

the number you are trying to reach is currently unavailable

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Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Minecraft (Video Game) , Video Blogging RPF , Dream SMP
Relationship:	Niki Nihachu & Wilbur Soot , Wilbur Soot & Technoblade , Wilbur Soot & Phil Watson , Toby Smith Tubbo & Wilbur Soot & Technoblade & TommyInnit & Phil Watson , No Romantic Relationship(s)
Character:	Wilbur Soot , Niki Nihachu , Minx JustAMinx (Video Blogging RPF) , Technoblade (Video Blogging RPF) , Phil Watson (Video Blogging RPF) , TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Toby Smith Tubbo
Additional Tags:	Alternate Universe - Zombie Apocalypse , Alternate Universe - Apocalypse , Platonic Relationships , Platonic Soulmates , Platonic Female/Male Relationships , Wilbur Soot-centric , Families of Choice , References to Depression , Implied/Referenced Self-Harm , Separation Anxiety , Good Parent Phil Watson (Video Blogging RPF) , Wilbur Soot Needs a Hug , No Romance , Comfort/Angst , Hurt/Comfort , Emotional Hurt/Comfort , Angst and Hurt/Comfort , Sad Ending , Hopeful Ending , Grief/Mourning , Five Stages of Grief , Sad Wilbur Soot , Wordcount: 5.000-10.000 , Symbolism , Voicemail , Musical References , cause i kinda was inspired by bits of the your city gave me asthma album , also this was not meant to be this long at all , oh well , Protective Siblings , Past Relationship(s) , Toby Smith Tubbo and Wilbur Soot and Technoblade and TommyInnit are Siblings , Adoptive Parent Phil Watson (Video Blogging RPF) , Missing Persons , Wilbur Soot Angst , Family Dynamics , Album: Your City Gave Me Asthma (Wilbur Soot)
Language:	English
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Collections:	Completed stories I've read , minecraft has ruined my life goddamit
Stats:	Published: 2021-03-29 Words: 9,478 Chapters: 1/1

the number you are trying to reach is currently unavailable

by [micah_is_haunting](#)

Summary

[Beginning of transcript]

The number you are trying to reach is currently unavailable. If you'd like to leave a message for their voicemail, please speak after you hear the tone. If you think this is a mistake, please cancel your call and try again, or press '1' for more information. Thank you...

[Pause]

Beep.

[Another pause]

[Shuffling sounds followed by a sigh and a choke of breath]

“Hey Niki, it’s Wil. Wilbur Soot. How long has it been, two years?”

• • • * • • •

A look into Wilbur's life before and after the beginning of the end of the world, and his connection with the one person he thought he'd always have at his side. But with a new family, the promise of healing, and one therapeutic call, Wilbur learns to move on and let go of the girl who he used to call his best friend.

Notes

This is a part of a series but can be read as a standalone! Enjoy!

Before we start, right off the bat I just wanna say for all the people who didn't read the tags that this is in NO way a ship fic. ALL of the relationships in this fic are purely platonic. I am aware that those types of romantic fics make Niki and Wilbur uncomfortable, and even though I am writing stories based off of their DSMP characters I will never ship them. Nope, never. The beginning may seem misleading, but this felt like a fun opportunity for me, as a probably aromantic individual, to write how not all male/female relationships have to be romantic. Niki and Wilbur are just friends, were always just friends, and will never be anything more than that.

Just wanted to make that clear.

Now, storytime! :D

This isn't very graphic, it's mostly rated Teen for the swearing and the grief, otherwise it's fairly lighthearted. Kinda. As lighthearted as you can get with angst.

TW: Angst, Implied/Referenced Depression, Grieving, Implied/Referenced Self Harm (very subtle Implied/Referenced Suicide Mention for a brief moment if you squint)

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

[A Goodbye to Niki Nihachu]

[Edited Audio Transcript Version Num. 4]

[The following is the transcript from an audio recording]

[The original automated transcript is no longer available]

[Some details may not be perfect transmissions due to low audio quality]

[Even in this edited version there may be omitted details]

[The full audio recording is available in your voicemail archive]

[For more information please visit [this page](#)]

[Beginning of transcript]

The number you are trying to reach is currently unavailable. If you'd like to leave a message for their voicemail, please speak after you hear the tone. If you think this is a mistake, please cancel your call and try again, or press '1' for more information. Thank you.

[Pause]

Beep.

[Another pause]

[Shuffling sounds followed by a sigh and a choke of breath]

"Hey Niki, it's Wil. Wilbur Soot. How long has it been, two years?"

• • • * • • •

Niki Nihachu was a German exchange student with bleach blonde hair, warm brown eyes, and the most beautiful smile on the planet.

And Wilbur Soot was painfully in love, *or so he liked to think.*

The blonde-haired girl shared a class with him back in college, and he would often see her around campus. He couldn't stop himself from staring after her, watching the way her face would go from neutral to happy at the sight of the friends she made around the college. He liked to watch her in class, oftentimes paying more attention to her than their professor. It explains why his current grade in that particular class was so low. Wilbur couldn't bring himself to care.

She was just so beautiful. The short girl was so sweet, always greeting her professor and friends with a smile. Despite her soft-spoken words she could brighten up and command a room if she dared to. She always walked around with a pep in her step and a friendly look on her face. He watched her carry her books around school and desperately wanted to be one of the people at her side, holding her hand or carrying her books for her. He wanted to bring her out for coffee or to get lunch together. He wanted to study with her and watch her draw in the sketchbook that never left her side. He wanted to be the person who she could always talk to and laugh with. He wanted to be at her side.

It had felt like a dream, those fantasies of imagining himself at the girl's side. He wanted to bring his silly crush to life. It was a dream he wanted to make reality.

It's why a couple weeks later, after shamefully watching Niki to avoid boredom, Wilbur found himself preparing to go up and confess to the girl. His stomach had been twisted in knots but he was trying not to let his nerves get to him. Sure, he had only spoken to the girl once or twice, and it was just a polite 'hello' as they crossed paths, but Wilbur was confident that he could do this.

