

## **i've only known you to keep your word**

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# **i've only known you to keep your word**

by [thisissirius](#)

## Summary

*The prospect of going home alone, tending to his hurts and sleeping in that bed all alone—  
Buck's breath hitches and he closes his eyes, forehead pressed to the lockers.*

buck's lonely and eddie knows.

## Notes

written on the discord because why not.

Buck barely has time to sit down and attempt to handle the silence in his apartment when a key jams into the lock of his front door and it swings open.

Eddie comes into the apartment, two bags in hand, and beer in the other. “Get the door?”

Buck stares.

Eddie rolls his eyes. “Don’t worry, I’ll get it.”

When Eddie’s shut the door, Buck finds his voice. “What are you doing here?”

“Bringing food,” Eddie says, and Buck hears the *duh* even if he doesn’t say it. “Not that I’m cooking it. You are.” He flashes a smile.

Buck snorts, moving past his confusion and grabbing for the beer. “Maybe I wanna watch you fail.”

Eddie shrugs. “It’s your apartment. Also possibly your funeral.”

Saluting Eddie with his bottle, he goes to the cutlery drawer and grabs a bottle opener. “Why are you really here?”

There’s a long, drawn out silence where Eddie just stares at him. Buck feels uncomfortable under the scrutiny in ways he hasn’t before. It seems like ever since they came back from Texas, Eddie’s been—Buck doesn’t know how to explain it.

“Chris is at a sleepover,” Eddie says eventually. He makes a face. “You know how I feel about that.”

Buck does. Eddie’s only ever antsy and weird when Chris isn’t around. “Such a drama king,” he says.

“Whatever. We cooking or what?”

“Fine,” Buck says with a sigh, hip checking Eddie out of the way, ducking away from the elbow Eddie aims at his side. “Don’t beat up the person who’s saving you from food poisoning, Diaz.”

Eddie narrows his eyes, but he starts emptying out the bags. Spaghetti. He’s so transparent but Buck hides his smile by taking a pull of beer. Buck’s spaghetti is Christopher’s favourite and Buck’s got no doubts Eddie’s brought enough ingredients for extra portions. Something like happiness blossoms in Buck’s chest and he covers it with a knowing smirk.

“Really?”

“Shut up,” Eddie grouses. “You try telling Chris we had spaghetti and didn’t save him any.”

“No thanks,” Buck says immediately. “I do not court death.”

It makes Eddie laugh, which is Buck's aim, after all, and he grins his way through the meal prep.

Later, stomach full and the happiness a comfortable constant, Buck is stretched out on the couch, another bottle of beer resting against his hip, one arm tucked under his head. He is super conscious of one of his legs resting over Eddie's lap, Eddie's fingers circling his ankle.

"I don't understand why they don't just talk to each other."

Eddie gives him a look. "It's a movie, Buck."

"So?" Buck watches as neither of the characters communicate. Again. "How hard is it to talk about your feelings?"

There's a pointed silence.

"Whatever," Buck grouses. "We have notable trauma, they don't."

"Noticeable trauma," Eddie says, raising an eyebrow.

Buck kicks him with the leg that isn't held hostage. "Be nice, Eddie, or you can go home."

"You wouldn't kick me out," Eddie says with certainty.

Falling quiet, Buck turns back to the movie, but he's not really watching it. Eddie's not wrong. He wouldn't kick Eddie out. Ever. Even in their worst moments, the only thing he wanted was for Eddie to come back, for them to be *them* again.

The movie finishes and Buck blinks. "Did I fall asleep?"

"Yeah," Eddie says softly. He removes his hands from Buck's ankle. Buck can still feel the phantom heat of his fingers. "Come on, time for bed."

Buck frowns. "I was comfortable."

"And we can be comfortable upstairs," Eddie says, once again with the *duh* unspoken. "Up, Buckley, let's go."

Buck feels a little adrift as they walk up to his bedroom. Honestly, he's been feeling that way most of the night and he doesn't know how to make sense of what he's feeling. Leaning against the balcony railing, he watches Eddie root through his drawers, grabbing sleep clothes. "Eddie—"

"Wash up," Eddie tells him, tossing over the clothes.

