

## mortalis et in gratia

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by [RyDyKG](#)

### Summary

(alternate title: in grace and mortality)

Thomas 'Tommy' Bailey starts his first year at college friendless, the lonely son of two

parents who do try their best, but have to go on business trips way too often. He starts it off with barely any hopes for the future.

Tommy Bailey, the Little Blessed, ends his first year at college with a group of hybrid friends, a bunch of gods for protective older pseudo-siblings, and the knowledge that when he grows up, he won't be alone.

(Or, a boy summons a friend from another dimension. Somewhere along the way, others from different dimensions come, and stick around for the way-too accepting boy and his eternal patience.)

## Notes

Okay! Kinda long notes! also I'm calling this the mortal in grace au because I have an inability to stop creating aus:

- neopronouns are used! more specifically, it/its for karl jacobs. in this au, the other dimensions have no concept of pronouns, so they just refer to each other by titles and names all the time. as such, when they get to learn about pronouns from tommy, they kinda just pick and choose whichever they want. it's also implied that jacksepticeye uses multiple pronouns in this au. if this is bad or wrong in any way, please let me know and I'll remove them as soon as possible!

- grammar errors are on purpose for the most part! gods don't really know how to speak english that well, not when there's far better languages to learn in their dimensions, so in the beginning there's some cases of that. anywhere else is completely by accident

- if any part of this fic is offending or demeaning or dehumanising or objectifying in any way please let me know!! it is not my intention to offend anyone by my words in here!!

- would you believe me if I said that this was supposed to be 2.5k words, maybe 3k max? don't be fooled by the word count. I wrote all of this while listening to Blackpink's album and writing in Arial size 12. don't know how I got this far, but it's just a bunch of disjointed paragraphs following a timeline, that's it.

There's a god outside his door. There's almost always a god outside his door.

Tommy opens it, dressed in blue sleepwear and dark grey socks, and glares at the god just standing outside without a care of who would see them. Well, not really 'standing', considering the fact that the god is nothing more than mist and aurora, but whatever counts.

"You don't have a corporeal form, Big Man," he mutters sleepily, before adding. "Or Big Woman. Or Big God. Whatever your gender is today."

He closes his eyes to yawn, and when he opens them again, a brown haired man stands in the place of the mist and aurora, wearing a black hoodie and green sweats along with a blue bandana around his head, looking decently ashamed.

“Hey, Tommy,” Jack — Septiceye, not Thunder, no matter how much he tries to get him to call him Jack instead — greets sheepishly. “Sorry, but I have to hide out for a while.”

Tommy takes in the sparkles of blue in his hair and splattered all over the god’s body, and sighs. Without missing a beat, he opens the door wider.

“Come in then, Big Man,” Tommy says. “My parents are asleep, so don’t you dare yell or do anything to them.”

It starts off like this:

Thomas ‘Tommy’ Bailey is a sixteen year old. A lonely sixteen year old, but a sixteen year old nonetheless. And lonely people will take any chance they get to make friends, even if they aren’t all that human.

When his parents leave town for a week for a business trip, he takes the chance to dive straight into the occult. More specifically, rituals for summoning. Anything to take his mind off of the fact that he is so very lonely.

He does an old ritual he found online, after carefully combing through pages upon pages of Google searches, because really, it’s been proven that demons and angels and summoning those aren’t real, so what does it matter about which ritual he chooses to do?

As it turns out, it matters a lot, because in a matter of seconds after he’s completed the ritual, a boy pops out from the ground, bee wings flapping harshly behind him, eyes wide and round and fully black.

Tommy has never screamed louder than that. In fact, the only thing making more noise than him is whoever he’s just apparently *summoned*.

After a few moments in which Tommy tries to kill the boy multiple times, they come to an agreement. The boy — whose name is Tubbo, and who is from another dimension entirely — will tell him stories about where he comes from, and in return, Tommy will help him blend into society and teach him how to be, well, human.

It’s the start of a beautiful friendship. Not that he knows of it at first.

He tells his parents this: Tubbo Daniels is his new friend from college, and they have a project together. Also, his parents are rarely home, so it wouldn’t be too much to ask for him to stay over for a while longer so he doesn’t get lonely, is it?

His parents adore him. After Tubbo hides his non-human features, he looks like another normal sixteen year old, with brown hair and blue eyes. They say he’s a good influence on him, a guy smart with coding and science, someone who they know can stop him from getting into too much trouble.

In college, it’s another matter entirely. Tubbo’s the one who barely shows up to classes unless it’s for coding. He only goes to each class twice before deciding to head out. Tommy doesn’t know how no one has discovered that Tubbo technically doesn’t exist or even go to this college, but no one notices, so Tubbo still joins him in his classes.

Tubbo's also the one who drags him into shenanigans such as finding out that his video editing professor is actually a runaway angel with an agenda to manipulate his students into conquering the world for him, or accidentally dragging Tommy into another dimension not either of theirs, and getting introduced to new friends.

Wisp, Bitzel, Luke and Deo are all hybrids. Wisp is a snake hybrid, Bitzel is a ghost hybrid, Luke is a vampire hybrid, and Deo is a lion hybrid. Tommy has no idea how some of their hybrid combinations work, but it doesn't matter in the face of the fact that he now has more friends. More friends from another dimension, who don't really know how to hide their non-human appearances, and who know absolutely nothing about humans.

