I Don't Like It, Don't You?

Posted originally on the fanfiction.lol at https://fanfiction.lol/works/1021.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	General (non relationship-focused)
Fandom:	One Piece (Manga)
Relationship:	Whitebeard Pirates (One Piece) & Original Character(s)
Characters:	Whitebeard Pirates Shirohige | Whitebeard | Edward Newgate, Fushichou Marco | Phoenix Marco, Portgas D. Ace, Diamond Jozu, Thatch (One Piece), Vista (One Piece), Blamenco (One Piece), Rakuyo (One Piece), Namur (One Piece), Blenheim (One Piece), Curiel (One Piece), Kingdew (One Piece), Haruta (One Piece), Atmos (One Piece), Speed Jiru, Fossa (One Piece), Izou (One Piece), Original Male Character(s)
Additional Tags:	Fluff and Angst, Surprise Adoption, Found Family, Fix-It modified canon- Everyone Lives/Nobody Dies, Pre-Canon, Unreliable Narrator, Confused Whitebeard Pirates, Good Parent Shirohige | Whitebeard | Edward Newgate, Kurohige | Blackbeard | Marshall D. Teach Dies, at some point, Finch is upsessed with birds, Trans Male Character, Emotional Constipation, Weird Plot Shit, Constructive Criticism Welcome, Not Beta Read, Other Additional Tags To Be Added, Slow to Update, Self-Hatred, Toxic Masculinity Used to Cope With Ones Transness, Suicidal Thoughts
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of Down Where The Raven Falls
Stats:	Published: 2026-11-02 Words: 23,344 Chapters: 7/?

I Don't Like It, Don't You?

by Rooks_Rook

Summary

Its stable, not nice or good but stable on Honeysuckle island and that's what he thinks he needs. Though what he truly needs becomes apparent when a pirate shows up on the island and comes to the cave he has been spending the last few months in, but of course like the stubborn child he is he refuses to accept that.

or

trans male oc gets picked up by the Whitebeard pirates and is forced to learn what its like to have a loving family after so long without one

Chapter 1

The clouds rolled over the sky as I walked through the dense forest surrounding Honeysuckle Village even with the trees' coverage I could still feel the harsh wild that was always present here no matter the weather.

I had just finished a small fishing trip down at the shore since I'm out of food and I'm not quite ready to head into the village and deal with the people.

Glancing forward I see the cave I've been staying in for the past five months. It looks rather small from the outside which is why it's perfect for me to stay in at least until I leave here. No one other than a few kids ever try to go into my cave and even then they usually run away before actually entering.

“Stupid kids…” I grumble to myself as I cross my arms accidentally whacking myself in the head with my fishing rod in the process making me let out a small yelp and quickly look around just to be sure no one saw that.

The only thing to witness my fumble is a weird blue bird that looks like it's on fire. I think it's the biggest bird I've seen on Honeysuckle Island or anywhere if I'm being honest with myself.

As I look at the bird it starts to make a noise that sounds like a laugh and I jump almost dropping my things.

“Wha- Hey! Don't laugh at me you dumb bird!” I yell threw gritted teeth but there's no real anger behind my words. I'm way too distracted by the way it looks to be mad.

I've never seen that type of bird here before or anywhere for that matter, it might just be the wind blowing against its feathers but it looks like its on fire and its face-

Wait, is it wearing fucking glasses?!

Ok yeah I've officially gone insane.

I'm hallucinating a bird wearing glasses. This is the end for me.

I turn away from the weird bird hallucination thing and continue onward.

I walk into the cave quickly placing down my makeshift fishing rod and bucket full of fish walking over to my bag that's resting against the wall of the cave.

It was dumb of me to go out without my water pouch especially with it being so hot today but I was so focused on getting food for my supper tonight that I entirely forgot to bring it.

It only takes a second to find given I don't own many things in the first place, the majority of my stuff being lazily thrown about the cave in easy to reach spots.

I open the pouch and quickly chug about half of it before stopping and letting out a sigh the coolness of the water helping soothe the slight scratch in my throat.

Shoving it back into my bag I move over to the left to sit down on the pile of stolen blankets most of which are from the rich prick who lives on top of the hill overlooking the village.

I move some of the blankets over to reveal a tattered brown notebook with a finch on the cover picking it and the pencil that was next to it up and I start flipping through the pages each containing a drawing of a different type of bird with information about them written as well.

Finally I reach a blank page at the very end of the book and start to do a rough sketch of the bird I saw. Even if it was a hallucination from my lack of sleep and food, I still wanna draw it.

Time passes by quickly as I work away at the drawing until the nagging pain of hunger gets too much and I have to stop to make food for myself.

It's starting to get dark outside as I place down my book and stand up walking over to the back corner of the cave where I have a stack of sticks and branches I collected from the forest floor to kindle my fire. I pick up an arms full and make my way back over to the middle of the cave where my firepit rests. I crouch down and place the sticks in a pattern before reaching over and grabbing my lighter to start the fire next i stand back up and go over to my bucket that contains the three fish i caught earlier in the day and it doesn't take long for me to get two of them set up over the fire to cook.

Sitting back down on my blankets I stare at the fire watching as my fish cook the pangs of pain from hunger getting stronger as the smell of cooking meat starts to reach my nose. I shut my eyes and let out a deep breath through my nose trying to ignore the pain the best I can as I wait.

“That smells pretty good yoi” My eyes snap open and i let out a gasp as i swing my head to look at the entrance of the cave where a tall man with a fucked up hair cut stands causally looking around like he owned the place.

I scramble backwards desperately looking around for my knife that I only ever use to cut up my food. I soon realize that my knife is sitting on the rock right next to him and there is no way in hell I'm gonna try and grab that now.

“Who the fuck are you?!” I yell trying my best to sound intimidating and failing miserably as my words come out high pitched and squeaky making me cringe at the sound of my own voice.

The man puts his hands up and gets a lazy smirk on his face.

“Whoa calm down kid i mean no harm yoi” he says in a tone that just irritates me more. He's talking to me like I'm some scared animal who's about to run. Which to be fair isn't that inaccurate to how I feel at this moment but still! I don't enjoy being talked down to by a random man.

“That doesn't tell me who you are” My voice is shaking as i force the words out of my mouth

It's not like I'm particularly scared of this guy, it's my paranoia of how he could be perceiving me that's making me nervous. That realization is so ridiculous that I almost laugh honestly how stupid must I be to be more worried about if this random stranger who has burst into my home sees me as a boy and not if he's going to kill me or not.

“You really don’t recognize me?” he asks, sounding genuinely surprised

If I wasn't so nervous right now I would have scoffed and rolled my eyes at him. I hate self-aggrandizing assholes almost as much as I hate the Marines which is convenient since most people like that are Marines or pirates but I don't hold any particularly strong judgments of them.

I try to force some snarky remark out but I just can't get my words to work right now so I just shake my head and press my back against the cool wall of the cave, shivering slightly at the feeling of it against my arms.

“Well im Marco first division commander of the whitebeard pirates yoi”

I feel like someone punched me in the stomach.

Whitebeard is a name even the most sheltered person would recognize. The strongest man in the world. The captain of the biggest crew this side of the grand line. Now that I'm actually looking at him I see the massive tattoo of whitebeards symbol smack dab in the middle of his chest. How the hell did I miss that?! If this guy is the first division commander no matter how hard I try, I'll never stand a chance against him in any way.

“What do you want?” I didn't even realize I was talking until I heard my own words spewing out of my mouth.

He pointed at the roof of the cave confusing me for a second before I glanced up.

The moss? What could a pirate want with moss?

Most likely seeing the confusion on my face he answers my question before I can even ask.

“This moss is only found here and i read in a book that is can be used for medicinal purposes i want to see if that's true yoi” he pauses for a moment before continuing

“Im a doctor”

Ooooh you know that makes a lot of sense. Bits and pieces that I've heard from random people on the street or on docks come back to me now and I think I've heard of him and his skills as a doctor.

It also makes me calm down a little. A doctor wouldn't hurt a random kid in a cave right?

Im pulled out of my thoughts by the smell of burning meat

“My fish!” I yelp and scramble forward to my fire and now burning fish Marco completely exiting my mind as I am suddenly reminded once again of the pain of hunger in my stomach.

Thankfully my fish are only a little charred by the time I get them off the fire and onto the plate I carved out of wood when I first arrived here. I let out a sigh of relief before basically inhaling both of them in seconds and I regret not making all three as soon as I'm done.

Suddenly Marco's laugh pierces my ears and I feel a pang of embarrassment hit me.

“Are you just gonna stand there or are you going to get the moss?” I snap at him and shoot him a glare which just makes him laugh more. I feel like I should regret telling him he could come in but he's a god damn pirate he was most definitely going to do it no matter what i said to him.

“Alright sorry I just didn’t want to intrude on your space” he says before swiftly walking over to the back of the cave where the moss grew over the entirety of the roof and a little bit of the back wall.

With him on that side of the cave I rush over to where my knife is and grab it. I know there is no way in hell I could hurt him but holding onto it will give me some peace of mind. Marco doesn't seem to care much about it anyway as he only glances at me for a second before getting back to collecting the moss into a jar.

Where did that jar come from? Whatever doesn't matter.

My eyes only leave him for a second to glance outside only to be met with the pitch black of night, the light from the moon barely able to peek through the thickness of the trees. It would be pointless to try and run id just end up tripping on a root and breaking my neck. So instead I move to sit down and watch Marco to make sure that the moss is the only thing he takes. I mean he is a pirate after all.

“Your family live in the village?” I jump slightly not expecting him to talk to me again let alone ask about my family of all things.

“Why do you care?” I ask wearily while squinting at him.

“It's pretty concerning to find a random kid in a cave completely alone at night don't you think yoi?” he says looking over at me with a raised eyebrow.

“Fuck that's a good point” i mumble under my breath quiet enough that Marco couldn't hear it or if he did he just pretend that he didn’t.

“No they don't, it's just me here. I came on a supply ship five months ago" I don't know why I told him that.

I could have, should have even, lied and told him that, yes! I have an amazing loving family who knows exactly where I am so if you do anything the Marines will be on you in seconds! Not that there are any Marines anywhere near here. This island is too small and insignificant for the government to care about it. I mean that's why I came here but I'm getting off topic.

Maybe he has a devil fruit that makes people tell the truth. That would be pretty useful for a doctor then no one could downplay their injuries to you. I think I would be able to tell if he was using a devil fruit like that though since I would probably feel a strong compulsion to tell the truth but I didn't. Whatever, it's too late to take back what I said now.

Pulling myself out of my thoughts I look back at Marco just as he closed his jar that was now jam packed full of moss. He looks over at me and smiles slightly, I just cross my arms and continue to stare hard at him.

“Do you mind if I stay here for the night? The people in the village aren't too welcoming yoi and I don't have any camping supplies" he said while already sitting down on the other side of the fire leaning against a large rock.

I snort. That was an understatement. I'm about 95% sure that they would have killed me by now for living here if I wasn't a kid. Even then I still got rocks and sticks thrown at me by the kids of the village the few times I have gone into the village to get supplies legally.

Do I really want this pirate doctor with a messed up hair cut in my home though? I mean he hasn't done anything yet but i haven't even known him for an hour so there is no way I could tell if he will do something or not and it's not like there's anything dangerous on this island that could hurt someone like him other than the nipping of the wind.

I bite the inside of my cheek as I contemplate it really shouldn't be this hard of a decision but it is. Maybe it's because of my lack of human interaction recently or more likely I've gone completely crazy and the bird from earlier was just the first domino to fall.

Wait who am i kidding even if i asked him to leave he wouldn't listen i mean look at him! He's lounging around like he owns the place.

“Looks like you already made the decision for me” I grumble out while glaring at him like I could make him explode from just a look.

“But you have to give me any weapons you have!” I say as I point at him accusatorily realizing that even if i couldn't beat him in a fight ill have a better shot at getting away if he had nothing to attack me with.

“Don't have any” he said as he leaned back placing his arms behind his head as a makeshift pillow.

