

Road trip

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/10721304) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/10721304>.

Rating:	Not Rated
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Batman (Comics) , DCU (Comics)
Relationship:	Tim Drake/Jason Todd
Characters:	Tim Drake , Jason Todd , Dick Grayson , Bruce Wayne
Additional Tags:	Angst , Kidnapping , Angst with a Happy Ending , Developing Relationship
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2017-04-24 Completed: 2017-06-15 Words: 24,036 Chapters: 10/10

Road trip

by [Li_La_Lou](#)

Summary

Tim gets badly injured during a mission.

While the Red Robin simply goes over the incident, knowing the risk he was talking as a vigilante, Jason Todd is unwilling to let this happen again. He won't wait patiently until the love of his life gets killed eventually. Obviously Tim would never end his business as a hero just like that, so Jason has to get a little creative.

Notes

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

Chapter 1

When Red Robin finally opened his eyes, his first instinct was to squeeze them shut again. As the darkness around him vanished, the dizzy numbness was replaced by a severe headache and a violent pain coming from his chest.

Moving on their own, his hands tried to reach for the hurting area but soon enough they were hold back.

The masked boy, not completely awake yet, blinked down on himself and was more than confused to find himself tied up. His hands were bound behind his back and his chest and feet were attached to the chair with a large rope. Well, at least the people who had captured him had been nice enough to actually give him a chair to sit on and didn't just threw him on the floor.

It only took him a few seconds to come back to his senses and as soon as the memory of where he was and why he was here hit him, he was calm again.

Carefully, unsure of how badly he was actually injured, he rose his head and looked around the room.

He was more than surprised and just as frightened to find the floor of the shady storehouse covered in blood. His eyes widened in horror as he found the bodies of his kidnappers to be piled up in the corner of the room.

“What...?”, he whispered to himself, trying really hard to figure out what had happened. All of a sudden he feel cold hands touching him from behind and he screamed out in fear.

Hearing the familiar voice of his friend and lover, also known as the Red Hood, left Tim more than confused. “Sh! Tim, Shh! It's okay! I am here, you're save! Wait, okay, stop pulling so I can cut you free.”

It wasn't until now that Tim realized he was tearing on the rope that held his hands together, following his natural instinct to escape the unsafe scenery.

He forced himself to calm down and relaxed his muscles. Only a few beats later he could move his hands freely again.

He wanted to help Jason with loosening the ties but as he bent down to free his feet from the legs of the chair he hissed out in pain. He instantly pressed his hands against his arching chest and was just mildly surprised to feel the hot, red liquid staining his glove.

Jason took a worried glance at the injury while he cut open the other ropes. “Fuck, Timbo, this looks bad!”, he said in a rush as he picked the shorter male from the chair and carried him away from the blood-covered room.

In front of the storehouse, Jason sat Tim down carefully before he reached for his phone. “I’m calling Dick. In this state I surely can’t use my bike to get you to the manor. We need Alfred to patch you up as soon as possible!”, he explained, slightly out of breath, while he had already started dialing their older brother’s number.

Tim simply nodded and even that was hard to do. He tried to push himself up but his legs seemed unable to carry him for just one second. His head still felt like it was trying to explode and the deep cut in his chest burned like the unholy flames of hell.

It took Jason less than a minute to briefly tell Dick about what has happened. He commanded him to pick them up before he ended the call without bothering to wait for the other one’s answer.

The Batmobile seemed impossibly out of place on the dusty road. Covered in a cloud of dirt, as Dick slammed on the brakes, it looked like a bad omen coming upon them, but instead of misfortune his arrival promised help to the injured boy.

Tim tried to pull himself up on Jason’s arm and walk over to the car by himself but he didn’t even manage to stand up straight before he got down on his knees again. Only thanks to Jason’s quick reflexes he was able to catch the bruised up vigilante before he fell face first into the dry earth.

“ Shit...”, Tim hissed and wrapped his arms a little tighter around his chest.

Dick had already jumped out of the car and was with him now, helping Jason to carry Tim to the car without moving him all too much.

They placed him on the backseat and Tim was more than glad he was allowed to lie down instead of having to sit upright for the whole way home.

The pain in his chest made it hard to breath and he started to feel dizzy again.

“ He’s losing too much blood!”, he heard Jason yell at Dick but his lover’s voice sounded damped and low, like it reached Tim’s ear through a lot of water or thick pillows.

He tried his best to not lose his consciousness again, fought to keep his eyes open, but he didn’t even hear Dick’s answer anymore before he was out cold again.

When Tim woke up the next time, he found himself to be in a way more pleasurable place. The first thing he saw when he opened his eyes was his light-flooded room. The windows were open wide and the early morning's sunlight playfully tickled his nose.

Tim blinked and rubbed his eyes as he sat up, more than relieved to notice the pain in his chest was as good as gone. He wasn't dumb enough to think that the absence of pain wasn't caused by some kind of medication but he also knew that he would be alright soon. He would heal. And until then he didn't mind if some painkillers made his life easier.

“ Good morning, sleeping beauty.”, Jason grinned, leaning in the door frame. Tim turned around and as soon as he was facing him he recalled why he in fact wasn't okay with what his boyfriend had done.

He shot up, straightened his back and glanced over to the taller male. “Jason!”

“ Um... yeah...?”, the taller man replied, obviously confused by the more than uncommon greeting.

Tim pressed the heels of his hands on his eyes and groaned in frustration. “Jason, you ruined it! You ruined it all!

Jason winced and stared at Tim before he slowly lower his eyebrows. “What?”

“ This was all part of the plan, Jason! I was there *by choice* !”, Tim exclaimed and he could see in Jason's eyes that his partner had lost him. “Eh?”

Tim rolled his eyes and let his fingers run through his hair. “Listen, Jay, this was all part of Bruce's plan. This was not solely about the small organization we were chasing. Those guys were supposed to lead us to the head of the whole system! But now they're all dead and those who are in control will be twice as cautious from now on! Bruce is gonna be so pissed...”, he groaned and let his head fall back.

“ How was I supposed to k-”, Jason started angrily but interrupted himself in the middle of the sentence. “Wait, Bruce made you do this?!”

Tim shook his head and sighed wearily. “No, Jason. I volunteered. Bruce asked who was poised to do it and I happily agreed on helping out.”

Jason stared at him, absolutely speechless for several seconds. “You were nearly beaten to death, Tim.”, he remarked unbelievably. “There is no way that *this* was part of your stupid plan!”

“ I have to admit, things got a little out of hand... But still, there was no need to blow those guys out just like that!”, Tim argued as he swung his legs out of the bed. “I’m gonna go and talk to Bruce. We need a new strategy...”

“ Don't say that and look at me like it was my fault!”, Jason growled. “First, I didn't know a thing about your fucking plan and second, what should I have done? Let you be killed by some money-grubbing assholes?”

“ You should have trusted me, Jason! I am not a child anymore, I can take care of my own business and I *certainly* don't need you to save me!”

As soon as the harsh words had escaped Tim's mouth, cut through the air like cold blades, he immediately regretted them as he saw the change in Jason's eyes.

“ You don't need me? Alright...”, he said slowly, not breaking eye contact with Tim. The shorter boy could barely stand it but he didn't dare to look away either, sure of what it would do to Jason.

“ That's not what I said and nowhere close to what I meant!”, Tim tried to defend himself, taking a step towards his boyfriend, but Jason backed off.

“ No, it's okay, I get it.”, he replied coldly. He had been out of the door already but he turned back once more to look at Tim. “Go back to bed, Baby-bird. You need to rest.”

And with that he was gone.

Tim looked at the empty spot Jason had left behind and suddenly his room felt way too quiet. He didn't want to disregard Jason's advice but he clearly couldn't get back to bed just like that. Instead he got dressed and made his way downstairs, looking for Dick or Bruce.

He was in the hallway, heading to the kitchen, as wrought up voices reached his ear. Even though he could barely understand what they were saying, he was almost sure they belonged to Dick and Jason. And that he had heard his name.

Breathing flatly to cause as few noises as possible, Tim sneaked after them as they made their way down to the cave.

“How could you let him do that?”, Jason hissed, a little more aggressive than appropriated. “I thought you liked acting out the caring big brother! Then tell me, how in fucking hell could you let Bruce use him as goddamn bait?!”

Dick tried his best to stay calm but Tim could hear the tension in his voice. “This choice was not up to me, Little Wing, and you know that. It was Tim's and I trusted him when he said he could handle it. And I am sure he would have found a way out of it by himself...”, Dick sighed but when he looked at the threatening glare Jason was sending him, he quickly looked away.

“He couldn't walk, Dick! He couldn't even stand up, bloody hell!”, Jason growled. “Don't act like it was all under his control. Or under Batman's!”

Dick sighed in defeat. “No, of course it wasn't... and I am more that glad you were there to help him. But, Jason, Tim knew the risk. He has enough experience and he is capable of making his own decisions. What do you want me to do? I cannot forbid him to do his job and we both know it's just as likely that he gets hurt while he is on patrol as it is when he's going on a mission.”

Jason paused for a beat, staring at the first Robin. “So, if he would have died it would've *kinda sucked but hey, don't whine that's the occupational hazard*, or what?!”

Dick pinched the bridge of his nose, sighing wearily. “Do you intentionally misunderstand everything I am saying, Little Wing?”

“Stop this Little Wing-Bullshit, Richard, I am serious!”, Jason growled and threateningly stepped towards Dick but the slightly shorter boy didn't even think of backing away.

“Oh, you're drawing the 'Richard'-Card now? Jason, really, I love Tim just as much as you. In another kind of way, yes, but not any less. Don't act like I wouldn't give a shit about whether he lives or dies. Whenever Tim is injured I am just as worried as you are but you might not realize there is literally nothing I can do! Doing what we do is a part of Tim, just like it is a part of me or you. He won't quit just like that and I am neither willing to hold him back nor am I in the position to do so! Not even Bruce is! If Tim should come to the decision he doesn't want to live this kind of life anymore, then I will happily help him as much as I can to leave it all behind. But to me it doesn't look like he wants to quit and as long as that's the case, the only thing we can do is to protect him as much as we are able to and have faith!”

Jason didn't know how to react on Dick's speech and therefore he stayed quiet. Weakly he covered his eyes with his hands and rubbed his face and if he didn't know better, Dick would swear he could see his little brother was shaking.

He sighed, his anger was blown away within seconds, and he placed his hand on Jason's shoulder. “I know you're scared...No one wants to lose the person they love... But as long as he has you to watch over him, Tim will be fine.”

When his older brother pulled Jason into a hug, the taller male didn't fight back but he didn't exactly hug back either. He didn't even bother to wrap his arms around Dick. The only thing he did was to nuzzle his face against his brother's shoulder.

They were talking too quietly now for Tim to understand them but suddenly Jay turned towards the stairs and he ducked away to hide in the shadows just in time in order to not be seen. "However, I um... gotta go now. There is something I have to take care of and I think Tim doesn't want me around right now anyway."

"He always wants you here. But he should rest anyway. Will you come back tonight?", Dick asked and got a lazy shrug in reply.

"Hard to say. I'll try", Jason said before heading to the stairs.

Tim luckily had enough time to move into a dark spot beneath the steps before Jason passed by. He exhaled in relief about not being found, closed his eyes for a beat but when he opened them again his view was blocked by a tall man with blue eyes and a bright smile.

"Yikes, Tim, that's a horrible hiding place.", Dick chuckled as he helped his younger brother up on his feet again. A blushed crept onto Tim's cheeks and he avoided to look in Dick's eyes.

"How did you notice me? Usually I am very good at sneaking!", he laughed awkwardly and Dick joined in.

"Usually, yeah but, Tim, really-" he shook his head before he imitated Tim's relieved exhalation which seemed, now that Tim heard it, way too noisy for someone who didn't want to be found.

Tim laughed nervously and his cheeks were bright red now. "Yeah... Sorry, I didn't mean to eavesdrop but-"

"No, I get that", Dick interrupted him with the warm smile on his lips that Tim had loved from the first time he had seen it. "But Jay is right about one thing. You *do* need rest!"

Tim sighed but he didn't fight back when Dick gently lead him back to the stairs. "I'll stay with you so you won't get bored. How do animated movies and popcorn sound to you?"

Tim grinned lightly at his brother."With you? Heavenly."

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

As an apology for what he had said and done earlier, Jason takes Tim with him for a nighty trip. Those little adventures aren't usual for the second Robin, therefore Tim is not suspicious when he gets into his lover's car.

Shamefully his boyfriend's intentions seem to be very different from what the Red Robin expected.

Chapter Notes

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

Tim had slept for less than an hour when he was forcefully awoken again.

He had been lying awake for hours, trying to convince his mind that he was actually tired but the several naps he took when he had watched Disney classics with Dick sang a different tune.

When he had finally brought his body to fall asleep by simply not moving a muscle until his system shut down, he had been restlessly tossing and turning in his bed, not exactly suffering from nightmares but the visions in front him were uncanny and confusing and did quite a job to make him uncomfortable.

The sound of the door opening and closing again did reach his mind but it simply added to the already weird things that were going on in his head.

What actually woke him up in the end was the hand that was placed over his mouth.

Tim's eyes sprung open at the fierce touch and his first instinct was to scream his little heart out and punch his attacker right in the solar plexus but then he made out the features of Jason's face in the dusky light, holding his finger against his lips, the scare was replaced by confusion.

“ Jason?”, Tim asked but since his mouth was still covered by his boyfriend's large hand it came out sounding more like *Dwafoom* .

Jay chuckled at the sound and slowly removed his hand. "Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you, Baby-bird, but I didn't want you to wake up the whole manor.", he whispered and leaned in to quickly steal a kiss from Tim.

"What are you doing here?", Tim asked, rubbing his eyes as he reached for the lamp on his nightstand.

"I came to make up for earlier. I've been a jerk, I know and I am sorry. So, to apologize for it, I'm gonna take you on a little adventure!"

