

A Leap Of Faith

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A Leap Of Faith

by [Deiohx](#)

Summary

Dirk strider's life is like an old car. close to falling apart, but still working.

Dirk strider had a simple life, he had three jobs that didn't pay enough and a cool younger brother to take care of. or at least, that's untill he met Jake English, his new nosy neighbor from across the hall.

a man who insist on making Dirk's life a tiny bit harder than it has to be, by forcing him to follow his dream.

Notes

give it a chance, thank you uwu

and so, it begins

Dirk didn't really remember much about his parents. He didn't remember their voices, or small things like his mom's perfume, or if his dad liked football. But he did remember feeling happy. Those moments at the dinner table sharing a new thing he learned, or watching a movie Friday night in the living room. The domestic happy moments of a family life.

Dirk was ten when they died and his big brother AD had to take care of them. Dirk doesn't understand how his older brother did it, he managed to keep it all together. It could have been easy taking care of three younger brothers.

Dirk had another big brother, Bro, his real name was Brodrick, but he was always called bro. And then there was Dave, the biggest joy in Dirk's young life. Dave was just a baby when it happened. Maybe that was good, he wouldn't miss their parents as much as AD, bro and he did. How can you miss a person you didn't know?.

AD made a good home for them. And things almost felt normal again after a while. Two years after their parents passed away, AD signed up for the military.

Five years after they passed away, so did AD.

Life became something else for Dirk. Their house stopped being a home - Bro started yelling and drinking more than before AD's death. The house became more of a filthy mess. Dirk tried to give Dave the same good moments he himself had experienced when he grew up. But Bro almost ruined it everytime, yelling at them to get out or to be quiet.

As they got older, Dirk started taking Dave over to Roxy's house when Bro started drinking, wanting to shelter Dave from as much damage as he could.

When Dirk was seventeen, he graduated High School. He packed his and Dave's things, and moved out. Dirk knew it was stupid trying to bring Dave with him, but he refused to leave Dave with Bro.

Dirk found a small, cheap apartment. It wasn't in the greatest of neighborhoods, but it was safe enough. He tried to go to college. He got a job at a diner, but it didn't pay enough, so he got another one as a phone salesman. it worked for a while. But eventually Dirk had to realize he couldn't juggle it all in the air at the same time. He dropped out of college and got another job at a small grocery store.

Dirk was okay with the way his life was. It worked, it was like an old car. Slowly decaying with rust, but it was still running. Nothing some duct tape couldn't fix.

It was a rather cold day, even though it was the start of April, it was still rather cold. It was pouring down over the streets of New York, rain water running down the busy roads and sidewalks into the sewers.

A car drove down the road and pulled up to park in front of an old apartment building. Dirk stepped out of the car, a smaller boy jumped out from the other side of the car holding a backpack. Dirk moved around the car to get his own bag wanting to get inside the building as fast as possible without getting soaked by the rain.

As he pulled out the shoulder bag, he looked over near the doors into the building. A moving truck was parked in front of it. A few boxes stood on the sidewalk getting soaked. Dirk locked his car, Dave and he started to walk to the doors.

A raven haired man, with glasses, held a box in his arms. It seemed rather heavy, judging from the exhaustion on his face .

“Excuse me champ, could you please hold the door for me?” The man called as Dirk opened it. Dave ran on in as Dirk held it open. “Yeah sure,” Dirk said and opened it further before the guy came to the door.

The guy smiled as he walked in “Why thank you, my good fellow.” Dirk walked behind him “Oh you’re welcome, don’t mention it.” he said. They walked together up the stairs. Dave was most likely already up by the door.

“So, you lived here long?” The stranger asked. Dirk spared a look at him “Huh? oh, yeah almost three years now.” Dirk held onto the railing as they climbed the stairs.

"It's a lovely building. I'm moving from the other side of town. Work related." The english man chuckled.

Dirk just nodded, as he got up to his own floor, he saw the door across from his own apartment stood open. Dave was talking to a kid in the door. “Oh! you must be my new neighbor.” The man smiled as Dirk pulled out his key.

Dirk nodded “Oh, yeah I suppose.” Dave looked over at Dirk with a big smile “Dirk, can I play with John?” He asked. Dirk guessed the other kid was John. He unlocked the door to their apartment “I don’t know, they seem pretty busy.” He said, not wanting to bother their new neighbor, but the man just chuckled “Oh it’s alright. honestly, if it wouldn’t be too much trouble, I could need some help carrying the last boxes up?” Dirk put his bag down “I think I have some time.” He said.

The man smiled wide and said “Splendid!” He put down the box in his arms “My name is Jake. Jake english.” He held his hand out for Dirk to shake. Dirk took it and gave it a shake “Dirk Strider.”

Dirk had planned to just help with a few boxes, but he ended up falling in a long conversation with Jake. He discovered quite a lot about him that evening. Jake was a police officer, he’d moved here for a job opening. John was his nephew, whose parents were working overseas. Dave and John apparently went to the same school.

Over the next few weeks after Jake moved in, they would often meet, sometimes they would both be coming home around the same time, walking together up the stairs. Sometimes they’d bump into each other on their way to get the mail. They ran into each other a few

times at the boys' school. They would talk about almost anything in those few minutes they had, and they'd almost always end their conversations laughing.

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The school bell rang. Dirk waited outside the classroom as it started to swarm out with kids. Dave smiled as he spotted him and walked up to Dirk. The kids were all loud as they went to find their parents or leave the school.

"Did you have a good day?" Dirk asked, looking down at his brother. Dave nodded, holding onto the straps of his backpack "Yeah. But we had math, so that was super boring."

Dirk and Dave were about to walk down the hall when a woman stopped them. "Mr. Strider. Excuse me." The woman spoke in a thick, broken Japanese accent. Her hair was pulled up in a tight bun.

Dirk turned to her "Hello Damara. What can I do for you?" Dirk asked. Damara gave a bit of a shady smile. "Last week I sent the kids home with a note, about the school trip to Atlantic City, and I couldn't help but notice you haven't paid for Dave to come." She tilted her head slightly to the side "And the deadline for payment is today."

Dirk shot her a look of confusion. "School trip?" He looked down at Dave, who apparently found his shoelaces more entertaining than the conversation.

"I must've misplaced the note." He said and looked back at Damara. "Oh, it's fine. I have an extra note with the signature you can sign, and you can just pay me now." She said.

Dirk nodded as she talked and found his wallet "Alright, how much is the trip?" He asked.

"\$100." Damara said, she almost liked the way Dirk froze up at that number. Dirk bit his lip as he looked down at the content of his wallet.

"I um.. I don't have that on me.." He said. He looked down at Dave "Can you go wait in the car?" He asked and handed him the car key. Dave nodded and took it before leaving them alone.

Dirk turned back to Damara "Can I owe you? I can get the money to Friday." he asked, hoping, but that disappeared as she frowned.

"We don't really do that here. Mr. Strider." she replied. Dirk looked back down at his wallet, as if it would magically make more money appear.

Dave was on his way to the door when he saw John waving at him. He smiled and waved back. John ran over "Hey Dave, I'm waiting for Uncle Jake to pick me up. Are you waiting for Dirk?" He asked.

Dave shook his head "Nah, he's talking to Miss Megido. She asked about the school trip." he said and looked down. "Aww man. I told you, you should've just given him the note." John said and clapped his shoulder.

“There you are John- oh hey ya Dave” Jake’s voice came from the school doors. “Is Dirk picking you up?” he asked, looking behind him in hopes of spotting the blonde. Dave pointed over his shoulder. “He’s talking to miss Medigo,” he repeated. Jake looked down the hall.

It looked like the two were discussing something important, but Dirk seemed extremely uncomfortable.

Dirk was glad that the people in the hall were starting to leave. He hated being put on the spot in the middle of public, especially when it was about money. “Please. can’t you go without \$100 till friday?” he pleaded.

Damara only grinned “Can’t you?”. Dirk was sure she was getting a kick out of this.

He clenched his fist in irritation, and tried to take calming breaths “I would, if i actually had \$100.” he said “Isn’t there something i can do for you to change your mind?”

Damara hummed, pretending to think, placing her hand on her cheek “Well, you could pay me in another way?~” she grinned as she looked him up and down, a dirty smile on her lips.

Dirk turned completely red with embarrassment, and he was about to fly completely off the handle, about to yell at her for even suggesting that when she knew damn well that he was gay. He might even have thrown some hands, if it weren’t for the gentle hand placed on his shoulder from behind.

“Excuse me.” Jake smiled, and Dirk had honestly never been so happy to see him interrupt a conversation. “ I couldn't help but overhear your conversation, and Dave told me Mr. Strider is in need of a tiny loan.” Jake smiled and looked between Damara and Dirk.

Damra looked pissed, but didn’t mention it. Jake just looked at Dirk as he pulled out his own wallet. “How much do you need?” he asked. Dirk would have declined Jake’s offer, but he could swallow his pride if it meant not having to lower himself to what was basically prostitution.

“52 bucks.” he said and looked down at his wallet. Jake just smiled and nodded as he pulled the right amount of money and handed it to Damara, Dirk gave her his own money right after. Damara took it and looked at Dirk “Have a good day, Mr. Strider.” She stopped herself to spare a glance at Jake. “Mr. English.” she gave him a slight nod before turning around to leave. Dirk didn’t wanna ask about the note and signature, he just wanted to leave.

“Dave and John are waiting by the cars” Jake pulled him out of his head. Dirk nodded “Okay.. I’ll pay you back on friday, and.. Thank you.” Dirk was grateful that Jake hadn’t just offered to pay the \$100, despite being more than able and willing to.

Jake smiled and rubbed his neck “You don’t have to thank me, and you really don’t have to pay me back. I like helping you.” he said, but Dirk just shook his head as they started to walk down the hall to leave the school.

“No, Jake, you paid over half of Dave's trip. I can’t just take your money like that.” Dirk said and opened the door, letting Jake walk out first. Jake chuckled and looked back at him

“Alright, if you really think you have to pay me back, how about you cook dinner on Friday instead?” he asked

Dirk blinked and thought it over “Uhhh.. sure. what would you like?” he asked, a slight blush on his cheeks. He looked over at the cars, Dave and John were chasing each other around them. Dirk and Jake had parked right in front of each other, the cars facing each other. What were the chances?

Jake smiled, pulling out his car key, a tiny keychain swaying from it “I’m in the mood for some spaghetti. How about that?” he asked

Dirk smiled wide “I can cook that.” They both called for the boys before getting in their cars. Jake smiled wide to Dirk from behind the wheel, and Dirk couldn’t help but smile back.

Jake drove off first. Dirk just looked after him. Dave looked up at Dirk from the passenger seat “Do you like him?” Dirk blushed madly.

“What? No!” He said.

Dave didn’t look convinced “Mhm, sure...” Dirk frowned “I don’t. And don’t think you’re out of the woods just yet. Why didn’t you tell me about this school trip?” He asked, knowing that Dave hadn’t mentioned it even once.

Dave looked away “You seemed so stressed about money... I didn’t want to stress you more.” he said. Dirk sighed and reached his hand over to pat Dave’s head “It’s okay. But you shouldn’t worry about that. That’s grownup stuff.” Dirk started and turned the key, starting the car.

Dave nodded “I know. But you work so hard... And I don’t have to go. I’m sure I’ll live if I miss a dumb trip.”

Dirk smiled “Nonsense, of course you’re going. Might give me some adult time.” he joked.

Dave looked offended but laughed “Oh shut up. You love me.”

a gentle touch

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Friday night, Jake and John stood outside the Strider's 'sweet abode'. John looked up at Jake, who held a bottle of diet coke. Jake was dressed in a black t-shirt and a green button up, which was open.

"Is this a date?" he asked with a smirk, and Jake immediately turned red.

"What? Nonsense- of course not." Jake laughed nervously, knocking on the door.

"Your jeans are washed. And you're wearing your clean sneakers. Do you like him?" John pointed out; his smile widening as he tilted his head a tad to the side.

"Just a moment!" came Dirk's voice from the other side of the door. Jake tried to laugh it off.

