## Semester 1

### **(Apr) High School: Debut**

Okay, Midoriya told himself, for certain, he was going to have a normal, easy high-school experience.

He took one step onto school grounds when he heard a window shatter. He stared in abject shock as someone drove a motorbike through the school building, shattering all the windows with a baseball bat.

Midoriya’s first day started here.

-

His teacher, Haimawari Koichi, reminded him of someone, but he can't think of who.

He looked like a small home made out of popsicle sticks, ready to blow apart as soon as the wind blew.

### **Day 2 -**

On the second day of school, Midoriya stepped out of his apartment and made a decision.

This was a world where he didn’t have his friends to remind him that he needs to live. It was in times like this, where he can swear that he can hear Iida tell him to focus on his school, and Tsuyu’s stern reminder that breaking rules to show that rule-breaking was bad was hypocritical, that he misses them the most. So instead, he apologizes to Deku and leaves the apartment.

It’s rash and a shot in the dark, but thinking of that lonely lady in the candy shop, he knows that he has to at least try.

-

He left his phone on purpose, and had a couple of bills in cash. In hindsight, he probably shouldn’t have just put all of his cash and taped it to the refrigerator, but he knew that Dabi and Shigaraki needed to eat something.

Hopefully, they like take-out. Concerning all they’ve been eating is curry since they got to his apartment, he supposed that it’ll be a welcome change.

Well, them eating is more important than the comfort of his transportation since he’s cutting class anyways. Don’t worry Deku-kun, he tried to comfort himself by comforting the man whose body he’s in, he will get the highest grades ever. That way, at the very least, Deku-kun will be able to choose whatever he wanted for the future when he returned.

And so, he made the long hike, hitchhiked when he could, saved a drowning dog for a kid, and helped a grandma cross the street. And yeah, someone driving by stole his wallet, and someone else mistakenly poured dirty water on him, and he slept under the bridge by the highway for three days straight. There were also a couple of incidents where these older men kept running into his butt, but they apologized and left him alone.

Which was fine. He’s just glad that he wasn’t a girl, or else things would have gotten a lot worse by now.

More importantly, the letter that he was holding onto was still safe.

“Hey kid, are you okay?”

On the third day of his travels, he barely makes it to Nagoya. He’s been running on a water-diet, and thanked the government everyday for instating public drinking fountains. He’s picked up some enough change to buy a map too.

The last thing he expected was Toyomitsu Taishiro.

“Whoa there kid, you alright?”

He stared at him and squinted. He knew this man. He fought with him several times, saved a lot of people together and all. If Deku hadn’t met him after he lost all his weight fighting crime before, he wouldn’t have recognized him.

The blond stared down at him. And his tratorous heart fucking fluttered as he leapt up to his feet, and then the vertigo of being so hungry for so long hit him and he toppled hard to the side. The large hands that grabbed him were sorely missed, and he did his best to get Deku’s native reactions to being grabbed in control as he stared at him with stars in his eyes.

Fat Gum, he thought, thank god this man is okay. He was in a tracksuit.

“Yes,” he nodded. He straightened out and gavea polite bow, “Thank you for your help. I’m okay-”

“You don’t look okay,” the older man replied, a frown on his face. “...You want a meal? Actually, I have a coupon here, but it doesn’t work unless I bring in another person.” He gave a grin at that, wide and blinding in its radiance.

Midoriya thought that it’ll be easy to get lost in those eyes and smiled back. The kindness seeped deeply into his bones.

“Ah, I eat a lot,” he said, “So, I don’t think I could impose-”

“Really? I want to see that for myself. C’mon, I promise I won’t do anything strange. Just a meal.”

His stomach gurgled loudly back, answering, him and Midoriya felt his face flush in response. He bowed his head.

“Please excuse me then.”

“Ah god, I can’t believe you.”

Fat Gum is every bit a passionately compassionate person that Midoriya remembers him to be. Despite how awfully this world probably treated him too, he’s glad that this exorbitant amount of positive vibes hasn’t been tainted.

Right now, as he pays for Midoriya’s all-you-can-eat buffet, he was tearing up as Midoriya told him about his trip.

“And you’re… you’re going to deliver this letter from a grandma to a grandson? Because she didn’t know where his address was but that he was farming in Osaka?”

He smiled back.

“She’s helped me out a lot, it felt wrong to not help when I could.”

“But… school and you’re not even packed or prepared.”

He shrugged back, “If you wait for ‘sometime’, isn’t that just code for never? She last heard that he was in Osaka. There’s my first clue, the faster I get there, the better chances it will be that I will find him. It sounded urgent, so I don’t think that it would be a good idea to wait too long.”

“It sounded urgent? Was she on her deathbed?”

“Oh no, she’s in good health, thank god,” Midoriya said, laughing a little. He stuffed two more rolls into his mouth before taking the tea. After chewing and swallowing, he continued. “But good health doesn’t last forever. It’s better to do it while you still can then when you only have regrets.”

Toyomitsu looked at the letter that Midoriya placed on the table. “So, do you even know what’s written on this?”

The young man tilted his head curiously. “Eh? Well, yeah, it’s not for me. Why would I read it?”

The blond gave him a look.

“...Is this your grandma?”

He shook his head, “I call her that, but Chiyo-san just lives down the street for me. Actually, one of my friends shoplifted from her store once or twice. He stopped now, but she didn’t hold it against him when he came back to apologize.”

Toyomitsu arched an eyebrow.

“An eldery woman that you know because your friend stole from here, huh? And you’re on this reckless pursuit, penniless and sleeping under bridges, skipping class and going hungry, to get this letter to her grandson because she asked you to?”

He blanched, “It sounds really bad when you say it like that,” he said, taking one of the bowls of soups to lift to his mouth. “And she didn’t ask me. She wouldn’t. That’s why I had to do it?”

“You had to force your way into her life?”

He shrugged back. “It’s what a hero would do.”

Toyomitsu stared at Midoriya for a long moment before he looked at the address.

“Well, you’re in luck. I know where this is, and who you’re talking about?”

“Eh? Really?”

Toyomitsu Taishiro was a normal guy who was bright-eyed and optimistic about the future. He joined the police department straight out of high school because he wanted to make the world a better place. He wanted to make the world a safer place.

Training was brutal, and there were plenty of times where he didn’t think he would make it, yeah, but a recent case ruined his thought process.

took break from case because injury + partner was in critical condition after a case went really, really really bad

like a kidnapping case that ended with one of the girls who was kidnapped snapping & killing everyone. All the other kidnapped kids, the kidnappers, and brutally maimed some of the police officers (including taishiro & partner). Ending with her imprisonment, even though she was just in a very, very bad place with shit decisions to choose between

### **Shuzenji Chiyo’s Grandson Shun**

Midoriya has a swollen finger that’s probably broken, a split lip, and three rips in his jeans by the time he finally finds Recovery Girl’s grandson.

“Here,” he said, handing the letter over. “Your grandma wanted me to send you this.”

Said Grandson looked suspiciously between Midoriya and the letter and snorted. He gave this shaky laugh, but Midoriya could feel the last of the Grandson’s defenses slipping away, revealing a desperate child who just wanted someone to be by his side began to slowly appear.

“What, and who are you? Her hired help?”

“No, I’m just a guy who can’t keep my nose out of other people’s business,” Midoriya replied frankly. And then, he gave a large grin, “I did all I could, so it’s up to you now, okay?”

With that, he rubbed the back of his neck and yawned. Walking out and onto the street, he waved at Toyomitsu, who sketched out an uncomfortable looking bow and fretted over the young man with a first-aid kit.

On the other hand, Midoriya gave him a pleasant smile.

“Hey, wait!” Shun the Grandson called out to them. He hesitated when they turned around and then beckoned them closer, “It’s pretty late. Why don’t you guys spend the night?”

He’s never had unexpected strangers come into his house like this. A thousand bad things could happen due to this. But at the same time, he’s never met someone who traveled from Tokyo to Osaka just to deliver a letter from his grandmother with nothing but the clothes on his back.

“Tokyo is literally like… three hours by train,” the man said, squinting at him. “And you walked here? How long would that have taken?”

“It took longer than I thought,” Midoriya agreed, “About three days?”

He grimaced back.

And you just… went for it?”

The student laughed back, “It was a good run.”

Shun stared for a moment longer before he gave this heaving laugh. “Oh my god,” he said. “You’re absolutely crazy.” He looked at Toyomitsu, “Please tell me he’s not serious.”

The blond shrugged, “I found him under a bridge.”

Shun covered his face. “My grandma did this to you?”

“No, no, no,” Midoriya shot to his feet to refute that claim. “No, she’s only ever been supportive and kind to me! I did this. I selfishly put my nose where it doesn’t belong and did this. Please, this is on me.”

The grandson shook his head. “That really doesn’t help the situation.”

### **Return**

Midoriya was beyond exhausted when he got home. Rubbing the back of his neck, he pushed the door open and suppressed a yawn.

“I’m home,” he called out.

The last thing he expected was for the twin sounds of pitter-patter and the disheveled looks of Dabi and Shigaraki running out to greet him at the entrance. They stared at him, and Midoriya felt all his exhaustion melt away into something sharper as he regarded the wild look in their eyes. He hasn’t seen that expression on their face since he found them, after all.

Who could have put such a lost expression on their face?

“Hey, is everything okay?” he asked, toeing his ripped shoes off, “You guys don’t look so good-”

“Where were you?!”

His jaw clicked shut, as he stared in wide-eyed shock as Shigaraki shouted at him. His shoulders were shaking, head bowed, and Midoriya looked to Dabi’s emotionally blank face leaning against the wall a little further back.

“I had to run an errand,” Midoriya continued. He tilted his head, confused as he tried to figure out what else to say. It couldn’t be… “I left a note on the fridge.”

“You mean that note that said not to look for you? That you’re okay and will come back?” Dabi asked, his voice shaking. Actually, now that he knows what to look for, he can see that Dabi’s hands were shaking even as his arms were crossed over his chest.

“...I came back,” Midoriya said, “Just like I wrote I would. What’s the problem?”

“The problem is that there was no way of contacting you! There was no build-up to this! You left your phone! And taped your money to the fridge! We didn’t know where you were going or when you were going to come back! For all we knew, you went to school and-and-and got kidnapped or something! How were we supposed to know? How the hell are we supposed to understand anything if you don’t say anything to us? We can’t read your mind! How could I ever believe that someone would come back just because they said they would?!”

There was a long pause, as Shigaraki ran out of steam, and his arms hung limply by his side instead. Midoriya stared at him, and maybe he was living under that fantasy and really did want to go home. But looking at Shigaraki now, he understands that there were now people that waited for him.

In this world or another, there was someone who was waiting for him. It no longer mattered if this was <real> or not, or if this was his world or not, because that expression on Shigaraki’s face, the way Dabi looked wasn’t something fake. The emotions that they felt weren’t fake.

And Midoriya was a hero.

He bowed his head.

“I’m sorry,” he said, “I didn’t mean to worry you. I won’t do it again.”

The older man took a deep, long breath, showing more patience in a single motion than Midoriya has seen from him in a year. He clenched his hands tightly.

“Okay, as long as you understand,” he said at last. “Hurry up and take a shower, you smell like fucking garbage.”

“Yes sir,” Midoriya laughed back, stepping in and feeling as though he came home.

“We have dinner up,” Dabi added as he walked by, “Welcome back.”

“...Yeah, I’m home.”

The words sounded much lighter than he thought.

“...Dabi, Shigaraki,” he called out, “Thank you for keeping an eye on this place.”

“Go shower.”

### **First Dinner Back \***

“And so,” Shigaraki said, placing the two plates of omurice onto the table, “I don’t trust you to cook,” he said pointing at Dabi, and then he pointed to Midoriya, “And I’m sick of eating curry.”

He gave a wolfish grin.

“Dig in, you filthy swin-”

“Oh my god, it tastes so good!” Midoriya cheered, talking over their resident chef in an instant. “The rice is so fluffy! The egg is so thin, but the texture is so smooth! The meat is cooked perfectly and the seasoning is so good! I can really taste how all the ingredients came together! I-”

“Okay, I get it!” Shigaraki suddenly snapped back, cutting him off. He turned away sharply, his ears bright red as he scowled. “God, just shut up!”

And just like that, he stormed back to the kitchen, presumably to get more food.

“...He’s really bad at taking compliments, huh?” Midoriya commented, watching where he had left.

Dabi shot him a look, and then snorted. It didn’t go unnoticed by the young man.

“W-What?” he asked, confused.

“Nothing,” Dabi replied back, dropping his gaze to the rice as he started to dig in. “Just… you’re a lot stronger than I thought,” he said.

“Eh?”

After coming to this world, quirkless, lost, alone and small again, it was the last thing he ever expected to hear. He dropped his gaze, shame filling his face. He had been so caught up in this world that he had almost completely abandon his. Strong? Far from it.

The people around him, who are trying to rebuild their life instead of getting distracted by every lost child around them, they were the strong ones.

“Oh no,” he said, shaking his head, “I’m not strong at all. I’m just… I have a long way to go.” He gave a nervous laugh, hoping that he didn’t ruin the soft ambiance with his needless chatter, and dug in. He gave a happy trill at the taste, deftly ignoring the weight of Dabi’s gaze by babbling instead, “Man, this omurice tastes really good though.”

Homemade food is a special thing. After going so long without it, Midoriya really appreciates it. If possible, he would like to make his mom a proper meal one day too.

“I… I think she’ll like that,” Dabi said suddenly.

Midoriya looked up at him, and gave out a surprised, “What?”

“Your mom,” Dabi said, “I’m sure she’ll like your curry.”

The young man stared, his eyes watering as he looked down at his plate. If all it took was a sentence to save someone, and the only way to be a hero was to save someone, then Dabi and Shigaraki had it down pat.

“...Don’t cry. Shigaraki worked really hard to make the perfect omurice.”

Coming back from the kitchen, Shigaraki looked just as red as he did when he left, “I didn’t do any of that shit-”

“It was awful, Izuku,” Dabi said, a slow smile on his face, “I’ve had nothing but omurice for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. At this rate, I might have to learn how to cook-”

“Then learn, you damned flowerman!”

“All flowers got a time to bloom, Shigaraki,” Dabi replied, waving his hand at him. He lifted his eyes to regard them and sighed, “You’ll learn eventually, kid.”

Shigaraki’s lips twitched, and Midoriya, unable to help himself, laughed.

It was a quiet sound, and if they didn’t grow up in a household where these sounds didn’t happen, they wouldn’t have thought twice about it.

As it was, it just became another treasure.

### **Back to school**

Now that he was used to it, he supposes that if UA was a poorman’s school run on taxpayer money.

“Where the fuck were you?!”

He nearly jumped out of his skin when Bakugo’s voice came for his hearing.

“Morning, Kacchan,” he replied back, more out of habit than anything else.

The blond’s glare didn’t diminish in the slightest, but he looked visibly calmer than before. His hands came up, and Midoriya tensed without meaning to. The blond paused at that, and then dropped his hands. Burying them deep into his pocket, he scowled.

“What are you doing today?” he asked instead.

“Huh? Uh… probably go straight home?”

“Okay,” Bakugo nodded, “I’ll come over so you can copy off.”

“Eh?”

Midoriya blinked, and watched his childhood friend (or at least what should have been his childhood friend) flush uncharacteristically (or maybe it was in-character for this one?) red. He scowled back and gritted out between clenched teeth, “What? You don’t want my notes?”

Overwhelmed with a friendship they never got to share, Midoriya eagerly nodded as he raised his hand up high in the sky.

“I want it!” he shouted out. “I want it! So come over!”

The blond spluttered, “Shut up!” he snapped out, “God, you embarrassment, just say yes quietly!”

Midoriya grinned back, unbashased at the thought that any Bakugo could be so easily flustered, and laughed, “Okay, Kacchan!”

“You guys are as close as always.”

Any semblance of pleasantries evaporated off of Bakugo’s face in an instant, but Midoriya turned around to flash a grin at the person who approached him.

After all, no matter the universe, Uraraka Ochako was a great person, right?

“Good morning, Uraraka-chan!” he said.

The brown-haired girl blinked back, as though she wasn’t expecting him to say hello. Still, she gave a little smile and nodded back.

“Good morning… Midoriya-kun, was it?”

Oh Midoriya realized belatedly, he hadn’t been in class for a few days, had he? It wouldn’t make sense for him to know everyone’s names yet, right?

Well, he’ll let bygones be bygones.

“Yes, nice to meet you,” he said brightly, hoping that he didn’t give away how nervous he felt. Somehow, he couldn’t shake the fact that something was wrong, but he didn’t know what.shaking it off, he decided that, for now, he needed to play along and be a good student.

He shouldn’t tarnish Deku-kun’s good name, after all.

“Good morning, Sero-kun!” he said, slowly but surely greeting each and every single person that he came across in his class.

That is, until Bakugo grabbed him by the shoulders.

“Izuku,” he hissed, “You fucking freak!”

“W-what? What did I do?”

“Why do you know everyone’s name?!” the blond snapped back.

“Because they introduced themselves?”

Red eyes narrowed, and Midoriya couldn’t believe that he didn’t immediately start to explode. Instead, the blond closed his eyes and took a deep breath.

“You’re the creepiest sonofabitch I know.”

“Eh?”

### **Laid off & Belated Pay-Day**

“...I didn’t think you were that kind of kid, but you really disappointed me. You just didn’t show up to work, for two weeks, no prior notice or anything, and you think that I’m just going to let you back? No, get out of here kid.”

In hindsight, it made perfect sense that he got laid off of his convenience store job. His one regret would be that he didn’t get Spinner’s contact information, among other things.

-

At the dinner table, where Shigaraki slid a plate of dumplings next to the tamogayaki while Dabi got the rice for the three of them, it still felt surreal. Was this real? He poured the hot tea out for them, and after putting the kettle away, took his seat with the others. Shigaraki sat on the left of him, and Dabi in front of him, just like they always did.

Sometimes, Midoriya had to double-check himself.

Today, however, he got to rid this particular wave of shame in his heart. His roommates had been pretty calm since he came back, so he didn’t think that it mattered much if he disappeared for a bit or whatever. Thinking back on it, he supposed it was a pretty big deal after all. He just didn’t think that his roommates would care.

