If James wanted to play this game for the rest of their lives, obedient, somber husband by daylight and Atlas at night, holding up Thomas’s entire world, then Thomas would bow at his feet until the day he died staring up at him in awe.

If only it was Thomas who was his husband, and not his nemesis.

If only they could spend a single night together without having to worry about getting caught. Without Thomas having to pretend he doesn't see Alexander's anger blooming across James's skin in blood and bruise because "It's not that bad baby, it's not his fault, he just had a bad day, I forgive him."

If only if only if only

And then Washington steps down, and everything changes.

wOw guys trigger warning for this whoOole thing this is gonna get dARk, this is NOT my other series at all
See the end of the work for more notes.
“And on top of all of these horrendous points, Jefferson’s plan also fails to take into account for how the financial burden placed on those directly above the poverty line will be mitigated,” Alexander concluded smugly, staring his opponent dead in the eye though the lines were being delivered to Washington. Dramatic prick.

“I’m fucking your husband, you bastard.”

Of course Thomas didn’t actually say it, but at this point the words had to be tattooed into his tongue; they’ve been poised there for coming on a year and a half now.

“You think that you know everything on the damn planet, but do you even know where your own husband has been spending two nights out of every week for over a year? Do you even know the soft sounds he makes in his sleep? Do you to stay up past him just to hear how sweet they are? Do you ever even bother?”

The speech never makes it out. Just etches into the sides of his brain for the hundredth time that week, like a knife dulled by the tally marks it’s been carving into its prison.

Instead he says,

“If you were to read section 5, subsection A, Hamilton, you would see the several proposals for a subjective gray zone surrounding the line. That is assuming you are capable of understanding it, of course.”

Before Alexander could retort, his lips already poised in a condescending scowl, Washington raised a hand. The action was accompanied by a deep sigh and several brief but commanding words.

“Gentlemen, it’s been seven hours now and while I must admit we are making notable progress, I believe our efficiency for today has far passed its peak. We will meet again tomorrow morning to finalize our changes so far. Have a nice night boys.”

Thomas stood up to stretch from his seat across from the president, luxuriating in the height difference between him and Hamilton.

Alexander, who hadn’t sat down for any portion of the meeting had the head start out of the door. He grumbled, I’m not a ‘boy’, under his breath but for once didn’t try to argue with his boss. He was probably as tired as the rest of them, not that he would admit it. It was three in the morning, after all.

Thomas nodded at Washington, who looked grateful and relieved that neither of them had tried to argue with them, and retired with a, “goodnight, sir.”

As soon as he was outside and had the door shut, he listened into the darkened hallway. It was odd for Hamilton to just depart like that, with no attempts to finalize the argument forever in his favor. The shorter man had been in an odd, particularly aggressive mood all day.

He was pissed off about something. It was ironic how when Hamilton was deeply, seething mad, his debates with Thomas became nothing to him. Tonight was obviously one of those nights.

He whipped out his phone before even taking a step farther into the hallway.

Tom J.
Stay with me tonight

The check mark appeared immediately, and Thomas knew the other man had seen his message. There was no response, though.

Jefferson turned on his notification sound and slipped the phone into his pocket, moving towards his office to grab his bags.

It was pure convenience that the path from Washington’s office to his took him past Hamilton’s.

He attempted to quiet his steps as he approached, but the building was completely deserted now except for the two of them. It was hopeless.

As he passed the door, he saw the other man’s office was as dark as the hall. No lights were on. Its inhabitant was visible though, eerily through the moonlight patterned across him through his blinds.

Hamilton stood in front of his desk, facing away from the door. His bags were half packed, but he had abandoned the motions in favor of the bottle of bourbon he kept buried in his meticulous desk. He stood in the dark, one hand propping him up on the desk while the other held the bottle steadily upwards.

“You’re not planning on driving yourself home like that,” Jefferson stated flatly, trying to hide his disgust. Hamilton would likely just get off on it, on his ability to provoke such an intense reaction from his enemy.

“Fuck off,” the other man growled, not even bothering to turn around or bring the amber bottle all of the way down.

Thomas didn’t say another word and left without looking back.

I hope he dies, he thought, I hope he drives off a damn bridge.

Rounding the corner to his office he brings out his phone again.

Tom J.

he’s drinking.

Again, message seen. Again, no move for response.

Tom J.

fine. don’t stay with me if you don’t want to. just don’t be there. please.

He let his dramatic side flair in the message, knowing how to get to the man.

James Madison seemed to like his men a little crazy and a lot dramatic.

Jem

don’t be like that

you know i want to be with you.

im already in bed. it’ll be fine.
The thought of James, sleepy and dozing off, vulnerable and valuable in that bed, waiting silently for his drunk, seething husband to slam his way into their home sent shivers down Thomas’s spine. They were mostly angry shivers.

Madison had made it clear early on that Thomas’s possessive streak wouldn’t have a presence in their relationship though. James was married to Alexander, James loved Alexander. Even if Hamilton had been a less than loving husband.

But he loved Thomas too, and the taller man knew that as well as he knew that those feelings were more than reciprocated. So he pressed.

Tom J.

then get up

i can probably get there before him. i’ll pick you up. you don’t even have to drive.

This time James responded immediately, and Thomas felt a little guilty for his words. He knew they would scare James, coerce him into agreeing. It was a dirty trick. But not as bad as some of the ones Alex tried to pull over on his own husband.

Jem

Don’t do that

Thomas

...

Jem

Thomas

Do not come here

Fine im coming, im grabbing my keys now

Tom J.

I just want to protect you

Jem

 Fucking don’t

I don’t need protecting from anything but your idiocrasy

I defineltly don’t need to be protected from him

Thomas sighed internally as he shoved into his coat and made his way out of the door. It did not appear to be one of James’s more lucid nights. It had been too long since something had happened, and James was easily coerced into forgiveness and forgetfulness by time. And his manipulative husband, who knew just what sugarcoated words to use to get James to forgive him for last night’s words.

And so the cycle went.
Jem

*Im going to get there before you. Im just going to go back to sleep. So goodnight.*

Thomas

*Okay. Im still going to kiss you though.*

*The fluffy green blanket is in the drier*

*I had to wash it after you spilled hot chocolate all over it the other night you goof*

Jem

…

Jem

*Okay*

*Thank you*

…

Jem

*I love you*

Tom J.

*Have you left yet???

James didn’t answer, and Thomas knew he wasn’t going to. The conversation was over, James obviously not wanting to think about the “running away” aspect of his life. Having to flee his own home.

Well. As James made it abundantly clear, there was no’having to’ there. He just didn’t like seeing Thomas in disarray, even if it bothered him what the source of Thomas’s discomfort was. Or so he said.

Thomas had seen fear in James’s eyes on several different nights after arriving, or in his voice when he called him in the middle of the night from the downstairs bathroom after a panic attack.

God, he fucking hated Alexander Hamilton.

The other man had disappeared when Thomas walked back by his office, and his bag had disappeared with him. He wanted to text James again, tell him to hurry, but he knew he was being ridiculous.

His lover was already gone. He was safe. They were safe.

He ignored how every day he became more and more nervous when Hamilton wasn’t in his sight line.

When James wasn’t.

Which, honestly, wasn’t an ideal situation either because that would mean that James and
Alexander were both in his sightline together. As a couple. A fucking married couple. It was painfully obvious to Thomas how James tried to tone it down, but Hamilton was never having any of it. It was likely he didn’t even notice his husband’s discomfort. It was also likely that his flashy, domineering kisses and hands-on-hip were because he liked to flaunt his marriage in Thomas’s face.

_Ha ha, I’m married and your wife is dead._

The only thing that kept Thomas shut up when Alexander practically oozed as much was that he got to know the real joke, and a large part of what made it funny was that Alexander did _not_.

By the time he arrived back at his townhouse, James’s car was indeed parked down the street in the indescript community parking lot. Never in front of Thomas’s house.

The hallway light was still on for him, though it was obvious from the lack of other lights that James had made good on his promise of sleep.

Thomas dumped his bag ungently on the kitchen counter and shrugged out of his jacket as he made his way up the stairs as quietly as he could.

He knew James had been in no danger tonight. He knew the small man was safe, had been all day. Still, the sight of Hamilton standing in the dark downing the amber poison had left an eerie shadow on Thomas’s heart, right above the words ‘_this man owns James_’.

And he hadn’t seen Madison in his bed in over four days. It was pathetic how easily Thomas missed James, how soon after the other man left his arms to return to the real world that he ached for him back.

The door creaked open gently, and Thomas was surprised to find one of the lamps still on. James lay on his massive bed, ignoring the comforter in favor of the ragged, fluffy green blanket he had taken a shining to early on. His eyes were shut, his breathing light and gentle. His smooth face was marred by lines, worry etched into his soul even in his sleep.

His breathing was light and easy though, and Thomas thanked god for giving the other man a break in the sickness that often plagued his body, however short it may be.

James was safe. He was bundled up on Thomas’s bed. He waited for him, despite strictly informing him he would not. It didn’t matter that he failed and slipped into sleep. Madison deserved all of the untroubled, worry-free sleep in the world. He deserved to sleep in a bed where he didn’t have to worry when he would be joined.

Thomas walked lightly toward the bed, still in awe of the other man’s simple presence despite having had it for over a year now. He was such a goner.

“Hey,” he whispered softly, kneeling down on the floor next to the bed where James lay and reaching out a hand to brush against his lover’s forehead.

A year ago, James would have jumped at such surprise contact. Now, his face scrunched up momentarily before relaxing and moving into Thomas’s hand. He didn’t even open his eyes, completely at ease in the other man’s presence.

It melted Thomas’s heart.

“Hey,” he said again, “I love you.”

James mumbled to himself softly before speaking up, his voice groggy and hiding a soft
“Yeah, yeah, I love you too.”

“Can I come in?” Thomas asked, having not yet made a move to join the half-asleep man in the bed.

