

# Why Butters?

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# Kapitel 1: Chapter One

Why Butters?

Chapter One

Leopold Stotch had never thought about why he was being called 'Butters'. He always assumed that it was just something that *was*. Just like Stanley was Stan and everyone except Butters was calling Eric 'Cartman' or, more so 'fat-ass'.

However, that was before he heard Kenny McCormick, sitting on the table with his friends ask to noone special, quote unquote "Why Butters?". It wasn't the first time aforementioned blonde had heard the hooded boy say those words and that was the problem. Seeing as Kenny was so concerned with his nickname made Butters feel pretty ignorant.

Heck, if it were just his semi-friends calling him 'Butters' he'd just say it was an ordinary nickname originating from... well, whatever it was. But even his teachers and parents – his whole family - were calling him Butters. It was even marred on the stone of his grave and for all of fifteen years he had never cared and, without him knowing, had made Kenny McCormick desperate with worry - or so he thought.

It made Butters happy in a guilty way. As far as he remembered nobody had ever shown so much interest as to wonder about him. Kenny was an awfully kind guy, and it wasn't nice to keep his mind occupied with something that shouldn't even be his problem in the first place.

Therefore Butters decided that, if Kenny wanted to know, Butters was going to give him an answer.

After some research, that is.

And Butters assumed, it would be best to start with where it possibly began – his parents. However, as soon as he put one foot into their kitchen, he saw his father sitting on the table with a sour look on his face and cornflakes in his plain turquoise mug, whilst his mother was preparing a meal with her back turned towards him even though she must have noticed that he had entered the kitchen.

Oh, hamburgers.

"Butters, will you mind telling us why I have to drink cornflakes instead of coffee?", his father greeted him, his voice seething with undenied anger.

Butters couldn't even explain how after so many years, he was still able to put their groceries in the wrong place. He was forced to learn the alphabet even before his first day of school and could recite it since the first day his parents had told him to store the stuff he had used back into the kitchen cupboard by himself and that was around the ages of three or four.

His only explanation was that he was elsewhere with his mind during the difficult process of storing away his breakfast ingredients, though he couldn't really point his finger on what exactly his mind had been on. Maybe it had been on the grammar test in English language, possibly on the fact that he was going to get grounded if he didn't ace his Maths class, which really sucked because Maths wasn't really his favorite subject and all and anyway, even the smartest kids he knew had a problem with their teacher and her way of showing them "what a bunch of idiots they are". Teacher's words, not his.

"How often do I have to tell you, that you have to put everything back in order. Do you

see that?" His father showed him his mug. The cornflakes had turned soft and gooey, exactly the way Butters loved them if they had been drenched in cold milk instead of hot water. The mug left his field of vision and was put to his father's mouth, who took a few gulps from the peculiar mixture, grimacing in disgust as he swallowed. "Now your father has to drink that. Does your father have to drink cornflakes after a hard working day, Butters, does he?"

Butters was about to stammer an apology, when his father pointed to the ceiling. "You get up to your room right now. You are grounded, mister!"

Butters kept close attention to his grounded days and if the blonde remembered correctly he was still grounded for the fact that as Eric had told him to take care of some business of his and bring his grandmother some food – which was really nice of Eric, to take care of his grandmother - he was sent to a ghetto-ish (because Butters wasn't so sure what a ghetto was like or which criteria a district had to fulfill to be called ghetto) district in the north of South Park. Though one could hardly say north because, really, South Park was far too small to have districts and he was pretty sure the ghetto of South Park consisted of only one house, meaning the house of the McCormicks, which wasn't as Eric has informed him a real house but originally a club house or backyard shed of some sort. Anyway, he had been sent to some scary and decayed block where he was attacked by starving stray cats, which ripped his clothes to shreds so that they could get their claws on the meat he had put away in his pockets.

His parents had thought he had been playing bully and fought with a friend in school and grounded him for acting like some criminal he will certainly turn out to be if he kept that aggressive behavior and, as an afterthought, for disregarding the clothes his parents had bought from money they had pains to earn. In addition to not complete his mission (because the cats had stolen the food and even tried to eat Butters while they were at it) and being grounded, he hadn't even found Eric's grandmother to sincerely apologize. The other boy had been a swell friend and told him to stuff it when he explained what had happened. He had some nice pictures instead, Eric had told him, though Butters couldn't make much sense of the last statement.

So, he was still grounded for that incident and would be for the next three days, wherefore he wondered, whether the new punishment would start today or when the last punishment ended.

Probably the latter, he decided without asking, because his father didn't look like he had the patience to answer any of his questions and his mother still had her back to him, seemingly ignoring his presence.

No dinner for him, then.

And just like his dinner vanished the chance to ask his parents about his nickname.

With a sigh, Butters turned around, hanging his head low and marching up to his room to do his homework, rummaging through his bag to withdraw a sandwich he hadn't eaten during lunch break. Well, it hadn't even been his intention to eat it in the first place.

Putting his books on the desk, he leaned over his art homework. A badly drawn image of himself, his face copied from what he had seen in the mirror he had used. Their assignment had been to draw a pose typical to their character. Of course, Kyle had chosen a pose where he looked like some genius thinker. Eric had copied Einstein's sticking-tongue-out portrait, denying the more or less insignificant fact that the man had been a Jew. Though when Kyle pointed that out, it only led to a long and heated fight between the two, which again ended with them being kicked out of class for the

remaining time.

Butters had taken a long time choosing the pose (him smiling shyly into the mirror) even longer in choosing the two colors he should use – colors that were supposed to show their character. Craig had chosen cold colors, blue and white, he had seen it, because he was sitting beside the dark-haired boy. Bebe had used bright colors, yellow and orange, same as Kenny's actually.

Butters sighed, putting the sheet of paper down.

Kenny had helped him choose the pose *and* the colors. Once during class, as Kenny had walked up to the teachers desk, he had passed Butters table and noticed, that while all their classmates had started working on the drafts, Butters was still just staring into his mirror, unsure of what to do. It had been Kenny who told him that just openly smiling into the picture would be enough, because it certainly projected his character.

Butters had felt stupid for smiling into the mirror, while trying to catch that image. Until Kenny had grabbed his shoulders and, leaning over them, brightly smiled into the mirror, all the while whispering some dirty jokes in Butters ear, which made him blush more than smile. Butters was really good at drawing, but Kenny's presence had made him nervous in a tingly happy way and he hadn't even protested, when Kenny had started to guide his drawing hand, helping him create the disastrous draft that Butters would still keep and use as the one he was going to color.

Even though his parents might not be happy about the mark he was going to receive and would ground him.

For a short moment, the blonde had even been tempted to draw the smiling face he saw reflected in the mirror, but suppressed the urge. It wouldn't show his character. He knew that Stan had painted his best friend into his picture and probably nobody was going to protest it, but Butters, no, Kenny was no constant in his life and wouldn't fit into his picture at all.

It was pathetic.

Kenny had really helped him that day and Butters couldn't even figure something out that was supposed to be really easy.

But he would.

With a determined glare he thought, he would walk up to the person that really would have to know where his nickname came from, because he was a know-it-all and the smartest kid in school.

However, things were easier said than done.

The next day Kyle wasn't really in a good mood and when Butters wanted to talk to him, Stan had pulled him away by his arm, mumbling something about staying out of the other's way if he treasured his life and wait until his mood would be slightly better, which, as Stan assured him, wasn't going to happen anytime soon.

Lunch time was the next chance to talk to him but Kyle still seemed angry, all the while fuming about whatever and not even Stan or Kenny could calm him down; the latter had actually given up somewhere between first and third period. Next to Butters sat Eric droning on about food and that fucking Stewart and Board of Education, but he wasn't entirely listening, mostly thinking about how to approach his semi-friend without disturbing him in his anger routine.

It was actually after school, as Kyle was about to leave in a rush, that Butters got the courage to walk up to him. Waiting patiently behind his open locker until Kyle finally slammed the door shut. "Spit it out Butters. I don't have all day", the redhead acknowledge his presence, still looking sour.

The blonde knocked his knuckles together, eyes darting from left to right, avoiding to look directly into the face of the clever boy. "Hi... hiya, Kyle", he stuttered, eyes now intently inspecting the dirty floor. "J-just wanted t-ta ask ya somethin'." Kyle was impatiently tapping his foot, giving a slightly annoyed sigh, which made Butters lose most of the courage he had built up during the day.

Well, Stan had warned him, he mused. He had known that Kyle was in a bad mood. Had something to do with Eric, who was again on some sort of warpath against whatever it was that had made him angry this time. If the blonde had listened to him during lunch break he might have known.

"I... do ya..." he stammered.

"I do what?", Kyle snapped, and Butters cringed. "Listen, buddy, I'm in a bit of a hur—"

"My name!", the blonde suddenly yelped, surprising the Jew into taking a step back.

"Why d'ya call me B-Butters?" He almost choked on the question, regretting it the instant he had voiced it.

How should *Kyle* know?

Alright, so he did seem to know everything, but Butters wasn't deluding himself into believing, that the other actually *cared* enough to remember, that was if he even *did* know at some point of time, which he somehow highly doubted.

It had been a really dumb idea.

"Let me clarify this. ... Just to make sure", Kyle replied slowly, voice by now free of any anger and confusion, and Butters looked up in relief, spotting a slight smile tugging on the other's lips, amusement visible in the green eyes. "Your actual question is 'Why Butters?'" He asked, illustrating quotation marks with the help of his fingers, while imitating Kenny's almost desperately worried voice.

The blonde frowned.

Was he that easy to figure out?

"Then its 'Buttercup'", Kyle finally answered with a satisfied smirk, Butters' lack of reply enough response. "Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got to find a certain fat-ass somewhere in D.C." The redhead turned around and walked away with a lopsided grin, not even thinking about explaining his words.

What did he even mean with *Buttercup*?

"D'ya... d'ya mean I look like a buttercup or somethin'?" he called after the other boy, who did not react to his words. "K-kyle?" Confused, he tried to catch up with the long secure strides of the redhead, following him outside the school building. However, before he could reach Kyle, he was grabbed by his arm and instantly pulled to the side.

"Dude!"

Surprised, he stared at one irritated Stan Marsh.

"What did you tell him?" Butters didn't understand. "He's been moody since yesterday and I couldn't cheer him up the whole day and then you walk over to him and I was just about to save your life, because honestly, you do *not* wish to – oh *whatever*, just, *dude*, **what** did you tell him?", the dark haired boy exclaimed, pointing at his redhead friend, who was currently engaged in a lively discussion with a certain hooded boy.

"Just asked why ya call me Butters", he mumbled, stunned.

"That's it?", Stan asked after a moment of disappointed silence.

"Y-yeah."

"Wasn't it because of 'Butterscotch'?"

Butters paused before he looked up, surprised about the sudden jump in conversation. "Kyle said because of 'Buttercup'."

"Why 'Buttercup'?"

"Dunno. ... Why Butterscotch?"

"Well, Butters Stotch sounds a lot like Butterscotch."

"Ma name's Leopold Stotch..."

"So?"

"How d'ya get ta Butterscotch and then ta Butters?"

Butters had lost Stan at that point of conversation.

"I gotta go", Stan finally opted after a long awkward silence, as the dull noise of an airscrew reached their ears, the wind suddenly catching up and growing stronger. The dark-haired boy turned on his heels and rushed to his two friends, who looked up to the helicopter that was about to land beside them, navigated by some Mexican guy, who seemed to suddenly lose control of the machine, swinging from left to right. Butters watched, wide eyed and obviously horrified, how the Mexican tried to gain control and the three friends under the helicopter dashed in different directions to save themselves.

Of course, the machine went right Kenny's way.

"Watch out!", Butters yelled, immediately catching the attention of the accident prone boy, who stopped dead in his steps and the helicopter whooshed right over his head, barely avoiding him and landing less than an inch next to the blonde.

