

Per Usual

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Per Usual

by [ros_is_writing](#)

Summary

If there was one thing Vitalasy knew about Subz, it was that he loved rebellion. Especially the passive kind. Killing them slowly was so appealing to him in ways that Vitalasy would never understand, but would always support. A lot of things were like that about Subz, Vitalasy would do anything for him.

Notes

This one has been in my drafts for about three months now. Yesterday I rewrote the entire thing to switch the pov and then incoherently finished it at 2am ish o7

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

Vitalasy hopped onto the train tracks, knees clicking as he landed. He turned around and offered Subz a hand and an adoring smile, as per usual. Subz didn't take his hand and jumped onto the tracks on his own, as per usual. He sent Vitalasy a teasing smile that lit his heart up and shuffled closer so Vitalasy could toss an arm over his shoulders and steer them into the metro tunnel. Subz may act prickly, but Vitalasy knew he was a softie at heart. He just had to be mean every once and while.

Back on the platform someone saluted them jokingly as they disappeared into the darkness. Vitalasy saw Subz salute back before they got out of eyeshot, and snickered. The comradery of the citizens in their city varied depending on the situation, but no one would ever be mad at exploring metro tunnels. Everyone wanted to know what was down there, even though it was exactly what one would expect. It was just a fun and relatively legal way of rebellion.

And if there was one thing Vitalasy knew about Subz, it was that he loved rebellion. Especially the passive kind. Killing them slowly was so appealing to him in ways that Vitalasy would never understand, but would always support. A lot of things were like that about Subz, Vitalasy would do anything for him.

Right now, Subz trudged along beside him, tucked under his arm with one of his hands tugging on Vitalasy's belt loops. It was annoyingly hot underground because of all the heavy machinery moving around and the lack of airflow. But Subz hadn't complained about Vitalasy's arm on his shoulder yet (and he *would* if he was uncomfortable), so Vitalasy would leave it there for now.

The metro tunnel they had entered was dark, aside from the occasional skylight or maintenance tunnel, so Subz flicked on his phone flashlight to guide them. Vitalasy squeezed his shoulder in thanks, then looked ahead. The tunnel they were in right now was the north to south line, but it would connect to the east to west one pretty soon. Vitalasy wasn't sure where they were headed yet, he'd probably let Subz choose.

As expected, a skylight illuminating a fork in the tracks came into view. The two tracks separated to accommodate a staircase that went down to the east to west lines. That's where they normally liked to explore, since it was underground enough to be spooky, but close enough to the surface to not be sweltering hot.

“Are you thinking west or east today?” Vitalasy asked, adjusting his backpack strap with the hand not holding Subz.

Subz hummed, “we went west last time right? To that maintenance tunnel atrium?”

Vitalasy nodded. “Yeah, we covered up that massive tag over the doors.” He sniffed, then continued. “I wonder if the person who put it up got mad.”

“Probably,” Subz responded with a grin. “It was so damn tall, they must have dragged a ladder down here to do it.” The flashlight only brightened half of his face, but Vitalasy could tell he was amused.

“I’d be pretty mad if someone covered that up...” Vitalasy mused, tilting his head to glance down at Subz.

“Eh,” Subz shrugged. “It looked more than a couple months old, it’s probably fine.”

It wasn’t exactly a rule that tags had to be left up for longer than a month, but most artists had the basic courtesy to do it. Honestly, the hardest part was figuring out how long a tag had been up. They didn’t exactly leave dates or anything, especially not on tags. Full artworks were a different story, but they weren’t worried about that right now.

“Let’s go that way then,” Subz decided. “I want to see if that guy got mad or not.” Vitalasy giggled and pointed towards where they were headed.

“Then we go down and then to the left,” he said. “Let’s hope we don’t get run over before then.”

“We’re not,” Subz elbowed him in the ribs. “We’ll get to the stairs first.” Just then the tracks started rumbling with the familiar sound of a train on its way. Vitalasy and Subz shared a wide-eyed glance before they started jogging over to the fork in the tracks. Only the rumbling

of the tracks meant the train was still a couple stations away, but depending on which train it was, it could be here pretty fast.