James pondered this for a moment before shifting minutely and sticking his leg across the other side of the bed, effectively occupying all of it.

“No,” he answered helpfully once he had accomplished this.

Thomas smiled at the soft antics but made no move to get in the bed. He would sit there for hours until James told him it was okay. It was never until James told him yes, told him he wanted him there.

It was a right Thomas knew James didn’t allow himself in his own home, in his own bed.

But Thomas’s house was his sanctuary.

And everything waited for him to say yes.

After a moment James finally opened his bleary eyes, knowing exactly what Thomas was doing. There was sadness in his face, and something soft and sweet and tired. He simply extended one hand to Thomas.

“Come.”

Jefferson moved quickly then, making short work of his shirt and pants before climbing under the green blanket with James, holding him against his chest.

“You waited for me,” he murmured into the flesh of James’s neck when they were settled.

“No, I didn’t. I was asleep.”

“You tried to wait for me.”

“Fuck you.”

“No thanks,” Thomas yawned genuinely, “I’m kinda tired.”

James actually laughed, soft and warm, and Thomas’s heart leapt that James felt like he could laugh at it. That he knew it was a joke.

“I love you,” Thomas repeated again for the hundredth time that night. James seemed to be leaving him with many less words these days.

“Yeah yeah,” James murmured affectionately, slipping into sleep himself, “go to sleep you big hot shot late night Secretary.”

“Okay,” Thomas whispered.

But he didn’t go to sleep. He waited until James did, and listened. The sounds he made in his sleep were so gentle. So sweet.

Thomas Jefferson may have hated Alexander Hamilton to the moon and back, but his love
for James Madison was so strong it didn’t even need to leave the Earth to prove itself. It didn’t even need to leave the room. He pressed his hand softly against where James’s heartbeat lived, and he accepted that he had never felt anything as real before. For once, even the glint of James’s wedding ring in the moonlight couldn’t detract from how powerfully his love swept over his life, white washing everything that had come before this moment.

If James wanted to play this game for the rest of their lives, obedient, somber husband by daylight and Atlas at night, holding up Thomas’s entire world, then Thomas would bow at his feet until the day he died staring up at him in awe.

The room lit up harshly in white light. James made a face and snuffled, but didn’t wake. Across the room, Thomas saw James’s phone light up as Hamilton called him.

The photo that swept across the screen was one Thomas knew all too well. James sat on Alexander’s lap at their wedding, cake smeared across his face where Alexander had placed it. Madison had been surprised at first before bursting into laughter. Alexander was looking up at him in satisfied amusement, one arm wrapped protectively around James’s waist, the other continuing to smear the cake around.

Thomas hated that picture. He didn’t nudge James either, letting the silent call go through to voicemail. He wasn’t sure what excuse James had left in their home for his absence, but couldn’t find it in himself to care.

They could deal with Alexander Hamilton tomorrow.
The points the man made were sometimes outrageous, James couldn’t deny. But he didn’t see stupidity and ignorance in such passages as Alex did. He saw intelligence and hope.

A freshly and firstly elected congressman, James found the tone refreshing and encouraging in the often desolate landscape of politics.

He had attended the White House events before, of course, a fixture on Alexander’s arm. He was a fair bit younger than his husband, and had been studying; his place in the political world was directly tied to being the Secretary of the Treasury’s husband. He never dictated where they went and who they spoke to. He had only glimpsed the mysterious revolutionary, and had never put any thought into it. This time, though, was his first since his election, and he was feeling bold.

“Introduce me to Secretary Jefferson,” he leaned over and whispered in Alexander’s ear, watching the extravagant man across the room.

Alex scoffed and glared in the same direction, “and ruin a perfectly good party?”

“Alexander, I work with these people now too. I’m going to have to meet him at some point or another. Wouldn’t you rather it be with you at my side?” James rationalized, laying it on thick and appealing to Alex’s possessive, protective streak.

Hamilton rolled his tongue around in his mouth for a moment, thinking. Finally he heaved out a sigh and reached out to wrap one arm tightly around James’s waist. Bingo.

“As good a point as always, my darling,” he muttered irritably, pulling James across the room.

As they drew closer, Secretary Jefferson’s voice grew apparent as he spoke to a small crowd in front of his seat at the bar.

“All, our roots are in tearing down big government, so all we’re doing building it back up again is giving us a more satisfying ending to the next revolution,” he spoke with a slight grin, his eyes half lidded and hands flitting about freely, his voice deep and rich. The crowd nodded, enraptured.

He’s good at playing people, James thought, impressed despite himself. He had heard tales of Jefferson’s smoozing personality. Such stories were always salted with tales of the man’s stage fright
around legitimate crowds afterwards, curtesy of one Alexander Hamilton.

“You do understand how ridiculous you sound, right?” Alexander cut in as he pushed his way to the forefront of the crowd, James held behind him.

“Ah yes,” Thomas chuckled and gestured to the newcomer, still addressing the people around him, “it’s our resident internal operations specialist, the banker.”

James could feel Alex’s teeth grind, and noted that Thomas had packed his punch right from the beginning. He knew secondhand that out of all of the things the Secretary of State did to piss off his husband, degrading his position was in the top five.

“And here, ladies and gentleman, is the man whose job it is to know about external operations. How lucky we are to have someone so multitalented,” Alexander snarled condescendingly.

“Yes, well, some of us think in real world applications, Hamilton, not numbers,” Jefferson retorted, still smiling.

Before Alexander could respond, James made his move. He stepped to the side, coming beside Alexander and laying one hand on his arm comfortingly.

“But it is those numbers that fund your wars, Secretary Jefferson, be they practical or not.” He spoke quickly and eloquently, one eyebrow raised.

Jefferson stopped in his tracks, his fake smile finally slipping as he considered James for a moment seriously. When he smiled again, it was different, less violent and more interested.

“Congressman Madison, I was wondering if I would ever get to meet you,” he drawled cheekily, recognition apparent. His eyes shifted to where Alexander’s arm was still wrapped purposefully around the small man and he corrected himself, “or is it Madison-Hamilton?”

“Just Madison is fine,” James assured. Alexander shot him a look from his side and yeah, that was probably going to be a problem later tonight but they had talked about the name thing and Alexander didn’t want to listen. Not that that was unusual. But all couples fought; James could withstand it.

“Well Congressman Just Madison,” Thomas picked up a glass of something surely expensive from the bar and raised it, “congratulations on your recent election. The results were truly impressive.”

James just raised an eyebrow at the solitary gesture, unimpressed. Thomas laughed and beckoned the couple over before leaning back to call to the bartender for more.

Alexander made no move forward, his eyes narrowed as he tried to size up his opponent with his arm still wrapped firmly around James.

“No thanks,” he bit out, trying to pull James back from where he had made to step forward, his nails digging into his husband’s side warningly, “we still have drinks at our table.”

Jefferson looked back over his shoulder and raised an eyebrow in surprise, “Oh, it wasn’t for you, Hamilton. I know you’ve stolen more than enough money from the people in this room to afford whatever drink you want. This,” he held up the fancy drink as the bartender passed it over, “is for the Congressman.”
“He said no thanks,” Alexander’s grip grew tighter and James was forced to step back behind his husband to prevent tripping over his own feet and falling.

Jefferson’s eyes squinted and he stared at James when he spoke again, “did he? I don’t think I heard him. Must be another grand talent of the multitalented, amazing Alexander Hamilton.”

“I’m his husband,” Alexander growled assertingly, “I know what he wants.”

This was not going like James had wanted it to. There would be a debate, of course, the two men were incapable of speaking in any other language to each other. But it was supposed to be about something James knew about, something he could argue either side over, play devil’s advocate for, impress Jefferson with.

It wasn’t supposed to be about him. There was no way he could win in this scenario, neither in his plan to meet his new role model or later that night when he returned home with Alexander.

Jefferson’s eyes narrowed even further and the issue was clearly becoming something more than a petty squabble to him. James remembered dimly in the back of his memory from his research on the man that he had been married, quite happily apparently, for several years. His late wife, a Mrs. Martha, had passed away a little over three years ago.

“He’s my husband,” Thomas reached out and shook his hand slowly, deliberately, his eyes boring into James’s thoughtfully.

“The pleasure was all mine Congressman Madison, it will be nice seeing you around more often.” Oh. So the other man had noticed him before tonight.

Alexander had noticed James’s urge to end the conversation, and smiled smugly at having effectively butchered the conversation. He pulled James even closer, ending the handshake prematurely too, and lead them away without another word to Jefferson.

James’s face burned with embarrassment as he felt the Secretary’s eyes boring into their backs. Damn it. He had just wanted to be seen as an independent figure from Alexander, someone other than ‘the husband’. It was foolish, of course. Alexander was considerably smarter than him and had been in the business much longer than him. His tie with the Secretary would always be the predominant feature in his career.

He was grateful for it too, as he knew he should be. He knew Alexander had given him a great many opportunities, had helped him through school and made him into the politician he was.

It was fine.

He’d just have to find another way to speak with Secretary Jefferson, one less bold that wouldn’t almost deliberately antagonize the man who had given him everything. He had been asking for that to go poorly, honestly.

He saw his chance later that night when Alexander had grown tired of playing the protective
husband role and left James at their table to talk with that journalist with all of the freckles four tables down.

He excused himself from those still at the table, claiming he needed to use the restroom. Angelica just looked pointedly down at Alexander and rolled her eyes with a nod before turning back to her sister.

He tried not to make his search obvious, allowing himself to be swallowed by the crowd. He made pleasant conversation along the way, enjoying speaking for himself. After several rounds of this, his search for the magenta suit Jefferson wore turned up nothing. When he looked back at his own table though, he did find what he hoped he wouldn’t find. Alexander stood over his chair, speaking with Angelica, a slightly confused look on his face. Suddenly he looked out, scanning the crowd and nodded distractedly before setting out into the throng of people. James ducked his head down and made goodbyes before stepping out of the room entirely.