"John, don't be silly. I mean, do I find him attractive?" Jake took a deep breath and stared to the side "Boy do I.. And he's great company. But I'm not in love with him."

John chuckled "No one said anything about love."

Jake was about to defend himself, again, when the door opened. Dave smiled wide "S'up, John. Hey Jake. Dirk's in the kitchen, making some sick spaghetti." He pushed his glasses up and shot a short nod towards the two of them, followed by a chuckle. "I can hear you laugh at me Davey!" Dirk called from the small kitchen space.

Dave stepped to the side to let Jake and John inside. John kicked off his shoes before he and Dave ran to Dave's room, hoping to get some time to play before dinner. Jake smiled and walked inside.

Despite both living on the same floor, he could actually see how Dirk's apartment was smaller. not by a lot, but Jake had two bedrooms, while Dirk only had one. He smiled as he came to the living room. Just like Jake's apartment it had an open kitchen-living room. Between the living room area and kitchen was a round dining table with four chairs. It was already set with plates and glasses. A salad had been quickly tossed together.

Jake looked at the living room area. There was a small TV on a small dresser, a katana hanging on the wall over it. A few shelves with dvd's and books. A small couch rested up against the wall on the opposite side of the living room. A comforter was folded together with a pillow on top of it, placed neatly on the floor between the window and couch. Next to the tv was a door, a drawing of a dinosaur and the name ' Davey', told him that was most likely Dave's room

Jake turned his head to the side to see Dirk's back to him. He was wearing the same pair of jeans and shirt as he always saw him in. Jake decided to look around the kitchen before he would accidentally check out Dirk's jeans a moment too long. It was a bit messy, tomato sauce splattered on the table and a bit up the wall, different notes and drawings hung on the fridge

with colorful magnets. Dirty knives, cutting boards and spoons took up the sink space, or the counter space next to it.

“Hey, I hope you're hungry, I usually only make dinner for two, and I think I might've made a bit too much.” Dirk said as he looked over his shoulder. He was stirring in a pot a bit quickly, trying to avoid burning the food.

Jake smiled and held up the bottle of soda “Oh, that's fine. I brought soda. I would have brought wine, but Dave and John are here and I didn't know which kind you fancy.” he said. Dirk smiled.

“You didn't have to, but thanks.” he turned his attention back around to watch what he was doing.

Jake went to put the soda on the table “Can I help with anything?” he offered and looked back at Dirk. the blonde just shook his head “Eh, appreciate it, but not really. The food is almost done.” he informed him.

Jake just nodded with a smile “It's a nice place you have- Woah. Is that a real sword?” he asked and pointed at the katana. Dirk smirked and chuckled lightly as he responded with a short “It's a real sword, but not japanese.”

Jake hummed in affirmation and muttered a “Still very cool.”

Dirk carried the pot with the spaghetti and red sauce over to the table. Jake hummed, it smelled delicious. Dirk smiled “I hope it tastes okay, I think I burnt the bottom of it.” he said with a light blush, as he moved to knock on Dave's door to get the boys for dinner.

Jake smiled “Oh don't worry, i'm sure it's great”.

dinner went along a bit quickly. John and Dave talked a lot as they ate, both eager to share what they had seen and learnt in school. Dave was excited to finally have a new person to tell all his dinosaur facts to.

After dinner, the boys were quick to run back to Dave's room, leaving Jake and Dirk to have some grown up time.

Jake and Dirk could hear the boys' laughter from Dave's room. Dirk and Jake both smiled. Jake took another sip of his cola, “Your boy Dave sure is a smart fella.” Dirk smiled and nodded “Yeah. I'm hella proud of him. He's definitely gonna do something with science someday- God knows he keeps talking my ear off about all his dino facts.” he complained, but there wasn't a trace of actual annoyance in his voice.

Jake nodded “Yeah.” he tilted his head to the side, looking down at his glass containing the brown sugar drink “Now, not to invade your privacy, or poke onto a touchy subject, but if I may ask.” He eyed Dirk carefully. “What happened to his mother? Bad break up or?”

Dirk looked puzzled at him, trying to understand what he meant about break up. Dirk broke down laughing as it finally clicked for him. Jake just gave a nervous chuckle to Dirk's

reaction. Dirk had to take his shades off to whip away a tear before he finally answered Jake

“You think Dave is my son?” Jake gave a short and careful nod. Dirk smiled, shaking his head “No, no, um, he’s my younger brother.” Dirk explained as he pulled out his wallet to find a picture of his family.

Jake leaned closer to get a better look of the picture. Dirk pointed at a young boy on the picture “That’s me, and that’s Dave” he said and pointed at the baby his mom was holding. Jake smiled “And I assume those are your brothers?” he asked as a finger pointed at AD and Bro. Dirk smiled and packed his wallet away again.

“Yeah, AD and Brodrick,” he confirmed. Jake smiled as he ran his thumb over the side of his glass “Where are those folk at now?” Dirk seemed to get a bit quieter, not sad, but Jake could see his shoulders seemed to get heavier.

“Brodrick is out of the picture, and AD passed away when I was about sixteen. Military service” Dirk shot out. Jake frowned “Oh, I’m so sorry.” Dirk shrugged “Don’t be. It’s not like you did it” he took a sip of his own soda. “He was awesome. He died like the hero he was.” he said and then smiled “He used to buy pizza for us whenever he came back home. And he’d tell us stories of what he saw, the good stuff like jokes with his friends, not that serious crap you see on tv.”

Jake leaned his head in his hand, listening as Dirk started to talk about AD, all the different stories and things he had experienced with him as a kid. It was clear as day that Dirk admired AD, both as a brother and a hero.

Jake smiled “He sounds like a swell champ.”

Dirk smiled “He was the swellest of champs.” he chuckled “I wish I could be even half as good a brother for Dave as he was.” he said and took another sip of his drink. Jake frowned slightly “You seem like an amazing guardian to me?”

Dirk shook his head “I do take care of Dave, but.. I work so much, and I don't have time to come to the big things. like school play, baseball games or science fair.. Seeing AD at those things meant the world to me, and I wish I could be there for Dave like that.” he said. Jake smiled “I’m sure he knows you’d be there if you could.” he said and reached over to squeeze Dirk’s hand.

Dirk blushed slightly and smiled “Thanks” he said. For a moment they just looked into each other’s eyes, Jake could see the orange color over the brim of the shades on Dirk’s face.

Dirk was the first one to look away “Wow, I sure know how to kill the mood.” he chuckled “Let’s talk about something else.” he said and looked around the apartment “Have you uhh always wanted to be a cop?” That was a good subject, right?.

Jake seemed fine with the change of subject and smiled “Yeah, ever since I was a kid.” he said. Dirk grinned “Let me guess, you wanted to become a cop because of ‘Die hard’?” He asked.

Jake laughed and shook his head “Nope. It was actually because of ‘lethal weapons.’” he explained “But how did you know it was because of a movie?” He asked.

Dirk pointed over at the shelves of DVD’s on Dirk’s wall, as if they were Jakes “When I went to help you move in some of your boxes, I noticed you have a ton of movies, a lot of them seem old school. They also seem to be kept in great condition, meaning movies mean a lot to you, and might have played a role shaping your career.” he said and shrugged “That, and old cop movies are pretty good.”

Jake has an amused grin on his face “Wow, that’s very.. Interesting. How did you do that?” He asked. “Do what?” Dirk asked. Jake smiled “That thing, have you been analyzing me?”

Dirk gave a laugh “My teacher used to tell me to read between the lines. He meant with books, but you’d be surprised what you can deduce if you just listen and look around.” he said.

Jake smiled “Alright detective, I doubt your big dream was being a waiter at a dinner, so what did you wanna be as a kid?”

Dirk drank the last of the cola in his glass and went to refill it half way “Court advocate for kids.” That surprised Jake “Oh? That’s a very adult job?” He said.

Dirk nodded “Yup. I’ve always been really mature.” he grinned and winked. Making Jake chuckle. “I did try tho, but I couldn’t balance school, work and taking care of Dave, so I had to drop out.” Dirk said.

Jake nodded “That’s understandable. How far were you?” He asked

Dirk didn’t even have to think “Third year. I only needed one more year and I would have had my criminal justice degree.” he said.

Jake smiled excitedly “You should consider finishing it, if you only need one year it would be easy.” he said, and Dirk couldn’t help but laugh. The blonde shook his head “Pfft! Good one Jake. And maybe I’ll buy a new car too.” he chuckled.

Jake frowned softly and tilted his head “No, I’m serious Dirk, You should go for it.” Dirk just shook his head, more serious this time. “Jake, no, I don’t have time for school. I have 3 jobs I need to do to keep things running.” he twirled his thing at the ceiling to refer to the room they were sitting in.

Jake fronwed, he wouldn’t budge “But Dirk, I really think you should-”, But Dirk cut him off. “Can we please talk about something else?” he asked and then looked over at the TV “Got it. Let’s watch a movie.”

Jake decided to give up on the matter for now. He didn’t want to kill the mood by upsetting Dirk. He nodded and smiled “That sounds like a swell idea”.

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The movie was playing on a small tv. Dave and John's laugh could still be heard on the other side of the wall. Dirk leaned his head in his hand as he listened to Jake point out small details about some of the scenes. They both seemed on edge, none of them completely sure why. But the 20 centimetres between them didn't seem to ease up their nervousness.

Dave opened the door into the living room "Dirk, do we have any popcorn?" he asked from the door opening. Dirk got up "I think so. Hang on, I'll go look."

He walked to the kitchen area and started to look through the cupboards, moving cans and boxes around to look in the back. Jake and Dave both watched him closely. "Oh hell yeah" Dirk grinned. "Language" Jake mumbled.

Dirk showed two packs of bacon flavored popcorn "We got the goods". Dave smiled and whooped along with Dirk as his big brother opened the microwave and pulled the plastic off the two packages. It didn't take more than 3 minutes for the popcorn to be ready. Dirk poured one bag into a bowl and handed it to Dave.

"Thanks man." he said before he closed the door again. Dirk put the other bag in a bowl for Jake and him. He sat down with the bowl in his lap, sitting closer to Jake now.

Jake raised an eyebrow at the slightly red popcorn "Good golly what is that?" he asked and pointed at the bowl in Dirk's lap. "Bacon popcorn" Dirk said and put one in his mouth "It's good".

Jake laughed with a frown "Where in the world did you find such a thing?" Dirk popped another popcorn into his mouth "There's a weird store down the corner, cheap, but foreign. I think these are from Germany or something." he held up a tiny red popcorn "Don't knock it till you try it." he then threw it into his own mouth

Jake looked at him and the bowl with a raised eyebrow. He then reached for the bowl and decided to try it. He chewed slowly, afraid it would make him gag because of the flavor. Dirk watched him with a smile.

"That's... actually pretty good," Jake said and took some more "Remind me to have you show me that store." Dirk chuckled before he proceeded to eat some more of the bowl's sticky content "I will."

They kept quietly commenting and telling jokes about the movie. At one point Dirk leaned his head on Jake's shoulder, the nervousness in the air seemed to fade away. The bowl was almost empty.

Jake moves his head and accidentally bumped it against Dirk's, knocking to his shades a bit. "Oh sorry" he said and moved to try and help Dirk move his shades. Dirk chuckled "It's okay, don't worry about it"

Jake carefully pulled the shades from Dirk's face. He blushed slightly as they looked into each other's eyes. "You, um, you have pretty eyes." Jake whispered, making Dirk blush.

“You too,” Dirk said under his breath. They both slowly leaned in closer to each other, a little hesitant to actually close the distance. But Dirk moved the rest of the way after a second. It was a gentle kiss, neither of them really moved.

They broke the kiss only for their lips to meet again a second after it ended. Jake took the bowl of popcorn out of Dirk’s lap and placed it on the coffee table, without breaking their kiss. Both of them tasted like bacon.

Dirk moved his hands up to the back of Jake's neck, gently cupping his head as he deepened the kiss. Their tongues moving against each other. Jake placed a hand on Dirk’s chest and carefully pushed him down on the couch, following his lips. Dirk let Jake move over him, his arms resting on Jake’s shoulders.

