

Kings by Kindness

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Kings by Kindness

by [Interjection](#)

Summary

Techno and Tommy explore the Nether. Among their goals are to survive, get obscenely rich, and “bond as brothers,” whatever Phil had meant by *that*.

“You know, Tommy.” Techno coughs out another splatter of blood. “I don’t know if I’ve said this before, but I do think you’re a very good brother. The best brother.” Another pause. “Don’t tell Wilbur I said that, though.”

“That’s great,” Tommy says impatiently. “But I’d like you to drink this health potion before you fucking die, please.”

Notes

you don’t need to have read the other fics in this series to understand this fic—the focus will be on how techno and tommy develop their relationship throughout their journey (and have amazing adventures in the nether. bitches will get stabbed, i guarantee you)

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

As it turns out, there's nothing quite like a roving bandit attack to start the day. One thing never changes, despite country or dimension—there will *always* be people trying to violently take their stuff.

“Fuck,” Tommy grimaces, kicking away one attacker to be abruptly met with another, rusted sword in hand. He parries, steps back, and raises his loaded crossbow.

Thwack.

The piglin hits the ground moments later, dead.

A slash. Tommy whirls to see Techno cutting down another assailant with a dark netherite rapier—one of a few unusual weapons they've picked up over the course of this trip. A quick glance around reveals nothing more than bodies and splatters of deep red crimson.

“There were more,” Tommy frowns, stepping over a still-twitching arm. He raises his sword and stabs the chest it's attached to, just in case. The hand twitches once more; and then it stills.

“Probably all fled,” Techno hums. He flicks the dripping blood off his fingers and wipes the rest on the trunk of a nearby crimson tree. His sword is then sheathed, to Tommy's mild disgust. The weapon still had plenty of blood dripping down it—he's not the one that'll have to deal with the future sogginess, though, so he shrugs and turns back to kicking around the bodies. Maybe one of them will have something useful—coin, or parchment, or something else they can use to document their travels.

Techno steps over to stand beside him, glancing around. His eyes narrow, framed almost perfectly by the waves of pink hair he has somehow managed to keep delicately elegant despite the heat and hurry of the Nether.

“I don't think—”

Tommy stiffens as the sound of a tearing flesh assails his ears, sudden as a ghastr attack.

~*~

Fuck. Why did there have to be one more bandit? Why did they *have* to insist on coming back for revenge? They had to have known Tommy would kill them, right? Stupid bitches.

~*~

Techno is bleeding out. There's an ender chest. Right there. In his pack.

Tommy shakes it out, the motion almost as erratic as his own hands, presses the button to enlarge it, and lays it flat on the soft mycelium floor. It's springy, this ground—now how interesting is that?

Techno's cough. Blood—he's coughing blood and... stuff. Something pale white. Is that a piglin thing? Hybrid biology is weird. Few things are guaranteed. Tommy wants to cry, almost, that he might know what he's doing more if Techno was a full piglin, instead of a hybrid. At least there are medical texts for piglins he could have plausibly studied.

But. Potions—yes. Healing. He takes the bottle of smooth pink liquid out of the ender chest—they both stocked up on potions in the space, thankfully—and there’s not much in a single bottle, but that’s because... doses. Right. And regen—Tommy pulls out the other potion, a darker red almost the color of piglin blood.

Phil’s words drill through his mind again. *If there’s both an external and internal injury, drink a dose of regen first, and then apply healing to the wound.*

Tommy uncorks the bottle and holds awkwardly up to Techno’s lips.

“Techno. Potion,” he says, trying not to let the urgency spill over too much.

Techno’s eyes are closed, and his head rolls a bit at Tommy’s words. There’s already a tiny bit of blood pooling at the edge of his mouth.

“Techno! This isn’t fucking funny!” Tommy presses the edge of the potion bottle against quirked lips. “Come one.”

Another shift in position as he leans slightly closer. The air is so stupidly humid all of the sudden—when did that happen?

A sharp inhale. And then—

“You know, Tommy.” Techno coughs out another splatter of blood. “I don’t know if I’ve said this before, but I do think you’re a very good brother. The best brother.” Another pause. “Don’t tell Wilbur I said that, though.”

“That’s great,” Tommy says impatiently. “But I’d like you to drink this health potion before you fucking die, please.”

He fucking swears, this idiot’s commitment to stupid dramatics—

Techno latches his teeth onto the bottle and somehow manages to chug it down in one steady go, like the unnatural creature he is. Some color slowly begins to return to his skin.