The thought made him a little lonely, but he knew that it was better for things to be like this.

More importantly...

“So uh. I got some bad news,” Midoriya said slowly, before he started to eat.

“Eat first, I’m starving,” Shigaraki said.

“And we got some good news too. Let’s share after dinner,” Dabi said.

With a heavy heart, Midoriya did just that.

“...It’s delicious,” he said, eyes wide. He didn’t know why he was so surprised. He could feel his eyes water and he gave a breathless laugh. Maybe he was more tired than he thought. Maybe he was fucking exhausted from the entire train wreck that was his life. Right now, as he bit into the rice and savored every sensation of taste across his tongue, he lost focus on everything else and just worried about the current moment.

It was so fucking delicious.

If he had looked up from where he was inhaling the food, he would see the twin looks of relaxed content on Shigaraki and Dabi’s faces.

-

“So, bad news first-”

“Wait,” Shigaraki said, “We’ve been waiting longer.”

“Huh?”

“Last week, actually,” Dabi said, a rare grin stretching on his face as he and Shigaraki pulled out envelopes from behind their back. “We got paid.”

“Hey, I wanted to say that!” Shigaraki hissed.

“...Paid?” Midoriya whispered.

Bad mood apparently forgotten, Shigaraki surged forward with a huge grin like a kid who scored particularly high on the last exam. He waved the envelope in Midoriya’s face.

“Yeah! We finally got paid!”

“Paid,” Midoriya repeated again, just as breathless.

“Yeah, we just said that.”

“F-from the job, right? Not something… less savory?”

Dabi snorted, “Like we’d get away with it anyways. Here,” he passed his envelope into Midoriya’s hands.

“Taxes are a bitch, but it’s something,” Shigaraki said. His words contradicted his actions, as he placed his hands on his hips and stuck his chest out in obvious pride. Even in the subdued, warm light of the Midoriya residence, his eyes shined like the sun was in their room instead.

Midoriya stared at the envelopes, as Shigaraki unceremoniously dumped his envelop on top of Dabi’s, feeling the weight of it in his hands, and he felt his eyes water all over again. They did it. They were full functioning members of society now. No one died, no one had to die, no one got hurt, but they looked proud of their accomplishments. In his hands was the physical manifestation of how far they came.

The weight of their humanity was a few grams at best, but it felt like so much more to Midoriya.

“That’s amazing,” he breathed out, his voice coming out much more shakily than he intended he coughed awkwardly, reigning his emotions in. “Really,” he said, “That’s amazing.”

He grinned at them, and seeing it mirrored back in an unfiltered manner could have blinded him in their radiance. If, in another world, they didn’t have to be villains and could smile so brightly, he felt relieved. Surely, in his world too, they could be that happy without ever killing someone, right? But the moment stretched, and the envelope remained in his hands. His smile turned a little more confused as he looked to it and then back to them, and their amused smiles. Wait...

“Wait, I don’t get it,” the young man said, trying to smile through the confusion. “Congratulations on your first pay, but why is it in my hands?”

“It’s for you,” Shigaraki said, easily. “As thanks for letting us bum off you.”

Next to him, Dabi nodded to confirm.

“Oh. Oh!” Midoriya brightened at that, and gave a little laugh.

A rush of warmth enveloped him at the thought that they wanted to repay him. They? Wanted to repay him? They knew and understood gratitude and they wanted to express those feelings to him? He was so happy he felt like he could burst out. Still, it felt all too silly, and he wanted to make sure that this was done correctly.

“I don’t want your money.” He stood up and pushed the pay back to the other men’s hands. Too shocked at the sudden turn of events, the other two numbly held the envelopes. “I don’t need this. This is the money you worked at the job you found. You should use it for yourself.”

There was a moment of silence before there was an eruption.

“What the fuck are you saying you don’t want it? Take the fucking money!” Shigaraki snapped back, shoving the money right back into Midoriya’s chest.

The younger man kept his hands up and away, and shook his head. He kept his expression calm, in sharp contrast to the increasing amount of ire that Shigaraki was building up. Right before he could start yelling again, however, Dabi spoke up.

“Why not?” he asked, his voice cold and eyes narrowed. His posture remained deceivingly calm and relaxed, but one look at his face let him know that he was one word from blowing up. “You just got laid off, didn’t you?”

Midorita sucked his breath in. He could feel his blood turn to ice as he stared at him.

“How…”

“It’d be more impressive if you had kept your job there after leaving for two weeks without prior notice,” the man said. His eyes felt cold and sharp, like he was armed with an icicle and ready to strike. “So why don’t you want this? It’s our token of gratitude-”

“I told you, I did it on a whim. You don’t owe me anything-”

“What the fuck you mean we don’t owe you anything! Then, fine! Here’s my selfish demand now take the money!”

Midoriya smiled back, touched by the gesture of kindness, and shook his head. In his world, Dabi and Shigaraki didn’t feel like they were capable of empathy, but there they were, expressing their heartfelt sincerity. It was more than enough. If they could move on and live, comfortable and happy without expending others, there was nothing more that Midoriya could want.

“No,” Midoriya said firmly, feeling more certain about himself as he overlapped the Shigaraki in front of him to the Shigaraki he once knew, “You’ve done more than enough. So, I really think you should have this money for yourself. Isn’t there something that you want?”

There had to be. In another world, Shigaraki wanted the whole world. He can only imagine that this Shigaraki also had to have some amount of desire as well.

“Yes! Of course there is!” the man snapped back.

“Okay,” Midoriya said, his heart warm and his smile warmer, “Now’s your chance.”

But neither of them knew what the price of Midoriya’s gentle smile was, and had no means of figuring it out.

“Still, you’ve been laid off. So you need money,” Dabi tried.

“I don’t need your money,” he replied back. “I have some savings if we need it. But we’ll be fine for a few months.” He would work hard to earn back all the money that he was stealing from Deku and his family. It was the least he could do for the kid he couldn’t save.

Shigaraki took a threatening step forward, but Midoriya’s smile didn’t falter. His face scrunched up, looking ready to beat his gratitude into Midoriya’s face, before he gave a loud sigh. Running his hand through his hair, he scowled back.

“I don’t understand you at all! Then why did you help?”

“Because I’m a hero,” Midoriya said, on reflex, “Helping people is what I do.”

For the second, the anger and frustration was momentarily forgotten as both of them turned to stare at Midoriya with mirrored looks of shock.

“What?”

The grin he gave them was blinding, but it did little to assuage their feelings.

### **Paycheck [MidoAi]**

“Would you... Uh… ever give your paycheck to someone?”

Aizawa looked at Midoriya from the corner of his eye, and then back to the ice cream they were eating. It was a rare moment where the two could be alone together like this, and he couldn’t let it slip by. The man next to him was still one of the most level-headed adults that he trusted. He could only pray that Yamada and Shirakumo were stuck in a long line.

“Huh?”

“Like to uh… Yamada-sens… er…. Yamada-san and Shirakumo-san,” he said, quickly amending his mistake before they teased him about it again. “Would you ever give your paycheck to them?”

“God no,” Aizawa stated back bluntly. He narrowed his eyes, and a dangerous aura began to surround him as his voice dropped. “Did they put you up to this? What did they break? They have their own money so why do I have to bail them out again?”

Midoriya, feeling that this was a very, very personal issue, he tried to deviate from it as fast as possible. Dealing with a moody Aizawa always sucked in any universe, but if he’s not careful, he would infect Yamada and Shirakumo with it and then Midoriya would have to deal with all three of them and their Moods.

Anyways, why did he have to be so defensive about it anyways? No, no, he didn’t want to know, did he? If he wanted to be able to make eye contact with his teachers when he got back, it would be better if he didn’t know.

“Well, Dabi and Shigaraki gave me their pays but I didn’t want it so I gave it back,” Midoriya blurted out, hopeful that it’ll distract him from whatever dangerous thoughts he had.

“...They what?”

It was successful, but the look in Aizawa’s eyes were no less scary. What did Midoriya do wrong? If he could tell him in a concise and efficient way, that would be the best!

“B-but I did give it back! I told them that they should spend their money on what they wanted. Is… Is this normal?”

“No,” Aizawa deadpanned, but considered it. Finishing his ice cream in two bites, he continued while dusting his hands off on his jeans. “Well to begin with, there’s nothing about you that I’d consider normal. Everywhere you go, all you do is get into trouble. They used to call us ‘problem children’ but you’re in a league all on your own.”

The words stung in their familiarity, and coupled with the rugged grin stretching on Aizawa’s face, Midoriya felt so homesick he could throw up.

He looked down on his hands. No, no, he thought to himself. He shouldn’t be selfish. Right now, he needed to help the people around him, and then he’ll worry about getting back. He didn’t want to leave a job half done just because it was more convenient for him.

“But isn’t it a good thing? Having more money. They said that they want to repay you, so why not take it and accept their gratitude?”

“...I don’t know, it just… it just feels wrong,” Midoriya said, shaking his head. “It’s not like being with them ruined me financially either. Even if I had that money, I don’t know what I would do with it. Shigaraki is always looking at games and Dabi really likes sci-fi novels, so I figured that there was something they wanted to buy and that’s why they worked so hard at part-times. Wouldn’t it be better for them to use that money that they earned for themselves than give it to someone who wouldn’t use it at all?”

The wind picked up between them. Aizawa leaned back against the park bench and Midoriya’s head turned to keep looking at him.

“You know, for a guy who always knows when people are suffering, you’re absolute shit at understanding them.”

He could see a literal question mark appear over Midoriya’s head, and he gave a relaxed smile.

“Well, if it were me, I’d take the money. It doesn’t matter if you use it or not. Or you could always buy something together with that money, like a victory bbq or something. Maybe some new furniture.”

But from the young man’s darkenening expression, it didn’t look like that was what they wanted.

“If you were thinking of something else, then you should tell them. What, you want them to get out since they make their own income now? You only wanted them when they were poor and useless?”

“They were never useless.”

Midoriya’s voice was sharp and cold, like an icicle. Eyes blazed, ready to defend the pair of scumbags, Aizawa had no idea how he managed to even find someone as flawfully loyal as the young man next to him. Said young man caught himself and dropped his gaze.

“Excuse my outburst,” he said quietly, polite and meek as he curled into himself. “It’s frustrating to hear that about people who are working so hard to make their lives better on their own. I have… I get so much courage and inspiration from them everyday. If anything, I should be the one handing my paycheck over.”

“...You try telling them that?” Aizawa couldn’t imagine it going well.

Midoriya shook his head.

“Yeah, keep it that way.”

He scoffed back. Polite, but cheeky. A glimmer returned to those green eyes and Aizawa closed his eyes. He took a deep breath.

“Well, there’s no obvious right answer. Straight up, both parties don’t even see the same scale. That’s where you should start. Once both of you find something of the same value together, it’ll be easier to decide things together.”

“...But that’s going to take a lot of time.”

Which piqued the host’s interest. Midoriya didn’t really strike him as the impatient time, but he supposed that he was a kid after all.

“...Taking what looks like the long road can be faster than taking a bunch of shortcuts too,” the older man said. “You should think about what kind of guy you are, but you should also remember that the kind of guy you are is the kind of guy that they’ll be known to associate with.”

Midoriya’s eyes widened, and that’s how Aizawa understood he hit the mark on the head. He placed his hand on green curls, ruffling them into an even more unruly mess. The young man flailed, but despite being known to send to men twice his weight into the hospital, didn’t fight Aizawa off at all.

The older man smiled back.

“Time is one of the only things you won’t get back,” he said, “Don’t spend it wondering about someone-spend it with them instead.”

And Midoriya smiled back.

-

Aizawa looked over and then sighed.

“You know, it’s bad manners to eavesdrop.”

“Then don’t have conversations where you can be heard, Shota,” Shirakurmo shot back. He looked to Aizawa and then to where Midoriya had. “But I can’t believe that. He turned down money? Because there was nothing that he wanted?”

“I can’t believe he left us without saying goodbye,” Yamada whined quietly. “We even got snacks for him.”

“No, if there was something he wanted...or something that he thought someone else needed, I bet you that he’d work for it.”

“Wow, so like, the exact opposite of us.”

Aizawa gave a wry smile at the frank observation.

“It’s just a matter of framing,” he replied back. “When you figure that you, maybe you’ll have more customers than me.”

“Boo! Shota! Boo!”

### **Paycheck [p2]**

In the end, Midoriya didn’t take the money. However, Shigaraki and Dabi figured that there were other ways to repay him.

They figured that they could presumptively pay the rent or utilities or whatever. Except it turned out that it was automatically paid for and covered by Midoriya’s dad, the name on the rent. When asked who they were, they didn’t threaten the rent-owner as much as they would have and walked away.

Well, whatever, there was plenty of other things that they could do. Except paying for groceries didn’t work since Stain and several other people always gave them freebies, and while they were busy taking the groceries, Midoriya always ended up paying in their moment of distraction. It was like he planned this or something.

But that was fine, there were other things. Like clothes. Except they rarely saw Midoriya out of anything other than his uniform and his tracksuit. And it wasn’t like they had any clue about what the kid would like to wear outside of plain clothes. It didn’t help that their neighbors leaped at any chance to buy something for Midoriya either.

From what they did know about Midoriya, was that he liked to live minimalistically.

What do you get someone like him?

Do they replace the plates that they’ve broken? Do they get books that they think that he’ll like? Do they get furniture to replace the home? Do they get better blankets so that the three of them don’t have to share the two that they have every night?

But if they do that, would that be okay?

If they did that, wouldn’t that engrave their presence into this home?

Was that okay?

If they asked Midoriya, he would undoubtedly say that it was fine, but they really shouldn’t be spending their money like that. And if they asked, Midoriya would surely pay more attention to those details and pay for it themselves.

It was hard. They wanted to repay back what they were given. However, they had to think about what they could do.

If they made these purchases, if they made that commitment, didn’t that mean that they wanted to keep going? Wouldn’t that mean that they were beginning to plan for the future? The money that they earned will go into their livelihood, their future.

What a novel feeling.

-

“

### **Stain & Roommates \***

“Aren’t police officers supposed to be busy?” Shigaraki asked, narrowed eyes and annoyed as Stain took a large helping of dinner again. Nevermind the fact that Stain also brought several bags of groceries, the bastard didn’t help in cooking it, and didn’t live here, so Shigaraki felt that he was justified.

The fact that he was still bitter that Midoriya was leafing through job-ads had nothing to do with it.

“I have to go back out,” he responded even though he didn’t dig in as soon as he was seated. Shouldn’t he be in a rush?

At the very least, if he was rushed, Shigaraki could make the claim that Stain was here only to eat their food and move on. He could bitch and complain a little while longer, but then he saw the way Stain straightened as Midoriya walked into the kitchen. He hated how similar they were.

“Wow, dinner smells good!” Midoriya cheered as he walked in. There was a towel around his shoulders that he was using to wipe at his hair.

Shigaraki felt his heart swell at the praise, and from the look that Stain gave him, knew that he couldn’t hide it at all. God, he hated this guy. Before, when Midoriya gave those kinds of compliments, he would fluster and splutter and possibly throw something at him. But after those grueling days where he had taped his pay and left his phone, Shigaraki felt something slide back into his heart with his consistent warmth.

“And if you want to eat it,” he said, feeling his throat constrict in ways it never has before, “Then you better go dry your hair properly.”

Was it strange? Did it not make sense? Midoriya’s eyes, bright and green, seemed to pierce right through him. Before he started fidgeting, he spoke up.

“Alright, I’ll do that. Don’t eat everything without me.”

Which was stupid, because they always have leftovers to pack lunches with.

“...He’s limping,” Stain said suddenly.

Shigaraki jerked, feeling as though his words were more accusatory than they actually were.

“He got into some trouble, didn’t he?”

It was phrased like a question, but Shigaraki couldn’t focus on anything other than the fact that he knew that look on his face. It was the same look Shigaraki has seen in the mirror, for the past few days.

Stain sighed, and rubbed the back of his neck. He took a deep breath, probably to lecture him on morality and ethics again, but before he could say anything, their front door opened.

“I’m back,” their last roommate called out.

“Oh, Dabi, welcome back!” Midoriya’s voice carried all the way.

Dabi wandered into the kitchen.

“What kind of roadkill are we eating today?” he asked, an easy grin on his face until he saw Stain. Then, his grin dropped and his eyes narrowed. “Officer Freeloader,” he greeted, voice as light as always although his expression promised a world of hurt.

“...Arsonist,” Stain replied back, voice even.

Shigaraki grimaced.

Then, appearing at the nick of time, Midoriya came rushing in. His hair, sticking up in several directions, was no longer dripping, but looked far from dry.

“I’m so hungry, let’s eat. You wouldn’t believe how much make-up work they dumped on me!”

“Then stop going to school,” Dabi said, the same time Stain spoke up.

“Then stop missing school.”

The two shot each other hostile looks and Midoriya remained blissfully unaware. Shigaraki wished he could be that young and innocent and ignorant. The food was starting to lose its taste, and he hadn’t even started eating. Awkwardly, they managed to pass around the food, filled in at their regular seats around the table, and prepared to eat dinner.

It was a stiff atmosphere, as it always was when Stain and Dabi are forced to recognize each other. Shigaraki, who yells the most often of the four of them, has never felt as much hostility with anyone like Stain and Dabi seemed to have for each other.

“You have a lot to do tonight?” Shigaraki asked, desperate to escape the reality facing each other down at their dining table.

“Yeah, I guess.” Midoriya nodded.

“Where have you been for the last two weeks?” Stain asked, cutting straight to the heart of the matter.

“I was around,” Deku replied back, “I was looking for something.”

The older man scowled harder and Shigaraki felt the food’s taste diminish. He hated all of them. Augh.

“Something that you couldn’t let me know about?”

The young man paused in his food, and placed his chopsticks onto the bowl. He stared Stain down from across the table, looking nothing like the awkward teenager that came in with his hair still wet just a few moments ago.

“I’m sorry that I couldn’t tell you before I left. It was time-sensitive. If I had to do it again, I wouldn’t have hesitated. I can’t tell you the exact details about what happened, but it wasn’t illegal and no one got hurt. If you have something else to say, then say it.”