"Oh my God, they—" Stan started, probably already having imagined the death that surely had to have occurred in his mind, but did not and he looked a bit disappointed at that, too. "No, never mind."

"You bastards!"

"He didn't die, Kyle."

"No, but *we* could have died."

"Dude, wrong intonation. It's *could*."

"No, I mean *us*." Kyle clarified, ignoring the dirty look he was receiving from their still surprisingly pretty alive friend, but instead wrenched the metallic sliding door open, pointing one accusing finger at the stoned Mexican, who looked at them with a lopsided grin.

"See you, Butterscotch", Stan suddenly called, wrenching Kyle's attention off of the pilot and instead onto the blonde boy who was still quite shocked, mashing his knuckles together. The dark haired boy waved shortly in his direction before getting on the helicopter, pushing the Mexican guy out of the front seat and taking place instead.

"Yeah, see you, Buttercup", Kyle almost drawled the last word, a knowing smirk playing on his lips as he was punched in the shoulder, courtesy of one Kenny McCormick, who, after throwing a short glance at Butters, pushed his friend behind Stan on the helicopter, all the while mumbling profanities under his breath.

Butters was confused.

He didn't really think that Butterscotch was the reason and he didn't know what Kyle had meant with Buttercup and, oh, he would just ask Wendy, he decided, mildly frustrated. Wendy was the smartest girl he knew and certainly at par with Kyle.

He would ask Wendy.

Wendy always knew advice.

"I have no idea."

These four words somehow shattered the impeccable image Butters had of Wendy Testaburger, who he had found in the library, surrounded by piles of books about declarations with foreign names, many -ism's and long titles with a lot of x's and y's.

He hoped it wasn't something he should know for any of *his* classes or he would probably fail and get grounded. Again.

"I always thought it had something to do with you being as soft as butter", Bebe chirped. The blonde was sitting next to her best friend, head cocked in a contemplating pose, while playing with a strand of her long curly hair. "You are cute and friendly and all, you couldn't even harm a fly."

"Pussy", Red muttered under her breath, but Butters wasn't so sure about whether he had heard her right.

Probably not.

"Or maybe because you like butter a lot", Heather interjected.

"I-Ah, d-don't like butter a whole lot," Butters confessed. "And Kyle said Buttercup."

"Why would Kyle say that?", Wendy asked, confused.

"Maybe you should ask your parents. Looks like you got that nickname from them", Angelica reasoned, nibbling at the butt of her pen. "Buttercup sounds more like something your Granny would call you."

"Yeah, just like in that old song," Red intervened again. " *I'm proud to say that she's my buttercup. I'm in love. I'm all shook up. Ohuhuhu, ohu'*. Now, wouldn't that just fit lil' flamin' butterfly?" The other girls on the tabled stared blankly at their friend, who didn't even care about elaborating, just shoveling through some papers until she found the one she was looking for.

"Don't mind her", Bebe finally sighed, shaking her head, "she just has a thing for Kenny."

The blonde boy didn't really know what that had to do with him or her being *angry* with him, but he might have enraged her in some way or another. He had a tendency to do that without noticing.

"How come you don't know the answer?," Token interrupted his train of thought, not exactly sitting with the girls but having obviously over heard the conversation. Butters turned around to Token's table, spotting a twitching blonde and a desinterested dark haired boy who had abandoned his blue aviator hat somewhere around sixth grade.

"I-uh have never asked", he admitted, sinking his head low.

"And why do you ask now?"

"Because", Butters stopped, before shaking his head. "I'd like ta know. What do ya think?" Token stared at him with a blank look, probably contemplating the question. Butters let his eyes wander to Craig, who, without even looking up, just flipped him off with his very infamous middle finger.

"Gah! Don't look at me! Nyag, this pressure!", was all Tweak answered, barely concealing his sudden spasm, which led Craig to flip Butters off again.

"Have you ever thought about the option, that there is no answer to that question anymore?" Token finally offered. "That it is just something that might have happened because of a sick joke and nobody remembers the joke but just the outcome?"

"T-the joke's the answer, then." Butters reasoned.

"So, you would want to know a joke nobody remembers?"

"If that's what it takes", Butters answered, determined.

"Or maybe you should just take a look at your face, ugly!" Red interrupted, slamming her notes down on the table with more force than necessary. "It's *butters*." Her eyes flashed livid when she looked up, before she stood up and vanished with an indignant huff behind one of the shelves.

The blonde's eyes widened at the girls outburst.

He must have done something really terrible.

"You're not ugly," Angelica assured him.

"No, just fey", Clyde claimed dryly, not looking up from his homework.

"Douche, you've got it all wrong", Craig suddenly piped up in a bored tone. "Your nickname's not the answer to his question."

"Who's question?", Bebe asked intrigued, but Craig just flashed her the bird before turning back to his book, again completely ignoring everyone around him.

"God, Craig, is that all you are ever going to answer?" the blonde huffed, "Don't you dare flip me off again!" she yelled, when the darkhaired boy was about to raise his hand, probably to perform the expected gesture.

He flashed her anyway.

At that moment Butters decided it was time to go. It being late and all and Bebe was throwing books at the dark-haired teen's head, which sent Tweek nearly into hysterics and made the librarian abandon her seat near the door and swiftly walk over to the group with a furious look.

Butters didn't want to get caught in a situation like that because if his parents heard about it he would be grounded and he had still nine days left from the cat accident and the cornflakes incident. Speaking of his parents, he had to have been home around four and a quick look at his watch told him that he only had half an hour left.

"Ahh, shucks," was all Butters muttered before he started to bolt.

If he was lucky he could catch the bus home. He would just have to hurry and pray to whatever was listening, that maybe his parents were a few minutes late, that the bus actually came on time at least *once* in his lifetime and the lights would be green and no snow would cover any path they would take and maybe – Butters had a feeling that he was really pushing his luck there but he just could *not* risk being late for his punishment curfew.

However, as a matter of fact, it wasn't going to be Butters day.

At all.

It just had to happen an accident on the roads halfway across the town. Rumors would have it, that a boy fell from heaven and crashed on the grey pavement. Surprisingly, he survived the fall, an oncoming truck could actually push his breaks on time, but the trailer swayed, tipped over and the driver's cabin crashed into the corner shop, while the goods packed in wooden boxes, crushed said unfortunate boy.

It had been an instant death.

Butters hadn't been supposed to be on the 3.31 PM bus. He couldn't even use that accident as some sort of excuse, not that his parents would probably care.

In a panic reaction, he had left the bus, worked his way through the gawking crowd and took every short cut he knew to get to his house as soon as possible.

Yet, his mother's car was already parked in the garage.

And Butters had been grounded yet another two days for being two minutes late.

Eleven days, then.

His personal record had been three months and ten days.

That had been for walking around the gay red light district and behaving like a slut. At least, that's what his father had said. However, Butters had only asked one of the nice boys he met on the road for directions. Cartman had sent him to bring his uncle some medicine. If Butters was faced with problems, he should just ask for Charlie and everybody would immediately know who he was talking about and bring him to said person. When he had arrived at Main Street he couldn't find the house number, walked up and down the street several times, all the while being eyed with suspicion by the local residents who seemed to enjoy the warm weather on their threshold.



That's what the situation had looked like to the blonde at least.

Eventually, frustrated, he opted for a boy that had watched him with a slight smirk while he had been running around heedlessly, but still seemed to be the nicest among the crowd who stared at him with discomfort, and approached him with a friendly smile. As soon as he had mentioned he was looking for one Uncle Charlie, the brunette looked at him with a funny expression before giving a short laugh and offering to bring him to the meeting place, all the while eyeing the pills in the blonde's hands.

Butters had assumed the boy was in dire need of some medication as well, even offered him a pill for his help. The boy had been overjoyed and Butters thought he must have had one heck of a headache. The brunette wanted to serve him for the pills, which Butters declined.

Why would he need a servant?

Anyway it was then, while Butters followed the happily glowering boy, who became displeasingly touchy as he slung one arm around his shoulder and started to speak in a very low, husky voice almost flirtatiously. He only recognized that tone because it was the way Kenny always suggested his two closest friends a threesome. Though Jimmy had to explain to him what a threesome was. And that had made Butters blush. Furiously.

The blonde had difficulties to understand the quiet words of the unknown boy, and moved closer to his lips. He could feel the warm breath tickling his ears and he had to think of Kenny, cheeks reddening, and the brunette had smirked, had pressed feathered kisses to his chin and that had been how his father had spotted him on Main Street.

Followed by a lot of yelling, cursing, accusing, fighting between his parents and a ban to *ever* come anywhere near that street *again*. Butters had spent almost one and a half months in solitude until summer break ended and school started again.

The blonde had never been this anxious for school to start.

The following half-month ended without incident and Butters was facing his last day of being grounded, when his mother had lost her grip on a precious porcelain teapot after he had startled her with his morning greetings.

That had been another month.

The last ten days had been for coming late four times, adding up to a sum of ten minutes.

That had been his autumn break and Butters was once again very happy about being back to school, which had made his classmates almost throttle him after he declared exactly those words to Kyle, who had rolled his eyes and shook his head before muttering something about 'not even him being that much of a nerd', with a whole lot more swearing than Butters cared to remember.

Withdrawing a yogurt from his bag, he sat down on his bed, staring blankly at the ceiling with his head resting against the plain wall, digesting the information he had received that day.

So, basically, nobody knew anything.

He would have to ask Kyle again the next day. And probably try to lure out an explanation of Craig.

The dark-haired boy definitely knew that Butters was asking because of Kenny. So, his name wasn't the answer to the question, huh? Then what else should "Why Butters?" mean? Maybe he had misinterpreted the question and the blonde actually meant something akin to, uhm, whatever.

However, that wouldn't explain Kyle's behavior and, oh, Butters thought he could feel the beginning of a headache.

It really shouldn't be *this* hard to figure out the origins of a stupid nickname.

"I'm so stupid," Butters mumbled into his pillow, pushing his face deeper into the soft fabric. Maybe he should just give up. It's not like the answer would be at all world changing. No divine wonder would occur. People would still suffer from hunger, lose their loved ones and die ghastly deaths. No, all the answer would do was satisfy Butters own selfish desires.

He turned his head slightly, eyes fixed on the tree growing outside his window, leaves rustling in the slight breeze. The sun was about to set, he would have to do his homework and prepare for a test in algebra but he just couldn't get himself up.

Butters was never one to give in to his depressions. He was always looking at the bright side of life, nothing much could get him down.

So why was he feeling like one big failure?

There was no obligation towards Kenny. The blonde didn't actually know, that Butters tried to help him ease his mind. He had made no promise (besides with himself) but he had wanted so badly to do something for the blonde, who was always willing to help him and who he had never properly repaid.

Kenny (and Stan and Kyle) had helped him, when Eric forced him to sell some illegal stuff to elementary school kids and saved him from being discovered (as his luck was never the best) and being grounded. Kenny (and Craig) had been there, when some jocks decided it would be fun to throw Butters into the closest trash can and instantly returned the favor on his behalf. Kenny had brought him a cup of hot chocolate (after haggling Tweaks coffee money off the spasming blonde) when he had sat at the corner of a street, drenched in rain soaked clothes, unable to leave.

There were more occasions Kenny had helped him than Butters could count and he never realized.

His eyes widened in the dimly light.

Of course, he had known that Kenny had helped him more than once but Butters had never realized what an important role the other blonde actually played in his life.

Kenny was probably the only one he might call a *friend* - even if the other didn't feel so. Though, was somebody a friend if it was only one-sided?

Butters frowned, before he pressed his face into the pillow with a frustrated groan. He was sick of thinking and worrying so much. His breath eased gradually as he tried to push any and every thought that might iniquitously and inexplicably enter his mind into the back of his conscience. There was nothing to worry about, he reassured himself.

Slowly the chaos in his head settled down, replaced by an empty calm, vanishing into silent darkness as his mind went completely blank.

