

It's often said that when something outrageous happens, some outlandish statement or some unexpected circumstance, the awkward silence that follows is so quiet that those present could hear a pin drop.

Following Izuku's blurring out of a fairly severe accusation, there was no such silence.

In fact, the young man she accused continued to smile, if in a more apologetic manner. "Right, sorry about that! It really did look like that from where you were standing, huh?" He bowed to her, still smiling, but genuine as he continued, "Sorry. I really didn't mean to make you uncomfortable. I just thought it'd be a funny way to meet you for the first time. Didn't really think it through I guess!"

"Oh..." Izuku uttered, surprised by the straightforward apology. "I... Alright. Thanks for the apology, I guess it was kinda funny now that I think about it, and know you weren't trying to get a look..."

"It was funny how he tried to look up your skirt?" Mina asked, confused and unnerved.

"No, because... Well, I can explain it later."

Not only Saiki was floored by the sudden turnaround in the situation. One moment the boy was enduring a serious accusation that had at least one member of Class 1-A considering beating him into paste. Then the next he had that same accuser defending his actions. He had taken it on so directly, responded and apologised so genuinely that he was completely forgiven just like that.

Well, maybe some of it could have been because Izuku could sometimes be a bit of a pushover. But still, even second-hand anger from everyone else was mostly quelled.

The adoring look of the other young man standing at the front of the class was maybe a little much, but most of the class were certainly impressed by the quick and clean handling of a difficult situation. There was charisma, and then there was whatever that was.

"Ooh, your feathers are pretty! Do you have to brush them like hair?" The comment and question was so sudden, none of the class realised the girl raising them had even moved, let alone begun studying Tokoyami's feathers.

"Uh-"

"Ooh horns!" the girl continued on, moving from the still flummoxed boy to the pink girl, prodding the tip of a horn with her finger. "Do they do anything? Can you hear with them?"

"Hey!" Mina protested, swatting at the hand.

"You're blushing! Are you blushing?" the girl continued on to Ochako. "Or is your face just like that?"

"Yes? I mean-"

“Nejire,” the quiet one of the three said suddenly as the exuberant blue-haired girl moved on to ask yet another question she wouldn’t wait for the answer to. “We’re not here so you can ask them questions. They’re supposed to be learning from us.”

“Oh, right, sorry!” Nejire apologised, retaking her place at the front of the class with a beaming smile. “Take it away, Tamaki!”

“Uhh... Me?” Tamaki asked, having not realised his reprimand meant he was taking control of the situation, and was thus expected to keep it. “Uhh...” He swallowed thickly, staring at the twenty students watching him. Waiting for him to... Do something. “Mm-mm!” He grunted, turning around and planting his face against the wall. “Can’t do it. I tried picturing them as potatoes but now I’m being judged by root vegetables!”

“These three are weirdos,” said Sero, not particularly trying to be quiet about his opinion. “Are they really the best of UA?”

“Don’t worry guys, I got this!” With a combination of confidence and fearlessness he shared with one of his peers and clearly not the other, Mirio Togata took his place behind the lectern. “So I guess this is pretty weird for you guys. Three third year students coming here to talk to you about a program that’s completely voluntary. But what I want you to understand is just how valuable an experience it can be. In fact...” He trailed off, the students who had been listening looking confusedly at one another. “I’ve got a great idea! Let’s get down to the gym!”

“Oh no,” Tamaki groaned.

“I’m gonna show you what it is to be someone with real hero experience under their belt!” He turned to look at the teacher. “That should be fine, right Eraserhead? It’s rational to give them a proper demonstration! Huh? *Rational!*”

The teacher sighed. “Fine, so long as you’re done before classes start.”

Saiki frowned. Wait, did that mean they could get Aizawa to go along with whatever they wanted so long as they pitched it as ‘rational’?

Moments later, the entire class had changed into gym uniforms and moved down to the gym they had been using to train their super moves in the previous month.

“I’m gonna show you exactly what I got out of my work-study!” Mirio declared. “I’m gonna take you all on at once!”

“Seriously?” Kyoka asked. “Twenty on one?”

“Nineteen,” Saiki pointed out, jerking his thumb at Todoroki on the sidelines.

“I didn’t get my license,” the scarred boy explained. “I can’t participate in work-study anyway.”

“You’re speaking my language!” Kirishima answered, slamming his hardened fists together in challenge to his upperclassman. “But don’t even think about taking us lightly! We’ve faced real villains, you know!”

Saki frowned. “Don’t take him lightly either. Those scars on his arms. He didn’t get those running the sports festival obstacle course.”

Mirio pointed a finger his way, dropping his thumb like a hammer on a pistol. “Good eye! I’ve been through a few scrapes. Show me what yours taught you!”

