How did you tell them?

Posted originally on the fanfiction.lol at https://fanfiction.lol/works/740.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Category:	Poly/Ensemble
Fandom:	Homestuck
Relationships:	Dave Strider & Wayward Vagabond, Rose Lalonde & Wayward Vagabond, Terezi Pyrope & Wayward Vagabond, Karkat Vantas & Wayward Vagabond, Aimless Renegade/Peregrine Mendicant/Wayward Vagabond - Mentioned/Background, Dave Strider/Karkat Vantas - Mentioned/Background
Characters:	Wayward Vagabond, Dave Strider, Terezi Pyrope, Karkat Vantas, Rose Lalonde, Peregrine Mendicant - Mentioned, Aimless Renegade - Mentioned, Windswept Questant | White Queen - Mentioned
Additional Tags:	Canon-Typical Violence, Meteorstuck, Angst, Character Study, Hurt/Comfort, Internalized Biphobia, Whump, Mentioned Past Character Death, Other Character(s) Not Mentioned In Tags, Possibly Slightly OOC, Coming Out, Grief/Mourning, Nightmares
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2026-07-26 Words: 6,288 Chapters: 1/1

How did you tell them?

by Sushipillar

Summary

It's the almost one-year anniversary of the start of the meteor trip, and something's wrong.

Dave hasn't been himself lately. He's been quiet, antisocial, and the only place anyone can ever find him in is Can Town.

The Mayor is worried, but when Dave asks him a (supposedly) innocuous question, WV finds himself haunted by the memories of what he lost, and the feelings he refuses to dig up and lay bare.

However, if he wants to help Dave, he's going to have help himself first.

Notes

This fic is apart of a larger AU idea i've had since 2022. I've always been so disappointed by the wasted potential of the relationships between WV and the meteor kids, and I really want to explore that however many ways I can. I also really really like WVPMAR.

So, for my birthday this year, I forced myself to actually commit to finishing a fic longer than 1,000 words! Yippee!!

I do have more ideas for this AU, so if anyone is intrested in a sequel fic (possibly involving a Dave POV with time travel shenanegans) please let me know :]

I also want to give a shoutout to Kozzax's Meteor Moments series over on Ao3. It's what gave me the confidence to finally put my silly ideas to paper, and i'm so happy there's someone else in this fandom that sees the vision. Please, if you have time, go read it. There's 6 fics in total, and at the time of writing, it's still ongoing!

Finally, huge huge HUGE thanks to Kit, Theo and Myth for proofreading this like a million times. I would never have actually finished this in the timeframe I did if it wasn't for their feedback. Thank you guys!!

See the end of the work for more notes

Can Town is oddly quiet.

Not that WV is incredibly talkative. While he does chime in on occassion, he mostly seems content with staying quiet. Which is fine by Dave, since it gives him a chance to fill most of the silence with seemingly endless babble.

But Dave's not talking today.

It's strange how unnerved by the silence WV is. Not that he isn't used to the quiet. Years and years of doing nothing but roaming the desert and empty cities meant he had to find some way to fill the silence in his head.

But a meteor full of teenagers means nearly every room he's in is somehow filled with more noise than he's heard in a lifetime, despite the huge size of said meteor.

It's honestly kind of scary just how used to the kids presence he's gotten in just a short amount of time.

Short amount for a carapace meant to live thousands of years, at least. It's been almost a year since the meteor first left, if he's not mistaken. He doesn't want to think about what else happened nearly a year ago, which is why he went to Can Town in the first place.

Dave's (and Terezi's. Sometimes Rose, and Karkat, should they ever make the uncommon decision to visit) endless rambling offers a nice way for WV to turn his brain off. He'll obviously listen and nod along when appropriate, but he doesn't have to talk or think about anything other than Obama and sick beats. Sometimes, Obama making sick beats.

But Dave is quiet today, and it's scaring WV a little.

He sets down the can he was holding, and notices how Dave jumps at the sound. He asks if Dave's okay, which gets him a nod and a distant "Yeah, m'fine."

Dave, he says, a little firm, what's wrong?

Dave jolts, much more noticably, and turns to properly face The Mayor, "Nothing. I'm good, man."