I gawked at him in disbelief and let out an odd noise that I didn't even know I could make which made Marco chuckle.

Fucking asshole.

“That's bullshit! You're a pirate, you have to have some type of weapon!” I say as I jump up to get a better look at him over the fire and much to my surprise I couldn't see a single blade or gun on him. I thought I just missed it before with the rush of emotions and the distraction of his tattoo but sure as hell I see nothing.

Marco opens his eyes and smirks at me adjusting his position slightly to get more comfortable against the rough rock.

“I prefer to fight with kicks” he says matter of factly making me grit my teeth in annoyance. Why’s he always sound so smug and casual at the same time? It's frustrating.

“Whatever…” I mumble and flop back down on my blankets, completely giving up on getting any type of upper hand over him.

Him having no weapons makes zero sense to me but hey im not the one whose part of a yanko crew, he is so what the hell do i know about anything involving battle? Well I know a

bit like how to hold a sword properly and how to shoot a gun but that's still nothing compared to him I bet.

I reached over to the small pile of wood next to the fire and threw a few pieces in so the fire doesn't get too low. Thankfully the cave is small enough that the fire heats it up perfectly but big enough that the smoke doesn't clog up the place.

“Hey kid?” i don't even look up from the fire as I let out a hum of acknowledgement as I reach over for my note book to continue working away at the drawing of the bird from earlier, not feeling comfortable going to bed just yet while he's still awake.

I'm still not sure if the bird was a hallucination or not…

“You never told me your name yoi” I tensed up automatically.

I haven't actually decided on a name for myself yet, given i haven't been talking to anyone for the past five months and there have been more pressing issues than what people should call me. I haven't really thought about it.

Realizing ive just been sitting here for who knows how long not saying anything, I shoot a look at the cover of my book staring at the finch etched into the cover of my favorite notebook.

“Finch” i say it so quickly i cant take any more time over thinking it.

Fuck that is so stupid. It's like I'm one of those shitty undercover people in a kids book smashing a name together from the nearest objects. At least Finch is a nice sounding name and it's my favorite bird so that's a plus as well.

“Thank you for letting me stay here Finch” I could hear the smile in his voice and it made an odd feeling rise up in me that I did my best to stamp down as quickly as possible.

“Yeah whatever, hurry up and go to sleep before I change my mind” I say as I flop down on my blankets with my back facing the fire I grab one blanket and throw it over myself.

I really need to get off this island so I can actually talk to people and I'm not acting like this because one of the strongest pirates in the world thanked me for something I technically didn't even agree to.

I think today was the weirdest day of my life and im not sure how exactly to feel about it yet

Chapter 2

When I wake the next morning Marco is gone and the only indication he was here is the bag laying on the floor and the pot sitting next to it.

Which is a little confusing because none of this was with him at the entrance last night. He probably brought it in when I was asleep, but why? I thought he was just here for the moss. It doesn't make sense that he is basically moving into here with me.

He didn't even bother asking for my permission! What a dick move!

The anxiety that swirls in my stomach overpowers any anger I have for him as I stare at his things from my spot on the ground. I've been just staring at his things since I first opened my eyes, only bothering to sit up so I can look at it better.

I can't just sit here staring until he comes back from wherever he is. I need to get up and try my best to continue my normal routine no matter how distracting this weird pirate may be.

Letting out a deep sigh I finally shove my blankets off and stretch my legs. I forgot to take off my boots last night in the rush of things so I just stood up and kicked my blankets into a pile out of the way so I don't step on them before moving over to my bag, digging my water pouch out of it and drinking the remains. I'll have to go fill it in the well again.

Putting it down beside me before going back to digging in it. I grab out my last can of peaches and quickly scarf down half of it. I'll save the other half for lunch or dinner if I'm not able to figure out what else to eat by then.

Right as I place down the can and move to pick up the water pouch instead I shoot a glance back at the pile of Marcos stuff and stop mid movement.

I wonder what's in his bag…

It wont hurt anyone to take a small peak right? I mean it's not like he’s here to stop me. And it's not like I'm going to steal anything! I'm just gonna…

Check for weapons! Yeah! There's no way he has no weapons, they have to be in there! And for my own safety I should confiscate them until he leaves.

I practically skip over to his bag finally having sound enough of a reason to snoop.

I threw a glance into the pot just in case and like I expected there was nothing inside it.

Hesitating for a second as I reach down for the bag I realize I should probably make sure he's not coming back before I start my search. Even though he's been fine so far i don't think he'll appreciate me digging in his things. I certainly wouldn't if I was him.

Flicking over to the entrance I look around wildly for any sign of him and find none making me grin.

Perfect!

I practically rip the bag open when I reach it again and start digging into it. Hopefully I can find something to warrant me doing this because I could really use the distraction.

The first thing I grab is the jar of moss and I start to wonder how it could be used as some type of medicine. I mean it's just moss. What could it possibly do?

Next I pull out a change of clothes, boring. Then there's a book which I'm guessing is the one he found out about the moss in and just under that there's just a plain notebook that I flip open to see what looks like notes about medical supplies. Flipping though the rest of it I confirm that's what it is and disappointed I put it with the other book.

At least I know he's not lying about being a doctor now, that's a good thing I guess.

After that there's just a bunch of random things that i don't even bother looking at for more than a second as they peak my interest and after throwing all the boring things to the ground I reach the bottom of the bag.

I stare at the inside of the now empty bag with a deep frown on my face.

“Well that was anticlimactic” I mumble to myself while reaching up to my necklace to roll it between my fingers.

All that worrying and paranoia over nothing, that's just great.

I know I should feel relieved he wasn't hiding a bomb or something in here but… I don't know. I've been alone with nothing to do for almost half a year now and was hoping for some type of adventure I guess. Don’t know why I thought I would find it in a bag though.

Huffing softly I shove everything back into the bag trying to get it as close to what it was like before so he doesn't suspect that I went into it while disappointment gnaws at me.

I should probably change clothes now. I've been wearing this outfit for two days now and I'm starting to stink. Normally I would have worn this for one more day but now that there's a person actually near me I feel even more self-conscious than normal.

Going over to the small pile of clothes I have obtained from various legal and illegal ways I grab a random assortment of things to throw on not really caring about what I wear at this moment.

Unzipping my boots and kicking them off causing them to slam into the wall before bouncing back and almost hitting me. Oops.

And as quickly as i possibly can i throw off my worn brown leather jacket that is too big on me and the long sleeve shirt with green and white stripes off and replace it with another baggy long sleeve that was a nice solid forest green before slipping my jacket back on. One of the only things I appreciate about my body is my lack of a chest even though the universe decided to curse me with being born into the wrong body. At least it had the grace to make my chest small enough that I can fully hide it by wearing loose clothes.

Shaking the thought from my head I reach up to my neck and pull my necklace out from under my shirt. My necklace is nothing special looks wise, it's a long necklace made of black string braided together, at the bottom of it is a white stone knit into it held by a wooden bead the colour of a hazelnut.

Then finally I changed out of a pair of black sweatpants into a pair of loose light blue jeans quickly moving back to the pile and grabbing my belt and putting that on as well then grabbing my boots and sleeping them back on making sure to zip up the side of them.

Now I can finally get on with my day.

I grab my water pouch and notebook as I head out of the cave shivering slightly as the harsh breeze smashes against me. I don't think I'll ever get used to how strong the wind is here even with the trees as cover, it still manages to break through and attack my exposed skin. I don't understand how Marco was walking around with his shirt open, how was he not cold?

I shove my notebook and water pouch into the pockets of my jacket so I don't drop them or have them get caught on anything.

Moving into the thinker parts of the forest pushing though bushes and plants. I end up getting smacked in the face by a branch I pushed out of my way making me let out a yelp and I send a heated glare towards the tree the branch is attached to like it personally attacked me.

As I walk I start to wonder where Marco is. He was already gone when I woke up and i didn't see him at all when I left the cave so I know he's not in the general area.

He's probably in the village trying to get something to eat.

The key word there is trying.

The people of Honeysuckle village don't like strangers in the slightest. I learned that the hard way when I tried to go and check out the town and got chased out by men with guns. None of them actually shot at me but if i stuck around any longer i don't doubt that they would have. They've cooled off somewhat now so I can actually go into town without the fear of a bullet going into my head but there is always someone tailing me like I'm some criminal! Which I am, but that doesn't make it any less rude!

Finally I'm brought back from my thought spiral as I reach an opening with a dilapidated shack that looks like it's about to fall in on itself and a well that's covered in vines and other

plants I don’t know the names of.

I think this used to be a farm of some kind but it's hard to tell given how messed up the building and well are.

I wonder why it was abandoned? I wish there was someone I could ask.

With how overgrown the well is I didn't think the water inside would be good to drink when I first stumbled upon it after my first encounter with the towns folk, but i haven't died from it yet so it must be fine!

It takes about ten minutes for me to lower the bucket down, bring it back up, fill my water pouch, drink it and then fill it up once again.

“What should I do now?” I ask myself aloud, tapping my finger against my chin as I think.

Usually I plan out what I'm going to do the next day every night based on the things I need to do and the things I want to do but i didn't get a chance to do that last night which I'm regretting quite greatly now as I stand here like an idiot next to the well.

Maybe I should draw more? No, I'm getting sick of doing that. Go sneak into the rich pricks house on the hill? No, I did that two days ago and I don't wanna change getting caught by going too often.

hmmmm

“Oh I know!” I say turning around so fast I almost trip as I start to make my way in the direction of the beach.

Last week I spotted a flock of rooks nesting in a tree which is odd because the usually don't move their rookeries unless something has happened to the old one which wouldn't make any

sense because just a few days before i saw them there i went to see them in their old trees which was right next to the rich guys house.

I want to try and figure out why they moved there instead of near one of the many farm lands that are on the island.

It could be that the villagers pushed them out of their old nesting spot for some reason so they moved the rookery somewhere safer and away from anyone who could damage their nests or there could be something wrong with the trees over there that made it so they needed to move all the way over to the beach instead.

Whatever the reason I would love to just watch them for a bit, rooks are such an interesting and beautiful species. They are extremely intelligent and resourceful birds who, like other corvids, know how to use basic tools and I would love to see that in person if anything.

It takes about an hour for me to reach the beach and another thirty minutes to actually get to the tree that sits right on the edge of the beach and the forest, the loud calls of the rooks as they fly in and out of the rookery.

Excitement flows through me as I look upon the birds. I haven't been close to a rookery in a while, I almost forgot how cool the rows and rows of nests placed only a few meters apart from each other are.

Behind the trees I see a flash of blue and to my shock the same bird from yesterday is flying by.

Huh, I guess I didn't imagine it in a dehydrated state of mania after all! Cool!

But that bird isn't what I'm here for and no matter how beautiful it looks while flying over my head going in the dissection i had just came from, its not what im focusing on at the moment and now that i know it wasn't my imagination and that its still in the area i can track it down latter to study.

With the blue bird behind me I focus back on the rooks.

I take a step forward to get a better look at them and-

“What ya doing Finch yoi?”

I scream and fall on my ass from turning around so quickly to look at him. How the hell did I not hear him coming?!

The Rooks are all most definitely gone now. Great!

Marcos laughing at me and he doesn't even try to conceal it and I have to resist the urge to get a bunch of sand to throw into his eye.

“What the fuck dude?! Where did you even come from?!” I yell as I point at him while cringing at myself from how high pitched my voice sounded.

“I'm sorry for spooking you yoi, I came from the forest” he states after he finally stops laughing. He walks forward in two long steps and extends his hand down to help me up.

I ignore his apology as I stare at his hand for a few long moments before deciding to just take it. He may be an annoying prick but that doesn't mean I can't accept his help.

I brush the sand off of myself before looking back at the tree and like I thought all but six of the birds are gone.

“Just perfect, it's going to be so much harder to figure it out now” I whine as I cross my arms, my plan to watch the birds for odd behaviors until i got hungry thoroughly ruined whatever time for plan B.

“What are you trying to figure out?” he asks as he moves to stand beside me and I have to crane my neck a little to be able to look at his face.

Geez I could tell he was tall but it's super noticeable when he's right next to me.

