Summary: SemiAU. Midoriya Izuku looked up from his mug with a wry smile, sitting at the only part of the couch that wasn’t covered in blood. “I think you’re in the wrong building, Hero Killer-san, but there were no heroes here,” he said, like the Neighborhood Hero didn’t lay bleeding out in front of him.

### **PreMidoriya**

Housewives can be lonely people, but Midoriya is certain that there was a line.

A pro-hero, cozying up to his mother. After the initial meeting, he became closer and closer. He was all sweet words, expensive gifts, and a constant presence with a kind smile. He believed that it was wrong for Inko to be so alone. He wanted to save her. For a while, Midoriya believed him.

He gave her his full attention. He smiled and listened to her woes, frowned and squeezed her hand when her voice broke and shoulders started to shake. A hero that didn’t forget about anyone, a hero that would help all and any.

And then came the bills and the debt. Then came the guilt and the guilt and the ring that Inko no longer wore.

So, Izuku got a chance to think and really think about his future. He thought about it while he sat in the closet of a Pro Hero’s office, where he was told to be quiet since they were playing “Hide-And-Seek.” Who was “it?” Who was he waiting for? Who did he want to be found by? When was it okay to come out? The last time he came out looking, he was yelled at and his mom cried because That Hero said he couldn’t work with someone as rebellious as him. Well, these thoughts and memories bled into nothing since they were all meaningless after the first few hours.

Izuku was a smart kid, after all. His mom said he got it from his dad, so he sat quietly and he wondered. What did he want to do with his life? He wanted to be a hero? Great, then what did that mean? If he was smart, like his dad, then why was his dad always out of the country?

It meant that he wanted to protect people when he couldn’t even protect his own mother? Would it mean finding other lonely married people and assimilating into their lives? Was his mother saved? Was this what happened to people who got saved, once the cameras were turned off?

Midoriya Izuku took a deep breath, and at the tender age of 10, made a decision.

He could do his best to be a hero like All Might. He could dye the magazines in his green, and inspire the next generation of youth.

Or, he could throw it all away for his mother.

People always said that he took after his mother more. Between a man who was smart enough to trash his family for his career, and a woman who was so lonely her heart splintered, he knew which one he wanted to be.

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Midoriya Inko was a strong woman.

### **The Smart Ones Would Have Been Invincible If They Didn't Have Such Terrible Impulse Control**

Stain had been watching for weeks to time this right.

Hopping right up to the open window, he almost faltered when he realized that his target was in a pool of his own blood. There was a knife in his chest, accompanied by several stabbing wounds that decorated his chest. His mouth was agape, tongue lolling out, and his eyes were glassey. This man was dead.

“...Who are you?”

Stain jerked, but his blade was drawn. Like some fresh dimwit, he let his guard down. Of course, if someone had killed his target just moments before (the blood was bright red and still draining out of him, the stench hadn’t reached him until he got to the window) they would still be here. It was rare for him to be caught off-guard, but even rarer for his target to be dead before he even got there.

While he didn’t consider this Fake-Hero to be strong, he knew better than to underestimate anyone just because they looked like easy prey. Slimy bastards are good at getting what they want. But still. The person who called out to him was…

“You… don’t look like the police. Or another hero. His schedule was clear for the evening. I made sure.”

A child. What the fuck was a child doing next to a dead body…. No. He knew why this kid was here.

“...Stain,” he said, and then for good measure, “The Hero-Killer.”

The kid leaning against a large desk, and when the moonlight found him, Stain grimaced. He had to be a kid, he was in a fucking middle school uniform, nodded back. He straightened up,

“My name is Midoriya Izuku,” he said, and gave a proper bow, “Nice to meet you.”

It was rare for him to stand in a room with a dead body between him and a stranger, and engage in civil and polite conversation. But the kid was acting like this was a natural thing. Were all kids like this?

His eyes narrowed, waiting for any movement or indication that Stain needed to run or kill. As it was now, in a situation he knew nothing about and was uncertain about, it was better to run and assess instead of entering combat. He didn’t know what the kid’s quirk was, but it was enough to kill a hero. No matter how incompentent that hero was, he was dead by multiple stabbings.

And so, curiosity kept him rooted to the spot.

Who the fuck took his target? Why?

His eyes tracked the child’s, Midoriya’s, every movement, from the way his hands were caked in blood and his slight limp, as he made it to the other side of the room. With his back to the window where Stain crouched in, he fired up the coffee machine, humming the main theme for the All Might the Animation (the second, and in Stain’s humble opinion, lesser version).

After a few minutes and the stench of coffee wafting through the room, the young man took it and moved for the couch.

...If the kid made the coffee to overpower the smell of blood, he was uncannily smart. If not, he was missing some screws.

Midoriya looked up from his mug with a wry smile, sitting at the only part of the couch that wasn’t covered in blood. “I think you’re in the wrong building, Hero Killer-san, but there were no heroes here,” he said, like the Neighborhood Hero didn’t lay bleeding out in front of him.

“...Did you do it?”