As he strolled down the hallway, he wasn’t certain where he was going or what he was looking for anymore. He felt incredibly guilty when the thought struck him, but he realized it was nice being by himself. By the time he made it outside into the gardens he wasn’t even looking for Jefferson anymore. He was just enjoying the quiet, the feeling of being alone with his own body and his own thoughts.

The fountain at the end of the garden path was turned off for the duration of the brutal winter, but James appreciated it none the less as he sat down on one of surrounding benches. He let his head tilt back and his eyes slip closed. It was so peaceful.

“Mr. Madison, I was wondering if I would ever get to meet you,” a voice penetrated the silence and interrupted James’s lack of thoughts. He didn’t turn around or open his eyes though, speaking forward to the sound of footsteps approaching his secluded seat.

“You’ve said that already,” he pointed out.

“Well I didn’t get to meet you, so I figured the line didn’t expire,” Jefferson supplied helpfully as he came around the bench to lean against the fountain, inspecting James, who reluctantly opened his eyes.

“Didn’t you?” He asked.

Thomas just raised an eyebrow, “did I?” he asked meaningfully.

James stared him down for a moment before relenting and nodding slightly, his gaze shifting off into the distance.

Having apparently gotten whatever point that was across, Thomas shifted and smirked down at the man.

“The purpose of events like these is to mingle, you know. Talk to people, make friends who might become allies. Or, if you’re your husband, enemies. Whatever floats your boat I suppose.”

“I’m talking to you, aren’t I?” James pointed out.

“But we’re already enemies, aren’t we?” Thomas shot back, straight face.

“How do you figure, sir?”

“You insinuated some of my wars are ‘impractical.’ It was a nearly mortal wound. Nothing I
ever do is impractical.” Thomas supplied, his tone stern.

“Even wandering out of parties filled with potential allies to sit with your enemy in a dormant garden?”

Thomas stood straight up, shaking out his shoulders and moving to sit next to Madison before answering.

“The most practical thing I’ve done all night, I think. Why are you out here again?”

“I was looking for you,” James simply said, unsure of what else to say that wouldn’t sound like he was running away from…someone.

“Oh,” Thomas answered, his brows raised in surprise over James’s blatant honesty, “and why would I be out here?”

“I kind of…stopped looking for you pretty quickly actually. It’s nice out here so,” James shrugged, “why are you out here?”

“I was looking for you,” Thomas chirped with a smile.

James turned his head to peer at him in confusion, “and what reason would you have for doing that?”

“I wanted to talk to you?” Thomas spoke as thought it was the most obvious thing in the world. When the confusion on James’s face did not cease at the vague explanation, he continued, “you interest me, Mr. Madison. I try to keep an ear down for all of the up-and-comers, and you’ve been on my radar for a while. A fair amount of our interests coincide. I read your thesis; it was a well written piece of work, if not a little outlandish.”

“Kettle meet pot,” James spoke softly, stunned at the turn in the conversation and unsure what else to say.

“How do you figure, sir?” Thomas mimicked him, a coy, questioning grin on his face.

“I’ve read all of your work, Mr. Jefferson, and I must say that while you lay some solid groundwork for what you present you almost always follow it up with entirely pointless and unachievable predictions. It all comes off rather frivolous, sir.”

When he turned to look back at Jefferson, he was unsure what he would find. The other man was smiling, still watching James as though he was inspecting him as he had been doing all night.

“You liked it?” Jefferson asked simply.

“I loved it,” James confirmed before he could reign himself in, “I think we need more of that. The people are losing hope. We’re becoming….” He looked over at the fountain, cold stone dead in the summer, still reminiscent of its past beauty. He didn’t finish his sentence.

“Congress may have hope yet,” Jefferson spoke, his dumb smile bleeding into his awed tone as he watched the desolate fountain with James.

“We’re not that bad,” James spoke softly, chuckling lightly.

“No,” Jefferson sounded sincere, “you aren’t.”

James could tell he was looking at him again, could tell he wasn’t talking about the Congressmen, could tell he was talking about how different he was from his husband when he
allowed himself to be. He refused to address it though, his lips pursing slightly but remaining closed. Perhaps he hadn’t thought the merits of speaking with Secretary Jefferson through enough. They had found themselves in dangerous territory.

The soft buzz of classical music cut off inside before either of them could speak again, and the tingling of a bell rang across the grounds. It was likely the president was preparing to speak to the crowd.

Jefferson stood abruptly, almost tripping over himself, looking back towards the door in concern.

“We should head back in,” he pointed out, offering his hand to James. He pondered it for a moment before taking it and standing up. Jefferson didn’t pull back though, and looped his arm through James’s.

“May I escort you inside Mr. Madison Is Fine?” He asked, his cocky grin back in place.

“Why would you do that, sir?” James asked, raising an eyebrow as he strung the other man along.

“Why, for you’re protection, of course!”

“How do you figure, sir?” James repeated again, dryly.

“Just that I’ve been here much longer than you have, and I don’t want you to get lost and miss your first speech as an elected official. It’s quite the experience, different somehow.”

Jefferson’s tone was joking, of course, but there was also sincerity to it, genuine pleasure and excitement towards James’s election. The smaller man smiled softly at the warm, teasing words, and Jefferson took that as a yes.

He started walking down the path, tugging Madison with him.

Madison clung to his chest, burying his face in Thomas’s neck and panting through the last vestiges of pleasure.

“Thomas,” he breathed out, sagging back against the taller man’s bed.

“Yes, Mr. Madison Is Fine,” Thomas breathed back, rolling off of his lover to his side to wrap around him.

James cracked up and swatted back at him, turning around to face him.

“Hey,” Thomas quirked, shifting to bring James’s face up against his.

“Shut up,” Madison supplied, kissing him softly before shutting his eyes.

“I love you.”

“How do you figure, sir?”

Thomas chuckled back warmly, prodding Madison in his stomach and running his fingers across the other man’s bare chest.
“Is that a actually question or are you just being a smartass? Because I have a powerpoint presentation on my laptop that I can go get for you.”

“Now whose being a smartass,” James muttered reaching up to defend himself and push Thomas’s cheeky hands away, “tired.”

“Too bad sweet cheeks,” Thomas quipped happily, enjoying this reversal in roles, “its morning. Sleepy time is over. If you had done a better job with that you wouldn’t be so tired.”

“Well maybe the reason I didn’t get sleep is because some asshole texted me at three in the morning and asked me to come over.”

It was domesticity and it was bliss. Thomas loved every second of it, even if it was just pretending. Pretending that Thomas had just made a booty call, that James just came over to come over. Not that Thomas pondered for the millionth time last night if Hamilton could actually kill James. If he would. If James would fucking let him.

Pretending pretending pretending.

“Hey kiddo, you woke me up this morning,” Thomas reminded him as he rolled out of bed.

“Are you saying you would have rather I let you sleep?” James drawled out innocently, stretching provocatively in Thomas’s bed, still completely naked.

“That is not what I said, don’t you dare bend my words Madison, you dirty politician.”

James just rolled his eyes before trailing them down Thomas’s body as he got dressed. He made no move to get up.

“Hey, if you wake up I’ll make you pancakes,” Thomas offered.

James sat up and stretched again, “Oh honey, I’m very awake. You made sure of that.”

Madison’s eyes trailed across the room, searching for his clothes. He was so beautiful, sitting there like that in Jefferson’s bed.

James’s eyes landed on his phone, they blinking blue light in the corner, pulsing frantically. Several messages, then. James’s face cracked a little, the smile now forced.

Pretending pretending pretending.

He moved to pick it up and dial in his passcode. He hesitated when he turned it on and stared at the screen with that awful painful smile for a moment.

I don’t know what you expected, Thomas wanted to say, you let yourself be chained to him, let your life be a big game of fight or flight where the answer is always fight. You could stop this. please

But James loved Alexander.

And if they left each other Alexander would ensure it would be with all of the animosity in the world. And their careers would be ruined.

So he just said, “Pancakes,” and walked out of the room, leaving James in silence to listen to Hamilton screaming.
Thomas doesn’t see James in person after sleepy pancakes for three days. Not that he didn’t see James, because he made it a point every day to find the man somehow, be it glimpsing him across the yard or in the news, or asking his coworkers about him. Just to make sure there wasn’t anything wrong, that James was still…there.

The meeting had been arranged by the president the morning after Alex’s alcohol infused pissy-fit, but nobody knew what it would be about. Well. Thomas placed some heavy bets with himself that Alexander knew, because he was Washington’s favorite. When the three days had rolled around, the room was packed.

Reporters took up the last five rows in the conference center, the front four reserved for political figures such as himself. Honestly, Thomas hadn’t put much thought into the meeting, had assumed they were just launching another one of Hamilton’s financial mishaps without informing him. It had happened before.

But he reconsidered that thought when James walked into the room, poised and composed by Hamilton’s side, the both of them walking with a purpose. James was obviously trying very hard to avoid Thomas’s questioning look. Why was he there?

Hamilton made no such effort, however, and looked directly into Thomas’s face to deliver a full-fledged smirk.

What the fuck was happening?

The two men made their way over to their seats in the front row but didn’t sit down. Instead James placed his arm on Hamilton’s shoulder and squeezed, as though comfortingly. Alexander looked back at him with a cocky grin, placing his hand on top of James’s and leaning in to whisper something in his ear.

A nervous, forced smile cracked James’s face and he nodded, seemed to say of course.

Alexander winked at him and stepped away, moving to greet the president where he was waiting by the podium. James, instead, finally took his seat, watching his husband with what was becoming more like dread.

When Alexander finished whatever cute little quip he had for Washington, he remained by the podium turning to face the crowd and folding his hands in front of him, making it clear he was to remain there and was actively a part of whatever was happening. Washington clapped him on the back like he was five damn years old and stood in front of the microphone.

