snack.

“Let’s make for the forest. The trees will give us cover.”

“Running in blind might cause our end,” Stain called back.

“You have a better idea?”

“Shigaraki isn’t even awake,” Overhaul spoke up, “Let’s just use him as bait-”

“I’ll carry him out,” Deku spoke up, ending the discussion there. “But you know, if they can only sense where we are by seeing with their eyes, then all we need to do is take our their eyes.”

He crouched closer to the ground, grabbing two handfuls of sand.

“You know how fast a snake moves? It’s instantaneous. It’s not a speed you can just see-”

“If they wanna eat me, they gotta work for it,” Deku decided, his heart fluttering at the fear and the rush of adrenaline. He gave a shaky smile, feeling as lost as he used to be when he first tried to be a hero, all those years ago. “Worry about getting out. I’ll get Shigaraki.”

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It works as well as he could hope. But grabbing Shigaraki and running into the forest was the strangest part. The man was lighter than he thought he would be. He would never think that this was the man that made so much of his life such a living hell.

As it was, he forged onwards, knowing that he would never forgive himself for leaving him behind.

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If they’re talking about sheer basic stats, they learn really quickly that they’s super duper fucking weak. In the face of a monster that could take a literal chunk of the tree trunk and munch it like chewing gum, it was clear to them that this was going to be an instantaneous run-or-die situation.

### 1st Night -

At the end of their first day, all five of them are still alive. Their camp doesn’t have any light. They are hungry, tired, injured, and exhausted. Their nerves are fried.

“We should decide on night watch,” Overhaul brought up.

“Why?” Dabi said.

“So that the rest of us can rest?” the man replied back, frowning. “We’re all exhausted. We might as well do a guard rotation-”

“You trust us enough to leave one of us on guard duty while the rest sleep?”

There was a brief pause and Overhaul clicked his tongue.

“Surely, even you could do something as simple as that, couldn’t you?”

“I don’t know… Maybe we should let the weak just die off,” the man replied back, a cruel smile curling on his face. “It’ll definitely be quieter.”

“I don’t know how any of you have the energy to fight,” Stain said, walking by them. “We haven’t secured any means of water or food. We have no means of a safe place to rest. We have bigger things to worry about than fighting it out.”

“We, we, we,” Shigaraki spoke up suddenly. He scowled as he pointed to Deku, “Doesn’t this make you angry? Or what, are you here to protect all of us? Come and save us, dear Hero.”

His words dripped in sarcasm and the young man stared at him for a moment. He looked down at his feet and took a deep breath.

“I… I want to go home. I don’t know why my quirk isn’t working. I don’t know why I’m here,” he said. He shook his head, but it was like a dam broke and he just kept going. “There’s nothing here that I recognize. I’m hungry, thirsty and tired. I don’t want to be here. I don’t want to be with any of you.”

He took a deep breath, and then stared Shigaraki in the eye.

“But, more than all of that. I don’t want to die,” he said. “Dying means that whatever brought me here wins, right? So, more than anything, I have to stay alive. As long as I’m alive, I can figure something out. And I figured that the best way to survive right now would be to stay together.”

There was a long silence following his words, until Shigaraki scoffed back.

“Tch, whatever.”

“I’ll take the first watch,” Deku said, earnest. “If you don’t trust me, then stay up.”

“When you’re tired, let me know,” Stain added. “I’ll cover the next shift.”

“Alright, then I’ll take the rest,” Overhaul pipped in, and Deku shook his head.

“The two of us will be enough,” he said, and then turned to the older man, “If you get tired, please wake me up. I will handle the rest.”

“...You’re going to be tired,” Stain said.

The young man shrugged back, “It’s not like I’m going to sleep well here anyways.”

Shockingly, they were quiet for the rest of the night.

### Shiga v Deku

“Why? Why are you trying so hard to save me?!” he screamed back. “Do you think that I’ll suddenly turn and change my mind since you’ve shown me the light!? Do you really think those friends of yours will really accept you after they learn that you saved me?!”

Deku pulled his shoulders back, but he didn’t turn away. Meeting Shigaraki’s gaze evenly, he shook his head slowly.

“I … didn’t become a hero because I wanted to be forgiven,” he said quietly.

“Then, why did you save me?!”

“Because I’m a hero,” Deku said with certainty, “but I don’t expect you to understand that.”

Shigraki grabbed the front of his shirt, and without anyone to stop him, punched him right across the face. Deku took a step back, his eyes burning bright as he took the full frontal hit, but didn’t back down otherwise.

He spat a mouthful of blood out to the side.

“Don’t look at me like that!” Shigaraki snapped back, and took a step backwards.

Even though they both knew that Deku wouldn’t fight back, Shigaraki also knew that he wouldn’t be able to win this fight. If they fight, it would just be a waste of energy and injuries they can’t tend to.

### Something Almost Comfortable

Sometime, between their fourth and fifth day, habits formed. They got better at running and hiding. As it turned out, even the hardest of villains and toughest of heroes could have their patience waned down to nothing.

Some of the things that they fought were man-eating animals that bore a striking resemblance to something they knew at back home. Other things looked like a monster from a storybook. Things with an aura or black smoke wisping off it, that left them nauseous in how wrong it looked.

Still, they were getting better at hiding and running. It was a frustrating way to survive, but if they wanted to live, pride had to be sacrificed.

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“Watch your head,” Deku called out down below as he pulled the fruits off the branch and dropped them. How melons, as big as his head and as thick as coconuts, managed to grow on a tree like this was beyond him. They tasted like honeydew though, and just as juicy and sweet.

It was one of the only reliable food sources that they had, so it wasn’t like they had the luxury to be picky.

“Hey, careful!” Shigaraki snapped back at him from below. “It’ll be bad if a hero couldn’t protect us properly, right? Four S-Ranked criminals but you let us run rampant? That’s enough to ruin your career, isn’t it?”

Deku huffed a long sigh out. Didn’t he get tired of being angry all the goddamn time? Just as quickly as the thought came, he tried to banish it. It wouldn’t do any good to let his words affect him.

Of course he’s thought about it. He thought it to death and woke up in the middle of the night thinking that he would have to explain to Iida how he almost lost his arm trying to save Stain. Of course he thinks about Eri’s shy smile whenever he has to work with Overhaul. He doesn't know how he’ll face Tokoyami after spending the night to keep watch over Dabi.

He looked down to where Shigaraki smirked up at him, did he think he was angry? This wasn’t anger. This wasn’t annoying. He didn’t feel things like that anymore, not for people like him. When he looked at Shigaraki, all he felt was that overwhelming feeling of guilt. Like something had grabbed his ankle and dragged him into an ocean of guilt.

He opted to keep quiet, as he had been doing so this entire time. He slid his body across the branch to grab some more and it suddenly cracked. Shit.

“Oh shit-”

Deku groaned as he landed on his side, the branch he was on still between his legs and crushing his arm and leg painfully.

“Karma’s a bitch, ain’t it?” Shigaki taunted.

Deku pushed himself up, feeling tingly in any place that he didn’t feel pain. A tidal wave of exhaustion threatened to consume him in that moment, and he expelled everything out with a deep breath. This won’t bother him. He won’t let it.

He looked over at Shigaraki, and then got up.

“Let’s get these back to the others,” he said, collecting the fallen fruits to the best of his ability.

“Tch, whatever.”

But, since Shigaraki did grab several fruits, Deku was certain that there was hope. He just needed to hold on until they got off this island. Then he can go home and be with his friends and family again.

He wondered how Shigaraki got here. What did it mean that anyone was here? And even if they went back, what would happen to them? However, if he was with them, didn’t that mean that they couldn’t raise hell somewhere else?

The questions led to dangerous thoughts, and he tried not to think so hard about it.

All Might once told him that his greatest weakness was his greatest strength.

### Dabi’s Injury

In all honesty, even Deku felt really dumb. There was no way for them to have survived the fall, and he’s pretty certain that Dabi would kill him for doing something like this, if only out of embarrassment for being (sorta) saved by Deku.

But, he couldn’t convince himself that Dabi didn’t need any help.

When the monster came slicing down onto Dabi’s chest, the blood sprayed, and Deku saw the look of absolute shock on Dabi’s face. His hands came up to his chest, blood drenching his clothes and forming a puddle at his feet. His handers were trembling, like he didn’t understand what just happened, but as he did, his eyes found Deku’s.

He looked, for a brief second, helpless.

Deku is certain that’s why his legs started moving first. As Dabi took two steps back and then started to tip off the cliff, Deku had slammed into the monster coming to swing at him again. He tackled it to the ground and dived off the side of the cliff after Dabi.

Dumb, right?

He spent a couple of minutes every night questioning why he was working together with him and if it was okay that they were working together like this, but as soon as Dabi looked like he needed help, Deku dove off the side of a cliff for him.

Deku grabbed him on the way down. His joy was short lived, though, as they dove head-first into the water. And well, Deku was always about putting the person first, so he wrapped one arm around Dabi’s chest, under his arms so that their chests were against each other. His arm didn’t wrap all the way or even close, and Dabi’s arms were limply hanging around otherwise, but he got him. With his other hand, Deku reached for the wall of the cliff and let his fingers sink into the side of the earth in a desperate attempt to stop or slow their fall.

While Deku considered himself resilient to pain, this was a new experience altogether.

He slid down, foot by foot, and all his nails and the skin on his fingers and the side of his leg burned off against the friction of the side of the cliff. His fingers caught onto some rocks a few times, but it did little to nothing other than chip away at his bones.

He broke three of his fingers like that, just falling with little to no way of slowing it. But, he lucked out when his fingers caught onto a little diviet at the side of the cliff. It did stop their fall for a moment, until momentum caught up with them and the weight of him and Dabi made something in his shoulder crack.

Wow. What a time for his extremely sturdy body to fail him.

He managed to make sure that he took the brunt of the fall, curling so that his back and shoulders would make contact first. When the two hit the water, he understands why people say that hitting the water could be like hitting concrete if someone jumps high enough.

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Deku manages to get the two of them into the cave that trace the edges of the water. The smell is pungent, the stone was cold, but they were alive. The only light inside of this cave was from the way the water surface reflected the sunlight back, shimmering and shining like a trove of treasure.

He’s shivering even though it feels like mid-spring, but the water temperature and his injuries were combining in the worst way. Shivers racked through his body, and he felt the world swim in his vision. If this is how he felt, inching closer and closer to death, then he’s certain that Dabi’s the walking incantation of suffering.

Said man, still bleeding out after being split shoulder to hip, didn’t look very alive. But based from his incredibly painful sounding pants, he was sort of alive. His pale features made the purple on his skin stand out that much more. Teeth chattering and brow furrowing, it didn’t take a genius for Deku to know that he already had a fever.

“It’s alright,” he said quietly. He hoped that he sounded convincing, but when he voiced the words aloud, he found himself believing it a little more. “It’s going to be alright,” he said.

Deku looked left and right and then back down and whispered several apologies but began to take off the man’s clothes and his as well. He wrung out his clothes the best he could, sitting in his All Might boxer briefs and shook out as much of the salt as he could. He tried to stop the bleeding with his very limited clothes, but at this rate, he was going to lose Dabi to blood loss before infection.

“Stay with me,” he said, nearly begging as he tried to stop the bleeding. “C’mon, Dabi-san, you’re stronger than this. You can’t burn me to ash if you die. You gotta see tomorrow if you wanna kill me.”

He was so lucky that he still had his pack with him, but it didn’t account for much when he realized that everything that could burn was wet and the cave seemed to stretch longer than his eyes could perceive. He grinded his teeth together. There had to be something.

Fuck.

He looked to his shirt and some of the loose rocks around him.

“...Dabi-san,” he said quietly, “I never thought that I would be the one to burn you.”

First, cauterize the wound. It would be the fastest method.

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Somehow, they were found.

Overhaul, Stain, and Shigaraki came stumbling into the cave right when the sun was starting to set. Deku, about to be on his wits end as he had nothing to eat, about to spend the first night in boxer-briefs with a man closer to death than life next to him, almost cried at the sight of them.

Of course, it was incredibly short-lived. They looked a little worse for wear, tired and exhaustion sketched out on their pale features. While it was clear that Dabi and Deku suffered the worst injuries, the others were still injured in various places, and they were all untreated. Still, it was clear that the only person that couldn’t walk was the person who wasn’t even awake.

“...Let’s just go,” Overhaul said, “...Even if he makes it, the recovery is going to be a bitch to deal with. We have no medicine, no food, or real shelter. We have no weapons and can’t use our quirks. We have no idea where we are, but there’s plenty of shit here that is trying to kill and eat us. We’re all injured, but Patches here can’t even stand up on his own. If that hit didn’t take him out, our shitty play at doctor will.”

Deku pursed his lips at that.

“Let’s just abandon him then.” Shigaraki added. “We can’t afford any dead-weight. Everything in a 15-mile radius have already locked into the smell of blood as it is.”

“No,” Deku shook his head, “I’m not going to abandon him.”

“..You’re already enough of a deadweight as it is,” Overhaul growled out lowly, grabbing Deku’s wrist and shoving his nailless fingers in front of his eyes. Deku gritted his teeth when his arm was forced to move, but didn’t otherwise acknowledge the pain lacing his arm. “Abandoning both of you will be easy.”

“Then do it,” Deku snapped back, wrenching his hand out of Overhaul’s grip. Everything, from his fingertip to his back ached at the motion, but he didn’t even flinch. “But I’m not leaving him. I’m going to save him. And that will be my first victory on this island.”

Stain stared for a moment, even as he leaned against the wall. He must have thought about something for a long time, because he suddenly pushed off of it.

“I’ll find something to eat tonight.”

When he came back, he carefully noted how all of them had stayed after all. His eyes drifted to Deku, who gave him a smile when he came in.

“Got some berries,” he said. He used his shirt as a makeshift bag, and looking at it now, it was probably really gross. But it’s been a little past 18 hours since they got here and the only thing that they had to eat was fucking berries.

He saw some smaller critters, not squirrels but very close in size and shape, chowing down on them, so he hoped that it wasn’t poisonous.

“Thanks,” Deku said, genuine even though he looks exhausted. His shoulder was swelling like a basketball, and an unhealthy shade of purple. “His fever hasn’t broken yet,” he said, shivering.

Stain gave him some of the large leaves he managed to grab. “They’re not much, but it’s better than nothing,” he explained.

At this, Deku seemed to shine. Stain stared at him, and wondered how he could be happier that someone else was getting desperately strung together bandages over having something to eat.

“Thank you,” he said again, his eyes watering. He didn’t cry though, and got to work.

“You should get some rest too,” he said.

“I will once Dabi’s fever breaks,” Deku replied back, his careful gaze on Dabi’s face. “That way, everyone else can worry about other things.”

The injured won’t get in their way. It also meant that they could run away easily. Stain wondered if this was how Deku was going to try and save them too.

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When Dabi woke up, he gave a long groan as everything seemed to flood his senses at once.

“Careful,” the voice came from his right, and the thought that someone was so close when he was injured and vulnerable had him tensing.

Alas, no fire came to his hands. It hasn’t come since he got here, all those weeks ago.

“It’s okay, you’re safe. For now, at least. Don’t worry, we’ll protect you and hold down the fort,” he said, “so all you need to worry about is getting better okay?”

Deku, he suddenly realized, was the one talking to him. Slowly but surely, his memories began to return to him.

“Do you want some water?”

He couldn’t manage to get any sounds out of his mouth, and when he strained to get up, hands came to hold his shoulders and push them back down. They were firm, but they weren’t trying to pin him down. If he didn’t know any better, he would say that it was reassuring.

“I’m sorry, but you can’t get up yet, okay? You’re really badly injured, so until your wounds close a little more, you’re stuck like this.”

He gave an aggravated huff, but the sudden movement of breathing hurt him.

Something wet came to his lips.

“It’s water on a cloth. It’s clean, I promise. But if you’re thirsty, this is the best way.”

Dabi, who has lived an entire lifetime where he wasn’t wanted or needed, opened his mouth. He hoped that the water would be poisoned. He hoped that his wounds would become infected. He hoped for his bad luck to finally change into good luck and end his suffering and life again right then and there.

And then, he could finally claim that someone cared about him in his last moments.

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Instead, a hero saved him.

The second time he woke up was much smoother. He blinked twice and when he tried to sit up, groaned in pain.

“We don’t have any pain killers, so you’re just going to have to live with that,” a voice came forward and his eyes flickered to where Overhaul came closer.

The older man, in Dabi’s humble opinion, was fucking annoying. He scowled, his irritation fueled by the pain in his chest.

“Surprised you stayed,” he said. His voice was gravely and it hurt to speak. He cleared his throat, ubt it didn’t help.

“Here, some water,” Overhaul handed him a rock that had a small divot in the center of it. In it, there was some water.

Dabi took it, cautiously, and forced his hand to take it despite how much they trembled. God, things were looking grim if he couldn’t even pick a rock up.

“Don’t worry, we were planning on leaving you behind,” he said. “You should have died.”

Dabi’s eyes narrowed.

“But lucky you, you got to be saved by our resident hero,” Overhaul said, chuckling like it was a funny joke or memory. “Don’t forget to thank him when he wakes up.” He motioned to the other side of the shitty cave that they were in.

Leaning against the side of the cave wall, in All Might boxer-briefs, was Deku. He slept sitting up, his neck bent at an awkward angle. The arm that looked like a bleeding mess of purple and pain was cradled in his lap.

Seeing him, Dabi used to not feel anything.

And now, he has a whole lot of something that he can’t name.

### Chisaki- Nightmares

On occasion, Chisaki dreams of being consumed by a darkness he’s powerless against. He loses mobility in his arms first, and as he loses sensation in all that he is, the only thing that he can feel is a crippling fear.

It swallows him up and he only has the thoughts that he is going to join the abyss. He will be nothing special, just a small, insignificant fraction of something much more. He was nothing. If he was there or not, it would make no difference.

He would be nothing in an instant. Devoured and digested, he wouldn’t be anything. Stripped of his arms, his quirk, his ability, his mind and then his identity. If he’s lucky, in that order.

There was nothing worse than being forgotten.

In that moment, something grabbed his wrist and yanked hard. He internally rejoiced, because someone noticed, someone cared, someone was going to save him-

He jerked awake, and met the worried stare of Deku. His green eyes and a gentle gaze that he’s never been on the receiving end of.

Overhaul’s chest heaved as he tried to get air back into his body, and his sweat trickled down his face. It was disgusting, but at that moment, all he could see was those green eyes staring right back at him. Someone could see him. Someone wanted to see him.

“...Chisaki-san?” he asked quietly, “...Would you like some water?”

Overhaul opened his mouth to say something, to say anything, to reject him and snarl and hiss, and when no sound came out, just nodded instead.

“Ah, I’m feeling incredibly tired, and I don’t think I’ll be able to stay up to do the watch on my own,” the young man continued as he handed a water pouch to the older man.

His eyes lingered at his trembling hands, but didn't mention anything. He waited patiently for the man to take it, and Overhaul is just overwhelmed at the thought that he has two hands. Once he was certain that Overhaul had the pouch, he released his grip and looked back towards the last embers of their campfire.

“...Perhaps, if you don’t mind, you could stay up with me tonight?”

Overhaul took the water and took a gulp. He opened and closed his hands. He felt fine, and in perfect peak-condition (or as close as he could without taking a shower and eating proper meals). His arms were there, he could feel his heartbeat in his ears as he tried to stabilize his breathing. He felt empty, as hollow as he always felt, but it was a soothing feeling that he was used to.

Empty he could do. Empty he would rather. He doesn’t want to feel anything. He doesn’t want to be nothing, but he can handle feeling nothing.

But his fingers trembled from an encounter with a nightmare he could never win against, and he nodded.

“That…” his voice came out rough, and he coughed into his hand to clear his throat, “I wouldn’t mind.”

He had been saved, and he had been empty for too long, if he had forgotten what this feeling was called.

-

When the morning light shined, Overhaul was surprised to know that he had fallen back asleep at all. He looked over and saw Stain just in time to see the man kick Deku backwards from where he was sleeping with his head resting on his fist, and his elbow resting on his thigh.

The young man fell down onto his back, before rolling over with a groan and readying himself with his fists up. He was clearly groggy, as he stumbled too far to the left and had to quickly recorrect himself. He blinked twice, his fists drooping.

“Some watch you are,” Stain said, narrowing his eyes at him.

Deku flinched back, wincing as he rubbed the back of his neck. “S-sorry,” he said.

Overhaul felt everything inside of his heart recede back into the nothingness. Surrounded by the way the sunlight filled the space between them, igniting the entire world with the amber light, surrounded by the forest musk and the remains of the fire from yesterday’s camp, Overhaul recentered himself.

-

“Last night,” he growled out to Deku when they were making their way through the thick of the forest, “Didn’t happen.”

Deku and those damned green eyes of his came into full visage. He hated him. He when he realized that he was just some high school brat playing hero, he hated him when he broke into his base, he hated him when he was being taken in by the authorities, and he hated him when he woke up on this godforsaken island.

The part that he hated the most about him was that gentle gaze as he took Chisaki as he was and nodded.

“Of course.”

### Stain - true heart

“I think that a person’s true nature comes out in times of extreme stress.”

“Really?” Deku asked, but it’s something that he’s heard many times. This would be the first from Stain though, they rarely talk if it’s not about their immediate survival.

“And Deku, you are a real hero.”

His words would have meant more if Deku didn’t know who he was.

“”I’m… I haven’t been much of a hero,” Deku replied back, “I haven’t saved anyone yet.”

Yet.

Both of them caught the word, and Stain’s lips curled into a smile.

“You sure about that?” he asked.

“Saving someone’s life doesn’t mean anything if they don’t want to live,” Deku said, closing his eyes like he was remembering something. He gave a brief pause before he looked up towards the taller man, “So no, I haven’t saved anyone yet.”

The Hero-Killer stared at him for a long moment,his good mood dissipating as the implication of the words sank in. In a rare moment of irritation. He stalked off instead.

### 1st Victory

Their first kill happened when Deku dropped down onto it’s thrashing head with a sharp rock. He’s spewing blood and soaking the fur on the beast. Like a demon possessed, Deku held onto the head with one hand as he brought his other hand down over and over again. There is nothing resembling the hero that they knew in that moment.

The beast, in a desperate attempt to get this man off of him, rammed itself against the trees. Despite taking the full brunt of the hit, Deku’s pacing didn’t stutter. With blood dripping down his face and off his chin, he gritted his teeth and kept swinging.

The beast eventually slowed, having sustained too much damage and eventually collapsed to the ground. Still strandling the beast, Deku threw his head back and screamed.

Looking at him, there was little doubt that the true monsters on this island were not the beasts that they came for them, but the weakling that bested them.

And then, he turned to them, a sheepish smile with shining eyes, and he spoke up.

“We’ll eat meat tonight!”

“You know how to gut this guy?” Overhaul asked, getting over his shock the fastest as he approached him. He made a face as he stared at the absolute mess its head was. “Disgusting.”

“Well, I guess that means you don’t,” Deku giggled back, a little high on the victory. He leaned back, teetering dangerously to one side, but managing to catch himself.

Stain did. Of course he did.

That night, they ate the flesh of a wolf, the first victory against a beast since they got to this island. Somehow, it bolstered their confidence, and it became a little easier to laugh together.

### Quick Escape

In reality, Overhaul was the closest person to Shigaraki at the time. So, really, if he had just reached a little further to grab the man, it would have caused the smallest amount of hardships for them as a whole. The smallest action would have saved them from a boatload of trouble.

But Overhaul wasn’t someone that thought in terms of “oh, this person needs to be saved and I can do it.” In fact, he didn’t think anything of it. It would have been perfectly normal and acceptable if he didn’t do anything, and Shigaraki wouldn’t have thought twice about it.

But with them at the time was Deku, who reacts purely on instinct. As though his heart only beats to help other people, he surges forward to shove Shigaraki out of the way.

If Overhaul had done it, there was little doubt that he could have shoved Shigaraki and saved himself in the progress. Because of the delay of Deku running over, Shigaraki was safe and Deku's arm was caught by the screaming beast.

He tore it out of the beast, losing chunks of flesh but not his arm. He swung his leg up, catching the beast in the neck, and when it whimpered, wasted no time in digging his hand into its eye. The beast screamed and jerked backwards. Deku dropped to the ground and rolled out of the way before its thrashing tail could catch him.

The beast pulled its head backwards, a foolish decision, and Stain rushed forward to stab into its throat with the makeshift spear. Choking on its blood, it died a pitiful and painful death, slumping onto the ground. If Stain had been a moment later, that would have been Deku.

“Phew,” Deku sighed in relief, as he got up to his feet. “Good cover,” he said.

Stain stared at him for a moment, “How did you know I was going to come?”

The young man shrugged back, “There’s no way you would have left such an opportunity to waste.” He winced as he looked at the mess of gore his arm was, and sighed, like it was more annoying to deal with than anything.

“W-why did you do that?” Shigaraki asked, a few feet away and petrified in his shock.

“Huh?” Deku blinked at him, “Why… did I do what?”

“Why did you try to save me? Is it that stupid hero-complex of yours?”

“You know,” the young man said, a frown on his face, “I hope you and everyone here knows that you guys are the ones that keep bringing up the whole villains and heroes thing. I don’t know what you want me to say-”

“Why did you help me? Why didn’t you abandon me? It’s my fault! I should have moved faster to get out of the way! Aren’t you sick of that? I do nothing but pick on you and I would have never tried to save you like you do me! So why do you keep trying to save me?”

The young man stared at him, and Shigaraki wanted to scream. What did he see so that he looked so calm in the face of Shigaraki’s rage? It drove the older man insane. Day after day, he’s been relentless in his words and actions as he waited for Deku to prove to them all that he was the same as everyone else.

“Answer me!”

The young man sighed back, like this was a big pain in the ass, even though Shigaraki was the one who felt like that.

“I just felt like it,” he said instead, nearing the end of his patience. “If it bothers you so much, stop needing to be saved.”

The older man jerked backwards, and the hero rushed past him to get to the nearest water source to clean out his injury. He didn’t get it.

Here, there was nothing. There was no media or other heroes or social media or anything. There was no need for Deku to keep up the whole hero-facade. Still, he diligently kept it up, and even lived up to his title on several occasion. But Shigaraki, for the life of him, couldn’t figure out why.

“Flip your thinking,” Stain spoke at last. “It’s not that Deku’s saving you because he’s a hero. He’s a hero because he keeps saving you.”

And that was something that Shigaraki would spend a long, long time thinking about.

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### Something Bends - ShiraDeku

Same shit, different day.

Deku pulled himself further along the branch. It shook under his weight but several weeks of falling and not falling out of trees gave him the confidence to go forward. Feeling more like a monkey than a hero, he shuffled a little more to grab the last couple of fruits.

With this, they’ll have about ten. Five for dinner, five for breakfast. That should be enough to hold them over. He looked to the branch next to him, where three more hung. Would it be worth it? It looked close enough that he could reach over-

The branch he was on cracked. He had a moment to ride the sense of deja vu before he plummeted straight for the ground. He braced himself for impact, and when he hit something that didn’t immediately inspire pain up and down his body, thought that he had finally gotten used to this whole ‘falling out of three’ shticks.

“God, you’re heavier than you look.”

The only thing that dropped faster than his jaw was his heart, as he looked up to see Shigaraki underneath him. Did he… cushion his fall?

“Close your mouth and get off me.”

“R-Right,” Deku rolled off of him and onto his feet, almost clumsy, and he extended a hand out to help him up.

Shigaraki stared at him, his hand, for a long moment and almost hesitantly, reached up to take it. Deku noticed it earlier, but holding his hand like this, he can see how much larger Shigaraki was than him. But his hand could easily wrap around his wrist, and he hauled him up to his feet. The older man groaned, and Deku felt puzzled.

This was Shigaraki. The guy who once stormed his school during a special training and nearly ended Aizawa’s career. This was the same guy who had watched Deku fall out of trees, day after wretched day. He had to know that it was painful to fall out, why would he break his fall? There was no reason to.

“...You know,” Shigaraki said, narrowing his eyes at him, “You talk a lot.”

Deku’s jaw clicked shut, and his face turned bright red. Did he hear…

“Yeah,” Shigaraki nodded back, “C’mon the others are waiting.”

More than waking up on an island without his quirk but four villains, this was the thing that shocked him. Numbly, he nodded, collecting the fruits and following along.

-

Without meaning to, Deku’s eyes found Shigaraki again. The man didn’t throw any scathing remark at him. At all. It was beyond strange. Deku felt like he was about to enter an identity crisis for him.

He had been watching him for a while, and he wanted to believe that Shigaraki wasn’t sick, but if he wasn’t sick then what was going on? He despaired at the thought that he would rather Shigaraki be sick than … this, but he couldn’t come up with any feasible conclusion.

Dinner came and went. Overhaul had given Shigaraki a strange glance, but no one else seemed to notice or care that Shigaraki was like… that. And even then, it was a passing glance and everyone remained quiet and ignorant. Maybe it was Deku. Maybe he was the crazy one.

“What,” Shigaraki stated, like a demand more so than a question, and the younger man dropped his eyes to his lap.