Though the fight is on the tip of his tongue, Buck keeps it to himself. He realises he doesn't want to argue and goes into the bathroom, closing the door behind him. He stares at himself in the mirror. The silence that usually crowds him in the evenings he's alone is absent and there's comfort in Eddie being a yell away. He relaxes, washing up and getting changed.

When he comes out, Eddie moves past him, a hand brushing his hip and Buck shivers. The touch feels deliberate and Buck's thrown back over the last couple of hours. Everything Eddie's done is just what Buck needs. It overwhelms him and he sits on the edge of the bed, not sure what happens next. Will Eddie get blankets and go downstairs? Worse, will he want to share a bed? What if he wants to talk—

"Buck," Eddie says gently, resting a hand on Buck's shoulder making him jump. "Sorry."

"It's alright," Buck says, smiling softly. "Sorry."

Eddie's hand squeezes before it falls to his side. "Get in the bed."

"Are you—"

"Come on," Eddie says, and it could easily be an order, but for the tone. Buck doesn't like being pushed around and it shows that Eddie knows that; he's careful, gentle, and Buck nods, climbing into bed.

Buck rolls over, watches Eddie as he shuts off the light and charges his phone. Buck panics for a moment, before seeing his own on the nightstand. His heart picks up a beat, twop, and he's holding his breath. Maybe if he doesn't move this won't stop being a dream. It still feels like one when Eddie reaches out, fingers sliding through the hair that's soft against Buck's forehead. "Sleep, Buck."

Buck doesn't know if he can.

"You save me from my nightmares," Eddie says, with a self-deprecating smile.

*I'll save you from yours.*

Buck closes his eyes and breathes out.

Buck's not quite sure what to make of it..

The next morning, Eddie burns breakfast (of course), abandons it (of course), and bundles himself and Buck in the truck to get breakfast—and to pick up Chris.

"Bucky!" Chris pokes his head into the car and grins.

Buck will never not love hanging out with Chris and he leans over the seat to give Chris a high five. “Sleepover okay?”

“Jamie’s got a hamster,” Chris starts.

“No,” Eddie says immediately, buckling his seatbelt.

Chris looks at Buck. Buck looks at Eddie.

“No,” Eddie says again.

Buck smiles at Chris and turns back around. They’ve got this.

Two very full shifts later and Buck is sitting in the locker room, staring at his duffle. He doesn’t know if he’s got the energy to pack the rest of his shit in there and move, let alone drive home. His body aches, bruises starting to blossom from the fall he’d taken on a previous call, and he hisses as he stands.

The prospect of going home alone, tending to his hurts and sleeping in that bed all alone—Buck’s breath hitches and he closes his eyes, forehead pressed to the lockers.

There’s a rap on the glass and Buck whirls around, ready to put up the front, make out he’s okay, and deflates when he sees Eddie. Neither of them says anything for a moment, and then Eddie’s moving into the room, wordlessly packing the rest of Buck’s stuff into his bag. Buck doesn’t know where he gets his energy from. “Eddie.”

“You look like you’re gonna fall over,” Eddie says, frowning.

“Sorry,” Buck starts.

“Why?” Eddie looks up at him, surprised.

Buck sits on the bench again, cradling his ribs. They’re not broken, says Hen and Chim both, but they still hurt like a bitch. “Give me a minute and I’ll be good to go. You should go ome to Chris.”

“That’s not happening,” Eddie says. “I mean alone,” he amends, interpreting Buck’s expression correctly. “You’re coming with me.”

“Eddie—”

“Don’t argue with me.” Eddie straightens up, Buck’s bag on one shoulder, his on the other. “You alright to move?”

Buck nods, gives himself a minute to breathe in and out slowly, then pushes himself to his feet. He winces when his ribs twinge. “You can drop me off, it’s fine.”

Eddie stops them, hand on Buck’s arm. His thumb is resting against Buck’s pulse point and Buck wonders, a touch hysterically, if he can feel it racing. “You’re coming home with me,” he says again, gentler this time. “You’re always allowed to ask me for help.”