So one college afternoon after class, Wilbur had walked right up to her, ignoring the other students he passed in the outdoor courtyard, so he could stand in front of the girl. Tearing her attention away from the other student she was conversing with, Wilbur remembered how he blurted out the most embarrassing phrase in the entire world.

"I think I'm in love with you."

Even as his face flushed red Wilbur continued to stand in front of her, hands clenched into fists at his side. Niki had just stared at him for a long moment. Her face was a myriad of emotions. Disgust, confusion, amusement, bewilderment, shock. To his surprise, after his embarrassing confession of love, Niki had laughed. She threw her head back, blonde hair falling around her face, as she burst into a fit of giggling laughter.

"That's silly!" she had said to him, her words so confident and full of amusement as she looked up at him. "You can't fall in love with someone just because you fancy their looks and have only known them for a week. You have to get to know them as a person! Try befriending me first, then you can confess your love again."

Then she had taken her friend by the hand and walked away, leaving behind a confused and red-faced Wilbur with the bystanders that had been watching their conversation from the beginning.

After that embarrassing confrontation Wilbur thought they were a lost cause. No girl would want to actually befriend the boy that had awkwardly confessed to them in front of a dozen other people. Not when she had hopelessly embarrassed him and told him off for being a love-sick fool. Not when she had pointed out how silly he was being confessing to her when he barely knew her at all. But it was just his luck that they had gotten paired up together for class.

You think that in college professors would realize how dumb group projects were, but that just wasn't the case.

During their first couple of days paired together for their project, Wilbur was hopelessly flustered around the girl. He stuttered over his words, tripped over his own two feet, and flushed red whenever the girl stared at him with an unapologetic look of amusement on her face. Niki just brushed aside his awkwardness and instead was the one to try her hand at the friendship thing, her own style.

And god was Wilbur grateful for that.

For the week they had worked together on their project Niki was always genuine. She teased him for the little crush he had on her but never made him feel uncomfortable. Despite the awkward 'love' confession she treated him normally. Inviting him for a study session, walking with him on campus between classes, and greeting him in class like nothing had happened just a week ago.

And at the end of the week when their group project was turned in with the promise of bringing up Wilbur's poor grade, Wilbur had asked Niki if they were friends. She laughed and said "of course!" with the brightest smile on her face before waving goodbye to him with the promise of seeing him

tomorrow. Wilbur had walked back to his dorm that day with a smile on his face. He was pleased that he had not only managed to make a new friend, but had become friends with one of the most amazing girls he'd ever met.

Being friends with Niki was easy. She was such a genuine person and kind-hearted girl. After their initial week of meeting and becoming friends she never brought up the confession again. Instead she just made an effort to be friends with him like anyone else would. You'd often see the two on campus or outside of campus hanging out and chatting, or you could catch sight of them when they were in classes. And when they weren't together or too swamped with work they'd make the effort to call on another or stop by each other's dorm just to check up on one another.

They did things that normal friends would do. They'd come over to each other's dorms and dragged each other out to get food or fresh air. They'd text each other late at night to make sure they were getting enough sleep or taking enough breaks. They'd hang out outside of class before parting ways to go do the other things they had to do. They didn't overstep any of their friend's boundaries or push them to hang out or drag them off to do something they wouldn't enjoy. They just hung out and talked. And Wilbur never really had the luxury of having a friendship as simple and genuine as that before.

And when Wilbur had eventually told her that he thought it'd be better if they stayed friends than to try and start a romantic relationship, Niki had nodded wisely with a faint smile on her face, like she knew this was going to happen all along.

"It's silly to start a relationship because you think you're in love with someone you've only just met," she had told him as they sat together, shortly after Wilbur had admitted to wanting to stay friends. "You're in love with the *idea* of them, but really, you don't know them at all. I could tell that you didn't love me, you loved the *idea* of loving me and the *idea* of starting a relationship. It wasn't until we became friends that you realized that you would have never tried to start a romantic relationship with me in the first place. We were always better off as friends, and that's perfectly okay!"

And to this day, Wilbur still doesn't know how he got so lucky to become friends with such a smart girl.

• • • * • • •

[Choking noise]

[Gasp for breath is heard through the microphone]

[Short pause]

"Do you remember our late night calls? The ones where we would vent to one another and talk about our futile yet pleasing existence? Remember the words I whispered to you that were for your ears alone, because I couldn't stand being the only one with those thoughts anymore?"

[Pause, followed by a long shaky breath]

"I miss it. I miss talking to you, hearing your voice, your laugh, seeing your smile and your eyes."

"God do I miss you Niki."

[Another pause]

[A small chuckle is heard through the microphone]

“It’s lonely out here, even though I haven’t been alone for a while.”

• • • * • • •

The sad thing about exchange students is that they all have to go back home eventually. Such was the case with Niki, who went back to Germany after spending a year in the UK. The nineteen-year-old, who was just a year younger than Wilbur, hugged him goodbye after he had offered to ride with her to the airport. (Neither of them owned a car, they shared a cab together.) The two friends exchanged a long hug full of whispered promises to call everyday and visit when they got the chance.

It was a bittersweet ending to Niki’s stay in England, but was just the beginning of new opportunities and experiences. Wilbur had online friends that were scattered around Europe, and Niki would just be another face he’d have to see through a screen. Somehow he could tell that their online friendship would be a little different, filled with more late night talks and frequent face-cam calls.

He wasn’t complaining, not in the slightest.

At first, Wilbur had to admit, transitioning from a physical friendship to an online friendship was tough. Wilbur used to be able to just walk over to Niki’s dorm and drag her out whenever he knew they had free time. Now, having a relationship where they had to schedule calls half the time due to changes in school times and the physical distance, was tougher. Manageable, but still it was a slight annoyance and difficult at times.

None of this stopped them from calling on another almost daily. They usually talked in the evenings, sometimes eating dinner together over call or studying even though they were in different schools taking different subjects.

