MHA 49 - Climax?

I sighed, looking over Fukouka city as I flew above it, using *just* enough electricity to keep flying. It’d been three days of lessons, where I’d hung out with Hawks as he went about his day, and we talked about everything from public relations (Be strong, but not aggressive, and make sure to spend one day a week just walking around, as that’d actually drop crime *just* as much as the other four days of actually patrolling, but more than once a week and you hit diminishing returns), to Heteromorph Descrimination (not good but getting better, facial mutations being the worst, but because of it if you went out of your way to help them it mad things better for everyone for a whole *host* of reasons), to the nature of the Hero Commissions (A necessary bureaucratic evil a whole, ‘worst system after all the others’ situation, where, unlike the American system where Quirk-use had way less restrictions, you had more low-level Villains but fewer were *high* level ones (And never, *never* mention clown Villains to the Americans)).

And, during it all, we’d *flown.*

Honestly, I was spending close to half my day in the air, but, it was already paying dividends, helping me learn to control myself *far* better in the air. Unfortunately, my method of flight was *not* Hawk’s, but he had a sidekick named Firebird who used flames for the same kind of propulsion that I did, and yesterday she’d tagged along with us and helped me get a handle on it, as I practically *felt* Psychic Talent perk up and take notice. I wasn’t throwing flames, or if I was they were embers, indistinguishable from my sparks, but her *use* of them was *just* close enough for me to skim some experience from.

Talking to Hawks, while his feathers were waterproof they burned *very* easily, so he’d gone out of his way to find a sidekick that could weather the flames that would normally stop him cold. It was something to keep in mind when I got some of my own. *If* I got some of my own. For all they were useful, my Talents didn’t come with any kind of instruction manual, and obviously were a lot more complicated than I’d first thought.

Regardless, despite already spending close to *thirty* hours with the man, who had his powers *always* active, I hadn’t gotten so much as a bit of down, but it’d been near the fifty-ish hour mark with my father before a finger had flickered into electricity. However, the question was then the ephemeral issue of *skill*. Was my father better with his power than Hawks was with his?

Hawks was twenty-two, actually younger than I was before all of this happened, though I strangely enough didn’t *feel* that old, and while Hawks was a Pro that used his powers constantly, so, in his own way, did my father. The man was nearly forty, and had refined his power to an *extreme* degree, even if one that was, ostensibly, not combat-related in the slightest.

Regardless, I’d either learn Hawks’ power, or I wouldn’t. Hopefully I’d made a good enough impression that I’d be invited back for the longer-term Work Studies in the fall, but even if I didn’t walk away from this with a new power, I was still learning an absolute *ton*.

Feeling my phone buzz in my pocket, I used that very thing I learned to dive and pull myself up *just so,* allowing me to run out of momentum as I lightly landed on a rooftop ledge, only needing to take a single step to stop myself, and that was more for safety's sake, and because I lost nothing doing so, then because I couldn’t stick the landing.

Taking out the phone it was a message that included a single piece of information.

His exact position.

*Shit.*

“Hawks!” I called, the Hero having, pulled up and around when he’d seen me land. “Sir, I-I need your help.” With any luck the extra heroes in Hosu would’ve been able to back them up, but apparently my luck was such that Midoriya *still ended up fighting Stain*. Part of me wanted to do nothing, to let everyone *else* take care of it, but Midoriya had been shut down in seconds during that fight, and Ida had survived by only the *slimmest* of margins. It would’ve been easier to just coast on my preparations, but, despite what I’d told Aizawa, I *still* felt responsible.

It was dumb, and arrogant, and maybe unrealistic, but something pulled at me to do *more*. It wasn’t my memories of the original Denki, not really, but. . . even if I was sure I was never actually going to graduate from UA, something about being a Hero *called* to me.

Expression curious, my mentor pulled up in front of me, still mid-air. “Yeah, Voltaire? What’s up?”

“My classmate, Midoriya, sent me a message that’s just his location. In *Hosu*. I think he might’ve found Stain,” I said. “I know it sounds unlikely, but-”

“You’re worried,” Hawks finished, putting a hand to his ear, toggling his comms. “Karasu, yeah, it’s me. Anything going on in Hosu?” His flapping paused, and he hung in mid-air, relaxed air gone in an instant as he stiffened, his feathers seeming to sharpen. “Repeat that. Got it. Might have a lead on the Hero Killer. The fledging’s friend. Of course.”

The man looked to me with an intensity he’d never shown before, and asked, *“****Where?****”* I showed him the address, which he read, nodding after a second of memorization. “That’s halfway across Japan, Denki. I’m gonna need you to dump most of of your reserves in thrust, but we should get there in half an hour.”