Breath catching in his throat, Buck doesn't know how to answer that. Eddie swipes his thumb once across the skin of Buck's wrist then lets go.

"I'll tell Chris not to jump on you," Eddie tells him as they head out of the station. "He's still banned from video games, so you'll have to entertain him some other way."

"It's not like we haven't had to before," Buck says, falling into the banter with ease. "At least this time it's a deserved punishment and not his dad being a technophobe."

Eddie glares at him over the top of the truck. "Hildy was watching me! She sees it all!"

Buck laughs, wincing as he slides into the passenger set, but the pain is worth it. Eddie helps with the seatbelt, which would be humiliating if Buck wasn't used to this. "Does Chris know I'm coming?"

"Nope," Eddie says, putting the truck in reverse. "Carla would kill me for one. Secondly, I'd hate to ruin the surprise."

Eddie's smile is fond and Buck can't help but match it, relaxing back against the seat. He can't wait to walk through that door and let Chris fill all the spaces that have grown in him since the last time. It always feels like coming home. Buck closes his eyes, pushes down the feeling. Chris isn't his and he should remember that.

"You still with me?"

Buck opens his eyes, head turning to look at Eddie. Eddie spares him a glance, then looks back at the road. "I'm not gonna be good company," he tries again. If he brings Chris and Eddie down with his mood, he'll never forgive himself.

"You think I was after the well?" Eddie huffs out a laugh. "Please, Buck, we'll ply you with painkillers, Chris can talk your ear off about whatever it is you two get excited about, then we'll go to sleep. It's not that hard."

"I could have done that at home."

"Yes," Eddie allows, Buck fascinated with how soft his touch when the steering wheel slides through his fingers. Why is everything about Eddie so gentle? "But I'd rather you be somewhere I can keep an eye on you."

The words signal exasperation, but the tone is fond, the smile on Eddie's face soft. Buck so often feels like a burden but Eddie's acting like he isn't. That this is something he wants to do, help Buck and make him—

"Fuck."

"Hey," Eddie says, sounding worried. "Are you crying?"

"No," Buck bites out, swiping at his face with the hand not pressed to his ribs. "Please keep driving."

Eddie does, thankfully, and Buck grits his teeth against the urge to keep crying. “I’m sorry.”

It’s Buck’s turn to be confused. “Why?”

“If you’re crying because someone wants to take care of you, I’ve been a shitty best friend.”

The words are still rattling around Buck’s head when it comes time for bed.

Chris is already tucked in, having dragged a story from both Buck and Eddie, and Eddie’s been putting stuff away in the kitchen, talking in low tones to Buck through the door. Buck’s been half paying attention, his mind still on the conversation in the car.

When Eddie steps back into the room, wiping his hands on the back of his jeans, he gives Buck a smile. “Ready for bed?”

“Yeah,” Buck says. “Toss some blankets, yeah?”

“As if,” Eddie says without hesitation. “No way are you taking the couch with those ribs.”

“Eddie,” Buck says. Eddie pauses at whatever he hears in Buck’s tone. Buck’s not sure how he sounds, barely knows how he feels. “What you said in the truck—”

There’s no judgement, no *embarrassment*. “Yeah?”

Buck opens his mouth, closes it. “You haven’t been a shitty best friend.”

“I have,” Eddie presses. Then, with a sigh, “sometimes.”

“So have I.” Buck groans as he rights himself, grateful when Eddie holds out a hand and takes most of his weight to help him stand. “I don’t know how to accept it. Someone taking care of me.”

Eddie nods. Buck doesn’t know how he always gets it, how he knows Buck so well when Buck barely knows what’s happening inside of his own head. Eddie’s hands are on his hips and he tugs a little, careful so that Buck doesn’t stumble, and drags him into a hug. Buck lets out a shaky breath, turns his face into Eddie’s neck. The angle would be awkward but for his stoop and he lets himself take the comfort Eddie’s offering.

“I know,” Eddie says quietly, a kiss ghosting over Buck’s temple. “You will.”