Stain’s shoulders squared, but Midoriya’s expression was patient. Their eye contact was fierce, and both Shigaraki and Dabi tried to figure out which dishes they would grab in case the two got into a fist-fight across the table.

“...Welcome back,” Stain said at last, dropping his gaze.

Midoriya smiled back, something warm and kind.

“Thank you.

### **Next Job?**

“...If you need a job,” Yamada said, eyes bright in a way that made it easy for Midoriya to overlap the image of Present Mic talking to him about the future, “Come work at the club with us.”

“Isn’t that illegal?” Midoriya asked instead of shooting it down on the spot. There weren’t a lot of places that wanted to hire a high schooler from a notorious place like UA, as ironic as it sounded in his head. But, he still had mouths to feed, money to save, and was getting desperate.

“Nah,” Yamada shook his head, “You’re smart, so I doubt you’d get caught.”

Right, it’s only illegal if you get caught. It was common knowledge that people went by here. Somehow, that didn’t do much to make Midoriya feel better at all.

“Just come in for an interview. And you can figure it out for yourself. We need people to help out with the loading and unloading on busy nights like the weekend. I’m sure we can find you a place.”

A job opportunity, given fresh by Present Mic sounded lovely. And to be honest, Midoriya didn’t think he had the right to refuse..

Beggers cannot be choosers, after all.

He walked in during opening.

“Hey, kid, we aren’t open yet.”

And his heart dropped when his eyes met the figure of Hound Dog.

His guidance teacher, the one that reminded him not to get into fights in the dorm room and that he would always have allies among the teachers to call as back-up, was apparently also a host. Of course he was. It seemed that the entirety of the UA faculty/staff from his world were working at this host club. This would be his life.

“I’m… I’m here for a part-time position,” he said.

“You?” Hound Dog eyed him, gave him a quick one over, and Midoriya was torn between insulted and a little relieved when he said, “uh, yeah right. You can’t be a host here, kid.”

“I was… I was told that I could get interviewed for a position with the loading and unloading stuff for the weekends,” he said, trying to remain calm even as his eyes watered. Hound Dog looked even softer than he remembered, and he wondered if that was because he put great care into the state of his fur.

“Kid, we don’t have a job for you here-”

“Please!” Midoriya said, stepping forward, “I need a job!”

Hound Dog turned back around, narrowed eyes and fur bristled, and Midoriya thinks that they get angry the same way, at the very least. Still, he holds strong. He makes clear eye contact before giving a proper, 90 degree bow at the waist and asked one more time.

“Please,” he said quietly. “At least give me one chance.”

There was a long silence. He thinks about how jaded Aizawa actually was, the sardonic way Yamada could speak, the sharp words and pleasant smile Shirakumo gave, and hopes that this wasn’t something that has changed.

“Alright kid. If you pass, I’ll personally pay for your uniform.”

Midoriya straightened, eyes shining. Hound Dog was still the same in that sense. He liked to see earnest people. It’s why he ended up liking Midoriya after everything that happened. Still, looking at the malicious grin curling up on his face, he wonders if being liked was really a good thing.

Well, he got a chance. Right now, he needed to do everything possible to make sure that he did this right.

At the end of the night, Midoriya almost had a heart attack when he turned around after finally finishing cleaning off the dishes and saw that Inui was standing at the entrance to the kitchen. He looked at him, felt the shame creeping up his face, and wondered how he was going to explain to Shigaraki and Dabi that he’s still unemployed.

Still, a promise is a promise. And Midoriya knows that he didn’t do a very good job tonight. He messed up orders on several occasions, broke a couple of drinks, spilled a drink on one of the girls, and he’s certain there’s a thousand other little things he did concerning his mannerisms and general unprofessionalism. Most importantly, he overestimated himself. By a lot.

This body was very bad with the smell of smoke, alcohol, and people. He knew that their shop could get busy, but he had severely underestimated how busy it could get. As a result, his body froze up and he struggled for seemingly no reason.

“...Welcome to the team.”

“What?”

Inui looked at him and tilted his head, a loose grin appearing on his face, looking absolutely terrifying. Still, he walked up to Midoriya, and when the younger man took a step back, followed him until his back hit the counter. Then, he placed on hand on one side of the counter and leaned over him. If Midoriya thought that he was a tall gentleman before, it was astonishing just how much larger this man was compared to him.

“Here’s my card,” he purred, the smell of alcohol and perfume washing over him in the most nauseating way possible, and Midoriya shivered. His body trembled as a large hand gently pushed the business card into his front hoodie pocket, “Give me a call when you’re free. I’ll buy the uniform for you.”

He stepped away, giving Midoriya room to breath.

“Huh?” he asked as soon as his body started to reset.

He didn’t completely lock up, like he did with Shigaraki a few months ago, and he wonders if he could unlearn the trauma in Deku-kun’s body for him. It was a comforting thought that he shoved far, far away in his mind.

“Wait… I got the job?”

“Yeah, you did great, kid.”

Probably in a combination of never being complimented by Hound Dog before, and the absolute awful last couple of days he had, the well-meaning words recognizing his hard work had his eyes welling up. He bowed forward, expressing his gratitude over the job and the kindness and the chance in the only way he knew how.

“Thank you very much!”

“Alright, let’s go talk to the manager to make it official.”

### **Roommates & New Job**

“So I got a job!”

When Shigaraki and Dabi both got jobs, they had a party. They got chips and fruit punch, and bought a small cake. It was a big deal and Midoriya really wanted to convey how happy he was for them on accomplishing that.

So, he would be lying if he said that he wanted them to be happy too. He wanted them to think that it was a good thing to have a job, some level of consistency in the world, and to let their horizon expand a little more by getting employment. There were a hundred other things that could happen because they have a job, and he wanted it to be a good thing. Getting employed wasn’t easy, after all.

“...What?” Shigaraki didn’t sound happy. At all. Like, not even close.

Dabi’s eyes flitted to Midoriya before landing on Yamada.

“Where?”

“At our Host Club,” Yamada said, bright and happy.

“Yeah!” Midoriya agreed, and realizing how it sounded, lifted his hands up, “Oh, all I’m doing is dish-washing and stuff! I’m not a host or anything!”

“Uh huh.”

“Since it’s not like I’m really attractive or anything and the club needs to keep an eye on their reputation. And it’s only during the weekends and stuff so it won’t bother you. The times I work actually won’t be that different from when I worked at the convenience store, and the uniform is already covered for so there’s nothing to worry about on that end-”

“Izuku,” Dabi snapped, “Shut up.”

Midoriya’s jaw clicked shut.

“Nah, don’t be so hard on him. It must be hard trying to keep three mouths fed. Shota, Oboro and I all work together but we have our hard patches sometimes too, after all,” the blond said. His smile was bright, and his words sounded well-meaning, but Midoriya couldn’t help but think that there was an extra pinch of something else.

Dinner was stifling.

“So, uh, tough day at work?” he tried, hoping that there was a way, anyway, to alleviate the heavy atmosphere.

Silence met his words. He felt like he could cry.

“Wow, the noodles taste great! It’s slightly chewy and the sauce is really sweet and spicy. The taste really fills up my mouth and it’s warm all the way down. This is super delicious. I never thought that we could have Thai food at home!” he took another mouthful, hoping to forget how hostile the environment had gotten.

He got a job. That was good news, wasn’t it?

“Thanks for the food,” Dabi muttered, his plate clean as he stood up.

“Yeah, just run some water on the dishes,” Shigaraki called back.

There was another brief second before red eyes turned to Deku.

“...Why’d you get a job?”

“B...Because I want a stable income?”

“I have a stable income.”

“But that’s your money.”

“Yeah,” Shigaraki motioned at the plates on the table, “but our food.”

Catching on to the unsaid question, Midoriya shook his head firmly.

“No, that’s your money. You should spend it on what you want to spend it on. I want to spend my money on this.”

Red eyes fell back on his plate before he stood up and walked out.

And Midoriya was alone in his dining room again. He really wished that everyone would just use their fucking words for once.

### **Phones**

“I realized that it’s pretty hard to not have phones,” Midoriya said one day, “Maybe we could grab some this weekend. I got paid pretty well.”

Shigaraki nodded back, “Yeah, let’s grab some lighter jackets while we’re out.”

“Some new shoes will be good for us,” Dabi called out, “And slippers. I’m dying with only sneakers.”

Despite himself, Midoriya felt a silly little grin come onto his face.

“What’s up?” Dabi asked, a smile stretching on his lips as though just seeing Midoriya smiling was infectious.

“Ah, no, I just… I never thought I would have something like this, I guess?” Midoriya said, trying to put his feelings into words. He placed his hand on his heart and grinned at them. “I’m glad.”

“We’re running errands,” Shigaraki said, as though he needed to be reminded of it.

“It’s nice,” Midoriya said, looking at the little list they made up.

He would have never believed that he would get to go shopping as casually as he did now. He would have never thought that the world would be stable enough, that he would be able to take a break now, and just go and run errands. In addition to that, the thought that he would be going out with once-villains to do something as domestic as this made his heart grow warm.

The people he found, tossed away without any regard for their life, were now capable and functioning members of society. He tried not to, but his eyes watered again. It had to mean something. He wasn’t meaningless here.

“I can’t help but think that it’s nice.”

He, so focused on his thoughts, missed the soft looks he received from his other two flatmates.

-

Looking at the phone selection, Midoriya feels the world slow down.

This was a purchase. If he makes this purchase, didn’t that mean that he wanted to stay? If he made this purchase, should he get something that even Deku, should he ever wake up, would use? Should it be something that would be easily replaceable? Did he want to burden him with that?

Once upon a time, he would have made a beeline for a yellow smartphone with an All Might case.

He picked up the cheapest phone.

It could call and it could text. It could take pictures, just in case. It felt like a brick in his hand, so hopefully, it won’t just shatter even if he gets tossed into another car. But no matter how he diced it, he couldn’t shake the thought that he was getting Too Comfortable here.

And that scared him.

“You’re going to buy that?” Shigaraki asked.

Midoriya looked up and Shigaraki towered over him. While he was glad that all the food he ate was helping him fill out, it was a little bitter to be reminded about how much bigger he (still) was over him.

Well, Midoriya is certain that he’ll hit his growth spurt eventually and be just as tall and big too, but that felt far, far in the future. Like, a future that wasn't his kind of far, because his world didn’t have a Shigaraki anymore.

The thought made him feel a little more hollow than before.

“Yeah,” he said, burying his heart away and focusing on the moment, “it can call, text, and has a camera. Did you guys pick what you want?”

Dabi and Shigaraki both picked a smartphone of some kind. In their stunned silence, Midoriya took it from them and headed towards the desk. When they tried to take it back, he quickly kicked Dabi in the shin and elbowed Shigaraki hard in the stomach. While they were doubled over in pain, he rushed to make the purchase.

In his humble opinion, they had it coming.

There wasn’t really a need for him to have a nice phone, since he wasn’t going to be here too long. But he knew he was a little… rough with his electronics. So, while Izuku was here, he’d have and use a different phone. And Deku can decide what he wanted to do with his phone when he came back.

If he never deleted all those photos, then there must be a reason why he kept them, right?

### **Being friends with everyone - Bakugo & classmates**

“I think we could all become friends,” Midoriya declared, rather bodly.

Bakugo gave him a withering stare. “Oh really?” The poor bastards.

“Yeah, because no one is a bad guy here. We don’t have villains.”

“We don’t have heroes either,” the blond supplied, and the young man shook his head.

“I got you,” he said.

He looked back to the textbook, trying to remember how to do this particular problem and was glad that Bakugo was such a great note-taker in any world. Due to his focus, however, he totally missed the bright red blush that painted Bakugo’s face.

It was a small thing, but he always forgot that Bakugo here wasn't loud with all his thoughts and feelings. Some habits are just hard to break, as it was.

And then, a cough was heard and the two of them looked up to the person standing at the corner of their desk.

“Can I… sit with you?”

Midoriya melted, and gave a smile to the normally indifferent Shoji.

“Of course!” he cheered, moving his notes out of the way so the man could sit down next to him.

Bakugo’s glare was definitely hostile, and Midoriya kicked him under the table. He gave a hiss, curling up to hold the sore spot tenderly, and the grin he gave Midoriya would make small children cry.

“You little bitch-”

“C’mon Kacchan, you should learn how to make friends, especially since Kirishima can’t translate for you.”

There was a pause.

“Kirishima?” Shoji asked, tilting his head, “The kid who stopped coming to school after two days?”

“...He what?”

### **Kirishima\*shut-in**

Midoriya could hardly believe. Yes, everyone said it, and yes, he saw the empty desk himself but… Kirishima?

Kirishima? The one that somehow managed to become friends with Bakugo at his max-bullheadedness? That Kirishima? The Kirishima who was on his way to be Red Riot, a hero who will protect everyone behind him? No way.

Until he saw him staring back at him, he would have never considered that Kirishima Eijirou would become a shut-in, in any universe.

The broken door in his hand, he stared where Kirishima stared back.

“W-who are you-”

The sight of the guy who used to reach out to him to let him know that he could still reach his friends, curled up with a blanket over his head, trembling with his back pressed to the wall, pale and terrified, made his insides twist out.

“My name is Midoriya Izuku!” he shouted out, hoping that his voice didn’t shake as much as his heart did. His eyes watered but he wasn’t going to let anything stop him. Remembering who inspired him to be a hero, managed to give a shaky grin. “I’m your classmate.”

In another world, they were best friends and comrades and classmates. He’s certain that there was a world where they were enemies too. But right now, in this strange world where they were no heroes and villains, he doesn’t want to be strangers.

“And we’re going to go to school together now.”

“N-Now?”

“Come on,” Midoriya sniffled loudly, scrubbed at his eyes, and kept his smile up, “We’re going to be late.”

-

“I-I… No one wants me there!” he said. Unintentionally, his hand started to harden and he hastily hid it behind him, “I’m just going to break stuff! There’s no point in me going there-”

“I came here because I realized that you weren’t in class!” Midoriya shouted back. “I don’t know about everyone else, but I want you to be there!”

“So what? I have to go to school to fulfill your selfish wish!? Why do I have to do that?!”

The young man reeled back, clearly not expecting the prickly words, but before Kirishima could take it back or even point out that he even hurt the people that came to help him, he found his ground again and started to yell back.

“Because we're heroes!”

Completely floored, Kirshima blinked back.

"What?"

This guy was a nutjob. There was a complete nutjob in his room. He broke the lock on his door and forced his way in.

Midoriya stared at him for a moment and then looked down at the ground.

“You’re right. It’s super selfish of me to demand this of you. But I… I want to be friends with you.”

“But why? We’ve never met before.”

There was a brief pause as the young man blinked at him, as though he was realizing this for the first time himself. He gave a laugh, and rubbed the back of his head.

“Yeah, I guess you’re right. We haven’t met yet. This was our first meeting.”

It felt like there was much more behind this than what was being let on. He didn’t know if that was a good thing or what, but for the moment, all Kirishima could think about was how the man was smiling even though he sounded like he was about to start crying. He didn’t get it.

If he didn’t want to come here that badly, why did he come? Was this a joke?

The thought filled him with more anger than he thought he was capable of and with a scowl said.

“Please get out.”

This dude, his classmate apparently, looked at him like he could see something that Kirishima couldn't and grinned back.

“I’ll come by after school.”

“No, please don’t,” Kirishima said.

“With friends,” Midoriya added, and it felt like a threat. But he left.

He finally left, and Kirishima could return to the quiet of his room. He could return to the time of tentative peace in the little hole he called home. He was fine here. He didn’t hurt anyone and no one could hurt him.

And his eyes kept glancing to the clock, dreading the moment where this peace would shatter again.

The words replayed in Kirishima's head, already haunting him. The world where Midoriya was a hero must be an awful world where even the heroes were villainous. He shuddered at the thought.

### **Shoji & Izuku \*being born**

Getting his ass pummeled by a kid half his size was nowhere on his to-do list, but here he was. Shoji held his bloody and broken nose in his hand, scowling and choking on his blood with every breath. His eyes locked with vibrantly bright green ones.

They were so bright, that for a moment, he thought he would be consumed by them.

“Being born isn’t a bad thing!” he screamed out, “Being born isn’t a tragedy! It’s not a crime to have been born!”

He grabbed him again by the front and Shoji felt the fight desert him when he saw Midoriya’s eyes fill with tears. The radiance in his eyes didn’t dim even as his shoulder trembled. He always thought that crying was a weakness, but he doesn’t think he’s ever felt so completely at the mercy of someone else before like this.

“We don’t choose to be born,” he said quietly. “How can it be a crime when there was no choice?” He sniffled loudly, releasing Shoji to wipe at his eyes. His voice cracked. “Okay? You might have done a lot of bad things in your life and that’s not okay, but being born wasn’t one of them. I won’t let you get punished or-or need to repent for something you had no control over.”

“But… why?” he asked, his voice quiet.

“Because I’m a hero. I protect people.”

Coming to this high school was the closest thing to going to a Juvenile Detention Center without going to the Juvenile Detention Center. Here, they were supposed to learn how to solve for the area under the curve and learn about all the subsets during the Sengoku Warring Period. They were supposed to learn how to grit their teeth and accept the roles that society placed on them with their jeering words behind their pitying smiles.

Nowhere, in all of that, did it ever say that he would find someone who wanted to be a hero.

“You’re a fucking freak,” Shoji said, because it’s the only thing he’s heard people say. His voice shook and he wanted to hit himself because that’s not what he wanted to say at all. He, of all people, knew how hurtful those words could be.

“Thanks,” Midoriya said, flashing him a toothy grin despite his blotchy and tear-stained face. He leaned forward to extend his hand out towards him, “You’re not so bad yourself, Shoji-kun.”

Shoji stared at the hand for a long moment. Under the pressure of a hundred different emotions branching thousand different memories, he forgot it all for a moment to take Deku’s hand.

He’s going to learn something new.

### **Mineta & the Other School**

Mineta was as much of a perverted troublemaker as Midoriya remembered him to be when they were students. However, this was… a little much. Not even the Mineta he was with could get like this, especially since they were still trying to be heroes.

But Mineta placed his purple balls, the things that saved Midoriya’s life on more than one occasion, and placed them around in discreet but vital locations. As a result, any girl’s skirt could get stuck. And Mineta, with all that intelligence Midoriya knew he had, would take pictures of any pantyshots.

