

Damnatio Memoriae

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Damnatio Memoriae

by [aamorpheus](#)

Summary

All you have is a knife and a lot of pent up rage. Nobody warned you that he'd be pretty.

0 - The Fool

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Your vision went white with static as you felt your arm mechanically swing him around into a table laden with flowers and fruit. A vase broke, spilling coriander blooms and orange lilies everywhere. Food and silverware scattered about, leaving a discordant symphony in their wake. You climbed on top of him, both of your hands raised and wrapped around the handle of your blade.

You could bring it down right now and end it.

You could erase him from existence.



You knew enough to question why nobody had put him in the electric chair. Bombings. Murders. Strings of dead bodies deceased without any weapon.

Just his hands.

Elusive and cunning, ruthless beyond compare. Nearly impossible to track down. But every city had rats, rats who were loyal to few and who were enticed by the flash of currency. He liked picking buildings that weren't quite abandoned, but lifeless enough to be mistaken as so. Closed windows and curtains drawn, with walls so old you could peel the lead paint off like leather. More importantly, he never stayed longer than a week.

He had no past, no origin, no birth certificate. Any record of him burned away from this world. He was a ghost in the realm of the living, silently dragging people to their graves. Now it was your turn, under the condition that you take him with you.

You know that to aim for such a goal is a fool's dream, but you just couldn't release him from your head.

“If you talk to him, he’ll pluck out your mind.”

They were wrong, he had already stolen it from the moment you heard his name. His dark eyes seemed to dare you into trying to find him as you stared down at the photo of him in your hand.

A monster.



It was bitter cold out, enough for your breath to steam in front of your face. The skies look like rolling plumes of marble and ash, the herald to a storm, or perhaps snow if you were lucky. Your car is tucked away in the parking lot of a library a few blocks back, the rest of your journey to be completed on foot.

The sun is beginning to dip below the horizon as you study a triplex situated behind overgrown vines and trailing ivy. Its windows are cracked in several spots, marked with white paint, and free of lights or movement. Unoccupied to the eye of an outsider. Nothing more than another decrepit building, half-renovated and awaiting tenants.

You circle the outside from a distance, inconspicuous enough that most would simply see another person out for an evening walk. This was the closest you had come to the building since your acquisition of the location two days ago. You would have to strike tonight, your presence far too loud to wait. You would have to kill him before he could vanish to another house, or worse- out of the country.

After the pains it took to get this information, as well as the crimp it put in your finances, you could not afford to go through the process again at this rate. The weight of the knife in your pocket is heavy. Tonight might be the night that you die, for better or for worse.

You eye a window perched at the top of the house. It is big enough that you could squeeze through, yet still well cloaked by the branches of a far too overgrown oak tree. You would feign walking back to your car to throw off any potential witnesses and double back to the

building on a more secluded route. Yes, you would corner him tonight and make sure that he would be removed from this world.

You exhale into the dusk air, your breath illuminated by the rosiness of the dying light.

What a shame, with his ability, it could've been him who was putting abhorrent beings out of their misery.



The branches of the tree scratch your leg through the fabric of your pants as you climb closer to the window. You silently curse yourself for not wearing something thicker. At least it was black, something to help you blend into the night. Your thighs ache as you approach the unlit building, your hands gearing up to grip onto the trim, lest you plummet to the cold hard ground below.

You cling to the window, arms shaking, and pull out your knife. It clicked far too loudly as it swung open, echoing in your mind. You jam the blade between the window and its frame, using the tip to turn the latch. You send a prayer to anyone who is listening that your entry falls upon deaf ears.

As you squeeze through the window, you find yourself staring down a winding hallway to another room. A single candle sits on the floor, burning down into a pile of waxy mush. It's not bright, but it's just enough that you can make out the sagging floorboards and the floral of the peeling wallpaper. You have to hold in your retch as your hand makes contact with the grime of the windowsill, a centuries' worth of dust and water damage touching your palm.

To your left is a closet with no door and to your right are shadowy stairs. The dirt on the steps has been swept off, yet more evidence that this place has an occupant. You inch forwards and test the floor for creaks. As you cautiously lean your weight on the aged wood, it makes no sound. A true miracle. You let out a quiet sigh and detach from the window.

You grip the knife in one hand as you advance, head tilted slightly to the side should you hear anything. You stop short just as you reach the end of the hall. Liling in the distance is *music*. The faint whisper of a violin creeping up like shivers down your spine.

As you round the corner, the faint light of another candle beckons to you from an ajar door. You take a deep breath and brace yourself, back pressed against the wall. Would he cry? Would he beg for his life? Or would he simply scoff at you for even trying? Your heart beats in your ears, a steady reminder that in this moment, you are still alive.

And in this moment, so is he.

You send the door swinging open with a solid kick from your knee, hand ready to swing and slash at the beast who waits for you. On an ancient wooden table sits a cassette player, music seeping from it into...an empty room. The furniture is neat and free of grime, the floor swept, and the corners dusted.

Already gone.

Already gone.

A scream builds up in your throat but you quickly swallow it down before you get caught for trespassing. Your arm tenses and shakes, picking up a small note next to the cassette player.

Try again.

You can almost hear it in his voice, see his face wearing that aggravatingly calm look, just the same as his photo. Your vision dips in and out. You feel that hot wax dripping through your bloodstream again as you grind your teeth.

A deep slash arcs its way across the wall, leaving the wallpaper peeling in its wake. You can't stop yourself as you land gash after gash into the wall until it looks like an animal was caged within this room.

You should've expected this from him. You should have known better.

Try again.

The words of The Conjurer beat about inside your skull. He knew all along, of course he would.

This hunt is no longer one sided, it never was.



The entire house was empty, he had up and left, just as you figured. With no other choice, you resign yourself to walking home with nothing to show for it except for a note, a cassette, and chafed legs.

The moon peeks through the clouds and watches you as you walk. You give her a smile and hope she is doing better than you are. You'll have to regroup tomorrow, you crumple up his note and shove it in your pocket. He probably left traps for you in your own home for all you knew.

In the haziness of the witching hour, you hear a second set of footsteps. Paranoia wraps its cold hand around your throat and you pull out your knife once more. The steps are not coming from behind you, but *towards* you. You know full well there are no pedestrians at this hour, especially not in the midst of winter. Failed killing be damned, you were not about to get mugged or kidnapped on this night.

From the shadows emerges a man wrapped in a black jacket with a fur trim. As he wordlessly passes, you notice that he's chewing his thumb, seemingly deep in thought. You keep walking, as does he. You allow yourself to let out the breath you were holding, perhaps he just liked the night.

"Did you like the music?"

You stop dead in your tracks, your entire body turning cold. Stiffly, with your knife gripped in both hands, you turn to face him.

He is paused in his walk, looking up at the moon before turning to gaze at you. His face is shadowed by dark, disheveled hair, but you can still see his slight smile. Without another word, he continues his walk. Somehow, you feel you've already lost despite him being so dangerously in reach.

You let him go.

Chapter End Notes

I'm writing this because I'm mad there isn't enough good content for him. I will chew through your walls about it.

Anyways, if I spontaneously break all my bones after posting this, I'll let y'all know.

14 - Temperance

Chapter Summary

and so it begins

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He never set up a base without putting cameras up. They were in concentric circles around wherever he decided to station himself. The more circles someone bypassed the more quickly he knew someone was hunting him down. Even by his standards your approach was bold. Far too bold to be an actual threat. As he saw your face flicker from camera to camera, he leaned back in his worn down chair and pondered who sent you. Were you from the ADA or the mafia? Had the government found him and sent an agent on his trail? Or had one of the DOA members finally turned and sent an assassin?

He always made it his business to know who wanted to put a bullet in his head, or who might have the inkling to do so. But your face drew a blank in his mind, something slipping through the cracks, much to his irritation. He began scouring for any record of you, and much to his surprise, a wealth of information poured through. For someone attempting to pull off such a move, he would've expected a little more difficulty on your part.

On the outside you were a student of good standing at one of the local universities. You received recognition mainly for your talents in art but had pristine records in all your classes. An upstanding citizen to most, he presumed. But beneath that were little crumbs of secrecy scattered about. You were unaffiliated but passed information around as needed, whether to the ADA or the mafia, you had no qualms.

But you were picky. The thread of tips you passed were always ones that caused no harm to others, still a heart to be found in your dealings. How... *virtuous* . And now you had seemingly gone rogue on a hunt for him.

He chewed absently on his fingers, picking at the scabs that had built up with the weight of his thoughts. He could kill you just as easily as he could send someone else to do it. Or he could let you live. The picture listed on your ID stared blankly at him from one of his

screens, boring a hole right through him. The light pouring out of his casket of electronics bathed the dark room in a shade of indifferent blue. Music played softly in the background, a string quartet, something haunting for the long nights.

Yes, he could kill you, that is for certain.

However...a change of subject could be interesting, something new to study. If killing you was of no trouble, perhaps he could let you live this time.

Just to observe you, of course.



You can't seem to focus. Your sleep is filled with the fidgeting and planning of a restless mind. You could've gotten him. You could've killed him right then and there. Or at least *tried*. Now he was probably up and out of the country and you did not have the funds nor enough of a social presence to weasel out any more tips.

The film runs out here.

You mindlessly fiddle with the note he left. You almost feel like crying. Failure, right when he was so close. *Failure.*

Try again.

His voice still echoes in your head. It taunts you. His presence settles around your shoulders like snowfall and whispers in your ears. He haunted you, in that brief interaction alone, he haunted you. Your eyebrows scrunch together as you stare at the partially crumpled paper.

How dare he leave you like this.

With a start, you stand up from your bed and start pulling a jacket over your house clothes. Fuck him. He wanted you to try? Fine. You'll try. It was obvious that following any sort of paper trail or tips from another person would just lead you down a rabbit hole of misinformation. He wasn't stupid enough to let you catch him that easily, it was a game. You two were gambling your souls, of course he'd want to get under your skin like this. An unclear mind addled with misplaced emotions is a recipe for mistakes. Mistakes that would cost you your life.

Oh.

How clever of him.



Your walking is hurried as you rush through the rain to the triplex. Raindrops pelt you and leave damp spots in your hair until strands are plastered to your skin. You jam your knife into one of the windows on the first floor, rather than attempting to break in through your old route. Your legs still ached from that decision. Paint chips off and flecks your coat sleeves like little stars as the window latch finally breaks.

You climb in with a relieved sigh, the feeling of water trickling down you ceasing. Making your way to the stairs, your wet shoes leave glossy footprints on the dirty floors, the true color of the wood shining through for a brief moment. You can hear the rain coming down harder as you wander up to the third floor, insistently tapping on the old roof.

The room you found the note in is still empty. Nothing has changed, no furniture moved, no new items. You move the table around and feel around the corners of the room. This is the only place you have left, the last thread you have connecting to him. Any clue at all would suffice, you just needed *something*. You run your hand over the results of your fit, fingers tracing along the curling yellow wallpaper. Some of the rage from that night burns in your throat again. That damned rat of a man and his moronic tests of wit. Nothing could ever be simple could it?

You stomp out of the room and back into the hall. The remains of the melted down candle are right where you left it. It's yellow like a lump of butter and the wall is slightly browned from smoke. You frown at it, the impulsive thoughts scratching at your door. You kick it so hard

that the thump echoes in the empty house. The swift whack of your boot sends it sliding across the floor, scattering chips of wax everywhere. At your feet is a square hole about the size of a tennis ball, the edges coated with more wax droplets.

That *motherfucker*.

You pull out your phone and shine a light down into the crevice, looking for bugs and any other mystery atrocities looking to rob you of your hands. Deeming the recess safe, you reach a tentative hand into it and feel your fingers make contact with paper...and something heavier?

Carefully, you lift it out and see another note, but the item it's tied to throws you for a loop. In your hand are three or so wisteria blooms bound together.

You stare in askance at the small bouquet. Just how insane is this man? You unfold the note and stare down at the neat handwriting scrawled across the page.

I'll return to this building in two days. Do not try and break in any sooner.

Chapter End Notes

so far I haven't died yet, I consider this a slay

the song that's playing in the background is String Quartet No. 3 (Mishima):
Mishima/Closing by Kronos Quartet, it's real pretty 10/10

anyways have y'all ever chewed on candle wax? it's kinda fun tbh

5 - The Hierophant

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Steam curled around you as the water boiled away in the pot. Sunlight seeped through your window, staining the tiles red as the sun dipped behind the trees and rooftops. The pasta swirled about in your pot as you stirred it with your fork.

You had heard rumors about him, nasty little horror stories that drifted through every organization, good and bad alike. Heinous things. Tales of a child scattered in pieces. Men with blood seeping from their mouths and eyes.

And now that man had you in a bind. Leaning back against the counter, you watched the sun drift lower and lower, the light peeking through the branches in little scarlet shards. Another day to wait, that is, if you follow his instructions. You tapped the fork against your mouth, tasting the salt from the water. Suppose you were to wait, would he live up to his word? Or is he just having you kill time while he continues to disappear?

You chew on the tines in thought, eyes flicking back to the pot to check the pasta. And what if you were to come early? What if you chose to try and take him by surprise? Foolish. Utterly foolish. He would expect that, wouldn't he? Worse yet, you might blow your only shot at getting to see him again.

You sigh and begin scooping the pasta into a bowl. It was all bad, every option felt like the wrong choice. Against your will, you had played right into his hands. He was intelligent, you had to respect him for that. You recalled hearing whispers of Ace and his sudden death. How he had hung himself. How there were no survivors on that ship. Brute force wasn't his style. No, he simply let his enemy dig their own grave, all he did was push them in. Perhaps he was right in saying that thought is a crime.

With a frown, you stared down at your food, chewing at your lip until the skin was raw. You almost found him...admirable. You had to admit, a mind like that made a skilled weapon. And now it was being used against you, something you had no hope of measuring up against. You took a bite of pasta and looked down your counter to where the newest note was sitting. The flowers still seemed out of place.

Why wisteria? Why include them? Everything else logistically made sense to you, was this just some way to confuse you? You sighed into your dinner. Every step you took towards understanding him left you with another question. Outside, the sky had calmed to a deep lavender, bathing everything in dusky purple. You supposed you could wait another day. A slim chance was better than none at all, even if you *were* constrained to his rules.



You found yourself unable to sleep. Your brain remained stubbornly active, leaving you tossing and turning while your body descended into exhaustion. Somewhere in the early hours of the morning, you gave up. You left the house with a jacket over your pajamas, your boots sloppily laced. The sun had not yet risen but the clouds were turning pink as you walked to the graveyard. You didn't feel like seeing anyone else while you wandered, you just wanted to be alone.