*I didn't do my homework!* was the first thought crossing his mind, when he woke up with a start, noticing that he had overslept. Well, not really *overslept* but by Butters standards he had only a little over an hour to get to school and about ten minutes to leave for the school bus. He couldn't follow his morning routine and he needed that sort of normalcy and sense of habit. He needed to wake up early, then use the bathroom, get dressed, prepare his cereal and then eat it while watching cartoons on the Disney channel. He would shut the TV off, when he could hear his parents waking up, slight thuds from the ceiling and soft voices whispering cloudy words to each other, and he would head to the kitchen to take the lunch his mother usually prepared

the evening before, because he used to leave the house before his parents got downstairs.

However, right now he was rushing through the first two steps of his usual routine, toothbrush sticking out of his mouth, while he simultaneously tried to slide his pants on, scuttling on one foot. The scent of coffee wafted through the air from the kitchen to the bathroom.

So his parents were already up?

Nevermind.

After partly successfully putting his clothes on, he spit the white foam into the sink, cleaned it with running water and stormed into his room, grabbing his bag and rushing down the stairs into the kitchen, where his father was sitting at the table, drinking his coffee. He looked up, when Butters halted in his tracks, breathing heavily.

"Morning, son", his father greeted. "Your mother prepared breakfast for you." He motioned to the plate that was sitting neatly on Butters' usual spot. That meant his mother was already long gone. He didn't know she was going to leave early that day. If that was the case she would have to go to some kind of conference but she still took her time preparing his meal. It had been so long since he had something other than cereal for breakfast and the thought of toast with fried ham was really appealing, but he had only a little time to get to the bus stop.

His father must have felt his hesitation, because he looked up with a raised eyebrow. "Sit down, son. I can bring you to school."

The blonde eyes widened, when he heard his father's words.

His parents were so *not* going to see him interact with the people at school. If they would know how he was treated among the other boys and girls and even *teachers* they would ground him for like *forever*.

Butters sure knew that he wasn't one of the popular crowd, actually he was in nobody's crowd. If he were lucky Stan, Kyle, Kenny and Eric would let him sit at their table. If he wasn't too noisy and would just keep quiet sometimes, when he had a very good day (and Token always claimed that depended on Tweak), Craig wouldn't bat him off their table, when he sat down beside Clyde. Most of the time, though, he sat alone or with Eric, but that was only when the brunette had a big fight with Kyle. Like yesterday.

It wasn't like Stan and Kyle would object, when he joined them at their table. Stan was too nice to say anything and Kyle just didn't care. Kenny wouldn't mind either. He would steal food off of Butters' plate, but that happened on a mutual unvoiced understanding between them. Butters always brought more food than he needed to school. He had actually done it for Kenny from the very beginning.

It had started with a big misunderstanding on Butters' part... or Kenny's part, Butters didn't know anymore. It had been when Kenny couldn't afford lunch and had nothing to eat during lunch period. Without thinking twice, Butters had offered him one of his sandwiches, which the boy promptly threw back in his face, turned around and walked away, mumbling about how he "ain't no fuckin' charity case".

Butters didn't talk to Kenny for about a week because he had been scared the other boy was still angry with him and he wouldn't want to fuel that fire further. Coincidentally, a few days later, Stan forgot his lunch money and Kyle was at home, sick in his bed. Eric wouldn't lend any money to the dark-haired boy and well; Kenny would have if he could have. When Butters noticed the dilemma of the other boy, stomach loudly growling in protest to its vacuity, he just shoved his tray over to the other and invited him to eat as much as he wanted.

Stan accepted with little protest, mumbling what a great friend he was while stuffing fries in his mouth.

The next day, Kenny sort of apologized for his behavior the week before, eyes never quite looking at the shy blonde. He was just sick of being treated like some ghetto poor ass pauper and over-reacted when Butters had just intended to be nice, he explained.

A few days later, when Butters sat next to Kenny, absentmindedly picking at his food in a bored manner, the hooded blonde had, without even asking, started stealing bits and pieces off his plate. Not much at the beginning, but so much more after Butters brought more food than necessary, claiming his mother made him too much and he wouldn't want to throw it all away.

But that was only when he was sitting with the guys and Eric wouldn't kick him off the table.

Butters hoped Kenny would be there today. He could offer him fried ham.

"I'd l-like ta walk", he finally answered, got a Tupperware container and put the food inside, before bidding his father good bye and rushing out the door.

There was *no way* he would let his parents take him to school. Even if it meant waking up early just to catch a bus that would arrive half an hour before school started.

As soon as he was out the door he could hear the distinct noise of a helicopter above his head. He looked up, almost immediately noticing red auburn locks and the smiling face of a boy waving at him against the sun. Butters stopped, shyly waving back, when suddenly a rope ladder was rolled down to him. He jumped back in surprise and the boy shouted something at him, though he could only make out syllables. The helicopter was slowly descending, and Butters could feel the heavy weight of twisting air. "But-n, -up." Taking a deep breath, he finally grabbed for the ladder and pulled himself up, appreciating the fact that whoever was piloting that thing – probably Stan – tried to make it as easy as possible for him, going as far down as they deemed appropriate. When he finally reached the end, Kyle grabbed for his hands and helped him up.

Butters heaved a sigh, and then looked around. Kyle was still smiling at him, hands on his knees while he bent down to watch the blonde on the floor. "Hey there Butterbean", he greeted, provoking a choke from the other end. Butters looked to the origin of the sound and discovered Eric, restrained by bonds.

"Now it's Butterbean?" Stan asked from the front and Kyle joined him as co-pilot.

"Whatever works", the redhead replied and Butters shot them a questioning look.

"Hey, Butters", Stan now greeted him, flashing him a wide smile, but immediately turned back to avoid crashing them into anything.

"So, how's your day so far?", Kyle asked, looking back at the blonde who decided that this was all a very weird dream, though he knew he was awake and that, if he didn't sit down somewhere safe, he might fall out that helicopter and end like the boy from yesterday. So, he sat down beside Eric, who was glaring daggers at him.

"Uhm... ya know..." he stuttered. "Same old stuff."

Kyle nodded. "Same as fat-ass here, then."

"Ay! I'm big boned you dirty Fewish faggot!"

"I'd watch my mouth, shit head", was what the redhead replied with a satisfied grin, leaning back with his hands crossed behind his neck. Butters had a feeling that the other two were deeply pleased with themselves. "Fat-ass here tried to become minister of the Board of Education."

Oh, so that's why Eric went to Washington.

"Incorrect! I *became* minister of education, Kahl!" the brunette snarled.

"So, where is Kenny?" Butters interrupted, not really interested in what had been going on between the trio but more as to where the fourth of the group was.

Eric pulled a face, snorting in disgust.

"You're right, he might have a chance with little Butterbean", the black haired boy chuckled.

"Told you so."

The blonde frowned in confusion. He had a feeling that they were having a completely different conversation.

"What's that 'bout Butterbean?", he questioned, nervously mashing his knuckles together.

"Kenny died yesterday." Kyle suddenly explained and Butters eyes widened in horror.

"Had a fight with Manuel here and was pushed out of the helicopter."

"Is he coming back today?"

"Who knows. Why?"

Butters fumbled with the straps of his backpack, sighing in disappointment. "I've got fried ham."

"Did you prepare that just for him?", Kyle asked, genuinely surprised. "I mean, we know you always bring twice as much as you need, but actually going that far."

"What do you mean, you *know*?"

"Dude, are you serious?" Stan asked, eyes squinting when he detected the gray rundown school building and prepared for landing. "Everybody knows you bring food for Kenny. It's like an unwritten rule that you are the only one who is allowed to do that."

"If someone else would try that they'd have their food back in their face."

"He thinks it's cute how you still believe he doesn't know."

Stan made a safe landing with the helicopter, put the headset down and sighed in relief. Butters stared at the blue-ish plastic box in his hand, before getting up. "Could ya give that t-ta Kenny?", he asked, pushing the box against Kyles chest, who was just about to get up, and jumped out of the helicopter, heading to his first class. He had still some time left to do the homework he had forgotten. He would have to skip lunch period to finish the rest, but he had a feeling that after the bad start, the day was going to be fun.

He didn't even know why he suddenly felt happy.

But there was something only *he* was allowed to do.

And that made him sickeningly happy.

Classes went by faster than expected. When he heard the ring of the bell and he thought he would have to endure the next hour of Mister Bernstein talking *again* about World War II and how his mother had told him stories of how they had tried to survive in Nazi-Germany until they finally left, first to France, than further up to America, the bell had rang a second time to announce the end of class.

As he walked to his locker to get his notes for second period algebra he spotted a certain blonde walking down the corridor, hands in his kangaroo pockets at the front of his faded brown hoodie. Inexplicable delighted, Butters contemplated greeting the other boy, but before he reached a decision, Stan and Kyle had already flanked Kenny on both sides and the gray-blue eyes of the blonde prior listless now lit up and a slight smile graced his lips.

They were really best friends, the blonde concluded pointlessly, heading to his locker, deciding against greeting.

"Hey there Buttercream."

The addressed jerked, before turning towards the voice that had called him, and he was met with a wolfish smile spread over Kyle's face, which made Butters slightly nervous.

Kenny however stopped dead in his tracks, before spinning around and gripping the redhead by his collar, brusquely bumping him into the closest locker. Butters cringed and Stan watched stunned. The hooded boy hissed words Butters didn't catch, but seemed to make the redheads smile widen and, in retrospect Kenny only angrier.

"Dude, that's enough", Stan finally intervened, pressing a hand on Kenny's shoulder. The blonde only slapped it off, but loosened his grip nonetheless and eventually removed his hands altogether, clenching them into tight fists. "That ain't cool", Kenny muttered.

"Chill, dude. Your chances are good."

"Fuck you!"

Kenny pressed his hands into his pockets before storming down the corridor, past Butters who watched them frightened, but tried to give a slight smile when the boy almost unnoticeable glanced at him while storming by.

"Hiya, Ke—"

"*Leave me alone!*"

Butters frowned, a little hurt at the angry words, but then just shrugged it off. He would see Kenny in his next class and it wasn't like he was angry at *him* but more so at Kyle, for whatever reason. He opened his locker, withdrawing his algebra notes and text book. "So Buttercream", Kyle drawled, approaching the blonde. "Stan and I forgot our algebra books. Would you lend us yours?"

"Dude, I—"

Kyle elbowed his friend in his chest and Butters blinked in surprise, didn't even realize that the redhead had already taken the book off his hand, a happy grin placed on his lips, when he walked away. "Thanks a bunch, Butterpie", he waved with the book, while Butters just stared after the duo.

"Dude, you act like a bully", Stan stated.

"Well, payback time for all the shit he had pulled on me... And you."

Butters frowned.

Again.

He was somehow lost between yesterday and today, as if a day was missing or something, because the other people around him were so not having the same conversation. He felt like they were talking in riddles, as if they knew something everyone but Butters knew. It was quite vexing and made him a queasy bit nervous.

And since when was Kyle the *bad* guy?

Well, according to Kenny, Stan had always had a thing for closeted assholes. Like Wendy. And Kyle was actually worse than Wendy, when it came to things they didn't like or felt endangered by. They seemed like nice, helpful kids at first glance, but if you would look behind the exterior one would see many little cackling Cartmans looming behind them, creating an atmosphere of arbitrary dread.

That's what Kenny had told him.

He didn't understand back then, but watching Kyle's back, Butters' book swinging back and forth in one hand, the other resting behind his neck, Butters thought he might be able to make sense of the words.

And that they might be true.

"Oh hamburgers", he mumbled, closing his locker and strolling to his classroom. He

was sitting in the front row, next to him Kenny because he had come in late first day at school to save himself a spot. Butters wouldn't ask Kenny. He had a bad day and wouldn't impose on the other. Yet, to his left sat a girl that more than once had felt the need to tell him how much she hated Butters, though never cared to explain why exactly.