Tim was in fact a little bit suspicious about Jason's sudden change of mind but this wasn't the first time he had picked him up in the middle of the night to go somewhere. Jason's *adventures* could vary from simply getting a slushy at three am and dance to music coming from his phone in the parking lot of a 7/11 to breaking into a theme park and hot-wire one of the roller coasters to have their time. It was always a thrill to come with him and Tim didn't like to miss out those occasions.

Also, he still felt like he had to make up for what he had said earlier, so some quality time with his boyfriend was just the right thing to do now.

Tim grinned and jumped out of bed without asking further question.

He grabbed the clothes he had placed on his chair for the next day.

"Do I need to bring something? Money or such?", he asked while he changed but Jason shook his head.

"I'll take care of it all", he smiled, so Tim just grabbed his phone and his wallet, mostly for his ID, before he took Jason's hand and followed him out of his room.

The boy was slightly surprised to find a black car in front of the manor instead of Jason's bike. "Aw, but I like your motorcycle. Why are we not using it?", he complained, pouting playfully.

Jason laughed and ruffled his hair. "You're still injured, Baby-bird, even though you're feeling better. I don't want you to have to hold onto me for that long."

Tim listened up and turned to face Jason. "That long? Where are we going?"

Jason's only reply to this question was a meaningful grin.

Tim knew better than to keep digging. He had seen this expression often enough to know that Jason wouldn't tell him a single thing. No matter how desperately he tried to pull off the cool and mature badass, he couldn't deny how much he loved to surprise the people he cared for.

He held car door open for Tim and watched his boyfriend getting in before he walked around the car and got into the driver's seat.

Tim hummed along to the music coming from the radio and let his arm hang out of the open window. Jason was a little more quiet than usually but Tim tried to not misinterpret his silence. He was probably still thinking about what had happened earlier.

Jason had only one hand on the steering wheel, the other one was resting on Tim's thigh. Mindlessly Tim stroke it with his thumb as he leaned back. They have been in the car for quite a while now and Tim seemed to have missed the point when they drove onto the highway.

“Where are we going?”, Tim asked, this time significantly more concerned while he looked at the signs above the road to figure out where they Jason was taking him. Once he had took him to the Zoo in Metropolis but they had passed that exit already.

His question hung upon their head like a heavy cloud of toxic thoughts. *What was going on?*

As if the feeling of trembling uncertainty wasn't bad enough on his own, Jason's reply did nothing to make Tim feel more calm.

“Away.”, was the only word that left the man's mouth. If Tim's question had been a cloud, Jason's answer was the lightning to strike the younger boy.

“What?! What do you mean 'away'?! Jason, *where are we going?*” Tim's voice was louder than he had intended it to be but it actually fit his mood quite well.

Jason stubbornly stared at the road, more than glad he had an excuse to avoid looking at Tim. His whole body was tensed up and he slowly took his hand off his boyfriend's leg to grab the steering wheel tighter.

Tim stared at him, waited for a reply but it never came.

“Jason?”, he asked again and as he again didn't get any kind of reaction he felt rage build up deep inside his guts. “Jason!”, he said again, this time loud enough that it made the man in the driver's seat flinch.

“ I can hear you, goddammit!”, Jason hissed, still not looking at Tim but at least he was answering now.

“ Pull over! And then you'll explain to me what exactly you think you're doing here!”, Tim commanded but Jason just shook his head.

“ There is no need to pull over. I am able to talk and drive at the same time, you know?”, Jason deadpanned.

Tim crossed his arms and nodded, even though he would clearly prefer to not drive further into a direction with unknown destination. “Fine. Then start the talking.”

Jason hesitated. His next move was very important. He had to choose the right words and be very, very careful. Tim wouldn't like what he would get to hear now but there was no way Jason would back down now.

“ I don't know where exactly we are going yet. But we are not going to come back.”

Tim took a moment to realize what he had just heard and Jason used his silence to elaborate his thoughts.

“ I cannot account for something like yesterday happening to you again. I know, you chose to put yourself in this danger but fact is that Dick and Bruce simply shouldn't have let you do it. Tim, you're eighteen, not even old enough to drink, you shouldn't be this careless about whether you live or not! Take it from me, Tim. I *have* died and trust me, you don't want that to happen.”

Tim opened his mouth to say something but Jason didn't leave him a chance to.

“ I know you think you can handle all this and I know you would never make the decision to quit the whole vigilante-business by yourself but, let's be real, Timbo, your instinct of self preservation is alarmingly low and since you don't want to pay effort into staying alive I will have to do this for you.”

Tim blinked at Jason. Then he blinked once more. “You're basically kidnapping me?”, he asked, his voice way to calm for the surreal situation.

“ Oh boy, no! No, I wouldn't put it like that. Let's think of it more as a road trip. A... quite long one!”

Tim couldn't even bring himself to protest. Jason could impossibly be serious.

They sat in silence for what felt like eternities. It took the boy some time before he found himself to be able to talk again.

“ We're not coming back...”, he whispered to himself staring out of the window with dead eyes.

“ Jason, how do you think we can do that? What about money and clothing and all our stuff? What about my equipment? What is about *our family* , for heaven's sake?! We are never going to see Dick again? Bruce? Alfred?”

As Tim turned to Jason again his eyes were glassy and in the dim light it looked like he was fighting back the tears.

It broke Jason's heart to see him like that and something in the very back of his mind told him to stop this madness at an instant, to turn around and get their asses back home before he did something he couldn't take back. But he knew what he had to do, he knew he had to be stronger than the wish to wash away Tim's fear if he wanted to protect him. In the end, Tim would be happier this way, he was sure.

“ I grabbed some stuff from your apartment, so you have enough to wear for at least one and a half week. I've saved some money too and it should get us far enough away. Then I'll get a job or something. I'll make it work... I um... also packed in the laptop you use for gaming and, you know, personal stuff.”, he paused, “But the rest of your equipment... you won't need that.”

Tim twitched and looked at his seemingly insane boyfriend. “What?! Then how am I supposed to...-”, he cut himself off in the middle of his sentence as he realized that he *wasn't* supposed to. He wouldn't have to do researches anymore and there was no need to hack into the bad guys' systems. Jason was ending Tim's days as a hero just like that and there was barely anything the boy could do. Except-

“ I'll run from you.”, Tim said quietly but his words still didn't fail to make Jason wince hard. “What?!”

Tim didn't look at him. He didn't really look at anything, he simply stared at his knees and tried to hold himself together. “I will run from you. Somehow I'll get back home. You cannot just steal my life from me, Jason!”

Jay lowered his head and bit down on his lips. “I am sorry you see it like that, Tim. But I won't let you go just like that. Don't you see I am just trying to protect you? Fuck...!”

Now he was finally pulling over, driving the car onto the parking lot of a dirty looking motel. His hands were shaking and he couldn't focus on the road no matter how much he forced himself to look at it. And it would have been a little ironic to die in a car accident while he was trying to save Tim's life.

After he had put the car to a stop he leaned back and ran his fingers through his hair.

“ Are we going back now? Did you come back to your senses?”, Tim asked, equally sarcastic and hopeful. He lowered his shoulders again, feeling tired and helpless, as Jason shook his head.

The taller man reached for a cigarette and a lighter while he let down the window. “We are not going back again, Tim. I told you before and I am still serious.” he lit the cigarette and placed it between his lips.

Tim knew it would have no use to just jump out of the car like that. Jason would catch him in no time. And he wasn't sure where he was, so where should he go? He would probably not even make it to the motel to call the police. Jason was fast. And way too strong.

He had escaped worse situation, he had been captured by people who had tried to kill him but... at least he wouldn't have to fear being hurt by him.

In a fight, Tim would probably have a fair chance, even without his bo staff, but there was no guarantee that he would in fact win.

Instead of risking to lose and ruining every chance that Jay would eventually let his guard down, he decided he should just wait. Soon enough Jason would grant him some time on his own, even if it was just to take a shower, and then Tim would simply call Dick and then he would be gone.

Tim ran his fingers through his hair, sighing deeply and trying to collect his thoughts. “So, let me draw my conclusion. One. You'll keep me from seeing my family ever again. Two. You're dragging me out of my life as a vigilante. Three. You have no idea where we are supposed to go.”

Jason nodded slowly, blowing out the smoke into the cold air. “Kinda... But we will... we will work this out, I swear.”

Tim sighed again, pulled his legs onto the seat and buried his face in his arms. “Jason, please... I want to go home.”

Jason turned around to face his broken-looking boyfriend and felt his heart crumble. “Tim...”, carefully he reached out to place his hand on the shorter boy's shoulder. “I know... but you need to understand that I cannot risk this.”

Tim slowly nodded but it was solely to give any kind of reaction.

The thought of being able to run as soon as Jason was unobserving gave him at least some kind of hope but it was still unclear when that would be or if he would get a chance at all.

Slowly, he didn't even noticed it at first, tears began to roll down his cheeks and drop down on his knees, the black fabric of his jeans turning darker where it was touched by the warm liquid.

Jason had no idea what to say to make Tim realize that this was the best for him. Tim had no idea what to say to convince Jason of bringing him back home. So they just sat in silence for a while. Tim was so deep in his thoughts, he barely noticed that Jason had started the car again and they were back on the highway. He kept on telling himself that he would be back in no time but right now everything just looked horrible to him.

Chapter End Notes

I am sorry the update took so long! Writing angst is super hard because I don't want Jason to seem like a total jerk and Tim like a whining baby.
So bear with me, I will update regularly but it might take a few days.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Jason is trying his very best to make Tim believe that all his actions are just for the sake of protecting Tim. A breakfast in a small diner is a nice attempt but shamefully thing don't seem to get better soon.

Actually, the opposite seems to be the case...

Chapter Notes

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

Tim must have fallen asleep eventually because when he opened his eyes again he was blinded by the merciless sun blasting through the front window.

Tim blinked against the glaring light, his lashes were sticky from his tears and his back was aching like hell.

He looked up and rubbed his eyes before checking the digital watch on the car radio. It was already eleven in the morning and Jason looked like he had been to hell and back. Well, he had been to hell and back and he had probably looked worse back then but the dark circles under his eyes and his messed hair were quite solid evidences that he wasn't feeling too alive now neither.

Tim had to realize they were still in the car and that the bad feeling deep down in his guts wasn't just a leftover from his nightmare. As much as he had hoped, as hard as he had prayed, Jason kidnapping him hadn't been just a bad dream. It was horrible and terrifying reality that he couldn't escape from.

“Morning, Baby-bird.”, Jason smiled as he noticed that his boyfriend was awake but his voice was low and rough. He gave his best to sound joyful but he just sounded tired. Jason wasn't much of a morning person. Especially not, when he hadn't slept at all. And especially not, when he had the feeling of heavy guilt burning in his chest.

Tim didn't want to reply. He wasn't even sure if he could, his mouth was dry and his throat hurt. Instead he just stared out of the window and looked at the signs that rushed by. There wasn't a single city name he had ever heard of before. God, how far did they drive while he had been asleep?

Jason sighed but he didn't force his lover to answer him. He could only imagine how Tim was feeling right now and he didn't want to make his situation any more uncomfortable. If he would only leave him enough space and time to think, the boy would eventually get to like their new life, so Jason thought. There was no need to rush.

“Shall we look for a diner and get ourselves some breakfast? I could kill for some waffles and hot coffee.”, Jason smiled softly, looking at Tim.

“Kill who?”, the boy in the passenger seat deadpanned without looking up.

Jason just laughed forcefully and pulled the car over onto the parking lot of a small diner at the side of the highway.

Tim was moving like he was in a trance, pilot-controlled by somebody else from far away. His eyes were glassy and he didn't look at Jason, not just once.

He got out of the car and walked by Jason's side as they made their way over the parking lot but his movements didn't look like those of a living human being. They were robotic and lifeless.

Jason sighed as he looked at his boyfriend. Gently he placed his hand on Tim's back, in between the boy's slender shoulders, and led him into the diner.

Except of a huge man with a baseball cap and a flannel shirt, the restaurant was completely empty.

Jason brought Tim over to a table by the window, touching him as lightly as possible but never losing the contact.

Tim was surprised about how relieved he felt when he sat down opposite to Jason and his boyfriend couldn't touch his back any longer. He had never felt uncomfortable around Jason before, he had never avoided his touch but he had never been caged by his presence like this. So even though he was forced to look at him now, sitting on the other bench and facing Jason was a lot better than sitting next to him.

A pretty girl with curly, brown hair and a note-book in her hand came over to their table with a shiny smile on her face. "Good morning, misters", she greeted joyfully and handed both of them a menu.

Jason smiled back at her. "Morning. Um, could you bring us two cups of coffee? Please."

"Sure, no problem", she replied kindly before she turned on her heel and ran off to fulfill the order.

"Quite a nice place, hn?", Jason remarked, again without any reaction. Tim just stared at the laminated piece of paper in his hands, used it to hide his face from Jason, and tried to not think of home.

But no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't ban the pictures of Dick's face from his mind, when his brother would find his room empty. He couldn't stop the sorrow in his eyes from flashing in front of his inner eye.

Jason sighed and lowered his head. As good as he knew there was no use in forcing Tim to talk, it was still hurtful to be ignored like that.

Before he could start one more pathetic attempt to bring up a new topic and maybe get Tim to talk somehow, the pretty waitress was back at their table and placed two red mugs with coffee on top of it.

"Here you go!", she smiled brightly. Jason only replied with a thankful smile while Tim didn't even look up. He simply pulled the cup towards him and wrapped his hands around it. He wasn't exactly cold but the warm sensation of a coffee-filled mug beneath his fingers gave him the familiar feeling of home. It made him feel safe.

"Did you choose yet?", the girl in the short waitress uniform asked with a look at the menus in front of Jason and Tim.