One time Niki called him and they talked while she dyed her hair bright pink. Wilbur chatted with her the whole time and laughed when her roommate barged in and demanded that Niki leave the bathroom so she could use it. It surely was an experience, dealing with crunchy audio quality as well as Niki’s hair dye slip ups. Nevertheless it was a fun call, lasting hours.

Another time both of them arranged to paint their nails together over call. Wilbur painted his black, and Niki laughed at him and called him an emo boy. He only called her an e-girl in return, even though it wasn’t really true and hardly an insult. It made the both of them laugh.

Sometimes, on the days they were more worn out, Wilbur would pull out his guitar and strum the strings, writing down chords and whispering lyrics to himself. Niki would sit in her room countries away with her sketchbook open on her desk, doodling, as she listened to him write his music and play his guitar. Sometimes she’d give him her own input, but a lot of times they sat together in silence, grateful for the late-night company on a day that could have gone a little better than it actually did.

Other times they simply chatted. Venting to one another about their problems. Trash talking professors they disliked. Complaining about their school workload or artblock they respectively

got from not being able to write music or draw for days because of lack of inspiration. Just normal everyday things they talked about to fill the silence and enjoy each other's company.

What Wilbur loved about Niki is that even on the days where he couldn't bring himself to get out of bed or respond to his messages, Niki would still make the effort to reach out to him. Little messages asking how he was doing, messages of support, or pictures of cute cats or art that she thought would brighten his day just a little. Wilbur always made sure he eventually thanked her for her undying support through his tough mental health days. He made sure to show his support on Niki's own tough mental health days, to return the favor.

Wilbur didn't count, no, he definitely did not count, the days they were apart. Not the whole year and couple months they spent away from each other, no. And he definitely did not spend hours rambling his heart out as soon as he got a plane ticket to Germany to see his best friend.

For him, it was easier to plan the trip. Wilbur dropped out of college months ago to pursue a career in music, with a side gig in online entertainment as well as working hours at his local Tesco. It was a lot to handle, especially since his mother wasn't too fond of his decision. While she was always one to encourage her son to chase after his dreams and achieve his goals she was also a firm believer in having a strong academic education.

Oddly enough, it was his grandmother and his sister, whom he rarely talked to anymore, that were happy that he was pursuing his dreams. It really helped to fill the gap that his parents had left. His father left him, his mother, and his sister years ago. And now his mother decided to try and convince him into finishing college and put off his musical career after he already made his decision. At least she was supportive in the background.

Niki was also one of his biggest supporters, if not the biggest supporter of his decision to pursue music. She was there when Wilbur announced that he had dropped out of school to join his bandmates in their house to write music together. She was there to help him along with his lyrics and chords, even with her limited musical education. Wilbur didn't really care though, he valued his friend's input.

And Wilbur was going to show Niki how much he truly appreciated her over the week and a half he was spending in Germany during her spring break.

Wilbur had visited a lot of places in Europe, but Germany felt more special. Maybe it was the way that Niki had described the country and the city she lived in with fond details, but he held this visit close to his heart. In Germany he got to meet Niki's loud yet caring roommate, Minx. She was a spitfire of an Irish girl with dark purple hair who liked to wear devil horn clips in her hair. Their first interaction was a strange one, considering that Minx had promptly slapped him across the face before giving him a hug.

She said it was for the stupid way he had introduced himself to Niki back in college a while ago, and for continuing to be a good friend to Niki over the past couple of years.

He didn't really get what she meant until Niki explained how Minx had been her friend for a long time and she was the first one to hear about Wilbur's 'love' confession from her. But after that she always talked about Wilbur fondly enough for Minx to realize that they were truly just good friends and Wilbur didn't have any ulterior motives.

Wilbur silently praised both girls for getting strong and confident friends to keep at their side.

During his time in Germany Niki took him sightseeing. She didn't live in her hometown, but she showed him all the favorite places in her new town. They got coffee at her favorite shop, went out

for lunch at her favorite restaurant, and saw a German movie at the local theater. Wilbur couldn't understand a word they were saying, not really anyway, but he enjoyed the experience nonetheless.

When they weren't acting like tourists they spent time at Niki's apartment. Wilbur had a hotel room down the street but he only ever used the room to sleep there, and actually spent a night on Niki's sofa one night when they all got a little too drunk to walk around the streets safely that night.

What Wilbur had enjoyed the most was being back in Niki's company. He didn't realize how much he craved her presence until he was at her side. Seeing her laugh, smile, and live in real life opposed to watching her through a screen was so very different. He missed how they were able to hug and hang out together in real time. It was so much better than having a friendship through a screen.

But good things must come to an end. When their time together was up, Niki took a cab with him down to the airport to wish him well and see him off. Just like Wilbur had done over a year ago when he went to see Niki off as she went back to Germany. Like last time, they exchanged a tear-filled hug before parting ways, with promises to message and call when Wilbur was back in England.

Still, it was painful, having to say goodbye to your best friend, to return to a friendship that was through a screen and not in a physical reality. But Niki assured him how this wouldn't change anything, assuring him how they would still call as often as they did before, and that he could always visit again when summer came around.

And Wilbur was ever so grateful for her optimism and the smile that she had given him before they parted ways.

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[Shuffling is heard through the microphone]

[There is a pause before sounds through the microphone grow fainter]

[Murmured voices are heard on the other end]

[None of the voices are discernible]

[Someone laughs faintly]

[Sounds are distorted]

[A pause]

[Sounds become clear again]

[A throat is cleared]

"Once I told you that I thought you were the only one that would ever understand me."

[Another pause]

“I’m not sure if that’s true anymore. I guess when you’ve been stuck with the same people for the better part of two - two years? Yeah? Yeah. Well, they get to know you really well.”

“I’ve told you about them before. But you can only get to know someone so well when you’ve only heard about them. Meeting them is so much, so much more, emotional? I’m not what word I should use there. My mind has gone blank.”