Jake moved one of his hands down Dirk’s side, over his hip and up his thigh. A slight shiver ran down Dirk’s spine as he felt Jake’s hand move his knee up and over Jake’s hip.

They finally broke the kiss, looking at each other with half lid eyes, before both of them started giggling and chuckling like teenagers. Jake buried his face against Dirk’s neck. Both of them were completely red in the face.

Jake smiled as he finally pulled his head away from Dirk’s neck “Hi there.” he laughed nervously. Dirk smiled “Hey.” He leaned up again and Jake took the hint and kissed him again. Just softly and sweetly kissing each other.

It didn’t go much further, since Dirk heard the telltale sign of someone coming out of Dave’s room. It was not something a lot of people could just pick up, but after living in the apartment so long, Dirk could tell by squeak of a floor board before Dave would even touch the door handle.

Three seconds before Dave opened the door, Dirk pushed Jake off him and to the other side of the couch. Both of the adults were red in the face and their hair a tiny bit messy.

The boys didn’t say anything about it. John stood next to Dave, who yawned. “Jake, can we go home soon?” John asked and fought to stay awake.

Jake nodded and stood up from the couch with a bit of force “Yep, yep, of course we can buddy.” he said. He looked at Dirk and smiled “Thank you for dinner, it was nice.” he said. Dirk nodded quickly “Yeah, it was chill. Let’s do it again sometime.”

If it was even possible, Jake blushed even harder.
“I’d love to”

Chapter End Notes

trust me, it's a slow burn. just wait and see

dinner for two

Chapter Notes

the drama is on the rise

The next few weeks Dirk and Jake ate dinner together almost every friday, with Dave and Jake there as well. When the boys were busy playing in their rooms, Jake and Dirk almost couldn't keep their hands off each other. Lips moving against each other, instead of actually paying attention to cooking.

But even though they made out at every chance they got, they still hadn't really talked about what it meant. They both wanted to ask the other out, but were too worried the other didn't feel exactly the same. They didn't kiss all the time though, sometimes when they were watching a movie or just talking, Dirk would lean a bit closer to Jake, or Jake would put his arm around Dirk or hold his hand.

But soon the weekend for Dave and John's field trips rolled around. Jake offered to cook dinner for Dirk. It would be their first dinner completely alone together.

Jake was preparing a nice pair of chicken breasts. The table was set, and Jake might have brought a wine bottle, since it was just the two of them. It knocked on the door. Jake called over his shoulder as he put the hot dish down on the table "It's open!"

Dirk walked in and smiled "Hey, I hope I'm not late" he said. He had had some problems finding a nice shirt. It wasn't a date, so he didn't want to overdress, but he also didn't want to just show up in his old t-shirt. He decided on a normal plain dress shirt, leaving the top button unbuttoned.

Jake smiled "Oh no, dinner just got ready." he said and took his oven mittens. he walked over and laid them on the kitchen counter, and then leaned in the peak Dirk's lips.

Dirk chuckled "How about we eat before we start that?" he smiled. Jake smiled and rubbed his neck "Yeah, good idea. I'm pretty sure the food would be cold by the time I'm done with you~" Jake looked at him with half lid eyes, his intent clear. The statement made a shiver run down Dirk's spine and he blushed "Oh I bet~"

Jake smiled and looked back over at the table "Well, take a seat." he said "I just need the glasses." Dirk smiled and went over to what had become his usual spot at the table. He smiled at how nice it all looked. He could tell Jake had cleaned up around the apartment.

Jake put down the glasses and smiled at him as he took the wine bottle, he had a bottle opener in his other hand. "I decided to go with a white wine for today's occasion." Dirk leaned his head in his hand as he watched him screw the bottle opener into the cork "Oh? How fancy."

Jake grinned as he tried to pull the cork from the bottle, but it was tighter than expected. He tried not to lose face as he changed his grip on the bottle. The cork wouldn't budge.

"Oh death's head upon a mop-stick" Jake mumbled and looked down at the bottle now. Dirk snorted and laughed as he watched Jake struggle. It was cute seeing a guy try so hard to impress him.

Dirk decided to take pity on him and held his hand out.

"Here, let me give you a hand with that." Jake tugged on it one last time before he sighed and gave it over to Dirk.

Dirk took the bottle around its neck and grabbed the bottle opener in his own hand. Jake blushed as he saw the muscles under Dirk's shirt flex a bit, as Dirk pulled on the bottle opener.

It took a good 30 seconds before the cork came out with a pop. Dirk chuckled and laid the bottle opener down as he handed the bottle back to Jake.

"There you go."

Jake took the bottle, trying to save himself from the embarrassment. He took Dirk's glass and started to fill it "Thank you, my knight in shining armor~" Jake teased. Dirk chuckled and leaned back in his chair "Oh please, I'm a goddamn prince." he winked

Jake laughed with him and handed him his glass before filling his own glass. Once full, Jake sat down and held it up "To kid free night?" Dirk raised his own glass and clinged it against Jake "To kid free night."

Jake and Dirk continued to talk and laugh as they started to dig into the food Jake had cooked. it was nice and relaxing. They flirted a bit here and there, told a few jokes they'd heard through their day and other small things. But Dirk could tell there was something Jake wanted to tell. The raven haired almost looked like a puppy waiting for him to throw the ball.

Jake put his glass down "I have some exciting news for you." he said. Dirk chuckled, he knew it. he put another piece of chicken in his mouth "What is it?"

Jake smiled, overly excited to finally break the news to Dirk. he took a breath and then said "I signed you up for the next semester to complete your degree!" Dirk choked on his food. He dropped his fork and hit his chest as he coughed.

when Dirk could finally breathe again, he yelled "You did what?!" Jake blinked, not expecting him to yell "Um.. I signed you up for a semester?" Dirk placed both hands on his head "Why?!"

"Um, I thought you would be happy?" Jake tried, his excitement was completely gone now. Dirk frowned "Why? I told you I didn't want to go back to school! You can't just sign me up for stuff. I'm pretty sure that's illegal." Dirk rubbed his temples "Fuck, Jake, that's a dick move." he sighed

“Dirk I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to upset you.” Jake tried to reach over to touch Dirk, but Dirk slapped his hand away. “Upset me? Jake, I’m furious. You impersonated me!” Dirk stood up.

“I told you I didn’t want to go back to school. I mentioned that degree once and you decided I had to go back?!” Dirk yelled. Jake stood, trying to make it better. This really killed the mood.

“Dirk I’m sorry, I know it wasn’t really that good of an idea in hindsight, but-“ Jake tried but Dirk cut him off “In hindsight?! Not a single part of you thought to maybe, I don’t know, ask me?!” He asked. He covered his eyes with one hand, his other hand shaking a bit with rage.

“I have to go, I can’t deal with this,” Dirk said and turned to leave. Jake frowned sadly and followed him.

“What, no Dirk, let’s please just talk about it?” He suggested as Dirk walked out of his apartment and into his own.

The only answer he got was a door in the face and the sound of a lock

Jake sighed and mumbled “Or later maybe..”

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It had been three weeks, and Dirk still refused to talk to Jake. The blonde would ignore him when he called and refuse to look at him. It was hurting Jake a bit, but he understood why. He just wished he could apologize.

Jake was walking up the stairs when he heard it. It was muffled and not completely understandable, but it was clear someone was yelling upstairs. He kept climbing the stairs, as the yelling got more clear.

“You owe me that goddamn money, so just hand it over!”

“I don’t owe you shit! If anything you should be paying me!”

That was Dirk’s voice. Jake frowned with concern and looked around the corner of the stairs and down the hall.

Right outside Dirk’s apartment, stood a tall blonde guy. If Jake hadn’t been wearing his glasses, he would almost have thought it was a clone of Dirk.

They had the same kind of blonde curly hair. Both of them had their cheeks covered in freckles. But the other guy was almost a head taller than Dirk, and his nose was colored in an ugly red skin tone, and based on the stink of alcohol, that clearly wasn’t because of a cold.

“You don’t talk to me that fuckin’ way.” the man growled at Dirk and grabbed his arm. Dirk tried to pull it away, but the other man had a firm grip on him.

Jake could see the panic in Dirk’s eyes as he tried to get him off “Let go of me!” The guy just pulled him closer “Give me my fuckin’ money first.”

Jake had to step in.

Jake stepped up into the hallway. He coughed to get their attention as he walked closer. His badge was on his belt and he made sure that both his badge and gun was on visible display to the stranger.

“Excuse me. Is there a problem here?” He asked and looked at Dirk. The other man glared at Jake, but remained quiet as he looked down at the badge.

He let go of Dirk’s arm “No officer.” Dirk ripped his arm away from him. He kept looking between Jake and the man in front of him.

Jake stood tall as he tried his best to intimidate the other man “Then I suggest you leave, since it’s clear Mr. Strider doesn’t want you around at the moment.”

The guy’s glare deepened and he looked back at Dirk, pointing at him “This ain’t over.” Dirk glared as he told the guy to fuck off. The guy cursed under his breath as he walked down the hall, past Jake, and down the stairs.

Jake looked back at Dirk when he couldn’t hear the guy anymore “Are you okay?”

Dirk stood still by his door, holding onto the arm, that the stranger grabbed. Jake was worried Dirk might have been hurt by the way he was rubbing the sore skin. Dirk looked away and said “I didn’t need your help..”

Jake knew Dirk was still mad at him, but he hoped he had at least calmed down a bit after having a few weeks alone.

“I know, but I couldn’t just stand and watch.” Jake said and rubbed his neck.

“Why not? I never asked you to stick your nose in my business. If I wanted your help I would have asked for it.” Dirk glared, clearly not referring to what had just happened anymore. Dirk ran a hand through his hair “...But thank you..” he said before he went back into his apartment. leaving Jake to wonder what exactly the stranger had wanted with Dirk, besides money.

Was Dirk in debt?

Or was it more criminal?..

a bad idea in hindsight

Chapter Notes

Roxy is a treasure and i tried to write her as such

The boys' laughter was loud in Jake's apartment, John had invited Dave to play over, since Dirk wouldn't be home till late. Jake was happy to agree, hoping it would give him a chance to talk with Dirk, without ignoring him. A cheery knock played on the door. "Just a moment." Jake turned down the heat of the stove and went to open the door. He expected it to be Dirk, coming to pick Dave up. He was already mentally preparing his apology, but it wasn't Dirk.

He was met with another blonde, a girl, or rather a woman. She was almost as tall as Jake, and had a cheery smile. She leaned in a bit and asked "Excuse, you wouldn't know where I can find a small boy named Dave? He lives across the hall."

Jake blinked "Oh, um, sorry for my rudeness, but who are you?" he asked. Jake didn't want to risk anything after what happened in the hall with that stranger bothering Dirk.

The woman didn't seem offended at all. She just smiled "Oh, of course, I'm Roxy, I'm looking after Dave till Dirk comes home. It's movie night." she held up a movie, it had a pink cover with a tiny green alien in a pink dress and a boy with a big head, the title read 'Invader Zim: Enter the Florpus.'

Jake frowned "Umm, okay? Dave is playing with my nephew at the moment. And I think Dirk would have mentioned it if he had plans." he said and pulled out his phone "Do you mind if I call and check with him?"

Roxy chuckled "Not at all."

Jake dialed Dirk's number and waited for him to pick it up. it only took two beeps before Dirk picked up, he sounded tired "Yes? What is it Jake? I'm at work." Jake tried to sound just a bit happy "Hello Dirk. um, I have a woman outside my door saying she's supposed to babysit Dave till you come home. Something about a movie night?" Jake already knew Roxy was telling the truth by the tone Dirk cursed.

"Oh fuck. Everything's cool. Could you hand her the phone?" Dirk's voice asked, it was loud enough for Roxy to hear, so she held out her hand. "Yeah sure." he said and handed her the phone.

Roxy held it up to her ear and smirked "Are you standing up on me?" her voice held a playful tone. Jake could hear Dirk apologize, "I'm so, so sorry Roxy. I completely forgot, can we reschedule till next friday?"

Roxy smiled “It’s alright Di stri, don’t go bonking your head.” she said and looked at the movie in her hand “Guess you just have to wait another week to see this masterpiece.” They kept talking for another two minutes before Roxy handed the phone back to Jake.