A thousand thoughts ran through his head, the same thoughts that had been running through his head with every passing day.

“...You’re being really nice these days,” Deku blurted out. “N-Not that it’s a bad thing or anything!” he quickly added. “But I just wasn’t … I didn’t think… You seemed…”

No good.

He couldn’t come up with anything. There had to be a better way to describe this feeling. There had to be a way for him to properly articulate what he was feeling. All those years of school, but he didn’t have a good enough grasp on the language to express himself.

Except no. That wasn’t true, was it? He knew exactly what he wanted to say. There was one way to explain exactly what he felt, when he realized that Shigaraki cushioned his fall. When someone helped you, when someone cushioned your fall, when someone saved you, there was only one way to respond.

“Thank you.”

More than any hurtful word that Shigaraki spewed, seeing the vulnerable expression on Shigaraki’s face when he was thanked was painful.

After a long moment, his expression calmed down into something detached from the world. He dropped his gaze at the ground. “You’re not the only one,” Shigaraki said quietly, before laying down on his side, facing away from the young man. The fire crackled quietly between them.

“Uh… what?”

“...I’m sick of fighting, too.”

If Deku didn’t feel so exhausted, he would have been happy to hear that. As it was, he found solace in the fact that they finally agreed on something. The admittance of that, of their gratitude and their amiable partnership, however temporary, was akin to defeat and hitting rock bottom. Had Shigaraki stood up and just left at any point, Deku would have understood. The fact that he stayed, for whatever reason, had tears coming up to his eyes.

"Holy shit, are you crying again?"

A hero being saved by a villain was a laughable thing, but here they were.

“No,” Deku croaked back, wiping at his eyes. “The smoke got into my eye.”

### Injury

Deku, on his back, briefly understood that he was dying. Hovering over him was Shigaraki, who seemed to be yelling, but that couldn’t be since he couldn’t hear him at all. His eyes trailed to Stain, who looked really surprised, but he was glad that he looked okay.

Good, it looked like he protected him well enough.

But seriously, why was Shigaraki yelling? Was he hurt too? No way, Shigaraki wasn’t the type to scream when he was in pain. He only yelled when he was angry, so the next question floated to the top of his mind slowly, like it was riding a bubble on its way up in oil. Why was Shigaraki so angry?

His head was turned by two hands, and it took him to realize that he wasn’t looking up at the sky but Dabi’s eyes. He never realized how bright those blues were, and wished that the man wouldn’t look so upset so that he could see the color a little better. As it was, it was just getting blurrier and blurrier.

He didn’t have enough strength to lift his arm or speak. But he managed a small smile at the man.

If he was dying, then he would be dead soon. If he cannot pick himself up, then he would be left to lay here. It was fine.

The previous night, Stain woke up to take over the watchshift for him. That morning, Shigaraki had saved him breakfast. Dabi had left his shirt to drape over him as a makeshift shirt. Overhaul and he had shared a joke of sorts. They may be little things, but it meant everything to Deku.

-

“You’re fine! Just! You’re fine! You-”

Shigaraki screamed as his hand gripped Deku’s shoulders. It was slick and sticky with the pouring blood and he hated heroes. He hated Deku. He hated himself and the world and the entire island. If he had never been here, he would have never known Deku and he would have never cared.

He would have never learned that Deku was the type of hero who only smiled when things went wrong. He would have never learned that Deku was the type of person who was beautiful even as he died.

He didn’t want to know.

### Promises, Promises

While Deku rested, the other four were silent. To begin with, they were mostly quiet people. They could go for days without hearing each other's voices. And for a while, they preferred it being silent.

But when the only sound that they heard were the pained gasps of the young man, things were different.

“...What are you going to do, when we get back?” Stain asked.

“...You sound pretty certain about that, don’t you?” Dabi replied back. “It’s been, what, four weeks now? And no help has even come by. For all we know, the world out thinks we’re dead.”

Which would be good for them, but bad for…

“It’s fine, isn’t it?” Shigaraki replied back, picking on something on the ground. “Plenty to eat and plenty of things to do. Don’t know about you guys but there’s nothing waiting for me even if I were to go back.”

“But there is something here, is that what you’re saying?” Overhaul asked. He snorted, “Look at us, we’re barely scraping by to see everyday-”

“Yeah, but we finally made progress didn’t we?!”

A pained groan came from Deku, and the conversation stopped. Dabi, who was sitting next to the sleeping man, looked down to change the towel on his head. There was nothing gentle of his gesture, dropping the piece of cloth on his head with little fanfare.

“You’re thinking of something, aren’t you? Isn’t that why you brought this up?” Dabi asked. “Spill it.”

“...What are you going to do if we can’t go back?” Stain asked. “We should… be prepared for the worst-case scenarios.”

There was a long silence.

Overhaul ran his hand through his hair, “Worst-case scenarios, huh?” he muttered back. He didn’t even consider this the worst-case scenario anymore, but if he had to pinpoint one thing that would make their entire situation worse…

His eyes trailed to Deku, fighting against a fever, while they twiddled their thumbs and thought about the future.

It was clear, already, wasn’t it?

“It was just a thought, but … consider it,” Stain said. “The future that you want tomorrow, in a week, in a month, in a year. Maybe a little beyond that.” He stood up, signaling that he was going to exit the conversation.

“What about you?” Dabi asked. “What… do you want?”

Stain’s gaze dropped to Deku’s figure.

“It should be obvious by now,” he said, turning his back towards them. “Hunt dinner.”

### Feeling like u wake up and everyone else knows something u don’t

“We’re gonna need to go back out to get some more food,” Shigaraki said, “As it is, we’re gonna be hungry for dinner.”

“We’re about out of water too,” Dabi called from where he was sitting next to Deku.

“...That thing has been getting closer every day too,” Overhaul said, eyes narrowed as he looked out of their small alcove. “We might have to grab Sleeping Beauty over there and make a run for it.”

“Sleeping Beauty, huh?”

All four of them turned as one to where Deku was slowly sitting up. Panting hard, like sitting up was the hardest thing he had done, he gave them a weak smile. Even Overhaul, with barely any extra lighting and 15 feet away, could see how bad his complexion was. Shivering enough that his teeth chattered, and pale like a ghost, sweating enough that he soaked through his shirt, it was impressive that he was even awake.

“Let’s make a run for it then.”

“...You-”

“Can’t leave this island… if we aren't alive, right?” he panted out. He gave them a lopsided grin, “Let’s go.”

Stain pushed off the wall and walked over to him. He stared for another moment before he kneeled down in front of him.

“Ready?”

Green eyes met his and he smiled.

If, on the cusp of death, Deku could give him such a peaceful smile, then Stain will find the power to make sure that they keep living.

“Let’s go,” Stain said, he turned around and opened his arms. “Get on my back.”

“You can’t be serious-”

“You want to run through the night-”

“We outran them before, we can do it again,” Stain argued.

“Alright,” Dabi nodded. “Do or die, right?”

“You guys are insane,” Overhaul spat out. “Even if we get out, then where?”

“...The mountains. It’s our best bet,” Shigaraki piped in. “We’re going to go for it anyways. Might as well.”

“...You in, Overhaul?” Dabi asked, blue eyes landing on him.

Golden eyes looked towards all of them, their desperate gaze and scowled.

“Let’s go.”

Dabi took his shirt off, working to tie it under Deku’s bottom and to Stain.

“It’s not much,” Dabi said, “But it’s better than nothing.”

Cloudy green eyes opened blearily.

“And this time, we’ll see morning together.”

-

Half a mile before they began the rocky ascent part of the mountain, the rocks rumbled underneath their feet. Within a minute, the earth split open under their feet, and they all fell in.

### The Truth

“...Oh, the world ended,” Deku said quietly. “And that’s why we’re here.”

The bright light shined.

“Yes, that is correct.”

“Why us? Why here?”

“You were the only ones worth salvaging. You should be grateful to have been chosen.”

“A hero, three villians, and an anti-hero?” Dabi blurted back, “that was seriously your best bet?”

A soft chuckle came back, a mocking sound that made his skin crawl, “I didn’t make the final selection. I am merely here to inform you of the Greater God’s choices.”

“...What?”

“Now, you will be given that chance. Live as you would like, this world has no future and there are no more blessings left. In this world without gods, make your own paradise.”

“...Wait, so we’re the only ones worth salvaging, but you’re just going to abandon us-”

“I said you were worth salvaging from that prototype. However, not worth anything by yourselves. Good day now.”

And the light was gone.

Deku sat down, with his face in his hands. He took a deep breath and stood up.

“Okay, I guess now that we know the mechanics of this place, we can start figuring out the best way to fight back.”

“Hey-”

“If we can’t leave, then we’ll have to make a shelter. It looks like the temple here is safe for now, so let’s work on that. So, let’s get some food and water.”

“Deku-”

“We can probably spend the night here too. I’ll go and get some fruits so-”

“Deku!” Overhaul’s voice boomed over his muttering. Green eyes snapped up to him, and for the first time since they got onto the island, he dropped his gaze first. “...We’ll go together. We all need to digest this.”

They can’t leave. They were stuck here. From the sounds of it, the world that they knew had ended and they’re in some new world like some shitty novel.

And honestly, if that was the case, then it was fine.

As people that viewed this as the best possible outcome for themselves, they probably had no right to comfort Deku. But that was fine. They had time now.

-

*What she didn’t say though, was that they were all from different universes. They would figure this out eventually, but at this moment in time, this was their reality. Regardless of where they came from, it wouldn’t change the fact that this was the reality that they were facing.*

### Not broken

“To be honest, … I think I was prepared for this. Like, it was in the back of my mind this whole time but I didn’t… I guess now I have the confirmation for it,” Deku said. His hands came up to hold himself as he looked over the shoreline. “More importantly, we should… decide on what to do now, huh?”

“Are you… sure you’re okay?” Dabi asked, eyeing him distrustfully.

“Does it matter?” his shoulders slumped, tired and defeated as he looked out to the ocean. “Does anything really matter? No matter how much I want to go back, there’s nothing even there, right? So I…” He cut himself off with a sigh, “Whatever, it’s not important.”

“...And if it is?”

He paused, his head snapping to where Dabi’s calm eyes focused on him.

“If I said that it’s important, would you believe me?”

‘Ha! I must be going crazy,” Deku said, shaking his head, “These days, I can’t help but think that you actually care. Dumb, right? Even though I know that you don’t, I …”

“But if I did,” he insisted, taking a step forward. “If I did, then what?”

Deku’s bottom lip trembled before he looked away. His eyes watered as his shoulders trembled. His back looked so taut that he would shatter if the wind blew a little harder.

“You’re right, you know. For us, it didn’t matter if we made it back or not. Either way, we’re fighting for our lives everyday. Here or there, we didn’t have the luxury of peace . But it’s different for you, right? You had friends and family, a warm bed and hot food every night, right? You had a choice, and you became a hero, didn’t you?”

Deku clenched his jaw, his eyes full of defiance like they were enemies again, but the villain, the former villain, pushed on.

“But you’re not alone here either.”

He watched those green eyes well with tears and Dabi couldn’t believe that someone could look so beautiful even though he had snot dribbling out of his nose. He reached out to him, pulling him into his chest as he rested his chin on top of his head.

Being on this island, isolated from the rest of the world, was fucking with his head, he decided. That was the only reason why he held Deku so tightly. That was the only reason why he felt like his heart would burst when Deku’s arms wrapped around his chest.

He must have lost his fucking mind.

### Stain the Party-Leader

“So, this is pretty much stationed like a game, right?” Stain asked, “So, shouldn’t there be a thing about making us a group? It'll be able to help us find each other, right?” he side-eyed Deku at that.

“Being grouped up will probably give us a lot of benefits,” Deku nodded, ignorant to the look he was given or actively pretending that it wasn’t happening, “Uhm… like a guild?”

“So like friending someone?” Overhaul, and scowled at the dubious expressions that were shot his way, “Don’t look at me like that, I didn’t really do much with social media and games like you children did.”

“No, I just… never thought I’d ever hear you use the word ‘friend’,” Deku said, “N-Not that it’s a bad thing or anything, but do you really see us as friends now?”

“Dick brothers is more like it,” Dabi replied back, callous as he gave Deku a wolfish grin. The younger man turned bright red and Shigaraki snorted.

“Party,” Stain said, snapping his fingers as though he remembered something, “We should make a party.”

<Stain has asked you to form a party.>

The message, spoken in the same voice as that fucking light at the bottom of this island, spoke at the same time a transparent box appeared before them.

“...There’s a box floating in front of me,” Overhaul commented. He looked at it, and the others stared at him.

“You too?” Dabi asked. He moved his hand up and down, and where no one else could see each other’s messages, Dabi watched as his hand phased right through the message box, like he was putting his hand in front of a spotlight.

It didn’t glimmer or glitch, aside from the areas he swept his hand through. The flat box appeared 2-D, but whenever they moved, it would follow to remain flat in front of them. It was black with a gold border and white words. It was slightly transparent, and they couldn’t move it away, so it remained immediately in front of their chest no matter what they did.

“Uh… accept,” Deku said suddenly.

“Whatever,” Dabi shrugged, “Accept.”

“Accept,” Overhaul said.

Shigaraki blanched and heaved a great sigh. “Accept.”

The system dinged back and a new window appeared in front of them.

“...Stain’s our party-leader?” Deku asked, while Shigaraki squinted at the screen.

“What does that mean?” Stain asked.

“...In most games, it’s the person that decides what quest and stuff we take together,” Shigaraki replied back. “Don’t know if it’ll be the same here but…”

“There has to be a better way to figure this out than speculations. Don’t games have guides?” Overhaul asked.

Ding!

A message box appeared, as well as the woman’s voice from before.

“You’re fucking kidding me,” Dabi said through gritted his teeth, “You’re telling me that fucking voice is going to remain with us whenever we need the system for anything? Does she really need to read the entire introductory thing?”

Yes, indeed, Dabi.

“No no no,” Deku said shaking his head as he tried to process everything in his head, “You mean this whole time-”

“-There was a guide!?” he and Shigaraki screamed at the same time.

The other three eyed them and took a wary step back

### Classes + Leveling Up

<Classes>, as it turns out, was a huge part of this.

“Hah,” Deku laughed quietly, “It’s like a game, isn’t it?”

“...What am I looking at?” Stain asked, his eyes looking from this place to that. To any other laymen, it would be clear that he was staring off into the distance, but as it was, Deku knew that he was lost while trying to understand the complexity of the stats bar.

He stood up, ready to explain it, but to his (and everyone’s surprise), Shigaraki stepped up instead.

“Okay,” he said, “All you bitches better be grateful that I, LordDecay119, will give you swinebags my guide on how to deal with this shit.”

Too shocked to protest, the man crouched down to the ground with a stick (where did he ever get a stick?) and started to etch out a <Passive Tree> and the balance between the Three Stats “strength, dextricity, and int.”

“So strength is all about your overall health,” Overhaul said, arms crossed over his chest as he looked from the ground to something to his left. “It includes things like our health points, defense, and everything physical except speed.”

“Yeah.”

“So Symbol of Peace here,” Overhaul said, jerking his chin at Deku, “will be that?”

Dabi spoke up at that, “Are we going to streamline right back to what we had?”

“Do you want to change out?” Overhaul arched an eyebrow at him, and then eyed his scars in particular, “Well, I suppose that makes sense that you want something different. Maybe something that could patch you up and make you look like a human could do you some good.”

Dabi flipped him off in response, his eyes narrowing dangerously.

“Didn’t you used to have an agenda about getting rid of all quirks in the world?” he replied back, voice low. Despite the relaxed slouch he had, he was nothing but hostile.

“This isn’t a Quirk,” Overhaul replied back. He gestured to the forest, “And I don’t know if you have forgotten, but we need every bit of assistance.”

“Since it feels that we are only going to have each other for some unknown amount of time,” Stain started to speak up, directing the flow of the conversation back to him even though Overhaul and Dabi continued to glare at each other. “It’s probably better if we decide on what we do as a unit.”

“...I don’t like it, but having a healer would make a huge difference for us,” Shigaraki added. His finger made some flicking motions, like he was flipping through pages in an invisible book in front of him. “As it is, there aren’t a lof of magic stuff, and they’re all for people with high int.”

“So then, what, one of us gets to play nurse for the rest of their time here?” Dabi frowned.

“Perfect, you didn’t want to use your fire anyways, right?” Overhaul replied back, tone light and eyes sharp. He gave a shrug, “Maybe you can do something about those scars of yours now.”

Dabi’s eyes narrowed, and he took a step forward, but Deku spoke up.

“I think it’s fine if everyone decides what they want to do for themselves. If this really is a game, then eventually, we will find other ways to help our HP,” he said. “But when we choose a class, its forever isn’t it? Then we should pick something that we individually like, because even if we lose each other, we’ll always have ourselves.”

The young man spoke frankly, and he reflexively brought his finger to his lips as the theories began to play out. It was logical, it was well-meaning, but the thought of losing someone had never occured to the others. As a result, they were dead silent as Deku muttered under his breath.

“If this is an island, there’s another beyond, isn’t there? So eventually, we will leave this island. When that happens, we can’t be certain that we’ll still be together, or if we’ll all still be there. At least with levels and stuff, we can finally see where we stand against the other monsters here, but since we started here, isn’t it fair to say that this is the most basic and easy stage, right? That means, whatever we face out there is going to get exponentially harder or whatever. And even then, that’s assuming we get off the island. We’ve gotten separated from each other so often here. We can’t depend on the whimsical ideal that someone can come and save us when there’s only five of us here-”

“Deku.”

His head snapped up to where Stain was staring back at him. He blinked, and realizing that they were all staring at him, flushed back instead, and dropped his eyes.

After a second, he started to speak. “...Deku makes a fair point,” he said quietly. “If that goddess is toying with us, then we’ll need every bit of help we can get. That means… we should go with what we are comfortable with.”

And just like that, they began to work individually towards a looming goal in hopes that together, they’ll be able to take it down.

-

"You know," Overhaul said, squinting at this and that on his screen. "There's a lot of shit here. So, do I just... tap on it?" His hand hovered over where the supposed map must have been laid out for him, but all Deku saw was Overhaul’s hand hovering over the sand.

“Well, I can’t see what you’re seeing,” Shigaraki replied back. “For the most part, I think that it’s gray if it’s unavailable to you, and yellow when you can take it. It turns if you have it.”

“All of it’s gray.”

There was a brief pause.

“..Chisaki, what level are you?”

“Level?”

The older man stared at him, tilting his head to the side.

“I, too, don’t know what ‘level’ is,” Stain spoke up.

-

"Okay, so leveling up makes it so that all of our current stats go up," Overhaul commented.

"And then we have more points to allocate across our stats as we please."

"And we need experience points to level up, so kill things."

Shigaraki nodded, looking immensely satisfied that his two (unwilling) students had learned so well.

"We have certain skills that unlock with every level," Stain reiterated. “And, when we reach a certain level, our current stats will give way to our class, where we will unlock more specialize skills?”

“That sums it up pretty well,” Deku said, walking into the clearing. He lifted up his shirt, where he had used it to gather the fruits. “C’mon, let’s eat lunch.”

They stared at him, and the young man smiled back, a little nervous.

“We keep talking about the future this and the future that, but there’s no future if we don’t eat,” he said, shifting from foot to foot. “So maybe we could… uh, eat for now. We still don’t know what we want for dinner, or where we’re going to sleep.”

From behind, Dabi came out with more fruit.

“We need to plan for the future, day by day, and then month by month, don’t you think?”

“...Yeah,” Stain nodded, “I was starting to get hungry anyways,” he said. He stood up, dusting himself off. He leaned towards Deku, making a show of looking at the fruits. “Thank you, Midoriya,” he said, his voice quiet.

The smile he got in return could have put the sun to shame.

### Inventory

"W-where's all the… the stack of red wolves? I… I swear to god it was right here."

"We are taking it back to camp, right?" Stain replied back, raising an eyebrow. "Yeah, I have it in my inventory."

"In...ventory?" Deku parroted back.

Stain stared at Deku. "... <Inventory>," he called. The familiar portal opened. "Shigaraki said it opened when you're level 10, but no one noticed until we figured out how to check our skills. I figured that yours was full and that's why you didn't store it away."

"Oh," Deku said quietly. "A skill, huh?"

"...Come to think of it… you never use skills, huh?"

Deku shrugged back. Then, a determined light appeared in his eyes. He lifted his hand.

"<Inventory>!"

The portal did open for him, but as soon as he called it, something inside of him ruptured. A sudden influx of blood came spilling past his lips and his hands flew to his mouth in an effort to keep the blood on the inside. A shock of pain ran through his chest, and he felt as though all of his organs were smothered and diced. While pain wasn’t unfamiliar to him, he was unprepared for the sudden onslaught of it, and it was enough to knock him to his knees.

The sudden loss of blood had him staggering, trying to remember how to breath and forgot about Stain until he felt a hand come onto his back. He lifted his head, feeling as though his head was filled with cotton.

He airly wondered if he was the reason why Stain looked like that.

Several branches broke and they turned to where Dabi stood. He took one look at Deku, the blood spilling all down his front dripping from his mouth, and froze.

Behind him, Overhaul and Shigaraki rapidly speeding up, the air around them tense with thunderous expressions, they briefly stared at Deku before looking around.

“What the fuck are you doing-” Shigaraki immediately snapped out when he was cut off.

“Where’s the enemy?” Overhaul’s voice was stern and final.

There was a long silence and Deku shook his head.

“It’s fine,” he said. He spat out a mouthful of blood, “...I’m fine.”

“You think we’re going to believe you when you’re spewing blood all over the place?” Dabi asked, folding his arms over his chest as he stared the young man down.

“Ah, no, it’s passing,” Deku replied back.

“Are you… sick?” Overhaul asked.

“...He tried to open <Inventory>,” Stain spoke up, his hand trembling against Deku’s back, “And then he… fell.” He stared at the man in front of him, a blank expression on his face.

“Isn’t this because you don’t have any mana?” Shigaraki spoke up. “All of us have two bars for our status, health and magic, but you only have one. So you… can’t use any magic?”

There was a brief silence. Deku stared at his hands, covered in blood, and for a brief second, felt like he was back in the second grade. He vividly remembers the stares that follow him when kids called out their quirks and ran wild, and can only laugh at the irony of the situation.

“I guess it uses health instead of mana.”

“Well, your level keeps going up. So surely, there’s a class that you’ll still be able to take. And you have that… blessing so-”

“I don’t think I can,” Deku replied back. His hands balled into fists as he placed them on the ground. “To be honest, when you guys pulled up…the skill tree you were talking about, I… couldn’t even pull that up.”

There was another long silence.

“Why didn’t you say anything?” Stain asked quietly.

“I ... I didn’t want to believe it,” Deku said quietly. “But I guess the cat’s out of the bag huh…”

In the last world, he was quirkless. And in this world, he’ll be classless. The irony didn’t escape him, but he would never tell anyone.

He took a deep breath, and gave a wide smile, filled to the brim with acceptance. He gave this defeated little sigh as he tipped his head back to the sky.

“Sorry about that, but I can't help with that.”

“...Midoriya,” Overhaul prompted, “When you talked about the future, you never counted yourself in it, did you?”

The green-haired man stilled, and didn’t respond.

“...I see,” the older man nodded. “So, did you think that we would abandon you because you weren’t useful? After all this time, did you think that your worth was measured by the number of skills you had or the use you hold?”

There was still no response, telling them all more than enough.

“...You’re kidding me, right?” Shigaraki asked. “After everything you said you… never believed us?”

“...No,” Deku shook his head. Figured that he would be quick to defend someone else. “It’s not that I don’t believe in you guys. I don’t believe in myself,” he explained quietly. His hands gripped each other tightly until his knuckles turned white. “I just figured that… you’ll get tired of me, too.”

As people who have only been berating Deku on every turn and corner for being optimistic while staring death in the face, or looking so nervous when he tried to tame their stronger emotional outbursts, it was easy to see why Deku had come to that conclusion. However, they were a collection of people that came from lives where joy was short-lived, love was poisonous, and they all met an unsatisfying end.

Regretting their past actions weren't something they were used to. Betrayal was the norm, and trust was just pretty decor. Likewise, being kind wasn't something they had in spares. Protecting someone, doing something for the sake of their smile, were all foreign concepts that belonged on a screen far away from them.

“Don’t decide things for us,” Overhaul said. He leaned down to help collect the things on the ground. “C’mon, let’s get back to camp.”

Deku nodded and went to do just that.

### Couple’s Shit

Dabi was, shockingly, the first to bend.

Deku was against the tree, his hands clutching onto Dabi’s shirt for dear life as the older man pressed closer to him. From the few inches still between them, he could feel his heat radiating off of him. He ran his hands down Deku’s sides, sliding his hands so that his thumbs ran down his ribcage, feeling every scar he could touch, and headed back up. He marveled at the feeling of his pulse hastening against his touch.

He could make his pulse rush.

“...If you don’t want this,” he said, leaning in until their noses were touching, “you need to push a lot harder.”

Deku’s face was bright red, his hands trembling against Dabi's chest and he gave the younger man another second to make his decision. He didn’t know how much longer he could stave this feeling off, and having Deku so close that he could feel his breath against his cheek was doing things to his heart.

He wanted this. He wanted this so, so bad.

But as it was, ruining their relationships, especially with the other three, could potentially ruin them and lead to all of their demise. More importantly, he doesn’t want to chase Deku back into being the Deku who flinched when he crept close and shied away from all his touches, friendly or not.

But Dabi was a villian made by circumstance. After a lifetime of freedom and indulging in all his pleasures as they came, he didn’t know how to limit himself. When he saw what he wanted, he was going to take it.

But he was willing to learn how to stop.

When Deku’s fingers grabbed his shirt and pulled him closer. He looked up at him from between his eyelashes and Dabi’s breath caught in his chest.

“If you … want this,” he said quietly, “Then don’t stop.”

Dabi doesn’t think ‘lucky’ was enough of a term to correctly depict what he was.

-

Deku learns that Stain is meticulous and merciless.

He said that like he learned it, but he knew for a while actually. He had to fight him once, after all, and while he never forgot the fight and what it meant, it was something that was tucked further and further away with every next fight. In comparison to that day in the back alley however, the intensity of that man was focused solely on him now.

Stain tipped his head up, running his thumb across his bottom lip and interrupting his thoughts. He took a step closer, stopping only when there was just a few inches between them.

“...You know, I’ve slept with Dabi,” Deku said, feeling it weigh on his chest uncomfortably so he blurted it all out instead.

“Yeah,” Stain nodded, “I know.”

“..Does everyone know?” he asked, scandalized.

Stain’s other hand came up to cup the other side of his face. “Don’t think about that. Don’t think about anything else right now,” he said. “I’m right in front of you.”

He leaned in, his bumpy tongue tracing his lips, and when Deku opened his mouth to say something, he assumed that it was to let him in. The smaller man gave a small moan, and Stain tilted his head for a better angle, his hands moving to roam his body instead. Deku pulled away, gasping, and the older man traced kisses against his cheek and down his neck instead.

He nipped a little harder at the collarbone, his hands trailing down to rest on Deku’s waist.

“I once dreamed of a time to leave my mark,” he murmured as he brought his lips up against Deku’s, “and the proof of my life would be the stain that I had left on the world.” His voice seemed to rumble in his chest, making Deku feel it more than hear it.

“...Yeah?” Deku replied back in between pants. He closed his eyes tightly as Stain’s hands roamed his chest, a slow pace that left burning trails in its wake. His hand shot up to his mouth, in a futile attempt to quiet himself as Stain’s lips latched onto his neck.

“And now, all I dream of is you.”

Stain’s hand grabbed his. Their fingers interlocked, though Stain’s grip was much harder than Deku’s loose one, and the younger man felt as though his hand could be swallowed by the size of Stain’s. He kissed him much harder this time, biting on his lips and sucking it into his mouth. His tongue swept into his mouth, and one of his hands gripped the back of Deku’s head to force the younger man into a better angle. One of his legs slipped between Deku’s, and the other hand pulled him closer, rubbing him in a way that made a heat pool in his stomach.

The man was thorough in what he wanted, and Deku felt like he was just being taken along for the ride.

-

Shigaraki hated being stared at, and he didn’t want to be touched. Yet, of all the men Deku laid with, he’s the one that leaves the most amount of marks on him.

Deku’s wrists were held together by one of Shigaraki’s hands, behind his back, with his face in the tattered remains of his shirt, as the taller man forces obscene noises out of him with every thrust of his hips. With his face pressed against the ground, Deku gave these quiet, high-pitched keens, despite how hard he tried to keep his sounds down.

Shigaraki bent over him, his teeth digging into any patch of skin he could find as he panted and grunted loudly.

“Shit, you’re so tight,” he growled out. “Fuck, you’re so warm.”

He pressed a kiss to Deku’s back, right in between his shoulder blades, and amongst the brutal pacing, Deku almost missed the gentle press until his teeth sank in to mark his touch. Shigaraki’s tongue ran over the bite before he made several more, as though he was scared to leave without making his mark.

“Shi-Shira-”

The hand holding his wrists tightened further, and the man pressed his chest against his back before growling. The sound echoed through them, and for a split second, it was as though their heartbeats were aligning.