Subz pulled Vitalasy into the small triangle of space next to the stairs right as the noise of the train started to be too loud for comfort. They both covered their ears and stumbled back towards the wall as the air started to move around, cuing the rapidly approaching train. They managed to get their backs to the wall for stability right as the train rocketed past, exposing them to about three seconds of sound barrier breaking noise.

Trains were *loud*, especially in tunnels like this.

“Alright,” Vitalasy pushed off the wall once the train was gone. “Clear now.” He grabbed Subz’s hand and led him down the stairs. Subz trailed behind him, trying to overbalance him occasionally.

When they got to the east to west bound trains, they turned left, headed west like they agreed. A few days ago, they had found an atrium that connected a few of the maintenance tunnels. But that’s not what made it impressive, the cool part was that the atrium was about twice as tall as a normal one. Neither of them were quite sure why, it didn’t look like there was anything up there, but it was a great space for art regardless.

The taller the wall was, the bigger your canvas was. And that was always a good thing.

The art that they had found there previously was someone else’s tag, an ugly, blocky thing that they had immediately covered up with their trademark purple and lilac swirls. It looked old, old enough for them to cover it up. So now they were going back to see if the previous artist had noticed.

“Here, right?” Subz asked, pointing to a maintenance tunnel on their left. Vitalasy made a thinking noise and opened his mouth to speak, but was cut off by Subz

“Yeah, it’s this way,” Subz decided, using their linked hands to pull Vitalasy across the train tracks and into the tunnel. Vitalasy laughed at his bluntness and swung their hands between them.

As they walked, the temperature got colder. Vitalasy remembered that was what drew them in this direction the first time. Underground metro lines just *weren't* cold, like it was physically impossible. Too much overheating machinery. So to feel a cold draft in those exact metro tunnels was weird.

The breeze got stronger as they continued down the tunnel, until they reached the source, the atrium. There were many air tunnels connected to the atrium, which is why the draft was so strong, but there were also several maintenance tunnels like the one Subz and Vitalasy walked out of. The combination of both tunnels is what made the atrium so big- and so tall.

“Eyy look!” Vitalasy pointed. “They came back!” Sure enough, where they had covered up someone’s tag last week, there was a freshly painted tag. Two or three days old by the look of it, Vitalasy would guess. It was the same one as last time, blocky and full of angular shapes.

“They took ours!” Subz noticed. “Look, it’s right there!” Vitalasy gasped as he saw it too, some of the purple incorporated in the new tag was just an outlined version of *their* tag. “Those bastards...” Subz added.

“We’re turning this into a turf war,” Vitalasy announced, swinging his backpack to the ground. He unzipped it and tossed Subz a can of spray paint, then pulled one out for himself. As they shook their cans to get them usable, they planned out how they were going to put their tag up.

“We should be bitchy and leave some of theirs visible,” Subz snickered. “That purple part up there would work.” Vitalasy nodded, they *absolutely* were going to be catty about this, no questions asked. This was some mischief that he and Subz could one hundred percent agree on.

“For sure,” Vitalasy agreed. “I want to put up an artwork too, maybe. If we have the time.” There was a piece of art that had been floating around in his brain for a couple days, and he wanted to see if he could make it. But he wouldn’t subject Subz to sitting around and watching him if Subz didn’t want to. And he didn’t want Subz to just leave. Not in a clingy way though.

“We’ll have time,” Subz assured him without a second thought. Vitalasy mentally slapped himself, why did he even think Subz would say no? God, this was why Vitalasy loved him.

For the next ten minutes, the two of them worked on putting up their tag. The bold black lines clearly separated where theirs ended and the one under it started, but of course theirs was a fresher paint so it was more eye catching.

True to his word, Subz circled a part of the previous tag in the same thick black line that outlined the main part of the tag, and made it a bubble accent.

When they finished their tag, Subz knelt by Vitalasy's backpack and started pulling out various cans of paint. He wordlessly held them up for Vitalasy to nod or shake his head at, then shook them to get them ready. While he worked, Vitalasy walked around the atrium, looking for a spot to put his artwork up. He settled in a well lit corner across the atrium from where they had just put up their tag.

“This is a lot of brown,” Subz remarked as he carried the spray paints Vitalasy has chosen over to him. “Whatcha making?”