Jake took it and held it up to his ear again “Thank you for calling me. Have a nice day.” then Dirk hung up. Jake sighed and put it back in his pocket. He smiled to Roxy “Well, you already came all this way, why not stay for dinner?” he offered.

Roxy smiled and stepped into the apartment “Don’t mind if I do.” she said, and took off her shoes. Jake smiled and went back to the stove and turned the patties over. He put two more onto the pan for Roxy and two more buns in the oven. Roxy smiled and stepped in “I can set the table?” she offered.

“That would be great, thank you.” Jake smiled and pointed at the cupboard “The plates up there and the glasses are there.” he said. Roxy was pretty fast, with Jake’s help on finding the different things, the table was set pretty quickly. she leaned up against the sink and watched Jake cook.

Jake started up a conversation “So, you’re not upset Dirk forgot you, right?” he asked, and kicked himself, that sounded awfully rude. Roxy just chuckled “Not really. I kinda planned for him to forget. I didn’t remind him of it for the past two weeks like I normally would. God knows Dirk can’t remember what he ate for lunch when he works so much.”

Jake frowned, confused “Wait? You wanted him to forget?” he looked over at her “Why?” she gave a look of mischief and grinned “Because I wanted an excuse to meet you.” she said and booped his nose.

The oven beeped and Roxy smiled “I’ll get the boys.” Jake just looked at her leave, he was beyond confused. He put the patties on a plate and took the buns out of the oven and set it all down on the dinner table. Dave and John sat next to each other, still talking.

Roxy sat down next to Dave and smiled.

“Oh it smells great.” Jake sat down on the last chair and looked at Roxy as the others grabbed a bun and one of the patties for their burger.

He cleared his throat “Can I ask, why do you wanna meet me?” he asked. Roxy reached for the salad. “Well, I always love to meet people, especially those able to grab Dirk Strider’s attention,” she grinned. Dave snickered a bit too as he drowned his bun in ketchup and mustard.

“Attention? Oh, you mean about the college thing?” Jake grabbed a bun “Yeah, in hindsight that was a pretty bad move..”. Roxy smiled “Oh it was. And yet Dirk still talks about you.” that grabbed Jake’s attention “He talks about me? In a good way or a bad way?”

“He won’t shut up about you.” Dave said as he closed his burger. Roxy nodded.

“Yeah, at the moment he’s mostly cursing you out, but he can’t say your name without

smiling. Makes it really hard for him to be pissed at you.” she winked and closed the bun on her burger and started to eat.

Jake grabbed the ketchup bottle “Wait, so you’re not here to give me a lecture on me signing him up for that semester as well?” he asked. Roxy laughed, she threw her head back, the blonde curls bouncing a bit. “Lecture you? I wish I had balls like you. I’ve tried to convince Dirk to go back to school ever since he dropped out.” she took another bite “Like, respect man. Bad move for sure, but still, respect.”

Jake smiled, he was glad he wasn’t the only one sharing his opinion. But he couldn’t help the sad smile on his face as he started to eat “Thanks, too bad I blew any chance I might have had with him.”

Roxy gave a knowing look “Well, it might not be completely blown up yet.” she suggested. Jake shook his head “Don’t give me hope. Dirk barely looks at me and he only really talks to me if it’s about Dave.. It’s over, I’ll forever be the nosey neighbor across the hall.”

John looked at Dave “I live with that:”

“You just need to show him how charming you are and all the things he fell for before you fucked up, and help fix this mess.” Roxy shrugged and finished her first burger. Jake blushed “So, you really think he likes me?”

Roxy grinned “I’ve known Dirk since we were 12, and trust me. I know all the signs of a lovestruck Dirk.” she said.

Jake thought it over “And you really think it would work? If I tried to make it better?”

Roxy laughed “Bitch please, I have a Ph.d. in Dirk Strider psychology.” she said and winked at him “He’s ready to be swiped off his feet.” she winked.

Jake thought for a moment and looked at Dave “And you’d be okay with that? If I ask your brother out?” Dave shrugged “Do I look like a king or something, why are you asking me?” he took another bite “You’re pretty cool, Dirk can do whatever he wants to, why should I have a say?”

Jake blinked as Roxy started laughing. “Um, I take that as a yes.” Jake said. Roxy carefully dried a tear away without running her eyeliner. Roxy smiled “Okay, now, how do we fix this mess?” she asked.

Jake thought “Yeah.. How?”

She shrugged “I don’t know.” and took a bite of her second burger. Jake frowned “You’re not a lot of help.”

Roxy just giggled and winked “I know.”

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Dave climbed the stairs, holding the key and the carton of apple juice in his arms, looking up at Dirk, who was holding two full grocery bags, as they came up to their floor.

“Why aren’t we eating over at Jake’s place anymore?” he asked. Dirk couldn’t really look down at Dave, afraid he’d drop the bags “Because Jake is a stupid poppyhead, that sticks his nose in things he shouldn’t.” Dirk said. Dave just nodded, getting his key ready as they walked down the hall “Does that mean I can’t play with John anymore?”

Dirk frowned “What? No, of course you can play with John.” he said. Dave unlocked the door for him “But don’t you have beef with him?”

“I have beef with almost everyone. But just because I have beef with someone, doesn’t mean it has to affect your relationships.” Dirk said as Dave opened the door. And as if the world couldn’t be sweeter to Dirk, Jake had to open his own door right then.

“Dirk, please, can we talk?” Jake’s voice made Dirk freeze up a bit. Dave just walked inside, kicking off his shoes. Dirk walked in after him “I’m kinda busy, Jake.”

Jake didn’t seem to take the hint “Just 5 minutes, please Dirk.” he said. Dirk sighed and hung his head “Five minutes. Outside” he said and placed the grocery bags on the counter “Dave, you start putting the things away,” Dave nodded “Sure thing, bro.” Dirk walked back out into the hall and closed the door. He crossed his arms over his chest, waiting for Jake to start.

Jake took a deep breath “I know you’re still mad at me, and I know I stepped over the line.” Dirk scoffed “It’s barely a line to you anymore. It’s a goddamn dot.” Jake nodded and looked at his shoes, “know, and I’m sorry. I’ll admit, I have a tendency to get overly excited about some ideas, and I see now that this was a bad move on my part. But I do think you should think it over. I mean, this is your dream.”

Jake looked hopeful at Dirk “Don’t you at least want to try?”

Dirk sighed and moved a hand up to his hair “Of course I want to. but I already tried, and I couldn’t make it work.” he looked up at Jake “I don’t have the time. Between work and Dave, I can’t go to school too. And that’s not even mentioning my money problem. I can’t pay for those classes.” he sighed and shook his head.

But Jake didn’t back down. He just smiled more “I can help you. I could help you cover some of your expenses?” Dirk frowned “I don’t want your money! And I still wouldn’t have time.”

Jake just kept pushing him. Shoving Dirk in a corner he didn’t like. “Then quit one of your jobs? Then maybe you could go?” It was like walking in a god damn circle with Jake. Dirk hated feeling pity. And right now that was all he could feel, and it made him furious.

“With what money?!” Dirk yelled, he ran a hand through his hair “My college fund? Oh why don’t we check?” He asked sarcastically and pulled out his wallet from his back pocket, and pulled out the crumbled bills and coins into his palm “I have exactly 16 dollars and 45 cents. And that’s not just in my wallet, that’s all I have for the rest of the month.” Dirk held the hand out, he didn’t know if it was to make a point or make Jake check for himself. “I work three jobs, Jake. I’m scraping money from anywhere I can, and what little money I can spare goes straight to Dave’s college fund... So that he doesn’t have to live like I do..”

A silence fell between them. Dirk shoved the money back into his wallet and sighed. He took his shades off and covered his eyes.

Jake bit his lip “I’m sorry Dirk, I.. I wanted to do something nice for you.” he said, trying to cheer up his friend.

Dirk shook his head and moved his hand away from his face “No.. It’s not nice, Jake. At least before I could tell myself that I probably just wasn’t fit for law. But.. in 40 years I’m probably gonna wonder if I wasted my life as a waiter.. So no.. It’s not nice.” Dirk said.

He turned around and walked back into his apartment. “I have to make dinner for Dave now, or I’m gonna be late for work.” And then he quietly closed the door, leaving Jake to stand alone in the hall.

Dirty

Chapter Notes

i want to say, that one of the scenes in this chapter is based on personal experience, and if it seems close to something you've experienced and you don't feel the way it's described here. it's purely based on what i felt, and i don't want anyone to think it's the same for everyone in dirk's situation.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

It was 5 AM when Jake's phone rang, waking him up. Jake rubbed his eyes "Bloody hell." he mumbled and picked up "Yes?"

He thought it would have been his boss or someone from work. But Dirk's voice came through the phone.

"If you wanna help me. Meet me outside the building in 15 minutes." and then he hung up.

It was a simple instruction. But it left Jake confused. Worried, he got up and pulled on a clean shirt and changed his pajama pants for a pair of jeans. He made sure to lock the door after himself.

When he came outside, he saw Dirk's car in front of the sidewalk. The blonde sitting in the driver's seat. The sun was barely up yet, the light skimming over the top of the buildings.

Dirk rolled the passenger seat window down "Get in." he said. Jake nodded and opened the door. He pulled on his seat belt.

"Dirk? Is everything okay?" He asked. Dirk nodded as he pulled out into the empty road "Yep. Everything is cool."

Jake looked out the front window at the road. He was a bit concerned. What would Dirk need him for at 5 in the morning?.

Jake looked over at Dirk again "Where are we going exactly?" He asked, a nervous smile on his face.

Dirk stopped at a red light, signaling to turn right. "Walmart" was all he gave as an answer. The light turned green.

Jake nodded slightly "Okay, cool, cool, cool." he said and clapped his hands together "Why tho?" He asked.

“You keep saying you want to help me. And I decided to take that offer for once.” he said
“Sorry it’s this early though.” he looked into the back mirror before turning.

Jake nodded again “Okay.” he bit his lip, “Dirk. Be honest with me.. Are we robbing a Walmart?” He asked nervously.

Dirk frowned and hit the breaks “What?! No!” He yelled and looked over at Jake. Jake places a hand on his chest “Oh thank God! I would not have been able to arrest you. That would have been awkward.” Jake chuckled nervously.

Dirk lightly glared at him “You seriously thought I’d rob a Walmart?” He asked. Jake blushed “I don’t know.. Maybe?”

“I’m not that poor.. Okay, I am that poor, but I’m not robbing a Walmart. Jesus.” Dirk mumbled under his breath. He pulled up into the parking lot outside of Walmart.

Jake blushed “Sorry. I didn’t mean to offend you.” Dirk shook his head and turned off the car “No it’s fine. A bit of a dick question, but fair, I guess.” he said.

Jake looked up at the store building “But.. What are we doing here?” He asked.

“Um, usually Roxy helps me with this, but I decided to ask you this time.” Dirk said, still holding onto the wheel of the car. Jake looked at him, he noticed Dirk was holding the wheel tight enough to turn his knuckles white. “With what?” He asked.

Dirk but his lip “Sometimes.. Stores like Walmart or Target, hand out bags of food that’s about to expire, for free to poor people.” he said and took a deep breath “It’s only one bag per person, and you keep offering to help me, so.. “.

Jake nodded “Oh.. Well I’m happy to help.” he said. Jake looked around, he did see a line starting to form outside of the doors. Dirk took his seatbelt off and stepped out of the car. Jake followed suit.

Jake stood next to Dirk as they waited for the store to open. He felt fine at first, he was just helping out his buddy after all. But he couldn’t help but notice the pit starting to form in his gut.

He was starting to feel nauseous, there weren’t any bad smells, but he felt vomiting. Didn’t know how to describe this feeling. But he didn’t like it.

He looked over at Dirk, hoping it would make him feel better. But it didn’t. Dirk’s shoulders were tight, and his head lowered, a slight frown on his face.

A woman unlocked the doors and people started to walk in. It wasn’t chaotic, it was rather systematic, an employee would hand a bag to one of the people in the line and the person would thank them before quickly leaving.

Dirk was right before him. He did just like all the other people, he took the bag and thanked the employee with a nod.