Over the following two days, Buck's body mends and he's able to move without wanting to punch himself in the face. He spends the time dicking around on his phone—having a photo off with Marjan about which one of them is more internet famous—and letting Chris talk him into playing almost his entire catalogue of video games.

Eddie's a silent presence in the background. He disappears for work, leaving Carla in charge, and she spends most of the time feeding Buck, berating him for not looking after himself, and throwing him knowing looks. Buck doesn't know what she's getting at. When Eddie comes home, he manages to put together a good dinner (Buck finds the takeout containers in the trash), settle down with them in front of the TV and throw an arm over Buck's shoulders, squeeze against him even when there's space, and on the second night, when they're an hour into the movie, Buck can feel Eddie's fingers playing with his hair.

It startles him, but he does his best not to react. Relaxing back against Eddie's arm, he catches the small quirk of a smile playing at Eddie's mouth and complains about something in the movie. Chris interjects, Buck only tangentially paying attention, because Eddie's fingers are scratching lightly at his scalp.

"Gross," Eddie says, wrinkling his nose. Buck can agree; there's way too much blood for a movie Chris can watch, but he doesn't answer. He can feel himself relaxing further, embarrassed when he pushes into Eddie's fingers. Thankfully, Eddie doesn't seem to notice. Except then, on the next pass, he scratches a little lighter. The sensation has Buck shivering and he swallows down the noise in his throat.

Reaching over, he rests a hand on Eddie's leg and squeezes. Eddie looks at him, picking up on Buck's silent cues, and nods. He keeps his hand in Buck's hair, but contends himself with running his fingers through it instead of scratching. Buck breathes out, shaky, but doesn't tense up again.

"Work tomorrow," Eddie says, his voice pitched low. Chris is still watching the movie, working his way through a packet of candy Buck's surprised Eddie let him have.

Buck nods. "Can't wait. I feel like I've put on five pounds in two days."

"Now who's dramatic." Eddie shakes his head. "Not that you're wrong; Carla's cooking does have that effect. So good."

"Anyone's would be," Buck says, smirking, "compared to yours."

Eddie glares, but he huffs, looking back at the TV. "Rude."

"Not wrong," Buck says lightly, sing-song, watching Chris out of the corner of his eye. Either Chris is doing a very good job of pointedly ignoring them (something he's practised at), or they're managing to keep their tone low. When Eddie doesn't reply, he pouts. "I'm injured."

"You were," Eddie corrects, but he's smiling. "All the rope rescues for you tomorrow."

Buck pauses. "You're not going to fight me for them?"

Looking nonchalant, Eddie shrugs. “Consider it a gift to you.”

*You’re my gift.*

The words get trapped somewhere in Buck’s throat. He can’t stop staring at Eddie. It almost feels like a relief when the movie finishes, and Eddie starts making noises about sleeping. Again, Buck finds himself being tugged in the direction of Eddie’s bed, even when the couch will suffice, but it feels not unlike the tsunami; Buck drowning, being pulled in different directions, but this time Eddie’s there; a guide, an anchor, when Buck feels most adrift.

Days pass into weeks.

Buck’s in his truck, on the way back to his apartment, and he’s startled by the *wrongness* of it. He can’t remember the last time he spent the night in his own home. Turning into the parking lot, he sits behind the wheel, knuckles white as he grips it, staring at the window of his apartment.

Not that he wants to hang around Eddie like dead weight. He’d dashed out of the locker room, a yell over his shoulder that he was late to pick up Chris. Not that buck expects them to hang out after work or anything, but ever since—well, since Texas, Eddie’s not been far.

Angry at himself, he grabs his duffel from the back seat and heads into the apartment building, fighting the lead weight settling in his stomach. It’s his fucking home! Just because Eddie doesn’t mind him hanging out with him and Chris, Buck needs to get a grip. He’s not part of their family and he needs to stop. Maybe go out, find someone to—

His phone rings shrilly through his thoughts and he grabs it, answering it with a harsh, “What?”

A pause. “Where are you?”

“At my apartment,” Buck snaps. “You remember? That place I live.”