-

Yet, it was Overhaul that surprised him the most.

For a guy who was normally very talkative, he was silent when he came to Deku. He moved slowly and with purpose, first cupping his face and leaning in to rub their noses together. His eyes stared into his as he slowly pressed their lips together once and now that Deku was more or less expecting it, he opened his mouth to give him whatever he wanted.

Overhaul, however, didn't press in to take everything as it was offered. He placed his hands on his hips and stepped closer. The taller man was leaning down, and Deku felt his neck strain a little to keep contact. His lungs began to burn and when he finally pulled away to breath, Overhaul didn't follow him.

He panted hard and Overhaul pressed a kiss to his cheek.

He turned his head to catch his lips again.

“You know,” he said, pulling away completely as he felt a full body flush, “...I slept with everyone.”

Overhaul leaned back to stare down at him.

“Yes,” he said. “I am aware.”

“...Then-”

He leaned back in, lifting his chin up to press a chaste kiss against his lips.

“Just think about me,” he said. “Just give me this. Please.”

He stared at him, molten yellow eyes meeting pine green ones.

Slowly, his hands came off of him, as though to step away when he didn’t respond, but Deku’s hands shot out to pulled them against him again. Overhaul’s eyes widened, his eyebrows shooting to his hairline in his surprise.

He closed his eyes tightly, as though trying to reign himself in. His hands trembled against Deku’s skin. When he opened his eyes again, he felt as though his chest was too small for the torrential flood of emotion that choked him when Deku leaned in to close the space between them.

-

“...So,” Deku said, “Can… can I make some assumptions about this?”

He nervously glanced around the other four men at the campfire, and hoped that no one could tell how red his face was against the fire light.

They were eating roasted fish off the stick, and he licked his lips as he tried to find his words. God, he was so lucky that he had the healing he had here because if it took him nearly half a day to recover enough to sit up, he doesn’t want to think about his battered body from another world.

They all had their dirty way with him, and while they also took very good care of him, they kept going until they had their fill for several hours straight. Literally, they only stopped long enough to pass him off to each other. As it was, even though he knew that he was physically fine, he still felt like his nerve endings were on fire.

Super sensitive to everything, it was even hard to have his blanket over his shoulders and the makeshift pelt tied around his hips without shivering at the feeling of something against his skin. However warm the fire was, the night breeze was giving him goosebumps. No, everything was giving him goosebumps. The way his hair brushed against the back of his neck was giving him goosebumps and he was getting tired of it.

More importantly, just looking at the men around them, the marks he left on them, was too much for his heart.

If this happened every time, he needed to lay down some ground laws now. Even if his body could handle this, he didn’t think his heart could.

“Uhm… doing it… like that, all at once and stuff is uhm… really hard on me,” he said slowly, “So maybe we shouldn’t do it that… aggressively since it’s hard for me to take care of myself afterwards.” He fidgeted a little, wincing at the phantom pains that ran down his spine, and gripped the blanket in an effort to keep it on.

“Hah?” Shigaraki looked up at him and frowned, “Then don’t.”

“Eh?”

“...What he means to say is that we’ll take care of all of that, so you just need to tell us,” Overhaul said without even looking up from his fish. “But fine, we can take turns or something.”

“Augh, it’s bad enough I have to share you with these shitheads,” Shigaraki scowled back, lazily motioning at said shitheads, “But only once every two days?”

“Two days?” Deku blurted back, because he counted four other men aside from him. Just talking about it was making his heart do questionable things.

“...We’re not double-teaming him,” Stain said, “Give him a break when he wants it.”

“He’s eating, ain’t he?” he snapped back.

Deku spluttered, his face turned even redder as he dropped his head.

“This… sharing thing doesn’t even bother you?”

“I thought it would bother you more, to be honest,” Dabi said, as he sat down next to him and passed him some water.

“Thanks,” Deku said, but when he took the water, their fingers brushed and Deku remembered something raunchy. He swore he could feel Dabi sucking on his earlobes, squeezing his dick and rolling his hips with a throaty moan. Before he knew it, his face was red and he couldn’t meet the older man’s eyes. The taller man arched an eyebrow at him.

“Damn… Are you trying to seduce me or something?” he asked. “I thought that you wanted these breaks.”

“No!” the young man snapped back and then looked away when he saw that tender gaze on him again, cradling the water protectively to his chest."Yes! Wait… uhh…"

This would have been much easier if he couldn’t see how they looked at him. It would be so much easier if he could just pretend that they just wanted flesh and not the whole package deal. It would just be a lot easier if there were none of these emotions going on, if his heart would just remain quiet and steadfast instead of gymnastics as soon as he caught their gentle gaze.

“Why are you accepting this so easily anyways?” Overhaul asked.

“Ah, well, I figured it’s better to accept it willingly. Whether I like it or not, it’ll happen, right? And well, four versus one isn’t really in my favor.” He carefully leaves out the part where he was too tired to fight his undeniable feelings inside of him. He already knows that they’re long past the point of hurting each other like that. However, Deku had no doubts that he would always find a new way to get hurt. If at all possible, he would like to spare them that.

There was a long silence.

“Alright,” Shigaraki said, “Once a week. Fine.”

“I… what?”

“...It’s fine,” the older man gruffed out, “Since… whether we like it not, we’re all stuck here together for some unforeseeable long future, possibly the rest of our lives.” he turned and gave a smile. It would have been comforting on anyone else. “Let’s get along great, alright?” As it was, it sent a shiver down Deku’s spine instead.

“I-I know how that sounded, and I didn’t mean it!” he blurted out. “It’s just… Being wanted isn’t something that I …” he looked down at the scars that danced along his hands, and he thought to the revenant way Stain kissed them. “I’m not… used to being wanted. So it’s easier to think that it’s just because I’m um… more durable?”

“Your durability is… useful,” Overhaul phrased carefully, “But it’s not that we chose you. It’s just… the one thing that we can agree on.”

Deku’s eyes widened comically.

“Regardless of what life was like before this, we can’t change it,” Stain said, eyeing Deku’s eyes across the way, “All we have is right now and each other. And we chose this. Each other. You.”

Overhaul nodded, “If… you don’t want this, want us, you better speak up now. It’ll get harder the longer it goes on.”

It would be so easy to say no. It would be so easy to deny the force between them. It would be so pathetically easy to pretend he was ignorant and naive.

But Deku didn’t even realize he was crying until Shigaraki pulled his blanket up a little higher.

“...Thank you,” he said quietly. He sniffled loudly, trying to find himself.

It was beyond obvious what he was going to do, and their actions just served to prove that. They, just like him, understood each other. Understood this.

“I… don’t want this,” he said, a smile on his face, as he looked at them, “I want you all. Is… Is that okay? You guys are… okay with me being selfish?”

Dabi plopped down next to him, and Deku shivered when he felt the warmth at his side. On the other side, Shigaraki slid closer so that their legs were pressed against each other.

“Be selfish,” Overhaul said, yellow eyes meeting his over the fireplace. “We already met our agreement.”

“...When?”

“...After the whole thing with the inventory,” Stain admitted after a moment. “...No secrets,” he added when Overhaul shot him a gaze. His eyes trailed back to Deku as he spoke slowly, like he was searching for the right words to say, “...You don’t have to be used to… being unwanted anymore. We want you. The way you are.”

Deku’s eyes watered.

“...I see,” he said.

“You’re not going to ask about the agreement? Or the fact that we’ve just been biding our time for this? You’re not… upset? Angry? You’re just going to accept it as is?” Dabi asked.

Deku looked at his feet.

“...To be honest, I don’t know,” he said, a small smile on his face as he giggled a little to himself. “I’ve never been in a situation like this, where someone… uh, admired me, I guess. With everything going on, it was a little hard to focus on that,” he explained quietly. “But if you guys came to a consensus on me, the way I am, I need to come up with a proper answer, right?” He pulled his shoulders back, something brighter in his eyes than they’ve seen in a while.

He looked over at Dabi at that, hoping that he could convey all of his feelings and gratitude.

“Thank you. I think… it’s easier if we’ll be together.”

And thus, something new was added to their routine.

-

>> they’re truly and honestly scared that Izuku is gonna leave, so they teamed up against him. After all, a hero won’t abandon their loved one… right?

### “Izuku”

“...Good morning, Izuku.”

Of all the things that they had to get used to since they got to this island, the degree of affection that Stain laid onto Deku was something no one could have been prepared for. The older man pressed his head against the top of those curls, purring out a morning and then ruffled the hair before completely detaching himself like this was a normal occurrence.

It wasn’t, by the way.

As it was, the young man’s face turned scarlet.

“I guess it would be weird to call you ‘Deku’ or ‘Midoriya’,” Dabi muttered back. He turned over, a sly grin stretching on his face, “huh, Izuku?”

Deku opened his mouth, but no sound came out.

Watching this, Shigaraki wanted to kick himself. As it turns out, it was super easy to beat a hero.

### Class

“Class! Declaration!” Shigaraki yelled out, looking more energetic in this moment than he has for his entire lifetime.

“Oh, are you finally level 50?” Stain asked next to him.

“What did you choose for your class?” Shigaraki asked, ignoring his previous question with his own. “It doesn’t show up on the Status.”

“It doesn’t show up because I haven’t chosen one,” the older man replied back. He put the stack of firewood he collected on the ground.

“Are you going to go on as classless?”

“No,” Stain shook his head. “Izuku will be upset if I did something like that.”

“...Do you know what you want to be?”

There was a long silence, and Stain made an effort not to face them.

“You’re reading through all of them, bit by bit, huh?” Shigaraki sighed back, as though the thought of putting in that much effort was a pain altogether. “Why don’t you just go with what you’re comfortable with? It’s like a rounin-ninja-stealth class, right? With a lot of status debuffs? Maybe some traps?”

The older man shrugged back, and remained silent otherwise.

Red eyes narrowed at him and then shook his head.

### Not-Jealousy

It burned.

Out of the corner of his eyes, Stain saw Overhaul gently lift Deku’s knuckles to his lips. He wasn’t close enough to hear what made that flustered expression appear on Deku’s face, but he was too close to move away without drawing attention to himself.

He closed his eyes, unsure if he wanted to hear more or nothing at all. He tried to block it out, tried to replace the vision he saw, and when that failed, tried to ignore the way his stomach twisted into a knot.

He wasn’t jealous. He can’t be.

Because jealousy led to stupidity, and they couldn’t afford to split. Jealousy would make them split apart. It would force them to corner Deku with a decision. If they forced Deku to choose, their story would end. It was quite possible that they would never get an opportunity to have Deku, except for this universe.

So he swallowed this feeling down. It wasn’t jealousy. He wasn’t jealous.

He couldn’t afford to lose Deku, so he’s not jealous.

### Stats

“...When did you become a Necromancer?” Dabi asked, squinting at the title, “How are you a Necromancer?”

“I’m working on the disintegration spells,” Shigaraki scowled back, “They’re on the way.”

Overhaul turned to stare at Dabi, “How can you tell?”

As though expecting the question, Dabi nodded, and lifted his hand towards Shigaraki slowly, indicating for the man to follow along.

“ <Appraisal > works as long as your level is higher than them, and you got some mana to spare,” he explained simply. “And since we’re in the same party, as long as we open our status window, we can check on each other.”

“... < Status>,” Overhaul said aloud.

“As long as you think it, it should work,” Dabi replied back.

“It uses more mana,” Shigaraki pipped in, “And you have to be over level 30. That’s when I started being able to cast without saying anything.”

“...I’m level 44,” Overhaul replied back.

Shigaraki broke into a wide grin, “I know,” he said.

The older man rolled his eyes.

But now he could see the others’ basic stats, at the very least. He thought that this will be really helpful, especially if someone (Deku) was pretending to not be as injured, or someone (Dabi) was pretending that they are more injured than they are… He thought about all the lap-pillows he could get when he complained loudly enough that he’s still hurt and mourned the loss of them.

“...Izuku’s the highest?” he asked. He really shouldn’t be so shocked, since Deku was usually the one who fights the most. He also always ends up fighting the worst of the worst, and Overhaul is willing to bet that some of the beasts here were dreadfully powerful.

Still, Izuku was at level 60, and Stain was the next highest at 54. The discrepancy was staggering. He was at 44, Shigaraki at 50, and Dabi at 47. He will say that, since being in a party together, he’s been leveling up much more quickly than he used to, but it also spoke measures on how often Deku probably fought for then.

“Glad I’m not the lowest,” Dabi said. He looked over, “Geez, old man, you’re going to die like this.”

Irritated, Overhaul lost focus and closed the status screen. He scowled harder, hating that he didn’t even have anything to say, because he was leveling up way too slowly in comparison to the others. It was made even worse because there was a class that he wanted, and it was much further away.

### Annoyed

“...It doesn’t bother you?” Dabi asked quietly. “That we’re not doing anything. That you’re the only one that’s putting in any effort to what we’re eating and stuff?”

Deku blinked back at him, and then laughed. The sound was vibrant and sudden. Dabi, not seeing what was so funny, jerked back and blinked owlishly in surprise. By the time he shook himself out of the shock, Deku was wiping a tear out of his eye as his laughter receded into soft chuckles.

“Ah….” he took a deep breath, “Sorry, I was… oh man, I just never expected you to care.”

The words stung more than Dabi would have liked to admit. And Deku gave him a warm smile.

“It’s fine. I think it’s good to have something to do,” he said. “And we all have something we can do, right?”

He gave this small smile, something that would have been easy to ignore since it was so small and weak and mediocre, but Dabi could only focus on his lips. He leaned in to kiss them, and Deku jerked backwards with a squeak.

Dabi felt something in his heart close, until Deku’s hand gripped his sleeve. He looked back and the young man, with a blush lovelier than roses, looked up at him.

“Sorry, I… I wasn’t expecting it. But I am now so…”

Dabi stared at him and heaved a great sigh before leaning down to kiss him. But stopped a few inches shy and grinned at the way Deku leaned in to meet him but ultimately didn't.

His flush turned somehow darker once he realized what Dabi did.

His previous thoughts and gripes were packed away and lost among the sand around him. Instead, Deku stepped in to fill the missing void inside with something much more gentle.

-

Eventually, Dabi would learn that Deku meant his words as in < This is all I’m good for > instead of the soft-hearted < Shigaraki is cute when he’s so focused >.

### Library (1)

Since the only thing they could predict about this island was the fact that it was unpredictable, they never went off too far alone. The only exception to this was when they were forced apart.

And well, Stain never thought he could miss anything. It just wasn't something that he was capable of. Where that, and many emotions, rested in his heart, he believed that he had removed it.

In fact, that was not the case at all.

He made a misstep, and fell into a hole in the ground. Standing around for a few moments, he wondered when his group would realize that he was gone. Knowing them, Overhaul would notice first but Deku would be the one that says anything about it. Asshole, he thought with a little smile. Suddenly alone, that creeping feeling settled in his heart as he tipped his head up.

He missed them…?

"Stain!?" Deku's voice called out and he squinted up to the small speckle of light in the dark tunnel he fell through. It looks like it was a good 40 feet drop.

He rubbed his neck. All things considered, he had a couple of bruises but nothing more serious. Concerning the sudden fall, that was a surprising, good thing.

"I'm fine!" he yelled up. He took a step to align himself with the light and began to devise a plan to propel himself up and then stepped on something.

He stopped and looked down.

It caught his eye, nagged at his suspicions, and he leaned down to pick it up.

It was a book.

While Stain would never refer to himself as an avid bookworm, he couldn't deny the allure of having a book in his hands after so long.

"You guys!" he called up, "Its a 40 feet drop, but I think you should see this."

-

"Books! Oh my god, these are books!"

Dabi, with a bright light illuminating from the small fire on his fingertips, whistled back at the sheer magnitude of the library Stain had fallen into.

"Look at all these books! Wow," Deku continued to gush as he browsed the shelves. He grabbed some catching spines and flipped through the contents. He pressed his face into the book and inhaled deeply, giving a happy trill before he leaned back to skim through the pages. His serious demeanor had nothing on the way he kept rocking from foot to foot and excitedly flipped through the pages. "It looks like there's a lot of information about this island as it is."

"... This is a book on magic," Overhaul said from the other side of the library.

"Augh," Shirgaki scowled, "This place is covered in dust." He looked to the other two who had succumbed to their desires and ran amok through the large library. "Bookworms."

-

“...Are they seriously still reading?” Dabi asked, coming in with Shigaraki after they had taken a nap in order to prepare for the first watch.

“I thought it was weird that they were wuiet,” Shigaraki sighed back.

“Wait, there’s, there’s stuff in here about the <Party System>!” Deku said.

Dabi’s eyebrow arched. “How convenient. We get to find all the information about the tutorial and how to live here now that we're stabilized our lives here. Great,” he deadpanned.

“There’s some interesting things you can do with elemental magic,” Overhaul said, coming forward with a stack of books. “Here.”

Both of the men grimaced and Stain came out of one of the dark corners of the room.

“I’ll take first watch,” he said, a book tucked under his arm. “I want to test some of these skills.”

“We’ll be here,” Overhaul replied back, meandering back to the bookshelf he left.

“I can’t believe this,” Shigaraki scowled and turned to where Dabi was leafing through one of the books that was left for him.

“...I can summon totems?”

“We can summon things?”

The two exchanged a look before Shigaraki stalked off to one of the bookshelves.

It wasn’t like they had anything better to do.

And so, The Library, for the time being, became their new designated home.

### Death

“...So like, if this is based off a game, do we die when we die or can we be revived?” Deku asked.

Shirgaki hummed, “It might be that we revive to where we last were without any of our inventory.”

“No, that would be awful,” Deku groaned, “All those pelts…”

“Would we have to start over from level one? Next time, I wanna be a swordsman,” Dabi declared.

Overhaul grimaced at the trio, “For all you know, when we die, we’re just dead. Actually dead. Never to be revived or respawned.”

They fell silent at that.

“We’ll figure it out when it happens,” Stain said, effectively ending the discussion. “We have other things to worry about.”

### Agreement

"But he has to be happy," Shigaraki hissed out.

He had to be happy. Otherwise, he would leave. Not one of them doubted that If Deku wanted to leave, he would find a way.

if they wanted this (and of course they did), they would have to make sure that Deku kept choosing them. All day, every day.

### Date

“...Uhm what?”

“It’s a fucking date.”

“A… date?”

Shigaraki scowled at him, doing everything that Deku didn’t think a man should do on a date, including but not limited to throwing sand at him, throwing him over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes, and dropping him onto the ground. Shigaraki’s face was red, like he was completely sunburnt, but Deku was the one who wanted to cry.

“Just shut up and sit down,” he said.

“Right,” Deku said slowly, sitting up where he was.

Shigaraki’s gaze was absolutely withering as he eyed Deku, “Not there!” he snapped back. He jerked his head over to the beach and then back to him, “Come on! Have you, like, never been on a date before? I thought you wanted this!”

“This is a date?! You just,” he made while motions of picking something up and onto his shoulder, “How was I supposed to know that it was a date!?”

Was this how villains dated? How was he supposed to know? Of all the villains he encountered back when he was a hero, it wasn’t really for dates.

“I’ve been dropping hints! You even said that you were done with everything for the day!”

“How was I supposed to know that they were hints!? I didn’t even think that you wanted to date!”

The other man spun back.

“Of course I don’t! I did this for you!”

“I - I …” The fight in Deku died. He stared, open mouth and shocked at the way Shigaraki vehemently refused to meet his eyes. “Oh.”

The next time Shigaraki looked at Deku, his face was as red as his eyes.

"Get that stupid smile off your face."

“Or… Or else what?” Deku asked, looking far more criminal with that smile. Shigaraki felt his heat stutter dangerously.

At least he had to grab people to disintegrate them away, Deku just needed to exist, and Shigaraki would have thrown himself at his feet. His face flushed darker as he scowled. He kneeled down next to him, putting each hand on either side of Deku’s hips.

“Or else we skip the date.”

Deku’s face turned bright red, and Shigaraki tilted his head to kiss him properly. Despite how aggressively he started, he didn’t force his way into Deku’s mouth. The pressure of his lips lessened, and he gently scratched Deku’s lips with his teeth.

Deku tilted his head and opened his mouth, more than eager and Shigaraki took a shuddering breath as he pulled back. Seeing Deku, the way he tried to catch his breath, the pretty pink splashed across his cheeks, and how he looked up at him with those eyes, had Shigaraki swallowing hard.

“Don’t do that,” he said suddenly.

“Huh?”

“If you look at me like that, I won’t be able to control myself.” He pulled back and stood up. He extended his hand out to Deku with a frown. “C’mon. Date. Then fuck.”

“How romantic,” Deku replied back dryly. Still, he took his hand and got up.

While he was brushing off some of the sand, he missed the look of awe Shigaraki gave their interlocked fingers. By the time he looked up, Shigaraki was staring at the water. They slowly began to make their way, until their feet were submerged in the water and they sank a little bit into the sand every time the tide drew back.

“...But you know, you’re wrong,” he suddenly spoke up.

“Huh?”

It was nice that he wasn’t the one that was confused anymore. Deku couldn’t help but think that Shigaraki looked adorable when he was confused.

“I don’t really care what we do,” Deku explained.

He tugged at Shigaraki’s hand to stop him where he was. He reached his other hand up to his neck and pulled him down as he pushed himself on to the tips of his toes. He kissed him as best he could, but the position was a little awkward and their noses bumped awkwardly. Still, Deku didn’t let that deter him.

“I just like being with you.”

Where Deku grew up, people radiated with this glow when they were happy. When they were loved or they were in love, there was this shine that they had, additional sparkles in their eyes, and it was something beautiful.

When Shigaraki received affection, he looked lost.

Deku cupped his face, and hoped that one day, he’d guide Shigaraki to him. Then, they wouldn’t be lost anymore.

“You’re an idiot,” Shigaraki said quietly.

“Is that really what you should be saying to someone you’re on a date with?”

### Party Name

“...Huh, we do have a Party name,” Dabi remarked suddenly.

“Eh?”

Deku raised his hand and opened his status.

“Huh, you’re right. We… We’re <Devoted>.”

Shigaraki, who was drinking water at the time, choked and it all came spraying out of his mouth. Overhaul, despite not being in the range of fire, jumped backwards like a frightened cat with no little amount of disgust in his face. He glared at the younger man, who was hitting his own chest in an effort to clear his airways.

Stain looked up and nodded. He dropped the kill of the day next to Deku, so that he could start gutting it, and Overhaul grimaced at the sight. Shigaraki, meanwhile, was still coughing.

“It said that if we have that set as our party name, we can share skills,” he said.

“We have party skills?” Deku asked, lifting his head.

“What were the other choices?” Dabi asked.

“Stack stats, group frenzy, temporary enhancement, the likes,” Stain said.

“Wait, so there were a bunch of things that were going to affect us, as a party,” Deku started slowly, cutting open the belly of the wolf with a practiced ease, “And without telling anyone, you just went with <Devoted> over the others because…”

“I wanted to use Appraisal. It’ll make a huge difference while hunting if I can grab the flowers Overhaul wants.”

“They’re not flowers,” Overhaul said, out of habit more than anything, before the words sunk in and all four of them turned to their party leader.

There was a long silence.

Shigaraki, finally managing to clear out his windpipe, buried his head in his hands.

“I can’t believe this,” he muttered back. “Izuku over there has no MP, how the fuck is he supposed to use any skill?”

“I can,” Izuku said, raising one of his hands like he was volunteering for a school project. “I can uh… use skills.”

“What?”

“Aside from your passives and lifestyle magic,” Shigaraki shot back.

“I mean, before yeah, but now, I can definitely use magic.”

“...Pull up your stats.”

Deku did as told, and the other crept in closer to watch. The young man lifted his other hand up and focused on the monster he was gutting.

“<Appraisal>!”

Indeed, for a small meager amount of 10 hp in his six-digit health points, Deku had successfully appraised the monster’s hide as <Red Wolf Pelt, Rank B>.

“See?”

“...So, while the rest of us are burning mana to use our skills. You’re going to be burning your HP?”

“Yeah, I guess,” Deku shrugged back. He closed out of his status and rested his hands in his lap. He played with the bloodied knife for a moment as he kept going, “I don’t really think I’ll be needing it, but… I think it’s nice. I… I’ve always wanted to use magic. You know, at least try it once.”

“Alright,” Dabi said, and then turned back to Stain to get to the heart of the matter that bothered him the most, “But still. <Devoted>? Really?”

Stain clicked his tongue as he sat down next to Deku. He stretched his legs out in front of him as he rested his elbows on the insides of his thigh as he hunched over and spoke, “Look, I don’t choose the name. I choose the buffs.”

Overhaul opened his status and gave a low whistle as “I don’t think this was a bad idea, Debuff Resistance and Regeneration is pretty nice, even if it’s scaled proportionally to us.”

“What’s done is done,” Dabi added, “No point in getting so upset over it.”

Shigaraki gave another long sigh. He rubbed the back of his neck, but the more he thought about what had occurred, the more it made sense. “So that’s why it’s stopped being itchy,” he muttered to himself.

“Guess getting fixed wasn’t too bad after all, huh?” Overhaul asked from the other side of him, “Too bad we can’t do anything about your face,” he said, turning to Dabi.

Dabi flipped him the bird.

### Quirks - Dabi

On occasion, when it was too early to sleep, but too late to do much else, they’d talk. Normally, it was Deku, as the person who was the easiest to start and hardest to stop when it came to mumbling and muttering a mile a minute. In second place was Chisaki, but he was just someone that liked to hear himself talk. Whether or not Deku’s quiet muttering or Chisaki’s monologuing was worse was a debate that never bore fruit.

On occasion, it was Dabi.

“...You okay?”

Dabi looked at his hands and sighed, “Cooldowns are annoying, and watching my mana fucking sucks,” he said.

He tipped his head back. He couldn’t believe it but it would be lying to say that he didn’t miss it. He missed his fire. He missed his fucking quirk, even if it was a constant reminder of a past he couldn’t revert.

“...My quirk, Cremation,” he explained slowly, “was something that would start to burn me if I used it too much. Long battles fucking blew. But even if I burned myself a little, I never had my flame give out on me or just not respond.”

“Don’t I know it,” Shigaraki muttered back.

Dabi flipped him off.

Deku shrugged back, “It’s okay, though, isn’t it?”

Dabi rolled over on their makeshift bedding to shoot him a look, “Yeah, until the first shot doesn’t kill the boar and now it’s a burning boar coming for you.” He sat up, his eyes brighter than the moonlight above. “You remember how long it took for me to get the second shot in?”

Ah, Deku realized, placing his hand over the scar on his chest that Dabi was referring to. It wasn’t something that Deku had been expecting either. But, Deku now had this inhumanely fast regeneration ability that he never had before. While it was something that he did want, in order to maximize the amount of damage that he took so that the damage the others took was minimized, it wasn’t pleasant.

That memory in particular, feeling his arms burn up and losing his arm inside of the boar’s mouth as the tusk dug into his chest, before he managed to flip it over onto its side and Stain swept down to deal the killing blow, was something that he didn’t particularly enjoy. He tried to muffle his screams, and the smoke that clogged his throat helped, but he flinched when he came close to their campfire.

And, it was still one of many instances. Of course, while their casualty rates and mortal wound rates have gotten down drastically as they got more used to fighting with each other, and their win-to-run ratio has finally flipped, it didn’t mean these moments didn’t stop. He doubted that they ever will.

Deku in particular was carved up before they got here, and it has gotten only worse with every fight. And thinking of it like that, when he eyed the scar that never healed on Dabi’s chest, he thinks this is fine. Good even.

“I’ll protect you,” he said with certainty. “So don’t worry about that.”

The older man stared at him, squinting at him as the disgustingly warm feeling began to bubble up inside of him again. With a big sigh, he flopped back onto his back and settled into the sheets. His eyes looked up to the starry night above him as he tried his hardest to quiet his heartbeat before someone else could heat it.

“...I can’t believe you can say things like that with a straight face,” he groaned.

Deku gave a little laugh, “Yeah, that was a little cheesy, huh?” he said, clearly embarrassed, as he scratched his cheek with a finger. “But I mean it. You, Tomura, Chizome, and Kai. I’ll protect this, so take as much time as you need.”

Even though it was obvious that he was no longer talking about their skill cooldown anymore, no one made any attempts to correct him or ask for clarification.

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“I never thought I could third wheel with two other people before,” Chisaki said as a way of greeting in the morning.

“I’ll protect you,” Shigaraki mimicked back and Deku’s face burned bright red in response.

“Oh my god, let me go,” he whined pitifully. He turned to the flame user, who didn’t even look at him as he gathered his blankets for the night.

“Stop picking on our protector,” Stain spoke up, and the others had a good chortle at that.

### Deku’s Eaten

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Deku screamed as he managed to punch his way out of the dragon.

He stood there, one of his arms missing and almost all the skin on his chest and legs burned off due to the acidity of the beast’s stomach, but he was here. Something was sliding down the side of his head, and when he turned, realized that it was his ear, but he was alive. Even though his heart stopped once, he was here and alive right now.

Breathing was hard. Every blink required a lot of energy to open his eyes again.

“Izuku!”