There was no one else he could ask.

He would have to endure, he told himself.

Kyle winked at him from across the room, mouthing thanks before he turned towards Stan. Butters sighed in defeat and counted the seconds passing by, counting the minutes he had to look like he actually knew what the teacher was talking about when she pointed out a very important formula or as if he was contemplating the answer to a calculation he couldn't see.

Though he didn't seem to do a very convincing job, when the teacher suddenly walked up to him. "Where is your text book, Mister Stotch." The high-pitched voice of the tall woman surprised him and he looked up from his task of looking busy.

Nervously, he knocked his knuckles together and looked up with wide eyes into the stern face of the strict woman. "I-uh", he shot a glance at Kyle, who pointedly averted his eyes, "forgot... it", he finished lamely, lowering his eyes.

The older woman sighed in annoyance, turning towards the girl that so conveniently loathed him. "Miss Williams, would you mind sharing your book?" The long haired blonde looked up from her algebra book, shooting a death glare at the boy before replying, in all earnestly, without even batting an eyelash: "Sorry, Ms. Abel, I forgot my book as well."

Deadly silence.

"Well..." the woman finally collected herself, turning towards Kenny. "Mister McCormick, would you be so kind?" She didn't even wait for a reply before turning around and walking towards the front. Butters shot a wary glance at Kenny, who threw a dirty look at someone behind Butters head – probably Kyle – then just pushed his desk away.

"Fuck this", he cursed, standing up and with more force than necessary threw the book at Butters, who could barely avoid being hit square in the face, before stomping out of the room. "I'm outta here." The door was slammed shut and everybody in the room averted his attention from the loud bang still hanging in the air to look at the blonde boy in the front row.

"Boy, are you loved", the Williams girl commented, voice dripping with sarcasm.

Butters didn't reply. He just kept his eyes down, fumbling for the book.

What did he miss?, he wondered, feeling the stares at his head, hearing the whispered insults and questions. Or did Kenny really just have a bad day? Same as Kyle, maybe? Why were they constantly fighting and why would Kyle look like he somehow enjoyed the death threats the other blonde would mumble and spit at him?

Where did Butters take another turn than the rest of the school?

He couldn't point his finger on it. His head was spinning and not just because he had somehow lost track of what they were currently doing in algebra. Butters tried to push those distracting thoughts back in favor to listen to what was being said in class but they would still try to creep their way back into his active conscience only disturbed by the shrill ringing of the school bell.

Closing the book and throwing all his belongings into the backpack, he nearly escaped to his next class, where there would be no Kenny or Stan and Kyle or even Eric. He had a feeling that his day was going down the drain and actually ending worse than it had

started.

And till this point starting a day without his favorite cartoons was actually the worst Butters could imagine, which made his aforementioned assumption sound like the apocalypse.

"You look – ngh – bad, Butters." The blonde glanced at Tweak, who sat down next to him, head slightly bowed to the side. His twitching had gradually become less (Token said because of a new therapy Craig had tried on the spasming blonde) and would mostly show when he was either very nervous or didn't get his coffee in the morning (and every following hour), however it had yet to show in his speech pattern.

"Cause the guys are acting like pricks", Craig replied, his chair tipped back, touching Tweaks desk behind him, arms crossed behind his head.

"I'm fine", Butters replied with a wry smile.

Though Kenny wasn't.

He sighed in distress, listening to his teacher droning on about the book they were currently analyzing. They would have to finish reading that book to next week and he was only half-way through. Butters didn't particularly care why some boy of higher society would go and sleep with a women that could be his mother, and worse, then wanting to date her daughter, and he was sure that his parents would throw a fit if they knew what they were reading in school but he tried to endure the dull monotone voice of Mister Hankins, his attention drifting.

Maybe he should apologize to Kenny.

And he had still his algebra book and would have to give that back anyway.

A slight sigh escaped his lips and Tweak watched him with a worried expression, though he ignored it.

He would just have to bite the bullet.

Dreaded lunchtime was coming to soon even though literature class always felt like a few hours. However, he took a deep breath and entered the crowded and noisy cafeteria. He spotted the loud quartet easily at one of the tables near the windows. Eric was smirking, watching as Kyle and Kenny were arguing again and Stan looked like he was really sick of it.

Oh boy.

"Will you shut up already?", Kennys voice roared through the canteen, words loud and clear. Some students stopped to stare at the fighting pair but continued to eat as soon as the blonde scathingly glared at them.

This was wrong, Butters thought. He should just stop and run the other way. He knew he should. He really really *really* should just *leave*. But it was too late, he already stood behind Kenny and Stan had noticed him, a slight reassuring smile appearing on his lips. Not. helping. much.

"Ke-Kenny?", he asked in a timid voice.

"And you!" Kenny yelled, promptly turning around in his chair, "Get the *fuck* away from me! I can't stand your *presence*!"

Butters eyes widened, before he slightly bit his lip. "I'm..." he tried, voice faltering.

Kenny couldn't stand his presence?

That had really stung, he realized surprisingly levelheaded, before a slight sad smile played his lips as he looked down on the other, who had his arms crossed in front of his chest. "Ya ... really a nice person", he finally managed, not only surprising himself but everyone who heard his words. "Ya awesome. I didn't know, though even though ya don't like me ya still always tried ta help me." He fumbled with the strap of his backpack. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean ta be a bother." Butters hoped nobody noticed the



hitch in his voice. "Though I won't be anymore. I promise, Kenny." He inconspicuously slid the book on the table, trying not to let it bother him, how Kenny was still staring apathetically to the other side, out of the window, as if Butters wasn't standing there, apologizing and trying to not look as hurt as he was. "Thanks for lettin' me have that", he mumbled, disappointed at the lack of reaction.

He turned away, towards the exit, hoping against hope that someone would stop him.

"You are a stupid jerk, Kenny."

"That was low, even for you," Stan agreed with his best friend.

"I was going to say something inappropriate, but I wouldn't want to spoil the heart wrenching moment, now would I Kenneh?"

Butters would eat outside. It was a little fresh but he would get used to it. He felt like crap, but he didn't want anyone to see it on his face. It didn't feel good to be disliked by a person you liked, he mused. Though he should get used to the feeling because it didn't look like those circumstances would ever change.

See?

Nobody was getting up and following him outside.

They all had someone else they would rather wanted to spend their time with.

That's what you get for almost but never quite belonging, he thought, when the cool air hit his face, ruffling his hair. Looking around, he decided on a spot that wouldn't be able to be seen from the canteen.

The last thing he wanted was someone to look at him sitting alone on a bench in the cold wind. And it was really cold, he noticed, taking an apple out of his bag and withdrawing the book he had to read for English literature.

He should have taken a jacket with him.

"Kenny doesn't hate you."

Butters almost lost the grip on his book, startled as he looked up at the the boy that approached him. He gave a weak smile, before returning to his book. "Ya don't need ta sugar coat it", he mumbled, feeling the other sitting down beside him.

"No really, he is just being an ass", Stan insisted.

"Kenny's entitled ta like and dislike whoever he wants." Butters reasoned, but something inside him yelled at the unfairness. No, Kenny should *not* be allowed to choose, he pondered, biting his lip. Especially not if the only one he seemed to dislike was only Butters and that wasn't fair because *he* liked the blonde so much more than anyone else.

"I must have bothered him somehow."

"Dude!", Stan exclaimed, exasperated. "You didn't even *talk* to him at all this *week*. There is *no* way you could have bothered him. It's **not** *your* fault that Kenny can't cope with his problem and that Kyle is *really* a dick about it."

"Whatcha talkin' 'bout?", Butters asked, intrigued.

"Yeah, *dude*, *what* exactly *are* you talking about?"

The two boys looked up to see Kyle standing in front of them, one hand to his hip, the other clenching on the brown hood of a certain blonde boy who looked everything but pleased to be man handled by none other than the redhead. Kyle shot a glare at his best friend, who didn't bulk under the death glare but simply stuck his tongue out in prepubescent resistance.

"Anyway, I brought Kenny to apologize", he said in a tone that obviously suggested that this conversation was not over, then pushed Kenny forward. The two blondes stared at each other. Butters played with the dog-ears of his book and Kenny crossed the arms in front of his chest, averting his eyes.

"I'm sorry," Butters mumbled faintly.

Stan pinched his nose, shaking his head. "Not you! *Kenny* is the—"

"Ya don't understand", Butters interrupted, not looking up. "I couldn't figure it out."

Kenny frowned, looking down at the blonde who looked up with an apologetic expression. "I tried ta figure it out but nobody could help me. And it's a stupid thing and it should be easy ta find out but then everybody said somethin' else and that's not an apology or so I just – just am sorry to bother ya. I wanted ta help ya, so ya wouldn't have to occupy ya with it, but... I... The answer ta yer question. I couldn't figure it out."

"What question?", Kenny prompted, frowning in contemplation.

Butters bowed his head. "'Why Butters'," he replied, quietly.

Kenny gave a strangled sound and Butters started to worry, noticing that the face of the other had suddenly blanched, a mixture of emotion showing in his eyes Butters couldn't clearly identify but panic seemed to be an overall fitting description.

"I'm going to figure it out!" Butters hastily added, jumping off the bench, approaching and trying to reassure the seemingly panicked boy.

"What? No!", Kenny exclaimed, taking a step back.

"But... but ... ya worried 'bout it!"

"So? It's got nothin' to do with you!"

"But it's *my* name."

Kenny opened his mouth, about to shout back a reply, when he suddenly halted, then raised an eyebrow in question. "Your name?"

Butters mashed his knuckles together. "I'm going to find out why they call me Butters." He announced, determined. "Yupp, I really am."

"Your *name*?", Kenny repeated stupidly, dumbstruck.

„Yeah.“

„... 'Why Butters'?"

The blonde frowned, throwing a short glance at Kyle, who had turned his back to them, shoulders trembling. Stan stood beside him still pinching the base of his nose, all the while shaking his head in apathetic resignation.

Did he miss something *again*?

So Craig was right? His name wasn't the answer?

Then *what* exactly was the question?

Kenny gave a pained groan when they could hear a slight chuckle from Kyle, which soon grew into a full-fledged laughing fit, though he had the courtesy to try to stifle it with his hands clamped over his mouth.

"It's *little buddy*", Kenny growled, hands balling into tight fist.

"What?"

"*Your name!*" he explained through gritted teeth. "You've got it from *little buddy*". The blonde snarled in desperate anger, before he turned around with a sharp spin, pushing Kyle hard against the back when he stormed by. "Seriously, dude, *why Butters?*"

Kyle chuckled, before enthusiastically yelling back: "Because that's just like him!"

## Kapitel 3: Chapter Three

The moment Butters had approached him and asked his stupid question, Kyle had known that he was going to have a blast with the two equally stupid blondes.

Both of them would make a scene on a daily basis without even knowing they made one, and besides math and vector algebra those meetings between those two actually made his day. So, when he noticed Kenny heading to their table with a determined look plastered on his face, he knew there was something about to go on.

"You see that, Butters?" Kenny suddenly asked without forewarning, turning the other blonde's head around to face the back of the canteen. Butters objected with a strangled sound against the rough treatment, but didn't voice any further protest, just followed with his eyes to where Kenny was pointing. "That's Tammy. My ex-girlfriend."

"Gee, Kenny, I know who Tammy is", Butters frowned, loosening the strong hold on his head.

"She's a pro in giving head", Kenny explained, ignoring the interjection. Butters face flushed beet-red and Kyle shoved his plate to the side, preparing himself for one of the best shows yet to come.

This was going to be fun.

"And even though she has a boyfriend right now, she once in a while would make an exception for me."

"Uhm... Ken-"

"And you know what?" The hooded blonde now turned towards Butters, directly facing him, poking one finger against his chest. "I'm going to give her up, because I'm stupidly romantic and annoyingly loyal."

Kyle snorted at these words.

