

## Providential Aids

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# Providential Aids

by [dendriax](#)

## Summary

"Welcome to the Pantheon of Hockey Gods," divinely declares The Great One in a deep booming voice.

It goes downhill from there.

## Notes

This is fiction and everything here is fictional. Anything resembling reality is either accidental or public knowledge. If you are or know anyone mentioned, please navigate away and don't look back.

That said, this here is... crack? A lapse of judgment? Insanity? I don't even know anymore but here it is, so, yeah.

(contains major spoilers for my other fic "Ever Constant, Always Variable" so maybe check that out first if you want? this is set in the same AU as EC,AV as well as my series of weird & sad hockey fics and comes after all of them)

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

- Inspired by [Ever Constant, Always Variable](#) by [dendriax](#)
- Inspired by [Deliberation](#) by [dendriax](#)

August, 2015

Kent's about to take the first bite of his steak when a sound of pointed throat clearing makes him pause.

He doesn't dare breathe, let alone move. Slowly, with his fork halting mid-air and his mouth still agape, he risks a glance towards his right, only to be met with a warm all-encompassing smile. Then--

"Welcome to the Pantheon of Hockey Gods," divinely declares The Great One in a deep booming voice.

Across the table, Sidney Crosby ONS is blissfully enjoying his own steak. Kent doesn't even have words.

"Sir," Kent stalls, and to think Kent was optimistic when Jack told him about Uncle Wayne's invitation to dinner. "I, uh..." Kent stalls more and, with more 'uh's and 'um's, manages to stammer out, "am not at all sure such great honor should be bestowed upon me while there are many more-deserving individuals who deserve it more, sir. And Zimms is the one with time-rewinding ability... sir?"

"Do not downplay your staggering accomplishments, Kent. The Pantheon keeps track of everything and is well-aware of the hard work you've contributed to the hockey world." Fuck, Kent thinks. "And with your exceptional hockey-tude, there's no doubt your own abilities will further greatly develop, of course," is asserted in the way only The Great One is capable of, which is totally beside the point.

It goes downhill from there.

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"What the fuck, Zimms? What the actual fucking fuck?" Kent demands, slamming the door to their hotel room. The steak is a lie, same as the charity golf tournament they ostensibly came here for.

Jack lowers his travel-sized history book onto his bare lickable chest, asking "What's wrong?" and looking all hot and guiltless and innocent like he genuinely hasn't been in on the ambush. And Kent believes him. Dammit.

So they fuck -- because priority -- and it's after their afterglow that Kent narrates what transpired at "dinner" to Jack, going so far as to get up and search through his discarded clothes so he can present the ceremonial inaugural puck to Jack's face.

Some moments later, Jack lets out a thoughtful and rather unsympathetic "Oh" while Kent is now blinking at his phone that was also rescued from his suit pants. "Well, you did break more than a couple of Uncle Wayne's records, and Sid's."

"Uuuggh," Kent turns to elucidate into Jack's muscular shoulder, tossing the phone away. The quantity of emails Sid has managed to forward to him already is alarming.

"We could go back," Jack offers, now with discernible compassion. "But I think it'd just be prolonging the inevitable?"

Well, shit, because Jack's right. Because a simple application of Jack's universal reset wouldn't be able to deter a pantheon of gods that operate from other planes of existence entirely. Which means even if they go back, Kent would have to go through some variation of that "dinner" again eventually. Which means Kent's fucked no matter what.

And so Kent sighs, fatalistically, and tells Jack of his need to get fucked in the fun way, which Jack happily obliges.

~

(Interlude: Useful PSA shit with nowhere to be

Some days, Kent can't help but feel rather fictional.

It's a league-wide open secret that hockey magic exists. It comes in various logic-defying forms, has various rights over the fragile laws of reality, and can fuck with you and everything you've come to care about in various fanciful ways. It's the main reason why superstitions are serious business in the hockey world, because it'll just make you look silly to conform to misconstrued causalities of uncorrelated coincidences but it'll be your funeral if you ignore the ones that are very real.

On its own, hockey magic is mindless and unpredictable, but can be functional if used wisely -- heavy emphasis on 'wisely' so check your sources, please. The more convoluted form of hockey magic coexists with other entities and is what constitutes supernatural hockey beings. Some are all-powerful yet movable, like the Stanley Cup, some are ritually instituted but not to be disrespected, like the locker room floor team logos, while others can be inconsequential and/or elusively intangible altogether, like that guy in juniors.