"Oh, oh yes!", Jason nodded and checked the menu once more as if he was afraid to forget

his order in the middle of speaking. "I'd like to have some waffles with hot cherries and vanilla ice cream... and um, my boyfriend will have the--"

"I can talk.", he was interrupted by Tim's cold voice and the death glare the shorter boy was sending him, gave him goosebumps.

As the boy turned to the waitress, he was back at his usual polite self and, if he was being honest, that sudden change in his behavior crept Jason out.

"I'll have french toast with cinnamon and seasonal berries. Please.", he smiled softly and the girl nodded. "Sure, no problem."

She did seem to wonder what was going on between the two men but she did a decent job on hiding her confusion and curiosity.

"So, you can talk, eh?", Jason asked as soon as the waitress was gone, leaning back and crossing his arms in front of his chest.

"Yes.", Tim replied stiffly. "I simply decided not to."

Jason stared at his lover for a while. "You surely can be a rude, little fuck, you know that, Timbo?"

Tim winced and finally looked up from his coffee to stare at Jason in disbelief but the taller male had run out of patience. He had never been the most patient person in the first place and Tim was really testing him.

"I am trying to do something good for you. I am trying to save your goddamn life, alright? I am not expecting you to be overly thankful. I don't even expect you to understand me, at least not now, but for fuck's sake, Tim. I love you and – call me full of myself, but – I am quite sure you still love me as well. Otherwise you would have beaten the hell out of me and ran away by now."

Tim looked away, stared into the dark liquid inside his mug, doing pretty much everything to avoid eye-contact with Jason but his partner went on.

"So if I am right, and you still feel anything close to love for me, than, fucking hell, Tim, get your shit together!"

Jason's heartbeat had started to race and his breath was a little too rapid. He hadn't even noticed how his fists had clenched around the edge of the table.

Tim, however, did notice. He had leaned back, sitting as far away from Jason as possible. Slowly, very slowly, Jason lowered his shoulders and forced himself to calm down. "I am sorry, Timbo...", he mumbled but Tim was already back at the silent version of himself that he had been during the last few hours.

With a deep sigh Jason grabbed his cup and took a sip of his coffee. He knew he had screwed up. He knew it would take weeks, probably months to make Tim comfortable in the situation he was in and he knew that he was doing nothing to make it easier for any of them.

For the rest of their breakfast, Tim kept quiet. He did say some words to the waitress but he spoke not a single one to Jason.

Jason on the other hand kept on babbling about random stuff. He wanted to show him, make his lover see, that he was still the same. That they were still the same. Just because they were away from home and Jason had done something probably mindless and potentially stupid didn't mean they couldn't joke around and laugh with each other and be close and kiss and talk like they had always done.

Or did it?

Tim seemed to think about all this slightly different. Right now, everything about Jason made him uncomfortable. He didn't like the way his hands felt on him, he couldn't stand the sound of his voice.

He knew he could trust Jason, he knew his partner would do anything to keep him from harm and would rather take a bullet to the chest than hurt Tim himself. The logically thinking part of Tim's brain knew that. But there was another voice, yelling at him to run as fast and as far as he could.

Subconsciously Tim mentally went over the past month of their relationship, looking for red flags but he didn't seem to find any. Somehow that made his current situation even more uncomfortable.

The boy tried to eat. He really did. But his mouth was so dry that he nearly choked on his french toasts, so he simply stuck with his coffee, clinging onto the mug like he was holding onto his dear life.

The french toasts were probably delicious and in another world, another situation, their breakfast in the cute diner would have been romantic and fun and easy but they weren't in another world. They were stuck right here, right there and it was terrible.

Tim apologized to the waitress for barely touching his order and explained that he was still a little car-sick from their ride. The girl didn't seem to believe him fully but her doubt was small enough to not ask any questions.

Jason paid for the food and got some snacks for the way that was yet to come, smiled at the girl and wished her a nice day before he carefully pulled Tim out with him. He lead the boy over to the car and winced barely visibly as Tim unexpectedly spoke up.

"We can't go back into the car yet.", the shorter male murmured and looked away as Jason turned to him.

"And why is that?", he asked suspiciously. He wanted to believe that Tim only wanted to walk around for a while, stretch his legs and prepare for the next stage of their ride but Jason hadn't forgotten about his partner's threat from yesterday yet. He knew Tim had been serious about running away. Just like he had been serious about not letting him.

"I need to go to the toilet, Jay."

That was surely not what Jason had expected.

"Oh, um, yeah, alright!", Jason nodded. Tim freed his hand from his boyfriend's grip but Jason still followed the shorter boy to the restrooms.

"A little decency. Please.", Tim demanded with a sigh. At least it made Jason wait outside instead of the anteroom in front of the loos.

Two doors between him and Jason made Tim feel at least a little save. Not quite comfortable, the restroom was too dirty to make anyone feel comfortable in any possible situation, but at least he was alone for a few minutes.

He sat down on the toilet lid and buried his face in his hands. The thoughts were crashing against the edges of his mind like bumper cars on a fun fair.

And when one finally hit him, it nearly knocked him off his feet.

He could stand up fast enough and hectically pushed his hands into his pockets only to have

his own hope backfire at him again. The place where he had put his phone at was empty. His wallet was still right there in his left pocket but his phone seemed to have disappeared. While growing panic made Tim's hands tremble, he felt down his other pockets and looked around him but his phone was nowhere to be found. For a split second Tim wondered if he had even took it with him or if his mind was playing tricks on him. But no, he was certain, he had it with him when he got into Jason's car.

In an explosive mixture of fear, anger and frustration he stepped back out of the restroom and walked right up to Jason, his finger accusingly pointing to the taller male's chest.

"Did you take my phone?!", he hissed without a second thought. His eyes were glowing with rage and, even though he was a good head shorter than Jason, the taller man stumbled back.

"Um...!", he made, rubbing his neck and gently pushing down Tim's hand. "I might?"

"You might?!" Tim was yelling at this point. "Don't take this too far, Jason!"

"What should I have done?! You would have called Bruce or Dick or whoever! I cannot let this happen, okay?!", Jason tried to defend himself, his voice growing louder than intended again.

Tim took a step back, calmly, to look into Jason's face. "This is it.", he said quietly, his voice barely more than a whisper. Then, without missing a beat, Tim turned on his heel and ran for his dear life.

He only had to reach the door of the diner, call the police or ask the nice waitress for help. He only had to make it that far and he would be safe. But fate didn't seem to be on his side.

Chapter End Notes

Again, I am so so sorry for the late update. Thank you guys for bearing with my slow butt.

Anyway, things are getting serious here.

It breaks my little heart to let Jason and Tim fight! I want them to be happy, why am I writing angst? oh boy...

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

As unwilling to accept his fate as Tim was, for now it looked like relaxing into the situation and waiting for the right opportunity. Still, how could anyone relax, calm down, with their mind spinning like crazy and suck with a man who they loved with all their heart and still were scared to the bones at the same?

Jason paid lots of effort into making Tim feel better, feel safe. But will that change anything?

Who knows?

Chapter Notes

It's super hard not to spoil you with the summary, I'm sorry it's so vague.

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

Tim could hear Jason's steps behind him, even over his heavy breath. Usually a little sprint would do the well-trained boy no harm but Tim's heart was racing and the adrenaline pumping through his vein made his breath go rapid and irregular.

Even though Tim was more agile than Jason was, and in their usual environment, the rooftops of Gotham City, he would never fail to win a race against his partner. But they were on the open field now. His flexibility was of no use for Tim.

Within no time Jason's arms were tightly wrapped around Tim's waist and with his strong hold the taller boy stopped his partner from running any further. Tim fought his grip but without any success. He dug his nails into Jason's arms and stared over to the diner. He hadn't even made it into the waitress' field of view. The only thing he could do was to find another way to draw her attention onto him.

Without hesitating, without wasting another second, Tim leaned forward and screamed his little heart out. If only she would hear him, she would come out and call help.

But Jason threw a spanner into Tim's plan. Before even the idea of a yell could escape the boy's lips, his mouth was already covered by Jason's hand. The feeling of his rough skin pressing against Tim's face took him back to when Jason woke him up yesterday night. The difference was that this time, Jason's touch didn't wake him up from a nightmare. It made him sink deeper into one.

The scream Tim was forcefully pressing against Jason's hand was not a scream for help anymore. The muffled sound that somehow made it through his fingers vanished into the

wind but Tim still yelled until his throat felt like it was going to burst. When his voice broke away, it faded into a desperate sob and heavy tears rolled down Tim's cheeks. If Jason's wouldn't have been still holding tightly onto Tim's waist the shorter boy would be on his knees by now. His legs didn't support him any longer. He felt too weak to even keep on standing and a part of him was actually glad he could let himself fall back against Jason's chest so that the only thing he had to put effort into was crying.

He held onto the arm that was dragging him back to the car, powerlessly stumbling along, and didn't even try to hold back his sobbing. He let Jason set him back into the passenger seat and motionlessly stared through the window while the taller man bucked his seat belt. He could feel Jason's eyes on him but he simply didn't have the strength to turn towards him. Neither physically nor emotionally. "I... I am so sorry, Timbo..." Jason's tender voice reached his ear but barely his mind. He was busy wiping the tears off his face but suddenly there was another hand but his own to touch his skin. Jason had placed his palm on Tim's cheek and carefully turned the boy's head towards him. "I know you probably don't believe me right now... But I love you, Tim.", Jason whispered, his voice quiet and low, before he pressed a gentle kiss on his forehead. "More than my own life."

Tim closed his eyes like he always does when Jason kissed him but this time it was to ban the sensation from his mind. Somehow his boyfriend's touch seemed to be the most comforting thing in existence but at the same time the bare thought of his lips on Tim's skin made him want to throw up. He was so confused by himself and the realization made him cry even more.

Jason wanted to say something. He would have said anything, would have done anything if it would only make Tim stop crying. But he knew his lover good enough to understand that he needed space now.

As hard as it was, Jason swallowed any further comment and got back into the car. It took him a little while before he was finally able to turn the key and drive off the parking lot. The silence inside the car felt like dark water surrounding them, threatening to let the two men drown, but the faintest sound made the uncomfortable atmosphere even worse. Jason fought to keep his breath low, even though Tim's sobbing would probably sound over it anyway.

This horrible sobbing.

Each and every tiny sound coming from Tim made Jason twitch. He felt like a million icy needles were piercing through his heart and now he was the one with trembling hands.

One hand on the steering wheel, he drew a cigarette from his pocket and lit it without putting a thought into it. This movement was so deep in his muscle memory, he would probably be able to do it blindfolded.

He opened the window and let his arm hang out of it while he let the smoke stream out of his mouth.

Slowly his body started to relax again and his mind calmed down to a point where he was able to actually plan his next steps. Planning in his manner, meant, he mentally went over all

his options and chose the least destructive one.

While he blew his smoke out of the car window, he figured it would be the best for now, to ditch the car and stay in one place for a little while. The small space and the stuffy air weren't really adding to the already oppressive mood. Getting to stretch their legs and having more than half a square meter for themselves would surely fix this. Fresh air and personal space made everything better.

At the next opportunity Jason left the highway and drove onto a smaller country lane. Tim twitched and looked up. He didn't feel a lot like talking, especially not because his voice was probably still shaky from crying and because the wound on his chest had started to hurt again caused by Jason's tight grip. Still, he wanted to know what was his boyfriend's plan. If he even had one...

"Where are we going...?", Tim managed to ask and he could see Jason's eyes lighten up at the sound of his voice.

"Oh, I think we have been in this stinky car for long enough now. We'll settle in a small town... at least for the rest of the day. Then we'll see what tomorrow brings, alright?" Tim nodded but didn't say another word. He placed his chin back on his knees and pressed his palm against his arching chest while he went back to staring out of the window. Jason didn't really care. He was glad that Tim had at least spoke one sentence to him. That was still better than nothing,

It didn't took them long to find a small town that fitted Jason's requirements. To be fair, Jason's requirements weren't too high, really.

However, the tiny motel he had picked from them was nice actually. The rooms were small and the fact that there was only one full-size bed from Tim and Jason to share made the younger boy feel sick again but apart from that it was alright. The furniture was clean and looked comfortable even though not new and the room was light, thanks to two windows with bright yellow curtains.

The woman at the reception was a kind, old lady who had led them to their room while telling them about all the great little things in her home town. Tim was thankful that she hadn't asked whether they were a couple. It would have felt wrong to refer to Jason as his partner but he wouldn't have want to lie neither.

He still loved Jason, loved him with all his heart, but currently he was nothing but confused and scared and tired. So tired.

As soon as Jason had locked open the door to their room Tim stumbled over to the bed and let himself fall onto the soft mattress. While Jason carried their bags in and closed the door, the younger boy rolled on his back and faced the ceiling, slowly closing his eyes. He was still pressing his hand against the still rather fresh wound on his chest but the pain was already growing weaker.

Tim felt a movement going through the fabric as Jason sat down at the edge of the bed.

"It's pretty... I mean, not quite the standard your spoiled ass is used to but still...", he grinned jokingly and Tim actually gave him the weak attempt of a smile in reply. That was so much better than being ignored. If he was already allowed to make stupid jokes again, things were

getting better, Jason knew that.

He knew it was probably stupid to test his luck this much but he couldn't keep his body from moving. Slowly he leaned over his lover, supporting himself by placing his hands on each side of Tim's head.

"Hey, Timbo?"

"Hm?", the boy hummed without opening his eyes.

"Can I get a kiss?"

Jason's voice was not as light as he wanted it to be. It was supposed to be a playful phrase, like when he asked Tim if he might have this dance before they started spinning around in the kitchen to a song coming from the radio, but it came out as an insecure beg.

"No."

Three Dog Night had been right. This was the saddest experience Jason had ever made. But he backed off. "Okay... no problem.", he said quickly, forcing a grin to his face.

With a long sigh Tim opened his eyes again, slowly turning his head over to face Jason. "Jay, can I ask you something...?"