He rubbed the bridge of his nose. He really wished that this wasn’t his problem. He really wished that he didn’t know, so that he could live ignorantly and more concerned about how to get back home.

Instead, he came up to the girl, lending her his jacket so she could tie it around her waist, and nearly ripped her skirt getting her off.

“...My friend did this,” Midoriya said, before he turned to her and bowed his head. “I’m sorry. He’s not a bad guy. He’s just… He just makes a lot of questionable decisions.”

“And what? I should just forgive him for doing this because you asked me to?”

The slap that cut across his face didn’t throb, but the ring caught on some skin and it broke. Still, Midoriya thought it was reasonable that she was upset and bowed his head back forward anyways. Right now, she wasn’t going to listen to words. He hoped that she knew he was genuine.

He didn’t excuse this behavior. Of course not. And he didn’t want her to excuse this behavior either. However, he didn’t want this to ruin Mineta’s life. He didn’t want this to define Mineta.

“Augh, whatever!”

She stalked off and he sighed deeply.

### **Stain & About classmates**

Stain ruffled his hair. It was strange, to think that this man would do something so affectionate to him, and he stared up in shock.

“Midoriya,” he said, “You’re a hero.”

His heart clenched. His eyes watered.

“Not the type that wears tights or flashy capes, but you’re a hero,” Stain said. “Because you don’t save people in an irresponsible way, where their life is just prolonged. You’re the kind of hero that inspires others. The type of hero that makes life easier to deal with.”

Midoriya sniffled, because if the right words from the right person could make him feel a thousand men strong, then the right words from the wrong person only served to remind him of where he needed to go.

“And besides,” Stain said, a lopsided grin on his face like an ill-fitted picture frame, “you saved me.”

### **Class Nicknames**

“Oi, Kirishima said we’re in self-study.”

“What?”

Bakugo frowned, but repeated himself, “Kirishima said that chemistry kits aren’t ready so we’re in self-study.”

“...You call him Kirishima?”

Bakugo blinked and turned to Kirishima, who looked back at him owlishly.

“Yes?” Bakugo narrowed his eyes. “What else would I call him?”

“Spiky,” Midoriya replied back without missing a beat.

The blond’s brow furrowed as he scowled, “Why the fuck would I call him that when I have spiky hair too?”

“That’s what we’ve been trying to say for years!” the green-haired man said.

Bakugo took a deep breath in, counting his pulses so that he didn’t lose himself and start strangling Midoriya again.

Next to him, Kirishima started to sweat nervously.

“We started talking, unfortunately, last year,” Bakugo said, dropping the spine of his textbook onto Midoroiya’s head, “Stop giving us a backstory that never happened!”

“Ah, right,” Midoriya rubbed his head.

“God, you’re an idiot,” Bakugo said, shaking his head. He paused for a moment, and then, quietly added, “We can make our own stories now, so don’t add fake stuff in the middle of all that.”

Kirishima covered his mouth, and Shouji gave him a solemn look as though to say, “Yes, that’s how they are.”

### **Scars \*DabiDeku**

Midoriya was used to the whole ‘injuries and the scars’ thing. He’s bothered, of course he’s bothered, but he has long since learned to brush off the words that people might say or the looks people might give. He’s never been good with the whole publicity thing, but if he can avoid paparazzi on the way to school everyday, then ignoring the things people said about him was just as easy. At this point, it was a habit.

Of course, he knew that other people aren’t used to that. And so, he made sure to cover up. His hero uniform made sure that no one could see what he turned himself into to get to where he was.

But from time to time, he forgot that before Izuku was Deku-kun. And Deku-kun didn’t know that. He didn’t know better and he didn’t ever learn and no one ever cared. He never knew how to keep going and ideas on accepting and moving on never occurred to him. That was his reality that he lived through, and Izuku wanted to save <Deku-kun>and everything he had left.

But he didn’t think twice, and he rolled up his sleeves past his elbows when he came in, this time to help with dinner. He didn’t want to get his undershirt dirty, so that was all rolled up, and he didn’t have any bandages on since he didn’t have any fresh injuries that needed them.

He finally came home early, and he had an hour or two before he had to get to work. And that meant that he can sit with his housemates and eat dinner with them before running back out.

And in all honesty, he was absolutely giddy about the idea that he was going to make dinner with someone. He felt great about it. He didn’t really ever get a chance to help his mom out in the kitchen, not since he was a child and they used to make chocolate chip cookies together once a blue moon. Still, those were some of his fondest memories. Making something with someone else was a valuable thing to Midoriya. So, this was exciting.

“...You had it rough too, huh?” the sudden voice yanked him out of his thoughts.

He turned over, his face bright while he held the bag of flour in one hand and a bag of breadcrumbs in the other. “What?"

He and Shigaraki were going to be making tempura tonight, and he was told to get the ingredients ready while Shigaraki went to the bathroom. Midoriya thought that he was alone, so hearing Dabi suddenly really threw him off.

Dabi’s eyes remained locked on the scar right on his forearm. He reached out, and placed his hand on Midoriya’s hand. After spending such a long time fighting this man, Midoriya surprised himself by relaxing under his touch.

He wondered if it’s because he occasionally gets stuck and still saw the Dabi that came for Kacchan all those not-years ago, or if it’s because Deku-kun’s subconsciousness kicked in and relaxed when something he perceived as ‘threatening’ grabbed him. He doesn’t know why, but he didn’t flinch or tense under those cool blue eyes.

Perhaps, they were just used to each other now or something. Wouldn’t that be nice? He wasn’t bothered and didn’t react negatively because it was Dabi. It was a pleasant thought, and the one he wished was the truth.

But when he looks up to see Dabi’s blue eyes, his breath caught in his throat, and he doesn’t know what he’s done wrong so that Dabi would look so fucking lost.

He frowned, adjusting so that Dabi could take his hand or whatever, and balanced the bags in his other arm instead.

“...You okay?” he asked quietly, squeezing the three fingers that he managed to grab.

Dabi’s eyes dragged from his forearm and then back up to the man. When Midoriya realized what he was looking at, he yanked his hand behind him instead.

“...Sorry, it's pretty ugly, isn’t it?”

It was fucking ugly, actually. Midoriya knew because when he woke up and saw it, he felt disgusted. An amagation between a kid who wanted to survive, cruel words, and a constant reminder that no one ever noticed. He hated to think about it, but it made him sad that in another world, a version of ‘him’ had succumbed to this. Lost in his shame, he avoided Dabi’s gaze.

He stared at him, expression unreadable before he gave a scoff.

“...You’re an idiot.”

Midoriya blinked, and looked back. Vaguely, he wondered if the expression wasn’t unreadable, but that his expression was just something that he had never associated with Dabi before. However, he didn’t know what to do once he realized that Dabi cared.

The taller man took a step forward, his arm reaching out to gently pull Midoriya’s arm out from behind his back. That blank stare, the way his eyes roamed at the old scars on his arms, the warmth of his hand on his elbow, it was all explainable by a single emotion that leaves Midoriya a little light-headed.

To think, Dabi was worried about him.

“...Yeah, probably,” Midoriya nodded, because he must be an idiot if it took him this long to decipher that look. He shrugged back, “But it could be worse.”

Dabi’s eyes, soft in a way that makes him wonder if this really is Dabi, met his.

The word that Dabi’s eyes caught, the one that was meticulously carved into his skin and decorated with cigarette burns, made his demeanor sag. And he would know that, right now, this Dabi in front of him, would never think of him as <worthless>. A world without villains and heroes, Dabi would stand in his kitchen and gently take his arm like this.

Thank you, Dabi, Midoriya wanted to say, even if that expression wasn’t for him.

Dabi doesn’t know it, but he saved Midoriya in the kitchen that day.

### **Yama v Mido**

“...Is my work unsatisfactory?”

Yamada jolted from where he was taking his smoke break and looked up where Midoriya gently closed the door behind him. Standing next to him, with the streetlight as their only witness, Yamada sucked on the cigarette more aggressively than he meant to.

“Uh, what do you mean?”

“I feel like, since I got this job, you’ve been...more distant I guess? I don’t…” Midoriya’s voice dropped a pitch before he changed his mind and started a new sentence, “I figured that maybe it was because my work isn’t good enough. So, I thought maybe I could just ask and see if I can fix it now that I’m more used to it?”

The blond bit down on his cigarette, ruining it, but he was far too annoyed about this entire ordeal.

“Then why are you talking to me?”

“Because you stopped talking to me.”

Yamada did miss the kid, he won’t lie. It’s been a while since he threw his arm around Midoriya and got him into a head-lock. It’s been a while since he teased the young boy, and it’s been far too long since he returned the greeting. Still, right now, everything felt empty. It didn’t feel like those smiles were his anymore. In fact, seeing how happy and content Midoriya was just annoyed him to no end.

“...Why didn’t you just come to me? If you needed help, you know that I would have, Oboro and even Shota would have put ourselves together for you. You know that,” he said. His voice cracked a little, as the emotions he tried to keep at bay surged back.

To his defense, Midoriya asked for it.

He got up to his feet and turned to the younger man. He hated those green eyes. He hated the way he stared at him, like he was something worth looking at when he was just some high school drop-out that made money off of preying on lonely women. He doesn’t understand how someone could look at him like that when they knew who he was and what he did. He didn’t like how someone who saw the ugly of the world could kept the shine in his eyes while he succumbed and became one of them.

“It… It’s this and when you were just gone for two weeks, have you ever considered that maybe there were people here who were waiting for you, too? You can’t just… come into our lives and make a home with us and then just fucking leave whenever you want!”

He thought back to the time when he would check the time and wonder what he was waiting for. How he waited for weeks and then leapt at the sound of Midoriya’s voice. Like some well-trained pup, left far too long on his own, and suddenly the ‘welcome back’ words in his mouth felt too bitter to say aloud.

Yamada, who thought that his world was full and perfect with the people at UA Host Club, really and truly believed that he was invincible with Aizawa and Shirakumo by his side. And after an entire childhood of being told that he wasn’t good enough, and that he was too loud, and that he was too much, he figured he would die pitifully with his two best friends, but they would go out together with a bang. Nowhere, in his short and miserable life did it ever mention a Midoriya Izuku.

“Why didn’t you just come to us? How come you’re fine without us? Why can’t you just quit and rely on us for the rest of your life?”

Midoriya, caged between his arms, still looked at him straight in the eye. Suddenly, Yamada felt like he’s the child, suddenly under the scrutiny of those eyes.

“...I can’t do that,” Midoriya said, and Yamada feels like he’s lost something precious. “Because, what if you need help one day? If I’m dependent on you, then I can’t help you. But like this, if you ever need help, then I can help.”

It was such a Midoriya-answer. So much Midoriya in a single answer so that Yamada felt stupid for even asking the question. Still, hearing the words returned some form of stability to his being.

He took a deep long breath, hating himself for how easy it was to center his heart.

“Man, now I feel dumb,” he sighed, stepping back and rubbing his neck.

“Really?” Midoriya looked towards the ground, a small blush on his face. “I didn’t realize that I mattered that much to you so… it’s a little embarrassing, but I’m,” he looked up at that, the lights dancing around his eyes and making Yamada’s stomach flip-flop as he finished out, “really happy.”

Yamada felt the heat rise to his cheeks. God. he couldn’t even remember the last time he felt embarrassed like this. Like, it had to be in high school when that cute girl asked him if he wanted to join her on a date, right? It was such a long time ago, back when he was a little more innocent. He sighed again, scratching his cheek as he reached for the door.

“Break’s over, let’s head back in, squirt.”

“Yes sir,” Midoriya said, giving a mock salute in the process. As they stepped in though, he took a moment to stare at Yamada. “But I am glad that we figured this out.”

“Yeah?” Yamada quipped back as he slipped his jacket on and adjusted his lapels.

“When you were being quiet, I felt… really lonely. So I’m glad that we figured this out.”

The blond felt his heart palpate dangerously. This kid was out for his job, Jesus, and to cover up for his misstep, he threw his arm around Midoriya’s shoulder with a big grin.

“Really?! You really mean that?!” he said, losing himself in the joy of the moment. “Oooh, I knew I could count on you!”

Midoriya gave this exasperated sigh, and if Yamada was a naive man, he would say that he could fall in love with the curve of his smile.

“...You guys made up then, right?” Shirakumo asked as their shift ended.

Aizawa, about four steps from sleeping where he stood, lazily opened one eye.

“Yeah,” Yamada grinned back. “We’re even closer than before,” he added cheekily.

The black-haired man snorted, but didn’t add further commentary.

“Sorry it took so long,” Midoriya called out, coming out with a towel around his neck. No doubt, Ishiyama took great care in making sure that he was properly taken care of before he left. The young man paused as he stared at them, and tilted his head in confusion, “Did something good happen?” he asked.

“Eh? What do you mean?” Shirakumo replied back, genuinely curious about what Midoriya meant.

“You guys seem like you’re in a good mood.”

Aizawa yawned as he got up to his feet, “The sun’s finally out,” he said, even though the sky was still dark and cloudy. “It’s going to be a good day.”

The two blonds broke out into loud laughter, while curious green eyes looked from the skies to them, no doubt thinking that they had way too much to drink tonight. If he got any more concerned, he might try to enter their home to make sure they all got to their beds again.

Well, it was fine to have a couple of secrets, right?

“C'mere you,” Yamada laughed, dragging Midoriya closer as he wrapped his arm around his shoulder and leaned in close, feeling light like a feather.

### **First Name \*ie class 1-A meets Shoto**

“Wait,” Mina gasped dramatically, “You mean you and Midoriya aren’t childhood best friends?”

Bakugo snorted, “We started talking in middle school.”

“We were born in the same hospital,” Midoriya added.

Bakugo made a face at him, disgusted and a little apprehensive, “You know what hospital I was born in?”

-

“...Call me Shouchan.”

“Pardon?”

Kirishima raised his hand, “And I’ll be Ei-kun!” he said.

Midoriya blushed and looked down. “Is… Isn’t that familiar?” he stuttered out.

Bakugo rolled his eyes. “Now he cares about shit like that. But when it comes to just standing outside of my house and screaming at the top of your lungs at seven in the morning -”

“I want to be Hi-kun,” Shinsou said, shoving Bakugo to the side as he walked over. His cheeks dusted a like pink, “And I guess we’ll call you Dekiru.”

### **Chisaki Finds Out About Host Club**

If Midoriya had learned anything, it’s that sometimes, you can just tell when a work shift was going to go to shit. Today was one of those days.

“Hai, here is your alcohol. Our hostesses will be with you shortly…” Midoriya trailed off as his eyes met familiar gold ones.

Unfortunately, Chisaki seemed to recognize him too, if that wide-eyed look was any indication. Fuck. He had hoped that the man would have forgotten his plain-ass by now, but the universe had it out for him. He passed around the glasses and placed the large sake bottle, a service from the manager of the night, and placed the menus on the table. Everything that he learned about the VIP rooms was followed to the T.

“Damn, how come we gotta have a man for this?” one of them complained loudly.

Midoriya was at work, and he’s heard worse, so the words wash over him. The heavy weight of Chisaki’s eyes, however, pressed down on him like a second layer of skin. It was a little harder to ignore, but he made careful certainty to not look at him or his general area. Maybe he could pretend that he looked similar to the guy that accidentally kidnapped Eri from kidnappers?

So the stifling silence following the comment, caused by the way Chisaki glared at the young man who spoke up, was beyond Midoriya. When he was done, he gave a polite bow, he wasn’t paid to smile or talk, he was only here as a temporary fill-in to get them started and let them know that their hostess was coming. It had nothing to do with the fact that he was trying to avoid Chisaki or something.

Still, not even four minutes after he leaves the room, his back is to the wall and Chisaki is standing in front of him. He still can’t quite meet his eyes, looking at the very interesting patch of tile about 15 feet away.

Someone up there must be having a great laugh, aren’t they?

“Is there… anything I can do for you, esteemed guest?”

“..I should have known that you were a filthy liar.”

Green eyes could have cut a line to Chisaki’s face. “Wha-”

“I don’t know how, but you knew that Eri was involved in the Shie Hassakai. You knew who we were before I even got to introduce ourselves. Well, I don’t really care how you know us, but to follow us to a host club? Isn’t that a little strange?”

Maybe it was because Midoriya hadn’t slept very well, and there was a persistent ache from his back where he had yet to ask Chiyo to look at since he was running to work, or maybe it was because Midoriya was so sick and tired of people like Chisaki. People who looked down on everyone else and assumed the whole world was their enemy. Seeing him, he wonders if he ever gets exhausted living like that. It probably comes with the whole yakuza-thing, but still.

“Really? I think it’s perfectly normal for me to show up to work,” he shot back dryly. “Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have a job to do.”

And in Chisaki’s surprise, he slipped away. It was one of the balliser things he’s ever done, but he has dishes waiting for him.

… He hoped that Chisaki was mature enough to not take it out on the hostess.

-

“Alright, spill.”

Midoriya thought that their post-shift ice cream was too quiet, as it turned out, they had something they wanted to inquire from him. As the four of them made their way back to the apartment complex, he looked at them as he licked his popsicle.

“About what? I didn’t know the labels were switched.”

“No, not about that,” Shirakumo said, and then laughed, “Although that was pretty funny, huh?”

“Oh man, the look on Ryu’s face when he drank it!” Yamada laughed back.

“...Don’t change the subject,” Aizawa spoke up. He finished off the rest of his gari-gari bar, holding the stick in his hand like a cigarette as his eyes narrowed. “How do you know that yakuza?”

“...What?” Midoriya thought about it, and remembering the heart attack he almost had earlier, nodded slowly, “Oh, Overhaul?”

“God, you have a nickname for him, too?”

“What else would I call him by?” Midoriya frowned back.

The other three paused and sighed. Yamada finished the rest of his ice cream and Shirakumo shook his head.

“...Izuku, that guy was talking about buying you.”

“B-Buying?!” Midoriya gaped back, and then paused, “But you… wouldn’t-”

“Of course not!” Aizawa snapped back. “But it’s easier to protect you if we know what happened. How the fuck did you piss off a yakuza? Aren’t you like, 10?”