Midoriya looked to him before setting his mug down. He opened his hands, and his red handprint shined against the white of the mug.

“Yes,” he said. “The others will be here soon. Maybe… another 10 minutes? Then, the police in about two. Don’t you have other heroes to slaughter?”

“...You’re not going to run?”

The kid gave a nervous laugh, his hands shaking, “and go where?” he asked. “I can’t avoid prison forever, but at least like this, I can be out by 18.”

Stain arched an eyebrow. “You sure about that?”

“There’s some files I left up on the internet. It’s only a matter of time before all the things he’s done surface anyways,” Midoriya said, waving his hand in the air like it wasn’t really a problem. “It’d be nice if someone got to them before the trial, but I won’t hold onto it. An esteemed man like himself has a good amount of backing. He probably knows a lawyer that’ll try harder than a public defense attorney.”

The thought that this kid would end up in jail, since he was certain that the Hero Commission will ensure that he will be charged as an adult, lingered.

“...Why did go after him?” he asked.

The kid looked back forward, his eyes unseeing as he gave a small smile.

Surely, if their conversation ended there, Stain would have let this go. He would have walked away, amended his target-list, and then prepared for the next hit. He would have forgotten about this boy and this moment like a small scar. And when he saw this story appear in the news, he wouldn't have paid it any extra attention.

This should have been nothing to him, like how he doesn’t care about an earthquake halfway around the world.

“You know, I love heroes, Hero Killer-san,” Midoriya said, ironically enough.

His smile was gentle, and his eyes found Stain’s gaze across the room. He didn’t know it then, but Midoriya only met the gaze of someone else head-strong like that when he was lying.

“I think that heroes are super cool and super awesome. They’re dazzling in their shine, and seeing them makes me more happy than anything else. So, when I heard that a guy like this was a hero, I just couldn’t handle it.” He looked to the body on the ground, and then back to Stain. His eyes turned into a determined glint, and his conviction felt so certain in his eyes, that it might have been tangible. “It’s okay if I go to jail, but at least this guy won’t ruin the ‘hero’-title for anyone else.”

And the first impulsive thing he had done, since becoming Stain, was kidnapping 12 year old Midoriya Izuku out of that office.

“To let you get arrested,” he said, his arm tight around his waist as he hoisted him over his shoulder, “would be a waste.”

The kid flailed.

“Hey, wait! What are you doing? You’re going to be marked as an accomplice!”

Stian snorted back. How could he worry about the Hero Killer’s reputation.

“I won’t be caught. Stop wiggling.”

“No wait,” Midoriya flailed harder, but his thin fists barely felt like scratched. “Please! I’m not afraid to take responsibility for my actions! Please, if you do this, I won’t have the courage to do what needs to be done-”

“Shut up.”

The second impulsive thing he had done would be knocking him out and carrying him back to his temporary base. Whether or not he would regret this moment would be a long, on-going debate in his head for the rest of his life.

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“Ten years,” Stain suddenly spoke up. “If you’re a model prisoner, you’ll probably get out in ten years for one case of murder. Especially in your case.”

Midoriya looked at Stain and then to the handcuff clipping him to the radiator. He looked back. Pulling on his arm, the chains clinked and jangled. He turned back and squinted at him.

“...So, you're keeping me here," he eyed the room, "for ten years?”

And Stain, who had heard enough about his room, swore that if he got one more comment, one more "so are you called Stain because it's your lifestyle or what you want to do?" or "augh, do you actually pay rent for this place?" he was going to beat Midoriya until he stopped moving.

So, as calmly as possible...

“If you get taken, everyone will say that I did it. Or coerced you to do it.”

“But that’s not what happened,” Midoriya replied back, a frown on his face.

Stain had no doubts about his life. If he got caught (and that would mean that All Might himself came for his life and he lived to see imprisonment), it would be a life-sentence. Or more likely, the death penalty after a horrendously long time serving in prison on tax-payer dollars. Depending on how big of a fuss other people kick up, he might live long enough to watch the world tremble under All Might’s fading light.

He looked at Midoriya, those green eyes were back on his face again. Stain stared back evenly. He wasn’t someone that gave things away with his body language. He wasn’t some kid anymore, wet behind the ears and clutching to an ideal while he screamed himself sore on a box at the train station.

“...You’re dumber than I thought,” the kid said, like he wasn't some middle school brat handcuffed to a radiator, staring at Stain and all the blades he held on his person.

“I really don’t think insulting me is going to do you any favors,” he deadpanned back. He was surprised, but not enough to let his demeanor slip. More importantly, he needed to move this conversation away or remove himself from it. Or else.

Or else, he’ll be curious about what else those green eyes see in him.

“If you’re keeping me alive, knowing that one day you and I will be caught anyways, you’re just running away from reality. We both know how this story is going to end.”

Stain broke eye contact first. He turned away, he needed to leave. He needed to leave before he realized how similar they were. He needed to leave before that passing curiosity became something insatiable. He had to leave before… before something that he was truly terrified about happened.

