Warning: messy feelings

Disclaimer: I don’t own anything.

Summary: Post-apocalyptic AU. When the world ends, you find a new one to… replace it, if you would. Which is certainly the only reason why Midoriya Izuku would have ever meant this much to Todoroki Enji. And then, you wake up and time has rewound 20 years.

Alt: “Yeah,” Touya shrugged, “One day, dad woke up and he was… Dad again.”

Paring: Todoroki Enji/Midoriya Izuku

A/N: Endeavor, meaning to attempt to achieve a goal, and Deku, from “Dekiru (to do your best)”.

a/n2: not standard soulmate but.

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### Notes

* Nuclear Wasteland. But more like I Am Legend
  + It’s been like this for the last 15~ years.
  + Enji/Izu has been together for majority of it
* Todoroki Enji (60 -> 34)
  + Formally a Pro-hero, but the world is dead and gone. His whole world, then, was Midoriya
  + Then he wakes up right before his wife breaks and while training shouto and gets up and leaves. Looks around. Gets lost in the sensation of civilization. Goes home. Wonders where Izuku was. Realized that Izuku would find him.
  + Lets his kids be. Lets his wife be. Lets the world be and he goes on an unexpected holiday after he tried to just quite & retire and everyone else was like “no no no no”
  + And of course, izuku finds him and Endeavor returns.
* Midoriya Izuku (30 -> 4)
  + Quirkless. World ended before he graduated middle school.
  + Wakes up as a 4 year old. Which is humiliating and awful and his mom gives him this look
  + “I… had a quirk. I can turn back time once,” he said, a wry smile on his face because he would die with this secret, “and I already used it.”
* Eventually:
  + Dabi goes double-agent for Midoriya (?)
  + Midoriya fixes the Todorokis (ish) and Rei does what she can for Inko

### Quiet Campfire

Izuku yawned behind his hand when a blanket suddenly dropped onto his shoulders. He looked up, sleepy but calm, and gave a small smile to the frowning older man next to him.

“You can sleep a little longer,” he said.

“No way,” Izuku said, “Every moment I’m awake is with you. I’m not… gonna…” he yawned again, and smacked his lips, “...sleep.”

Next to him, Enji chuckled. The larger man slowly sat down next to him, and threw a spark into the fire, making it glow a little brighter. On instinct, Izuku leaned towards his arm and curled the blanket around him a little tighter. When Enji’s arm wrapped around his shoulder to bring him closer, smiled.

“We got a couple hours till morning light,” Enji said. “Rest up.”

At the end of the world, Izuku could still sleep soundly.

It was Enji’s only accomplishment these days.

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In reality, Enji cannot relax until he verified that Izuku was alive. It had gotten worse and worse with every passing day. If the young man slept too far away, if he cannot hear his breathing or feel his heartbeat, Enji felt his control on his flames slip precariously. If he wasn’t careful, he would be ash.

During the day, it’s a little easier.

Izuku was constant and consistent. He’s always talking or muttering under his breath. Surrounded by destroyed cities and buildings overgrown with greenery, it was the only sound outside of their footsteps and the wind. It’s what kept Enji’s thoughts on the present. It honed his hearing, and swaddled his heart.

And at night, they take turns on the evening watch. Those nights, Enji woke up every two to three minutes until he can’t handle it anymore and laid down behind Izuku’s sitting figure. He laid there, on his side, curled around the sitting man like a large cat, and Izuku’s hand came to rest in his hair and absent-mindedly play with it.

Then, he can rest.

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His eyes opened with morning light. As always, sleeping where he could feel Izuku’s warmth and hear his breath kept all his nightmares at bay. The constant ache of exhaustion kept his memories away like a charm. Between the two of them, he could sleep almost peacefully.

Izuku’s smile was sweet, sleepy, and he leaned up to feel it against his.

The world has not ended, of course not. He was here next to him.

### Goal

“Wow…. And it used to stand here, huh?”

They both knew that, even together, they ran the risk of losing their minds. In a world as desolate as the one they woke up to daily, their only salvation was that they would go together.

Until then, however, they do whatever it was that they wish for. It had been four years since they met, three years since Izuku mentioned how he had never seen the several landmarks before, and now, they were standing in front of it. The constant moving and traveling kept them in focus, but reaching the destination always made Enji feel a little empty.

He used to protect some of these. He used to take his kids to visit some of these places. He used to patrol the area. If he closed his eyes, he could still see the sprawling masses taking the early morning commute and making their way through the day.

When he opened his eyes, however, he saw the remains. The building had caved in completely. The landmark with a piece of the name remained, tilted and hanging precariously off. It’s underwhelming, and Enji could feel parts of himself chip away at the sight. The sidewalk and walkways were broken, like they were shattered glass.

Blue eyes turned to look at Izuku. He had never been good at the whole comfort-thing, but he had a few ideas on what he could say and do.

The expression on Izuku’s face, as he stared up in awe at buildings and landmarks from a civilization ago, made his heart calm and his resolve to strengthen.

“...Wow,” he said, breathless.

Enji relaxed, as though he was the one that had narrowly missed execution.

There is nothing safer than to be together.