Despite the shades, WV has gotten good at reading Dave facial expressions. He can just barely see through the opaque glasses that theres something in his eyes, almost like he wants to ask WV a question.

He gives the kid a Look. A 'I know your hiding something' look.

It works, and Dave seemingly cracks a little, "Did you- Were you ever-" He bites his tongue, "Look, Mayor, i'm just going to be blunt here man, did you ever have a girlfriend?"

Oh.

Well, WV supposes one of them was bound to ask this sort of question. They are kids, after all. Naturally curious, if their behaviour over the past year is anything to go by.

He just thought Karkat would've been the one to ask, if anyone.

Despite him realisitcally knowing this conversation would have to happen eventually, WV is far from prepared for it. He doesn't really know how the kids, especially the humans, would react to knowing about his-

Friends. They were his friends. And that's all they're ever going to be.

He figures he shouldn't keep Dave waiting. No, he says, he didn't have a girlfriend. Or a boyfriend, for that matter. WV hates how strained his voice sounds when he says that, hates how his stomach twists into knots, how his throat dries.

Dave looks a little disappointed, but doesn't pry further, giving The Mayor a small nod and a "Oh. Cool." before turning back to working on some sort of strange park project he and Terezi have spent the past couple of weeks tinkering with.

The rest of the day passes by in silence, and when Dave and The Mayor both leave to go get something to eat, WV sees that Dave still has that distressed yet contemplative look in his eyes.

It was the same the next day. Dave was still weirdly quiet, especially for a kid who apparently can't stop himself from running his mouth.

WV has the thought to pry a little more, but figures maybe all Dave needs is a little space. He's a growing kid, after all, and sometimes all someone needs is just a little privacy.

And, selfishly, he's worried about opening his own can of worms. Whatever's wrong with WV, Dave, or the other kids for that matter, don't need that on their plates. Not when they already have so much more to worry about.

So, he gives Dave space, figuring that whenever he was ready, Dave would come to him, and maybe then The mayor would be more prepared to help him.

Whenever Dave pokes his head into Can Town, The Mayor makes sure to give Dave a little distance, but still lets him know if he ever needs to talk, he'll just be right over on the other side of the room.

Dave appears to appreciate it, considering he visits Can Town much more often than he used too, which was already pretty frequently, if you asked WV.

This routine continues for about a week. Dave comes in, gives a small greeting to The Mayor, and settles himself on the edge of Can Town, fiddling with something WV can't quite make out.

By the end of the week, WV had started to become a lot more worried.

While Dave definitely wasn't the type to be open about his feelings, WV had noticed the boy was seemingly more willing to open up to him than anyone else on the meteor. Whatever Dave was concerned about, he was worried to the point where he felt he couldn't even come to The Mayor, and that scared WV, most of all.

WV is starting to think the stress from this situation is giving him more frequent nightmares.

It's not like he was having any particularly good dreams over the past year, but recently his nightmares have become much, much worse.

Instead of simply wandering the battlefield, forced to sift through the sacrifices of his failed revolution, he now catches a glimpse of his fellow exiles, off in the distance.

Most of the time, it's PM and AR, standing side by side, their backs to him.

For a fleeting moment, he feels something light within him, and he finds himself running to catch up with them, the hope that maybe, just maybe, he's found them within a dreambubble, and he can see them once more and tell them how sorry he is that he's failed all of them.

When he catches up, though, he notices that they aren't responding to his calls, and when he finally gets close enough to get a proper look at them;

They collapse, and he sees the Renegade and the Mendicant's bodies sprawled along the remnants of his revolution, their blood pooling together and flowing down the river. WV looks back up, and he can see that over top of their corpses stands Jack Noir, staring down at him with those same crazed eyes from all those years ago.

And then The Mayor wakes up, surounded by cans and and the smell of chalk.

He clutches his stomach, the empty, hollow feeling he had for the first few days of the trip returning in full force.

The only thing that stops him from screaming, or running off, is Dave, quietly sleeping on the other side of the room.

WV doesn't know why Dave started sleeping in Can Town all of a sudden, but he has a feeling it has something to do with whatever's been plauging him recently.

Taking deep breaths, he watches the boy shuffle in his sleep, like PM used to whenever she had a rough nightmare. Whenever that happened, AR would gently shake her awake, and would spent the rest of the night trying to calm her down from whatever was haunting her.