So Tommy takes the logical solution, and when his mother stumbles upon them playing video games in his room one day, he passes them off as having to be furies for a month as a dare.

His mother believes him, much to his new friends' incredulity. Deo even makes a remark on how oblivious they are. Tommy grabs a pillow and throws it at his face, which turns into a pillow fight after a brief moment to explain the rules and no, he isn't trying to start a war.

Tommy gets partnered up with them for a project that needs a group name, so they list down 'Business Bay', after the fact that they are all Big Men who like the sea, and the fact that the project is for an economics study fair he decided to take on a whim, and the others followed him into.

Even after the project ends, they decide that whenever a group project occurs and they get to partner up, they will partner up, and they will be Business Bay.

Sure, his friends aren't conventional, and most certainly not appropriate for society's stereotypes, but that's okay. He's not so lonely anymore, and that's great.

When Tommy first wakes up to see a brown haired man with skin looking more like water than solid skin staring at him curiously, he screams. The man also screams.

They scream at each other before Deo bursts in with a lance gleaming purple. Instead of slashing, however, Deo takes one look at the man and drops to his knees, and begins praying in his language, a language which Tommy hasn't learned enough to understand what Deo is saying yet.

Tommy proceeds to spend nearly an hour stuck in that room as Deo and the man talk. He can't go out since Deo's blocking the door, and barely manages to squeeze past the man without him noticing. In that span of time, he's gone for a quick shower and changed his clothes, and is starting on his homework when they finally stop talking, and Deo leaves the room, leaving him and the man alone.

"You are Thomas Bailey," the man's words are halting and accented, meaning he probably hasn't spoken English in a long time, if at all. "You spend time around Cauldres and you do not fear?"

"I mean, they're my friends?" Tommy replies, half-confused, half-tired and just wanting everything to be over already. "Why would I be scared?"

The man stares at him. "Interesting."

He leans forwards and sits on the bed awkwardly. His skin doesn't make the bed sheets wet, thankfully, but his bottom half is also a mess of tentacles and fish tails, so Tommy's not sure which is better.

“I am Wilsheskoth,” the man says, “I am a holy god, but I want to experience being one human.”

“Okay...?” It’s not the weirdest thing Tommy’s had to experience, and it probably says something about him that he’s already desensitised to these kinds of things, but he nods regardless. “First, we gotta work on your grammar, Big Man. Second, you need a nickname. Your name’s too non-human for you to pass off as one. Third, we’re gonna be working on your appearance soon.”

The god stares back at him, looking as lost as Tommy was when him and Deo had been speaking their language. “Nickname?” he repeats.

“Yeah, a nickname,” Tommy huffs. “Uh... oh, yeah, good one Tommy. Hey, how does Wilbur sound to you? Or William? Or even just Will?”

“Wilbur,” the god tests out the first name on his tongue. Some semblance of a smile appears on his face, his skin splitting apart to reveal the back as he nods his head. “I like nickname.”

“Wilbur it is!” Tommy claps his hands. “Alright, Big Man, time to meet my friends. They know how it feels to change their appearance to be human anyways. Well, one of them at least, but whatever.”

After the first god comes and befriends him, more arrive. They watch him as he goes about his days with Business Bay and Tubbo. He’s pretty sure his friends know they are watching, but they don’t say a word, and neither does he.

In the span of that time, Tommy learns more about gods. For one, they have absolutely no concept of pronouns, which makes his earlier referral to Wilbur as a man kind of problematic. But it’s fine, because Wilbur seems happy with being called a man and using he and him pronouns, so he leaves it at that. He makes a note to not make the same mistake again though.

By the end of the week, Tommy spots at least five hiding in different places as he walks to his college. It’s kind of annoying and a little disorienting, knowing that there are people — *gods* — watching his every move.

Tubbo also makes a friend and brings him over to meet Tommy. His name is Fundy, and he’s not very good at hiding his traits. Tommy could’ve spot those fox ears and tail from a mile away.

“You’re not very good at hiding it,” he tells Fundy one day, when Wisp and Tubbo are off doing their thing, Deo is on a Hunt — whatever that is, he still won’t tell — and Bitzel and Luke are out shopping. Fundy pauses his game to stare at him with a hint of fear in his eyes.

“Not good at hiding what?”

“Your traits,” Tommy shrugs. “You’ve clearly never been around humans before. And probably neither have the two gods clinging onto my walls in a corner, but whatever goes for them.”

Fundy jerks his head up and turns just as Tommy hears someone falling down. He sighs and turns around too, controller left on the floor.

“How did you know?” one of the gods, with brown hair on a translucent, vaguely human-looking figure. Tommy has to give props to them; if he never knew about the supernatural and the gods, he would’ve thought they were a human — if he looked from a few miles away, that is.

“Wisp likes hiding in corners whenever he gets angry. Luke also does that too, but better because

he can make himself invisible,” Tommy responds. “It’s not hard for me to spot your figures, really.”

The other god, with long blonde hair and a too-bright figure that makes Tommy’s hands itch towards his cabinet, where he knows his sunglasses are in. They stare at him in curiosity. “So your whole... group, none of you are human are you?”

“I mean, I like to think that I am human, since I’ve had no reason to believe otherwise,” Tommy shrugs. “I summoned Tubbo and he dragged me to another dimension, where we found Wisp, Luke, Bitzel and Deo, and here I am.”

