### **Mountain w/ Miruko**

And that was how Miruko first met Midoriya.

She stared at the bare-footed boy in a pair of handcuffs. With ripped jeans and a simple t-shit that might have been white once, he looked up at her with eyes brighter than anything in the forrested mountain range. Eyes wide open, their breath dissipated in seconds, like the mountain wanted to erase all of their traces.

"...You..." she trailed off.

"Miruko-san?"

Who?

"...It's dangerous over here," the young boy who was as pale as a ghost said through chattering teeth. He shook his head hard, "Please turn around, and as soon as you are availiable to, call the police."

"W-Wait, what?"

"Oh, and tell them that there are 14 people running a drug farm up here. There are six minors involved in the incident, but none are severely injured. It's about," he pointed to the place behind him, "a mile out that way, in an abandoned building next to a stream that leads to a cliff."

### **A sudden dinner with Chisaki**

Midoriya looked at his phone, the message from Toyomitsu letting him know that a new case blew up in their face, and then back up to the udon shop in front of him. He hoped that his anonymous tip of the ring going on at the construction site will finally come to an end, now that the police will be grabbing their suppliers.

The waitress inside probably knew his face by now, since he had been loitering in front of their store like some creepy stalker for the last two hours. He covered his face, but didn't feel hungry enough to go in and eat. However, waiting out here was probably infinitely worse.

He blew hot air over his fingers when someone suddenly came in front of him.

His heart dropped to the ground with his jaw.

"With the way you're looking at me, you would think that I would never leave my house."

The voice was smooth as it was playful, but there was a dangerous glint in those golden eyes as he looked down at him.

"...Overhaul-san," he said quietly.

"My, I thought we were close enough for you to call me 'Kai,' Izuku. You'll make me lonely like this."

"Oh, uh, sorry," the young man cringed from his own words.

Gold eyes peered at him, looking for something.

"What are you waiting for?" he asked, his voice dropping in pitch.

Midoriya, suddenly aware of the fact that he was staring at his phone worthlessly, pocketed his phone quickly. Even though he knew this was inevitable, his heart felt hollow. Waiting for someone was hard, even more so when they ended up not coming.

"I uh," his mind searched frantically for a good excuse, and what came out was, "I was enjoying the scenery?"

Chisaki raised his eyebrow, calling him out on his bullshit then and there. The young man closed his eyes and willed the universe to open up under his feet and swallow him whole. Of course, this would be the one time that the universe did not do that.

"...Well, I suppose anything would be enjoyable with you," the yakuza said slowly, voice rich and smooth like age-old wine. "...or at least enjoyable enough that I feel like it's a waste to have you out here alone."

He took a step back and motioned to the udon place that Midoriya had plans to hit with his police-force friends.

"Could I interest you in giving me a few hours of your evening? I promise to make it worth your time."

Not for the first time, Midoriya thought that Chisaki would have been a man that got all the lonely stay-at-home-wives to swoon at his feet. He wondered if the Chisaki who wasn't obsessed with purifying the world and weighed down by the justice in the world, was someone who fed hungry teenagers in his spare time. The thought hurt him more than he would like to admit.

"Uh."

But at the same time, if the others caught him with Chisaki wouldn't that be bad? Like, really, really bad? It wasn't like he was trying to keep this a secret from anyone either, it just... sort of happened. Really. There really wasn’t ever a reason to introduce them. If the need arised, he probably would have. Really. And he would have never guessed that Chisaki would keep showing up in his life like a badly-timed Villain from a children's hero-show. He really did think that their meeting would have been one and done.

"I can handle rejection gracefully," Chisaki said, but his gaze was piercing.

"It's not like that," Midoriya said, and somehow that made the older man look even more amused.

"Then, what's the issue?"

"I uh."

"If it's about our age-gap, I assure you that I'm patient."

If Midoriya was drinking something, he would have spat it all out. Instead, he choked on his heart, when it leapt up into his throat, and he suppressed the urge to cry.

"I-I-It's not that either," he sputtered out. "It's uhm. I ... I was waiting for someone."

"Hm, shall we call it a kidnapping then? Don't worry, I'm a rather... experienced man."

Midoriya's eyes bugged out and the older man chuckled.

"Come then," he said, "If they've made you wait, then they can wait as well."

"They're not usually late," Midoriya said, feeling as though he defended those who weren't present to defend themselves.

"And you still defend them," the older man muttered under his breath. A little more wistfully, he sighed deeply, his shoulders sagging a little as he turned away, "My apologies. I didn't mean to..."

He pinched the bridge of his nose and took a deep breath.

"It... It's upsetting for me to see you defend the people who have wronged you."

"It's just a dinner," the young man said, "It's not that big of a deal."

"Then, let's go."

"I-"

His voice cut off mid-sentence, as the back of Chisaki's fingers came up to his cheek. He flinched at the gesture, but Chisaki didn't pull away. Eventually, he relaxed, unable to pull away from Chisaki's warm hands. Eyes of melted gold softened

"I think you've waited enough. C'mon. lemme get you some udon."

And while Midoriya never really cared for praise or slack from someone else, being on the receiving end of such kind words had his eyes welling. He closed his eyes, and took a shaky breath before he nodded.

Since his eyes were closed, he missed the expression that Chisaki gave him.

-

“How is it?”

“Delicious,” Midoriya said. He eyed the other side dishes, “If a lot.”

Chisaki shrugged, “I’ll take the rest to the boys at the end of the night.”

“Oh, you’re going back to the office?”

“Yeah, due to someone’s interference, we have an entire empty warehouse to rent out,” Chisaki replied.

Midoriya guiltily looked away, and it must have been funny because the older man chuckled at the sight.

“Don’t be like that,” he said, “I’m sure Tabe will love these.”

Midoriya stared at him, and then back down, but couldn’t find the words. Even now, he still doesn’t know how to interpret a Chisaki who cared about his Expendables.

“...I see,” the young man said quietly, a small smile playing on his face. “I’m glad that you’re getting along though,” he admitted.

The older man leaned backwards.

“...Midoriya, you know that I’m not a good person. While you were taking down Kawasaki and his Imported Crystals, you must have seen that we were also buyers. Don’t look at me like that, of course I know that you caught them. Anyways, our sellers have been snatched by the pigs.”

He tapped the table.

“You understand where I’m going with this?”

Midoriya clenched his jaw.

“...You must have known that I’m trash. Even if I didn’t order it for myself, for being a part of it. Obviously it’s just the tip of all the things I’ve done. You, of all people, should know that. What I do.”

Midoriya placed his chopsticks and stared back at Chisaki. His gaze was so steady that Chisaki could believe that the world actually turned around him instead.

“So tell me, Izuku. Why do you still give me the time of day, when you don’t even want to be one of us?”

Because, if Midoriya ever wanted to come to this side, Chisaki would snatch him up. Chisaki would keep him where he belonged, by his side, and carve their legacy into the whole damn world. Chisaki knew that, with Midoriya, Oyaji’s dreams of regaining their glory would be a certainty. Chisaki wanted so bad for that future.

But that future would only be beautiful because Midoriya wanted it too.

“I don’t think you’re a bad person,” Midoriya said. “I don’t think that anyone’s a bad person. I’m not naive enough to believe that they are good people either, but. I...”

Chisaki ate a piece of chicken, listening carefully and forgetting the taste in his mouth to immerse in green eyes in front of him.

### **A Field Trip**

-

“Well, we should use the cultural festival,” Midoriya said, “And then we can generate some money, and we can go on a field trip.”

“...You want us to… go on a field trip?”

Midoriya motioned to the pamphlets that he and Bakugo had collected from Todoroki.