From his stance at the front of the room, Alexander made direct eye contact with Jefferson again. The smirk seemed a little more sinister, a lot more intense. His skin prickled. When Alexander
turned his eyes to his husband, the predatory look was mingled with a possessive one, and Thomas wanted to vomit. The president’s voice rang out in the room.

“Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for gathering here with me today…”

Stepping down.

Washington was…stepping down.

Not running for another term next year.

And Alexander Hamilton was campaigning for president of the United States.

James had relented, finally, and caught Thomas’s eye before the taller man left in a rush. The look was a patented James Madison blend of terror, desperation, and regret mixed with blind hope and empty optimism.

_Hey_, the two seconds of eye contact seemed to say, _this might mean that all of your dumbfounded hopes of a happy ending with the love of your life and your sound political beliefs are being slaughtered before your eyes, but Alex really isn’t that bad._

Yeah. That’s one Thomas has heard before. Hundreds of endless hundreds of times.

_It isn’t that bad Thomas._

_He really does know what he’s talking about Thomas._

_I know you don’t agree with him honey, but he’s doing what he believes is right._

_It doesn’t hurt that bad baby and it stopped bleeding pretty quick this time, please drop it._

President of the United States of America.

Thomas barely made it back into his office with a blank face before screaming.

“Godamn it,” his fist slammed into the solid oak door.

He wanted James to slip in behind him, to whisper soft things and rub his back and try to make him feel better. But he knew that would never happen. It wasn’t the middle of the night. And James was campaigning as First Gentlemen. And James wasn’t _his_ husband. He wasn’t _his_ at all. He never would be.

If James thought he was trapped in his marriage before, he has another thing coming, he thought viciously, unable to repress the ugly part of his mind that blamed James for their entire situation.

Sally slipped into his office instead, her eyes firmly planted respectfully on the floor and not on Jefferson, who was leaning on his desk now, breathing heavily and clutching his hand.

“Sir?” Her voice was clipped, knowing exactly how to deal with him. Sally had seen him at his worse, and knew just how to slap reality back into him.

“He can’t be president,” he growled, flexing his hand and trying to take a deep breath.

“The press reacted very positively to the idea of it sir, they’re already saying his chances look
good. Of course, if he had the right opponent sir, that would indubitably change.”

There was silence for a moment as that sunk in. When Thomas spoke again, it was slowly and with contemplation.

“I thought I’d have another four years under Washington before I ran.”

Sally just raised a perfectly plucked eyebrow at him.

“Well that fucker does have a way of throwing everyone’s lives into disarray,” Thomas snorted harshly at the unexpectedly unladylike words out of her mouth, “but that trick can only take you so far in life. And I’d say that’s all he’s built of sir; tricks. I’d be interested in finding out when they run out.”

*It’s not about when they run out*, he thought bitterly, *its about finding people willing to fall for them again and again and again.*

“Thank you Sally,” he said briefly, moving to stand up.

She allowed herself a small smile at the tone in his voice. She spoke once more before turning and leaving the room.

“You know, sir, there are plenty of news channels looking to interview you right now. National television has always been one of the best methods of breaking important news to the people. If, that is, you decide you have any, that is.”

6:53 p.m.

*Jem*

*What the fuck are you doing*

*Did you even plan this*

*Or are you just being an asshole*

*You can’t just randomly decide to run for the president of the united states!!!!!!!*

✓ *seen 6:54 p.m.*

*Jem*

*Thomas*

*Please do not pick this fight*

*Fuck you call me back!*

*this is a bad idea*

Chapter End Notes
man i wrote the roughdraft for the ending of this and WOOOO BOY this is gonna get dark :o :) :) :)

Breathing

Chapter Notes

yeeeee I got a new computer so this took a bit longer than I would have liked oops

The next two weeks passed in a flurry. The nation was ajar; Washington had the highest approval ratings of any prior president. He had been guaranteed eight years of the presidency. Nobody had been planning on a brutal race next year. Nobody was prepared for the immediate and violent backlash to both Jefferson and Hamilton’s campaigns.

The country had been living in relative peace for the last four years. All of that changed in a matter of days.

This was, of course, due to the polarizing nature of either of the party’s potential candidates. They represented two different sides of the same spectrum, immediately causing a split in their party and revolting voters for the other side.

Unfortunately, the opposing side held fast under the news, uniting under Aaron Burr’s tentative new campaign.

Jefferson and Hamilton made no immediate move to solve this issue, however. Their first moves were to bash each other, toeing the line of inappropriate from the beginning.

Washington’s reign was not yet up, though; Thomas and Alexander were still forced to see each other daily at their current jobs. Obviously this was a problem for everyone within a mile of the offices.

It was no surprise, then, when Washington arranged a gala to smooth over the admittedly rough and jarring news of his future, hoping it would reign in the whiplash effect that had manifested in the two secretary’s campaigns.

Alexander arrived fashionably late as always, too cocky to believe in the necessity of time.

James looked fucking gorgeous next to him, the midnight blue suit setting off his eyes. His pretty, dumb eyes that were smiling up at his husband adoringly. It had been one of those weeks then. Great. As if things could be going any worse for Thomas right now.

He regretted the thought as soon as it occurred. If James was going to insist on being chained to this man for his plethora of reasons, Thomas should be glad that he hadn’t been fucking beaten at the very least. He was glad.

Still, realizing when it was a “good week” was always a bittersweet, double edged sword. Alex hadn’t hurt James. So James loved him more.

Fucking great. It was all so great.

He took another glass of wine and gestured jeeringly to his opponent, noting his late behavior and tangenting on his other immature tendencies.
The music echoing in the room picked up and several couples spun out to the middle of the room. Hamilton, of course, was the first, tugging a reluctant James behind him.

Fucking great.

Thomas didn’t stay to watch the happy couple dance; it was easy to sneak out the back door. He wandered the halls until they spilled him out into the garden. Approaching the fountain, he reminisced the last time he had sat there in the dead of winter during a gala. It seemed so long ago….

It was twenty minutes before he sensed the presence of another person.

“It’s going to be a lot more difficult getting my sister’s chicken noodle soup to you now,” James spoke softly, maintaining his distance and not moving to sit next to him.

Thomas thought for a moment before responding to that. James’s tone was so casual, so soft and teasing and he wants to lapse back into so easily. But it was the first thing James had said to him in weeks, and Thomas wasn’t sure if he could keep up.

So he didn’t say anything.

“You’re going to get sick again sitting out here in the cold,” James tried again, taking another step forward so that he was standing right behind Jefferson.

A hand raised gently to his shoulder, not rubbing or holding, just touching. Just a presence, there for him to admire, it was just James.

Jefferson allowed himself a deep sigh and slumped down, running one hand over his face.

“Are you okay?” James asked quietly, timidly.

“What the hell do you think, Jemmy?” He answered, just as quietly.

There was another pause as James evaluated the situation, mapped it out in his head. Searched his databanks for Jefferson, pulled what he knew he could use to make him feel better. He took his hand off of Jefferson’s shoulder to come around and sit next to him. He didn’t take his hand, they were still in public after all and only so much could be excused, but his hands rested right next to Jefferson’s. He could feel their warmth.

“Your campaign is running really well,” he pointed out softly, encouragingly.

Jefferson scoffed and leaned back, pulling his hands away.

“Yeah, I bet you hate that, don’t you?” he bit out.

James peered at him a moment, all big, searching eyes like a wise owl. Sometimes it seemed like James had infinite knowledge (except where it actually fucking counted). It was clear he was thinking hard about what he was about to say.

Thomas tried to play it off, like he wasn’t hanging off of whatever came next. Like he wasn’t hoping James would pledge his allegiance and leave Hamilton.

Pretending pretending pretending.

“I’m proud of you,” is all he said in the end.

Thomas just turned his head to look at him, and eventually James continued.
“You know I’ve always aligned more with your beliefs within our party.”

“Is that so? How are you going to be voting then?”

Who are you going to be true to?

James answered immediately and without thought, an extreme rarity for him.

“You.”

That really caught Thomas’s attention, and his eyes pierced into James’s. It had been weeks. Madison would get to do the talking here. Thomas was honestly too tired to navigate the complexities of this side of their already complicated relationship.

James stared right back at him, the soft and sincere expression blanketing his face becoming more stretched and cracked as the seconds wore by.

“He can’t be president, Thomas,” James’s voice cracked, and there were tears gathering in his eyes. He was still smiling though, still trying to play life off as a big game where nothing could ever go wrong. When his gaze finally broke and he had to look down at his hands he shivers.

“He just can’t.”

Not even a full second had gone by before Thomas had leaned forward and scooped James against his chest. It was a rather blatant action, and there would be no justification if someone were to stumble upon them.

James never cried. He never let his mask slip, as infuriating as it was to Jefferson. The two tears trailing down his smooth, round cheeks now were intense for James, and damn but Thomas had missed all of him.

James let himself be pulled forward, let their foreheads brush against each other. Leaned in all on his own to brush their lips together. It isn’t until his lover was panting against his lips that Jefferson realized how close the other man was to a complete meltdown. He pulled away and cupped James’s face in his broad palms just in time for the smaller man to unsuccessfully choke back a sob.

It was a harsh, brutal sound ripped from his lungs.

Thomas could swear that sometimes it felt like his own heart would slow down to compensate for when James’s sped up; always trying to create a sense of equilibrium for the two of them. The deeper they got, though, the less sure Thomas was that he could catch himself before stopping his heart altogether for James.

But maybe that wouldn’t be a bad thing.

Thomas knew that James was capable of keeping Hamilton out of power. The stories he had of the moments he spent alone with the powerful man would be more than enough to strip him of that power.

Of course, James would never tell. He would never be the one to hurt his precious husband, even if he agreed he couldn’t win. He loved the pathetic bastard too much, for reasons Thomas knows he will never understand.

So he didn’t prompt James, didn’t remind him of what was surely already haunting him; James had the power of the entire race in his hands. Instead he just spoke factually.
“He isn’t going to be,” his arms wrapped firmly around the smaller man, squeezing to reinforce his point.

