

*Stars*

“What are you made of?”

Through half-lidded eyes, the teenager looked up, a cigarette between his fingers as he exhaled a puff of smoke. He only pressed his lips into a tight, thin line, before shutting his eyes in deep thought, and pressed back, the back of his jacket snagging against the brick wall of his school. What *was* he made of? He knew what his schoolbooks taught him - he was made of blood and water and elements he didn't care to memorize past any tests or quizzes that his teacher sprung upon him. He also knew, from several late-night searches, that he was made of the stuff of stars; although he definitely didn't *feel* like it.

“Smoke,” was his first response, dark eyes looking to the cigarette burning between his fingers.

“And?”

Then came his second, quieter than the first, “fire. Broken glass.”

“Broken glass?”

He looked up to the other teenager's face, before repeating the words, as if he was affirming this to more than just them: “broken glass.”

“Why broken glass?”

He only shrugged, “it's sharp. And clear. But... it won't hurt you until you touch it.”

“Is this your way of saying you're dangerous? Because you aren't.”

“Aren't I? You know what your parents think of me.” Two more words lay unspoken, still caught at the tip of his tongue. *Of us.*

“When have I cared what they think?”

The smallest of grins managed to break through as he glanced down to the cigarette between his fingers, burning slowly, "you do. Sometimes."

There was a pause. "How many of those have you smoked?"

"Before today?"

"Before today."

"A few. I only smoke 'em when-"

"I know. How many times how you felt that way?"

"What are you, my shrink?"

"I'm just worried about you, Cam."

"Dude, I'm fine. Don't waste your time worrying about me."

"I'm not-"

Cam had been quick to intervene, "what are you made of?"

He was caught off-guard for mere seconds, but quick to answer with a simple word:

"dreams."

"Dreams?"

"I'm a dreamer. I'm made of dreams and warmth and clouds." He could hear his friend chuckle softly, "what?"

"That's cute."

"I mean... I like to think I'm made of warmth." A beat. "Am I?"

"You are."

"You are, too."

"That's-"

"You're the one that said fire. Fire can warm."

"If you don't get too close. You're already burnt, Peter."

"I don't mind being burnt."

Cam shut his eyes and inhaled deeply, before pulling his jacket closer to him, speaking softly, "I think you're made of stars."

"Aren't we all?" Peter shifted, sitting next to the teen and drawing his legs up.

He pursed his lips together into a fine line, "if you wanna talk science, we are. But y'know we aren't talking science."

"I think you're made of stars too, then."

"Me?" He held back a chuckle, "nah. Not me. You were born to shine. I'm just kinda *here.*"

"Not to me. I think you could shine if you wanted to. But... you're more like the moon, I guess." Peter paused for a mere second, before looking back to his friend, "you're so much more than you think you are."

"Y'know why my dad kicked me out. And why some of our friends abandoned us. I'm not much in the end."

"And your mom went with you. And I'm still here," it was at this that Cam swore he felt fingers ghost over his own, although Peter had shown no sign of movement. "And I'll stay here if you want."

"You deserve better. You deserve the world, and... being here, with me, isn't going to get you it."

That was where Peter went silent. His voice caught in his throat as words molded together and his thoughts became incoherent as he struggled to find what *exactly* he wanted to say. He only frowned in the end, running a hand through his hair before quietly shivering and drawing his knees closer to himself. And when Cam stood up, Peter went to join him until he watched him shrug off the leather jacket he had adorned, and hold it out to him in a small, silent gesture. Cam only watched with glistening eyes as Peter's attention flit from the jacket in his hands to his face, drinking in every feature before finally reaching out with trembling, numb fingers wrapping around the material before taking it from him slowly. He pulled it over his shoulders, not bothering to fully put it on at the thought of returning it later, but quietly enjoyed the lingering warmth. Silently, he ran his fingers over the leather and pulled it closer around his neck and shoulders, shutting his eyes.

Finally, Peter parted his lips and spoke as he heard Cam sitting down beside him. "One more year."

In a silent understanding, Cam nodded, looking to Peter as he only repeated the small statement; "one more year."

"It's unfair, though. Prom."

"I didn't really wanna go anyway."

"They can't do this to us, though. This isn't right."

Cam forcibly exhaled and shut his eyes, "what do you expect?"

"I expect more. I always expect more."

"Obviously you don't in some cases," Cam chuckled, nearly motioning to himself.

"You wanna crash at my place?" Peter asked on a whim, "tomorrow's Saturday."

"So it is."

"Are you gonna answer me or not, Cam?"

"Yeah, sure dude. Your parents won't mind?" Peter only looked to him.

He let out a soft sigh, burying his face in his hands, "yeah. Yeah they'll mind. Your place? They like your mom. I'll say she wanted me to come over. She loves me anyway."

"She loves everyone. She's a good person," Cam said.

"She is."

Cam stood, offering a hand to Peter, "come on, *your highness*. Let's go home."

"Your home is my home," he only said, voice quiet as he took Cam's hand, and was immediately whisked up. He never forgot how strong Cam was. He never could.

So the two walked, the moonlight pouring down on them as the stars glittered above. As they neared Peter's car, they had glanced up to the twinkling lights above, only for Peter's attention to fall to Cam and the reflection of the stars in his eyes. His attention darted away as Cam looked to him. Peter quickly clicked his car unlocked, climbing into the driver's seat and only cranking the car up when Cam spoke again.

"I think..." He trailed off, before looking away from his fingers, and suddenly Peter remembered he was wearing his jacket. "I think you're right."

"That'd be a first."

"I mean it. You're right."

"About?"

"I think we're made of stars. I think we're brighter than people think we are. I think we're so much more than what people think we are, since stars look small from here, but they're

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bigger than anyone could imagine. I think... we'll shine one day. I think we'll be bigger than anyone could imagine."

Cam tensed up as he felt Peter's hand over his, fingers lacing with his own as he took his full attention -- although Cam would lie if he said that Peter didn't steal his attention more often and easier than this. With a tight squeeze, he finally spoke after drinking in each and every word that had tumbled so fluidly from Cam's lips.

"We already are."