“I’ll go first!” came from two different voices, one with determination, the other with eagerness. Izuku and Katsumi looked at one another.

Katsumi frowned at her rival. Her ‘maybe not almost sort of maybe in the past but also sort of now but she didn’t care to unpack all that right that second’ friend. Slowly, the frown turned into what was almost a smile but was more like a sneer. “We’ll go together.”

Izuku was left visibly astonished, but quickly found her resolve, turning to face their opponent. “Right!”

“I hope you’re not still mad!” Mirio said. “I really am sorry about yesterday. Oh, also, sorry in advance.”

Vanguard decided, Kirishima took charge. “Close combat team! Get ready to surround him!”

“RIGHT!”

The response came from every close range fighter in the class, save one. Saiki knew it wasn’t a bad strategy for someone who by the looks of him fought up close and personal. Mirio was built, as noted, had scars that screamed someone who got in the thick of it. But at the same time, he was confident enough to take on the whole class at once. If that was the case, he wouldn’t be pinned down that easily. Not to mention, what little they knew of his quirk...

Izuku had said he had appeared to her as a face poking out of the floor. So what could that mean? Compressing his body down to one part, like that one girl from the license exam? Or maybe passing through things? In either case, trying to box him in was unlikely to work.

“... Sure,” he agreed eventually regardless, letting loose his wings and rising seven feet in the air. High enough that he could soar overhead in most any direction. Even if he had misgivings about their strategy, declaring that outright was the last thing he felt he should do. Giving the enemy insight into your thoughts was just giving away free intel.

Izuku and Katsumi blasted forward, the former with explosive force and the latter with the force of an explosion. Both saw their opponent suddenly and unexpectedly shed, or rather pass through, his clothing.

“Wha—!” Izuku flushed brightly on seeing the first penis of her entire life, her brain coming to a complete halt.

“Oop, sorry! My quirk’s a little—”

“HEAD OUTTA YOUR ASS, DEKU!” Katsumi roared, continuing forward completely unperturbed. Her hand reaching out and aiming for the target he presented. Her explosive blast passing through his crotch without any effect.

“Low blow, but no hesitation!” Mirio praised her. “Good! But...” He passed through the floor, dropping out of sight completely.

Underground. Which meant he could pop up anywhere. And if he could do that, the most strategically advantageous place he would pop up would be...

Saiki heard Kyoka’s shriek before he could even turn around. But it only confirmed what he already knew. Flying sideways he interposed himself between his lover and the naked man. His arm moved to catch the punch. Mirio’s smile didn’t falter in the slightest as he kept moving. Through his arm. Kept moving. Looked like he was going in for a headbutt. Saiki was sure his head was harder so moved to meet it with his own forehead, only for that to pass through too. His vision went dark for an instant.

Kyoka grunted in pain, letting out an explosion of air as all of it was blasted out of her with a powerful body blow.

Saiki moved to the side. Being in the way didn’t help and he needed to know just what was happening. With that new perspective, he was able to understand. And what he understood was a problem. Mirio could pass through him with ease, and also choose what parts of him were entirely tangible. Which meant getting in his way didn’t matter in the slightest.

Three more backliners fell one by one as Saiki tried to defend them. “Guard up!” he shouted, hoping some of them would get themselves together. Not that he had expectations they’d do better.

“Dark Shadow!”

“Got your back, T!” the bird-like construct declared, wrapping around Tokoyami’s body.

“Not enough!” Mirio answered with a shout, rising from the floor with an uppercut that took boy and quirk construct off their feet and into the air.

Another one?! Saiki didn’t have time to curse, moving toward Momo. “Body to body!” he told her. There had to be a limit! There had to be!

“... I got it!” Momo announced, not revealing what she ‘got’ out loud.

“Try as many times as you want!” Mirio challenged. Once again coming in with a heavy punch that passed through Saiki, only for his arm to unexpectedly bounce away.

Momo grinned behind her shielding boyfriend. "Block has to be skin to skin!" she announced, showing off the thick plate of metal she interposed between her belly and Saiki's back. "He's choosing what's intangible, not what he passes through! If there's no space for what he makes solid, he just bounces off!"

"Wow!" Mirio laughed, looking at the teacher for this class. "You've really got an impressive group here, Eraserhead! Figuring out my quirk this quickly! Sorry, though!" He lunged forward again, as though expecting the result to be different now that they had figured him out. "Eyeball Crush!" His finger jabbed toward Saiki's eye. On pure instinct, the student flinched and turned away, only for the hand to pass through him to the woman behind him and punch her across the gym.

"Yaomomo!" Mina shouted, only to have more important things to worry about when Mirio suddenly appeared before her to lay her out in a similar fashion.