He was suddenly engulfed in the warm arms of someone. He wasn’t certain when Shigaraki became someone whose presence innately calmed him, but the exhaustion of everything that had happened hit him hard. He buried his face in the older man’s chest and cried. He knows that he’s smearing his blood and body fluids all over the other man, but he doesn’t want to be anywhere else.

Funny, more than thinking that he died, the thought that he left them behind felt worse.

-

Shigaraki’s arms tensed just in time to catch the young man when he passed out. He looked down in shock, but the pained expression on Deku’s face made him freeze.

“Don’t just stand there, get him over here,” Stain said, dropping down next to him. His eyes narrowed as he assessed the damage on the young man and helped collect his legs, what was left of them. Shigaraki fumbled a little to wrap his arms around the younger man’s chest, trying hard not to think about how badly his stubbed arm was bleeding all over him. It drenched his legs with blood, and he wondered why it wasn’t closing up.

He had a passive that was supposed to kick in at times like this, right?

Together, they lifted Deku, who was panting painfully. And took him to where Overhaul and Dabi had made a makeshift bed with some of the pelts and two long branches..

“We’ll take him back to base once we stabilize him,” Overhaul said as his eyes critically looked over the young man. “He’s got a bad fever. We’re lucky that he has fast regeneration.”

Deku's missing right arm had yet to stop bleeding, so Shigaraki had no idea what the fuck Overhaul meant by that. The patches of skin that had burned off weren't looking any better either, and his skin was literally steaming where the burns seemed to be the worst. This was him with hyper regeneration?

He popped open a potion bottle to drink then leaned over to feed it to Deku through his mouth. Half of it dripped right back out, and the younger man was too far gone to make any motion that he understood what was going on.

“C’mon…” Overhaul whispered quietly, unusually desperate. “Izuku, wake up.”

He didn’t. His furrowed brows gave way for how much pain he was in and his sweat was beginning to drip down his face.

They stood there in trepidation silence, waiting and hoping that he would get better.

-

The next time he was conscious, Deku blinked slowly before he realized that the late afternoon sun was shining into the room.

How long had he been sleeping?

He shot up into a sleeping position, his eyes darting around the room. He clenched his head, trying to think hard about what had happened before he had passed out and slowly replayed the memories he had in his head like a movie. He took a deep breath and remembered.

Right now, he was in a tent. They were working on making a small house to stay in semi-permanently, and while they were looking through the caves for some nice stone, that huge beast came out of the ground to attack them. He has no doubt that the others had finished killing it, if it somehow did survive after he burst out of its gut. Internally, he hoped that he was the only one that was injured, if only because he knows that this body could handle it.

Case and point.

He felt well rested, and then felt his face turn hot when he realized that he was naked. Goodness, was he like this all night? He looked back at the mess of pelts that he had slept on and felt his face flush.

He didn’t really know when, but he had already memorized the smell of the others he was with. The thought made his face burn harder, especially since they all left him a comfortable nest of pelts. The gesture made him warm and gooey on the inside.

He rubbed his shoulders with his hands and then he suddenly realized that he had two hands. Looking down to inspect the damage, he thinks that, unlike Dabi, he really can’t pull off the patch-work skin aesthetic. As if it wasn't bad before with how One for All destroyed his body, it felt like getting carved up like this was just a part of who he was. It didn’t matter the body, it was just a new canvas.

Despite the fact that he seemed to have grown a new arm, it was a different color than the rest of his body, pale like it had never seen the sun. Even worse that the remains of the acid must have gotten to it, since it also had patches of skin that was the wrong color. His new burn scars were all outlined with small ridges, as though they were healed in a hurry and couldn’t have been bothered to clean it up.

He could only hope that, with time, it would become bearable. At the very least, it didn't hurt at all and his movements weren't hindered in the slightest. It was just ugly to look at, and he’s had his fair share of scars.

While staring at the mess he has become, the tent flap opened and Shigaraki crawled in.

Their eyes met for a few moments before Deku’s face turned bright red and he grabbed the blanket to try and cover himself. The tray that Shigaraki was holding clattered to the ground and the man all but ripped the pelts out of his hands. He paused for a second, eyes taking in Deku’s naked figure for something.

“Wait-”

Shigaraki then grabbed Deku’s shoulder and forced him back down onto the bed.

“Shira-”

“You-you shouldn’t be up,” he said, his voice shaking and then Deku realized how much his hands were trembling. He watched in shocked silence as Shigaraki lowered his head to press his ear against the young man's chest, right where his heart was. “Izuku,” he whispered quietly. “You… You’re alright?”

“...I’m fine," the young man said quietly, calming down as he recognized what Shigaraki was going through. "Sorry for worrying you."

"If you're so sorry then don't do it again," the man snapped back, though his eyes seemed distant. He lifted his head, and leaned in closer to bring their faces together.

Deku, figuring that he wanted a kiss, lifted his chin, but to his surprise, Shigaraki just rested their foreheads together. He gave a long, shaky sigh. His arms wrapped around Deku's shoulders, like he was something precious, and Deku lifted his arms to return the embrace as best he could.

The man was clearly shaken up. Delu didn't really get it, but figured he had to look like absolute trash if this was the way they were acting in response to him waking up. He rubbed his back in small circles, humming the main theme to his favorite Hero Show as quietly as he could.

"...I'll go let the others know that you woke up," Shigaraki said quietly, finally pulling away. He lifted the tray he dropped earlier and placed it over the other man's lap. "You think you can eat anything?" He asked.

The thought of food suddenly kick-started his stomach and he nodded.

"Starving."

"I don't know how your body works here," he said. "But we will get you something easy to eat, since it's been a while."

"Thank you," Deku said, warm with gratitude. Shigaraki leaned in to press a kiss to the top of his head. The gesture would have filled him with warmth, but the hand that came to rest on his curls were trembling, so he worked harder to keep the concern out of his voice instead. "Was I out for long?"

"... A week."

Deku gasped, eyes widening. "A-a week?"

Shigaraki’s breath trembled.

“Don’t do it again,” he whispered.

-

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“...Are… Are we not going to have sex?” Deku asked the man lying next to him.

Overhaul’s eyebrows climbed up his forehead and the man turned on his side to fully face the younger man at his side.

“...Well, when you ask like that, I suppose I have to deliver.”

“Oh I…” Deku was about to reject it since that look in Overhaul’s eyes always made him wary, but then, he turned over onto his side to face the older man. “...Is it because it’s… really ugly?” His hand came to rest on his chest, right on top of his shirt, and wondered why it was trembling so badly. “I… I’m not the one that usually cares about things like this, but I guess.” he gave a nervous laugh, unable to meet Overhaul’s eyes, “... I guess I changed too.”

The other man sat up.

Deku blinked, and wondered if he had pushed too hard. Just a few months ago, the thought that they knew how to exercise kindness would have never occurred to him. Sitting on that bed, he wonders if they were showing him mercy instead. Regardless, he resigned himself to this fate, and thought that a life without being used by other men was surprisingly very empty.

Overhaul gave a long sigh as he rubbed his forehead with his hand. “And here we were, waiting on you… guess there was no point in that, huh?”

“Waiting? On me? Why?” Deku sat up.

The look he got in return was withering.

“C’mon, you’re supposed to be smart, aren’t you?” he asked. He turned and pushed him flat onto his back and hovered over him. With his acting mask hanging around his neck, his handsome face was for full, unfiltered display in front of Deku’s eyes. “You got injured and we suddenly stopped any intimate acts with you… but you can’t figure out why?” he murmured.

Deku shivered at the sound of his words and the heat of his gaze.

“Isn’t it obvious why we’re waiting?”

The smaller man gave a shaky breath at that. Overhaul placed his hand on his chest, and slowly pulled the tied piece of cloth off of him, like he was pulling on a ribbon of a present. His large hand laid against his chest, heavy and warm.

“Do I need to spell it out for you?”

He pulled back, and waited for Deku to open his eyes. When he did, he felt his throat constrict and eyes water when Overhaul looked down at him. His gaze was unlike anything Deku had seen on him before, as though they were liquid gold, soft and malleable. At the focus of that gentle stare, was Deku, his scars, and gaping face.

“We want to cherish you.”

“Oh…” Deku tried to find his voice, but lost himself in those golden eyes.

“This,” Overhaul said, as he placed his hand on his chest, fingers splaying to cover more than half of the mess of skin there, “This was a mistake on our part, yes. Looking at this, I feel frustrated with myself for being unable to spare you from this. That day… We… I don’t want to ever see you in that state again. I don’t want to lose you. I cannot lose you.”

He leaned down to kiss the edge of one of the scars and Deku shivered again. His hands flew to the older man’s shoulders, uncertain if he wanted to push the man away or pull him closer.

“W-Wait, Chisaki-”

“Kai,” he breathed out against his heart, “I want to be your Kai, Izuku.”

Deku sniffled loudly, feeling overwhelmed with something he couldn’t describe.

“Okay,” he said. “Okay, I’ll be your Izuku.”

Like a vow, they sealed it with a kiss.

-

“You guys had a good night,” Dabi commented as soon as he saw them.

Deku turned bright pink and turned his head away, giving everyone a clear view of the rather large and numerous amounts of hickies littering his neck and shoulders.

Dabi whistled as he leaned in.

“So the ban’s lifted, right?” he asked.

Deku’s eyes flickered to Overhaul, who didn’t even look back as he pulled water out of his inventory to put more water in the pot they had over the fire.

“Hey,” Dabi said, voice a little more stern as he grabbed Deku’s chin and jerked him so that their eyes met. “Don’t look at another man when I’m trying to talk to you.”

“R-Right,” Deku whispered back before he stepped back, “No, not right. I… I think I can do whatever I want to.”

“You’re right,” the older man replied back, “So can I.”

A shiver ran down his spine and after a tense moment, the older man pulled back.

“I’m just joking, don’t get your panties in a twist,” he said. He was smiling, but it was all sharp teeth and fierce words, as though he was the one that was injured for a week. “Just a joke.”

He turned away, without ruffling his hair and walked away.

Overhaul stared at him then, “...You’re going to let him go?” he asked.

“I…” he looked between the two of them, lost.

“I don’t mind,” he said. “I don’t care as long as you come back. Don’t do something you’re going to regret. Remember, here, it’s just us.”

At that Deku nodded and left. He took a deep breath, running his hand through his hair. There was no need to feel like this. There was no reason to feel so dissatisfied and despite saying and understanding that, his eyes chased Dabi’s figure as he ran off.

It would have been easier if they didn’t feel. If they did this because they craved the feel of another human body. It would have been if that was the case. Deku would have been fine with that.

Because when other emotions get mixed in, the entire picture becomes muddy.

-

"...Dabi…?"

"It's just frustrating," the other man said without turning around. He looked down at his hands, "I can't change what happened. If I were to turn back time, I don't think I would change anything anyways but I …"

He turned over to stare at the young boy. There was an emotion swirling through those pale blue eyes that Deku didn’t know how to define. If someone else, like Iida or Bakugo looked at him like that, would he have been able to identify it?

Probably not.

"I thought I lost you. And that somehow, while losing you, I lost myself.”

Green eyes widened at the proclamation as the man’s hands fell limp to his side. The image he once had of the unfaltering Dabi flickered. Blue eyes looked back to the ground, unable to meet Deku’s eyes due to a force he couldn’t explain.

This was not love.

“I’m here,” Deku said, stepping closer. He wrapped his arms around Dabi’s middle, pushing his forehead against his sternum. “No one is lost.”

Dabi’s arms trembled as they wrapped around his back. The hold was loose like he was scared Deku would just shatter in his arms if he held on too tightly. The smaller man tightened his hold, and it seemed to do the trick.

He was acutely reminded of how much longer and taller Dabi was than him, as the older man curled around his figure. His arms tightened to an almost painful degree, and he almost lifted Deku off his feet in an effort to hold him close.

“I can’t… I can’t lose you. I can’t,” Dabi whispered fiercely. “When did you become important?”

This wasn’t love.

But, in another time, in another place, if they weren’t who they were with the history that they did, it could have been.

### Sleep Patterns

They all had shit sleeping habits. Being in a place where danger lurks on every corner didn’t help at all. Even when Dabi figured out how to have totems watch over them along the perimeters so that he was the first one to be alerted when something came for them, and even when Shigaraki finally managed to unlock some passive necromancy skills, it never felt like it was enough.

“Is he still sleeping?” Dabi asked, approaching the two.

Deku looked up and then down to where Shigaraki’s face looked almost peaceful as he slept under the midday sun next to him.

“...Yes?”

“Wake him up, we need all hands on deck if we want to try and fish in the ocean today.”

“...I’ll take over for him,” Deku said quietly, “Let him rest.”

The older man frowned, “That hero attitude of yours is meaningless when there’s only us here. It’s only going to get in the way. We should be cutting the deadweight and staying active while we can. All of us.”

Deku looked up from where he was sharpening the sticks they were going to use to skewer their food, with an amused expression on his face as he eyed the taller man. Dabi didn’t take too well to this and scowled back.

“What?”

“No, it’s just…” Deku gave a breathless laugh, “Shigaraki once said the same thing about you.”

Dabi tensed, and he could feel the scars on his chest from when they first arrived here. It was an ache he never forgot, even though he was pretty much fully healed, and had always wondered why these bastards didn’t abandon him. Standing in front of Deku like this, he thinks he understands why Overhaul and Stain didn’t mention anything about this earlier.

“I already said it,” Deku said, “I’ll cover for him today. Let him rest. It’s rare enough that someone here gets a good rest. So, I’ll protect it.” He shrugged and gave a sheepish smile, “Guess I can’t let go of my hero’s attitude after all.”

-

Shigaraki yawned as he woke up, stretching his arms high above his head.

“Oh, he finally wakes,” Overhaul drawls out.

“Help yourself,” Stain said, motioning to the roasted fish.

Shigaraki sat up and rubbed his face. He massaged the back of his neck and rolled his shoulders.

“...Did I sleep through the day?” he asked, squinting at the sky above.

“Yep,” Dabi said. “Sleep well?”

He must have, because he didn’t scowl at them or flip them off. Instead, he nodded slowly.

“Yeah,” he said, “Thanks.”

“Thank Midoriya,” Stain said, “he’s the one that did your work.”

He gave a little sigh, but Deku flustered back.

“No, it’s all good. I was happy just seeing you sleep.” When they all glanced at him, his words reprocessed in his head and his face turned bright red, “In like a not creepy way, okay? Don’t look at me like that.”

“Every light has a darkness,” Dabi muttered.

“I knew you were a freak,” Overhaul added back quietly.

“W-Wait-”

“I was thinking of what I could do to reward you,” Shigaraki added, licking his lips as he eyed the young man, “But I guess you already rewarded yourself huh?”

Stain shook his head, but the small smile on his lips gave him away as they took turns ripping on the young man.

And so, when someone did sleep in, they let them sleep as long as they would like for as long as they did.

### Something to Sleep on - Chisaki

“Hey, can you guys go on a really long walk after dinner today?” Overhaul asked suddenly.

“I thought it was weird that you volunteered to do the dishes,” Dabi relied back.

Stain looked at Overhaul and then back down to the piece of wood he was sharpening, “I’ll go add some more traps then.”

Shigaraki frowned, “Why do I have to?”

“My neck and back hurts too much after the second round,” the former yakuza boss responded, “And I’m sick of the same position.”

“Then just do a different position outside,” Dabi shot back, “Why do we have to leave?”

Overhaul scowled back, as though the idea personally offended him, “I don't want to deal with him complaining about how much his waist and back hurts at the end of it."

They all, by now, were intimately familiar with Deku's pain tolerance. And even worse, they were starting to understand each other much better than they would like to.

"Guys, the stars look really pretty tonight! We should have eaten dinner outside," Deku said as he walked into their little hut.

He paused as they all turned to look at him.

"...What? Is something wrong?"

"Do you prefer being on the top or bottom?" Shigaraki blurted out.

Deku blinked twice before color flooded his face. He spluttered, looking away as his hands came up to cover his face. It did nothing to hide his embarrassment.

"I… Does it even matter?"

"Yes," Dabi and Overhaul responded at the same time, face blank and tone bland.

"I… I don't…" his eyes trailed to Stain, and clearly remembered something as he snapped his head back and shook his head. "It uh… really doesn't matter to me."

"We will figure out tonight," Overhaul said.

Deku squawked back.

-

“So?”

Overhaul’s eyes slid to them and he looked forward, “He’s more wild on top, but he’s louder on bottom-”

“Kai!”

### Teasing Dabi

“What are you guys doing?” Overhaul asked, where Shigaraki and Deku were muttering quietly to themselves next to the fire.

“We’re going to get back at that fucker,” Shigaraki said, his voice a low growl thrumming with contempt.

Overhaul elegantly arched an eyebrow up. Once Shigaraki was done with Dabi, he was next.

“Get back at … Oh, the thing at lunch?” Stain asked.

Shigaraki hissed at the memory and the other two looked to Deku, who was rubbing his face. Just one look at the copious amounts of kiss-marks riddling down his arm was enough to figure out why they were teaming up.

“...You can’t tease Dabi,” Stain said, more as a forewarning.

“Oh, really?”

“Yeah, you can’t tease someone with no shame,” Overhaul deadpanned.

At that, Deku and Shigaraki heaved great sighs, as though emptying out their lungs with their ambitions.

### Sweetness - Shira & Stain

“...How come Izuku is loud with you?”

Stain looked up from the arrows he was carving out. “What?”

Shigaraki leaned against the tree slightly behind him, careful to keep his body out of the moonlight, and the older man hoped he wasn’t talking about what he thought he was.

“Next time,” Shigaraki said, "Can I watch?”

“No,” Stain didn’t hesitate to stop this one where it was. If Shigaraki was talking about what he was thinking that he was talking about, then he really didn’t want this conversation to go any longer than it had too.

“Don’t be so stingy,” Shigaraki replied back, “I just want to see what you’re doing that’s so different.”

“Figure it out yourself.”

The younger man tilted his head back and groaned loudly.

“...Izuku’s a simple guy,” Stain said slowly, hoping that the younger man would take it and leave him alone, “He likes being pampered, likes affection, and he likes touching as much as being touched.”

The gray-haired man paused for a moment.

“Why?”

Stain scowled, “Go bother him, not me. How would I know?”

But of course, Shigaraki didn’t leave. He stayed, sitting still as he kept his eyes on the shoreline ahead.

-

"...Shigaraki? Is… are you okay?"

The man pulled away from where he was lavishing attention to Deku's collarbone. Unlike normal, he was leaving small nips against his collarbone and make trails down his chest instead of rushing to stick it in and well, it confused Deku.

"Haah?" The man drawled back, as he leaned back to properly narrow his eyes at the man underneath him. "Don't you like this?"

"Uhm… not really?"

Shigaraki frowned back, "Why not?"

"It uhm… I guess... uh…"

Impatient and a little hurt, the man slammed his hands down on either side of Deku's head and hovered over him.

"M-more importantly, why are you trying to switch it up so suddenly?"

There was a silence and Shigaraki remained stubbornly silent for another moment and right when Deku opened his mouth to say something, spoke up.

His voice was quiet, and if Deku didn't know him, he would say that he was being shy. But that's impossible since this is Shigaraki, right?

"The sounds you make when you're with Stain… I want to make you make them."

"Huh?"

"So… when I asked him he said that you make those sounds if I'm gentle so…"

"...You're trying to be gentle?" Deku asked, oddly pleased before the words sank in. He sat up, pushing Shigaraki a little to sit up and face him, and the other man pouted a little but let him be. "Wait, wait, you heard me? When I'm with Stain? So you mean like, you… everyone can hear me e… every day?"

Shigaraki nodded slowly.

Deku looked mortified as he covered his face and groaned. He knew, or at least he figured that this was the case but now that he had confirmation it was even worse.

"Oh my god."

"It's fine. I think it's pretty hot," he said. He pulled Deku in between his legs so he could press kisses against his hands. “So this time, I’m going to make you cry.”

"W-wait," he pulled his hands back and Shigaraki took it as an invitation to kiss his lips instead. "S-stop it-"

"What? Didn't I answer enough?" He asked, clearly irritated by being stopped.

"No no no just one more. What… do you all just… talk about what we do?"

"...No, I had to ask."

Deku's face flushed darker and Shigaraki kissed him again.

"And… and you got that you needed to be gentle?"

"Yeah. That’s another question. Now give me another chance."

Deku's hands were trembling as Shigaraki took them in his and pressed a kiss to the inside of his wrist. He looked at him with a hungry gaze that Deku would never associate with gentle.

"Izuku," he said, voice low, "Give in to me.”

And under that hungry gaze, Izuku did just that.

-

Gentle, Shigaraki thought to himself as he rolled his hips slowly.

Underneath him, Deku clawed at the pelt underneath him and gave this high-pitched sound between pants. They had been at this for hours, and it’s only been getting harder with every passing moment. He doesn’t cry out like he does with the others, but those quiet mewls made his vision narrow. Everything made him want to thrust recklessly into the awaiting heat, but he swore to himself that he’d be gentle this time.

His eyes flickered to the flush that ran down Deku’s face and gritted his teeth when he realized that the younger man had covered his mouth with his hand. He released one of his thighs to lean in and snatch that hand away, and the sharp movement had them both gasping.

“I want... to hear,” he panted hard, “Izuku, I want… I want to hear-”

The man stared at him, “S-Shira-” he gasped out and Shigaraki’s hips reflexively thrusted harder at the sound of his name.

“Tomura,” he whispered against his lips, “Call me.”

The steady stream of tears from Deku’s eyes spilled a little faster as he nodded.

“Tomura,” he whispered, and on his lips, it sounded like a prayer. Shigaraki shivered at the name and his slow, gentle rhythm broke again. “Tomura-”

This was a mistake, Shigaraki thought, losing his composure. Deku squirmed and gasped underneath him. He pulled back to adjust his grip on his legs, but the sweat made it a little slippery and instead, he dropped one of Deku’s legs and lifted the other one up to his shoulder. He slipped up a little, his rhythm stuttered and he pushed in further than he meant to, and Deku moaned obscenely loudly.

He paused for a moment, and Deku’s hands flew back to his mouth as he stared back.

The grin that grew on Shigaraki’s face in that moment was not something that could be described with the word ‘gentle’. It was a grin that only Shigaraki could pull off, when he had something exactly where he wanted it. It was a grin that made Deku hot under the realization that he would be devoured.

“There we go,” he purred out, holding one of Deku’s legs over his shoulder and insistently grinded deeper and deeper into the younger man. With every shallow thrust, he gave a full one that made him jolt and moan against his fingers before the onslaught of pleasure made his body go limp.

He panted and keened back, making all the sounds that Shigaraki has been dreaming of since he heard them, and began to drool. A sheen of sweat covered his entire body, and his chest heaved as waves of pleasure wrecked all his nerves. Looking absolutely debauched, the older man bit down on the inside of his thigh to hear him squeal. He left the biggest, darkest mark there, as though to mark this moment on Deku’s body as much as he was in it.

“...Izuku,” he whispered.

And Deku’s eyes widened as he suddenly came with a sharp cry.

There was another moment before Shigaraki blinked. He looked down to where Deku was currently trying to bury his face into the ground and he gave a breathless chuckle. If he wasn’t so wiped by orchestrating this whole thing he probably would have given a bigger laugh and mocked him some more.

As it was, he was too overwhelmed with an emotion that he couldn’t describe as the thought that just calling his name was enough to make Deku cum.

-

“...When my quirk first manifested, I killed my entire family,” Shigaraki said against the base of Deku’s neck, right when he was about to fall asleep. His voice was quiet and soft, and if Deku didn’t have such a fast recovery rate and was still stuck on that blissful cloud, he would have believed that the wind was blowing and would have totally missed it.

Instead, however, the younger man froze, and when he tried to move, tried to turn around to see the look on Shigaraki’s face, the older man’s arms tightened around him. The message was clear. He didn’t want to be seen. Despite the warmth around and in him, he thought that it’s a chilly night.

“My dog, house, mom, dad, sister… everything that I ever knew about life up until that moment disintegrated in a second,” he explained. He wasn’t upset or remorseful, but he also didn’t sound proud of it like he normally would be when it came to the people he killed.

Deku didn’t know if this was a step-up or down. On one hand, he was glad that the man wasn’t happy to have killed a bunch of civilians, and on the other hands, he thought it’s awful that killing your own family doesn’t bring about any emotions.

“After that, I had to take a lot of precautions so that I didn’t touch anything with all five of my fingers unless I wanted it gone,” he explained. “...It was annoying, but I got used to it. And later, I got good enough that I didn’t need all of them. Just one was fine.”

Deku remembered. It felt like a thousand years ago, like a faded scene from an old film, but he remembered. His attention turned back to the current time and place though, when Shigaraki opened his hand up, placing it on Deku’s bare chest. His hand was large, covering most of his upper torso without a problem.

“...I didn’t get why that was so pitiful.”

Deku placed his hand over his, holding it against his chest as though he was ready to just give Shigaraki his heart if he asked.

He felt at a loss for words, and even though Shigaraki was content with not being told anything, and he was still reeling in shock that he was told anything at all, there was something that he wanted to say. He wanted to say something, the right thing.

“Izuku, thank you,” he said, whispering the words against his spine.

Deku felt his eyes water, but he couldn’t come up with anything to say.

He grabbed Shigaraki’s hand, peeling it off his chest and kissed it instead. The man tensed, but didn’t pull his hand away. Deku kissed each pad of his fingers, then kissed the palm again and held it to his chest.

Pity? Was this pity? Was this pain in his chest pity? Was it pity that made him do this?

Of course not, because Deku knew.

He knew that being unable to touch the one you love was pitiful.

Clutching Shigaraki’s hand in both of his, keeping it next to his chest, he hoped that this would be a pain they would never have to face again. He hoped that this was a pain that company could heal and companionship could mend.

It was, after all, all they had left.

### Status Ailment - Drunk

“Oh,” Deku said suddenly.

Overhaul looked over, “That’s not a good ‘Oh’,” he said. He put down the other potions he was working on and walked to the young man, “What did you-”

Deku’s arms came up to wrap around his neck and he pulled him down suddenly. He gave him an open-mouthed kiss, absolutely filthy as he licked his way into Overhaul’s mouth and sucked on his tongue. The older man reflexively reached to grab the young man by the waist, and kneeled down so that they were closer in height. As soon as his knee hit the ground, Overhaul was splayed on his back, gasping in shock and staring up at the sight of Deku in his lap, straddling his hips as he ran his hands up his chest and shoulders. The young man gave a giggle as a bright red flush across his cheeks and green-eyes hooded in their desire to devour him.

Ver, very little could make Overhaul so hungry and parched in a second. Uncomfortably turned on by the sudden turn of events, he tried to formulate his words and thoughts even as the young man on him rolled his hips and grounded down against his rapidly hardening erection.

He hissed at the sensation, prefering to be in control. However, when his hands came up to grab Deku’s hips, couldn’t muster the strength to do anything but hold on. The amount of pleasure that ran up his spine, as well as the tantalizing view above him made his brain short-circuit.

“Hehe,” Deku said, “You’re sooo handsome,” he slurred out.

Overhaul squinted, his brain trying to keep up as he felt embarrassingly flustered. “A-Are you drunk?” he asked, appalled and a little jealous. If he could get drunk, or even tipsy, there was a lot more shit he would be willing to put up with. As it was, he was a little glad that he was completely sober for this moment.

He never wanted to forget this.

“Noooo,” Deku said, wriggling his hips as he leaned down to press his lips against the man underneath him again. “Not… drunk,” he said with a giggle on his lips. He bit down on Overhaul’s bottom lip, sucking it into his mouth and nibbling hard.

Overhaul’s hand slid up his thighs, cocking an eyebrow but making no move to stop him. It was rare enough that Deku would ever make the first move or become so demanding, but this was unheard of.

“I don’t know how you managed this,” he said between peppered kisses, “but you’re going to regret this.”

Deku moaned a little louder at that, loud in a way that he never was, and Overhaul’s eyes shined. He pushed upwards, ready to spend the rest of the night indulging in this kind of fantasy when Deku’s hands slammed him right back. He gave a surprised gasp, having never been on the receiving end of his strength before.

“Noooo,” Deku said, “You stay right there, okay?” He flicked his nose, and Overhaul felt his eye twitch.

He didn’t mind if Deku was on him or under him, but this was… unexpected.

“You guys having fun?” Shigaraki drawled out, stepping forward. “Jeez, at least get dinner first-”

“Tomura,” Overhaul’s voice cut out, “Something’s wrong, Deku is-”

“Mou, Tomuraaa,” Izuku called out, needy and surprising both of them. He extended one of his hands out towards him, “Kiss! Give me a kiss!”

Overhaul eyed the slack-jaw expression on his face, certain that he wasn’t doing any better, but to his surprise, Shigaraki did as he was told. He came to Deku, and as soon as he got into arm’s distance, Deku had grabbed him by the wrist and yanked him forward.

A surprised yelp came out of Shigaraki, as he nearly sprawled on the ground, but Deku silenced him with an earnest kiss. The loud, slurping sounds could be heard even as the young man gave high-pitched keening noises and rolled his hips against Overhaul.