“Yeah. It’ll be fun.”

-

“Well, we have like, actual rich people here,” Mineta said. “Why not make them pay?”

Not so subtly, he eyed Iida. Good old Mineta.

“Hm? Then it won’t be a school trip,” Midoriya replied back. “I think a school trip will be fun.”

The look that Iida gave him looked hopelessly lost, but it quickly disappeared into something fond.

“So, are we going to do a concert?” Kirishima asked, eyeing Jirou from the side of his eye.

“Are you guys sure?” Jirou frowned back, “It won’t be a Class 1-A event then. And we have to get people from another school involved.”

The words hit Midoriya harder than he thought.

A concert wasn’t a Class 1-A event.

“Oh, that’s a good point,” Kaminari said, nodding. “Well, in like manga and stuff it’s always a cafe, right? Maybe we should do a caf-”

“Maid cafe!” Mineta shouted out. “We should do a maid cafe! With cat ears!”

Shoji’s face turned bright red at the thought.

Midoriya turned to stare at Bakugo and smiled. “I think that’s a great idea.”

“Don’t look at me and say that,” Bakugo hissed out, his face turning red. And after a moment, his eyes lingered to the top of Midoriya’s head and then back down. “But I… don’t think it’s a bad idea either.”

“Yeah!” Kaminari shouted out, ignorant to the atmosphere building around his classmates, “Deku, you’d be hella cute in cat ears!”

Midoriya felt the rush of heat come to his cheeks and Bakugo stood up. He turned around and grabbed the blond by the front of his shirt. He shook him hard, ramping up the speed and power when the man started to cry.

“Well,” Uraraka said, diverting the rest of their attention away, “Do we have the clothes for that?”

Mineta wailed.

“What about a hero cafe?” Tsuyu asked. She looked at them and gave a shrug.

“Dressing up as a hero?” Kirishima replied, sheepishly rubbing the back of his head, “That’s… a little embarrassing, you know?”

“And wearing cat ears isn’t?” Tokoyami replied back. When his classmate couldn’t reply, he threw in his vote, “I think it’s fine.”

-

“If you needed money, you should have just asked.”

“And how could I ever ask money from a retiree?”

Chojuro rolled his eyes.

“You’re not cute at all. Obviously, I’d make a payment plan for you.”

The student rolled his eyes. “And it’ll end with an insufferable amount of interest. Can’t say I find it interesting.”

The older man placed his hand on his shoulder, the one that would never recover, eyes narrowed into slits.

“Then, why don’t you call in a debt?”

The young man tensed, a frown forming on his face as he batted the hand away. It didn’t work, and instead, he rested his hand to futilely push the other’s paw off of him.

“I have no debts to call on.”

Far away, in the safety of his private thoughts and feelings, he almost regrets ever getting involved with this man.

“But if I did, I would use it to get rid of this irritating man who has been stalking me for the past weeks.”

“Who? The blond?”

“You.”

Briefly, so briefly he almost missed it, the older man looked shocked.

“Me?” he said, before a grin curled up on his face, “How cruel.”

It was like Midoriya was a magnet for these kinds of people. He would really like a break.

“C’mon, as an apology for making you so sad, I’ll buy you something to eat.”

“I don’t want to eat with my stalker.”

“No stalker would eat with their prey,” he said, nodding along. His hand came around to Midoriya’s shoulders, absolutely dwarfing him in size. “Good thing I’m here to scare them away.” He leaned down a little more, so that his nose bumped into a few curls. “And it looks like you’ve brought company. If you wanted an audience, I could have brought some friends.’

Midoriya’s frustrated scowl relented just a bit.

“I can handle my own fights. Surely you have better things to do than pick on high schoolers.”

“Hm… I don’t know… Do I?”

Midoriya understood in a split second what he needed to do. He gave a defeated sigh and motioned to the area before them.

“Lead the way.”

Chimera grinned back, wolfish and downright terrifying, as he eagerly moved Midoriya along, half-dragging him as he did so.

The group of disgruntled teens looked a little put off, but they let them be. Good, they weren’t total idiots.

With Midoriya under his arm, Chojuro almost wanted to thank them.

### **(pre) Cultural Festival-Neighbors**

“Oh, a cultural festival, huh?” Yamada whistled, “That brings back memories.”

“God, can you sound any older?” Aizawa shot back, narrowed eyes.

“Aw, Shota, you’re just upset because you missed all of our cultural festivals,” Shirakumo teased back.

“...Really?” Midoriya turned to Aizawa, and without meaning to, the image of his homeroom teacher overlapped the image of the host in front of him.

“Yeah, the school always made sure to get us all expelled before the festival,” Yamada said with much more joy than Midoriya thought someone could have about the memory.

“No, I’m pretty sure we got arrested the first time around,” Shirakumo said, tilting his head and trying to think harder about it. “Well, whatever, the past is in the past,” he said. He turned and grinned at Midoriya. “Don’t look at me like that.”

What kind of expression was Midoriya wearing? He didn’t know. What kind of expression was he supposed to have on when he heard about his two teachers, the people that he used to give so much grief whenever he was late, had missed their own cultural festival because they were arrested-

So what kind of expression was he supposed to have then? How was he supposed to handle this information? What was he supposed to say? What was he supposed to do? How was he supposed to feel?

“You’re such a strange kid,” Shirakumo said, reaching to ruffle his hair. “If you want us to come, you just had to ask.”

Shakily, he nodded back. He took a deep breath and with a trembling smile, he extended an invitation.

The three stared at him, and then made a show of checking their schedules like they wouldn’t have cleared it all for him, before agreeing with the promise that they get a discount for his booth.

### **Parents are Heroes**

Endeavor has made one mistake, in all the time that Midoriya has seen him work. It was not a large mistake, and if anyone else had done it, most people would have never noticed. But this was Endeavor, the CEO of Endeavor Corporation and the walking personification of perfection. And this was Midoriya Izuku, who had sharp eyes when it came to meticulous detail.

So of course Midoriya noticed his mistake.

Endeavor had, by mistake, left his personal calendar up. So Midoriya saw a brief glimpse of it right before it was shut off, almost violently. And all he could notice was that all the marked dates were color-coded in some way, and while he didn’t get to see everything, he did see the closest one.

There was a class play tomorrow.

Midoriya’s eyes darted to Endeavor, who didn’t catch his eye and didn’t threaten to dock his nonexistent pay for once, and he started to make plans.

The only person that had any relations to an elementary school had to be Fuyumi. That blue he chose was for Fuyumi, and maybe Endeavor cared a lot more than anyone could guess. It was creepy and probably illegal that he did this, but using some questionable methods, Midoriya got all the information that he needed to put his plan into motion.

In another world, he was called a hero for meddling into affairs that weren’t his own. Here, he was probably just a stalker.

Still.

-

Endeavor, predictably, was very unhappy when he found out.

“How dare you!?” he snapped like Midoriya had stolen from him, and Midoriya was the one who caused his life to burn down all around him. “Get out of here! Never appear before me again!”

“Endeavor-san!” Midoriya screamed back, struggling hard against all three security members. He lost himself to a life that wasn’t his as he yelled out, “I know that it’s hard! And I know that it’s scary! But you haven’t even tried!”

Todoroki Enji’s eyes were cold, but to pretend that this man wasn’t suffering wasn’t something that Midoriya could leave alone. He knows what the Endeavor plagued by regrets looked like and it was frightfully similar to the man in front of him.

“You can’t read their mind! And if you can’t understand them, then you can’t expect them to understand you either! So just talk! Just say it!”

“Security!” he called from a button on his desk, “Toss out this outsider!”