With a wince and sharp inhale, Techno releases the bottle from his lips and lets it fall to the side, thudding softly into the spongy, red-rooted ground. His eyes close, but his hacking breath evens out slightly.

Right. Meanwhile... healing.

Tommy uncorks that bottle and pours a few drops into the wound—festering red, dark—piglin blood is darker than a human’s. Techno’s is somewhere in between, so—still dark. A similar color to drying crimson fungus, which takes on the discolored hue when they lose what little bit of moisture they have.

The flesh around it is jagged, like bits of meat grinded up and left open to the elements. The piglins of this area are fond of blades with jagged edges; especially painful to their enemies, and with the potential to cause death by infection or weakness long after a skirmish has ended. Tommy’s had to deal with the fuckers more than once since this trip began. He wishes he could ground them all to dust right now.

“Techno,” he says instead, only daring to shake Techno’s shoulders the slightest bit. “Techno, stay with me.”

“‘m here,” Techno mumbles. His eyes flutter, showing him awake. “Not gonna pull a Wilbur on you. Don’t worry.”

Tommy laughs. It’s a terribly weak sound. “I—that wasn’t funny, Techno.”

“It was,” Techno argues back. “You even laughed.”

“Bitch.”

“What does that even—nevermind. I’m too tired to deal with this right now.”

Hah! A win for the great and glorious Tommy Innit.

Then Tommy swallows, and drips more potion onto the wound. Its flesh warps slightly, stitching itself back up one thread by one, like thousands of tiny ants marching together to build a nest of leaves in formation.

(They have a terrarium of these ants back home—weaver ants. Techno had been so excited to discover the species a year back.)

More drips of the healing potion. It’s a delicate operation—Tommy’s seen what happens when healing potions are applied at incorrect rates. Wounds that bleed out too fast when someone is *too* careful, or that grow into bulbous, painful masses of flesh when too much is poured in at once.

It’s all about timing, as Techno would say.

“It *is* all about timing,” Techno agrees.

Tommy splutters. “How did you—”

“You get that—” A thoughtful hum. “That *look* on your face.”

As if that explains anything.

“Okay, well, we can’t all be mind readers,” Tommy retorts. He drips more potion, and watches the wound stitch itself, once again jumpstarted. The bleeding has stopped.

“Tommy,” Techno says. “You’re forgetting something.”

Tommy stiffens. “What? Did you get stabbed somewhere else? I swear to the fucking gods, Techno, *I’m* supposed to be the irresponsible one. You’re supposed to be the—I don’t know, the one who’s not shit at this.”

“I got stabbed, yeah,” Techno says, rolling his eyes. They look more awake now, which is a good sign—wait.

“Uh—” Tommy scrambles for the basics of his medical training. Shit. One of the most important things Phil had emphasized is asking the patient what hurts and what their concerns are, if they’re able to respond. “Fuck, I—how are you feeling, Big T? Doin’ good? No other bits stabbed?”

The current wounds looks like a spiked barbecue stick had pierced through Techno’s stomach. Probably not his actual stomach, though, because Tommy’s pretty sure Techno would be reporting way worse symptoms if that had happened. Probably just flesh and... Tommy squints. Maybe the bottom of a lung. A kidney or three—piglins have three kidneys and so does Techno, they had found out recently.

“I think I’m fine,” Techno says, huffing in clear amusement. “I’ll be walking again within a day.” He frowns, glancing around. Tommy is made suddenly, acutely aware of their position in the crimson forest—alone, surrounded by hoglins and lava vents and wandering piglins who, like that last group, are all too eager to take advantage of a pair of unwary travellers.

The red curtains of crimson vines and leafery dangling around them are both a blessing and a curse. They’ll obscure both Techno in his vulnerable position, and any incoming intruders. Tommy worries his lips slightly, dripping the last of the potion onto Techno’s wound and standing up to rock back and forth on his heels. Even the *ground* beneath them isn’t safe—who knows when some crittering mycelium crawler or other strange Nether creature might attack.

“You could probably move me,” Techno suggests dryly from below. His voice is still weak and hoarse, but he’s lost none of his usual bite. “You know. Since you’re now bigger *and* taller than me.”

Oh, right. Tommy *can* do that. Because he can shift into whatever the fuck he wants.

He’s spent so long not using the power that sometimes he still forgets.

“Um—right,” Tommy says. “Let’s... do that.”

While shapeshifting powers are objectively amazing, they are also a fucking pain in the ass to practice and use. He quickly decides on a strider, an animal basically made for carrying other animals, and closes his eyes.