Eddie’s quiet on the other end of the phone and Buck grips the edge of the counter, closing his eyes, opening his mouth to apologise. Eddie talks first, his tone soft. “I remember.”

“I’m sorry,” Buck blurts out. He presses his hand to his eyes. “I think the shift must have got to me.”

“You sure you’re alright?”

*No.* Buck nods. “Yeah.”

A hum. Eddie’s voice is still quiet when he says, “alright. See you tomorrow.”

When the dial tone rings in his ear, Buck lets the phone slide out of his hands, hitting the counter and sliding away from him. Buck swallows once, twice, feels the burn of tears in his eyes. He doesn't understand what's happening. He doesn't realise he's slid down to the floor until he feels the cold beneath his butt, his head falling back to rest against the island. Time slides away from him and he breathes slowly, trying to focus on the here and now, even if it's the last place he wants to be.

"Buck?"

Buck's breathing sounds too loud.

"Head up, Buck, come on."

*Eddie*, Buck's brain helpfully supplies. He blinks, stares up into Eddie's face.

"There you are," Eddie says, voice soft. "You with me?"

"Eddie?" Buck says, his voice scratchy.

Eddie nods, his arms on Buck's. He tugs gently, helping Buck up off the floor. Buck lets himself be led, unsurprised when Eddie pushes him down onto the couch. There's a glass of water on the coffee table, a blanket against the arm.

Buck stares, wonders if there's an echo when he says, "Eddie," again.

"I'm here," Eddie says, and Buck's sure this isn't real, that he's gone mad. "Not mad," Eddie says, "just lonely."

The word catches in Buck's ribcage, feels like a knife. "I don't like being alone."

Eddie sits next to him on the couch, turning sideways, knee pressed to Buck's thigh. "I know."

"I hate it," Buck continues, staring around the room, at the cold whiteness of everything. He's tried to make it a home, put stuff up, kept some of the drawings Chris does for him, photos hung on the walls. It doesn't feel like anything. Not the way Eddie's does when he walks through the door. The smell, the sounds, the comfort of Chris laughing, of Eddie grousing about something.

Buck's chest feels tight.

"Buck," Eddie says, his tone hard. "Look at me."

Buck does.

"That's it." Eddie's tone shifts back into soft and he reaches over, pulls Buck closer to him. Buck tenses up but Eddie doesn't let go. He keeps talking, the words washing over Buck like a balm. "You never ask for help. I know I don't either. We've both got—what did you call it, notable trauma?"

It's funny, but Buck doesn't laugh. He starts to relax, hand fisting in Eddie's shirt.

"You're lonely," Eddie says, not that Buck needs the reminder. "But you're not alone."

Buck clenches his eyes shut, letting out a shaky breath.

"You hear me?" Eddie says again, burying his face in Buck's hair. They shift around a little until it's comfortable, Buck pressed against Eddie, the two of them stretched out on Buck's couch.

"Chris," Buck says, panicked. If Eddie's here then who's got Chris?

"He's with Hen and Karen." Eddie's fingers are on the back of Buck's neck, grounding him. "He's safe."

Okay. Chris is safe. Buck's not alone.

"Eddie," he says, hating himself for this weakness but unable to keep from saying, "I don't wanna be alone."

Eddie sucks in a breath, lets it out. He sounds wrecked. "I know. You're not, I promise."

Buck shakes his head. "I am. When you go home. When everyone—I'm alone. Abby left and Ali and I'm alone." The words spill out of him, water running over him, drowning him, holding him fast. "My parents left me alone. Maddie. You." Eddie's breath hitches. "Why doesn't anyone stay?"

Arms tightening, Eddie drags him up, mouth pressed to his forehead, breath hot against Buck's face. "Not anymore, you understand me?"

Buck wants to believe it. Eddie's been here, all this time, taking care of Buck. Dr. Copeland says he can accept it for what it is; Eddie caring. Buck wants to, but he doesn't know how.

"It's okay," Eddie says, watching him carefully.

"What is?"