"Well, you're the smart one of us, so I don't know if I'll be all too helpful, but sure, go ahead.", the men grinned, trying to act over his horribly arching heart.

Tim blinked and simply looked at him for what felt like eternities even though it has probably only a split second.

"What are you planning to do? I mean, long-term? Do you think, I'll eventually stop trying to run and accept my fate?"

Jason winced slightly. Now that Tim had said it, it actually sounded incredibly stupid. He bit his lip and played with his fingers while now he was in the position to avoid his partner's glance.

"I don't know. I am not quite the guy for long-term plans...but yeah, I was kinda hoping it would turn out like that."

Once more Tim simply looked at Jason for a while before he snorted and turned back to the ceiling. "Sure."

Jason sighed and ran his fingers through his hair as he got up. "I know it's probably naive to think this, alright? But hey, at least I am realistic enough to know, if you really won't stop trying to run, you will eventually be successful. Like I could stop you forever.", he laughed out in frustration "You are smart, Timbo. Smarter than I'll ever be. You would find a way to get away one day or another... I just...", he sighed and lowered his head. "I can only hope that you'll understand why it's important for you to stay..."

Tim didn't look at Jason. He didn't move at all. But he was listening. Jason's words were echoing through his head and when he let his eyes fall shut he felt like he was spinning. Jason was right. If he wouldn't give up, and heaven knew he wouldn't, he would escape eventually. This thought was both, comforting and frightening, at once. He would be gone forever. He would see Dick again. And Bruce. And all the others.

On the other hand he knew what it would do to Jason. He knew their relationship was probably not strong enough to handle this. They would never be the same after this, no matter how it turned out in the end.

Tim's thoughts were interrupted by the sudden sound of an unfamiliar voice filling the room. He twitched and sat up, only to realize that the voice was coming out of the radio Jason had just turned on. The younger boy lied back again and groaned quietly about his ridiculous reaction. He was on the edge of his seat and it didn't look like he would feel calm again anytime soon. He was annoyed by his own jumpiness but there was literally nothing he could do about it, which annoyed him even more.

The stupid chat-show on the radio found an end and the host spoke a few last phrases before the somehow unsettling voice was replaced by some music.

Tim sighed and sat up, swinging his legs out of the bed again. He felt tired but his mind was restless. Since he probably wouldn't be able to sleep anyway he decided to make himself as comfortable as possible.

"Did you bring the book I was reading with us?", Tim asked as he knelt down in front of the dark blue traveling bag.

"The one you left on the table in my safehouse?", Jason asked as he turned to Tim, who nodded while he went through the things that had been clumsily stuffed into the bag.

"Oh, never mind, I found it.", he said and drew *The pelican brief* out from between some creasy shirts.

Reading had always been Tim's favorite kind of self-care and right now his only option to flee the situation.

He was about to make himself comfortable but suddenly he decided there was something else he had to do first in order to actually relax.

"I'm gonna take a shower.", he announced and grabbed some fresh clothing. He had been inside of this car for way too long. He felt sweaty and disgusting and he could still feel the salty trails his tears had left lingering on his cheeks. A shower had never been more necessary.

"Um... yeah, wait!", Jason said, quickly spying into the small bathroom before he nodded at his boyfriend. "alright!"

Tim tilted his head, not quite getting why Jason would have to check the bathroom first but suddenly it stroke his mind. He leaned forward to look through the half-open door as well before he unbelievably stared at Jason.

"Did you seriously just checked for windows?!", he snapped and took a step towards Jason.

"Really, Jason?!"

The taller man shrugged, obviously uncomfortable but at least he weren't avoiding Tim's glance this time.

"What did you think I would do? I said, I am realistic enough to know you'll eventually be able to run, not that I was gonna make it that easy for you."

Tim blinked. He paused. Then he blinked again.

"For heaven's sake, Jason!", he yelled before grabbing his stuff, running into the – windowless – bathroom and slammed the door shut behind him. He was not up to deal with this right now.

He could feel the pressure building up behind his eyes again but he was able to hold back the tears.

He took a deep breath, closed his eyes and slowly let the air stream out of his lungs, unwilling to cry again because of this. Then he started to undress and got in the shower.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter focuses more on the emotions of Jason and Tim and how they try to deal with their situation. I know you had to wait a long time again, but I have the most of my story figured out now and I hope I'll be productive in the next days.

Thank you so much for sticking with me!

Anyway, what do you think? Are they losing each other or will they make it? Will Tim accept his fate or will he run? Or maybe Jason backs away? What's your guess?

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Things look like they are getting better but is it the truth or just Jason's head trying to make everything look better than it actually is?

Chapter Notes

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

Jason was sitting at the desk, his face in his hand, distractedly staring at the radio, when Tim entered the room again. The finger of his free hand tapped the beat of the song that was playing but he stopped when he heard the door open. He turned around to look at Tim and sent him a careful smile. “Yo.”

“ Hey.”, Tim replied without really looking back at Jason. Instead he grabbed his book from the edge of the bed and got comfortable. At least the pillows were huge and very fluffy. Tim leaned back and sunk into the soft fabric.

For a while they just sat in silence. Jason didn't quite know what to say and Tim didn't want to say anything. The silence was uncomfortable but to him, it was still better than talking.

He let his mind sink deeply into the universe hidden behind the pages of the book in his hands. It was calming to him, not thinking about his own life for a while but suffer with *Darby* instead.

When he was dragged back to reality it was caused by a familiar tune reaching his ear. He knew and liked the song that was coming from the radio and without wasting a thought to it he started to hum along to the music.

Jason looked up and a smile crept on his face. He couldn't keep himself from remembering when he and Tim had danced to his song, blasting from his phone, in the middle of the batcave after a long training session. It had been perfect.

He looked at Tim from the corner of his eye as he started tapping the beat again, quietly singing along.

Tim looked up and their eyes met but instead of immediately looking away again, a grin crept on Tim's face. He was remembering the same scene. Jason could tell by the look in his eyes.

Slowly the younger male put his book aside and when the song's chorus came, he jumped up, bouncing on the bed and loudly singing along to the song.

“ If you gave me a chance I would take it!”, he sang while pointing at Jason who instantly jumped off his chair.

“ It's a shot in the dark but I'll make it!”, he joined in and climbed onto the bed to Tim.

“ Know with all of your heart, you can't shake me!”, Tim continues, before Jason and him sang the last line together.

“ When I am with you, there's no place I'd rather be!”

They kept on singing along, bouncing and dancing on the bed, and when the song ended, Tim let himself fall back onto the bed. Jason grinned and threw himself into the pillows right next to his partner. First he was going to lean in for a kiss but then he remembered Tim's earlier reaction and he decided that a failed attempt would only ruin the mood. Yes, it had definitely been the car. Every since they got into the little motel room things were getting better. Sure they had had the little bathroom window- fight but apart from that, it felt like Tim was finally getting back to normal.

Jason rolled on his side to look at Tim. The boy was lying on his back since the side of his chest still hurt but he was facing Jason as well.

“ I love you...”, Jason said, putting himself in a great risk because if Tim wouldn't reply it would probably rip his heart out.

“ I love you too...”, Tim whispered and Jason escaped an audible sigh of relief.

“ But I still want to go home...”

Jason sighed quietly as he nodded. “Yeah, I got it...no need to tell me over and over again...”

“ I won't stop saying it until you let me go home.”, Tim said clearly but quiet. He looked straight into Jason's eyes but the taller male rolled on his back and broke the connection. “I know. Can we just... talk about something else..? Just for a little while?”

At first, Tim wanted to protest, wanted to complain about how Jason wasn't in the position to ask for this. He wasn't the one who was being kidnapped, he didn't get to be stressed or upset!

But before those thoughts made it to Tim's mouth, he realized that he would prefer a more pleasant topic as well so he simply gave a lazy nod.

“ So, what are we going to do tonight?”, he asked, casually leaning his forehead against Jason's shoulder. It was just a small movement but the touch made a Jason smile.

“ I don't know, Timbo, what would you like?”

Tim shrugged lightly. He wasn't really used to coming up with plans for the night. Usually Jason would be the one to make the plan and Tim was the one to get the tickets or rent the movie or make a reservation for a table. Depending on what Jason was planing.

“ Maybe we can go to the movies, if there is one in this town. Or a bar.”, he suggested with another shrug.

Usually Tim wasn't one of those teenagers who abused alcohol to drown their pubertal agony with but today he felt like he could use a drink or two. But then something else came to his mind, that would make him feel a lot more home.

“ Or we could get a slushy and some candy and just stray around.”

Jason nodded with a smile. “Sounds good to me. There has to be a convenient store around here somewhere, hasn't it?”, he chuckled and Tim smiled slightly.

“ Yeah”, he agreed with a smile before he looked over the the bathroom door. “But, Jay, um... No offense, but you've been in that car for quite some time as well and... maybe you as well should take a shower before we leave.”

Jason winced and blinked at Tim. “Are you telling me I'm stinking?”, he asked in fake dudgeon.

“ Well-”, Tim started and leaned away from Jason, playfully pinching his nose with two fingers, “-, I tried to put it nicer but technically... Yes.”, he nodded before his lover rolled over him and the shorter male got stuck under Jason's heavy body.

“ That's rude, Tim!”, he grinned, wrapping his arms tightly around the other one, so that Tim couldn't get away. “Are you loving me less because I smell bad? Nooo, but what will I do without my Baby-Bird?! Please don't leave me because I'm stinkyyy!”, he whined while rolling around on the bed, the younger male still in his arms.

Tim laughed with Jason but somehow managed to slip out of his arm and jumped out of the bed. “Go, take a shower, Jason!”, he demanded with a laugh.

“ Fine!”, Jason sighed and threw his arms into the air before he got off the bed as well. “Fine, I'll hurry. Bye, Timbo”, he winked and disappeared through the bathroom door.

Well, at least he cannot climb through a window to escape , Tim thought in a short flashing of bitterness.

As soon as he heard the key turn in the lock, living in one house with that many siblings (some of them as shameless as Steph) made everyone develop the habit of always locking the bathroom door, Tim knelt down next to Jason's stuff.

His phone had to be somewhere around. If he would be able to find it before Jay had returned he could call Dick and he would be out of here in no time.

He could hear the water running behind the door and he could hear Jason quietly humming to himself but the only sound he actively noticed was his racing heartbeat.

His fingers were shaking while he hectically dug them into Jason's bag. The phone had to be somewhere around! It just... It had to!

He bit his lip, a little too hard probably, and felt for the phones, desperately hoping for his fingers to touch the cold screen soon but the relief of feeling the device in his hands never came.

Suddenly something in the room had changed. Tim looked up and hold his breath in order to hear what as wrong as he suddenly realized that he was hearing nothing at all. The water had stopped running.

Immediately Tim jumped up and rushed back onto the bed, doing his best to act innocently so Jason wouldn't get an idea of what the younger boy had just tried to do.

He pretended to be back on reading his book when Jason unlocked the door and pushed it open. He was already dressed but his hair was still dripping and he rubbed his neck with a white towel he had found in the bathroom.

“ Jo, Timbo.”, he smiled and Tim looked up from the random line he had just read over and over again to pretend he was actually following the story.

“ heyo.”, he replied with a smile but it didn't reach his eye.

“ Give me five more minutes to dry my hair, then we can go and get ourselves some slushies. We deserve those after such a long day, right? I'm gonna take a blue one and you?”, Jason kept on babbling while he rubbed his hair dry.

“ Green.”, Tim answered while he put his book aside, not really in the mood to talk anymore.

The setback about the phone was hard to take and in the back of his mind Tim was still trying to figure out where Jason could have hid it as it suddenly stroke his mind.

He looked up to face Jason to verify his assumption and indeed, he could see the shape of his phone through the thin fabric of Jason's pocket.

He hold back an angry hiss and bit down on his lip, forcefully bringing the smile back on his face.

This wasn't too bad actually. If Jason carried his phone with him when they were out, it would be easier to steal it from him. Still not an easy task but at least somehow possible.

Shortly after Tim and Jason were straying through the unfamiliar town. The dusk wrapped it in a dark blanket that seemed to swallow all the sound. Some people were passing by but nobody really paid attention to the uncommon couple.

Back in Gotham, people used to look at Jason and Tim when they were walking through the streets. Jason had always claimed it was because both of them were so incredibly handsome people couldn't believe they were actually real. Tim had always smiled at him when he had said stuff like this, enjoying the idea of it, even though he knew it was different.

Jason and him were an uneven duo. At the first sight they seemed to have no similarities at all. While Jason never actually dropped his street dog manner, no matter how hard Bruce had tried to make a well-behaving young man out of him, Tim had been used to luxury since the day he was born. While Tim was more of the person to think, Jason – even though he was one of the smartest people Tim knew – was more of the guy to act. To Tim, the previous Robins, Dick and Jason, had been role-models, to Jason, Dick had been a rival back when he was still Robin. While Tim drew all the energy he had out of his family, the support and balance they gave him, Jason had always been the one to deal with problem by himself, to not bother anyone with his worries.

No, at the first sight people wouldn't get why the two of them ended up together.

But those who were close to them knew better. They knew about how Jason and Tim were both fighting to prove themselves every other day. How they felt like they were the only ones to truly accept each other without any second thought. They knew about how Jason felt calm around Tim and how Tim dared to be reckless sometimes, as long as Jason was there.

When the world was going crazy, when Tim felt like nothing worked out and he was lost, Jason had always felt like home.

But no matter how tightly Jason hold onto Tim's hand, the younger boy had never felt more far away from home than right now.

It didn't matter how Tim was feeling right now, though. Showing how lost he really was would endanger his plan. Jason had his guard down, visibly thankful for Tim finally talking to him again and he had to use that opportunity.

When they finally reached a 7/11, the greeting warmth inside made Tim want to fall asleep at an instant. He hadn't noticed how tiring it was to keep the act up, to make Jason believe he was growing used to his new situation.