Jake couldn't help but look at the floor, trying to avoid eye contact with the employee as he was given the bag, he gave a quick whisper of a thank you before he turned rather quickly to follow Dirk out the store.

Jake's heart was beating slightly faster, he didn't know why. Dirk put the grocery bags on the backseat. Jake didn't know this feeling. It was a mix of pity and some form of humiliation.

He felt dirty.

The ride back to the apartment building was quiet. Jake didn't really know what to say. It wasn't like it was a big deal. Dirk was used to this, it was normal to him. But.. did that mean this awful feeling was normal to him too?

Dirk parked the car and got out. He picked up the grocery bags. They walked in silence back up to their floor, it wasn't before they stood outside Dirk's door that Jake broke the silence.

"Do I make you feel like that?.." Jake asked. Dirk had pulled out his key, but he didn't move to unlock his door. He didn't look up at Jake either. "Do I make you feel.. Dirty?.. When I offer to pay for you?"

Jake didn't need more than the soft nod Dirk gave to feel absolutely horrible. He frowned "I'm sorry, I should have." he tried to apologize but Dirk caught him off

"No, don't apologize." he said and looked up at him "I.. I wanted to bring you along so you knew how it felt. I'm sorry. It was a dick move." he said. Jake shook his head "No, I'm glad you brought me along."

The silence fell over them again. Jake fiddled with his own apartment key, but didn't turn to his door just yet.

"I think I needed it.. To really understand it? Even though it's probably nowhere close to what you feel everyday.."

Dirk nodded "Yeah.. I guess.. Thank you for helping me. It meant a lot." he said and unlocked his door. He put the grocery bags down and looked at Jake "Have a good day, Jake,"

"You too Dirk," Jake said and watched the door close. Leaving Jake alone with his thoughts.

He hated that he made Dirk feel like this. It wasn't fair. Jake wanted to help his friend, but it was clear now that Dirk's pride and feelings wouldn't accept it.

Jake's eyes widened as a light bulb turned on inside his head. He knew how he could help now.

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Jake smiled as he knocked a melody on the door "Don't worry Janey, Dirk is gonna be perfect for this job." he said and looked at his sister. Jane smiled "Well, you did describe him as a very perfect fit for it, and as long as I get rid of this favor I owe you, I'll accept anything."

Jake chuckled "I've never been so happy you crashed that boat as I am now." he grinned. Since they were teens, Jane had owed him the biggest favor of all time, after he took the blame for a boat party gone wrong. He was grounded for almost a year, but he knew this favor would come in handy. He drew four in a game of uno.

As they both heard the lock come undone they looked back at the door, Jake stood up a bit straighter, and Janey ran a hand over her skirt, both wanting to be as professional and convincing as possible.

Jane didn't know what she should be expecting, but a shirtless man, in blue pajama pants with hearts on them, a bathrobe and a toothbrush in his mouth, wasn't it. she didn't think much of it though, since it was clear Jake hadn't informed Dirk of her visit.

Dirk blinked his tired eyes and pulled the toothbrush out of his mouth "What is it Jake?" Jane wanted to say something about the tone in his voice, but Jake started talking before she could.

"Good morning Dirk. This is my sister, Jane" he said and moved his hand to refer to her. Dirk looked at her and then subtly pulled his bathrobe closed around his chest "Hey." Jane smiled "Hi there."

Dirk looked back at Jake "This is not really how I pictured I'd meet you sister." he said a bit embarrassed over his choice of clothing "And why are you introducing her to me at.." Dirk leaned his head back into the apartment and then said "7 in the morning on a tuesday?"

Jake just beamed with a smile and said "Because I, Jake english, got you a job!" Jake expected Dirk to be happy, and confused, but mostly happy. but he was greeted with a deadpan look from Dirk

"You what?" he asked. Jake repeated himself.

"I got you a job. You said, you were broke, and you worked too much, so I cashed in a favor Janey here owes me, and got you a job at her place, of course you'd have to actually go to an interview, you know, make it look real, and actually follow the law." Jake started to explain.

Dirk sighed and rubbed the bridge of his nose "Jesus Jake, it's too early for this." His hand with his toothbrush went for his door handle and started to close the door. Jake grabbed the other side of the door and tried to push against it to stop Dirk from closing it.

"Look, I know. But please just hear me out!" Jake begged. Dirk frowned and kept trying to close the door, it was almost a jar now. "Jake, I told you I didn't want your help, and you keep ignoring me, why can't-" Jake cut him off "The salary is 27\$ per hour."

that seemed to shut Dirk up, he didn't try to close the door anymore. Jake could see the wheels turning behind Dirk's eyes, so Jake kept talking "It's 5 days a week, from 8 to 5, it doesn't really include a good health plan, but it's better than what you have now."

a silence fell over them

Dirk opened the door up a bit again. He looked at Jake with a serious frown “What’s the catch?”

Jane and Jake tried to act confused, but it was clear on both of their faces that there was a catch. Dirk knew a job offer that good was too good to be true, even from Jake English.

Jane decided to take over for her brother “If you want the job, you have to go back to school and finish your degree.” Dirk glared at Jake
“No.”

Jake gasped “What? No?-. Please Dirk, just give it a chance.”

Dirk opened the door fully and leaned against the door frame
“I appreciate what you’re trying to do, Jake, I do. But there’s two problems with that plan.”
he held up his free hand, showing two fingers “1. going back to school would only make my debt bigger, and 2. how am I supposed to go to school if i’m working from 8 to 5?” he asked.

Jane smiled “We could schedule around it? And set up a loan?” she suggested. Dirk was about to say no to their offer when Dave called. “Dirk get your butt dressed. I’m not showing up at school with you, if you’re dressed in your pjs.” his voice was heard.

Jane handed Dirk her card “Just think it over, and give me a call.” she said. Dirk took it and nodded.
“Alright. It was nice to meet you.” he said and looked at Jake “See you later, Jake.” he said and closed the door.

He laid the card on the kitchen table.

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Dirk kicked his shoes off half hearted and pulled his jacket off, one of the sleeves got turned inside out, but Dirk was too tired to fix it. He heard the tv playing and walked into the living room.

Dave was sitting on the sofa, hugging the comforter Dirk slept with. Dirk saw one of the old school episodes of Ed, Edd and Eddy was on. He didn’t even know if Dave knew that show. Dirk looked back at Dave, he looked tired. He probably hadn’t noticed Dirk was home yet.

“Shouldn’t you be in bed?” Dirk asked and fought back a yawn. Dave looked over at him
“Someone rattled with the door.. I wanted to wait for you.”. Dirk nodded and walked over to sit next to Dave on the couch. The light from the tv was the only thing illuminating the room.

Dave moved closer to Dirk and leaned up against him, Dirk just placed his arm around his shoulder “Dave, you’re really smart right?” Dirk asked with closed eyes.

Dave smiled “The smartest there is bro.” he looked up at Dirk. “I need your advice on something, man,” Dirk said and rubbed the bridge of his nose. Dave just waited for him to start talking.

“Let’s say, you had the opportunity to either stay at your school where it’s stressful but it’s still kinda stable enough for your life to work, or you could go to this other, much better school that gives you less homework, but you’d risk that stability you already have. What would you do?” Dirk asked, he hated that he had to ask Dave this, he didn’t like making Dave worry about their money problems or take such grownup decisions.

Dave made a humming hm sound, showing that he was thinking it over “Would you be home more? If you choose the other school?” he asked. Dirk tilted his head “I suppose yeah, but I’d be busy doing homework.” he said “ Why does that matter?”

Dave looked down at his hands, holding the comforter closer to himself.

“Sometimes, when you’re at work, I think I see him through the window.. and I get scared thinking, he might be waiting for you.” he said in a quiet voice. Dirk got a bit anxious at that, he even looked out the window, as if he might actually be there right now. Dave just smiled “I think you should take the offer. It seems like you really want to.”

Dirk ran a hand through his hair “I do, but I don’t like just being handed it though, it doesn’t feel right, like maybe I don’t deserve it.” he said. Dave looked deadpanned up at him.

“That’s the stupidest thing you’ve ever said bro. You deserve to get a good job and to go back to school if you want to. You’re the only one holding yourself back right now. Like, maybe this is the universe’s way of giving you an ‘atta boy’, or something, I don’t know.”

Dirk frowned, confused, how did Dave know about the job? Had he been listening in on them? Or was his metaphor that easy to figure out?

Maybe Dave was smarter than he looked. Dirk smiled and moved Dave closer, holding him in his arms

“Let’s get you to bed,” Dirk said and stood up, carrying Dave in his arms. Dave moved his arms up around Dirk’s neck “Only if you spit some rhymes.” Dirk gave a soft laugh “Alright, give me a second then.” the wheels in Dirk’s tired brain started turning as he tried to rhyme.

“I know this boy, his name is Davey, and it’s past his bed.. T I M E.” Dirk got a small chuckle from Dave, he knew it wasn’t really a good rhyme between Davey and e.

“He goes to sleep.. And he can just dream.. And not have to be, In a stinky apartment with me.” Dirk walked over to Dave’s door, pushing it open with his foot. “So when I feel blue, Don’t know what to do.” he was careful not to step on any of the legos Dave hadn’t cleaned up. Dave stirred slightly in his arms, but still looked at Dirk with tired eyes. “I look at you, And I just say,” Dirk then attacked Dave’s cheek with a raspberry. Dave laughed and pushed Dirk away, and Dirk dropped Dave onto his bed.

Dirk sat on the corner of his bed. He pulled his own comforter from Dave before he tugged Dave in with his own comforter and smiled “Good night little man.” he said as he watched Dave close his eyes, he left the door ajar.

Dirk placed his comforter on the couch, and then went to the kitchen area, he opened the fridge and pulled out the leftover box of chinese food he brought for lunch the other day and started eating it. he saw the card Jane had given him was still laying on the table. Dirk

swallowed the food in his mouth and picked up the card. He placed the box of chinese food down and pulled out his phone.

He started to dial the number

Chapter End Notes

the rhymes are based off the song from '8 mile', 'Lily's lullaby'

breaking point

Chapter Notes

can't have a fanfic with law, without adding terezi

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The knocking was hard and fast. It almost scared Jake from the book he was reading. He put his bookmark in and closed it, "Just a moment!"

He hurried over to the door, quickly wondering if he had any guests coming over. Maybe he had forgotten about a lunch date with Jane.

As he opened the door, he was surprised to see Dirk outside. Jake didn't even get to say good day before Dirk started talking.

"I took the job. I thought it over and I realized that I need it and it's what I want." he said fast, he then pointed at Jake "But you wanted me to take it, and you signed me up for that semester, so you're gonna help me make this work." he said sternly.

Jake nodded with a smile wide enough to hurt his cheeks, not saying a word, despite how happy he was.

"I need you to take Dave to and from school. And it would help a lot if you could let him eat dinner over here sometimes." Dirk stated "I'll pay you back for the food and such, but I'm not gonna have time to cook and such. This next year is gonna be one long stressful shit storm for everyone." he warned.

He moved his arms cross as an x before swinging them away from each other again "And whatever is going on between us, has to be put on pause. And I know there's feelings between us, but I just won't have the energy to do that too." he said and looked at Jake a bit sad "I'm not gonna ask you to wait for me. It isn't fair to you, and if you meet someone else, then go for them. But for the next year I'm just not gonna be available in the dating department."

Jake smiled in the door "I'm so proud of you."

Dirk blushed madly "So.. you're okay with that?"

Jake hugged him close "Yeah, I mean, it's gonna hurt a bit, but if I have to wait, then I'm willing to," he said. Dirk smiled and hugged him back

"Thank you so much for making me do this."

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Dirk was pretty nervous. He almost couldn't find his classroom, and he didn't know if he was actually prepared for the class. No one seemed to really notice him, despite being new in their class.

He drummed his pen on his desk as he waited for the class to start. A girl walked up to him. She had short hair, a red cane and a hoarse like voice. She hit his leg with her red cane

"Excuse me, but that's my seat, new kid." she said and pointed at his seat. Dirk looked up at her "Oh um, I didn't think there was seating arrangements." he said and pushed his things to the next spot and moved over.