WV can feel his body shaking, and before he knows it, he's out of bed and finds himself sprinting through the meteor's halls. He doesn't like leaving Can Town alone, but he feels like he's suffocating. He can't deal with the memories of the desert right now. Not with Dave there.

He needs a quiet space, somewhere he can get some fresh air. Or as fresh of air as anyone can get can in this place.

Although he tends not to venture far into the meteor's depths, WV winds up slipping out of the building entirely, climbing up onto the rooftop and sitting down on the edge of the building, curling up on himself as he relishes in the quiet comfort of being alone, with nothing but his shallow breaths and memories to keep him company.

He closes his eyes, and allows himself time to collect his thoughts. He doesn't want to think about the nightmares, he doesn't want to think about the war, he doesn't want to think about that night in the desert.

Instead, he chooses to mull over the conversation he'd had with Dave the week prior.

WV knows why that question Dave asked gives him knots in his stomach. He knows why he's so hesitant to directly pry into Dave, and ask him point blank what's wrong.

Because doing so would mean he'd have to admit, out loud, his feelings for-

His eyes snap open as he hears hard footsteps approching behind him. Dave doesn't say anything as he settles himself next to WV, looking out with him over the vastness of Paradox Space.

They sit together like that for a while, comfortable silence settling between them.

WV doesn't know if he could ever admit this, but having Dave here with him gives him both a sense of comfort and and a sense of dread. He wonders if the kid feels the same about him, or about any of the other kids on the meteor?

It's Dave who chooses to speak first, suprising WV, "Mayor, are you okay, man?"

WV hesitates, assuring Dave that he's just fine. He just needed some fresh air and all.

A different kind of silence fills the air, this one uncomfortable. Feeling awkward, WV finds himself searching for something to say, and before he can catch himself, he finds he's asking if Dave misses John, or Jade.

"Well duh. Of course I do. They were my best bros." He replies, turning to face The Mayor, "Is that it? I told you, dude, he's fine. They're both fine."

The way he says it sounds like he's trying to reassure himself moreso than WV, but The Mayor doesn't pry into that.

Instead, he tells Dave that, while he does worry about John, it's - it's much more complicated than that.

Then, he asks if Dave would be willing to keep a secret for him.

"Sure dude. My lips are sealed. Nothing's gonna ever unzip them. I'm locking my lips up and throwing away the key."

Dave's rambling gets a fond smile out of WV, as it usually does. Honestly, he doesn't know why he's choosing to tell him this now, but Dave has been upfront about a lot of things with

him so far, so it's the least WV could do to return the favor.

He explains to Dave that he had friends before he came onto the meteor. He doesn't give their names, but he tells the boy about the three that kept him company in exile. About the days they spent scavaging for food, the nights dancing around the campfire, and WV finds himself feeling lighter, being able to finally tell someone all of these stories, even if he's choosing to omit some information.

Dave, for his part, keeps quiet, listening intently as WV rambles ans gestures with his hands, The Mayor's eyes looking into the vastness of Paradox Space.

Dave's silence would've been suprising to WV if it had been any other time, at any other place. But now? He's thankful, happy that he's finally able to tell him about an important part of himself, with no interruption.

Once he finds himself trailing off - because there's only so much he can say about the three without giving away his secret - he spares a glance at Dave, looking to gauge his reaction.

The boy doesn't say anything. He simply nods, and turns once more to face the empty sky, "I know how you feel."

WV follows his gaze, feeling the best he's felt in weeks. He asks if Dave wants to talk about it.

Dave doesn't say anything, and WV believes he's not going to get anything out of him tonight, but then he speaks up.

It's a bit quiet at first, uncharacteristic for Dave, but as he rambles on, he gets louder, to the point WV can hear him cleaely without straining.

"- I mean, it's not like I don't miss Egbert and Harley. I do. They're the coolest people to have ever walked this Earth. Or this fuckass space time paradox place. They're maybe even cooler than me. They're definitely cooler than me. Don't tell them I said that."

WV gently reminds Dave he's rambling.