“Hmm. Kitty cat,” Vitalasy said, picking up a light brown. He had packed mostly neutral colors today, besides the colors of their tag. Not to say that he knew they were going to do this... but he knew they were going to do this.

Subz snorted. “Have fun,” he grumbled, then made himself comfortable against the wall with his sketchbook.

Vitalasy set to work, painting stripes and circles across the wall. Subz had to scoot over a couple times because he kept expanding his canvas. A few minutes later, Subz tucked his pencil behind his ear and got up. His footsteps looped around behind Vitalasy so he knew Subz was getting a larger view of the artwork. Subz hummed, then walked across the atrium to Vitalasy’s backpack and started rummaging around in it. A noise startled Vitalasy, and he turned around just in time to catch a neon purple can of spray paint.

“Woah!” Vitalasy exclaimed. “What was that for?”

“It’s spray paint,” Subz deadpanned. “Use the spray paint.” He moved back across the atrium and sat back down at his spot, picking his sketchbook up again. Pencil noises resumed from Subz’s direction, so Vitalasy shrugged and opened the purple spray paint.

This artwork was supposed to be all neutrals, very monounsaturated, but if Subz wanted to add purple (Vitalasy’s favorite color!) then who was he to say no?

The purple mixed really well actually, it stood out in the mostly brown artwork, but it worked great as a highlighting tool. Vitalasy quickly got a true black can from his backpack and started adding dark shadows too. For variation, he added some other shades of purple and some white too.

Subz reappeared when Vitalasy was spraying close to the wall to create a drip. A calloused hand landed on Vitalasy’s back, followed by the rest of Subz’s body and ending with his cheek on Vitalasy’s shoulder blade. Two arms looped around Vitalasy’s torso gently.

“Are you almost done?” Subz asked. “I’m tired.”

“Mhm,” Vitalasy nodded. “This is the last thing.” When he finished he stepped backwards, moving Subz to his side instead of his back, and walked them both away from the wall.

“Whatcha think?” Vitalasy asked, looking at his artwork with a tilted head. Subz looked too, squeezing his arm around Vitalasy’s hips a little.

The artwork was bright, brighter than Vitalasy originally pictured, but it was definitely a good thing. At the center of it was a cat with its mouth open in a yowl, facing off center. It was hyper realistic to contrast the bright purple bubbly shapes around it.

“The purple helped,” Subz decided. “Makes it pop.” Vitalasy nodded and leaned his cheek on Subz’s head in thanks. He wouldn’t have added the purple unless Subz physically threw the can of spray paint at him.

“Did you get your sketches done?” Vitalasy asked, referring to the drawings Subz was working on while Vitalasy was spray painting.

Subz shrugged. “Enough,” he said simply. Subz preferred to sketch his ideas out before he put them up. Each of his works had at least five draft sketches somewhere in his sketchbook.

“Are you ready to go then?” Subz asked as he picked his sketchbook and a few cans of spray paint up off the ground.

“Yeah,” Vitalasy yawned. “What time is it?” He scooped up the rest of the spray paint and followed Subz across the atrium.

“Eleven,” Subz answered. He organized the things he was carrying in Vitalasy’s backpack, refusing to let him do it himself. “Hold on.” He stood up and pulled his phone out. Before Vitalasy registered what he was doing, he snapped a picture of him staring blankly with his artwork in the background.

“Oh, this is the one,” Subz laughed, looking at his phone. Vitalasy whined and told him to delete it but it was pretty funny. A picture would probably be the only way to immortalize the artwork anyway, since it will likely be covered up in the next few months.

“Bye cool atrium,” Vitalasy said as he picked his backpack up and slung it onto his shoulder. Subz hung onto his backpack and used it as a lead as he tapped on his phone while they left the atrium.

“Bye tag turf war,” Vitalasy added, looking at the abused section of wall that had now *four* tags overlapping each other on it. Subz laughed and stuffed his phone in his pocket, catching up to Vitalasy.

“Any bets that they come back and cover ours up again?” Subz asked. Vitalasy groaned and shook his head.

“If they do, I’m not gonna see it,” Vitalasy said confidently.

End Notes

Please excuse literally the most sloppy ending in the history of ever <3

Also they will most definitely be seeing the tag again. Vitalasy is lying

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