And focuses. And focuses. And focuses some more.

“I have a feeling you’re not actually doing anything besides thinking too hard for your brain to handle,” Techno comments.

“Shut up!”

Eventually, Tommy manages to get into the form of a large strider—except he gets rid of the part about the body shivering without lava, because he’s *cool* and can use his *imagination* —and manages to get Techno on top of him.

“So. Where too, exactly?” Techno asks.

Tommy stops his slow tread. He hadn’t exactly thought *that* part through. Striders have kind of useless mouths he hasn’t figured out how to grow human vocal cords in, though, so he can only do his best approximation of a shrug.

Techno shifts a bit on top of him, a strangely light weight from the body of a strider. Tommy gets a lower view of the forest as well, which helps him see below all those vines and weeping branches for the feet of any attackers.

“Let’s head west,” Techno says eventually. “That’s where our map says the next friendly village would be.”

The *map*, a rudimentary document they had purchased from a fortress as one of the first things they did when they entered the Nether, has been wrong before. That’s why they’re drawing their own map. But it’s also the best bet they have for uncharted territory, so Tommy manages another slight shrug and sets off in the direction of *west*, where Techno’s finger points to.

“Oh come on!” Tommy yells. “There’s no way there’s not a *single* empty house around here we can borrow.”

The piglin eyes him with the dark gleam in her eye. Of all the piglins in this village, of course the only one who can speak any kind of human language has to also be one of the few constantly trying to get into their money pouch.

Trade and interaction with humans of the Overworld in this part of the Nether is heard of, but uncommon. A lot of far-flung settlements with different currencies don’t really care for gold, silver, or gems. Tommy had been hoping this one would be wowed enough by the novelty of human visitors that they could get some free housing around here.

But alas, it was not meant to be.

“You stay and no pay, I tell and people here get mad,” the piglin insists. “Leader will get mad. You do not want. Give 3 emeralds and we good. Good buy.”

“Just hand her the emeralds,” Techno says, leaning against the crimson-thatched walls of the house.

“Fine, fine.”

The piglin translator accepts the emeralds with a triumphant smug that Tommy wants to wipe off her face. She turns away, speaking to the village’s leader. They nod at each other while gruffing about for another few minutes, while Techno takes shallow breaths nearby. Tommy frowns at the tip of the bandages wrapped around his abdomen, just barely peeking out through the white cotton shirt.

Speaking of which, they should probably find something other than very obviously human clothes to wear around here too. Not only do they stick out like a sore thumb to any piglins passing, Overworld fibers also have the irritating tendency to catch on fire.

“So what now?” Tommy whispers, sidling up to Techno.

Techno shrugs.

Well. Fucking great.

~*~

They’re escorted to a small building at the edge of the village, made of some combination of orange netherrack bricks and a thatched roof of woven crimson vine. It’s among the closest to the dense swaths of crimson forest which creep along the village’s edge. Techno spies the occupants of a few other nearby huts—many seem to be missing a few limbs, an eye or 2, and still others have rot splotched across their skin like gangrene. Their eyes follow him and Tommy with curiosity, hunger, and maybe the slightest trace of pity.

“Well,” Tommy says when their escorts have left them alone. “If I had wanted to get ripped off for housing prices, I would have gone to rent a room in Las Nevadas.”

Techno snorts, opens the door of their assigned house, and steps inside. It fumes faintly of old cheese and pine bark, which is strange considering that neither of these are a thing in the Nether. Yet.

They’re greeted with one large, single room. A small bed is against a corner, and there’s what

looks like a fireplace at the opposite end. Or at least, Techno presumes it's a fireplace—a cauldron-shaped hunk of metal filled with chunks of netherrack. A three red sacks are stacked beside it, with various symbols he recognizes as the numbering system around this part of the Nether. They're labeled I , $\frac{2}{3}$, and $\frac{1}{3}$ respectively.

“One bed,” Tommy mutters, irritation still clear. Then he sighs. “Since you're injured, I guess you can have it.”

“Great,” Techno says mildly. “Because I wasn't going to give you a choice on the matter anyways.”

“*What*—you fucking bitch, see if I ever do anything nice for you again—”

~*~

“There's dust everywhere too,” Tommy grumbles as he shakes the bed cover free of its debris. Techno's nose twitches against the temporary cloud of must.

“You literally asked for the house no one lived in,” Techno points out.

“Fuck you.”

From rather painful personal experience, Techno knows he does need to rest the wound to minimize the chances of it breaking open and worsening. It's still to his annoyance that he's directed and practically confined to a bed by a fussy Tommy, though.

