

See You At The Finish Line

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See You At The Finish Line

by [riacte](#)

Summary

The Blue Bats are an underdog spaceship racer team in Exterra 1. Fruitberries is a cryptid. And he bounces.

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Fun MCC9 Blue Bats Space Opera AU :D

(No prior knowledge is needed :D)

Notes

This is actually a space opera AU that my Discord friends and I have been brainrotting over. Lots of things are Going On (it's literally why some of us got into Formula 1. It started out as research for racing but we accidentally became invested), but this fic should be spoiler-free so don't worry :D

I wrote this because space opera Fruity B is actually one of my favourite characters. He's the alien emoji but personified. He's the funniest. Bogos binted.

Hope you enjoy! <3

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

Fruit meets Ren and False at an illegal street race. They've been illegally racing as rookies for a few years, and Fruit watches their ship- a monstrosity of bits and pieces and coloured wires slapped together called *Falsewell*- zoom above the narrow, twisting streets. Fruit's been travelling across the galaxy, he even used to work as a mechanic for official Exterra 1 teams, but he's never seen a ship as *scuffed* as theirs. Fruit has no idea how the ship is holding itself together. The gunner, False, points homemade guns at targets slapped on drones. She never misses. She clears obstacles for her pilot Ren, and he directs the ship to smoothly fly through.

The ship is the worst thing Fruit's ever seen. It's janky. It looks unbalanced. The parts are outdated. It should not exist. And even if it does, it would *not* win anything. But Fruit is proven wrong when *Falsewell* crosses the finish line first. False and Ren greet their roaring fans, Ren blows kisses and declares something about "everybody getting in line!", and the racing duo fist-bumps each other.

"What the fuck," Fruit says.

Night falls and the crowd slowly disperses, but Fruit doesn't leave. He needs to find answers. Their godawful powerhouse of a ship has intrigued him. He won't be able to sleep. He needs to discover what the *fuck* is up with *Falsewell*.

He finds them repairing the ship. False's blonde hair is tied up in a ponytail with an orange bandana, exposing the glowing red freckles on her cheeks. Ah, she's a Lumian. Fruit's met a couple of Lumians before, and he always feels mildly protective of them because he knows they're often trafficked for the glowing chemicals their skin produces. The pilot Ren has wolf ears and brown fur and big paws- a typical Lykon. Except Fruit hasn't seen many Lykons on this planet. Well, it's not his business to pry.

"Hi," Ren says cautiously. False shoots Fruit a curious look. Fruit often gets that- he's a tall green *thing* with big black eyes, he doesn't know what species he belongs to, he's in a constant state of "?????" and he's fine with that.

"Hi," Fruit replies, then without any subtlety, he continues. "What the fuck. Why the fuck haven't you crashed yet. How is your ship still intact. I am so impressed yet terrified. *What.*"

He half expects them to get defensive, but they just look at each other and shrug. "Honestly, it's a miracle we haven't crashed yet," Ren admits. "What's your name?"

"Erm, Fruitberries. I'm- I'm a mechanic. I can take a look at your ship if you want...?"

HBomb is spending his days away in some cheap hotel when Fruit contacts him. They knew each other from Exterra for a bit. H was an official pilot in a team sponsored by a megacorp, but he loathed the working environment there. The team only cared about money and making sponsors happy, not the safety of the crew. Disillusioned by the racing industry, H sought solace from Fruit, a mechanic from another team. Together in bars, they complained about the corruption and unfairness of Exterra, and once they both saved up enough money, they quit. They'd gone separate ways since then, travelling to different galaxies and such, but they always kept in touch.

“Hi H,” comes Fruit’s voice.

“Sup!” H curls his cat tail around him, and desperately resists the urge to shove his water bottle off the table.

“So, uh, I’ve met these two rookie racers...? The pilot is a Lykon called Ren, the gunner is a Lumian called False. They’re doing pretty well in illegal races despite using the jankiest ship. It’s fucking insane. And now they want to get into Exterra 1. Aka. the shitass industry we both escaped from.”

“Ah.”

“...”

“...”

“Listen, H, I’ve spoken with them, and they genuinely have the drive and passion. They’re charismatic and their fans *love* them. They’re determined to learn to build their own ship. They know how awful the racing industry can be but it’s still their dream to enter. It’s in their blood, man.”