As you pass over the stones, you feel a sense of emptiness, like you're the only one not at rest. Perhaps it's the sleep deprivation speaking. Your hand brushes over the graves, feeling the grittiness of time and worn down rock. Occasionally you read the names and the writing beneath them, as if the epitaphs could tell you the person's secrets.

You let an errant finger trace out someone's last name- Gunn. It's a scottish name if memory serves. Did Dostoyevsky have any family? He had to have come from somewhere, who cared for him when he was young? You tried to picture him as a boy, your mind sketching out the shape of a thin little thing with a mop of black hair.

You were not foolish enough to assume he had been born the demon you hunt now, but what made him so? As you continued your winding path between graves, you pondered that scrawny young boy. A child cursed with the ability to kill. You supposed someone *had* to have died by his hand.

Was he scared when it happened? Did he look in horror down at the person flecked in blood at his feet? You could almost see the fearful eyes of adults around him, staring at this antichrist, a demon without a choice.

You gaze into the blank eyes of a stone angel perched atop a grave, she stares back mournfully, her arms full of flowers for the person at her feet. What a lonely way of living that must have been. A sad boy bearing the shadow of a monster, the world refusing a place for him. No wonder he despised ability users, it must have only ever brought him misfortune.

Tiredness pulled at your sleeve and your path turned back home, some bedraggled wraith stumbling between the stones. The sun was on its way up when you made it back to your door. You hardly remembered hearing the lock click, or taking off your boots. As soon as your body touched the bed, all you knew was the forgiving darkness of a dead sleep.



As day stretched on, he did not hear the telltale sound of the latch coming undone. The windows untouched, the cameras empty of your face. His eyes followed the slash marks in the walls, the skid marks from the movement of the table, the chips of wax scattered like you were throwing bones. You had given him his two days, some patience to be found in you.

He smiled, he almost thought you wouldn't be able to hold back that kind of temper. He hadn't been able to see your expression when you pulled the flowers out, your face angled away from the cameras. What did you do with them when you left? With emotions that ran high such as yours, he wouldn't have been surprised if you had burned them. Just a little something to pick at your brain, a chekhov's gun that would never fire.

He was used to dealing with people of many creeds and calibers, but not one so *human*. It was refreshing that for once his adversary did not have an overinflated sense of self. And in the same breath, your volatile actions were unnecessary to him. He couldn't imagine being ruled by rage in such a way. You stomped your feet and swung around you wildly like an animal. How are people okay with acting like that? Always squabbling and beating about like goons. Life need not be so messy.

How strange it would be to feel so violently.

got excited about the vibes and started derangement writing again

why am I awake

16 - The Tower

Chapter Summary

this chapter is sponsored by I Can't Decide by The Scissor Sisters

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

This time, you decide to meet halfway and wrestle open the door on the second floor balcony. Was it riskier than the third floor window? Yes, but damn it, that tree was a pain in the ass. The door was already loose on its hinges as you worked your knife around the latch. The wood was flimsy and partially rotted, splintering around your blade with ease.

If he was here, all this beating about the bush would pay off, you could finish your job and sleep easy. And if you died, at least your soul could take pride in your final efforts. All this back and forth for what? You repressed an irritated sigh as you ascended the stairs. Tonight, it was all going to be worth it.

You can hear music again, this time a piano arrangement. It's beautiful, but the fact that it's him who is playing it makes it feel condescending. Like you were nothing more than a simple visitor. There is a new candle in the hallway when you reach the top of the stairs, it's red this time and it flickers as you pass it. Your old friend wrath laces its burning fingers with yours. Your feet move of their own accord, your consciousness telescoping backwards as you let anger engulf you. Mania numbing your body for what comes next.



Your eyes were bright even in the dark. They gleamed through the strands of your disheveled hair unlike anything he had seen, even from the organizations actively hunting him. You were a force all on your own, a storm front seeking destruction.

You hadn't brought men with you to corner him, nor an ability to challenge him, not even a gun. Just a simple silver switchblade with a black handle.

The tip of its blade pressed into his side, ready to skewer him in a heartbeat.

He was prepared to touch you and take your life.

Your other hand was holding one of his arms back by the wrist. Your bare palm was pressed against him, not even a layer of fabric between you and his ability.

Your hands still shook with the fear of a person who isn't ready to let go of their mortality. And yet you were crouched over him, staring him dead in the eyes, unblinking. Your body was tensed and ready to strike without hesitation, the anger pouring off of you undeniably palpable.

And then he watched as your pupils dilated slightly, nearly imperceptibly.

The grip on your knife relaxed and your shoulders dropped.

You stood and walked out his door without a single word exchanged.

He sat up, watching you leave and put away your knife as if you were returning home from nothing more than a night stroll.

A coward's move.

No.

There was nothing cowardly about the wrath that radiated off of you nor the speed at which you dragged him from his chair to the sagging wooden floorboards of his temporary home. There was no cowardice in the way you pressed that knife to him with bloodlust seeping through your gritted teeth.

No, that was *mercy*.



You didn't expect him to be pretty.

Black hair like a murder of crows. Violet eyes. Strong cheekbones.

Some voice in the back of your brain was flabbergasted that you were even considering the features of the target you were prepared to kill. It's not like you hadn't seen him before in quick caught photos. But in person it was different.

He was handsome.

Fuck.

His chest rose and fell with each breath he took, lips slightly parted as he stared up at you. His gaze was still cold, and yet in the depths of his pupils, you saw a spark of genuine surprise. If anything, he seemed to be torn between dull resignation and fascination at your movements. There was not a trace of fear in him, he didn't beg or plead for his life, he didn't even move to fight you back. You were awestruck that you even made it this far without him killing you with his ability.

The pulse in his wrist thrummed under your hand, living proof that he was nothing more than another human being. A human being you'd have to kill.

He didn't look like a monster, he just looked like a man.

All your anger drained out of you, replaced with a sick sort of despair. You haven't killed before, haven't looked a person in the eyes and taken their life. You wanted to be mad, you wanted to stain the wood with scarlet, you wanted anything but this. He was just a man. Beneath all your blade and bite, you still had a heart, one that wept for humanity. No matter how far removed he was from it, he was still a person.

Your shoulders slumped.

You couldn't do this, could you?



As you scramble off the balcony, you feel like there's coins and stones rattling around your brain. What were you doing? Your chance was right there, you had him pinned beneath you, your knife in hand. The minute your feet touch the ground, you break into a run, not caring who saw you tearing through the night.

You tore at your hair like you could pull the emotions right out of your brain. You were soft, repulsively soft. If only you were a little more dead in the heart, if only you felt nothing at all, if only you could've just killed him. Your vision blurs into vague splotches of blue and black. Tears are rolling down your cheeks, your hands shakily wiping them away. In this moment you are a fool, god's most ridiculous clown.

Your path bends to a place where no one is likely to see you. Pavement changes to grass and rock as you stumble over gravestones. You can't stand going home just yet, not after that. You cannot face your bed. You cannot face the sight of those wisteria blooms. You almost wondered if he had purposely played to your softness, your weakness. In the midst of the dead, you finally open your mouth.

A scream radiates out into the darkness. It rips a hole right through you, your chest aching from crying.

You can hear a dog barking in the distance, answering back to you.

Try again.

You wipe off your face again, taking deep breaths to calm your erratic breathing. You couldn't fail. You refused too. It didn't matter if you had to face him again. You were going to keep going as many times as it took if it meant he'd be dead.

As long as he lives, you will seek him.

Chapter End Notes

Congratulations ! we finally get to encounter the man up close and personal

We will now be entering indecision central featuring an unfortunate amount of emotions

anyways I can't stop thinking about this fic, every day we get a little closer to seduction



9 - The Hermit

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

You wake with a start. Sitting up in bed, you rub the tiredness out of your eyes and realize with a pang that it's Monday again. You have classes awaiting you regardless of what your late night activities may be. As you go to pull some clothes on, you peek behind the drape covering your window. You are greeted by a flash of white and you squint at the brightness. It snowed while you slept. The outside world looked so peaceful draped in ice.

Bundled up in your jacket with a few extra layers, you begin your walk to campus, thankful for the convenience of housing that wasn't far away. Your boots crunch as you trudge through snow, trying your best not to slip on patches of black ice. The sky is steel gray with spots of brilliant blue peeking through. It's nice and quiet, early in the morning enough that most people aren't out yet. A calm moment in your life for once. However, as you pass over a bridge, you notice there is a man sitting on a bench beneath barren trees.

Each step feels like you're walking through glass as you start to near him. You really hoped you could've gone a few more hours without seeing him, enough to collect yourself and steel your mind against whatever curveball he threw at you. The shame of not putting an end to him last night still prickled in your chest. You gritted your teeth and crossed your fingers for the slim chance that he would leave you alone. Your social veneer was null and void leaving nothing but stark annoyance, god help him if he tried to be serious with you at this hour.

You could feel him watching you as you pass, eyes boring into you. He probably expected you to do something, to lose your buttons at him or pull some kind of threat. If you were being honest, you didn't have the energy for any of this.

“Do you like to read?”

You blink, your entire body halting as you processed his question. It's been a decade or so since someone has asked you that. Out of all the things you could've expected him to ask, that was not one of them. You turn to look at him, he's still watching you, head resting on one hand.

“Why’s it matter to you?” You reply, squinting at him. You half expected a riddle, given his habit of confusing you.

“Wouldn’t you be curious about your adversary?” His eyes glitter with something akin to fascination. Your chest tightens as he studies you.

He stands to walk by your side as you continue your way to campus. How odd, to walk with the man you’ve attempted to kill as though he were nothing more than a companion in passing. The silence is deafening as his original question goes unanswered. You sigh internally. He had already intruded on your morning, maybe if you just answered plainly, he’d leave you be.

You exhale into the freezing air, fixing your eyes straight ahead so you wouldn’t have to look at him. “Yes, I read, but I see no point in your asking.”

You fold to temptation, your gaze momentarily flickering to the side. He’s peering at you again, measuring you with his eyes. In the morning light they take on shades of blue. You lean back just slightly, vaguely unnerved by the fact that his face is far too close to yours.

“You have the mannerisms of someone who has built a home in their books.”

You shrugged at his response. You had to admit, he wasn’t wrong.

“So what if I have?” You reply, the knot in your chest wringing its hands, “Reading reminds me that I have a soul.”

He smiled for a moment, the corners of his mouth turning up in a catlike smile.

“Then by your logic, wouldn’t I have a soul?”

The beast in your brain twitches and squints through the bars. He was being strange again, the same flavor of oddity as the wisteria flowers sitting on your windowsill.

“There’s a folk tale I read once, about a girl who got bitten by a snake.” You begin as he watches curiously, “The stray cats, despairing for her, transform her into one of their own.”

Your hands are tracing little shapes in front of you as you talk, re-imagining the scenes as you walk.

“She does not wish to be a cat, but in having her wish granted, the snake kills her aunt instead.”

He’s intrigued now, watching you speak with your hands and the movement of your eyes. He’s never seen you talk this much, a glimpse into your irrationally emotional mind. A chance to make sense of you.

“And who am I in this story of yours?”

You stare at him, studying his cold violet eyes, empty of anything that could be called a home.

“The girl chooses to be a cat, chooses to spend longer trying to become human again, just so her aunt may live.” Your voice takes on a slightly bitter edge, something tinged with anger, “I doubt there is anyone in this world you would make such a sacrifice for.”

His pace slows and when you turn to face him, he looks like a statue paused in the snow. You can see his hands tensing and untensing ever so subtly. Was he mad? You supposed you would be too if someone insulted your humanity.

“Does that make me the snake in your eyes?” he inquires, his voice dangerously smooth.

You ponder this for a moment, watching the clouds move across the sky. The rolling wisps seem to drift through your mind as you think, a calming silence as you consider his question.

“No, not quite.” You finally reply, “Is there someone you’d unravel time for? Someone you’d spend lifetimes trying to save? If there is, you might not be empty of a soul.”

And with that, you leave and he does not follow. Just as you always do. Just as it is supposed to be.



You ran from him again, same as before. He could hear his heartbeat in his ears and exhale warm breaths into the freezing air. He could feel his hands growing numb in the cold, pins and needles in his fingertips. He was living, wasn't he? He was on this earth with a mind to think and eyes to see.

Ah.

But a mind and a soul are separate creatures. You tangled yourself up in his mind, seemingly fascinated and enraged at the same time. He saw the fire in your eyes when you searched the empty room for any trace of him, saw how you paused when you looked at the flowers under the floorboards. Even now, he could almost hear the mechanics of your brain as you carefully mulled over his questions. Is that why you kept returning every night?

But when it came to his soul, whether he had one or not, you would falter. Your knife would shake in your hand. Is that why you ran? He chewed on his fingers in thought as he trudged through the ice. What do you see when you look at him? You were so determined to kill him, so ready to push that blade of yours into his side. You were only human, you shouldn't be that hard to study. And yet you showed him mercy. Why would you? You must have seen something for it to affect you like that.

Did he want to be human in your eyes?

Spots of red dotted the harsh white of the snow, a bead of blood welling up from his index finger.

He hated the slashes you left in his walls. He hated your eyes and your voice and the violence of your hands. If being human meant being like you, he didn't want it. How foolish of you to have mercy for him.

And yet...

And yet, against his will, he found himself praying. A quiet wish that you would come see him again with your knife in hand. A prayer for the animal that stalks him.

Chapter End Notes

oh the story about the girl and the snake is an actual thing, it's called The Cats of Tanglewood Forest

it has really beautiful illustrations tbh

anyways. everyone gets feelings'd against their will

2 - The High Priestess

Chapter Summary

I listened to Dedicated to the One I Love. I think the vibes are a lil different here,

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

If you remained as you did, you would probably come again tonight. He couldn't keep his focus as he typed, you walked around in his mind and let your hands run over his thoughts and memories. If only he could pluck you out and keep you in a box. Why did you wander about in his head? Your occupancy was unwarranted, not to mention unwelcomed.

He closed his eyes and leaned back in his chair, hearing his spine pop as he straightened up. The screen was starting to make his head hurt, the words fizzing into meaningless static. How would you act this time around? Would you still try and act heartlessly? Maybe you just wouldn't come back.

He shook his head. You were an experiment, a test subject. Your emotions were irrational, reeling with anger one moment and showing him mercy the next. Demand and patience. Fear and philosophy. You were like a walking contradiction.