“Fuck,” Overhaul thought, feeling absolutely powerless in the situation. He covered the bottom half of his face with his hand, doing his best not to lose all of his composure and failing rather miserably.

“Hey,” Deku said, pulling back to lick Shigaraki’s lips. “I want you inside me,” he said. His hand came down to rest on Overhaul’s chest, right where at the bottom of his ribcage, “both of you.”

Shigaraki eyed Overhaul, who stared just as surprised back.

“Please,” Deku panted out, “Fuck, my hole it’s … it’s itchy and I need it-I want it. I want you so bad-”

Overhaul pulled his hand out and over Deku’s lips, stopping him where he was. He gave a poorly concealed shudder when the young man moaned and licked against his hand instead. The loud wet sounds was nothing against the actual feeling of his tongue tasting the calluses on his hand.

“Jus… I need to think,” Overhaul said, even though his eyes kept trailing back to the way he was moaning against his hand. “God, you disgusting bitch,” he said, breathless as Deku rocked his hips a little harder.

Shigaraki whistled.

“What did you give him?” he asked, “We need more of it.”

Overhaul shot him a withering look.

“If you don’t want this,” the man said, licking his lips, “Back off. I’ll be happy to take care of this. Is that what you want, Izuku? Something to just fill you up? I bet you don’t even care who it is at this point-”

At that, Deku’s hand came up to grab Overhaul’s hand and pull it off his mouth. They watched the strand of saliva connect his hand to his mouth as he gave a large gasp.

“No, I want you two. Please. Inside,” he said, clearing starting to give up on forming sentences. His voice turned a little high-pitch, his rosy cheeks turning darker as he whimpered out, “I need it…”

Shigaraki leaned in, sucking a part of his neck hard and licking it as he pulled away. Deku gave another high-pitch moan.

“You better not forget any of this,” he purred out against his ear. He looked over at Overhaul, “You in?”

The older man’s eyes found Deku’s and he sighed.

“So be it.”

-

“You’re telling me that he was… drunk?” Shigaraki asked, narrowing his eyes, “And that’s what happens when someone with no mana takes a mana potion?”

Overhaul stared at the empty vial, eyeing the innocent-seeming thing with great contemplation.

“I… I am so sorry,” Deku said, face still red as he sat on his knees and kept his eyes on the ground.

“No, no need,” Dabi said, still on his back as he tried to recover, “Last night was awesome.”

Deku buried his head in his hands.

### Deku’s Quirk -

“You know, if I didn’t lose to it first hand, I would have definitely believed you if you said that your quirk is crying.”

Deku sniffled, scrubbing at his eyes. “Shut up,” he muttered back.

### >>> Island for a Lord

### Shipwrecked (again) - Tyrant of a Duke

"You're kidding me, right?" Shigaraki said, narrowing his eyes at the incoming black clouds. "You have got to be fucking kiddding-"

In this world, they were certain that the sound of the goddess' laughter was the sound of waves crashing and wood splintering.

RIP their Second Boat.

### Caught

>> dabi & stain

>> overhaul & Shigaraki

### Deku-in a cave

It couldn't have been longer than four days since they've been reunited. With that thought in mind, he's honestly shocked that they lasted so long without being reunited.

So when they finally see Deku, they almost didn't recognize him. Where was he? What was he doing?

Looking at the fact that he was so drenched in blood that he was dripping, they had no doubt that wherever he was, it was rough.

His arm was missing, and he had several different sticks of varying sizes sticking out of him.

"Izuku!" Dabi called out, abandoning everything to run to his side.

If Stain was a little younger, a little more free, a lot more expressive, he knew that he would have done the same. But he left the initial comfort to Dabi, the searching eyes to Overhaul, and the physical reassurance to Shigaraki. Instead, he steeled his heart and distanced himself from the situation. This was as vulnerable as they would get and Stain will allow them this moment to be vulnerable.

He forcefully pulled his eyes from Deku and the way he collapsed into Dabi's arms. He pretended he can't hear the wet plopping sounds of his bone hitting the ground.

“...Can you… hear me?” he heard.

“Shit, he doesn’t… He doesn’t have ears.”

He gave a peak.

Midoriya’s ears were gone, but because there was so much blood everywhere, he didn’t know if it was an old injury or new. Stain tried not to think about it, about the cold seeping in his heart where Deku’s smile used to be. Instead, he tried to focus on something else.

As it turned out, he had finally hit the point where he was more afraid of losing Deku then he was angry about whatever drove him to this state.

"...He can't hear us," Dabi said. He pulled out a potion to try and help the situation when the system popped up instead.

<Target HP too low to consume potion.>

And reminded them how lacking they were without a healer.

“He can’t see us,” he added, as Midoriya’s eyelids were concaved in. “He can’t… God.” Placing him flat down on his back, Dabi tipped his head up and took a drink of the potion in an effort to force-feed the potion to him.

<Target HP too low to consume potion.>

“Fuck,” Dabi hissed, the potion bottle shattering in his hand. “Fucking christ, Deku, just wake up. This isn’t… This isn’t that bad, okay?” he said. The older man pulled the blood-soaked head against his chest, cradling him as though he was trying to slot a mismatched piece against his chest where it used to belong. “C’mon, Izuku, you’re fine, right?”

Deku, too far gone, didn't react and they were forced to wait for his passive to kick in.

None of them could say for certain if it was better to watch Deku get injured, or find him injured. They honestly didn’t know.

### Deku's Passive

Deku, unlike the rest of them, had three active passives at all times. In exchange, the only active skills he could use required the price of blood and were shared under their Party Blessing <Devotion>. The other four members of the party only had Deku’s passives shared between their Party when Deku’s passive was active. Meaning, his passive only worked when he was using it too. And, even if his passive worked best when focused on one subject, if they were all injured, it will still try to rejuvenate all of them at the same time, as though they were a single unit.

One of Deku's passive, <Eternity of Partings> made it so that he can regenerate a certain amount of HP per second until he was at max HP. The fact that his HP has been consistently lower than 50% since they crashed onto this island was already telling.

The longest Deku had ever taken to recover was that one time he sorta got eaten by a dragon. He was out for a week, but when he woke up, it was like nothing was ever wrong. The only sign that he had ever gotten eaten was the new assortment of scars that he had, but otherwise, they hadn’t seen his HP dip that low since.

And of course, no amount of passive can magically do away with the emotional trauma that came from… whatever it was that he was doing. They were haunted by all sorts of emotions and memories, some spanning from before their time here. However, the baggage that they carried were their own and no one else’s.

“...Izuku?” Shigaraki asked, voice quiet. He reached his hand out to the younger man.

One of his eyes had (finally) grown back, and a bright green eye stared at him blankly. The sides of his head were a mess though, could he hear them?

“...Izuku, can you hear me?”

He stared at him for another moment before he took another step. He limped badly, and Shigaraki stood up, ready to run and catch him. He threw a glance to Overhaul, who had pulled out a potion. According to Deku’s HP-status, he was less than 50% of the way left to heal himself.

To use a potion felt like a waste since they knew that Deku would heal himself quickly anyways, but to not use a potion -to not try everything that they have- made him feel like he would die instead.

The young man walked over to Shigaraki and sat down. In response, Shigaraki sat back down on the ground, in front of the fire. Careful red eyes watched as the young man crawled into his lap, like it was a cushion made just for him, and rested his head against his chest. He closed his eyes and just like that, he was asleep again.

“You woke us up to brag?” Dabi hissed. “Fuck this, I’m going back to sleep.”

He says that, but he dragged his blankets and settled down on the other side of Shigaraki. Stain dropped his blanket over Deku’s body and Overhaul yawned loudly.

“I’ll take the rest of watch,” Stain said, “Get some rest.”

“Yessir,” Shigaraki muttered back while Overhaul waved at him.

-

Come morning light, Shigaraki woke up to the sound of Deku’s laugh. It was such a comforting sound that he instinctively relaxed. He must have laid down in the middle of the night, because he was sleeping on his side, and right when his eyelids closed again, did he realize what he heard. His eyes flew open and in front of him, laying on his back, next to him, was Deku. He turned his head to face Shigaraki with his green, green, green eyes.

“Morning,” Deku said quietly, like if he spoke too loudly, he would shatter this moment.

Shigaraki, outwardly, calmed down. Internally, his heart raced. He threw an arm around the younger man and pulled him in closer. Their legs entangled a little more, and he tucked Deku’s head underneath his chin. He took several slow breaths, still smelling the blood on Deku’s otherwise clean head, and wrapped his arms around him tightly.

What he wanted to say was, “Good morning, Izuku. I missed you. I’m glad you’re okay. I thought that I would die when I couldn’t find you. I thought the world was ending when I saw how injured you were. You might have been actually injured but I honestly thought that I would just die.”

What came out was, “No.” And Shigaraki held him like a long-lost teddy bear until he heard the others waking up.

Whenever he had to let go of Midoriya, and it didn’t matter when, it would be too soon. And Shigaraki didn’t know what to do with that unnamed emotion.

-

"Yeah it was a den of monsters," Deku said, once he was awake and coherent. “To be honest, it just felt like a long night.”

“...I wish it were,” Stain said, “It would have been easier to deal with.”

He dropped his hand to ruffled Deku’s curls, his touch lingering as Deku closed his eyes and leaned ito the touch.

“I guess I lost track of time.”

“Yeah, no shit,” Dabi said.

“Well, it’s probably better that it went by so quickly,” Overhaul continued.

-

That night, Stain wrapped one of his arms around Deku’s waist and held him tightly against his chest. His breathing was even, and Deku felt it against his shoulder and despite the difference in their sizes, he could feel that their heartbeats had synchronized.

He missed it.

“...Go to sleep,” the older man whispered, right by his ear. The tone, the voice, the familiarity of it all immediately loosened something inside of him, and he gave into it. “I’ll still be here.”

They were both acutely aware of what their life was becoming, what their life has become, and that their life would expire if they lost one another in any way. Confronted by this fact again, it was humbling and terrifying all in one.

### Heroes vs Villains

“If you give me yourself, then, I guess I could let him go,” she purred.

And Deku for a moment, really considered it.

“Lady,” Shigaraki scowled back, “Where I was from, I used to be the leader of a criminal organization. We don’t do the self-sacrifice crap.”

“We do the, kill everything in front of us and then set it on fire crap,” Dabi finished.

The two stared down at her, the magic around them charging dangerously.

“D-Don’t you care about him? If you kill me, you’ll never find a way to break the curse.”

“Ah,” Overhaul shrugged back, “The thing about growing up with nothing is that you learn how to make do with what you have. If you don’t have something take someone else’ or make your own.”

With that, he released his magic first. The ground underneath her opened up and Stain grabbed Deku by the back of his shirt, before his arm wrapped around his waist and he hauled him away, chains and all.

“You good?” Stain asking, pulling him to a little diviet at the side of the forest.

“Y-yeah,” Deku replied back, breathless.

“...Deku, do you remember that night when you said that you’d protect us?” he asked.

“Y-yeah?”

God, that felt like an eternity ago.

“We do, too,” he explained.

Deku felt his eyes water, even as the woman screamed as her body deteriorated from the bottom-up, and burned into ash top-down. The chains around him felt heavy, the leftover wounds stung, and his chest constricted painfully under the weight of their affection.

“...You crying again?”

Deku sniffled loudly, “No,” he said. Feeling like a child under the lights dancing across Dabi’s eyes as Overhaul reached over to ruffle his hair and Shigaraki plopped down on the other side of him.

### Interlude: Stain

Stain finally passes level 80 as they’re leaving this island. By this point, leveling up is like pulling teeth, and it wasn’t like the things that they fought here was particularly hard to defeat. There was some hiccups here and there, but overall, all five of them are still here and he’s fine.

Seeing Deku’s beaming smile next to Shigaraki’s small one, watching Dabi get a piggy-back ride from Overhaul, having people who call him by name, Stain thinks that he’ll never need again.

### Bodyshot - DabDek

“I’m begging you,” Dabi said, both of his hands clasped in front of him as he stared at Deku pleadingly, “Please, please let’s do some body shots.”

The young man flustered.

“I… I alright,” he sighed and the older man actually cheered.

He gave him a moment, staring at the incredulous amount of joy painted on his face. He was vibrating in his glee and excitement, and Deku didn’t know how to feel with the thought that body shots made Dabi this happy.

“Dabi,” he said quietly, and the older man came to return his full attention back to him, “You don’t have to beg.” He hesitated a little, but figuring that he needed this to be said, spoke up with certainty, “I’ll do whatever you want, you just have to let me know.”

And maybe that wasn’t the right thing to say, since the grin that crossed Dabi’s face looked absolutely predatory. He surged in, but instead of the kiss Deku was expecting, his teeth nipped his lips harshly. Surprised, the young man yelped, but the older man followed him when he tried to pull back. One hand came up to grab his hands and yanked them forward so that Deku couldn’t get away.

Like that, Dabi’s greedy tongue forced his tongue into his mouth. The sharp taste of iron filled his mouth while the wet sounds echoed in his ears. Eventually, the man had his fill, as he pulled back. He licked his lips, while his eyes appreciated the view of Deku’s flushed features.

“Anything, right?” he purred out.

And even though Deku was certain he’d regret this, he could only see Dabi’s bright features and agree.

He jerked his head into something resembling a nod, if only to see the light dance in those sky blue eyes.

### Market-exp:

Deku grabbed the woman before she could fall face flat on the ground. It was a sudden motion, and Dabi always wondered how he grew up so that this was his natural response wherever they went. He never asked, if only because Deku looks surprised himself that he acts the way he does.

He didn't know a lot of heroes, but the ones he did know weren't like him.

"Are you alright?"

The young woman nodded as she stared at him, and Dabi watched her face color brightly at the sight of the man he came with. He grinned, smug, as she stared in star-struck awe as Deku gave a polite smile and pulled away from her with a quiet, "Please be careful."

Bur right when he turned around to return to Dabi's side where he belonged, ready to repeat back all the things that they needed to buy for the third time, the woman's hand reached and grabbed his wrist.

Of course, Deku could have yanked his arm back and possibly tear her arm off in less than a second. As it was, Dabi's smile turned upside down as Deku turned almost fearfully back.

"Please, let me thank you."

"N-no…" Deku stammered out a rejection as he tried to recover from his shock. "Please… let go of me."

Dabi took a step closer, his fingers twitching in a way only Deku could fix, ans the woman clasped his hand in both of hers.

"Oh no, I insist, please. Allow me to show you my gratitude, my good sir. Uhm, what is your name-"

"He's not interested," Dabi said, hoping that he appeared much calmer than he felt. He grabbed Deku and tugged him lightly, but the smaller man all but fled her loosened grip to tuck himself behind him.

They were making such great progress too, he thought to himself as Deku's hand grabbed his jacket and trembled. Now they were took a full step backwards since this woman, he turned to glare at her, couldn't take no for an answer.

He turned, narrowed eyes and cold, with the intention of leaving it as it was so that they could get Deku to a better place, when she stared at his face and screamed. Her face, white like snow, contorted to show the all the fear in her heart as she lifted a trembling finger towards Dabi’s face.

“M-Monster!”

She was a stranger. He had never seen her, anywhere or anytime before this moment. He had no name to her, and he’s certain that given tomorrow, he wouldn’t remember this moment. He wouldn’t remember the way her jewels shined and her dress glimmered under the mid-afternoon sun. There was nothing telling or important about this moment, because it had happened so often before that it was more surprising that Dabi had forgotten at all.

“He’s not a monster!”

But this was new, and this was different.

Deku stood in front of him, an arm extended out as if to shield him from her, which was laughable since Dabi towered over both of them. Deku’s pale complexion wasn’t much better, but Dabi still felt something in his chest thaw out.

“To see someone and immediately pass judgement on them, like you’re walking around for the first time, perhaps the true monster is within yourself!” he snapped back, uncharacteristically upset and when he took another step forward, she took a step back in fear. Deku, however, didn’t stop, “Take responsibility for your actions and your mistakes! Apologize to him for your slander and dismiss yourself immediately!”

She looked between Dabi and Deku before she fell backwards in her fear. Tears pooled and began to roll down her face as she stared up at them from her place on the ground, and when she realized that no one was going to come to her side, turned around and scampered up to her feet in an attempt to run.

He doesn’t know what Deku would have done, if he didn’t have his hand on his shoulder. But his grip wasn’t tight, not that he was capable of stopping the young man if he really wanted to leave, but Deku just slowly turned around. The smaller man stepped closer until his head came to rest against Dabi’s chest, and he wondered if Deku could hear his heartbeat.

“You’re not a monster,” he said, as though he was whispering it to his heart.

“...Not to you,” he said quietly back.

“No, you’re not a monster,” Deku replied back, he took a step back and grabbed Dabi’s hand. For a brief moment, he thought that this would be the end of their conversation, but instead, the young man dragged his hand up to his chest, right where his heart is. “See? It’s the same. If you’re a monster, then I am too.”

Dabi stared at Deku for another moment, expression unreadable.

“You know,” he said quietly, “That doesn’t sound that bad.”

Deku’s smile could put the sun to shame.

### Inn

“An… Inn?”

“Yes!” Deku cheered, “Oh my god, a bed would be nice!”

“Jeez, I can’t believe you,” Shigaraki sighed even though he had already grabbed the keys and was focused on the door.

“Children,” Overhaul said, eyes shining as he nudged Stain along. “Well, the innkeeper was nice enough to give us all of this, might as well. Good for you, huh, Deku?”

“Man, Deku,” Dabi said, all but shoving the others up the stairs, “You wanted to sleep in a bed that badly?”

“Don’t be rude you guys,” Stain said, long legs speeding up towards the said doors. “We have an early morning.”

And Deku had the briefest moment to give them a very exasperated smile as they all but ran on in.

-

Deku literally put all his things down and ran for the bed. He had his shoes off in less than a second, and he jumped onto the mattress before they clattered to the ground.

Overhaul crinkled his nose at the thought of getting the bed dirty as he had just came in, but then the young man leaned up onto his elbows and caught his eye with a wide grin.

“What are you doing?” he asked.

Overhaul arched an eyebrow.

Deku opened his arms up, his eyes turning half-lidded as he spread his legs apart. The older man narrowed his eyes, clenching his jaw tightly when Deku returned his gaze with a slow smile and half-lidded eyes.

“Come here. Pamper me.”

Overhaul never considered himself an obedient person, but he thinks he can make an exception.

He walked over, leaning into the grabby hands. He has enough time to press a kiss against his hand before Deku’s arms wrapped around his neck, and pulled him in. And they both knew that the older man was lost.

-

“Bed,” Shigaraki said.

Deku barely managed to get his shoes off before the older man was shoving him onto the bed. He was on top of him in an instant, and Deku rolled his hips up.

“Fuck,” Shigaraki said, breathless before he was suddenly splayed out on his back and looking up at the ceiling. His eyes widened, and lingered as Deku leaned over him. His hands came to either side of his head, a grin stretching across his lips.

The young man grinded his hips down, relishing in the way Shigaraki hissed against his lips and ran his hand over his thighs.

“God,” he said quietly, “You’re so hot.”

“To-Tomu,” Deku gave a sharp gasp, “Please-”

“Yeah,” Shigaraki licked his lips, “What do you want, babe?”

-

They spend about two straight days doing nothing but an extreme sex marathon. It had been a while since they’ve been able to really let loose, but having a bed seemed to just flip the switch inside of them. They switched off, of course, and for the first time since they got off the first island, Deku finally feels fully sated.

-

And then they were asked to leave the inn.

The owner could not meet their eyes, and Deku’s entire body suffered from an intense blush as he realized exactly why they were being asked to leave.

“Oh my god,” he said, “I-I am so, so, so sorry-”

“No, no,” the innkeeper squeaked back, looking uncomfortably, “Please, the… we uh… we cannot ignore the complaints of the other guest-”

“No, I totally understand-”

Both of their voices continued to climb up in octave and eventually, Deku just bowed several times and left, absolutely mortified.

“...Guess we should buy a house or something then,” Stain commented aloud.

“Oh? You wanna get hitched and settle down for that married cottage life?” Shigaraki asked sarcastically, his lips twisting up. He tilted his head to the side, clearly already thinking about it, “And what, in a little cottage in the middle of the most dangerous forest ever?”

“Hm,” Stain was contemplating it, but ultimately decided, “Anywhere where Izuku can be as loud as he wants, with a bed or two.” He shrugged back, “If there's some hunting game, that’ll be nice. The less we have to depend on other people, the better.”

“Wow,” Dabi deadpanned, “We have such high standards of living.”

### Magic Circles

“Ehhh,” Shigaraki groaned as he eyed the spell structure. “Too bad we don’t have anyone that can learn this,” he said. He rubbed his neck, staring at it this way and that.

It was rare for Shigaraki to compliment something, as roundabout as it probably sounded, so it meant a lot about the quality of the spell if he made note of it.

Dabi whistled as he eyed the thing. “Huh, it’s just a couple of layers of spells,” he said. “I see, you incorporate different types of elements on top of each other too.”

It took another hour or so before the two realized that they were still looking at the magic spell. They whipped around, looking for their party members, and stared in shock at how they had set up camp.

“Hm? Done learning?” Overhaul asked when he realized that their attention had shifted. “What a fast class. I’m beginning to see why you’re lacking so much in those heads.”

Dabi flipped him off while Shigaraki scowled back.

“Could have just told us to move on,” Shigaraki grumbled.

“It’s fine,” Deku said with a little shrug. “We’re not in a rush.”

Stain poked at the fire and met eyes with Shigaraki.

“Food,” he said simply.

“Oh come on, I make stir-fry one time and now I’m permanently on cooking duty?” Shigaraki complained as he walked over to start on dinner. “Man, what would you guys do without me?” he asked, in sharp contrast to his actions.

“Whipped,” Dabi muttered quietly under his breath as he took a seat next to Deku.

“You can go read more if you want,” the younger man informed him.

“And miss this time with you?” he purred back. “If I didn’t know nay better, I’d say that you wanted me to go.”

Deku opened his mouth to say something, but before he got any words out, his cheeks turned red. Normally, he would blush after Dabi said or did something particularly raunchy, so this was a surprise. He tilted his head and waited patiently for Deku to look at him or say something.

“...You’re…” Deku tried to start and he trailed off. He took a deep breath, clearing his throat in his fist before he shyly looked up at Dabi in a way that never failed to excite him. “Uh… You’re very handsome when you’re reading, too.”

Dabi blinked, and suddenly remembering a library from a long time ago, covered his mouth as his grin started to grow.

No good, he thought, he felt so happy that he thought he was going to explode. Was it possible to die because one was too happy? If he’s not careful, he was about to find out.

“Stop laughing at me!”

### Second Village

The second village they came to, since Deku couldn’t look at another human being without turning into a tomato, they managed to get a small little hut on the outskirts.

### A House To Call Our Own

One really nice thing about living in a house, even if it was only for a brief moment, would be that they didn’t have to do guard duty anymore. Since they were within the city bounds, they were protected by a magic circle that kept the monsters outside.

This meant that whoever was on watch-duty didn’t have to be on their full guard, ready to fight at a second’s notice every morning. It also meant that Deku didn’t need to get up so early, habit or not.

Dabi, before this day, never knew that he could wake up for Deku. The last thing that he saw before he went to sleep was Deku, the first thing he saw when he woke up was Deku. And for a brief moment, he almost thanked that fucking goddess for dumping them all together.

Deku blinked slowly, groggily waking as the morning light flooded into the room, painted the room in a soft light, and slowly woke up. When he saw Dabi, a lazy smile came onto his face, as though he saw something particularly wonderful.

“G’morning,” he murmured, before his eyes closed again. He nuzzled into Dabi’s scarred chest, scooting closer to intertwine their legs a little tighter.

Dabi’s arms instinctively tightened a little around him and Deku gave a happy little hum against his collarbone. He felt warm, inside and out, and doesn’t know if it was the sunlight or magic or the man in his arms. As it was, his hands trembled as he accepted this new normal into his heart without trouble. Not for the first time, he thinks that if he loses Deku, there wouldn’t be mornings anymore.

He nosed some curls, taking a deep breath, and pressed a kiss to the top of Deku’s head.

No, no, he was thinking about this whole thing wrong. He would never lose Deku. He couldn’t. The only way Deku would ever die is if he dies first, of that, Dabi would make certain. Deku was strong enough to stand when the whole world came crashing down around him, but Dabi honestly thought if Deku leaves, there would be nothing left in him.

He leaned back a little, catching eye on how Deku immediately reached for him, but he wanted to use the bathroom. He got up and did his business, more than pleased to see that Deku had grabbed his pillow as a replacement.

“Oi, don’t you want the real thing instead?” he asked, not because he was jealous of a pillow or anything.

Deku gave a mumbled reply, slurred and almost complete incomprehensible. The sight of his goofy smile, however, had Dabi’s insides melting like ice cream in the summer heat.

“Geez,” he said quietly, taking a hand to gently push back on his curls. “Are you going to be this cute when you’re old and wrinkly?” he asked.

Deku’s hand reached up to grab his wrist and pull it closer to kiss.

“There’s only one way to find out,” he said, a lazy grin on his face.

Dabi still struggled with the concept of looking forward to the future and everything, but Deku made everything so easy.

-

Shigaraki knew that today was going to be a bad day.

With Dabi on one side of him, eyes bright like the clear blue skies, and Deku on the other side, with eyes shining like a field of fresh spring grass, it felt like the whole world was converging in on him. There would be no lazing about today. There was no chance for him to just be alone and breath while he fiddled with the magic spells he had his mind on.

These bastards were going to park it right next to him, and subject him to whatever nonsense they had planned out.

How terrible. How deplorable. He was once the Best Villain (self-proclaimed) of the Era, but even he would never degrade down to their labels.

With a loose grin he didn’t know he had, he looked forward to how awful today would be.

### “Deku”

Seeing the people there, Deku hesitated. His hand trembled, but ultimately, he turned away

"Izuku," Stain called out suddenly. "Are you going to run away from now on?"

Deku's expression crumpled into shame, and a tense moment passed before Stain turned away.

"You… may not remember, but for me, I played that scene over and over again in my head. Getting involved in someone's else's business is what a hero should do, right?"

"There are no heroes here. They have magic and monsters, but no heroes." The creases on his forehead deepened as he all but yelled out, "And maybe they could live like that and be okay, but I can’t, Izuku! I need a hero! I,” he took a step forward, for the whole world to see his vulnerability on his face as he shouted out, “I need you, < Deku > !”

Deku took a trembling breath. The whole world faded away a little more, and, very quietly said.

“It’s okay?” he asked, like he was four. “I might… I might not be able to save them. Is it really okay? Even though it’s just me?”

Stain shook his head. “Because it’s you,” he said, “I know you will save them.”

Deku didn’t let it slip by that he didn’t have magic in this world. It worked out for them in the end, but he always thought that if everyone else modeled their magic after their quirks, he must not have any magic here because he never had his own quirk.

While he was good at pretending it didn’t bother him, it weighed on him heavily. When everyone else, people who had a very good reason to hate him and wish for his ongoing agony, started to expand and grow stronger, he felt fear. When those people turned around with soft words and gentle affection, he lied to them and accepted it greedily.

The feelings they have for him, for Deku, was as the successor of All Might, a hero with One For All. But he thought that he could lie and accept it for himself.

He looked at Stain, trying to find the right words to say and act on, and faltered.

He wasn’t much of a hero. He never saved what he wanted to, and barely scraped on by with his own life. He caused the premature end of his greatest idols, and always drove his mom to tears in her worry and grief.

He sniffled and wiped at his eyes before his tears could spill out.

“Okay,” he decided.

He couldn’t save the people at home. He couldn’t save the world back home. Somedays, it takes all his strength just to start his mornings. He doesn’t think those are any qualities a hero should have.

But looking at Stain, he finally remembered.

He never wanted to be a hero that was remembered and recognized. He just wanted to save people, with a smile on his face.

A little wobbly, like he was 14 again with his friend behind him in a dingy alleyway, he grinned at the young man.

“I…I am here.”

And like he did the first time they met, Stain grinned right back.

### Shipwreck (Encore) - Guild Life

“Are you fucking kidding-”

“You have got to be-”

“We are never going to get on a fucking boat-”

“This fucking goddess-”

“Oh, come on-”

Their party (un)expectedly sails during a storm, their boat splintering in a painfully familiar way and temporarily swallowed up by the waves before being spat out on the shoreline by morning light.

But this time, they stayed together.

### Bandits & a Ticket In

There was a carriage that was getting attacked. It was so stereotypical that Shigaraki was half-expecting narration to kick in. Hopefully, no one else noticed the yelling and screaming from that side, and they can just keep walking like nothing happened.

As soon as he thought that, his eyes met with Deku’s, and he knew that it wasn’t going to be the case.

-

“Thank you! Truly, thank you so much!”

Shigaraki gagged in his mouth as the remains of the bandits disintegrated away. The last one, their leader with a jagged scar running from the center of his forehead, down the side of his face and to his chin, was a man who was referred to as ‘Crescent Moon’.

Shigaraki thinks that the obvious proof, aside from them, that the Goddess is a real piece of shit is in this man. Like, a c-shaped scar on his face and he was called a fucking moon? Seriously?