“Im trying to find out why those rooks moved here.” I say as I gesture towards the few sitting in the trees.

“They usually live near farm land, grave yards, or parks, sometimes they move close to beaches but that usually only when said beach is highly populated by people so they can eat the scraps of food they drop and obviously there isn't anyone other then a family of coconut crabs living here” I ramble out quickly as I walk forward to the trees.

I think that's the most I've said at once in my entire life, it makes me a little embarrassed.

“Got any theories?” he questions while walking beside me. I can't tell if his tone is condescending or genuine, making me squint at him suspiciously for a few moments which he doesn't pay any mind to.

I decide to just assume he's being genuine so I can keep talking about birds.

“I have four actually! Option one is that they were pushed out by the farmers and they decided this is the safest spot to rebuild" I pause for a second as we reach the bottom of the tree. The few rooks in the tree pay us no mind as I stare up at them.

“That seems likely from the few interactions I've had with them yoi” he said and I nod in agreement.

“Option two is that something happened to the trees they were living in before, could have been killed by some type of bug or infection or it could have died naturally i don't know” the rooks look healthy from here but it's hard to tell even from this close. I need to grab one to really see.

Marco doesn't say anything so I continue.

“Option three is that they just decided to move here for no particular reason i really want that to be the case” i doubt it is though because as soon as a rook finds a rookery to their liking they stay in it for their entire life.

“And option four is the one I'm really concerned about and that is the possibility that this is some type of parasite that's making them act definitely then usual if that is the case the only way to tell is any type of odd behavior they might show" One of the rooks comes down from the and starts to peck at the ground for bugs, if im fast enough I could grab it to check if its ok.

“You care a lot about these birds yoi” he says softly I don't bother to reply. I don't see the point when he's just stating the obvious. Of course I care about birds! I care about all animals! They're just so much easier to understand than people and I can be friends with them without having to worry about them caring about who I am because gender isn't a concept they understand.

I can feel his eyes on me as I take off my jacket holding up as I slowly move closer and closer to the rook. As soon as I'm close enough I lunge forward rapping the rook in my jacket as it starts to caw and struggle against me.

“I know I know I'm sorry but I need to see if there's something wrong with you” I spoke as gently as I could muster hoping it would calm it down slightly which surprisingly it did.

Marco comes to crouch down beside me as I unwrap the rook from my jacket and hold it in my hands instead and I start looking over it for any signs of injury or other issues.

I try to be as gentle as possible as I maneuver it around so I can examine its wings, feet, beak, and eyes. Nothing seems to be wrong with it, no visible injuries and it's not reacting abnormally.

“Do you mind if I take a look yoi?” His question took me by surprise. I didn't think he actually cared about what I was doing. But I guess it makes sense he is a doctor after all its

kinda their job to care about peoples health so of course that would extend to animals as well.

“Be careful with her wings” I say as I carefully hand her over to him.

Marco raised his eyebrow at me.

“Her?” he asks and I just shrug there's no way to actually tell her gender but I really don't wanna keep calling her an ‘it’ it feels disrespectful.

I slip my jacket back on as I look at Marco as he does the same thing I did, look her over for any signs of injury. I sit down on the ground as I watch him meticulously look over her until he clicks his tongue and points to a spot in the middle up her back. I scooch closer to him to see what he's pointing at only to be met with a long gash along her back that was buried by her feather.

How the hell did I miss that big of a cut? The thing is way to clean of a slash to have been caused by another animal and by the look on Marcos face he agrees with me. Well at least we know it was the people who made them move now.

Right as im about to say something the hand Marco was using to point ignites in blue flames and i jump back in surprise.

I was about to yell at him and ask what the hell he was doing before I noticed that the rook wasn't panicking. This was the most relaxed she has been since I first grabbed her.

After a few seconds the flames dissipated and Marco got a crooked smile on his face.

“There we go all better yoi” he says as he places the rook down on the ground. It takes her a moment before she takes off back into the tree and in her nest.

“What did you do?” i ask confusion evident in my voice and a look of realization goes over Marcos face

“Right of course you wouldn't know what my devil fruit is” he says with a huffing laugh while moving from a crouch to sit on the ground next to me.

“I ate the Bird-Bird Fruit, Model: Phoenix it gives me enhanced healing abilities, allows me to heal others, and I can turn into a phoenix” that is so cool! He can turn into a bird. What does it look like? How big is it? Can he-

Wait a second the pretty bird I saw looked like a phoenix…

“Have you been stalking me as a bird?!” I yell accusatorially spooking the nearby birds from the trees once again. Seeing that cool bird fly over my head then having him pop up out of nowhere wasn't just a weird coincidence!!

“I wasn't stalking you! I was just making sure you didn't get into any trouble yoi. I overheard a group in the village talking about you so I wanted to check to make sure you're alright!” he said defensively while covering his face with his hands.

Well that's not very good news. Not very surprising though it was only a matter of time before they became fed up with me and forced me off the island. I thought I had more time though. Whatever that just means I can go all out on whoever hurt these birds and forced them to move here.

“Yeah whatever creep” I say pretending he didn't even mention the villagers to me as I stand up and brush the mix of sand and dirt off my pants before turning around and walking towards the direction of the village.

I hear him let out an exasperated sigh making me roll my eyes and smirk slightly. I'm proud of myself for getting him so worked up so quickly.

“If you want to keep me out of trouble then you better get off your ass and come on because I'm going to deal with the pricks who hurt the birds” I state as I continue walking determinedly to the village not bothering to stop for a second to wait for him.

Chapter 3

You know I didn't actually expect him to follow me. Though I'm not complaining, he can be useful in getting the information I want.

“So how are you planning to find out who did that yoi?” Marco asks, gesturing with his head back toward the beach.

“You” I poke his arm before continuing “Are going to make them tell me” I say pointedly and drop my arm back down to my side.

Even though *I* didn't realize who he was at first, everyone in the village most definitely did. I know everyone in honeysuckle village is way too paranoid to not know every single pirate that has a bounty on their heads no matter how big or small. They probably even keep track of the petty criminals who aren't pirates as well.

So since they are all terrified at the prospect of any criminal even looking at them for more than a second Marco should be able to get them to tell him whatever he wants just by smiling at them.Their gonna regret not having any type of contact with the Marines now.

“Am I now?” he smirks at me and I dead pan at him. I drop my arm back down to my side before putting my hand in my pocket to run my fingers over my notebook.

“Yep! you don't really have a choice” I say in a condescendingly cheery tone.

Marco lets out a sudden laugh and reaches over to ruffle my short choppy hair. “Alright whatever you say boss” I smack his hand away and shoot him a glare which much to my dismay just makes him laugh more.

Fucking asshole

I hate how he knows exactly how to get on my nerves despite not knowing each other for less than a day at this point. It's like his sole purpose is to follow me around and find out every way to make me want to hit him. He reminds me of Juniper in that way. Maybe that's why I tolerate him. But my opinions of Marco aren't important at the moment. Right now I just need to focus on confirming my suspicions of who hurt the rooks.

“Finch i have a question for you yoi” of course he does. Well we still have a while to walk so i might as well indulge him.

“Ask away” I say as I kick a rock up the path watching it bounce and roll until it comes to a stop in a small hole that fits it perfectly.

“Why did you come to Honeysuckle Island?” ah. Should have guessed he would ask that.

“Its out of the way, not many people even know it's here and it has a lot of birds” im not lying by saying that but its not the full truth either. There is no way I'm going to tell him the main reasons, no way in hell am I doing that ever.

I'm guessing Marco can tell it's not the full truth by the feeling of his eyes boring into the back of my head. He can stare all he likes. I'm not breaking.

“Hm” ok… That wasn't the response I was expecting. He didn't even try to press me for more information. If i was him i wouldn't stop asking till i got the full truth. But I am thankful for his lack of prying. It's refreshing after having to deal with a bunch of nosey pricks who don't even like me.

“What about you” i ask

“You already know why I came yoi” he says as he shrugs and scans his eyes over me as if he's trying to see every thought I have before I voice it.

“You really want me to believe you came all the way to this tiny island for a single jar of moss that you think has some type of healing properties and nothing else? Really? I'm supposed to believe that?” and here i go prying but i did say i wouldn't stop asking unless i got the truth.

“Yes you are because it's the truth” he pauses for a moment before continuing "there's an outbreak of sickness happening on one of the islands under our protection and the only known remedy is the one in the book yoi. And the reason I only have one jar is because the medicine requires very little of it to make” Marco says, his usual casual expression replaced with the most serious look I have ever seen on him.

“Oh” is all I manage to say in reply. I don’t want to believe his explanation. Mainly because I can't fathom pirates choosing to help people. It might just be all of the government propaganda but I have never heard of that happening though I have never paid much attention to what pirates are doing unless it affects me personally. I'm much more concerned about the government.

I feel bad about not believing him now no matter how reasonable my suspicion was given the fact he was a pirate and they don't have the best track record of being honest.

Not wanting to leave our conversation off on that horrid note I decide to ask another question.

“What are the rest of the commanders like?" I ask as I look over at him again, he looks a little caught off guard by my question.

Marco regains his composure and chuckles under his breath before going on a tirade about his siblings.

The first person Marco talked about was the fourth division commander who's in charge of the cooking; Thatch. Marco talked about his cooking and baking and how if I ever got to eat it I would understand why he's talking about it so fondly. Then he mentioned Thatch's jokes and pranks and how he was often the victim of them. Man, I would love to see that. And apparently he would ‘adore me’ because he “loves the snappy ones” whatever the hell that means.

Next Marco started talking about Haruta who's head of communications. Similar to Thatch Haruta loved to pull pranks his were a lot less targeted than Thatch's though. He apparently got Uno banned from being played on the ship after a game went haywire on his birthday. Haruta was also the one who found the book about the moss which Marco can't seem to express how grateful he is for.

Jozu was next. He was someone I actually remembered the name of but that's just because I got obsessed with finding out what gems birds like the most and if they even have a preference and his devil fruit being what it is sorta made me stubble upon him on accident. Marco said Jozu was quiet and intimidating when you first meet him but once he warms up to you he's one of the nicest people to have around. But Marco also mentioned he's known Jozu for almost thirty years so I don't know how reliable that information is.

The only non-human commander Namur was who Marco mentioned next. Namur is the most recent of the commanders to join the crew which isn't saying much given he's been a part of the crew for fifteen years. Namur is in Marcos words “to shy for his own good” which surprised me given how big their crew is but I guess even in the largest crowd there is gonna be an introvert there.

Then he brings up Izou. who i remember seeing the wanted poster for in the village not long ago i didn't realize Izou was a man though, Marco just laughed at that and said that “most people don't till they hear his voice” that intrigued me quite a bit because if people realized that Izou was a man despite how he looked then maybe they do the same for me. Marco talked about how Izou was more on the serious end and how much of a drama queen he could be which made me laugh a little.

Sadly he was cut off by the sight of the tall and narrow buildings of Honeysuckle village coming into our view. The tall buildings always felt odd and out of place to me, like they were plucked out of a city and placed on this small quaint island.

“I'll finish telling you about them later” Marco said as he pats my head once again and just like before I swat his arm away like he's a bug.

As silence rested over us as we finished the short trek to the village I started thinking. Marco talked about his brothers so fondly that confused me a little. My siblings would never have talked about me like that, other than maybe Juniper but she didn't like talking about what she thought about anything really. I was brought back to reality when we entered the village and

all of the bustle of normal life stopped abruptly and all eyes looked at us and I suddenly felt like I was four getting yelled at by my mother again.

I took a small step closer to Marco and hoped he didn't notice my spike in nervousness.

I hate having so many people look at me. It's why I avoid this place as much as possible.

“Well who should I ask first, Finch yoi?” Marco asks me as I scan over the street as people try and fail to act like they weren't watching us like we were going to jump at them and murder their mothers.

I was looking to see if I could see the person I was looking for in the crowd and I couldn't, which makes things much easier for us.

“We need to go to the fabric store” I stated just loud enough that Marco could hear me but none of the bystanders could.