Apart from the slushy he picked a can of some energy drink, wanting to fight down his growing tiredness, and some candy bars.

While Jason paid for their unhealthy purchasing Tim took a glance at the newspapers and magazines that were displayed in a silver-colored stand. He couldn't quite decide if he should be surprised or not about finding not a single photo of Batman, Robin or anyone else of his family beneath any of the headlines. Home in Gotham the magazines were always loaded with news about the city's vigilantes. Surprised or not, Tim knew one thing for sure. He was disappointed. Seeing Bruce's or Dick's or even Damian's face, even though it would only have been a cheap print, would have been exactly what he needed right now.

But no, no chance for the boy, no trace of hope, no silver lining on the horizon.

He sighed and followed Jason as he went out of the store. It was a warm night, perfect to waste some time in an empty parking lot. Jason did that a lot, sometimes with Tim, sometimes with Roy or Dick, sometimes even with Babs. Sometimes he needed to sit on the cool asphalt with a slushy in his hand to cope with his life.

Right now it was Tim who had trouble with coping but he was rather sure that a cold drink and an uncommon place to hang out wouldn't be enough to make him feel better. Still, he sat down next to Jason on the edge of the curb stone. The taller boy handed his boyfriend his slushy and took a sip of his own.

Tim wrapped his fingers around it and stared at the cold, viscous liquid. He chewed on his lip before wrapping them around the straw, taking a big sip of the sweet drink.

His eyes wandered over to Jason, to his pocket actually. He could see the upper edge of the phone peaking out of it. It was so close, yet so incredibly far away. He could just reach out his hand and grab it. Hypothetical of course, because Jason would stop him in less than a second if he would attempt to just steal it like that.

No, he needed at least somewhat of a plan. Tim's mind wasn't really working normally right now but he should still be able to come up with a strategy for this.

He set his Slushy on the floor next to him and turned to Jason with the brightest smile he had to offer, even though that still wasn't very bright. "How about a dance, Jay?"

I just had to get them a little closer together again, I can't deal with my babies fighting. I want them to be happy, why am I writing angst. Oh right, for self-hate reasons.

No, actually it's really fun to write this for all you guys! I hope you enjoy the angst fest as much as I do!

(Oh and we're a little further than half into the story. about 3-4 more chapters to come!)

Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

Finally Tim gets his ticket to freedom.

But will he actually use it? Will he say goodbye for good or agree to a new life?

Chapter Notes

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

Jason tilted his head, slightly confused by that unexpected request but the joy won over the skepticism. Dancing with Tim in a parking lot has always been one of his favorite things and eventually it grew to be sort of a tradition whenever they went for Slushies. Though, he would have never guessed Tim could possibly want to do that *now*.

Still, he wouldn't let this opportunity pass. He put his drink away and got up, offering Tim his hand. The younger boy pulled himself up on it and wrapped his arms around Jason's neck. Jay bit down on his lips with a wide grin while he drew his own phone out of his pocket. "What would you like to dance to, Timbo?", he chuckled, scrolling through his playlist with one hand while the other one rested on Tim's waist.

"You choose.", Tim mumbled, leaning his head against Jason's chest. Jay quickly tapped one of the more silent songs – he had made a 'dancing' playlist a while ago since most of his music was a little too loud to dance slowly to – before he wrapped the other arm around Tim was well, holding him tight.

Tim didn't quite know how he should feel about the situation he was in. On the one hand his mind was spinning around the phone in Jason's pocket and the best way to get it, was caught up by the thought of his family and how much he missed them. On the other hand he simply couldn't deny how perfectly he fitted into Jason's arm. It felt like he was originally created to fill this place. He felt safe, he felt home when he was with Jason. While the left half of his brain kept on screaming at him that, as much as he hated to admit it, Jason was his enemy right now, the right half refused to picture Jason as such, refused to see Jason as anything else but what he had always been – the love of Tim's life.

His confused feelings and the growing tiredness made him feel dizzy and for a moment he allowed himself to close his eyes. He wouldn't get the chance to call Dick anytime soon, even if he managed to steal the phone now. As long as he got it before they returned to the motel everything was according to plan. It wouldn't hurt to enjoy this moment for a little while.

He nuzzled his face against Jason's shoulder and pulled him a little closer. He placed a gentle kiss on his lover's neck and smiled as he noticed the goosebumps it gave Jason. For a second, only a split second, he wondered if maybe he could get used to a life without the cape but with Jason by his side. He could slap himself for that thought right after it had crossed his mind. He had to get back home, even if that meant he had to leave Jason behind.

He bit his lips and suddenly felt like crying. He had known all along that he had to choose, Jason or his life a vigilante, but the clear though hadn't stoke his mind until now. It nearly knocked him off his feet as he realized he would probably never see Jason again after that. It brought tears to his eyes but he quickly blinked them away. He had to stay strong now, had to keeps his eyes on his goal.

He took his arms off Jason's neck, wrapped them around his waist instead. While he made Jason believe he was just trying to hug him tighter, his hands slowly traveled down the taller man's back. He couldn't risk going too fast now, he must not want too much at once. He let his hand rest in the middle of Jason's back, kept it there for several seconds before he dared to move again.

Jason leaned down buried his face in Tim's neck, talking it all in, the way Tim's hair smelled, the way his breath sounded and how he could feel the shorter boy's heartbeat against his chest. He barely realized how fast it was going, since his own heart was pounding like hell as well.

He was so bedazzled by his own happiness that he didn't notice how Tim froze for a second whenever he moved. And he didn't pay too much attention to the boy's hands, which were still making their way down his back.

Tim hold his breath when the tip of his ring finger brushed the edge of his phone. He hid his face on Jason's shoulder, slightly turning it away, so there was no chance that a glance in his eyes could reveal his doings. Slowly he let his fingers run over the phone's case, trying to figure out if it was his or Jason's. He hold back a sigh of relief as he felt the slightly uneven print on the back of his 'crown of thorns'-case.

Now he only had to get a grip on it. Only. Ha.

His hands were shaking and while he slowly dragged the phone out of Jason's pocket, going inch by inch, he had the feeling the device would slip out of his fingers and fall to the floor any second.

Tim was so far on the edge, his system so pumped with adrenaline, he didn't notice at first that he was actually holding the phone in his hand. He got it. It was right here, his ticket to freedom. Now he only had to slide it into his pocket without Jason noticing and he would be out of here in no time.

“ Jason?”, he said softly, pulling away, only a little so his hands were still behind his lover's back.

“ Yeah?”, Jason asked, visibly disappointed by the sudden parting.

“ Could you go and get me one of those slices of pizza they had?”, Tim smiled sweetly, nodding over to the 7/11. He could tell by the expression in Jason's eyes that the taller man was struggling, unsure if he was really willing to let and if he already trusted Tim enough to leave him alone for a minute. “Please, Jay, I don't have any money with me right now and I am starving...”, Tim went on, looking up at Jason through his lashes. This kind of look never failed to make Jason weak and the man gave a defeated sigh.

“ Yeah, alright. Don't move. I'll be back in a minute...”, he mumbled and gently tapped Tim's forehead. “Stay. Right. Here.”, he said slowly, one tap for each word.

Tim giggled quietly at this cute act, not pretending this time but actually laughing for real. Partly because he had always admired how light-hearted Jay would be even in the most horrible situations, partly because he somehow had to express the unspeakable relief he was feeling right now.

As soon as Jason turned around to get back to the store, Tim let the phone slide into his pocket.

He bit his lip, doing a very bad job at hiding his grin while he sat down on the floor again. He picked up his drink and tried to calm himself down while Jason was still gone. He took some deep breathes but he couldn't stop smiling to himself. He constantly felt his phone in his pocket and if he was being honest, he couldn't remember if he had ever felt something so wonderful.

He had his features under control again when Jason came back and sat down by his side, handing him the pizza. “here ya go, Timbers.”, he smiled.

“ Thanks.”, the shorter boy replied and took a bite before holding the slice up, offering it to Jason.

They shared the lukewarm pizza and eventually Tim leaned against Jason's shoulder. He couldn't risk drawing attention onto any kind of change in his behavior. Also, now that he knew he was going home soon, he was way more calm and definitely more up for being touched again.

For the moment he allowed himself to just relax and enjoy this moment with Jason. It was one of the last moments they would ever share after all, considering the betrayal that Tim was about to commit.

For this very moment he only wanted to forget about how he would probably never get to talk to Jason again, once he had called Dick. He allowed himself to think about anything but the fact that Jason probably wouldn't forgive, that he would be unwilling to ' *watch Tim die* ' like he would probably put it.

For this very moment, he only thought about Jason's arm around his shoulder and the gentle rising and falling of his chest Tim could feel underneath his head.

He closed his eyes and smiled to himself, pretending that everything was alright for as long as he could.

The time flew by and the boys finished their drinks. Tim wasn't sure how long they still sat there after this but it was clear that neither of them was willing to get up yet.

But eventually even the perfect moments have to find an end and when a raindrop hit the tip of Jason's nose, they decided it was time for them to go back to the hotel.

On their way back, Tim grabbed Jason's hand, much to the taller boy's surprise but also to his delight. Little did he know, that Tim was already busy, mentally telling him goodbye.

“ That was fun! Sucks, that it started raining..!”, Jason exclaimed as they entered their room. As if to prove his words, the raindrops started crashing violently against the windows, filling the room with a calming pattern.

Tim shrugged slightly. “It was getting late anyway.”, he remarked with a quick glance in the alarm clock that was sitting on the nightstand.

“ Are you tired yet?”, Jason asked, seeming a little surprised. Tim quickly shook his head.

“ No, not really...”

“ What would you like to do then?”, Jason asked while he sat down at the edge of the bed and took off his boots. “Apparently we don't have a TV or something but I packed some card games or we could play something else.”

“ You brought card games?”, Tim stared at Jason for a moment before he burst into unbelieving laughter. “You brought card games to a *kidnapping* ?! Jason, you're the only person who could ever come up with something like that!”

While the situation was ironically amusing to Tim, Jason didn't feel like laughing at all. He didn't like Tim to call this a 'kidnapping', he didn't like to be laughed at and, really, he had only tried to make all this a little less horrible.

The glance in his eyes seemed to be rather definite because Tim choked on his laugh as he saw it.

“ Sorry, I-... I just thought that was cute.”, he tried to explain himself and got a short nod in reply.

Jason figured he should be happy that Tim was feeling good enough to talk to him, even to laugh. It would be the best to just push back his own insecurities and focus on how Tim was. So he just forced a smile on his lips and gave a small wave of his hand.

“ It's fine, Timbers, don't worry.”, he chuckled. “But I also brought your laptop, as I told ya. I don't think you'll have any connection around here but you had some movies and series on that thing, don't you?”

nodding his head partly because he agreed, partly because he was already thinking about what movie would make Jason fall asleep the fastest, Tim went over to the bag and drew his laptop out of it.

“ Yeah, I have several. What would you like to see?”, he asked, knowing that Jason would leave the choice to him anyway.

“ As if I would care.”, the taller man voiced what Tim had expected him to say while he got out of his shirt and jeans as well, threw them on the floor where his boots were lying and got into something more comfortable.

Tim placed the laptop on the bed and plugged in the charger before he started it and then changed himself. Other than Jason, he didn't put on his pyjamas. Instead he went with gray sweatpants and a black shirt, figuring this would be a better choice than a *Star Wars* PJ if he really happened to flee tonight.

Jason was already lying in bed, one arm behind his head, one spread out some Tim could cuddle in if he wanted to.

In fact, Tim did. No matter how hard he tried to push it out of his thoughts, something in the back of his head kept on reminding him that this would probably be the last night he would even get to be around Jason.

Fuck, he would miss him.

Tim smiled as he nuzzled against Jason's chest, the laptop sitting on his lover's lower stomach, but it didn't reach his eye. He buried his face on Jason's neck and closed his eyes, taking it all in.

He focused. He let everything sink into his memory. The way Jason smelled and felt and sounded.

The older male for his part didn't seem to realize what Tim was going through. The only thing he noticed was that his boyfriend seemed to be very eager to cuddle. Not actually a surprise, considering everything that happened to him during the past days, so Jason thought. Everyone would need a hug after that.

So he wrapped his arms around Tim and held him close, stroke his back and gently rocked him from side to side.

Eventually, Tim stuck his head out of his hiding place that happened to be Jason's arms. "Let's just watch this.", he said, clicking on a random romantic comedy. The kind of movie that Jason would only watch if Tim wasted at least half an hour on begging. But today was different. Today, Jason would accept Tim's choice without any further comment. Instead he got comfortable, his arms still tightly wrapped around Tim and watched the movie. Well, to be completely honest, he spent most of the time looking at Tim's face, his soft features, this stub nose and his rosy lips. He memorized every single barely visible freckle, that would always become a little darker in summer but still could only be seen from very close. He memorized the dark shades underneath his eyes and the slight purple shade his eyelids were naturally colored in.

He fell asleep over the thought how much he loved the boy that was curled up against his chest.

When Tim was sure that Jason was fast asleep, he had gently touched his shoulder and whispered into his ear – without any reaction but a quiet snorting, he dared to crawl out of the bed.

He sneaked over to the pile of clothes on the floor, more than thankful for the soft carpet that swallowed any sound his steps produced. He knelt down and pulled the jeans he had worn today onto his lap. Looking over his shoulder at Jason, checking that he was still sleeping, he let his hand slide into the pocket and pulled the phone out.

In the second he had wrapped his fingers around it, he jumped up again and ran over to the bathroom with quick but silent steps.

Carefully he closed the door behind him and looked it shut before he sat down on the edge on the bath tube and dialed Dick number.

Chapter End Notes

Well, well, well, things have reached a final turn, haven't they?

I think I can write the end of teh story this week and then I can upload faster! Yay :D

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

So, does this mean goodbye for good?