H sighs. “So you’re calling to...?”

A pause. “Well, I was hoping you could give them some advice. You actually have racing experience as a pilot. C’mon H, I really like these two people. They’re nice to me, and best of all, they buy me drinks (despite me being underage).”

H trusts Fruit’s judgement. And besides, it’s not like he has anything to do. Might as well take a look at the two rookies that Fruit likes so much. “Alright, send me the planet and the coords.”

Just like Fruit, H ends up being taken by False and Ren. They’re so starry-eyed and determined, much like he was before he became disillusioned. And he vows to protect them from the horrors of the industry, but he wants them to achieve their dream too.

So they form the racer team Blue Bats (ironic because Ren is known as the Red King and False as the Queen of Hearts), with Ren as the pilot, False as the gunner, Fruit as the mechanic, and H as their mentor and manager. H teaches them the way of Exterra and the rookies are fascinated.

They don’t start out particularly well. They don’t have any big name sponsors (until Mr. Fan of ConCorp comes casually waltzing in) and funds are low. They start out in small races with practically no publicity. No one really expects them to win. They’re the underdogs, but soon people learn not to underestimate the underdogs.

It’s enthralling to see their team score win after win, and H feels even happier than when he won. False and Ren’s surprised yet joyous faces keep him up at night.

They put most of their money towards the racing ship. (Fruit is still horrified by Ren’s atrocious engineering skills.) Which means they just rent a single hotel room for all four people and squash into it.

False usually takes the bed, but Ren gets the blanket. H sleeps on the table. Fruit sleeps on the floor. It's where they all prefer to sleep so it works out fine.

When the Blue Bats are still very new, False wakes up, thirsty for a drink. As she moves across the room, she accidentally bumps into Fruit. Fruit's eyes are wide open. "Whoops sorry, didn't mean to wake you up," she apologises. Fruit doesn't move.

"False?" Ren's voice comes sleepily. "Don't tell me it's 8am already." Ren's eyes flutter open, and when they land on False, he lets out an excited yelp.

False groans. She checks herself. Of course her freckles are glowing red in the dark. And of course Lykons *love* shiny things. Ren always gets really excited after sundown and it's half endearing, half annoying. Sundown is when they first met, and Ren's always been fascinated about her glow. (It used to make her flustered, but now it doesn't.)

"Aww man, you guys woke me up," Fruit says from below. His eyes are still wide open. False jumps. "Sorry, I thought you were awake. Unless... you sleep with your eyes open?"

"Maybe. I don't know." Fruit is as nonchalant as always.

A yawn. "Guys, what's going on?" H asks, half-awake. Then his eyes snap open. "You're *glowing!*"

False follows H's finger to herself with a wry, amused smile. "Yes, I am a Lumian and I glow," she drawls. Ren and H start jumping in their uncontrollable excitement, their ears twitching. Fruit does not share the instinctual urge to enjoy shiny things, but he joins in the chaos by gently bouncing around the room. This feels like a disco party, except False is the disco ball.

False supposes this is what she gets for rooming with a Lykon, a Felisian, and... whatever the heck Fruit is. For Pearl's sake, not even Fruit himself knows his species. False doesn't even know how old Fruit is, but she assumes he's an adult. Otherwise they might get into legal trouble for buying him drinks.

False grabs her hoodie and yanks it over her head. "Alright guys, party time's over."

Ren looks up at her with puppy eyes. H looks up at her with kitty eyes. Fruit looks up at her with... well, freaky eyes that don't shut when he's sleeping.

False exhales. She can tell this is going to be a long partnership.

Ren beams up at Fruit. "Hey Fruityloops, your grib is so freakin' cool!"

"Thanks!"

Fruit does not know what the hell a grib is. He just likes being called cool. He sits there and smiles and suddenly he's False and Ren's favourite kid.

The Blue Bats are off to another official race that they're predicted to win, but even after years of fame, they never let it get to their heads. Ren and False jump into the pilot and gunner seat respectively, and False affectionately ruffles Ren's hair. He yawns.

"Goodness gracious, I slept early last night but I'm still so tired," he complains.