James took a few more deep, steadying breaths against Thomas’s shoulder. The trembling was still present, however, and Thomas could tell that the other man wanted to burrow there and stay.

But they were already pushing it, putting their careers on the line just sitting here with each other.

“Come over tonight?” Thomas asked, trying not to let his voice show the raw emotion, the need he had to hold James again in his own home, somewhere they were safe.

James sagged in his arms and sighed before pulling back up and wiping the back of his hand across his face tiredly. He glanced back at the building behind him, and shook his head hesitantly.

“Thomas I…I can’t. Not tonight.”

Jefferson closed his eyes and tried to reset. He tried to forget how nice that felt, to tell himself he didn’t need it. It didn’t matter. He was going to be president of the United States of America, he could stand to spend another night alone.

“Okay,” he said quietly, reaching out to hold James’s hand, “I love you.”

James just looked down at their joined palms and squeezed Thomas’s before pulling away and moving briskly back inside, leaving Jefferson alone in the garden again.

Thomas was still awake that night near eleven when there was a bang on his door. He almost didn’t hear it, the meager sound lost under the rushing winds and bouts of thunder blooming outside in the harsh storm. He waited a moment until he heard it again, and once he confirmed it wasn’t his tormented mind plucking at him, he was up and out from behind his desk in a split second. He hurried to the door, throwing it open.

James was pushing his way inside before the door was even fully open. Thomas caught sight of him and winced. The smaller man was completely soaked, having likely parked down the street in his usual spot and then walking up the block in the dark in what was shaping up to be one of the worst storms of the year.

A feat impressive on its own, but doubly so considering how deathly afraid James was of storms.

“Hey there,” Thomas cooed, shutting the door with a quick glance outside to make sure he hadn’t been followed, “hey sweetheart.”

He wrapped his arms around the man, not caring that he was soaking because he was also trembling and visibly biting the inside of his lips hard.

“Are you okay,” Thomas asked, letting his hands roam listlessly across James’s small frame, “Jesus, baby, how’d you even drive in this?”

James just shook his head against Thomas’s shoulder and didn’t speak, his breaths carefully controlled.

He had braved all of that for Thomas.

“Come on, honey, let’s get you something dry, okay?”
Thomas left one arm wrapped around James’s shoulder and led them deeper into his townhouse, back towards his bedroom. He made sure to grab the old green blanket from the couch as they walked by, and James smiled for the first time that night.

It was easy to find the old pair of pajama pants James had left at Thomas’s once. Mostly because Thomas had totally stolen the pants and pretended they were lost that night because it was still early on in their relationship and James had always been hesitant to leave things at Thomas’s. They had had a designated place in Thomas’s top drawer ever since, placed just so that he would glimpse them when pulling out whatever he was going to wear that day. A subtle little warm reminded of James’s presence in his home.

James rolled his eyes from his perch on the bed when Thomas pulled out the revered things and handed them over. He slid them on, already having confiscated one of Thomas’s William and Mary sweatshirts. It was oversized and adorable on him; James made it a habit to wear it as often as he could. It was a little piece of security as much as the raggedy green blanket was.

Once he was dry and clothed, Thomas joined him on the bed. He pushed him over gently so that he could roll in next to him and pull him against his chest.

Thomas sighed contently, placing a light kiss against the top of James’s head.

“T’m glad you could make it,” he spoke softly, never sure how close he was to hitting a nerve. James could have made up an excuse and skipped over because he wanted to sleep with Thomas. But he could have also…had an altercation with his husband and fled, wanting to sleep next to Thomas, buried in safe warm arms. In that case should he be glad James made it?” It was always so complicated and Thomas hated it.

“Me too,” James responded softly, not letting Thomas in on yet another secret.

Another bought of thunder echoed outside and Madison shivered.

“Hey there,” Thomas insisted, “None of that. I’ve gottcha baby, nothing’s ever going to hurt you here.”

It was a pretty not so subtle jab at Hamilton, designed to fill Thomas’s insatiable need for James to understand the difference between Jefferson and Hamilton.

But James just ignored that piece of it and rolled his eyes.

“My hero,” he deadpanned, starting to press chaste kisses to Thomas’s neck where he had resumed his burrow from earlier.

“What can I say? I have a huge hero complex,” Thomas grinned.

“Yeah, Thomas, I know,” James groaned, rolling his eyes again.

“It’s probably because of how extremely attractive I am combined with my unearthly intelligence,” Thomas mused to himself.

“You’re also a narcissist,” James muttered playfully, his kisses picking up their pace across Thomas’s neck and chest.

“That’s always what they tell the people like me who can actually see the world for what it is, Jemmy,” he replied mournfully, gasping under the other man’s ministrations as the plush lips moved downward.
“Yeah,” he sighed, “Oh god, Jem.”

James sat back up, looking at him with an eyebrow raised.

“Yes?” he mimicked with fake spite, “oh god? Really, that’s all you’ve got for me here?”

“I mean?” Thomas raised his own eyebrow challengingly, “you’re not really giving me much to go off of here baby.”

James huffed and rolled onto Thomas’s his legs.

“Sit up,” he commanded, and Thomas was more than eager to do as he asked so that he was sitting with his back propped up against the headboard.

James shuffled forward again until he was sitting pretty in Thomas’s lap. He resumed his kisses, more passionate this time, trailing upward until he reached the other man’s lips. His hips rocked back in forth, shifting up and down against Thomas’s lap the way he knew got the older man going. Thomas grasped him tightly by the small of the back, pulling him tightly against Thomas. They kissed passionately for a while, enjoying the feel of each other’s bodies for the first time in a while.

“Jesus,” James moaned, pulling away to attack Thomas’s’s neck, “I’ve missed you.”

Jefferson just chuckled, a sound cut off by a moan as James licked that one spot behind his ear.

“Of course you have baby, a maiden is wont to miss her precious hero.”

“Shut up,” James breathed as he pressed another kiss to Thomas’s lips before pulling back to fumble with the baggy sweatshirt. Thomas leaned over, quick to help. When it came over the other man’s head, Thomas’s hands were all over his bare chest, tracing the familiar vague muscles hidden comfortably in a soft roundness encompassing the man’s body. Thomas thought he was fucking beautiful.

He leaned forward to press a kiss against James’s collarbone before bending to trail down, laying kisses all over the beautiful expanse of skin. James hand’s worked underneath him, tugging at Thomas’s’s shirt.

“Off,” he commanded when he couldn’t manage to get the shirt off at the angle, but Thomas didn’t stop what he was doing, “Thomas, off.”

“Alright alright,” Jefferson smiled, finally pulling away to pull his own shirt over his head. They fumbled quickly, and the old pajama pants joined the pile on the floor, along with Thomas’s’s jeans.

James’s hips rocked more frantically down onto Thomas’s’s lap and his head tilted back, lost in the pleasure of it.

“So fucking beautiful,” Thomas muttered, attacking the neck presented to him with his lips.

“Yeah?” James asked, a breathy sound as he gasped for breath.

“Yes,” Thomas growled.

James leaned forward to bring his lips next to Thomas’s’s ear as he ground down hard.

“Show me,” he commanded breathily.

Jefferson responded immediately, one hand moving to reach down the smaller man’s’s boxers, grasping his ass possessively. James groaned again, a stuttering noise as Thomas’s fingers moved
farther, pushing against him.

Jefferson’s other hand moved over to the bedside drawer, shifting through it restlessly. The condom came out easily, but the lube evaded him and he wasn’t about to look away from the sight in front on him to find it faster.

James rocked down on Thomas’s hand in a fast paced motion, his cheeks flushing and his eyes fluttering closed, his mouth poised ever so slightly open.

“Thomas,” he insisted when the other man continued to move his hand through the drawer.

“I know baby, god, look at you, so ready for it, just hold on, I’ve just gotta find…”

“I don’t care, we don’t need it. Thomas please,” James whined, his hand going down to grasp Thomas’s hardening length and push it against himself.

“James – Jesus baby – trust me I want this as much as you do right now, but I’m not going to hurt you,” Thomas insisted back (see, James, do you see how I’m not him?), shifting his hips to thrust into Madison’s hand.

His hand moved all the way to the back of the drawer and – aha!

“Thank god,” Thomas muttered, bringing it out of the drawer.

His one hand fumbled, trying to hold it and unscrew the cap at the same time, and failed to do so. James huffed impatiently and tried to snatch it from his hands to do it himself.

“I’ve got it,” Thomas insisted, pulling his other hand out and away to reach back for it.

“Honey just let me do it,” James persevered, and both of their hands struggled to unscrew it. Thomas pulled back, moving to pour the bottle over himself once it was open, but succeeded only in throwing the cap open early under both of their ministrations. The entire lid fell off, and the slippery substance poured all across the both of their chests. Now completely soaked in the also very fucking cold goo, they looked down in surprise. Goo that also happened to be a bright orange, and was seeping off of them and into the expensive white sheets every second.

“What the fuck,” Thomas finally asked, his eyes wide and confused.

James peered down wide eyed for a moment to before something clicked in his mind and his eyes widened for a different reason. He began to laugh, a small disbelieving noise at first that grew into a big, bubbly warm one.

Thomas looked at him, bewildered.

“What the fuck,” he repeated.

“oh no,” James laughed and laughed, finally rolling off of Thomas to lay next to him in the bed and curl up in his raucous laughter.

“Hey, don’t “ Thomas began as James effectively moved a large amount of the orange goo and smeared it across the sheets, but stopped once he realized they were already ruined.

“James?” He asked again, but Thomas was starting to laugh himself, unable to contain it at the sight of his lover struggling to grasp his breath next to him in the ridiculous situation.

“Oh shit,” James gasped between laughs, “I forgot I did that!”
“What?” Thomas asked incredulously, still laughing himself.

“I thought—“ laugh, “I thought the next time I’d be over was Halloween and I was sort of drunk—“

laugh, “so I put all of your orange food coloring in it.”