“That doesn’t happen often. Guess I really am nervous.”

[Laughter]

“But just know that they mean a lot to me, and in return, they care a lot for me as well.”

• • • * • • •

“How is it, in England I mean? Aren’t things a little crazy over there right now?”

Wilbur tapped his fingers in a steady rhythm against his desk. He was staring at Niki as she doodled away on the side margins of her notebook. He was pretending not to notice how observant he was being even when they were separated by a screen. Both of them had decided to chat over a face-cam voice call instead of focus on their work that probably needed to be done. Like Wilbur’s song writing or Niki’s schoolwork.

He pulled his fingers away from the desk, opting to sit his hands in his lap instead as he leaned back in his seat.

“I don’t know what the big deal is,” he said honestly. “I think some severe strain of the flu is going around.”

Niki looked up from her sketchbook, staring into her webcam and gave him a confused look.

“How severe?” she asked, sounding mildly concerned. Wilbur only shrugged in response. He didn’t know much about it, no one really did unless you were working in healthcare or for the government. The only reason he knew what he knew was because his mother decided to rant about it to him last week. She was quite the chatterbox when it came to subjects that she knew a lot about or was passionate about.

His mother, who was a midwife at a hospital, said that they were swarmed with patients as of late. Some came in with symptoms like fevers, vomiting, and coughs, while others had stranger symptoms, like dry, irritated skin or coughing up blood. His mother had been volunteering among the regular nurses due to the large incline of patients that had been admitted into the hospital, and she said to him one time while calling last week that the weirdest thing was that all the patients had one thing in common, irregular heartbeats. Wilbur has no medical knowledge, but he assumes by the way his mother sounded so worried that it wasn’t a good sign.

“Honestly, no one really knows much about it,” Wilbur said. “I’ve just been opting to stay inside, as much as I hate it, but getting sick is worse. But I got the house to myself, my bandmates are off visiting some friends and family, or something like that.”

His bandmates were away at the moment. One of them was visiting their sister, who was hospitalized due to this new virus. Another one was off visiting some family for some event, a

wedding or something along those lines, and the third was just out of town for the week. It was kinda fun, he had to admit, to have the house all to himself.

“You don’t know much about it or people aren’t telling you enough about it?” Niki inquired. Her sketchbook had been set to the side and her full attention was on Wilbur.

Wilbur paused. Now that he thought about it, no one was really telling him anything about it. People were still living normally since the government was brushing off their concerns. The most he heard about it was from his mother, who was a natural chatterbox, so even if she was told to keep information on the low she likely wouldn’t be able to keep it all to herself. But it was mildly concerning that the government wasn’t saying anything about it when his mother mentioned how severe this virus could be. If Wilbur had to bet he’d say that there were already people dead due to this virus.

Niki took his silence as an answer enough. She sighed and ran a hand through her hair. She looked worried and Wilbur couldn’t help but feel a little bad about it, since she was probably worried for him.

“My cousin wanted to visit England this summer,” she said, seemingly out of the blue. “You know what they told me?”

“What?”

“They said that the borders were closed. Did you even know this?”

Now Wilbur was definitely confused and concerned. Why in the world would the British government close the UK’s borders without telling their people? How would that benefit them? What were they trying to hide?

“When did you hear about that?” Wilbur asked.

“Maybe a week ago,” Niki said. “It honestly slipped my mind until the international news mentioned how bad the flu was in the UK right now.”

“Well,” Wilbur said, hesitating. “I’m not going to worry about it too much unless they declare a national state of emergency. Worrying about it will do *wonders* for my anxiety.”

“Oh, I shouldn’t have brought it up then!” Niki rushed to say. She was always looking out of Wilbur, knowing how his anxiety and depression got to him. Wilbur just brushed it off, offering his friend a smile.

“It’s fine, really,” Wilbur said, trying to comfort his friend. “Now, have you heard anything else interesting lately? What happened to that one bitch of a professor?”

• • • * • • •

“But it still hurts, knowing that you’re gone.”

“You were my best friend.”

“And now we’ll never see each other again, most likely.”

“I like to remain hopeful, even though it makes me a fool.”

[Long pause]

“Still, no one knows what’s happened outside of the UK. Maybe you’re alive out there, living normally, wondering what happened to me. Maybe not. Likely not.”

“Techno doesn’t believe that the rest of the world is still living normally. He thinks someone would have come to England’s aid if that was the case. Phil thinks the same, even if he doesn’t really voice his opinions out loud. So I can only hope that you’ve died peacefully or have become one badass motherfucker doing her best to survive in this shit world.”

[Laughter]

[It fades away to silence moments later]

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Seven days.

Seven days Wilbur had spent locked up in his empty house, alone, with no one left to help him. The last call he got from his mother was seven days ago, when he first heard about the hospital being overrun by *zombies* of all things. She had sounded scared and confused, and when their call cut out, Wilbur panicked. He only thinks that it's fair to panic when you can't reach out to your mother, the spare family that you have left. It had been a week since then and every time Wilbur called her she didn't pick up. He could only assume the worst.

From his sister it had been five days. Five days had gone by since they had last called. She had called to ask if he had heard from their mother recently. He told her the bitter truth, the truth that their mother was likely gone. His sister asked how he was doing. Wilbur had said terrible. His sister didn't stay on the call much longer than that, having her husband to look out for as well. There was now radio silence from her as well. Wilbur didn't like to dwell on that fact.

His bandmates, two, two days. All three had called throughout the week, but he started getting calls from fewer of them as the days went on. Two days ago, only one had called, asking if he had heard from the others that day. He hadn't. Then, today when he reached out, there was no one there to pick up the call.

From Niki, it had been just one day. She had called him every day, multiple times as well, as soon as she had gotten the news about the fall of the hospitals around the country. She was worried for him, his safety, his anxiety, his depression, his overall state of being. He can't even count how many times he had cried over their calls, explaining how each person he loved he had slowly lost contact with. Niki was the only one left.