“Whatever you would like, I would be happy to help you! I have plenty of money when I get back to the city, but if you would like something else, please name it! I would be honored if I could be of use to my saviors!”

“Do you mind answering a few of our questions?” Overhaul asked.

“Yes, yes! Of course!”

“Where is this?”

The man stared at him for a moment, and then the others around him.

“...Pardon?”

“I asked, ‘where is this?’ Are you going to answer my question or were you all talk?”

Stain, who was playing with his blade, letting it run down his knuckles finger by finger before flipping it back up, probably didn’t realize how frightening he looked while doing so, but Overhaul was grateful for it. Hopefully, the little bag of money will squeal and they’ll be on their way.

“...You’re in the Country of Floss. The City of Incids is just down the way here,” he said pointing down the road. “Maybe another half a day trip?” He stared at Overhaul, peculiarly, “There is nothing but demon forests to the west of here… but where did you come from that you wouldn’t know this?”

“My…” Overhaul tossed a glance back behind him, what did he call them? Was there even a word to describe their relationship? “...partymembers and I got shipwrecked after a bad storm. When we woke up, we were here.”

“...That’s strange,” the man said, rubbing his chin. “Ah! I don’t mean to make it sound like I’m suspicious of you! I’m not, truly! To question my heroes would go agasint everything I stood for. It’s just…”

Behind him, Shigaraki gagged loudly at the h-word. Overhaul deftly ignored him as he fixed the merchant in front of him with a hard stare.

“...Well, there hasn’t been a tropical storm for years! At least four years!” the merchant said, shocking the others overhearing their conversation as well, “but… If I’m not wrong and you aren’t either, perhaps there’s another angle to the case.”

“...Oh?”

“Yes. I’m no mage, but there are plenty of magicians in the city I am heading to,” he continued. “If you would like, I would be honored to have you all accompany me to the city. Since I am a merchant, I will be able to get you all in with minimal hassle.”

“You’d do that for a bunch of strangers?”

“If a stranger saves your life, I don’t think you could call them a stranger anymore,” the merchant replied back, a hearty chuckle escaping past his lips. “If you don’t want to, I don’t intend on pushing any further, but there is a lot of information in the city, should you choose to go.”

Overhaul nodded and turned over his shoulder. Immediately, he met eyes with Stain, who gave a curt nod before he disappeared, moving faster than the eye could keep up. Shigaraki groaned loudly, and Deku was already heading to take point. Further away, Dabi returned from his call to nature, and looking around sighed.

“God damn it, I was gone for three minutes.”

### First (overnight) quest

Deku leaned down to grab some firewood, and when he stood up, felt Dabi’s lips against his.

He thinks it’s telling that he can now recognize them by their lips and their habits, and buries the thought as soon as it comes up. It was probably also bad that he immediately relaxed into their touches, but when Dabi’s warm hands come to grab his arms right by the elbow, he feels himself turning into putty as he begins to thumb circles on him.

“I-I’m gonna drop the wood,” Deku managed to pant out, even as Dabi’s lips chased his as he pulled away.

“Okay,” Dabi replied back, backing the smaller man against the tree to press closer. He licked his lips, uncaring of the mess their salivas were making. He sucked his tongue, making obscenely loud noises.

“D-Dabi-”

“Fuck,” the man replied back hotly, pulling back just a little bit so that Deku could see how small his pupils have gotten and how flushed the older man was despite the fact that they’ve only been kissing. He placed one of his hands on the tree above Deku’s head, and took a step closer, pressing against the firewood between their chests as he panted loudler. His leg slipped between Deku’s, bold and confident as he pressed a kiss against his temples and muttered out, “God, you get me so hot.”

The uncensored desire in Dabi made him shiver violently. He dropped his gaze, and Dabi’s hand came up to cup his chin. He gave this helpless little sound in the back of his throat at the action, and unlike usual, the other man didn’t say anything about it.

“No,” he said sharply, the light dancing in his eyes, “Look at me. I want you to know exactly who is gonna make a wreck out of you tonight.”

He kissed him again, no less passionate than all the other kisses they’ve ever shared.

Deku dropped the firewood, abandoning it to wrap his arms around Dabi’s neck, and could feel his grin against his lips. The man rolled his hips, drawing a loud moan out of Deku and he kissed him harder.

“Babe,” he purred out, “No need to rush. Let’s take our time tonight, alright?”

The warmth of the body next to him, the one that calls for him and responds to all of his touches, is by far the most valuable thing he ever had.

### Another Party -

On their way from one end of the forest to the other, they encounter several screams. Figuring that whatever was killing the people over there would eventually make their way to ambush them, they went to check it out.

It was pretty standard, all things considered. There was a group of adventurers forming a circle around one of their members as they faced a pack of wolves to the left and a pack of goblins to the right. It was clear to everyone present that they had been caught in a territorial scuffle between the wolves and goblins, and now they were paying the price.

Once they realized what they were seeing, they knew that there was no need to intervene. The adventurers would either kill all the monsters surrounding them at the moment, or they would be killed or carted off for a fate worse than death.

“Nothing to see here,” Overhaul said, eyes dispassionate, “Should we get involved?”

They came here to see if this would escalate into a problem for them. Now that they knew this was a battle because of territorial reasons and bad luck, there was no reason to stay. Even if the adventurers were to all die, they wouldn’t be caught up in all of this.

Even worse, they just didn’t want to get involved with any more people than necessary. With other adventurers, they had no doubts that they would be too nosey and it would be annoying to deal with for any duration.

“Hold on! Just fucking hold on!” one of them called out and Deku’s eyes snapped to him. He stood up, his mouth dropping in his shock, and announced his pressence to everyone by jumping into the fight.

“Izuku?!”

-

Which was how they ended up in their current predicament. Within four minutes, they had hunted down every last monster in the area, and the resulting gore smeared across the roadway and the trees all around them. The sight of it was grotesque, and some of the adventurers emptied their stomachs at one side of the road or the other.

“I uh…” their spokesperson stepped forward, spiky red hair and a nervous smile.

He was a young man, in a loose shirt with no sleeves, and had a pair of black gauntlets on his hands. His eyes darted from the gore to Deku, who stared at the ground, and then back to the ground. He took a deep breath, clearly refocusing himself as he looked forward and gave a proper bow.

“Thank you for saving us!” he said. He looked up, a big grin on his face, “But wow, your fighting style was so manly! I was a little… thrown off at first, but if you came running out to save a bunch of strangers, I think you’re a pretty manly guy!”

Deku’s green eyes flitted up to his face, staring in so much shock and pain that the other man’s smile faltered.

“Ah, are you hurt?” he asked, “I uh… We don’t have much, but we’re heading into the next town. It’s a three day trip from here, and there’s a great tavern to eat there. Do you… do you want to come with us?”

The green-haired man stared for a long moment, and then dropped his gaze. He hesitated for a long moment, staring at the ground, until Stain appeared in front of him.

“...Izuku,” he said, voice low, “You good?”

He’s never seen the young man like this. He looked like he was about to throw up, pale face and despite the fact that he ran out during their discussion to a fight none of them wanted to do to save a bunch of strangers, he hid behind Stain.

Brave, courageous, tough Deku hid behind him.

This motherfucker in front of him, who Deku threw their words and thoughts and feelings away for in an instant, said something to him that reduced him to this. More than the feeling of his heart aching when Deku had ignored him, the fact that he couldn’t even look at him made an unbridled amount of rage swell up inside of him as he reached a single conclusion through the haze of emotion.

This guy had to die.

Stain pulled his blade out before he understood what he was doing. He turned to him, his bloodlust so high that the young man in front of him choked on it and froze in fear. He would have killed him, had he not felt a tug on his shirt.

His eyes slid back to where Deku was holding his shirt. He was shaking like a leaf and managed to shake his head no.

“...What?”

He shook his head, but didn’t lift his head up.

“If it bothers you so much, then don’t look-” he tried to turn back to kill the man. The young man jerked backwards, and his party finally surged forward to provide him some support.

“If you were going to just kill us, why bother saving us?!” one of the girls snapped back.

“No, like seriously,” Overhaul said, running over. Dabi remained put on the other side of the area, arms crossed over his chest with a big frown as Shigaraki walked over as well. “Are we killing them or helping them?”

Deku shook his head again, unable to lift his head or find his voice, his hands just clutched Stain’s shirt even harder. His shoulders trembled, and he took a deep, heaving breath.

“Fine,” he said at last, quietly, “I’m fine.Let’s… Let’s help them.”

Stain met Overhaul’s eyes. And the man shrugged back.

“...Alright,” Stain said, “We’ll help you.”

“Wait, what?” Dabi said.

“But you stay away from him,” the older man said, staring down at the party-leader of the other group.

“No problem. Is he… Is he okay? I’m sorry if I offended you. I really didn’t mean it. But uh, since we’re not strangers anymore, lemme uh… lemme introduce my party,” he said.

He motioned at his group and went left to right, “We Mina is a trap-specialist, she’s our scout. Tenshin is our archer, Tina is our healer, and I’m the brawler.”

He made his hands into fists and punched them right in front of his chest. He gave a big grin, looking even younger with a radiance only a child could produce.

“I’m Eijirou! And together, we make up Red Riot.”

-

-

“...A what?”

“You can… form a temporary party with us…?”

“...We can do that?”

The guy that they were talking to opened his mouth, and then closed it, and then opened it and turned to the people that he was with.

“Yeah, uh. Yeah. It’s uh… Yeah, we can do that.”

“And it’ll naturally dissolve?”

-

“Well, anyways, what’s your party blessing?” he asked.

Stain stared at him, and then said, “ < Devotion.>”

Their party archer choked as he snapped his head towards him. “Seriously?”

Stain nodded again. “Is there… a problem?”

“No, I just… I never heard of a party actually utilizing that,” he said.

“It was the most useful one of all the party-blessings,” the other man replied back.

“Well yeah, no doubt, but it only works as long as your party is loyal to each other, right? There’s a lot of groups that fell apart because they could see how much they did and didn’t trust each other based on what they could and couldn’t use. And even if you could use their skills, it’s such a huge drain on your mana until you get tight.”

The older man stopped walking as he turned to the other man. “...What?”

He thought about how ridiculously difficult it was for them to first use each other’s skills, except Deku’s. They figured that it was because Deku’s skills were all passives and they didn’t require thinking just dying.

“I mean, I know that they don’t count towards your class skills, but everything else is pretty much free game, right? Damn, that’s super impressive, especially if you have any passives.”

Stain thinks about how easy it was to call <Appraisal> and how easily he and Overhaul fell into step with each other. His blades can cause things to burn and can cast <Curse> on just about anything. He’s given Dabi more piggyback rides than he wants to remember, and Shigaraki’s left shoulder was his arm rest.

He doesn’t know what to do with this feeling.

“You guys must have been together for a long time.”

### Town - Slave

Of all the things that could possibly go wrong, this was probably the one was the most annoying.

“...You don’t have mana?” the soldier at the gate said, “Are you a runaway?”

“...Uh… no?”

He turned to the Overhaul next to him, “Then, do you own him?”

The man’s eyebrows climbed up his forehead and Dabi scowled. He took a bold step forward when Stain placed his arm over his chest.

“We’re new here,” Overhaul said, taking quick control over the situation “We just came to this continent by ship. Could you please explain what you’re trying to say?”

“Ah, sorry about that. Wow, we rarely get travelers though, with the war going on and all,” the gate-keeper said. He looked through their group, his eyes flitting away from staring at Dabi the most and then looked down at his papers. “Most forms of identification rely on someone’s mana. They get their ID card that only activates with their blood. Magic is the only thing in this world that you can’t alter yourself, you know? And everyone has their own unique brand.”

He stared at Deku at that.

“But, if someone without mana is born, there is not much for them to do and there’s no real way for them to actually work and get identified. Either they die of work, or live to be a slave under someone else’s magic so that they can live a little.”

“...Slave?” Deku repeated, a little numb.

The gate-keeper nodded.

“If you don’t belong to anyone kid, and you’re not a citizen or no one can vouch for you, you’re going to have a hard time getting into any country here.”

He nodded, feeling a little numb.

-

“...I’m fine with it,” Deku admitted at last, “Being your slave.”

Overhaul’s eyes turned far, far too bright at the sentiment. “Truly?” he asked, eyes darting from Izuku’s eyes to his lips, and then back up.

“...Uhm…” Deku hesitated, inching away from the older man and then, after another moment, caved. “Yeah, I guess not.”

“Okay,” Dabi said, “I’m not going, that’s probably the third hottest thing you’ve ever said.” He raised his eyes, looking as bored and impassive as ever, “But I don’t think it’s a good idea.”

“Eh?”

“You’re doing it for identification, right? But this means that you’ll never be an equal to anyone else.”

Deku nodded, “Yeah. That’s a slave.”

“Yeah,” Dabi agreed, “I don’t like it.”

### Forgiveness- ShiraDeku

“I’m trying to be angry at you,” Shigaraki said, “Stop it.”

“Stop… what?” Deku looked from the meat he was holding to the other man.

“I can’t be angry if you’re looking at me like… like that!”

“Like what?”

The man looked at him, staring at him with so much frustration, but Deku gave him a patient smile in return.

“Like what, Tomura?”

“...Augh, whatever,” Shigaraki said. He dropped down behind Deku, collecting him in his arms, and tucking him in between his legs.

It wasn’t fair. He thought, his hands gripping tight around Deku’s boy. It wasn’t fair at all. He can just smile at him and Shigaraki was willing to forget everything.

This wasn’t fair.

### Guild -

“You want to… what?”

“They say

-

“And then what?!” Shigaraki snapped back, “You want to settle down here? Become proper upstanding citizens?!”

“I mean, we could,” Deku said, but it was clearly the wrong thing today as the space around Shigaraki seemed to crackle in response to his emotions.

“Why?! What’s the point? Why do we have to live in assimilation to that fucking goddess!? This whole world is bullshit! But why, Deku,” he said, sneering the name out like it was an insult, and Deku takes an actual step back.

“I… Why are you even so upset? I don’t even understand where you’re coming from!”

“Of course I’m upset! Ever since you saw that-that fucking Red shithead you’ve been all sorts of up and down, and I can’t even… It’s like I don’t even know who you are! I thought we were your first priority! I thought all you ever wanted now was for us to be together!”

“I do! It’s just-”

“Then why are you choosing to stay here?!”

Deku jerked back, like he was physically struck by the words. His eyes dropped to the ground.

There was a long silence and then Deku finally spoke.

“...The last time I saw Kirishima-kun, it was from neck up. It just… seeing him whole was… I got lost, I guess-”

“-You guess-” Shigaraki cut him off, but Stain grabbed him by the arms to yank his backwards

“...And?”

“...And I won’t make that mistake again,” Deku said, raising his eyes. The determined light finally returned into his eyes, focusing on the men in front of him as he spoke, “...I’m sorry for making you feel uncertain because of my ambiguous actions. I… I made that promise to you guys on that island, all those years ago.”

He tapped his sternum with his fist, right where they knew one of the ugliest mess of scars sat, and he straightened as his ambitions returned.

“...The rest of my life, of this life, I’ll devote it to you.”

Shigaraki yanked his arms out of Stain’s hold, and Deku understand exactly how deep his actions had hurt him, because he walks out instead.

“He’s just pouty,” Stain said.

Deku stared at Stain, and reached his hand out. Stain stared at it for a moment too long, four seconds far too long, and Deku knows that he can’t live without this. The older man takes his hand.

“...And you?”

“...I’ll forgive you,” Stain said, staring at their hands but not bothering to interlock their fingers. “I know I will.” He turned the hand and pressed a kiss to his knuckles, like he was a knight offering his loyalty to his lady.

“That’s fine,” Deku said, “Don’t give it to me till I earn it.”

Stain laughed against his skin, the huff of air warm dancing across his hand.

-

“...Let’s join the fucking guild,” Shigaraki said.

They all stared at him in varying amounts of shock and surprise, more at the timing then the fact that he caved.

His eyes turned to Deku.

“Forever,” he said.

Deku tapped his sternum.

“Forever.”

And just like that, Shigaraki had forgiven him, and they joined the guild officially the following morning.

### Reception + jealousy

-

"You're not… jealous? Upset? Unhappy?"

"...Why would I be?" Deku asked, tilting his head in confusion. He smiled, resting a hand on top of Shigaraki's. "You… you never realized how you have been staring at me? Of course, I'm not worried."

### Normal? Deku?

At first glance, Deku seems to be the normal one.

It’s reasonable to think that, since he’s the only one of them that seems genuine when he asks you, <are you okay?> and the only one that laughs at miscellaneous jokes, and takes the whole world as he sees it with so much glee that there has to be more than the same blue sky you’ve seen since you have been born.

And then, Deku punches a hole through a dragon, creates a crater under his drop kicks, and doesn’t falter even if he’s impaled by a harpoon.

And you realize that Deku is the furthest thing from normal after all.

-

“...You changed your tune fast,” Overhaul said as the tanker of the group came up to him again.

The man stared at him and then laughed, “Is that how it seems! Haha, yeah I guess you’re right.”

Of course, Overhaul prefered it when people left Deku alone. There weren’t many people that he was okay with seeing with Deku, and it was for certain these strangers. Made even worse, he knew that Deku had a bad habit of getting attached to weaklings, and even if he’ll never take their side and fight against his impulsive instincts, he doesn’t like seeing the young man frown.

And so, regretfully, Overhaul decides that this is probably the better option. He heaves a great sigh, knowing that Dabi could be as responsive as a rock, Shigaraki could glare someone into submission, and Stain could disappear until he wanted to be fine.

So.

“I thought you and Deku would be talking,” he said, mentally remembering to fix the way he addressed the young man. In another lifetime, he couldn’t imagine him calling Deku anything but that title, but now the word feels foreign and heavy.

“Ah yeah, I… I guess I started to talk to him first because he seemed the most like… nicest y’know?”

Overhaul could understand that, out of tall of them, Deku was the kindest. Shitheads always liked to take advantage of that, and it didn’t matter when or where they were.

“And now?”

“...I think that guy’s the furthest away from being a human,” he said quietly. Now that Overhaul was properly taking him in, he noticed how the man’s hands trembled. “...I don’t mean anything bad by it. With him by my side, I don’t think we can lose to anything, and I know he’s a sweet kid. But you guys at least use skills.”

He threw a cautious glance over his shoulder and Overhaul followed his gaze to the large crater that halved the mass of the mountain they were fighting on earlier that day.

“That’s just his natural, raw power, right?” the man shuddered back, both in awe and terror. “Wow.”

And staring at it, Overhaul thought that Deku must have been holding back as much as possible, since half the mountain was still standing.

He kept his thoughts to himself, though, and they kept walking.

Was it better to align with an untrusty human, or a kind-hearted monster?

### ShiraDeku - bjs

Shigaraki pressed a kiss to his neck, his hand sliding from his back around to his chest and then sliding down to his thighs. His large hands squeezed his thighs, groping them as he sucked on a patch of skin, right where Deku’s neck met his collarbone.

“W-wait,” Deku stuttered out, shivering against the touch. “T-Tomura,” he gasped out.

“What?” the man growled out, clearly upset that he was getting interrupted. His hand rested against Deku’s thigh, but stopped moving, although his lips were right against the pulsepoint on his neck, he didn’t didn’t do anything.

“Uh…” the young man paused, trying to recollect his thoughts and craned his neck to the older man. “Hey, can I just… blow you or something?” he asked.

“...Why?”

The heat rose to his cheeks and he looked away.

“I can’t… keep quiet if we… go all the way,” he said quietly. Big, wide eyes turned to him, “So, can you just be satisfied with my mouth until we get back?”

Shigaraki’s arms wrapped around his chest, pulling him against his chest and snaking one of his hands up to force Deku’s head to a better angle so he can kiss him. The combination between the ferocity of the kiss, the sudden action, and the uncomfortable strain in his neck had Deku trembling against him. The man pulled back, eventually, and licked his lips.

Staring down at him, he leaned in to nip the bridge of his nose and leaned back.

“Alright, I just need to wait till we get back?” he asked. “Whatever,” he pulled away from the younger man, ignorant to how hot and bothered he was leaving him.

“W-wait, that’s it?”

Shigaraki paused, tilting his head so that his bangs parted so that there was nothing obstructing his vision as he took in Deku’s flushed features. He watched as the man turned even darker and he frowned.

“You said you don’t wanna fuck,” he said, blunt and callous.

“I-I said I don’t mind… giving head,” Deku said, his face burning at the admission.

“Ehh?” Shigaraki drew out the sound. He tilted his head, as though he was really thinking and considering his options and Deku tried not to squirm. Eventually, he sighed out. “But I don’t want to.”

The green-haired man paused, frowning a little as a surge of insecurities reared its ugly head in, but Shigaraki waved his other hand, as though to wave away all his worries.

“Don’t look at me like that,” he said, “I don’t mind cumming down your throat, and you give great head. I just don’t like getting sucked off. Do you wanna get sucked off?”

The man spluttered, but the insecure look didn’t leave his face. Shigaraki’s lips scrunched up, like he ate something extremely sour, and turned around so that his back was facing the young man.

Before something cold could settle into Deku’s heart, however, his eyes caught onto Shigaraki’s red ears and soft words. The taller man grabbed his hand, clammy and cold like this was the first time.

“If you suck me off, I can’t kiss you as much as I want to.”

There was a brief silence.

“...You’re… really romantic.”

“I’ll get you on a bed,” Shigaraki snapped back, his face almost as red as Deku’s, “then we’ll know who’s really a romantic.”

Not even four steps away, Dabi frowned at the scene in front of him.

“I give really good head too,” he said.

### Marriage - Stain

“So, you got a sweetheart or two?”

Stain isn’t proud or ashamed of this fact, but he doesn’t have friends. Even in the other world, he never really had friends. No one ever tried to understand him, and he never made any effort to try and understand others. Those days, all he had was himself and his ideal.

“...No,” he said. He took a mouthful of the ale. It wasn’t anything nearly as refined as the sake he used to drink, but it did the job.

These days, it was a little different, but he would never refer to those people as ‘sweethearts’.

“Really?” the man looked honestly surprised at that. “You know, you’re not getting any younger, you should hurry up and find a honey to settle down with. You won’t be able to adventure forever.”

Stain nodded. This wasn’t a conversation he had with anyone except his mother that one time when she came to visit him in the hospital after his last incident at Stendal. He had regalled to her about his new idea, his new mission and destiny, and she had told him something akin this.

He needed to quit his dreams, live in reality, give her grandkids, like that was all he would ever amount to in her eyes.

...He hadn’t even thought about her in a long time. He can’t even remember what she looked like.

“Is it that important?”

“Gee, you haven’t grown up at all, have ya?” the man said, laughing. “Look, girlies don’t like old guys, ykno? Unless they’re rich. And if you are rich, you don’t look it.”

Stain looked at the drunk man next to him, uncertain to get him some water or to feel offended by the assessment.

“It’s fine,” Stain said.

“Nah man, the worst thing that could happen to you is being alone. It’s like… a thousand times worse than everything else,” he continued. And then, his arms dropped onto the bar and he took a dry-heaving cry.

Oh no, Stain thought.

“Like, look at me. My wife left me and took our kids! I don’t even know where they are!” he said, starting to cry and wail a little. “I didn’t even get a chance to hold the little buggers! You think that they even know what I look like? No! They won’t! You know, they say that a kid will forget a face if they don’t see it for three months! It’s been like, 20 years!”

Distantly, Stain didn’t blame her for leaving him, as he started to go on and on.

-

Dabi’s arms wrapped around his stomach, wheezing as he tried to catch his breath. Still laughing over the fact that Shigaraki had to pull Stain away from this drunken man and his drunken sobbing.

They would be working together again in the morning, and for the first time since they got here, they thought that being with other people didn’t always have to be a bad thing. Stain didn’t think the man was a threat. Clingy? Definitely. But not a threat. Just annoying. And exhausting. The man clearly had no desire to move on from the past, and no intentions of listening to anyone else, but really wanted to be heard by someone else.

He couldn’t imagine it. Why would anyone want to stay with someone so annoying? Why would anyone wish to stay loyal to someone who was insufferably selfish? The love that he might have once felt was many years ago, and he clings to it like it defines him.

Stain couldn’t imagine living like that.

How could someone love someone else that much? Is that really love? More than loving the person, wasn’t it just loving the memories that they once shared? He didn’t get it. How could anyone live like that? Why would anyone live like that? Didn’t it make more sense to move on? Wouldn’t someone, eventually, at one point or another, just move on?

“We’re back,” Deku called as he walked in with a large basket in his arms. Behind him, Overhaul followed with a basket of his own, closing and locking the door behind him. A quick spell to ensure that nothing will come through, and he turned to them with a raised eyebrow.

“What’s going on?” Overhaul asked, eyeing Dabi in particular. He grimaced when he saw the wide grin on his face, “Who died?”

“You… you wouldn’t believe… oh my god,” Dabi panted, trying to catch his breath. Realizing that words were failing him, he lifted his hand up, to signal he needed more time to calm down. He took two slow breaths, soundless chuckles ruining his breathing patterns less and less. “Okay, okay I’m calm.”

And then, he took one look at Stain and started to snicker again.

Right when Stain gave Dabi a very tired look, his eyes caught Deku’s curious gaze. His head was tilted just a little to the side, and Stain didn’t know how he could do such a little gesture and completely steal his attention.

“What… happened?” he asked, slowly like he didn’t know if he wanted to know the answer to the question.

“Chizome, our dear party leader,” Dabi said, his lips twitching into a wide-grin as Stain sighed back, “got caught by a drunkard. Tomura had to get him out of there.”

Dabi may not be a fake hero or anything, but Stain really wanted to cut that smile right now.

“So you’ve been laughing at him since?”

The man sighed dramatically, shaking his head, “It was fucking hilarious. You’re just saying that because you weren’t there.”

And, Stain doesn’t add, if Deku was there, he would have been out of that situation much faster.

But, Stain saw the exasperated sigh Deku gave, the cheeky grin Dabi shot back, and found his answer.

### Fleshlight - Dabi

“He seems like a lively guy,” the man sitting at Dabi’s table said.

Dabi’s eyes trailed from his drink to where Deku was still talking to the receptionist. The man next to him shot him a glance and gave a loud laugh before he turned to Dabi.

It was rare, but it seemed that there were decent people around here after all.

“So, how much?”

Dabi blinked, and wondered if he had zoned out of their conversation by mistake.

“What?”

“How much for a night with him?”

His eyes trailed back to Deku, but Dabi’s eyes didn’t follow him this time. Instead, something cold settled right at the pit of his stomach as he watched the expression of the man next to him.

“Ah, well, since he’s so well-taken care of by you guys, I figured that he’d be mighty fine, you know? Can’t help a guy for getting curious.”

He licked his lips, his eyes still trained on Deku, and Dabi vividly remembered Overhaul telling him to stay put while they go figure out the rest of the mission rewards. Yet, he could feel his fire returning to his fingertips.

“He’s not for sale.”

“Ah, exclusive huh?” the man said, sighing deeply. He leaned back in his seat and Dabi wanted to incinerate him on the spot. “Man, I’m so jealous. I only get the girls in the slums, you know? I’m lucky that I have potions, or else it would really ruin me.”

His eyes met Dabi’s again and he laughed. This time, the good-natured sound felt like poison. His pleasant buzz deserted him and it took all of his power to keep all his feelings on the inside.

“You guys are so lucky to have a fleshlight all to yourself. But, if you ever get tired of me, I’m sure plenty of us will be more than happy to take care of him, haha!”

“It’ll never happen,” he said simply. “So don’t even bother dreaming about it.”

“Ah, you’re surprisingly possessive about it!” he said, jovial and bright as he got up to his feet.

Dabi felt numb.

-

That night, when he had Deku pinned against the wall, the kiss felt bitter. He pulled back, a scowl on his face as Deku peered up in surprise.

“...Dabi?” he asked quietly.

“Shut up,” Dabi snapped back, surging forward to kiss him again but couldn’t. Something in the back of his mind, something about the way that guy called him fleshlight poisoned this touch and he hated the thought that he was so weak that something like this could shake him up so hard. Instead, he had his arms caging the smaller man against the wall as he futility to center himself.

“Hey, talk to me,” Deku said quietly, moving his hands from clutching Dabi’s shirt to opening them up. He pressed his palms against Dabi’s chest. He slid them up to his shoulders, right up his neck, and then cupped his face. “What’s up?”

Dabi buried his face into his hands. The small gesture, the small hands, the scars that ran across his scarred face, was something he was so intimately familiar with but it no longer felt like it was enough. He pulled away completely from Deku, taking a few steps backwards.

“...I saw you talking to the big guy, Boris, right? While I was talking to the receptionist, you looked… you looked like you weren’t having a good time. And when I came back, you didn’t even finish your drink. So we left before the others came back, right?”

Deku stepped closer to Dabi, reaching to grab the older man’s hand in his. This time, he didn’t fight it.

“Dabi...?”

“I wanted to kill him,” Dabi blurted out. “I wanted to burn that whole place down. That bastard,” he said, lifting his other hand to cup Deku’s face, “I wanted to kill that fucking bastard for even looking at you.”

Deku nodded.