"Right. Sorry." He forces himself to get to the point, "There's this - feeling. This really shitty feeling that i'm glad they're not here to see me like this. What would they think of me? I'm supposed to be the coolest guy around. And here I am, stuck on this hunk of rock sitting here like a bunch of ducks freaking our over something as stupid as-"

He appears to catch himself, stopping himself before he can blurt out whatever he was going to say.

"You know. Teenage boy things."

WV doesn't know what being a teenager is like, but tells Dave knows what he means, all too well.

Because he does. He wonders how disappointed the others would be in him, how pitiful he was now, or maybe had always been.

He wonders what PM and AR would think; The disapproving looks they'd cast him if they knew what he really was: a failure. A failure of a leader, of a mayor, and of a friend.

What kind of a person was he to say he was in love with them?

He'd left them all behind. For all he knows, PM, AR and WQ are dead, their bodies rotting in the desert, while he gets to keep going. Why him? Why had Jack decided to spare him twice?

He snaps of out of his sprial when he realizes Dave is staring at him. He pulls himself together, putting his hand on Dave's back as a means of comfort (for him or for Dave, who's to say?)

He tells Dave they should probably go back and get some sleep. The boy nods, and without a word, the two of them climb back into the meteor's building, and head back down to Can Town.

Despite, or maybe because of, the nature of their conversation, WV finds himself much more tired than he was earlier.

As he settles back into his makeshift bed, he looks over at Dave, and finds the kid in a peaceful-looking sleep. WV sighs, relieved, and closes his eyes to sleep.

For the first time in weeks, he sleeps with no nightmares.

A few days later, as WV was mulling over what happened on the roof that night, Terezi decides to pay Can Town a visit.

She passes by Dave, who barely gives her a nod in aknowlegement, too focused on whatever he was working to notice Terezi's lack of greeting.

As she approches The Mayor, she mutters a, "W3 N33D TO T4LK" and grabs him by the arm, the carapacian wincing as he feels her claws almost dig into his carapace.

She drags The Mayor out of the room, barelling through Can Town, nearly knocking over months of hard work. If WV wasn't so frazzled over the past few days events, he'd be pretty peeved.

Once they were outside, she turns to The Mayor, hands on his shoulders, "WH4TS UP W1TH TH3 COOLK1D?" Terezi's voice is barley a whisper, but WV's pretty sure Dave wouldn't be able to hear them anyway, "H3S B33N ACT1NG W31RD FOR TH3 P4ST W33K OR SO."

WV shrugs, going over the recent events in his head, and choosing to answer Terezi with a I don't know. He explains that Dave's just been abnormally quiet recently.

He doesn't mention any of the conversations he'd had with the boy. He figures Dave would rather those be kept between them, and WV knows he really doesn't want Terezi (or Vriska,

for that matter) prying into his own personal life.

"D4V3'S N3V3R QU13T, H3 DO3SN'T KNOW WH3N TO SHUT UP." She turns her head to the side, seemingly trying to piece something together.

"D1D SOM3TH1NG H4PP3N?" WV shakes his head. Not that he's aware of, no, nothing happened that could've caused this sudden change.

Terezi thinks for a moment, tapping her chin with her claw, "H4V3 YOU TR13D T4LK1NG TO H1M?"

WV hesitates, and tells Terezi that he *wants* to talk to Dave, but he's not quite sure how to approach the young boy.

Actually, now that WV thinks about it, maybe Dave would benefit from speaking to someone his own age. She knows what Dave's been through better than he does, and he tells Terezi as such.

Terezi sighs, "1'V3 TR13D, BUT H3 DO3SN'T W4NT TO T4LK TO M3. OR ROS3. OR K4RK4T, 3SPC314LLY K4RK4T."

Huh. WV had thought Dave and Karkat were getting pretty close? If anything, WV figured Karkat would be high on the list of people Dave would go to about personal troubles.

WV asks Terezi to clarify, especially Karkat?

"Y34H," she starts, "D4V3'S B33N 1GNOR1NG K4RK4T L1K3 H3'S TH3 PL4UG3. 1T'S K1ND OF W31RD, 1 W4S ST4RT1NG TO TH1NK THOSE TWO W3R3 4TT4CH3D 4T TH3 H1P. L1T3R4LLY."