The girl sat down and grinned "There's not." Dirk frowned and noticed she didn't look at him. She had sunglasses on as well. Dirk concluded she was blind. He looked away from her "Well, good to know then."

He looked at the front of the class as the professor walked in. He froze as he felt her sniff him. He frowned "What are you doing?" He asked.

The girl didn't even try to look embarrassed after being caught. She ignored his questions "You're new here, aren't you?" Dirk frowned confused "Um yes. I am." he said.

She smiled "Fresh meat, cool. My name's Terezi." she said and held her hand out to shake.

Dirk took it "I'm Dirk. And I'm not really fresh meat. I've studied before. Just here to finish my degree." he told her. He didn't know why though.

She nodded "Oh? That's cool too." she said "Good luck to you, good sir."

Dirk chuckled, he liked this girl "And good luck to you as well."

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When Dirk said the next few months would be chaos, he was more than right.

No one could ever really be sure on what kind of Dirk the day would bring. either he was rushing around, stressing over deadlines or work, or he would be a zombie, a tired mess who could need a 12 hour power nap.

Dirk was grateful for Jane only making him work on the weekdays, after classes, so he had the weekends to study and prepare his homework for the classes. Dave was happy with eating over at Jake's place, it meant he and John could play more. And it was nice to finally have Dirk home on the weekends.

Even if they didn't do much, Dave liked knowing Dirk was there.

Dirk always made sure to either call home to Dave or be home to tug Dave into bed, ever since Dave told him about Bro that night. Dirk wasn't too worried, but he wanted Dave to feel safe.

But one night, Dirk didn't call.

The knock was soft, but loud enough for Jake to hear it. "Just a moment," he said. He turned down the heat on the kettle he had on the stove and went to the door.

He opened the door and looked down at Dave "Oh, hey there Dave, what can I help you with?" He smiled and looked at the clock. It was 10:30 PM on a Wednesday, long past Dave's bedtime.

"Have you heard from Dirk?" Dave asked, he looked down the hall, as if Dirk would walk up the stairs any moment.

Jake frowned softly "Um no. Why?" He asked. Dave looked back up at him "He's not home yet. And he didn't call to say goodnight to me." he said. Jake frowned "Oh.. Well, you can sleep over here with John till he comes back." Jake said.

Dave bit his lip as he thought it over. It might scare Dirk if he came home to find Dave missing from his bed, but Dave didn't like not knowing where Dirk was and being alone this late, even at home.

"I would like that," he said. Jake smiled "Alright, let's just go lock the door to your apartment first." Dave nodded and handed Jake his own key to the apartment and watched Jake lock it and test the door handle.

John didn't register much as Dave crawled under the covers with him. After Jake made sure Dave was okay and sleeping soundly, he pulled out to text Dirk and let him know Dave was over at his place.

Jake went back to the stove to make his cup of tea and went back to his movie, deciding to wait up for Dirk to answer his text. But as his tea got cold, his eyes grew heavy.

At 2 AM, his phone went off, the Indiana Jones theme playing loudly. Jake woke up with a start and grabbed his phone. He answered the phone "Hello?" He asked, expecting to hear Dirk's voice, but was greeted with a panicked Roxy.

"Jake! Jake. You have to do me a favor. You have to go over to Dirk's apartment and check on Dave. I need to know if he's okay. Please." Roxy spoke so fast Jake could barely understand her. She sounded like she was crying almost.

"Roxy, calm down, breathe." Jake finally managed to get her attention through her panic. "Dave is okay. He's here at my place. He's asleep with John." he said, knowing Roxy wouldn't settle down before she knew that. And by the sigh of relief he heard, it seemed to do the trick.

"Now. Why do you need to know that? Do you know where Dirk is?" Jake asked, a bit hopeful. Roxy gave him a sniffle and choked on a sob.

"Dirk's at the hospital.." her voice shook "Someone found him in an alleyway..." she tried not to start crying again.

Jake's face turned pale "Is he okay? Do you know what happened?" He asked. Roxy sniffed "He's okay.. I mean, he's not okay, he's in a damn hospital, but he's alive." she said "No one knows what happened.. He has woken up yet.." she said.

Jake took a deep breath "I.. I um.." Jake placed his free hand on his forehead "I'll be right there, what hospital is he at?" He asked.

"Queens Hospital.." Roxy said "Don't you dare leave Dave alone." Jake got up and went to get a shirt on and some actual pants "You want me to bring him along to a hospital?" He asked.

Roxy was quiet for a few seconds, but then said "Dirk would skin us alive if we leave Dave alone right now." Jake nodded "I see. I'll be right there."

He rang up the phone and pulled on his shirt and threw his pj pants on the floor before getting his jeans on. He went into John's bedroom and started to wake the boys up. They both stirred awake, confused.

John rubbed his eye "What's going on?" He asked. Jake smiled and found him some socks, the boys could go in their pajamas if they wanted. "We're gonna go on a small adventure." he said.

Dave sat up "Is Dirk home yet?" He asked. Jake shook his head "We're gonna go see him." he said. John pouted "But there's school tomorrow?"

Jake kept shaking his head "No, we're gonna take a personal day, okay?"

.....

It was almost 6 AM and none had given them any actual information on Dirk. None of the nurses could say anything about his injuries.

Dave and John were leaning up against Roxy in the ugly chair of the waiting room. Roxy held an arm around them both. She watched the news that was running on the tiny tv, wishing they would report something nice for once. Jake stood at the reception desk, discussing with the receptionist.

"There must be something you can tell us?" He said. The lady sighed, tired of repeating the same answer to the same question again. "Sir, we can't say anything for certain yet. You can see your friend, when he wakes up." she said "Right now, only family can see him."

Jake ran a hand through his hair, irritated "And I'm telling you. That boy over there is his younger brother, So let us go in there." he tried again, but to no avail. The woman just shook her head "Sir, it's best if you just wait. Now please. Take a seat."

Jake crossed his arms, but finally decided to stop interrogating the poor woman. He sat down next to John. Roxy looked over him, her cheeks were still a bit puffy and her mascara had left some dark smudges under her eyes. "Did she say anything?" She asked.

Jake shook his head and crossed one leg over the other “No, she just kept saying we should wait.” Roxy nodded slightly. The hand on Dave’s back gently rubbed over the red pajama shirt.

Dave has tried to stay awake, but he failed. He only really agreed to fall asleep if Roxy promised to wake him up when they could see Dirk.

Jake watched her quietly. She looked tired as well, but she had probably been there for multiple hours, waiting for any answers.

They ended up waiting for another hour, before a doctor finally walked into the almost empty waiting room. “Um, is there a Roxy Lalonde present?” The doctor asked into the room. Roxy stood up slowly, so she didn’t wake the boys up “Yes, I’m Roxy Lalonde,” she said. Jake stood up along with her “Is he okay? Can we see him?” He asked.

The doctor nodded “He’s waking up as we speak, and you can see him, but try not to overwhelm him.” the doctor said, and saw both Roxy and Jake nod.

“Can you tell up anything about his injuries?” Jake asked worriedly. The doctor looked back at the paper in his hand “Well, he has a mild concussion, and we sewed up his head injury. He has a black eye and a few scratches here and there.” the doctor said as he read through the list “And his right wrist seems to be sprained. But all in all, he’s okay, and he’ll recover just fine. It’s not something a few painkillers and some rest can’t help.” the doctor said.

Roxy sighed in relief “Oh thank god. What room is he in?”

“Room 208.” the doctor said.

Roxy went back to their seats and gently shook the boys awake.

Dave ran down the hall ahead of them looking for the number on the doors. When he finally found the right door, he didn’t hesitate to push it open. Jake opened the door for Roxy.

Dirk was no sight for sore eyes. The skin around the left eye was slightly swollen and had a purple color to it. A butterfly bandage held together the stitched head injury on his right temple. He was covered in bruises, and Jake didn’t doubt he had more under the cover. He had a wrist brace on his right hand. But he still managed to give a tired smile as Dave stood next to his bed, asking all kinds of questions, pretty close to crying.

“Hey Davey, calm down.” Dirk said, with his left hand he pulled Dave up onto his bed “I’m okay little man, everything is fine.” he said and hugged him with his good arm. Dave buried his head in Dirk’s neck.

Roxy smiled softly, she and John walked over to the other side of the bed “You sure gave us a huge scare there, D stri”. Dirk chuckled “Sorry about that. Thank you for looking after Dave.”

Roxy smiled and looked over at Jake “Actually, Jake looked after him.” Jake smiled and gave a small wave from where he stood at the end of the bed.

Dirk blinked “Oh, hey Jake. Sorry. I guess I’m still waking up.” he said. Jake chuckled “Hi Dirk”. The room fell silent, Dirk kept stroking Dave’s back, trying to comfort him.

“Dirk. What happened?” Jake finally asked the question Roxy couldn’t get herself to ask.

Dirk didn’t look at him “I don’t know.” he lied. Jake narrowed his eyes “ Bullshit.”

John grinned as he almost yelled “Language!”. Jake sighed and looked at Roxy “Can you take the boys to the cafeteria and get some breakfast?” He asked.

Roxy nodded slightly “Um, yeah sure.” Dave looked over at Roxy, not wanting to leave. “But he just woke up,” he protested.

Dirk smiled gently “It’s okay, I’ll still be awake when you get back”. Dave frowned “Promise?” Dirk nodded and held up a fist bump “Promise.” Dave smiled and bumped his fist before getting off the bed and following Roxy and John out of the room.

Jake’s eyes didn’t leave Dirk. And Dirk refused to meet his eyes. It was dead quiet between them.

“Dirk. You have to tell me what happened.” Jake tried again. Dirk fiddled a bit with the brim of his wrist brace “Nothing happened, I just-“

“If you say you just walked into a door or fell down some stairs, I swear to Jesus, I will make sure your shades get another crack.” Jake warned him, looking stern.

Dirk still didn’t meet his eyes.

“Are you involved in something? Do you owe someone money? Dirk I can help you-“ Jake started, but Dirk cut him off “No! Jake, I’m not involved in anything, and this was just a mugging gone wrong.” Dirk tried to lie, he had the same scared look in his eyes as when Jake had seen him in the apartment hall with that other guy.

Jake blinked and quietly asked “You know who did this to you. Don’t you?” He watched as Dirk’s body language changed from defense, to something that resembled fear.

“It was that guy from the hall.” it was more a statement than a question. But the subtle nod from Dirk was enough to confirm it.

Jake walked around the bed to sit down next to Dirk. “What happened Dirk?” He asked more gently this time. Dirk took a slightly shaky breath.

“I had a late class, and I was on my way to my car, I had to park down the street because I couldn’t get a parking spot.” he said and moved his left hand up to hold his head. “Brodrick grabbed me and pulled me into some alley way. He beat the shit out of me. I got a few punches in, but..” Dirk trailed over, his bottom lip shaking slightly.

Jake reached over and carefully held Dirk sprained hand, loose, but still showing him he was there for him. Dirk took another deep breath.

“He knocked me to the ground and started kicking me.. It’s kind of blurry, but I think I saw him take my wallet..” He sighed and leaned back against the pillows “And then I passed out.”

Jake gently stroked his thumb over Dirk’s fingers “Dirk, we have to report this.” he started, but Dirk shook his head, but regretted doing it because of the incoming headache. “No. No police, this is why I didn’t want to tell you.” he said.

Jake frowned with concern “Dirk. You were assaulted and robbed. You know who it was. We can’t just pretend this didn’t happen. What if this happens again? What if no one finds you? You have to report him.” Jake almost begged Dirk at this point.

“I can’t.” Dirk said.

“Why not?” Jake asked and shook his head.

Dirk looked at him “He could take Dave away from me..” he shrugged “ I can’t risk that.”

“What do you mean?” Jake asked and leaned closer over the hospital bed.

Dirk sighed and looked down at their hands “I.. I’m technically withholding Dave from him.” he hesitated “I don’t have any legal right to care for Dave. I don’t get child support. When I moved out from home I just took Dave with me. Brodrick knows I earn money and he threatens to take Dave away if I don’t pay him..” Dirk closed his eyes

Jake waited patiently for him to continue. “Bro doesn’t want Dave, but he knows I do.. And he has every legal right as Dave’s guardian to take him away from me.. And I can’t risk Dave going back to that hell hole.” he sniffed and looked back up into Jake's eyes “Don’t get the police involved.. Please..”