Terrify? Him? Something scared him? What? What could it be?

Curiosity is a terrible thing. It can take all your neat plans and hard work and chuck it out the window so you can throw a small child over your shoulder and carry them away with you to your temporary base. Curiosity could lead to terrible things, and people who are strong and well-disciplined would never need to worry about this.

Stain isn’t nearly as disciplined as he thought, because he turned around and lo-and-behold, there was a tender smile on that child’s face.

“Hero-killer-san… If you are the physical manifestations of your ideals, they’ll fall apart when you do.”

For Stain, and all the bad things he’s done and will do, a life sentence began the moment those green eyes seared themselves into his head.

“If you promise not to run, I’ll let you go free,” he tried. Even to his own ears, he sounded painfully weak.

Midoriya blinked at him, surprised for a fraction of a second before that smile came onto his face. He tilted his head, and Stain contemplated cutting his eyes out. Even if he did, he had a feeling that nothing would change, instead, it would be worse. It would haunt him permanently. It was better to let this interest die a natural death.

Natural.

“Well,” Midoriya tugged on his wrist, and Stain frowned when he saw how purple his thin wrist had gotten, “one way to find out, right?”

Why couldn't he have gotten a real child? Why did he have to get Midoriya? Could he get a refund or something on this?

“No, you’re right,” he said, recovering enough of his sense. “Earn it.”

The smile dropped. Good.

“How am I supposed to earn your trust when I’m handcuffed to the radiator?”

“How’d you kill that hero and bypass the security?” he shot back.

Midoriya hesitated, and the Hero-Killer didn't relent.

“The news reel came out. They don’t even know who killed him. There’s no search warrant or…” Stain hesitated before he remembered that he wasn’t someone who hesitated. He came in here with a purpose, and he will not leave until it’s completed. “...or even a missing person.”

“You can’t claim a missing person report until three days,” Midoriya replied back coldly, his eyes on the ground. It almost sounded like he was defending them. Almost.

He pulled uselessly at the handcuffs, the clink-clink-clink just as erratic as Stain’s-Midoriya looked back up at Stain, and he lost his train of thought. His logic fell apart-or at least he couldn’t focus on it long enough to make answer sense out of it.

“Please?” he tried.

Stain stared a little longer.

He had an idea about this child, and it would take some more time to figure it out. When he did, would it be that he trusted Midoriya, or would it be because Midoriya let his guard down? The thought was more interesting the longer time passed, and it dogged his steps like a shadow. Logically, he knew the correct thing would be to drop off the kid at the next crime scene with his artery sliced open. Logically, he should just kill the kid and forget about those green eyes as soon as possible. Logically, he should have never taken this kid, no matter how much of a waste it would have felt.

Logically.

It took him an extra four seconds of just staring before he had to remind himself that his business was concluded. He left the room. Behind him, that clinking resounded, echoing in his head like an annoying song that he couldn't get out of his head.

Stain walked into the room, and froze.

In front of him, leaning against his kitchen counter and not handcuffed to the radiator, was Midoriya. Their eyes met, and the child dared to look as surprised as Stain felt, before he bolted.

Finally, Stain thought, something fucking normal from this kid.

He took one look at him, at his captor, and ran. Yes. Finally. Something that victims should do. Maybe he was wrong this whole time, and Midoriya was just in shock. Now that the shock wore off, he was going to be an actual victim, and the curiosity will die and Stain would finally be free.

Stain ignored the bowl of cereal on the dining table and made re-capturing the child a priority again. This will be easier as soon as Midoriya acted like a child should. Even better? If Midoriya launched himself out the window or got out of the door so that they could run with the whole ‘he got kidnapped’ ploy. How perfect would that be?

Instead, Stain ended up chasing him back to the room Midoriya was normally imprisoned in. Distantly, he thought that the window would be too small to jump out of. Naturally, in hopes that Midoriya would do what Stain thought was the Normal Fucking Thing To Do, and attempt a real escape, he kept his pace much slower than he normally would have.

Escape, he wanted to beg the man. Escape or die so that Stain could move on from this-

He stared.

Nothing could be easy with Midoriya.

Midoriya, already cuffed back to the radiator, looked to him and then back down to his cuff. He clinked it, as though to prove that he couldn’t escape, and looked back to Stain. He opened his mouth. Closed it. He pulled at the handcuffs again. The same gesture, the same way. The wrong hand.

"Oh no," Midoriya deadpanned, tone flat as he tugged on his wrist, "I ... I am handcuffed to the radiator. I cannot escape."

And before Stain could say anything, could even think to say anything, Midoriya gave a sharp gasp.

“Oh no! The cereal!” he gasped. He turned up to Stain, “Uh… someone that wasn’t me broke in and uhm…" he snapped his fingers when he found the words he wanted, "ate your food! Since you don’t know what happened to it, you should give it to me to poison-test it.”

But there was this headache that was building between Stain’s eyes. It grew and pulsated with every heartbeat. Before he knew the name for this feeling, the feeling that mixed with disgust and shock and guided his addictions because Midoriya didn’t escape and therefore, neither of them did, he called it annoyance.