There’s a moment where the two gods stare at each other, confused. Fundy turns to him, his ears and tail now out in the open. Or rather, tails, seeing as he has three of them, two of which Tommy hadn’t noticed before.

“Did... were you the one who taught them how to act,” Fundy gestures vaguely. Tommy puffs out his chest slightly in pride and nods.

“I’m the Big Man, of course I taught them,” Tommy jokes. “But I can teach you if you’d like.”

“Us too?” The blonde haired god asks politely, appearing right in front of his face, making him yelp. “If you would take us.”

Tommy glances between the three of them, shrugs — an action which he’s doing a lot nowadays —, and nods. “Sure, why not?”

The two gods introduce themselves as Earlenyar and Amineika. They do not spell out the same way as they are pronounced, and after a few tries of pronouncing their name and failing miserably, Tommy gives up and gives them nicknames instead. Eret and Niki sound much more human, anyways.

Just as he’s expected, since he’s gone through this whole thing with the others before, they have no concept of gender or pronouns. Everyone’s always referred to them as the Holy One and the High Holiness, which is stupid in his opinion.

While Niki decides staying female and using she and her pronouns sound nice, Eret only pauses for a while after hearing the three most common pronouns before declaring they want to use all of them. When Tommy asks if neopronouns are on their list of acceptable pronouns to use as well, Eret pauses again before saying that they would have to research it further before deciding anything.

At some point, Tubbo and Wisp come back, and Wisp gets into a fight with Fundy. Tommy has to force them apart, and makes a note to absolutely not let the two stay in a room together without someone else with them.

Then, Tommy teaches them to look human. It’s easier this time around, since he’s had practice with Wilbur beforehand. In the end, they keep their form, but at least they don’t have any glows or translucent bodies and instead look passable as a human.

“Who are the other gods?” Tommy asks as he lies on his back, letting them use a new tablet Tubbo and Wisp had bought while shopping to pick out the clothes they like. Eret pauses to stare at him.

“Other gods?” she repeats. Tommy nods.

“Yeah, other gods,” Tommy jerks his hand towards the window. “There’s always at least five of you guys staring at me, and Wilbur came by a few times before already.”

“Wilbur?” Niki takes her attention off of the tablet to stare at him, ashen-faced. “Wait, sorry, could you describe to us the gods that appear the most?”

“Uh, Wilbur’s real name is Wilsheskoth if that helps,” Tommy waves vaguely up at the air. “There’s also the pink and red god and the god with wings. The latter two are the recurring ones; Wilbur’s my friend who I got all the information about how to teach a god to act human from.”

Eret and Niki share a scared look.

“They won’t hurt you,” Wisp pipes up from a far corner of the room. “They’re probably just trying to make sure the- uh, I mean, Wilbur isn’t hurt.”

“The Deathless One and the Blood Hellbringer are just like that, y’know?” Tubbo shrugs from where he’s sitting on the table.

“No I don’t,” Tommy responds flatly. “I know nothing about them. None of you acknowledged them, so I didn’t either.”

“Well you’re about to,” Eret says, and that’s all the warning he gets before Tommy is whisked out of the room.

So Wilbur’s part of a triad of the most dangerous gods up in all of the dimensions out there. And the other dimensions have a coalition. And Tommy’s gotten the attention of all of the gods in that coalition simply because he’s a human from the human world spending time with decidedly non-humans and not giving a single fuck about it.

Joy. He should be surprised and terrified, but with exams on the horizon and having to make up excuses to his parents as to why there’s even more people hanging in their house more often, he really doesn’t have time to worry about it.

As it turns out soon enough, he probably should’ve, because one moment he is laying in bed, and the next, he is dangling by a rope around his leg over a lava pool.

He flails around in fear, before stilling when he sees the red and pink god standing on a cliff nearby. The god looks like a pig hybrid, and has blood splattered all over his fancy clothes. A crown is placed on his pig-head, and his pink hair is braided neatly. With everything, he looks like a king more than anything.

Tommy takes one look at the god who’s ruined his sleep and practically kidnapped him from his own house, and flips him off. “Fuck off asshole, just let me take a goddamn rest, I have an exam tomorrow!”

The surprised look on his face would be funny in any other circumstance, but not this one. The god scowls and reaches for a lever which Tommy assumes will lower him closer to the larval pool, but before he can, Wilbur comes out of nowhere and smacks the other god’s hand away.

They begin to argue in a language Tommy can’t understand. At some point, the winged god he spots sometimes joins them, but none of them make a move to grab him and take him to the cliff or at least safety, leaving him to just swing awkwardly.

He's about to try and swing to the cliff, since he's pretty sure Wilbur wouldn't let him die, when feathers reach under his arms and lift him, the rope falling away as he's taken to the cliff. He looks up, and the winged god is there, his wings spread wide. They look absolutely majestic, and Tommy would be lying if he says he isn't in awe.

He stumbles when he finally lands. Wilbur rushes to him, looking a lot more liquid-like than before, fussing over him. "Are you okay? Oh my god, I *told* Tetkityarl you were nice, I don't know why he decided to kidnap you, what the fuck—"

"At least it's better than that one time when I met Business Bay," Tommy responds dazedly.

The pink and red god — who's named after Tekkit or something — rolls his eyes and grunts. The winged god steps forwards and offers a smile. Or something similar to it anyway, considering how he doesn't have any mouth, and instead stretches his eyes to form one.