Midoriya winced but bit back the scathing remark that Endeavor approached him first. Instead, he gritted his teeth and didn’t even look at the security officers that came in. It was clear that they hadn’t expected to be tossing Midoriya out. Probably thinking about all the late night donut and coffee runs he did for them, they hesitated.

“Wait, Midoriya-”

“Are you going to make me repeat myself?” Endeavor growled out, every bit that imposing hero that struck fear in the hearts of villains all over Japan. The Security focused again, their hesitance disappearing away as they converged onto Midoriya.

The young man, for what it was worth, didn’t even pay them any mind.

“You don’t have to suffer alone! The first steps might be hard, but you won’t be by yourself!”

“Just-just shut up-” Endeavor stuttered, and Midoriya was probably the only person that noticed.

“Christ, this kid is strong-”

“Stop making our lives harder-”

Three full grown men came for him, but Midoriya didn’t even sound winded. He pulled at their grips, climbing over their arms, trying to think of the right thing to say but coming up with only one thing. Screaming with all his might even though the room wasn’t that big, Midoriya wanted to be heard. He wanted his voice to echo through Enji’s head like it was echoing through the room. He didn’t want his voice to be lost and he wanted Endeavor to know that someone was here. Someone recognized that he was trying.

That Midoriya was here.

“Endeavor-san! Did you know?! For kids, our parents are the first heroes we meet!”

Just like that, his temporary internship (slavery) ended.

-

The words would repeat in his head over and over again.

And then, Enji received his files. Actually, he had these files for a while, but he never had a pressing reason nor the time to flip through them. But now that he chased him out, he can’t think about anything but his haunting words and his bright eyes.

Who was Midoriya Izuku, then? Hopefully, he could gain some insight from this.

First of all, his name, written and spelled out, was Midoriya Deku. Deku, he assumed, meaning ‘useless’ and he is reminded of that nervous kid awkwardly eating at his dinner table until he bit down on the chicken karaage and was over the moon.

His eyes skimmed the file. A child whose mother committed suicide on his birthday. A child whose father walked out on him just a few months ago. A child with a series of noise complains filed against him and a dirty history filled with hospital visits and failed suicide attempts.

That kid came here, wormed his way into his and his family’s life, and told him that parents were heroes?

There was no way a file would be enough to explain everything. The more he read, the clearer that became. There was only so much he could garner from a human being using reports. But the child that yelled at him in his office at headquarters was nowhere to be found across the neatly typed words, as though he was a completely different person altogether.

His papers spelled out a tragedy, but the boy in his office was someone with hope and determination. The kid that managed to charm his way through his employees and forced his way into the Todoroki household affairs, could not be the kid that he was reading about here. Children who were abused and neglected and lost, like the child he was reading about, didn’t smile like that.

It was puzzling, but this too was a first step in deciphering what an anomaly that Midoriya Deku really was.

He placed his head in his hands and took a deep breath. This was supposed to be pathetically easy. He was supposed to squeeze every last bit of life out of him and force him to give his son up. He would finally get Touya back. He was so damn close.

He was going to use him against Touya in case he tried to keep this silly rebellion up. It would be better if Midoriya was sympathetic to his cause and if Midoriya could be the one to lead Touya to him. And if not, he was ready to twist Touya’s arm around, but now all he could think about was that shade of green.

Fuck. He thought.

Shoto had finally started to greet him in the morning. Fuyumi didn’t flinch when he turned the corner too quickly. Natsuo was starting to come home for dinner now. Rei actually smiled at him last night. His employees cheerfully greet him, and they don’t skit around him and excuse themselves out of his presence nearly as much as they used to. Kamiji even cracked a joke at him and he smiled and it didn’t feel like a crime for enjoying that moment of peace.

From the getgo, he never had any intention of collecting any money from Midoriya. He was going to give him the full pay that anyone who worked as much and as hard as he did at the end of all this and Touya and everything. But here they were, barely one month from when he was hired, and everything had neatly gone to shit.

With his head in his hand, he cursed again.

What the fuck was he supposed to do?

### **Laid-off (reprise)**

The security that was supposed to throw him out of the office, escorted him down to the main lobby instead. They had to drag him out since he put up a fight, but now that they were out of Endeavor’s office and by the receptionist desk instead, it was clear how much regret they held about the situation.

Midoriya felt bad, knowing that they weren’t bad people and that they were doing their jobs. He didn’t want to leave it like this, but to do anymore would be asking them to risk their jobs. And he couldn’t do that.

So instead, he gave a proper and formal bow to them.

“Thank you for all your help,” he said. “Thank you for looking after me all this time.”

Their eyes looked at him pityingly. It’s a gaze that he gets often, but he’s never felt comfortable under. But more importantly, he had bigger things to do. Endeavor clearly didn’t want this help, but you know what?

Midoriya was going to shove his nose into his and his entire family business whether he liked it or not.

“Midoriya-kun,” the receptionist said quietly, “Why are you… trying so hard?”

Midoriya looked her dead in the eye, because this was the same thing in both universes. People asked him this question like they didn’t know the answer and then they always looked confused at his answer even though it should be obvious.

“Because I’m a hero.”

-

Walking out of the office, however, thanking and denying any refreshments and snacks they wanted to give him before he left, the last thing he expected was to see Mirio.

“Senpai,” he greeted without thinking.

Mirio, the blond that he remembered just a few weeks ago, smiled even when he didn’t feel like smiling because he would find a reason to smile. The Mirio in front of him didn’t do that. His gaze felt as heavy as it was cold, and he looked from the building behind him and back to him. He narrowed his eyes.

“Is this why you refused to come intern with Sir and I?”

Oh no.

Midoriya felt the pathetically familiar feeling of despair curl in his gut. It was amazing how bad things could get for him so quickly. Just when he thought that he hit a new low, life just had to prove him wrong.

“Uh,” his brain, still on the high that was that yelling battle between him and Endeavor, failed him again. He hesitated and eventually ended up saying the worst possible thing he could in the moment. “It’s not what it looks like?”

Mirio’s cold expression turned into a smile. Cold sweat broke out on Midoriya’s back, and he wished he didn’t live with his foot in his mouth.

“Is that so? Then you don’t mind joining me for some coffee, do you?”

Begrudgingly, he did, but went with him anyways.

-

“Todoroki-san isn’t someone that takes in high schoolers as his interns,” Mirio said. “And in fact, I was under the impression that he didn’t take any this semester.”

Midoriya winced.

“More importantly, didn’t you just get out of the hospital?”

Of course, he knew about that. He winced again.

Should he come clean? Is that something he could do? Was that something that was okay to do? Then, where did he begin? With the fact that he doesn’t belong here?

Sometimes, Midoriya felt like he would choke on all the things that he wanted to hide and all the things he felt like was safer if he hid. It felt like, sometimes, all he did was lie and speak half-truths like that was his actual quirk or something. The thought made him feel empty. He wasn’t always like this, he would like to think. He wouldn’t always be like this.

He used to be honest. He could be honest again, right?

“...Hey, I know that I sound mad, but I swear I’m not mad at you, okay?”

He blinked twice, wondering when Mirio became so blurry.

“You don’t have to cry. Just tell your senpai everything.”

Midoriya blinked, his hand coming up to his eyes, and realizing that he was just sitting there crying. Sniffled loudly. He wiped at his eyes and shook his head.

“I…” where did he start?

This wasn’t even his Mirio. Was this okay? If he told this to Mirio, who would he tell? Who would the information eventually circle back to? Wouldn’t that get Mirio in trouble? Wouldn’t that put Endeavor’s name deeper in the mud?