“I didn’t think it would piss him off!” Midoriya said, pointedly ignoring the jab at his age. He rubbed the back of his neck, “I’ll talk to him, maybe we can figure something out. I won’t let it bother anyone at work.”

“Izuku,” Shirakumo said suddenly, and the certainty of his voice caught the young man’s attention even though he wasn’t speaking very loudly. His smile was present but it didn’t reach his eyes, “We’re not bringing it up because we don’t want to be involved. We’re bringing it up because we want you to know that we got your back.”

“Yeah, we’re like scumbags, but we’re still adults,” Yamada said. “No one was there for us as kids, but we’ll be here for you, alright?”

Midoriya felt his eyes water, and Aizawa sighed. He dropped his hand onto his head, ruffling his curls and letting his presence known even if he didn’t tell it to him. The warm fluttery feeling buzzed around pleasantly until Midoriya remembered what they were talking about.

“Then, if it gets out of hand, I’ll be counting on you.”

“Of course!”

“Rely on us before it gets out of hand,” Aizawa deadpanned back.

### **Aizawa’s Problem Child**

Nezu mentioned it, once or twice, that kids like Midoriya were the most dangerous. Even though Aizawa once saw Midoriya give a roundhouse kick that knocked someone double his statue to the ground and remembered that one other time Midoriya threw a man over his shoulder with little difficulty, he never registered the kid as dangerous. Kids like him, who cries at the drop of a hat and smiles like he’s never known hurt, are typically too stupid and naive to be anything other than a walking-hazard.

Problem-child? Undoubtable. Unlucky? Definitely. Dangerous? Nah.

But when that yakuza group came in, when one of them motioned for the floor manger to be called, when he asked how much Midoriya was-

Yamada and Shirakumo had to restrain him, when they were both plenty upset that this guy was trying to buy Midoriya from them. Unlike some of the other sleazebag clubs in the area, they weren’t under contract to work their debts off. Nezu took very good care of all of them, and they were free to do as they pleased. The insinuation that UA Host Club was anything but kind to their employers made something burn inside of them.

But to try and take Midoriya on top of all of that?

Aizawa was seething. He hasn’t felt this much anger over something since that time someone swerved off the road and almost killed Yamada. Neither one of his longtime friends were doing better, and eventually Inui and Kan had to drag them all out.

Kayama, who was on standby, followed them out. She reminded them that someone who can make other people rush to their defense, regardless of who their opponent is, are dangerous people. Aizawa just about believed it.

The man who asked was young, and from the rumors surrounding him, he was a dangerous guy, even among the yakuza. A powerful man, in every sense of the word, who might end up taking over the Shie Hassakai one day. The people he was with, that he brought, were on their best behavior and kept their drinking to a minimum in his presence-because that’s how well-respected he was.

In the yakuza, respect goes hand-in-hand with danger.

That kind of man had his eyes set on Midoriya, and the thought of it made Aizawa’s skin crawl.

“We’re not going to give him up,” Aizawa growled.

“You’re… usually much calmer than this,” Kayama said. “You know Nezu-san won’t sell us, any of us, out. That includes Izuku-kun.”

The thin man, finally free from Shirakumo’s and Yamada’s hold almost growled out. He pulled a cigarette out and angrily lit it.

Right as he took the first breath, he could already see Midoriya’s stern face telling him that smoking was bad for his body, and he hated how everything felt tainted by him. But he knew that she was right. He was normally calm.

More than angry, both his blond friends looked over him worriedly.

“...But, we need to figure out at least why they’re coming for him,” Kayama said. “I’ll leave if to you boys.”

“You got it, Kayama-senpai,” Yamada replied, giving a lazy two-finger salute.

And calm, level-headed Aizawa was forced to assess the fact that Midoriya might be dangerous.

### **Chisaki - digging for info**

“Get all the information you can about him,” Chisaki said, tapping the table. “This has gone on for too long.”

“And then what?” Kurono asked.

“Information first,” the older man said, “Then we can see his worth.”

-

Within a week, because Kurono was meticulous on a bad day, he had a report several pages thick on his desk.

“...What is this?”

“The report on Midoriya that you requested. Moreso than him, however…” he trailed off as Chisaki leafed through the papers, eyes narrowed, “...as you can see, his father has quite a reputation among our bars.”

He thought back to the kid that boldly stood between a small girl and a group of yakuza men. That kid? He looked down at the papers in front of him. That kid had a dad like this? Of course, the debt that was racked up wasn’t the worst thing he had seen, but it wasn’t a figure of money that they could laugh off either.

From the looks of it, there were payments occurring every month, but the interest rate was going to eat them alive. Which was fine. Chisaki didn’t care about Midoriya, after all. And in fact, this was probably a good thing, that he had such a clear and obvious weakness that they could use against him.

So, just in case, because Chisaki wouldn’t have made it this far in life without being as careful and paranoid as he was, he bought out Midoriya’s debt.

Just in case.

### **Stain & Fatgum \*Coming on Over**

“...You know, I do know where you live,” Stain said as he walked up to the young man. Despite how flat his voice sounded, his eyes glimmered with mirth.

That is, until he saw the black-eye that Midoriya had.

His lips pulled to a frown as he walked up to the younger man.

“And I see that you got yourself into trouble again. What did you fight with this time, a door?”

Midoriya’s beaming smile turned into a pout.

“How rude, I even came out to meet you!”

“I didn’t ask you to,” the man replied, just as dry.

Still, the two fell into a familiar step next to each other, wordlessly moving to their next destination together.

“I know, but I got excited when you said you’d come over for dinner. But I guess it was really annoying though, since Shigaraki chased me out,” the young man said, rubbing the back of his head sheepishly.

Facing forward, however, he missed the small smile tugging at Stain’s lips, and the way his tense posture relaxed into a slouch.

“...Yeah, I can see that,” he said, already playing the scene out in his head. “...It’s good to see you too-”

“Oh, this is what you were doing?”

Stain froze, and Midoriya whirled around to stare at the thin-version of Fatgum appeared behind him. He towered over Stain, and given how much taller Stain was than Midoriya, he might as well have been a child standing next to him. In all honesty, Midoriya found it hard to look at this man and call him ‘Fatgum.’ After all, the Fatgum he knew (from another world) was a proud and optimistic and confident kind of Hero, and the Toyomitsu he met on his impromptu trip was a little more muted, but still had the same magic in his grin. The Fatgum here, however, had this peculiar smile, mischievous as though he learned a secret.

It felt despairing.

“Ara? Izuku?”

Midoriya was still lost in his shock at seeing this man again that he missed the glare that Stain shot the blond.

“Fatgum-san?” Midoriya gasped, “I thought you went back?”

“You… know each other?” Stain asked, slow and cautious. His eyes darted from the blond and back to the child he had by the scuff of the neck.

“Yeah, Izuku here showed up in a tunnel a couple of weeks ago, and we went on an adventure to Osaka. I didn’t know you guys knew each other.”

“He’s the reason why I joined the police force,” Stain said. It was probably better than saying that he stood on a bridge, ready to kill himself, when a strange middle school student showed up in his life, but Midoriya felt like that gave him way more props than he deserved by wording it like that. It didn’t help that Stain only spoke with a certain confidence that, honestly, Midoriya inspired to be like one day.

“Huh, really? He’s the reason why I transferred,” Toyomitsu admitted.

“Oh,” Stain’s eyes narrowed, “Is that so?”

After spending such a long time running into danger, Midoriya had a little meter in his head that told him how bad a situation was going to get. For some odd reason, he could feel it ringing right now, like a bomb raid siren wailing at full blast.

“W-Why don’t you come and join us for dinner?” Midoriya said, hoping to dissipate the fight with the promise of food. It always worked for him and his friends. “And you can tell me all about the transfer! I’m glad to see you!”

There was a beat of silence, before the blond broke into a wide grin. Midoriya instinctively relaxed at the sight, and so focused on him, missed the betrayed look that Stain shot him.

“Yeah, I’m this guy’s partner now! And Iida-senpai is super nice to us!” Toyomitsu replied back, the same bundle of joy that Midoriya remembered him to be. His heart clenched tightly, and he felt the warm, fluffy feelings overtake him.

“That’s great to hear,” he said, smoothly ignoring how he felt about the fact that Iida Tensei was Stain’s senpai in the police force. “I hope you like curry!”

“I love curry!” he laughed back. “We talked about curry a lot then, didn’t we?” he sighed back. “Man, those were some crazy days.”

“The two weeks you went missing,” Stain said, “You were backpacking through Osaka?”

Midoriya opened his mouth, closed it, and then thinking it through, nodded. “Yeah, pretty much.”

“Hey, don’t sell yourself short,” Toyomitsu said, a frown on his lips, “You did it for Shun-kun, right? I can’t believe you’d go so far for someone you barely knew.”

“It’s really not that amazing. I owe a lot to his grandma, so it was hard to turn her down,” Midoriya laughed back, determined to downplay the situation.

“You didn’t have any money when I found you. Dehydrated and almost starving, but you were still trying to march all the way down, right?” the blond continued. “To deliver a letter from a grandma to her grandson even though you didn’t even know that the address would be correct.”

“When you say it like that, it was pretty stupid, huh?” the young man tried to laugh it off, but his tone turned wistful as he remembered it himself. “And it all worked out in the end. I guess I got some good luck.”

“...You got fired from your job,” Dabi chimed in suddenly.

“And you got that in-school suspension and all those essays too,” Shigaraki added.

Neither of them looked at him, not like how Stain was determined to stare a hole through his head, and Midoriya felt his smile strain. His eyes dropped to his hands, feeling the surge of emotion in his chest, the same one that propelled him to become a hero in the first place. When someone needed help, he didn’t know how to say no. That wasn’t an option that was available to him. He didn’t know how to explain that to someone who needed a reason to help someone.

“But that’s easy, you know? I can deal with consequences because I’m still here.”

There was a moment of quiet, and Midoriya shrugged back.

“It’s probably stupid of me to say this but I… When I realized that no one was going to do anything, even though Chiyo-san was still hoping... I don’t know, I just thought that it was too sad.”

And it had nothing to do with the fact that Midoriya was incapable of staying out of other people’s businesses, even when he couldn’t figure out his own.

“Izuku,” Stain said, his voice firm and grave like stone, “Things like that belong in storybooks. Not everyone gets a happy ending. Some people don’t even deserve them”

“Probably not,” Midoriya said, his heart clenching as he thought about an old lady running a candy store by herself here while she was surrounded and celebrated back in his world, “but it’s nice to think that we could.”

There was a brief silence at the dinner table. It would have been easier to flush Midoriya’s words as something a naive child would say. But unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on the spin), they knew this kid. He was a real-life superhero, and had the scars and muscle to back his words. He lived in the same world as they did, and where they all fell apart, his kindness remained steadfast.

If Midoriya could become a hero that could save just about anyone and anything, then they’ll be the safetynet to ensure that his life wouldn’t end in tragedy.

Because it would be too sad if that was the case.

“Ah, the mood is really bad, but the curry is really good. In fact, I think I’m going to get some seconds, do you guys want any?”

Dabi stood up, taking Stain’s bowl when the man lifted it and balanced Shigaraki’s bowl on his arm as he headed to the kitchen. Green eyes turned to Fatgum, who stared back with an odd expression on his face. It wasn’t something that Deku had ever seen on the man before.

“Are… you sure?” he asked quietly.

“Yes,” the young man smiled back, “You eat when you’re hungry, right?”

Toyomitsu’s smile returned, in that quiet and muted way that Midoriya remembered seeing in that tunnel, a long time ago.

“Thanks, seconds sound great.”

“Thanks for coming over, Fatgum,” Midoriya said, “It was nice having you. Feel free to stop by whenever, just let us know, okay?”

“I need your number then,” the blond said, a grin on his face.

A blush splattered across Midoriya’s cheeks, and he couldn’t believe he forgot that. While fumbling to input his number into the blond’s phone, however, the man spoke up again.

“Does Chiyo-san know?”

“Huh?”

“That you lost your job over it?”

Midoriya gave a small smile, finishing with his phone and handed it back to the man.

“Does she need to?” he asked, tilting his head to the side, “It’s not a big deal. It was just a part-time job at a convenience store, and I lost it more because of my own mistakes. Even if she did know, that doesn’t change the fact that I didn’t regret it. If I could go back in time and do it again, I’d still do the same thing.”

Toyomitsu stared at Midoriya a little longer, his expression blank before it broke out into a beaming smile.

“Izuku,” he said, and Midoriya choked on air, “I thought this earlier, but you’re a good kid.”

“Eh?”

His hand came down to the top of his hair, needing to bend down a little because of how small the man was, as he ruffled the curls.

“And we’re adults. And I’m in the area now, too. You can rely on me whenever you want.”

He waved his phone at Midoriya before he pocketed it. A large grin stretched across his face.

“With that said, I’m still figuring out the area, so I’ve been looking for some nice places to eat at. Maybe you could help me out while doing that.”

The young man beamed right back.

“That sounds great!”

### **Studying**

“But,” Midoriya said, lifting his notes up, “This means we can spend time together, right?” He flashed a shy smile at them.

Todoroki would sell his heart for less.

“Sounds great,” he said.

“Wait, you don’t even attend our school,” Bakugo said.

“Well, math is the same in a different country, it can’t be that different.”

Shinshou placed his head in his hands and sighed.

### **Mirio Gets Chased Down**

There was something terrifying about being chased 10 kilometers by some kid on a bike, then being overtaken, and then having said kid drop on top of your car. And then, as soon as the driver slammed on the brakes, the kid flew off the top of the car, rolled five feet on solid concrete, and then got up. Blood dripping down his forehead, the young man with frighteningly bright green eyes lifted a piece of paper to them.

If he hit him, would he be pinned with murder? No, right? Since whatever...that was (since it couldn’t be a person) was walking, right? And murder only counted if it was a person, right? That wasn’t a person. It couldn’t be murder, surely?

What kind of person would come sprinting after a car?

Said …. Thing took a step closer and the driver got ready to hit the gas as hard as he could, when a hand grabbed his shoulder from the backseat.

“Wait,” Toogato said, stopping him. “...Let’s just… see what he wants.”

“B-But sir-”

“I’ll take full responsibility,” he said, like he had any idea what those words met, “and we can just hit the gas as soon as he comes closer. I won’t even leave the car.”

He rolled down the window and waved the … thing to come closer.

He did so, not even limping, and passed the piece of paper through the crack that Toogato and rolled his windows down.

“It’s from Tamaki-senpai,” he said.

And then, he turned around and began to walk back towards the way he came from. Astonished and surprised, Toogato rolled down the window the rest of the way to stick his head out.

“That’s it?! You come, chasing my car like a bat from hell, but that’s it!?”

The young man stared at him, and nodded.

“What? Why?”

“...Tamaki-senpai said that he needed to get this to his important, precious friend,” the monster with the face of a young boy explained. “It’s none of my business, and I don’t know why you guys fought, but was it really worth your entire friendship?”

The blond’s expression turned thunderous, “Outsiders should keep their nose out of other people’s business.”

“...Then stop dragging other people into your messes,” he snapped back before he turned away. He sighed deeply and gave a polite bow, “...I wish you the best.”

And, to the driver’s shock, Togato kept the letter in his hand.

### **Testing**

“This… this isn’t fair,” Kaminari said, squinting at the board. “You don’t even come to class!”

Midoriya stared at the scoreboard, a little surprised, because he didn’t think that he would ever be the top scorer. But, there he was, sitting at Number One with a perfect score.

### **Stain sees some scars**

“You don’t need to get this looked at?”

“Huh?” Midoroya craned his head to where Stain was, and realizing what he was talking about, quickly assured him, “Yeah, it’s not too bad. It doesn’t even hurt.”

“...It’s not the worst thing that’s happened to you?” Stain continued.

Midoriya gave a humorless laugh, “Yeah, not even close,” he said.

“Yeah, I can see.”

And the butterflies and easy laughs froze and rotted in his mouth. Whipping around to face Stain, he watched the man’s eyes drag from his leg and back up to meet his gaze with an unreadable expression.

What a dumbass, Midoriya realized. His leg was fucking covered in all sorts of shit. Ranging from the time that he got stuck in a fence and nearly tore his muscles out just a few weeks ago, to the questionable things that Deku-kun’s body went through, he knew that wasn’t an attractive sight. He had, by accident, cleaned his leg without a problem in front of Stain, and who would have thought that he would drop his guard down in front of the Hero Killer?

Shit. Fuck. Oh no.

“...Don’t look at me like that,” Stain said, his expression turning into something more annoyed. “I figured you made shit life decisions since your natural reaction to dangerous strangers is to house them like stray animals.”

Still, Midoriya couldn’t find it in himself to relax. He dropped his gaze, pulling his ripped pant leg and source of all his problems right now, and tucked it behind his other leg.

“Sorry,” he said quietly.

“...I don’t want your apology,” Stain said, shaking his head. “But I do want you to know that I’m… I’m here. If you…. Want me. It,” he said, quickly trying to amend his words. However, it was clear that he had never given support before, nor has he ever received it. When he realized that his words sounded cold, he kept trying, “I meant, if you want my assistance. Or support. Or anything.”

Green eyes slowly dragged up to meet Stain’s, confusion apparent.

“Huh?”

“What I mean is… Is that I…” he hesitated, either because he was embarrassed or he didn’t know what to say. Midoriya doesn’t know which he would prefer, but Stain didn’t let him figure it out for him as he kept talking. “That you don’t have to go alone. Just call me. I’ll go with you and these…” he motioned to his leg, “Will remain scars. Your last ones.”

It was, by far, the sweetest thing he ever thought the Hero Killer could ever say. His heart stuttered, and he didn’t even realize he was crying until he saw Stain take a full step backwards and away from him.

“Don’t say something like that and then run away!” Midoriya called out, sniffling.

“Then stop crying!” he snapped back, clearly out of his element.

“I can’t help it!” he said, wiping at his eyes.

Things like broken bones or cleaning wounds might sting and hurt, but it didn’t make him cry. He’s shattered his arms over and over again, but the most that happened was that his eyes watered. He’s been lectured by just about everyone in every role in society. In his world, everyone said that he was a little weird for it, but he knew that they understood. Mirio-senpai once brought him to the side to tell him that he understood.

“Thank you, Stain, truly,” he said, feeling as though he would choke on his gratitude.