But one night's sleep and over a dozen missed calls later, Niki was now gone as well, leaving Wilbur alone with himself and his collapsing mind.

He cradled his phone in his hand, pressing the call button over and over, but every time his call doesn't go through. He's called Niki at least ten times now in the past fifteen minutes. His number of calls in his phone's archive keeps increasing. And she still hasn't picked up. He had tried Discord at first, but his internet had been down for days. He has Niki's phone number, of course,

but either the international signal isn't getting through or she's just not picking up.

Niki always picks up his calls.

He was frantically trying to reach out to her, panicking as he called again.

"The number you are trying to reach is currently unavailable. If you'd like to leave a message for their voicemail, please speak after you hear the tone. If you think this is a mistake, please cancel your call and try again, or press '1' for more information. Thank you."

"FUCK YOU!" Wilbur shouted as he threw his phone across the room, watching it bounce against the wall before falling to the carpeted floor, lying there mockingly.

He buried his face in his knees, wrapping his arms around his legs. He rocked back and forth slowly, trying to calm himself. Trying to ground himself.

Old habits have come back to haunt him. He's ashamed to admit that the razor in his bathroom has had more use in the past couple of days than it has in weeks, in years if we're talking about the action he's used it for. His skin is proof of that, as well as the towels and sink that are stained with dried blood.

He's been having trouble eating, anxiety making him feel nauseous more often than not. He can't bring himself to eat more than one meal a day, just to survive. If he eats more than that he can't stop the vomit that rises in his throat that he has to puke up into the toilet.

He's pulled out a lot of hair pacing around his room or sitting on the floor rocking back and forth trying to survive through the panic attacks he's been having. He keeps screaming at the walls, shouting, willing the pain to go away. It doesn't, and he keeps going through this cycle of suffering.

He keeps waiting for someone, anyone, to pick up his phone calls.

No one does.

He is completely, and utterly, alone.

And as the world dies around him, Wilbur thinks that he is dying too.

• • • * • • •

"I have to admit, things were rough in the beginning. I have the scars, both mental and physical, to prove that. I consider myself one lucky bastard that I found help before I did something reckless."

[Pause]

"Or before I gave up completely."

[Shuffling is heard through the microphone]

[Sound becomes unclear and distorted momentarily]

[There is a fumbling sound]

[A thumping sound is heard seconds later]

“Shit!”

[More fumbling and shuffling]

[A murmured voice is heard]

[The voice and words are not discernible]

[Sound becomes clear again]

[Dry laughter]

“Sorry, dropped my phone.”

“I’m still an idiot.”

“I guess an apocalypse can’t change that.”

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Wilbur’s voicemail inbox becomes his audio diary. He, of course, had the voice recording app on his phone, but that doesn’t fit the same purpose that his voicemail archive does. Every single call he makes, every single call that Niki doesn’t answer, are all saved on his phone, marking the days. He erased all the other data on his phone to ensure his phone would have enough storage to save all the calls. Games, other calls, apps, contacts, and at least half of his phone’s picture gallery has been deleted. It is no longer important in a world where those distractions could get you killed. Not to mention that his phone has to stay out of the way, only to be brought out in cases where he knows it’s safe to sit down and rant to it, to Niki, for fifteen or more minutes.

It’s been a couple of weeks since the beginning of the end of the world. Wilbur stayed in his house for as long as he could before abandoning it. At first it seemed smart to stay there, because the house was meant for a group of people and had a lot of supplies lying around. But the bittersweet memories and the dwindling supplies are the things that eventually drive him away from it. He realized rather quickly that due to the population of the city he was in meant there would be a lot of zombies. So he took what supplies he could find, stealing other stuff on his way out, before heading north.

He wanted to go south, to try and figure out a way across the English Channel, to find a way to Niki, but his chances of survival are next to none if he does that. Who knows how he’d get across the water, let alone figure out how to walk through multiple countries to find his way to Germany and to Niki’s city. It’d be near impossible, and there would be no telling if he’d survive or if Niki was there as well. Up north he’ll eventually reach places where there aren’t many zombies. Where snow will slow them down, as well as himself, but there would be safety.

He hoped as much.

What Wilbur does not expect is the people he meets on the way.

Technoblade, the bloody fucking American, was his first friend he made in this new world and

new reality. They were a strange duo, for multiple reasons. Techno was an American with long hair that was almost always tied up into a ponytail or bun, and he carried around a fucking sword. Wilbur was the tall guy with the guitar by his side (which he had stolen since he had to use his other guitar to bash some zombie's brains in) who lightheartedly joked with Techno to fill the void in his heart that had been left behind in Germany.

Wilbur could still remember the day where they raided a hunting shop for supplies. Techno surprisingly seemed to know what he was looking for, but Wilbur wandered around looking for whatever he thought could come in handy. He ended up finding a hunting crossbow that caught his eye. He took archery back in his younger schooling years, middle and highschool as Americans would call it. He had shot a crossbow before, even though it had been ages, but this thing could come in handy.

Techno's face was priceless when he saw Wilbur with the weapon, which he had decided to name *Chekhov's Gun*, mostly for fun but also because he thought it'd make Techno smile, or Niki if she knew. When they made camp for the night he remembered how he took out his phone, which ran solely on solar powered battery packs that could recharge it, ready to call Niki. Techno was watching him out of the corner of the eye, and while he wasn't a talkative fellow, Wilbur could see the curiosity in his eyes.

"Why keep that thing with you?" he had asked. "Isn't it just dead weight?"

Wilbur only shrugged in response as he pulled up Niki's contact, her smiling face staring at him as he hesitated to press the call button.

"I use it to call my friend," he answered. Techno's eyes widened in response.

"Do they pick up?"

"No. Unavailable, probably because cellular power is down throughout all of England."

"Then why call?"