"It seems we've gotten off wrong," the winged man raises one of his wings — and Tommy now realises that, hey, the winged man has four wings, two of which are his... hands, or arms, or something — and lifts it up before jerking it down twice. "I am name Pfyherrile. Blood God is Tetkityarl."

"Nice to meet you?" Tommy asks more than says, curling his hand up into a fist and mimicking the way Pfy-guy moved his wing-hand. "Uh, I'm Tommy. Thomas Bailey, but most people just call me Tommy."

"Tommy," Pfy-guy repeats. "Strange."

Wilbur turns to say something to Tekkit. Tommy's not sure what he says, but it makes Tekkit relax, just a little, and turn to stare at him. He lets out a few grunts, and Wilbur translates.

"Tetkityarl asks if you could show him around the human world," Wilbur tells him brightly. "Tetkityarl and Pfyherrile are in need of a break from their duties, anyway."

Tommy looks at the other two gods. He looks back at Wilbur.

"As long as they promise they won't like, cause an apocalypse or some shit I guess I can help," Tommy sighs. After a few moments, he adds, "And they need nicknames. Human ones."

Wilbur turns to talk to Pfy-guy and Tekkit, before turning back to him. "What names do you have in mind?"

Tommy stares at the other two gods. Tekkit and Pfy-guy don't fit them, and the names definitely aren't human.

"Phillip, or just Phil for Pfy-guy," Tommy says. And, as a spark of mischief lights up in him, he adds, "Techno for Tekkit."

So here's what Tommy Bailey's life has come to. He's harbouring multiple interdimensional beings and hybrids in his house. His parents are getting suspicious of how many new friends he's suddenly getting. Some of his friends want to stay on Earth. He's running out of pocket money to feed his friends. He has also gotten himself a bunch of sibling figures.

In his defence, he never actually wanted to go on that bonding trip with Wilbur, Techno and Phil. But he did, and he went on that trip with a somewhat friend and two new strangers, and came back



with three protective brother figures. He's not entirely sure how that happened, but he's not complaining.

But there's still the problem of money on hand. Don't get him wrong, he trusts his friends to manage themselves, and they've passed as a human multiple times already. But those interactions aren't at a job, and he doesn't want to force them to get one, that would just be selfish of him.

So Tommy does the right thing, and he gets a job at his local Starbucks as a cashier. If he works there for about a year and saves up his pocket money, he should be able to afford an apartment for his friends who need it. It's not like anything will go wrong, right?

Tommy stares at the Starbucks shop, which is now on fire. He then slowly turns to stare at a trio of sheepish gods, poorly disguised as humans. In fact, they're only passable as humans if they're seen from far away, which might be why he's currently on a rooftop a few blocks away, watching the smoke rise.

“What,” he states flatly. “The fuck.”

The shortest one of them, the one with glitches all over their body, turns to the one with his body looking more like flames than an actual body and, for some reason, panda ears on top, and makes a computer glitching noise. The flame guy responds by making an offended noise.

There's also the third god, with a body that looks surprisingly human-shaped, but they're also fully neon green, with white covering from the stomach to the legs, and with smiley faces doodled all over the body. They also have very, very sharp hands, and they seem to find enjoyment in the shop burning.

In all fairness, Tommy should've expected this, what with his current track record with the mythical. Even so, he's only been working at Starbucks for a week, he didn't realise they would decide to ruin his chances to make more money like that!

“Who the fuck are you?!” Tommy yells. The neon god turns to stare at him — or at least he thinks he's staring; the god has like thirty pairs of eyes — and laughs, a sound so human-like it makes him do a double-take.

“So you're the little child everyone's been so enamoured with,” they say, multiple voices overlapping.

Tommy's mind flashes to the multiple times the gods have beat him up to 'teach him how to fight' — even though he knows they're damn good teachers, considering that his muscle mass has kind of increased, their training still *hurts* — and the hybrids have dragged him into their messes, and resists the urge to groan. “I don't think enamoured is the right word.”

“Then why do they spend time around you so much?”

Tommy stares at him. Then at the two other gods still arguing. Then at the last of the smoke slowly floating upwards from the fire in the Starbucks. “I wouldn't want to hang out with you either.”

The fire god whips around and yells something like a curse at him. The glitch god makes an indignant sound and screeches something at the smiley god, who laughs and turns to him.

“You may call me Dream,” the smiley god tells him. “As for the other two... well, they are called

Gauraddigm and Sargespint, but you can come up with those little nicknames as you've given to the others, can't you?"

"Fuck you," Tommy replies. He pauses, before adding on. "And, oh fuck it, George and Sapnap."

The fire god makes a thrilled noise, which sounds like a log being tossed into the fireplace. Tommy resists the urge to scream. He's been doing that a lot nowadays.

"They burned down your job place?" Phil blinks at him. "Well, good riddance to that. I hated that place."

"You can't just say that," Tommy groans as Dream preens like a bird. "I needed the job."

"But you already have enough money to buy snacks and stuff," Bitzel says as he comes down the stairs, nearly slipping and falling on the last one. "Why do you need a job, or whatever it is?"

Tommy looks around the almost-full house and sighs. It is at times like this that he is so grateful that his parents' work needs them to leave home for a pretty long time, because he doesn't know how he would lie to them out of this situation.