And then there's hockey gods.

Hockey gods, as the title suggests, are hockey players that have magically ascended to godhood and/or higher planes of existence. And by virtue of once having been players themselves and therefore aware of the hardship and suffering you must endure, they are unbelievably benevolent and will be there for you in your time of hockey need. For the good of the hockey world! The Pantheon exists for a reason, duh. As a rule, hockey gods are highly attentive to their subjects, specifically you, which is to say that wishes and prayers are heard and processed in the most organized manner conceivable. The higher-planes-of-existence, of course, is where things get iffy as it makes it appear as if hockey gods work in mysterious ways when, in fact, nothing can be more untrue. Only, hockey gods often benevolently misinterpret wishes due to most wishes being ambiguous, unrealistic, and made by much-younger culturally-confounded often-shitfaced individuals. With that said, Kent has been assured that hockey gods do mean well (for the most part, as there are also rogue hockey

gods). And in the spirit of meaning well, physical hockey gods have been elected as part of a relatively recent effort to make the Pantheon more readily accessible.

As to where these physical hockey gods come forth from, the answer is rather elegant in its simplicity. Thanks to hockey magic, citizens of the hockey world generally gain, for lack of better words, 'superpowers' the moment they unknowingly stumble into the state of having done enough hard work and thus solidified their unwavering allegiances to the game. These magical powers often start off subtle and require certain conditions to be met to take effects, which is why hardly anyone notices anything until shit gets unmitigatedly fucked. And while a number of the powers are identified to be sets of loosely related abilities, the majority of the powers are, thankfully, very specific in function and/or scope. There's also an obscure and often unfortunate fact that the better hockey players get, the more their abilities grow and evolve. Because it's not enough that they are confined by a magic-induced code of conduct and can unwittingly submit ill-advised prayers that result in wish-babies and de-aging, all of them poor unsuspecting fuckers are expected to deal with mundane animal transformations and other fun character-building stuff as well.

And for those deemed exceptionally great? Fucking welcome to the Pantheon of Hockey Gods.)

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November, 2015

Kent wakes up in the darkness of his bedroom to find one Jack Eichel sitting on the floor, face illuminated in an eerie glow and eyes staring unblinkingly.

It's totally normal.

"Sir. Sorry to bother you, sir," Eichs says a few seconds after Kent mashes his face back into a pillow.

"Please stop with the 'sir' and it's--" Kent claws for his phone. 37 missed calls and 113 texts, great. "-- still an ungodly hour. Isn't it your off day? Why aren't you asleep?"

"I will do my best to win tomorrow night's game, sir. And for this is my astral projection, physically I am asleep, sir," Eichs recites back, smiling a little. The 'sir' thing has likely been a lost cause since they first met before Eichs got drafted. "Would you mind, sir, if I let the person behind this particular disturbance of the hockey world exposit on the matter, sir?"

When Kent yawningly makes a vague go-ahead gesture, Eichs holds up a tablet showing a downtrodden-looking Connor McDavid, one arm noticeably in a sling.

Several questions come to mind, but-- "How do you have a functioning tablet if you're astrally projecting?" Kent can't help but wonder.

"All possessions on my person are projected along with me, sir. It defies explanation but I'm grateful it means I can remain clothed while projecting, sir," which--

"Okay, fair." Kent concurs before directing his bleary gaze to the camera.

On the screen, Davo flinches, then looks physically pained.

"You finally get a hold of Parser?" Hallsy's sleep-rumpled face pops into the frame, almost jostling Davo. "Hey, Parser. Davo here broke himself against the boards last night and is in need of your providence!"

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February, 2016

Segs accosts Kent with a full-on hug just as Kent steps out of the Stars' visitor locker room. "So how's godhood treating you?"

"It's the best," Kent lies, pulling away from the ass-grab. "Wanna trade? You'd be so good at it."

Segs laughs douchily back at him. "Fuck you. But like, seriously, the magical combination of my epic hotness, tactile gay-dar and badass dudebro status has helped so many dudes in distress. So. Many."

Routinely made aware of Segs' deeds and specialty in being too much of a fuckboy to appear not straight, Kent doesn't doubt references can be provided upon request so instead he segues. "Can you have a gay-dar if you're bi?"

"Bi-fi, then," Segs settles, and then pulls a face. "And I'm straight, Parse. What the fuck?"