"That you don't believe me." Eddie says it so matter of fact and though Buck wants to deny it, he can't make himself say it. Eddie's thumb rubs over his cheek. Is Buck crying again? "I'll show you."

Buck doesn't know what that means. "How?"

"If you don't wanna be alone," Eddie starts, cuts himself off. There's pink on his cheeks, determination in his expression. "My bed is cold without you."

"Mine is too big," Buck blurts out.

"Alright," Eddie says, even though Buck doesn't know what he's agreeing to. He curls into Eddie, emotionally wrung out, not sure where they go from here. Have they solved anything?

Buck's still going to be in this cold apartment and Eddie might want him around sometimes, but all the time? Buck doesn't know if Eddie likes him enough to—

Fingers scratch against his scalp.

Buck lets out a soft noise.

"I wasn't sure," Eddie says, words drifting softly into Buck's ear where Eddie's lips are pressed. "But you asked me to stop."

"I didn't know," Buck says, shaky, groaning when Eddie's nails scrape down the nape of his neck. He gets a hand between Eddie's back and the couch, curls his fingers into the fabric of Eddie's shirt. A henley. Yellow. Fuck, he looks so good.

Eddie whispers, "I know," and adjusts his hips, slides further back and *oh*. Buck rocks his hips up, a little out of it because this is Eddie, and they're on his couch, and he's, he's chasing — "That's it."

There's a counterpoint; Eddie's fingers in his hair, against his scalp, and his hips, the thick curve of his dick pressed to Buck's.

"Eddie," he manages to get out.

"You can have it," Eddie grits out, dropping his free hand to Buck's ass and dragging him up. Buck punches out a groan, body quivering as he his orgasm starts to build, pleasure pulsing at the base of his spine. Eddie's breathing in his ear, there's the rustle of fabric, and Buck can smell the fading scent of Eddie's cologne.

"Please," Buck bites out.

"Take it," Eddie says, biting at the curve of Buck's jaw. "You can have whatever want."

Buck sobs out Eddie's name as he grinds his hips down, lost in the sensations of Eddie's hands, his voice, the pleasure cresting up and over, drowning out everything but Eddie, Eddie, Eddie.

"You with me?"

Buck hums, craking open an eye. They're still on the couch, his pants feel gross, but Eddie's stroking a hand down his back so Buck can deal.

"Buck?"

"Yeah," Buck says.

Eddie shifts a little, extricating himself enough to grab the water bottle. Buck makes a disgruntled noise, but can't deny he's thirsty. When Eddie's satisfied he's drunk enough, they settle back, Eddie's hand drifting through his hair. "Move in with me."

Buck's body tenses. "Eddie—"

"I'm asking," Eddie says, and when Buck pulls back, he can see the apprehension on Eddie's face. "Not telling. And no," he adds, "it's not pity."

"I can get over it."

Eddie doesn't answer. He gestures for Buck to lie back down and after a momentary hesitation, Buck does, sinking against the lines of Eddie's body. He's lulled into comfort by the press of Eddie's hands against his back and neck, the steady rhythm of Eddie's chest rising and falling.

"Part of me thinks I'll never be over Shannon," Eddie says. Buck hardly dares breathe. "I've always thought I wasn't good enough," Eddie continues, burying his face in Buck's hair. "And yet every time I look up, there you are. Still here."

The words take a moment to resonate; Buck's broken and splintered, but Eddie is too. Maybe their damaged parts match up, maybe they don't. Somehow, they fit together anyway, and Eddie's been here. He's still here, Chris safe with friends because Buck needs him.

"I've never been a priority," Buck rasps out.

"Yes you have," Eddie says with a certainty that makes Buck wants to hold on and never let go. "You and Chris? You have to know you're everything."

Buck tightens his grip on Eddie. "I don't know if I can do this."

Eddie huffs a breath. "I know. Neither do I, sometimes, but I'm not letting you go, Buck."

"Promise?"

Gentle pressure on Buck's chin tilts his head up and he stares into Eddie's eyes and Buck's breath catches in his throat at the expression on Eddie's face. "You have every part of me that doesn't belong to Chris."

When Eddie kisses him, Buck lets himself fall.

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