Marco looks down at me confused “the fabric store..?” he questions and I realized that he wouldn't know *who* owns that store.

“Right um… sorry I forgot you don't know who runs it. The owner Mister Zuno is the mayor and the father of the guy who had the rooks living on his property" I say as I point at the fabric store and I don't fail to notice the people who were just standing in front of it scatter like bugs making me roll my eyes.

It's not like we’re gonna hurt Mister Zuno!

Probably…

Maybe…

He would deserve it if we did!

I had been in the store twice during my time here and both ended with me getting whacked with a cane and getting told I'm nothing but a dirty rat by him.

I didn't mind the rat part. Rats are cool.

Not as cool as birds though.

You know now that I'm thinking about it, Mister Zuno looks really old despite only being forty-three. He reminds me of a mole with how wrinkly he is.

Maybe it's all his bottled up anger that makes him look so old.

Angry people always seem to age faster than other happier people so it must have some type of effect on them.

When we entered the store it was completely empty save for Mister Zuno who was standing behind the counter with his back facing the door. It's always funny to see him behind the counter given he’s barely tall enough to fully reach everything on the counter.

“Ill be with you in a moment” He said gruffly as me and Marco approached the counter.

The shop had changed slightly since I was last in here. All of the colorful murals of a variety of animals and landscapes had been removed and the flowers that used to hang from the ceiling are also gone. The murals are replaced with paintings of Mister Zuno in a variety of different poses and outfits and the flowers with signs that talked about how good of a mayor he is.

I knew he was self absorbed but this is just ridiculous.

This shop used to belong to his wife who was the old mayor before him but she passed away a month ago so now he took over both her shop and her position as mayor. Which seemed not very legal given he wasn't vice mayor at the time of her death but what do I know?

“We need to talk to you now, Mister Zuno” I say, trying to distract myself from my second hand embarrassment by getting his attention.

At the sound of my voice he freezes and I can practically feel the anger start to emanate from the short man. Slamming the fabric he was folding down onto the shelf next to him he started to speak while turning around to face me.

“I thought I made it clear to you, brat. You aren't welcome in my shop or anywhere near-” he fully turns to look at us and as soon as he lays his eyes on Marco he falls backwards with a gasp, his eyes bulging out of his head as his jaw lays open and slack.

Marco waves at him as he smiles with his eyes closed “Hello there” His tone was so flat and unkind compared to his smile that it caught me off guard.

“You- I thought they were lying! No this can't be happening to me!” Zuno was muttering rapidly under his breath, eyes flipping from me to Marco over and over.

So I was right about everyone already knowing who Marco is.

Marco started slowly walking towards him and I followed only a few steps behind him.

“We only need you to answer a few-”

“Who fucked with my birds?!” I cut Marco off, making him send me a look.

I ignore him in favor of glaring at Mister Zuno trying to be as intimidating as I can be.

“B-birds?” he rasps out still staring wide eyed at Marco.

“The birds that lived behind your son's house. Who hurt them” a look of realization dawns on him and a scowl crosses over his lips as he finally looks at me. The look in his eyes is so intense it makes me feel small.

“Well?” Marco says as he leans against the counter.

Mister Zuno stands there in silence for a few moments and right when im about to speak he interrupts me.

“How- how much is she paying you? I'll triple it if you kill her”

A cold flash goes over my entire body, my eyes go blurry and bile rises in my throat.

I had been doing so well hiding the fact I wasn't born a boy this entire time.

I just wanted one person in the stupid world to view me as a boy and now it's ruined because some hairless mole looking old man can’t keep his stupid mouth shut.

…..

There's a sudden movement beside me and a few seconds later I see something hit the counter.

It's blood.

Blood?

I blink rapidly and look back up and realize is now behind the counter with Mister Zuno who now has a deep slash across his face.

Why did he do that?

Actually better question, *how* did he do that to Mister Zuno? He doesn't have any weapons.

“My brother didn't pay me anything” Marco says as he shoots me a look I can't decipher.

Brother?!

Since when was I his brother?!

Wait if he called me his brother that means he sees me as a boy!

I feel like that's not the thing I should be focusing on right now but still it's a win!

“That- that brat is a Whitebeard..?” Mister Zuno whimpers out, staring at me like I'm the one who slashed him across the face.

No im not-

“He is now yoi”

What.

I didn't agree to that at all.

I hear the door to the shop open behind us and I turn my head to see one of the ladies who owned a fruit stand right outside of the fabric store.

She stares at me then at Marco and Mister Zuno before slowly walking backwards and closing the door.

There are too many things happening right now.

I'm getting a headache.

“Im going outside” i mumble out barely audible over the buzz in my ears.

I hear Marco say something to me but I'm too out of it to actually understand what it is that he said. I turn around and leave the shop to plop down on the curb.

The street is completely barren now even in the few seconds it took for me to follow the lady out of the shop.

They all probably think Marco’s going to kill Mister Zuno and he might i don't know he seemed pretty pissed.

I place my face in my hand and let out a deep sigh.

So many things just happened in a matter of seconds and i don't know what to address first.

Ok deep breathes.

Easiest thing to process first.

Marco just attacked the god damn mayor because he misgendered me.

That was… I mean it was cool but I feel weird about it.

No one has ever done anything remotely close to that for me, not even Juniper.

And now a pirate who i have know for less then a fucking day is treating me better then my own family ever has.

Speaking of family… Why did he say I was his brother?

Was it just to intimidate Mister Zuno? Or did he actually mean it?

With how weird this all is i wouldn't be surprised if he did.

And he wouldn't need to say that to intimidate him, he's literally the first division commander he is plenty intimidating on his own he doesn't need Mister Zuno to think im part of his crew.

But that still doesn't make sense to me. All ive done is be suspicious of him, call him creepy and forced him to help me with stupid birds!

No, the birds aren't stupid you shouldn't take my confusion and annoyance out on them.

I rub my eyes till I start to see dots and I stop to look up at the sky.

What the hell is my life?

I close my eyes again and wrap my arms around my legs pulling them up to my chest and resting my chin on my knees.

I'm not sure how much time passes before I hear the door open behind me.

Footsteps slowly approach me before stopping beside me and I hear him sit down.

I open my eyes to glance over at him and see him looking up at the sky so I decide to do the same as we sit in silence.

“Did you kill Mister Zuno?” I ask barely audibly from behind my arms.

“No I didn't. Do you want me to?” he ask it so casually that i don't doubt for a second that if i said yes he would.

….

“No” i don't like Mister Zuno but he doesn't deserve to die.

Marcos nods and is quiet for a moment before speaking again.

“He paid some travelling merchants to deal with the rooks, their already long gone yoi. I'm sorry Finch” Marco says apologetically as he places his hand gently on my shoulder using his thumb to rub circles.

Perfect.

Just perfect.

I went through all this trouble only to not even be able to get revenge for the rooks… maybe it's for the best though I had zero plan on how I would get revenge in the first place. I probably would have ended up injured or worse if I did try anything given my lack of weapons.

“Don’t apologize, it's not your fault.” I mumble against my arms with a huff.

“Does everyone here treat you like that yoi?” His question caught me off guard.

I never really thought much about how they treated me. I mean this is the best I've been treated my entire life so i thought this place was the best i was gonna get. It's not good in the slightest but it's better than what my life used to be.

“I mean yeah. They treat me a lot better then anyone else has so i don't mind that much” i say with a slight shrug.

“You don't mind? Finch you looked like you were gonna throw up in there” Marcos voice raises and i flinch away from him slightly.

“Why do you even care?” I snapped, raising my head up to actually look at him. “You don't know me, I'm just a random ass street kid who dragged you along to help get revenge for some birds! Do you pity me or something?!”

“I don't pity you finch not in the slightest. Almost my entire family was in a similar position as you before they joined our crew. I would be disappointed in myself if I didn't help you out” he says exasperatedly.

I feel like he's lying. But there is no reason for me to think that he’s been nothing but honest to me.

This is all Juniper's fault. I don't know how but it is.

I let out a huff and dropped that thought. I already have enough on my mind I don't need to be thinking about her on top of it.

“Is that why you called me your brother then? Because I remind you of them?”

“No I did *that* because you're coming with me back to the Moby yoi” he states like it was the most obvious thing he could ever say I just look at him owlishly.

“What? I never agreed to that!” I say with confusion lacing my voice.

“I know. There is no way I'm leaving you here with people who treat you like that” he takes his hand off my back and uses it to gesture to the store.

“What if I say no?” I question tilting my head to the side.

I most definitely am not against the idea of getting off this hell hole of an island but I don't know if I want to be a pirate. I mean it seems sorta… difficult to be one. You have to worry about the Marines, other pirates and the unpredictability of the sea on top of it.

“I'd have to refuse your refusal yoi” he says with a smile tugging at his lips. I scrunch my nose and squint at him.

“That's kidnapping” I said blankly.

Marco shrugs as his smile grows “Thatch thinks the term 'surprise adoption’ fits more” he says making quotation marks with his fingers.

“That is *so* dumb” I say, not being able to hold back my laugh any longer.

“Hey there we go! You're not moping any more!” he says as he pats my head ruffling my hair.

I stop laughing and scoff before shewing away his hand.

“I was not moping, I was thinking!” I say defensively as I send him a dirty look.

“Sure you were Finch yoi” he said teasingly.

“I was you dick head!” I whine out pouting.

“Mhm sure” Marco said as he stood and brushed himself off.

“Alright i need to do something, you should go back to your cave and get all your stuff” he's already walking away from me before he even finishes talking.

“Huh? Why?” I ask as I shoot up and quickly follow after him.

Oh wait that is a pretty stupid question after he literally just told me he was gonna kidnap me.

“We’re leaving tomorrow to meet up with my crew yoi”

Maybe this island has made me go crazy because I don't hate the idea. Obviously I don't voice this fact as I huff and speed walk past him.

“I didn't agree to that” I snapped as I continued to quickly walk away from him out of the village.

“Right, that's why you're going to do exactly what I told you?” he says and i can just hear the smirk in his voice.

“I'm hungry! I'm going to get something to eat!” it's not entirely a lie. I am getting pretty hungry.

Marco just snorts and I hear him turn into an alleyway.

I wonder what he's doing?

Actually i don't wanna know.

I just told him that everyone here treats me like shit and with how he treated Mister Zuno i wont be surprised if he does something to a few other people.

Wait.

I was just stuck in my own head feeling like shit and Marco made me entirely forget my bad thoughts.

I wanna be mad at him for that but I really can't be. Juniper was the only one who was able to do that.

I wonder what she would think of this whole thing?

She would have probably called me stupid for getting this worked up about birds. She would also be pissed off at me for not standing up for myself and having to have someone else do it for me.

She always thought I was too soft on the people who treated me badly. She used to stand up for me but as we got older she stopped because and im quoting her "I won't always be here to protect you! You need to learn how to defend yourself before it get to that point”

I guess she was right. I just let everyone here walk all over me now.

But who knows that might change soon.

I'll just have to wait and see.

Chapter 4

Maybe I should be putting up more of a fight about this whole situation.

I don't see the point in that though.

Marco can easily throw me over his shoulder and take me kicking and screaming or I could keep my dignity and cooperate with him.

I will be complaining the entire way though.

The walk to my cave from honeysuckle village is a lot shorter then the walk from the beach to there but I purposefully take my time walking there. I don't wanna be sitting around in the cave for who knows how long waiting for Marco to be done whatever he's doing.

I also wouldn't mind going to the best spot on the island before I leave.

Let's see where is…

Ah! There it is!

Stepping off the path I walk into an opening in the foliage being careful not to have my feet get snagged on any loose roots sticking up out of the ground. I'm very thankful for my jacket at this moment because without it my arm would definitely be getting ripped up by all the sharp branches hanging off the trees.

One of the only good things Suminari did for me was give me this jacket before I left. I never did get to thank him for that…

Whatever, it's just another thing to add to the ever growing list of regrets I have.

Really i have to-

A branch I was pushing out of the way with my hand slips from my grip and smacks me right in the face “Ow! That hurt….” I whine out rubbing the bump forming on my forehead.