No.

You only *seemed* irrational. Every time your eyes had widened, every time you lost your senses. The flowers. The books. Simply looking him in the eyes. You expected cruelty, coldness, apathy. That's why you tried not to meet his gaze while you walked alongside him. *The key.*

He opened his eyes, staring into the ceiling like he could see the sky right through it. You stumbled when you saw him act *normal*. No, if he were to act detached, that would only separate him from you, allowing you to feel nothing for him. You could kill him as long as he played the part of the monster, as long as you could be angry at him without guilt or fault.

You expected him to be mean.

No amount of fear would stop you as long as you could hate him. If he wanted a reaction from you that was not rage, he would have to be human around you. Your heart was numb when you were wrathful. He wanted to see something real, to see past your mind into your soul. Something he supposedly did not have.

Ah. The hitch. Having to commune some semblance of emotion to you. The thought chafed. He didn't have a heart to show you, he didn't want you to have to see what he is made of. His inner mechanisms belonged to *him*. But if he didn't, this entire experiment would be null and void. He'd have to kill you.

He could still see the different flecks of color in your irises. The face you made while in thought. What a waste it would be if he were to kill you. The image of you crumpled on the ground, blood dripping from your face, flashed into his mind. The scene made his stomach twist, his mouth flattening into a thin line. That feeling, that *drop* in his chest, it bothered him. Maybe you were infecting him with your mood swings. Maybe he was sick.

He rubbed his eyes and tried to clear his head. The bottom line still remained, if he wanted to have any real effect on you, he supposed he'd have to find some way to show humanity, to frazzle you until he could pick you apart piece by piece. He still wondered what you saw in his eyes that night, tangled on the floorboards of this crumbling house.

He knew your name, your family's names, your home, your school, your face with complete clarity. Everything. Every record, every document.

But he didn't *know* you.

The same sickening drop in his chest came back. What if he *wanted* to know you?

“Just an experiment.”

His voice echoed in the empty room. The reverberations almost sound like a question. He must just be tired.



He heard the thump of the door from the second story balcony as you made your routine entry. This time around, he waits at the end of the hall for you to ascend the stairs. Faintly, the sound of your footsteps move through the rooms below him, the sound of your boots on the old floors echoing through the house. How would you react to seeing him waiting? There was a chance it might stun you.

The rhythmic thud of your footsteps trailed up the stairs, but that wasn't the only sound. He could hear a scraping sound, the grind of something being dragged across old plaster. You were running your knife across the walls and you didn't care if he heard you. An omen. A warning.

You looked unearthly, backlit by the moonlight leaking through the window behind you. An angel of death. You looked ready to charge at him, your eyes flickering around as you weighed your options. You had never confronted him quite like this before. He could see you trying to stay in your head, holding onto your anger like a life raft.

“Why did you pick me to kill?”

His curiosity is genuine, but he knows that the longer he talks, the harder it is for you to keep your composure. This time though, instead of responding, you stomp down the hall like a hellbent beast. In the five seconds of thought he has before you reach him, he considers his outcomes. If he starts running now, that would accomplish absolutely nothing. If he puts up a fight, things could get messy. Frankly, he wasn't really in the mood for bloodshed. Sighing internally, he braces himself for what you will do. Best to just let you tire yourself out and maybe then you would be reasonable.

The consequences of being human.

You grab the collar of his shirt with your free hand, fingers curling into the fabric with an iron grip. Your pupils are little pinpricks in your eyes and your lower lip is red and chapped from you chewing it. Endearingly disastrous. And then the walls blur, the world swinging around like a broken carousel. When the movement stops, his back is pressed to the wall. The hand that swung him is now wrapped around his throat.

He cocks his head as much as your grip allows him to. His fingers are curled around your wrist, not tightly, but just enough that you'd have to pry him off of you. The tip of your knife rests just below his sternum, if you stabbed him, you'd likely puncture a lung. He could almost imagine the feeling of his own blood drowning him.

"Aren't you going to answer my question?"

Your eyes are fixed on his hand on your wrist, your train of thought struggling to leave the station. You don't want to look at him. You don't want to meet his gaze.

"Because you cause pain wherever you go. Because I don't think someone like you should be allowed to walk the earth."

That was a throwaway answer. That didn't tell him anything about *why*.

"Come now, a million criminals walk this earth, some of which you even *work* with. Is there something more you hide from me?"

He teases you, after all, you can't ever seem to resist your own spite. The tips of your ears are turning red and you squeeze his throat a little tighter.

"Don't flatter yourself," you whisper, your voice a low grumble like soft thunder, "I don't owe you anything."

Stubborn. Irritatingly so. But he supposed that if the roles were reversed he might not want to give an answer either. Still, you were fighting yourself to keep control so hard it was nearly

painful to watch. With his free hand, he taps your chest right where your heart would be.

“You try so hard to say that your mind is doing the work, but something else is pulling the strings, is it not?” His eyes narrow as he studies you, “You simply don’t want to admit that it has more of a hold on you than you want. So I’ll ask again, why did you choose me to kill?”

Your whole face is flushed, eyebrows drawn and nose scrunched. You look like you might bite him at any moment. In a flash, you jerk your arm and he is thrown off of you.

He watches as you stand over him, leaning down to finally meet his eyes, knife poised above his throat.

“Maybe I felt you didn’t deserve to abuse that beautiful intelligence of yours.” You take a breath, eyes fluttering closed for a moment, “Such intricate plots, such perfect carnage...”

Oh.

Oh.

He finds himself at a loss for words. You didn’t just hate him, you were *intrigued* by him. Something warm blossomed in his throat. If he didn’t know better, he would’ve thought you had finally drawn blood.

He was your experiment too.

Before he can stop himself, his fingers nearly brush against your jaw before he quickly draws his hand back. But that action does not fall upon blind eyes. You stare at him and he stares at you and for one maddening moment, everything feels like a fever dream.

You break out of your trace and straighten up, stumbling backwards like you had seen something horrific, something nightmarish. Without another word, you run to the window,

your hands scrabbling at the frame before you climb out.

He wished he could open up your mind in that moment. He nearly ran after you, he wanted to see more, he needed to know more.

But you were already gone, nothing left of you except the marks in his walls.



You crawl back out the window again, leaning against the aged siding as you stand on the roof of the second story balcony. You can't think, you can't breath, you can barely move. The coyness of his eyes sent a strange hum through your ribs and deep into your chest. Your breathing comes out in shallow pants and your gaze is unfocused as you stare somewhere off into the night.

He was a demon, a nickname well earned. He picked you apart easily, like you were made of glass, like he had always known you. The hum in your chest twisted and curled into an unrecognizable knot. Was it anger? Fear? You weren't sure.

The way his hand rested on your wrist as he studied you. The way his eyes pierced you. He was reminiscent of a scientist studying a specimen, fascination flashing in his irises as he unraveled the recesses of your mind.

You...wanted him to do it again?

No that couldn't be right.

Your hands quickly covered your face as your body burned like you were perched in front of a raging fire. You didn't like how easily he could see through you, you didn't like how he knew you. And yet no one had ever studied you so intently before. Your knees nearly buckled at the thought of him knowing you with his hands. Always precise and careful, always seeking a reaction-

Your mind is somewhere in a deep fog, the image of him running a hand across your jaw, etched into your eyes.

No.

This couldn't be right at all.

Shaking your head, you make your way off the roof and down to the balcony below. You stumble as you slide down the roof tiles, thoughts addled and scattered. It must be fear, it must be fear of being known. You repeat this to yourself like a mantra.

Your body aches for something like you're sick. Shivers wind through your bones and leave you shaking. You must be exhausted, you must simply be run down. All you have to do is sleep it off and when you wake, you'll be ready to kill him once more. When you wake, that drum you call a heart will be slow once more.

It must just be fear.

Chapter End Notes

the fun chapter is next and I'm probably gonna post it real soon. there are in fact, some whores in this house

Also shout out to all y'all leaving comments, I love you guys <33

anyways [wrings this man out like a wet towel]

10 - The Wheel of Fortune

Chapter Summary

um LONGER CHAPTER. it gets suggestive at the end,,, !

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

You laid in your bed. All you wanted to do was sleep. You wanted to sleep for a millennia and wake up when he was gone. The ugly little feeling in your stomach grew worse with every night you did not return. Your wrist still burned from where he touched you.

He must just be trying to misdirect you. His goal is to live, his goal is to continue his plots and plans to the end of destruction. He couldn't feel, he couldn't be human. You start pulling at your hair again, curling into the blankets as the red of the setting sun shone accusingly through your window.

You shut your eyes in a feeble attempt to find a moment of peace. In your mind's eye, all you can see is him. He is sprawled on the floor, black hair like charcoal framing his face. His eyes are wide and he is looking at you with such genuine surprise. He looked like he had seen the start of the universe. You probably looked like you had seen the end.

You hadn't meant to say that much. He wasn't supposed to know how much he consumed your thoughts. And you *still* hadn't killed him. If you could shrink into a little dot of light in the sky until you were like all the other stars, you would.

But you had a job to do. A vow to keep. And if you didn't fulfill your promise, it would haunt you until they lowered you into the black earth for good. His face kept returning to you even now. Against your will, your mind replayed every touch of his hands, the way his fingers ghosted your face.

How dare he. How dare he tease you in such a way. He didn't care about you, at the end of the day, you were bound to be another corpse. You remembered the way he smiled as he

wormed his way into your brain. How gentle his touch was. His cheeks flushed when you squeezed his neck. You sat up, fists balled in the sheets. You couldn't stay in the house. Not with these thoughts. Maybe if you got dressed, it would clear your head a little.

As you get dressed, you put on something nicer. It didn't matter if you had nowhere in particular to go, you wanted to feel nice. You take your time as the last of the sunlight ebbs from your walls. When you're done, you still don your black jacket. At this point, it feels like a permanent part of you. Maybe you would visit the bookstore, it had been a while and you were missing a few books from your collection. Maybe you could find something new to read, something to take your mind off of things.

As you go to leave your room, you pause in the doorway. With a sigh, you walk to your nightstand and open the top drawer. Your knife gleams at you in the half light. You reluctantly slip it into your pocket, you supposed it too had become a permanent fixture of your existence. A cluster of white next to it catches your eye and you notice it's a string of white pearls with a cross clipped to the end of it. You run your fingers over it, you wore it sometimes with your more elaborate outfits. You decide to take it with you, wrapping it around your wrist. Maybe it would bring you luck tonight.



He paced around the room outside his makeshift office, his circling leaving a slightly cleaner ring on the dusty floor. So you were fascinated by him. You struggled to kill him, not only for the glimpse of his humanity that only you could see, but you were also genuinely intrigued by him. You seemed nearly enamored by his intelligence.

But you seemed more flustered by physical contact if anything. The way your eyes had fixed on his hands when he touched your wrist. Or almost touched your jaw. An unrecognizable feeling ate at his chest. It was foolish of him to give into an impulse like that, even if it was just to study your face. You had run from him immediately after, that vision ate at him too. Your hands were shaking as you struggled to unlatch the window despite breaking in countless times before. Maybe it was the fear of him snuffing out your life. Could you not look at him because you were scared? Or were you truly enamored? Your face was rosy when you complimented his precision so sweetly. He shook his head as he made another circuit. You really must be infecting him with these kinds of thoughts.

The only goal was to simply dissect the contents of your mind and soul. That is all. If the key to knowing more was not only in talking to you, but also touch, how could he best throw you off? He watched the floorboards in front of him as he paced. You hadn't been back in several

days, he'd have to come up with something before you'd return. He still recalled the first setup he left for you. A little music for your time. You looked like a deer in headlights when he passed you on that night, the first time he ever saw you.

Ah. Music. *Dancing*. That would be something to throw you for a loop. But the scene had to be just right. Most of your encounters with him had been relatively straightforward. He could imagine you breaking in using one of your myriad of entry points, only to see some ornate setup. You'd certainly be wary, that's for sure.

He paused in his loop. This room, a decrepit dining room of sorts, was big enough to dance in. All it needed was something to give you pause.



As you trudge through the snow, it occurs to you that it's past sundown. Everything you'd usually visit is closed. You sigh and walk to the only place they can't lock you out of. At least you looked nice, you could be like a stray cryptid someone catches a rare sighting of.

You squeeze through the broken gate and into the graveyard again, making your way to your favorite headstone to bid it a good evening. You watch the stars as you walk, marveling at the spatters of white across the deep blue of the sky. When you were younger, you'd talk to the stars in the early mornings before school. You'd wish that your friends would have good days and you'd ask the sky to tell your soulmate that you miss them.

It's silly to think about, but you almost feel you should do it again. Just for luck, or maybe on the off chance that anyone does listen, that they send you a little help. Your footsteps stop short before a crumbling angel, still bearing her stone flowers as always. You nod your head respectfully and wish her a good night. She stands as still as ever, quietly watching over the person at rest beneath her. Always poised.

With a pang, you feel the weight of your knife in your pocket once more. Why were you out gallivanting in a graveyard? You should be trying to finish what you started. You cleared your head, you got all dressed up. You did everything but take his life. You had to put him in his place, giving in twice was unbearable enough. If you failed a third time, you feared you would never leave the house again out of pure shame.

It was night, wasn't it? The perfect time for another one of your break-ins. If you were lucky, this would be the last time you'd have to do this. You shrug to yourself before squaring your shoulders. What else were you going to do at this time of night? Sleep? Might as well make use of the time. If he wanted to occupy your mind so badly, you were going to carve him out of it like a tumor. You wanted these ugly heart-sick thoughts out of your head.

Taking a deep breath, you nod to the stone angel once more before setting off. So what if you were soft? So what if you had a heart and soul? He didn't. The weight of his presence on this earth was a blight. You didn't care how human he looked. You didn't care how pretty he was. People like him did not deserve to continue life as long they caused carnage wherever they went.

You chewed on your lip again. He didn't deserve to be beautiful.



This time, when you walk up the stairs, you are silent. You are nothing more than a machine ready to fulfill a purpose. There would be no room for nonsense tonight. What color candles would be on the floor this time? Yellow again? Or perhaps black. You can hear music. He's trying to confuse your mind in a maze of random details. He's a maniac, he'll resort to anything to sidetrack you. As long as you stay focused, as long as you empty yourself of thinking, of thoughts and feelings, you can kill him.

A burst of delicious anger pours through you. All this. All these strange questions and little squabbling fights, for what? Why had you decided to play his game? You signed up to be his puppet and he had simply pulled the strings as he wished.