“What?” Thomas asked again entirely confused but amused, unable to contain his chortling at the bizarre statement.

“I thought it would be sexy,” James managed, laughing now at himself.

“Oh yeah baby,” Thomas agreed, guffawing, “this is very sexy, you’ve definitely nailed it.”

James looked at him, his eyes all crinkled up and Thomas was so in love godamn, “I know right?!"

They chuckled for a few moments longer in each other’s arms before looking back down at the sheets.

“Well, you can deal with this mess tomorrow James,” the smaller man chuckled again, “but for tonight we can sleep in the guest room.”

“Good plan,” James replied, patting Thomas on the chest as he moved to get up and wandered to the door, “I’m hungry now though.”

And he walked out without looking back at Thomas, who rolled his eyes and cursed playfully to himself.

“Okay then princess, make yourself at home!” He called as he stood up himself, meandering to the on suite to pick a towel to ruin.

When he made it to the kitchen James was standing by the refrigerator, peering into a Styrofoam container curiously.

“Did you steal this from the banquet tonight?” He asked, slightly incredulous as he looked at the fancy pasta dish he recognized.

“Okay sir, but why do you assume I stole it? I’m going to be president of the United Damn States of America, all I had to do was ask and they boxed some up for me,” he defended, moving to pull out two plates.

James looked at him thoughtfully as he dished out the two servings and let Thomas place them in the microwave.

“If you’re going to be president of the good ‘ol USA, why are you taking home leftovers?”

Thomas shrugged, trying to appear nonchalant as he stood facing the microwave with James behind him at the island, “I saw you eating it across the room. You seemed like you liked it, but I noticed you got… pulled away before you could finish it. I figured you would raid my damn kitchen, so this seemed like a good solution.”

Nobody mentioned anything about Thomas’s assumption that James would show up.

Nobody mentioned anything for a bit, and Thomas stood nervously, rubbing one foot against the other. There were so many… boundaries with James.

He loved the man. He knew James loved him. But how far Thomas was allowed to go to show it depended on what day of the week it was, and he never knew if what he was doing would put James
too far past his limits. There have been several times, early on mostly because Thomas is a good learner, that he went way too far. It was usually steering the conversation directly at leaving Hamilton and eloping with Jefferson, or going public with the man’s true nature. Any serious talk about the future of their relationship really. James pulled away almost immediately, guilt clear on his face and across his body. He usually made quick work of leaving after that, and it would be days before he would reach out to Thomas again.

The worst part of it all was that Thomas knew that James freaked and felt guilty because he wanted it, and had actually allowed himself to entertain the idea for a moment.

James wanted him. Wanted to be with him, to call that old William and Mary sweatshirt his, to eat leftovers with him at midnight, to tie dye their fucking lube and ruin Thomas’s sheets and then laugh at him.

And god, did Thomas want James.

“Thanks,” Madison spoke eventually, his tone soft but timidly appreciative, and Thomas knew he hadn’t lost him for the night.

“Gotta keep my maiden fed, huh?” Thomas joked, pulling the plates out and setting them down.

James just smirked but kept silent, pulling at the pasta with his fork and eventually eating it. His eyes closed for a moment and his eyelashes fluttered, and Thomas counted that as a win.

This was all he needed.

He could keep telling himself that.
The race continued as normal.

Threats and humiliating tidbits were thrown around daily between the two runners and the party continued to split and polarize. The race was intense, and everyone had a side on everything that they would take to the grave.

But under the flurry of spitfire, nothing was quite the same anymore.

Of course it wasn’t. James had resumed his position in Thomas’s life, and Jefferson felt himself begin to thrive. His insults towards Hamilton were more constructive than downright nasty, and his numbers began to rise slowly.

Not that he got to see Madison, at least privately, all that often anymore. Public figures more now than ever before, the necessary security details and publicity followed them nearly everywhere. With Hamilton’s obvious plan for James to be his smiling, pretty, impressive figurehead (and not much else, damn him) there weren’t many excuses Madison could pull to speak with him one-on-one; It would be to odd.

Now if Jefferson could get ahold of James for his campaign, he knew the two of them could decimate Alexander in a heartbeat. That had nothing to do with the intimate knowledge James shared of the man, or his relationship with Hamilton at all for that matter.

Thomas Jefferson knew that James Madison was so much fucking more than a husband. His intelligence could easily match Alexander’s, if he ever chose to speak up and use it.

But it wasn’t in James’s nature to cause any kind of conflict, at least directly. It was in James’s nature to make a series of shitty life decisions, including but not limited to meeting Alexander Hamilton, holding a strong distaste for Kraft mac and cheese, talking to Alexander Hamilton, knowingly being a massive blanket hog, marrying Alexander Hamilton, stealing Thomas’s shit all the damn time (and where the hell does he collect it all because it sure as hell isn’t his house), and not leaving Alexander Hamilton to rot.

Despite these errors, James Madison was an intelligent and rapid paced politician; a monumental asset to anyone lucky to have him on his team.

A gift that Alexander Hamilton was just the right kind of stupid to kick to the curb. James had made it clear from the night he and Thomas started speaking again that his involvement in the campaign had not been in-depth. Not that Hamilton didn’t want James to know about his plans, just that it never really occurred to him that James was someone worth having such strategic conversations with.

Jefferson ached at this. Some part of him wanted to see Hamilton realize his mistake and consult his fucking genius of a husband, even though it would most very likely end in Jefferson’s political demise, just to see James light up like he did for the five minutes he allowed himself to converse with Jefferson about it.

It was absolutely fucking beautiful.

James Madison’s mind was the eighth wonder of the world.

(The way his body looked curled up in Thomas’s was a close ninth).
It was honestly an honor just to hear the other man speak, and that was why Thomas didn’t really mind when James opened for Alexander in his next big speech with an obviously pre-written and directed insult aimed loosely at him.

Thomas chuckled to himself and rolled his eyes from where he padded around his kitchen as James spoke on the television. He looked over at the same time James peered into the camera and Jefferson smirked and waved at the screen.

“Fuck you too, baby.”

James made his smart, witty parting remarks and finally introduced the asshat of the evening. Alexander paused to kiss James on the cheek sweetly on his way to the podium and the crowd awwwed.

Asshole.

As much as Thomas knew he shouldn’t, and that it meant he would have to rewatch the event later again tonight, he started to tune out everything Alexander blabbed about after that. He focused his attention instead on reviewing his emails on his laptop from the island, and it wasn’t until he got up to get a glass of water ten minutes later that he happened to catch Hamilton’s newest ‘intriguing’ little plan for his presidency.

Thomas raised a single eyebrow, unimpressed with the other man’s pandering about reducing drug abuse nationwide. When the hell had he come up with that pretty little tale? It was like the shorter man was pulling them out of his ass at this point. Ridiculous.

“And, often enough, the victims are not the only perpetrators. Enablers can also be blamed for the thousands of drug-attributed deaths every year in our country. Often a family member under the same roof allows a lie of normality to settle, and ignorance is never bliss. Our program will target not only potential users, but the people around them as well to make sure everyone can contribute to the rehabilitation of our beloved citizens.”

He didn’t say Jefferson’s name.

He didn’t have to.

The implication was obvious.

Thomas was sure that tomorrow morning the headlines would be dredged up again from the depths of hell.

“Martha Jefferson, Wife of Ambassador, Found Dead after Drugged Overdose.”

He was going to be sick.

And then he was going to fucking kill Alexander Hamilton.

The invitation arrived the next night. James sifted through the mail absentmindedly; nothing really important ever came physically. It was all email these days.

The thick, creamy invitation caught his eye and he pulled it out of the stack.

Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Madison
James squinted down at it, recognizing Thomas’s handwriting easily. That and the fact that Thomas was the only person that called him Mr. Madison anymore.

His fingers tapped restlessly as he genuinely considered throwing it in the trash before Alex came down from his shower.

It was absolutely, 100% trouble, packaged in a pretty white envelope.

James had been expecting it, of course. There had been a surprising lack of retaliation so far from his husband’s…exciting new plan. And its implications.

He himself hadn’t even really heard from Jefferson. He had extended a simple, are you okay? To which Thomas’s blunt im fine had been a satisfying enough answer.

Well. Not satisfying. No part of this situation was satisfying. But it was…enough for James to be able to step away without drowning in guilt for his distance.

Martha didn’t scare him, necessarily. And he didn’t hate the poor, dead woman in the least. Still, the topic…unnerved him.

It could have almost been funny, how scared James was that Thomas had been married. That someone else held a place in his heart, preventing him from handing it over in its entirety to James.

Or maybe that’s the exact opposite of funny. The blank, sucking, painful void where laughter should be.

James certainly wasn’t laughing as he glared at the envelope.

“What’s this?”

Alexander swooped it out of James’s unsuspecting hands as he walked into the kitchen, not stopping on his way over to the bar.

James stopped himself from wincing and shrugged.

“I’m not sure, honey.”

Hamilton caught sight of the Madison and raised an eyebrow, unimpressed.

“What the fuck does he want?” Hamilton asked in distaste and James felt shivers on his spine at how quickly Alexander had pieced it together just as he had.

He threw the envelope back on the counter for James to open as he walked back by towards the glasses.

He slid his fingers through the seal slowly, deliberately, hoping the house would spontaneously catch fire or something before he had to open the surely ticking bomb.

As he pulled out the cardstock invitation, he couldn’t help his freeze.

Alexander was watching him, of course, he always was, even when he wasn’t.

“James?” He asked from the other side of the room, watching his husband shrewdly.

“Yeah, yeah honey, its just…”
Hamilton wasted no more time and moved to approach James from behind. He stopped against his shorter husband, resting his chin against James’s shoulder as he read over it.

It could almost pass as normal, a funny coincidence. However, it was to deliberately addressed at to meaningful a time for the invitation to Jefferson’s domestic abuse fundraiser ball to be so insignificant.