"That's it!" Izuku shouted. "Momo said he bounces off! That's how he's moving so fast! By abusing how he's forced out of occupied space!"

Mirio laughed again as he sank below the floor. "Come on, don't you think that's reaching a little bit?" Launching up again to take out the last of the long-range fighters.

"So Deku was right," Katsumi growled, a grin on her face. "Not just that. He's got a weakness. He wants to stand, he's gotta keep his feet solid. Ain't that right, Guy Smiley?"

"Sounds like we got a plan!" Kirishima declared. "Skin to skin blocks, target his feet, back off if he starts to phase through the floor. With this we can wear him down!"

"Maybe!" Mirio agreed with a friendly smile before he leapt toward the nearest target, Ojiro. "Then again," he continued as he passed through the tailed boy entirely, then through the floor, only to lean back and bounce right back into Ojiro's undefended back, "Maybe not!"

Saiki almost swung as he felt a presence approaching from his rear right side. "Midoriya has a plan," Iida suddenly said quietly to him. "Ochako has to touch him, just once, and we can win this. Be as loud and distracting as you can."

"HEY SMILEY! HOW LONG CAN YOU HOLD THAT QUIRK OF YOURS?!" Katsumi shouted, effectively declaring she already heard the plan and agreed with it.

The winged boy looked back to see Izuku relaying the plan to Uraraka. "... Got it." His wings buzzed. "Katsumi, tag out!" The blonde girl backed off from her rapid fire explosions as her lover took her place. Not directly getting into close combat, but being the biggest pest, using his high speed flight and acrobatics to flit around the muscular naked man. Attacking with foot, fist and wing at any opportunity as he passed back and forth. Even as Mirio ducked into the floor, Saiki didn't let him get away. Chasing him down to continue the relentless assault.

"TAG!" Izuku took over alongside Iida, the two of them raining down high speed attacks over and over again.

"This coordination is impressive!" Mirio praised the two, dropping and suddenly attacking Iida directly to ruin that coordination. "Have you two fought together before, for real?"

"We have!"

"Good! Working with others is important!" Mirio continued the conversation as engine-propelled feet passed through his midsection. "Sorry about this though." A quick dip for a little extra power and his foot lashed out between the runner's spread legs.

"U-Urgh, ah!" Iida squealed more than grunted as his genitals were kicked somewhere into his small intestine. Figuratively. He keeled over in agony.

"TAG!" Katsumi barked.

"This again," Mirio observed. He jumped, temporarily denying Katsumi his weakness as he went full intangible for her oncoming onslaught of explosions. "You're pretty dangerous, so I guess I'll take you down next."

"Yeah?! Try it! STUN GRENADE!" From her cupped hands, a bright and loud explosion emerged, the 1-A students looking away from the blast having seen it before and knew what was coming. But even not knowing to protect his eyes, even without attempting to shield himself at all, Mirio was entirely unaffected as he descended to and through the floor. "What?"

"Hup!" The blond appeared again, not near Katsumi, or Izuku, or Saiki but instead rising up and kicking Kirishima in his unprotected and unhardened gut before dashing to and punching Ochako in the same place. "Sorry, looked like you were keeping my attention off them, so..."

"God dammit!" Katsumi snarled, attacking again, getting very little reaction from him as he passed through her entirely. She attempted to stamp of his foot as he passed only for her own to go right through his. She tried to turn but wasn't fast enough as his leg slammed into her abdomen, kicking her directly into Izuku who was moving to support. "God dammit," the bomber coughed, "Get the hell off me, Deku!"

"Bakugo, you're out," Aizawa called from the side.

"What?! The hell?! I can still fight!"

"You'll say that until you literally pass out," the teacher countered. "This is a lesson, not a match. He bested you, accept it."

"Tch!"

"And then there was one!" Mirio cheered, facing Saiki.

The winged boy took in a breath, deep and heavy. Then let his wings carry him toward his opponent. He didn't stay in the air though. Instead, he slammed his feet down to leave himself barely inches away. "Close Combat!" Punches. Dozens of them in rapid succession. No attempt to guard, no attempt to even try to do anything fancy. Simply pummel an enemy into submission with an unrelenting assault no matter what punishment he'd receive in turn.

"Interesting," Mirio observed as his head swayed to the side, seemingly not to dodge but to inspect. "Oh, I get it! You're trying to see if you can force me to wear myself out by overusing my quirk! I gotta warn ya, that'll take a while!" He almost casually dropped through the floor, his expression unchanging as he popped out again with an uppercut to the boy's midsection.

Only to realise he needed to return to fully phasing immediately. The assault didn't stop or stall in the slightest from the blow.

"So will that," Saiki grunted in response.

"Huh! Well, darn!" Mirio stepped back, raising his hands. "Guess we can call it a draw."

