

## divine intervention

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by Anonymous

### Summary

"If we went through this all again," he says, and it sounds so far away. "Would we still find each other?"

(Less than a metre away, Jaron stares at the sky. To his side, Bacon looks at the rubble by their feet. Even when you know it's coming, the end still feels like a loss you can't prepare for)

### Notes

this is somewhat of a companion piece to my first ever lifesteal fic, [atlantis](#)

there's just something about the 3ht and sadness that makes my brain go brrrr, apparently

The rubble is fresh.

Really, Planet should be used to walking amongst debris. He's just spent the past 24 hours of his life running for his life through the remnants of the server. People have tried to blow him up more times than he can count on both hands - and they'd often been successful as well. He's spent far too long hiding in explosion holes, trying to work out how likely they were to return from the warmth

of the stone and dirt.

The server had never seen more unrecognisable than it had in those moments, if he's being entirely honest. Builds that had been called home for nine months were destroyed in the blink of an eye. Stone hovered in mid-air, a pathwork left behind by those who no longer cared about the state of the world they left behind.

Planet had curled up in villager houses and hoped that the moment would never come to an end. He'd wasted time on the nether roof, playing along with whatever Spoke asked him to - only to realise it was nothing but a delaying tactic for the target painted on his back.

He'd spent so long travelling across netherrack in the overworld that seeing it no longer seemed wrong. The heady rush that came from applying a new heart - because even without the kill, there was something physically addicting about the rush of power - passed in the blink of an eye. He'd run through so many of them that his body no longer got the same boost of adrenaline. The bitter taste that came from exploits was accustomed to the back of his throat.

There's still mud on his shoes now.

It coats both Bacon and Jaron as well. There's dried blood on the hem of Jaron's shirt. Bacon's scarf is missing - it was something for their pursuers to grab onto, so it had to go. There are streaks of dirt on their skin, but they've all been running for far too long together to care about appearances. It somewhat matches the state of the world around them,

Ash and smoke the same colour as the bags underneath their eyes. The piles of anvils only a couple hundred of metres behind them, left there yesterday in the last-ditch attempt of living as they wanted to.

And in front of them, the first Three Heart Trio base stands as proud as ever.

In pieces.

"This place is a mess." Bacon kicks a stone into the crater. At some point, there had been a wall between the grass outside and what had once been a villager trading hall. That has long since disappeared. Now, weeds grow dangerously close to the edge. There are small piles of dirt where someone had stood too close and had to tower back up, and the couple of remaining composters have disappeared.

The stone hits the ground. It doesn't make any sort of special noise. It's barely even audible above the ringing in all three of their ears. Even without the explosions, having the world stretched so thin and for so long has left its mark.

It still feels funny, being so weightless. He's spent so long caring about every single half-heart dropped, that no longer having that familiar fear feels... wrong. Unsettling.

But isn't that just the state of the server, nowadays.

"I mean, we did blow it up first," Jaron says. "We were the originals. All of this?" He casts an arm out behind him, referring to the sea and the craters, and the blood-stained ground and the bedrock box encased in barriers. "Yeah, they're just copying us."

"Yeah." Planet's voice sounds weak, even to himself. He doesn't think that Jaron or Bacon notice. Or maybe they just don't mention it. Just as he doesn't mention the strain in their own.

There are the remains of a cobblestone bridge leading out from the doorway. It leads to a small

platform, and it's so achingly familiar that Planet is moving before he can realise he hadn't tested the ground for stability yet. Before he can realise that he doesn't need to anymore. Even falling won't hurt him.

Jaron is quick to follow him. They both recognise this place - and maybe it's Planet that moves first, but Jaron knows exactly what's going through his mind. They make their way to the platform and stand in the shell of the place that used to be their home.

Bacon doesn't join them, instead going to make his way out of the ruins. He'd barely gotten through the space where the door used to be, but he's already pulling himself up and out. There's so much still to see, and staying in the same place for too long makes them all uncomfortable.

"Bacon!" Planet says "Come back here! I'm trying to do something!"

To his credit, Bacon stops trying to leave as soon as Planet opens his mouth. He turns around slowly, in that faux-annoyed way they've gotten so good at practising around each other, but he doesn't play into it. His feet land on the cobblestone bridge. It's only a few steps before he's standing on the same precarious platform as Planet and Jaron.

"This is where we stood originally."

Bacon frowns, but Jaron's face is lighting up. "Oh, yeah!" He says, "I remember!"

It hardly looks like the same place anymore. There are no lanterns to light up the dark corners. No chests of goods stashed around, with a shitty sugar cane farm outside. The beams that stretched out above their heads burnt down a long time ago. There's barely even a floor beneath their feet.

Planet's not sure if they're the same people anymore, either. He can't imagine going back to those moments. They've all changed too much.

It wouldn't feel right.

Bacon remembers, even if he doesn't say anything about it. It's obvious in the way that his expression shifts, and they've all spent too much time around each other to need words. The three of them stand there for a couple of moments. It feels like less than a second and an entire lifetime all at once.

"It feels like the world is ending," Planet says.

Jaron looks at him. "Have you seen outside?" he says, but he knows what they mean.

Nothing is going to be the same after this. Spawn is covered in water and structures that shouldn't be there. The ground is netherrack and the builds are half-replaced with end ships and jungle temples. The dirt that does remain is thick with the blood of a hundred different people. Most of it is gone, revealing the giant crater beneath.

Planet hasn't seen their most recent base, and he doesn't want to. He'd returned to the second base after they'd moved away, and seeing it in such a state had been unsettling. He'd prefer to keep it as it is in his memory.

This place is different. They did most of this damage themselves, so it's easy to trick himself into thinking this is what it's always looked like. It's only when he goes to take a breath that he can taste the exploits again. The air is still thick and heavy with it, even if it's pulled so thin that it's suffocating.

There's something odd about knowing that it's all coming to a halt. Waking up every day, only to find that the day has come where that's no longer needed. It hasn't been spoken, but it's understood.

The day is coming. Maybe it's already passed. The wind is no longer blowing. The air is warm.

Is the ash keeping the grass from growing, or is it something else? Can he still hear the waves from the ocean outside if he tries to listen above the noise of the ringing? Were the clouds always that gentle, and the hole where his hearts should be so empty?

Maybe the taste in his mouth hasn't been from the remnants of the exploits. Maybe it was loss. In some ways, they're more similar than it might initially seem.

"I think," Bacon says, slowly, "I liked this."

He isn't talking about the world outside.

"I liked it too."

Neither is Jaron.

This is where they stood a lifetime ago. There might be the ticking of a clock in the distance, or the timer might have rung hours ago. He knows that he failed to do something. He knows that it was important, and that he tried his best - but that this was what really mattered.

Being right here in this very moment. They're right beside him, and the air is thinner and tighter and heavier and thicker. If this is how the world ends, then Planet is happy.

"If we went through this all again," he says, and it sounds so far away. "Would we still find each other?"

This is the end, there's no doubt about that. It's impossible to restart, because what happened in the past is maybe the only thing that's stayed the same. He isn't asking about that. He's asking about what happens next.

He doesn't want to lose them.

"I don't know," Jaron says, because Jaron doesn't lie when it comes to things that matter. He's honest and he knows that it hurts, and he wasn't there when Bacon and Planet mourned him.

"I don't know," Bacon says, because he's also honest, and then he says, "But I'm glad we did this time."

That's all that matters. The time that they had together is sweeter because it had to come to an end. When it comes down to it, he isn't sure that there's anything he'd change. He'd be too afraid to lose them. Even if it's just for a moment, that's all that matters.

"I'm glad too," Planet says. "I had fun."

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