Sure, Kenny never cheated on Tammy – or any other girlfriend he had, for that matter.

However, the only reason Kenny could claim that was because throughout the month he had dated Tammy (and the others) he had broken it off with her the day before he was going to bed another girl. A few days later Tammy would call and ask what went wrong and they would be back together and if somehow word got out about Kenny and another girl he could always argue that that had been when they had a time-out.

Kenny better not do that to Butters, Kyle thought.

It wasn't that Kyle liked Butters – or hated him. He merely... tolerated the nervous

blonde, because, honestly, Butters was the kind of person who could pull the asshole out of everyone. Even Maria Theresia, beyond a doubt. It was just the way he wouldn't fight oppression, the way he accepted every bullshit that was thrown at his face with a smile and without much of a fight; the way his eyes darted around nervously and how he would almost unnoticeably shiver like a gerbil whenever danger was near.

He unwittingly awakened the urge to bully him.

However, the really surprising thing was, that Kyle had never seen Butters cry.

Not when some asshole thought it might be fun to stick his head in a toilet, or when Officer Barbrady shot his pet dog because he thought the animal was a Chupacabra in hiding (which he incidentally was but that was beside the point). He didn't see Butters complain when some older girl asked him out for a party and let him wait about two and a half hours in the cold pouring rain just to drive by with her girlfriends and current boyfriend to laugh at him – the same boyfriend who by the way, one day later beat the shit out of him for talking to his woman. He did get angry at some of the shit Cartman pulled on him sometimes, but even though many of those things had been more than just plain cruel and painful, he came back smiling. Like when Cartman prostituted Butters to get the money for some game and the blond was nearly raped by two, stinky, old, sadistic bastards that wanted to take the boy double; or that one time when Cartman told Butters to take care of a goat and they found out the goat Butters was sitting was the mascot of a college in Denver and all of the football players came crashing down on him and beat him into a bloody pulp (Kyle still didn't know what the hell had been Cartman's intention back then). There had been that time, Cartman had told Butters his parents had died in a car accident even though they had just been on their way to the cascades up in Boulder. The blond had been devastated, but did not shed a tear but that might have been the shock in combination with Cartman, who all but abruptly decided to use Butters' house as a drug lab. Butters didn't notice much because he was distracted with funeral preparations and the fact that the medical examiner couldn't seem to find the supposedly almost burned corpses of his parents.

Kyle could go on and on with that list but he didn't do pity well.

Nevertheless, in some way, he admired Butters.

Though Kyle would never admit that.

Ever.

However, Butters did not deserve a cheating boyfriend and as much as he loved Kenny, Kyle wasn't sure that the perverted blonde could be the partner Butters needed and deserved.

*"However"* Kyle returned his attention back to the objects of his daily entertainment, "the dumb blonde I'm about to date better be as good as that one." Kenny again pointed towards Tammy, but Butters' eyes remained on him.

"Golly, Kenny. Ya shouldn't make your ex-girlfriend cheat on her current boyfriend."

Kyle sucked in some air.

"An' ya shouldn't talk like that 'bout the one ya like. If it were me I'd be really hurt."

"For fucks sake", Kenny cursed, clenching his fist. "You are so dumb." With that, he left the table in a fury. Kyle couldn't deny that he loved the desperation in Kenny's voice whenever he talked to his almost-but-not-quite-lover.

Butters furrowed his brows, before he turned to Stan and Kyle.

"Nuhu, what was that?" he asked, confused.

"Well", Kyle drawled with a smirk, "I'd say you better start learning."

"Learn what?"

"Fellatio."

"Blowjobs."

"Give head." the other boys at the table answered in unison, though Token looked slightly disgusted with the fact that he actually answered that question together with Clyde and Craig.

"Wh-What?! Why?" Butters squeaked, but was only rewarded with a middle finger, rolling eyes courtesy of Token and a very wide grin from Clyde.

"You know what?" Wendy suddenly interrupted their manly bonding with her excited voice and a hand slamming on their table, a sheet of paper positioned under it. "We read about a course that shows you how to give a blowjob. The girls decided to go there. You can even keep the dildo as a keepsake. For personal usage if you want so." Stan spat out his orange juice and looked at the dark-haired girl in horror, same as Butters, which was quite funny.

"Wendy!" he yelped incredulously, but the girl just rolled her eyes.

"So, Butters, what do you say? Want to come with us, seeing as you lack experience in anything sexual related? Just like Stan when I dated him. Hope for Kyle that had changed." She cast a skeptical look at her ex-boyfriend. "Or should we take him with us, Kyle?"

Kyle raised an eyebrow at her mocking provocation. "That'd be an excellent idea. He does lack some skill in that department."

"Kyle!" Stan choked.

"Oh, I believe that. He never was any good with his tongue."

"Could you two *please* stop that!", Stan yelled, face red and about to be buried in his hands in embarrassment. "And no, Wendy, Butters *and* I decline!"

Kyle eyed the blonde who sat on the table, looking as confused as a few minutes ago when Kenny had left them, but face still red up to the tip of his ears, then at Wendy, who pursed her lips in a pout.

Wendy and Kyle shared a healthy love-hate relationship, based on the fact that Kyle had officially started dating Stan, when the two had been on one of their many but last break-ups somewhere around the beginning of high school. Stan had accused her of hanging on to him basically for her own benefit because she had a disgusting thing for one of his friends and he *maybe* could have lived with the fact if it had been Kenny but *nooo*, it had to be Eric fucking Cartman and Wendy argued that Stan wouldn't touch her because he was a freaking closeted gay and had a boner for his 'bestest friend'. Stan then mentioned that it was one of the reasons she had decided to stay with him, because he wouldn't touch her unless necessary and so it went on back and forth for about three hours and a half until the two were exhausted and sat next to each other, voices raw, shoulders touching, Stan with his chin on her head. "I love you", he had whispered and she had smiled and answered, "but only in a platonic way." Both had hugged and then started to plan how to seduce Kyle.

Or at least that's how they had confessed after Stan had gotten into Kyle's pants.

Motherfuckers.

Kyle was still slightly annoyed, especially when Wendy mentions or hints on anything Stan and her *could* have done, because, even though he *knew* there never was more than a few innocent kisses between them, he still got incredibly jealous. And Wendy knew that.

He actually liked the dark-haired girl and he liked to talk to her on a higher educational level than he could with anyone else, the same as he liked to get drunk with his friends and still laugh immaturely at farts and barfs – but she could still be an annoying bitch sometimes.

"Is Bebe going with you", Token asked, trying to not look as excited as he probably was.

"Bebe *suggested* it", Wendy answered, turning away from Stan and Kyle.

"Alright, okay, I give up", Kenny suddenly shouted, returning to their table and plombing down beside Butters, then looked up at his friends. "Did I miss somethin'?" he asked, noticing their amused glances and how Stan and Butters tried to play ostrich and hide their heads under the tables.

"Nothing", Token answered, continuing to eat his lunch.

"Yeah, nothing", Wendy agreed, purposefully pushing the sheet of paper towards

Kenny when she turned around to head back to the other girls. The blonde picked the pamphlet up, scanned it before slamming it down.

"We're going."

"Come again?", Token answered, the only one verbally reacting while the others just gaped at the crazy blonde.

It was time, Craig probably assumed, to leave as silently as possible. He just stood up and showed everyone the middle finger. Kenny returned it, which led Craig to show both middle fingers, pointing inwards and then left the table. Token followed suit not even a few seconds later, with a petty excuse about him meeting Bebe in the janitor's closet. Though, as experience had taught that might not be an excuse but the truth.

Clyde didn't leave but that was probably because he assumed the word *we* did not include him and therefore just continued to eat. Kyle didn't know why Token and Craig had thought the *we* included *them*.

"I already told Wendy I'm not going", Stan answered, tone suggesting that he did not want to press this topic any further.

"And I don't need to", Kyle stated, smugly.

"I beg to differ" Stan countered straight-faced.

"Excuse me?"

"You heard me."

"Stop flirting", Kenny interrupted. "We know you love each other. However," he threw a short glance at Butters before a wide grin spread over his lips. "If you want me to, I could help you with your *studies*."

"Excuse me", Butters suddenly mumbled, pushing himself off the table. "I think I- uhm have to go to class." His ears were still tinted red and he looked shyly down, when he picked his tray up to throw the leftovers into the trash can, but left the yogurt he hadn't touched accidentally on the table.

Kenny thought it was cute when Butters tried to be subtle.

Kyle thought they were both retarded.

"Alright, now that Butters' gone", Kenny started, turning to them while lowering his voice. "Do you know about Butters' birthday?"

"No", Stan answered without a second thought.

"When is it?" Kyle asked out of faked interest.

"Monday."

"You've got anything planned?"

"Of this week." Kenny explained further.

"... as in four days ago?"

"Dude!" Stan exclaimed surprised.

"I didn't know."

"Neither did I", Kenny admitted. "Tweek told me."

"Tweek told *you*?"

"Yeah, after actually-"

"No, no, no! Hold on! *Tweek* told *you*?!"

Kyle was honestly kind of surprised. Kenny wasn't a bad guy, but he was frivolous, dirty-mouthed, and energetic enough, to make the crazy-haired blonde nervous enough he couldn't stop twitching if Kenny was even one foot around and so much as *glanced* at him. A civilized conversation was nearly impossible.

"Yeah, after *yelling* at me how horrible of a person I am."

Kyle blinked and Stan stopped eating.

"You see, I was going to the bathroom, when I heard the spaz pathetically apologizing to Tucker" – it was their thing to call each other by their last name, even though everybody knew that they shared some sort of strange friendship nobody wanted to exploit the depth of – "because he had to bake a cake for Butters by himself. So I asked him why they would make a cake for Bu—"

"Hold on a sec there, dude," Kyle interrupted again. "Craig? Baking a cake? For *Butters*?"

The redhead tried to picture the other boy in the kitchen, electric whisk in one hand, holding the bowl with the dough in the other but somehow the face of the dark-haired boy was hid behind a big black censor bar.

"Yeah, get over it. And they told me that it had been Butters' birthday last Monday and that was the point when the crazy wreck actually yelled at me that I should at least know something like that about the person I... you know."

Kyle nodded like he understood.

Though he didn't.



He didn't know what it was that drew Kenny towards Butters and for his own sanity, didn't even want to know. Love was a tad difficult to understand, because Kenny never had been in love. Lust was sort of urgh... because, really, Butters! Urgh! Maybe it was something like how a prostitute *thought* she loved her sugar daddy, because he provided her with whatever she liked, just like Butters supplied food.

Kyle watched as Kenny stored the yogurt into his kangaroo pocket, probably to share it later with his parents and siblings.

"Amatory tolerate?" Stan offered helpfully with an off-handed gesture.

"He doesn't tolerate."

"Well then, amatory attracted?"

Kenny shrugged in resignation and buried his head in his crossed arms on the table.

"If it helps", Kyle started, trying to be nice. "Butters won't care you didn't know."

"Yeah, he probably didn't even imagine you remembering." Stan seconded.

"I mean, you don't do birthdays."

"Yeah, you don't even know ours and we practically grew up together."

"That's wrong. If you'd asked me I'd know when your birthday is, though when the day comes I don't remember it's that day."

"Same thing, dude." Stan explained.

"I still can't believe it"

"What? You can trust me for once!"

"No, not that. How did Tweek do that?"

"Do what?"

"Get Craig to bake a cake."

"The same way I make you stop talking, when I get a headache from you bitching about Cartman."

"That's it! That's the couch for you!" Kyle growled, furrowing his brows. "What's your problem anyway?"

"My problem is you talking to Wendy about our", Stan's cheeks reddened as he cast his eyes down. "Love life in front of the whole school."

"Well, it's you running to her whenever there is a problem between us."

"Because you tend to be a freaking stoic asshole when I want to talk about problems to *you*."

"Sorry I don't wear my heart on a sleeve."

"You don't get it, do you?"