False snorts. "I hope that won't affect your performance, *Red King*."

"I'm ready to kick some freakin' *butt!*" Ren declares passionately, and they both laugh. They've both struggled so much to get in the official Exterra competitions, and they're actually doing pretty good. The Red King and the Queen of Hearts are the new blood in the racing industry, independent from the other racers yet inseparable from each other, preferring to build their own ships instead of letting mega companies build for them. They don't adhere to the unofficial rules of racing, but they win again and again anyway. Compared to the other teams with ludicrous amounts of money invested in them, the Blue Bats are the underdogs. They're on top of the world, but they're still the underdogs. They both turn to see H and Fruit waving at them on the sidelines. Soon, they'll both have to go to the pit stops and standby in case anything bad happens. False and Ren wave back.

Ren's paws land comfortably on the controllers he made for himself. "Alright, baby, let's do this!" Ren whoops. He turns to False, his eyes shining bright. "See you on the other side, Falsie."

Ahh, Ren's always the one with the dramatics. False playfully nudges him. "Nah. See you at the finish line."

A little while after that, Fruit's invited to give a speech to celebrate the achievements of the Royalty Duo. Of course he would as he's the mechanic to the Blue Bats. Fruit stands with shaky hands on top of the podium. The audience stares back up at him, their eyes starry. He swears half the galaxy has tuned in for the event; after all, False and Ren are two of the most popular racers. This does nothing to calm his nerves. Oh Pearl, what if he messes it up?

HBomb shoots him a thumbs-up and a small smile.

The first thing Fruit says in the microphone is, "*Ren and False are two of my closest friends.*" The crowd gazes up at him. Fruit says the sentence like he always does- he refuses to change anything for this special occasion. He takes a deep breath.

"I've always been inspired by their optimism and perseverance. I've known them since they were rookies and I don't think they've changed since then. They've always had that passion and heart for racing, and they spread it to everyone around them. I'm sure you'll all agree."

The audience nods. Somebody sniffs, already emotional. Fruit's stomach churns. He can't do this. He's not made for speeches. He can't fucking do this.

So Fruit decides to throw the script away (not literally). He shifts his weight and stares at the audience.

"They're seriously amazing people and even better friends. Like, they bought me drinks even when they knew I was underage."

At this, a ripple of laughter spreads through the crowd, and Fruit can't help but laugh as well. Is

this what insanity feels like? He doesn't know whether to smile or cry. Under the stage, False, wearing an elegant black dress, has been demurely sitting up until this point. At Fruit's sudden confession, she stands up and whips her head.

"I am *so* gonna kill Ren for buying Fruit drinks," she mutters. "Where is the dog?"

H holds her back, a firm hand on her arm. "Sit down, we've got appearances to keep up with!" he hisses. False shoots him a tired, withered glare, but complies. Fruit cracks another joke, the audience chuckles, and False sits down with a dramatic huff.

...Even months later, when hearing Fruit's speech, Ren can't help but smile. He sits up a little straighter. His eyes are glued to his screen when a shaking hand tries to get porridge in his mouth. At first, he and False genuinely didn't know he was still a kid, but even after they knew, Fruit had his way of weaving into Ren's heart. And Ren's not rude enough to reject buying him drinks. After all, he's Ren's Fruityloops. He's their sassy lost child.

And nothing can change that.

Right?

Fruit continues to be a nuisance in the years after. He's so good at it that when he introduces his friend Illumina to False, she expects to see another gangly alien with those freaky eyes that don't shut when they sleep.

So she's surprised when this Illumina fellow emerges with cat ears and a dragon tail and actual *horns* and heterochromic eyes. Green and purple freckles glow under his eyes and for Pearl's sake, does he have Lumian blood as well? Illumina is a mix of many species, and Fruit looks comically bland next to his best friend.

"Hi," False says.

"Hi," Illumina says.

"WHAT'S UP MOTHERFUCKERS!" Fruit says.

False shoves Fruit. He starts bouncing against the walls.

Fruit and Illumina lay on top of their bunk beds in the spaceship. As always, Fruit's eyes are wide open. Illumina's silent. He's gotten a new job, and it has been tiring him both physically and mentally. Nevertheless, Illumina feels an urge to continue. It's a very important job and he feels morally obliged to do it. He lets the thoughts wander in his head.