I'm glad Marco wasn't here to see that…

I just know I would never hear the end of it.

Focusing back on my path I begin walking again making sure to pay extra attention to what is going on around me.

It only takes a few minutes of walking for me to reach an opening in the foliage. I'm met with the familiar sight of honeysuckles sprouting out of the ground.

This spot is typically only visited by the townspeople on special occasions so I have it all to myself a majority of the time.

There's a variety of different types of honeysuckles growing here and I don't know the exact names of them (I like birds not flowers) but they are all so beautiful that I can't help but come here every now and then to draw and admire them. The birds also seem to enjoy this spot as well, which is another plus to it.

This is the only thing I'm gonna miss about this island.

Well, other than the birds, I'm definitely gonna miss the birds.

Walking forward I pay attention to where I'm stepping for two reasons. Reason number one is that i don’t wanna crush any of the flowers i would feel like an asshole if i did that and reason number two is that there are red ant hills all throughout the field and i learned the hard way when I first got here that you really don’t wanna step on them.

I get shivers even thinking about it…

My careful steps lead me to the center of the field where a small patch of grass with no flowers rests. I'm not exactly sure why there's no flowers growing or ant hills built here but i don’t really care too much because it makes the perfect spot to sit.

Sitting down I pull my note book out of my pocket along with my pencil.

I think I'm gonna finish the drawing of the Marcos phoenix form.

I'm still mad that it was him and not an actual bird.

I would have loved to document it the same way I do with all the other birds I see but no, the coolest bird I've ever laid my eyes on had to be a stupid pirate. (who's now kidnapping me)

It would be nice if I could have him right in front of me so I can get all of the details right but I think it would feed his ego way too much if I asked him so I wont be doing that.

This sucks so much. I'm so much worse at drawing if I don't have the thing I'm drawing right in front of me.

But I already have the base scratch done so I should stop complaining and start drawing instead.

It takes me around an hour to finish the drawing. It's not exactly up to my usual standards since I don’t have him right in front of me so I can perfect every little detail but it will do. I'm sure I'll have plenty of time to update it and get it right in the future since I'm being forced to join his stupid crew.

Looking up at the sky to see where the sun is I have to squint slightly trying to see where the sun is to tell the time before quickly giving up on that.

I really wish I had a watch or something so I could actually tell the time without having to burn my eyes looking at the sun to try and guess what time it is.

Maybe I should steal one before we leave…

Nah, I'm too lazy for that.

The time doesn't matter anyway as long as I get back to the cave before dark.

I place my book onto my lap then stretch my arms above my head and I let out a small wince when a small spike of pain shoots through my back.

Jeez, I really need to stop sitting so weirdly or I'm gonna end up messing up my back.

Now I think it's about time I go back to the cave. Im not sure how long it's been exactly but i think Marco should be done whatever he's doing.

Hopefully he is i don't wanna get back to the cave and have to wait forever for him to get there. That would be so boring.

I grab my note book and pencil off my lap and put them back into my pocket as I stand.

Ok which way is the fastest way to get back to the cave again?

“Left or forward?….” I mutter under my breath, tapping my foot against the ground. It's been a few weeks since I've gone here, so it seems that my brain decided that the directions weren't important anymore.

I let out a sigh, deciding to just go left and hope that it’s the faster way.

And thankfully my guess was right!

That's a win for me! Hell yeah! I'm the best!

It only took around ten minutes for me to get back to the cave instead of the twenty it usually takes.

I practically skip into the cave feeling immensely proud of myself for my lucky guess.

And Marco’s not here.

Well shit.

I'm gonna get so bored after I'm done packing my stuff up.

I let out an annoyed sigh as I walk up to my closed bag, suddenly my stomach growled and I remembered just how hungry I was when I left the village.

How the hell did I manage to forget something like that?!

Closing the short distance between me and my bag I pull out the half eaten can of peaches I ate earlier and start to slowly finish eating them.

They taste a little weird but I'm too hungry right now to really care.

By the time I finish them my stomach is still growling but there really isn't anything I can do about it since that was my last bit of food I had in here and I really don’t wanna go out looking for food since I literally just got back.

I sigh once again as I look over the cave, my things thrown about carelessly on the ground and on rocks. I might as well pack all of this up so i don't have to do it later.

The first things I grab are all my clothes and I carefully fold them up to make them fit into my bag easier.

Next I grab the only two actual books that I own (both about birds) and place them on top of my clothes in the bag.

Then I grab my knife off the ground next to my blankets and slide it into the holder on my belt. I probably should have had that with me the entire time but I didn't think of that when I first left this morning.

Finally I grabbed the other miscellaneous things like my brush and spare pencils off the ground, shoving them into my bag the best I could before zipping it up which took quite a bit of effort but I got there eventually.

Now the only things that lay on the ground are my blankets (that I'm not even gonna bother trying to fit in my bag), my bag, Marco’s bag, the unlit campfire, and the wood for said campfire.

Sitting down in front of the campfire I rest my head on my hand staring into the ashes from the previous fires.

I'm bored and hungry which is not a good combo at all.

There's nothing left for me to do now other than wait for Marco to get back.

I flop backwards onto my blankets and stare at the ceiling.

I should look for shapes in the rocks that could be fun.

That looks like a Wood Thrush, that one kinda looks like a Gray Antbird or maybe a Bananal Antbird either one, oh and that looks like a Rock Martin.

Ok yeah this is not working.

No matter how many birds I can find in the patterns of the rock it will not be any more entertaining than just laying here

I lift my hands up to cover my face and I let out a noise of frustration.

I hate this. I hate being bored. It feels like there's something crawling under my skin and into my brain If I'm not doing *something.* I'm usually constantly moving around but now I have literally nothing to do. I mean I could draw or go on a walk but I've already done both those things already.

“Hey Finch im back yoi”

I shoot up and look at him so quickly that I get a little dizzy “Marco! Thank god im so fucking bored and hungry. Do you have food?” I say as I cross my legs and look at him and the bag that I just noticed in his hands expectantly.

A smile crosses his face as he reaches into the bag pulling out a small paper bag. He throws it over to me and I practically rip it open and my eyes widen when I see the still hot meat buns. “Thank you” I say between stuffing my face with the absolutely amazing meat buns.

“You’re welcome, there's more in the bag if you're still hungry after that” Marco says as he sits down next to me on my blankets placing the bag between us and he also starts eating his own food.

I light up at that and as soon as I'm done with my meat buns I look into the bag to see what else he got.

“You got brownies?!” I practically yell as I pull one of them out.

“Yep I got six yoi” Marco said in between bites.

I didn’t particularly like brownies but Juniper would always make them when Suminari was upset (which was quite often) so eating them always reminds me of them.

Damn I miss them.

Taking a bite of the brownie doesn’t really help to distract me from the memory of my siblings, it makes it worse.

I wish they could have came with me. I wish I could have at least said goodbye. I wish none of this shit had to happen.

But there's no point in wishing now it’s already done and there's nothing I can do to change that. They probably hate me now anyway.

“Finch, how old are you?” Marco asks suddenly catching me off guard.

I finish chewing the brownie in my mouth before talking “oh um… I'm fifteen, why?” I question giving him a puzzled look.

“Once we get to the ship I'll need to make you a medical file yoi”

“Oh ok if that's the case then you’ll probably wanna know I’ve never been to the doctor″ I say it quickly knowing its probably gonna set Marco off in some way since he is a doctor himself.

Marco looks like I've just slapped him “What do you mean you’ve never been to the doctor?” The disbelief in his voice is so obvious that it makes me a little embarrassed.

“My Mother thought all doctors were evil and wanted to take me and my siblings away from her. She even did a home birth for all of us” I rub the back of my neck with my hand as my face flushes from embarrassment. Juniper tried to sneak us to the local doctor a few times but we always got caught. It was like Mother had eyes on us all the time.

Marco places his face in his hands and lets out a noise that sounds like a dying bird making me cringe slightly. Pulling his face out of his hand he rubs his temples while sighing.

“Please tell me you’ve at least got the basic vaccinations somehow yoi?” There is a twinge of hope in his voice and I feel kinda bad that I have to crush it with my answer.

“No” I say hesitantly and I swear I can see his hair turning grey.

“How the fuck have you not died of some type of sickness”

I stop rubbing my neck to instead twirl the crystal on my necklace instead as I shrug “I'm lucky?” I said more as a question than a statement not knowing how to answer him.

We both fall silent and I feel so insanely embarrassed about this that I can't even look at him. Mothers paranoia over my and my siblings safety no matter how well intentioned it was led to us being isolated from everyone around us even more than we already were.

The few times I did interact with kids my age back home it just led to me being bullied for having a ‘crazy mother’.

Juniper and Suminari both tried to get me to stand up for myself against them but I didn’t see the point. Everything they were saying was true so why deny it? Why should I even try to

defend myself against the truth?

The vitriol everyone there held for my family would have been so much worse if they knew who our father was. Though we most likely wouldn't even be alive if that was the case.

“Come lets go yoi” He stands up picking up the bag full of food while walking over to his bag.

I felt dizzy from both my spiraling thoughts and his sudden words “What? Where are we going?” I scrambled to my feet as fast as I could without tripping on my blankets.

“There is no way I'm going to wait until tomorrow to leave knowing you could very easily die from any type of common sickness. We’re going to get to the Moby Dick as quick as possible to get you properly vaccinated " The sternness in his voice shocked me but it also kicked me right into motion and I picked up my three blankets, slotting them under my left arm before moving to pick up my backpack as well.

Even if I wanted to I don’t think I could reply right now with how tight my throat feels all of a sudden. My siblings were the only ones to ever talk to me like that.

Squeezing my eyes shut tightly I force the rush of emotions down, that's something I should deal with when I'm alone. Marco’s busy worrying about my physical health right now he shouldn't have to deal with my emotions on top of that.

What the hell is going on with me? Why the fuck are my feelings so out of whack?

“*My brother didn’t pay me anything”*

Marco’s words from earlier today ring in my head.

That’s what it is.

It's been five years since anyone has called me that and even then they only got to call me their brother once before everything went to hell.

Stupid fucking pirate.

He just had to come along and swoop in with all this talk about family and helping people.

Whatever, I'll deal with all this when I'm alone.

Opening my eyes again I follow after Marco who is already half way out of the cave. He's walking so fast that I'm almost running to keep up with him.

We turn off the path rather quickly going through the less bush covered part of the forest. I feel uneasy about going this way since I've rarely gone over to this side of the island since not many birds like to nest over here.

But I’m already in too deep to try and turn around and leave. He wouldn't let me anyway with how worried he seems about my lack of medical history.

It's starting to get dark and the weight of my backpack on my back is just starting to hurt when we finally reach Marco’s boat.

He docked it right on the edge of the beach and rocky shore of the island. It's perfectly hidden from anyone who isn't specifically looking for it.

It's not a small boat by any means but it still isn't anywhere near the size of a normal one.

“Hop on Finch” His tone is almost back to normal but I can still hear the tension in it.

I still don’t trust myself to speak so I just nod my head as I move to haul myself up onto the boat. Which is pretty difficult to do with a heavy ass bag on my back and blankets in my arms but I get there eventually.

I stand awkwardly not really knowing what to do as I wait for Marco to untie the boat from one of the rocks.

“You can go put your stuff in the cabin yoi. I'm gonna be up most of the night making sure we stay on course so you can take the bed. It's through the door on the left” Marco says probably noticing how I don’t exactly know what to do with myself right now.

A quiet almost silent “Alright” is all I manage to say as I turn and walk over to the door.

Opening it leads to a small set of stairs that have a bunch of crates and two doors one on the left and one on the right. Opening the left door leads to a small bedroom with a bed, dresser, and nightstand. I place my blankets down on top of the dresser and bag on the ground next to it.

It only takes a second before the tears start to fall as I sit on the bed.

I don’t know when the last time I cried was but it was so long ago that the feeling of tears falling from my eyes felt odd and foreign.

I'm not surprised I'm crying though it really was a matter of time.