Distantly, WV makes a note to check on Karkat later. He can't imagine Dave ignoring him for a little over a week has been doing anything good to the troll's psyche.

Despite already knowing the answer, WV asks if Dave had said anything about why he stopped hanging out with everyone.

Terezi confirms what he already knows, "H3 H4SN'T. H3 JUST BLOWS US OFF WH3N3V3R W3 TRY TO T4LK TO H1M."

This changes things. At first, WV had believed Dave just needed some space, and whatever was going on with him was something that had to do with The Mayor.

He knows Dave's been spending a lot of time in Can Town, but WV always assumed he was getting along with the others just fine.

But Dave was't just distancing himself from The Mayor, he was ignoring the other kids. He was isolating himself, purposefully withdrawing deeper into his own mind, away from anyone else who could help him.

WV figures, if any, now would be a good time to step up and properly confront Dave about all of this.

But before he does that, he supposes he should talk to other kids too, and see if he could get a better picture about what was really going on with Dave.

He thanks Terezi for bringing this up with him, and asks her if she's perhaps seen Rose anywhere.

WV doesn't know much about human biology, or human families for that matter, but he figures Dave's 'sister' would be the best place to start.

From what he knows, they were never raised together, like 'proper' human familes apprently should be. Despite this, WV knows that, out of all the people on the meteor, Rose is perhaps the person Dave is the closest with, Karkat coming in at a close second.

Even with Terezi's directions, it still takes him awhile to find her, which is a testiment to just how vast the meteor is. On occasion, WV will leave Can Town to do go something or other, and find himself getting lost wandering around the labs. When he does, he always gets this sinking, familar feeling, like he's back wandering the desert. Alone.

It's why he doesn't like to explore much.

He eventually manages to find Rose. She's with Kanaya, as she always seems to be nowadays. The girls are tucked away in the latter's designated sewing room, chatting about something WV can't quite make out.

Something inside him says he's interupting something, and that he should just come back later. Rose is busy, he'll just have to ask her about Dave another time.

WV doesn't get the chance to leave, as Rose and Kanaya turn to face him, almost as if they sensed he was there.

"Hello, Mister Vagabond. Care to explain why you've chosen to intrupt our date?" He knows Rose isn't angry with him, just annoyed. WV has spent enough time with her to be able to tell when she's actually pissed off about something. He doesn't fault her for being annoyed, either. He'd be pretty peeved if someone interrupted his date with-

Forcing himself back on track, he tells Rose that he's already told her, he doesn't mind them calling him The Mayor, really! If anything, he'd prefer they call him that anyhow, as he doesn't like how sick he feels whenever they call him WV.

But Rose doesn't need to know that last part. None of the kids do.

He apologizes for barging in on their date, and tells Rose he wouldn't mind speaking to her later if she's busy.

"It's about Dave, isn't it?" She asks, to which WV just nods. Rose turns back to her girlfriend,

"Well, Kanaya, as much as i'd like to stay and continue our tryst, I suppose I have an obligation to make sure my brother doesn't run himself into the ground with his little crush. As he is prone to saying, 'Bros before Hoes'"

"I Cannot Believe You Would Abandon Me For The Mayor Rose. Your Own Matespirit." Her tone is playful, and she's smiling as she waves Rose off, "Shall We Pick This Up When You're Done?"

"Maybe tomorrow," Rose says as she stands to leave, "I promised Vriska i'd help her out with something anyway. Her great 'battle plan', I think?"

"Such A Shame. I Shall Just Sit Here And Wallow In My Sorrows Until I May Be Graced By Your Pretty Face."

"Until then," Rose gives Kanaya a quick kiss and a wave goodbye as she follows WV into a more secluded spot of the meteor.

"Now then," WV finds they're tucked into a corner, quite far from the normal living areas, "What was it you wanted to know about Dave?"

WV explains that Dave hasn't been talking to him much recently. He's tried giving him space, but it's been over a week, and Dave seems more distant than ever. Terezi's also told him that he's been distant with everyone else too, not just him, and so he was hoping perhaps Rose would be able to help shed some light on whatever's troubling Dave?

Rose listens, and nods once's finished, "So, I figure you already know this, but Dave has a thing for Karkat."