Just a few months ago, Stain stood at the edge of a bridge. And now, he was offering his support to him. It hurt his heart more than anything else in the world. Someone who wanted to end his life was now reaching out to be someone else’s support.

“Why do you call me that?” he asked suddenly.

“What?”

“Stain.”

“Because that’s who you are?”

“A Stain? You think I’m a stain?”

The words caught up to him, and he gave a laugh back. “No, no, not in the way you’re thinking it’s just… Just something nostalgic. Like, you want to leave your mark on the world, even if that means you become the bad guy and do some unsavory things,” he said. It wasn’t like he could come out and say that they had met from another world or anything. But this man in front of him was not the man that Midoriya remembered. Not even close. So maybe, it was time to give up on [Stain]. “Sorry about that, Akakuro-san-”

“If you’re not going to call me Chizome, Izuku, then call me Stain.”

“Eh?”

“I’ll be your Stain, or whatever dumb nickname you make up. So, lean on me a little more, okay?”

“Uh.”

Filled with something that he didn’t know how to describe, Midoriya gave a slow nod instead. Seemingly satisfied, Stain stepped out, probably to grab the first-aid kid.

What just happened?

## Summer Break

### **Koiichi knows**

Just like that, his patrols weren’t alone anymore.

“So, how far is too far?” Koichi asked.

“Ah, I always figured we could capture them, maybe knock them out, make sure that the police get to them, but otherwise remain anonymous.”

“You’re wearing bright yellow,” Koichi replied, pointing to the nearly hazardously yellow sweatshirt he was wearing.

“Well, I’m not here to catch bad guys,” Midoriya replied back. “I’m here to help people. Isn’t it better so that I can be easily seen for that?”

Koichi stared at him for a moment, and even though the universe may point and laugh at their incredibly naive and ignorant views of the world, he doesn’t want to change this. It was never about putting away bad guys or making them pay.

“Then… what are you fighting for? What are you trying so hard for?”

“I wanna make the world a better place,” Midoriya said. “I think it starts in my neighborhood. And then, I’ll go from there.”

And Midoriya wonders if there was a Koichi in his world, if he was like this, if this was something that could have been. As it was, there was no one else he could have asked to be a better coworker.

### **Jul \*Deku’s Mom**

He gets a letter in the mail. From his dad. It seemed that the only way they could communicate were through these one-sided letters that he wrote to Deku-kun.

Which was fine, Midoriya didn’t mind, he was glad that he was okay and well. He was. Truly. He wasn’t upset and he wasn’t angry. In all honesty, he didn’t know anything about this man other than the fact that he missed his wife so much that he lost his mind. Which made sense. Sort of. Well, Midoriya watched people fall apart for similar reasons, turning in their license or quitting their current life to spend the rest of their life focused solely on revenge.

And he’s glad that Hisashi, this Hisashi, didn’t lose himself to that.

So really, he was truly and honestly glad, like he was whenever he knew anyone that regained their hope and humanity.

But the heart and the body didn’t line up. When he saw Hisashi’s scrawl on that paper, he felt his blood run cold. When he tried to open the envelope, his fingers trembled. When he read the letter, painfully short and to the point, he felt nauseous before a surge of anger began to bubble inside of him.

How dare this man ask how he was doing? He should know, concerning the way he had left. How dare this man ask him if he was going to go visit his mother’s grave? How dare he ask him to put a certain type of flower and bring her favorite sweets for him? He should do it himself. He should be here, with Deku, and walk together and visit her grave together. He should grovel for her forgiveness for completely losing himself in his grief, and then promise to make amends. He should have…

“...Izuku?”

Midoriya sniffled loudly, his hands flying to rub his eyes. He wasn’t sobbing pathetically. Quickly, he turned to the person who called for him.

“Yes?”

Shigaraki looked at his face, then to the letter in his hand, and then back to his face before he scowled.

“...I…” he hesitated. “I wanted to know what you wanted for lunch.”

“Oh, uh…”

“Not curry,” he quickly added.

Midoriya laughed, sudden and light, and missed the way Shigaraki’s shoulders relaxed by an inch at the sound of it. “Alright, anything is fine, really.” Red eyes narrowed at him, and the young man shrugged back, “Uh… fried rice? I really like your fried rice.”

Shigaraki stared at his face for another moment before he nodded.

“Alright,” he said. He looked like he was going to leave, but his eyes fell to the letter in Midoriya’s hand and then to his face. “You know, we…well, actually, I don’t know about Dabi but I…” he tried, stumbling a little over his words, like he was searching for something. He must have found it, because he eventually blurted out, “I won’t know that you need something unless you tell me.”

Midoriya blinked at him, clearly caught off-guard at the admission, and Shigaraki scowled even harder when he saw the raw shock on his face.

“I’ll be in the kitchen,” he said, leaving the room.

Midoriya looked at the letter in his hand, anger forgotten.

A visit, huh?

Right. There were things that he should do.

-

“Ah, I’ll be gone all day Thursday,” Midoriya said on Monday. “I don’t know when I’ll be back, so just eat dinner without me.”

“Hm, okay,” Shigaraki said, yawning behind his hand. He rubbed the back of his neck, “Where are you going?”

“There’s someone I have to meet,” he explained.

“Do you need some help?” Dabi asked.

“No. This is something I need to do by myself,” Midoriya replied back, taking another bite of the omelette. “Wow, this is really good.” He gave a triumphant hum, his eyes bright in their glee.

The other two exchanged a glance, but didn’t say anything otherwise.

-

And so, the first time Midoriya properly met Deku-kun’s mom, he was on his way to the cemetery. He does his entire morning routine, the way he always does, except he ditches his school uniform for something that he wouldn’t normally wear.

To think that he’s become a pro at ditching.

With a white button-down and a pair of jeans, he hopes that he won’t sweat through his clothes in the heat of the summer, and heads out. Was this enough? Could he really convey his feelings when he was dressed like this?

He doesn’t actually know where she was buried, but he figured he’ll take his time to figure it out. Today, he’s not Midoriya Deku, but Midoriya Izuku, and he needed to pay his respect. His mom loved carnations, but grave-etiquette requires lilies. Still, Midoriya would rather make her happy than look like a ‘proper son’, so he gets her the brightest array of carnations at the flower store.

...Did Deku-kun’s mom like carnations?

The grave was modest. It looked like someone had been taking care of it. The weeds growing on it were minimal, and Midoriya takes great care to get rid of all of it. He prayed, lit incense, everything that the online forums that he checked said he should do when he comes to visit a grave for a family member. He had some far-off memories of what it was like to visit the grave of someone who passed away, but the more he remembers, the emptier he feels.

Of all the people who died in his lifetime, this one was probably the one person he had the most to say to, even though he had never met her.

He plopped down in front of the grave, neatly tossing all of his manners away as he began to articulate into words all the thoughts in his head.

“...My name is Midoriya Izuku, and I don’t know where your son is. I… I woke up one day in his body, and have been living as him since. I chased your husband out of your home. I’m sorry for desecrating his memory like this. I’m sorry for desecrating your memory like this. I just… I miss my mom too.”

He placed his head in his hands. What was he doing? He couldn’t ask for forgiveness, and he couldn’t repent. He didn’t regret what he has done since he has gotten here, but he also just wanted to go home. He used to be a hero, and here he was, apologizing to someone who couldn't even hear him.

For a lingering moment, he realized that home is the place where Shigaraki and Dabi were waiting for him. The thought is, at once, humbling and crippling all at once. The thought sank into him, because he knew that it was easier to forgive a villain than to think that the people he used to love would become deplorable.

He knew. If Midoriya Deku died, had tried to kill himself multiple times, then it was because of a thousand different reasons that accumulated into a single conclusion. He understood that, and still, he couldn’t fathom how no one noticed or cared. He couldn’t wrap his head around the fact that the parents that he did have, that were present and with him, exacerbated the situation.

In that sense, maybe it was a good thing that they weren’t here.

The thought was fleeting, and was banished from his head as soon as he thought it. Curling up into a tight ball, Midoriya placed his hand over his mouth to stifle his cries as best he could. He used to be a hero, and he just thought that it was better for someone to be dead. Because it would be more convenient for him.

“I’m sorry,” he said, hoping that someone would believe him.

Here, at the grave of Midoriya Inko, Midoriya Izuku will be the one person that mourned the loss of Midoriya Deku. His heart ached, and without much prodding, the floodgates in his eyes spilled and he cried over the loss of someone no one even noticed was gone.

### **Band …?**

“B-but-”

“It’s fine,” Tamaki said easily, “I mean, my cute little kouhai asked this of me, you know? Isn’t it only right that I give him my support?”

Word on the street is that Tamaki has gotten weak, and that he was easy prey. The people closest to him think that he’s comfortable in his skin, cooler than ever, and stronger every day. The reality was that Tamaki just wanted to finish his school year. The reality is that something important and irreplaceable had been mended and returned to him.

He ruffled Midoriya’s hair, making sure to go roughly enough that the young man couldn’t look up and see his expression right now.

“It’s good to rely on someone, isn’t it?”

At least, it felt great to be relied on.

### **Summer Vacation \*cleaning Takoba Municipal Beach Park**

“Well, when you said that you were going to go to the beach, I thought we’d… be going to beach. Not this trashheap,” Bakugo said, looking over the mountain of trash before them.

“I… didn’t think it was going to be this bad either,” Midoriya said. It had been a long time since he saw how trashed this beach was. Was it really this bad back in his world? He didn’t think so, but there seemed to be a lot of strange things that ended up being the exact same as his place back at home.

But, if this was the same thing he dealt with at home, he was an ambitious fuck.

“I… I’m really sorry about this guys,” he said, bowing deeply to the half of his class that showed up today. “I really, really am. I’m really sorry for wasting your time with this, and I’m really sorry that you guys came out for nothing. But uh… I’m sure there’s other places that you guys could do to.”

“You’re not going to come?” Shinsou asked.

“Well, I’m already here so I figured I’d do something about that,” Midoriya said, motioning to the mess on the beach.

“You have nothing better to do than cleaning up… that?” Uraraka asked, a skepitcal look on her face.

“Whatever, the faster we get this done, the sooner we can actually use the beach,” Bakugo sighed. He rubbed the back of his neck as he eyed the beach, “Let’s move out all the burnable trash first.”

“Eh? Kacchan, you’re going to stay?”

“I’ll go back to the convenience store to grab some trashbags,” Todoroki added, turning around.

“Hm, let’s go together. We’ll need more water!” Mina added. “Do you mind if we use your cooler?” she asked, turning to Yaoyozuro.

The other girl, surprised at suddenly being called at, nodded slowly. As the words registered, she straightened out and nodded more vigorously, “Yes, I will be happy to help!”

“Oooh, how reliable,” Jirou nodded back, a grin on her face. “Don’t think you can run, Kaminari,” she said, grabbing the blond by the back of the shirt. “Maybe cleaning up around here will help you clean up your mind.”

“Haha, save that for Mineta,” the blond stuck his tongue out. He did grab the teen in question before he tried to run, “Oh no, you don’t.’

“I’ll ask my brother if he knows any place to deal with the junk,” Iida said, pulling his phone out. “I’m sure our local police will be happy to help us do something nice for the community.”

“I’ll start with the big things then,” Shoji agreed, nodding his head. “Ojiro, give me a hand.”

“Man, we’re going to be here all day,” Ojiro sighed as the two began to jump over the railing to get into the beach.

Midoriya stared back, his jaw dropping.

“Don’t just stand there like a dumbass,” Bakugo snapped, “You going to help or are you just going to stand there?”

“I… Are you guys sure?” he asked quietly.

The look he got back was withering.

“Well… This isn’t really what I had in mind when you said the beach,” Kirishima said, “But I think this makes more sense now.” He gave a blinding grin, looking more like the hero Midoriya almost graduated with instead of the shut-in he was just a few weeks ago.

“Yeah! Cleaning a beach? That’s more Midoriya’s mojo!” Hagakure cheered back. “Yosh! Let’s get in on this!”

Midoriya felt his eyes water, and he wanted to scream at the world to look at his friends. Look at his classmates. It didn’t matter what world it was. It didn’t matter how badly the world tried to beat them down. They were still strong, they were still kind, and they were still heroic.

He wanted to protect this.

-

“You… You’ve been cleaning? A beach? Over summer vacation?”

Mina looked at her parents, because it did sound strange, didn’t it? Why would anyone spend their vacation time to clean up one of the dirtiest and clearly abandoned beach? It was so bad that they didn’t even let prisoners do their community service to clean up the area.

So, she understood that it was strange, but she knew that if she said, “Midoriya’s organizing it,” they wouldn’t understand it either.

“What else would I do?” she asked.

She thought about it. What did she do this time last year? Paint her nails? Wonder why she was single? Go back to standing at the station late at night looking for a wrinkly old man to squeeze money out of? Forget about all her summer homework until the day they went back to class and it turned out that their teacher quit and they were working with a sub until they got a replacement?

She shrugged.

“I want to try something new.”

Her parents looked at her like she grew a second head, but she didn’t blame them. Just a few months ago, she didn’t ever think that she’d sit and eat dinner with them.

“I want to be my own person.”

-

Enji frowned.

“What did you say?”

“I uh… Your son’s on the news.”

He could feel the migraine building between his temples.

“God, what did he do now?”

“He cleaned up Takoba Municipal Beach Park.”

“...Excuse me?”

“With his …. High school friend, it looks like.”

“He doesn’t have friends,” Enji snapped back, still reaching for the remote to turn the TV on. As he did, his secretary scrambled to get the clip up for him.

His frown deepened as, indeed, he could see the top of his youngest’s head in the furthest corner of the beach, helping a green-haired boy pull a refrigerator. He was wiping at the sweat on his face, and his figure was too blurry to see anything else. He couldn’t believe it.

This time last year, he was getting a call from the school about how anti-social Shoto was and how he only showed up to classes once a week. He went literal months without seeing his son’s face, and it wasn’t until Fuyumi came to him in tears, begging for him to at least make him come home. It was a headache to deal with. However, it ended with him buying out half the homeless and getting a TV-special on their company’s humanitarian deeds, and bolstered their image so he didn’t say much.

Needless to say, he thought he knew Shoto. He was so certain of it, because he was the same. His father, according to others, was hard on him, but look where he stood now. That’s why, he was certain that he was doing the right thing.

He stared at the scene in front of him, the clip starting to loop. It wasn’t longer than a few minutes, and it had been replaying for a while now.

His son. He thought to himself, had friends.

In an instant, he made a decision.

“Go figure out the nearest junkyards to help them. Pay whatever you need to, write it out under my expenses, and I will figure it out later,” he ordered. His eyes looked from the screen back to his, and he turned the segment off.

He was still on the clock, after all.

-

“Wait…. There was another beach?” Midoriya asked quietly.

“Yeah, there’s like a hundred beaches. But if you’re going to go and run a stand, everyone's going to go to Asakura,” Kaminari said.

“No one would choose to come to Takoba Municipal Beach Park,” Sero added. “...You seriously didn’t know?”

Midoriya’s face flushed back. “But I… I…” He made a wild motion at the now clean beach. “He didn’t tell me the name of the beach.” He didn’t want to whine, since he didn’t want to be a whiner, but from the shared look between Kaminari and Sero, he was definitely whining.

He looked at his phone and then groaned.

“That’s why Inui-sensei was so mad…”

### **THE CONCERT**

Midoriya felt so stupid. These weren’t the kids he went to school with. They weren’t the kids who were ready to dedicate themselves to training their minds and bodies to save people. They weren’t heroes-in-training.

-

Shouji stared in disbelief.

He vividly remembered Midoriya giving him a long list of all the great and wonderful things he could do with his quirk. It was a list that revolved around helping the people around him, and some that included saving someone’s life. Listening to it, it was honestly touching (and super embarrassing, he thought that Midoriya would just whip out a projector with carefully prepared slides) because he no one ever had anything nice to say about his quirk.

Not even his parents, who just apologized to him and offered to help cover him up.

But Midoriya was different. He was supposed to be different.

Instead, after being told pretty things, like how his size wasn’t monstrous, it was reliable, Shouji realized that it wasn’t the case at all. Midoriya was just like everyone else.

He was just a stupid liar and Shouji was even stupider for ever believing him.

Blood dripping down his face, three of his fingers purple and swelling, Midoriya’s green eyes found his.

“Are you okay?”

“...Are you stupid?” Shouji choked out, “I… I…”

If Midoriya didn’t come sweeping in, Shouji would have been hurt, yes, but not as bad as Midoriya. Midoriya had been fighting before he got here, and he had been getting steadily more and more injured the longer they fought.

And still, the idiot jumped in to take the hit for Shouji, the guy he said was undoubtedly strong and reliable.

### **Beach \*Miruko**

Miruko hadn’t been working for a while. It wasn’t that she didn’t have any offers or anything, but she felt like she had hit a wall.

Why did she start taking photos? Why did she love mountains so much?

Everything felt like too much.

-

She took a break, on the request of a friend, and tried to distance herself as much as possible.

Taking a breather, if you would.

And so, she came to the beach where she used to get drunk with her friends at, a long, long time ago. Standing there, looking at the beach where her fondest memories as a student originated, she saw nothing but trash. The heaping amount of trash was almost unbearable, and it was hard to even see the shoreline with all the trash that people had abandoned here.

When she was a kid, she saw how she couldn’t tell where the ocean ended and the night sky began and thought that it was like her future, unknown, but there was going to be a bright dawn following it.

Looking at it now, she still related. Just this time, instead of something beautiful, she felt as dirty as the trash that piled on it.

And when she saw a bunch of high schoolers, screaming and yelling, she couldn’t believe that they were actually cleaning up the mess.

## 

### **Aug\*SomeFestival ShigaDeku another world**

“What’s on your mind?” Shigaraki asked.

“Huh?”

The older man was quiet for another moment. They leaned against the railing of the bridge where they were waiting for the others.

“Ah, I was just… thinking, I guess.”

His face twisted into disgust. “Whenever you think, you end up getting hurt,” the older man said bluntly. Midoriya winced at the words, but managed a little smile. And then, catching him off guard, the older man continued, “Think aloud today.”

Green eyes blinked at him, “What’s the occasion?” he asked. “You usually tell me to keep my mouth shut.”