When you reach the top of the stairs, there's no candle in the usual spot. In fact, the hallway is pitch black. You take a breath, there are no rooms lining the hall, he can't ambush you until you're at the very end. With one hand on the wall, you slowly walk yourself to the end, seeing candlelight get brighter and brighter, a little rectangle of flickering yellow waiting for you. The music gets louder as you walk until you are sure that it's too loud to be coming from his office. When you step out into the main room, you stop dead in your tracks, frantically looking around you for any sign of him.

The room is done up with dozens of flickering candles, some pooling on the floor, others clustered together on windowsills and small tables. A record player sits on one of them, playing a classical piece unlike the others you've heard seeping from his office. It's different, it has a step to it. On one of the bigger tables are flowers curling out of vases in lush bouquets. Fruit perches on delicate china. Peaches, grapes, pomegranates. A setup that would make Persephone herself jealous. You spin around, scouring your surroundings again for him. There had to be a reason for this, some sort of trap to dispose of you once and for all. The door to his office is open and the small room is empty of him, nothing but a laptop sitting closed and a chair pushed into the same scuffed table.

Paranoia has its chokehold on you again as you step back out into the main room.

“Do you like it?”

The question comes from the dark of the hallway. You ready your knife as you see him emerge from the shadows.

The closet .

Shit.

He must have been tucked away in the darkness, waiting for you to walk the hallway. You had grown so accustomed to his usual placement that you had forgotten to be wary. A slip of the mind. He could've killed you right then and there, could've taken your life as you walked blindly down the hall. Your chest feels ice cold at the thought.

You brace yourself as he approaches you. You put out one hand to stop him, the other ready to slash his throat open. He eyes your weapon and your stance before smiling ever slightly. He laces his fingers with your unoccupied hand and you feel your mind go blank. Reflexively, you press your knife to his throat. He doesn't flinch, instead, he simply places his other hand on your waist. You feel like your brain is dissolving into ash. This was not how it was supposed to go.

The music, it sounded different because it was made for *formal dancing*.

You can feel him start to lead you through the first steps of the dance before your thoughts snap back into place. He enraged you, the way his eyes glimmered in this half-dark room lit only by burned down candles. You force his footing to change so *you* are the one dragging him along. You pressed the knife a little further to his throat, letting the cold blade rest against his pale skin.

“Careful, you might make me bleed.” his voice lilted with a knowing smile over the music playing in the background.

You let one eye squint a little but nothing more. Your face strained against the snarl that wanted to desperately leer out at him. But you couldn’t. You refused to give him the satisfaction of getting a rise out of you.

The violin seemed to dance through the air and roll through you in waves, daring you to go into a trance and let your body be carried away by the melody. The music’s effect was his doing, no doubt. You were leading in this blasted waltz, your left hand entwined with his, and your right pressing your switchblade to his flesh.

Your eyes traced along the blade, watching the way it caught the light and flashed with each step you took in this freezing, desolate room. He had such a pretty throat, as white and smooth as cream, jawline curving against it. What beautiful bones. He looked like he was made of snow. Would his neck be just as cold as his hands? Would his hands pull at your hair if you were to place kisses along his jaw and adam’s apple? You could take a bite out of him.

You felt the hand resting on your waist move lower to your hip, something possessive yet executed in the lightest of touches. Your eyes flashed back up to meet his, your face almost breaking its composure. In your momentary distraction you found it was you who was being pulled along now, his footsteps becoming leading ones once more. You nearly stumbled trying to change your footing as he swept you through the motions of the dance.

“You always do have to be the one in control don’t you?” the words slipped out of your mouth before you could contain them.

He gave no response, only the smile of someone who wanted to push your limits. You were not about to submit to him. Murderer. Beautiful, ugly thing.

“I know you play mind games. So play. Pick me apart if you’re so good at puppeteering people. I heard it was you who made Ace hang himself.”

He cocked his head ever so slightly, curiously even, as if you had spoken out of turn. As if you were the one with the backwards ideologies. Your nose scrunched against your will and you found yourself resisting the urge to bite him.

“You’ve come to kill me many times, your hatred palpable, always the same blade pointing at me. And yet you have never drawn blood. Some part of you always yields to me, doesn't it?”

Your body stiffened, your grip on the knife tightening.

“And you could always kill me with a single touch, but your hands remain uncannily needy.”

He smiled then, a real smile, his violet eyes crinkling ever so slightly. It sent shivers running through your body and a knot curling in your stomach.

“I’m just your plaything aren’t I?”

Once again he gave no response and simply leaned forward, the hand on your waist moving to run along your cheek, eyes glinting with mirth. Your blood burst into flames and every tendon in your body vibrated like you were just another one of the violins in his favorite songs.

His voice was cool and even, without pause or stutter.

“Is that what you want to be?”

Your vision went white with static as you felt your arm mechanically swing him around into a table laden with flowers and fruit. A vase broke, spilling coriander blooms and orange lilies everywhere. Food and silverware scattered about, leaving a discordant symphony in their wake. You climbed on top of him, both of your hands raised and wrapped around the handle of your blade.

You could bring it down right now and end it.

You could erase him from existence.

His eyes looked black as they stared up at you, something unreadable dancing behind the pits of his pupils.

“Do you believe in god?”

You blinked.

Your gaze momentarily moved from his eyes to your wrist. Pearls with a cross dangling off the end swung about like a pendulum. You had forgotten you were wearing that.

Water dripped out of the broken vase onto the floor in piercing taps as the record came to an end. He looked almost curious, amused at your outburst. You felt ill looking at him. No one had the right to be so gorgeous when innocent blood stained their hands. Your stomach curdled the longer your brain continued to weave him into your synapses. No one had the right to entrench themselves in your mind like he did. Some parasitic thing eating away at you like an obsession.

“God is neither real nor fake, but I don’t believe in the one that you speak of.”

“Why *do* you come to kill me every other night?”

You grimaced at him, lips curling with disgust. “Have you forgotten? Or did you simply never figure it out? I thought you were good at reading people, no?”

As per irritatingly usual he chose not to answer, waiting ever so patiently to hear it from *your* mouth.

“Well if you insist on dragging it out, your ideals are sickening, the things you’ve done are abhorrent, and you do it all believing you are carrying out God’s wishes. You are a blight, I hope every record of your name and face is condemned. I hope you are forgotten.”

His expression remained unchanged, eyes still glittering with the same coyness, smile still wry. His cheeks were ever so slightly pink. Soft carnation pink.

“Kill me then.”

You sat there stunned. Why weren’t you moving? This must be some sort of trap, he must be using you or something, there has to be a convoluted plan behind this, there must be something wrong with your head. *Why weren’t you moving?*

He raised an eyebrow, his gaze unwavering.

“Such hesitation from someone who was once so eager to see me gone. One might think that you’ve taken a liking to me.”

You scowled. “Shut up. Shut the fuck up.”

You watched as he raised a single porcelain hand and let his fingertips run along your jaw. You resisted a shiver that threatened to sneak up your spine. Why didn’t he just kill you? Why didn’t he do it while you danced? The longer you stared at him sprawled underneath

you, his eyes half closed, his touch gentle, the less things made sense. You were missing an obvious piece but it felt nearly taboo to even guess it.

“Fyodor, why don’t you kill me? I doubt even a plaything would last this long without facing death. I’ve only ever seen the people you use as pawns get the privilege of living. What do you seek from me?”

He reached up and brought your white knuckled hands close to him, the point of your knife pressing ever so slightly into his chest.

“It is fascinating to study something so erratic. What good would it bring me to end the show? It would serve me nothing to cut it short.”

You studied him, his words seeping into your bones. He had hands like a human, he could touch like one, dance like one. But his violet eyes were empty, dead and cold like a doll’s.

“You don’t love. That’s why you’re not human.”

You spoke plainly, your voice turning sweetly sad. What a curse it would be to not love. To not treasure someone. Without warning he yanked your hands a little closer, pressing the knife further to his chest, the fabric starting to split beneath the blade.

“Then make me.”

Your mouth nearly dropped open. Was this part of some plan? Or a cruel joke? You knew he liked to toy with you in his own twisted way. He had set up this room to be danced in the minute you snuck in through the window. This *must* be some way to scramble your head.

“My knife rests against nothing. Your chest is empty of anything that could be made to love.” You replied coldly.

You began to move away. You wanted to go home. You wanted to sleep and drain him out of your head. The next time you saw him, you would kill him without another thought. But now your mind was flooded with too many voices to push the knife through his ribs.

“You’re a romantic against your will at times, you despise being truly alone, don’t you?”

You stepped off the table and began brushing flower petals and bits of pomegranate seed from your black attire.

“That was an easy one.” You sighed, too worn out to even be offended by his analysis of you.

“You come knowing you won’t kill me, you doubt yourself.”

You paused and glanced up. He was sitting on the table, ruffled black hair framing his angular face, eyes fixed on you with startling intensity.

“You like it when I pick you apart, don’t you? It’s not my ability that causes you such self doubt, it’s my mind that you fear. And yet you run straight to it.”

In a heartbeat you had your hand tangled in his hair. He was so close you could feel his breath on your cheek. Your entire face burned with a cocktail of incoherent emotions. Blood roared in your ears. The clattering of your knife echoed hollowly somewhere behind you.

“You’re right,” you whispered, your lips pressing to his ear with each syllable, “it would be a shame to destroy such a beautiful mind.”

His mouth was a starved one as it pressed against yours. His body was cold but his hands were feverish as they bound you close to him. Hands that could kill you as easily as a gun. You clawed at him, his hair, his clothes, his waist. He was breathtaking. He was poison so sweet you couldn’t help but drink.

You felt your fingers scrabble at his collar, whether to strangle him or undo the buttons, you weren't sure. With a stubborn yank, you pulled at the overlap of fabric until the clasps gave way and scattered on the floor. He was wiry, with a narrow little waist that would make a seamstress blush. You needed to put your hands on it, to run your nails along his sides. Admiring him, you let an errant hand card back into his hair, tightening into a formidable grip.

Ever the wild card, he dragged you closer to him by your belt. You could feel his hands curled around the leather, fingers pressing into your hips. The sound of the buckle clinking filled your ears as he toyed with it, playful without truly unbuckling it. You slapped his prying away with your free hand, pulling his hair for good measure.

“Won't you undress for me, Myshka?” He purred.

He spoke it like a suggestion, an offering, but the glint in his dead eyes was mad with fascination. A *greed*. How could you deny that? Madmen were always the most fun to please, yet so few in existence. His desire to pick you apart with his words and hands was growing on you. He just looked so beautiful when he craved to know. To *understand*.

You could be his doll. His darling. You could let him know you.

Know you?

You blinked, your vision swaying for a moment.

What on earth were you doing? You had bent to his will enough this night, to undress for him would be downright generous. You should've gone home before all of this mess.

You shouldn't have kissed him.

He is a murderer, a beast above men, and here you were, offering yourself to him like a lamb to sacrifice. Your mouth burned. How could you have allowed yourself to kiss something so abhorrent?

He wasn't a fool. Far from it in fact. The look on your face must have been enough to deter him. He wordlessly moved off the table and walked away towards the door to his office. He must have not felt like pushing you any further.

You dashed towards the window and squeezed back through, clawing your way out of that suffocating room. The moon stared forlornly down at you, as if taking pity for a brief moment. Shivers wracked your body and your breath came out in billowing clouds of steam.

Know you.

You felt like you were going to throw up, bile threatening to spill its way down the icy roof tiles.

He could've had you.

You might've let him.

Chapter End Notes

most of this was actually what I wrote first.

Y'all have no idea how long I've been waiting to post this.

ANYWAYS. I was in an insane kind of mood when I wrote this. there's a drawing of this too and that drawing is actually what spawned the whole story. I just got worse about it

LMAO

I probably shouldn't be awake but yeah xoxo they finally fucking kiss <3

17 - The Star

Chapter Summary

Oh boy. Oh lord. the softness. touch starved idiots starts now

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Your bed did nothing to comfort you. As you laid there, your head felt like it was full of water. You shook like a leaf, as brittle as glass. Your clothes from that night were still balled up on the floor beside your mattress, a corpse left to rot.

He had never terrified you like that. Every other night you would come to kill him, come to gaze down at him beneath you with your knife pressed to his throat. Every time, knowing he could've killed you with a single touch. Why were you scared now? You had been prepared to die all this time as long as you took him with you.

His hand was soft on your cheek. Cold, but gentle.

Fear ate its way through you and tore at your stomach and chest like you were ill. He was a devil preying upon your very soul. How could you allow yourself to care about a heartless thing like him? To be mesmerized by him? If you were to be killed while fighting him, to be shot down in battle against the enemy, that would be something honorable. But to love him was a sin all on its own.

"You come knowing you won't kill me, you doubt yourself."

His words echoed in your mind, burning holes through everything it touched. It was beyond doubt, beyond fear. It was surrender.

To love him meant to allow him to kill you.

He was Thanatos dressed in white, and if he offered his pale hand to you, you'd let him lead you to death as long as he was the one doing it.

Enraptured.

Utterly enraptured.



You hadn't gone back, choosing to confine yourself in the house. Sleep was your only moment of peace, but even that came to be interrupted by a knock on your door in the dead of night.

Rousing yourself from your bed, you dragged your blankets along with you like a quilted shell. You stumbled your way to the door to look through the peephole, narrowly missing the corner of a table that threatened to gouge you. Squinting out into the night, your line of sight was greeted by no one, just the porch lights shining into the yawning darkness. It was probably just kids being dicks. Cautiously, you opened the door, peering around it to see if they left anything behind.

The bottom of your door bumped into something with a soft rustle followed by a heavier thump.

Flowers?

Tentatively, you looped your finger around the white ribbon holding them together. You dragged them closer to you, quirked an eyebrow at the weight they had to them.

Purple hyacinths and skeleton flowers. At the center of the bouquet, your fingers made contact with cold metal peeking through the stems. You nearly dropped it.

Amongst the ghostly blooms was your knife, glinting as your eyes bore into your own in the reflection of the blade.

The devil had paid you a visit.



Everything around him was silent, save for the hum of his computers. The sagging walls seem to stare at him as he types, as he weaves his web of plans ever larger. His hands shake, causing errors in his work. Another huff and the click of the backspace. He couldn't remember how many hours it had been since you had come to see him. How many times the sun had risen and set with his window empty of your face. The screen blurred in front of his exhausted eyes. His mind slid and sloshed around his skull, dizzy with fatigue and clouded with incoherent thought.