WV, for his part, had a feeling it had something to do with a crush of some sort. WV also suspected Dave had *something* going on with Karkat, but he didn't want to pry. He tells Rose as much.

"You're aware that back on earth, a relationship between two people of the same sex was heavily discouraged, right?" Despite her outward appearance of a smile, WV can feel Rose's eyes burn into him, clearly judging him. Her statement makes it clear she's trying to gauge his opinion on the idea of two people of the same gender dating. Which was strange, because he hoped he'd made it clear enough he was fine with Rose and Kanaya being a thing.

He doesn't have a problem with same-sex relationships, he'd be a hypocrite if he did. He tells Rose the first part of that statement.

"I figured," Her glare on him softens, and he relaxes a little, "You've just- If you don't mind me prying, you've been strangely awkward around me and Kanaya since we've made ourselves offical."

It's not the homosexual part, he starts to explain, before quickly deciding to bite his tongue.

It's too late, as the look on Rose's tells him she seems to be putting the pieces together, "It's the relationship part, isn't it?" WV can see something terrifyingly mischievous in her eyes,

along with a soft gasp, "Mayor, did you have a girlfriend?"

The air around him feels sharply cold, like the soul has been sucked from his body, leaving behind a husk of a carapacian.

Swallowing thickly, he tells Rose they're getting off topic.

"You're right, we are." Although he's relieved she's choosing to leave it alone for now, WV can tell Rose is filing this topic away to pester him sometime in the near future.

He tries not to let the looming dread of that conversation distract him from his current goal. He'll have time to worry about that later. Right now, he just wants to make sure Dave's okay.

Speaking of, "I'm sure you understand where I was getting at with my previous statements."

WV had a hunch. Earth's traditions wouldn't allow Dave to have any affection for someone of the same sex. And even though they're not on Earth, Dave still feels the pressure to hold himself up to Earth's standards, because it's what he's used to.

"Exactly. So as you can see, he's not taking the idea of possibly being a homosexual well."

At first, WV wants to ask about Rose. Dave doesn't seem to have any problems with her and Kanaya. If anything, he seemed to be pretty happy for her.

But WV knows it's different when it's other people. You're more likely to think much higher of other people than you are to think of yourself.

WV thanks Rose, and tells her she's been a great help. He turns to leave, stopping only when he hears Rose call out to him.

"Before you go-" She hesitates for a moment, taking her time to find the right words, "I wouldn't mind having another chat with you. One not about my brother's self-destructive tendencies."

Although he knows he's setting himself up to be pychoanalyzed later, WV finds he doesn't really seem to care as he tells Rose he'd be more than willing to hangout with her sometime.

It's hard finding you're not able to live up to the expectations your people place on you, even if those expectations happen to be incredibly stupid.

Karkat should know all about that.

WV does. He knows well enough what the feeling of not being good enough for your people feels like.

But he's not ready to confront Dave yet. He needs a third opinion, and he wants to check on Karkat, just to make sure he's doing okay.

He finds the troll in the designated 'common area', sitting on the couch. From the looks of it, WV could see him watching some old alternian romance movie on his crabtop.

It takes Karkat a second to notice he's there, but when he does, he quickly shuts his laptop and gives The Mayor his full attention.

"SHIT, HEY MAN, WHAT'S UP?" he rips out his earbuds and pats the spot next to him, inviting The Mayor to sit and chat with him on the couch.

WV does, and braces himself as he tries to find the right way to explain he's here to ask about Dave.

"OH." He can feel Karkat's mood shift, the troll awkwardly looking off to the side.

"STRIDER'S BEEN AVOIDING ME FOR DAYS NOW. I DON'T KNOW *WHY*, BUT CLEARLY I MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING TO PISS HIM OFF."

As he continues ranting, Karkat's eyes meet with The Mayor's, and WV can now clearly see the mixture of hurt and anger in them, "I THOUGHT WE WERE BROS. I ACTUALLY THOUGHT HE WASN'T THE ASSHOLE HE SEEMED TO BE. I THOUGHT-"

Karkat's winces as his voice dries out. WV finds himself surprised to see Karkat just - deflate.

Anger is typically the troll's go-to emotion for… well, any situation, really. WV figures must be really upset if he's not shouting up a storm about this.