Could he do that? He knew that the man was finally making progress with what family he had left, and thinking of the hesitant way Shoto mentioned how his mom made coffee for his dad in the morning, knew he couldn’t do it. To begin with, wasn’t he the one that took Touya from them anyways? And then he snatched Shoto away from them since he didn’t know how to see his friend and turn the other way. Wasn’t he splintering this family even more?

This was karma, wasn’t it?

Maybe he should stop being greedy, if it bothered him so much.

“...Midoriya,” Mirio said, collecting his attention. “Tamaki, Nejire and I are going to get lunch on Sunday,” he said. “I… I don’t know what you’re doing and I get why you probably can’t tell me, but I wanted you to know that we’re friends again.”

Mirio looked infinitely kind, infinitely bright, in a familiar kind of way that made his eyesight blur even more.

“Thank you for meddling,” the blond said.

A pathetic sob ripped from his lips.

The blond abandoned his seat to come around the table. Large arms, not nearly as thick and strong as the ones that he remembered, wrapped around him. Pretending that this was someone else from a different time that never happened, Midoriya buried his face in his chest and for the first time since he came to this world, was comforted.

-

“I am so, so, so sorry about that,” Midoriya said at the end of that overtly emotional display of emotion. He bowed deeply and Mirio laughed goodnaturedly, like his entire shirt wasn’t drenched in Midoriya’s snot and tears.

“No problem, sounds like you had a lot going on for you. You sure you’re done?” he asked. “Just let me change shirts first.”

Midoriya’s face flushed in embarrassment and he nodded. “Yeah, I promise. Sorry about that-”

A hand came down to the top of his head, and with a beaming smile like he was the sun itself, Mirio ruffled his hair.

“I told you, didn’t I? You can come and lean on me whenever. This Senpai here will always comfort you.”

Midoriya sniffled again and the blond laughed.

“I knew it, you weren’t done!”

“I-I am!”

He ruffled his hair just a little bit more.

“Good, now then, is there anything you want to tell me?”

“Thank you,” Midoriya said, missing that Mirio’s expression crumbled for a second. Still, when he lifted his head up, his eyes were bright with the determination that Mirio didn’t realize he was looking for. “I know what I need to do now.”

They shared a little laugh, bid their farewells, and watching him leave, the blond tipped his head back. He didn’t even know that Midoriya was lost.

“One day,” he promised himself and willing himself to forget how empty his arms felt now.

Until then, he’ll just be Midoriya’s crying rag.

### **Mirio \*Frustrations of Being Young**

“Mirio,” Yagi’s voice was cold, “You’re just someone riding off the coattails of someone else.”

The reprimand, for it could be nothing else, seeped deeply into his heart and Mirio gritted his teeth in his irritation.

“But one day, you will own everything that I do. You will understand better then, and be able to make proper decisions then.”

But, Mirio couldn’t say, one day is already too late.

### **Future Money - housemates**

Midoriya walked in, and before anyone could even welcome him back, opened his mouth and blurted out the truth.

“I got laid off but it’s okay, I got a plan.”

Dabi and Hawks, who had come to greet him, blinked in surprise and then at each other.

“Uh,” Hawks hesitated.

“You don’t have to,” Dabi pitched in. And after a brief pause said, “And that Host Club laid you off?”

“What? No, the other one,” Midoriya said, unknowingly digging himself deeper into a hole. He missed the way Dabi’s eyes narrowed, and Hawks’ wings fluttered just a little bit. “Well, anyways, I have a good idea on what-”

“Stop crowding the doorway!” Shigaraki snapped out, cutting the discussion short. He came out to glare at them, “Dinner’s ready, let’s eat. I’m hungry.”

The youngest took a small breath of relief, and right as he walked by, Shigaraki spoke again.

“We’re not done.”

-

Midoriya’s chopsticks didn’t even get to his mouth before Dabi started.

“I told you that you don’t need to worry about working anymore. Between the three of us, we can figure something out, so just quit that stupid host-club too.”

“And I told you that I’m not going to use your money. You should be saving your money for what you want to do-”

“Then what about you? You think Shigaraki and I didn’t know that you were throwing your money away for us? That you’re still doing it? Where’s your savings, Izuku?!”

Hawks and Shigaraki jolted, since it was so rare for Dabi to raise his voice, but Midoriya didn’t lose face. Instead, he gritted his teeth.

“I do have a savings-” he lied, because it wasn’t really his.

“Are you thinking about the future? Are you thinking about your future? Do you think you have a future? You make a mess out of our lives so that we can have a future, but what the fuck have you been doing? Or what, Izuku, are you still hoping that all of this will just end after all?”

This whole thing began to fall apart. Their carefully kept peace trembled like Dabi’s voice. But the last bits of it shattered when Midoriya stood up too. His chair screeched behind him, and a rare expression of actual anger flitted across his face.

Maybe it was the exhaustion of constantly running around, and the fact that he had been stretched far too thin, or the constant emotional exhaustion that came from staring at the people he thought he couldn’t save. Maybe it was the fact that he recently realized that he was the biggest villain all along. Maybe it was because, these days, he found it harder and harder to remember what he had left behind.

“What was I supposed to do? What am I supposed to do?” he snapped back. “You think I haven’t been trying? I’m just doing what I thought was the right thing to do!”

Dabi flinched, clearly not expecting that Midoriya would yell back. He stared at him for a moment, the realization sinking in as he spoke.

“Are you… fucking with me right now?” he asked quietly. He narrowed his eyes. “You always ask about other people but you’ve never said it yourself, did you? What the fuck do you want to do with your life? When you tried to make everyone else face the future, what the fuck were you thinking of? How can you pile expectations onto other people like that when you don’t even know what you want to do with your life!?”

And Midoriya, at his wits end, shouted out, “Because I didn’t think I’d still be here!”

Surely, those words sounded much worse for them than what he thought. The look on Dabi’s face was painful. Someone as proud as him shouldn’t ever look like that.

“...No way,” Shigaraki said quietly, “You picked us off the streets because you didn’t want us to die, but you didn’t think you were going to make it?”

Midoriya wanted to correct them, but it wasn’t his place. This wasn’t something he could say. He couldn’t make this decision for Deku. His hand came up to his chest, right at the mess of bullet wounds that he never told them. He couldn’t tell anyone, and no one would ever be able to tell Deku. He wanted to go home. He wanted to be Midoriya Izuku again. He wanted to return this body to Midoriya Deku and just be gone.

He didn’t want to be here anymore. He didn’t want to make a home in a place that wasn’t his.

He really, really, really thought that he would be home by now, with his mom. This was Deku’s shambled mess of a life that he made a worse mess of, yes, and there really wasn’t any excuse but.

“...Say something,” Dabi said, pleading.

“...I’m sorry,” Midoriya replied back, knowing that it was all he could say.

“Anything but that,” Dabi said, his head in his hands.

And without his apologies, what did Midoriya have? The truth? Let them know that he’s been lying to them this whole time? Then, what? Should he just keep lying? Just add more sins to his original ones by lying his way out of this?

He opened his mouth to do just that. But staring Shigaraki in the face, his courage deserted him instead.

He couldn’t do that.

Midoriya could not look at Shigaraki or Dabi or Hawks and lie.

The realization was sobering. He looked down and unable to find his words, did the only thing he knew how to do.

He ran away.

-

“...Do you think it’s possible for me to have a future?”

“Yes,” Midoriya replied back, certain in a way he didn’t understand.

“...But you don’t think there’s a future for you?”

He looked back down.