Jake bit his lip and looked at their hands “I can't promise you that..” he held Dirk’s hand between both of his. Jake's fingers traced over the small scars on his hand. Dirk's skin felt so rough against his.

“But I promise you, no one is gonna take Dave from you. Not while I’m here.” Jake said, a new form of boldness in his eyes. It was so overwhelmingly reassuring to Dirk.

Dirk couldn’t stop the tears, as he broke down, the pressure breaking the last bit of strength he had left. Jake moved onto the bed and held Dirk, as he let the hurt man let out his worries and tears.

Chapter End Notes

what do you guys think about the fanfic so far? comments are really appreciated

Nerf gun

Chapter Notes

Hey everyone,
sorry this chapter took a while to post and that it's so short, but there's a reason!
one of my friends offered to be my beta reader, and I didn't want to post the chapters before they were beta read.
anyway, I hope you enjoy this chapter

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Dave was sitting by the dining room table, a bowl full of cereal in front of him, and an old nerf gun in his hand. He quietly munched on the sugary cereal as he took aim. his victim? A sleeping older brother.

Dave knew Dirk must have been up past 3 AM, purely based on the amount of notes and how sloppy the handwriting had gotten on the page. He knew it probably wasn't nice to wake Dirk up at 9 AM on a Saturday morning. But he also knew Dirk had shopping and other plans to do.

Dirk laid on the couch, sleeping on his stomach, face buried in a pillow and snoring away. He was still wearing his jeans and dirty t-shirt from the day before. His shades had been folded and laid neatly on the table.

Dave pressed the trigger, the foam bullet hit Dirk on the shoulder. It got him a stirr, but Dirk continued to snore. Dave took another spoonful of cereal, keeping the spoon in his mouth as he aimed again.

This time the foam bullet hit the back of Dirk's head. "Dirk, get your ass out of bed." Dave said. Dirk moved, a snore being cut off as he moved his head and upper body. He mumbled with closed eyes "Yeah.. Yeah, I'm up." and then he fell back against his pillow, now with his face up, another small snore escaping him.

Dave frowned and aimed yet again, now just shooting at his brother to his heart's content. Dirk seemed to finally wake up around the fifth bullet, but they kept coming. He covered his face and sat up "Okay, okay, I'm up, Jesus." he mumbled.

He ran a hand through his hair and yawned "You could just have woken me up by shoving to me like a normal person." he said. Dave shrugged and put the nerf gun down, before taking another spoonful of cereal "What's the fun in that?" He asked.

Dirk went to the bathroom "Has Jake come by yet?" He asked and started to brush his teeth. "Nope. Thought I'd let you get pretty before he had the chance." Dave laughed.

Dirk gazed over at Dave from the open door “We’re not dating. He’s helping me with a project.” he said. Dave turned in his chair “Why aren’t you dating? It’s obvious you both like each other.”

Dirk blushed “No, it’s not. And how would you know. You’re 10?” He said with his toothbrush in his mouth. He spit out the toothpaste and washed his mouth “And it’s none of ya business.” he said and walked to the kitchen to grab a bowl and spoon to get his own cereal

It had been three weeks since Dirk came back home from the hospital. his eye was close to looking normal again, and most of the bruises had faded away. But his right hand was still wearing the wrist band. The sprain had made it quite hard for him to write and take notes, but lucky for him, Terezi had taken pity on him and offered to share her notes with him until his hand was okay again.

Dirk finished eating and got dressed.

“Are you sure you’re okay with being alone for the day? I don’t know how long this will take.” he said as he tried to tie his shoes.

Dave got up from his seat and went to help him. “Yeah I’m sure.” he said “Are you?” he teased.

Dirk glared “Oh shut up,” he said and grabbed his jacket “And thank you.” he checked for his phone and keys before he looked back at Dave before walking out “If you need anything just call me, or Roxy.”

Dave nodded “Noted. Have a nice day!” he called before going back to his breakfast. “Love you!” Dirk called before he left.

Dirk closed the door and turned to knock on Jake’s, but Jake was already standing outside. Dirk jumped “Jesus! Jake, you scared the shit out of me.” he placed his hand over his heart. Jake chuckled “Oh sorry. How are you feeling?”

Dirk sighed “I could be better.. Let’s just go before I change my mind.” Jake nodded and they walked down the hallway. Since the hospital, Jake had tried to convince Dirk to call the police on Brodrick. They had discussed it for hours, before Dirk agreed to give his testimony and possibly get a restraining order. Dirk didn’t want Dave to know anything, if anyone asked about what the two were doing today, then it was just a school project.

Jake drove them to the police station, it was a silent ride. Jake tried to spark up a conversation, but Dirk was too tense to really reply. Jake parked in his usual spot and turned to Dirk “He’s not gonna be there. It’ll be quick, just in and out” he promised.

Dirk’s left hand held the wrist brace in his hand, nodding slightly “I know.. It’s just..” Dirk sighed and looked down “I know he deserves it, but.. He’s still my brother.” he said “In an odd way, I feel like this is wrong.”

Jake laid his hand on Dirk’s shoulder and tried to give a comforting smile “I know. But you’re doing the right thing.” he assured him. Dirk nodded, but didn’t meet his eyes “Let’s just go in.” he moved to take his seat belt off. Jake followed suit.

Dirk was glad Jake was there with him. He had no idea who to talk to or how to do any of this. He thought he would have been put into one of those interrogation rooms, the ones you see on tv with the one sided window. But he was just led over to a desk of one of Jake's coworkers.

There weren't a lot of people there, but it was still rather noisy. It smelled like fresh brewed coffee and alcohol, but Dirk blamed that on the few drunks sleeping off their hangover in the jail cell.

Dirk would have preferred that Jake took his statement, but apparently that wasn't allowed due to personal involvement with Dirk. It went by rather smoothly, the officer would ask basic questions, and Dirk would try and answer them the best he could. Dirk didn't bring up the abuse, he only told the officer about the assault. He wanted this over with as fast as possible.

Dirk watched as the officer typed everything into his computer, he then turned to look at Dirk again "Alright. That should be about it. We'll let you know what happens." the officer said.

Dirk nodded "Okay, thank you." Dirk said and got up. He wanted to go find Jake, but he just had one more question.

"Um, what's gonna happen to him?" Dirk asked, referring to Brodrick. The officer hummed in thought, like he was considering what he should get for lunch. "Well, he's gonna get arrested, and if the evidence fits up with your story, he could look at.." the officer looked over the information he had written on his screen "One to three years in prison? Maybe a big fine as well."

Dirk bit his lip and nodded "I see.. Thank you for your time." he said, marching off to find Jake. He felt terrible, like he'd betrayed his brother. But he knew all this had to be done. If it happened again Dirk might end up getting more hurt, or maybe Dave would get hurt..

Dirk didn't want to think about that..

Chapter End Notes

Dirk : *actually sleeping*

Dave with his nerf gun : so you have chosen death.

Waiting time

Chapter Notes

hey, thanks for waiting for this chapter.

The whole fanfic has now been beta read and chapter nine will be posted in a few days.

Kudos and comments are really appreciated uwu

Today was the day.

The day Dirk had prepared for in almost a year now. All his hard work and countless hours of studying would now finally be put to test. 'Cause today was the day of the Bar exam.

Dirk's nerves were all over the place. He had spent the last two weeks reading up on all the material he had. Through the first weeks time had become a construct he no longer understood. He used the few sick days he had at work to study. He had spent almost every woken hour on reading and studying. His friends helped with quizzing him.

It was only because of Roxy that Dirk actually got 10 hours of sleep and a healthy breakfast the day of the test. But even though Dirk was more than prepared, he was still a nervous wreck

Roxy, Jake and Jane had all offered to go with Dirk to the school building. Normally Dirk would have declined. He was a grown man, he didn't need any hand holding. But he also knew he would need the support, so he agreed.

Jake was driving with Jane in the passenger's seat. Roxy sat in the back with Dirk, quizzing him on a few last cards.

Roxy smiled "I think you're ready, D." she said and laid the cards in her lap. Dirk was bumping his leg up and down on the floor of the car fast.

"I don't know, what if I missed something? What if there's something on the test I don't remember or know?"

Roxy patted his shoulder "You know it. Just relax." Jake pulled up in the parking lot of the school. It was a big old boring building, a few different people making their way inside. Dirk shook his head "I can't do this, I can't. I'm not ready yet. What if I don't know the answers? What if I fuck up the whole test? Maybe I should just take it next year." Dirk started to spiral, clearly losing himself to his thoughts and worries, but Roxy would have none of that.

She grabbed one of Dirk's shoulders with one hand, turning him to face her and then bitch slapped him across the face. Jake and Jane paled a bit as Dirk's head turned from the slap.

Roxy grabbed his head and made him look her in the eyes “Nuh-uh, nope. You did not study this hardcore just to bail in the last second.” she started

with one hand she let go of his head and pointed at the school building “You are gonna go in there, and you’re gonna crush this test.” she said, determination clear in her eyes “You’re gonna pass! And become the best kid’s lawyer there is!” Jane cleared her throat “Court advocate for children,” but Roxy ignored her correction.

She pointed back at Dirk “And you know how I know this?” she asked. Dirk blinked “How?” he asked. Roxy grinned “Because you’re Dirk fucking Strider!” Jake grinned along with her “Yeah!”

“And there's' nothing you can’t do!” Roxy cheered. Jake accidentally threw his hand up in a fist bump and hit it on the car roof “Yeah!”

Dirk smiled, finally seeming to get his confidence back “Yeah, you’re right. I’m gonna pass this test.” he said and grabbed his back opening the car door. He hugged Roxy before leaving the car “Thank you Roxy.”

He only got a few steps before he stopped and looked back at them “You guys aren’t gonna wait here for me to be done, right? It’s like a six hour test.” the three people in the car all blushed and looked away, all clearly lying as they said they weren’t, and how that would be crazy.

Dirk slapped a hand over his forehead and sighed “Go to lunch or something!”

Jane hummed “I could eat.” Jake smiled and looked back at Roxy “I know a great bagel place.” Roxy lit up at that “Ooohh I love bagels. Do you want one Dirk?”

Dirk smiled and sighed “That would be nice.” he said and turned to walk towards the building, Roxy yelling after him “What kind?!” Dirk yelled back over his shoulder “Chicken and bacon!” Roxy smiled “Okay! Good luck!” and then Dirk disappeared into the building.

he walked into the gym hall, over 50 desks had been placed with a meter’s distance. Dirk looked at all the names on the different papers, trying to find his own. A lot of people were already at their desks, while some were looking for theirs. The test was starting in almost 20 minutes, but there were still people missing.

Dirk finally found his desk and put his bag down. He pulled out all he needed and placed it neatly on the desk in front of him. He grabbed a pencil from his pencil case, drumming it between his fingers as he looked around. Terezi was sitting at one of the desks a few meters in front of Dirk.

She seemed calm, ready for this test, and Dirk knew she was gonna pass. He pulled out his phone and looked at it one last time before getting up to hand it over to the teachers. It was full of texts from his friends, wanting to wish him luck on the test. He smiled as he saw one from Dave as well.

'Knock them dead, bro.'

Dirk smiled and locked his phone. He laid it down in the cardboard box with the other phones and went back to his seat. And in the words of Roxy Lalonde, he was gonna make this test his bitch.

.....

They all thought the test was the hardest part for Dirk, but it turned out that the waiting was like pure torture. After the test, all the students had to wait up to five weeks before they knew any results about their test. And it was hard waiting so long.

Dirk tried to make himself busy, he'd hang out with either Roxy or Jake, go to work, stay overtime a few times a week. He enjoyed the break from school the waiting time gave him, and it felt amazing to finally sleep in for once. Jake and Roxy were just as eager to know the result as Dirk, often asking him for updates, which weren't helping Dirk forget about the waiting.