His fingers paused over the keys before resigning to save his work and stagger to bed. As he turned to get out of his chair his vision violently swayed, everything looking like plastic before dissolving into static. He stumbled back into his chair while his eyes slowly regained sight free of pixelation. The thought of food crossed his mind, something to stabilize himself a little before another wave of exhaustion rolled through him.

Rest would have to come first this time.

In bed, he stared at the ceiling and the ceiling stared back, an unfeeling shade of gray in the dimness of the unlit room. His mouth still burned from where you kissed him. His hands could still feel the small of your back and your hair carding through his fingers. He shifted in the blankets, his thoughts running a fever. You had called his mind beautiful, the sin of thinking something precious to you. If he closed his eyes, he could still feel your breath against his mouth when you pulled away from him.

What would you look like undressed? To see you sprawled on his bed, your eyes gleaming like they would when you were on the hunt for him. To have you beside him would be eden, worth more than any currency could ever pay.

He rose from bed, agitated hands coming to scrunch in his hair before his pointer finger was caught between his teeth. How could you have caused him to fold? You were nothing more than a visitor, an assassin. When had you made him so weak? His thoughts hummed in a jumbled cacophony.

He didn't want them. He didn't want your presence resting beside him. He should just swallow his feelings down like bitter alcohol. Eradicate you who forced him to feel from memory. You wanted to know him. You wanted to know him so badly you couldn't bring yourself to murder him. His vision blurred again with each new thought speaking, a headache beating behind his eyes.

He had to get it out, had to get you out. Delirious hands scrabble at the stash of items resting beneath his bed. Files, books, information that would have most organizations shaking in their seats. None of it mattered right now. His fingers finally felt the familiar cold metal of a pen lost in a pile of loose leaf paper. Using the hard back of a book as a makeshift desk, he found himself scrawling out the pathways of his mind, line after line.

You would crack your fingers out of habit and sometimes you used your sleeves to help pop your thumb. The heels of your boots had worn out to the point where rocks had gotten stuck in the hollow recess, if he listened closely he could hear the rattle of them when you walked. You often chewed and picked at your lip the more you thought about something, sometimes to the point where it would bleed. He couldn't walk at night without thinking of you, as it had become your hour. You were the long shadows from the evening sun. You were the scattered remains of a wrecked candle on his floor.

Folk tale illustrations with spiraling linework, the crumbling stone walls that bordered the sidewalks, the sound of plates clinking in an occupied kitchen. You were erratic and irrational, a splattered hot wax mess of a human being. A star spitting embers and burning sparks. He didn't want to let go of your presence just yet.

But you were gone.

The room is quiet. The house is cold. He lets an errant hand rest on the mattress beneath him. His bed feels so strangely empty. It wasn't overcrowded with your body. It wasn't occupied by your touch. Hollow. Absent of something vital. Your mouth was so soft when you kissed him, you stole his breath with such ease.

Gazing down at the pages covered in writing, a flush crept up his neck as he scanned the product of his delirium. You had made him so... *soft*. How vile, how sweet. He couldn't remember how long it had been since he returned your knife. Maybe you hated him for it. Slumping into his hands, he tried to gather the pieces of his being together into some semblance of logic.

He wouldn't be able to do anything if he didn't sleep.

He certainly couldn't stay in this house much longer.



You showered for the first time in days, water dripping off of your hair and rolling down your chest as the steam billowed around you. When you pass the mirror, you pause to wipe away the fog, observing your reflection. Purple shadows your eyes with a layer of exhaustion.

Towel wrapped loosely around you, you shuffle to your room, leaving watery footsteps in your wake. You're still a little too damp as you pull a gray t-shirt on, the fabric sticks to your skin like plastic wrap.

Thunk.

You almost fall into the end of your bed, your ankle scraping the bottom of it in your startled stumbling.

A bug must have hit the window, the moths back at it again.

Thunk.

Your head whips around to stare at your drape-cloaked window accusingly. You slide a pair of shorts on and pad over to it to peek though the crack in the drapes. The lights in the room are too bright and the outside world just looks black by comparison.

You shut off all the lights and as you're marching back to the window, your knife snags the corner of your vision. It seems to smile at you with a condescending knowing. You hesitantly pick it up, familiarizing yourself with the feeling of the cold black handle once more.

The rivets dig into your palm as you peer though the curtains, the night now looking more violet than black. A figure stands in the snow below, shallow breaths illuminated by the glow of the streetlights.

Ice seems to trickle down your scalp and roll in rivulets through your spine.

That *fucker*.

He's dressed in black this time, his thin frame wrapped in a long black overcoat. A single fleck of ash in a world of blue and white.

You know you should hide, you know that you should just stay inside holed up with your knife and his wretched flowers until he gets the sense to leave. But he is not daft enough to believe your house is empty.

Familiar rage wells up in you and rears its ugly head. Since when were you going to let this asshole terrify you? You had once been ready to die fighting if it meant he'd be erased from the world. You were not a lamb to sacrifice, and you were not about to let this rat bully you into being a wilting pansy in your own house.

In a fit of impulse, you grab the flashlight off of your nightstand, open the window, and get ready for noise complaints.

The cold air is bitter and it cuts through your damp body like glass. The flashlight clicks on and his pale face is bathed in a beam of light. He looks ridiculous, squinting in the brightness, shoulders bunched up like a cold pigeon.

“Hey asshole, get off my lawn.”

His face is just composed enough to suggest that he figured he'd forced your hand. Yet the whites of his eyes make you inclined to believe he hadn't been expecting something this brash.

“Will you walk with me?”

You stare at him incredulously. After what he pulled last time? You didn't really feel like getting manhandled at this hour.

“You know what true crime series say about people like you? Never let a killer take you to a second location. Fuck off.”

He sneezes. You didn't know that he was even capable of such a thing.

“Can I come inside?”

“No.”

His mouth flattens into a thin line, torn halfway between laughing and frowning. He sways on his feet slightly. You almost giggle. This was a man most people would be shaking in their boots about, you were certainly no exception. But he was still just a man, and an anemic one no less.

What was he here for? If he really wanted you dead you supposed he would've done it long ago. Maybe he just wanted to fuck with you again.

You sigh and close the window.

Pulling on a hoodie, you jog downstairs and drift through the unlit kitchen. Your hands feel numb as you fumble with the lock, a knife still held in one.

Cold air greets you once more as you open your back door. He is leaning on one of the posts holding up the porch overhang. He sways slightly, face a little more white than usual. He looks ready to pass out at any moment.

“Am I still not allowed to come in?” He asks, looking you up and down as you stand in the doorway.

“Haven’t decided yet. Why are you here?”

One shaking hand comes up to press a palm to his eye, rubbing away exhaustion.

“I couldn’t sleep. I haven’t slept for five days.”

You raise your eyebrows at him without sympathy.

“Isn’t that what you do usually?”

The mix of sleep deprivation and your constant stream of sass is starting to put cracks in his composure. A rare glimpse at him acting like a regular human being. His eyebrows are drawn and his gaze keeps flickering about.

“You stopped coming to kill me.”

Cocking your head, you squint at him. Was he implying that he *missed* you?

“You have a colorful track record of lying, cheating, and betraying everyone around you, regardless of their creed or motives.” You start, leaning on the doorframe.

You can see his metaphysical hackles rise as you begin your ramble, his eyes finally coming to fix on you.

“You’ll say whatever you have to in order to keep them under your thumb until you eventually discard them as yet another corpse in your trail.” Your voice is bitter, gaze downcast.

“And what if I wished for you to live?”

He’s no longer looking at you. His nose and ears have gone red with the frost biting at them. His hair is sticking up in erratic strands, evident of a restless night. One finger is starting to wedge itself between his teeth again.

“Then I would call you a beautiful liar.”

Silently, you walk to him, and he in turn watches you with curious eyes. His very skin is practically poisonous, lethal with ease. And yet you place a gentle kiss on his cold cheek.

“Fyodor.”

His eyes close at the sound of his name in your mouth, head tilting ever so slightly to the side to hear your hushed voice.

“If your karmic debt had hands, it would be dragging you to hell as we speak. How should I trust that you wouldn’t drag me with you?”

He lets his forehead rest on yours, his dark hair blocking out the world around you.

Just him.

Only him.

“If all I can give is my word, would you let me rest beside you without fear?”

A ruse.

A hook.

A plot.

Deception and manipulation and another body dead simply for being. That could be you as he is saying this. But he is leaning against you with uncanny trust, knowing what he is and knowing of the knife in your hand. This man is not a kind one, but in this moment in time, he is kind to you. Would he truly play the long con all for the sake of your demise? You? A nobody in the grand scheme of it all? He looks so exhausted, dark circles ringing his eyes. Perhaps he could sleep in your bed. Just this one night.

You let out a long sigh, your whole body de-tensing.

With one hand clutching the sleeve of his jacket, you allow him to pass into your home, into warmer and more welcoming darkness. The walk is silent as you lead him up the stairs, not even pausing to turn on the lights. Each step creaks under your shared footsteps, evidence that this is not some conjuring of your tired mind.

When you reach your room, he pauses in the door as you turn on a small lamp. Startled at the sudden halt, you glance back and find him removing his shoes. They rest next to the doorway, the remnants of the snow dissolving and seeping into the carpet. He shrugs off his jacket and takes care to fold it neatly. You notice the fraying seams look hand-stitched. An image plays into your mind of him sewing up his clothes, deft fingers threading the needle through with quiet precision. You shake your head to clear the thought and remove your hoodie so the layers of blankets won't make you too hot. Your knife watches you from the nightstand.

In the half-light you take in just how young he looks, certainly not past his mid twenties. The concept makes you feel a strange sort of sickness. Strange for someone so young to be doing things of such damage. Hardly old enough to die. His sweater is worn and just a bit too big on him, and for a moment, he looks like any other student you'd see in passing.

You crawl into bed on the side you prefer slightly more and scrunch down under the covers. The sound of his footsteps comes around the opposite side and your gaze flickers over to see him for a heartbeat before he shuts off the lamp.

The drapes block out any whisper of streetlight or moonlight. Darkness settles around your shoulders and cradles you in peaceful void.

The bed dips beside you and the covers carefully move as another warm body joins you. You've slept next to someone before, that is for certain. But not quite like this. In the darkness you feel stripped away of your being, nothing left but vulnerability and the fear of moving around too much. You can hear the sound of his quiet breathing, feel the outline of where he lays. It occurs to you how long it's been since you've been held. Would he mind if you were to hold onto him? Would he despise it or push you away?

How strange, to think about being held by the man you've pressed a knife to.

You allow a nervous hand to slide through the sheets, seeking his out blindly. Your fingers make contact with his wrist, tracing down his knuckles as you loop your pinky around his. A burst of terror snakes its way through you.

Was this too far?

He brings your linked hands closer to him, letting them rest on his chest. His heart beats steadily under your palm. In the blackness of your unlit room, there is nothing but the sound of your shared breaths, the weight of the covers, and the hum of a car driving off in the distance.

Him, next to you.

You, next to him.

In the lull of a sleepless and cold winter night. You find rest beside an unforgivable man.

Chapter End Notes

God I wish this were me

18 - The Moon

Chapter Summary

short chapter. a great number of feelings

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Your dreams are feverish and you can hardly remember them. Blurs of shapeless color, ebbing and flowing and sharpening into mindless scenes. You feel like you're chasing something, a memory maybe. Grass and dirt and mud-stained hands. Beige walls. The way the light is cutting through the window. The thud of your feet as you race down stairs. Hazy people passing and looking at you. You feel you should recognize them.

Your eyes creak open to another fuzziness, your mind too sleep addled to even process it. You shift about in the covers, arms reaching out for something you can't quite place. In the mists of half consciousness, you feel a body beside you. You grasp at this lifeline and hold onto it, grounded by the sounds of breathing and blood rushing. You cling to him like a small child with a stuffed animal, face buried in the warmth of his side.

In this haven, sleep finds you once more.



He couldn't remember the last time he had slept beside someone. Had he ever? You had linked hands like this is something you two had always done. He cannot see you very well in the darkness of the room, but he can feel you. Your head had dipped to rest on his shoulder as you gave in to drowsiness. You're so close to him, so strangely vulnerable for someone capable of violence like you. Sometime in the night, your arms wrapped around his waist and held on like he was the only thing left in this world.

As the light stubbornly pushes against the shades, he is able to see a little more. Your face is smushed against his chest, your features draped in lavender and rainwater blue. It's quiet in your house, warm too. There are drawings and photos taped to your walls in haphazard clusters. Your nightstand is cluttered with small trinkets and books stacked in short messy towers. There's nicks and dents in your bed frame. A collection of blankets are piled in patchwork of different fabrics on your bed.

And you are next to him, tangled around him in this warm bed.

His eyes drift closed for another heartbeat as he feels your hand sleepily wander down his side. Unbearably gentle. You were always so...comfortable? You touched with ease, like it was normal for you, like he was just another person with you from the start. Is this what being human is like? He peers down at your sleeping face, watching you dream in thoughtless peace. He wants to kiss you, but he doesn't know how. Doesn't know how to handle you tenderly.

And yet he practically begged for you to undress in front of him. How *desperate*. Of course you would have run from that, a degenerate lost to primal impulse. His skin crawled in disgust. How low of him to be controlled by such a thing. Subject to the whims of an animalistic function. He had to leave. He had to sit in that crumbling house and cut those perverse thoughts out.

As he started to nudge you off, you stubbornly held on tighter, your hands latched onto his clothes. Your eyebrows scrunched and you drowsily mumbled his name into his side. An ache burned in his chest at hearing you say his name so softly. He was no demon nor devil, not even the conjuror. He was only a man, and in this moment, he belonged to you.

But you did not deserve something so cruel. He'd damage you. When your arms finally gave way, you curled in on yourself in his absence. You looked so lonely in that big bed. But you did not need him beside you. If he kept telling himself this, he could leave. He plants a gentle kiss on your temple, a parting gift.

His coat is resting on your dresser and his boots are left next to the door. A thread of himself quietly woven into your normal life. Ordinary, sweetly so. Your kitchen is small but cared for. You lived alone, he supposed you must cook by yourself often. A little scene played behind his eyes, something of you making soup or slicing peaches. Nothing but you in that oversized shirt, honeyed fingers making something to delight in. He could be a part of that, if he

wanted. He could have a home. On your windowsill are vases, the morning light refracting through the glass like scattered suns. Hyacinths. Skeleton flowers.

Wisteria.

He couldn't do it. He couldn't take the thought of you waking up without something of his. A piece of himself to let you keep.