These past few months as a whole have been so overwhelming with me getting stuck on this island after my boat got stolen by someone, the people here assuming im some horrible criminal and hating me for it despite me being nothing but kind to those assholes, the constant reminders of Juniper and Suminari, and now Marco shows up and just decides im his brother!

I truly don’t know what is going on with my life.

What I *do* know is that im crying and im tired and my stupid fucking back hurts from carrying my bag.

And really what's a worse combination than that?!

Fuck.

They would be so disappointed in me.

Juniper would be so mad at me for becoming a pirate.

She always hated them. I don’t blame her for that either, it's a pirate's fault that Mom acted the way she did all the time. The paranoia and over protectiveness is all a stupid pirate's fault.

Maybe I should hate pirates because of that as well.

But I don't and I'm not sure why that's the case.

Suminari on the other hand would probably think I'm replacing him with Marco.

That thought makes me let out a choked sob and I cover my mouth to muffle it.

I need to stop.

I don’t wanna think about that.

And I definitely don’t want Marco to hear me crying and come to check on me.

Sniffling I rub my eyes ruffly with the heels of my hands trying to force the tears to stop.

It doesn’t work of course, why would it?

Ok I need to breathe, that always helps.

Deep breathe in, hold, breathe out.

It takes a few minutes of repeating that until my crying is reduced to small sniffles and labored breathing.

It's fully dark in the room now with the sun having set all the way. There's only a small bit of light seeping in from the bright stars.

And it's only now that I'm calmed down that I notice the rocking of the boat and realize that we’re moving away from the island.

There really isn’t any turning back now.

My head is throbbing and my eyes hurt.

I should just go to sleep then I won't have to deal with any of this shit.

Standing up from the bed I take off my jacket, placing it on top of the dresser with my blankets, then I slip off my shoes and put them at the end of the bed.

I'm not gonna bother changing out of my current set of clothes.

I'm too tired for that.

Pulling back the blanket on the bed I flop down and throw the blanket over myself.

Closing my eyes it only takes seconds for sleep to take a tight grip over me and pull me under.

My giggles fill the house as I run room to room doing my best to dodge Suminari

“I'm gonna get ya!” He calls from behind me as I run down the stairs and into the living room jumping onto the coffee table.

“Nuh uh!!” As soon as he reaches the bottom of the stairs I take off running again going straight for the kitchen.

Crashing into the kitchen I make the door slam into the wall loudly making Juniper who was digging in the fridge trying to figure out what we’re going to have for dinner jump and whip her head around to look at me.

“Hey watch what you’re doing brat!” she hisses out but there's no real venom in her words and there's even a small smile tugging at her lips.

“Sorry!” I whisper as I hide behind the kitchen island waiting to see Suminari enter so I can bolt behind him.

Juniper just rolls her eyes and turns back to the fridge to keep looking.

I stay there crouched looking intensely at the door but Suminari never comes in and the longer I stay there the more confused I get.

Juniper finally pulls out leftover spaghetti, deciding to just warm that up for tonight.“He’s standing right behind you” she hums.

I slowly turn my head and as soon as I lay my eyes on him he jumps forward, trapping me in his arms.

“NO FAIR!! Where did you even come from?!” My voice comes out loud and whiney but that's put to a quick stop as me starts tickling my sides making me squeal and burst into a fit of giggles.

“None of that whining firefly I won fair and square” he says in between his own laughter as he continues to tickle me as he spins us around

Juniper who's now leaning against the counter just smiles at us.

“Hey Juni, you should play with us!” Suminari says as he suddenly stops spinning and tickling me and he almost makes us both fall from his dizzy stumbling.

“Yeah come on!” I said excitedly as I give her my best puppy dog eyes.

She gets a conflicted look on her face “but mom said-”

“Oh screw that! Mom makes you do everything! It won't kill her if you play with us for a bit” Suminari snaps out frustration leaking into his voice.

“Please Juniper?” I ask a pout forming on my face as I stare at her.

“Come on, you don’t wanna make us sad do you?” He emphasizes his words by shaking me around a bit making me let out a squeak.

Sighing she shakes her head “fine but only for a bit ok?”

“YES!” me and Suminari say in unison as he puts me down and jumps at her pulling her into a tight hug and i follow closely behind him and hug both of them tightly.

Chapter 5

BANG

Opening my eyes slowly I groan out into the pillow burying my face into it trying to block the sun that was shining through the small window from reaching my eyes. If that noise was something actually important I'm sure Marco will come get me.

I adjust myself under the blanket trying to get more comfortable so I can try to fall back to sleep, hopefully I can get back to that dream.

BANG

Alright what the hell was that noise?

Sighing I sit up slowly and reach up to rub the sleep from my eyes. I hear some noise from outside the door that I can't quite make out so with a loud groan I move the blanket off myself and get off the bed.

I stumble slightly as I stand a little thrown off from the rocking of the ship but I'm quickly able to balance myself and stretch. I felt less sour than I have in a long time but I guess that's what actually sleeping in a bed will do.

Sluggishly I move over to the dresser grabbing my jacket and throwing it on before grabbing my boots from the ground and clumsily putting them on.

BANG

“I swear if we’re getting attacked I'm going to lose it” I mumble as I make my way to the door and open it only enough for me to be able to see out of it. Peaking out the small opening

I glance around I don't see anything different from last night but the sounds get louder.

It sounds like talking, so hopefully that means we aren't getting attacked.

Opening the door fully, I glance around just to be sure there isn't anything out of place or anyone down here. Thankfully everything is the same as it was last night so I walk out and up the short set of stairs. When I reach the top of the stairs after a few short steps I press myself against it so I can hear whatever is going on more clearly.

“Oh come on birdy just a few drinks! It's been forever since we last saw each other!" a man's voice that I don't recognize said, sounding carefree and cheerful.

Alright good we aren't getting attacked then.

“How many times am I going to have to say no? I have shit I need to do yoi” Marco says irritation with whoever he was talking to extremely clear in his voice and I can't help but snicker quietly at that fact. He deserves to be annoyed like that after last night's shit show.

“I'm sure that can wait a little while” a different voice says, sounding a lot more casual than the other man.

How many people are on the deck? Four counting Marco maybe? That would explain the three bangs, it could have been them jumping onto the deck but those bangs were really loud so im not sure.

“It really can't,” Marco grumbles as he sighs.

“Just give it up boss you know he wont give in” and there's the third, he sounds almost as done with this entire thing as Marco is.

“You don’t know that!” the first guy says in a whiney tone.

“What's so important that you can't stop for a few minutes to have a drink or two with us?” the first man asks, focusing back on Marco.

“That's none of your concern”

Well going out now would be perfect comedic timing!

God, I'm so funny.

Opening the door, the first thing I see is a very irritated Marco and I have to hold in a laugh at the look on his face. Looking past him I see exactly who Marco was talking to.

Holy shit.

Holy shit, holy shit, holy shit!

Sitting on a barrel near the railing of the ship is Red Hair fucking Shanks and to the left of him is his first mate and sniper of his crew.

I thought the only Yonko I was going to meet was going to be Whitebeard, at least for a while. But low and behold there he is. I usually never paid any mind to the pirates in the newspaper but Shanks and his crew were the exception due to Suminari’s obsession with them.

He would be so jealous of me right now!

Suminari had an entire collection of newspaper clippings, wanted posters, and other things dedicated to the Red Hair Pirates that he kept secret from our Mother. He would spend hours telling me everything he knew about them and how he wants to be just like Shanks when he is older. I never cared that much about Shanks but talking about him was a way to spend time with Suminari so I was fine listening to him go on for however long he wanted. Juniper never understood his fixation on them and she didn’t care to listen to him rant most of the time but she would still give him any newspapers that had anything to do with the Red Hair Pirates.

“Finch, go back to your room please” Marco says exasperatedly, snapping me out of my stunned state.

I open my mouth to tell him he can go fuck himself and there is no way im going to do that when a crew so cool is right here but Shanks interrupts me.

“Hey now wait a second birdy! Aren't you going to introduce us to the kid?” Shanks says as he quickly moves over to me so Marco can’t stop him “so Finch right? You one of Newgate's brats?” he asks as he wraps his arm around my shoulder and pulls me away from the door.

I don’t know if I should be worried or excited that someone so strong and feared is being so nice to me right now. I know Suminari’s portrayal of him wasn't one hundred percent accurate due to his idolization of him but how he is portrayed by the world government is definitely inaccurate as well since they love to demonize anyone who they don’t like. So im really not sure how to feel but he is a Yanko, there is no way he got that title from being this happy unintimidating guy all the time.

“Uh yeah I guess so” I can’t help but sound awkward and unsure when answering him since im not really sure of the answer myself.

Shanks doesn't seem to notice or just doesn't care as he unhooks himself from my shoulder and plops back down onto the barrel he was sitting on moments before.

“You want a drink, kid? Marco’s obviously not going to have it” the sniper, Yasopp I think, says, picking up the mug of bear that was sitting next to him and holding it out in my direction.

“He’s fourteen he doesn't need to be drinking" Marco introduces before I can even think of an answer.

“I started drinking when I was fourteen, it's fine!” Shanks said matter of factly with a wave of his hand.

“And look how you turned out” Marco mumbles under his breath just loud enough that we can hear. I couldn't help but laugh at that and I muffled it behind my hand.

“Wha- what’s that supposed to mean?!” he says with an offended scoff as he points an accusatory finger at Marco.

“How about you both let him answer for himself” Beckman (I remember that's his name because Suminari was even more obsessed with him then he was Shanks) interrupts flatly stopping that before it could turn into any type of argument.

“Id rather not, thanks for the offer though” I definitely wouldn't mind drinking but i haven't had anything else to drink or eat today so that really isn't a good idea besides Marco would never let me even if i did say yes.

“Suit yourself” Yasopp says with a shrug.

“Now that that's sorted we really need to be on our way” Marco says so passive aggressively that it catches me off guard but with the red force quite literally blocking the way of our ship moving forward I get why he is so irritated about this whole thing.

Completely ignoring Marco, Shanks turns to me “You know why Birdy here in such a rush to get back to the old man's ship?” he asks, a sly grin spreading on his face.

“You don’t need to tell him anything Finch yoi” Marco says walking up to us.

“Yeah i know Marco you don't need to tell me that” I roll my eyes with a huff “I don’t have all my vaccinations up to date so Marco’s being paranoid and trying to get us there as quick as possible so I can get them" I omit the part of me having never gotten *any* of my vaccinations since they really don’t need to know that.

“I’m not being paranoid Finch if anything I’m under reacting to this situation”

Shanks blinks at me and Marco for a few moments with a bit of a dumbfounded look on his face before turning to look over at his two crew mates “I'm sure we have that stuff on board, right Ben?” It's more so a statement than a question.

“Maybe, you’ll have to ask Hugo if he has the ones the kid needs,” the first mate answers as he takes a long drag from his cigar.

“He needs all of them” Marco states flatly while rubbing his hand over his face.

That makes all three of the men stare at us in silence. The few moments that they sit there not speaking just staring the more a pit forms in my stomach just like it did when I first told Marco about this.

“All… of them?” Shanks questions looking between the two of us with raised eyebrows.

“Yes all of them, now either call Hugo over or let us leave” Marco says giving Shanks an impatient look.

From the railing of the Red Force a man leans over the side and looks down at us

“Someone say my name?” he questions with raised eyebrows.

“Do we have all of the basic vaccinations on the ship?” Beckman asks before Marco can.

“Sure do” Hugo replies as he looks directly at me with an odd look that makes me shrink back closer to Marco. Its like he has some weird doctor sense that there is something wrong with me, or well he knows everyone else here so it's kinda obvious that I'm the one that would need them.

“Great, can you bring one of each here?”

He doesn't lift his gaze from me as he nods his head and pushes off the railing to go retrieve the necessary things.

“There now you can relax and drink with us while Hugo is giving the kid his vaccinations or whatever!” Shanks says excitedly as a massive grin spreads across his face.

“No, I'm going to be giving them to Finch.” I feel a small sense of relief when Marcos says that. I may not like him very much but I sure as hell trust him more than I trust any of these guys despite the mountains of praise Suminari gave them and them being nothing but kind to me so far.