“Uhm," Midoriya tilted his head to the side, like he was posing for a kitten calendar, wide-eyed innocence and not at all a murderer, "please?”

The Stain who went to the kitchen to bring Midoriya the half-eaten bowl of cereal (he didn’t have any milk, so Midoriya was literally eating a bowl of plain oats, as if the kid wasn’t freaky enough already) was the Stain that wanted to kill Midoriya. And that meant that Midoriya could not starve. And that was very important because Stain was annoyed by Midoriya.

There was shampoo in his bathroom. It was Kamui-Woods shampoo, guaranteed to make your man smell like pine.

Was anything sacred anymore?

"Kidnapper-san?"

Stain closed his eyes. Took a deep breath. Counted backwards from ten.

"Kidnaperrr-saaaaaaan?"

Yeah no, not today.

He stood up and went to that dreadful room that contained all of his woes inside of a single human child. Was this how kidnapping worked? Is this the bullshit that kidnappers went through? Suddenly, he felt his respect for kidnappers go up a little. He would never do this again. It just wasn't fucking worth it. Murder was so much better. So much cleaner.

"Excuse me, Kidnapper-saaaan?"

And quieter. It would be so much quieter.

He opened the door.

"Just call me Stain," he said. "But you really shouldn't be yelling either of those out."

And Midoriya, because of course, was on his back, leisurely reading manga that Stain had never seen before. His legs were crossed and one of them were handcuffed to the radiator. He didn't know why Midoriya even fucking bothered anymore. Stain had caught him eight times without the handcuffs before he stopped counting.

But what was he going to do? Stop him? Look how well that's been going. At the very least, he doesn't have to watch when and where he pisses, but he did want to know where he got the sweater and track-pants he was wearing. Like seriously. They looked cleaner than the clothes Stain was wearing.

"Hey, you're going out on a hunt tonight, right?" he said, looking at him upside down.

Stain refrained from stomping on his face.

"...How did you..." he trailed off as he thought about it and then, "No, I don't want to know." He looked at Midoriya, hoped that he had some capability to mask his emotion and said, "Just tell me what you want."

"Uh, no, I was just curious."

Stain narrowed his eyes.

“And also, you’re hungry for pizza.”

Stain tilted his head to the side, a frown forming on his face.

“I’m really not.”

“No. You really are.”

That annoyance bubbled back up. He can’t believe this. Deciding not to devolve into a playground argument, he stepped through the ledge of the window and dropped into the night.

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“Yeah, welcome back,” Midoriya said, as he stepped over to Stain with a first-aid kit in his hands. His eyes focused on the pizzabox in the villain’s hands. “Oh my god, I can’t believe you actually got pizza.”

The box of hot (this was freshly made and the smell made Midoriya’s mouth water) food was thrusted into his direction. With careful maneuvering, Midoriya ended up dropping the first-aid kit on his foot (he yelped), but caught the pizza safely.

“I was hungry for it.” Stain deadpanned back. “Move. Now.” He just didn't care anymore.

His target ran into a dead-end, all on her own. She had frantically called for back-up to no avail. It didn't take longer than three minutes to finish that. He swore that the standard for heroes were plummeting. And as soon as he left that alleyway, he came face-to-face with a pizza company.

“Yes sir.” Midoriya mocked him by living. He stepped to the side as the man marched away and into the bathroom.

Stain, when he had left that alleyway thought that it was just a coincidence and he didn't need to think anything of it. When he was pulling off the 'Stain' identity to blend in with civilians, he found a sock in his bag. Low and behold, there was cash in his sock.

"Oh! You got plain cheese? I love plain cheese!"

And of course Midoriya and he shared the same taste in pizza. Just. Of course.

"Stop pretending you're cuffed to the radiator," Stain deadpanned. "You're not doing anything so pull your own damn weight."

"Well, I would have loved to pull my own damn weight, except I was taken away from the scene of the crime without any chance to do so myself," Midoriya shot back. He always shot back. Was it his quirk or something?

The Hero-Killer stared at Midoriya for another moment. Willed himself not to hit Midoriya.

"Then, you wouldn't know what's been going on with the communication link between heroes and police, hm?"

Midoriya sucked his cheeks in. He titled his head left to right and back again and shrugged. "Hm," he said, making a huge show on pretending, "Maybe."

Stain arched an eyebrow.

"But you don't want to help, right?" he asked his captive. "Then stop getting involved." He turned to survey the room.

He didn't understand. Every time he came back, there was something else he didn’t recognize here. The floor was already covered in different newspapers and flyers, ranging from the meat-sales going on on Thursday to expired promotion deals for upgrading phone lines for the town south of here. There were some food wrappers, half-eaten chips and empty water bottles. This was a prison, damnit. Couldn't Midoriya at least act like it was? Who would litter their own prison cell like this? When Stain got arrested, he'll be sure to stay tidy. He squinted when he found a sock filled with… with coins. Midoriya had a sock filled with coins. It looked like a relatively clean sock but. A sock filled with coins, being as heavy as a human head.