"Fruit, I can't sleep," Illumina mumbles.

"Happens to the best of us," Fruit says nonchalantly. "You know, when I can't sleep, I listen to Ren reading stories. He has a nice voice."

“I know.”

Fruit chuckles. “Even though False always says he sounds like a potato.”

Illumina shifts in his bed. “A potato?” He echoes incredulously.

H slams the door open to find Pete and Illumina staring at Fruit. “What are you guys doing?” He asks, skeptical.

“We are pondering the orb, also known as Fruitberries,” Illumina says solemnly.

“We don’t know what the fuck is wrong with him,” Pete adds on in the same solemn tone.

Fruit is lying perfectly still on the floor. H feels compelled to stare at him too. “I agree.”

That is how all four of them slacked off for the day.

“No, Fruit, you cannot be Blue Balls,” False says flatly. She holds up the Exterra competition form in front of him. “You are *not* changing your competitor name to Blue Balls.”

“But *Moooooom!*” Fruit whines. Next to him, Pete snorts.

“Fruit ‘Fruityloops’ Fruitberries, you’ll get banned from Exterra because of your name alone.”

“Like I’m not banned already?”

False shoots him a glare. Fruit raises his hands in surrender.

“I am sure,” Fruit says, dead serious, “changing my name to *Blue Balls* will have more pros than cons, and will greatly aid us in our long term mission of-”

False shoves Fruit. He starts bouncing against the walls again. Members of the crew have taken to throwing Fruit around for stress relief (it works). Pete has to cradle his cup of coffee protectively. “Pete, back me up!” Fruit cries.

“It’s too early for me to deal with this,” Pete says bluntly. He raises a foot and kicks Fruit back to False, who steps aside to let Fruit bounce into the wall. Just then, H steps into the room, his cat ears twitching. He groans at the sight.

“Ren’s gonna be surprised when he finds us like this.”

“I KNOW REN WILL *NOT* STAND THE BLUE BALLS ERASURE-”

It's nighttime and the rest of the crew are asleep. Ren's sitting alone in the living room, a small TV in front of him. The TV's playing a Blue Bats documentary and Ren can't help but smile at their younger, grinning faces on the screen.

"Reminiscing the glory days?"

Ren shifts so Martyn can also sit on the couch. "Sorta," Ren admits. His prosthetic hand feels heavy until Martyn places his own hand on his.

Ren's voice is soft. "I can't sleep." He watches his and False's faces on the TV. So fresh to the scene, so passionate.

"It's alright." Martyn snuggles into Ren's shoulder. "I'll stay."

That's how everybody finds them the next morning, sleeping side by side on the couch.

"Morning everybody! Thanks for the great work, Illumina. Ooh, nice analysis on our rival teams! Pete, don't worry about me, I really do not need to sleep. Not at *all*. Ren. Ren. *Ren*. Dude. Can you maybe step away from Martyn for five seconds? It's getting annoying. Oh my Pearl, the media thinks Ren and Martyn are dating. The Red King and his Hand. Har, har. Gem, can you check to make sure our backup engines are working? Thank you. And *no*, Fruit, for the last time, *you cannot be Blue Balls*. I think I'm going to have a breakdown."

False rubs her tired eyes, but she continues to stare at the screen in front of her. She loves her crew, she really does, but the babysitting does occasionally grate on her nerves.

Fruit suddenly pops up next to her, and False has learned not to jump. She's gotten pretty good with thirteen years of practice. "Look!" Fruit gleefully declares, shoving his phone to her face.

False stares. And blinks.

"How. How did you get @blueballs verified?"

Ren's at a restaurant with Skizz when Skizz tells him. "Ren, they're saying you have a Lumian fetish."

"Exsqueeze me, a *what*?"

Skizz shows him on his phone. Users on social media are squawking about how "rk has a lumian fetish!! just look at the people he teams with! blonde hair and pointy ears and fair skin!! HE FETISHIZES LUMIANS! WHY ARE WE STILL SUPPORTING THIS MF???"