Dabi sighed back. Leaning back into the bench, his arm came out to rest on the back of the seat. He took a slow breath, and tipped his head back to stare at the sky between the tree leaves. Next to him, Midoriya hunched over, looking tense and coiled, probably ready to fight.

Knowing him, and the fact that it took four hours of straight sprinting to find him, Dabi was more likely to believe that he would run. For a fighter, Midoriya’s flight game was no walk-in-the-park. Kid knew how to survive. When he thought about that, it made him wonder about all the injuries he came home with.

Home.

When did he start referring to it like that? When did that word start to have meaning? He still didn’t know.

“...But you know, I think I finally know what I want,” Dabi said, deciding to go with a different route instead.

“...Really?”

Dabi waited until Midoriya picked his head up to stare at him before he gave him a lopsided grin. He couldn’t believe this kid.

They were strangers when they met. Strangers, but Midoriya was really willing to take the plunge for him. Strangers, since Dabi never actually told him anything about himself for no good reason other than the fact that Midoriya never asked. Strangers, since they never really formally introduced themselves, and Midoriya didn’t know that he had dined with his family without him. Strangers, but Dabi had never felt closer to another person before.

“Yeah,” he said. He spoke slowly at first, looking back forward instead of the teen next to him. “I got a job. Some savings. I live in an apartment and I read in my free time. So I’ll use my savings to go on book tours or big signing events,” he explained, and the more he talked about it, the more he realized how tangible his ideals have become.

His eyes turned a little distant, and he swore that he could already see it all planned out in front of him. Leaving the brisk autumn wind for the rush of hot air when he entered a bookstore, a hot drink in one hand and on the other would be...

“I wake up in the morning with breakfast on the table, I get a bento for lunch with octopus-sausages, and head to work. Help office workers get flowers for an anniversary they forgot, and prepare flowers for kids who made achievements. When I come home, I eat dinner. Some roommates wait for me, and I wait for the rest. I help out with the dishes. I go and visit my family eventually on the weekends or go to a live concert or play baseball with my annoying neighbors and win against the neighborhood police team. No one can take any loss or victory with grace, so we hit the bars for our next challenge. And I… I think that this is what I really wanted.”

There was a long silence, stretched as the wind carried it in with a few leaves. The two were silent for a long moment. He didn’t mean to go on a tangent, but he didn’t realize it himself until now. This wasn’t about paying back debts or getting spiteful revenge. He wanted to do the whole, “domestic, peaceful lifestyle” that he didn’t understand in the past. He wanted that boring life. He wanted something for himself now. He wanted to be alive. He wanted to live.

He wanted...

“But that future, for me, is only worthwhile if you’ll be there too.”

Green eyes, soft like grass after a rainstorm, shined and Dabi felt so, so stupid.

This whole time, this kid needed help. The same way that Shigaraki and Dabi and Hawks and all the dumbasses that they’ve met in the last few years were helped by Midoriya. He needed help too. It was dumb and he despaired at the thought that he never thought to do this before.

He stood up from the bench to stand in front of Midoriya instead. He extended his hand out to him, the same way Midoriya did for him on that rainy day.

“Deku,” he said, “Let’s go home. We can work on the future everyday, together with everyone.”

Dabi would think that he had finally gotten to him, and that Midoriya finally understood the true meaning behind his words. This wasn’t something made from his gratitude, and it wasn’t about paying him back or anything. It was something else, something stronger than his fire but gentler than the spring sun, but he didn’t want to say it yet.

One day, when Midoriya could speak confidently about the future, he’ll say it properly then.

Midoriya stared at him for a moment longer, before he took his hand with a watery laugh. Dabi’s face started to hurt from how big his grin was, but he couldn’t bring it in himself to say anything about it. Hand-in-hand, he almost couldn’t believe that the person who always ran to help people instinctively had a hand that could be engulfed by his.

They’d get home, and between Shigaraki’s large frown and Hawks’ worried face, they’d be fine. They’d get dinner. They would eat it, and they would eventually take turns talking about their future goals and aspirations. It was no longer just a long list of appliances to replace and purchase, but also experiences that they wanted to share with each other. Their long list included the places to visits, food to eat, the possibility of future occupations and the likes.

And Dabi wouldn’t have known, would have never guessed, that this was the opposite of what Midoriya needed.

### **(Spring) Cultural Festival**

“Welcome!”

Yamada gave a whistle as he walked in, “Man, I haven’t been in a school since… since our graduation!”

“Aw man, were these seats always this small?” Shirakumo gawked right back.

“Table for three,” Aizawa said at the front. “...Is Izuku here?”

Their receptionist, a young girl with giant floppy bunny ears paused as she assessed them a look.

“...Izuku…?” she repeated.

“Uh… Midoriya!” Yamada called out, as though he had to think really hard about it.

“What? I thought his name was Shigaraki?” Shirakumo repeated back.

“Yeah, but that’s the name that’s written on his door,” the other blond said.

“Oh, Midoriya-kun?’ their receptionist blinked back and smiled a little more nervously, “He’s not a server. He’s on cook duty.”

Yamada pointed at their butler-maid cafe display next to them.

“But! But! We came here to see him in bunny ears!”

The young girl giggled a little, clearly unfazed at the volume that Yamada could speak at. Aizawa, after all these years, wished he could say the same.

“Would you like to sit down or what? You see, we have a long line to get through,” she said, a smile on her face as she tilted her head to the side. The tone felt a little threatening, and the three stepped back on instinct.

“Uh yeah, that’d be great.”

“Boy, Midoriya-kun is so popular,” she sighed. “I can’t believe all these big wits are coming to see him. Too bad that he’s in the back, huh?”

“Wait, what do you mean big wits-”

“Ah, of course you’re here.”

And they came face to face with the other people that have been polluting Midoriya’s life.

A young man, in a butler outfit and a head of a bird, came up to them. He gave them a menu, just a page long, and they took it with little fanfare.

“What do you want?” he said after a moment.

“Whatever Izuku is cooking is fine,” Shirakumo said, eyeing the menu. “Actually, it says here that we can order a server of our choice and get some custom service,” he said, pointing at it. “Three of these then. So can Izu… uh… Midoriya come out to play?”

The look that the young man gave him was full of disdain.

“Midoriya is in the kitchen. He’s a cook, not a server,” he said, narrowing his eyes, “And if you don’t like it, leave.”

“Gee, what a sourpuss,” Yamada frowned back. He thought about it and then sighed, “But I guess that makes sense since we do the same at our club. Our customer service is so much better though.”

"We have customer service for customers. You're not a customer until you order something," raven-head said.

His two friends gave him a dry look but looked down at the menu.

“One coffee,” Aizawa said, “Black. And the curry will be fine.”

“Oh yeah, if it’s Izuku, definitely curry,” Shirakumo muttered back, rubbing his chin. “Okay, curry for me too. And this deluxe green tea parfait.”

“Then I want the strawberry cake and the curry and the ice cream and the-”

“Dude, Yamada-”

“-and a big heart on a latte,” the blond finished. He turned and gave a grin, “Because Izuzu is the cook, right? Then he can give me his heart.”

The double innuendo didn’t go unnoticed by everyone in earshot, and the playful grin on Yamada’s face seemed to hold a dangerous edge.

The server narrowed his eyes at them, looking like he was a breath away from throwing them out on their asses.

“...Whatever,” he said, turning on his heel and back to where the others were cooking.

-

“...You know some strange people, huh?” Tokoyami asked as soon as his eyes landed on Midoriya.

The young man, about to go on his break, tilted his head in confusion.

“Huh?”

### **Cultural Festival (post)**

“I’m really, really sorry that I couldn’t make it,” Dabi said.