*. . . what?* I thought, before shaking my head. “Can you move faster without me?” I demanded, and he nodded without hesitation. “Then fucking go without me! I’m good, but I’ve got nothing on you, and *seconds* can count with this shit. You need my phone?”

Hawks stared at me for a second, his gaze sharply assessing, before he shook his head. “No, I’ll be able to find them. You sure?”

“Them being safe matters more than me being there to fight Stain. Now fucking *go!”* I yelled, realizing I was being rude. “Sir,” I added, but didn’t back down.

However, the Pro just laughed, drifting forward to rustle my hair. “Will do kid. Head back to HQ. I’ll text when they’re safe.”

And then he darted upwards, so fast he seemed to evaporate, a gust of wind buffetting me back. I looked up, trying to catch sight of him, and *barely* spotted something blur away from the city before a distant double-boom almost like a pair of cannon blasts, echoed from above as the Pro *broke the sound barrier.*

*Okay. . . Hawks is probably stronger,* I couldn’t help but think, as I turned around, taking off for the Hawks Hero Agency, hoping he made it in time.

<MHA>

“Midoriya,” Todoroki said, almost blasé despite the desperate situation they all were in, walking slowly towards them as Stain watched them both warily. “I got your message, but in the future you need more details. A few minutes more, and you might’ve been in trouble.”

“I already was,” Midoriya replied, smiling, glad to see his classmate. “Is Endeavor near? And, you’re using your left side?”

With a stomp of his right side, ice spread out, lifting upwards under the still paralyzed forms of Ida and Bullrush, sliding them back as Midoriya leapt backwards, his wound having already stopped bleeding, and the small puddle he’d left behind quickly covered up and out of Stain’s reach. “The Pros should be here soon,” he replied, not answering his classmate’s other question.

Landing beside the thermokinetic, Midoriya quickly brought him up to speed. “He paralyzes people, I think by swallowing their blood. *That’s how he got Ida!”*

“That explains the blades,” Todoroki noted neutrally, smirking. “That just means I need to keep my dis-”

He was cut off as Midoriya shoved him to the side, a dagger flying through the space his head would’ve been, Stain charging them both. However, even as the Hero Killer taunted, “Ya have good friends, Ingenium,” Midoriya realized the man wasn’t wielding his sword, but two knives at once, leaping right for Todoroki as the boy tried to regain his balance. Todoroki slammed a hand on the alley wall, a spike of Ice growing as the Stain declared, *“Or you did!”*

The awkward angle meant that the Hero Killer didn’t have the leverage to break through the ice, the knife binding in it when he tried, the other knife thrown at Midoriya as he closed, giving the Villain enough time to leap into the air, where the Katana still spun, likely thrown at the same time as the dagger.

Grabbing the spinning blade with ease, Stain pulled another knife and came down, even as Todoroki threw up a nother wall of ice, but, with his primary weapon, the Healer Killer cut through it easily. However, Midoriya stepped in, punching the now free clump of ice, shattering it and turning it into a frozen shotgun blast that hit the Villain, forcing him backwards as Todoroki frantically through up even more defences.

*“Just stop it. Why are you doing this?”* Ida demanded, behind them both, as Todoroki switched to fire, letting out a long blast that both defrosted himself and kept the Hero Killer at bay, even as another dagger came hurling through the flames for the thermokinetic’s chest, deflected by Midoriya. “*His fight is with* ***me!*** *I inherited my brother’s name. I’m the one who should stop him. The Hero Killer is* ***mine!****”*

Midoriya deflected another dagger, shooting Ida a worried look, not knowing how to respond, but Todoroki, now steaming with heat, had no such problem. Slamming his right down on the cement floor of the alley, filling the area in front of them with towering spires of ice thirty feet high. “You’re *Ingenium* now? Strange,” the boy taunted, as Stain moved further and further back to avoid being trapped. “The Ingenium I knew before never had *that* look on his face.”

Ida’s rage-filled scowl gave way to surprise, though his brows were still knit with anger, as Todoroki continued, “You’ve got a dark side. Guess my family isn’t the only one.”

The thermokinetic seemed to relax, looking at the wall between him and his opponent, but Midoriya tensed, his fear proven right as, with a series of slashes, Stain struck out with enough force to shatter the entire wall, raining hunks of ice back on the standing pair, as the hero killer called out, “You blocked your field of vision against an opponent who’s faster than you. *Rookie mistake*.” Todoroki threw up a shield of flame to both keep Stain away and to melt the frozen chunks coming towards, only for another dagger came flying out from the fire, only not for *him*.