### Acid Rain

“Wow,” Izuku whistled as he stared up, “It’s really coming down, huh?”

“Get away from the windows,” Enji called out, dropping another book on their ongoing fire. “It’s acidic. I don’t want you getting hurt from it.”

“Okaaaaay,” Izuku called out, drawing the sound out as he got up to his feet and away from the window. He walked over to Enji and peered up at him, “We really lucked out though.”

Enji shot him a dry look. “We are holed up in a former motel. There is nothing to eat and at least twenty-five miles until the next town to get something to eat,” he said. “What part of this is lucky?”

“Well, we could be outside right now, traveling the twenty-five miles,” Izuku pointed out, boldly sitting down in his lap and leaning back like Enji was his personal couch. He shot him a cheeky grin, the one that Enji always ended up returning as he continued, “but we’re indoors. We’re warm. And we have each other.”

Izuku’s hands came to grab Enji’s, and then he brought it up to rest against his chest, right over his heart.

“Lucky.”

And with his heartbeat to anchor himself down onto, Enji felt the frustration and hunger ebb away.

He pressed his nose against those curls, inhaling the dirt and grime like it was precious, and moved his arms to wrap tightly around Izuku. Weeks of borderline starvation and constant wandering made him even smaller, but Enji secretly loved the way he could completely envelop Izuku’s body.

It made him feel like he was Izuku’s shield. It made him feel like he had a purpose and a reason, and that it was almost okay for him to be here. The thought comforted him, even though he knew that he didn’t live up to the title. He liked to think that one day, he would though.

“I can… think of a couple of things,” he murmured, grinding up against Izuku and grinning when he heard his sharp gasp. He felt the way his ribcage expanded under his hands and he ducked his head to press a kiss against his neck just to feel his full-body shiver right against his.

“Oh,” Izuku replied back, far too breathless for it to do anything other than excite Enji.

His turned his head to catch Enji’s lips against his. With the sound of rainfall as their accompanant, Enji pulled an entire symphony from those lips.

Perhaps rainy days were nice.

### Fantasy

Enji’s greatest fantasy was something so extravagant, so perfect, and so impossible that sometimes, it felt like a nightmare. He doesn't know where it originated from, but every time Midoriya laid against him and he could feel his ribcage when he wrapped his arm around him to pull him close, it reared its ugly head in.

When Izuku shivered because the water he bathes in is too cold, when he woke up with bags under his eyes, and when his sunken cheeks seemed more and more pronounced, Enji was beside himself in his disappointment. It was awful to think that Izuku was used to it, and the days when they find unexpired canned goods or fresh fruits on unkept farms are to be celebrated.

The carrier of Enji’s heart, the bearer of his vitality, the reason he even bothered to try every day, shouldn’t have to live like this. The part of him that was born and raised to be a Strong and Successful Todoroki ached at the thought that he was barely more than a warm furnace on the right nights.

But at night, when he dreamed with Izuku safely tucked against him, he dreamed of waking up in a giant plush bed. He knew that Izuku was the type to have more pillows than needed, and they would always wake up with at least half of them on the ground. However, it’s a battle that he has never won and has long since stopped bothering to fight.

They would have breakfast together. There would be fresh fruits and cold milk. There would be a stack of hot chocolate chip pancakes with an unhealthy amount of syrup, and eggs cooked in every way imaginable. The spread would be colorful and take up the entire table, and the remaining space would be filled with sleepy “good mornings” that evolve into Izuku explaining the most recent dream he had. It would be so much food that they would be way overstuffed, but still, they would talk about what they wanted to eat for lunch in a few hours.

And then, he would wake up and the only thing from that fantasy he managed to snag was Izuku. One of their stomachs, if not both, would growl as it shrinks in on itself and that would be the trigger that gets him awake.

It’s a blessing, he knew, because at least he had Izuku, but it also makes him feel worthless.

Izuku stretched out like a cat, turning over and snuggling against Enji’s beefy chest with a content smile. He pressed a kiss against his pectorals, leading a trail up his neck and then to his lips, where he gave a loud smack.

“G’d mornin’,” he slurred out, a grin on his face.

“...Good morning,” Enji replied back, wondering how real or fantasy, Izuku’s grin could always make his breath snag.

“Had a good dream?” Izuku asked.

Enji’s greatest (and guiltiest) fantasy was that he would be enough for Izuku.

“...Yeah,” he said, pressing a kiss to Izuku’s forehead, “Yeah, I did.”

They got up and got ready for the day.

## Reality

### Waking up

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And Enji felt his entire demeanor relax. He stared, wide-eyed and shocked, because he would recognize those green eyes anywhere.

The world fell silent around them.

Of course, Enji thought. Of course Midoriya would find him. Why did he think anything else?

“...Izuku?”

“I… I’ve been,” the young boy, almost a baby, he’s smaller than Shouto, waddled a little closer and Enji couldn’t fucking believe it.

They talked about it. They mentioned it. But confronting the facts like this was simultaneously the best and worst thing that could have ever happened. Because on one hand, they weren’t alone. They had found each other (well, Midoriya had found him but). The world was fine.