Where did he even get these coins? Where was this sock's other half? He risked a glance at Midoriya, the young man still had both of his on.

The young man huffed. "Well, when my life sort of depends on whether or not you return-"

"-And where did you even get these earbuds?-"

"-I sort of have to take measures to ensure my own safety-"

Midoriya's jaw clicked shut as Stain walked behind him, bingo. He looked around, finding an impressive amount of All Might posters (looking to be an advertisement of some sort) before he kicked a hole in the wall, and then kneeled down in front of broken plaster. Double bingo. He reached into the hole and pulled out a slick black bag. He turned back to Midoriya, still sitting next to the radiator, still pretending.

"How did you find that?" Midoriya gasped.

"Where did you get a laptop?" Stain asked. In all honesty, he wanted to know how Midoriya re-did the plaster for this place and Stain didn't even notice. He shook the bag at him, "Looks like neither of us will find out."

Midoriya gnawed on his bottom lip. Stain's eyes lingered way longer on those lips that he should have. Eventually, he walked back in front of him. His footsteps felt heavier, the weight of his thoughts resting heavily on his chest the moment he heard about the security suddenly failing, cops getting rerouted, emergency calls failing, heroes that conveniently end up lost and alone in alleyways. He crouched down in front of him.

He had thought that the heroes were getting sloppier. He had thought that he was getting better at this. What a joke. He wouldn't have even thought to check until the third hero mentioned that their communications' line broke. It was supposed to be a wild theory. It wasn't supposed to be real.

"...Have you been helping me these last few kills?"

The child looked down, like a child who had their hand caught in the cookie jar, and Stain didn't even know how to begin to describe the anomaly that was Midoriya Izuku.

"If you keep doing this, they'll think that you're an accomplice," he warned.

Midoriya, even though both of them knew that he could have gotten at any time, jangled the handcuff around his wrist at him. His eyes fell to the ground at the side, giving Stain a few of his thin neck, pale skin, small ears, soft curls, and bit down on his lips, as though to stop himself from saying anything.

It was enough of an answer.

He placed the laptop bag down in front of him.

"You're dumber than I thought."

"Okay, so, I need you to not bleed everywhere," Midoriya said, as calmly as he could.

Stain, on the ground with a split lip and a hand on an open stab wound, bared his teeth.

"Right away," he hissed, "Just let me get off the carpet as my organs slip out of my body."

"Thank you for being so understanding," the young man replied back dryly. He turned to peer at get another look at Stain and his bleeding wound, and grimaced. “...Maybe we should call a doctor.”

Stain stopped and gave him the most scathing glare possible.

“Right,” Midoriya nodded, “Right, that would be uh. Really dumb. Since you're a Hero-Killer.”

He kneeled next to him, his hands fluttered over Stain's hand. They didn't touch, and he brought his hands back up to his mouth.

“Oh my god,” he said. “You’re dying.”

And Stain, who has suffered worse damage before and came out reasonably well, gave a long suffering sigh. Why did he come back here? He should have died in an alleyway somewhere, far away and hopefully in peace.

“Haven’t you already killed people before?” he rasped out.

“Yes, but there was less,” Midoriya made a wild motion at him and the mess of gore, “and more monologuing and lecturing.”

“Do not monologue at me.”

“I won’t,” the young man said. He made a helpless little sound as he motioned at Stain. “But this is going to stain the carpet. I live here. You don't even buy cleaning supplies. How am I going to get your... liver? Is that your liver? Well, I need it to not rot and stain the carpet that I live on.”

And Stain needed to figure out how to get a refund from kidnap victims. ASAP.

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When Stain woke up, he was in a futon. Which… he didn’t realize they had a futon.

His hand came down to his side, where he felt the very clean bandages and then back up. He recognized the apartment, but not the bandages. What? He sat up, and pulled at the bandages. He stared in morbid shock and curiosity as his fingers ran across the neatest little stitches he had ever seen.

If Midoriya had been hiding the fact that he could do some wicked surgery, then this would get even harder for Stain. At this rate, he might actually forget how to be alone again. While he didn’t think he would live a very long life, he didn’t want this.

Why couldn’t Midoriya just abandon him? Why couldn’t Midoriya just been a normal fucking teenager and let him die and run away and condemn him like everyone else? Why couldn't those damn handcuffs do their fucking job and keep Midoriya in that damn room?

And also, is he a doctor or what?

“Oh, you’re awake? Finally, what took you so long?” Midoriya said as he walked into the room.

“You a doctor?” he rasped out, his voice failing him from how parched he was.

“Huh? Of course not, I am a kidnapped minor…” Midoriya stared at him, and then to what Stain was touching, “Oh, that wasn’t me. That was our neighbor.”

“Our… neighbor?”

“Yeah, the one that gave me my second laptop.”

“Our neighbor gave you a laptop… wait, how many laptops do you have-”

“Well, you should be fine with good food. C’mon, I made curry.”