Shigaraki scowled back and turned his attention back to the water underneath them, “Whatever, just do it,” he said.

Staring at him for a moment, the younger man smiled back somberly. Maybe it was because he was really losing his mind, or maybe it was because Shigaraki’s face now brought his guard down. Once upon a time, that face brought nightmares or tragedies. Now, it reminded him of warm dinners and the smell of laundry. He wasn’t certain when the switch happened, but regardless, he spoke.

“...Can you entertain me for a bit?” he asked. Sharp red eyes rested on his face, before giving a curt nod. With a small hum, he asked, “Do you think that parallel universes exist?”

The taller man grimaced, but before he said anything careless, he caught the near desperate look on Midoriya’s face. He gave a long, suffering sigh. He turned to face the young man.

“Let’s say I do.”

“...In… What if, in another world, I was a hero and you were a villain?” he asked, his voice small and quiet.

Shigaraki placed his head in his hands, but right before he wanted to start yelling, took a good and hard look at the man next to him. His eyes trailed on the bandages on Midoriya’s trembling figures, and for a moment was reminded of the Midoriya he found puking his guts out in the bathroom when he cracked open a beer that first time. He must have come to his own conclusion, because he heaved another sigh and thought about it.

Whatever Midoriya was thinking about, it haunted him. It haunted him and it woke him up in the middle of the night to cry. He bit down on his tongue to stop himself from saying something dumb. For the first time, or so it felt, Shigaraki thought that Midoriya was looking for help from him.

"...I can't really imagine it," Shigaraki said, "Me? A villain?” He snorted, “That sounds like too much work.”

He tilted his head, closing his eyes as he tried to forget the strangeness of all of this, and tried to think about what to say to keep going. There was little that he wouldn’t do for the guy sitting next to him, and he hoped that he recognized it.

“It’s like being a terrorist right? Bombing buildings, starting fires, throwing the economy into disarray…” the more he thought about it, the more troublesome than it would be worth it. Living under the radar would be a pain in the ass. He couldn’t get the games he wanted, or eat the food he wanted with the people he wanted to, right? “The world would have to be shit if that’s the case.”

And then, he remembered his quirk. The quirk that he tried so hard to hide, and now, it was much easier to think that he’d be a great villain. All he had to do was touch things.

He tilted his head just slightly to see him better, where Midoriya stared up at him with wide eyes, as though his words and thoughts mattered, and Shigaraki returned his gaze with a warm smile.

But the things he touched would be the kitchen equipment that he used to feed them, or it would be the books that they read before they go to bed, or the cramped apartment that they call home. None of these things were things that Shigaraki wanted to decay so.

"And besides, you’re the hero, right?” he said, feeling that cold place in his heart fill back up like it was never empty. “Then there’s nothing to worry about. You will find a way to save me. Villains are just violent victims, right?"

He wouldn’t be able to say it aloud, not when it looked like Midoriya was hanging onto his every word. Him? Destroy a world that Midoriya protected? How could he? This world was filled with something amazing once he dyed it in his colors. If he was a villain, it had to be because Midoriya hadn’t saved him yet.

And he couldn’t imagine this guy ever not saving him. If parallel worlds existed, he'd go and tell his other self that he just needed to hold on until Midoriya got to him, and then, he won’t be alone anymore.

While he was busy thinking about that, however, tears burst out of Midoriya’s eyes and streamed down his face. He sniffled, and rubbed his eyes fiercely. Shigaraki stared back while an impending feeling of panic rose up inside of his chest. What just happened? Did he say something wrong? No way, right? He spoke as honestly as he could. What the fuck was he supposed to say? What was he supposed to do?

Why couldn’t Midoriya just come with a fucking manuel that explained what the fuck he was supposed to do?

“A...And if I don’t?” he croaked out.

Shigaraki, jerked backwards, like the question brought him physical pain. Wasn’t this just hypothetical? Were they just going to ignore the fact that he was crying and sobbing on a bridge during a festival? This clearly wasn’t making him feel better, couldn’t they just drop this? Why was Midoriya making such a big deal out of this?

But, if Midoriya was clutching so hard to this, then it must be important to him. And if it was important to him, then it would be important to Shigaraki too.

“Then, it’s not over,” he said at last. “Since the good guys always win in the end.”

Midoriya gave this shuddering sob, his arms curling around his body as he trembled like he couldn’t stand the cold.

Some time ago, Shigaraki would have never considered this as an option, but right now, he couldn’t think that he could do anything else.

He wrapped his arms around Midoriya, feeling him fit against him like a puzzle piece, and thought that this would have been a much sweeter moment if Midoriya didn’t blow his nose against his shirt. He placed his head on top of Midoriya’s comfortably, and tried not to dig his chin down. He hesitated, even though he had gloves on, but placed a hand against Midoriya’s back. It was strange to think that someone who was so small was someone who could support him so well.

Shigaraki hoped that his heartbeat, beating a little faster than normal, next to Midoriya’s head, was proof enough that he had been saved. He had never been good with his words, after all.

And Midoriya seemed to understand him anyways.

-

“Sorry about that,” Midoriya laughed, rubbing at his eyes.

Shigaraki ruffled his hair.

“...When someone helps you, you should say ‘thanks’,” he said.

Midoriya blinked at him, like he was shocked, but it melted away into something kinder.

“...Thank you, Shigaraki.”

### **Autumn Festival**

“...They want us to what?”

Midoriya nodded, “So Jirou, you should let me know, do you want a bigger crowd?”

Jirou felt her heart race.

“Of course,” she said, a grin twisting on her face, “Of course I would.”

### **Koichi & the Wallet Incident**

Muggings happened so often that they were starting to stop have meaning for Midoriya, as awful as that probably sounded.

“...You can’t stop all of them.”

“...Yeah, but I stopped this one.”

“So, uh… who are you?”

Midoriya turned to the man and gave a laugh. He grinned, big and wide.

“I’m a hero!”

### **Spinner \*Choosing Something**

“Just stop!” Spinner shouted as Midoriya got back to his feet. “Just fucking stop! Can’t you see? There’s no point in doing this! Just run! Abandon me and just run!”

The young boy who stood defiantly between Spinner and a rampaging monster, didn’t run. Instead, he stood tall and strong on shaky legs. And Spinner, who had beaten him up twice, didn’t get why he wasn’t running.

“I… I lived an incredibly fortunate life,” Midoriya said. “If I… I don’t stand up to protect it, no one will!”

“What does that have to do with me?!”

The green-haired man slowly got up to his feet. And when most people would be irritated, annoyed, frustrated, angry, they would just literally be anything other than that blissfully content smile and a double bloody nose that Midoriya looked at him with.

His breath stuttered, part in fear, most in awe. No wonder this was the man that his unofficial Master Stain said he would lay his life down for.

“You’re already a part of that, Spinner.”

“Hey, Spinner! You got the kid yet!”

“Augh, what you would expect from a scaley bastard like him.”

Spinner stared where the two men came up to him. And he wondered, a life of debt or a life of regrets, which would be better to live with? He spared a glance where Midoriya trembled but managed to pull his fists up in a poor guard that even a child could hit through.

He made his decision.

Three swings, and the men were down. He turned to where quirkless, weak, useless Deku stared back at him, surprised with stars in his eyes.

“...Okay,” he said. He won’t choose debt or regret or anything. He walked over to properly stand in front of Midoriya and waited for the next people to step forward.

He’ll choose Midoriya.

### **Enter: Gang Orca**

If one good deed ran into another, if one action can change the world, if all this world needed to understand that the world doesn’t have to be the way it was an example, then the proof of it stood right in front of him.

“...To be honest, when you first came out…. I laughed too. I thought, what a crazy guy. He’s going to die real soon.”

Midoirya stared, dazed, as a hand outstretched towards him.

“Nice to meet you, young man. My name is Sakamata Kugo. The person who has severely wronged you was my underling.”

"Wow," the young man gaped back, because there was only one way to react when meeting Gang Orca. He’s just as tall and as imposing as Midoriya remembered him to be. Even though he’s certain that this man could ruin him here and now, in this moment, he feels relief. And then, realizing the mess of the parking lot that they have met, managed to bow his head, “Sorry about all that.”

He looked good.

The man placed his hands on Midoriya and helped right him up to his feet. He didn’t let go until Midoriya was stable, and the young man felt bad at finding relief in his warm hands while simultaneously staining them in his blood.

"I am the one that should be saying that," he said, voice a little breathless and somewhat fond.

"No, no," Midoriya said, shaking his head. He teeters, and the man reached for him. He didn’t need it, and he didn’t touch him this time, but the gesture brought back fond memories. "To me, meeting you is a humbling experience."

“...Is that so?”

"If my actions lead to someone else standing up," he said quietly, "Then doesn't that mean that I need to be firmer in my stance?"

He gave a little laugh. Steadier on his feet and in his head, he gave a bow.

"Thank you."

He probably had a concussion. His arm was bleeding from his forearm to his wrist. His leg was aching, even though he was just standing. His side didn’t hurt enough for him to think that he sustained any damage to his kidneys, and he vaguely wondered if the trains were still running. He has no doubt that he'll be in a lot of pain tomorrow, but nothing is broken so he isn't too upset.

But right now, he thought as he looked up at Sakamata, he needed to figure out how to defeat this man.

“So, what will it be?” he asked. He wiped at the blood off his face, trying to get rid of it but instead doing a great job smearing it all over his face.

“Do you think that you can win against me?” he asked.

“I win if I survive, right?” Midoriya asked, “Then, yeah, I guess I will.”

“Confident, aren’t you?” Sakamata said, his voice low like a purr and the young man ran through as many possibilities he could in his head. “What’s your quirk?”

Midoriya stared at Sakamata and laughed, “I don’t have one.”

“What?”

“I’m quirkless,” he said, the words feeling like tar against his tongue.

“...You’re quirkless but you jumped into a fight like that?”

Midoriya shrugged back helplessly, “I’m quirkless, not helpless,” he explained. His vision swimmed for a moment, but he managed to keep steady. “So if I can help someone, I should. Because some people have a quirk and are still helpless.”

It was bold of him to say, and Sakamata didn’t miss the subtle jab.

It felt like, no matter how he diced it, he was going to break a couple more bones. He lost his lighter back somewhere, so he would either have to burn something else, or get a lucky shot in. Sakamata outclassed him, even when he was perfectly healthy, in every way. Experience, height, weight, Sakamata would win. Bleeding out and on his second hour straight of combat, Midoriya is beyond exhausted. There is no reason to think that he was going to win this fight. The likelihood of escape was slim as well.

“...It appears that everything I could say is something you’ve heard before,” the man said, shaking his head. “Regardless, this time, it was my boys who were in the wrong. To think that, instead of taking the blame like mature adults, they decided to gang up someone who disagreed with them instead...” Standing up straight, he gave a bow, waist-deep. Even folded in half like that, he was still taller than Midoriya, this bothered him a lot more than he thought. “My deepest, most sincere apologies for that.”

There was a beat of silence, but right before the man straightened, Midoriya spoke up.

“...Are you apologizing because I’m a kid?” he asked quietly, “Or are you apologizing because you let this happen?”

The man stiffened and stood up straight. His eyes widened, taking in Midoriya’s sharp eyes.

“If the latter, you’re apologizing to the wrong person,” Midoriya said, rolling his neck as he tapped the toes of his shoes to the ground. “If it’s the former, then it doesn’t matter if I forgive you, does it?”

He tensed his arms. The bleeding stopped, but he can’t feel his pinky or his ring finger. He imagined that he will have two good hits with it and then it’ll be out of commission for a week, maybe two.

Sakamata, no matter the world, was intimidating when he wasn’t trying, and when he was...

“Do you think that you’re in any place to make demands from me?”

“Isn’t your apology meaningless if you don’t give it to the right person? Don’t offer it if it’s half-assed.”

There was another brief silence. Maybe his friends were actually bad influences after all.

“I suppose there is some truth in your words,” Sakamata eventually conceded. “So, I apologize for my boys’ rough treatment of you. Do you know where the other person I should apologize to is?”

Midoriya stared at him for a moment longer and shook his head. “I told him to get out of here, so I don’t know where he went.”

“...Well, do you have his number?”

“Uh, actually, I don’t even know his name.”

“...What?”

Now that he was saying it aloud, it probably sounded really bad. As it was, he gave a helpless shrug and nervously rubbed the back of his head.

“So, what, you just happened to see something here and just jumped in?”

“...Yeah, I guess I did.”

“Why?”

Midoriya paused at that, turning to him with a frown. “What do you mean?”

“You jumped in and got beaten almost an inch into your life for a stranger. Why?”

“Do I need a reason to help someone?” he tilted his head, like Sakamata was the strange one for asking.

“... Then,” the man said slowly, “I guess I don’t need a reason to help you either.”

“Pardon?”

One of Sakamata’s massive hands grabbed Midoriya’s shoulder (actually, almost half his toso and arm too) suddenly. His grip was firm, but it didn’t hurt any more than what Midoriya was used to. More than anything, Midoriya swore that he could feel his lifespan decrease in his shock.

“I’ll look after your wounds. It’s not like you can go home to your mother like this, correct? Then, I’ll take care of you for the time being.”

The words felt much more painful to hear than he thought. Unprepared for it, he nodded dumbly instead.

“What’s your name, kid?”

It was a habit by this point. It was something that he was starting to say because he didn’t want to be forgotten. It was his one mark against the world, the one way that he can claim that he did exist. And even if it was a blatant lie to be himself now, he figured that it would be fine since he didn’t think he’d ever meet Sakamata after this. This was a man who clearly had his life in order, far away from Midoriya and his normal high school life.

“Izuku,” Midoriya said. “Izuku is fine.”

The doctor that Sakamata brought him to wasn’t gentle, but he was thorough. Midoriya was grateful for it. He worked silently, and as soon as he was done, Sakamata had come in. He hoped that the doctor wouldn’t tell Sakamata about the old scars on his body, patient confidentiality and all that.

“You look young. Are you in school?”

Midoriya stared at him for a moment and then laughed, “I get that a lot,” he said.

He didn’t want to lie, and often, it felt like it was all he did. Maybe it was bad to avoid their questions like this, but to look at someone he looked up to and just lie to them… that felt even worse. It was better to play coy. Half-truths because he knew he couldn’t lie to someone with Sakamata’s face. Half-lie because this wasn’t his life that he was risking.

“Did you think I’ll answer everything the way you want me to?” Midoriya asked.

“Do you think you can escape right now?”

“Probably not,” the young man agreed, but met his eyes evenly, “But I don’t want to be the kind of person that cowers just because the situation looks bad for me.”

“Then, is that the reason why you won’t answer my questions?”

“I answered them-” Midoriya cut himself off at the severity of the glare that Sakamata shot him, and with a small huff of laughter, said, “Well, stranger danger and all that.”

“Stranger danger,” Sakamata deadpanned back, his arms uncrossing as he leaned forward. “You ran into a den of thirty-armed men with various quirks that could kill you for a random stranger you didn’t even know the name of, but you can’t tell me what grade you're in?”

The young man opened his mouth and then closed it. “When you put it like that-”

“No matter how you put it, it’s that bad,” the man cut him off.

“And if you're going to cut me off, then I guess I don’t need to answer any of your questions, do I?”

At that, the man stood up and left. Surprisingly, he had a lot less patience than Midoriya thought he would. And remembering that this wasn’t the person he remembered, looked to the doctor instead. Right when he was going to ask how long it would take, the door opened again.

The first man was fully covered up in bandages and a full face mask. He came in and blurted out an apology, gave a bow to his waist. On reflex, Midoriya jumped up to his feet and bowed back, giving an earnest apology for beating him up, too.

From there, the people that he beat up, and Midoriya felt a little bad now that he realized whose people they were, came into the room and took turns apologizing to him. Of course, he made sure to apologize to each and every single one of them too. He wouldn’t have beaten them so badly if he didn’t think that his plans would have gone so well. He gave them a smile, they returned it, and they all laughed together in their shared pains.

What bizarre people.

“You’re good to go,” the doctor said. “Stay off your arm and leg for at least a few weeks. Stop getting into fights. No hard labor like lifting heavy objects either. That includes people. ”

Meaning, he needed to go to Chiyo before his next shift. No problem. He was meaning to visit her anyways.

“Change the bandages every four hours, or every time it bleeds through. If it’s still bleeding tomorrow, go to the doctor.”

He nodded, and the doctor stared at him for a long, long moment before he gave a long-suffering sigh. He reached into his pocket and handed him a business card.

“If you can’t get to a doctor, just contact me. I will take care of it, okay?”

“...How should I repay you?” Midoriya asked. These kinds of things don’t just happen to him, after all.

“You already did, kid. I haven’t seen Sakamata-boyo that energetic in a long time. I’ll take care of this for you, as thanks for letting me see something so entertaining.”

The green-haired man frowned back, clearly confused.

“Don’t worry about it,” the doctor said.

“Izuku-san!” one of the other men called for him.

“I-Izuku-san?” he flustered back.

He was ignored and the young man grinned back at him, despite how much it must have hurt to pull his split lip like that. “The boss said he’ll drop you off where you want to be dropped off. Come this way.”

“Uh.”

And so, Midoriya got into the back of a very, very expensive car. Like, breathing in the car made him feel like he was devaluing the car, and it felt incredibly uncomfortable.

“Where to?” Sakamata asked.

“Uh…” he gave off the convenience store address, and when the man looked at him, he shrugged back. “Personal information,” he tried to explain.

From the look on Sakamata’s face, he’s beaten people up for less. For whatever odd reason, however, he let Midoriya sit here.

What time was it? It was so dark outside, and the dark-tinted windows made everything seem even darker. Whenever it was, he can only imagine how upset Shigaraki was going to be when he came home in his tattered and bruised body.

The car ride was uncomfortably quiet. The A/C in the car was running at full blast, making Midoriya painfully aware of how cold and awful he felt. Still, he didn’t dare say anything, and wondered why this car ride felt so long when they weren’t crossing a large amount of distance.

“Thank you for the ride,” Midoriya said, never one to forget his manners no matter how uncomfortable he felt. “And the first-aid,” he added. He got out of the car, when a voice stopped him.