And, on the other hand, they weren’t alone. The entire world was watching them (him, Endeavor, especially) and they were about thirty years apart. In no country was this legal or even morally okay. But no one would believe them if they said time-travel, and there weren’t enough evidence to prove that it was a quirk.

So instead.

“I thought you... you forgot…”

Enji kneeled down, and even then he was too tall. He hunched over, still too big, and wrapped his arms around Izuku. Slowly, he brought his Izuku close to his chest, and felt the young man cry. How could he ever forget?

“I’m sorry,” Enji said, because there was nothing else to say.

He didn’t realize that Midoriya could get smaller. But he supposed that the most amazing part of all of this was that Midoriya cried the exact same way.

### Midoriya’s Ruined the Todorokis (1)

Touya looked to the left, as discreetly as possible.

Rei took a bite of her rice, her eyes water as she stuffed the side-dishes, one after another in to her mouth until her cheeks bulged like a chipmunk’s.

“It’s so delicious, Inko!” she cheered, her voice quiet but no less excited as she made her way through her meal eagerly. “Mou, hurry up and divorce that man so we can get married!”

Inko giggled behind her hand, “Geez, Rei-san, you can’t just say things like that. But since you love the tofu side dish, I’ll get you some more, okay?”

Touya grimaced at the sight of hearts forming all around his mom as she made doe-eyes at Inko.

He looked to the right, not even bothering to be subtle as he gazed at his dad.

“Could you pass me the soy sauce?” Midoriya asked.

Enji reached for the soy sauce, snatching it up and right before handing it to Midoriya, gave a smirk. He kept it, right out of the young man’s reach when he tried to get it.

“...Can I help you?” he asked almost scathingly.

“You could,” Enji nodded back, “by growing taller.”

“I would love to,” the young man deadpanned back. And he made a vague gesture to the people at the table, “be the size of a regular human being.” His scowl turned even more firm. “I’m sure I would if I ever got my soy sauce so I can shovel more food into my mouth.”

Midoriya’s frowned turned even deeper when Enji gave a deep chuckle.

“You’re right, wouldn’t want you getting any smaller.” He placed the soy sauce down on the table, right next to Midoriya. “It’s a little heavy though.”

“I think I’ll manage, hero-san,” the young man said, but his sarcastic tone fell flat when he couldn’t hide his smile.

And Touya looked at his plate, wondering if he had been saved by the Midoriya’s or ruined. He rubbed his temples.

“What’s wrong, nii-chan? You don’t want your dumplings?” Natsuo asked, eyes wide, curious. And well, ignorant to the situation at hand.

“Of course I’m going to eat my dumplings,” he hissed back at his little brother and focused on his food.

### [Real]

But Izuku, Enji thought as placed his head in his hands, he wanted to give Izuku everything. He closed his eyes.

Saving the world was so easier when he just needed to worry about keeping the two fed. He couldn't ever think to wish for those days.

But he yearned for Izuku.

He never needed to hide this before. There was never 'others' that he needed to be aware of. For a while, it was just Izuku and him and there was a lot they needed to live in comfort but they were happy.

But they weren't there anymore. Could he safely say that Izuku would be better off with him? Wasn't it better to forget about a future that didn't happen? Are they really living in reality?

He could do it. He could. Cut his heart out and live for the sake of a better and safer world. It wouldn't. He could. He.

If he could reimagine Izuku's grin, down to the last millimeter of his face as he tried to catch the snow on his hands, would he ever be able to live without it? He didn't want it. Comparing them, he liked who he was. He didn't like, and he knew Izuku wouldn't like, who he used to be. So he tried. He tried and he tried to make that not-futute a not-future. And it worked but now.

But now his not-future, and every last bit of it, was not real. It was not their reality. It wasn't.

Society would frown if he took a man as a husband, if he divorced Rei for him, if his husband was as young as his youngest son.

But he wanted it.

He wanted to see Izuku's name on his family registry. Things that they couldn't have, from fresh fruits to filing their taxes together, Enji wanted it all. It was selfish. It was abhorrent. But it would, he had no doubts, bring tears to Izuku's eyes from how happy it would make him.

Do they run away? Could they run away? Was it feasible? No, no. There was no point in a life where they would have to always look over their shoulders and wonder and worry. He didn't want that. He wanted the opposite of that.

The thoughts bit at each other's heels. No progress. No conclusion.

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Midoriya Izuku understood, to some extent, that he was the last shackle on Enji.

Perhaps, if they never found each other again and never confirmed that their life together was real to them, they would have never met. They could have accepted that they had a wild imagination and an awful dream, but that was it. They'll never meet. They'll never even know that the other existed.

It could have been fine. He could have lived with that empty hole in his chest, the size of Enji's crooked grin when he manages to reel in a fish.

But Midoriya could not accept that. He had to give up everything. His hopes and dreams and education, and then his food and water and shelter. His comfort and sanity chipped away, bit by bit, with every passing day they wandered through that world.

So he didn't want to let this go. He knew. He could do away with everything else as long as he had This. So why the fuck would he ever consider sacrificing Enji and their late bight stargazing with fucking anything and everything that the world could offer?

### reality