There were times when AR would get mad at him. There were times when he'd have a disagreement with PM. However, he always knew, eventually, they'd make up. And it's with this knowlege he tells Karkat he'll make up with Dave eventually.

If the look on Karkat's face is anything to go by, he doesn't seem to believe him.

You'll both work this out, WV says, trust me.

"I DON'T KNOW, MAYOR. WHATEVER I DID TO MESS UP OUR FRIENDSHIP IS SOMETHING I DON'T THINK I CAN COME BACK FROM. DAVE SEEMS REALLY PISSED OFF."

WV tells Karkat that he didn't do anything to upset Dave, and that the boy wasn't pissed at Karkat.

"SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?" Karkat doesn't seem deflated anymore, but now he seems to be frustrated, exasperatedly waving his arms around.

It takes him a second to get his words in order.

Dave is-, WV starts, I don't know if it's something for me to tell. But it's not your fault, or anyone else's for that matter. Whatever's going on with Dave is something Dave himself has to work through. We can only help him as much as he lets us.

In that moment, WV can see himself in Karkat's eyes, and he realizes, now, that at some point he's going to have to take his own advice and tell the kids everything.

No hiding behind cans, or names, or promises of the future. He's going to need to be upfront, and let the kids in.

Because if he can't be open with them, why should they be open with him?

"SO WHAT AM SUPPOSED TO DO THEN, JUST WAIT FOR HIM WALTZ OUT OF HIS ROOM AND COME TALK TO ME?"

In the meantime, although a tad hypocritical to his previous statement, WV does't want to out Dave in any way. But he doesn't want to keep walking around in circles with the kids.

Taking a moment to collect his thoughts, he eventually settles on explaining that he's going to go and talk to Dave as soon as he can. And maybe, once WV's spoken to him, Karkat should too.

"I'VE TRIED," Karkat lets out an annoyed hiss, "AND EVERYTIME I DO HE TELLS ME HE'S DOING JUST FINE! JUST FUCKING DANDY!"

Seemingly out of energy, the troll once again deflates.

Placing a hand on his shoulder, he tells Karkat that he's here to talk if he ever needs him. He knows where to find him, after all.

Karkat seems to consider this. He doesn't have to, WV says, visit Can Town *or* talk to Dave. But, The Mayor thinks it could do him some good.

Reluctantly, Karkat agrees, "FINE. BUT IF I MAKE AN IDIOT OUT OF MYSELF *AGAIN* I'M BLAMING YOU."

From the angle he's sitting at, WV could almost see a bit of a smile on Karkat's face.

"I HATE TO SAY THIS OUT LOUD," He pauses, "BUT- THANKS. FOR COMING DOWN HERE. DAVE'S RIGHT - YOU ARE PRETTY COOL."

And WV can't help the faint smile of his own.

It's been exactly one year since WV arrived on the meteor.

One year since Jack Noir showed up in front of him and impaled his claws through his stomach.

One year since he showed up and massacred everyone he loved for a second time.

One year since he lost PM and AR.

WV doesn't know what he would've done today, if anything. Maybe he'd spend the day wallowing in Can Town, or crying in a hidden room somewhere. But, as life has cruelly shown him plenty of times, things don't always go to plan.

Instead of feeling sorry for himself and cowering away somewhere, he's standing outside of Dave Strider's chosen room, knocking and waiting for the boy to answer.

When he does, WV notices he looks tired. Moreso than normal.

"Sup Mayor," He greets, with an attempt to put on his usual façade of normalcy. WV ignores his too-cheery attitude, and asks if he could come in.

The tone of his voice is enough to tell Dave what kind of conversation they'd be having, and WV watches as Dave'd demenor shifts. It's subtle, but WV has gotten good enough to read Daves expressions, shades or no shades. And right now, WV knows Dave wants to slam the door on him.

But Dave would never do that to The Mayor, now would he?

When he comes down to it, WV knows he wouldn't, and he proves that by silently stepping aside and allowing WV into his temporary bedroom.

Without any words, WV situates himself on Dave's bed, patting the spot next to him as a form of invitation.

Dave decides he's going to stand instead of sit, firmly planting his feet next to the bed. Okay, that was fine, whatever makes this more comfortable for him.