"Right, I forgot. You're chaotic straight as opposed to my lawful bi," Kent deadpans, mindful to look suitably unimpressed only to get a wolfish grin in return.

"Come on. Let's go back to mine," Segs says conspiratorially, throwing an arm around Kent's shoulder. "My new webcam's so fucking baller Zimms is gonna cry when we show him what he's been missing out on!"

-

March, 2016

Kent's only responsible for mortal (that is to say, health-related) matters because 1) they are hard to be calamitously screwed up, 2) they are literally the only known utilitarian application of Kent's set of abilities, 3) Sid (and only Sid, at least for now) is trusted to manage other kinds of matters, 4) The Great One and Le Magnifique deal with everything else, and 5) the rest of the Pantheon handles the rest -- whatever that means.

So it's very disappointing, honestly, when--

"Team North America is a thing and we're not on it," Kent yells as soon as the call connects.

"It's an honor to represent our respective national teams," Jack lays out darkly. "And they did say 23-and-under."

"Fuck national teams, that's what the Olympics are for," Kent groans. "We were supposed to play together. Us playing together has been recognized to help promote the general well-being of the hockey world. It'd be fucking awesome to play together. It'd be fucking awesome to play with the kids. Now if--"

"Kenny," Jack warns, but his resolve is wobbling, Kent can tell.

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August, 2016

They're eating dinner. Sid isn't here but Jack is, because Kent sure as hell isn't gonna go into a possible ambush alone.

Kent's first year being a glorified fucker went, in the words of The Great One, great. And this is even accounting for the many mistakes Kent's made, like that time with Burnsie where Kent accidentally regrew his trademarked missing teeth, or that time with Daddy where Kent accidentally... made him less Jewish. At any rate, the mistakes, or rather 'mishaps', were all assured to be remediable and attributed to the fact that Kent was -- and still is -- very inexperienced and fucking clueless.

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November, 2016

"Fuck me for saying this but I miss being an Oiler," Hallsy laments over a giant bowl of kale-laden KD, which isn't the meal Kent had in mind when he waylaid Hallsy after playing the Devils on their turf.

"Love the players, hate the management," Kent commiserates, eyeing his own smaller bowl before chancing an exploratory bite.

"I don't even know what the fuck we did," Hallsy pouts more, faceplanting onto the table and narrowly avoiding making a green-ish splat. "And Nuge and Davo were supposed to be the responsible ones."

"So you guys did do something." Kent takes another bite, endures Hallsy's kale of maturity because Kent's that fucking hungry.

"We did lots of things, magical things that were supposed to break the shitty unending curse of Edmonton," Hallsy finally admits after months of increasingly frantic moping.

"Tell Sid about it?" Kent suggests, then watches as Hallsy rolls his head to the side, angles his bowl with one hand, and proceeds to shovel in food with the other.

It's moments like this that make Kent wish he could do more.

"Ebs and Nuge're drafting an email," Hallsy says through a mouthful. "We'll CC you."

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December, 2016

Considering the sweltering hellhole that is year-round Vegas, a wintertime Canada roadie is hugely welcome. This, though...

"How is it again that you two get to be on the same team?" Kent manages to ask despite being trapped in a comprehensive bone-crushing hug.

"The Leafs did tank for me," Auston Matthews says, beaming unironically and looking pleased as anything. Kent frees one hand to ruffle his hair.

"Don't be selfish, Matts. Wait for your turn," Marns whines right into the crook of Kent's neck, still trying his level best to enact being surgically attached to Kent's everything.

Matts, known sucker for all things Mitch Marner, predictably joins in.

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January - April, 2017

An incredibly detailed email arrives, then come a carefully worded reply and heaps of unintelligible follow-ups. Bettman makes noises about the Olympics. The regular season ends. Hallsy doesn't get traded back, but, miracle of miracles, the Oilers finally make the playoffs after their ten-year drought.

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June, 2017

It's been instilled into every hockey player's brain that the NHL Awards reception is a professional obligation and emphatically not a party. So when Davo abruptly flops towards Jack and chants, "Make it stop. Please, make it stop," like some upper-middle-class suburban teenager who's just taken nine different kinds of ghetto-ass club drugs, everyone knows something is very, very wrong.

"Make what stop?" Kent asks, helping Jack maneuver Davo to sit on the floor.

"The noise--" Davo gasps out as their impromptu squad gathers around. "-- voices -- saying hockey things."