Instead of bedsheets, the vine-stuffed mattresses are covered by a reed-like mat of... also vines. They really do use those things everywhere. It's a much cooler surface than the plain, paved netherrack floor, however, so Techno gratefully sinks onto the bed and leans his back against the brick-rough wall.

Tommy tosses their bags against the other corner of the room with about as much care as Wilbur has for tossing out his dinner remains. Techno winces at the scrapes of dull protest.

“It'll be fine,” Tommy dismisses, glancing at him and rolling his eyes, as if thinking *here's Techno back at it again with his paranoid worries*.

“Hoglin leather doesn't mean it's indestructible,” Techno gripes.

“But it's close enough,” Tommy counters.

“Those were a pain to buy.” Techno had spent nearly half an hour getting a decent price. He has *personal stake* in successfully talking sense into Tommy.

“We could always do it my way next time and just borrow the stupid things without asking.”

Techno tightens the bandages slightly and lies down on the bed, taking in another evened breath. “That's called robbery.”

Tommy smiles thinly. “Fucking robbery. My favorite pastime.”

~*~

“What do you want for lunch?” Tommy asks after sufficiently enough time has passed with them staring away from each other that the previous argument could be considered, as Wilbur might say, *left in the crater*.

“Do we have potatoes?”

“We ran out in the first 3 days.”

Techno sighs. They’d only begun their Nether expedition a little over a week ago, but it’s been nearly 2 decades since the first Overworld cities have established proper communications with the piglin communities in the western hemisphere. One would *think* some potato eyes have been traded by now—Techno’s own experiments have shown they manage to grow in the Nether climate well enough, albeit with a strange fishy taste.

“How about carrots?”

“You’ve eaten all of those as well too.”

“Dang.” Techno pauses, leaning a hand against his bandaged stomach. He should probably go for something light...

“Soup?” he tries. “With some of that dried fruit we *definitely* still have, unless you ate them all.”

“Soup made with fruit is basically liquid candy.” Tommy wrinkles his nose in clear disgust.

“That’s a fucking abomination. I refuse to adhere to this breach upon my rights—”

A whirry ruffle as he shifts through the contents of their bag again.

“Milk and papayas,” Tommy finally declares. “I want papayas today.”

“Okay, how is *that* not liquid candy—”

“It’s fucking dried fruit!”

“Your hypocrisy has no bounds,” Techno sighs, shaking his head. “Both are dried fruits in a liquid. Your argument is pointless—”

“Yeah, but I’m not trying to boil the sweetness out of my fruit,” Tommy retorts. “Milk with papayas actually tastes *good*.”

Techno leans his bed-bound body closer to the edge, gaze staring straight into Tommy’s eyes like twin beams of light. “Fruit soup is delicious.”

“Those are 2 words that should be *illegal* together,” Tommy complains. “*Fucking illegal*.”

With a jolt, Techno catches a tossed bag of dried papaya and opens it with a frown. Since when did Tommy find a way to get rabbit hide in the Nether?

“But anyway,” Tommy continues, plopping down next to him with 2 bottles of milk cradled in his hands. “I make the rules round here, so we’re having something that’s *not* fucking... fruit soup. It’s dinner time!”

“Lunch.”

“Who the fuck cares, Techno. The sun left to get milk a long time ago ‘round here.”

Techno nearly chokes on his papaya piece, but he internally admits that Tommy has a point.

End Notes

i'm not sure how long i want to keep this going, but i think it's probably a while? this is basically techno and tommy exploring the Nether with more Application of Worldbuilding.

a quick rundown of stuff you should know i guess

-tommy can theoretically shapeshift into any form he wants, as long as no new mass is created or destroyed. i say theoretically because getting it right requires a large amount of experience and control he doesn't have too much of yet.

-this is set in a "realistic fantasy". there will be elements of minecraft and minecraft's magic (i mean they're literally in the Nether) but stuff like inventories and game mechanics gravity doesn't exist.

-there will be references to the dsmp, but nothing past nov. 16 happened. this is set in an au where wilbur survives nov 16, and sbi left the dsmp area afterwards.

-i would consider this the sequel to valley of serenity, though—the current situation of Techno and Tommy can be traced back to that fic's events. but again, this fic is very different in tone and ideas, and the time gap is large enough that it's not necessarily a direct sequel so much as a companion piece.

[discord](#) for discussion of stuff in general. we're known as the crow cult server

comments and kudos are always appreciated. concrit welcome. thanks for reading <3

special thanks to jay

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