Wilbur paused for a moment, the weight of his phone in his hands feeling like the weight of the world. He called Niki for a lot of reasons. There's the hope that Niki will pick up. It's a way to rant without feeling like he was being a burden. It's also his own version of self therapy, because if he didn't speak about the things that haunted him he was afraid that they'd swallow him whole and drag him under the earth. And maybe he calls because of the hope that even though Niki couldn't pick up, that maybe she'd heard him. Maybe it was because he was lonely, hoping his best friend was at his side instead of a teenager who was a few years younger than him and only had known him for a couple months as they traveled together.

"It's therapeutic," Wilbur said instead. "Helps me keep track of the days, and helps me to not let myself fall apart completely."

Techno nodded, and left him and the campsite to give him some space. Wilbur was quick to hit the call button after he left, the familiar tone of the robotic voice telling him that his call wasn't not going through. Then he ranted his heart out to the girl countries away, where a piece of his heart would always remain with.

“But still, I’ll never forget you Niki.”

“I’d rather let myself die than to throw away all our memories, our friendship, our connection. I’d never give that up.”

“I’ve written songs for you, ‘La Jolla’, ‘Since I Saw Vienna’, and ‘Saline Solution,’ just to name a few. They’re depressing, but they’re an outlet just like talking to you is.”

“Or well, how talking to you used to be.”

[Thumping noise is heard]

[Footsteps can be faintly heard in the background]

[There is also the faint sound of laughter as the footsteps pass by]

[The background sounds fade away]

[Pause]

“Tommy likes the songs a lot. He found an old cassette tape recorder and made me record all my songs onto a tape. I hear him listen to them all the time.”

“It’s a shame that Tubbo can’t hear them.”

“It’s a shame that you can’t either.”

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Tommy was an interesting character. Tubbo too.

Wilbur still remembered how they found them half starved in the forest, running off of a few hours of sleep and adrenaline. Children, surviving in an apocalypse, using weapons and stealing items like it was the most normal thing in the world. They’re only sixteen, Wilbur believed. They only threw out guesses to how old they might possibly be, but the boys never gave them a firm answer. Still, it’s an answer enough.

They’re too young to be having to deal with this chaos, with this depression, with this world falling apart and restitching itself at its seams.

Something clearly traumatic happened to the boys. Nothing like what the adults in their northern house went through. Techno lost his family, Phil lost his wife, and Wilbur lost Niki. He doesn’t know what the boys’ lost, but he knows they lost something. It’s easy to recognize the far-off look in their eyes when their minds wandered. He recognized it in himself. He can’t help but worry for the boys.

Not to mention that both of the boys made it clear that they were not always mute or deaf before the zombie apocalypse. Something made Tommy decide that not speaking was better than speaking. Something happened that was the reason to why he’d rather give up his voice than share his words with everyone. Something happened that made Tubbo lose his hearing and have burn scars that covered his body. There was something that was the cause of the reason why he woke up screaming in the middle of the night on occasion.

Wilbur didn't know what happened, and he's not sure if he ever will know, but he wanted to help nevertheless.

It's what Niki would have done. She would have taken one look at those boys and immediately would have claimed them as her own. She would have swept them into an embrace, sat them down with a cup of hot cocoa or tea and got them to talk to her without making them feel obligated to say something. She would have been the big sister that they never had, or the big sister that they had lost, in order to fill in a gap that was left in their hearts. She would always be there for them, because they needed a sense of security, a grounding embrace that would stay there to protect them.

But that was Niki, and he was Wilbur. And there was a pretty clear difference between the two of them.

At least he had Techno and Phil here to help. The two boys adored them. Tommy loved to tag along with Techno and work in the garden or mock fence with him. Tubbo liked to watch Phil mess with runes and magical books that decided to appear one day.

Wilbur didn't feel like he had much to offer them, other than some poor jokes that he said to try and lift the mood.

That's until he brought out his guitar one day. For months it had sat in his room, untouched, and out of the way. He hadn't touched the thing in ages, since the beginning of the apocalypse really, when he stole it from a music store after the unfortunate accident that broke his previous one. Every now and then, like when he first met Phil, Techno, and the boys, he'd get it out to play a little tune, but nothing more than that. He couldn't bring himself to play, painful memories always resurfacing when he'd tune it to play. Too many memories of the girl with the glowing smile that was always there to support him, who had to leave him behind.

But he found himself playing more often, wanting to find a way to connect with the kids, to be there for them. He'd stay up late into the night, sitting by himself in the garden strumming chords and whispering lyrics under his breath. He even stole one of the notebooks that they had laying around the house for the boys to communicate with so he could write down the chords and lyrics to his songs.

Niki was one of his muses. The friend he had to leave behind. Other things inspired him as well, as things do with music. His travels during the beginning of the end of the world. His dreams that were no longer achievable. The city that gave him asthma and nearly choked the life out of him before he moved on from that depressing time in his life. Those are just a few that he can name, or wanted to name.

When he finally found himself ready to perform for the boys he was nervous. It's really no surprise. He's only ever played a tune or two for his newfound family, and never for long, and not for ages. Before that, the last people he sang and played guitar for were his bandmates and Niki. From his bandmates he expected mild criticism and support, because they were working together to write songs for a larger audience. From Niki he expected the undying support she showed him, because she knew how important his passions were to him, and she'd never make him feel bad about them.

From his new family, he didn't know what to expect.

But he certainly didn't expect for Tommy to approach him with a cassette tape recorder and demand he record his songs after his first performance of them. He didn't expect for a *deaf* Tubbo to ask him to help learn the chords on the guitar and ukulele that he brought home and hung onto

like a lifeline. He didn't expect for Techno to give him a smile and invite him to play whenever he liked in their room instead of the garden during the night. He didn't expect for Phil to ask him to play them a tune or song nearly every night before they all turned in for the night so they could all sleep well.

He didn't expect to be loved unconditionally from a group of people that he met only a year ago. He didn't expect to find love in a world that has fallen apart. He didn't expect that he could learn to love again.

He didn't expect to find himself moving on from the girl that he had lost years ago.