*“No!”* Midoriya gasped, darting forward and smacking the blade aside an instant before it could pierce Bullrush’s heart, only for two more daggers to follow, both burying themselves to the hilt in Todoroki’s left arm.

Without having to worry about the flames, Stain leapt down, sword at the ready, yet another dagger thrown, one of the broken ones, to the side to make Midoriya take that much longer to get back to his friend as the villain called, “You kids are good, better than that waste, but it’s not enough.”

Seeing the blade coming down, Midoriya pushed himself even harder, to twenty percent, enough that his bones ached under the pressure as he darted forward. He’d only spiked it for hits, so Stain was completely unprepared as Midoriya shot through the air in an instant, grabbing the Hero Killer and grinding him against the wall to bleed off momentum, before hurling the Villain back down the alley as Stain tried to slash him, sending the Hero Killer over a hundred feet away.

*“Ah!”* Midoriya gasped as he landed, not *quite* feeling like he’d fractured the bones in his legs, but it’d been close. Alone, he’d had to conserve his strength, but with allies, and with Todoroki’s power like a beacon, help was on its way, and he could burn through his reserves of toughness.

“You okay?” Todoroki asked, worried, as Midoriy lightly leapt back, legs sore, but workable. “Damnit, where’s the Pros?” Shaking his head, as Stain cautiously approached them, the boy declared, “We can’t let him get close, we have to hold him off at a distance.”

Looking at his opponent, who slowly got to his feet, walking to collect his fallen sword a dozen feet away, and was staring at them with *murder* in eyes that practically glowed red, Midoriya had to shake his head. “No. We give him a chance to set the pace of the fight, we’re gonna lose. He comes, I’m gonna meet him, and I’m gonna need you to support me. Alone, he’d kill us, but, *together*, we have a chance.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbmOO79IIgw>

The thermokinetic took a deep breath, and pulled out the knives in his arms, reaching inside a belt pouch to grab a packet of ointment he ripped open with his teeth. Wincing in pain he squirted it into his wounds, where it spread and hardened, creating a seal as the Hero Killer continued to stalk towards them. “Fine,” he said with a nod, left hand burning with flame. “It’s risky, but I’ll back you.”

Midoriya smiled at his classmate, and heard Stain start to charge both of them. Pulling OfA back up around himself, All Might’s successor turned to his opponent and charged, bouncing back and forth down the alley to reach his opponent, not attacking directly but darting past the swordsman, Todoroki sending a bolt of flame at Stain’s back as the man turned, but the man dodged, giving Midoriya an opening to attack.

He *almost* hit, but also able to move out of the way of the Hero Killer, allowing Todoroki to fling out a small wall of ice. Stain slashed through it, and Midoriya wanted to hit it back in the Villain’s face, but instead leapt backwards, landing feet first on the wall as stain slashed again, blade passing right where Midoriya would’ve been if he punched. Doing so gave the teen an opening to launch himself in a spinning, overhead kick that caught the Hero Killer shoulder, aiming for the man’s head, but still slamming him into the ground while lifting Midoriya high, above the Villain’s counter as a stream of fire shot out, singing the Villain as he was burned.

*His fighting style’s completely changed,* Midoriya thought, the fanatic now no longer going for skillful slashes only meant to cut enough to draw blood, no, Stain was trying to *kill* him now with every slash. The last one would’ve taken the teen’s hand in an instant, and Midoriya found himself struggling to keep up, pushing OfA higher and higher to do so, his body already aching from the stress he was putting it under.

Ignoring Midoriya, Stain, seeming more monster than man, charged Todoroki and the others directly, the thermokinetic trying to raise an Ice-wall in defense. The Hero Killer slashed through it, but it gave Midoriya time to catch up to the other man, while also ripping a bit of iron from a fire-escape railing as he went, leading with that in stab, hoping he was right.

He *was,* and while Stain’s seemingly blind counter-slash hit Midoriya’s attack, it didn’t hit *him,* slicing through the solid metal bar with ease, but so cleanly that the teen kept his momentum and closed, socking a punch right into the other man’s head. The blow, enough to break *rock,* only seemed to annoy the Villain but sent him flying up and *over* the others, while Midoriya followed in pursuit, but knowing how quickly Stain recovered, Todoroki throwing fire to distract the Hero Killer in the process.

*“You have to run!”* Ida begged from behind Midoriya, as he landed. *“I can’t watch this.”*

Putting his classmates pleas out of his mind, Midoriya dashed forward towards Stain, who through another dagger, which blurred towards the boy like a loosed arrow, Midoriya barely able to deflect it before the Hero Killer was on him, swinging in wide, frenzied arcs.