Alexander didn’t tense behind James, would never let his husband see any weakness of the sort, but Madison could still feel the heat traveling from Alex’s eyes over his shoulder and into the cardstock.

“Well that’s just lovely, isn’t it,” Hamilton snarked from behind him, reaching to snatch the invitation from James’s ever so lightly trembling hands.

“Pretentious fucking…” Alexander growled to himself as he ripped it into fourths before grabbing a knife laying on the counter a skewering them with it against the chopping block. He kept moving, grabbed the bottle of vodka from where he had set it down and moved back towards the door with it, obviously having given up on just pouring one drink.

He paused in the doorway, his hand hovering expectantly over the lightswitch. James stood up obediently, following his husband upstairs.

It was obvious in the way Alexander forced himself to walk that he didn’t want to give away his extreme irritation, at least not yet. But James knew him, knew what stunt Jefferson had just pulled, knew what his husband was feeling. He took several large steps, matching Alexander’s strides, and took his husband’s free hand in his own without speaking.

Hamilton spared him a glance, sizing him up and making a decision.

He let out a little sigh and pulled his hand out of James’s to wrap it around his shoulder, pulling his husband against his chest as the moved through the house to their room.

James didn’t speak, just burrowed his head into Hamilton’s shoulder and wrapped his arm around the taller man’s back, allowed himself to be led to their bed.
James was so damn tired.

He had no idea where their boundaries lay, had never read any book or seen any movie condoning such behavior as he and Thomas were partaking in. He felt somewhere inside of him he should be mad at the older man for the brazen stunt. He felt like his anger would be natural and called for. But then again, he was playing on both sides of a war. What did he expect?

Great question. What did James expect? How could he possibly win at the game he was playing? He was setting himself up for a definite lose-lose. But he had known that from the very beginning and he hadn’t let it stop him before. Why try now?

Well, that was quite the weak excuse, and James was quite aware of it thank you. But he was emotionally drained from all of the bullshit and he had some bruises on his chest that were necessitating his inhaler for the first time in over a year and he did. not. care.

Madison knew he was going off the tracks, flying off at a rapid speed that was irreversible. Everything he did, every breath he was taking, felt like another condemnation waiting to catch up to him. He was trapped, so what could the harm be in wrapping the web around himself to try and get comfortable?

What could the harm be. Oh, that’s so sweetly and delectably rich.

Stupid, stupid James.

It had been over three weeks since James had seen Thomas in person – on stage or in private. He wasn’t coming home from Jefferson’s bed that night, didn’t even need to pretend. It was his work, his own personal job that continued to exist during the feud between his husband and his… and Thomas. He wasn’t even lying that night. He didn’t even need to.


James laid the keys down with a heavier hand than he usually would have this late at night with Alexander asleep upstairs. He shuffled his shoes off silently, letting out a heavy breath. He was exhausted. The prospect of crawling into bed with his husband was more appealing than usual.

On his way towards the steps, he noticed the light on farther down the hallway in the den. Alexander must have left it on, a rarity. James changed course and moved towards the room to turn the light off. But when he entered the room, he noticed a fire burning in the fireplace as well, and his skin prickled. He moved toward the fire, peering down into it in confusion for a long moment. Finally something, not a movement nor a sound, something fundamental, made him look to his right.

Seated to the right of the door, out of view from outside the room and lounging in the armchair, was Alexander. He was completely still, his face blank in an awful way, his eyes piercing into James’s existence. James nearly jumped out of his skin, bringing a hand up to his chest at the surprise.

“Jesus, Alexander, what are you doing?” He breathed out, ignoring the realization that his husband must have been staring at him like that since he entered the room without his knowing.
Alexander didn’t answer, didn’t move an inch. He just continued to stare at James with that hard, lifeless expression. James felt himself cower back, not even knowing why.

“How long?” He asked again, quietly, concern surely evident on his face.

After another long moment Hamilton broke his stillness to flex his hands, resting poised on the armrests. He cocked his head slowly, like an animal taking in its prey.

“How long?” His voice was pleasantly neutral, but there was a warning burning deep within it that James knew well.

“How long what, Alexander?” James asked, more concerned than ever, the hairs on his arms standing up.

Hamilton just stared at him, his head still cocked slightly, lapsing back into a still silence. It was clear the ball was in James’s court, but Alexander wasn’t playing a game James recognized.

“Is this because I'm late home? I’m sorry, my meeting ran late and I had a hard time caching up on my work after,” James insisted.

Alexander twitched, but still refrained from responded. Unbearably uncomfortable caught in his husband’s stare, James turned around, intending to put out the fire, needing movement to break the trance Alexander was trying so hard to lock him in. It took a few moments, but behind James’s back Alexander finally spoke.

“How long?” it was soft and blank and James froze.

“Excuse me?” He asked, his voice almost a whisper as he spoke into the flames. He didn’t turn around, paralyzed, even though his body was screaming at him turn, turn around, don’t let him out of your sights, don’t leave him alone behind your back, run.

Sure enough, there was a slight noise behind him, followed by soft but awful footsteps coming towards him. Still, he did not move, did not turn.

When James was a child, he could only ever sleep with his back to the closet door, worrying not about whether or not the monster would get him, but whether or not he would have to see it coming when it inevitably happened.

Alexander came up behind him, pressing his chest against James’s back and effectively trapping the smaller man against the flames. One arm snaked around his waist, a familiar gesture that suffocated James.

“How long?” Hamilton repeated, his lips tracing down James’s ear. There was more to his voice this time, the darkness seeping through. His irritation was clear, a deep furry buried beneath it. Hamilton was holding himself back; he had obviously evaluated himself enough to acknowledge the depth of his emotion, and knew how to pace it out and lead to a crashing crescendo. It was a familiar tactic, one that lead to some of the best sex James had ever experienced (though it never topped Thomas on a rainy Sunday) and some of the worst, most terrifying nights of his life. He sensed though, that tonight was going to top every other…unsavory experience he had had with his husband.

He couldn’t speak, feeling like a bug trapped in the spider’s web, waiting to be bitten. Alexander couldn’t…know? Could he?

When it became apparent James wasn’t going to respond, Alexander chuckled mirthlessly,
his hands spreading out to trace patterns across Madison’s skins.

James was sure that if he were to draw over them they would form daggers and skeleton grins.

“How did it feel, Madison?” The other man drawled.

Oh. Oh god.

“Spreading your legs for him?”

James whipped around, struggling to do so around the encircling arms. It was what Alexander wanted, though, and he was quick to grab James’s arms and pin him back against the fireplace, centimeters away from the flames.

“Alec- Alexander, please-“ James began frantically, “it isn’t like that-“

“That isn’t what I want to hear,” Alexander interrupted, his voice cold steel, like a knife piercing James’s tongue.

James stood, locked in his husband’s twisted embrace, watching the other man with wide, horrified eyes. Finally he relented, dropping his head down and hunching his shoulders submissively as much as he could in the pin.

“What do you want to hear?” He asked brokenly, his voice barely a whisper.

The response was immediate and just as cold.

“I want to hear you beg James, I want to hear you justify yourself and your entire pathetic existence. I want you on your knees for me,” Alexander reached one hand to grasp James’s jaw harshly, leaving bruises and yanking his face up to face his stare, “and then I’ll decide if I’m going to end you or not.”

James shuddered, tears starting to pool out of his eyes, his hands coming up to clutch his husbands shakily.

“Alexander please-“ he started.

“Yes, just like that,” Alexander breathed, his own hands starting to tremble around James. He knew it wasn’t a sign of weakness though.

James didn’t know what to do, wasn’t sure what game Alexander was playing but knowing he didn’t want to play along. Still, he felt himself trapped, incapable of doing anything else.

“Lexie I’m sorry!” He sobbed, clutching harder to Alexander’s hands compassionately. It didn’t stop the other man from yanking his hand off of James’s face and bringing it back down hard enough to send James to the floor.

He could feel the entire left side of his face turning purple already.

“Do not call me that,” Alexander snarled.

James heart broke. This wasn’t just pure anger. His husband was actually hurt to insist such a thing, instead of just letting James plead pointlessly like a bleeding little animal.

“I’m sorry,” James just whispered again, the tears flowing freely. He had never meant to hurt
Alexander. Never wanted to leave him or upset him. James loved him, and it pained him to see the… extreme he had driven his husband too.

Out of his peripheral vision, staring at the ground where he cowered, James saw Alexander flex his hands, obviously trying to reign in the outburst. Finally, when he spoke again, it was that same flat steel.

“You’re not doing a good job of convincing me, Jemmy.”

James flinched violently at Thomas’s nickname for him. How did he know?

“Convincing you?” He asked meekly.

Alexander didn’t respond, and James knew they were playing connect the dots again. He let his eyes flick upward briefly, not looking into his husband’s face but wandering the room nervously. They landed on the table next to Alexander’s armchair.

And the pistol sitting on it.

**RUN**

Running had never worked, not once, had only always made things a hundred times worse. But he just had to get Alexander away from that thing, keep him from doing something he would regret. Something that would ruin his career and his life.

“I love you,” James whispered quietly, knowing it would only make Alexander even madder but needing to say it before whatever happened in the next five seconds.

Sure enough, his husband sucked in another angry breath and his hands curled back into fists. James was gone though, bolting to the side on his knees and staggering up once he had cleared his husband’s legs and the fireplace. He ran as fast as he could out the door, slamming into the wall outside it.

Gasping for breath he climbed back up, head flinging back and forth down the hall, trying to decide where to go. The front door was locked back and it would take too long to unlock all five bolts. Left it was then, towards the kitchen. The landline was there, secure in the pantry closet. It wouldn’t take Alexander very long to break his way in, but it was better than nothing. It would work, he was sure of it, but he had to move.

Five steps into the room, James slipped and fell.

Scurrying back up frantically, he noticed the bottles of bourbon and vodka broken, scattered all across the floor. He had glass in his hands, inside of his knees. He couldn’t feel it though.