"Hello? Someone with a problem here?" Kenny finally interrupted their quarrel, pointing with his hands to himself.

"I don't see your problem", the redhead stated dryly, glad to change the topic. "So, you forgot Butters' birthday. Big deal. So did everyone else. It's not the first time and it won't be the last. People just don't care about Butters' birthday and they haven't done so his whole life."

Kenny looked at him with something akin to disappointment and Kyle actually felt uncomfortable under his stare.

"Well, maybe we should start caring." Stan looked up from his task of massacring his broccoli, his voice quiet and earnest. "His birthday was Monday, right? So why not pretend we didn't forget but wanted to celebrate on the weekend to party through the night? I think it would be good to do something nice for Butters for a change."

Kyle and Kenny looked at the dark-haired boy; the latter raising an eyebrow in question, while the first just opened his mouth to retort.

"Fag."

"Oh come on! You know how I mean it!"

"That's why I called you a fag."

"Do you have some sort of marriage quarrel going on or what?" Kenny asked, leaning back in the uncomfortable plastic chair.

"Guys! Hey, hey guys!" A fourth voice suddenly yelped into their discussion and Kyle's face scrunched in disgust when he spotted the fat bastard dashing towards their table, slamming both hands on the wooden plate. "Ya goin' to Bebe's party at Tokens' on Saturday?"

"I didn't know you were interested in parties, fat ass."

"Am not, dirty faggot Jew. Just 'n info an' thos' parties are da best source."

"We could take Butters to that party." Stan suggested suddenly, not even acknowledging the looming dispute between the other two boys, instead turning his

attention towards Kenny. "Has he ever been to one of those?"

"I doubt it", Kenny replied.

"Why'd you take that melvin to a party?"

"For his birthday."

"... That had been Monday", Cartman wrinkled his forehead in curiosity, sitting down beside Kenny who stared at him wide eyed.

"You knew?"

"Sure, have been tellin' him for years he's been the reason for 9/11. That sucker believed it."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"Oi, why'd you care? Yer t'poor to celebrate. Turning into a fag yourself for this fagot? Anyway, don't botha takin' him to Token's. He'd be just a mood killer fer all I know, whinin' on 'bout how his parents would ground him fer bein' out late and all. Trust meh, I'd know."

"If we'd tell Bebe about it, maybe we could act like this was planned from the beginning." Kenny almost seemed giddy, ignoring Cartman's helpful advice.

"Now you sound desperate." Stan stated.

"Why do you want to do something for him anyway? I thought you were trying to avoid him." Kyle asked.

Kenny didn't answer, just looked down on the table, tracing the cracks in the wood with his pointing finger and Kyle knitted his brows. He couldn't remember Kenny actually wanting to do something for one of his dates. Sure, the blonde was a great friend, he would run to their aid, cheer them up, ignoring his own pain in favor for his friends, but as great as a friend he was, he could be as bad a boyfriend after the honeymoon phase, which lasted about one to two weeks.

"Bebe's party it is", Kyle finally agreed anyway with a deep sigh, ignoring Kenny's happy grin. "But it's your task to get him there. I will talk to Bebe, maybe she can arrange something."

"Dude, you planning on congratulating him there?" Stan asked, surprised.

"Bebe is... and hopefully it doesn't end in an embarrassing muttering of 'Who is Butters?'" with that said, Kyle stood up and left the table to find the curly blonde girl. If he was lucky she wasn't yet with Token in some broom shed or closet and he could arrange everything and it could be done and over with.

He spotted the girl, when she was about to separate from her group of friends, books pressed against her chest

"Bebe, I need a favor."

~.~.~

"You lost him?" Kyle asked disbelieving.

"Yeah, I lost him." Kenny confirmed, looking around the room, searching the faces for an innocent dump blonde burden.

"Among the things you have told me today, this one is the most unbelievable." Kyle paused to contemplate that statement before he shook his head. "No, the most unbelievable was when you told me you told Butters to get dressed again." He paused. "Gross."

"You are no help."

The redhead didn't answer; just let his drink swirl in his glass.

Everything was going as planned. He had told Bebe and she started to babble about how she didn't *know* and oh my gosh, what a fabulous idea, Kyle! She even forgot her date with Token in the janitor's closet over her brimming excitement, and started to uninvite most people then and there, making a few cry because they probably thought they were banned from the *It* crowd Bebe and Wendy – nerd she was – unmistakably belonged to.

As far as Kenny had told him, everything was going smooth on his part too – to a certain point of time.

He went to fetch Butters, climbed the tree in front of the blonde's window and saw the boy practically naked, changing to his sleeping wear. Kyle, knowing Kenny, could imagine how much his friend probably had to restrain himself to knock on the window instead of continuing to watch his own nude show. After telling Butters to get dressed again, answering to the question "Why" because they were going out and stopping every protest of "But my parents" and "What if" and "I don't think" beforehand by turning around so Butters could get dressed. They left for Token's house, walking in silence, Kenny a few feet ahead – Kyle assumed because his blonde friend was again unreasonably aggravated - a state he was in whenever Butters was near.

And right on the front porch, Kenny heard a muffled sound, turned around just to find Butters gone.

"So, how can you lose a sixteen year old boy?" Kyle asked himself, taking a swig from his glass.

"You tell me", Kenny replied, head in his crooked arms.

"Well, you have to think positive."

"HIV-positive?"

"That was sick", Kyle replied dryly, but otherwise chose to ignore that statement. "You can find a better lay."

"It's not about sex, Kyle", Kenny snarled enraged. "Why don't you understand? I thought you of all people would know where I'm coming from!"

"Yeah, maybe, but let me ask you a personal question."

"Shoot ahead."

"Why Butters?"

Kenny glared at him. "You can be really despicable sometimes."

"Cheer up dude. As long as it's you, you can hook up with whoever comes in next." Kyle said turning towards the archway, which separated the entrance hall from the living room, they were currently occupying, together with dozens of other people neither of them knew.

"You bet," Kenny said, turning around and leaning with his back against the integrated bar.

"How much?"

"I don't bet on that."

Kyle raised an eyebrow. "Fifty bucks."

"Deal."

"You know you are too easy, don't you?"

Kenny didn't even react to that statement, just eyed the archway. "The next person coming in, right?"

"Yeah, female, male, don't care."

"Me neither, as long as they aren't Cartman."

"Alright, dude, thanks for that mental image."

Kenny smirked.

"Oh sick." Kyle whined and then they watched in silence the entrance, Kyle taking a sip

of his lousy spiced orange juice, though he needed more of that vodka to get that picture out of his head. Gross.

"Bebe doesn't count by the way", Kenny stated suddenly when he noticed the blonde girl heading to the front door. "Wouldn't want Token for an enemy."

"Whatever."

They watched as Bebe left the living room. They couldn't see the front door from their spot and Kenny tried to crane his neck to get at least a glimpse of the newcomers but soon gave up, as he apparently couldn't get anything.

"Taking their sweet time, don't they?" The blonde mumbled impatiently, when Bebe entered the room again without company.

"She sent them away?"

"Had done that a lot today", Kenny voiced, raising an eyebrow in question.

"Yeah, she said she didn't want any assholes for 'Butters' party'." He looked at the garland above his head that read "Happy birthday, gorgeous" in multicolor metallic colored letters.

And that was, when Stan entered the room.

"Hell yes!" Kenny whooped, before Kyle could even process.

"Hell *no*!" Kyle barked, but the grin on his friend's lips only widened.

"Speaking of dreams coming true."

"No, dude! The next person, you hear me!"

"Spoilsport."

"Keep your hands of him."

"You know," Kenny started, voice serious, while they watched Stan scanning the room, probably looking for them. "When it comes to Stan, you are strangely possessive. It's not like he would cheat on you." When the dark-haired boy spotted the two at the bar, he smiled brightly at them, then looked to the entrance hall and gestured at someone to come in. "If it were me, I would be far to frightened of you. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned, you know?"

Kyle ignored Kenny, as Stan frowned at the entrance hall before he left the living room again. "What's he doing?"

Kenny only shrugged. "Getting me my fifty bucks, I guess."

And that's how Stan dragged in Butters.

"Hell yes!" Kyle whooped, scaring the shit out of the guy next to him, who expected the redhead to empty his drink in his lap.

"Hell *no*!" Kenny cried desperately.

"Talking of dreams coming true."

"Dude! That's not funny!"

„Don't be a spoilsport."

"I can't just go and snog *Butters*."

"You can do with others."

"But they aren't *Butters*."

Kyle watched his friend out of the corner of his eye, shaking his head due to the ambiguous behavior. Kenny wasn't complex in his love affairs. If he liked them, he would date them. Period. The problem with Butters was that he liked him even though he didn't want to, resulting in him being aggravated 24/7, pushing Butters away, which made him feel guilty and try to do something nice, for which he hated himself even more and God, this could be funny if it wasn't so freaking annoying.

"Hey guys", Stan greeted them, still holding Butters' hand.

"Who's birthday is it", Butters stuttered, avoiding to look at Kenny. "I-I don't think I'm invited."

"It's alright, Butters," Stan assured with a warm smile.

"Didn't Bebe see him at the front porch?" Kyle addressed his question towards his friend, who shook his head in response. "Bebe opened the door, started flirting, I sent her away and when I was about to close the door he all but fell into my arms."

Kyle smacked his hand to his forehead. "So much for a surprise"

"Where have you been?" Kenny asked annoyed.

"I-I-uhm-Eric wanted to ta-talk ta me."

"About what?"

"He said I was a persona non grata or somethin' like dat. Said I'd ruin the party an'—"

"We get it", Kyle interrupted, searching the crowd for that fat bastard. "I don't understand what that guy is scheming again. Just ignore what he said", he smiled

reassuring at the blonde. "And you owe me big time" he addressed at Kenny, then left to find the Queen of intoxicating parties.

As experienced proved, Token's house was really impractical, when it came to finding people. The first time he had been in the villa he got lost in the hedge maze together with Kenny, who was eaten alive by a monster calling the botanic labyrinth his home.

The second time he accidentally stumbled into the adult playroom and, gross, he didn't need to know *that* about anyone's parents. Why didn't they *lock* that stupid room?

For further visits Kyle had demanded that Token gave him the blueprints of his home to avoid any of these accidents and mapped the layout in his head. However, that didn't make finding someone any easier besides that he could now find his way back and avoid any of the rooms marked by Token – with the comment of 'You might like to avoid those places'.

He finally found Bebe in the kitchen, sitting on the centered kitchen neck, staring out the window and probably listening to the muffled bass of the music.

"He's here", Kyle said upon entering, noticing that the kitchen had their third new coating of the year.

"You think Token would be thrilled if he heard I was pregnant?" the blonde girl replied off-topic.

"... That explains why you're still sober at," he glanced at his watch, "quarter pass nine."

"Asshole. I'm serious."

"Me too."

Bebe hopped off the kitchen counter, turning towards Kyle. "I shouldn't have asked you."

"Seriously, I don't know why you are worrying about something like that. Are you stupid? That guy loves you. It's disgusting how much", Kyle explained. "The only thing you have to worry about is how he would turn into a complete mother hen as soon as he hears about it. Trust me, that Token looks like the kind of guy that either gets pregnant *with* you or won't allow you to do *anything*. He will probably get you a wheelchair immediately, and god forbid you carry your own books to classes. He will either do it himself or pay someone to do it. Now, can we get back to Butters?"

"Didn't Kenny lose him?"

"Yeah, and Stan found him. So, up you go."

"I can't. I have to wait for Wendy and Token."



Kyle raised an eyebrow in question and contemplated asking further or just let the topic be.

"Wendy thought a birthday cake might be a good idea, and Token said he knew a bakery in Denver but they haven't arrived yet. Maybe in half an hour or so." She sighed, fumbling with a strand of her hair. "It never occurred to me to ask Butters when his birthday is. Strange, don't you think so?"