Stain’s nose, finally finding the smell of the food, made him frown.

“That doesn’t smell like curry," he said.

“It’s…" he hesitated to find the words and ultimately decided on, "It’s edible?”

Oh god, he realized. If the stabbing didn't kill him, Midoriya's cooking would, wouldn't it.

"Don't look at me like that. I did my best. You should be thanking me instead. I didn't have to," he made a motion for him, "for you."

Stain, briefly and honestly, thought that he was dead. He had to be dead. He could not be alive. And more importantly, people like Midoriya did not exist. So he could not be alive, right then and there.

That feeling, that annoyance, bubbled back up inside of him. It remained on the inside, underneath his stitched wounds and it distracted him enough that he ate Midoriya’s questionable cooking with minimal discomfort. All things considered, it was edible. And it definitely wasn’t curry.

-

About a week later, when he was fully healed and the two were preparing to leave this place to go find another temporary safehouse, he realized that they had stayed in an abandoned apartment. They had no neighbors.

And by then, it felt too much like he lost to that knowing smile on Midoriya’s lips to ask.

How annoying.

### **Cohabitat**

“...You can’t even clean the dishes right?”

“Well, if I had known that I would be the live-in maid for the Hero Killer, I’m sure I would have tried a little harder to learn these life skills,” Midoriya replied dryly.

Stain didn’t even react. His gaze was like a blade, piercing and fatal. Midoriya gave his full attention to the dishes in the sink, and tried not to think about how he could feel the stare. As a result of his incredible attention to detail, the plate clattered loudly to the sink when it slipped out of his hands. The sound was deafening and Midoriya felt his eyes well up.

“It’s not worth crying about-”

-God, his voice was so close that he could feel his breath against him-

“-Move over. Learn well. You’ll have to do this yourself soon.”

A shiver ran down Midoriya, and he stood like a statue as Stain reached around him. Since Stain was always hunched over, Midoriya had almost forgotten how much taller this man was over him. Standing like this, he was aware. He towered over him, still hunched, and his arms came on either side of him as he placed his hand into the soapy water. Fingers calloused by training and dyed by murder gentle pried the spongue out of Midoriya’s stiff hand.

“W-Why is that?” he asked, trembling despite the warmth at his back.

“Because I don’t want to see you cry over dishes.”

Midoriya flushed hotly.

And so, Midoriya learned how to do the dishes from Stain, the Hero-Killer.

### **Chained (again)**

“No, like seriously, what’s the point of this,” Midoriya hissed at him, pulling futility at the chains. “Where did you even get this!? If you don’t want me, then just kill me! Or let me go so I can do it myself!”

“No,” Stain replied back, his voice stern.

Midoriya’s eyes narrowed at him, a hot kind of anger boiling out from inside of him.

“Then, what’s the meaning of this?”

He’s not angry, Stain can tell. When Midoriya was angry, he started to smile, and from his furrowed brows and present frown, Stain knew that he’s not angry. Maybe confused, definitely annoyed, but not angry. And if he could tell just from looking at him, that was telling enough. He walked over and kneeled in front of him, his pupils pinpricks of black in a sea of red.

The gaze that Midoriya thought was trained only on [the Mission] was suddenly concentrated on him.

He leaned in close enough that he could feel his breath and heat against his face.

“Meaning?” he said quietly, “You haven’t figured it out?”

The older man took a long exhale through his nose.

“Izuku,” he said quietly, “I can no longer imagine a future without you.”

The look on Midoriya’s face made him laugh, a humorless sound.

Fear is a strange thing to see on his face. He’s seen him stand under the threat of blades, on the brink of death, but he hadn’t ever seen this particular shade of fear on his face before.

“Does that scare you?” Stain asked, his voice even like he was letting Midoriya know that it was his turn to do the dishes again, “Because it scares me.”

And reflected in Midoriya’s eyes, he can see himself smile. It looked terribly awkward, almost as wretched as he felt.

As it turns out, neither of them used smiling for what it was really meant for.

“Stay here,” Stain said. “I mean it. And stay out of it. Don’t get involved. Don’t...”

He left, just like that, and Midoriya wanted to scream after him.

Where would he go?

### **Parental Permission**

“...So?”

Stain took a long, deep breath, hoping that he could get enough oxygen in his head before he had to deal with Midoriya being himself.

“Yes?”

“Are we gonna have sex?”

And Stain, who was a man with desires and needs, raked Midoriya’s figure with his eyes. The young teen, and wasn’t it bad enough that they kissed that one time, peered up at him in a way that made his mouth dry out.

He disgusted himself.

“No. You’re a minor, so I need your parent’s permission.”

Deku jerked into a sitting position. “Are you kidding me?” he asked, eyes so wide that Stain worried they might pop out. “M-My parent’s permission? Because I’m a minor.”

The dead-eyed expression that Stain gave him back showed him exactly how serious he was.

“...You’re the Hero-Killer. You straight up murder Heroes.”

“Yes, but I’m going to do this right.”