Chapter Notes

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

“ Tim! Thank god!!”, was the first thing to reach the boys ear. It hadn't took Dick more than a split second to pick up the phone. He probably didn't even notice how the relief made him speak way louder than he had intended. Just like Tim barely noticed how the relief of hearing his brother's voice brought tears to his eyes.

“ Where are you?! I've been trying to reach you all day long! You and Jay, you guys cannot just disappear without telling anyone where you're going! Bruce and I were worried *sick* !”

“ Dick!”, Tim interrupted him before he could talk himself in a flow. “I am not here by my own will...!”, he said and didn't even realize that his voice was shaking.

In brief sentences he explained what had happened. He tried to choose words that wouldn't make Jason appear like a possessive insane but that turned out to be harder than he had expected.

Dick kept quiet for while Tim was talking but when the Red Robin was done, the first Robin's voice had changed completely. It was rough and cold and way to calm to not sound threatening. “Stay right where you are, Tim. I'll be there as soon as possible. Are you safe for now?”

“ Yes, of course!”, Tim quickly said. “It's not like Jason hurt me or something. His intentions were good from the start...!”, the boy tried to defend his boyfriend. He didn't seem to really convince Dick.

“ I'll come and get you.”, his brother's uncommonly dark voice said before he hung up.

Tim swallowed hard and stared at the phone in his hand. He wanted to get back to the other room, curl up in bed next to Jason, hug him tightly and whisper sweet nothings to him, like he would usually do, when Jason was asleep and he was lying awake. He wanted to nuzzled his face against his chest and fall asleep in his arm. He wanted to wake up by his side again, knowing that he was safe and well.

All of a sudden, he regretted calling Dick. No, he didn't. He still wanted to go back home. He couldn't live without the cape. Red Robin was an important part of Tim's life. Without him he simply wouldn't be whole anymore.

What he did regret, however, was the fact that he had set a seal on the end of his and Jason's relationship. He wasn't ready to let go of Jason yet. He wasn't prepared for leaving him for good.

But now it didn't matter anymore. Now he had lost any chance to take back what he had done. Now there was no way back.

With a deep sigh he finally managed to push himself up and stumble back to the bedroom. Mindlessly he threw the phone into the bag, not caring if Jason would see it or not when he woke up, and crawled back under the blanket.

He nuzzled in between Jason's arms, got back into his safe hiding place from earlier, and buried his face in his lover's shirt.

The warmth of Jason's body was nice and comforting but it didn't have all too much effect against the numbness inside of the boy.

Tim clung onto Jason and bit down on his lip. He wasn't crying but his breath was hitching as if he would be. Quietly, minding not to wake Jason up, he started whispering to himself.

“ Jay... I know you probably can't hear me right now.. but if you do – if this somehow reaches your mind – I want you to know that I-I love you with all my heart. And I truly believe that we were meant for each other. I'm sorry I couldn't stay with you. I'm sorry I had to do this and I am so *so* sorry it had to end this way. I would wish upon a million stars if only it would make you stay with me after this. That we make it through this. But I am not that naive.”

He sighed and ran his hand over Jason's chest, feeling the soft fabric of his lover's shirt beneath his fingertips. “If I really never see you again... Thank you, Jason. Thank you for showing me real love. Thank you for showing me what I can do, who I can be. Thank you for holding my hand, whenever I needed you... God, thank you for everything...”

By now, there were tears dripping down his chin and soaked Jason's shirt. His quiet, monotone speaking was rather to comfort himself than to really say something, though he had to get this things off his chest. Maybe he should write Jason a letter, so he thought. On the other hand, the older male would surely wake up when Dick arrived... But would he be willing to listen then?

Tim sighed, unable to get his thoughts straight. Instead of getting lost any further in his own mind, he decided to just focus on the here and now for as long as he could.

Gently he stroked Jason's chest, as if to comfort him. As if too sooth away the pain he would cause him. As if to apologize.

He didn't really know how long he had been lying there in Jason's arm, staring at the wall with a dead expression, when a violent knock on the door tore the silence apart.

Tim instantly sat up straight and so did Jason, though Tim's heart wasn't racing because of a forcefully awakening but because of the burning guilt in his chest. Much to Tim's discomfort Jason was the first to get up and walk over to the door, mumbling quiet swears about whoever dared to wake him at such an ungodly hour.

From his position on the bed, Tim could not see Jason's face when he opened the door but he could vividly imagine how his boyfriend's face must have dropped at the sight of Dick. The Red Robin couldn't see his oldest brother's face either, for Jason covering it with his head, but if he was being honest, Tim preferred it this way. He knew only too well how frightening Dick could be when he was angry. And right now his anger rooted from deep, deep worry. Everybody knew that was the worst kind of anger.

Dick simply went over any kind of greeting and pushed Jason aside as he walked into the room. "Tim! Thank god!", he exhaled and grabbed the shorter boy by the shoulders to pull him off the bed and into a tight hug. "I am so glad you're alright!"

Tim had always found it terrifying how fast the emotions that were displayed on Dick's face could change. While he had looked at Jason with a expression so enraged it could easily be mistaken for pure hatred, there was nothing but love and honest relief in his eyes when he looked at Tim.

Dick pushed the boy against his chest and held him there for what felt like a small eternity. His head was resting on the other male's chest and he could barely move an inch, due to his strong grip. The position he was trapped in forced him to look over Dick's shoulder and right at Jason's face.

Tim was certain he had never seen someone look this heartbroken before. He couldn't stand the confusion and the sadness in Jason's eyes. He couldn't stand to face the betrayal he had committed.

"What are you doing here?", Jason asked sharply, aiming it at Dick but looking at Tim. Dick spun around at an instant and furiously stared at Jason.

"What do you think am I doing here?! I am taking Tim back home!", he growled and let go of Tim in order to take a threatening step towards Jason. "What were you even thinking?! I mean, seriously, what was going on in your mind?! Did you picture this as some kind of tragic romance, running away together like they do in some old dusty books?!"

Jason crossed his arms but his eyes were on fire when he finally ripped his view off Tim and stared at Dick. “Don't you dare and make me the bad guy here!”, he snapped, leaning forward while he spoke. “You saw him back in that goddamn storehouse, bleeding and fucking unconscious! He could have *died* back then! And, take it from me, dying is no fun! I was just trying to avoid that!”

Dick put his hands on his hips and shook his head. “Yes, Jason, I know. You died back then. And guess what, we all still feel terrible about it! But this cannot be your excuse for everything! You downright *kidnapped* him! Don't try and sugarcoat that!”

“ Fuck you, Dick!”, Jason hissed, clenching his fists. “You don't understand anything! Everything was perfectly fine but then you had to show up here!! This is none of your business anyway!”

“ It became my business when Tim called me!”, Dick said loudly and Tim wasn't sure if it was the sound or the words that made him twitch.

All of a sudden, Jason was very quiet. The rage in his face vanished and was replaced by disbelief. Slowly he looked over at Tim, then turned back to Dick and again back to Tim where his eyes finally stayed. “What...?”

Tim didn't quite trust his voice when he opened his mouth. Neither did he trust his legs to support him any longer if he would dare to look at Jason's face. “I-I'm sorry...”, was all that he managed to say.

Jason looked at him for a long time before he took a step towards him. Dick attempted to move between them but Tim gently placed his hand on his older brother's arm to let him know it was alright. Still, Jason kept some distance.

“ But... why? Things got better, didn't they? I mean, we were having fun together or not?” The man's voice was weak and low, nothing like it had been before, when he was screaming at Dick. “You're... You're not going with him, are you?”

Finally Tim dared to look up at Jason. He instantly regretted it. He could barely take the misery he found in his lover's eyes.

“ Jay... I'm so sorry but...” Tim's voice died away and he lowered his head again, hoping that Jason wouldn't notice the tears that were filling his eyes.

The taller man ran his fingers through his hair and exhaled in disbelief, staring at Tim with wide eyes before he turned away.

“ But. Sure. I wish I could stay but-. You might be right but-. I love you a lot but-!” Jason had a hard time stopping himself from punching a hole in the wall.

He wasn't even exactly angry, he just felt frustrated and lost and... scared. He had done so much to keep Tim safe, to keep him close. And now they were ripped apart, not by death but by the life that Tim just couldn't leave behind. He didn't even blame him. Still, he felt like his dear heart was melting away, flowing out of his chest and leaving a nasty stain of the hotel room's carpet.

“ Well, I told you, I am not just gonna watch you die, Tim. I'd rather leave you for good than having to see you being beaten to death.”, Jason said coldly, trying to hide the pain in his voice.

Tim nodded slowly. He knew what was gonna come, still he prayed to all gods he had ever heard of that Jason wouldn't say it.

“ If you're leaving now, you won't see me ever again.”

Those few words coming from Jason's mouth hurt so much more than anything his enemies could ever do to Tim. He felt like someone was ripping his beating heart from his chest and forced him to watch while it was torn in two.

“ I know...”, he whispered. His voice was quiet and shaky and only audible due to the all-consuming silence that surrounded them.

Tim lost track on how long they have been standing there in silence when Dick made the first move. “I'm going to pack your stuff.”, he said softly, placing a hand on Tim's shoulder.

“ Don't you dare move an inch!”, Jason's sudden yell cut through the air and made Tim twitch. “You won't touch a thing before Tim didn't say to my face that he wants to leave!”

“ Oh, for heaven's sake Jason!”

Both, Dick and Jason winced and turned their heads to stare at Tim. Finally he had found his voice again. Now he was standing upright and looked at Jason with determination in his eyes. “I know what you are trying to do, playing those little psycho tricks, but no matter what you say, you won't make me stay here! I love you. Shit, I love you so much it hurts sometimes. But you just cannot ban me from my life, from everything that means something to me. And if I can only have one, then I am sorry but I can't do that...”

Slowly he walked up to Jason and placed his hands on his boyfriend's... Ex-boyfriend's shoulders. As he got on his tiptoes, he could feel that every muscle in the man's body was tensed up. He sighed and closed his eyes before hugging him tightly, even though Jason did not move a single inch to return the hug. No matter how much he would miss Tim, he just

couldn't bring himself to wrapping his arms around him, knowing he would never let go again, once he was holding the man he loved.

“ I will miss you...”, Tim whispered softly. “Promise that you'll never forget me. And how much I loved you.” He pressed a kiss on Jason's cheek, equally gentle and desperate before he let go.

The sense of Jason's body still lingered on Tim's skin and every bit of him longed for the man's touch. Still, Tim was able to take a step back. Physically and mentally.

“ Let's go, Dick.”, he said before heading straight through the door, unsure if he could resist the urge to grab Jason's hand and run if he stayed a little longer.

Wordlessly, Dick stuffed Tim's things into the bag before he threw it over his shoulder. When he passed Jason he stopped and sighed, turning to him once more. “I'm sorry, little wing. I'm just... I'm very sorry...”

Jason crossed his arms and looked away, not making a sound but giving the floor a deadly glare.

Dick sighed once more and shook his head before he followed Tim out of the room.

When Dick arrived by the car, he found his brother leaning against it's door, sitting on the dusty parking lot floor. He hid his face in his hands and was shaking like crazy. Dick sighed and lowered his shoulders, looking at the broken boy with honest sympathy in his eyes. He dropped the bag and knelt down in front of the shivering mess of a boy.

“ Are you- Oh hell, I know you're not okay right now. I am so sorry, Tim...”, he said softly and attempted to hug the shorter boy but he was stopped by a gentle but firm push against his chest.

“ I'm alright. I can handle that.”, Tim said, even though both of the boys knew he was lying. With his legs still barely carrying him, he pulled himself up on the car's door and opened it to let himself fall into the passenger's seat. He buckled his seat belt before allowing himself a last, apologetic look at the hotel where he had left Jason.

Dick threw Tim's bag on the backseat as he got behind the steering wheel and rubbed his eyes before he started the car.

Then, they were driving back to the manor. And away from everything that had ever felt like home.

Chapter End Notes

I know, this chapter was a very VERY emotional train wrack but I hope you actually enjoy suffering through this (I mean, I do. Maybe you do too, who knows...!)

But I promis, things will get better after this! I swear!

Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

The darkest times can be brightened by people who care about you.

Chapter Notes

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

At first, Dick had tried to start a conversation, had tried to distract Tim from what he was going through but soon enough he had to realize that it was no use. Tim didn't feel like talking. Being completely honest, right now, Tim didn't feel anything at all but the numbness in his limbs.

Dick sighed but eventually his attempts to cheer his little brother up died off. Instead he drove home in silence, hoping that the younger boy would feel better as soon as they got back to Gotham. To his family.

Tim's mind was somewhere very far away. He turned and spun his phone between his fingers, unsure if he was expecting to receive a message from Jason or if he was thinking about calling him himself. In the end, neither of it happened.

A wistful smile crept on his lips as he recognized the city names on the signs that were passing by. They were back on the highway on which Tim's dark journey had begun. Well, of course they would go back the same way they had come but still, it somehow felt ironic to Tim, passing those names again.

It didn't took the boys long to arrive at the manor. "I um- ", Dick started while he parked the car. "I didn't exactly tell Bruce I was going to pick you up. I mean, I left right after you called me, so I had basically no time to do so and I forgot to call him. Also, I didn't want the line to be blocked, in case you'd call again...", he explained, nervously rubbing his neck. "However, um,... if you don't want him to know what happened, we don't have to tell him. I mean, in case you're afraid he might treat you different if he knows or if you don't want to answer any questions..."

"Why would he treat me any different? I didn't get shot, Dick, I just spent two days with the man I love. Unintentionally.", Tim said and shrugged it off.

Dick missed out on remarking that he didn't sound that unconcerned back on the phone.

“ Still-”, Tim went on, ”- I think it would be the best to tell Bruce the truth. I'd eventually find out anyway. And I think he deserves to know why Jason won't be around anymore.” Tim could hear his own voice breaking with the last words and quickly cleared his throat, trying to regain control of it.