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[Pause]

"You must understand that a part of me needs to move on. To accept that you aren't coming back. That somewhere in Germany you'll remain, while I remain in England. That's just something I have to accept, even if it's hard."

"I've noticed that I desperately need to move on. From my pain, my past, my dreams that are no longer achievable."

[Pause]

"Even from you."

[Long shaky intake of breath]

[Long shaky exhale of breath]

"Maybe I need to stop calling you."

"No, I need to stop calling you."

"I need to let go."

[Long pause]

[Shuffling is heard through the microphone]

[Another short pause]

"It's been two years Niki, and I'm still in the five stages of grief when it comes to you. I've been through denial, anger, bargaining, yet I've been stuck in depression for over a year."

"You know what comes next."

"That's why I'm saying goodbye for one last time."

[Pause]

[A choking sound is followed by a shaky breath]

“I love you Niki. I always will. A part of my heart will always belong to you. I’m sure you know this. I’m sure that you would say the same. Because we were best friends, no doubt about it. Our friends would tell us as much. We were platonic soulmates for life.”

“But I’ve learned to open my heart to others. I’ve learned to love again. Now I have three younger brothers and a father figure that I’d never thought I would have again.”

“I can’t stay stuck on you anymore. I know, you know, they know.”

“So this is goodbye.”

[Pause]

“I love you Niki Nihachu. I will always remember you and hold our memories of one another close to my heart. But I’m letting you go, I’m moving on, I’m accepting that you’re gone. This is our final farewell, the end to our symphony.”

“Goodbye Niki.”

“Rest in peace.”

[End of transcript]

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Voicemail after voicemail, photo after photo, video after video, Wilbur was looking at them all. Memories that belonged to the past. A past life that belonged to a past world. So much has changed since then, but Wilbur still misses it. Misses her.

He hadn’t touched his phone in a long time. Not in months, not since the boys entered his life, not since he started playing guitar again. It had honestly slipped his mind. He used to call Niki weekly, telling her all about his adventures in this new world. But he hadn’t sat down to find the time in ages, then he had misplaced his phone. With no need to feel like he had to rant to the ghost of his best friend and forgetting where he had put his phone, he had forgotten it.

But reorganizing a drawer made him stumble upon the outdated device. Feeling guilty he had plugged his phone into the solar powered battery charger and left it to charge for a couple hours while he let his mind wander to memories of her.

Bleach blonde hair. Warm brown eyes. Soft smiles and gentle embraces. A German girl with the biggest heart and kindest soul to exist. A girl with a fire in her that she held back to remain tame for those whom she loved. A girl that Wilbur used to call his best friend.

She was someone who he had let himself all but forget about. And now the guilt of that action had made him slowly stumble through the day. He was unfocused and clumsy, but he couldn’t bring himself to care.

Everyone knew that something was up with him. They saw how he acted out of it, his mind in a different place. They didn’t comment on it. They all had their days like that. But Wilbur knew that

they were worried for him. It was clear in the way that Tommy and Tubbo snuck up to check on him more throughout the day. It was clear in the way Techno invited him to the garden instead of going off by himself. It was clear in the way that Phil approached him and tried to start a conversation with him instead of the other way around.

But now he was sitting atop his bed with a phone in his hands, alone. The phone's battery was already beginning to die quickly, not meant to last as long as it had in this new world. He listened to his old voicemails he had left Niki months ago. Looked through the few photos and videos he had managed to keep saved on his phone in order to make room for more data in his voicemail archive. He was revisiting memories that he had long since buried. He felt guilty for forgetting the girl who he had promised never to forget.

A knock on the door caused him to look up from his phone and momentarily clear his thoughts. Phil popped his head through the door, and Wilbur met his eyes. He looked concerned.

"Can I come in mate?" he asked, standing in the doorway, a hand still on the doorknob of the half-open door. Wilbur nodded and Phil walked in, closing the door behind him. He sat on the edge of Wilbur's bed, looking at Wilbur and the phone in his hands.

"Everything alright?" Phil asked, looking to Wilbur's phone. It had been a long time since Phil had seen it, most likely. He knew about Wilbur's habit of calling Niki and venting to her through voicemails she'd never hear. He hadn't felt the need to in such a long time that it was probably strange to see it now. Especially when Wilbur had dried tear tracks on his face and looked miserable as he held the phone in his hands.

"I forgot Phil," Wilbur whispered. "I let myself forget about her. I haven't bothered to call in so long, and then I misplaced my phone and forgot. I feel so guilty for forgetting. I used to call all the time to talk to her."

"Aw mate," Phil said, scooting back on the bed so he could lean against the wall and sit right next to Wilbur. "That's not forgetting, that's moving on."

"But I can't!" Wilbur exclaimed, choking back a sob. "What would she say if I told her that I moved on from her, letting myself forget her?"

"That's not what I'm saying Wil," Phil said kindly. "I'm not saying you'll forget her. I'm saying that you're accepting that she's gone. Like your brothers' families and my own. We've all accepted that they're gone, but you're still stuck on her. And clearly that's hurting you."

Wilbur choked and tears slipped down his cheeks. He clenched his hands tightly around the device that was between them.

"She was all I had left," Wilbur said quietly. "And I have to let that all go?"

"Of course not!" Phil reassured him. He put a hand on Wilbur's knee and squeezed it gently. "You'll always remember your time together. Nothing can replace that. But there's room in your heart for more people, more memories. You're not replacing her, nothing can. You just have to let go, you have to say goodbye."

"I don't want to though."

Phil gave him an apologetic look. He then opened his arms wide and Wilbur let himself fall into them, hugging his pseudo father tightly. A hand rubbed up and down his back in a comforting pattern that made Wilbur choke on his tears again.

“I’m no therapist, but I know it’s not healthy to hang on so tightly to the past,” Phil said, whispering into Wilbur’s ear. “What do you think your friend would say if she saw you like this, so hung up on the memories of her in an unhealthy matter? You have to learn to let go, to move on and to heal. You’re not betraying her by moving on, you’re honoring her memory by keeping your memories of her close, without letting yourself stay in this depression.”