His cheeks turned pink in a pretty way that will bring some sweet dreams to Stain later.

“And what, I’ll just, pop by home and say, “Hey Mom, longtime no see. This here is the Hero-Killer. Do you mind if we get hitched?””

“...Do you want to get married?”

“I don’t know,” Midoriya shouted back, “Does my mom need to sign off on that, too?”

Stain, despite himself, smiled.

“Well, as long as you’re a minor-”

“By the time I’m an adult, you’re going to be a grandpa!”

Good mood vaporized, he turned to Midoriya.

“Could we have sex? You’re going to need… medicine or something to keep it up.”

“Midoriya,” Stain took a deep breath and summarized all of his feelings into two words, “You freak.”

### **Helpless**

Normal Tuesday night. Midoriya gave a helpless shrug and Stain suppressed the urge to throttle him.

Because if Stain learned anything, just fucking anything, about being forced to cohabitate with Midoriya, he knew that the young man was the furthest thing from 'helpless' as helpless could get. It felt reasonable and justifiable that he saw red and his blood roared in his ears because Midoriya was not helpless.

### **append(dabi + spinner)**

“And… you’re…”

“A good time, if you get me out.”

Dabi arched an eyebrow, but didn't turn around. There was a kid, a tiny child, that sat in a motherfucking cage, at the base he was staying at for the time being. He, in hindsight, probably shouldn't have stalked Stain right to his apartment.

At the same time, if he didn’t keep an active eye on the man, he felt like he would disappear like a shadow under light.

“I’m not into brats.”

“Aren’t you a villain? Shouldn’t you be?”

The scars on his face twisted as his face contorted into surprise. His eyes found green eyes, in that cage, bright and amused, and he felt that pinch of annoyance grip at him. All they did was meet eyes, but Dabi felt like he was losing.

He sighed, taking a slow step towards the man, and allowed his fire to lick at his arms.

Most people panic, some cry, but all can’t help but feel fear when they see his fire. His quirk, cremation, was no joke. People were ash in minutes. Excruciating pain until eternal release. Time to find out if this kid was a nutjob or hot air.

As it was, he was leaning towards nutjob, because the kid actually scooted closer to him. His chain clinked as it was stretched out to its maximum range, and there was this light in his eyes. It was familiar, undoubtedly, but it wasn’t familiar enough that Dabi had a name for it when he saw it. Instead, he felt all of his attention hyper-focus on him instead.

In front of him, Midoriya laughed. It was a quiet sound, like a puffy cloud, wispy and gentle.

“What a beautiful fire. Is that your quirk? Amazing. If it’s blue, then it must be really hot. I read once that blue fire is the hottest fire that can be made on Earth. I see, then are your scars past burn wounds? No wait, that doesn’t make sense, because why would you use metal piercing on a burn wound? If the fire was that hot…” he drained the rest of his muttering out easily, the kid wasn’t talking very loudly, but Dabi couldn’t help the shock that came when he finally had a name for the look in his eyes.

Wonder. He was in wonder. In awe. This kid had his ankle cuffed and chained to the wall, with death in the shade of blue inched closer to him, but his eyes were clear in wonder.

This wasn’t a kid that was chained and bound and kidnapped.

But he didn’t know what he was either, and for the first time since he became ‘Dabi’, he took note of a stranger.

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Stain snorted, “He’s only in there because he wants to be.”

Dabi’s eyebrow twitched, but he didn’t say anything. Whatever crazy shit Stain did when he wasn’t hero-killing, he really didn’t care. He was here because they agreed on a lot of things, and Dabi actually respected him. What he did when he wasn’t hero-killing really didn’t (shouldn’t) matter to him. Just for good measure, he repeated that to himself three more times.

Next to him, Spinner frowned.

“Truly? He has his own key?”

Dabi could hit him for being so bad at reading the atmosphere, but he didn’t think that Spinner would notice.

Stain snorted.

“There’s nothing that can chain him down,” he said.

“Then, why is he chained up?” Spinner asked.

The Hero-Killer stilled for a moment. He opened his mouth to say something, before he broke out into a crooked grin.

“Right, he’s the one chained up, isn’t he?” he murmured quietly. “Well, don’t worry about it. If he says he can get out, that's when you can worry.”

Dabi frowned, and he couldn’t help that curl of curiosity gripping his heart. He tried to stop it where it was, because stupid decisions were made in the name of curisosity, and he had no desire of stepping into that role.

### **Getting Back in Time for Dinner**

“But why did we pull back?” Spinner asked, about to lose his mind for this. “We could have killed him. We didn’t have to leave him alive. There was no reason for that failure-of-a-hero to still be alive!”

Stain slipped into the window of his temporary base, Spinner seething as he followed a second later. His feet touched the ground with a dull thud, and when he looked up, Midoriya had poked his head out of the hallway to stare at them.

“You’re late,” he said.

“...We got tangled up,” he said. “There were eighteen, by the way, not ten.”