“ Would you do me the favor and tell him that I am back? And about the rest too? I... I really just want to go to my room and be alone for a while.”

Dick nodded quickly. “Yes, sure. No problem.”, he smiled softly while he and Tim got out of the car.

By the stairway that lead up to the corridor where Tim's room was, their ways parted. “Tim?”, Dick said softly, stopping his little brother from running upstairs for a little longer.

“ Yeah?”, the shorter boy replied, longingly staring at the top of the steps before slowly turning back to Dick.

“ I know it's hard... but I am very glad you're back.”, he said slowly, softly, with a gentle smile on his face.

Tim couldn't help but smile back, at least he tried to, even though the half smile on his lips was not very convincing. Dick was the kind of person who felt like the first warm ray of sunlight after a long and severe winter. His presence was felt inexplicably warm and comforting, made everybody believe in a brighter future. Tim was sure it was physically impossible to feel bad while Dick Grayson was around.

Shamefully, feeling bad was the only thing that was left to Tim. He just wanted to lie down and bury himself in his own misery, wanted to blame himself for letting Jason go and wanted to feel horrible about it. He deserved it.

He quickly mumbled something that sounded like a rushed 'thank you' before he ran up the stairs.

As fast as he could, he stumbled into his room and locked the door behind him. His heart was beating faster than it should but he felt so tired at the same time. It actually surprised him that he made it to the bed before letting himself fall instead of just collapsing on the floor. With a sigh he buried his face in his pillow and the fact that it still smelled slightly like Jason was comforting and hurtful at the same time.

The boy closed his eyes and inhaled the familiar smell, remembering what it had felt like to rest his head on Jason's chest instead of the soft fabric.

He didn't feel like moving. He really didn't. But he wasn't sure how much time alone he was granted. So he slowly reached back and drew the phone out of his pocket.

Tim's arms felt too heavy to actually hold the phone for any second longer than it was absolutely necessary, so he dropped it on the pillow right next to his face and clumsily dialed Jason's number with his index finger.

For a short amount of time, for the amount of time he could hear the free-line signal, he had something like hope and when he first heard Jason's voice his heart jumped of joy but in the very next second he realized that it was nothing but the mailbox messages:

“ Hey, It's Jason. Looks like I can't pick up right now due to a thing that's called personal life. But I swear it's not my fault! Really! I am blaming Tim Drake for it! I'm almost certain he's the one stopping me from picking up now! So leave a message, alright? Cool.”

Tim couldn't help but smile to himself. He vividly remembered the day Jason had recorded that message.

It had been the day after their first official date. In the beginning it was ought to be a secret – the two of them really wanted to avoid having the whole family going crazy – but Jason had accidentally told Roy and Tim had unintentionally mentioned it around Dick and within no time the whole society of vigilantes and superheroes seemed to know about it.

When they had been back home, still drunk on joy and laughter, they found to have at least twelve missed calls and around twenty messages each, all coming from different friends or family members who had requested to know about how the night had been going.

Tim recalled the cocky smirk that Jason had been giving him while he had recorded the message. He could remember how he had scream 'He's probably getting shot at!' into Jason's phone with a laugh and how Jay had already ended the record by then. He remembered how Jay had told him he was a slow-ass and how he had told Jay to shut up before he had muffled his boyfriend's laugh with a kiss.

He bit his lip and ended the call, only to dial Jason's number again and listen to the record once more. Then he hung up again.

He opened the chat with Jason, closed it again and locked the phone. Then he unlocked it again just to go back to staring at the messages he and Jason had send. He typed ' *I'm sorry* ' and deleted it again only to replace it with ' *Jason? Are you there...?* ' but that he would soon delete as well just as the ' *I love you* ' that had followed.

He groaned and knocked his phone off the bed. He hated himself for not knowing what to do. He was Tim Drake. The Red Robin. The wiseguy, the smart one. He was the one who *always* had a plan! He simply wasn't used to not knowing what to do and it was killing him. Usually, when he was feeling lost, there was someone to comfort him but the only person he would want to see right now was far away.

Tim let his hands slide under the sides of the pillow and pressed them against his temples. He let his eyes fall shut, took a deep breath before he started screaming like he never had in his life. His throat started to hurt but it was so relieving to stop now.

Eventually Tim's voice died off and he was slightly out of breath. But at least he felt better. So much better.

Now that he had been able to get all the anger, frustration, sadness and fear out of his system he felt prepared to get up again. There was no use in lying in bed all day and whining about spilled milk. That wouldn't make Jason come back to him either.

Instead he determinedly swung his legs out of the bed. The first thing he did was to open his windows, letting some fresh air fill the room. He finally felt like he could breathe freely again and it wanted to enjoy it for while it lasted, unsure of when the next wave of guilt and agony would hit him.

After that, he did what should have been the first thing for him to do. He walked, nearly ran, out of his room and down to the batcave. He didn't stop before he stood in front of his Red Robin suit. Not when he passed Dick, who seemed more than confused to see his brother running downstairs after he had been told to leave him alone, and not when he nearly ran into Damian, who missed out on any mean remark because -even though he would never admit it- he had missed Tim as well.

Down in the cave, Tim opened the glass tube in which Bruce stored the costumes. Carefully he placed his hand on the thick fabric and bit down on his lip. On his way here he had thought that he might have mixed feelings about going back to being a vigilante. Not that he had been gone for long, his little trip with Jason hadn't last longer than two and a half days, but thinking he would never get back to it made the break seemed more final, made it a bigger deal to come back. But now, that he was actually facing his suit, feeling the rough fabric underneath his fingertips, there was not a single trace of doubt. It had been the right decision to leave. Or actually to come back.

It felt strangely unfamiliar to put the suit on, reminding Tim of the very first time he got to wear it. He took the smell in, together with the memories that came with it and a smile sneaked its way onto his face.

Going on a little trip over Gotham's rooftops was exactly what he needed and wanted right now. But before he would leave just like that, he remembered that there was something else he should probably do.

Instead of leaving the manor through the cave, making his way to town, he ran back up the stairs.

Bruce and Dick were both in the living room, Dick sitting on the sofa, Bruce in the huge, comfy armchair that Tim loved to read in.

They were talking and both men looked indisputably concerned. Shamefully they were talking silently enough for Tim to not understand a word but he had a vague idea of their topic, considering the latest events. He rocked back and forth, from the ball of his feet to the heels, and cleared his throat. Immediately the heads turned towards him and Dick sent him a bright smile. The kind of smile that made everything seem better.

“Hey guys.”, Tim said quietly, giving a shy smile himself, as he sat down on the couch. next to Dick. The situation was beyond awkward. He knew he couldn't expect an overly emotionally greeting from Bruce. Actually he didn't even expect a hug and if he was being perfectly honest he preferred it to be this way, unsure if he would know how to deal with this kind of affection. Personally, he would like to just forget about what had happened and go back to their previous life... well, minus one family member.

He knew that everything he'd say or do, concerning where he had been the last two days, would only make Jason appear in an awfully bad light. He was unwilling to be the reason why, if he should by any chance come back someday, he would be greeted with nothing but disapproval and coldness.

So he decided to simply keep quiet about it. It was fine just like that. He could hear the gentle 'I'm glad you're safe...' coming from Bruce without him even opening his mouth. He could feel Dick's comforting hug without his brother even touching him. He was safe and happy to be with the ones he loved... With most of them at least.

“Are you planning to go out on patrol?”, Dick asked with a nod towards Tim's suit.
“Already?”

Tim shrugged slightly, playing around on his utility belt. “Yeah, I wouldn't see why not. It's helps me to get my thoughts straight again.”

“Are you sure this is a good idea?”, Dick asked carefully and the concerned frown on his face made him look a lot more like a dad than a big brother.

“Dick is right.”, Bruce agreed. “If you're distracted you might get hurt. Also, I am afraid your wounds are not completely healed yet. Are you sure you will be safe?”

Tim chuckles quietly and couldn't help but think about how *this* was a decent way to try and protect a beloved person rather than kidnapping them. It would have been funny if it hadn't been so sad. “No, I am good, I swear. No need to worry.”

“Let me come with, maybe. You know, to make sure you're fine.”, Dick offered with a careful smile.

“Damian would stab me.”, Tim replied and he wasn't even joking. Damian couldn't stand anyone else spending time with *his* Grayson. Especially not Tim, who the current Robin seemed to hate the most out of all people who walked on this dear earth. “If you want me to take someone with me, I'll pick Steph up before I go to town...”

Neither Dick nor Bruce seemed entirely happy about Tim's idea but neither of them had any reasonable argument against it.

Tim, however, knew all too well, that Stephanie Brown has probably not been the first person to be informed about his disappearance by Dick. She probably hadn't heard the faintest thing about what happened and that was exactly what Tim wished for right now. Someone to treat him normally.

Shortly after, Red Robin and Batgirl were speeding over Gotham City's rooftops. Steph's laughter was contagious and Tim smiled happily as he followed her movements. A friend like her was a blessing, especially in moments like now.

He didn't need anyone to comfort him, he didn't need someone to tell him he would be fine again.

He needed a friend who made him feel like he had felt before all of this happened. And with Steph by his side he actually was allowed to feel like Red Robin for the rest of the night. To feel like who he was originally ought to be. To feel like he had made the completely right choice.

Chapter End Notes

One and a half chapters from the end.

I'm done writing and will (most likely) be able to upload the final chapter and a little bonus within the next few days. Yay!

Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

Tim is slowly finding a way back into the life he used to live. It's hard, harder than he ever thought it would be, though he's getting a hold onto it. Baby-steps are still steps in the right direction.

Little does he know that things are going to change once more.

Chapter Notes

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

It had been about a week since Tim had last seen Jason Todd but the trace he had left in the boy's life hadn't disappeared yet. Everyday, Tim found some of Jason's stuff lying around in his room or the cave. Sticky notes with cheesy messages which Jason had left on Tim's laptop. Shirts Jason had left for Tim to sleep in, still slightly smelling like the man. Plans of the city, short handwritten notes about the cases Jay had been working on, the people he had been following.

A few days ago Tim had made the mistake to spend a few hours in one of Jason's safehouses. It had been nice while it had lasted but after he came home he had just felt worse.

Tim was being haunted by nightmares each and every night but he was hoping they would grow less if only he would manage to forget about what dragged him down. If only he would manage to forget about Jason.

Of course Tim was very aware that he could never completely ban Jason neither from his mind nor from his heart. But he had to push him back, had to make him a smaller part of his life, in order to survive.

When he had first made this decision he wasn't sure if he would even be able to do so. But he just forced himself to focus on his work, though there wasn't a bigger case that he could keep his eye on, and generally avoided going to sleep so he wouldn't have to suffer from those nightmares.

He was doing surprisingly well. Not good but better than he had expected.

Since there was not enough work for him to keep him up all night, he spent more of his time on patrol than he probably should. Sometimes he brought Steph with him but most nights he preferred to just be on his own.

Just like tonight.

Tonight had been rather unexciting. Tim was straying through the streets and made his way over the rooftops while he played 'would you rather...?' with Oracle over the Comm-system. At first she had insisted on Tim paying attention to what he was doing but after the boy had ensured her twice that there was nothing going on and that he would focus as soon as there was the slightest trace of trouble she agreed to a little game.

“ Would you rather be stuck in a room with Robin for 24 hours or only eat microwaved Chinese take-out for a year?”, she asked over the sound of keys getting hit. Tim knew that Barbara was busy guiding Dick through the city on his search for a teen-gang who seemed to enjoy lighting convenient stores on fire. Nothing that would cost Nightwing or Oracle too many nerves, still something to keep the girl on the other end of the line from getting bored.

“ That's a tough one.”, Tim replied, thinking about it. “I think I would try and live through the day locked up with Damian. If I would manage to keep my mouth shut there would be a good chance for me to survive with only minor injuries. But I surely wouldn't be able to live without Alfred's food for a whole year..!”, he then answered with a grin and got a laugh in return.

“ Yeah, you're right.”, Barbara chuckled. “However, your turn...!”

“ Alright, would you rather want to know the way you die or the time you die?”, he asked and a disapproving hum came for his friend.

“ That's so dark, Red... But I would rather want to know the way. Like that I can try and avoid it, you know...?”

“ Makes sense...”, he said, nodding slowly, while he jumped over the edge of a roof and landed on a slightly less tall building.

Suddenly he stopped and turned around, hearing noises coming from an alleyway beneath him. He looked over the edge of the building and shook his head. Really, with all the vigilante in town, thugs should know better than to rob random people in a dark alley. It was certainly not worth the little money they would gain from it.

“ Wait a minute, Babs, gotta take care of some business here.”, he sighed before jumping off the building. With a silent bumping noise he landed behind the two men, made them turn away from their frightened victim and face him. The vigilante who had newly joined the scene put his hand into his hip and held his head high, trying to look down to the men even though he was slightly shorter.

“ Does your mothers know that you're still out playing?”, he asked with a smug grin before grabbing his Bo staff. Usually he would end this as fast as possible, ask the victim, who had already grabbed his stuff and ran off as fast as possible, if he was good, tie the thugs up and call the police to pick them up.

But today was different. He told himself that he had the feeling those men needed a stronger reminder than a night behind bars but actually it was him who needed more. Tonight, he was the one, eager to pick a fight.

So when the one man drew a knife, threateningly pointing it at the Red Robin, his only reaction was a challenged grin.

“ This in none of your business, kiddo.”, he growled. “Just because you dress up in tights and mask doesn't make it yours. Go run back to mommy before I get angry!”

“ Yeah!”, the other man agreed, sounding even less ingenious than the first one, as far as that was possible.

Tim snorted and rolled his eyes. “Sure. Hey, if calling me a kid makes you feel any better, go for it.”, he replied as he took a step forward and waved at the men to come closer.