*“You wanna make your brother proud?”* Todoroki shouted to Ida, as Midoriya, arms and legs shuddering, barely evaded his opponents swings, only a burst of fire giving the green-haired boy enough time to recover from a blow that almost pierced his heart. *“Then stand up and be Ingenium!”*

Stain blurred past Midoriya at superhuman speeds, and the boy struggled to catch up, Todoroki blazing with fire as he urged Ida to, *“Become the hero he wanted you to be!”*

The Hero Killer darted to side, blazingly fast, leaping several dozen feet as he seemed to fly over the ground, coming in on Todoroki, but the dodge let Midoriya catch up, slamming into Stain’s back with a kick and sending him forward.

But Stain twisted *with* the blow, slashing at Todoroki, who, lacking Midoriya’s training, was unable to dodge, only luck the reason that the swordsman's strike hit the thermokinetic’s *armored* shoulder, blade bouncing off the white plating.

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7OzxYom4XkM*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7OzxYom4XkM)

“Too Quirk reliant,” Stain chided, landing and turning on a dime to bounce back for another slash. *“Careless.*”

*“Todoroki!*” Midoriya cried, unable to move mid-air, unable to do anything as he saw his classmate be killed.

*“****Recipro BURST!****”* Ida yelled, blasting upwards and slamming into the Hero Killer with a jet-powered kick, the Villain’s return slash skidding off the boy’s armor the second before Stain was thrown back dozens of feet, hitting an alley wall and going *through* a fire escape, but hitting the ground in a rolling recovery.

*“Ida!”* Mirodiya shouted in relief, both that Shoto survived his mistake, and that Ida was up and fighting too.

Todoroki, hands shaking, tried to blandly comment, “I suppose there’s a time limit to his Quirk then,” but couldn’t hide his barely-repressed panic.

Tenya stood, staring at Stain, as he said, “Todoroki, Midoriya. This has nothing to do with you. I aplogize.”

Maybe it was training with Ms. Mirko, but Izuku couldn’t help himself when he replied, “Not this shit again. Now’s not the time, Ida.”

His statement got a surprised look from the other two, as Midoriya realized he just *swore!* But, well, he wasn’t *wrong.*

Either way, Tenya nodded. “I’m okay,” he promised them. “And I won’t let the two of you shed anymore blood for me.”

Stain scoffed, “It’s no use trying to pretend you’re a hero *now.* A person’s true nature doesn’t change in just a few minutes.” With a sneer, the Villain told Ida, “You’re nothing but a fraud who prioritizes his own desires. You’re the *sickness* that’s infected society and *ruined* the name ‘Hero.’” Someone must teach you a lesson.”

“By *killing* him?” Midoriya demanded, the sheer nonsensicalness of the man’s statement angering him. He started to make sense, and Midoriya could agree that there were a lot of heroes that weren’t really, well, *heroic,* but Ingenium was one of the ones that *was* and Stain had still made sure the man couldn’t be a hero again!

Todoroki was right there with him, informing Stain, “You’re a fundamentalist lunatic. Ida, don’t listen to this murderer’s nonsense.”

Tenya, however, was taking the Villain’s words to heart. “No,” he said. “He’s completely correct. I have no right to call myself a hero. . . at all.”

It hurt Midoriya, to see his friend like that, and he opened his mouth to tell Ida that, even if he wasn’t a hero *now,* he could still work at it, still *do heroic things,* until he *was* a hero, just like his brother, but tenya wasn’t finished.

“Even so,” the armored boy continued, blood seeping from his wounds and running down his armored arm. “There’s *no way I can back down.* If I give up now, then the name ‘Ingenium’ will die!”

*“Pathetic!”* snarled Stain, charging forward and attacking, showing how wrong his arguments were.

Midoriya knew All Might better than almost anyone and his mentor could talk down those Villains who weren’t evil, but were only confused, or just needed help, without striking a single blow, his only actions being stopping them from hurting others. *He* was right, having truth and understanding on his side as a true Hero and, as long as someone would listen, he could help them, but Stain?

Stain was nothing but hate and self-righteousness, a Villain not just because of his crimes, but because he’d hurt anyone who dared tell him he was *wrong.*

In a Berserk fury, the Villain charged Tenya, But Shoto was there to let loose a river of fire to force him back, and Midoriya jumped high, intercepting Stain mid-escape, and kicked him right back into the flames. The Villain was burned, though not much, as he was only in the fire for a second before he darted away, scarf still burning as he rolled on the ground to put it out.

“Get out of here,” Bullrush called from behind them, the Pro having regained consciousness. “You’re just kids. You can get away!”