"Well, you know this place is getting crowded right?" he starts. "And my parents are getting suspicious as to how you all are just suddenly hanging around me and stuff, considering half of you look like you're a lot older than me. So I was like hey, you guys need another place to live. But I don't have enough money, and I wasn't about to make any of you get a job since you guys still aren't really used to retail work, so I needed a job. And Starbucks was near and it suited my school times..."

"Wait, you got a job to get us another place to live?" Fundy looks touched. Tommy sighs.

"Yeah. I needed extra money to be able to afford at least a small apartment for those of you who wanted to stay," Tommy shrugs.

"Wait," Eret speaks up. "So all you needed was wealth in the form of this dimension faction's currency? I could've just popped some up, why didn't you ask me sooner?"

"I don't think that'd be good for the economy if you just—" Tommy starts, but he doesn't speak fast enough before the small table in the living room is overflowing with multiple £500 pound notes.

"How much does an apartment cost again?" Wilbur asks, stashing the notes in a briefcase. "Actually, how do apartments even look? Because I'm not settling for anything less than perfection."

"You're not even gonna *live there!*" Tommy screams in response.

"You know," Luke says to him one day. "Now that I think about it, it's really weird."

Tommy blinks and looks at him. "What's weird?"

"Well, you know, before I met you, all these gods that keep coming and going were like— they were *big big*, and we all respected and admired them and thought they could do no wrong because they were gods and shit," Luke gestures wildly. "And then you came along, and you kept having

gods come to you and befriend you like you're a magnet and they're the metals, and the patron god of my whole community tripped over my traps like six times already, and it's all just so surreal, you know?"

"What, that your gods aren't who you thought they would be?" Tommy raises an eyebrow. Luke shrugs and looks away.

"Yeah," he admits. "And I'm not sure if that's a good thing or not."

"Probably a good thing. Didn't you say your myth included Techno starting the apocalypse or some shit?"

"Forgot about that part," Luke laughs, the worry on his face smoothing out and relaxing. Tommy relaxes too.

"Yeah, so there's no worry. You'll get used to it eventually."

"I'm the superior Jack!"

"Oh, let's not get into this fight again. Everyone knows I'm the true Jack."

"Why the fuck are you two arguing on my front porch," Tommy says, holding a cup of coffee, squinting up at the still-dark sky, before turning his attention back to the literal cloud with lightning crackling underneath and the mess of mist and aurora next to each other. "At hell o'clock in the morning on a *Sunday*?"

"Oh, it's you!" The mess of mist and aurora shifts. "Hey, which of us is the better Jack?"

Tommy stares at them, already regretting finally being able to understand the gods' dimension-speak. He takes a long sip out of his coffee, before turning on his heels and slamming the door shut.

"I am too tired to deal with this shit," he groans, placing down his coffee as he passes by Tubbo sitting in the living room. "Tubbo, can you help the two gods outside? Thanks, I owe you one."

In the morning, Tommy stumbles downstairs, and sees a guy wearing the glasses that cinemas give at 3D movies and another person with a bun. The two turn to look up at him when they probably hear him.

"You're back!" bun person exclaims. Tommy closes his eyes and tries not to just head back upstairs and collapse back onto his bed.

"I am," he says tiredly. "Who are you again and why are you here?"

"Oh, I'm Thumandijon," the glasses guy says casually. "And this here is Sechrinleth. We heard about this cool trend that gods were hanging out more and more in this little dimension all for this one boy, so we decided to check it out together. But then we decided on the same human name, so we need someone to decide who is better, and who else better to judge than the boy who started this trend in the first place?"

Tommy kind of feels touched that so many people are choosing to hang out with him willingly, but it's early in the morning and he doesn't have enough patience in the morning to deal with their bullshit, so he just points to each of them and gives them a different nickname.

“You can be Thunder,” he points to the glasses guy, then to the bun person. “And you can be Septiceye. You can both use Jack as a human name. Alright, done, I’m out. If you need more help ask Wisp, Deo, Bitzel, Luke, or Tubbo; they’ve been here the longest.”

With those words finalised, he turns and walks back upstairs. He has homework to work on, anyways.

“There is no nation that would ever benefit from prolonged warfare.”

“Big Guy, this is a condominium,” Tommy says flatly.

He’s helping out with moving Business Bay into the condominium they decided to buy. His parents had been delighted that he was already so close with them to do something like this, and let him go without much fanfare.

Tommy had thought that no other gods would be seeking him out when he’s not at his house, but looking at the baby ram-cow-sheep-snake-goat chimera standing at the door front of the new condominium, he realises that he’s very, very foolish.

The chimera scowls. “Man, even you, the Little Blessed, can’t enjoy my words? I knew this was a bad idea.”

“What the fuck does the Little Blessed mean,” Tommy says. “Actually, nevermind. Don’t answer that. Why did you seek me out?”

“Well, every high-up god seems to have decided to ditch their duties in favour of hanging out in this dimension, and I got curious. Plus, the rumours of you are already making waves, and a lot of us are curious,” the chimera grins a sleazy smile.

“So you’re not a god?”

“Oh, don’t be fooled by my form. I am just as good of a god as the rest.”

“Yeah, okay Big Dude,” Tommy stares at them suspiciously. Distantly, the sounds of electricity sparking is soon followed by sounds of shrieking. “So who are you?”

“You can call me Jerobicharr,” they chuckle. “And I heard you are giving out nicknames?”

“To make you guys blend in better in society,” Tommy scowls. “You know what? You get to be Schlatt.”