It takes WV a moment to properly decide just what to say. He wants to ask so many questions: What's going on with you and Karkat? Why do you feel you can't talk to Rose about whatever's going on? Or anyone else for that matter? Are the absence of John and Jade hurting you more than you're letting on?

In the end, what WV settles on is a simple, You've been distant, are you okay?

Dave (who is already pretty keyed up, in WV's opinion), tenses. "Yeah, dude, i've already told you, i'm great. The best i've ever been, even."

If given the opportunity, Dave will keep ranting until the destruction of Paradox Space. So, WV doesn't believe he's being all too rude when he bluntly interupts him,

Do you love him? WV asks, quickly clarifing by mentioning Karkat.

Okay, he could've been a little more tactful, sure. But knowing Dave, the best thing WV believes he could do is rip off the metephorical bandaid as fast as possible.

It works, because although he turns his head away from WV's, Dave actually responds.

"I-" his voice cracks, which is something it doesn't often do, if ever, "Yeah. Yeah, I do. I think."

They sit in strangely comfortable silence for a moment, and as WV's about to spring more questions on him, Dave turns his head back to WV.

"Did you-" He pauses. Through his glasses, WV watches Dave's eyes roam all ovet the place, shifting on his feet nervously. "Have you ever - like- had feelings for someone. Romantic feelings? But you've always been told you're never supposed to like. Have these kinds of feelings for this kind of person? Because the people who do are weird. And you've been like yeah sure makes sense. And then the world ends and suddenly nothing matters and you realize hey maybe that whole romance rule was kind of stupid. But then you find out you're one of the weirdos. But it shouldn't matter anymore. But for some reason you're caring about this more than you should. And-"

WV shouldn't be suprised. This kind of question was only the next logical step from the conversation they'd had back in Can Town, but that doesn't stop him from clamming up a bit.

He sighs. Yes, he admits, I did.

Dave pauses. "Wait, really?"

WV, as he is prone to do, considers hiding the truth from Dave. But he knows it wouldn't be fair. Not to Dave, not to the others, and not to Him.

He doesn't want to keep running from his feelings anymore. He knows now that whatever Dave is going through, WV has been through it before, and he knows he would've appreciated someone sitting him down and telling him he wasn't alone.

It's clear Dave needs him to tell the truth. The full truth.

Their names, he explains, were PM and AR.

To his credit, Dave doesn't freak out like WV ways assumed he would. He doesn't say anything, actually. Which is good, because it gives WV a chance to speak.

He explains his feelings aren't anything like the Quadrant system. What he feels for his two former companions could easily be classified by human romance, or Matespiritship, in troll terms.

"For two people?" It's Dave's turn to have a barrage of questions. But he restrains himself, much to WV's appreciation.

For a long time, I thought I was abnormal, in so many ways. Then, I met them, and they'd made me feel, well, not normal, but whole. They made me realize there was a future for me, for everyone after all. Even if I couldn't see one without them.

PM was so dedicated to her cause of delivering mail, and making sure every message was always recieved. AR was passionate about justice, and protection, and he was always so insistant on having some form of defense for Can Town.

They were wonderful, in so many ways. I miss them.

Dave is quiet, hooked on every word WV is saying. It feels wonderful, like a weight lifted off your chest, to know someone else out there understands the things you feel, in similar ways you feel them.

"How did you tell them?" He asks. "That you loved them?"

WV gives him a strained smile. I never did, he says, I never said how I felt about them, and it's one of the biggest regrets I have.

Dave goes quiet, and looks off to the side, away from WV's pained eyes.

"I'm sorry man." The way he says it is the most emotion WV thinks he's ever heard from Dave throughout the year he's known him.

He reminds Dave it's not his fault. Jack wasn't anybody's fault. PM and AR dying was Jack's doing. Not Dave's, Not Karkat's, Not Vriska's, not anybody else but Jack.

"I should-" a pause, "I really should tell him."

WV agrees. He should.

He'll be right there when he does.

End Notes

Thank you very much for clicking on this fic. Even if you didn't read it, or you think it sucks, someone deciding to check out my work is so so awesome! (> ᵕ <) ♡

As always, comments and feedback are very appreciated!!

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