"Oh my Tsuki. I-I don't even know what to say in response to this." Ren's completely flabbergasted. Skizz is sniggering when he sends it to the rest of his crew.

“Ren has a Lumian fetish,” Fruit tells False, his face completely straight. His phone is held in his hand.

“Fruit-”

“Also I went on Launchpad and people are still making bad boy Red King x Y/N fanfictions. People who ship Ren and Martyn (*#treebarkers*) are having ship wars with people who ship Ren and you. Racertwt is ablaze. A 10k enemies-to-lovers fanfiction of Ren and his stalker is trending. The minors think you’re transgender.”

“I’m confisticating your phone-”

“They humanized the Dogwarts freighter and called it a dilf.”

And before False can throw Fruit again, he jumps and gracefully bounces himself off the walls and out of the room.

The “Blue Besties” (as H calls them) are participating in an Exterra competition. Years have passed since their debut, but False’s skills as a gunner have only grown sharper. She knows Ren’s done some impressive stunts that have led his fans to speculate if he is “immortal”. She chuckles to ease her nerves. The Immortal Red King. It does sound cool.

False is silent in her gunner’s seat. This race will possibly be the most important one in her career, no, her *life*. She has to be in prime condition. They have to either get second or first. And she has to do it for Ren. She’s so absorbed in thinking that she barely notices when her longtime partner slides into the pilot’s seat. “Don’t stress too much, alright, Falsie?” he says.

Out of habit, False ruffles that familiar brown hair. “This is all or nothing. Everything we built up depends on this moment.”

A sigh. “Geez, there’s a lot of pressure on me as a pilot.”

Now it’s False turn to reassure him. “At least we have an advantage. We know how street races work. Won’t be too difficult for us to climb up the rankings.”

The years have made both of them more subdued, and in turn, more focused on their job. The countdown begins, and False grips her gun tighter. She stares out of the window.

“Ren—” she says out loud, feeling she has to. *“See you at the finish line.”*

Blue eyes meet blue. And they’re off.

At the finish line, Ren leaps off his spaceship, elated. “First place, baby!” He whoops. He’s so freakin’ happy for him and his team. Then False throws off her helmet and hugs him tightly, her

tears staining his shoulder. Before Ren can even take another breath, he's swept away by False to meet H and Fruit. Fruit runs up to him.

"Hi Fruityloops," Ren manages to get out, a thousand thoughts going through his mind simultaneously.

"Hey."

Fruit stares up at Ren as if he's suddenly forgotten something.

"I know you don't know, but False won't let me name myself Blue Balls. Help me."

"Err, *what?*" This is the last thing Ren expects to hear from Fruit. He desperately turns to False for an explanation. False shrugs. "Your Fruityloops is a nuisance," she says, but she's biting back a smile.

"You were the COOL PARENT!" Fruit wails.

H then picks Ren up and swings him around. "RENDOG!" He cheers. "I always knew you were a better pilot than me!"

"Rendog, the living legend!" Fruit similarly whoops, and a wide grin spreads on Ren's face. "Guys, I-I don't even know what to say. I'm sorry," he admits. "I-I just love you guys so, *so* much. The Blue Bats! Man! We're back! We're freaking back, baby!"

False is crying happy tears, but despite that, her freckles are finally glowing again. Ren misses his favourite shade of red so much- he's barely seen it in the past decade. Ren raises his prosthetic arm and wraps it around False. She jolts a little at the touch, unused to the metal.

"We should- we should all go for dinner," she sniffs. "Unless you got something to do, Ren...?"

Ren *probably* has things to do, but he has his Bats and suddenly nothing else matters. He's simply too exhilarated. "Yup, dinner it is! I'm so grateful for you guys. *Seriously.*"

With their hands wrapped around each other, the Blue Bats jovially walk away from the finish line- just like how they were when they first started out.

The more things change, the more things stay the same.

End Notes

Fruit is just gently bouncing. He wants to call himself Blue Balls. This is Fruityloops, everybody.

Space Operators, read between the lines and maybe you'll find some hints to the context :eyes:

I wonder what people think the plot is about from reading this oneshot? :D

Anyways, thanks for reading this mildly chaotic fic I churned out in one day :3 hope you enjoyed! As always, kudos and comments are appreciated :D

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