“That doesn’t sound very human.”

“I’m the human here, not you. Now shut up and change into a human form if you can, and if you can’t, follow me.”

Tommy’s at college in one of the few classes where he’s alone. He’s sitting at the back of the class, since no one really wants to hang out with the weird kid, when someone comes to sit next to him.

Tommy blinks at the guy with a creeper mask on their face. “Hello?”

“Hello,” the mask guy repeats. “Nice to meet.”

Tommy looks downwards, and yup, the guy's legs are sprawls of tentacles and silk cloths. Why is he even surprised at this point?

"You're the first one to seek me out at my college, you know?" he tells the other casually. "You should probably change your lower body to look like mine though, I don't think people would appreciate seeing you moving with tentacles."

The guy stares at him in surprise, even as they follow what he told them to do.

"I did not expect you to know how to speak my language," the guy says cautiously. "But I am Shammunuel. I'm here with my companions, Xeroqua and Werringmyrth. We are here to seek out the reason why so many gods have been dismissing their duties, and to bring them back."

"Speak for yourself!" Tommy yelps and looks around wildly, breathing out a sigh of relief when he realises that no one can hear the gods, before turning to see a duck-like creature on the mask guy's shoulder.

"I'm here to have fun!" the duck crows out loudly, and once again, no one seems to hear them.

"I don't think that's a good idea..." another voice speaks up, and Tommy turns to face someone who looks pretty similar to Niki. The only difference is their colours, in which the other has black and white for body colours, and two beady red and green orbs at where eyes should be.

"Yeah, that might be because of me," Tommy says distractedly. "Sorry, I'll talk to them when I get home after this. Wanna come along?"

"That would be nice, thank you," the mask guy drops their head and looks back up. "I heard it's a tradition for you to christen us gods with... 'nicknames'?"

"Christen isn't the word I'd use, but that works," Tommy says. "You can be Sam, it fits in with your name anyways. Duck guy can be Quackity, and monochrome guy can be Ranboo."

"Quackity doesn't sound like a human name." the newly dubbed Quackity whines.

"Big Q, you are very annoying. Shut up."

"Wh- hello?!"

"You guys need to stop being around me so often," Tommy tells Dream, George and Sapnap as he stands before them sitting on the sofa. The trio who are almost always together blink at him.

"What?" Sapnap asks. Tommy huffs.

"Sam and Schlatt have both said that all of you have been ditching your duties and shit in your dimension to hang out with me," Tommy explains. "And don't get me wrong, you guys are really nice to be around, and I'm not lonely at all, but the people in your dimension deserve as much care as I do."

The trio sends each other a look that Tommy can't decipher. Finally, after some weird telepathic conversation or something like that, they turn to him with matching grins.

"Then why don't you come with us?" George suggests. "The annual Meeting is happening soon, and we'll get bored without you."

Tommy thinks it over. “Will it coincide with my college studies?”

“Nope,” Dream says way too cheerfully.

“Okay... do you promise that you’ll actually take care of your dimension if I come along?”

The trio nod eagerly. “Of course,” Sappnap chirps.

Tommy stares at them, but can’t find a single hint of a lie on their faces. He sighs. “Alright, then I’ll come.”

Tommy’s gone to some of their dimension before. It’s inevitable, considering his best friends are from one of the coalition’s dimensions. He’s met citizens of those dimensions who stare at him with scrutiny and track him with their viewing limbs — not eyes, because not all of them use their eyes, if they even have them in the first place — to make sure he doesn’t do any shady stuff.

He knows what it’s like to be scrutinised for any sign of weakness and mistake, so that it could be used against him. High school is brutal, and he’s learned from that time.

That still doesn’t prepare him for the sheer anxiety that falls upon him as he walks into the grand hall where the Meeting is taking place. The place is grander than anything he’s even seen in his whole life, looking like it’s out of one of those fantasy books — which it kind of is, since he is in another dimension. And that’s not mentioning the amount of gods or servants all looking at him. He doesn’t need to see their viewing limbs to feel the stares on his form, after all.

He’s wearing the suit he bought for his senior year at high school’s prom. It’s a little bit of a tight fit, but it was either this or let his godly sibling figures — and yes, he’s admitting it now, they’re kind of like his older siblings — decide what he would wear, which is objectively worse in so many ways.

It only gets worse when the gods decide to fight over who gets to introduce him first. Tommy sidles up next to Tubbo as everyone’s attention is on them, and whispers, “So do you have any godly friends? Or anyone who you know a bit?”

Tubbo stares at him and smiles. “Yeah! I think I saw one of my friends, actually.”

“Great, introduce me over, I do not want to be here any longer than I have to.”

Tubbo leads him over to where a servant is standing in a corner. “Hey, Karl!”

“Is their name just Karl?” Tommy asks as they near him. Karl looks up, startled, and nearly falls over. Tubbo nods.

“Yeah! We all just refer to Karl as Karl, but I think pronouns would be nice for Karl!”

“H-hello Tubbo,” Karl greets them. “And, uh- hello! Little Blessed!”

“Hey,” Tommy greets, ignoring the ‘Little Blessed’ remark for now; he can always ask one of the others later, anyways. “Say, have you heard about pronouns before?”

“N-no?”

So Tommy tells Karl. And Karl eventually decides to use he and him pronouns along with it and its pronouns, because in its words, “I kind of feel bad for the objects.”