When you wake, your bed is empty.

The light seeps in through the sides of the curtains, sneaking in to whisper that it's sometime late in the afternoon. Your hand traces over the rumpled sheets where he once was. His boots are gone from the door as well as his coat. An unrecognizable feeling aches behind your ribs, it's cold and it drips through your bones.

A patch of new color waves from the edges of your vision. Rainflowers are resting on your nightstand, guarding a small slip of paper.

I haven't slept like that in many years. Thank you.

-

You flip the note over

If you wish to keep saying my name so softly, you can call me Fedya.

Curling up in the blankets, you dig your fingers into the sheets beneath you. The bed still smelled like him. Something of paper and the morning after it rains. Your throat closes up and you squeeze your eyes shut as tears begin to roll down your cheeks.

You couldn't kill him.

Chapter End Notes

in Egyptian mythology, one of the five parts that makes up your soul is your name, a connotation I happen to like

anyways this fic is literally just ♠==>♥

the folks that get it, get it

13 - Death

Chapter Summary

sad bitches and hornknee bitches

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Your space was empty. A little void in the shape of another human. You cooked alone, read alone, went to your classes alone. It's not like you didn't have friends who would be happy to see you, or places you could visit. But even around other people, smiling and sitting cross legged while conversation drifted around you like river currents, you were always a little alone. You laughed at their jokes, talked to them, asked them questions. A circle of different faces blooming around you. Friends, by anyone else's standards. And yet some corner of you is eternally a small dirt-smudged child, quietly building a shrine of stories to curl up and sleep under. The eternal wanderer. A single figure walking through the mists.

It's not like you hadn't done this before. You watched the trees sway in the wind, the light playing across the windowsill, the greenery through the fence slats. Loneliness held your hand and exchanged no words. You talked to yourself and sometimes you didn't speak at all. Sometimes you'd draw or maybe write. Sometimes you'd simply close the curtains on life and disappear inside another book piling up on your tables and floors.

You and solitude were good friends.

You didn't mind being by yourself, and yet, the hole shaped like him ached. You can't pick up your knife. You can't kill him anymore. You can't change him, you can't fix him. Some part of you doesn't even want to even try. Either way, he cannot love you and you cannot love him.

He is not a good man.

With no excuse to see him, had lost count of how many weeks had passed since you stopped your nightly visits. and yet every minute that passed felt like being crushed under stone. You couldn't bear any of this. You hated him, you adored him, and worst of all you missed him. How cruel it was waking up to an empty bed over and over.

You didn't even have anything new to read.



He switched buildings. Looking at the marks you left on his walls just reminded him of every night he had you to himself. Some beautiful and ugly memory perched on his shoulder. It was a newer place, less decrepit and more like an actual home. But it wasn't the same. It didn't have a piece of you in it. He'd almost rather remain in that house, breathing in flecks of lead paint and asbestos until his thoughts of you finally poisoned him.

You.

A double edged sword. How could he have done this to himself? Every minute spent at his computer felt mindless, his intricate web of plans curling around him like a self made prison. He would stare at those cold blue screens until his head hurt and his eyes blurred over with exhaustion. At least it would leave him in a dead sleep, no room for you in his head to visit. But no amount of work could chain him from his own thoughts. Again, he found himself writing. Endlessly writing in front of the window where the sun could reach through and the moon could bid him a quiet hello. Anything to purge his mind of you.

He couldn't do this to you. You were too good, you had a soul he did not have. He couldn't have you. And yet he wanted to selfishly keep you for himself. But you wouldn't be happy, you needed someone to embrace you with equal goodness. To be a light to you.

You hadn't sought him out in a number of weeks. The ugly feeling in his chest clawed at him from the inside, unsure if he wanted you to come back or to stay far away. Maybe with time, he could forget you. Maybe if he traveled far enough, he could leave his heart behind with you. You and your damned hands.

Maybe in another lifetime, he could find you all over again.



There's a bookstore a little bit down the street from him. Maybe if he can find something to drag his mind away from you, he'll be okay. Just something small to distract him. Or maybe he was feeling foolish enough to hope he'd see you.

He traces a hand across the spines as he wanders through the maze of books. Fiction, religious, historical. Options waved at him from neat little cards. He's not sure what to look for, his mind somewhere lost in a fog. But the hum of the overhead lights and the smell of pages calms him. It's quiet and the dark wood of the shelving brings him some sense of sanctuary. Perhaps he would be alright.

At some point in his aimless drifting, he had ended up in the romance section. His mood sours once more. Did his own subconscious intend to play a cruel joke on him? The titles are rather dramatic, or downright ridiculous. Is this what normal people read? Images of the books you hoarded flashed into his mind. *Would you be the kind of person to read these?*

He experimentally peeked at some of the covers. Most were either vastly fantastical, cavity inducing, or involved some shady grayscale photography of a couple. It was always the same model-looking woman with long brown waves and a muscular man with a half beard. How... conventional.

Boring, even.

How utterly brainless. He briefly flipped through one before quickly shoving it back on the shelf. Absolutely tasteless dialogue. As he attempted to walk away from the genre he found himself in a shadowy corner where romance melded into the erotica section.

Oh.

He assumed it was the same level of quality as all the other ones, but his curiosity still nagged at him to have a look. Giving in to temptation, he pulled another volume out and flipped to a random page. He was immediately slapped by degeneracy. He wasn't sure what he expected but he still felt the need to lean back slightly like he was opening something that might have a bomb in it.

The quality was just as bad as he figured but it was strangely mesmerizing in its awfulness. He squinted at the choice of wording, the term "member" giving him pause before he shook his head and put it back. If he sounded anything like what he just read he would hope you'd just stab him and call it a night.

Would you read something like this? The ugly little impulse to snoop through your book collection jeered at him from the corner of his brain. What did you like? What made you flushed in the cheeks and half crazy? He remembered when you took off your hoodie before getting into bed, how it had taken your shirt with it, exposing your lower back and stomach for a heartbeat.

Oh, the sweet thought of you taking off your clothes for him. To touch you without hindrance. He could have you all to himself, wrapped around him with your eyes closed and head tilted back.

"Fyodor?"

Every thought he could've had flies out of his head. There, just around the corner is you. You with the messed up hair and the dark circles under your eyes. You who he hasn't seen in a month.

You, whom he could still feel clinging to him as he tried to leave your bed.

You start walking over to him, and for a moment, he sees flashbacks of you racing down the hall. He braces himself as you grab him by the collar, your eyes boring into his like you were ready to snap his neck with your bare hands. And then he noticed just how red your cheeks were. Saw the tears starting to pool in your eyes.

He doesn't know how to respond. What can he say to you that atones for anything he's done?

You lean your forehead against his, strangely intimate for something happening in the corner of a bookstore. Your breathing slows and the torrent of thoughts happening in your mind seems to ebb away. He's watching you carefully, re-memorizing the planes of your face. He missed you. Against all odds, he missed you.

In one quiet movement, he presses his lips on yours. You lean into it, head tilted to draw him closer. More. *More*. You relax against the bookcase, allowing your weight to rest on it with the reassurance of the wall behind it. His hands come to hold your jaw and lower back, gentle yet possessive. Kisses sweet yet coy until they dissolved into wanting. Your hands slide into his hair to keep him closer.

He could hardly get enough of you, he never wanted to let you go. You were his killer and his lover. The very thought of seeing you in someone's arms made his stomach curdle. Could they understand you like he could? Of course not. He found himself clawing the hem of your shirt, sliding his hand beneath your clothes to rest on your bare back. It wasn't enough, he needed your legs wrapped around him, he needed you in his bed. You were his *lover*.

Agitation coursed through him. He loved your mercy and your ruthlessness. He loved your eyes and your hands and the sound of your voice. It wasn't supposed to go like this.

You were supposed to break his windows and slash his walls, you were supposed to push that knife of yours into his chest, you were supposed to be another dead body in his hands. Another person with blood dripping from their skull with nothing more than a simple brush of his fingertips.

Your face looked so peaceful when you slept beside him, clinging onto his side like you expected him to vanish at any moment. A pang of guilt ached in his chest. He shouldn't have left you like that all alone. He should've stayed in your bed until the sun crept in.

"Fedya."

Your voice startles him out of his thoughts, his eyes opening as he pulls away.

“What are you thinking of?

You’re running your hand along his cheek and looking at him with such knowing eyes. Once more, he doesn’t know what to say to you. He doesn’t know how to tell you how weak you’ve made him. *It wasn’t supposed to go like this.*

He hates you.

He thinks you should let go of him.

He wants to keep you entirely his.

He loves you.

He loves you.

And you’re looking at him with unbearable tenderness, unmatched adoration. How could he ever make someone like you happy? He can’t do it. He can’t do *any* of it. And so, like you had done to him many times before, he ran.

He can hear you trying to talk to him as he walks away but he can’t parse any of it. His own abhorrent thoughts block out his ears and blur his vision. This wasn’t supposed to happen, he was supposed to forget about you.

He was supposed to leave at the end of it.

Chapter End Notes

oh yeah while I was at the goodwill one time I found a horny book and when I opened a random page I was greeted by dick

7 - The Chariot

Chapter Summary

the cure for sadbitchitis: communication

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

You always thought that love for you would be kind. You thought they would quietly etch themselves into your life until it felt strange to be without them. You thought it would be soft. In some respects, you were right. He had become a fixed point in time, a permanent piece of your being without you even allowing it. You had hated it so much when his presence would bleed into yours. But now you let the ghost of him lurk with you even in the most mundane of places and tasks. He is sitting on the floor beside you when you fold laundry, he is riding in your passenger seat when you drive early in the morning, he is perched in the chair across from you when you're out with friends.

Your friends would ask sometimes, whether you'd like to go out more often, what you've been up to in your usual prolonged absence. And of course, you'd laugh slightly, awkwardly. Your voice would raise in pitch, a reflex of anxiety. You always hated when it did that.

And of course, you'd always give them some vague answer, just polite enough that the machine of social acceptance wouldn't grind you to shreds.

You wanted to go home and you wanted to fall to pieces in your bed. You wanted to sleep, to dream, to rest without another thought. Alone, relishing and despising it. And so here you are, decomposing in your sheets until the day wastes away. Until the world burns out leaving you melting back into the shadows. You noticed he never truly begged you for your presence like your friends would, he allowed you to come and go as you pleased without so much as a thought to social customs. A relief, if you were being honest.

He only showed such want for you once. He was swaying on his feet with sleeplessness, practically draping himself over you. In that snow and stardust speckled moment, he was soft to you.

This time, he was running from you. First from your bed, and then from you in the bookstore. It's not like you hadn't run from him countless times. Maybe this is what you deserved after all of that. You cried so pitifully when you saw him. Oh, him. Bedraggled him with the wrinkles in his clothes and the sky in his eyes. You found yourself crying into the sheets once again.

He had kissed you like he was trying to keep you. He had held you close to him like you were the only thing that mattered, and then he left. He had started this, he had asked to dance, asked to sleep beside you. For what? To tease you? To hurt you? You didn't know if he loved you or loved to torture you. Carnage without a single drop of blood shed.

Love was not kind to you.



The stones were old and overgrown with the remains of moss. Snow dusted each of them like veils, forgotten to time and left to crumble into pieces. He skirted around a broken slab and the rusted iron of an old plot fence sunken deep into the earth. Once, he saw you squeeze through these gates, completely unaware of his passing. He always wondered what you came here for, who you came to visit, if anyone.

The way you had called for him as he walked away still echoed in his ears, a constant reminder of his own failures. But he should leave you, shouldn't he? After all, he was never supposed to have you. He was only supposed to know you, to open you up for observation, an impartial audience. He wasn't meant to love you.

Or so he tells himself.

In the distance, he can see a grave still standing tall, a lighthouse amongst a sea of the dead. It calls to him, curiosity pulling him ever closer. Each footstep crunches in the ice and flurries

of snow swirl around him. The world almost seems like nothing more than a dream.

When he's finally close enough to make out details, he stops in his tracks. In this land of ruin, a single intact angel still stands. She has rather mournful downturned eyes and her wings are chipped in places. Browned moss spirals up her dress and creeps over her shoulder. She bears clover flowers, the small petals peeking between her slender fingers and spilling over her arms. A deteriorating beauty.

She seems to ask him what his sorrows are, quietly scrutinizing him.

He pulls his jacket around him a little tighter as the cold bites at him. You started crying when you saw him, did you miss him? Or were you just beyond angry? A sharp pain poked his chest at the thought of you crying over him. He had hurt you. *He had done this to you.*

And he had run like a coward. You let your guard down, after all those anger and fear ridden fights, you let yourself be seen. And he had indulged in you only to throw it back in your face. He couldn't imagine how hurt you must have felt. All that for what? For him to waste what you were trying to give him because you were good and he wasn't? You cooked for him and he had thrown the dish on the floor like an insolent child.

You may be stubborn, but you did not chase something that didn't want to be chased. He could've had you, but he had resigned you and him both to misery. The angel stares down at him with slight disdain. If he tried, could he atone for what he has done? Even if he is unforgivable?

The wind pushes at him, blustering and brushing through his clothes and hair. It seems to whisper to him, chiding him for burning time away amongst the dead. In this moment, you are alive and so is he. If he were to wait any longer, you would simply slip through his fingers like the flecks of snow melting on his hands.

He has to try, even if the answer is no. You are allowed to scream and cry and push him away until he is bruised and deaf in the ears. You have every right to hate him.

But he has to try.

Because for once, someone matters.



Numb hands pull a small stone from the dirt next to your driveway. His entire face feels cold and like it's burning up simultaneously. In one hurled decision, he flings the stone at the top window faintly glowing against the dusky purple of the twilight. A single lantern of faith ready to go out. You could ignore him, leave him in the oncoming night.

The yellow of your window flickers and the curtain is drawn back. He is greeted by the hush of the window sliding open. Greeted by you, haloed in gold, staring down at him. Your hands are gripping the windowsill and your shadowed eyes glitter with the same intensity as the beast of Judgement itself.

His heart is being weighed on the scale and you are ready to devour it.

“Will you walk with me?” His voice nearly wavers in the cold.

You don't answer, you simply watch him, unmoving. You've sealed yourself off again, even your anger seems to be tucked away somewhere in your chest. You look like that stone angel, looking down at him with distrust.

“I want to talk to you-”

You sit up a little, hope swinging in front of him before you turn away, hands slipping from the sill.