“...Eighteen?” Midoriya parroted, he titled his head, no doubt already running the numbers and figures through his head, “Huh, then Dabi had it easy, huh?” he asked. “Where is he?”

“Take a wild guess.”

Dabi opened the door, walking in with a lazy grin on his face. Without a doubt, that was the expression of someone who got everything he had ever wanted.

“Stain-shishou!” Spinner tried one more time, “Please!”

Midoriya frowned, “You’ve been bullying him again?”

“Dinner,” Stain clipped back.

The young man rolled his eyes and walked towards the kitchen, “It’s gone cold. I told you, you took too long.”

As soon as Midoriya was out of sight, Stain turned back to Spinner. Stain, who had impeccable control over himself, knew that there wasn’t anything resembling emotive on his face. With his features blank and tone even, he looked at Spinner and shook his head.

“It’s rude to keep someone waiting,” he explained simply.

Spinner spluttered back. And realizing why Stain had chosen until Midoriya to leave to reply, spluttered even harder. “He would have understood,” he hissed back, keeping enough sense to keep his voice down.

“He would have,” Stain had no doubts. It’s because of Midoriya’s ability to understand people that he made the choice to allow himself to be handcuffed to a radiator for so long.

“Then…?”

“I think he’s been waiting long enough.”

Spinner didn’t get it then, and Stain didn’t know how to explain it. Even now, Midoriya was still that child he found in that office room, pouring himself a cup of coffee and wondering when he would be forced to face his jury.

Stain wasn’t a hero. He was a hero-killer.

That didn’t mean he didn’t have someone he wanted to protect.

“C’mon, let’s eat dinner. We’ll be on the run again in a few hours.”

### **Selling**

“Yeah, but it’ll be easier, won’t it?” Midoriya asked, tilting his head. “It’s fine. I don’t mind working with him for a bit.”

Just the thought of it had Stain scowling. Spinner, for all the time he spent next to him, hadn’t even realized that he could express that much emotion. The same way someone may recoil from rotting food, Stain looked before he turned to Midoriya.

“I’m not selling you.”

“Pity, you would finally have enough money for that nice knife you’ve been eyeing.”

He scowled back, “You’re worth more than any weapon I can find.”

If he wasn’t in the place he was, Spinner would have blushed at the words. Instead, pursed his lips.

“...That’s not why you’re upset,” Midoriya said, leaning back against the wall with a small smile. He tapped his finger against his cheek as he made a thoughtful expression. “What is it then? It’s not like I’m much more to you than another mouth to feed.”

Distantly, Spinner wondered if Midoriya’s dwindling appetite was a way he was looking after them.

“...If it’s not me, you’ll leave,” Stain said, looking at the table and the papers scattered about on top of it.

“You really think it’ll be that easy to escape?”

Stain shook his head, “You’ll find a way,” he said. He looked at Midoriya. “I know you will.”

Spinner, feeling like he was wallpaper, wondered if he should leave the room. About the same amount of shit would get done. As it was, he felt petrified as he watched the scene in front of him.

“Then,” Midoriya said as his smile turned cold, “Why am I still here? If I can’t even escape you, then how could I ever escape them?”

The Hero-Killer looked at Midoriya, a painful looked smiling cutting across his face.

“I don’t know, but if I find out, I know you’d leave.”

The smile slid off his face.

And Spinner really, really, really wanted to leave, but he felt like if he breathed too loudly, they would turn against him in an instant.

### **The End: All Might**

“...It’s simple, isn’t it?” Midoriya said, a calm smile on his lips. “I just need to become the Number One Hero, the Symbol of Peace,” he said.

Stain suppressed a shiver at the raw look on his face.

“Don’t look at me like that,” the young man said, “I’m telling you to hold on. I will definitely save you.” He lifted his hand up to him, closing it into a fist. “I’ll grant you that salvation you desire.”

Stain narrowed his eyes, as Midoriya opened his hand up to him, like he was extending his promise to him.

“I’ll kill you, in place of All Might.”

And Stain didn’t know how to articulate that he was the Symbol of Peace to him. He was the light and the bright, and a bunch of other things that he heard people describe All Might as. Strong unlike everyone else, and good in any and every situation, Stain had already replaced the Number One Hero in his heart.

Instead of capes, it was chains. Instead of tights, it was sweats. Instead of a laugh that everyone knew, he had Midoriya’s heartbeat echoing against his chest.

“...Ridiculous,” Stain said, even though he was already dreaming.

### **Hero-san**

Their base suddenly got raided.

Luckily, Midoriya was the only one here. And by luckily, he meant Oh Shit. He was the only one here, and that meant that no one would be able to provide extra feedback.

“Don’t come back,” Midoriya said into his mic before he slapped the laptop closed and popped the hard drive out.

He tossed the laptop underneath the cage and chucked the harddrive in the corner of the room. It clattered loudly and he threw on his shiny bracelet. He laid down just in time for the door to slam open.

“Stop it!” he screamed. “Stop it, please!”

The hero was young. The hero was alone. Then, Midoriya might just have a friend in this cell.

### **w**