“Oh come on! Can’t you-”

“Shanks drop it” Beckman says, stopping his Captain before he can start.

“Fine…” Shanks mumbles as he pouts dramatically and lets out a loud sigh that makes me scoff.

Makes sense why he's the First mate Shanks seems to listen to him why he tells him to stop.

Now that that is dealt with Marco turns towards me and I quickly take a few steps back trying to play it off like I wasn't just standing so close to him.

“Finch you go down into the bedroom alright? I'll be down there in a minute” I can tell that it was more of an order than a question as he gives me a look that reminds me of the ones Juniper would give me and Suminari when she wanted us to do chores around the house.

“Ok whatever” I say with a roll of my eyes as I go do exactly what I was told to do.

space

My arms are hurting so bad. What the fuck is wrong with these things i thought they were ment to keep you from hurting and getting sick not make you hurt. Marco under-exaggerated when he said these would only hurt a bit, it feels like my arms are burning.

And I didn't even get all of the one I needed apparently since some I have to wait a while so the other vaccines can kick in. I think that's a lie so Marco can see me suffer more.

“See that wasn't so bad” Marco says giving me a soft smile as he walks back into the room after going back up to the deck to hand the used supplies back over to Hugo.

“Go fuck yourself” i grumble while floping onto my back and whincing when a spike of pain shoots through my arms.

Marco laughs as he moves over to me and sits down on the bed. I stare at the ceiling purposefully ignoring the fact he is staring at my aching arms.

“Here give me one of your arms” he says suddenly catching me a little off guard as he holds out his hand.

I hesitate only for a moment before sitting back up and placing my arm in his hand. As much as I would love to deny this prick's help right now the pain in my arms are too much for me to be petty. It only takes a split second for blue fire to erupt from his palm making me flinch back slightly before instantly relaxing moments later as a warm comforting feeling spreads through my arm. The feeling is so intense yet gentle at the same time as he runs his hand up and down my arm a few times until he is sure there isn't any leftover pain in it and he repeats the process again with my other arm. I feel disappointed when he does finally pull away from my arms and extinguishes the flames from his hand, missing the warm feeling already.

“Thanks…” I murmured quietly as embarrassment from how much I enjoyed the feeling creeps up me and makes my cheeks redden.

“No problem” he replies with the same soft smile from when he entered on his face.

We sit in a nice silence as I beat my embarrassment back down so hopefully he doesn't see the red tint to my cheeks.

“Finch, can I ask you a question about your mother?”

And there it is. I was wondering how long it would take him to ask that, it was my fault for mentioning her in the first place. I really need to learn how to keep my mouth shut. But I might as well answer his question now so I don't have to do it later. Hopefully talking about her doesn't make me spiral like it did before.

“Go for it” I say as I lay back onto the bed.

“Do you know why she was so against doctors?” he asks and I can’t help but sigh.

Don’t know why I thought he would ask anything other than that. I hate talking about the bad parts of my mother, it feels like I’m disrespecting her in some way. That's why I reacted like I did yesterday. At least I think it is I don’t understand my mind most of the time.

But it might be nice to actually talk about it even if it is with Marco.

“She was scared. She was convinced that they would take me and my siblings away from her so she kept us as far away from the village as she could. I'm not sure why she thought that she never really told us her reasoning for anything, she just wanted us to do exactly what she told us to do with no argument” I don’t think I've ever said that out loud before.

Juniper and Suminari talked about our mother with each other all the time but they never let me join the conversation, always saying I was too young to be worrying about that stuff. I think they just thought I was too young to understand anything they were talking about but I wasn’t. I heard and saw all the same things they did. I just didn’t process it the same way as them.

“You have siblings?”

…

Fuck.

I didn’t even realize I mentioned them. Now he's going to have questions about them like where they are and why they aren't with me and I really am not ready to unpack all that.

“I don’t wanna talk about them” I say so quickly that my words come out jumbled.

“Alright you don’t have to”

What.

I- I didn’t think it would be so easy to get him to drop it, I thought I would have to argue with him or something.

I can’t help but give him a bewildered look, this guy make zero fucking sense to me. It would make sense if he wanted me to tell him everything he asked as repayment for all the things he is helping me with but no, he doesn't seem to want anything and that confuses me so badly. Almost everyone I have met since I was forced to leave home has wanted something in return for helping me so why doesn't he? I just can’t make sense of him.

“Have you eaten anything yet?” Marco asks, breaking my train of thought.

“No” I mumble, looking away from him and reaching up and grabbing my necklace.

Marco nods and stands from the bed walking to the door.

“I’ll go get you something to eat, you can stay here or go back on the deck if you want” he says looking back and giving me a soft smile before turning back and leaving the room before I could answer him.

As soon as he closes the door behind him I let out a deep long sigh.

I can’t seem to have one day without something negative happening. At least I don’t feel the need to start crying because I just mentioned my family, that's a good thing I guess.

Sitting up, I reach beside me and grab my jacket and put it back on. I really don’t feel like being alone right now and on top of that I don’t want to miss the opportunity to ask Shanks about the stories I remember Suminari telling me about.

Chapter 6

I know pirates like to tell stories but *god damn*

Shanks has been talking basically nonstop since I came up and asked him about some of the things he’s experienced. The only times he stopped talking was to drink or let one of his crewmate's add onto his story. He has been telling story after story for so long now that the sun is right smack dab in the middle of the sky now and Marco, who has continued to refuse to drink is looking even more annoyed with Shanks than earlier. Anytime he brought up us leaving to continue on our way Shanks would brush him off with a laugh and say something along the lines of “just one more story then we’ll leave you be birdy” before proceeding to tell another five.

Right now he was going on and on about a kid he met in the east blue. Luffy was the kids name and apparently he was a little menace if what Shanks is saying is anywhere near the truth. He had stolen and eaten the devil fruit they had just found which is hard for me to wrap my head around because why the hell would you leave a devil fruit near a kid who you know at that point will eat absolutely anything he thinks is edible? Honestly with that level of stupidity I have no clue how he has lived this long let alone become a Yonko.

But I am impressed with the kid, he left such an impression on Shanks that he gave him the hat he has been wearing his entire pirating career. I was wondering where it went when Shanks got a new wanted poster last year that was missing it and i thought he just wasn't wearing it when the photo was taken but I guess that explains it.

If Suminari knew that Shanks had given his hat to some random seven year old in the east blue he would loses his shit. He went on so many rant about how cool Shanks' hat was and how he wanted one just like that,, which he did get when Juniper made it for him for his fourteenth birthday but he would have still been so disappointed that there could have been a chance if he ever did meet Shanks that he could have been gifted the hat if he met whatever criteria Shanks had.

This kid sound absolutely insane though so i really doubt if he did ever meet Shanks that he would even a a fraction of a chance compared to this kid. Even so Sumi always had a blind hope for those types of things and it was so annoying at the time but now its just another thing that makes me miss how life used to be.

“And the damn kid stabbed himself right under his eye! Almost took it right out! Can you believe that?!” he said boisterously through slurred words as he laughed and smacked my back roughly to accentuate how funny he found it almost causing me to fall forward and off the barrel I was sitting on.

“Given what you’ve told me about him I definitely can” I say laughing awkwardly not really knowing how to reply anymore. It's not that I'm not interested in hearing more stories from him but this is the most social interaction i have had in four years and its been overwhelming for a while.

I want to just slide onto the floor and disappear into the void so I can be alone for a bit.

Shanks doesn't seem to notice as he continues rattling on about the things Luffy did while he was there. primarily about how Luffy stole that devil fruit from him which Shanks has already told me about. I guess hes to fucked up to remember that or he does and just doesn't care. I'm not surprised that he favors a kid like that given the type of person he seems to be.

I'm not sure if I mean that in a bad or a good way yet.

"Captain I think we should be heading out" Beckman who had moved back up onto the Red Force calls down suddenly finally making Shanks stop for more than two seconds.

Looking up at him i notice he looks even more annoyed then Marco does which is definitely a feat.

"What? Why?" Seeing a grown man like Shanks pout like a child will never not be weird to me.

"You know why" Beckman says and his tone sounds almost strained and that seems to sober Shanks up a bit if him sanding up so quickly says anything.

Alright that's weird and kinda ominousness.

"Ah well that's to bad" He says before turning to me with a massive smile "it was nice meeting you Finch! If you ever want anymore stories just ask birdy to give me a call"

"Will do" I am never gonna do that shit. As much as I loved the stories he talks way to much and that is not something I can handle right now or any time soon.

"Fucking finally" Marco sighs from behind me where he was leaning against the railing and I'm peeved that I have to agree with him.

If Marco had it his way we would have been out of here as soon as I had finished eating a few hours ago but Shanks had it so the Red Force was blocking our way preventing us from going anywhere till they moved.

Total ass move honestly but it worked so i gotta give him props for that i guess.

As much as it seamed like he wanted to Marco was not going to try and fight them he was eyeing the ores but those are conveniently a multiple person job and even though I am not enjoying myself as much anymore my annoyance with him outweighed my want to be alone by quite a bit.

The entirety of Shanks crew that was on our small ship quickly pick up all the mugs of beer and barrels that they brought on and move back to their ship. With how drunk most of them seemed just moments ago I'm surprised some of them can even walk let alone carry stuff back up a latter onto their ship.

"Tell the old man I said hi Marco" calls down from over the railing as his ship begins to move.

"No"

"Aw come on!"

"Use your den den mushi and do it yourself"

"Your no fun!" Shanks says pouting before turning and going further onto his ship.

Both me and Marco are silently staring at the Red Force as it moves away until its far enough that I'm sure no one on it could hear us talking.

"Please tell me its not a common occurrence for him to show up on Whitebeard's ship. I can not handle that long of a conversation for a while" I ask truing to look at Marco.

"It's not don't worry yoi" he says reaching over and giving me a small pat on the shoulder.

I brush off his hand and turn away from him with a nod making my way over to the railing of the ship to gaze out at the quickly shrinking Red Force

I've had no time to really just look at the ocean and appreciate it. Seeing the different seas was the only thing I liked about the constant moving I was forced to do over the last few years. It was the only consistent thing i had, it was always gonna be there with its same blue color no matter how much changed around me. It may be unpredictable and dangerous but at least you know that's what it is, the sea doesn't try to hide what it is or pretend its something different.

People do though, Marco probably is hiding more then one thing about why he is taking me in but with most secrets they will probably stay hidden from me till something bad happens because of the festering secrets. I don't know if that's what will happen, I can't tell the future but I can guess and that seems like the most likely thing to happen since life just loves to fuck me over.

God that sounded so angsty what the hell is wrong with me.

Glancing back over my should I notice that Marco is no where to be seen and the sails are now down again. I didn't even notice he did that.

Well that just means I'm actually alone now and I'm not breaking down crying so that's better than before.

So in the span of three days I met the first division commander of the Whitebeard pirates, had him defend me against Mr. Zuno, got kidnapped by him, had a breakdown in the room he let me stay in because he reminds me so much of my sister, and met another Yonko.

Right.

I let out a deep sigh and run my hands over my face and through my hair ruffling it more then it already was.

Why can't my life be normal for once?

But if it was normal then it wouldn't be *my* life would it?

Deciding to drop that thought for now I stare out at the water trying to make out the shapes of the fish swimming around just beneath the surface of the water. I'm sick of fish, I've been eating way to many of them when I was on Honeysuckle island since i couldn't really go into the town to get any other type of food. Fish where never my favorite but now that I've eaten other foods the thought of having to eat anymore makes me queasy.

I do like the thought of fishing though that's fun. Well fun probably isn't the right word but still. Its something I can do to keep me occupied and not overthinking stuff. Juniper is the one who taught me to fish on my sixth birthday. She couldn't get her hands on an actual birthday present for me so she did that instead and it was more fun then any gift she could have given me. After that at least once a week I would beg her to go down to the river with me so we can

fish together and no matter how much she protested or said no she always ended up down there with me.