“Nah, you’re fine,” Midoriya said, “You shouldn't stop your life just because of me. It happens.”

Yeah, it does, Dabi knew because he had a whole childhood of blaming his folks for never being there for him. He knew, and from the look on Shigaraki’s face, it was something they both knew intimately well.

### **Picnic (Spring)**

“Hawks,” Shigaraki said, “Can you get next saturday off?”

“Uh…” he ran his schedule off the top of his head.

Normally, the weekends would include him going out and partying or clubbing and mainly selling his fame and reputation, but he had stopped doing that since he moved in. Since he’s moved in, however, they usually spend Saturday cleaning up the apartment and stocking up their fridge. Coming to a conclusion, he nodded.

“Yeah, probably,” or at least, nothing he can’t cancel, “What’s up?”

Were they going to join Midoriya in some crazy adventure? Were they going to go eat out with everyone? With Midoriya, the possibilities and the people that he met were endlessly entertaining, so Hawks definitely didn’t want to miss out.

“We’re going on a picnic. You good at climbing a mountain?” Shigaraki asked.

“What?”

-

“I-I’m fine, really,” Midoriya said, even as he stared at the swelling mess of an ankle.

“Nah, this is sprained,” Yamada whistled. “It’s fine.” He looked up to where Shigaraki was heading the trail, and shouted out, “Oi! Let’s turn around!”

Incredulous sounds of protest were heard, as Midoriya reached for the blond. His hands gripped his shirt tightly, his tracksuit that he got for the sake for their biannual picnic wrinkling under his grip.

“No, it’s fine. It’s-”

“What happened?”

He looked to where Hawks’ easy smile and Twice’s excited figure came into view.

“I just need a small break, then I’ll be fine-”

“Izuku,” the blond said, his hands squeezing his cheeks as he brought their faces closer, “We can take a break here and go back down, alright? You want some water?”

“No, no, really, I can go on. I-”

He couldn’t let Hawks’ and Twice’s first picnic with them end like this. Not because of him. There was so much that this world robbed them off, and he wanted to give them something.

“I-”

“Wow, that looks bad,” Hawks noted as he came up to him. A hand dropped to his shoulder, and Midoriya saw Hawks smile on his sweaty face. It should be a crime to look that good while sweating, but if anyone could pull it off, it would be Hawks. “C’mon, I’ll help you down-”

“You can barely get halfway up without losing your breath,” Aizawa snapped back. “Move. I got him.”

“Really,” Midoriya said, his voice getting quieter, “I’m fine. It’s okay. I’ve done worse so-”

“If you’ve done worse before, then you should know better by now,” Aizawa said sternly. He crouched down in front of Midoriya, so that his back was facing him, and opened his arms up, “C’mon, before Yamada starts crying.”

“Boo hoo hoo,” Yamada sniffled loudly. Shirakumo, who finally made it to them, made a show of collecting him into his arms and rubbed his back.

“There, there, we’ll protect our Problem Child,” he said, wiping at his eyes and sniffling dramatically.

“See? Look what you’ve done,” Aizawa said, even thought a crooked grin was appearing on his face. “Now they’re going to be inconsolable.”

As though those were the words they were waiting for, the two threw their heads back and wailed loudly to the sky.

Midoriya didn’t know if there was a Shirakumo in his world, but he hoped that he was someone who laughed and cried just as energetically as the one in this world. Well, he didn’t know everything about his teachers from freshman year, so maybe they were all still friends that met up and got dinner together. He hoped so, especially if they were this happy.

“Now, as punishment, I’ll carry you down.”

With that, and Dabi’s stern expression from further away, Midoriya’s arms came around his neck and was lifted onto Aizawa’s back.

He was definitely thinner than the Aizawa-sensei that always came to defend him from the media as a student. Somehow, he felt just as reliable.

-

“Ah, it’s fine. I can just wrap it and be done-”

Aizawa’s hand squeezed down on the swelling and Midoriya hissed back.

“What about now?” he asked dryly. His eyes came up to meet Midoriya’s confused expression and he gave a small huff. “Just shut up and accept it. What, are you scared to owe someone or something?” He reached over to grab the wrappings to begin. He took the ice pack off his leg and passed it to Midoriya to hold.

“I… I just feel bad,” the young man said quietly, eyes resting on the precipitation beading on the package. He still can’t believe that Shigaraki packed an extensive first-aid kit. They used it, so it was paying off, but seriously? Did they really need to carry an AED? “I really wanted to go up and eat lunch with everyone.”

“...Izuku, we can eat lunch whenever. We’ll come back and climb this mountain again whenever. It doesn’t matter to us,” he said, wrapping his ankle in a gentle way.

As he finished, he slowly maneuvered Midoriya’s foot down. He placed his hand on his other thigh, close to his knee and leaned into the young man’s space. Their noses almost touched, as Aizawa’s eyes met his.

“All that matters is that I get to have you.”

Red eyes flitted from Midoriya’s green eyes to his lips and then back up. He tilted his head a little more, leaning in dangerously close, until Yamada’s loud, encroaching voice came running to the car.

As though nothing had happened, Aizawa leaned back and packed away the rest of the kit.

“Hey there, little Listener! And Shota, I guess,” Yamada said, poking his head in, “You guys done? Let’s eat.”

“Yeah, lemme just finish this up,” Aizawa replied back. He rummaged through the contents, but didn’t move from his place in front of Midoriya. After a moment, he looked back at Yamada, “I’ll handle it, you should go ahead.”

“Eh? Ah, but you carried him down, so I’ll take care of getting him to our lunch table.”

“I carried him since I knew neither you or Shirakumo could do it,” Aizawa replied back, his voice blunt and hard as stone. “I’ll take care of it.”

“Shota, don’t be greedy,” Yamada said, and Midoriya was certain that he would start stomping his face when he pouted. “You’re not the only one that started working out after that first picnic.”

“You guys what?”

“Oh, I wasn’t supposed to say that,” the blond said. He looked from Aizawa to Midoriya, and with a sheepish grin, slinked away.

Which left Midoriya and Aizawa alone again. He stared at the host, who rubbed his temples with a deep sigh.

“He did that on purpose, that little fuck,” he muttered to himself. His lips twisted down into a scowl and his cheeks turning a rosy red.

“Was it supposed to be a secret?”

He scratched the back of his head as he stared at the floor of the trunk next to Midoriya, “Not a secret,” he admitted. “And it wasn’t because of the picnic, either.”

Midoriya’s patient smile stared back at him, and he gave a long sigh.

He looked at his hands.

“You were a big part, the final push, I guess. But I… I did it ultimately for me,” he said quietly. “I feel it too, like for the first time, this is my body that I can do whatever I want to. I know exactly what I can do and how much farther I can go.”

He opened and then closed his hands. With a deep breath, he motioned to Midoriya’s bandaged ankle.

“I’ve gotten pretty good at this, right? I’m not that guy you saved in that alleyway anymore.” He gave him a crooked grin as he reached out to ruffle his hair in his hand. “I’ll take care of you for the rest of your short life.”

“...Why does everyone assume that I’m not going to live long?” Midoriya asked, the beginning of a frown pulling at his lips.

Aizawa’s grin turned more exasperated. “That’s what you’re going to focus on?”

“Oh! I mean, thank you for the offer but it’s really unnecessary,” Midoriya added, giving him a polite bow as best he could while sitting. “It’s not saying much while I’m like this, but I promise that I’m actually super reliable!”

The large hand, thin and boney, grabbed the top of his head, and with so much familiarity that Midoriya could cry, Aizawa frowned.

“Listen to me when I speak,” he growled out.