It was Friday night, Jake had invited Jane, Roxy and Dirk over to dinner. Dave and John were watching a movie as the adults chatted in the kitchen. Dirk and Jane were busy setting the table, talking about work and some of the office gossip they both heard, leaving Roxy and Jake to do the cooking.

Roxy was slicing the salad, while Jake was busy hammering the steaks. Roxy looked over at Dirk and Jane, making sure they weren't paying attention, before she leaned over to Jake and half whispered "When are you gonna ask him?" Jake blushed and looked at her "Not yet. Not before he knows the results."

Roxy rolled her eyes "Lame. He already took the test, you should ask him." she grinned with excitement. Jake shook his head "No, after he's done studying, that was the deal, and I'm gonna respect that." he looked over at Dirk, the blonde smiled and chuckled at something Jane said. Jake blushed softly "But good golly, waiting hurts."

Roxy smiled and gave a light punch on his arm "Then don't wait. Go for him, tiger." Jake was about to protest again when Dirk spoke up.

"The results are up." it was so calmly spoken the others had to take a moment to process. Roxy put down her knife and walked over "How do you know? Did you pass?" she asked and tried to peak at his phone, but Dirk closed it.

"My classmate Terezi texted me, she passed." Dirk started to look around, forgetting he wasn't in his own apartment "I need my computer." Jane smiled "Then go get it!"

Dirk almost ran out of the apartment, across the hall, into his own apartment. He fumbled with his bag to get the laptop out. He then ran back to Jake's apartment, already opening the computer and placing it on the table next to one of the plates, bending over slightly to type. John and Dave paused their movie as they heard the commotion, already knowing what it was about. Dirk logged on to his computer, he hurried to pull up the website. Roxy and Jane

stood on one side, peaking over his shoulder, as Jake stood on the other side, watching Dirk's reaction.

It was dead silent as Dirk opened the test results. The tension in the air was high in the living room, everyone waiting for Dirk to react. Dirk didn't bother reading all the text, he just focused on the green word on top of the document.

"I passed.." he said under his breath, a smile breaking out across his face as he stood up "I passed." Roxy smiled wide "You passed?" Dirk looked at her "I passed!" Roxy took Dirk's hands in her own and started to jump up and down "You passed!" Jake and Jane started to jump as well, all of them cheering and repeating the phrase 'you passed!' Dave and John just watched them and laughed to themselves.

The group eventually calmed down, all cheering. Jake smiled and went to the kitchen to see if they had anything to celebrate with. Dave smiled "I'm guessing you passed?" Dirk had happy tears in his eyes, nodding to Dave. He ran his hands through his hair, his smile never leaving his face "I can't believe it, I actually did it."

Dave smiled "Congratulations bro, you earned it." Jake came in with four glasses and a bottle of wine. It was the same bottle from Dirk and Jake's first dinner alone.

Roxy smiled "I'll find some soda." she said and clapped her hands "And then let's get this party started!"

Worth the wait

Chapter Notes

I hope, just like jake, this was worth the wait ;)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

It was friday night, Dirk was staying in, enjoying his alone time. Dave was at a birthday party for a kid named Karkat or something. Dirk couldn't remember, he just knew it was a special name and that Dave was overly excited to go.

Dirk had just put down the pot on the stove, going to get the macaroni from the cabinet and start making dinner, when it knocked on the door. He closed the cabinet and went to the door. He didn't even have to look to know it was Jake standing outside.

His neighbor stood there as predicted with a wide smile and a blazer and white dress shirt over his arm. "Hello Dirk, are you free this evening?" he asked with an innocent tilt of his head. Dirk smiled and leaned against his door "Yeah, I'm not doing anything tonight. Why do you ask?" he rose an eyebrow.

"Splendid." Jake smiled "Put this on." he said and handed Dirk the white dress shirt and blazer. Dirk blinked and took the clothes "Why?" Jake giggled, he was definitely up to something.

"Just do it, and wear some nice pants as well." Jake made finger guns at him "Meet me in the car in 15 minutes," and then Jake hurried down the hall.

Dirk looked after him, and then down at the clothes. He shrugged and closed the door to go change into the clothes. He added the tie Roxy and Dave had given him as a graduation gift. Roxy had told him Dave wanted to give him one covered in dinosaurs, and Dirk was so glad Roxy didn't let him.

He walked down to the parking lot, Jake's car was parked out front, Jake smiling from behind the wheel.

"Hop in." he said, he seemed overly excited.

Dirk chuckled and got into the passenger seat. He buckled up and turned to look at Jake, as the raven haired man pulled out into traffic. "Jake, where are we going?" he asked.

Jake focused on the road still smiling "What? Can't a guy just kidnap his friend without a reason?" he asked with a chuckle. Dirk rolled his eyes with a smile "Jake, why are you kidnapping me at 7 PM on a friday?"

Jake blushed slightly, the grin never leaving his face "Just wait. you'll see."

The sun was going down behind the tall buildings, the lights of the city lighting it up in all kinds of colors. Dirk smiled as he looked out of the window, waiting patiently for Jake to get them to their destination. He had no idea how fast Jake's heart was beating.

Jake had waited months for this evening. He had done everything to plan it, right down to the smallest details. At one of the red lights, Jake gazed over at Dirk, seeing his gentle smile, the light from the city reflexing in his shades.

Jake smiled and slowly placed his hand on Dirk's leg, hopefully not too close to make Dirk uncomfortable, and just gentle enough that Dirk could hit his hand away if needed.

Dirk looked down at the hand, he didn't say anything. He just smiled and looked back out the window, enjoying the gentle touch. Jake looked back out on the road, his thumb gently moving over the knee in a soothing manner. None of them said anything.

Eventually Jake pulled up to a parking lot outside a tall building. It looked rather fancy, soft warm lights shining out onto the street. A fancy sign that read 'midnight music' stood over the entrance. Jake turned off the car and smiled to Dirk "Let's go in,"

They exited the car, Jake hurried around it to the passenger side and offered his arm to Dirk. Dirk chuckled and decided to play along, linking his arm with Jake's, before they made their way to the entrance.

"What is this place?" Dirk asked as he looked around the room, it seemed like a luxurious lobby, soft music came from a room behind a curtain, which hung in an open door.

Jake smiled "It's a music club, they mostly play old songs from the 30's to the 50's. Really romantic." he blushed lightly. He led them up to what seemed like a front desk, a sign that said 'wait here for service' stood on it. Dirk looked up at the big chandelier over them, studying the way the light reflected in the glass pendants.

An elderly man walked up to them, dressed in an old uniform suit, a name tag on his shirt said 'jack'. He stood tall and firm, "What can I help you with tonight?" he asked. Jake smiled "I have a reservation, Jake English." he said. The man looked at the computer behind the desk and typed on it. He gave a nod "Yeah, I see it. This way please." lead them over to the curtain.

The man took them over to the curtain and moved it aside, to let them in. The light was dimmed, candles lighting up the different round tables. A band was playing a song on stage, a woman in a black and green dress singing. There was a small dance floor in front of the small stage, a few people were dancing. It was loud enough to enjoy, but you didn't have to lean over to a person to have a conversation. It was like a scene out of an old spy movie.

The man took two menus and led them over to one of the tables. Dirk let go of Jake's arm and moved around to his own chair. Jack laid the menus down on the table in front of them "I'll give you a moment to look at the menus, do ask if you have questions." he said before he walked away again.

Dirk took off his shades, it was too dim in there to see anything with them on. He folded him and laid them carefully on the table. Dirk took one of the menus, but instead of looking at it,

he looked over at Jake “This place is really beautiful.” he then looked down at the menu “And expensive.”

Jake smiled from behind his own menu “Yeah, but don’t worry about it. It’s my treat.” he looked up at Dirk “You just sit back and enjoy.” Dirk nodded and looked back up at Jake again “Yeah okay,” there was a pause “Jake, what are we doing here?” he wanted to be sure about what exactly was going on, was what he thought it was.

Jake blushed harder and smiled nervously “ Well.. You remember you said we couldn’t really figure out what this thing.” he pointed between them both “Between us was, while you were studying?” Dirk nodded and blushed as well “Yeah, I remember.”

Jake rubbed the back of his neck “Well, you’re technically not studying anymore, and I have been planning this for months, so.. Tada, it’s a date,” Jake said and made the tiniest of jazz hands. Dirk laughed softly and smiled “You really don’t ask for permission about anything, do you?” he shook his head lightly.

Jake took Dirk’s laugh as a good sign “Yeah, sorry. I wanted to surprise you.” Dirk smiled and leaned his head on his hand, the light from the candle on the table reflecting in his eyes “Well, next time give me a heads up. I would have liked to fix my hair for this. It’s a mess.” he teased. Jake smiled fondly “You’re perfect.”

Dirk blushed madly and looked back at the menu “W-what do you recommend?” Jake laughed at the flusteriness but didn’t tease him. Jack came back and took their drink orders, an old whiskey for Jake and a glass of white wine for Dirk. They both ordered the steak with steamed vegetables and whiskey sauce.

They laughed and chatted most though most of the meal, playful flirting hidden between the lines. They bumped their feet together a few times under the table, both trying to be flirty and failing, which only made them laugh more.

Jake patted off his mouth on the napkin and smiled as he leaned back in his chair. “Here’s a question. What would your perfect wedding be like?” Dirk choked on the wine in his mouth and pointed at Jake as he swallowed it “Jake I swear, if you show up with a ring at my door in the next few months, I will say no.”

Jake laughed “No, no, it’s not like that, I was just wondering what the amazing Dirk Strider might be dreaming about for such a special day.” he said and leaned in over the table on his arms. Dirk watched him carefully up and down, judging him. You could never be too careful with Jake English.

He decided to give in to the question. He moved his finger over the rim of his wine glass “Alright. But don’t laugh.” he warned with a light blush. He thought it over for a moment “It would be an outside wedding, Roxy would be my best man or maid of honor, however that shit works.” he said “And the music, you know the one you walk down the aisle to, would be played on guitar. And..” Dirk thought “The cake would have white icing but when you cut into it, it would look like a rainbow.” he blushed. Jake smiled and chuckled “A rainbow? Really?”

Dirk shrugged “It’s a gay wedding after all.” he looked back up at Jake “What would you want?”

Jake hummed as he thought “Well, I would want a summer wedding, and host the party close to dark. I’d want it to be on a farm and have fairy lights and lanterns hanging from the trees.” Jake said as he started to describe his dream wedding
“There would be cute personal vows, and I’d want the song at the first dance to be ‘la vie en rose.’” he smiled.

Dirk chuckled “You’re such a dork. ” he drank the rest of the wine in his glass “But that does sound romantic.” he agreed. Jake smiled fondly to Dirk “I know.” They looked into each other’s eyes as the band started to play a new song.

Jake gasped and smiled “I love this song.” he said and stood up “Would you love to dance?” He asked and offered Dirk his hand. Dirk smiled and took it as he stood up

“I’d love to.”

Jake led him out onto the dance floor. He held one of Dirk’s hands in his own and placed his other on Dirk’s waist. Dirk placed his free hand on Jake’s shoulder.

The song had a happy tune, but it was slow and gentle. The woman started to sing the lyrics in a beautiful soothing voice “Heaven, I’m in heaven, and my heart beats so that I can hardly speak, and I seem to find the happiness I seek, when we’re out together dancing, cheek to cheek.”

Dirk moved his head to lay on Jake’s shoulder, closing his eyes. Jake smiled and quietly whispered the lyrics to Dirk as they swayed. “I love to climb a mountain, and to reach the highest peak, but it doesn’t thrill me half as much, as dancing cheek to cheek” Jake whispered to Dirk.

Dirk smiled and whispered back “I think I’m in love with you.” Jake honestly thought his heart skipped a beat in that moment. He looked down at Dirk, meeting his eyes
“I’m in love with you too.”

Dirk moved his head and leaned in to kiss Jake. It was just like their first kiss, soft, sweet and slow. None of them were sure if they were still swaying, but then again, they didn’t care. It had been so long since their last kiss. A few other couples were out on the dance floor, but in that moment it felt like they were the only two in the whole world.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you guys enjoyed this silly idea of mine,
if you did, please leave a comment and let me know
have a nice day!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!