They happen to be migrating from the ceremony to the reception through some void hallway so like, great timing, Davo, because this would've drawn shit-tons of unwanted media attention. The squad is so that rapacious reporters can't easily single any of them out, especially Davo, who just won a bunch of awards and is therefore the prime target for tonight and--



Then it clicks.

It's been known for a while that Davo can in certain cases hear proximal thoughts that are deliberately inflicted upon him. And Davo did so good this season it's only logical that--

"Your ability has evolved," Kent concludes, turning to Jack, who nods.

"From all the accomplishments this year," Sid corroborates. "Your telepathy must have increased in range and extended to include more than just thoughts about you, maybe hockey in general."

"How do we turn it off?" Marns demands over Davo's now ragged breathing, eyes wild. "Stop everyone from thinking hockey thoughts?"

"We could try wrapping his head in tinfoil?" Matts suggests helpfully. Behind him, Zach Werenski appears to be relaying what's happening to someone over the phone.

Before anyone can figure out where the nearest source of tinfoil is or whether they should just order some online, Eichs materializes with a "sir" and proceeds to knock Davo's lights out.

Everyone stares.

"Fucking Eichs, better not just give me a concussion," Davo mutters, his mouth not moving and his voice sounding like it comes from--

"Eichs is here?" Marns cranes his neck around but looks right past the space Eichs' projection is occupying.

Eichs zeroes in on Marns instantly. "Effing Davo, how do I hear you from Marns' shitty effing ice rink?"

It's also been known that somewhere in some plane of existence there's Mitch Marner's Metaphysical (shitty fucking) Ice Rink for Deeply Unconscious Hockey Players, M3sfIRfDUHP for short.

"Yes to you, Marns, and I don't fucking know, Eichs," Davo's voice carries over. "But it's nice and quiet in here, so. Fucking thanks, I guess."

"Fuck, I can hear Davo, too," Matts announces with a horrified expression on his face. And it only occurs to Kent then that being able to hear a voice from another plane of existence is not normal.

"So can I?" Zach says hesitantly, peering around before adding, "I still can't see Eichs, though."

"So Marns' ability's also evolved? Or is it me? Would mine return to normal if I give back all the awards?"

"No, it wouldn't," Jack solemnly replies. "Our abilities develop with our hockey-tudes and contributions to the hockey world. The recognition and accolades just speed things up."

"My estimation is, Connor, you will be able to hear every hockey-related prayer aimed at any hockey god by the next time the Oilers make the playoffs," Sid adds matter-of-factly.

"And Matts still hasn't made up for his baseball-playing years yet," Davo mumbles dejectedly. The Great One himself explained it during All-Star weekend.

"We can go back, prepare in advance," Kent offers after no one else says anything. "Maybe even help develop your ability a step further so you can block this out when it manifests."

"Let's turn back a day first so we can set up and strategize," Sid decides. "You guys can fill me in once you're then. We can also see if it manifests again. Jack?"

"Okay," Jack nods. "Now?"

Sid nods back, then they both turn to Kent.

"Fine with me. Davo?" Kent says and looks around the room. "Everyone?"

"Wait! Let me get inside so I can remember this, too. I just need--" Marns chimes in before getting cut off by Eichs jamming a hand into his skull and flickering/shimmering into him. "I guess I'm in. Oh, hey, Eichs."

"Fucking hockey," Matts grumbles, cradling Marns' unconscious body in his arms.

-

June, 2017 (again)

"So," Kent begins. "Ebs is Jersey-adjacent, there's one discombobulated Stromer in Edmonton while another Stromer still can't get away from the wiles of the Coyotes, and Hallsy is now in charge of another first overall pick."

Across from him, Sid grimaces. "There've been... clerical errors, which is exactly why trade-related wishes are discouraged and frowned upon."

"O... kay," Kent says. "And is there anything me and Jack can help about the NHL's quarrel with the Olympics?"

"Word from the higher-ups is they're handling it," Sid slightly hesitates, then adds, "I've been reassured."

-

To fucking no one's surprise, NHLers are banned from the upcoming Winter Olympics -- a minor issue that they manage to rectify after only two (2) of Jack's universal rewinding.

And if Jack's performance at the tournament renders his shockingly large ass worthy of godhood, well...

## End Notes

Seriously, I still don't know where to put that giant chunk of Interlude.

Also somewhere in this mess is Noah Hanifin with his collapsible eagle wings made of flames and capable of performing evasive flight maneuver while simultaneously blasting gusts of fiery hurricanes, just saying.

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