I wanna fish now god dammit. Since I wont be eating any of those fish I can throw the one I do catch to the seagulls and other birds that are flying through the sky and landing on the ship to take breaks from flying. But I don't even know if there are any fishing rods on the ship, it really wouldn't make cense if there wasn't but still there is a chance there arnt.

Pushing off the railing i make my way to the door to the lower deck and make my way down. obviously there are no fishing rods in the bedroom and I really don't wanna go digging in the creates for one so…

I have to ask Marco.

Yay.

I can hear his loud sighing from the room that I haven't gone in yet. I don't hesitate to walk up to the door and open it. Its a small kitchen and Marco sits at a chair he pulled up to the counter and he was scribbling on some paper.

"What are you doing?" I ask walking up behind him and peering over his shoulder.

"Paper work for you, I was actually about to call you so I can get the details right" he reply's sitting up straight and looking over at me.

"Aw what? I don't wanna do that I wanna fish" I say it a lot more whiny then I wanted to making me cringe at myself.

"Either we do it now and get it done with or we do it when we get to the Moby your choice yoi." He says placing the pencil down before crossing his arms over his chest and raising his eye brow at me.

Oh god hes giving me the same look Juniper did when me or Suminari didn't wanna do our chores.

"Fiiiiine, might as well get it done with" I grumble as i hoist myself up to sit on the counter.

"Thank you Finch, I'll grab you a fishing rod once we're done" He turns back to the stack of papers and picks back up the pencil. "A majority of this I can already answer but there are a few I'll need your input on"

"Alright" I mumble as i watch him write away and lean forward to rest my chin on my hand. "do you do this with everyone?"

"Yes we do, its important that we know all of a persons medical history so if they have any conditions or require any medication or have any allergies we can handle it appropriately and since you already said you have never been to the doctor it make filling this out a lot easier sadly."

"Sadly? why is it a bad thing it means there's less work for you." I say confused tilting my head at him.

"Yes and it also means we don't know if you have any underlying medical Issus that might not be obvious to the naked eye or even to the person that has them" He says while letting out a exasperated sigh and flipping over to the next page

Yeah I guess that makes cense, still don't like it though.

"Do you know if you have any allergies yoi?"

"I get stuffed up when there's a bunch of pollen but that's it" he writes something down before going to the next page

"Broken or sprained anything?"

"Sprained my ankle a few times and broke my right arm once" he side eyes my arm at that examining it. "it happened seven years ago and my arms fine now stop looking at me like that"

"Hm…" Is all he says in reply.

This goes on for a around ten minutes with Marco asking me question and me answering yes or no to them. They were all super basic questions that i really didn't see the point in him asking but he's the doctor not me so I can't really say much.

Well I can and I did but that's not the point.

"Alright that's all I need you for so you can go now" Marco says as he once again places the pencil down on the counter.

"Fishing rod" I say flatly as I stare at him with a blank expression.

He looks at me for a second before remembering "Right sorry, I'm a little out of it right now" he says with a small laugh as he stands up and out of the room with me following closely behind him. He takes off the lid of one of the crates and inside are a bunch of fishing rods of different sizes "we had to get new ones because Trace was being stupid and ended up destroying the ones we had. I still don't get how he manged that" he says while opening a smaller crate.

"Thanks" I say as i reach in and grab out one of the rods

As I pull away from the crate with the rod in my hand Marco passes me a small black rectangle container "There bait and lures in there yoi"

I nod and pick that up as well and start walking towards the stairs.

"You know how to put the bait and lure on the rod right?" I turn back to give him a annoyed look as i furrow my brow

"I'm not six Marco of course i know how" I snap, I'm offended that he genuinely thought i wouldn't know how to do something so simple.

Marco raises his hand up in defence as he chuckles "sorry, sorry, i was just making sure"

I give him one more long glare before continuing up the stairs and onto the deck. It takes less then a minute for me to get all set up and to start fishing.

The next few hours fly by with me only catching a few things but that's really to be expected while fishing off the side of a quickly moving ship. Paying attention to my rod making sure I don't miss even the smallest tug has really helped keep my mind off things, Marco leaving me alone during that time was also helping with that.

Though it was starting to get dark and my stomach was starting to growl so I think its about time I stop and go annoy Marco for food.

Reeling my line back in I stand my rod against the railing before going to bother the weird bird stalker. He was still siting in the kitchen where i last left him but now instead of doing paperwork he was reading a book.

"Make me food" I say as I jump back onto the counter I was sitting on earlier.

He looked up at me with a amused look "wow not even a hello?" he asked with mock offense as he lowers his book down.

"You kidnapped me, why would I be nice to you"

"I didn't- you came here willingly Finch, you haven't even complained about it until now"

"Yeah because you said yourself that you would force me to go no matter what so what choice did i really have in this situation?" I say as i watch him stand and move over to the fridge. "I could have tried to stay and be carried to your dumb ship or I could walk and keep my ego from breaking" I continue making Marco snort as he pulls out sliced cheese and bread from the fridge.

"You have an ego? I couldn't tell" He laughs out and I squint at the back of his head as he leans down to open one of the cupboards to pull out a frying pan.

"Whats that supposed to mean?"

"what do you think it means yoi?"

"I don't know that's why I'm asking you dipshit"

"You'll figure it out"

"Why do I even talk to you"

"Because you like me"

"In your dreams maybe" I huff out crossing my arms and looking away from him in annoyance.

With that silents falls over us and I'm left to mope in my annoyance as he finishes making me food. What is he making anyway? I wasn't really paying attention to that. Looking over at him from the corner of my eye and I see hes just making me two grill cheese sandwiches.

Basic ass food but its still better then what I was eating before.

The next day I only do four things fish, feed the birds the fish, draw the birds as they eat, and do my best to ignore Marco's attempts at getting to know me better. I've already told him to much in such a short amount of time that I'm worried that I'll spill everything before we even reach Whitebeards ship.

I was sitting against the wall next to the door down to the lower deck drawing when Marco finally came over to me after standing on the other side of the deck acting like he wasn't watching me for the past twenty minutes.

And he gets annoyed when I call him a creep.

"What are you drawing Finch yoi?" he asks crouching down to be at my level and try and look at my sketchbook.

I look up at him for a second before looking back down at my drawing to continue it. I honestly didn't want to talk to him at all nor did i want to show him my perfect drawing of a seagull. I'm drained from the last few days they were so eventful that I really just need to be left alone.

But obviously I'm not gonna out right say that no, that will just lead to more issues then is worth it.

"A bird" I say flatly as I close my sketchbook and stand moving to the other side of the ship leaving Marco there.

"Alright then…"

"Where are you from Finch?" Marco suddenly asks as he walks up beside me as I so some more fishing for the new horde of birds that have decided to stay on the ship now that I've been feeding them.

"Why?" I give him a confused look from the corner of my eye.

"Just curious that's all yoi" he says as he leans against the railing.

If I tell him he might try to contact someone there to ask about me, even the thought of that my stomach turn.

"It doesn't matter" I say keeping my eyes trained on the bobber of my rod.

"Oh?" holy shit can't he just drop it?

I quickly reel my line back in placing my rod against the railing before turning to leave.

"Finch-"

"Fuck off" I say slamming the door to the lower deck behind me and locking myself into the bedroom.

Its the middle of the night when I shoot awake form yet another nightmare. Those have become more and more common these past few days but I can never seem to remember what actually happens in any of them only that they always involve Mom in someway.

I reach my hand to my neck griping my necklace tightly in my hand and rubbing it between my fingers. A few moments latter there's a small knock on the door and Marcos voice calls out to me.

"You okay Finch?" he asks softly

I don't reply right away instead focusing on calming my breathing.

"Finch?" he calls again

I take one last long deep breath before answering "Yeah I'm fine just… go away" I say as i flop back down and stare at the ceiling.

"Okay just come get me if you need anything"

"Yeah whatever" I say back while listening his footsteps move away.

There's no way I'm gonna be able to fall back to sleep.

Chapter 7

"I hate my stupid life man" I say burying my face into the pillow.

I haven't slept for three fucking days now. I've got no clue why, usually I sleep to much not to little. The only times I can remember having insomnia like this was when dad came home that one time and decided to stay for awhile. I was so paranoid that something was going to happen that I couldn't sleep till he left. I don't remember why I was so worried, Suminari probably said something that set me off he loved doing that.

He would be just laughing his ass off if he could see me right now or even if he could see the last two years. I've done so many things that he would laugh at. Like caring more about birds then I do myself, he'd say something about me always staying the same and then smack me for not taking proper care of myself while continuing to laugh at me.

I need to stop thinking about him, I'm to tiered to start getting all emotional. I don't even think I could cry if I wanted to, pretty sure I've used them all up the last time I cried. Or at least that's what I hope. Its embarrassing to cry so much after being able to hold all that in for basically a year. And I'm a man I shouldn't be acting like this.

Alright you know what? I know what'll fix this bullshit. Pushing up and off the bed I walk over to my bag and start rummaging though it till I find the old thick leather bound book at the very bottom. This will be my salvation!

'The New World's Guide To Rumored, Rare, And Extincted Birds'

I don't even remember when I first got my hands on this book but it has been a source of comfort for my enter life. This of course isn't the same copy form when I was younger, I had to leave that one behind. Though it still holds the same amount of value to me.

How I didn't think to read this over the past week and something is beyond me. But I seem to be forgetting basic things in favor of bad memories as of late so that might be the reason. I could have also just been being stupid. That is also very possible.

I sit down with my back against the wall and open the book up right were I had left it and-

"You're fucking kidding me" I say aloud to myself as I stare at the (quite pretty) drawing of a phoenix on the page.

This has to be some type of massive joke the universe is playing on me in particular! Like this is just fucking ridicules! How the hell does this happen to me!

Whatever, I'll still read about it because phoenix's are still cool as hell even with Marco staining their reputation.

'Many have rumored to have seen a phoenix all over both the new world and the blues but there has been no solid evidence for its actual existence. Photos have been taken of a phoenix in the past but upon closer inspection by professionals it seems to have just been the current holder of the Tori Tori no Mi.'

Ok when the fuck was this published. Flipping to the very beginning I scan the page until I find it and… Ten years ago. "Fucking Marco! I can't even escape him in my book!" I wanna throw something. Or scream. Both actually sound really good.

I know all of the sightings they are talking about weren't him there were probably users before him but a lot of them must have and that is frustrating. More then that honestly.

I read this book to escape the world to escape my thought and feelings and imagine what it would be like to see all these birds in real life but now my real life is getting dragged into the book and I don't know what to do about that. I don't know what to fucking feel other then anger. Its the easiest thing to feel. And maybe that says some deep shit about me that Juniper would ask- no *demand* I tell her about but I'm nothing like her so I really don't give a shit about learning why I think like this or feel like this.

I just wanna escape.

Looking down at the book I run my hand over the cover and even though its been this way for the three years I've had my hands on this copy the lack of wear and the rip at the very top just doesn't feel right. The book had been a gift from Suminari for one of my birthdays I think and I had read it over and over and over again I just couldn't put it down. It got to a point were June had to hide it from me so I would leave my room and do something but read it. That thing was bird watch outside but it was still a win for her. The myths though I never really paid much mind to I didn't want to hear about birds people told stories about I wanted to know about the bird that always chose to sit on my window or the ones who flew away during the winter and the ones that didn't. Maybe if I had actually read them I wouldn't be acting like this because I would have known he was in it but I didn't and I'm mad about it.

I'm mad about everything right now.

Is being mad better then being sad? Maybe. Anger is an emotion more associated with men then sadness is but that's not a good thing.

Letting out a deep breath I look up at the ceiling gripping the book in my hands tightly. I don't… I don't know.

All the anger seeps out just as quickly as it came and I just feel tired. My grip on the book loosens and I let my eyes fall closed.

God I must look pathetic. Why do I bother with this shit anymore.

I just end up back in bed curled up like a loser in the end. At least its a bed and not the cold stone of that cave now I guess. Whatever Marco saw in me back on the island is probably gone now I've been nothing but an annoying little shit the entire time even though he saved (kidnapped) me from there and I'm sure his brothers or whatever didn't act like this.

It would have been better if he just left me there to die.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!