Which is... well, he hasn't heard that kind of reasoning used before, but that doesn't mean Tommy isn't going to respect his choices.

And somehow in that span of time, the gods have stopped fighting, and half of them are now on the ceiling staring at his interactions curiously, and they are now discussing pronouns. Tommy doesn't think they know that he can understand them; they probably think Tubbo's translating for him, which is great, because that means he can get *so much* intel. Oh, he can't wait.

"Where are we going?" he asks Phil as the older tugs him away while Techno is busy 'politely' discussing with another god who Tommy has nicknamed Squid. And by 'politely', he means semi-aggressively sending sarcastic and insulting remarks.

"I'm taking you to meet some of my friends," he replies. "Remember what I told you about me being one of the oldest gods?"

"Barely, yeah."

"Yup, so we're going to go meet some of my oldest friends!" Phil says cheerfully. "Don't worry, they'll love to meet you."

"That's what Dream said too," Tommy says. If he stops ignoring it, he can still hear the noises of fighting and squelching as Dream, George and Sapnap battle it out with someone whose name he really can't bother to remember.

"And unlike Dream, I know to make sure they are safe first before introducing you to them," Phil shoots back, and Tommy lets out a little laugh.

There's a group of people huddled near the middle of the large hall. They all turn to them when they near the group.

Phil makes a weird, low-pitched sound, and the others parrot it back, so it's probably a greeting in a language Tommy hasn't learned. Phil then gestures to him, ruffling his hair lightly and messing it up, making his face scrunch up in annoyance.

"This is Tommy," he introduces. "Don't worry, he can understand the main language; I'm a good teacher, after all."

"Tubbo's the one who taught me the most though," Tommy says cheekily, letting out a yelp and a bark of a laugh as he's playfully smacked on the back.

"Don't be a brat," Phil rolls his eyes. "Say hello."

"Formal greetings," one of them, one with many, many fish eyes and dull blue fur on a half-horse form, wearing a thin but fancy white robe, greets him warmly. "I hope you have been finding everything well so far."

"Things are nice," Tommy agrees. "I'm Tommy Bailey, it's nice to meet you."

"Oh, we've heard of you," another one who looks startlingly human and yet not, with a bandana wrapped around an oval-shaped head and a sword strapped to a square body, laughs lightly. "It's hard to not."

Phil laughs and pats Tommy on the back again. "These are the Captain, the Organiser, the Oracle,

and Diamond.”

Tommy’s brown furrow. “No long names?”

“We’re a more... special group, if you may,” the third one, covered from head to toe in shades of pink and blue and with large butterfly wings, chuckles. “We’re older than the rest of them.”

“You’ll understand soon enough, once you learn more,” the fourth and last one, a tall and big goopy blob in white and blue, with diamonds buried in the god’s body. “I’m surprised you don’t seem to have heard of Hardcore’s. Hardcore is very proud of Hardcore’s achievement, and brags about it often.”

Tommy blinks, remembering how Wilbur had introduced Phil with his name, and the other hadn’t refuted or attempted to stop Wilbur from saying it. But since Tommy’s not sure if that will get Phil into trouble or not, he stays quiet for now.

Phil scoffs and makes a move to lead Tommy away. “Yeah, yeah, laugh it up. We’ll talk more next time, yeah?”

“Go along, Hardcore,” the first one laughs. “The Little Blessed needs the Little Blessed’s introduction, after all.”

“Why do they keep calling me the Little Blessed?” Tommy makes quotation marks when he says the last part, leaning back and sinking into the way-too comfortable cushioned chair that the librarian manning the front desk was a little too eager to give to him when he asked for a more comfortable chair.

He’s sitting with Wisp, Deo, Bitzel and Luke in The Library, after his introduction was said and done. Well, that’s what the name Fundy translated for him means, but he’s pretty sure the actual name is just a bunch of fancy words that, when combined together, means the vague and slightly eerie name of The Library.

Bitzel pauses his reading of a book titled ‘The Legends and Tales: Volume 4’. “Has nobody ever told you?”

“Well if they have, I wouldn’t be asking,” Tommy rolls his eyes, but his tone is joking. “Everyone’s called me that before. You guys may have not, but all the gods started calling me that after the first five of them came, I started hearing it. And in the hall, literally *everyone* called me that, even after hearing my actual name. Why?”

The others all share a look. Tommy’s getting kind of sick of people knowing things he doesn’t know.

Wisp stands up. “I’ll go search for it,” he says, and darts away into the deep hallways of the library’s shelves. The lights beneath the floor light up his path.

“It’s more- it’s more to do with belief and prophecies and stuff like that,” Luke starts off the explanation with a wince. “It’s not really set in stone, but because most of the gods believe it in, or some part of it at least, everyone thinks it’s true, and that’s how your moniker started.”

“It’s like a trickle down waterfall, or whatever it’s called,” Bitzel adds. “When the highest ranks in the coalition believe in it, so does everyone else.”



“I don’t-” Tommy snickers lightly. “That’s not how the words are used, Bitzel.”

Wisp comes rushing back with a book tucked under his arm. He collapses next to him on the chair, and opens it up to a well-worn page.

“That’s the part where the entity arrives, isn’t it?” Deo peers over his shoulder to stare at the page. Wisp nods.

“Yeah,” he gestures to a weird looking block guy on the page. “Tommy, I won’t try to finagle my way around this. The reason why we all call you the Little Blessed is because you *might* — and only might, it’s not set in stone because it’s not a true property — have to become like one of those heroes in your world’s mythology.”