“Please-”

The words slip out his mouth, desperation clawing up his throat. You pause, the light traces the bridge of your nose and the slope of your shoulders. Wind ruffles your gray t-shirt. There is not a single sound in this blue tinted world, nothing left but him in the snow below and you in your tower. You shut the window without a single word exchanged. Something cold drops in his chest, every muscle frozen. Is this it? Had you torn yourself from him permanently?

The last time he would ever see you, you outlined in saffron with an old loose shirt on.

And then your back door opens and you're walking out, dressed in that long black coat as you always are. You aren't looking at him, you're watching your boots in the snow, waiting for him to lead you off into the darkness. He breathes a sigh of relief he didn't realize he was holding. You. *You*. It wasn't lost yet, the night is still quite young.



You stood in front of the back door, the moonlight dividing your face up through the panes of glass. So he was coming to you this time. Would he leave you again? For all you knew, you were just someone on the sidelines for him to pick up and use whenever he wanted. You could be nothing to him. Still, he is waiting out there. He said please, you've never heard him say that before. Maybe he did mean it. *Maybe*.

You can't help but be drawn to him, again and again.

You open the door and stumble out into the cold. You know he's there in your peripherals. The ghost of him is real this time. You focus on your feet, on the way the snow gives way around you with each step you take. When you get close enough, he offers a hand to you, a wordless gesture asking once more if you want this. You don't leave but you don't take it either.

He draws back and you can see the quiet hurt in the way he curls his fingers. You almost want him to hurt, to be plagued by an ounce of humanity. Something of equal weight for how much you've cried. Without ask or demand, he turns away, leaving you to follow him. Silently, you begin your walk beside him. Two figures drifting through a world of white like a pair of snow speckled crows. The moon watches the wanderers with old eyes and you can feel her staring at you with curiosity.

It's peacefully quiet, no lights on, no traffic humming. Just forgiving darkness and his presence hovering beside you. It's like the whole world has died. You had forgotten why you liked your nightly break-ins, forgotten the delights of a dead world free of anyone nagging you or trying to make small talk.

You notice the path he's taking seems oddly familiar. You feel you've walked this before, but it's not the path to his house. You follow the turns in your head, retracing the maps in your mind until your finger is met with a red pin embedded in your mental corkboard. Your suspicions are confirmed when you see the rusted over gates coming into view and the bend in the iron where you often sneak through. But he doesn't lead you amongst the graves.

You find yourself guided to a small building, a decrepit chapel, just as abandoned as the headstones. The doors are sitting ajar, the chain holding them shut long since broken and falling to pieces. The air inside smells of dust and the remains of incense. Some of the stained glass windows are broken, allowing trailing vines to sneak their tendrils in and climb up the walls.

You take a deep breath.

"What do you want from me?"

Your voice echoes in the high beams, chasing the silence around. He's standing in front of the altar as still as can be. He won't meet your eyes again, something mournful and ashamed playing across his features before melting back into his usual neutral expression. All these meetings with your knife against his throat and it's only now he looks truly worried.

"I don't want anything."

You tilt your head as you gaze at him. His voice is serious, unwavering. You are still hurt and you want to hurt him. The animal in you bites its own legs, torn between running to him and pushing him away. You still haven't forgiven him for toying with you like that. You sigh, your shoulders tensing and drawing close to you.

“Why did you leave me? How should I trust you to stay?”

Your words slice at him and he continues to look away from you. You hope it cuts.

“How do I trust you not to kill me when you get tired of me?”

He stiffens at your second comment, his fingers tightly lacing together until his knuckles turn white. Darkness shadows his face leaving his expression unreadable.

“I won't kill you. If you're going to hate me for any reason, please don't let it be that. I don't want you to be scared of me.”

He takes a deep breath, shoulders dropping as he exhales.

“I didn't want to leave.”

Anger flares up in you, heat crawling up your neck and burning in your cheeks.

“And how am I supposed to trust that? Am I still your specimen pinned in a butterfly box? Or are you going to treat me like a human?”

He's finally chosen to look at you now, eyes piercing right through you. Beautiful and terrifying.

“I left *because* you are human. Everything around me dies, don’t you want someone who can love you in a way that doesn’t poison you?”

You’re approaching him, your feet dragging you to him without thought.

“I don’t want normal, I chose your heart and your twisted mind. I chose *you*. But I can only have you if you let me. Do you want me or not?”

You’ve leaned close to him now, nose scrunched and teeth bared. The same face as when you’d press your knife to his side. His eyes are narrowed, gleaming with a small fire at seeing you speak so brazenly. But there’s not a trace of anger in his features.

“Of course I want you.”

His words warm something deep in your chest, he is yours and you are his. Your anger starts dissolving in you, little by little. A heartless man *loves* you. And it is because of his nature that he wanted you to be happy even if it meant giving you up. But he is here, offering himself to you, letting you peek through the cracks into his inner workings. He does have a heart and you can see it, just as you always could.

“Then have me.” You whisper, your lips brushing his cheek.

His arms wrap around you, hands finding their usual places on your back and hip. He kisses you like you’re all he has left. He’s letting his grasp wander, letting errant fingers sneak beneath your coat to warmer places. You can feel his cold fingertips tracing a path down your spine, following the dip in your back. He parts from you for breath, his heart is racing and you can feel the thud of it in his chest pressed against yours.

He’s looking at you like he’s knowing you all over again. Your face burns once more, but not from anger this time. The moonlight seeping through the windows plays across his face in dappled spots of color. You like the shape of his eyes and the curve of his lips and the feeling of his hands. Most of all you like the red in his usually pale cheeks and the feeling of something hard pressing against your leg. All you can think about is him, only him.

And all he wants is you.

Chapter End Notes

hey guys I've had a shitty week I won't lie

anyways ya boy listened to too many damien rice songs in a row and decided to get sad, angry, and horny with it

thanks for continuing to leave kudos and nice comments, I am eating them for serotonin and motivation

6 - The Lovers

Chapter Summary

ambiguously afab reader. I dunno, there's no pronouns and neither tits nor coochie is explicitly named. sorry to my amab readers if this isn't gn enough

Oh YEAH THEY FUCK IN THIS CHAPTER YOU GUYS.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Oh.

You stayed. After everything, you are still here. Still here with your hand tracing along his jaw.

Here. Still here.

Oh, oh *you*.

You're leaning into him, you're not letting go. He feels like he's caught the moon in his hands, a miracle, a piece of pure chance.

Someone *loves* him.

Every brush of your fingertips feels maddening, the way you cling to him makes the back of his neck burn, some demon rattling the chains in the void of his mind. Animalistic. The want. The *need*. Something he cannot bury, no matter how hard he tries. If you desired it, he'd let you see into the recesses of his being. If you desired it, he'd coat the world with blood. If you desired it, he'd take you right here in this broken chapel.

Not yet.

Not here. No, no. You deserve something better.



Snow blurs all around you until it looks like static on an old film camera. The sky overhead has turned a velvety black with little pinpricks of white like diamonds. Two sets of footsteps crunch through ice before clicking on the freezing pavement. Wind weaves through your hair as you walk, his hand clutching yours.

He's taking you somewhere new, somewhere out of the cold and cracked windows and dusty floors. And you let him. Your body feels so light, it's like you've become the breeze. All that despair and rage you had been lugging around for months has been left in pieces in the black earth of that graveyard. You can breathe again, at long last, your lungs taking in deep breaths of the cold night air. Unhindered. He wants you. *He wants you.* Excitement runs hot through your veins and makes your heart beat in your ears.

Buildings meld together into vague shapes out of the corners of your eyes, you can't stop looking at him. Can't stop feeling his fingers laced with yours. You feel almost dizzy, the adrenaline of having this man at your side racing through your system. Your eyes trace along the sliver of his neck peeking out from under his collar. You replay how you had pulled his shirt open, a snapshot in time of his bare chest. Somewhere in the black hole of your mind, you can still hear the buttons scattering on the floor.

Soon.

Your face burns at the thought, your mind's eye traveling down his stomach to what lies below the belt. A flush creeps up your cheeks and a little pulse settles in the valley of your hips. Your head clouds at the thought of him in you, how it would *feel*.

You nearly jump out of your skin when you feel his hand detach from yours to brush across your back for a heartbeat. He's fumbling with the lock on the door of another run-down building. There's a slight pink on the bridge of his nose and cheekbones as he fusses with the latch, eyes narrowed. You are possessed by the urge to kiss him all over again. You want to drag him down into your abyss, to have him all for yourself.

When the door finally gives way, you enter his home and surrender to the creature in you. You can't help yourself. All those nights spent alone have left you starving. Desperate hands fumble in the darkness of the unlit foyer, grasping blindly for him. Fingers grasp at the lapels of his jacket, at his hair, hungrily bringing his face to yours. Fever eats you up as you kiss him, tangled in the corner of the hallway. Your clothes are suffocating you but you can't break yourself from him. He tastes of tea and something sweet. You want to indulge yourself until you feel sick. He's got you close to him, cornering you against the wall with fervor. Your tongue runs along the points of his teeth, a thrill rolling through your spine. A reminder that he's still dangerous. You like that about him. You wouldn't want him any other way.

You part from him to finally take a breath, letting your head rest on the wall behind you. A single hand runs across your cheek, his thumb following the dip of your lips before tracing a line down your throat. Memorizations. Shivers etched into you everywhere he touches. He peers at you, eyes half closed, something untamable lingering in his gaze. He links hands with you once more, fingers slowly and precisely entwining with yours like a ritual. The silence is deafening and wraps around your shoulders like heavy snowfall. Wordlessly, he leads you deeper into the darkness of the house and you follow him mindlessly. You'd follow him into hell if it meant you'd get to touch him. Everything feels like you're caught in a dream, like you might open your eyes and find yourself back home with your hand sneaking beneath the elastic of your underwear again. He's an angel, your addled brain hums. He's irreplaceable.

A light is turned on, a small yellow lamp pushing away the darkness with ochre hands. You're in a room. His room. One corner is mostly electronics, flickering ghostly blue against a backdrop of walls the color of rainwater. There are notes pinned to things, little reminders and codes for his antics. It's messy, scattered with documents and pages scrawled over beyond recognition with writing. Books stacked here and there, some open to random sections that you assume only makes sense to him. The contents of his mind unraveled before you in a room only a little smaller than your own. He's allowing you here, into his space, into his den of secrets. A little bit of warmth blooms in your chest as you shed your jacket, touched by that show of trust. Your coat leaves you along with your boots, your body relishing in some of the weight being taken off of it at long last.

He's standing in front of his rumpled bed with his back to you. He's already taken off his coat and is starting to work some of the buttons on his shirt open. The tips of his ears are red as if he's embarrassed to have you look at him. You watch with shy eyes. The desperation eating through your system quiets as you observe him. You wonder quietly if anyone else has ever gotten to see him like this. As the fabric slides off him you feel your breath hitch in your chest. The light plays on the curve of his back, carving out shadows that have your hands twitching. A sheath of dark hair hides his face from view, yet he is breathtaking all the same.

He's lithe, built like a bowstring, but his shoulders are still broad. You are reminded over and over again how wonderful it is to be mortal. To be able to touch and feel.

He's beautiful.

You pad over to him, brushing his hair behind his ear so you can press a kiss to his cheek. A sweet kiss. Knives and venomous words and anger that could kill. But it's tenderness that brings him to his knees. Just a gentle kiss no longer lingering with the salt of blood and the aftertaste of wrath. You wondered if someone had ever handled him kindly. You wonder how long he's been starved of it. His eyes are closed and he almost shakes with poorly contained want. He's needed this for *so long*.

He nearly grabs onto you when he feels you leave his side, but he quickly muzzles his impulse, trying to smooth out his breathing. A composure you want to break. You begin your work slowly, you want this to be *savored*. He chews on his thumb as your fingers pop each button on your shirt one by one, calculated and patient. With each small movement of your hands, the sliver of bare skin peeking behind the fabric grows ever larger. He can't stop himself from engraving this image of you into his mind, the dip of your collarbones, the shape of your hips. He stares as each item is discarded to the floor, something mesmerizing in the way you move. His breathing cuts short as your hands drift to the waist of your pants. You undo your belt buckle with slow precision, letting the clink of the metal echo in his ears. As the fabric slides off your legs, a hint of red catches the corner of your eye. Blood is dripping down his hand, his lips stained red.

In nothing but your undergarments, you march over to him and grab his bloodied hand. He blinks, watching your next actions with rapt attention. He can't help but feel as though he's offended you with how violently he bit his own finger. His thoughts scatter the minute your breath ghosts along his hands. Your lips press to his thumb, letting your tongue lap some of the blood off. His heart stutters as your gentle kisses move to his wrist. You can feel how his pulse jumps beneath your lips. All he can do is watch you and trust you'll touch him more. He's never felt this desperate before. You touch him reverently, like he is something perfect. Placing your hands on him without fear.

More.

More.

He's never been so enraptured by the feeling of another human. Everywhere you touch feels like he's being shattered and put back together all over again. Each of his senses are overwhelmed as you remind him that he has a body. That he is still human, just like you. After so long, the gates holding everything back finally bow and break.

You've overrun his thoughts, and he lets you.

He's watching the way your eyes move, the rising and falling of your chest, the expanse of bare skin in places only he gets to see. In a breath of lunacy, you look like you're made of the sky itself, the light reflecting in your pupils becomes nothing more than distant stars, your body, the universe. In one fluid move, he brings you into his bed, guiding you into his lap. You settle on him, lost for a moment in how he looks on the bed, sprawled beneath you just like always. The weight of you pressing down on him makes colors spot in his eyes, electricity arcing up his back. He doesn't know what to ask for, or how to ask it, only that he feels he might go mad without it. His hands settle on your hips, pulling you closer to him. A wordless greed.

You meet his half-lidded gaze, your restraint deteriorating with the way he's moving against you. He leans up just slightly, beckoning for a kiss. One of his hands detaches from your hip to rest on the back of your neck. A heat curls in your stomach. You want to give in, you want to fall apart so badly and let him have you. The flush creeping up his cheeks has him looking so beautifully rosy in the half light. You want to drive him wild, to see that gorgeous face of his when he cums. You want to *hear* him. God, you couldn't remember the last time you had felt like this, he really must be driving you mad. You find yourself grinding against him, following the motions his hands urge from you.