"Not as strange as you telling me suddenly you are pregnant, which you probably are not."

"I thought I was." Bebe confessed. "I was about to have a nervous breakdown, when I didn't get my period."

"Sick, Bebe!"

The girl just started to laugh, and Kyle thought he might have heard her muttering something about his sexuality but he wasn't about to explore that topic further, instead just motioned the girl that he would leave the kitchen. She soon picked up on his gesture and approached him, still grinning.

"You know." Kyle started when they entered the crowded living room, pressed together on their shoulders. "If you were pregnant, you've got friends you can talk to. Wendy, Clyde... me..."

"Softie", was all she answered as she bumped their shoulders together and then headed in a different direction, winking at and yelling someone's name he didn't recognize. Kyle was not comfortable in big crowds and used to avoid them at all cost. During High School he had to get used to parties, bodies rubbing against his and girls he didn't know hanging over him for whatever reason – mostly because they were dead drunk and couldn't stand and Kyle unfortunately was standing next to them when their legs would give in.

He made his way through the dancing teenagers, pushing a guy hard against the shoulder when that inconsiderate asshole wasn't even thinking about making way for him and blocked the open doorway with him hanging on his girlfriend's lips. Though, if the fuss that broke loose after he had gotten past the boy was any indication that girl hadn't been *his* girlfriend.

Kyle snatched a few beers from a guy holding bottles up, and then returned to his friends. Stan was still holding Butters hand and the blonde was still trying to vanish behind the freetime-sports-player-and-stand-in-for-whichever-team-needed-one. The redhead wasn't sure whether he should be worried or annoyed, but seeing as that melvin was doing the Tweek and looked around like he expected a murderer jumping out behind the couch, he could overlook the fact that Stan was acting like a mother hen.

Especially considering that that murderer was probably Cartman.

Kenny on the other end eyed the clutched hands with distrust, arms crossed in front of his chest. Obviously everything but pleased but at least making an effort in not showing it on his face.

"If you don't stop, it'll stay that way," Kyle claimed, throwing him a bottle, which Kenny caught with practiced ease. He didn't even think about offering Butters one and Stan was known for keeping as far away from that stuff as possible since his last encounter that had unwittingly made him star of a homemade internet porn video. And a bad one at that.

"You want one?" Stan asked the blonde, who had eyed Kenny opening his bottle with the lighter but turned away as soon as he heard the question, shaking his head. "A coke or orange juice?" Stan tried again.

"A glass of milk maybe?" Kyle suggested sweetly.

"Am fine, thank you."

Besides the part of Butters whining about his parents going to ground him, Cartman's prediction had been pretty accurate. By now, Stan would be usually on the dance floor together with Kenny instead of taking care of a little kid. Kyle on the other hand would wander the house and look for interesting books or find something else to do. Everything was better than him on the dance floor. Not even Kenny or Stan's lead could make a difference, which was one of the reasons he usually stayed home when Stan and Kenny went to parties. He mostly felt out of place and bored and getting smashed wasn't something he called his hobby since the first and last time, that had not only left him with a painful headache but had taken his virginity as well, without any kind of memory but a video that was all over the internet the next day.

Talking about decent coming-outs.

Fucking cola-whisky mixture.

All in all, Kyle hadn't only lost his way, and friends in that house, but his virginity, too.

What was that villa? The freaking Rose Red Manor or what?

Kyle rolled his eyes, remembering his mother's uproar and his father's apathy and all the people posting helpful advice under the comments on Youtube; such as "OMG, use some lube, dude!" or "Oh, that must've been painful."

"Hey guys!" a loud voice interrupted his thoughts and he looked up from the bottle he had been staring at. He barely spotted Bebe near the plasma TV, sticking out the crowd as if she was standing on a chair, holding a microphone in one hand. "Oi shut up!" She yelled, the microphone screeched, and the crowd tuned it down. "Someone I share a special relationship with has turned sixteen last week!"

Kyle knew what kind of 'special relationship' the girl was talking of.

They have been growing up together, more or less been through so much shit together. Sure, they fought, they quarreled, they insulted each other but that just resembled the relationship he shared with his brother. The South Park kids didn't hang out as much together as back in their elementary school years but there was a strong bond between them, not because they knew each others darkest secrets, but because they had memories together and those memories made Bebe squeal with joy when Kyle mentioned Butters' birthday. Those memories made them look out and care for each other, even if some haven't talked to each other for over a year. One call and they would be there, standing by your side whatever it was.

They could even talk to Kevin who had left South Park a few years ago, who had never sent a letter, and left without a second word; because who else could understand them better than someone who was used to the craziness of South Park and as fucked up as them due to their hometown?

There weren't that many people, whose parents tried to rebuild the arch of Noah and than fought about who was allowed on the arch, almost killing half of the adult population, while their kids watched in annoyance and decided they would let them just kill each other and dismiss all the talk about flooded sewers and South Park soon swamped by masses of shit, literally. If that didn't make you connect, what did?

"I'll be honest, I didn't know." Way to honest Bebe. "But those guys over there", she pointed towards them and a few people turned their heads but most just wanted the music to start again, "pointed it out. So, let's use this party to congratulate him all. Let's give a loud cheer for Butters!"

There was a loud uproar of congratulation cheers, Kyle was pretty sure that everybody tried to figure out who Butters was and where the hell did he stand? so they could pretend to know him and at least clap in his direction, and Bebe dashed towards the surprised blonde and embraced him in a tight hug.

Butters however just froze, hand still held by Stan.

Kyle was getting irritated.

"Happy birthday, sweetheart!" Bebe wished and the crowd behind her suddenly parted and made way for Wendy and Token, both holding a cake, decorated with a few candles and Butters' name.

"Don't you think that's a bit too over the top?" Kenny whispered in Kyle's ear, leaning to his side.

"Dude, it's Token. Everything he does is over the top."

"Happy birthday Butters", Wendy said, but Butters couldn't even get a word out, just stared at the cake dumbstruck, before he turned towards Kenny, who looked to anywhere but him.

"Did-did you know?" he asked.

"His idea", Kyle stated, saving them the trouble of dreadful minutes of denying, stuttering and then yelling and what else their conversation usually consisted off.

"I – I..."

"Butters", Wendy said warmly, smiling at the shy blonde. "Just say thank you."

He looked at her, before he cast his eyes down. "Gosh, this is really. I..." Stan squeezed his hand, and Butters at least tried to make an effort. "Thank you all. I have never... even with my name" Wendy stopped his babbling with a sudden hug, leaving the weight of the cake only on Token's hands who could barely avoid a disaster.

"I just saw that cake on the floor", Stan mumbled and the other two nodded in unison.

After Butters had blown out the candles on the cake and someone yelled that they now should start with sack race and egg and spoon race - Kyle just *hoped* the retard was being sarcastic - the music started again and Wendy dragged Butters towards the dance floor through the crowd of rowdy teenagers, who patted the blonde on the shoulder, winked at him, or simply congratulated him, even though, Kyle was sure none of them have noticed him before.

"Was there a reason for *that*?" Kyle asked as soon as they were left alone, to no one special, but Stan still took up on the innuendo and just shrugged. "Dude, he was shaking like a leaf and scared as hell."

"Just asking", Kyle replied simply, taking Kenny's hand and dragging him to the far end of the room, where a few kids had gathered around the pool table table.

"Do I have to become your revenge?" Kenny asked in a bored tone, leaving the empty bottle on someone's table.

"You are not my revenge. Stan's just horrible at pool billiard and I feel like playing. It was a mutual understanding when we both decided that Stan was never to play again as long as he hasn't taken at least a few lessons."

"Not cool, dude."

"Neither are you."

"Charming, now aren't we?"

"Always the gent."

Kyle wasn't the best player by far, no pro material, but he was fairly good with the cue. He was surprised himself after playing it a few times with Craig and Clyde, but found it soon self assuring, seeing as he lacked skill in all the sports Stan aced in.

On Kyle's part, it was just a question of arithmetic and math.

'I'm bad at math', had been Stan's defense back then.

'That's why you are bad at pool', had been Kyle's plain answer.

Stupid as it was, it was painful to watch Stan play billiard pool. He would either destroy the fabric of the table, shoot the balls across the room, or nearly gouge somebody's eyes out. Kenny on the other hand beat Kyle on a regular basis, because he was a freaking jack-of-all-trades. There was nothing the blonde *couldn't* do, just the things he decided he didn't *want* to do.

Kenny was pushing some random guys to the side and grabbed their cues, threw one to Kyle and scared the shit out of another upper classman who previously eyed him with suspicion but then fled the table as soon as Kenny threw him a dirty glare.

"Dude, your reputation is really down the drain."

"If I had to decide between a walking cheat sheet or a rough, drunken down, drug addicted bad ass I'd chose the latter."

"At least when people see me, they don't hide themselves in their own locker."

"No, they just push you in that locker."

"Asshole."

"Prick."

"Butters lover."

"That was low."

"That was true."

"Mine too and I didn't stoop that low."

Kyle smiled, when he set the cue down.

Inane chatter and name-calling was sometimes the best therapy against aggressions and Kenny was one of a few that actually got involved into verbal abuse and liked to fight back. Cartman did too, but with that fat ass everything turned serious soon.

Kyle wanted to have fun, not wonder about why the fuck Stan was holding Butters like it was the only thing keeping him in place.

It was bugging him more than he liked to admit.

For God's sake it was *Butters*.

Everybody who wanted to have a sexual relationship with that baby face was a sick pervert.

*Kenny* was a sick pervert, yes.

But not Stan.

Kyle couldn't tell how long he had let Kenny beat the shit out of him and he didn't really care, he just thought it was the right time to stop, when some drunken girl tipped out her Heineken over Kenny's black tight-fitted shirt he usually hid under his brown hoodie, which he had put to the side when he noticed that Kyle was better at that game than he had expected.

The drunken brunette winked at Kenny seductively but he just dismissed her with a bored gesture, stole the bottle off her hand and emptied the rest himself before he started for the bar.

Kenny was clingy when he was drunk and Kyle didn't want to be the literal pillar of support through the night, so he threw someone the cue and left to find whatever there was to find. Whether it was alcohol, food, books, or Stan.

Instead of the favorite four he found Butters, sitting on the edge of a couch, knees bent and body tilted to the opposite side of a couple making out beside him. Kyle sighed, before he opted for his semi-friend and pushed the obnoxious girls off the couch.

"Show some class, man", he said, nudged one of the girls against the leg and as he had her attention, pointed to the upper floor. "Third room to the right. Make sure the web cam is turned off; otherwise you will find your video all over the Internet. I'm talking out of experience."

God forsaken cola-whisky.

One of the girls smiled devilishly before she snatched the hand of her girlfriend and pulled her up the stairs.

"How's it going, Butterpie", Kyle asked, when he dropped down beside the blonde, keeping enough distance so that the boy could finally get comfortable on the couch.

"I... I'm a bit overwhelmed," he confessed.

The redhead didn't answer, just leaned himself forward, elbows leaning on his knee and chin cupped in one hand as he spotted Stan on the dance floor with Wendy.

That guy was so going to sleep on the couch tonight.

"How so?" he asked, turning his face finally towards the blonde.

"I'm really thankful and that cake was really delicious but I-uhm don't know half the people here."

"Trust me, about eighty percent don't know you, too." And the twenty that did, were the people that bullied him on a regular basis, wherefore Kyle wasn't surprised when Butters more or less had jumped to the side when they wanted to greet him in their drunken condition. They belonged to those people that would congratulate him, just to give him a present, that turned out to be a skirt in which they would let him parade around high school. That was, in *only* that skirt.

That happened before.

Kyle didn't know why none of them regarded Butters as a South Park kid even though, they were constantly beaten to a bloody pulp by none other than über-badass Kenny McCormick and his partner in crime, Craig Tucker.

Actually, there was an unwritten law in their high school.