Tommy takes one look at the remaining parts of the pages, sees the star illustrated big and almost bursting, next to a tiny, blue circle, and shuts the book.

“It can’t hurt me if I don’t know myself,” Tommy says faintly, and he’s not sure who he’s trying to convince. He takes a deep breath, and grabs the book to put it away gently.

“Let’s talk about something else,” he says, and Luke jumps at the opening to talk about something else. None of them mention anything about the book.

“Thomas,” his mother starts off, on a rare day when his parents are home and his friends aren’t. They’re sitting at the dining table, with breakfast laid out and Tommy himself mid-bite into a pancake. “About those friends of yours...”

Tommy swallows his pancake and makes a vague, confused noise. “Yeah? What about them?”

“Don’t get us wrong, son,” his father continues for his mother. “You’ve been happier ever since they’ve come around, and we’re glad for you, really, we are. But have you ever considered to look closer as to who their family members are?”

Tommy sighs and sticks his fork into another pancake. “I’ve told you already, they’re orphans who decided to band together.”

“Orphans,” his father repeats in a tone that doesn’t sound like he’s convinced. “Right. They’re orphans.”

Well, it’s not like Tommy can outright tell his parents that hey, his pseudo-family of friends are actually beings from another dimension, and his furry friends aren’t actually furies at all, and they may or may not be more eldritch than human. Chances are he’ll be sent away, or his friends will be blamed, and maybe his parents will try to keep them away from him, which is a bad idea on all sides.

“Yeah, they are,” Tommy munches on his pancake. “What do you have against my friends anyways?”

“Nothing, sweetheart,” his parents share a look, and his mother speaks up. “Just... be careful, alright? We don’t want you getting into things you’ll regret when you grow older, or spend time around the wrong crowd.”

‘And what counts as the wrong crowd?’ Tommy thinks, but outwardly he just nods and smiles.

“I know, mom,” he offers her a reassuring smile. “I’m smarter than that, you know that.”

His first year at college ends just a few days before winter does, and Tommy walks back home with a red scarf around his neck, a black jacket on his body, and a red beanie situated snugly on his head.

Wilbur looks at the beanie with pride, Techno preens at the red scarf, and Phil ruffles his hair upon seeing the black jacket.

In the few four days before spring officially begins, Tommy spends his days in other dimensions, since his parents are in Germany for an important business meeting. He learns to speak another language semi-coherently, spends some more time with his friends’ friends, and has fun.

He still stands out when he’s with his friends; he may be tall for his age, but compared to his non-godly friends in their home who stand at least a few inches taller, and compared to his godly friends with their hulking forms and multiple limbs, he’s like a tiny mouse surrounded by cats.

It’s not a good comparison, and he hits Quackity when he decides to compare him and his friends to that, but his friends’ laughter makes it all worth it.

Soon, he has to return to Earth, and the scent of flowers in Spring makes Tubbo’s wings flap in excitement, and the other animal hybrids run around in happiness and contentment.

His second year at college will be starting in a few weeks. As he looks around the Business Condominium, surrounded by friends he never would’ve even thought of making a few months back, he takes a long sip out from his energy drink, and smiles brightly.

There’s a saying somewhere that if you spend enough time around monsters, you start to become one of them too.

It’s used in fantasy stories, ones that dive deep into the complexity of humanity, and the concept of monstrosity. People usually laugh it off, or get invested in it purely in a fictional way. After all, monsters with long teeth and claws and twisting appendages don’t exist in reality.

But Tommy has spent his time around gods with blood on their fingertips and forms ghastly and so inhuman it’s impossible to mistake them for one. He has spent time around people who look so human, but with little traits and quirks that breed doubt and confusion into minds.

He knows he’s becoming like them, in a way. He gets used to incorporeal forms and random colours. He gets used to little, whispery voices in the dark and bright lights shining out of places where there shouldn’t be any.

It should be terrifying, to know that he’s spent enough time around them to get used to their quirks, to not even bat an eye at the things others would call monstrous and out of the world. But it’s not, because they’re his family, and he knows they wouldn’t dare do anything to him.

There was a murderer who had come in at the wrong time and had to be killed. He did deserve it, of course.

But he was also fully, wholly human, and Tommy got the first experience of how it would be if someone unlike him had found out who he surrounded himself with.

“Monster!” the murderer had gasped, even as he was held up with a hand by the hair. “You’re a monster! You’re not- you’re a fucking freak! You’re a goddamn Stockholm Syndrome case to the extreme!”

In response, Tommy had shrugged and turned away.

“At least I don’t murder kids for a living,” he had said casually. “Tubbo, wanna go get ice cream with me?”

Sure, he’ll admit, he isn’t the best of people. Maybe he’s a monster. Maybe he’s a freak. Maybe he’s not really human anymore, and not in a physical sense. Maybe he’s grown desensitised.

But he knows he’s not being deceived. He knows it in the way his friends and pseudo-family would help him with his homework, play games with him, treat him nicer than anyone else outside of his parents have. He knows it in the way they apologise after accidentally hurting him, in the way they treat his wounds carefully, in the way they listen and don’t ignore him.

There’s a saying somewhere that if you spend enough time around monsters, you start to become one of them too.

If that’s the case, then Tommy’s glad to be a monster.

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