The friction makes your head go a little fuzzy, relief coursing through you in cool waves to your delirious mind. His grip tightens on your hips and you swallow down an embarrassing little noise lodged in your throat. You like it when he's grabby, when he can't help but manhandle you. You dip down to hide your face in the crook of his neck, hands curling into the pillows beneath him. His hips are pushing up against yours and you don't know how much longer you can hold it together. You press feverish kisses against his neck and chest, not caring if you leave marks. You almost hope that others will see the violet peeking out from under his collar. They should see that he has a lover. The hand on the back of your neck only presses you closer, fingers curling into your hair.

You sit up a little to take a breath in, detaching from the trail of magenta going down his throat. Your heart is racing as a burst of white hot impulse floods through your system. Languidly, you allow your hand to wander. You watch him carefully as your hand drifts lower to touch him, just to feel the hardness of it beneath your hand. Just as your fingertips brush against it, he grabs your wrist, holding you still. Your hand is still resting on him, held immobile. You can hear a low hum deep in his chest, his eyes drifting closed for a moment. Oh if only he hadn't held back, if only he let that pretty sound slip out just a little more.

Grabbing you by the waist, he flips you over so you're the one sprawled on the mattress. He holds you with the desperation of someone out of their mind, clutching you to him like he can't get enough. You can feel his heart beating against your chest, his breath warming your cheek. One of his hands has come to hold your hip again, his thumb sneaking below the elastic of your underwear. You can feel the last scrap of fabric slide off of you, the cold of his fingers leaving icy trails down your thigh.

You allow your eyes to close, welcoming reassuring darkness. Blindly, you let touch and sound wash over you. The brush of his fingertips along your inner thigh, shivers running through you. Your heart pounds like thunder, your breathing rushing like water in your ears. His fingers curl in you, the pads of his fingers exploring which spots make you arch into his hand. He's studying you again, some helpless little thing on his bed. Taking you apart just how you like it.

You crack your eyes open a sliver. His vivid gaze pierces yours right back. Something delirious and sadistic flashes in his expression, so taken by the way you squirm. His head is cocked to the side, eyes narrowed as he pushes his fingers in deeper, seemingly determined to get a sound out of you. Stubbornly, you flatten your mouth into a thin line and begin to ride his hand slightly. A silent challenge.

His free hand slides under your leg, lifting it up to rest on his shoulder so he can have better access. You bite back a whine each time his fingertips touch a spot that's been neglected, overstimulation sparking through you from the sensitivity. But still, you keep your mouth shut. His hair is falling across his face in disheveled strands but his eyes gleam with the same intensity as when he works. You forget, he is just as stubborn as you.

"Do you think about my hands when you're alone?" He purrs, his voice bordering on condescending, "Do you touch yourself and imagine my fingers instead of yours?"

He punctuates his words with his hands, the smoothness of his words leading you astray. A small whine escapes you, not much, but just enough that his cheeks color with satisfaction. A gleam of realization lights up in his eyes and you can feel any sense of control slipping through your fingers like sand.

He leans close to press kisses along your cheek and jaw, fingers still curled inside you.

“Does someone like my voice?”

A catlike smile spreads across his face as he feels you tighten involuntarily around him. He’s not even moving his hand, your body simply can’t help but react to him. Your face burns with embarrassment and you refuse to meet his eyes.

“Is that why you always listen when I talk?” He teases, “How *perverse* of you.” He draws out his words, relishing in the way you shiver beneath him.

“...shut *up* .” You mumble, your thoughts scrambled beyond coherency.

His touch leaves you, and you let out a broken moan, your body feeling horribly empty without him. You reach out for him, hands grasping, guiding his face to yours. You pull hot, open mouthed kisses from him in your fevered neediness. Through the blurriness of your own addled mind, you can hear his belt unbuckling. The click of the zipper. The sound gives you goosebumps, your body aching with cravings held back for far too long.

You reach out with desperate hands to guide him into you, all those nights you spent alone rushing through you in a shot of unrestrained adrenaline. He holds you steady as you take him, slowly sinking down until your hips are flush with his. Your breathing is heavy as you steady yourself, trying to hold it together but *you just feel so full*.

“*Fedya...*”

He leans into you at the sound of his name called so sweetly, hands coming rest on your back. He can't bear to have you apart from him, you're saying his name like that. Only you get to cry for him so sweetly. You're shaking like a leaf as your legs wrap around him, keeping him buried inside you. His fingers dig into the softness of your flesh as he buries his face in the crook of your neck. He doesn't move, not trusting his composure to stay intact.

You nearly start shaking as he presses kisses to your neck. He's so delicate with it, one hand cradling your head while his lips leave a trail down your throat. You can feel how he smiles against your skin as your breaths come out heavy. The way he's pressing you close to him makes you feel like the only human in existence, like time has come to yield. Your thumbs follow the v etched into his pelvis, feeling the way the flesh drew downwards to meet yours.

His movements were slow, teasingly so. You could tell by the way he was holding your hip that he wanted you to savor this. His other hand came to rest on the small of your back and you found yourself arching forwards like it burned. How long had you been needing this? You pushed yourself towards him, meeting his thrusts, drinking in the way he pushed deep inside you. The spot he was hitting felt good, *addictively good*. Your body began to move of its own accord, something animalistic coming through to urge you faster. *Faster*.

Madness had its chain around your waist and it yanked it like a dog to its master. If he stopped it would break you, the delirium would eat through your body and leave you for dead with a tear stained face. There was no room for any thoughts left, just him.

He thrust into you. *Hard*. With a gasp, you gripped his shoulders, hanging on to your sanity. His hands kept your hips locked still into place as he purposely slowed down. You let out a weak sob. Through your half open gaze, you could see him staring at you. His eyes were scrunched into catlike slits, pupils dilated. Face flushed and eyebrows drawn, he looked enamored by the way you shook in his hands.

"You're so needy, Myshka..." he breathed, "Does it hurt? Do you need it that badly? *You're shaking so much...*"

He paused, his eyes closing as a shiver rushed through him. He ran a hand down your chest and stomach, leaving a pathway of pins and needles in its wake. His cold touch felt like heaven as he let his fingers roam you. He almost seemed drunk, head tilted to one side, thoughts struggling to keep at their usual calculating pace.

He sighed, “Oh darling, you’re practically running a fever-”

The need for release was becoming unbearable and your body twitched in his grasp. Hot tears rolled down your cheeks as you pleaded with him.

“Please- *please*- ” you gasped out, hardly able to keep your voice steady.

Your hands came to claw at your own hips and stomach with desperation. You were *so* close and yet it wasn’t enough. A reassuring kiss was pressed to your lips and for a moment you were grounded enough to hear him with clarity.

“Your body is so warm, you must be *aching*. ” He lilts softly.

You nearly gasped as you felt his knuckles run along your cheek, one hand roaming to rest on your chest, palm over your heart. You rock against him, seeking any friction you could get. His hips stutter and jerk into you, composure momentarily lost. He’s starting to get sloppy, his thrusts quicker and more desperate. You can feel the burn in your stomach, the weight gathering right below your navel as your entire body tenses. Each brush of his hands feels like he’s touching every nerve ending, threads of white hot shivers tracing out from his fingertips. You’re being unraveled, your brain falling apart, your vision blotting out with static. No words, no thoughts, just mindless panting as you take it.

You let out a small cry as you feel the points of his teeth on your neck, his eyes shut as he leaves rings of bruising dappling your skin. That was all it took for you to lose it. No words left you as your back arched off the mattress, clinging to him, legs shaking.

“*Ah...*”

Your eyes widen at hearing him moan so prettily. His hips stutter. Warm cum floods into you.

Oh.

Your eyes flutter shut as he slumps against you, shaking. All your muscles feel like gelatin as you relax against the mattress. He weakly sits up, pulling out before draping himself over you once more, too tired for cleanup. You slide the blankets over you and him, just enough that you won't get cold. For once, the world is silent.

Darkness greets you one last time as you rest beside him, blessed by a dead sleep.

Chapter End Notes

hi guys, sorry I dipped for like two months, I got into a car accident and didn't have a ride for a while, I'm also a stressed little shit with three different powerpoints being demanded of me as we speak.

My family also barred me from writing for a little bit because they got convinced that it was causing a curse of some sort

hope y'all like the porn, ratman fuckers are winning tonight, slay <33

21 - The World

Chapter Summary

softe...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Green. Sage green and yellow like molten honey. You crack your eyes open, gold seeping through your eyelashes and spilling across your face. The first thing you see is the cotton white of the pillow crumpled beneath you and the unfocused blue of the walls. It smells like fresh rain and you can hear the faint rush of wind-rustled leaves through a partially opened window. A hand sleepily traces incoherent little shapes up and down your bare back while the other has its hold on your waist.

You shiver at his gentleness, arching into his touch and blinking away the sleep from your eyes. You sit up a little to get a better look at him. He's half awake, something content settling over his expression. The thread of stress and calculated thought that often settled in the corners of his mouth and the pupils of his eyes is gone. He looks like this is the best rest he's had in decades, like he's finally at home. The draft from you sitting up makes him restless and he pulls you close to him once more. You run your hands through his disheveled hair, pressing kisses to his cheeks and jaw. Face buried in the crook of your neck, you can hear him mumble softly that he loves you, a drowsy little confession only you get to hear.

You let your head drop to rest on his chest while he strokes your hair, the thump of his heart steadily beating under your ear. He's here, he hasn't left you behind, he hasn't run away. And neither have you. Music drifts faintly through the window from the building across the street, colors blot and melt together in your tired eyes. You think you want to stay here awhile, curled around him with the windows letting in afternoon sunlight. Making up for lost time. Your gaze drifts around lazily, taking in his space as your own. Papers are stacked on his bedside table, scrawled over beyond recognition. There is something strangely holy about seeing his writing laying out in the open, being in his room, having him naked next to you.

There are flowers in a small vase on his nightstand too, honeysuckle and bellflower. They cast little shadows like paper snowflakes as the sunlight drips over them. His breathing lulls you in and out of sleep as you study him. He truly is pretty. You like the bridge of his nose and the curve of his lips. You like his voice and the flush in his cheeks and the strands of hair curling around his face. There's a freckle on his hip, something only you get to be privy to. He's still not a good man, and it's likely he never will be. But he's good to you and that is enough. You look his disasters in the eyes and choose him anyways. And maybe one day, when all his walls come down, he'll tell you everything that's hurt him. In the warmth of this small bed, his hands rest on your back like you're sacred.

You, holding him.

Him, holding you.

The devil and his fool.

Chapter End Notes

when is it MY turn

1 - The Magician

Hello ! This is not another chapter, it's more of ah.. behind the scenes type thing. Like when you finish a book and find a glossary or a map in the back, that sort of vibe.

First off, the title is latin, it's my go-to after three years of classes on it. It translates to "Condemnation of Memory," and it's a Roman practice of sorts. If a person (typically political figures) made such a negative impact during their time, after death, they'd destroy all accounts of their existence. They'd burn records, destroy statues, carve out any image of their face or name, basically anything to exclude them from history. I felt that was particularly fitting given the amount of raging the reader goes through and their desire to erase him.

The triplex that our beloved rat man is hiding out in for the majority of the story is an amalgamation of several places, but mainly one I did painting work in. It's about a century old with the silliest goddamn layout known to man. If you thought the number of entrances, balconies, and fucked up windows in the story was odd, that's legitimately how it was. Oh, and it really did have lead paint that you could peel off like leather.

Chapter 7 was the first thing I wrote and it was originally supposed to be the *only* chapter. And then I got excited about symbolism and plot and it turned into a whole thing. I also started writing this in late May, a full two months before it ever saw the light of day. God bless my friends and family who have had to sit through my prolonged derangement about the yassified version of an author that's been dead for many slutty slutty years, may he roll in his grave as we commit atrocities. Ironic especially since he had the shittiest ratings on my simp powerpoint (it is 46 slides long and I just might make a sequel)

The flower language was done on a whim in a fit of 2am insanity and then it just stuck.

Chapter 1 - Ivy - dependence, endurance, faithfulness

Chapter 1 - Oak - strength

Chapter 2 - Wisteria - welcoming

Chapter 7 - Coriander - lust

Chapter 7 - Orange Lily - desire, passion, hatred

Chapter 8 - Purple Hyacinth - sorrow, please forgive me

Chapter 8 - Skeleton Flowers/Diphylleia - I will show my true self to you, clarity, honesty

Chapter 9 - Rainflowers - I love you back, I must atone for my sins, I will never forget you

Chapter 11 - White Clover - I promise

Chapter 13 - Honeysuckle - devoted affection, bonds of love

Chapter 13 - Bellflower - unwavering love

I also listened to a lot of music while writing this, here are some of the repeat guests or ones that simply felt emotionally on brand.

Engravings - Ethan Bortnick

It Takes a Lot to Know a Man - Damien Rice

Volcano - Damien Rice

Cold Water - Damien Rice

The Animals Were Gone - Damien Rice

My Favourite Faded Fantasy - Damien Rice

Laughing With - Regina Spektor

Après Moi - Regina Spektor

Kissing a Fool - George Michael

Valse A L'Etage - Gabriel Yared

One Step Dance - Gabriel Yared

Blue Zoon - Gabriel Yared

A Kiss On The Window - Gabriel Yared

Butch 4 Butch - Rio Romeo

Crucified - Army Of Lovers

Hares On The Mountain - Davy Graham

Suburbia Overture - Will Wood

6up 5Oh CopOut (Pro/Con) - Will Wood

String Quartet No. 4 (Buczak): II. - Kronos Quartet

String Quartet No. 3 (Mishima): Mishima/Closing - Kronos Quartet

String Quartet No. 3 (Mishima): 1962 - Body Building - Kronos Quartet

String Quartet No. 3 (Mishima): November 25 - Ichigaya - Kronos Quartet

String Quartet No. 5 III. - Kronos Quartet

Prelude in G minor, Op.23, No.5 - Sergey Vasil'yevich Rachmaninov

Yes, to Err is Human, So Don't Be One. - Will Wood

Catherine - PJ Harvey

I Can't Decide - Scissor Sisters

Trigger Of Love - Jawny

Shoot Him Down - Alice Francis

Just Wait Til Next Year - John Maus

Do You Love Me? - Nick Cave

Loverman - Nick Cave

Angel of Small Death and the Codeine Scene - Hozier

Take Me to Church - Hozier

From Eden - Hozier

Me and Your Mama - Childish Gambino

Suzanne - Leonard Cohen

That's all. Much love and appreciation to all my funky friends who listened to me scream loudly and spectacularly about this man for unwarranted amounts of time. And much love to everyone who left comments and kudos, y'all make it worth it. I hope y'all liked it and I hope I did this man justice after the drought of content available for him.

May life treat you all well <33

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