But, eventually, he was picked up, like a princess, and no matter how hard he tried to fight and splutter and argue, Aizawa’s smug grin only seemed to intensify.

-

“I can-”

“-If you’re going to tell me that you’re going to walk up the four flights of stairs to our apartment, I’m going to hit you. Then you can deal with a mild concussion and a sprained ankle,” Dabi said, cutting Midoriya off.

Midoriya closed his mouth. The florist rolled his eyes as he turned around for the young man to get on his back.

“Are you sure?”

“C’mon, the faster we get up, the faster we’re home.”

Still, Midoriya’s fingers hesitated, and Dabi wondered why. Was this something he could ask? He wanted to know though. He wanted to know everything there was to learn about Midoriya, even the things that the young man might not know about himself.

It was unfair to think that, when he wasn’t exactly open about himself. However, he would tell Midoriya anything he wanted to know, should he ever ask. Unfortunately, he didn’t think that Midoriya was the same. There were things about himself that he didn’t want to share. As much as he wanted to be understanding, he was too selfish and greedy to accept it so easily.

And other times, like when he realized that Midoriya knew someone who looks at him the same way he does, he felt like the ground was unsteady under his feet.

Grip tight on the man’s legs, he climbed up all four flights of stairs. He didn’t complain about the death grip on his shoulders, and hoped that one day, he would have earned that trust.

### **Day Trip with Class 1-A and 1-A**

### **Aoyama-kun**

“Monsieur Izuku,” Aoyama yelled out over the roar of the train roaring next to them, “Everyone calls me an idiot!”

Midoriya turned to stare at him, and frowned. His eyebrows furrowed but the blond shook his head to stop him from saying anything. The peaceful expression on his face was disconcerting, if only because it wasn’t a look that Midoriya saw often and when he had seen it…

He focused back in front of him.

This Aoyama wasn’t a shooting star, ready to burn bright in a final fanfare. This Aoyama wasn’t a hero-like the Aoyama that used to share snacks with him. This Aoyama wasn’t even in his class at school, but a school on the other side of the city.

“So I studied incredibly hard to get the scholarship that I have! And I studied as hard as I could to get in the Top 50 scores of my year! And I was Top 100 in the Nation!”

His words were lost in the rumble of the rails, as though to reflect how he felt.

“And I thought that I would be happy if I made it to the top. Or if I became rich and famous, and then, I could be the reason why my family came back together.”

The train left, and the silence seemed to ring in its absence.

“But there’s a lot of other things in the world that make me happy here too!” he said. He turned to Midoriya and smiled. “I went out and made friends. I went to concerts and cleaned a beach, got involved with gang fights and got into a motorbike race too.”

Next to him, green eyes welled with tears.

“You don’t have to cry for me anymore, Monsieur! I want to laugh together! If I ever see my parents again, I’ll tell them that I did just fine without them. If I never see them, that’s fine too, because I got a family right here.”

The blond stepped forward, his arms open wide as he faced the mountain scenery.

“Aoyama Yuga!” he screamed out to the forrest, “is here! And I am okay!”

He gave a bright grin, his teeth twinkling, as he took a brave step forward.

And Midoriya wondered if he’ll ever be that strong.

### **Enji tells Rei**

“...Rei,” he said suddenly, “Are you busy?”

His wife looked up from her book and tilted her head. Was it that surprising that her husband came to talk to her? Thinking on it, yes, it was. Enji tried not to let the shame creep up into the forefront of his mind.

“...There’s something that I wish to discuss with you.”

In that moment, Rei honestly thought that he was handing her divorce papers. She opened the manilla folder though, and stared at the information inside.

“...You looked into him? Isn’t this private information?” she asked, a familiar anger beginning to bubble up inside of her.

“Just read it,” Enji scowled at her. And then, after a moment of just glaring at each other, sighed.

Rei was never one to listen to him, but this wasn’t something that he couldn’t onto by himself anymore. His expression pinched, and he dipped his head forward in a show of his sincerity.

“Please.”

Rei frowned, it was rare for Enji to plead. It was rarer than him smiling.

She looked at the papers.

The part of her that respected Midoriya, the child that brought the smile back to Shoto’s face, wanted to throw the papers back in Enji’s face. The rest of her was stuck on the fact that Enji was pleading.

So she read it.

She read the file on “Midoriya Deku” and wondered who this could be talking about. It was a report on the violence in his life, the tallied analysis based off of the police reports conducted, and the compiled information from school information, and the accumulation of it all spelled out a tragedy. She looked at it and then at Enji. On another person, she would have said that Enji looked like he was in pain since learning about Midoriya, but she knew Enji too well. That expression on his face was foreign but not completely unrecognizable.

Enji had, at some point, decided to take responsibility for this boy. At some point in time, he looked at Midoriya and recognized and began to value him in his life. He had to, because Enji looked like he was disappointed in himself.

The entire situation, from learning about Midoriya Deku to Enji’s humanity, was bizarre. She almost wished that it wasn’t real.

“...What… what did you want me to say now that I read this?”

“I don’t know how to help him,” her husband said quietly. “Please help me.”

Rei looked at Enji, feeling just as lost as he looked.

The two of them together brought together a jagged family. The closer they tried to come together, and they tried, the harder they pricked and prodded against each other. As a result, they tore at each other until the only thing that was left was ten years of open, festering wounds.

Looking at each other, they had no idea where to even begin.

-

“Shouto,” Rei called out, “You know, you should invite Izuku-kun over for dinner again.”

Shouto looked at her, his blank expression twisting in confusion.

“Why?”

She winced.

“Aw, why not? I like the guy.”

Rei could have hugged Natsuo for his perfect timing.

“We usually go out with everyone for dinner,” Shouto said slowly, narrowing his eyes. “And he has work on the weekends.”

Rei’s smile turned even more strained.

“Really? What kind of work does he do?”

Shouto stared at her, his expression turning curious. “He doesn’t really talk about it. Does it matter?”

“No, I was just,” concerned, “curious!”

“I can ask.”

“Oh, and ask if Nii-chan can come with him,” Natsuo added. The others stared at him, “What? It’s reasonable.”

“Can Touya-nii and Otou-sama even be in the same room without something breaking?”

Yes, Rei said, because Midoriya is the Ultimate Ward against Evil in her heart, and family feuds.

“If Midoriya is there?” Natsuo arched an eyebrow.

“Don’t use my friend as a shield,” the youngest frowned back, his eyes narrowing down.

Todorokis’ were loyal. Or maybe it was just Shouto. Surely, the more they meet Midoriya, the better of an answer they would find.

### **2 years - Tamaki & Midoriya**

Tamaki figured that the kid was fucking stupid. What other word was there, to describe someone that could so blindingly believe him?

What other word was there, to describe the way this fucking idiot, after Tamaki emptied his wallet and threw him infront of a car and beat him an inch into his life, and still came trailing behind him with wide eyes? He hated this kid.

Kids like him, with eyes that bright and that clear, made him sick. Kids who never lost anything and had the whole world handed to him from the second he was born.

A kid that Tamaki would have really enjoyed fighting back-to-back with. Loyal to a fault and strong enough to keep up, they would have spent their days believing that they were invincible. Or maybe not, since Midoriya was someone that never forgot the people who showed him kindness, from the old lady running a candy store to the old man running a takoyaki stand who gave them freebies if they helped him set up for the evening shift. Tamaki wasn't really someone that his friends (followers?) could comfortably introduce to their parents (if they were on good enough terms to try), but Midoriya was someone that Tamaki's folks would have loved to have over. He just knew it.

"...If only I was born two years later..." he sighed.