Wilbur tucked his head into Phil’s neck. He knew he was right, but it still hurt. He didn’t want to accept that Niki was gone. That’s why he had been calling her for so long, hung up on the memories of them, of her. But he knew he could still remember her without letting himself stay depressed like this.

It’s what Niki would want. She would hate to see him like this. She would hate to see him wallowing in his own misery, trying to hold onto memories and dreams that would forever remain in the past.

When he looked up through tearstained eyes he could practically see Niki standing across the room. He could almost hear her whisper ‘you have to let me go’ as she smiled at him. It made him choke on his own breath, and he took into a shaky breath as he tried to bite back more tears.

“We need you to move on Wilbur,” Phil said softly. “Be it today or tomorrow, but we hate seeing you like this. Me and your brothers don’t want to see you suffer. You have to say goodbye Wil.”

Wilbur nodded, and pulled away from Phil. He wiped his eyes with the sleeve of his sweater and sniffled. He adjusted the beanie atop his head and gave Phil a small smile. Phil smiled back at him, an expression both happy and sad.

“I think I have one last phone call to make,” Wilbur choked out, laughing dryly to himself. Phil nodded and pushed himself away from the wall, getting up from the bed, Wilbur following suit.

“I’ll leave you to that mate,” he said, walking to the door and opening it to let himself out. “Just remember that we’re here for you Wil. We all love you.”

And with one last smile Phil disappeared into the hall, closing the door behind him. Wilbur turned and looked down at his bed, staring at the small black device lying still atop the covers. It’s empty black screen looked up at him almost mockingly. He let himself grab it and quickly typed in the password before he backed out.

Instead of sitting on his bed he decided to sit under the window that is between his and Techno’s beds. He slid down to the floor, bringing the phone up to his face. He found Niki’s contact easily, it being the only saved number left in his contacts on his phone. The picture of her gorgeous face greeted him for a second before he dialed her number.

He can’t put this off any longer. It’s been too long since he went into grief over her. He knew that he needed to move on, even though it’s painful and feels like a betrayal.

But it’s what Phil wanted, what Techno wanted, what Tommy and Tubbo want. It’s what Niki *would* want.

It’s what he needed.

The familiar sound of the ringing met his ears when he puts the phone on speaker. He took a deep breath, ready for the robotic voice of the automated message to come next.

It didn't even take a moment until the ringing reached a stop.

“The number you are trying to reach is currently unavailable. If you’d like to leave a message for their voicemail, please speak after you hear the tone. If you think this is a mistake, please cancel your call and try again, or press ‘1’ for more information. Thank you.”

There’s a pause for a moment, then the awful beeping noise that came before the beginning of the voicemail recording. Wilbur watched the numbers for the recording time count, one, two, three, four. He shuffled on the floor, getting comfortable. He doesn’t know how long this call will last. Maybe a long time, maybe no time at all.

But it’s necessary for the long overdue closure.

He sighed, letting out a breath he didn’t know he was holding. Then he took in a long shaky breath, exhaling sharply before he cleared his throat quietly. Tears threatened to spill down his cheeks, but he willed them away.

He needs to move on.

He choked once during one of his breaths, nearly ruining his composure and breaking down again, but he managed to pull himself through. He imagined Phil waiting in the other room, sitting with Techno, Tommy, and Tubbo, waiting for him to move on. He imagined Niki, sitting next to him, smiling sadly, waiting for him to let go. He blinked, squeezing his eyes tightly before opening them, looking up at the ceiling as he finally readied himself in order to say goodbye to the girl that he had loved for so long, and held onto for so long. The girl he had refused to let go of.

Another beat passed, another number ticked up.

Then he opened his mouth to speak.

“Hey Niki, it’s Wil. Wilbur Soot. How long has it been, two years?”

End Notes

Here's some information: Niki may or may not be dead. It's entirely up to the viewer to believe what they want to believe. I decided a long time ago that characters mentioned in this series that aren't confirmed dead by another character would simply never be officially confirmed dead by me as the author. I will not be the one to decide their fate, that's up to you. Niki, Wilbur's bandmates, Wilbur's mother and sister, they could all still be alive. That's up to you to decide, whether or not you think they are dead or alive. I won't share my personal opinion, that ruins the thought that you get to decide on your own. I like to see your guy's thoughts and ideas and interpretations, it's fun. Feel free to share them with me, whatever you decide to believe. :)

This was meant to be no more than 6000 words but 9347 words later (according to my google doc, and that was before all the final edits i made in Ao3 so it's more than that now) we have, this. And like 1/9th of it is the voicemail that is between each of the segments of the story. Wack, am I right?

BTW, if you wanna just read the voicemail here's a link: [\[A Goodbye to Niki Nihachu\]](#) I didn't want to post it as its own one-shot but I know people might just want to read it on its own again. No extras or anything, just all the voicemail parts in order as a whole. Might

have a few mistakes here and there tho...

This is honestly I think my favorite part to this series. I say that every time I write a new part, but this is a type of writing style that I've never really done before. I had so much fun with the voicemail, because it reminds me of Wilbur's music with the retro computer sound effects and recordings in the beginning of them. That was a part of my inspiration for the beginning. I had to listen to like, four different voicemail recording thingies before I eventually made up my own, lol. Robot voices are weird, creepy too.

It's funny how you start out with a broad idea and fine-tune the details later. I wrote like 500-1000 words of the start of the one-shot, had a random idea, deleted everything I had already wrote, and started again. Boy am I glad I did that. Because if I didn't I think this one-shot would have ended up like the others in this series and taken me a month to write instead of just under a week. Doubt it would have been as long as it is as well. (I don't know how I almost wrote 10000 words wtf).

Thank you so much for reading and for all of your support. Thanks for any comments, kudos, bookmarks, whatever. Love you all <3

Until next time

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