"I…" he has never thought Gang Orca could ever sound so uncertain, or have nothing to say at all. He manages to give him a smile though. If a child saw it, they would have cried. "I would like to thank you too, for giving me a push for something that I didn't even know I wanted."

Midoriya stared at him and grinned.

“You don’t need to thank me for that. You did that all on your own,” he said. “Good luck though!”

And finally, finally, and Saka,ata smiled back. It was every bit terrifying that he remembered, and if he was a little younger, he might have sobbed at the sight of it. Instead, he gave a beaming smile back, relieved that this world couldn’t take that smile from Sakamata.

Still, he came home, covered in grime and soot, smelling like sweat and blood, and too tired to be hungry. He jingled and jangled his keys as quietly as he could, but he could feel the sleep pulling his lids down and splitting his vision in two.

If he’s not careful, he was just going to sleep in the doorway or something. His phone has been long-dead, but it’s probably not broken. Probably. Phones don’t need their back casing, right? And they usually function even if the screen was shattered. Yeah, this will be fine. When he was in the car, he checked the time, and it said that it was nearing four am. He had to be in homeroom in about four hours. Closing his eyes, he took a deep breath and suppressed the urge to cry.

Ugh, he was so tired, he couldn’t even cry. This was just awful.

He pushed the door open, trying to be as quiet as he could, and the sudden flurry of movement right at the entrance of his apartment made him snap to full attention.

In front of him, Dabi shot up to his feet, and Shigaraki fell backwards. The man groaned as he sat up, and as soon as he laid eyes on Midoriya slowly got up to his feet. Had they been waiting for him at the door? Had they seriously pulled a pair of chairs up to the doorway with some books and tried to wait for Midoriya to come back?

“God, fucking finally,” Shigaraki groaned. He yawned as he got up without any complaints. “You hungry? We got some leftovers.”

Dabi’s sharp eyes, as though he hadn’t just been sleeping at the entranceway, carefully looked him over.

“I’ll get the first-aid. Go take a shower.”

Midoriya felt the exhaustion melt away, and in its place was gratitude. He couldn’t believe it. They had been waiting for him. He doesn't know for how long, but they had waited for him, and then fell asleep waiting for him at the entranceway.

“...That sounds great,” he said after a moment, feeling all the emotions choke him out. He gave a little cough, clearing his throat and felt his tear ducts kick in. “Sorry for coming in late,” he said.

“Just send a text next time,” Shigaraki said, meandering into the kitchen. “Augh, my fucking neck.”

Dabi’s hand landed on his head, ruffling his dirty curls, and walked away.

At about 4:15 AM, the three of them are sitting at the dining room table, eating dinner together because they had waited all day to do this. In about three hours, they would have to get ready for the new day, and maybe even eat breakfast. It would be the start to the most exhausting day yet, but none of them complained.

### **Midoriya The Server**

Midoriya turned his serving tray, spinning it and effectively deflected most of the bullets. The ones that flew way off course weren’t his problem. When the rain of bullets stopped, and the man tried to reload, Midoriya took his mangled serving tray and threw it like a frisbee. He turned away, grabbing one of the glasses with a few ice cubes, and sprinted for the man.

Predictably, the man smacked the tray away with one of his hands, and in the time it took him to bring his arm up and back down, Midoriya was already on him. He splashed the man’s face with the ice first, and grabbed his wrist. He ducked under the fist that came swinging, the man had shit aim with proper vision and he was just atrocious now, and retaliated by breaking the glass against the man’s forehead.

The man fell backwards, unconscious, and Midoriya kicked the gun far away and into the corner of the room.

He pulled at the lapels of his vest and turned around.

“Esteemed guest, are you alright…” his words trailed off, as his eyes met the visibly shocked and confused Kurono down the hallway. Behind him, Chisaki stood with an eyebrow arched. Oh no. Both of them, as realization dawns on their faces, looked equal parts amused and impressed.

Oh, come fucking on.

“...I guess you are.”

“...Very well done,” Chisaki said, ignoring Kurono and walking up to him. Shouldn’t he care more? He’s Kurono’s boss, right? And Kurono is pretty much his right hand man? Shouldn’t he give any shits that this man was assaulted and fighting off three hitmen by himself before Midoriya got here?

But no, instead, it was like those gold eyes could only see him. Whatever small hope he had that the yakuza would walk past him died when Chisaki’s very expensive shoes stopped right in front of him, with just a few feet between them.

“We could have handled it,” he said.

“Well, when people die, they can’t come back, so we try to minimize death as much as we can. As it is, we can only bill the living,” Midoriya deadpanned back. He looked down at the unconscious men littered on the ground, and then back to curious golden eyes. He shrugged, “Just think of it as a service,” he said.

Now both of his eyebrows were high on his forehead. No no no. Midoriya wanted him to be bored and uninterested, why did this always happen to him?

“It seems like it’s a waste to have you as a mere server,” he said quietly. “Perhaps I could interest you in-”

“No thanks.”

Customer Etiquette Rule Number 8: Do not cut off the customer.

Midoriya pursed his lips. They’ll forgive him. Probably. Hopefully. They said that they wouldn’t sell him, so at least he could hold onto that, right?

“I’m happy here,” he said, slowly, trying not to think about the bodies in the hallway. “And I have a job to do. Do you require any more assistance?” he asked, even though he was already walking past him and to Kurono.

Customer Etiquette Rule Number 5: Do not leave until you are dismissed.

Oops.

He crouched down next to Kurono. “Are you alright? Do you need an ambulance?”

“No, I’m alright. Thank you,” Kurono said, eyeing him like he was seeing him for the first time. The weight of his gaze made Midoriya’s heart turn into a pit of anxiety.

Please don’t turn out like your boss, he wanted to beg.

“Truly, Midoriya-kun, thank you.”

The green-haired boy gave a tight smile back.

“Well, if you don’t need anything else. I’ll be returning to my station. Ectoplasm-san will be by to handle those bodies. Excuse me.”

Customer Etiquette Rule Number 10: do not run away from the customers.

Surely, he thought to himself, they would only dock his pay because of this. Okay, even though he sprinted at his fastest to get out of that hallway as soon as physically possible, they would only dock his pay. He put down the three hitmen, so that counted for something right? No one died and the customers weren’t injured. This was a good thing, right?

Please. It wasn’t much to ask for right? To get a fucking break?

### **Chisaki & Midoriya’s changing relationship**

In practice, their relationship hadn’t changed much. They treat each other the same way they always had. Chisaki was rather forward and Midoriya danced around the subject.

These days, Chisaki felt that pull inside of him, when he found Midoriya in these kinds of moments. That flare of shock, like the whizzing of a firework just a second before surprise explodes out and he’s left breathless in the aftermath. The way that fire blooms in the sky, he could see how easy it was to get lost by that kind of dazzling beauty.

And Midoriya, who still didn’t know about the fact that his father was deeply in debt to Chisaki, treated him as he always did. Respectfully, but as distantly as possible. It was, aside from entertaining, novel.

People wanted to put Chisaki in their debt. People wanted Chisaki to be interested in their well-being and be a reliable ally. If not, people didn’t want to know Chisaki. Not knowing any yakuza was always better than knowing one, ally or not.

But Midoryia didn’t shy from him like that. It could be because he was young and naive, but Chisaki didn’t think that someone young and naive could look at him so kindly.

As strange as it was, it was precious. For as long as it was interesting, Chisaki did not wish to relinquish it.

### **Roommates & Heatwave**

Dabi pulled on the front of his shirt. God, he felt like he was starting to melt. Normally, he was pretty good with the heat, but this was just painful. He didn’t even want to read, scared that he would get the pages wet since he was sweating like a pig.

Next to him, Shigaraki was laying down in front of the fan. They didn’t even have the energy to bicker with how hot it felt inside the apartment.

And then, Midoriya came out of the bathroom, sat down with his schoolwork and went to work. Isn’t he tired? Dabi is in a t-shirt and gym shorts, Shigaraki abandoned all clothes but boxers, but Midoriya is dressed in a long-sleeved green shirt and his normal sweatpants.

Isn’t he hot?

“I’m going to get a heatstroke looking at you,” Shigaraki told Midoriya.

The young man laughed, “Should I get you some water?”

No seriously, the kid had to be a saint. Drags in half-dying men like abandoned cats into his home, and doesn’t ever get angry even on the record hottest day of the year. If Dabi didn’t feel exhausted from the heatwave, he’s certain that Shigaraki and he would be reduced to hissing assholes again.

But Midoriya is calm and patient like always. He’s ready with a smile, and Dabi doesn’t understand how.

Shigaraki frowned, and Dabi narrowed his eyes.

“You’re going to get a heatstroke,” the older man said, and Dabi was surprised that he could keep talking.

“Really? I feel fine though,” Midoriya replied back.

“You don’t want to wear something lighter?” Dabi spoke up.

Green eyes found his before he dropped his gaze. No matter how tired Dabi felt, it was an expression that he recognized well.

Shame.

“It’s nothing, don’t worry about it. If it makes you uncomfortable though, I can go sit in the kitchen-”

“No, it’s fine,” Shigaraki said, shooting Dabi a dark glare.

What? How was he supposed to know?

He narrowed his eyes back, annoyed, but didn’t say anything.

“Not sure if you noticed, but he doesn't like showing skin,” Shigaraki said when they were doing the dishes together. They ran the water ice cold. For reasons.

“Fine with sleeping with strangers, but shy about his skin,” Dabi summarized. “Duly noted. You want some of the iced tea?”

“Yeah, that shit is good.”

“Oi Deku!” Dabi called out, “Ice tea?”

“What?”

“Iced tea!” he yelled a little louder.

“Who?”

Dabi tipped his head back while Shigaraki cackled.

“Just get it to him. It’s not like he’ll say no.”

Dabi rolled his eyes, but figured he would do just that.

### **Second Semester \*(still a freshboy)**

“...Kacchan?”

“Why aren’t you ready yet?”

Midoriya blinked at Bakugo, and tilted his head, “What do you mean? Kacchan, why are you in…”

The gears slowly turned into his head, and the realization sank in deeply.

“Oh no,” he whispered quietly, “School starts today?”

The blond blanched, before the anger came out, “I fucking told you that school goes back in today! What the fuck were you doing?! We even went and did our homework together, you dumbass bitch!”

“I forgot! Oh my god!”

“Let me in! And then go get dressed, you shitbag!”

Midoriya swung the door open to let the blond in, and ran for the bathroom.

“Dabi! Shigaraki! I have school starting today! Let’s move the lunch plans to dinner!” he called out.

“We don’t have lunch plans today! We said Saturday!” Shigaraki snapped back from the kitchen.

Dabi handed him his uniform right before he went into the bathroom, “We know.”

“Then why didn’t you say anything?!” Midoriya wailed back.

The older man arched an eyebrow at him. “Are we supposed to know your schedule better than you?”

It was a fair point, and Midoriya wanted to cry. How did he miss this? How come everyone knew but him? How did he forget something like this? Of course, he doesn’t need to go to school, but the good kid in him couldn't wrap his head around the thought that he was going to be cutting class. Besides, it wouldn’t be good for Deku-kun to return, only to learn that he had an awful reputation for himself.

By the time he got out, Dabi handed him his bag, and Shigaraki tossed his bento at him.

“Don’t rock it too much,” he said, after Midoriya just barely caught it.

“Thank you! I’ll see you guys after! Have a good day!” he called out in a rush before he left.

And as they got to the school, Midoriya suddenly came to the realization that they weren’t rushing. There was no need to rush. They were perfectly on time. He turned to Bakugo, who arched an eyebrow back at him.

“If I have to go to school,” he said, “You’re going too.”

“Eh?”

“Since it’ll be pretty hypocritical of you to make a bigass show in front of my house when we’re in middle school but you suddenly play truancy as soon as we hit high school, you goddamn delinquent.”

“Eeeeh??”

### **Enter Inasa: Trainwreck**

“Alright, let’s split the water among all the healthy people,” Midoriya said. “That means this one is mine, right?”

There was a stiff silence, and hearing no objections. Midoriya took the water.

“This one is mine. And everyone here can see that this is mine to do as I please with it,” he said. “This is what we agreed to.”

No one spoke, but the tired and desperate looks in the eyes of the other people turned into confusion as they regarded him. It turned into certainty, and some of them nodded to indicate that they understood.

With that, the high school student smiled. He took the water straight to the woman with a broken leg.

“Here you go,” he said.

“B-But-”

“It’s alright. This is my water to do as I please with it,” he said. “I’m not really thirsty anyways.”

Her eyes welled with tears, and Midoriya helped her drink it slowly.

Inasa, holding his water bottle in his hand, wondered what he was doing with his life.

Midoriya was sweating through his clothes, like everyone else here. His uniform was starting to become see-through, and Inasa could see that he was wearing an undershirt. most have taken off what they could and unbuttoned what was necessary, but Midoriya kept everything buttoned up.

Looking at him, Inasa felt even hotter.

### **Midnight & Midoriya \*Dresses**

“I don’t know,” Aizawa said, grabbing a small amount of the wig in his hand. He lowered his head at the same time, he lifted his hand, closed his eyes, and pressed his lips to the piece of hair. He opened his eyes and looked directly up at Midoriya without changing his posture.

And Midoriya felt like he would enter cardiac arrest as the man with his teacher’s face curled his lips up to a gentle smile.

“You look beautiful, dress or not.”

He straightened, dropping his hair and wiping his face from any expression. Midoriya, understanding that he had been played, still couldn't control the blush that overtook his face and neck.

He stood there, staring at the ground and spluttering like an idiot, and totally missed how the smile returned to Aizawa’s face.

But Aizawa, who was such a convincing liar that he could even lie to himself, thought and believed that the only thing Midoriya was to him was entertainment.

## Autumn

### **Eri \*Kidnap**

-

“...Eri-chan, the truth is,” Midoriya whispered quietly, “I’m actually a hero.”

“...A … Hero?”

His heart tightened, and he managed to pull a grin on.

“Yeah,” he said, breathless but he’s not tired. He wasn’t tired. In fact, he was just getting started. He stood up. “Eri-chan, did you know that people die when their heart stops?”

“Yeah, that’s why grandpa said to shoot their chest first.”

Often, Midoriya wondered about Eri’s questionable education. He never managed to ask though, and he was beginning to think that he never would be able to. No, that was wrong. He will ask about it, one day, far into the future. And in order to do that, he needed to be alive to do so.

“Then, can you help me out?” he asked. She peered at him, and he was glad that she had finally stopped crying. He crouched down to take her hand, and wrote the kanji for ‘heart’ in her hand. “This is my heart. I’m entrusting it to you, okay? I won’t die as long as you take care of it, no matter how many times I get shot.”

Her eyes widened.

“I-Isn’t it important? If you don’t have a heart, you’ll die!”

“Then take good care of it for me, alright?”

Sagely, Eri nodded. She looked at her hand, like there was something truly precious there, and Midoriya prayed that this would be enough. With this, she would stay out of the battle, she wouldn’t try to jump in, and he didn’t have to worry about her getting involved. He would protect her.

The girl who believed that he couldn’t die of heart failure because he gave it to her… he’ll protect this innocence. He’ll protect it.

For certain, Overhaul and the rest of the family will be coming to save their princess. He had left more than enough evidence for them to find their way here. If not them, it will be Stain and the police force. Regardless, help was coming.

He just needed to make sure that everyone here would be alive for them to be saved.

There were about four other girls, other than him. From a quick look around, he was the second oldest person (physically), and the oldest girl was 16. From the way that the kidnapper talked, she was the one in immediate danger for sexual assault. Given their obvious distaste for the crying and wailing girls, the youngest girls were in immediate danger for physical assault. Regardless, he would protect all of them.

He may be the ugliest girl, but he was a girl here. He would protect them from everything.

With that thought in mind, he stood in front of the door.

-

As it turned out, an ugly girl was still a girl.

“She’s not going to sell for much, so it’s fine right?”

“Yeah, it’s not like her face is anything special going for her.”

“Don’t worry, we’ll be gentle the first time.”

And if Deku thought that he would be safe because he was actually a boy, he learned that the world can always be a crueler than he thought. At the very least he can see that they’re all here, and have left the girls alone. A real hero may have also been able to save himself too, but he was fine with this.

His heart, after all, was safe somewhere else.

### **ChisaMido \* the Dress Incident**

-

He doesn’t know what he was expecting, but for the door to break down and Midoriya to appear was not one of it. The young man was in a ripped dress, a frilly and fluffy looking thing, looking absolutely wrecked.

Green eyes stared at them, and they aimed their guns but no one fired as the man remained where he was. After all this time with him, it seemed that they recognized him on sight, even though he was covered in bruises, blood, and also in a ripped dress.

They were bad people who have done just about every sin in the book. It didn’t take them long to put two and two together and come to an answer on why Midoriya probably looked like that.

“...Midoriya?” he said, his voice barely a whisper.

Yellow eyes took in his ragged features, the way his once long-sleeves were ripped off and the smeared blood and grime on his exposed shoulder, and then back to the way relief flooded his features. It wasn’t something he mentioned in that moment, but he took note of the ridges and ridges of scars, barely visible from the amount of dried blood on it. Those green eyes suddenly welled with tears and he gave a smile filled with gratitude, and he lost all his questions.

“...Thank god,” he said, breathless as his legs gave out and he crouched down. “I knew you’d come.”

And suddenly, Chisaki felt parched.

Next to him, Kurono surged forward, putting his jacket around Midoriya. And the young man waved it off. In another place, at a different time, Chisaki could easily pinpoint that smile as the same courtesy smile he gave his right-hand when he tried to get him a drink from the vending machine.

“Please, Midoriya,” Kurono said quietly.

And even though Kurono’s voice didn’t change in pitch or tone, and his facial features didn’t even twitch, the young man only needed a second glance before accepting the jacket.

“Ah, thank you,” he said, pulling the jacket closer around him. It dwarfed him in size, and he slowly got back up to his feet, “Sorry about that, I guess I was a lot more tired than I thought,” he said, a nervous smile as though he was explaining that they unexpectedly ran out of an item on the menu. He gave a little nod, “There’s four men down there and six girls,” he said. “Eri’s unharmed, I’ll take you to her first.”

Chisaki nodded, stepping forward as he regained his senses.

“...I see,” he said, eyeing the young man. “And you? How are you?”