Alexander strolled into the kitchen, leisurely almost. It was clear he felt James had no chance of escaping. Why would he need to hurry? His expression was that same dead stare, piercing into his husband.

James didn’t speak, his breath dying in his throat as they locked eyes. He scrambled backwards, still struggling to stand up in the puddles of gin.

Alexander merely raised a bored eyebrow when he slipped backwards again, stabbing a large shard deep into his hand and crying out for the first time so far.

“I do regret that it has to be this way James,” he spoke flatly, not sounding sorry at all, “but I
was hoping you’d repent.”

He strolled forward more, his hand ghosting over the countertop and grabbing something there James couldn’t see from the floor.

“Alexander I’m sorry,” James tried again, “I didn’t mean to hurt you, honey, please-“

“Does that matter? I mean to hurt you. I’m going to hurt you.”

His hand came back from the counter, and the kitchen lights glinted off the butcher knife it brought with it.

Chapter End Notes

HELLO FRIENDS! Yes I know it has been a loooOooong time since I’ve worked on this. I started college this August and it’s been a bit of a rough transition. All of the sudden you have to redefine yourself around a whole new world of people and I made the mistake of letting fic slip away from me. Just working on this, though, was so incredibly cathartic and I miss it and all of yall so much. I’m also gonna be honest I miss your lovely comments so I decided, what’s the best way to get more of those and improve my quality of life? Hahaha, ACTUALLY POSTING! So here is some more of this poor awful thing and I am really sorry by the way.
He was supposed to call.

It was running through Thomas’s mind again and again and again and again and again and –

And he needed to stop. It definitely wasn’t the first time James had been late or even neglected entirely to call him.

Though…that had been long ago, when things were calmer, and the call wasn’t a literal lifeline…

What was he going to do about it? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. There was nothing he could do. He had backed himself into a mighty fine corner. He couldn’t go over there, and he couldn’t call Madison lest Hamilton see the call coming through on his phone. Jesus.

It was fine. It had to be.

There was nothing he could do.

The sound of the phone cut across his living room from where he had forced himself to set it. He is across the carpet in less than a second, scooping it up despite the fact that it was obviously not Madison, or at least Madison’s cell number, calling him. The sound indicating such a call is significantly different than his default beeping.

“Yes?” He asked breathlessly into the receiver, not taking the moment to chastise himself (the future president of the United States!) for answering his phone so curtly and out of breath.

There was no sound for a moment and his heart took the silent second to tighten the noose wrapped around it.

Though Thomas wouldn’t realize it at the time, that second of silence was a second of beautiful, ignorant bliss.

It was torn away quickly with the ragged breath. He knew who it was immediately.

“James?” He questioned intensely, again not stopping to care that if this was not James such an outburst would be suspicious at the least.

“Oh - oh god

please please please –”

“James,” Thomas inserted again, sure of the voice and completely terrified by its crazed utterings.

“Thomas?” James’s broken voice finally came through the phone, shaking and in disbelief, as if Thomas had magically managed to contact him instead of the other way around.
“James, James honey, what is it what’s wrong—”
He can’t get through his ramble before a terrible, loud crackling rang over the phone. James audibly jumped at the crash and began murmuring to himself again in distress and incoherently.

“Are you at home?” Thomas asked urgently, “James baby where are you what’s happening?”

Another crash and James screaming, “Please please please I’m sorry I’m sorry I’m sorry I’m sorry—” his voice growing even higher and more frantic with every utterance of the prayer. Somewhere in there Thomas had started yelling to, yelling to James, yelling for him to just tell Thomas where he was godamn it.

He didn’t even realize how loud he had become until James’s complimentary yells were cut out as the call was ended. But not before an odd change in volume, the phone changing hands, followed by a moment of silence and ending in the crashing crescendo of a bitter, bitter laugh. Then silence. Nothing.

Thomas dropped the phone to his lap, staring in disbelief at the ended call.

His mind had stopped. He was numb. He felt so, so alone.

Then came the anger, rich and plentiful. Anger at Hamilton, a bright and vivid flavor thick under his tongue. And an anger at himself, dark and sticky, blooming rapidly around his heart.

He wasn’t alone. How dare he even think that. James was out there, James needed him. He wasn’t alone.

Not yet.

He wasn’t sure what he was doing whirling around his house like a hurricane. When he landed in his car in a panic, freezing sweat dripping down his face, there was a butcher knife thrown into the side seat haphazardly (for the first time in his life he regretted not owning a gun) and his phone was laying sideways in the cupholder, ready to receive any calls. Ready ready ready. Please God.

If he thought the twenty unbearable seconds getting the car to start were the longest of his life, he was in no way prepared for the drive. Twenty minutes. Twenty damn minutes where he couldn’t do a thing for James. His eyes flicked nervously down to his phone every other second and he took his hands off the wheel just to make sure it was turned up all the way enough that his car should have been in a ditch.

By the time Jefferson arrived the deep, sinking fear had made its way far enough into his system to slow his craze and let him think before charging in. But only enough to tuck the knife into his back waistband.

He stared up at the huge, menacing wooden doors for only a moment before his anger overtook his fear and he began pounding.

It was immediately as if all noises inside stopped. There was a difference, an audible one. But Thomas’s blood was rushing so loudly in his ears that he didn’t even notice until it was gone.

Was it crying? Was it screaming? Was it James?

It was silent now. Deadly, emptily, silent.
Thomas couldn’t take it. He pounded on the door again and didn’t stop.

It was an eternity before he heard motion beyond the door and felt eyes on himself from the peephole. He thought he heard that laugh again, that terribly bitter laugh, before it swung ever so slightly open.

There were Hamilton’s eyes, lidded darkly, glaring at Thomas in a sort of superior satisfaction.

“Jefferson,” He hissed, his menacing face curling into something that resembled his usual smarmy smile – his ‘you ignorant fool, I know everything you know and more’ smile.

Thomas realized he was suddenly struck without words. He knew James wouldn’t want him to start throwing accusations, wouldn’t want Thomas to escalate the situation in any way at all, would want Thomas to stay home and cry himself to sleep (as he does and does and does).

Something had broken in Thomas during that call though. The floodgates were open and he didn’t give a shit. James’s small voice had started a fire in Thomas’s woefully unprepared heart and had burned it straight through to the middle. Now, with every other layer of it melted off, Thomas could see clearly what was in the middle. James was all that mattered. Not his job, not his reputation, none of it. Just James.

Just James, who was buried somewhere behind those doors and behind Hamilton, hurting.

And Thomas was fucking done. He was done playing nice, listening to James beg and wheedle him. He was done being ever so secretly scared of the same things James was (what would they do? What would happen? Everything would change) and he was done letting James spin the excuses for both of them like the coward Thomas was.

It was over. Maybe Jefferson and James. Definitely James and Hamilton.

“How is he,” He demanded gruffly, his voice quivering.

Hamilton’s mean, ugly smile just grew between the crack of the door.

“What, no formalities Jefferson? No good day my dearest Alexander?” Hamilton sneered.

Thomas hand came up swiftly to grab the other side of the door threateningly.

Alexander’s eyes drifted over to his hand in aloof disgust.

“No? No. Of course not,” His eyes were back to boring into Thomas’s, “it’s never really been about that. Its always been about the slut.”

Thomas shoved the door open more in one brute push.

Hamilton’s frame came into view and took Thomas’s breath away.

There was so much blood. So, so much.

He regained himself swiftly. He could break down into tiny pieces and cry later.

His hands came out again to shove Hamilton out of the way as he forced himself into the house.

“James,” He yelled, moving swiftly down the hallway and gazing vigilantly into each room
as he passed, repeating his call urgently, “James? Madison?”

He tried to ignore the sounds of Hamilton laughing behind him, seemingly unmoving.

Thomas reached the end of the hallway – the kitchen. There was glass sprinkled all over the floor and the room reeked of bourbon. There was a particularly large shard in the left corner, soaked in blood. Behind it lay the remnants of the pantry door, and through it Thomas saw the dark little room and the house phone dangling off its hook there.

Don’t stop. Break later. Don’t stop. Can’t stop.

He whipped back around, dogging back to the front of the house.

The door still stood open. Hamilton was gone.

Thomas heard a noise upstairs. Alexander was humming deeply into the house.

“Come on then Thomas,” the ugly voice rang out from beyond the stairs, “come and find him. Maybe you’ll want to take a turn with what’s left.”

Thomas couldn’t help it, the anger bubbled up his throat like magma and he screamed in anger, bolting towards the stairs and hurtling himself up them.

“James,” he screeched again, throwing open every door he came upon, raking his eyes desperately through the library, the dressing room, the guest room. He didn’t let himself falter before he through open the door he knew to be into the master bedroom, despite wanting to.

It was a misplaced relief when he saw the room to be completely in order.

When he dodged back into the hallway, he heard Hamilton down the hallway where he had come and saw his shadow moving in the dim light pouring from the library door.

Thomas snarled but whipped back around, making his way farther down the hall until there was only one door left.

Nooked into the corner of the hall, Thomas knew it led to a guest room. He knew because he had been there with James the one and only time he had ever been over. The last time he had been in the room James was splayed out on the bed waiting for him, a smile on his face.

I’m coming for you baby. I’m here honey. You’re never going to know so much as a fucking papercut after tonight sweetheart.

Thomas didn’t know if he wanted James to be in that room or not. He didn’t know if he was ready to find out.

He couldn’t feel his hands reaching out and ripping the door open.

He couldn’t feel the tears pounding on his face.

He couldn’t feel it as he screamed again, ripping his throat open.

He couldn’t he couldn’t he couldn’t
Hello I am back and I am sorry :) 
I know I know I know, but comments inspire me and remind me that writing has a purpose so pretty please ~

Comments make my life! Let me know what you like and what you don't! Constrictive criticism and compliments make for a better story for everyone!!!!

I love yall, and I hope you have a wonderful day!

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1–800–799–7233

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