They didn't need any further invitation. With a enraged battle roar the man with the knife in his hand ran towards Tim, aiming his first stab at the boy's chest. With ease, the Red Robin spun out of his way and blocked the other man's hit in the same move. Gracefully turning on his heel, Tim rammed his Bo staff into the second man's stomach. He gasped and stumbled back, his back hitting the wall, so Tim went back to the first guy. He still carried the knife but his hand seemed to be a little shakier by now. Oh, he was already so scared of the boy, yet so unaware of what Tim could actually do.

“ Drop that, say sorry and I might forget about all this.”, Tim smiled, grabbing the staff with both hands, ready to knock the man out with it.

“ You piece of shit!”, the man yelled, grabbing the handle of the dagger so tight that his ankles turned white. His upper lip twitched in anger before he attacked the vigilante once again.

Tim flipped back, pushed himself off the brick wall and landed behind the thug. A well-placed kick against the man's lower back made him fall forward against the wall. The violent crash made him drop the knife and groan out in pain. A thin streak of blood ran down his temple, coming from where his head had met the wall. Still, he was not ready to give up yet. Shamefully neither was Tim and when the thug moved to turn around once again, a single thrust with the staff against his head made him go out cold.

Tim took a step back, looking at the body sinking down on the wall. With a perfectly satisfied nod he reached for his Comm-system to contact Oracle, wanting her to call the police.

He never came that far.

All of a sudden he was interrupted by a sound right behind him. A sound that didn't foreshadow anything good. Tim spun around and stared into the barrel of a loaded gun. He felt his heart freeze and time seemed to run slower.

“ You shouldn't have done that, kid.”, the man growled calmly and Tim could see his finger pulling the trigger.

The boy closed his eyes shut and heard the bang.

Jason's face flashed in front of his eyes and Tim felt surprisingly calm. For a second, he wondered if this was what death felt like. This was nothing like Jason had ever told him about afterlife. This wasn't cruel or frightening or violent. This was soft and easy. If this was death, with Jason by his side and a warm feeling inside his body, he could happily accept that.

But before Tim could even finish his thought, it hit him that he was not the dead one here. He opened his eyes at the muffled sound in front of him and found a collapsed body laying on the floor. The gun has fallen out of his hand and his widened eyes expressionlessly stared into the distance. Thick, hot blood was streaming out of a deep red hole in his forehead.

“ Wha-...?”, Tim whispered to himself as he moved to look up the building, trying to find where the shot had come from. Deep within, he had an idea but he didn't dare to hope yet.

But when the heavy, black boots hit the floor right next to him, he couldn't hold himself back.

“ That's what you get for threatening my babe.”, Jason growled at the dead body on the floor but was interrupted by Tim crashing into him. He nearly knocked the taller boy off his feet as he wrapped his arms around Jason's waist and pressed his face against his chest.

“ Jason!”, he whimpered, his voice was shaky but filled with unconditional joy. “Jason, you're back!”

He hid his face on Jason's chest and dug his nails into the worn off leather jacket that he had missed so much. Though, not remotely as much as the one who was wearing it.

“ God, what are you doing here? Please tell me, you'll stay! Shit, Jason I-I missed you like crazy, I...!”, Tim hectically babbles, trying to fit as many words as possible into the breaks

between his sobs.

He was cut off, when Jason took his chin in his hand and carefully lifted his head.

“ Well, what was I supposed to do, baby-bird? If you won't put enough effort into not dying, then I will have to be the one to keep bad guys from killing you, ain't I?” The cocky smirk on Jason's face was supposed to make him look all though but the tender expression in his eyes told a different story.

Holding Tim in his arms again felt pleasurably unreal. Like a long gone dream which he didn't dare to hope would come true. It felt so new, yet so familiar.

“ So, you came back to be my guardian angel?”, Tim asked jokingly, choking back some happy tears. Crying would certainly ruin the situation. “Well, good luck then, I am an expert at getting my sorry ass into trouble...”, he chuckled and nuzzled his face against Jason's chest once again.

Jason grinned as he buried his face in Tim's slightly too long and impossibly soft hair. “I know, that's why I am the right man to do it. I am an expert at getting your sorry ass *out* of trouble.”

Tim laughed quietly and couldn't stop two tears dropping down his mask and rolling over his cheeks. “I am sure I can keep you busy then...”, he whispered before going on his tiptoes and pressing his lips onto Jason's.

The kiss was firm and gentle at the same time, filled with so much desperation and unconditional love Tim could barely stand the overflow of emotions that were washing over him in this very moment. His fingers were shaking as he dug them deep into Jason's hair, pulling him closer. Even though the tears still came streaming down his face, the edges of his lips curled into a loving smile.

Jason sighed into the kiss and his eyelids fluttered as he carefully took Tim's face in his hands, brushing away the tears with his thumb.

God, how much he had missed Tim's touch. The warmth he felt, when their bodies were so close. Those soft lips on his.

The peaceful, yet so perfectly exciting moment was all too soon interrupted by an unpleasant noise, coming from the unconscious man who was still motionlessly lying on the floor.

Tim twitched and turned his head towards him. “Damn!”, he whispered. He had almost forgot about the situation they were in right now. His singing heart had made him blank the dark alley and the injured bodies out.

“ Wait, I'll take care of that.”, Jason said, pulling the handgun which was still in the holster on his belt.

“ Don't!”, Tim quickly said, backing of a little and pushing down the gun which was already aiming at the knocked out man's head. “I'll just tell Oracle to call the police and make them get here. We'll be long gone when they arrive.

“ Long gone, huh?”, Jason asked, putting the gun away again before pushing his hands into the pockets of his leather jacket. “And where are we supposed to go...?”, he asked, playing it cool but the nervous undertone in his voice was unmistakably telling the truth.

Tim smiled softly and placed another gentle kiss on Jason's lips as he reconnected his Comm-system. “Home.”, he whispered before backing off again, talking to Barbara over the comm. Still he didn't let go of Jason's hand for just one second.

Jason sighed softly and looked at their hands, Tim's thin, pale fingers nearly completely covered by his own rough hand. He couldn't exactly imagine what the boy meant with *home* , knowing that he couldn't expect a kind welcoming from the family he had left behind. But he knew, wherever he was, if he was with Tim it would be okay.

Only minutes later, they were sitting on the rooftop of the nearest building and watched the blue and red lights flashing through the streets, hunting the criminals back into the shadows like the sun forced the rats back into the dark. Tim's head was resting on Jason's shoulder and his hand was still inside of his boyfriend's. A quiet sigh escaped his lips as he closed his eyes and even though he was facing a completely different direction, the only thing he focused on was the feeling of Jason being so close to him.

To Jason, it was the same. He barely noticed anything that was happening around him but the soft feeling of Tim's hand in his and his hair dancing in the wind and tickling his neck.

“ I couldn't live without you...”, Jason whispered after a moment of silence, pulling the shorter boy a little closer to him. Tim looked up at Jason, equally surprised and happy about the tender confession. “I mean, I tried...”, he went on, staring at the horizon and following the rising sun with his eyes. “But every time it was quiet I could hear your voice. Every time I closed my eyes I saw your face and I swear to god, if I would have stayed away a little longer it would have torn me apart.”

Finally he turned his head to look at Tim, finding a gentle look in the younger boys eyes. “Oh Jason...”, he whispered breathlessly and moved to hug Jason as tight as human possible. “I missed you so much it nearly killed me... God, I love you.”

Jason smiled tenderly and kissed Tim's head, holding him close and rocking him gently. "I love you too, Timbo...And I swear on my own grave I won't leave you again."

Minutes passed by while they were just sitting arm in arm on the rooftop, bathed in the golden light of dawn. "We should get going...", Tim mumbled after a while of cuddling in happy silence, even though he was rather unwilling to actually get up. "Not back to the manor. At least not yet... but maybe to one of your safehouses..."

Jason nodded slowly, more than happy about not being confronted with Dick's and Bruce's judgment just yet.

" Sounds great to me..." , he agreed as he got up, pulling Tim onto his feet as well.

" Oh, hey Jason..." , Tim quickly said after he had gotten up and stretched his legs. "I would never complain about our nightly adventures but, please, ... no more ' *road trips* ', alright?" , he grinned before grabbing Jason's hand and jumping off the roof.

Chapter End Notes

That's it. That's the story (but a little bonus will follow :>)

I really REALLY hope you guys are not too disappointed by the way I ended it all. I think it's not as epic or dramatic as some of you expected it to be but I figured that Jason wouldn't be able to live without Tim for so long. Especially not if he knew that his baby-bird might be in danger.

But sometimes good things just happen, right? Without a huge turn. Sometimes fate just allows us to be happy. (And cannot let my babies stay unhappy to save my life, I just couldn't bring myself to writing all angst. They deserve happiness!)

Thank you a million, billion, trillion times for staying with me for so long (over two month so I think! Wow!)

You are amazing and if I was able to make some of you smile or cry with my work than I am the happiest person on this planet.

Thank you all !!!

Bonus

Chapter Summary

Jason returns to the family and greeted with open arms. mostly.

Chapter Notes

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

A burning pain flashed through Jason's cheek and his head flew to the side as his brother's hand hit his face. Some streaks fell over his eyes and he brushed them out of the way and he stood up straight again. “Yeah, okay I deserved that...!”, he said but he didn't even find the time to finish the sentence before he was nearly knocked off his feet once more. This time, however, it was not because of a slap but because of Dick throwing himself against Jason's chest. He wrapped his arms around his brother's neck and hugged him tightly.

“ Jason Peter Todd, how dare you doing this to me?!”, he asked, trying his best to sound strict and angry, he certainly still was angry, but the relief of having his brother back made his voice come out softer than intended.

“ You stole my Baby-Bird from me and as if that wouldn't be enough you decided to stay away for even longer, little wing?! God, I thought I would never see you again in my whole life! What were you thinking?!”

He pulled back a little to look at Jason but his hands still rested on the taller man's shoulders.

“ You're drawing the 'second name'-card? Really..?”, Jason laughed nervously. His cheek was still bright red from when he had gotten to learn how strong a worried Nightwing could possibly become but he didn't really cared about his aching face right now. “And – like always – I wasn't thinking.”

“ This is not funny, Jay...”, Dick sighed as he hugged the man once again and closed his eyes. “I worried about you. Both of you. And I missed you like crazy...”

“ It wasn't suppose to be a joke...”, Jason replied with a shake of his head. “I wasn't thinking. When I made the decision to do all this, I was listening to my heart, not my head. I did what felt right to do...”, he sighed and lowered his head, letting his hair hide his eyes.

“ I am so sorry, Dick... I know, it was a mistake to take Tim with me. And it was an extremely stupid mistake this time, even for me. But you know what it's like to see somebody

you love getting hurt...”

Dick nodded slowly as he recalled all the times those who were close to him had been more dead than alive. He knew the constant worry, the horrible feeling of powerlessness and the paralyzing insecurity. He had experienced all of this way more often than he would have wished for.

“ I know... I know how you feel, little wing. But I told you before and I'll tell you again, it's not up to us to decide-”

“ Yes, I know!”, Jason quickly interrupted him. “I know now... I was so caught up in the idea of protecting Tim that I didn't see what was actually good for him.”

“ Well, at least you understand that much.”, said a cold voice, coming from the door. Dick spun around and Tim, who had been watching the scene with a tender smile, instantly grabbed Jason's hand as if to protect him.

Bruce was leaning in the door frame, staring at Jason with cold eyes. Every single muscle in Jason's body tensed up as Bruce slowly made his way across the room. He swallowed hard but didn't back away. Instead he straightened his back and looked directly into Bruce's eyes.

“ So, I see you're back.”, the Batman said dryly.

“ Obviously.”, Jason replied with a short nod, more a twitch of his head. He gave his best to act calm but his grip around Tim's hand tightened with every second that passed. Eventually it actually started hurting but Tim simply bit his tongue, not making a sound.

“ It's good to see you again.”, Bruce said, a sigh swinging along with his words. Jason twitched and looked at Bruce with deep, honest surprise. The confusion was written in Tim's and Dick's faces just as obvious. “Though,-”, Bruce went on, “-If you dare to do something like this *ever* again, I swear, I will find you and I will make you regret it...”

Jason bit down on his lip, hesitating for a moment before he slowly nodded. “Yes, I know. I ... understand that.”, he agreed, squeezing Tim's hand, gentler this time.

Bruce nodded before putting his hand on Jason's shoulder for only a very short moment. “I'm glad the two of you are alright.”, he said before turning away again and leaving the room with no further comment.

“ That was... extremely disturbing.”, Jason remarked after the door had fallen shut. “I mean like, *extremely* disturbing.”

Tim chuckled and nuzzled against his arm. “Yeah, but you know how he is. That's-... That's his way of telling that he missed you.”, he smiled and pressed a kiss onto his boyfriend's shoulder.

“ He did.”, Dick confirmed with a smile. “We all did...” Jason smiled gratefully and chuckled as Dick pulled him into another tight hug. “Oh, come here, little wing...”, he chuckled and nuzzled against his chest. Tim grinned widely and wrapped his arms around both of them, squishing his face against Jason's side.

Jason chuckled and rolled his eyes as he took both of them into his arms. “You two, I swear to god...”, he mumbled gently before pressing a gentle kiss at Tim's hair. “I love both of you so much...”

“ You're disgusting. All of you...”, it came from Damian passing by the room and throwing a quick glance at them.

Tim just chuckled, not minding the rude remark. For this very moment, nothing but perfect happiness filled his guts. He didn't know what was going to come, what they would have to face. But after all that had happened, he knew one thing for sure. They would always face it together.

Chapter End Notes

It was very important to me to sooth the things between Jason and the rest of the family. Especially with Dick. The two or them are very close to my heart and mean a lot to each other. Therefore I need them to be in good terms!

End Notes

This is my first time to write angst.
I hope it'll turn out to be good haha! Updates coming soon.

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