*Don't mess with South Park kids.*

That law had been established generations before them and continued down to the youngsters.

There was only a slight diversion from their generation and that was the add-on:

*Because you don't want to mess with Eric Cartman.*

Wendy was known in high school for being school president and for not only being smart but also nice and cute. Bebe was known because she couldn't get rid of that obstinate rumor of her being easy and doing it with everyone in school. Stan was fairly famous because of his sports – whatever it was he decided to play at the moment.

However, Cartman was known by *everyone*. There had been cases of kids moving away and changing their names to get away from that personified evil, because they had rubbed him the wrong way.

Their current principal was already counting the days until Cartmans' graduation, while his predecessor quit barely a month into their first year at high school, because he couldn't handle the bastard's manipulation.

You just don't want to mess with Eric Cartman.

However, Cartman was oblivious to the subtle tricks and bullying Butters had to endure, or at least pretended to be, and Butters would never tell on someone, which was the reason that even Kenny only noticed about one third of what they were doing to him.

"Yeah, that too," Butters admitted and looked down on the coke he clutched in his

hands, drawing the attention back to him. "But I don't know what I'm s'posed ta do."

"You should just have fun. Don't worry about anything, the girls just wanted to do it, is all."

"Bebe said it was Kenny's idea."

"Practically."

Kyle noticed the blue eyes flicker towards Kenny, who was currently engaged in a drinking competition, cheered on by other teenagers.

"Let me ask you something", he started, startling the blonde for a second. "Who do you like?"

"I uhm, like everyone", the Butters answered, blushing.

"So you like Cartman?"

Butters dropped his gaze. "I don't hate him... much..."

"What about me and Stan?"

"I like you both, but..."

"But?" he probed, making Butters cringe.

"I-I like Stan a bit more."

Kyle frowned and even felt a bit insulted. Until he realized that that answer was probably justified. He wasn't an annoying goody-goody like Stan for sure and since he found out about Butters and Kenny he had become worse in teasing the stupid blondes.

"What about Wendy?"

"Wendy is a really good friend and she helps me with my homework. But she can be scary at times. So I guess, I like her a lot?"

"Kenny?"

He watched as the eyes of the blonde lit up and reflexively flickered to the drunk, who started to built a beer pyramid of the cans he had emptied in that stupid contest which he was about to win as far as Kyle could see.

"I guess, I-I like Kenny more than Stan."

Kyle raised an eyebrow and contemplated, whether he should whack that fucker over the head for that answer.



"You trying to make me angry?"

Butters eyes widened. "No! I-why would I? I uh, know I shouldn't like Kenny that much, but I think it can't be helped and you know, I know that he would never want to be my friend anyways, but then you tell me that he organized that" he spread his arms to emphasize the 'that', "I-I kinda get my hopes up that maybe he likes me a little but-but the next day he treats me like I wasn't there and I don't complain because I'm used ta that and all an-and Tweek tells me he's a good-for nothin', and that I one day will end in jail, where people will rape me and then ah – but I don't believe that, I mean it's Tweek, ya know? An' I think that Kenny's a great guy and works hard in school and at his part time and I think it's great how he shares with his family. I-I can understand why he wouldn't want to be my friend, I'm not cool like you and Stan—"

"Dude, you're head over heels." Kyle stated, mainly to quell that nonsense rambling.

"Wh-what?"

"Just analyzing."

Butters fell silent and just stared at his coke. When Kyle thought the conversation was over, he heard him whisper, so faint he wasn't even sure whether he had imagined it.

"Yes."

"Yes?"

Butters looked up with an earnest look. "Yes. I like Kenny. A lot."

"Don't tell me, I know that. I thought *you* didn't know", Kyle answered, leaning back against the cushion of the couch, spotting Stan now dancing with Bebe and that asshole had even the audacity to bat his eyelashes at him.

"Does Kenny know, too?"

That made Kyle actually laugh and he noticed out of the corner of his eye that Stan raised an eyebrow in question.

"I doubt it. ... You intent to tell him?"

Butters looked up again. "I ... no. No."

Kyle only shrugged. That was to be expected seeing as Kenny was completely ambivalent when it came to Butters and that made him crueller than even Cartman. At least with Cartman Butters knew where he stood. With Kenny, Butters never knew whether the blonde wanted to embrace him in a tight hug or throttle him with bare hands. Kenny probably wasn't sure either.

Butters yawned, and Kyle saw his chance to fled that boring party. "You want to head

home?" He asked, standing up from the couch, extending his hand towards the blonde.

"What about the party?"

"The party will survive without us. Most of the people are already dead drunk and I would like to be home before they decided it would be fun to puke all over each other."

Butters hesitated, before he took the offered hand and let himself be helped up.

They both headed through the crowd towards the entrance hall, when Butters suddenly stopped. "What about Kenny and Stan?"

"Don't care," Kyle answered. Kenny was a big boy and Kyle had to spike a couch with needles before that boyfriend of his came home.

"Shouldn't we at least ask?" Butters stuttered. "Or... or tell them that we are leaving?"

"Dude, just tell me when you're jealous, for fucks sake!" Stan suddenly intruded on their conversation, emerging out of the mass made of bodies. "You always have to play the freaking Drama queen, don't you?"

"Oi! You wanna leave?" Kenny shouted across the room, cutting his way through the crowd of dancing teenagers, getting rid of a guy that dared to grab his ass.

That guy would be dead meat tomorrow if he dared to cross Kenny's path again, Kyle assumed.

"Yeah, it's late and little Butterbean has to watch The Sandman else he can't sleep", the redhead explained. "So I offered to bring him home and tuck him away safely in his bed. I will even check under his bed for monsters, so you go and have your fun."

"I will bring him home", Kenny stated.

"I don't think that's a good idea", Kyle answered hesitantly, eyeing the dirty blonde haired boy.

"Why not?" Kenny demanded.

Because Kenny was a clingy drunk; he was a touchy, seductively and all over *honest* drunk. The qualms he had when sober about touching Butters were certainly lost when intoxicated.

"You are drunk." Stan finally answered.

"I'm not drunk. Maybe mellow."

"Dude, you won that drinking contest!"

"Because the other guy's a pussy, Stan."

"I will not let two drunken guys go home together."

"I'm not drunk." Butters defended himself.

"You are", Kyle argued back.

"Nuhuhno, I only had coke and orange juice."

"Trust me Butters, you are. You just don't know." Kyle explained as if talking to a little child. If he would just suggest it long enough, the blonde would eventually buy it and by the way, he probably wasn't lying. There was no non-alcoholic coke and orange juice on these kinds of parties so Butters must be a least tipsy.

"It's alright, Kyle", Kenny eventually said, hugging Butters shoulder with one arm. "I'll bring him home."

The redhead frowned, before he shrugged. "Don't come crying to me."

Kenny just shrugged and the four of them got dressed and parted at the crossing a few feet from Token's house. Butters bid them goodbye, nervously eyeing Kenny's hand in his – for not getting lost again – and Kyle just turned around and headed his way, followed by Stan who soon caught up to his level, blowing his hot breath into his hands.

"It's freaking cold."

"It's freaking South Park", Kyle retorted.

"If you are pissed then tell me. Don't be a sissy."

"I'm not pissed."

"Sure. I can just imagine you coming up with a hundred of ways to make that disgusting couch even more uncomfortable."

"Maybe water. I could lie to you and tell you, it's just pee."

"Oh come on! I was nine!", Stan fret. "I don't pee in pools anymore! And I *wash* my hands before I leave the restroom, for gods sake! So stop checking the towel every time I leave!"

"Or maybe thumbtacks."

"Alright, I get it, so you *are* angry!"

Kyle didn't answer.

"So what? You jealous about Butters? Or me dancing with Wendy?"

"Why should I?"

"Stop. Being. So. Fucking. Passive aggressive!" Stan yelled, stopping Kyle with an arm around his stomach. "You know, I'd really wish you would talk to me."

"There is nothing to talk about."

"The hell there is!"

"It's not your problem that I turn into a *sissy* and get angry about something stupid like you dancing with your ex."

"You don't want to dance. And I *like* Wendy! There was a reason we were dating for so long!"

"I guess there was."

Stan took his arm from Kyle's stomach and rubbed his hands against the fabric of his pants. "Why is it that you are always so distant about everything? I've been your best friend for years and we haven't fought as much as we are doing right now. You don't want me to kiss you in public, I'm not even allowed to touch you. You don't even want to talk to me about important stuff anymore. Before we started dating we could talk about everything and I could always touch you." Stan stopped and turned his head away, trying to hide his blush. "That is, I don't want to touch or kiss you nonstop or so. I mean, I do want to touch you and fantasize about you in class or—" Kyle could feel his face heating up. "That is, I don't do *that* very often. Maybe when I see you in PE but it's not like I get the urge to just drag you in some random closet very often. I mean—"

"Dude!"

"I can't help it!" Stan defended himself desperately. "I'm not affectionate but it would be nice to not have a book thrown in your face just because you want to kiss your boyfriend once in a while!"

"I don't throw books at you!"

"Of course you do! Remember that one time in the library, when no one was around and I just leaned over and you push your history book in my face because 'there might be cameras around'? Or that one time, when I just *mentioned* that I would like to kiss you and you threw a pen at me? Dude, a *pen*?"

"That's because you make me act stupid!"

Stan blinked. "I don't understand."

"You don't have to."

"Of course I have to! Don't you realize? We will never stop fighting if you can't talk to me! Get over your freaking complex and just tell me, for fucks sake."

Kyle bit his lower lip, crossed his arms in front of his chest.

Stan waited a few seconds, before he turned around. "Alright, keep to yourself." he growled, throwing his hands in the air. "See if I care."

Kyle hesitated until he noticed that Stan really wasn't going to turn around again. He watched his back, the bare hands balled to fist, while the dark-haired boy tried to keep them warm with rubbing them against his pants.

The red-head let his arms fell to the side, helpless.

"If you kiss me I want to kiss you back."

Stan stopped and Kyle didn't know where to keep his hands.

"And if I do," he continued, lowering his gaze to the grey pavement of the side walk, "I will skip through school like a deluded crack addict on meth. It's not that I don't want to touch you but if you do I don't want you to stop and—I can't believe you made me say that!" Stan finally turned around and Kyle pressed his lips together, spotting the satisfied smirk on the others lips. "Stop grinning like a lunatic, Stan Marsh!"

But the boy just started to approach him again.

"You're cute."

"Don't say that!"

"I love you."

"Don't *say that!*"

As Stan reached the other, he just leaned forward, giving Kyle a peck on the cold, red cheeks.

"Stan!"

Then on the lips.

"I mean it!"

"Want to continue on that disgusting couch? You get the cola and I get the whisky?"

Kyle pressed his lips together, before he gave a resigned sigh. "I hate you..." He mumbled, lips in a pout, but started to walk again, Stan by his side. "You know, I think Kenny and Butters do fit each other", he suddenly said, touching Stan's arm with his

gloved hand and then pulling his cold bare hand into his pockets.

The dark haired boy looked at the clasped hands, before he smiled warmly. "How come?"

"Because they are both stupid." Kyle simply answered, squeezing the hand. "Just like us."

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Kyle looked at Kenny, face hid in his crossed arms on the table, a disturbing smirk on his face, while Butters had asked a girl in the back to change seats upon entering their math class and now sat as far away from Kenny as possible. Kyle leaned against the windowsill, arms akimbo, while Stan pinched the base of his nose.

"So you did what?" he asked, rotating his hand to coax the answer out, though Kenny couldn't see that.

"I jumped in front of an oncoming truck." They heard the muffled answer through the arms and Kyle's smirk only widened.

"I'm dead earnest" Kenny whispered, now looking up to his friends. "Why Butters?"

"Well..." was all Kyle answered, before he saw Ms. Abel walking into their classroom. "Because you are both stupid." He finished, then headed to his seat leading Stan, who couldn't stop pinching the base of his nose, to their places.