“Why didn’t you?”

“Because you were having a good time,” he said. “And Kai said not to make a mess and Chizome said we should leave quietly and I wanted to prove Tomura wrong. But he… that fucking bitch said that he’d ‘take care of you’ if we ever got tired of you, like that will ever happen.”

He rambled, something that was very unlike him, and Deku closed his eyes. He could imagine the situation easily, the man saying some raunchy comments and Dabi doing his absolute best to not ruin this nice town they found a temporary home in when they were scattered as it was.

“I don’t even know who I’ll be without you,” he said, voice quiet. “And that fucking bitch thought he could take you from me.”

“...He couldn’t, you know,” Deku said, opening his eyes. “I don’t think anyone could take me from you. I wouldn’t let them.”

Dabi knocked their foreheads together, feeling something loosen in his chest. “Damn straight,” he said.

Deku stepped closer, wrapping his arms around his chest and placing his ear against the area right where Dabi’s heart would fit. The older man placed his chin over the soft green curls, his arms wrapping possessively around him, feeling as though his heart had returned to his chest.

### Cityscape

“...That’s… that’s like a metropolitician city, right?”

“...Yeah.”

“And … And we’re all seeing this, right?”

Stain pulled up his status, “No sign of being put into an illusion.” And then, he squinted back at the sight before them.

“That’s not fair,” Shigaraki said, narrowing his eyes in clear distaste, “We never got to have flying cars.”

“No no no,” Chisaki said, pinching the bridge of his nose “We just came out of a forest and now there’s a full, futuristic city like it came out of some shitty sci-fi movie. This doesn’t bother anyone?”

“Even if it did, there’s not much we can do about it,” Dabi replied back, dead-eyed as he heaved a big sigh. He side-eyed Shigaraki, who looked like he was about to jump into the city, uncertain how to feel about the large amount of energy coming out of the usually lethargic guy.

“We gotta go,” Shigaraki spoke up, for once speaking in favor of entering a town. “For science.”

Stain arched an eyebrow at him.

“Who are you?” he asked for good measure.

### Overdeku - Rings

"Izuku," Overhaul said quietly.

Deku looked up from where he was waiting for his fingernails to grow back on the bed. He sat so his legs were dangling off the side, and Shigaraki was sleeping quietly behind him. As it was finishing, the older man kneeled in front of him and pulled his mask down.

He looked up at Deku, who raised one of his eyebrows at him curiously.

"I…" Overhaul tried to start, but no other sound came afterwards. There was a long silence that followed.

"...Yes?" Deku said.

He hesitated for a heartbeat, before he suddenly rushed to kiss him. The younger man gave a happy hum, melting into the touch and then it ended as fast as it started. He blinked, surprised and a little upset that he pulled away so quickly.

But Overhaul couldn't meet his eyes.

"Kai…?" Deku whispered quietly, his confusion turning into worry.

"I…" He tried again, and then trailed off. He took a deep breath. "I want to make you happy," he said at last.

Deku's eyebrows nearly reached his hairline as he opened his mouth to say something, but Overhaul still wasn’t looking at him. Instead, he reached into his pocket and pulled out a small pouch. It was barely as big as his palm.

“I know it’s not the same,” he said, “but I made it for you. It’s supposed to raise luck because I thought… I thought that it would be useful.” He finished rather lamely, feeling his feelings waver.

He pulled out a ring. It was a silver band with a yellow gemstone on it, citrine. It was small and modest, but most importantly, Overhaul’s cheeks were bright red and he couldn’t meet his eyes.

“They… they say that people used a ring to represent these kinds of vows and promises to show eternity. The… The idea that the promise will end with eternity, where this ring would end. The last time we talked about it, it sounded like this was important to you. I meant it then, and I mean it now.”

He got down to one knee, and brought his eyes up to Deku’s.

“What’s important to you is important to me.”

There was a brief silence as Deku took in Overhaul’s features. His eyes trailed to the scar hiding under his hair, right above his ear, from a close-call that brought them closer, and then to those eyes. As though someone had melted gold to fill in the color for his eyes, Deku felt like he was being stared at from the insides of a furnace.

“...I love it,” Deku said, and leaned in to kiss the man.

Eagerly, the older man returned to kiss. He pushed back just as hard, nipping his lips and forcing his tongue in as soon as Deku’s lips parted just a bit, like he couldn’t get enough. He sucked on his tongue, his hand coming down to either side of his waist and molding his body between Deku’s legs. This wasn’t something that they weren’t familiar with, but the weight of the actions felt heavier than usual.

Eventually, Overhaul pulled away, pressing a kiss against his forehead.

“Thank you,” he said, like this was more than a ring.

If he could encase the light that shined in his eyes, he’ll never have experience the dark again.

### Bandits - A Conclusion

“The answer is obvious then,” Deku said simply, “Let’s kill them all.”

The other four men turned to him in so much shock and disbelief that Deku almost checked to see if they were petrified.

That happened once, and it would mark the only time Deku had ever seen Stain blush. He wanted the same thing without ever wishing for the same circumstances, but he didn’t think this was the same.

“Wait, wait, wait-” Shigaraki said, like a broken machine.

“I need to sit-” Overhaul looked like his eyes were going to pop out.

“I need a drink-” Dabi wheezed.

“Izuku, what the fuck?” Stain blurted out.

Their youngest flustered back, spluttering a little as he said, “What? I thought that’s what you guys would want. And it sounded like all they were doing was harassing each other. It just… seemed neater.”

“Kill?” Shigaraki whispered, “You?”

“I can do it!” Deku replied back, lifting his fist up. “And you said it first!”

“I have no doubt,” Overhaul said, rubbing his temples, “Just… wasn’t expecting you to be the one to suggest it first.”

The young man stared at them and then dropped his gaze. “I mean… I don’t… want to kill them. But, if we want to get that key, we need to kill a minimum of two, right?” He wrung his fingers together, uncomfortable and pale, “And it doesn’t seem like we can punch our way through it.”

“...No,” Stain said, resolute. “Not anymore.”

“I can do it,” Deku replied back.

“You’re too strong,” Shigaraki spoke up, “You don’t need to kill. So just… Leave it to us.”

“...If you have excess energy,” Dabi suddenly said, dropping his hand onto his shoulder, “I can take care of it for you.” His smile was blinding, but so was the flush that broke out onto Deku’s face.

“If we’re going for the kill route,” Overhaul spoke up, “Izuku and I will watch camp. You guys go and work hard.”

“What?!” Shigaraki snapped at the same time as Deku.

“But that’s not fair-”

“That sounds good,” their party leader said. He gave a small smile as he stretched his neck, “Maybe we should up the stakes a little,” he continued.

“Oh?” Dabi looked suddenly interested, “And what were you thinking, dear Party Leader?”

The former Hero-Killer gave a grin, something bloodthirsty as red eyes landed on Deku.

“Hm, we can leave that to Izuku.”

“Eh?”

“Oh, alright,” Shigaraki grinned. “Winner gets a reward from Izuku, hm?”

Seeming to agree to something that Deku didn’t realize he was going to play a part in, the young man just heaved a great sigh instead.

“Don’t I get a say in this?”

“We already outvoted you.”

### Something Traumatic

>> gets caught in a sleeping spell (for nightmares) only Deku is unaffected (no mana + natural debuff) so fights with sleeping bitches and manages to come out on top because he’s nice. Fixes the nightmare curse with power of True Devotion

“So, you did this because you’re sad and lonely?”

“N-no!”

“It’s alright,” Deku said, eyeing the men sleeping in front of him. “Because now I’ll be sad and lonely too.”

-

“I… I didn’t do this because I wanted to!” the small witch blurted out. “I did release the spell! I did! Okay, if they’re sleeping, it’s because they want to!”

Somehow, the young man seemed to look even more tired.

“It’s alright,” he said, voice soft like the clouds. He ran his fingers through Dabi’s hair, like he was sitting in a garden of flowers, and looked back at the woman. “We’re bad people. Before we got here, we did a lot of bad things. So, it’s okay. Don’t worry. I’m sure that we deserved this.”

She stared at him, shocked and confused.

“...You know, they might sleep for a long time…”

“Then, I guess I’ll be waiting a long time.” Deku stood up and rubbed his neck, “I don’t think you would know where they could rest for a while, right?”

“...There’s a house…”

“...Thank you,” Deku said, his smile as genuine as his forgiveness. “I won’t forget your kindness.”

If the little Witch didn’t think so before, she was certain about it now. Humans were terrifying creatures.

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### ShiraDeku - Post-nightmares

Does Deku look at him like that?

Deku was a leaky faucet, always dripping with kindness no matter what kind of bill it might rack up for him. He knew that, in his head, Deku cared for them all the same way. He knew that, but it was different when he saw his face twist into concern like that.

Hurry up and wake up, Overhaul nudged Shigaraki.

“...Kai?”

“C’mon, you look like you’re about to keel over,” he said. “Chizome can keep an eye on him.”

“I’m…”

“Fine? Yeah, I know.”

Giving an exasperated sigh, Deku stood up. He walked past Overhaul to walk out, but the older man slipped his hand into his. When green eyes came up to meet his, the man nodded at the door.

“C’mon.”

They didn’t speak, even as they walked outside of their cozy cottage. The night air was more humid than he’d prefer, but any moment he had Deku was precious to him.

He was pathetic like that.

The two stood there, hand in hand, even in the warm summer heat. Overhaul, from experience, knew that there wasn’t much that he could say. Everything that they could do, they have. It was just that they had to wait for Shigaraki to finish replenishing his mana, and then he’ll wake up and everything can return back to their tentative happiness.

Normal, he meant normal.

“I know that everything is going to be okay,” Deku spoke up, breaking their silence.

Yellow eyes looked at him, quietly waiting like how a flower waits for sunlight.

“I know, and I don’t mean to worry anyone. I just… And I’m fine. I really am.”

His hand squeezed.

“I’m not alone, after all.”

The smile that Deku gave Overhaul was everything that Overhaul never had in the last life.

“No,” Overhaul agreed, “You’re not. Neither of you are.”

And, if he was ten years younger, he would have said something as naive as, “and you never will be.”

So instead, he leaned down to kiss Deku’s brow. When Deku went up to the tips of his toe to get a real kiss, thought that eternity could be sweet.

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Shigaraki groaned as he woke up, and immediately in his hand was a cup.

“I got you,” the voice he recognized as kindness told him, “Water, right?”

He grunted and allowed himself to be helped into a sitting position to drink the water down. Once he managed a few mouthfuls, he pulled away and the cup was removed from his lips. Slowly, he was placed back down onto the bed.

The next time he wakes up, Deku will be passed out, sleeping in the uncomfortable chair next to his bed. He was slumped forward onto the bed so that his head was resting on his forearms, snoring away softly. Shigaraki would stare at him before ruffling his hair, and wonder why he ever worried.

“..Some guard you are,” Shigaraki murmured, fingers catching on curls. “Falling asleep on the job.” His lips twitched up when Deku leaned into the touch, a sleepy smile stretching on his face.

It looked like he was having a pleasant dream. He figured that he shouldn’t make fun of him too much, and let him rest. He gave a long sigh, and peered out the window. He stared at the small patches of grass that led up to a dense forest. The deep greens shined a bit brighter under the sunlight, and the color gave him comfort.

They got a nice place this time.

-

“...Tomura’s up?” Overhaul asked as soon as Stain walked in to start lunch.

“Yeah, were we that loud?”

If they were loud enough to wake up Overhaul, then it was only a matter of time before a sleep-deprived and scowling Dabi came downstairs.

“No, you’re finally smiling.”

Stain froze at the doorway, his eyes flying to Overhaul’s knowing look. He looked back down to the pot in front of him as a hand came up to touch his face. He didn’t even notice.

“It’s been a while,” Overhaul said.

And it was like time resumed.

### Leaving the Guild

“...Kai, do you remember?” Deku asked, a smile on his face, “As much as you want to stay together, it’s the same for me. In order to stay together, we have to work together.”

Overhaul’s eyes shined, and the young man gave him a thumbs-up.

“So, if you really want to go, let’s go.”

### Shipwreck (Reprise) - Island of Nothing

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After another shipwreck...

There was nothing on this island.

It was a little larger than the tutorial island, and once they realized that, they sat down to talk about if they were going to stay here for a bit.

### Fishing - OverDeku

For the moment, it was just the two of them.

“...Back in the other world,” Overhaul started to speak, and before he continued, Deku already knew what he was going to bring up. “I assumed position to purge the world of that disease. Quirks.”

It was something that Deku has heard many times, on more than one occasion. In the rare moments that they are together for long periods of time, Overhaul always fills the space between them by talking. Today, under the clear blue skies, the two sat for hours. Deku listening and Overhaul still talking.

“Finding Hejire was a coincidence, but I suppose it was lucky. If anything, the most lucky part was that I never met you.”

Deku, long since zoned out, grunted back like he has been doing this whole time, watching the water ripple under the breeze, and thinks that Overhaul is lucky he likes his voice. Otherwise, he would have beaten him up and thrown him into the lake at some point.

“If I had met you then, if we had been on the same side, then I’m certain that I would have forgotten my ambition,” he said. “Though I suppose that this is the kind of life that Oyaji wanted for me.”

Instead, he sat there, yawning and not really listening to the way Overhaul just kept talking. For the next three hours, about this and that and something else.

### Cosplay

“Obviously,” Shigaraki said, waving his hand through the air, “Izuku should be in a skirt. Fuck, and thigh-high socks.”

He could already imagine it, Deku looking up at him sitting down on the mattress with wide eyes, almost swimming in a sweater much too big for him. His shirt neatly folded underneath him as he played with his socks a little. Shigaraki gulped audibly, signaling exactly how quickly his dirty fantasy was playing out in his head.

“...Hah,” Dabi snorted, “Fuck that, I wanna open him up while he’s wearing a full-length ball gown.”

The man gave a filthy grin at the though of hiking up and bunching up expensive material under his hand. Or better yet, tearing it off of him to expose his most intimate parts up to him. He wanted to see Deku trembling against him, dragging up his high heels up the back of his leg as he forces his body to accommodate his.

Overhaul’s chuckle ruined both of their fantasies and they turned to the older man.

“Please,” he sighed, “Your world is still pathetically small.” They didn’t want him in this conversation, but didn’t have a choice as he lifted his finger up and said, “Nurse uniform.”

He could already see Deku trying to tug down an atrociously short skirt, his face bright red. And then, he would get right down to business and sweetly try to inform him about the patient in the other room while Overhaul opens him up with his mouth. He wanted to feel his thighs quivering against his head as he listened to him stutter out medical terminology to him.

At that second. Stain placed his mug down onto the table with a soft clink. It garnered all of their attention at once and they stared to see what their Party Leader would say.

“Cat ears,” he said.

A sudden onslaught of images, Deku with soft cat ears and a long tail looking at them with a small smile. The way he would purr into their touch and mewl loudly when he feels particularly good.

All the while, Deku stared at them with a bright red flush and poorly concealed disdain, wondering when they would remember that he was with them at the breakfast table.

### Shipwreck - a Love Song of 60 Years

“I’m starting to get really tired of this,” Dabi wheezed as Deku got back to the shoreline.

“Okay, everyone is accounted for,” the young man panted out next to him.

Insane STR stat or not, he was fucking tired. While he was glad he was strong enough to stay awake the entirety of the storm, he was glad that he could mostly keep the others safe. He ran his hand through his hair, pushing the wet locks out of his face.

“You’re so hot when you’re wet,” Dabi groaned out.

The young man gave him a really, really tired look back. He leaned down to press his lips against Dabi’s forehead. The older man jerked his chin up.

“You missed,” he said, still panting.

“Just catch your breath,” Deku replied, placing his hand on his forehead as he turned over to where Overhaul was sprawled out next to him. “How are you?”

The older man gave this gurgling sound, and Deku figured that he was awake enough.

“Shigaraki is just pretending,” Stain called out from the other side of Shigaraki. The man sat with his arms resting on his knees, panting as hard as everyone else, but lifted his hand to flip him off.

Indeed, Midoriya thought to himself blankly.

"Where the fuck are we?" Shigaraki asked.

"Well, according to the map, we have been here before."

As one, the group turned over to stare at the hugr forest. Huge didn't seem like a word big enough tk describe the trees that would make Mountain Lady feel like a child.

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The forests were huge and expansive. It was clearly made for a lifeform much larger than them. However, it didn’t dampen their spirits as they had to climb over huge tree roots sprawling across the ground like a stone labyrinth.

Deku’s mouth was open in his awe as his eyes traced how the branches stretched.

The others gave him wry looks and amused snorts, but no one dampened his spirits. Even though they couldn’t see the skyline, and they normally guided themselves by using the position of the sun and stars, they didn’t feel lost.

They weren’t innocent enough to say that they were adventuring, but it was close.

Shigaraki knew that they wouldn’t get lost. Until Deku’s eyes lost their glimmer and light, he was certain that they never would.

### Deku v Curses

Deku grabbed the young girl. This little girl? She managed to do something that hasn’t happened since the day they found the goddess on that first island. Fucking christ, they’ve been on this island for a total of a fucking week.

She had…

The girl is crying. She looks like the girls he used to save, in another lifetime, she was sobbing and crying silently. Her eyes were impossibly big, and her blotchy red face was stained in tears. She’s tiny, barely taller than his thigh. However, since she tripped over a tree root, she was on her butt, looking up at him in absolute terror, and he doesn’t get why.

He’s the one that’s scared. Whatever happened to his party members, they were still sleeping through.

This soddy run-away game died within seconds. There was no way that Deku would be slower than a child when he was faster than Stain in terms of short-distance sprints. As it was, there was no way he would have lost this girl, unknown forest or not.

“...Those are my...,” he started quietly, and then caught himself, “They’re… my everything, you see.”

He grabbed her hand, and for a brief second, forgot himself. As a result, her hand shattered in his grip like a cracker. She screamed into her other hand, crying even harder. She thrashed like mad, but her kicks didn’t even make Deku flinch.

“Ah, sorry,” he said unapologetically, “I didn’t mean to lose my patience like that. In reality, this is what I should have done.”

With that, he straightened, placing his foot onto her leg and snapped it like a branch.

This time, she failed to muffle her screams against the ground, and it echoed in the world. Somewhere, in the back of his head, he remembered a time when he saved a young girl like her with everything he had. Now, he couldn’t even remember what she looked like, and the haze that settled over his heart constricted him to this moment.

“...I’ve used up all my patience a long time ago,” he said. “Release them.”

“I-I can’t…” she sobbed, “I can’t-”

“It’s alright,” Deku said, “It’s okay. Magic disappears when the person calling it to the world disappears too. The only exception to that is a curse that takes the life of their caster.”

He placed his foot over the girl’s neck. With enough pressure, it would snap. With how hard she was panting and gasping against the dirt, he had no doubts that she could not breath properly. Mercy dictats that he put her out of her misery right now, and it might result in the swift return of his party members.

Then suddenly, the golem from before came hurtling down next to him. The forest grounds shook and the trees rattled, but Deku didn’t even look up at it. As far as he was concerned, a pebble had rolled over.

“Please, I beseech you,” the slab of rock begged, “Please spare her. She’s just a child.”

“...I don’t care about that,” Deku replied back, voice deceptively quiet. “I just want to cancel out what she did to them.”

“...I’m sorry,” he said. “As long as they wish to wake up, they will. She is not strong, and was taught only to protect herself. All of her magic are wired so that the stronger they are, the harder it’ll be for them to escape.”

The young man didn’t doubt it. There was no way there could be a mage-class person who was better than all of his comrades, but couldn’t knock him flat on his ass. It had to be a spell that was awful only to the people that could fight back. The person who was teaching this girl must have treasured her. It made something cold settle in his heart, and the hardened expression in his eyes made him look much older than how he looked in front of the other two. “...Oh, is that it?” Deku said, “Then they’ll wake up soon enough, huh?”

If the golem had eyes and physical features like a human, he would have blinked owlishly at him. He managed to pull himself together, and placing his head on the ground, pleaded.

“Please,” he said, “Please spare her.”

“...We’re the same, you see. You are putting your head on the ground because you want to save her,” Deku commented. He pressed down on the girl, distantly realizing that she had thrown up in her pain.

He understood the feeling, since he once had all his organs suddenly ruptured and was throwing up whenever he felt anything resembling that sensation. However, a key difference was that he had four people who diligently helped him survive and comforted him in any and every way. Of those four, not one could even look at him and call his name.

“But the thing is,” he shook his head, as though trying to banish those pleasant memories lest he raze the forest to the ground. “I want to kill her so that I can save my people,” he said. “Do you understand?”

As it was, Deku had turned back to his sleeping party members, removing his foot off of the pitiful child. In the end, they were the same, after all.

“...Then, what should I take as insurance?” he asked quietly.

“...Pardon?”

“You’re a golem. You don’t feel pain and it seems that you will live as long as the previous magic doesn’t run out, right?” he asked, assessing the situation so simply without the full story. “Then, you must be locked in here since your magic is strong enough to be with he. So I’m assuming that you had waited for someone too. Since you’re here and you care about her, that person must have brought you into the world and then perished afterwards had to have left you with the mission to <protect her>.”

Deku sighed, and rubbed the back of his neck, like this was the greatest pain in the ass. And no one here would even know that his posture and gestures mirrored something Shigaraki would have done exactly.

“I’m sorry, I really am, but I’m about to lose my temper,” he said quietly, his voice eerily distant. He turned to them. “So tell me right now, what will you give me as insurance?”

“I... I’ll stay,” the young girl said quietly. “And… and me and my entire bloodline will stay until they all wake up.”

“...I see,” Deku nodded, along. He looked thoughtful for a moment and then gave a small smile, looking like an angel promising to take them to utopia. “Yes, I suppose that will do.”

He looked down at her, oozing with a purity that felt wrong for the situation.

“Let’s get along well, alright?”

And just like that, 60 years passed.

### 50 years - Stain Awakens

The sunlight was too damn bright, shining in his goddamn eyes, and he woke up. He sat up and rolled his shoulders. He must have been tousled up a lot worse than he thought, if his muscles still feel tight after all of that. He rolled his shoulders and got up.

It was strange for him to be awake so late in the day. He looked around, and seeing Overhaul, Dabi, and Shigaraki sleeping around in the beds, he has no doubt that Deku was the reason why they got out of that particularly bad situation.

Geez, looks like he should reward Deku for this. The thought already had him smiling.

He got out of the bed, grateful that Deku was the one that always took care of them, if only because he was the only one of them that makes sure to change their clothes and clean them up so that they wake up comfortable. However, more than anything, he was surprised that Deku wasn’t in the room with them.

He paused at that thought and then sighed. He couldn’t believe it. He sounded like a fucking child, to be upset over the fact that Deku wasn’t waiting on his hand and foot. He caught his reflection in the mirror and realized that he was smiling.

The morning suddenly felt too quiet, and he turned to the door.

He gave a small smile, something that he only had because of the people he was with and the comfort that they brought him every day.

“Morning, Izuku,” he said.

And if he thought that Deku running into his lap, a crying, sobbing wreck, was an issue, than the fact that Deku had spent the last 50 years caring for him and the others threw him for a loop.

-

“...Why didn’t you just abandon us?” he asked quietly.

The green eyes, that stared at him with more wonder than he knew he ever deserved, blinked back at him blankly.

“Do what?”

“...Leave us?”

Deku blinked, and Stain doesn’t understand how the thought to abandon the people that were dragging him down, that left him a crying wreck all through the night, that never mustered enough courage to tell him that they loved him, never occurred to him.

50 years was a long time to be left with your own thoughts. Stain remembers the eternities that stretched from day to day when he was locked up and tied down. And remembering those days, how boring they were and how often he receded into his mind, doesn’t know how Deku managed to do this.

“...Oh,” Deku said, and then turned to him. He gave a sheepish smile, “I thought about it.”

Oh, that was a surprise.

“...But you know, waking up to absolutely no one and nothing is… really, really lonely.”

No, Stain thinks. This wasn’t a surprise. This was Deku.

He reached out, and wrapped his arm around him. He stepped in and desperately wished that this was enough. Stain couldn’t find his voice though, so he tried to press Deku closer so that he could hear his heartbeat, as though his heartrate was a better method of communication between the two of them.

Deku gave his shuddery breath, his arms wrapping around his chest. Somehow, 50 years later, his arms are still not long enough to wrap around his chest all the way. His fingertips have a few more inches to go.

And still, this was Stain’s greatest treasure.

“I dreamed about this,” he said quietly, voice wet. He buried his head against Stain’s collarbone. “I’ve dreamed about this.”

“It’s not a dream,” he said, promised.

While he had no plans to ever leave Deku’s side before, he now had plans to stay by his side forever. It wasn’t because he thought that he owed him for watching over him and the others for 50 years, and it wasn’t just because he respected him.

One day, he swears that he’ll be worthy of this <devotion>.

### 60 Years

And then, 60 years passed.

If Deku had any doubts about it before, they were all gone now.

Of all the things that were taken from them, the ability to grow old was also taken from them. He has reason to believe that if <they stopped aging>, that means that they won’t be able to grow old together. This was something that was taken from them too.

But, when Dabi woke up that morning, Deku was eternally grateful that blue returned to his world.

Then Shigaraki woke up.

-

Deku cried himself to sleep, curled around Shigaraki, his hand clutching on the man’s pants leg.

It was so cute that Shigaraki dismissed the strange clinginess of it. He figures that Deku was probably freaked out if he and the others were injured enough to pass out for days. And, he thought absent-mindedly as he ran his fingers through the green curls, it was too cute.

So he let him be.

Still, he definitely felt like he had slept for a long time. Even while they were fucking like rabbit, he felt a lot of limiatations every time he shifted his arms.

“God,” he groaned, rubbing his neck with his other arm, “How long were we out?”

Stain, who was walking in with a tray of some easy to eat soups, stared at him for a long moment, and then to Deku.

“...A couple of days,” he said, “I’m glad you guys are awake.”

Shigaraki waved him off, but when took his hand off of Deku’s head, the man curled around him.

“...Izuku did a great job taking care of you guys,” Stain said quietly. He set the tray down, pausing to ruffle the young man’s hair, and they watched as he immediately relaxed against the touch. “Just … give him whatever he wants, okay?”

“I mean, don’t we usually anyways?” Dabi asked frowning.

“...Please,” Stain said.

And well, they supposed that Stain and Deku must had been incredibly shaken up by the events, if all three of them had been out at the same time. Yet, they couldn’t shake the feeling that something was incredibly wrong.

-

A day and a half later, Overhaul woke up. He yawned loudly, and even though no one would admit that they were worried, Deku broke out into tears and sobs when he ran into his arms like he did everyone else.

-

Deku felt nothing but gratitude at the thought that they weren’t taken from him.

### First Time Out

“Wow, you guys got a nice place out here,” Overhaul said, eyeing it critically.

The inside of the house was cozy, but the outside made it look like it had been abandoned for several decades. It was overgrown with greenery and vines, wrapping around the columns of the house and scaling the walls.

He peaked over his shoulder, and sure enough, Deku was staring at him. And while he always knew that the kid was a little… strange at times, this was a new level strange. This didn’t feel like him at all.

“Something on my face?” he asked.

“Eh?”

Deku blinked, as though surprised that Overhaul noticed that he had been staring, and where he would have dropped his eyes before, one-part bashful and three-parts embarrassed, kept staring instead.

“You’re… really handsome,’ Deku decided on instead, and the sheer, genuine, honesty, coupled with his absolutely tender gaze, made his heart flip inside out and backwards.

The older man coughed, spluttering a little, and turned away.

He didn’t think it could be good for his heart, especially coming out of the weird magic coma, to be subjugated to those eyes of Deku’s.

### Something Simple, a Little Strange

“Oi, Izuku, did you-”

“Izuku?” Deku blurted back, surprised and Dabi stopped.

“...Yeah?” he said, squinting a little, “I just said that.”

“Me,” the younger man repeated, his eyes wide.

“Yeah, you. Izuku,” Dabi repeated again, nodding slowly. “...Is there any other Izuku that would know where all our fucking pants went? I thought you had the laundry.”

But those green eyes, dazzling in their shine, stared at him like he was something incredible and precious. In all honesty, being the center of that focused gaze made him more uncomfortable than anything.

“...Why are you staring at me like that?”

“Ah, sorry,” Deku laugh was airy and uncertain, and dropped his gaze to the round. His smile was present, but Dabi couldn’t felt that nagging feeling that something was wrong. It just didn’t make sense how someone could look so sad while smiling. “I just… I haven’t heard you call my name in a while, I guess.”

Dabi stared back, and gave a slow smile. He couldn’t handle their current atmosphere, but was more than happy to make it something he was used to.

“Well, Izuku, I can hold you all night to help make up for lost time,” he said, a suggestive smile on his face.

Deku smiled, but looked more like he had been sucker-punched. He gave this forced laugh that had Dabi frowning before he knew what was going on. He didn’t like this. It had just been a couple of days, right? This, shamefully, wasn’t the first time they’ve had to leave him-or any of them- alone, but he couldn’t decide on why this time was so different. Why was Deku acting so… distant?

The gap between them widened, and feeling like he was lost in a large, expansive, huge place, Dabi thought he would choke on this unwanted freedom.