Midoriya, surrounded by people and laughter, looked like he was having fun. Tamaki wondered if happiness was some infectious disease, because he could already feel his lips curling at the sight of it.

### **Graduation Viewing**

“Congratulations!” Midoriya laughed, presenting Tamaki with another bouquet of flowers to join the several others he had.

Tamaki stared at him, a bright grin stretching across his face. The pride and joy in his expression didn’t fit the image of Suneater he had in his head, but he thought it looked very nice.

“Thank you!” he said, genuine and completely different from the sarcastic senior that Midoriya met at the beginning of the school year. “But just because I’m graduating doesn’t mean I’ll be gone forever.”

Green eyes shined, and he wondered how the Tamaki back at home was doing. Obviously, he kept in touch with Mirio and kept tabs on Tamaki and Nejire, but how was he doing? Since he felt to become a hero, was he happy? Did he smile like this at his graduation?

He grinned at Tamaki.

For as long as he was here, he’ll keep an eye out. He’ll do better with the whole, ‘keeping in contact’ thing too. He’ll do his best, going Plus Ultra.

And then, hopefully, it’ll be easy for Deku-kun to fall into those habits and fall in love with the wonderful people the same way Izuku did.

-

Just like that Midoriya became a second year in high school for the second time.

### **High school second year-kun**

Midoriya’s hands trembled. It was probably really bad, that he was still here. How much more of Deku-kun’s life was he going to steal?

### **Future aspirations - Kaminari**

"Midoriya? You wanna get hot dogs or hamburgers?"

The group, as one, came to a standstill as they turned around, where Midoriya stared out across the street.

"...You guys go ahead," Midoriya said without looking at them, "I'll catch up-"

"The last time you said that, we didn't see you for three days," Shinsou deadpanned, "What are you looking at?"

"Ah, you guys don't have to-"

"Yeah but it's better if we go together," Kaminari called out, standing to look across the street. "What, the guy with his hood open?"

Midoriya stared at them, like he was seeing something worth smiling about, and Kirishima gave a tight smile back.

They weren't stopping to help someone in great need because they were good people. They were stopping because Midoriya stopped. If someone does enough 'good deeds' does that make them a 'good person'?

He didn't know, and he didn't really care.

Moreso than a good person, he just wanted to spend more time with Midoriya.

"Excuse me!" Midoriya yelled out when the light changed and he jogged up to the man standing with his car hood open. "Is everything okay?"

The man looked like he would rather die than talk to a bunch of teenagers. In fact, he doesn't blame him, since teenagers were the number one reason why people clutch onto their handbags and steer clear from the middle of the sidewalk.

But he must have been desperate.

"It's a dead battery," he said.

"The conbiencence store down the corner will have some jumper cables and batteries," Midoriya said, already ready with a solution. "I'll go grab it for you. Will you please watch my stuff while I'm gone?"

"O-Oh, you'd do that? Here, let me give you some-"

"No need for that," Kaminari said as he stepped forward. He made electricity crack between his index finger and thumb, "I got this one." He pointed at the driver's seat, "You mind starting it up when I ask you to?"

"O-Oh!" The driver stared, confused and looking like he wanted to protect, like he didn't believe them, and Kaminari didn't blame him.

For some strange reason, however, he did believe them.

Kaminari ignored the looks from his friends, and got to work.

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"Wow, I didn't realize you could do that with your quirk!" Kirishima said again as they settled down with their ice cream. "Damn, that was so manly!"

And Kaminari, who had once used his quirk to steal and ruin cars to help his family's towing service, shrugged back.

"I guess," he said.

"Kaminari-kun," Midoriya said, his voice gentle and gaze warm, "that guy was pretty happy, huh?"

Kaminari thought about the older man, the way his eyes lit up and how graciously and frantically he thanked the blond. He thought about how the man offered to pay them back and how Kaminari refused because he was uncomfortable with how happy the guy looked. Taking one from Midoryia's book, he just told the guy that it's what a hero would do. The look on the man's face was priceless, and Kaminari could understand why Midoriya said that so often.

Kaminari said it was cool. Iida gave him a wide grin. Mina whistled loudly. The sound of their laughter rang through the street and the nearyby adults threw them dirty looks for being so rowdy.

"Yeah," Kaminari agreed, thinking of the tears that had sprung up in the man's eyes as he thanked them again and again. "It was weird."

He rubbed his chest, unsure what the feeling was.

If he asked Midoriya, he would have gotten some cliche, feel-good answer. And more than getting an answer that would make him happy, Kaminari needed to decide if this was a feeling he wanted to feel again.

### **Future & Anchors - Hawks**

“I did what you asked,” Hawks spoke frankly, leaning against the giant windows of the corporate building. His wings made sure that the cold of the window didn’t permeate through his clothes, but it was just uncomfortable enough that he hated it. He couldn’t wait to leave.

“Oh? Already?”

“Yep, took some time, but I did it.”

He passed over Midoriya’s file.

“The anchor that you wanted me to find, the person or thing that would make sure I always come back after completing my missions,” he reported, “has been completed. Here he is.”

His handler took the file. She arched an eyebrow. It was amazing how much bullshit she could call out just by raising her eyebrow.

“This one? Truly? Hawks, if this is a joke…”

Hawks wasn’t surprised that he didn’t take him seriously. No matter how well he got his work done, his heart was never into it. He didn’t realize it then, but he understood it now.

“Right? Hard to believe, isn’t it?” he gave a breathless laugh, “he wouldn’t believe me either. I realized that it was fine.”

His handler’s jaw slackened a little bit. Hawks wasn’t too surprised.

“Hawks, this is a minor…”

“Hey, is that seriously the problem right now? All the things I’ve done, butthat’s what you’re going to nitpick.”

“A child,” his handler repeated.

“Don’t worry, I won’t lay my hands on him until he’s older,” Hawks said, “and I won’t do anything that he doesn’t like.”

Even though he couldn’t see it, he could feel the judgement in her eyes.

“It’s pure!” he shouted, despite himself, “My feelings are pure!”

-

“Ah, Hawks, welcome back!”

Keigo’s shoulders slacked as the door closed behind him.

“Oh?” his face split into a grin, “You’re back early. What’s the occasion?”

“Gas leak at the school,” Midoriya replied, “So the afternoon classes were cancelled.”

“Oh wow, that’s… exciting,” the blond said as he stepped into the kitchen. “No one was hurt?”

“Nothing. I think one of the senpais just said that.”

Hawks laughed at that. It sounded like something he would do. “Upset?”

“Hm? Uh… I guess. I was hoping that Sakaguchi-sensei would explain question six on the math homework again, but I figured I’ll ask tomorrow instead.”

“Wow, as responsible as always.” And by accident, he slipped out, “Going to school with you must be fun.”

Midoriya laughed back, “I think going to school with you would be more fun.”

Hawks felt his heart skip a beat. It was dizzying. He still wasn’t used to it. That laugh, that smile, the person who welcomed him home, it all rolled into the same conclusion for him.

Whatever happened, he would do it. Whatever they ordered, he’d faithfully do it. He would do just about everything if it meant that he would return to this. Birds, you see, they fly south when it gets cold, and they return when it warms up again. It’s instinctual. This was instinctual.

It was probably bad, but it wasn’t like Dabi or Shigaraki were here. He stepped to where Midoriya just finished setting the rice cooker, and wrapped his arms around his waist. Pulling his back against his chest, he buried his face into soft curls and inhaled deeply.

“...H-Hawks?”

The quiet sound, high-pitched and bright, burrowed deep inside of Hawks.

“Thanks, Deku.”

Birds always found their way back home.

### **F**