The punching slowed to a stop. "A draw?"

"Yup! Fun as it might be to see who lasts longer, I mean it'd probably be me but I don't know for sure and I'm kind of curious to find out! But we all have class soon and," he looked around at the mostly groggy and pained students of Class 1-A, "I think I pretty much got my point across anyway, right? My quirk is pretty strong, huh?"

"Strong? More like bullshit," Kaminari groaned. "You can just make it so nobody can touch you? That's insane!"

"No, it's really not. You see it now and you're seeing it after I put so much work into making it something worthwhile." He raised both hands, then had one pass through the other. "My quirk is called Permeation. As some of you figured out, it lets me pass through solid matter. Not only that," with the arm currently partway through his hand, he used the hand of that arm to grab the other. "I can choose what part of me is able to phase through stuff! It's really useful, but it didn't start that way. Something else you figured out, if my feet aren't solid, I just fall through the floor. You guys really did figure out a lot from a short fight! It's really impressive!" he laughed.

"Thing is, that's not the only drawback to using it. I can't feel with the parts of my body that aren't solid. No senses at all. So if I phase with my head, I can't see, hear, smell or taste at all. Even the simplest thing like walking through a wall is a process of a dozen steps that I have to figure out on the fly."

"Holy shit," Saiki breathed, coming to a sudden realisation. Well, two sudden realisations.

"You look like you just figured something out. Care to share?"

"When you were passing through me to hit other people," Saiki explained for the benefit of his classmates. "You had to move the intangibility of your arm up as it passed through me,

then become solid again as it came out the other side, without being able to sense any of it. You did it by feel. And you didn't mess it up a single time, not until there was something in the way you didn't know about."

"That's right. It took—"

"Also I could've popped you in the face at the end there and dropped you like a ton of bricks."

"Ahahahaha! Yeah, maybe!" Mirio agreed in a tone that said it could have happened, but he didn't believe it would have. "But yeah, it took a lot of work just to learn how to use my quirk in a way that it could be useful at all, let alone as a hero. I scraped my way into UA, then managed to get a work-study apprenticeship. When that happened, it wasn't okay anymore to just be good enough. The hero I was working under wanted me to be great, not just for my own improvement, but so I could be a better hero. Because when you take a work-study position, that's what you are. You're not a guest like in an internship, you'll be treated like a sidekick. That means you'll be expected to pull your own weight. My boss was kind enough to give me a training regimen to get the kind of control of my quirk that I have now. That and the real life experience of hero work turned me into what I am today."

The class listened to his speech with rapt attention. Once again, the young man's charisma made him seem larger than life. Like being at UA was just a formality for him for him to finish up. To his audience, they already believed he was a hero.

"If you take a work-study position, it will be scary. You'll have the pressure and responsibility of real hero work and I know all of you understand that isn't something to be taken lightly. But even if it's scary, I really think it's something worth doing. There's no replacement for real world experience when it comes to improving as a hero. And really, seeing what it's really like to be a hero, with all of its ups and downs, will inspire you all the more to be the best hero you can be!"

For a student giving a speech to other students, most of the time it would be expected for any applause to be polite. But in this case, there was enthusiasm behind it. His words were inspiring, motivating, not just because of what he was saying but the proof behind them that he displayed not just with the scars on his body, but by how thoroughly he defeated all of them only moments prior.

In fact, he was so inspiring, it appeared not only he but his entire audience had forgotten.

"Mirio," Tamaki said, having slid his way around the wall to them without once turning away from it. "Put some pants on."

He looked down, and with everyone so enthralled by him, so did his audience. "Whoops! Totally forgot about that! Sorry, everyone! Didn't mean to leave my willy on display like that!"

"Hm, yeah, I'll bet," Saiki muttered, not appreciating the flushed faces of two of his lovers.

"What's wrong, Saiki?" Katsumi teased. "Feeling a little envy?"

“Why would I?” he asked with folded arms. “I’m bigger.”

“You weren’t always.”

He opened his mouth, then closed it again, which only made Katsumi laugh at his silent realisation. “You know,” he said casually, “You probably don’t want to push that button. After all, if I keep feeling inadequate, I might be tempted to grow some more.”

“Please don’t,” two voices chorused as one from behind him.

Toward the back, Kaminari glanced at Ojiro standing beside him. “Hey, you remember when we didn’t have to hear about Saiki’s sex life?”

“You’re complaining?” Ojiro sighed. “My room’s above his. I don’t just hear about it.”

“Least we’ve got girlfriends to help us suffer through it, right?” A long pause. “Right?” Kaminari looked over, to see Ojiro’s expression appeared to be carved from granite. “Oh. Uh... Sorry, man.”

“Yeah, it’s okay, don’t worry about it.”