### Found Out Sleep Schedule

“...I’m so sorry for casting that spell!”

“Uh, okay?” Shigaraki said.

“Moreso than you, shouldn’t your kid or whatever be apologizing?” Overhaul replied back.

“Apology accepted, just get the fuck out of here,” Stain snapped back. “We already told you that we don’t want your apology.”

There was a brief moment as the other three turned to Stain in shock. While words like polite and kind didn’t quite describe him, the curt and rude words didn’t sound like him at all, and threw them all in a loop.

“But still! Even if it was sixty years ago, I wanted you to know that I’m not that little girl anymore! And I want to take proper-”

“I said, get out!”

“Wait!” Dabi snapped out, raising his hand. A silence fell on the group, and the man pointed at the girl. She flinched backwards, her eyes watering, but he spoke firmly and clearly. “What do you mean, ‘sixty years ago’?” he asked.

“It’s nothing,” Stain tried to stress back, getting to his feet as he glared at the girl in front of him.

“No, I want to know,” Overhaul said, yellow eyes staring at Stain. “Izuku’s… been acting strangely. And straight up, you’re not the type to hide things. So spill.”

The little witch stared at Stain in shock, “I thought you would tell them,” she gasped. “Why wouldn’t you tell them?”

“Tell us what?” Shigaraki snapped back, sick of this keep-away game they were doing.

“I said it’s nothing,” Stain replied back, voice dropping in pitch as he narrowed his eyes to the young witch. He pulled a blade out, and in that moment, everyone understood the severity of the situation.

Despite his normal stance on letting Stain kill as needed, since Stain always eliminated threats before they could hurt them, Overhaul stood in front of Stain, the girl behind him. It’s a far-cry from what he would have normally done, and Stain’s eyes widened when he did so.

“You guys have been sleeping for sixty years,” the witch shouted out, talking loudly and quickly, her face stern as she eyed Stain. The other three froze as she continued, “I was that little girl who placed that spell on you, sixty years ago.”

“Wait, wait,” Overhaul said, placing a hand to his head, turning around as Stain dropped his gaze and stared at the ground, “And you mean that we were just fucking sleeping? For sixty years? And Chizome and Izuku was just taking care of us?”

She shook her head, “Stain here only woke up ten years ago.”

“Ten…”

“...years?”

She nodded again.

“No, no, no, I don’t believe this,” Shigaraki replied back, “Because… if … if it had been sixty years, why doesn’t Izuku look different? He barely looks like he’s aged a week, moreorless sixty fucking years?”

“I… I don’t know,” she said quietly. “You will have to ask him-”

“But why hide it?!” Dabi snapped back, slamming his hand onto the table. The sight of this table, and the ease that Deku maneuvered through this little cottage suddenly made his gut twist. “Were you just going to hide it from us forever?!”

And in all honesty, if this crazy woman had come in, claimed that she was that little girl, said that she bewitched them into a 60 year slumber, that Deku patiently waited for them to wake up, and they wouldn’t have taken her seriously. They wouldn’t have taken her seriously, and would have mocked her relentlessly for it.

But the fact of the matter was how hard Stain was fighting to hide this from them. The fact of the matter was that Stain, their party-leader, unshakable, stern and focused Stain couldn’t meet their eyes.

It was the only proof that they needed.

“Chizome?!”

“What’s going on?!”

The door slammed open, and holding a basket of apples, Deku was there. He stared at all of them, before his eyes fell to the witch, no longer the small girl that they remembered, and then back to them.

“...Well?”

“...Izuku, did you… really wait 60 years?” Dabi asked quietly.

Deku’s eyes widened, his face paling before he looked from the girl, to Stain, and then to the ground. He took a deep breath, his features relaxing.

“Well?” Shigaraki pressed.

“Yeah, I guess,” he said, looking serene.

“Y...You guess?”

Deku shrugged back, “I didn’t really keep count.”

The witch looked like she was ready to cry, and they have no doubts that someone as meticulous as Deku had it down to the last minute.

“And you were ready to never mention it to any of us?” Overhaul asked. “And you were just going to hide it from us for the rest of our life together?”

The young man kept his eyes on his basket of apples. He spoke quietly and slowly, “Even if you knew, nothing would change. So it’s-”

“60 years! Do you understand? You waited 60 fucking years for us to just wake up! Did you… did you even know that we would wake up?!” Shigaraki snapped back, turning to the man like he was the one that was lost.

The green-haired man smiled back, content and at peace with the world.

“Yes,” he said. “It was well-worth it.”

And under that soft radiance, their fight died. Next to him, the absolutely haunted look on the woman’s face made them even more uncomfortable.

“...Let me walk you out,” he told the old woman, the once-child that put them into a 60 year slumber by accident, “You don’t have to come back anymore, alright? The contract has been completed.”

The woman, with one last, pitying glance towards them, did just that.

-

<< “I feel like you’re suffocating me.” >>

The stricken look on Deku’s face fucking haunted him. He didn’t really care if he hurt anyone’s feelings or anything, but just that look on his face. He never wanted to see it again. He never wanted to be the reason why he made that face.

And now, he sat down, knowing that he was the asshole in the situation, even though Deku was the one that hid from him that they slept for sixty fucking years.

Suffocating?

It’s barely been two weeks since they woke up. It’s barely been half a month month since he felt his patience draining from how much Deku hovers over them. It’s been a month since he thought that there was a leash tightening around his neck.

Not even a month, but Deku’s been through 720.

### Upset

-

“I’ll be honest,” Deku said, speaking up, “If you guys all fall asleep like that again, I think I’m going to actually go crazy.”

They eyed him.

The whole sleeping thing was a pretty sensitive issue, if only because of how nonchalantly Deku acted about it while Stain acted like he was walking on eggs. Even though, for them, nothing seemed to have really changed, the distance that Stain and Deku held from them felt especially bad.

“You guys don’t have to feel responsible. Six hours or sixty years, it makes no difference. You guys woke up. I choose to wait. So it’s okay. I’m fine.”

He beamed at them, and if they didn’t know him so well, they would have believed him.

Of all the thousand things that they could have said, they didn’t say anything at all.

### Old Habits, New Habits

Overhaul’s hands came to his shirt, and Deku’s hands flew to grab his.

The older man arched an eyebrow back, but didn’t move his hands. As it was, Deku’s hands were on top of his, gripping at the tunic he was wearing right at his hips. His features were deathly pale, making his ragged scars pop out even more.

“Ah, sorry,” Deku said, “It’s just… are you sure? You don’t have to-”

Overhaul sat up a little, pulling his hand away to prop himself up onto his elbow to kiss him, a soft action that only involved their lips and an unspoken promise. He pulled away, leaning back and stared up at the young man straddling him. He remembers a time when a sudden kiss was enough to set his cheeks aflame. Right now, it just looks like Deku wants to cry.

Deku may say things like he didn’t feel the passage of sixty years but Overhaul is beginning to think that it was something that he tried to block out of his memory.

“...It’s not the same as you probably remember,” Deku said.

“You’re… still you,” Overhaul said quietly, laying back down. He lifted his hand open for him, palm up, and waited for the young man, “And I’m still me.”

Deku stared at the hand for a moment before he shyly pulled his hand back. Overhaul was careful not to show it on his face, but he despaired at the loss of a young man who used to whine and complain if he didn’t pay enough attention to him. Overhaul caught on of his hands and brought it up to his lips, kissing every knuckle, every pad of his fingers, and traced right around the callouses and the scars until Deku ripped his hand away from Overhaul.

He stared, in shock, as Deku cradled his hand against his chest. His form trembled.

“S-Sorry,” he said, “I… I just…” His eyes dropped in shame.

Something ached in his heart. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath.

“It’s fine,” he said. “There’s nothing for you to apologize for. Can I… Can I show you? How much I missed you?”

Green eyes stared at him, confused and a little surprised, and he nodded.

This time, when Overhaul reached under his shirt and pulled it off, he didn’t fight it. He didn’t fight it, but he got progressively paler and paler as Overhaul’s eyes raked his figure. He trembled like a frightened animal, and for a moment, Overhaul wanted to go find the woman that put him into the Slumber and kill her.

Since Deku didn’t really change, didn’t grow taller or wider, didn’t grow his hair out, the small things that did change were the only indicators that time passed. So, once he got his shirt off and he saw the sheer magnitude of scars running across Deku’s chest, scars that he didn’t recognize, he is given another reminder on how long 60 years must have been.

“I-it’s really, really-”

“Izuku,” Overhaul said, “You’re still you.”

Tears sprung to his eyes again, and Overhaul gave a quiet laugh. It wasn’t something that he would normally do, and the sound was far too melancholy for it to be anything resembling a laugh.

But some things didn’t change. And of all the things that were taken from them, they still had this.

“...But thank you for waiting.”

This time, when he kissed him, Deku kissed back as eagerly as he remembered him to. It took a little longer than then the ‘normal’ he remembered, but when those lips pushed back, he felt like Deku was returned to him. He left a trail of kisses outlining his jaw, feeling him shudder instead of giggle. Running his hands up his thighs, mapping out the new ridges and scars, relearning. Deku dipped his head down with a quiet whine and Overhaul swallowed it in his mouth.

He doesn’t know how long it’ll take to build up Deku’s tattered mind, but if Deku could wait 50 years in near absolute solitude, waiting for them to wake up, then he’ll wait for the rest of their fucking lives if that’s what it takes.

Every time Deku’s eyes turned away from him, he slowed down to fix those eyes back onto him. Every time Deku tries to stifle his cries, he’ll kiss him that much harder. He’ll force his way into his body and make Deku watch the way his body accepts him. He’ll worry his teeth into his skin, even if they’ll disappear in seconds, because Deku shivers underneath each one. Overhaul had no desire of playing into fantasies. This is reality. He will make this Izuku’s reality, and in turn, their future.

The words that weighed heavily, the three words that he never thought he could ever make claim to, lingered in his mind. He swears that, as soon as Deku’s eyes didn’t have to be coaxed to meet his, he would say it.

-

“Sixty years,” Dabi breathed against his neck, “Have you changed? Gotten someone else to snag along? Had fun with our compliant and sleeping bodies?”

The green-haired man gave this little laugh, empty and hollow. His hands trembled, but he did well to keep it from either of their eyesight.

“You know,” Deku said, turning to face him, “I don’t think I could, even if I wanted to.”

“Oh?”

The young man was clearly thinking about something in particular, and Dabi kissed his cheek before biting it playfully. Deku gave a little gasp and Dabi placed the entire flat of his tongue right on the bite.

“Pay attention to me,” he said. He brushed their noses together, bumped their foreheads, and gazed deeply into his eyes, “I’m here now.”

Deku stared back, his eyes filling with tears.

“...Babe, don’t cry,” he said, kissing his cheeks as the tears ran down his face. “Izuku,” he breathed out, like it was a secret just between the two of them.

Deku nodded back, the same quick and jerky movements he always did, as his hands came up to his eyes and wiped at them.

“It’s fine, just go ahead,” he said. “Please. I want this. I really… I really want you. Please, I do. So just. Please, just-”

Dabi leaned in to kiss him, deep and full, and for a moment, he felt Deku’s tears catch on his eyelashes. He pushed the young man down onto the bed, climbing over him with little difficulty. He placed his hands on either side of Deku’s ears and hovered over the man so that they were only inches apart.

“You don’t have to beg,” he said. Blue eyes met green, obscured only by the tears, and he still can’t believe that he found someone that missed him so much that they’d cry over it. “Not about this. Whatever you want, I’ll give it to you,” he promised. He leaned down to kiss him again.

Eventually, when Dabi rocks his body against Deku’s, he’ll wipes his tears again and again. He’ll kiss and touch him like this was their first time and feels the differences. He spends hours opening him up, savoring every moment. He takes extra care in making sure that Deku cries because of what he’s doing now and not because of something he missed.

For him, it was just three days ago since he last held him. And in three days, even though the body feels the same, he can’t quite focus on anything other than how tenderly Deku’s eyes drinks him in. He looks at Dabi like he was the gift, he was the blessing, and something so much more than what he was.

He wants to live up to that.

-

Shigaraki pulled Deku closer into his lap, trapping most of their sounds between their lips. He rolled their hips together, and swallowed the loud groan he gave out between them.

It tastes just as sweet as he remembers it. In this moment, he thinks that nothing has changed after all. The sounds that Deku gives are the same sound that he always coaxes out of him, and he wants to drown in them.

Eventually, when he pushed Deku onto his back, he would lean back to stare at the flushed man. He thinks that he’s staring at Deku the same way he always does, but just staring at him was making the man underneath him shiver and shudder.

His fingers trailed down his side, gripping Deku’s thighs the way he always did, and marvelled at the soft keening cries he released in return.

He thinks back to those days when he worked so hard to hear him. The victory doesn’t feel easy still, and he grins wildly.

“So good, Izuku,” he purred out, his grin predatory and his tone mocking. The sound of his voice made him tighten around him and his hips stuttered in response, “Fucking-”

“Please,” Deku begged underneath him, “Please.”

His hands came to cover his face and Shigaraki grabbed them.

“Let me see,” he growled out. “Look at me.”

“Tomura,” he rasped out, “Tomura, I need you. I needed you. I-”

“I won’t,” he said, “Ever let you leave me.”

It wasn’t something that a lover should say. It was a little worrying to hear it, or to even think that Shigaraki has lost himself to this companionship. However, Deku’s eyes shined with tears and Shigaraki licked them away. He grimaced at the taste, but would do it again.

Deku would never be alone again.

He kissed him again, hard, over and over, again and again. More than ready to do this for the rest of his life.

-

Sixty years is a long time. It’s so long that they couldn’t really wrap their heads around it.

### Nightwatch

“You can go to sleep,” Deku said quietly. “It’s okay.”

Stain ruffled his hair. “You’ve been alone long enough,” he said. “Let us do this for you.”

“I’m not going to turn down more sex,” Dabi pipped in, a rauchy grin on his face as he eyed Deku.

The young man stared, meeting his eyes for a brief second before dropping his gaze as though Dabi said something hopelessly endearing and not what he actually said. The older men exchanged a quick glance over his head.

“Yeah, no,” Dabi said, grabbing his chin and jerking it up so that he could force eye contact. “We are not going to let this poison spread. We gotta end this now.”

-

Hopeless wasn’t waiting for them to wake up, wondering if they were going to wake up. Hopeless was understanding that Deku would do it again and again. Hopelessness was knowing that, every time they wake up, they would still expect him to be there.

### Stay vs Leave

Two months since they had woken up, since the truth came out, and they are getting used to their current reality, they are sitting around their dining table.

“...Okay, so are we going to stay here for the forseeable future?” Overhaul asked. “I don’t care either or, but,” his eyes drifted to Deku, who smiled back sweetly.

“I’m fine either way,” Deku responded.

“We should leave,” Shigaraki said, “And burn this place down before we go.”

They all turned to give him a Look.

“And that way, we can put this whole thing behind us. And make it so we can never return,” he added when he saw the looks on their faces. “It might do you some good,” he said to Deku.

“...Hm,” Deku hummed a little and then nodded back. “Sure, that sounds good,” he said, not sounding at all like he was listening.

Stain looked from Deku to the others and then added in his two cents. “I don’t mind this domestic life,” he said. “So next time, let’s find a place that we all chose.”

Deku smiled back, giggling a little.

“What’s up?” Overhaul said, eyeing the young man. He feels like, since the long slumber, he has completely lost touch in how to read this man. “What are you thinking about?”

“Huh?” Deku looked up, and seeing their eyes on him, he looked back down, “Ah, it’s nothing. Don’t worry about it-”

“We can do this the easy way or the hard way,” Dabi said. Deku’s eyes wandered Dabi’s figure at that, no little amount of desire in his eyes, and he licked his lips. Dabi’s eyes narrowed, and he leaned forward when Overhaul put his hand over Dabi’s eyes and Stain’s hand dropped on Deku’s head.

“Focus.” Shigaraki said from across the table. “You fucking sluts.”

Where normally, Deku would have flustered and tried to fight it, the young man chuckled again instead. “I just… thought it was nice, you know?” he said. His held his hands in front of him, resting his wrists on the table, and with his head bowed forward, he looked as though he was about to start praying. His voice was quiet, but it felt loud with how quiet their small cottage was. “Together.”

“...Izuku,” Shigaraki said, catching his attention, “You’ve always spoken freely before. So don’t stop now.”

“...Sorry,” the man replied back, “Some habits are hard to break.”

There was a long pause, and then Deku realized what he said. His hand flew up to his lips, and he looked away as he gave himself away.

Sixty years was a long time, and the fact that Deku kept trying to play if off was starting to get on Shigaraki’s last nerves. The man scowled back, the anger and frustration at being locked out and kept away from Deku and his vulnerabilities surging out in waves.

“Yeah,” Shigaraki said, slowly standing up, his hand splayed on his table. “Just get it all out. What are you thinking about? What are you feeling? We won’t know unless you tell us so just say it.”

“I… I’m trying,” Deku replied back. His hands held each other tightly in front of his chest. “I am. I really am I just…”

“There’s no need to push him,” Stain said quietly.

“No, you don’t get to say that!” the Necromancer snapped back. “Fuck you! You’ve been awake for ten fucking years and you just let this poison fester-”

“This isn’t Chizome’s fault!” Deku snapped back, managing to regain himself just in time to defend the man. “I’ll get better! I’m working on it-”

“I’m not upset that you’re not better or whatever, I’m upset that you aren’t letting me in!” Shigaraki yelled back. “If you were going to wait so pitifully for me, you might as well just let me in! Why are you keeping things from us now!?”

The green-haired man flinched backwards and looked down. He pursed his lips and the other man just wanted to scream.

“Izuku,” Overhaul spoke up, crossing his arms over his chest, “I’m with Tomura on this one. There has been some distance, and it will take some time to readjust to that but… but actively keeping it away won’t do you any good. We need to break those habits now, as they happen.”

“I… I know,” Deku said, balling his hands up by his side. “I’ll do better.”

“You’re doing fine,” Stain said. “Keep it up.”

Silent, Dabi watched on.

-

“...Spill,” Dabi said as the night turned.

In his lap, Deku’s naked body laid underneath his covers as he leaned against the wall next to his bed. The young man quietly snored away, thoroughly sated.

They had spent a good portion of the night doing nothing but reassuring Deku that they were real again, and it was something that they were willing to do however many more times than necessary. Still, it was exhausting.

The things that were said at the dinner table was haunting, and so they threw an impromptu meeting in the bedroom after their nightly routine.

In that quiet moment, where Stain extinguished the candlelight and the moonlight began to pour through the windows instead, Dabi felt the sharpest.

“...What happened when you woke up?”

Stain looked at him and then back down. Even without looking to check, they knew that both Overhaul and Shigaraki were awake and aware of what was going on. He leaned against the glass of the window and sat down on the windowpane. After a moment, he popped it open.

The night was warm, but the breeze was cool. A thousand stars lit up the skies, but the view was obstructed by the ever growing forest a little further out. The air felt clean, and it made Stain feel dirty just by feeling it.

“...As you know, I woke up ten years ago,” he said. “Izuku is… a lot better than he used to be. When I woke up, he… he couldn’t even speak. So just, give him time,” he said. “He’s come a long way.”

But for people who felt like everything was normal and fine just a week ago, it was a lot harder to understand. They had spent every waking and sleeping moment together for several years with minimal breaks. They knew each other and their habits, down to their breathing habits when they were sleeping.

The Deku who had to adjust to life without them isn’t the Deku that they landed on an island with all those years ago.

### Village Down The Way

“Oh! Deku-san!”

Overhaul arched an eyebrow as Deku lifted his hand to wave back. Over his head, he saw Dabi mouthing “Deku-san?” to Shigaraki, who showed his discomfort by frowning. An older man came running up to them. He had short brown hair, sunkissed skin, and a smile brighter than a field of flowers.

“Who are these… oh, did they finally all wake up?” he asked. He got even more excited when Deku nodded. “That’s great! Dude! I’m so glad!”

Deku’s smile turned softer.

“We’re leaving soon,” Stain said, clearly more used to this. “We’re here to grab some supplies and we’ll be out of your hair.”

“You’re… leaving?”

Deku nodded.

“Aw… that’s… that’s good, right?” he said. “It’ll be good to get out of that house, and we always called you a hermit… Well, you always have a home here.”

He gave a big grin.

“When are you leaving?”

“Tomorrow,” Deku said, finally speaking.

“T-To-Tomorrow?!” the man spluttered back, both Stain and Overhaul turning in surprise. They hadn’t decided on a when to leave, and they’ve left on shorter notice before, but they thought that Deku would want to stay and say proper goodbyes.

Deku nodded again, his content smile remaining strong.

“...I uh… see,” the man said. And then he nodded. “That’s not enough time to throw a party, but I’ll let everyone know. Go ahead and go around, just stay a little longer than normal okay? But uh. Everyone’s super curious about who you were waiting for, so uh… don’t get too upset alright?”

He looked at Overhaul and grinned back.

“Welcome to our humble village. It’s not much, but it’s all that we have. Everyone’s going to be super annoying though, so please put up with it.”

Overhaul’s eyes trailed to Deku, and when they began to walk towards the next house, the young man returned his gaze with a tender smile.

“His grandpa enranged a boar god,” he said quietly, “I took care of it, and that’s how I found this village in the first place.”

“...His grandpa?” Overhaul repeated.

He looked at the kid, who definitely looked older than him, and then back to Deku, who was already heading to the next place.

“The tavern here has some good food,” Deku said.

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“Deku-san is like the Guardian of the Forest to us,” the man from before said. “He’s got here right before my Grandpa hit retirement. He was on his way home, you see, and he got involved with the Curse of the Mountain next door. It brought down an entire army of boars against him, but Deku-san saved him.”

He laughed back, like he was remembering something funny.

“And I was born, like, twenty years after that.”

Seeing it in front of them like this, it gave them a little more perception on how long sixty years were. It wasn’t sixty years in terms of the scars Deku had, the little habits he picked up, the methodological way he worked. It was sixty years in terms of how the world moved on and Deku choose to stay with them.

“We’re really glad that you guys woke up.”

### Next Place (1)

They burn the little cottage down.

“...You good?” Stain knocked their arms together.

Deku took a long moment to stare at it, watching the fire consume the small thing.

“...Yeah, this is fine,” he said. He turned back to him, smiling sweetly as their hands interlaced. “I got home right here.”

### Island of Unaging Promise

>> the island where they become guards

“So?” Overhaul asked, opening his arms up to Deku. “What do you think?”

“You look… good,” Deku said, his eyes flitting from how well the uniform fit him to his face and then back down.

Overhaul’s smoldering eyes trained onto Deku’s face, tracing the blush that crawled down his face, and stepped forward.

“Yeah?” he asked quietly.

“Y-yes, you are… Are very handsome.”

“Really?”

Deku gulped audibly, and Overhaul smirked in triumph, even though they both knew how this would play out from the moment Overhaul said he was going to be in uniform.

“That’s good,” Overhaul nodded. “I only want you to remember me as someone handsome and cool.”

“Well,” Deku licked his lips, “You have both in spades.”

“...Lemme prove it to you,” the older man said. His voice slowly dropped to a low purr, and Deku could feel the sound moreso than hear it. “Clothes make the man, but I assure you that it’s not all there is to me.”

### Marketplace- Collars

Deku stared at the assorted collars on display and then back to Dabi.

“You want one?” he asked, a playful smile on his face.

Blue eyes found his face and then to the display in front of him.

“I don’t think it’s a bad idea,” he said. “I can definitely pull it off.”

“There isn’t a lot you couldn’t,” Deku agreed. He picked up one of the collars.

As far as stats and buffs went, it was trash. A measly +3 for attack for a collar that people put on their necks was no better than a pebble on the ground. If they bought this, they would have it until Shigaraki found it delivered a long lecture about equipment before it got trashed.

But, he couldn’t help but think that it was a nice blue. He lifted it up, brandishing it to the man next to him with a little fanfare.

“Look, it’s the color of your eyes,” he said.

“...Are you stupid?” Dabi snorted back. He grabbed the collar and tossed it at the general direction of the display. It clattered onto the table with a dull thud, and Deku wondered if he pushed too hard. Perhaps this wasn’t actually a joke that Dabi was comfortable with.

It was hard to imagine this man as uncomfortable, but they’ve spent a lot of time together. Deku knew better.

“You should get something that matches the owner, so that, you know, the whole world will know who the wearer belongs to,” he replied back.

And then, to Deku’s surprise, the fire mage turned back to the display. His posture was slouched and from a quick glance, he looked like he was uncaring and bored out of his mind. But then, Dabi grabbed the green one that was on display. He reached his other hand up to grip Deku’s chin and tilted his head up forcefully. The young man didn’t fight it, but his eyes darted from the display to Dabi and back in confusion.

“No, this one is too dark,” Dabi said, putting the collar back. “And that’s… the only green one,” he sighed after another moment of looking.

In the meantime, Deku was trying to scrape his jaw off the ground.

### ShigaDeku - promise

“Deku, do you remember what I promised?”

“Huh?”

Shigaraki dropped his hand onto his hair.

“Don’t do things you don’t want to do.”

With that, he pulled back and kicked Deku straight down the room. The door slid shut and the floor opened up underneath him. In an instant, there was nothing but his scream that filled the hallway.

Shigaraki turned back to the horde of bodies that limped towards him. The swell of magic thickened in the air, and he grinned back.

“C’mon bastards, I’ll keep you company.”

### Goddess

“Izuku!”

Before his body hit the ground, Overhaul managed to grab him. His body curled around the smaller man, the best he could, as he jumped backwards to put as much distance between him and the glowing body. In an instant, Stain and Dabi stood in front of them, and Shigaraki came behind them. His eyes glanced down to Deku, who was knocked back. He choked on his blood, more than half his HP missing from a single hit.

It appears that, even with all the strength in the world, it was not enough to even phase this goddess. He fucking hated this fucking bitch..

“Goodness,” she said, pulling her sleeve up to her mouth, as she narrowed her eyes. “What a revolting man.”

Ugh, he hated telepaths.

However, instead of striking them dead where they stood, she narrowed her eyes at them.

“You should be thanking me,” she said, haughty and arrogant.

“Thanking you?!” Shigaraki snapped back, “Whatever the fuck for!?”

“Hah! You think you woke up because you wanted to wake up?!” she snapped back, raising her voice right back.

Something cold slid down Overhaul’s spine.

“Of course not!” she said. Her voice calmed down, and she took a deep breath. “I never thought that the blessing you took that day could even have this kind of effect,” she said plainly. “I had truly and honestly believed that everything that could have been in this world, has been. As it turns out, that wasn’t the case at all. I have that young boy to thank.”

She raised her other hand, pointing her fan at Deku. On instinct, Overhaul pulled him closer to his body. Even if it was probably futile, he would rather be torn asunder than allow this bitch to do whatever more damage to Deku.

As it was, the young man was slow in recovering.

“Please,” she said, waving her hand, “I’ve already tried everything. Imagine my surprise when he still chose you. I sent him disease, famine, bandits, demons, curses, everything. And he still found a way to stay with you all.”

She chuckled, as though remembering something funny. From the way Deku trembled in his arms, he doesn’t think it was anything humorous.

“Of course I rewarded that kind of < Devotion >. So you all woke up in 60 years, after all.”

“...How long were...we supposed to be asleep?” Dabi asked, voice low and cautious.

The woman’s sleeve lowered, just enough for them to see the cruel smile pulling on her lips.

“600 for you,” she purred out, “and 500 for the other one,” she said, motioning to Stain. “Could you believe it? He was ready to wait, too. I have absolutely no idea what you lot did to each other, but indeed, I have never seen < Devotion > to this extent. I’m almost jealous.”

And if the world is an awful place, it’s in reflection of the woman who created them. It’s beauty is deceiving, and the truth can be seen in the malicious angle to her lips.

The goddess laughed, her eyes cold, “It makes me want to play.”

She was clearly a goddess. For there was no other way someone could install so much fear into them with a single smile.

Deku… finally, finally, finally, started to laugh loudly again. They have finally broken that strange habit he had of speaking so quietly. They have finally broken through that awful habit he had where he would stare at them like they were a far-off goal he couldn’t have. He leaned heavy into Overhaul’s chest, and Overhaul couldn’t think of anything more important than him.

“How sweet,” the goddess purred back. “But don’t worry. I’ve already given you time,” she said. “So there’s no need to fret, my dears, your time will come. And I will enjoy it greatly.”

With that, she waved her hand and Overhaul was flung backwards. However, Deku’s bruised and bleeding and healing body was slowly brought up to her. To the side, Shigaraki was wrapped down by vines around him, Dabi had a stone pillar running through his arms and pinning him down, and Stain was helplessly locked into a cage while he gripped at his shoulder where his missing arm used to be. They hadn’t felt this powerless since the first time they woke up, all those years ago on that island filled with monsters.

The goddess cupped Deku’s face in her hands tenderly. Her eyes were narrowed in their mirth, and something absolutely cruel twisted into her smile.

“Do not worry, child. I haven’t had this much fun here in a long time. Do not look like that. This won’t even be the worst thing that happens.”