Midoriya landed next to his classmates, legs almost buckling, but Todoroki reached out and helped him stay standing. “I’m not sure we could get away, and even if we could, we’re not leaving you to die. That’s not what heroes do!”

“You okay?” Shoto asked. “Did he hit cut you?”

Stain darted to the side, but a twist of Todoroki’s foot sent spikes of ice out, the Hero Killer jumping between them, but not going on the offensive. Daggers were thrown, but not nearly with the same speed, and Midoriya was able to knock them out of the air, though his gloves were cut up, the underwire mesh seen in dozens of places.

“No, but I’m not good for much more. Tenya, Shoto, ready for one more push?” Both boys nodded. “Then let’s stop this Villain, once and for all!”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIH5dkcUAVs>

Gritting his teeth, Midoriya pushed himself as far as he could with Full Cowling, eighteen percent, his bones shot through with pain but he could *do this.* With so much power and speed, he could barely control himself, he darted to the left with a cry of *“Full Cowling!”*

At the same time, the flames from the exhaust pipes on Tenya’s legs not their normal yellow, but a pale Blue-White as he yelled *“Recipro Extend!”* he blasted of to the right even faster than Midoriya could move.

With his defenders gone, Stain hurled several daggers at Shoto who dodged only enough to keep moving, blades gracing his ribs, while another cut a thin line across his face, Todoroki’s attack had no name as he stooped low, bringing up twin blasts of Ice and Fire, just as he had during the sports festival, both blasting up at the Hero Killer who tried to dodge, but was caught by the edges of both, sent tumbling through the air.

As one both speedsters blazed towards their foe, running up the wall with ease as they closed on their foe, Ida with a devastating kick, and Midoriya with a punch worthy of All Might himself. But Stain still struck, lashing out with sword and knife, lashing out at both attackers at once. Ingenium accepted the cut along his arm, to strike, while Deku *grabbed* the sword, snapping it in half, and using the leverage to slam a kick into the Hero Killer in a dual attach that caught him between the two, before sending him flying straight down, impacting hard enough to crater the ground.

Shoto stood at the ready, fire in hand, as he stood at the edge of the Crater, as Midoriya and Ida landed on two other sides, ready for more, but it wasn’t needed.

*Stain was out cold.*

Izuku dropped to his knees, letting One for All fade. He wasn’t on his *last* legs, but he was close, and that’d pushed him to his absolute limit. Ida was similarly bad, his engines leaking smoke, Todoroki breathing hard, but the best of the three.

“You. . . you defeated Stain,” Bullrush said, getting to his feet. “But, you’re just kids.”

Todoroki glanced back at the Pro. “Good for you that we’re not *just* kids,” he shot back, getting a weak grin and a nod from the horned-man.

“To be honest, I wasn’t sure we could either,” Tenya offered, staring at the downed Villain. “I expected to feel more, but I just feel. . . empty.”

Bullrush shook his head. “Revenge is like that. Sometimes, you need to do it, but it doesn’t fix things, just stop it. Now let’s get-”

He cut himself off as the sound of slow clapping rang out across the alley. All four turned to the source, as a figure slowly walked down the alley. “Quite the show,” the man said, his voice familiar, and as he got closer, Midoriya could make out his features.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atmlKQmvbbo>

It was a man in a tailored suit, with a black wolf’s head, and piercing green eyes.

“I can see why my employer is interested in you,” the man continued, nodding to them, though his gaze was fixed *directly* on Midoriya. “Now, if you don’t mind, Mr. Akaguro’s audition is over. He failed, of course, but we have use for failures as well.”

Ida took a step forward, glaring at the heteromorph. “Stain was working for you? Who are you? What’s your game?”

Reaching inside a breast pocket, the man took out a cigarette and, putting it in his mouth, blew through it slightly, the tip glowing with a green flame the same color as his eyes. Breathing in, he took a drag off it, before breathing out a thin cloud of smoke. “He wasn’t, but he will be. My name is not important, and my game?” he shrugged, looking into the distance, where the heroes were still fighting the monsters from the League of Villains, and Midoriya felt a weight in the pit of his stomach. “Middle Management. Though today I suppose you could say it was data collection.”

“Now,” the wolf man smiled, and a figure jumped down from above, large, and muscled, with deep red skin and a mouth full of serrated teeth. What drew the most attention, though, was the fact that the top half of the man’s head was an exposed brain, inset with three eyes in a triangular formation staring almost mindlessly forward, confirming Deku’s fears. “We’ll be taking Mr. Akaguro, and you as well, Izuku Midoriya. My employer would quite like to. . . *make your acquaintance.*”